The Cowpen Slaughter: Was There a Massacre of Mexican Soldiers at the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales?

William Gorenfeld

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Historical Review by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu, Isloane@salud.unm.edu, sarahrk@unm.edu.
The Cowpen Slaughter

WAS THERE A MASSACRE OF MEXICAN SOLDIERS AT THE BATTLE OF SANTA CRUZ DE ROSALES?

William Gorenfeld

Oh, war blows her ringing blast,
And fighting times have come at last.
Freedom, buckle on the sword
To crush the Mexican vile horde.

Chorus
Then march, freemen, march,
Come march, true freemen, march,
March day and night, and boldly fight
For freedom and for Texas
Heigh ho! United go
To crush the Dons of Mexico.

The Battle Call

Samuel Clemens's short-lived Civil War career occurred in Missouri, where he briefly served in a state guard unit that named itself the Ralls County Rangers. Clemens recalled:

We stacked our shabby old shotguns in Colonel [John] Ralls' barn and then went in a body and breakfasted with that veteran of the Mexican...
war. Afterward he took us to a distant meadow, and there, in the shade of a tree, we listened to an old fashioned speech from him, full of gunpowder and glory, full of that adjective piling, mixed metaphor and windy declamation which was regarded as eloquence in that ancient time and region . . . This mixed us considerably, and we could not just make out what service we were involved in, but Colonel Ralls, the practised politician and phrase juggler, was not similarly in doubt; he knew quite clearly that he had invested us in the cause of the Southern Confederacy. 2

Clemens does not say whether Colonel Ralls told him anything of his exploits during the late war with Mexico. In 1847 Ralls had raised a company of soldiers at New London, Missouri; at age forty was elected colonel of the Third Regiment of Missouri Volunteers; and in 1847 headed west to Santa Fe where, attached to the command of Brig. Gen. Sterling Price, the regiment defeated the Mexican Army at a small town known as Santa Cruz de Rosales. 3

Most likely young Sam Clemens was unaware that the battle, occurring as it did after the war ended and in a remote part of Mexico, resolved nothing in Pres. James K. Polk's plan to "Conquer a Peace," and received little, if any, mention in the press. 4 Probably, Clemens was also unaware that some of Ralls's troops might have perpetrated an atrocity after the battle. The hypothesis advanced in this article is that Ralls's men herded Mexican prisoners into a corral and then killed them—an event later referred to by an American officer as the "cowpen slaughter."

General Price Moves South

On 14 September 1847, Gen. Winfield Scott captured Mexico City. 5 The Mexican War wound down to scattered skirmishes as diplomats frantically attempted to find a way to end hostilities. But in the fall of 1847, rumors reached Santa Fe that a Mexican army of three thousand men was marching north from Chihuahua to recapture the region. 6 Though such reports would later prove to be wildly inaccurate, General Price, in command of the newly conquered region of New Mexico, sensed that here was a last chance for the politician-turned-general to garner laurels on the field of battle. 7
A former Democratic member of Congress from the state of Missouri, Price resigned his seat when the war with Mexico broke out and helped raise the Second Regiment of Missouri Mounted Volunteers. The U.S. Army sent him west to command a garrison that would simply occupy and hold New Mexico—a backwater of the war. General Price decided to move the greater part of his forces down the Rio Grande Valley to El Paso where they would be in position to attack the approaching enemy. In March 1847, troops under the command of Col. Alexander Doniphan brushed aside a significant Mexican force at Sacramento and occupied Chihuahua for nearly two months. The campaign made Doniphan a national hero and humiliated the Mexican defenders. General Price decided to follow Doniphan's path to fame and glory.

General Price's command mostly consisted of volunteers, but it also included a rough-and-ready squadron of regular army dragoons—the proud and elite mounted arm of the U.S. Army. Stationed at Albuquerque, companies G and I of the First Dragoons had been with the Army of the West during Gen. Stephen W. Kearny's conquest of Santa Fe. They had recently seen action against Navajo and Comanche raiders and suppressed insurgen ts during the Taos uprising in 1847.

The dragoon squadron was bolstered by the recent addition of Company B, commanded by 1st Lt. John Love. This company was composed mostly of men recruited in Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri. Well mounted on big-boned sorrels, and seated on new Grimsley saddles, most of Love's recruits did not appear soldierly in bearing. Army headquarters in Santa Fe had special plans for the unsteady horsemen of Company B. In need of artillery, the army would transform them into a field artillery battery. The detachment left Fort Leavenworth on 5 June to escort the army paymaster on his trip to Santa Fe. Most of these recruits had been in the army for only six months, but had “seen the elephant” when, on 30 June 1847, Comanches attacked, outrode, and defeated them at Coon Creeks on the Santa Fe Trail.
Five of the U.S. soldiers were left behind in unmarked graves along the trail; six others were wounded in the battle.\(^{13}\)

The squadron of dragoons was under the command of the colorful Maj. Benjamin "Brilliant" Beall.\(^{14}\) As a youth, Beall had dropped out of West Point in 1817 and became a clerk at the War Department.\(^{15}\) In 1836 he gained a civilian appointment as a captain in the newly formed Second Dragoons. "Old Ben" Beall fought with distinction in Florida against the Seminoles, and then commanded a squadron of dragoons during Scott's campaign in Mexico.\(^{16}\) On 16 February 1847, Beall was promoted to the rank of major in the First Dragoons. Word of his promotion caught up with him while he was at Puebla, Mexico. Beall hurried back to the United States and rode west to join his new command.\(^{17}\)

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the state of Chihuahua, not surprisingly, viewed with apprehension the steady buildup of American forces in El Paso.\(^{18}\) The 19 January 1848 edition of the Faro, a Chihuahua newspaper, mentioned that rancher Ignacio Roquillo had complained that Price's men had taken seven hundred of his sheep without offering him compensation, but the newspaper reassured the populace that the Yanquis (Yankees) lacked sufficient supplies and provisions to invade.\(^{19}\) The Faro was wrong about troop movements.

When he arrived in El Paso, General Price discovered that the accounts of a menacing Mexican Army were false. He received orders from Adj. Gen. Roger Jones directing him to stay put in El Paso and, if possible, to send five or six hundred of his mounted troops west to reinforce the weak garrison occupying California. Ignoring Jones's instructions, General Price ordered Maj. Robert Walker's three mounted companies of the Santa Fe Battalion to ride ninety miles south and to occupy the Mexican town of Carrizal.\(^{20}\) Price believed that from this location Major Walker could command the passes on the roads to Chihuahua and observe the operations of any approaching force. Major Walker dutifully occupied the town, sent out patrols far and wide into
the Chihuahuan Desert, and rounded up a few Mexican Army stragglers, but he found no evidence of any organized Mexican force. General Price soon moved his forces south along the well-worn commercial road known as El Camino de Tierra Adentro. His objective was to seize Chihuahua, a settlement of fourteen hundred residents. As he neared the scene of Doniphan's 1847 victory at the Rio Sacramento, a Mexican patrol approached under a flag of truce. The Mexican commander handed General Price a note from Mexican governor general Angel Trías containing the startling news: a peace treaty had been signed on 2 February at Guadalupe Hidalgo, and a cease-fire had been declared. Having received no official word of a cease-fire and doubting Trías's representations, General Price continued with his advance. Although he was distant from reliable sources of intelligence, Price had reason to believe Trías, as the general knew that Mexico City had been captured five months earlier and his scouts had proven false the rumor of a Mexican army marching north.

Gov. Gen. Angel Trías was thirty-nine years old at the time of the invasion. Educated in Europe, he had returned to his native State of Chihuahua to serve in the Mexican Army. In 1846 Trías headed the Committee of Defense for the State of Chihuahua and was named interior minister by the governor of Chihuahua. Following his participation in the 1847 battles of Sacramento and Cerro Gordo, Antonio López de Santa Ana made Trías governor and general of the State of Chihuahua. Trías would prove to be an honorable and competent opponent.

The governor, seeking to avoid bloodshed and recognizing the inadequacy of the forces at his disposal, abandoned Chihuahua and retreated south toward Santa Cruz de Rosales with four hundred soldiers and eight cannon. Price's troops entered defenseless Chihuahua on 7 March and, in the words of one observer, "thus was accomplished the second annual capture of Chihuahua." The ambitious General Price, unsatisfied with the bloodless capture of his objective, planned the destruction of Trías's army before it could be reinforced and while it was strung out in retreat. He had ordered two companies of Major Beall's dragoons to ride overland and to intercept Trías. The dragoons, attempting a difficult night march over treacherous and mountainous terrain, became lost and were unable to block Trías's avenue of retreat.

After a rapid march of sixty miles along the highway to Durango, Price caught up with General Trías on 9 March. By this time, Trías had reached the shelter provided by the adobe walls of Santa Cruz de Rosales, a small
Mexican village. Again, the governor general insisted that a peace treaty had been signed and requested of Price an armistice so that a courier might bring a copy of the document. General Price, realizing that he lacked sufficient troops and artillery to carry the town, agreed not to take action for five days. Price's forces camped in the woods about one mile east of the town and awaited further orders.

The Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales

Both generals called for reinforcements. Over one hundred Mexican troops under the command of Col. Cayetano Justiniani slipped through the Yanqui lines and entered Rosales on 10 March. A few nights later, two hundred more troops of the Second Battalion of the National Guard entered the town. These reinforcements swelled Trias's force to over eight hundred men.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Love's battery was encamped 210 miles north of Santa Cruz de Rosales. On 12 March, Love received Price's orders to support the general in Rosales. Mounting some of his newly minted artillerists on fast-traveling sorrels and accompanied by three companies of the Third Missouri Horse, Lieutenant Love raced to the scene of the siege—he covered the 210 miles in three and one-half days, 60 of the miles in the final twenty-four hours.

Santa Cruz de Rosales hardly looked appropriate for a bloody siege and potential massacre. Situated at an elevation of thirty-nine hundred feet, the town sat adjacent to a clear mountain stream that coursed the plain in a northeastern pathway to the Rio Grande. Surrounded by freshly plowed fields watered by irrigation ditches, the town lay astride the dusty road from Chihuahua to Durango. Spring had arrived early that March of 1848. Philip Gooch Ferguson, a Missouri Volunteer, noted in his journal that "the cottonwoods were in full leaf and the grass quite green; peas and other vegetables in full blossom."

In 1848 Santa Cruz de Rosales extended for about three-quarters of a mile along the road on a northeast-southwest axis. The town was about one quarter of a mile at its widest point. In the town's center was a plaza two hundred yards in length. On the west side of the plaza sat a church. Most of the buildings were low, adobe-walled structures with flat roofs.

General Trias's defending force of 804 men was a mixed lot, consisting primarily of elements of the Second Battalion of National Guard along
with some regular (permanent) artillerymen and cavalry. There was also a detachment of presidial lancers commanded by Lt. Col. Vicente Sánchez. 36 The infantry was armed with British Brown Bess muskets—flintlock relics of the Napoleonic era that had an effective range of about seventy yards. 37

In order to protect his troops from exposure to artillery and rifle fire, General Trías placed most of his men in the town's interior. He ringed the town plaza with entrenchments, barricades, wall cannon, and fortifications. The bulk of Mexican artillery was placed securely behind fortifications, well sited with a clear field of fire down the broad boulevards that led to the
plaza. The flat roofs of the buildings adjacent to the plaza and church bristled with infantry and small caliber wall cannon.

By mutual agreement, noncombatants were afforded the opportunity to leave the town before the start of the battle. As they streamed out of the town, Love’s six-gun battery headed across the dusty fields toward positions to the west of Rosales. Lively strains of a bugle sounded, and the U.S. detachment halted five hundred yards to the northwest of the town plaza. Then came the command: “Fire to the rear—caissons pass your pieces—trot—march—in battery.” Cannon, caissons, limbers, horses, and men moved in every direction. Within a few minutes, the guns were unlimbered in line and the crews stood at the proper posts, horses to the rear and ammunition chests aligned behind each piece.38

Lt. Col. Richard Lane’s squadron of the Third Missouri rode out from the east woods and took positions to the north of Rosales. Stationed slightly behind Love’s battery were four companies of Col. John Ralls’s Third Missouri. Maj. Robert Walker’s Santa Fe Battalion and two mountain howitzers covered the southern approach to the town. Major Beall’s two companies of First Dragoons and Capt. W. L. F. McNall’s company of the Third Missouri remained in position to the east of the town.39

At 10:30 AM on the morning of 16 March 1848, General Price ordered his artillery to open fire. Love gave the command to fire and each of six gunners touched off their cannon. Smoke and flame belched forth as six cannon balls arched across the morning sky. Edward James Glasgow, an American merchant who had been doing business in Chihuahua, rode south in order to observe the battle. He wrote that the shots struck the adobe buildings, “making the mud bricks fly about pretty lively and so continued for the greater part of the day.”40

For more than a deadly hour, the American and Mexican cannon dueled at short range, and two of the Mexican cannon were silenced. Upon General Price’s orders, a section of the battery, consisting of a twenty-four-pound howitzer and a six-pounder, under the command of Lt. Alexander Dyer, was shifted seven hundred yards south to the town cemetery.41 The remainder of Love’s battery soon joined Dyer’s two guns, now positioned less than four hundred yards from the town. Despite intense counter-battery fire by Yankee cannon, a lone Mexican nine-pounder located in the plaza continued bravely to return fire. Most of its round shot, however, flew high and did little damage to Love’s battery.42 Some of the Mexican overshots
landed among Colonel Ralls’s troops, killing Cpl. Thomas Ely of Company E, seriously wounding trooper Ulysses Norton, and killing six horses. 43

Lieutenant Love would later observe that during the close-range artillery duel, Mexican grapeshot (a large number of iron balls fired en masse) “fell like hail among the men striking the cannon, limbers and caissons.” Enemy fire struck Pvt. George Meyers, a recruit from St. Louis; he would lose his right arm. The Irish luck of Pvt. John Vance, an old soldier from County Tyrone, ran out when some grapeshot hit him in the face. Private Vance survived his wound but lost his right eye. Thomas Crosby, a twenty-six-year-old British immigrant who had re-enlisted in the dragoons when the war started, was also seriously injured by counter-battery fire. Four other B Company Dragoons were slightly wounded during the morning’s intense artillery exchange. 44

Around noon American scouts reported that a column of nine hundred lancers were fast approaching; Lieutenant Love was ordered to fall back in order to protect the American encampment and his ammunition train. As he did so, rousing cheers and loud shouts of “Venceremos,” “Viva Mexico,” and “Santiago” could be heard from the defenders who believed that the Yanquis were in retreat. 45 The reinforcements turned out to be nothing more than a few presidial horsemen and some unarmed campesinos from neighboring towns. Hearing the distant rumble of artillery, they came to watch the battle. These individuals skirmished briefly with a company of Santa Fe Horse and fled. 46

During a lull in the fighting, Glasgow the merchant briefly napped in a field near the battle, only to be awakened by the screams of a wounded man whose leg was being sawed off by an army surgeon. A short distance away he saw hospital attendants “dressing the stump of another’s which had just been cut off.” Glasgow wrote that he “didn’t feel sleepy again for some time” and concluded: “War is an ugly business and I could not help thinking when it was all over, that this thing of people’s killing each other is the greatest nonsense extant.” 47
General Price decided that the lengthy artillery bombardment had not shaken the resolve of the well-entrenched defenders and that his troops must enter the town. At 3:00 PM, he ordered Lieutenant Love's cannon back to the cemetery with orders to provide covering fire for the impending attack. Love's battery, under fire from two Mexican artillery pieces, trotted forward and again swung into battery.48

Lieutenant Colonel Lane's three companies of Missourians dismounted and swiftly advanced from the north. Meeting little resistance, Lane's detachment cut through several walls of buildings and came to within one hundred yards of the plaza. Here, they encountered several artillery pieces masked behind secure fortifications under the command of Col. Vicente Sánchez and Capt. Francisco Montes de Oca. Sánchez ordered his troops to open fire. A fusillade of bullets chipped the surrounding walls; Lt. George Hepburn of Company D fell mortally wounded, as did B Company privates Henry Beckmann and Joseph Scharfenberg.49 The fire from the plaza increased and five or six of the attackers lay wounded. Lane's men, finding their exposed position to be perilous, beat a hasty retreat back to their original position. General Price rode up and ordered the command to mount and attack from the southwestern side of the town.50

From their fortified position in the plaza, the defenders had successfully withstood the intense artillery bombardment and repelled the attack from the north. Mingled with wreckage and burning material, the dead and unattended wounded lay all over the ground. The acrid smell of gun smoke filled the sky. More attacks would come.

General Price ordered Colonel Ralls's four companies of Missourians to advance on foot at the double quick from the southwest quarter. After withstanding Mexican cannon shot all morning, and with their pent-up rage unleashed, they gave a loud cheer and charged the village. From high atop the church and on the roof of a neighboring two-story building, Capt. Juan Talamantes and a company of infantry guardsmen took up exposed positions to meet Ralls's attack. These movements attracted the attention of Love's gunners. Well-aimed shots from three of Love's cannon killed Captain Talamantes and most of the men in his detachment.51

Colonel Ralls's detachment of 190 men moved cautiously down the narrow streets that led to the plaza. Ralls would later describe the Mexican positions: "Every house and wall, from the point of our entrance into town to the steeple of the church was filled with infantry, protected by barricades or parapets, and, in fact, the outlines of the walls and houses bristled with
musketry, which continued to pour in the direction of our party, added to which were hand grenades, which the enemy was constantly throwing into our midst.52

In front of Ralls stood a formation of forty-three National Guard skirmishers commanded by Lt. Jose Escobar. As Ralls neared the plaza, Escobar's skirmishers swiftly parted, unmasking a barricade in which was placed a twenty-four-pound howitzer. The weapon belched forth a deadly round of canister into Ralls's formation and sent it reeling. Two Missourians fell seriously wounded. Rather than risk a suicidal charge, he ordered his men to fall back and take cover inside the adjacent buildings.53 Mexican artillery was positioned to fire down the streets but not into many of the buildings. By going inside, the Missourians were protected from being struck by artillery. Using crowbars, picks, rifle butts, and shovels, Ralls's detachment slowly bashed, clawed, and dug their way through the interior adobe walls of buildings and soon gained possession of a corral fronting on the plaza.54

At about 5:00 PM, Major Walker's detachment of Santa Fe Volunteers and Missouri Horse launched their attack from the southwest. Brushing aside some skirmishers, Walker's men steadily advanced from the south toward the plaza, and soon encountered a strong Mexican position under the command of Colonel Justiniani. Walker's men cleared the position by poking holes into the walls of fortified houses and then tossing lighted howitzer shells into the rooms. Walker brought up a twelve-pound mountain howitzer to fire canister into the plaza and at the Mexican rooftop snipers.55 The Mexican forces had bravely endured over six hours of bombardment and fighting. They were now being attacked on two sides, and casualties were mounting. At twenty minutes after six, and with darkness fast approaching, General Trías ordered a cease-fire and surrendered.56

This did not end the battle. In Colonel Ralls's official account of the battle, written on 17 March 1848, he reveals that, after his troops had gained a position near the plaza, they observed a white flag of surrender and he ordered a "cease fire." Colonel Ralls wrote: "So intent were the men, and so
determined was their enthusiasm to occupy the church (from which so much mischief had been done) and the plaza before night, that the officers (including myself) had much difficulty restraining [the troops], and to get them once more into ranks.57 In Trías's official report of the battle, he mentions that American troops did not stop shooting even when a bugle calling for a cease-fire was sounded.58 A Mexican account of the battle notes that as nightfall descended, and after the plaza fell to Price's men, the victors did not suspend their fire nor cease the commission of excesses.59

After the Shooting Finally Stopped: Casualties and Fallout

The final assault upon Rosales had taken about an hour and one-half. General Price's losses for the battle amounted to four killed and nineteen wounded.60 Mexican losses were significantly higher.

John Gooch Ferguson of the Third Missouri wrote that as soon as the battle ended, it became dark and he bedded down in the church. "The next morning the sight that had met the eye was shocking to behold. Piles of dead Mexicans were seen in various quarters, many of them most horribly mangled."61 Acting Asst. Surg. E. S. Gale of the Third Missouri surveyed the south side of town after the battle and counted 182 dead Mexican soldiers.62 Price reported Mexican deaths at two officers and 236 enlisted men. General Trías, however, reported that only two officers, thirty privates and eleven civilians were killed during the battle.63 Two historians questioned the casualty totals from the engagement. Why did the attacking army suffer so few casualties while the defending Mexicans, fighting behind stout fortifications, lost 236 men? George Lockhart Rives and K. Jack Bauer concluded that Price's report of Mexican losses must have been mistaken.64 The Mexican command structure ceased to exist at the end of battle. Mexican officers, who were prisoners, hastily computed the casualty reports. Given Assistant Surgeon Gale's body count after the battle, Price's estimation of Mexican dead would appear to be more accurate than that given by Trías.

On the day after the battle, General Price and the bulk of his command headed back to Chihuahua. The prisoners were paroled and set free.65 A portion of Missouri volunteers under Colonel Ralls remained in garrison at Santa Cruz de Rosales. Ferguson, a newspaper reporter in civilian life, wrote that a "day or two after the battle I found an old press and types, and issued one number of a paper called the Santa Cruz Banner, containing Colonel
The typical Missouri volunteer wore civilian garb. The federal government supplied his primary weapon, a Model 1841 Yeager rifle. From John Taylor Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition: Containing an account of the conquest of New Mexico ...* (Cincinnati: J.A. & U.P. James, 1848).

Ralls' and Colonel Lane's reports and an [unofficial] account of the battle.  

On 24 March 1848, Colonel Ralls, concerned that the battle was fought after the rumored ceasefire, sent a copy of his report with a letter by courier to the commanding officer at army headquarters in Saltillo, Mexico. He included the following observation:

Feeling a strong desire to have news from the United States and Mexico, I have thought it proper to send this communication to you, with the request that it may be laid before the General Commanding, in order that I may have returned to me the latest and most authentic intelligence. There was a rumor at this place, and it was so reported to General Price before his capture of this town, which took place on the 16th Inst, [he heard] there was an armistice, but no facts could be furnished bearing evidence sufficient to convince the General that there existed such an armistice.  

General Price, who had made no mention in his report of any misconduct by the troops under his command, was furious when he heard that Colonel Ralls had allowed copies of an unofficial account of the battle to be printed and placed into the hands of his troops. On 24 March, the general wrote to Colonel Ralls that he regretted "exceedingly the course you have adopted, as it gives a publicity to an important document never recognized but through the medium of the War Department." General Price ordered Colonel Ralls to report immediately to headquarters in Chihuahua and upon Ralls's arrival, placed the colonel under house arrest.

On 4 April 1848, Colonel Ralls responded to Price's vague charges. He took umbrage with Price's assertion that this behavior somehow violated a sense of military protocol:
While in arrest without written information as to the nature of the charges it is intended to prefer against me for insubordination given by you on yesterday when you placed me in arrest, I am led to the conclusion that you have done so relative to the printing of what purported to be my official report of the action taken by the forces under my command at the Battle of Santa Cruz Rosales, on the 16th of March in connection with the letter forwarded by me from that place to the officer in command of the United States forces stationed at Saltillo from which you seem to infer that I am disposed to assume a command which you think belongs only to yourself.

If I am correct in this conclusion, then I deem it to be a duty I owe to the public service, to you and to myself to make a statement of the motives and feeling which influenced me in regard to this matter.

The document referred to [The Banner] was not printed by my order, nor does it contain my official report—however, in justice to those who executed the printing, it was done by my consent—in the hour of excitement after the achievement of victory over our enemy’s [sic], the printing was permitted without any mischievous intent on the part of myself or any others—believing as I did at the time that any accusation of such notoriety of the Battle of Santa Cruz could be printed without being to the public service. . . . The facts published were generally known in this Country and being communicated in every direction by each party engaged in the Conflict.\[70\]

On 5 April 1848, General Price wrote to General Wool that he had “made every effort to suppress circulation of this [unofficial printed] Report, and at once ordered Colonel Ralls to report to me in person: his corroboration of these facts led at once to his arrest.” The next day, Price released Ralls from confinement.\[71\]

Gen. William Butler, commanding the American forces in Mexico, ordered General Price to return the arms seized in the Battle of Rosales to the Mexican government. Possibly fearing armed retribution for the actions of the volunteers, this order was troubling to Colonel Ralls. In a letter written to his wife from Santa Cruz de Rosales on 21 April 1848, he chaffed:

We must deliver to the Mexican authorities all arms and property which we captured in the battle here on the 16th of March. This is looked upon by the brave soldiers who so nobly fought for and
captured these arms & etc., as degrading. We would rather fight again
than be compelled to surrender the arms. I am clearly of the opinion
that if Genl. Butler had been fully apprised of the facts in regard to this
Battle, and the unpleasant situation in which this order places us, he
would not have required us to comply with such an order. 72

Colonel Ralls need not have been worried.
Presumably the weapons were returned to the Mexican government and
on 24 July 1848, the U.S. forces departed Chihuahua for Santa Fe. There were
no reported confrontations during their march to Santa Fe. The Third Mis­
souri marched home and was mustered out of service in Independence, Mis­
souri, on 25 October 1848. Colonel Ralls returned to his wife and family. In
1850 he gained admission to the Missouri bar and later became a judge. 73

Sec. of War William Marcy wrote to General Price, remarking that the
general’s unilateral decision to invade Chihuahua was jeopardizing the frag­
ile peace by creating “great uncertainty as to what will be our future relations
with Mexico.” Sensing the all-too-common hostility of volunteers to the Mexi­
can populace, he urged the general to take “great pains . . . to prevent all
irregular or disorderly conduct in our troops.” He also expressed anger that
Price had disobeyed orders by failing to send some of his men westward to
reinforce the army in California. 74 No matter, the war was over. General Price
got the victory he wanted, and Marcy was powerless to hurt a war hero. Turn­
ing control of the territory and remaining troops temporarily over to Major
Beall, Price returned to Missouri and was hailed as a conquering general. 75

Was there a Massacre of Mexican Prisoners?

On 22 May 1848, Lt. Cave Couts penned a brief letter to Lieutenant Love from army headquarters at
Saltillo. 76 At the time, Couts commanded Company A of the First United States Dragoons. Like Love,
he was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and a junior officer in the dragoons. A treaty end­
ing the war had been signed at Guadalupe Hidalgo

LT. CAVE COUTS
(Photograph courtesy Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California)
nearly four months earlier. But like the other American officers in northern Mexico, Couts was not aware of this.

Lieutenant Couts, who was not at the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales, had heard accounts—most likely from Colonel Ralls’s letter and battle report—of a massacre of Mexican troops. With the arrival of Capt. William Grier’s troop of dragoons in Saltillo, Couts was relieved to hear firsthand that Lieutenant Love and the dragoons played no part in this abomination. Couts wrote to Love:

We are delighted to hear from Capt. Grier that you had nothing to do with the ‘Cowpen Slaughter’ at Santa Cruz. Something had been heard of it previous to the arrival of the Capt., which agreed with his version of the affair, viz: you penned up a number of Mexican regular greasers, and slaughtered them by file. We are all proud, and feel happy in learning that you gave countenance to no such inhumanity.

He concluded:

I had forgotten at the commencement of my letter to congratulate you on your Captaincy—allow me to do so, in a few minutes, with a good gulp of brandy. By the way, I send you a quantity of Puros, (1200), and not least a keg of fine old Brandy (15 galls). Take a drink with all the fellows in Chihuahua also, for me. If peace is not made, we will probably meet in the next world, if not before. In haste.

Six years later in 1854, Love, who had resigned from his commission, received another letter suggesting a dark side of the battle. This one was from Major Beall, his former commanding officer at Rosales. Beall wrote to inquire about opportunities in the private sector for a retired officer. In this letter, Major Beall, possibly making a reference to the Cowpen incident, asked could “a poor devil like me make any money in this business? Or must I go back to [the State of] Chihuahua and meet such fellows as you, [Adrian?] Terry, Folger, [Lt. John] Adams, [Lt. Col. Alton] Easton, McCarty, & a host of others who congregated in that abominable Corral.” In the idiom of nineteenth-century language use, the term abominable has a special meaning: inhuman, detestable, or beastly. The question is whether Major Beall was guilty of using outrageous hyperbole, or if he was referring to dastardly atrocities committed at Santa Cruz de Rosales.
To date, there is no detailed study on the battle. Most historians who write of this battle do so in the broad context of the U.S-Mexico War. Often reading from the same published battle reports, official correspondence, journals, newspapers, as well as from each other, they give the battle about one or two pages of attention in their books. Although one historian, without citing any authority or giving details, suggested a postsurrender atrocity, the others fail to mention any significant carnage.

A good starting point to sort out the mystery is the casualty reports. In six of the major battles fought in the war, the percentage of casualties—killed and wounded—suffered by the United States compared to Mexico ranges between a low of 23 percent (Palo Alto and Churubusco) to a high of 133 percent (Monterrey). The total loss of U.S. soldiers in these representative battles averages to roughly 34 percent of Mexican losses (see fig. 1).

At first glance, the disproportionate casualties at Santa Cruz de Rosales may be attributed to the combination of badly sited Mexican artillery, wildly inaccurate Mexican marksmanship, and the reckless exposure of Mexican troops to U.S. artillery fire. These factors may be responsible for a portion of the significantly disparate figures. Yet there could be a darker reason for the unusually high toll of Mexican enlisted casualties: many of the Mexican soldiers may have been ruthlessly killed by volunteers after they had surrendered.

### Figure 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battle and Date</th>
<th>Number of U.S. Soldiers Killed and Wounded</th>
<th>Number of Mexicans Killed and Wounded</th>
<th>Percentage of U.S. to Mexican Losses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palo Alto, 8 May 1846</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resaca de la Palma, 9 May 1846</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterrey, 21-23 September 1846</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buena Vista, 23 February 1847</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churubusco, 20 August 1847</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>4297</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molina del Rey, 8 September 1847</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>3026</td>
<td>8893</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz de Rosales, 16 March 1848</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At Santa Cruz de Rosales, Price's losses were a mere 1 percent of the reported Mexican casualties. These figures are notable considering that Price attacked fairly well-entrenched defenders who had forted up inside of a village. Usually, an army attacking prepared defenses can expect to take heavy losses. Furthermore, the loss of just two Mexican officers out of over two-hundred deaths raises suspicion that the slaughter may have occurred after these officers were separated from their men and placed under the protection of American officers.

Two weeks after the battle, Edward James Glasgow wrote to his sister from Chihuahua that Mexicans are “cowardly in the extreme,” having “perhaps fewer redeeming traits of character than any other nation; not excepting Comanches nor the wild Arabs.” This attitude was not unique. A significant number of volunteer soldiers viewed Mexicans as an inferior race and often resorted to acts of violence, pillaging, and rape. Troops marched merrily off to war to the patriotic strains of Yankee Doodle, but with new words added for the occasion:

The Mexicans are doomed to fall,
God has in wrath forsook 'em,
And all their goods and chattels call
On us to go and hook 'em.
We're the boys for Mexico,
Sing Yankee Doodle Dandy,
Gold and silver images,
Plentiful and handy.
Churches grand, with altars rich,
Saints with diamond collars,
(That's the talk to understand)
With lots of new bright dollars.
We're the boys for Mexico, etc.

The Niles Register of 28 January 1848, quoting the editor of the New York Evening Post, reported the following:

And again, “the aborigines of this country have not attempted and cannot attempt, to exist independently alongside of us. Providence has so ordained it; and it is folly not to recognize the fact. The Mexicans are aboriginal Indians, and they must share the destiny of their race.”
The “destiny of the race” of “aboriginal Indians along side of us” has been extinction—rapid extinction—not subjection, as we all know. They never have submitted to become slaves. Is it then seriously contemplated that the seven millions of Mexican Indians shall not “exist independently along side of us?”—and pronounced to be “a folly not to recognize the fact, that Providence has so ordained it?”

In 1919 historian Justin Smith gently summarized the reason for the misbehavior of the troops: “Conquering soldiers in a foreign land, especially when the enemy is deemed cowardly, treacherous and cruel, are not likely to be angels; and we may count upon meeting here with disagreeable as well as complimentary facts.” Writing about atrocities committed by volunteers eighty-three years after the publication of Smith’s work, historian Paul Foos was more blunt: The “proclivity [of the volunteers] for racist, religious, or nationalist rationales for their crimes took up the language of manifest destiny, suffusing their criminal activity with heroism and comradeship implicit in their cause.”

From Matamoros to Monterrey, from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, the Mexican nation was ransacked and pillaged by American soldiers throughout the war. Fourth Artillery Lt. Daniel H. Hill, later a Confederate general, witnessed a paroled Mexican soldier gunned down in cold blood by a volunteer, and heard that “at least one hundred inhabitants [of Monterrey had been] . . . murdered by Volunteers.” Dragoon trooper Sam Chamberlain wrote of witnessing a massacre of twenty to thirty civilians by Arkansas Volunteers. In 1849 a regular United States officer reported to Congress that all through Northern Mexico “the smiling villages which welcomed our troops on their upward march are now black and smoldering ruins, their gardens and orange groves destroyed, and the inhabitants who administered to their necessities, have fled to the mountains. The march of Atila [sic] was not more withering and destructive.”

Francisco Montes de Oca, the captain of artillery at Rosales whose cannon stopped Lane’s advance in its tracks, decades later related how the invaders plundered Rosales following the battle. For many years after the battle, residents of the region would recall with horror the murder and other atrocities committed by Price’s troops.

Although the press sometimes reported personal accounts of atrocities, not all atrocities were publicized. Foos explains: “It was extremely rare for an individual volunteer to break ranks with his fellows and unashamedly declare
that his comrades were out-and-out murderers. . . . [T]he closed mouths and closed ranks of the volunteers made it difficult to achieve corroboration of those stories. 98 Indeed, there existed a near silence among the volunteers who fought at Santa Cruz de Rosales on that sixteenth day of March. But clues, viewed in the aggregate, make for a strong case of a shameful massacre.

There were men in the Third Missouri who had little respect for their officers and often refused to follow their orders. 99 This may explain why some Missourians, as reported by Colonel Ralls, continued to shoot into a mass of surrendered Mexicans after the order of cease-fire. In addition many men in the Third Missouri were infected with racial animosity. Ferguson noted in his diary that on 27 October 1847, a fight between townsfolk of San Pedro and some members of the Missouri regiment resulted in the destructive actions of twenty or thirty troopers who “ransacked the town, broke open several doors, and brought away fourteen prisoners, who were found on top of a house with arms in their hands; and it was said that one Mexican was shot. In the melee the men took a good many chickens, blankets, trinkets, etc, and Gilham displayed one of their Saints, or images (San Antonio), as a trophy.” 100

A growing body of evidence supports the proposition that an abomination occurred at Santa Cruz de Rosales on that March afternoon. First is the statistically anomalous disproportion in the number of dead Mexican enlisted soldiers. Second is the likelihood of racial animosity of many of the Missouri Volunteers toward Mexicans. Third are the actions and words of Ralls, including his report stating that he had difficulty restraining his troops after his order to cease fire, and his fear of returning firearms to the Mexicans. Fourth are the letters written to Lieutenant Love by Lieutenant Couts, who referred to the “Cowpen Slaughter” of “greasers,” and by Colonel Beall, who mentioned an event occurring in a corral in the State of Chihuahua that he characterized as “abominable.” Finally, a massacre at Santa Cruz de Rosales may be partially inferred from the overreaction of the politically ambitious General Price, particularly by his “exceeding” regret that Colonel Ralls had given “publicity” to the battle by virtue of a report published in the Santa Cruz Banner, his suppression of the Banner distribution, and his arrest of Colonel Ralls for allowing the report to be published.

This article will hopefully impel historians to take a closer look at the unheralded fight at Santa Cruz de Rosales and, by doing so, to locate evidence that either supports or refutes the author’s hypothesis that a postsurrender massacre occurred on that sixteenth day of March in 1848.
Notes

4. At the time of the battle, the shooting had officially been over for six weeks. A cease-fire had been signed at Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico, on 2 February 1848.
6. Santa Fe (N.Mex.) Republican, 9 October 1847.
8. Ibid., 69.
16. Theophilus F. Rodenbough, *From Everglade to Canyon with the Second United States Cavalry . . .* (1875; reprint, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 19–21, 47–53, 136, 140. An account of Major Beall’s successful pursuit of Antonio de López Santa Ana’s army, which was attempting to retreat from Cerro Gordo, appears


18. Richmond (Va.) Enquirer for 22 February 1848 reported: “The Mexicans in that part of the country, are making every effort to oppose their march with a strong force. At first they did not intend making any resistance whatever; but, emboldened by the long delay of our troops at El Paso, they set to work in good earnest, and have now a considerable numerical force and twelve pieces of cannon. Should our troops continue on their march, they will probably have a second edition of the battle of Sacramento.” Article available at http://www.history.vt.edu/MsAmWarlNewspapers/RE/RE1848gJanJune.htm#aRE1848g44n85plc7RioGrande (accessed June 2006).

19. Quoted in St. Louis Republican, 18 March 1848, p. 2.

20. Smith, The War with Mexico, 2:166; and Shalhope, Sterling Price, 71.

21. Price to Jones, 31 March 1848, U.S. Congress, House, Report of Operations of the Army of the West, February–March 1848, 30th Cong., 2d sess., 1848–1849, HED 1, ser. no. 537, p. 113 [this collection of reports of the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales is hereafter referred to as HED 1]; and American Star (Mexico City), 25 March 1848, p. 3. The American Star was a newspaper started by a group of Yankee journalists in 1847 that followed General Scott’s army from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. Smith, The War with Mexico, 2:227.


25. Joaquín Márquez Montiel S.J., Hombres célebres de Chihuahua (Mexico: Editorial Jus, 1953), 273–75. Five months after the Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales, Cave J. Couts, a lieutenant with the First Dragoons, described Governor General Trías as showing “himself more of a man than I thought possible to be in the frame of a Mexican, and in private intercourse a perfect gentleman, good and sociable companion, loves a frolic and always ready for one” (emphasis in original). Cave J. Couts, Hepah, California! The Journal of Cave Johnson Couts from Monterey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, to Los Angeles, California, during the Years 1848–1849, ed. Henry F. Dobyns (Tucson: Arizona Pioneers’ Historical Society, 1961), 29. In a journal entry for 1 September 1848, Lieutenant Couts reported having dinner in Chihuahua with General Trías, during which the general offered a toast to the Yankee troops: “The Americans as enemies you whip us, as friends you slay us” (p. 30).

26. Unable to obtain weapons from Mexico City, General Trías had the eight cannon fabricated in foundries located in Chihuahua. Smith, The War with Mexico, 2:419.

28. Beall to Price, 22 March 1848, HED 1, pp. 120–21.
31. American Star (Mexico City), 25 April 1848.
33. Love to Benjamin Beall, 22 March 1848, HED 1, p. 124.
34. Ferguson, 8 March 1858, “Diary,” in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 356. Traveling past Santa Cruz de Rosales a few months later, Dragoon Lieutenant Couts remarked, “The whole section of the country produces most excellent peaches and watermelons.” Couts, Hepah, California!, ed. Dobyns, 17.
35. John Ralls to Sterling Price, 17 March 1848, HED 1, p. 128.
37. Ibid., 50.
39. Sterling Price to Roger Jones, 31 March 1848, HED 1, p. 116. Although mounted, the Missouri volunteers fought on foot. An observer remarked: “The United States dragoons could alone properly be called cavalry, as the commands of Col. RALLS and Major WALKER, although mounted, were armed chiefly with [long-barreled] muskets, and in action, as actually happened, would be obliged to dismount and to act as infantry of the line. Company A, (MCNAIR’S) [sic], of RALLS’ regiment, however, was provided with the proper arms.” St. Louis Republican, 15 May 1848, p. 2.
42. Love to Benjamin Beall, 22 March 1848, HED 1, pp. 124–25.
43. Perry (Mo.) Enterprise, 26 July 1906.
44. Benjamin Beall to Sterling Price, 23 March 1848, HED 1, p. 124.
45. Ibid.; Sterling Price to Roger Jones, 31 March 1848; and Robert Walker to Sterling Price, 22 March 1848, HED 1, pp. 117, 132.
46. Robert Walker to Sterling Price, 22 March 1848, HED 1, p. 132.
47. Glasgow to sister, 31 March 1848, in Brothers on the Santa Fe, ed. Gardner, 137.
48. Love to Benjamin Beall, 22 March 1848, HED 1, p. 125.
49. Ferguson, 8 March 1848, “Diary,” in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 357. After the battle, Ferguson recounts, the Missouri troops came across the body of Lieutenant Hepburn and “found [it] completely stripped of clothing” (p. 358).

50. Ibid., 357-58.

51. The Battle of Santa Cruz de Rosales is remarkable in that, after his surrender, Colonel Justiniani provided General Price with a detailed report indicating the disposition of his troops and cannon prior to the attack. “Official Account of Forces which were Engaged in the Action at the Town of Rosales against the American Forces, 17 March 1848,” Price to Adj. Gen. Jones, ff. 234-42, r. 388, Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series), 1822-1860, Microcopy 567A (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1995), Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1780-1917, Record Group 94, National Archives [hereafter M567, RG 94, NA].

52. Ralls to Sterling Price, 17 March 1848, HED 1, p. 128.

53. Ibid., 127.

54. Ibid., 128; and Daily Missouri Republican, 15 May 1848, p. 2.

55. Ibid.; and Walker to Sterling Price, 22 March 1848, f. 132, r. 388, M567, RG94, NA.


57. Ralls to Sterling Price, 17 March 1848, HED 1, p. 128.

58. American Star (Mexico City), 25 April 1848.

59. Ramón Alcaraz et al., Apuntes para la historia de la guerra entre México y los Estados Unidos (1848; reprint, Mexico: Siglo Ventiuno Editores, 1970), 400.

60. Price to Roger Jones, 31 March 1848, HED 1, p. 124.

61. Ferguson, 8 March 1848, “Diary,” in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 358.

62. Gale to Sterling Price, 25 March 1848, f. 282, r. 388, M567, RG94, NA.

63. Copy of Report of General Trias, 31 March 1848, cited in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 356 n. 215. See also American Star (Mexico City), 25 April 1848. Mexican losses were reported to number twenty-six according to documents in the archives of the Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, see Almada, Resumen de historia del Estado de Chihuahua, 229. The day after the battle, Fray Juan José Perez claimed to have counted twenty-four dead bodies in the plaza. See Eduardo Espanza Terrazas, Santa Cruz, antigua región de los tapacolmes: Historia de la Villa de Rosales (Chihuahua: Instituto Chihuahuense de Cultura, 2004), 116-17.

64. Rives noted that the reported figure of Mexican dead was “obviously impossible, unless it is meant to include the prisoners, besides the killed and wounded.” George Lockhart Rives, The United States and Mexico, 1821–1848: A History of the Relations between the Two Countries from the Independence of Mexico to the Close of the War with the United States, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1913), 2:581 n. 1. See also Bauer, The Mexican War, 1846–1848, 159. From all accounts, the entire Mexican garrison at Rosales was captured, wounded, or killed. Those who survived were immediately released. If Rives’s hypothesis were true, General Price would have claimed in excess of eight hundred Mexican casualties.
65. The American Star (Mexico City), 26 April 1848, noted: "The Official Register of Durango contains a communication from the Minister of War to Trias, late Governor and Commandante General of Chihuahua stating that he is at liberty . . . He says the Provisional President, the moment it was known the American troops were advancing upon Chihuahua, determined that reparation should be made in case of disaster. It was therefore agreed with the American commander in chief that if any Mexicans should be captured, they should not be held as prisoners, nor warlike stores and munitions be considered as lawful prize. Sen. Trias is therefore set at liberty, the trains, &c., are to be restored, and as the editor of the Register remarks, 'there is only the loss that will be felt, that of the brave men who fell at Rosales.'"

66. Ferguson, 8 March 1848, "Diary," in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 358.

67. Ralls to Commanding Officer, Saltillo, Mexico, 24 March 1848, f. 344, r. 388, M567, RG94, NA. See also Richmond (Va.) Enquirer, 5 May 1848. Colonel Ralls was seemingly unaware that Maj. Gen. John Wool was in overall command in Saltillo. Historians have long considered General Wool to be a fair-minded officer whose keen sense of ethics often got him in trouble with his superior officers. For example, in 1838 he failed to carry out orders to forcibly remove the Cherokees out of Georgia, and in 1856 refused to open up Native American lands to settlers in the Pacific Northwest. Durwood Ball, Army Regulars on the Western Frontier, 1848-1861 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 64.

68. Price to Ralls, 24 March 1848, ff. 329-30, r. 388, M567, RG 94, NA.

69. In his journal, Ferguson wrote: "This morning Colonel Ralls left for Chihuahua. There is a rumor that he has been arrested by General Price for printing his report of the battle. There is also a report of an armistice has been agreed upon which terminates in May next. Many rumors of peace are also afloat." Ferguson, 2 April 1848, "Diary," in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 359.

70. Ralls to Price, 4 April 1848, ff. 341-42, r. 388, M567, RG94, NA.

71. Ferguson, 2 April 1848, "Diary," in Marching with the Army of the West, ed. Bieber, 359. See also General Orders, Army of the West, Price to Wool, 5 April and 6 April 1848, ff. 338-39, r. 388, M567, RG94, NA. The grounds for Ralls arrest and release were reported as follows: "In consequence of the representations made by Col. Ralls commanding Missouri Horse, in relation to the publication of his Official Report of the operations of his command on the 16th ultimo, and the circumstances which induced him to open communication without authority from these Head Quarters, with the Army of Occupation, the Commanding General is disposed to stop further proceedings in the matter. Col. Ralls is hereby released from arrest and will rejoin his command. By order of the Brig. Genl. Sterling Price." Special Order no. 18, Headquarters Army of the West, Chihuahua, 16 April 1848, f. 170, r. 1, Orders Issued by Brig. Gen. Stephen W. Kearney and Brig. Gen. Sterling Price to the Army of the West 1846-1848, T1115 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1969), RG 94, NA.
72. Ralls to Lucinda Ralls, 21 April 1848, John Ralls Letters, 1837–1848 (C2156), Western Historical Manuscript Collection, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.


84. Shalhope writes, "Many Mexicans were brutally killed while attempting to surrender." Shalhope, *Sterling Price*, 73.

85. In contrast to the four-hour shelling of Rosales, the Americans bombed Vera Cruz with heavy siege cannon for fifteen days, killing eighty-five Mexican soldiers. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846–1848*, 252.

86. At Monterrey in 1846, for example, the Mexicans defended themselves from behind walls and fortified buildings. The U.S. forces, in assaulting these positions, suffered greater casualties than did the Mexicans. Likewise, at the 1847 Battle of Molina del Rey, where a portion of the Mexican defense was anchored in some buildings, the U.S. losses were 35 percent of the Mexican losses. At the Battle of Sacramento, Colonel Doniphan lost nine and reported Mexican losses to be in excess of three hundred. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846–1848*, 156. There has never been any suggestion of a massacre at Sacramento. The disproportionate losses, however, may be attributed to the reckless and uncoordinated Mexican cavalry charges that ran into deadly effective rifle and howitzer fire. One participant in the battle wrote that Mexican losses at Sacramento were closer to twenty-five. William Glasgow, "Memrandums," in *Brothers on the Santa Fe*, ed. Gardner, 170.

87. Glasgow to sister, 31 March 1848, in *Brothers on the Santa Fe and Chihuahua Trails*, ed. Gardner, 137.


90. *Niles Register*, 28 January 1848.


97. Almada, *Resumen de historia del Estado de Chihuahua*, 230; Bárzca, *Recuerdos de la invasión norteamericana*, 3189. Other regions of Mexico were also needlessly destroyed by the invaders. Justin Smith, referring to General Scott's march across Central Mexico wrote: "The torch was applied with much liberality, on suspicion, and sometimes on general principles, to huts and villages, and as the end a black
swath of destruction, leagues in width, marked the route.” Smith, *The War with Mexico*, 2:156. See also Levinson, *Wars within War*, 62–63.


100. Ibid., 333. Although his company of Missouri Volunteers did not fight at Santa Cruz de Rosales, Capt. Elihu Sheppard describes several acts of racial animosity and theft of Mexican property by his troops during the 1848 Chihuahua campaign in *The Autobiography of Elihu H. Shepard* (St. Louis: G. Knapp and Co., 1869), 158–59, 163, 165–68, 182.