August 2025 Between Woke and Whitewash Issue 22

Tales of Texas NEWSLETTER

August 2025

This issue of Tales of Texas concerns a little known but extremely critical incident in Texas History: The Rape of Zacatecas

The photo above is the beautiful city of Zacatecas, Mexico.

Comments? Go to website listed below.

The Rape of Zacatecas

When seeking a title for this edition of the Tales of Texas, I worried about the use of the word "rape." One of the more famous examples of the rape of a city is the *Rape of Nanking*. Nanking was the capital of China and fell to the Japanese army in 1937. The Japanese put on a show of brutality, sexual assault, and murder that horrified the world. Tens of thousands of girls and women were assaulted and killed. While that example is famous, there is another instance we rarely hear about. The *Rape of Zacatecas*. One of the first things one learns as a police officer is that when investigating a sexual assault, the assault has nothing to do with sex. It's all about extending power over the victim in the most brutal way imaginable. This is why Nanking and Zacatecas meet history's use and definition of the most undesirable term.

We, in Texas, consider the Texas Revolution as having started in Gonzales under the well-known "Come And Take It" flag. It's been called our Lexington and Concord moment. While that notion is not wrong, it is limited.

We need to keep in mind that Mexico as a country was brand new. It got its independence from Spain in 1821, eleven years after Father Hidalgo started their Revolutionary War. In 1824, Lorenzo de Zavala wrote the *Constitution of 1824*. This was the first real democratic government in Mexico. Do NOT think of the U.S. Constitution when forming an image of the 1824 document in your mind. The U.S. Constitution gave individual rights to everyone in the U.S. The Mexican document did not. It was set up as a manual of how to run the government. Left wing armchair historians now say *1824* permitted slavery and that is why Texian revolutionaries fought for it. Totally wrong.

Tales of Texas

Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna

Flag of Federalistas

1824 simply gave states more autonomy the further away they were from Mexico City. Imagine a map of Mexico, including the American Southwest, with an overlay of concentric circles. The bull's eye would be Mexico City. Because of limitations on communications, people in the far-flung states wanted more autonomy. *1824* gave them that. It made no mention of slavery because it didn't have to. Slavery was already illegal. Mexico had indentured servitude, a system that many Europeans of all races came to the New World under. The point is that *1824* is like the U.S. Constitution in one respect. Neither lists crimes. Murder is not mentioned in the American compact because it's already illegal. To say *1824* permitted slavery because it didn't specifically outlaw it, is wrong.

A civil war broke out in Mexico. It was between *Centralistas* and *Federalistas*. The *Centralistas* disavowed *1824* and wanted all authority returned to Mexico City. The *Federalistas* wanted "states rights" and the decentralized authority of *1824*. Santa Anna was on the side of the *Federalistas* – at first. But he flipped when he saw the real money and power was on the side of the *Centralistas*. He then took it a step further and inserted himself as the supreme dictator.

Several Mexican states rebelled: Yucatan, Coahuila, Tejas, and Zacatecas. On May 12, 1835, Santa Anna acted against Zacatecas. After a full-fledged battle, he took the beautiful city in central Mexico. Rather than bring the city back under his protective wing, he unleashed hell on the people: particularly, the female population. He gave his marauding soldiers a free reign of terror for forty-eight hours. Thousands of women and girls were raped as horrified husbands and fathers were forced to watch. Dr. Stephen Hardin, the "Dean of Texas History," said that "more than two thousand defenseless noncombatants were killed in that orgy of destruction. Texians received reports of the rape of Zacatecas with dismay and foreboding."

Santa Anna established his reputation as a ruthless and savage dictator. Today, some left-wingers want to characterize this blemish on humanity as a crusading abolitionist. Don't believe it. The people of Zacatecas can attest to the fact slavery had nothing to do with the dictator's trademark of death and destruction.

For further reading: Hardin, Stephen L., *Texian Iliad*, 1994: University of Texas Press.