

## 6. Baillaul Confectionary

On July 9, 1844, Edward Bailey sold the lot and building to Auguste Baillaul, whose Confectionary Shop operated in the building for a decade or more. His 1850 ad in the Texas Ranger newspaper read: "Confectionary A. Baillaul informs the public that he has always on hand every thing pertaining to a Confectionary, together with all the nick-nacks which the most 'fastidious epicure' could desire. Parties furnished with cakes, and candies, on the most reasonable terms.--From his long experience in the above line, he flatters himself that he can give satisfaction. Washington, Jan. 1, 1850."

## 7. Washington Hotel

Originally known as the Stephen R. (Squire) Roberts Hotel, the hotel had been built prior to April 1835, (believed to have opened in 1823). The Roberts Hotel predated Samuel Heath's arrival in town, so it was built by someone else. It had been already built in April 1835 when the Washington Town Company was formed.

### Supplying the Texian Volunteers

In the fall and winter of 1835-1836, the Roberts Hotel provided provisions, forage for horses, meals, lodging and guns to American volunteers passing through Washington from East Texas headed for the front lines at Gonzales and San Antonio. Micajah Autry's squad of 10 soldiers headed for the Alamo boarded at the Roberts' table for five days in late January and early February.

Some of the delegates to the March 1836 Convention lodged with Roberts. Alphonso Steele arrived in Washington with a group of American volunteers in January. His unit disbanded and he remained in Washington until the Convention met. Looking for work, "I hired to a man named Roberts who ran a hotel. I ground corn on a steel mill to make bread for the men who signed the Declaration of Texas Independence." When Steele died in 1911, he was the last surviving veteran of the San Jacinto battle.

## 8. Hatfield's Exchange

Basil M. Hatfield purchased for \$5,000 the store house of Martin Clow & Co. in 1839 and operated it as a saloon known as Hatfield's Exchange. The property value went up in 1841, perhaps reflecting a new building or major remodeling to the structure. The value of Hatfield's property seems to remain around \$3,000 annually but reduced to \$1,000 by 1860.

### The New Government Meets

Only the 7th Congress met in Independence Hall. The 8th and 9th Congress met upstairs of Basil M. Hatfield's saloon, the "Hatfield Exchange." Hatfield was paid \$150 for "fitting up and furnishing a comfortable Room" for the House of Representatives of the 8th Congress and \$100 for providing the building for the 9th Congress.

Before the 8th Congress started, a stove pipe was purchased from William G. Ford's store, an indicator that a stove had been installed to heat the upstairs space before Congress convened on December 4, 1843. The building and its furnishings got a bigger make-over before the 9th Congress started in December 1844.

Anson Jones' Inaugural Ball was hosted in the House chamber in December 1844. J. K. Holland attended and recalled the scene: "Washington was a small village, and it was difficult for the government to obtain suitable rooms for Congress. About the biggest building in the town was Hatfield's 'grocery,' or saloon as we now say; but that was a very important place of resort, where congressmen and strangers were most in the habit of congregating ... The saloon itself was not surrendered; but there was a large hall above it used for gambling purposes, and this hall was rented by the government. In order to accommodate the convenience of the members and to protect them from temptation, it was thought advisable to move the stairway from the inside of the building to the outside—at least for the time."

### Inaugurating the President

J. K. Holland recalled, "In the hall thus prepared occurred the ball at the inauguration of President Anson Jones in 1845, the first and last inaugural ball, as I believe, that was held in Texas during the days of the Republic. The attendance of prominent men and beautiful women was very large, and the ball-room was densely packed."

## 9. Hall and Lott's tavern

John W. Hall and John Lott continued to operate their tavern until December 1, 1836, when they rented the operation to Henry R. Cartmell and Bernard W. Holtzclaw for one year. The sale of the tavern on February 15, 1837 paid Hall and Lott \$1,500 each in a total of seven promissory notes.

Cartmell continued to operate the tavern, promoting it as a "House of Entertainment for the reception of Travelers, at the town of Washington, on the Brazos" in an advertisement in a Galveston newspaper in 1842.

## 10. Andrew Robinson Marker 1969 Texas Historical Commission marker

Andrew Robinson was the first settler of Stephen F. Austin's "Old 300" colonists to arrive in Texas. He came in November 1821 with his wife Nancy and 2 children. In 1824 he received title to over 9,000 acres of land and was made a captain in the colonial militia. The town of Washington was surveyed on his grant, and he became a co-founder of it. By 1830 he was operating a ferry at La Bahia Crossing as well as a hotel and saloon. In 1835 he fought in the Battle of Gonzales, where his unit first carried into battle the original Lone Star flag made by Sarah Dodson.

## 11. Heath's carpenter shop

Heath's shop was rented by Convention delegates contingent upon Heath putting a floor in the building. It seems implicit that Heath had separate lodging from the shop he rented to Gray and the delegates, likely nearby on his two-lot property.

### Distinguished Lodgers over a Shop

Heath's carpentry shop became the lodging for a distinguished group of Convention delegates the diarist William Fairfax Gay recounted on March 9, 1836: "I have made a bargain with Heath, the carpenter, for his shop. He is to put a good floor in it and rent it for \$25 ... Zavala, Navarro, Ruis, Badgett and myself are to occupy it and divide the cost equally. We shall then be retired, and comparatively comfortable, and I shall enjoy the benefit of an intercourse with Zavala, whose character and attainments interest me. He has kindly offered to give me lessons in Spanish, and I have already received several ..."

Heath's carpentry shop may have played host to another distinguished tenant. Secretary of State Anson Jones, serving under President Sam Houston, had his office in "an old wood shop which by the carpenters had been reconstructed into a very respectable one-story building and large and roomy enough to transact all the business of the then young republic."

# HISTORIC Washington, Texas WALKING TOUR & SOUNDWALK



Independence Hall



Ferry on the Brazos



Etched Viewing Window

# Historic Walking Tour & Soundwalk of Washington, Texas

## 1. Townsite marker

### 1969 Texas Historical Commission marker

This village — site of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence and first capital of the Republic of Texas — began in 1822 as a ferry crossing. Here the historic La Bahia Road (now Ferry Street) spanned the Brazos River. In 1834 a townsite was laid out and named, probably for Washington, Georgia, home of a leading settler. In 1835, enterprising citizens promoted the place as a site for the Convention of 1836 and, as a “bonus,” provided a free meeting hall. Thus, Texas’ Declaration of Independence came to be signed in an unfinished building owned by Noah Byars and Peter Mercer.

## 2. Independence Hall

\* Located on the site of the original building, today’s 1970 replica designed by Raiford Stripling shows the building as it was at the time of the Convention in 1836.

Convention Hall, or Independence Hall as it is also known, was a partially completed frame building constructed by partners Noah T. Byars and Peter M. Mercer. Nine merchants in Washington agreed to rent the building for \$170 for three months beginning March 1, 1836, to be used for the Convention. Byars & Mercer were to “have the house in complete order and repair” for them.

William P. Zuber’s recollections provide one of the better descriptions of the building at the time of the Convention: “On the tenth day of March, I visited the Convention. The house in which they sat was a two-story frame, but they occupied only the first floor. It had two doors; I entered at the front door ... The doorkeeper admitted me and requested that I not come in touch with the delegates as they sat.

“I found myself the only visitor present. A long, improvised table covered with writings and stationary extended north and south nearly the whole length of the floor. The delegates sat around it on chairs, the chairman ... at the south end. There were no seats for visitors and no bar around the table, but the Texas people of that time were too well bred to encroach ... ”

### The End of Convention Hall

\* It is not clear when the original building was torn down but it most likely occurred in the late 1850s or early 1860s. Wood from the original building is said to have been turned into a small writing table, a walking stick (cane), a judge’s gavel, and a document box. The document box, known as “The Ark of the Covenant of the Texas Declaration,” currently resides in the Texas State Archives, Austin.

## 3. Sam Houston’s Presidential Office

When Republic of Texas President Sam Houston arrived in Washington in October 1842, Wilson Y. McFarland turned over his own law office for the President’s use. McFarland acquired the building as part of the assets of Bailey, Gay & Hoxey in August 1842. Even before his acquisition, he kept his law office there in a building that might have dated back to 1835 under the ownership of Asa Hoxey.

### The Rough Presidential Lodging

Charles Eliot, the British charge d’affaires to Texas wrote to his superiors in London that “the President has convened Congress to assemble at Washington on the Brazos, where there are 12 or 13 Wooden shanties, and to which place there are no means of getting except in an ox train, or on a horse ... The President writes to me in a private Note a few days since, that He finds things at Washington rather raw and as He has been accustomed to the elaborate comforts and luxuries of an Indian Wigwam, I presume he must be living in a commodious excavation.”

## 4. Rucker’s Drugstore

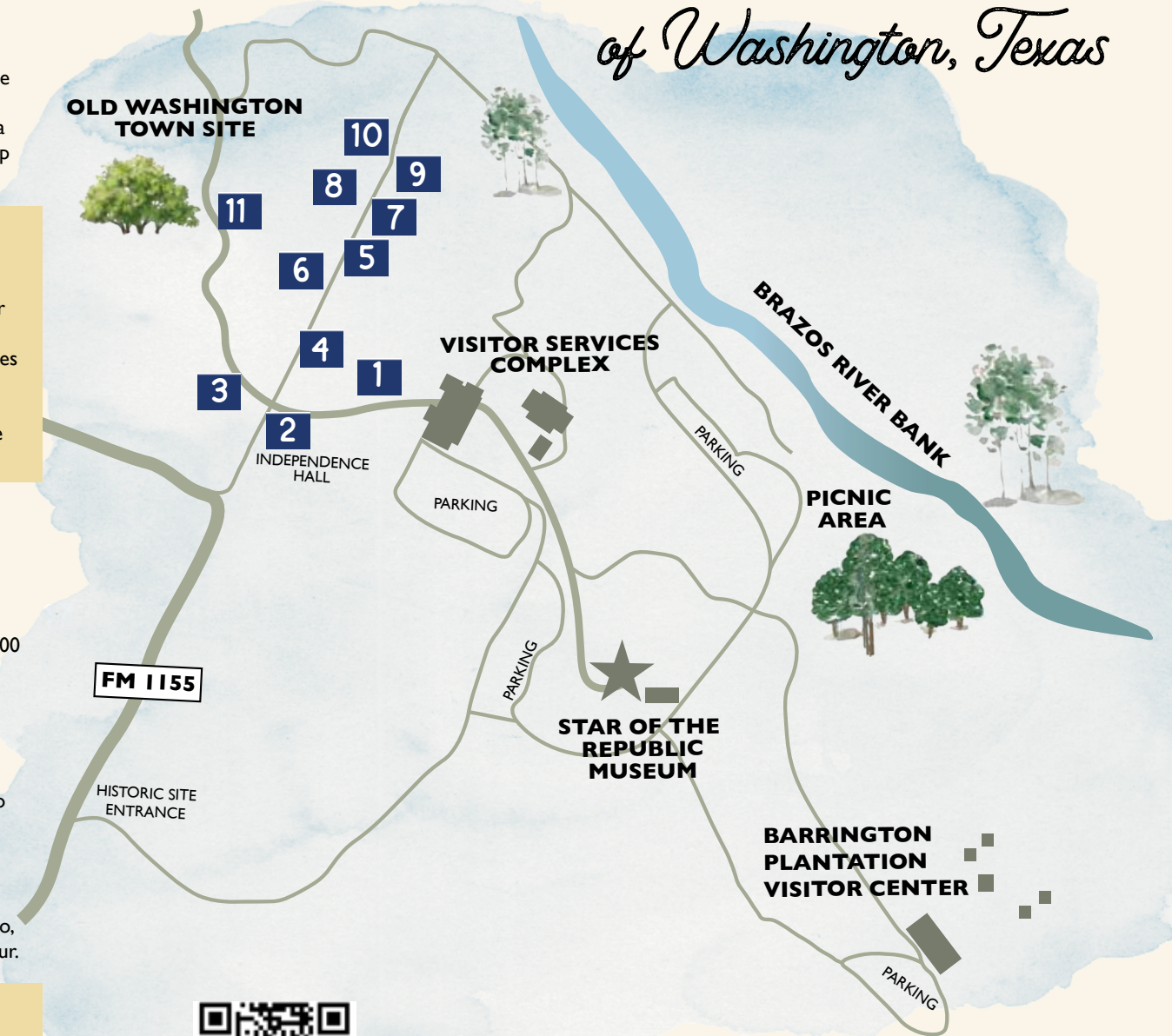
Benjamin F. Rucker paid \$550 for the corner lot on June 4, 1850. On the lot was the two-story frame store building that it is believed dates from 1838 if not earlier. Appraised at \$2,000 in 1838, the improvements on the lot were assessed at \$400 to \$700 during the 1850s. Rucker kept an inventory of drugs and related merchandise that was worth about \$5,000 annually in his store.

## 5. Bailey, Gay, And Hoxey Store

Edward Bailey, Thomas Gay, and Asa Hoxey formed a merchant partnership on September 4, 1836. Gay and Hoxey had been two of the original Founders of Washington. The store was one of three principal ones in Washington during the late 1830s. They stocked ready-made clothing, domestic and imported fabric, buttons and sewing notions, men’s and women’s shoes, hats, flatware, imported ceramics, trunks, saddlery, gunpowder, tobacco, whiskey, brandy, champagne, and staples like coffee, sugar, and flour.

### Goods Sold for Land

As Dr. John W. Lockhart recalled, “There were two or three dry goods firms in the place. E. S. Cabler kept one, Bailey, Gay & Hoxey another, and David Ayres another. These, I think, were the principal ones and did the largest business. These firms did not continue very long in business, on account of the scarcity of money. They sold their goods principally for lands, and in after years became quite wealthy off of the increased value of them.”



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