

The Bandera PROPHECY

October 7, 2022

Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas

On this day in 1883, Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson, survivor of the Alamo, died in Austin.

The Tennessee native married Almaron Dickinson in 1829 and moved to Gonzales in 1831. Susanna's only child, Angelina Elizabeth Dickinson, was born in 1834. Her husband went off to serve in the Texas Revolution in October 1835. She joined him in San Antonio, probably in December, and lodged in Ramón Músquiz's home, where she opened her table to boarders (among them David Crockett).

On Feb. 23, 1836, the family moved into the Alamo. After the battle of the Alamo on March 6, Mexican soldiers found her-some accounts say in the powder magazine, others in the church-and took her and Angelina, along with the other women and children, to Músquiz's home. The women were later interviewed by Santa Anna, who gave each a blanket and \$2 in silver before releasing them.

Legend says Susanna displayed her husband's Masonic apron to a Mexican general in a plea for help and that Santa Anna offered to take Angelina to Mexico. Santa Anna sent Susanna and her daughter, accompanied by Juan N. Almonte's servant Ben, to Sam Houston with a letter of warning dated March 7. On the way, the pair met Joe, William B. Travis's slave, who had been freed by Santa Anna.

The party was discovered by Erastus (Deaf) Smith and Henry Wax Karnes. Smith guided them to Houston in Gonzales. After the tragic events at the Alamo, Susanna lived a long and troubled life, marrying five times and sometimes making a living as a prostitute before achieving a measure of stability and prosperity with her last husband, Joseph William Hannig.