

The Alamo:

The Alamo was a historic Franciscan mission near San Antonio where the Battle of the Alamo took place in the mid-1800s. This battle was between Mexican troops, led by General Antonio López de Santa Anna and Texan and Tejano defenders, under the command of Colonel William B. Travis. Key defenders also included Jim Bowie and David Crockett. This battle was fought in order to help defend Texan lands from the Mexican army. The defenders were able to hold off the intruders for a while, but Santa Anna's men eventually broke through and killed all of the men inside the Alamo. The Alamo is important because the men sacrificed themselves for the good of their country and chose to die protecting their freedom. The Alamo became a war cry during later fights. It also motivated Texans to fight for their independence, which led to the decisive Texan victory at San Jacinto.

The Mudsill Theory:

The Mudsill Theory is a proposition that there must be a lower class for the upper classes to rest upon. This term was first used by South Carolina Senator James Henry Hammond, a Southern plantation owner. He used this term in the mid-1800s during a senate speech in the nation's capital. Hammond argued that slaves and the lower class preferred work that enabled the rich to move civilization forward. According to him, abolishing slavery and promoting equality would hurt civilization as a whole. Many people found this to be a weak explanation for inequality. Southerners were afraid of losing their slaves, abolitionists countered. The Mudsill Theory is important because it was an important pro-slavery argument from the South and an effort to persuade abolitionists that fighting slavery was wrong. The South claimed that they were bettering society by employing the lower classes. This was an indication of Southern attitude at the time.

Cotton Gin:

The cotton gin was created in the late 1700s by Eli Whitney and it helped clean and prepare cotton faster, meaning that more cotton was cleaned and therefore more textiles could be created in a shorter amount of time. As demands for textiles increased, the cotton gin also led to the expansion of the institution of slavery. Cotton became a huge part of life in the South, meaning that they would do anything to protect the "King Cotton" crop. The cotton gin is important because it led to the growth of slavery and led to conflict because the South would do whatever it could to protect "King Cotton."