

Translated by Greg Gorsuch
Volume 2 Part 10

SECOND SIEGE OF ZARAGOZA,

BY THE FRENCH ARMY OF ARAGON,
IN 1808 AND 1809.

30th NIGHT, of 27 to 28 January.

Attack on the right. Two hundred workers and eighty-one sappers. At nightfall, two six-inch mortars were lowered into the courtyard of the isolated Goicoechea oil mill. These mortars successfully dropped bombs on the Convent of Saint Mónica and on the flank battery established by the enemy in the upper garden of the convent. A section of trench was opened to the right of the oil mill, leading to the isolated house of Gonzales. A new attack was launched against this house, which we entered, but which we were then forced to evacuate after putting a dozen men out of action, among them Captain Reggio of the miners, who was killed, as well as a Polish officer.

We were still only occupying the ground floor and first floor of the houses on Calle Pabostria, neglecting to establish ourselves on the upper floors. The enemy was then able to return via the rooftops to the attics of these houses and descend upon us unexpectedly via the stairwells. They thus drove us from one house, where we suffered two casualties. We were therefore forced to occupy all the floors, and even the roofs of the houses bordering those of the enemy. Communications were improved, and the gallery containing the two explosive mines that the Spanish had set in motion at the time of the assault was completely emptied. However, as it opened under fire from the flank battery of Santa Mónica into the lower garden adjoining the town's oil mill, it had to be temporarily closed.

Attack on the center. The approaches to the Santa Engracia square were entrenched, and two six-inch mortars were positioned there. The parapet of the enemy entrenchment between Santa Engracia and the Huebra bridge was reversed. The mortar batteries, positioned behind the third parallel, continued to bombard the city to prevent the enemy from advancing on the districts we occupied.

General Lacoste ordered the work on the feigned attack on the castle to cease and employed the engineering officers, sappers, and laborers stationed there to fortify the Trinitarian convent. They began to crenellate the convent walls; they sealed the doors and windows on the city side with sandbags, cut an opening in the opposite wall, and attempted to construct a communication trench along the rampart to reach it. This trench, proving very difficult to defend, was

subsequently abandoned. Shortly before daybreak, the Spanish attempted to retake the convent; but, met with a fierce volley of gunfire, they were forced to withdraw. Another attack took place simultaneously against the convent of Santa Engracia and was also repelled.

DAY of 28 January.

The breach begun in the section of the city wall that serves as a boundary for the upper garden of Santa Mónica had not been attacked at the same time as the others because it was impassable. This breach, becoming essential to outflanking the enemy's entrenchment in this garden, prompted the artillery to direct fire from Battery No. 13 towards it once more. Simultaneously, they began a new breach further to the right, at the Augustinian convent; but the wall, being abutted in this section by relieving arches, each pier of which had to be successively battered, made it impossible to create this new breach. Battery No. 14 counter-battered the enemy guns that they had retained at the head of the Tanneries suburb, at the confluence of the Huebra River.

At the request of General Lacoste, trench duty was organized so that the regiment on guard duty for each attack also provided the laborers¹. A second regiment was held in reserve. The guard relief time was also set at six o'clock in the morning, instead of six o'clock in the evening, so that officers and soldiers could reconnoiter the positions they were to defend during the day. For each attack, the sapper companies had to provide about sixty men, and the mining companies ten; five or six engineering officers were also employed, and this number was barely sufficient to oversee the details of the numerous works, direct the troops in the assaults, and navigate the maze of communications that grew more complex every day due to the progress of our trenches.

With the attack on the right, we managed to capture several houses in the area between Pabostria Street and the wall to the left of the town's oil mill, allowing us to advance along Gato Street (Calle Gato). The large house facing this street was fiercely contested; and after we had occupied it, the enemy returned to attack us there and threw many grenades. Since the previous day, we had occupied a considerable number of houses to the right of Pabostria Street, on the island between Nueva Street and Gato Street. On the morning of the 28th, all communication with these houses was cut off by enemy fire as they advanced along Pabostria Street, both from Quemada Street on the left and from a small house adjoining the Solar de Cera on the right, where the enemy had opened loopholes. To re-establish communication, a double-sapping trench was opened in Pabostria Street. Around noon, the enemy appeared in force behind the traverse that cut across Gato Street and attempted to cross it to attack us. But a few shots, fired from the house we occupied on the rampart extending from that street, brought down an officer whose bravery roused the Spaniards, which prompted them to withdraw. The day was a continuous battle. We had seventeen men killed and thirty wounded, including two officers.

During the attack on the center, we tried in vain to gain ground in front of Santa Engracia Square. On the 27th and 28th, we lost seventy-eight men killed and two hundred and seventy-eight wounded in this attack.

¹ See supporting documents, no. 20.

At the Trinitarian convent, the workers were harassed all morning by gunfire coming from the neighboring houses. Captain Barthélemy of the engineers was killed at a battlement. In two days, the engineers lost six officers and thirty-eight non-commissioned officers or soldiers.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, the Trinitarian convent was attacked again. Panic gripped the two battalions of the One Hundred Seventeenth occupying it, causing great confusion. General Rostollant was wounded, and the enemy was already entering the convent when Colonel Robert of the One Hundred-Seventeenth rushed in, restored order by his presence, and repelled the Spaniards. In both this attack and the one the previous night, we suffered seventeen men killed and fifty-seven wounded.

The city was in a state of great agitation. Palafox toured the threatened districts and, in the evening, had it proclaimed that the French had lost more than six thousand men. The enthusiastic crowd filled the air with cries of joy. However, the military leaders received orders to redouble their efforts and vigilance, to secure the city against a surprise attack, and to defend the ground inch by inch. By this strategy, Palafox hoped to exhaust the French army and give his two brothers, who were in Catalonia, time to gather forces to come to his aid. He issued a new proclamation calling the entire population to arms².

31st NIGHT, of 28 to 29 January.

Attack on the right. Two hundred workers and eighty-four sappers or miners improved communications and barricades in the houses we occupied in the town. Two new six-inch mortars were placed behind the isolated oil mill, to fire on the convent of Saint Mónica and that of the Augustinians. Battery No. 13 had succeeded not only in making a passable breach in the town wall in the upper garden of the convent, but also in ruining the corner and gable of the Saint Mónica building, which stood on that wall itself. The cannonballs, and the fragments of stone they sent flying, forced the Spaniards to retreat to the other end of the garden, where Villacampa had a parapet built at the foot of the convent's arcades using crates filled with earth. This parapet, which faced the breach, was a new obstacle to overcome in order to enter the convent; but the enemy had been forced to abandon the entrenchment, armed with two cannons, which flanked the lower garden adjoining the town's oil mill, where we had not yet been able to advance. They repositioned these two cannons at the new breach they had made in Palomar Street. For our part, we had fifteen light infantry reconnoiter the breach at Santa Mónica, who were able to penetrate the building overlooking the rampart to the right of this breach; but there, lacking support, they had to retreat. One of them was wounded.

Attack on the center. The two clusters of houses located to the right and left of Santa Engracia Street, at its opening onto the square of the same name, were attacked. The ditch in the rampart between the Torre del Pino and the Ponte de la Huebra was filled in, and an opening was made to allow artillery to enter the town.

The Trinitarian convent was finally barricaded, with a sandbag buttress erected behind the main church gate. To achieve this, an external communication route was constructed, replacing the

² See supporting documents, no. 21.

rampart, which had become too difficult to defend. The garrison at this post was reduced to one hundred men, commanded by a battalion commander.

DAY of 29 January.

Attack on the right. Fifty laborers and seventy-five sappers or miners. Communications were improved. The attack extended to the left into the houses on Pabostria Street, which border the enclosure. Five were occupied without a fight; but several soldiers were killed or wounded by imprudently appearing at the windows. The breach in the Convent of Saint Mónica having been found passable in the previous day's attempt, it was assaulted by ninety Poles of the Second Vistula Regiment, preceded by ten sappers. This troop scaled it and reached the upper garden as far as the parapet that the enemy had built opposite, at the foot of the convent's arcades. They attacked this parapet, but half-heartedly. The enemy then opened fire extremely heavily, both from the parapet and from the first-floor gallery, from where they simultaneously hurled a hail of stones and grenades. The attackers withdrew, having suffered four wounded.

Within twenty-four hours, we had six men killed and nine wounded.

Attack on the center. We captured a few more houses on the right side of Santa Engracia Street; but on the left side, we were unable to cross the small street that leads into Santa Engracia Street and immediately precedes Las Recogidas Street. A sergeant of miners and several soldiers were wounded. The mortars of Battery No. 5 were moved to Battery No. 20.

The section of communication begun the previous day to reach the Trinitarian convent was improved. We had one man killed and three wounded.

32nd NIGHT, of 29 to 30 January.

Attack on the right. Fifty workers and seventy-five sappers or miners. An attempt was made to construct a lodgment at the top of the breach in the upper garden of Santa Mónica, but enemy fire prevented its execution. The undermine was then tied down to the left of this breach in order to enlarge it. A new trench was added extending from the one that existed to the right of the Goicoechea oil mill. This attack was quite isolated and protected only by flanking fire from the oil mill; nevertheless, the enemy did nothing on that side. It was decided to seize the small house adjoining the Solar de Cera in order to extend to the right and outflank the Santa Monica convent, where the Spaniards were putting up fierce resistance. Consequently, the undermine was tied down at the foot of this house on the side facing the rampart, and, despite a few grenades thrown from above, a few pounds of gunpowder were managed to be lodged in the wall, creating a breach. But, when the assault was about to begin, it was discovered that the interior floor of the house was higher than the exterior floor, and that the breach opened into a shaft which completely blocked the passage: it was then necessary to position the undermine a few meters further on.

Within twenty-four hours, we had six men killed and nine wounded.

Attack on the center. The houses captured during the day on the right side of Santa Engracia Street were entrenched, and communication lines were established there. On the left side, we crossed the small street that had halted us the previous day and occupied the ground floor and cellar of a house on the opposite island. The enemy had cut the staircase leading to the upper floors and were positioned in the neighboring houses. The sappers created crenellations in the partition walls to dislodge the Spaniards, but they breached these crenellations before our soldiers, so they had to be closed. We suffered one miner killed and one wounded.

The communication line begun outside the walls was completed, leading to the Trinitarian convent.

DAY of 30 January.

Attack on the right. We took several more houses on the left side of Pabostria Street, as we approached the Quemada Gate. Sergeant Thomas, having personally killed three Spaniards in these houses, saw the others flee. At noon, the miner finished the latest explosive charge at the small house adjoining the Solar de Cera. The explosion only opened a barely passable breach, still in the raised terrace of that house. However, around three o'clock in the afternoon, after some further work, Lieutenant Morlet of the engineers, followed by twelve men, scaled the breach with a ladder, entered the house, where he killed a Spaniard with his sword, and advanced to the right along Diezma Street, threatening to outflank the defenders of the Convent of Saint Mónica. We were then able to occupy the lower garden, adjoining the town's oil mill. The Spanish laid heavy fire on the houses surrounding the Plaza de las Héras de San Agustín, particularly on a breach made at the entrance to Calle del Pozo, and one of our sappers was killed.

Immediately after this attack, one hundred elite men of the Fourteenth Line Infantry Regiment, commanded by Captain Hardi and preceded by ten sappers, advanced swiftly on the breach in the upper garden of Santa Mónica, crossed the parapet, and entered the convent, despite the fire from the crenellations in the cloister wall behind the arcades. The enemy initially retreated into the church. Villacampa, who was in command there, having been wounded, the officer who replaced him, fearing to be outflanked on his right by the main door of the church, located on the side of Lieutenant Morlet's attack, decided to abandon the church, leaving only a small detachment, which itself soon disappeared through an opening made in the wall near the high altar.

Captain Hardi, at the head of his column, tried in vain to emerge from the church through the main door under enemy fire. The sappers then closed this door and began to entrench themselves. A few moments later, the enemy emerged on our right through the Tanneries suburb to retake the convent; but they were repelled by a platoon positioned at the foot of the breach and by fire from the entrenched post of the isolated churchyard³. The occupation of the Sainte-Mónica convent was very useful to us in supporting our right flank; so that, to protect our advance, we had a kind of unbroken parallel line from the convent to the Quemada Gate, where the last three houses were still holding out. We had thirty men put out of action, including two sappers and a miner.

³ See supporting documents, no. 22.

Attack on the center. Our sappers, unable to break out of the ground floor they occupied in the house to the left of Santa Engracia Street, Major Breuille of the engineers had five or six barrels of gunpowder placed in the cellar of this house to blow it up. The entrance was blocked with wood and earth, then set on fire. The explosion destroyed six houses, burying a considerable number of Spaniards beneath their ruins. The debris, hurled into the air, had not yet settled when our sappers and grenadiers, taking advantage of the rising cloud of dust and smoke, rushed through the rubble to seize the neighboring houses; but, finding themselves exposed and surrounded on all sides, they were forced to retreat. This operation, therefore, did not achieve the success that had been expected. It made us realize the drawback of using too much gunpowder; and, from that moment on, the charge in the blasting chambers was adjusted so as to only open or shake the houses, allowing us to pass through them under cover.

The inhabitants, fearing that we might try to expand from the Trinitarian convent into the Portillo district, prompted Baron de Warsage, who commanded that side, to prepare an attack to retake the convent. He ordered a battery to breach the wall facing the castle, and at three o'clock in the afternoon, the breach appearing passable, he ordered the assault. The intrepid Iago Sas and several other priests advanced at the head of a multitude of soldiers and peasants, while the rooftops of the neighboring houses filled with skirmishers. The attackers boldly reached the foot of the breach and the church door, which they broke down with axes; but the sandbag buttress behind the door stopped them. They then brought up a cannon by hand to remove this obstacle. Despite this fierce attack, the light infantry of the Fifth Light Infantry, who formed the convent's guard, reinforced by laborers and sappers, put up such a good fight that the enemy was forced to retreat, leaving a large number of dead on the field, including two officers and a monk. We had seven men out of action, including two sappers⁴.

Our total losses in the twenty-four hours were eleven men killed and forty-nine wounded.

To maintain the courage that the inhabitants, men and women, had shown that day, Palafox addressed two proclamations to them⁵. Although these productions may seem ridiculous, and reflect the haste with which they were conceived, they nonetheless bear the imprint of the national character and are useful to consult for understanding the mechanisms that Spanish leaders employed to influence the masses and make them endure all the hardships that afflicted them.

The plan of General Lacoste for conducting the attacks was to advance as far as the Coso River, proceeding on the right along Palomar and Quemada streets, and through the center along Santa Engracia Street, hoping that the area of the city between these two directions, where there were many gardens, would then fall without much resistance. The attack on the right seemed particularly important to him because he still held onto the idea he had had from the beginning of the siege: to seize the suburb on the left bank of the Ebro, in order to take the city from the rear, bombard the houses along the quayside, and then more easily advance the siege routes to the Church of Our Lady of the Pilar, which, given the inhabitants' state of mind, could be considered the heart of the defense. The attack on the suburb had been delayed because of the presence of the bands that, from the start of the siege, had harassed the camps of division of Gazan; but with

⁴ See supporting documents, no. 23,244

⁵ See supporting documents, nos. 24 and 25.

the external enemy defeated, and Suchet's division covering the roads on the Catalan side, nothing prevented it from being undertaken; Marshal Lannes gave orders accordingly.

By 27 January, the Spanish had been driven from the large factory they occupied on the road to Barcelona, nine hundred meters from the Convent of Jesus. They had also been forced to withdraw from their positions at the mouth of the Gállego River, and our troops had seized several dikes, which served as the starting point for the approaches. Two artillery companies, a detachment of sappers, and twenty siege guns were sent to the left bank, and Colonel Dode, commander of the engineers in the Fifth Corps, made all the necessary preparations for opening the trench. Two boats that were on the Ebro at El Burgo were brought upstream to the mouth of the Gállego and used to establish a pontoon bridge downstream from the town to facilitate communication between the districts.

33rd NIGHT, of 30 to 31 January.

Attack on the right. Communications were established in the houses captured during the day, and their doors and windows were barricaded. Around seven o'clock in the evening, the enemy attacked the house to the left of the Convent of Santa Mónica, on the street of the Diezma, but was repelled.

Attack on the center. Several houses on the right side of Santa Engracia Street were captured and entrenched. At the Trinitarian Convent, the sandbag buttress behind the church door was rebuilt, and another was constructed behind the breach recently opened by the enemy.

DAY of 31 January.

Attack on the right. Two more houses along the wall were taken on Pabostria Street. The third, near the Quemada Gate, was defended all day by the Spanish with such ferocity that, despite being bombarded by fire from Battery No. 16, we were unable to capture it. We suffered two killed and nine wounded, including a sapper. On the other side of the street, we made more progress; and, after crossing Calle del Turco, we advanced as far as the houses we occupied along the wall.

We spread out across the entire island between Calle de Alcalá and Calle del Pozo, starting from a house we had occupied since the previous day, on the left side of Calle de la Diezma, opposite the Solar de Cera. This facilitated the attack on the other island, located to the left between Calle de Alcalá and Calle Nueva. Captain Foucauld of the engineers and five men were wounded there. Towards evening, the courtyard wall of the Diezma building, located on the other side of the street of the same name, was breached with an explosive. The enemy was driven out and taken up positions in this building.

Villacampa, who had been promoted to brigadier by Palafox, had returned to the post occupied by the Huesca Volunteers beyond the convent of Santa Monica. He and his troops had just been relieved by the Extremadura Regiment when our soldiers, who were occupying the church of Santa Monica, heard knocking in a chapel in the side aisles of the nave near the door, coming from the other side of the wall separating them from the enemy. They thought it was miners

working; the officers, becoming concerned, sent word to Battalion Commander Haxo of the engineers. He immediately went to the scene; and, although he thought the enemy only intended to breach the battlements to fire into the church, he had a hundred pounds of gunpowder placed against the wall, upon which sandbags and planks were laid, all held firmly in place by buttresses braced against the chapel's vault. Towards evening, this explosive mine was set alight, and the explosion breached the wall, killing eight Spaniards who were working behind it. Through this breach, they entered the adjacent houses, thus occupying the entire island between Palomar Street and the Augustinian church.

As the enemy was making preparations to defend the breach opened in the city wall by Battery No. 13 within the Augustinian convent, a mine was laid in the courtyard separating the convent church from the houses on Palomar Street adjacent to Santa Mónica. This work was carried out in a location hidden from the enemy's view and presented no difficulties.

Attack on the center. On the right side of Santa Engracia Street, at the level of Ballesta Street, several houses were entered after being breached by sapping a small street that separated them from the main line. On the left side, the enemy found themselves in the middle of an island of houses that they stubbornly defended. To drive them out, two hundred pounds of gunpowder were placed in a ground-floor room and set alight. The explosion destroyed five houses and buried many Spaniards under the rubble.

The rest of the island was seized, and a line was begun under the street of Las Recogidas to attack the houses that the enemy strongly occupied on the opposite side. Lieutenant Cartron of the engineers was mortally wounded.

The raised earthworks at the Trinitarian convent were improved; crenellations were cut to flank the church gate, and the communication lines were completed.

34th NIGHT, of 31 January to 1 February.

Attack on the right. Sixty sappers, assisted by some infantry workers, established communication lines through the houses. Mining continued at the Augustinian church. We had four men killed and twenty-five wounded.

Attack on the center. Communication lines were established in the houses taken during the day. A trench was opened to the left of the Trinitarian convent using a sape volante, where the artillery began work on Battery No. 21, consisting of three 24-pounder guns and an eight-inch howitzer, to bombard the castle. A new Battery No. 22, with two six-inch howitzers, was also started in front of the Casa-Roja on the road to Madrid via Calatayud, to support the left flank of the attacks. We suffered five men killed and twenty-five wounded.

Attack on the suburb. A thousand workers and a detachment of sappers, protected by a battalion, opened a first parallel, approximately three hundred and sixty meters long, on the left bank of the Ebro, six hundred meters from the Convent of Jesus. This parallel abutted its right flank against a large enclosure whose wall was crenellated. They advanced through three zigzag trenches to reach a point behind an undefended dike, where the second parallel began. This operation

encountered no other obstacle than a few musket shots fired sporadically from a hovel located in front of our right flank.

DAY of the 1st February.

Attack on the right. The explosive mine, prepared under the side wall of the Augustinian church and loaded with 200 pounds of gunpowder, was detonated at five o'clock in the morning. The breach opened by the explosion was found to correspond to the sacristy, and ladders were needed to descend into it. The grenadiers of the Forty-Fourth passed through the breach and formed up in the church behind the high altar. The Spaniards, who had expected the convent to be attacked through the breach made in the outer wall by Battery No. 13, were taken by surprise. At first, they offered only weak resistance; but soon they occupied the nave galleries and the organ loft, located above the main entrance of the church and leading to the bell tower staircase. From there, they opened a fierce exchange of fire. Nevertheless, our troops managed to drive them out, not only from the church, but also from all the numerous buildings of the convent, by turning the cuts and crossbeams into wool sacks that lay at every step in the corridors. Some peasants had remained in the bell tower, from where they were throwing grenades into the Place Saint-Augustin. These men found themselves without a place to retreat, since we held the foot of the bell tower steps, when their compatriots emerged from Calle de los Frailes to retake the church. This attempt failed, but it facilitated the retreat of those in the bell tower.

To the left of the attack, we seized the last house on the city wall, at the junction of Calle Pabostria and Calle Quemada. Several companies of the Forty-Fourth advanced recklessly along this latter street as far as the Orphanage, located on the Coso River, and some men even reached the Plaza de la Madeleine. We immediately occupied the houses lining the street on the right, following the lines of communication opened by the besieged in the adjoining walls. But as the enemy was giving way, we neglected to barricade the doors and low windows facing the street, and to establish a firm foothold in these houses. Around two o'clock in the afternoon, the Spaniards, incited by the tocsin, attacked us furiously, numbering six or eight thousand men, and forced us to evacuate the entire Quemada Street. We even lost some of the houses we had previously occupied on the right side of Pabostria Street⁶. We had about a hundred men put out of action in this engagement, on the occasion of which Palafox addressed a proclamation to the inhabitants to congratulate them on their successes⁷.

To prevent such skirmishes, Marshal Lannes expressly forbade, by order of the day, any attack by force that did not aim to proceed step by step, from house to house⁸.

Attack on the center. At noon, a blast was set off at the end of a branch line extending under the Calle de las Recogidas. The explosion destroyed several houses on the island between this street and the Calle de las Munitions and buried a large number of Spaniards under the rubble; but a violent fire broke out and forced us to remain in our positions for several days.

⁶ See supporting documents, no. 26.

⁷ See supporting documents, no. 27.

⁸ See supporting documents, no. 28.

To the right of the Calle Santa Engracia, two houses on the small parallel street, which ends opposite the Convent of the Daughters of Jerusalem, had been taken without much difficulty that morning. Two hundred pounds of gunpowder were placed in one of these houses, so that we could expand to the right and left after the explosion, which effectively destroyed the neighboring buildings. Two companies of the First Vistula Regiment, having advanced through the rubble, seized the entire island up to the street that is an extension of the Calle de las Munitions. General Lacoste, who had appeared at a window overlooking the site of the attack to rally the Poles, was struck by a bullet in the head and died a few hours later. His loss was deeply felt throughout the army. His loyalty, frankness, and noble character made him cherished, as did his energy, brilliant valor, and military skill. On that day, which cost us so dearly, we suffered six more dead, including an adjutant on the general staff, and fifteen wounded, including a sapper.

The fortification of the Trinitarian convent church continued. The houses adjacent to the Carmen Gate, which the enemy had abandoned since 28 January, were entrenched. Communication was established with the Pino Tower via a trench opened between the two walls.



No. 20

*Report from General Lacoste to the Duke of Abrantès,
Commander of the Third Corps.*

At the camp before Zaragoza, 28 January 1809.

Monsieur Duke,

I have the honor to report to Your Excellency that the service in the right-hand part of the city we occupy is being carried out rather poorly by both officers and soldiers. The guard, being relieved in the evening, creates disorder and makes it impossible for anyone to know the locations in this sort of maze at night; it seems to me that they should be relieved in the morning. It also seems to me that the proper functioning of the service would require a senior officer in command *ad hoc* in this right-hand part of the city, and permanently assigned, with an officer serving as adjutant of the garrison: the same should apply at Santa Engracia. These commanders would be perfectly aware of the positions, which change daily, and would work effectively with the engineering commanders of each assault. It would also be very important for this guard service to be organized by regiment, or by battalion, when a whole regiment is not required. Then there would be more cohesion in this new type of service, which demands great regularity and attention in order to make progress. I have the honor of proposing to Your Excellency that separate workers no longer be provided; but, when increasing the number of guards, that these same guards be provided at the request of the engineering officers: it is impossible for us to know in advance the number of workers that may be needed, and moreover, this would avoid a mixing of soldiers from different corps, where there should only be one unit, in order to avoid skirmishes. Today it was not deemed appropriate to attack the Augustinian convent, since the artillery had not yet had its full effect. Tomorrow, I think it will take place. The general trench officer, General Laval, had not yet received any instructions on this matter; moreover, it had been agreed with me that he would attempt the attack when it was feasible.

I have the honor, M. Duke, to offer you my respects.

The General Commanding the Engineers,

Signed: COUNT LACOSTE.

~~~~~

## No. 21

### *Proclamation of Palafox to the inhabitants of Zaragoza.*

At the Zaragoza headquarters, 28 January 1809.

Zaragozans!

All of Spain and all of Europe have admired and applauded your conduct in the critical circumstances into which the universal tyrant has placed the nation. I value nothing so much as the advantage of being from Zaragoza, because of the honor that name carries with it since May 24<sup>th</sup>; but it is with bitterness that I must warn you that you run the danger of having the palms of the distinguished victories you have won thus far snatched from your hands. Yes, people of Zaragoza, you are in peril, as a result of your lack of subordination and steadfastness. No sooner had the enemy set foot in the city than you rushed forward with your customary valor to repel him; but many of you disobeyed the advice of your leaders, and others withdrew without orders. It is true that, revived by honor and your courage, you returned promptly; but what does it matter if, in the meantime, you exposed the city to its destruction! You already see the impetuosity with which the enemy attacks it, and their desire to seize it. You see their ferocity and their cunning. Would it be surprising if they were to take advantage of one of those moments when you leave your posts to put you to the sword, the least of the disgraces that could befall you if you were defeated? Zaragozans! Valor and steadfastness! Yesterday we would have dislodged the French from the city, if you had punctually obeyed your leaders; obey them today, and we will conquer. Yes, a few hours of sustained and uninterrupted fighting will suffice to deliver us from this treacherous rabble. I hope that you will immediately resolve to such a just course, since there would be no excuse for any other course of action. Well then, Zaragozans, you acknowledge this; and I hope that you will neither lay down your arms nor withdraw from the enemy until you have exterminated them. But if, contrary to my just expectation, there should be anyone in this city who does not promptly advance to the threatened points or who abandons them, I declare him a traitor from this moment forth, and, as such, he shall be immediately punished with death, and his property shall be confiscated. On the other hand, any inhabitant who gathers one hundred others, who presents himself with them before the enemy, and who obeys the military leaders, shall receive the rank of captain; he who gathers sixty men shall have the rank of lieutenant; and whoever gathers thirty men will be given the rank of second lieutenant: all, without exception, inhabitants or peasants, will be generously rewarded. Whoever gathers fifty men useless to arms, but useful for labor, who remains with them for as long as necessary, and who works diligently, will obtain the rank of second lieutenant. Those who aspire to these favors will present themselves to me without delay, with the list of men they have gathered, to receive a suitable assignment; finally, they will obtain certificates from the commander of the place to which they have been sent. These certificates will serve to have their commission for the rank to which they are entitled issued. Courage, Zaragozans! Today is the day of honor; today we will conquer, and we will escape slavery; we will conquer, since you will help me; and this is enough for me with the protection of our patroness, the Most Holy Virgin of the Pilar.

*Signed: PALAFOX.*

~~~~~

No. 22

Trench Report. – from 30 to 31 January.

I received orders, on the day of 30th, to seize the houses occupied by the enemy and the convent located to the right of the first breach. I contacted Battalion Commander Alexandre, and together we reconnoitered the breaches through which the troops were to enter. Immediately afterward, I deployed one hundred elite men from the Fourteenth Regiment and gave them the necessary instructions. The Commanding Captain, with seventy-five men and a detachment of sappers and miners, was to advance along the main wall facing the oil mill crossing and reach the convent through the outer breach, while twenty-five men, commanded by a lieutenant, were to cross the courtyard and join the Captain inside the convent. The expedition set off at the signal of four shells fired from six mortars. It was a complete success. The detachments scaled the breaches with great intrepidity, and in the blink of an eye the convent and two neighboring houses were occupied. The Spaniards, numbering three to four hundred, were not expecting this attack; they were at that moment praying in a chapel where they had lit candles. At the emergence of the troops, who opened a very heavy fire upon them, they fled; a sergeant of grenadiers of the Fourteenth had killed their first sentry. An hour after the occupation, the enemy made a movement on their left to drive us from our position; several hundred men emerged from the quayside on our right; but a platoon positioned at the bottom of the breach and the fire from a small reserve stationed at the burned-down oil mill repelled them with losses. The convent and the houses are firmly held. The night was spent barricading ourselves in, carrying sandbags, and establishing communication between the convent and the neighboring houses. I don't think the enemy can dislodge us.

On the left, we captured about twenty houses during the day, bringing us closer to the gate and Quemada Street; only one house remains on that side to reach this essential communication point.

As soon as we attacked, the enemy sounded the tocsin. I believe that what happened elsewhere greatly benefited us.

We suffered between forty and fifty killed or wounded, including two brave officers. The Fourteenth particularly distinguished itself in this attack by the audacity shown by the detachment of one hundred men who entered the convent, and by the activity of the rest of the regiment in supporting them, barricading the convent, and carrying sandbags.

I commend to Your Excellency the brave Captain Hardi, commander of the expedition; the intrepid Lieutenant Vieillard, who received three wounds and who already distinguished himself at the attack on Saint-Joseph; Lieutenant Dauxion, who commanded the twenty-five men on the left flank; and Second Lieutenant Desalles, who received a very serious wound. As usual, the brave sappers and miners distinguished themselves: three were killed.

Brigadier General,
Signed: HABERT.

~~~~~

No. 23

*Report from General Morlot to the Duke of Abrantès,  
on the attack on the Trinitarian convent.*

At the camp near Zaragoza, 30 January 1809.

Since yesterday, the enemy, having continuously fired heavy artillery at the Trinitarian convent, breached its defenses, and today they arrived at four o'clock in the afternoon to launch an assault. I immediately went to my division. After ordering them to take up arms, I temporarily reinforced the convent's garrison with one hundred and fifty men; I sent two hundred into the trench to reinforce its guard, and I advanced two battalions within range to serve as a reserve. I also had an 8-pounder cannon and a howitzer positioned on the right flank of the Casa-Roja, out of sight of the fortress, which proved highly effective and contributed greatly to our success. The doors of the convent church having been broken down at the top, the enemy began to undermine them from below with axes; but they found sandbags behind them which stopped them, and they were busy removing and destroying them when the skirmishers of the Fifth Light Infantry mounted them, opening a very heavy fire. The enemy suffered a great loss, both at this point and on the other sides of the convent where they dared to venture. We had only two men killed and five wounded. The firing having ceased, I ordered everyone back to their respective posts at nightfall.

At this moment the enemy continues to fire on the convent.

Signed: GENERAL MORLOT.

~~~~~

No. 24

Proclamation of Palafox to the women of Zaragoza.

At Zaragoza Headquarters, 30 January 1809.

Women of Zaragoza,

You too aspire to glory. The Amazons existed among the ancients, and to this day they have not been replaced. Those who wish to imitate them will present themselves for the defense of the city and our august patroness. I could tell you that it is not new to find valor among people of your sex; but in you, women of Zaragoza, one finds more activity than in other women. Unite, gentle women, and do not leave the laurel and triumph solely to men. The French soldiers will fear you, and it will be a shame for them to be defeated by you. Preserve the noble enthusiasm that you have shown me; and all those who see you contributing to the defense will be surprised with admiration and struck with terror: your mere presence will make the most valiant retreat; a woman, when she wants to, makes even the strongest tremble. Be the first to receive the thanks of all Spaniards. I am also your general and your friend. I desire that you see me as your father: that alone was lacking to complete my happiness.

Signed: PALAFOX.

~~~~~

No. 25

*Proclamation of Palafox to the inhabitants of Zaragoza.*

At Zaragoza Headquarters, 30 January 1809.

Valiant inhabitants of Zaragoza!

The glory of the city is in your hands; if you wish to help me, join my valiant soldiers. I am a slave to my honor and to your trust; I will know how to preserve them, and I will die rather than fail in my duty. This city has parishes renowned for their courage; we shall see which is the most valiant, and to which the city and Our Lady of the Pilar will owe their triumph: I flatter myself, my dear compatriots, that it will be due to all, and that they will vie for the renown of the most valiant troops in the world. In a few hours, if you so desire, we will deliver ourselves from the treacherous enemies who besiege us; they have already been repelled; the advantage is ours; you know the terrain better than they do. Let us go and conquer, my children; let us march, the Virgin of Pilar will always triumph.

*Signed: PALAFOX.*

~~~~~

No. 26

Trench Report. — Attack on the right, from 31 January to 2 February.

The 31st of January was a very quiet day; we limited ourselves to capturing a considerable number of houses, which we held into the evening. We detonated a mine that crushed a large number of enemy troops and facilitated the capture of another block of houses in front of the Santa-Mónica convent.

The First of February, at six o'clock in the morning, we detonated a mine that had been laid during the night near the Saint-Augustin convent. Immediately after the explosion, the colonel of the Forty-Fourth, at the head of his grenadiers, rushed through the breach into the convent courtyard. I immediately had ladders brought in, which were used to bring the grenadiers inside, and in less than half an hour we were in control of the convent.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, the enemy launched a very strong attack on the center and left flanks of the right flank. I estimate, and I believe I am correct, that the various enemy columns numbered at least eight thousand men: many women were seen following them. The enemy presented artillery at both points. A large number of peasants entered the houses through the rooftops, from where they fired musket shots at our soldiers and harassed them by throwing stones and wood. Despite the impetuosity with which the enemy advanced, they only forced us to abandon the edge of the clusters of houses captured that morning, because the continuous fighting had prevented the engineering officers from properly quartering them, all the men being employed with the fusillade. The enemy was repelled, despite the various attacks they launched during the night, and we held the position we had at midday.

The Trench Brigadier General,

Signed: LAVAL.

~~~~~

No. 27

*Proclamation of Palafox to the Inhabitants of Zaragoza.*

At Zaragoza Headquarters, 1 February 1809.

Heads of Families and Inhabitants of Zaragoza,

You have just seen what the valiant defenders of this invincible city know and are capable of; their valor has reached such a degree today that we must acknowledge it as due to the infinite mercy of God and the special protection granted to us by the Most Holy Virgin of the Pilar. Let us be grateful, and let us forever reform our ways, so that we may be seen as the beloved children of Mary. Let us also be grateful to these valiant inhabitants who, joined with the brave troops of our army, have spared the city the cruelest and most shameful enslavement. The enemy already believed he could slaughter the most respectable people in the city; take the other inhabitants into slavery, to lead them to their deaths in the North; abuse virtuous women, and tear children, innocent creatures, to pieces in the streets! A terrible day of horror and dread was being prepared for Zaragoza! The inhabitants and the valiant soldiers of the army saved it from this misfortune. Now there is no recourse but victory. We have only to continue with the same zeal and courage as today, and I hope that soon not a single Frenchman will remain beneath our walls, and that we will finally be able to breathe freely. These valiant defenders of the fatherland must be helped: I have ordered that each of them be given five reales a day and a ration of wine.

Several wealthy individuals have offered to advance the necessary funds; the regent of the audience has been charged with receiving them, as well as all other gifts offered subsequently. For my part, I have given my watches, my silverware, and everything I possessed, reserving nothing for myself but my sword, to avenge the insults inflicted upon us by this infamous and cowardly nation. I have ordered that my rations be reduced to the same as those of ordinary soldiers, and that my pay be given to the defenders of the city. People of Zaragoza, give free rein to your patriotism; bring to the regent of the audience all that your zeal dictates, to help the poor inhabitants; and if we achieve victory before the distribution of funds, we will give what remains as a reward to those who have distinguished themselves, to the women whose husbands have been killed, and to the children who have become orphans. Help me, people of Zaragoza; I assure you, we will conquer, and we will all go together with the greatest devotion and deepest gratitude to give thanks to the Most Holy Virgin of the Pilar, who so visibly protects and defends us.

*Signed: PALAFOX.*

~~~~~

No. 28

Order of the Day.

3 February 1809.

The Duke of Montebello reiterates his order, which expressly forbids any skirmishes during the siege of Zaragoza. His intention is that, as soon as a house is captured, troops should occupy it before moving on to another; and that, after an explosion and once one or more houses have been captured, the troops quartered there should be replaced by those forming the reserve.

For the Major General, Chief of the General Staff, the Deputy Chief,

Signed: V. DUMOLARD.