

CHURUBUSCO; August 20, 1847

Historical Background

Following the US surprise attack at Contreras (August 19-20) and the almost total disintegration of the Mexican Army – Santa Anna went around screaming how he was going to shoot General Valencia on sight – what was left of that army streamed towards Mexico city, with the over-excited Americans in hot pursuit.

Fortunately, the Mexicans had begun to build a very strong *tete de pont* defense system at the bridge across the Churubusco River, and Santa Anna decided that this would be a good place to slow – it was never meant to stop it entirely - the US advance. To that effort, he deployed the equivalent of two brigades – one of regulars and one of local national Guard contingents - in the two strong points guarding the approach, the *tete de pont* and the convent of San Pablo, which had its own defensive walls. Inside the convent, in its last appearance in the war, were the remnants of the San Patricio Battalion, essentially fighting as both artillerists and infantry, and refusing to surrender. Santa Anna also kept a strong contingent of cavalry across the river as a reserve.

Scott, in the meantime, allowed his army, mostly parts of three divisions – Worth’s, Pillow’s and Twiggs’ – to rush on ahead without any apparent plan, other than to take the bridgehead, which the Americans thought would be “no problem”. It turned out to be just the opposite, as the Mexicans fought as stubbornly and effectively as they had in the entire war.

The two Mexican positions were very well constructed for defense, the high walls aided by moat-like ditches, some 4 feet deep and about 20 feet across. Just as bad, in terms of attacking, was that virtually all of the surrounding countryside was head-high cornfields, riddled with irrigation ruts and other obstacles. Add to that the fact that Scott’s division commanders were, to put it mildly, not on speaking terms with each other, rendering any sort of cooperation moot.

Separate assaults were launched against both strong points, with little initial success and heavy losses. It wasn’t until two brigades, under Shields (soon-to-be-President Franklin Pierce, the other brigade leader, had fallen from his horse and was hors de combat), crossed the river west of the village and moved (slowly) against the rear of Santa Anna’s position, that the Americans began to make headway. Santa Anna was forced to move several regiments north of the river to meet this move – his cavalry, under Torrejon, didn’t seem to have much affect in keeping the flanking force away ... the usual story with Mexican cavalry – and this stretched his forces south of the river to the point where they were starting to lose effect. When several US regiments managed to cross the Churubusco to the east (not portrayed in the game), Santa Anna saw the handwriting on the wall and ordered his men to abandon their positions and retreat to Mexico City for the final stand.

It took much of the afternoon for Scott to accomplish this, and his men got a rather bloody nose against stubborn and capable Mexican defenders,

Preliminary Information

Churubusco uses a scale different from the big battles, c. 50 yards per hex, similar to that in Chapultepec. While the Turn/AM sequence remains the same, each Turn now represents c. 30 minutes, not an hour. Some of the basic rules mechanics have been streamlined (cf. the artillery fire rules, below).

Balance

This is a difficult game for the Americans to win ... if the Mexican player can maintain his position. He outnumbers the attackers, but much of that is ephemeral, as his cavalry is not in an aggressive mood and many of his units, especially the National Guard units, are in combat for the first time. But he has position, and he has field of fire. And his purpose is to delay, not hold forever. So, if he's still in place by the end of the 10th turn (which would be about the time that the Mexicans, historically, folded tent and stole away), he's done his job ... and he wins.

CHANGES TO BASIC GBACW RULES

(3.0) SEQUENCE OF PLAY

II. B is used only by the US, and is applicable if the brigadier is within Command Range of his Division commander.

D is **not** used.

(4.0) COMMAND

The US Division Commanders' Activation Rating is not used, and there are no Artillery Leaders.

(5.0) ACTIVATION

(5.1) The US automatically has the Initiative each game-turn.

(5.21) Only the US uses Efficiency markers, as per the battle rules, below.

(5.3) The Americans use Division Activation Markers. The Mexicans use Army markers for all infantry and artillery units. The Cavalry AM is used for the mounted units.

(5.34) Only the US may use Brigade Coordination.

(5.36) There is no Mexican Division leader. Mexican brigadiers are in Command if they are within Santa Anna's range. Otherwise, they are treated as Out of Command for this battle and, thus, do not get to use II/B (Division Orders).

(5.4) Not used.

(6.0) THE ORDERS SYSTEM

(6.1) There are no March orders in this battle; just Advance and Attack.

(6.3) The Reserve Rule is not used.

(7.0) FACING

(7.21) **Change:** Units under Advance Orders may change facing one vertex (per hex they are in) at no cost in MP.

(8.0) STACKING AND EXTENSION

(8.12) The Stacking limits are 5 SP of infantry (or one counter, whichever is bigger) and up to six guns. **Only 2 guns** may be placed (plus the infantry) in a Defensive Wall hex (e.g., 4103),

(8.4) Line Extension is not used; we've kept the units to small enough size, *vis a vis* the scale, to make this unnecessary. See, though, Special Fire Rules, below.

(10.0) FIRE COMBAT

See the Special Rules for Fire, below.

(10.52) Mexican units in Defensive Wall hexes may use prepared Fire at any range, if they don't move.

(10.61) Mexican artillery may **not** move. US batteries may **not** move and fire in the same activation.

(10.63) Mexican guns in different hexes may not combine fire. Guns that are stacked together may do so, regardless of type.

(11.0) SHOCK ASSAULT

(11.37) Units **defending** against shock while in a Defensive Wall hex **subtract one (-1)** when undertaking a Pre-Shock Cohesion check.

(13.0) MORALE AND RALLY

(13.3) Ignore this rule; it is not used.

(15.0) ENGINEERING

This section is ignored; no one may build breastworks.

(17.0) FATIGUE

Fatigue is not used; the battle is too short.

SPECIAL RULES FOR THE BATTLE

TERRAIN

Fields. The entire area around the village of Churubusco (and the Portales “farm” just to the north) was cornfield, with the corn head high, and the ground criss-crossed with irrigation ditches and wagon ruts. The corn slowed movement, and the ditches rendered artillery movement extremely difficult, other than by roads.

Causeways and Roads. The farm roads provide the only speedy access on the battlefield. The Causeway leading into the *tete de pont* appears “raised” because it is bordered by the same type of ditch(perhaps not quite as wide) that surround the strong points.

Ditches. These were mostly for irrigation, although the defensive works used the idea, in moat fashion, to make moving against them just that more difficult. The ones surrounding the fortifications were 4 feet deep and 28 feet wide.

The Defensive Walls. The walls guarding both the *tete de pont* and the convent were recently constructed, and done so quite well, although, as you can see, the western flank was not finished. About 9 feet high, the walls had places atop for the guns and defenders, and thus they are placed inside the hex (not on the hexside). A unit in a defensive Wall is assumed to be atop that wall. It may exist in that hex and not be on the wall by placing a “Not on Wall” marker atop of it. Note costs to get atop wall from inside, and to get off the wall (also inside).

Play Note #1: *Remember that units defending inside/atop such fortifications (a) get a -1 DRM to any pre-Shock Cohesion checks, and (b) may ignore Retreat results.*

The Convent and Church. The church buildings had their own walls, not built for defensive purposes but quite high. They were not crossable militarily, with access to the convent grounds solely by doors and gates. The Mexicans had constructed some scaffolding along the walls to allow a few men to take position there, and some defenders were atop the convent roof. Given that the area outside of the convent was about 100 yards away, and that the walls did much to block LOS, it is not quite sure what good these units could do.

With this in mind, the game allows entry by any **one** unit to the Convent through either of the two gates, and such entry places that unit atop the convent roof.

EFFICIENCY/ACTIVATION MARKERS

The **Mexicans** get to put two (2) Activation markers into play each turn. He may use either two Army AM, or one Army and one Cavalry AM. They do not use/need efficiency markers.

- The Army Marker activates all infantry and artillery on the map.
- The Cavalry AM activates all cavalry. However, cavalry may only be activated once per turn.

The **Americans** get 6 Efficiency markers, which are drawn for the 3 US Divisions (four 2's, two 3's). Each Turn the US player draws one for each Division, as per the usual rules. However, they may not be modified by any ratings.

SMALL-ARMS FIRE

(8.31) The Maximum Fire Strength per hex is **five (5)**.

(8.45) If both units - 'a' and 'b' (e.g., the 4 US regiment) - of the same regiment are in adjacent hexes, for purposes of combining fire SP's, they are treated as if they were "extended".

Play Note: *This does not apply to 10.42/Return Fire.*

Infantry uses the Churubusco Small-Arms Range Chart to determine the DRM for fire.

SPECIAL ARTILLERY RULES

On-Map Artillery

Given the scale of the map, any gun of the era could reach any hex on the map with relative efficiency, given good Line of Sight. Therefore, to simplify matters, the artillery in this battle do not use the normal artillery firing rules. Instead, they use the Churubusco Artillery Firing Table.

When firing guns, the player rolls the die and consults that table. He adjusts that die roll as follows:

- +1 for each SP over '1' in that unit. Thus, a 2SP section would get a +1 DRM
- -1, for all Mexican guns.
- +1 for firing at any target within three hexes.
- -1 if off-map; see below

Historical Note: *The Mexican artillery held their fire until the Americans were in musket range, mostly for effect, partially because the corn hid the approaching units.*

Restrictions. Aside from the normal LOS rules, Mexican artillery atop the defensive Walls may not fire into any hex adjacent to that wall hex. This includes Reaction/Return Fire. (A question of the inability of the guns to depress at that angle).

US Off-Map Artillery

The US batteries do not have to move onto the game map. The fields presented major movement problems, and the roads and causeways, narrow as they were, had to remain open for the foot units.

The three US batteries may be placed one hex off-map, at either 3202 or 3211. They count range by tracing from there, the first hex they count being either 3202 or 3211. Mexican guns may fire at these batteries by reversing the range count.

US **off-map** artillery may **not** fire at any hex that is adjacent to a friendly unit.

THE MEXICAN ARMY

Initial Mexican Deployment

[All units are under Advance Orders]

<u>Hexes</u>	<u>Units</u>
Any Defensive Wall hex, or other hex adjacent to the Convent.	Rincon ; All units of the Bravos and Independencia National Guard; the San Patricio Battalion; all 7 4lb, 6lb, and 8lb artillery units.
Within 2 hexes of 4212	Perez ; any 4 units from Perez's brigade, 3 12-pounder Guns (1 per hex)
On the road between the Tete de pont and the Convent (3907-4209)	Any 3 units from Perez's brigade
Any hex north of and adjacent to the Churubusco R. from 4312, east.	Any 4 units from Perez' brigade
Within two hexes of 4511	Santa Anna [a] ; the Hussars of Special Powers [b], Tulancingo Curraissiers, Light Mounted Regiment of Vera Cruz

Torrejon's Cavalry

The Mexican Player has a large brigade of cavalry sitting just off the eastern edge of the map, north of the river.

The Mexican Player may bring these units on in any Turn after an American unit has appeared north of the Churubusco. They enter with any Cavalry Activation (see above) through 4618.

a = It appears that Santa Anna was in overall command of the Mexicans during most, if not all, of the battle. However, his role appears to have been limited to moving units around to shore up defenses. As the Mexican position here is entirely defensive, there is no need to have Santa Anna be part of the “game” mechanics.

b = The Hussars are Santa Anna’s personal guard. They will never move more than one hex away from him, and they move only when Santa Anna moves. The other two regiments may be activated as part of a cavalry activation.

THE US ASSAULT FORCE

No US units start on the map; all units enter as Reinforcements. They enter under whatever Orders the US Player wishes.

There are three divisions:

- Worth’s 1st Division: the brigades of Garland and Clarke
- Twiggs’s 2nd Division: the brigades of Smith [**a**] and Riley
- Pillow’s 3rd Division.: the brigades of Pierce and Shields [**b**]

a = Smith’s brigade (1/2 Div), included the regiment of Mounted Rifles. While these men fought dismounted at Cerro Gordo, it appears that they were mounted here and served solely as escort for the infantry. We have not included them in the counter-mix.

b = Shield’s brigade was actually part of Twigg’s Division. However, it was reassigned to Pillow for the attack because, among other reasons, Pierce (soon to be 14th President of the US) fell off his horse early in the day, fainted from the pain, and could not take command., So his regiments were combined with those of Shields to form one brigade.

US units enter through any one of three entry hex/areas. The US Player must assign, before starting, one division to each of the three entry hexes.:

- **3402** (This is the road from Cocoyanas, where Scott has his HQ)
- **3411** (the road from San Antonio, and Contreras)
- **4501-4601**. These hexes may not be used until Turn 4.

Historical Entry: For those wishing to follow exactly who entered where, the attack started with an assault on the Convent, led by Smith’s brigade. Worth’s Division was assigned the road from Cocoyanas (3402). Twigg advanced from San Antonio (3411) with (Clarke’s brigade in the lead. Garland’s brigade (for the most part) entered somewhat later and swung to the right (east) to cross the river. Shield’s extended brigade (from Pillow) entered a couple of hours after the initial assaults had taken place, as a flanking maneuver, through 4501-4601.

Historical Note: *A company of dragoons was present, but did not take place in the battle.*

Initiative

The US Player always has the Initiative.

VICTORY

The game has **10 Turns**.

The **U.S. Player wins** if, at the end of any game-turn (not Activation Phase), he occupies **both 4311 and 4212**.

The **Mexican Player wins** if the US player doesn't.

CHARTS AND TABLES

THE TERRAIN EFFECTS CHART: Churubusco

<u>Terrain</u>	MOVEMENT				COMBAT		
	<u>Inf</u>	<u>Cav</u>	<u>Arty</u>	<u>Leader</u>	Effect* on <u>Fire</u>	Effect* on <u>Shock</u>	Block <u>LOS? [r]</u>
Fields	2	2	4	2	-1[f]	x	NO
Road [a]	1	1	1	1	x	x	NO
Village	2	3	3	2	-1	-1	NO
Convent [b]	3	NO	NO	3	x	x	YES
River	+2D	+4D	NO	3	x	-3	NO
Ditch	+1	+2	NO	+1	x	-1	NO
Defensive Wall [e]	+2	NO	NO	+1	-1 [d]	-2 [d]	YES [g]
Convent Wall [b]	NO	NO	NO	NO	x	x	YES
Gate, Bridge	Negates Cost of Crossing Hexside				OTIH	OTIH	NO
Change Facing, per vertex [c]	1	1	1	1	NO EFFECT		

x = No Effect **NO** = Not Allowed **OTIH** = Other Terrain in Hex
D = Automatically Disordered at end of movement

* = Effects are all adjustments to the Dieroll. They apply if the defender is in the named hex, or being shocked/fired at across that hexside.

Movement Notes

- a = The roads, of course, negate any other terrain in the hex for movement costs.
- b = This refers to entering the convent through the gate and going onto the roof, which is allowed for one unit only. The cost also applies to leaving the roof and going through the gate.
- c = There is no cost for changing facing when using - and following - a road.
- e = See restrictions on the number of guns that may in any one of these hexes.

Combat Notes

- a = Road hexes are considered to be "clear".
- d = Units that incur a Retreat result as a 2nd Disorder from either Shock or Fire may, if it wishes, ignore the Retreat and stay in place with no additional effect.
- f = This applies to all fire except that from an adjacent hex. It has more to do with visibility than anything else.
- g = To everything except the Convent roof.

Churubusco Artillery Firing Table

<u>Adjusted Dieroll</u>	<u>Result</u>
0-3	No Effect
4	d-2
5	d-1
6	d
7	d+1
8	d+2
9+	D

Dieroll Adjustments

- +1 for each SP over '1' in that unit. Thus, a 2SP section would get a +1 DRM
- +1 for firing at any target within three hexes.
- 1 all Mexican guns.
- 1 Terrain?
- 1 Artillery moved

There are no DRM for Off-Map US Artillery, other than terrain.

Churubusco Small-Arms

<u>Weapon Type</u>	<u>Max/Prep</u>	<u>Range in Hexes</u>						
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6-7</u>	
M (Musket)	[5/2]	+3	+2	0	-1	-3	x	
BkR (Baker Rifle)	[7/2 'x']	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3	
C (Carbine)	[5/na]	+1	0	-1	-2	-4	x	
E (Escopetta) c		[1/na]	+3	x	x	x	x	x

x = See new 10.52. The effectiveness of the Baker Rifles was often reduced by fouling.

COUNTERS

Leaders (Repl in Italics)

S. ANNA Army **** 0 4	RINCON Convent * N 3 +1 <i>Repl</i> * C 3 0	PEREZ Tete * N 3 -1 <i>Repl</i> * C 2 -1	TORREJON Cavalry * C 3 0 <i>Repl</i> * C 2 -1
--------------------------------	---	--	---

Activation Markers

MEXICO ARMY AM	MEXICO ARMY AM	MEXICO CAVALRY AM
----------------------	----------------------	-------------------------

Regular Infantry (Disordered status in Italics)

1 Liger a Perez X BkR 4-6-6 4-5-5	1 Liger b Perez X BkR 4-6-6 4-5-5	3 Liger a Perez X BkR 5-6-6 5-5-5	3 Liger b Perez X BkR 5-5-6 5-4-5	3 Liger c Perez X BkR 4-5-6 4-4-5	4 Liger a Perez X BkR 4-6-6 4-5-5	4 Liger b Perez X BkR 4-5-6 4-4-5	4 Liger c Perez X BkR 4-5-6 4-4-5	11 Line a Perez X M 6-7-6 6-5-5	11 Line b Perez X M 6-6-6 6-5-5
11 Line c Perez X M 6-6-6 6-5-5	San Pat Rincon X M 5-9-6 5-8-5								

Irregular Infantry

BravosNG Rincon X M 6-4-5 6-2-4	BravosNG Rincon X M 5-3-5 5-2-4	BravosNG Rincon X M 5-3-5 5-2-4	IndpNG Rincon X M 6-4-5 6-2-4	IndpNG Rincon X M 5-3-5 5-2-4	IndpNG Rincon X M 5-3-5 5-2-4
---	---	---	---	---	---

Cavalry

2 Line Torrejon / C 4L-4-9 4L-2-7	3 Line Torrejon / C 3L-4-9 3L-2-7	7 Line Torrejon / C 4L-4-9 4L-2-7	8 Line Torrejon / C 4L-4-9 4L-2-7	GuanAct Torrejon / E 3L-2-9 3L-0-7	SLPAct Torrejon / E 3L-2-9 3L-0-7
TulCrsr a S.Anna / C 5-7-9	TulCrsr b S.Anna / C 4-7-9	LtMtVC S.Anna / C 4L-5-9	Hussars S.Anna / C 2-6-10		

5-5-7 4-5-9 4L-3-9 2-5-9

Artillery

Convent	Convent	Convent	Convent	Tete	Tete	Tete
• 4	• 6	• 8	• 8	• 12	• 12	• 12
[2]-7-x	[1]-7-x	[2]-7-x	[2]-7-6	[1]-7-x	[1]-7-x	[1]-7-x

USA Counters (Front)

US Army/Division Leaders and AM

SCOTT	WORTH	TWIGGS	PILLOW
Army	1st Div	2nd Div	3 rd Div
****	** 1	** 0	** 0
+2 6	5	3	2

WORTH	GARLAND	RILEY	CDWLDR
Army	1st Div	2nd Div	3rd Div
Repl	Repl 1	Repl 0	Repl 0
+1 4	3	2	2

US Brigadiers

Garland	Clarke	Smith	Riley	Shields
1/1Div	2/1Div	1/2/Div	2/2/Div	1/3Div
* A	* N	* A	* N	* N
3 +1	4 0	5 +1	3 +1	4 0

BELTON	ABCRMB	LORING	REPL	REPL
1/1	2/1	1/2Dv	2/2Dv	3/Div
Repl N	Repl N	Repl N	Repl N	Repl N
3 0	3 0	2 0	3 0	3 0

US Efficiency and AM

4 '2' Efficiency

2 '3' Efficiency

3 AMs each for Worth, Twigg and Pillow

US Regular Infantry

4 US a	4 US b	2 Art a	2 Art b	3 Art a	3 Art b	5 US a	5 US b	6 US a	6 US b
Garland	Garland	Garland	Garland	Garland	Garland	Clarke	Clarke	Clarke	Clarke
X M	X M	X M	X M	X M	X M	X M	X M	X M	X M
4-7-6	4-7-6	3-6-6	3-6-6	3-6-6	3-6-6	4-7-6	3-6-6	3-7-6	3-6-6
4-6-5	4-6-5	3-5-5	3-5-5	3-5-5	3-5-5	4-6-5	3-5-5	3-6-5	3-5-5

8 US a	8 US b	Light	3 US	1 Art	7 US	2 US a	2 US b	9 US a	9 US b
Clarke	Clarke	Clarke	Smith	Smith	Riley	Riley	Riley	Shields	Shields
X M	X M	X M	X M	X MR	X M	X M	X M	X M	X M

4-7-6	3-6-6	4-7-6	5-7-6	4-6-5	5-6-6	4-7-6	3-6-6	3-6-6	3-6-6
4-6-5	3-5-5	4-6-5	5-6-5	4-5-4	5-5-5	4-6-5	3-5-5	3-5-5	3-5-5

12 US Shields X M	15 US a Shields X M	15 US b Shields X M	Voltgrs Shields X M
2-6-6	3-6-6	3-6-6	3-7-6
2-5-5	3-5-5	3-5-5	3-6-5

US Volunteer Infantry

1 SC Shields X M	2 NY Shields X M
4-7-5	4-6-5
4-6-4	4-5-4

Artillery

A, 2US a Garland • 6	A, 2US b Garland • 6	K,1US a Smith • 6	K,1US b Smith • 6	3rd Art Shields • H12	3 Vol Art Shields • 12
[2]-8-8	[2]-8-8	[2]-8-8	[2]-8-8	[2]-8-7	[2]-7-7

MARKERS

Need:

Strength markers 1-6
 Combat Ineffective Brigade
 Shock (Check Cohesion)
 Attack/Advance
 Cavalry Charge
 Prepared Fire
 Must/May Advance
 Collapes/Blown
 “Not on Wall” (about 5)