



# Texas Navy Association

Historical Article



## Texas' Two Small Navies Performed Mighty Feats

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The Texas Navy was a spunky outfit, whose small size was the exact opposite of the huge feats it performed for Texas independence.

A museum of the Texas Navy—its two navies, in fact—will be dedicated next Saturday, on San Jacinto Day, aboard the battleship Texas. Dedication ceremonies begin at 11 a.m.

The existence of the museum is due to the spunk of a native Texan, Adm. S. M. Robinson of 3006 M.A.S. St. Robinson became interested in perpetuating the contributions of the Texas Navy to independence when he discovered how little was known generally about it.

### Made Him Mad

"When I found there practically wasn't a blamed soul in Texas who even knew we had a navy, much less what they did," Adm. Robinson growled, "it made me mad.

"I went before the patriotic organizations, and they all approved my working up a museum of Texas Navy history.

"I wasn't going to settle for anything less than a \$500,000 building, till Lloyd Gregory came along and suggested we put the museum aboard the battleship Texas. That is the perfect spot."

Gregory is chairman of the Battleship Texas Commission, and Adm. Robinson is now a member of the commission.

### Exhibit Growing

The exhibit they put up, still small, but growing, as was the navy it enshrines, is a tribute to the contributions of the Texas Navy to the independence of the republic.

The first Texas Navy, four small ships, cut off Gen. Santa Anna's sea supply lines and made it virtually impossible for him to maintain the huge

army so far away by land from its home supplies.

Powder captured off Yucatan from the Mexican supply ships by Capt. William S. Brown of the converted schooner Liberty was used against the Mexicans at San Jacinto by Gen. Sam Houston.

### Ship Captains

"You never hear of the ship captains," Adm. Robinson asserted. "Jeremiah Brown, who captained the Invincible, and William of the Liberty should be better known."

The second Texas Navy of seven ships (after the first Navy finally was lost), "kept the Mexicans off the backs of the Texas Republic for four years," as Adm. Robinson phrases it.

Adm. Robinson gathered the exhibits for the Texas Navy Museum from sources ranging from Chicago to Galveston. Sketches and pictures of the ships of the Navy were copied from authentic pictures in historical collections.

### Typical Sailors

A neighbor, Henry Thompson, painted the pictures of typical sailors of the two navies, big life-size ones which dominate the two collections and show what a sailor of those days looked like.

A pistol carried by a naval officer was donated by Gen. J. K. Crain, formerly of Cuero; and a sword from the Sam Fisher family in Houston, descendants of Rhodes Fisher, first secretary of the a tribute to the contributions Houston.

Adm. Robinson has begun assembling a collection to perpetuate the story of the merchant marine which plied during republic and statehood days between Gulf and Atlantic ports.