

Name:

Date:

Class/Period:

## Voices: American Indians in the Texas Revolution

### Accounts of American Indians in Texas leading to and during the Texas Revolution: The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue (Rose) Harris

**Instructions:** Read the background information and analyze primary source excerpts by Dilue Rose. First, answer the document analysis questions, then analyze and respond to the reflection

#### **Background Information:**

Born in 1825 in St. Louis, Dilue moved with her family to Texas in 1833 to the lower Brazos River, the heart of cotton country. She was only 10-years-old at the outbreak of the Revolution. Dilue documented the events of the Revolution through journal entries that provide a very unique and valuable perspective of the conditions Texas colonists endured. Her journal entries are now organized into a collection of documents titled "The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris" and excerpts from this are displayed below.

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*Background information provided by Dr. Andrew J. Torget,  
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#### **Document A, January, 1834. – The Roark Family**

"Mrs. Roark, a widow lady, lived two miles from our house." ... "They came with Austin's first three hundred emigrants. The husband, Mr. Elijah Roark, was murdered by Indians in December, 1829, near San Antonio. Mr. Roark, his eldest son, Leo, and a young man were going to San Antonio with a wagon load of country produce. It consisted of butter, cheese, lard, bacon, soap, candles, and various other things which they expected to exchange for dry goods and family supplies. San Antonio, at that time, was the only market in Texas." ... "The terrible tragedy of Mr. Roark's death was a great source of sorrow to all the people in the neighborhood, and left his family almost destitute [in poverty]."

Texas State Historical Association. "The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association, Volume 4, July, 1900 – April, 1901" pp. 162. *The Portal to Texas History*. University of North Texas Libraries.

<https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Texas State Historical Association. Accessed September 25, 2021.  
<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph101018//m1/132>

**Document B, December, 1834**

“The men had been absent but a few days from home when a large tribe of Indians came and camped between our house and Mrs. Roark’s. There were two or three hundred men, women, and children. They came in the night. They had a large drove of Indian ponies. One squaw came to the house to buy corn. She said they were good Indians. She could speak English. She said they lived at the Waco village at the falls of the Brazos river, and were going to Harrisburg to sell hides. They had a great many buffalo hides and bear skins. The women and children in our neighborhood were afraid of them. Mrs. Roark had a perfect horror of Indians. It was only five years since they had murdered her husband.”

Texas State Historical Association. “The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association, Volume 4, July, 1900 – April, 1901” pp. 162. *The Portal to Texas History*. University of North Texas Libraries. <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Texas State Historical Association. Accessed September 25, 2021. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph101018/m1/132>

**Analysis Questions:**

1. Based on the information from documents A and B, did the women and children living in Dilue’s neighborhood have reason to be afraid of the American Indians? Why or why not? Support your answer with text evidence.
  
2. In your opinion, what was the relationship between American Indians and Anglo-Americans during the 1830’s? Explain your reasoning.

## Comparison of Two Journal Entries

### Background Information:

Dilue (Rose) Harris made two journal entries almost exactly one year apart. In her first entry from March, 1835, she reports over the good conditions of Texas but in her journal entry from March, 1836, Dilue reports over the conditions of Texas during the Runaway Scrape.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>March, 1835</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report over the conditions in Texas Months before the first battle of the Texas Revolution</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>March, 1836 Crossing the Trinity River</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report over the conditions of the Anglo- American colonists during the Runaway Scrape in the Texas Revolution.</p>
<p>“The Indians left the first of March. We were glad to see them go.” ... “The Indians left in the morning, the men with guns first, the squaws carrying their papooses tied on their backs, and leading the ponies, and the dogs following. The ponies were packed with buffalo robes, blankets, bear skins, pots and kettles, and things too numerous to mention. The children were riding in baskets suspended across the ponies' backs.” ... “The farmers were planting cotton, and corn was up and growing. Father hired help that year. He was the only doctor in the neighborhood, and he was obliged to hire two boys. He had been well paid for the last year's practice. The people of Texas were doing well, and if it had not been for the uncertainty of the Mexican laws father could have located land and got a home.”</p> <p>“Father was well pleased with the country. He said Texas would be a great State in the future, and if it was not for the lawyers and land speculators there might not be any trouble with Mexico. The Mexicans were fighting among themselves, but he said Texas should not interfere.”</p>	<p>“At the Trinity river men from the army began to join their families. I know that they have been blamed for this, but what else could they have done? The Texas army was retreating and the Mexicans were crossing the Colorado, Col. Fannin and his men were prisoners, there were more negroes than whites among us and many of them were wild Africans, there was a large tribe of Indians on the Trinity as well as the Cherokee Indians in Eastern Texas at Nacogdoches, and there were Tories [royalists], both Mexican and Americans, in the country. It was the intention of our men to see their families across the Sabine river, and then to return and fight the Mexicans. I must say for the negroes that there was no insubordination among them; they were loyal to their owners.”</p> <p>“Our hardships began at the Trinity. The river was rising and there was a struggle to see who should cross first. Measles, sore eyes, whooping cough, and every other disease that man, woman, or child is heir to, broke out among us.”</p>

Texas State Historical Association. “The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association, Volume 4, July, 1900 – April, 1901” pp. 162. *The Portal to Texas History*. University of North Texas Libraries.

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**Reflection:** Compare the two journal entries above to answer the questions below.

1. Compare and contrast the mention of American Indians in both journal entries. In what ways are they alike and in what ways are they different?
  
2. From Dilue's 1835 journal entry, she states that "Father was well pleased with the country [Texas]." Do you think her father has the same feelings about Texas one year later based on her 1836 journal entry? Explain your answer.