

How do we know what we know? *Advanced*

Unit 6: The Republic of Texas

Name:

Date:

Period:

Part I: Life After the Texas Revolution

Many Texas families had abandoned their homes and fled for safety in the Runaway Scrape during the Texas Revolution. They had often burned their property and even entire towns to prevent Santa Anna's army from using the resources they had to leave behind. When the war ended, many returned to their homes and began the difficult work of rebuilding their lives and communities. The years after the war were very difficult for many Texans.

Rosa Kleberg was a young German immigrant who had moved to Cat Spring, Texas, 130 miles east of San Antonio, during the early 1830s. While her husband fought in the Battle of San Jacinto, Rosa fled her home with her infant child in the Runaway Scrape. At the time, she was only twenty-three years old. Decades after the war, Rosa recalled what life had been like as she and her family returned home to rebuild their lives after the Texas Revolution.

"Upon returning home, everybody went peacefully to work once more. There was scarcely any crime; but times were very hard. Nearly all the cattle in the country had either been stolen ... or were strayed and could not be found. A pig and one lame old ox constituted our entire live stock. Our house had been partly consumed by fire, and our crop of corn and cotton was, of course, totally destroyed. ... There was no ready money in the country; at any rate, we had none of it; and, what was worse, were in want of provisions. I sold some fine linen table cloth which I had brought from Germany for rice and flour. Six pounds of flour or rice could be obtained for one dollar. ... The first store that did business after the war stood near the present site of Bellville. San Felipe was rebuilt soon afterwards. In 1837, my husband was made associate commissioner of the Board of Land Commissioners, and in 1838 he was made president of that body by J. P. Borden, Superintendent of the Land Office. Upon his return from Houston he poured a number of bright silver dollars into my lap. This was the first money I had seen since the outbreak of the war."

- The Narrative of Rosa Kleberg, The Texas Historical Association Quarterly.
The Portal to Texas History

1. In your own words, explain at least three of the challenges that Rosa and her family faced after the Texas Revolution.

2. In the passage, Rosa stated that, **“Six pounds of flour or rice could be obtained for one dollar.”** One dollar in 1836 would be the equivalent of about \$34.00 in today’s money!

How many years passed after the war before Rosa and her family had actual money, according to the passage? How did they pay for necessary items until then?

3. After the war, the government of the Republic of Texas struggled to pay off its debt and raise the funds necessary to run the government and protect its citizens.

Do you think that the financial struggles of Texas citizens like Rosa Kleberg and her family had a positive, negative, or neutral effect on the government’s ability to meet its financial obligations? Explain.

Part II: Hope for the Republic of Texas

The Republic of Texas faced a number of challenges including a large national debt, economic instability, and an ongoing struggle to gain recognition of its independence, sovereignty, and borders. Throughout the era, the government had limited options for addressing these challenges. Read the following excerpt from one north Texas newspaper discussing two potential solutions to the various challenges Texas faced after the war.

"All would be gloom if it were not for the prospect that the political horizon may lighten up during the next 12 months, and annexation with the United States, or commercial alliance with England, remove all our difficulties, and bring us once more, plentiful times, light hearts, and merry faces."

- The Northern Standard Newspaper of Clarksville, Texas. December 2, 1843
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1. According to the article, what were two potential solutions to the many challenges Texas faced in 1843?

2. Which of these two potential solutions do you think most Texans would prefer, and why?

Part III: An American Point of View on Texas Annexation

One option the Texas government seriously considered and worked toward was the annexation of Texas to the United States of America. Many Texans believed that joining the U.S. would provide the Republic of Texas a measure of economic, social, and military stability that Texas struggled to achieve on its own.

Americans held different points of view about the possibility of Texas' annexation to the United States. Henry Clay was an American politician running for president of the U. S. in 1844. In the excerpt below, he stated his opinion on Texas' annexation to the United States.

"I consider the annexation of Texas, at this time, without the assent of Mexico, as a measure compromising the national character, involving us certainly in war with Mexico, probably with other foreign Powers, dangerous to the integrity of the Union, inexpedient in the present financial condition of the country, and not called for by any general expression of public opinion."

- A letter from American politician, Henry Clay, to the National Intelligencer newspaper of Washington D.C., April 17, 1844.

1. According to the excerpt above, did Henry Clay support or oppose Texas annexation to the United States? Provide textual evidence to support your answer.
2. In your own words, explain Clay's reasons for his opinion on Texas annexation.