



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on William Barret Travis. Then, answer questions about it.

William Barret Travis 1809–1836

William Barret Travis was only twenty-six years old when he died defending the Alamo. He came from Alabama just five years before, in 1831, leaving behind a failed career and marriage. Texas, a land he came to love, gave Travis a new life—and an early death.

Travis clashed with authorities in Anahuac shortly after arriving in Texas, feuding over Mexico's antislavery laws. He spent two months in prison and earned a reputation as a troublemaker, but went on to build a successful law practice. Then, in June 1835, as tension mounted between colonists and Mexican officials, Travis returned to Anahuac. With twenty volunteers and a small cannon, he forced the local customs officer to leave town. That was Travis's first experience with military action just as the Texas Revolution was unfolding.

Six months later, in February 1836, newly commissioned Lt. Colonel Travis assumed joint command of the Alamo with James Bowie. As Mexican forces gathered, Travis sent dispatches to fellow Texians pleading for reinforcements. "If my countrymen do not rally to my relief," he declared, "I am determined to perish in defense of this place, and my bones shall reproach my country for her neglect."

His words were prophetic: little help came, but outrage over the slaughter of Travis and other Alamo defenders inspired a rush of Texian volunteers who ultimately defeated Mexican General Santa Anna at San Jacinto.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on William Barret Travis. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Who did William Barret Travis share joint command of the Alamo with?
2. What can you infer about Travis's views on slavery given that he "clashed with authorities" over Mexico's antislavery laws?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Making Inferences.** What do you think Travis meant when he said "my bones shall reproach my country for her neglect"?