

The Diary of Mary Austin Holley

Mary Austin Holley, a cousin of Stephen F. Austin, traveled in Texas between 1831 and 1838. During the period 1835 to 1838, she kept a diary about her second trip to Texas. The diary gives authentic details about early immigrant life in the Texas coastal plains. Holley is known too for her book *Texas: Observations*, which also details life for the immigrants.

Her diary is of interest because of its realistic descriptions of frontier life, its view of the early Republic of Texas, and for its mention of such famous Texans as Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin, Mirabeau B. Lamar, and others. *The Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin*

May 13th [1835] Thursday

Brother started for St. Filipe on important business.

14th

Thermometer 86° —at noon. Dr. Hawley & Mr. Trendale arrived while we were at supper — glad to see them —walked in the garden long & talked about Texas & its prospects.

15th

Walked about the place in search of the great live oaks so much talked of. Did not find but one — a bee tree —had been girdled & stript of its leaves to my sorrow —what wanton barbarism. Discovered the little burying ground with roses blooming on two fresh graves —dropped there a tear — had dreaded to inquire for them. It is well chosen —a little enclosure —figs & growing luxuriantly without & flowers blooming within.

10 o'clock

Thermometer at 86, fresh sea breeze —accompanied the gentlemen across the river & through the avenue to Dr. Phelps's —a charming walk —the high trees protecting from the sun —the blackberries refreshing us with their tempting fruit —very sweet & abundant —they led their horses, which were in waiting at the bank —all of us preferring to walk. By way of experiment I mounted one of their Spanish saddles for a short distance.

From Bolivar to Orizymbo —about 3/4 of a mile through woodland very like the shrubbery of Col. Perkins & Mr. Bussey near Boston —though on a far grander scale.

In the corridor of Dr. Phelps we inhaled with a sensation of delight the sea breezes over the prairie over which the eye extends 9 miles. In the distance are two wooded points resembling the narrows below N York, & you fancy the sea beyond. One would think that nothing but health could be borne on such gales, for they are fresh & strong, yet Mrs. Phelps was lying ill of scarlet fever, from which several members of her family had but recently recovered. This led to various speculations on epidemic disease. What region escapes entirely? Is it that we need not forget our mortality? In such a position one feels such perfect contentment there is danger of doing so. After partaking of a family dinner, consisting of rabbit soup —a piece of yankee pickled pork —venison steaks —with snap beans —remarkably fine Irish potatoes & lettuce from the garden —our visitors took leave for Columbia very favorably impressed with this episode from their grand tour through the Colony. I turned my steps homeward accompanied by Mr. Jamison with his gun, which he had occasion to exercise on the squirrels en passant, while I partook of the blackberries. One fine fellow received his death wound through the eye by the Kentucker & was deposited in the skill for my supper. We learned that a Mexican Cutter has captured a schooner supposed to have contraband goods off Velasco. The passengers, among them Mr. McKinny the owner, being put on shore. The schooner had Mexican colors. So much for disregarding all laws on the ground that there is not power to enforce them.

The Texas people are ungrateful to Mexico to whom they owe so much. Not satisfied with very lenient laws they evade all law. How can they be made to respect it? Mr. McKinny is charged with smuggling.

Address of the Honorable S. F. Austin Delivered at Louisville, Kentucky, March 7, 1836

...When a people consider themselves compelled by circumstances or by oppression, to appeal to arms and resort to their natural rights, they necessarily submit their cause to the great tribunal of public opinion. The people of Texas, confident in the justice of their cause, fearlessly and cheerfully appeal to this tribunal...

But a few years back Texas was a wilderness, the home of the uncivilized and wandering Comanche and other tribes of Indians, who waged a constant warfare against the Spanish settlements. ...

In order to restrain these savages and bring them into subjection, the government opened Texas for settlement. Foreign emigrants were invited and called to that country. American enterprise accepted the invitation and promptly responded to the call. The first colony of Americans or foreigners ever settled in Texas was by myself. It was commenced in 1821, under a permission to my father, Moses Austin, from the Spanish government previous to the Independence of Mexico, and has succeeded by surmounting those difficulties and dangers incident to all new and wilderness countries infested with hostile Indians...

The question here naturally occurs...what hopes could have stimulated us, the pioneers and settlers of Texas, to remove from the midst of civilized society, to expatriate ourselves...from this our native country...? Can it for a moment be supposed that we severed all these ties...and went to Texas to grapple with the wilderness and with savage foes, merely from a spirit of wild and visionary adventure, without guarantees of protection for our persons and property and political rights? No, it cannot be believed. No American... can or will believe that we removed to Texas without such guarantees, as free born, and, enterprising men naturally expect and require.

The fact is, we had such guaranteed...[in] the colonization laws of 1823, '24, and '25, inviting emigrants generally to that country, especially guaranteed protection for person and property, and the right of citizenship.

When the federal system and constitution were adopted in 1824, and the former provinces became states, Texas...exercised the right which was claimed and exercised by all the provinces, of retaining within her own control, the rights and powers which appertained to her as one of the [states.]. But not possessing at that time sufficient population to become a state by herself, she was with her own consent, united provisionally with Coahuila, a neighboring province or society, to form the state of COAHUILA AND TEXAS, "until Texas possessed the necessary elements to form a separate state of herself." I quote the words of the constitutional or organic act passed by the constituent congress of Mexico, on the 7th of May, 1824, which establishes the state of Coahuila and Texas...It was therefore a solemn compact, which neither the state of Coahuila and Texas, nor the general government of Mexico, can change without the consent of the people of Texas.

In 1833 the people of Texas, after a full examination of their population and resources, and of the law and constitution, decided...that the period had arrived... and that the country possessed the necessary elements to form a state separate from Coahuila. A respectful and humble petition was accordingly drawn up by this convention, addressed to the general congress of Mexico, praying for the admission of Texas into the Mexican confederation as a state. I had the honor of being appointed by the convention the commissioner or agent of Texas to take this petition to the city of Mexico, and present it to the government...Many months passed and nothing was done with the petition, except to refer it to a committee of congress, where it slept and was likely to sleep...

I despaired of obtaining anything, and wrote to Texas, recommending to the people there to organize as a state de facto without waiting any longer...I was arrested at Saltillo, two hundred leagues from Mexico, on my way home, taken back to that city and imprisoned one year, three months of the time in solitary confinement, without books or writing materials, in a dark dungeon of the former inquisition prison. At the close of the year I was released from confinement, but detained six months in the city on heavy ball. It was nine months after my arrest before I was officially informed of the charges against me, or furnished with a copy of them...

These acts of the Mexican government, taken in connection with many others and with the general revolutionary situation of the interior of the republic, and the absolute want of local government in Texas, would have justified the people of Texas in organizing themselves as a State of the Mexican confederation, and if attacked for so doing in separating from Mexico...it was a denial of justice and of our guaranteed rights - it was oppression itself.

Texas, however, even under these aggravated circumstances forbore and remained quiet. The constitution...still existed in name, and the people of Texas still looked to it with the hope that it would be sustained and executed, and the vested rights of Texas respected...

The emancipation of Texas will extend the principles of self-government, over a rich and neighboring country, and open a vast field there for enterprise, wealth, and happiness, and for those who wish to escape from the frozen blasts of a northern climate, by removing to a more congenial one. It will promote and accelerate the march of the present age, for it will open a door through which a bright and constant stream of light and intelligence will flow from this great northern fountain over the benighted regions of Mexico...

It is [of] great importance of Americanizing Texas, by filling it with a population from this country, who will harmonize in language, in political education, in common origin, in everything, with their neighbors to the east and north. By this means, Texas will become a great outwork on the west, to protect the outlet of this western world, the mouths of the Mississippi, as Alabama and Florida are on the east; and to keep far away from the southwester frontier-the weakest and most vulnerable in the nation-all enemies who might make Texas a door for invasion, or use it as a theatre from which mistaken philanthropists and wild fanatics, might attempt a system of intervention in the domestic concerns of the south, which might lead to a servile war, or at least jeopardize the tranquility of Louisiana and the neighboring states...

To conclude, I have shown that our cause is just and righteous, that it is the great cause of mankind, and as such merits the approbation and moral support of this magnanimous and free people. That our object is independence, as a new republic, or to become a state of these United States; that our resources are sufficient to sustain the principles we are defending; that the results will be the promotion of the great cause of liberty, of philanthropy, and religion, and the protection of a great and important interest to the people of the United States...

Austin, Stephen F. "Address of the Honorable S. F. Austin" (speech, Louisville, KY, 1836), "New Perspectives on the West." *The West*. PBS, 2001. <https://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/two/txaustin.htm>.

Writings of John O'Sullivan

About the Author: John O'Sullivan was a writer and editor of a well-known newspaper around the time of the Mexican-American war. Most people give him the credit for coining the term "Manifest Destiny."

John O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity," 1839

The American people having derived their origin from many other nations, and the Declaration of National Independence being entirely based on the great principle of human equality, these facts demonstrate at once our disconnected position as regards any other nation; that we have, in reality, but little connection with the past history of any of them, and still less with all antiquity, its glories, or its crimes. On the contrary, our national birth was the beginning of a new history, the formation and progress of an untried political system, which separates us from the past and connects us with the future only; and so far as regards the entire development of the natural rights of man, in moral, political, and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity....

Yes, we are the nation of progress, of individual freedom, of universal enfranchisement. Equality of rights is the cynosure of our union of States, the grand exemplar of the correlative equality of individuals; and while truth sheds its effulgence, we cannot retrograde, without dissolving the one and subverting the other. We must onward to the fulfilment of our mission -- to the entire development of the principle of our organization -- freedom of conscience, freedom of person, freedom of trade and business pursuits, universality of freedom and equality. This is our high destiny, and in nature's eternal, inevitable decree of cause and effect we must accomplish it. All this will be our future history, to establish on earth the moral dignity and salvation of man -- the immutable truth and beneficence of God. For this blessed mission to the nations of the world, which are shut out from the life-giving light of truth, has America been chosen; and her high example shall smite unto death the tyranny of kings, hierarchs, and oligarchs, and carry the glad tidings of peace and good will where myriads now endure an existence scarcely more enviable than that of beasts of the field. Who, then, can doubt that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity?

O'Sullivan, John L. "The Great Nation of Futurity." *The United States Democratic Review*, Vol. 6, No. 23 (November 1839), 426-430. Accessed November 12, 2019. https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Great_Nation_of_Futurity

John O'Sullivan, "Annexation," 1845

It is now time for the opposition to the Annexation of Texas to cease, all further agitation of the waters of bitterness and strife, at least in connexion with this question, --even though it may perhaps be required of us as a necessary condition of the freedom of our institutions, that we must live on for ever in a state of unpausing struggle and excitement upon some subject of party division or other. But, in regard to Texas, enough has now been given to party. It is time for the common duty of Patriotism to the Country to succeed;--or if this claim will not be recognized, it is at least time for common sense to acquiesce with decent grace in the inevitable and the irrevocable.

Texas is now ours. Already, before these words are written, her Convention has undoubtedly ratified the acceptance, by her Congress, of our proffered invitation into the Union; and made the requisite changes in her already republican form of constitution to adapt it to its future federal relations. Her star and her stripe may already be said to have taken their place in the glorious blazon of our common nationality; and the sweep of our eagle's wing already includes within its circuit the wide extent of her fair and fertile land. She is no longer to us a mere geographical space--a certain combination of coast, plain, mountain, valley, forest and stream. She is no longer to us a mere country on the map....

Why, were other reasoning wanting, in favor of now elevating this question of the reception of Texas into the Union, out of the lower region of our past party dissensions, up to its proper level of a high and broad nationality, it surely is to be found, found abundantly, in the manner in which other nations have undertaken to intrude themselves into it, between us and the proper parties to the case, in a spirit of hostile interference against us, for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions....

John O'Sullivan, "Annexation," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Vol. 17, No.1 (July-August 1845). Accessed November 12, 2019. <https://pdcrodas.webs.ull.es/anglo/OsullivanAnnexation.pdf>

The Annexation of Texas Joint Resolution of United States Congress, March 1, 1845

Resolved . . . , That Congress doth consent that the territory properly included within, and rightfully belonging to the Republic of Texas, may be erected into a new State, to be called the State of Texas, with a republican form of government, to be adopted by the people of said republic, by deputies in convention assembled, with the consent of the existing government, in order that the same may be admitted as one of the States of this Union.

2. That the foregoing consent of Congress is given upon the following conditions, and with the following guarantees, to wit: First, Said State to be formed, subject to the adjustment by this government of all questions of boundary that may arise with other governments; and the constitution thereof, with the proper evidence of its adoption by the people of said Republic of Texas, shall be transmitted to the President of the United States, to be laid before Congress for its final action, on or before the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and forty-six. Second, Said State, when admitted into the Union, after ceding to the United States, all public edifices, fortifications, barracks, ports and harbors, navy and navy-yards, docks, magazines, arms, armaments, and all other property and means pertaining to the public defence belonging to said Republic of Texas, shall retain all the public funds, debts, taxes, and dues of every kind, which may belong to or be due and owing said republic; and shall also retain all the vacant and unappropriated lands lying within its limits, to be applied to the payment of the debts and liabilities of said Republic of Texas, and the residue of said lands, after discharging said debts and liabilities, to be disposed of as said State may direct; but in no event are said debts and liabilities to become a charge upon the Government of the United States. Third, New States, of convenient size, not exceeding four in number, in addition to said State of Texas, and having sufficient population, may hereafter, by the consent of said State, be formed out of the territory thereof, which shall be entitled to admission under the provisions of the federal constitution. And such States as may be formed out of that portion of said territory lying south of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes north latitude, commonly known as the Missouri compromise line, shall be admitted into the Union with or without slavery, as the people of each State asking admission may desire. And in such State or States as shall be formed out of said territory north of said Missouri compromise line, slavery, or involuntary servitude, (except for crime,) shall be prohibited.

3. That if the President of the United States shall in his judgment and discretion deem it most advisable, instead of proceeding to submit the foregoing resolution to the Republic of Texas, as an overture on the part of the United States for admission, to negotiate with that Republic; then,

Be it resolved, That a State, to be formed out of the present Republic of Texas, with suitable extent and boundaries, and with two representatives in Congress, until the next apportionment of representation, shall be admitted into the Union, by virtue of this act, on an equal footing with the existing States, as soon as the terms and conditions of such admission, and the cession of the remaining Texian territory to the United States shall be agreed upon by the Governments of Texas and the United States: And that the sum of one hundred thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated to defray the expenses of missions and negotiations, to agree upon the terms of said admission and cession, either by treaty to be submitted to the Senate, or by articles to be submitted to the two houses of Congress, as the President may direct.

"The Annexation of Texas Joint Resolution of Congress, March 1, 1845." "New Perspectives on the West." *The West*. PBS, 2001. <https://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/two/txaustin.htm>.

Texas County Election Results Nov. 10, 1845

Statement of the number of votes polled in the several Counties of the Republic on the 13th, Oct. ultimo for the ratification or rejection of Annexation, the Constitution + Ordinance

Counties	Annexation		Constitution		Ordinance	
	For	Against	For	Against	For	Against
Austin	114	1	124	3	112	11
Bastrop	166	"	156	6	143	5
Bexar	138	17	89	68	36	110
Colorado	168	"	167	"	167	1
Fayette	287	3	277	11	262	15
Fort Bend	166	1	165	1	139	21
Galveston	287	125	324	84	309	66
Goliad	16	"	12	"	12	"
Harrison	498	5	485	5	486	5
Jackson	58	"	58	"	52	2
Jasper	200	1	200	"	195	1
Lamar	238	7	237	7	193	22
Liberty	297	3	297	3	277	4
Matagorda	140	"	140	"	124	12
Montgomery	534	25	509	44	467	54
Robertson	271	22	248	40	275	9
San Patricio	56	35	56	17	46	26
Shelby	286	3	307	11	172	73
San Augustine	227	13	221	5	221	6
Travis	107	6	105	7	102	11
	4254	267	4174	312	3790	454

Department of State

Nov. 10th 1845.

The above statement of votes is the whole number returned to the Department up to this date and were compared by the President and such members of his cabinet as were present on this day.

J. E. Eldredge

Acting Sec'y. of State

Statement of the number of votes polled in the several Counties of the Republic on October 13, 1845, for the adoption or rejection of "annexation," the "State Constitution" and "ordinance concerning Colony Contracts," the returns of which were not received at the Department of State until after the 10th day of Nov. 1845.

Counties	Annexation		Constitution		Ordinance	
	For	Against	For	Against	For	Against
Brazoria	230	"	227	5	209	3
Brazos	81	"	80	1	70	1
Bowie	269	"	281	1	234	3
Fannin	226	8	227	7	228	5
Gonzales	164	4	162	6	145	13
Harris	324	50	299	68	249	72
Houston	344	30	330	39	261	88
Jefferson	92	"	92	"	92	"
Milam	80	14	77	17	66	14
Nacogdoches	401	4	400	7	367	16
Red River	288	15	287	17	277	24
Rusk	283	4	283	9	263	20
Sabine	103	"	102	"	101	"
Victoria	95	3	94	4	73	19
Washington	430	31	412	43	372	53
	3410	31	3353	224	3007	331
Add number of votes rec. prior to 10 th Nov. 1845	4254	267	4174	312	3790	454
Total No. of votes polled	7664	430	7527	536	6797	785

Department of State

January 1st 1846

Joseph E. Eldredge

Acting Secretary of State

"Ratification of Texas Annexation, 1845 Vote Totals." Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Accessed November 12, 2019. <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ref/abouttx/annexation/voters.html>.

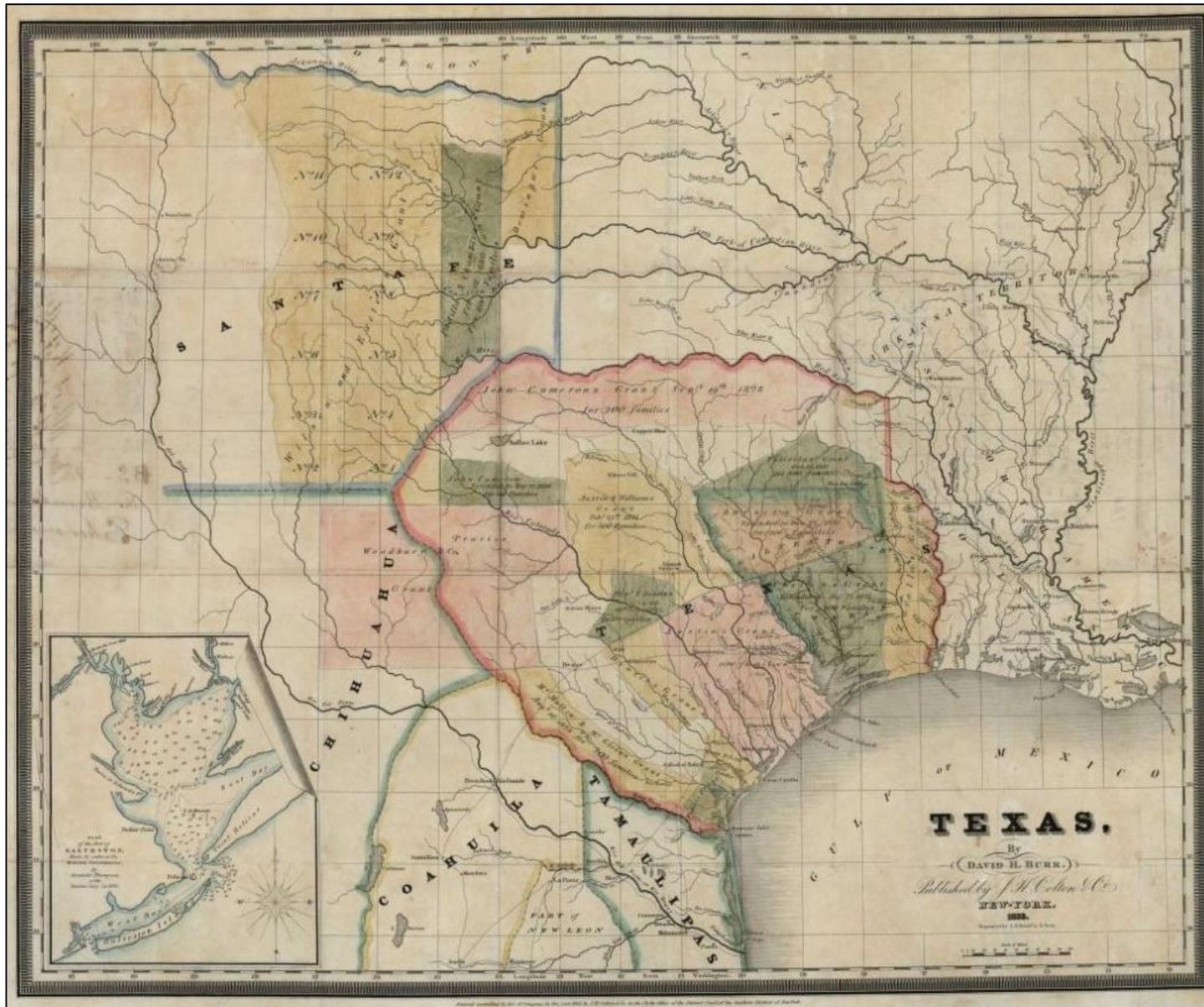
Cabin of John Williams, Texas Colonist 1823

A rustic cabin built of rough-sawn cedar planks in about 1823 by John R. Williams who was a Texas colonist and part of the Old Three Hundred. It is the oldest-known structure in Harris County, Texas, and is a part of Sam Houston Park.



Reading, Brian. *The Old Place, Houston*. Photograph. January 6, 2013. Accessed November 11, 2019.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Old_Place,_Houston.JPG

Texas 1833



Burr, David H. *Texas*, 1833. New York: J.H. Colton & Co., 1833, Map #93836, Holcomb Digital Map Collection, Archives and Records Program, Texas General Land Office, Austin, TX

Political Cartoon - Texas Coming In

- Signed: H. Bucholzer (printer).
- The Library of Congress's impression was deposited for copyright on June 28, 1844.
- Summary: A pro-Democrat cartoon forecasting the collapse of Whig opposition to the annexation of Texas. James K. Polk, the expansionist candidate, stands at right near a bridge spanning "Salt River." He holds an American flag and hails Texans Stephen Austin (left) and Samuel Houston aboard a wheeled steamboat-like vessel "Texas." Austin, waving the flag of the Lone Star Republic, cries, "All hail to James K. Polk, the frined [sic – intended to say "friend?"] of our Country!" The Texas boat has an eagle figurehead and a star on its prow. Below the bridge pandemonium reigns among the foes of annexation. Holding onto a rope attached to "Texas" above, they are dragged into Salt River. Led by Whig presidential nominee Henry Clay, they are (left to right) Theodore Frelinghuysen, Daniel Webster, Henry A. Wise, and an unidentified figure whose legs are tangled in the rope. Clay: "Curse the day that ever I got hold of this rope! this is a bad place to let go of it--But I must!" Frelinghuysen: "Oh evil day, that ever I got into the footsteps of my predecessor." Webster: "If we let go, we are ruined, and if we hold on-- Oh! crackee!" Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, straddling a barrel labeled "Abolition" in the river, shouts at Clay, "Avaunt! unholy man! I will not keep company with a blackleg!" referring to the candidate's reputation as a gambler.
- Repository: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>
- For full size version, go to <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661429/> and click on the "tiff" file. Choose "open."



Baillie, James. "Texas coming in." Illustration. June 28, 1844. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Accessed November 12, 2019. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2008661429/>

D. S. Lee 22 July, 2016



Lithography and Print Coloring on reasonable terms by James Easton 1846 from New York.

TEXAS COMING IN.

Entered according to an Act of Congress in the Year 1846 by James Easton in the District Court of the Southern District of New York.

Published in the Liberator's office, No. 15 N. 2d St. New York, July 22, 1846.