

## Section

# 1

## The New Texas Population

### Main Ideas

1. Brought to Texas for a variety of reasons, immigrants settled in all parts of the state.
2. Rivers and climate helped people choose where to live.

### Why It Matters Today

The early immigrants who came to Texas had to endure long, hard journeys. Use current events sources to find information about the conditions people face on modern migrations.



**TEKS:** 2D, 2F, 8A, 11A, 11B, 21A, 21B, 21C, 21F, 22D

### myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the people who lived in Texas in the 1820s and 1830s.

### Key Terms

- G.T.T.
- squatters
- flatboats

## The Story Continues

The lone rider heard the wagon train before he saw it. Shouts and cries mixed with the thuds, clangs, and groans of the wagons and the oxen. Slowly bumping over ruts and stones, the wagons rolled into view. Weary immigrants struggled past. Some rode, while others trudged along on foot. Despite the hard journey, they kept going, eager to reach Texas.



### Gone to Texas

The population of Texas grew quickly during the 1820s and 1830s. In 1820 the region had been home to only about 3,000 Tejanos. By 1834 that number had grown to about 24,000 Tejanos and new arrivals. Some of the new arrivals to the state had come from Europe or from other parts of Mexico. However, most of the settlers flooding into Texas were farmers from the southern United States. Texas was also home to thousands of American Indians, some of them immigrants from the United States, who remained independent and were not counted in the population.

Why were people so eager to move to Texas? There were many reasons. The promise of cheap land and easy payment terms drew some immigrants. Others were simply looking for reasons to leave the United States. Many immigrants were escaping debts resulting from an economic crisis that hit the country in 1819. They hoped to make a fresh start in Texas, where American creditors had no authority to collect debts. For example, both Stephen F. Austin and Jared Groce had left behind large debts when they moved to Texas.

Authorities from the United States could not follow criminals into Texas either. As a result, a number of drifters and outlaws began entering the region. Gradually, word spread through the southern United States that Texas was filling with undesirable people. Such rumors made some people hesitant to move to Texas. One man wrote to Austin about his concerns.

### TEXAS VOICES

"As I contemplate becoming a resident of Texas, I feel great solicitude [concern] about the nature of the population which will inhabit the country. . . . The planters here have a most desperate [low] opinion of the population there, originating . . . from such villains as . . . have taken shelter in that province."

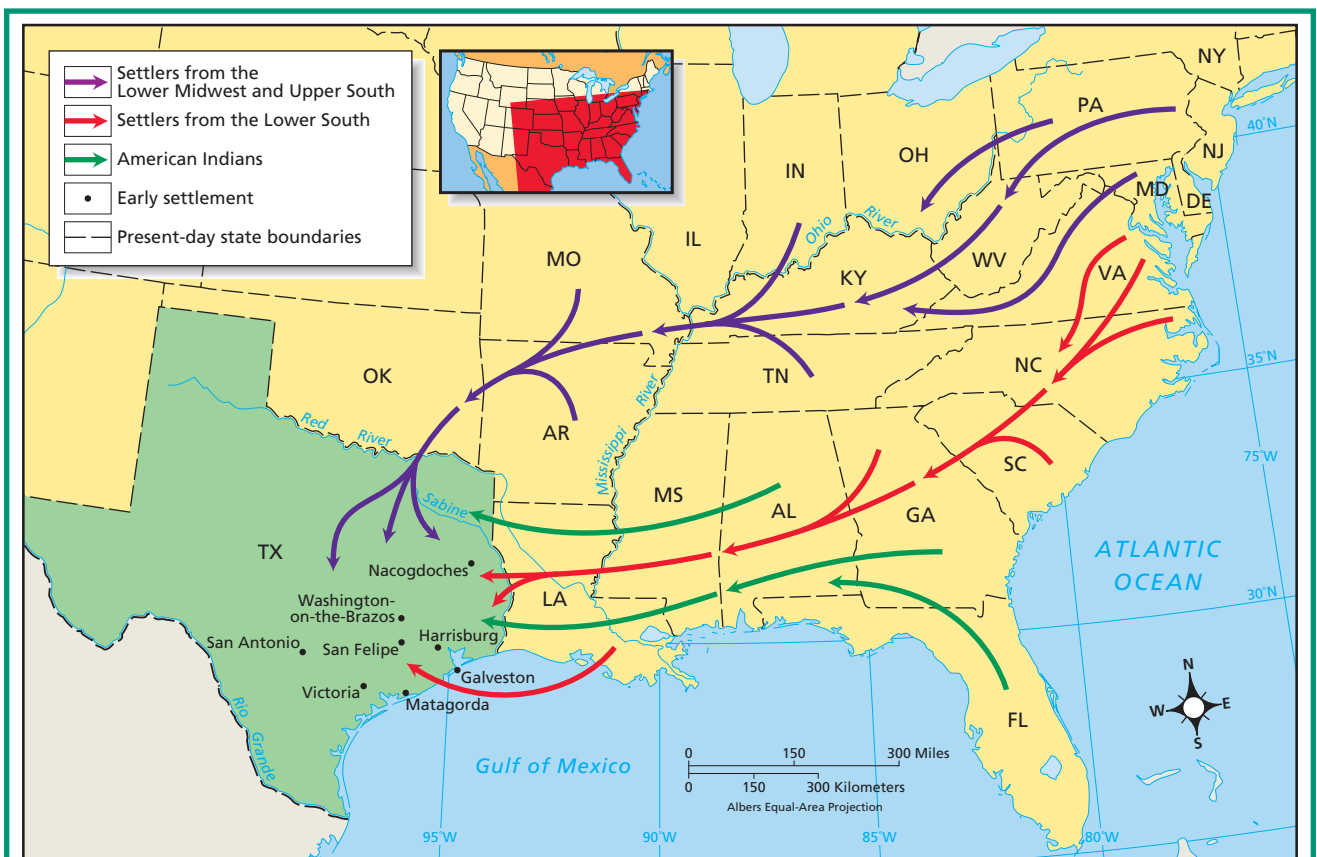
—Thomas White, quoted in *Texas Siftings*, by Jerry Flemmons

In some cases, these rumors became part of popular culture. When someone left town in debt or accused of a crime, people said they had probably gone to Texas. Many overdue accounts were marked "G.T.T." for "Gone to Texas."

**Reading Check Categorizing** What were the major factors that led people from the United States to move to Texas?

### Analyzing Primary Sources

**Identifying Bias** What factors might have influenced White's opinion of Texas settlers?



## U.S. Settlers Come to Texas, 1830s

**Interpreting Maps** Settlers from different parts of the United States came to Texas and built homesteads.

**Locate** To what region of Texas did each group of settlers move?

## Interpreting Visuals

**Getting to Texas.** Many U.S. immigrants traveled on flatboats for part of their journey. How do you think geographic features such as rivers affected immigration to Texas?



## ★ The People of Texas

In 1834 nearly three-fourths of the people of Texas—some 15,000—were from the United States. They mainly settled along the Gulf Coast and in East Texas. While many of these settlers came to Texas with the help of *empresarios*, a few came on their own. Mexican law allowed settlers to acquire land directly, but it was difficult. As a result, most settlers who came independently did not bother to obtain land titles. They became **squatters**, people who do not legally own the land on which they live.

The Tejano population in 1834 was about 4,000, mainly in and around San Antonio, Nacogdoches, and La Bahía-Victoria. While some Tejanos during this period developed successful ranching operations, most lived as subsistence farmers. A few established close business relationships with Anglo Americans and served as important politicians.

The majority of Texan settlers from Europe were of British, German, French, or Italian backgrounds. A number of Irish families lived in San Patricio and Refugio.

In 1834 at least 2,000 enslaved African Americans lived in Texas. Most came as slaves of Anglo settlers. As a result, slaves lived mostly in East Texas and along the Gulf Coast. About 150 free African Americans from the United States also called Texas home. Under Mexican law, free African Americans enjoyed the full rights of Mexican citizenship.

Several Indian groups also migrated to Texas in the 1820s and early 1830s. Many Cherokees left the southeastern United States as Anglo settlement expanded. Some Cherokees eventually settled in East Texas. Chickasaw, Creek, Delaware, and Shawnee Indians also settled in Texas during this period. These immigrant tribes joined the large number of Texas Indians, including Comanches and Apaches, already in the region.

**Reading Check Summarizing** What immigrant groups came to Texas, and where did they settle?

## That's Interesting!

### Early Texas Germans

Johann Ernst did not set out to live in Texas. His family was headed to Missouri when he read a report about Austin's colony. Intrigued, Ernst decided to try his hand in Texas. Once there, he was so happy that he wrote to a friend in Germany describing his new home. His letter was circulated throughout Germany, convincing many people to move. For many years, Ernst's home served as a hotel for new arrivals from his homeland.

## Getting to Texas and Choosing Land

By 1835 an estimated 1,000 settlers from the United States entered Texas each month. Most of these new Texans traveled overland. Some came in covered wagons pulled by horses, mules, or oxen. Others rode horses with their belongings tied behind their saddles. Some even walked. For most, the fastest way to reach Texas was by boat, but water travel was more expensive than traveling overland. Those who could afford to go by water usually went to New Orleans first. Those from northern areas first floated down the Mississippi River on long, low **flatboats** to the city. There they boarded ships headed to Texas.

On reaching Texas, settlers had to decide where to live. Although *empresarios* sometimes assigned specific grants of land, most settlers made their own choices. Most preferred settling along rivers and streams that provided water for drinking and farming. Rivers and streams made travel and transportation easier. The fertile soil and mild climate of the Gulf Coast Plain and the Piney Woods were likewise appealing to many immigrants. Some settlers also chose land that resembled their old homes. For example, many people from hilly southern Tennessee settled in hilly areas in present-day Red River County.

The presence of American Indians also affected settlement patterns in Texas. Many settlers had heard stories of fierce Plains Indians such as the Apaches and Comanches. As a result, colonists avoided the lands of those groups, settling east of the Guadalupe River and south of the Old San Antonio Road instead. There, Texas Indians posed less of a threat.

**Reading Check Drawing Conclusions and Inferences** Why do you think many new Texans were drawn to areas similar to those they had lived in before?



### The Big Thicket

Some people who moved to East Texas settled in an area called the Big Thicket. In the 1830s, yellow pines up to six feet in diameter covered the region. Bear, deer, panthers, and wolves roamed the area's hills and swamps. Today the Big Thicket offers one of the largest varieties of plant life in the world, including four meat-eating plants. The region is also home to some 350 bird species. **How do you think the natural resources of the area affected settler life?**



## Section 1 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

### 1. Define and explain:

- flatboats
- squatters

### 2. Identify and explain the significance of the following:

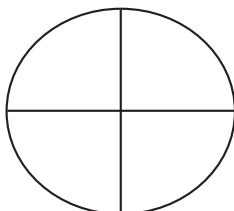
- G.T.T.

### 3. Locate on a Texas map:

- San Antonio
- Nacogdoches
- Victoria

### 4. Categorizing

Copy the diagram below. In each segment, identify one group of people that moved to Texas and explain their reasons for moving.



### 5. Finding the Main Idea

- a. How did settlers travel to Texas?
- b. What factors did settlers consider when choosing land, and how did this affect the development of Texas?
- c. Compare Mexican and Anglo settlement.

### 6. Writing and Critical Thinking

 myWriteSmart

**Summarizing** Imagine that you are a Mexican official living in Texas in the early 1830s. Write a report describing the people of Texas. Consider the following:

- where different groups settled in Texas
- how immigration affected Texas culture