

## Journal From Lima to Caracas Commencing September 4th, 1826

By William Owens Ferguson

*Coming down the cordillera this night a thunder storm and tremendous shower overtook me in the midst of a primeval forest, as dark as pitch and a torrent on my right thundering along making as much noise as the thunder. My horse got so frightened as to actually crouch so that my feet touched the ground. If I had been of a romantic turn, this was a bella occasion to enjoy myself. However, two or three falls of my horse and wet to the skin, hungry, sleepy and tired I only cursed the Commission, the road and country and last of all poor old Columbus who discovered it (15 December 1826).*



William Ferguson's journey from Lima to Caracas  
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The text of this journal has been transcribed from the original manuscript to a typewritten copy by William O. Ferguson's grand nephew. The present text is a scanned (OCR) version of the transcription. Only noticeable errors have been corrected, including a few place names (ex. Bogotá instead of *Bagota*). Biographical and other information was added, which is included in William O. Ferguson's biography.

The Ferguson Papers are the property of Mrs. C.D. Gamble of Canada. We are thankful to Susan Wilkinson of Toronto for sending her copy of this journal for publication.

4th September 1826. Left Lima, arrived at the Fortress of Callao and embarked at 7 at night. The crowd being so great as to impede the General embarking sooner. Men, women and children in fear and all declaring they would on no consideration allow his departure.

5th to 8th. On the Pacific, on board the sloop of war "Congress". Fair wind.

9th Sept. Came to in sight of Deadman's Chest in the mouth of the Guayaquil River.

10th Anchored at Island of Pema.

11th Farther up the river. Magnificent scenery.

12th Arrived at 3 o'clock in the morning at the city of Guayaquil, and landed just at daybreak amidst a thundering salute of cannon, ringing of bells, bands, huzzahs, etc.

13th to 18th In Guayaquil, five balls, three public dinners, horse races, etc.

18th To the town of San Borondon, 7 leagues, and embarked. Beautiful scenery, the banks of the river are covered with plantations and country houses. The effect is heightened by the picturesque appearance of the "balsas" on rafts, each of which has a little thatched house and a number of flower pots on it besides poultry and all the other little appendages to a family. It looks something like what is described of the Chinese. A plentiful dinner but cursedly hot and the room not very airy.

19th To the Fort and Town of Babahoyo, 8 leagues by river. Shot several crocodile they being in swarms on the sand banks, some as long as 16 feet. The banks of the river here are covered with rich pasturage and savannah.

20th Halt for meals.

21st To the cattle estate of Carzah, 3 leagues. Went to shoot wild geese, plenty game.

22nd To the hamlet of Large, 9 leagues. Very bad road through an almost impenetrable forest impervious to the rays of the sun, up to the girths in mire. Crossed the river several times. This road is impassable in the rainy season.

23rd To the town of San Miguel, good road in the dry season, vice versa, 7 leagues, 5½ and an ascent of about 60 degrees. San Miguel cold climate in a beautiful, valley and commanding a good view of Chimborazo, which is seen rising majestically above the clouds over the valley of Guaranda. The climate now changes from excessive heat to the cold bracing air of the serrania or mountains, I rather say Highlands.

24th To the borough town of Rio Gamba, 12 leagues. Cross the Cordillera of the Andes by the Paramo of Payal and the Chimborazo. Cross the rains of the old Rio Gamba. Breakfasted at the town of Cajabamba. Splendid dinner today. About 3,000 horsemen came out to meet the General, in fact these people show that they have some talent and discernment having shown a due respect for the Aides.

25th To the borough town of Ambato 9 leagues. This town suffered considerably when the last eruption of Cotopaxi ruined La Facunga and Rio Camba. Well received, good dinner and better horses. Mine tried to run away with me and as I was as headstrong as he, all the revenge he could take was to throw himself on his back, whilst I threw myself off it. It broke my new Hussar saddle and galloped all the way and jumped over the road, ditches and all.

26th To the borough town of La Facunga, 7 leagues, through beautifully cultivated I country. This day there were seven volcanoes in sight. Well received. An immense crowd of Indians with saints, triumphal arches and chicha pots, of which liquor they made most liberal libations.

27th To the town of Machachi, 11 leagues. Past the foot of Cotopaxi and over the plain of Mulalo in which there is an artificial mountain made by the Incas, supposed to contain hidden treasures. This plain is covered with enormous masses of stone ejected by Cotopaxi.

28th To the city of Quito 11 leagues, fine road, magnificent and rich scenery, abundant country. This city is seated at the foot of the Pichincha Volcano. We were well received although through the stupidity of the Intendant not so well as otherwise might have been expected. Here we remained carousing and in was sailing till the 4th of October. Beautiful women in Quito although without soul.

5th October To the Estate of Chaquinbamba, 7 leagues. On leaving Quito there is a lovely prospect of the Valley of Pomasqui. An immediate descent to the river and rather cold at night.

6th To the borough town of Otobal, 8 leagues. Beautifully rich and picturesque country in a high state of cultivation and thickly populated. There was a splendid reception, excellent déjeuner, dinner supper and ball. Pretty girls and kind. Mountain Imbaburá.

7th To the city of Ibarra, beautiful scenery and reception with a great deal of taste, ball at night and next day dinner, ball and supper. Left the Cayanti to the left.

8th All snug and in clover.

9th To the town of Pentel. Past the beautiful Lake of Yaguar-Cocha or moody Lake, and descent to the River Chota which has a bridge. A tremendous ascent in which during a storm we lost our way and got well drenched in spite of our oil cloth clothes. Beastly dinner, bad quarters and a miserable town with a talkative and fastidious old friar as curate who recommended his coffee as super excellent, as he assured us it was "de America". So much for the Friar's knowledge of the production of his native country.

10th To the town of Fulcan. Breakfasted at the town of Tura whose curate was just as bad as the other and gave us black puddings for breakfast. Stopped to take something at the town of Guica situated in a forest infested with banditti. This day we had an escort of cavalry and got well drenched. Got into Fulcan about 5 in the evening after 12 leagues of a heavy road. My wally de sham deserted today and carried with him a horse saddle and bridle. All my cloaks and dressing apparatus for the road ... probably the guerrilla took him in the wood.

11th To Cumbal, 4 leagues over rich pasturage. This town is very cold and situated at the foot of a volcano from which it takes its name. There was a battle fought here.

12th To the town of Fuguerres, 10 leagues over rich pasturage. A little corn and potatoes. Past three towns, road very good in dry weather.

13th To the city of Pasto, 12 leagues in Yacuanguer, past the River Guitara. A good deal of ascent and forest with positions at every half league. The city has a beautiful appearance from above, situated in a plain which it covers with a fine river running through it. The country rises almost imperceptibly in amphitheatre covered with country houses, farms and estates mostly of wheat and barley with Indian corn and potatoes.

14th Remained at Pasto which is almost without inhabitants owing to the bloody and inveterate war which has been carried on. It is calculated that not less than 60,000 men have lost their lives in this province and from the year 1823, 95 Field Officers and Officers have been killed in Pasto of the Colombian Army. Things are beginning to mend however, as the last guerrilla was taken with his party a few months since and shot. The obstinacy of these people has never had an example in any nation. They have frequently routed our best troops with wooden clubs and spears and never has a Pastuso asked for quarter on the field. The original settlers of this Province were Biscayans and Catalonians who are remarkable for their hardiness and constancy in Spain.

15th To Ortega, a ruined hacienda, by some mistake the cooks missed their way and we were without dinner or supper too. Fine country but entirely depopulated. We could see several groups of cattle that had gone wild and whose owners had long since been exterminated. My baggage did not make its appearance today and to an empty stomach I had the agreeable sensation to add that I had not a second shirt to my back. This day's journey 8 leagues, partly forest with a villainous heavy road and partly open country.

16th To the hut of Encanada, 5 leagues, descended to and crossed the River Juanambú, desert country full of positions and remains of field fortifications. There have been at least thirty engagements fought at different times within these 5 leagues. No appearance of the baggage, many a curse did I bestow, dire heart and fell did I bestow on the Pastusos as I recrossed the river in search of it. However, at last I met with the baggage mules tired out. There was nothing else for it but to make the servants dismount and place the baggage on their horses and my own. Whilst "Guy Surrey" who had had very little idea of climbing over precipices had the benefit of a little extra exercise.

17th To Venta Quemada, a shed, 7 leagues, over a mountain and forest road. Met wit skulls and bones still lying on the road of a detachment which had been surprised and cut to pieces about 6 months before. Not an inhabitant to be seen. Devilish short commons today.

19th To the hacienda or halo (cattle estate) of Puro, 8 leagues, very hot, crossed the River Patia, bad fare, tremendous thunder storm this night.

18th To the town of Mercaderes, 9 leagues, crossed the River Mayo. A little better fare although evidently is still in enemy's country.

20th To the chapel and curacy of Bordo, 7 leagues, situated a little above the town of Patia. Dreadfully hot but better fare than for some days past.

21st To the town of Morqueta, 12 leagues, troublesome road without anything interesting farther than passing by the gold mines of Santa Lucia.

22nd To the town of Macienda of Pimbio, 7 leagues, here we met with every luxury than money and taste could procure. Also a deputation from the city of Popayán waited His Excellency to facilitate him on his return.

23rd October 1826 To the city of Popayán, 3 leagues. Fine country. Beautiful view of the Volcano and Cordillera. About a thousand well dressed people came out to meet us and everything attending the reception was as splendid as possible. There we remained to the 29th and had four balls and several public dinners.



Popayán, Cauca  
(Photo Luke Mastin 1999)

<http://www.lukemastin.com/%20diary/feb99.html>

30th October 1826 To the town of Totoró, breakfasted at the Hacienda of Calivido, 7 leagues, bad road in winter.

31st To the shed or Fambo of Gabriel Perez, 6 leagues of ascent excessively cold and half way up the Andes.

Nov. 1st To the town of Yussa, 12 leagues. Crossed the Andes here, tremendous rain, piercing cold wind and villainous roads made of logs of wood which in many places are worn away and so dangerous in others that it is necessary to dismount and the baggage unloaded. Arrived at 7 o'clock at night.

2nd To the city of La Plata, 13 leagues, across a fine cattle country, still excessively hot climate.

3rd To the estate of Juneal, 7 leagues, cross a fine cattle country, still oppressively hot.

4th To Ancon, 7 leagues, This day crossed the River Magdalena. Fine country and excellent accommodation at the hacienda, still hot.

5th To the city of Neiva, 14 leagues, A level hot country of pasturage. Cross the Magdalena again, good reception at Heiva which is a pretty place enough.

6th To the Villa Viega, a borough town, 6 leagues, ever hot plains of pasturage.

7th To Patea, a town 4 leagues over plains of pasturage. Cross the river Saldana

8th To the city of Natagaima, 6 leagues, very hot. The plains intersected with ravines.

9th To the borough town of Purificacion, 6 leagues, over the same description of plain. Well received.

10th To the town of Espinal, 8 leagues. Same kind of road. Crossed a lovely plain covered with palm and date trees and intersected with cottages and cattle estates.

11th To the borough town of Tocaima, 12 leagues. Very hot, pass the Magdalena twice today. Here General Santander and the Ministers of state met us, great deal of political manoeuvring and finesse. Santander making himself out the disinterested man etc.

12th To the town of Mesa de Juan Dias, 8 leagues. Mountainous road ascending.

13th To the town of Punza, 9 leagues, 5 of a steep ascent the remainder through the fertile plain of Bogotá. Here we met several acquaintances who came to meet us.

14th To the city and capital of Colombia. Bogotá, 4 leagues. Good road. The reception on the whole very indifferent. Here we had several public dinners and diplomatic balls and suppers. Rained almost incessantly during our stay which was to the 24th.

25th To Santander's estate of Hato Grande, 6 leagues. Breakfasted at the town of Usaquem. For the first 12 miles the road skirts along the foot of the chain of mountains of Montserrat, being lined with neat country seats and tolerable well cultivated farms which extend about 2 miles from the foot of the hills, the plain beneath being used for grazing. As, owing to its being overflowed at certain seasons of the year, it cannot be properly cultivated and the prospect is charming having in view several towns whose white steeples give an idea of comfort which is too often found to be erroneous on a closer inspection. On reaching the Brid called Del Comun the road continues to the right, leaving the other great one to the left which continues by Sipaquirá, famous for its salt mines, through Chiquinquirá celebrated for its miraculous image and magnificent sanctuary, to Guadalupe, Ahiva, Socarro, Zil, Pie de Cuesta, Pucaramanga and Olaina. Following our route along the left bank of the river for about six miles we reached Hato Grande where we got a superb dinner etc. etc.

26th To the estate of Poita, 4 leagues, through a cold highly cultivated country. Passed several villages. Nessr Montayas gave a splendid set out.

27th To the town of Choconta, 7 leagues, over a fine country with crowded population, passed five or six villages.

28th To the town of Venta Quemada, 6 leagues, mountainous country and very cold.

29th To the city of Funja, 6 leagues, passed Boyaca, cold mountainous country. Vex enthusiastic people, here we stayed the next day and had two balls.

December 1st To the town of Paipa, 7 leagues, rough road and although well cultivated, a cold country.

2nd To the borough town of Santa Rosa, 5 leagues. Magnificent scenery, rich pasturage and a valley covered with houses and cattle of all descriptions.

3rd To the town of Sativa, 11 leagues. Hilly road and various climate most part of the way, the country apparently without cultivation, but immediately about the town cultivation even to the top of the immense mountains that surround it.

4th To the town of Suata, 8 leagues, through hot ravines. Tolerable cultivation.

5th To the town of a Capitanejo, 10 leagues, across a good bridge. Unhealthy climate and suffocatingly hot.

6th To the town of Cerrito, 11 leagues. Ascent all the way, passed through two fertile valleys, very cold.

7th To the town of Chitaga, 8 leagues. This day we passed the paramo of Almorzadero, very cold.

8th To the city of Pamplona, 7 leagues, 3½ ascent and 3½ descent, over a cold mountain. The appearance of the city is beautiful from above as you can distinguish every house. They say here that it rains 13 months in the year. Very insipid, stupid, good sort of people here. Stopped the ninth.

10th To the town of Chinacota, 7 leagues. Situated in a fertile and hot valley. Descending all day, left the clouds and rain behind us up in the sky.

11th I was this day sent suddenly on commission to the west of Venezuela, where, during the revolution which began in April, the disaffected had always declared they would wait for and abide by General Bolivar's decision but now knowing that he was really coming they have thrown off the mask and disclaim all obedience to him. Principal authors of the revolution are Pena Paez, Marino and Carabano. The object in my going is to unite the troops stationed at Menda and Frufillo and to march on occupying the country as far as I can without compromising myself too much. Travelling past I can tell little of the country. Crossed the Zulia by swimming as the ford was lost owing to the rains. After going over some hills got into the beautiful valley of Cucuta, full of cocoa estates and famous for its breed of mules. Crossed the mountains of Cucuta and reached the town of Fariba near San Christobal at seven o'clock at night, 25 leagues.

12th Crossed the immense mountain and paramo of Tramadero, 6 leagues ascent. Reached the valley and town of Cobre. Then the borough town of La Grita, famous for its tobacco establishments. Crossed the high mountain and paramo de Puerco and reached at eleven at night the fertile valley and borough town of Bailadores, 29 leagues.

13th Passed the beautiful, rich and important tobacco plantations of Tobacal, reached a large cocoa estate and got into the Laderos de Chama. Here the road is about two feet wide and in some places a kind of miserable staging of pieces of wood is all that supports you, whilst a precipice of about two hundred feet and a rapid river is below on one side whilst on the other the mountain is so perpendicular as to be compared to a rock. My situation this day was not the most enviable as my mule was very tired and stumbled several times. Crossed the river by a sling or Taravita. This is effected by stretching a rope across which has a kind of runner or loop into which the "patient" is slipped and you have the pleasure of seeing a roaring torrent a couple of hundred feet beneath you whilst a lazy peon is tugging away and one is suspended in the middle where if the rope should have been slack you remain swinging to and fro. Arrived this night at the city of Merida, 30 leagues. Here I found only 120 men of the Battalion Paya, almost all recruits, badly paid and without shoes. Impossible to get them any and no more than 100 muskets in the park.

14th Remained all day at Merida. Marched off Paya.

15th Passed the valley of Merida, through four towns. Passed the borough town and paramo of Mucachies, passed the town and valley of Timotes, passed the paramo of Timotes and arrived at Boca del Monte. Coming down the cordillera this night a thunder storm and tremendous shower overtook me in the midst of a primeval forest, as dark as pitch and a torrent on my right thundering along making as much noise as the thunder. My horse got so frightened as to actually crouch so that my feet touched the ground. If I had been of a romantic turn, this was a bella occasion to enjoy myself. However, two or three falls of my horse and wet to the skin, hungry, sleepy and tired I only cursed the Commission, the road and country and last of all poor old Columbus who discovered it. This day did 33 leagues and slept at Bocado del Monte.

16th December 1826 Passed the towns of Cucharito, Bulera, Motatan and Pampanito. Fine country with partial plantations and Conucos, or small farms, tolerably well inhabited and hot. Arrived at Trujillo at 12 o'clock after travelling 15 leagues. Trujillo is one of the oldest cities in Venezuela and is situated in the gorge of a small valley and greatly ruined by the earthquakes. Here I found there was not even a single soldier, or even arms, and that as there was no money in the treasury, it would be out of the question to expect to get the Militia under arms, even supposing ourselves to be in a profound peace, but as we learned that preparation was making in the city of Focuyo, to invade this and the Province of

Merida, as having belonged formerly to the old Captain Generalship of Venezuela, which was now proclaimed an independent state, and Paez had actually invaded the Province of Varinas, with a force of 1100 men. Remained here waiting for Paya, which arrived on the 19th, sent it on with fifty militia to Carache, the frontier where all the militia of the Province was to pass a review on the 24th. Marched on the 22nd.



Carache, Trujillo  
(Photo Oswaldo Terán  
<http://cfpm.org/~oswaldo/fotos.html>)

23rd December 1826 To the town of Carache 9 leagues, after passing through the town of Santa Ana, where Generals Bolivar and Murillo met, and signed the celebrated treaty regulation of the war. The inhabitants of Carache have always shown their decision for the Royalists, and so far from coming forward at the present critical juncture, have all absented themselves and left the town almost deserted. The militia has not made its appearance, and in fact things look very blue. I this day received intelligence of Colonel Forellas who is commander-in-chief of the West, having stationed an

advance post in the town of Omucaros, between Focuyo and Agua Blanca, that on the 26th there is to be a review of all the troops and local militia of the West in Focuyo, which is surmised will be to prepare an expedition against Truxillo and Merida that in Cumana there had been a severe engagement between Bermudez and the revolutionists, in which the former was worsted and obliged to abandon the province. That General Paez had attacked Porto Gabello which place had declared for General Bolivar, and had been defeated. In fact the civil war has commenced, and to crown all I got a letter from General Bolivar, desiring me to push on far as I could with safety. However, what could I do with one hundred bad infantry! Were I to invade the West with even 2,000 men, the result would be dubious. Whereas by a coup de main, I may probably gain over Forres, probably may revolutionize the country and even if I should be taken prisoner on my way I may leave proclamations and let the people see the General is coming, the factions having spread industriously a report of his death. The receipt of these proclamations dated 16th in Maracaybo decided me, and leaving orders with the Commandant Frazer to consider me as taken if he did not hear from me within two days. The road from Carache (from whence I started at two o'clock -a.m.) to Agua de Obispos is dreadfully bad, with about 5 leagues of a steep ascent, in many places worn away by rains. Reached Agua de Obispos a little after daylight, and within half an hour proceeded through a heavy inundated road and presently entered a forest, where on account of the almost incessant rain, the road became like a river in many places plunging ourselves into quagmires from which with difficulty I extricated myself. Arrived at the town of Onnicuros at about one o'clock p.m. of the 25th, where I found an advanced post with an officer, who under the pretence of accompanying me, did the part of spy and guard at the same time. Continued, after half an hour's stay and arrived at the City of Focuyo about four o'clock on the evening of Christmas Day. As I had travelled incessantly I was quite knocked up, however it surprised me not a little on entering the city, to see the martial appearance of the people, military parading, awkward squads, drilling in the square, and in fact, all the appearance of war, people far from coming up to me on seeing my red coat (General Bolivar's staff uniform) to shun the street, and I could see them peeping out of the windows, evidently afraid of being seen in conversation with me. On entering the Governor's I found some ladies there who received me

rather coolly. My Umucaro friend the officer who accompanied me, now came forward rather boldly to state to the Governor that according to his orders he had brought me prisoner! an assertion that I thought proper to assure both was utterly false, as I now with astonishment certainly, for the first time learned that I was considered in the light, protesting at the same time most bitterly against such an outrage on the authority of General Bolivar.

Here the Governor began to explain to me the late occurrences and that so far from respecting the authority of General Bolivar, he had orders to stop him or take him should he arrive there, and any Aide-de-camp he might send to the West, should be immediately sent to Headquarters with two officers, who should not lose sight of him; adding at the same time that I must not speak to anyone and to prepare to march within two hours!

I must confess my feelings were not very enviable at this moment; a perfect stranger, tired to death and with very scanty purse and twenty leagues distant from my camp, in the hands of the enemy and on the point of being sent off post haste to Valencia, and add to this my being a foreigner on whom either party would rejoice to vent its spleen.

As the mass of the people were averse to this revolution and as General Bolivar was loved by the great body, I determined on beginning my operations at once. After assuming a very important tone and letting fall as if inadvertently, that my flying camp had remained in Omurcares, 5 leagues (by this time a number of officers had surrounded me) to be duped by Paez; that the only disinterested man in the country was Bolivar. I assured them he was in Trujillo with 5,000 peruvian troops and then read his proclamation which was most a propos. I took the advantage of the moment they were most warm in their praises of him and straight forward, John Bull fashion, proposed throwing off all allegiance to Paez and to proclaim the Constitutional Government. Some looked a little blue but an old veteran with only one leg limped up and giving a most magisterial thump on the table with his crutch, settled the point on the spot saying he was resolved it should be so and without waiting their answer, proceeded to give orders to several of the by-standers relative to the proper measures for explaining the affair to the troops and other officers, counting on the private citizens concurrence to a man.

I was quite surprised to see the influence of this man, however, I soon learned that he was comptroller of the tobacco factory and head administrator for the factory, besides his jovial manners and distinguished services when in the Army had gained him an immense popularity. This gentleman 's name is Undanata.

He presently sent for the principal men in the town and in taking into consideration what ought to be done, I learned that on the following day the local Militia from Carora and Quiber was to arrive for the review and that in Barquisemeto, 15 leagues distant there was a Battalion 1,000 strong with a well provided magazine and 4 guns. Also that Forellas had his headquarters there and at the moment was entertaining Pena and Cistiaga who were on their way as Commissioners from General Paez to announce to General Bolivar the new order of affairs and oblige him either to return or enter Venezuela as a private individual. I also learned that there were 300 infantry and a squadron of cavalry in Quibor, 3 leagues distant and that in Barquisemeto they did not even know of my arrival in Carache. It also appeared that there was no ammunition until it should arrive from Barquisimento.

The first thing that occurred to me was to get Pena and Forrellas into my power by surprise and although they all approved my plan still there was no cavalry mounted and it was now 9 o'clock at night. On the other hand as the revolution would take place at daybreak and had been talked of already it was more than probable some one would send off an express to Forrellas.

I had not yet tasted a mouthful of dinner and sleep was overpowering me. It was at this time it occurred to me that only a most rapid movement would save the country as delay was perdition. I now got a little wine and biscuit and sallied out in quest of some officers who had spoken with me and after going to three or four balls where they were amusing themselves, I succeeded in persuading five and twenty to accompany me, and at twelve I had marched with my detachment of Lancers! We arrived at three at the borough town of Quibor and surprised the barracks without a shot, so unexpected was it. I now spoke to these officers and troops and making a virtue of necessity said to show by confidence in their loyalty to

General Bolivar I would not deprive them of their arms but merely ordered them to be present at 9 o'clock in Focuyo there to swear allegiance to the Constitutional Government. I now continued my way at a brisk trot and having fed the horses and given the detachment a good breakfast at an Inn 4 leagues from Barquisimeto set out again with our horses all well refreshed. I must confess that I began, after passing such a sleepless night and scorched by a dreadfully hot sun to reflect on my enterprise as rather hazardous, only 25 Lancers, our horses would not be able to carry us back again, myself totally unacquainted with the country or town we were going to surprise, beside a foreigner and accompanied by officers who 12 hours before were amongst the most sanguine supporters of the Revolution, probably they might be playing me the same trick as my Umucaro friend. In fact I felt rather low-spirited, however, we kept on at a round pace to the outskirts of the town where I formed up my piquet and briefly telling them of our compromise they unanimously swore they would accompany me faithfully.

I am now determined in case the Garrison should be got under arms before we could take the Magazine and Barracks to get possession of the persons of Forrellas and Pena and if we could not bring them off to lance them as State Criminals as proscribed by law. The inhabitants at first took us for a party of masqueraders as at this Festival it is customary to parade and gallop about on horseback but as soon as they heard us shouting "Viva Bolivar" (an exclamation which had been long been supplanted by Viva Paez"), "Viva la Federacion" they began to see what was going forward. The generality of the people detested Paez and the new system but it still had its supporters among the Empleados or Civil Officers but almost one half of the middle class were friends of the measure and although none had as yet declared against General Bolivar their actions did so. The confusion became great as we advanced (at full gallop), some cried "Viva el Libertador", some "a las armas" others shut their windows and doors whilst in all directions men could be seen running some to arms and others to get out of the way. We now got into the principal square and seeing a group of officers opposite before they recovered from their surprise I surrounded them and finding that Forellas and the Commandant of Arms were amongst the number I left five or six Lancers guarding them whilst I proceeded to Pena's house, where I took both him and Cistiaga without any resistance. Here I left 10 of my piquet and gave them orders to kill them immediately if rescue should be attempted. It now became quite a critical moment when I regained the street I found myself with only 8 officers and still the Barracks and Magazine were in the hands of the enemy! I did not know the way or the direction they lay in. I galloped up the first street I came to and seeing a body of about 300 men running before me it struck me (as was really the case) that they were trying to gain the Barracks and arm themselves. We immediately charged on them and as only a few officers who were with them had swords they all dispersed and gained some ruins that were near. We soon gained the Barracks and found the guns half way out of the gate (the guard having abandoned them as they saw us disperse the others) and having once possession of the arms I began to look a little about me. I here left 7 of my men at the Barracks and rode back to see about securing my prisoners. When meeting the officer I had placed in charge of Forellas he informed me that he had made his escape with the Commandant who was at that moment rallying some of the fugitives to attack us. Things had gone on swimmingly until now as not a shot had been fired as yet but I could not help seeing that if ten Infantry attempted it they would infallibly turn the scale and the mass of the people who until now had remained neuter would rise and secure us as there was only one pair of pistols in all my army.

It appeared that I had not perceived a guard of 25 men, which was close to where Forellas was standing and when I was gone he began reasoning with the officer and edging away until he got close to the guard when he ordered them to fire but at calculating that I had not only come with the advance guard thought it as well to fly for it.

I here found myself almost alone, my small force divided in four distant parts, the Commandant (a determined fellow) at liberty uniting a force to attack us. I then sent to the Civil Authorities an order to prepare barracks and rations for three squadrons of Hussars which formed the Vanguard or the Army and would arrive within two hours, I having only come on to reconnoitre as I had only two or three privates in the 25 of picquet the rest being officers.

The people now began to join me. At this moment I retook the Commandant who had some 8 or 10 men together and only fired one or two shots. As there was not the slightest disorder or pillage, the inhabitants thought by putting themselves on their good behaviour they would be treated on the arrival of the Army, (my flying camp of 100 recruits very quietly stationed 35 leagues off waiting for orders and now began to make a great noise crying out "Viva el Libertador" etc. On seeing this I got them collected in the Public Square and read aloud the General's proclamation which was loudly applauded. Taking advantage of this effervescence the Municipality and principal inhabitants were got together and in less than an hour I had compromised the greater part of the city making them personally sign an act disclaiming the new Government and putting themselves entirely under General Bolivar's control. After gaining this very essential point, what was their astonishment when they learned that all the Force within 100 leagues was 100 infantry and even these half recruits! However, their vanity was flattered to think that only an assurance of their good disposition towards General Bolivar could have induced him to send such a small force, which did not touch their pride by insinuating anything like conquest or invasion. The bells now rung a merry peal and having published a proclamation with all due formality the Battalion volunteered and swore fidelity etc. The Artillery was got in readiness, a Squadron of well-mounted Volunteers presented itself and deputations went off full tilt to every town in the neighbourhood to give the news.

At 10 o'clock at night I had 1,000 Infantry and 200 Cavalry with four field guns in complete order and a magazine with ammunition and arms quite sufficient to equip an army.

I literally had not slept since the 23rd and had been travelling or working night and day. I fell fast asleep dictating an official letter to General Paez and there lay till next day until six o'clock in the morning.

27th December 1826 Today the borough town of Yaritagua sent a deputation placing itself with a Battalion and two Squadrons of Horse under the General's absolute orders. I sent off a column of 300 men to the town of Sanare, 10 leagues in advance, to cut out the road of the Forest on Montana del Altar and threaten the town Aurare, following myself at 6 o'clock in the evening. Slept at town of Marita.

28th December 1826 Next morning continued and met near Sanare an Officer commissioned by the Commandant and Municipality of Araure to offer the submission of their Province. Having heard that I entered Barquisimeto with 1500 men. I thought it as well to go on to Araure and accordingly having first sent on a spy to see if there were any troops, I crossed a beautiful plain country and after twenty leagues ride entered Araure at sunrise with Major Escalona and two officers whom I had brought with me. The Commandant Escalon, brother of the Major, was the most perverse and intriguing agent in Venezuela, but fearing the invasion had made this ruse to gain merit in the eyes of the victorious party under the impression that I had a formidable division under my orders at Sanare; but the other brother finding that the operation of Bar-



Los Zaragozas celebration at Sanare, Lara  
(Estado Lara  
<http://www.estadolara.com.ve/folklore.shtml>)

quisimeto had been a coup-de-main now regretted exceedingly having invited me, nevertheless as they were detested by the people, I could immediately perceive, I called a public meeting or Cabildo, where I dictated an act similar to that of Barquisimeto which every inhabitant signed.

I now understood that the Commandant was getting together a body of horse about 3 leagues distant to surprise and take me, but owing to the enthusiasm of the inhabitants, the Militia would not assist him.

Cala with the Division which had invaded Varinas was now on his retreat having heard of my march from Trujillo and fearing to have his communications cut off and was expected to pass through Araure within two days, so that as my Force could not be in Sanare for three or four days yet I resolved on leaving Araure, first making the inhabitants abandon the Town and conceal their horses and cattle so that Cala might not receive any assistance there. I also deposed Mr. Commandant and sent him off. I before had remitted Pina and Cistiaga to Maracaybo.

29th Travelled all night, passed through and after 22 leagues arrived

30th at 7 O' clock in the morning at Yaritagua, where I learned that General Paez's brother, Commandant of the City of Felipe had got 800 men under arms and threatened this place where the troops were Militia only. I sent for two Companies to Barquisimeto and dispatched 3 or 4 secret agents to revolutionize San Felipe.

This day returned to Barquisimeto, 8 leagues. The whole of this country is thickly populated. Wherever there can be water procured for irrigation there are beautiful plantations and farms and in the parts the ground is covered with the Cardon tree, a species of immense thistle that breeds the cochineal.

31st Received news of the Infantry from Carora and Quibor having presented themselves in Focuyo where everything went on swimmingly. Ordered two squadrons and all the flank companies up.

Jan. 1st, 1827 In Barquisimeto. This was the third city founded in Venezuela, Caro having been the first and afterwards Focuyo, it still retains vestiges of its former opulence as it was levelled to the ground by the earthquake of the year 1812. The houses at present are only one storey high on that account.

This day we received the account of San Felipe having declared itself under General Bolivar's protection and also the brother of General Paez whom they remitted prisoner. I sent off a column of 600 Infantry to march with what men they could collect in San Felipe and Yaritagua against the borough town of Nirgua, which they were to take in case of resistance and open communication with Puerto Caballo where General Bolivar would arrive in a day or two. After doing this the Division was to seize the Pass of Forito only 6 leagues from Valencia where Paez had his headquarters. As the ground here is very mountainous they were to defend this pass, which could not be turned, whilst I either dispersed or defeated Cala's Division and would then march on San Carlos and crossing from Finaco would form a junction in Forito having a secure retreat either on San Felipe or Puerto Caballo and with all calculating on a force from 2,000 to 2,500 disposable men, in opposition to which Paez had only about 2000 men in Valencia. Besides which my closeness on him would encourage desertion as his troops were beginning to demoralize.

Until now my servant had not even come up with me and I had been from the 25th of last month without any help taken away from Paez his Prime and Confidential Minister, the cities of Fucuyo, Carora, Barquisimeto, San Felipe, and Araure, the borough towns of Quibor, Yaritagua and Candare and Nirgua, beside ten smaller towns, upwards of 3,000 stand of arms, 57 barrels of gunpowder, 7 guns, 8 squadrons of local cavalry, all without ten shots and withal a foreigner and perfectly unacquainted with the country or any of its inhabitants.

2nd Marched to Sanare. The two companies of Paez and Company from Quibor, having arrived and ordered to continue at midnight as I had received information of Cala' s Division having arrived at Ospinos and expected to arrive at Araure the day after.

3rd To Araure 10 leagues. Found my little column rather in a funk, being only 200 strong and that of Cala's was stated to have 1500 veteran troops.

4th Crossed the River Facarigua and reconnoitred the town of Purificacion where I was chased by a party of Dragoons.

5th The Paya's and another squadron came up this day, also 200 Militia. This day I received accounts (not officially) of General Bolivar's having pardoned Paez and his abettors also an order from his Secretary to suspend hostilities, provided the other party remained in status quo. I immediately sent off an Officer to Cala to inform him of this and recommended him to remain where he was, as I would not permit him to pass without an express order from General Bolivar. I invited him to an interview in the Savannah of Choro.

7th Marched with Colonel Urslar to see Cala and was much surprised to meet his Division in full march at about 2 leagues distance. On my remonstrating with him for this breach of orders, I could perceive that he despised my force as being inferior so on his refusing to halt I darted off and in less than an hour had my line formed in the plain in a tolerably good position, he being within two musket shots, I immediately threw out skirmishers and advanced a squadron of Cavalry to turn and carry off his Park, cattle and baggage as I saw he had only about 80 ill-mounted cavalry left. He now saw what he had bought himself to and very wisely knocked under and capitulated on the spot with only condition of waiting General Bolivar's order concerning him.

8th Remained in Araure this day. General Urdanita arrived and having received despatches from General Bolivar, permitted Cala to proceed to Valencia with two companies, the remainder of his division having been sent in different directions.

9th Returned this evening to Aurare with the Column. Here we received letters and despatches from General Bolivar who had given a decree in Puerto Cabello indulging Paez, and those concerned in the Revolution. His motives for doing this were originated in the difficulty of securing the person of Paez, who could make himself formidable by retiring to the plains and carrying on a desultory warfare also be raising the black population, which would only end in the ruin of the country. Notwithstanding we were not at all contented with these measures as in fact we would have taken Paez himself had the decree been a week later. As it was, I being recalled, dismissed all my volunteers and prepared to march on the morrow.

10th To San Carlos, 18 leagues. Cross the forest of Altar, pass the towns of Caramacate and Santa Rosa. The City of San Carlos has suffered greatly by the revolution and is situated in a splendidly fertile grazing country, on the banks of a river which takes its name, navigable very close to the City and falls into the Portugesa and Apure which join the Orinoco.

11th In San Carlos.

12th To Finaquillo, a town, pass through the borough town of Finaco, over a fine arable country well stocked with cattle 20 leagues.

13th To Valencia, through Carabobo and Focuyito, beautiful country covered with cattle and conucos or farms. Passed three English Settlers farms on the Carabobo. This city (Valencia) is situated about a mile distant from the famous lake of that name in a fertile plain, with a healthy appearance and salubrious climate.

14th In Valencia.

15th To Victoria, passing through the borough towns ,of Mocundo, Guacara and Maracay, besides several small towns, all situated the fertile and beautiful valley of Aragua. 21 leagues. Victoria is a handsome enough city.

16th January 1827 To Caracas, 23 leagues. Pass the town and mountain of Cocuisas (the estate of General Bolivar), San Mateo lies behind Victoria), the town of San Pedro and the great descent to Las Juntas from whence the road skirts off along a noble valley called San Francisco in which is situated the City of Caracas, birth-place of Bolivar.

The General was at dinner when I entered and in Paez's and Carabana's presence got up from the table and embraced me. This was satisfactory but all the reward I got for my commission which ended here with my Journal.

There are a great many towns not mentioned in this journal we not having halted in them. The leagues are of 6666 Toises.