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<http://www.sfasu.edu/heritagecenter/7036.asp>



Thomas J. Rusk is significant in Nacogdoches for his role as a soldier and politician in the Texas Revolution and the Republic of Texas.

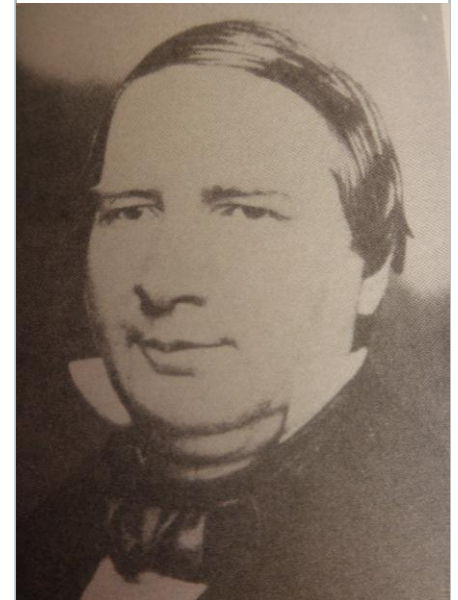


Misty Hurley, a Graduate Student in Public History at Stephen F. Austin State University, created this brochure as part of her thesis on cemetery preservation and creation of interpretive materials connecting Oak Grove Cemetery of Nacogdoches with historic sites, museums, artifacts, and archival records.



This project has been created in conjunction with the Center for Regional Heritage Research at SFASU. Photograph courtesy of the Nacogdoches County Genealogical Society.

Thomas Jefferson Rusk



Lawyer,
Politician, Texas
Revolution
Leader



Thomas Jefferson Rusk was born on December 5, 1803 in South Carolina where the family lived on the property of John C. Calhoun. Calhoun found Rusk a position in the office of the District Clerk, where he earned a living while studying law. Upon gaining a license to practice law, Rusk moved to Clarksville, Georgia, and soon rose to prominence and earned some wealth. Thomas Rusk met and married Mary Frances Cleveland on January 4, 1827.

Rusk invested everything he had in a gold mining operation but was left with nothing when his partners fled with his money to Texas. Rusk followed and though he never regained his investment, he did find his new home in Nacogdoches. On February 11, 1835, Thomas J. Rusk took his oath of allegiance to Mexico.

In Nacogdoches, Rusk met Sam Houston and other revolutionary minded men who were unhappy with their Mexican government and devoted himself wholeheartedly to the achievement of Texas independence. As a Captain in the Texas Army, Rusk organized a company of volunteers and marched to San Antonio in



October of 1835. After a victory at Concepcion, Rusk was named Commissariat for the Army. Thomas J. Rusk was elected to the Convention of 1836 where he signed the Texas Declaration of Independence. Rusk became the Secretary of War under President David G. Burnet and joined Sam Houston at San Jacinto. When Sam Houston was wounded, Rusk took up the position of Brigadier General and commanded the Texas Army as it chased the Mexican troops out of Texas.

After the war, Rusk returned to Nacogdoches to try and live a quiet life with his family but Texas was not through with him. Rusk served in many political positions until his suicide on July 29, 1857, including :

- Cabinet member of President Sam Houston
- Member of the Second Congress of the Republic of Texas
- Chief Justice of the Republic of Texas
- President of the state Constitutional Convention
- Senator United States and President Pro Temp of the Senate

Visit these sites associated with Thomas Jefferson Rusk

- Historical Markers – The Battle of Nacogdoches and Red House - 115 South St.
- The Durst-Taylor House Museum - 304 North St.
- Thomas J. Rusk Homesite - corner of North St. and Rusk St.
- The Stone Fort Museum - Griffith Street on the Campus of Stephen F. Austin State University
- Thomas J. Rusk Historical Marker, Rusk Building Historical Marker, and the Rusk Building - Alumni Drive on the Campus of SFA
- Rusk Statue - intersection of North St. and Main St.
- Thomas J. Rusk grave at Oak Grove Cemetery - North Lanana St.