

**The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “1976/04/20 - President Ford Committee Reception, Corpus Christi, Texas” of the Frances K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

### **Copyright Notice**

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Reception in St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas  
Tuesday, April 20, 1976

What a fabulous parade and what a great time I had!  
There were moments when I really thought I was dreaming,  
because the beautiful floats <sup>on the river</sup> and the enthusiasm and  
excitement in the air were just unbelievable. San Antonio  
lives up <sup>to</sup> its reputation as one of America's loveliest  
cities, and I will remember Fiesta and the people I've met  
here very fondly.

I'm really having a grand time in Texas. I guess  
I don't have to tell you about the Presidential primary  
May 1st. But I <sup>of course</sup> can't help mentioning my favorite  
candidate---my husband. *Jerry Ford* —

Thank you so much for your warm welcome and all of  
your kind words. Texas <sup>has won</sup> ~~is winning~~ a place in my heart,  
because of the wonderful people I'm meeting. San Antonio  
is ~~so~~ <sup>really</sup> super, and I hope the rest of Fiesta is <sup>just</sup> as wonderful <sup>great</sup>  
as last night. *It will remain a special*  
*memory forever* —  
-0-

RECEPTION

ST. ANTHONY HOTEL, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Tuesday, April 20, 1976

---

WHAT A FABULOUS PARADE.

1.

AND WHAT A GREAT TIME I HAD!

THERE WERE MOMENTS

WHEN I REALLY THOUGHT I WAS DREAMING,

BECAUSE THE BEAUTIFUL FLOATS

AND THE ENTHUSIASM AND EXCITEMENT IN THE AIR

WERE JUST UNBELIEVABLE.

SAN ANTONIO LIVES UP TO ITS REPUTATION

2.

AS ONE OF AMERICA'S LOVELIEST CITIES,

AND I WILL REMEMBER FIESTA

AND THE PEOPLE I'VE MET HERE VERY FONDLY.

I'M REALLY HAVING A GRAND TIME IN TEXAS.

3.

I GUESS I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU

ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY MAY 1ST.

BUT I CAN'T HELP MENTIONING

MY FAVORITE CANDIDATE---JERRY FORD.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR WARM WELCOME

4.

AND ALL OF YOUR KIND WORDS.

TEXAS HAS WON A PLACE IN MY HEART,

BECAUSE OF THE WONDERFUL PEOPLE I'M MEETING.

SAN ANTONIO IS REALLY SUPER,

AND I HOPE THE REST OF FIESTA

IS JUST AS GREAT AS LAST NIGHT.

IT WILL REMAIN A SPECIAL MEMORY FOREVER.

# # #



Reception in St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas  
Tuesday, April 20, 1976

What a fabulous parade and what a great time I had!

There were moments when I really thought I was dreaming, because the beautiful floats and the enthusiasm and excitement in the air were just unbelievable. San Antonio lives up to its reputation as one of America's loveliest cities, and I will remember Fiesta and the people I've met here very fondly.

~~Last night I helped lead that beautiful parade, and today I'm hoping to encourage you to lead a parade of voters to the polls on May 1. I understand you haven't had a presidential primary before, and I hope you will be sure and vote. Of course, when I say "please vote" I do have a candidate in mind--my husband. Please vote for him in the Republican primary in May--and, of course, in November.~~

Thank you so much for your warm welcome and all of your kind words. Texas is winning a place in my heart, because of the wonderful people I'm meeting. San Antonio is just grand, and I hope the rest of Fiesta is as wonderful as last night.



Fiesta is as wonderful as last night.

Reception in St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas  
Tuesday, April 20, 1976

What a fabulous parade and what a great time I had! There were moments when I really thought I was dreaming, because the beautiful floats and the enthusiasm and excitement in the air were just unbelievable. San Antonio lives us to its reputation as one of America's loveliest cities, and I will remember Fiesta and the people I've met here very fondly.

I'm really having a grand time in Texas. I guess I don't have to tell you about the Presidential primary May 1st. But I can't help mentioning my favorite candidate---my husband.

Thank you so much for your warm welcome and all of your kind words. Texas is winning a place in my heart, because of the wonderful people I'm meeting. San Antonio is just super, and I hope the rest of Fiesta is as wonderful as last night.

Reception in San Antonio, <sup>+</sup>Tuesday, April 20, 1976

What a fabulous parade last night! Floating down the river at night was so beautiful ~~xxxxxxx~~ and ~~xxxxxxx~~ so exciting. I just wanted you to know how happy your warmth and hospitality make me. San Antonio ~~xxxxxxx~~ truly lives up to its reputation as one of America's loveliest cities, and I will remember Fiesta for a very long time.

Although Fiesta is more than ~~en~~ enough reason to come to visit, I really am here to work for my husband in the May 1st primary. I understand that you haven't had ~~xxxxxxx~~ a presidential primary ~~en~~ before, and I hope you'll be sure an vote. Of course, when I say vote I have some one special in mind---my husband.

Reception in St. Anthony Hotel, San Antonio, Texas  
Tuesday, April 20, 1976

18th draft

What a fabulous parade and what a great time I had <sup>last night</sup>.  
There were moments when I really thought I was dreaming, because  
the beautiful floats and the enthusiasm and excitement in the air  
were just unbelievable. San Antonio lives up to its reputation  
as one of America's loveliest cities, and I will remember Fiesta  
and the people I've met here very fondly.

Last night I helped lead that beautiful parade, and today  
I'm hoping to encourage you to lead a parade of voters to the polls  
on May 1. I understand you haven't had a presidential primary  
before, and I hope you will be sure and vote. Of course, when I  
say "please vote" I do have a candidate in mind--my husband. Please  
vote for him in the Republican primary in May--and, of course, in  
November.

Thank you so much for your warm welcome and all of your  
kind words. Texas is winning a place in my heart, because of the  
wonderful people I'm meeting. San Antonio is just grand, and I  
hope the rest of the Fiesta is as wonderful as last night.



# **occasional papers**

NUMBER 1

DECEMBER 1975

## **NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS 1750-1800**

### **A BICENTENNIAL MEMOIR**

By

**D. E. KILGORE**

HONORARY CURATOR OF HISTORY  
OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM

Published by  
THE FRIENDS OF THE  
CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM  
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS  
U.S.A.

**NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS 1750-1800**  
**A BICENTENNIAL MEMOIR**

By  
D. E. KILGORE  
HONORARY CURATOR OF HISTORY  
OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM

Published by  
THE FRIENDS OF THE  
CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM  
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS  
U.S.A.

NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS, 1750-1800  
A BICENTENNIAL MEMOIR  
By D. E. Kilgore



Jose de Escandon

While delegates to the Continental Congress assembled at Philadelphia in the summer of 1776 to spell out their grievances against George III, a few ranchers, subjects of the King of Spain, chased mustangs and tended their cattle near the mouth of the Nueces River. Not until three-quarters of a century later did Texas become one of the United States, but at the time of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, the first settlers had resided in present Nueces County for ten years.

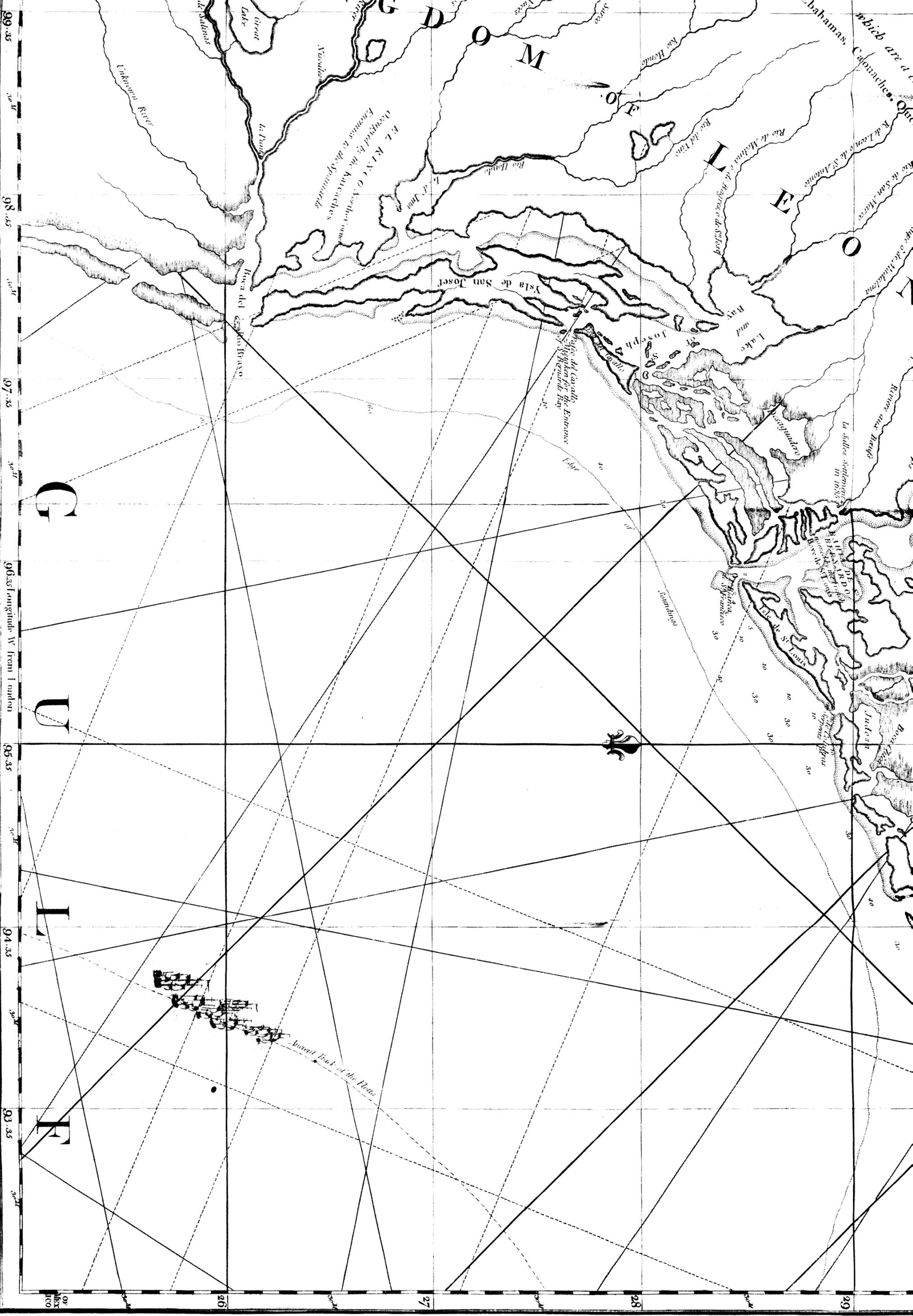
Corpus Christi Bay was unknown and unexplored until the mid-eighteenth century. Following several abortive attempts to establish a town on Corpus Christi Bay, ranchers from settlements along the lower Rio Grande followed their herds northward to the area in the 1760's. By 1800, herds of Spanish cattle grazed along the streams and thousands of wild horses roamed the prairies near Corpus Christi Bay, although the King of Spain did not grant any private titles to land at the mouth of the Nueces River until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Until the discovery of Corpus Christi Bay in early 1747, the Nueces River was thought to be a tributary to the Rio Grande. Alonso de Leon assumed so when he discovered and named the river for the many pecan trees along its banks where he forded it near present Cotulla in April, 1689. De Leon headed an expedition seeking the settlement of the frenchman, La Salle, near Matagorda Bay.<sup>(1)</sup> La Salle himself may have seen Corpus Christi Bay in the 1680's but left no record of his visit.

Spain had long claimed Texas as part of her possessions in the new world and the French intrusion under La Salle spurred Spanish attempts to colonize Texas. San Antonio, founded in 1718, and Espiritu Santo Mission, established in 1722 and later moved to the site of modern Goliad, were the first permanent settlements in southern Texas. Large cattle ranches spread out from both.

In 1746, to forestall foreign intrusion and to control Indians preying on the Spanish settlements in Mexico, plans matured to settle the region long known as the Seno Mexicano and renamed Colonia de Nuevo Santander. This area, now southern Texas and the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico, extended inland approximately 200 miles along the Gulf of Mexico from the San Antonio River on the north to the Panuco River on the south.





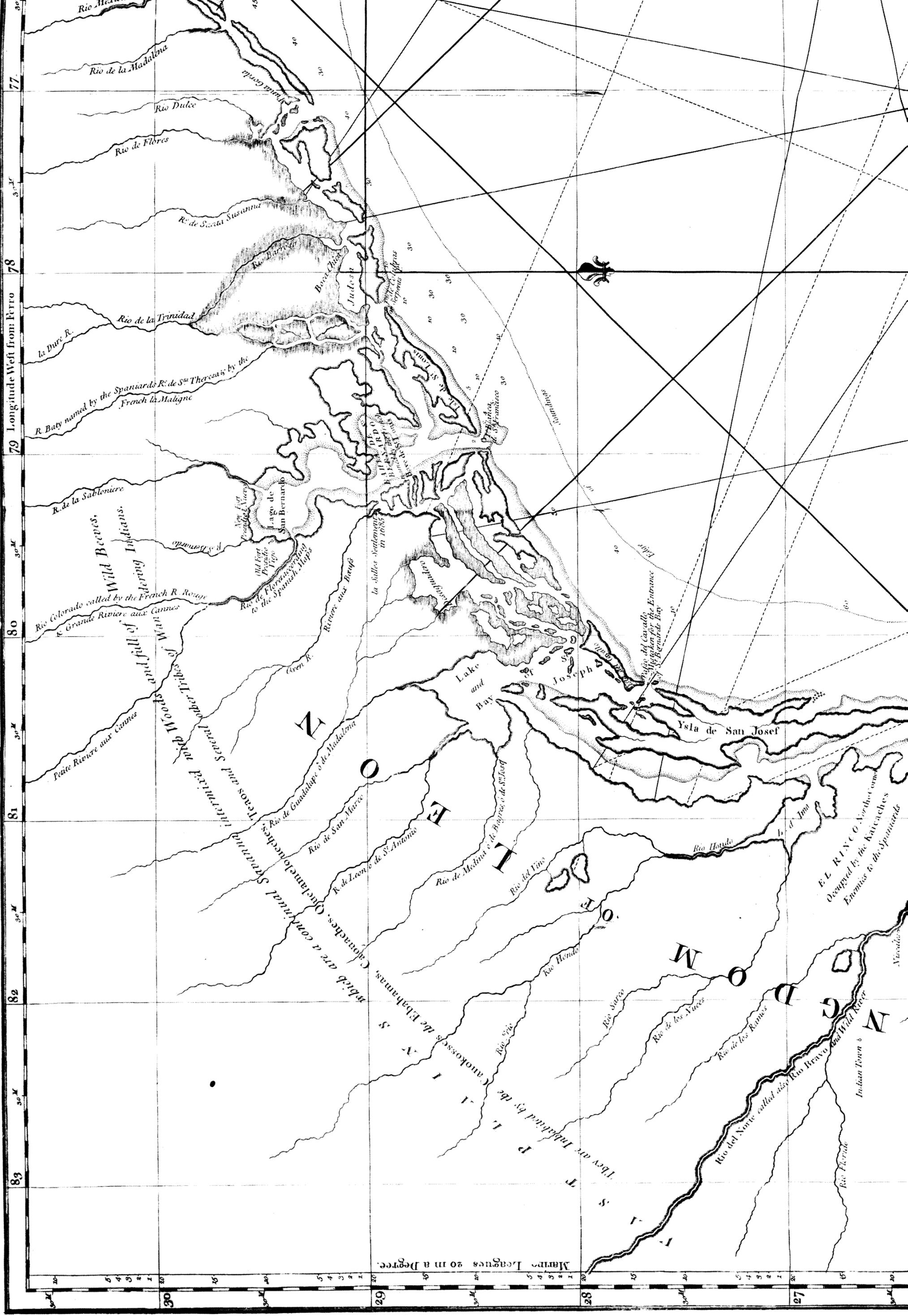
99.35 98.35 97.35 96.35 95.35 94.35 93.35

G U L E

26 27 28 29

London: Published by Wm. Wood & Co., 25, Abchurch Lane, in the Strand, W.C. 2R.

The WESTERN COAST OF LOUISIANA and The COAST OF NEW LEON By Tho. Jefferys Geographer to His. Majesty







JURIS-

DI CION

DEL NUEVO REY

NO DE

LEON

JURIS-

DI CION DE

CHARCAS.

JURISDI CION

DE SAN

LUIS Po-

Los parajes que van señalados con <sup>T</sup> encarnada son los destinados para Fundaciones y los números que tienen, los mismos en q̄ hablo de cada una de ellas en la Consulta.

Las Misiones, que tiene cada Religión, en los Términos de este Mapa, van señaladas en el modo siguientes:

Las 4 nuevas de el Apostólico Colegio de San Francisco de Pachuca, con color amarillo

Las 16 de la Custodia de Tampico, de la Provincia de S.<sup>o</sup> Francisco de Mexico, color verde

Las 5 que tiene la Provincia de S.<sup>o</sup> Domingo de Mexico color morado

Las 8 que tiene la Provincia de S.<sup>o</sup> Fran.<sup>o</sup> de Michoacan, en la Custodia de Rio verde, en bien

Las 8 que tiene la Provincia de S.<sup>o</sup> Francisco de Zacatecas en el Nuevo Reyno de Leon, negro

Las 3 que tiene el Apostólico Colegio de la Santa Cruz de Querétaro en el Rio del Norte color de Oro

Las 12 que tiene nuevas el Apostólico Colegio de Guadalupe de Zacatecas en la Costa del Señó Mexicano, Colonia del nuevo Santander color de Bermellon.

Las 6 de el Apostólico Colegio de S.<sup>o</sup> Fernando de Mexico en Sierra gorda con color azul

1792

DEL NUEVO

SAN CAN

TAN

JURISDI-  
DE VILLA  
S. Nicolas.

DE V

DE L

JURISDI-  
CION DE LA  
VILLA DE

JURISDI CION DE

ZIMAPAN.

JURISDI CION DE

ESMI-

QUILPA.



27

26

25

24

23

22

21

271

272

273

274

275

276



27  
26  
25  
24  
23  
22  
21  
20  
19  
18  
17  
16  
15  
14  
13  
12  
11  
10  
9  
8  
7  
6  
5  
4  
3  
2  
1

273 | 274 | 275 | 276 | 277



Despite Escandon's efforts, the settlers never arrived on the Nueces. They barely existed nearly a year, suffering terribly while awaiting further orders. During their stay, Captain Gonzales and six of the colonists died, several families grew discouraged and returned to their homes in Nuevo Leon, and most of the horses and mules, as well as their cattle, were eaten when no other food was available. The suffering people finally appealed for relief. Escandon dispatched Captain de la Garza Falcon, not to guide them to the Nueces, but to escort them to a new home much farther south.

The Captain escorted the settlers to the coast at the mouth of the Soto la Marina River and established them there in the new villa of Soto la Marina. Escandon provided them food and supplies for months while they learned new occupations. Shepherds and cattle-raisers had been picked to locate on the Nueces River, but fishing and trade were the most profitable industries in the new villa. The people had difficulty changing occupations and with their resources exhausted before arrival, continued to live in poverty and near-starvation for years. Thus ended the first attempt at settlement on the lower Nueces. Had the colonists travelled to Corpus Christi Bay, distant as it was from the other settlements, it is hard to imagine greater privation than they endured.<sup>(9)</sup>

The colonies on the south bank of the Rio Grande were as outstanding successes as Villa de Vedoya was a sad failure. Immediately after the founding of the towns on the Rio Grande, the settlers' cattle began grazing north of the river and whetted their owners' desire for lands on the other side. On August 22, 1750, Jose Vasquez Borrego, a ranchman from Coahuila, founded the first settlement north of the river, Nuestra Senora de los Dolores. In his petition for the grant to Borrego, Escandon expressed the opinion that this settlement would facilitate the opening of a road to the Nueces River and beyond. Not only would the road help to settle Villa de Vedoya but could lead to other settlements. When Escandon visited Dolores in 1753, he sought Borrego's aid in exploring the country north toward the Nueces.<sup>(10)</sup>

Escandon continued to press for a colony on Corpus Christi Bay. Tomas Sanchez, another rancher from Coahuila, petitioned for a second settlement on the north bank of the Rio Grande, and Escandon told him he first must examine the mouth of the Nueces. Sanchez reported that he explored both banks of the river but could not find a suitable site to settle. His unfavorable report ended the second attempt to establish a colony on the Nueces and he received permission to found the town of Laredo on May 15, 1755.<sup>(11)</sup>

Settlement of the Nueces received another setback from the official representative of the Viceroy of Mexico in 1755. Jose Tienda de Cuervo, making an inspection of Nuevo Santander, submitted a most unfavorable report on the Corpus Christi area, although he did not bother to travel beyond Laredo. Misinterpreting Orobio y Basterra's 1747 report, the Cuervo inspection described the mouth of the Nueces as a headland of sand extending into the sea, with unprotected sandy beaches and very unhealthy. The little water found between the Rio Grande and the Nueces was unhealthy and travelers could journey for four days without finding any.<sup>(12)</sup>

The founding of Revilla in 1750, and Mier in 1753, brought to six the number of towns established by Escandon along the lower Rio Grande. Only two, Dolores and Laredo, lay north of the river but cattle from all six pastured on the north bank in what is now Texas. The size of the herds and flocks verify

that the towns were situated in a stockman's paradise. A census of the Rio Grande settlements in 1757 listed a total of almost one hundred and eighty thousand sheep and goats, twenty two thousand horses and mules, and nearly nine thousand cattle. Citizens of Camargo owned the largest numbers with seventy two thousand sheep and goats, seventy five hundred horses, and twenty six hundred cattle.<sup>(13)</sup>

Escandon never established an official settlement on the Nueces River, and not until some time in the 1760's did ranchers from Camargo, pushing northward in search of grazing lands for their growing herds, arrive in the Corpus Christi area. Camargo was the first town founded on the Rio Grande, and from its inception in March 1749, its citizens looked northward beyond the river. They planned to obtain salt north of the river and Escandon hoped that exploitation of the salt deposits would lead to shorter and safer communication with his proposed towns on the Nueces and San Antonio Rivers. Several Camargo settlers received grants north of the Rio Grande in 1753, and within two years numerous large ranches operated opposite the town.<sup>(14)</sup>

In 1761, Escandon said that the people of Camargo "have already settled all the opposite bank of the Rio Grande del Norte, within the limits of land granted them, and so desirable has become the territory that reaches up to the Nueces (and although many people without having seen it assert that it is unproductive) that most people are eager to obtain it for its size and good pasture." In the same year he spoke of extending the ranches near the Rio Grande eastward to meet those to be established from La Bahia.<sup>(15)</sup>

Rumors that the English had settled on islands near the mouth of the Nueces River may have led to the first settlement near Corpus Christi Bay and certainly brought on the thorough exploration of the bay and the coastal islands made in 1766. In late 1764, the Viceroy ordered Escandon to investigate the rumors as he departed central Mexico for the northern part of his colony. Colonel Diego Ortiz Parrilla, captain at San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande, was commissioned in April, 1766 to explore the islands along the lower Texas coast.<sup>(16)</sup>

Escandon reported in May, 1766 that "the settlement (of the country) between the Rio del Norte and the Nueces, which you likewise charge me with, is making good progress." Blas Maria de la Garza Falcon, captain of Camargo, by now had established the first settlement in present Nueces County. His ranch, called Santa Petronila, was within five leagues of the mouth of the Nueces, "with a goodly number of people, a stock of cattle, sheep and goats, and cornfields." The ranch was located on Petronila Creek and gave the name to that stream. Although Escandon does not say so, he may have used the English scare to accomplish his long sought settlement near the Nueces and probably subsidized it by furnishing soldiers for protection.<sup>(17)</sup>

The first references to Corpus Christi Bay by its present name occur in reports written in 1766. Parrilla simply called it "the bay named Corpus Christi." Jose Antonio de la Garza Falcon, the son of Blas Maria de le Garza Falcon, submitted a report through Parrilla which refers to the "beach of Corpus Christi." Circumstances indicate that one of the Falcons bestowed the name Corpus Christi on the horseshoe shaped bay at the mouth of the Nueces.<sup>(18)</sup>

Jose Antonio de la Garza Falcon first explored the coast from the mouth of the Rio Grande to Corpus Christi Bay with twenty-five soldiers during the

summer of 1766.<sup>(19)</sup> He later submitted a report to Parrilla, dated September 24, 1766, that between September 13 and 23 he explored the entire length of Padre Island with twenty-five soldiers and nine Indians from the missions of the Rio Grande. This first detailed description of the island reveals that it has changed little in two hundred years. They found no springs and only a few small ponds, and like the Indians, obtained water from hand dug holes. Timbers and remnants of wrecked ships littered the beach, including the hull of one of ten to sixteen cannons which they set afire. Their horses did not relish the coarse grass of the island. They encountered no Indians but found their abandoned huts. They saw no ships sailing or anchored and discovered no trace of the English.<sup>(20)</sup>

The evidence is strong that Parrilla did not come to Corpus Christi Bay as he was ordered and as he claimed to do but went directly to Presidio La Bahia where he took testimony from several soldiers about conditions on the coast and the offshore islands north of Corpus Christi Bay. One soldier stated that while he was on the coast seeking runaway Indians, a hurricane struck on September 6 or 7, followed by four days of rain, that he was marooned by high waters for a week, and then spent another week returning to the presidio. Parrilla said that a month after the storm it was impossible to travel to the coast from La Bahia.<sup>(21)</sup>

Parrilla wrote at La Bahia on October 7 that he departed San Juan Bautista (near present Eagle Pass) on September 13 to journey to the mouth of the Nueces. He said he remained at the "Bay named Corpus Christi" long enough for the exploring of Padre Island to be carried out. Yet later in the same report he admitted that rising waters from six days of rain prevented him from going to the north of the Nueces. He then crossed the swollen river in rawhide canoes forty-two leagues above the bay in order to find the road to La Bahia where he arrived in early October. It appears that Parrilla never came to Corpus Christi Bay at all, but that he had previously ordered Jose de la Garza Falcon to explore Padre Island and relied on de la Garza's report submitted to him later.<sup>(22)</sup>

In the years after 1766 more and more of the Spaniard's cattle came to graze the fertile lands around Corpus Christi Bay. As the herds and flocks along the Rio Grande multiplied, they wandered east toward the Gulf and northward to the Nueces River. The ranchers learned the country and grew less afraid of leaving the settled communities and moving to remote localities. The pattern of settlement near Corpus Christi Bay after 1800 is clear, it was one of advance and retreat, more or less at the pleasure of the Indians; and this same pattern almost certainly prevailed before the turn of the century. The stockmen moved northward with their herds to remain until driven back to the Rio Grande by an Indian uprising. In time they subdued the Indians and then returned to their grazing lands.<sup>(23)</sup>

In 1785, Don Jose Evia, first pilot of the Royal Spanish Armada, explored and drew the first accurate charts of the coast of the Gulf of Mexico from the Mississippi River to the Tampico River. In his report and on his map he refers to Corpus Christi Bay as Lago de Ima. What appears to be a new name for the Bay probably can be accounted for by the abbreviations and careless drafting of a mapmaker. San Miguel Arcangel, the name given the Bay in 1747, could have been abbreviated on Evia's map as Lago (lake) de S.M.A. and if the S was mistaken for an I, would have been read as "Ima."<sup>(24)</sup> Evia reported the Nueces

was populated with cattle ranches (poblado de Haciendas de Ganado).<sup>(25)</sup>

In 1787, Manuel de Escandon, who like his father was both Count of Sierra Gorda and Governor of Nuevo Santander, proposed another town on the Nueces that never progressed beyond the planning stage.<sup>(26)</sup> Five years later Escandon and others suggested the mouth of the Nueces as the original location of Refugio Mission. The site was proposed because of the river's importance as a waterway but was rejected because of the danger of attack by Lipan Indians.<sup>(27)</sup>

Early the same year, 1792, detachments from Camargo and Reynosa overtook and defeated a band of Lipans preying on the cattle herds along the Rio Grande. Escandon pursued another raiding party to the mouth of the Nueces but failed to catch them.<sup>(28)</sup>

When Refugio Mission was to be moved from its site on the Guadalupe, an expedition carefully explored Corpus Christi Bay in November, 1794 as a possible new location. The party found an encampment of forty-two Karankawas, including two runaways from the missions, at the bay. The congregated Indians probably rejected Corpus Christi Bay as the new site because of its distance from their usual haunts, and the mission relocated at the site of present Refugio, then the "Rancho de Santa Gertrudis", a large ranch operated by Juan Barrera, administrator of the tithes at San Antonio.<sup>(29)</sup>

The original settlers along Petronila Creek and those who followed left few records of the first years of the white man in Nueces County. As their herds pushed northward from the Rio Grande, the stock raisers extended their ranches without obtaining titles to the land. Immediately after 1800, the King of Spain, through his local delegates, began to issue grants conferring private ownership to influential citizens from Camargo and Reynosa already occupying lands near Corpus Christi Bay. These first grants, lengthy documents reciting the careful surveys and elaborate ceremonies involved in transferring a plot of ground from his majesty to a subject on the farthest frontier of Spain, provide clues to the lives and hardships of the first civilized inhabitants at the mouth of the Nueces River.

Stock raisers on the Rio Grande, usually military or civil officials, seldom lived on their outlying ranches but established small settlements to hold their land. Often one or more sons resided at the ranch along with servants, vaqueros, and distant relatives and management was left to the *mayordomo* or foreman. It appears that Jose de la Garza Falcon managed his father's ranch on Petronila Creek. Gregorio Farias, son-in-law of the owner, was *mayordomo* of the Herrera grant on the Nueces River.<sup>(30)</sup>

All the original titles refer to danger from different Indian tribes, but the primary enemy was the Lipan Apaches, horse riding Indians who began ranging in South Texas about the time of the founding of the Rio Grande settlements. Their ancient enemies, the Comanches, pressed them so relentlessly that in 1850 the Lipans entered into a peace treaty with the Spanish at San Antonio. While the treaty was more honored in the breach than in its observance, it permanently moved the range of much of the tribe south of San Antonio. The Lipans first camped on the Medina River near the town, but soon migrated to the headwaters of the Nueces River, where the Comanches at times attacked them. In ensuing years, the Lipans ranged the Nueces all the way down to Corpus Christi Bay.<sup>(31)</sup>

It was probably the Lipans who presented a passport from the Governor at San Antonio to an early rancher on the Nueces and pretended to be at peace. The settler complained that even after his *mayordomo* gave the Indians four beeves, they killed four more and drove off his gentle horses twice within three months. The mustangs and Indians combined made it next to impossible for the stockmen to keep horses to work their cattle. Although most of the settlers lived in simple *jacales*, one grant states that a fortified house was necessary for protection against the Indians. (32)

While the grants mention the expected wild animals such as deer, wolves, and coyotes, the Herrera grant cited "the great numbers of alligators which injure the large and small cattle." All of the titles refer to the multitudes of mustangs or wild horses. Mustangs represented a natural resource available for the taking by anyone able to capture them, but until caught and broken, they were wild animals hazardous to both settlers and travelers. They ran off gentle mares from the ranches and travelers were constantly in danger of being left afoot in the wilds by herds of mustangs stampeding their horses on the trail during the day or from camp at night. (33)

Old corrals for trapping or holding the wild horses were located on both the Herrera and Montemayor lands. A large mustang pen, or trap, appears on the Herrera map southeast of present Calallen. The pen stood in the bottom of a broad ravine with wings extending up the sloping sides of the ravine toward the open prairie. Since it was so carefully drawn on the map, the trap must have been in active use in 1800. The horse hunters chased their quarry on the extensive plains until they were exhausted, then ran them over the rim of the ravine through the wings of the trap into the stout corral hidden at the bottom. (34) Horses predominated over cattle on the open plains south of the Nueces and could be traded for cattle which thrived along the wooded rivers in the province of Texas to the north. (35)

Cattle of the ranches became almost as wild as the mustangs but did not have as much speed to escape their enemies. While the faster horses ran openly on the plains, cattle escaped their enemies by hiding in thickets and in woods of the stream bottoms during the day. Only at night did they venture out to graze on the prairie. The ranchers usually caught their cattle when they came out of the brush, especially on moonlit nights when they were more visible. (36)

A government official, inspecting the province of Nuevo Santander in 1795, complained of the wasteful practices of the stock raisers. Ranchers often occupied tracts without marked boundaries and wandered to another location after their livestock grazed down the pastures. This system discouraged owners from caring for their lands and even at this early date, brush was invading the open plains. Livestock carried seeds from one site to the next and since the owners did not bother to clear the brush, settled areas became infested with thorny native shrubs propagated by the stock. (37)

South Texas has been called the cradle of the American cattle kingdom, the romantic industry originating with the trail drives after the Civil War that enveloped all the unoccupied grasslands of twelve western states by 1876. The Nueces River valley was the center of the region spawning this industry. (38) Many of the original Texas ancestors of the uncounted longhorns that made the long trek to Kansas railheads and then spread over the northern plains came with the first settlers to the mouth of the Nueces River a century earlier in the 1760's.

## Footnotes

1. Bolton, Herbert E. (ed.). *Spanish Exploration in the Southwest, 1542-1706*. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1952. pp. 348, 391.
2. Bolton, Herbert E. *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Publications in History, Vol. 3, 1915. pp. 57, 293.  
Hill, Lawrence F. *Jose de Escandon and the Founding of Nuevo Santander*. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Studies, Contributions in History and Political Science, No. 9, 1926. pp. 58-59.
3. Archivo General, Provincias Internas. (Transcript in Bexar Archives, The University of Texas Archives, Austin) Vol. 179, pp. 241-246. In stating that Corpus Christi Bay was horse-shoe shaped because of the way the sandbar lay, Orobio could only have been referring to the sandbar between North Beach and Indian Point, which gives the bay its characteristic shape. By his statement "quedando, por lo que estrecha la Barra, en figura de una Herradura" he could only have meant "remaining in the shape of a horseshoe through which stretches the sandbar" referring to the bay. His readers must have interpreted it as "leaving a sandbar which stretches out in the shape of a horse-shoe." That the statement was so interpreted is borne out by the map of Nuevo Santander prepared to show Escandon's explorations. (See map Hill, *Escandon* following p. 149 and Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, following p. 302) The map shows a large promontory extending into the Gulf of Mexico at the mouth of the Nueces River. This interpretation was also probably responsible for Tienda de Cuervo's description in his report of 1757 wherein he stated, "Between la Bahía del Espíritu Santo and the Rio Grande there extends into the sea a Headland of Sand, which forms a sort of Harbor, and which they have named San Miguel." (Bolton, Herbert E. (trans.). "Tienda de Cuervo's Ynspeccion of Laredo, 1757," *Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, Vol. 6 No. 3 (January, 1903) p. 203.
4. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, p. 57.  
Hill, *Escandon*, pp. 66-67.
5. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, p. 58.
6. *Ibid*, p. 296.  
Hill, *Escandon*, p. 67.  
Provincias Internas, Vol. 179, pp. 275-276, 358.
7. Hill, *Escandon*, p. 79.  
Castaneda, Carlos Eduardo. *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas*. Seven volumes. Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Company, 1936-1958. Vol. 4, pp. 188-189.
8. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, p. 58.  
Provincias Internas, Vol. 179, pp. 506-508.
9. Hill, *Escandon*, pp. 89-91, 126.
10. *Ibid* p. 99.  
Deviney, Marvin Lee. "History of Nueces County to 1850." Master's thesis, The University of Texas, 1933. p. 127.
11. "Tienda de Cuervo's Ynspeccion of Laredo", pp. 188-189.  
Prieto, Alejandro. *Historia, Geografia y Estadística del Estado de Tamaulipas*. Mexico, 1873. p. 188. It appears that Sanchez was determined from the beginning to establish his settlement at Laredo, rather than on the Nueces, and threatened to abandon the enterprise if he were not permitted to establish a town near Dolores, where he already had his cattle. Official records indicate that Sanchez reported the results of his exploration of the Nueces directly to Escandon, but Prieto asserts that Escandon had left orders with Borrego that Sanchez might settle on the Rio Grande if he confirmed the bad reports about the Nueces River.
12. "Tienda de Cuervo's Ynspeccion of Laredo", p. 203.
13. Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*. Vol. 3, pp. 168, 171.  
*Estado General de las Fundaciones Hechas por D. Jose de Escandon en la Colonia del Nuevo Santander, Costa del Seno Mexicana*. Two volumes. Mexico: Publicaciones del Archivo General de la Nacion, 1929-1930. Vol. 1, pp. 371, 393, 410, 423, 443, 449.
14. Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*. Vol. 3, pp. 157-162.
15. *Ibid*. Vol. 3, p. 301.  
Taylor, Paul Schuster. *An American Mexican Frontier, Nueces County, Texas*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1934. p. 9.
16. Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*. p. 104.
17. *Ibid*. pp. 301-302.

18. "Testimonio de los autos, y diligencias fhas. por el Coronel D. Diego Ortiz Parrilla" and "Testimonio de las Diligencias practicadas por el Coronel Don Diego Ortiz Parrilla." (Parrilla Reports). Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de Guadalajara, 104-6-13, Dunn Transcripts, The University of Texas Library, Austin. pp. 15, 18.
19. Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*. Vol. 4, pp. 215-216.
20. Sheire, James W. *Padre Island National Seashore; Historic Resource Study*. Washington: Office of History and Historic Architecture, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1971. pp. 70-72.
21. Ibid. pp. 219-220.
22. (Parrilla Reports) pp. 18-19. Parrilla's report of October 7 is too vague and fails to mention any details such as Santa Petronila or Jose de la Garza Falcon which it certainly would had he come to Corpus Christi Bay.

Under weather conditions Parrilla describes, between September 13 and October 7 it would have been impossible for him to journey from San Juan Bautista to Corpus Christi Bay, wait ten days for Padre Island to be explored, then ascend the Nueces River forty two leagues to get to La Bahia.

Although Parrilla submitted reports of his expedition on April 4, 1867, he did not forward de la Garza's account of the exploring of Padre Island until two months later on June 21, indicating he did not receive it until after he transmitted his formal report.

It appears that de la Garza Falcon may have made only one exploration of Padre Island rather than two. The report submitted to Parrilla gives the beginning date of the expedition as September 13, when flood waters from the hurricane would have made it impossible to ford the Laguna Madre to Padre Island. De la Garza's descriptions are not of an island ravaged by a hurricane or even one with beaches swept clean by one that did not strike the immediate area. The evidence is that he wrote up his exploration of the summer with appropriate dates as though it occurred at the time ordered by Parrilla.

23. Scott, Florence Johnson. *Historical Heritage of the Lower Rio Grande*. San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1937. p. 101.
24. Hackett, Charles Wilson, and Charmion Clair Shelby (trans.). *Pichardo's Treatise on the Limits of Louisiana and Texas*. Four volumes. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1934. Vol. 1, pp. 350, 440.
25. Archivo General Historia, Tomo 302, Folio 236. (From original in Mexico City, by courtesy of Miss Nettie Lee Benson.)
26. Hackett, *Pichardo's Treatise*. Vol. 3, p. 459.
27. Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*. Vol. 5, p. 91.  
Oberste, William H. *History of Refugio Mission*. Refugio, Texas; Refugio Timely Remarks, 1942. p. 52.
28. Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage*, Vol. 5, p. 114.
29. Ibid, Vol. 5, p. 94.  
Oberste, *Refugio Mission*, pp. 149-152.
30. Lea, Tom. *The King Ranch*. Two volumes. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1957. Vol. 1 p. 381. (quoting Harbert Davenport).
31. Vigness, David M. (trans. and ed.). "Nuevo Santander in 1795: A Provincial Inspection by Felix Calleja. *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (April, 1972) pp. 488, 491, 495-496.  
Bolton, Herbert E. (trans. and ed.) *Athanase de Mezieres and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier, 1768-1780*. Two volumes. Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1914. Vol. 1, p. 328.
32. Taylor, *An American Mexican Frontier*. pp. 11, 12; 321-323.
33. Ibid, p. 321-323.  
Land grant - Kingdom of Spain to Don Juan Jose de la Garza Montemayor, dated July 21, 1806, Nueces County Deed Records.  
Coues, Elliott (ed.). *The Expeditions of Zebulon Montgomery Pike, to Headwaters of the Mississippi River, through Louisiana Territory, and in New Spain, during the Years 1805-6-7*. Three volumes. New York: Francis P. Harper, 1895. Vol. 2, pp. 782-783.
34. Taylor, *An American Mexican Frontier*, p. 323.  
Coues, *Zebulon Montgomery Pike*, Vol. 2, pp. 782-783.
35. Bolton, *Athanase de Mezieres*, Vol. 2, p. 112, n. 24.
36. Prieto, *Historia de Tamaulipas*, pp. 266-267.
37. Vigness, "Nuevo Santander in 1795." pp. 473, 475-476.
38. Webb, Walter Prescott. *The Great Plains*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936. pp. 207-209.

Copyright by  
**THE FRIENDS OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM**



**GRUNWALD PRINTING COMPANY  
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS**