



Houston: 1860 to 1900 (Images of America)

Ann Dunphy Becker

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In an area that was little more than a thick forest lining Buffalo Bayou, Houston was founded in 1836 by the Allen brothers and named after the Republic of Texas's beloved general Sam Houston. By 1860, there were 5,000 residents in Houston, wooden sidewalks, a few shell-paved roads, and five railroads. Out of the mud and mayhem of Houston's humble frontier beginnings arose men like Thomas W. House, Alexander P. Root, Edward Hopkins Cushing, Thomas Bagby, and William S. Swilley. The sleepy little bayou that wound from Main Street and emptied into Galveston Bay would soon become one of the largest ports in the south. By 1900, the founders' grandchildren were ready to strike out on their own and would play their part in building a great Texas city, a railroad nexus for the Gulf Coast, and an international port of call.

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