

1783 -1993

Motor Vessel -MISTAKE

Recovers Galvez's El Cazador (ship)

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Submitted by James Edward Mitchell, Chairman
Texas SAR RevWar Graves Index

Central to New Spain's contribution to the American Revolutionary War experience is strong support, from *King Charles III* combined with Spanish planning & a secret declaration of war accompanying the official promotion of (Acting Gov.) Don Bernardo de Galvez to Governor. It was the summer of 1777 in New Orleans for Galvez, who was receiving reports & military road surveys that British at West Florida had re-supplied their garrisons from Pensacola to Mobile and at Baton Rouge and Natchez.

Immediately, the LA Gov. decided not to rebuild the cities palisade & to re-set wooden posts in a layered multi-tiered defensive position. Instead, he ordered that small river boats be armed with heavy cannon to transport his Metropolitan Troops, Louisiana regts. He ordered that watch posts are manned day & night some distance from the city to warn of any impending British assault. An American agent & Spanish West Indies trader with whom Galvez was friendly named Oliver Pollock had been named a purchasing agent for the United States in Louisiana.

Galvez was authorized by the Spanish Crown to sell Pollock flour and much needed supplies of beef and black powder stores for shipment north to the Ohio River and points east to Pennsylvania, where Pollock had arrived in 1760 from Ireland.¹

Spain had wrested East & West Florida from Great Britain following the (British) Treaty of Peace of 1783. *King Charles III* ordered a silver coin treasure sail from Veracruz on Jan 11, 1784 aboard the Spanish brig: El Cazador i.e., *The Hunter* to New Orleans. However, after the sailing of El Cazador; its silver, Pillar Dollar hoard went missing and never arrived at Louisiana?!

The British 1783 Treaty of Peace with the United States set the East Florida boundary at the 31st parallel lat. Spain denied the boundary instead claiming the old British line of 32 degs. & 28 mins. Spanish Crown objectives at Florida and Louisiana following 1783 were to safeguard the Miss. River Valley checking the expansion of the United States and further developing Louisiana. Gov. Galvez was returned to Spain and in 1784 and he was appointed Capt. Gen. of Cuba. His Spanish Army aide, Col. Don Esteban Rodriguez Miró, (LA) militia regt., had become Acting Gov., during 1780 when Galvez sailed from New Orleans to Belize, to stage his 2,000 troops for the campaign against Mobile and Pensacola.

In 1785 Galvez ordered his aide Gov. Miró, to conduct a census of population. As a result it was determined that the population had practically doubled during the preceding 16 years; meaning

for Spain that more people had settled in the colony over this period than during all the years of French control.²

On Aug 2, 1993 fifty miles south of Louisiana a raggedy, butterfish trawler snagged a line aboard the vessel, MISTAKE. When the haul was examined from the Gulf of Mexico's floor there before his crew –all the recovered Spanish coin bore the Mexican Mint mark with a portrait of King Charles III of Spain.

Finally, indeed, financial help had arrived but for the vessel Mistake's Captain Jerry Murphy & crew!

¹ *Louisiana a Narrative History* by Edwin Adams Davis, 3rd Edition Copyright Sep., 1970 at Baton Rouge, pgs 110-120.

² *Ibid.*, pg 120.