



Texas Navy Association

Historical Article



A Time Line History of the Texas Navy

The following is a Year by Year account of events in the History of Texas that were relevant to the Texas Navy.

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1824

November: Stephen F. Austin asks Mexico's government to authorize a settlement on Galveston Island as a base for cotton shipments to England, then asked the Mexican congress to authorize a seaport there; no action would be taken on this request until the following year.

1825

March 24: The Mexican state of Coahuila y Tejas passes legislation providing tremendous incentives to immigrants who settle in that state. Under this and other immigration laws, Stephen F. Austin continues the work of his father, Moses Austin, in creating the largest Anglo-American colony in the Department of Texas.

1831

December 15: Jeremiah Brown, merchant

captain of the schooner Sabine (owned by Edwin Waller and William H. Wharton) runs past the Mexican fort at Brazoria, on the Brazos River, to avoid the export duty demanded by the fort's commander. Mexican troops fire on the Sabine, but its decks were lined with bales of cotton to absorb the musket balls, and the Sabine makes the run down the Brazos to the open Gulf of Mexico. Waller and Wharton are arrested for evading customs, but two other merchant vessels, the Spica and the Nelson, run the "blockade" before the end of the month.

1832

Texian ships Stephen F. Austin, Water Witch and Red River blockade and fire on a Mexican garrison at Anahuac (near Houston) in support of volunteers who free William B. Travis and two other radicals from a Mexican prison. Brazoria, a two gun merchant ship, also supports volunteers attacking Fort Velasco (at present day Freeport).

1835

July 26: Mexican Navy Captain Thomas "Mexico" Thompson, an Englishman, issues a proclamation to the citizens of Anahuac in which he threatens to burn the town, igniting the hatred of the Gulf Coast citizens that results in the seizure of his ship, the Correo Mexicano, later that year.

August 27: Colonel James Fannin, who was later massacred after surrendering to Santa Anna at Goliad, predicted that once applications from "old & gallant officers" were accepted and letters of marque and reprisal were issued, "we will have afloat a sufficient naval force to guard our coast and cripple their trade from the Campeachy banks to N. Orleans the land party will, thus closed in, be an easy prey."

September 1: The first shots of the Texas Revolution are fired by the armed schooner San Felipe at the Mexican revenue cutter

Correo Mexicano off Velasco, at the mouth of the Brazos River. During the battle, the Mexican ship takes three casualties and attempts to flee to open sea, but a calm stalled the Correo Mexicano the next morning, and the Texian steamship Laura towed the San Felipe into firing position. The Correo Mexicano surrendered without a fight. The Mexican crew, including its English captain, Thomas "Mexico" Thompson, were taken to New Orleans for trial on piracy charges, where they were eventually acquitted and sent back to Mexico. The incident enrages the Mexican government, which moves ahead with plans to reinforce its garrisons in Texas and send Santa Anna to Texas at the head of 6,000 men.

October 26: Galveston's Telegraph and Texas Register reported that the privateer San Felipe arrived from New Orleans bringing arms, ammunition, and most importantly, heavy artillery, for the Texian army.

October 31: The General Council, the provisional legislative body of the Texas revolutionary government, makes the first effort to authorize letters of marque and reprisal to privateer captains who wished to operate against Mexico.

November 1: Silas Dinsmore, Jr. and John G. McNeel press the armed schooner San Felipe into Texas service on behalf of the Matagorda Committee of Safety.

November 3-14: "Consultation" of municipi-

palities in Texas sets up a provisional government, including a governor, lieutenant governor, and a "General Council," to take power after the Consultation adjourns on November 14. This provisional government would be the revolutionary government of Texas until nominally March 2, 1836, when independence was declared and an ad interim government was established. (As a practical matter, however, the provisional government only effectively government until mid-January 1836.)

November 8: Augustus C. Allen (one of the founders of the city of Houston) petitioned the provisional government, in whatever form it was established, for letters of marque and reprisal, which would allow Allen's armed ships to cruise the Gulf of Mexico and capture Mexican merchant shipping.

November 9: Schooner San Felipe trades shots with the Mexican warship Veracruzano off Bird Island, near Matagorda. Her cannon were recovered on November 13 and placed on the privateer William Robbins, which was placed under the command of the San Felipe's former captain, William A. Hurd.

November 15: Provisional government's Committee on Naval Affairs reports that the Mexican war schooner Veracruzano was prowling Texas waters of the Gulf, and noted that more requests for letters of marque were being submitted to the provisional government.

November 16: In his first address to the General Council, provisional governor Henry Smith urged the Council to pass legislation allowing him to issue letters of marque to qualifying sea captains.

November 18: General Council's Committee on Naval Affairs drafts legislation to provide for letters of marque and reprisal, and urges that Texas create its own naval force for protection of its coast, recommending that two 12-gun schooners and two 6-gun schooners.

November 19: Reports reached Matagorda of the capture of the merchant vessel Hannah Elizabeth by the Mexican war schooner Bravo while transporting arms and ammunition to the Texas insurgents. Samuel Rhoads Fisher of Matagorda leads a group of armed men aboard the privateer William Robbins, and the small force sallies to the scene to find the Hannah Elizabeth under the command of a Mexican prize crew from the Bravo, which had been blown out to sea by a fierce norther. Fisher's force quickly recaptures the Hannah Elizabeth, along with the lieutenant and eleven sailors and marines aboard her. Her civilian cargo was sold at Matagorda, and the prize money was divided among the captors, sparking a heated protest by the cargo owners. This protest was taken up by Colonel James Walker Fannin, commander of the Texas volunteers in the south, who was a political enemy of Fisher and the William Robbins' owner, shipping entrepreneur Thomas F. McKinney.

November 22: General Council passes a bill establishing a navy and authorizing letters of marque, and sends it to Governor Smith for his signature. Although he favors a privateer law, Smith vetoes the bill two days later, stating that the requirements for service were not stringent enough. Smith recommends that the naval bill be made a separate piece of legislation from the privateer law.

November 25: Governor Smith signs into law the General Council's bill creating a Texas Navy. That same day, the schooner *Invincible* is registered in Baltimore under the ownership of Henry H. Williams, brother of Samuel May Williams, who is in the United States acquiring a fleet of warships for the Texas cause.

November 27: Revised privateer bill, passed on November 26, is signed into law by Governor Smith.

November 30: Silas Dinsmore, Jr. of Matagorda receives the first set of official letters of marque, authorizing privateer operations in the Gulf of Mexico.

December 1-6: Letters of marque and reprisal, which permit "privateering," or legalized acts of piracy, are issued by the Provisional Government to Silas Dinsmore, Robert Potter (Texas' future Secretary of the Navy), Ira R. Lewis and the Matagorda Committee of Safety, and other unnamed would-be privateer captains.

December 7: Stephen F. Austin, William H.

Wharton and Branch T. Archer are appointed by the Texas revolutionary government as commissioners to the United States. They are to, among other things, purchase warships for the fight against Mexico.

December 9: Local shipping magnate Thomas F. McKinney informs the General Council, Texas' revolutionary legislative assembly, that the Mexican warship *Moctezuma* is patrolling the central Texas shoreline, requiring an armed fleet to oppose her.

December 13: San Antonio falls to a Texas volunteer force led by Colonel Francis Johnson and Benjamin Milam. (Milam is killed in the assault.)

December 16: Provisional Governor Henry G. Smith informs the General Council: "Our sea coast for years has produced nothing but a scene of fraud, corruption and piracies, to the unfortunate, who either by misfortune or design have been drawn upon our shores. So well have we already established our character abroad for having a piratical coast, that it is with difficulty insurance can be effected, and always at an unusual high rate, and frequently not at all. This stage of things has grown entirely out of our disorganized situation, not having the proper laws enacted to restrain the vice."

December 17: Committee on Naval Affairs commissioners appointed to sort out the legal mess caused by the November 1835 capture of the Mexican prize ship *Hannah*

Elizabeth (an American schooner captured by the Mexican warship *Bravo* the previous month), concludes that the captors – Captain William A. Hurd of the privateer *William Robbins*, and Samuel Rhoads Fisher, the local militia commander (and future Texas Navy Secretary) – acted illegally in selling off the *Hannah Elizabeth's* cargo in Matagorda without a legal condemnation proceeding.

December 19: General Sam Houston recommends Charles E. Edwards to Texas' agents in New Orleans for a commission in the Texas Navy, as a distinguished officer who "entered the Mexican Navy, under Commodore Porter and is familiarly acquainted with the coast of the Gulph." Twelve Mexican prisoners captured by the privateer *William Robbins*, who had been held in Matagorda for two weeks, are transferred to the home of S. Rhoads Fisher. They are held at Fisher's home for two more weeks before being paroled to return to Mexico.

December 26: A group of 26 New Orleans shipping and insurance company officers write U.S. District Attorney Henry Carleton, complaining about the presence of the Texas schooner *Brutus*, which was fitting out with six cannon "and one large one on a pivot, for the purpose of capturing Mexican vessels." This complaint, and the investigation it sparked, would keep the *Brutus* in port until January 1836, when Carleton's investigation turned up no direct evidence of an intent by the *Brutus* to do anything more than defend

its cargo if attacked. (On its first voyage, this “merchant vessel” carried seven cannon and over one hundred marines to guard its negligible cargo of fifty barrels of miscellaneous “merchandise.”)

1836

January 1: The eight-gun Baltimore schooner *Invincible*, newly purchased by Velasco businessman Samuel May Williams, arrives at Galveston Harbor.

January 3: Texas shipping entrepreneur Thomas F. McKinney offers to sell his armed privateer William Robbins to the revolutionary government for \$3,500. The vessel would be purchased by Texas later that month, and would be rechristened the *Liberty*. McKinney, whose business partner Samuel May Williams had just purchased the warship *Invincible*, also offered to sell the *Invincible* to Texas for a 12 percent finder’s commission.

January 5: The revolutionary government’s General Council authorizes agents to inspect and purchase the William Robbins and the *Invincible*. Around this time, Texas commissioners to the United States Stephen F. Austin, William H. Wharton and Branch T. Archer arrive in New Orleans and inform Governor Smith that they purchased the William Robbins during its voyage to New Orleans and rechristened it the *Liberty*. That same day, the General Council provisionally adopted the naval regulations of the United

States as the rules governing naval officers of Texas.

January 7: Texas General Council directs its Committee on Naval Affairs to consider revoking letters of marque and reprisal, issued to privateers, now that Texas is on its way to purchasing a navy. That same day, Texas governor Henry Smith vetoes the General Council’s move to purchase the William Robbins on the grounds that it already had been purchased by Texas’ commissioners to the United States. The Council overrode Smith’s veto, but Smith never took action on the measure.

January 9: Reports reach Texas that the Mexican warship *Moctezuma* was prowling the Texas coast, waiting to seize shipments of volunteers and arms bound for Texas ports.

January 10: Governor Smith sent the General Council a scathing letter rejecting its attempted purchase of the William Robbins and *Invincible* and plans to send an expedition to Matamoros, a port on the Rio Grande. Smith’s ire stemmed from the Council’s purported intrusion on the power of the executive, and afterwards relations between the Governor and the General Council became so strained that the government ceased to operate until independence was declared in March 1836.

January 14: Austin, Archer and Wharton appoint Edward Hall as Texas’ naval agent

in New Orleans. Hall had already acquired the warship *Brutus* in December 1835. That same day, Lieutenant Governor James Robinson suggested that the General Council establish a marine corps to augment its naval power. Eventually over 350 men and 18 commissioned officers would serve in this branch of Texas’ armed forces.

January 14-15: Mexican Navy Lieutenant Thomas M. “Mexico” Thompson is tried by the U.S. District Court in New Orleans for piracy, for his attack on the Texas-owned (but American flagged) brig *Tremont*, steamer *Laura* and armed schooner *San Felipe*. He and fellow defendant, Mexican Army Lieutenant Carlos Ocampo, were released after Ocampo’s acquittal and Thompson’s jury deadlocked. The case became so acrimonious that the prosecutor and defense lawyers began throwing inkwells and books at each other across the courtroom, and were sentenced to jail for contempt of court. The *New Orleans Courier* reported the next day: “The issue of the suit is indeed a very remarkable one such, it may be said, as never happened before the pirates set at liberty and the Attorneys committed to jail.”

January 16: The *Invincible* receives its commission as a Texas Navy warship.

January 18: The U.S. armed revenue cutter *Ingham* is purchased from the United States and renamed the *Independence*. The eight-gun warship would serve Texas as its flagship under the command of Commodore Charles

E. Hawkins. During January, the Independence began its first cruise, escorting supply vessels from New Orleans to Galveston, the Brazos River mouth, and Matagorda.

January 21: Commissioners Austin, Archer and Wharton appoint A.J. Yates to travel to the United States to purchase an armed steamer for the fledgling Texas Navy. Nothing ever comes of this proposal, and Texas will not have a steam-powered warship until 1839.

January 24: Schooner Brutus, now armed with seven guns, arrives in Matagorda under Captain William A. Hurd, the former captain of the privateers San Felipe and William Robbins.

January 27: "Mexico" Thompson's warship, the Correo Mexicano, is returned to the Mexican chargé d'affaires in New Orleans. The schooner was in such decrepit shape that she had to be sold for \$450.

January 28: The Liberty arrives in Texas waters under the command of Captain Jeremiah Brown.

February 1: The revolutionary General Council's Committee on Naval Affairs recommended that the warships Invincible and Brutus be sent to Matamoros to support an invasion of Mexican territory. The warships ultimately were never used in connection with any invasion of Mexico during the Texas Revolution.

February 12: Registry of the seven-gun warship Brutus was transferred to the Texas government, becoming the last of the four warships to comprise the first Texas Navy.

February 16: Texas commander James Fannin, providing an assessment of the condition of Santa Anna's invading army, wrote to the revolutionary government: "Provisions are very scarce in Matamoros and the adjoining country, and they must depend upon New Orleans. Where is your navy? Stop those ports, and they are ruined."

February 25: The merchant vessel Pelicano cleared New Orleans loaded with black powder hidden in barrels of flour. The Pelicano would be captured by the Texas warship Liberty the following month, becoming the first significant prize captured by the Texas Navy.

March 2: Texas declares independence from Mexico.

March 3: The war schooner Liberty (formerly the privateer William Robbins) falls in with the merchant vessel Pelicano and captures it. The Pelicano's cargo of fruit, flour and other foodstuffs concealed three hundred kegs of gunpowder, which were forwarded to Sam Houston's retreating Texas Army.

March 6: Under the joint command of William B. Travis (for the regular army) and Jim Bowie (for the volunteers), over 2000 Mexican troops stormed the Alamo Mission in San Antonio. All of the Texan defenders

were killed.

March 12: Commissions are issued for the first commanders of the Texas Navy: Commodore Charles E. Hawkins (of the Independence), Captain Jeremiah Brown (of the Invincible), Captain William A. Hurd (of the Brutus), Captain George Wheelwright (of the Liberty), and Marine Captain Arthur Robertson. That same day, Captain Luke Falvel of the privateer schooner Flash received his commission as a privateer captain. The Flash would play an important role in evacuating refugees from central Texas to Galveston Island as Santa Anna's invading army drove towards Harrisburg and San Jacinto.

March 16: Ad interim President David G. Burnet appoints Robert Potter of North Carolina as Texas' first Secretary of the Navy.

March 20: The American brig Pocket, carrying dispatches and supplies for the Mexican army, along with several Mexican Navy officers, clears New Orleans for Matamoros. The Pocket would be captured by the Invincible off the mouth of the Rio Grande, and this seizure would set off a huge legal and diplomatic uproar between the Texas Navy, the Texas government, and the United States. That same day, the Texas flagship Independence began her second cruise along the Mexican coast.

March 25: President Burnet issues a proclamation suspending all letters of marque and

reprisal issued to Texas privateers, evidently in response to the effectiveness of the official Texas Navy and public backlash from New Orleans against the seizure of merchant ships bound for Mexico by privateers.

April 1: Samuel P. Carson, Texas' provisional Secretary of State, authorizes Texas patriot James Morgan to purchase the armed schooner Flash for the Texas government. The deal never goes through.

April 3: The schooner Invincible sails to Brazos Santiago, at the mouth of the Rio Grande, flying a U.S. flag and spots the Mexican warship General Bravo stranded, with her rudder damaged. The Invincible sends a lieutenant in a U.S. Navy uniform aboard for reconnaissance, but the Mexican captain sees through the ruse and attempts to flee towards Matamoros, the armed garrison further upriver. The Invincible opens fire on the Bravo, and the two ships exchange cannon fire for an hour with no serious damage to either side. The Invincible draws off when a strange sail is spotted on the horizon, and captures the stranger, which turns out to be the U.S. brig Pocket, carrying goods, personnel and information to the Mexican Army. The incident persuades Matamoros military authorities to call of a resupply and reinforcement mission of an estimated 1,000 troops and supplies for Santa Anna's army. If these troops reached Texas near Galveston or Brazoria, they probably would have given Santa Anna's second-in-command, General Vicente Filisola, enough troops to

prompt an attack after the Battle of San Jacinto, which could easily have spelled the end of the budding Texas Republic. Thus, the Invincible probably saved Texas. The Invincible and her crew would, however, be arrested in New Orleans the following month for piracy for the seizure of the Pocket, and the controversial capture would cost Texas in money and public support in New Orleans. (The Texas Navy lieutenant sent to the Bravo, Lt. William H. Leving, was shot as a spy on April 14.)

April 9: President Burnet issues a proclamation adopting the Texas Navy flag, which is identical to that of the United States, except that it has one star in the blue field rather than the twenty-four stars of the U.S. flag.

April 18?: Sometime around April 18, the Texas flagship Independence engages the Mexican warships Urrea and Bravo, with inconclusive results.

April 18-19: The schooner Flash, sailing around Harrisburg near modern-day Houston, picks up interim president David G. Burnet between Clopper's Point and Red Fish Bar on Galveston Bay. Burnet is taken to join the rest of the fleeing government to Galveston Island, where the government will defend the island or flee to New Orleans if Santa Anna defeats Sam Houston in open battle.

April 21: Battle of San Jacinto. Victory over Mexican army and capture of General An-

tonio Lopez de Santa Anna on the following day achieves de facto Texas independence. Interim President Burnet, unaware that the Texas Army had just won Texas' independence by defeating Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto, nationalizes Galveston Island as a naval depot and orders the Texas Navy to prepare to defend the island in case of attack.

April 28: Spain recognizes Mexican independence. The crew of the Invincible were the first on Galveston Island to hear the news of Santa Anna's defeat at San Jacinto, from Robert J. Calder and Judge Benjamin C. Franklin, who rowed from the mouth of the San Jacinto River to Galveston with the news for the provisional government. The news next reached the flagship Independence, where Commodore Charles E. Hawkins ordered a feast and celebration with cannon salutes. At some point, the revelers realized that President Burnet had not been told, and Burnet was reportedly upset to be the last person on Galveston Island to find out that the Republic of Texas had been saved.

May 1: Warship Invincible captured in New Orleans by the United States sloop Warren.

May 4-6: Trial in New Orleans of the crew of the Invincible on piracy charges for the seizure of the Mexican-bound brig Pocket. The crew is acquitted, and spends the night of May 6 frolicking in the French Quarter.

May 8: Ship Yellowstone ferries President

David Burnet, General Sam Houston, Generalissimo Santa Anna and General Cos to Galveston from San Jacinto. From there, Santa Anna boards the flagship Independence for Velasco, where the treaties ending the Texas Revolution are signed.

May 9: Commodore Charles Hawkins, commander of the fleet, asks Col. James Morgan for a column of men to man the captured American brig Durango.

May 10: New Orleans National Intelligencer reports the Mexican warship Bravo (formerly the Montezuma) patrolling the Texas coast.

May 19: Louisiana State Marine & Fire Insurance Company sues Captain Brown of the Invincible. Texas officials defend the case, which dies out after May 1840.

May 20: Warship Brutus leaves New Orleans with a convoy for Galveston.

May 22: Warship Liberty and schooner Flora arrive in New Orleans with General Sam Houston for medical attention to his wounds from the Battle of San Jacinto. The Liberty puts in for repairs, and when Texas cannot pay for the repairs, the ship is sold at auction, becoming the first casualty of the Texas Navy.

May 29: Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Rusk orders Major Isaac Burton to take a company of mounted rangers to Refugio to scour the

coast for enemy ships. At Copano Bay, the ranger company lures and captures the Mexican supply ships Watchman, Commanche and Fanny Butler.

May 30: For reasons unclear, the Brutus under Commodore Hawkins and Captain Hurd fires on the Invincible off Velasco. The shot, personally leveled by Commodore Hawkins, misses the Brutus. Captain George Wheelwright assumes command of the Liberty in New Orleans, and the Mexican Congress organizes a Special Committee for Texas Matters and resolves to prosecute the war in Texas "with vigor."

June 3: A mob of New Orleans volunteers under General Thomas Jefferson Green arrives at Velasco aboard the steamship and seizes Santa Anna from the warship Invincible as he was about to depart for Mexico in conformity with the Treaties of Velasco.

June 3: Texas Rangers under the command of Major Isaac Burton lure the Mexican supply ship Watchman into Copano Bay (near Refugio) and capture it.

June 6: Flagship Independence sails from Velasco to New Orleans with diplomats to negotiate U.S. recognition of the Republic of Texas.

June 18: Using the captured Mexican ship Watchman as bait, Major Burton's ranger company captures the Mexican supply ships Commanche and Fanny Butler.

June 28: Captain John M. Allen (later mayor of Galveston) is granted a letter of marque and reprisal for the schooner Terrible, which mounts one long six-pounder pivot gun. The Terrible would go on to capture the Mexican merchant ship Matilda and would be taken in to Pensacola by the U.S.S. Boston on piracy charges, which were ultimately thrown out on a technicality. (A young lieutenant aboard the Boston would eventually become commander of the Texas Navy and its greatest hero.)

New Orleans papers report that the Mexican warship Bravo was lost at sea on a voyage between Matamoras and Vera Cruz.

July 4: The Texas warship Invincible is dispatched to the rescue of the Brutus when she was blockaded at Matagorda by the Mexican brig Vencedor del Alamo.

July 8: Major Isaac Watts of the Texas Rangers is authorized by President David G. Burnet to pay over prize money to the men of his Ranger Company as a result of their seizure of the Mexican supply ships Watchman, Fanny Butler and Commanche.

July 14: Invincible, back at New Orleans, picks up Texas commissioners Branch T. Archer and William H. Wharton for a return trip to Galveston.

July 21: President Burnet issues a proclamation declaring a blockade of Matamoras, and orders warships to the mouth of the Rio Grande and Brazos Santiago to enforce

the blockade. The blockade will be lifted by President Sam Houston on November 1 of that year.

August: Texas warship Liberty, formerly the privateer William Robbins, is sold for the cost of repairs in New Orleans when the Texas government cannot afford to pay the repairmen.

August 4: Ad interim President David G. Burnet orders the Invincible under Captain Jeremiah Brown to New York for repairs. He quickly countermands this order when the Mexican Navy threatens the Texas coast, but Captain Brown proceeds to New York against orders nonetheless.

August 9: President Burnet grants a captain's commission to W.S. Brown, brother of the Invincible's captain, if he can fit out a ship to be called the Benjamin R. Milam. The commission is never finalized because Brown dies in New Orleans before he could finish arming his ship. That same day Commodore A.J. Dallas of the U.S. Navy's Gulf Coast squadron writes a letter from Pensacola stating that he would dispatch a warship to the mouth of the Mississippi to protect any vessels bound for Matamoros, and would raise the blockade declared by the Texas government.

August 12: Texas Navy flagship Independence contacts the privateer Terrible off the Northeast Pass of New Orleans on her way to join the Independence at Matamoros.

August 16: New Orleans newspapers report that the Texas privateer Terrible under Captain John M. Allen (who would later become mayor of Galveston) is patrolling the Gulf. The one-gun Terrible would capture the Mexican merchant sloop Matilda and rendezvous with the Texas Navy warship Invincible before being captured by the U.S.S. Boston and taken to Pensacola on piracy charges. Interestingly, a young lieutenant aboard the Boston, Lt. Edwin Ward Moore, would later become the commander of the Texas Navy.

August 31: Texas warship Brutus under Captain William Hurd arrives in New York, having gone AWOL to seek repairs there.

September: Texans vote on new government officers, national constitution, and the question of annexation to the United States. Vote overwhelmingly in favor of annexation.

September 3: Captain John M. Allen of the privateer Terrible (who would later become mayor of Galveston) departed New Orleans for a cruise to Campeache and Matamoros. Allen's goal was to meet the Invincible and blockade the port of Matamoros. The Terrible would be captured that month by the U.S.S. Boston and taken to Pensacola for trial on piracy charges for its capture of the United States merchant sloop Matilda. That same day, the ad interim government informed its agents in New Orleans that they would have to allow the warship Liberty to be sold, as the government could not pay its

repair bills incurred at New Orleans.

September 11: Warship Invincible under Captain Jeremiah Brown arrives in New York, having left New Orleans on August 24 against the orders of Texas ad interim President David G. Burnet. The Invincible would spend the winter with the Brutus in New York, leaving the Texas coast defended only by the flagship Independence.

October 1836: During the first week in October, Captain Nathaniel Hoyt of the privateer Thomas Toby sailed for Mexico, stopping at the Mexican ports of Veracruz, Sisal, Campeche, Matamoros and Tampico. During this trip, the Thomas Toby captured the Mexican schooner Mentor, and bombarded the fort at Tampico with his ship's "long tom" cannon. He challenged the commandant of Tampico to meet with any armed vessel Mexico could field, and when the challenge went unanswered, Hoyt sailed back for the Louisiana coast.

October 2: One Captain Moore was given a commission for the schooner Jim Bowie, formerly the Shenandoah, which was ordered to New Orleans to fit out and apparently did not ever resume active service for Texas. Because Texas' agents in New Orleans did not advance the money for the ship's fitting out as a warship, the schooner remained the Shanandoah in merchant service in New Orleans and never saw active service for Texas. October 17: Captain Jeremiah Brown of the warship Invincible reported that he had ar-

rived in New York to find the warship Brutus unable to leave due to extensive debts that her captain, William A. Hurd, incurred in repairing and provisioning his ship. Nine days later, a frustrated President Sam Houston would write to Texas agents in New Orleans asking them to forward his orders to Captains Hurd and Brown to return home as soon as possible.

October 26: President Houston submitted his cabinet for Senate approval, including "S. Rhoades Fisher, Secretary of the Navy." Fisher came to Texas from Philadelphia in 1831, settled at Matagorda and represented Matagorda in the Consultation, and signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, and was on its Constitutional Committee. He was fired by Houston after the unauthorized summer 1837 cruise against Mexico, and died at his home in Matagorda in 1839. That same day, the Congressional Committee on Naval Affairs recommended "the immediate building or purchase" of a 24-gun sloop, a 10-gun steamship, and 2 11-gun schooners at an estimated cost of \$135,000.

November 1: President Sam Houston lifts the blockade imposed on the Mexican port of Matamoros, on the Rio Grande. The blockade had been imposed the previous July by interim President David G. Burnet.

November 18: President Houston signs an act providing for an increase in the Texas Navy, to include a 24-gun sloop of war, two steam transports and two 11-gun topsail schooners. The act would never be funded.

November 19: A New York judge issues warrants to seize the Texas warships Invincible and Brutus, whose captains had run up large unpaid debts while AWOL at the Port of New York. The vessels would not return to the Texas coast until the following February.

November 21: President Houston sends Congress an angry message over the seizure of the U.S. brig Pocket by the Texas warship Invincible, which sets off a long series of heated diplomatic exchanges between Texas and the United States.

December 9: Texas President Sam Houston recommends that Congress commission Joseph C. Williams, "of the Texian private Armed Schooner, Terrible," as a captain in the Texas Navy.

December 10: Texas government passes legislation creating the official Texas Navy flag, one which had been in use since April 1836. The flag is identical to the national flag of the United States, except that it has a single star in the blue field, in place of the twenty-four stars of the U.S. flag.

December 13: President Houston signs a law that requires Cabinet officers to remain at the seat of government, at the time Columbia, Texas. This law would be used to justify Houston's removal of Texas Navy Secretary S. Rhoads Fisher, after he departed Texas on an offensive cruise against Mexican coastal villages and shipping in the summer of 1837.

December 15: Texas government enacts regulations for the Texas Navy. These regulations are virtually copied from those of the United States Navy. That same day President Houston signed a law appropriating \$150,000 for navy expenses. (Little of this money was ever actually raised.)

December 19: In New York, creditors of the warship Brutus, which had been in port since early November (and had run up tremendous debts for repairs and supplies), obtained a judicial hearing to have the vessel sold to pay its debts. By December 26, Texas agents in New York managed to raise the money to free both the Brutus and the Invincible so that they could return to Texas that winter.

1837

January 5: The Brutus, having been detained in New York since October 1836 under debt collection proceedings, manages to scrape together enough funding from Texas land speculators to pay enough debts to leave New York.

January 11: Resolution to recognize Texas introduced in the U.S. Senate.

January 17: General Santa Anna arrives in Washington, DC.

January 21: Navy Secretary S. Rhoads Fisher orders Commissary General Algernon S. Thruston to proceed to New Orleans to pur-

chase the privateers Thomas Toby and the Terrible. Neither vessel would ultimately be purchased.

January 26: Texas Congress passes a law providing for a new group of warships for the Texas Navy.

February: A mutiny took place aboard the privateer Thomas Toby in which the privateer's purser and doctor were murdered. The mutiny was quickly put down, and the mutineers were thrown into a New Orleans prison.

February 9: The Mexican central government announced a blockade of all ports of Texas. The warships Libertad, Iturbide, Vencedor del Alamo, Terán, Urrea and Bravo are dispatched to make the blockade effective. This move forces the Texas government to recall the Independence, which had anchored at New Orleans for supplies.

February 11: Commodore Charles E. Hawkins, commander-in-chief of the Texas Navy, dies of smallpox in New Orleans. He is buried with full military honors, and command of the Texas Navy devolves to Captain George Wheelwright.

February 27: Warship Invincible leaves New York for Galveston after a five-month lay-over for supplies and crewmen. The schooner had been seized by creditors to pay its substantial repair and supply bills, and was released after land speculators agreed to lend funds for the ships in return for land

scrip, which could be redeemed for thousands of acres of Texas land.

March 3: U.S. recognizes the Republic of Texas, the last act of the Jackson Presidency.

March 11: Santa Anna, home in Mexico, renounces all guarantees made to the Republic of Texas as a condition to his restoration of freedom.

March 27: U.S. Secretary of State reports that treaty agreements with Mexico prohibit the U.S.'s annexing Texas.

April: Sometime this month, President Sam Houston appoints Henry Livingston Thompson as commander of the warship Invincible, replacing Captain Jeremiah Brown, who took the schooner to New York in the fall of 1836 in defiance of President Burnet's orders. Houston would fire Thompson by the fall for engaging in an unauthorized cruise against Mexican ships and coastal villages.

April 5: President Sam Houston orders Secretary of the Navy Samuel Rhoads Fisher to Velasco to determine how best to deal with the rumored Mexican blockade. Houston's orders read: "You will proceed to Velasco forthwith, and if true as reported, there should be a Mexican Naval force off the mouth of Brazos. You will devise such measures for the defence of the coast, as may seem to you best, with all the means, which you can command. Do the best you can, as you will be upon the spot and can judge of

the course most proper to be pursued."

April 10?: Around this time, the flagship Independence, under the command of Captain George W. Wheelwright, leaves New Orleans for Velasco on its final cruise.

April 12: The merchant schooner (and sometime gun-runner) Julius Caesar is captured by the brig General Urrea of the Mexican Navy during its spring 1837 blockade of the Texas coast. The merchant vessels Champion and Louisiana are also captured that same month.

April 15: The Texas warship Brutus arrives in Texas from a long absence in New York, short on men and provisions.

April 17: After a running battle lasting several hours, the eight-gun Independence is captured by the new Mexican brigs Vencedor del Alamo (seven guns) and Libertador (sixteen heavy guns). Captured aboard the vessel are the Texas minister to the United States, William H. Wharton, as well as a wounded Commodore Wheelwright and a skeleton crew of green recruits. The surrender of the Texas flagship is within sight of Velasco, near the Texas capital of Columbia, and one of the outraged onlookers is none other than the Secretary of the Navy, Samuel Rhoads Fisher. The Independence would be transferred to the Veracruz Squadron of the Mexican Navy. That same day, Mexican President Anastasio Bustamente, in his inaugural address, pledges to reorganize

his military to “preserve the rights of the nation,” which includes the reconquest of Texas.

April 29: Texas Congress passes a resolution requesting that President Houston send the Brutus and Invincible to Matamoros on the Mexican coast to negotiate an exchange of Texas prisoners from the Independence for Mexican prisoners left over from the Battle of San Jacinto. Houston vetoes the measure on the grounds that it would be a risky and futile venture to send armed ships against a much stronger and with the larger Mexican Navy prowling the coast.

May 6: Secretary of Navy S. Rhodes Fisher, aboard the Brutus, receives word from Texas spies that Mexico is building a 22-gun warship in Baltimore.

May 23: Against President Houston’s wishes, Secretary Fisher orders Captain H. L. Thompson to take the Invincible and the Brutus down the Mexican coast in retaliation for the capture of the flagship Independence and the Texas ship Julius Caesar. The cruise becomes the longest, most destructive offensive into Mexico Texas will ever mount.

May 31: President Houston vetoes a Congressional resolution to send the Invincible and Brutus to Veracruz to attempt a prisoner exchange for the crew and passengers of the Independence and Julius Caesar. New Orleans’ National Intelligence reports the schooner Flash stranded ashore at the west

end of Galveston when the ship’s captain mistook the San Luis Pass for the entrance to Galveston harbor.

June 8: Privateer Thomas Toby sent into port a captured Mexican brig, and took off in pursuit of two other Mexican ships (it would not capture these vessels).

June 10: Warships Invincible and Brutus leave for a two month cruise along the Mexican coast, raiding and burning coastal towns and capturing Mexican merchant vessels. They are ordered out by Secretary of the Navy S. Rhodes Fisher, who joins the expedition, in retaliation for the capture of the flagship Independence and the merchant vessel Julius Caesar. Texas warships Invincible and Brutus continue to cruise the Mexican coast on an offensive ordered by Navy Secretary S. Rhodes Fisher in revenge for the capture of the flagship Independence that spring.

With the consent of the officers of the captured Texas flagship Independence, “Mexico” Thompson, the villain of Anáhuac, assists Commodore George Wheelwright and ship’s surgeon Dr. A. Levy in their escape to Texas. Wheelwright would return to command the Texas Navy, while Thompson would live in Galveston and serve in the Texas Navy.

July 13: Invincible and Brutus land at Cozumel, claiming the island for Texas. According to Invincible’s captain Henry L. Thompson, the landing party “hoisted the Star Spangled

Banner at the height of forty five feet with acclamations both from the inhabitants of the island and our small patriotic band,” and the ships fired a salute of 23 guns. The island was held by Texas for only a few days before the ships moved off.

July 16-22: Invincible and Brutus sail down the Mexican coast, to the Island of Contoy, port of Dzilam and other points along the coast, capturing small Mexican vessels and raiding coastal villages.

July 21: A landing party from the Brutus captures the Yucatán port of Telchac. According to the Brutus’ captain, James D. Boylan: “I sent Lieut. Wright on shore to take the town [Telchac] this he soon accomplished the Alcalde making a formal surrender of the town to the Texian Government.” The city is held less than a day, and the ships move on.

July 22: Brutus and Invincible capture the Mexican schooner Union, loaded with logwood.

July 24: Secretary Fisher, Captain Boylan and a landing party from the Brutus are attacked by a Mexican cavalry patrol when they stray too far from their boats. Secretary Fisher draws his pistols and drops one trooper from his saddle, giving the party a chance to dash back to their boats and escape to the Brutus. Because of this “rascally reception,” Captain Thompson orders his squadron to burn coastal villages for the next several days.

July 25: Texas squadron captures the Mexican merchant ships Adventure and Telegrapho. The Adventure would be burned because it was too slow to keep up with the squadron.

July 26: Captain Thompson issues an ultimatum to the Yucatán city of Sisal: pay the Texians \$25,000 or he will destroy the town. The Mexicans ignore him. The next day he sails into the harbor, fires a couple of shots at the town, and the Mexicans reply with heavy cannon fire. After a couple of hours of bombardment, the Texians sail off.

July 31: Texas squadron captures the Mexican schooner Abispa loaded with cargo off Alacranes Island.

August 3: Texas warship Brutus under Captain James D. Boylan captures the British schooner Eliza Russell, setting off an international incident that results in a quick apology to Her Majesty's government by President Sam Houston and payment of reparations to the ship's owner.

August 4: Texas minister to the United States presents U.S. government a formal offer from the Republic of Texas to annex itself to the United States.

August 12: Brutus captures the armed Mexican schooner Correo off the Yucatan coast. The Correo carries information about the whereabouts of the Mexican squadron consisting of the captured Texas flagship Inde-

pendence and the brigs Terán and Bravo.

August 17: Captain Boylan in the Brutus captures the Mexican schooner Rafaelita, which was reported to be the former Correo Mexicano captured by the Texas privateer San Felipe during the opening shots of the Texas Revolution.

August 26: Invincible and Brutus, towing the captured ship Abispo, arrive at the Galveston bar. The Brutus and Correo cross the bar safely, but the deeper Invincible has to wait outside the bar until high tide the next day. The following morning, the Mexican brigs Vencedor del Alamo and Libertador arrive at the harbor, chasing the Texas ship Sam Houston into port. The two brigs begin shelling the Invincible, which makes a run for the harbor but gets grounded on a sandbar, helpless. The Brutus rushes to the aid of her sister ship, but she gets stuck on a sandbar and loses her rudder, and is of no help. The Mexican brigs pound the Invincible until her captain and crew abandon ship, then move off. That night, the Invincible is beaten to pieces by the hammer blows of the Gulf's waves. It would be over 150 years before traces of the Invincible were found by nautical archeologists.

Early September: Captain J.D. Boylan of the Brutus continued efforts to salvage the wreck of the Invincible, grounded and wrecked on August 29 after a battle with the Mexican brigs Urrea and Vencedor del Alamo. He also worked on retrieving the Brutus' rudder, which was stuck in the mud

on the Galveston bar, rendering the Brutus useless as a warship.

September 4: A "large and respectable" meeting of the leading citizens of Houston was held, and passed a resolution honoring Navy Secretary S. Rhodes Fisher for his actions in sending the Texas Navy to take the war to the Mexican coast. These citizens' opinion differed markedly from the city's namesake, President Sam Houston, who promptly sacked Fisher for disobeying orders to keep the fleet off the Texas coast.

September 15: With the destruction of the Invincible and severe damage to the Brutus, President Sam Houston declares that the practice of issuing letters of marque and reprisal to privateers, discontinued after the opening weeks of the Texas Revolution, will be reinstated. No privateers answer Houston's call to arms. That same day, the Navy Department asked Captain Alexander Thompson, formerly a cartographer with the U.S. and Mexican navies, to begin drafting plans for a Navy Yard on Galveston. Captain Thompson's plans would result in a large Navy Yard and naval anchorage on Galveston's north shore, near present-day 29th Street.

September 16: Charges are brought against Captain Henry L. Thompson of the Invincible by several junior officers for "oppressive conduct," "ungentlemanly and unofficerlike conduct," embezzlement, "tyranny" and drunkenness. Captain Thompson died before court martial proceedings could be

commenced.

September 20: The brig Phoenix was surveyed by a Texas Navy lieutenant to determine whether it should be purchased by the government for use as a war vessel, to replace the loss of the Invincible. The captured schooner Correo (no relation to the Correo Mexicano of the San Felipe incident) was also judged to be a lawful prize later that month, and was inspected to see whether it could be converted into a man-of-war.

September 28: The Texas Senate begins an investigation into the conduct of Navy Secretary S. Rhodes Fisher. A trial ultimately results in the Senate upholding Houston's decision to relieve Fisher, but praises his patriotism and bravery in defending the Republic.

September 30: Acting Navy Secretary William Shepherd recommends that Texas purchase the privateer Tom Toby to replace the Invincible. The following month, before any action could be taken, the Tom Toby was destroyed in a deadly storm that devastated Galveston and destroyed the Brutus.

October 5: Captain Alex Thompson, formerly with the Mexican Navy, presented a plan to the Navy Department for the construction of a Naval Station at Galveston.

October 6: President Houston vetoed a request from the Senate to reinstate S. Rhoads Fisher as Secretary of the Navy, citing Fish-

er's unauthorized offensive cruise against Mexico in the summer of 1837. The Senate passed a resolution reinstating him on October 18, but Houston ignored it. Ultimately, Fisher was tried by the Senate, which explicitly found no fault in his patriotism or motives, but upheld Houston's decision in the interest of efficient government.

October 16: A deadly hurricane called "Racer's Storm" (named after the British naval sloop that first spotted it) hit Galveston, leveling the town, drenching the shallow island under four feet of water and destroying at least fifteen ships, including the Texas Navy warship Brutus, the privateer Thomas Toby (which the Texas government was negotiating to purchase) and the captured Mexican merchant vessel Rafaelita. That same month, Mexican President Anastasio Bustamente freed Texas Navy prisoners captured aboard the Texas flagship Independence in April off the coast of Velasco.

October 24: Lieutenant Francis B. Wright inspected the captured Mexican schooner Correo Mejicano to see whether it could be used as a warship to replace the wrecked Brutus and Invincible. The one-gun ship, captured in August 1837, would have made a good fighting vessel, but it was never commissioned as a Texas warship, and was ultimately sold.

November 1: Commander Henry L. Thompson, commodore of the Texas squadron during its 1837 adventures off the Mexican coast,

dies suddenly, sparing him a court-martial at the hands of an angry President Houston, who forbade the expedition. (The expedition was ordered by Navy Secretary S. Rhoads Fisher, who went along on the voyage as a volunteer.)

November 2: Texas Congress passes a bill allowing President Houston to issue letters of marque to sea captains to attack Mexican shipping in the Gulf and to protect Texas commerce. Although the government's share is reduced from the usual ten percent to two percent, no one applies.

November 2: With the loss of the Invincible to two Mexican warships and the destruction of the Brutus by a hurricane, the Texas Congress passes a bill to recreate a Texas Navy by purchasing one 18 gun sloop-of-war, two 12-gun brigs, one steamer and three schooners, each carrying five to seven guns. President Houston signs the bill into law on November 4, giving rise to the second Texas Navy.

November 7: President Houston formally charges Secretary Fisher with violating orders, leaving his post at the seat of government, embezzlement, tobacco smuggling, and other charges justifying Houston's dismissal of Fisher.

November 24-25: The impeachment trial of Navy Secretary S. Rhoads Fisher takes place in the Texas Senate. Representing Secretary Fisher were two prominent anti-Houstonites, General Thomas J. Rusk and ex-pres-

ident David G. Burnet. Other well known Texians rose in Secretary Fisher's defense. "The trial of Mr. Fisher was continued today by Mr. John Wharton, in a most furious tirade against President Houston; it was the bitterest invective I ever heard uttered by man," recorded Reverend Littleton Fowler, the Senate chaplain, on November 25. On November 28, the Senate upheld Houston's dismissal of Fisher in the interest of harmonious government, but stated that it found that Fisher had done no wrong.

November 29: The United States government presents formal claims against the Republic of Texas over the capture of the U.S. merchant brigs Pocket and Durango by Texas forces.

December 7: President Houston nominates Dr. William M. Shepherd, a former surgeon with the New Orleans Greys, to replace S. Rhoads Fisher as Texas Navy Secretary. "Dr. Shippers," as Houston spelled his name, is confirmed by the Senate that same day.

December 14: Texas Congress appropriates \$250,000 in long-overdue backpay for Texas Navy and Army officers and men. Most of this appropriation, like most others of the Texas government, would never actually be paid.

December 30: Navy Secretary Shepherd orders Commodore George Wheelwright to fit out the captured Mexican merchant schooner Correo as an armed warship, to replace the Invincible and Brutus, which were lost

earlier that year.

1838

January 4: Senator William C. Preston introduces a resolution for a tripartite treaty between the U.S./Mexico/Texas in the U.S. Senate.

January 10: Mexican President Anastasio Bustamente declared that the war to reconquer Texas was "the first obligation of the government and all Mexicans."

March 21: French diplomats present Mexico with an ultimatum for payment of claims brought by French citizens against the Mexican government. The ultimatum would escalate into a French naval expedition against Veracruz later named the "Pastry War." During this conflict, a French naval squadron under Admiral Charles Baudin, a veteran of Trafalgar, sailed into Veracruz, bombarded the fort of San Juan d'Ulloa, and captured the Mexican Navy stationed there.

March 31: Oaths of office are distributed to the officers of the Texas Navy by Secretary of the Navy William M. Shepherd. The oath for Captain Wheelwright stated: "I Geo. Wheelwright do solemnly swear that I will bear true allegiance to the Republic of Texas and that I will serve her honestly and faithfully against all her enemies or opposers whatsoever, and observe and obey the orders of the President of the Republic and the officers appointed over me according to the rules

and articles for the Government of the Navy of the Republic." (Wheelwright ultimately refused to take the oath, and for this reason among others, President Houston sacked him.)

April 9: Captain Wheelwright refuses to take the officers' oath, on grounds that only petty or warrant officers (not commissioned officers, like himself), take an oath, under U.S. Naval regulations then in force. Houston disagreed, citing Article V, section 3 of the Texas Constitution, and fired Wheelwright on April 15. The next day, Acting Secretary of the Navy George Hockley appoints Lieutenant John W. Taylor to assume command of the Texas Navy. Several officers of the Texas Navy submitted an unsuccessful petition to Congress to reinstate Captain Wheelwright.

April 11: Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Texas finally settles the claims of the U.S. government over the capture of the American brig Pocket by the Invincible in April 1836.

April 26: Great Britain formally charged the Texas Republic with committing illegal acts on the high seas because of the seizure of the English ship Eliza Russell by the warships Invincible and Brutus during the Texas Navy's summer 1837 cruise.

May 1: Naval secretary William Shepherd, who replaced Fisher, reports to the Texas Secretary of State on disciplinary action taken against Secretary Fisher and Captain

Thompson for the seizure of the British ship Eliza Russell.

May 23: President Houston signs a Congressional resolution compensating the officers and sailors of the Invincible and Brutus for prizes taken during their 1837 cruise.

May 25: USN officer John Grant Tod joins the Texas Navy, eventually becoming commander of the Galveston Navy Yard.

June and July: John Quincy Adams speaks against the annexation of Texas all morning, every morning in the U.S. House of Representatives.

June 10: President Sam Houston orders former U.S. Navy midshipman (and Mexican Navy officer) John G. Tod to the United States to look into matters affecting Texas naval interests.

June 14: Resolution introduced by Senator William C Preston on January 4th for a tripartite treaty between the U.S./Mexico/Texas in the U.S. Senate is tabled.

June 14: U.S. Senate approves a treaty satisfying U.S. claims for the seizure of the merchant vessel Pocket by the Invincible in April 1836. Samuel May Williams, a merchant from Velasco (and later Galveston), begins negotiations with the firm of Frederick Dawson of Baltimore for the purchase of six new ships for the Texas Navy. These negotiations would eventually result in Texas

acquisition of the Austin, Wharton, Archer, San Antonio, San Jacinto and San Bernard.

July 2: President Houston appoints George W. Hockley acting Secretary of the Navy. Hockley would serve as Houston's permanent Secretary of War and Marine during his second administration.

July 6: Texas and the United States enter into a treaty resolving claims against Texas for the seizure of the merchant brig Pocket by the Texas warship Invincible in April 1836. Under the treaty, Texas agrees to pay \$11,750, plus interest for the brig's capture.

October 9: Galveston merchant Samuel May Williams, on a special mission from the Texas Government, reported that Texas might be able to purchase the steamship Charleston for conversion to a steam-powered warship. A contract was executed on October 24, and repairs and modifications began the next month. The Charleston was renamed the Zavala, and became Texas' only steamer of war. (It was found buried under a Galveston parking lot some 150 years later.)

October 12: Texas withdraws the offer of annexation because of the U.S. Congress' lack of action on the proposal.

October 30: Secretary of the Navy William M. Shepherd reported to Houston on the decrepit condition of the Texas Navy (it had only one unarmed ship in the whole fleet). He urged Houston to fund the armament

of the receiving ship Potomac in case she was needed for maritime defense. Secretary Shepherd also recommended providing land bounties to Texas seamen, an idea that eventually became a congressional resolution that Houston vetoed.

November 18: Samuel May Williams, founder of the original Texas Navy, signs a contract with shipbuilder Frederick Dawson of Baltimore to build a 500-ton sloop-of-war, two 300-ton brigs and three 130-ton schooners for the Texas Navy. That same month, General James Hamilton is appointed by the incoming president, Mirabeau B. Lamar, to take Williams' place. (The previous month, Hamilton completed a contract for the east coast steamer Charleston, which would be brought to Texas, armed and re-christened the steamer Zavala.)

November 27: During the "Pastry War" between Mexico and France, French Admiral Charles Baudin launches an attack on Castle San Juan D'Ulloa at Veracruz after a lengthy blockade of the major Mexican port, capturing or destroying the entire Atlantic Mexican Navy in the process. French troops would soon take control of the castle, and Mexican General Santa Anna lost a leg in the attempt to recapture the position. After negotiations, the Pastry War is ended and Baudin returns home via Galveston. Baudin's actions effectively buy Texas several months of peace, during which time Texas is able to rebuild its naval forces.

December 9: Mirabeau B. Lamar is sworn in as Texas' second elected president, replacing outgoing Sam Houston. One of Lamar's top priorities was rebuilding the Texas Navy from the disasters of 1837.

1839

January 10: Texas Congress passes an act sanctioning the purchase of the steamer Charleston. The steamer would be refitted in Philadelphia and New Orleans as the armed steamer Zavala, and would be the most technologically advanced ship of the Texas Navy.

January 21: Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Texas' arch-nemesis, is declared interim president of Mexico. (Having suffered disgrace for his loss and capture at San Jacinto, he became a new national hero after losing his leg fighting the French at Veracruz in late 1838.)

January 23: Texas Congress passes joint resolution approving of President Sam Houston's withdrawal of annexation proposal.

January 26: Texas Congress passes an act appropriating \$250,000 for the Texas Navy, primarily to pay for the six ships ordered from the Baltimore shipbuilding firm of Frederick Dawson & Brother. That same day the Texas Congress passes a law ordering a survey of the harbors of Texas.

February 9: Steam packet Charleston leaves New York Harbor for Galveston. When she arrives, she would be rechristened the Zava-

la and given four guns, becoming the Texas Navy's only steam-powered warship.

March: United States Navy Lieutenant Edwin Ward Moore travels to Texas and meets with President Lamar. No records are left of this meeting, but it is believed President Lamar offered Moore the job of commander-in-chief of the Texas Navy at this meeting. Moore would later resign from the U.S. Navy and become the Texas Navy's greatest commander.

March 9: France concludes a treaty with Mexico, ending the "Pastry War" and setting the stage for Mexico's emergence as a regional naval power again. On his return to France, Admiral Baudin pays a courtesy call at Galveston and his saluted by the Texas steamer Zavala.

March 18: The steamer Charleston arrives in Galveston to be converted into the warship Zavala, the Texas Navy's only armed steamship. On March 23, she would be commissioned as a Texas Navy vessel.

March 22: Commander John Grant Tod is appointed by President Mirabeau Lamar to oversee the construction of six powerful warships in Baltimore. The six ships form the core of the second Texas Navy, the most powerful naval force in the Gulf in its day.

April 17: The U.S. Navy Department ordered Lieutenant Edwin Ward Moore to respond to reports that he had been offered com-

mand of the Texas Navy. By the end of the month, reports had reached U.S. newspapers to this effect, and Moore denied that he had been given the job.

April 21: Commodore Edwin Ward Moore's commission as Post Captain in the Texas Navy takes effect from this date.

April 29: Secretary of the Navy Memucan Hunt orders Commodore Moore to purchase 180 revolving carbines and revolving pistols from Colt's Firearms Manufacturing Company. The pistols, five-shot .36 caliber Paterson No. 5 models, are the first workable revolvers to arrive in Texas, and are the precursor of the famous Colt Peacemaker, "The Gun that Won the West." Many of these revolvers would be transferred to the Texas Rangers, where their exploits would save Colt from bankruptcy and earn the ranger force lasting fame. Samuel Colt would later show his appreciation and love of the Texas Navy by engraving a naval battle scene, the Battle of Campeche, on the cylinder of his popular Mod. 1851 pistol with "Engaged 16 May 1843" appearing below it, and the pistol would become known as the "Colt Navy" model.

May 10: Texas finally pays U.S. claims over the seizure of the brig Pocket by the Invincible in 1836. A French naval squadron under Admiral Charles Baudin pays a visit to Galveston after destroying the Mexican fleet at Veracruz. The fleet is met by Captain A.C. Hinton of the steamer warship Zavala,

and after being feted by Galveston officials, the Zavala returns a 13-gun salute from the French flagship Neride.

June 15: Santa Anna asks the Mexican Congress for extraordinary powers to prosecute the war in Texas.

June 27: Schooner San Jacinto arrives in Galveston from its builder in Baltimore, becoming the first warship of the "second" Texas Navy.

July 6: Texas finally pays \$12,445 for the 1836 seizure of the Pocket, as required by the July 6, 1838 treaty with the United States.

July 8: United States Navy Lieutenant Edwin Ward Moore resigns his commission to become commander of the Navy of the Republic of Texas.

August 7: Schooner-of-war San Antonio arrives at Galveston, the second of three armed schooners purchased by Texas as part of its reconstituted navy.

August 31: Schooner-of-war San Bernard, the last of the armed schooners purchased for the second Texas Navy, arrives at Galveston.

September 20: Negotiations for the harbor ship Louisville, also called the "Striped Pig," were consummated, and the Louisville was added to the Texas Navy roster as an unarmed supply ship.

October 4: Commodore Edwin Ward Moore arrived in Galveston aboard the SS Columbia to take command of the Texas Navy.

October 18: The Colorado, Texas' second-largest active warship (later renamed the Wharton) arrived in Galveston from Baltimore, where she was built. The Colorado would sail to New York on a recruiting trip and then remain in port until 1843, when she sailed with the flagship Austin on the Texas Navy's final cruise.

October 25: Secretary of the Navy Louis P. Cooke ordered Commander A.C. Hinton to proceed to New Orleans to begin refitting the Zavala as a fighting vessel. Hinton's cost overruns led to his dismissal from service the next year, but Texas Navy officials agreed that Hinton's repairs produced a vessel of extraordinary strength and seaworthiness.

November: During this month, the Texas sailing fleet, consisting of the armed schooners San Jacinto, San Antonio and San Bernard and the brig Colorado (later renamed the Wharton) receive supplies in anticipation of recruiting trips to New Orleans and New York.

November 10: The Colorado departs for New York via New Orleans.

November 18: President Mirabeau B. Lamar sends the Senate a list of officers for the revitalized Texas Navy. Unfortunately, the number of officers exceeded the amount

Congress had permitted, and Lamar and the Texas Navy become political targets of the pro-Houston faction. Lamar quickly withdraws the nominations, and the officers of the Texas Navy will operate without official commissions (therefore, technically as pirates) until July 1842.

November 20: The steamship Zavala, Commander A.C. Hinton, weathers her first storm under Texas colors on her first voyage as a warship. She arrives in New Orleans safely after what would be the first of many sea storms she would run through with no loss of life. Just before her arrival, the schooner San Antonio under Lieutenant Francis B. Wright arrives in New Orleans to pick up new recruits and supplies for the schooners remaining at Galveston.

November 29: Commander Hinton reports to Secretary of the Navy Louis P. Cooke that repairs and refitting for the Zavala will cause an estimated budget overrun of about \$4000. (The ultimate tab would exceed Hinton's budget by nearly \$14,000, and would cost Hinton his job.)

December: Commander A.C. Hinton spends the month in New Orleans fitting out the Atlantic coast steamer Charleston into the warship Zavala. The war schooner San Antonio, under Lieutenant Francis B. Wright, was in Mobile recruiting men and procuring supplies for the Navy.

December 9: Commodore Edwin Ward

Moore arrives in New York aboard the 16-gun brig Colorado, his first Texas Navy command vessel. He would spend the month in New York recruiting sailors and officers, and procuring supplies, small arms and ammunition. (Included in the supplies he procured were the first large shipments of Samuel Colt's newfangled revolver, the "Gun that Won the West.") Moore's recruiting is generally done under cover of darkness, as it violates U.S. neutrality laws.

December 17: Lieutenant Wright and the San Antonio return to New Orleans from Mobile. According to Commander Hinton, her affairs were in bad order: "Her bills unsettled, the Sheriff with numbers of writs against her commander for private debts. Since his arrival Mr. Wright literally playing hide and go seek to avoid the bailiff & last left them unpaid ; and almost every body with curses in their mouths, some against the whole Navy, others against Mr. Wright especially."

December 30: Lieutenant Charles S. Hunter of the U.S.S. North Carolina charges Commodore Moore with violations of the Neutrality Act of 1818, which prohibits recruiting sailors for foreign navies on U.S. territory. Moore is arrested but released on one thousand dollars bail. He skips bail and, at the prodding of the U.S. Secretary of State, leaves New York soon afterwards, his brig filled with new sailors and junior officers "Hailing from Texas and calling themselves Texians."

1840

January 1840: Texas' new flagship, the twenty-gun sloop-of-war Austin, arrives in Galveston harbor. She would become the most active vessel of the Texas Navy after 1840, and she would be the last surviving Texas warship, being broken up after annexation in 1848.

January 3: Commodore Moore, aboard the brig Colorado on a recruiting trip to New York, retrieves his gunpowder from the Brooklyn Navy Yard magazine in preparation to leave New York for Texas. Moore's departure from New York was motivated by charges of illegal recruitment of sailors on U.S. soil, a charge undoubtedly true.

January 4: After a delay of nearly eight months, the Texas Senate approves the appointment of Louis P. Cooke as Secretary of the Navy. Cooke would become the last man to hold this position, as the following year the Navy Department would be reduced and incorporated into the War Department as a departmental bureau.

January 7: Commander Addison C. Hinton, in charge of repairs to the Zavala to make her an efficient naval warship, informs the Texas government that he will run about \$7,000 over his budget. Hinton will soon be fired without court-martial, which led to the passage of an act of Congress entitling any officer to a court-martial if the government wishes to remove him. (This act would play a critical role in a later dispute between

Commodore Edwin Ward Moore and President Sam Houston.)

January 9: The last of the shipments of Sam Colt's newfangled revolving "Patent Fire Arms" are sent to Texas. These fire-arms - 130 revolvers and 130 revolving carbines - were purchased by the Texas Navy. The shipments temporarily saved Sam Colt from bankruptcy, and the revolvers, some of which made their way to the famed Texas Rangers, revolutionized warfare in the western frontiers, and were the precursors to the famed Peacemaker model, the "Gun that Won the West."

January 13: Texas Senate requests that President Mirabeau B. Lamar to explain under what authority he appointed nearly one hundred Texas Navy officers while Congress was in recess. This would become a sore spot between Lamar and the increasingly hostile Congress.

January 20: Commodore Moore, aboard the brig Colorado, sails home for Texas.

February 5: The Texas Congress passes an act laying up the fleet "in ordinary" (mothballed). The act contains a provision that allows President Lamar to recall the fleet to active status if he perceives a threat to Texas. Lamar invokes this provision almost as soon as Congress goes home at the end of its session.

February 6: Commander A. C. Hinton is

dismissed from the service by Secretary of the Navy Louis P. Cooke for overspending his budget for the arming of the Zavala by about \$12,000. That same day, Commodore Moore's agents in New York sign an invoice for small arms from Samuel Colt's Patent Arms Manufacturing Company, bringing the first Colt revolver to Texas. These five-shot revolvers, the famed Paterson Model, would be transferred to the Texas Rangers and begin the career of Colt's "gun that won the west."

February 23: Former (and future) Texas President Sam Houston pays a visit to the Texas Brig of War Colorado, receiving a 17-gun salute from Commodore Moore's crew.

March 29: Former and future Texas President Sam Houston is invited aboard the flagship Austin for an official visit, and is given an eighteen-gun salute by the sloop-of-war. Upon seeing the ship-shape condition of the Navy, Houston remarked to the editor of the Telegraph and Texas Register that he regretted his opposition to the Navy and hoped the ships could be put to sea at once.

April 11: The crew of the flagship Austin throws an elegant ball for visiting government officials, "said to excel any thing of the kind that was ever given in Texas," according to Midshipman James Mabry, whose accounts are published in the Galveston News a half century later.

April 25: The brig Dolphin arrives in Galveston from Baltimore, as the last of the Texas

Navy's warships to be delivered to the Republic. The Dolphin, later to be renamed the Archer, would never see an operational cruise outside Texas waters. A new fleet, consisting of the sloop-of-war Austin, the brigs Archer and Wharton, the schooners San Bernard, San Jacinto and San Antonio, and the steamer Zavala, prepare for their first cruise against Mexico, which will begin in mid-June.

June 2: Captain John C. Clark, a veteran of the Bolivar Wars of Independence, is commissioned in the Texas Navy as commander of the Archer and will eventually command the sloop Washington.

June 3: Commander Tod returns to Galveston from Baltimore and becomes commander of the Galveston Navy Yard.

June 27: The mightiest fleet Texas ever fielded - consisting of the 18-gun sloop-of-war Austin, the 8-gun steamer Zavala, and the 6-gun schooners San Jacinto, San Bernard and San Antonio - leave Galveston for a cruise along the Mexican coast. They are under orders to support a diplomatic mission to Mexico and abstain from offensive operations unless attacked. Two other brigs, Wharton and Archer, remain behind to guard Galveston, although Commodore Edwin Moore orders Captain George Wheelwright to prepare the Wharton to join the fleet at sea.

July 16: The San Jacinto loses an anchor

and part of an anchor chain in New Orleans when the SS Columbia accidentally runs too close to her.

July 19: Zavala leaves New Orleans for the Arcas Islands to support the Texas squadron, arriving off Sisal under English colors on July 25.

July 27: Austin and San Bernard sail from New Orleans to Yucatán on a diplomatic mission to ascertain Yucatán feelings towards Texas. The two ships arrive on July 31 under U.S. colors until it is determined that Yucatán is friendly to Texas. This trip will ultimately lead to the September 1841 pact between Texas and Yucatán to cooperate in their mutual fight against the central government of Mexico.

August 2-4: Texas flagship Austin and schooner San Bernard arrive off the coast of Campeche, and during the next two days Commodore Edwin W. Moore meets with Yucatán officials, who offer Texas the use of Yucatán's ports during its rebellion against the central Mexican government.

August 10-24: Austin, Zavala, San Bernard and San Jacinto cruise off the Mexican coast, delivering diplomatic correspondence to Yucatán officials, supporting Judge James Treat's diplomatic mission to gain Mexican recognition, stopping Mexican shipping and ultimately, blockading the principal Mexican port of Vera Cruz. The blockade by the Texas Navy would cause the Mexican press to cry out: "...we are in a moment blockaded

by the Texians, and although pirates, they will not be permitted, with impunity, to molest the vessels of other nations, this we confess, makes our blood boil; we cannot view it with serenity; it makes us desperate..." The effect of the blockade on Mexican war preparations was described by one British diplomatic official: "To give you some idea of the wastefulness going on even at Vera Cruz, I heard it repeated over and over again that the Battery erected against the Schooner San Bernard was merely to draw Money out of the Treasury, the Sand Bags cost nearly 7,000 Dollars, and afterwards resold: the Military and those employed pocketed nearly two thirds of the sum, and in this manner the public Money is fritted away from one end of the Republic to the other." Ultimately the blockade is called off, and the ships return home.

Early September: Commodore Edwin Ward Moore's flagship, the sloop Austin, stayed off the Mexican coast near the mouth of the Rio Grande River, trying to bait the centralist forces into attacking his ships so that he would be justified in commencing a blockade of the Mexican coast. The Mexican soldiers wisely refused to commence hostilities.

Late September: The armed steamer Zavala proceeded to the Arcas Islands off the Yucatán coast, while the Austin and schooners-of-war San Bernard and San Antonio anchored off Point Mariandrea, near the Mexican port of Veracruz. Commodore Moore sent the San Bernard to the Arcas with food for the

Zavala, then headed to the Island of Lobos to care for his sick crew, leaving the San Antonio to monitor events off Veracruz.

October 1: A fierce norther struck the southern Gulf of Mexico. The Zavala, anchored off the bar at the Tabasco River, was lashed by the storm for three days. Her crew dropped all anchors, and when that did not stop the ship from moving, they tied ropes to the ship's cannons and rolled them overboard. The Zavala ran her engines to keep her off the rocks, burning fuel until she ran out, then cord wood until the wood ran out, then the burning pieces of the ship's decking and furniture. After three days of being tossed about, the Zavala survived the storm and limped off to the Tabasco port of Frontera for repairs and provisions. The Austin, anchored off the Isle of Lobos, was also violently rocked in the gale, but managed to save the passengers and crew of the Mexican brig Segunda Fama, which was wrecked off the nearby Banquilla Reef. The stranded passengers and crew were returned to Veracruz on October 17.

October 10: Lieutenant Thurston M. Taylor, commanding the sick on the Isle of Lobos, encountered a Texas ally from Yucatán, General Pedro Lemus, who with his family was stranded after the Mexican warship taking him to Mexico City for trial was grounded in the norther that hit the Zavala and the Austin. The Texas Navy took General Lemus and his family home, where the general would be a key figure in the revolutionary Yucatán

government and a great ally for Texas.

October 20: The San Jacinto under Lieutenant James O'Shaunessy, left Point Mariandrea off Veracruz without orders and proceeded to the Arcas Islands, where the ship was accidentally wrecked on October 31.

October 21: A water-gathering party from the Austin was fired upon by Mexican soldiers, allowing Commodore Moore to begin offensive operations against Mexico under his orders from President Mirabeau B. Lamar.

November 1: In a message to Congress, President Lamar explains that he was compelled to appoint officers during Congress' absence due to a Mexican naval threat brewing in the Gulf. Congress, unpersuaded, continues to attack Lamar's domestic and foreign policies, including those connected with the Texas Navy.

November 2: The sloop Austin arrives at the Arcas Islands to find the schooner San Jacinto aground and crippled from a storm that hit the Gulf the previous month. The San Bernard is also there, and Commodore Edwin W. Moore manages to get the San Jacinto on shore where it can be safely repaired. That same day, the Mexican merchant schooner Ana Maria is run down and captured by the San Antonio under Lieutenant Alex Moore, a cousin of Commodore Moore.

November 8: The Austin arrives at Campeche, off the Yucatán coast, bringing revolutionary Yucatán leader Pedro Lemus and his family home. They were stranded on a small island after being captured by the centralist faction then in power in Mexico City. Lemus would become a forceful advocate for better relations between Texas and Yucatán, which was in revolt against the centralist government.

November 20: The Texas warships Austin, Zavala and San Bernard, along with a Yucatán brig, arrive at San Juan Bautista in the Mexican state of Tobasco, having traveled up the Tobasco River (Rio Grijalde). The object of the cruise was to recapture the Tobasco city from 600 centralist troops that were holding it, thus driving the centralists from the southern part of Mexico. Upon word of the squadron's arrival, the centralists evacuate the city, and as part of an agreement between Commodore Moore and Yucatán General Juan Pablo Anaya, the Texas Navy is paid \$25,000 for its work.

November 23: A court-martial is convened for seaman Edward Thornton, a maintop captain, on charges of conspiracy to mutiny. (Thornton and unnamed conspirators evidently wanted to get their hands on the \$25,000 in Mexican silver promised by the Yucatán government.) Thornton's trial, lasting eight days, would result in a conviction and sentence of death, but upon recommendation of mercy, his sentence was reduced to 200 lashes with a cat 'o nine tails. Thorn-

ton died of yellow fever before his sentence could be executed, but Commodore Moore had the findings and sentence of the court read over the body before it was committed to the deep.

Late November: Commander John Grant Tod, in charge of the Galveston Navy Yard, becomes acting Secretary of the Navy in the absence of Secretary Cooke. Tod would soon draft legislation to abolish the post of Secretary of the Navy and combine the Navy Department with the War Department, as part of a general government reorganization to save badly needed currency. Also, tropical fever reached its peak for the Texas fleet - some 24 officers and men aboard the Austin alone died of the disease between August 1840 and January 1841.

November 30: The San Antonio, under Lieutenant Alex Moore, brings home Judge Treat, a diplomat sent by President Lamar to negotiate Mexican recognition of Texas. Treat's mission would end in failure, and he died on the journey home, to be buried in Galveston alongside one of the family members of Lieutenant William S. Williamson.

December: War schooner San Bernard hovers off Veracruz, waiting for any Mexican ships that may sail into the Texas blockade. The San Jacinto lies wrecked on the Arcas Islands, while Moore coordinates the fleet's movements from his flagship Austin, escorted by the steamer Zavala. The San Antonio returns to Galveston. Outbreaks of tropical

fever claim the lives of over a dozen sailors and officers this month.

December 3: Citizens of the Mexican state of Tobasco, recently liberated from the centralist government by combined actions of the Texas Navy and federalist rebels, are invited to a grand ball aboard the Austin thrown by Commodore Moore. Three days later, the Austin fired a 21-gun salute to Tobasco, and the Texas fleet pulled away for the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

December 8: San Antonio arrives in Galveston, bearing the remains of James Treat, a Texas peace envoy to Mexico, whose mission of negotiating Mexican recognition of Texas independence failed.

1841

January 8: Texas war schooner San Bernard arrives in Galveston, bringing news of the Texas Navy's capture of the Tobasco capital San Juan Bautista and the rebel contribution of \$25,000 in return for the Texas Navy's services against the central Mexican government.

January 13: Texas flagship Austin arrives at the Arcas Islands, in the Gulf of Mexico, to pick up marooned sailors from the schooner San Jacinto, which was lost on the reefs there the previous October.

January 14: Lieutenant James S. O'Shaunessey succeeds the fever-ridden

Lieutenant Thurston M. Taylor of the San Bernard. Lt. O'Shaunessey would later embezzle a number of the schooner's Colt revolvers and sell them to local Yucatán officials, then desert the service.

January 18: In a cost saving move, the Texas Congress passes a law that combines the Department of the Navy with the War Department. The Texas Navy is now run by the Navy Bureau, a part of the Department of War and Navy. The Secretary of War, Branch T. Archer, becomes head of the combined department, and former Navy Secretary Louis P. Cooke becomes a congressman for Travis County, Texas.

January 28: The San Bernard is dispatched to Veracruz with news that Great Britain has recognized Texas, and has agreed to mediate the subject of Texas recognition between Texas and Mexico.

February 4: In response to the dismissal of Commander Hinton, the Texas Congress approves an act that decreed that no officer could be dismissed without a full and fair court martial. (This act would figure prominently in the defense of Commodore Edwin W. Moore when he was dismissed by President Houston in 1843.)

February 10: While cruising off the Mexican port of Veracruz, the Austin boarded a small inbound schooner, which turned out to have Yucatán General Lemus, a federalist prisoner of the centralists who controlled the Mex-

ican government. Moore ordered Lemus released and landed him at Campeche, on the Yucatán peninsula, where he was elevated to a governmental position and became an influential friend of Texas.

March 5: While anchored at Frontera, Lieutenant James O'Shaunessey, commander of the warship San Antonio, deserts the Texas Navy. O'Shaunessey was commander of the San Antonio's sister ship, the San Jacinto, when it ran aground and was lost at the Isle of Alacranes off the Yucatán coast, and he was involved with the theft of 25 or 30 Colt's revolver pistols from his ship and other small arms and selling them to local officials.

March 10: The San Bernard arrives at Veracruz under a flag of truce bearing dispatches from Lord Palmerston to the British consul at Veracruz. Because Mexico and Texas are still formally at war, the dispatches are given to the nearby H.M.S. Comus. The San Bernard returned to Galveston, anchoring there on March 18.

March 22: Lieutenant Alex Moore, cousin of Commodore Edwin Ward Moore, returned to Texas, having deserted his post as commander of the San Antonio after it seized a merchant vessel belonging to a United States consul in Yucatán. Commodore Moore forced his cousin to tender his resignation that same day, and he was discharged from service.

April 20: The armed steamer Zavala arrives

back in Galveston from a lengthy cruise along the Mexican coast. She brings with her over \$8000 in silver from the government of Yucatán for aiding that Mexican state in its rebellion against the central government.

June 16: French frigate Sabine gives the San Bernard official word of Mexico's rejection of President Lamar's latest effort to negotiate a peace treaty with Mexico. As a result, Texas envoy Judge Webb recommended that Lamar enter into an alliance with the rebellious Mexican state of Yucatán, which sets the stage for the Texas Navy's operations in Yucatán.

July 1: San Bernard arrives at Galveston with Judge Webb, who has been denied entrance to Mexico to negotiate recognition of Texas' independence.

July 4: Commodore Moore, aboard the San Antonio, leaves Galveston for a survey of the coast of Texas. This three month survey will produce a more accurate chart of Texas' Gulf Coast, reducing shipping insurance rates and opening up more commerce for Texas.

July 20: President Mirabeau B. Lamar sends a letter to Yucatán proposing a defensive alliance against the central government of Mexico.

September 6: Sam Houston is elected president for a second term, to succeed President Mirabeau B. Lamar beginning December 13, 1841.

September 18: Texas consummates an extraordinary deal with the government of Yucatán, a Mexican state that was in revolt against the central Mexican government. Under this agreement, signed by President Lamar and Colonel Martín F. Peraza of Yucatán, Texas agreed to provide at least three warships to protect Yucatán and attack Mexican cities and commerce, in return for \$8,000 per month in silver, plus a 50 percent share of any ships or public property captured by the Texas Yucatán forces. A great ball was held in Austin to announce the alliance between Texas and the rebellious Mexican state, and orders were issued to Commodore Moore the following day to prepare his ships to sail for Yucatán. The deal was nearly overruled by the Texas Congress in November 1841, but the agreement remained in force long enough to fund another cruise against Mexico.

October 1: Commodore Moore was aboard the San Antonio at Paso Cavallo, having completed a survey of the Texas coastline from the Sabine River down to Matagorda Bay. That same day, a report to Secretary of War and Marine Branch T. Archer noted that unless repairs were made on the Zavala, the ship would rot into disrepair and become unusable for Texas.

October 8: Lieutenant A.I. Lewis took secret orders from the Department of War and Marine to Commodore Moore, instructing Moore to prepare for operations on behalf of Yucatán, which agreed to pay Texas \$8,000

per month in silver for the use of three Texas warships. Moore left Matagorda Bay for Galveston on October 13, and began fitting out his ships for their first active operations since late early 1841.

November 10: Incoming president Sam Houston (scheduled to take office in mid December) wrote his views on the Texas Navy's planned cruise in support of Yucatán. The cruise was part of an extraordinary pact between President Lamar and the Yucatán government to rent the Texas Navy to Yucatán to assist in its fight against the central government of Mexico for \$8,000 per month. Houston wrote, "Our navy has not yet started, and if it could be of any use to us I would be glad that it should not go. If it should sail, you may rely upon it that it will be the last of our navy. That it will be in the hands of Santa Anna in ninety days, I would be willing to wager a trifle. I would not be surprised if it would turn out that the whole revolution in Yucatán was set on foot by Santa Anna with a view to inveigle Lamar and get the navy in possession." As it turned out, Houston was fortunate not to have bet against his navy; it returned the following April after capturing several merchant vessels and thrown Mexico's Atlantic shipping into a panic.

November 23: President Lamar, whose term was about to expire, informed Congress that he had dispatched the Texas Navy to support Yucatán, and offered to recall it if Congress directed him to do so. A measure brought by

the Houston faction to recall the Navy failed by a narrow margin, and the cruise was allowed to proceed.

November 27: Commodore Moore pays the Texas Navy's bills (some of them) with badly needed funds received from Yucatán.

December 13: Sam Houston is inaugurated as Texas' third elected president, succeeding himself and President Lamar. Because he was commonly known to be antagonistic to the Texas Navy, Commodore Moore leaves Texas with his fleet (consisting of the Austin, San Bernard and San Antonio) in accordance with orders from President Lamar (to coordinate offensive operations with the Yucatán government). Two days later, President Houston orders Moore to return, but his orders arrive too late, do not reach Moore in Yucatán until the following March.

December 24: George W. Hockley, Sam Houston's artillery commander from the Battle of San Jacinto, is confirmed as Secretary of War and Navy.

December 30: Houston sends a message to the Texas House of Representatives stating that if his intelligence were correct, "there can be no doubt that some movements against Texas are in preparation. Mexico, in my opinion (relying on the current intelligence of the day) has, at no time since 1836, been in a situation so favorable for annoying our country as at the present moment."

1842

January: Crewmen of the schooners San Antonio and San Bernard begin to plot a mutiny against the vessels' officers. This plot would come to a head the following month off the harbor of New Orleans.

January 6: Commodore Moore arrives in Sisal, on the Yucatán coast, to support the Yucatán rebels against the Mexican government in accordance with a pact signed between Yucatán and President Lamar. The Texas squadron at this time consists of the sloop Austin (20 guns) and the seven-gun schooners San Bernard and San Antonio.

January 10: To his dismay, Commodore Moore learns that the Yucatán government has decided not to declare independence from Mexico, and is in negotiations with the central government for a return to the Mexican union.

January 12: While Moore was in Merida, Yucatán's capital, Lt. Alfred G. Gray became concerned about Yucatán treachery. He seized several Mexican government negotiators and held them aboard the Austin until Moore could assure him that the Yucatán government had acted honorably, and was not holding Moore as their prisoner. Gray immediately released the prisoners.

January 14: A Texas auditing board concludes that the government owes Commodore Moore \$10,000 for personal expenditures Moore made on behalf of the Texas

government. The money would not be repaid for another five years.

January 29: Commander Hinton, fired by Navy Secretary Louis P. Cooke in 1840, is acquitted by the Texas Congress of any act contrary to the code of an officer and a gentleman.

January 31: President Houston vetoed a resolution of thanks of the Texas Congress to Commander John Grant Tod, for the work Tod had accomplished in supervising the building of the Texas Navy vessels in Baltimore. Houston reasoned that one should not give a congressional vote of thanks to a public servant simply for doing his job well. The veto was overridden.

February 3: An Act of Congress approved by President Sam Houston cut the Texas Navy's annual salaries to \$1,200 for captains; \$720 for commanders; \$600 for lieutenants commanding a vessel of war; \$480 for lieutenants; \$216 for midshipmen; \$240 for warrant officers; \$360 for the captain's secretary; and \$240 for ship's clerks.

February 6: The Austin, sailing in Mexican waters, boarded and captured the Mexican merchant schooner Progreso.

February 11: While anchored off New Orleans, marines and crewmen of the warship San Antonio get liquored up and mutiny, killing their commanding officer, Lieutenant Charles Fuller, and wounding two offi-

cers who rush to Fuller's aid. The mutineers lock the officers below decks and escape in the San Antonio's boats. They are caught the same day thanks to the quick work of the New Orleans Police Department and officers of the U.S. revenue cutter Jackson, anchored nearby. The mutineers remain incarcerated in New Orleans for over a year, during which time the ringleader escapes and one of the key mutineers dies in prison. The remainder are returned to Commodore Moore for punishment; two are lashed with the cat 'o nine tails, one is acquitted, and four are hanged from the foreyard of the Austin for their crimes.

March 2: Former Navy Secretary Robert Potter is killed outside his home in a gun battle stemming from a feud between two political factions known as the Regulator-Moderator War.

March 6: Commodore Moore, at Campeche on the Yucatán coast, learns of the February 11 mutiny aboard the San Antonio, in which the vessel's acting commander, Lieutenant Charles Fuller, was murdered. The mutineers were caught, and command of the ship was returned to Lieutenant William Seeger. Moore, writing the Secretary of War and Navy, vowed: "I expect to meet Capt. Seeger at Laguna, for which place I leave tonight, and I will mete out to the rascals the uttermost penalties of the law."

March 10: Orders from President Houston dated December 15, 1841, reached Com-

Commodore Moore's squadron off the Yucatán coast. Moore had his fleet put to sea before Houston was sworn in as President on December 13, 1841, because he knew that Houston would very likely order the fleet to remain in port and avoid further cruises.

March 14: Commodore Moore orders a court martial for two of the mutineers of the San Antonio. The rest would not be tried until more than a year later.

March 26: President Houston declares a blockade of Mexican ports in response to the Mexican Army's brief occupation of San Antonio. Houston does not, however, provide any money for the Navy to put to sea.

April 3: Commodore Moore's squadron, cruising off the Mexican coast, captures the centralist merchant vessel Dos Amigos.

April 5: Commodore Moore urges the Texas government to spend a few thousand dollars to save the steamer Zavala which, rotting at the Galveston harbor, is sinking into the mud through neglect and disrepair. The government ignores Moore's warnings, and within a year, the ship that cost the Texas government nearly a half million dollars becomes completely useless.

May 3: Commodore Moore is ordered by President Houston to blockade Mexico, but allow the captured blockade runner Progreso to proceed to Mexico unharmed. The flagship Austin is sent to New Orleans for

refitting, and the armed schooners San Bernard and San Antonio are sent to Mobile to obtain supplies.

May 26: Commodore Moore sends the San Antonio to Yucatan to collect amounts due for naval services to assist that state's revolt against the central Mexican government, and asks to renew the alliance so that his fleet will have the money to go to sea.

June 1: American schooner Mary Elizabeth is captured by the Texas sloop-of-war Washington. The Washington was commanded by Captain John C. Clark, who led the Galveston seacoast guards, commanded the brigs Archer and Wharton in ordinary, and ran the Galveston Navy Yard for a short time under President Lamar. The prize was declared illegal and ordered released.

June 6: Brig Wharton under Captain J.T.K. Lothrop arrives at New Orleans to join the Austin in a blockade of the Mexican coast ordered by President Houston. Neither ship would sail until next year due to lack of funding.

July 2: Commodore Moore meets with Secretary Hockley in Houston and proposes to renew the lapsed alliance with Yucatán. Moore also requests repairs for the Zavala, back pay for his officers, and ratification of their commissions by the Texas Senate (without which, they could technically be considered pirates).

July 5: San Bernard is at Mobile, Alabama,

raising funds for the Texas Navy.

July 20: After nearly three years of delays, the Texas Senate finally approves the commissions for the officers of the second Texas Navy.

July 23: Texas Congress appropriates funds for the repair of the Zavala, but President Houston refuses to disburse the funds, and the ship eventually sinks into the muddy Galveston shore and rots. It would turn up, nearly 150 years later, buried underneath a Galveston parking lot. Congress also votes over \$97,000 for the Texas Navy, but Houston also refuses to disburse this appropriation, so the Navy is left without food, supplies or money.

July 27: President Houston issues sealed orders to Commodore Moore ordering him to blockade Mexico.

August: Texas Navy ships San Antonio, San Bernard, Austin and Wharton lie off New Orleans, waiting for funding from Texas that will allow them to blockade the Mexican coast as ordered by President Houston. Commodore Moore goes deep in debt to fund his fleet, and appropriations by the Texas Congress are withheld by President Houston. In desperation, Moore reopens negotiations with Yucatán to obtain funding for the navy. August 27: The San Antonio leaves New Orleans for Yucatán under command of Lieutenant Seegar and is never heard from again. Rumors persist that her

crew mutinied and she became a slave ship, and a pirate ship matching her description was chased off the Isle of Pines by the U.S.S. Boxer, but it is generally believed the ship perished in a tropical storm that hit the Gulf in mid-September 1842.

September 11: Mexican General Adrian Woll invades Texas, capturing the city of San Antonio briefly before returning across the border to Mexico.

September 15: President Houston ordered Commodore Moore to court-martial the mutineers from the warship San Antonio, who mutinied in February when the schooner was off New Orleans, killed their commanding officer and fled in the ship's boat, only to be captured by New Orleans police and the crew of the U.S.S. Jackson.

September 22: The armed schooner San Bernard is blown ashore at Galveston during severe storm. This was probably the same storm that claimed the schooner San Antonio, which left New Orleans for Yucatán under Lieutenant William Seeger to negotiate a renewal of the September 18, 1841 agreement and was never heard from again.

September 26: Acting Secretary of War and Marine M.C. Hamilton revokes Moore's earlier orders to take his fleet to blockade the Mexican coast. The reasons for this action in the face of Woll's invasion of Texas stem from Great Britain's efforts to mediate Mexican recognition of Texas. (The posts of

Secretary of War and Secretary of Navy were combined in a budget cutting law passed in late 1840.)

October 1: While the brig Wharton lay at anchor off New Orleans, Midshipmen F.R. Culp and George R. White fought a duel in which Culp was mortally wounded. That same month, Marine Captain Robert Oliver died of congestive fever. Captain Oliver and Midshipman Culp were buried in a vault at the Girod Street Cemetery in New Orleans, and in 1955 their remains, along with those of one other Texas Navy officer, were transferred to the Texas State Cemetery in Austin for reburial.

October 29: Moore wrote to Secretary of War and Marine M.C. Hamilton, stating that without government funding of some kind, he could not get to sea. That same day Secretary Hamilton, writing from Texas, informed Moore that he regretted to inform Moore that funds from the government would not be forthcoming due to Texas' destitute condition, and ordered Moore to return home if he could not get his fleet to sea.

November 2: Lieutenant Downing H. Crisp, commanding the dismasted brig Archer and the grounded schooner San Bernard in Galveston, receives word from the War Department that the Texas government no longer has any funds to pay its officers, or even supply them with food, and they must therefore fend for themselves. Upon hearing this, Commodore Moore, in New Orleans, shipped rations to Crisp for his officers and

men, to avoid having to discharge the crews and let the ships rot.

November 5: Commodore Moore, commanding the Texas squadron in New Orleans, receives word from the War Department that the Texas government no longer has any funds to pay for its Navy, and orders Moore to return to Galveston if possible. Hamilton, however, does express his hope that by "some fortune" Commodore Moore would be able to accomplish his stated mission of funding the Texas Navy with Yucatán money, and sail against Mexico in support of Yucatán.

November 15: In a secret report to President Houston, Acting Secretary of War M.C. Hamilton informs Houston that Commodore Moore, then in New Orleans with the Austin and Wharton, was unable to get to sea with the paltry funds Houston provided him, and concluded that the Texas Navy was better off being mothballed in Galveston than left to rot in New Orleans. This report laid the groundwork for Houston's plan to recall the Navy to Galveston and sell it off.

November 16: Acting Secretary Hamilton orders Moore to return to Galveston, "if practicable."

December 1: Moore is ordered to return from New Orleans to Galveston by Acting Secretary of War and Navy M.C. Hamilton. Moore's fleet, however, lacks the funds to leave port.

January 12: Moore is ordered to return to Galveston from New Orleans with the Austin and Wharton, “if practicable,” by Acting Secretary of War Morgan C. Hamilton. Regarding Moore’s repeated pleas to President Houston to release appropriated funds to hire sailors to bring the ships back home (and pay, feed and clothe the officers), Hamilton states: “Any expectations that may have been entertained of realizing or in any manner making available the appropriation of the extra session of Congress, will certainly end in disappointment. It was subject, from the first, and still is, to such contingencies as to render it a dead letter on the statute books.”

January 16: At President Houston’s urging, the Texas Congress meets in a secret session and passes a law disbanding the Texas Navy and sell the warships at auction. Houston will be authorized to appoint three commissioners to go to New Orleans, take possession of the vessels, and bring them to Galveston for sale.

January 17: In New Orleans, Commodore Moore sends one last plea for funding to Yucatán aboard the charter vessel Two Sons. It is Moore’s hope that the Yucatán government will renew the pact signed by President Lamar and fund the Texas Navy so that it can put to sea and stop the naval blockade of Yucatán. (This would help Texas, because Mexico’s foreign policy was to subdue

Yucatán before turning its fleet and armies against Texas.)

January 20: Lt. Downing Crisp, an English citizen and commander of the mothballed brig Archer, obtains a furlough from Sam Houston to return to England and seek employment with the Royal Navy. Crisp and his men had not been paid in years, and were literally starved out of their posts, having to pawn ship’s equipment the previous month in order to buy food to eat.

January 22: War Secretary George W. Hill orders Commodore Moore to come to Texas and report his activities to the War Department. It is a thinly-disguised attempt to get Moore out of New Orleans to make it more likely that the commissioners will have an easier time getting the Texas Navy officers to bring their vessels home, where they can be sold. Orders directed to Commander John T.K. Lothrop, “or Officer in Command of Navy,” require the commander to submit to the direction of the commissioners. Since Moore is the commander of the Texas Navy, he elects to stay in New Orleans with the commissioners (at their request) rather than return home.

January 23: Secretary Hill sends a secret letter to shipbuilder Frederick Dawson, offering to return the Austin, Wharton, Archer, and what is left of the San Bernard in return for a release of all claims against the Texas government for the purchase of those four ships, plus the schooners San Antonio and

San Jacinto. Dawson, not wanting to have given away two ships and loaned four others for free, declines.

February 8: The midshipmen of the brig Wharton, destitute, lacking clothes and with no hope of real pay, submit their resignations to Commodore Moore. The resignations are not accepted by Moore, who is about to conclude a deal with Yucatán that would provide additional financing for the Texas Navy.

February 11: Commodore Moore, faced with the loss of his navy due to neglect and the Texas Republic’s bankrupt state, signs a renewal of a “rental agreement” originally executed by President Mirabeau Lamar. The agreement, between Texas and the former Mexican state of Yucatán, calls for Texas to provide a squadron of warships to fight off the Mexican fleet in return for \$8,000 per month in silver. Moore would use this agreement to refinance his fleet and sail off to Campeche, to battle the Mexican squadron besieging that key port city.

February 23: Commissioners James Morgan and William Bryan arrive in New Orleans, ordered by President Houston to take command of the Texas Navy and bring it back to Galveston so that it can be sold. The same day, Commodore Moore receives secret orders requiring him to report to Galveston so that he will be out of the way when the commissioners take charge of the Navy. These actions are in accordance with a secret act

passed January 16, 1843, which called for the sale of the Texas Navy. Ultimately, Moore would convince these civilians that the navy was worth saving and was needed to defeat a Mexican fleet that would ultimately be used for an invasion of Texas.

March 2: Moore informs civilian commissioners James Morgan and William Bryan, appointed by President Houston to sell off the Navy, that he cannot give up control of the Texas Navy without proper orders from the Department of War and Marine.

March 3: U.S. Senate passes a proposed commerce treaty with the Republic of Texas. However, the Senate's amendment of the original treaty terms causes the Texas Congress to reject the final version of the treaty.

March 10: Commissioners Morgan and Bryan inform President Houston of Moore's reluctance to give up the Navy he worked to build and protect. Houston would issue orders suspending Moore from command and ordering him to return to Galveston so that the commissioners could take command of the Texas Navy and move its vessels back to Galveston for sale.

March 23: President Houston signed a proclamation to the world declaring the Texas Navy to be pirates and murderers and calling upon "the Naval Powers of Christendom" to seize his fleet and return the officers to Texas for trial and punishment. The proclamation would not be published until May 6, and its

publication brought scorn upon Houston throughout the bemused world.

April 3: Secretary of War and Marine issues orders to Moore suspending him from command and ordering him to proceed under arrest to Galveston. These orders are countermanded by James Morgan, commissioner appointed under the act of January 16, 1843 as commander of the Texas Navy.

April 5: The Mexican steamer Moctezuma arrived at Telchac, on the Yucatán coast, to support an invasion of Yucatán by the central government of Mexico. News of the Moctezuma's arrival prompted Commodore Moore to ask James Morgan for permission to take the fleet to Yucatán to drive away the Mexican Navy.

April 16: The flagship sloop of war Austin and the brig Wharton sail away from New Orleans on the final cruise of the Texas Navy. The crew of the U.S. sloop Ontario gives the Texas ships three hearty cheers as they go off to fight the ultramodern Mexican fleet. That same day, a court martial is held to try eight mutineers from the schooner San Antonio for mutiny and the murder of their commanding officer, Lieutenant Charles Fuller. On recommendation of the court, up to one hundred lashes were inflicted on two of the guilty defendants, and on April 26, four of the mutineers were hanged from the foretopyard at noon. Their bodies were left hanging while the crew ate lunch, and were cut down and buried at sea.

April 30: The Texas Navy engages the Mexican fleet off Campeche. The Mexican squadron consists of the ironclad steamer Guadalupe, the heavily armed steamer Moctezuma, the brigs Yucateco and Iman, and the schooners Aguila and Campechano. The Texas ships Austin and Wharton are assisted by two Yucatecan schooners and five small gunboats. The action lasts for a few hours before the Mexican fleet draws off. The action is the world's first engagement involving an ironclad steamer, the Guadalupe, being the most advanced warship in the world at the time.

May 1-15: Texas' sloop-of-war Austin and brig Wharton, with seven small ships from Yucatan, play a game of cat and mouse with the mighty Mexican fleet, which includes the ironclad steamer Guadalupe (armed with two massive 68 pounder shell firing guns), the armed steamers Montezuma and Regenerador, the brigs Yucateco and Iman, and the schooners Aguilla and Campechano. Because the Texas guns are short and medium range, Moore borrows two long 18 pounders from the Yucatan coastal defenses. A few shots are exchanged on May 5 and 7, but the Mexican fleet refuses to fight.

May 6: President Houston publishes a proclamation denouncing Moore and his officers as pirates and murderers, and calls upon the "Naval Powers of Christendom" to arrest his navy and bring them back to Texas for justice.

May 16: The Battle of Campeche. The Montezuma, Guadalupe and Aguilla square off against the Austin and Wharton. The Aguilla flees, and after several hours of bombardment, the Montezuma and Guadalupe retreat, being pursued for several miles by the Texas ships until they give up the chase. The Wharton was not hit, but lost two men when a gun exploded; the Austin was moderately damaged and suffered three killed and 21 wounded. The Montezuma's captain was killed and 40 others were killed or wounded, while the badly damaged Guadalupe had 47 killed, 32 amputations and 64 other injuries. This was reportedly the only time in history a sailing ship ever bested an armored steamer in open combat.

May 20: Galveston mayor John M. Allen chaired a meeting of prominent citizens, which passed a resolution expressing gratitude for the heroic actions of Commodore Moore and his men.

June 1: Word reaches Commodore Moore's fleet at Campeche that President Houston has declared his navy to be "pirates and murderers," and has called upon "the Naval Powers of Christendom" to seize his fleet and return them to Texas for trial.

June 15: Sam Houston issues proclamation declaring armistice between Mexico and Texas.

June 26: In consequence of their defeats at Campeche Bay by the Austin and Wharton, Mexican naval forces leave the Yucatán

coast permanently, eliminating the threat to Texas' ally.

June 28: Texas Navy leaves Campeche for Galveston.

July 1: Austin and Wharton, having driven the Mexican squadron from the Yucatán coast, arrives at Sisal en route to Galveston and receives the thanks of the city for saving them from the Mexican blockade.

July 7: Austin and Wharton sail for Galveston via Arcas Islands on the Texas Navy's last voyage.

July 14: Commodore Moore's squadron arrives at Galveston to the welcome of city officials, cannon salutes, applause, speeches and dinners. Because he has been proclaimed a pirate by President Houston, Moore immediately surrenders himself to the Sheriff of Galveston County, who refuses to arrest Moore.

July 17: Moore reports himself to Secretary of War and Marine George W. Hill, and asks for a court-martial to try the charges President Houston has brought against him. This request is refused, and ultimately Congress passes a law requiring the War Department to try the charges against Moore by a proper court-martial. Moore is acquitted.

July 19: Commander J.T.K. Lothrop of the Wharton is dishonorably discharged for failing to relieve Commodore Moore of com-

mand earlier that year. Lt. C.B. Snow of the Navy Yard is also dishonorably discharged for leaving his unfunded post to join Moore's squadron off Yucatán.

July 25: Commodore Moore is dishonorably discharged by President Houston, in spite of a Texas law that prohibits dismissal of military officers without first giving them a proper court martial.

July 26: Commodore Moore leaves the Austin for the last time, to the cheers of his men and a 13 gun salute. Commander Lothrop leaves the Wharton to an eight gun salute.

July 27: All officers of the Texas Navy, except Lt. William A. Tennison and Sailing Master Daniel Lloyd, resign.

August 7: Secretary of War and Marine M.C. Hamilton, effectively having no army or navy to command after President Houston orders his fleet mothballed, resigns.

October 14: The Texas Navy was put up for auction at Galveston's harbor in accordance with a Secret Act passed at Houston's behest in January 1843. An angry mob appeared at the auction place and threatened to lynch anyone who would bid on the Austin, Wharton, Archer and San Bernard, or the removed engines from the Zavala. The mob's threats prevented any competitive bids from taking place, and the ships were returned to the Texas government, where they stayed until annexation in 1846.

November 22: Navy Commissioners William C. Brashear and William Bryan, who had been charged with selling off the ships of the Texas Navy at auction, were ordered to turn the vessels over to Lieutenant William A. Tennison for mothballing, since the auction was a complete failure.

November 30: In his annual report to the president, Secretary of War George Washington Hill reports that attempts to sell the Navy the previous month were thwarted by an angry Galveston mob. Hill also accuses Moore of disobedience to orders of the prior secretaries and President Houston.

December 29: The Texas Senate adopts a resolution requesting Houston to furnish the Senate with instructions given to the commissioners under the act of the secret session of the Seventh Congress, "and an estimate of the amount necessary to preserve the Navy in port, what number of men will be required, and the pay of each, together with such information as he may think necessary to enable Congress to take some action on the subject..." The Navy will never sail on a combat mission again.

1844

January: President Houston submits annexation question to Texas Congress, then instructs minister to the U.S. to resume annexation talks.

January 9: Pursers Fleming T. Wells and

J.F. Stephens, and Lieutenants Thurston M. Taylor and Downing Crisp, petition the government to remit their unpaid salaries due for the last two to three years. Lieutenant Crisp will die shortly thereafter of an early outbreak of yellow fever. (This same epidemic killed the wife of Port Collector Gail Borden, Jr., an inventor who, among other things, founded the dairy products company that bears his name to this day. Borden devoted his next few years to an unsuccessful scheme to eradicate yellow fever, proposing to erect a large tent over the city of Galveston with a primitive air conditioner, which would cool temperatures below the usual level during the yellow fever season.) The officers' petition goes nowhere.

January 12: Commodore Moore brings his petition for court martial to the Texas Congress. Houston, it seems, discharged Moore without court martial, in violation of a law enacted in January 1840. He ultimately received a court martial, and was exonerated.

January 19: Secretary of State Anson Jones asks War Secretary George W. Hill to commission Royal Navy officers into the Texas Navy to facilitate England's interdiction of the African slave trade in Texas waters. (While slavery was legal in Texas, the importation of new slaves was forbidden under Mexican, U.S. and Texas law.)

February 1: Texas Congress passed an act to pay the officers of the Texas Navy, who had gone for many months without pay. The

act is vetoed by President Houston on the grounds that the Republic has no money to pay the officers or crewmen.

February 5: Texas Congress passes an act laying up the Navy in ordinary until it can be disposed of by sale or annexation to the United States. That same day, a separate resolution is passed providing for an impartial court-martial of Commodore Moore, who was charged with piracy, murder and disobedience of orders by President Houston. (Moore ultimately would be acquitted of all but the most technical offenses.)

February 24: General Order No. 3 of the Department of War and Marine honorably discharges all officers, crewmen and marines not necessary to keep the Texas Navy in ordinary.

April 11: An annexation treaty between the U.S. and Texas signed between the two diplomats.

June 8: U.S. Senate rejects the annexation treaty between the U.S. and Texas signed between the two diplomats (35 to 16).

August 21: Court-martial of Commodore E.W. Moore commences. Since there were virtually no Navy officers left, the court-martial would be presided over by Army officers. Moore, who demanded a trial to answer charges of piracy and murder brought by President Houston, would ultimately be acquitted of all but the most technical and

trivial of charges.

September 11: The Texas Navy ships were “laid in ordinary” (mothballed) under the command of Lieutenant William A. Tennyson. The navy was effectively disbanded by President Houston upon its return to Galveston in July 1843 from the Battle of Campeche, and efforts to sell the ships at auction failed. By this time, the *Austin* had begun to break down, and the brig *Wharton* was sinking from lack of maintenance. The *San Bernard* was eventually anchored next to the *Wharton* and the brig *Archer*, where the four ships would remain until they were ceded to the U.S. Navy in May 1846. The steam warship *Zavala*, Texas’ most expensive ship, had by now broken down on the Galveston shore, her hull thoroughly wormeaten, and she had begun to sink into the shoreline mud, to be lost until archeologists uncovered her in 1986.

September 23: Commander William C. Brashear was appointed to replace Lt. Tennyson as commander of the Texas Navy fleet in ordinary. Brashear would later insist on receiving pay as a U.S. naval officer when Texas joined the United States, and his case ultimately went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that the Annexation Treaty of 1845 did not obligate the United States to induct Texas Navy officers into the U.S. Navy.

December 7: The court martial of Commodore Moore, which commenced in August,

ends. Moore would be exonerated of virtually all charges leveled against him by a bitter Sam Houston.

1845

January 11: The decision of the court martial of Commodore Moore is published. Although the court exonerated Moore of blame, President Houston declared the court’s findings invalid, claiming personal knowledge that Moore was guilty of treason, insubordination, piracy and murder. A joint resolution of Congress reinstated the court’s findings in favor of Moore, and demanded Moore’s return to office, but President Anson Jones, Houston’s successor, vetoed the bill.

January 25: Joint Resolution to annex Texas passes the U.S. House of Representatives.

February 19: Texas Congress passed an act providing a pension for disabled officers and seamen. Evidently no funds were ever actually provided to these deserving mariners.

February 27: Joint Resolution, with amendments to be voted on by the house, passes U.S. Senate (27 to 25). The original vote in the Senate had tied at 26 to 26. When Johnson of Louisiana, originally opposed to the resolution, changed his vote, his action broke the stalemate and allowed the passage of the annexation resolution under which Texas entered the United States. Thus, it can be said with some justification

that Texas annexation was the result of a single vote.

February 28: House adopts senate version of the joint resolution to annex the Republic of Texas (132 to 76).

March 1: United States Congress passes a resolution calling for the incorporation of the Texas Navy into the navy of the United States. The language of the resolution – which left open the question of whether Texas Navy officers would be inducted into the ranks of the U.S. Navy – became the source of a long running controversy and the subject of a United States Supreme Court opinion.

March 1: President Polk signs annexation resolution.

March 3: Annexation offer sent to Texas president Anson Jones.

May 1: United States Congress passed a joint resolution incorporating the Texas Navy fleet into the United States Navy. The language of this resolution would set off years of debate over whether it included the officers of the Texas Navy as well as the ships, munitions and other property.

May 5: Moore, in a letter to Sam Houston, challenges the latter to a duel, but notes that Houston has declined similar offers from former Texas president Lamar and Burnet.

May 19: Cuevas-Smith treaty between Mexico and Texas signed guaranteeing Texas independence so long as it remains a separate republic.

May 24: A committee of prominent ladies of Galveston passed a resolution applauding the efforts of Commodore Moore and the Texas Navy.

June 16: Texas Congress meets in special session to consider both the proposed Mexican treaty and the annexation resolution from the U.S. Congress. U.S. offer accepted.

June 28: Texas Congress adopted resolutions declaring Commodore Moore's court-martial findings as "final," permitting him to resume command of the Texas Navy, and giving the thanks of the Republic for his heroic work in defeating the Mexican Navy. These resolutions were vetoed by President Houston's successor, Dr. Anson Jones.

July 4: Convention meets to consider both the Mexican treaty and the U.S. annexation resolution. U.S. offer accepted by Convention.

August 27: In an effort to help Texas Navy officers get paid by the U.S. Navy upon annexation, John G. Tod is commissioned as a Texas Navy captain, backdated from January 1840, six months after he arrived in Galveston after overseeing construction of the Texas Navy's second fleet.

December 29: President signs the Joint Resolution. Texas officially the 28th state on this date.

1846

February 19: Texas cedes authority to the government of the United States in a ceremony at the Republic's capital. The Texas Navy would not be passed to the custody of the United States, however, until May 11.

February 19: Transfer of government completed when Governor J. Pinckney Henderson takes the oath of office.

April 21: U.S. Navy Commander Victor M. Randolph is dispatched to Galveston to assume command of Texas naval assets in Galveston in the wake of the United States' annexation of Texas, which became official in February 1846.

Texas Navy is transferred to the United States Navy by Lt. William A. Tennison, the last active commissioned officer of the Texas Navy. A salute was fired from the Austin's gun, the Texas naval ensign was run down and that of the United States was run up in its place. The Texas Navy at this time consisted of the Austin, Wharton, San Bernard and Archer. A survey of the ships would find only the Austin seaworthy (the Wharton was sunk in 12 feet of water), and the other three vessels were sold for scrap.

July 31: Senator Sam Houston speaks in

Congress in favor of a bill that would allow former officers of the Texas Navy to be admitted to the United States Navy with the ranks and seniority they held in the Texas service. The bill would ultimately go nowhere, but some Texas Navy officers were given a settlement in return for relinquishing any claims they had to ranks in the United States Navy.

August: William A. Tennison, the last lieutenant left in the Texas Navy, resigns, transferring command of the four decrepit ships the Austin, Archer, Wharton and San Bernard to Midshipman C.J. Faysoux. Lt. Tennison served both Texas Navies over a ten year period and was in charge of the ships' transfer to the government of the United States.

September 19: United States Navy Secretary J.Y. Mason recommended that President James K. Polk give him the authority to order the sale of the Texas Navy ships San Bernard, Wharton and Archer, which, along with the Austin, were ceded to the United States in May 1846.

October 8: U.S. Secretary of the Navy J.Y. Mason asked President Polk for permission to sell the Texas Navy ships that had become the property of the United States Navy on May 11, 1846. That same month, he ordered the U.S. Navy commander at Galveston, Victor I. Randolph, to remove the guns from the Wharton, Archer and the San Bernard, and the following month all three vessels were

sold for scrap.

November 7: In his report to the President, U.S. Secretary of the Navy John Mason reports on the condition of the Texas Navy vessels acquired from Texas in May 1846 as part of the Treaty of Annexation: "The brigs Wharton and Archer, and the schooner San Bernard, transferred from the Texan navy, have been sold as unfit for service." The Austin, he reported, had been towed to Pensacola; it would ultimately be used as a receiving ship until it was broken up in 1848.

March 27: Commodore Moore publishes a pamphlet entitled, "A Brief Synopsis of the Doings of the Texas Navy under the command of Com. E.W. Moore together with his Controversy with Gen. Sam Houston, President of the Republic of Texas; In Which He Was Sustained by the Congress of That Country Three Different Sessions; By the Convention to form a State Constitution; and by the State Legislature, Unanimously" in an effort to obtain reinstatement to the United States Navy with the rank of Post Captain.

1850

January 24: Act of the Texas State Legislature calls for the Governor to pay Commodore Moore \$11,398.36 - 1/2 to reimburse him for personal expenditures on behalf of the Texas Navy.

January: Commodore Moore and other officers of the Texas Navy submit a petition to the U.S. Congress to incorporate them into

the U.S. Navy at the ranks they held in the Texas Navy. Ultimately this effort fails.

May 2: United States House of Representatives Committee on Naval Affairs recommends that the United States Navy incorporate commissioned officers of the Texas Navy. Opposition from US Navy admirals is fierce, and the Texas Navy officers were eventually paid off but never incorporated into the US Navy.

July 15: Senator Houston gives a speech in Congress attacking Commodore Moore's conduct as commander of the Texas Navy.

1857

March 3: An Act of Congress provided compensation to the officers of the Texas Navy in return for their giving up all claims to induction into the U.S. Navy. (As with much of the legislation surrounding the Texas Navy, the language was ambiguous enough so that midshipmen had to petition Congress to be included in the pension.)

1865

October 5: Commodore Edwin Ward Moore, the Texas Navy's greatest commander, died, and was buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery, near Philadelphia.

1952

Oil discovered off the coast of Texas, dispute begins between Texas and the Federal Government as to who owns the rights to off

shore oil production.

1955

Under the supervision of the Sons of the Republic of Texas, the bodies of Lt. Charles F. Fuller, along with two other Texas Navy men, moved from the condemned Girod Street Cemetery in New Orleans to Republic Hill in the Texas State Cemetery, Austin.

1958

Texas Governor Price Daniel, in hopes of creating a tide of public sentiment in favor of Texas toward the Tidelands debate, reinstates the Texas Navy by proclamation, declaring that the "memory and heritage of the Texas Navy can be preserved best by Texas citizens who are willing to continue by every lawful means the defense of the rights and boundaries of the State.."

1970

Texas Governor Preston Smith returns the headquarters of the Texas Navy to Galveston.

1973

Texas Senate Bill #94 establishes the Texas Navy Association, a non-profit corporation, as the official governing body of the operations of the Texas Navy.

2005

Long recognized in an ad hoc manner by governors and the Texas legislature, in 2005, the legislature enacted a law officially establishing the third Saturday of each September as Texian Navy Day, which “shall be observed with appropriate ceremonies and activities.”

This summary written by Texas Navy Admiral Jon Jordan and edited with additions from the “Timeline of Texas History” by Bill Jones. Third Texas Navy information by Texas Navy Admiral Dick Brown. Compiled for the Internet by Admiral Dick Brown.