

although still married to a woman in Mexico, he remarried one of his teenaged captives from his Texas campaign. But he had been without his most recent bride for two weeks now. Emily looked like she would make a very suitable replacement.

Thus, he ordered the immediate setting up of his encampment on the plains of the San Jacinto despite protestations from his colonels who insisted the location violated all principles of wartime strategy. And they were right. Houston, upon hearing of Santa Anna's location from Turner, moved his troops into the woods within a scant mile of the beguiled general's headquarters.

On the morning of April 21, Houston climbed a tree to spy into the Mexican camp. There he saw Emily preparing a champagne breakfast for Santa Anna, and reportedly remarked, "I hope that slave girl makes him [Santa Anna] neglect his business and keeps him in bed all day." [Garner]

By afternoon, the great final battle for the independence of Texas was engaged. The Mexican army was caught completely by surprise, and Santa Anna was literally caught "with his pants down." (Reports at the time

said he was caught running away from the battle with his studded silk shirt opened and concealed under a dead soldier's blue smock - hurriedly put on during his attempted escape.)

Emily West Morgan survived the battle and made her way back to New Washington. Two days later, James Morgan, who had not heard of the battle, returned from Galveston and Emily told him of her ordeal and the outcome of the last great battle. The colonel was so impressed with Emily's heroism, he repealed her indenture and gave her a passport back to New York - the final chapter of which we have no record.

We do know, however, Morgan made certain everyone knew of Emily's heroism. He told everyone he encountered or anyone who would listen, and recorded the story in his journals. Morgan "kept a running commentary on Texas affairs with Samuel Swartwout, one of Houston's friends in New York City." He also told his story to an English friend and ethnologist, William Bollaert, who recorded the story in every detail.

There are some in recent history who have suggested Emily's efforts were made because she was attracted to the opulence and good looks of the Mexican general. But the accounts from those who were there indicate she was a loyal "Texian" who did what she could for the independence of Texas.

Today, the heroic acts of the young woman from New York are still reverently commemorated by the members of the Knights of the Yellow Rose of Texas each April 21 at San Jacinto.

To answer the questions, "Is there a Yellow Rose of Texas?" and if so "What is it?", the answer is there was a "Yellow Rose." But it was not a "what" it was a "who" - Emily West Morgan.

Special thanks to Mark Whitelaw's widow Laura for letting us use portions of his article on "The Yellow Rose of Texas". To read the complete story go to <http://www.markw.com/yelrose.htm>.

Thanks also to Lanny Allen of Amarillo, Tx for his help in creating a facsimile of an old song sheet.

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