

AGUSTÍN SOLIS DE LA GARZA COLLECTION
Finding Aid

Compiled by
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Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives
Edinburg, Texas

2013



*Founded in 1967 as the
Hidalgo County Historical Museum*

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SUMMARY

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Size | 0.54 cubic feet |
| Geographic Locations | San Diego, Texas; Brownsville, Texas; Edinburg, Texas; Laredo, Texas; Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico; Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico; Torreón, Coahuila, Mexico; Veracruz, Veracruz-Llave, Mexico |
| Inclusive Dates | 1906-1952 |
| Bulk Dates | 1915-1920 |
| Languages | Spanish, English |
| Summary | The Agustín Solís de la Garza collection contains correspondence and other documents related to the Plan de San Diego, which was an attempt by certain groups in Mexico in 1915 to regain territory lost in the Mexican-American War. |
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| Stack Location(s) | Cage |

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE

Agustín Solis de la Garza was born on June 11, 1881. His sister Margarita Garza lived in San Diego, Texas, in 1916. His brother Francisco Garza live in Mexico, another brother Jose Garza lived in New York and another sister live in San Antonio, Texas. Garza lived in San Diego, Texas in 1910 and that year went to work for the clothing firm M. Cirilo and Company in Monterrey, Mexico. By 1913, Garza represented the company in Torreon, Coahuila. About that time Garza became involved in the Plan de San Diego.

The Plan de San Diego was a revolutionary manifesto that was supposedly drafted in the town of San Diego, Texas on January 6, 1915, which called for a no quarter race war to begin on February 20, 1915. The plan was actually drafted in a jail in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon and outlined the formation of a Liberation Army of Races and Peoples to be composed of Mexican Americans, African Americans and Japanese in the emancipation of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Colorado from the control of the United States. The plan came to the attention of authorities in South Texas upon the arrest of Basilio Ramos Jr. on January 24, 1915 by Hidalgo County Sherriff A.Y. Baker and local authorities. Ramos held in possession a copy of the plan's manifesto as well as his personal credentials regarding the Plan de San Diego.

In August and September of 1913, Garza organized protest meetings against United States of the port of Veracruz. After his meetings, Garza telegraphed President Victoriano Huerta from Saltillo to offer his services in repelling American aggression. Huerta congratulated Garza and ordered General Joaquin Maas to provide him with weapons. Garza asked for only arms and ammunition; but Maas refused, saying there was no money, ammunition, or weapons available for the volunteer corps. As a result, Garza had to disband more than two hundred volunteers in Saltillo.

The Plan de San Diego was set to begin on February 20th of 1915 at two o'clock in the morning and thus start the Hispanic insurrection of Texas and other southwestern American states. In this plan Garza is unanimously commissioned as the "General of the Army Corps" and "General Chief of the Liberating Army of Races and Peoples of America." Garza had no prior military experience and for conspirator purposes used the alias of Leon Caballo.

While continuing to work on the Plan of San Diego, Garza and affiliates organized a mercantile corporation named Garza Hermanos y Compania on January 26, 1916. The company was located at 17 Avenida Independencia in Mexico City. The firm lasted for ten years and dealt in many mercantile activities with Garza serving as the office manager, taking fifteen percent of the annual profits. Garza also handled affairs of another syndicate with an office in the same building, formed in March of 1916, which acquired oil properties and raised capital. In this company Garza was involved with General Jose Maria Zuazua and Juan Kvake Forseck. Foreseck was used by President Venustiano Carranza as an agent to keep an eye on the Plan de San Diego conspirators.

As part of his work on the Plan de San Diego, Garza secretly recruited men for the Texas insurrection and disregarded political affiliation. On March 8th, Carranzistas arrested two Huertistas in Garza's ranks who implicated Garza under interrogation. On the same night, Francisco Villa raided Columbus, New Mexico resulting in Garza's arrest under suspicion of being in league with Villa. Only three days earlier Garza had asked Venustiano Carranza for his support in the Texas insurrection. Garza was released from

detention in less than two weeks thanks to the help of General Jose Maria Zuazua, Pablo Nago and Secretary of the Interior Jesus Acuna.

By May 31st of 1916, Garza set up Plan de San Diego headquarters at the Hotel Independencia in Monterrey and later moved the operation to room 12 of the Hotel del Centro. From the headquarters Garza sent and received correspondence from Basilio Ramos Jr., Gerardo Garza Gonzalez, General Jose Maria Zuazua and Colonel Jose O. Flores. Garza continued to live in the Hotel de Independencia into the early months of 1919.

According to the Bureau of Investigation (now known as the FBI) agent W.A. Wiseman, Luis de la Rosa and Leon Caballo printed the Plan de San Diego in the local newspaper *El Dia* and sent it to Texas for distribution. In 1916 Venustiano Carranza authorized them to recruit men in order to invade Texas close to Reynosa. De la Rosa went to Reynosa while Caballo stayed in Monterrey and tried to organize a body of men on August 15th. Due to a lack of funding and equipment the plan failed and a disagreement between De la Rosa and Caballo prompted them to break relations.

In 1919, Garza was a partner in the Monterrey mercantile firm Salinas y Garza at Calle de Morelos number 108. By April, Garza moved to Calzada la Piedad number 52 in Mexico City where he (now using the alias Lino Caballo) continued to work as a secret agent for Carranza and was officially on his payroll. In 1920 Venustiano Carranza was overthrown and assassinated.

By the 1930s Garza and his family moved to Mexico City where he worked for the government. In 1938 he wrote to the Senate for pension in light of his services and secrecy in order to maintain relations with the United States government. The new Law of Pensions for Civil or Heroic Merit was passed and Garza appealed to then President Lazaro Cardenas with documents in which six retired generals certified Garza's merits. In July of 1952, Garza requested of the government to certify that the signature of Mario Mendez on his letter was real but was informed that the technical equipment was lacking.

Agustín Solis de la Garza died on January 10th, 1970.

Works Cited

Green, Ford. "The Infamous Plan of San Diego." *Old West Winter* (1975): 8-19. Print.

Harris, Charles H., and Louis R. Sadler. *The Plan De San Diego: Tejano Rebellion, Mexican Intrigue*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2013. Print.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Agustín Solís de la Garza collection is composed of personal papers collected from his dealings with the Mexican government and Plan de San Diego revolutionaries before, during and after the Mexican social revolution. Included are letters, telegrams, legal documents, broadsides, receipts, brochures, notes, newspapers, articles, transcriptions, maps, photographs and artifacts dating from 1906 to 1952.

The collection is organized into nine series. The first series is Legal Documents which consists of the Plan de San Diego Manifestos and copies, individual credentials for the movement, attendance sheets of meetings and propaganda drafts for Negro recruits in the United States.

The second series is Correspondence. Main correspondents include Basilio Ramos Jr., General J.O. Flores and General Fortunato Zuazua with subjects including finances, the Plan de San Diego, Leon Caballo's operations in American opposition, military movements, company business, the Hotel Imperial, President Venustiano Carranza, propaganda and property title archives. Items of note include the typewritten testimony of Basilio Ramos Jr. in Brownsville after his arrest, a protest letter against American occupation of the port of Veracruz and telegrams written in secret code. Absent from the series are correspondence from the 1920s, a majority of the 1940s, and anything from 1952 until Agustín Solís de la Garza's death in 1970.

The third series is Financial Documents, which includes handwritten receipts for hotels in Monterrey, restaurants, general expenses and personal debts. The fourth series is Printed Materials and Publications, which contains assorted propaganda broadsides, Plan de San Diego delegate enrollment forms, newspapers and newspaper clippings. The fifth series is Notes, which consists of journal entries and handwritten notes with an item of note being a statement written by Garza, stating his detention location in Mexican federal prison.

Series six is Photographs and has a sepia photo postcard and black and white photograph, with Garza being depicted in both. Series seven is Artifacts and contains a cipher disk for decoding correspondence and a banner or sash reading "LIBERTAD, IGUALDAD E INDEPENDENCIA." The eighth series is Maps and contains one map depicting rail lines of the continental United States with portions of Mexico and Canada.

The ninth series is Ephemera containing printed train schedule clippings, a weapons brochure, legal documents, manifesto misprints, handwritten lists, and article transcriptions, which cover subjects such as the Garza Hermanos y Compania, Union Drug Company and Plan de San Diego. Items of note include a stamp imprint of the Plan de San Diego movement and stamp imprint of Leon Caballo's identification.

The Agustín Solís de la Garza collection is reflective of Garza's personal life, the Plan de San Diego, or Texas revolution, and the social revolution occurring in Mexico from 1910 to 1920. With Garza being a participant in the Plan de San Diego, his papers are a valuable asset to researchers interested in military border conflicts, political revolutionary interests in Mexico and the international border relations in the Rio Grande Valley.

LIST OF SUB-GROUPS, SERIES, AND SUBSERIES

- I. Legal Documents (Manifestos)**
- II. Correspondence**
 - A. Letters**
 - B. Telegrams**
- III. Financial Documents**
- IV. Printed Materials and Publications**
- V. Notes**
- VI. Photographs**
- VII. Artifacts**
- VIII. Maps**
- IX. Ephemera**

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

I. Legal Documents (Manifestos)

The series is comprised of manifestos, personal credentials and legal documents of the Plan de San Diego movement. The copies of the Manifiesto include a carbon copy, onionskin paper copies, a copy edited with reforming requests by Agustín Solís de la Garza, a shorter abridged version in Spanish and English, and an original version including signatures of all the participants of the act. A notable document is a handwritten list of names that documents an increase in attendance throughout meetings of the Congreso Revolucionario. The full Congreso is present in the last meeting and some member names are listed with their aliases.

Another group of documents are the Manifiesto drafts for Negro recruits in the United States of America. The drafts call the black population of the United States to arms in support of the Plan of San Diego.

There are an original and copies of Garza's [Leon Caballo] credentials naming him the General of the revolution's army and conceding to him faculties of war with the power to pay salaries. The original document is signed by the President and Secretary of the movement and dated the 21st of February, 1915.

A final notable document is an outline of acts of patriotism compiled by Garza.

II. Correspondence

A. Letters

Letters are arranged by individual and thereunder chronologically by year. Individuals include correspondence to and from Basilio Ramos Jr. and General J.O. Flores.

Letters exchanged with Basilio Ramos cover the topics of finances and money owed, the failure of the Plan de San Diego, and the operations of the future in regards to American opposition. Items of note include credentials issued by the Provisional Directorate of the Plan of San Diego and typewritten transcriptions of Basilio Ramos' testimony when held under arrest by customs officer E.P. Reynolds in Brownsville. These documents along with a letter from Agustín Solís de la Garza, before Ramos' arrest, are in Spanish as well as English.

The letters from Flores to Garza date from May 31, 1916 to June 16, 1916. All letters are typewritten or handwritten on letterheads from Garza Hermanos and Company. One letter contains two pages with lists of recipients of cash.

Letters arranged chronologically cover the Plan de San Diego, military movements, Francisco Madero, property title archives, business, seeds, automobile maintenance, propaganda, Gringo/Yanque opposition, Francisco Villa, the M. Cirilo y Campania and Refinadora de Aceites Para Combustibles company. Items of note include a letter in 1913 from Torreón with seven signatures protesting American invasion of Veracruz, a letter in 1916 from Guillermo Ortiz to Leon Caballo awaiting military order and a telegraph copy from Leon Caballo to Pablo Nago in Roma.

B. Telegrams

The content of this sub-series includes information about General Fortunato Zuazua, Venustiano Carranza, the Mexican secretary of state, Agustín Solís de la Garza's arrest and merits, Jesus Acuno, M. Cirilio y Compania, Saltillo, Leon Caballo, F. Oberlin, coded messages and the Hotel Imperial. An item of note is a typewritten correspondence, dated April 6th, 1916, from General Fortunato Zuazua to the Minister of Government Jesus Acuna, praising Garza and emphasizing his loyalty and services to his country. Another notable telegraph is written from General Fortunato Zuazua to Garza warning that there is a price for the capture of Leon Caballo, Garza's alias. Coded telegrams are notable with one being completely typewritten and another containing a handwritten coded message.

III. Financial Documents

This series consists of receipts, which are mostly handwritten and are for hotels in Monterrey, restaurants, general expenses and personal debts. Most receipts are either issued to Agustín Solís de la Garza or his alias Leon Caballo. Others mentioned are Luis Ferrino, Major Pedro Hernandez, Colonel Luis Santos, W. Asakwa, G.G. Gonzalez, Pedro M. Gomez, General Jose Cantu, Juastino Gutierrez and Monico Lozano.

IV. Printed Materials and Publications

Printed Materials include delegate enrollment forms, membership statements and six different broadside propaganda publications. Their titles include "Nuestros Hermanos de America," "Exhortacion," "El Dia," and "A Nuestros Compatriotas Refugiados en el Extranjero." One item of note is the "Manifiesto a los pueblos oprimidos de America!!" This manifesto outlines the points of the Plan de San Diego in a broadside form for public dispersal.

Publications consist of full newspaper pages and clippings regarding bandit raids and the Plan de San Diego from Mexican and Texan publications. Their publication dates range from the years 1915 to 1917. Newspapers from *El Tribunal*, published in San Diego, Texas, are one sided. One copy has a handwritten list of the signers of the first Plan de San Diego on the back, and the other has a typewritten carbon copy of the Manifesto to Blacks and a signature of a Negro delegate on the backside as well.

V. Notes

Notes by Garza, handwritten journal entries, and personal notes removed from a small notepad are found in this series. An item of note is a statement written and signed by Agustín Solís de la Garza stating his detention location in federal prison in 1916. The document is on the back of a paper bag and has the seal from the "Oficiala Mayor – Camara de Diputadoes del Congreso de la Union."

VI. Photographs

Two photographs make up this series: a sepia photo postcard and a black and white photograph. The postcard shows Garza in Torreón with an unidentified man in

1912. The photograph has Garza with 18 men and one boy in front of a building with a thatched roof.

VII. Artifacts

There are two artifacts. The first is a code wheel or cipher disk used to decode encrypted telegrams. The second artifact is a hemmed banner or sash reading "LIBERTAD, IGUALIDAD E INDEPENDENCE." The banner is separated from the documents and stored in the artifact storage.

VIII. Map

The Map series contains an 1889 map depicting rail lines, population of states and total land and water surface. The map encompasses the United States with portions of Mexico and Canada.

IX. Ephemera

This series contains train schedule clippings, a Winchester Repeating Arms Company brochure, legal documents, manifesto misprints, a letter, a handwritten receipt and covers subjects such as the Garza Hermanos y Compania and Union Drug Company. Two handwritten lists include a hierarchical list of names with military titles and a list of cities in the United States with individual names. Also found here are articles and transcriptions with titles such as "The Revolution in California," "El Odio de la Raza," and "La Agonia de la Raza." Individuals mentioned are General Fortunato Zuazua, Jose Maria Zuazua, Luis Beltran and Agustin Solis de la Garza. Items of note include a stamp imprint of the Plan de San Diego movement logo and stamp imprint of Leon Caballo's identification with a signature of Leon Caballo.

INDEX TERMS

Persons

Caballo, León.
Carranza, Venustiano, 1859-1920.
Carranza, Venustiano, President, Mexico, 1859-1920.
De la Garza Solis, Agustin, 1881-1970.
Flores, Jose O. (Colonel)
Garza, Agustin, 1881-1970.
Garza Gonzalez, Gerardo.
Méndez, Mario.
Nago, Pablo.
Ramos Jr., Basilio.
S. de la Garza, Agustin, 1881-1970.
Zuazua, Fortunato (General)
Zuazua, Jose Maria (General)

Organizations

Compania Mexicana de Petroleo.
Garza Hermanos and Company.
Garza Hermanos y Compania.
M. Cirilo and Company.
M. Cirilo y Compania.

Subjects

Bandit Wars.
Ciphers.
Ciphers and telegraph codes.
Cipher and telegraph codes--Plan de San Diego.
General Zuazua (Mexico)
General Zuazua (Mexico)--History.
Mexican Revolution, Mexico, 1910-1920
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Telegrams.
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Telegraph codes.

Places

Brownsville (Tex.)--1910-1920.
Brownsville (Tex.)--History.
Edinburg (Tex.)
Edinburg (Tex.)--History.
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AGUSTÍN SOLÍS DE LA GARZA COLLECTION
1906-1952

2009.006
MHMM Archives

Monterrey (Mexico)--History.
Monterrey (Nuevo León, Mexico)--History.
Nuevo Laredo (Mexico)
Nuevo Laredo (Mexico)--History.
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San Diego (Tex.)
San Diego Region (Tex.)--History.
Torreón (Coahuila, Mexico)
Torreón (Coahuila, Mexico)--History.
Veracruz (Veracruz-Llave, Mexico)
Veracruz (Veracruz-Llave, Mexico)--History.
Veracruz (Veracruz-Llave, Mexico)--History--American occupation, 1914