**Expansion to 1840**

*1n 1790, a great majority of Americans lived east of the Appalachian Mountains, but many began moving west intermittently. Before, 1840, they mainly settled the areas east of the Mississippi River and avoided the arid Great Plains region. Texas was a popular destination for American settlers, especially southern planters with slaves, so when the Mexican government tried to restrict the rights of these settlers, the Texas War for Independence resulted.*

**Stephen Austin:** Austin was a prominent leader of Americans in Texas. In the 1820s, he was a highly successful *empresario*, who had contracted 300 American families to move to Texas by 1825. After Mexican president Santa Anna invaded Texas in1835, Austin became one of the leaders of the Texas Revolution.

**TEXAN WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE:** In 1836, Mexican president Santa Anna invaded Texas and brutally crushed the rebels at the battle of the Alamo. However, the leader to the Texans, Sam Houston, retaliated at the battle of San Jacinto. At San Jacinto, the Texans killed half of Santa Anna’s men in 15 minutes and Houston captured Santa Anna and forced him to sign a treaty recognizing Texan independence. The Mexican government never recognized this treaty, but could no longer afford to fight, so Texas became the Lone Star Republic.

**Alamo:** The Alamo was a mission in San Antonio, Texas, that became the setting for and important episode in Texan war for independence from Mexico. In 1836, Mexican forces under Santa Anna besieged San Antonio and the city’s 200 Texan defenders retreated into the abandoned mission. All of the Texans were killed in their attempt to fight the Mexican army.

**Davy Crockett:** Davy Crockett was a politician, a frontiersman, and a soldier. From 1827 to 1835 Crockett represented Tennessee in Congress. In the 1835 went to Texas and joined the revolution against Mexico. He was killed while defending the Alamo in 1836. Exaggerated stories written after his death made Crockett an American folk hero.

**William Barrett Travis:** Travis was a lawyer before he moved to Texas in 1831. In 1835, became colonel in Texas Revolution. In 1836, Travis became a war hero when he was ordered to defend San Antonio and the Alamo. When Santa Anna and his men attacked, greatly outnumbering Travis’ 200 troops, Travis and all of his men died in battle.

**San Jacinto:** The battle of San Jacinto was the last battle of Texan war for independence. Texan General Sam Houston and 800 of his men ambushed Santa Anna and the Mexican army. The battle lasted less than 20 minutes, during which after Santa Anna was captured and forced to signed a treaty granting Texans their independence.

**Santa Anna:** Santa Anna was elected president of Mexico in 1833. However, in 1834, he overthrew government and named himself dictator. He invaded Texas in 1835, but got captured at the battle of San Jacinto in 1836. After this defeat, he was forced into retirement until 1838. He was overthrown in 1845, but called back in 1846 to fight in the Mexican War.

**Sam Houston:** Houston was a military commander and an American statesman who served in House of Representatives from 1823 to 1827. In 1836, Houston was chosen as president of the Texan rebels. He led them in the battle of San Jacinto, where he captured Santa Anna and achieved Texan independence.

**Republic of Texas:** Texan rebels declared their independence from Mexico in 1836. They drafted a constitution modeled after the United States Constitution and chose Sam Houston as their president. Texas was an autonomous nation from the time Santa Anna recognized Texan independence at the battle of San Jacinto until it was annexed by the United States in 1845.