

Answers Chapter 6 Trial by Fire

1. Billy Carroll
2. the failure of his marriage
3. lose it
4. to his foster father/to the Cherokee Indians in Arkansas
5. Haden Edwards
6. because he tried to prevent the killing of Americans
7. Santa Anna
8. served as “Cherokee ambassador” to the federal government, served as peacemaker between tribes, fought against corruption among Indian Agents
9. Houston’s alleged purpose to use the Cherokee Indians to set himself up as “Emperor” of Texas
10. Military occupation of Texas, new settlements composed of Europeans and Mexican convicts, new customs duties, other trade restrictions, a cancellation of all unfulfilled empresario contracts, and further American immigration prohibited.
11. William Travis
12. His assault of Congressman Stanberry
13. Stanberry had accused Houston and another man of fraud

Discussion/Essay

1. Houston wrote, “That veneration for public opinion by which I have measured every act of my official life, has taught me to hold no delegated power which would not be daily renewed by my constituents . . . “ This letter of resignation contains the political beliefs of Sam Houston: a profound respect for our system of government and for those people who elected him. Also, the whole point of this letter underscores the belief that authority has a moral basis; being “delicately circumstanced,” he thought that some would judge his authority “questionable.” Further, Houston did not resign because he was shown to have done wrong; he resigned because his situation could create the *appearance* of wrongdoing.

2. Haden Edwards was an empresario like Stephen Austin, who obtained a land contract from the Mexican government. However, instead of protecting the rights of existing settlers, he insisted on the letter of the law -- an actual title -- and evicted a Mexican man with a questionable right to his land. Showing no carefulness or tact, the Edwards brothers rebelled when the Mexican government ruled against them and threw them out of the country. When they announced the so-called Republic of Freedonia, Austin refused to join them; instead, he rounded up several hundred colonists and joined the Mexican troops who were sent to put down the rebellion.

3. Santa Anna was good at finding insurgents during the bloody decade that preceded Mexican Independence. His motives were totally self-seeking; he had no political convictions, but supported whatever and whomever would serve his own interests.

5. Teran knew that settlement by Americans was dangerous, partly because they were closer to their country than Texas was to the settled parts of Mexico. He knew instinctively that an oath of loyalty did not instantly turn them into Mexicans. [to help them understand these fears, you can mention that by 1836 the population of Anglos in Texas was much higher than that of the Mexicans.] Also, the U.S. had offered to buy Texas twice, a move which made the young, struggling country of Mexico defensive.

6. Austin understood the American way of thinking, their belief that the authority of government was derived from the "consent of the governed." The principles of responsible republican self-government had been fought and bled for just a generation before, in the American Revolution; just as the presence of British Redcoats had aggravated problems in the colonies, so Mexican troops would have the same effect in Texas.

7. Houston fought for the principle that elected representatives were still responsible citizens. They did not possess a special "privilege" which allowed them to do wrong without suffering the consequences. In his defense, Houston challenged, "When a member of this House, entrenched in his privilege, brands a private citizen in the face of the whole nation, as a fraudulent villain he . . . renders himself answerable to the party aggrieved . . . Gentlemen have admitted that the power they claimed is not in the Constitution. Then where is it?"