

Southwestern States of America

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Arizona

The text and image are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



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Rust camp, Grand Canyon (1909)

The "Grand Canyon State," Arizona, was the 48th state to join the U.S. in 1912-- the last of 48 contiguous (connected) states to join the Union. The state's name comes from *arizonac*, from two Papago Indian words meaning "place of the young spring." Arizona has a very dry climate and is known for its cactus plants. In fact, the state flower is the saguaro cactus blossom.

Texas

The text and image are from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



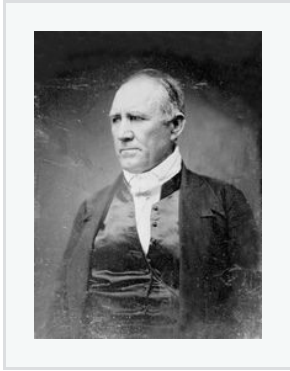
Harden, Homer T. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

Looking towards Burkburnett from 3/4 mile west (1919)

The Republic of Texas achieved its independence from Mexico in 1836, the same year as the famous siege of the Alamo in which pioneers Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett were slain. The "Lone Star State" was the 28th state to join the Union, admitted in 1845. The name Texas is a Spanish name, which comes from an Indian word meaning "friends" or "allies." Texas is the second-largest state in the Union area, after Alaska. Although it has a wild, frontier history, today Texas is a major producer of oil and has important centers of industry and finance. A Texas state historian has said that the state flower, the bluebonnet, "is to Texas what the shamrock is to Ireland."

Sam Houston and the Battle for Texas Independence

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Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

Sam Houston

"Remember the Alamo" is a well-known phrase. Do you know what it means?

Sam Houston had already served in the U.S. House of Representatives and as governor of Tennessee when he moved to Texas in 1832. At the time he arrived, Texas was part of Mexico and the site of rising tensions and violent disturbances between Mexican authorities and Anglo settlers from the United States. Voicing his support for a separate state of Texas, Houston emerged as a leader among the settlers. In 1835, he was chosen commander in chief of the Texas army.

The Alamo was an 18th century Franciscan Mission in San Antonio, Texas, which was the location of an important battle for Texans fighting for independence from Mexico. In 1836, a small group of Texans was defeated by Mexican General Santa Anna.

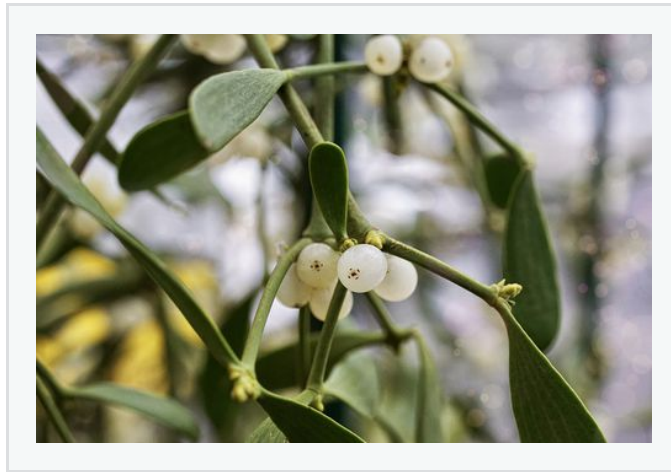
When Houston received word of the defeat at the Alamo, he was inspired to begin a month-long retreat to regroup and replenish the Texas army's strength. Remembering how badly the Texans had been defeated at the Alamo, on April 21, 1836, Houston's army won a quick battle against the Mexican forces at San Jacinto and gained independence for Texas. Soon after, Houston was elected president of the Republic of Texas. He continued to serve as senator and governor after Texas became part of the United States in 1845.

Sam Houston died in 1863 in Huntsville, Texas, where a 67-foot-tall memorial statue of him now stands. After a lifetime of service to his country, the event for which he is most [well-known] is his role in the independence of Texas.

Oklahoma

The text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

The name Oklahoma comes from two Choctaw Indian words, *okla*, which means "people," and *humma*, which means "red." In 1889, Congress opened up 2 million acres for white settlement (it was previously open only to Native Americans who were forced to leave their homelands), and the first of a number of land runs began. Some of the state's settlers were called "Sooners" because they had already staked their land claims before the land was officially opened for settlement. Oklahoma was admitted as the 46th state in 1907. Oklahoma's capital is an easy one to remember -- Oklahoma City. The state flower is the mistletoe, a favorite for kissing under during the winter holidays.

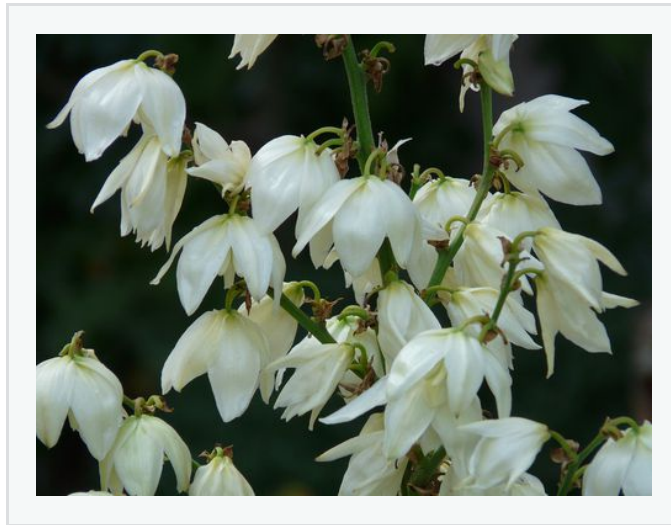


Photograph of mistletoe

New Mexico

The text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.

In 1540, the Spanish conquistador Coronado trekked through the area known today as New Mexico in search of the fabled seven cities of gold. New Mexico, called the "Land of Enchantment," was the 47th state, entering the Union in 1912. Part of the "Old West," New Mexico was a place known for cowboys and cattle drives. The influence of the Apache Indians who live there is evident in the artwork and culture. The Pueblo Indian presence is also very apparent, most visibly in the tribe's buildings. The state also has a large Hispanic population, as New Mexico was under Spanish control from the 16th century until about 1846. The capital city of Santa Fe, founded in 1610, has the oldest continually used seat of government in North America. The state flower is the yucca.



Photograph of yucca flowers

International UFO Museum and Research Center

The text is from "America's Story from America's Library" by the Library of Congress.



Roswell crash sites

Do you know about the incident reported at Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947?

Many people believe that aliens, or extraterrestrials, crash-landed near Roswell in July 1947. A rancher claimed that he found wreckage made of unusual metal that many think was from a flying saucer. The United States military collected the wreckage and at first announced that it was indeed from a flying saucer. However, soon after, military officials insisted a mistake had been made, and that the wreckage was from a weather balloon. For many people, the truth about the Roswell incident remains a mystery.

Anyone interested in UFOs and aliens would probably want to visit the International UFO Museum and Research Center, which was founded in 1991 in Roswell. UFO is an abbreviation for "unidentified flying object," which is an object in the air that cannot be easily explained. Over the years, many people say they have seen UFOs. However, the objects usually turn out to be things that can be explained, such as meteors, balloons, or even birds. . . .