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**TEXAS'S INTERNAL IMPROVEMENT CRISIS OF 1856:
FOUR REMEDIAL PLANS CONSIDERED**

by Earl F. Woodward

On June 19, 1856, State Representative J. S. Sullivan of Ft. Bend and Austin counties—a proponent of state owned-and-operated rail and waterway facilities in Texas—wrote to spirited editor John Marshall of the *Austin Texas State Gazette* his assessment of the current critical need for an updated transportation system:

The entire public mind seems now to be so thoroughly aroused on the subject of Internal Improvements, that the early adoption of some system appears more than probable. The great future of our State will assuredly be most vitally affected by that policy, which may be adopted. We are, indeed, now, in an important crisis in our history.

The "crisis" of which Sullivan wrote had stemmed from the fact that of some forty-odd private state-chartered railroad companies in Texas, two had built a paltry sixty miles of track north and west out of Houston and Harrisburg at Galveston Bay, while the others had produced nothing at all.¹

This, coupled with a dismal river improvement record over the past years, inspired Texans from farm to legislature to consider four main schemes that culminated in passage of the so-called "Railroad Loan Bill" and "River Bill" in August of that same year. The former gave private railroad companies sixteen sections of land plus state loans of \$6,000 from the Special School Fund for each mile of finished track, while the latter set up a state fund out of the treasury to pay contractors to clear for navigation the obstructed rivers and bays.²

The rail-water improvement question had been a factor in state politics since 1853, if not earlier. In the gubernatorial election of that year, Representative Lorenzo Sherwood of Galveston—an advocate of state-owned railroads—supported Senator John W. Dancy of the La Grange District. Dancy, in opposition to Elisha Marshall Pease who at that time supported the private rail builders, asked that the \$10,000,000 payment received from the federal government in the Texas-New Mexico boundary settlement of 1850 be used for constructing state railroads. Pease's ear, however, proved closer attuned to public sentiment than were those of the state plan men: the people elected him to office, and incidentally recorded their opposition to a state system of not only railroads but also of waterways.³

The state system advocates did not tire easily. Sherwood's plan gained heavy support on Galveston Island owing to the persuasive prodding of editorials in Willard Richardson's *Galveston Weekly News*. Richardson opposed private rail companies because he believed that they "must necessarily possess interests antagonistic to those of the people, from whom they expect to make their profits and their fortunes."⁴ He was obsessed, also, with a fear that the snag-filled lower Trinity below Liberty—very destructive to steamboat commerce—was encouraging East Texans to dispatch their cotton and timber overland to New Orleans, instead of to Galveston, his beloved "Island City."⁵ Similar fears drove other Texans to invent remedial internal improvement plans. Soon four of their elaborate schemes were circulating for popular consideration. Sherwood's so-called "State Plan" was supplemented with another of like hue authored by the aforementioned J. S. Sullivan, while two loaning policy schemes made bids. They were the "Iron Rail Loan Bill" sponsored by Representative M. L. Merrick of Bexar

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County (San Antonio), and the Railroad Loan Bill written by Senator Edward A. Palmer of Harris County (Houston). These plans are compared in the charts below⁶:

I. THE STATE SYSTEMS

SHERWOOD'S STATE PLAN	SULLIVAN'S STATE PLAN
<p>Objectives, unique to each one:</p> <p>1. State builds 1,500 miles of track.</p>	<p>State builds unspecified number of miles of track.</p>
<p>Funding:</p> <p>1. State borrows 15-30 million dollars, pays off this principal with new Internal Improvement Sinking Fund.</p> <p>2. State establishes Internal Improvement Tax of 10-15 cents per \$100 property valuation to pay off loan interest.</p> <p>3. State waterway improvement program with no set amount of funds.</p>	<p>State appropriations and two million dollar Special School Fund combined to form Internal Improvement Fund.</p> <p>State establishes school tax of 7 cents per \$100 property valuation to replace interest lost from Special School Fund.</p> <p>State allocates \$3,000,000 for railroads, \$200,000 for waterways.</p>
<p>Special Problems:</p> <p>1. Such large borrowing debt would require a constitutional amendment.⁷</p>	

Common Points:

1. Sale monies from 50,000,000 acres of state lands to be used.
2. Railroads to begin at Galveston, and at Powderhorn on Matagorda Bay, then build in northerly direction toward Red River; also, fan out to reach San Antonio, Austin, and East Texas.
3. Waterway jobs aim at improving Galveston Bay, creating intracoastal canal from Brazos Santiago to the Sabine River.

II. THE LOANING POLICIES

MERRICK'S IRON RAIL LOAN BILL

PALMER'S RAILROAD LOAN BILL

Objectives, unique to each one:

1. Private rail companies build three trunk lines, out of Sabine Pass, Galveston Bay, and Matagorda Bay; then, build northward on prescribed routes to meet the proposed transcontinentals near 32nd degree parallel of north latitude.

Existing private, state-chartered rail companies to continue with virtual free choice to build on routes described in charters.

2. Clear waterways for navigation.

Funding:

1. State-owned rails loaned to private companies after first 25-mile section graded for superstructure.

State loans given private companies after first 25-mile section is completed for service.

2. State buys rails with money from \$2,000,000 Special School Fund and sale of 75,000,000 acres of state lands; companies pay for loaned rails in installments.

Money to come from \$2,000,000 Special School Fund; be loaned at rate of \$6,000 per mile of track.

3. Two hundred thousand dollars of Special School Fund set aside to improve waterways.

Common Points:

1. Both plans provided land grants of sixteen sections per mile.
2. Both required companies to pay state with six per cent interest.

In 1855 Governor Pease switched his support substantially in the direction of Lorenzo Sherwood's State Plan. He backed the imposition of an internal improvement tax at the rate of fifteen cents per one hundred dollars property valuation; this sum would be combined with the Special School Fund to finance a ten-year state construction program. When a group of Galveston promoters questioned him, however, the governor qualified his stand. He said that he would support either of the loaning policy bills if the people indicated such a preference. Pease feared that any loaning policy must fail because private financiers would withhold investments, owing to, as he expressed it, the "well founded supposition, that no rail road in this State will, for many years to come, pay a fair interest upon its cost."⁸

If, indeed, the loaning policy bills must fail, then any chance of making internal improvements was imperiled. This was true because the state plans were opposed by such prestigious Texans as Sam Houston and Thomas J. Rusk, both of whom were currently members of the U. S. Senate. They believed that building trunk lines in the Southwest was a waste of time and money, that Texas should aid the promotion of the proposed transcontinental lines through her lands to the Pacific, and that connecting rails to the Gulf Coast would follow naturally.⁹

In the fall of that year, Sherwood's scheme suffered a shattering blow. On November 16, 1855, the Galveston representative spoke in the house on the subject of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, a highly-controversial topic related to the slavery question. Sherwood put together an indiscreet choice of words that left him open to charges that he was, indeed, a free-soiler! This, of course, was anathema in Southern-oriented ante-bellum Texas. His pro-slavery colleagues quickly showered him with questions, demanding to know where he stood on the most heated topic of the times. Sherwood angrily bellowed out that he did not think of black bondage as being a "Divine institution,"¹⁰ thereby literally ruining both his political career and the chances for passage of a state system so closely identified with himself.

Meanwhile, even as Sherwood spoke, Senator Palmer's Railroad Loan Bill was meeting with early approval in the halls of the legislature. Since his was the only one of the four plans that did not provide for waterway improvements, a "River Bill" was added. First indications were that legislators would vote their own interest. For instance, Representative M. D. Ector of Rusk County introduced the Railroad Loan Bill in the house. Henderson was the county seat of his constituency, and, undoubtedly, Ector was intent upon helping the troubled Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad reach that town. He also wanted to begin, at long last, construction of the proposed Henderson and Burkeville Railroad. Henderson thus would be connected with Galveston Bay and Sabine Pass, the latter via the Sabine River from Burkeville down. Shipping of East Texas's timber and cotton, not to mention other crops, would quicken and bring about an economic boom. In like manner, Senator James M. Burroughs introduced the River Bill into the upper chamber with intent to improve his area's Sabine, Angelina, and Neches rivers for cheap shipping down to the Mexican Gulf.¹¹

Palmer's loaning policy scheme rested comfortably upon firm support from such prominent Houston railroad promoters as William Marsh Rice, James H. Stevens, and William J. Hutchins. They were dedicated to the advancement of Houston's commercial growth against that of Galveston, which meant forging their blossoming "Bayou City" into being the premier railroad center on Galveston Bay. These men left newspaper support for their loaning policy up to the editor of their own Houston *Telegraph*, and to John Marshall at the *Gazette* office in the capital. Marshall, an uncompromising slave expansionist, could never bring himself to forgive Sherwood for his house speech. His dislike for the Galvestonian glowed with such heat that even after Sherwood succumbed to the pro-slavery accusers and resigned from the legislature in May 1856, Marshall got satisfaction out of writing crudely that the islander was a "putrid excrescence in our State."¹² S. A. Thompson moved into Sherwood's vacant legislative seat and immediately delighted Marshall and the loaning policy camp by declaring that he was "not so tied down" to his predecessor's State Plan "as to oppose blindly every other theory which may be proposed."¹³ Thus the Galvestonians began to tack, veering generally away from the failing state system and toward a loaning policy. In June, Representative John Henry Brown of Galveston set the course that most of his constituency henceforth would follow; he decided that, if necessary, he would accept Palmer's Railroad Loan Bill, but only after working in the legislature "to divest it of every doubtful and dangerous feature."¹⁴

Throughout the first half of 1856 numerous railroad conventions had been held statewide to determine popular sentiment on the improvement plans. Each elected delegates to attend a general convention at Austin on Friday and Saturday, July 4-5. The will of that convention was intended to guide a special session of the legislature which Governor Pease had called to deal with the internal improvement crisis. It turned out that a majority of these delegates favored a loaning policy that was close to the terms of Palmer's Railroad Loan Bill. They asked the legislature to permit the state to "loan to all Railroad Companies, which shall have completed twenty-five miles of road, a sum

approximating to one-third of the cost of construction; [and] not less than six thousand nor more than eight thousand dollars per mile" from the Special School Fund.¹⁵

The state system people, however, still would not down easily. John Dancy helped write a strong dissenting minority opinion at the Austin convention. Sherwood and Sullivan tried to inspire their faltering followers by publishing their firm conviction that the loaning policy was nothing more than certain improvement schemes that had already failed to lay promised tracks in Missouri, Georgia, Alabama, and other southern states. Then Sherwood announced that he would speak in Galveston on Monday, July 7, in the wake of the Austin convention's adjournment. He hoped, presumably, to try to convince his fellow islanders that he was, indeed, a loyal Texan and not a free-soiler. His try, alas, was doomed to failure. A battery of Island City businessmen under the aggressive leadership of William Pitt Ballinger, the influential merchant capitalist, aligned themselves against Sherwood. They had been embarrassed by Sherwood's folly in the legislature, he denounced him, and had followed Representative Brown's cautious entry into the Railroad Loan Bill camp. Now they would suffer no return of the villain Sherwood, and they bluntly threatened him with violence if he mounted the rostrum. Sherwood retreated; he cancelled his speech, pleading the dearness of maintaining public safety. John Marshall happily wrote in the *Gazette* afterwards that "Galveston has at last done her duty."¹⁶

Several days later, in mid-July, Palmer's bill faced heavy amendatory debate in the house. Representative J. W. Throckmorton introduced it, guided it past several attempted revisions, then succeeded in securing passage of his own important amendment that eliminated loans to the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad for its fifty-mile span then under construction south of Houston. Throckmorton represented the north-central railroad counties of Denton, Collin, and Cook which had expressed in their convention held at Dallas a desire to link their sector with Houston. This could best be done through extending loans to the Galveston and Red River Railroad that was already building northward out of its Houston terminus.¹⁸ This was the key to the Railroad Loan Bill's success: link the Dallas area to Houston for steamer shipping out of Galveston Bay to New Orleans and abroad. The pending transcontinentals—when finally built—thusly would be tied into the Gulf Coast. The mainland would prosper, although Galveston might die. To this Throckmorton-Palmer scheme, neither the Island City nor the southern leg of the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson Railroad were essential.

With Sherwood finally ousted for certain, Sullivan's bill was the last hope for a state system of building railroads—but it lacked popular support. The adoption of the Railroad Loan Bill, give or take a few amendments, appeared certain at the current special session of the legislature. Among high state officials only Governor Pease still expressed a strong preference for a state system.¹⁷

Since the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson's proposed trackage up to the Bayou City was left dependent upon private funds and prior state land grant laws, Galveston's Representative Brown tried to make the best of the discriminatory situation. He succeeded in writing into the Palmer bill the exclusion from loan benefits of all railroads below Houston in the bay area.¹⁹ Brown and officials of the Galveston-based line had become convinced that Houston's Galveston and Red River company wanted to use loan money to lay tracks down to the island. Holding the bill's financial advantage, the Houston road conceivably would build faster than the Galveston, Houston, and Henderson; capture the Galveston line's territory, and ruin its Island City promoters through bankruptcy. Now, with all lines excluded from loans, the islanders seemed to ask only for fair competition; they henceforth would go it alone with their private railroad, chancing the loss.²⁰

This Railroad Loan Bill became law on August 13, 1856. Governor Pease passively refused to sign it, indicating that he still thought a state system the proper remedy for the railroad crisis. Neither did he endorse the accompanying River Bill, and probably for the same reason relative to the clogged waterways. The River Bill's life had already begun, legally, on August 1. It provided that a state engineer assign various waterway projects to the highest bidders: that any subscription of \$1,000 or more, with five per cent actually paid into a fund, be supplemented with quadruple amounts of state money up to a maximum of \$50,000; and that \$15,000 each be provided for clearing the Red, Sabine, and Rio Grande rivers in cooperation with the respective states of Arkansas and Louisiana, and the Republic of Mexico—if they should choose to contribute matching sums. The governor controlled the dispersal of funds under the River Bill, while he, the comptroller, and the attorney general acted as a board of commissioners in allotting the Special School Fund as individual loans to qualified private railroad companies. In both cases, the state engineer was kept in close consultation.²¹

On August 15, 1856, the legislature overwhelmingly elected William Fields of coastal Liberty County to be the first state engineer. Fields, a highly-respected Democrat whose ability and character was recognized even by the political opposition, conveniently established his office at Galveston.²² A modest man, just prior to his appointment he apologetically confessed to having had "no experience in river improvements." He vowed, however, to "endeavor, by every possible means, to inform & qualify myself, and by a judicious management of the fund appropriated advance the interests of every section of the state."²³

Texans everywhere enthusiastically supported Fields' determination to make the program a success. On August 4, with the River Bill only seventy-two hours old, editor Edward Cushing of the *Houston Telegraph* gloated that "we ought to do wonders" in opening up the waterways.²⁴ On September 1, new railroad activity included an extension of the troubled Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railroad Company charter; chartering of the Sabine and Galveston Bay Railroad and Lumber Company (which evolved into the important Texas and New Orleans line); and altering of the misnamed Galveston and Red River Railway Company's name to that of the Houston and Texas Central Railway Company. Also, William Marsh Rice led a Houston group that secured a charter for the Houston Tap and Brazoria Railroad Company. This line soon would dip down into the "Sugar Bowl" of the lower Brazos bottoms and literally siphon the cane commerce away from Galveston. These four companies—led by the Houston and Texas Central which made the first application for a \$150,000 loan in March 1857—plus the Washington County Railroad between Hempstead and Brenham, and the ante-bellum Southern Pacific transcontinental at Marshall, were the only lines given state loans. The total amount was \$1,816,500, all transacted by the early days of the Civil War. This, with the accompanying land grants, enabled the private companies to build about 331 of the state's 492 miles of track that were operational at that fateful time.²⁵

The River Bill began its task even more from scratch than did the Railroad Loan Bill. Certain projects had had their beginnings early in the decade of the 1850s, such as the Galveston and Brazos Canal. David Bradbury, the project engineer, had opened the waterway between West Bay and the river on May 1, 1854. The goal was to expedite shipping from the Brazos bottom lands to the island's wharves. Further excavation allowed the steamer *Major A. Harris* to make the first voyage through the crude canal in December of that same year. The waterway soon afterwards was expanded to dimensions of eight miles by fifty feet by three and one-half feet. Ninety-five sections of state land grants in January, 1856, was helpful, but the big financial boost that brought relief to the promoters was the authorization for funds in the River Bill "to complete the Canal."²⁶

Under the state system plans, this canal was to have been part of a great protected intracoastal waterway from the Rio Grande to the Sabine—but this ambition was only implied in the River Bill. Dredging was planned along the coastal bays, while the rivers were to be cleared from their mouths upward. Fields were given a fund of \$300,000 from the treasury to pay contractors. He awarded jobs for the lower Colorado and Guadalupe rivers near Matagorda Bay, and for the Angelina, Sabine, and Caddo Lake area in East Texas; he did, however, arrange the job assignments in such a way that an intracoastal canal and a cleared, navigable Galveston Bay would result. The bay jobs included clearing the lower Brazos and San Jacinto rivers, cutting through sand bars and oyster reefs, and dredging deeper West Bay's approach to the Galveston and Brazos Canal. Dependable David Bradbury found that his experience in building the canal stood him in good stead on these later contracts. He won several of the bids for the bay work, and earned close to \$38,000 by 1858.²⁷ The importance of opening Galveston Bay for heavier ocean traffic is worth close attention at this time. It was to allow large, seagoing steamers to reach the railheads at Harrisburg and Houston. Of particular importance to the Dallas-Houston interests that had backed the Railroad Loan Bill was getting these ships to the Houston and Texas Central railhead at the Bayou City. When all was done, northern Texas—its wheat, transcontinentals from the Mississippi to the Pacific, everything—would have access to the Mexican Gulf by rail at Houston, and could henceforth ship abroad from there over the navigable, sufficiently-deepened bay. This was the ultimate purpose of the Railroad Loan Bill and the River Bill when meshed together.

The improvement in and around Galveston Bay was far more successful than at other areas. The intracoastal canal jobs went quite well, with the Aransas-to-Corpus Christi channel being finished by year's end, 1857. By the start of the Civil War, dredging crews had enlarged it to sixty by eight feet, enough to handle ocean freight.²⁸ No progress was made, however, on opening a proposed channel from Corpus Christi to Brazos Santiago.²⁹ This was not unexpected since the prime effort was expended on dredging the channel from Corpus Christi toward Matagorda Bay, and, eventually, the Galveston and Brazos Canal.³⁰ On other projects, the Colorado River was opened successfully, but only remained so until 1860 when its giant raft rebuilt itself; the Brazos clearing effort fell far behind schedule, making it the only notable disappointment at Galveston Bay; and the Sabine River job lagged and required a change of contractors.³¹

Whatever shortcomings befell the internal improvement program are not traceable to lack of effort or cooperation on the part of either Governor Pease or State Engineer Fields. It is to the chief executive's credit, considering his basic lack of confidence in a loaning policy, that he worked diligently to see the program through. Fields—there can be little doubt—actually worked himself into an early grave. He was ill on several occasions while holding office, found the necessary traveling from project to project extremely tiring, and at one time asked Pease to provide several temporary assistants for his tasks. William Fields died in September, 1858.³²

Thus during the early 1850s internal improvements lagged in Texas and prompted the passage of the state's first comprehensive rail-waterway improvement program. It alleviated, if it did not dispel, the crisis in transportation. The debate over a state system or a loaning policy was long and intense. It was highlighted by a commercial war between Galveston and Houston, and by strong desire among northern Texans to achieve a transcontinental to the Pacific Ocean and a state railroad to the Gulf of Mexico. The Railroad Loan Bill, devised by Houston interests, seemed the best solution. It pumped state loans into the existing sluggish private rail companies and made Houston Texas's premier ante-bellum rail center. The Railroad Loan Bill and the River Bill accomplished this at the expense of Galveston, an island port steeped in colorful history, but destined henceforth to a less competitive commercial role on the bay.

NOTES

¹St. Clair Griffin Reed, *A History of the Texas Railroads* (Houston, 1941), 50. Sullivan's quote is in *Austin Texas State Gazette*, July 5, 1856. For a survey of improvements, see Earl F. Woodward, "Internal Improvements in Texas Under the Administration of Governor Peter Hansborough Bell, 1849-1853," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXXVI (October, 1972), 161-182.

²The Railroad Loan Bill also provided for a security lien on the railroad company bonds and thus was considered both a profitable and sound investment of the \$2,000,000 Special School Fund and a consequent aid to education. See *Austin Texas State Gazette*, February 2, November 22, 1856. For full text of the Railroad Loan Bill, see Hans P. N. Gammel (comp.), *The Laws of Texas, 1822-1897* (10 vols.; Austin, 1898), IV, 449-455; River Bill, IV, 427-431.

³Earl Wesley Fornell, *The Galveston Era; The Texas Crescent on the Eve of Secession* (Austin, 1961), 167; Ira G. Clark, *Then Came the Railroads: The Century from Steam to Diesel in the Southwest* (Norman, 1958), 15, 27; *Austin Texas State Gazette*, December 13, 1853.

⁴Fornell, *The Galveston Era*, 162-163. Quote from *Galveston Weekly News*, January 11, 1853.

⁵*Galveston Weekly News*, January 10, 1854.

⁶See *Austin Texas State Gazette*, May 17, 1856, for full texts of the four plans.

⁷Article 7, Section 33 of the Texas Constitution of 1845 stated this debt prohibition: "The aggregate amount of debts hereafter contracted by the Legislature, shall never exceed the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, except in case of war, to repel invasion, or suppress insurrections. And in no case shall any amount be borrowed, except by a vote of two-thirds of both Houses of the Legislature." See Gammel (comp.), *Laws of Texas*, II, 1295.

⁸*Austin Texas State Gazette*, April 28, 1855.

⁹Amelia W. Williams, and Eugene C. Barker (eds.), *Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863* (8 vols.; Austin, 1941), V, 454; Llerena Friend, *Sam Houston: The Great Designer* (Austin, 1954), 237. Houston preferred to give railroads only grant lands, not loans, believing this method best to build the lines, develop state lands, and subsequently to strengthen the state's economy.

¹⁰See *Galveston Weekly News*, December 18, 1855, for full text of Sherwood's speech.

¹¹*Senate Journal*, 6th Texas Legis., Reg. Sess. (1855), 54, 68; *Austin Texas State Gazette*, December 15, 22, 1855.

¹²Fornell, *The Galveston Era*, 169; *Austin Texas State Gazette*, May 24, July 26, 1856. Quote is from July 26 issue.

¹³*Austin Texas State Gazette*, May 24, 1856.

¹⁴*Galveston Weekly News*, June 24, 1856.

¹⁵*Austin Texas State Gazette*, May 10, July 12, 1856; *Galveston Weekly News*, July 8, 1856. See *Gazette*, March 8-July 19, 1856, for accounts of the various conventions; see July 12 issue for the great Austin convention.

¹⁶Austin *Texas State Gazette*, July 5, 12, 26, 1856; Galveston (*Tri-Weekly*) *News*, July 8, 1856; Galveston Citizens Committee to Sherwood, July 7, also undated broadside, 1856, William Pitt Ballinger Papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin); J. D. B. DeBow (ed.), *DeBow's Review*, XXI (1856), 433-438. Quote is from *Gazette*, July 26 issue.

¹⁷Austin *Texas State Gazette*, July 19, 26, 1856.

¹⁸*House Journal*, 6th Texas Legis., Adj. Sess. (1856), 54, 90, 92; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, July 19, August 2, 1856.

¹⁹*House Journal*, 6th Texas Legis., Adj. Sess. (1856), 97-98, 104-105.

²⁰G., H., & H. President Richard B. Kimball to Sen. M. M. Potter, July 4, 9, 12, 1856, Ballinger Papers.

²¹Gammel (comp.), *Laws of Texas*, IV, 427-431, 449-455; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, August 2, 1856.

²²Austin *Texas State Gazette*, August 22, September 27, 1856. For the esteem in which the Texas American (Know Nothing) Party held Fields, see Ralph A. Wooster, "An Analysis of the Texas Know Nothings," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXX (January, 1967), 415; for a view of one of Fields' competitors for the engineer job, see H. McLeod to Guy M. Bryan, August 3, 1856, Bryan Papers (University of Texas Archives, Austin).

²³Fields to "Gentlemen" (presumably, of the legislature), August 9, 1856, *Ibid*.

²⁴Cushing to Bryan, August 4, 1856, *Ibid*.

²⁵G. & R. R., H. & T. C. Railway Co. Minute Bk. No. 76 (1852-1871), 67, 69 (Southern Pacific Railroad Co. Archives, Houston); Gammel (comp.), *Laws of Texas*, IV, 347-351, 744-749, 808-816; Charles Shirley Potts, *Railroad Transportation in Texas* (Austin, 1909), 34, 92. Company loans went to the B. B., B. & C., \$420,000; H. & T. C., \$450,000; T. & N. O., \$430,000; H. T. & B., \$300,000; S. P., \$150,000; W. C. R. R., \$66,000. See Reed, *A History of the Texas Railroads*, 137.

²⁶Galveston *Weekly News*, May 2, November 7, December 5, 1854, September 22, 1857; Bernice Lockhart, "Navigating Texas Rivers, 1821-1900" (M.A. thesis, St. Mary's University, 1949), 59; Pease, Proclamation, September 11, 1855, Governors' Correspondence (Archives, Texas State Library, Austin); Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 12, 1856. Quote is from the *Weekly News* issue of September 22.

²⁷Fields to Pease, June 20, July 1, October 5, 1857, Governors' Correspondence; Galveston *Weekly News*, October 13, 1857; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, January 31, August 22, 29, September 12, 1857.

²⁸Pease's Report to Legislature, December 3, 1857, Governors' Correspondence; Galveston *Weekly News*, November 17, 1857, quoting correspondence from Corpus Christi dated November 5, 1857; *Texas Almanac & State Industrial Guide, 1861* (Dallas, 1861), 236.

²⁹As late as November 25, 1859, a preliminary survey had yet to be undertaken in preparation for planning construction of the lower section of the prospective intracoastal canal. See Austin *Texas State Gazette*, December 3, 1859.

³⁰Galveston *Weekly News*, September 15, 1857.

³¹Gammel (comp.), *Laws of Texas*, IV, 967-968; Pease's Report to Legislature, December 3, 1857, Governors' Correspondence; Comer Clay, "The Colorado River Raft," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LII (April, 1949), 423.

³²Fields to Pease, April 13, June 20, 1857, Governors' Correspondence; Austin *Texas State Gazette*, February 7, 1857, September 18, 1858. A. B. Gray, a former surveyor for the fraud-ridden Southern Pacific Railroad, succeeded Fields as state engineer. See Robert J. Walker, Thomas B. King to Pease, September 12, 1854, Governors' Correspondence; Reed, *A History of the Texas Railroads*, 82. It is not unreasonable to assume that a railroad man such as Gray might have tended to let waterway improvements lag, thus accounting for, say, the rebuilding of the Colorado's raft.