

Battles of the Texas Revolution: 1835-1836

Lesson Overview



The Texas Revolution began well before 1836 and started as a fight between conflicting ideas about government in Mexico. Those living in Texas were divided; some believed they were fighting for independence, and others were fighting to restore the Constitution of 1824. In this lesson, the students will explore more about the significant events in the Texas Revolution that included

- 1835 Siege of San Antonio de Bexar
- Battle of the Alamo
- Goliad Massacre
- Battle of San Jacinto

Essential Question

How does conflict cause political, economic, and social change?

Explain the lasting impact of the people and events leading to the Texas Revolution.

Think like a Historian:

Primary source conversations on the importance of Tejanos troubles with the Law of April 6, 1830

Source: [Excerpted from Petition from Ayuntamiento of Bexar to Coahuila-Texas Legislature, December 19, 1832, reprinted in David J. Weber, ed., *Troubles in Texas, 1832: A Tejano Viewpoint from San Antonio* (Dallas: Wind River Press for DeGolyer Library of SMU, 1982)]

Think - Pair - Share
Using the guided questions,
analyze the primary source
*Support your claims using text
evidence.*

Document Analysis

Most Tejanos considered the Texas Revolution to be part of a civil war within Mexico between “centralists” and “federalists,” and those conflicts went back as early as 1830. With the passage of the Law of April 6, 1830, both Tejanos and Anglo-Americans believed the Texas economy and the future colonization of Texas were in jeopardy. For those in Texas, this law was another attempt by the conservative government in Mexico City to control Texas.

Current State of Affairs in Mexico

What was going on with Mexico in 1835?

Much of Mexico was in rebellion.

The Mexican States led by the states of Yucatan, Zacatecas, and Coahuila y Tejas were upset because Santa Anna overthrew his own government, threw out the Constitution of 1824, ended Federalism, and assumed dictatorial powers for himself.

Santa Anna felt Federalism failed to bring the necessary stability to Mexico.

Texas was in Rebellion

In December 1835, General Cos and the Mexican army were defeated by the Texans at the Siege of San Antonio de Bexar. With the surrender of the Mexican Army, they were released to return to Mexico and never return to Texas. Many people believed that the Mexican troops would remain out of the region for months.

Yet from Santa Anna's perspective, Texas was in a state of rebellion, and his plan was simple - crush the insurgency in Texas as he had in Zacatecas and make examples of the rebels.

Sam Houston

Sam Houston was a newcomer to Texas, arriving in 1832 after his first marriage failed in 1829. Like many Anglo-Americans flooding into Texas, Houston saw the endless opportunity. Houston settled near Nacogdoches and opened a law practice.

Houston quickly became involved in Texas politics. He tended to side with the more radical "war party" that included William B. Travis and William H. Wharton, and by October 1835 had come to believe that war was inevitable. In November 1835, he was named commander of the newly established Texas Army.

In early 1836 word arrived that Santa Anna and his army were approaching Texas; most thought it would take Santa Anna months to arrive in Texas. Sam Houston then sent Jim Bowie and 25 militia soldiers to the Alamo to remove the cannons and abandon San Antonio. Bowie, along with Colonial Neill, later decided to fortify the Alamo.

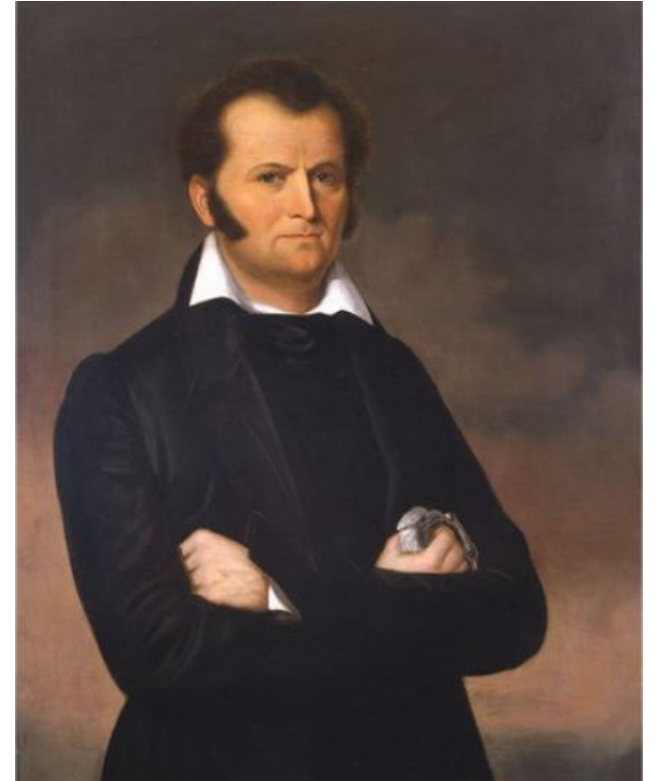


Raba, Ernst Wilhelm, 1874-1951. [General Sam Houston], photograph, Date Unknown; (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph459990/>), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting San Antonio Conservation Society.

Jim Bowie

When Bowie arrived in Texas in the 1830s, he speculated on land and slave trading. Bowie became a Mexican citizen and eventually married Maria Ursula Veramendi, the daughter of an influential family in San Antonio de Bexar. Sadly, in 1833, Maria Ursula and their two children died of a cholera epidemic sweeping San Antonio de Bexar. Bowie remained distraught over the loss of his family for the rest of his life.

Bowie was the leader of the volunteer militia at the start of the Alamo siege, but he collapsed on the second day because of a lung ailment and had to turn over control of his troops to William B. Travis. Bowie spent the rest of the Alamo siege severely ill and bedridden, before being killed on March 6, 1836, when Santa Anna's troops stormed the Alamo.



Jim Bowie, probably George Peter Alexander Healy, oil on canvas, c. 1820s.

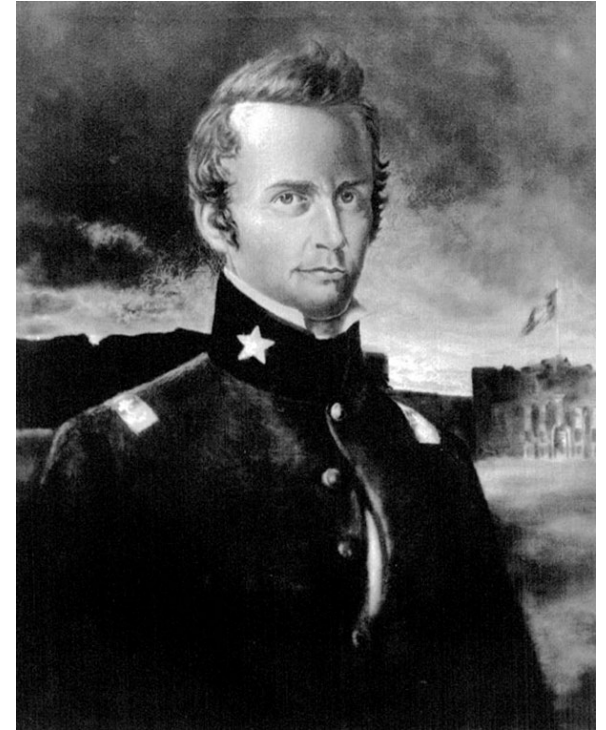
Capitol Historical Artifact Collection, State Preservation Board. Retrieve from <https://tspb.texas.gov/prop/tc/tc-collection/artwork/index.html>

William Barret Travis

Travis arrived in Texas sometime in 1831, after abandoning his pregnant wife and young son in Alabama. In Texas he established a law practice in Stephen F. Austin's colony and soon established himself as a leader of the "war party" that began pushing for a fight against Mexico City. In late 1835, Travis became a lieutenant colonel in the Texas Army under the leadership of Sam Houston.

At the direction of Houston, Travis and 29 Texas soldiers arrived in San Antonio on February 3, 1836, to fortify the Alamo. Travis would later become the commander at the Alamo when Col. Neill left the fort to assist a sick family member.

When Santa Anna surrounded the Alamo on February 23, 1836, Travis sent out several pleas for additional troops and support, but very little support came. Travis was shot and killed during the beginning of the final Battle of the Alamo.



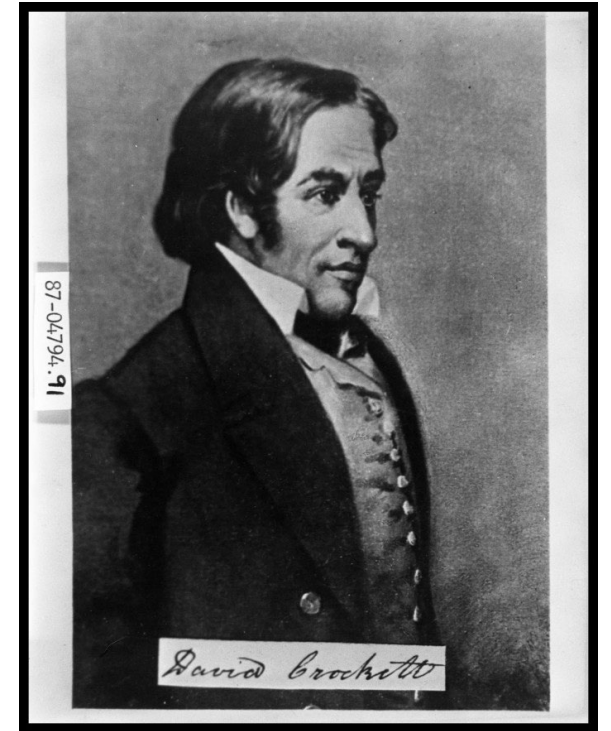
Portrait of William Barret Travis by McArdle, The McArdle Notebooks, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/mcardle/alamo/alamo74.html>

Davy Crockett

Arriving at the Alamo with his 12 volunteers shortly after the arrival of Travis, Crockett, like most, came to Texas for a new start and to take advantage of cheap land. To many in the Alamo, Crockett was a celebrity. He was known as a frontier legend, a sharpshooter, a hunter, and a storyteller. Crockett was also a former US Congressman from Tennessee.

Eyewitness accounts of Crockett show him as an effective leader, always providing support to Travis and Bowie and rallying the Alamo defenders. He would sometimes play his "fiddle" to raise the spirits of the men.

Crockett and his fellow Tennesseans men defended the "palisade" near the Alamo chapel and were killed at the end of the Alamo battle. Some accounts have Crockett and his men being captured at the end of the fight, only to be executed immediately afterward on the orders of Santa Anna.



Portrait of David Crockett, photograph, Date Unknown;
(<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapt:h55640/>: accessed August 19, 2021), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/>; crediting Hardin-Simmons University Library.

Juan Seguín

Tejano Juan Seguín was born in San Antonio de Bexar in 1806 to influential parents Erasmo Seguín and Maria Josefa. In 1834, Juan Seguín became the “jefe political” or the political chief of San Antonio de Bexar and was a supporter of Stephen F. Austin’s colonization efforts. Seguín, much like his father, was a passionate believer in federalism and intensely loyal to his native state of Texas.

As the events of the Texas Revolution escalated, Seguín recruited 37 Tejanos for the Texas rebellion and he fought against Santa Anna’s troops in the Battle of Bexar in



Chicano Times Magazine (San Antonio, Tex.) July 1, 1971;
(<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph1337448/>), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/>; crediting Our Lady of the Lake University.

December 1835. Seguín later served as a courier out of the Alamo, seeking help for the Texas rebels surrounded by Santa Anna. When the Alamo fell, Seguín recruited more Tejanos for the Texas Army and assisted Sam Houston on his eastward retreat. Seguín later fought against Santa Anna in the Battle of San Jacinto.

Juana Navarro Alsbury

Juana was the daughter of Jose Angel Navarro, the brother of the influential Tejano Jose Antonio Navarro. She was a Tejana, born in Texas, and adopted and raised by the wealthy Veramendi family. She knew James Bowie, who was married to Maria Ursula Veramendi. She eventually married Dr. Horace Alsbury, who was part of the Siege of San Antonio de Bexar.

Along with her two children, Juana was brought to the Alamo by James Bowie for shelter and protection. Juana was an eyewitness to the fighting in the Alamo. She provided nursing support to the men during the siege of the Alamo. She narrowly escaped with her life and her valuables were stolen by Santa Anna's soldiers. In the end, Santa Anna pardoned her for siding with the rebels because her father, the political chief of San Antonio de Bexar, had remained loyal to Santa Anna's government. In the aftermath of the fall of the Alamo, Juana joined family members in San Antonio.

Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson pt.1

Susanna Dickinson was a native of Tennessee and came to Texas at the age of seventeen with her husband, Almeron Dickinson. The Dickinsons moved in February 1831 to Gonzales, Texas, where they had a daughter – Angelina -- in 1834.

Almeron was involved in the Battle of Gonzales on October 2, 1835, the first skirmish of the Texas Revolution. Soon after the battle was over, most of the men in Gonzales joined Texian volunteers under the command of Stephen F. Austin and left for San Antonio. Susanna, just like many other women in the colony, was left alone with her young baby to maintain their home, taking on all of her husband's responsibilities.



Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson. Texas State Library and Archives.

Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson pt.2

By December of 1835, she and her baby Angelina joined her husband and the other Texian volunteers in San Antonio. On February 23, 1836, the Dickinson family, along with other women, children, and Texian volunteers retreated to the Alamo to endure the 13-day siege.

Following the battle on March 6, 1836, Susanna and Angelina, along with “upwards of a dozen” other Tejano women, children, and African American men were taken by Mexican soldiers to be interviewed by General Santa Anna. Various accounts state that Santa Anna sent each woman away with two pesos and a blanket. Many of the survivors returned to their family home in or near San Antonio. Susanna, however, had lost her husband and had no family in Texas to return to.



Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson. Texas State Library and Archives.

Antonio López de Santa Anna

Antonio López de Santa Anna Pérez de Lebrón, soldier and president of Mexico, was born to a criollo middle class family in Vera Cruz, on February 21, 1794. In 1833, he was elected president of Mexico as a federalist, but in 1834 he stated that Mexico was not ready for democracy and emerged as an autocratic centralist.

In 1836 he led an army north to San Antonio where he would defeat the Texian troops at the Alamo. After his capture by Sam Houston's army at the Battle of San Jacinto, he was sent to Washington, D.C., and soon afterward he returned to Mexico.



Santa Anna on horseback, image, Date Unknown; (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth31618/>: accessed December 17, 2021), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Star of the Republic Museum.

Santa Anna Arrives

On February 23, 1836, Santa Anna and his army arrived at San Antonio and laid siege to the Alamo. The Texians barricaded themselves inside the Alamo. The Alamo defenders did not intend to die there; many believed they would be reinforced. One of Travis's first acts was sending out couriers to request aid and reinforcements.

Another request was sent to Goliad to James Fannin to come to their aid with his 400 volunteers, and another went to the Texas settlements asking for more men and reinforcements.



Tolucan Battalion Flag. Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/historicflags/4034Toluca.html>

A Chance to Surrender

Santa Anna gave the Texans one final chance to reconsider and surrender, but Texans fired a cannon shot at the Mexican army to say “NO!”

Santa Anna then raised the red no quarter flag, meaning “No Prisoners!”

Think like a Historian:

Primary source letter from William Barret Travis called Victory or Death - one of the most famous documents of Texas History.

Source: "William Barret Travis' Letter from the Alamo, 1836." TSLAC | Texas State Library And Archives Commission, 21 Mar. 2016, www.tsl.texas.gov/

Think - Pair - Share

Using the guided questions,
analyze the primary source
*Support your claims using text
evidence.*

Document Analysis Questions 1:

1. What does Travis mean when he writes "The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken." Support your response with evidence.
2. Based on the information in the second paragraph, what is Travis willing to do?
3. What was Travis' overall tone in this letter?

Constitutional Convention of March 2, 1836

Near the end of the siege at the Alamo, delegates from across Texas met on March 2, 1836, at Washington-on-the-Brazos to form a new Texas government. When news arrived of the dire situation in San Antonio, some wanted to ride to the aid of the defenders of the Alamo. Sam Houston urged them to focus instead on establishing a government.

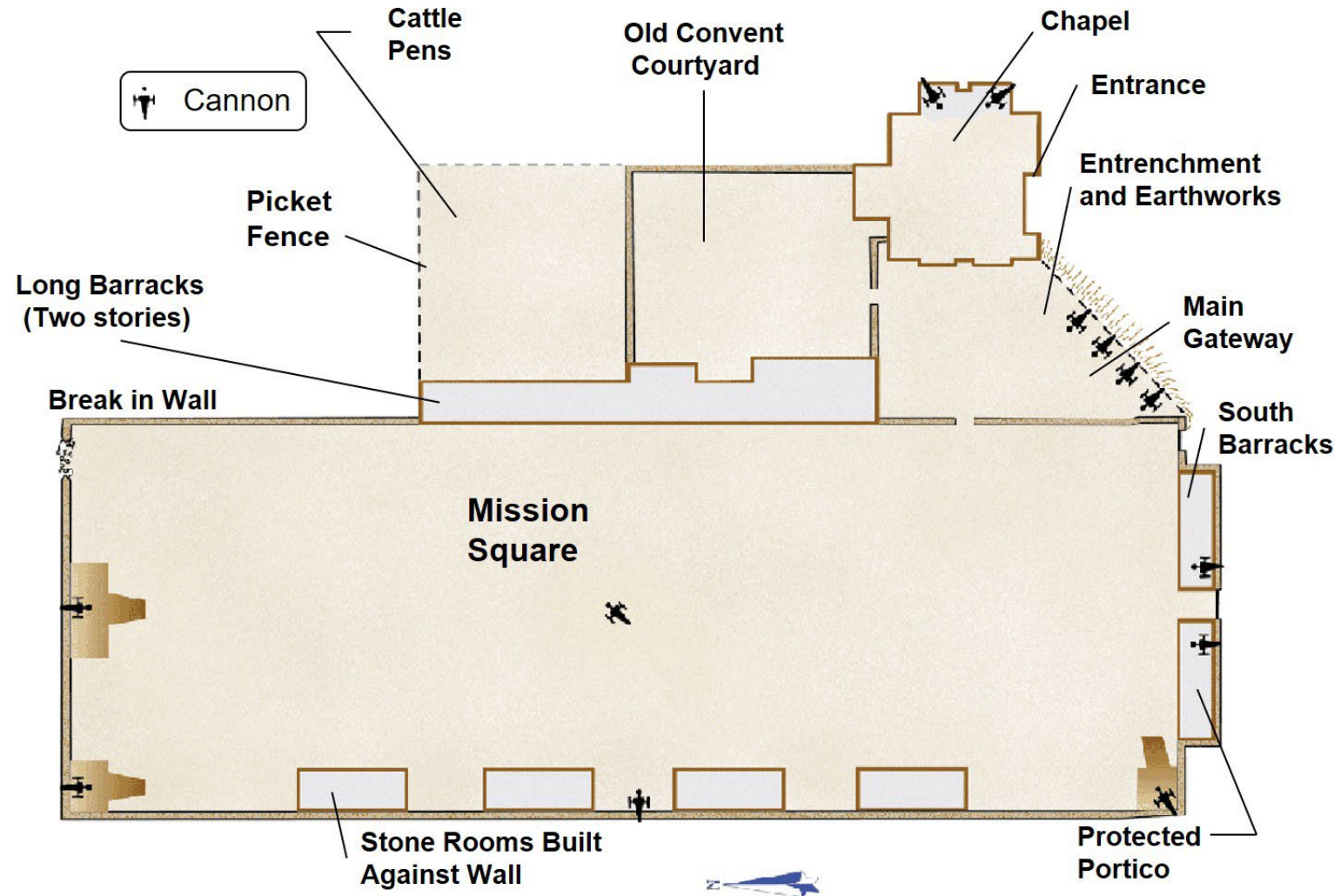
The new government elected David G. Burnet as the ad interim (temporary) President, and an influential Tejano delegate, Lorenzo de Zavala, as the ad-interim Vice President. The delegates declared Texas independent from Mexico on March 2, 1836, and named Sam Houston as the commander of a new Texas Army and then wrote a new constitution for Texas.

Siege of the Alamo

The Mexican army kept up a constant cannonade throughout the 13-day siege. The Alamo was never intended to withstand long-term cannonade. It was built to withstand Indian attacks and serve as a mission. Yet the defenders of the Alamo held out, hoping that the rest of Texas would rally to the cause and reinforce them.

Then under cover of darkness on March 1, 1836, a small group of 32 men arrived from nearby Gonzales to reinforce the Alamo. In the celebration of the arrival of the Gonzales group, Travis fired off two cannon shots—one of which tore through the tent of Santa Anna's headquarters. Two days later, another rider brought the news that Fannin and his men from Goliad were not coming.

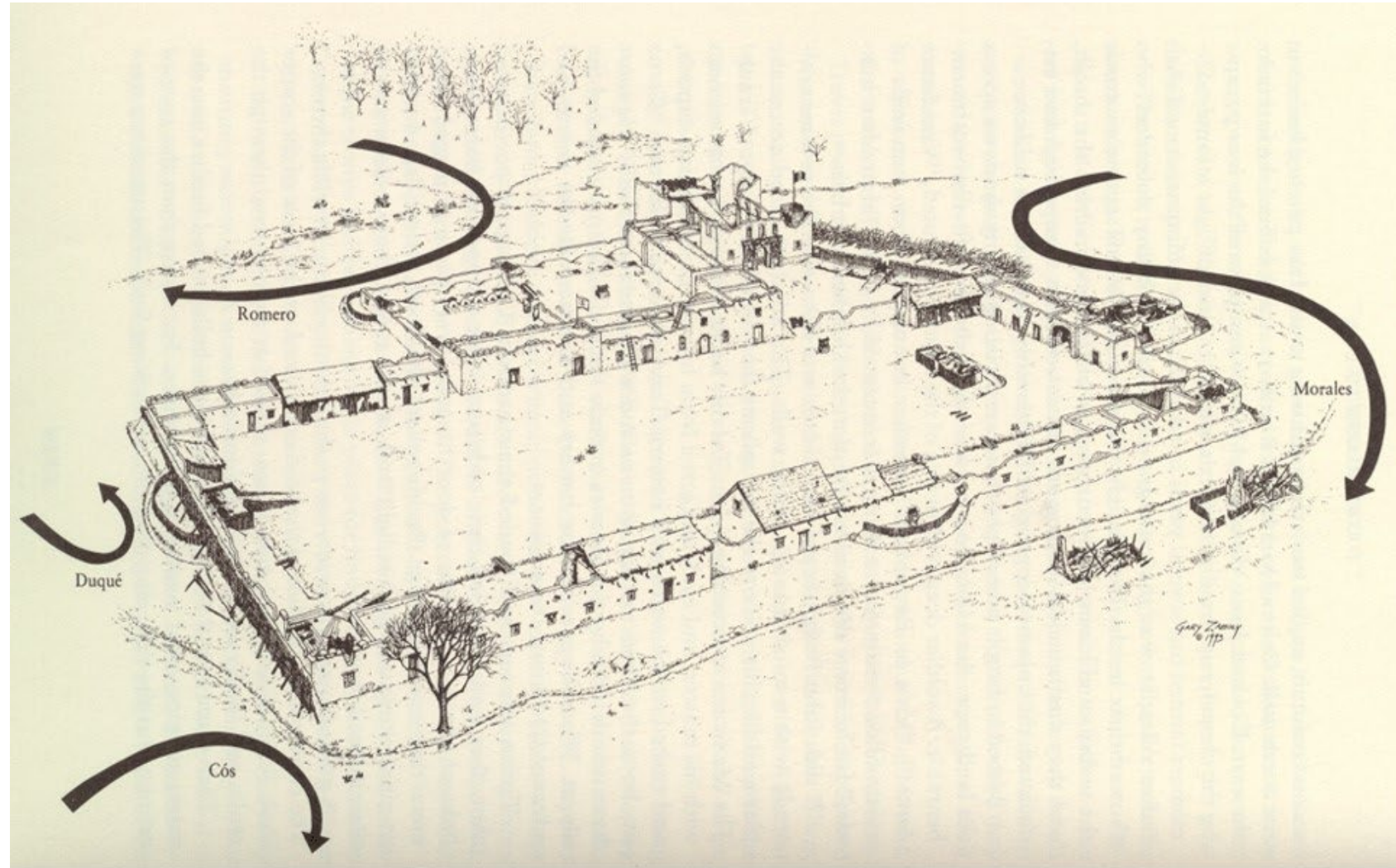
Diagram of the Alamo



Battle of the Alamo

Santa Anna ordered the end of the constant cannonade on March 5, which he hoped would lull the defenders of the Alamo into sleep. In the predawn darkness on March 6, 1836, the Battle of the Alamo began as Santa Anna's army launched rocket flares and began firing as they advanced from four sides.

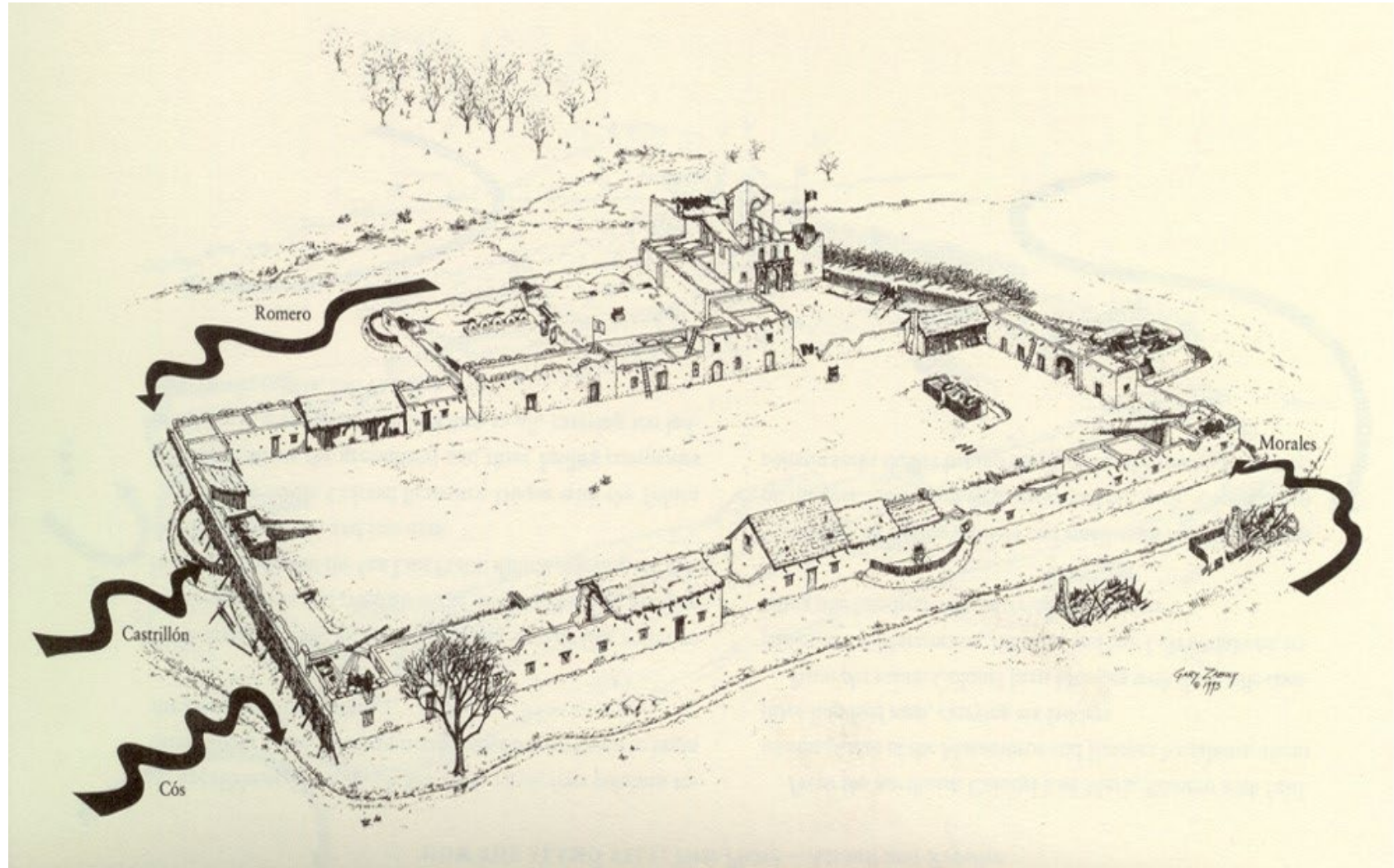
Battle of the Alamo 1st Wave



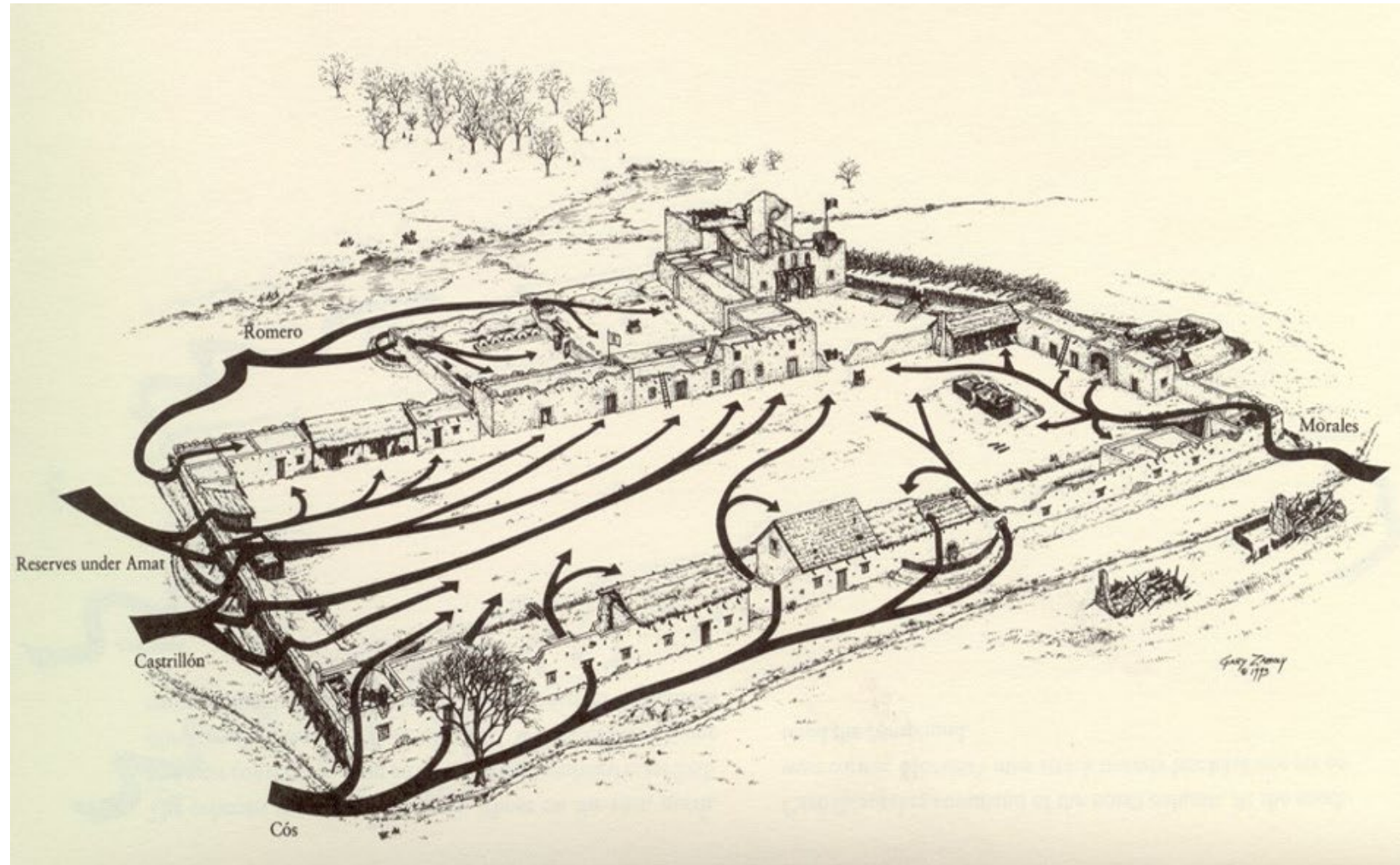
Hardin, Stephen L. *Texian Iliad*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994.

<https://education.texashistory.unt.edu>

Battle of the Alamo 2nd Wave



Battle of the Alamo 3rd and Final Wave



Think like a Historian:

Primary source conversations on
the importance of women in the
Texas Revolution

Source: "William Barret Travis' Letter from the Alamo, 1836." TSLAC |
Texas State Library And Archives Commission, 21 Mar. 2016,
www.tsl.texas.gov/

Think - Pair - Share

Using the guided questions,
analyze the primary source
*Support your claims using text
evidence.*

Primary Source Document Analysis

Students will analyze primary source excerpts from Susanna Dickinson and others who documented her journey in the Revolution.

Santa Anna Divides his Army



Wikimedia Commons contributors, "File:Campaigns of the Texas Revolution.jpg," *Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Campaigns_of_the_Texas_Revolution.jpg&oldid=509769018 (accessed August 19, 2021). derived from Pageant of America, Vol. 2, The Lure of the Frontier (1928), Yale University Press.

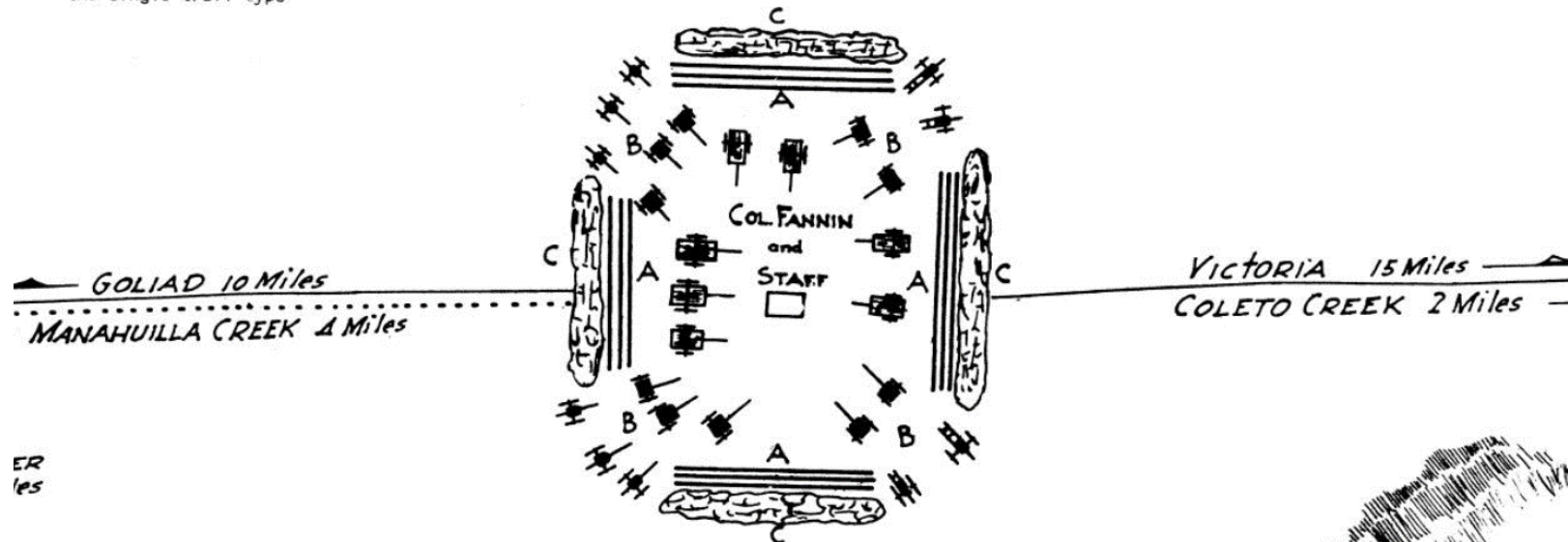
<https://education.texashistory.unt.edu>

Battle of Coleto Creek

"Fannin's Fight"
March 19, 1836.

- A Texan Infantry
- B " Artillery
- C " Breastworks
- D Mexican Dragoons
- E " Infantry
- F Rise of 6 feet, behind which Mexican Artillery fired, on the 20th

...Col. Fannin's line of march
---Gen. Urrea's line of march
Duval wrote that the Texan Infantry were in three lines, behind breastworks
Shackelford and others wrote that they had 10 cannon in action
The Mexican cannon, found at Goliad by Fannin, were the obsolete, split trail type
The Texan cannon, from the United States, were of the single trail type



Houston, Andrew Jackson. Military Maps of the Texas revolution, map, 1938; Houston.

(<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph2489/>; accessed August 19, 2021), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/>.

Goliad Massacre

With Fannin's surrender, the Texan army was marched back to Goliad as prisoners. The wounded were placed in the hospital at the presidio. Several days later, those who could walk were divided into three groups, marched out of the presidio in separate directions, and summarily executed by Santa Anna's troops. The wounded were also taken out and shot.

A handful managed to get away, but the vast majority – about 400 men -- were cut down where they stood. With the help of Francisca Alvarez, 20 men were able to escape execution. She is known today as the “Angel of Goliad.”



Moore, Larry D., "File:Angel of Goliad Texas Centennial Monument.jpg," *Wikimedia Commons*, the free media repository, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Angel_of_Goliad_Texas_Centennial_Monument.jpg&oldid=547075114 (accessed August 19, 2021). CC BY-SA 4.0

Battle Cry

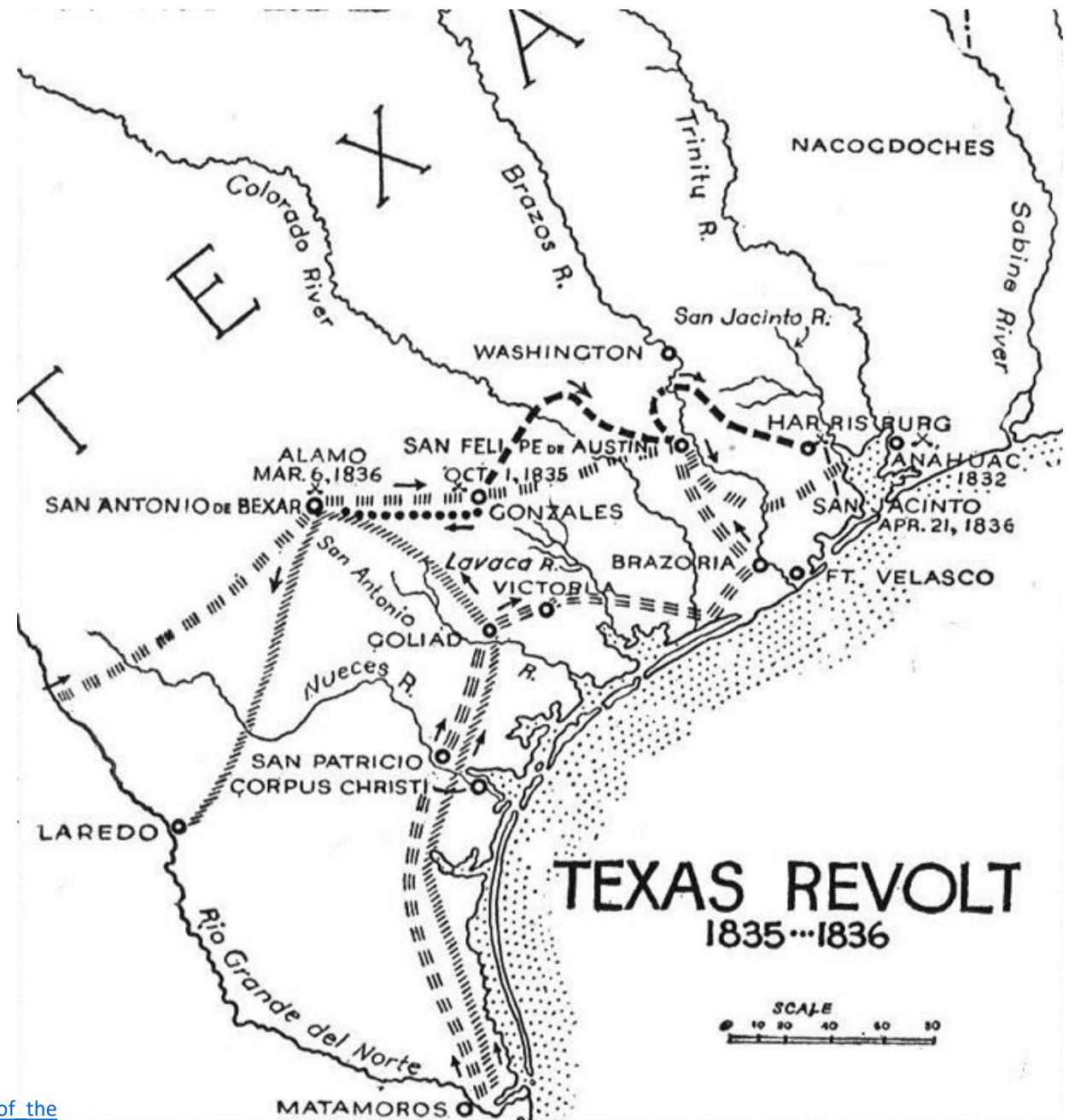
The memory of those Texas defenders who fought and died to the very last man in the struggle for independence at the Alamo and later Goliad angered Texans. That anger would fuel the Texans' resentment towards Santa Anna and the Mexican government.

“Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!” would become the battle cry of Texans everywhere.

Runaway Scrape

CAMPAIGN ROUTES

AUSTIN	• • • • •
HOUSTON	— — — — —
COS	//////
URREA	≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡
SANTA ANNA	



Wikimedia Commons contributors, "File:Campaigns of the Texas Revolution.jpg," *Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Campaigns_of_the_Texas_Revolution.jpg&oldid=509769018 (accessed August 19, 2021). derived from Pageant of America, Vol. 2, The Lure of the Frontier (1928), Yale University Press.

<https://education.texashistory.unt.edu>

An Account of the Runaway Scrape

Creed Taylor, who served in the Texas Army, recalled in 1900:

“I have never witnessed such scenes of distress and human suffering . . . Delicate women trudged alongside their horses, carts, or sleds from day to day until their shoes were literally worn out, then continued the journey with bare feet, lacerated and bleeding at almost every step. Their clothes were scant, and with no means of shelter from frequent rains and bitter winds, they traveled on through the long days in wet and bedragged apparel, finding even at night little relief from their suffering since the wet earth and angry sky offered no relief . . . Thus these half-clad, mud-besmeared fugitives, looking like veritable savages, trudged along.”

The Runaway Scrape narrated by Creed Taylor, ca. 1900, in *Tall Men with Long Rifles* by James T. DeShields
Wallace L. McKeehan, *Sons of Dewitt Colony Texas*, 1997-2018

Think like a Historian:

Primary source account of the Runaway Scrape by Dilue Rose Harris

*Source: The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris. II, 162,
The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association, JANUARY, 1901,
Vol. 4, No. 3 (JANUARY, 1901), pp. 155-189*

Think - Pair - Share
Using the guided questions,
analyze the primary source
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evidence.*

Document Analysis Questions, part 2:

1. Dilue Rose began her account of the Runaway Scrape by remembering the moment that they learned of the fall of the Alamo. What was their reaction to the news? Use text evidence to support your answer.
2. In the second section of document A, Dilue states: "Then began the horrors of the "Runaway Scrape." What is your initial reaction to the Runaway Scrape based on that statement?
3. Dilue outlines the conditions she and her family endured at the Trinity River in document B. In your opinion, out of all the hardships she described, which three are most horrific? Explain your reasoning.
4. The very last excerpt from document B refers to the "bad news.... Fannin and his men were massacred." Which battle of the Texas Revolution is she referring to?

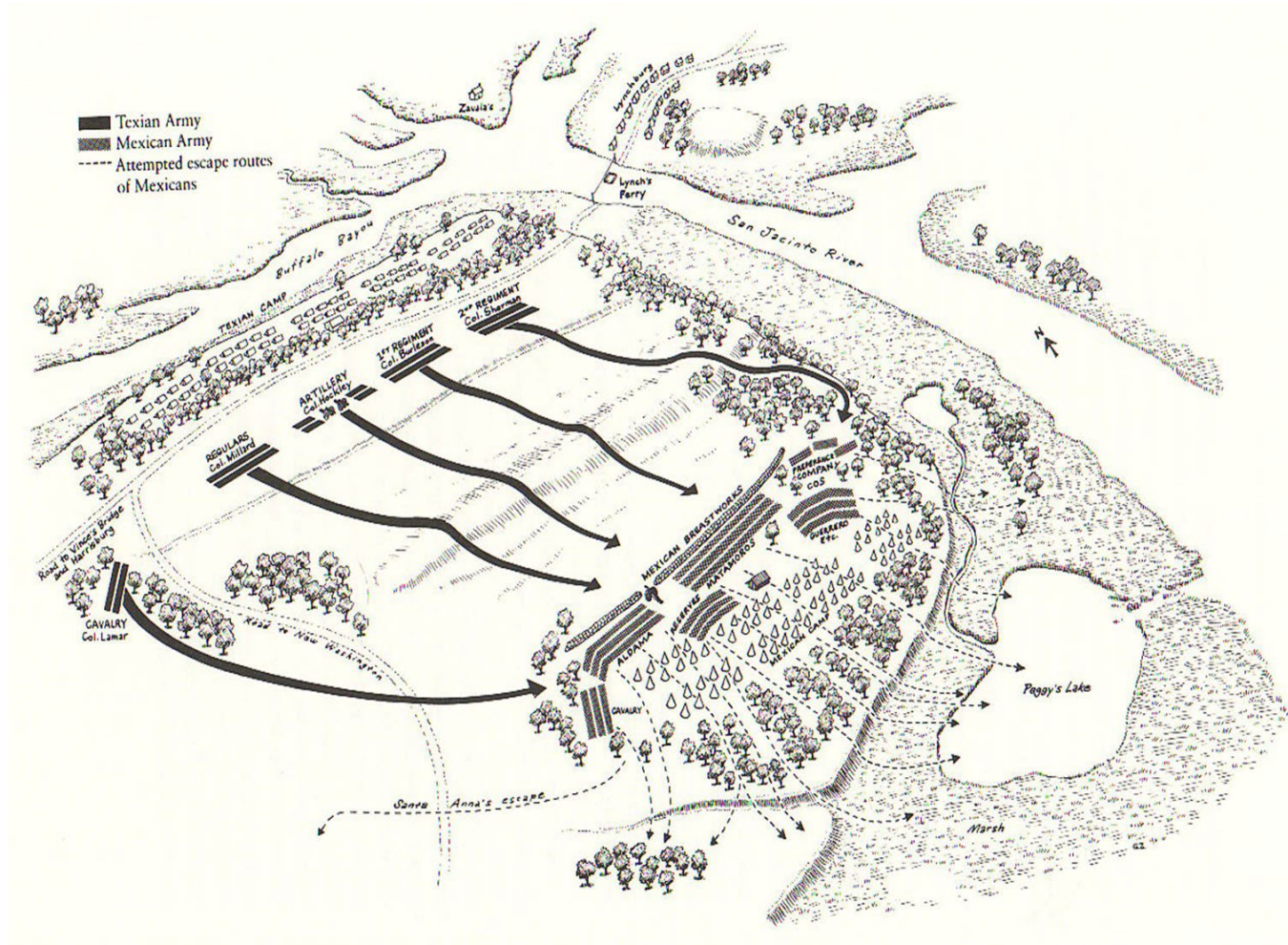
San Jacinto



Wikimedia Commons contributors, "File:Campaigns of the Texas Revolution.jpg," *Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File:Campaigns_of_the_Texas_Revolution.jpg&oldid=509769018 (accessed August 19, 2021). derived from Pageant of America, Vol. 2, The Lure of the Frontier (1928), Yale University Press.

<https://education.texashistory.unt.edu>

San Jacinto Battlefield



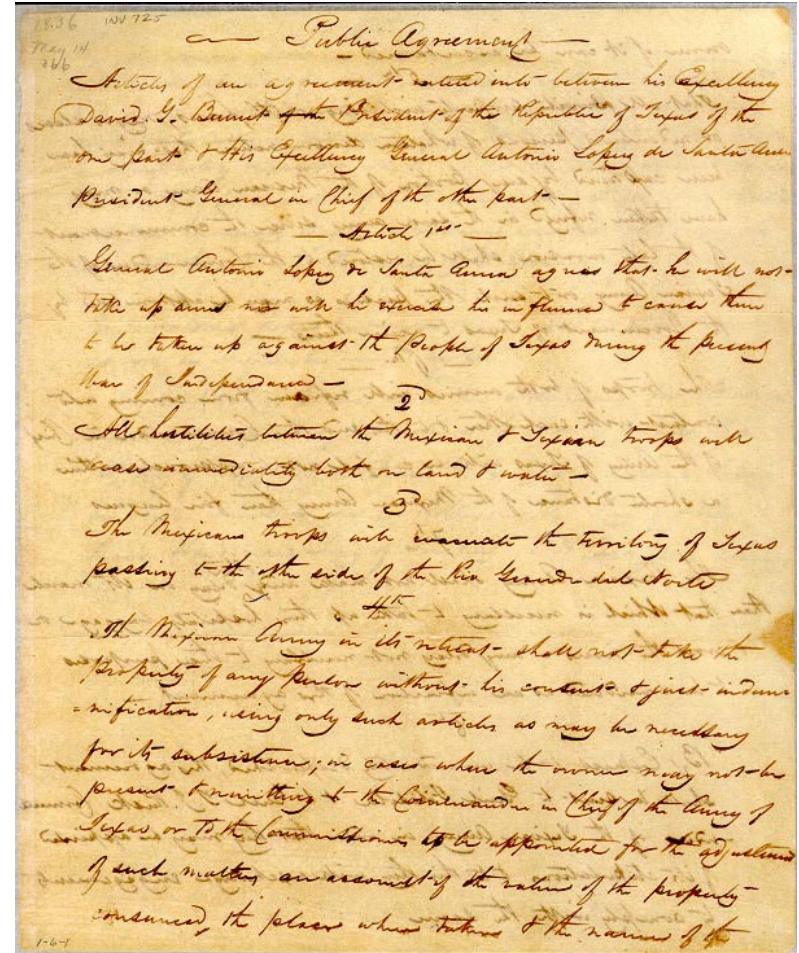
Battle of San Jacinto



The Battle of San Jacinto, Prints and Photographs Collection, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/mcardle/paintings/sanjac-big.html>

Treaty of Velasco – Public Treaty

With the capture of Santa Anna, Texas was independent of Mexico. The remaining Mexican army retreated into Mexico, and Houston forced Santa Anna to sign two treaties. The first treaty stated Santa Anna agreed to sign over all Mexican rights to Texas, promised never to fight against Texas again, and ordered all Mexican forces out of Texas.

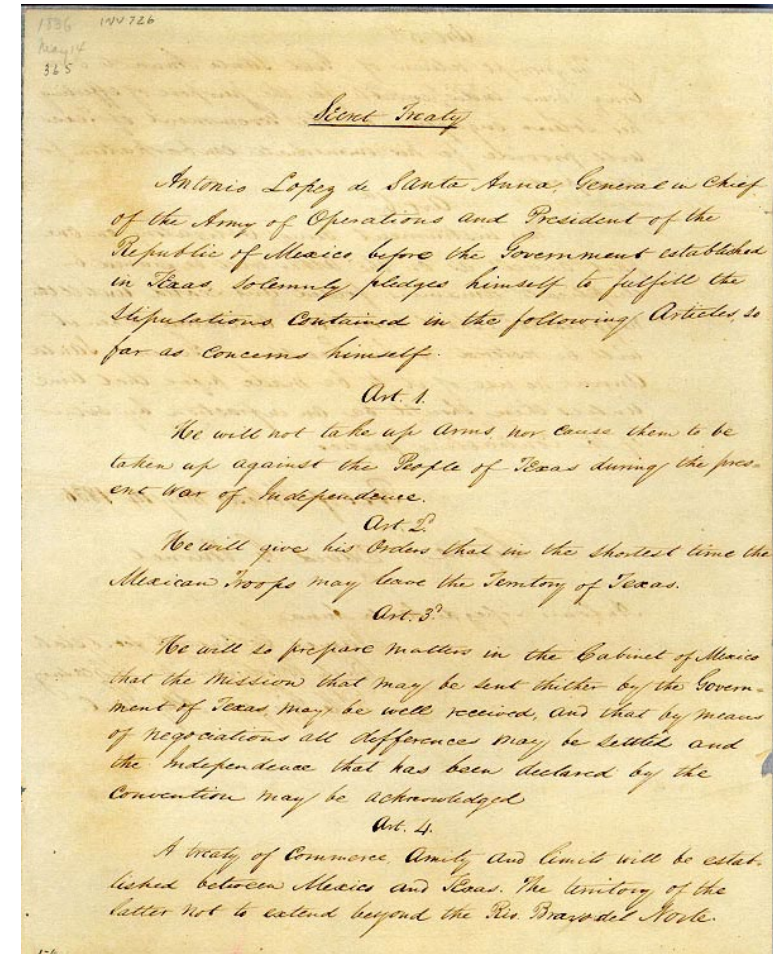


The Treaty of Velasco (Public), May 14, 1836, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/treasures/republic/velasco-public-1.html>

Treaty of Velasco – Secret Treaty

In the second treaty, Santa Anna promised to work with the Mexican government to recognize Texas was independent. Santa Anna also promised to try to get Mexico to recognize the Rio Grande as the boundary of Texas.

Then Santa Anna was sent to Washington, DC, to meet with Andrew Jackson, the president of the United States. From there, Santa Anna made his way back to Mexico City. Although he had promised to help secure Mexico's ratification of the Treaty of Velasco, Mexico's government refused.



The Treaty of Velasco (Private), May 14, 1836, Republic of Texas Legation in Washington correspondence, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/exhibits/texas175/velasco-secret.html>

Think like a Historian: Primary source accounts on the Aftermath of the Runaway Scrape

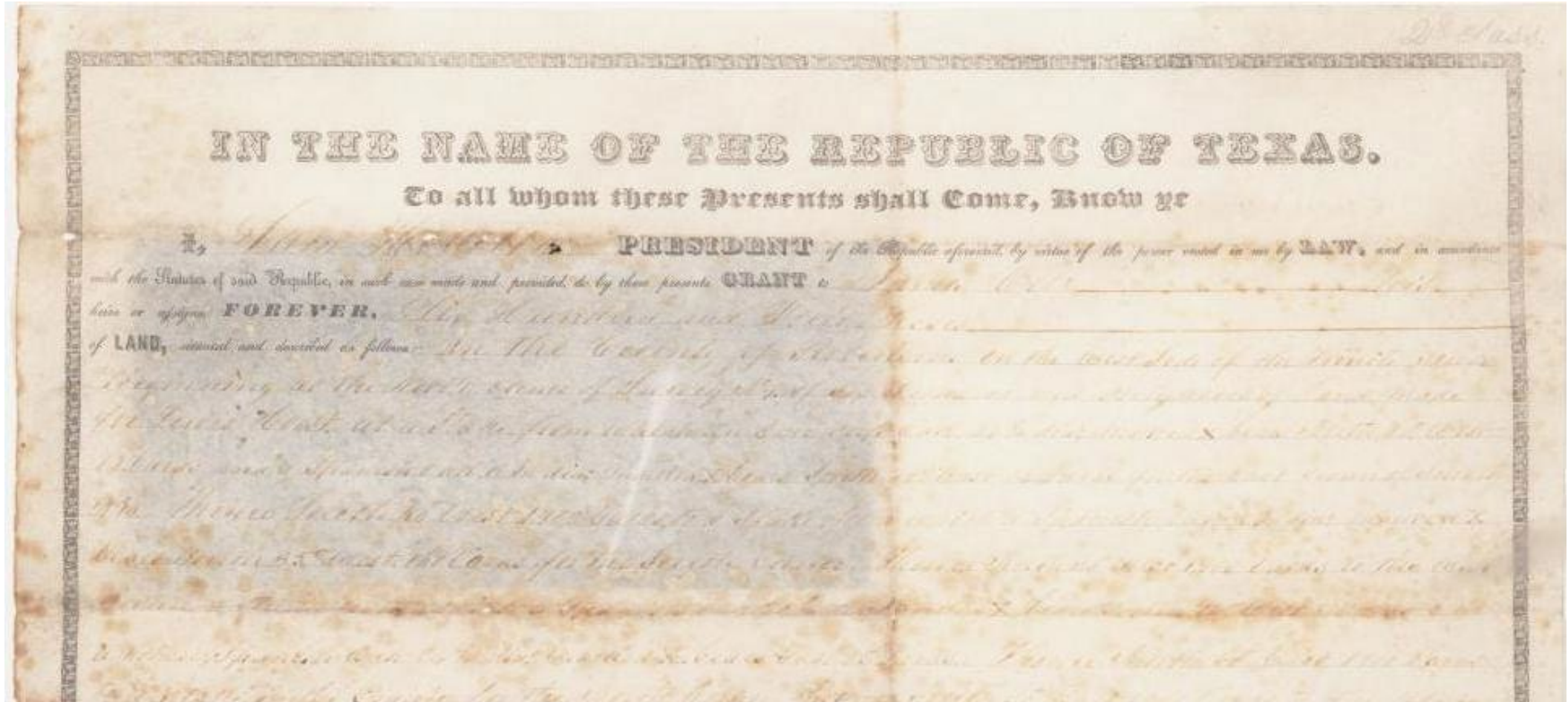
Source: The Papers of the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836 (Austin: Presidial Press, 1973), Lack, The Texas Revolutionary Experience, 235.

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Document Analysis Questions, part 3:

1. Document A gives an account of Angelina Peyton's return to her tavern in the aftermath of the Runaway Scrape. The closing remarks state "She could stand to stay but a short time . . . before moving on to Columbia to open another tavern." In your opinion, do you think other colonists did the same thing? Why or why not?
2. Based on the accounts from documents B and C, use three adjectives to describe the type of women that endured the events of the Texas Revolution.

Significant Challenges



Republic of Texas Land Grant Certificate, photograph, March 28, 1844;
(<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph34854/>), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Dallas Heritage Village.