

Transcription of letter from William Barret Travis to Henry Smith, February 13, 1836:

Bexar. Feby 13<sup>th</sup> 1836—

To His Excellency Henry Smith,

Dear Sir, I wrote you an official letter last night as Comdt of this post in the absence of Col. Neill; & if you had taken the trouble to answer my letter from Burnam's, I should not now have been under the necessity of troubling you - - My situation is truly awkward & delicate - - Col Neil left me in the command - - but wishing to give satisfaction to the volunteers here & not wishing to assume any command over them I issued an order for the election of an officer to command them with the exception of one company of volunteers that had previously engaged to serve under me. Bowie was elected by two small company's; & since his election he has been roaring drunk all the time; has assumed all command - - & is proceeding in a most disorderly & irregular manner - - interfering with private property, releasing prisoners sentenced by court martial & by the civil court & turning everything topsy turvey - - if I did not feel my honor & that of my country compromitted I would have [left] here instantly for some other point with the troops under my command - - as I am unwilling to be responsible for the drunken irregularities of any man. I hope you will immediately order some regular troops to this place - - as it is more important to occupy this post than I imagined when I last saw you - - It is the key of Texas from the Interior without a footing here the enemy can do nothing against us in the Colonies now that our coast is guarded by armed vessels - - I do not solicit the command of this post but as Col. Neill has applied to the Commander in Chief to be relieved & is anxious for me to take the command, I will do it if it be your order for a time until an artillery officer can be sent here. The citizens here have every in me, as they can communicate with me & they have shown every disposition to aid me with all they have - - We much need money - - Can you not send us some? I read your letter to the troops & made a speech & they received it with acclamation - - Our spies have just returned from Rio Grande - - They enemy is there one thousand strong & is making every preparation to invade us. By the 15<sup>th</sup> of March I think Texas will be invaded & every preparation should be made to receive them. E. Smith will call on you & give you all the news - - so will Mr. Williams, the Bearer of this - -

In conclusion, allow me to beg that you will give me definite orders immediately - -

I have the honor to [be]

resp.

W. Barret Travis

P.S. This is a private letter & is directed to Nibbs for fear it may fall into bad hands.

Travis