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Yours truly
J. M. Rodriguez

Rodriguez Memoirs
of
Early Texas

Jose Maria Rodriguez

1913

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P. S. H.

In Memoriam

Since the preparation of these memoirs, Judge J. M. Rodriguez, after a short illness, died at Laredo, Texas, on the 22nd day of February, 1913.

After his death, at the request of members of his family, I undertook to correct the proofs and assist in the publication of this little volume. It has been a great labor of love for me because of the long continued friendship, dating back nearly two hundred years, between the Rodriguez family and ours; and because of the great respect that I had for Judge Rodriguez, the author of these memoirs.

I have always thought it a great loss to this city that some authentic history of old San Antonio had not been written when data was easier to gather than it is now, and while this booklet does not pretend to be a history of San Antonio, yet, in a great measure it gives the present inhabitant some idea of the life of the old settlers and pioneers who lived in this outpost of civilization during the time when things were not as comfortable and pleasant as they are today, and whose labors laid the foundation of this beautiful city.

Judge Rodriguez was the type of the best element that helped to make this country. He was by birth and education a gentleman, and his whole life was devoted, as were those of many of his ancestors, to the service of the country. He believed that the making of money and accumulation of a fortune was secondary to the service to his country and to the community in which he lived.

Judge Rodriguez was born in this city, as were his father and his grand-father on both his father's and his mother's side, and he was early honored by the citizenship of this community by being elected to the office of Assessor and Collector in 1858, upon the ticket headed by General Sam Houston for Governor.

After the war he moved to Laredo, Webb County, Texas, where, after a short time, he was elected County Clerk, and thereafter he was elected County Judge, which office he held continuously for 35 years, and was County Judge at the time of his death; and while Judge Rodriguez was very fond of the people of his adopted city, his first affection was for the city of his birth. In writing these memoirs he has done a lasting service to the people of San Antonio.

LEONARD GARZA.

San Antonio, Texas, September 16th, 1913.

Preface



At the request of my kin people and a great many of my friends, I have undertaken in this little narrative to write just the things that have happened during my life time as nearly as I can recollect them. Not being at all literary inclined, I have simply dictated these facts as they occurred, and this is in fact more of a contribution to my family than a book for the general public, and I hope the stranger will pardon my referring to my own family as often as I do, for I intend this mostly for my children and their descendants as the recollections of one of their ancestors at the time when the government of this country was in a period of formation. I had not intended to have this printed at all, but my kin people are so numerous and my friends so insistent, that I have caused to be printed about two hundred copies, memoirs for distribution among my kin people and friends. Many of the things, such of course as the description of the battle of San Jacinto were repeated to me by my father, who was a participant therein, and who often spoke to us about it.


Yours truly,

Laredo, Texas,

J. M. RODRIGUEZ

Aug. 15, 1912.

War of Independence

Y earliest recollection is when I was a boy about six years old. One evening I was coming with my father and mother up Soledad Street, where the Kampmann Building is now, and as we got a little further up the street, we were stopped by a sentry and there were other soldiers there and we saw some breastworks there. General Cos, the Mexican general, my father told me, was in possession of the town. We went a little further down where the present corner of Travis and Soledad Street is. We crossed a ditch on a plank and went up Soledad Street to see my uncle, Jose Olivarri. I heard a great deal of shooting towards the Plaza and my father said that General Burleson of the Texas Army was trying to capture the city. The next day General Cos capitulated and was allowed to take his arms and leave the city.

Ben Milam was killed at the Veramendi House. The arms the Mexicans had were old English muskets that did not reach much over fifty yards. The Texas army used long range flint rifles. Shortly after that, Colonel Travis was put in command with a small garrison and he stayed at the Alamo. Colonel Travis was a fine looking man of more than ordinary height. I recollect him distinctly from the very fact that he used to come up to our house from the Alamo and talk to my father and mother a great deal. Our house was the first one after you crossed the river coming from the Alamo and Col. Travis generally stopped at our home going and coming. He was a very popular man and was well liked by everyone.

My father was always in sympathy with the Texas cause, but had so far not taken up arms on either side.

Soon after this, a report came to my father from a reliable source that Santa Ana was starting for San Antonio with 7,000 men, composed of cavalry, infantry and artillery, in fact a well organized army. My father sent for Colonel Travis and he came to our house and my father told him about this coming of Santa Ana and advised him to retire into the interior of Texas and abandon the Alamo. He told him he could not resist Santa Ana's army with such a small force. Colonel Travis told my father that he could not believe it, because General Cos had only been defeated less than three months, and it did not seem possible to him that General Santa Ana could organize in so short a time as large an army as that. Colonel Travis, therefore, remained at the Alamo, and at the last, Travis told my father, "Well we have made up our minds to die at the Alamo fighting for Texas." My father asked him again to retire as General Sam Houston was then in the interior of Texas organizing an army.

The Mexicans in San Antonio who were in sympathy with the war of Independence organized a company under Colonel Juan Seguin. There were twenty-four in the company including my father and they joined the command of General Sam Houston. My mother and all of us remained in the city.

One morning early a man named Rivas called at our house and told us that he had seen Santa Ana in disguise the night before looking in on a fandango on Soledad Street. My father being away with General Houston's army, my mother undertook to act for us, and decided it was best for us to go into the country to avoid being here when General Santa

Ana's army should come in. We went to the ranch of Dona Santos Ximenes. We left in ox carts, the wheels of which were made of solid wood. We buried our money in the house, about \$800.00; it took us nearly two days to get to the ranch.

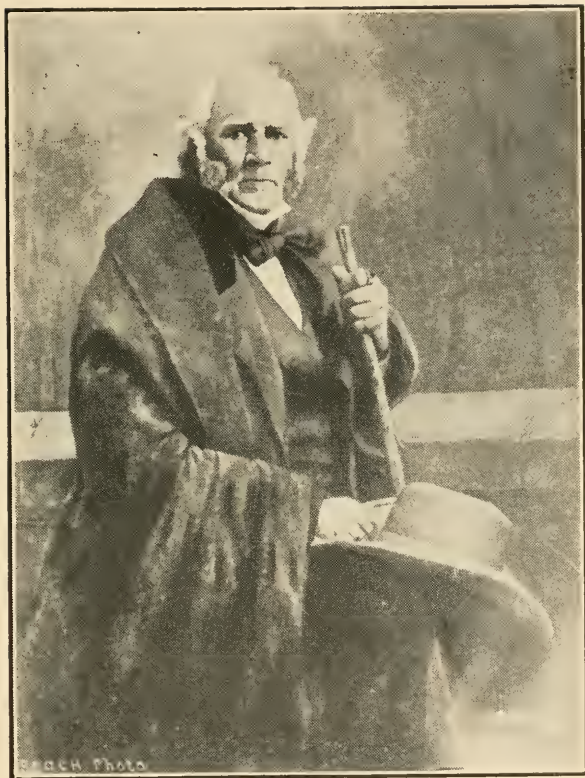
A few days after that, one morning about day break, I heard some firing, and Pablo Olivarri, who was with us, woke me up. He said, "You had better get up on the house; they are fighting at the Alamo." We got up on the house and could see the flash of the guns and hear the booming of the cannon. The firing lasted about two hours. The next day we heard that all the Texans had been killed and the Alamo taken. A few days after that an army consisting of about 1200 men under General Urrea came by from San Antonio on their way to Goliad to attack Fannin. I saw these troops as they passed the ranch.

There has been a great deal of discussion with reference to what had been done with the bodies of the Texans who were slain in the Alamo. It is claimed that Colonel Seguin wrote a letter in which he stated that he got together the ashes in the following February and put them in an iron urn and buried them in San Fernando Cathedral. This does not seem possible to me, because nothing of that kind could have happened without us knowing that and we never heard of any occurrence of that kind. Seguin did not return from Houston's army until my father did, both of them being in the same command, my father a first Lieutenant and he a Colonel. It is true that the bones were brought together somewhere in the neighborhood or a little east of where the Menger Hotel is now and were buried by Colonel Seguin, but that any of them were ever buried in the Cathedral, I have never heard nor do I believe that to be true. The only person I know of being buried in the Cathedral was Don Eugenio Navarro, who was

buried near the south wall of the Cathedral near the chancel.

Some days after the Urrea army passed, we heard of the massacre of Fannin's army at Goliad. My mother, along with other loyal families, determined then to move to East Texas, and we started with all our goods and chattels in ox-carts. The Flores and Seguin families were among those who went with us. Most of us traveled in the carts. Horses were very scarce, the army taking nearly all they could find. We had gotten as far as the Trinity river on the road to Nacogdoches where we heard of Santa Ana being defeated and all returned to San Antonio, except our family, who went on to Washington, which was the Texas Capital, as my father was still in the field with Houston's troops.






GENERAL SAM HOUSTON,

*from a painting by S. Solomon of San Antonio.
The original has been approved by the whole
family as the best likeness in existence.*

The Battle of San Jacinto

 HE company which my father joined, belonged to General Sam Houston's forces and were attached to General Houston's staff. My father and General Houston became very warm friends, which friendship lasted until my father's death, and continued with our family until Houston died. My father often told us the story of the Battle of San Jacinto.

He told us that General Santa Ana picked out 1200 of his best men from his army and crossed the Brazos in pursuit of Houston, under the impression that Houston was retreating toward Louisiana, and his main army of about 5,000 men or more remained on this side of the river under General Filisola. Houston discovered all these movements of Santa Ana, and he told his men that he was preparing to fight Santa Ana's advance army. Santa Ana came up within only a few miles of Houston's camp.

One evening Houston sent out a scouting party consisting of my father and others, to reconnoitre. They ran into Santa Ana's scouts and had a little brush. Santa Ana's men had a small cannon, and a cannon ball passed so close to my father's eyes that he was blinded for three or four hours. The next day about two o'clock, General Houston went around and talked to all of his men in camp and he told them that now was the best time to fight Santa Ana and asked them would they do so, and they all agreed to it enthusiastically. Houston had about 600 men, all cavalry. The next day he prepared for the attack,

and my father's company was placed on the left hand of Houston, and he told them that when they got in certain distance to lay down and drag themselves on the ground until they got in rifle shot of Santa Ana's men, who were taking a siesta. As soon as they got in range they let loose a volley into Santa Ana's men. After they had fired, they were afraid to stand up again and load. One of the company, a man named Manuel Flores, got up to load his gun and said, "Get up you cowards, Santa Ana's men are running." Then they got up, loaded their guns and commenced firing again. Santa Ana's men kept on running from the first volley and General Lamar coming up stopped the shooting, and took about six hundred prisoners. Santa Ana's horse was shot about six times. The horse was brought to General Houston and died. General Houston was slightly wounded in the leg.

A day or two after the battle, two of Houston's men went out from the camp to kill some game, and when a few miles from camp, they found a man sitting in an old log house, and they took him prisoner. As soon as they arrested him, one of the men said to him, "Look here, you are Santa Ana." The man denied this and made signs with his hands that he was a clerk; he was a scribe. The men said that as he wore a fine shirt, he could not be a common soldier because the common soldiers did not wear such shirts. They started with him for Houston's camp, but he only walked a few steps and then complained that he could not walk, so one of the men gave him his horse and kept asking him if he were not Santa Ana. One of the men thought he was Santa Ana and the others did not. Soldiers did not wear shirts trimmed with lace, so that surely must be Santa Ana.

He put the man on the horse and led him. When they got near the camp with their prisoner, the Mexican prisoners in the Texas camp began to cry, "Santa Ana, Santa Ana." They took him into camp and as soon as they came to General Houston, Santa Ana said, "General Houston, I am General Santa Ana, your prisoner of war." General Houston said "What can I do for you?" He answered "Give me something to eat, for I am hungry." Then General Houston said to my father, "Rodriguez, you and Menchaca cook a fine Mexican dinner for General Santa Ana." There was not much to cook, but they made tortillas of flour and gave him the best they had in camp.

As soon as he had eaten dinner, General Houston asked him, "Why did you put to the sword every man in the Alamo," to which Santa Ana replied, that according to the rules of war when a superior force demanded unconditional surrender of inferior forces, if not obeyed, they forfeited their lives. General Houston told him that such was a barbarous custom and should not be practiced in these days. Then General Houston asked Santa Ana why all of Fannin's men were massacred. Santa Ana said that he had nothing to do with that; that he was not responsible. General Urrea was in full command at Goliad. General Houston asked Santa Ana then to issue an order commanding General Filisola to retire across the Rio Grande. To this, Santa Ana replied that he was not in command of the Mexican army then, he was a prisoner of war and that General Filisola was the commander and was not bound to obey his orders. General Houston told him to issue the order anyway, and if not obeyed that he, Santa Ana, would not be to blame. He gave the order and General Filisola obeyed and retired. This greatly helped the Texas cause.

General Santa Ana said he wanted to make arrangements for his liberty. General Houston replied, "I have no authority to make such arrangements. We have a Congress and a Provisional Government. We will have to submit that question to them."

I omitted to state that Santa Ana, after he had come into the camp and had eaten, inquired if his aid General Almonte was alive and was told that he was alive and he sent for Almonte, who was a good English scholar and who thereafter acted as interpreter. Santa Ana asked for his baggage and it was brought to him. He took out a gold watch and offered it to the soldier who loaned him his horse. General Houston said, "My men cannot take presents." Then they had a long conversation about his liberty, and this conversation between General Houston and General Santa Ana was in my father's presence.

My father said that while Santa Ana was in the camp with Houston, some of the men of his army attempted to create a mutiny and demanded that Santa Ana be executed because of the massacre of Fannin's men and the Alamo. General Houston being wounded was lying down at the time and he rose up and made a speech to the men. "If we keep Santa Ana alive," said he, "We have the liberty of Texas in our hands; if we kill him, we will have the contempt and the odium of the entire world and will lose our war. If you kill him, you might as well kill me." They talked it over and finally agreed to drop the matter. My father was a witness to all of this.

A peculiar circumstance of the battle of San Jacinto is that my father's kinsman, Mariano Rodriguez also took part in that battle, but he was on Santa Ana's staff as Captain and paymaster, and he

retired to Mexico with the Mexican army and did not return until after the Mexican War was over in 1849.

The Mexican troops having departed from Texas altogether, the Texans then organized their government, but a great portion of the army remained in the field, expecting the return of the troops from Mexico. About eight months after the battle of San Jacinto, the company in which my father served was mustered out and he was honorably discharged. While he was still in the army, a brother of my mother's came to Washington and brought us back to San Antonio, and my father after leaving the army returned to San Antonio and went to merchandising.

Two or three days after we got to San Antonio, I went to the Alamo and saw the blood on the walls.



After the War



COLONEL SEGUIN was then appointed mayor of San Antonio and had charge of the town as to both military and civil affairs. A great many of the Mexicans who were in sympathy with the Mexican Government had fled to Mexico, and others who had been loyal to the Texas cause, returned and helped to establish the civil government. J. D. McLeod was the first Chief Justice and Jose Antonio Navarro represented Bexar County in the first Congress. My father opened a store next to our residence on Commerce Street.

Then came the Vasquez raid at which time I was at the ranch with my father, near Seguin. General Vasquez made his raid in 1841 but only remained here a short time. There was no fighting and he finally left. I am not familiar with the details of that raid.

General Woll's Invasion

In 1842, a report came into San Antonio that a band of robbers from Mexico was coming to rob San Antonio. The people then got together and organized two companies of citizens. My father belonged to the company with Capt. Menchaca and they had their quarters in the old court house on the corner of Market and Main Plaza. On the corner of Soledad and Main Plaza, an American named Chauncy Johnson had a company of forty men, all Americans and they composed the divisions to fight against these rob-

bers. As soon as they organized they sent three Mexicans with an escort to meet this band. They met them and it turned out to be the regular army of Mexico, instead of robbers, and they kept them prisoners.

One morning, just before daybreak I heard a gun fired, and woke up and I heard a band of music, playing an old air called La Cachucha. It was the dancing tune in those days. It was very fine music. It was a band of fifty musicians. The firing of the gun was the warning to the citizens that the army was here. As this was the regular army of Mexico, Menchaca's company agreed that they could not stand up against a whole army and withdrew to a safe distance. Chauncy Johnson, however, said his company should not disband, but would fight it out. The army then marched into town. The band was in the lead coming into Main Plaza between the Cathedral and what is now Frost's Bank. Then Johnson's men turned loose a volley on the band and killed and wounded fifteen or twenty musicians. This angered General Woll, and he placed a small cannon where the Southern Hotel now stands and fired on Johnson's men. Johnson then raised a white flag and the Mexicans took them all prisoners and they finally were sent back to Mexico. General Woll had a fine ball given in his honor by the citizens. After the ball a report came in that Colonel Hays was camped on the Salado preparing to attack Woll. General Woll sent a portion of his men out to the Salado to attack Col. Hays; They fought one day and night but could not dislodge Hays and the next day they retreated towards the Rio Grande. Antonio Perez, the father of the present Antonio Perez now living at San Antonio, who was with General Woll, came at night to our house and told us the army was going to retire into Mexico. While the battle was going

on at the Salado, Woll sent a company of cavalry and attacked and killed Dawson's men, who were coming from Seguin to reinforce Hays. They killed and butchered nearly all of them.

After Woll's raid, General Somerville organized a force, and disobeying the orders of General Sam Houston went into Mexico and was defeated at Mier, and all were taken prisoners. Those prisoners were taken into the interior of Mexico, and one of them related to me the whole circumstance. His name was Glascock. He said that they had orders to kill one out of every ten. They filled a pitcher with black and white beans, then the men were formed into line and each man would run his hand into the pitcher and take a bean. Glascock said that when he went up to the pitcher to take his bean out that he was shivering. He ran his hand into the pitcher and got a white bean and was saved. Glascock afterwards started the first English newspaper in San Antonio.



Texas as a State



IN 1845 the Republic of Texas was annexed to the United States as a state and thus passed away the Republic of Texas.

I was sent to New Orleans in 1842, where I attended the French schools for two years. While there I heard that Henry Clay was a candidate for President. He was opposed to the Annexation of Texas to the Union, but he was a weak candidate and was defeated and Polk was elected on the democratic platform, which favored annexation. After Polk's election, followed the annexation of Texas as a state. Then came the war with Mexico.

The United States troops came, a regiment of cavalry and camped on the Salado. They were here for a time and afterwards went into Mexico. After I returned from New Orleans, I went to work in my father's store.

The Mexican War, of course settled the status of this government and it then became the same as any other state of the Union and the people became interested in the politics of the United States, of which the leading issue was slavery. In this particular section of the state, there were not many slaves, because Mexican people as a rule do not believe in slavery. My family owned some slaves, but we worked them as other servants and treated them kindly. I became interested in local politics in 1854 and was elected alderman. My father had been an alderman also, during the term Colonel Seguin was Mayor of San Antonio. Afterwards I was elected assessor and tax

collector and served in these offices for two years. The secession question then came to be a burning issue. General Houston was a candidate for Governor on the Union issue and Runnels was his opponent. General Houston made an eloquent speech at San Pedro Park on the Union issue against secession; he was speaking from a small platform erected by the democrats. In his speech, he alluded to the democratic platform and said that he did not believe in platforms. He was a very fine orator, and during his speech he ridiculed the democratic platform and called out, "Platforms will not stand." Just at that moment the platform upon which he was standing fell, and General Houston went through. He continued his speech, although the people could only see his head and shoulders above the fallen stand, and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, you see the democratic platform will not stand." He carried Bexar County by a great majority and was elected Governor by 10,000 or more votes. I saw him inaugurated and carried my sister Carolina with me to attend the Inaugural ball, and General Sam Houston did us the honor to invite my sister to lead the grand march at the Inaugural ball. He was a steadfast friend of our family and had a great affection for my father.

Shortly after that, the secession convention was called and I attended it as interpreter for Colonel Basilio Benavides, representative from Webb County. Sam Smith and Jose Angel Navarro represented Bexar County. After the secession was declared and established, Houston refused to accept it by taking an oath and he was removed from office. His place was taken by Lieutenant Governor Clark. After Houston was relieved from office he went out on the capitol grounds, and before a large crowd, among whom was about 500 of McCullough's men, delivered a most magnificent address. Among other things he

said, "You Southern people stand to-day as traitors to your country and your flag and you will regret the day that you made such a move because the United States is a powerful nation and they will get reinforcement from Europe. You will not be recognized as a nation by the world, and have no standing whatever, and it will not be long before you will be paying five dollars a pound for your coffee." This later came true. "You will put up a good fight and then have to surrender. You have no more right to secede than a county has from a state,—you are revolutionists, and as I stand here to-day, although I am ready to risk my life for Texas, I hate to see the Texans lose their lives and property."

In the meantime there were shouts from those who opposed him, and some people would no longer listen to his speech. He retired to his home, but the war went on, and everything he predicted came to pass.



Indians



AM sorry to say that I cannot recount hairbreadth escapes of my own among the Indians as I generally managed to keep out of trouble of that kind. My duties to my family generally kept me in the city and I did not have an opportunity to mingle with the Indians as freely as those whose duties called them to the country.

How the Name of Texas Originated

I have heard a great many reasons for the name Texas, but I am, I believe, peculiarly in a position to be able to settle that question for I have in my possession a document of the Spanish government dated 1786 which was issued from the then governor of Texas to my ancestor Andres Benito Curvier, which made him a knight of the Spanish crown. In the beginning of the document it sets forth the various titles of the governor and among others is given that of "Capitan De Los Tejas de esta Provincia" which means "Captain of the Tejas of this province" meaning a tribe of Indians. Further along in the same document it gives as one of the reasons for thus honoring my ancestor the fact that he had faithfully acted interpreter in the negotiations with the Tejas Indians. Here Tejas in the Indian language is explained to me by my father as meaning "round silver disc-like metal," and all of the Tejas Indians wore a metal disc of that kind around their necks to distinguish them from the other tribes. My father

has told me that he remembers in his youth to have seen many of them thus equipped. It is just one step from Captain De Los Tejas to the word Texas, because J in Spanish is usually pronounced the same as X. Even to this date, most of the Spanish people in Mexico and Texas usually pronounce it Tehas.

The Main Plaza Indian Fight

The nearest I ever came to being in an Indian affray was in 1841 when a noted fight took place in and around the old court house, corner of Market and Main Plaza between some Indian Chiefs and the Texas military and San Antonio citizens. It was a most unfortunate affair. The people of San Antonio were for a long time thereafter criticized and hated by the various Indian tribes throughout this country, the Indians claiming that they had been treacherously dealt with. I was entirely too young at the time to remember the details, being just twelve years old.

It seems that at various times prior to that, the Indians had taken a lot of white people prisoners and a conference was called by the people of San Antonio with the Indian Chiefs in San Antonio and the Indians were to bring their captives with them. As heretofore described the court house was on the corner of Market and Main Plaza and back of that where the old Market House now stands and beyond was a large corral in which as a rule the sheriffs, soldiers and rangers penned their horses. A little jail was also in the back there. About twenty-five Indian warriors came in for this conference accompanied by their squaws and papooses and they camped in this corral. The Indian warriors attended the conference with the civil and military authorities in the court house. A great discussion took place there and the Indians were upbraided by the citizens for failing to keep their promise and bring their captives.

The local authorities then insisted that part of them should go back and leave one half dozen of their chiefs there as hostages until they brought back the captives. This discussion was going on when I slipped into the court house with one of my cousins about my age. I saw my father there and other citizens. While this discussion was going on, I looked from the East windows towards the old Market House and saw Major Howard who was in command of the troops with about twenty soldiers, cutting off the retreat of the Indians from the rear. One of the Indians saw that, and they began to talk very fast and looked excited. The interpreter then came down from the platform where they were all seated and said, "I am going home, the Indians are mad." Things were looking a little squally when my companion insisted that we should leave. We got out and when we got into Market Street, we began to hear the guns firing and then we ran into Commerce Street and got into the house of Don Antonio Baca where we took shelter. It looked as though there was fighting going on all over town. We finally managed to get home. My mother was very uneasy for she knew my father was at the court house. He finally got home and told us just what occurred after I left. It seems while he was in the court house acting with the other citizens, some one called out to my father that the man with the robe around him had a bow and arrow under his robe. My father then jerked the blanket away and found the bow and arrow fixed. He took it away and then the soldiers fired on this Indian and kept a general firing up and all of the Indians were killed. Major Howard was slightly wounded by an arrow. The next day the commanding officer of the troops went to the camp of the squaws back of the Market House and informed them of the death of the Indians and asked if any of them would volunteer to go out and

bring in the captives and when they had done so the squaws and their children would be released, otherwise they would be held as captives until the white captives were released. I was present when this conversation took place. A middle aged squaw then volunteered and told the officer that if they would give her a good mount she would promise to bring the captives in. They then took her to the corral where the horses were, and I remember seeing her pick out a roan horse, mount him and go out of town. A few days after the Indians came to the edge of the city and sent notice in that they were there with their captives. Remembering the fate of their brethren they refused to come into town. An exchange took place at San Pedro Springs and after that it was a little hard to get the Indians to come directly to town.

Various Other Incidents

In the immediate vicinity of San Antonio, there were no wild Indians located. The nearest settlement was at New Braunfels where the Tahuacanos usually camped. They were great horse thieves and would sneak into town and steal horses right out of the corrals at night. When they came here on friendly visits or to trade skins, they usually camped at San Pedro Springs where a kinsman of my father's, Francisco Xavier Rodriguez, had established a trading post. Sometimes they would kill men and scalp them. I remember one day about two o'clock when we were living on Commerce Street, my mother called us to the window and said, "Look, look," and we looked toward the Ursuline Academy and saw two Indians stooping over a man that they had killed. One rode a bay and the other a white horse. At another time I remember an uncle of mine who had married Josefa

Curvier was killed on the Salado just outside of town and brought into town with his scalp off. They lived across the street from us. I will never forget that sight.

One time Fernando Curvier, also a kinsman, was going to a fandango on what is now Houston Street and when he passed a little way up Acequia Street, what is now Main Avenue, from the Garza Building, now the Rand Building, he heard a noise but paid no attention to it. He wore a Mexican blanket in lieu of an overcoat as everyone else did in those days and when he got into the house where the fandango was, he found to his great surprise an arrow stuck in his blanket. He then remembered the noise in front of the Garza Building and they all went together to catch the Indian, but he had gone. My uncle Jose Olivarri and others went out hunting deer on the Leon Creek and in a brush with the Indians out there, was killed. He was my mother's brother and the father of Mrs. A. F. Wulff, of San Antonio. One time the Indians rode into town and taking a man up, whose name I have forgotten, rode across San Pedro Creek. He was kept prisoner for some years and finally exchanged.

The Experience of Antonio Eugene Navarro

Antonio was the son of Col. Navarro and had a little store in San Antonio. He was on his father's ranch in Atascosa County and was taken captive by the Indians. The Indian method of treating prisoners in camp was to strip them of all of their clothing and simply give them a breech clout and in that way prevent their escape to any distance. Antonio was treated just that way, but strange to say, among the Indians in his camp was one who had remembered Antonio giving him sugar at various times from his store in San Antonio. The Indian made himself

known to Antonio and told him that he would aid him to escape. One day when a band of the tribe went out hunting, Antonio asked to be taken along. Being a captive he could not have a horse and he chose to ride behind the Indian who had promised to help him. As they were riding along about midnight, the Indian told him to get off the horse and hide in the brush until the Indians had passed. He did so and then struck out for San Antonio. He had no clothes on and came into San Antonio naked as a worm, early in the morning. His family residence was on Camaron Street and Antonio quietly slipped up to his door and knocked. When his wife came to open the door, she cried, "Indians," and slammed the door in his face. It took Antonio some time to convince his wife that he was not an Indian brave but her own husband. Antonio was afterwards made county judge of Zapata County for many years and is now dead.

My cousin Olivarri and I decided one day that we would go to Fredericksburg and we went on horse back and when we were about fifteen miles from there, we saw a number of Indians around us in different places. We did not know whether they saw us or not, but we certainly made time on our horses until we got to Mr. Meusebach's ranch, one of the newly arrived German settlers. We were royally treated and stayed until we thought it safe to go back.

Another curious incident about Indian life occurred after the annexation. Major Neighbors was the Indian agent for the Federal Government and lived at San Antonio. He took several Indian Chiefs to Washington and I remember seeing them when they came back. They came to our house several times. Their dress consisted of nothing but a military coat with epaulettes on the shoulders. They wore no

trousers but they had moccasins on their feet. They wore enormous medals presented to them by President Polk. One of them, the head chief, was a very handsome looking Indian. He recited to us some of the doings of the Indians on their voyage to Washington.

Steamboats were just then a new invention and the Indians on their way to Washington took a little steamer and went down Buffalo Bayou. Just as soon as they got on the steamer, a whistle blew and one of the Indians got scared and jumped in the water. It took some time to get him back on the boat. When they arrived at Washington they were visited by all the noted men of the nation and the ladies even entertained them and played the piano for them and gave them cake and other good things to eat.

Francisco Xavier Rodriguez who as heretofore said, had a trading post at San Pedro Springs for the Indians, was on the way one time to go to Guadalupe County, accompanied by a servant, to one of his ranches, but was taken by the Indians and murdered. The servant came right back into town and reported his master's death. The body was never found and the Germans out in that neighborhood claim that his body was buried in one of the fields out there that shows a stone mound. He was the father of Mariano Rodriguez and the grandfather of Thomas A Rodriguez.

*Old Spanish Court House,
Cor. Market St. and Main
Post. Scene of the Indian
Fight*



The Vidaurri Revolution



Y children and grandchildren will hardly suppose that their dignified grandfather was ever engaged in a revolution, but that is a fact. In 1855 when Santa Ana was president of Mexico, Vidaurri organized a revolution against him. Three of us, Sixto Navarro, Pablo Olivarri and I determined to join the revolution and we got some horses and went to Rio Grande City where the head of the insurrection was supposed to be. When we arrived there we were told that Gen. Caravajal was organizing a regiment ten miles below. We were sent there but did not find him but we found Col. Garcia in command and he told us we were welcome to join his ranks. I was made first lieutenant and put on the staff. We stayed about three days on this side of the Rio Grande. One night we were told to get ready to cross the river and we crossed 150 men in a small flat boat. There were about fifty men on the other side waiting for us. They told us that Santa Ana's troops of about 600, were about twenty miles down the river. We consolidated our forces and moved to the city of Mier. As soon as we arrived in Mier we got into the middle of the Plaza, and Col. Garcia called to pay his respect to the Alcalde. The colonel said to the Alcalde, "I must have \$5000.00 to give to my soldiers and must have quarters and corn for my horses." The Alcalde then beat a big drum on the Plaza to summon the citizens to a conference. That was the custom in those days. Then he assessed each one so much money and in the evening they gave us

\$5000.00. I was present in the city hall during the transaction.

The soldiers then each got some money and I got \$4.00 as my share. In the mean time I had mingled with the people and persuaded them to declare themselves against Santa Ana's government which they did the next day. They then organized a company of fifty men of cavalry of their own and joined our command. The third night they gave us a grand ball. It is true we had no glittering uniforms but we had a good time. We then started out on our march in the direction of Monterey. About four days after that we reached the town of Cerralvo where we went through the same process of getting money and corn that we had at Mier and the people there joined us and augmented our army just as they had at Mier. At this place General De la Garza came from Victoria to take command of our troops. Our orders were not to move as a large force was going to join us. General Garza in a few days took all the troops out of Cerralvo and went to meet Vidaurri's army. The meeting took place the next day at Capadero Hacienda. We arrived at four o'clock in the afternoon. Gen. Viduarri and his staff met Gen. de la Garza and his staff, of which I was one. We had quite a confab and they gave us chocolate and cake. Gen. Vidaurri had some newspapers from the United States in English and I was the only one who could read them so it kept me busy for the next few hours translating the papers to the General. While I was with Gen. Vidaurri, Capt. Zaragoza, who afterwards became a noted general, called on me and asked me if I was Rodriguez of San Antonio son of Ambrosio. He invited me to his tent and we had quite a chat. He was in the infantry of the army and claimed that there was some relation between his family and mine. The forces of Vidaurri then

united and moved back towards the Rio Grande as far as Mier where we heard the report that a large army was near Saltillo commanded by General Cruz. Vidaurri then took his main army and went to meet Cruz and routed him. Gen. Garza commanded about 700 men, with whom I was and remained at Mier. Finally we were ordered to proceed slowly to Matamoros and not to attack without orders. We went from there to the city of Guerrero and Santa Ana's troops were riding towards Matamoros. They went to Reynosa and finally got to Matamoros where they joined Gen. Woll who was in command there. This is the same Gen. Woll that came into San Antonio after the treaty with Santa Ana. We surrounded Matamoros and laid siege to it. We were there nearly two months before anything happened. The people were in sympathy with us and gave us news of what was going on in Matamoros every day. Finally we heard that Gen. Woll had left his command and gone over to Brownsville. We were told that Santa Ana had left the country and all sorts of rumors were afloat. Matamoros finally surrendered and a committee of citizens came into camp with a white flag and made arrangements with Gen. Garza to give up the town on the condition that the troops would have the privilege of leaving town with all their arms and ammunition except the cannon. I remember the day the city was turned over to us. Santa Ana's troops marched out of one end of the town, while we came into the other and took possession of it. We were furnished fine quarters and the citizens there called to see us. The army was then reorganized. We were given uniforms consisting of blue blouses with shoulder straps and blue pants. In the meantime Santa Ana's army in the interior had been defeated and Juan Alvarez was declared president of Mexico. I remained with the

command at Matamoros for six months as first lieutenant but every mail I received letters from my mother urging me to come back so I went back to San Antonio and the next election I ran for collector and assessor of Bexar County and was elected.

Since my experience in Mexico along my own residence on the Rio Grande I have seen many revolutions and it looks as though that country would never be at peace. The trouble with the people of Mexico is with the principal people that own the property. They do not seem to be willing to fight. Each side in a revolution usually hires men to fight for them, who have no interest in the country, but get paid for fighting. It is to be hoped that eventually as the middle and lower classes become better educated, that Mexico will have an army patriotic enough to fight for that country for its own sake rather than for the pay they get. At the present time it seems as though they would have to be governed with an iron hand to prevent absolute destruction of all property. Poor Mexico!



Home Life of the People



*Rodriguez Homestead.
The first two-story
home built on
Commerce Street.*

THE people of pure Spanish descent who lived here in the early days had very few commercial pursuits, and there was just enough at this time to provide the necessities of life that the town required. We had plenty to eat, but no great luxuries. We raised enough cattle and sheep for our own consumption. Our food was mostly corn, bacon, fruit and vegetables. There were wild apricots, black haws and wild plums and persimmons. The greatest commerce seemed to have been the traffic from Port Lavaca, bringing all the goods for the stores

and also the trains that went overland to Chihuahua, to Santa Fe and El Paso. The people employed in that traffic camped along the San Pedro Creek and finally formed the little village called Chihuahua. We sometimes had dances among ourselves, and the young people sometimes attended dances at Seguin. One time at a dance we had tied our horses outside and the Indians came and stole our horses. We had to stay all night and walk home the next morning.

The wealthier people wore fine silks, French goods, muslins, etc., brought from New Orleans. Soon after annexation, things began to assume a more cosmopolitan appearance. The coming of the United States

Army officers brought an era of social gatherings and I was kept busy acting as an escort for my sisters in attending all these functions.

I first attended a little Mexican school in the neighborhood where we lived on Commerce Street, where nothing but Spanish was taught. Afterwards when the town of Seguin was organized, the Americans there established a very good school and we moved there and stayed for eighteen months in order to have the benefit of the schools. Then the Ursuline Convent was established here and my sisters went to it.

The Public School System of San Antonio was established in 1854 and the convent also was permitted to draw its part of the School fund. Since then the constitution has been changed and no private schools are now allowed to draw a portion of the public school funds which I think is a great mistake.

The house in which I was born was the first two-story house ever erected in San Antonio on Commerce Street. Adjoining us on the west side the Perez family lived. The daughter Rafaela, still resides in San Antonio, the wife of Cleofas Ximenez. On the east side near the river lived a Mr. McMullen, for whom McMullen County is named. Between that house and ours was brush. In front of us lived a grand aunt of mine Alejandra Curvier.

We owned all the property on both sides of the river clear to Convent Bend, including Houston Street and what is now the Gunter Building and the Gunter Hotel, all then planted in a corn field and other crops. My family inherited most of that property and it was afterwards disposed of by my mother.

Later the Bohnet family lived where the Lockwood Bank Building is located. Mr. Bohnet's daughter is

the present Mrs. Kampmann, wife of the late Major Kampmann. The Nic Ladners, then Pancoast and further on Dr. Nette, and then the Bell Jewelry store, almost to the Plaza. F. Gilbeau lived between us and the Plaza on the south side of Commerce Street. He was quite a young man then and afterwards went into general merchandise business. At the corner there was a stone building, where Frank Brothers store is now. The building belonged to the Musquiz family which was a very noted family. They left San Antonio after the declaration of Independence and founded the town of Musquiz in Mexico. Around the Plaza at what is now the Kampmann Building, corner of Commerce and Soledad Sts. lived a man by the name of Barrera, (not Augustine). Around the Plaza there were few buildings that I recollect, except that of the Yturris'. Where the Frost Building is now, used to belong to the Trevino family. At the corner by the church, where the Southern Hotel is now, lived the Bustillo family; the other corner was owned by the Cassiano family. On the south side of the Plaza lived the family of Augustine Barrerra, who was appointed provisional Governor after Santa Ana left for San Jacinto, after the Battle of the Alamo. Where the old St. Leonard Hotel was, then belonged to the Garza family. Where the court house is belonged to Mariana Leal, grandmother of Ed. and Joe Dwyer. She owned considerable property on what is now known as Dwyer Avenue up towards Nueva Street. There was an old building at the corner of Market Street where Juan Montes de Oca lived. On the opposite corner was the old court house. It was an old stone building. I remember it well, they held court there during the days of the Republic.

On military Plaza, there was, I remember only one house at the east corner. On that corner was an

old building that belonged to the Perez family. On the corner of North Flores, Mariano Rodriguez lived. Where the Silver King is, a big store was built some time in 1845. On the West on the site of the present Orphan's home lived Mr. Calonge, who was a school teacher and taught school either at that place, or back of the church. The rest was occupied as military quarters. Toward the middle was called the Cuartel, a Spanish word for quarters, and the Commandancia which was the headquarters of the military commander, was on the west side of Military Plaza. There was no Flores Street, either North or South. There were no houses across the San Pedro. There was a big lake where Milam Park and the Santa Rosa Hospital are now. The Chavez family lived on what is North Flores Street now. The Navarro's lived across the street, opposite from the Silver King.

The Veramendi House is supposed generally to have been the Governor's Palace, but it was not an official residence. It was a private residence, and I went to school there in the early part of 1840.

There were no buildings fronting on the west side of Alamo Plaza, except a few jacals, all mesquite posts. There was one house on Losoya street occupied by the Losoya family after whom the street was named. Alamo Plaza itself contained nothing more than the convent, some old broken down walls and ruins. What was then called the Alameda was the continuation of Commerce, now known as East Commerce Street. The Alameda means rows of trees with a path between. The Alamo means cottonwood trees. There was no Houston Street.

Villita, meaning a little town, was settled by some of the soldiers that came with the Mexican army and those who had intermarried with Indians, and who were not supposed to be the very best people. In

fact there was a great distinction between the east and west side of the river. The west side of the river was supposed to be the residence of the first families here, and the descendants of the Indians and Spanish soldiers settled on the east side of the river. On this side were the descendants of the Canary Islanders. My recollection is that there was never a stone house on the east side of the river, except the Alamo and its buildings. Most of the Canary Islanders who lived on this side took great pride in preventing any inter-marriage with mixed races and when one did mix he lost his caste with the rest.

All the farming that was done was by irrigation within the city limits or immediately outside of it and the ditches supplied the water. The irrigated fields were along what is now South Flores Street, running between the San Pedro Creek and the San Antonio River. There were also irrigated fields between what is now the rock quarry and the river. There were also irrigated fields along what is now River Avenue between the main ditch and the San Antonio River, and as a rule the community raised enough produce from them to supply the necessities of life and to keep up the garrison. There was a ditch called the Acequia Madre, which was taken out from the east side of the river near the head of the river and crossed what is now Rusk and Water Streets and that ditch went clear down to the Missions and irrigated the fields at the Missions. These were cultivated by men who were either half breed or full blooded Indians, who were called the Mission Indians. There were no bridges across the river nor across the San Pedro Creek and we crossed on logs laid across the river. I recollect distinctly on Commerce Street they had two or three large mesquite trees with forks in the river and we crawled across

from the west side of Commerce Street to the other side. These were all the bridges they had when I was a boy.

In addition to their town houses, each family had small ranches with cattle and horses. They had no fences and everything ran loose. The cattle were perfectly gentle.

There were no tribal Indians living in the immediate vicinity of San Antonio at that time, other than what were called the Mission Indians, which were civilized Indians. The nearest that I knew of was a tribe of Indians that lived on the Comal near New Braunfels. Very few Americans were living in San Antonio. Among the foreigners were Jose Cassiano, an Italian, and John Twohig, who was a merchant. He kept a store where Frank Brothers store is now. At one time he blew it up when the Mexican troops were coming in. It was sometime between 1836 and 1840 during the Vasquez raid. Nat Lewis, the father of the present Nat and Dan Lewis, and William Elliot the father of Wm. Elliot and Mrs. Howard were living here then. Major Howard was here in 1841. He was a Captain of Infantry in the Texas Army. The Mavericks lived at the end of what is now Houston Street. Col. Jack Hayes was here at that time and commanded a company of Rangers. Sam Smith came in the very early days. He came about 1847 and is the father of Thad Smith. John James and Jim Trueheart came in about 1845 about the time of the annexation of Texas to the United States. Bryan Callaghan father of the late Mayor Callaghan and also a brother of his, who was killed at what is now called Sutherland Springs by General Woll's army, came at this time. Callaghan was a merchant. Peter Gallagher also came at this time. There was a Russian doctor whose name I do not remember. The Mexicans called him "Vivora,"

because he kept so many snakes in his office. *I remember Deaf Smith, who was the spy of Houston's army. Colonel Seguin had a fine stone house on Military Plaza. His father held a civil office under the Mexican government. After the Battle of San Jacinto, John Seguin was the first mayor of the town. Some time between 1829 and 1835 he organized the Mexican rangers and here remained in command until the Mexican troops went out. After the battle of San Jacinto, Major Howard was in command of the troops of the Republic and after Texas was annexed to the United States.

Shortly after annexation a regiment of the United States Cavalry came here under Colonel Harney. It must have been in 1846. They camped near the town. It must have been near the head of the river. There were no quarters for them in town large enough to hold them.

In 1848 and 1849, the Germans came in. The very first colony I think was at Castroville. The first new town settled was Seguin. It was settled mostly by discharged soldiers out of Houston's army.

Prince Solms New Braunfels of Germany was a young and handsome German Prince who came here and bought lands. Some of his lands were bought from the Veramendi and Garza heirs and this sale took place at our house, where the papers were signed. I remember very distinctly the Prince riding up surrounded by a retinue of a dozen troopers; they all had feathers in their hats. Their uniform was a kind of German uniform. I saw them many times. The Prince stopped often at my grand-aunt's house opposite Seguin. He had along with him a man by the name of Bluecher, who was an interpreter; he knew several languages. He was a relative of the

noted Prussian General. He has relatives living in Corpus Christi. He afterwards became a surveyor and surveyed most of the lands in this section.

Dr. Herff and Dr. Schleman came at the same time; Dr. Nette, a druggist came afterwards; I think about a year after the Annexation. Dr. Schleman lived on Commerce Street; also Dr. Nette, the druggist.

Cholera

The first cholera epidemic was in 1833. My father told us that the cholera was very bad and we left town and went to the head of the river until the cholera was over. The second epidemic of cholera was in 18'9. I was still living then on Commerce street. Fifteen or twenty people died almost every night. There was one Sunday the Mexicans called "black Sunday." I went up town on Monday following and I heard that twenty-nine people had died the night before. I came and told my mother, she got an ox cart and we moved to a ranch opposite Seguin that belonged to my Aunt Josefa Cuervier, and we remained there a long time. The cholera lasted a month or more. The first epidemic they had no doctors.

The third epidemic of cholera was in 1866 or 1867. I happened to be here on a visit to my mother. One evening a relative of mine came to me and reported that Carolina DeWitt had died of cholera, and there were thirteen or fourteen more down with it. Just the day before that I had bought an ambulance to take my family back to Laredo, for which I had paid \$350. Immediately I sent a runner to the Medina to borrow a pair of mules, because I had left my carriage horses at Durands ranch, and the mules came right away and I took part of the family out

to the Medina and then came back after the others, making two trips. I took both my father's family and my brothers family out on the Medina and got my horses and sent the mules back. I remained there two or three days, and after seeing that the families were comfortable, I left with my wife and children for Laredo. The cholera never reached Laredo, there being no communication between the two places, except the mail rider, who made four trips per month.



My Own Family



My father, Ambrosio Rodriguez, was the son of Manuel Ignacio Rodriguez, who was born the 7th of September, 1778, and was the son of Prudencio Rodriguez and Polonia Curbelo.

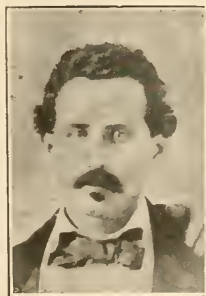
My great-grand-father Prudencio, was the son of Antonio Rodriguez, who was the oldest son of the widow Rodriguez, Maria Rodriguez Cabrera, to distinguish her from the other widow Maria Rodriguez Granados whose maiden name was Maria Robaina Betancourt, a native of the Island of Lanzarote, and a lineal descendant of

Jean de Bethencourt, discoverer of the Canary Islands in 1402.

Polonia Curbelo was the daughter of Jose Curbelo son of Juan Curbelo and Gracia Prudhomme y Unpierre, all natives of the Canary Islands.

Juan Curbelo born in Lanzarote in 1681, and his wife, Gracia 1685.

Jose born in 1706, and Polonia, his daughter born in San Antonio de Bexar in 1749, and died at the comparatively early age of 53 on the 25th day of August 1802, but



*Judge J. M. Rodriguez
at about thirty-five.*



T. A. Rodriguez, Sr.



Mrs. T. A. Rodriguez, Sr.



T. A. Rodriguez, Jr.

she lived to see her son Manuel Ignacio, married the 26th of August, 1800, to Antonia Curbiere, no doubt a correct spelling of her own name Curbelo, as all the settlers from the Canary Islands were of Norman French descent, the original settlers having been brought to Lanzarote by Jean de Bethencourt and his nephew, and the name Bethencourt, Prudhomme, Unpierre, Lagarde, Curbelo and etc., are common names in the Cathedral Records.

My grand-mother Maria Antonia was the daughter of Andres Benites Curbiere, a lieutenant in the Spanish Army, who was knighted by the King of Spain for meritorious conduct in the line of duty in San Antonio de Bexar, on the 27th day of November 1786.

The original documents are still in my possession in which he was appointed by Don Domingo Cabello, the Governor and Commander of the Army and Provinces of Texas and New Philippines, interpreter of the Indian Languages mentioned therein and with which he was familiar. His mother, or my great-grand-mother was Feliciana Duran, born the

30th day of December 1760, and her parents were Don Pedro Duran, a native of Castille and holding a high official position, and Dona Antonia Cortinas,

and were married in San Antonio in the year 1754.

My ancestors, both on my father's and mother's side were military men and all of them engaged in the service of their country at some time, and my mother's father, Simon Olivarri, was an officer in the Spanish Army, and my father Ambrosio Rodriguez was a soldier in the Texas Army and fought with General Sam Houston at the battle of San Jacinto.



*Don Ambrosio Rodriguez and wife
Maria de Jesus Olivarri Rodriguez,
father and mother of the author.*

"My father was married on the 16 day of January 1828 to my mother Maria de Jesus Olivarri, daughter of Simon Olivarri and Guadalupe de Torres. Guadalupe de Torres was the daughter of Lazaro de Torres, also connected with the Army, and Dona

Ana Josefa de la Garza, who was born in the historical Garza house, on the 12th of June 1760, and married to de Torres in 1779. My mother and her grand-mother both married at the Garza residence, there being a lapse of 50 years between the events. This is not to be wondered at as the Garza family occupied the same residence for over 150 years, a record unparalleled up to the present time in the annals of Texas.

My mother's grand-mother was the daughter of Leonardo de la Garza who was born in San Antonio and baptized in the Chapel, which served as a church to the town, on the 29th day of August 1731, seven days after birth, and his wife Magdalena Martinez



*Marie Antoinette
Rodriguez*

was born and baptized* in 1735, their parents Geronimo de la Garza, Xaviera Cantu, Marcelino Martinez and Ildefonsa de Castro, natives of Monterey, Nuevo Leon, and came to Texas, with Don Domingo Ramon in 1716.

There were eight children in our family; I was the eldest, next to me came my oldest sister, Guadalupe, who married Adolphus Duran, and had one son named after his father Adolphus, all are now dead, Josefa and Romana died young and unmarried; Carolina married Dr. Mason of Leesburg, Virginia;

they had two sons and one daughter, her daughter married a son of Dr. Swann, Governor of Maryland. This daughter died leaving one son, who inherited all the estate of his grandfather.



*Mrs. Carolina R.
Mason*

Alice was the first wife of General Bullis, both of whom are now dead, they had no children. The general afterwards married again and left a large family. Susan married a cousin, Tomas Rodriguez and lived in Atascosa County; he went into the stock business there and became very prominent in that county, representing Bexar, Wilson and other counties in the

Legislature for many terms. They are both dead, and left four children, of whom Thomas A. Jr., and



*Marie (nee Rodriguez)
Deutschman*

Ambrosio Rodriguez are still living. One daughter Nina, died in early youth and the other Marie married Mr. Selig Deutschman; she died leaving two children, Ruth and Hannah.

Our family was related by marriage to Basilio Benavides, who represented Webb County in the Legislature and was a member of the Secession Convention of the State of Texas. My wife Felix, was the daughter of Basilio Benavides, she is dead. I have two children Natalia and Ambrosio, Natalia has six children, Julio Jr., Humberto, Eudalia, Evelyn, Refugio and Jose. We lived in a house on Commerce Street until my father died in 1848, at which time we moved to Laredo Street. Our lot was very large and

deep, extended Eastwards to the San Pedro Creek. We had a very fine orchard, planted with peach, plum, quince, pomegranate, persimmon and other trees besides the vegetable garden which furnished enough vegetables for our use. We all lived there until I moved to Laredo, Texas, and my mother remained there until 1887.

After my father's death which occurred in 1848, as previously stated, and up to 1861, the man-



*Ruth and Hannah
Deutschman*

agement of our estate devolved upon me. It consisted of a great many lots and properties that he owned, and those that were inherited from his family. My mother was a great believer in education, and a large



Natalia Rodriguez and her children, Humberto, Julio, Eudalia and Jose M.

portion of our estate was gradually sold off to provide the best education that the country could afford for myself and my sisters. The lots that the Gunter Building now stands on, were disposed of by us for

Three Hundred (\$300.00) Dollars, and the lots that the Gunter Hotel stands on now, perhaps did not bring much more.



General John L. Bullis



Alice Rodriguez Bullis

The lots on the streets running down to the Convent were sold off by us at various prices from time to time.

My youngest brother Ambrosio went into the cattle raising business and he established large holdings



Reading from left to right: Ambrosio Rodriguez, died in 1847; Ambrosio Rodriguez his son; Ambrosio Rodriguez, present County Clerk of Webb County; Ambrosio Rodriguez Deputy District Clerk, Bexar County.

in Webb County, which, at his death, reverted to the balance of the family, he having never married. My sister Alice in the meantime married Lieutenant Bullis, as heretofore stated, who was in charge of the

Seminole Indian Scouts in Presidio County. • He, together with General Shafter, established what is now known as the Shafter Mines on the tract known as the Alice Rodriguez Bullis Tract.

Afterwards there arose a controversy between



Judge J. M. Rodriguez, J. Ambrosio Rodriguez, Ruth and Hannah Deutschman, Evelyn and Cuca Rodriguez.

Bullis and Shafter as to the ownership of the property. Shafter's lawyer claiming in court that Bullis was not entitled to his interest in the mine because

he had already located as much land as the law would allow him, though Bullis claimed that the tract upon which the mine was situated was purchased with the money of his wife Alice Rodriguez Bullis, who had inherited the money from her own father, and therefore was her separate property."

While the litigation was pending my sister Alice Bullis died without any issue, and under the laws of the State, the property should have reverted to her family meaning my mother and the rest of Alice's brothers and sisters including myself.

My mother as head of the family relieved General Bullis of our interest and generously permitted him to take the whole of the property since he had done so much towards developing it."



The Principal Families



SHORT sketches of the principal families living here in San Antonio prior to the annexation of Texas to the union as far as I can recollect, would not be amiss here.

Naturally I know more of the history of my cousin's family, Don Mariano Rodriguez, and I will commence with his history.

He was the son of Francisco Rodriguez who laid out most of the irrigation ditches. Francisco's father was Manuel Francisco Rodriguez, and his mother Vicenta Alvares Travieso, daughter of Vicente Alvares Travieso and Maria Ana Curbelo, daughter of Juan Curbelo, and Gracia Prudhomme Unpierre who is described as a girl of about 18 years, fair complexion, long face, light gray eyes, chestnut hair and eye-brows and thin nose. These physiognomical characteristics are yet to be found in her descendants. She was born in Lanzarote in 1718. Her sister who was 13 years of age when she came to San Antonio, married a few years after her arrival, Joseph Bueno de Rojas, and after his death married Christoval de los Santos Coy and dying at the age of 86 on the 16th day of December 1803, being the last survivor of the original Canary Islands settlers, and was familiarly known as "Tia Canaria" or "Aunt Canary" amongst the old families who spoke in kind remembrance of her, even up to our time.

On the 23rd day of April 1800 Don Mariano Rodriguez by a special permission was married at the Mission de la Concepcion by father Jose Maria Delgadillo to Maria de Jesus Caravajal daughter of

Francisco Caravajal and Trinidad de la Pena. From this marriage he had two daughters and one son, Maria Gertrudes married Jose Sandoval the 6th of June 1821, he was a native of Spain, son of Pedro Sandoval and Maria de Sanchez. On the 20th of August the same year his other daughter Maria Josefa, was married to Don Manuel de Yturri Castillo, a native of the Province of Asturias, Spain, son of Pelayo de Yturri Castillo and Dona Maria Josefa Acorta. His son Jose Maria became a Priest, settled in Mexico and died there. After his first wife's death Don Mariano married Dona Josefa Estrada and had several sons and daughters amongst them Tomas Rodriguez whose biography has already been given by Judge Rodriguez in the sketch of his own family. The other children were Antonita who married Erasmo Chavez, and after his death married Thomas Code, and had one child from each, Alexander Chavez and Tom Code Jr. Juan Rodriguez still lives on his father's original land grant next to the San Pedro Springs. Maria married Rafael Martinez and has one daughter living at Niagara Falls, New York, Hortense Nicklis.

Don Mariano was essentially a military man. In the time of Santa Ana, he was in the actual command of the military forces here. The records of the Mexican Government show that at that time he was authorized to organize, and did organize a regiment called the San Fernando Rangers. He went with Santa Ana after the battle of San Jacinto to live in Mexico, and remained there until after the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, and then returned to San Antonio.

After his return from Mexico, he found a great deal of his land had been taken from him by fictitious law suits, and he spent the rest of his life try-

ing to recover his property that had been taken from him. He died at the beginning of the Civil War.

The Garza Family

I knew the Garza family well. My grandmother Guadalupe Olivarri used to call Don Jose Antonio de la Garza, uncle, therefore we are distantly related to this Garza family. To what degree this relationship extended, has been fully set forth in the biographical sketch of the Ambrosio Rodriguez family.

Jose Antonio de la Garza was the youngest son of Leonardo de la Garza and was born in San Antonio in the Garza house corner of Acequia and Veramendi Streets on the 30th of May 1776 and baptized 18 days after birth on the 7th of June and in that house he lived and died. His father bought out the interests of his brothers and sisters to the residence in 1751 the year before he was married to his wife Magdalena, and in his turn Jose Antonio bought all the interest in the homestead of his brothers and sisters the year he was married to his second wife in 1824 or 73 years after the first purchase.

As stated, he was married twice, his first wife was Dona Josefa Rivas, daughter of Captain Francisco Rivas, from Saltillo, Mexico. From her he had three children, Carmen, Vicente and Ra[^]ael, the latter married into the Veramendi family, and that family is now represented by his namesake Rafael Garza, the Veramendi name itself being extinct. He married his second wife on the 20th of July 1824; she was Dona Maria Josefa Menchaca, daughter of Jose Menchaca and Marguerite Chavez and granddaughter of Francisco Xavier Chavez of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Juana Padron, daughter of Joseph Padron and Gertrudes de Armas, daughter of

Maria Robaina de Betancourt and Martin Lorenzo de Armas, Canary Islanders.

Jose Menchaca, her father, was the son of Diego Menchaca and Rosalia Rodriguez, the latter an aunt of Don Mariano Rodriguez. In fact, as we trace back all those pioneer families we find that they were connected by consanguinity or affinity and it was a God-send that so many army officers, attracted by the beauty of the San Antonio girls, married them and thus saved the pioneer families from gradual deterioration by continual intermarriage.

From his second wife he had a very large family. Rudecinda, the oldest, better known as St. Magdalena, Mother Superior of the Ursuline Convent for many years; Margarita, who married James L. Trueheart, the next Josefa, who married John C. Crawford, the next Carolina who married Bart. J. DeWitt of the New York DeWitts; the next Helena, who married Manuel de Yturri; the next Joseph Rafael was killed at the battle of Mansfield, Louisiana, then the youngest, Leonardo namesake of his grand-father. Of this large family only two survive in my day, the one just mentioned and Mrs. Yturri. They all lived where the Rand Building is now being constructed, opposite the Veramendi Palace. They owned a great deal of property in the city and a great deal out towards the Missions. They owned all the land between the San Antonio River and the Leon Creek. In fact, he was supposed to be the largest land owner of any one here. He owned a great deal of land up in the Northern part of the City, where Brackenridge Park is now, and extending towards Alamo Heights. He has been honored by having a County in Texas named after him.

Veramendi Family

The first of the Veramendi family to come to Texas, was Don Fernando de Veramendi. His wife was Josefa Granados, also known as Josefa Rodriguez Granados, grand-daughter of Maria Robaina de Betancourt Rodriguez Granados. He had several children, but only Don Juan Martin de Veramendi survived; Don Fernando died in 1784. Don Martin married into the Navarro family; his wife was Josefa Navarro, daughter of the old Corsican, Angel Navarro.

They had as far as I remember, five children, three girls and two boys.

The eldest daughter, Ursula, married on the 25th day of April, 1831, James Bowie, son of Raymond Bowie and Alvira Jones. *She is lately gone* *Begin*

The young couple went to Monclova to spend their honey-moon; they remained there until about 1833, when Ursula and their child died. Bowie came back bowed down with grief and ready for any enterprise. His subsequent history is well known. His sister-in-law, Juana de Veramendi, daughter by adoption of Don Juan Martin Veramendi, was with him to the last.

Rafael C. Garza, son of Don Antonio de la Garza, married Dona Josefa de Veramendi. They had three children Adolfo, who was an officer of high grade in Mexico and is buried in the pantheon of San Fernando, in the City of Mexico, dedicated to the great men of that Republic.

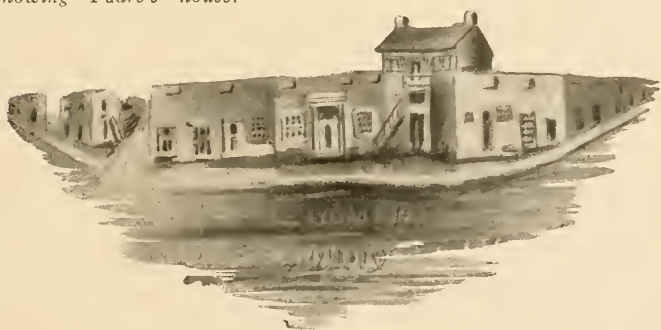
Juan M. Garza, who at the time of his death was Assistant Marshal of the City of San Antonio, and Victoria, who married Doctor W. Merick, son of the old Bexar County Surveyor. The Doctor is still living.

Juan M. Garza married Miss Tulitas Sandoval, daughter of Carlos Sandoval, the latter being a grand-son of Don Mariano Rodriguez. They had several children and they represent the Veramendi family at the present day, a son, Ralph, being the eldest of that family now living. Adolfo left no issue and Victoria also left no family.

After the death of Josefa Veramendi, his first wife, Rafael married the other daughter, Maria Antonia de Veramendi. They had two children as far as I know, Fernando and Rafaela, both are now dead. Rafaela married Pedro Duque de Estrada, and several children survive.

Of the Veramendi boys I have little to say. I remember them as very handsome, polite young men, but Pepe went away to California during the gold excitement in 1849, and Marcos moved to Mexico where he married Miss Louisa Meade, but whether any children survived them or not, I cannot say.

*West side of Main Plaza
showing Padre's house.*



Nabarro Family •



J. ANTONIO NAVARRO

*By special permission of E. Raba,
Photographer*

I was very well acquainted with the members of the Navarro family. In my time Don Antonio Navarro, was the most conspicuous of them all. He had gained his celebrity as one of the signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence, and had taken an active part assisting the Texans to achieve their independence.

He was a man of large physique, imposing presence, and of pleasing address. He had received a liberal education; was well

read, had visited the City of Mexico and made several trips to New Orleans.

He was the son of Angel Navarro, a country-man of Napoleon Bonaparte, the latter going towards the rising sun to become the greatest man mentioned in secular history, and the former towards the setting sun to a small border town in the wilds of Texas, where unknown to fortune and renown, he quietly passed away in peace and contentment. }

Don Antonio had several sons and daughters; Jose Antonio G., Angel, Sixto, Celso, Arthur, Carmen, Gertrudis and Josefa, none of whom are now living.

He gave his children a good education, Angel being sent to Harvard College in Massachusetts, where he graduated in the Class of '49 or thereabouts. Noting the fact that their father was a Corsican, we find it strange, peculiar, surprising and interesting to note the Cosmopolitan character of the inhabitants of San Antonio, even from its earliest days. We find here Spaniards from all the different Provinces of Spain, Castille, Andalucia, Malaga and Asturias; Frenchmen, Flemings, Italians, Irishman and Anglo Saxons only after the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Many of these men were of high social standing in the community from whence they came. There must be something alluring and attractive in this old City. The Baron de Ripperda lived here. Three of his children were born here, and some of them married here. General Simon de Herrera lived here, was murdered at the Rosillo and is buried within the old Cathedral Walls; also General Manuel Salcedo, Governor of Texas during the Spanish Domination, lived here, was assassinated the same day that General Herrera was murdered, and is also buried within the Cathedral. His funeral was carried on with all the ceremonies of the Catholic Church.

The 28th of August 1813, was a sad day for San Antonio, for on that day there were buried ten other distinguished men, victims of the insurgents of that period.

This town was specially fascinating for Army men. After retiring from the army, many remained here. Governor General Urrutia y Cevallos, who was in charge at the time the Canary Island colonists arrived, made his permanent home here.

Captain Juan Antonio Perez de Almazan, who received the colonists in the Absence of the Governor, remained here permanently.

General Cordero married Miss Gertrude Perez, a young lady of this city.

Pedro Duran, a native of Castille; Francisco Xavier Chavez, son of Francisco Xavier Duran y Llaves, receiving the name from his ancestors who were the keepers of the keys or "Llaves" of the Royal Household of the King of Spain.

Thus we see how, from early days, men from all parts of the world came here when San Antonio was supposed to be isolated from all the centers of civilization.

In the year 1808 or thereabouts, Major Zebulon Pike an Emissary of the United States Government, visited San Antonio, and he estimated the population then, at three thousand people, which was a pretty correct calculation.

After the war of Mexican Independence, many families moved away from here; also after the Texas war, so that San Antonio had a smaller number of inhabitants in the '40's, than at the beginning of the century. This is corroborated by the fact that at least two hundred old Spanish families who lived here at that time, are unrepresented today in Bexar.

But to continue the broken thread of the Navarro family:—Don Antonio Navarro was rewarded, if such can be called a reward, by having a county, a street and a school named after him and a city after the birthplace of his father.

Don Antonio lived to a good old age, was beloved and respected by all who knew him and his life is worthy to be emulated by our youth.

Another son of Don Angel, was Luciano Navarro who married Miss Teodora Caravajal, a member of the old Antonio Caravajal family and Gertrudis Sanchez, prominent in Bexar. He had many sons and

daughters, but if his family is represented in Bexar at this time, I am not aware of it.

Luciano, his son, died lately in Laredo at a very advanced age. A daughter Teodorita married Mr. DuHamel and moved to Cuba. This is as far as I can trace Don Luciano's family.

The family of Don Jose Antonio is now represented by his grand-children, amongst them being Eugenio Navarro, son of Angel Navarro, and Antonio Navarro, son of Sixto, a noble young man, of courteous manners and pleasing address, and a Spanish Teacher in the Public Schools of San Antonio, Texas.

Leal Family

In my youth Don Juan Leal was the head of the Leal family. His ancestors were among the Canary Island Colonists. There were three families of Leals. Don Juan Leal Goraz, Juan Leal Jr., or El Mozo and Joseph Leal.

Juan Leal Jr., had long been married and had a large family; Joseph Leal married during the journey from Vera Cruz to their destination, so as to be one of the heads of a family and receive his share of land on his arrival.

The original number of families was twelve, but at the time they reached their destination there were fifteen families, three of the young men having married from the time of their departure from Vera Cruz to their arrival at San Antonio, Texas, thus augmenting the families to fifteen, the remaining single men in a group were considered one family, thus making the sixteen usually mentioned in history.

Don Juan Leal Goraz was the oldest man amongst the colonists and was chosen the first perpetual Alcalde of the town.

The Leals were numerous and influential in the early days of San Fernando de Bexar.

Don Juan lived to a good old age, leaving quite a large family. Narcisco, the eldest was a merchant in his early manhood and afterwards engaged in the live-stock business. He recently died, living like his father to a good old age. The Leals are a long lived people. An uncle of theirs, Don Vicente Leal, lived to the age of 94.

The Ramon and Menchaca Families

In my youth I knew Dona Teresa Ramon, who married Don Antonio Menchaca. There were no male members of the Ramon family living at that time. The Ramons were the descendants of Don Diego Ramon, nephew of Don Domingo Ramon, the first Commander of the Garrison of San Antonio de Bexar. The Ramon family is now represented by members of the Menchaca family. The name of Ramon is extinct.

Don Antonio Menchaca, who married Dona Teresa was a member of the old Menchaca family and took the sides of the Texans in the war of Independence. He fought at San Jacinto and was a Captain of the Company.

In the Mexican history of the battle, it is related therein, that an officer of tremendous size, speaking Spanish, urged his men forward in a voice of thunder to give no quarter and that they slaughtered the Mexicans like sheep. The author says: "I shall never forget that fearful sight." The man he referred to, is supposed to have been Don Antonio. Many of his descendants are living in San Antonio, but do not bear the name of Menchaca. This name also has become extinct.

Cassiano Family

Don Jose Cassiano, the first of that name in San Antonio, was a countryman of Christopher Columbus, and was born in Genoa, in 1791. At an early age he came to America, and finally settled here in San Antonio. His first wife was Dona Gertrudis Perez, widow of the Spanish Brigadier General Cordero, who had been Governor of Texas for many years.

He had one son, Ignacio, who was brought up in luxury and with delicacy, but this did not spoil him, for he grew up to be an elegant, courteous and considerate gentleman.

Don Jose after his first wife's death, married Dona Margarita Valdes and had two children, Fermin and Isabel, both are now dead.

For his third wife he married the beloved and excellent lady Dona Trinidad Soto, a native of Laredo, Texas, daughter of Miguel Soto and of Jesusa Trevino; from his last wife he had no issue.

His son Ignacio married Margarita Rodriguez, daughter of Rufino Rodriguez and Dolores Rivas. He had many sons and daughters, but the best known are Jose Cassiano, formerly very active in political affairs, but he now has retired to enjoy the fruits of his successful labors, and Gertrudis, wife of the retired army officer, Charles P. Smith.

Fermin, son of his second wife, married into the Flores Valdez family, and Isabel married Jose Evaristo Garcia, related to Dona Trinidad Soto.

There are many of their descendants living in San Antonio. Fermin's son, Geronimo was named after the father of Don Jose Cassiano, and a daughter after the mother Catalina de Cantania.

Chavez Family

The first of the Chavez family in San Antonio, was Don Francisco Xavier Chavez, who was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. At the age of eight years he was stolen by the Lipan Indians, who occasionally made raids into New Mexico. He remained with them about fifteen years, when he left them in San Antonio, having been rescued by the army stationed in San Antonio; he joined their ranks, and was immediately appointed interpreter of Indian languages with which he was familiar.

His descendants have two rewards of merit signed by the king of Spain at the Palace of Aranguez for services rendered by him to the Spanish Government.

By permission of the Commander of the Post, he was allowed to return to his native home in order to obtain credentials of his social standing, and on his return, the credentials being satisfactory, he married a Canary Islander Juana Padron, daughter of Jose Padron and Antonia de Armas.

Jose Padron was the son of Jose Padron and Maria Sanabria, native of the Canary Islands, and heads of one of the original families. Don Francisco had several children, amongst them Gertrudis de Chavez, who married on the 23rd of April 1818, Juan M. Montes, son of Francisco Montes de Oca.

Another son, Jose Ignacio Chavez, born on the 21st day of September 1791, married Maria Leonarda Montes de Oca, daughter of Francisco Montes de Oca and Josefa Sambrano, and they were the parents of Juan Antonio Chavez, who married his cousin Gertrudis de Rivas, daughter of Juan Manuel Rivas and Gertrudis Menchaca, a sister of Josefa Menchaca, wife of Jose Antonio de la Garza.

He was the last male Representative of the old Chavez family which I knew, and died lately at the advanced age of 85. He and I were schoolmates going to a school here in the Veramendi house, which was taught by a man by the name of Taylor.

He had several children, but I am not acquainted with them and therefore cannot give their history.

Yturri Family

Don Manuel Yturri was a native of the Asturias, a Province of Spain. This was a Province where the Spaniards made a determined stand and gradually drove the Saracens out of Spain. For this reason they hold themselves above the rest of the inhabitants of Spain. In early youth Don Manuel left home and started for Mexico bearing letters of recommendation to the Viceroy of Mexico. He obtained work as a clerk in the business house of the Urtiaga Brothers, celebrated Spanish Merchants of Mexico, and they having business here, sent Mr. Yturri to represent them and becoming enamoured of the town he settled permanently here.

On the 20th of August, 1821, he married Josefa Rodriguez, as stated heretofore in these memoirs. Soon after marriage he was driven out from Bexar on account of his nationality, he being a peninsular Spaniard, but after the war of Independence he returned, was well received and his property was returned to him. They had two children, Manuel de Yturri Castillo, named after his father, and Vicenta, named after Dona Vicenta Alvares Travieso, grand-mother of Don Mariano Rodriguez and daughter of Vicente Alvares Travieso and Maria Ana Curbelo, daughter of Juan Curbelo and Gracia Prudhomme y Unpierre.

Young Manuel married Dona^a Helena Garza, daughter of Don Antonio de la Garza. They have a very large family.

They are one of the few old families who have preserved and even added to the luster of their ancestors.

Vicenta married Mr. Edmunds, a gentleman from Louisiana. They have several children and they live in contentment and peace near the old Concepcion Mission.

Flores Family

There were two families of Flores. Those who lived on the corner of Dolorosa and S. Flores Sts., being the Flores de Abrego, a very old family coming here from the time of Don Domingo Ramon. They came originally from Saltillo.

Don Francisco Flores de Abrego, on the 1st of May, 1722, married Maria Sapopa de Carabajal, and ever since that time this Flores family has been prominent and influential in Bexar. They have ranches and farms on the River below the City. The town of Floresville was named after them.

The other branch of the Flores family was the Flores Valdez, likewise a very ancient and prominent family in Bexar. They are represented at the present time by Mrs. Fermin Cassiano and Mrs. Mateu, whose daughter married Thad W. Smith, the old Ex-County Clerk.

Alejo Perez Family

On the 10th day of May, 1832, Don Alejo Perez, son of Remigio Perez and Maria de la Concepcion Flores, married Juana de Veramendi, adopted daughter of Juan Martin Veramendi and Maria

Josefa Navarro. They had one son, Don Alejo Perez, named after his father who is still living in Bexar and has held several offices in the County.

Barrera Family

Augustin Barrera, son of Don Juan Barrera and Dona Encarnacion Pulido, married on the 12th day of January, 1827, Maria Ignacia Rodriguez Salinas, daughter of Manuel Salinas and Maria Ignacia Flores. They had a very large family and are worthily represented at the present time through the female line of the family, by the families of Charles Baumberger and Martin Campbell and through the male line by Sixto Barrera, son of Augustin Barrera and Pilar Chavez, of the old Chavez family.

Juan Barrera, the oldest son of Don Augustin, lived to a good old age and passed away lately.

Seguin Family

The Seguins were very prominent and influential in early days. The first mentioned in Texas History was Santiago Seguin who came here in 1722. One of his descendants, Don Erasmo Seguin, was a power in his days. His son John N. Seguin, as he is known in history, was also very influential, he married on the 18th of January, 1826, Maria Gertrudis Flores, daughter of Jose Flores and Antonia Rodriguez.

Colonel John N. Seguin joined the Texas forces and did excellent service in the war of Independence. He had an idea that Texas would continue to be an independent State, but when it joined the Union, he left for Mexico and never returned to Texas.

He has several descendants living in Monterey, Mexico, Santiago, his son, being quite prominent there.

Indo Family

The present representative of the Indo Family now living in San Antonio, is Don Manuel Indo, grandson of Manuel Indo, a Spanish Officer, who was stationed at San Antonio at the beginning of the 19th Century. His father was Augustin Indo and his mother Dona Maria Antonia Asimigaray. He married Maria Casiana Zambrano on the 29th of July, 1812, daughter of Pedro Zambrano and Concepcion de la Santa.

The Zambrano family was very prominent in Texas during the Spanish Domination of Texas. Jose Maria Zambrano, Jose Dario Zambrano and Juan Manuel were especially well known. They were descendants of Marcario Zambrano and Juana de Ocon y Trillo. Don Pedro Ocon y Trillo, her father, being a native of Spain, from the Province of Malaga.

Don Manuel had a very large family. His son, Miguel Indo married in 1849 Margarita Delgado, daughter of Juan Delgado, a descendant of the Canary Islanders. His ancestors being Juan Delgado and Catarina Leal, daughter of Juan Leal El Mozo, and Maria Engracia Acosta, a native of the Canary Islands, and son of Lucas Delgado of Lanzarote.

Don Miguel was known as an honest, courteous and hospitable gentleman and very popular among his neighbors and worthy descendant of a Castilian gentleman.

His son, Manuel, has a ranch and farm in Wilson County, and is regarded as one of the most substantial and respected men of Bexar.



*Some representatives of prominent Spanish families,
living and dead.*

Montes de Oca Family

This family came with the Monterey, Mexico, Colonists. The head of the Montes de Oca family in my day was Don Juan Montes de Oca, born on the 16th day of December, 1782, and on the 20th day of April, 1818, married Gertrudis Chavez, daughter of Francisco Xavier Chavez, and Juana Padron. His father was Francisco Montes de Oca and his mother Josefa Zambrano.

One of his sisters, Maria Leonarda married Ignacio Chavez, as set forth in the Chavez family sketch.

Another sister, Maria Antonia Celedonia married October 25th, 1823, Manuel Cadena, son of Juan Cadena and Maria del Refugio Falcon, a daughter of the Cadena family married Juan E. Barrera and another married Francisco Galan of the Garza Galan family of Saltillo, Mexico.

Many descendants of the Montes de Oca family are to be found in Bexar, but I am unacquainted with the present representatives of that family bearing the name of Montes de Oca.

Perez Family

Don Antonio Perez was our next door neighbor on Commerce Street. He had two children. Mrs. Cleofas Ximenez and Antonio Perez, namesake of his father; both are still living.

Don Antonio was a descendant of Jose Perez, native of Teneriffe and Paula Granados of Lanzarote. He was the son of Don D  mingo Perez and Maria Hernandez, and she was the young daughter of Maria Robaina de Betancourt from her first husband, Juan Rodriguez Granados.

Antonio Perez, Jr., married a daughter of Fermin Cassiano and Teresa Flores Valdes. He has a large family and is highly respected.

Ruiz Family

I was well acquainted with Don Francisco Ruiz, the principal one of the family in my youth. He was familiarly called Don Pancho. Everybody knew him by that name, and it suited his genial manners and democratic ways.

He was the Alcade of the City at the time of the Battle of the Alamo. His father was the brother of Dona Josefa Ruiz, wife of Don Angel Navarro, therefore he was the first cousin of Don Jose Antonio Navarro and of Josefa Navarro, wife of Juan Martin de Veramendi, and uncle by affinity of James Bowie, the latter having married Ursula, his niece.

Although the wife of Bowie was dead at the time of Texas agitation for freedom, he still considered himself a member of the Veramendi family, and was kind and affectionate with the relatives of his wife, and they reciprocated his affections.

After the battle of the Alamo, it is said that by authority of the Alcalde Don Francisco Ruiz, the remains of the heroes of the Alamo, were gathered together and carefully and tenderly placed beneath the sod.

It is believed that through the influence of their nephew Bowie, both Don Pancho and Jose Antonio Navarro, were induced to join the Texas forces and give their services to the Texas struggle for Independence. Both were signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence

The services of Don Francisco* have not been as fully recognized by the State of Texas as those of Don Antonio for there is only a school and a street named in his honor

He had several children. I knew Alejandro, who died in early manhood and Eugenio who is still living here. They were educated in New Jersey.

One son, his namesake, Francisco, is living in El Paso, Texas. If there are any other relatives, representing that family here, besides Don Eugenio Ruiz, I am not aware of it.

Old Cathedral 1738





Rear view of San Fernando Cathedral, showing the massive walls and Moorish dome. The church was built by subscription, and many names which appear among the original contributors are still familiar. Here, too, one may read the marriage contract of Ursula Veramendi and James Bowie.

Laredo



COULD hardly close these pages without saying a few words about the good people of Laredo who have been kind to me from the first day that I arrived.

Laredo, Texas, is one of the oldest settlements of the State, much older than Nuevo Laredo, across the River. It was perhaps settled about the same time that San Antonio was. The records show that two of the principal families, the Benavides and Sanchez, settled there in 1767. It was always a thriving town and did big business with the interior of Mexico.

The County of Webb is one of the largest in the State. The affairs of the City and County have always been in the hands of the Spanish speaking people, and the manner in which the affairs of that city and County have been managed is a complete answer to the proposition that the Spanish people cannot govern themselves under a Republican form of government. I venture to say that no city in the State has a higher class of citizenship than has Laredo and the principal families, such as the Benavides, Sanchez, Garcia, de la Garza, Vidaurri, Trevino, Bruni, Martin, Ortiz, Salinas, Ramon, Herrera and Farias, will easily rank with the best people of the United States.

Their treatment of the American stranger alone shows to a large extent the kind of people they are, for those who have come among them and have shown a disposition to join in their affairs they have welcomed with open arms and given them places of

honor. It is true that some Americans have come there who for some reason or other, just as soon as they arrived, begun a movement to clean out the Mexicans. They would rant at public meetings and declare that this was an American country and the Mexicans ought to be run out. That type of man of course has never been able to get along with our people, nor should he. The Spanish families of the first class who live in Webb County, have been there over 150 years, and it hardly seems reasonable to suppose that they would voluntarily leave to please the strangers.

It has been my good fortune to enjoy the friendship of the best American citizens living in Laredo, and I am under many obligations to them for their courtesies to me. Especially to the Messrs. Atlee, McLane, Page, Foster, Mullaly, Cogley, Haynes, Brewster, Wilcox, McGregor, Penn, Barthelow, D. D. Davis, Leyendecker, Ligarde, Hamilton, Puig and many others, too numerous to mention.

To show that the citizens of Laredo are patriotic, I point to the fact that they organized three companies of soldiers to the Confederate service, under command of Colonel Santos Benavides.

The principal families of Laredo who control most of the property have always been conservative, although there have been several attempts made by the land boomers to wreck that town and to load it down with taxes. During the 34 years that I was County Judge we built two court houses and two jails, and yet did not issue a single dollar of bonded indebtedness against it. That is a fairly good showing where 75 per cent of the County are of Mexican parentage and speak the Spanish language.

There is just one little matter that I would desire to say a few words about before I close this book, and that is to testify my admiration for the humble and hard working Mexican laborers. I know of no

class of men who are paid less for what they do than these poor men, and yet crime among them is almost unknown. It's true that once in a while they will have a little cutting scrape among themselves when they drink a little more than is good for them, but when it comes to real downright honesty they can set a very good example to men who have had much better opportunities than they have.

I have always had the utmost confidence in the future of Laredo, and I hope that the old Spanish families of Laredo and Webb County will not do as their rich compatriots have done in Mexico—sell out their land to the stranger and then rent from him. Whenever things settle down in Mexico Laredo must prosper and become one of the best towns in the State.

At the close of this little volume I want to reiterate that I am no literary man, but I have simply jotted down my thoughts and experiences upon the matters that I came in contact with during my long life, and I hope that a perusal of them by my family and my friends will be of some interest and perhaps benefit to them.

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