



AUGUSTUS KOCH'S BIRDS EYE MAP OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, 1873. THE SMITH HOUSE IS THE THIRD HOUSE FROM THE RIGHT FRONTING KINGSBURY STREET, ON THE NEAR SIDE OF THE STREET.

Immigration to Texas in the 18th Century: The Journey of Maria Jesusita Curbelo-Delgado Smith's Canary Island Ancestors

Emily McCuiston



This summer, TexasBeyondHistory.net (TBH), a public education service of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at the University of Texas at Austin, published a new lesson plan for 7th grade Texas History classes and an accompanying online site exhibit about the Canary Islander history of San Antonio. This history begins in 1729, when Spanish King Philip V offered land and titles of nobility to families from the Canary Islands who were willing to settle in Texas. The families embarked on a year-long journey to Texas, sailing across the Atlantic Ocean and travelling overland hundreds of miles across Mexico, much of it on foot, before settling San Antonio, living among Texas Indians, and forming a civil government which they led for over 100 years.

In the lesson plan, *Immigration to Texas in the 18th Century: The Journey of Maria Jesusita Curbelo-Delgado Smith's Canary Island Ancestors*, students explore the journey of the Canary Islander families and compare it to the experience a modern traveler would have today. After researching and discussing what they learn, students write an essay comparing and contrasting the historical and modern voyages. The lesson plan, written by

Education Editor Emeritus of Texas Beyond History Carol Schlenk, meets 7th Grade Social Studies and English Language Arts and Reading TEKS.

The accompanying site exhibit, *John William and María Jesusa Curbelo-Delgado Smith House: Foundations of a San Antonio Family*, tells the story of Canary Islander descendant María

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Jesusa Curbelo-Delgado Smith through the archeological excavation of her San Antonio home and archival research. Her husband John William Smith, a famous Texian who would become the last messenger of the Alamo and an important San Antonio political figure, gained power and success through his marriage to María, and her social connections to powerful Canary Islanders. John's early death made María a young widow, leaving her to raise their children and manage and defend his complex estate.

The site exhibit and lesson plan are based on excavations at the Smith House in 2022. Archeologists uncovered the foundations of María's home during the planning phases of development on San Antonio ISD property. The exhibit and lesson plan were sponsored by

Pape-Dawson Engineering, and the exhibit was authored by archeologists Dr. Karissa Basse and Brooke Bonorden with assistance from Katie Canavan. Texas Beyond History is excited to bring to teachers' and students' attention this fascinating and under-told piece of Texas History! Find them at: texasbeyondhistory.net/smithhouse.

In other exciting news, this fall you will notice some major changes in the TBH Teachers' section (texasbeyondhistory.net/teach)! The Teachers' Guide and Lesson Plans pages now have organizational features and improved navigation so you can easily discover lesson plans and other teaching resources on TBH. Not only has the website navigation and look improved, TBH has hired consulting Texas educators to update TEKS and revise our

older lesson plans to ensure they meet the needs of teachers and students. All lessons will eventually be migrated to a new, cleaner, online format, except those that are too outdated to rejuvenate, which will be deleted from the site. Do you have comments or suggestions for TBH? We love to hear from educators. Please email TBH Assistant Editor Emily at emccuiston@utexas.edu.

Emily McCuiston is a professional archeologist and assistant editor at TexasBeyondHistory.net. Begun in 2001, Texas Beyond History's enduring mission is to share the results of archeological and historical research on the cultural heritage of Texas. You can contact her 701 Columbia Ave, San Marcos, TX 78666 emccuiston@utexas.edu 512-431-2676



AN 1826 MAP OF THE UNITED STATES OF MEXICO: AS ORGANIZED AND DEFINED BY THE SEVERAL ACTS OF THE CONGRESS OF THAT REPUBLIC, CONSTRUCTED FROM A GREAT VARIETY OF PRINTED AND MANUSCRIPT DOCUMENTS, BY HENRY SCHENCK TANNER. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.