

During this time the Indians under Chief Bowles were undecided about what course to pursue. They felt their allegiance to Mexico and probably preferred Mexican control, but on the other hand they recognized the supremacy of the Texans. The Texas leader, Sam Houston, had lived among the Cherokees and was a friend to the Indians. He defended their rights to land in Texas and tried to enlist their support for Texas against Mexico. Because of his efforts the new republic of Texas made a treaty with the Cherokees and their affiliated tribes, including the Shawnees. Other tribes involved were the Delawares, Kickapoos, Quapaws, Choctaws, Biloxis, Ionis, Alabama, Coushattas, Caddoes, Tahocullakes and Mataquos. According to this treaty Texas recognized the claim of these Indians to land between the Angelina and Neches rivers, just south of the Sabine river. The Indians who signed were Colonel Bowles, Big Mash, Samuel Benge, Oosoota, Corn Tassle, The Egg, John Bowles and Tunnatee. Many of the Indians did not like this treaty. It severely curtailed their lands and hunting territory. Many of the Texans did not like the treaty, either. In fact, many Texans favored getting every Indian out of Texas just as soon as possible. Finally, in December of 1837, the Texas Senate rejected the treaty. Soon afterwards Mirabeau Lamar became President of Texas and he bent his energies towards getting the Indians to leave Texas.

Although Sam Houston had obtained the Indians' consent to this treaty and they promised to remain neutral in the struggle with Mexico, many of the Texans were suspicious of the Indians, particularly the Cherokees. There were reports of white settlers killed and stock stolen, and these were blamed on the Indians. By 1838 there were a number of Mexicans in revolt against Texas, and Mexican agents were visiting the Indian villages trying to enlist their support. After a number of reports of Indian attacks on whites and so forth, Texas sent military forces against the Indians. <sup>In July of 1839</sup> The Texans attacked the Cherokees on the Neches River. The Cherokees lost over 100 men, including their chief, Colonel Bowles. The Texans pursued the Indians, burning their cornfields and villages. Colonel Bowles' son, John Bowles, and another man, "The Egg" became chiefs of the allied tribes. They took refuge on the headwaters of the Trinity River.

It is not clear just where the Shawnees were during the hostilities between the Texans and the Cherokees. No doubt they did not join the fighting because they were later given a share in a reservation on the Brazos River, along with some Delawares and some Caddoan groups.

In the fall of 1839, John Bowles and The Egg tried to lead their followers to Mexico; but the Texans attacked them at the mouth of the San Saba River, 75 miles above Austin on Christmas Day. Both chiefs were killed and some of their followers captured. The rest of these Indians retreated to Indian Territory. This was the last fight of the Cherokees in Texas.

In this same year, 1839, a group of 80 Kickapoos with a few Delawares, Shawnees and Cherokees travelled southeast to Matamoros on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande. There they reported to the Mexican officials and were issued guns, ammunition, clothing and rations of food. This was the beginning of the Mexican Kickapoos and the first of a number of migrations of various Indian groups to Mexico.

The year, 1839, is thus an important year in the history of the Shawnees in Texas, though it is still not clear exactly what was the relationship between Texas and the Shawnees. The later chief, Big Jim, may have been a small boy during these troubled times. The chief of the Texas Shawnees was named Linney. In May of 1839 (before the fight between the Texans and the Cherokees), the President of Texas wrote a letter to Linney, chief of the Shawnees. He mentioned his suspicions about the loyalty of the Cherokees, and advises the Shawnees to be loyal to Texas. He told them the Mexicans would never return to power, and not to help them in any way.