

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1839, the Cayuga, the former floating capitol of the Republic of Texas, was sold and disappeared from the historical records. The Cayuga was built in Pennsylvania in 1832 and arrived in Texas in August 1834, under the command of John E. Ross.

The small river steamer was the first commercially successful steamboat in Texas, and played an important role during the Texas Revolution. She carried supplies for the revolutionary army, transported government officials and refugees, and was the temporary capitol of Texas in April 1836.

On April 15 of that year, Captain William P. Harris, in command of the steamer, evacuated Harrisburg just ahead of Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna and his troops. The refugees included President Burnet, his cabinet, and all the inhabitants of the town.

After stopping at Lynch's Ferry and New Washington, the Cayuga preceded to Anahuac and Galveston, where the passengers disembarked. The cabinet members remained aboard, and on April 19 were rejoined by Burnet, who had left the steamer at Lynch's Ferry to get his family and had narrowly escaped being captured by the Mexicans at New Washington.

The business of the republic was conducted on the Cayuga through April 26.