

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas history

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On this day in 1805, a royal order commanded the viceroy of Mexico to compile all pertinent data concerning the true boundary between Texas and Louisiana.

Fray Melchor de Talamantes was appointed the head of the historical commission, beginning work in 1807, but was removed a year later for political reasons and replaced by José Antonio Pichardo. Pichardo worked for four years, "uninterruptedly night and day, without even leaving [his] room," to complete the monumental (3,000 pages) treatise *On the Limits of Louisiana and Texas* (1812).

The work was enthusiastically praised by the advisors of the viceroy, who granted him a pension of 100 pesos a month for life and recommended his appointment as canon of the Cathedral of Mexico. The sexagenarian Pichardo, however, sick with gout and suffering from rheumatism, died just a few months after the completion of his report, before this high honor could be conferred.

Pichardo's treatise was translated into English and edited by Charles W. Hackett and published in four volumes by the University of Texas Press in the 1930s and 1940s.