

1808
1809

Los Sitios de Zaragoza

La Aljafería

Following the events on 2 May 1808 in Madrid and as news arrived from all the Spanish capital cities, anti-French riots arose in many of them. The one in Zaragoza took place on 23 May.



Plano de los Sitios. Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza, 4-2-0244.

THE ALJAFERÍA PALACE IN THE SIEGES

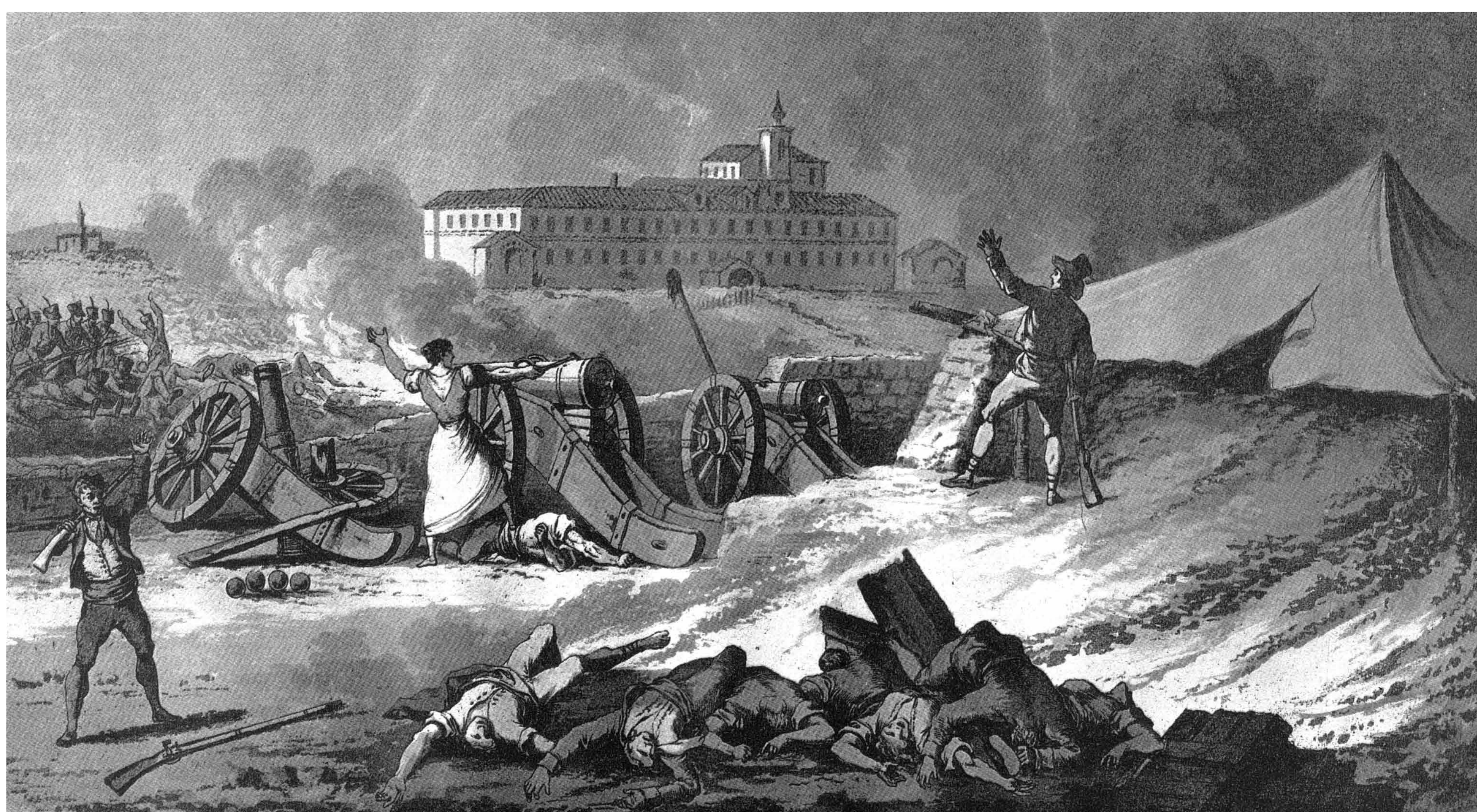
On 24 May, rebellious Zaragoza citizens requested weapons from Captain General, Jorge Juan Guillelmi, who refused them. They captured him and took him to the Aljafería Palace where he was imprisoned, while they seized the existing arsenal there: 25,000 rifles and 65 artillery pieces.

During the War of Independence (1808-1814), the Castle had well differentiated uses: it was a fortress during battles and a prison. Palafox took part of the French residents in Zaragoza there to protect them; it was a prison for Spaniards during the French occupation and subsequently, a prison for the French.

And after two sieges, the capitulation of the city to the French forces was signed in the Aljafería Castle on 22 February 1809. The combatants who could still stand had to surrender their weapons in the Aljafería esplanade in front of the French troop formation.



Fachada principal del Castillo de la Aljafería de Zaragoza. Mariano Júdez y Ortiz, 1859-60. Álbum de Andrés Martín e Ipas. Colección Mariano Martín Casadelrey, Zaragoza.



Engraving by Gálvez y Brambila. PORTILLO ARTILLERY BATTERY. As she watched the defenders fall dead or wounded with no one to shoot the artillery, this is the spot where "Agustina de Aragón" jumped over the corpses to grab a fuse to grab a gunner who had just died. With uncanny bravery, she then halted the fierce momentum of the enemies in their attack on 4 July.



English
Français
Mapa/Map/Carte



CAJA RURAL
DE ARAGÓN



Zaragoza
AYUNTAMIENTO

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As they awaited events, the French Army had slowly been occupying several strategic positions. After taking over Pamplona, they fixed their sights on Zaragoza, the key to the Ebro valley and a major milestone on the road towards lower Catalonia and Valencia.



The defenders of Zaragoza departing from the city on 21 February 1809. Maurice Orange. 1893 Musée d'Art Thomas Henry Cherbourg-Octeville.

JORGE JUAN GUILLELMI Y ANDRADA

(Seville, 5 January 1734). Captain General of Aragon in 1808 and Military Governor of Zaragoza. Knight of the Order of Santiago and Lieutenant-General upon graduation. He had served in that post since 1797 and was a veteran Artillery officer who had learned marksmanship techniques under Frederick the Great. He fought in the siege of Gibraltar and the Balearic Islands against France in 1795; and he was seriously wounded in action. He earned distinction as a wise professor and taught mathematics at the Academy of Segovia from 1781 to 1790. His famous scientific voyage with Tomás de Morla began in 1787. He died on 9 March 1809 in the Aljafería Castle where he had been confined since 24 May 1808.



Manuscrito El Burgués de Hamburgo. Ejército español 1807-1808.



Canvas of the former Cavalry barracks, called "Cuartel del Cid", in front of the Averly factory. Present state.

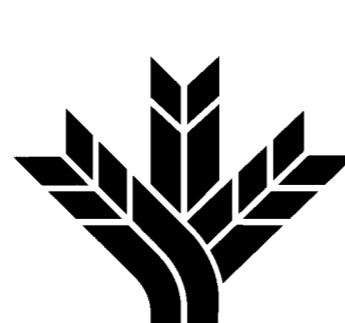


Postcard published to celebrate the centennial of the Sieges of Zaragoza, 1908. "Cid" Cavalry Barracks. Archivo Municipal de Zaragoza. 4-1_016308.

In the nearby Promenade called Paseo de María Agustín, it is still possible to see the painting of the rear façade of the former Cavalry barracks. This barracks was built between 1774 and 1775 and was later named "El Cid" barracks. One of the French attacks took place at this barracks on 15 June 1808. The French soldiers invaded the city through that gate and those windows and the people of Zaragoza halted them there after a bloody combat.



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