

CHIPITA RODRIGUEZ

Chipita Rodriguez was Tejano, born on Texas soil. During the Texas Revolution, her father was killed in an encounter with some soldiers from Mexico. Alone, Chipita took up with a cowboy and bore a son, but the man kidnapped their infant and deserted her.

One hot August day over 25 years later, two travelers arrived at Chipita's hut on the banks of the Aransas River. As she studied one of the men, she became certain that he was her son.

The next morning, he was gone, and his companion was dead—killed with her ax—outside her cabin. Chipita thought her long-lost child had committed the crime. To protect him, she wrapped the body in burlap, and a neighbor helped her carry it to the river and toss it in. When the body washed ashore downstream from Chipita's home, many began to talk of a lynching.

The two were saved from that rash action, but a court quickly found them guilty, ordered Chipita executed, and sentenced the neighbor to five years.

Chipita Rodriguez, possibly the only woman ever hanged after a legal trial in Texas, may as well have been lynched by a mob. It is said that her ghost haunts the banks of the Nueces River where she was hanged from a mesquite tree and buried in an unmarked grave.

De Leon, Arnaldo. *They Call Them Greasers*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983, pp. 80-81.
Handbook of Texas Supplement, p. 809.
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