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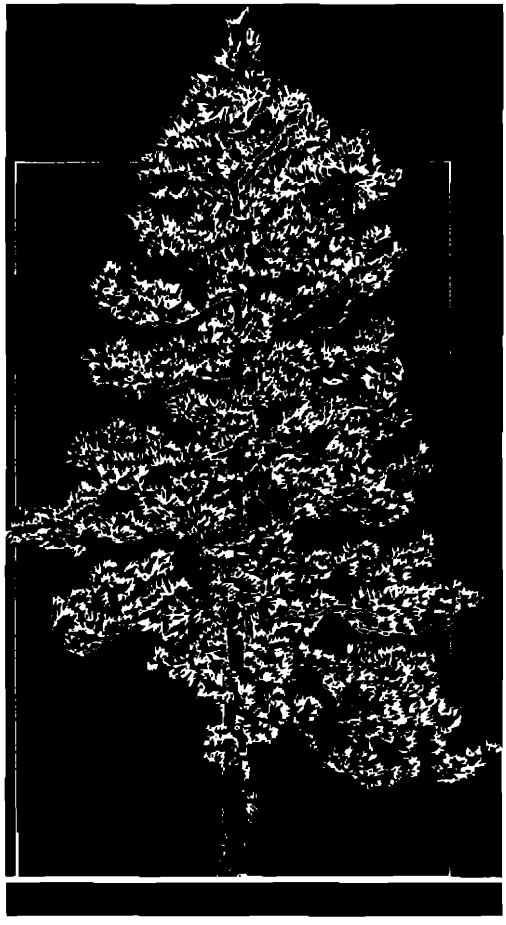

EAST TEXAS HISTORICAL JOURNAL

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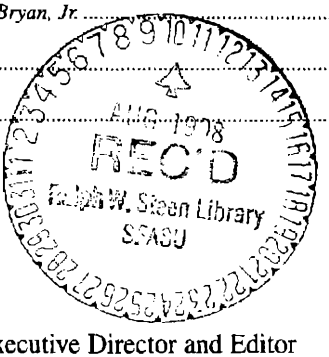

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BOOKS REVIEWED

DARING YOUNG MEN REMEMBERED

by Max S. Lale

When the British Empire withdrew from its Hong Kong crown colony, it was left principally with Gibraltar and Bermuda and what one publication described as "an island group that is home primarily to seals and penguins, an additional two uninhabited except for scientists and an American naval base and one occupied principally by an active volcano."[1]

Not quite. Not included in this assessment of the Falkland Islands, the Caymans, the British Antarctic Territory, and the Caribbean island of Monserrat (wracked by volcanic eruptions late in the twentieth century), is a plot measuring twenty by thirty-four feet in Fort Worth's Greenwood Cemetery. Known officially as the Royal Flying Corps Cemetery, it is one of only three pieces of property in the United States owned by the British government. The other two are the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., and a small burial plot on Ocracoke Island off the coast of North Carolina.[2]

This Texas piece of empire is a bit of greensward which in the spring would be a credit to the lawns of Oxford. It is located in a public cemetery whose entrance is dominated by replicas of the Venetian horses at St. Mark's Cathedral. Except for the sometimes brutal heat of a Texas summer, the plot might seem transported from England itself.

In the Fort Worth cemetery are buried the remains of twelve members of the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Flying Corps (Canada), eleven of them dating from World War I, when Britain trained pilots at three flying fields located in proximity to the city. The twelfth, wishing to spend eternity with his comrades, died in 1975.

The first eleven men were buried originally at one or another of the three training fields, where a total of thirty-nine were killed in accidents or died of disease or injuries during their time in Texas. When the British government acquired title in 1924, they were removed to their final resting place. Not therein, however, is the most notable of the casualties. Captain Vernon Castle, the celebrated dancer and actor who flew in combat and served as an instructor, died when he crashed while avoiding a collision with a student pilot at Benbrook on February 15, 1918.

While all are permitted the Union Jack over their graves, two of the Fort Worth dead, natives of the home island, are forever one with the part of empire Shakespeare described as "This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England."

How this bit of Texas soil became a part of the sceptered isle dates to a negotiated agreement between Canada and the United States reached on June 4, 1917, allowing British students to train with United States cadets. The agreement is believed to be the first treaty for reciprocal air training sites in American history.[3]

Max S. Lale, a past president of the East Texas Historical Association, lives in Fort Worth and Marshall.

The burial site became forever a part of Britain on December 3, 1924. For $750, Greenwood Cemetery Association deeded it to the Imperial War Graves Commission, 82 Baker Street, London W.1., England. Records describe it as "Lot Five (5) ... of Block O, Section H" in a deed signed by J.F. Prosser as secretary and William J. Bailey as president of the association.[4]

Almost as if foreshadowing the formal annexation of the burial plot as a Commonwealth property was the climate described by RAF Lieutenant Alan Sullivan in a recollection: "The situation was, in short, as though an area in Texas had been temporarily acquired by the British Empire, and in it members of an Imperial force conducted their affairs with the utmost freedom."[5]

Little evidence remains today, beyond a central cemetery shaft, a neglected memorial monument honoring Vernon Castle at Benbrook,[6] a Texas Historical Commission marker, and thin slabs of headstone, of the air fields where the honored dead were denied their destiny over the battlefields of Europe. Training was conducted at Camp Taliferro's three Tarrant County fields named Taliferro 1, 2, and 3. No. 1, known later as Hicks Field, was located in north Fort Worth near what is now Meacham Field. No. 2 was known as Barron Field, near Everman, and No. 3, in Benbrook, was known as Carruthers Field.

Scratched from rural cotton fields, each of the three fields accommodated 2,000 officers and men, and laid the groundwork for an aviation industry in Fort Worth which continues to the present: "The Royal Flying Corps, although in Texas for only a short time, had a beneficial and lasting influence on aviation in this country."[7]

Removed from these fields onto their own tiny plot of Texas soil were:

- Cadet Cyril Albert Baker. Royal Flying Corps (prior to its re-designation as the Royal Air Force in April 1918). Died December 21, 1917, as the result of an accident. Son of Mrs. B. Baker, 23 River Street West, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada. Native of Lewisham, England.
- Cadet Claude Follett Bovill. Died of pneumonia. February 27, 1918. A British Subject born in Canada.
- Second Lieutenant M. E. Connelly. Died of illness January 14, 1918. Son of Mrs. M. L. Halket, 1901 Haro Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- Lieutenant J. Stuart Ross Cuthbert. Died December 28, 1917, as the result of an accident. Son of Mrs. A. R. Cuthbert, Ithaca, New York.
- Sergeant Frederick George Hill. Died December 7, 1917, as the result of an accident. Husband of E. E. M. Carne (formerly Hill) of Blenheim, Ontario, Canada.
- Cadet Howard Hooten. Died March 27, 1918, as the result of an accident. Husband of L. Hooten, 30 Clairmont Apartments, Montreal, Canada.
- Cadet Milo Kirwan. Died April 8, 1918, as the result of an accident. Son of F. Kirwan, Wallace, Nova Scotia, Canada.

- Cadet Eric Douglas Manson. Killed December 24, 1917, in an accident. Only son of Mrs. B. Manson, 111 Northgate, Bury St. Edmunds, England.
- Corporal W. Miles. Died March 19, 1918, as the result of an accident. Husband of W. Miles, 84 Boundary Road, St. James Wood, London, England.
- Cadet James Gourley Ringland. Died February 21, 1918, as the result of an accident. Native of Los Angeles, California.[8]

In addition to these who died or were killed during training, a twelfth burial in the plot is that of Lieutenant Robert Herbert, Royal Air Force retired, a native of Ithaca, New York, who chose to be buried alongside his wartime comrades at his death in 1975. These names are carried on the central cemetery shaft with that of Lieutenant A. M. Breuneke, whose name also was added after his death on June 18, 1984, although he is buried elsewhere.

The central shaft carries the motto *Per Ardua ad Astra* (Through Difficulties to the Stars).

An unmarked grave in the Royal Flying Corps Cemetery is that of "Baby Dore," the infant daughter of Canadian Captain Charles Dore, an instructor. She is buried in front of the plot's central monument.[9]

Fort Worth Star-Telegram Photograph Collection, Special Collections Division, The University of Texas at Arlington Libraries.

Since 1986, a "friends" group under the inspirational leadership of Dr. Griffin Murphey, a Fort Worth dentist and former naval officer, has conducted a memorial service at the cemetery on the weekend nearest American Memorial Day (in alternate years). With a wreath laying ceremony, a firing squad in World War I uniforms and helmets, a flyover in the "missing-man" formation, a pipes master in regimental uniform, and visiting senior officers from Canada and Great Britain, the memorial service pays tribute to the fallen flyers and to all patriots resting in foreign soil.

Commissioned from Army ROTC, Dr. Murphey wound up his active duty military career as a naval dental officer with the first battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment,

in 1975 with the evacuation of South Vietnam and support for the Mayaguez recovery operation. An expert with small arms, he startled and perhaps dismayed and intimidated his combat-type comrades with his range firing. He still uses aviation-commemorative stamps on his correspondence.

"When my dad passed away in 1986, I had occasion to drive through Greenwood Cemetery and to look for the RFC plot. I was struck with its quiet dignity and was determined that I would start a memorial service," Dr. Murphey explains. "How could anyone with my background and Anglo-philia not be enthralled with the Plot?"[10]

Nor was Dr. Murphey unaware of the human drama played out by host Texans and visiting Britishers in the month of their association during what was called, at the time, the Great War. He is quoted in a publication devoted to pilots and flying as saying: "The Brits and Canadians got on famously here in Fort Worth, gobbling sirloin steaks and washing it down with whiskey, competing with cowboys and oilmen for girls, crashing Jennies, and generally raising hell before going on to the Western Front."[11]

For all the honor focused on those buried at Greenwood, none of them, in life or death, attracted the attention of the nation as did the man not buried there. Castle, a stage and film presence whose combat in the skies over France made him an international celebrity, had become a darling of Fort Worth before his death in the crash of his Jenny.[12]

With two victories in France while serving with No. 1 Squadron and as holder of the French *Croix de Guerre*, it was only natural that the captain should make the Fort Worth social scene, often with his pet monkey, Jeff, on his shoulder. A former debutante, Mrs. C.F.A. McCluer, recalled in later years that he liked to join the dance band, playing drums, at Rivercrest Country Club.[13]

Born in Norwich, England, in 1887, Castle moved to the United States in 1906 but retained his English citizenship. He learned to fly at his own expense at the Curtis school in Virginia. After joining the RFC in 1916, he was posted to No. 1 Squadron while it was based at Bailleul, France, from which he scored the first of his two victories on November 27, 1916, and was awarded the *Croix de Guerre*. In 1917 he was posted to Canada as an instructor at 83 CTS (Canadian Training Squadron), based at Mohawk, and then moved south to Texas with 83 CTS, which reformed at Benbrook. He then was transferred to 84 CTS, situated at the same station.[14]

Castle's first victory came, as a second lieutenant, while he was patrolling in a Nieuport at 8,000 feet over Wytschaete, in the Ypres salient. Observing two German planes flying southwest over Vlamertinghe, Castle was able to close on one of the craft, a "large 2 seater biplane," so that his observer was able to fire "almost 5 drums" from his Lewis machine gun into the German, who then was fleeing toward his own lines. G.F. Retyman, commanding No. 1 Squadron, confirmed the kill after interviewing another member of the squadron, a Lieutenant Slater, who "saw the German machine falling below the clouds in a spinning nose dive, apparently completely out of control."[15]

Just as his CO had testified to his combat skill, a contemporary in the United States also spoke of his flying skill somewhat later: "... this little red-headed commander was really a terrific flyer. At each field (of the three constituting Camp Taliferro) there were fifteen hangars, and he had all of his planes taken out of the fifteen hangars. He then proceeded to fly his plane through one hangar, zoomed over the next one, and went through the next. Skipping over every other hangar, he flew through half of the hangars. He really was a terrific pilot."[16]

The Fort Worth Press reported February 15, 1918, that "Thousands Pay Last Tribute to Capt. Castle." Funeral services were held at the Robertson Undertaking Parlor, 308-314 West Tenth Street, after which the coffin, draped with the Union Jack, was carried to the Texas and Pacific Railroad station on an artillery limber drawn by six horses. More than 200 American and Canadian flying cadets were in the line of march, along with the 133rd Field Artillery band of the 36th Division, then training at Camp Bowie, on the west side of town. An honor guard from the Royal Flying Corps followed the coffin with rifles reversed in the British tradition. The "solemn" procession moved east on Tenth Street to Houston Street and down Houston to the old T&P station, where Castle's remains were placed aboard the Sunshine Special for New York, in accordance with his wife Irene's wishes.[17]

For Ely Green, Castle's death was a dream shattered. The child of a black-and-white union, he had met Castle when his employer, a Waxahachie banker named O.E. Dunlap, lent the flyer his car and Green, his driver. Castle's Rolls Royce had broken down, and, while driving Castle back to Taliferro. Green told Castle he could repair the car.

Castle was so impressed with the young man's energy and competence that he made a promise to him. If Green would enlist in the U. S. Army. Castle would arrange a transfer to the Royal Flying Corps, where he promised to instruct him personally to become a military flyer, thus becoming the first black (or half-black) to do so.

One week later, after repairing the Rolls Royce and enlisting in the U.S. Army, Green "began to drive to Benbrook to deliver it to him. As he neared Carruthers, Green met a speeding ambulance. At the gate, a sentry told him that Castle had been fatally injured in a plane crash."[18]

Had Castle foreseen his death? Perhaps. In an essay written before his death but printed afterward, he wrote, "I see the red glow rising on the new day, and on that day, I shall see the myriads of heroes returning from hard-fought fields; and on their various uniforms will be pinned the medals that mark some heroic action. But there will also be heard the muffled drum-beat that marks the March of the Dead: those unseen heroes who rest beyond the pale of the cannon's roar, but we must not be sad; because to us comes the consolation that each died that the world might be made safe for democracy."[19]

Honors were paid to Castle and to his companions at Greenwood as early as the mid-1920s by then young former Great War pilots living in the Fort Worth area. Calling themselves the Flyers Club, they included men whose

names still resonate in the city's history: Ken Davis, Charles F.A. McCluer, Harry Brants, H.C. Vandervoort, and others who became civic and business leaders in the 1930-1960 period. They erected the central monument dominating the plot in the 1930s.[20]

The last surviving widow of one of these men, Myra (Mrs. Charles) McCluer, dedicated the Texas Historical Commission marker at the site on May 25, 1992.[21] Her husband, a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Signal Corps and a member of the Flyers Club, was an instructor at Hicks Field. She remembered well the impact on the social scene by the young British and Canadian cadets and flying officers in Fort Worth.[22]

Two years after The Friends of the Royal Flying Corps revived the memorial services in 1986, Squadron Leader David Woolridge, then posted at Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas, was the first Royal Air Force active duty officer to become a member of the official party. In 1990, the RAF was represented by Air Commodore Bob Peters, British air attaché at the empire's Washington embassy, and Squadron Leader Dick Fallis, and in 1992 the latter also represented the RAF, along with Group Captain Trevor Beney. This also was the first time RAF aircraft overflew the graves.[23]

Canadian Lieutenant General L.W.F. Cuppens, OMM CD, deputy commander-in-chief of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, led the group of distinguished visitors attending the ceremonies in 1997. After a flyover by World War II PT-17 Stearman trainers, and the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner" and "God Save the Queen" by those in attendance, General Cuppens paid tribute to the alliance of English, Canadian, and American forces in two world wars, as represented at the cemetery.

Four AT-6 trainers flown by pilots of the Confederate Air Force then overflew the site as the "Royal Air Force March" echoed over the graves. The final tribute was the playing of "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes by Pipe Major Robert G. Richardson of Glasgow, Scotland, and "The Last Post" (the English equivalent of the American "Taps") by Robert Snyder of Terrell, Texas, on the bugle. A firing squad in World War I American uniforms representing the Texas Memorial Historical Society fired volleys over the graves.

It should be noted that the Royal Flying Corps Cemetery at Greenwood, though unique as a property of the Commonwealth, is not unique as to empire burials in the United States. Twenty-four such are at the site of No. 1. British Training School (BFTS) at Terrell, Texas, and 957 burials and cremations (three of them unidentified) may be found in 445 cemeteries in the United States. From St. Helena Ascension Island to Zimbabwe, the commonwealth counted 932,176 burials and cremations of its subjects in foreign soil as of August 1, 1989.[24]

In Forth Worth, historians and patriots remember twelve of these daring young men who lived briefly and died there, far from home in a distant war.

NOTES

*The author wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance of Dr. Griffin Murphey, DDS, who opened his files, made photo copies and in general helped the author to avoid error.

[1]*U.S. News and World Report*, July 7, 1997.

[2]*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 2, 1991.

[3]*Forth Worth Star-Telegram*, May 2, 1991.

[4]Warranty Deed 1999, Book 309, record of Deeds for Tarrant County, Texas.

[5]*Aviation in Canada, 1917-1918, Being a Brief Account of the Work of the Royal Air Force Canada, the Aviation Department of the Imperial Munitions Board and the Canadian Aeroplanes Limited* (Toronto, Canada, undated).

[6]Restoration of this monument was beginning as this was written; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, August 6, 1977.

[7]Texas Historical Commission marker, Royal Flying Corps Cemetery.

[8]*Camaraderie, The News Letter of the Western Front Association, United States Branch* (February 1997).

[9]Printed program for the 78th "Remembrance Service" held May 29, 1995, by Friends of the Royal Flying Corps Cemetery.

[10]Interview with author, June 16, 1997.

[11]*Aeroplane* (November 1992).

[12]One publication identified this aircraft as a JN-4D. Dr. Murphey believes, based on a study of photographs, that it probably was a Canadian built JN-3, nicknamed a "Canuck."

[13]Printed memorial program, 1995.

[14]*Aeroplane* (November 1992).

[15]AIR 1/1339/204/17/81, Air Ministry Records.

[16]Interview, Col. Ralph A. O'Neill, in *Over the Front, Quarterly of the League of WWI Aviation Historians* V. 2 (Summer 1987), p. 117.

[17]*The Fort Worth Press*, February 17, 1975.

[18]*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, May 21, 1997.

[19]*Pass in Review, the Authentic Military Newspaper at Camp Bowie and Camp Taliferro Aviation Fields, and to Give Their Friends the Truth*, Fort Worth, Texas, Vol. 1, No. 9, February 28, 1918. This publication of the 36th Division devoted its cover to a photograph of Castle, with Jeff in his arms.

[20]Memorial service program, 1995.

[21]*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, June 10, 1992.

[22]*Aeroplane* (November 1992).

[23]Memorial service program, 1995.

[24]*Annual Report, 1988-1989*, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, KG GGMG CCVO ADC, president.

AIR ACTIVITIES OF TEXAS: A SMALL TOWN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE BIG WAR

by Tommy Stringer

From 1939 through 1941 the United States attempted to maintain a position of peace while war raged in Europe and Asia. Although proclaiming an official policy of neutrality, the United States demonstrated partiality toward the Allied Powers through measures such as the Lend-Lease Act. Denouncing Germany and Italy as representatives of hatred and force, President Franklin Roosevelt urged Congress to pass legislation needed to create "Fortress America," and to establish the United States as the "Great Arsenal of Democracy."[1]

Congress appropriated massive sums for war preparations, increasing the existing budget of $2 billion to more than $10 billion in 1940. That year the Selective Service Act, the nation's first peace-time draft, called for 1.2 million inductees for one year's service and activated more than 800,000 reservists. Clearly the nation was moving toward direct involvement in the war.[2]

Among the areas that attracted special attention from the nation's political and military leadership as the war approached was air power. The issue had first been raised by Brigadier General William "Billy" Mitchell. As assistant chief of the Army Air Service in World War I, Mitchell concluded that the airplane put a completely new complexion on the old system of making war because of its capabilities to take the war beyond the battlefield to what he called the vital centers of the enemy's country, its cities and its industries. Mitchell predicted the airplane would replace the battleship as the dominant military weapon, a theory he demonstrated with highly publicized displays in 1921 and 1923 in which he sank warships by dropping bombs from planes. Predicting that Japan would likely be America's next military opponent, Mitchell urged the government to expand the nation's defenses, particularly its air defenses. Since the attitude of the Coolidge Administration was to cut the budget, reduce taxes, and avoid expensive innovations, Mitchell's cries went unheeded. His "Report on the Pacific and Far East" (1924) was buried in the files of the Department of War.[3]

Mitchell leveled charges of incompetency, criminal negligence, and almost treasonable administration of the national defense against the departments of the Navy and War. His attacks led to his court martial and eventual resignation from the Army in 1925. But by the late 1930s, Hitler's *Luftwaffe* was teaching bloody lessons on the effectiveness of the airplane as a weapon of war and destruction. Mitchell had been correct in his assessments. Clearly, the United States had to design a program that would produce the most air power in the shortest amount of time.[4]

America's venture into aviation began during the Civil War when the Union Army experimented with observation balloons as a way to monitor enemy movements. In 1892 a balloon section was organized in the Army Signal Corps and headed by Aldolpheus Greeley. Fifteen years later the Signal Corps added

Tommy Stringer teaches history at Navarro College.

an Aeronautical Division and purchased its first planes from the Wright Brothers. General John J. Pershing created an independent Air Service of the American Expeditionary Force in France in 1917. Following the Great War, Congress passed the National Defense Act of 1920, which established the Air Service within the United States Army. The name of the Air Service was changed in 1926 to the United States Army Air Corps, and that designation remained until 1941 when it was changed to the United States Army Air Forces.[5]

In 1935 the Army Air Corps adopted a ten-year master plan of goals, but developments in Europe and Asia mandated that the plan be revamped and the time frame for accomplishing some of the goals be shortened. Overseeing the monumental task was General H.H. "Hap" Arnold, who as commander of the Army Air Forces directed the organization and construction of a behemoth air power with destructive forces the world had never before seen.[6]

Time was of the essence, beginning with a massive conversion from peace-time to a war- time economy. Although the United States declared an official policy of neutrality when hostilities erupted in Europe, officials began preparations for what appeared to be an inevitable involvement in the conflict. For example, a piano company began building airplane wings, a tire plant turned out fuselages, a pickle production facility produced airplane skids and floats, and a girdle manufacturer made parachutes. The most obvious and immediate need, however, was for airplanes. In 1938 American aviation manufacturers built 100 planes per month, but this was woefully inadequate. Arnold implored them to double or even triple production.[7]

It was apparent that increasing the number of available aircraft was not enough. According to Arnold, a powerful air force resulted from the sum total of air supplies, air bases, and airmen. It was as important to have a balanced production of trained combat and maintenance crews as it was to have planes. Consequently, training pilots to fly the planes that were coming off the American assembly lines was a top priority for the Army Air Corps.[8]

To train the necessary personnel, the Army Air Corps became the largest educational organization in existence. But even the Army's greatest efforts were insufficient to train all the pilots and support personnel that would be needed when the United States entered the war. To build a facility comparable to Randolph Field in San Antonio would require five years, and it could train only 500 pilots a year. So Arnold devised an unorthodox plan: he invited directors of some of the nation's best civilian flying schools to his office in Washington. He explained that he had no funds for the proposal, but he expected Congress to provide the necessary financing in the next appropriations bill. He proposed that the civilian flying schools expand their facilities to feed, house, and train cadets for the Army Air Corps. Even in 1940 the Army needed 100,000 pilots, but the military trained only 750 annually. According to Arnold's plan, the Army would furnish planes and a small supervisory staff and pay the civilian schools a fixed fee per student pilot. The proposal was received less than enthusiastically, since such a move was "against precedent." Arnold recalled, "My training experts though I was slightly balmy."[9]

When the civilian contractors estimated it would require an initial expenditure of $200,000 for each school, Arnold suggested they borrow the money until Congress approved the appropriation. Incredibly, they did precisely that. President Roosevelt approved $106 million for the training program, which included building costs, gasoline, transportation, and training planes. Arnold hoped the civilian schools would train up to 2,400 pilots per year, but as the situation in Europe and Asia intensified, he boosted that number to 12,000 per year. By 1939 he was hoping for 30,000. According to Arnold, the objective was met.[10]

Training pilots was an "assembly line" procedure, much like the mass production of planes. The entire process of taking raw cadets and turning them into pilots spanned thirty-two weeks of training and involved three levels of flying schools. It began with pre-flight training where recruits learned army discipline and military customs and traditions while undergoing intensive physical training and conditioning. The second level involved primary flight school that entailed ground school as well as actual flying. The aspiring pilots learned various maneuvers in a P-T (pilot training) plane that culminated in a successful solo flight. From primary school the cadets moved to more advanced training, commonly called basic, where they learned to fly more sophisticated aircraft. Some specialized as navigators or bombardiers. Borrowing from the personnel practices of America's giant corporations, each trainee was assigned the job for which he seemed best suited. After graduation from basic, he received a commission as a second lieutenant and was ready to make his contribution to the war effort.[11]

Because of its extensive open area, level terrain, and significant number of clear weather days, Texas was an ideal location for numerous Army Air Force stations. The government built new facilities and contracted for the use of existing facilities to meet the growing need for trained pilots and related personnel. By the end of World War II, sixty-five different stations in the Lone Star State were involved in various levels of flight training. They stretched from Dalhart to Brownsville and from Tyler to El Paso.[12]

Under those arrangements, the Air Activities of Texas, Corsicana Field came into existence. Prior to World War II, Air Activities of Texas, owned and operated by J.D. Reed in Houston, trained civilian pilots, sold airplanes to private individuals, and provided charter service. Reed sold controlling interest in the school to a partnership of B.L. Woolley, B. W. Woolley, E.D. "Dick" Criddle, Edward F. "Doc" Booth, and J.O. Womack. A graduate of the University of Texas, B.L. (Bennett) Woolley was an independent oil producer in Dallas. He served as president of the Highland Park School Board and vice president of the Petroleum Association. Booth was a West Point graduate, and he had received flight training at Kelly and Brooks fields in San Antonio. He had flown as a commercial pilot for Pan American Airlines before founding his own aviation company in 1933. Womack was a licensed commercial pilot who had operated civilian flight schools in Marshall and Houston. B.W. (Wynne) Woolley, Bennett Woolley's brother and business partner, moved to Corsicana

to operate the flight school on a day-to-day basis as director of Air Activities of Corsicana. His brother-in-law, E.D. "Dick" Criddle, was the assistant director of the school.[13]

The new owners negotiated a contract with the government to train military pilots under the provisions developed by General Arnold. B.L. Woolley traveled to San Antonio's Randolph Field in August 1940, to meet with a Major Smart to discuss the agreement. Smart advised Woolley to examine existing facilities at California Aero Academy in Ontario, California. Stover Brothers Contractors had constructed that facility, and it had proven to be an effective training site. Woolley's inspection of California Aero was helpful as he planned his Texas operation. Following lengthy negotiations, Air Activities of Texas received a contract from the government to establish a facility at Corsicana. Congressman Luther Johnson, a Corsicana native and ranking member of the House Foreign Relations Committee, no doubt was instrumental in securing the site for his hometown. A formal contract was signed December 13, 1940, in Dayton, Ohio, authorizing the Air Activities of Texas to provide primary flight training, the second tier in the three-level training process. The contract provided a rate of $17.50 per flying hour to be paid to the flight school.[14]

Construction of the facility began six weeks later. The field was located six miles south of downtown Corsicana on U.S. Highway 287 on a 400-acre tract owned by banker J.N. Edens. A large part of the acreage had been an oil tank farm, which meant the tanks must be removed before construction of the airfield could begin. That was only one of many obstacles. When construction began on February 2, 1941, so did the rain, and every load of building materials had to be pushed through mud by heavy tractors. More than 250 carpenters, plumbers, painters, and laborers worked in sloppy conditions to get the facility ready for the first class of cadets due to arrive in a matter of weeks. The task was monumental. Plans called for a landing strip 2,000 feet long and 225 feet wide, hangers, barracks, offices, maintenance buildings, and a combination kitchen and mess hall. Despite time constraints and inclement weather, workers completed six buildings by March 18. The first class of cadets, Class 41-H consisting of fifty-one men, arrived the next day to begin primary flight training. America's entry into World War II was nine months away, but preparations proceeded in earnest.[15]

Wendell W. Hutchinson rode the train all night from his home near Anderson, Iowa, to Corsicana to report for duty. He was the first cadet to check in at the Corsicana Field. George Gaffney came from Arkansas, arriving in the middle of the night at the Corsicana bus station. The agent on duty had no idea what Gaffney was talking about when he asked directions to the "air field." When daylight came, Gaffney walked downtown and made contact with B. W. Woolley, who told him to check into the Navarro Hotel and await further orders. Woolley told the early arrivals to "eat in the hotel restaurant when you're hungry, but I hope you don't get hungry more than three times a day." The cadets occupied their barracks on March 19, and the Air Activities of Texas, Corsicana Field, was in operation. It was designated as the 301st

A.A.F.F.T.D. (Army Air Force Flying Training Detachment). In May 1944, the designation was changed to 252nd A.A.F. Base Unit Contract Pilot School, Primary.[16]

Major O.E. Ford, Jr., who had a degree in mechanical engineering from Texas A&M and had graduated from Kelly Field Flight School in 1934, was named post commander. Major Ford's staff, all of whom were transferred from the Air Corps Training Detachment in Lincoln, Nebraska, consisted of two officers, three enlisted men, and a civil service clerk. They arrived in Corsicana in February prior to the completion of their offices at the field, so they established temporary headquarters at the Navarro Hotel. They later moved to the private residence of Sergeant Major Spencer and finally occupied a suite of offices in the State National Bank on Beaton Street. On April 1 the officers finally moved to their new quarters at the Corsicana Field. By that time their numbers had increased to five officers, nine enlisted men, and three civil service clerks. The military personnel were to establish military organization and discipline and insure the cadets received proper training in standards of the Army Air Corps.[17]

There were eighteen civilian flight instructors and twenty-two airplanes that had arrived from Dallas, where they had been used to train army pilots. The number of planes and instructors grew dramatically as the field and its operations expanded. For example, Class 44-A had 164 instructors, and by late 1944 there were 199 planes at the Corsicana Field. The directors attempted to maintain a 3.5:1 ratio of planes to cadets and a 4:1 ratio of instructors to cadets.[18]

The primary flight training involved ten weeks of instruction with sixty hours devoted to flight training and 140 hours to ground school instruction, which involved flight theory, airplane engines, maps and air navigation, plane identification, meteorology, and mathematics. The 140 hour ground school was reduced to ninety-six hours by mid-1944. Paul C. Holcomb was director of the ground school, a position he held during the entire operation of the Corsicana Field.[19]

Ground school instructors, who normally numbered about ten, had backgrounds in the field of education. Miss Margaret Pannill, who later had a distinguished career as an English instructor at Navarro Junior College, taught in the Corsicana Public Schools before she moved to the aviation school. She recalled being approached by officials of the Air Activities school with an offer to teach there. She expressed surprise since her background was in music and literature, and she knew little about airplane identification and weather patterns. When she questioned her qualifications to teach such subjects, she was told the most important concern was her teaching skills. "They asked me if I thought I could teach, and I told them I knew I could teach. Then they told me they would teach me what I needed to know," she recalled. She remembered "staying one step ahead of the cadets," by preparing each day's lesson the night before.[20]

Besides the ground school instructors, the Air Activities of Texas employed other civilians. Many Corsicana residents worked as maintenance

personnel, mechanics, barbers, cooks, secretaries, and other positions. In January 1944, Air Activities had 552 civilian employees on the payroll. The school also purchased many goods and services from local merchants, providing significant boosts to sales. George Baum, owner of a local shoe store, contracted to provide footwear to the cadets. Obviously, the Corsicana Field had a major impact on the local economy.[21]

Within months, a rigorous physical exercise program was added to the cadets' curriculum. Under the leadership of Joe Lagow, the program included exercises to improve coordination and build stamina, essential traits for effective pilots. Cadets performed calisthenics to music, a forerunner of "jazzercize." The sessions included lively games of volleyball, baseball, and soccer which encouraged the competitive spirits of the cadets and built a bond of camaraderie among them. The construction of a swimming pool enhanced the physical fitness program and provided opportunities for leisurely recreation. A highlight preceding the graduation of each class of cadets was a tug-of-war between the graduating cadets and the underclassmen. The contest was held across a creek so the winners dragged the losers through the mud. Although the competition was intense, the activity was viewed by the cadets as one of the more fun events of their experiences while training at the Corsicana Field. The physical training program built morale among the men and kept them in top physical condition.[22]

The cadets came from all over the United States and some special groups were brought in for training at the Corsicana Field, including a unit from Brazil and another from Mexico. There were no African-American cadets in any of the classes. Although many of the trainees were Texans, the vastness of the state made it difficult for even some of them to get their bearings in the rural area around Navarro County. A flight instructor from Arkansas and his trainee took off for their initial flight and after practicing some stalls and spins, the instructor told the trainee to return to the field. Looking below in order to orient themselves, neither could find recognizable landmarks. They set their plane down in a pasture and learned from a farmer that they were a short distance from Hubbard, located about 30 miles west of Corsicana in Hill County. A car was dispatched to drive the lost pilots back to the base where they endured good-natured ridicule from colleagues. Since four hours of flight time and one forced landing were added to the trainee's record as a result of the miscue, the episode was not a complete waste of time.[23]

Instructors made a concerted effort to build a sense of teamwork and community among the members of each cadet class. To establish a network of communication, the cadets published a newsletter, *The Reville*, later expanded and the title changed to *Flying Lines*. It was printed every two weeks and contained news about activities on the base and personal information about cadets, instructors, and civilian employees at the Corsicana Field. Each edition included a page entitled "Locker Lovelies" with photographs and information about cadets' sweethearts back home. A regular feature was the "Girl of the Week," usually a female civilian employee at the Field. Political correctness was not a matter of concern in the 1940s.[24]

Class 42-A published a class book, *The Lazy 8*, in the format of a high school annual with photographs of cadets, instructors, and civilian personnel. It provided a pictorial review of the class activities at the Corsicana Field. Succeeding classes continued the publication until the end of the Field's operations.[25]

The cadets also produced a radio broadcast from the studio of radio station KAND in Corsicana. The program provided listeners with news and information about base activities and featured the musical talents of some of the cadets. The aspiring pilots also showcased their talents with periodic revues held in the Corsicana High School auditorium where the cadets combined some serious performances with nonsense ranging from vocal and instrumental presentations to magic acts. Large audiences always attended the performances.[26]

Of course, the primary reason the men had come to Corsicana was to learn to fly. The responsibility for that task lay with the civilian flight instructors. By January 1944, 153 flight instructors were on the staff. Each instructor was assigned four or five cadets. Beginning cadets were labeled "Do Do's," after the extinct, flightless birds noted for their lack of intelligence. The instructor sat in the front seat of the cockpit in the training plane, the P-19, and communicated with the trainee through a one-way "no-talk-back" speaking tube. According to Tillman Reed, a flight instructor from Kerens, their task was sobering. The lives of trainees depended on the instructors' effectiveness in transmitting information. The flight instructor had the sobering responsibility of deciding if and when a cadet was sufficiently skilled to move to the next level of instruction. Each cadet had to solo as a final step in completing his primary flight training. He then received his "Wings" and was initiated into the "Society of Soloers" by being thrown into the lake or washed down with a fire hose. This "ceremony" was the last rite of passage before the cadet moved to the next level of training.[27]

The cadet classes graduating from the Corsicana Field were sent to various locations for basic training including: Majors Field in Greenville; Perrin Field in Sherman; Enid (Oklahoma) A.A.F.; Strother Field in Winfield, Kansas; Independence (Kansas) A.A. F.; Garden City (Kansas) A.A.F.; and Waco A.A.F.[28]

At times the flight instructor had to deliver the heartbreaking news that the aspiring pilot had "washed out." One instructor was nicknamed "Captain Maytag" by the cadets because he would "wash them out" like a washing machine. A special bond often developed between the instructor and his charges. Reed still had contacts in person and by mail with several of his former cadets more than fifty years after they completed their training.[29]

As the war intensified and the demand for pilots increased, the Air Activities facilities expanded. By July 1941, a total of six barracks provided housing for the cadets, and by September two more hangers had been added. Cadets considered the Corsicana Field as a "country club" base. New arrivals often commented about the comfort of the facilities, which included three-

quarter beds in spacious barracks. They even had positive remarks regarding the food served in the mess hall. One cadet recalled that by paying twenty-five cents a week he could have his bed made and his shoes shined by a porter, and his "caretaker" would virtually guarantee the cadet would pass inspection each Saturday.[30]

The additional numbers of planes and cadets created a congested air traffic problem, so additional runways and landing strips were added near Kerens. As the demand for pilots increased, the size of the cadet classes expanded as well. The first class, 41-H, which arrived in March 1941, totaled fifty-one cadets; class 43-H, which began training in February 1943, started with 343 members, and each succeeding class through 1944 had over 300 cadets. Success rates based on graduation figures varied. For example, thirty-seven members of the first class, or seventy-two percent, graduated and moved to the next level of training. Class 44-G graduated 286 of its original 296 cadets for a ninety-two percent success rate, the highest compiled by any class. While safety of pilots and instructors was a major concern, accidents did occur. During the four years the Air Activities facility was in operation, nine flying-related fatalities occurred.[31]

Various changes evolved at the Corsicana Field over time. Major Ford was relieved of his command and assigned combat duty in March 1942. He was replaced by First Lieutenant Robert Johnson, who was post commander until July. Captain Stanton Smith, a twenty-six-year-old native of San Antonio and a West Point graduate, then became post commander. In February 1943 Major Leonard Dysinger assumed command and remained in that role until the based closed.[32]

The lives of the cadets could be stressful. The training was demanding, and each man realized he was going into combat once his training was completed. There were frequent reports from the battlefront regarding former Corsicana cadets who had be injured or killed in the line of duty, grim reminders to the aspiring pilots of the hazards awaiting them. The progress of the war was always in their thoughts. On the evening of June 6, 1944, the men gathered for a prayer service led by two Corsicana clergymen in behalf of the Allied invasion of France that had occurred earlier that day, commonly referred to as D-Day.[33]

The citizens of Corsicana attempted to alleviate some of the fears and concerns of the trainees by welcoming the cadets with open arms. They thought of their own sons away in military training at different locations around the country, and they hoped the towns where they were stationed would treat them kindly and hospitably and lessen their pains of being homesick. The community tried to make the cadets feel at home as much as possible while they were in Corsicana by providing them with ample recreational opportunities when the young men had "open post." Each new class was entertained with a dance held at the Corsicana Country Club. In addition to ample supplies of food and refreshments, young ladies from the community were on hand as dancing partners. Other social functions were held on a regular basis. Corsi-

cana churches provided transportation from the air field to town for worship services, and members invited the young men into their homes for Sunday dinner. Although the cadets were in Corsicana for a brief period of time, some met their future wives, and after the war ended, they moved back to make their permanent homes in the community.[34]

One of the most successful endeavors in acclimating the cadets to the community was the Hospitality Center located in downtown Corsicana. Opened in 1943, the center provided a homelike, attractive environment where the cadets could gather in their off hours. Women's clubs donated food and refreshments, which were served by the Red Cross Canteen unit. Several local single women formed the Cadet Co-Ed Club, eighty young women who volunteered their time at the Hospitality Center each weekend to show their patriotism and loyalty to the men in uniform. The center also had reading areas, ping-pong and pool tables, and other recreational activities. It was a popular gathering place for the off-duty cadets.[35]

The number of trainees arriving at the Corsicana Field began to decline as the Allies gained the upper hand in the war. The last class of cadets arrived for training August 8, 1944, and completed their studies in October. The 195 members of the last class was the smallest since class 42-J (May 1942), which had 176 cadets. Of the 8,480 cadets in thirty-seven classes who trained at the Corsicana Field, 5,769 graduated to the next level of instruction, a sixty-eight percent graduation rate. Pilots who received their primary flight training at the Corsicana Field participated in every theater of the war. A total of 145 Corsicana graduates received decorations and awards for their combat service. They were honored by inclusion in the Hall of Fame at the Air Activities field, where their photographs were displayed in a prominent location on the base. Obviously, the Air Activities of Texas had made a major contribution to the Allied victory over the Axis powers.[36]

With the war winding down, the Corsicana Air Activities became unnecessary. Consequently, general orders dated October 13, 1944, deactivated the Corsicana Field. The government continued its contracts with only fifteen primary flight schools nationwide, and only four of those were in the Gulf Coast region, including El Reno and Chickasha, Oklahoma, and Brady and Uvalde, Texas. The process of closing down the Corsicana facility began almost immediately upon issuance of the general orders. The military personnel and the civil service employees were reassigned to other bases, and many of the civilian flight instructors found employment with commercial airlines. The official closing date was November 15, 1944. Immediately following the closing, some of the buildings on the base were used for dead storage, and a crew of mechanics arrived to recondition various types of airplanes, which were then sold to the public.[37]

In reflecting upon his experience with the primary flight school, assistant director Dick Criddle commented about the pride that the Air Activities of Texas had in helping to make the Army Air Corps the largest and best in the world. He had words of praise for the civilian and military personnel who

worked at the base, and he was especially complimentary of the citizens of Corsicana who gave generously of their time and money to make the cadets feel welcome while they were in the community. He expressed hope that peace and security would once again return to the world and the need for such a facility would not reoccur, but if such a need did arise, he and his partners were prepared to contribute in whatever way they could.[38]

Interest in new uses for the abandoned air field developed in the Corsicana almost immediately. As early as the 1920s, local business leaders and educators had discussed the creation of a "first class junior college" for Navarro County. Corsicana postmaster A.A. Allison, who also chaired the Education Committee of the Corsicana Chamber of Commerce, published an article in the *Texas Outlook* in 1928 promoting the advantages of a junior college, especially in meeting the educational needs of Navarro County. Impressed with Allison's arguments, the Chamber of Commerce made the project its number one priority for 1929, but the Great Depression derailed the plan.[39]

When the nation and the county recovered from the economic woes of the 1930s, once again talk of a junior college surfaced, only to be deferred by the outbreak of World War II. When the War ended, community leaders again pursued the goal of establishing a college. Led by Corsicana school superintendent W.H. Norwood, Navarro County educators met in April 1946, to discuss the steps that should be taken. Norwood said the time had come to start the college because of the availability of the Air Activities of Texas facility which could serve as a campus. He believed that returning servicemen would provide an ample number of potential students. Many of them had their academic careers delayed or interrupted by military service, and now they would have financial assistance through the recently passed GI Bill. A public, two-year college in their community would be both affordable and accessible. Jobs would be difficult to find after the demobilization of the military and the closing of war-related plants and factories.[40]

The county's response to the proposal was overwhelmingly positive. Community leaders contacted federal authorities to secure the transfer of buildings and equipment, which was accomplished with minimal problems. Local civic clubs and organizations began a campaign to secure public support in an election to be held July 16, 1946, to create Navarro Junior College, approve an *ad valorem* tax to help fund the institution, and elect a seven-member board of trustees to govern the college. Voters approved all three measures by a four to one margin. At its first meeting on July 22, 1946, the board of trustees named Ray Waller as the first president of the new college. One week later they approved a $52,000 annual operating budget for the new college. On September 16, 1946, only two months after the voters approved the creation of the junior college district, Navarro Junior College began classes. Of the 238 students who enrolled for classes that fall, eighty-five percent were ex-GIs.[41]

The Air Activities of Texas that had been used as a facility to train young men for combat became a college campus to prepare young men and women for careers in the new postwar world. From the outset, the board of trustees

agreed that the Air Activities site was to be a temporary campus until a more suitable location could be secured. That was accomplished in 1951 when the college moved to its current location on Highway 31, three miles west of downtown Corsicana. Many of the buildings that had been part of the Air Activities facility were moved to the new campus and used as classrooms, offices, and dormitories for many years. When the buildings deteriorated and maintenance became too expensive, they were demolished and replaced with new structures. The last building moved from the original campus was an airplane hangar that was used for a number of years on the new campus as a gymnasium. It was razed in 1985, replaced by a modern structure which opened the following year.[42]

Once the college vacated the property that the Air Activities had occupied, the city of Corsicana leased the land from E. N. Edens and modified it for use as a municipal airport. The city purchased the property outright in 1963 and has operated the Corsicana Municipal Airport at that location since that time.[43]

The Air Activities of Texas, Corsicana Field, like hundreds of similar facilities across the United States, is a remarkable example of the spirit of cooperation and determination that characterized the nation during the dark days of World War II. The effects of the Air Activities were felt immediately as well as long term. It contributed to the nation's security by training literally thousands of pilots who made important contributions to the Allied victory over the Axis powers. The presence of such a facility dramatically impacted the local economy of Navarro County and touched the lives of the young men and the military personnel who came to the field for training. The base also provided the foundation for the beginning of Navarro College, which has become the "first class" institution its founders envisioned. The success of the Air Activities of Texas is a testimony to men such as General H.H. "Hap" Arnold, whose vision enabled the United States to assemble the largest, most powerful, and best trained air force the world had ever seen. The dedication of the owners and directors of the operation made the endeavor successful, and the eagerness of the instructors and cadets speak to the depth of patriotism which the entire country experienced during those trying times.

NOTES

[1]C. L. Sulzberger, *World War II* (New York, 1970), pp. 70-73.

[2]Gerald P. Nash, *The Crucial Era: The Great Depression and World War II, 1929-45* (New York, 1992), p. 120.

[3]Russell F. Weighley, *The American Way of War: A History of the United States Military Strategy and Policy* (Bloomington, 1973), pp. 232-36.

[4]Weighley, *The American Way of War,* pp. 231-32.

[5]"The Development of the Army Air Forces," *Lazy 8: Gulf Coast Army Air Forces Training Center Yearbook, Class 43-C*, Corsicana, Texas, 1943, pp. 3-10.

[6]H.H. Arnold, *Global Mission* (New York: 1940), p. 179.

[7]H.H. Arnold, "Report of the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces to the Secretary of War," *United States News*, January, 1944.

[8]Arnold, *Global Mission*, p. 190.

[9]Arnold, "Report of the Commanding General, " p. 5.

[10]Arnold, *Global Mission*, pp. 181, 206. According to Arnold, by the end of the war the civilian flight schools were training 105,000 pilots per year.

[11]*Lazy 8 Yearbook, Class 43-C*, Air Activities of Texas, Corsicana Field, pp. 18-21.

[12]A. Ray Stephens and William M. Holmes, *Historical Atlas of Texas* (Norman, 1989), p. 48.

[13]*Flying Lines*, February 8, 1944.

[14]"History of the Corsicana Field," *Flying Lines*, May 3, 1943; "Chronological History of the Contract," *History of the 2552nd AAF Base*, Book VI, September 14-November 15,1944, Appendix. The contract was amended on January 1, 1942, to pay $18.10 per flying hour. A contract signed on July 23, 1942, reduced payment to $16.70, followed by another reduction to $11 in September 1943. The final contract, executed August 26, 1944, paid $9.75 per flying hour. It should be noted that during the time rates were being reduced, the size of the classes of cadets significantly increased, greatly expanding the number of flying hours.

[15]*Lazy 8 Yearbook*, 43-C, p. 47.

[16]Interview with Wendell Hutchinson and George Gaffney, October 1991; *Lazy 8 Yearbook*, p. 47.

[17]*Flying Lines*, February 8, 1944; *Dallas Times Herald*, June 14, 1962.

[18]*History of the 2552nd AAF Base Unit*, Book VI, Appendix, Attachment II-A.

[19]*Lazy 8 Yearbook*, p. 47.

[20]*Lazy 8 Yearbook*, p. 47; Interview with Margaret Pannill, December 15, 1977.

[21]Chart prepared by E.D. "Dick" Criddle. Later references cited as "Criddle Papers."

[22]*Lazy 8 Yearbook*, 42-A and 42-B, p. 19.

[23]*Flying Lines*, May 11, 1943.

[24]*Flying Lines*, August 24, 1944.

[25]*Lazy 8 Yearbook*, 42-A, p. 19.

[26]*Flying Lines*, March 13, 1943; *Flying Lines*, February 8, 1944.

[27]Interview with Tillman Reed, October 25, 1991; Interview with Gerald McClung, November 11, 1991; *Flying Lines*, March 24, 1944.

[28]*Flying Lines*, March 24, 1944.

[29]Ed Steger, personal letter, August 24, 1993; Reed interview.

[30]Steger letter.

[31]"Criddle Papers."

[32]*History of the 2552nd*, Appendix. According to an article in the August 4, 1944, *Flying Lines*, Colonel Ford was killed on a combat mission.

[33]*Flying Lines*, June 27, 1944.

[34]Interview with Richard James, October, 1995. James was a cadet in Class 43-C.

[35]*Flying Lines*, August 19, 1943.

[36]"Criddle Papers."

[37]*History of the 2552nd*, p. 3.

[38]"Criddle Papers."

[39]A.A. Allison, "Junior Colleges," *Texas Outlook*, June, 1928.

[40]Interview with R.A. (Andy) Armistead, June 20, 1978. Armistead was principal of Corsicana High School and was involved in many of the meetings in which the formation of the Navarro Junior College was discussed.

[41]*Corsicana Daily Sun*, July 17, 1946; Minutes, Board of Trustees of Navarro Junior College, July 22, 1946; *El Navarro* (yearbook of Navarro Junior College), 1947.

[42]Interview with E.E. Burkhart, February 3, 1943. Burkhart was a Corsicana contractor who supervised the moving of the buildings from the Air Activities site to the new campus.

[43]City Records provided by Nelda Neal, city secretary of Corsicana.

THE KNOW-NOTHINGS AND DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION IN HARRISON COUNTY

by Larry McClellan

As the election of 1855 neared, Democrats in East Texas raised full-cry against a new enemy, the secret and nativistic American (Know-Nothing) Party. Though Americans denied charges of religious intolerance, called themselves Unionists working to heal sectionalism, and strove to trace origins to Washington, Jefferson, and Jackson, Democrats jeered them as bigots, belabored the commingling of abolitionists and Know-Nothings in the North, and linked them to the Alien and Sedition Acts and the Hartford Convention.[1] Former governor J.P. Henderson, speaking in Marshall, vilified the Know-Nothings as a party based on the concentration of power in the federal government at the expense of state's rights.[2] Americanism, fumed R.W. Loughery, editor of the Marshall *Texas Republican,* was "federalism in its most odious form."[3] Democrats in Harrison County pledged uncompromising resistance to secrecy, oaths, intolerance, and political proscription.[4] Know-Nothings, Democrats scoffed, were disappointed office seekers, Whigs, abolitionists, and disaffected Democrats joined in fragile alliance.[5] They were the "old, wrinkled caste of prostitutes of party, with no more pretension to piety than an unrepentant Magdalen."[6] The election was a "fair contest between intolerance, federalism, concealment, and deception ... and open-handed, free-hearted, and straight-forward Republicanism."[7] So argued the *Texas Republican.* But despite the contumely, the Democrats lost Harrison County.

In May 1854 newspapers had first reported the existence in Texas of a mysterious group called Know-Nothings because members answered "I don't know" to questions about politics.[8] Surprised by early Know-Nothing victories in San Antonio and Galveston, Democrats in Texas were ill-prepared to oust the intruders. Having lacked a powerful adversary, the party had never organized properly, candidates paying little heed to state conventions and announcing for office through the press. As a result, politics in Texas centered on personalities rather than parties. Democrats, reacting vigorously to the new threat, called urgently for formal organization and the establishment of the convention system. At the same time, they linked the American Party to Northern abolitionism, thus stigmatizing Know-Nothings as enemies of the South.

Organization and victory, though, were not easily achieved, and a study of the conflict in just one county can serve as an example of similar struggles throughout Texas. Harrison County is appropriate for several reasons. First was the unusual strength of the Americans. Know-Nothings carried the county in the state elections of 1855 and 1856 and for some time controlled city offices in Marshall, the largest town in the county and the stronghold of Know-Nothing power in East Texas. Second was the high quality of political leaders. Calling Harrison County home were several men who were either well-known political figures or who were to become prominent. Among the Know-Nothings was L.D. Evans, who won a seat in Congress in 1855 and served as

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chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court in his later years. Democratic champions included Pendleton Murrah, governor from 1863 to 1865, and L.T. Wigfall, a pro-Southern extremist and United States Senator during the critical period just before the Civil War. Third was the presence of both Democratic and Know-Nothing newspapers. The Marshall *Texas Republican* spoke for the Democrats and the Marshall *Meridian* and later the Harrison *Flag* for the Know-Nothings.[9] Unfortunately, issues of the *Meridian* were not preserved and issues of the *Flag* are not available for the period of greatest Know-Nothing activity. Consequently, the capable but biased and vituperative editor of the *Texas Republican*, state's rights Democrat R.W. Loughery, serves as the primary source detailing the battle between Democrats and Know-Nothings. Loughery welcomed a fight, recognizing that highly-emotional political issues were a newspaper's lifeblood. "What is a paper without politics?" Loughery asked, but a "perfectly wishy-washy affair devoid of interest or merit."[10]

Loughery first mentioned the Know-Nothings in June 1854, reporting that a secret group originating in New York "some months ago" had "spread with astonishing rapidity."[11] Four months later Loughery wrote that the American Party was a secret organization "calculated to work mischief," opposing the rights of immigrants and Roman Catholics to vote or hold office. In the North, Loughery claimed, the party was made up of Whigs and freesoilers, and in the South Know-Nothings gained strength from "the order thieves in the cities" where anti-foreign passions were "acted upon by bad men."[12] Loughery charged early in 1855 that abolitionism had triumphed in the Know-Nothing councils, one proof being that abolitionist papers had ceased criticism.[13] Another proof was that the Americans had elected to office William H. Seward, an abolitionist whom Loughery called the most dangerous man in the Union.[14]

Thus early and briskly Loughery opposed the American Party. Too, he unerringly singled out the theme that Democrats found most efficacious in battling the Americans: the blending of Know-Nothings with abolitionists in the North, by association identifying Know-Nothings in Texas as enemies of state's rights and the South.

The date of the entry of the Know-Nothings into Harrison County is unknown, but possibly a lodge existed before the county election of 1854. J.M. Clayton, elected school trustee in August, wrote a letter to the *Texas Republican* favoring nativism and advocating the American Party.[15] Conceivably, Clayton had been supported by a Know-Nothing chapter. At the least, his letter documents the existence of Know-Nothing sentiment.

Posing as a river improvement convention, the Texas Grand Council of the American Party met June 11, 1855, in Washington-on-the-Brazos. Their most important actions were the nominations of candidates for state offices and for the United States Congress. The choice for governor was D.C. Dickson of Grimes County, at that time lieutenant governor in the administration of E.M. Pease. Dickson's opposition to the state system of internal improvements – a plan calling for the state to build, own, and operate railroads – appealed to many Texans and probably helped him gain the nomination.[16]

As the congressional candidate for the eastern district, the convention chose Lemuel Dale Evans. Evans, a lawyer from Harrison County, had arrived in Texas in 1843. No stranger to politics, he had represented Fannin County in the Annexation Convention in 1845. By 1850 he was a district judge living in Marshall.[17] Evans had been a strong contender in the governor's race in 1853, particularly in East Texas.[18]

Democrats, learning of the Know-Nothing meeting, hastily called a state convention for June 16 in which they nominated E.M. Pease for a second term as governor. Pease waived his support of the unpopular state system, promising to cooperate with the people.[19] Although selecting a congressional candidate for the western district, the convention made no nomination for the east. Denouncing all secret political factions, Democrats condemned Know-Nothings as enemies of the government. Secrecy, they declared, was the only issue, an issue determined by the American Party's "midnight caucus."[20]

Democrats in East Texas sought a candidate to oppose Evans, but calls for a convention met with little interest.[21] Three Democrats, George W. Chilton, John T. Mills, and Matthias Ward announced for Congress, but Chilton and Mills yielded to Ward after "consulting with friends."[22] Mills withdrew "more than willingly" to avoid confusion.[23] Chilton, placing priority on defeating the Know-Nothings, said that the party had to be driven "back to the dens of abolitionism."[24]

Evans, speaking in Marshall, denied membership in the Know-Nothings. Loughery countered by arguing that a "good source" had declared that Evans had been a member of the Marshall council but had withdrawn in order to state truthfully that he was not a member of any secret society.[25] The source to which Loughery referred was Josiah Marshall, the editor of the *Meridian*, who had switched from the Whigs to the Know-Nothings. In a letter published in the *Texas Republican,* Marshall wrote that he did not say that Evans' name could be found on the Know-Nothing roll but had said that he had no doubt of Evans' membership.[26]

Six weeks after the state Know-Nothing convention, Democrats in Harrison County took the first of several steps toward thorough organization and eventual triumph. Meeting in July, they swore uncompromising opposition to the Americans, charged that the greatest victories of the Know-Nothings had occurred in the "hot beds" of freesoilers and abolitionists, requested an alliance with the Whigs, and upheld state's rights, stating that the Union was secondary to the rights it was to protect.[27] As candidates to the state legislature, the convention nominated E.B. Blalock, Pendleton Murrah, and J.S. Anderson. Murrah said in his acceptance speech that Know-Nothings boasted of having 800 of the county's 1100 votes, but that the real strength of the party was unknown because of its secrecy.[28] Another of the nominees, Anderson, had entered the meeting amid shouts of "Know-Nothing." He had belonged to the order, he admitted, but had left it because he felt that the party was not in the best interests of the country.[29]

The same day as the Democratic meeting, Know-Nothings also selected

candidates for the state legislature: W.A. Tarlton, formerly a Union Whig; Nathan Smith, an ex-Union Democrat; and A.D. Burress, an ex-state's rights Democrat.[30] Several "abler men," Loughery claimed, had been passed over because they had been Whigs, and Know-Nothings in Marshall were trying to avoid the opprobrium of Whiggery.[31]

In a letter published in the *Texas Republican*, Burress illustrated the Know-Nothing attempt to avoid nativism and deal with state topics. Like most East Texans, he opposed the state plan for internal improvements, criticizing it as a tax-raising idea "fraught with mischief." He also opposed the building of railroads by outsiders, wanting counties to construct their own.[32]

Always the steady-going Democrat, Loughery supported his party's candidates in all races. Though disliking Pease's policies, Loughery favored him over Dickson. All Democrats, Loughery wrote, had to unite behind Pease to insure victory.[33] Loughery disregarded state issues, saying that the only goal was victory over the Know-Nothings.[34] Dickson, Loughery declared, "has proved unmindful and ungrateful for the high honors which have been conferred upon him... . He deserves the repudiation and rebuke which he is destined to receive at the hands of the people."[35]

Despite the efforts of Loughery and other Democrats, Know-Nothings carried Harrison County by large majorities, Evans defeating Ward by a vote of 673 to 393. By the slimmest of margins Evans won the Eastern district, his election to Congress being the capstone of Know-Nothing triumphs in Texas.[36] To prevent future losses, Loughery urged immediate organization and increased circulation of Democratic papers.[37] The defeat, he stressed, "will teach the party to be more active and industrious for the future."[38]

Nettled by the Know-Nothing victory, Democrats scheduled a rally and barbecue for October with Senator T.J. Rusk as the honored guest.[39] In addition, they called for a meeting at the courthouse in Marshall to organize for the presidential campaign and to appoint delegates to the state convention.[40] Realizing that they had several candidates for district attorney to one for the Know-Nothings, Democrats also scheduled a meeting at Henderson.[41] Originally, the convention was to have met in Harrison County, but in marked overstatement Loughery pronounced the county to be "almost entirely free from political agitation."[42] Democrats in Marshall chose delegates to the Henderson convention and appointed a committee to report the names of candidates suitable for county offices.[43]

Having written in April that Harrison County lacked political activity, Loughery lamented in June that Democrats seemed to be organized everywhere but in Harrison County. Obviously, Democratic organization was necessary, he wrote, as Know-Nothings were plentiful. One proof of their strength was that they had raised $1600 "without any display of excitement – without scarcely an effort" to establish the Harrison *Flag*.[44]

Overshadowed by the approaching presidential election, the state elections of 1856, held the first Monday in August, caused little excitement. Although Know-Nothing candidates were defeated statewide, William Sted-

man of Henderson, nominee for attorney general, and William A. Tarlton of Marshall, candidate for treasurer, both carried Harrison County.[45]

In the election of county officials, taking place at the same time as the state election, four Democrats, one Know-Nothing, and another probable Know-Nothing entered the contests for commissioners. Returns suggest the election of three Democrats and one Know-Nothing.[46] In races for other county offices, Loughery said that T.A. Harris, the president of the Marshall Know-Nothing council, and J.M. Curtis, an active member, were defeated. Another Know-Nothing, Loughery wrote, was beaten because his foreign-sounding name had caused nativists to vote against him.[47] Democrats had supported convention nominees, but whether or not Know-Nothings had chosen a ticket is not known. The wide difference between votes: e.g. for county clerk E.C. Beasley-809, Jesse Witt-214, indicates that Know-Nothings did not support a nominee but that Beasley drew votes from both parties.[48]

Know-Nothings bustled about in anticipation of the presidential election. The Fillmore American Club of Marshall invited free discussion at a barbecue held September 15.[49] Following a three-hour speech by a Know-Nothing, Democrats asked for L.T. Wigfall. Denied, they went downtown to listen to Wigfall for two hours.[50] A good attendance of Marshall Know-Nothings heard out-of-staters speak for Fillmore on October 2. Then Wigfall met the Know-Nothings in debate.[51] On October 10 and 11, Know-Nothing activities in Marshall drew an attendance of about 1200. A large procession with banners and flags preceded the festivities. B.H. Epperson, a former Whig, spoke for the Know-Nothings. A second Know-Nothing speaker reminded the sharp-tongued Loughery of "a small steamer with a diminutive engine, burning green cottonwood and running about one mile an hour."[52]

Democrats were not idle, either. A meeting in Marshall on July 5 unanimously adopted a resolution approving James Buchanan and John C. Breckinridge and the platform of the national convention. Meeting again in August, Democrats decided to sponsor a debate and barbecue. The convention also voted to precede the barbecue with numerous meetings in Marshall and surrounding areas: Cook's store, Whitehorn's, Lagrone's, and Brown's schoolhouse.[53]

Large delegations from Upshur, Cass, and Panola counties arrived in Marshall on November 1. Democrats in a playful mood attempted to raise a pole 150 feet long flying the flags of Buchanan and Breckinridge, but the pole snapped. Disappointed celebrants lashed the shaft to a building. During a night filled with high-jinks, Know-Nothings decorated the doors of houses, attached black crepe to the flag of the Democratic candidates, dug a grave where the flagpole was to have stood, put Buchanan's name over the grave, and surrounded it with a fence.[54]

The next day Democratic speakers, most importantly Wigfall, shared the platform with Josiah Marshall and Gil McKay, both Know-Nothings from Marshall. McKay, Loughery wrote, was the superior speaker among Know-Nothings in Harrison County – intelligent, forceful, and direct.[55] Marshall, former editor of the *Meridian*, spoke in favor of the Know-Nothing presi-

dential candidate, charging that Buchanan was an abolitionist and his supporters fire-eaters and disunionists. For two days speeches continued, and when the meeting was over Loughery jubilantly announced the "dawning of a political millennium" in which the sun had broken through for the first time in fifteen months. Know-Nothings, Loughery averred, had heard the "thrilling tocsin of defeat."[56]

Though the Know-Nothings had carried Harrison County in 1855 and in the state elections of 1856, Democrats won the presidential election by sixty votes. "This is indeed a glorious triumph," Loughery wrote, "and one of which the Democratic party may well feel proud." The county had been "disenthralled, redeemed, regenerated."[57] He attributed the victory primarily to the voting of state's rights Whigs.[58] Know-Nothings, however, continued to carry Marshall, but by only five votes. Statewide, Buchanan defeated Fillmore by a two-to-one margin.

Encouraged by the result of the presidential election, Democrats met two weeks later to select party officers and to organize a Democratic club. At the convention held November 15, Democrats in Harrison County organized properly for the first time. After electing a chairman, members stated that a Democratic victory was necessary "to preserve the ascendancy of those principles over Know-Nothingism and Federalism," and passed the following resolutions:

1. Each precinct was to form a Democratic club.
2. The clubs were to meet the first Saturday of each month.
3. A committee was to study the need for a reading room.
4. A committee of correspondence was to be established to communicate with other Democratic clubs throughout the state.
5. Each precinct was to establish a vigilance committee to organize the Democratic clubs.

Officers elected for the year were W.R.D. Ward, president; L.T. Wigfall, C.M. Adams, and Joseph Taylor, committee of correspondence; and R.W. Loughery, secretary and member of the reading room committee. Vice presidents were elected for each of the ten precincts. In the November 22 issue of the *Texas Republican*, Loughery reported fully the actions of the convention, naming approximately 100 men who had been placed in some position in the Democratic organization.[59]

Less than a month after the national contest, Marshall elected city officials. Loughery requested a convention to nominate Democratic candidates unless "opposition to the movement is manifested by members of the party who may regard it as in expedient and impolitic." He wrote that there was much dissatisfaction with the incumbent administration, controlled by the Know-Nothings, and specified the failures of leadership: curtailing trade by alienating town from country; levying oppressive taxes, city taxes being higher than state and county taxes combined; not publishing a list of expenditures; and keeping secret the value of assessed property, amounts collected, and the condition of the treasury. If the Democrats could win in Marshall, Loughery said, the Know-Nothings would lose the entire county. "For a man to come out

for office in this county, and to be recognized as a Democrat," Loughery complained, "has been hitherto considered sufficient to ensure defeat; insomuch as we have quietly permitted the Know-Nothings to monopolize nearly all of the offices."[60]

The Know-Nothings made no nominations for city offices; nevertheless, their entire ticket was elected.[61] The vote of 172 stood in contrast to the 455 ballots cast in the presidential election only a few weeks before. Obviously the Democrats, though finally organized, had not been sufficiently concerned about a local election to turn out in large numbers. Loughery's brag that Know-Nothings had heard "the thrilling tocsin of defeat" had proved premature. Nevertheless, he commented that they might not have another occasion to boast.[62]

Rapid deterioration of the American Party on both national and state levels followed their defeat in the presidential election. The party disintegrated in Texas, riddled by defections and stunned by failure. Former Know-Nothings flooded Democratic papers with letters stating essentially the same theme: Americans, deserting nativism, were waging war against the South.[63] Reacting to accusations of disloyalty to state and section, many Know-Nothings deserted the party. In Marshall, for example, unhappy Know-Nothings claimed disillusionment with the "abolitionist" American Party and sought to join the Democrats.[64] Finally, at the state convention in 1858, delegates resolved that "the doors of the great temple of Democracy" be opened to "all repentant sinners" and invited recreants to return, confessing, to be "readmitted to the fold of the faithful."[65] At a special night session, Know-Nothings seeking entry adopted the sectional views of the regular Democrats, reinforcing the Democratic self-image as bastion of state's rights and protector of Southern institutions.

That the Know-Nothings embraced the views of state's rights, pro-Southern Democrats is not surprising. Like the Democrats, a large majority of Know-Nothings came from the lower South.[66] And like their Democratic counterparts, Know-Nothing leaders were generally old-line Texans of education and refinement. They were professional men: doctors, lawyers, teachers. Most were middle-aged, Southern-born, holders of real and personal property, and slaveowners.[67]

One of the state's most important Know-Nothings, J.S. Ford, editor of the *Texas State Times*, the leading Know-Nothing journal in the state, announced in May 1857 that duty to the South forced his withdrawal from the Know-Nothings and reaffiliation with the Democrats.[68] Assuming editorial leadership, the Harrison *Flag* broadcast the need for a state convention to be held at Fairfield.[69] Know-Nothings in Harrison County, in their first open meeting, confirmed Fairfield as the site and selected delegates to attend, instructing them to support Sam Houston for governor.[70] Loughery, present at the meeting, acidly commented that the convention was an "exhibition in political depravity" in which members "openly boasted of trickery, scheming, and wire pulling."[71] Most counties, though, were unable to initiate sufficient

interest, and plans for the meeting in Fairfield fell victim to waning strength and enthusiasm, no convention being held.

As the election for governor neared, residents of Harrison County wrangled over the choice of a candidate. Both Democrats and Know-Nothings signed a letter published in the Harrison *Flag* supporting William T. Scott, a Harrison County planter and member of the Texas senate. But Scott, Loughery wrote, could not gain the support of the state Democratic convention because he had backed Dickson in 1855.[72] Friends of Scott rebutted through an article published in the Henderson *Democrat,* arguing that Scott had led the fight against Whigs and Know-Nothings. Loughery's opposition to Scott was based on "well understood" personal reasons.[73] In reply, Loughery dismissed the author of the letter as seeking to divide the Democratic vote. The issues, Loughery said, were Scott's Know-Nothing membership, his comments during the election in 1855, and his voting a mixed ticket.[74] At the Democratic state convention, H.R. Runnels received the nomination for governor, his opponent being the Unionist and former Know-Nothing Sam Houston, running as an Independent.

L.D. Evans had returned to Marshall by April 1857 to prepare for reelection.[75] Evans announced from Washington that he had left the Know-Nothings and wished to rejoin the Democrats. The Democrats, though, were not eager to receive him. Should the "long suffering Democracy of Texas have bowels of compassion for all his sins?" the Dallas *Herald* asked. Charles De Morse, editor of the Clarksville *Standard,* denounced Evans as "the gay deceiver who lured the Democracy to its undoing but two years since; when his seductive tales, not quite correct, secured their confidence only to be betrayed. The sweet mouthed Lemuel with his mellifluous smile has run his course. His political sands are run out... ."[76]

Democrats meeting in Tyler selected J.H. Reagan to oppose Evans.[77] In Harrison County, Democrats nominated W.T. Scott, Pendleton Murrah, and L.T. Wigfall for the senate, but Murrah, who was present, withdrew, and Scott, who was not present, declined by a letter he had written earlier. Then Wigfall, called one of Texas' brightest sons, distinguished for "preaching ... Democracy in its purity," was nominated by acclamation.[78] For representatives the convention unanimously chose Murrah, Eli T. Craig, and W.F. Baldwin. Loughery, the secretary of the meeting, believed the candidates to be the best available – all men of superior speaking ability who could express Democratic ideas forcefully.[79]

Harrison County Know-Nothings met five days after the Democrats. Giving each member one vote meant that Marshall would control the convention. Know-Nothings chose J.F. Taylor to oppose Wigfall, and Josiah Marshall, R.B. Gatlin, and C.C. Johnson to oppose Murrah, Craig, and Baldwin.[80]

Excitement swept Marshall when the two candidates for governor, Houston and Runnels, visited the city. Nearing town on the morning of June 12, they were ceremoniously escorted to the courthouse. After being welcomed by Josiah Marshall, Houston spoke briefly. During the afternoon he

was to speak two more hours. Then, following a dinner break, Runnels was to speak for two-and-a-half hours, Houston concluding the debate by speaking for another half hour. Houston said that he had started out on a lion hunt but found himself beset by dogs and puppies. He denounced his opponents, blamed a corrupt legislature for wanting to steal the public lands and protested the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Loughery complimented Houston's commanding presence, clear and melodious voice, distinct articulation, and precise style, but ridiculed Houston's speech as "twaddle and egotism" that created only nausea among his followers.[81]

When Runnels, a notoriously poor speaker, was reportedly too ill to reply, the cry went up for Wigfall. The issue, he responded, was Houston's attempt to destroy the Democratic Party. Wigfall allied Houston with opponents of Southerners and conservative Northerners, singling out for special censure Houston's vote for Fillmore, whom Wigfall called an abolitionist and enemy of Democracy.[82]

Evans and Reagan, candidates for Congress, both spoke in Marshall. Loughery, not surprisingly, dismissed Evan's speech as "transparent humbug."[83] In speeches across East Texas, Evans claimed status as a Buchanan-like Democrat divorced from caucuses or cliques.[84] His most important point was his assertion that Southern Democrats were controlled by demagogues intent on dividing the party. Reagan and Runnels, Evans said, backed extreme measures, including the reopening of the African slave trade.[85]

Reagan, shying away from denunciations of men, tried to deal with principles. Preaching state's rights, he opposed the federalism put forward by Whigs and Know-Nothings. Acknowledging the right of secession, he recognized that it would be accompanied by violence.[86] Stating that Know-Nothings still lurked abroad, he spoke against religious tests in politics, proscription of foreigners, and secret political organizations.[87]

When the vote was in, Democrats in Harrison County rejoiced. In the county's largest turnout until that time, smaller boxes overrode Marshall's vote for Independent or American candidates, giving the Democrats a clean sweep. Know-Nothing strength in Marshall was best indicated by the votes for the senate and legislature. Know-Nothing candidates averaged 212 votes; Democrats, 205. Wigfall, whose opponent was said to be one of the most popular men in the county, was elected to the senate by a majority of ten. Having won Harrison County by 280 votes in 1855, Evans lost it by forty in 1857.[88] His epitaph had been written months earlier:

> Alas, poor Lem'—here he lies,
> No body laughs, no body cries,
> Where he has gone, and how he fares,
> No body knows, and no body cares.[89]

A gratified Loughery announced the election to be the death blow to Know-Nothings in Harrison County.[90] This time, he was correct. Except for verbal sparring, the battle between the Democrats and the Know-Nothings was over.

Emerging from the contest for Harrison County was a well-organized

group of pro-Southern state's righters devoted to the convention system of choosing candidates. Similar organization took place all across Texas as did thorough organization on the state level. When the Democrats met at the state convention in 1858, only one regular Democrat was opposed, and even though a few Democrats protested the politicization of judicial positions, most accepted the pronouncement of J.H. Reagan that "Democrats must learn to surrender their private judgments to the judgment of the party."[91]

That voters placed sectional issues over state issues was articulated by Loughery in his discussion of the governor's election of 1855. Three-fourths of the voters, he claimed, had disagreed with Pease's politics but had voted for him because the election transcended state issues, being linked to larger issues embracing the entire South.[92] W.B. Ochiltree of Nacogdoches, the ex-leader of the Whig faction in Texas and advocate of Americanism, gave considerable punch to the Democratic argument when he deserted the Know-Nothings for the Democrats, saying that views against foreigners must be subordinated to views against abolitionists.[93] In a letter to the *Texas Republican* a former Whig and ex-president of a Know-Nothing council voiced the pro-Southern convictions of most Americans. When joining the Know-Nothings, he wrote, he had believed that the party would crush abolitionism in the North and unify the South. But abolitionism had triumphed, and slavery being the only question pending, he would vote with the Democrats.[94]

Thus, as streams of propaganda rolling from conservative presses promoted sectionalism by instigating a marked self-consciousness, transient Whigs and Know-Nothings vowed allegiance to the South and leagued with the Democrats. Unionism and the Constitution as expressed by Houston and Evans fell victim to state's rights and the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions as extolled by Runnels and Reagan.[95] The combative Loughery had seized upon ready-made and incendiary issues, crying against secrecy, anti-foreignism, anti-Catholicism, federalism, and abolitionism. The Democrats of Harrison County – incited by constant pleas for organization, provoked by outpourings against the abolitionism of Northern Know-Nothings, fortified by Know-Nothings who had found the lures of secrecy and nativism fleeting – rose from the defeat of 1855 to beat down a strong antagonist and stand victorious in 1857 and beyond.

NOTES

[1]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 30, 1855; March 10, 1855. The Hartford Convention recommended constitutional amendments which would weaken the power of the Southern states, including abolishing the three-fifths compromise by which slaves could be counted for congressional representation.

[2]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 4, 1855; May 19, 1855.

[3]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 7, 1855.

[4]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[5]T.J. Rusk in *Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 14, 1855; George H. Chilton in *Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 7, 1855; J.P. Henderson in *Texas Republican* (Marshall), May 19, 1855.

[6]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), March 27, 1855.

[7]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[8]*Texas State Times* (Austin), May 26, 1854, cited by William Darrell Overdyke, *The Know-Nothing Party in the South* (Baton Rouge, 1950), p. 62.

[9]In December 1855, R.W. Loughery wrote that he had been using ink acquired from Josiah Marshall "late editor of the *Meridian*" for three months. *Texas Republican* (Marshall), December 15, 1855.

[10]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 18, 1854.

[11]Texas Republican (Marshall), June 10, 1854.

[12]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 7, 1854.

[13]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), February 24, 1855.

[14]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), February 24, 1855.

[15]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 19, 1854; September 9, 1854.

[16]Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, pp. 116-17; *Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 7, 1855.

[17]Microfilm copies of 1850 census, Texas, Harrison County.

[18]Election returns in the *Standard* (Clarksville), September 10, 1853.

[19]*Standard* (Clarksville), July 7, 1855; *Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 7, 1855.

[20]Ernest William Winkler (ed.), *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas* (Austin, 1916), p. 64; *Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[21]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 30, 1855.

[22]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 30, 1855; July 7, 1855.

[23]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 7, 1855; *Standard* (Clarksville), July 21, 1855.

[24]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 7, 1855.

[25]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 30, 1855; July 28, 1855.

[26]Letter from Marshall, *Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 4, 1855.

[27]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[28]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[29]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[30]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 4, 1855.

[31]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 4, 1855.

[32]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 28, 1855.

[33]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 30, 1855; July 14, 1855; July 21, 1855.

[34]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 14, 1855.

[35]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 14, 1855.

[36]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 10, 1855. Evans carried the East by fewer than fifty votes from a total of 20,714. File number 2-13/324, Texas State Archives. The story of the election of 1855 is in Waymon Larry McClellan, "The Democratic-Know-Nothing Hurly Burly in Upper East Texas: 1855-1857," (unpublished Master's thesis, East Texas State University, 1971), pp. 32-67.

[37]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), September 15, 1855.

[38]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 24, 1855.

[39]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 13, 1855.

[40]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 3, 1855.

[41]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 26, 1856.

[42]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 26, 1856.

[43]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 26, 1856.

[44]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 7, 1856. The *Flag* carried on its masthead a picture of an eagle above a drawing of George Washington. The caption read "Americans Must Rule America."

[45]Results ascertained from copies of election returns furnished by Texas State Librarian.

[46]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 16, 1856; November 22, 1856.

[47]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 9, 1856.

[48]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 16, 1856.

[49]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), September 12, 1856.

[50]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 4, 1856.

[51]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 11, 1856.

[52]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 13, 1856.

[53]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 25, 1856.

[54]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 8, 1856.

[55]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), October 25, 1856; November 8, 1856.

[56]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 8, 1856.

[57]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 8, 1856. Statewide, Buchanan defeated Fillmore by a two-to-one margin.

[58]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 8, 1856.

[59]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), November 22, 1856.

[60]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), December 6, 1856.

[61]City officials elected for Marshall in 1856 were: mayor, S.J. Richardson; constable, J.M. Bailey; treasurer, A.H. Barrett; recorder, J. Mullins; aldermen, W. Fields, A. Wilson, G.W. Vivion, G. Gregg, and W. Taylor. *Texas Republican* (Marshall), December 13, 1856. In 1855 the following men had been elected to town offices: mayor, R.N. Stansbury; constable, J. Martin; treasurer, A.H. Barrett; recorder, A.A. Wilson; aldermen, G. Gregg, J. Witt, C. Hynson, E.P. Johnson, and W. Taylor. *Texas Republican* (Marshall), September 29, 1855.

[62]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), December 13, 1856.

[63]See, for example, a letter containing ten signatures in the *Standard* (Clarksville), July 28, 1857.

[64]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), July 12, 1856, quoting speech by M.J. Hall.

[65]Francis Richard Lubbock, *Six Decades in Texas, or Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock, Governor of Texas in War Time, 1861-63*, ed. C.W. Raines (Austin, 1900), p. 233.

[66]The slave states of the lower South populated East Texas, with Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi furnishing 51.8 percent of new families to 1860; Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Missouri added another 34.7 percent. The remaining 13.5 percent came primarily from Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and the Carolinas. See Barnes F. Lathrop, *Migration into East Texas 1835-1860* (Austin, 1949), p. 34. The percentage of slaves increased at a greater rate than the percentage of whites in East Texas, indicating that ownership of slaves was becoming more widespread. Henderson County, for example, registered a 201 percent increase in the white population between 1850 and 1860, but showed a 1,277 percent increase in the number of slaves. Lathrop, *Migration*, pp. 25-26.

[67]Ralph A. Wooster, "An Analysis of the Texas Know-Nothings," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXX (January, 1967), pp. 414-23.

[68]John Salmon Ford, *Rip Ford's Texas*, ed. Stephen B. Oates (Austin, 1963), xxxi; Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, p. 272. His jaunt in the Americans, Ford said, was just "one of those inconsiderate things men do sometimes." Ford, *Ford's Texas*, p. 211.

[69]Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, p. 272.

[70]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 4, 1857.

[71]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 4, 1857.

[72]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), March 14, 1857.

[73]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 11, 1857, quoting the Henderson *Democrat*.

[74]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 11, 1857.

[75]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), April 25, 1857.

[76]*Herald* (Dallas), June 7, 1856; *Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 29, 1857, quoting the Clarksville *Standard.*

[77]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), March 7, 1857.

[78]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 13, 1857.

[79]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 20, 1857.

[80]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 20, 1857.

[81]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 20, 1857. Speaking to the Senate in August, 1856, Houston said that "grave charges have been brought against a party of which I acknowledge myself to be a member....I am a member of the American Party because I am an American born and wish to live and breathe the same air and enjoy the same free institutions, shielded by the same *aegis*, and follow...the same eagle that has brought victory and joy to our country." Speech to the United States Senate, August 30, 1856, in Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker (eds.), *The Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863* (Austin, 1942), VI, p. 386.

[82]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 20, 1857.

[83]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 6, 1857.

[84]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 6, 1857.

[85]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 6, 1857; Lubbock, *Memoirs*, p. 218.

[86]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 20, 1857.

[87]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 20, 1857; John H. Reagan, *Memoirs, with Special Reference to Secession and the Civil War,* ed. Walter Flavius McCaleb (New York, 1906), pp. 63-64.

[88]Election results in *Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 15, 1857. The vote in Harrison County was as follows: governor, Runnels-601, Houston-556; congressman, Reagan-598, Evans-558; representatives, Baldwin-605, Gatlin-521; Murrah-595, Johnson-518; Craig-592, Wilson-511.

[89]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), February 2, 1856, quoting the Clarksville *Standard.*

[90]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), August 8, 1857.

[91]*Herald* (Dallas), August 14, 1858.

[92]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), March 21, 1857.

[93]Ochiltree's comments taken from the Trinity *Advocate*, quoted in the *Texas Republican* (Marshall), May 17, 1856.

[94]*Texas Republican* (Marshall), September 8, 1855.

[95]The state Democratic convention of 1857 unhesitatingly embraced Southern rights. The platform committee determined to avoid "embodying in their platform any opinion on questions of State policy." Winkler, *Platforms*, p. 72. Specific policies concerning the railroads and other state topics, Democrats feared, would fragment the party. *Texas Republican* (Marshall), June 13, 1857. The convention concluded that the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, which argued that states had the right to decide the constitutionality of acts passed by Congress, had "binding authority" on the party. Winkler, *Platforms*, p. 73.

ROBERT CAVELIER, SIEUR DE LA SALLE'S ADVENTURES AND TEXAS: THE MAKING AND BREAKING OF FRENCH COLONIAL POLICY

by Sandra M. Petrovich

After 1661, *de facto* French Secretary of State Jean-Baptiste Colbert involved himself with colonial policy. He wanted strong, self-sufficient overseas territories and his colonial strategy required forceful officials who could make immediate decisions. Overseas officials and French explorers such as Rene Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, while usually obedient, sometimes did not follow Colbert's mandates.[1] Most of the challenge ensued because these men knew they were far from Colbert and usually could do as they pleased.[2] La Salle and his partner, Louis de Baude, Comte de Frontenac and Governor of Canada (first term: 1672-1682), made a habit of maneuvering around Colbert's mandates to explore and make a profit.

La Salle and Frontenac perceived clearly Colbert's rules and colonial vision for New France (Canada) and North America in general, where Colbert wanted to promote a stable, agrarian culture and large families. The fur trade, New France's major revenue source, undercut Colbert's concept. The minister regarded the fur trade as a force that could undermine the compact colony he envisioned if uncontrolled. Colbert wanted two things: to restrict the fur trade and to control westward expansion. A booming fur trade would necessitate western garrisons, which Colbert rightly envisioned as sparsely populated, weak, and prone to attack.[3] For Frontenac, Colbert's commands would restrict the fur trade and westward expansion.

However obvious Colbert's colonial vision, Frontenac and La Salle made illegal profits by capitalizing on their positions of authority, their distance from France, and their clients among the colonists. The king's need for strong military men as leaders in frontier areas caused Colbert to suffer Frontenac and La Salle's sometime disobedience and insouciance. However, Colbert had a limit to his patience and did not hesitate to take action against insubordinate officials.

Frontenac immediately realized that wealth could be made in the fur trade. A seasoned soldier with a pressing need for money, the governor ignored Colbert's order not to involve himself with the fur trade and went about making his contacts, both French and Amerindian. No doubt the mission Indians near Montréal helped the count begin his education about one side of the fur trade, and by accepting partnerships with experienced traders, Frontenac gained quick access to the European end of pelt trading. Through his office and prestige, Frontenac attached to himself the cream of the New France entrepreneurs: Sieur Bairze, Sieur Le Bére, as well the ambitious adventurer Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle.[4]

Before Frontenac arrived in Canada, Colbert refused permission for

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Intendant Jean Talon to build a garrisoned fort on Lake Ontario to guard the area from Iroquois or English attacks.[5] Frontenac improved upon Talon's idea and in connivance with La Salle established not a garrison but a fur trading post on the Kataracoui River near the eastern part of Lake Ontario in 1673. The governor finally reported to Colbert the existence of Fort Frontenac.[6] Predictably, the minister expressed displeasure, but Frontenac claimed that the fort and a soon-to-be-built barque would secure the lake for the French, while adding that its placement was strategic to tap incoming trade.[7]

To further his ambitions Frontenac continued his partnership with La Salle, whose land grant they used to promote their western adventures for fur and to form a monopoly.[8] In 1676 Frontenac ordered the construction of a fort at Niagara to block the western Algonquian access to Albany and to monopolize the fur trade without informing Colbert.[9] With Albany as a trade *entrepôt*, natives reaped excellent prices for their furs and inexpensive European goods, while the English and Dutch obtained pelts that they sold in Europe at a large profit. Frontenac hoped to intrude into this trade. Frontenac was only beginning his fur-trading enterprise. With Frontenac's backing, La Salle circumvented Colbert's non-expansion policies and gained permission from the king on May 12, 1678, to explore the Mississippi Valley and establish forts as needed.[10] La Salle opened a trading post on the Saint Joseph River in 1678 and in 1680, Frontenac and La Salle built Fort Crèvecoeur on the Illinois River and Fort Prudhomme on the Mississippi River below the Ohio River. Alone, La Salle built Fort Saint Louis at present-day Port la Vaca, Texas.[11]

Louis XIV directed the governor to issue permits to trade to keep tabs on the number of traders and discourage the outlawed western trappers known as *coureurs de bois*. However, the king did not envision that Frontenac would fill his pocketbook by issuing trading licenses to clients, such as La Salle.[12] Colbert ordered an end to this practice on May 30, 1675.[13] Frontenac got around this ordinance by issuing not trading but hunting licenses until the king commanded him to cease this practice in 1676.[14] The enterprising Canadian governor improved his troubled finances at the expense of Colbert's policy.

Despite the clarity of their orders, La Salle and Frontenac had room to maneuver due to Colbert's increasing absorption in the Dutch War, 1672-1678, and drastic reduction of communications across the sea.[15] They made illegal profits by capitalizing on their position of authority, their distance from France, and their clients among the colonists. They did obey many of the orders of Louis XIV and Colbert, but they were the most independent where it concerned their own or their colonial clients' interests.

Colbert did not shy from privately admonishing Frontenac for his misconduct. A stream of letters from Colbert censured Frontenac for misusing his authority and disobeying Colbert's ruling against western expansion.[16] On December 4, 1679, Colbert wrote a letter to Frontenac revealing his opinion of him. He stated that he hoped "that you [Frontenac] can change the conduct that you have given up to the present, because [the King] sees clearly that you are not capable of adopting the spirit of concord and of tolerance necessary for

impeding all the dissensions which arise and which are always the main cause of defeat and ruin in the new colonies."[17] Such words would have proven instructive of La Salle some six years later! Frontenac received a harsh letter from Louis XIV, charging him with self-promotion and poor service.[18] To the king's indictments, Frontenac replied: "Your Majesty will clearly understand that I never suffered more than when I was represented as violent and as a man who would trouble the Officers of Justice in the performance of their duties... ."[19] Frontenac refused to be held accountable for his illicit colonial dealings.

Robert René Cavelier, sieur de La Salle, also was headstrong, resourceful, and creative, and refused to be held accountable. By 1667 he and his team had discovered or mapped the Great Lakes, the Ohio River, and some points to the south.[20] Frontenac systematically supported the exploration of the West, with La Salle as his most famous protegé. By the 1670s, La Salle had explored much of the Illinois country.[21] In 1678, La Salle persuaded the reluctant Colbert and Louis to allow him to establish the above mentioned forts, ostensibly to protect French claims but actually to tap into rich fur-trading areas. La Salle's western explorations and business arrangements angered the Iroquois League, a confederation of Iroquoian people who had a long-standing animosity towards the French. The League protested French encroachment into land they wanted by attacking the Illinois and Miami people, groups friendly to the French and active in La Salle's western fur trade, in the 1680s.

La Salle's two most famous voyages occurred during the same years. The first occurred in 1682, when he followed earlier explorers Joliet and Marquette's track along the Illinois River. Traveling downstream, La Salle and his party encountered generally friendly natives as they headed for the Mississippi River, or the Colbert River, as it was called in his day. The expedition made its way to the Gulf of Mexico, then turned around and returned to Québec. In Québec, La Salle met Frontenac's replacement, Joseph-Antoine Le Febvre de La Barre, a luckless lawyer turned colonial governor. The king had sent an order revoking permission to explore any more land in North America, and commanding that La Salle and his party be compensated for this loss of a job.[22]

Having never met La Salle, Governor de La Barre sided with merchants who resented La Salle's rivalry in the fur trade. The new governor needed an excuse to remove La Salle from control of the lucrative trading post of Fort Frontenac. Using his legal skills, La Barre found an excuse. He professed that La Salle gave up his claim to running the fort when he "abandoned" the post the year before. Actually, before the exploration La Salle left a capable subordinate in charge, hardly the act of a man abandoning his claim. Deaf to any protests, La Barre ousted La Salle's handpicked commander from the lucrative fort to put in his own client.[23] With such a thin case against the explorer and a pressing need to profit from the fur trade, La Barre unearthed an ancient charge against La Salle. The governor ordered La Salle removed from the fort and brought to the authorities to explain his questionable actions with the Iroquois League. In 1674, the former *intendant*, Jacques DuChesneau, who hated Frontenac and thus such allies as La Salle, accused the explorer of

compromising the French position when he dealt with the Iroquois. Years later, La Barre used this old accusation and ordered La Salle to take a ship to Paris to explain his actions and "false discoveries."[24]

La Salle went directly to Paris to plead his case for the need for French exploration. The king was scarcely interested in La Salle's claims of exploration, which he considered useless. La Salle wanted to create an establishment in Louisiana, and to do this, he realized he had to make the exploration of the Gulf Coast desirable. To make his claims more attractive, he professed that the Mississippi River flowed into the Río Bravo (Río Grande), the back door to New Spain, an error of 250 leagues. One must consider that even though La Salle lost his compass on his voyage down the Mississippi, he had proven himself an excellent observer. Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, the "father" of Louisiana, later noted that La Salle made the error so he could "see himself near the mines of New Mexico and thereby to induce the court to set up in that country establishments which could not but be very profitable thereafter."[25] As Louis was ever prepared to entertain ideas about seizing land from the Spanish, he listened with interest. Colbert passed away in 1683, and his son, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, took his place. Seignelay, well-trained by his father, was planning with Louis a war against Spain, and they looked favorably upon attacking Mexico after Spain's declaration of war in 1683. They approved a second La Salle expedition and recalled La Barre for what they considered gross incompetence.[26]

The war between France and Spain had ceased on August 15, 1684, with the Truce of Ratisbon. In that same year La Salle gained the king's permission to set up a French colony along the Gulf of Mexico. La Salle had convinced the king that it would be advantageous for the French to have a base to attack and harass Spanish shipping as well as a claim to lands that the Spanish did not yet occupy. The tradition of privateering and buccaneering raids in the seventeenth century was reaching a close, yet it was still viewed as a viable way to damage an enemy during war. Great cooperative ventures between the French and English, such as Henry Morgan's raid on the City of Panama, were major victories for both nations in 1670-1671. Louis did not totally approve of these actions, but he allowed La Salle to set up a French colony in Spanish territory. La Salle left Rochefort on July 24, 1684, and reached the French-held island of Saint Domingue before word of a treaty of truce reached the Caribbean, and continued his voyage with four vessels and 280 people.[27]

The voyage is famous for the disasters that struck the group. One large problem occurred between La Salle and naval commander Tanguy le Gallois de Beaujeu. They disliked each other and La Salle's natural distrust of people did not help the situation. Other problems involved illness and a Spanish privateering raid off Hispaniola that left the group one ship short. Also, upon coming to the island of Saint Domingue, some of La Salle's men joined a local privateering venture and left the party.[28] In this atmosphere of bad luck, the group failed to find the Mississippi River, where the colony was to be located, and upon entering Matagorda Bay, they lost the storeship *Aimable*, which was wrecked on the shoals.[29]

One of the colonists observed that upon arrival, "From afar we saw something like men, but someone said that they were big birds."[30] These birds were either brown pelicans or they were the Karankawan Indians who were indigenous to the area. Some days later they met the people of that land and found that they were being watched and scrutinized by them. The natives told the French, "if they wanted to, they could have killed us, being hidden in the rushes."[31] Yet they only watched. The colonists traded with the natives, but their stores were decreasing because of the loss of their ship. To make matters worse, blankets were left unattended by the French and were taken by the Amerindians.[32] La Salle knew of this, and sent a party of men into the village to retrieve the blankets. He instructed his men that the natives either had to give back the blankets or the French would take canoes as compensation. The canoes would only be returned when the blankets were brought back to the French. La Salle's nephew was put in charge of this venture, and he was forced to take three canoes.[33] Not being able to drag them back, they made a fire and went to sleep to wait for help to arrive. While they slept, "The savages who saw the fire came there. Finding them asleep, they shot arrows at all who were there. They killed two outright and seriously wounded three who returned to the camp injured and again sounded the alarm."[34] French relations with the indigenous people were not the best. These are not the chronicles of a successful colonial venture.

The colony somehow managed to survive, yet the numbers dwindled to 180 persons. Part of this loss was not due to death but rather to the fact that Captain Beaujeu left for France.[35] This and other factors, such as malnutrition and disease, dropped the French population, and there were at least one to three deaths a week reported during the first year.[36] The colonists suffered a great blow when their remaining ship went down in a squall. La Salle and his people were no longer able to leave by the convenient sea route.

Stranded, the French settlers managed to build a fort named Saint Louis in the first year that they spent at Matagorda Bay, and the colony survived for two more years. Racked with death and no hope of rescue, in 1687 La Salle left the colony in an attempt to find a French fort also called Saint Louis, located on the Illinois River. At this point, only forty colonists remained and help was needed badly. "Borrowing" the Amerindians' canoes without giving anything in exchange, La Salle brought the wrath of the natives down upon the squabbling colonists he left behind at the fort. Murder was planned, and one of La Salle's men shot and killed him in the wilderness of East Texas before he found any European help. The remaining colonists did not fair much better. Shortly after La Salle departed, as retaliation for their lost canoes, a group of Karankawa attacked Fort Saint Louis and killed all of the colonists except for a few children. These children were taken into the native villages, tattooed, and incorporated into the indigenous way of life until they were found by the Spanish.[37] The French crown's first attempt at colonizing the Gulf Coast ended in tragedy.

In many respects Colbert's ideas concerning holding defendable positions and development without expansion was realistic. La Salle's colony was too

far from French support so the people had to depend upon themselves. Native American hostility, lacking a supply line, and far from the reach of Versailles, Fort Saint Louis' demise was a strong example of the correctness of the minister's policy. Unexpected disasters such as the sinking of his ships and the desertion of his men amply proved to La Salle the reason Colbert had been so insistent on compact, self-sufficient colonies that had organized government, supply lines, and stood prepared. La Salle's adventures in Texas proved to Louis XIV the soundness of his late minister's policy.

NOTES

[1]A.V. Petrovich, "At Wit's End: Colbert and the Governors Jean-Charles de Baas and Louis de Baude, Comte de Frontenac," *Proceedings of the French Colonial Historical Society*, 20 (1996), pp. 50-58.

[2]Petrovich, "At Wit's End," pp. 50-58.

[3]This policy becomes clear when perusing Colbert's letters and instructions to the governors of New France. See Jean-Baptist Colbert, *Lettres, instructions, et mémoires de Colbert*, 12 vols., Pierre Clément, ed. (Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1862-1869), vol. 3, part 2, pp. 557-600, for examples as well as *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, 15 vols. ed. and trans. E.B. O'Callaghan (Albany, Weed, Parsons, and Company, 1856-87; hereinafter NYCD), 9, pp. 39-44. William Eccles, in *France in America* (New York, 1972), shows this traditional notion of a compact colony, as does Gustave Lanctot, *A History of Canada*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).

[4]*Royal Fort Frontenac*, Richard Preston, ed. (Toronto, 1958; hereinafter RFF), pp. 121 and 319; and *Report de la Archivist de la Province de Québec*, edited by P. Roy (Montréal, 1927-1932; hereinafter *RAPQ*), 1, pp. 26-52, 60-78.

[5]The refusal came because Colbert wanted to stop Canadians from migrating west, and Lake Ontario constituted the west. See RFF, pp. 102 and 300. In the margin of the letter is Colbert's answer: "Establishment on Lake Ontario. To wait." An *intendant* was a government official, equal in power, but not prestige, to the governor. His exclusive duties were finance, police, and justice.

[6]*RAPQ*, 1, p. 68.

[7]*RAPQ*, 1, pp. 26-52, 58.

[8]*RAPQ*, 1, p. 78; and *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises de l'Amérique sous le vent*, 6 Vols., edited by Louis E. Médéric Moreau de Saint-Méry (Paris, 1784-90), 4, p. 402.

[9]*Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 72 vols., edited by R.G. Thwaites (Cleveland, 1896-1901), 60, p. 134.

[10]*RFF*, pp. 125 and 323.

[11]Eccles, *Canadian Frontier*, (New York, 1967), p. 109.

[12]See *Archives de Québec: ordonnances, commissions, etc., etc. des gouverneurs et intendants de la Nouvelle France*, 2 vols., edited by P.G. Roy (Beaucerville, 1924), 1, p. 210, for a sample of the permits.

[13]*RAPQ*, 1, p. 85, Colbert to Frontenac, May 30, 1675.

[14]*NYCD*, 9, p. 126. King to Frontenac, April 15, 1676.

[15]Regrettably, the French archives contain little for North America ca. 1674-1678.

[16]See Colbert, *Lettres*, vol. 3, part 2, pp. 557-61, 574-81, 585-90, and 641, Colbert to Frontenac, June 13, 1671, May 17, 1674, April 22, 1675, and December 4, 1679.

[17]Colbert, *Lettres*, vol. 3, part 2, p. 641, Colbert to Frontenac, December 4, 1679.

[18]Colbert, *Lettres*, vol. 3, part 2, pp. 644-49, King to Frontenac, April 30, 1681.

[19]*RAPQ*, 1, p. 129, Frontenac to King, November 2, 1681.

[20]See *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1 (Toronto, 1966; hereinafter DCB).

[21]Philip Boucher, *Les Nouvelles de France* (Providence, R.I., 1992), p. 55.

[22]*DCB*, 1, p. 178.

[23]*DCB*, 1, p. 178.

[24]*DCB*, 1, p. 179.

[25]*DCB*, 1, p. 179.

[26]French ardor for Spanish riches was fueled, no doubt, by Solís y Rivadeneyra's *Histoire de la conquête du Mexique* (Paris, 1684, 1691, and 1705).

[27]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage to the Gulf of Mexico", trans. A. Bell, in Robert S. Weddle, ed. *La Salle, the Mississippi, and the Gulf: Three Primary Documents* (College Station, TX., 1987), pp. 84-87.

[28]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 88.

[29]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 109. There is some recent confusion about the name of the ship that sank. Archaeologists salvaging one of La Salle's ships recovered cannons with the name *Belle*. The written record names the sunken ship as the *Aimable*. One answer can be found at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Mélanges Colbert #133, f11, where a partial ship list of vessels once in service to the Comte de Vermandois names the *Belle Aimable*. Future research into insurance claim records, port records, and written reports may further clarify the issue.

[30]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 105.

[31]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 110.

[32]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 112.

[33]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 112.

[34]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," pp. 112-113.

[35]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 113.

[36]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 110.

[37]Minet, "Journal of Our Voyage," p. 112.

THE JACKSONS OF BRAZORIA COUNTY: THE LIFE, THE MYTH AND THE IMPACT OF A PLANTATION FAMILY

by Alisa V. Petrovich

From ghost stories to gossip, the Jacksons have generated interest throughout East Texas. Ranked one of the richest plantation owners in Texas in the United States census of 1850 and 1860, Major Abner Jackson left a legacy of wealth and myth.[1] The history of the family and exploits of Abner Jackson and his children provide an important perspective in assessing this legend. The paper will examine the stories surrounding the Jacksons and then view the historical facts about their lives and deeds.

Brazoria County stories hold that Major Abner Jackson ranked as the richest plantation owner in Texas and the most successful planter in the Southern United States. While neither of these ideas reflect an accurate assessment, they suggest a factual story. A successful planter, Major Jackson possessed the most slaves in Texas. He obtained wealth, built grand buildings, and planned a navigation company that produced easier transportation. Too, he owned the first steam-powered sugar mill in Texas. While Abner Jackson did not qualify for the titles of the richest or the most thriving planter in the South, his story exemplified an American success story and provided fertile soil for the Southern plantation myth.

In 1838, twenty-eight year-old Major Abner Jackson arrived in Brazoria County from South Carolina.[2] He appeared during the depression of the 1830s, and by using barter and credit he achieved moderate success with his planting business during the era of the Texas Republic.[3] He purchased a land tract originally deeded to Jared E. Groce and Stephen F. Austin, and earned a sizeable profit on his crops.[4] With his initial success, Jackson established the Retrieve Plantation.[5] This plantation soon supported a booming cotton and cane business. By 1849, Jackson planted 200 acres of sugar cane and could afford to build a sturdy brick sugar house.[6] In part, Abner Jackson fulfilled one portion of the myth: he was fast becoming a rich man. Major Jackson enjoyed his success with his second wife, Margaret, his daughter, Arsenath, and his sons John, George, Andrew, and Abner Junior.[7] In twenty years, the Jackson family's wealth grew sizably.

Although the Jacksons did not appear on lists of the wealthiest families in the Southern United States, they became more affluent during the sugar production crisis of the 1850s. Sugar cane yields declined for several reasons: market prices were low; the hurricane of 1854 leveled many fields in Texas and Louisiana; a terrible drought caused crop failure; and the winters of the 1850s were extremely cold, especially the winter of 1855-1856, that killed much seed cane. Most of these problems did not affect the Jacksons. Low prices did not injure the Jackson family because of their high level of production (296 hogsheads of sugar per growing season as compared to the Texas average of fifty hogsheads of sugar per growing season).[8] The hurricane

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did not damage the Jackson's crops except at Retrieve Plantation.[9] Because the Jackson plantations stretched along both the Brazos River and Oyster Creek, they could irrigate more successfully than could other planters. The cold winter of 1855-1856 did not spare the Jackson family, but they quickly recouped their losses by purchasing fresh seed cane from out-of-state.[10] Despite the setbacks of the 1850s, the Jacksons built their fortune and increased their stature.

Linked to the Jackson success was the status of being a major slave owner. One reason for this dubious status concerned Major Jackson's many holdings. He shared partial ownership of Retrieve Plantation with General James Hamilton, and by 1858 Jackson had purchased Darrington Plantation after the death of its owner, Sterling McNeel.[11] These were bigger sugar plantations and had outstanding records of production. To farm so much land, Jackson utilized a large slave work force. According to the census of 1860, Abner Jackson had the second largest slave holdings (285 people) in Texas, as compared to David Mills (313 people).[12] General Hamilton owned 213 slaves in conjunction with Jackson, for a total of 498 souls.[13] Therefore, despite the set-backs of the 1850s, Abner Jackson became the owner of more slaves than anyone else in Texas.[14]

Jackson did everything with a grand flourish, from being one of the leading sugar producers in Texas to owning the most slaves in the state. His mansion constituted one of his most impressive achievements. In 1842, Major Jackson began construction on what would soon be considered one of the finest plantations in Texas – Lake Place. His temporary house on the lake could not be considered elaborate; the house consisted of elm and ash logs and contained but four rooms. Construction on the brick-and-cement mansion ended in 1851.[15] It had a beautiful northern view of the lake and boasted twelve rooms and a large gallery on the second floor. Romanesque columns and elaborate windows appointed the $25,000 home. Jackson also constructed a brick sugar house, brick slave quarters, an orchard, a garden with brick walk ways, and a $10,000 man-made island in the center of the lake.[16] Boats skimmed the lake, and the family possessed at least one steam powered vessel, the "Lady Anne."[17] The Lake House was surrounded by 70,000 acres and county residents considered it the center of the plantation culture of Brazoria County.[18] Like most of Abner Jackson's projects, the Lake House proved grand and expensive.

Jackson's success became the staple topic of polite society. Retrieve, Darrington, and Lake Jackson plantations produced 622 bales of cotton and 586 hogsheads of sugar per year.[19] By 1859, Jackson's plantations yielded 20,000 bushels of corn while the average production in Texas rendered 7,000 bushels. His real property totaled $84,415 and his personal property, excluding slaves, totaled $88,360. He also owned livestock valued at $46,770 and 2,550 acres of improved land in what is today the city of Lake Jackson.[20] Like other plantations, horses powered the Jackson mill. In 1855, the Major began conversions for steam power. In 1858, he had the only steam-powered mill in Texas.[21] Jackson's fame for wealth and success, however, did not outshine his family's ability to elicit stories.

Apart from the yarns concerning Jackson's success, local myth also spotlighted the Jackson children by noting that Abner lavished money on his

children indiscriminately. For example, Abner Jackson's children went East to obtain their education. Two sons went to Norwich University, a military school in Vermont.[22] One son went to school in Kentucky, the other son studied in Georgia. Arsenath, his only daughter, attended school in Columbia, Tennessee.[23] Brazorians probably viewed spending money on a daughter's college education as frivolous. Other than education, the Jackson children's treatment appears unremarkable.

The personalities of the Jackson children also are a matter of local myth. While Arsenath, Andrew, and Abner Junior appeared to perpetrate childish pranks, George and John had more serious charges lodged against them. Stories paint George as an improvident gambler and an often-married ladies' man, but his will does not mention a wife and county records indicate that he did not wed.[24] Still, he enjoyed gambling, especially in restaurants and on river boats. Frequent indictments on the charge of gaming in public attest to George's love of games of chance.[25] George always pled guilty, paid a fine (often as much as $1000), and promised to behave.[26] John's case differed. Stories depict the eldest Jackson son as a vicious slave master and a gunslinging thief. Brazoria County Criminal Cases prove that the State of Texas indicted John for the murder of a slave and for threatening to kill another slave.[27] The State of Texas also charged John with horse stealing, assault, and gambling.[28] Add to these charges that John whipped his brother George publicly in 1866, and a man of violent temper and passion emerges.

All the Jacksons, except Arsenath, died young.[29] In 1858, their mother, Margaret Jackson, passed away, as did the Major in 1861.[30] The four Jackson sons served in the Confederate army. Abner Junior and Andrew perished during the war.[31] John fought with the Eight Texas Cavalry for a time, then returned home to handle the estate of his deceased father.[32] Local myth attests that George murdered John in 1867 and the guilt-ridden George died of tuberculosis in Galveston in 1871.[33]

The myths of the Jacksons focus on two aspects of the family: their slaves and the murder of John Jackson. The four main stories about the Jackson family are the cruel treatment of the slaves, how slaves dug the lake (or a portion of it), the vengeful ghost of a slave, and John Jackson's specter. All the myths can be explained in part by fact and in part by the impression that the tragedies made on local inhabitants.

One portion of the myth concerns Abner Jackson's sadistic cruelty to his slaves. Jackson's partner, General Hamilton, may have helped fuel the story. Upon arriving in Brazoria, Hamilton expressed shock at what he considered the scanty clothing given to the slaves at Retrieve Plantation. He wrote "In this dreadful cold weather, they have received a flimsy negro cloth and a scanty pattern at that."[34] Four days later, he modified his charges against Jackson's cruelty because he observed that the Jackson slaves had the same, if not better, clothing as did most slaves in Texas.[35] Another source for the tale might be Abner Jackson's eldest child, John. As discussed earlier, the State of Texas indicted John for the murder of a slave and for threatening to kill another.[36]

After sentencing him to pay a fine, the court released him.[37] Owning a large number of slaves, Major Jackson probably witnessed some cruel treatment of them. Yet official records at the Brazoria County Court House do not reveal indictments against him for the mistreatment of his slaves. In reality, the story of cruelty concerns John and not Abner Jackson.

Akin to the indictment for cruelty to slaves is the story about the vengeful black ghost that haunts the ruins of Lake Place's sugar mill.[38] To date, no scholar has explored the reality behind the legend. Sometime before January 18, 1848, a fatal accident took place at the Lake Place sugar mill. The incident involved the crushing of a black slave, and a letter from the publisher and inventor, Thomas H. Borden, to James F. Perry, mentions the tragedy. Borden claimed that his new invention "[would] prevent [the mill] from choking consequently it will never break neither will it grind up niggers as the old Methods are liable to do as in the case of Maj. Jackson and a number of such cases in La."[39] County court records do not mention the incident, but one can assume that county residents memorialized the slave's violent death through the legend of the vengeful ghost.

Another prevalent myth in Lake Jackson is that slaves created the lake due to the whim of Abner Jackson. One can easily discern the truth in this case: slaves and oxen actually dug one mile of canal in an attempt to link the Brazos River and Oyster Creek.[40] Also, this slave activity did not occur because of a whim. Shipping to and from Lake Place and Retrieve plantations occurred along Oyster Creek. The proposed canal would have served many plantations along the creek, as well as Brazos River traffic. The Brazos Canal Company lacked the money to compete with its rival, the Galveston and Brazos Navigation Company, so work on the canal ceased.[41] The memory of slave labor making a waterway also might have come from the improvements effected on Oyster Creek.[42] Deep enough for sidewheelers, the creek was narrow, thus slaves toiled to widen the creek and remove the snags.[43] After the Civil War steamboats stopped using the route, but the memory of slave digging efforts remained garbled and pervasive in local myth.

By far the most famous myth of Brazoria County concerns the alleged murder of John C. Jackson by his younger brother, George W. Jackson, on December 16, 1867.[44] The story has three versions: George cut off John's head and threw it in the lake; John fell backward down the Lake House's grand staircase after George shot him; and George shot John six times in the chest in front of Lake House.

The ghost story comes in two versions. One version states that George Jackson fired six shots into John's chest in front of the Lake House because John tied up his inheritance and insulted him.[45] Still angry over John's words, George decapitated his brother with a machete and threw the head into the lake.[46] The story explains that the ghost walks around the old plantation grounds searching for its lost head.[47] The other version places the fatal confrontation on the stairs of the Lake House. When George shot John, John's body thudded down fifteen steps.[48] People claim to hear the thumping, as well as "a soft plopping noise like raindrops pattering against a windowpane ..." (blood hitting the bottom step).[49] Myth also asserts that the State of Texas

indicted George for murder but decided not prosecute him because John was mean and disliked.[50]

The basis for the myth is a book published in 1936 by Abner J. Strobel, the step-nephew of Abner Jackson. In the book, Strobel relates "the story of the tragedy in this family, so as to forever set at rest the garbled version of the affair ... [because] I am the only living person who saw the killing and who is familiar with the events that led up to it."[51] He gives the following report: John claimed all of Abner Jackson's estate and refused to share a portion of the inheritance with George.[52] When George came begging for money in 1866, John publicly horsewhipped him.[53] In 1867, George petitioned the court for some of the inheritance and obtained 6,700 acres, 150 head of cattle, and some mules and horses as his portion.[54] On December 8, 1868, George and John met in front of the Lake House.[55] John threatened to whip George again, and George pulled out his revolver and shot John six times in the chest.[56] Thus died John C. Jackson, and both Abner Strobel and local legend hold that "John Jackson got what he deserved."[57] While Strobel's account unintentionally helped fuel the story of the Jackson murder, reality is not only different but also poses questions concerning George's guilt.

The story-tellers base their tale on the assumption that George killed John. Yet two curiosities exist. If witnesses saw the murder, why did George plead "not guilty?"[58] Also, knowing that eyewitnesses could testify against him, why did not George, who had $5000 in cash to post bail, hire a lawyer?[59] Instead of accepting any legal counsel, George attested that his innocence would help him in his defense and thus he represented himself at the trial.[60] George's plea is also interesting. He might have chosen a plea of "self-defense," because John attacked George in public a few years earlier and John's mean temper was common knowledge.[61] Strobel claims that John had threatened George with another whipping, thus a plea of "self-defense" would be logical, especially if eyewitnesses were available. The other problem concerns the trial. The inconclusive evidence produced at the trial provided a deadlock.[62] If the State of Texas had eyewitnesses and George, untrained at law, defended himself, why could not the jury deliver a verdict? Perhaps the notion of eyewitnesses is an expression of myth, too, like John's decapitation. Or did George really kill John?

The trial did not end due to the deadlock. The sheriff attempted to collect a new jury six times and could not assemble the proper amount of people.[63] Modern scholarship concludes that the court freed George due to an inability to find jurors. The Brazoria County Clerk's office stated that they generally believed that locals who depended on the Jackson family refused to be on the jury, and thus the court quietly dropped the case.[64] However, more careful examination of the court minutes disproves these opinions. The state indicted George for playing cards in a public place on the first Monday in January 1871.[65] What is significant about this is that on the next page "The State of Texas versus George W. Jackson, Indictment for Murder" appears again, under the same case number as the gambling charge.[66] Because the sheriff could not locate a jury, the court ordered that Fort Bend County hold the trial because it

had "the nearest court house to this."[67] The minutes of the court list the witnesses for and against George. State witnesses included four men, the defense counted two men, and the record does not distinguish what type of testimony they offered.[68] The trial occurred on the third Monday in March 1871.[69] Whether George murdered John is a question that is debatable.

From the riches of Abner Jackson to the ghost of John Jackson, local myth earmarks the Jackson family of Brazoria County. These stories have a basis in fact, although they skew the truth because people prefer to view Abner Jackson as the richest man in the South rather than one of the wealthiest men in Texas, or to believe that slaves dug the entire lake rather than that slaves and oxen widened some part of Oyster Creek. While historical facts do not always negate the essence of myth, reality is often as interesting as fantasy. Facts prove that Abner Jackson became an American success story, that his children went to the East for their education, and that they died young. Facts, too, demonstrate that John murdered a slave and mistreated other workers, one slave died in a gruesome accident, and that someone killed John Jackson. While legends concerning the Jackson family can be dispelled using historical data and careful analysis, one intriguing question remains. Did George really murder John on a bleak December afternoon in 1867? Unfortunately, the evidence stands mute. In this instance, myth has swallowed reality.

NOTES

[1]"Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants in the County of Brazoria, Texas" *Seventh Census of the United States of America, 1850*, and "Schedule 4 – Production and Agriculture" *Eighth Census of the United Stated, 1860*. Also, "Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants in the County of Brazoria, Texas" *Eighth Census of the United States of America, 1860*.

[2]Allen A. Platter, "Education, Society, and Economic Characteristics of the Plantation Culture of Brazoria County, Texas" (University of Houston, Ph.D Dissertation, 1961), p. 89; and Abner J. Strobel, *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County, Texas* (Houston, 1936), p. 42.

[3]Platter, "Education, Society," p. 89; and Strobel, "The Old Plantations," p. 42.

[4]Platter, "Education, Society," p. 89; and Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 42.

[5]Platter, "Education, Society," p. 89.

[6]S.M. Williams Papers. Rosenberg Library, Galveston Texas, Tables V, VI., pp. 17,18. Abner Jackson to S.M. Williams, April 3, 1849.

[7]The 1850 Census listed Abner Jackson as a planter; his income was $13,215. However, it also listed Retrieve Plantation as Jackson's only holding. At the time, he owned both Lake Jackson Plantation and Darrington. How this error occurred cannot be discerned. *Seventh Census of the United States*, October 14, 1850, p. 218, Roll number 908.

[8]William R. Johnson, "A Short History of the Sugar Industry In Texas," *Publication of the Texas Gulf Coast Historical Association*, 5 (January, 1969), pp. 14-15. See also P.A. Champonier, *Statement of the Sugar Crops Made in Louisiana in 1852-1853* (New Orleans, n.d.); and James A. Creighton, *A Narrative History of Brazoria County* (Waco, 1975), p. 205.

[9]Johnson, "A Short History," p. 28.

[10]Johnson, "A Short History," p. 28. In 1852, Brazoria County produced 7,357 hogsheads of sugar and this figure was reduced to 5,150 hogsheads by 1858. However, the Jacksons were able to produce an impressive portion of this figure. Creighton, *A Narrative History*, p. 205.

[11]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, pp. 45-46. Platter suggests that the Jacksons concentrated their effort at these two plantations, and grew cotton and staples in Lake Jackson; Platter,

"Education, Society," p. 91. For an interesting biography of General James Hamilton, see James Day, ed., *The Texas Almanac, 1857-1873* (Waco, 1967), pp. 462-64.

[12]"Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants" *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860.*

[13]Schedule 2 – *The Eighth Census of the United Stated, 1860*; and Ralph Wooster, "Notes and Documents on Texas' Largest Slave Holders," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 65 (1961), pp. 74-75fn. The average slave holding in Texas constituted thirty-eight individuals.

[14]"Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants" *Seventh Census of the United States.*

[15]Recent archaeological excavation has examined the ruins of Lake Place and its surrounding buildings, which can be viewed off County Road 2004 in Lake Jackson, Texas. While only the foundations of the house remain, the sugar boilers and the fireplace of the mill are extant.

[16]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 28. Also found in Creighton, *A Narrative History*, p. 218. Creighton notes that peaches, plums, pears, quince, grapes, and strawberries grew in the gardens and were available to slaves.

[17]Brazoria County Courthouse Probate Records. December 1867, Estate of John C. Jackson, #867.

[18]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 43.

[19]"Schedule 4 – Agriculture" and "Schedule 2 – Slave Inhabitants," *Eighth Census of the United States, 1860.*

[20]The average holding in Texas was between $5000-10,000. Wooster, "Notes and Documents," p. 75 fn9.

[21]Williams Papers, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas, Tables V, VI, 17, 18. Abner Jackson to S.M. Williams, April 3, 1849.

[22]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 43. He adds that Abner Jackson sent his children to different schools because he did not want them to band together and try to run the school, and also to give them varying perspectives on differing areas of the United States.

[23]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 29.

[24]George's will can be found in the County Courthouse, Probate file # 923.

[25]See Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Cases, *Index to Criminal Cases*, Volume A, for the numerous example of these charges.

[26]Brazoria County Court House, *Index to Criminal Cases*, volume A.

[27]Brazoria County Courthouse, *Index to Criminal Cases*, volume A, files 517 and 543.

[28]Brazoria Country Court House, *Index to Criminal Cases.* See Volume A for the many file numbers.

[29]Arsenath Jackson married J. Fulton Groce, son of the wealthy Leonard W. Groce of Liendo in Waller County, on June 21, 1855. *Marriage Records of Brazoria County from 1829 to 1870* (Lake Jackson, 1982), p. 29, license number 254.

[30]Brazoria County Courthouse Probate Records #764 and #765.

[31]Brazoria County Probate Records #780, #854.

[32]Platter, "Education, Society," p. 95.

[33]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, pp. 44-45; Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Records, case #633 and #739; and Brazoria County Probate file #923.

[34]A. Holbrook, "Life on Antebellum Slave Plantations," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 76(1972), p. 374, quoting Ballinger Papers, James Hamilton to J.M. Bass, February 6, 1856.

[35]Holbrook, "Life on Antebellum Slave Plantations," p. 374.

[36]Brazoria County Courthouse, *Index to Criminal Cases* volume A, 10 File number 517, pages to minutes 2425, 2659, and 2779, and file number 543, pages to minutes 2519 and 2536.

[37]Brazoria County Courthouse, *Index to Criminal Cases* volume A, 10 File number 517, pages to minutes 2425, 2659, and 2779, and file number 543, pages to minutes 2519 and 2536.

[38]This story can be found in Bertha McKee Dobie, "The Ghosts of Lake Jackson," in *Follow the Drinkin' Gou'd*, edited by Frank Dobie (Austin, 1928).

[39]Perry Papers, T.H. Borden to James F. Perry January 18, 1848.

[40]James F. Perry Papers, Peach Point Plantation, Brazoria County Texas. General Hamilton to James Perry February 2, 1845. Agreement: James Perry, William G. Hill, E.M. Hill, Abner Jackson November 13, 1845. Abner Jackson to James Perry April 15, 1847.

[41]By 1856, the Galveston Company had dug an intercostal waterway between Galveston Bay and the Brazos. Taken from Perry Papers, "Report to Stockholders of the Galveston and Brazos Canal Company," April 1, 1856.

[42]In 1856, the state granted $3,833 to improve the creek between the intercostal canal and Retrieve from the $315,000 total budget for Texas river-and-harbor improvements. Taken from Charles S. Potts, "Transportation in Texas," from *Readings in Texas History*, edited by Eugene C. Baker (Dallas, 1929), pp. 542-43.

[43]Pamela Puryear and Nath Winfield, *Sandbars and Sternwheelers: Steam Navigation on the Brazos* (College Station, 1976), p. 2.

[44]Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Records, file number 633, pages to minutes 2750, 2804, 2805, 2857, 2872, 2894, 2926, 2949, and 2999.

[45]Catherine M. Foster, *Ghosts Along the Brazos* (Waco, 1977), pp. 72-73.

[46]Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 73.

[47]Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 74.

[48]Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 73.

[49]Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 73.

[50]Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 75.

[51]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44.

[52]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44. Abner Jackson either never wrote a will or his will was never probated because it cannot be found in the probate records of the Brazoria County Courthouse. Local legend assumes that John destroyed the will and thus was able to seize the inheritance for himself. This claim is unsubstantiated.

[53]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44.

[54]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44. Strobel is verified by Probate case number 781.

[55]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44. Strobel is incorrect. Criminal court records demonstrate that John was killed on December 16, 1867 (case number 867).

[56]Strobel, *The Old Plantations*, p. 44.

[57]Foster, *Ghosts*, p. 77.

[58]This information can be found in Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Case #923 page to minutes 2750.

[59]Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Case #923 page to minutes 2750.

[60]Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Case #923 page to minutes 2750.

[61]For proof, examine his murder of the black slaves, charges of brawling, stealing, gambling, and threats to commit murder.

[62]Brazoria County Courthouse Criminal Cases, file number 633, page to minutes 2805.

[63]Brazoria Country Courthouse Criminal Cases, pages to minutes 2857, 2872, 2873, 2949, and 2999.

[64]Oral interview with D. Bailey at Brazoria County Courthouse, 03/19/92.

[65]Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3053.

[66]Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3053.

[67]Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3054.

[68]Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3054. A note states that no stenographer was present for any of George's hearings or his trial by judicial order.

[69]Brazoria County Court House Criminal Cases, case number 734, page to minutes 3054. Unfortunately, the Fort Bend County Courthouse's Criminal Records do not contain further information and George died November 15, 1871, in Galveston (Brazoria County Courthouse Probate record number 923).

DALE MAY YORK: THE LAST VICTIM

by Robert Nieman

The 1930s will be remembered as the decade of The Great Depression. All over America, indeed all over the world, people were starving. Few could get a job, and once proud men stood on street corners begging money for the support of their families. The Dust Bowl destroyed farms, and everywhere destitution ruled supreme. Everywhere, that is, except the tiny East Texas community of Kilgore. While the rest of the world swam in a sea of poverty, Kilgore swam in a sea of oil: oil meant money, lots of money, and money meant jobs.

On October 3, 1930, Texas wildcatter Marion "Dad" Joiner brought in the Daisy Bradford Number Three just south of Kilgore. Then, on December 28, thirteen miles north of the Joiner find, the Lou Della Crim Number One came roaring in. Still further north of the Lou Della Crim, on January 26, 1931, Longview's Barney Skipper brought in the Lathrop Number One. This proved that the East Texas Oil Field was by far the largest oil field ever discovered in North America. Forty-five miles long, north to south, by twelve miles wide, east to west, at its widest – the colossal East Texas Oil Field was truly The Great Black Giant.[1]

The population of the sleepy village of Kilgore exploded from 700 to 7,000 in twenty-four hours.[2] Towns such as Arp, Gladewater, Henderson, Longview, Overton, and Tyler also experienced growth. Such towns as Joinerville did not even exist before Dad Joiner's discovery. But they existed now, and they were blowing out the seams. Not only were towns experiencing unprecedented population explosions but the wells themselves were unbelievable. The Daisy Bradford came in at 6,800 barrels a day, the Lou Della Crim at 22,000, the Lathrop at 20,000, and these were considered only fair-to-average wells. Within a one-block area inside Kilgore there were forty-four producing wells. It truly earned its nickname, "the world's richest acre." Land that had sold for as little as fifty cents to one dollar an acre before The Boom now leased for $5,000 and $6,000 an acre for those lucky enough to find land not already under lease.

In the heart of The Great Black Giant lay the tiny village of London. It was no different from other towns in the field. Like most, it was unincorporated and had no need for a post office. Obviously, incorporating the town and opening a post office were essential to keep pace with the astronomical growth. Unfortunately, the name London was already in use in West Texas, so the name New London was adopted.

Growth created a major problem for all the communities: the schools could not keep up with the influx of new students. Nowhere was this problem more acute than in New London. At the beginning of The Boom, New London had a small, four-room school that housed four teachers and about 100 students. By 1932 New London proclaimed itself as the richest school district

Robert Neiman lives in Longview, Texas

in the world, and as such the community decided to build a new, state-of-the-art school. No expense was spared in its construction – no expense, that is, except in the heating system. To save money, a gas-steam heat system was substituted for a central steam heating system. Such systems were in use throughout the United States. However, it required gas lines to be run under the school.

By the 1936-1937 school year it seemed that nothing could dim the bright lights of the New London school. Its football stadium was the first illuminated field in East Texas. Its band had custom-tailored, gabardine uniforms.[3] Reminded that these were still growing boys and girls and they would be lucky to get more than one year's service out of the uniforms, critics were told not to worry. If new uniforms had to be purchased each year, new ones would be bought. No school anywhere in the country could boast of better teachers or a finer physical plant. The Manual Training Shop was the best money could buy. Indeed, things could not have looked better for the proud New London Wildcats.

Thursday, March 18, 1937, began like any other day. The community was looking forward to a long weekend. There would be no school on Friday because of an interscholastic meet in nearby Henderson. At 3:17 p.m.,[4] eighteen minutes before school was to be dismissed for the week, everything changed forever. In the blink of an eye more than 300 people, mostly children, died. In one appalling instant the eyes of the world focused on the little community and its devastated school. Moments before the final bell sounded, shop teacher Lemmie Butler decided he had just enough time before school let out to check out "Old Sparky"[5] a damaged shop sander he had repaired. One of the shop students, John Dial,[6] remembered seeing Butler flip a switch that sent 220 volts of power surging to the sander. There was a spark, a flash, and the school was gone. The best estimate is that 305 students, faculty, and visitors were killed[7] instantly.

One question, then and now, dominates any discussion of the New London School Disaster. How could this happen? No expense had been spared in building the school. After all, was this not the richest rural school district in the world? Barely three years old, the New London School was the pride of East Texas. How in the world could this have happened?

The Great Black Giant's killing agent was odorless, tasteless, natural gas. Early in the day the main two-inch feeder line in the crawl space under the building broke, filling the basement with deadly methane gas. When Butler threw the power switch, a spark from the sander caused an explosion. In the blink of an eye there was no more school, only tons of debris and more than 300 lifeless bodies.

All night and into the following day rescue workers removed the dead while praying they would find the living. By noon Friday all that could be done had been done. Slowly, painfully, the job of identifying and burying the dead began. By midday Sunday all the bodies had been identified and prepared for burial. All, that is, except one. The corpse of a young girl was at the American Legion Hall in Overton, mangled so badly that no one could identify her.

Since all the bodies had been identified except one, logic dictated that the body must be Wanda Louise Emberling, but A.P. Emberling knew that the girl in the American Legion Hall was not his daughter. Ever since the explosion, Emberling's father, like the other parents, had gone from morgue to morgue throughout the oil field looking for his little girl. Emberling was forced to do so alone because his wife, Mildred, had an even more tormenting task. She was keeping a deathwatch over their son, George. The top of the young boy's head had been practically torn off in the explosion, and death would come as surely as the morning sun.

Notices were posted throughout the area asking people to come by the American Legion Hall to try to identify the young lady. All day Saturday people filed by, took a quick glimpse at the mutilated body, and rushed from the scene. One man, Oscar Worrell,[8] looked, turned quickly away, and left the room. Something familiar about the lifeless body forced him to return for another look. Again he could not bear to look for a moment before once again rushing from the room. He felt sure he knew the identity of the young lady, but he had to go back one more time to confirm it. He returned to the dead girl's side; this time he asked to look at her left foot. There it was: a scar under the left big toe, identical to one under Dale May's toe. In the pre-television days of the 1920s, children, especially farm children, occupied themselves the best way they could. While playing with a garden hoe Dale May had slipped and severely cut the underside of her left big toe, leaving a large, clear scar. There was no doubt in Worrell's mind as to the identity of this poor child. Being a cousin of the family, he had known Dale May all her life. He told officials the girl's name.

"Impossible," they said.

"No, there could be no doubt; the young lady was Dale May," he replied.

"No," he was told, "this could not be possible; Dale May York had already been buried!"

Dale May, the daughter of Jessie and Luna York, was born January 1, 1927,[9] in Genoa, Arkansas. She had two older half-brothers, J.T. and Grady York. At the time of her death ten years later, she would have another brother, Doug, four years her junior. Dale, a peculiar first name for a girl, was named after the doctor who delivered her, Dr. Dale. Her middle name came from her mother's brother-in-law, Bill May. As a young lady in her early twenties, Luna had lived several years with the Mays. Dale spent nine of her ten years in several locations in Arkansas and Rusk County, Texas. On March 19, 1934,[10] Jessie and Luna York moved to the Pleasant Hill community near New London. Jessie, a farmer, was one of the few men in the area who did not work in the oil field.

In 1934, children were not required to attend any certain school, but like most of the other children in her neighborhood Dale May attended the school closest to her home, Farmer's Institute. The Yorks were unaware that during the 1936-1937 school year Farmer's Institute had been consolidated into the New London system. As they usually did on the first day of school, Dale May

and her best friend, Mary Lois King, walked to school. When it was time for the girls to have returned home from school and they had not, Mrs. York and Mrs. King began to worry. Shortly thereafter Dale May and Mary Lois arrived home and told their mothers that a school bus had picked up all the kids at Farmer's Institute and taken them to New London.

After investigating and finding out that New London and Farmer's Institute had been consolidated, Luna asked how they liked the new school. The answer was swift; they did not. It was such a big school that the girls had been lost all day. They wanted to go back to Farmer's Institute. Assuring Dale May that the problem was not as large as it appeared, Luna told Dale May to take a piece of red crayon and mark the door of her homeroom. That way she would not have to worry about being lost. The next day Dale May came home and told her mother that she had marked the door and did not have any trouble finding her homeroom. In the cleanup after the explosion, the door sill was found and Dale's homeroom teacher, Ann Wright, showed the Yorks the sill. It was easily identified. It still had the red crayon mark on it.[11]

Dale May adapted to her new surroundings and excelled in her studies. She was exceptionally pretty, and it was not long before she had a boyfriend, fellow fifth grader Preston Crim. It was a serious fifth-grade romance.

At the time of the explosion, Dale May's older brother, J.T. was at his home in New London. Hearing the explosion, he ran from his house to the ruins that had once been a school, and miraculously he found his sister's body almost immediately. Even finding his sister as quickly as he did, other alarmed families were already arriving at the school. He knew his father would be on the scene shortly, so he decided he would stand vigilantly over Dale May until then.

While J.T. stood guard over his sister, at the York home in the Pleasant Hill community, Luna and her neighbor, Ora King, heard the explosion and assumed it was a another boiler exploding. Ironically, Luna said to Ora, "... well some poor old mother's heart's broken over something... ."[12] There was no special reason for the women to think anything about a boiler exploding – this was a common occurrence. Shortly afterward, another neighbor, Mrs. Will McClellan, arrived at the York's home and told the ladies that it was not a boiler they heard. It was the school.

A frightened neighbor came by the York farm spreading the word of the disaster at the school. Dale May's father, Jessie, was frantic to get to the school, but he had no gas for the family car. Faced with no other choice, York ran from his house to the road connecting New London and Henderson where he caught a ride to New London.

Meanwhile, J.T., seeing that Dale May had been correctly identified, tagged, picked up, and sent to Crim's Funeral Home in Henderson, headed for his father's home. Along the way J.T. and York unknowingly passed one another. Unable to find either J.T. or Dale May, York returned home.[13]

While Jessie and J.T. were crossing paths, Ora King, Mary Lois' mother, came running into the York's yard and said she had just come from the home

of Preston Crim, where Preston's father had told her that the school had blown up. Ora said to Luna that they had to go back to the Crim's. If Preston was home, Mrs. King felt sure that Mary Lois and Dale May had to be all right. Grabbing up five-year-old Doug, Mrs. York and Mrs. King started for the Crim home. Arriving at their neighbor's home, they were met by both Mr. and Mrs. Crim. Yes, Preston was home, but "... Preston said Dale was dead." Mrs. York asked if she could see Preston. "... [N]o, Mrs. York, he's in no shape ... . He and Dale were sweethearts ... . He always said he was going to marry her."[14]

When J. T. arrived at his father's home, he found neither his father nor step-mother Luna at home, so he raced back to the school. Shortly thereafter, both Mr. and Mrs. York arrived home. Not knowing that J.T. had found Dale May, they proceeded to the makeshift morgue at the American Legion Hall in Overton. Years later Luna told Doug's wife, Cloe: "... and Cloe, I never in all of my life seen ... some with their heads off, some with their legs broke off, some with their feet gone. Oh, I never in my life. You'd have to raise the sheet; you see, they had sheets and put over 'em. Bloody and ... ."[15] Probably the Yorks looked at their own daughter and did not recognize her.

Later they found J.T., who told them that he had sent Dale May to Crim's Funeral Home in Henderson. Immediately the Yorks set out for Henderson to see Dale May. Arriving at Crim's Funeral Home they asked to see Dale May. They were refused. The body was too horribly mutilated to be observed. A schoolmate, Walter Freeman, who was sitting beside Dale May, reported that a large slab of concrete had crashed down on her.[16]

Not to be put off, Mrs. York insisted that she be allowed to see the body of her daughter. Again she was refused. Pleading, Mrs. York asked to at least be allowed to see her girl's left foot. She wanted to see for herself the identifying scar under her toe. Tragically she was again refused. The funeral director explained that Mr. York could look, but Mrs. York could not because he could not have women fainting, as he felt they would surely do, if they were allowed to see their children. Since his wife was not allowed to view their child, Jessie declined to look. From that moment on, Mrs. York insisted that was not her baby resting in the coffin.[17] At the funeral and later at the burial she continued to insist that the girl in the coffin was not her Dale May.

But time waits for no one, not even bereaved families wanting to bury their dead. On Saturday, March 20, the Yorks, like dozens of other families, prepared to bury their child. At least the weather was cooperating. Dale May, her cousin Hazel Pearson, her best friend Mary Lois King, and seven other children's coffins were lined up outside the west wall of the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church. Their funerals were conducted by the Reverend John Buster Welsh.[18] While Brother Welsh delivered his service, Bill May, Jr., Dale May's cousin, came over to his aunt and said, "Aunt Luna, that is not Dale May."

Mrs. York sadly replied, "... [H]oney, I know it's not Dale... ." Later, as she left the graveside, she said, "Ya'll can believe it [if you want, but] ... it is not."[19]

As earlier stated, Luna had lived with her sister and her husband, Bill May, Sr. By 1937 the Mays were living in Winfield, Texas, and were only able

to get together with the Yorks once or twice a year. The Christmas before the explosion, the Mays were visiting the Yorks in Pleasant Hill during the holidays. Billy Jr., Dale May, Doug, and some other kids were playing outside. Doug became angry with Dale May because he thought his big sister was paying more attention to Billy Jr. than to him. Angrily he threw a rock at Dale May; it hit her in the mouth, chipping a tooth.[20] Somehow Billy Jr. knew that was not his cousin in the coffin. He said, "Aunt Luna, that's not Dale May!"[21] Unfortunately, everyone else, including Dale May's father, thought it was Dale May and would not listen to Luna's pleas. Like countless others, the Yorks buried what all but Luna and Billy Jr. thought was their loved one.

Meanwhile, back in Overton, the Junior High School Principal of the destroyed New London School, Felton Waggoner,[22] was asked if he could identify the unknown body. Entering the room, the first thing he saw was a little brown coat beside the sheet-covered body. The first words out of Principal Waggoner's mouth were, "Does that coat belong to that body under the sheet?" Told yes, Waggoner, without ever looking at the body, said, "Then that girl is Dale May York." Waggoner was told that this was impossible. Once again Waggoner asked, "Does that coat belong to that body?" Yes, but it could not possibly be Dale May York; she had already been identified and buried. Exasperated, Waggoner slammed his fist into the palm of his hand and said, "If that coat belongs to that body, then it is Dale May York!"

Asked how he could be so sure, Waggoner explained that Dale May had been sick with pneumonia and had not been attending school. That fateful Thursday was Dale May's first day back to school in two weeks.[23] Before she could get into any classes, she had to see Waggoner to get a pass, and he distinctively remembered Dale May's little brown coat. He knew, without doubt, that if that coat belonged to the little girl under the sheet, it could only be Dale May.

The truth began to settle on the community, a community that had already seen far too many awful truths. There was only one way to find out for sure; Dale May's grave had to be opened. The court was petitioned and exhumation orders obtained.

On Sunday, the Emberlings, Yorks, and a deputy sheriff arrived at Dale May's grave. Both the Emberlings were mentally and physically exhausted. Mrs. Emberling, having sat up with George for days, was no longer able to stand; she was on a stretcher.[24] Though also exhausted, Emberling was still on his feet.

Mrs. York had been given a sedative to soothe her nerves before going to the cemetery.[25] Throughout the exhumation she prayed, "Please Lord, don't let me faint. Please Lord, don't let me faint. Please Lord, don't let me faint." Later Mrs. York said that the Lord watched over her throughout the ordeal; she did not faint.

Once the grave was opened, Mrs. Emberling, unable to bring herself to look into the coffin, asked the deputy to look. She asked him if the toenails on the body had been colored in red by red crayon. The night before the explosion Wanda Louise had friends overnight. Playing "make-up," Wanda Louise had

taken red crayons and "painted" her toenails red. The deputy sadly told Mrs. Emberling that indeed the body had red crayon-colored toenails.[26] Mrs. Emberling immediately fainted.[27] There could be no doubt that it was Wanda Louise.

Wanda Louise Emberling's coffin was exhumed; a new grave was prepared near the main entrance gate and she was re-interred. Later that night Wanda Louise was joined in death by her brother, George, who succumbed to his injuries. Once more the Emberlings made the terribly lonely trip to Pleasant Hill Cemetery to lay the brother beside his sister.

One mystery was solved, but another remained. How could the mix-up in bodies have happened? J.T. York had positively identified his sister at the school grounds. He had stayed with her, seeing to it that she was correctly identified, tagged, and placed in a hearse that he thought was going to Crim's Funeral Home in Henderson. In the confusion, the body did not go to Henderson, but instead went to the American Legion building in Overton, and somewhere in the handling the name tag was lost. Even now no one knows how the mix-up came about; the York family has no idea. Considering the mass confusion and the mangled condition of the bodies, perhaps it is not really too difficult to understand how it happened.

Now that they knew for sure that the girl in the grave was not Dale May, there could be no doubt about the body at the American Legion building in Overton. Once more Jessie and Luna made the awful trip to Overton, and this time Mrs. York was not denied the chance to identify her daughter.

Now Mrs. York, who had been convinced that it was not her daughter who had been buried previously, had to bury her daughter again. Mrs. York insisted on a different gravesite than the one that had been occupied by Wanda Louise.[28] A new grave was prepared, ironically only a few plots south of Wanda Louise. Now, like hundreds of other families, the Yorks had to come to grips with the loss of a child, and in the case of the Emberlings, two children. It is said that time heals all wounds. That is not true; it does not.

This has been but two stories out of more than three hundred, each tragic in its own way. As you walk through the hundreds of graves in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery, you will see dozens of tombstones with a common notation: "Died – March 18, 1937 – Victim of London." Numerous tombstones have pictures of children mounted on them. One has a picture of a frail young lady, forever ten years old: Dale May York.

NOTES

[1]James A. Clark and Michael T. Halbouty, *The Last Boom*, (Austin, Texas, 1972), p. 109.

[2]Data from a movie that is shown in the East Texas Oil Field Museum in Kilgore, Texas.

[3]Interview with John Fuhr at his home in Denton, Texas, on July 15, 1994. Fuhr was a member of the New London High School Band.

[4]Interview with Loyd Richardson, Henderson, Texas, November 9, 1994. Richardson's brother, Roy, worked during the night searching the wreckage for survivors. One piece of debris that he removed was a clock. It was stopped at 3:17 p.m.

[5]Interview with Jack Strickland in Overton, Texas, April 7, 1994. Strickland was in Butler's shop at the time of the explosion. He remembered the nickname the students had given to the sander.

[6]Michael Toon, "The New London School Disaster," Master of Arts Thesis, Stephen F. Austin State University, 1977.

[7]Mollie Ward, a survivor, has done extensive research on this subject and has confirmed this number.

[8]Interview with Doug York, brother of Dale May York, March 19, 1994. York says that Oscar Worrell first identified his sister.

[9]Interview with Doug York, March 19, 1994.

[10]Sometime before her death on June 5, 1988, Dale May's mother, Luna, was visiting with her son, Doug. Unknown to her, her daughter-in-law, Cloe, had turned on a cassette recorder. I am thankful to Doug and Cloe York for giving me a copy of this tape. During Cloe's recording, Luna made the statement that she and Jessie had moved to the Pleasant Hill community on March 19, 1934.

[11]Tape of Luna York.

[12]Tape of Luna York.

[13]Interview with Doug York.

[14]Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[15]Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[16]Interview with Doug York.

[17]Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[18]Interview with Doug York.

[19]Interview with Bill May, Jr., first cousin of Dale May York, January 15, 1995, at Shepherd, Texas.

[20]Bill May, Jr., January 15, 1995.

[21]Interview with Doug York, and Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[22]The following information comes from an interview with Waggoner at his home in Monroe, Louisiana, on March 26, 1994.

[23]Interview with Doug York.

[24]Michael Toon's, "The New London School Disaster."

[25]Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[26]Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[27]Cloe York's interview with Luna York.

[28]Today Dale May's/Wanda Louise's grave is occupied by Perry Lee Cox.

JUDGE ROY'S PLAYGROUND: A HISTORY OF ASTROWORLD

by Karen Guenther

On June 1, 1968, Lt. Governor Preston Smith won the Democratic Party nomination, virtually becoming the next governor of Texas. Robert Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy agreed in a televised debate prior to the California primary that Secretary of State Dean Rusk would be replaced if either were elected president. Houston's newspapers, however, also touted on the front page the opening of Judge Roy Hofheinz's theme park, Astroworld.[1]

The youngest judge in the county's history and a former mayor of Houston, Hofheinz had achieved fame and fortune through a variety of business ventures. Earlier in the 1960s he succeeded in bringing major league baseball to Houston and, with the assistance of Harris County taxpayers, oversaw the construction of the "eighth wonder of the world," the Astrodome. The opening of the Astrodome – which was not only a multi-purpose stadium but also Hofheinz's home – was the first in a series of events that led to the construction of a family entertainment complex in south Houston that included hotels, exhibition halls, and an amusement park.[2]

Hofheinz approved plans for the amusement park in January 1967,[3] with the formal announcement made in September. At the press conference, Hofheinz declared that his park would "'become the world's greatest tourist attraction, bringing untold millions of dollars into the Houston area economy.'" Originally fifty-six acres, the Judge indicated that the facility ultimately would become twice that size and entertain over one and a half million visitors annually.[4]

Hofheinz realized that Houston's humid weather would be a factor in the park's success. He indicated that over 2,000 tons of central air conditioning – more than at any other outdoor amusement park in the world – would be blown on all shaded areas, not just inside gift shops and restrooms. One of the rides at the park would give visitors a chance to experience the thrill of real snow and the Abominable Snowman on the "Alpine Sleigh Ride," a toboggan ride through a man-made mountain that the Judge named "Der Hofheinzberg."[5]

Hofheinz's dream was "to create a bright and colorful world where the young and the young at heart could leave their cares behind and enter the timeless, enchanting, ever-changing, fun and fantastical kaleidoscope of a dream come true."[6] At the same time as he was planning the development of Astroworld, however, Hofheinz became majority stockholder in Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Circuses, Inc., which diverted his full attention from the construction of the park. This acquisition led Hofheinz to hire Stan McIlvaine, a former executive with Great Southwest Corporation that controlled Six Flags Over Texas. McIlvaine provided the benefit of his experience to the proposed amusement park and became its first general manager. Hofheinz also selected architect Randall Duell, an award-winning Hollywood set designer who had expertise in designing theme parks, including

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Six Flags Over Texas, and Harper Goff, an Oscar-winning designer, to plan the layout for the amusement section of his entertainment complex.[7]

It is clear that the success of Disneyland and Six Flags Over Texas inspired Hofheinz to create Astroworld. In fact, Hofheinz consulted with the staff at Disneyland when developing the park to avoid problems that had arisen during the construction of their park. To ensure that his park would provide the proper escape experience for children, he took his eldest grandson on a trip to both of these two parks to gauge the child's reaction to various rides and scenes. To determine the "fun quotient" of the new park, Hofheinz arranged for his grandchildren and several of their friends to experience Astroworld two weeks before its official opening. The complex passed inspection, and the seasonal staff of approximately 1,000 college students prepared for the grand opening.[8]

On opening day – June 1, 1968 – over 23,000 visitors enjoyed the shops, rides, and other attractions of the park. Even the weather cooperated; while scattered showers fell over other parts of Houston that day, rain avoided Astroworld. Hofheinz's children and grandchildren were on hand to open the park, with his five grandchildren throwing a gold-colored electrical switch that started the rides.[9]

Besides the sleigh ride, Astroworld included other rides and attractions unique to the park: the Mill Pond, a bumper-car ride on water; an electronic shooting gallery; and the Astrowheel, a futuristic ferris wheel.[10] Guests could experience a Lost World Adventure while touring the Río Misterio on an air-conditioned boat, twirl wildly on the "Maypole" spinning cups, view the park and Houston's skyline from the cabins at the top of the Astroneedle, practice their driving skills behind the wheel of a French taxi or sports car, be jostled by the scrambler-type Orbiter or octopus-like Black Dragon, or travel from one section of the park to another riding the 610 Limited train or the Astroway sky ride. For children, Hofheinz created a special section of the park that contained a miniature carousel, a water ride through a story book of nursery rhymes, a slide enclosed in a Texas-size boot, and a barnyard complete with a petting zoo.[11]

Visitors on opening day raved about Houston's newest attraction. A reporter from the *Houston Chronicle* interviewed members of the James W. Barker family from Center, Texas, who also had visited Six Flags Over Texas in Arlington. The elder Barker called Astroworld "'a fun place,'" while Mrs. Barker thought it was better for her family to visit than the park near Dallas. The notion that guests could wait for rides in the comfort of air conditioning particularly impressed the family.[12]

Opening day revealed its problems as well. The ride that drew the most attention, the Alpine Sleigh Ride, had not yet been tested, so guests could not experience the thrills of wind blasts of 10° F as they cascaded through a recreation of the Swiss Alps. In addition, two of the "water bug" cars in which guests would ride at the Mill Pond arrived late, and a mechanical failure also hindered the operation of the ride. Despite these setbacks, the general opinion was that Astroworld had "enraptured thousands of young and old alike."[13]

If there was one special feature about Astroworld, it was the impact that Houston's climate had on the park's development. Over 2,400 tons of air conditioning cooled shaded waiting areas, open snack stands, and indoor gift shops. Part of the challenge in constructing the park, then, had been the installation of air vents. The Oriental section of the park included bamboo ceilings, so the engineers had to devise narrow slot outlets that would not detract from the distinctive appearance of the building's interior. At the umbrella-topped tables outside the French-motif Ice Cream Parlour, the table tops had small vents at the post that cooled diners. The system was so elaborate that Astroworld reputedly had "the largest outdoor air conditioning system in the world" in 1968.[14]

It was clear, too, that the park had room for further development. The Oriental section of the park had a train station for passengers on the 610 Limited to load and disembark and one end of the sky ride Astroway. Western Junction, in the middle of the park, included such diverse rides as the Mill Pond, the Astroneedle, the other train station, and a tilt-a-whirl type ride known as the Wagon Wheel because of its appearance. This area also contained the Crystal Palace, where live performers entertained the crowds, and a shooting gallery. Other sections of the park included Plaza de Fiesta, which contained the Río Misterio Lost World Adventure, the Black Dragon, and a Plaza de Música where a mariachi band entertained guests; the Children's World; European Village, with the Antique Lé Taxi ride; Alpine Valley and its sleigh ride and Astroway station; Mod Ville, which contained the Astrowheel, Spin Out sports cars, and Orbiter; and Americana Square, which resembled a turn-of-the-century small town with its variety of gift shops and restaurants.[15]

Because there still was land to be developed, additional rides appeared at Astroworld over the next few years. In 1970, one of the islands in the lagoon area between the Astroneedle and Plaza de Fiesta became Fun Island. Connected by a rickety, wobbly, wooden bridge to the mainland, Fun Island included a Swamp Buggy ride that traveled inside a tree and then wound around the outside of the trunk. More remarkable was the Wacky Shack, where gravity seemed suspended in a tilted house. By 1971, the Oriental section had gained a miniature roller coaster called the Serpent and a water flume ride where bamboo boats would soak guests and cool them off on a hot day. Mod Ville also saw the addition of the "Barrel of Fun," a ride where centrifugal force pushed riders against the side walls while the floor dropped below them.[16]

The first major expansion occurred in 1972 with the opening of the Country Fair section between Americana Square and Oriental Corner. This area recreated a 1900-era fairgrounds, complete with fairway attractions, sweets, and skill games. Among its features were a mirrored carousel, bumper cars, and the Dexter Frebish Electric Roller Ride, a modified mine train that became the first serious roller coaster at the park. Another attraction was the Nickelodeon and Horseless Carriage Pavilion, which served as Hofheinz's museum for antique music boxes and mechanical instruments. The pavilion also included an authentic Nickelodeon movie theater, complete with a short silent film accompanied by live organ music.[17]

By the mid-1970s, Hofheinz's business problems affected the operations of Astroworld. Typical of many high profile Houston businessmen of the era, Hofheinz had overextended himself in developing the Astrodomain complex. In addition, his direct participation in the daily affairs of the amusement park declined after he suffered a stroke in 1970. Because of these problems, the Hofheinz family sold parts of the Astrodomain complex, including ownership of the Astros. Astroworld had already left the fold, as the Six Flags Corporation leased the park in May 1975.[18]

The acquisition of Astroworld by Six Flags resulted in a renewed emphasis on thrills and entertainment. To celebrate the bicentennial, an eleventh theme area, Coney Island, opened. This section included the former Black Dragon, repainted and renamed the "Razz Ma Tazz;" a food stand that sold Texas-size foot-long "Coney Island" hot dogs; an area with skill games like the original Coney Island midway; and an air-supported theatre that hosted a magic show. The most famous attraction of this new area was the ninety-two foot high Texas Cyclone, a mirror-image of the original Cyclone coaster at Coney Island in New York, only on a larger scale.[19]

For roller coaster enthusiasts and thrill seekers alike, Astroworld only entered the modern age with the opening of the Texas Cyclone; it had introduced the ride that quickly achieved fame as "the finest roller coaster ever built."[20] *Houston Chronicle* reporter Jeff Millar had another opinion, as riding in the front car enabled him to view every twist, turn, and precipitous drop, prompting him to remark that "my life, as they say, passed before me."[21] A year later, *Houston Post* columnist Lynn Ashby commemorated the first anniversary of the Texas Cyclone with a review of the ride's construction and appeal. In contrast to Millar's fear, Ashby saw a ride in the front seat as "fun, a great view [where] you get there fustest with the mostest and experience the fear of instant annihilation before anyone else on the train." The back seat – which literally leaps off the track on the first and second dip – "will scramble your pancreas," according to Ashby, enabling you to "get to know your seat mate whether or not you want to." Instead of bolting for the exit, Ashby urged Houstonians to ride the Cyclone again, as once was not enough.[22] Coaster enthusiasts have agreed with Ashby's endorsement, and the Texas Cyclone has remained among the top wooden roller coasters in the world.[23]

With the infusion of capital from Six Flags following the formal purchase of Astroworld in 1978,[24] the emphasis on themed entertainment and thrill rides increased. The Maypole teacup ride outside the Children's section was replaced in 1977 by Aquarena Theatre, which featured a live dolphin show. Mod Ville was renamed International Plaza, and the Orbiter ride moved from its enclosure and the building became "Horizons Theater," where guests viewed movies shown on the panoramic dome ceiling. In 1978, the first loop coaster at the park, Greezed Lightnin', appeared across the railroad tracks from Western Junction Train Depot. Two years later, Thunder River, the world's first man-made, white-water-river-rapids ride, opened across the tracks from Bamboo Shoot in Oriental Corner.[25]

While the Texas Cyclone has received the most publicity of all the rides at Astroworld, Thunder River has perhaps become the most useful. Inspired by man-made rapids developed for kayak races during the Olympics in 1972, general manager Bill Crandall conceived Thunder River as "'a takeoff ... on Mother Nature's ride.'" The circular movement of the raft ensured that the warning in the queue house, "You ride hard and come out wet," would not disappoint guests.[26] The success at simulating whitewater rapids, in fact, led one guide to remark that Thunder River would provide "'one of the hottest kayak runs on the North American continent.'"[27] Since 1985, the Houston Police Department has conducted a rescue clinic for area firemen, game wardens, and emergency medical personnel at the ride because it recreates the activity on a raging river in a controlled environment.[28]

The 1980s saw several new and exciting rides added to the park. A park visitor in August 1981, remarked that the most popular rides that summer, judging by the length of time guests waited in line, were the Texas Cyclone, Greezed Lightnin', and Thunder River—two coasters and a water ride guaranteed to soak.[29] That year a new futuristic ride, Warp 10, replaced the Astrowheel in International Plaza. In 1983, a ten-story free-fall ride, Sky-screamer, opened in the Plaza de Fiesta, while one of the original rides, the Alpine Sleigh Ride, departed. The region formerly occupied by the sleighs and the French taxis became Enchanted Kingdom in 1984, a recreational activity center for children and their parents. That same year the former children's section became the site for XLR-8, a unique suspended roller coaster that enabled the cars to sway as they swooped along the track.[30] Environmentalism came to Astroworld in 1985, when the Lost World Adventure was remodeled and renamed The Wetlands, complete with a display about the environment assembled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service available for reading while waiting in line. A feature in the *Houston Post* in 1985 promoted this change as both "an educational experience ... [and] a relaxing break between hair-raising rides."[31] Looping Starship, a passenger spaceship that carried riders through several 360° orbits, opened in 1986 on the site of Warp 10, which reappeared in the Plaza de Fiesta section a year later as Warp 2000.[32] Tidal Wave replaced Wetlands in 1988, with passengers going over a sixty-five-foot waterfall and getting even more drenched than on Thunder River.[33] The park rearranged Oriental Corner in 1989 and squeezed a steel loop roller coaster called the Viper into part of Fun Island and the former location of Runaway Rickshaws, which was the name for the Orbiter ride once it relocated to the Oriental section. The Viper was tamer than the world-famous Texas Cyclone and Greezed Lightnin' but more hair-raising than XLR-8.[34]

Astroworld underwent many other changes during the 1980s besides adding new rides. In 1981, the park rethemed the Country Fair section and renamed it Nottingham Village; the former Dexter Frebish Electric Roller Ride became known as Excalibur. The "Airena Theatre" in the Coney Island section became a permanent structure, known as Showcase Theatre. A year later, the Crystal Palace in Western Junction ceased to have live performers. Instead, mechanical livestock debuted in the "Great Texas Longhorn Revue" at the

refurbished Cow Palace.[35] The first waterpark in the Six Flags family, WaterWorld, opened in 1983 adjacent to the eastern edge of the park. WaterWorld included water slides, rides, pools, and waterfalls for adults and even scaled-down versions of these attractions for children.[36] In 1985, Pace Productions joined Astroworld in opening Southern Star Amphitheatre, a concert arena that seated 3,000 guests in chairs and another 20,000 on the lawn rising above the stage. With concert admission often free with park admission, Southern Star quickly became the "premier outdoor concert facility in the Southwest."[37] The park's operating season extended into October for the first time in 1986, when "Fright Nights" enabled young Houstonians to trick-or-treat at Houston's largest Halloween party.[38] Christmas came to Astroworld in 1988 with the first celebration of "Holiday in the Park," where guests could go sledding down a man-made snow hill, which actually was the lawn seating area for Southern Star Amphitheatre, skate on an ice rink, or take a carriage ride through the park.[39]

The emphasis on thrill rides and water rides has continued into the 1990s, as park planners realized the need to entertain, to excite, and to comfort tourists. In 1990, the Ultra Twister debuted and was billed as "'the only roller coaster of its kind in the world'" because of its ninety-two-foot drop straight down, after which the cars would make 360° rotations while traveling forward, then backward.[40] The Condor in 1991 had riders twisting and turning while riding to the top of the bird's wing span and then back down.[41] Adventure Rivers replaced the Condor in 1992 as Astroworld united Texas history and water slides by giving visitors a chance to experience rafting down the Brazos, Colorado, Pecos, and Rio Grande rivers. This ride represented a renewed emphasis on theming that had disappeared early in the 1980s, as part of the "adventure" involved walking past Old West set decorations and signs providing brief histories of the rivers.[42]

Theming a ride – or making the actual ride part of a larger entertainment experience than merely having one's body tossed about on a roller coaster – took a further step in 1993 with the introduction of Texas' first stand-up roller coaster, Batman the Escape. The ride's developers recognized that the popularity of the Batman character, combined with the excitement of a coaster, would result in long lines. To get the riders in the proper frame of mind, queue lines took them through the Batcave, Arctic Park – which was a remnant of the original Der Hofheinzberg – and Gotham City Cold Storage, constantly assaulted by audio messages and visual effects. The ride itself served as a means for the guests to escape from the clutches of the Penguin, who pursued them through the queue lines.[43] The latest coaster addition continued the concept of making the ride part of a larger entertainment experience. The Mayan Mindbender, which opened in 1995, received its inspiration from the popular Indiana Jones movies of the 1980s.[44] Enclosed in a structure that resembles an ancient Mayan temple, the Mayan Mindbender is geared to families yet does have its own scare factor in that it is totally in the dark. The sounds of hissing snakes and the sight of flashing lights enhance the sensory experience of this indoor coaster.[45] The most recent coaster addition to the

park, Dungeon Drop, takes riders through a recreated medieval dungeon while waiting in line for the ride.

The ownership of Astroworld also changed considerably during the 1980s and 1990s. Six Flags purchased the park in 1978, and the corporation sold it and other Six Flags parks to Bally Manufacturing Corp. in 1982. Wesray Corporation, a private investment company, bought the Six Flags parks from Bally in 1987,[46] and in 1990 Time Warner acquired a 19.5 percent stake in the company.[47] Time Warner increased its holdings to 50 percent in August 1991,[48] and bought the remaining portion in September 1993.[49] Time Warner reduced its holdings to 49 percent in April 1995, but remained the majority stockholder in Six Flags.[50]

Over the years, other theme parks and amusement centers have opened in the Houston area. More often than not, these developments have proven futile. The Anheuser-Busch brewery company operated a Busch Gardens early in the 1970s that lasted one year before becoming a bird park, and then closed several years later when the company expanded its production facilities.[51] In 1984, Hanna Barbera Land opened in north Houston, primarily to cater to young children, but it closed a couple of years later and was replaced by Splashtown, a water park.[52] Even Sea Arama in Galveston did not fare well and ceased operations in January 1990.[53] With the addition of thrill rides and a renewed emphasis on themed entertainment, Astroworld has increased its attendance during the 1990s while other theme parks in Texas have experienced declining visitation.[54] During its first twenty years, over thirty million tourists from around the world came to Astroworld, indeed pumping untold millions of dollars into Houston's economy just as Judge Hofheinz predicted.[55]

In addition to thrills and chills, Astroworld has presented a variety of live shows to entertain guests. In 1973, the park hosted Jerry Lewis's Labor Day telethon for Muscular Dystrophy.[56] Airena Theatre opened in 1976 with the Mark Wilson Magic Show as the featured attraction.[57] The lagoon area of the park has served as the site for performances by the Great American High Diving Team[58] and, most recently, the "Batman Forever Water Stunt Spectacular" stunt show. For children, costumed characters from the unique crew of Marvel McFey and Friends to the Warner Bros.' Looney Tunes and Animaniacs have enhanced their Astroworld experience. Finally, local talent such as Randy and Dennis Quaid[59] have performed in vaudeville and Broadway-style shows since the late 1960s, often gaining valuable experience for careers in the entertainment industry.

In 1996, the management of Six Flags Theme Parks developed a mission statement that essentially restates what Judge Roy Hofheinz perceived as the true purpose of his park: to provide "unique, exciting, themed entertainment experiences ... to people of all ages." If Judge Hofheinz were alive today, the Astroworld he would see would hardly resemble the park that opened in June 1968. Nevertheless, he undoubtedly would have approved of the growth and development of the park. Only six of the original rides remain, and all of them have undergone modifications or relocation since 1968. Also, dozens of

additional rides and attractions have been added to thrill, jolt, and soak visitors and thus to encourage them to return to the park. Indeed, Astroworld has succeeded in becoming a playground that amuses millions of tourists annually.

To understand more completely the significance of Astroworld in local history, several other issues remain to be addressed. The concern about safety in the amusement parks that arose in the 1980s, including congressional hearings on the subject, is worthy of additional exploration, especially in light of the few accidents the park has experienced over the years. Further research would reveal the changing composition of its seasonal staff of "hosts and hostesses" from Hofheinz's emphasis on college students to the more diversified work force of today. Finally, the history of Judge Hofheinz's amusement park is important in understanding the way Americans spend their leisure time. Astroworld serves primarily to entertain, yet it is just as much of the American historical landscape as a Civil War battlefield.[60]

NOTES

[1]*Houston Post*, June 2, 1968, p. A1; and *Houston Chronicle*, June 2, 1968, sect. 1, pp. 1, 24.

[2]Edgar W. Ray, *The Grand Huckster: Houston's Judge Roy Hofheinz, Genius of the Astrodome* (Memphis, 1980), pp. 267-352; and "What Makes One Texan Run," *Business Week*, June 8, 1968, p. 89.

[3]Charlie Evans, "Final Plans OK'd for Astroworld," *Houston Chronicle*, January 8, 1967, sect. 1, pp. 1, 19.

[4]Gerald Egger, "Astroworld, Roy Hofheinz $18 Million Amusement Park Complex, Is Announced," *Houston Post*, September 17, 1967, pp. A1, A17; and Charlie Evans, "Astroworld Park to Open in '68," *Houston Chronicle*, September 17, 1967, sect. 1, pp. 1-20.

[5]Evans, "Astroworld Park," pp. 1, 20.

[6]1973 Astroworld Yearbook, p. 160.

[7]Ray, *Grand Huckster*, pp. 350, 407, 409; and Evans, "Astroworld Park," p. 1.

[8]Ray, *Grand Huckster*, pp. 366, 422; and "The Disneyland Effect," *Time*, 91 (June 14, 1968), p. 54.

[9]Frank Davis, "Crowds Thrilled by Astroworld," *Houston Post*, June 2,1968, p. A2; and "Astroworld Reaction: 'It's A Fun Place,'" *Houston Chronicle*, June 2, 1968, sect. 1, p. 1.

[10]Egger, "Astroworld," p. 17.

[11]Egger, "Astroworld," p.17; Evans, "Astroworld Park," p. 20; and Map of Astroworld in 1968.

[12]"Astroworld Reaction," p. 1.

[13]"Astroworld Reaction," p. 1; "Amusement Park in Texas is Climate Conditioned," *Electrical World*, 170 (September 9, 1968), p. 45; I. A. Naman and Jack B. Buckley, "Air Conditioning the Outdoors at Astroworld," *Heating, Piping and Air Conditioning*, 40 (August 1968), p. 74; and "New Astro-attraction," *Houston Chronicle*, June 2, 1968, sect. 5, p. 4.

[14]Naman and Buckley, "Air Conditioning," p. 72; and "Amusement Park," p. 45.

[15]Map of Astroworld in 1968.

[16]"Astroworld Evolution," p. 3; Typewritten history of the park distributed by the Public Relations Department at Six Flags Houston.

[17]*Astrodomain: The Astrodome, Astroworld, Astroworld Hotels/Motels, Astrohall* ([Houston]: Houston Sports Association, 1972), p. 53.

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[25]"Astroworld Evolution," [pp. 3-4].

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[31]Christi Fowler, "Astroworld, A Roller Coaster Ride Away: Take the Kid in You to Texas' Largest Amusement Park," *Houston Post*, August 9, 1985, p. E9. The change probably was hastened by the destruction of one of the ride's landmarks the previous operating season. See: "King Kong 'Dies' in Smoky Blaze; Astroworld Figure Destroyed," *Houston Post*, April 19, 1984, p. A17.

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"'WHIP THEM LIKE THE MISCHIEF:' THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF FRANK AND MINTIE PRICE"

edited by Jimmy L. Bryan, Jr.

In 1994, Marc B. Smith, Jr., of Fort Worth donated a series of Civil War letters written by Frank and Mintie Price to the Special Collections Division of the University of Texas at Arlington Libraries. The collection consists of handwritten transcripts by Mary Martha Hackney, a distant cousin of Smith, and includes correspondence from October 1861 to November 1864. The Hackney Papers include seven letters written by Mintie from San Augustine to her husband, who served in Virginia with the First Texas Infantry. After his wife died late in 1862, Frank served with the First Texas Partisan Rangers in Louisiana and wrote home to his wife's father and sister, William and Mary Garrett, who kept his children. The collection includes thirteen of these letters. A letter to Frank from his sister and brother-in-law, Tempe Price and A. W. McLaurine of San Augustine, make a total of twenty-one letters. The collection also includes notes entitled "Thoughts about B. F. Price" which Hackney prepared for a presentation to the History Club of Fort Worth and provides additional biographical and genealogical information on the Price family.[1]

Benjamin Franklin "Frank" Price was born in North Carolina on August 12, 1827, to Elijah and Temperance Thomas Price. The family moved to Alabama in 1830, where Price served in the state legislature. He brought his family to Texas in 1841 and established a plantation and a mercantile store at San Augustine. In 1849, Frank Price entered a partnership with Benjamin F. Benton and purchased the San Augustine *Union*. They changed the title to the *Red Land Herald* and operated the newspaper until they sold it in 1851. On October 20, 1853, Price married Clementine "Mintie" Garrett, with whom he had three children, John, Mary, and William.[2]

Born in Texas in 1836, Mintie Garrett was related to two of the most prominent families of San Augustine County. Her grandfather, Jacob Garrett of Tennessee, came to Texas in 1824. He served as *alcalde* of the Ayish Bayou District in 1830 and was a delegate to the Conventions of 1832 and 1833. His son William Garrett, Mintie's father, participated in the Battle of Nacogdoches in 1832 and in the Texas Revolution. He established a plantation and was San Augustine County's largest slaveholder in 1860. On October 20, 1833, he married Mary Crutchfield Cartwright, sister of Matthew Cartwright, a wealthy San Augustine merchant and land speculator. Their father, John Cartwright, brought their family to Texas in 1825. Late in 1862, Mintie Price contracted typhoid fever and died after a seven-week illness on December 18. Her sister, Mary Garrett, living with their father, suffered from the same disease but recovered. She took over the care of the Price children while Frank served in the Southern army.[3]

In San Augustine early in 1861, Frank's former newspaper partner Benjamin F. Benton organized a company for the Civil War styled the "Texas

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Invincibles." Frank and his brother Elijah Price joined the unit. In the election of officers, the soldiers made Frank first lieutenant and Benton captain. The company marched to Richmond, Virginia, where on October 11, 1861, the Confederate Army mustered the unit as Company K, First Texas Infantry, part of the celebrated Hood's Texas Brigade. The regiment saw its first action on May 7, 1862, at the Battle of Elthan's Landing, but Frank Price probably did not participate. By May 16, he had resigned his commission under the recent Conscription Act which prompted a re-organization of the regiment.[4]

Frank Price enlisted in the First Texas Partisan Rangers by July 1863. His activity from his resignation to his re-enlistment is not known. Family tradition says he did not return home until after war's end, but he likely returned to San Augustine when his wife died in December. Whether Price joined the partisan rangers in June 1862 during the unit's organization or during its re-organization in March 1863 is not certain.[5]

Acting under a commission issued by General Earl Van Dorn on June 5, 1862, Colonel Walter P. Lane of Marshall organized a regiment of partisan rangers, recruiting heavily among veterans such as Frank Price, who had left their former units under the Conscription Act of 1862. The Confederate Congress passed "AN ACT to organize bands of partisan rangers" on April 21, 1862. These partisans acted as guerrillas behind enemy lines but possessed the legal sanction of their government. In case of capture, they received protection as prisoners of war while independent guerrillas were prosecuted as criminals. Units organized under this law were allowed to join the Confederate Army as regulars, and Colonel Lane apparently raised his regiment with that intention. The First Texas Partisan Rangers never acted as guerrillas. At Jefferson in the summer of 1862, Colonel Lane mustered fourteen companies; most Civil War regiments only counted ten. The organizational history of the unit remains difficult to trace. It underwent two re-organizations in which Lane reassigned company commanders and designations. To further confuse the matter, no muster roll survived.[6]

Lane's Rangers initially served in northwest Arkansas and participated in the battles of Prairie Grove (December 7, 1862) and Van Buren (December 28, 1862). The unit suffered greatly during the winter, which prompted a reorganization at Jefferson in March 1863. At this point, Frank Price probably joined Company E as a private and served with it during the campaigns in Louisiana. He served a brief time in the brigade's quartermaster's department and probably accepted a promotion to lieutenant at that point as he held that rank by January 1864. Early in the summer of 1863, Lane managed to get his cavalry reassigned to Louisiana where they participated in the Confederate effort to draw Union forces away from the besieged Port Hudson, resulting in the battles of Thibodeux (June 20, 1863) and Donaldsonville (June 28, 1863). Lane's Rangers later fought at Cox's Plantation (July 12, 1863) and Grand Coteau (November 3, 1863). In December, the regiment marched to Houston to counter Union movements on the Texas coast. No fighting resulted and the Rangers spent the remainder of the winter in the vicinity of Houston.[7]

In the spring of 1864, when Union General Nathaniel P. Banks launched his Red River Campaign, Confederate commanders rushed the First Texas Partisan Rangers with other Confederate units to northwestern Louisiana. Lane's soldiers made a stand at Wilson Farm (April 7, 1864) and participated in the Battle of Mansfield (April 8, 1864), at which the Confederates thwarted Banks' advance. For the next forty days, Southern forces clashed with Banks as he retreated down the Red River. Lane's Rangers fought at Pleasant Hill (April 9), Monette's Ferry (April 23), Bayou Rapides (April 28), Wilson's Landing (May 2), and the closing action of the campaign, Yellow Bayou (May 18). Frank Price served throughout the ordeal commanding Company B, a position he accepted on April 10.[8]

Frank Price and Lane's Rangers continued to scout and picket in Louisiana until August 1864 when the regiment marched into Arkansas and managed one final action at Brewer's Lane (September 11, 1864). In December, Lane's Rangers returned to Texas and for the remainder of the war operated in the vicinity of Austin rounding up deserters. The companies of the First Texas Partisan Rangers disbanded at war's end.[9]

Frank Price returned to San Augustine. Hackney suggested that a romance might have been brewing between Frank and his sister-in-law, Mary Garrett, but a marriage did not occur before 1867. In the summer of that year, Frank gathered a herd of cattle and drove them to New Orleans, where he contracted yellow fever and died on September 26. At a later date his descendants removed his body for reburial in San Augustine.[10]

Seven letters from the Hackney Collection follow. Two letters from Mintie Price describe conditions at San Augustine early in the war, including details on local organization of troops, supply shortages, and profiteering. Her letters provide a glimpse of the reaction of San Augustine's affluent to these shortages and of the network of family support on the home front. Frank's letters provide information on the often overlooked 1863 campaigns in southern Louisiana as well as the 1864 Red River Campaign. He describes the action at Thibodaux, Bayou Bourdeau, and Monett's Ferry as well as a vivid account of campaigning in the hot Louisiana summer. Any researcher interested in the topics contained herein should consult the Hackney Papers at the Special Collections, University of Texas at Arlington, for additional information.

[No. 1]

San Augustine, Texas
Jan 5, 1862

My Dear Frank,

I have again seated myself to perform the pleasant task of writing to you – And I assure you it is a very agreeable way of passing off my time these dull and lonesome Sundies. I could go to church and do sometimes, but I find more pleasure in writing to you dear Frank.

Your sister Mary came out the other day and paid that long promised

visit. She has been sick nearly ever since you left – but is getting better. Dr. Jack is giving her Strichnine pills and I think it will cure her. Jane Rhote was with her out here.[11] She is just as full of mischief as ever – She advised me to take the same pills too to make me look young by the time you come back – but I do not think I shall follow her proscription. I am not atall [sic] uneasy about my own appearance I am anticipating how you will look and how long it will be before you return. I think it would be wise in you to come home pretty soon. I think you are risking a little to much by staying there and so much sickness around you. Oh! Frank you must come. There is no use of your staying there you will not have a chance to whip any Yankees or be in any fights so I think you had better abandon that place at once. It makes me feel so uneasy to hear of so many deaths and I feel that there will be more ere long, but I hope not.[12]

Sis has been up to Mr. [Sexton's] and says that he will leave on the 13th of this month for Virginia. He says that he intends to go out to see you all – But I hope by the time he gets there you may be many miles from that ever memorable place Richmond[13]

There has nothing new transpired worthy of communicating since I last wrote so I am at a loss how to finish this long letter I have commenced. Pa is at the plantation as usual. Mr. Chapman went down New Years day as overseer. I hope he will make a good one for Pa is sadly in need of someone to assist him, although he is getting well, he has not been trouble with his shoulder lately.[14]

Gran Ma[15] has been down to see us. She has just left and Johnny thought he would ride to the branch on behind the carriage. Well he popped on and the buggy started. (You never saw such eyes as his before) Johnny thought he was gone and it was quite amusing to see how frightened he was but he at last succeeded in getting off. I do not think he will try it again soon. He looked too funny – with his eyes as big as a moon and as if he was glued to the buggy behind. He is well and as fat as you ever saw him. Suck and Willie are both well and as bad as ever.[16]

Well Frank I must now tell you something of our hardships and how Mr. J.D. Thomas sells salt. It is 20 dollars a sack and I suppose he [stinted?] his own meat to get to sell the salt and he lost all of his meat – Some people are very glad that it is so. I think myself that it served him right[17]

Everyone complains very much about not having any sugar and coffee, and I hear is not a piece of Calico in town. I do not know what we are to do for Calico and shoes. We will have to go to spinning and weaving I suppose and making moscosins. It would be right funny to see us all in Homespun with about those widths in our dresses, would look beautiful – [paper cut off] are getting right hard. I have not heard any news of the Mason [&] Slidell affair since last week.[18] I hope though that Old England will hurry and open the blocades

I must close now for it is getting late, wishing you good health, better

health and best health. I remain as ever you affectionate and devoted wife

Mintie

P.S.

Dear Brother

It is so late that I cannot write you a long letter so I thought I would just inscribe a few line in hurry to finish out his long letter I have had a [jollie time] this new years week – and I hope it will continue. Annie Marie Cartwright and I went up to Mr. [Sexton's] and spent a pleasant time with Miss Anne Coffman.[19] I got some beautifull little cedars to set out in the yard. I am going to have the front yard look beautifull by the time you come back.

I have not seen Mrs. Jamie Watson lately, but she sends her love to Jessie and for every time I write and so I will take the liberty again. Mr. & Mrs. H are both well.[20] Remember me to all inquiring friends. I remain as every your Sister.

Mollie[21]

[No. 2]

San Augustine
Feb. 24th 1862

My Dear Frank,

I have today had the pleasure of receiving a nice long letter from you bearing the date Jan 28th and also one for Pa dated Feb 7th. The mails have been so irregular lately that we do not receive out letters weekly. I am glad that you have had another letter from us and hope you may receive many more. I feel so thankful when I here from you and you are still enjoying good health.

You spoke of reinlisting. You must not think of such a thing until you come home and see us and then if the War continues I will let you go back, but as far as getting a battallion here you just as well talk to the wind. John Brook has come back after recruiting and all the young men that were left here and all that have returned from the war are going back with him[22] – Besides Dick Waterhouse company, he has a good many now. Judge Dickson is Capt.[23] You could not get any but the old men. I heard today that a man had come in the Stage to draft all who were not willing to go. I would not like to be in their shoes, would you? Sis and I were at church today and heard Mr. Sam Williams preach Mrs. Simpsons funeral. He delivered a very good sermon. We saw Jimmy Roberts and also your sister Mary. They were both looking very well and Jimmy has one of the sweetest little babies you ever saw.[24] We went home with Uncle Matthew and dined and spent the afternoon had a very pleasant time.[25]

One of you old friends John [G.] Walker passed through town on the stage this morning on his way to Nacogdoches. He was in Colonel Terrys Regiment and was wounded. He was carrying his family to Nacogdoches.[26]

There has been another company formed in Nacogdoches lately. Henry & Jim Curl both have gone. They are at some little place in the upper part of the

State. They are to start to Kentucky the first of March. Cousin William Crouch is anxious to go also.[27] They heard from the Missouri Boys not long ago. Meck and Lon Cartwright, Bud Holman, Tom Davis and in fact all the boys were enjoying excellent health. Lon and Tom Davis were on their way to a party in Fort Smith. They are having nice times up there I recon.[28]

We are hearing more favorable news from Kentucky and Tennessee ever time, hope we may turn the tables on them at Fort Donaldson [1 word] and whip them like the mischief. We hear they are fighting there.[29]

I will now say a word for the children. They are all sleeping very sweetly at present I read both of your letters to them and they were as still as mice. Johnny is progressing finely reading. He will have a second reader next week. Suck is learning her ABC's but she is too great a figet to learn fast. Willie cried for your dyguerritype everytime he sees it and says He would know his Pa if he was to come home. They are all well and enjoying fine health. Pa is at the Plantation as usual. He and Grandpa Wallace are together I recon. As Colonel Wallace is assessor now. I wrote to you before that he held the office.[30]

I do not think that you will see Ridly there soon. It is reported that he intends to be married soon to Miss Midonia Powell. He was here the other day with his long tail yellow on. Sis laughed enough at his coat. Have you one like it? I think they are very nice.[31]

I must close now as it is getting late and I have written all that I can think of. Wishing you all the good Luck and health anybody could. I remain as ever your

affectionate wife
Mintie

Sis and the children join me in love to you and Lije.[32]

[No. 3]

Parrish of Assumptions
8 miles of Donaldsonville
July 1st 1863

My dear Sister[33]

I have just learned that a gentleman from Capt McCoy's company[34] will leave our camp today to go to Texas and I take the pleasure in writing you a letter by this opportunity. When our regiment left the camp below Alexandria I did not dream of the difficulties and dangers ahead, but sis I am resigned to meet the fate of our brave soldiers. Our regiment in company with Col Stone's and Col Phillip's[35] marched almost day and night to form a junction with Genl Green and Mouton[36] at [Thibodaux]ville in bayou [Lafourche]. Genl Mouton's headquarters is now at [Thibodaux] and Genl Green's is at [Paincourtville] a small town ten miles from Donaldsonville on bayou [Lafourche]. Our regiment is stationed on the bayou between Genl Green and the [fort] and has picket duty to do every day. We have a force of about twelve thousand men

now on the bayou and I do hope that Mouton will not order us into the [fort] at Donaldsonville and [I] think it impossible to take it. I wrote your Pa a few days ago and when I wrote to him we were under orders to take the [fort] at all hazard, but Col Lane knowing the utter impossibility of taking the place would not carry his men into the slaughter pen.[37] I wish you could have seen Rowdy in the charge upon [Thibodaux]ville, I never saw a better cavalry horse, about three hundred of the best horses of the regiment was selected by Lt Col Crump[38] to make the charge, and I can assure you that Rowdy stood the fire of the enemies guns as well or better than the rider. The cowardly Yankees could have killed all of us while we were crossing the bridge of [Thibodaux] but they only fired three rounds before they skedaddled and then such a yell;

In one hour after we entered the town, the victory was ours and our capture of comissary stores and negroes is estimated [at] two hundred thousand dollars. I suppose that you have heard it was a great and glorious capture of arms and munitions of war were captured by our forces to the amount of about 1000 stands, twelve pieces of artilery.[39]

Now Sis just imagine that you had been away from home as long as I have and you had not heard a word from your friends. I think you would be almost in a hopeless and desponding condition. well this is my situation. I have had slight fever for two days but am clear of fever this morning. I expect the lack of sleep and expousre to the hot sun is the cause of me having fever. I have done a soldiers duty every day since I left Alexandria until yesterday when my heart and strength failed. I must rest a day or two and then I am ready again. Sis you and your Pa must not let the first opportunity pass of sending me a letter for if I could get a letter from you and know that my little ones were well and happy then I should feel better contented.

Your sincere Brother
B. F. Price

P.S.

Meck's well and makes a brave and gallant soldier.[40]

B. F. P.

[No. 4]

Centerville, Bayou Teche
La. July 27th, 1863

My Dear Sister,

After a long and hazardous raid down the Mississippi River and on the Bay of Berwick our army has called a hault on Bayou Teche near Centerville. You can scarcely imagine the hardships which we have undergone in this expedition in hard marching, fighting and starving, but we are still cheerful and hopeful that our loss of Vicksburg and Port Hudson[41] will not hurt us so bad but what we will soon recover from these misfortunes. I have not received but one letter from home since I left and that was the first one that you wrote,

but I am anxiously expecting another everyday. I know that you will write me something about my dear little ones; every opportunity. Sister you may think it strange, but it is true, that I dream of my little Willie almost every night. I sometimes see him sleeping and at other times I see him in your arms crying. I never see him playing; what means such continued [impressions], I do not know. I hope they are not bad omens. I try to dispel these gloomy feelings but they seem to inscrease. I have been detailed to serve in the Quartermaster Department at Genl Majors Headquarters on Capt W.H. Bassetts staff. Meck has also been appointed in the same department, so we will still remain together. When you write, direct your letter to me, Genl Majors Brigade, Capt. Bassetts Staff.[42] My appointment is temporary as the Brigade is only temporarily organized. I expect to go back to Col Lanes Regmt after a while, if the Brigade does not continue its organization. Mr Evan S Lowell who was wounded at the Battle of Bayou [Lafourche] near Donaldsonville died on the fourth day after the fight in the Hospital at Napoleonville. Sister I know that you will be glad to learn that Col Lane gives me more credit for galantry [sic] in the [Lafourche] fight, than any man in his whole regt. I do not know that I deserve the credit that he gives me as I only did my duty as a good soldier.[43] Four gunboats came up the Bayou last evening and shelled us a little, but did no damage. We expect them again today. If they come we will fight them.[44] There is a good deal of disatisfaction among our soldiers because they do not get any pay. Lanes Regiment has not been paid a dollar for more than nine months. Some of the boys say they will not fight any more, untill they are paid. I would have written to you by Lt. Chaffin, but I did not know that he was going home until after he was gone. Capt. Edwards has been very sick but is getting well.[45]

I wish you would make me a nice overshirt and send it by Lt. Chaffin when he comes back. Remember me to all the Family and tell your pa, that he must come to see me this fall if he can leave home. Oh how much I desire to see you and the children – but I cannot leave my post.

Adieu Sister
B. F. Price

[No. 5]

[Opelousas] La Nov 24, 1863

My Dear Sister

I have been waiting for several weeks for an opportunity to send you a letter and I now have a safe and good chance of sending a letter by your uncle George Cartwright who is here after his son Sanford. Sister you cannot imagine the feelings of joy expressed by Sanford when his Pa came into the hospital and he saw him. He cried for a few moments and I tell you it brought the tears in my eyes to see them meet. Sanford was very badly wounded on the leg and is not yet able to sit up. I was sitting by his side talking to him when his Pa came into the hospital.[46] Sister you said in your last letter that I must do

all I could to keep the Yankees from coming to Texas. Well I tell you candidly that I think that if every Southerner would do as much as I do and will do, the Yanks will never molest you and my dear little ones. I would write you all about the Battle on [Bourbeau] Bayou, but I know that you have heard all and more too about it then I can write. I will only mention my own escape on that memorable day. About three oclock in the evening after our men had been fighting two hours, I was sent to the front of the lines to assist in getting the wounded off the field. While I was there, about five or six hundred Yankees came up within one hundred yards and commenced firing upon us, and this was one of the times that I had to leave in a hurry. I regret that we could not get our wounded but they were exchanged the next day. It was a glorious victory for us as we killed two or three times the most men and took about six hundred prisoners.[47] I heard some good news from Genl Walkers division today. It is said that they have captured two transports and sunk two in the Mississippi River.[48] Our little army has been catching from [ten to twenty] Yankees every two or three days since the Battle on the 3rd inst. But it has been our misfortune to loose about one hundred of our bravest and best men. Col Bagly's Regt was surrounded at Camp Pratt and about one hundred of them taken prisoners a few days ago. They belong to Genl Greens old Brigade.[49] Sister I have a bad pen very dim light to write by and I know you will excuse this badly writen letter. Thus are a great many things that I would like to write about if I had a good pen and light. I received your letter by Capt Edwards and also my overcoat which came in good time. I received also by Lt. Chafin those nice yarn socks and overshirt. It is truly a blessing to have a good kind sister. To hers and other dear images my thoughts often wonder and now may Gods Holy angels guard bless and protect you. good night.

B.F. Price

[No. 6]

Rapides Parish La
Ap 27th, 1864

My Dear Sister,

I thank heaven that I have been spared to write you a few hasty lines, which I hope may prove to you that you are not forgotten amidst the storm of Battle. While many of my comrades have fallen in the hands of a heartless enemy and others fill bloody graves upon their native soil I am still spared to avenge our wholesale wrongs. On the morning of the 23rd at the Ferry on Cane River below [Cloutierville] our Dismounted Cavalry took position in line of Battle to receive the advancing columns of Genl Banks[50] about 10 o'clock heavy skirmishing proved to me that a battle was to be fought at this place. Our Regiment which had taken position about two hundred yards above the Ferry was not ordered about a half mile to the left, to prevent the enemy from flanking us, but also dear sister in a very short time we were flanked and be it said to the credit of Lanes Regiment that for an hour it held an overwilming force in check until the enemy could not stand our fire any longer, when they

raised a yell and charged upon our little squad of four undred dismounted cavalry. We fought them until they came up in twenty steps. I gave them the benefit of six rounds from my six shooter. We lost thirty prisoners five killed and nine wounded. The enemys loss is estimated at one hundred killed and wounded. Thirty killed dead on the field.[51] I regret to say that we have no General. Genl Bee gave up the Ferry without any resistance and came very near sacrificing half of our cavalry.[52] We retreated out on the road above Carrol Jones[53] and the next morning turned our column in the direction of Alexandria. Yesterday morning we made our appearance on the hill on the bayou, called McNuts Hill. Here Sis was a magnificant sight a full view of twenty thousand Yankees moving in columns of infantry in front and cavalry to cover their retreat. immediately in their rear was Genl Majors with fifteen hundred cavalry and on McNuts Hill Genl Bee lead a charge upon the rear of the retreating columns of the enemy. They were repulsed with slight loss and then the enemys Batteries commenced to shell us, but not to our serious injury. they only killed one man.[54] Thus closed the day. We stopped and the Yankees retreated to Alexandria, buring corn cribs, sugar mills and negro quarters. Oh Sis, Heaven ought to arrest their desolating career. Little Billy Holman[55] fought like an old veteran soldier by my side on the 23rd. He was cool and killed his share of the enemy. I loaded his gun and gave him a good position to fight from. He went back to the Battle field the next day and got himself a nice saber which he will keep as a trophy of his valor. I thank you for your prayers. God will bless you with a free country and a happy spirit Lend.

Your devoted Brother
Frank

[No. 7]

Morgans Ferry on the
[Atchafalaya]
Aug. 3, 1864

My dear Sister,

Do not think that I have been negligent in writing to you for I have not been so situated during the past month, that I could write to you. I had spell of fever and since my recovery continually after the Yankees across the [Atchafalaya] has made it out of my power to write. I came back to the regiment last night after a scout of five days with only six men with me. Some days the Yankees run me and then again sometimes they had to trot. In the fight a few days ago we killed and wounded about twenty = among the number was Col Garrison.[56] our loss was two men killed and three wounded. We have been expecting a heavy fight for several days but the loss of their col may make them stay in their fortifications at Morganza. I am almost worn out. the weather is so hot and the bayou water that we have to drink so warm that it almost vomits one to drink it. I still hope that it will soon be over and we can again enjoy the blessings of peace and a free and happy land will welcome back to their homes the gallant souls, not many survive. God grant this bloody

and mournfull drama. Sister it is a sad, sad thing and yet we bear it with fortitude and patiense that it may not be worse. I am sorry that my feeble arm cannot do more to bring about an honorable pease, but I must not [left blank] and be content if I can with my labor. I wish I had some officers in the company to help me but they are all still absent and the consequence is that I do not get any rest. I cannot imagine why Lt. [Weeks][57] does not come back as his furlough has been out several weeks. It may cost him dearly if he does not have a good excuse. Nothing but sickness will excuse him. Tell Johnny that I sent him a saber with the hopes that when I come home, he could sit down by my side and read me all about how our brave boys cut the Yankees heads off in a the [sic] battles. I would also be so happy to hear that the could read and write good. I know that I should try to bring him something that would please him if I was to hear that he loved his books. All of our Brigade has left and and our regiment is to stay here a while in Piquet. I will be glad to get into the Hills of Texas or anywhere else from this place. It is a mean place to stay at. Sister I am sorry that you place yourself in such an humble attitude about your letters to me, when they are better written than mine, both in compositon and execution. Learn then the truth, that I appreciate them, esteem them, and shall always treasure them as welcome messengers of affection that has so often turned a gloomy heart and restless spirit into gladsome sea of hope, joy and pleasure. I must decline the compliment you would pay me when you say that my letters are more sinsible than yours. If dr. Jack does take a notion to get married I hope he will not leave San Augustine. I think Miss Mary Raguet is a nice Lady but not very pretty. Jack and Mary are both old enough to get married if they want to and I hope will live happy together. I hope Jack will invite me to the wedding as I know that he is one of my best friends. Tell him to wait till fall and maybe so I will get a chance to eat something once more. I am fond of cake and wedding dumplings.[58] May God bless and protect you through this life and reward you in eternity is my prayer.

B. F. Price

I expect to send this letter in a day or two by Sanford [Cartwright] and David Sharp of Sabine County. They will get furloughs to go home and will take letters for the boys Sanford has been transferred to our company and goes home to get a horse I have not heard of my horse yet and unless I am lucky It may be I never will hear of them. I am sorry to hear of the death of Capt John Grass. He was a good and galant officer. I shall begin to look for or five days more.[59]

Goodbye.

NOTES

[1]Frank Price wrote from Virginia, but that correspondence has not survived. The collection includes a copy of orders that Frank received while in Virginia detailing him to transport prisoners to Richmond. A series of seventeen letters by Mary Garrett to Frank Price apparently remain in the family's possession, copies of which are not included with the collection. Mary Martha Hackney Papers (Arlington: Special Collections Division, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries; cited hereinafter as HP).

[2]According to one source, Price and Benton later published the *East Texian* at San Augustine between 1857 and 1858, but surviving issues at the Texas State Archives do not support this. Donaly E. Brice to the editor, August 12, 1996, editor's files; "Thoughts about B. F. Price," HP; George Louis Crocket, *Two Centuries in East Texas: A History of San Augustine County and Surrounding Territory from 1685 to the Present* (Dallas, 1932), pp. 220, 246; *Founders and Patriots of the Republic of Texas: The Lineages of the Members of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas* (3 vols. Austin, 1963-1985), III, p. 111; Frances Terry Ingmire, *San Augustine County, Texas, Marriage Records, 1837-1880* (St. Louis, 1980), p. 8; Marilyn McAdams Sibley, *Lone Stars and State Gazettes: Texas Newspapers before the Civil War* (College Station, 1983), p. 365; Ron Tyler, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols., Austin, 1996), I, p. 494.

[3]Henson and Parmalee cite that Jacob Garrett came to Texas in 1827. Mintie Price was buried in the Garrett Cemetery in San Augustine County. For more information on the Cartwright Family see Margaret Swett Henson and Deolece Parmelee, *The Cartwrights of San Augustine: Three Generations of Agrarian Entrepreneuers in Nineteenth-Century Texas* (Austin, 1993), pp. 62, 149, 220; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, I, pp. 1004-1005, III, pp. 98-100; Matthew Cartwright to Lon Cartwright, December 23, 1862, Cartwright Family Papers (Austin, University of Texas at Austin; hereinafter cited CFP); Anna W. Cartwright to Lon Cartwright, January 31, 1863, CFP; *Caucasian Cemeteries of San Augustine County, Texas* (3 vols., San Augustine, 1993), I, p. 288; J.B. Sanders, *1860 Census of San Augustine County, Texas* (Nacogdoches, 1968), p. 49; Ralph A. Wooster, "Wealthy Texans, 1860," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXXI (October 1967), pp. 163-180.

[4]The date of organization for the Texas Invincibles appears to have been July 11, 1861. Soon after Price left Virginia, Captain Benton was killed at Gaines' Mill on June 27, 1862. Harold B. Simpson, *Hood's Texas Brigade: Lee's Grenadier Guard* (Waco, 1970), pp. 44, 72, 97-103, 123-124; ----, *Hood's Texas Brigade: A Compendium* (Hillsboro, 1977), pp. 72-77.

[5]"Thoughts," HP; Marshall *Texas Republican*, June 21, 1862, February 26, 1863.

[6]Due to growing "irregularities," the Southern Congress passed a law on February 17, 1864 that repealed the Partisan Ranger Act of 1862 and called for the disbanding of all partisan units not regularly enlisted in the Confederate Army. Lane's Partisans fell under this exemption and continued to serve. "Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Texas" (Washington, 1960; hereinafter cited CSR), Roll No. 192; [U.S. War Department], *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (1880-1901 reprint, 128 vols., [Harrisburg, Pa.], 1985; hereinafter cited OR), Ser. 3, Vol. III, pp. 148-164, Ser. 4, Vol. I, p. 1094, Vol. II, pp. 42-49, 279-294, 585, Vol. III, pp. 189-194.

[7]CSR, Roll No. 192; B.F. Price to [Mary Garrett], July 1, 1863, HP; B.F. Price to [Mary Garrett], 27 August 1863, HP; B. F. Price to [Mary Garrett], January 5, 1864, HP; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXII, Pt. 2, pp. 775-776, 827-828, 830, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, pp. 186-232, Pt. 2, p. 508, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. 2, p. 932; Marshall *Texas Republican*, May 2, 1863.

[8]B.F. Price to [William] Garrett, 17 April 1864, HP; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXXIV. Pt. 1, 616-625; Walter P. Lane, *The Adventures and Recollections of Gen. Walter P. Lane, a San Jacinto Veteran, Containing Sketches of the Texan, Mexican and Late Wars with Several Indian Fights Thrown in* (1887 reprint, Austin, 1970), pp. 108-110.

[9]Ms. Hackney reported that Frank received his discharged at Mansfield, Louisiana. CSR, Roll No. 192; "Thoughts," HP; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XLI, Pt. 1, pp. 753-754, 855-858, Pt. 2, pp. 1045, 1049-1050, Pt. 3, pp. 926-927; Dallas *Herald*, May 11, 1865; Henderson (Texas) *Times*, December 17, 1864.

[10]Descendants reburied Frank Price's remains in the Garden of Memories Cemetery. *Founders*, III, 111; "Thoughts," HP.

[11]Mary Thomas Price (1828-1882) was a sister of Frank Price. On February 21, 1845, she married Samuel S. Davis, who died in 1859. Dr. Jack was probably Dr. Isiah Jackson Roberts (1818-1877), a native of San Augustine County and a son of Isaac E. and Elizabeth Bickham Roberts. He was known as "Jack" Roberts and served in the Confederate Army as a surgeon. Jane Hollis (ca. 1834-1878) was a daughter of William and Elizabeth Hollis [see note 20]. She married German-born John C. Rohte on November 16, 1852. *Caucasian Cemeteries*, I, pp. 256-257, II, p.

59, III, p. 35; Crocket, *Two Centuries*, p. 343; B. F. Price to [Mary Garrett], August 3, 1864, HP; Ingmire, *Marriage Records*, pp. 3, 9; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 9; Mrs. V. K. Carpenter, *1850 Texas Census* (in 10 parts, Huntsville, Ark., 1969), pp. 1709, 1710; Mrs. McXie Whitton Martin, *1870 Edited Census of San Augustine County, Texas*, ([n.p.]), p. 26; Mary S. Estill, ed., "Diary of a Confederate Congressman, 1862-1863," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXXVIII, (April 1935), p. 274n.

[12]In camps near Richmond, Company K suffered eighteen deaths due to disease between November 1861 and February 1862. Simpson, *Compendium*, pp. 72-77.

[13]Mintie's sister was Mary Garrett [see note 33], but the "Sis" mentioned here probably was Frank's sister Mollie, who according to the postscript of this letter, had recently visited the Sexton's. She was not listed in Elijah Price's household in 1850 and may have been married by that time. Franklin Barrow Sexton (1828-1900) was a San Augustine lawyer who came to Texas with his father's family in 1831. He served in the Confederate Congress (1862-1865) [see note 19]. Carpenter, *1850 Texas*, p. 1709; Estill, ed., "Confederate Congressman," pp. 270-301; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, V, p. 982.

[14]Mintie's "Pa" was William Garrett (1808-1881), a native of Tennessee and son of Jacob and Charity Taylor Garrett [see introductory text]. The overseer Chapman could not be identified. Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, p. 62; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, III, pp. 99-100.

[15]The identity of Mintie's "Gran Ma" remains uncertain. Her maternal grandmother, Mary Crutchfield Cartwright, died in 1848. Her paternal grandmother, Charity Taylor Garrett, may not have come to Texas. One source cited her husband as a widower in 1827, but another placed her in Texas, dying about 1840. Carolyn Reeves Ericson, *Nacogdoches — Gateway to Texas: A Biographical Directory, 1773-1849* (Fort Worth, 1974), p. 57; *Founders*, I, pp. 270, 272, II, p. 123; Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, p. 315.

[16]Frank and Mintie Price's children were John B. "Johnny" (1854-1872), Mary C. "Sook" or "Sookie" (1856-1943), and William F. "Willie" (1859-1933). The oldest suffered some misfortune. In a letter dated August 10, 1864, Frank wrote as if his son was dead. "Here I drop a tear and do not write his name," he wrote, "because I never think of him without thinking of a still dearer form, that dwells in the spirit land – I love to dwell upon this subject when I meet danger on the Battle Field or when sickness brings me to my pillow..." Hackney reports Johnny's death in 1863. The census of 1870, however, shows him living with his brother and sister with their grandfather William Garrett. Cemetery records show that he died in 1872 and was buried near his mother in the Garrett Cemetery. *Caucasian Cemeteries*, I, p. 288; B.F. Price to [Mary Garrett], August 10, 1864, HP (quotation in note); "Thoughts," HP; Martin, *1870 Edited Census*, p. 37; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 49.

[17]Probably Iredell D. Thomas (1805-1866), who opened a store at San Augustine when the town was established in 1834. *Caucasian Cemteries*, III, p. 295; Crocket, *Two Centuries*, p. 218; Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, pp. 64, 273.

[18]As Confederate commissioners to Europe, James M. Mason (1798-1871) and John Slidell (1793-1871) were intercepted by the U.S. while aboard the British steamer *Trent*, creating an international controversy often known as the "*Trent* Affair." Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel, eds., *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (4 vols., 1884-1888 reprint, Secaucus, NJ, [n.d.]), II, pp. 135-142; James L. Harrison, comp., *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949* (Washington, 1950), pp. 1510, 1821.

[19]Annie Marie Cartwright was probably Mintie's cousin Anna W. Cartwright (1844-1903), daughter of Matthew Cartwright. She presented a flag to Benton's Company upon its departure for Virginia. She married Benjamin T. Roberts on January 10, 1869. Anna M. Kaufman (ca. 1844-1881) was the daughter of David S. Kaufman, the first U.S. congressman from Texas. He died in 1851, and his wife died in 1852. Anna lived with her uncle Frank B. Sexton [see note 13] in 1860 and married John G. Allen on November 2, 1863. Lon Cartwright described her as "a very pretty and intelligent young lady." Lon Cartwright to "John," July 21, 1860, CFP (quotation in note); Estill, ed., "Confederate Congressman," p. 276n; *Founders*, II, p. 159; Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, pp. 208, 219, 233, 267, 315; Ingmire, *Marriage Records*, p. 13; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 7; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, III, p. 1039.

[20]The Mrs. Jamie Watson probably was Mary Jane Watson (b. ca. 1841), who was listed with William Hollis' family in the census of 1850 and 1860. Watson was her maiden name. The Mr. and Mrs. "H." were probably William (1800-1871) and Elizabeth Hollis (1812-1879), parents of Jane Rohte [see note 11]. The only Watson serving in Frank's company was a Private William H. Watson. Several Jesse's served as privates with the names of Barnes, Benton, Hail, and McCrowson. Carpenter, *1850 Texas*, p. 1710; *Caucasian Cemeteries*, II, p. 59; Martin, *1870 Edited Census*, p. 26; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 9; Simpson, *Compendium*, pp. 72-77.

[21]"Mollie" [see note 13].

[22]John Henry Broocks (1829-1901), captain of Company C, Twenty-seventh Texas Cavalry, recruited fifty-five men. He was a merchant in San Augustine before the war and attained the rank of lieutenant colonel. [Mintie to Frank Price], March 8, 1862, HP; Crocket, *Two Centuries*, pp. 122, 336; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, I, p. 747.

[23]Company E, Nineteenth Texas Infantry mustered into the Confederate Army on March 30, 1862. Richard "Dick" Waterhouse, Jr. (1832-1876) lived with his merchant father in San Augustine. He organized the Nineteenth Texas and served as its colonel. He received a promotion to brigadier general in 1865. Felix B. Dixon (1818-1896), who was chief justice of San Augustine County in 1840, served as the company's first captain until he resigned on February 18, 1863 on account of his age. CSR, Roll Nos. 369, 399; *Caucasian Cemeteries*, III, p. 130; Crocket, *Two Centuries*, p. 337; Sanders *1860 Census*, p. 11; Geraldine Smith to the editor, February 23, 1996, editor's files; Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray: Lives of Confederate Commanders* ([Baton Rouge], 1959), pp. 326-327.

[24]Samuel A. Williams (ca. 1805-1866) was the first Methodist minister stationed in Texas, arriving at San Augustine in 1838. Mrs. Simpson was probably Letitia Simpson (b. ca. 1815), widow of William M. Simpson. Jimmy Roberts could not be identified. Mary Price Davis [see note 11]. Carpenter, *1850 Texas*, pp. 1708, 1709, 1726; Crocket, *Two Centuries*, pp. 275-277; Sanders, *1860 Census*, pp. 15, 49.

[25]Mintie's uncle, Matthew Cartwright (1807-1870), was the sixth wealthiest man in Texas in 1860 [see introductory text]. Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, I, pp. 1004-1005; Wooster, "Wealthy Texans," pp. 163-180.

[26]John G. Walker (b. ca. 1829) should not be confused with his cousin of the same name who commanded a division of Texas infantry during the war. Price's friend was captain of Company K, Eighth Texas Cavalry, or Terry's Texas Rangers. He was wounded in the arm on December 17, 1861 at Rowlett's Station, Kentucky, the same action in which the regiment's celebrated colonel, Benjamin F. Terry, fell. On January 9, 1862, Walker received the rank of lieutenant colonel and commanded the regiment at the surrender of Murfreesboro, Tennessee (July 13, 1862). He resigned on October 9 for medical concerns. He later served as provost marshal at Orange, Texas. CSR, Roll No. 53; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. VII, pp. 19-20, Vol. XVI, Pt. 1, pp. 810-811; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, VI, pp. 795-796.

[27]Henry T. (1838-1864) and James W. Curl (1843-1932) were sons of Thomas and Laurena Garrett Curl. The mother was William Garrett's sister and Mintie's aunt. The Curl brothers joined Company A, Seventeenth Texas Cavalry at Nacogdoches on February 1, 1862. Henry served as first lieutenant and was with the company when it surrendered with the Southern forces at Arkansas Post, Arkansas (January 11, 1863). He died in the service on April 4, 1864. James received a discharge on July 30, 1862. William C. Crouch (1824-1880) was an older half brother, the son of Laurena Garrett and her first husband, Albert Crouch. William did not join his brothers, serving with the state troops instead. CSR, Roll No. 93; *Founders*, II, p. 123; Carolyn Reeves Ericson, *The People Of Nacogdoches County In The Civil War* (1980 reprint, Lufkin, 1993), pp. 67-68.

[28]Americus Peyroux "Meck" Cartwright (1840-1873), Leonidas "Lon" Cartwright (1842-1922), William Sanford "Bud" or "Billy" Holman (1845-ca. 1903), and Thomas Davis (ca. 1835-1911) were troopers in Company E, Third Texas Cavalry, stationed in northwest Arkansas. Meck and Lon were sons of Matthew Cartwright and were Mintie's cousins. Bud Holman, another cousin, was an orphan of Sanford and Clementine Cartwright Holman. He and his sister Anna lived with Mintie's family after Clementine Holman's death in 1847. Tom Davis apparently was not a relative. After being elected lieutenant, Meck left the regiment and joined the First Texas

Partisan Rangers with Frank Price. Federals captured Lon Cartwright at Satartia, Mississippi, on April 8, 1865. Billy Holman and Tom Davis were both wounded at Thompson's Station, Tennessee (March 5, 1863). Holman later served with Frank Price in Lane's Rangers in 1864. W. S. Holman to Lon Cartwright, September 16, 1903, CFP; Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, pp. 150-151, 227-229; Douglas Hale Papers, Texas Confederate Gravesite Project Collection (Arlington, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries).

[29]By the time Mintie wrote this, the Confederates had surrendered Fort Donelson on February 16. Johnson and Buel, eds., *Battles*, I, pp. 398-428.

[30]A wartime photo of Frank appears in Simpson, *Compendium*, p. 481. "Granpa" may have been an honorary title for William W. Wallace (ca. 1806-1886), a San Augustine lawyer who came to Texas in 1855 and served as district judge in 1865. His brother Benjamin Rush Wallace (1800-1878) was probably the "Colonel" mentioned. He was a cadet at West Point but left before graduating and located at San Augustine in 1837. A lawyer, he served in the Republic's Ninth Congress and two terms in the state legislature. Carpenter, *1850 Texas*, p. 1712; Crocket, *Two Centuries*, pp. 244-265; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 47; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, VI, p. 803.

[31]Probably Medora Powell (b. ca. 1847), a daughter of C.B. and Medora Powell. Ridly could not be identified. Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 1.

[32]Elijah "Lige" Price (1846-1903) was born in Texas and was Frank Price's brother. He served with Frank throughout the war as a private in Company K, First Texas Infantry, in Virginia. He received his discharge on September 8, 1862 and joined his brother in Company E, First Texas Partisan Rangers, late in 1863. After the war, he married Eliza Torry Hall and moved to Logansport, Louisiana, where he died. Carpenter, *1850 Texas*, p. 1709; *Founders*, II, p. 58; [A.] W. McLaurin to Frank Price, September 5, 1863, HP; Simpson, *Compendium*, p. 76.

[33]Mary Garrett (1832-1883) was Frank's sister-in-law who cared for his children after his wife died and was the recipient of most of his correspondence from Louisiana. Mary contracted typhoid at the same time as her sister but survived. She married Henry W. Sublett on July 15, 1869. *Caucasian Cemeteries*, I, p. 288; Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, pp. 149, 220; Ingmire, *Marriage Records*, p. 15.

[34]Probably Hec McKay's company from Harrison County, also shown as Company E. CSR, Roll No. 192.

[35]B.W. Stone's Second Texas Partisan Rangers and Joseph Phillips' Texas Cavalry, with Lane's First Texas Partisan Rangers, formed James P. Major's Brigade. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, p. 227.

[36]Thomas Green (1814-1864), brigadier general from Texas, commanded a division of cavalry. He was killed at Blair's Landing (April 12, 1864) during the Red River Campaign. Alfred Mouton (1829-1864), son of Louisiana governor Alexander Mouton, received his commission as brigadier general in 1862. Like Green, Mouton fell during the Red River Campaign at Mansfied (April 8, 1864). Warner, *Generals*, pp. 117-118, 222-223.

[37]Colonel of the First Texas Partisan Rangers, Walter Paye Lane's (1817-1892) concern was well founded. On June 28, General Green and 800 cavalry attacked Fort Butler at Donaldsonville, defended by about 200 Yankees and three gunboats. The federals repulsed the Confederates, who sustained 261 casualties to the defenders twenty-three. Price's report of Lane's reluctance is interesting considering that Lane's regiment failed to engage the enemy and became lost without a guide. Green excused this action, "There is no blame attached to Colonel Lane for the mistake." Soon after Donaldsonville, Green promoted Lane to command Major's Brigade. He achieved the rank of brigadier in 1865. Lane, *Adventures*, pp. 83-107; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, p. 228 (quotation in note), pp. 227-229; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, IV, pp. 62-63; Warner, *Generals*, pp. 173-174; John D. Winters, *The Civil War In Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1963), pp. 290-291.

[38]Richard Phillip Crump (ca. 1825-1869) was lieutenant colonel of the First Texas Partisan Rangers and rose to colonel after Lane received his promotion to brigadier. He died at Jefferson while a federal prisoner during Reconstruction. T. C. Chaddick, "Jefferson's Indomitable Richard Phillip Crump," *East Texas Historical Journal*, (October 1970) VII, pp. 164-170; U.S. Eighth Census (1860), Population Schedules, Marion County, Texas (Washington, n.d.).

[39]With part of his own and Phillip's Cavalry, Colonel Lane took Thibodaux on June 20. The Rebels routed several Yankee companies, pursuing them to Lafourche Crossing four miles away. They captured over 100 prisoners and stores. Lane recalled that he replaced the old shotguns and rifles of his regiment with new Enfield rifles captured there. Lane, *Adventures*, p. 105; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, p. 218; Winters, *Louisiana*, pp. 285-286.

[40]Americus P. "Meck" Cartwright [see note 28].

[41]Vicksburg and Port Hudson surrendered to federal forces on July 4 and 8 respectively. Johnson and Buel, eds., *Battles*, III, pp. 534, 597.

[42]James Patrick Major (1836-1877), brigadier general from Missouri, commanded a brigade of Texas cavalry which included the First Texas Partisan Rangers. He later commanded a division. Captain Bassett could not be identified. Warner, *Generals*, pp. 209-210.

[43]This battle occured at Cox's Plantation on July 13 on both sides of Bayou Lafourche south of Donaldsonville. Colonel Lane commanded Major's Brigade on the east side while General Green deployed on the west. Lane routed the forces under a drunk Colonel Joseph S. Morgan and gave Green the opportunity to sweep his side. The engagement was a debacle for the Union and resulted in the court-martial of Colonel Morgan. Evan S. Sowell (ca. 1830-1863) was a San Augustine County farmer. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, pp. 204-209, 230-232; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 26; Winters, *Louisiana*, pp. 292-293.

[44]Probably the U.S.S. *Clifton*, *Estrella*, *Hollyhock*, and *Sachem* on a reconnaissance of the Atchafalaya to the Teche under command of Lieutenant Frederick Crocker. Navy History Division, *Civil War Naval Chronology, 1861-1865* (6 vols., Washington, 1971), III, p. 121.

[45]In 1860, William B. Chaffin (b. ca. 1829) lived with his father James A. Chaffin, proprietor of the Chaffin Hotel in San Augustine. In August 1863, a citizen near Alexandria, Louisiana, charged Chaffin with horse theft. He remained with the regiment and was wounded during the Red River Campaign. Thomas C. Edwards (b. ca. 1827) organized Company E, First Texas Partisan Rangers, and served as major by war's end. He received a commendation for gallantry during the Red River Campaign from Colonel George W. Baylor. [Price to Mary Garrett], August 30, 1863, HP; OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. 1, p. 625; Sanders, *1860 Census*, pp. 4, 48; Dallas *Herald*, May 1, 1865; Galveston *Tri-Weekly Herald*, June 17, 1864.

[46]Mintie's uncle, George W. Cartwright (1812-1881), came to Texas with the Cartwright's in 1825. He fought and was wounded in the Battle of Nacogdoches in 1832. He located in Sabine County. His son Sanford H. (1844-1887) was probably wounded at the Battle of Bayou Bourbeau on November 3, 1863. Henson and Parmelee, *Cartwrights*, pp. 4, 53, 55, 151, 165, 315.

[47]Confederates under General Green routed the federals under General Stephen G. Burbridge at Bayou Bourbeau on November 3. Lane's Cavalry fought on the right and lost eight missing. Green reported that U.S. General Godfrey Weitzell appeared with reinforcements two hours after the battle. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, pp. 356-361, 393-395; Winters, *Louisiana*, pp. 298-299.

[48]On November 19, 1863, units of John G. Walker's Infantry Division burned the *Black Hawk* to the waterline. Winters, *Louisiana*, p. 299; J. P. Blessington, *The Campaigns Of Walker's Texas Division* ([n.d.] reprint, Austin, 1968), p. 151.

[49]On the morning of November 20, 1863, U.S. General Albert L. Lee captured about 112 men and officers of Arthur P. Bagby's Seventh Texas Cavalry at Camp Pratt, located between Vermillion and New Iberia. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXVI, Pt. 1, pp. 346-347, 369-370.

[50]Nathaniel Prentice Banks (1816-1894), U.S. major general from Massachusetts, took command of the Department of the Gulf at New Orleans on November 8, 1862. He unsuccessfully attempted to take Texas three times, including the Red River Campaign, a failure which caused his removal from command. Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, I, pp. 369-370; Winters, *Louisiana*, pp. 146, 427.

[51]The battle on April 23 occurred at Monett's Ferry on the Cane River. Having reached the crossing before the federals, General Hamilton P. Bee [see note 52] cut off General Banks' retreat to Alexandria and forced an engagement. Under the immediate command of William H. Emory, the Yankees numbered 15,000 while Bee deployed 2000 cavalry and several batteries. Holding Bee's attention at the ferry, Emory sent Henry W. Birge to a ford above the Rebel position, turning

Bee's left flank. Bee sent Colonel George W. Baylor in command of Lane's Brigade to meet Birge, resulting in the action described by Price. Birge forced Baylor back toward the ferry, and Bee, believing the enemy had turned his right flank as well, ordered a retreat. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 394-397, 610-612, 618-620; Winters, *Louisiana*, pp. 362-365.

[52]Hamilton Prioleau Bee (1822-1897), brigadier general from Texas, commanded Green's cavalry corps at Monett's Ferry. Confederate General Richard Taylor agreed with Price's assessment of Bee's conduct and blamed him for losing an opportunity to capture Banks' entire force, a view widely expressed in Texas. However, E. Kirby Smith, commander of the Trans-Mississippi, Arthur P. Bagby, and James P. Major, Bee's lieutenants at the battle, and John A. Wharton, who succeeded Bee in command of the corps, all defended his decision to give up the ferry. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. 1, pp. 580-581, 612-615; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, I, p. 458; Winters, *Louisiana*, p. 365.

[53]Carroll Jones (b. 1815) was a free black who owned a farm on Point Coupee Bayou along the Opelousas and Natchitoches Road near Cotile. His farm served as a forage station frequented by both Union and Confederate troops during the war. Winters, *Louisiana*, p. 329; Patsy K. Barber, *Historic Cotile* ([n.p.], 1967), p. 21; *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana* ([n.d.] reprint, Tuscaloosa, Ala, 1985), p. 353.

[54]The skirmish near McNutt's Hill occurred on April 26. Lane's cavalry did not participate. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. XXXIV, Pt. 1, p. 583.

[55]William S. "Bud" or "Billy" Holman [see note 28].

[56]Probably Morgan H. Chrysler (1822-1890), colonel of the Second New York Veteran Cavalry who suffered a wound to the neck during a skirmish near Morganza on July 28. He survived and received the rank of brevet major general on May 25, 1865. OR, Ser. 1, Vol. LXI, Pt. 1, p. 179; Edward A. Collier, *A History Of Old Kinderhook...* (New York, 1914), pp. 476-477.

[57]Elbert M. Weeks (b. ca. 1826), lieutenant in Company E, was a San Augustine County farmer. He served previously with Frank Price as a private in Company K, First Texas Infantry. Carpenter, *1850 Texas*, p. 1719; CSR, Roll No. 192; Sanders, *1860 Census*, p. 44; Simpson, *Compendium*, p. 77.

[58]Probably Mary Helen Raguet (1829-1868), daughter of Henry and Marcia Towers Raguet of Nacogdoches. The family came to Texas in 1833. Both she and her brother William died in an accident on the Ohio River near Warsaw, Kentucky. She was unmarried. Dr. Isiah "Jack" Roberts died unmarried in 1877 [see note 11]. *Caucasian Cemteries*, III, p. 35; Tyler, ed., *New Handbook*, V, pp. 408-409; Carolyn Reeves Ericson, *The People of Nacogdoches County in 1860: An Edited Census* (Nacogdoches, 1978), p. 7; ---- and Joel Barham Burk, *Nacogdoches County Cemetery Records* (5 vols., Nacogdoches, 1974-1978), II, p. 56.

[59]David Sharp (b. ca. 1845) lived with his parents James and Mary Sharp in Sabine County in 1860. Captain John Grass and Oliver and Courtly Long could not be identified. Mrs. Helen Gomer Schluter, *1860 Sabine County, Texas Census With Added Family Information And Corrections And Some Civil War Records* ([n.p.], 1983), p. 24.

BOOK NOTES

What follows is the Editor's ramblings about happenings of a historical nature and about what has happened in the wonderful world of publications about Texas.

Ed Eakin of Eakin Press (Box 90159, Austin, TX 78709) sent along lots of slender but interesting books about which you should be aware. Association Members Wanda Landrey and Bill O'Neal head the list, and do so for that reason. Wanda's book is titled *Lost In The Big Thicket*, and is billed a "mystery and adventure" set in that wonderful, unique area. Illustrations are by A. Ann Wilson; also present is a map of the region and a glossary of terms used in the text. Enjoy.

Having told us about baseball, outlaws, and more in the past, Bill's latest book is entitled *Historic Ranches of the Old West.* Texas comes in for the greatest share (King, JA, XIT, Matador, 6666, and eight more), but other states are well represented: New Mexico (John Chisum's Jinglebob, plus two more); Oklahoma (Pawnee Bill's Buffalo Ranch and others); Kansas (two); Nebraska (three); Colorado (Charles Goodnight's Rock Canyon Ranch plus four others); Wyoming (nine, but not Shiloh of Owen Wister fame, alas); Montana (four, but not the Lonesome Dove), Arizona (seven); Dakotas (two); Nevada (one); and California (two). Two chapters are of general interest: "Ranches to Visit" and "Ranching and the Movies." The story of each ranch is traced and illustrated with photos and sidebars on persons or events associated with it. As usual, Bill has done a good job.

Quicker Quips: Rana Williamson, *When The Catfish Had Ticks: Texas Drought Humor*, with such observations as "... in Jones County the trees started chasing the dogs" (p. 3) ... Margaret C. Berry's *UT History 101: Highlights of the History of the University of Texas* is a shotgun approach to its topic; for example, in the 1880s, "A plank fence was built around the Forty Acres to keep out cows and other stray animals." An Aggie friend says they still have a lot of strays there. Much more serious is Ellie Kamran Belfiglio's *The Rain Stops In Texas: A Woman's Struggle From Oppression to Freedom*, the story of her difficulties in tumultuous Tehran and her subsequent flight and finding of freedom in Texas. Her husband, Valentine Belfiglio, contributed a Foreword.

Some others: Always a winner, the *Texas Almanac, 1998-1999*, edited by Mary G. Ramos (distributed by Texas A&M Press Consortium, Drawer C, College Station, TX 78843-4354. $12.95), is its usual indispensable self. This is the compendium that anyone interested in Texas must have, and they must always keep the newest version handy. I remember visiting Ralph Steen in Austin after he quit being president at SFA and worked for the Coordinating Board. There were three items for reading in his hotel room: that day's issue of the newspaper, the then two-volume *Handbook of Texas* – and the *Texas Almanac*. Special articles of interest in this one include "*LaBelle* and Fort St. Louis" and "All-Woman Supreme Court." Also included – any statistic on Texas you are likely to need.

Larry L. King's *True Facts, Tall Tales, Pure Fiction* (also University of Texas Press, same address), isn't so serious but is a good read. Each part of the title heads a section of the book, which is our scorecard to know what is going on. I especially enjoyed his recollections of our former Congressman Charlie Wilson, who represented us Up There for twenty-four thrilling years.

Games, sort of: *The Loblolly Book of Baseball* (The Loblolly Press, Carthage TX 75633), edited by Lincoln King and Beth Hazelwood, is a fancified version of the fare found for years in their serial publications, this time dedicated to the National Pastime. Has lots of b&w illustrations. . .I'm letting Dennis Roberson's *Winning 42: Strategy & Lore of the National Game of Texas* – says the author; I thought it was the lottery, but what do I know? – (Texas Tech University Press, Box 41037, Lubbock, TX 79409-1037), in here because I know a lot of East Texans would agree with the premise of the title, although I don't know why. Since I really can't understand this one, I'll borrow Al Lowman's phrase: "For the folks who like this sort of thing, this is the sort of thing they will like."

Back to Loblolly. Now who doesn't like a cookbook? I do, anyway, ever since *Helpful Hints for HouseHusbands of Uppity Women* reached print. Comes now *Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread: Loblolly Cookbook, Gary High School.* Quite a mouthful, appropriately. Put together by Karen Whitside McAllister and Ronnette Griffith Cooke (good name for such work). They stand behind each and every recipe, which is more than I can say for *Uppity*....

Friend and ETHA member Pete A.Y. Gunter sent along a published lecture given down Lamar University way, titled *R.E. Jackson And Early Big Thicket Conservation: Setting the Stage* (Big Thicket Association, Saratoga, Texas). This is a case of not being there but still getting to read about it. B&W illustrations.

Buck A. Young's *The Making of a City: Baytown, Texas Since Consolidation, 1948-1998* (Lee College: Baytown, 1997), is the story of what happened to Goose Creek, Pelly, and, of course Baytown, after their merger as one community. Chapters are devoted to local government, industry, retail and commercial activity, schools, transportation, leisure and sports, health and medicine, and leadership. Lots of b&w photos and maps.

Now for a pretty book. *Texas Past: Enduring Legacy* (Texas Parks and Wildlife Press: Austin, 1997, distributed by University of Texas Press, Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819), with text by Andrew Sansom, photos by Wyman Meinzer, and a foreword by Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock. Sansom is the director of the Parks and Wildlife Department for the State of Texas. A sequel to the writer-photographer team's *Texas Lost* (1995), this is a handsome volume filled with beautiful color photos of some of the best that is left of Texas' heritage. Good book.

Finally, one of the best for last: Bob Bowman's, *The Search for an Alamo Soldier* (Best of East Texas Publishers, Box 1647, Lufkin, TX 75901, $20), is a personal saga. It is dedicated "To those Alamo defenders whose sacrifice has been immortalized, but whose lives have remained in obscurity." Bob has in

mind his ancestor, Jesse B. Bowman. Bob's quest began with an epiphany: discovering while visiting the Alamo in 1946 that his great-great-great grandfather had been among the defenders of the Alamo, which I have called elsewhere the crucible of Texas history. Bob's search for "the rest of the story" took him to Illinois, Indiana, Arkansas, and finally to Hempstead County. The search entailed some detective work but the benefits were great, especially Bob getting to know his family history. An excellent genealogy of the Bowman family, entitled "Jesse and his descendants," is included.

BOOK REVIEWS

Jean Laffite Prince of Pirates, Jack C. Ramsay, Jr. (Eakin Press, P.O. Drawer 90159, Austin, TX 78709-0159) 1996. Appendices. Index. B&W Photos. Notes. $21.95 Paperback.

Jean Laffite Prince of Pirates is Jack Ramsay's quest to use only authentic Laffite data to unravel the mystery of America's most famous pirate. The author traces the buccaneer's life from New Orleans through Barataria and Galveston, maybe to Cuba, and finally to his possible resting place on Isla de Las Mujeres.

Ramsay's chapters on Laffite's stay on Galveston Island will disappoint serious students of East Texas history. This section included no new information and contained several serious omissions. The author failed to grasp Laffite's significant role in shaping the ethno-history of the Texas coast (he forcefully removed the Karankawa Indians from their ancestral homeland, Galveston Island). The author did not mention how Laffite's operation at Campeachy shaped the larger geo-political confrontation between Spain and the United States. A perusal of Charles Hayes' classic *Galveston: History of the Island* could have refocused these oversights.

Who was Jean Laffite and what is his place in history? Ramsay posited, "This is a mystery well worth solving." The puzzle remains unsolved.

Don Willett
Texas A&M University at Galveston

Cowboys: Ranch Life Along the Clear Fork of the Brazos River, Lawrence Clayton (Eakin Press, P.O. Drawer 90159, Austin, TX 78709-0159). 1997 Contents. Index. P. 120. $14.95. Paperback. B&W Photos.

Some people wonder if cowboys exist? Dean of Arts and Sciences at Hardin-Simmons University Lawrence Clayton knows intimately twentieth-century cowboys from scholarship and personal experience. He answers emphatically, yes.

Clayton believes that cowboys of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River typify those living in Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, and eastern New Mexico. He reveals their work, individualism, personal life, gear, and transition of past to present ranching. Clayton describes the practical elements of today's roundup, the danger, and the role of horses, helicopters, and pickups. Readers can almost hear the cattle bawl. Included in this social history are recipes (anyone care for calf fries?) and perceptive quotes: "The Lord is my foreman" (p. 55). Black-and-white photographs show chaps, hats, saddles, bridle bits, boots, and spurs. The book's significance is that it is a good, brief introduction to the life, culture, and spirit of recent Texas cowboys.

Irvin M. May Jr.
Blinn College at Bryan

Lone Cowboy: My Life Story, Will James (Mountain Press Publishing, P.O. Box 2399, Missouli, MT 59806) 1997. Illustrations. P. 416. $16.00. Paperback.

This autobiography of Will James is the sixth reprint of the twenty-four books by the author. After James' death in 1942 interest in his books waned

and they eventually went out of print. Renewed interest in James' work resulted from recent biographies and film documentaries on him and with the formation of the Will James Society and the Will James Art Company, and all of the author's books are being reprinted.

Orphaned at age four, James spent his formative years in the care of family friends, including a French Canadian rancher and fur-trapper. During winters the two lived in a log hut in Canada's north woods. The trapper ran his lines and the boy contented himself drawing pictures of horses and learning the mysterious words he found in old magazines. With no formal education, Will became semi-literate bilingually through his own and the trapper's efforts. It was on his own, however, that he became a good artist.

A drowning accident of the trapper left Will, a teenager, to shift for himself. He began a life as a drifting cowboy, working on an endless succession of ranches learning well the hard trade. He explains how innocently he sold someone else's cattle and got into trouble. It was still called cattle rustling and James spent a short term in the penitentiary.

Space does not allow a complete summary of James' exciting life. His books inspired a generation of young Americans in their time. Many modern youths could find the reprints just as exciting if they could leave their computers and TVs long enough to read anything. This book is recommended for public and public school libraries, or for anyone who still likes to read a good western story.

Robert W. Glover
Shiloh Ranch

Science on the Texas Frontier: Observations of Dr. Gideon Lincecum, Jerry Bryan Lincecum, Edward H. Phillips, & Peggy A. Redshaw, editors (Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843-4354). 1997. Contents. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. P. 211. $35.00. Hardcover.

Science on the Texas Frontier, a history of Gideon Lincecum's life and scientific contributions during the early 1800s, is recommended as both interesting and refreshing reading. The author presented Lincecum's scientific contributions in letters sent to other scientists. Those letters afford insight into Lincecum's impressions, interpretations, and philosophy.

Attaining only rudimentary formal training in science, Lincecum accumulated an amazing list of contributions. He published manuscripts in the *Journal of the Linnaean Society, Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Science*, and *Smithsonian Institute*, while collaborating with such scientific giants as Charles Darwin and Spencer Baird. The lack of formal training, however, resulted in anthropomorphic interpretations and allowed him to inject wit and to wax philosophically in his manuscripts. His range of scientific interests included Zoology, Botany, Meteorology, Geology, and Medicine.

Lincecum's letters revealed a highly intelligent person with attributes common to most scientists: a driving curiosity about the biotic and abiotic world; an ability to observe carefully and critically; and an analytical mind. For example, as a pioneer on the primitive Texas frontier, he kept detailed meteorological data. His fascination with the Texas "Norther" was particularly interesting.

Lincecum had vision. He believed that Texas contained a vast wealth of mineral resources (a half-century prior to Texas' oil boom at Spindletop), and advocated formation of the Texas Geological Survey to explore and develop mineral wealth. He also proclaimed the need for a state academy of science as a repository for biological and geological collections and scientific publications. Thirty years later the Texas Academy of Science was founded in 1897.

Jack D. McCullough
Stephen F. Austin State University

News of the Plains and Rockies 1803-1865, Volume 3: Missionaries, Mormons, Indian Agents, Captives, Compiled and Annotated by David A. White (The Arthur H. Clarke Company, P.O. Box 14707, Spokane, Washington 99214) 1997. Maps. Tables. Facsimiles. References. Bibliography. P. 310. $50.00. Hardcover.

David White's annotated compilation of *News of the Plains and Rockies 1803-1865, Volume 3: Missionaries, Mormons, Indian Agents, Captives* presents a significant set of firsthand perspectives of the Euro-American expansion into the prairies and mountains of North America. The reader will discover original narrative involving the religious interaction of white and Native American as well as that reporting the interaction of agents and white captives with the various tribes in the American West.

Difficulty in organizing the source material is evident. White's work is divided uncomfortably into two sections: the first is a group of extracts, reports, and exposes related to the extension of American religion to the West; the second is reports, letters, speeches, and first-hand narratives of Indian agents and Indian captives. Despite this unnatural grouping, the two sections individually work well. "Missionaries, Mormons, 1821-1864" includes William D. Robinson's almost fictional description of Western geography; John Dunbar's report of his twelve-year mission to the Plains Indians; a series of epistles from Brigham Young and the Latter Day Saints and their settlement of the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1848 and 1849; and Samuel Parker's reports of the Presbyterian Mission to the Oregon natives during the 1830s. The wealth of information is abundant. Two examples suffice: scholars and almost no laymen realize that one of seven immigrants from the Missouri along the trails to the Pacific from 1847 to 1869 was a member of one sect or another of the Latter Day Saints, while the themes of religious rivalry and conflict of missions between Samuel Parker and Marcus Whitman can be found in Parker's report.

The work's second section, "Indian Agents, Captives, 1832-1865," reveals the depths of human struggle and tragedy inherent in the clash of native and Euro-American cultures on the Western frontier. A brief aside about Major Robert Neighbors, an Indian agent in Texas, reveals the conflict of interests among the whites: Neighbors was murdered by a white man, presumably as a result of the agent's actions to protect the tribes from the lawless incursion of white men into tribal lands and reservations. The series of reprints in this section document the dual commitment generally by agent and missionary to the removal and resettlement of the native from his tribal lands to reservations to facilitate American expansion into the plains and mountains. The six captivity narratives describe the horror that many captives suffered. A particular twist to this mini-section is White's comparison/contrast of truthful narratives

by Rachel Plummer and Jane Wilson with the false stories of Caroline Harris and Clarissa Plummer. The reporting of R. Plummer and J. Wilson is stark and horrific, reminding the reader that other captives than those lucky ones such as Cynthia Ann Parker suffered terrible times among the tribes.

The importance of *News of the Plains and Rockies 1803-1865, Volume 3: Missionaries, Mormons, Indian Agents, Captives* is that it preserves, with a valuable commentary, primary source material of participants and witnesses to the exploration and settlement of the American West. The work reveals the belief and intention of missionary and agent that the tribes should be and would be removed for American expansion. The Mormon letters demonstrate the intent of Utah Mormons to build God's Kingdom, a theo-democracy, at the crossroads of the mountains. The captivity narratives document the inhumanity of tribal man toward some of those whom he understood to be taking his land. David White and The Arthur H. Clarke Company have presented another valuable addition to the preservation of the history of the American West.

Melvin C. Johnson
Layton, Utah

My Confession: Recollections Of A Rogue, Samuel Chamberlain, William H. Goetzmann, editor (Texas State Historical Association, 2.306 Sid Richardson Hall, University Station, Austin, TX 78712) 1996. Contents. Appendices. Notes. Index. Color Illustrations. Maps. P. 384. $60.00. Hardcover.

To hear it told by some, Sam Chamberlain was a roguish, racist, sexist, murdering xenophobic religious bigot with a mean streak as wide as the Rio Grande. Maybe so, maybe not. Without doubt, however, he was a self-centered braggart who enhanced his notoriety with barely concealed half-truths, occasional outright lies, and an unquenchable conceit all rolled into a generous slab of arrogant romanticism. In the bargain, he also happened to be a primitive water colorist of some skill, a master of the Palmer method of penmanship, and an imaginative keeper of an even more imaginative journal the contents of which are hard to imagine. Some of the stuff is so obviously eye-wash that Walter Prescott Webb dismissed the work as "a hoax" (p. 2).

Even William Goetzmann, whose enormous and diligent research on Chamberlain has eclipsed that of everyone else, allows that the narrative has "flights of fancy" that sometime place it in the same category as the *Edda*, *Beowulf*, and the *Odyssey* (p. 22).

Chamberlain fought in the Mexican War (largely the focus of this very large tome), the American Civil War, and sandwiched in between a scalp-hunting expedition with Tom Glanton's thugs in Arizona. If a reasonable reader concludes that Chamberlain had the irritatingly inevitable excuse for his whoring, robbing, and murdering in the first two instances, one can only in some awe wonder at his prosy legerdemain in rationalizing the last. In the end, he got religion, or so we are told, the fact of which is explained by his collection of over 800 Bibles and his enormous regret for the bloody misdeeds which he expressly excused by the folly of his wasted and wicked youth. In this process of contrition, as is sometimes the case with reformed miscreants, one might profitably assume that he was not excessively burdened by past iniquities, at least if the tone of this retrospective guilt may be trusted any more than any other part of the *Confession*.

For all its hypocrisy, sham, and pretense, this reviewer still loved the book, so much so that he purchased a copy to present as a gift to one who showed a particular kindness to his daughter. And one more thing – Goetzmann's effort is a *tour de force*, the consummate combination of intelligence, art, and scholarship. There are those who may regard Chamberlain as no more than a self-inflated ass of Munchausean proportion. If so, they need not explain themselves; the point is well taken. But wouldn't it be nice if the adventures, as Samuel Chamberlain presented them and then worried about, turned out to be indeed true?

James W. Pohl
Southwest Texas State University

With the 18th Texas Infantry: The Autobiography of Wilburn Hill King, L. David Norris, editor (Hill College Press, The Confederate Research Center. P.O. Box 619, Hillsboro, TX 76645) 1996. Contents. Epilogue. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. P.126. $15.00. Hardcover.

The material in this book was written for other purposes than as an autobiography. King apparently copied himself extensively. This results in considerable duplication in an already thin volume – 126 pages. The editor wrote whole chapters and a large part of others. This part is referenced to standard histories of Walker's Division and is well written and scholarly.

In spite of its shortcomings, this book fills a gap in the literature of Texas in the Civil War. I had seen this unit and this general only on lists.

King was born in Georgia and grew up in his grandfather's home. He does not mention his education. It is obvious that he had a superior education, at least for his time.

King rose from private to major to colonel of the 18th Texas Infantry in a few months. He had a divisional assignment in Richmond for a while. Kirby Smith promoted him to brigadier general after he was wounded in the Battle of Mansfield. General King wound up in command of Walker's Division at the end of the war.

He became a lawyer after the war and was Texas' adjutant general for ten years.

Wallace Davison
Lufkin, Texas

Cullen Montgomery Baker, Reconstruction Desperado, Barry A. Crouch and Donaly E. Brice (Louisiana State University Press, P.O. Box 25053, Baton Rouge, LA 70894-5053) 1997. Contents. Sources. Illustrations. Maps. Index. Essay. P. 190. $34.95. Hardcover.

At last, thanks to authors Brice and Crouch, we have a realistic account of the life of Cullen Baker, the infamous, post-Civil War outlaw, depicting what a sorry, degenerate piece of human scum he really was. Louis L'Amour and others have portrayed him as a Robin-Hood type of folk hero, "attributing traits and attitudes to him that he did not possess" (p.7). These two scholars have researched everything available about Baker, favorable and unfavorable,

in an attempt to obtain the real truth about him. They have done this after several generations have gone by, biases have disappeared, and things are looked at more objectively.

Most previous writers have portrayed Baker as a noble defender of the Southern "lost" cause. Such was not the case, say Brice and Crouch. He was actually "a sociopath turned psychopathic killer whose actions were not guided by discrimination between right and wrong and one who is best referred to as a moral imbecile" (p.169).

For those interested in reading a true account of a cowardly, ruthless killer who preyed on poor, helpless victims, newly freed blacks in particular, this is a riveting book that will be hard to put down. It is one that sets the record straight on this much over-rated, over-eulogized, small-time desperado.

Fred A. McKenzie
Avinger, Texas

From Can See to Can't: Texas Cotton Farmers on the Southern Prairies. Thad Sitton and Dan K. Utley (University of Texas Press, P.O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819) 1997. Contents. Epilogue. Notes. Bibliography. Index. P.316. $16.95. Paperback.

Thad Sitton and Dan Utley wrote a powerful and dynamic book about Texas agriculture and life. They asked the important question: how did the hundred-acre, yeoman cotton farmer actually live? Sitton and Utley focused on the daily lives of German, Czech, Anglo, and African American farm families during the late 1920s in Fayette and Washington counties and expertly combined oral history with secondary sources.

Chapter organization reflects the agricultural cycle. A brief survey of Texas cotton prior to the 1920s brings the reader to the lay of the land. There, readers meet the ethnic farmers, the Brazos River cotton planters who deserve a book of their own, and tenants. This chapter could have been strengthened by asking what was the result of declining cotton prices on land ownership? Yet, the reader understands the feelings and emotions of the farmers on the land.

Farmers were more skilled than some historians would have us believe. They operated a complex agricultural system. There was more to life than cotton planting, cultivation, harvesting, and ginning. Corn, cane, mules, hogs, education, and social events enriched life. Readers visualized house parties, gambling, and drinking, but not the cotton farm family at church. Yet, religion was more important than gambling and drinking, and on this subject we are still in the dark.

What is the significance of this book? The authors came close to writing a great book in Texas history. *From Can See to Can't* is a major contribution to Texas historiography and should be read by all students of twentieth-century Texas history.

Irvin M. May Jr.
Blinn College at Bryan

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1988 – John H. Reagan Memorial Center, 400 Micheaux, Palestine 75801
1989 – French House Trading Post, 2985 French Road, Beaumont 77706
1990 – Tol Barret House, Rte. 4, Box 9400, Nacogdoches 75961
1991 – Gilbert House, 2540 Farmer's Branch Ln., Farmer's Branch 75234
1992 – Temple Beth El, 208 South Fifteenth Street, Corsicana 75110
1993 – Downs-Aldrich House, 206 North Seventh Street, Crockett 75835
1994 – Panola County Jail, 213 North Shelby, Carthage 75633
1995 – A. W. Perry House, 1509 Perry Road, Carrollton 75006
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