

1769
First California
mission founded

1821
Mexico wins
independence
from Spain

1822
First colony of
Americans set
up in Texas

1836
Republic
of Texas
established

1765

1790

1815

1840

2 Hispanic North America

SECTION PREVIEW

Objectives

- 1 Summarize Spain's efforts to strengthen its North American empire and the effects of Mexican independence.
- 2 Explain the rise of trade between the United States and Mexico's northern territories.
- 3 Describe the events that led to Texas independence.
- 4 **Key Terms** Define: presidio; secularize; Santa Fe Trail; Texas War for Independence; Battle of the Alamo.

Main Idea

The movement of traders and settlers from the United States into northern Mexico led to economic and political changes.

Reading Strategy

Question Writing Read the section's boldfaced headings. Write a question about each heading and look for the answers as you read.

The United States government assumed that the Louisiana Purchase would remain part of "Indian Country." Thousands of migrating Americans had other ideas. By the 1830s, many white settlers already were pushing west into Indian Country. In the north the stream of migrants was so large and steady that it led to the creation of three new states: Iowa (1846), Wisconsin (1848), and Minnesota (1858). Long before these states came into the Union, however, many Americans in the southern part of the United States were moving west along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

Spain's North American Empire

Spain's commitment to controlling what is now the southwestern United States had always been weak. After the Pueblo revolted against Spanish settlers in present-day New Mexico in the late 1600s, this commitment grew even weaker. In the 1700s, surrounded by increasingly powerful Indians, the Spanish

limited settlement to a string of small towns along the Rio Grande and in present-day Texas.

Spanish weakness in its control over New Mexico and Texas reflected the larger weakness of the empire as a whole. No longer the most powerful nation in Europe, Spain in the late 1700s faced growing threats to its North American territory from other European nations.

To meet these various threats, the Spanish government tried to establish better relations with the Comanche and Apache. These efforts achieved an uneasy peace with these Native American groups.

Securing California More dramatic was the Spanish effort to secure the area that is now the state of California. The Spanish feared that this land would fall into the hands of either the British or the Russians. In the late 1700s, Spanish soldiers and priests began building a



These Spanish mission bells were rung at religious services to indicate key points in the Mass.

network of missions and **presidios**, or forts, along the rugged California coastline. They created a chain of 21 missions running north from San Diego to San Francisco.

From the Spanish point of view, the colonizing efforts in California were a great success. While their settlements in present-day New Mexico and Texas remained small, the presidios and missions in California grew and thrived. However, from the point of view of many coastal Indians, the settlements were a disaster.

Enthusiastic Franciscan missionaries devoted themselves to converting Native Americans to Christianity. One such missionary, Father Junípero Serra, founded the first of the California missions, at San Diego, in 1769. By 1782 he had founded eight more missions farther north. One goal of all the missions was to make the local Indian groups a part of the Spanish culture. Some of the Indians entered the mission community willingly. Others had to be forced.

The missions became visible symbols of Spanish authority in the region. They also became lively centers of trade. Serra brought Mexican cattle, sheep, fruits, and grains into California. As a result the missions, located on fertile farm and ranch lands, produced wine, olive oil, grain, hides, and tallow, a waxy substance used to make candles and soap.

The missions owed much of their success, however, to the Indians who labored for them. Indians tended the cattle and sheep, farmed the land, built the missions, and wove clothing. In return for their efforts, they usually received only food, clothing, and shelter. The priests often treated the Indians as harshly as the soldiers did. Those who refused to work might be whipped or locked in chains.

For these reasons, some Native Americans chose to leave when the chance to escape arose. Those who stayed often endured poor living conditions and limited medical care. These contributed to tragic epidemics of measles and smallpox. Between 1769 and 1848, the population of Indians in California fell from about 300,000 to about 150,000.

While the number of Indians declined, the number of Mexicans grew. These colonists from the south settled along the coast, usually around the missions and presidios. Monterey was the capital of the territory of California. Other important Spanish settlements included Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Los Angeles.

New Mexico Grows Meanwhile, change also had come to the settlements in northern Mexico, known as New Mexico. Thanks to long stretches of peace and more attention from Spain, the Mexican population in the

Main Idea CONNECTIONS

Were the California missions successful? Explain.



Franciscan friars lead a religious procession in this painting of a California mission in the early 1880s (right). The Native American pictograph (above) captures another view of a Spanish mission.

Economics How were the missions able to develop into centers of trade?



region increased from 3,800 in 1750 to 19,000 by 1800. Unlike settlers in eastern North America, those in the New Mexico region did not spread over the countryside in small farms. Instead, the presence of powerful nomadic Indians and the harsh landscape of New Mexico encouraged the new Mexicans to live close together in large settlements, such as Albuquerque.

As New Mexico's population grew and its trade thrived, social changes took place. Women in this colony gained a great deal of independence. Wives were able to run businesses, divorce their husbands, own property, and sue in courts of law. In fact, women actually lost rights and influence when the region of New Mexico became part of the United States in 1848.

Effects of Mexican Independence

Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821, after a thirteen-year struggle. The independence movement started with demands for self-government and a few local uprisings. In 1810 one of those uprisings, led by a priest named Miguel Hidalgo, triggered a rebellion that spread throughout southern Mexico. Spanish authorities crushed the early rebel groups, but the idea of independence stayed alive. In 1821, when a respected army officer named Agustín de Iturbide joined forces with the remaining rebels, victory came quickly. The Treaty of Córdoba, signed August 24, 1821, officially granted Mexico its independence from Spain.

California, New Mexico, and Texas were far from the fighting. Still, independence had an effect on their residents. As citizens of Mexico, the men in these territories were now free to elect representatives to the new government in Mexico City.

Because Mexico's new government was hostile to the Roman Catholic Church, it **secularized** the missions, meaning it put them under the control of the state rather than the Church. By the 1830s, only a handful of priests remained in northern Mexico. In addition, economic reforms designed to bolster the Mexican economy actually widened the gap between rich and poor in Mexico's northern territories. But these reforms also encouraged trade with the United States.



Traders blast their guns in celebration as they reach the outskirts of Santa Fe in this drawing from the 1840s. The journey from Independence, Missouri, was a dry and dangerous trip more than a month long. Unable to negotiate through the mountains, wagon trains took the Camarron Cutoff, discovered by William Becknell in 1821. **Economics** How did trade strengthen U.S. relations with Texas, New Mexico, and California?

Trade with the United States

In 1821 William Becknell, a nearly bankrupt American, brought a load of goods from Missouri to the New Mexican capital of Santa Fe, where he sold them for mules and silver coins. Other Americans followed, taking advantage of the commercial opening created by Mexican independence and economic reforms. The high quality and low prices of American goods nearly replaced New Mexico's trade with the rest of Mexico.

By the early 1830s, caravans of wagons traveled regularly along the **Santa Fe Trail**, which linked Independence, Missouri, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. According to one of the most active American merchants, these caravans shaped the character of Santa Fe: "One now sees everywhere the bustle, noise, and activity of a lively market town."

American fur traders and merchants took advantage of economic openings in other parts of northern Mexico. New Englanders who sailed around South America to reach the West soon dominated the trade with California in fur, cattle hides, and tallow. In return, Californians bought finished goods from the New Englanders. According to one resident of Monterey in the 1840s, "There is not a yard of tape, a pin, or a piece



Bowing to his father's dying wish, Stephen Austin (above) established the first colony of American settlers in Texas in 1822.

of domestic cotton or even thread that does not come from the United States.”

Thus the United States had strong economic ties with Texas, New Mexico, and California long before it gained political control over these areas. When the Mexican government loosened the rules affecting trade with American merchants, it ensured that Mexico's northern territories would trade more with the United States than with the rest of Mexico. More important, stronger commercial ties encouraged some Americans to settle in northern Mexico.

Texans Seek Independence

Nowhere was the flow of Americans into Mexican territory more apparent in the 1820s than in Texas. Stephen Austin, carrying out the plan begun by his father, Moses, received permission from the Mexican government to found a colony of several hundred families in east Texas. Austin, 29 years old and a member of the Missouri territorial legislature, led the first organized group of American settlers into Texas in 1822. By 1824, some 2,000 immigrants were living in Austin's colony.

American Demands Grow When Americans first started moving into what is now eastern Texas, the new Mexican government adopted policies that favored immigration. The Mexican Colonization Law of 1824 promised American immigrants cheap land, the protection of the Mexican government, and a four-year tax break if they settled in Texas.

Soon land agents were arranging contracts for hundreds of Americans to settle in Texas. By 1830 about 7,000 Americans lived there, more than twice the number of Mexicans in the territory. Worried that they were losing Texas through immigration, Mexico passed a law in 1830 prohibiting any more Americans from settling there. Equally important, it outlawed the importation of slaves. Still, Americans continued to flow across the border, and they brought their slaves with them.

By 1835 more than 30,000 Americans lived in Texas. As their numbers swelled, these Americans demanded more political control. In particular, they wanted slavery to be guaranteed under Mexican law. At the time, some 3,000 African American slaves labored for settlers in Texas. Through his diplomatic efforts, Stephen Austin blocked a proposed ban on slavery in the territory. The newcomers continued to call for the same rights from the Mexican government that they had possessed in the United States.

Tension Erupts into War The settlers were divided between those led by Austin, who preferred to work within the Mexican system, and those led by a lawyer from Alabama named William Travis, who wanted to fight for independence. Events in Mexico City soon helped Travis's supporters gain the upper hand. The ambitious General Antonio López de Santa Anna declared himself dictator of Mexico. Later, he stripped Texas and other territories of their remaining rights of self-government.

These actions united the Texans in the cause of independence. Not only settlers from the United States, but also Mexican settlers in Texas sought self-government. In November 1835 these independence-minded settlers clashed with Mexican troops, beginning the **Texas War for Independence**. The settlers named Sam Houston, a recent immigrant from Tennessee, as their commander in chief.

Sam Houston

AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY

Before Sam Houston arrived in Texas in 1832, he had already

led an exciting life. Born in Virginia in 1793, Houston moved west with his family to a farm in the Tennessee wilderness. He left home as a teenager to live with a nearby group of Cherokee Indians, with whom he stayed for almost three years. Houston took the name Black Raven and educated himself in the Cherokee language and way of life.



Sam Houston (1793–1863)

During the War of 1812 Houston fought under Andrew Jackson. In 1817, Jackson helped him get a job managing the removal of Cherokee from Tennessee to a reservation in the Arkansas Territory. Houston left this position the next year after the Secretary of War scolded him for wearing his Indian clothes in the Secretary's office.

Houston went on to study law and become a district attorney before running successfully for Congress. In 1827, at age 34, he won election as governor of Tennessee. Houston did not run for a second term, instead deciding to follow the Cherokee to Arkansas. He traded with them and became their adviser, using his knowledge of government to fight for Cherokee rights.

In 1832 President Jackson sent Houston to Texas to work out treaties with the Indians there to protect American traders crossing the border. He settled in Texas the next year and soon became a leader of the independence movement. ■

Texas Wins Independence

The settlers' defiance of Mexico provoked General Santa Anna into action. He led an army of several thousand men north to subdue the rebellion. After crossing the Rio Grande, the Mexican general headed for the Alamo, a walled fortress built on the ruins of a Spanish mission in San Antonio. In December 1835 a group of Texas rebels had ousted Mexican troops from the fortress.

The Texans at the Alamo, numbering fewer than 200 men, prepared to meet Santa Anna. Their leaders, William Travis and James Bowie, hoped to be able to slow the general's advance long enough to allow their fellow rebels to assemble an army.

The **Battle of the Alamo** lasted 13 days. Under siege by a vastly larger Mexican force, Travis sent this plea for help "to the People of Texas and all the Americans in the World":



"Fellow citizens & compatriots, I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. . . . I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism & everything dear to the American character to come to our aid, with all dispatch. . . . If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible & die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor or that of his country."

—Colonel William B. Travis

The courageous Texans inflicted heavy casualties on the roughly 4,000 Mexican troops, but on the morning of March 6 Santa Anna's men forced their way inside the walls. The Mexican general ordered his men to take no prisoners. When the fighting stopped, more than 180 Texans lay dead, including Travis, Bowie, and the legendary frontiersman Davy Crockett.†

The slaughter of the Alamo defenders was followed two weeks later by another shocking event. Texans occupying the presidio at Goliad surrendered to a larger Mexican force, which agreed to treat them as prisoners of war. Santa Anna later rejected that agreement and had all the Texans shot, more than 300 soldiers in all. These two events enraged and energized Texans to mighty actions for their cause.

† All the Texans in the Alamo did not die. The Mexicans spared around 15 people, mostly women and children. An estimated 1,000 to 1,600 Mexican soldiers died in the battle.



General Santa Anna's army far outnumbered the Texan freedom fighters. **Movement** Why do you think Santa Anna expected victory as the Mexican forces moved eastward?

Events Leading to the Texas War for Independence

Date	Event
1821	Moses Austin receives a 200,000 acre land grant from the Spanish government to colonize Texas, in northeastern Mexico. He dies before he organizes the colony. Mexico achieves independence from Spain. Stephen Austin, Moses's son, receives permission from Mexico to carry out his father's plan.
1825	Mexico opens Texas to American settlement. American population in Texas swells.
1829	Mexico abolishes slavery.
1830	Mexico stops American settlement. Differences between American settlers and the Mexican government increase.
1834	General Santa Anna declares himself dictator.
1835	Mexico rejects Texas application for statehood.
1836	Texas declares independence.

Interpreting Tables At first, many settlers were willing to seek diplomatic solutions to resolve the disputes between Texas and the Mexican government. **Government** What finally united settlers to declare Texan independence?

"Remember the Alamo!" On March 2, 1836, the rebels formally declared the founding of an independent Republic of Texas. By the end of the month, the young republic seemed about to fall to Santa Anna's army. Thousands of

Texans were fleeing eastward in what became known as the Runaway Scrape. Sure that victory was near, Santa Anna divided his force to finish off the rebels.

Just when all seemed lost, about 800 Texans regrouped at the San Jacinto River under Sam Houston. There, on April 21, they surprised the overconfident Santa Anna. Rallying to cries of "Remember the Alamo!" they routed the Mexican troops in a matter of minutes. The map on the previous page illustrates the Texas war for independence.

The Texans captured Santa Anna and forced him to sign a treaty recognizing the Republic of Texas. Mexico later denounced that treaty but did not try to retake Texas. In the fall of 1836, the citizens of Texas elected Sam Houston as their first president. They then drafted a constitution modeled on that of the United States. The constitution included a provision that forbade the Texas Congress from interfering with slavery. The slavery provision would raise difficult issues in the years to come.

By the end of the 1830s, with almost no help from the United States government, American traders and settlers had established a firm presence in Hispanic North America. They had also succeeded in prying away a large piece of territory from Mexico. The loss of Texas continued to enrage the Mexican government. Meanwhile, however, Americans kept on pushing west, threatening even more Mexican territory. With these issues unresolved, tensions between Mexico and the United States grew to the point that war became a possibility.

SECTION 2 REVIEW

Comprehension

- Key Terms** Define: (a) presidio; (b) secularize; (c) Santa Fe Trail; (d) Texas War for Independence; (e) Battle of the Alamo.
- Summarizing the Main Idea** Why did the settlers in Texas want independence from Mexico?
- Organizing Information** Make a table showing the important changes that took place in the areas of California, New Mexico, and Texas during this period.

Critical Thinking

- Analyzing Time Lines** Review the time line at the start of the section. Which event do you think had the greatest effect on the people of Mexico? Explain.
- Recognizing Cause and Effect** Name two effects of increased trade between the United States and northern Mexico.

Writing Activity

- Writing an Expository Essay** Write an essay explaining how Mexican independence from Spain affected California, New Mexico, and Texas.