


# Sam Houston's Copy of His Official Report of the Battle of San Jacinto, page 1

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Head Quarters of the Army  
San Jacinto 25<sup>th</sup> April 1836

To his  
Excellency  
J. J. Burnett  
President of the Republic of Texas

Sir, 

I regret extremely that my indisposition since the Battle of the 30<sup>th</sup> has been such as to prevent my sending you my official Report of the same, previous to this time.

I have the honor to inform you that on the evening of the 18<sup>th</sup> inst after a forced march of fifty five miles, which was effected in two days and a half, the army arrived opposite Harrisburg, that evening a Courier of the Enemy was taken from whom I learned that Gen Santa Anna with one division of his choice troops had marched in the direction of Lynch's Ferry on the San Jacinto, having left Harrisburg as he passed down.

The Army was ordered to be in readiness to march early on the next morning. The main body effected a crossing over Buffalo Bayou, below Harrisburg on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> having left the baggage, the tents, and a sufficient camp, landed in the rear.

We continued the march throughout the night, making but one halt in the prairie for a short time, and without refreshments. At daylight we resumed the line of march, and in a short distance our scouts encountered those of the Enemy, and we received information that Gen Santa Anna was at New Washington and would that day take up his line of march for San Antonio, stopping at Lynch's.



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their Artillery was placed. Their Cavalry upon their left wing. About 9 o'clock on the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> the Enemy were reinforced by 500 choice troops under the command of Gen Cos, increasing their effective force to upwards of 1500 men, while our aggregate force for the field numbered 783. At 1/2 past 3 o'clock in the evening, I ordered the officers of the Texan Army to parade their respective commands, having in the mean time, ordered the Bridge on the only road communicating with the River, distant 8 miles, from our Encampment, to be destroyed, thus cutting off all possibility of escape. Our troops paraded with alacrity of spirit, and were anxious for the contest. Their superior disparity in numbers only served to increase their confidence, and heightened their anxiety for the conflict. Our situation afforded me an opportunity of making the arrangements preparatory to the attack without exposing our designs to the Enemy. The first Regiment commanded by Col Bullock, was assigned the center. The second Regiment under the command of Col Sherman, formed the left wing of the army. The Artillery under the special command of Col Geo. W. Hockley Inspector Genl. was placed on the right of the first Regiment; and four companies of Infantry under the command of Lieut Col Henry Millard, sustained the artillery upon the right. Our Cavalry sixty in number, commanded by Col Mearns B. Laman (whom gallant and daring conduct on the previous day had attracted the admiration of his comrades, and called him to that station) placed on our extreme right completed our line. Our Cavalry was first dispatched to the front of the Enemy's left, for the purpose of attracting their notice, which an extensive island of timber afforded as an opportunity of concentrating our forces and displaying from that point, a greatly to the previous design of the troops. Every evolution was performed with alacrity, the whole advancing rapidly in line, and through an open prairie, without any protection whatever for our men. The Artillery advanced and took station within two hundred yards of the Enemy's Breastwork and commenced an effective fire with grape and canister. Col Sherman with his Regiment having commenced the action upon our left wing,



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the whole line at the center and on the right, advancing, in double  
quick time, using the war cry "Remember the Alamo" raised the enemy's  
fire and advanced within point blank shot before a piece was discharged  
from our line - Our line advanced without a halt, until they were in  
possession of the woodland and the enemy's breastworks. The right wing of  
Burlinson's, and the left of McMillan's, taking possession of the breastworks,  
our artillery having gallantly charged up within 70 yards of the enemy's  
cannon, where it was taken by our troops. The conflict lasted about 18  
minutes from the time of close action, until we were in possession of  
the enemy's breastworks, taking possession of Cannon (number 4) 4 stands  
of colors, all their camp equipage, stores, and baggage. Our cavalry  
had charged and would that of the enemy upon the right and given  
pursuit to the fugitives, which did not cease until they arrived at the bridge  
which I have mentioned before. Capt. Warner, always among the foremost  
in danger commanding the pursuers. The conflict in the breastworks, lasted  
but a few moments, many of the troops encountered hand to hand, and not  
having the advantage of bayonets on our side, our soldiers used their  
pieces as war clubs, breaking many of them off at the touch. The route  
commenced at 1/2 past 4, and the pursuit by the main army continued  
until twilight. A guard was then left in charge of the enemy's Encamp-  
ment, and our army returned with one killed and wounded. (TX)

In the Battle our loss was two killed, and twenty three wounded, six of  
whom mortally. The enemy's loss was 600 killed, among which was our  
General Officer, 4 Colo, 2 Lieut Colo, 5 Captains - 12 Lieut. Wounded  
308 of which were 3 Colo, 3 Lieut Colo, 2 Second Lieut Colo, 7 Captains  
& Capt. Prisoners, 700. Residents General Santa Anna, Gen Colo, 4  
Colo, aids to Gen Santa Anna, 1 Lieut Colo, the private secretary of Gen  
Santa Anna, and the Col of the Guerrero battalions are included in the  
number. Gen Santa Anna, was not taken until the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and Gen Wood  
on yesterday, very few escaped. About 600 muskets, 300 Sabres, and 200  
hats, have been collected since the action. Several hundred mules and horses  
were taken, and nearly twelve thousand dollars in specie.  
For several days previous to the action our troops were engaged in forced marches  
exposed to excessive rains, and the additional inconvenience of extremely bad

# General Houston's Battle Report

At half -past three o'clock in the evening, I ordered the officers of the Texan army to **parade their respective commands**, having in the meantime ordered the bridge on the only road communicating with the Brazos, distant eight miles from our encampment, to be destroyed, thus cutting off all possibility of escape. [...]

parade their commands =  
line up their soldiers

The 1st Regiment, commanded by Col. Burleson, was assigned to the center. The 2nd. Regiment, under the command of Col. Sherman, formed the left wing of the army. The **artillery**, under the special command of Col. George W. Hockley, inspector-general, was placed on the right of the 1st Regiment and four companies of **Infantry**, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Henry Millard, sustained the artillery upon the right. Our **cavalry**, sixty-one in number, commanded by Col. Mirabeau B. Lamar [...] placed on our extreme right, completed our line. Our cavalry was first dispatched to the front of the enemy's left, for the purpose of attracting their notice, while an extensive **island of timber** afforded us an opportunity of concentrating our forces.

artillery = cannons

infantry = foot soldiers

cavalry = soldiers on  
horseback

island of timber = group  
of trees

[...] The artillery advanced and took station within two hundred yards of the enemy's **breastwork**, and **commenced** an effective fire with **grape and cannister**. Col. Sherman, with his regiment, having commenced the action upon our left wing, the whole line, at the center and on the right, advancing in double quick time, raised the war-cry, "Remember the Alamo," received the enemy's fire, and advanced within pointblank shot,

breastwork = wall around  
Mexican camp

commenced = started

grape and cannister =  
groups of small  
cannonballs

before **a piece was discharged** from our lines. Our line advanced without a halt, until they were in possession of the woodland and the enemy's breastwork –the right wing of Burleson's and the left of Millard's taking possession of the breastwork our artillery having **gallantly** charged up within seventy yards of the enemy's cannon, when it was taken by our troops.

a piece was discharged =  
our cannon was fired

gallantly = bravely

The conflict lasted about eighteen minutes from the time of close action until we were in possession of the enemy's encampment. [...] The conflict in the breastwork lasted but a few moments many of the troops encountered hand to hand, and, not having the advantage of **bayonets** on our side, our riflemen used their **pieces** as war-clubs, breaking many of them. The **rout** commenced at half-past four, and the pursuit by the main army continued until twilight.

bayonets = sharp knife  
attached to the end of a  
gun

pieces = guns

rout = retreat



# Analyze a Written Document

## Meet the document.

Type (check all that apply):

- |   |                                    |  |  |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech    | <input type="checkbox"/> Patent                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram      | <input type="checkbox"/> Court document        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chart                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement           | <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Report                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Email     | <input type="checkbox"/> Identification document |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Presidential document |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional document |                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                   |  |  |

Describe it as if you were explaining to someone who can't see it.

*Think about: Is it handwritten or typed? Is it all by the same person? Are there stamps or other marks? What else do you see on it?*

## Observe its parts.

Who wrote it?

Who read/received it?

When is it from?

Where is it from?

## Try to make sense of it.

What is it talking about?

Write one sentence summarizing this document.

Why did the author write it?

Quote evidence from the document that tells you this.

What was happening at the time in history this document was created?

## Use it as historical evidence.

What did you find out from this document that you might not learn anywhere else?

What other documents or historical evidence are you going to use to help you understand this event or topic?

