

end. So far I find the family exceedingly kind and attentive. The affairs are in the hands of his two sisters Doña Anna Maria, a widow lady, and Doña Rosalita, Doña Anna's daughter, Doña Josafa, with her three children compose the family. Doña Anna Maria is a second Mrs. Ross in her person, age, conversation and manners. She is good & kind and seems to have rather the principal management, bears the name of a favorite in the village, she is a *mui Senora* in my estimation. How much I am struck with their manner of rearing children. The little daughter of Doña Josafita, only six years of age, carries with her the dignity of our girls of eighteen. It attracted my attention particularly the evening I came, with the same ease of a lady much accustomed to society, she entered the room, with a polite bow and "*Bonus tardes*" [*Buenas tardes*—good evening], shook hands with me and seated herself.—The eldest daughter of 17 years is sick with *sarampion* [measles].

*Thursday 18th.* I am altogether pleased with our boarding house—the inmates are exceedingly kind and exert themselves so much to make me enjoy myself, 'twould be cruel if I did not attend to their solicitations. We have chocolate every morning on rising, breakfast about 10 o'clock, dinner at two, chocolate again at dark, and supper at 9 o'clock, all are attentive, indeed we are so free and easy, 'tis almost a hotel, meals are served in our own room, one of the ladies always being in attendance to see and know if we are properly attended to; the dishes are often changed, and well arranged to have water brought from the Del Norte for their use. At this time he was a man of about thirty years of age.

prepared. I shall have to make me a recipe book, to take home, the cooking in every thing is entirely different from ours, and some, indeed all of their dishes are so fine 'twould be a shame not to let my friends have a taste of them too.

Don José Ygnacio Rouquia, his Senora and three little daughters called this P. M.; and la Senora Garcia and daughter. My book is drawing so near to a close, and I have so much to write each day, I shall only take a few notes on each hereafter.

*Friday 19th.* We are all getting quite familiar and friendly in our dealings; as our acquaintance extends it is more agreeable, and to me more improving; as I am quite inquisitive, for I see so many new and strange ways of making every thing, I always ask something about it, and in return I give my way. I shall make me a recipe book.

*Sunday 21st.* This morning I have been to mass—not led by idle curiosity, not by a blind faith, a belief in the creed there practiced, but because 'tis the house of God, and whether Christian or pagan, I can worship there within myself, as well as in a protestant church, or my own private chamber. If I have sinned in going there in this belief, I pray for pardon for 'twas done in ignorance. I am not an advocate for the Catholic faith. It is not for me to judge; whether it be right or wrong; judgement alone belongs to God. If they are wrong we (if alone in the right way) are not to rail at them, but in brotherly love to use our little influence to guide them into the straight path. One thing among them they are sincere in what they do. I speak of the people; of the Priests and leaders I

know nothing. I am told to "judge no man but to bear the burden of my brother." As for myself I must first remove the beam from mine own eye, and then shall I see clearly to pull out the moat out of my brother's eye. In my weakness I will endeavour to walk according to God's laws, as my own understanding points them out to me; and at all times I have a help both in the light and in darkness. . . . The Sabbath is not enough observed, it is a day for visiting; and entirely contrary to my feelings and wishes, I have been obliged today to see several ladies that called; there is far more pleasure to me in my Bible, prayer book, and retirement, and if I could I would have it so; here we have but one room, and persons come in and out, to see me as they are in the habit of visiting other inmates of the house. . . . I wish *mi alma* would observe the Sabbath more than he does, and, though 'tis the custom of the country to do otherwise, shut his store up. It hurts me more than I can tell; that he does not find six days of the week sufficient to gain the goods of this poor world, but is also constrained to devote the day that God himself has appointed us to keep holy, to the same business. And I too am to be a partaker of the gain of this day! Oh, I hope and pray that the Lord will make us better, will create within our sinful breasts feelings holy and pious, loving his laws and commands more than we do, and desires to walk continually in the humble foot-steps of him who has offered himself as a guide and a light to those who walk in darkness.

*Monday 22nd—Tuesday 23rd.* Both yesterday and today I have been returning my calls. Of all the houses

and families I have visited that of Don Ygnacio Rouquia pleases me most, to say nothing to disparage the others. Mrs. Rouquia is a lady easy in her own house, commanding respect from her servants, and respectful affection from her children, and exerting herself to entertain her visitors agreeably. Her house is large, though as yet unfurnished, and the placita quite pretty, for she takes pride in rearing choice fruit trees, as oranges, figs, apricots, almonds &c., all of which are tastefully arranged, while in the center of the patio she has a raised bed of earth some four feet, for flowers; she bears the name of an industrious housewife, and to me shows far better at home than abroad; her children are studying English and French, and their parents are very anxious to have them proficient in them.

Don Ygnacio is a second George Washington in his *appearance*, and is altogether a great admirer of the man whose name is ever dear to the hearts of the American; he says the course Mr. Polk is persuing in regard to this war, is entirely against the principals of Washington, which were to remain at home, encourage all home improvements, to defend our rights *there* against the incroachments of others, and never to invade the territory of an other nation. . . . Doña Refugio, wife of Senor Belumdis, now a prisoner by Col. Doniphan, lives opposite to Don. Y. She is a lady much given to talking, though perhaps means no harm by it; but to one not accustomed to such tis rather strange I must confess. Along with many like questions she asked me if I was never jealous of my husband, and when I could not understand what "zeloso" [jealous] meant she was quite particular to explain to me that

at that moment he might be off with his other *Senorita*. Oh, how I was shocked, I could have cried my eyes out for any one else to suppose such a thing let alone myself! And how twould hurt him too if I should tell him, when my own heart tells me he is a husband as true as the world *ever* contained. I generally tell him every thing that happens in my visiting, but *this*, I couldn't try his feelings so much, but you my poor journal must hear all whether good or bad, whether in praise or disparagement.

*Wednesday 3rd March 1847.* Oh, the ups and downs of this world! One day we are in greatest life the next affairs bring different faces. A whole week has passed away since I wrote in my journal, and for why, as my friends tell me I am so *triste* [sad]; and no wonder, when nothing but the dark bear walls of a Mexican prison are staring me in the face—in prospective only though. I'll see though if I can remember a few incidents since my last insercion; all last Wednesday I was half deranged with headache, (this is no good news) but notwithstanding, most of the day was spent I hope in doing good, making a chemise for "Maria *la tonta*" [the stupid], this needs an explanation however. Maria is a deranged woman entirely dependent on the charities of the citizens, and to do them justice, I must say they are both liberal and attentive to her as well as the other poor. The first Sabbath I attended mass here, she discovered me in the church—an object of curiosity of course, at once signalized me by the name of "*Nana*" [aunt], and since that day she has been a constant visitor at my room. I am "*Nana*," Doña Josefa "*Mama*," *mi alma* "*tata* [tato—

brother], and Doña Rufujio "*Mana Juga*" [Mama Fuja—a burlesque on the name Doña Refujio], so we all have our respective names. She is truly singular in her conversation, causing mirth at every word she says, while she herself appears more delighted if we laugh at her expressions than when we remain silent. She grew very angry with me this P. M. when she found I did not finish her garment, which on acct. of my head I was unable to do. A little coaxing, persuading, fruit and money, reconciled her at the last and she bid me good bye till tomorrow. Don Sista, his wife Doña Francisca, and her sister Doña Josafita Albo made us a call this P. M. The ladies requested to see some *modas Americanas*, for dresses, so accordingly I opened four or five dresses, all of which seemed to strike their different tastes, tomorrow, with my permission, they will take two or three of them as patterns for a few days till they can cut or make themselves some.

*Friday 26th.* This afternoon with Doñas Josafa y Rifujio, I called at Doña Agapita's, sat with them an hour or so, and returned home to hear nothing but bad news, viz: Gen. Taylor has been defeated in a great battle at San Luis Potosi, and taken prisoner with the whole of his army; that Gen. Wool is blockaded in Monterey; that a large fource is coming up from Durango to assist the Chihuahuans, who of themselves number they say 8000 now in arms, in capturing Col. Doniphan's little army of 1000. Saturday has been a day of great suspense and further confirmation of the *noticias de ayer* [news of yesterday]. Sunday

morning I attended mass with the family, not for a show, but to worship God.

*Monday the first of March* comes with a wind, and such news as makes at least two hearts sad, my heart aches to the very core for my husband's sufferings of mind, and more too, when I sit down by him and he looks on me with sorrow and says he never in his life, though he has encountered many severe troubles, till now been troubled by his misfortunes; "in all others I have been *alone*, and could endure them patiently, but to think of you now, that you are compelled to endure so much it is too heart rending." Eight men have arrived today from Chihuahua, still confirming the last news, with additions that Santa Anna is preparing to invade Texas; and that a large force is leaving Chi. to encounter Col. D. who has but six pieces of artillery, while the others have thirty-four pieces; that the enemy Mexican forces are commanded by Trius, Jinedia, and Martinus, three good generals, that as soon as they have fixed Doniphan, which they look upon as fixed already, they will march on here to take New Mexico; that Brother James has been sent off to Durango, perhaps to Mexico [City], and who knows what will become of him, and is not all this enough to make our hearts sick? There is under these circumstances no fate before us but to be taken by a band of lawless soldiers, every thing we have in the world seized and divided among themselves as pay for their services, while we are dragged off to prison, separated and may be *forever*. Oh, my dear husband would that *I* could relieve you of the anguish of mind you are labouring under! But alas, alas! I myself am no better off. It

behooves me though to put on more fortitude than this. I must be his comfort and not his trouble. I can console him a little, and that little in such times as these is a great deal. I can do all that's in my power, and when that is done I can pray for him, for God ever liveth to "send help from the sanctuary, and strength out of Zion."

Tuesday the same as before; tonight a *friend* sends for *mi alma* and tells him in secret to be on his guard, that a mob is about to rise in the town and rob his waggons. And *friends* (for we have a few here) tell him every day that not only his wagons are observed but, that as soon as the least news favourable to the Mexican arms below, neither himself or his wife will be spared, we may be seized and murdered in a moment for we are Americans, and though disposed to be peaceable, are here entirely against our own will, judgement and inclination, still we must suffer notwithstanding the efforts that this family, to whom we are and shall always be indebted for their unceasing kindness to us, say they would make to save us. A reckless mob is an awful thing to peaceful citizens.

But to speak one word in regard to this interesting family—our situations are truly singular; we have a brother prisoner in Chi.[huahua], while they have one *el Senor Cura* [the priest] held as hostage by our army for his safety, and we are here in the same house and as I trust, friends. I know on the part of ourselves we are sincere, and I have no right to doubt the sincerity of the others. I shall regret deeply when we have to leave them; twould be injustice to say that I like one more than an other for I love them all. *Mi alma* has

offered his services, and would either write or go himself if he could be of any service to el *Senor Cura* as regards his liberation, but they are looking for him in a few days as liberated by his own countrymen.\*

*Wednesday 3rd.* Oh, such suspense we have been in this day! the citizens have been confidently expecting a courier bearing news fatal to us—but heartfelt thanks to the giver of all good, the prayers of a wicked servant have been heard and the evil so far as been withheld from us. Never could I wish harm to or exult over the other party, if I were able I would have all peace. Tonight a man has arrived a courier to us he says from brother James, with intelligence that he is still in Chi.[huahua] that the Mexican army consists of only 3000 men with nine pieces of cannon, and that they are now in a treaty in regard to their prisoners and will have no battle. We know not how to believe a word of it tho' for he brings no letter or paper, and talks himself in such an insane way it all must be false, notwithstanding, true or false, it has raised our drooping spirits a little. I hope they will not fight. . . . Our wagons have been brought in today and placed in the square, under the protection of the civil authorities, to keep them from the mob.

*Friday 5th.* Can we ever be too thankful for the mercy shown us by our Heavenly Father? Can we ever repay the debt we owe him for the preservation of our lives in all the danger that has surrounded us? But a day since, we were in hourly expectation of being

\* While at this house and in the critical situation we were in I never wrote all I might have done, for fear of my journal being seized had things gone with us differently.

either murdered or sent off to prison, as a lawless set of robbers or spies, and now the scene is changed. We were struck with consternation about 12 o'clock today while quietly talking with our friend, Mr. White, Don Ygnacio Rouquia suddenly stepped in at the door, with hair somewhat on ends and features ghastly. At once our minds were filled with apprehensions lest the dread sentence had been passed. Without seating himself, and scarcely saying good morning, he took Mr. Magoffin by the hand and led him out of the room in haste, and with tears in his eyes told him that "he was a Mexican, and it pained him to the heart to know that the American army had gained the battle<sup>90</sup> and taken pos-

<sup>90</sup> The battle of Sacramento River "not only gave increased reputation to our arms, but was one of the most important which occurred during the war in its results and effects. It was the means of keeping down the disturbances which had broken out in New Mexico a short time previous, and secured peace in our newly acquired possessions in that quarter. It made the Indian tribes look upon us as a race far superior to the Mexicans, and overawed them. It prevented a large amount of property in the hands of the traders from falling into their hands; property which was sufficient to have supported the whole Mexican Army for several months, and at that particular time would have been of the utmost value to Santa Anna and the government. We captured the *Black Flag* which cut such a conspicuous figure at Brazito, but the bearer of it made his escape, and it was well he did, for our men would have made mincemeat of him. We found in a trunk three thousand dollars in copper coin which appeared to be their military chest, but the men made large acquisitions of silver and one I understand got one hundred doubloons." (Gibson, "Diary of the Mexican War," MS.) This "Black Flag" now hangs in the museum of the Missouri Historical Society at St. Louis.

This battle was fought February 28, 1847, and lasted three

session of Chi.[huahua]." No particulars as yet are known, save that 'twas a severe battle, fought on Sunday last, and we will have official accounts in a few days. I would not for the world exult or say one word to hurt the feelings of this family, but 'tis a natural consequence that I am delighted with the news. They were condoling with me the other day, and now 'tis in my power perhaps to offer them in return a little consolation in regard to *el Senor Cura*, who, this courier to Don Ygnacio says, is safe, and during the action remained with the other prisoners with the traders at their camp. He asserts the news we heard in regard to Gen. Taylor as false and that more American forces are disembarking at Vera Cruz. With this I feel rather in better spirits than the other evening, when every moment almost I expected to hear news that would have made my heart sick, such as would have robbed me of the dearest thing, to me, on Earth, for a time, and may be forever.

*Sunday 7th.* Attended mass this morning as usual, and passed the day after it, in reading; no visits much to my satisfaction. It is exceedingly windy these last few days, more so I believe than in Ky. this month; there is so much dust one cannot even stand at the

and a half hours, with losses to the American forces of Major Owens killed, one mortally wounded, and seven others who recovered. The Mexican casualties were about three hundred killed and about the same number wounded, many of whom died later, and about forty prisoners. There were 924 effective Americans (at least one hundred of whom were engaged in holding horses and driving teams) opposed to almost four thousand Mexicans.

door or window without having their eyes nearly put out, much less going into the street, where nothing scarcely can be seen but flying sand. Things in regard to the news of Friday continue quiet.

*Monday 8th.* *No correo todo dia* [No courier all day], but contradictions of the news of the 5th. Last night or evening about twilight the whole village was thrown into commotion by the reported arrival of two Pueblo Indians, sent on from the last settlement below, by the *alcalde* [mayor] of that place, Sorocco, who they say arrived there yesterday, fainting from a wound received in the battle of the 28th ultimo. The news is, they fought all day Sunday, and commenced again on Mon. that a great many have been killed, and among the number *El Senor Cura* and Don Sibastien. As he left on Sunday he cannot tell the final termination of the battle, but gives this as his opinion, that though American arms gained the first day, the Mexicans will have the last for they were receiving recruits from below. Tues. this news was proven false, for the wisdom of the place got together, made search for the bearers of this, and they could never be found, *as they had not arrived in the city*. But this did not stop the movements of Doña Ana Maria, interest for her brother is first, and lest the news might be true she dispatched a servant to Socorro, to see if the reported arrival of the *Senor Ruis* were true, and to learn from his own mouth the particulars. The servant returned this morning about day-break with the expression, (very common now adays) "*todo es mentira*" [the whole thing is a falsehood], then of one burden we are freed. This morning a letter was brought to the

wife of Don Sibastien written by Ruis, from Chi. [huahua] or very near there, in which he says the Americans have gained the action, and not to be uneasy for the prisoners, that they have been treated by the American troops as officers and either have or are soon to have their liberty, I forget which.

*Tuesday 9th.* An other man arrives this A. M. but still no official express. He says the Americans have entered Chi.; the Mexican forces left it for Durango; *el Senor Cura* is at liberty and will be here in a day or two; brother James has been sent off some place he does not know where; and that our friend Col. Owens<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Samuel C. Owens emigrated to Missouri when he was very young, and became prominent among the early settlers. He was a native of Kentucky, the son of Nathaniel Owens, one of the wealthiest and most influential men of Green County, Kentucky. The famous Mary Owens, courted by Abraham Lincoln during her sojourn at New Salem, Illinois, and who afterwards became Mrs. Jesse Vineyard of Weston, Missouri, was half-sister to Samuel Owens. Colonel Owens, as he was popularly known, was the first clerk of Jackson County, Missouri, and served also as clerk of the county court, recorder of deeds, and representative in the state legislature. He operated large caravans along the trail, was one of the principal wholesalers connected with the Mexican trade, and had also a general store on the southeast corner of the Square at Independence, Missouri. Many of his purchases were made in Philadelphia, being brought by the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri rivers from Pittsburgh.

During the Mexican War, Owens was with other traders on the Santa Fé trail. In obedience to the orders of General Kearny, all traders and caravans were required to accompany Colonel Doniphan's command. This was to keep their large stores from falling into the hands of the enemy and thus supplying him for his military campaign. Shortly before the battle of Sacramento,

was killed in the battle by a rifle ball shot at him, *a league and a half off*; it is a great rifle that, equal to the report of the first arrival of the American canon.

Doniphan impressed these traders and most of their teamsters into military service, forming an extra battalion of one hundred and fifty men under the command of Owens as their major, and Messrs. Skillman and Glasgow as their captains. These took part in the battle of Sacramento. It may be noted here that the United States Government never paid these men and never allowed them pensions, the reason given being that Colonel Doniphan had no legal authority to create new companies of troops.

During the battle of Sacramento a charge was made by four of the companies upon one of the twenty-eight Mexican redoubts which had proved especially troublesome. The charge of these companies was not made simultaneously, and through some confusion of orders they paused in a dangerous position. Captain Reid, of one of the companies, dashed ahead, accompanied by only a few men, including Major Owens, who had joined them voluntarily. Upon nearing the enemy Captain Reid and the others turned to the left and ran along the Mexican front past several redoubts, drawing the fire of the entire Mexican line. This circumstance made it necessary for the Mexicans to reload their flintlock guns and the delay incident thereto permitted the whole American line to get over the redoubts and rout the Mexican Army. Major Owens, instead of turning with the others, who escaped unhurt, charged single-handed upon the Mexican redoubt, and both he and his horse were killed.

There have been various comments upon this spectacular bravery of Major Owens. Colonel Doniphan said in a letter to a mutual friend: "He lost his life by excessive bravery, or rather rashness. He rode up to the redoubt, filled with armed men, and continued to fire his pistols into it until himself and horse fell, pierced with balls, upon its very brink."

Major Owens had recently suffered a very sad domestic tragedy, and there were many who thought he welcomed death. One account says that he went into battle dressed in white and