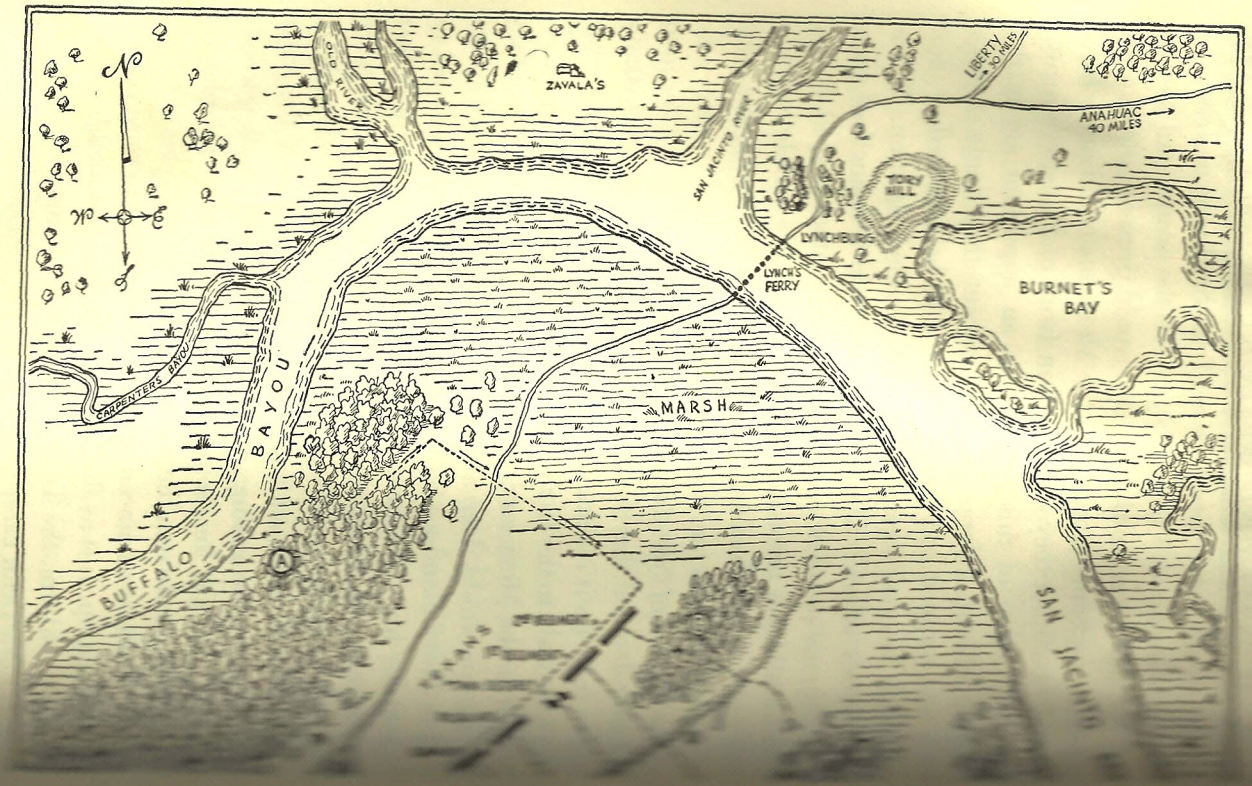
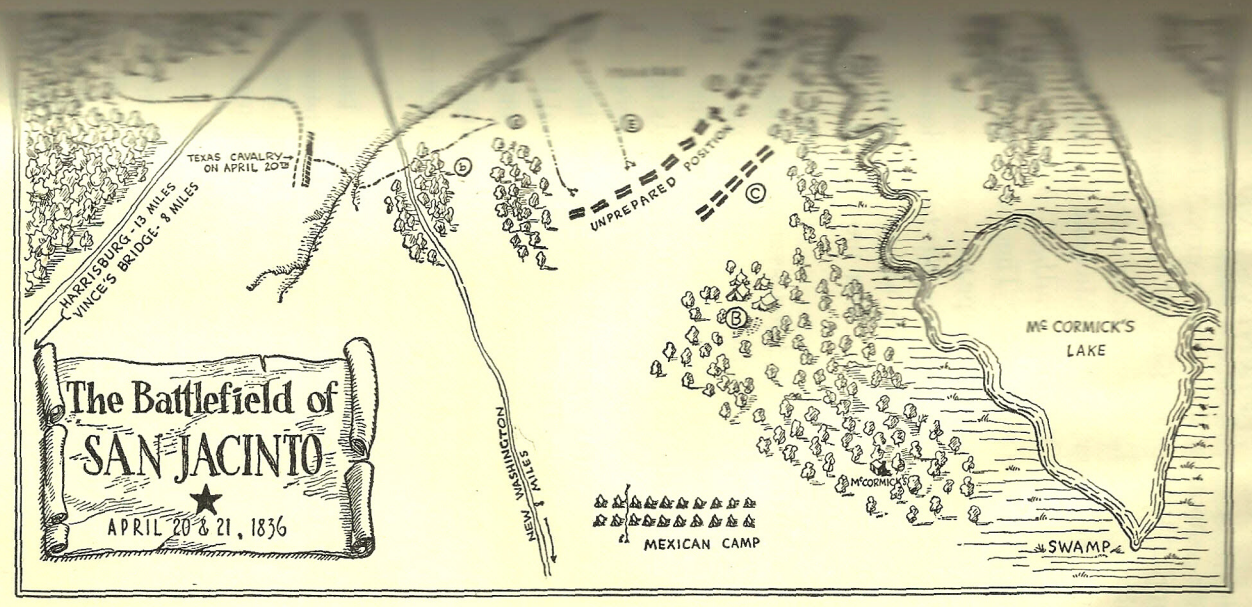




The Battlefield of SAN JACINTO

APRIL 20 & 21, 1836

A. Texan Camp
B. Santa Anna's Camp
C. Mexican Reserves
D. Gully Crossed by Texan Battle Line
E. Houston's First Horse Killed
F. Houston Wounded
G. Clump of Trees Used as Screen by Houston
H. Deep Narrow Bayou Crossed by Fleeing Mexicans
I. Where General Almonte Was Captured. April 20th
a. Texan Artillery on the 20th
b. Mexican Artillery on the 20th
c. Cavalry Skirmish on the 20th

troops. Houston then ordered Deaf Smith to cut down the bridge over Vince's Bayou. All the armies had passed over this bridge, so cutting it down would prevent other troops from joining Santa Anna. And the Mexicans could not escape from the position they had taken in front of Houston's army. The destruction of this bridge was an important act in the winning of our independence. It meant that Santa Anna's army was trapped and must either win or be captured.

In the Texans' camp there was divided opinion. When should they attack? About noon they held a council of war. Some wanted to attack immediately, while others urged delay. Houston did not enter into the discussion. He was letting the men work themselves into a state of fury. This was the way he wanted them to feel when they entered battle.

The Battle of San Jacinto. About 3:30 in the afternoon Houston decided that the time was right and ordered his officers to form their commands in the line of battle. Mounting his horse, he rode to the front of his force to lead the attack.

Over in the Mexican camp Santa Anna did not believe that the Texans would dare attack them. He was impatient to return to Mexico and already had ordered a Mexican vessel to be sent for him. The possibility that he might suffer a defeat seemed never to have entered his mind. The Mexicans were taken by complete surprise. Santa Anna himself was asleep, as were most of his staff and many of his men. Of the other men, some were eating, some were scattered in the woods gathering boughs for shelter, and some were riding the horses bareback to and from the water.

The Texans advanced quietly until they were near the Mexican camp. Just as the Mexican sentinel sounded his bugle to give the alarm, the Texans charged. For them it was do or die. The Mexican camp was a scene of wild confusion as the

Texans struck, shouting their battle cry, "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!" Houston's beautiful horse was shot down. The General mounted another, which also was shot from under him. The Mexican privates pleaded for mercy by crying, "Me no Goliad!" "Me no Alamo!" Many of them ran into the woods. The Texas cavalry surrounded the woods, cutting off escape.

The infantry spread through the woods to cut down the remains of the once proud Mexican army. The whole battle lasted only about twenty minutes, but the pursuit continued until nightfall.

The Alamo and Goliad had been avenged. Santa Anna's army was cut to pieces. Of his army of fourteen hundred men, over six hundred were dead, and another 570 were prisoners. Houston's army consisted of 960 men. Of these, only two were killed and 23 wounded, six of whom died later. General Houston, himself, was severely wounded. His leg had been shattered just above the ankle. The next morning General Houston sent the following message to General Gaines who commanded the United States troops along the Sabine where many of the Texas families who were fleeing in the "runaway scrape" were camped:

> Tell our friends all the news, that we have beat the enemy, killed 630, taken 570 prisoners. Generals Santa Anna and Cos were taken, three generals slain. Vast amount of property taken and about 1,500 standards of arms, many swords and one nine-pound brass cannon. Tell them to come on and let the people plant corn.
>
> Samuel Houston
> Commander-in-Chief

The independence of Texas was won.

Santa Anna was captured. That night everyone was happy in the Texas camp as they celebrated their victory. But there was one note of disappointment. Where was Santa Anna? Had he escaped after all? For those questions there was to be an answer soon. The next morning three young men mounted their horses and rode out over the prairies to see what they could discover. The names of these men were James Sylvester, Joel Robinson, and Sion Bostick. Proceeding up a small hollow, they soon came upon a Mexican soldier who jumped up from a clump of tall grass. He wore a corporal's uniform, was barefooted, and carried a tightly wrapped bundle under his arm.

The Texans made him a prisoner and ordered him to march ahead of them toward the camp. According to one story, the prisoner complained that he simply could not walk on his blistered feet. Sylvester and Bostick threatened to kill him if he did not walk ahead to the camp. But Joel Robinson said, "Don't, men," reached down, took the prisoner's hand, and said, "Get up behind me." As they rode into camp, the prisoner requested that he be taken to General Houston. Realizing then that they had captured an important person, they took him quickly to Houston who was lying wounded at the foot of an old oak tree. The prisoner slipped off the horse and surrendered to General Houston, saying, "I am General Santa Anna and ask your protection." The famous and cold-hearted dictator was now a prisoner at the mercy of General Houston and the Texans.

The Treaty of Velasco. General Houston and Santa Anna agreed on an armistice (temporary peace). According to this agreement Mexican troops were to retire to San Antonio and Victoria until a treaty of peace could be made. Houston then went to New Orleans where he had several pieces of bone removed from his shattered leg and ankle. Thomas J. Rusk succeeded Houston as commander-in-chief of the army.