

History films

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Alamo: The Price of Freedom was a 1988 movie directed by Keith Merrill.

The film is a depiction of the historic battle in San Antonio, Texas. The movie starred Casey Biggs, who played the role of William Travis. While both Merrill Connally and Enrique Sandino played the roles of Antonio Lopez and David Crockett respectively. Although some of the film's scenes contradicted the historical facts of the epic battle, Keith Merrill's film was a closer depiction of the true happenings. The movie, which is a story of bravery, depicts the 1820s siege of the Alamo complex by the Mexican army. The Texan forces leads by William Travis were heavily outnumbered by the Mexican army.

They held on their defenses and defended the Alamo fort without surrender until they lost the battle and lost their lives (Merrill, 1988). The Alamo was an old Spanish mission complex, whose establishment dates back to 1724, that served the religious needs of surrounding native population. This was until 1793 when religious activities came to an end. Consequently, the Spanish army took over the complex. The complex was converted to serve as the headquarters of its Calvary unit stationed in San Antonio. The word Alamo was taken from the Spanish language and it referred to the cottonwood that grew in the area.

In the early 1820s, settlers from the USA started flowing into the area, which was then a part of the Mexican territory, to cultivate cotton. The influx caused tensions among the natives and the growing population of English speaking settlers. In 1835, the tensions grew into a full blow rebellion in Gonzales, a nearby town. This started a series of battles between the Spanish army and force comprising a combination of speaking natives and

the English settlers (Leavitt, 2008). The combined force under the command of Benjamin William defeated the Mexican army and occupied the complex. Two months later the Spanish army with reinforcements returned to claim the complex.

A Force of about two thousand soldiers, under the command of General Antonio Lopez, attacked their former garrison. The garrison was under the defense of about one hundred and fifty five men. Although they outnumbered, William Travis and his men refused to surrender awaiting reinforcement (Leavitt, 2008). However, only thirty two volunteers were sent to assist them defend the Fort against the large Mexican force. The Mexican army surrounded the fort and begun destroying its walls with artillery fire. By the sixth day,, William and his men were slowly running out of ammunition and food, but still held on their defenses.

Some soldiers from the Mexican army managed to scale over the old fort's wall and captured the cannon gun. They used it against William and his men. The battle eventually turned into hand melee and the Mexican army was able to overrun the Texan forces last line of defense sparing only a few civilians. The defeats of the Texan forces helped to unite the independence movement (Leavitt, 2008). Some of the story lines in the movies were changed to endear the film to its viewers. However, most of the historical facts were unaltered unlike in the earlier versions of the movie.

The film director Keith Merrill did a great job. Although he maintained most of the historical facts, he was at the same time able to producing an endearing film. That captured the minds and hearts of its audience and in

the process taught the audience some of history that helped build the United States of America. I feel that the director of the movie managed to achieve the purpose of showcasing this historical event. At the same time, he manages to entertain the audience through the alterations of some of the issues related to the historical event.