

The Texas Indians (Centennial Series of the Association of Former Students, Texas A&M University)

David La Vere



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During an excavation in the 1950s, the bones of a prehistoric woman were discovered in Midland County, Texas. Archaeologists dubbed the woman "Midland Minnie." Some believed her age to be between 20,000 and 37,000 years, making her remains the oldest ever found in the Western Hemisphere. While the accuracy of this date remains disputed, the find, along with countless others, demonstrates the wealth of human history that is buried beneath Texas soil.

By the time the Europeans arrived in Texas in 1528, Native Texans included the mound-building Caddos of East Texas; Karankawas and Atakapas who fished the Texas coast; town-dwelling Jumanos along the Rio Grande; hunting-gathering Coahuiltecans in South Texas; and corn-growing Wichitas in the Panhandle. All of these native peoples had developed structures, traditions, governments, religions, and economies enabling them to take advantage of the land's many resources. The arrival of Europeans brought horses, metal tools and weapons, new diseases and new ideas, all of which began to reshape the lives of Texas Indians.

Over time, Texas became a home to horse-mounted, buffalo-hunting Apaches, Comanches, and Kiowas and a refuge for Puebloan Tiguas, Alabama-Coushattas, Kickapoos and many others. These groups traded, shared ideas, fought and made peace with one another as well as peoples outside of Texas. This book tells the story of all of these groups, their societies and cultures, and how they changed over the years.

Author David La Vere offers a complete chronological and cultural history of Texas Indians from 12,000 years ago to the present day. He presents a unique view of their cultural history before and after European arrival, examining their interactions—both peaceful and violent—with Europeans, Mexicans, Texans, and Americans. This book is the first full examination of the history of Texas Indians in over forty years and will appeal to all of those with an interest in Native Americans and the history of Texas.

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