



# A Guide to the Dickinson Family Papers, circa 1850-circa 1883

## Collection Summary

**Creator(s):** Dickinson Family

**Title(s):** Dickinson Family Papers

**Date(s) (Inclusive):** Circa 1850-circa 1883

**Abstract:** The collection contains two white cotton petticoats, one with cutwork down the front panel that belonged to Susanna Dickinson and one with horizontal lace insertions that belonged to Angelina Dickinson. It is unknown when these garments were made, but it is not believed that they date to the Battle of the Alamo in 1836. Other items relating to the Dickinson family that were donated with the petticoats have been separated from the collection.

**Identification:** Col 14592

**Extent(s):** 2.75 linear feet (2 oversize boxes)

**Language(s):** Materials are in English.

**Repository:** [DRT Collection](#)

## Collection Details

### Biographical Note

Almeron (which has alternatively been recorded as Almaron) Dickinson (also Dickenson or Dickerson) was born in Pennsylvania around 1800. Popular claims that he was an artilleryman in the United States Army and a Mason remain unsubstantiated. On 1829 May 24, he married Susanna (also Susan, Susana, Suzanna, or Susannah) Wilkerson (or Wilkinson) in Hardeman County, Tennessee. The couple moved to Texas in early 1831 as colonists in Green DeWitt's colony, receiving a league of land on the San Marcos River in what became Caldwell County and additional lots in and around Gonzales. Dickinson established a blacksmith shop and, with George C. Kimball, who also later died at the Alamo, a hat business in Gonzales. Almeron and Susanna's only child, Angelina Elizabeth Dickinson, was born on 1834 December 14.

During the Texas Revolution Almeron Dickinson participated in the Battle of Gonzales and the Siege of Bexar. After the latter engagement, his wife and daughter joined him in San Antonio; the family took refuge in the Alamo mission when Gen. Santa Anna's Mexican troops arrived in the town on 1836 February 23. Evidence suggests that Dickinson, an artillery captain, manned a cannon at the back of the Alamo church during the final assault on the garrison on March 6. Dickinson was killed during the attack, but his wife and daughter, who were in the sacristy, survived and were sent to Gonzales to deliver news of the garrison's fall.

Susanna Dickinson, who was born in Tennessee around 1814, married four additional times, the last being to Joseph William Hannig (or Hannag) in 1857. The couple moved to Austin, Texas, where Hannig became prosperous through his numerous and diverse business ventures, helped organize the first chamber of commerce, and served as alderman. Susanna died in Austin on 1883 October 7.

Almeron and Susanna's daughter Angelina Dickinson married John Maynard Griffith, a farmer from Montgomery County, in 1851. The Griffiths had three children – Almeron Dickinson (1853-1938), Susanna Arabella (1855-1929), and Joseph (1857-1924) – before the marriage ended in divorce and, leaving her children with relatives, Angelina went to New Orleans, Louisiana. She became associated with and possibly married Jim Britton, a railroad man from Tennessee and Confederate officer. She apparently also married Oscar Holmes in 1864 and had a fourth child, Sallie, in 1865. According to *Flake's Daily Bulletin*, Angelina died as "Em Britton" in 1869 July of a uterine hemorrhage in Galveston, Texas, where, the obituary reported, she was a known courtesan.

### References

Almeron Dickinson vertical file, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio, Texas.

Angelina Dickinson vertical file, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio, Texas.

Susanna Dickinson vertical file, Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio, Texas.

Henson, Margaret Swett. "Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson. *Handbook of Texas Online* . <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdi06>.

Massey, Katherine L. "Almaron Dickinson." *Handbook of Texas Online* . <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdi05>.

Massey, Katherine L. "Angelina Elizabeth Dickinson." *Handbook of Texas Online* . <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdi36>.

Shiffrin, Gale Hamilton. *Echoes from Women of the Alamo* . San Antonio, Texas: Clarke Printing Company, 1999.

### Scope and Content Note

The collection contains two white cotton petticoats, one with cutwork down the front panel that belonged to Susanna Dickinson and one with horizontal lace insertions that belonged to Angelina Dickinson. It is unknown when these garments were made, but it is not believed that they date to the Battle of the Alamo in 1836. Other items relating to the Dickinson family that were donated with the petticoats have been separated from the collection; see the DRT Library's catalog for additional information about these materials.

## Collection Restrictions

### Access Restrictions

No restrictions. The collection is open for research.

### Usage Restrictions

Please be advised that the library does not hold the copyright to most of the material in its archival collections. It is the responsibility of the researcher to secure those rights when needed. Permission to reproduce does not constitute permission to publish. The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming to the laws of copyright, literary property rights, and libel.

## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Dickinson Family Papers, circa 1850-circa 1883, Col 14592, DRT Collection.

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Willard Marian Griffith Nitschke, 1979.

### Processing Information

Processed by Caitlin Donnelly, 2009.

Finding aid edited and encoded by Caitlin Donnelly, 2011 February.

Updated to EAD3 by Leslie Stapleton, 2021 March.

## Subject Terms

### Index Terms :

- **Personal Names :**

- Persons*

- Dickinson family.
  - Dickenson, Angelina Elizabeth, 1834-1868.
  - Dickenson, Susanna.

- **Subjects :**

- Alamo defenders.
  - Clothing and dress--Women--Texas--19th century.
  - Women--Texas--19th century.

- **Genres/Formats :**

- Document Types*

- Family papers.
  - Artifacts.
  - Petticoats (underskirts).

▼ Inventory

**Inventory Information**

**Detailed Description of the Collection**

▼ **Title:** Dickinson Family Papers, circa 1850-circa 1883

**Title:** Petticoats

**Title:** Susanna Dickinson petticoat, circa 1850-circa 1883.

**Box** Oversize 1

**Title:** Angelina Dickinson petticoat, circa 1850-circa 1869.

**Box** Oversize 2

**Title:** Separated material

**Title:** Marriage bond: Almeron Dickinson and Susanna Wilkerson, co-signed by B. D. Johnson, Hardeman County, Tennessee, 1829 May 24.

**Collection** Documents Collection

**Title:** Ambrotype of Angelina Dickinson, undated.

**Collection** Photograph Collection

**Title:** Tintype of John Maynard Griffith, undated.

**Collection** Photograph Collection