

Texas Historical Commission

A Community Investment
Grade 7

FANTHORP INN

— STATE HISTORIC SITE —

Anderson, Texas



Virtual Field Trip

TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION





Image of Fanthorp Inn
courtesy Texas Historical Commission

A Community Investment

Overview: Environments, Entrepreneurs, and Communities

Henry Fanthorp built a business on providing shelter to the men and women who built Texas. From famous leaders to European immigrants and enslaved Africans, people from all walks of life could be found at the Fanthorp Inn in the 19th century. Fanthorp, an English immigrant, worked hard to expand his inn and used his wealth to invest in his business, his community, and Texas. In these activities, learners use primary source documents to explore how a hotel and a stagecoach impacted the development of Texas communities and businesses.

Objectives

- Demonstrate understanding of early Texas community and commerce development
- Analyze primary source documents and images
- Reflect on the challenges of transportation in 1850s Texas

Social Studies TEKS

7.2F, 7.5A, 7.8B, 7.8C, 7.9A, 7.10B, 7.10D, 7.12B, 7.18B

Additional Discipline TEKS

Fine Arts MS1

Resources

- Activity 1: Community Investment Primary Sources Analysis
- Activity 2: The Nicest Inn the South Can Afford
- Activity 3: All Aboard the Stagecoach!

Vocabulary

inn (IN) noun: an establishment that provides travelers a place to sleep and food and drink

investment (in VEST muhnt) noun: the practice of using money to make more money

La Bahia Trail (lah bah HEE yuh trayl) noun: originally an east-to-west route used by Native Americans and later European explorers that ran from Presidio La Bahia in Goliad, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana

postmaster (POST mass tur) noun: a person in charge of a post office

primary source (PRY meh ree sorss) noun: an immediate, first-hand account of an event, created by a person who was involved in the event

stagecoach (STAYJUH kohch) noun: a large horse-drawn vehicle used to carry passengers and often mail along a regular route between two or more places

Historical Context

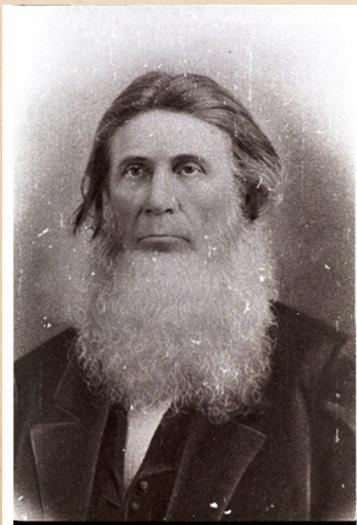


Image courtesy of Texas Historical Commission

Henry Fanthorp was born in Lincolnshire, England in 1790. He immigrated to Texas in 1832. He married Rachel Kennard in 1834 and moved into a log cabin near the crossing of two Native American roads, La Bahia Trail and the Coushatta Trace. Many travelers journeyed on these roads every day, so Fanthorp began letting them sleep in his parlor. This made Fanthorp a lot of money which he used to add more rooms to his house for people to stay.

Fanthorp then contracted with the H.M. Black stagecoach line to allow them to use his inn as a stop where they could switch their drivers and horses. This was very important because the stagecoach didn't just bring travelers to his inn, it also transported the mail. Fanthorp became the first postmaster in the area. His home and business became a hub for locals in the community to gather and receive information. The Fanthorp Inn was a hotel, stage stop, and post office as well as a restaurant, lounge, general store, ballroom, and community center.

Guests at the Fanthorp Inn described it as “the best the South could afford.” The finest coffees, teas, and tobacco products were made available to guests. Most Texas inns served only salted pork and corn bread, but Fanthorp brought an English style of innkeeping with him and served his guests fresh beef, pork, chicken, turkey, and venison all prepared with the finest spices imported from around the world.



Activity 1: Community Investment Primary Source Analysis

45 minutes

In this activity, learners use the **Consider This resource** to analyze three primary sources: a transcription of **Amos Beardsley's letter** to his wife in April 1850, a **map of Fanthorp Inn** and the town of Anderson from 1850, and an **1851 painting** by Richard Caton Woodville.

Preview the analysis resource and each primary resource. Encourage learner reactions. Review the definition of a primary source and discuss why primary sources are important to the interpretation and preservation of history.

Activity 2: The Nicest Inn the South Can Afford 30 minutes

In his book *Roughing It* published in 1872, Mark Twain described typical stagecoach inns of the day. In this activity using the **Nicest Inn graphic organizer**, learners read Twain's excerpt then compare and contrast his descriptions with images showing Fanthorp Inn around the same time. Discuss learners' answers when completed.

Activity 3: All Aboard the Stagecoach! 45 minutes

Henry Fanthorp contracted with the HM Black Stage Company to make his inn a stagecoach stop. The stagecoach was one of the quickest and most efficient modes of overland transportation in the 1800s.

Stagecoaches got their name because they would travel long distances in stages. The vehicles transported passengers and mail across long distances. They were driven by a team of mules or horses. The coaches would travel at six to eight miles per hour down rough and bumpy roads. About every ten miles, the stagecoach reached a stop where passengers would get off, others would get on, and the horses and stage drivers would change out.

The Fanthorp Inn was one of those stops. Some passengers would get off at the Fanthorp Inn and decide to stay for a meal or for the night. In the 1840s, Henry Fanthorp charged one dollar for guests to stay at his inn. For that price, guests received two meals in the dining room and a spot in one of these beds. The guests were assured only a part of the bed, not the whole bed. Travelers would most likely spend the night sleeping next to a stranger.

In this activity, learners use the **All Aboard the Stagecoach!** resource to plan an 1850s stagecoach trip and write and illustrate a fictional letter or journal entry describing the adventure. Share responses when completed.



Activity 1: Consider This

Read and look closely at the primary sources to answer the questions.

April 1850 Letter from Amos Beardsley to his wife

- How does this letter relate to Texas history?
- List at least three words that describe the writer.
- What does this letter tell you about Fanthorp's role in his community?

Map of Fanthorp Inn and town of Anderson, 1850

- Why do you think Fanthorp placed his inn where he did?
- Henry Fanthorp used enslaved labor to cook the meals and provide for his guests, but their homes are not on the map. Why do you think that might be?
- What does this map tell you about Fanthorp's community?

1851 painting, Mexican News, by Richard Caton Woodville

- Describe what is happening in this painting.
- What does this painting tell you about the role of women and African Americans at inns in Texas during the 1850s?
- How could this painting relate to Fanthorp Inn?

Activity 1 Resource: Letter by Amos Beardsley to his wife

April 1850

We had a great Ball at Fanthorps Hotel last Monday the 21st called the Battle of San Jacinto in commemoration of the day that gained them their independence which was fought 14 years since at the mouth of the San Jacinto River where it empties into the Buffalo Bayou. I saw the Battle ground when I came from Galveston it was one of the bloodiest that was fought commanded by Sam. Houston on the part of Texas & Gen Santa Ann there were probably 150 or more at the Ball & Mr & Mrs Fanthorp took all the pains in their power to get the supper up in good order & style & succeeded beyond my expectations if they had had nice furniture & crockery it would be hard to beat. They had a good variety for Texas! and it was well cooked the fair sex present were the most of them good looking & dressed in good style & taste the dancing on the whole was very good that is what I saw of it I only occasionally looked upon them. Don't Be Jealous!



Activity 1 Resource: Map of Fanthorp Inn and Anderson, 1850

This map was drawn by Amos Beardsley in 1850 and depicts the Fanthorp Inn, its surrounding buildings, and the first block of the town of Anderson, north of the inn. Image courtesy of Texas Historical Commission. (Note: Alta Mira is the former name of the town of Anderson).



Activity 1 Resource: Painting, *Mexican News*

Mexican News, by Richard Caton Woodville, 1851. Image courtesy Reynalda House Museum of American Art.



Activity 2: The Nicest Inn the South Can Afford

Read the description of a typical stagecoach inn from Mark Twain's 1872 book, *Roughing It*. Then look at the pictures of the photos showing what the Fanthorp Inn looked like at about the same time. Complete the compare and contrast graphic organizer.

Twain's Inns

Fanthorp Inn

Alike



Activity 2 Resource: from *Roughing It* by Mark Twain

The furniture of the hut was neither gorgeous nor much in the way. The rocking-chairs and sofas were not present, and never had been, but they were represented by two three-legged stools, a pine-board bench four feet long, and two empty candle-boxes. The table was a greasy board on stilts, and the table-cloth and napkins had not come—and they were not looking for them, either. A battered tin platter, a knife and fork, and a tin pint cup, were at each man's place, and the driver had a queens-ware saucer that had seen better days.



Illustration from *Roughing It*. Courtesy of Project Gutenberg

Activity 2 Resource: Images from Fanthorp Inn



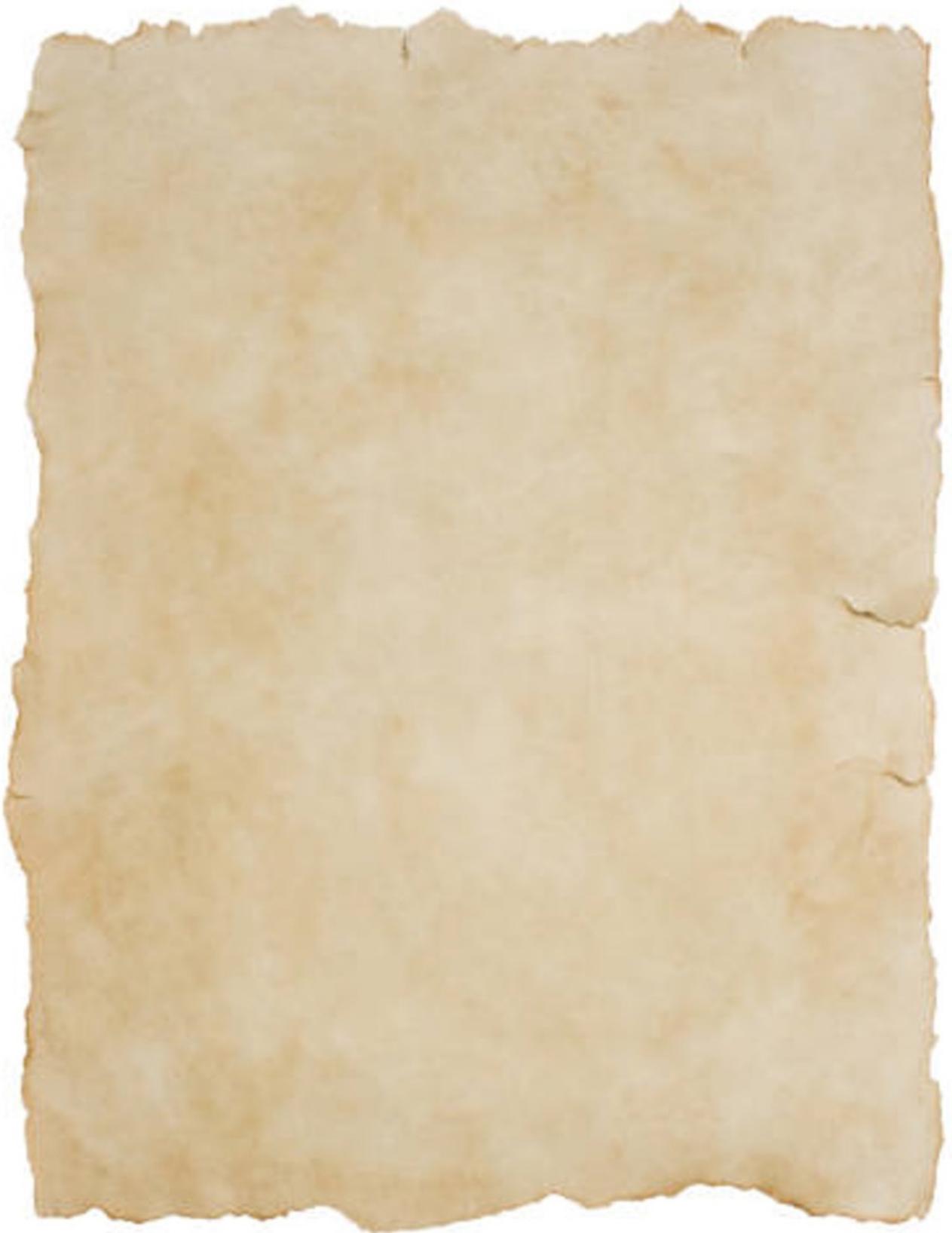
Activity 3: All Aboard the Stagecoach!

My Stagecoach Trip

Reason for my trip	
What I packed	
What I liked about staying at Fanthorp Inn	
What I didn't like about staying at Fanthorp Inn	
What I liked about riding in a stagecoach	
What I didn't like about riding in a stagecoach	
What I saw as I travelled across Texas	
Friendly advice for traveling across Texas in a stagecoach	



Activity 3: All Aboard the Stagecoach!



Resource Images: Fanthorp Inn Stagecoach



The inside of the stagecoach had three benches where travelers sat. Most stagecoaches could carry nine people inside, however, some travelers sat on top of the coach itself. Sometimes as many as 17 people traveled in or on a stagecoach!



Resource Images: Fanthorp Inn

Travelers at the Fanthorp Inn stayed in a room like this. Multiple beds offered travelers a place to sleep. However, a traveler didn't get a whole bed! Most beds were shared with at least one stranger. Paying Mr. Fanthorp \$1.00 reserved a part of a bed for the night.

