El Camino Real de los Tejas was a road that could carry people from Natchitoches, Louisiana, to Mexico via San Antonio and was instrumental in the early settlement of Texas. Original traces of El Camino Real de los Tejas can be viewed at Mission Tejas State Park.

GET A GLIMPSE OF A DREAM REALIZED BY ONE FAMILY WHO TREKKED EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS IN SEARCH OF WEALTH, OPPORTUNITY, AND ADVENTURE.

IN APPRECIATION
The home was donated to Mission Tejas State Park in 1973 by surviving members of the Rice Family. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will be forever grateful for being given the opportunity to preserve this unique piece of history to share with park visitors.

NEARBY POINTS OF INTEREST
Davy Crockett National Forest
Caddoan Mounds State Historic Site
El Camino Real de los Tejas (The King’s Highway)

PARK LOCATION
Mission Tejas State Park is located 21 miles northeast of Crockett and 12 miles southwest of Alto on SH 21 (the Old San Antonio Road). The park entrance is near Weches, where Park Road 44 intersects with SH 21. The park is open throughout the year. Call in advance to schedule a guided tour of the historic structures.

NOTE: Texas state law makes it unlawful for anyone to disturb in any way historic or prehistoric, archeological or paleontological sites, or any historic marker situated on lands controlled by the state of Texas.

NUMBERS TO CALL
For all reservations, call (512) 389-8900
For information only, call (800) 792-1112
Mission Tejas State Park
120 State Park Road 44, Grapeland, Texas 75844
(936) 687-2394 • www.tpwd.texas.gov/missiontejas/

TOUR INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT PARK HEADQUARTERS
According to tradition, Joseph Rice built Room 1 in 1828. It served as a multi-purpose dwelling in which the entire family cooked, ate, washed, and often slept in the dogtrot to take advantage of breezes funneled through the passageway. The dogtrot seems to have evolved in the American South during the 18th and 19th centuries.

When Rice first built the home, it may not have had any windows, or only a small, shuttered one like the one found in Room 2. Glass would have been added later as it became available. British tradition dictated that at least one full-sized window be cut in the front wall facing the porch. The centrally positioned doors also reflect British influence and distribute the structural load most effectively.

Porches were common in most Texas log homes and provided shade during the hot Texas summers as well as a storage area for saddles, riding gear, etc. during rainy weather.

Rooms 2 and 3 are joined by a double fireplace on the common wall. This type of construction is sometimes referred to as “saddlebag construction” because the roof of the house sits across the common chimney like saddlebags on a horse. There are many 19th century homes with dogtrotts and some with saddlebag construction but the Rice Home is one of few with both.

Swedish immigrants likely were the first to use horizontal log construction in America during the 1630s and 1640s. But German immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania during the 18th century probably made the most impact on the spread of log construction. They introduced the technique to the English, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish pioneers, who saw that log housing was well-suited to life in a forested environment. When the pioneers began to move westward and southward, they carried this construction technique with them, introducing it to Texas even before the establishment of Austin’s colony.