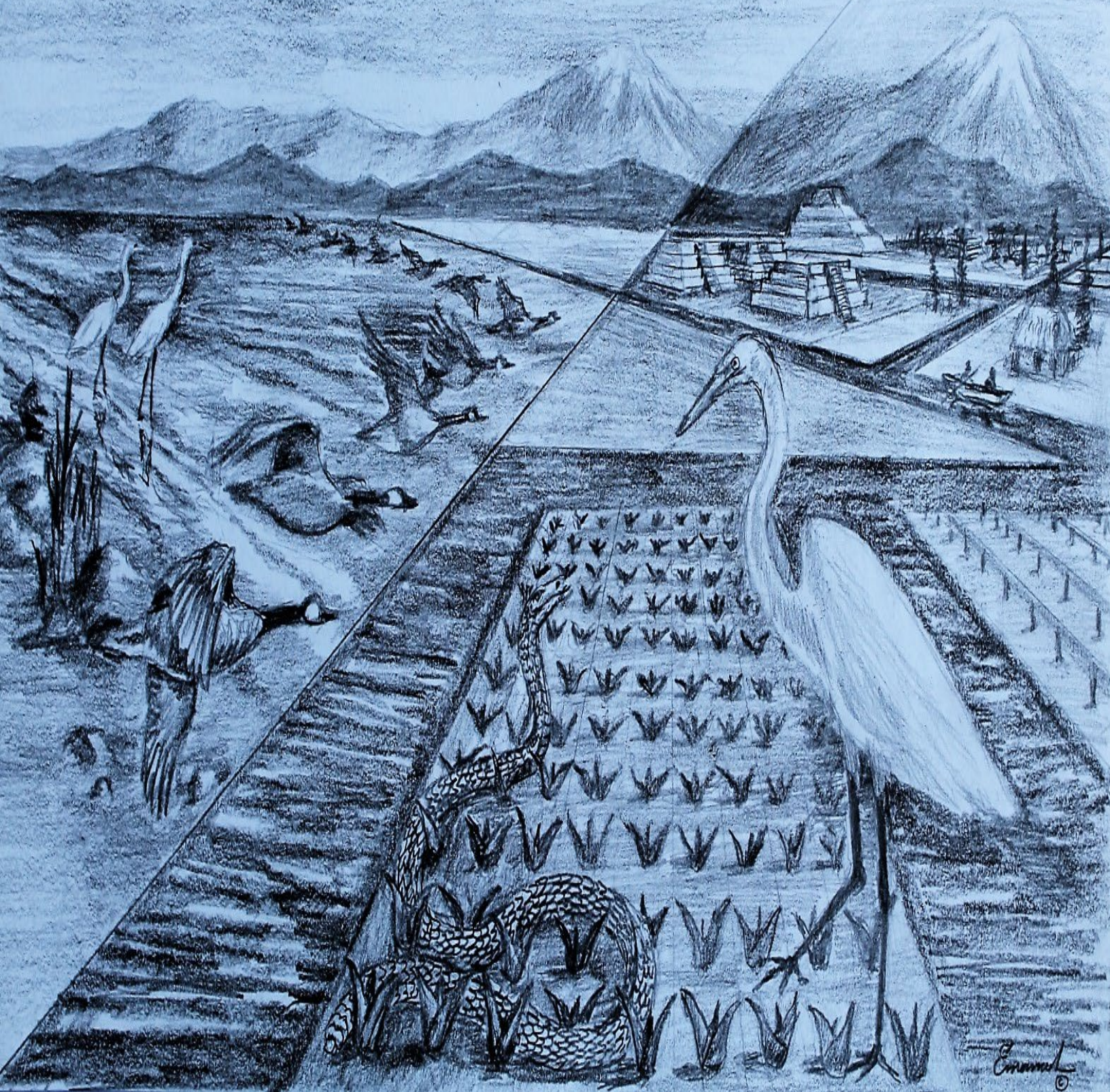


SAINT PATRICK BRIGADE ILLUSTRATED



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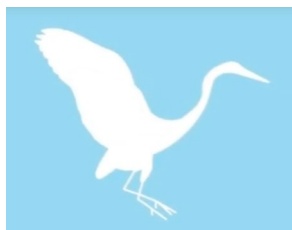
SAINT PATRICK BRIGADE ILLUSTRATED

A PROJECT OF AZTLAN CULTURA
ARTIST COLLABORATIVE
CHIMAYO, NEW MEXICO
2017

ORIGINAL ART BY EMANUEL MARTINEZ

INTERPRETATION BY
DANIEL WELLS SCHRECK

EDITOR: GLORIA CASTILLO



COVER:

THE WILD GEESE, IN IRISH LORE, ARE THE CHILDREN OF LLYR, WHO UPON ARRIVING IN THE VALLEY OF MEXICO SYMBOLICALLY REPRESENT THE SOULS OF IRISH FALLEN WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES FOR THE MEXICAN PATRIA.



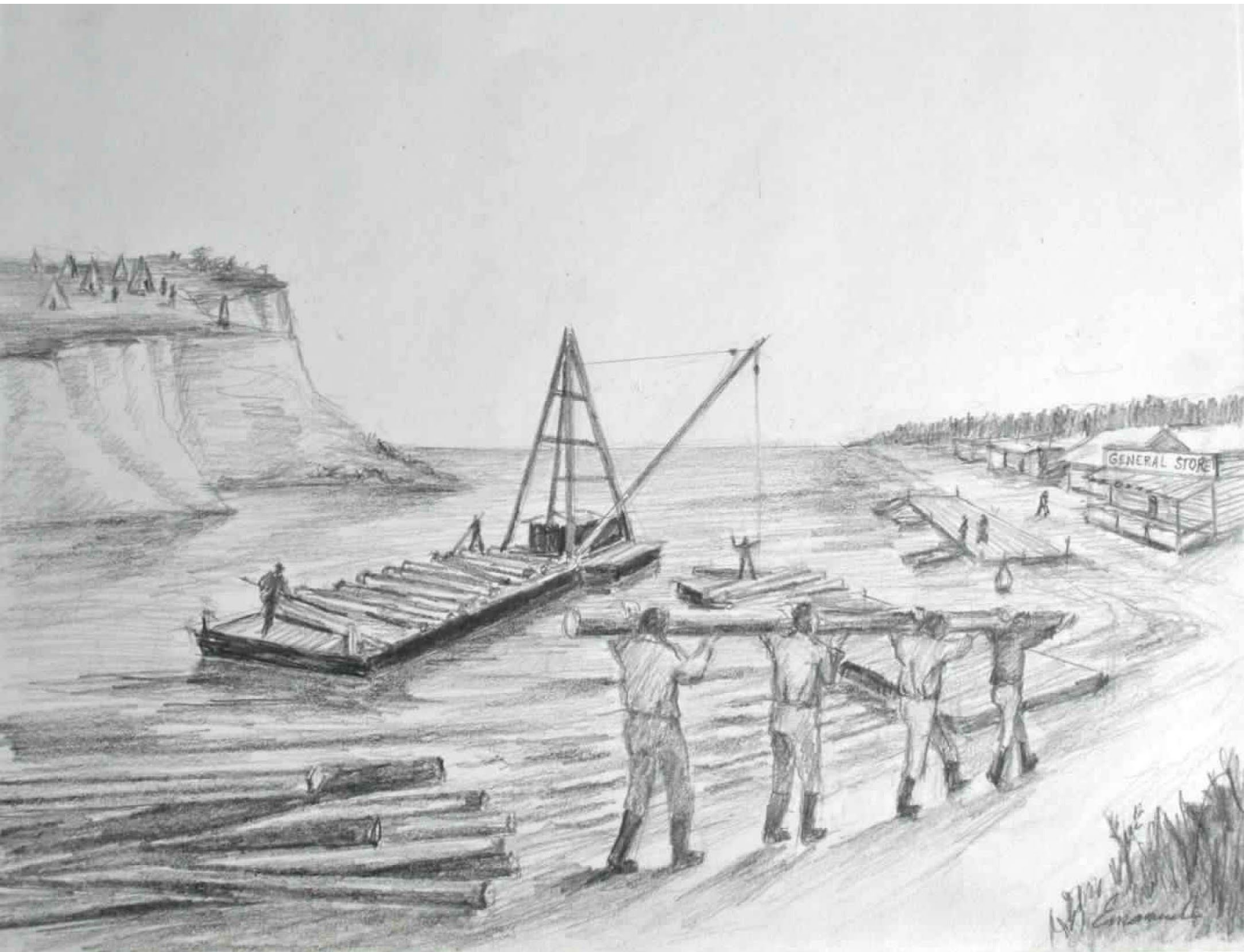
Emanuel Martinez

Born in Denver, Colorado, Emanuel Martinez began his artistic pursuits as a means of escape from an oppressive childhood. As a forerunner of the contemporary mural movement that began in the late 60's, Emanuel worked in the civil rights movement with Cesar Chavez and other prominent leaders. Three of the art works he did in that era are now in the permanent collection of The Museum of American Art at the Smithsonian in Washington D.C.

The work of this prolific, highly versatile artist has won him numerous awards including: the Colorado Governors Award For Excellence in the Arts (1985), the Denver Mayors Award for Excellence in the Arts (1995) and the Denver Civil Rights award in 2001. Andrew Connors, a former curator at the National Museum of states in a published book on Emanuel's work, "As an educator and community activist, Martinez has especially helped young people find ways to make their voices heard. We can all find parts of ourselves, of our dreams, in his artwork because he recreates the triumphs of the individual and at the same time affirms a collective identity in his murals, paintings, prints, and sculptures. As an artist Emanuel acts locally with a significance that is national."



John Reilly is chopping wood in the forest on Mackinac Island off the southern coast of the northern Michigan peninsula after being discharged from the British Army in Canada, circa 1845. He is probably one of the sons of the Wild Geese, those Irish soldiers in Wellington's Army in Spain fighting Joseph Napoleon, circa 1815. They have grown up in an Ireland rife with struggle over agrarian reform.



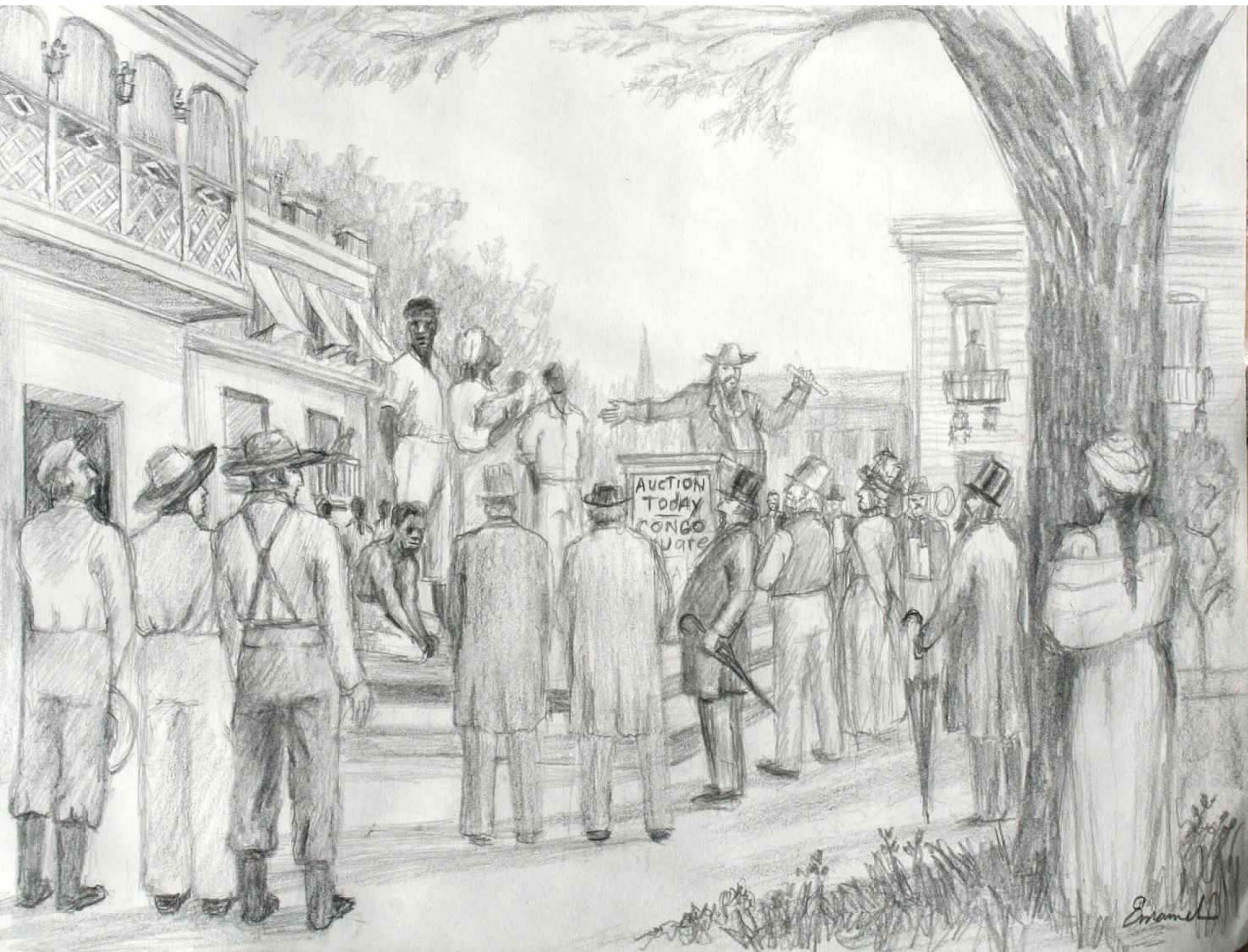
The discharged Irish soldiers are loading wood onto barges for a local Irish businessman. They had become disillusioned with British Army mopping up operations against indigenous nations in Canada. Nights find them grumbling that their prospects are dim. A flyer posted in the tavern recruits for soldiers to join the U.S. Army in Texas.



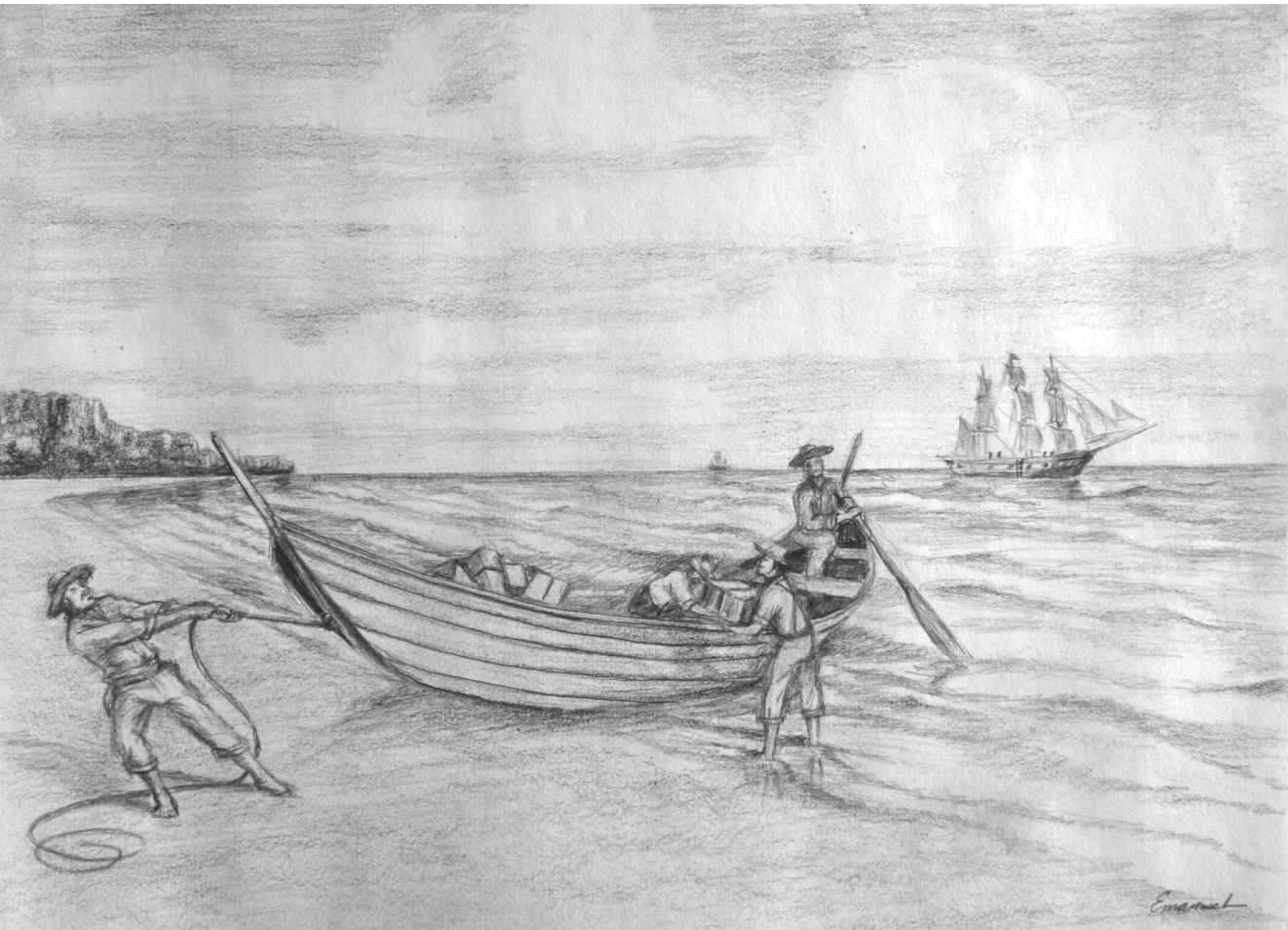
Floating down the Mississippi river on a barge finds John Reilly reading William Lloyd Garrison's "The Liberator," an abolitionist newspaper which runs stories pertinent to the anti-slavery struggle. Soon, the "Great Liberator," of Catholic Emancipation in Ireland, Daniel O'Connell, inveighs against slavery in the American South with the admonition, "Free the African!" Frederick Douglass goes to visit O'Connell in Ireland and raise money for the abolitionist cause.



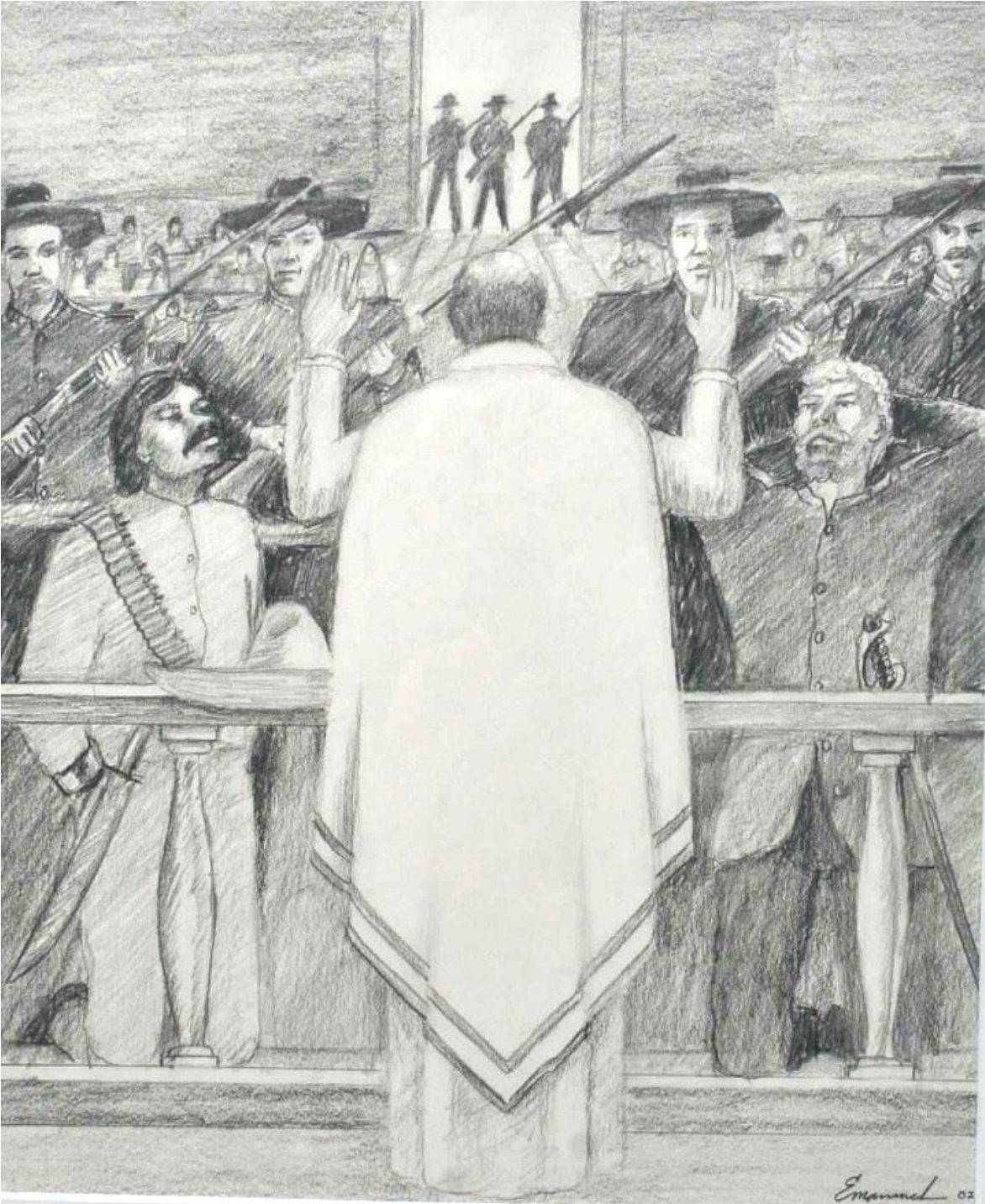
John Reilly and his men muster up at the U.S. Army barracks in New Orleans in front of U.S. "Sam" Grant. The Irish are given their first taste of the antebellum South during a cholera epidemic.



On leave for a few hours, they pass by Congo Square, the slave market. Under the tree, the famous priestess of Vodun, Marie Laveau, is observing who is being bought and sold. Laveau runs the local chapter of the underground railroad. Her husband helps people without documentation develop identity papers.



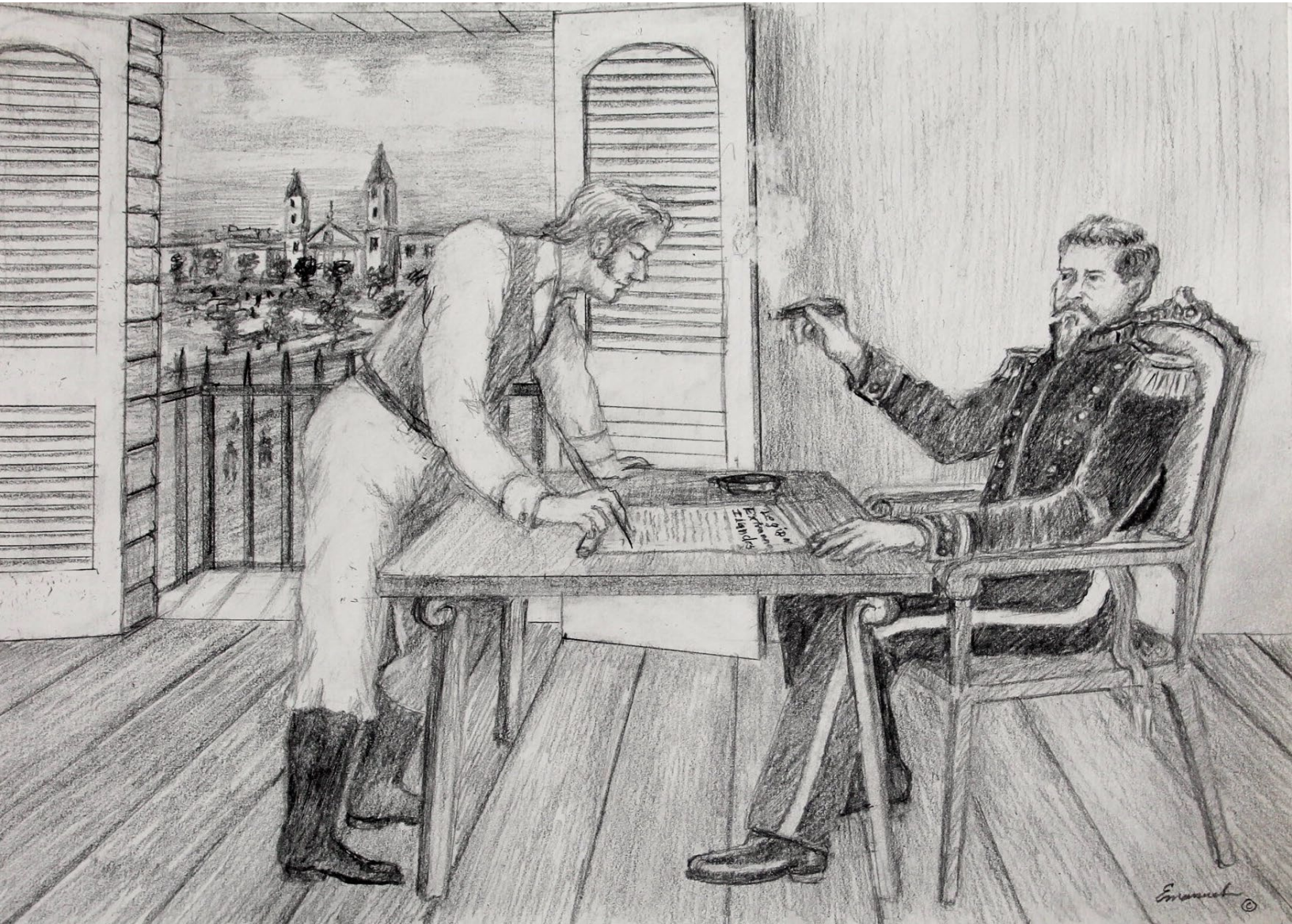
From New Orleans to the Corpus Christi coast of Texas, U.S. troops have arrived in ocean-going sailboats, and are ferried ashore in longboats. Texas has entered the Union as a pro-slave state so that the Southern Plantocracy can utilize slaves in growing cotton, as well as confiscate land from native peoples to expand cattle production.



In southern Texas, after the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, Sergeant John Reilly obtains permission to attend a Catholic church service at a nearby farmstead. From there, he slips away into the night to cross the nearby Rio Bravo, and defect to the Mexican side at Matamoros.



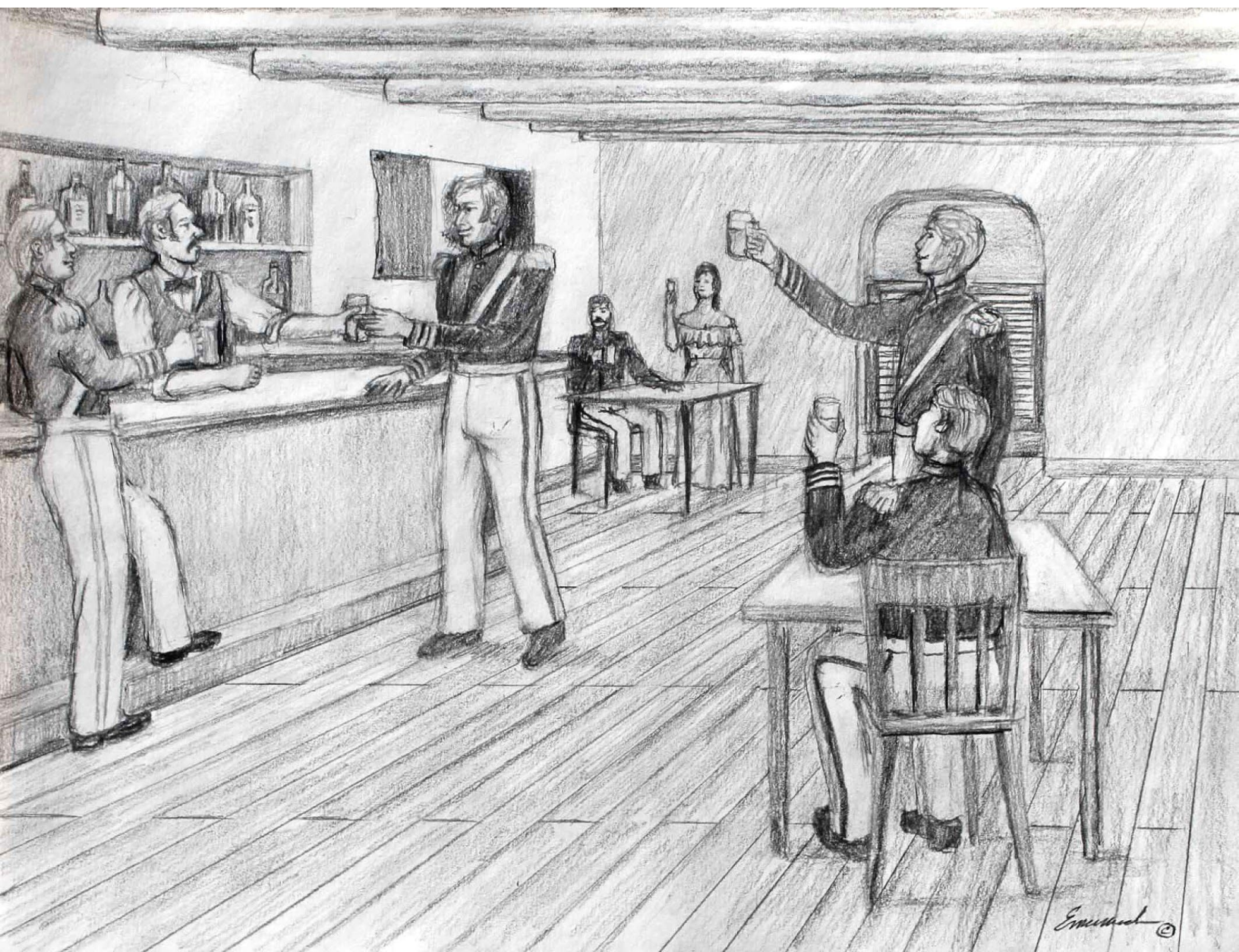
John Reilly, having swum across the Rio Bravo, is assisted by sympathetic Mexican citizens.



John Reilly has found his other compatriots, who defected before he did, gathered at a local watering hole, which houses a hotel, bar, dry goods store, and transportation hub. He is conveyed to the office of commanding General Pedro de Ampudia, where they come up with the idea of forming the Irish Foreign Legion in the Mexican Army.



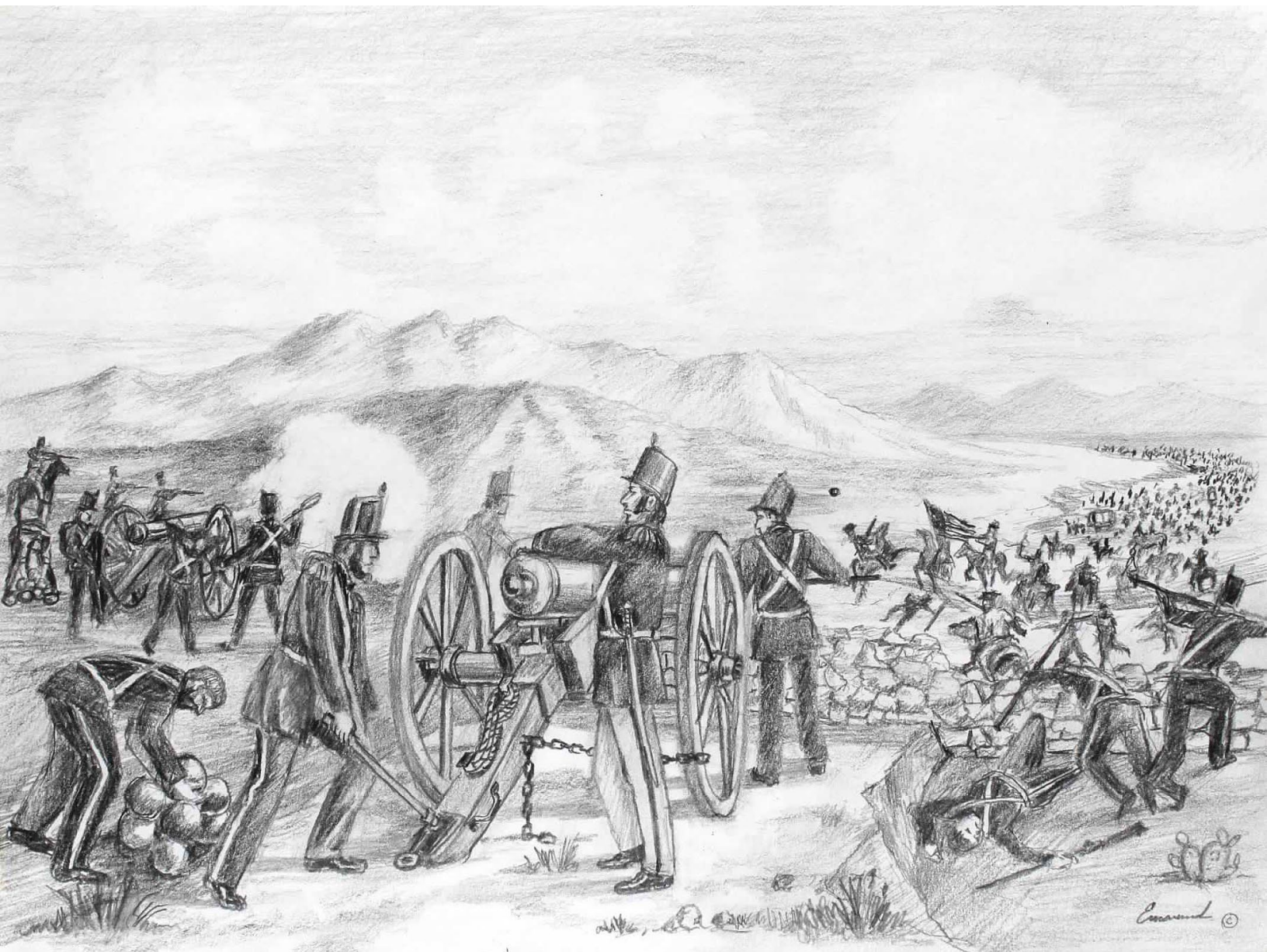
John Reilly and Francis Salton are newly-minted officers of the St. Patrick Brigade, and are, here, envisioned at a celebratory ball with the local senoritas.



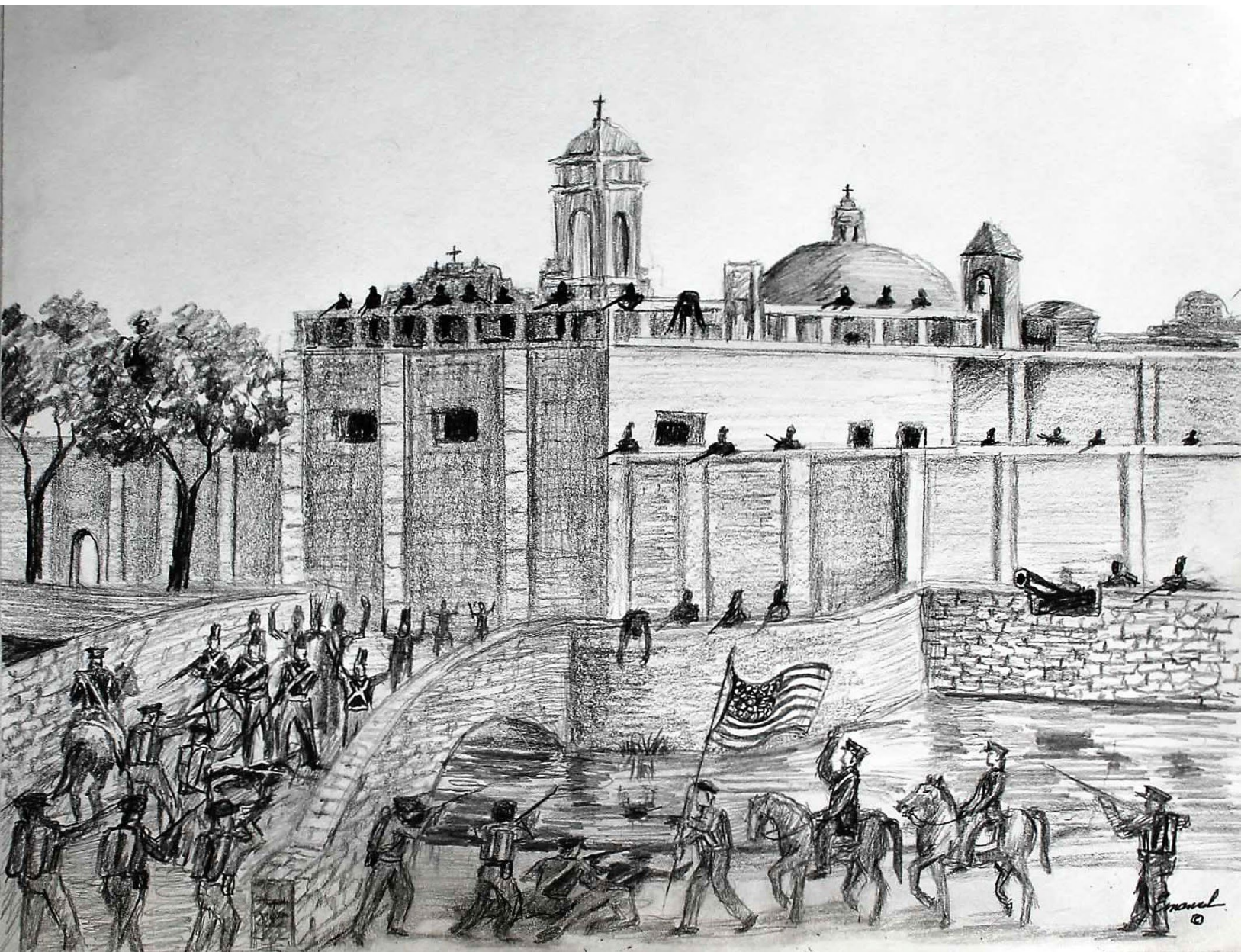
The Irish soldiers are back at the tavern toasting the new Foreign Legion with the bartender, a member of the Fuentes family.



There were atrocities committed by North American forces against the Mexican population. General Taylor had to send in regular Army troops to stop a massacre perpetrated by Arkansas volunteers at Agua Nueva who had scalped some of the civilians in an attempt to make it appear as if native peoples had done it. This, of course, begs the question as to whether it had, in fact, been the British who had introduced the practice into the Americas, and was, subsequently, being used as a counter-insurgency tactic.



At the battle of Monterrey, the Irish have become an artillery battalion, and are holding the American infantry line pinned-down, until General Santa Anna, inexplicably orders a retreat. Some historians assert that if Santa Anna had ordered an attack, the Mexicans would have won the War in the North.



Prior to the battle of Churubusco convent, Robert E. Lee led a night-time expeditionary force across the Pedregal lava flats with a Mexican guide, to be the first U.S. attacker on the convent. During the defense of Churubusco bridge, the Irish defend it with their remaining cannons. Slowly, the North Americans gain the advantage. Santa Anna gives defending General Pedro Anaya the wrong caliber ammunition for his defenders. Reilly is captured.



At the battle of Chapultepec Castle, where the Heroic Cadets, or the Ninos Heroes, are atop the flag tower while the Irish, with one remaining artillery piece, attempt to prevent the Americans from advancing up the hill. Meanwhile, at Tacubaya, within sight of Chapultepec, Colonel William Harney is prepared to hang twelve Irish deserters, including legless Francis O'Connor. Rather than surrender, the Ninos Heroes martyr themselves by jumping to their deaths as the Americans storm the castle. The Mexican flag is brought down and the Stars and Stripes hoisted up. That is the signal for Harney to hang the Irish.

Summary

In the 1640's, Oliver Cromwell promised his radical Puritan allies, Thomas Rainsborough and Gerard Winstanley, that in recognition of their contribution to the Puritan revolution, in overthrowing the Stuarts, he would abolish the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. Since it was too lucrative to abandon, and the Digger's and Levelers were violently suppressed, the slavery endured for another two hundred years, but not without continuing revolts and rebellions against it.

One such incidence occurred in Ireland in 1798 with the United Irish Rising led by Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Two hundred of the Irish rebels were given a choice of either imprisonment in Ireland, or transportation to Jamaica to serve as colonial militia. Many promptly fled into the mountains to join Maroon communities against slavery.

In Belize, Colonel Edward Despard, an Irishman, was serving as colonial governor. He tried to institute a land reform. The merchants complained back to London. He was removed and summoned to the imperial capitol with his Afro-Mayan wife, Catherine. Later, he was involved in a plot to blow up the carriage of crazy King George III. He was subsequently hung in 1803.

In 1805, the greatest slave rebellion in history, at least since Spartacus, occurred in Saint Dominique, or Haiti. This gave encouragement to both the abolitionist movement in the United States as well as Simon Bolivar who was given sanctuary in Haiti and launched his liberation movement for South America from there. Juan O'Leary led Bolivar's Irish brigade. During the Napoleonic Wars, the Wild Geese, or those Irish who served in Wellington's Army in Spain against Joseph Napoleon returned home to an island rife with agrarian reform leading up to Catholic Emancipation led by Daniel O'Connell in the 1840's.

Jobs were still scarce in Ireland, so that many enlisted again in the British Army, this time in Canada in operations against native people there. With the onset of the potato famine in the 1840's, many emigrated to the United States, only to find their options limited, and thus, the U.S. Army found fertile ground for further recruitment.

The art executed by Emanuel Martinez, and conceptually designed by Daniel Schreck, envisions the Irish as they move through both U.S. and Mexican history, as well as the confluence of the two. One of the historical questions brought up by the research is the influence of abolitionist forces within the Mexican Army. While Father Hidalgo, with his Grito de Dolores, had announced the abolition of slavery in Mexico, and was able to enforce it in those areas controlled by his rebel Army, once they were defeated, slavery returned. The same pattern occurred under Padre Morelos. It took an armed rebel movement led by Vicente Guerrero and Juan Alvarez, both from Guerrero state, named after its liberator, to assume the Presidency of Mexico in 1829, and pass legislation to abolish human bondage.

Guerrero was assassinated two years later by the criollo elite for his trouble, proving the adage, "No good deed goes unpunished." Guerrero's "pardo" army was comprised of soldier's of Afro-indigenous descent. Their sons may have very well seen action in the "War of the Northern Intervention, the War of the Northern Cession, or the U.S.-Mexico War of 1847."

General Santa Anna had been Commandant of the San Juan de Ulloa fortress in Veracruz and oversaw many Afro-Mexican troops from the "Jarocho" coast. They, too, would have been in his Army and its march north when Santa Anna entered the fight at the battle of Buena Vista. Generally speaking, the U.S.-Mexico War is considered by North American historians as being the first imperialist war. This however, has come into question more recently with Native American historians like "Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz," pointing out that settler operations against native nations began with the pilgrims' landing at Plymouth Rock.

Since the Irish soldiers had already been politicized by their upbringings in Ireland, and wanted to be discharged from the British Army in Canada, because of having to participate in actions against native people there, their recourse was, again, to be immigrants to another country, this time, the U.S. From the frying pan, they were right back in the fire given the lack of job opportunities, and therefore, enlisted in the U.S. Army destined for the war in Texas. Since Texas had entered the Union as a pro-slave state, and Daniel O'Connell had inveighed against the Southern Plantocracy, many found themselves, as a matter of conscience, in an untenable position.

Mexico had, in fact, abolished slavery some thirty-four years before Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Emancipation in 1863. In the final analysis, the U.S. used the War against Mexico as a pretext to ethnically cleanse the four thousand Mexican settlers in a lightly-populated Tejas y Coahuila, as well as the Comanches led by Quanah Parker and gain the territory as a big piece of real estate for Manifest Destiny.



Daniel Wells Schreck "How It Began"

"The story of the St. Patrick Brigade involves honoring the deeds of those who fought to oppose imperialism, settler-colonialism, and the war to expropriate native land. Given the life and times of the Irish soldiers, they decided to support Mexico. As I noted in the narrative in the St. Patrick Brigade video, the United States used the U.S. - Mexico war as a pretext to clear out both Mexican settlers in Texas for both cotton production for the Southern Plantocracy, and cattle grazing, as well as commit genocide against native peoples.

I, initially, encountered this history when talking to "Nane" Alejandrez, executive director of Barrios Unidos of Santa Cruz, California, telling him about my family history, on my father's side, as Irish-Mexican's from Texas and Matamoros, Mexico. He told me I should go and talk to Chris Matthews, an Irish-American publican at Poet and Patriot Bar in Santa Cruz who had authored the play, "A Flag to Fly," about the fall of Chapultepec

Castle to U.S. forces in 1847, where the Irish "deserters" were hung at Tacubaya by Colonel William Harney. Chris' bar exhibited paraphernalia on the walls, including a picture of a plaque in San Jacinto Plaza in San Angel in Mexico City commemorating the Irish fallen, and a poster of the performance of his play at the Listowel Literary Fair in Ireland. A mural, outside, depicted scenes of the Irish in the Mexican War. Steve Bare, a friend of Chris', was involved in a performance of the play at UC Santa Cruz. We gave Chris' widow a present of the St. Patrick Brigade flag, a description of which was found in a letter by their leader, John Reilly, by the research team in Mexico at the Mexican military archives.

I had gone to the Guadalajara Book Fair in 2010. I attended a presentation given by Armando Ruiz Aguilar who had compiled a book that included letters between Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata. On his panel, participants included Tomas Villa and Edgar Zapata, a grandson, and grandnephew, respectively. Although I didn't know them, when I got to Mexico City, and checked in with my cousin's husband, Andy Correa, now our project manager, he informed me that Armando and Tomas were well-known to him and close colleagues. I told Andy that we had to go to Don Celes street, where the antiquarian bookstores were located, near the Zocalo, to find a copy of Patricia Bustmamante Cox's 1954 novel, the St. Patrick Brigade. In the first shop, I found a first edition. This kick-started the project.

In June of 2015, Nane, and Juan Jose Negrete, a Barrios Unidos board member, helped me organize a showing of our video, the fifty-four minute Spanish version, as a memorial for Chris at the Veterans Hall in downtown Santa Cruz. Danny Sheehan, the attorney, spoke on the issue of why the Irish were in solidarity with the Mexicans. Crooked Road performed, along with other bands.

More recently, we have finished our "Aztlán Cultura Artist Collaborative" webpage where the work of many of our current participants can be found."