



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Amelia E. Barr. Then, answer questions about it.

Amelia E. Barr 1831–1919

In 1888, the historical novel *Remember the Alamo* was published to popular and critical acclaim. Set during the Texas fight for independence, the book includes vivid portraits of Santa Anna, Sam Houston, and Davy Crockett. The novel's unlikely author was Amelia Barr, a British writer who lived in Texas in the mid-nineteenth century.

Barr moved to America with her husband and daughters in 1853. They lived briefly in Chicago and Memphis before settling in Austin.

In Texas, Barr was enthralled by tales of the state's history. She plunged into Austin's social life and recorded sharp-eyed accounts of the city in her diary in the turbulent years before and during the Civil War.

In 1867, Barr's husband and three of her children died of yellow fever in Galveston. Barr moved to New York soon after and, as she put it, "was reborn" into a life of duty. To support herself, she launched her remarkably successful writing career, publishing an average of two books per year over three decades. Richly detailed historical romances such as *Remember the Alamo* became her specialty.

Barr died in 1919. In her memoir, completed at age eighty, she wrote that she hoped her life story might help "any sad or doubtful woman to outleap her own shadow, and to stand bravely out in the sunshine to meet her destiny."

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Amelia E. Barr. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. Why did Amelia Barr begin her writing career?
2. Where did Amelia Barr live prior to coming to Texas?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Making Inferences.** Why might a historian writing about Texas during the Civil War be interested in reading Barr's diary?