

SOUTHWEST & MEXICO
Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Mexico
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San Fernando Cemetery #1: Tejano Heroes of the Texas Revolution

From 1519 until 1820, Spain owned and controlled the Texas Territory, which included all of present-day Mexico, all of present-day Texas, and lands as far north as Montana. Gradually the United States assumed control of most of the northern sections of that Territory. In 1820, Spain granted independence to Mexico, which included all of present-day Mexico and present-day Texas.

The city of San Antonio, recognized as an official Villa by the Spanish government in 1717, fast became the largest city within the Texas Territory. The city served as the Territory's governmental center from 1773-1827—when Santa Ana transferred that function to Saltillo, in present-day Mexico. In 1837, Texas gained its own independence, and became a separate nation: The Republic of Texas.

During all of these 317 years the residents of San Antonio, Texans of Spanish heritage (both Mexico and Spain) were known, even among themselves, as *Tejanos*. Anglo-Americans that gradually and illegally filtered into the Texas region were known, even among themselves, as *Texians*.

Only in the 1820s were the Texians recognized as legitimate citizens of Texas—when Santa Ana granted Stephen Austin, among a few others, the right to own and settle land. These new landowning Texians gained the recognized title of *Impresarios*.

The well-documented history of confrontations between the San Antonio-based Tejanos/Texians and the combined Spain/Mexico authorities (at least five battles between 1813 and 1835) is largely ignored by present-day Americans—who seem to have tuned into such history very late in these confrontations, with the Battle of the Alamo in 1836. Our American view starts with an exaggerated focus on *Texans*, effectively blurring the *Texian/Tejano* distinction into one that unconsciously emphasizes the Anglos. Most English-language histories, rightly so, highlight the fact that the new government of the Republic of Texas recognized more than 500 veterans of the Texas Revolution by bestowing upon them land grants and/or pensions—not highlighted is that 325 of those veterans were Tejanos.

On Saturday, October 08, 2005, the Los Bexareños Genealogical Society sponsored a ceremony honoring Tejano Texas Revolution participants buried at San Antonio's San Fernando Cemetery #1. [see photo #1]

By my estimate over 100 people participated in the ceremony. [see photo #2] Los Granaderos y Damas de Galvez, a historical

preservation group dressed in period uniforms of the Spanish military and non-uniform (or “rag-tag”) attire of the Tejano volunteers presented Colors for the ceremony. [see photo #3]

Archdiocese records document that 33 Tejano veterans are buried in the cemetery. A muster-list of all 33 was read by local weather TV meteorologist Maclovio Perez. A single drum roll accompanied the annunciation of each name and death. The late-morning sun and cool temperatures allowed those of us in the audience to comfortably contemplate the contribution of each of the heroes—and extend our thanks to other heroes; other wars. I wondered to myself how many Tejanos were now serving in Iraq; how many were already buried in our South Texas cemeteries.

After the ceremony, I walked with the Coy family to Texas Tejano Revolutionary Veteran Trinidad Coy’s marker, which had recently been reconstructed. The marker had been replaced with Trinidad’s epitaph facing south, instead of its original east position. Fortunately, the new alignment allowed for reasonable photography. [see photo #4]

TRINIDAD S.

COY

NACIO

ENERO 9,

DE 1801

FALLECIO
DIBRE.11. DE
1888
ETERNA PAZ A SUS
MORTALES RESTOS
A LA MEMORIA DE MIS
QUERIDO PADRES
EMETERIO COY

*[Trinidad S. Coy. Born January 9, 1801. Died December 11, 1888.
Eternal peace to his mortal remains. To the memory of my dear
parents, Emeterio Coy]*

I excused myself from the Coy family, giving my thanks to various friends among the membership of the Los Bexareños Genealogical Society.

For more information on current research regarding gravemarkers of other Texas Revolution veteran's, I recommend two websites: www.TexasTejano.com and www.LosBexareños.org.

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