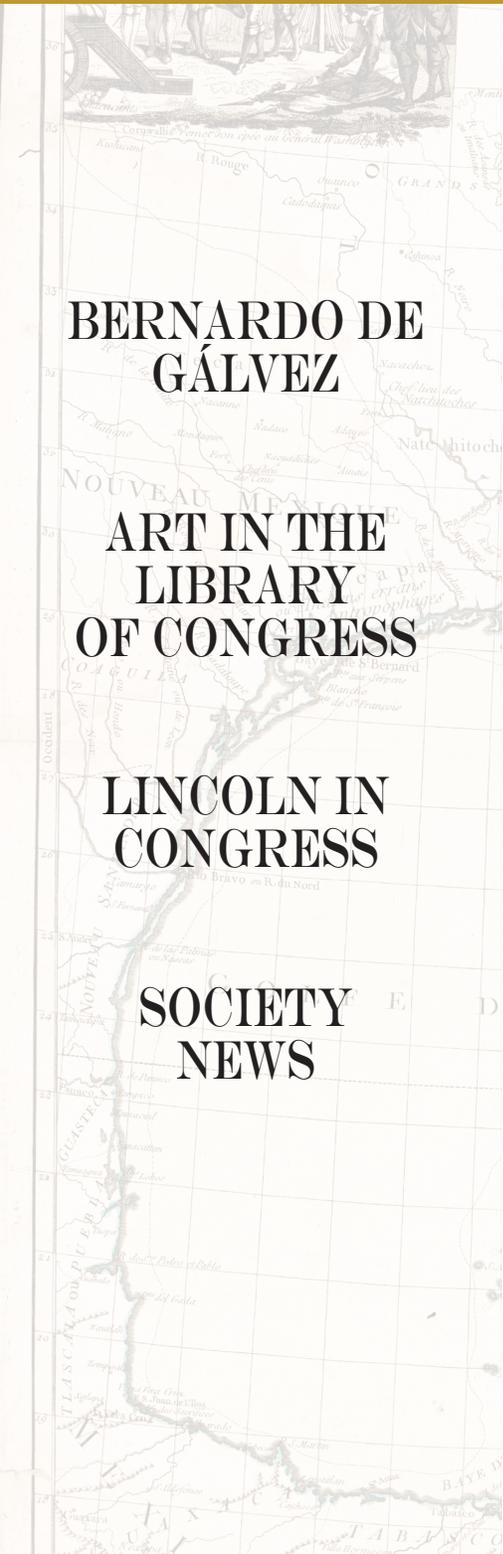


# THE CAPITOL DOME



**BERNARDO DE  
GÁLVEZ**

**ART IN THE  
LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS**

**LINCOLN IN  
CONGRESS**

**SOCIETY  
NEWS**





## *From the Editor's Desk*

The articles presented in this issue of *The Capitol Dome* are tied together by the theme of *recovery*—shining light on art, stories, and documents that have been lost, buried, or neglected but “hidden in plain sight.”

Dr. Gonzalo Quintero Saravia’s biographical treatment of Bernardo de Gálvez makes us appreciate congressmen’s interest in hanging his portrait where they could see it every day...in 1783. Although lost for most of the past 230-plus years, Gálvez’s portrait can now be seen once again—hopefully with congressmen asking, not “why is this painting here?” but “why wasn’t it here for so long?” An accompanying article expands the story to include art’s place in eighteenth-century diplomacy and the welcoming of the newest honorary citizen of the United States.

Few know the Library of Congress’s hallmark Jefferson Building as thoroughly as the next contributor, Dr. Lynda Cooper. Her article deals with various details often overlooked by visitors overwhelmed by an abundance of marble, mosaic, and motifs. Particularly noteworthy is the exciting discovery of a possible

source for the theme and arrangement of Edwin Blashfield’s mural “Human Understanding” high over the Main Reading Room.

Buried deep in the National Archives are hundreds of documents written and/or signed by “A. Lincoln.” Dr. David Gerleman, former assistant editor of the Lincoln Papers Project, probably holds the national record for discovering the most previously-unknown Lincoln letters in his hand (fifty-plus). Dozens of others, bearing his signature or not, help to tell the story of Lincoln’s single term in Congress. David has mined the Archives and brought all these buried documents to light while providing the context for the typical experiences of an antebellum congressman—before that congressman became a very un-typical president.

Enjoy!

*William diGiacomantonio*

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*Contents*

Bernardo de Gálvez and Spain’s Role in the American Revolutionary War.....2  
 by Gonzalo M. Quintero Saravia, S.J.D. & Ph.D.

Bernardo de Gálvez in the Capitol.....15  
 by Joseph W. Dooley and William diGiacomantonio

Female Allegories and Male Putti: A Sampling of Statuary and Murals in the Library of Congress.....20  
 by Lynda Cooper, Ph.D.

Representative Lincoln at Work: Reconstructing a Legislative Career from Original Archival Documents.....33  
 by David J. Gerleman, Ph.D.

Society News.....47

Marketplace.....56

**Cover:** This portrait of Bernardo de Gálvez, presently hanging in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Room (S-116), is a replica painted by Carlos Monserrate of Málaga, Spain. The original, commissioned by King Carlos III as a gift for Gálvez’s services in Spain’s war with Great Britain (1779-83) and executed by the court painter Mariano Salvador Maella (1739-1819), remains in a private collection in Málaga. (Photo courtesy of Manolo Olmedo Checa, Vice President of the Asociación de Bernardo de Gálvez)

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# BERNARDO DE GÁLVEZ AND SPAIN'S ROLE IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

by Gonzalo M. Quintero Saravia, S.J.D. & Ph.D.

Spain's contribution to the American Revolutionary War was the outcome of a struggle between its traditional policy of confrontation with England and the fear that the example might spread to her own American territories. These two objectives, which at times seemed contradictory, resulted in a complex policy that supported the United States of America in its war against England while preventing a formal alliance between the United States and Spain.

In 1775, Spain had a long list of grievances against the British. At the end of the Seven Years War in 1763, she surrendered to England East and West Florida (comprising present-day Florida and the panhandles of Alabama and Mississippi). She received in compensation the unproductive French colony of Louisiana. The first years of Spanish presence in Louisiana were not without problems. Its population even rebelled against its new rulers and expelled its governor in 1768. After a period on uneasy peace, a new acting-governor was appointed, a young colonel only 30 years old. Even though he was the nephew of Spain's all-powerful minister of the Indies, Bernardo de Gálvez was not devoid of merits or experience in North America.

Between 1769 and 1772 Gálvez had been posted to the always-dangerous northern frontier of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, Mexico, with orders to defend Spanish settlers against raids, mainly from the Apache. But instead of succumbing to the war-mongering attitudes prevalent in the region, he demanded from his countrymen that they

be impartial and acknowledge that if the Indians are not our friends, it is because they do not owe us any benefits, and if they take revenge on us, it is only in just compensation for the affronts we have caused them . . . , the lies we have told them, and the tyrannies they have suffered from us.<sup>1</sup>

On their reputation for cruelty he wrote, "the Spaniards accuse the Indians of being cruel, and I do not know what

their opinion is of us, but most probably it would not be better, for much better reason." During these campaigns, in which he was wounded several times, Gálvez commanded a company of American-born cavalry soldiers. Contrary to a long-standing tradition of demeaning the qualities of American-born soldiers in the service of Spain, he considered them "as brave as the Indians against whom they fight." Since Americans

had been brought up in freedom and accustomed to independence . . . they know by reason that they must obey, but demand that they are lead with reason, and in this I'm with them because I expect more from a man who knows how to make his rights respected than from another a thousand times outraged and debased.

Finally, brushing aside all racial prejudices, he stated, "I've seen a flag more gracefully and better defended in the black hands of a mulatto that between others that could be whiter but feebler."

## BERNARDO DE GÁLVEZ IN LOUISIANA

When Bernardo de Gálvez arrived in New Orleans in the last days of 1776, he immediately began preparing for war against the British. He developed a network of spies and informants that supplied him with information on his future enemy's plans and, even more importantly, he started supplying the Continental Army with arms, ammunition, blankets, tents, uniforms, food, etc. At the time Spain was officially neutral, so Gálvez had to disguise his aid to the American rebels in every possible way. Crates labeled as containing supplies for the Spanish army mysteriously appeared in the depots of the Continental army. American privateers found safety in Spanish ports and their ships were even refitted at the cost of the Spanish Treasury. Captain James



Fig. 1. Equestrian Portrait of Viceroy Bernardo de Gálvez (oil on canvas, 1796), by Fray Pablo de Jesús y Jerónimo

Willing was able to sell the booty of his controversial expedition against Loyalist settlements along the Mississippi in an auction in New Orleans. All this much-needed assistance by Bernardo de Gálvez to the revolutionaries' cause was officially recognized by the authorities of the new United States of America. In a letter dated 12 June

1777, the Secret Committee wrote him:

We are informed by means of Mr. Oliver Pollock of the favorable disposition you have been pleased to manifest towards the Subjects, Interest and cause of the United, Free and Independent states of America



Fig. 2. Suite du Théâtre de la Guerre dans l'Amérique Septentrionale y Compris le Golphe du Mexique (Paris, 1782), by Louis Brion de la Tour, shows the central importance of Gálvez's stronghold of Louisiana in any military operations along the Gulf Coast—Britain's vulnerable southern flank throughout the Revolutionary War.

upon every occasion that has presented since your Excellency's accession to the Government of New Orleans & Louisiana.<sup>2</sup>

On 31 October 1778 the Continental Congress approved a recommendation from the Board of War:

That Governor Galvez be requested to accept the thanks of Congress for his spirited and disinterested conduct towards these States, and be assured that Congress will take every opportunity of evincing the favorable and friendly sentiments they entertain of Governor Galvez, and all the faithful subjects of his Catholic Majesty inhabiting the country under his government.<sup>3</sup>

Louisiana was to leave a life-long imprint on Bernardo de Gálvez. He liked the place and its inhabitants, who showed him a devotion bordering on adoration. But more importantly, he met and fell madly in love with Felicitas Saint-Maxent. The daughter of a prominent creole family from New Orleans, Felicitas was a charming young widow. Alexander von Humboldt, who met her decades later in Spain, couldn't help remarking that "her beauty is remarkable, and loved by everyone."<sup>4</sup> The problem was that Spanish officials and military officers were forbidden to marry women from the territories they ruled without special permission from the king, so the young couple decided to marry secretly under the legal institution of a "marriage in danger of death." The marriage would be later validated by the bishop of Havana, but that could not hide a simple fact that proved either Bernardo was not as seriously sick as he pretended to be, or his wife had exceptional healing powers. Their first child was born exactly nine months after the secret marriage ceremony.

## WAR AGAINST ENGLAND

Spain formally declared war against Great Britain on 8 May 1779. The official entry of Spain into the war not only tipped the balance of the conflict, making the Franco-Spanish naval forces superior in number to the British ones, but also profoundly changed the general strategy of the war.<sup>5</sup> Britain would be forced to abandon a purely American perspective and adopt a more global view.<sup>6</sup> The French also had to modify their strategy, since the Spanish government succeeded in making the French hostage to Spain's war aims: the regaining of Minorca, Gibraltar, West Florida, and the coast of Honduras.<sup>7</sup> While Spain was an official ally of France, that would not be the case with the United States. Although Spain and the United States fought the same enemy, benefited from each other's victories, and Spain supported the United States with supplies, arms, ammunition, and hard cash (both grants and long-term loans), their relationship would not go further than co-belligerents.

Even before news of Spain's declaration of war officially reached Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez departed from New Orleans up the Mississippi towards the British Fort Bute, a relic of the Seven Years War on Bayou Manchac, which he took by surprise on 7 September. Shortly after, he conquered Baton Rouge, just a few miles to the north. Gálvez's troops were a mixture in every sense: a small portion of professional soldiers, infantrymen of Louisiana, both native Spaniards and creoles; a provincial militia, including the New Orleans Colored Militia Battalion, formed by one company

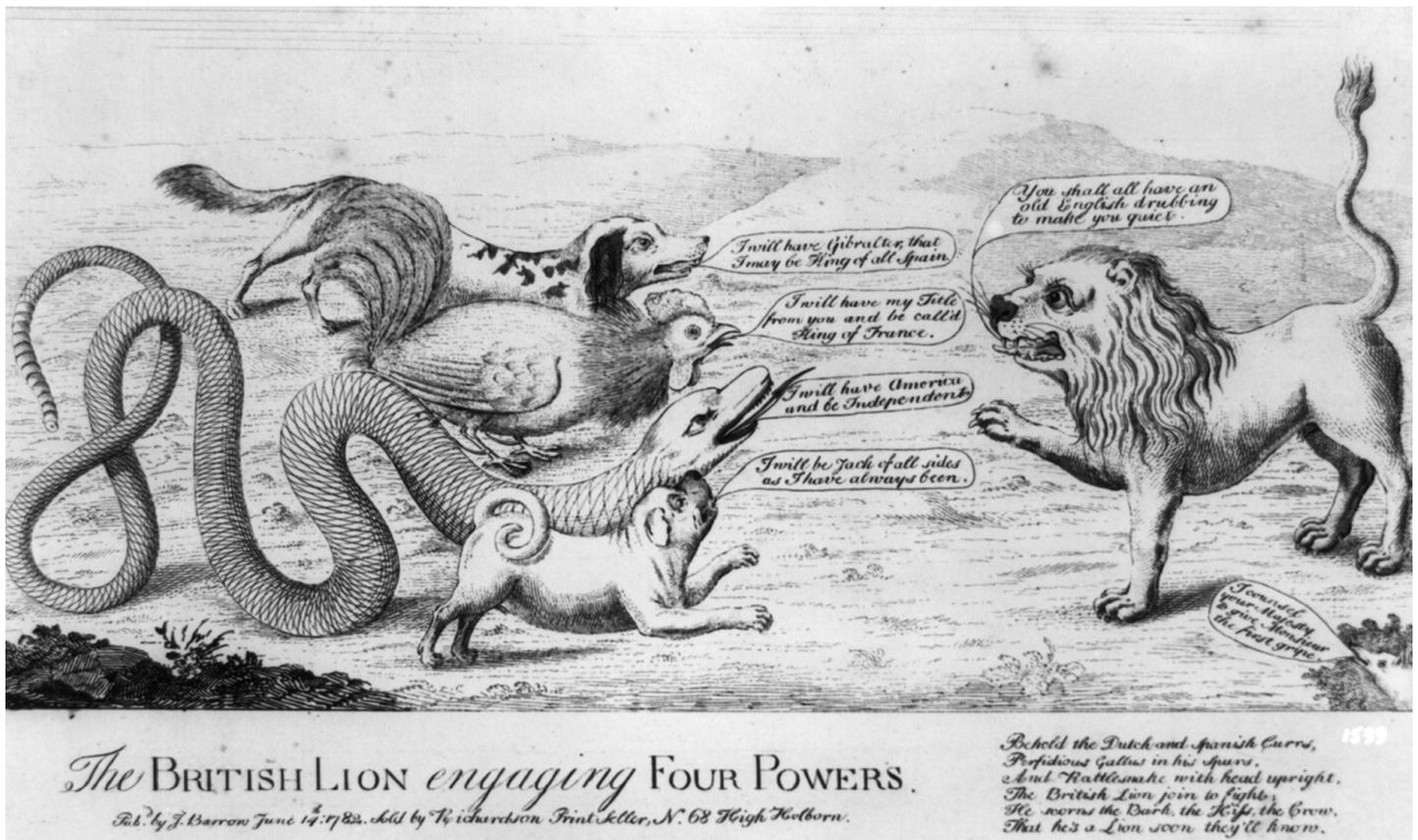


Fig. 3. The British Lion engaging Four Powers, an anonymous London engraving (1782), shows the U.S. in the guise of a rattlesnake, from the “join or die” motif popularized by Benjamin Franklin in the mid-eighteenth century. The three other powers are France (a fighting cock), Spain (a cocker spaniel), and Holland (a pug dog). Only France was formally allied with the U.S.; Spain and Holland were co-belligerents, fighting their own war with Great Britain at the same time as the Revolutionary War.

of mulattoes and another of African Americans; and Oliver Pollock, “an agent from the [U.S.] Congress, who made with me the whole campaign,” along with two officers and seven American volunteers. Altogether Gálvez had “667 men of all conditions, nations, and colors, without an engineer or artillery officer.”<sup>8</sup>

After his success against the British settlements along the Mississippi, Gálvez returned to New Orleans, where he had a hero’s welcome. Julien Poydras, Louisiana’s first poet, celebrated the occasion with a poem full of mythological references.<sup>9</sup> From across the ocean came the promotion to *mariscal de campo*, a two-star general. After the initial surprise was lost, any other general would have consolidated his position in the very likely event of a British counterattack. But Gálvez was not, and would never be, just “another general.” Instead, he demanded urgent reinforcements for a new attack, this time against Mobila (today’s Mobile, Alabama). His patience was put to a test, and not for the last time, by the dilatory tactics of the old generals in Havana, who considered Gálvez little more than a lucky adventurer

not worthy of their support. After several months of complex negotiations he finally set off for Mobile, whose 120-man garrison surrendered to Gálvez’s 1,300-man army on 12 March 1780. Reporting to Congress, U.S. Minister to France John Adams included a paragraph from the *Gazette d’Amsterdam* of 14 July 1780 with which he fully agreed: “the conquest of Mobile . . . appears so much the more important as it leads infallibly to that of Pensacola, by which the Spaniards may cut off one of the principal avenues of Jamaica.”<sup>10</sup> To France’s minister of foreign affairs, Adams added that “the advantages which Spain has gained in West Florida, and particularly of late at Mobile, and the probability that they will succeed in acquiring both the Floridas, show that the English are on the losing hand in that quarter.”<sup>11</sup> In the Continental Congress, the news of Gálvez’s victory at Mobile was well-received. New Jersey Delegate William C. Houston remarked that they offered a relief from the recent “bitter Cup of ill Tidings” of the British capture of Charleston (May 12) and the American defeat in Waxhaw Creek (May 29), both in South Carolina.<sup>12</sup>

## HIS FINEST HOUR: PENSACOLA

After the victory at Mobile, everyone was counting on an immediate push against Pensacola. Pensacola was the capital of British West Florida and the key to the control of the strategic Old Bahamas Canal, which ran parallel to the coast and was the main route for the Spanish ships on their way from the Caribbean to Europe. At least those were Gálvez's plans and orders. But once again, he was denied the necessary reinforcements from Havana. Actually, a few days after Mobile was taken, several vessels arrived from Cuba but the troops were insufficient for the intended attack against Pensacola. Gálvez was furious. In a letter to his uncle José, the powerful minister of Indies, he wrote "we can't consider without pain that if the expedition from Havana would have arrived in time, the English would have suffered as much as in Saratoga."<sup>13</sup> He had no choice but to return to New Orleans, where the population received him again as their hero and he immediately started the preparations for the final assault against Pensacola.

There was lingering concern over Gálvez's recent conquest. Although he left his good friend and one of his best officers, José de Ezpeleta, as governor of Mobile, he was certain that the British would try to re-conquer the place. He was right. In January 1781, the much-feared Hessians—German mercenaries in the British service—attacked Mobile with fixed bayonets. Private Benjamin Baynton, an American loyalist, may have overstated the case when he called the fierce fight a "Bunker Hill in miniature."<sup>14</sup> Only through a combination of courage, good leadership and sheer luck did the Spanish garrison succeed in holding the fort.

Increasingly impatient with the old generals in Havana, Gálvez decided to go himself to Cuba to try to speed things up. After a series of never-ending war councils he managed to get most of the troops and ships he needed, and in October 1780 the expedition departed for Pensacola. When a furious hurricane hit the fleet, sinking several ships and damaging or dispersing most of the rest all around the Caribbean, the old generals saw it as the triumph of reason



*Fig. 4. This anonymous View of Pensacola, in West Florida (London, 1777?), presents an idealized and highly glorified view of the modest port to highlight instead its strategic military and economic importance in the British Empire—and hence, the importance of Gálvez's victory.*

over ambition and considered it the end of the ambitious young general's career.

Once again they were wrong. Instead of dispersing the expedition, which would have meant the end of his command, Gálvez simply acted as if its departure had been postponed, and immediately began to regroup his ships and men for the next attempt against Pensacola. Several months passed. The old generals kept dragging their feet, so by the end of January he had merely a portion of the expedition ready. This is when, according to some historians, Gálvez devised a secret plan.<sup>15</sup> He demanded reinforcements just for the defense of Louisiana while, at the same time, he carefully drafted his own orders to, if "a happy opportunity appeared, engage in a new effort the inhabitants of those provinces, and fall upon Pensacola."<sup>16</sup> Just to be sure that everything was going to go according to his "secret plan," he left behind in Havana his trusted friend Francisco de Saavedra, invested both by him and by his uncle, the minister of Indies, with large powers to ensure that the rest of the troops would depart as soon as they were ready.

Finally, on 28 February 1781, a fleet of 27 transport ships escorted by five warships carrying little more than 1,500 men sailed from Havana. Even though the old generals still thought that its destination would be either New Orleans or Mobile, Gálvez gave orders to go directly to Pensacola. After an uneventful journey they arrived at Santa Rosa's Island, south of Pensacola Bay, where reports stated that the British had built a fort. The reports were wrong, and the Spanish troops disembarked unopposed, taking possession of the island and its beachhead from which to deploy their artillery against the two British frigates anchored inside Pensacola Bay.

The next phase was to be more difficult. In order to take the troops to the mainland, the ships needed to bypass the British defenses. The navy did not want to expose their ships in what they considered to be a suicide mission. Gálvez could not give direct orders to the navy since it was just assigned to the expedition but not under his direct command. He went aboard the small packet-boat *Galveztown*,<sup>17</sup> a privateer which was under Gálvez's direct command as governor



*Fig. 5. The Prise de Pensacola, a French engraving by Nicolas Ponce (Paris, 1784?) imagines the crucial moment during the siege when a Spanish cannonball hit and ignited the powder magazine in the Queen's Redoubt, a formidable link in the British defenses. This is probably the most popular contemporary image of the siege.*



Fig. 6. In contrast to fig. 5, this view of the siege of Pensacola, by the hyper-realist history painter Augusto Ferrer-Dalmau, yields a fanciful center stage to Gálvez in the successful storming of a British rampart but adds the grim reality faced by the common soldiery. British casualties included several Native American allies.

of Louisiana, hoisted the flag of admiral of the fleet, and ordered it to head directly to Pensacola. To the surprise of most present, especially the naval officers, the *Galveztown* entered the bay with only minor damage. The British guns could not hit her since their placement on the top of the so called Red-cliffs prevented aiming them at a ship sailing close to the shore. At the time, Gálvez presented his actions as how “fortune befriends the bold” (quoting Virgil’s *Aeneid*). It was not the first time, nor would it be the last, that fortune would come to Gálvez’s rescue. For this action, the king later rewarded him with the motto “I, alone” for his coat of arms.<sup>18</sup>

The navy officers had no choice but to follow Gálvez’s route into Pensacola Bay. The troops disembarked, and the

preparations for the siege started. Galvez’s forces at the time were not enough for the dangerous and complicated task ahead of them, so he contented himself just with encircling the British positions, digging some trenches, and placing the small cannons they had brought with them. No siege guns were on board since the expedition was in theory only a reinforcement for Louisiana’s defenses. Everything depended then on receiving new troops from Havana. In late March, his friend José de Ezpeleta arrived from Mobile with more than 2,000 men, which raised the total of his forces to a little more than 4,000. The news was well-received but they were not enough to overcome the well-fortified 1,600 men of the British garrison.<sup>19</sup>

The science of war dictated that a position the size of

Pensacola could only be successfully stormed with at least six to eight thousand besiegers.<sup>20</sup> On 19 April 1781 a relief expedition from Havana reached Pensacola, giving Gálvez 7,806 men under his command and more confidence than ever in his victory.<sup>21</sup> His troops were now even more diverse than when he conquered Fort Bute: professional soldiers from old regiments from the Iberian Peninsula (one of them formed by Irishmen);<sup>22</sup> several companies from various French regiments; veteran Spanish and French sailors; and American-born soldiers and militia men from regiments raised in Louisiana and Cuba, including all-black and mulatto units from Havana.

The plan was to attack the main British position in Fort George from the rear, but the pace of the advance dictated by the corps of engineers' scientific war was too slow for Gálvez's taste. On 4 May, 120 Pennsylvania & Maryland Loyalists, and 80 of the 3rd Waldeck Regiment supported by an unknown number of Native Americans, almost succeeded in breaking the siege. It is not without a certain degree of irony that this attack, which was meant to be the last hand-to-hand fight for the defense of British Pensacola, was carried out by American-born units, German troops, and their Native American allies. A few days later, a strong storm forced the Spanish to stop all siege works. Despite his confidence in public, in private Gálvez was increasingly worried. He confessed his "great predicament" to his friend Francisco de Saavedra:

The supply of cannonballs from Havana was very short, and they were running out of 24 pounders (the biggest ones used to bombard military defense constructions) of which they were less than a two-days supply. Almost all cannonballs fired by the enemy were recovered by his soldiers who were paid two *reales* for each, but even that was not enough. . . . In this situation [*he quotes Gálvez declaring*] I have resolved to attack the Queen's Redoubt by escalating its walls.<sup>23</sup>

Such a direct and desperate attack would not be necessary. The very next day, during what appeared to be another routine bombardment from the Spanish artillery, a huge blast was heard miles around. After the smoke cleared, a great breach in the walls appeared. Gálvez immediately ordered an assault and the remains of the British garrison had to retreat to the Prince of Wales's Redoubt. After a short fight, a white flag appeared over the ramparts. Fortune again had befriended the bold General Gálvez. A Spanish cannonball, perhaps one of those previously shot by the

British and recovered by the Spanish soldiers, had landed directly on the powder magazine. After a brief negotiation, the British commander capitulated and the whole garrison became Spanish prisoners.

In the United States, the news of the Spanish victory was received with mixed feelings. First, according to the articles of capitulation, most of the British prisoners were to be released under parole—sworn not to take up arms against Spain in the present conflict, which clearly implied that they could bear arms against the American revolutionaries. In a letter addressed to Francisco Rendón, the unofficial representative of Spain in Philadelphia, George Washington himself stated, "I have no doubt, from Don Galvez's well known attachment to the cause of America, that he would have refused the articles, which have been deemed exceptionable, had there not been very powerful reasons to induce his acceptance of them."<sup>24</sup> A second major issue was that with the conquest of the two Floridas, Spain was encircling the United States—threatening, or at the very least making more difficult, their expansion to the South towards the Caribbean. The Americans were fighting to be free from the British, but also to get hold of the biggest part of the continent in which their new nation was born. Shortly after the end of the war, relations between the United States of America and Spain would be under the shadow of three problems: the repayment of loans made by Spain to the United States; the drawing of Florida's border; and navigation along the Mississippi. These problems would only be resolved partially by Pickney's Treaty in 1795, and later fully by the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819.

The victory at Pensacola had important consequences for Gálvez. His powers were reinforced. The old generals in Havana were removed to irrelevant positions in the Iberian Peninsula where they could do no harm, and the newly conquered territories were placed under Galvez's direct command as governor of Louisiana. He was immediately promoted to *teniente general*, three-star general, and two years later he was made viscount of Galvestón (Spanish for Galvez-Town, today's Galveston, Texas) and count of Gálvez.<sup>25</sup> Not bad for the son and nephew of shepherds from the small and poor village of Macharaviaya, near Malaga, in the south of Spain.

## AFTER PENSACOLA

Bernardo de Gálvez's next assignment was to command an expedition against the British stronghold in the Caribbean: Jamaica. The end of February 1782 found him in Guarico, in today's Haiti, the agreed concentration point of the joint expedition. The conditions in Haiti were not easy but his



Fig. 7. In *Précis du traité de paix*, another French engraving by Nicolas Ponce (Paris, ca. 1784), medallions depicting notable battles of the Revolutionary War, such as Trenton and Monmouth, frame winged Victory trumpeting a scroll of heroes' names that includes Gálvez among the likes of Lafayette, Rochambeau, Benjamin Franklin, and Horatio Gates, victor of Saratoga.

wife Feliciano, who had hispanized her name by then, insisted on accompanying him, trading her comfortable life among New Orleans's creole gentry for the hardships of a military camp, where she gave birth to their first son, Miguel.

In early April 1782 Gálvez had under his command more than 9,000 men, and news arrived that the allied French fleet had arrived at Martinique. But on the 12th the French encountered 37 warships under the command of Admiral Sir George Rodney, and everything changed. The Battle of the Saints left Great Britain's navy the mistress of the Caribbean. Deprived of the essential French forces, Gálvez had no choice but to postpone the expedition against Jamaica. In January 1783 news arrived that preliminary articles of peace had been signed in Paris the previous November, and in September, Spain and the United States signed separate peace treaties with Great Britain, essentially ending the War of the American Revolution.

Bernardo de Gálvez and his family departed for the Iberian Peninsula, where he spent almost a year waiting for

a new assignment. Like a lion in a cage he tried to keep himself busy as an adviser on American affairs and also found time for scientific pursuits like testing a "Method for directing aerostatic machines." The experiment, which took place in the Manzanares River near Madrid, was reported in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*.<sup>26</sup> In 1785 Gálvez was appointed governor general of Cuba but his stay in the island was meant to be a short one. Only months after his arrival in Havana he was promoted to arguably one of the most powerful positions in the Spanish empire, in many respects second only to the king: viceroy of New Spain, a territory that included today's Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and the states of Florida, the southern parts of Alabama and Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, California, Oregon, and Washington in the United States.

From the very beginning, Gálvez displayed a new style of government. His reputation as a military hero, his youth, even his wife's beauty and charm and the vice royal couple's

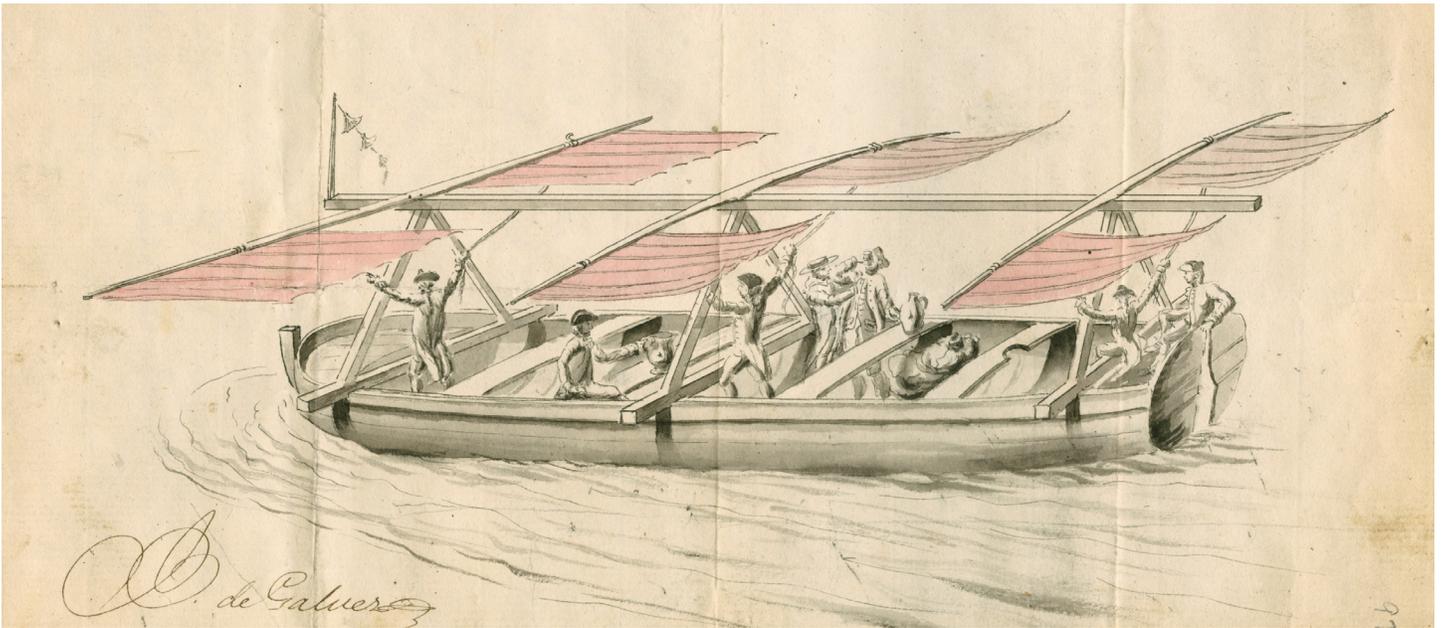


Fig. 8. Gálvez's interest in ethnography, hydrography, and exploration marked him as a child of the Enlightenment. On 2 March 1784, prominent citizens of Madrid signed a letter testifying to his interest in aeronautics as well. No less a celebrity than Sir Joseph Banks communicated the letter, accompanied by this engraving, to London's Royal Society, whose Transactions circulated Gálvez's vision throughout the Atlantic world.



willing participation in bull fights, dances, and festivities, made Gálvez very popular. But his tenure as viceroy was darkened by the so-called “famine year,” a series of weather phenomena that destroyed most of the crops in Mexico. Gálvez had to use all the resources of the Spanish administration to try to feed the starving inhabitants of the most populous viceroyalty in the Americas. He fought hoarders and black marketers who abused “those unhappy people that, although poor, are the ones who fatten the rich giving them with one hand what they received with the other, and the ones who make the wealth of kingdoms working with their arms, fighting the wars, and paying taxes.” For Bernardo de Gálvez, the people were “the strength and vigor of the State.”<sup>27</sup>

Fig. 9. Bernardo de Gálvez's commemoration in American public art and popular culture predates his portrait being hung in the U.S. Capitol in 2014. On 3 June 1976, Spain's King Don Juan Carlos I dedicated Juan de Ávalos's statue of Gálvez among the “Statues of the Liberators” on Washington, D.C.'s Virginia Avenue NW—“as a reminder,” according to the inscription on its base, “that Spain offered the blood of her soldiers for the cause of American Independence.” In the intervening years, Gálvez has appeared as the subject of both a U.S. postage stamp (1980) and an episode of the PBS children's series, Liberty Kids (2002).



Fig. 10. HM King Felipe VI and HM Queen Letizia viewed Gálvez's portrait in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Room during their first official visit to Washington, D.C., on 16 September 2015. Joining them were (from left) Senators John Barrasso (WY), Robert Menendez (NJ), and Tim Kaine (VA).

While most of Gálvez's energies were consumed in dealing with the humanitarian crisis faced by New Spain, he also addressed several profound and long-lasting reforms. Among them, and arguably the most important one, was the Instruction for the Government of the Internal Provinces of August 1786, which laid the foundation of a new policy concerning the expansion and settlement of the northern frontier of Mexico, today's southern states of the United States.<sup>28</sup>

By the end of 1786 Bernardo de Gálvez was seriously ill. When he sensed his end was near, he got up from his sickbed, dressed in his full general's uniform, and received communion, standing up as he had done all his life while facing his enemies. He died on 10 November 1786. In his will he stated that his remains should be buried in Mexico City—in America.

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## NOTES

1. This and the following quotes in this section are from Bernardo de Gálvez, *Notes and Considerations on the War with the Apache Indians in the Provinces of New Spain* (*Noticia y reflexiones sobre la guerra que se tiene con los indios apaches en las provincias de Nueva España*), Madrid, circa 1771, Mnss., 43, 40–41, 61 and 59. In Blas Osés, *documentación varia*, Mss., México, 1817, The Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, The Steiner Collection, Bush Centre, John's University, Collegeville, MN Steiner 27, Blas Osés, *Manuscritos*, n. 2, pp. 35–66. For an English translation, see: Elisabeth A. H. John, "A Cautionary Exercise in Apache Historiography

—Notes and Reflections on the War with the Apache Indians in the Provinces of New Spain—by Bernardo de Galvez, ca. 1785–86,” *Journal of Arizona History* 25 (1984): 301–15. The importance of Gálvez’s *Notes and Considerations on the War with the Apache* can not be overstated. It was a private document not intended for publication nor to be sent to his superiors; thus, he writes freely about his impressions.

2. Secret Committee to Bernardo de Gálvez, 12 June 1777, in Paul H. Smith et al., eds., *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774–1789* (Washington, DC, 1976–2000), 25:624–25.

3. Worthington C. Ford et al., eds., *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789* (Washington, DC, 1904–37), 12:1083–1084.

4. Alexander von Humboldt to Miguel Constanzó, México, 22 November 1803, in Puig-Samper, Miguel Ángel, “Humboldt, un prusiano en la Corte del Rey Carlos IV,” *Revista de Indias*, 59, no. 216 (1999): 329–55.

5. For general considerations on the Spanish strategy, see Thomas E. Chávez, “Spanish Policy and Strategy,” in Donald Stoker, Kenneth J. Hagan, and Michael T. McMaster, eds., *Strategy in the American War of Independence: A Global Approach* (London & New York, 2010), pp. 163–75.

6. H.M. Scott, *British Foreign Policy in the Age of the American Revolution* (Oxford, UK, 1990), p. 277.

7. John Reeve, “British Naval Strategy: War on a Global Scale,” in Stoker, Hagan, and McMaster, *Strategy in the American War of Independence*, p. 86. Also see: Jonahthan R. Dull, *The French Navy and American Independence: A Study of Arms and Diplomacy, 1774–1787* (Princeton, NJ, 1975), p. 111; Nicholas Rodger, *Command of the Ocean: A Naval History of Britain, 1649–1815* (New York, 2005), p. 136.

8. *Diario que yo, d. Bernardo de Gálvez, brigadier de los Reales Ejércitos, gobernador de la provincia de la Luisiana y encargado por S.M. de la expedición contra Panzacola y Mobila, formé de los acontecimientos que ocurren en ella.* Archivo General de Simancas, SGU, LEG 6912, 2.

9. Julien Poydras, *La Prise du morne du Bâton Rouge par Monseigneur de Galvez, Chevalier pensionné de l’Ordre Royal distingué de Charles Trois, Brigadier des Armées de Sa Majesté, Intendant, Inspecteur et Gouverneur Général de la Province de la Louisiane*, (New Orleans, LA, 1779). For an English translation, see Edward Larocque Tinker, *Louisiana’s Earliest*

*Poet: Julien Poydras and the Paeans to Galvez* (New York, 1929).

10. John Adams to the President of Congress, 19 July 1780, in Francis Wharton, ed., *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States* (Washington, DC, 1889), 3:870.

11. John Adams to Count de Vergennes, 13 July 1780, in Wharton, *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence*, 3:849.

12. William C. Houston, 5 June 1780, in Smith, *Letters of Delegates to Congress*, 15:252–253.

13. Bernardo de Gálvez to José de Gálvez, Mobila, 20 March 1780. Archivo General de Simancas, GS, 6912, EXP. 2.

14. Benjamin Baynton to Peter Baynton, Pensacola, 2 February 1781. Pennsylvania State Archives, MG 19, Sequestered Baynton, Wharton and Morgan Papers, 1725–1827, Part III, Baynton Family Papers, 1770–1827, Correspondence of Benjamin Baynton, 1777–1785, in *The On-Line Institute for Advanced Loyalist Studies*, www.royalprovincial.com.

15. F. de Borja Medina Rojas, *José de Ezpeleta, Gobernador de La Mobila, 1780–1781* (Seville, Spain, 1980), pp. 651–69.

16. *Diario de las operaciones de la expedición contra la Plaza de Panzacola concluida por las Armas de S. M. Católica bajo las órdenes del Mariscal de Campo D. Bernardo de Gálvez*, Biblioteca Palacio Real de Madrid, III/6526 (2) and Biblioteca Nacional Madrid, 2/12654.

17. The packet-boat *Galveztown* or *Galveton*, formerly *HMS West Florida*, had been captured from the British in the battle of Lake Pontchartrain (10 September 1779) and refitted in New Orleans as privateer with funds from the Governor’s treasury.

18. Dossier on the award of the royal title of Castille of Count de Gálvez to Bernardo de Gálvez, *Expediente sobre concesión del título de Castilla y de la encomienda de Bolaños de la Orden de Calatrava. Contiene: Título de Vizconde de Gálvez-Town, cancelado, blasón y genealogía de la casa de los Gálvez, de Macharaviaya, y relación de méritos.* Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Consejos 5085, a.1783, exp.2.

19. *Diario de las operaciones de la expedición contra la Plaza de Panzacola concluida por las Armas de S. M. Católica bajo las órdenes del Mariscal de Campo D. Bernardo de Gálvez...* Biblioteca Palacio Real de Madrid III/6526 (2) and Biblioteca Nacional Madrid, 2/12654.

20. Saint-Paul, Noizet, *Elementos de fortificación*, Madrid, Imprenta Real, 1818, n. 2, p. 178. 1st ed. Noizet de Saint-Paul, Gaspard, *Traité complet de fortification*, Paris, Barrois l'aîné, 1792.

21. *Diario de las operaciones de la expedición contra la Plaza de Panzacola concluida por las Armas de S. M. Católica bajo las órdenes del Mariscal de Campo D. Bernardo de Gálvez...* Biblioteca Palacio Real de Madrid III/6526 (2) and Biblioteca Nacional Madrid, 2/12654.; *Diario de las operaciones de la expedición contra la Plaza de Panzacola concluida por las Armas de S. M. Católica bajo las órdenes del Mariscal de Campo D. Bernardo de Gálvez ... (1st manuscript)*, Archivo General de Simancas, SGU, 6913, Exp. 3.

22. The Irishmen who served under France, Spain, and Austria are commonly known as the *Wild Geese*. Traditionally only men who served in the military received scholarly attention, tainted with an almost romantic view of their lives, but recent studies have provided a more realistic perspective through the inclusion of civilians, Catholic priests, and women. See Enrique García Hernán and Óscar Recio Morales, eds., *Extranjeros en el Ejército. Militares irlandeses en la sociedad española, 1580–1818*, Madrid, Ministerio de Defensa, 2007, and Óscar Recio Morales, *La presencia irlandesa en los ejércitos de la monarquía hispánica, 1580–1818 (The Irish Military Presence in the Spanish Armies, 1580–1818)*, CD-Rom, Madrid, Ministerio de Defensa, 2007. For the traditional view, see Donald Harman Akenson, *An Irish History of Civilization* (London, 2005) 1:187. For a more recent perspective, see Óscar Recio Morales, “When Merit Alone is Not Enough: Money as a ‘Parallel Route’ for Irish Military Advancement in Spain,” in *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, 5, no. 2 (July 2007): 121–124.

23. Entry for 6 May 1781, Francisco Morales Padrón, ed., *Diario de don Francisco de Saavedra* (Seville, Spain, 2004), p. 185.

24. George Washington to Francisco Rendón, 12 October 1781, in Worthington Chauncey Ford, ed., *Writings of George Washington* (New York, 1891), 9:379.

25. Real Cédula, Aranjuez, 20 May 1783. Biblioteca Nacional Madrid, Mss. 10.639.

26. Joseph Banks, “Sur un Moyen de Donner la Direction aux Machines Aérostatiques. Par M. Le Comte de Galvez,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, 74 (1784): 469–70.

27. Order of 11 October 1785, in Eusebio Ventura Beleña, *Recopilación Sumaria de todos los autos acor-*

*dados de la Real Audiencia y Sala del Crimen de esta Nueva España y providencias de su Superior Gobierno: De varias Reales Cédulas y Órdenes que, después de publicada la Recopilación de Indias, han podido recogerse, así de las dirigidas a la misma Audiencia ó Gobierno, como de algunas otras que por sus notables decisiones convendrá no ignorar* (Mexico City, 1787), pp. 1–5; Bernardo de Gálvez to José de Gálvez, letter n. 262, 29 October 1785 (2nd of this date), Archivo General de Indias, Mexico City, 1418.

28. *Instruction for the Government of the Interior Provinces of New Spain*, 26 August 1786, original copies in Archivo General de Indis, Guadalajara, 268 and Ultramar, 714, and in Archivo General de Simancas, Guerra Moderna, 7041. For published versions, see: *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación*, n. VIII, 4 (1937): 491–540; Donald E. Worcester, ed., *Instructions for Governing the Interior Provinces of New Spain, 1786* (bilingual ed., Berkeley, CA, 1951); and María del Carmen Velázquez Chávez, ed., *La frontera norte y la experiencia colonial* (Mexico City, 1982).

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Fig. 2. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division

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Fig. 4. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, [LC-USZ62-45384]

Fig. 5. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, [LC-USZ62-39588]

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Fig. 8. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, v. 74, (1784), Table XXI, fig. 1. Image number: RS.9807. ©The Royal Society

Fig. 9. Bruce Guthrie

Fig. 10. Office of Sen. Bob Menendez

# BERNARDO DE GÁLVEZ

## IN THE CAPITOL

### THE LOST GIFT

In 1783, the United States government passed a resolution accepting a portrait of Bernardo de Gálvez as a gift from Oliver Pollock to the American people. As commanded by Spain's King Carlos III, General Gálvez had harassed the British in the Gulf of Mexico in support of the American Revolution. The same resolution that accepted the portrait of Gálvez asserted that it should "be placed in the room in which Congress meets." George Washington and many others of the Revolutionary generation were well aware of Spain's help in the struggle of the United States to gain its independence from Great Britain; hanging the portrait was

to be a public display of American appreciation for Spain's assistance.

The government of the United States at the time was operating under the Articles of Confederation, and the current U.S. Capitol was years away from being built. Still, Congress had resolved to hang a portrait of Gálvez in "the room in which Congress meets." If Congress honored this resolution, Gálvez's portrait should have been hung somewhere in the U.S. Capitol shortly after its construction in the nineteenth century. But even though the U.S. government made this promise in 1783, it was not until 2014 that Congress finally kept its word. The issue was all but forgotten until Teresa Valcarce learned



SEE NOTES FOR IMAGE CREDITS.

*Fig. 1. The unveiling ceremony on 9 December 2014, attended by Sen. Tim Kaine (far left), Spain's Ambassador Ramón Gil-Casares (second from left), and—preparing to cut the ribbon—Teresa Valcarce and Sen. Robert Menendez.*

about it. Teresa's family is from Málaga, Spain—the same province where Gálvez was born. After Teresa learned about the 1783 resolution to hang a portrait of Gálvez in “the room in which Congress meets,” she went looking for it. Of course, it was not hanging in the current U.S. Capitol, so she searched various buildings in former U.S. capital cities, including Philadelphia and New York. She contacted the U.S. Senate Historical Office and then researched what paintings might have been burned when the British burned the White House and Capitol in 1814. It seemed no one knew anything about the 1783 resolution or the portrait of Gálvez.

Finding no trail of the original painting, Teresa decided to contact Members of Congress and to press Congress to honor the resolution to hang a portrait of Gálvez somewhere in the Capitol. Among the members of the House who were supportive of Teresa's initiative right away were Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Jeff Miller (FL), Chris Van Hollen (MD), and Xavier Becerra (CA), and in the Senate, Robert Menendez (NJ).

Teresa also rallied several organizations to this cause. Among these were the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (the DAR) and the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (the SAR).

The DAR, the SAR, and about 30 other organizations represented millions of people who supported this effort. At this time, I was serving as the President General of the SAR and immediately became involved in this effort.

Teresa contacted several newspapers, and her story about the portrait of Gálvez was the topic of articles in *The Washington Post*, *Roll Call*, and *Hidden Hispanic Heritage*. I wrote a piece myself, which was published in the weblog *American Thinker*, and I was interviewed by Richard Simon for his article on Teresa and the Gálvez portrait in *The Los Angeles Times*. *The Washington Post* dubbed Teresa “the portrait lady.”

In addition to all the support Teresa garnered for this cause, she also arranged for a replica of a portrait of Gálvez to be donated to the United States so that it could be hung in the U.S. Capitol—and it wouldn't cost the American taxpayer a nickel. The original portrait, from which this replica was copied, was a gift from King Carlos III to General Gálvez himself and is part of a private collection in Málaga.

Menendez formally requested that the curator for the Architect of the Capitol hang a portrait of Gálvez in the U.S. Capitol. The Senator's request was approved.

The portrait was shipped from Spain to the Spanish Embassy in Washington, D.C., but since it was not the

property of the Spanish government, the Embassy could not hold the portrait for long. Teresa called me, and we brainstormed where we might keep the portrait until Congress took possession of it. I offered my own home, which was not really practical, but then I had a better idea. I called Lynn Forney Young, the President General of the DAR, and asked her if the DAR could take temporary custody of the portrait. The DAR Building houses not only Constitution Hall and one of the best genealogical libraries in the world, it also has an accredited museum and gallery. Teresa and Lynn connected and, before long, the portrait of Gálvez was removed from the Spanish Embassy and placed on display at the DAR Building until Congress accepted it to be hung in the Capitol.

On 9 December 2014, the por-



Fig. 2. (from left) Sen. Menendez, Lynn Forney Young, the author Joseph Dooley, and Ambassador Ramón Gil-Casares at the portrait's unveiling ceremony.

trait of Bernardo de Gálvez was unveiled in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Room (S-116). Among those who attended the unveiling were Teresa Valcarce, Senators Menendez and Tim Kaine (VA), Ambassador Ramón Gil-Casares, Lynn Forney Young, and myself.

—Joseph W. Dooley

## PORTRAIT DIPLOMACY IN THE EARLY CAPITOL(S)

When Oliver Pollock gifted a portrait of his friend Bernardo de Gálvez to Congress in May 1783, he was participating in a tradition hallowed by centuries of European diplomacy. French and Spanish diplomats had sent portraits of George Washington back across the Atlantic to their royal masters in Europe, and Congress had commissioned a portrait of a French diplomat (Conrad Alexandre Gerard) for their chamber in Philadelphia in 1779. In that same year, Congress requested the French Foreign Ministry to send companion portraits of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette—“that, by being placed in our council chamber, the representatives of these states may daily have before their eyes the first royal friends and patrons of their cause.” As this coincided with Congress’s request for more financial assistance from France, “courtly sensibilities and monetary concerns ran on parallel tracks.” Congress did not receive the portraits until March 1784, and then it took more than a year until they were formally installed—first in New York’s City Hall (soon to be Federal Hall), then in Philadelphia’s Congress Hall, and finally in the new Capitol in Washington, D.C. They had been hanging in a Senate committee room for more than a year before the British burned the Capitol in August 1814, when the portraits are thought to have been carried off and/or destroyed. Dr. Todd Larkin’s research, funded in part by the U.S. Capitol Historical Society’s Capitol Fellowship in 2000, posits that Congress’s ambivalent attitude towards the French royals’ portraits was a casualty of “the problematics of creating an acceptable visual embodiment for the new heroes of the republic.”<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez’s portrait appeared under different circumstances, but it suffered similar treatment by Congress—including an equally mysterious fate. The donor, Oliver Pollock (1737–1823), was an Irish immigrant who lived only two years in Philadelphia before becoming a trader, first in the West Indies and eventually in New Orleans, which was formally transferred to Spain from France in 1769. Pollock’s good relations with Spanish officials over the ensuing years

made him an effective liaison when he was appointed commercial agent for the United States in 1777—coincidentally, the year Gálvez assumed office as governor of Louisiana. It was Gálvez’s generous loans to Pollock, no less than his military victories over the British along the Gulf Coast, that gave Congress “so favorable an Impression of your [Gálvez’s] Character and that of your Nation that they have not ceased to respect you and to wish for an intimate Connection with your Country.” That acknowledgement was penned by Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris just a month after



*Fig. 3. A copy of Marie-Antoinette in Ceremonial Dress, from an original painted in 1778 by Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755–1842), hung in the Senate Chamber of Philadelphia’s Congress Hall until its wall space was taken up by the addition of a spectators gallery and it was moved to a nearby committee room. This reproduction, painted by Pierre-Louis Ganne in 1975, presides over the West Committee Room outside the Senate Chamber on the second floor of Congress Hall. It and its companion piece, of Louis XVI, are replicas given by the French government in 1976.*

the victory at Yorktown (October 1781) showed what allied French and American forces could accomplish. Morris was no doubt hinting what might yet be expected from Spain.<sup>2</sup>

On 8 May 1783, while in Philadelphia to settle his public accounts with the Confederation government (which included money borrowed from Gálvez), Pollock wrote Congress's President Elias Boudinot about the Spanish general's "signal Attachment . . . to the Interest of the United States and the repeated services he rendered to their Cause." Activated by "the liveliest sense of Gratitude" and "Penetrated with respectfull Attachment[,] I requested & obtained his Excellency's Portrait with the view of presenting it to the United States. I flattered myself that the representation of so early & so warm a friend could be agreeable to Congress, and under that Conception I pray leave now Sir to Solicite their Acceptance of it." Congress ordered Boudinot to inform Pollock "that Congress in consideration of the early and zealous friendship of Don B. de Galvez late govr of Louisiana do accept the present of his Portrait," and "*Resolved*, That the Secretary do cause the same to be placed in the room in which Congress meet." The next day, Boudinot wrote to Pollock "that Congress have *cheerfully* accepted the portrait [*italics added*]." Another letter Boudinot wrote just a few weeks later bears a timely significance: addressed to Gálvez himself, it requested "your Excellency's patronage and interposition" in Pollock's executing his duties as Congress's newly-appointed commercial agent in Havana, Cuba.<sup>3</sup>

That is how Gálvez's portrait fits into the tradition of portrait diplomacy. Everyone got something out of the transaction: Gálvez favored Pollock and the Congress by giving them his portrait; Pollock then favored Congress by gifting the portrait to the very men who were tasked with settling his public accounts (ideally, in Pollock's and Gálvez's favor); Congress favored Gálvez by graciously accepting the portrait and displaying it where it loudly broadcast Spain's friendship while signaling Congress's hope for even closer relations with Gálvez—and his boss, Carlos III.

But what of the portrait itself? In the same letter acknowledging Congress's receipt, and only one day after the portrait was ordered to be hung in their meeting place, Boudinot mentions a mysterious new twist—informing Pollock that Congress "have directed me to cause it to be hung up in the Hall of the Presidents House." Boudinot's new instructions are unjournalized; indeed, after 8 May, no other action on the portrait is recorded in the Journal of the Confederation Congress. Perhaps the resolution of 8 May was intended to be of short duration—placing the painting on temporary display in Congress's meeting room (in Inde-

pendence Hall) until a more permanent location could be found (in Boudinot's residence). Or perhaps "the Presidents House" itself was deemed merely a temporary location.

The Mutiny of 1783 probably determined just how temporary it would be. When units of the Continental Army's Pennsylvania Line demanded back pay from the state legislature by surrounding its meeting place (Independence Hall), just weeks after Gálvez's portrait was received in its meeting room upstairs, Congress decided it ought not to rely on a state government for its security and moved temporarily to Princeton, New Jersey. Whether the portrait made it into or out of Princeton is unknown. In March 1785, shortly after Congress convened for the rest of its short existence in New York City, Thomas Lee Shippen wrote a vivid description of the decor, dining, and domestic life within the "Palace" occupied by his uncle, President Richard Henry Lee. He makes no reference to Gálvez's portrait.<sup>4</sup> Within months, John Jay was involved in tortured and ultimately unsuccessful negotiations with Spanish diplomats over a treaty that would have to wait another ten years before settling long-standing boundary and commercial issues.

Meanwhile, Gálvez's portrait remained a victim of neglect; Boudinot's letter of 9 May 1783 remains the last known reference to anyone's seeing Oliver Pollock's portrait of Bernardo de Gálvez.

—William diGiacomantonio

## A GIFT RESTORED

December 2014 was a good month for Bernardo de Gálvez. After 231 years, Congress honored a promise made in 1783 to hang a portrait of Gálvez in the U.S. Capitol. Two days later, Congress also granted honorary citizenship to the Spanish hero of the American Revolutionary War.

In the words of the enacting legislation, "honorary citizenship is and should remain an extraordinary honor not lightly conferred nor frequently granted." In fact, only seven individuals had been so honored prior to Gálvez, beginning with Britain's most famous prime minister of modern times, Winston Churchill, in 1963. The others include two Revolutionary War heroes (the Marquis de Lafayette and Poland's Casimir Pulaski), two humanitarian leaders (Raoul Wallenberg and Mother Teresa), and a husband-wife team who lived decades before there was even a United States in which to claim citizenship (Pennsylvania's colonial founder William Penn and Anna Callowhill Penn). No legal rights or privileges are granted by honorary citizenship; for example, it does not confer the right to a U.S. passport. But