

Expanding West

Section 2



MAIN IDEAS

1. Many American settlers moved to Texas after Mexico achieved independence from Spain.
2. Texans revolted against Mexican rule and established an independent nation.

Key Terms and People

Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla priest who led the first major Mexican revolt against Spanish rule in 1810

empresarios agents of the Mexican republic hired to bring settlers to Texas

Stephen F. Austin empresario who established the first American colony in Texas

Antonio López de Santa Anna Mexican leader who came to power in 1830 and suspended Mexico's constitution

Alamo an old mission in San Antonio occupied by Texan revolutionary forces in 1836

Battle of San Jacinto decisive victory that gave Texas independence from Mexico

Academic Vocabulary

explicit fully revealed without vagueness

Section Summary

AMERICAN SETTLERS MOVE TO TEXAS

In the early 1800s, the region we now know as the American Southwest was part of Mexico, which in turn was part of the vast Spanish empire in the Americas. Mexico struggled against Spanish rule. A revolt led by **Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla** in 1810 failed, but the rebellion he started grew. In 1821 Mexico became independent.

In order to establish control of Texas, the new Mexican republic hired agents known as **empresarios** to bring settlers there. One of these, **Stephen F. Austin**, selected a site on the lower Colorado River and settled 300 families, mostly from the southern states. These settlers often **explicitly** ignored Mexican laws, including Mexico's law forbidding slavery.

Tension grew between Mexico's central government and the American settlers. Colonists were

During the early 1800s, in what part of Mexico was Texas located?

Use an online browser or another resource to research "the Old 300."

From what region of the United States did most settlers come to Texas?

Section 2, continued

angry when **Antonio López de Santa Anna** came to power in 1830 and suspended Mexico's constitution. Austin was imprisoned for a year and a half. When he returned to Texas, he began urging Texans to rebel against Mexico.

Underline the sentence that helps explain why tension grew between the central Mexican government and the American settlers in Texas.

TEXANS REVOLT AGAINST MEXICO

Hostilities began with a battle at Gonzalez in 1835. Santa Anna inflicted two brutal defeats on the Texans at the **Alamo** and Goliad. Within a month, however, Texas forces under Sam Houston had won a decisive victory over Santa Anna at the **Battle of San Jacinto**. Santa Anna signed a treaty giving Texas its independence.

Use the library or an online resource to find an account of the famous siege of the Alamo.

Most people in the new Republic of Texas hoped that Texas would join the United States. However, U.S. President Andrew Jackson was concerned about two factors. He was worried that admitting Texas as a slave state would upset the fragile balance between free and slave states in the Union. Also, Jackson feared that annexing Texas might lead to a war with Mexico.

As the annexation of Texas was delayed, more American settlers came from nearby southern states, often bringing slaves with them to work the land and to grow cotton. Tensions between Mexico and Texas remained high. After a few unsettled years, Texas President Sam Houston signed a peace treaty with Mexico in 1844.

What did many American settlers bring with them to Texas?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Evaluation Take sides in a debate as to whether Texas should join the United States or remain an independent nation. Write an **explicit** defense of your position.