

This Day in History... July 25, 1746

Birth of Bernardo de Gálvez

Bernardo Vicente de Gálvez y Madrid, Viscount of Galveston and Count of Gálvez, was born on July 25, 1746, in Macharaviaya, Málaga, Spain.

After studying military sciences, Gálvez participated in the Spanish invasion of Portugal. He then traveled to Mexico where he fought the Apaches and was named commandant of arms of Nueva Vizcaya and Sonora.



Stamp honors Gálvez and the Battle of Mobile.

In the coming years Gálvez joined in an expedition to Algiers and taught at a military academy before he was appointed governor of the Spanish colony of Louisiana in 1777. Soon after, he started aiding American revolutionaries.



Gálvez and St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, were named for Gálvez and his patron saint.

In 1779, Spain declared war on Great Britain, and Gálvez attacked British forts in West Florida and along the Mississippi River. These actions were a great aid to the American Revolution, as they took away from Great Britain's fighting ability. Gálvez's efforts helped Spain gain possession of the British colonies of East and West Florida.



Gálvez Day is a local holiday in Pensacola.



Galveston, Galveston Bay, and Galveston County, Texas have been named in Gálvez's honor.

Gálvez led several successful battles during the war, including Manchac, Baton Rouge, Pensacola, Mobile, and Natchez. These campaigns kept vital supply lines open for the Americans during the War of Independence. One of his most significant victories was at Fort Charlotte. After a two-week siege, Gálvez's men overcame the last British post threatening New Orleans and its strategic port. The 1780 fall of Fort Charlotte forced the British to retreat and denied them the opportunity to encircle the colonists from the south.

Gálvez returned to a hero's welcome in Spain in 1783. In 1784, Gálvez was named governor of Cuba, Louisiana, and Florida. Then, in 1785, he was appointed viceroy of New Spain, Spain's empire in the Americas. Gálvez died from typhus on November 30, 1786. Galveston, Texas, was named in his honor, and St. Bernard Parish in Louisiana was named after his patron saint. Gálvez is also one of just eight people to be awarded honorary American citizenship.

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