

Bellwork

Would you fight a battle in which you knew you would most likely lose? Why or why not?



The Texas Revolution: The Siege of the Alamo

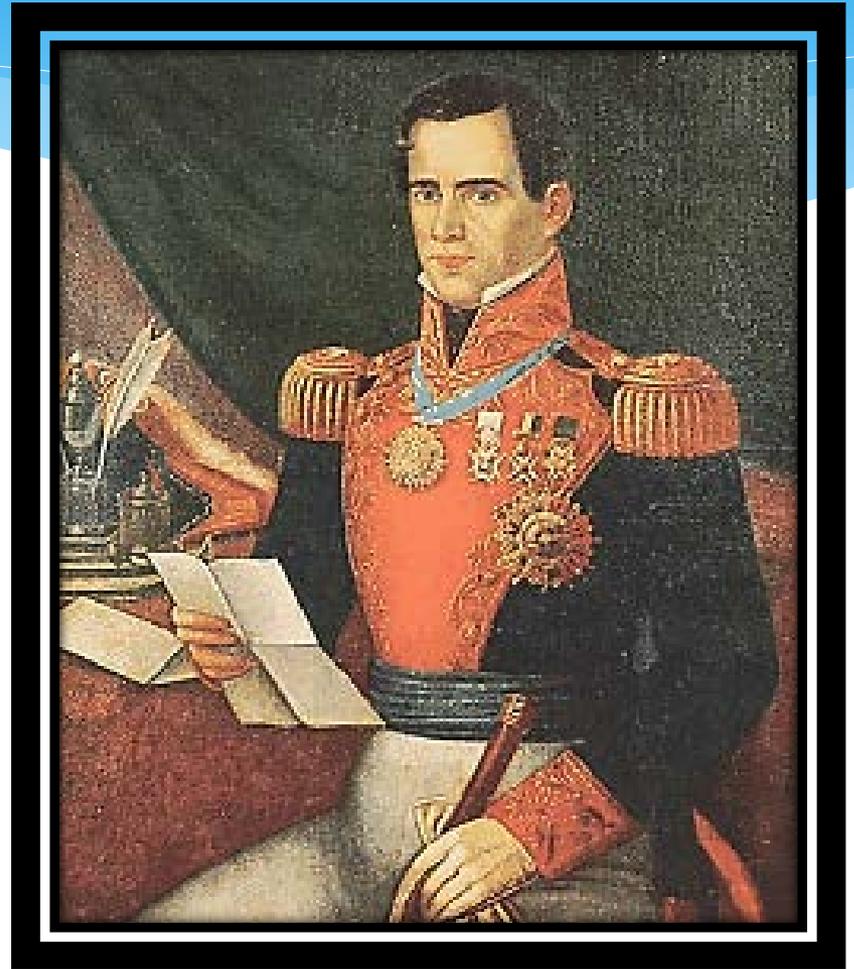


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The Mexican Army Advances

- Santa Anna decides to personally lead the Mexican attack on Texas.
- February, 1835: Santa Anna reaches the Rio Grande with 6000 troops and heads towards San Antonio.



*General Antonio López de Santa Anna
President of the Republic of Mexico*

The Mexican Army Advances

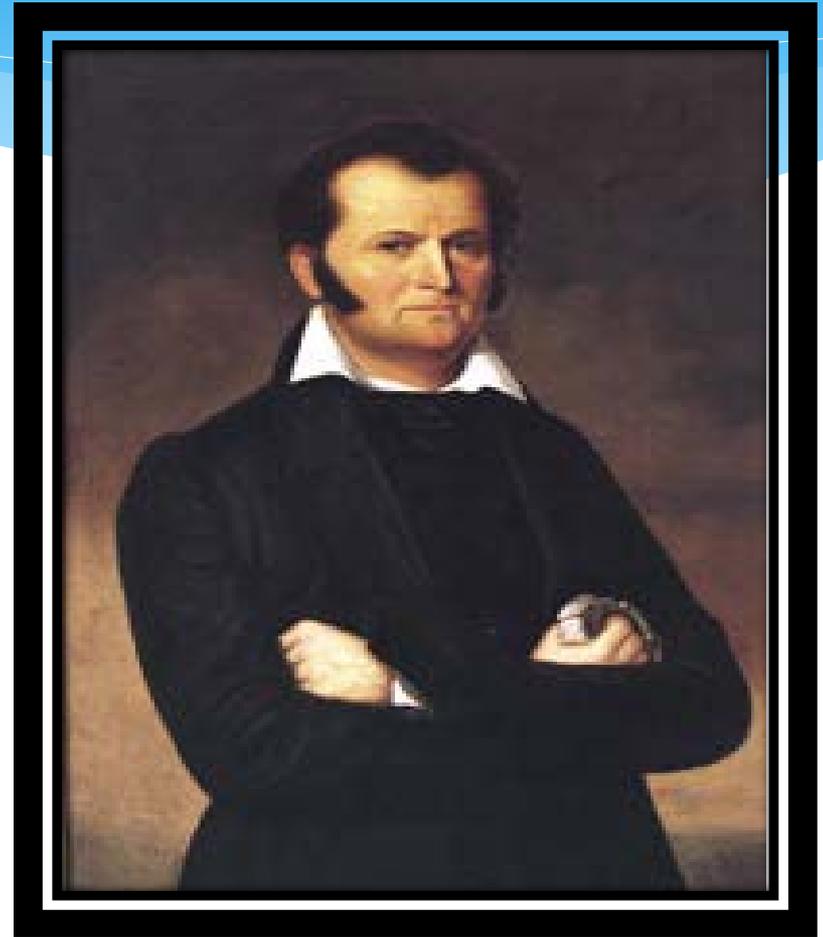


*Lt. Colonel James Clinton Neill
First Texian Commander at the Alamo*

- The Texians were unprepared for the Mexican advance into Texas.
- Lt. Col. James Clinton Neill only had just over 100 untrained militia troops under his command in San Antonio at the Alamo.
- Neill had been a hero in the War of 1812 at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend.
- He was an artillery officer who had fired the Texas “Shot Heard Round the World” from the Gonzales “Come and Take It” cannon during the Battle of Gonzales.

The Mexican Army Advances

- Jim Bowie-sent by Houston to the Alamo to evaluate the situation there in January, 1836.
- Houston had given Bowie orders that they were to remove all munitions and weapons from the Alamo, and blow up the fort to prevent it from falling into the hands of Santa Anna.
- They were then to fall back with the munitions, weapons, and men to Goliad, and rendezvous with Col James Fannin and his men at Fort Defiance (Presidio La Bahia) where they were to then repeat what they had done at the Alamo, and fall back to rendezvous with Houston and his Army to concentrate their forces and firepower against the Mexican Army.



Lt. Col. James "Jim" Bowie

James “Jim” Bowie

- Born in 1796 in Kentucky.
- Spent most of his life in Louisiana.
- Caught and rode wild horses, caught and rode alligators, and trapped bears.



Lt. Col. James “Jim” Bowie

James “Jim” Bowie



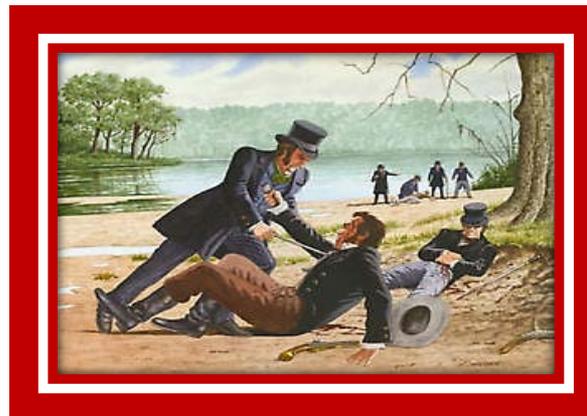
- * Signed up to fight in the War of 1812.
- * Engaged in illegal slave trading with Jean Lafitte.
- * Heavily involved with land title forgery and fraud.
- * Known for having a very fiery temper, and got into many fights.

The Bowie Knife

- * Designed by Jim's brother, Rezin Bowie, Jeff Cleft created the first knife.
- * It had been given to Jim for protection, and he became very skilled in its use.
- * It gained fame after the famous "Sandbar Fight" in Natchez, Mississippi in September, 1827.
- * Bowie was stabbed, shot, and beaten half to death in this fight, but won by using this fearsome knife.

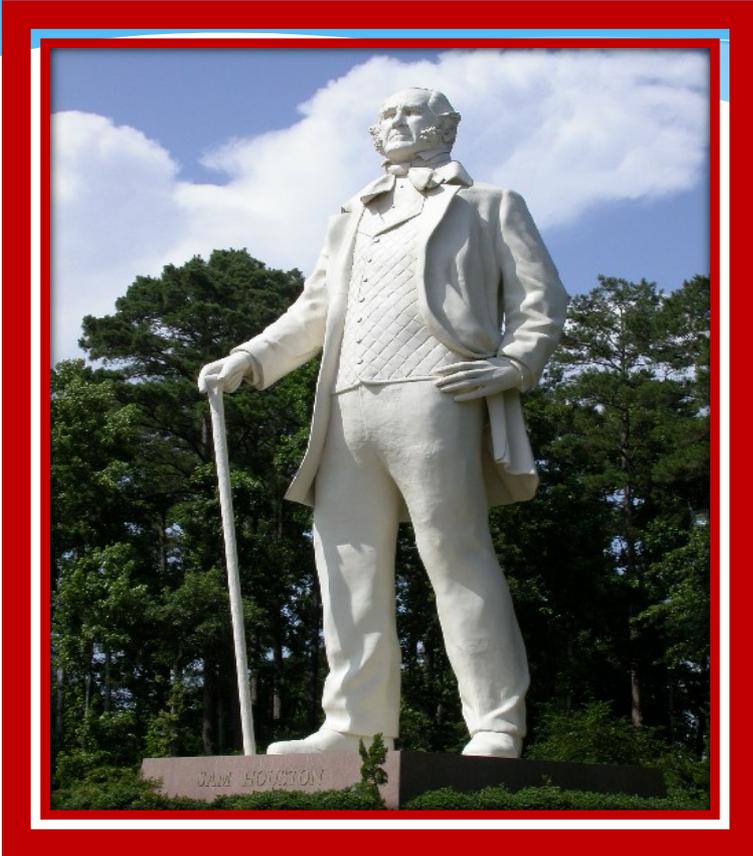


*Bowie No. 1
As found in the
Historic Arkansas Museum*



"The Sandbar Fight", or "the Sandbar Duel."

The Mexican Army Advances



Statue of Sam Houston

- Sam Houston recommends the Alamo be destroyed
- Provisional Gov. Smith disagrees noting improvements made to its defenses

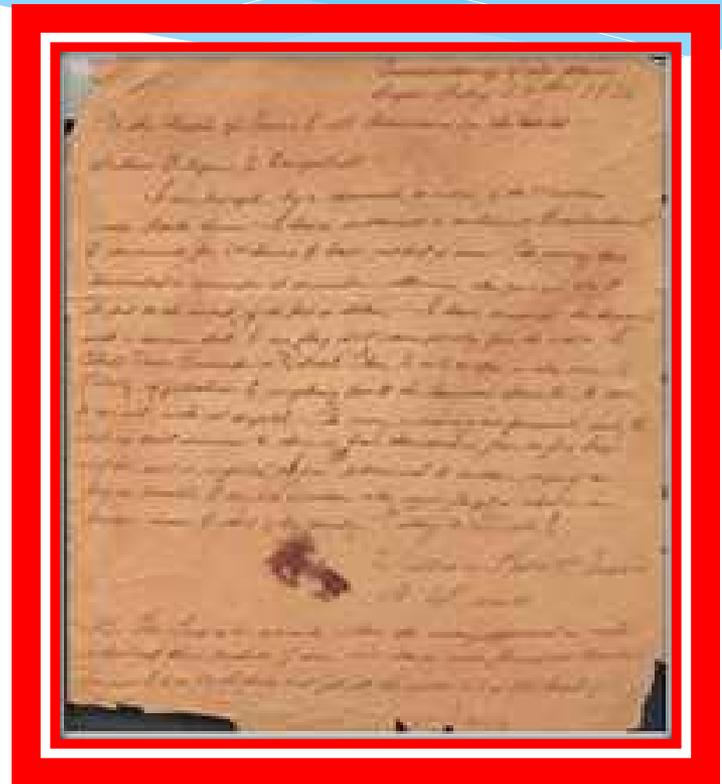
The Mexican Army Advances



- The Alamo was located along the Old San Antonio Road- (The old Spanish Camino Real to the East Texas missions-one of the two major routes through Texas.
- It would be one of the first locations Mexican Army reached.

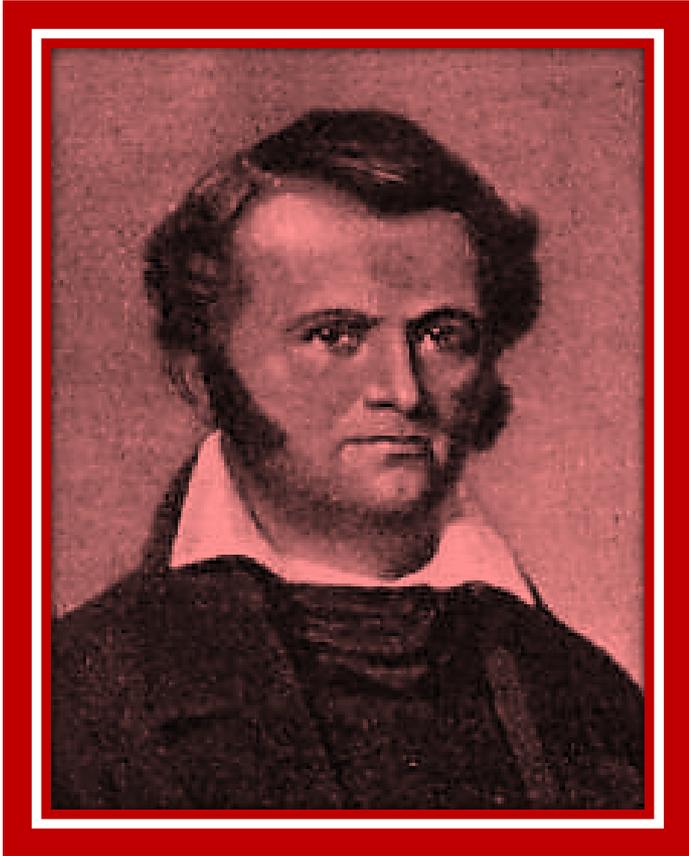
The Mexican Army Advances

- Bowie arrives at the Alamo
- Writes a letter to Houston saying the fortification is too valuable to abandon:



Bowie's Letter to Sam Houston

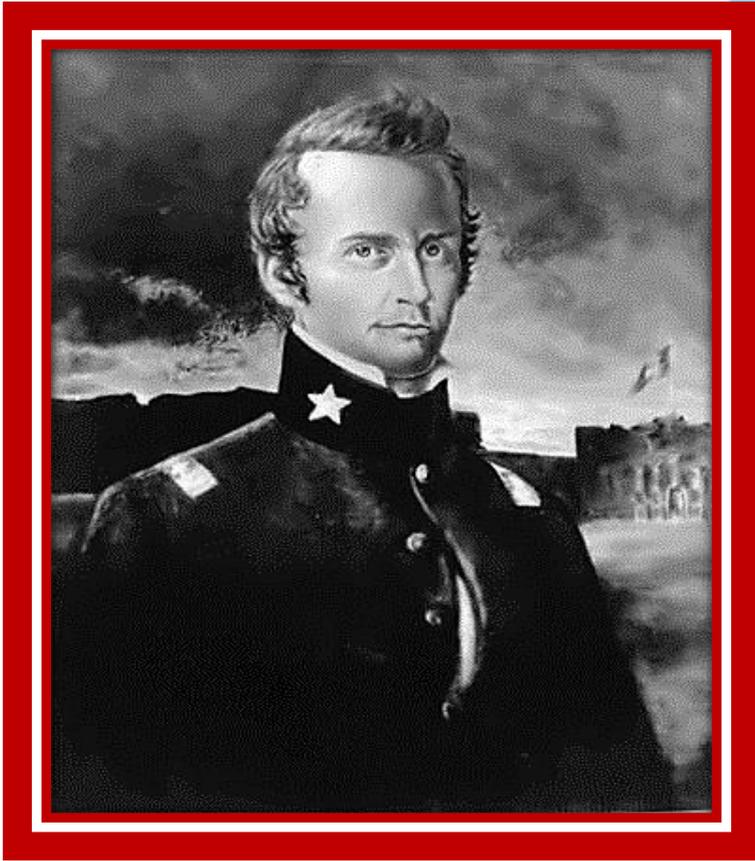
Bowie writes...



“The salvation of Texas depends on keeping Bexar (San Antonio) out of the hands of the enemy...we will rather die in these ditches than give them up to the enemy.”

Jim Bowie

The Mexican Army Advances



Lt. Col. William Barret Travis

- Gov. Smith orders Lt. Col. William Barret Travis (of Anahuac incident fame) to gather reinforcements and go to San Antonio.
- Travis manages to gather about 30 volunteers.

William B. Travis

- Born 1809 in South Carolina
- 1817: His family moved to Alabama
- Worked for a time as an Assistant Teacher
- Also had worked as a Lawyer



William B. Travis



*Restored Law Offices
of
William B. Travis in Alabama*

- 1828: Travis married a former student
- Started a newspaper
- Adjutant in state militia

William B. Travis

- 1831: Hopelessly in debt in Alabama, Travis abandons his wife, his son, and his unborn daughter.
- He then entered Texas and started a law practice at Anahuac.
- Travis was very active in War Party politics



The Mexican Army Advances



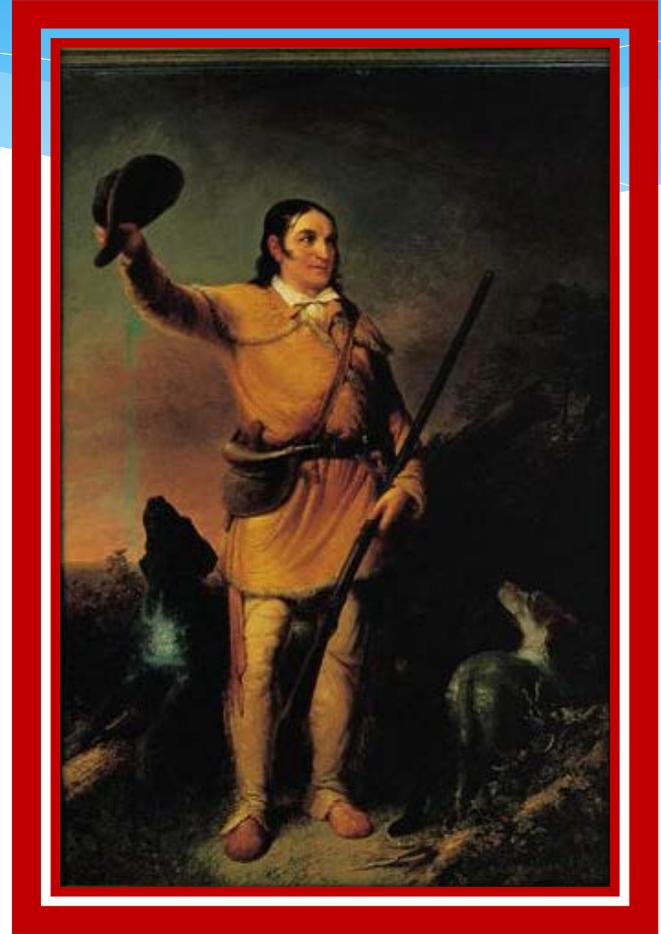
*James Bonham &
the Mobile Grays from
Alabama*



*Lt. Colonel David Crockett
led
a dozen volunteers from
Tennessee*

David “Davy” Crockett

- Born 1786 in Tennessee
- Killed a bear at age 3
- Often played hooky as a youngster
- Ran away from home to avoid a beating from his father



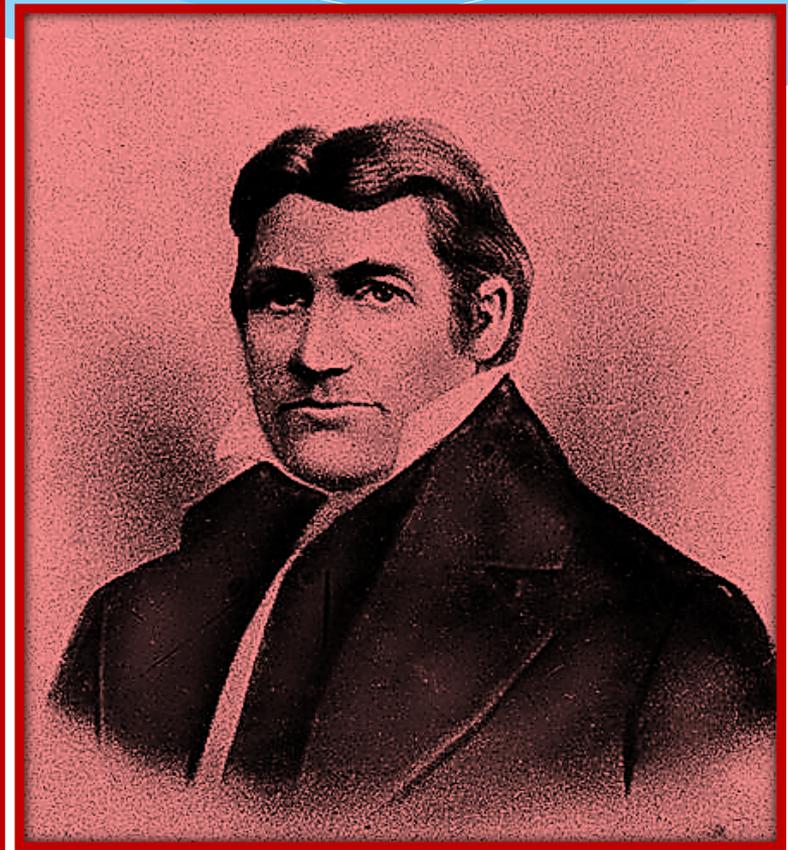
David “Davy” Crockett



- 1806: Married Polly Finley
- 1813: Joined the TN militia.
- 1815: Wife dies and Davy remarries.
- 1817: Crockett elected Justice of the Peace

David “Davy” Crockett

- 1821: Elected to the Tennessee legislature
- 1827 & 1829: Elected to U.S. Congress
- 1831: Defeated for re-election



David “Davy” Crockett

- 1833: Elected once again to the U.S. Congress.
- 1835: Lost his bid for reelection by 252 votes.
- Crockett had been friends with Sam Houston from Houston’s time as Governor of Tennessee, and had been told by Houston about this wondrous land known as Texas.
- “You may all go to Hell and I will go to Texas!” -David Crockett



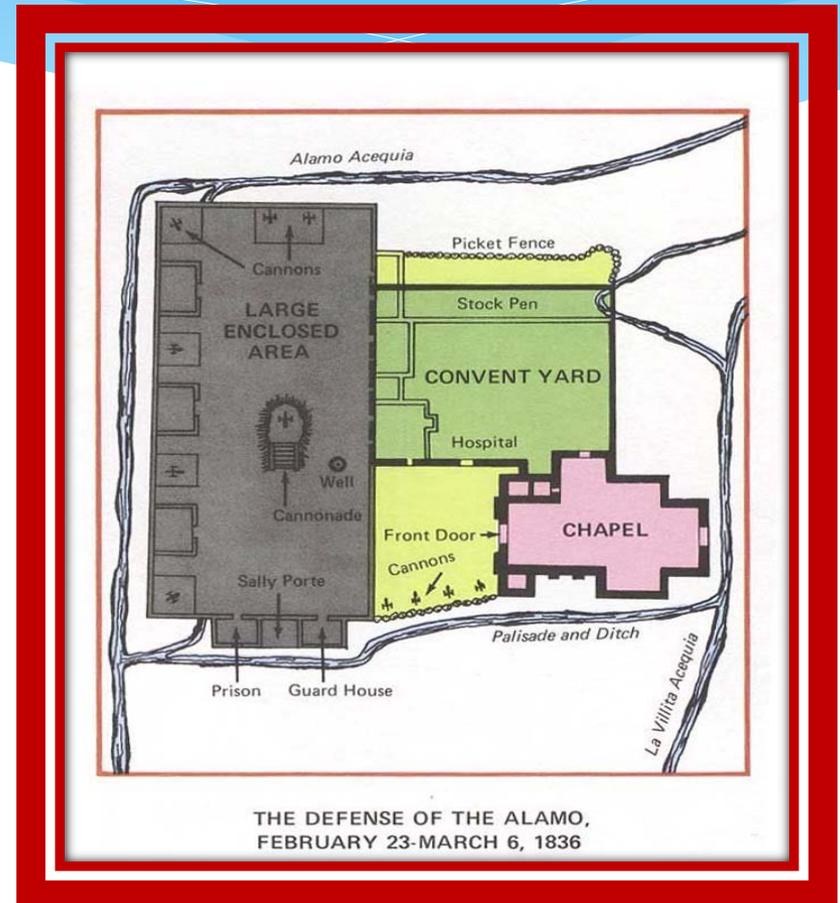
The Mexican Army Advances



- Lt. Col. Neill leaves the Alamo to care for sick family, puts Travis in command
- Bowie and Travis argue over control and agree to share command.

The Siege Begins

- Built up defenses:
 - Walls built to 12 feet high and 2 feet thick.
 - Palisades-high fences made of stakes behind which soldiers could fight.
 - 21 cannons placed around the Alamo. (Most cannon of ANY fort west of the Mississippi River)

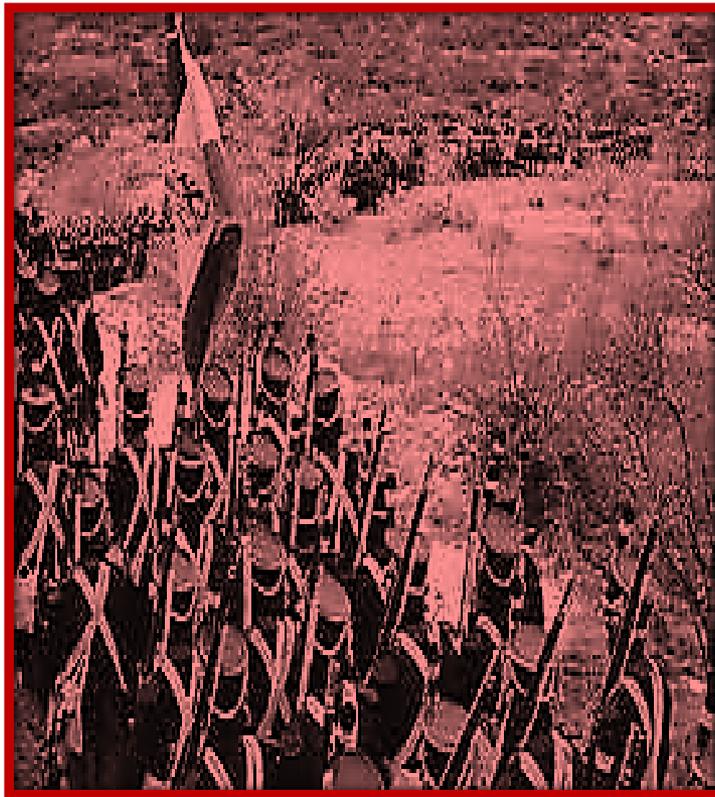


The Siege Begins



- * The Alamo was originally designed to be a mission, not a fort or a presidio.
- * The total Alamo complex encompassed about three acres.
- * Based on the square footage and walls surrounding it, it would require approximately 1000 soldiers to properly defend it.

The Siege Begins



- The Texians are still holding out hope for reinforcements.
- **February 23, 1836: Scouts from the Alamo spot the lead elements of Santa Anna's army approaching San Antonio.**
- Residents of Bexar frantically gather supplies, valuables, and weapons and get behind the walls of the Alamo.

The Siege Begins



*Alamo Battle Flag
that flew over the Alamo*

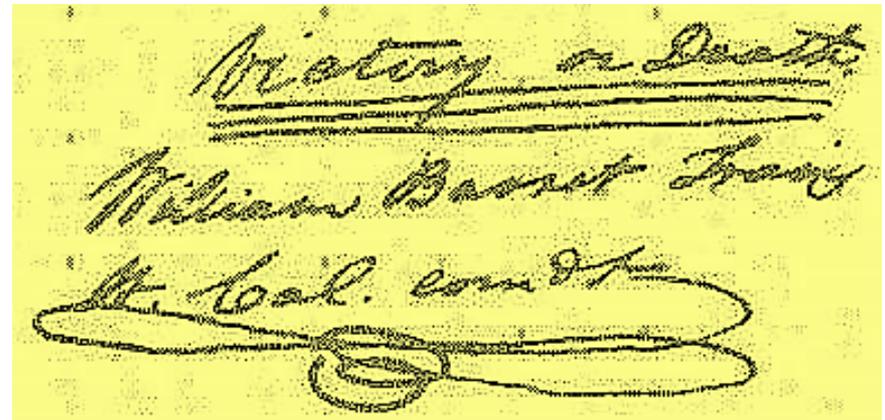


*Flag of
No Quarter
flown by
Santa Anna at
the Alamo*

- Santa Anna demands unconditional surrender.
- The Texians, on the order of Col Travis, reply with a cannon shot.
- Santa Anna raises red flag, signifying that no quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken, and all defenders will be put to the sword.

The Siege Begins

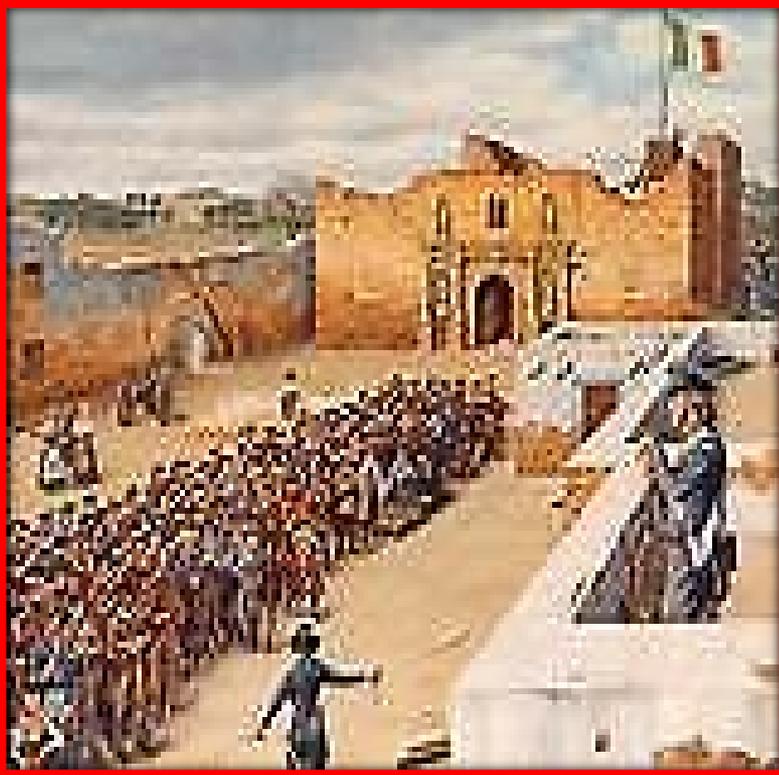
- February 24: Mexican forces open fire with cannonade bombardment and long-range sniper fire.
- Travis writes letter to Sam Houston, Governor Smith, and the world asking for reinforcements.
- Day 4: Travis orders troops to stop firing back at Mexican forces in order to conserve ammunition.



Excerpt from Travis' letter

<https://youtu.be/AasBi4Pdggk?list=PLqE38hWFGAfSzSKFTXumPQaYxUmzxVY1N>

Fall of the Alamo



Travis Speaks to the Defenders of the Alamo

- March 1: 32 volunteers arrive from Gonzales. This makes a total of 189 Texian defenders inside the Alamo.
- Santa Anna had at least 1800 troops, outnumbering the Texians 10 to 1.
- March 5: Travis calls the defenders together, and makes a speech to the defenders, asking who will stay and fight with him. Contrary to legend, he does NOT draw a “line in the sand”. Almost all choose to stay.

https://youtu.be/_lqw8-VSujs

Fall of the Alamo

- March 6: Texans awakened suddenly at 4:30 AM by shouts from Mexican soldiers.
- Santa Anna's bugler plays "Degüello" which translated means "slit throat". It is a Spanish march usually played at bullfights when the time came to kill the bull.



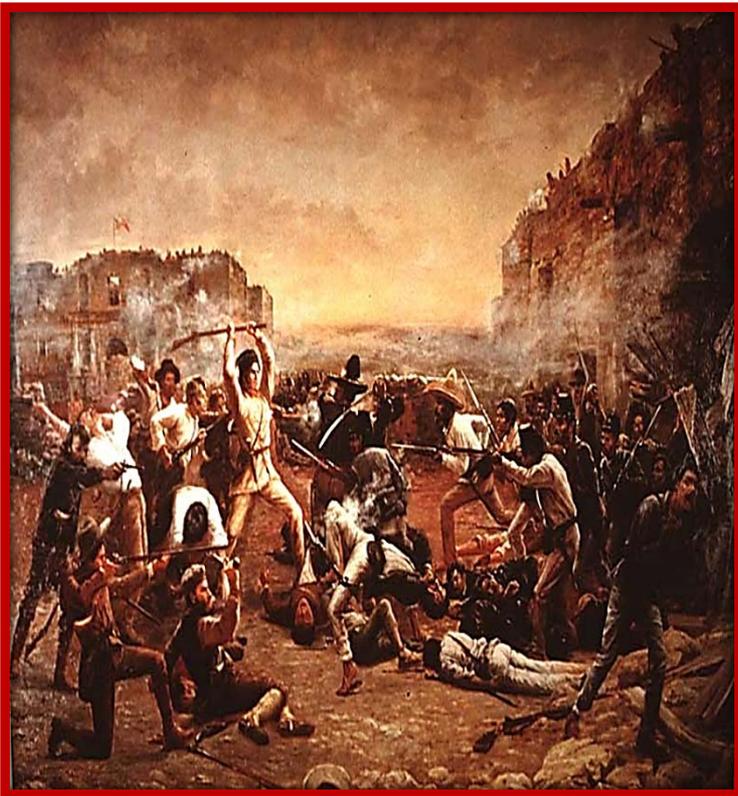
<https://youtu.be/BsSBC02irr4>

Fall of the Alamo



- **5:00 AM:** four columns of Mexican soldiers attack the Alamo.
- Their advance is halted briefly by Texian artillery.
- Mexican reserve forces join the attack. Mexican soldiers then regroup and counter-attack, quickly overwhelming the Texians, and breaching the perimeter walls of the Alamo.

Fall of the Alamo



- Mexican soldiers pour into the Alamo by the hundreds.
- Mexicans capture the interior cannon inside, and turn it on Texian defenders who were holed up in the long barracks, turning it into a massive killing zone
- Hand-to-hand combat follows until almost all defenders have been killed.

Fall of the Alamo

- At least 182 Texans killed. Some, including David Crockett, survived the battle but were then executed afterwards on Santa Anna's direct order by being bayoneted and hacked to death with swords.
- At least 8 Tejanos were killed at the Alamo while fighting for Texas.
- Mexican Army deaths were about 600.





Fall of the Alamo

Survivors included:

- **Susanna Dickinson and her infant daughter**
- **Ana Salazar Esparza**
- **William Barret Travis' slave Joe slave and a few other noncombatants.**



Susanna Dickinson

Fall of the Alamo

- Santa Anna believed that after taking the Alamo he had achieved a total victory against Texas.
- *“Remember the Alamo!”*