

Section

5

Independence Is Won

Main Ideas

1. In the Runaway Scrape, Texans fled the Mexican army.
2. A Texan army surrendered at Goliad but was massacred a few days later at Santa Anna's orders.
3. Texas won independence at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Why It Matters Today

Many Anglo and Tejano settlers fled from Santa Anna's army to seek refuge in the United States. Use current events sources to learn about refugees to the United States today.



TEKS: 1B, 1C, 3B, 3C, 8A, 9A, 9C, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21E, 22D

myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the final battles of the Texas Revolution.

Key Terms and People

- Runaway Scrape
- Battle of Refugio
- James Fannin
- Battle of Coleto
- Goliad Massacre
- Francita Alavez
- Battle of San Jacinto

The Story Continues

In the spring of 1836, 10-year-old Dilue Rose Harris sadly packed up her belongings. Scouts from the Texas army had warned her family that Santa Anna's soldiers were on their way. The Harrises loaded their bed linens, clothes, and food on a sleigh pulled by oxen. They left their farm as the sun set, wondering if they would ever see their home again.



The Runaway Scrape

General Sam Houston was charged with the task of defeating Santa Anna so that Texans like the Harrises could return to their homes. During the Convention of 1836, the delegates had given Houston full command of both the regular and volunteer armies. He was no longer a commander with no army. However, Houston was still short on troops, guns, ammunition, and money. He also had to quickly organize and train his army.

On March 6 Houston left Washington-on-the-Brazos and headed to Gonzales, still unsure of the outcome at the Alamo. When Houston reached Gonzales on March 11, he was greeted with stories of the defeat. He sent out his best scouts to find out what had happened and where Santa Anna's forces were. Scouts Deaf Smith, R. E. Handy, and Henry Karnes left to investigate. The next day, the scouts escorted Susanna Dickinson and a few other survivors of the Alamo into Gonzales. Houston and the Texas army heard for the first time the details of the defenders' last stand at the Alamo.



VIDEO

Independence
for Texas

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The Texans also learned that Santa Anna was heading to Gonzales, where Houston had fewer than 400 men. With more than 700 Mexican troops advancing on them, the Texans were in danger. Houston ordered a retreat. Many civilians packed their belongings and left with the army. Houston then ordered the town of Gonzales burned so that the Mexican troops could not take any additional supplies.

Word began to spread through Texas about the Alamo. Fearing for their lives, Texans fled eastward. Anglo settlers—often accompanied by African American slaves—and many Tejanos left their farms, homes, and towns to avoid the advancing Mexican forces. This movement of settlers became known as the **Runaway Scrape**. Jeff Parson, a slave at the time, described the scene. “People and things were all mixed, and in confusion. The children were crying, the women praying. . . . I tell you it was a serious time.” Conditions were made worse by heavy rains and flooding during the spring of 1836. Many died from disease and hardships during the Runaway Scrape.

Reading Check Identifying Cause and Effect What led to the Runaway Scrape, and how did it affect Texas?

Fannin’s Surrender at Goliad

Even as Texans were fleeing Santa Anna near Gonzales, people in southern regions of Texas were fleeing before another Mexican army. General José de Urrea had crossed the Rio Grande with some 550 troops. He moved up the coastline, attacking settlements along the way. He had already defeated the Texans sent to capture Matamoros, and there were few Texans to slow his progress.

While Santa Anna lay siege to the Alamo, Urrea continued toward Refugio. On March 14 he won the **Battle of Refugio**, defeating the troops who had been sent to evacuate the settlement. The Texans held out for several hours, but they eventually ran low on ammunition. Many were captured by Urrea’s forces. Urrea next turned his attention to Goliad where Colonel **James Fannin** had an army.

On March 14 Fannin received an order from General Houston to withdraw to Victoria. Instead of acting immediately, Fannin waited for his troops to return from Refugio, not knowing that they had already been defeated. Meanwhile, General Urrea was hurrying to Goliad. On March 18 Urrea’s advance force met Fannin and his troops in a series of brief fights. Too late, Fannin decided to leave the protection of the fort at Goliad and head northeast to Victoria.

On March 19 the Texas troops marched into an open prairie outside of Goliad during a heavy fog. When they stopped to rest their animals, Urrea and his main army surrounded them. The Texas force numbered at least 300 soldiers, and the Mexicans had 300 to 500 troops. With no choice but battle, Fannin chose to stand and fight near Coletto Creek.



BIOGRAPHY

Susanna Dickinson

(c.1814–1883) Susanna Wilkerson was born in Tennessee, where she later married Almaron Dickinson in 1829. Two years later the young couple moved to Gonzales. When her husband left for San Antonio with a volunteer army in October 1835, she stayed behind and took care of their home and daughter. As Mexican troops approached, she moved into the Alamo. Dickinson hid with her baby as the battle raged. After the battle Mexican troops led her to Santa Anna. She was released, but Santa Anna had her take a message to Sam Houston. It was a warning that Santa Anna was coming after the Texans.

Why did Santa Anna release Dickinson?



During the conflict outside of Goliad, Fannin's troops were surrounded on the open prairie.



BIOGRAPHY

James Fannin

(c. 1804–1836) James Fannin joined the Texas army in 1835 and fought at Gonzales. Later he led Texas forces in the Battle of Concepción, in which 90 Texans defeated 400 Mexican soldiers. In December Fannin took charge of the troops at Goliad. He surrendered to General Urrea on March 20, 1836, and was executed along with many of his troops by order of General Santa Anna. In memory of Fannin and his troops, “Remember Goliad!” became a battle cry of the Texas Revolution. **How did Fannin inspire Texans?**

In the **Battle of Coleto**, the Texas rebels were pinned down without cover. The next morning, Mexican reinforcements arrived, giving Urrea several hundred more troops. Wounded and severely outnumbered, Fannin decided to surrender. Following the surrender, he and most of the other Texas rebels were marched back to Goliad.

The prisoners were held in Goliad for a week. Their imprisonment was not overly harsh, as one Texas recorded. “[Urrea] was not blood thirsty and when not overruled by orders of a superior . . . was disposed to treat prisoners with lenity [mercy].” Urrea wrote to Santa Anna for permission to hold the Texans as prisoners of war, rather than kill them. Santa Anna’s response was swift and clear. Anyone who had taken up arms against the government of Mexico must be executed immediately.

On March 27, Mexican soldiers shot more than 400 Texans outside of Goliad. Those executed included Fannin’s troops as well as Texas soldiers captured outside of Victoria. When the firing began, a few of the Texans ran and escaped. Some survived the **Goliad Massacre** during the smoky confusion. **Francita Alavez**, who was traveling with the Mexican troops, helped a few people escape. Texans later referred to her as the Angel of Goliad.

Reading Check Summarizing How did geographic factors and other events lead to Fannin’s surrender?



Houston Prepares the Troops

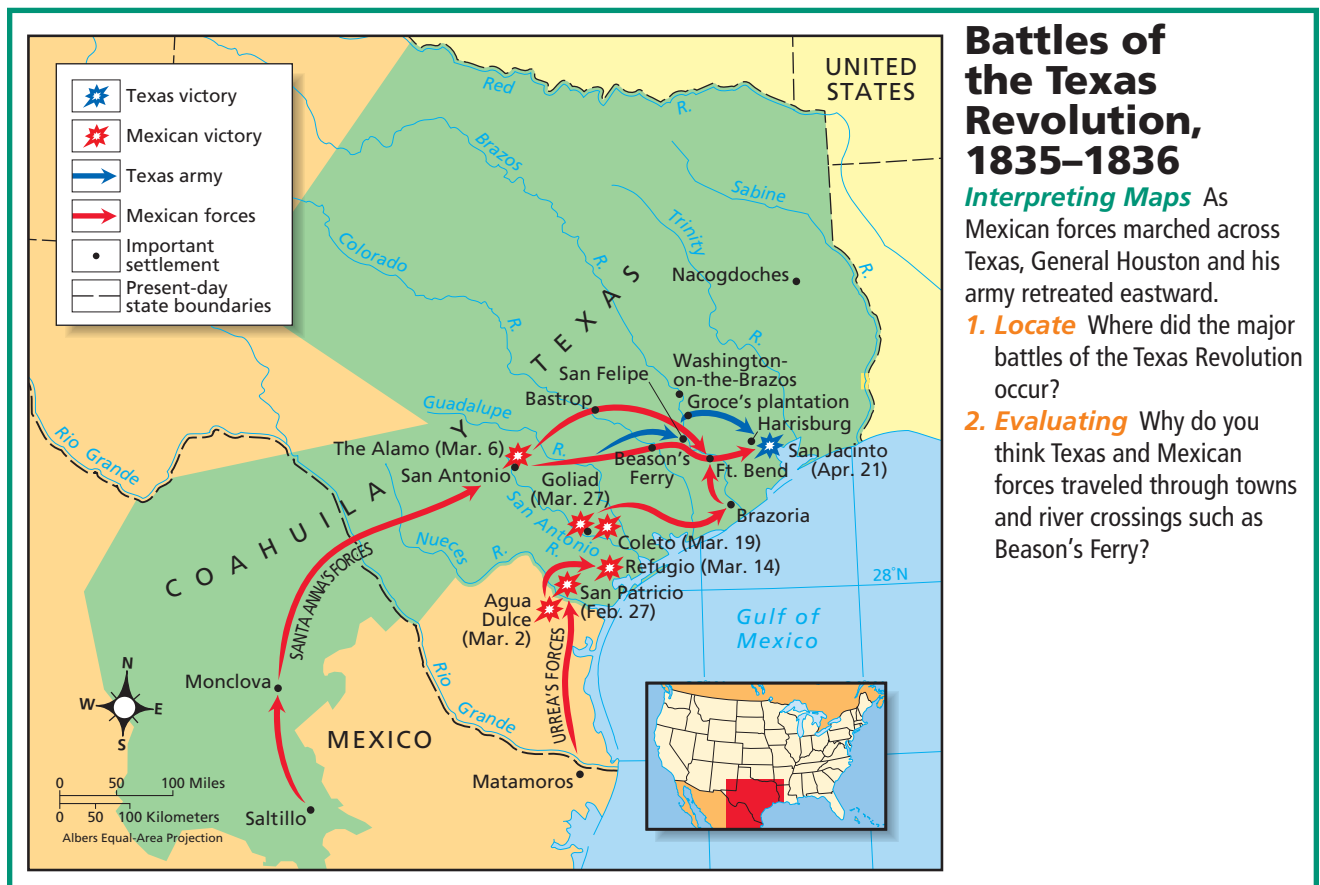
Upon hearing news of Goliad, some angry Texans began to demand an all-out attack on Mexican forces. The Texas army had grown to more than 1,200 men after the fall of the Alamo. Houston, however, believed that his army was still too small and untrained to defeat the larger and better-supplied Mexican army. So he continued to avoid fights. As Santa Anna moved deeper into Texas, Houston led the army eastward.

Several Texas troops openly rebelled against Houston, criticizing him for retreating from Santa Anna. They believed he was acting like a coward. Even President Burnet challenged Houston to fight. “The enemy are laughing you to scorn.”

Houston ignored the criticism. When he heard that Santa Anna was approaching his base at San Felipe, he moved his army 20 miles north to Jared Groce’s plantation. There Houston trained and drilled his troops. The troops also collected supplies and ammunition, some of which had come from supporters in the United States. The citizens of Cincinnati, Ohio, for example, had sent two cannons to the soldiers. The Texans named the cannons the Twin Sisters.

Houston and the Texas army left Groce’s plantation on April 12, marching southeast toward Harrisburg, where they arrived six days later. That same day, Houston’s scouts reported that Santa Anna and part of his army had crossed the Brazos River and were camped not far from Harrisburg. Houston made his decision. He wrote a friend, “We are in preparation to meet Santa Anna. It is the only chance of saving Texas.” The stage was set for the final battle against Santa Anna.

Reading Check Supporting a Point of View Explain whether, in your opinion, Houston’s actions after the Alamo and Goliad were or were not an example of good leadership.





Interpreting Visuals

San Jacinto. During the Battle of San Jacinto, Texas forces crept onto the prairie that separated the Texan and Mexican camps. The Texans then launched a surprise attack crying, "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!" **How does the artist show the confusion of battle?**

★ The Battle of San Jacinto

Houston's army moved quickly to get to Harrisburg. From there, they traveled down Buffalo Bayou to where it met the San Jacinto River near Lynch's Ferry. On April 20 the Texans camped in a grove of live oak trees on high ground, with a wide field in front of them. The only way the Mexicans could attack them would be to cross the field.

Santa Anna and his forces arrived at the junction of the San Jacinto River and Buffalo Bayou that afternoon. They set up camp in a vulnerable spot. Santa Anna's forces were exposed to the Texas troops, who were partially hidden by the grove of trees. One of Santa Anna's officers, Colonel Pedro Delgado, was worried about the location.

TEXAS VOICES

"We had the enemy on our right, within a wood, at long musket range. Our front, although level, was exposed to the fire of the enemy, who could keep it up with impunity [without the risk of loss] from his sheltered position."

—Colonel Pedro Delgado, quoted in *Texian Iliad*, by Stephen L. Hardin

Santa Anna sent a small force to try to drive the Texans from their position, but the Texans drove it back. In response, a small group of mounted Texans attacked the Mexican cavalry but were forced to retreat. Neither side would give any ground. Then, on the morning of April 21, General Cos arrived on the field with 540 more Mexican troops.

The Texas army realized that defeating the more than 1,200 Mexican soldiers now in position would not be easy. Shortly before noon on April 21, Houston called a meeting his officers. After much debate, the group decided to attack that afternoon.

KEY DATE 1836

Texas wins its independence from Mexico.

Houston assembled his approximately 900 troops—including Juan Seguín and a small group of Tejanos—at about 3:00 P.M. The Texas soldiers moved from the woods onto the prairie, unseen by the Mexican forces. Many of the Mexican soldiers, having just built new defenses and not anticipating an attack, were sleeping. Houston ordered the advance. Many Mexican troops were awakened by bullets and battle cries of “Remember the Alamo!” and “Remember Goliad!” The **Battle of San Jacinto** lasted only about 18 minutes. Surprised by the afternoon attack, many Mexican soldiers fled or tried to surrender, but the Texas troops continued firing. When the shooting stopped, 630 Mexican soldiers had been killed. Only nine Texas troops had died. Houston was among the wounded, with an ankle shattered by a rifle ball.

Santa Anna had disappeared during the battle. He was found the next day hiding in the marsh and taken prisoner. When the captured Santa Anna wrote his second-in-command to withdraw, the bulk of the Mexican army stopped fighting. The Texas army won not only the Battle of San Jacinto but also the war. Houston refused to let the soldiers kill the defeated Mexican general. He later explained his reasons.



Sam Houston was considered a hero after the Battle of San Jacinto.

TEXAS VOICES

“My motive in sparing the life of Santa Anna was to relieve the country of all hostile enemies without further bloodshed, and to secure his acknowledgment of our independence.”

—Sam Houston, from an address to the citizens of Texas

The victory at San Jacinto in 1836 marked the end of the Texas Revolution. With this victory, Texas had won its independence from Mexico. The Republic of Texas was born.

Reading Check Identifying Cause and Effect What was the outcome of the Battle of San Jacinto?



Section 5 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

1. Identify and explain

the significance of each of the following in Texas history:

- Runaway Scrape
- Battle of Refugio
- James Fannin
- Battle of Coleto
- Goliad Massacre
- Francita Alavez
- Battle of San Jacinto

2. Locate on a map:

- San Jacinto River

3. Summarizing

Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to explain the significant events in 1836 after the fall of the Alamo that led to Texas independence.

The Fall of the Alamo	
Texas Independence	

4. Finding the Main Idea

- What led to the Runaway Scrape?
- How did geographic features help the Texans win the Battle of San Jacinto?
- In what year did Texas win independence from Mexico?

5. Writing and Critical Thinking

myWriteSmart

Identifying Points of View Write a short news report explaining the Runaway Scrape and Sam Houston's leadership and how these issues affected the Battle of San Jacinto.

Consider the following:

- Houston's retreat and training of troops
- Houston's decision to attack on the afternoon of April 21