



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 Mary Austin Holley. Then, answer questions about it.

### Mary Austin Holley 1784–1846

Writer Mary Austin Holley introduced English-speaking readers of the 1830s and '40s to Texas, which she called a land of "surpassing beauty . . . a splendid country." A Connecticut native, Holley lived in Boston and Lexington, Kentucky, until the death of her husband in 1827.

She later wrote to her cousin Stephen F. Austin, inquiring about the colony he founded in far-off Texas. Stephen replied enthusiastically, even promising her a tract of land upon her arrival. She visited in 1831, and several times over the next twelve years, with plans to settle there.

In 1833, Holley published *Texas: Observations, Historical, Geographical and Descriptive*, the first book on Texas by an Anglo American. Three years later, she published a second book, simply titled *Texas*, which included a thrilling portrayal of the Texas War of Independence and a detailed guide to the new republic's land and people.

*Texas* was the first book to include many important documents of the Revolution, including the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Republic of Texas Constitution.

Holley's work persuaded many to pack up and move to Texas. Sadly, she died of yellow fever in 1846 and never settled in the place that had captured her heart. Today, her engaging books, her intricate pencil sketches of early Houston, and her journals and family letters provide invaluable accounts of life in early Texas.

**Check for Understanding:** Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Mary Austin Holley. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. What connection did Mary Austin Holley have to Texas that led her to visit?
2. What documents were included in Holley's second book *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. **Creating Connections.** Holley's second book was published in 1836. What events had just concluded? What about them might have made people likely to move to Texas?