

Descriptive Summary:

Creator:	Benjamin Rush Milam
Title:	Ben Milam Papers
Inclusive Dates:	1835 January 5
Bulk Dates:	1835 January 5
Abstract:	One letter from Ben Milam to Richard Pryor regarding the settling of Texas.
Accession #:	3806
Extent:	1 folder
Language:	The letter is in English.
Repository:	The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

Biographical Note:

Benjamin Rush Milam was born on 1788 October 20 to Moses and Elizabeth Pattie Boyd Milam in Frankfort, KY. He fought in the War of 1812 with the 8th regiment, 39th infantry company of the Kentucky militia, serving from 1812 August 17 to December 8. By 1818, Milam was in Texas, trading with the Comanche Indians on the Colorado River. The following year he joined José Félix Trespalacios and James Long in what became known as the “Long Expedition,” working to separate Mexico and Texas from Spain. Milam became a Mexican citizen under the new constitutional government on 1824 June 24, and was commissioned as a colonel in the Mexican army.

Sometime after 1826, Milam was engaged to Annie McKinney. After returning from a trip to England in 1829, however, Milam found that McKinney had married another. He never married.

On 1826 January 12, Milam signed a contract granting him permission to establish “Milam’s Colony.” The agreement required that he settle three hundred Catholic families on the land within six years. Milam failed to do so and the contract expired on 1832 January 25. The claims of the fifty-two families in Milam’s Colony—like those of settlers across Texas—were therefore in question. In 1835, Milam convinced the governor of Coahuila and Texas, Agustin Viesca, to grant land titles to Texas settlers. Shortly thereafter, however, Antonio López de Santa Anna overthrew the government and captured Viesca and Milam on 1835 June 5.

Milam escaped in October and joined a band of Texans under George Collinsworth who were fighting for independence from Mexico. They captured Goliad and then marched to San Antonio. On December 4, Milam heard that most of the men had given up the plan to attack San Antonio. He challenged the army by asking, “Who will go with old Ben Milam into San Antonio?” Three hundred men volunteered, and the attack began on 1835 December 5. Four days later, General Martin Perfecto de Cós and the Mexican army surrendered. Milam did not live to see the victory, however; he was killed by a sniper’s bullet on December 7. Milam is believed to be buried in Milam Park in San Antonio, TX.

Sources:

Barr, Alwyn. “Bexar, Siege of.” *Handbook of Texas Online*.

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qeb01>. Accessed 2012 May 25.

Garver, Lois. "Milam, Benjamin Rush." *Handbook of Texas Online*.

[Http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmi03](http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmi03). Accessed 2012 May 23.

Garver, Lois. "Benjamin Rush Milam." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 2 (October 1934): 79-121.

Garver, Lois. "Benjamin Rush Milam: Chapter III (Continued)." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 3 (January 1935): 177-202.

Nielson, George R. "Ben Milam and United States and Mexican Relations." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (January 1970): 393-395.

Scope and Content:

The Ben Milam Papers consist of one letter written by Ben Milam, addressed to Richard Pryor of Lafayette County, Arkansas Territory, on 1835 January 5, regarding the settling of Texas. It is in average condition.

Organization and Arrangement:

The Ben Milam Papers are in one series: correspondence.

Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

Literary Rights Statement:

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Index Terms:

Milam, Benjamin Rush, 1788-1835.

Texas -- History.

Related Materials: None.

Separated Materials: None.

Custodial History:

Acquisition:	The letter was acquired as a gift from J. M. Clement Milam on 2011 September 29.
Citation:	Ben Milam Papers, Accession #3806, Box #, Folder #, The Texas Collection, Baylor University.

Processing Information: Finding aid completed by Jonathan D. Riddle, 2012 May 30.

Container List:

Series I: Correspondence

This series includes one letter from Ben Milam to Richard Pryor discussing Texas settlers' petition to the Mexican government to have their land titles confirmed, speculators, and Milam's prospects of settling what he calls "my colony." The letter is in average condition.

BOX NUMBER	FOLDER NUMBER	FOLDER TITLE	DATES
1	1	Correspondence: General	1835 January 5