

Antonio López de Santa Anna

Antonio López de Santa Anna Pérez de Lebrón was born on February 21, 1794, in Veracruz, Mexico. He fought for Mexican independence from Spain in the War for Mexican Independence.

During his early political career, he was widely popular across Mexico for his views as a federalist who supported the rights of individuals and states. He was elected president in 1833, at a time when Mexico struggled with a number of political, economic, and military challenges. Many in the country believed that federalism was failing to address these important issues and, as a result, centralism began to grow more popular for some people.

Santa Anna joined a growing centralist rebellion that overthrew his own federalist government. The new centralist government abolished the Federal Constitution of 1824.

The centralists enacted the *Siete Leyes*, or the "Seven Laws," which limited who could vote or hold office. They disbanded, or got rid of, the federal congress and established a new centralist one. They changed Mexican states like Coahuila y Tejas to military districts. They changed the presidential term limit from four to eight years.

Several Mexican states openly rebelled against Santa Anna and his centralist government. Santa Anna's army worked to subdue these rebellions, forcefully and violently putting down the largest one in Zacatecas in May 1835.

He then sent centralist troops into Texas. In October, the Texan militia fought centralist soldiers at the Battle of Gonzales. Then, the Texans forced all the centralist troops out of San Antonio. Santa Anna responded by personally leading 6,000 Mexican troops to Texas in the middle of winter and defeated the Texans in San Antonio at the Alamo.

Santa Anna was eager to subdue the Texas rebellion as quickly as possible. As a result, he made an important mistake and divided his army in his pursuit of Sam Houston's army. This ultimately allowed Sam Houston an opportunity to attack Santa Anna's troops at San Jacinto. The Battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, resulted in Santa Anna's capture.

The Texans forced Santa Anna to sign the Treaties of Velasco before he was eventually released to return to Mexico. While Santa Anna was away from Mexico, however, the Mexican government removed him from power. Mexico would not recognize Texas independence until after the U.S.-Mexico War of 1846 - 1848. Santa Anna would go on to be president of Mexico seven more times by 1855.

Sam Houston

Sam Houston was born in Virginia on March 2, 1793. His family moved to a small farm in Tennessee in 1807 after the death of his father. As a teenager, he ran away and lived with the Cherokee Indians of Tennessee for three years. A Cherokee chief named Oolooteka adopted him and gave him the Indian name *Colonneh*, or "the Raven."

For a brief time, Houston worked as a teacher and then a lawyer. He also served in government as a state attorney general, a congressman, and the governor of Tennessee.

Houston was briefly married to a young woman named Eliza Allen. When that marriage failed, he went again to live with his adopted Cherokee father, Oolooteka, whose tribe had been forced to move into Arkansas and modern-day Oklahoma.

Houston eventually made his way into Texas in 1832. Like many other Anglo Americans who flooded into Texas during the 1830s, Houston saw Texas as a land of opportunity and new beginnings. He settled in Nacogdoches, where he opened a law practice.

When the centralists overthrew Mexico's government in 1835 and abolished the Federal Constitution of 1824, many Texans, including Houston, were very angry. Houston served as a delegate at the Convention of 1833 and at the Consultation in 1835, where he was appointed to lead the newly created Texan army.

In February 1836, he helped negotiate a peace treaty with the Cherokee Indians living in Texas. In this treaty, the Cherokee promised not to take up arms against the Texans in their war with Mexico.

Houston also served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1836, where the Texans wrote the Texas Declaration of Independence. The Convention then appointed Houston major general of the army of the new Republic of Texas.

Houston led the Texas army after the fall of the Alamo, as they retreated from Santa Anna's approaching forces. Houston was waiting for the right opportunity to confront the centralist forces. Then, on April 21, 1836, Houston and his men defeated and captured Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto, ending the Texas Revolution.

Houston went on to become the first president of the Republic of Texas. He served two terms as president, leading Texas through its early years as a young republic. In 1836, the city of Houston was established in his honor and served briefly as the capital of Texas.

James Bowie

James “Jim” Bowie was born in Kentucky in April 1769. In 1800, the Bowie family moved to Spanish Missouri and swore allegiance to Spain. Then, in 1809 the Bowies moved to back to the U.S, settling in Louisiana where they ran a cotton and sugarcane plantation. They also raised livestock and took part in the slave trade, often working with the French pirate and slave trader, Jean Lafitte.

In early 1830, Bowie immigrated to Texas and settled in San Antonio. Bowie became a Mexican citizen and eventually married Maria Ursula Veramendi, the daughter of an influential Tejano family in San Antonio de Béxar. In September 1833, Bowie’s wife and child died of cholera, which devastated Bowie.

Jim Bowie, like many other Anglos who immigrated to Texas, saw it as a land of opportunity. He led men on several expeditions around Texas searching for gold and silver and exploring American Indian lands.

Bowie was involved in various military conflicts. After the fights in 1832 between Anglos and the Mexican military at the forts of Anahuac and Velasco, the Mexican military at Nacogdoches demanded that citizens there surrender their firearms. Hearing this, Bowie went to Nacogdoches to accompany a militia of about 300 men who laid siege to the Mexican garrison, eventually attacking and driving them out of the city.

When Santa Anna and the centralists took over the federal government, Bowie sided with the War Party in Texas. He believed that Texas should go to war with Mexico. Bowie joined Stephen F. Austin’s militia at the rank of colonel.

Bowie was involved in several fights against the centralist army, including the Battle of Concepción and the Grass Fight, before arriving at the Alamo at San Antonio de Béxar. At the Alamo, Bowie commanded the volunteer troops until he collapsed on the second day of the siege because he had become very sick, most likely with tuberculosis. Bowie spent the rest of the siege severely sick and unable to leave his bed.

He was killed in his bed during the final attack on the Alamo on March 6, 1836.

William Barret Travis

William Barret Travis was born in August 1809 in South Carolina. The Travis family moved to Alabama in 1818. He became a lawyer, started a newspaper publication, and joined the Alabama militia. During that time, he married Rosanna Cato, and they had a child, Charles Edward Travis. A year later, in 1831, Travis abandoned his pregnant wife and their son, and immigrated to Texas by himself.

Travis obtained a land grant from Stephen F. Austin and first settled in Anahuac, opening a law practice there. In 1832, Travis was hired by a man named William M. Logan to secure the return of several enslaved people who had escaped his plantation. The enslaved people were being housed at Fort Anahuac under the protection of Colonel John Davis Bradburn, an American who served in the Mexican army.

Travis sent false information to Bradburn, warning that a large group of armed men were marching on Fort Anahuac to reclaim the runaway slaves. When Bradburn discovered the deception, he arrested Travis and his law partner, Patrick Jack, and kept them as prisoners at Anahuac.

Word spread of the arrest, and small fights broke out at other nearby locations, like Velasco and Nacogdoches. A group of Anglo settlers even tried to attack Anahuac with a cannon to free Travis and Patrick Jack. Recognizing that the Mexican forces at Anahuac were outnumbered, Bradburn released Travis and Jack. This incident became known as the "Anahuac disturbances."

Travis later took part in the Consultation of November 1835 and then accepted a military position as a lieutenant colonel in the new Texas army. After the Texans drove centralist troops out of San Antonio in December 1835, Travis and a small group of men went to reinforce the Alamo. Travis was then placed in charge of the regular army at the Alamo, while James Bowie commanded the militia.

Travis wrote letters during the Alamo siege desperately requesting reinforcements. In his most famous letter, written on February 24, 1836, he appealed "To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World" describing the siege and begging for reinforcements. In that letter, Travis declared he would "sustain himself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country – victory or death."

Travis was killed at the very beginning of Santa Anna's final attack against the Alamo on March 6, 1836, as he fought on the northern wall. After the battle, Santa Anna ordered that his body – and the bodies of all the Alamo defenders – be burned.

Juan Seguín

Juan Nepomuceno Seguín was born on October 27, 1806, into the prominent San Antonio family of María Josefa Becerra and Erasmo Seguín. Erasmo was an early advocate for Anglo colonization of Texas and had developed a close relationship with Stephen F. Austin and the Anglo colonists.

Juan Seguín, like his father, believed that Anglo colonization of Texas would help the region develop into a prosperous and thriving state. He was an active political and social figure in San Antonio. When Juan was only 17, he helped his mother run the family post office in San Antonio while his father served in the national congress in Mexico City. He held many important political positions in San Antonio as a young man. He was elected to the city council, served as the alcalde, or mayor, and later as the political chief of the department of Béxar.

At 19, he married the daughter of a prominent ranching family, María Gertrudis Flores de Abrego. María was a descendant of the Canary Islanders on her mother's side. All four of María's brothers fought for Texas during the Texas Revolution. María supported her husband's career and together they had ten children.

Seguín's military career began in 1835 when he joined Stephen F. Austin's volunteer army as a captain. He took part in the battle to drive centralists forces out of San Antonio in December 1835, and was among the men who went into the Alamo when Santa Anna's army arrived in February 1836. He was later sent out of the Alamo as a courier with one of Travis' letters asking for reinforcements. He then joined up with Sam Houston's army in Gonzales and led a company of Tejanos who served as the rear guard of Houston's troops as they retreated to the east.

Seguín commanded the only company comprised of all Tejano soldiers during the Battle of San Jacinto. He then accepted the surrender of the Mexican army that had remained in San Antonio on June 4, 1836, and served as the military commander of the city through 1837. During that time, he arranged for the burial of the remains of the men who had died defending the Alamo.

Seguín was elected to the Texas Senate in 1837. However, when relations between Tejanos and Anglos grew tense, he was accused of being a Mexican spy and had to flee to Mexico for safety. After the U.S.-Mexico War, he returned to Texas for many years before finally settling in Nuevo Laredo in Tamaulipas, Mexico. He died in Tamaulipas on August 27, 1890. His remains were eventually returned to Texas in 1974 to be buried in Seguin, a Texas town named in his honor.

David “Davy” Crockett

David “Davy” Crockett was born in Greene County, Tennessee, on August 17, 1786. At 12 years old, David’s father sent him to work as a cattle driver. Later, he ran away for two and a half years, taking various jobs to support himself. In 1806, he returned home and married Mary “Polly” Finley and they had two sons.

In September 1813, Crockett enlisted in the Tennessee militia and took part in several campaigns during the War of 1812 against the Creek Indians in Alabama and Florida. While he was away, his wife died in 1815 of unknown causes. He soon married Elizabeth Patton, and they moved to Lawrence County, Tennessee, where he served as justice of the peace, town commissioner, and a colonel in the local militia. Crockett then began a career in politics and served several terms in the Tennessee House of Representatives before serving several terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he worked to pass laws that would support poor western farmers.

Over the years, Crockett developed a reputation as a frontiersman, sharpshooter, hunter, and storyteller. By the early 1830s, Crockett’s reputation as a frontiersman turned Congressman had made him into a celebrity. Plays, books, and almanacs were created to tell stories of his adventures – although many of the stories were not true.

Crockett abandoned politics in 1835 after losing a bid for reelection to the U.S. Congress. He then decided to move to Texas, reportedly telling the voters of Tennessee that “...you may all go to hell, and I will go to Texas.” Crockett arrived in Nacogdoches in January 1836 and swore allegiance to the provisional government of Texas, not to Mexico.

Crockett arrived in San Antonio de Béxar in early February and joined William B. Travis at the Alamo before Santa Anna’s arrival. The Tennessean then became one of the defenders of the Alamo when Santa Anna’s troops surrounded the mission in February 1836. William B. Travis wrote in one of his letters that Crockett was everywhere during siege, encouraging the men to fight.

Like all the other defenders of the Alamo, Crockett did not survive the battle.

Susanna Dickinson

Susanna Wilkerson was born in Tennessee in 1814. When she was 19 years old, she married a man named Almeron Dickinson, and they moved to Gonzales, Texas, arriving on February 20, 1831. On May 5, 1831, she and her husband received a land grant from Green DeWitt, who was the empresario of Gonzales. Susanna and Almeron had their only child, a girl named Angelina, on December 14, 1834.

Susanna's husband participated in the Battle of Gonzales in October 1835, although it is not clear what Susanna and her young daughter did during the fight. Like many residents of the town, she likely took shelter in the trees along the Guadalupe River during the battle. Two weeks later, her husband marched off with the Texan militia to confront centralist troops in San Antonio, leaving Susanna and their baby Angelina alone in Gonzales.

Just a few weeks later, in November 1835, Anglo volunteers on their way to San Antonio arrived in Gonzales and looted Susanna's home. This means that they entered her home without consent and stole items. Surely shaken by such a terrifying experience, Susanna left Gonzales and took her daughter to San Antonio where they could be with Almeron.

In San Antonio, Susanna and her daughter stayed with a local Tejano family and supported herself by doing the laundry of the boarders, or people who paid for a temporary place to stay. One of the boarders was David Crockett, who would go on to fight and die at the Battle of the Alamo.

When Santa Anna's army arrived in San Antonio on February 23, 1836, many San Antonio residents – including Susanna and her daughter – took shelter at the Alamo. Susanna and Angelina lived through the thirteen-day siege of the Alamo and the battle that took place on March 6.

After the battle, Mexican soldiers found Susanna and several other women and children who had been sheltering at the Alamo. Susanna was brought to Santa Anna, who reportedly took an interest in little Angelina. He offered to adopt her, promising to provide her with a good life. Susanna refused his offer.

Santa Anna gave each of the women a little money and a blanket before he released them. He chose Susanna to carry a special message for Sam Houston that Santa Anna's army was coming for the rest of Texas and would take no prisoners. Susanna then made her way to Gonzales, and along the way ran into Joe, an enslaved man who had also survived the Alamo siege and battle. They continued traveling together until they reached the Texas army in Gonzales. There Susanna delivered Santa Anna's warning to Houston. She likely then followed Houston's army as it retreated east during the Runaway Scrape.

James Fannin

James Walker Fannin, Jr., was born in Georgia in January 1804. He was adopted by his grandparents and raised on their plantation near Marion, Georgia. He briefly attended the military academy at West Point but withdrew after only two years and returned to Georgia. He then married a woman named Minerva Fort, and they had two daughters. Fannin moved his family in 1834 to Velasco, Texas, where he took part in the slave trade and likely ran a plantation.

Fannin was an early supporter of the War Party, advocating for war with Mexico in pursuit of Texas independence. He was involved in the first fight of the Texas Revolution when he served as captain of the Brazos Guards in the Battle of Gonzales.

After the Gonzales fight, Fannin and another Anglo volunteer, James Bowie, served as scouts for the Texan militia that marched to confront centralist troops in San Antonio. Along the way, both Fannin and Bowie fought in what became known as the Battle of Concepción on October 28, 1835.

By early 1836, Fannin had become a colonel of the Provisional Regiment of Volunteers at Goliad. When William B. Travis sent urgent requests for reinforcements to Fannin at Goliad, Fannin declined to send help. After the fall of the Alamo, Houston ordered Fannin to withdraw from Goliad and retreat east to meet up with Houston's army so they could better prepare to confront Santa Anna's forces. Fannin delayed his retreat for several days, however, which proved to be a fatal error.

By the time Fannin began his withdraw from Goliad, one of Santa Anna's generals -- General José de Urrea -- was within striking distance, and Urrea finally caught Fannin and his men in an open field. Urrea's troops quickly surrounded Fannin's men and forced them to surrender after a fight known as the Battle of Coleto Creek. General Urrea then marched Fannin and his men back to Goliad where they were held as prisoners of war. Urrea sent a letter to Santa Anna recommending mercy for Fannin's men, but Santa Anna refused. On Santa Anna's orders, nearly 400 Texan prisoners of war -- including James Fannin -- were executed on March 27, 1836. Today we call this the Goliad Massacre.

As news of the Goliad Massacre began to spread, many terrified Texans began joining the masses of people fleeing east toward safety in Louisiana as part of the Runaway Scrape.

Lorenzo de Zavala

Manuel Lorenzo Justiniano de Zavala y Saénz was born on October 3, 1788, near the city of Mérida in the state of Yucatán, Mexico. During Zavala's childhood and young adulthood, Mexico was still a Spanish colony and subject to the rule of the Spanish king. Zavala openly opposed the Spanish monarchy. When Zavala was only 19 years old, he established several newspapers that publicly advocated for the right of the people to vote, hold office, and take part in their own government.

Zavala was arrested for his vocal opposition to the Spanish monarchy during the War for Mexican Independence. He was imprisoned for three years from 1814 to 1817 for his views. During his time in prison, he became qualified to practice medicine and taught himself English. Upon his release, he then served in the government of Yucatán.

When Mexico won its independence, Zavala served in the Mexican National Congress and as the governor of the state of Mexico. He also served as the Secretary of the Treasury under Mexico's second president, Vicente Guerrero.

A rebellion forced President Guerrero out of office in 1829 and targeted his ministers like Zavala. Zavala was temporarily placed under house arrest, then went into exile and moved to New York City. While in New York, he worked to find Anglo-American men who were interested in moving to Texas as part of the empresario system.

Zavala returned to Mexico in 1832 and soon reentered politics. The new federalist president, Santa Anna, named him Minister to France, and Zavala reported to his post in Paris in 1833. When Santa Anna later joined the centralist takeover of the government, Zavala denounced Santa Anna and resigned his post.

Zavala moved to Texas in 1835 where he served as a delegate to the Consultation and the Constitutional Convention of 1836. He signed the Texas Declaration of Independence and helped George Childress draft the Texas Constitution. He was highly respected among the Texan delegates, who named him provisional vice president of the Texas Republic.

Zavala served as the vice president of the Republic of Texas after the Texas Revolution, although he was forced to resign his position as a result of poor health. During the fall of 1836, he contracted pneumonia and died on November 15, 1836. In addition to Zavala's political achievements, he also authored many significant works including a two-volume history of Mexico.

José Domingo de Ugartechea

José Domingo de Ugartechea's date of birth is unknown. As a young man, he served in the Spanish military during the War for Mexican Independence and in 1813 he fought in the Battle of Medina, the bloodiest battle ever in Texas history, as a cadet under the command of Joaquín de Arredondo, a Spanish general in Texas who subdued rebellions against the Spanish government.

Following the Law of April 6, 1830, more than 15 years later, Ugartechea was placed in command of 125 men at Fort Velasco just south of present-day Houston. Fort Velasco was one of several forts Mexico established in Texas to ensure Anglo adherence to the Law of April 6. This fort was approximately 50 miles south of another Mexican fort – Fort Anahuac.

When the commander at Fort Anahuac arrested and imprisoned William B. Travis in 1832, many Anglos began organizing a volunteer force to confront the soldiers at Anahuac. A group of Anglo men attempted to move a cannon from Brazoria to Anahuac during this conflict. Ugartechea and his men intercepted the Anglo militia, and a fight broke out called the Battle of Velasco. Ugartechea was defeated, and he and his men evacuated their fort.

When the centralists took control of Mexico's government in 1835, Santa Anna converted the states into military departments and placed Ugartechea in command of Coahuila y Tejas. Ugartechea was then stationed in San Antonio de Béxar with limited supplies and troops. As tension grew in Texas, Ugartechea tried to avoid conflicts and suppress rebellion among the Tejanos and Anglos in the region.

One step Ugartechea took was to order the arrest of people that he believed were causing problems in Texas, like Lorenzo de Zavala. These arrest orders only made many Anglos and Tejanos more upset, however.

In October 1835, Ugartechea sent a small cavalry unit to Gonzales to retrieve a Mexican cannon that Mexico had loaned to the citizens of Gonzales. A fight broke out known as the Battle of Gonzales, which began the Texas Revolution.

Ugartechea led the Mexican forces who were defeated at the Battle of Concepción in October 1835. When the Texas Revolution ended after the Battle of San Jacinto, Ugartechea continued fighting for the centralist cause in Mexico. He was killed on May 24, 1839, in a conflict with federalist rebels in Saltillo, Coahuila.

Stephen F. Austin

Stephen Fuller Austin was born in southwestern Virginia on November 3, 1793. He and his family immigrated to Spanish Missouri in 1798 as his father, Moses Austin, invested in lead mining in the region. Stephen served in the Missouri militia and in the legislature. When his father, Moses Austin, passed away in 1821, Stephen took over his father's plans to bring Anglo empresarios into Texas with the support of the newly independent Mexican government.

Austin was the most successful empresario in Texas, settling the first 300 Anglo families in the region, or "the Old 300." Over time, he was able to settle nearly 10,000 people into Mexican Texas by working closely with prominent Tejanos in the region. He strongly supported the Mexican government. He worked tirelessly for the development of American colonies in Texas, encouraging the production of cotton for economic growth.

As the centralists grew in power in Mexico City, Austin continued to work to develop the Anglo colonies in east Texas. When the Law of April 6, 1830, prohibited any further Anglo immigration, Austin secured an exemption for his and Green DeWitt's colonies. He was eventually able to get the law repealed in December 1833.

Austin served as the president of the Conventions of 1832 and 1833, where Anglo-Texans petitioned the Mexican government for several things, including making Texas a separate state from Coahuila. Austin brought these requests to Mexico City to present them to the new president, Santa Anna. When the requests were denied, he wrote a letter encouraging the Texans to establish their own government anyway. His letter was intercepted, and he was imprisoned for treason for a year and a half without a trial.

During his time in prison, Austin came to support the idea of fighting the centralist government to restore the Federal Constitution of 1824. He was released from prison in December 1834, but he was not able to return to Texas until August 1835. Two months later, the Texas Revolution began with the Battle of Gonzales.

During the Texas Revolution, Austin briefly led the volunteer army and then served in the provisional government as commissioner to the United States. As commissioner, he worked to secure financial support for the Texas rebels. He also tried to gain political support for the Texas Revolution from the U.S. government. The U.S. president, Andrew Jackson, and the U.S. Congress, however, did not officially support the war.

After Texas won its independence, Austin served for a short time in the Republic of Texas government as the secretary of state under President Sam Houston. He died of pneumonia only three months into his service on December 27, 1836, at the age of 43.

Martín Perfecto de Cos

Martín Perfecto de Cos was born in Veracruz, Mexico, in 1800. He joined the Mexican army in 1820 at 20 years old. He rose through the ranks from cadet to lieutenant to brigadier general by 1833 when Santa Anna was elected president.

In 1835, Santa Anna sent General Cos to Texas to increase the centralist presence in the region. Cos took action to subdue the growing rebellion in Texas. He established his headquarters in San Antonio de Béxar and disbanded the legislature of Coahuila y Tejas. He issued arrest warrants for prominent federalists in Texas who were critical of Santa Anna, including a well-known Mexican federalist named Lorenzo de Zavala who had settled in Texas earlier that year.

Texan volunteer fighters formed a militia and resisted many of General Cos' actions. After the Battle of Gonzales, Stephen F. Austin led a militia to San Antonio in an attempt to drive Cos and his soldiers out of the city. The Texans laid siege to Cos' troops in San Antonio from late October to early December 1835. During that time, the Texans received reinforcements, including James Bowie, Juan Seguín, and James Fannin.

Several skirmishes broke out between the Mexican army and the Texan volunteers during the Siege of Béxar. The Texans fought and defeated some of Cos' troops at the Battle of Concepción on October 28. Volunteers under William B. Travis successfully captured hundreds of mules and horses belonging to the Mexican army. Texan volunteers under Erastus "Deaf" Smith stopped a delivery of grass and hay intended to feed the Mexican army's starving horses in a conflict that became known as "the Grass Fight."

Finally, on December 5, 1835, the Texans stormed into San Antonio and began a street battle for the town. Over the course of five days, Cos and his men took heavy casualties as they steadily lost ground and soldiers. Finally, on December 9, 1835, General Cos surrendered San Antonio to the victorious Texans.

Cos and his men were then ordered to leave Texas and never return. Cos began a retreat out of Texas, but then joined his force to Santa Anna's army as it marched into Texas in January 1836. Cos then took part in the siege and Battle of the Alamo and was later defeated and captured with Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto in April 1836.

After the Texas Revolution, Cos returned to Mexico. He took part in the U.S.-Mexico War of 1846 to 1848, then returned to his home in Veracruz where he died in 1854.

George Childress

George Campbell Childress was born on January 8, 1804, in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1826 he graduated from Davidson Academy, which would later become the University of Nashville. He became a lawyer in 1828 and married a woman named Margaret Vance later that year. Margaret died in 1835, only a few months after giving birth to their son, Charles.

Childress worked as a lawyer and editor of the newspaper *The Nashville Banner and Nashville Advertiser* from 1834 to 1835. During that time, his uncle Sterling C. Robertson was organizing a colony in Texas under the empresario system. Childress visited his uncle in the Robertson Colony in December 1834, and then returned to his home in Tennessee.

When the Texas Revolution began during the fall of 1835, Childress took an interest in supporting the Texan war effort. He raised money and recruited volunteers for the Texas army while living in Tennessee. He then moved to his uncle's colony in Texas in December 1835.

Even though he had just recently arrived in Texas, Childress served as a delegate at the Constitutional Convention of 1836 that declared Texas independent of Mexico. Childress then helped lead the convention in writing the Constitution of the Republic of Texas.

On March 19, 1836, the provisional Texas president, David G. Burnett, sent Childress to the United States to gain support for the war from the U.S. president, Andrew Jackson. More than anything, Burnett wanted Childress to convince President Jackson to recognize Texas independence from Mexico. Childress was unsuccessful, however, and returned to Texas in May 1836 after the Battle of San Jacinto.

After the Texas Revolution, Childress married a woman named Rebecca Stuart Read Jennings. They had two daughters, Annie and Ellen. Childress attempted to open several law offices in Houston and later Galveston, but his businesses were unsuccessful, and he struggled to support his family. He died on October 6, 1841.

David G. Burnet

David Gouverneur Burnet was born on April 14, 1788, into a prominent family in New Jersey. His father, William Burnet, was a doctor who had served in the Continental Congress during the American Revolution. His parents died when he was three years old, and he was raised by his older half-brothers who were very politically active in the government of the new United States of America.

As a young man Burnet studied law in Ohio, worked as a clerk in New York, and took part in an unsuccessful filibustering expedition to Venezuela in 1806. In 1817 he moved to Louisiana and traded with the Comanche Indians.

In 1826, Burnet traveled to Mexico City to secure an empresario land grant to settle colonists in east Texas. He then returned to Ohio to try to recruit Anglo settlers to immigrate to his colony, although he had little success. He then partnered with a Mexican man named Lorenzo de Zavala who was also struggling to recruit settlers in America for his own land grant in Texas. Together, the two men sold their land to the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company in 1830. Burnet moved back to Texas in April 1831.

Burnet was elected to serve as a delegate to the Convention of 1833, where he helped write the request for Texas statehood. When the centralists took over the federal government of Mexico, some Anglos began arguing in favor of war for Texas independence. Burnet was initially opposed to a war for Texas independence.

Burnet was not chosen to serve as a delegate to the Consultation or the Constitutional Convention of 1836 because of his lack of support for the war. Nevertheless, he attended the Constitutional Convention anyway. When the time came for the delegates to elect a provisional president, they decided that they did not want the person they chose to be a delegate from the meeting. As a result, Burnet was able to convince the delegates to elect him to be the provisional president. He won the vote by a slim margin.

His presidency of the provisional government lasted from March to October of 1836. He faced many challenges, and many of his actions angered the government, the army, and the Texas people. He left office, but later returned to serve as the second vice president of Texas under President Mirabeau Lamar. He stayed active in politics during the time of the Republic of Texas as well as after Texas joined the United States.

Burnet died many decades later on December 5, 1870 in Galveston, Texas.

Dilue Rose

Dilue Rose was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 28, 1825. In 1833, when Dilue Rose was 8 years old, her family moved to Texas and settled in Stafford's Point, near Houston today.

When the Texas Revolution broke out at the Battle of Gonzales in 1835, Dilue was 10 years old. Decades later, she wrote about her experience during the Texas Revolution. Her writings provide valuable information about what life was like for civilians during the war.

Dilue wrote about how delegates at the Consultation had sent out a call for volunteers for the Texas militia after the Battle of Gonzales. She said that schools in her town closed as many young men went off to join the militia. On small farms, which often did not have enslaved people, women and children like Dilue worked to finish harvesting cotton.

Dilue described hearing rumors about Santa Anna's army marching to Texas. She said many people did not believe the news because there had been a lot of different rumors about Santa Anna's movements. When the news was finally confirmed, Dilue described how a lot of families in the area became scared and began packing their most valuable belongings so they could try to get to safety in Louisiana.

One day a courier came to town with William B. Travis' letter asking for people to help the defenders at the Alamo. Dilue's mother read the letter out loud and then gave it back to the courier, who rode off to deliver the news to more people. Dilue helped her mother sew clothes and make bullets for her uncle, James Wells, who decided to join the Texas army.

Dilue remembered when her family received the news that the Alamo had fallen. General Houston had ordered all the people around her home to evacuate for safety. She recalled, "Then began the horrors of the 'Runaway Scrape.'" Dilue, along with her mother, father, and infant sister left at sunset that night. Soon, thousands more had joined them. Many of these Texas colonists brought their slaves with them and Dilue remembered that soon there were more enslaved people than Anglos. She described how an enslaved man called Uncle Ned was often placed in charge the women and children when the Anglo men had to leave.

During the Runaway Scrape, Dilue and her family struggled with freezing temperatures, muddy roads, dangerous river crossings, lack of food, the measles, "and every other disease known to man." Dilue's baby sister died on the journey. She remembered the day an Anglo soldier arrived shouting the news that the Texans had defeated Santa Anna at San Jacinto; it was safe to return home! The man who brought the news was an Irishman who had fought for Texas in the battle. That night, he described and even acted out stories from the battle for the people there. It was the first time that her mother laughed since her little sister's death. The next day, Dilue and many others began making their way back to their homes.

José Antonio Navarro

José Antonio Navarro was born in San Antonio de Béxar on February 27, 1795. His father was from Corsica, an island off the coast of Italy. His mother was a descendant of a noble family of Spain. When Navarro was a child, his father served as the *alcalde*, or mayor, of San Antonio.

Young Navarro grew up in San Antonio at time of increasing opposition to Spanish rule. During the War for Mexican Independence, Navarro supported the Gutierrez-Magee expedition that was part of the rebellion against Spain. The Gutierrez-Magee expedition ultimately failed, and Spain took harsh revenge on the rebels and their supporters. Navarro was forced to flee to the United States for safety until he could return three years later in 1816 at the age of 21.

Navarro was an early supporter of Anglo colonization of Texas, and he developed a strong friendship with Stephen F. Austin. He served in the state legislature of Coahuila y Tejas and later in the national Congress where he advocated for policies that would support Anglo colonization, including separate statehood for Texas.

During the Texas Revolution, Navarro supported Texas in its war against Mexico. He and his uncle José Francisco Ruiz were both elected to represent San Antonio as delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1836. Navarro and his uncle both signed the Texas Declaration of Independence. He also helped draft the constitution of the Republic of Texas.

Navarro continued to be politically active after Texas won its independence from Mexico. He served in the Congress of the Republic of Texas as the representative to San Antonio, where he was a strong advocate for Tejano rights.

Under Texas' second president, Mirabeau Lamar, Navarro was chosen to participate in the Santa Fe Expedition. The goal of this expedition was to establish a trade route that would connect to Santa Fe in New Mexico, which belonged to Mexico at the time. Unfortunately, the expedition encountered many challenges, and when they arrived in Santa Fe, the Mexican government had them arrested and brought to Mexico City. Navarro was charged with treason, imprisoned in Vera Cruz, and held in terrible conditions awaiting execution.

He managed to escape and return to Texas where he continued to be politically active. He wrote historical accounts of Tejano contributions to the Texas Revolution. He died in 1871 at the age of 76.

Joe

Joe was a young, enslaved man in his early 20s during the Texas Revolution. Because he was an enslaved person, we do not know much about his early life. We do not know his date of birth, where he was born, or where he grew up. The only name we have for him is Joe.

Joe may have originally been from Alabama. He was brought to St. Louis, Missouri, and then New Orleans, Louisiana, before finally being brought to Texas in 1832 or 1833 by an Anglo colonist named Isaac Mansfield. Although slavery had been outlawed by the state legislature of Coahuila y Tejas, Mansfield used a legal loophole known as Decree 56 to bring Joe into Texas by claiming he was a contract worker rather than a slave.

Mansfield began having financial problems, so he decided to sell Joe. Joe escaped, possibly intending to travel back to Alabama where his family may have lived at the time. Joe was caught, however, and William B. Travis rented him for a short time before he was sold at auction in 1834. In 1835, Travis bought Joe to be his personal servant.

Travis brought Joe with him when he received his orders to serve as commander in San Antonio. They both took refuge in the Alamo when Santa Anna's army arrived on February 23, 1836. Joe lived through the terror of the 13-day siege of the Alamo.

When Santa Anna's army began its attack on the Alamo in the early morning hours of March 6, 1836, Joe was asleep near Travis on the west wall. The men awoke to the sounds of screaming. Travis grabbed his shotgun and ordered Joe to get a rifle and follow him to the north wall. Travis was then shot and killed almost immediately at the start of the fight. Joe then retreated back to the west wall and took shelter. He recalled firing two shots into Santa Anna's army when they broke through the Alamo walls.

After the battle, Joe was almost killed by two of Santa Anna's soldiers, but a third soldier saved his life and protected him. He was then directed to identify the bodies of Bowie and Travis before being taken to Santa Anna, who interviewed him and the other civilian survivors, including an Anglo woman named Susanna Dickinson.

It is not clear whether Joe was released by Santa Anna or if he escaped. What we do know is that he then made his way to east toward Gonzales. Along the way, he ran into Susanna Dickinson, and they traveled together to Gonzales. Joe was interviewed by the Texas military and government about what had happened at the Alamo.

After Texas won its independence from Mexico, Joe remained enslaved. On the one-year anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto, Joe escaped from slavery. He was never captured.

José Enrique de la Peña

José Enrique de la Peña was born in Jalisco, Mexico, around the year 1807. He joined the Mexican military in 1825 and began serving under Santa Anna in 1828. In 1836, Peña received orders from Santa Anna to join the Mexican army that was marching to Texas to put down the rebellion there. Peña traveled 700 miles to Texas and kept a detailed journal during the Texas Revolution, which was later published. The following information comes from that journal.

According to Peña, the march from Mexico City to San Antonio was full of hardships. The army had brought very little food or water, and many people got sick and died of disease on the journey. They marched through fierce winds, snow, and freezing winter temperatures that left their hands too numb to gather firewood. Many horses, mules, and people froze to death as the Mexican army marched toward Texas.

When Santa Anna arrived in San Antonio on February 23, 1836, Peña's unit was struggling to keep up and were still nearly a week behind their general. He and his men finally arrived in San Antonio on March 3, 1836. Peña had not been present for most of the siege but he had arrived just in time to help make preparations for the final attack on the Alamo.

Peña was present at a meeting between the generals planning the attack. He said that the generals argued over what to do with any Texans who surrendered. Some of the generals argued for the humane treatment of prisoners, but according to Peña, Santa Anna did not listen to them.

Just before dawn on the morning of March 6, 1836, Peña took part in the attack on the Alamo. He described the fighting as chaotic, terrifying, bloody, and confusing, especially after Santa Anna's army broke through the northern wall. The killing finally ended around 6 am, when he stated that about six men who had survived the battle, including Davy Crockett, were brought before Santa Anna, who ordered them to be executed. Peña said, "I turned away, horrified, in order not to witness such a barbarous scene."

Peña then accompanied Santa Anna's army as they marched into the rest of Texas. Along the way, Peña saw the abandoned homes of Texans who had fled in fear as part of the Runaway Scrape. He saw the ruins of towns like San Felipe de Austin, which had been burned by the Texas army to keep it out of Santa Anna's hands. Peña and his unit were camped at the Brazos River, unable to cross, when they received word that Santa Anna had been defeated at San Jacinto.

After the war Peña was imprisoned for opposing the centralist government in 1838. He died in prison several years later.