

## = Grass Fight =

The Grass Fight was a small battle during the Texas Revolution , fought between the Mexican Army and the Texan Army . The battle took place on November 26 , 1835 , just south of San Antonio de Béxar in the Mexican region of Texas . The Texas Revolution had officially begun on October 2 and by the end of the month the Texians had initiated a siege of Béxar , home of the largest Mexican garrison in the province . Bored with the inactivity , many of the Texian soldiers returned home ; a smaller number of adventurers from the United States arrived to replace them . After the Texian Army rejected commander @-@ in @-@ chief Stephen F. Austin 's call to launch an assault on Béxar on November 22 , Austin resigned from the army . The men elected Edward Burleson their new commander @-@ in @-@ chief .

On November 26 , Texian scout Deaf Smith brought news of a Mexican pack train , accompanied by 50 ? 100 soldiers , that was on its way to Bexar . The Texian camp was convinced that the pack train carried silver to pay the Mexican garrison and purchase supplies . Burleson ordered Colonel James Bowie to take 45 ? 50 cavalry and intercept the train . An additional 100 infantry followed . On seeing the battle commence , Mexican General Martín Perfecto de Cos sent reinforcements from Bexar . The Texians repulsed several attacks by Mexican soldiers , who finally retreated to Bexar . When the Texians examined the abandoned pack train they discovered that , instead of silver , the mules carried freshly cut grass to feed the Mexican Army horses . Four Texians were injured , and historian Alwyn Barr states that three Mexican soldiers were killed , although Bowie and Burleson initially claimed the number was much higher .

## = = Background = =

On October 2 , 1835 , Texas colonists attacked a Mexican force at the Battle of Gonzales , formally launching the Texas Revolution . After the battle ended , disgruntled colonists continued to assemble in Gonzales , eager to put a decisive end to Mexican control over the area . On October 11 the disorganized volunteers elected Stephen F. Austin , who had settled the first English @-@ speaking colonists in Texas , as their commander @-@ in @-@ chief . Several days later Austin marched his newly created Texian Army towards San Antonio de Béxar , where General Martín Perfecto de Cos , brother @-@ in @-@ law of Mexican president Antonio López de Santa Anna , oversaw the garrison at the Alamo . In late October the Texians initiated a siege of Béxar .

## = = Battle = =

At 10 : 00 a.m. on November 26 , Texian scout Erastus " Deaf " Smith rode into camp to report that a pack train of mules and horses , accompanied by 50 ? 100 Mexican soldiers , was within 5 miles ( 8 @. @ 0 km ) of Béxar . For several days , the Texians had heard rumors that the Mexican Army was expecting a shipment of silver and gold to pay the troops and purchase additional supplies . The Texians had been fighting without pay , and most wanted to charge from camp and loot the expected riches . Burleson calmed the crowd and then ordered Colonel James Bowie to take 35 ? 40 mounted men to investigate , but only attack if necessary . After Bowie recruited the army 's 12 best marksmen for the expedition , there was little doubt that he intended to find a reason to attack . Burleson managed to stop the entire army from following by sending Colonel William Jack with 100 infantry to support Bowie 's men .

About 1 mile ( 1 @. @ 6 km ) from Béxar , Bowie and his men spotted the Mexican soldiers crossing a dry ravine . This was likely near the confluence of the Alazán , Apache , and San Pedro Creeks . Bowie 's men charged the Mexican party , scattering the mules . The mounted forces briefly exchanged fire , and then both sides dismounted and took cover in dry streambeds . The Mexican forces counterattacked but were repulsed . In Béxar , General Cos saw the battle begin and sent 50 infantry and 1 cannon to provide cover so the cavalry could retreat to town . The Texian infantry also heard the initial shots and rushed toward the battle , at one point wading through waist @-@ deep water . They approached the battlefield during a lull . The lack of noise made it difficult for them to

ascertain where the Mexican troops were , and the Texians were surprised to find themselves between the Mexican cavalry and infantry . As the Mexican troops began firing , the Texian infantry troops dropped to the ground . Colonel Thomas Rusk led a group of 15 in an attack on the nearest Mexican cavalry ; as those cavalymen fled the Texian infantry was able to scramble to cover .

The Texian cavalry joined their infantrymen . Burleson 's father , James Burleson , led a cavalry advance on the Mexican position , yelling , " Boys , we have but once to die , they are here in the ditch . Charge them ! " The Mexican artillery fired three times , driving the Texians back . Three times the Mexican cavalry attempted to take a small rise to give the artillery better position ; they were repulsed . The Mexican infantry then attacked . Rusk wrote of the Mexican attack : " These men advanced with great coolness and bravery under a destructive fire from our men , preserving ... strict order and exhibiting no confusion . " The infantry abandoned their charge when they realized that Texian James Swisher had led a band of cavalry to try to take the Mexican cannon . The Mexican forces then withdrew towards Béxar .

= = Aftermath = =

Four Texians were wounded in the fighting , and one soldier deserted during the battle . In his reports , Burleson claimed that 15 Mexican soldiers had been killed and 7 wounded , while Bowie claimed that 60 Mexican soldiers had been killed . In his book *Texans in Revolt : the Battle for San Antonio , 1835* , historian Alwyn Barr stated that only 3 Mexican soldiers had been killed and 14 wounded ; most of the casualties were from the cavalry companies . Burleson praised all of his officers for their conduct ; Bowie received the most mention .

The Texians captured 40 horses and mules . To their surprise , the saddlebags did not contain bullion . Instead , the mules had been carrying freshly cut grass to feed the Mexican horses trapped in Béxar ; this prize gave the battle its name . Although the engagement , which historian J. R. Edmondson termed a " ludicrous affair " , did not yield valuable plunder , it did serve to unite the Texian Army . Days before , the army had been bitterly divided and unwilling to risk a prolonged siege or assault . With their success at the Grass Fight , however , the Texian soldiers began to believe that , although outnumbered , they could prevail over the Béxar garrison . The Texians believed that Cos must have been desperate to send troops outside of the safety of Béxar .

Several days later , on December 1 , a handful of Americans in Béxar convinced Cos to allow them free passage from the city . Although they had promised to leave the country , the men , including Samuel Maverick , instead joined the Texian Army and provided information about the Mexican defenses and the low morale within the town . Buoyed by their Grass Fight victory , on December 5 the Texians launched an attack on Béxar ; Cos surrendered on December 9 . As a condition of their parole , the Mexican troops were forced to leave the province , leaving the Texas colonists in full control .