

Section

1

The Annexation of Texas

Main Ideas

1. Support for annexation in the United States was divided over the issue of slavery.
2. Texas became a state in 1845.

Why It Matters Today

During the 1840s, politicians could not agree on the issue of whether or not to annex Texas. Use current events sources to find information about an issue that politicians are debating today.

Key Terms and People

- manifest destiny
- Jane McManus Cazneau
- political parties
- joint resolution
- Convention of 1845
- Texas Admission Act



TEKS: 1B, 1C,
4B, 17A, 21B, 21C,
21D, 22D

myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the debates and votes that led to statehood for Texas.

The Story Continues

President John Tyler of the United States was concerned. He took office in 1841, a few years after Congress had rejected the chance to annex Texas. Since that time, Great Britain had become more involved in Texas affairs. Tyler feared that the British were working to gain a foothold in North America from which they could interfere with American matters. Perhaps it was time to reconsider Texas annexation.



The Treaty to Annex Texas

The annexation question remained a hot issue in Texas for many years. Although his initial attempt to bring Texas into the United States had failed, Sam Houston had never given up his dream. A majority of Texans still longed for statehood, too. As time had passed, support for annexation had grown in the United States as well, especially in the southern states.

Like many debates in the United States at this time, the fight over Texas annexation hinged on the issue of slavery. Pro- and antislavery factions in Congress were almost perfectly balanced. Southerners, hoping to gain more power in the government, welcomed the thought of Texas, which allowed slavery, to become a state. A New Orleans newspaper declared, “The South will almost to a man sustain the policy of . . . annexation.” Northerners, afraid that they would lose influence, were strongly opposed to the idea.

U.S. president John Tyler, a southerner, favored annexation. In 1843, he sent agents to Texas to reopen negotiations. In a proposed treaty the next year, he offered to make Texas a U.S. territory—the first step toward statehood. As part of the treaty, the United States would pay off the Republic’s large public debt. In exchange, Texas would give all its public lands to the federal government.

Tyler’s treaty met with great opposition, both in Congress and from the American public. Northern senators protested the addition of a new slaveholding territory. Former president John Quincy Adams wrote of the treaty that “with it went the freedom of the human race.” At a public rally in New York City, some 3,000 people protested the treaty. The Senate began debates about the treaty in June 1844. After three weeks of debate, the treaty was rejected.

Despite the Senate’s rejection of the annexation treaty, many Americans continued to support Texas statehood. These Americans were eager to expand their country westward. They saw the West as a place of opportunity, where farming and trade would provide economic growth. They believed that the United States was meant to expand all the way across North America to the Pacific—an expansion that would include Texas. This belief became known as **manifest destiny**.

Across the country, newspaper articles began to appear supporting Texas statehood. For example, columnist Jane McManus—**Jane McManus Cazneau** after her 1849 marriage—wrote articles that helped turn northern opinion in favor of annexation.

Reading Check Supporting a Point of View Would you have supported annexation? Explain your answer.

BIOGRAPHY

Jane McManus Cazneau (1807–1878)

In 1833 Jane McManus Cazneau moved to Matagorda and tried to obtain a land grant. During the Revolution, she gave money to support the Texans’ cause. After Texas gained its independence, she pushed for annexation in columns she wrote for the *New York Sun*. Cazneau eventually returned to Texas, where she was an early settler at the town of Eagle Pass. **Why was Cazneau an important person in Texas history?**



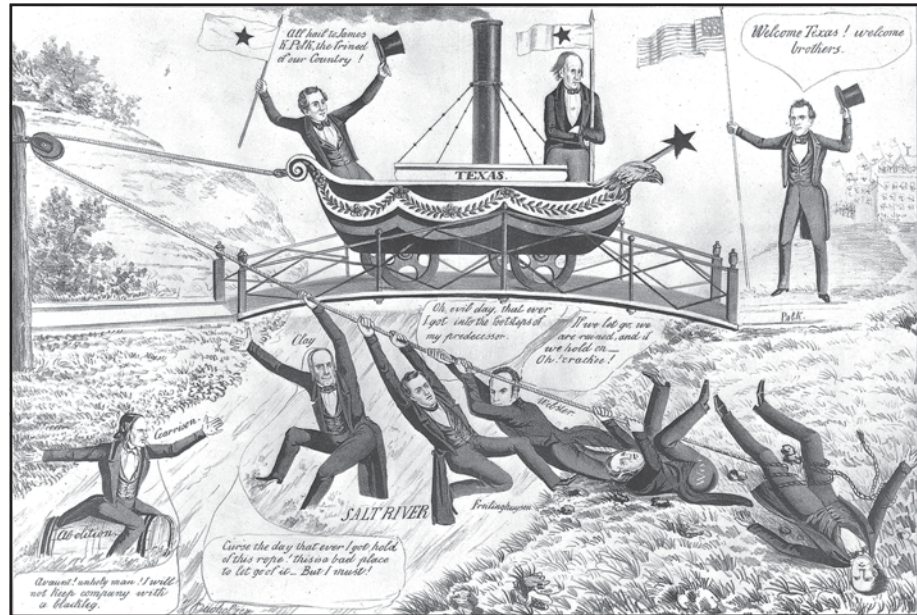
Image Credit: © Christie's Images/Superstock

Interpreting Visuals

Manifest destiny. John Gast’s painting shows the westward movement of U.S. settlers across North America. **How does this painting show Americans’ belief that they had the right to expand across North America?**

Interpreting Political Cartoons

"Texas Coming In." This political cartoon forecasts the annexation of Texas and shows Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston riding a boat into the United States. According to this cartoon, is the United States pleased that Texas is joining the Union?



★ The Annexation Resolution

The questions of annexation and manifest destiny were important issues in the U.S. presidential election of 1844. The two political parties involved in the election held differing positions on these issues. **Political parties** are groups of people who help elect government officials and influence government policies.

The Democratic Party nominated James K. Polk of Tennessee for president. Polk wanted the United States to annex Texas and expand west. His chief opponent was Whig Party candidate Henry Clay of Kentucky. At first, Clay spoke against annexation. He worried that it might result in war with Mexico. But to win votes in the South, he softened his opposition, while trying to reassure northern voters. Clay's mixed messages on the issue cost him many voters—and the election. Polk won.

Most Americans, including President Tyler, considered Polk's election a sign of the public's approval of annexation.

Analyzing Primary Sources

Identifying Points of View What conclusions did Tyler draw from Polk's election?

TEXAS VOICES

"A controlling majority of the people and a larger majority of the states have declared in favor of immediate annexation. . . . It is the will of both the people and the states that Texas shall be annexed to the Union . . . immediately."

—U.S. president John Tyler, annual message to Congress

Tyler therefore requested that the two houses of Congress pass a **joint resolution**, or formal expression of intent, for annexation. A joint resolution required only a simple majority to pass. This was less than the two-thirds majority in the Senate he would need to approve a treaty. In February 1845 Congress passed the joint resolution to annex Texas.

Reading Check Finding the Main Idea How did Polk's election affect the annexation of Texas?


Texas Enters the United States

The joint resolution's terms were more favorable to Texas than the annexation treaty's had been. Texas would enter the United States as a state rather than as a territory. The new state could keep its public lands, although some would have to be sold to pay the public debt. In addition, Texas would have to turn much of its public property, such as military supplies, over to the United States.

In 1845 Texas president Anson Jones called for a convention to discuss the U.S. offer for annexation. The delegates to the **Convention of 1845** assembled in Austin on July 4, 1845, and quickly approved annexation. Then they began work on a new state constitution. You will read more about the convention and constitution in the next section.

Before Texas gained statehood, though, the people had to formally approve annexation. Texans had been proud of their independence, but there were good reasons for joining the United States. Most Texans were originally from the United States, and many still had families there. Texas and the United States also shared strong business ties. The federal government would also provide Texas with military protection and postal service. On October 13, Texas voters approved annexation by a vote of 4,254 to 267. They also approved the new state constitution. On December 29, 1845, President Polk signed the **Texas Admission Act**, making Texas the 28th state. One Texan explained.

TEXAS VOICES

 "Truly we have every reason to be happy! To rejoice over the prosperity we enjoy! We are . . . united once more by the strong tie of national sympathy to all that we ever loved."

—W. B. DeWees, *Letters from an Early Settler of Texas*

Reading Check **Evaluating** Why did most Texans favor annexation?



Section 1 Review



hmhsocialstudies.com

ONLINE QUIZ

1. Define and explain:

- manifest destiny
- political parties
- joint resolution

2. Identify and explain

the significance of each of the following in Texas history:

- Jane McManus Cazneau
- Convention of 1845
- Texas Admission Act

3. Categorizing

Copy the graphic organizer below. List the leaders and groups who favored or opposed annexation.

For Annexation	Against Annexation

4. Finding the Main Idea

- a. Why did most Texans favor annexation? Why did Americans support it?
- b. Beginning with the annexation treaty, identify in order the events that led to annexation.

5. Writing and Critical Thinking

 myWriteSmart

Comparing and Contrasting Write a paragraph comparing a northerner's and a Texan's views of annexation.

Consider the following:

- northerners' and southerners' views on slavery
- annexation's effect on the U.S. Congress