

Burleson, Edward ^[1]

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by Donald K. Pickens, 1979

15 Dec. 1793–26 Dec. 1851

Edward Burleson, Texas politician and Indian fighter, was born in [Buncombe County](#) ^[2]. After moves to Tennessee and Alabama in 1814, he went to Missouri, where he commanded a company of Howard County militia and later was a colonel in the Saline County militia. By 1823, in Tennessee, he served as lieutenant colonel and later colonel in the Hardeman County militia.

After arriving in Texas in 1830, Burleson acquired title on 4 Apr. 1831 to a league of land in present Bastrop County, Stephen F. Austin's second colony. He served as delegate to the convention of 1833 at San Felipe from Mina Municipality. On 10 Oct. 1835, at Gonzales, Burleson was elected colonel of the only regiment organized under Austin. When Austin became commissioner of the provisional government of the United States, Burleson became first in command. Near Bexar, on 12 Mar. 1836, Burleson was elected colonel of the First Regiment of Texas Volunteers, which he commanded at the Battle of San Jacinto. A year later he became a brigadier general of the militia, and by 1838 he was a colonel of the first regiment of infantry in the regular army.

Burleson was politically active as a member of the [Texas House of Representatives](#) ^[3] from Bastrop County in the second congress, 1837–38, and as a member of the Texas Senate in the third congress, 1838–39. After establishing the town of Waterloo in 1839, Burleson spent the following year fighting Indians, commanding regulars in the Cherokee War, but he did not participate in the Plum Creek fight.

Elected vice-president of the Texas Republic on 6 Sept. 1841, Burleson was inaugurated on 10 Dec. Largely through Sam Houston's efforts, he lost in his presidential candidacy against [Anson Jones](#) ^[4] in 1844. Burleson was on [James Pinckney Henderson](#) ^[5]'s staff during the [War with Mexico](#) ^[6].

In the first and second legislatures, 1846–49, he was the senator from the fifteenth district, and was elected president pro tem. In the third and fourth legislatures he represented the sixteenth district, having moved to Hays County, where he built a home near the headwaters of the San Marcos River. At the time of his death, he was still senate president pro tem. On 24 Mar. 1846, Burleson County, Tex., was named in his honor.

In 1831, Burleson married Sarah G. Owen of Madison County, Ala.; six of their children survived infancy.

References:

DAB, vol. 3 (1929).

Handbook of Texas ^[7], vol. 1 (1952).

Additional Resources:

Texas State Historical Association: <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fbu40> ^[8]

A Guide to the Edward Burleson, Sr. Papers, 1835-1853, 1922, University of Texas at Austin: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utcah/01238/cah-01238.html> ^[9]

"Edward Burleson : Texas frontier leader", by John Holmes Jenkins; Kenneth Kesselus: <https://www.worldcat.org/title/edward-burleson-texas-frontier-leader/oclc/22903233> ^[10]

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[15]

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