



El Regalo Real: The Spanish Contribution to the American Revolution

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History

1754- 1763: French & Indian War (also called the Seven Years' War) fought within the colonies but not exclusively. France and Spain experienced major losses of territory to Britain. France and Spain were allies against a common enemy.

1763- 1779: Spain plans and rebuilds its military, planning for a successful war against Britain.

1776- 1779: Spain supplies weapons, ammunition, explosives, etc. to the colonies. Money is either given directly to the colonies or funneled through France. Bernardo de Gálvez is granted permission for military actions.

Cut off British access to the port of New Orleans and the Mississippi River. It became a major supply line to the Americans.

(**1778:** France officially enters the war with the signing of the Franco-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance.)

21 June 1779: Spain formally enters the American Revolution when King Carlos III declares war against King George III. (Exact date of declaration varies with account).

1779: Spain engaged the British in Gibraltar, Havana and, the French West Indies (diverting some of the British Navy from the colonies). The French Navy landed troops in the US colonies.

Bernardo de Gálvez captures Baton Rouge and Natchez on the east bank of the Mississippi River. Led to colonial control of the east bank of the Mississippi further north.

Bernardo de Gálvez arranges for Texas Longhorn cattle to be provided from Texas for food.

1780: Gálvez captures Mobile.

King Carlos III royal order for subjects in the Americas to pay a Donativo to support the war (1 peso per Indian; 2 pesos per Spaniard). Churches in Spain were also asked to contribute.

1781: Bernardo de Gálvez won back Pensacola. The Mississippi River and the gulf coast are now free from British attack.

Havana raised \$500,000 in 6 hours to replace the money not yet arrived from Spain to pay French Admiral de Grasse for supplies and payroll prior to the French fleet's departure to Yorktown.

Following Yorktown, Francisco Saavedra raised 9.5 million pesos for the war in New Spain and sent to Havana.

Spain's forces were diverted to Venezuela, Colombia and Peru due to revolts. Those troops were to be used at St. Augustine and East Florida.

Britain attempted to bring Russia into the European front at Minorca but France and Spain defeated the British. Spain also attacked the British in the West Indies and Central America, forcing the British to further divide their forces.

1783: Armistice leading to the Treaty of Paris. Britain signed separate agreements with Spain, France and Holland. This included recovery of some of the land lost at the end of the Seven Years' War.

Search Strategies

Records may be in local, state, church or foreign archives.

Records may be in English, Spanish or French. Church records could be in Latin.

Nueva España included California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, Louisiana, Alabama, Mexico, Cuba; and much of Central America, South America, etc. (Land boundaries/control changed so additional areas may have records.)

Check university and all libraries where your Spanish ancestor lived.

Check manuscript collections.

Check libraries with Spanish collections.

Locate museums with collections from the time period/events to add context. Question them about items not on display in their collection.

Research an event your ancestor may have been involved in or the leaders of events.

Use the internet! Search online catalogs and finding aids first. Search for background information and databases/records online first.

Resources

This is a small sampling of what is available.

**Book is highly recommended for background on the contribution of Spain and its citizens based on primary source information.*

General Information

Beerman, Eric, *España y la Independencia de Estados Unidos* (1992)

Bolton, Herbert Eugene. *Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier 1768-1780, Spain in the West, Volumes I and II*. Cleveland, Ohio: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1914. Available at <https://books.google.com> for free.

Byers, Paula K., ed. *Hispanic American Genealogical Sourcebook*. Detroit, Michigan: Gale Research Inc., 1995.

* Chávez, Thomas E., *Spain and the Independence of the United States, An Intrinsic Gift*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2002.

Din, Gilbert C., *The Canary Islanders of Louisiana*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988.

Hill, Roscoe R. *Descriptive Catalogue of the Documents Relating to the History of the United States in the Papeles Procedentes de Cuba Deposited in the Archivo General de Indias at Seville*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1916. Available at <https://books.google.com> for free.

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Matinez, Leroy, *From Across the Spanish Empire: Spanish Soldiers Who Helped Win the American Revolutionary War, 1776- 1783. Arizona, California, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Texas Military Rosters*. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., 2015.

McCallum, Harriet Hardin, *New Mexico's Contributions to the American Revolutionary Cause Form Original Letters and Documents, 1779-1785, Including the Presidio Rosters of Santa Fe, New Mexico & San Carlos de Cerro Gordo, Parral, Mexico*. Santa Fe, NM: Self-published, 2005.

McDermott, John Francis, "The Battle of St. Louis 26 May 1780," *The Bulletin, Missouri Historical Society*, vol 36, no. 3 (April 1980) 131-151.

Medina Rojas, F. de Borjas, *José de Ezpeleta, Gobernador de la Mobila 1780-1781*. Seville, Spain: Press, 1980.

Morales Padrón, Francisco, Ed, Moore Topping, Aileen, Translator, *The Journal of Don Francisco Saavedra de Sangronis 1780-1783*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1989.

Odom, Wesley S., *The Longest Siege of the American Revolution: Pensacola*, Self-published, 2009.

Thonhoff, Robert H., *The Texas Connection With the American Revolution*. Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2000.

Villarreal, Jesse O. Sr, *Tejano Patriots of the American Revolution 1776-1783*. Austin, TX: Self-Published, 2011.

Yaniz, Major José I. (Spain), *The Role of Spain in the American Revolution: An Unavoidable Strategic Mistake*. Masters Thesis, Quantico, VA: United States Marine Corps, 2009.

Spanish Terms/Translation

DAR
link????

NSDAR Spanish Task Force, *Spanish Words and Phrases A Guide to Understanding Spanish Documents From the Colonial Period*, 2006.

Compilation of Colonial Spanish Terms and Document Related Phrases.
<http://www.somosprimos.com/spanishterms/spanishterms.htm>

Google Translate. www.translate.google.com

Archives/Holdings

The Archivo General de Indias (AGI) in Seville, Spain.

Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid, Spain.

Archivo General de Simancas in Valladolid, Spain.

The WWW History Central Catalogue European History. <http://vlib.iue.it/hist-spain/archives.html>

Genealogia Española-España GenWeb. <http://genealogia-es.com/>

Biblioteca Nacional de España (National Library of Spain). <http://www.bne.es> Click on "Welcome" on the top right for an English translation.

Library of Congress. Parallel Histories: Spain, the United States and the American Frontier. <http://international.loc.gov/intldl/eshtml/eshome.html>

Library of Congress, Hispanic Division online finding aids
www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/asp/dclcmss.html

Spanish Archives Portal (PARES). <http://en.www.mcu.es/archivos/CE/PARES.html>

Louisiana State University, Hill Memorial Library Special Collections, Baton Rouge, Louisiana includes Archivo General de Indias, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba.
www.lib.lsu.edu

University of Florida, P. K. Yonge Library. Papeles Procedentes de Cuba Archival Calendar.
<http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/papdcuba.html>

All Spanish Colonial Records on Microfilm.

<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/pkyonge/Microfilm/SpanHoldings.html>

The Historic New Orleans Collection. The Williams Research Center, New Orleans, Louisiana. Microfilm of the Archivo General de Indias Santo Domingo Papers (1757–1810) and the Cuban Papers (1762–1824). www.hnoc.org

Historic New Orleans Collection Manuscript Update (finding aid).

<http://www.hnoc.org/pdf/manuscripts/Volume%2010.pdf>

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Growing resources and database.

Spanish Patriot database. <http://www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy>

Resources <http://www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy/minority-research#spanish>