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Joe T. Timmons

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**THE REFERENDUM IN TEXAS ON THE ORDINANCE OF
SECESSION, FEBRUARY 23, 1861: THE VOTE**

by Joe T. Timmons

In a study of secession in Texas, over 110 years after the fact, an effort to check the results of the popular vote on secession leads to the conclusion that in the stress of the times there were inaccuracies in recording the actual votes *for* and *against* secession. The researcher finds quite interesting the errors that were made and has noted some omissions of returns. One wonders if in the age of mechanical tabulation and computers the same slips might appear?

The official recordings of votes by the Secretary of State, the MS "Journal of the Secession Convention in Texas, 1861," the edited *Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas, 1861*, contemporary accounts, and twentieth-century histories are all in error in stating the total votes cast, when compared to the extant MSS Election Returns.¹ The student of secession in Texas is confronted with a dismaying array of figures representing the votes on the Ordinance of Secession. The errors began with the "official" recordings, and many of them have persisted to the present through careless accounting or by merely accepting one or another "authority's" figures, both unpublished and published, without checking the official MSS Election Returns. Over the years the discrepancies which appear in the historians' figures on the votes cast are so interesting that the reader can but wonder on what sources they relied. John J. Linn, in his *Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Texas*, says the vote was 38,415 for and 13,841 against secession. John Henry Brown approximates "a little over forty-six thousand for and a little over thirteen thousand against." Frank Brown may have used the figures given in the *Galveston Civilian and Gazette*, April 2, 1861, and reported 44,317 for and 13,020 against. Lubbock's *Six Decades in Texas* has exactly one thousand more votes for secession than did Linn. Charles W. Ramsdell's *Reconstruction in Texas* makes the count 44,317 for and 13,020 against. Frank W. Johnson, in *A History of Texas and Texans* (edited by Ernest W. Winkler), gives the vote: for 46,129 and 14,697 against secession, corresponding to the figures given in the Winkler *Journal*.² There is, likewise, a variety of incorrect data presented in some of the local histories which follow the older references. Particular discrepancies appear in the vote totals cited for Bell, Fayette, and Tarrant Counties.³

File 2-13/311, Archives Division, Texas State Library, contains the MSS Election Returns from 122 counties, with supplemental returns for several of them, for the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession. This study is based on these returns along with a careful comparison of the MSS Executive Record Book, Secretary of State, a check of the MS "Journal of the Secession Convention in Texas, 1861," a close inspection of the printed *Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas, 1861*, and a search of the Miscellaneous Papers of the Secession Convention, MSS Certificates of Election for Delegates to the Secession Convention.⁴

The MS "Journal" was not a stenographic record of the proceedings of the Secession Convention; it appears to have been "edited" or transcribed after the event. The give-and-take of debate is not evident, and the document is too neatly written; cross-outs and interlineations do not appear. James H. Bell, an ardent Unionist, and an Associate Justice of the State Supreme Court, had not been admitted to the Convention during secret session, though certain other non-delegates (secessionists) had

Joe T. Timmons is from Fort Worth. He has done doctoral work at the University of Chicago.

been admitted. In a letter written March 2, 1861, to John A. Wharton, Bell observed: "I did not wish any friend of mine to move to expunge from the journals any thing that appeared there about [not] admitting me to a seat in the body during secret session." Bell continued: "You told me you had yourself been instrumental in having the journals made to appear silent about the matter." Bell assured Wharton that his "feelings were in no way wounded," and he concluded: "I did not desire that any one, *speaking for me, or understood to express any wish of mine*, should move to alter the journals."⁵

The "Journal" was not kept "open" for the tabulation of late returns "until the 15th inst." [March] as the delegates had provided.⁶ A study of the MSS Election Returns discloses that one return was dated February 20 (El Paso), five were executed on February 23, three on February 24, thirty-one were made on February 25, sixty-eight returns were completed on February 26, eight were dated February 27, with supplemental returns from both Parker and Bosque bearing that date also; one return was prepared on February 28, as was the supplemental report from Erath; the Ellis County return had no date other than "this February." The returns from Hardin and Hill were not dated. Harris County submitted a supplemental return on March 4. The return from Cass County was executed on March 6. Therefore, all of the 122 reporting counties seem to have completed the returns, and made supplemental vote reports, well in advance of the March 15 date. However, neither the MS "Journal of the Secession Convention in Texas, 1861," nor the edited *Journal* tabulated all of these returns. It is obvious that a careful study of the MSS Election Returns and a comparison of them with the tabulations made by the Secretary of State and the entries in the MS "Journal" would have prevented many of the errors that appear in the printed *Journal*.⁷

Was the February 23, 1861, referendum a "full poll"?⁸ Was it a "fair" representation of the "will of the people"? The vote was taken after unionists and secessionists had taken extreme positions. The political climate had become highly charged through several weeks of intense debate on the future course Texas should take. Under such conditions, it may have been impossible for Texans to make an intelligent, reasoned decision at the ballot box. Extremists among the secessionists considered the break-up of the Union inevitable, while certain unionists pleaded in vain for Texas to remain in the Union and defend her position under the Federal Constitution. Some wanted Texas to join a "Southern Confederacy." Others looked to the rebirth of the Lone Star Republic.⁹ *The Texas Almanac for 1862* has an interesting account of the confusion in the minds of the voters on the eve of the referendum:

Pending the brief period between the passage of the Ordinance of Secession by the Convention and its ratification by the people, and up to the time of the final annexation by Texas to the Southern Confederacy, the Lone Star flag, the former emblem of our independence as a Republic, was generally used all over the State in evidence of the almost universal desire to resume our State Sovereignty. There were numbers in various parts of the State, embracing many of the early settlers, who took active measures to organize what was called Lone Star Associations, advocating the re-establishment of the Republic of Texas in opposition to annexation to the Southern Confederacy.¹⁰

Gideon Lincecum had advocated secession, but when he learned the Convention had sent off delegates to Montgomery, Alabama, he denounced the Convention in bitter words:

See what the late, damnable convention has done, notwithstanding the fact that it is almost diametrically in opposition to the object

for which they were elected, a large majority of the people, in their stultified condition, cry Amen, and will sanction the doings of the said, hell deserving, convention at the coming election by an overwhelm[ing] majority. Well, let them all go to ruin together, while I shall try to learn myself not to grieve about it.¹¹

Before proceeding with an analysis of the referendum of February 23, 1861, it is pertinent to comment briefly on the Presidential election held in Texas on November 6, 1860. It was bitterly contested; the issues drawn were "secession" or "submission" and the campaign resulted in the largest voter response in any of the elections of the pre-Civil War period, except for the gubernatorial contest of 1859.¹² Since this election was so important and the secessionists took the results as a "mandate," it is proper to ask: was the election legally held and were the votes properly recorded? Fifty-one counties reported total votes that represented a voter participation of 70 per cent or greater. [See Table 2, for the votes cast and voter strengths.] All returned majorities for Breckinridge and Lane electors. In seven counties (Hamilton, Kaufman, Live Oak, Marion, Parker, Wharton, and Wood) the percentages of voter response exceeded 100 per cent; thirty-one counties registered a voter turnout of 70.0-79.9 per cent; ten counties reported an 80.0-89.9 per cent performance; and three counties had a voter turnout of 90.0-99.9 per cent. Six of the counties having a voter involvement of 70 per cent or greater in the Presidential election rejected secession on February 23; all the others supported secession by large majorities, except for Lampasas, where the vote was close—85 "for" and 75 "against" secession. The total vote cast in the Presidential election by the fifty-one counties (that reported a voter involvement of 70 per cent or greater) was 32,456, or 50.7 per cent of the entire vote of the State. The seven counties having a voter turnout of more than 100 per cent of the possible number of "qualified electors" cast 5.7 per cent of the total vote. The six counties (having a voter participation of more than 70 per cent) that ultimately rejected secession on February 23, cast only 8.8 per cent of the total Presidential vote. It is difficult to believe that so many of the counties were able to achieve such a "full" poll on November 6, 1860. Was there manipulation of the vote in that election?

Examination of the votes cast in the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession, contrasted with the total votes cast in Texas in the Presidential election, gives rise to some speculation and quite valid conclusions. Relating the votes reported in the referendum to an approximation of voter strengths determined for the several counties discloses that in many instances the referendum poll was too "full"! Table 1 is a comparison of the votes tabulated in the edited *Journal* with the MSS Election Returns for the February 23, 1861, vote on the Ordinance of Secession; the discrepancies are explained in detail by county in footnote c to Table 1. Generally, both the MS "Journal" and the edited *Journal* failed to include those returns that were executed after February 26 (the report date required by law and which also was printed at the bottom of the report form), and were not received by the Convention by March 4, the date the votes were canvassed. Since the Convention had gone on record that the "Journal" should be kept open until March 15 (in order to include any late returns), editing of the "Journal" should have included all these late and supplemental returns. Table 2 presents a study of voter participation in both the Presidential Election and the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession. There were 2,983 fewer votes cast on February 23, 1861, than for Presidential Electors. The secessionist ranks suffered the greater defection: -2,201 votes cast on February 23, as compared to the vote for those Electors who stood for Breckinridge and Lane; the unionists also had fewer supporters on February 23: -782 votes "against" secession (but counting such votes as "Lone Star" and "Union") than had been registered for Bell and Everett Electors. Only

Bandera, Gillespie, and Starr Counties had supported the unionist ticket on November 6, 1860, but Bandera and Starr switched to "For Secession" on February 23. Seventeen counties (Angelina, Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Collin, Cooke, Fannin, Fayette, Grayson, Jack, Lamar, Mason, Medina, Montague, Travis, Uvalde, and Williamson) that had returned majorities for Breckinridge and Lane, switched their votes—opposing secession in the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession. Gillespie was the model of consistency; it was the only county that returned majorities for Bell and Everett and then voted against secession on February 23. Although the secessionists suffered a greater defection from their ranks (a + 4,209 voted "For Secession" and a - 6,410 either switched votes or "stayed home," for a decreased "secessionist vote" of - 2,201), the unionists were unable to reverse the tide running since the previous summer. Perhaps many of those who supported Breckinridge and Lane in 1860 did so because they believed John Bell did not have a chance for victory on the national scene. But when the testing time arrived, on principle, they rejected secession. "Old Sam" (unquestionably the leading unionist in Texas), for example, supported the "Union ticket" as a matter of principle, but he liked "Breckinridge more than either of the other candidates in the field," but he did not believe Lincoln could be defeated unless Breckinridge stood on a Union platform or principle. Houston rather quickly disposed of John Bell:

As for Mr. Bell, I regard him as a slim chance for a President, and I would not *directly vote* for him, although he voted against the Nebraska Bill. There is a tale to that! So you see that I do not go for man, or men, but for principle,¹³

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF VOTES ON THE ORDINANCE OF SECESSION

County‡	—Journal*—		—MSS Election Returns†—			County‡	—Journal*—		—MSS Election Returns†—		
	For	Against	For	Against	Other		For	Against	For	Against	Other
Anderson	870	15	870	15		Fort Bend	486	none	486	000	
Angelina	139	184	139	184		Freestone	585	3	585	3	
Atascosa	145	91	145	91		Galveston	765	33	765	33	
Austin	825	212	825	212		Gillespie	16	398	16	398	
Bandera	33	32	33	32		Goliad	291	25	291	25	+16
Bastrop	335	352	335	352		Gonzales	803	80	803	80	
Bee	139	16	139	16		Grayson	463	901	463	901	
Bell	495	198	456	198		Grimes	907	9	907	9	+1
Bexar	827	709	827	709		Guadalupe	314	22	314	22	
Blanco	86	170	108	170		Hamilton	86	1	86	1	
Bosque	233	81	223	79		Hardin	167	62	167	62	
Bowie	268	15	268	15		Harris	1084	144	1128	163	
Brazoria	527	2	527	2		Harrison	886	44	866	44	
Brazos	215	44	215	44		Hays	166	115	166	115	-1
Brown	75	none	16			Henderson	400	49	397	48	
Burleson	422	84	422	84		Hidalgo	62	10	62	10	
Burnet	159	248	157	248		Hill	376	63	376	63	
Caldwell	434	188	434	188		Hopkins	697	315	697	315	+8
Calhoun	276	16	276	16		Houston	552	38	552	38	
Cameron	600	37	600	37		Hunt	416	339	416	339	
Cass	423	32	423	32		Jack	14	76	14	76	
Chambers	78	6	109	26	+5	Jackson	147	77	147	77	
Cherokee	1106	38	1106	38		Jasper	318	25	318	25	
Collin	405	948	405	948		Jefferson	256	15	256	15	
Colorado	584	330	584	330		Johnson	531	31	531	31	
Comal	239	86	239	86		Karnes	153	1	153	1	
Comanche	86	4	86	4		Kaufman	461	153	461	153	
Cooke	137	221	137	221		Kerr	76	57	76	57	
Coryell	293	55	293	55		Lamar	553	663	553	663	
Dallas	741	237	741	237		Lampasas	85	75	85	75	
Denton	331	256	331	256		Lavaca	592	36	592	36	
De Witt	472	49	472	49		Leon	534	82	534	82	
Ellis	527	172	527	172		Liberty	422	10	422	10	
El Paso	871	2	871	2		Limestone	525	9	525	9	
Erath	179	16	185	27		Live Oak	141	9	141	9	
Falls	215	82	215	82		Llano	134	72	150	72	
Fannin	471	656	471	656		McLennan	586	191	586	191	
Fayette	580	626	580	626		Madison	213	10	213	10	

County†	—Journal*—		—MSS Election Returns†—			County‡	—Journal*—		—MSS Election Returns†—		
	For	Against	For	Against	Other		For	Against	For	Against	Other
Marion	467	none	467			Smith	1149	50	1149	50	
Mason	2	75	2	75		Starr	180	2	180	2	
Matagorda	243	8	243	8		Tarrant	462	127	499	132	
Medina	140	207	140	207		Titus	411	275	411	275	
Milam	468	135	468	135		Travis	450	704	450	704	
Montague	50	86	50	86		Trinity	206	8	206	8	
Montgomery	318	98	318	98		Tyler	417	4	417	4	
Nacogdoches	317	94	317	94	-11	Upshur	957	57	957	57	
Navarro	621	38	621	38		Uvalde	16	76	16	76	
Newton	178	3	178	3		Van Zandt	181	127	181	127	
Nueces	142	42	142	42	+4	Victoria	313	88	313	88	
Orange	142	3	142	3		Walker	490	61	490	61	
Palo Pinto	107	none	107			Washington	1131	43	1131	43	
Panola	537	5	536	5		Webb	70	none	70		
Parker	535	61	535	61		Wilson	92	21	92	21	
Polk	567	22	567	22		Wise	76	78	78	76	
Red River	347	284	347	284		Wharton	249	2	249	2	
Refugio	142	14	142	14		Williamson	349	480	349	480	
Robertson	391	76	391	76		Wood	451	191	451	191	11
Rusk	1376	135	1376	135							
Sabine	143	18	143	18		San Saba	113	60	113	60	
San Augustine	243	22	243	22		Young	166	31	166	31	
San Patricio	56	3	56	3	+4	Zapata	212	none	212		
Shelby	333	28	333	28							
Totals:						46,129	14,697	46,153	14,747	+51	
Camp Hunter,											+13
Coleman County-											

46,166

*Ernest W. Winkler (ed.), *Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas, 1861*, pp. 88-90. At the end of the tabulation appears the following: "154 counties in all; 30 unorganized; 2 organized counties not heard from, viz: McCulloch and Presidio." Although no official returns have ever been located for Presidio County, there is an "unofficial" report. In a letter dated March 1, 1861, Daniel Murphy wrote to E. M. Pease: "The Vote pold [sic] in Precedio [sic] del Norte for the union is 316. The Vote pold in Fort Davis 48 for the union making in total in Precedio County 364 Votes for the union." Pease Family Papers, Austin-Travis County Collection, Austin Public Library, Austin, Texas.

†File 2-13/311, MSS Election Returns, February 23, 1861, Archives Division, Texas State Library. Tabulation of these extant returns indicates a total vote of 60,964; for secession - 46,166; against secession - 14,747, and 39 votes of the "other" category "for the Union." Eight of the votes in the "other" category were cast "against Separate Secession & infavor Southern Confederacy." Four votes were designated "scattering." Camp Hunter, Coleman County, voted "For Secession 13" and "Against Secession —." This document was filed in the Miscellaneous Papers of the Secession Convention, MSS Election Certificates for Delegates to the Secession Convention, Archives Division, Texas State Library. Ernest W. Winkler (ed.), *Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas, 1861*, Appendix IV, 409-52, has reproductions of these documents; on p. 442 the Camp Hunter Election Certificate appears. However, the vote "For Secession" shown there is not recorded in the edited *Journal* in the tabulation of Election Returns, pp. 88-90.

‡The differences in the votes tabulated in the printed *Journal* and in the MSS Election Returns are explained by county in the following:

Bell County: The return on the printed form was clearly written; the Secretary of State also recorded the vote: "For Secession 456" and "Against Secession 198."

Blanco County: a separate sheet in the file indicates an additional return was made: 22 votes "for secession." It appears that the Secretary of State received this

document, but added 22 votes to each of the original figures "For" and "Against" secession; whereas, the printed *Journal* does not reflect the 22 additional votes.

Bosque County: A supplemental return reported 25 additional votes "For Secession" from Childress Creek Box and Cyprus Box, and 11 additional votes "Against Secession" from these precincts. The votes on the original return and the supplemental report add to no more than 223 "For Secession" and 79 "Against Secession." These are also the totals recorded by the Secretary of State.

Brown County: The return on ruled paper listed by name the sixteen individuals who voted "For Secession." A stroke count showing sixteen votes follows the names. Eight of these have been identified in the MSS Schedules, Eighth United States Census, Schedule I, Free Inhabitants [Microfilm, Texas A&I University Library]. The Census indicates a possible total of 63 "qualified electors." Joseph C. G. Kennedy, *Population of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), "State of Texas, Table No. 1.—Population by Age and Sex," pp. 472-73, indicates there were 133 males enumerated in Brown County, but 67 were "under 1" through age 19.

Burnet County: the return is clearly written as "157" and this is the same vote recorded by the Secretary of State.

Chambers County: the *Journal* tabulated only the Wallisville precinct vote; the original return and supplemental returns for Wallisville and Cedar Bayou also reported the votes of Old River and Double Bayou for substantially higher figures.

Erath County: a supplemental report for precincts 4 and 6 has a "P.S." recap of the total votes.

Goliad County: At the bottom of the printed form, written in Chief Justice William N. Fant's hand, appears the additional vote: "*For the Glorious Union 16 Votes.*"

Grimes County: A second return shows: "Union 1 vote."

Harris County: On February 27 a manuscript return was submitted with the notation "no return" for Precincts 7, 10, 11, 13, and 15; on March 4 the printed form was executed with the entry: "Since 26th Feby additional came in 'For Secession' 44 [and] 'Against Secession' 19," with new totals shown.

Harrison County: the figure "eight hundred and eighty six" has been very distinctly written over to read "eight hundred sixty six" votes. The correction appears to have been made by the person preparing the form. The Secretary of State tabulated the vote for secession as "866," obviously noting the corrected figure.

Hays County: at the bottom margin of the form appears: "One Vote for the Union."

Henderson County: the return on the printed form gave the vote: "For Secession 397" and "Against Secession 48." At the time the writer examined the MSS Election Returns there was no additional return in the file for Henderson County. The Secretary of State tabulated the returns as shown on the printed form.

Hopkins County: the manuscript return reported the vote in a third category: "Against Separate Secession & infavor Southern Confederacy 8 votes."

Llano County: a supplemental return gave the new totals, which was also the vote tabulated by the Secretary of State.

Nacogdoches County: the manuscript return reported a third category: "For the Union 11."

Nueces County: the return, entirely in manuscript, reported a third category: "Scattering 4."

Panola County: although the total "557 For Secession" is given in the manuscript return, the votes, by precincts, add to no more than 556.

San Patricio County: the manuscript return reported a third category: "For Union 4 Votes."

Tarrant County: a supplemental return gave the new totals, which were also the votes recorded by the Secretary of State.

Wise County: the return, entirely in manuscript, clearly reported the votes: "Against Secession 76" and "For Secession 78," in that order; careless reading of the document caused the figures to be transposed in the printed *Journal*!

Wood County: the manuscript return reported a third category: "Lone Star 1."

TABLE 2
VOTER PARTICIPATION IN TEXAS: 1860/61

County	Electors*	2/23/61		11/6/60		County	Electors*	2/23/61		11/6/60	
		Total Vote No.†	%	Total Vote No.‡	%			Total Vote No.†	%	Total Vote No.‡	%
Anderson	1517	885	58.3	966	63.7	Harris	2244	1291	57.5	1393	62.1
Angelina	769	323	42.0	335	43.6	Harrison	1493	910	61.0	1069	71.6
Atascosa	379	236	62.3	215	56.7	Hays	322	282	87.6	296	91.9
Austin	1670	1037	62.1	552	33.1	Henderson	768	445	57.9	584	76.0
Bandera	106	65	61.3	38	35.8	Hidalgo	330	72	21.8	64	19.4
Bastrop	1045	687	65.7	617	59.0	Hill	699	439	62.8	521	74.5
Bee	196	155	79.1	145	74.0	Hopkins	1156	1020	88.2	1083	93.7
Bell	851	654	76.9	679	79.8	Houston	1203	590	49.1	574	47.7
Bexar*	3780	1536	40.6	1279	33.8	Hunt	1292	755	58.4	947	73.3
Blanco	296	278	93.9	164	55.4	Jack	231	90	39.0	136	58.9
Bosque	409	302	73.8	265	47.9	Jackson	401	224	55.9	296	73.8
Bowie	589	283	48.0	450	76.4	Jasper	508	343	67.5	356	70.1
Brazoria	625	529	86.0	455	72.8	Jefferson	514	271	52.7	342	66.5
Brazos	453	259	57.2	296	65.3	Johnson	881	562	63.8	505	57.3
Brown	63	16	25.4	48	76.2	Karnes	496	154	31.0	223	45.0
Buchanan	58					Kaufman	772	616	79.8	832	107.8
Burleson	855	506	59.2	616	72.0	Kerr	197	133	67.5	117	59.4
Burnet	475	405	85.3	284	59.8	Kinney	18				
Caldwell	672	622	92.6	551	82.0	Lamar	1680	1216	72.4	1123	66.8
Calhoun	739	292	39.5	533	72.1	Lampasas	205	160	78.0	152	74.1
Cameron	1885	637	33.8	417	22.1	Lavaca	973	628	64.5	706	72.6
Cass	1093	455	41.6	770	70.4	Leon	987	616	62.4	714	72.3
Chambers	220	140	63.6	126	57.3	Liberty	563	432	76.7	351	62.3
Cherokee	1335	1144	85.7	1066	79.9	Limestone	793	534	67.3	522	65.8
Clay	48					Live Oak	144	150	104.2	147	102.1
Colin	1865	1353	72.5	1369	73.4	Llano	244	222	91.0	201	82.4
Coleman	180	13				McLennan	966	777	80.4	726	75.2
	Census					Madison	363	223	61.4	258	71.1
	Rtns]					Marion	579	467	80.7	630	108.8
Colorado	1216	914	75.2	963	79.2	Mason	204	77	37.7	18	8.8
Comal	918	325	35.4	223	24.3	Matagorda	402	251	62.4	203	50.5
Comanche	141	90	63.8	113	80.1	Maverick	354				
Cooke	768	358	46.6	401	52.2	Medina	455	347	76.3	190	41.8
Corvell	510	548	68.2	335	65.7	Milam	847	603	71.2	648	76.5
Dallas	1844	978	53.0	1146	62.1	Montague	182	136	74.7	152	83.5
Dawson	131					Montgomery	624	416	66.7	376	60.3
Denton	1101	587	53.3	775	70.4	Nacogdoches	1350	422	31.3	572	42.4
De Witt	849	521	61.4	574	67.6	Navarro	1003	639	63.7	664	66.2
Eastland	27					Newton	442	181	41.0	112	25.3
Ellis	1000	699	69.9	632	62.2	Nueces	757	488	64.5	469	62.0
El Paso	1702	873	51.3	1053	61.9	Orange	462	145	31.4	135	29.2
Eminal	11					Palo Pinto	332	107	32.2	158	47.6
Erath	491	212	43.2	233	47.5	Panola	1187	561	47.3	650	54.8
Falls	457	297	65.0	246	53.8	Parker	853	596	69.9	941	110.3
Fannin	1670	1127	67.5	1155	69.2	Polk	942	589	62.5	624	66.2
Fayette	1371	1206	88.0	1187	86.6	Presidio	340				
Fort Bend	620	486	78.4	400	64.5	Red River	1315	631	48.0	825	62.7
Freestone	761	588	77.3	638	83.8	Refugio	325	156	48.0	200	61.5
Frio	14					Robertson	662	467	70.5	437	66.0
Galveston	2235	798	35.7	1015	45.4	Rusk	2173	1511	69.5	1668	76.7
Gillespie	661	414	62.6	136	20.6	Sabine	356	161	45.2	245	68.8
Goliad	637	332	52.1	379	59.5	San Augustine	519	265	51.1	253	48.4
Gonzales	1244	882	70.9	862	69.3	San Patricio	151	63	41.7	67	44.4
Grayson	1618	1364	84.3	1217	75.2	San Saba	189	173	91.5	154	81.5
Grimes	1264	917	72.5	809	64.0	Shelby	835	361	43.2	514	61.6
Guadalupe	862	336	39.0	385	44.7	Shackelford	5				
Hamilton	116	87	75.0	116	100.0	Smith	1898	1199	63.5	1503	79.6
Hardin	264	229	86.7	247	93.6	Starr	717	382	53.4	446	62.2
						Tarrant	1277	631	49.4	826	64.7
						Throckmorton	34				

County	Electors*	2/23/61		11/6/60		County	Electors*	2/23/61		11/6/60	
		Total Vote No.†	%	Total Vote No.‡	%			Total Vote No.†	%	Total Vote No.‡	%
Titus	1579	686	43.4	1163	73.7	Webb	384	70	18.2	77	20.1
Travis	1277	1154	90.4	1101	79.2	Wharton	227	251	110.6	236	104.0
Trinity	712	214	30.1	245	34.4	Williamson	816	829	101.6	713	87.4
Tyler	697	421	60.4	504	72.3	Wilson	[Bexar Census]	113			117
Upshur	1557	1014	65.1	1279	82.1	Wise	661	154	23.3	258	39.0
Uvalde	164	92	56.1	101	61.6	Wood	758	643	84.8	768	101.3
Van Zandt	731	308	42.1	364	49.8	Young	137	197	143.8	109	79.6
Victoria	778	401	51.5	328	42.2	Zapata	187	212	113.4	151	80.7
Walker	1086	551	50.7	660	60.8	Zavala	9				
Washington	1937	1174	60.6	1079	55.7						
Totals:							102,297	60,964	59.6	63,947	62.5

*These figures are approximations of the "qualified electors" in each county determined in the following manner. In Joseph C. G. Kennedy, *Population of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), "State of Texas. Table No. 1—Population by Age and Sex, White," pp. 472-77 are tabulated the population by age groups. The total white male population is given for each county on pp. 473, 475, and 477. By subtracting from these totals the males shown in the columns "under 1, 1 and under 5, 5 and under 10, 10 and under 15, 15 and under 20," and assuming that one-tenth of the males shown in the column "20 and under 30" were 20 years of age (and therefore not eligible to vote), the resulting figures give the males 21 years of age and older. Perhaps more exact figures might be determined by examining all the MSS Census Returns, Schedule I, Free Inhabitants. This process has not been completed for all the counties, but a random sampling of fifteen counties validates these approximations. The actual count of males 21 years and older, in the state one year and in the county six months (using the childladder method) in these fifteen counties closely correlates with the numbers of qualified electors determined by using the figures in the compilation cited above. The total "qualified electors" determined from the compilation figures for these counties was 9,313; the actual count from the Census Returns was 9,224—a difference of 89, or an error factor of less than one per cent.

†Recorded in this column are the total votes cast in the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession, for and against secession (see Table 1, above, MSS Election Returns).

‡MSS Secretary of State Executive Record Book, pp. 147-50, File 2-13/328, Archives Division, Texas State Library. The official tabulation by county of the returns for Presidential Electors is an interesting document. Texas was entitled to four electors. It appears that most counties permitted the voter to ballot for four individuals, instead of voting one time for a list or slate of electors. The Secretary of State recorded the votes cast for each individual and added them. The total vote for each slate was divided by four. The figures thus obtained were then announced as the "results" of the election! Malcolm D. Graham, Thomas N. Waul, A. T. Rainey, and John A. Wharton ran on the Breckinridge and Lane slate, and William Steadman, George W. Paschal, Benjamin H. Epperson, and John H. Robson stood as candidates on the Bell and Everett ticket. A recap by individual candidate of the total votes cast in the November 6, 1860, election appears on p. 150; only the votes for Steadman and Robson were correctly added, and the division is incorrect. The figures used in Table 2 were

derived by using the highest vote cast for each slate of four candidates for the Electoral College; in this manner the writer has arrived at the following totals:

Breckinridge and Lane Electors— 48,367 votes
Bell and Everett Electors— 15,580 votes

Total: 63,947 votes

△ Wilson District was enumerated in the Bexar County Census Returns. Therefore, adding the two together the voter participation percentages would be:

	Electors	2/23/61 Vote	Voter Participation %	11/6/60 Vote	Voter Participation %
Bexar	3780	1536		1279	
Wilson		113		117	
Combined:		1649	43.6	1396	36.9

Of the total vote cast on February 23, 1861, 75.7 per cent was "For Secession."¹⁴ But the question remains: was the vote legitimate in the sense of being properly held and correctly recorded? Sixty-nine counties reported a smaller vote at the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession than in the election for Presidential Electors. Fifty-three counties returned a larger vote at the later election (see Table 2). The median voter participation in the February 23, 1861, referendum was 62.4 per cent; in the Presidential election the median was 65.8 per cent. The larger vote cast than there were possible "qualified electors" in Live Oak, Wharton, Young, and Zapata Counties (these four counties supported secession by 94.8 per cent of the vote they reported!) certainly seems to suggest irregularities in the voting as certain unionists had charged.¹⁵ In Williamson County the vote against secession was 57.9 per cent of the total vote reported, but again the number who voted possibly exceeded the body of legitimate electors. If there were discrepancies in the votes reported in these five counties (those having a voter participation of more than 100 per cent of the possible electors), is not one justified in questioning also the vote recorded in those counties where the voter turnout exceeded, say, 70 per cent? In a frontier society (concerned with Indian depredations, drought, crop failures, and a multitude of other problems), having a widely-scattered, sparsely-settled population in many areas, was it possible to muster such a vote?

There were thirty-three counties that voted for secession whose voter participation exceeded 70 per cent of the possible qualified electors. Their combined vote for secession was 81.9 per cent of the total vote they reported. In eight counties that opposed secession the voter participation was also more than 70 per cent, but the combined vote of these counties against secession was only 59.0 per cent of the total vote they returned. Including the five counties in which there was a voter participation of more than 100 per cent of the possible qualified electors, the vote, therefore, in thirty-eight counties is rather questionable. These represent more than one-fourth of the 122 reporting counties. Their combined votes for and against secession aggregated 21,105, or 34.6 per cent of the total vote cast on February 23, 1861!¹⁶

Why did Texans vote to sever the ties of Union? The decision at the ballot box for disunion cannot be explained simply in a phrase or two. Several factors seem to

have influenced the voters, and confused some of them, when they went to the polls on February 23.¹⁷ A determined band of disunionists, out in the open for the first time after Abraham Lincoln's election became known in Texas, merely overwhelmed the unionists. The secessionists had a plan; they were ably led by a group in high position, though the "movers" of secession were generally outside the government; they controlled the important instruments of propaganda—the leading newspapers of the State and the Democratic Party machinery. They widely publicized their position in the press, private correspondence, speeches, and secessionist literature—playing on the fears, emotions, and prejudices of a frightened people. Oran M. Roberts retained a copy of a letter he wrote to Messrs. James H. Fry, George W. White, and others, dated December 3, 1860, in reply to the group's request for a copy of Roberts' December 1 speech on the "Impending Crisis." A notation was made in pencil, in Roberts' hand, that 4,000 copies were printed and distributed over the State. William P. Rogers wrote to Roberts on December 16, 1860, "*Private*—our plan meets with general approval." Gil McKay in a letter to Roberts on December 26, 1860, observed: "There are very few submissionists in this Section [Marshall]." And he quite correctly continued: "I would suggest the propriety of sending large numbers of copies of your Speech to the Northern Counties." On January 4, 1861, Malcolm D. Graham advised Roberts: "I received the package of your speeches and distributed them. The Speech meets with very general approval."¹⁸ The *Texas State Gazette*, published at Austin, on February 16, 1861, carried an "Open Letter, O. M. Roberts, President of the Convention, to the People of Texas" (letter not dated); it was an appeal for the people to sustain the Convention at the ballot box on February 23; since the newspaper enjoyed a wide circulation, it was intended in this manner to reach as many of the voters as possible.

There is no doubt that the secessionists played on the fears, emotions, and prejudices of the people. Commenting on accounts of incendiarism and an alleged abolitionist plot in Texas, as early as August 25, 1860, the *San Antonio Ledger and Texan* had observed: "the celebrated John Brown raid was mere child's play, in comparison with the state of things which now exists in Texas." The February 23, 1861, issue of the *Texas State Gazette* was a particularly rank appeal to racial prejudice; an open letter "To the Working Men of Travis County" charged that Abraham Lincoln was the "apostle of freesoilism and abolitionism in its [sic] worst forms," and John Marshall's editorial closed: "are [you] willing to tolerate social and political equality with the negro? Are you willing that they shall control you by their votes? Are you willing that the white and negro races shall amalgamate?"¹⁹

The secessionists manipulated the election and they coerced and silenced their opponents. N. B. Ellis, who had travelled extensively as Assistant Marshall enumerating the Census in the summer of 1860, wrote to O. M. Roberts on January 4, 1861, from Comanche: "We will have an Election [for delegates to the Convention] in this County on the 8th inst. We have not more than 2 or 3 Southern Tories in this County, & I am sorry to think that there are that number." Ellis rather incorrectly observed: "The frontier is almost unanimous for Secession. What few Southern Tories [there are] among us, are afraid to cheep . . ." ²⁰ Was there coercion?

On the other hand, a band of valiant unionists desperately fought to keep Texas in the Union. They failed because they could not find a leader.²¹ The unionists also failed to put the real issue across to the electorate: was the Union worth preserving? Fort Sumter destroyed the unionists' dreams of reconciliation and it also ended their efforts to re-establish Texas as an independent nation-state.²²

Secession in Texas carried because of secondary considerations. Fears of a general slave uprising, recollections (often faulty) of burning towns and private prop-

erties put to the torch, and prejudices towards the Negro certainly figured in the decision for separation.²³ The rugged individualism that characterized the frontier society of Texas definitely surfaced. Texans, such as James W. Throckmorton, would not be coerced,²⁴ and they hastened to "go out [of the Union] before Lincoln's inauguration."²⁵

Perhaps most Texans who voted that fateful February day did not realize they were engaging in the "Second Texas Revolution."²⁶ As in the first, they were unprepared for war. When it came, many Texans thought that the war they believed the North had started in the Abolitionist Crusade would end quickly on terms favorable to Texas and the South.²⁷ They expected the economics of cotton and the vital Mississippi River life-line to work to their advantage.

Rather than lauding the referendum of February 23, 1861, in Texas on the Ordinance of Secession as the outpouring of an overwhelming sentiment of a united people, perhaps one should consider suspect the votes that were reported. A detailed study (which limitations of space obviate at this time) of the "campaign period," February 1-23, suggests there were concerted efforts made by the secessionists to win the support of the electorate. Not quite certain of ultimate success at the polls in a secret ballot, the secessionists insisted on a *viva voce* vote (to intimidate?), a deviation from the customary "paper ballot" or "ticket." Perhaps certain election officials "padded" the vote they returned, for the majorities some counties reported for secession were too close to, or in excess of, 100 per cent to be accepted at face value.

The decision for secession closed a sad chapter in Texas history. It was the threshold of a worse fate: loss of life, depreciation of properties (primarily in the loss of slaves), privation, and want. Few that day dared foretell the future: war and ultimate subjugation, and a period of reconstruction so replete with rancor, bitterness, and hate that it was regarded then, and since, as an era of "dictatorship" and "Radical Republican Rule" not soon to be forgotten. An observation made in 1863, though, proved rather prophetic:

The man who prophesies even at this day, the end of the present troubles, risks his reputation for sanity, but if there be any certainty in Heaven or on earth the present Southern Confederacy must perish—it is founded on no principle of liberty or right—it is the work of satanic ambition, and terrible will be its end.²⁸

NOTES

¹The most obvious error is the vote recorded for Wise County. The return was entirely in manuscript on plain paper (see File 2-13/311, MSS Election Returns, February 23, 1861, Archives Division, Texas State Library) rather than on the printed form which provided for the reporting of the vote "For Secession" in a blank to the left and "Against Secession" in a blank to the right of the document. Wise County was the only one to reverse the reporting order—"Against Secession 76" and "For Secession 78." None of the official tabulations noted this reversed order of reporting the vote. In Ernest W. Winkler (ed.), *Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas, 1861* (Austin, 1912), 90, the Wise County vote is tabulated, but not in the proper order as shown on the MS Election Return.

²The Secretary of State's tabulation of the votes may be found in MSS Secretary of State, Executive Record Book, File 2-13/328, Archives Division, Texas State Library. On pp. 22-23 the individual county votes are recorded, but the total of the votes given in this source is 13,903 "Against Secession," not 13,894, as shown on p. 223. The MS "Journal of the Secession Convention in Texas, 1861," is located in File 2-7/279, Archives Division, Texas State Library. The figures tabulated on pages 80-83 are inaccurate and incomplete when compared with the MSS Election Returns. The edited *Journal of the Secession Convention of Texas, 1861*, hereafter referred to as the Winkler *Journal*, on pages 88-90, has a "Tabular Statement of Election returns, February 23, A.D. 1861. For and against Secession." It is inaccurate in several points (see Table 1). Below the table of votes appears the statement: "122 counties heard from; aggregate vote, 60,826; for secession 46,129; against secession 14,697; majority for secession, 31,432." (See page 90.) *The Texas Almanac for 1862* (title page missing; microfilm of the orig., Texas A&I University Library), 15, reads: "Returns were received from 120 out of the 123 original counties in the state, and over sixty thousand votes were polled, more than three to one of which, or about 46,000 were 'for secession.'" The secondary works, in the order cited above, are: John J. Linn, *Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Texas* (Facsimile Reproduction of the Original, Austin, 1935, first published in New York; 1883), 356; John Henry Brown, *History of Texas* (title page missing, catalogue entry: St. Louis, Mo.: L. E. Daniell, 1892-93), II, 401; Frank Brown, "Annals of Travis County and of the City of Austin," Typescript, Austin-Travis County Collection, Austin Public Library, XX1, 25; Francis Richard Lubbock, *Six Decades in Texas, or Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock, Governor of Texas in War-Time, 1861-63: A Personal Experience in Business, War, and Politics* (Austin, 1900), p. 309; Charles W. Ramsdell, *Reconstruction in Texas* (Gloucester, Mass.; 1964, reprint of the 1910 ed.), 19; Frank W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and Texans* (Chicago, Ill, 1914), I, 538; Clarence R. Wharton, *Texas Under Many Flags* (Chicago, Ill., 1930), II, 85, reports the vote as "thirty-nine thousand four hundred and fifteen votes . . . for the ordinance and thirteen thousand, eight hundred and forty-one against, a total of fifty-three thousand two hundred fifty six votes, about ten thousand less than the vote cast in the governor's election the year before." The gubernatorial election was held, however, in 1859.

³George W. Tyler, *The History of Bell County* (San Antonio, Texas, 1936), 200, accepts the figures cited in the Winkler *Journal*, but the MS Election Return reported a different figure. (See Table 1). Leonis Rummel Wayand and Houston Wade, *An Early History of Fayette County* (LaGrange, Texas; 1936), 244, reads: "the voters of Fayette County defeated Secession by the narrow margin of twenty votes out of a total of 1180 cast." The margin was wider, however; the MS Election Return shows that Fayette County voted "For Secession 580," and "Against Secession 626." The

total vote cast as reported in the return was 1,206, not 1,180. Oliver Knight, *Fort Worth: Outpost on the Trinity* (Norman, Okla., 1953), 51, writing on the February 23, 1861, vote in Tarrant County, states: "By a scant twenty-seven votes out of eight hundred polled, the county favored secession." The MS Election Return shows that Tarrant County voted "For Secession 499," and "Against Secession 132." The total vote was officially reported at 631 votes.

⁴Examination of the MSS Miscellaneous Papers of the Secession Convention, Certificates of Election for Delegates to the Secession Convention, Archives Division, Texas State Library, also proved beneficial. The MS Election Return for the February 23, 1861, referendum held at Camp Hunter, Coleman County, was located in that file. (See Table 1.)

⁵Oran Milo Roberts Papers, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library.

⁶Winkler *Journal*, 90.

⁷Possibly the reporting officers of twenty-six counties did not make separate returns, as required by law, to Secretary of State E. W. Cave, for his unionist sentiments were widely known. Of the 122 counties that submitted returns for the referendum of February 23, 1861, votes for only 96 counties were recorded by the Secretary of State. (See the Winkler *Journal*, 58-59, for the ordinance setting the referendum on the Ordinance of Secession; 59, n. 10, reads: "The legislature passed an act on February 17th, legalizing this ordinance of the Convention. Two days later a supplemental act was passed, which required the Governor 'to issue forthwith his proclamation for the election.' The supplemental act required further that the returning officers of the counties make returns to the Secretary of State, to be counted by the Governor and the Attorney General. These returns were in addition to and separate from those required to be made to the President of the Convention.") Governor Houston's proclamation, dated February 9, 1861, setting the election is in Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker (eds.), *The Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863* (Austin, Texas, 1941+), VIII, 263. On February 2, 1861, the House of Representatives read for the first time House Bill #4, requiring the Ordinance of Secession be submitted to a vote of the people; after two suspensions of the Rules, the bill was enrolled on February 4; it was read for a third time and passed on February 7. The next day the House speedily passed an act requiring the Governor to issue a Proclamation of Election—the returns to be made to the Secretary of State. See File 2-8/77, Records of the Legislature, State of Texas, Archives Division, Texas State Library.

⁸Frank W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and Texans*, I, 538-39, cites the votes cast for governor in 1857, 1859, the vote for Presidential Electors in 1860, and the vote on the Ordinance of Secession in 1861, and concludes: "Each of these elections aroused more than ordinary public interest and resulted in a full poll. The vote for Breckinridge and Bell was determined by issues so closely parallel to those presented by the ordinance of secession that the almost identical poll of the two is much more than a coincidence; it shows that sentiment in November, 1860, was almost the same as in February, 1861." The syntax in the preceding sentence seems to be in reverse order. While the votes cast in these two elections were "almost identical" in their totals, a close inspection indicates there were considerable variations in the votes cast in the individual counties in the two elections.

⁹For the notion that the breakup of the Union was inevitable see: Letter of Robert Crawford to Oscar M. Addison, January 26, 1861, Oscar M. Addison Papers, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library; *Dallas Herald*, January 23, 1861; Letter of

Jesse Grimes to Robert McIntire, January 29, 1861, Robert McIntire Papers, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library; *Texas State Gazette* (Austin), February 23, 1861 (the day of the referendum!) "All is Vanity," for John Marshall's editorial declaration: "It is useless to disguise the fact that a dissolution of the Union is inevitable."

¹⁰See page 16.

¹¹Letter to Prof. S. B. Buckley, February 17, 1861, Gideon Linccum Papers, Letter Press, 1860-65, Part I, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library.

¹²Frank W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and Texans*, I, 538.

¹³Sam Houston to George Washington Crawford, September 8, 1860, in Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Barker (eds.), *The Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863*, VIII, 135-36.

¹⁴Rupert Norval Richardson, Ernest Wallace, and Adrian N. Anderson, *Texas: The Lone Star State* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1970), 189: "By their vote on February 23, the electorate approved secession; they had taken no action on joining the Confederate States of America. In the minds of most people, however, the two steps seem to have been inseparably linked." Ernest Wallace. *Texas in Turmoil: the Saga of Texas, 1849-1875* (Austin, Texas, 1965), 71, observes: "The campaign was marred by intimidation, intolerance, and violence."

¹⁵James P. Newcomb, *Sketch of Secession Times in Texas and Journal of Travel From Texas through Mexico to California, Including a History of the "Box Colony"* (San Francisco, Calif., 1863), 8, flatly states: "many of the secession majorities reported, were false." Gilbert D. Kingsbury, who had served as Postmaster in Brownsville before the Civil War under the assumed name of F. F. Fenn, recalled his experiences on election day: "The vote for & against Secession was taken. Under whip & spur, every secessionist was lashed to the Polls. Under threats and inducements thousands voted for secession who neither believed in its right or policy and other thousands did not vote at all . . . Armed men stood round the polls warning every man who voted against Secession of its dangers. Where I voted, armed men including the District Judge & Clerk, told me significantly never again to vote in Texas. I replied that 'in so much as Texas swung out of the Union I was a foreign resident there, and should never offer a vote there, until she swung back again.' They said they 'wanted no abolition speeches [sic], they were only giving me friendly warning' and by way of emphasizing their assurance, slapped their hands on their revolvers. The vote in that County under such discipline was 701 for secession 36 against it." (See: MSS "Second Speech, on Texas," n.d., no place given, Gilbert D. Kingsbury Papers, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library. The correct vote in Cameron County for secession was 600 to 37.) There is an interesting item in "Notes," *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, V (July, 1901-April, 1902), 168-69, Agnes Paschal McNeir, "Did Texas Secede?"—an account of her mother's recollections of the vote in Double Bayou Precinct of Chambers County. The contention is that the correct unionist vote was not reported by the election officials.

¹⁶An exact determination of any fraudulent reporting of the votes would require a diligent search of the MSS County returns in each of the 122 counties. By law the County Clerks were obligated to record and to retain the returns from the precinct managers, reporting only the county totals to the State officials. It is doubtful that all of these have survived the ravages of time, fire, weather and "house cleaning." Even

so, a *viva voce* vote (the manner in which the February 23 election was held) might have been declared one way and recorded another, depending on the conflicting sentiments of voter and local election manager.

¹⁷In the opening paragraph of the chapter entitled "Secession and War, 1860-1865," Rupert Norval Richardson, Ernest Wallace, and Adrian N. Anderson, *Texas: The Lone Star State*, 183, an oversimplification is attempted: "Ninety percent of the white immigrants to Texas had come from the Old South, bringing with them pronounced opinions on their institutions and rights. Thus as the rancorous controversy over slavery divided the nation into two well-defined camps, it was natural that the state should join the proslavery group." Joseph C. G. Kennedy, *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census*, "State of Texas. Table No. 5—Nativities of Population," pp. 486-90, presents a variety of data. The total population of Texas was 604,215, of which 182,566 were slaves; there were 421,649 free persons (including only 355 "colored"). Of this number, 131,909 were born in the Lower South (31.3% of the total); there were 28,062 born in the Border South (6.6%); "Other U.S." and "At Sea" and "Not Stated"—65,213 (15.5%); those who were foreign born—43,422 (10.3%); native Texans, 153,043, comprised 36.3% of the population. Therefore, only 268,606 persons were born outside Texas and had migrated some years prior to the enumeration. Of those who had immigrated, 159,971 were born in the Lower South and the Border South (59.5% of those migrating); "Other U.S."—65,213 (24.3%); "Foreign Born"—43,422 (16.2%). No more than 59.5% of those persons enumerated in 1860 had been born in the Old South; however, certain native Texans, children of Southerners, may have reflected the attitudes of their parents.

¹⁸All of the letters cited above are filed in the Oran Milo Roberts Papers.

¹⁹The *Navarro Express* (Corsicana), December 21, 1860, had reported a speech by "William Tolley, Esquire," who had reportedly quoted from a recent issue of the *Philadelphia Ledger* that a "respectable colored family" had advertised for a "white boy 14 or 16 years of age to wait on the table and make himself generally useful about the house. None need apply, unless they can come well recommended for honesty and humility. He will not be allowed to receive the visits of his friends at the house, as he will be allowed half a day Sunday to go to see his acquaintances, and as the family cannot be annoyed by poor white people calling at the house." The writer has been unable to locate such an advertisement in any of the extant issues of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger and Transcript* from November 7, through December 21, 1860. The MSS United States Eighth Census Returns, 1860, Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, for Navarro County do not list a William Talley as a resident of Corsicana. A. W. D. Tally, twenty-five years of age, a stock raiser, born in Washington, D.C., resided in a tavern operated by W. W. McPhail. Tally listed no property; he was hardly a "First citizen" of Corsicana—one who would be expected to influence the voters.

²⁰Oran Milo Roberts Papers. Rupert Norval Richardson, *The Frontier of North-west Texas, 1846-1876: Advance and Defense by the Pioneer Settlers of the Cross Timbers and Prairies* (Glendale, Calif., 1963), 226, explains the vote against secession in the counties of Wise, Jack, and Montague: "The number of people of Northern origin in these counties does not altogether explain the voting." Richardson continues: "Nor must one believe that the votes of one hundred and seven to zero for secession in Palo Pinto was a true reflection of the sentiment there. It is easier to believe that aggressive advocates of separation cowed the opposition."

²¹For efforts, and failure, of the unionists to organize see: J. W. Throckmorton to John H. Reagan, August 17, 1859, John H. Reagan Papers, Archives Division, Texas State Library; Throckmorton to Benjamin H. Epperson, August 18, 1859, Benjamin H. Epperson Papers, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library; Throckmorton to Reagan, September 9, 1859, Reagan Papers; Throckmorton to Epperson, September 13, 1859, Epperson Papers. James P. Newcomb, *Sketch of Secession Times in Texas*, 9, blames Sam Houston with the failure of the unionists to find a leader: "Gen. Houston seemed to fail, for the first time in life, to be equal to the emergency."

²²Intelligence of the firing on Fort Sumter became known in Austin on April 17. See Frank W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and Texans*, I, 542. The *Dallas Herald*, April 17, 1861, editorially observed: "The Probabilities of War—We honestly believe that everthing portends a sudden and violent commencement of hostilities,—then woe, upon the heads of those who would not let us have a peace in the Union nor suffer us to depart in peace, when we desired to do so!" On March 9, 1861, G. P. Hollingsworth writing to O. M. Roberts had commented that Lincoln's inaugural address "is generally regarded as a declaration of war—in the South," and he rather astutely continued: "I suppose the next thing we will hear will be the reverberations of the *guns* from Fort Sumter." (Oran Milo Roberts Papers.) Benjamin H. Epperson, writing to Elisha M. Pease on May 22, 1861, expressed the view that the commencement of hostilities had ended "forever" any possibility of reconstructing the Union. (Pease Family Papers, Austin-Travis County Collection, Austin Public Library.) William Pitt Ballinger in a letter to Pease dated May 25, 1861, expressed similar views, concluding that the only "alternative [is] now but to fight to the death, or to be subjugated and abased." (Pease Family Papers.)

²³For the accounts of fires, abolitionists' activities, and a rumored slave "plot" see the issues of the *San Antonio Ledger and Texan*, June 2, July 21, the "Incendiarism" extra of July 27, July 28, and August 25, 1860; *Texas State Gazette* (Austin), July 14, and August 25, 1860; *Navarro Express* (Corsicana), August 11, and September 21, 1860; *Civilian and Gazette* (Galveston), September 11, and October 16, 1860. In his "Memoirs," *Six Decades in Texas*, 305, Francis Richard Lubbock makes an interesting comment: "As an original question, secession, perhaps, would have failed to carry in Texas; . . ."

²⁴Claude Elliott, *Leathercoat: the Life History of a Texas Patriot* (San Antonio, Texas; 1938), 50-51, explains J. W. Throckmorton's support of the Confederacy: "Through bitterly opposed to secession, Throckmorton refused to endorse coercion. He even believed that an attempt on the part of the Federal government to coerce a state might justify the breaking up of the union; that is, he believed in the right of secession but not in the wisdom of its assertion." Frank W. Johnson, *A History of Texas and Texans*, I, 541, concludes that Texans "believed in the right of secession; and they denounced coercion in the strongest terms."

²⁵John H. Reagan to O. M. Roberts, letter written at Washington, D.C., December 7, 1860, Oran Milo Roberts Papers. Reagan requested that Roberts show the letter to John Marshall, editor of the *Texas State Gazette* and Chairman of the Democratic Party State Central Committee, and "have him put our people on guard against this compromise proposal [John J. Crittenden's efforts]. It is but a tub thrown to the whale, & intended to stay Southern action, & give time for the forming of a great Union party."

²⁶For the idea of "revolution" see: *Texas State Gazette* (Austin), December 1, 1860, "If this be Treason, Make the Most of it!" The *Standard* (Clarksville), February 9, 1861, editorialized: "Let us show that Texans, in this revolution; as in the first, are

an unbroken brotherhood." John H. Reagan, *Memoirs with Special Reference to Secession and the Civil War by John H. Reagan*, Walter F. McCaleb and George P. Harrison, eds. (New York, 1906), 109, explained his position on Alexander H. Stephens. Reagan would not have voted for him "because it was the first time I had known of a people embarking in a revolution and selecting as one of their leaders a person known to be opposed to it." Discussing the election of delegates to the Secession Convention, Charles W. Ramsdell wrote in *Reconstruction in Texas*, 15: "Extra-legal and revolutionary as the plan was, it won the endorsement of secessionists everywhere, and by its very audacity at once gave them a great advantage over the Unionists, whose defensive and negative opposition only assured the election of secessionist delegates."

²⁷"Texas was not prepared for war. The people did not want war," was the observation made by Frank W. Johnson in *A History of Texas and Texans*, I, 541. Oscar M. Addison assured his worried mother, "Civil War, that won't happen." (Letter of February 10, 1861, Oscar M. Addison Papers.) Royal T. Wheeler, having surveyed the files of Northern newspapers, concluded: "we will not have war—at least anything like a general war." Twelve days later Wheeler again wrote reassuringly to O. M. Roberts, "we shall have no war; and the union shriekers at home will not be able, I am satisfied, to get the anticipated & desired aid from 'Uncle Abe' to make war on us at home. These desperate men will 'strut their brief hour' unaided & alone- & impotent for harm." (Letters of March 14 and 26, 1861, Oran Milo Roberts Papers.) Although Confederate forces had fired the "first gun" at Charleston, "the war was begun by the North to all intents and purposes," according to an editorial in the *Navarro Express* (Corsicana), April 24, 1861. In a letter to O. M. Roberts written on April 26, 1861. Leonard Randal expressed the view that: "Mr. Lincoln's preece [sic] policy has turned out to be a hoax and instead of peace the Northern people are prey [sic] strongly infected with the war spirit." (Oran Milo Roberts Papers.) Joel Daves wrote his preacher-brother, Oscar M. Addison, "the war fever rages here—two Companies are to be formed here—all K,G,Cs. I made them a speech last week. not public—in the Castle, of which I am c[h]aplain [sic] & Treasurer—a good office these hard times." (Oscar M. Addison Papers.) Governor Ed. Clark took time out from his executive duties to write Guy M. Bryan: "Lincoln, as you say, has threatened war and subjection to our Section—that was to be expected—I only regret that he is so *tardy* in executing, or attempting to carry out his threats. All we ask is for them to come & give us a chance to *welcome* them." (Letter of April 30, 1861, Guy M. Bryan Papers, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library.) Abraham Enloe wrote his relatives, living in Paducah, Kentucky, for "war news" of the border area and reflected on conditions in Texas: "We are all fuss preparing for war[.] let me hear all about your fuss and war arrangements [sic]. We have hard times[.] No money[.] Cannot sell property at any price." (Letter of May 16, 1861, [1860 on the letter] to John Enloe, in Abraham Enloe Letters, Civil War Period Letters—I, Archives Collection, University of Texas Library.) The editor of the *Navarro Express* (Corsicana) in an editorial on May 15, 1861, reasoned "no one here should fear the final result of the war, nor do we suppose any such feeling is entertained." Charles DeMorse expressed his candid opinion: "Our own belief is, that after all, it will not be Much of a war—that after the novelty of playing soldiers has worn off, the North will become reflective." [*Standard* (Clarksville), May 18, 1861.]

²⁸James P. Newcomb, *Sketch of Secession Times in Texas*, 12.