



# HISTORY TRUNK

## HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS

Questions and comments may be sent to the Alamo Education Department at:

**[EDUCATION@THEALAMO.ORG](mailto:EDUCATION@THEALAMO.ORG)**

**The ALAMO**



**Dear Educator,**

The Alamo History Trunks are designed to help students get hands-on while unpacking Texas history. The trunk contains a collection of accurate reproduction items from the 1800s. The items range from clothing to eating utensils and examples of period food. Period playing cards, a compass, and fire starting kit provide opportunities to compare with similar objects today. Additional information, including primary sources, images and links can help guide classroom discussions.

We hope this program can help teachers ignite the spark that leads learners to a lifelong appreciation and love of Texas History.

If you have any questions or suggestions feel free to share your feedback at: [education@thealamo.org](mailto:education@thealamo.org).

**Sincerely,****The Alamo Education Department****TEKS  
Alignment****Grade 4  
Social Studies**

- (2) A, C, D, E
- (3) A, B, C, D
- (6) B
- (7) A
- (8) A
- (9) A, B
- (10) B
- (11) C
- (12) A, B, C, F
- (13) C
- (19) A, B
- (20) B
- (21) A

**Grade 7  
Social Studies**

- (1) A, B
- (2) C, D, E
- (3) A, B, C
- (4) A
- (8) A, B
- (9) A, B
- (10) A
- (11) A
- (19) A, B, C
- (20) A, C



## HISTORY TRUNK ITEMS

# CLOTHING

Procuring clothes in the first half of the 19th century in Texas was not an easy matter. Many of the settlers could only afford a few sets of clothing – and many garments were handmade. The Father of Texas, **Stephen F. Austin** wrote of this in a letter to his mother and sister in 1824. “It is my wish that nothing should be worn in the family but homespun, at least for several years it is the cheapest but what is of more importance it will set an example to the rest of the settlers. [W]e are all poor in this country and therefore all on an equality and so long as this continues we shall all go on... harmoniously... and our industry will soon remedy our poverty if we have the proper economy with it” (Austin, 1824). Furthermore, even if pioneers had the means to buy clothes, oftentimes there were simply no clothes available. A perfect example is Texas Ranger Robert Hall whose wife, Polly, was reduced to one well-worn dress by 1838. Against his wife’s protests of the danger involved, Hall traveled one hundred miles to reach a store so that Polly might not be dressed in rags (Holman & Parsons, 1979). In the more settled areas, such as Austin’s town of San Felipe, mercantiles received shipments from New Orleans to provide for settlers like the Halls. Perry and Somervell was one such store, and they received, for example, “50 [pairs] boys brogans, 1 [dozen] heeled prunellas shoes, [and] 1 [dozen] boys cloth caps” in December of 1833 (Frost, 1833, p. 1). In 1836 these circumstances led to a creative blend of clothing that combined cultures, frontier style, and fashion.

### Hunting Frock

A practical, durable garment, the hunting frock was a popular item of clothing worn by men in frontier Texas. Homemade, they fit loose and were tied to the body with a belt. The fringe could be used for repair of other garments (Holman & Parsons, 1979). Many can be seen in their portraits wearing hunting frocks including Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, and **David Crockett**. In his autobiography, when Crockett spoke to a friend in Tennessee about his plans to run for office he stated that he “would therefore have me a large



Burt, C. (c. 1820). Stephen F. Austin, Digital Collections, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Austin. [https://www.cah.utexas.edu/db/dmr/image\\_lg.php?variable=di\\_04965](https://www.cah.utexas.edu/db/dmr/image_lg.php?variable=di_04965)



Print of David Crockett in hunting frock. Stuart, C. (n.d.). Colonel Crockett. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.]. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/pgs.04179/>





buckskin hunting-shirt made” in preparation (Crockett, 1834, p. 89). Though the frock in the trunk is made of cotton, many would have been created with buckskin – a more readily available material in the 1800s.

## Belt

Though the fashion of the day was dominated by stiff collars and tight clothing, as most of the clothing in early 1800s Texas was homemade, fit was not always ideal. Generally, clothing was baggy and loose fitting, so belts were a simple solution for securing clothing to the body. Furthermore, the belt often held pistols, ammunition, and knives (Holman & Parsons, 1979). Simply made of leather and a metal buckle, the belt in the trunk shows a simple, straightforward design.



## Fabric Swatches

Fabrics were, like most things in Texas, difficult to come by. According to one of Austin’s original settlers (the Old Three Hundred) William DeWees, “once in a great while we are able to obtain a small piece of unbleached domestic or a bit of calico, at the exorbitant price of seventy-five cents a yard, from someone passing through the country; but this is very seldom.” (DeWees, 1854, p. 45). Furthermore, when Texas was first settled, spinning wheels and looms (used to create fabrics) had to be left behind because, in the words of Noah Smithwick (a participant in the Battle of Gonzales), “there was, as yet, no use for them – there was nothing to spin” (Smithwick, 1900, p. 16).



## Buckskin

The obstacles of distance from stores and expense of fabrics led to the popularization of buckskin in Texas – a clothing material they could make for themselves from the hides of animals. Buckskin is created by cleaning the skin of an animal, scraping and rubbing to create softness, and smoking for weather resistance. It was known for its durability, and was worn by many men of Texas (Holman & Parsons, 1979). Mary Austin Holley, cousin of Stephen F. Austin, recorded a special name given to hunters who wore buckskin. “The dress of these hunters is usually of deer-skin; hence the appropriate name of Leather-Stocking” (Holley, 1990, p. 134). James M. Hill, a veteran of the battle of San Jacinto, recalled that famous scout, messenger, and soldier, Deaf Smith, “had a suit of buckskin he took from the Mexican courier near Harrisburg” (Hill, 1895), and David Crockett owned a beautiful buckskin vest that is part of the Alamo collection. Furthermore, it was not simply soldiers who wore buckskin, but families as well. Jesse Burnam





David Crockett's buckskin vest is part of the Alamo collection. It was not worn during the Battle of the Alamo.



Cotton boll on a cotton plant.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/visitmississippi/3484472248>



Carding (cleaning) fiber by hand at the Alamo.

and family, who were part of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred, recalled his first hunt in their new home of Texas. "I had not gone far when I saw two deer, a fawn and its mother. I shot the fawn first knowing the doe would not run far, then I shot and killed her...I took the fawn to camp for my hungry children, and took William, my oldest boy, and a horse after the doe. My wife had dressed a skin and made William a shirt, but it lacked one sleeve, so she dressed the fawn skin that day and made the other sleeve" (Burnam, 1901, p. 13). Native Americans were also known to trade and gift buckskin to settlers. William DeWees wrote of the kindness of the Tonkawa tribe in 1823. "Were it not for the Toncaway Indians, a small tribe who are friendly to us and supply us with dressed deer skins, we should be almost entirely destitute of clothing" (DeWees, 1854, p. 44-45).

## Cotton

Though buckskin was readily available, fabrics were cooler, easier to sew, and softer on the skin. As Texas grew more settled, spinning and weaving provided cloth that could be created in-state. The cotton plant was first cultivated in Texas by Spanish missionaries in the 1700s because it grew well in the hot climate (Holman & Parsons, 1979). A 1772 inventory of Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) stated that the mission housed a workshop which contained scales for weighing cotton, 24 arrobas (Spanish weight measurement equal to 32 pounds), and a chest of 12 pounds of cotton thread (Barón de Ripperdá, 1977, p. 34). The first crop planted by Stephen F. Austin's colony was in 1822 (White, 1957, p. 257). A cotton boll is a fiber that serves as a fluffy protection growing around the seeds of the plant. When harvested, the fiber was cleaned, spun, and woven to create fabric. When done by hand, this was hard, tedious work. Tilatha Wilson English, who came to Texas with her family in the early 1840s, described this work. "I am an old spinner and weaver. I have had to quilt, card, spin and weave ever since I was large enough. We had to pick out all the seed from our cotton with our fingers for several years after we came to Texas, make up our own clothing, and raise our own indigo to color the cloth. I never saw a sewing machine or cook stove until after the [Civil] War" (Goodnight, Dubbs, & Hart, 1909, p. 248). However, cleaning the





cotton became easier when Eli Whitney's cotton gin was introduced to Texas. The first known gin was brought by Austin's wealthiest colonist, Jared Groce in 1825 (White, 1957, p. 258). By 1836, Mary Austin Holley stated that cotton is "the great crop of Texas and has, for some years, produced as much as ten thousand bales" (Holley, 1990, p. 61).

## Jean

Derived from cotton, jean was merely cotton fabric woven into a tough, twill weave (which creates a diagonal pattern). The fabric was particularly useful for work clothes as it could endure more abuse (Holman & Parsons, 1979).



Jean

## Linen

A plant based fiber like cotton, linen was derived from the flax plant. Linen, however, declined in popularity after the invention of the cotton gin because cotton was softer and more supple. Furthermore, the process required to make flax useable was more complex and time consuming than cotton. Therefore, linen never found a foothold in Texas in the same way as cotton and wool (Holman & Parsons, 1979).



Harvesting flax to make linen. Claus, E. (1904). Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flax#/media/File:Emile\\_-\\_Claus001.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flax#/media/File:Emile_-_Claus001.jpg)

## Wool

Wool was made into fabric in much the same way as cotton and linen. However, the fibers were taken from the hair of sheep rather than a plant. A spinning wheel was used to turn the fibers into thread or yarn, and the loom wove the thread into fabric. Although looms and spinning wheels were not commercially available in Texas until the 1840s, some women managed to bring their tools to Texas or have them made. Mary Rabb, one of Austin's Old Three Hundred, recalled how her brother-in-law built her a spinning wheel in 1823. "Andrew Rabb made a spinning wheel and made me a present of it. Then I was very much pleased, and I soon got to work to make clothing for my family" (Rabb, 1962, p. 2). Although sheep were brought to Texas by the Spanish, wool was never as prevalent as cotton (Holman & Parsons, 1979). However, in the inventory of San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo) in 1772, there was an entire room devoted to wool that included 25 arrobas of wool. Furthermore, there was a spinning room occupied by a loom and two spinning wheels, and the mission boasted a flock of 253 sheep (Barón de Ripperdá, 1977, p. 34-37).

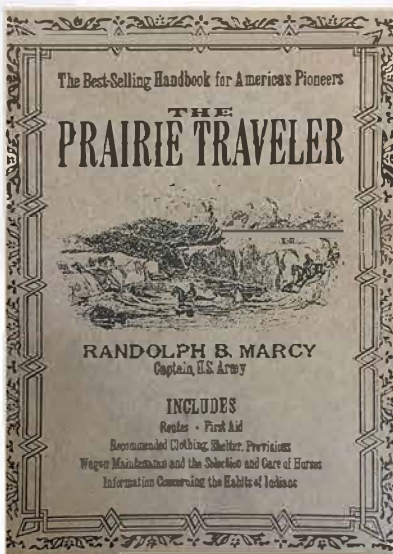


Spinning wheel





Alamo Living Historian dressed as a New Orleans Grey.



Guidebooks were popular among pioneers as they offered advice and suggestions for safe travel.



Brogans

The soldiers at the battle of the Alamo wore a variety of fabrics, but the only known uniform was worn by the New Orleans Greys. Typical winter military uniforms of the time period were made of wool. This would have kept them warm in the bitter 1836 Texas winter, and the fire resistant material made it safer for them to work the cannons.

## Brogans (Shoes)

Randolph B. Marcy, a U.S. Army Captain, spent considerable time in Texas and the Southwest. He took the knowledge he gleaned from that time period and wrote a book in 1859 detailing how to travel through the untamed regions of Texas. Regarding shoes he wrote that “in the summer season shoes are much better for footmen than boots, as they are lighter, and do not cramp the ankles” (Marcy, 1993, p. 39). Furthermore, Noah Smithwick, who first came to Texas in 1827, noted an advantage to be found in wearing shoes rather than moccasins at a dance in Stephen F. Austin’s colony. Many of the boys were wearing moccasins, and they did not make enough noise to please the colonists – fortunately, their “brethren were not at all selfish or disposed to put on airs, so, when they had danced a turn, they generously exchanged footgear with the moccasined contingent and gave them the ring, and we just literally kicked every splinter off that floor before morning” (Smithwick, 1900, p. 40). Boots, though more expensive, were the preference for many because the primary mode of transportation was on horseback. However, boots were expensive and not always available, so a crude footwear called brogans was worn instead. The price ranged wildly, and Charles Pressler, a German immigrant, wrote to his family in 1847 that, “shoes and boots are in high price. I advise you to provide yourself with those” (Holman, 1974, p. 30). Furthermore, the shoes were not always created by experienced cobblers (shoe-makers). Dilue Harris wrote of her family’s experience with brogans when she arrived in Texas at the age of nine. “When we came up to Harrisburg in the year 1833, sister and myself were the only little girls that had nice shoes. There was a shoemaker living at Harrisburg named Paddy Brown. His shoes were so ugly I said I would not wear Paddy Brown’s shoes. The neighbors would join and tan deer and cow hides, but it was rough leather” (Harris, 1901, p. 113). Unfortunately for Harris, she had to eat her words when her nice shoes ruined – her parents bought





her a pair of Paddy Brown's shoes. Yet, she was lucky in many ways as men were given priority with shoes in pioneer Texas. Because of the expense and scarcity of footwear, if no money was left for shoes after the men were shod, women and children often went barefoot.



Slouch hat



Alamo Living Historian wearing a coon-skin hat with face intact.

### Slouch Hat

When Randolph B. Marcy described the articles of clothing needed for a three month expedition, a broad-brimmed hat of soft felt was part of the list – just like the one included in the trunk (Marcy, 1993, p. 39). Even Texas Rangers were seen wearing this type of hat by John Duval, a survivor of the Goliad Massacre, on a visit to San Antonio. He wrote that the Rangers were “mounted on their horses, and dressed in buckskin hunting shirts, leggings and slouched hats, and with pistols and bowie knives stuck in their belts” (Duval, 1892, p. 69). Slouch hats were used throughout Texas and other parts of Mexico as evidenced by a letter from James Austin to his brother Stephen while he was in Monterrey in 1823. “Do not forget to bring me...a Spanish wide brim, white, wool hat. I understand they are very cheap and it will be almost impossible to stand the prairie without one” (Barker, 1924, p. 649). It was a common hat that could be shaped by the wearer. The quality of the hat could be determined by its ability to hold its shape (Holman & Parsons, 1979).

### Fur Hat

Wearing a fur hat has come to be associated with David Crockett, however, it was worn by many frontiersman. The hat in our trunk is made from a raccoon, but caps could also be made from squirrels, foxes, bears, etc. They were made to fit tightly to the head which kept them from blowing off in high winds, and they kept heads warmer in cold weather. Furthermore, they provided a natural camouflage. These hats could be seen on the volunteer soldiers marching from Gonzales to San Antonio de Béxar after the Battle of Gonzales in 1835. Noah Smithwick noted in his memoirs that many hats were present on the march including “a coonskin cap, with the tail hanging down behind, as all well regulated tails should do” (Smithwick, 1900, p. 110). Though traditionally hats would have a tail hanging behind as prescribed by Smithwick, other variations included antlers, fox ears, and raccoon faces (Holman & Parsons, 1979).







### Bonnet

Though bonnets were the fashion of the day, they were a necessity in the hot Texas sun. There were various styles of bonnets, but the one in our trunk is a cotton bonnet of an informal style. The strings could be tied under the chin or left to fall on the chest. If fabric was available, bonnets were easy and relatively inexpensive to make. However, a number of women wore hats or whatever else was available to protect their heads, necks, and faces. Dilue Rose Harris, an 11-year old girl when her family fled in the Runaway Scrape, gave testimony to this as she remembered returning home after the victory at San Jacinto. “Father said if he got his cotton to market I should have two or three sun-bonnets, as he was tired of seeing me wearing a table-cloth around my head” (Harris, 1901, p. 173). Not only a practical piece of clothing, the removal of a bonnet conveyed a message of approval for the viewer. Writer Amelia Barr, who came from England to Austin, Texas in 1856, noticed the mystique of the bonnet. “The white sun-bonnets of the Texan girl were things of beauty, and as they were removed on entering a room, I soon learned that the very act of removal communicated a pleasant surprise and a revelation of unsuspected charm” (Barr, 1913, p. 203). In fact, Barr used her new found knowledge to win the favor of a local lawyer who was helping her family to find a house.



Alamo Living Historian protecting her dress with an apron while dying fabric.

### Apron

The cotton apron contained within the trunk was tied around the waist with the top portion pinned to a woman’s dress. It served as protection for a dress which could not easily be replaced. A colorful use for an apron in 1870 is recorded by James Newberry recalling one of the many skirmishes between Native Americans and settlers. “During the fight Mr. Millsap ran out of cartridges for his Winchester rifle and his daughter, Miss Donnie Millsap, took some in her apron and carried them back to her father; as she was going back to the house the Indians began to shoot at her and as she went through the door of the house they shot an arrow through her apron and it stuck in the door facing” (Goodnight, Dubbs, & Hart, 1909, p. 215).



## Sewing Kit

The sewing kit is another item recommended for a three month journey in Randolph Marcy's handbook and with good reason (Marcy, 1993, p. 39). As established with the other clothing items, clothing was scarce, and it was imperative to be able to repair the clothing that the pioneers already owned. Nor was the sewing kit reserved for women – Marcy, in fact, recommends the sewing kit specifically for men. When traveling or on a military campaign, men repaired their own clothing items – thus the need for a compact kit as they would be carrying it along with their other gear. David Fentress, a

Confederate Texas doctor during the Civil War, wrote to his wife in 1863 about his sewing skills. “My two pants I brought from home are yet good. One I patched in the seat two months ago and the job would astonish you and the other, my uniform britches, I will have to do likewise in a few days when they will be almost as good as new...I would make a very good seamstress if I had a thimble” (Fentress, 1863, p. 3). The trunk contains a sewing kit with scissors, wooden thimble, artificial sinew, a wooden case with needles and pins, buttons, and cotton thread all contained in a compact cotton bag. The sinew would have been real in 1800s Texas – made from the tendons of animals. It was used as a tough, alternative sewing material.



## NOURISHMENT

Not only in early 1800s Texas, but on any frontier, the primary food eaten consisted of wild meat and native plants because without an established civilization, the food provided by domesticated animals and agriculture was not available. However, even in 1835, food did not have great variety in Texas. *A Guide to Texas Emigrants* created in 1835 by the Galveston Bay and Texas Land

Company stated that “Along a very considerable part of the road that leads from Natchitoches to San Antonio de Bexar, better lodging and provisions are obtained, in greater abundance, and at a lower price, than on many of the principal roads in Spain. The hospitality of all is most meritorious, and the usual price of each meal (which consists almost invariably of pork, eggs, bacon, butter, maize cakes, hot coffee, and sometimes venison and other meats), is only one shilling” (Woodman, 1835, p. 94). However, more established settlements had greater selection as evidenced by Mary Austin Holley writing of Austin's colony in 1836. “A great variety of fruits, both of the tropical and





more temperate climates, are produced in uncommon abundance and perfection. Olives, oranges, lemons, figs, prunes, peaches, etc. are of the finest quality, and may be obtained in great profusion” (Holley, 1990, p. 65-66). Yet the turmoil of the Texas Revolution created a scarcity for the members of the Texas Convention of 1836. William Fairfax Gray was an attendee to the convention and provides a wonderful primary source account of the proceedings through his diary. He noted on March 10, 1836 that “the eating at our house is becoming sorry, no butter, no milk, no sugar, little or no vegetables, and not much meat except pork” (Gray, 1909, p. 128). Furthermore, even into the Republic of Texas period, when settlers traveled any distance from established towns, good preparation was necessary for survival. George Wilkins Kendall was part of



the ill-fated Santa Fe Expedition which was part of a plan by President Mirabeau B. Lamar to conquer parts of New Mexico in 1841. He records their supplies at the beginning of their journey in June. “With an eye to the general welfare [our cook] had purchased a ham of goodly dimensions, besides coffee, sugar, tea, salt, and red pepper” (Kendall, 2004, p. 17). However, even with these luxuries, they had not packed nearly enough food, and troubles along the trail depleted their supplies further. Texas was still a harsh and wild land, and a short while into their journey, the men found themselves in a difficult situation. “Long and tiresome marches, bad water, and not half enough of even the worst provisions, had combined to weaken and dispirit the men...The consequence was, that one party would go in this direction in quest of grapes or plums, another in that, hunting for game or water, and nearly all discipline was lost. It is difficult, and requires a most efficient officer to keep even regular soldiers under subjection, when half starved and broken down by fatigue – nothing can restrain volunteers under such circumstances” (Kendall, 2004, p. 107).

### Skillet

Whether at home or on the trail, if Texians wanted to cook their food, a skillet or frying pan was often the utensil of choice. In an inventory of the supplies at the Alamo on February 3, 1836, four frying pans are included in the list (Chariton, 1990, p. 208). The skillet included in the trunk is made of sturdy iron with a handle that can be folded for easy transportation. It is very similar to the





“frying and baking pans of wrought iron” listed as necessary for a traveling group of six to eight people by Randolph Marcy (Marcy, 1993, p. 40). Marcy’s declaration of a skillet as a requirement is evidenced by Mary Rabb and her family when they decided to move to a different location in Texas in 1823 for fear of Native Americans. They could pack very little, but a skillet was included in the essential provisions (Rabb, 1962, p. 4). Even when having a skillet led to an outcome as recorded by George Kendall on the Santa Fe Expedition in 1841, the utensil was kept. One of the other men on the trail, Falconer had a pony who did not care for all of the gear his master carried. “Falconer had a way...of packing all his...cooking...instruments upon his horse, and on the occasion to which I have alluded, some one of them chanced to chafe or gall the pony, inducing him to give a kick up with his hinder limbs. The rattling of the pots and pans started him off immediately, and the faster he ran the more they rattled... The rattling of the tin, earthen, and other ware, as the pony snorted, kicked, and pranced about made a noise resembling that produced at a charivari [a folk custom of noise making after a wedding]. His antics were of the most unseemly nature... and the cool philosophy of Mr. Falconer, as he quietly followed in the wake of the vicious animal, picking up the fragments scattered along, completed the picture... Some time after this adventure the Indians stole the horse, but they made a bad bargain of it” (Kendall, 2004, p. 49). Nor was it a tool only used on the open fires of the wild frontier – Amelia Barr records the use of skillets in 1865 inside the homes of her friends in Austin, TX. She spoke of husbands aiding their wives in housework. “I knew men who ‘fired’ all the food, for the cooking was then done in skillets on the hearth, with hot coals underneath, and upon the lid” (Barr, 1913, p. 253).

### Horn Spoon & Horn Cup

Because of the scarcity of resources, Texas pioneers did not only use their cattle for meat and milk. They also used their horns for a variety of inventive purposes. They were converted into a wide range of containers including cups and spoons. However horn broke easily and if it got too hot, it would begin to lose its shape. Records of their use are difficult to ascertain. Perhaps because it was such a common item that it was not discussed, or the fact that commercially produced dinnerware was becoming more available in the 1800s.

### Wooden Bowl

Dishes for travel were made of more sturdy material than ones made for tableware. Dishes carved from wood were used both at home and on the road. Stoneware and china did not travel well and therefore these were kept at home. The 1836 *Guide to Texas Emigrants* recommends



a wooden bowl for mixing as one of the utensils to be taken to Texas (Woodman, 1835, p. 188). However, Randolph Marcy was quick to point out that he would use tin for anything requiring water as wood is “liable to shrink and fall to pieces” (Marcy, 1993, p. 40). Yet tin was not always available, and all that was required to create a wooden utensil was a knife and an obliging tree. Bowls could even be used as a replacement for a drinking vessel as evidenced by William Fairfax Gray as he journeyed to see interim Vice President of Texas Lorenzo de Zavala on March 23, 1836. On the way he “stopt at the house of Atkins, an English farmer [and] wife a spruce and kindly woman. Asked her for a drink of water and she gave me a bowl of fine milk” (Gray, 1909, p. 144).

### Tin Plate & Tin Cup

Tinware, actually sheet iron coated with a thin layer of molten tin, was lightweight and sturdy. Tin cups had the advantage over horn and stoneware in that they could also be used as boilers for making coffee, tea, soup, or stew. Mugs made from pewter were also still in use but were going out of fashion. Randolph Marcy recommended “cups of heavy tin, with the handles riveted on [and] tin plates” for camp equipment (Marcy, 1993, p. 40). As William Fairfax Gray fled in the Runaway Scrape with other Texians attempting to escape the oncoming Mexican army on April 18, 1836, he happened upon his former landlady with whom he had boarded during the Convention of 1836. She gave him food and a tin cup for his journey (Gray, 1909, p. 165). In 1841, before the Santa Fe Expedition left Austin, the cook purchased “a tin cup for each man’s private accommodation” (Kendall, 2004, p. 17). Tin’s diverse usability, light weight, and sturdy material made it the ideal traveling utensil. As with most items in 1800s Texas, tin utensils had purposes beyond simply eating. Dilue Harris records a Fourth of July celebration in Austin’s colony. Although, “the people were very anxious about Stephen F. Austin, as he was in Mexico, a prisoner...it was [still] a grand affair for the times.” They danced to music that consisted of two fiddlers, a man beating in time on a cart tongue with an iron pin, and a man beating a tin pan (Harris, 1900, p. 110).



Wooden Bowl



Tin Cup and Canteen

### Eating Utensils

Spoons have essentially not changed in form for hundreds of years. Forks, however, did undergo some change during the early 19th Century, mainly going from a two-prong version to one with three-prongs. Table knives of the period had wider blades than today's version, due to the





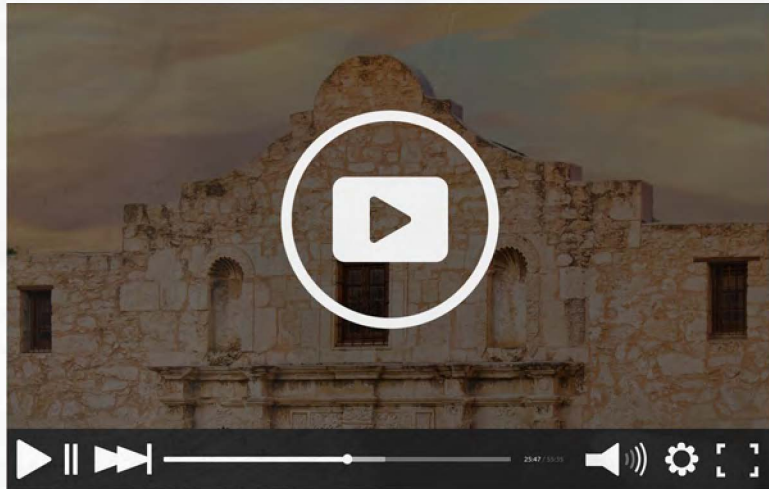
fact that they were used as a utensil to carry food from the plate or bowl to one's mouth. Eating utensils were made from wood, iron, horn, pewter, and silver. Handles were sometimes covered in wood, horn, or bone. The version in the history trunk is made with bone handles – another example of Texians using their resources. Rather than letting the bones of their cattle rot, they were used in the creation of utensils such as these. Though perhaps not as essential an item as a skillet, forks and knives were recommended by Randolph Marcy (Marcy, 1993, p. 40), and they were carried by the men of the Santa Fe Expedition. Unfortunately, a grass fire set by Native Americans proved one of the weaknesses of iron materials. “Two of our wagons only had been entirely consumed, but nearly all had suffered...Our pots, pans and kettles, knives and forks, were converted into old iron – everything was gone” (Kendall, 2004, p. 96).

### Haversack

A haversack is a cloth bag with a strap that is used to carry personal items and food. In the true sense of the word, a haversack was an item issued to a soldier in which only food was to be carried. During the Mexican War in 1846, the *American Flag* newspaper (produced in United States occupied Matamoros, Mexico) stated on May 19, 1846 that “every man of the divisions will take two days’ sustenance in his haversack. This will be the general rule for all marches when a greater number of rations is not specifically mentioned” (Headquarters of the Army, 1847, p. 2). The concept was useful, however, and similar cloth bags were used by civilians as well. Civilians used them for carrying any number of things as was the case of William S. Stilwell, a participant in the Battle of San Jacinto. On August 26, 1837, Stilwell paid for a notice in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* regarding an unfortunate incident with his haversack. “Taken from captain Chapman’s boat, lying at the steamboat landing at Houston, on the 24th July last, a bundle containing a variety of wearing apparel, together with a haversack containing valuable papers, etc., which can be of use to no one but the owner. The person who took them is perfectly welcome to the wearing apparel, provided he will send the haversack, with its contents, to the commanding officer of this post. No questions will be asked” (Stilwell, 1837, p. 3).







The San Antonio missions were all built close to the San Antonio River  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XP8nesULGLQ>

## Gourd Canteen

One of the most vital elements for any human being is water, and Texas is known for great stretches of land that contain little water. The Spanish missions of San Antonio de Béxar (including the Alamo) were all settled along the San Antonio River, and its waters were used for drinking as well as watering their crops through an ingenious irrigation system. The necessity of a water resource for his colonists was a great consideration of Stephen F. Austin when he wrote to his friend and agent Josiah Bell on August 29, 1823 regarding a capital for the colony. “I want a place for the town on the west side of the Brazos where there is abundance of good water besides the river, either springs or a good creek. The place I have in view on this river is very well watered with the best of springs” (Barker, 1924, p. 690). However, those who journeyed beyond rivers, settlements, and wells were advised by Randolph Marcy to take precautions. “The scarcity of water upon some of the routes across the plains occasionally exposes the traveler to intense suffering, and renders it a matter of much importance for him to learn the best methods of guarding against the disasters liable to occur to men and animals in the absence of this most necessary element” (Marcy, 1993, p. 46). Finding water along the trail was certainly needed as the Santa Fe Expedition illustrated in 1841. “An early start the next morning, which was the Fourth of July enabled us to reach a cool and delicious spring early in the afternoon, and here we slaked our intolerable thirst” (Kendall, 2004, p. 44). However, without a means to carry water, the spring would be of little use as soon as a traveling party journeyed on. Although there were many types of canteens during this time period, a gourd canteen was an option that could be created using materials provided by nature. A variety of squash, the gourd produces a fruit that can be dried, de-seeded, and made into a water tight container. Gourds with long stems could be made into ladles such as a “dipping gourd.” In order to prepare a gourd for use as a container, it was first allowed to dry. When dry, a small hole cut into the top enabled a stick to be inserted into the body of the gourd so the seeds and meat (which had dried into flakes) could be scraped out. When William DeWees left Austin’s colony for a trading expedition in the hopes of learning Spanish, he carried just such a canteen during his travels. He wrote of it to a friend on March 18, 1826 from San Antonio de Béxar. “We choose, if possible, to encamp on the bank of some stream, where we can have the benefit of fresh water; but if this cannot be, we always carry with us a Spanish gourd filled with water” (DeWees, 1854, p. 61). It was a common item to be carried by a settler – traveling



or not. Dilue Harris recalled a time in 1834 when several men, including William B. Travis, came for the trial of a man accused of stealing. They were invited to eat with her family, and she recalled that “each man had a knife, a tin cup, a gun, and a bottle gourd” (Dilue Harris, 1900, p. 101). Furthermore, they did not require any money to create. Shortly after marrying his wife Temperance in 1812 and before coming to Texas, Jesse Burnam and Temperance were very poor and used gourds for cups (Burnam, 1901, p. 12).

## FOOD ITEMS

Though water was the primary concern of early Texians, the need for food followed closely behind. Some food items were particularly scarce as recorded by Irish settler Jemima Toll in a letter to a friend who would soon join her in Texas. “Bring a supply of sugar, coffee, tea and flour for 8 or 9 months; if you have any to spare, you get your price” (Woodman, 1935, p. 169). Furthermore, anything that couldn’t be grown or raised in Texas was at the mercy of unreliable deliveries from other locations such as New Orleans. Dilue Harris records such a time in February of 1834. “...The schooner didn’t come to Harrisburg in the fall; so there was no flour, coffee, bacon, nor lard in the country”

(Harris 1, p. 96). George Kendall gives another glimpse into the diet of Texians when he describes the rations eaten at the beginning of the Santa Fe Expedition. “The regular ration to each person was three pounds of beef a day, a quantity amply sufficient for an ordinary man even when he has no breadstuffs or vegetables, as was our case. In addition to the beef, coffee enough to give each man two pints a day, with the needful sugar was served out” (Kendall, 2004, p. 41). As their travels continued, they killed and ate many of the wild animals offered by the Texas frontier including trout, buffalo, and prairie dogs. However, as they grew more desperate they even began to eat horse, and one poor man tried to roast a turtle. When he was surprised to find the turtle missing from the fire, another older member of the group stated, “You must have thought the terrapin mightily troubled with the simples if you supposed he would stay in the fire and be roasted alive, when he could easily crawl out and make tracks off” (Kendall, 2004, p. 138).





## Parched Corn

Corn was by far the most important grain in pre-industrial America. It was used as food for people as well as livestock. When Mary Rabb and her family first arrived in Texas in 1823, she wrote of the pigs living underneath her father-in-law's home. "After I got tired spinning at night there was under the bottom log of the house close in the corner of the chimney a little place the pigs could crawl through so when I put the wheel away and get ready to go to bed I would shell some corn over the floor and under the bed and open that little place and by the time I got in bed all them little pigs would be in the house cracking corn" (Rabb, 1962, p. 4). When cooked, corn could be boiled, fried, or creamed. Mary Austin Holley wrote of corn as "that invaluable article of bread-stuff, maize or Indian corn, is produced abundantly in every district of this country...It is stated by a visitor to Texas that upon the poorest kind of soil, known among the inhabitants by the name of hog-bed prairie, Indian corn, if merely dropped into holes made with a stick, will yield considerable crops even without hoing" (Holley, 1990, p. 62).



**Travis Letter referring to bushels of corn**

[https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/t-slac/landing/documents/Travis-Ltr\\_1836.pdf](https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/t-slac/landing/documents/Travis-Ltr_1836.pdf)

The abundance of corn caused it to be a common food resource throughout the Texas Revolution. At the siege and battle of the Alamo, it was eaten by soldiers inside and outside the former mission. William B. Travis, commander of the Alamo, wrote of corn in his famous letter on February 24, 1836. "When the enemy appeared in sight we had not three bushels of corn – we have since found in deserted houses 80 or 90 bushels" (Travis, 1836, p. 2). Juan Almonte, a colonel in the Mexican army encamped around the Alamo, wrote in his diary on March 2, 1836 that "information was received that there was corn at the farm of Seguin, and Liet Menchaca was sent with a party for it (Chariton, 1990, p. 208). One advantage of corn was that it could be dried and kept for long periods of time. Dried corn could be ground into meal and baked into bread or boiled into mush. The meal could also be made into a paste or dough and fried or baked into johnny or journey cakes for bread for the traveler. Hoe cakes were a type of corn biscuit baked on the blade of a hoe by slaves in the field. Kernels of corn soaked in lye to remove the husk were known as hominy; this could be ground into small particles call "grits." On the Santa Fe Expedition, the men traded with Mexicans along the trail to eat another meal with corn called atole "a thin mush made of meal and water or cow's or goat's milk...any preparation of meal or flour...[was] as welcome to [them] as manna was to the suffering Israelites in the wilderness" (Kendall, 2004, p. 142).





## Chocolate

As the cacao tree originated in what would become Mexico, it was only reasonable that chocolate would be found in Mexican Texas. While traveling in Saltillo, Mexico (about 150 miles from the Rio Grande River) in 1827, William DeWees wrote of the abundance of chocolate beans produced in the area illustrating the fact that although the indigenous people of Mexico no longer ruled, the production of cacao still endured (DeWees, 1854, p. 56). However, the chocolate used by early Texians would have been very different than the chocolate we eat today. In fact, it wasn't originally eaten. Chocolate began as a bitter, unsweetened drink. The Europeans brought sweetness to the drink, but it wasn't until the late 1840s that chocolatiers found a method by which chocolate could be made pleasant to eat. Before that time period it would usually have been purchased in wafers, which could be melted to create a chocolate drink (Coe & Coe, 2007).

Though not written in Texas, *The Early American Cookery* of 1841 provides an idea of the kind of chocolate drink that would have been prepared by Texians. "To each square of chocolate, scraped off fine, and put in the pot, allow a pint...of water. Stir it while boiling; and let it be uncovered. Let it boil about fifteen minutes, or half an hour, then pour in your cream or rich milk, and let it boil up. Nutmeg grated over a cup of chocolate improves the flavor" (Hale, 1841, p. 112). Though chocolate would have been far from a necessity for Texas pioneers, we know that it was used by them based on evidence such as an advertisement placed in *The Texas Republican* newspaper on July 25, 1835. "24 boxes chocolate just received and for sale by Edmund Andrews" (Andrews, 1835, p. 3).

## Coffee – Roasted & Green

While water was the most common drink, it could prove dangerous as water borne illnesses such as cholera and yellow fever were common in the Americas in this time period – particularly in standing water. Although, in a time when the cause of many diseases were unknown some even believed that coffee was dangerous. William Fairfax Gray wrote of a man who had lost



Chocolate



Roasted coffee



Green coffee



twelve of the thirteen companions with whom he had traveled to Texas. The man believed that the high death rate was caused by intemperance. He stated that “the inordinate use of ardent spirits and of coffee, of which the people here drink a great deal... [is] injurious to the nervous system” (Gray, 1909, p. 82). Coffee was purchased as unroasted beans (green coffee). These were roasted in a pan or cup over a fire, beat or ground into small pieces, and then boiled in water. It was a common beverage to be found throughout Texas. It was even present during the battle of the Alamo. There were 2 bags of coffee recorded in the stores of the Alamo on February 3, 1836, but two bags for almost 200 men did not last long. Alamo defender Isaac Milsaps wrote to his wife on March 3 that “we have beef and corn to eat but no coffee, bag I had fell off on the way here so it was spilt” (Chariton, 1990, p. 303). Though some settlers developed the coffee drinking habit in the United States before they immigrated to Texas, coffee was a common drink in Mexico as well. William DeWees recorded daily life during his visit to Saltillo, Mexico in 1827, and coffee featured prominently in the schedule. “The people all sleep till very late in the morning; before rising they take a cup of coffee, at ten o'clock they take breakfast, and at twelve they dine; immediately after dinner the streets are deserted; each one takes a siesta or nap, and spends his time in lounging till three o'clock, they then rise, take a cup of coffee, and the ladies retire to their dressing rooms” (DeWees, 1854, p. 69). It was often carried on the trail because it traveled well, and George Kendall wrote of the pleasure it brought to he and the other men journeying with him. “A goodly-sized pot of coffee was also quickly boiling upon the same fire, and what with the scent of the roasting meat, and the fragrance of the old Java, I soon was the possessor of an appetite a city gourmand might envy. Most ample justice did I do to it in the way of eating... and a tin cup of coffee, sweetened, it is true, but without milk, I then thought the most delicious draught I had ever tasted. It would be folly to deny that an appetite, known only in the woods and on the prairies, lent a sauce to our plain repast” (Kendall, 2004, p. 13).



### Brick Tea

Although tea was cheaper, and therefore more commonly consumed before 1812, the War of 1812 caused tea to become unpatriotic for Americans. With trade interrupted, the prices of tea to the Americas skyrocketed, and coffee



became a more popular drink. Although tea was available after the war, it was now being shipped from China (Murry, 1991). This tea was often imported from China in “bricks” of compressed, dried leaves. The bricks made it possible for tea to arrive to its location across the world without spoiling – a feat difficult to accomplish with fresh tea leaves. The bricks could be scraped with a knife and the flakes boiled.





The scarcity of tea in Texas is obvious from Dilue Harris' account of her mother in 1834. "Mother had rice, tea, dried apples and white sugar which she had brought from New Orleans, and which she was keeping for hard times and sickness" (Harris, 1900, p. 96). While coffee was a familiar trail companion, tea did not travel as well, and it was generally associated with more civilized society. Often referred to as "taking tea" in diaries and reminiscences, these events generally included food and ladies. When **Lorenzo de Zavala**, first vice-president of the Republic of Texas and contributor to the 1836 Texas Constitution, traveled to the United States in 1836, he wrote of his experience with tea parties. "The tea parties are in fact social gatherings where generally there is singing and sometimes dancing. They serve fruits, tea, wine, sweets, cookies, pastries, or other similar things" (Zavala, 2005, p. 85). Although the decadence Zavala experienced would not always have been present for those taking tea in Texas, it provides a glimpse into taking tea in the time period.

William Fairfax Gray was invited to take tea in February 1836 in San Felipe de Austin with the first postmaster general of the Republic of Texas, John Jones, and his wife (Gray, 1909, p. 111), and **Mary Maverick** was dancing after taking tea when Cherokee Chief Bowles entered the room "dressed in a breech-cloth, anklets, moccasins, feathers and a long, clean, white linen shirt, which had been presented to him by Houston" (Maverick, 1921, p. 16). Mary Maverick joined her husband Samuel, a veteran of the Texas Revolution, in Texas after their marriage. Her diary provides an excellent time capsule of life in Texas during the mid-1800s. She also records another more practical use for tea, though not a traditional tea made from tea leaves. In 1848, her son William became very ill and "all summer he was sick and thin and fretful – once he lay at the point of death with the dysentery, and the doctor told [us] there was no hope. Mrs. Gorch told me to make tea of pomegranate root, and give a teaspoonful every fifteen minutes until the dysentery was checked. I did this and I believe it saved his life" (Maverick, 1921, p. 100).



Lorenzo de Zavala – first Vice-President of the Republic of Texas. Wheeler, Larry. 1980; San Jacinto Museum of History. [texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph3002/](https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph3002/)



Mary Maverick, wife of Texas Revolution veteran Sam Maverick, and her children. Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Austin. [https://www.cah.utexas.edu/db/dmr/image\\_lg.php?variable=di\\_02166](https://www.cah.utexas.edu/db/dmr/image_lg.php?variable=di_02166)





## Piloncillo

The sugar familiar to Texans came from sugar cane. Unlike white sugar, which is highly refined to remove impurities, Texas sugar was much darker in color. White sugar would have been a scarce commodity in 1800s Texas. Just as Dilue Harris' mother hoarded tea from New Orleans, she was also saving her white sugar for special occasions (Harris, 1900). Although white sugar was rarely available, Mary Austin Holley wrote of the prevalence of sugar cane which produced brown sugar in Texas in 1836. "The sugar cane is beginning to be extensively cultivated, and will prove a most valuable article to Texan agriculturists. It grows luxuriantly throughout the whole level region. Neither Arkansas nor Louisiana can rival Texas in the production of this cane. The stalk grows much larger and taller, and possesses the saccharine matter in larger proportions and greater purity in the latter than in the former States, and is said to sweeten a foot and a half higher up than the Louisiana cane. Its manufacturers always find a ready market at a good price" (Holley, 1990, p. 61). For William Fairfax Gray this abundance of sugar would have been a relief as his sweet tooth is evident throughout his diary. His determination of a good cup of coffee depended on the availability of sugar (Gray, 1909). Sugar in a semi-liquid form was called molasses. As Dilue Harris' mother was saving her white sugar, she sent her husband to a neighbor to gain some local sugar that Harris described as "black as tar." She went on to say that "Father went to Mr. Stafford's...and mother gave him a bag to get sugar. He was going in his every-day clothes, but mother would have him put on his best suit, and when he got back he was holding the bag at arm's length, his clothing covered with molasses" (Harris, 1900, p. 96). Sugar could also be molded into a shape called a sugar cone. In Mexico these were called piloncillos. While Texas was still a Spanish province in 1821, a report was made from the capital of San Antonio de Béxar regarding the entire province. This was before the immigration of Stephen F. Austin and his Old Three Hundred opened the flood gates of colonization, therefore, the few people living in Texas had difficulty planting crops "owing to the uninterrupted war carried on by the Indians against the settlements, scarcely leaving the people the necessary time for the cultivation of the lands previously granted them." However one of the few crops they had been able to plant was sugar cane. This sugar led to "the only article manufactured in the province...the 'Piloncillo' sugar" (Martinez & Flores, 1856, p. 1).



Harvested sugar cane

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sugar\\_Cane.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sugar_Cane.jpg)



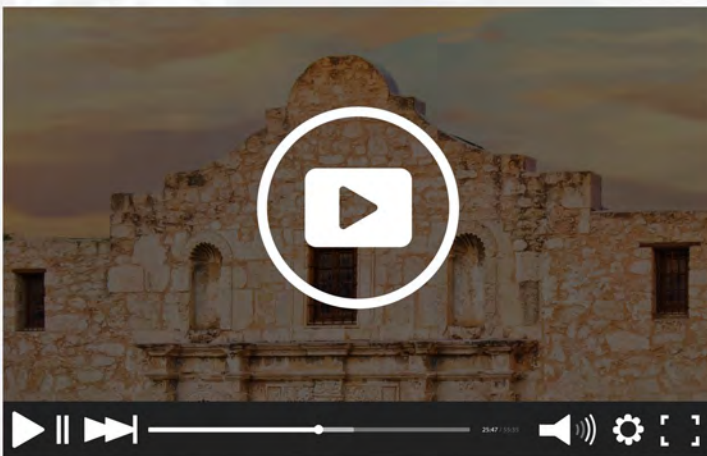
Piloncillo



## Dried Beans

As is the case today, beans were a staple food. They were grown in abundance as recorded by *Guide to Texas Emigrants* author David Woodman, “beans...and other culinary vegetables are always in demand, and may be produced in any desirable quantity, in either of the three colonies of Zavala, Vehlein, and Burnet” (Woodman, 1935, p. 65). However, on the trail, dried beans were preferable as they would not spoil. When Stephen F. Austin wrote to his mother and sister in 1824 before they traveled to Texas he recommended, “the furniture and other heavy articles...sell for pork, flour, beans, etc. to use on the road for you must start with enough provisions enough to last the whole journey.” He also recommended many

items to bring in excess as they would sell very well including “from Missouri several barrels of beans” (Barker, 1924, p. 785-787). On a business trip to San Antonio de Béxar with his wife in 1830, William DeWees found it necessary to resupply his food stores from Native Americans on the way, and beans were the food provided (DeWees, 1854, p. 127).



How to make salted pork. Townsends (Producer).  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdmPlpQZPRg>



## Dried Meat

Though Texas has become known as cattle country, pigs were the more common meat item during early colonization simply because they required little care. The *Guide to Texas Emigrants* states that “in many parts of Texas, hogs may be raised in great numbers on the native mast. Acorns, pecans, hickory nuts, etc. with the several varieties of grass, and many kinds of roots, afford them ample sustenance throughout the year” (Woodman, 1835, p. 63). Furthermore, cattle could be used for pulling wagons and providing milk, although they were used for their meat if the need arose. Meat from freshly butchered animals had to be consumed fairly quickly or it would spoil, and Texas settlers could not afford





to waste food. George Kendall and his traveling companions came to know this maxim through experience on their journey. “During the whole of the time we were in the buffalo and game country, there was a most improvident waste of beef, the regular rations being served out to each man. Those who could obtain choice portions of buffalo and deer, which were now killed in immense numbers, of course threw away the coarse and tougher parts of beef given to them...Could we have anticipated the horrible sufferings we were then bringing upon our heads, or rather stomachs,...a more provident course would have been adopted” (Kendall, 2004, p. 42). Mary Maverick wrote of a certain method of drying meat called jerked meat. “Many an old timer declares to this day that the flavor of beef cut in thin strips and sun dried cannot be equaled. Not only was meat ‘jerked’ to prepare it for long marches, but kitchen doors of the early days were sometimes supplied with iron hooks upon which newly purchased steaks were hung and cooked in the hot sun. School girls and boys of the [18]60s relished ‘jerked’ beef in their lunch boxes” (Maverick, 1921, p. 52). When a group of travelers stopped at the house of Dilue Harris in 1834, this is the method they used to preserve their meat. “He had a large scaffold built over a trench and made a fire under it. He butchered the beeves (beef) and dried the meat over the fire” (Harris, 1900, p. 99). Another preservation technique placed meat in a “salt box” where the salt seeped into the meat and served as a preservative. Arthur Wavell was a close friend of Moses Austin, and at his death, Wavell helped his son, Stephen F. Austin, with his pursuits in Texas. Wavell wrote that some Texians even had a separate location for their dried meat called, “the smoke-house, where the meat is smoked and kept” (Woodman, 1835, p. 91). Pork was the most popular dried meat in Texas as pigs “increase[ed] in weight 150-fold in the first eight months of life. Another significant factor in the popularity of pork was its ‘good keeping qualities’” (Murry, 1991, p. 93). However, dried meat was not obtained only from pigs – the many wild animals of Texas provided alternative options. Noah Smithwick’s “first meal in Texas [in 1827] was dried venison (deer) sopped in honey” (Smithwick, 1900, p. 13-14).



## TOOLS

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Although it was imperative to take care of clothing and food, Texians would be ill-prepared indeed without certain tools. In writing for preparation of the Santa Fe Expedition in 1841, George Kendall wrote of his necessary supplies. “My rifle – short, but heavy barreled, and throwing a ball, with great strength and precision, a long distance...My pistols, powder and lead, bowie and other knives, blankets, accoutrements for my horse, and other implements and articles necessary for a prairie tour” (Kendall, 2004, p. 6). Tools helped provide protection from the harshness of the environment. However, merely having tools was not enough – hunting, fire building, and shelter creating were necessary skills. Those who came to Texas unprepared soon learned why the land had long remained unsettled.



## Compass

Getting lost is never a pleasant experience, but in Texas, it was infinitely dangerous. Straying too far from civilization and known paths left Texians open to the hazards of Texas. William DeWees found himself in just such a situation when traveling with a friend to Nacogdoches in 1821. After a storm, they lost the trail. He wrote of their predicament after a few days of travel. “We had entirely consumed our bacon, and in consequence of having to swim water courses we had so damaged our ammunition as to render it of no benefit to us. We were in a country where we were entirely unacquainted; with no road, no compass, and on the point of starvation” (DeWees, 1854, p. 20). Without the help of the Caddo Indians, DeWees and his friend might not have survived the trip. For Native Americans familiar with their land, the compass was an odd tool indeed. Randolph Marcy wrote of his attempt to show the tool to a member of the Delaware tribe. “He seemed very much interested in its mechanism, and very attentively observed the oscillations of the needle...He did not, however, seem to comprehend it in the least, but regarded the entire proceeding as a species of necromantic performance got up for his especial benefit, and I was about putting away the instrument when he motioned me to stop, and came walking toward it with a very serious but incredulous countenance, remarking, as he pointed his finger toward it, ‘Maybe so he tell lie sometime’” (Marcy, 1993, p. 186). William Fairfax Gray wrote that “without the aid of a compass it is impossible to tell the points of the heavens” (Gray, 1909, p. 17). It was among his required materials while traveling, and when fleeing during the Runaway Scrape in April of 1836, he and his companions “went across the prairie, taking [their] course by the compass” (Gray, 1909, p.166). Without this tool, Gray might have found himself in the hands of the Mexican army.



Honey Bees at the Alamo

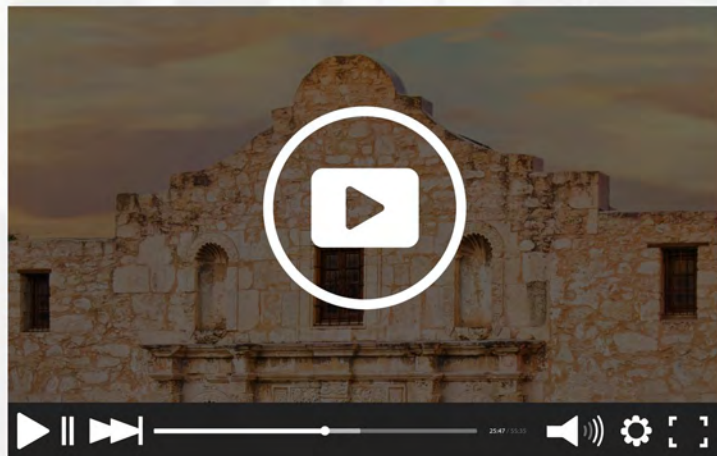
## Candle & Candle Mold

George Kendall wrote on his journey through Texas in 1841 that “honey could be obtained in almost every hollow tree” (Kendall, 2004, p. 51). He described the honey as “a great luxury to those who are engaged in a border life” (Kendall, 2004, p. 56). Honey was a natural form of sweetener, and its abundance made it popular among Texians. To get to the honey, a fire could be built at the foot of a “honey tree.” The smoke would help to drive the bees away from the hive and it could be knocked to the ground. Sometimes, if the beehive was too high to reach from the ground, a man or boy would climb the tree in order to knock it down. However, it wasn’t just the honey that settlers were after – the honeycomb was





another prize. In fact, Mary Austin Holley recorded in 1835 that the honeycomb had more value than the actual honey. “The honey-bee seems to have found a favorite haunt in Texas. These industrious insects swarm in great abundance in every district, and beeswax and honey may be produced in any quantity and without the least expense. White or bleached beeswax generally sells for one dollar a pound in the cities of Mexico, where large quantities are made use of for candles in the churches. It is common for hunters to secure the wax and throw away the honey as of comparatively trifling value, and so abundant” (Holley, 1990, p. 68). As Holley discussed, honeycomb was often melted down into beeswax which was converted into beeswax candles. Mary Maverick records the use of candles in a religious context during a Catholic celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe (who is identified with the mother of Christ) in San Antonio in 1840. “Twelve young girls dressed in spotless white, bore a platform on which stood a figure representing the saint very richly and gorgeously dressed. First came the priests in procession, then the twelve girls bearing the platform, and carrying each in her free hand a lighted wax candle” (Maverick, 1921, p. 53). Candles weren’t merely used for religious purposes, they were necessary for light after the sun set, and during the Council House Fight in 1840, they were used for another purpose. Mary Maverick records what happened after the peace talks devolved into a brawl. After the heaviest fighting ceased, two Comanche were found hiding in a house in San Antonio. After they refused to surrender, “a number of young men took counsel together that night and agreed on a plan...About two hours after midnight [they] dropped a candlewick ball soaked in turpentine, and blazing, through a hole in the roof...and so frightened the [Indians] that they opened the door and rushed out” (Maverick, 1921, p. 53). Beeswax and wicks are the necessary ingredients for creating these candles, and Jemima Toll wrote to her friend in 1832 to be sure to bring “plenty candle wick” (Woodman, 1935, p. 169). However more was required in the actual making of beeswax candles. The candle mold in the trunk provided one method. It was favored by the mother of Dilue Harris. At a party where tallow candles (which were made from animal fat and known for their smell) were used, Dilue Harris records her mother’s exchange with the hostess. “Mother had candle moulds. She asked Mrs. Dyer why she did not send and get them. Mrs. Dyer said she had never used candle moulds. She and her mother, Mrs. Stafford, used cane, or dipped candles” (Harris, 1900, p. 103).



How to make beeswax candles using a candle mold. Townsends (Producer). [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G\\_iITvMJZEY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_iITvMJZEY)

## Powder Horn

A more common use of cow horn was to create a device to hold gun powder called a powder horn. The version in the trunk is attached to the hunting bag for easy access. Gunpowder was necessary for the weapons of the time, and Randolph Marcy emphasized the necessity of always having a weapon on the frontier. “Every man who goes into Indian country should be armed with a rifle...and he should never, either in camp or out of it, lose sight of [the weapon] (Marcy, 1993, p. 41). Used for both

hunting and protection, without powder, guns were useless. Immediately following General Cos’ surrender of San Antonio de Béxar after the Siege of Béxar in 1835, Dilue Harris’ father risked going out because of his great need for three particular supplies. “Father went to Columbia and Brazoria with a cart load of peltry, consisting of the skins of otters, deer, bears, panthers, wild cats, wolves, and ‘coons. He was in need of medicines, powder, and lead, and could not wait any longer for the steamboat which went up the river later” (Harris, 1901, p. 158-159). Without the powder, Harris would not be able to protect his family, add to his family’s food, or gain pelts to sell or barter. Powder horns were also carried in battle. In the Battle of Concepción, one of the opening acts of the Siege of Béxar, Texian and Mexican soldiers clashed outside the San Antonio mission. Before the battle commenced a Texian sentry was fired upon by Mexican soldiers. He shouted out, “Boys, the scoundrels have shot off my powder horn” (Hardin, 1994, p. 31). Though accidental, it was an effective shot as the sentry would be unable to fire his weapon without gunpowder.



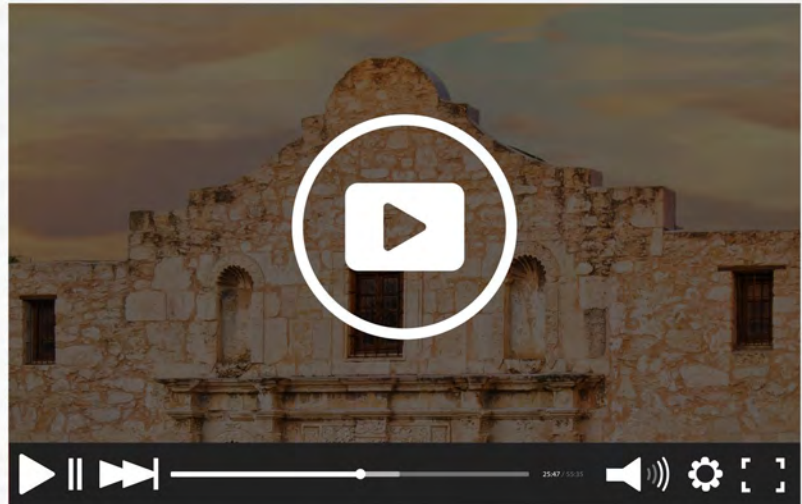
## Hunting Bag

Hunting bags were useful tools for storing the supplies (or accoutrements) needed for guns. It would not be uncommon to find the powder horn attached to the hunting bag as is the case within the trunk. They were carried by the men of the Santa Fe Expedition as recorded by Kendall when they prepared for a possible skirmish with Native Americans. “All looked well to their powder-horns and bullet-pouches, and examined their flints and percussion-caps, to see that all was right” (Kendall, 2004, p. 69). John Hart, who as a young boy lived in Weatherford, TX in the 1850s, recalled that the men of his town carried their guns and hunting bags everywhere. “All had their guns at church, with their shot, pouch and





powder horn. In the pouch would be a bar of lead, bullet-molds and a rag for patching, and if caps were used, a box of caps, but if a flint lock, several flints” (Goodnight, Dubbs, & Hart, 1909, p. 145). His memories illustrate the transition from a weapon that created a spark for the gunpowder using flint and steel, and one that used percussion caps. The caps made the spark more reliable and allowed for shooting in any kind of weather.



How to make a powder horn. Discovery Channel (Producer).  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDqfSDhkkGs&t=69s>

### Pot Scrubber

The pot scrubber is extremely useful, but used for a less than glamorous activity. Pot scrubbing rarely makes an appearance in primary sources, but it was a necessary activity. The pot scrubber is included in the trunk because it is a traditional item that has been passed down from the time period of early Texas, and it is still used in Mexico and Texas today. Stiff, effective, and long lasting, this tool was easy to make. The pot scrubber is another example of using natural resources. It is made by binding together fibers called sisal harvested from the native Mexican agave plant.



### Hand Axe

This multi-purpose tool could be used for everything from personal defense to house building. Mary Rabb’s husband, John, used an axe to clear six acres of their new land. He then cut some of the wood into rails for later use. It is an excellent illustration of the diversity of the axe. However, when Rabb recorded John retiring for the evening, she emphasized the need for keeping such valuable tools within your possession. “[John] come to the house one Saturday evening leaving the axes...expecting to return to...work on Monday morning, but as [he] had made a good many rails, the Indians thought it would be a good way to make a pen out of those rails and seize our horses...When Mr. Rabb and [friend John] Ingram went to their work, they found that their axes was gone and a pen was made and our horses was also gone (Rabb, 1962, p. 2-3). While John Rabb used the axe for work, it provided security for Dilue Harris’ mother when her brother and father were away from home. “Mother milked the cows before night, fetched in water and the axe, barricaded the doors and windows,



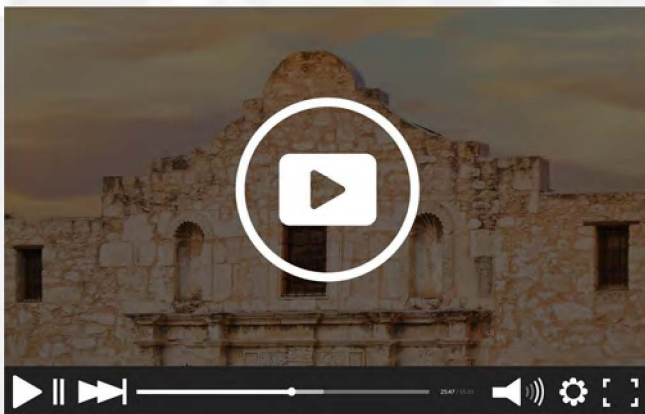
and prepared to go to the upper rooms” (Harris, 1901, p. 106). Furthermore it was used as an offensive weapon as well as a defensive weapon. Mary Maverick records the use of an axe at the conclusion of the Council House Fight. The final two Native Americans who had not surrendered were smoked out of the house in which they had taken refuge. “An axe split open the head of one of the Indians before we was well out of the door, and the other was killed before he had gone many steps – thus the last of the sixty-five were taken” (Maverick, 1921, p. 35).

### Flint and Steel

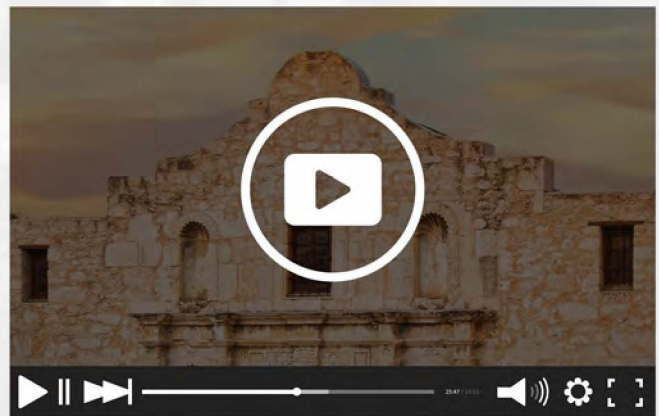
Before the invention of matches, fires were started by striking a forged piece of steel against a piece of flint. The blow resulted in a shower of sparks, which were directed into a “nest” of dried combustible material such as dried leaves or grass, linen tow, or wood shavings. The procedure, which required blowing on the embers to fan the flame, proved hazardous to facial hair and may have helped account for the unpopularity of beards and mustaches in this time period. Fires were, of course, necessary in frontier Texas – they provided warmth and the ability to cook food. When Dilue Harris recalled a slave running away in 1834, he only deemed two items necessary – “a large knife he had stolen, also a flint and steel for striking fire” (Harris, 1900, p. 105). Though matches had been invented by the time of the writing of Randolph Marcy’s guidebook in 1859, they were not as reliable as flint and steel. “The most simple and most expeditious of [kindling fires] is by using the lucifer matches; but, unless they are kept in well-corked bottles, they are liable to become wet, and will then fail to ignite...I have seen an Indian start a fire with flint and steel after others had failed to do it with matches.



Notice the hand or belt axe worn by this Alamo Living Historian.



Starting a fire using the kits included in the History Trunks. Jas Townsend and Son. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zg65rB-z66Q>



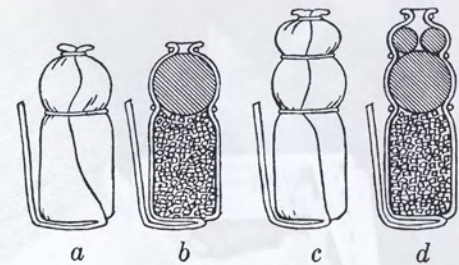
Flintlock Pistol illustrating the use of flint and steel on a firearm. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoCJR7Yqz0k>



This was during a heavy rain, when almost all available fuel had become wet” (Marcy, 1993, p. 156-157). However, not everyone had the skill of the Native American. Even in dry weather, one of the companions of Dilue Harris had difficulty starting a fire. “We came to a mound that was high and dry, and Mr. Lytle said we would camp. He hobbled the oxen and turned them loose so they could feed. He got pine knots to make a fire. We had a flint and steel, but couldn't strike fire. In those days there were no matches, and every man carried a flint and steel, and the guns all had flint locks.” (Harris, 1900, p. 91). The flintlocks referenced by Harris were the method used to spark the gunpowder from the seventeenth century until the rise of percussion caps in the mid-1800s. The flint rock would strike the steel lock and provide a flash which began the chainreaction that led to the bullet shooting out the barrel of the gun. This is why when George Kendall wrote of a possible confrontation with Native Americans, the men spoke “in low and hurried tones...[asking] another...for a spare flint” (Kendall, 2004, p. 69). Without a good, sharp flint, their weapons would prove useless.

### Bullet Block

A weapon used in 1800s Texas would have required gunpowder, a flint, and a bullet or ball. Bullets or balls were made of lead. The bullets on the bullet block illustrate the different calibers. The number of caliber is determined by the diameter of the ball compared to an inch. Therefore a 72 caliber ball is .72 inches in diameter. Buckshot were smaller balls which allowed for more than one ball to be placed in the barrel. This made for a wider range when shooting as the buckshot dispersed upon firing. The ball size required for a gun was determined by the size of the barrel. Balls were generally made by hand as recounted by Dilue Harris. When her family read one of William Barret Travis' letters calling for aid at the Alamo in February 1836, they decided to do what they could to help. “We worked all day, and mother sat up that night sewing...I spent the day melting lead in a pot, dipping it up with a spoon, and moulding bullets” (Harris, 1901, p. 160). Before battle, balls were sometimes combined with gunpowder in what was called a cartridge. This made it possible for the soldiers to load their guns more quickly. Three common cartridges were: buck and ball (buckshot and ball together), ball (only ball), and buckshot (only buckshot). An example of the use of a buck and ball cartridge can be found in William Fairfax Gray's recollections of the day after Christmas in 1835 in Vicksburg, MS. It also illustrates the danger that could be found in the untamed west. “This morning I saw a horrid spectacle. A man had been shot in the street last night, and was still lying exposed at breakfast time. There was a bullet in the center of his breast, and three buckshot near the heart. He was shot by his cousin, Tom Thatcher, because he would not give up a dirk that he wore with which Thatcher wished to attack another man”



### Musket Cartridges

a & b Ball Cartridge

c & d - Buck & Ball Cartridge





*The Sandbar Fight*, by Tom Johnson

(Gray, 1909, p. 57). Guns were not used simply for fighting, they were often used for protection, defense, and hunting. Nor were they used exclusively by men. Mary Austin Holley wrote of a Texas woman in 1835 who was very familiar with the use of a firearm. “The use of a rifle is not confined...to the ruder sex exclusively; as the following anecdote, the subject of which is still living, will testify. Mrs. M--, the Texas Diana, has killed with the rifle eighty deer and one buffalo. Her canting husband wanting industry and capacity, she was compelled thus to support him and her children. She now lives alone with her children, in the prairie near Chocolate Bayou...The mode of her education, in the use of a rifle, will show how natural it is that we should find, in a wild unsettled country, many females in her circumstances and of a daring spirit, who are acquainted with its use” (Holley, 1990, p. 135). Guns were prone to misfiring, and until Paterson Colt pistols were purchased for the Texas Navy in 1839, most firearms could only fire a single shot. The reload required for guns was complex and time-consuming, therefore, knives, swords, axes, etc. were still useful in fighting. The arrow head included in the bullet block would also have been used in a weapon of the time period – bow and arrow. During the Sandbar Fight of 1827 which made both Jim Bowie (co-commander and defender of the Alamo) and his knife famous, he and a fellow combatant had to resort to other weapons after firing their pistols. “After firing they both advanced on each other, Wright with a sword cane, and Bowie with a large butcher knife. Bowie stabbed Wright through the arm in two places...and gave him a stab in the breast, which went to his heart – he died instantly” (An Eye Witness, 1827, p. 182).

## ENTERTAINMENT & LUXURY ITEMS

Perhaps no greater distinction exists between items owned in Texas past and present than can be found in the entertainment and luxury items. In a world where survival was not assured, time and money could not always be spared for something as





simple as a toothbrush. However this does not mean Texans of the past were without play and fun. When George Kendall stopped for the night in San Antonio in 1841, he wrote that “the sound of a violin drew me across the plaza, or principal square, and up to one of the narrow streets leading to it. Poor Power, in one of his plays, used to say that ‘wherever you hear a fiddle you are pretty sure to find fun.’ In the present instance I found a fandango” (Kendall, 2004, p. 19). Nor were children without the joy of play. They used their imaginations and the offerings of a wild country to make their own fun. Dilue Harris recalled a favorite spot frequented by she and her siblings. “Near our house there was a grove of trees. There were four large trees that almost formed a square. Near the trees there was a large petrified log. It had almost turned to stone. We children built a playhouse under the four large trees. We had put moss on the petrified log for a seat” (Harris, 1900, p. 101). They had, in fact, made it so inviting that when a group of men visited her family, they used the playhouse as their bunking quarters and sent side-combs to Harris and her sister for allowing them to use the playhouse (Harris, 1900). Ingenuity is on display among these items as with many of the others throughout the trunk as a number of them were created using materials found in Texas.

## Playing Cards

Playing cards date back hundreds of years. Playing cards came to the Americas in the hands of Europeans. A feature of modern playing cards has been the addition of numbers – the cards included in the trunk lack numbers as would have been the case in frontier Texas. The suits on English-style playing cards have remained basically the same - diamonds, clubs, hearts, and spades. Mexican cards are based on traditional Spanish decks, with the suits being swords, coins, cups, and clubs. In polite society, card playing was a parlor game intended for entertainment. On the frontier, however, card playing was often associated with gambling. Brag was a form of poker. Faro was a card game similar to roulette. Monte was a popular Mexican card game. When George Kendall visited a fandango in San Antonio, he “passed through an open door, leading into a back room, where were a small party of men and women betting at monte. I lost a couple of dollars just to get the hang of the game...and then retired to my lodgings” (Kendall 2004, p. 19). For a description of the card game Monte and other early card games, see <http://files.meetup.com/1460145/Mer-ryGamester.pdf>. Gambling with cards appeared to be prevalent among most of the communities of Texas. William DeWees wrote in 1826 of citizens of San Antonio de Béxar. “The people of Mexico all profess the Roman Catholic religion; all classes, men, women, and children engage in gambling. Of a Sabbath morning, every person attends church. In this, they are very particular, the service closes at ten o’clock. Immediately afterwards, priests and people repair to gambling rooms, where they spend their tie in playing and betting large sums of money till night closes in” (DeWees, 1854, p. 57-58). After the second Anahuac Disturbance in 1835, the Mexican soldiers who had capitulated to William B. Travis were sent to Harrisburg – home of Dilue Harris. She recalled that the soldiers joined in the



Fourth of July festivities and “sat and smoked and played cards” (Harris, 1900, p. 125). As William Fairfax Gray journeyed to Texas on a steamboat in 1835 he wrote of “a great deal of gambling on board – no less than 6 card tables at one time” (Gray, 1909, p. 15). Though gambling with cards was very common, they were also used for game play in social circles. In Natchitoches, LA – just across the border of Texas, Gray mixed with the officers and ladies of the garrison, and “in the evening went to a social party at Lt. Macrae’s where they played cards and backgammon” (Gray, 1909, p. 86).

## Mirror

The mirror included in our history trunk is made for a soldier to carry on the campaign. Designed for a soldier to shave, this would have certainly been a luxury. As soldiers were required to carry their own gear wherever they went, lightness of the pack was desirable. A breakable mirror would likely have been one of the first items to be removed to lighten the load. Mirrors were not exclusive to soldiers in Texas. They were used as an item of trade with Native Americans. In a letter to the governor of Texas in 1808, “two hundred and fifty dozen hand-mirrors ‘wood or metal-backed’” were recommended to help create relationships with the local Comanches (Guice, 1957, p. 509). Mary Maverick’s husband was taken prisoner in 1842 by a Mexican invasion into San Antonio. As the Maverick home was used to guard the prisoners, she moved into temporary housing where she tried to make it feel at home when she “placed flowers and green boughs in the chinks, and erected a shelf on which we placed a borrowed mirror” (Maverick, 1921, p. 69). After the founding of Houston, TX in 1836, Pamela Mann opened an inn known as the Mansion House which was well known and upscale. “The sleeping accommodations included three rooms with washstands, mirrors, and double beds” (Garwood, 1956, p. 232).



## Toothbrush

Toothbrushes were commercially available in Texas during this time period. Manson and Bailey, a dry goods store in Brazoria, advertised toothbrushes amongst their other items in *The Texas Republican* newspaper in 1835 (Manson & Bailey, 1835). The handles were usually made of bone (like the toothbrush in the trunk) or wood; the bristles were made from stiff hog hair. Ash could be used as a simple tooth powder. However, *The Kentucky Housewife*, a cookbook from 1885, prescribes a more exotic tooth powder containing “a half an ounce of cuttlefish bone; half an ounce of the finest prepared chalk; two dracms of Peruvian bark; [and] two dracms of Florentine orris root” (White, 1885, p. 206). Teeth brushing was obviously of import to many of the pioneers as William Marcy recommends taking two toothbrushes on a three month expedition (Marcy, 1993, p. 39). Furthermore, William Fairfax Gray spent 37 ½ cents on a toothbrush in 1837 (Gray, 1909, p. 225). Though this may seem a modest sum in our modern economy, to place it in perspective, an acre of land could be purchased in Stephen F. Austin’s colony for 12 ½ cents (or one bit). Gray could have purchased three acres of land for the amount he spent on a toothbrush.





## Corn Husk Doll

Even if parents of pioneer children had money to spare on toys, it would have been a difficult task to find a store selling such items. However this did not keep children from their play – they simply made their own toys. Ida Hall recalling her childhood in frontier Texas spoke of children who “rode stick horses and see-saws, swung on trees, ... rolled hoops, [and] ... -made dolls of rags and corn shucks” (Dobie, Boatright, & Ransom, 1941, p. 141). Making dolls from corn husks was a simple option using one of the few prevalent materials in Texas. Corn husks are the material in which corn is wrapped while growing on the stalks. Green while living, after stripped from the corn, the husks turn yellow and dry. These could be soaked and shaped into a doll. They proved such an enduring toy that a child who lived in Texas during the early 1900s recalled that “I used to help my sisters make some of their dolls. We lived on a farm near Trent in Taylor County. It must have been about 1918, when I was twelve years old, that I made my first one” (Abernethy, 1989, p. 67).



## Marbles

Crock marbles, or marbles made from clay, were popular toys in the 1800s. They were simple to make and easy to play in a multitude of games (Abernethy, 1989). For examples of marble games played in Texas, reference Texas Toys and Games here: <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc67661/m1/160/?q=marble>.



## Coins

Paper money had not yet come into popular use in the 1800s. Money, in most people's mind, was gold or silver coins called specie. The Spanish dollar (also known as a real, peso, or piece of eight) was accepted as legal currency in the U.S. until the 1850s. A document of the royal attorney of New Spain (what would become Mexico) illustrates the use of the Spanish dollar in Texas as early as 1718. In an effort to protect against the French, the salaries of presidial soldiers in New Spain were cut to provide for more soldiers in Texas. “They will have sufficient funds to support themselves, provided they are paid in cash, and the cash is given to them personally as provided by law. The remainder between the sum of 365...and 450 pesos, which is the amount allotted, if Your Excellency should approve, could be assigned to the soldiers to be stationed in Texas” (Haggard, 1941, p. 203).



Silver dollars could be cut into the following fractions: 2 halves, 4 quarters, or 8 bits. Thus, a quarter was worth 2 bits; a half dollar was worth 4 bits; a dollar was worth 8 bits. Each bit was worth 12 ½ cents, so each of Stephen F. Austin’s colonists would have paid 1 bit for each acre of land as evidenced by a letter he wrote in 1823. “The smallest quantity of land which a family that farms and raises stock, both, will receive is one league square or five thousands yards square – the cost will be 12 1/2 cents per acre” (Barker, 1924, p. 673). The coin in the trunk is the first Spanish coin minted in New Spain known as the Pillar Dollar. Named after the pillars of Hercules found on one side, the crowned globes represented Spain’s rule over the old and new worlds. The opposite side illustrates the crest of Spain. These were the first milled (made by a machine) reales. The consistency in size and form that this gave the coin made it more difficult for thieves to shave silver from the edges. The barter system was used when money was not available or if new settlers did not have the appropriate money. Dilue Harris wrote that “the English had plenty of money, but it was gold, and they couldn’t change it.” Her father, who was a doctor, did not get much money for his practice. “He received cattle and hogs. A cow and calf passed for ten dollars” (Harris, 1900, p. 123). Mary Rabb recorded her husband’s barter in 1826 after the loss of their best horse. “Your Pa sold his corn very well he got a fine American mare for some of it” (Rabb, 1962, p. 9). Even Stephen F. Austin stated “from those who have not money I will receive any kind of property that will not be a dead loss to me, such as horses, mules, cattle, hogs, peltry, furs, bees wax, home made cloth, dressed deer skins, etc.” (Barker, 1924, p. 680).



## Dice

Another way that soldiers amused themselves while in camp was playing and gambling with dice. Dice could be made of wood, bone, or lead, and the markings are the same as dice used today. Soldiers sometimes hammered musket balls into cubes, marked them with the appropriate spots, and used them as dice. Gambling was common among soldiers when not in battle. For examples of dice games played by soldiers, such as Chuck-A-Luck, see <http://files.meetup.com/1460145/MerryG-amester.pdf>. Santa Anna gambled heavily after his regiment put down a rebellion in Texas in the Battle of Medina. In fact, he lost so heavily that he forged the signatures of his commanding officers to gain funds from the company’s coffers (Fowler, 2007). However, gambling was considered unsavory in some circles. In Stephen F. Austin’s terms of settlement, he wrote “no drunkard, nor gambler, nor profane swearer no idler, nor any man against who there is even probable grounds of suspicion that he is a bad man...will be received” (Barker, 1924, p. 705). Musket balls were



Playing the game Chuck-A-Luck





shaped into other items besides dice, including William Fairfax Gray's inventive use in 1836. "I found my watch had got wet and stopt, and the crystal, which I had cracked in the famous passage of the Neches, now came entirely out. So I took a lead bullet and beat it out in size and shape of a crystal, and fixed it in, to protect the hands until I can get the crystal put in" (Gray, 1909, p. 172).

## Lice Comb

Combs of the period often had two different sides – one was for regular combing and the other was for lice (vermin). The prevalence of these combs indicates that lice were a common problem. John Shackelford, a survivor of the Goliad massacre, wrote of this problem. He was spared by the Mexican army because they needed help in their hospital. He wrote of this time period "our situation at this time was truly deplorable; having everything stolen from us but the clothes on our backs; having little or no food, and that of the most revolting kind; - covered with vermin, worn down with fatigue, and a prey to the most heart-rending forebodings" (Foote, 1841, p. 245). Cowboys on the trail also suffered from lice. H.D. Gruene, whose family helped settle the town of Gruene, TX, wrote of his cattle driving days. When they stopped in Salt Lake City on their way to Wyoming from Texas in 1870, Gruene wrote "we bought some new clothes and had a general 'cleaning-up,' for we were pretty well inhabited by body lice, the greatest pest encountered on the trail" (Hunter, 200, p. 136). Frank Buckelew was kidnapped by Native Americans in 1866, and he wrote of the reaction of his kidnappers to the lice. "They began preparations for a move...as I supposed to rid themselves of the swarms of lice that infested everything possessing life and many things without life as well. The lice laid their eggs, or nits, in the seams of their clothing. It was amusing to see them take a garment and fold it with the seam exposed and pass it between their teeth biting the nits. You could hear them pop, and from the greedy manner in which they would lick their lips it was evident that they liked the taste of the nits" (Dennis, 1925, p. 98). Texans in the 1800s suffered from lice in part because wool clothing and bedding, one of the most used fabrics, was difficult to launder. Dirty clothing and bedding helped lice thrive. Cotton became a miracle cloth because it could be washed and dried very easily—hence, a revolution of cleanliness that helped control lice.



**WEAPONS****FIREARMS****The Long Rifle**

<b>Range</b>	200 - 300 yards
<b>Rate of Fire</b>	1 to 2 minutes per round
<b>Caliber</b>	Various: .32 to .54
<b>Type of Ammunition</b>	Round Ball, Patch, & Loose Powder
<b>Main Advantages</b>	Accuracy & Long Range







### The Baker Rifle

<b>Range</b>	200 - 300 yards
<b>Rate of Fire</b>	1 to 2 minutes per round
<b>Caliber</b>	.62
<b>Type of Ammunition</b>	Round Ball, Patch, & Loose Powder or Paper Cartridge
<b>Main Advantages</b>	Accuracy & Long Range; could be used with bayonet for close up action.

Note: Loose ball and powder was recommended for individual firing such as on a skirmish line; cartridge was used when firing in ranks. Loading and firing with cartridge was quicker but less accurate because of the variations that took place when priming and charging.





### East India Pattern Musket

<b>Range</b>	Effective Range 100 yards (Note: US muskets sighted for 160 yards)
<b>Rate of Fire</b>	3 rounds a minute
<b>Caliber</b>	British: .75 with .72 cal. ball / United States: .69 with .62 cal. ball
<b>Type of Ammunition</b>	Paper Cartridge: Round Ball (1 large ball), Buck & Ball (1 large ball & 3 small balls), Buckshot (9 to 12 small balls)
<b>Main Advantages</b>	High Rate of Fire and Bayonet

Note: The British or Mexican musket is often called the "Brown Bess" but it's actually known as the East India pattern musket.



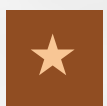
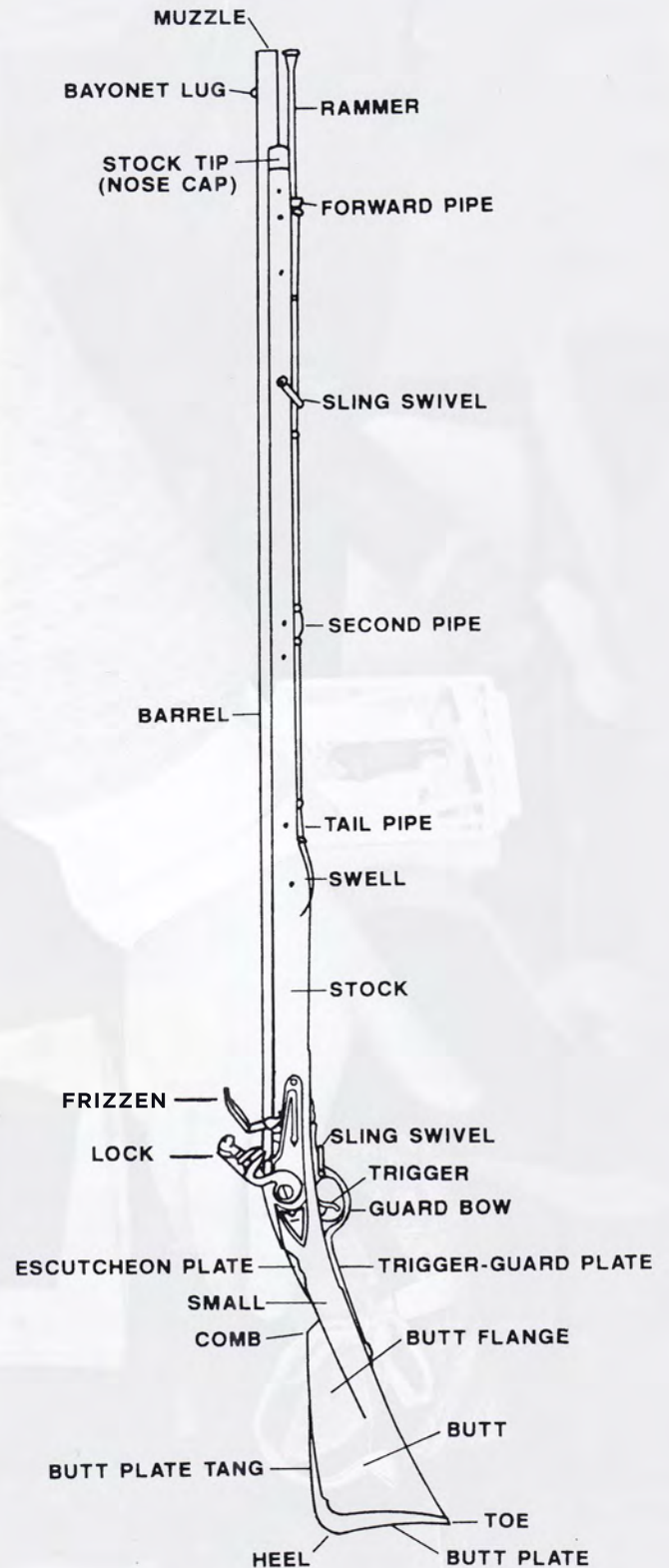
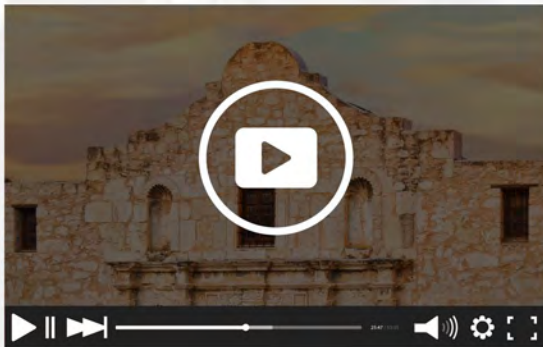


# FIREARM DETAILS

Note: The frizzen was formerly known by these other terms: hammer, steel, or battery. Use one of these words instead of frizzen.

## Load by Twelve Commands

1. LOAD.
2. Open-PAN.
3. Handle-CARTRIDGE.
4. Tear-CARTRIDGE.
5. PRIME.
6. Shut-PAN.
7. Cast-ABOUT.
8. Charge-CARTRIDGE.
9. Draw-RAMMER.
10. Ram-CARTRIDGE.
11. Return-RAMMER.
12. Shoulder-ARMS.



# EDGED WEAPONS

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These consisted of tomahawks, belt axes, butcher knives, daggers, and Arkansas toothpicks. The term "Bowie knife" was coming into fashion but it referred to several styles.



Butcher-style knife. Given by the Bowie brothers to their friend , Caiaphas Ham.

**Alamo Collection**



Knife presented by Rezin P. Bowie to Captain H.W. Fowler, an officer serving in the U.S. Dragoons.

**Alamo Collection**



Reproduction of a traditional double-edged knife or dagger. Large daggers were often called Arkansas Toothpicks.

**Knife by Tim Ridge**



Reproduction of a traditional style hunting or Bowie knife.

**Knife by Tim Ridge**



Reproduction of a James Black style coffin-handled Bowie knife.

**Knife by Tim Ridge**



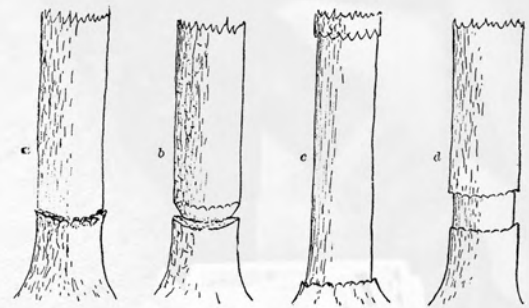


# LAND INFORMATION

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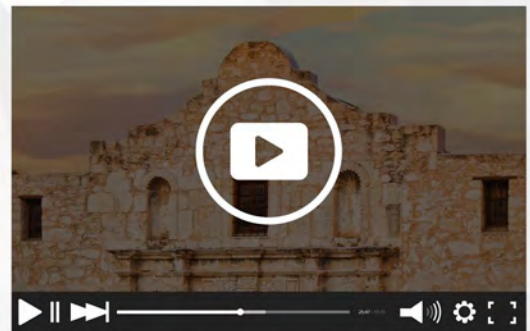
In pre-industrial America, land provided both the basis of livelihood and wealth. The majority of people living in the world were farmers. Access to land was vital if a family was going to produce food, clothing, and other items needed to subsist. Any surplus could be sold or bartered. A man's wealth was often measured by the amount of land he controlled. More land meant a larger surplus, meaning a cash crop.

Agriculture, as practiced in pre-industrial America, was "slash and burn." Farmers moving into previously uncultivated areas first had to clear the land of trees and undergrowth. The first step involved "girdling" the unwanted trees, the act of cutting out a ring of bark around the trees' trunks. This usually took about a year to kill the trees; the dead trees were cut down, used as building material or burned. The undergrowth would be cut out or burned as well. In Texas, large areas of cane, called canebrakes, were burned to make way for crops. Cotton, corn, and other crops used up the nutrients in the soil fairly quickly and the practice of fertilizing had not yet come into fashion. The popularity of cotton cloth created a demand for cotton production. Cotton quickly wore out the soil which meant that farmers were constantly searching for more and better land. This was one of the factors that drew settlers to the west, including to Texas. Cotton production was labor intensive which meant that there was a demand for slaves. An enormous amount of capital became tied up in slaves. The problem was that slavery ran counter to the founding principles of the republic. The two interests (economic vs. ideology) created an internal conflict that had to be resolved one way or another.



**Process of girdling a tree.**

Yearbook of the United States Department of  
Agriculture (Washington: Government Printing  
Office, 1903) 269



**Girdling Treatment**

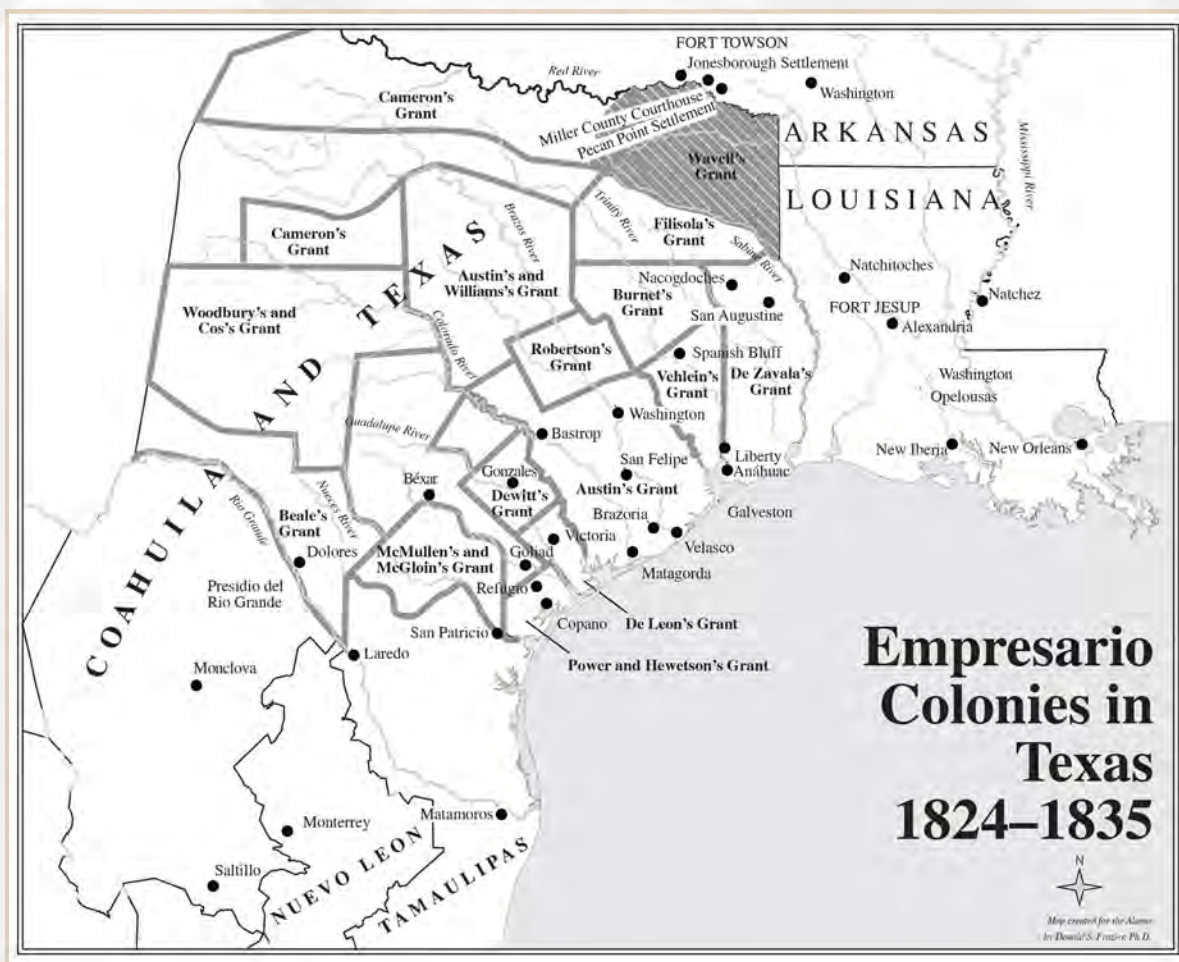
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ldA9UcSWKE>

The policy regarding public land (land owned by the government) in the United States was hotly debated. One faction wanted to sell public land to raise revenue for the government. Another faction wanted to make the land available as cheaply as possible to settlers so that more people could become landowners. One issue that greatly affected the land policy was the action of speculators. Often, landless settlers lacked money to purchase land at a lower government price because they were required to buy large tracks of land. Instead, these large tracks of land were often



purchased by speculators who in turn broke the land into smaller parcels but at a marked up price. Thus, the problem for the government was to try to devise a plan whereby the public land would actually end up in the hands of farmers who needed it.

The land use pattern in Texas differed from that of the United States. The traditional process of granting land called for residents to receive both land in town as well as land to farm or ranch. Thus, Tejanos usually kept a home both in town and in the country. [Note: Under this system, land was given to a person or family for their use and was not to be sold to others.] The lack of markets prevented the planting of cash crops as in the United States but when colonists began to flood Texas, greater economic ties were made to New Orleans and other ports.



The empresario system offered Americans a way to have land at a greatly reduced rate. One misunderstanding that developed was that the land was not actually being sold but the Mexican government was granting its use to the colonist. The 12 ½ cent per acre fee went to the empresario to pay his cost for surveys and other business expenses related to acting as a land agent for the government. This misunderstanding would later lead to conflict between the colonists and the Mexican government.





# CLOTHING IN TEXAS, ca. 1836

## Tejanos

A Tejano was essentially a person from Tejas. However, the term has come to mean native-born Mexicans from the state of Coahuila y Tejas. At the beginning of foreign colonization in the mid-1820s, the Tejanos were concentrated in three areas: San Antonio de Béxar, Goliad, and Nacogdoches. Two factors affecting dress in Texas were (1) it was on the frontier of Mexico, and (2) Texas' cattle based economy. Tejano dress had basic elements in common with other Mexicans at that time. Although social standing determined the quality of clothing, the cut and style was fairly universal throughout the Tejano community.

**Tejano men** traditionally wore pants (*calzones*) that opened down the outer seam that could be closed by buttons; when opened at the lower calf, the pants revealed a lighter colored pair of pants underneath (*calzoncillos*). Jackets were short and often trimmed with lace. Shirts were made of cotton or linen and were either plain or fancy, depending on its function and owners' social standing. Footwear consisted of sandals and low cut shoes—boots were not common. Leggings, called *botas*, were worn around the lower part of the leg to protect men on horseback from brush and thorns. Hats had a broad brim and low crowns and were made of wool, felt or straw and were often decorated with cords and silver ornaments. *Serapes* were worn instead of coats. A sash was often worn around the waist. The illustration to the upper right depicts a Tejano dressed for a military campaign. The hat is wide-brimmed in the style of the region. He wears a fringed leather hunting jacket, shirt, and tie or cravat. He is wearing brogans, not the traditional Mexican style shoe. Also absent are the *botas*, or traditional leggings that protected the legs from thorns when riding through brush. He has a knife thrust into a sash tied around his waist. For his personal needs, he carries a haversack, a gourd canteen, and a *serape* or Mexican blanket over his shoulder. His weapon is a British carbine, sometimes also called an *escopeta*.

**Tejano women** (Tejanas) traditionally wore a cotton or linen chemise, a skirt short enough to show their petticoats, and slippers without stockings. Their hair was usually braided. Jewelry included earrings. A rebozo, or shawl, served as both a head covering and cloak. Many of these items were adapted by other colonists to Texas because of their suitability for the weather and terrain (Holman & Parsons, 1979).



Illustration by Gary Zaboly from Stephen Hardin, *Texian Illiad*



## Americans

Unlike in the Tejano community where there was some uniformity in dress, Americans tended to exhibit a wider range of cut and style, based on mode of livelihood and social standing. The first wave of colonists from America had been in Texas since the mid-1820s. The cut and style of their clothing would represent American fashion of the time of departure from the United States. Farmers often wore overshirts or smocks when working or engaged in other outdoor activities. The men engaged in commerce or other business often wore a tailcoat and vest. Hunting and travel wear consisted of either overshirts, smocks, or hunting shirts; overshirts pulled on over the wearer's head while smocks and hunting shirts were either pulled over the head or wrapped around the body. Pants were either narrow fall or broad fall front; the French fly was not yet in vogue. Stocks, cravats, and neck kerchiefs were a standard item of dress. Hats were made of wool felt, beaver felt, or straw. Fur hats were strictly winter wear. The most common materials were wool and linen although cotton was becoming increasingly available. Buckskin was worn for two reasons: (1) no other material was available, (2) it could be made into attractive "showy" garments; however, buckskin was hot in the summer, cold in the winter, and clammy when wet. Footwear included the following: moccasins - most people owned a pair because they were easy to make and saved wear on shoes; shoes - both low and high top brogans were available in Texas - most would have been imported but shoemakers were plying their trade in Texas by 1830; boots - this is one item that may have indicated class standing, with boots indicating a higher social position - one reason is because boots, which were good for riding, were not especially suited for walking.



Women also would have had clothing that they had brought with them to Texas. Additionally, new clothing they produced would have been made along lines with which they would have been familiar. Class may have played a role in introducing new styles as the more affluent colonists bought goods imported from New Orleans. Dresses were divided into the standard categories of the time (morning, day, walking, evening, ball, and mourning) but essentially could be viewed as to function, meaning those used for everyday work and

those reserved for special occasions. Materials included wool, linen, cotton, and in some special cases, silk. Home-spun cloth was still being produced although machine produced fabric was beginning to make its way into Texas. Poorer women went barefoot in warm weather and wore moccasins or slippers when it was cold. Bonnets were worn when they traveled or worked outdoors.





## Americans Outside of the Empresario System

These people consisted of two groups: squatters who slipped into Texas and settled on land to which they did not have title and American volunteers who came to Texas to fight once the revolt erupted. The first group represented a lower standing on the social scale as squatting was most often practiced by the landless: their dress would reflect their lower social position. American volunteers came from all walks of life and wore a variety of dress. Their clothing, however, fell into several basic categories: military uniforms, hunting clothing, travel clothing, and occupational clothing. Thus, an observer would have seen military style roundabouts (a jacket with no tails), hunting frocks, overshirts, and tailcoats. Footwear would have included moccasins, brogans, and boots. Hats would have included both military and civilian styles. The clothing of the American volunteers reflected their length of service in Texas as they did not have access to replacements; thus, worn clothing was patched and threadbare.

## Europeans

Just like the Americans, colonists from Europe often brought costumes from their home countries. These colonists came from all over Europe, but a large population from Germany settled in Texas and brought German styles to their new home. While traveling through New Braunfels, TX in the 1850s, Frederick Law Olmsted (a travel writer of the day) noted in the German town that “men in caps and short jackets, with pendent pipes, were everywhere to be seen” (Olmsted, 1857, p. 143). Another settler from the 1840s recalled meeting a French settler wearing “a blouse, with a fur casquette [brimless hat] on his head” (Houstoun, 1844, p. 282). These are only a few examples of many among the variety of cultures who settled Texas, however, much of the traditional dress began to fade with successive generations as ties to the home country lost their strength (Holman & Parsons, 1979).





## Native Americans

While Native Americans did not participate actively in the Texas Revolution, they were present in Texas. They included eastland tribes such as the Caddo and Cherokee; the coastal Karankawas; and the nomadic Comanche. The Texas Parks and Wildlife department has an excellent resource for classrooms with more detailed information regarding Texas Indians [http://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd\\_bk\\_p4000\\_0016.pdf](http://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_p4000_0016.pdf).

Historically, native people relied on their local environment to provide clothing. Dressed animal hides (deer, buffalo, rabbit, etc.) were turned into dresses for women and shirts and leggings for men. The breechcloth or breechclout was widely used. Shells, feathers, and porcupine quills served as decoration. Contact with the Spanish and French, and then with Mexicans and Americans, gave Indians access to wool and cotton cloth, glass and brass beads, and other trade items. Tejanos who had the most exposure to Anglos were beginning to have access to clothing made in the American style. Volunteers, whose clothing had worn out, could have picked up Mexican hats, serapes, and other such articles.



## Cultural Crossover

Dress is one of the first aspects to be altered when different cultures meet. Thus, older colonists had begun to adopt some items of Tejano clothing such as hats and jackets.

The military itself represented a separate culture. Once the revolt had broken out in 1835, the rebels (Texians and Tejanos) began to adopt a more marshal appearance as well as to try to act like soldiers (or at least citizen-soldiers). Old accoutrements, knapsacks, and uniforms - souvenirs from previous conflicts - would have been taken out of trunks and put into service.

Cultural exchange had also taken place between Native Americans and other people including both Americans and Tejanos. One case in point was Crockett's beaded buckskin vest made like a typical cloth vest except for the selection of material and mode of decoration.





# MEDICINE

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## HEROIC MEDICINE

In the early 1800s, doctors and the public did not know that “germs” existed or caused diseases. Medical theory was still based on the beliefs and practices of Ancient Greece.

People believed that the body’s four humors (blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile) must be kept in balance. The term “Heroic Medicine” was used because healing involved drastic treatment. Illness was believed to be caused by an imbalance between the body’s humors. The following were methods used to restore balance to the body’s humors.

- **Bleeding** (extracting blood from a vein)
- **Purging** (induced bowel movements)
- **Vomiting** (induced to empty stomach)
- **Sweating** (to remove impurities through the pores)



Bloodletting tools called lancets



Bloodletting in the 1800s.  
The Burns Archive, New York  
[www.burnsarchive.com/EXPLORE/MEDICAL/Therapy/index.html](http://www.burnsarchive.com/EXPLORE/MEDICAL/Therapy/index.html)

## THEORIES OF MEDICINE, CA. 1835

### Allopaths

Allopaths followed the theory of humoric balance. They would have been considered the standard physicians of the day, although they would have been the only sect to have attempted surgery. Allopaths utilized all four supposedly restorative treatments of bleeding, purging, vomiting, and sweating, and they used powerful agents including opium, arsenic, calomel, antimony, nitre (salpetre), and mercury. Because many of these treatments actually weakened the patients, at times to the point of death, some patients began to turn to other types of healing.

### Thomsonians

A farmer from New Hampshire named Samuel Thompson rejected “traditional” medicine after the death of his mother at the hands of Allopath doctors. When his wife fell ill, he used physicians who used herbs to treat her. After her recovery, Thompson, researched and began to popularize this form of healing. One of the tenants of his doctrine was the belief that disease came about because of the cold and could be combated with heat such as steam baths and cayenne pepper. Although this form of treatment did not maintain popularity, it cleared the way for much needed changes in the medical practice.



## Homeopaths

While Thomsonianism developed outside of what was considered orthodox medicine, Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahnemann was a German doctor who became disenchanted with the use and distribution of drugs prescribed by physicians. He was especially critical of bloodletting which he correctly accused of causing harm to the patients. Through his research, he came to conclude that “like is cured by like.” He used cinchona bark from which was derived the treatment quinine used to battle malaria as an example – when he took the drug, it produced symptoms of malaria. This served a springboard for the homeopathic sect. When Hahnemann popularized the method of supplying patients with small amounts or no treatments rather than the brutal “heroic” treatments, “regular” doctors became antagonistic towards homeopaths. Unfortunately, when homeopathy made its way to Texas, some of the men who plied their trade were not actually physicians although they often added the title doctor to their names. The famous Texas doctor, Ashbel Smith, even went so far in 1875 as to compare the choice of using homeopathy to the right of travelers to choose their path to hell (Ferris & Hoppe, 1985).



*Cinchona Tree, Britannica Online for Kids.* <http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/art-149504>

## Medical Training

In the mid-1800s, the primary method for learning a trade was to serve as an apprentice. As there were no medical schools in Texas until the late nineteenth century, many who wished to become a doctor merely had to find a physician willing to act as a teacher. The apprentice would generally spend two to three years reading and learning before having several years of more practical training as the doctor’s assistant. Because of the wild, frontier nature of Texas during the 1800s, it was relatively easy for charlatans to claim to be doctors as there were few regulations and even fewer people to check their credentials – particularly in rural areas. This led to wide disparity in the education of doctors – some had diplomas from prestigious institutions in the United States and Europe and some had not even finished high school (Ferris & Hoppe, 1985).

## Doctors at the Alamo

The first hospital in Texas was established at the Alamo in 1805 by acting Governor Manuel Antonio Cordero y Bustamante. Its purpose was to provide medical care to the soldiers stationed on the frontier. The first small pox vaccinations in Texas occurred at the Alamo hospital.

There were several doctors serving in the Alamo’s garrison. These included the following men: John H. Forsyth, William D. Howell, Edward F. Mitchasson, Amos Pollard, John Purdy Reynolds, John Sutherland, and John W. Thomson. The training of most is unknown, but Sutherland was trained as a Thomsonian. Two men actually attended medical school: Pollard graduated from Vermont Academy in Castletown, Vermont and Reynolds graduated from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.





## Earning a Living in the Medical Profession

Doctors in 1800s Texas often faced difficulty in making a living. Money was limited in that time period, and doctors were often paid with items offered in trade for their services. This included everything from food to livestock. Doctors would, at times, partner with other doctors or barbers to try to obtain a more stable business – therefore, patients could receive a haircut and shave after being treated by their doctor. The average annual income for early Texas doctors was only \$500. Although fees varied, and money was often substituted by barter items, the following fees were recommended by the Medical and Surgical Society of Houston in 1838 (Ferris & Hoppe, 1985):

- 1st visit to patient - \$5
- Follow-up visits to patient - \$3
- Double the charge after 8 PM
- Visits outside the city limits - \$1 per mile during the day; \$2 per mile at night
- Consultation visit - \$20
- Advice & prescription in office - \$5 (\$3 per hour for extra time)
- Venesection (bleeding) - \$2 plus office charge
- Tooth extraction - \$2 plus office charge
- Cupping - \$5 plus office charge
- Surgical operations – charge depended on difficulty of procedure
- Natural labor - \$40 (difficulty in delivery increased the charge)
- Medicines provided by the doctor - \$0.50 per dose



## Folk Medicine

With the medical profession still in its formative stages, folk medicine played an important role in the lives of many people. Colonists brought folk remedies from the United States which their ancestors had brought from their home countries. Tejanos practiced folk medicine which combined both Spanish and Indian traditions.

### The following are examples of Southern folk remedies:

- For a sprain or bruise: A pint of rectified spirits of wine & two ounces of Camphire [Camphor] put into a quart bottle & filled up with Ox’s gall—Rub the sprain or bruise before the fire twice a day for a considerable time.
- To cure any sort of fits: Take all the scales that grow on the inside of a Black Stallions Legs, dry it and powder it, take for one Dose as much as will lie on the point of a Case knife for a grown person in Molasses.
- To stop purging (diarrhea): First of all upon its first coming take a plenty of Chicken water. If it continues take a dose of Hippo if that don’t stop it take a dose of Rhubarb and if it continues after that take the following decoction—Persimmon root, Yarrow, plantain, black-berry roots, Gum leaves and a little red oak Bark boiled one 3rd part away a little brandy and sugar and drink it at discretion.
- Cure for frostbite: Rub the part affected three or four times before the fire with the fat of dung-hill fowls—then rub it with flannel, and wrap it up, in two or three days the cure will be effected.
- For a tooth ache: (1) Take a jug of water and put a few red hot coals into it and wash the mouth often with it. (2) Clean your teeth at least three times a week with powdered fire coal burnt from wood & frequently whilst the pain lasts.



**The following articles were often used by Tejanos as medicinal cures.**

- Burns ..... Aloe Vera
- High blood pressure, cough ..... Garlic
- High blood pressure, sedative ..... Passion Flower
- Stomach ailments ..... Peppermint
- Stomach ailment, chicken pox ..... Trumpet Flowers





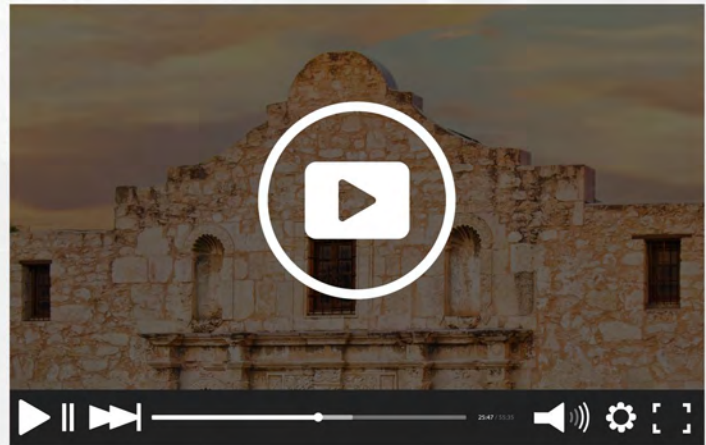
## COMMON 19TH CENTURY DISEASES

### Cholera

Cholera is caused by *Vibrio cholerae*, a bacteria present in untreated water. The sources of the bacteria can be wells, ponds, and slow moving waterways. The disease, still common today in countries with poor water treatment facilities, was once found worldwide. The disease was frightening because death could result within hours of the first appearance of the symptoms. These could include diarrhea, vomiting, and leg cramps. The cause of death was from dehydration, the rapid loss of the body's fluid. Furthermore, the cause and spread of the disease was not understood – often attributed to “bad air.” It wasn't until 1854 that London scientist John Snow made the connection to contaminated water. His discovery would help lead to modern epidemiology, or the study of disease.

Cholera often occurred in epidemics due to the fact that the source of the bacteria was usually a community's source of drinking water. The disease could also be transmitted through contact with body fluids of infected patients, making those who treated cholera victims vulnerable to infection. Cholera made a strong appearance in the United States in 1832. The disease, which had ravaged Asia from 1815-1826, was carried to Europe and the Americas by trading vessels. Port cities in the northeast like New York City were hit hard. Inland areas were not immune, however, as the ships carried the bacteria to the Great Lakes as well as throughout the river network that links small towns with the larger cities. Cholera had broken out in New Orleans by 1833. From there, its destination was Mexico, including Coahuila y Texas. The disease struck the Anglo settlements along the coastal plains first before traveling inland. No total number of deaths was recorded for Texas, but the town councils of Goliad and Victoria reported 91 and 25 fatalities respectively. Officials noted that the epidemic had left many children orphans and had struck slaves as well as their masters.

One notable victim of the disease was Ursula María de Veramendi, the wife of colonist James Bowie. Ursula contracted cholera while at Monclova visiting her father, Governor Juan Martín de Veramendi. Several members of the Veramendi family, including Ursula, her father and mother, died in the summer of 1833.



**More information about Dr. John Snow's Cholera discovery.**

<http://www.history.com/shows/mankind-the-story-of-all-of-us/videos/cholera-outbreak>



## Malaria

Malaria was ever-present in the 19th century. The disease is caused by a microscopic parasite called Plasmodium, which enters the human body through the bite of the Anopheles mosquito. Although not always fatal, the disease left its victim with a lifelong illness characterized by periodic bouts of fever, chills, and violent headaches. Early doctors found that quinine, a substance from the South American Cinchona tree bark used by the homeopathic Dr. Hahnemann, could help control its symptoms. Once malaria was contracted in the 19th century, however, there was no cure. Other names for malaria include the ague and swamp fever.

Prior to modern medicine, the key to understanding malaria was believed to be in its name: “bad air.” This fit the notion of the time that “good air” promoted health while “bad air” caused sickness. The idea was reinforced by the fact that many people stricken with malaria lived along waterways and marches where stagnate water collected. These areas were also prime locations for mosquitoes, a connection not made until the 1880s and 1890s.

## Yellow Fever

Like malaria, Yellow Fever was transmitted by mosquitoes. Instead of a bacteria or a parasite, Yellow Fever was caused by a virus that entered the human body through the bite of a mosquito. Its incubation period lasts 3 to 6 days. Initial symptoms are flu like chills, fevers, and headache, which can gradually disappear in a few days. The skin turns yellow due to jaundice. In severe cases, though, the virus attacks vital organs, which results in internal bleeding. Patients experience stomach pains and begin to vomit congealed blood. This gives the disease the name the “Black Vomit.”

Yellow Fever was mainly confined to coastal areas. Cities severely affected in the 1840s included New Orleans, Louisiana, and Vera Cruz in Mexico. Galveston, Texas saw nine yellow fever epidemics between the years of 1839 and 1867. Although Dr. Ashbel Smith went so far as to taste some of the vomited blood of his patients to prove that Yellow Fever was not contagious, quarantines remained in effect because the mosquito origin was not known (Burns, 2010). People most at risk were often travelers, who had not yet built up an immunity to the disease.

## Smallpox

Smallpox is caused by the variola virus and is transmitted through direct contact with an infected person. Nevertheless, the disease can also be contracted by contact with items which a victim has touched such as clothing, dishes, or blankets. The virus' initial symptoms are fever, vomiting, and a widespread rash on the body, arms, legs, and face. As the disease runs its course, the rash transforms into pustules, which subsequently form scabs. In severe cases, the victim is left with deep scars where the pustules formed. Although smallpox can be fatal, victims who survive the disease are immune from further occurrences.



Dr. Ashbel Smith, known as “The Father of Texas Medicine,” was a close friend of Sam Houston. Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, Austin.  
[https://www.cah.utexas.edu/db/dmr/image\\_lg.php?variable=di\\_01429](https://www.cah.utexas.edu/db/dmr/image_lg.php?variable=di_01429)





Smallpox was one of first diseases for which a vaccine was developed. Doctors observed that milkmaids were less likely to contract smallpox than others. They reasoned that the women's exposure to "cow pox" somehow helped them ward off the human illness. In 1796, Dr. Edward Jenner inoculated a young boy with "cow pox." Several weeks later the doctor exposed this patient to smallpox but the boy failed to contract the disease. This discovery led to the practice of vaccinating against smallpox.



*Dr Jenner performing his first vaccination on a child, 1796. Board, E. (1920). Iconographic Collections, Wellcome Library, London.*

In 1806, the community of San Antonio de B exar was introduced to smallpox vaccinations when the vaccine was sent there by order of Spanish officials. Several children from the town as well as children of the "Alamo Company" garrison stationed at the old mission received the vaccine.

## Consumption

The disease tuberculosis was once known by the name consumption. Caused by a bacterium, the disease caused its victims to gradually "waste away." Most often the disease affected the lungs, which resulted in the patient developing a hacking, bloody cough. The disease was infectious and was passed through personal contact or by contact with items that victims had touched. There was no cure since antibiotics were not yet known. People with consumption were often urged to move west, where the air was thought to be healthier. Many south Texas towns drew pioneers suffering from tuberculosis hoping to improve their ill health, and this influx caused San Antonio to become known as "The Sanitarium of the West" (Burns, 2010).



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