Step By Step

Through the

Jourdan-Bachman

Pioneer Farms

A Self-Guided Walking Tour For Time Travelers

Compiled by Texas Storyteller Thos. Burkhardt

History Tour:

Starting at Sprinkle Corner Village

Austin-Texas:

Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms Foundation
MAP OF THE JOURNEY
YOUR TOUR BEGINS AT SPRINKLE CORNER VILLAGE
BEGIN YOUR TIME TRAVEL
RULES OF THE ROAD AS YOU TRAVEL INTO 1800S TEXAS

Using the map on the preceding page, you should orient yourself by standing on the front porch of the General Store. The length of the tour is just over three-quarters of a mile. A system of clearly marked trails and pathways begins and ends at Sprinkle Corner. Visitors could stay on marked pathways at all times.

For appropriate safety and comfort of all, all visitors are asked to follow these rules to ensure a safe journey:

• Children must be accompanied and supervised at all times by an adult.
• Modern privies are located at the various interpretive sites.
• Do not feed the livestock. Animals are unpredictable and can cause serious injury. If you pet them, be careful as some may bite or peck. Livestock corrals and pastures should not be entered under any circumstance.
• Beware of the natural hazards of the prairie — snakes, fire ants, bees, poison ivy, stinging nettles and thorns.
• Littering, smoking, expectorating, foul language or misbehavior are not allowed. Eating in buildings, and climbing on fences and structures is also prohibited.
• If an area is roped off, you should stay out.
• Pets are not allowed on the grounds. Neither is boozing or consorting with known scofflaws.
• Natural elements and artifacts should not be removed from the museum grounds. Flowers are to be looked at, not picked.
• Visitors should refrain from using any modern conveniences and gadgets such as cell phones and personal-communications devices, as they may spook horses and neighbors from the 1800s that have never before seen them.
• First aid kits are available at each farmstead, historic site and in the General Store, for those needing remedies and bandages.
The town of Sprinkle was settled in 1876 by Erasmus Frederick Sprinkle, who brought his widowed daughter and four children to Texas from Virginia in a wagon a few years earlier. A farmer by trade, he started growing cotton in the fertile black soil on 223 acres he purchased and soon opened a small store. The town, officially founded in 1881 after other settlers arrived, soon became a trading center in this part of Travis County. It was one of Travis County’s most diverse communities, serving the Texian white settlers, freed slaves called freedmen who settled in the area in large numbers after the Civil War and with emigrants from Germany and Europe.

In its early years, Sprinkle had a general mercantile store (pictured below, in 1893), three churches, a post office, a blacksmith shop, a school and several homes. Sprinkle’s ambitious grandson, William Braxton Barr, built the landmark Barr Mansion across the street from the store. The mansion still stands today as an events and rental center. Though Sprinkle had a population of more than 100 residents in 1890, forty years later it was little more than a wide place in the road with just 10 inhabitants. That was mainly due to a drastic drop in the price of cotton that forced many farmers to find work elsewhere. Our Sprinkle Corner village is designed to replicate the spirit and size of the original Sprinkle – right down to the town square, 100 feet by 100 feet.
BY THE FRONT GATE: NATIVE GROVE

Just past the steps of the store is a native grove that replicates ones where townspeople would sometimes gather for conversation in the evening coolness, beneath the oaks, maples and bois d’arcs. They were an early version of a park and often featured a small gazebo, as this one does. As towns moved to beautify their environs in the late 1800s, groves such as this one were replaced by town squares and other green space.

NEARBY: FLAGPOLE AND SITTING STONE

At the edge of the native grove stands a tall wooden flagpole that was a common fixture in small towns, almost always near the post office. Most towns of any size had a flagpole that served as a gathering point for neighborly conversation. This one was carved by hand from a 30-foot telephone pole by Pioneer Farms volunteers, using standard plans for an 1871 U.S. Army flag staff. Beside the flagpole is a sitting stone marked with the name “Yoe” on one side. It came from outside Madam Yoe’s rooming house in Guy Town, a gambling district along Fourth Street in Austin, where customers would sit and wait during the late 1800s. Sitting stones were common outside other businesses of the day, as well, and were usually marked with the business name.

ACROSS THE STREET: TATE HOUSE

Samuel William Tate came to Texas in 1845, traveling all the way from Tennessee in an ox cart— a really rough ride, no doubt. He settled in the Sandy Mountain community in Llano County, northwest of Austin, and in 1854 built this long-porch building as his house and general store. He cut logs from nearby forests for the supports. Look under the porch, and you may be able to see some of the old bark still on some logs. He and his wife reared 12 children in this “dog-trot” building, a typical Texas house of the period with a breezeway in the middle. Tate went on to become the county’s first district clerk and served as postmaster for many years before passing away in 1899 at age 76. The building was a gift to Pioneer Farms from the late Lady Bird Johnson. It’s the oldest commercial building in Sprinkle Corner and among the oldest in Austin.

BY THE TATE HOUSE: WATERING TROUGH

In the days when horses were a primary mode of transportation, hitching posts and watering troughs like this one were as commonplace a century ago as parking meters are today. The posts were necessary to keep horses from wandering off. Their location along a street would designate where the parking spaces for horses were, although riders also often used fences and porch posts. Watering troughs gave horses a place to get a drink of water while they were tied up. The first posts and troughs were made from wood. Cut stone pillars with an O-ring to hold the reins were also common, like several to be seen around the town square. They were used in downtown Austin after 1850. More sturdy watering troughs were like this concrete one, used on Congress Avenue in downtown Austin during the late 1800s.
**NEXT TO THE Tate House: Storefront**

Like many stores in small Texas towns during the late 1800s, this one is small in scale, with just a single room, and is of wood-frame construction with a steep-pitched roof. This building, a later kitchen addition to the Moody Farm House just down the street, was moved into the Town Square in early 2018 and is interpreted as a late-1890s shop. Its front entryway dates from years before, after being salvaged from a decades-older building built by noted Austin masterbuilder Abner Cook. Cook built the Governor’s Mansion and other significant early buildings in Austin. The entryway was installed to complete the shop that replicates several in period photos from Elgin, Pflugerville and other small towns in this area in the late nineteenth century.

**NEXT DOOR: Fisk Log Building**

The first parts of this rough-hewn log building were hacked from cedar breaks in Austin in the decade before the Civil War, when Millard Fillmore was president and when most of Texas was a wild frontier. The building was later doubled in size, used as a store, as a corn crib or house, and later for storage. Austin civic booster Walter Long bought the structure sometime in the 1930s to save it for posterity. Long’s descendants donated the building to Pioneer Farms in 2009, and it was carefully disassembled and moved here as part of an Eagle Scout project. A woodwright’s shop will eventually occupy its two rooms.

**BEHIND THE FISK BUILDING: Saddlery**

Located at the edge of town with the other trade shops is this one-story, unpainted building that houses the Saddlery. Most towns had a saddlery where tack and harnesses were made and repaired. Distinctive and pungent odors would have greeted visitors: polish and solvents combined with rawhide and tanned leathers. Saddleries and leather shops were usually located near livery stables, close to their primary trading customers. This structure was built as a movie set in 1994.

**Quick Quiz: Log Buildings**

*Early Texas settlers used what they had to build shelter. Trees were the choice, mostly cedar in this part of the state. Logs would be cut with axes and hatchets from straight trees. Limbs would be cut off. Logs would be stacked, with the corners notched so they would fit tightly together, providing structural integrity to the building. At the corners of this building, notice how the logs are stacked alternately – one side first, then the next side. How many logs high would your log building have to be for you to stand up straight inside?*

**Walk Toward Blacksmith Shop**
Artisan Block
Rural Texas Industry in the Year
1899

Artisans shops were a key to survival of small towns in the nineteenth century in Texas. There, craftspeople made door hinges and handles, built furniture and wagons, constructed and repaired buggy wheels, and cared for horses and mules that were essential for transport and heavy labor. At the edge of the town square, a group of workshops and stables are planned that will replicate the industrial section of small towns in the late nineteenth century. Ours will eventually feature a smithy (pictured below, an 1896 example), a woodwright’s shop (carpentry and furniture), a wheelwright’s shop (makes wheels for wagons), a livery stable and a saddlery.

In the days before the Civil War, when most goods were made by hand and sold locally, the workshops in blocks such as this were the industry of Texas – long before large manufacturing plants and assembly lines became commonplace in large cities. If you needed nails for a building project, a local blacksmith made them for you. If you needed a new bedframe or armoire, a local carpentry shop would make it. If you needed a wagon wheel repaired, you went to a wheelwright. If you needed your horse boarded or doctored, you could go to the livery stable. Not until after the Civil War did that change, when manufactured goods became more readily available to many communities via the expanding network of railroads. Even so, small artisan shops employing hand craftsmen continued to thrive in small towns. Not until the arrival of the automobile that replaced horses for personal and commercial transportation, did the blacksmith shops and artisans shops begin to disappear. With them went specialized craftsmen trades that today we are working to bring back and preserve through classes and demonstrations.
This barn-like building featuring vented eaves replicates a blacksmith shop in Elgin during the 1890s. Buildings of this design and scale were common for such shops in small towns of that period. Texans during the 1800s relied on blacksmiths to manufacture a variety of items, from horseshoes, hinges and chains to nails, tools and wagon wheels. The presence of a smithy on a farm during much of the 1800s generally indicated the homestead was prosperous. By the late 1800s, as manufactured goods brought in by rail and wagon replaced blacksmith-made items, many smiths moved their operations into small towns where business remained good. A forge with coal and fire, anvil and hammers, sharpening stone and water bucket were the major tools of the blacksmith. Amid the smell of sooty smoke and sounds of hot metal being hammered into shape, a smith in an 1890s shop like this would spend most of his time shoeing horses and repairing equipment. The ends of the roof were left open, and the roofline was almost a half-story higher, to vent the smoke from inside the building. Often, local blacksmith shops were located in converted livery barns or carriage stables. Most were of wood, pole-barn-style construction like this one. This smithy was constructed by hand by volunteers in the fall of 2017 and as a part of an Eagle Scout project led by Austinite Andrew Butler.

Outside the Smithy: How Blacksmiths Work

Blacksmiths have a rhythm to working the red-hot metal. First, they head up the metal and use a hammer to work a metal bar into shape on the anvil. They start work at a small portion of the bar, going slowly, heating only the sections that are being smithed. Other portions of the bar are cooled by dipping them into a bucket or barrel of water. The bar is constantly either cooled or reheated because the blacksmith doesn’t want the bar getting too hot or too cold. If the metal bar gets too hot, it will burn and if it got too cold it will get brittle and be more prone to cracking. Eventually, the blacksmith will complete work forming his tool or piece of hardware. The smith then employed several techniques to strengthen the iron or apply a finish to it that include tempering, annealing, and blacking — to name a few.

Quick Quiz: Blacksmith Tools

Four tools allow blacksmiths to do their job: The forge, where the steel is heated; the hammer that is used to apply force to the hot metal to change its shape; the tongs that allow the smith to hold the hot metal while shaping it, and the anvil, a steel table where the hot steel is mashed with a hammer. Which of those tools have you used?
On our left, as we walk east, lies the Town Square — something that no self-respecting small town would have been without in the late 1800s. Most measured 100 feet by 100 feet, the first attempt by early settlers at community planning — at a time when most towns were a hodge-podge and organized only as they grew. The town square was a gathering point. Some were places where wagons were parked (pictured below, a wagon loads outside our General Store) and horses were watered, others covered with grass in what was a town’s first and perhaps only park.

Roughly a third of the small towns with substance in this part of Texas had town squares, many of them centered with a courthouse or a community well where horses were watered. In the nearly town of Sprinkle, the “square” was an open area between the general store and the Barr Mansion, once the home of early-day resident William Braxton Barr. By the late 1890s, many town squares had a band shell, a gazebo or shrubs, trees or ornamental gardens. If we listen carefully, we can almost hear the sound of famous orator William Jennings Bryan making a speech on a stage in 1898 or, perhaps, the sound of horses whinnying at the nearby hitching posts as conversations and laughter echo from the porches of nearby shops.
ACROSS THE SQUARE: GENERAL STORE

Our Jackson & Giles General Store is a replica of a store operated from 1897 to 1901 in Gilesburg, a hamlet of a town that was located about a half-mile northwest of where we are standing. It was named for Eugene Giles, who operated the store. Most of the small-town stores of the area looked much like this one: Small in size, one-story, built of “slab” boards that were sawed from logs. This replica store was built in 1994 as a set for a made-for-television movie Lantern In Her Hand. Its interior decoration and furnishings include many artifacts from early-day stores in Central Texas and feature many of the original smells – from sweet peppermint sticks and pungent coal oil to handmade brooms and bolts of brightly colored fabrics. Stand on the porch for a few moments, look around and imagine you are in the real community of Sprinkle that was located just a mile to the southeast.

NEXT TO THE STORE: W.T. WROE STOREFRONT

Just east of the General Store is a large white storefront, typical of those seen on small-town squares across Texas during the late 1800s. It is a replica of a general store building in Cele, a tiny community in northwest Travis County. Ours replicates the home of Wroe & Sons, a prominent harness and tack supplier in Austin that also sold buggies, wagons and carriages. On display inside the building are several horse-drawn vehicles that were actually used in Austin during the late 1800s, as well as a real Texas stagecoach – they were called “Mud Wagons” in this part of the country – and a Victoria Coach once used by the governor of Texas. The vehicles are part of the Janet Long Fish Collection that was assembled during the late 1800s and early 1900s, as motorized vehicles replaced horse transportation. This storefront connects to the turret building next door.

NEXT DOOR: GROVE APOTHECARY

Sitting like a pointy-topped sentinel at the northeast edge of the Town Square is the Grove Apothecary, built about 1893 as an addition to the Orsay House located just down the street. When the Orsay House was moved to Pioneer Farms in August 2006, its turret section had to be removed and was saved as a separate building on the Town Square. Bay-window buildings like this often decorated main corners of trade and housed a variety of businesses: banks, apothecaries, dry goods stores, among others. This example is named after the Austin’s Morley Brothers Grove Drugs, prominent early-day druggists whose trademark monogrammed brown bottles are now prized collectors’ items. It currently houses exhibits.

TOWARD THE OPEN FIELD: JARMON HOUSE

Built around 1900 by Robert Jarmon, a prominent storekeeper in the nearby community of Sprinkle, this one-story, three-bedroom house was a hilltop landmark there for more than a century. A popular post-Victorian design for rural homes, it features wide veranda porches with
signature columns and a steep-pitched, wood-shingle roof. Jarmon migrated to this part of Texas from Virginia in the 1870s and eventually settled in Sprinkle with his wife Beulah and children. After working for William Barr, who owned the general store in Sprinkle, Jarmon bought the store. Barr’s father served as postmaster general of the Republic of Texas. When the house faced demolition in 2010, Jarmon’s granddaughter, Elizabeth Wilder, moved it here to save it. It will house exhibits when the interior restoration is completed.

ON THE SQUARE: GAZEBO

This unique roofed structure gazebos like this one were a fixture in many small towns in this part of Texas and were used for entertainment and relaxation. Originally called summerhouses, kiosks or band shells, they were designed to provide shade and some shelter in town squares for community gatherings, musical performances, political speeches and public announcements. Some provided a shady spot where people could engage in idle chitchat. They were common in town squares that had become small parks. A majority of gazebos are octagonal, with or without benches. The open sides allow occupants to enjoy a pleasant breeze and the natural environment that surrounds the structure. The term “shooting the breeze” came from people sitting in gazebos or on shady porches during the summer to talk.

OTHER SIDE OF THE SQUARE: WESSELS HALL

Anchoring the south side of the Town Square is a one-story wooden building surrounded by large decks that was a community center common to many small towns in the late 1800s. Most were known as dance halls. Built around 1900, this one came from West Point, a small community in Fayette County near La Grange. Starting in the 1850s, dance halls were popular social centers across Texas and were a key reason that Texas’ rich music culture thrived the way it has — from German polkas to western swing to conjunto music. Built by two brothers, this hall features a free-span interior floor — an open dance floor with no supporting poles — and is typical of many in this area during the late 1800s and early 1900s. It was donated to Pioneer Farms by the builders’ family and was moved here in late 2012.

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**QUICK QUIZ: MEASURING BY PACES**

During the 1800s, long before modern tape measures were available, people often measured short distances by walking them off — in paces. That came from the use of the “foot” as a measure of distance. Walk two sides of the town square, keeping track of the number of paces for each. Then, determine how many “paces” — or “square feet” — the square is in total size.

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WALK TO THE WHITE HOUSE TO THE LEFT OF THE SQUARE
SPRINKLE HOMES
A SMALL TOWN NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE YEAR
1899

A Texas hamlet knew it was more than just a wide place in the road when it developed a residential neighborhood. That’s when a town knew it had residents, not just folks who might move on at any time. The earliest towns in Texas grew from a few houses and a shop or two, with no discernable street layout. Once a community became a town, streets were generally established to provide some order to future development, if not the ability of local officials to manage further growth. Austin was unusual in that it was planned city from the start, with a grid-layout for its streets and locations for government buildings as the capital of Texas. In towns both small and large, businesses were generally clustered together, with heavier commercial uses to one side and areas reserved for homes adjacent to the business district.

After the Civil War, towns in Texas became more organized as homesteaders began a slow migration into the towns. With a growing population, businesses in trading centers flourished. Communication and transportation were improved, and the latest styles and merchandise from larger cities in the Midwest and East soon showed up in small towns. As a result, the architecture of homes and buildings changed — as did the way of life in small Texas towns.
Just east of the Town Square sits a one-story early Texas-style house that was built starting in 1851, six years after Texas gained statehood. Isaiah Hezekiah Aynesworth, a Tennessee preacher-farmer-carpenter-surveyor who recently had arrived in Texas, built it in a Greek Revival style for his homesick wife, Nancy. Aynesworth bought 246 acres of land for $500 near the current-day intersection of I-35 and Airport Boulevard and completed this house in 1853. That makes it older than both the Governor’s Mansion and the General Land Office, the oldest state government buildings. A father of six, Aynesworth sold the property in 1855 to Dr. Joseph Wright, just arrived from North Carolina, for $5,000 and moved to Burnet County where he continued to preach and farm until his death in 1876. Wright, his wife Rachel, and two children cultivated a large garden and farmed several acres. Their pastures were surrounded by a bois d’arc hedge that the Aynesworths planted. In front of the house is a stone hitching post that came from downtown Austin, where it was used to tie up horses in the late 1800s. It was moved to a corner in a residential neighborhood just west of downtown. During a street widening project, it was rescued and relocated to Pioneer Farms during the 1990s.

**Behind the House: Doctor’s Cabin**

Just behind Dr. Wright’s house sits a simple log structure where he dispensed medicinal powders for one dollar after he bought the house in 1855. He was one of the first trained physicians to practice in Austin in an era when “horse doctors” often treated people. He moved his office to more modern quarters by the 1870s, but the little cabin remained in his yard until after his death at age 99 in 1898. Wright was the original surveyor for the University of Texas campus in the early 1880s. He was active in efforts to improve fire protection, law enforcement and public schools in Texas’ capital city. This 1850s cabin is approximately the same size as Wright’s. It was moved to Pioneer Farms from near Burnet, where it served as a granary, then a house at another site before being abandoned in the 1920s.

**Next Door: Houston-Orsay House**

Built in 1875 on Neches Street in Austin, this small home – originally just two rooms connected by a central hall with a kitchen added later – was typical of many working-class houses built after the Civil War. Its Gothic style was popular at the time, noticeable in the decoration around the top of the porch. It was built by a nephew of Texas hero Sam Houston, who rented it to Henry Orsay, a French Canadian by birth who came to Austin in November 1865 with a Union Army general named George Custer. Orsay stayed in Austin after Custer departed months later. He was a civilian attaché to the Civil Guard during Reconstruction and was a witness to the Semicolon War when Texas had two governors for a time in 1871. He was also chief clerk in the Adjutant General’s Office when Camp Mabry was founded. Orsay and his wife Hulda lived in the house for a time in the 1890s. The house was moved to Pioneer Farms to save it from demolition in 2009.
**Quick Quiz: A Diverse History**

Texas was settled by people from a lot of other places. That created much diversity on the frontier, especially in this area where white settlers from the East lived among former slaves who were called Freedmen, immigrants from Germany and other parts of Europe, and Tejanos of Mexican descent. One example is Henry D’Orsay, a French Canadian who ended up in Texas and lived in the green house. Ask for a show of hands of who was born in Austin and who was born elsewhere. The ones from Austin would be like the Tonkawa Indians and other First Texans, and the rest would be like settlers.

**Across the Street: Moody Farm House**

This Queen Anne-style house was built in 1883 in Taylor, northeast of Austin, by a prominent merchant. By the early 1920s, the across-the-street neighbor was Dan Moody, a lawyer and fierce prosecutor of the Ku Klux Klan who served as Texas governor from 1927 to 1931. His family purchased the home, and it was later moved to a rural site near Hutto in the 1970s by Moody’s son. The house represents a quaint design that was common in small towns in Texas during the late 1800s, with its wrap-around corner porch and cute dormer windows on the steep-pitched roof. Moody’s descendants donated the house to Pioneer Farms to ensure its style and history would be preserved, and it was moved to this site in early 2018.

**Along the Way: Grid-Plan Streets**

In the westward development of the United States, the use of the grid plan where streets run at right angles was nearly universal in the construction of new settlements. Texas was no exception. One of its main advantages of the grid plan was that it allowed the rapid subdivision and auction of a large parcel of land. When the legislature of the Republic of Texas decided in 1839 to move the capital to a new site along the Colorado River, the functioning of the government required the rapid population of the town, which was named Austin. Charged with the task, Edwin Waller designed a fourteen-block grid that fronted the river on 640 acres (one square mile) and 306 lots were quickly sold. As Texas towns grew, grid-street patterns were adopted by most. In many, streets were numbered even more carefully than in the east to suggest future prosperity and metropolitan status. In Austin, the east-west streets in the grid were named for Texas trees and the north-south streets were named for major rivers.

**Continue Ahead Up the Road**
Early-day Texas travelers had only four choices when they needed to get from one town to another – walk, ride a horse, bounce along in a buggy or take a stagecoach. Multi-passenger horse-drawn stagecoaches – Texas’ first regularly scheduled non-maritime, for-hire public transportation – came into use soon after the Mexican province won its independence from Mexico in 1836. By 1837, only a year after the Battle of San Jacinto, a stage line connected Houston and Harrisburg, a distance of five miles. By 1839, with the founding of Austin as the republic’s capital, a stage line carried mail, passengers and freight along a hardly improved 150-plus-mile route from Houston to the new city on the frontier. In the days before railroads, the stagecoach was the primary long-distance method of transportation for Texans, a title it would hold until after the Civil War.

Every stagecoach route in Texas stretched along a series of stopping points where drivers could hitch on a fresh team in 10 minutes and be on their way again. Three times a day, passengers could get a hurried meal. Long-haul stages tended to run 24-hours-a-day, but some stage stops featured overnight accommodations. The distance between stops varied depending on the terrain and the availability of water, but 15 to 30 miles apart was the norm.
JUST AHEAD: FORK IN THE ROAD

They’re not paved, and they have no exit signs or billboards. They’re often dusty and narrow, but roads such as the ones leading away from Sprinkle Corner were the norm in rural areas during the 1800s, the rough-hewn expressways for commerce as Texas grew up. Grass growing the middle like a centerline was the norm. Several major roads traversed this area after fording Walnut Creek just to the southeast of this point: Cameron Road, a major trade route north out of Austin; Fiskville Road that ambled west through the Pecan Bottoms, and Dessau Road, which headed northwest to the hamlet of the same name. This road was once a lightly used trail that ran along a fence line.

TO THE RIGHT: BLACKLAND PRAIRIE

At the start of the nineteenth century, a sea of native grasslands called the Blackland Prairie stretched to the north of Austin as far as the eye could see, as far as one could travel in a day by horseback. On a windy day, the grass swayed back and forth like waves. In all, the Blackland Prairie eco region covered more than 6.1 million hectares of rolling hills and plains that stretched from near San Antonio to the Red River. Large herds of buffalo grazed seasonally in this region as late as the 1830s but had generally disappeared by the 1840s. By the second half of the nineteenth century, row crop agriculture was well established in the Blackland Prairie. Today, less than one percent of the original vegetation remains.

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QUICK QUIZ: TRAVELING ON FOOT

In the days before cars, Texans rode horseback and traveled by foot. How long would it take you to get to school if you walked using a watch? Measure how long it takes you to get to the next site. Count the number of steps it takes and divide that by the number of minutes. Then you can measure how fast you were traveling.

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AT THE CORNER: JOLLY CABIN

The one-story, single-pen log cabin built during the 1850s by John Grey Jolly was used at a stagecoach stop on the line between Austin and Lampasas from sometime just after the Civil War until the 1880s when service on the line was stopped. The stage stop featured this cabin and another, pens for horses and a small log barn. In the early days, especially in the more populated areas, those stops came at rural inns offering travelers bed and board. These inns ranged from log cabins to handsome two-story Greek Revival–style houses. In cities, hotels often served as departure points. As Texas grew to the west and south, the stops in more remote areas tended to be less fancy. By 1866, a small community named Jollyville had grown up around the cabin on Rattan Creek at U.S. 183, eighteen miles north of Austin in southwestern Williamson County.
Jolly operated a blacksmith shop and a store and provided land for an early school at the site. In 1878, the school enrolled 35 pupils, and the town had a dozen residents.

**AT THE CORNER: STAGECOACH STOP MEALS**

Stagecoach stop fare ranged from terrible – wormy biscuits and grease-laden meat of unknown source – to something weary travelers looked forward to. Meal prices ran from 40 cents to a dollar in the late 1850s. At most stage stations, pork or wild game, beans, bread and coffee awaited tired, dusty travelers. But at the better places, usually those in the more settled areas of East Texas, a hungry stage passenger might find a variety of wild game, oysters or fish. Biscuits or cornbread could be slathered in butter and washed down with sweet milk, as it was called. At a hotel that served as the stage stop in Lampasas, west of Austin, travelers spent the night and complimented the “hearty breakfast of hot cakes and coffee” they had before departing west. “The fare, though rough, is better than could be expected so far from civilized districts,” a *New York Herald* correspondent said of stagecoach stop food in Texas in 1871. “It consists of bread, tea, and fried steaks of bacon, venison, antelope, or mule flesh – the latter tough . . .” He added, “the stomach does not long remain delicate after a few days of life on the plains.”

**AT THE CORNER: STAGECOACHES**

Three types of stagecoaches traveled the rough roads of the Lone Star State. The first was the Concord coach, a distinctive teacup-on-four-wheels design that, even though it became an icon of the Old West, came from a manufacturer in New England. Pulled by either four or six horses, the coaches came in 6-, 9- or 12-passenger sizes. Up to six passengers, including the driver and a messenger in charge of the mail sacks, also could sit on top of the coach. The coaches had upholstered seats and a leather “boot” on the back for luggage. It was built to lessen the bumps associated with traveling unpaved roads, the thorough braces caused the stagecoach to swing from side to side. If the coach got stuck in the mud, savvy drivers knew that motion made it easier for the horses to extract it. The second commonly used vehicle was a four-horse wagon covered with a canvas tarp that could be rolled up in warm weather or tied down in cold or rainy conditions. Built on a Concord frame, these vehicles were called celerity wagons. They had a lower center of gravity and being lighter, could travel faster. Often pulled by mules, they usually served the shorter, less-trafficked, more rugged routes, particularly in West Texas. The third type of stage was called a mud wagon. Boxy and well-built with a heavy chassis, they traveled most of the routes west of what is now Interstate 35, in what was then rough country to cross in any type of wagon, much less ones with a lighter frame like the Concord. Six horses were generally needed to pull these heavier coaches with tough freight-wagon frames that were idea for traversing little-maintained and rocky trails common on West Texas.

TURN RIGHT, CONTINUE AHEAD ALONG THE TRAIL
In the decades following the Civil War, more than 6 million cattle — up to 10 million by some accounts — were herded out of Texas in one of the greatest migrations of animals ever known. These 19th-century cattle drives laid the foundation for Texas’ wildly successful cattle industry and helped elevate the state out of post-Civil War despair and poverty. Although a number of cattle drive routes existed during this period, none captured the popular imagination like the one known today as the Chisholm Trail. The path of the trail for a time in the late 1860s and early 1870s crossed Walnut Creek just south of here, at a point near the Tonkawa Encampment just ahead on the tour.

Early map of the Chisholm Trail
Beside the Path: Longhorn Cattle

The hardy breed of livestock known as the Texas longhorn descended from Spanish Andalusia cattle brought over by early-16th-century explorers, missionaries, and ranchers. By the 18th century, Spanish missions maintained large domesticated cattle herds, which provided food, clothing, and other products for Spaniards and American Indians. Missions like San Antonio de Béxar and Mission Espíritu Santo established some of the earliest ranches in Texas. Despite the ultimate decline of the missions, the ranches, vaqueros, and longhorns remained. In the early 1800s, Spain lost control of the region to Mexico, but ranchero and vaquero traditions lingered, affecting the look, equipment, and vernacular of what became the iconic American cowboy. Terms like lasso, lariat, mustang, chaps, and bandana became a part of everyday speech, and American cowboys adopted the Spanish traditions of open-range ranching, branding, and round-ups. After the Texas Revolution and the change in governmental control, many cattle were left to roam free in sparsely populated ranch land. Wild cattle were widespread throughout Texas and were considered game, much like deer and buffalo. Abundant food and water and little human contact allowed the longhorn breed to adapt to the land, and the cattle population grew into the millions.

Down the Path: Jesse Chisholm

Jesse Chisholm was a Tennessee-born Indian trader, guide and interpreter who moved with his Cherokee mother in 1820 to what is now eastern Oklahoma. Fluent in a dozen or so languages, he established small trading posts and interpreted at treaty councils in Texas, Indian Territory, and Kansas for nearly 20 years. Republic of Texas President Sam Houston, who probably met Chisholm at Fort Gibson in Indian Territory between 1829 and 1833, called on him to play a major role in communications with the prairie Indian tribes of West Texas. During the Civil War he served the Confederacy as a trader with the Indians, but by 1864 he was an interpreter for Union officers. In 1865, Chisholm established a trading post at Council Grove on the North Canadian River near the site of present day Oklahoma City. His route to the site from Fort Leavenworth in Kansas later became the Chisholm Trail. He died of food poisoning at Left Hand Spring, in Oklahoma, on April 4, 1868 — never having driven cattle on the trail that bears his name.

Quick Quiz: Driving Cattle

Cowboys had different roles in a trail drive. A Drag Rider was a cowboy who rode at rear of the herd to keep it moving. The Point Rider rode at the front of the herd. A Flank Rider rode at the side of the herd to keep it from spreading out. A Swing Rider rode at the side to help turn the herd. A Drag Rider was a cowboy who rode at rear of the herd to keep it moving. As you walk down the trail, have people in your group assume these positions like you were moving cattle.
DOWN THE PATH: BARBED-WIRE FENCES

By the 1870s, westward expansion of agriculture across the Great Plains had been halted by the lack of adequate fencing to protect crops from cattle. Where stone and wood fences were common in the East, Texans used ditches, mud barriers, thorny hedges and bois-d’arc barriers. The features of thorn hedges and smooth wire were combined into barbed wire. On November 24, 1874, Joseph F. Glidden of DeKalb, Illinois, was granted a patent for the first barbed wire. Known as the "Winner," it was the most commercially successful of hundreds of eventual barbed wire designs. “Light as air, stronger than whiskey, and cheap as dirt,” the product was touted. Barbed wire soon enclosed the open range, contributing to the end of the cattle drives and Indian raids. By the 1880s, most lands in Texas were fenced.

DOWN THE PATH: WOMEN ON THE CHISHOLM

Although social and gender roles prevented most women from working openly as drovers, at least one intrepid female — Amanda Burks of Cotulla — reportedly dressed as a man in 1871, joined a trail crew, and fooled them for months before revealing her true identity. She later became a successful rancher. Hattie Cluck also followed a cattle herd up the Chisholm Trail in 1871. Traveling while pregnant with her fourth child and with the others in tow. Her adventure included threatened by cattle thieves and crossing the Red River on a wagon kept afloat with logs strapped to the sides.

In 1873, Margaret Borland, the daughter of Irish immigrants and a widow from Victoria, bossed her own herd to market, accompanied by several children and grandchildren. Lizzie Johnson Williams, a schoolteacher, bookkeeper, and writer, made several trips up the Chisholm Trail in the 1880s with herds she owned. Her success earned her the title, “Cattle Queen of Texas.” Mary “Mollie” Taylor Bunton followed a herd of 5,000 Kansas-bound longhorns in the waning days of the Chisholm Trail, and left the most detailed account of a woman’s experiences in her 1939 book, A Bride on the Old Chisholm Trail published in 1886.

DOWN THE PATH: DIVERSITY AND THE TRAIL

Texas cattle drovers on the Chisholm Trail represented many ethnic backgrounds. Multi-racial outfits were common. African American and Hispanic cowboys comprised two of the largest and most significant groups, numbering a quarter to a third of the total number of trail hands, especially from regions with large black and Hispanic populations like South Texas and the Gulf Coast. In some cases, they made up entire outfits. Ancestors of the Chisholm Trail’s Hispanic vaqueros delivered the first permanent cattle herds to Texas from Mexico in the late 1600s and drove Texas longhorns to New Orleans in the 1770s and 1780s. They originated the methods and much of the equipment used on the range and trail.

CONTINUE DOWN THE PATH TO THE CABIN
Emigrants from Germany began homesteading in this fertile area outside Austin in the 1850s. Some relocated from areas to the south, which were more prone to Indian attacks, while others arrived from Indianola and later Galveston, the primary ports of entry. After the Civil War ended in 1865, the community of German immigrants in this area had grown to more than 20 families. They settled the communities of Dessau and Pflugerville — the latter named for its founding Pfluger family. Log cabins (Kruger Cabin pictured below) were replaced over time with more substantial stone and wood-frame houses.

**FRITZ KRUGER FARM**  
A GERMAN EMIGRANT HOMESTEAD IN THE YEAR 1867

**THROUGH THE GATE: KRUGER CABIN**

The Fredrich “Fritz” Kruger family immigrated to Texas in the late 1850s from Anhalt Dessau in Germany. Fredrich, relative Andrew, and others constructed this log house in 1867 from cedar logs cut six inches wide at a Bastrop sawmill. The cabin’s single room was the center of family activities — a parlor, a dining room and a bedroom all in one. The parents slept in the cabin, and the 13 children who lived with them slept in the loft upstairs or in the barn. Fritz’s wife, Fredericka, shocked non-German neighbors by working alongside her husband in the fields. During the Civil War, Fredrich helped run Texas cotton around the Union blockade by hauling it to Mexico.
When the Kruger family lived here, there was no running water. Using buckets and a wooden yoke, they carried water from the creek through the trees down the hill to the back porch. Imagine having to carry water a mile from a creek – a long way. Would you get tired? How many times a day would you have to carry water to the cabin for the family to have enough? How many trips would you have to make?

IN THE YARD: KITCHEN

From the earliest days that settlers moved into this area, fire was one of the biggest threats to homesteaders’ daily lives. Cabins burned often, and cooking fires were one of the main culprits. As a result, outdoor kitchens like this one were common. By the late 1860s, most outdoor kitchens like this one had a stone hearth. Heavy steel cranes allowed cooks to swing heavy pots off of the fire without lifting them. As was the custom in that day, women and girls would do their preparation work on the hearth or an adjacent long wooden table that served as counter in a modern-day kitchen. Imagine cooking outdoors in this kitchen in the middle of the winter, when frigid winds would blow out fires and freezing precipitation would.

BACK OF THE YARD: OPEN-BAY BARN

At the back of the yard is an open-bay barn typical of those on small farms in the 1860s. It is so named because of the feeding area and small pens on one side, an open bay where the livestock could eat and be sheltered. This type of barn was easier to build and took less lumber because it was not totally enclosed. Because livestock was such an important asset, a barn was often the first building a new settler might build, even before a house. Barns such as this had fallen out of favor by the late 19th century because the availability of store-bought nails, hinges and cut lumber made larger and more desirable closed barns easier to build.

IN THE YARD: VEGETABLE GARDENS

Unlike other early settlers, emigrants from German and elsewhere in Europe were known for plowing up most of their yards, and planning them in vegetables and herbs that they used to barter with neighbors for items they needed, such as nails, tools, even livestock. Common on these early Texas farms, the Three Sisters Garden was planted by Native Americans for centuries in many regions of North America. So called because they feature corn, beans and squash, these gardens form an ecosystem of companion planting – the corn provides a climbing stalk for the beans, which provide nitrogen to the soil and nourish the corn. The squash leaves spread out and prevent competition from unwanted weeds and shade for the corn’s shallow roots.
IN THE BACK: HEN HOUSE

Chickens were a staple on most early-day farms, almost as important as a plow horse or mule and a sturdy cabin. Eggs added protein to a family’s diet. Chickens were a source of meat, their feathers provided filler for pillows and their leavings were a nutrient-rich fertilizer for gardens. While some farmers let their chickens run loose during the day, the Krugers kept their chickens penned up. The earliest types of chickens tended to be native or early breeds such as Plymouth Rocks. Like most farmers, the Kruger family consumed most of the output of their coops, but as time progressed, they expanded their flock and bartered eggs with neighbors.

NEXT TO THE HEN HOUSE: DEVIL’S GATE

This open-style gate was popular on many Central Texas farms before the Civil War. Its name made it a colorful addition to history. Livestock and most wildlife would not pass through the opening because it was required a sharp right turn, and from a distance, it looked like a trap. After the Civil War, when manufactured hinges became more readily available, these types of gates disappeared. The devil part? Legend has it that the devil is unable to make right turns. Hence, he could not get through it either. Superstitions held that if a devil’s gate was present, the family would be prosperous, happy, and free of evil spirits.

THROUGH THE GATE: JOHNNY

In 1800s Texas, outdoor toilets had a variety of colorful names: “netty,” “johnny,” “privy,” “necessary,” among others. The Krugers called theirs seitengebäude, German for “outhouse.” That term originally referred to an outbuilding used for a variety of purposes but mainly for activities not wanted in the main house. Over time, the name came to mean a small enclosure around a pit used as a commode. Usually built of scrap wood, the first outhouses in Texas sometimes had only a hole in the floor over which a person would crouch. This outhouse has two holes, most likely because the Krugers had 13 children at home. Most outhouses were located downwind from the house. Toilet paper was commonly newspapers or hay.

ON DOWN THE TRAIL: FISKVILLE ROAD

Once known as Fiskville Road, this path once connected areas to the north and east with the small community of Fiskville located along Walnut Creek near the present-day intersection of North Lamar Boulevard and Ohlen Road. The town was founded in the early 1870s and named for George Greenleaf Fisk and Josiah Fisk, early settlers in the area. By the early 1890s it had a steam flour mill, cotton gin, general store, church, district school and a dairy — and about 200 residents. The town disappeared from official state maps around 1910. Today, two Austin streets are named for it.

CONTINUE ON THE TRAIL TO THE FORK, TURN RIGHT TO THE CREEK
Meandering through the shady greenbelt that lies just down the road is Walnut Creek, one of 14 Texas creeks that bear this name. It runs from northwest Travis County for 25 miles to the Colorado River. The creek was named for the hundreds of black walnut trees that once lined its banks. Most died in an early-1900s blight, but several remain here. They are joined by a large grove of Texas pecan trees just to the west. The creek serves as habitat for an array of native species — fish, snakes, coyotes, ringtail cats, deer, and a variety of native hawks and birds. The area looks much as it did before the Civil War, from the flood-plain grasses in the creekside meadow to the deep pools of water in ages-old sedimentary rock that line the waterway, where prehistoric fossils can be seen. Stand in the quietude of the brook and smell the sweet Texas history that was lived here.

The topography in this area features high limestone bluffs on either side of the creek — on the south for miles, then on the north side. The point where the topography changes, where the creek crosses Pioneer Farms, has made this a natural crossing point for centuries — for the native Tonkawa Indians who traveled through here seasonally in search of game, for the early Spanish explorers looking for gold, for the early settlers who cheered the black soil and abundant game.
This crossing is believed to have possibly once been used on the northern branch of El Camino Real, a 1700s route for Spanish travelers, as the place where roads to Cameron, Fiskville, and Dessau fanned out to the north and west, and as a spot where cattle drives on the famous Chisholm Trail crossed onto the rolling Blackland Prairie for a time in the 1870s. Archaeological exploration in the area has confirmed that this area was a campsite and crossing point long before Austin was first settled in 1839.

CONTINUE ON THE PATH: Historic Bluffs

In 1838, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar visited the small frontier hamlet of Waterloo, on the Colorado River where Austin is now located, while searching for a new site for the capital of the Republic of Texas. In Waterloo, he and two Texas Rangers found a hill just north of the river that would be a fine site for the capitol itself. Riding north from Waterloo, they reached some tall bluffs on a creek, overlooking a great expanse of prairie where a large buffalo herd grazed. That cinched it for Lamar: This is where the new capital of the Republic would be built. That site is believed to be the bluffs along Walnut Creek, just ahead of where you stand. One of the Rangers who was on that expedition, Lt. James O. Rice, was awarded the land where Pioneer Farms is now located for his help in siting the new capital.

CONTINUE ON THE PATH: Native Wildlife

A variety of native wildlife lived in this area during the 1850s and supplied the First Texans and early settlers with food as well as hides for clothing and shelter. The Tonkawa Indians used deerskins and buffalo hides to cover their tipis. They ate deer meat and fish from streams like Walnut Creek. Other native wildlife included a variety of snakes, including venomous rattlesnakes and water moccasins; bobcats and ringtails; coyotes and skunks; and prairie hens, ducks, turkeys and several types of hawks. Most of those animals still live in this area and frequent the creek side areas in the early morning hours and at dusk as they hunt for food, much like the early settlers did.

QUICK QUIZ: Tracking Animals

Wildlife was a food source for the early settlers. This included deer, squirrels, fish and even doves. Early settlers had to hunt to survive. How did they do that? They looked for evidence of animals in an area, such as tracks or scat. They would wait and try to find the animals. Look in the grasses and water areas and see what traces of animals you can see. If you see wildlife, back off and give them space. Do not get close.

CONTINUE UP THE HILL TOWARD THE BIG TREE
TONKAWA ENCAMPMENT
A VILLAGE OF FIRST TEXANS IN THE YEAR

1842

The Tonkawa were a group of independent bands of native peoples that united in Central Texas in the mid-1800s, though their range was as far south as the Gulf coast and north into Louisiana. The Tonkawa name comes from a Waco Indian term meaning "they all stay together." By the mid-1800s, most Tonkawa — a nomadic people that practiced Plains Indian traditions — had disappeared from the Austin area. Known as keen hunters and trackers, they were prized as scouts by the armies of both the Republic of Texas and the United States. After being relocated to desolate areas west of San Antonio, tribal members in the 1870s were removed to a reservation in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) where they remain today.

This confirmed Tonkawa campsite is one of just a few in Texas, and the only one in the Austin area. With oversight from the tribe, archaeological research was undertaken in the 1990s that confirmed the location and led to the discovery of an array of artifacts that have been used to determine the current interpretive program.
IN THE TONKAWA CAMP: TIPIS

Conical tents like this, originally made of deer and buffalo skins, were a staple housing design for Native Americans on the Great Plains from at least the 1500s into the 1800s. By the 1840s, when white settlers began populating Texas, canvas from wagons had taken the place of the skins in many villages. By its design, with a vent at its top point, a fire could be lit inside. Blankets, bedding and personal effects would have decorated the interior. Heights could range to 25 feet. Based on paintings in the 1850s and early photographs, most Tonkawa tipis in this part of Texas did not have symbols painted on them. A tipi is built by tying three poles into a balanced tripod, with additional poles and a covering then added. The word ‘tipi’ comes from the Lakota term thipi that means (thi) to dwell and (pi) they dwell.

BY THE TIPIS: SWEAT LODGE

Lodges such as this one were a key element on Tonkawa encampments, because they served as a gathering point for clan elders and for religious observances. Because Tonkawa men were the only ones who could participate in sweat lodge activities, this would be the equivalent of a Men’s Club in the village. Depending on the size of the village, a Tonkawa sweat lodge might be small, such as this one, and would be covered by reeds or cedar or other brush. Men would sit around a small fire inside, smoke and conduct ceremonies.

BY THE TIPIS: CAMP ETIQUETTE

Tonkawa villages contained members of an extended family, a “clan.” The Tonkawa believed they were descended from wolves, and many of the village ceremonies were related to wolves and the clan’s connection to the land. That’s ironic, because the Tonkawa culture — like that of most plains tribes — was a matrilineal culture, meaning that women made most of the decisions about when the villages would move and to where. That came from the buffalo, where males become solitary animals after they mate and the females guide the movements and society of the herds. Men were hunters and gatherers, supplying the food for the clan and defending it from marauders. Girls would work with their mothers in food preparation and carrying for younger siblings. Young boys would help with chores until they got older, when they would become hunters.

TOWARD THE CREEK: HORSE CORRAL

Just a stone’s throw away from the Tonkawa camp would have been the modern-day equivalent of a parking lot for the clan staying here. Tonkawa horses were kept within sight of the camp to prevent raiders from stealing the “rides.” As many as three dozen horses might be kept in one grazing area. The grazing area would be moved from time to time to keep it in good grass. Horses were a prized asset of the Tonkawa who used them for transportation and as work animals since the First Texans were introduced to horses by Spanish explorers about three centuries earlier. Considered expert horsemen, the Tonkawa mostly rode bareback. Men used horses for a variety of
activities — from raiding competing tribes’ camps to moving their own camps by travois from one place to another. The grazing areas might have been fenced brush or hide ropes between trees.

**BY THE BIG TREE: PIONEER OAK**

Beneath the majestic Pioneer Oak, estimated to be 600 years old, just up the hill from Walnut Creek is the site of an early-day Tonkawa Indian camp, one of just a few documented in Texas. It is believed to date to the late 1700s or early 1800s, before Texas became a Republic, when this area was still part of Spain and then Mexico. This camp likely would have featured groups of tipis and flat-topped brush huts, a central fire pit for ceremonies, and gathering areas for members of the clan (family unit) that camped here. The clans were led by women, just as the herds of buffalo were led by female bison. The Pioneer Oak tree is a “lightning tree,” evidenced by the stripe down one side, that shows where lightning once struck it.

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**QUICK QUIZ: LIGHTNING STRIKES**

*This tall tree is about twice as old as Texas and grew here long before the days when the first settlers arrived in this area. It is believed to have been struck by lightning in the mid-1800s. Discuss what happens when lightning strikes a tree, how the bolt of electricity moves down the tree under the bark to the ground, and how all the bark along that path is blown off and never grows back. Would you want to be standing nearby when the lightning bolt struck this tree?*

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**UP THE HILL THROUGH THE TREES: CAMERON ROAD**

Appearing on maps as early as 1868, this trail was once part of Cameron Road, a major trade route between Austin and Cameron, located northeast of Georgetown. Like other major roads of the day, this one was a former trail that became popular because it was the most direct route. Wagons forded Walnut Creek just down the hill, at a point where the Chisholm Trail once crossed the creek, and where Indians once made their camp. Note that the fence lines along the road’s edges are close to the road — a feature typical of country roads of the day. Many sections were just wide enough for two wagons to pass. Traffic consisted of horse-drawn wagons, horseback riders and an occasional stagecoach. By the late 1880s, the alignment of Cameron Road shifted to the west, its course likely changed by floods.

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**CONTINUE ON THE TRAIL TO BARN & PENS**
This “Old Home Place,” or homestead, lying just uphill a short walk north of the Tonkawa campsite typifies the farm of a middle-class settler’s family who had come to Texas from the Eastern states. They were called Texians when they first arrived in the 1820s and 1830s. By the 1870s, an average farm would have covered 250 acres, purchased 30 years earlier from those who had claimed the land and made a few improvements. While most Texans still lived on family farms, the era after the Civil War was a time of great change: Reconstruction (or “Yankee occupation,” as many Texans called it) ended in Texas in 1873. The first railroad train arrived in Austin two years earlier, and a newly invented product called barbed wire began fencing the open range and forever ending the cowboy trail life that had defined the Western frontier in previous decades.

BY THE BARN: GRAPE ARBOR

Like several of their neighbors, the Jourdans built a grape arbor within a few years after they homesteaded here in 1858. Arbors such as this usually featured a variety of native grapes — usually not good for wines — and could shade the entry path to their cabin. A vine-shaded entryway could add a touch of class. Wild grapes of various varieties flourished in this part of Texas for centuries. The Spanish explorers remarked in their written diaries about the sweet grapes along the Colorado River, and the Tonkawa were known to eat grapes and even ferment them into a ceremonial wine. Farmers harvested the grapes to eat and to occasionally distill wine, mostly for their own consumption. The Jourdan family maintained an arbor for years to shade the path between their cabin and barn.
UP THE PATH THROUGH THE ARBOR: JOURDAN CABIN

Frederick Jourdan arrived from Tennessee in 1839, while Texas was still a republic. After several moves he settled here in 1858, on land that had originally been homesteaded by Texas Ranger Lt. James O. Rice in 1844. Jourdan and his slaves built the cabin from cedar logs. Originally used as a corn crib to store livestock feed, the building was later converted into a house — most likely after a fire or tornado destroyed their other abode. The Jourdan Cabin is original to the Pioneer Farms site and features a “dog-trot” style cabin — two rooms, one on either side of a breezeway, with sleeping areas for children in an upstairs loft. On a hot summer afternoon, the temperatures in the breezeway could be ten degrees cooler than outside. The house also features an indoor kitchen with a “modern” wooden cook stove and a second bedroom, which was added in the 1870s. The Jourdans eventually acquired 2,000 acres in this area along Walnut Creek where they reared 12 children and grew cotton, wheat and corn.

FROM THE PORCH: OUTBUILDINGS

The buildings you see to your left, while looking out from the front porch, are outbuildings typical of a farm of this period. The one farthest away is a log barn built in the dog-trot style, just like the house. Dog-trot buildings were popular both as houses and barns for much of the 1800s in the southern Appalachian Mountain region and Tennessee in the late 1700s and may have come to Texas from there. Sometimes, a family might live in one side of their barn until their separate home was completed. This barn was relocated here from the Texas Hill Country. Just up the corral line from the barn is the hen house — a source of eggs, meat, feathers for pillow and mattress filler, and droppings that provided a nutrient-rich fertilizer for kitchen gardens. The chickens pecking in the pen are Rhode Island Reds and other varieties the Jourdans may have had. Beyond the hen house is an outdoor kitchen, a root cellar that was an early version of a refrigerator to store canned goods and produce, a smokehouse for a curing meats and an outhouse. The post-and-rail corrals made of rough cedar posts confine livestock that were used to work the fields and feed the family.

Quick Quiz: Lots of Freds

Frederick Sprinkle. Fredrich Kruger. Frederick Jourdan. Why were so many early settlers in this area named Fred? It was a popular name in the early 1800s, especially among settlers in this area who came from Eastern States and Germany. Often sons and daughters were named after older relatives, as they are now. Ask the members of your group how they got their first names and who they were named for.

CONTINUE ON THE TRAIL TOWARD THE BIG RED BARN
Immigrants from Germany began homesteading in this fertile area outside Austin in the 1850s. Some relocated from areas to the south, which were more prone to Indian attacks, while others arrived from Indianola and later Galveston, the primary ports of entry. After the Civil War ended in 1865, the community of German immigrants in this area had grown to more than 20 families. They settled the communities of Dessau and Pflugerville — the latter named for its founding Pfluger family. Log cabins were replaced over time with more substantial stone and wood-frame houses.

UP THE ROAD, TO THE LEFT: DAWSON CORN CRIB

This double-bay log building, with a “dog trot” breezeway at its center, was built as a corn crib around 1851 by Noah Dawson, an Austin farmer. Constructed of rough-hewn cedar logs that were saddle- and V-notched, a common building style of the day, the building also features a “witch’s hat” roof — with a ridge pole and notched rafters. This type of roof was common in the 1850s, just before the Civil War, a design departure that arrived with settlers from the Eastern states. In its role as a barn, corn and other feedstock for animals would have been stored in one of its log bays while the other bay would have been used for storage of implements and tools. It also served at one point as a house and, for a time at Pioneer Farms, as a blacksmith shop.
BY THE DAWSON BARN: FLAG POLE

This short flagpole features squared edges and a joint, which allows the flag to be flown by raising the pole. This “break-joint” flagpole was popular during the early to mid-1800s in Texas, often seen at rural stores and trading posts and in military camps. All were hand-hewn and featured wood or blacksmith-forged steel pins that secured the joint. Break-joint flagpoles usually ranged in height from 10 to 20 feet, shorter than other types that used used rope and pulleys. This type of flagpole faded from popularity by the 1880s. Flagpoles in the early days were used to attract customers and would make a business stand out from its neighbors, much as they do today. This flagpole was carved by hand in 2003 by volunteers working from historic plans and using period-appropriate methods.

INTO THE BARN: SCARBOROUGH BARN.

Built circa 1850, atop a hill near Austin’s Highland Mall, this barn was once a part of the Scarborough family farm just north of Austin. It is likely the oldest extant barn of its type in the area, still in farm use, and one of the oldest in Texas. It features large, hand-sawn timbers held together with pegs instead of nails. It is a common design for barns built before the Civil War. The double-pen design could stable six horses or mules and store seed or animal feed in two granaries. As you walk through the barn, smell the sweet aroma of livestock and hay — a scent that city folks seldom know nowadays, but one that used to be common in frontier Texas. Hay was stored upstairs, which was also occasionally used for gatherings and dances. Extended sheds on each end made room for tack, harness and wagons and, on this farm, a carpentry shop. That was a sign that the owner was prosperous. Just outside the barn are various implements — hay rakes, plows and hay cutters. Fine barns such as this were a hallmark of successful farms in mid-1800s Texas.

IN THE PASTURE BEHIND THE BARN: CALDWELL CORN CRIB

Located behind the Scarborough Barn is this one-story log building, built circa 1829 in Garfield, southeast of Austin, by early homesteader Hezekiah Caldwell. It is the oldest building at Pioneer Farms, and one of the oldest extant in Texas. The structure is made of cedar logs, each notched in various ways to fit together at the corners. Its rough-hewn construction is typical of most Texas buildings of that time, featuring a log structure atop a field stone foundation. As a corn crib, it was built to store food for both settlers and livestock. Yellow kernel corn was fed mainly to animals, while the white-kernel variety was a staple on settlers’ tables — in cornbread, corn mush and grits.

NEAR THE BARN: ECLIPSE WINDMILL

The tall tower and tank marks a common necessity on Texas farms: a reliable water supply. The advent of windmills in the mid-1800s allowed Texas farmers to fence more land and raise more livestock, reducing farmers’ reliance on the weather. This Model 10 Eclipse windmill was manufactured in 1886 and was one of the most common on the Southern Great Plains until World
War I. Invented in 1867 by the Rev. Leonard H. Wheeler of Beloit, Wisconsin, the original model had four large paddle-shaped blades. By 1881, Eclipse windmills were being marketed through Fairbanks Morse & Co. This windmill’s arms are made from oak, and its fins and blades are cypress. By the 1890s, wooden windmills began to be replaced by metal mills.

**UP THE ROAD FROM THE CABIN: SWEDISH SILO**

Round and short and somewhat of a curiosity, the wooden silo just down the path from the Jourdan Cabin was built between 1898 and 1912. It is original to Pioneer Farms. Like dozens of other barrel-shaped silos that once dotted this farming region, it is reported to be only one of two still in existence — and the only one that has been restored and can be seen by the public. For years it was known as the Swedish silo, presumably for the Swedish immigrants who built it. Grain silos such as this came into vogue after the Civil War, replacing corn cribs and barn lofts as a place for farmers to store their animal feed. While silos in states north of Texas were taller, those in this part of the country tended to be just one or two stories in height — owing to the longer growing season here. This silo originally had a twin that was located just to the east, marked by a circular foundation still visible.

**BY THE TRAIL NEAR THE BARN: GILES TANK**

Named for the family that impounded a tributary of Walnut Creek during the last century, this pond served for years as a stock tank and watering pond for Giles dairy and farm. The wooded areas surrounding it have a colorful history. It was near here, in the late 1850s, that a young man was reported to have been kidnapped and murdered by Indians. Along the banks of this pond, area residents many times reported seeing ghosts and other apparitions during the fall harvest. The pond is home to fish, beavers and various native plants. Fish if you brought your cane pole and some bait, but don’t swim because there are snakes and other critters in and around the placid water that might scare you.

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**Quick Quiz: Livestock Types**

Livestock kept by early settlers varied, sometimes based from where the settlers had come or how much money they had. Settlers from Eastern states tended to have oxen, cows, horses, chickens and pigs. German emigrants had pigs, mules, chickens and cows. Well-to-do farms had many more types of livestock. What types have you seen so far, and how were they different from farm to farm? What were the various types of livestock used for?

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**Continue on the Trail Back to the Village**
Cotton was one of the few crops harvested in both the Old and New Worlds before Columbus and, after Eli Whitney patented the cotton gin in 1793, became entrenched in Texas and the South by the mid-1800s. Although the price of cotton dropped steadily after the Civil War, rich soils, good growing conditions and new farm machinery provided most farm owners with comfortable lifestyles. Most farm owners had large and well-appointed homes, well-built barns and outbuildings, and finely-bred livestock. Cotton was still king in Texas in the 1880s, but the world was changing quickly — from the frontier era to the modern Victorian era. Telephones came to Austin in 1881. The University of Texas opened in 1883. That same year, a new libation called Dr Pepper was invented in Waco. The fabled Driskill Hotel opened in 1886. Two years later, a grand new State Capitol was opened.

Just up the road: James Bell House

Built about 1859 along Brushy Creek on the rolling prairie east of Round Rock, this Greek Revival style plantation house was the home of James Hall Bell, an associate justice of the Texas Supreme Court. It served as the centerpiece of Bell’s 600 acres of agricultural interests in Travis and Williamson counties for more than 35 years. A Harvard-educated attorney trained in
Kentucky, Bell (1825-1892) had moved to the area in 1859 from Brazoria County, on the Texas coast. He supported Governor Sam Houston in opposing Texas’ secession but, unlike Houston, continued to serve as an elective official throughout the Civil War. Bell was a founder of the Texas Republican Party. He and his wife Catherine reared five children — two sons and three daughters — in this house constructed of milled lumber. Its deep front porch, central hallway, and large rooms reflect the conservative popular design tastes of the day. Bell’s other connection to history: In 1873, he delivered the telegram from President Ulysses Grant that ended the Semicolon War — a dispute over a misplaced semicolon in the state election law that left Texas with two governors for several weeks.

OUT THE BACK DOOR: KITCHEN & SPINNING ROOM

Since the earliest days of Colonial settlement in the United States, the fear of fire placed most kitchens in free-standing buildings such as this one. It is equipped with a large stove, several work tables, and cabinets. Dependencies were usually one-story in construction and matched the Main House in design. They often housed not only a kitchen but also a spinning room or wash house. Many Texas farms of this size before the Civil War had two dependencies, as you see here.

NEAR THE KITCHEN: CORRALS & OUTBUILDINGS

Beyond the kitchen lie formal white-board corrals that reflected the relative wealth of the landowner. The yard features a cistern house located just east of the main house where water could be pumped for bathing and cleaning; a smokehouse near the kitchen, an outhouse — a nicer version than on some other farmsteads — and ornamental flower gardens, a feature that became popular as the Victorian era began. Most flowers are native species. Beyond the dependencies, in the farmyard, lies a small barn that sheltered pigs, hogs or sheep — called a “half-barn” because it was a half-story in height. Such barns were common animal sheds in early Texas, built just high enough to shelter sheep, goats and sometimes pigs. The yard fence features “rabbit boards” at the bottom to keep wildlife from burrowing underneath and nibbling the flowers and shrubs.

QUICK QUIZ: COTTON WEALTH

What do you see about the James Bell House that would indicate he had more money than the other home sites at Pioneer Farms? Furniture? Gardens? Bright paint? Cut-board fences? More toys for his children? Just as in today’s world, the size and style of a home can often give an indication about the family that lives there.

CONTINUE ON THE TRAIL TO THE VILLAGE
CONGRATULATIONS!

The last leg of the tour will be returning to Sprinkle Corner, where you started your travels. Feel free to shop for souvenirs and snacks in the General Store and to peruse the exhibits and other historical sites before you leave. You have just finished walking through nearly 70 years of Texas history during the 1800s!

ASK YOURSELF:

What was the most interesting historical site we visited today?

How old was it?

What was going on in Texas and the United States during that period?

What was the most unusual item you saw?
(butter churn, cast-iron stove, tipi, carriage, outhouse)

How was that item used?

Do we still use an item like this today — if not, what has replaced it?

At which site would you like to live? Why?

Where would you get your food?

How would you get your clothes?

Where would you sleep?

Where would you go to school?

Please return this Walking Tour Guide to the General Store.

THANK YOU FOR VISITING PIONEER FARMS!
ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Our museum covers more than 90 acres, encompassing the core of what was once the homestead of Frederick and Harriet Jourdan. In 1956, the Jourdan grandchildren, Laura and Eugene Giles, donated the property to the Heritage Society of Austin for a park to honor early-day settlers. Opened in 1975, the museum was operated by the Austin Natural Science Foundation and the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. Between 2003 and 2013, the museum was staffed by volunteers and was managed by a semi-independent Board of Governors that from the start established self-sustaining operations. In 2015, after successfully establishing its business operations, the museum was transitioned into ownership and management of the non-profit Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms Foundation, an entity created to ensure the successful future of the Austin treasure.

In the past decade, the museum has more than quadrupled the amount of historical programming offered to the public, including the highly acclaimed Heritage Artisans initiative that offers demonstrations and instructional classes in dozens of ‘lost arts’ and pioneering skills. Annual special events have been expanded year-round, and more than a dozen additional historic buildings have been preserved as part of greatly expanded historical sites and exhibits. Interpretive periods for the historic sites have been expanded from one year to stretch from 1841, when Texas was a Republic, to 1899, just before the dawn of a new century – giving visitors an expanded view of Central Texas’ colorful and storied history during the nineteenth century.

Annual attendance now exceeds 60,000 visitors, a five-fold increase since 2003. More than 8,000 school children each year learn about Texas history by touring the museum through a variety of focused learning programs during weekdays.