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The Mier
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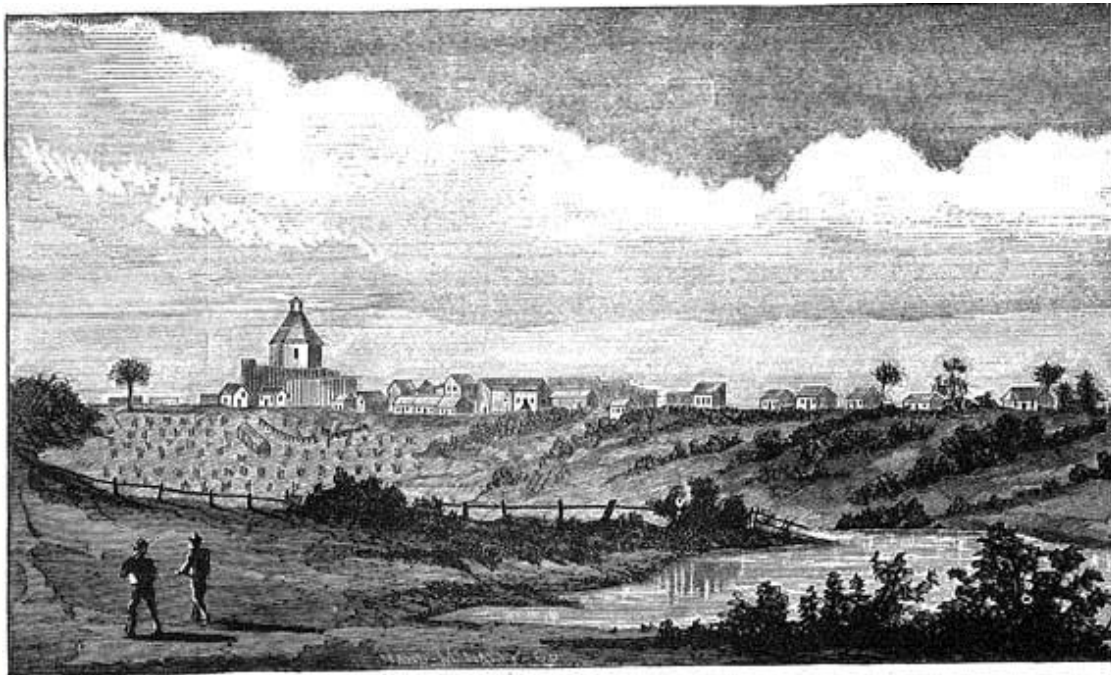


"BIG-FOOT WALLACE"

From John C. Duval's,
*The Adventures of
Big-Foot Wallace:
The Texas Ranger
and Hunter*



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TOWN OF SAN ANTONIO DE BEXAR, TEXAS, 1840.

From Rev. Homer S.
Thrall's,
*A Pictorial History
of Texas*



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THE ADVENTURES OF

The Mexicans received us, as I said, with heavy discharges from these escopetas, and after some sharp skirmishing we got possession of a portion of the town, and the fighting began in earnest.

Among us there were some of the best marksmen in the world, backwoodsmen from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Arkansas, and every "greaser" that ventured to peep at us above the parapets of the houses, and round the corners of the streets, was sure to get a bullet through his head.

So far, we had lost but one man killed (Major Jones, former Postmaster-General of the Republic). The Mexican loss must have been considerable, but we had no means of ascertaining the extent of it.

From John C. Duval's,
*The Adventures of
Big-Foot Wallace:
The Texas Ranger
and Hunter*

This excerpt discusses
the Battle for Mier.

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BIG-FOOT WALLACE

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In the morning, after our guard had paraded us several times around the public square, to give the good people of Camargo a chance to look at the "wild Texans," we bid them farewell, and again took the road down the river. Occasionally we were halted to rest for an hour or so at the "haciendas" and "ranchos" on the way.

In some places the inhabitants, and especially the women, seemed to compassionate the miserable condition of the "Gringos," as they called us, and gave us water to drink, and sometimes more substantial refreshments. In others, we were hooted at by the mob, that was sure to collect around us whenever we stopped for a few moments, who would call us by all sorts of hard names, and pelt us with stones and clods of earth, and stale eggs.

From John C. Duval's,
*The Adventures of
Big-Foot Wallace:
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and Hunter*

Read about the Texans'
march to prison
after their surrender.



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Our plan was for Captain Cameron to “raise the yell” when he thought the proper moment for the attack had arrived, and at this signal our men were to rush out suddenly, knock down the sentinels stationed at the doors, and hasten to seize the guns that were stacked in front of the Mexican camps—all of which we hoped to accomplish before the Mexicans could recover from the disorder into which we thought the suddenness of our attack would throw them.

Captain Cameron took his seat near the open door, for the purpose of watching the movements of the Mexicans, who were scattered about here and there, busily engaged in cooking their breakfast, and totally unsuspecting of our designs. We anxiously waited for the concerted signal from him, and when it was given a “yell was raised” that might have been heard for miles, and out we poured from our dens like a pack of ravenous wolves. In an instant, the sentinels who were stationed at the doors were knocked down and trampled under foot, and we dashed forward as rapidly as possible to where the guns were stacked. The Mexican soldiers made a rush for them at the same moment, and a fierce struggle took place for their possession. But the Americans generally had the advantage over their foes in strength and weight, and the contest was of short duration.

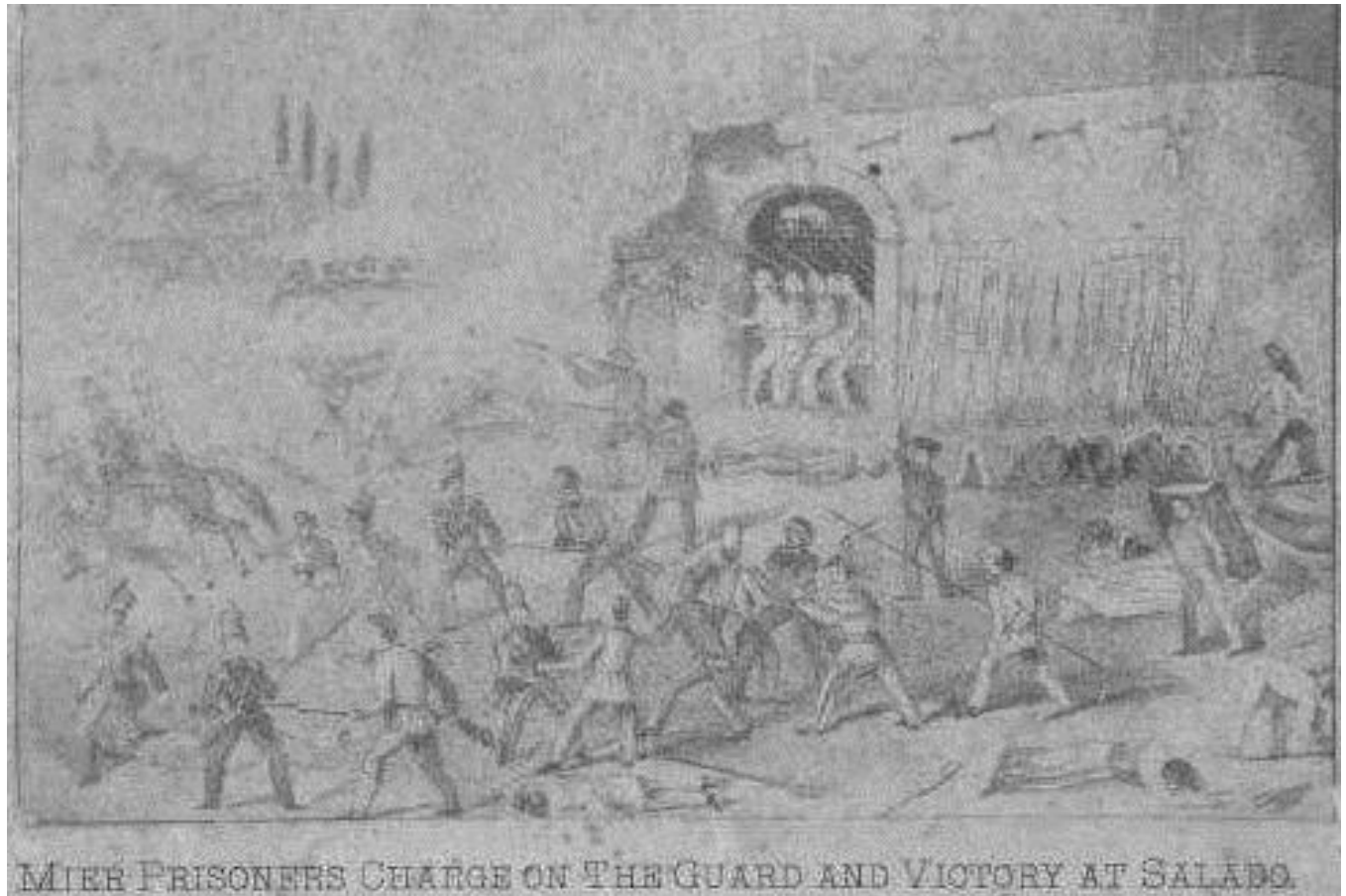
As soon as we had secured the guns, the Mexicans fled in the wildest confusion, leaving ten of their number dead upon the ground. Our loss was five killed—

From John C. Duval’s,
*The Adventures of
Big-Foot Wallace:
The Texas Ranger
and Hunter*

Read about the
prisoners’ escape
attempt.



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Mier Prisoners Charge on the Guard

Fort Bend Museum

University of North Texas Libraries



BIG-FOOT WALLACE 206—207

On the morning of the fifth day we made an early start, in order to get over as much ground as possible before the sun should acquire its full power. But, by the time it had risen above the tops of the mountains to the eastward of us, the suffering of the men became so intolerable that many of them, to relieve themselves of all superfluous weight, threw away their guns and equipments, and what remained of their rations of jerked meat—for hunger was not felt or feared—our whole craving was for water! water! Many of the men gave out entirely, and laid down on the wayside to die, but no one paid any attention to them, for great suffering, such as we were enduring, is apt to render men callous and unfeeling toward each other. Still the rest of us struggled on, hoping that our strength might hold out until we came to water; but we toiled up one rugged, barren mountain, only to see another as rugged and barren rise up before us.

From John C. Duval's,
*The Adventures of
Big-Foot Wallace:
The Texas Ranger
and Hunter*

Read about the Texans'
misery in the desert.



BIG-FOOT WALLACE

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About 10 o'clock at night, we discovered some fires burning ahead of us, and supposed that they were the signal fires of some one of our straggling parties, to let us know that water had been found. We pushed on toward them as fast as we could, and scarcely had the foremost men reached them, when a large Mexican force rose up on all sides of us, and enclosed us in their lines.

No attempt at resistance was made; indeed, we would have been utterly incapable of anything of the sort, even if we had been armed, but as well as I remember now not more than ten or a dozen of our men still carried their muskets with them—the rest having thrown them away while in the mountains.

From John C. Duval's,
*The Adventures of
Big-Foot Wallace:
The Texas Ranger
and Hunter*

This excerpt discusses
the recapture.



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DRAWING OF THE BEANS

From John C. Duval's,
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It was determined that the seventeen men to be executed should be selected by lottery, and in a little while a squad of Mexican officers came into the corral, preceded by a soldier bearing an earthen vessel, which he placed upon a low stone wall bounding the farther side of the corral, and which was intended to hold a number of white and black beans, corresponding to the number of men and officers in our command. The Mexican officers stationed themselves near the earthen pot, to overlook and superintend the lottery, and see that every one had a fair chance for his life. One of them then proceeded to count out so many white beans, which he poured into the vessel, and then dropped in the fatal seventeen black ones on top of them, covering the whole with a thick napkin or cloth. We were then formed into line and drawn up in front of the low wall on which the earthen pot had been placed.

Before the drawing began, they informed us that if any man drew out more than one bean, and either of them should prove a black one, he would be regarded as having drawn a black one solely, and be shot accordingly.

Our commissioned officers were ordered to draw first. Captain Cameron stepped forward, and without the slightest visible trepidation put his hand under the cloth and drew out a white bean. He had observed, when the Mexican officer put the beans in the pot, that he poured the white in first and the black ones on top of them, and then set it down without shaking, possibly with the intention of forcing as large a number as possible of the black beans upon our commissioned officers, who were to have the first drawing.

From John C. Duval's,
*The Adventures of
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Read about the
Black Bean Episode.

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BIG-FOOT WALLACE

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When he returned to his place in the line, he whispered to those nearest him, "Dip deep, boys," and by following his advice all the officers drew white beans except Captain Eastland.

After the officers had all drawn, the "muster-rolls" of the men were produced, and we were called forward as our names appeared upon them. Some of the Mexican officers present were evidently much affected by the courage and nonchalance manifested by the men in this fiery trial; others, on the contrary, seemed to enjoy the whole proceedings hugely, particularly

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Read about the
Black Bean Episode.



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SANTA ANNA.

From Rev. Homer S. Thrall's,
A Pictorial History of Texas



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Reunion of the Survivors of the Mier Expedition
Fort Bend Museum