



SAN JACINTO PATRIOT

Dedicated to the memory of those who fought at the Battle of San Jacinto

December 2009

Publisher – San Jacinto Chapter No. 1 of The Sons of the Republic of Texas

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Held the First Thursday of Every Month at Noon

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, December 3, 2009** at the **Post Oak Grill**, 1415 South Post Oak Lane, Houston, Texas at Noon. Many attendees arrive by 11:30; be there by 11:45 a.m. to ensure you get a good parking spot and a seat. The cost of lunch is **\$22.00**, payable at the door by cash or check. Parking is free in the garage - enter restaurant from the rear door in the garage.

About This Month's Guest Speaker:

Our Guest Speaker for the December luncheon meeting will be Mr. Jeff Kester, RA, PMP, current Region II Program Manager for the Infrastructure Division of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Mr. Kester will provide an update on the projects going on at the San Jacinto Battleground, San Jacinto Monument and Battleship Texas, such as the proposed Visitors Center and the dry-berthing of the Battleship.

Upcoming Events and Items of Interest:

SRT's Winter Quarterly Executive Committee Meeting will be held on December 4-5, 2009, in Victoria, Texas, at the Hampton Inn, 7006 N. Navarro Street (361) 573-9911, in conjunction with the 2009 Presidio La Bahia Award Ceremonies. The schedule of events is as follows:

Friday, December 4, 2009

5:00 p.m. Hospitality Room opens at the Hampton Inn - Tom Houston, Chairman
Dinner – members' choice

Saturday, December 5, 2009

8:30 a.m. Executive Committee Meeting, Hotel Meeting Room, Hampton Inn
12:00 p.m. Box Lunch Blue Quail Deli-224 S. Commercial, Goliad (pre-registration for this is now closed, but other good lunch alternatives are available)
2:00 p.m. Presidio La Bahia Awards Ceremony – Goliad

San Jacinto Chapter - Daughters of the Republic of Texas, invites you to a Christmas Open House, honoring the Friends of the Log House, on Sunday, December 13, 2009, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Open House will be at the Pioneer Memorial Log House Museum, 1510 North MacGregor, in Hermann Park. Come see the beautiful Christmas Tree, along with re-enactors in Republic of Texas period dress. There will be wassail, lemonade and holiday cheer. The CRT (Children of the Republic of Texas) are collecting and donating toys to the Ben Taub Pediatric Center, so please bring a small toy (unwrapped). For additional information, contact Eron Brimberry Tynes, 54texan@peoplepc.com

Chapter #1's Elizabeth Powell Tavern marker repair project is now underway. Replacement bronze parts have been ordered from the Texas Historical Commission, and local support has been identified. In fact, the landowner of the site - Mr. Jack Wendt - has reported that his crews have already lifted the marker and cemented it onto a new base! Watch for updates as we work toward repair and re-dedication of this important 1936 historical marker located in Fort Bend County.

November Days in Texas History:

1835, November 4: Texans engage Mexican force in battle of Lipantitlán On this day in 1835, the battle of Lipantitlán was fought on the east bank of the Nueces River three miles above San Patricio in San Patricio County, directly across from Fort Lipantitlán. A Texas force of around seventy men under Adjutant Ira J. Westover engaged a Mexican force of about ninety men under Capt. Nicolás Rodríguez. The battle lasted thirty-two minutes, leaving twenty-eight Mexicans dead, including Lt. Marcellino García, second in command, who was mortally wounded and died two days later at San Patricio. The Texans suffered only one casualty, when a rifle ball cut off three of the fingers on William Bracken's right hand.

1835, November 7: The Consultation takes a step toward the Texas Declaration of Independence

On this day in 1835, at San Felipe, the Consultation adopted the Declaration of November 7, 1835, a statement of causes for taking up arms against Mexico preliminary to the Texas Declaration of Independence. The document declared that the Texans had taken up arms in defense of their rights and liberties and the republican principles of the Mexican Constitution of 1824. Among other assertions, the declaration stated that Texas was no longer bound by the compact of union, that Texans would not cease to carry on war against the Centralist troops in Texas, that the Texans had the right to establish an independent government, and that Texas would reward with lands and citizenship those who volunteered their services to her in the struggle.

1835, November 15: Santa Anna's policies lead to abortive invasion of Tampico

On this day in 1835, an armed invasion of Mexico by North Americans led by George Fisher and José Antonio Mexía unsuccessfully assaulted the Mexican garrison at Tampico. The Tampico Expedition, like the incipient Texas Revolution, was launched in response to the reactionary policies of Antonio López de Santa Anna. The expedition sailed from New Orleans on the schooner *Mary Jane* on November 6. The *Mary Jane* ran aground off the bar of Tampico on November 14. Mexía attacked the city on November 15 and was defeated. The rebels retreated aboard the American schooner *Halcyon*, which arrived at the mouth of the Brazos on December 3. Thirty-one prisoners were left at Tampico. All either died from wounds or were executed.

1835, November 17: Ohioans come to the aid of Texas with "Twin Sisters"

On this day in 1835, the people of Cincinnati, Ohio, decided to aid the cause of the Texas Revolution by raising funds to procure two cannons. Since the United States was taking an official stance of neutrality toward the rebellion in Texas, the citizens of Cincinnati referred to their cannon as "hollow ware." Two guns, probably six pounders, were manufactured at the foundry of Greenwood and Webb in Cincinnati and then shipped down the Mississippi to New Orleans. The cannons arrived in Galveston at the beginning of April 1836, accompanied by the family of a Dr. Charles Rice. The guns were presented to representatives of Texas under the sponsorship of Dr. Rice's twin daughters, Elizabeth and Eleanor. Someone in the crowd made notice of the fact that there were two sets of twins in the presentation, the girls and the guns, and thus the cannons became the Twin Sisters. The guns went into action on April 20, and, under the command of George W. Hockley, supported the infantry assault the next day at the battle of San Jacinto. Along with the Gonzales "come and take it" cannon, the Twin Sisters are among the most famous weapons of the Texas Revolution.

1835, November 25: First Texas Navy created

On this day in 1835, the first Texas Navy was established when the General Council authorized the purchase of four schooners and granted letters of marque and reprisal to privateers until the ships were armed. Established to protect the supply line to New Orleans, the navy included the 60-ton *Liberty*, the 125-ton *Independence*, the 125-ton *Brutus*, and the 125-ton *Invincible*. All four ships were lost by mid-1837, and the Texas Navy virtually ceased to exist until March 1839, when the first ship of the second navy was commissioned. A cruise ending in July 1843 marked the end of the operative career of the Texas Navy, as a truce with Mexico came that summer and the United States undertook to protect Texas until annexation. In June 1846 the ships of the Texas Navy were transferred to the United States Navy. The officers of the Texas Navy desired to be included in the transfer, but seniority-

minded United States naval officers opposed the proposal. In 1857 the claims of the surviving Texas Navy officers were settled, and the Texas Navy was no more.

1835, November 26: Texans win Grass Fight On this day in 1835, Texan forces defeated a Mexican column in the so-called Grass Fight. The Texas army besieging San Antonio was informed at mid-morning that Mexican cavalymen with pack animals were approaching. Thinking that the column might be carrying pay for the Mexican army, the Texans attacked with cavalry and infantry. Gen. Martín Perfecto de Cos, commander of the Mexican garrison in San Antonio, sent out infantrymen and an artillery piece. The Texans eventually drove the Mexicans back. Texas losses included four wounded, while Mexican losses numbered three dead and fourteen wounded. The pack train, the Texans discovered, was carrying only grass for the Mexican army animals.

1835, November 29: Newspaper publisher authorized to outfit privateers On this date in 1835, Samuel Whiting, who later published a number of newspapers in Texas during the period of the republic, was granted six blank commissions or letters of marque to outfit privateers at New Orleans. Just four days previously, the General Council had passed a bill providing for the issuance of letters of marque to privateers until the first Texas Navy should become a reality. Whiting and others were taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the embryonic Republic of Texas to entrepreneurs who wanted to serve their country on the high seas by accosting Mexican vessels. Letters of marque were later issued by the Confederacy to Texans who wanted to do similar duty against Union vessels. Charles DeMontel, for instance, was officially authorized in 1863 to command the steamer *Texas*, a privately owned vessel of the Confederate States. During the early days of the republic, the Texas government even authorized an official flag for registered civil vessels and vessels sailing under letters of marque and reprisal.

1835, November 30: Sam Houston welcomes Mobile Grays to Texas On this day in 1835, Gen. Sam Houston welcomed David N. Burke's Mobile Grays to San Antonio, commending "the manly and liberal feelings which have been manifested by you in the tender of your services in behalf of Texas." The Grays, a company of about thirty volunteers, were organized in Mobile by James Butler Bonham, Albert C. Horton, and S. P. St. John and placed under Burke's command. In December, upon the army's reorganization for the Matamoros expedition of 1835-36, the group, enlarged by transfers from the New Orleans Greys, proceeded to Goliad and became part of the Second Battalion of the Provisional Regiment of Volunteers under James W. Fannin Jr. One member was killed in action on March 19. Three escaped, four were spared, and thirty were killed in the Goliad Massacre on March 27.

1836, November 15: Lorenzo de Zavala dies On this day in 1836, Lorenzo de Zavala, the first vice president of the Republic of Texas, died. Zavala was born in 1788 in Mexico. His support of democratic reforms led to his imprisonment in 1814 in Veracruz, where he gained enough knowledge from reading medical textbooks to qualify him to practice medicine upon his release in 1817. He also taught himself to read English during his imprisonment. In the early 1820s he helped establish a republican government in newly independent Mexico, but due to Federalist-Centralist strife was forced into exile in 1830. Zavala returned to Mexico in 1832 and was named by President Antonio López de Santa Anna to serve as the first minister plenipotentiary of the

Mexican legation in Paris. When he learned that Santa Anna had assumed dictatorial powers in 1834, Zavala denounced his former ally, resigned his post, and eventually went to Texas. Although he first advocated the cause of Mexican Federalism, he soon became an active supporter of the independence movement. Zavala's legislative, executive, ministerial, and diplomatic experience, together with his education and linguistic ability, uniquely qualified him for the role he was to play in the drafting of the constitution of the Republic of Texas. Under the Treaties of Velasco Zavala was appointed a peace commissioner to accompany Santa Anna to Mexico City, but returned to his home in poor health shortly thereafter. He resigned the vice presidency on October 17, 1836. Less than a month later, soaked and half-frozen by a norther after his rowboat overturned in Buffalo Bayou, he developed pneumonia and died.

1837, November 10: Battle of Stone Houses On this day in 1837, eighteen Texas Rangers fought 150 to 180 Kichai Indians in present-day Archer County in a conflict called the battle of Stone Houses. In mid-October 1837, a ranger company pursued the raiding Kichais up the Colorado River. Lt. A. B. Van Benthusen and seventeen men split from the main group and headed north to the Brazos. Eventually, they found the Kichais. Cherokee and Delaware Indians who were present attempted to act as peace agents, but when one ranger killed an Indian and took a plug of tobacco from the dead man's body the infuriated Kichais attacked. The rangers sought cover in a shallow ravine, but after fierce fighting, the Kichais set fire to the prairie and smoked them out. In the ensuing chaos, some rangers escaped into the woods. Eight rangers survived the battle, which was so named after three stone mounds that looked like houses to the Indians.

1837, November 27: Texas Presbytery organized at Sumner Bacon's home On this day in 1837, pioneer Cumberland Presbyterian ministers Sumner Bacon, Amos Roark, and Mitchell Smith began the Texas Presbytery at Bacon's home. Bacon, born in Massachusetts in 1790, traveled as a young man to Arkansas, where he was converted at a Cumberland revival meeting and decided to become a minister. Because he lacked even a basic grasp of grammar and spelling, the Cumberland Presbytery of Arkansas asked him to spend two years improving his education before applying for a license to preach, but he went instead to Texas as a freelance itinerant evangelist in 1829. Since Catholicism was the legally required religion of the territory, Bacon did his preaching surreptitiously. In 1833, the American Bible Society commissioned Bacon as its first regular agent in Texas. In the summer of 1836 he organized the first Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Texas near San Augustine. Due to poor health, Bacon's leadership in church activities diminished after 1837, although he did serve as the first moderator of the Cumberland Synod of Texas in 1843. He died in 1844. Although Bacon was not the first Protestant to preach in Texas, evidence indicates that he was the first resident Protestant evangelist to maintain a continuous ministry in the new territory.

1838, November 29: A founder of Methodism in Texas crosses into the republic On this day in 1838, Jesse Hord crossed the Sabine River into Texas at Gaines Ferry. He preached his first sermon at San Augustine the next day, then worked vigorously to establish Methodism in the republic. Between December 23, 1838, and April 15, 1839, he founded the first Methodist congregations at Richmond, Matagorda, Brazoria, Bay Prairie, DeMoss, Texana, Velasco, East Columbia, and Houston. His 500-mile circuit included twenty preaching places. He continued preaching on circuits until 1848. Hord died on January 17, 1866, and was buried at Goliad.

Most facts courtesy of Texas State Historical Association's "Texas Day-by-Day".

Visit our chapter website for more information –
<http://www.sanjacintosrt.org>

If anyone has any information or news to include in the *San Jacinto Patriot* or on the web page, please contact:

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