

10-1968

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Recommended Citation

Ramirez, Maria G. (1968) "Stephen F. Austin Letters," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 6: Iss. 2, Article 9.

Available at: <http://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol6/iss2/9>

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Stephen F. Austin Letters

Maria Grace Ramirez

The East Texas collection in the Paul L. Boynton Library on the Stephen F. Austin campus has a number of original Stephen F. Austin letters. These letters were presented to the library on August 16, 1946, by Miss Mary Louise Girand in behalf of her mother, Mrs. Charles W. Girand, and her aunt, Miss Nell Kittrell, both of Houston. The letters had been among the papers of Miss Girand's grandfather, Norman Goree Kittrell.

In comparing the original letters with the published letters of Stephen F. Austin, it was found by Maria Grace Ramirez that at least one Austin letter was not included in the *Austin Papers* which were edited by Eugene C. Borner. The unpublished letter was written to Samuel M. Williams and is dated May 22, 1832.

Victoria, 70 Leagues from Tampico, 22 May 1832

Dear Sir. I arrived here today in company with Mason—Everything is quiet in this place—The Legislature have returned to their duty and are trying to undo the harm they did in March—I called on [General Mora] who is in command in this place—he informs me that Genl. Teran approached the fortifications at Tampico on the 14 inst. with a few men and sent in a flag with a proposition for a parley—The offer was rejected, and the batteries fired six cannon charged with grape shot at the Genl. and his party of troops, and killed three soldiers, one officer, and wounded a number—Some of the killed fell within a few feet of the Genl. who had a narrow escape—It is expected by some that Tampico will be taken by [storm] in a few days—others think that it cannot be taken in that way, or if it is, that there must be a great slaughter—I shall go on tomorrow, and may see, a new sight, to me, a battle, or a city stormed—

I sent you from Saltillo all the necessary papers to perfect the titles for the land granted to the Aguirres and requested you to proceed to locate it—on reflection I think that at least one third can be located to advantage in one body up the San Jacinto—and wish you to employ some one to examine the land on that river—I mean high up, that is six or seven miles above the Tuscasite road tho if the land is good, the nearer the road the better—I fear there will be a difficulty about the tract on the west of the Colorado, for I learned the day I left Saltillo that that Colony had been granted to a company of Mexicans in Mexico—The tract on the east side of the Colorado has no good land except a small prairie adjoining Tannahills upper line—I do not know how the land is back from the river on the head of Walnut Creek, but think it is not very good—I will however take that tract it will be a good stock farm and a healthy place—If the tract in the forks of Onion creek & the river cannot be had, you can let [one] of the grants remain unlocated until I return—I prefer having them all in one body, that is each grant in one body, than to separate them, and I think a good location may be had up the San Jacinto to bound on the tracts already granted on the west, and on the river on the east which will of necessity give a long front on the river—This land costs me very dear and I must have it well located or I shall loose by the purchase

I hear a report here that there has been a difficulty in Galveston Bay with a vessell & [that] three soldiers killed—but I hope it is not so—In all my other letters I have urged the necessity of preserving good order, harmony & peace, all over Texas. I can assure the people there, that it is more important for their future prosperity to be in harmony with all the officers of govt. at this time, than at any former period and you must spare no pains to impress this fact on them all

From Altamira I shall go to Matamoros whether I will return to Texas, from there, or go to Saltillo will depend on circumstances. This climate is very hot—Tell McKinny that his old friend Floris is here, he is now a Captain—

remember me to all

Yours &c

S.F.A.