

REMEMBER THE ALAMO!

by ROBERT PENN WARREN

The men who prepared to defend the Alamo on that fateful February day in 1836 had no thought of making history. A few of them, like Jim Bowie, Davy Crockett and Buck Travis, were already famous; but the rest were unknown volunteers who had come from many sections of the country.

Whatever their backgrounds, these men must have had certain traits in common. They must have been willing to take risks, or they wouldn't have volunteered for military duty. They must have had a thirst for adventure, or they wouldn't have been on the Texas frontier. And they must have been men who could take a dare or they wouldn't have attempted, with a force of less than 200 men, to defend the garrison against the hundreds of trained Mexican soldiers in Santa Anna's army.

From the outset the odds were against the steadfast defenders of the Alamo. Yet the Texans took a brave stand. Their last-ditch, room-to-room defense cost the Mexicans dearly. But not until Sam Houston rallied the rest of Texas with the cry, "Remember the Alamo!" did Santa Anna realize just how costly the Mexican victory had been.

The story of the Alamo is a story of courage—an unflinching fight to the last man against overwhelming odds. It is also the story of how Texas became an independent nation. And since Texas with its Lone Star flag became one of the United States, the great story of the Alamo belongs to all of us.

Illustrated by WILLIAM MOYERS

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