



## THE HANDBOOK OF TEXAS **Online**

HOME

ABOUT

SEARCH

BROWSE

HELP

CONTRIBUTE

BOOKSTORE

CREDITS

**BEAN, PETER ELLIS** (1783-1846). Peter Ellis Bean (or Ellis P. Bean), filibuster and Mexican revolutionary, was born to Lydia and William Bean, Jr., on June 8, 1783, at Bean Station, Tennessee. In 1800 he joined Philip Nolan's<sup>qv</sup> last filibustering expedition to Texas, lured by promises of wealth from captured mustangs<sup>qv</sup> and by talk of gold and silver. He was captured by the Spaniards, established residences in both Mexico and in Texas, and became a minor, though colorful, figure in the history of both regions.

In Texas Bean found only misfortune. At dawn on March 21, 1801, Spanish troops attacked Nolan's fortified camp, in what became McLennan County or Hill County, killed Nolan, captured Bean and the other survivors, and took them deep into Mexico, where they held them in a succession of towns.

Mexican revolutionaries led by a priest, José María Morelos y Pavón, gave Bean his chance for freedom at Acapulco in 1810. He had been released from jail there to fight for the besieged Royalists, but he deserted to Morelos and helped capture the town. He stayed with Morelos and rose in favor.

Fifteen years after leaving his native land Bean returned as a Mexican colonel to seek United States aid for Morelos's cause, but with scant success. During the journey he joined Andrew Jackson's army and fought at the battle of New Orleans. On February 18, 1815, he departed for Mexico on the *Águila*. Thereafter, as a man of split loyalties, he divided his time between visits to Mexico and the United States. The royalists eventually executed Morelos, and in 1816 Bean barely escaped capture himself by leaving his wife, Magdalena Falfán de los Godos, at Jalapa, Vera Cruz, and fleeing to the United States. In 1818 he married a Tennessean, Candace Midkiff, and they eventually had three children. In 1820 the family moved to Arkansas and in 1823 to East Texas. There Bean served Mexico again as Indian agent. He persuaded the Cherokees to remain neutral during the Fredonian Rebellion.<sup>qv</sup> In 1830 he commanded a small military force at Fort Terán. However, neither Texans nor Mexicans trusted him. After Texas independence he began yearning for Mexico and his other wife

and so traveled to Jalapa and there, on October 3, 1846, died in her home.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Peter Ellis Bean Papers, Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas at Austin. Bennett Lay, *The Lives of Ellis P. Bean* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1960). John Edward Weems, *Men Without Countries* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969). Henderson K. Yoakum, *History of Texas from Its First Settlement in 1685 to Its Annexation to the United States in 1846* (2 vols., New York: Redfield, 1855).

*John Edward Weems*

[top of page](#) | [about](#) | [search](#) | [browse](#) | [help](#) | [home](#) - [contribute](#) - [bookstore](#) - [credits](#)

[how to cite this article](#) | [report an error or correction](#) | [suggest an article topic](#)

The *Handbook of Texas Online* is a joint project of [The General](#)

[Libraries at the University of Texas at Austin](#) and the [Texas State Historical Association](#).

© The Texas State Historical Association, 1997,1998,1999.

Last Updated: February 15, 1999

Comments to: [comments@www.tsha.utexas.edu](mailto:comments@www.tsha.utexas.edu)