

The Texas Revolution

DAY 12, March 5, 1836

Santa Anna ordered his army moved closer to the Alamo. The cannon attack continues. Santa Anna announces to his officers that he plans to attack the Alamo in the morning and orders them to prepare their troops for assault. His officers consider this an unwise move. They argued that the Texians would surrender soon enough and a battle was not necessary. Santa Anna insists on victory and demands that every defender be killed, either in battle or executed immediately afterwards. According to legend, Travis gathered his men together one final time to offer them the chance to leave. According to one account, Travis draws a line in the sand and asks his men to make a decision to stay or leave. Only one man, Moses Rose, chooses to leave.



DAY 13: March 6, 1836 - THE BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

Santa Anna gives the order to attack just before dawn, around 5 am in the morning. The Mexican troops attack the Alamo from all four sides before finally gaining access to the mission from the south wall. Travis is one of the first Texians to die, and James Bowie is executed in his sick bed. After a bloody 90-minute battle, the Alamo falls and all of the defenders die. To this day there is ongoing debate that Davy Crockett survived the battle, but was then executed immediately after. Santa Anna orders the bodies of the slain defenders burned. Officially, 189 defenders died, but ongoing research may increase the number to as many as 257. The Mexican forces also suffered heavy casualties in the Battle of the Alamo, losing between 600 and 1,600 men. Women and children were spared in order to spread the word of the Texian defeat. Susannah Dickinson, wife of one of the defenders, shared the horrors of the battle with Sam Houston when she reaches Gonzales.

The Texas Declaration of Independence - March 2, 1836

While Santa Anna was attacking the Alamo, the delegates at the Convention of 1836 were creating a government. They had to work quickly, as they knew it was a matter of time before the Mexican army reached their location in Washington-on-the-Brazos. First they wrote a declaration of independence from Mexico. The Texas Declaration of Independence was adopted on March 2, 1836. The declaration was written by George Childress in less than 24 hours and based on the United States Declaration of Independence. It claimed that Mexico had "ceased to protect the lives, liberty, and property of the people, from whom its legitimate powers are derived" and complained about "arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny."

Next, the delegates worked to both create a government and defend their new country. They elected Sam Houston as commander-in-chief of the Texas military. He immediately began work to defend Texas. The ad-interim (temporary) government then elected David G. Burnet as the president and Lorenzo de Zavala as vice president. They created their Constitution by basing it on the laws of the United States and Mexico. Then they began to flee - the Mexican army determined to capture and execute them.