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CONTENTS

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Archie P. McDonald
Editor

BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN B. DENTON, PIONEER PREACHER-LAWYER-SOLDIER

by John Denton Carter

John Bunyan Denton, pioneer Texas leader for whom the county and city of Denton were named, earned wide acclaim during his lifetime as a forceful and picturesque figure, an eloquent orator, and a many-sided man who made his mark as a Methodist preacher, lawyer, and soldier on the north Texas frontier.[1] A native of Tennessee, Denton lived most of his life in the Arkansas Territory and his last four years in the Republic of Texas. Much of the fame that survives him rests largely on his death in the Indian wars, an event that helped to open up the north Texas prairie to agricultural settlement. Five years after his death in 1841, the grateful people of Texas gave his name to one of the new counties carved out of the wilderness which today supports a population of several million centered on the great cities of Dallas and Fort Worth.

Born in Tennessee on July 28, 1806, Denton lost his parents when he was eight years old and was apprenticed with his older brother William to Jacob Wells, a blacksmith. Both Denton's father and Jacob Wells were Methodist preachers, probably part-time local preachers, a very important element in the spread of Methodism on the frontier. Soon after the death of Denton's parents, near the end of the War of 1812 when many settlers were rushing into the newly opened lands to the west, Jacob Wells moved with his family and the Denton children from Tennessee to Indiana, and from thence to Clark County, Arkansas Territory, where John B. Denton lived most of his Arkansas years.[2]

Clark County lies along the Ouachita River in southwest Arkansas. The present county seat, the university city of Arkadelphia, developed in time along the west bank of the river, but when the Wells and Dentons arrived in the county there was no settlement that could be described as a town or even a village. The inhabitants were scattered along the streams in small communities or on isolated farms. Some large slaveowners moved into Clark County with their slaves in the early period, but most of the settlers made their living as subsistence farmers, hunters, trappers, and fishermen. Wild life was abundant and provided a major source of food as well as a profitable trade in furs and hides.[3]

Jacob Wells became one of the leading citizens of Clark County and of the Arkansas Territory. He arrived in the county with his family and the Denton children some time before 1819, the year in which his name appears in the records as a member of both the grand and petit juries.[4] In 1824 he was commissioned a colonel by the territorial governor and given command of the First Regiment of the Arkansas Territorial Militia. John B. Denton's brother William was commissioned a second lieutenant in the regiment.[5] When Arkansas was admitted to the union in 1836, Jacob Wells became the first county treasurer of Clark County under statehood.[6]

Some of the accounts of John B. Denton's boyhood days in Arkansas, based on distorted source material, suggest that Denton was reared not only in poverty-stricken but even "degraded" circumstances, but all of the reliable evidence portrays Wells as a man of character and substance, a prosperous farmer, blacksmith, and public servant.[7] However, there was one unfortunate situation in the Wells household that made life difficult for Denton. Both John and his older brother William had been apprenticed to Wells to learn the blacksmith trade, but it appears that John, not yet in his teens, was considered

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John Denton Carter is from Biloxi, Mississippi.

too young to work at the forge and was made to help Mrs. Wells with the house work until he grew older. John could not get along with Mrs. Wells—could not abide her "unbearable scolding," according to one of Denton's sons—and he left the Wells home at the age of twelve to work as a deckhand on a flatboat on the Arkansas River.[8] No doubt there was reconciliation later, because John returned to Clark County to marry and settle down in the same community in which his brother William, Jacob Wells, and other members of the Wells family lived.[9]

At the age of eighteen John B. Denton married sixteen-year-old Mary Greenlee Stewart, a native of Bossier Parish, Louisiana, who, according to some accounts, taught him to read and write.[10] Six children were born to the Dentons between 1826 and 1840. At the time of his marriage it can be assumed that the ambitious young Denton began to think more seriously of a career beyond that of a landless subsistence farmer. He was a man possessed of much native intelligence, although no formal education. He had strong religious convictions based on the teachings of his preacher-father—who had named him after the great religious mystic, John Bunyan—and of the Methodist missionaries who were active in the Ouachita area at an early period. At this time, too, John must have discovered his unusual talent as an orator which was to serve him well later in the pulpit and the courtroom.

In 1826, two years after his marriage, John B. Denton made the decision to enter the Methodist ministry.[11] For some years, however, he remained in Clark County as a local preacher performing voluntary services at Methodist meetings in his own area while supporting himself and family by other means. During these formative years Denton came under the influence of Rev. William Stevenson, one of the founders of Arkansas Methodism, and other early pioneer preachers and laymen who had established a flourishing center of Methodist activity at the farming community of Mound Prairie, located in Hempstead County about fifty miles southwest of the Ouachita settlements in Clark County. Here at Mound Prairie a group of Methodists and others, led by Stevenson, had migrated from Missouri to form one of the more prosperous communities in the territory. Here, too, the first Methodist church building in Arkansas, a log cabin, was constructed in 1817; and from here, under the leadership of Stevenson and his associates and successors, the Methodist preaching circuits widened and the number of preaching places increased in southern Arkansas, in the Choctaw Nation, and in the American settlements in northeast Texas between the Red and Sulphur Fork rivers.[12]

The circuit riders of travelling preachers from Mound Prairie found a fertile ground for the spread of Methodism in the Ouachita settlements in Clark County which William Stevenson had visited on a preaching mission from Missouri as early as 1814, several years before the Wells and Denton families arrived in the county. As Stevenson and his successors at Mound Prairie expanded their activities into the Ouachita settlements, they brought into their circle the forceful, eloquent, and enthusiastic young local preacher, John B. Denton, who, even in his youthful ministry, wrote Rev. William Allen, the Denton biographer, had "power, grace, and eloquence."[13]

In 1833 Denton decided to join formally the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Church (which then had jurisdiction over Arkansas Territory) and to give full time to the missionary work of the church in the southwest. He was admitted to the conference on trial at the annual meeting which assembled at Salem Camp Ground near Cane Hill, Washington County, Arkansas Territory,

on September 4, 1833. Denton was assigned, with one other preacher, to the Mound Prairie Circuit for the coming year.[14] By this time Mound Prairie was no longer the primary center of Methodist activity it had been in the past—its zenith has been reached in the 1820-1825 period—but was only one of nineteen circuits, or pastoral appointments, in the Arkansas Territory.[15]

Denton's first venture into the full-time ministry lasted for only a year, that is, from the fall of 1833 to the fall of 1834. The conference minutes for the 1834 meeting do not list Denton as a conference member, and, in fact, he remained out of the conference for three years.[16] While there is no record of why Denton dropped out of the active ministry at the time, undoubtedly the primary reason was that he had difficulty making a living for his growing family, a difficulty that was to force him out of the ministry permanently after he moved to Texas. No doubt, too, he was not happy over the requirement that he be separated from his wife and small children over long periods as he rode the circuit. It was Bishop Francis Asbury's opinion that batchelorhood was the ideal condition for a Methodist circuit rider on the frontier; and Denton's experiences seem to bear this out.[17] After his one year on the circuit, Denton returned to Clark County where, in Methodist parlance, he "located," that is, assumed the status of a local preacher performing part-time duties in the community while making a living in other ways.

One result of Denton's appointment to the Mound Prairie Circuit was that it brought him into direct contact with the Texas fever, or "Texas mania," defined by a preacher in Missouri as "the General rage in every quarter to Move to Texas." In Hempstead County in 1824 "movers were passing nearly every day going west" to the Mexican province of Texas.[18] The Mound Prairie community was located only a few miles from the town of Washington, then the county seat of Hempstead County and the very center of this steady migration. In fact, Washington and the surrounding area formed a sort of staging point for the final leg of the journey into northeast Texas. Here the migrants were able to obtain the supplies that would be needed until they reached their destinations in Texas, to have their horses shod and rested and their wagons repaired. Among the famous men who passed through this area and remained for awhile on their way to Texas were Stephen F. Austin and James Bowie. Austin became a friend and correspondent of Rev. William Stevenson, visited in the Stevenson home, and left some of his baggage in Stevenson's care when he departed for Texas.[19]

As John B. Denton rode the Mound Prairie Circuit into southwest Arkansas during the year 1833-1834, he had occasion more than once to cross the Red River and preach to the American settlers in Texas.[20] He was not the first Methodist preacher to do this; in fact, William Stevenson had preached at Pecan Point on the Texas side of the Red River as early as 1815, according to his autobiography.[21] It is probable that Denton considered northeast Texas to be within his bailiwick, because Arkansas then claimed all of the region lying between the Red and Sulphur Fork rivers and has organized the area as Miller County, with the county seat at Pecan Point.[22]

The Texas fever did not take hold of Denton at this stage of his career, that is, during his year on the Mound Prairie Circuit. Three years later, at the annual meeting of the Arkansas Conference at Little Rock on November 1, 1837, he was readmitted *in absentia* to the conference and was assigned, probably on his own initiative, to the Sulphur Fork Circuit in northeast Texas.[23] But before he reentered the conference and received his Texas appointment, he was presented in September of that year with the opportunity for a long trip into Texas extending over several months as the travelling companion of Rev. Littleton

Fowler, a member of the Tennessee Conference who had been sent to Texas by the Methodist Board of Foreign Missions at New York. Fowler and Denton crossed the Red River into Texas at the end of September, 1837. The trip is described in Rev. Fowler's journal:

> In Arkansas, I engaged John B. Denton, a local preacher, to accompany me to Texas to work in the missionary field. . . We held a camp-meeting near Clarksville, Red River County, near the first of October. From Clarksville, in the protecting company of three others, we two, with provisions for four days packed on our horses, struck out across Texas for Nacogdoches. We slept in the forest four nights, and arrived at Nacogdoches on October 16, 1837, and preached two sermons. . .
>
> October 19th we reached San Augustine and preached four nights in succession. There I began a subscription for building a church. In less than two weeks a lot was deeded, $3500 was subscribed, trustees were appointed, and the building was under written contract to be finished before the first of next September. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."[24]

In November 1837 Littleton Fowler departed San Augustine for a visit to Houston, then the capital city, and left Denton temporarily in charge of the work in the San Augustine-Nacogdoches area. Fowler's main purpose was to establish churches in the major centers of population to the south. In Washington-on-the-Brazos, the original capital, he was given the deed to a large lot for the construction of a church; and in Houston, then a town of 800, a generous donor gave half a block near the capitol to the church which was to become the center of Methodism in the area for many years.[25]

In the meantime, back in San Augustine, John B. Denton was becoming quite concerned over rumors that both Littleton Fowler and Robert Alexander, another Methodist missionary, were speculating in land. In a letter of November 15, 1837, from San Augustine, Denton wrote to Fowler, then in Houston, asking for some assurance that the rumors were false, else he was quite willing to forfeit the Fowler friendship and leave the mission.[26] As a matter of fact, he did soon leave the mission and return to Mound Prairie, more because of his longing for his family and his desire to reenter the regular pastorate, rather than his disappointment in Rev. Fowler.[27]

The next letter from Denton to Fowler, dated February 15, 1838, was written from the Choctaw Nation where the Methodists maintained a mission near present Idabel, Oklahoma. Denton informed Fowler that he had arrived home safely and "was permitted to see my dear family [then amounting to his wife and five children] & found them in the enjoyment of good health; for all of these blessings I am thankful to our common Parent." While happy about his family, Denton was not so sanguine about the state of religion in Mound Prairie, once the very flower of Arkansas Methodism. He wrote:

> The state of religion in Hempstead is anything else than very favorable. The love of many is truly waxed *cold*, others have *backslidden* & so our Divine Master has suffered in the house of his friends.
>
> O that the Great Head of the Church may revive a zeal according knowledge in the bosom of his *ministers* & the *laity*.

Upon his return to Hempstead County early in 1838, Denton learned for the first time that he had been appointed, back in November 1837, to the Sulphur Fork Circuit in northeast Texas.[28] He could not have been too surprised, because he had probably arranged with the presiding elder to return to the full-time ministry provided he were given an appointment in Texas. He had gotten the Texas fever at last, and, as was the case of so many others, had seen in his mind's eye an opportunity to leave behind the frustrations of the past, in which he had never been able to provide his family with more than the bare necessities of life, and to envision a new and more prosperous life in the fabulous Republic of Texas. In many ways his dreams came true, although he had the misfortune to be cut down in battle just as he seemed on the threshold of realizing his fondest expectations.

To the letter of February 15, written to Fowler from the Choctaw Nation, Denton added a postscript four days later informing his friend that he had crossed into Texas and was staying with one of his Methodist brethren on the Sulphur Fork where the first quarterly conference of Denton's pastorate was held.[29] Unfortunately, Denton's colleague or co-pastor, Rev. E.B. Duncan, had not been able to report for duty but was seriously ill back in Tennessee. An even greater difficulty was that Denton could not bring his family with him but was forced to leave them in Arkansas for the time being while he made arrangements to provide food and lodging in Texas. Eventually, he was able to move them to Clarksville.

Denton again wrote his friend, Littleton Fowler, on March 29, 1838, in part to apologize for suspecting Fowler of speculating in land, and in part to report on his work on Sulphur Fork Circuit. By this time, he had made three rounds of his circuit, and while he had found it "all unorganized," he was nevertheless cheered by the reception of the people who were "anxious for preaching." Two days earlier he had "preached to a very attentive and serious congregation," with one conversion and four new members brought into the society; the following day five new members joined. The most encouraging news that Denton had to offer was that he had under way an arrangement for building a church in Clarksville, and that he had pledges for four or five hundred dollars with prospects for more.[30]

In spite of some successes here and there, Denton still found, after a year of hard work, that he had not been able to raise himself and family above the bare subsistence level. His dreams of improving his position in Texas had not materialized, nor could he see a chance for betterment as long as he remained in the ministry. It was under these circumstances that he grasped the opportunity to study law and to enter the legal profession. He was influenced strongly by a local Methodist preacher, John B. Craig, who had opened a law office in Clarksville. Denton began reading law in Craig's office, but even before this, he revealed in his March 29 letter to Fowler, he had been seriously considering a legal career and had purchased a small library of law books. He seemed to be almost apologetic to Fowler and told of his worry over whether he could practice law "in accordance with the spirit of the gospel." Nevertheless, he made the decision, before the next annual conference met in the fall of 1838, to give up his pastoral work and to form a law partnership with John B. Craig in Clarksville. He reverted to the status of a local preacher and preached occasionally as he rode the law circuit.[31]

John B. Denton prospered in the law. His oratorical talents, force of character, and mental acuity served him well in the courtroom as they had in the pulpit. Denton rode the law circuit back and forth across north Texas in his

practice before the district court, while his law partner, John B. Craig, an older man, stayed home and took care of the local business. Denton entered politics as a candidate for the Texas Senate in the 1840 election, but was defeated by the well-known Robert Potter, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the first secretary of the navy of the Texas Republic.[32]

As was true of so many Protestant ministers in the early Texas period, John B. Denton took an active interest in the Masonic Lodge. When he arrived in Texas he associated himself with the lodge at De Kalb in Bowie County which was within his Sulphur Fork Circuit. As he travelled his preaching circuit during his first year in Texas, and his law circuit after 1838, he kept in close touch with his Masonic brothers, occasionally speaking before lodge meetings or assisting in the installation of new lodges. While in Fannin County on court business he participated in the organization of Constantine Lodge No. 13 in Fort Warren on the Red River on November 3, 1840. This lodge continues today in the city of Bonham, county seat of Fannin County, and its records contain an account of Denton's participation in the birth of the lodge. The first senior warden of the lodge was James Slater Baker, district clerk of the county, one of whose sons would later marry Denton's oldest daughter.[33]

Following the disbandment of the Texas army after San Jacinto, the Republic was largely dependent for the defense of its borders on volunteers, a few ranger companies controlled by the central government, and locally controlled militia units sometimes known as ranger companies.[34] The officers of the militia units came from various backgrounds, but the most numerous were politicians and lawyers who combined the practice of law—and often farming and land speculation—with their political and military services. Among the outstanding military figures in north Texas during the period of the Republic were such lawyers as Edward H. Tarrant, William C. Young, and William H. Bourland, all of whom held political office at one time or another.[35] As was expected of a patriotic, vigorous, and ambitious young lawyer-politician, John B. Denton joined this group and was commissioned captain of a company in Brig. Gen. Edward H. Tarrant's Fourth Brigade, Texas Militia.

Denton's commission came at a time when his services, as well as those of every other able-bodied citizen on the north Texas frontier, were badly needed. Indian raids on isolated farms and settlements had been increasing and had reached even into Bowie County in the extreme northeast corner of the Republic. In April 1841 the raiders staged a gruesome attack on the Ripley family in an area south of Clarksville that later became part of Titus County. While the father was away, a party of Indians attacked the Ripley home, shot to death Mrs. Ripley and her grown son and oldest daughter, and clubbed to death several of the younger children.[36] The outraged settlers demanded retaliation, leading to the organization of an expeditionary force under Gen. Tarrant charged with locating and destroying the Indian base of operations which was known to be a group of villages lying in the vicinity of present Fort Worth.

In response to a call for volunteers, a force of approximately seventy mounted troops assembled on the Red River in Fannin County, proceeded to abandoned Fort Johnson near present Denison, and on May 14, 1841, struck out in a southwesterly direction toward the area in which the Indian villages were reported to be located. The Tarrant force had Capt. James Bourland as company commander with Lt. William C. Young second in command. Capts. John B. Denton and Henry Stout served as aides to Gen. Tarrant, with each placed in charge of a small detachment of scouts.

After a ten-day march the Tarrant force came upon the main body of Indians encamped in a group of villages along Village Creek at a point where the creek now intersects Highway 80 immediately east of the present limits of Fort Worth. Two of the villages were taken with little or no opposition, but on the approaches to a third village the invaders were met with gunfire and were forced to fall back and regroup near the second village. From here, Capt. Denton and Capt. Bourland were sent out with small scouting forces with instructions to scour the woods and to meet at a designated point a mile and a half in the direction of the third village, from whence they were ordered to report back to camp. But at the rendezvous point a trail was found leading down into the creek bottom toward the main Indian encampment. Disregarding instructions to avoid an ambush, a detachment, led by Denton and Stout, spurred their horses forward along the trail in order to obtain a better view of the Indian encampment. At a bend in the creek they were fired upon by the Indians waiting under cover. Denton was killed instantly, Henry Stout was badly wounded, and Capt. John F. Griffin was wounded slightly. The attack in which Denton was killed occurred on May 24, 1841. The startled scouts pulled back quickly and, in some dissarray, returned to the main camp. The most immediate concern was to recover Denton's body, which was accomplished by Capt. Bourland with a force of twenty-four men. Before the day was out the expedition was on its way back to Fannin County, taking a considerable amount of ammunition and other loot and a number of horses. General Tarrant had learned from captives that the Indian villages could muster a maximum force of a thousand men, and that about half that number were in camp at the time.[37]

As the Tarrant men crossed the area later organized as Denton County, they buried John B. Denton in a marked grave on an embankment overlooking Oliver Creek near its junction with Denton Creek. Present at the burial service were a number of men well-known in Texas history, including two, Edward H. Tarrant and William C. Young, for whom Texas counties were named. Others were the Bourland's, James and William H., both later members of the Texas legislature; Claibourne Chisum, father of John S. Chisum of Chisum trail fame; Henry Stout, great hunter and fighter who had migrated to Texas during the Spanish period; and Andrew J. Davis, later a prominent Methodist minister who wrote an account of the Tarrant expedition and the fight at Village Creek. In 1860 Denton's remains were found by John S. Chisum and removed to the Chisum ranch home near Bolivar in Denton County. The remains were again disinterred in 1901 and reburied on the courthouse lawn at Denton. A monument was placed over the Denton grave during the Texas centennial in 1936.[38]

John B. Denton's death aroused strong emotions in the north Texas community, with grief for the fallen hero mixed with anger and the urge to retaliate at the first opportunity. Within the next several months, two expeditions were sent against the Indian villages. A second Tarrant expedition, of 400 to 500 volunteers, assembled at Fort Inglish near present Bonham in July 1841. The other force, organized as the Third Brigade, Texas Militia, started from the Nacogdoches area under the command of Brig. Gen. James Smith. Neither of these two forces was able to find the Indians, who had fled the villages as the enemy approached.[39] One immediate result of the 1841 campaign was to transfer the border war zone farther to the west. More important in the long run, the rich north central Texas prairie was opened to agricultural development.

John B. Denton was endowed with many of those qualities associated with leadership, combined with a versatility found in few public men. He was articulate, intelligent, forceful, and ambitious. He had an attractive personality

and a sense of integrity and high purpose that earned him the friendship and respect of the best minds among his Arkansas and Texas contemporaries in the church and in public life. After some years of poverty and frustration, he seemed to have found himself when he moved to Texas. He was the first Methodist preacher to give full time to the work of the church in northeast Texas, and may justly be described as a founder of organized Methodism in the area. In an entirely different field, he was one of a group of pioneer north Texas lawyers who, as officers of the district and county courts, worked to establish a system of justice among rough frontiersmen who were too often moved by violent passions rather than respect for the rule of law. In his final great service to the Texas Republic, Denton have his life in a battle the repercussions of which would settle finally the conflict between encroaching settlers and the plains Indians for control of the north Texas prairie. Had he lived, John B. Denton would probably have gone far in the politics and public life of Texas. He was a man who seemed destined for power and place, but he passed on before he could realize his bounding ambitions. However, he achieved enough in his all-too-brief lifetime to have a Texas county and city named in his honor.

NOTES

[1]For many years Denton's middle name appeared in various publications as Bernard, but this error was corrected by Mrs. James William (Annie) Baker, widow of one of Denton's grandsons, in the Denton *Record-Chronicle* of February 3, 1957. John B. Denton, Jr., was known familiarly as "Bun" Denton, obviously a shortening of Bunyan.

[2]William Allen, *Captain John B. Denton, Preacher, Lawyer, and Soldier: His Life and Times in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas* (Chicago, 1905), 67-79.

[3]Mrs. Laura Scott Butler, "History of Clark County," Arkansas Historical Association *Publications*, I (1906), 362-394; II (1908), 553-579.

[4]*Ibid.*, I, 371.

[5]Clarence E. Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*, XX, *The Territory of Arkansas, 1825-1829* (Washington, 1953), 69.

[6]*Biographical and Pictorial Memoirs of Southern Arkansas* (Chicago, 1890), 117.

[7]Portrayal of the Jacob Wells family as "one of the most degraded families in Arkansas" is an example of the distortions introduced into the Denton biographical literature by Alfred W. Arrington in his frontier tales of the southwest. One of Arrington's stock characters was a young and eloquent preacher-lawyer named Paul Denton, obviously modelled after John B. Denton. Some of the fiction in the Paul Denton tales found its way into the various histories of Arkansas and Texas Methodism by simply changing the name of the hero to John B. Denton. The best account of Arrington's career and his fictional distortions of men and events is by Ted R. Worley, "The Story of Alfred W. Arrington," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, XV (Winter 1955), 316-339.

[8]Allen, *Capt. John B. Denton*, 80-84, 143-146.

[9]U.S. Fifth Census, 1830, Territory of Arkansas, Clark County, shows John and William Denton and several members of the Wells family as heads of families living in Caddo Township, Clark County.

[10]Allen, *Capt. John B. Denton*, 91, 146.

[11]*Ibid.*, 96-98.

[12]Walter N. Vernon, *William Stevenson, Riding Preacher* (Dallas, 1964), 40-43; Walter N. Vernon, *Methodism in Arkansas, 1816-1976* (Little Rock, 1976), 18-22; Allen, *Capt. John B. Denton*, 88.

[13]Vernon, *Methodism in Arkansas*, 21; Allen, *Capt. John B. Denton*, 99-100.

[14]*Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1833-1840* (New York, 1840).

[15]Vernon, *Methodism in Arkansas*, 21.

[16]*Minutes of the Annual Conferences* for the years 1834-1836, inclusive.

[17]In early Methodism in America only single men were accepted as conference members. Bishop Francis Asbury, the greatest circuit rider of them all, remained a batchelor all of his life.

[18]Vernon, *Methodism in Arkansas*, 21-22, 29.

[19]Vernon, *Stevenson, Riding Preacher*, 48-50; Charlean Moss Williams, *Washington, Hempstead County, Arkansas–Gateway to Texas 1835, Confederate Capital 1863* (Houston, 1951).

[20]Macum Phelan, *A History of Early Methodism in Texas, 1817-1866* (Nashville, 1924), 178; Walter N. Vernon, *Methodism Moves Across North Texas* (Dallas, 1967), 39-40.

[21]Vernon, *Stevenson, Riding Preacher*, 42-43; and *Methodism Moves Across North Texas*, 19-20.

[22]Rex W. Strickland, "Miller County, Arkansas Territory; The Frontier That Men Forgot," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, XVIII (1940), 12-34, 154-170; XIX (1941), 37-54.

[23]*Minutes of the Annual Conferences*, 1837.

[24]Dora Fowler Arthur, "Jottings From the Old Journal of Littleton Fowler," Texas State Historical Association *Quarterly*, II (July 1898), 78; Laura Fowler Woolworth, comp. and ed., *Littleton Fowler, 1803-1846; A Missionary to the Republic of Texas, 1837-1846* (Shreveport, La., 1936), 21.

[25]Arthur, Texas State Historical Association *Quarterly*, II: 79-81.

[26]The Denton to Fowler letter of November 15, 1837, is the first of three such letters preserved in the Fowler Collection, Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University.

[27]Littleton Fowler, as Denton suspected, acquired a considerable amount of land in his early Texas years. The 1840 tax lists show that in Nacogdoches County he held full title to 8,302 acres, and in San Augustine County 4,428 acres. He owned town lots and other acreage in three other counties. Gifford White, ed., *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin, 1966), 77, 88, 125, 165, 173.

[28]Denton to Fowler, February 15, 1838, Fowler Collection, Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University.

[29]Postscript dated February 19 to *Ibid.*

[30]Denton to Fowler, March 29, 1838, Fowler Collection.

[31]Allen, *Capt. John B. Denton*, 111-118.

[32]Ernest G. Fischer, *Robert Potter, Founder of the Texas Navy* (Gretna, La., 1976),

185.

[33]W.A. Barr, Secretary, Constantine Lodge No. 13, Bonham, Texas, to John D. Carter, March 7, 1960. The Constantine Lodge has maintained good records of its activities since the very beginning in 1840. The records include a history of the lodge written by one of the members.

[34]Joseph N. Heard, "Army of the Republic of Texas," in Walter P. Webb and H. Bailey Carroll, eds., *The Handbook of Texas*, 2 vols. (Austin, 1952) I:69-70; and Walter Prescott Webb, "Texas Rangers," in *Ibid.* II:755-756.

[35]Biographical sketches of these men appear in *Ibid.*

[36]*John Henry Brown, Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas* (Austin, 1892), 85.

[37]James T. De Shields, *Border Wars of Texas* . . . (Tioga, Texas, 1912), 353-359. This is the first account of the Village Creek fight to make use of the official report of Acting Brigade Inspector William N. Porter to Secretary of War Branch T. Archer, June 5, 1841.

[38]Andrew J. Davis' account of the Tarrant expedition appeared in the *Dallas News* of October 6, 1900, and was reprinted in Allen, *Capt. John B. Denton*, 130-142. The finding of Denton's remains, their removal to the Chisum home and later reburial at Denton is described at some length in Allen, *op. cit.*, 17-65.

[39]Brown, *Indian Wars*, 87-88.

OBJECT: SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE, THE FREEMAN-CUSTIS EXPEDITION

by Beverly Watkins

Thomas Jefferson had a life-long interest in Western exploration. Even before he knew of the purchase of Louisiana he had made the arrangements for the Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the Missouri River system to find routes for communication and trade with the Pacific coast.

As soon as the news of the purchase of Louisiana reached Jefferson, he began collecting information on the new territory. In preparing a report to Congress, Jefferson sent a list of seventeen questions about Louisiana to Daniel Clark, the consul at New Orleans, William Dunbar, a scientist and plantation owner of Natchez, Mississippi, and William C.C. Claiborne, governor of the Orleans Territory. Four of the questions dealt with maps and boundaries; others were about militia strength and Indian tribes. The answers that Jefferson received served as the basis for his report to Congress on 14 November 1803.[1]

Congress was also interested in learning more about Louisiana. On 8 March 1804 the House Committee of Commerce and Manufactures produced a report on the need for exploring the new territory. After taking note of the Lewis and Clark expedition and of the availability of information on the land along the Mississippi River, the report pointed out that large parts of Louisiana were still unknown, particularly along the Arkansas and Red Rivers. Special attention was given to the Red River because it was assumed that the source of the river was in the southwest corner of the new territory, where the boundary was undefined. The committee felt that the government should determine the latitude and longitude of the river's source. The report went on to recommend "that it will be honorable and useful to make some public provision for further exploring the extent, and ascertaining the boundaries of Louisiana."[2]

Jefferson and Henry Dearborn, Secretary of War, acted promptly on the committee's recommendation. Both of them wrote to William Dunbar on March 31, 1804 suggesting that he lead the expedition to explore the Arkansas and Red Rivers.[3] Dunbar was born in Scotland and educated at Glasgow and London. He came to America in 1771 where he engaged in the Indian trade; later he established a plantation near Baton Rouge, then moved to a new plantation near Natchez in 1783. He was widely known for his scientific abilities and was employed as an astronomer in running the northern boundary of Florida.[4]

The original plan of exploration for the Arkansas and Red Rivers was for the expedition to ascend the Red River to its source, then go overland to the Arkansas and descend that river. Dearborn wrote to James Wilkinson informing him of the expedition and directing him to supply Dunbar with an escort and supplies. The escort was to be a sergeant and ten men, volunteers if possible, who were faithful, discrete, and sober. In addition to a boat, they were to be furnished with six months rations of ham and flour, one wall tent, three common tents, and guns or rifles.[5]

From the beginning, Dunbar was worried about the reaction of the Spanish government to an expedition up the Red River, since the question of the boundary was unsettled. He communicated his fears to Jefferson, emphasizing orders which had been issued to the governor of Texas and the Commander at Nacogdoches to allow no Americans to approach the Texas frontier or to attempt to mark the Louisiana boundary. In view of the unsettled conditions, Jefferson ordered Dunbar to delay the expedition.[6]

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Dunbar, however, was anxious to do some exploring, so he decided to use the supplies and personnel to travel the Ouachita River, a tributary of the Red, and investigate some hot springs.[7] This limited expedition left Natchez on October 16, 1804 with Dunbar, Dr. George Hunter of Philadelphia (a chemist), a sergeant and twelve men. They reached the hot springs in December, and returned to Natchez in late January, 1805.[8]

The success of the expedition up the Ouachita River, and the wealth of scientific information which it produced, created renewed interest in the exploration of the Arkansas and Red Rivers. Early in March, 1805, Jefferson wrote Dunbar asking him to reorganize an expedition, using $5,000 appropriated by Congress. Dearborn echoed the request but limited Dunbar to a budget of $2,000.

Dunbar accepted the new assignment promptly and made several recommendations to make the trip easier, including using two small boats instead of one large one. He also mentioned again his fears of Spanish opposition, in particular from the militia at the Spanish settlement on Bayou Pierre about fifty miles above Natchitoches.[9]

In May Jefferson decided, because of the problems encountered by the Ouachita expedition in transporting itself from the river to the hot springs (about nine miles), that the new expedition should confine itself to the Red River rather than try to reach the Arkansas River by land.[10]

The President also attempted to solve the problem of Spanish opposition. He directed William C.C. Claiborne, governor of the Orleans Territory, to obtain a passport for the expedition from the Marquis de Casa Calvo, the Spanish boundary commissioner then in New Orleans. Claiborne was to stress the scientific nature of the expedition, and to offer Casa Calvo the opportunity of sending along his own representative in order to assure himself that obtaining geographical knowledge was the expedition's only activity.[11] Claiborne applied for the passport and got a favorable reply from Casa Calvo, who said that he would issue the passport on demand and that he was notifying other authorities because the expedition might cross their provinces.[12]

In the meantime, Dunbar was faced with finding leaders for the expedition. Although he would supervise the trip, he had decided not to be the actual leader. Dr. Hunter had also decided that the rigors of exploration did not appeal to him. Dearborn and Jefferson both suggested a number of possible candidates. Dunbar finally settled on Thomas Freeman, a surveyor he knew personally from running the Florida border, and not to be confused with Constant Freeman, the commander of the post at New Orleans. Dr. Peter Custis was chosen as the naturalist for the group.[13]

In February Claiborne wrote to Casa Calvo again on the subject of a passport. He informed the Spanish commissioner that the expedition led by Thomas Freeman would soon be ready to leave. Claiborne also renewed the assurances that the expedition was solely scientific. Casa Calvo, however, now declined to issue a passport and Freeman was forced to proceed without even that small measure of protection.[14]

By March Freeman had reached New Orleans to make the final preparations for the voyage. By this time Claiborne was afraid that the lack of a passport would cause Freeman some difficulties, saying, "I very much fear he will be interrupted in his excursion by our jealous and illdisposed Spanish neighbors."[15]

Claiborne had reason to be concerned. From the time the United States had purchased Louisiana, Nemesio Salcedo, the Commandant-General of the Interior Provinces, had feared the encroachment of foreigners on Spanish territory. He had sent a detachment of troops to the Bayou Pierre settlement, and it was he who had issued the order to stop Americans from entering Texas or trying to survey the boundary. He therefore saw the scientific expedition as a survey party in disguise. In order to meet the threat from the east, Salcedo redistributed his troops until he had 700 men in the province of Texas, with 141 at Nacogdoches by the end of 1805.

Antonia Cordero y Bustamente, the governor of Texas, was also concerned about the security of his province. In February 1806 the troops from Bayou Pierre were forced to withdraw beyond the Sabine River (the boundary claimed by the Americans). Following this humiliation, Cordero replaced the commander at Nacogdoches with Captain Francisco Viana, and ordered Lieutenant Colonel Simon de Herrera to command the border forces. He also called militia from neighboring provinces until the number of soldiers in Texas reached 1,368 in June 1806, with 883 of these in Nacogdoches.[16]

The long delayed expedition up the Red River finally got under way in the spring of 1806, leaving Natchez on April 28. The party consisted of Freeman, Custis, Lieutenant Humphrey, Captain Sparks, two non-commissioned officers, seventeen soldiers, and a black servant; a total of twenty-four. They arrived at Natchitoches on May 19 and were joined by twenty more soldiers assigned to them because of the danger of Spanish opposition.[17]

The expedition left Natchitoches on June 2. Five days later they were overtaken by an Indian guide sent by Dr. John Sibley, the United States Indian agent at Natchitoches. The guide brought the news that a detachment of Spanish troops had left Nacogdoches with the object of intercepting the exploring party. This information made them more cautious but did not deter them.

At about one hundred miles above Natchitoches the party encountered its greatest geographical obstacle, the Great Raft. At this point the Red River was filled with logs and trees in an obstruction to navigation many miles long. The expedition had forced its way through three small rafts, but the enormity of the Great Raft forced them to leave the river and fight their way up the line of lakes and swamps which ran along the edge of the valley. It took them fourteen days of hard labor to regain the main channel above the Great Raft.[18]

On June 27 they reached the village of the Coushatta Indians about twenty miles above the raft. There they were met by a messenger from the chief of the Caddo village about thirty miles away. He brought news "that about three hundred Spanish dragoons . . . were encamped near that village with the design to prevent further advance of the Americans." The party set up camp to wait for further news from the Caddo village.[19]

Freeman's expedition remained at the Coushatta village for several days and was honored with a visit from the Caddo chief himself. By July 11 however, having heard no more news of the Spanish force, the expedition started up the river once more. Because the water was low, the boats often ran aground,and progress was slow.

On July 26 they were hailed by three Caddoes. The Indians told Freeman that the Spanish troops had gone to Nacogdoches for reinforcements but had returned to the Caddo village six days earlier. The Spanish force was greatly enlarged and had cut down a United States flag presented to the Caddo chief by Freeman before it had moved to a camp on a bluff a few miles away to wait for the arrival of the expedition.[20]

After burying a cache of important papers, provisions, and ammunition, the expedition reached the Spanish position on July 29. Ironically news of the Spanish detachment reached Claiborne in New Orleans on the same day, but he wrote the Secretary of War that he had no fears for their safety.[21]

Freeman had a different view of the situation. After surprising an advance guard which fled, the party readied their guns for action and continued up the river. When they rounded the next bend they had a good view of a long stretch of the river. The expedition stopped to fix its noonday meal and a short time later saw a large Spanish detachment riding toward them.

The soldiers from the expedition concealed themselves where they could attack the Spanish flank and rear if the opportunity arose. There proved to be no need for this, however. The Spanish troops stopped on the beach and the officers came forward to talk with Captain Sparks. The Spanish were determined to carry out their orders to stop the expedition. The Americans, recognizing the overwhelming superiority of the Spanish force, acquiesed and agreed to return down the river. They had traveled 230 miles by water above the Coushatta village; 635 miles above the mouth of the Red River; or roughly to the present western boundary of the state of Arkansas.[22]

The expedition reached New Orleans late in August and Claiborne immediately wrote a protest to Herrera. Claiborne pointed out that he had given Casa Calvo prior notice about the scientific nature of the trip. He also complained about the actions of the Spanish troops in cutting down the American flag at the Caddo village. Herrera replied only that Freeman and the Caddoes were both on Spanish territory. Claiborne rejoined that Herrera's lack of effort to justify the Spanish actions must come from the knowledge that the Americans were in the right.[23]

The Freeman-Custis Expedition added little to the fund of scientific knowledge. In his annual message to Congress in 1806 Jefferson noted that the voyage had not been successful but complimented the men on their zeal and prudence.[24] The Freeman expedition, along with those of Lewis and Clark, and Dunbar, did, however, help to make the country aware of the possibilities of the new territory, and encouraged a wave of settlers which soon made the Orleans Territory the new state of Louisiana.

NOTES

[1]Isaac J. Cox, "The Exploration of the Louisiana Frontier, 1803-1806," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1904* (Washington, 1905), 152.

[2]*Annals of the Congress of the United States*. 8 Cong. 1 Sess., 1125-26.

[3]Dunbar to Dearborn 13 May 1804, Dunbar to Jefferson 13 May 1804 in Mrs. Dunbar Rowland (Eron Rowland), ed., *Life, Letters and Papers of William Dunbar of Elgin, Morayshire, Scotland, and Natchez, Mississippi: Pioneer Scientist of the Southern United States* (Jackson, Miss., 1930), 128-33.

[4]Eron Rowland, *Life of William Dunbar*, 9-11.

[5]Dunbar to Jefferson 9 June 1804, Dunbar to/Constant/Freeman 14 June 1804 in *Ibid.*, 133. Secretary of War to James Wilkinson 31 March 1804, Secretary of War to Constant Freeman 23 April 1804 in Clarence E. Carter, ed., *The Territorial Papers of the United States*. Vol. 9 *The Territory of Orleans, 1803-1812* (Washington, 1940), 217-18, 231.

[6]Dunbar to Jefferson 13 May 1804 in Eron Rowland, *Life of William Dunbar*, 131; Cox, "Exploration of Louisiana," 155-56.

[7]Dunbar to Jefferson 18 August and 14 October 1804 in Eron Rowland, *Life of William Dunbar*, 139-41.

[8]For accounts of the journey see "Journal of a Voyage," in Eron Rowland, *Life of William Dunbar*, 216-320; and Milford F. Allen, "Thomas Jefferson and the Louisiana-Arkansas Frontier," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 20 (Spring 1961), 47-52.

[9]Jefferson to Dunbar 14 March 1805, Dearborn to Dunbar 25 March 1805, Dunbar to Dearborn 4 May 1805 in Eron Rowland, *Life of William Dunbar*, 148-52.

[10]Dearborn to Dunbar 24 May 1805, Jefferson to Dunbar 25 May 1805 in *ibid.*, 152-53, 174.

[11]President to Gov. Claiborne 26 May 1805 in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, 9:451.

[12]Claiborne to Casa Calso 11 July 1805, Casa Calvo to Claiborne 15 July 1805 in Dunbar Rowland, ed., *Official Letter Books of W. C. C. Claiborne, 1801-1816*. (Jackson, Miss., 1917; reprint ed. New York, 1972). 3:199, 128-29.

[13]Jefferson to Dunbar 14 March, 25 May 1805, and 12 January 1806, Dearborn to Dunbar 24 May 1805, Dunbar to Jefferson 6 July, 8 October, 17 December 1805, and 18 March 1806, Dearborn to Custis 14 January 1806 in Eron Rowland, *Life of William Dunbar*, 152-55, 174-75, 182-83, 186-91; Allen, "Jefferson and the Frontier," 58.

[14]Claiborne to Casa Calvo 8 February 1806, Claiborne to Dunbar 12 February 1806 in Dunbar Rowland, *Letters of W. C. C. Claiborne*, 3:262-63, 265.

[15]Claiborne to Jefferson 26 March 1806 in Carter, *Territorial Papers*, 9:616.

[16]Odie B. Falk, *The Last Years of Spanish Texas, 1778-1821*. (The Hague, 1964), 121-24.

[17]Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains*. Vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1823; reprint ed. *March of America Facsimile Series*, No. 65 Vol. 2, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1966), 306-7.

[18]James, *Expedition*, 307-9.

[19]*Ibid.*, 309-11.

[20]*Ibid.*, 311-312.

[21]Claiborne to Dearborn 29 July 1806 in Dunbar Rowland, *Letters of W. C. C. Claiborne*, 3:375.

[22]James, *Expedition*, 313-14.

[23]Claiborne to Herrera 26 August 1806, Herrera to Claiborne 28 August 1806, Claiborne to Herrera 31 August 1806 in Dunbar Rowland, *Letters of W. C. C. Claiborne*, 3:383-84, 392, 394.

[24]*Annals of Congress*, 9 Cong. 2 Sess., 14.

ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON'S 'CRUEL UNCERTAINTY'

by Max S. Lale

More than eight years after he died at Shiloh, Albert Sidney Johnston's heirs still were battling rival claimants for final title to a league of Harrison County land which the Confederacy's second ranking general officer had acquired—or thought he had acquired—in 1838. The tract lies four miles east of Marshall, though the city had not yet been settled at that time and would not become an incorporated municipality for another six years. The general's title difficulties, and his administrator's after the general's death, were common to the period and the place. As one of a breed, the early Texas settler and landowner was a singularly litigious human being whose passion for land led him to courthouses all over the Republic and the state it would become. Johnston's tribulations were not unique.

As early as 1832, the East Texan for whom Harrison County is named had complained of the "cruel uncertainty as to land titles," and it was on the motion of Jonas Harrison that the San Felipe de Austin convention named a committee "to take into consideration the situation of the land business to the east of San Jacinto." Harrison, a brilliant eastern lawyer turned backwoods recluse and parttime legal advocate, was one of 10 delegates named to the committee, which ended its report four days later, on October 6, with a plea for appointment of a commissioner with authority to give title to settled lands.

The report noted that "a number of industrious citizens have settled in the district of country between the San Jacinto and Sabine rivers; and that the settlers have made extensive and valuable improvements in farms, mills, cotton gins, and machinery; and having been obedient to the constitution, in the year 1828, grants of land were made to them by the government, and Don Juan Antonio Padilla was appointed commissioner to issue titles. Unfortunate circumstances prevented the said commissioner from completing the objects of his commission, and business remained in suspense. In 1831, Don Jose Francisco Madero was appointed commissioner by the government for the same purpose, but unfortunately he was arrested by military authority, and prevented from issuing the titles. These repeated delays and embarrassments have defeated the paternal intentions of the government, in favor of the inhabitants of that remote section of the state . . . The uncertainty of their situation causes an uneasiness among the inhabitants, and cannot be favorable to the public tranquility, and is in the highest degree prejudicial to the prosperity of the country . . .".

Strictly speaking, Johnston's title problem was not one of simple delay. His land lay north of the Sabine in an area of the republic even more remote than that cited by Harrison. Where earlier settlers had entered Texas through the Natchitoches/Nacogdoches-San Agustine corridor or the Gulf ports, they now had begun to arrive in the far northeast section through the Port Caddo gateway or overland from Shreveport. Port Caddo, since consigned to oblivion, was developing as a thriving river port on the Caddo Lake-Cypress Bayou system and was an international entry point and entrepôt for both immigrants and riverboat cargo for which the republic assigned a resident customs agent for collection of import duties. Only 20 miles distant from the site at which Marshall subsequently would be platted, Port Caddo was for years the first point in Texas reached by many immigrants.[1] Among these in the early days were determined

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settlers whose regard for the legal niceties of land title were minimal. Johnston's problem, in short, was squatters.

Given the difference in the nature of their respective difficulties, Johnston still must have uttered a fervent "amen"—from the eminence of 30 years and the special niche reserved in heaven for fallen heroes—to Harrison's observation about cruel uncertainty.

And, by one of the curious quirks of fate which make the study of East Texas history so fascinating, the man to whom Johnston at one time turned over certain land management functions had had his own difficulties along similar lines—and these with Sam Houston, with whom Johnston's own relationship had not been too amicable! John Nathan Craven, in his biography of James Harper Starr, recounts the story of Houston's 12-year attempt at law to gain title to Starr's Nacogdoches home and 254 acres of land adjoining it.[2]

Starr, whose last years were spent in Marshall and whose name descends to many distinguished residents, counted Johnston only one among many clients of his land office. By 1861 the former Secretary of the Treasury in the Republic of Texas owned lands in 27 counties and managed real estate holdings for hundreds of clients all over the country. Johnston became his client after service as Secretary of War, a post in which he found his own views often running counter to those of Sam Houston.

Craven relates that after Houston's appearance before the court at Nacogdoches in 1855, from which came a compromise settlement on the part of weary litigants, Starr was constrained to write: "I feel much relieved by the result. Shall enjoin it upon my children never to content at law with a *great man* who has such proclivities for swearing. *Ordinary men* with such proneness for making affidavits 'according to any pattern' may be resisted, for they will not be believed, but beware of *great men* with such tendencies."[3]

Starr, who early had felt respect for Houston, if not affection, dated his difficulties with the former president from 1842, when an army of Santa Anna invaded Texas, occupying San Antonio, Goliad and Refugio before withdrawing into Mexico. Starr at that time opposed Houston's efforts to return the capitol to Houston from Austin, resulting in a bloodless "war" which became one of the most curious chapters in Texas history.[4]

In contrast to his relationship with Houston, Starr's feelings of affection toward Johnston never abated, and he assisted the general's son, William Preston Johnston, in preparing a biography of his old friend in the autumn years of his life in Marshall. He not only provided biographical material, he also gave the assistance his age and health would permit to see that the partisanship among pro-Houston and anti-Houston factions did not result in an attack on the Johnston biography.[5]

William Preston Johnston reciprocated by arranging for Starr to sit on the orator's stand when the Army of Tennessee Association unveiled a statue of the general in a New Orleans cemetery in 1877. Among others on the stand that day was Jefferson Davis.[6]

The former president of the Confederacy thus paid homage to a man who, commanding the Second Cavalry as a brevet-brigadier general for his conduct of the Utah campaign against the Mormons, "represented all President Davis's ideals of a soldier" when the War between the States began.[7] His record as a land speculator was less distinguished.

Johnston was the man whose name Davis sent up to the Senate on August 31, 1861, as the second on the list of generals authorized by the act of May 16,

1861, ranking only under the adjutant general, Samuel Cooper, and a file ahead of Robert E. Lee. By this promotion order, which placed Joseph E. Johnston fourth, Davis incurred the enmity of this officer, who believed he should have been named the South's senior general officer. This break influenced command considerations throughout the war.[8]

But this was almost a lifetime, as the life span was measured in those days, after Albert Sidney Johnston entered the land business. His Harrison County venture began in October 1838, more than three months before the act creating the county was enacted into law by the Congress of the Republic of Texas in January 1839, with President Mirabeau B. Lamar's signature following shortly.

Johnston became the owner of his league of Harrison County land in a transaction by the terms of which Garnett Duncan bought one-half of four leagues from one William Brookfield, and George Hancock and Edward Ogden bought the other half, conveying one-half of their half to Johnston in exchange, it would appear from the surviving records, for his perfecting title to the entire four leagues. The four partners in the venture agreed that the four-league tract should be conveyed to Johnston and that "he shall have the right to sell or dispose of or to manage the same exactly as if the property was all his own." In the drawing of lots to determine which partner should claim title to which league, Johnston became the owner of League No. 2, "originally the league of Hiram Blossom."[9] This league was patented originally to Blossom on Octoer 10, 1835, by the Republic of Texas.[10]

Charles P. Roland, in his biography of Johnston, asserts a somewhat different version of the transaction. He reports that the general actually bought the league with proceeds from the sale of property he owned in Louisville and in Missouri, adding that Johnston also bought the leagues of Duncan, Hancock (a kinsman) and Ogden with the understanding that he would hold title to the land but was bound to pay any proceeds to his associates. This arrangement, he suggests, may have been a device for getting around a Texas law which prohibited aliens from owning land in Texas except by titles obtained directly from the government of the republic.[11] Whatever the arrangements, it seems clear that Johnston was motivated in the transaction by the desire common to many prominent figures in early Texas history to acquire wealth through land speculation, for he also invested in real estate in Austin and Galveston and in a tract of 1,280 acres in Van Zandt County. "I have waded up to my chin in Galveston lots," he wrote to a kinsman.[12]

The partners in the Harrison County venture agreed that

> said Johnston is not to incur any liability to account for anything more than he or his heirs or assigns may receive from the said several parties, he having accepted this trust at the request of said other parties and for their benefit and accomodation only; it is clearly understood that said Johnston is not to be chargeable for neglect and that he only binds himself to release the land on account for the proceeds if he sells it, and any expenses he may think proper to incur in relation to the land the said Duncan for his part and the said Ogden and Hancock for their part agree and bind their heirs and assigns to reimburse whether it turns out profitably or not.[13]

This agreement, dated October 11, 1838, in two separate instruments, was subsequently acknowledged before J.W. Bredlove, commissioner for Texas at New Orleans on February 6, 1861, along with a companion document dated October 11, 1838, in which the four partners executed a partition deed setting

out the understandings of their agreement.[14] The latter document was executed at Louisville, Johnston's home town. In the acknowledgement before the Texas commissioner it was stipulated that "we now ratify and confirm the foregoing deed as our act, on the date of its date, and we ratify and confirm to said A.S. Johnston the legal title to all the land referred to in the foregoing deed; all of which was in the year Eighteen Hundred and Thirty-Eight conveyed to and vested in said Johnston, and if necessary we again grant and convey the same to him *nunc pro tunc*, that the same may be duly recorded upon personal acknowledgment of all the grantors."

Two years after the four leagues were acquired, in a "transfer" dated February 10, 1840, and filed for record October 4, 1841, William Brookfield conveyed

> all his right, title and interest in and to four leauges of land belonging to him unto Albert S. Johnston, a citizen of the Republic, for and in consideration of the sum of five thousand dollars, the receipt of which the said Brookfield declares and acknowledges, and that payment has been made to his entire satisfaction, which four leagues of land more severally granted to Hiram Blossom, Henry Harper, Samuel Murphy and Samuel Monday by George W. Smith, commissioner, acting for the Government of the State of Couahila and Texas as will more fully and specifically appear by the certified copies of the deeds issued by said commissioner to said Blossom, Harper, Murphy and Monday, respectively, all of which the said Brookfield has transferred and handed over to the said Johnston for his better security and evidence of title; said four leagues of land are situated between the Sabine River and Soda Lake of Red River, the metes and bounds of each league will be found fully defined and described in the respective deeds as before mentioned.[15]

By the date of this "transfer," Johnston already had determined to retire from public life in order to become a planter, a decision which he executed by resigning his post as Secretary of War the same month. This decision doubtless was encouraged by a disagreement with Houston which led Johnston on January 5, 1840, to write a note remonstrating "the most vituperative language with regard to me" and declaring "you will not be surprised that I inform you that *immediately* after a termination of the present session of Congress I will hold you accountable." Fortunately, Houston backed away from a confrontation, declaring in a reply to an intermediary dated January 7 that "the reported expressions said to have been used, evenings since, *never* were used by me, nor has anything transpired within my knowledge which could change the estimation which I have always entertained of the high and honorable bearing of General Johnston and his character."[16]

To set himself up as a farmer, following his resignation, "it was necessary for General Johnston to raise the means by selling his real estate elsewhere," according to his son and biographer.[17] Accordingly, the general went to Louisville for this purpose, returning to Texas during the summer. This, it will be recalled, was almost two years after Johnston acquired the Blossom league in Harrison County, a transaction which Roland says was financed by the sale of property in Louisville and in Missouri, and several months after Brookfield acknowledged receiving $5,000 from the General. Under the circumstances, there must be some question whether Johnston actually purchased the Harrison County land from the proceeds of his property elsewhere, as Roland asserts, or whether he was acting for his three partners in a fiduciary capacity, as they seemed to imply in their earlier agreements.

A case can be made that Johnston used the proceeds from his 1840 sales to buy China Grove Plantation in Brazoria County, which he described as consisting "of 1,500 acres of cotton-land, between 300 and 400 acres cleared, with gin, fences, etc.; and 4,428 acres of rich prairie, affording fine grass for stock, and in every way more suitable for production of sugar-cane than richer bottom-lands."[18] The purchase was made in partnership with a friend who was both a planter and merchant. Johnston's son, in his biography, recorded that the estate was undoubtedly valuable, "but the price, nearly $16,000, was too great; and the purchase proved to be injudicious and disastrous." The General performed his responsibilities under the partnership agreement, "realizing the necessary funds by the sale of real estate at considerable sacrifice," but the partner, near bankruptcy, subsequently appealed to be relieved of his obligation. "General Johnston, with a sense of obligation perhaps too scrupulous, at once assumed the whole responsibility, thus incurring a load of debt from which he was not freed for ten years," his son wrote.[19]

The General's tribulations in Brazoria County mirrored his disappointment with his Harrison County land, though there is no indication that he ever intended to operate the latter as a plantation as he did China Grove. His Northeast Texas venture was purely speculative, however its purchase had been negotiated.

None of the legal safeguards which Johnston and his Harrison County partners undertook served to secure them in possession of their land. It subsequently developed that there were rival claimants to the title, under terms of a certain Anna Dunman Survey overlying the limits of the Henry Harper, Hiram Blossom, Samuel Monday (or Munday, as it sometimes appears in the records) and Samuel Murphy (or Murphey) leagues comprising the holdings of the Johnston partnership. As Roland describes the conflict, "the title of prior ownership was not clear, and settlers promptly moved onto the land. For the remainder of his life, Johnston attempted to validate his title but was never able to do so."[20]

Litigation over the rival claims developed as early as October 1845, during the time Johnston was engaged in a vain attempt to save China Grove, either by its sale "or by that of other property."[21] It seems possible an effort to sell the Harrison County property, in order to use the money at China Grove, could have triggered the intial litigation, which dragged on for 24 years before a final finding in the district court seven years after the General's death at Shiloh. Johnston began the task of perfecting titles which he had accepted under the terms of his partnership by filing suit against William T. Scott, one of the largest landowners in Texas, whose holdings lay in the eastern half of Harrison County, between Marshall and the Louisiana line. This suit revolved around title to 720 acres of land in the Blossom league.[22] In the same month, Johnston also filed suit against Jesse Parchman and Richard Hooper, joined 24 years later when the case finally came to trial by a long list of defendants who by that time had become party to the suit, to determine title to the entire Blossom league. In his original petition, Johnston alleged that he was "owner of a league of land situated in the eastern part of said county and Republic of Texas, lying north of Sabine River and south of Soda Lake," on which the said defendant Parchman, "on the 1st day of March, 1843, and on divers other days and times from the date first mentioned . . . entered upon said land, took possession of the same, plowed and broke the ground, cut down large quantities of timber growing upon the same, and he still holds forceable possession of said land to plaintiff's damage $10,000."[23]

By October 1849, Johnston found himself on the defensive. In that month, the county levied on the "Smith half" of the Blossom league, "being the south half of said headright," insofar as title to it "was vested in or claimed by said A. Sidney Johnston." In a sheriff's deed dated November 6, 1849, and witnessed by W.P. Hill and George Adkins, the sheriff of Harrison County transferred title to John Graves in consideration of 3¢ per acre.[24]

A year later, in a sheriff's deed dated December 4, 1850, title to the Samuel Murphy league (owned by Garnett Duncan in the original partnership arrangement) was transferred to James G. Haralson. This sale proceeded out of three executions issued by the clerk of the district court on August 7 and 8, 1850, on judgments given against Johnston in July for the sum of $7.70 in each of "three several suits." The deed recites that

> whereas on the 4th day of November James M. Curtis, deputy sheriff of the court, did levy on all the right, title and interest of the aforesaid A. Sidney Johnston in and to one league and labor of land lying in said county . . . known as the headright of Samuel Murphy, and the same being advertised according to law to sell the same at the court house door of said county on the first Tuesday in December, A.D. 1850, in the legal hours of sale, the aforesaid tract of land was exposed to public sale by Solomon R. Perry as sheriff of the county aforesaid to the highest bidder for cash and James C. Haralson was then and there the highest bidder to the amount of one dollar.
>
> Perry witnessed that "I . . . have hereunto set my hand and affix my seal using a scrawl for a seal this 4th day of December, A.D. 1850."[25]

This letter instrument was filed for record on December 4, the date of the deed. However, the earlier Graves deed to the south half of the Blossom headright was not filed for record until February 3, 1857, a year and a half after Johnston and Mrs. Johnston had executed a special warranty deed on June 18, 1855, in favor of William P. Johnston, the general's son by his first marriage, to the entire Blossom league. This deed conveyed "a certain tract of land situated in the State of Texas, granted by the Mexican Government through George W. Smythe, commissioner for issuing titles to settlers, to Hiram Blossom situated between the Sabine River and Lake Soda of Red River, being *sitio* No. 2 of four *sitios* sold by Wm Brookfield to Geo Hancock and Edmd Ogden and Garnett Duncan and is now the property of aforesaid A.S. Johnston and wife, and contains one league of land." The consideration was shown to be $1.00 cash. This deed was acknowledged before James J. Dozier, commissioner of Texas, Jefferson City, Missouri, on August 31, 1855, by the general, and again on February 7, 1971—more than 16 years later—by Mrs. Johnston, this time before N.R. Wilson, then the commissioner in Jefferson City.[26]

By December 1857, partner Duncan apparently had wearied of the litigation. In an agreement dated the 15th, Duncan noted that

> certain suits have been instituted in Texas and pending for a long time in the name of A.S. Johnston, plaintiff, to recover four leagues and labors of land near Marshall, Texas, granted severally by Sam'l Munday, Sam'l Murphy, H. Harper and H. Blossom, all of which are still pending in the court of original jurisdiction at Marshall, except the one against Elbert Smith and Otis A. Wheeler upon the Monday grant, which is now pending in the Supreme Court at Tyler, upon appeal or

> wishes to release himself from all further trouble in or attention to those suits, and as the preparation is similar in at least three of the suits, and he sits, and as the preparation is similar in at least three of the suits, and he does not wich to contribute thereto, it is hereby agreed with B. Ballard (who owns H. Harper league) that he the said Ballard will take charge of and prosecute all of said land claims owned by him and Duncan, with authority to compromise, adjust, and settle in whole or in part as to him may seem best, and that he will out of his funds pay all the costs, fees, expenses and charges which have been incurred in and about said land . . . and also all taxes and public dues, and also all costs and fees, charges and taxes that may hereafter be incurred in and about said suits and claims.

Duncan washed his hands of the whole affair by agreeing further to give half of the said leagues to Ballard, on condition that "he the said Duncan is not bound to do any service or be obligated to give any council (sic) or advise him in the premises." Duncan also agreed to relinquish any right to taxes or costs paid by him in the past.[27]

One can almost hear "the said Duncan" heave a monumental sigh of relief to be rid of the whole worry.

Five months later, in a power of attorney dated May 8, 1858, in Jefferson County, Kentucky, William Preston Johnston, to whom the General and Mrs. Johnston had deeded the Hiram Blossom league, gave to the same Dr. Benjamin Ballard of New Orleans all authority "to exercise a general and special supervisory control and management of said land, to lease and sell the same or any part thereof, and to receive and collect the rents and purchase money for the same, to institute and prosecute suits for ejectment of trespassers, to employ counsel at his discretion, to carry out the objects of his agency, to compromise, arbitrate and settle any and all suits and adverse claims to said lands or any part thereof . . .[28]

In an all-inclusive gesture, which a later Madison Avenue generation would speak of as "touching all the bases," General Johnston, then commanding the Second Regiment of U.S. Calvary in the Utah Territory, also executed a power of attorney in favor of Doctor Ballard to act for him in a like capacity. This instrument was acknowledged before Albert G. Brown, Jr., clerk of the federal district court in Green River County, U.T., on May 19, though it was not filed for record in Harrison County until June 27 of the following year.[29]

Johnston's affection for his adopted state is reflected in correspondence with his son in the summer of the same year. William P. Johnston, acting on the advice of Texas attorneys, recommended to his father that he enter suit in federal court to evict the squatters living on the Blossom league. It was the opinion of counsel that federal judges might be more favorably disposed toward Johnston's claim than state judges. There was only one rub. Johnston would have to renounce his Texas citizenship, and this he would not contemplate:

> My citizenship in Texas was obtained at the cost of the bloom of health & the prime of life spent in the service of the state [and of] property which if I had now would constitute a princely estate—I will not give it up now, tho' I should lose in consequence every foot of land I have in the state, this I would regard as a mere mess of pottage in comparison with my citizenship.[30]

"Johnston," declared his biographer Roland, "considered himself a Texan for time and for eternity."[31]

Doctor Ballard, acting under the power of attorney given him by the General, in an instrument dated October 1, 1860, gave his own power of attorney to George Lane and J.M. Clough of Marshall to act in his name in any matters pertaining to Johnston's claim.[32] The latter, one of Marshall's most distinguished sons, was to survive only slightly more than one year. He enlisted as a private in the company organized in Marshall by his brother-in-law K.M. Van Zandt, son of the famous Republic of Texas figure whose home was on Van Zandt Hill, now occupied by East Texas Baptist College, and died a lieutenant colonel at Fort Donelson in early 1862. Van Zandt survived many bloody contests to build an illustrious career after the war.

Of George Lane, the other of the two to whom Doctor Ballard gave his power of attorney in the Johnston land claim, General Walter P. Lane, a brother, tells a delightful tale in his memoirs:

> As I was coming to Marshall in an ambulance [two days after the Battle of Mansfield, in which he commanded a brigade and was wounded] with John Neff . . . we met two superannuated old gentlemen, with vengeance in their eyes and old double-barreled shot-guns in their hands, going down to participate in the battle. When I got near them they proved to be my brother, Judge Lane, and Col. Ward, both of Marshall. I told them the battle was over and the enemy in full retreat, and that as one of them was a lawyer, and the other a railroad director, I thought they were better muscled for something else than fighting, and not to go down there and eat what little the men had, as they were short of rations. But go they would, and go they did. On reaching the army they crowned themselves with glory. Col. Ward, in taking an armful of corn for his horse out of a field without permission, came near being shot; and Judge Lane, who volunteered to be put on the extreme picket next to the enemy, the orders being that no gun was to be fired, as it would cause an alarm, getting tired of the monotonous duty, and, forgetting the orders, fired at a squirrel he saw run up a tree. He missed the squirrel, but brought out the whole regiment, who raised a laugh and returned to camp, knowing the judge knew but little of military matters . . . They enjoyed themselves hugely for about two weeks, when, seeing no prospect of murdering any of the enemy, they returned quietly home. They reported, on their return, that a soldier's life was the jolliest thing they had ever experienced; that their rations were cooked, their horses fed, no guard duty to perform, with nothing to do but lie about camp and make the time pass pleasantly with their fellow soldiers.[33]

What with the alarums and excursions of the war years, with their sequestration suits and other legal matters arising from the war, the Johnston cases were passed to another time, when attention could be returned to purely personal, civil actions. During these years, of course, General Johnston had literally poured out his life's blood on the field of Shiloh, and new heroes had stepped upon the stage, all marching toward an April Sunday in 1865.

It was not until June 1866 that George Lane, the survivor of the two to whom Doctor Ballard had given power of attorney in 1860, filed a petition in the county court at Marshall asking that letters of administration be granted to Jesse H. Curlin in connection with the "large" estate of the fallen general.[34] The application was approved.[35] Curlin took his oath, and his bond was accepted by the court on September 3.[36] The probate minutes show that Johnston was possessed at his death, among other assets, of "one league of land situated in

Harrison County originally granted to Hiram Blossom," along with three other leagues "held by the deceased in trust for others, said lands being four leagues valued at $40,000."[37]

It took another three years and more for Curlin and Lane to clear up the title contest with William T. Scott which first had been filed in October 1845, twenty-five years earlier. In a judgment entered in the fall term, the district court recognized a compromise worked out between Curlin and Lane, on the one hand, and Scott and his attorney George L. Hill, on the other. This compromise called for Scott to pay the costs of the case "except as to the cost of taking the Ruez deposition" and one dollar per acre in U.S. currency "or its equivalent," one-half to be paid down and the other half payable in 12 months, with a lien to the Johnston estate pending final payment.[38]

A compromise also settled the suit against Jesse Parchman and Richard Hooper. This case, it will be remembered, involved an allegation of trespass, for which Johnston claimed damages of $10,000 in a petition filed October 9, 1845, in the district court. The same team of Curlin and Lane handled the case for the Johnston estate, and George L. Hill again represented the defendants, whose numbers by this time had grown to considerable proportions. The terms again were the costs of the case and one dollar per acre "in U.S. currency or its equivalent in specie," to be paid one-half down and the balance in 12 months by note of each defendant. The court accepted this compromise as its judgment and described by metes and bounds the tracts thus awarded to A.J. Brightwell, Joseph W. Slater, William L. Perkins, Peter B. Parchman, Washington Mathis and J.C. Darden (for the use and benefit of C.S. and R.M. Slater).

George L. Hill, the defense attorney, made himself a party to the suit and was awarded title to 320 acres on the basis of a deed from Johnston through his agent Ballard to W.P. Hill, from whom George L. Hill acquired his claim. William Scott also made himself a party to the suit for purposes of recognizing the compromise settlement worked out earlier in his case.[39]

It took another year to work out a solution to the problem of the sheriff's deed to John Graves, but this time the case went to a jury for decision. Johnston had entered his suit against Graves on October 10, 1845, enunciating claim to the whole of the Blossom league, after Graves had moved onto the land in 1842, possessed of a bond for title to the tract from James Adams dated March 21, 1837. Graves had defended his title to the tract in a successful suit against the heirs of James Adams, the judgment being entered on January 17, 1851.

By the time the Johnston-Graves suit came on for trial in the October 1870 term of the district court, Robert Scott and Frances M. Scott, executrix of the estate of Samuel T. Scott, had become defendants in the action involving the north half of the Blossom headright. George B. Adkins represented the Graves interests as executor of the Graves will.

A jury headed by A.I. Clark as foreman found for Curlin, representing the Johnston estate, against the Graves and Scott heirs as to the north half of the league and ordered that a writ of possession issue for the land and the costs of the case. For the first time, however, a final decision in the longdrawn contest went against Johnston when the court ordered "that as to the south half of said league of land, the plaintiff take nothing and that the defendant go hence without delay."[40]

Thus the sheriff's deed conveyed by Sheriff T. Kennedy to John Graves on November 6, 1849, stood up before a district court jury, and the hero of Shiloh, through his attorney, finally lost title to half of the Hiram Blossom league.

possession of which he had entered upon so hopefully 32 years earlier.

Jonas Harrison's phrase about the "cruel uncertainty" of land titles was perhaps even more true than he had expected it to prove, at least in the case of Albert Sidney Johnston's land venture in Harrison County.

NOTES

[1]For a more detailed account of early immigration into Northeast Texas, see James Curtis Armstrong, "The History of Harrison County, Texas, 1839 to 1880," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Colorado, 1930).

[2]John Nathan Craven. *James Harper Starr, Financier of the Republic of Texas.* (Austin, 1950), 89-92.

[3]Craven, *James Harper Starr,* 92.

[4]Dorman H. Winfrey, "The Texan Archive War of 1842," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* LXIV, (October 1960).

[5]Craven, *James Harper Starr,* 172-3.

[6]Craven. *James Harper Starr,* 182.

[7]Douglas Southall Freeman. *Lee's Lieutenants, A Study in Command,* (New York, 1943), I, App. II, 709.

[8]Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants,* 113.

[9]Recorded in Vol. S, 299-302. Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[10]Though not recorded, this information is contained in Abstract of Land Titles, Vol. I, 661, as reflected in the abstract for "Hickory Hollow Farms" which straddles the Old Shreveport Road east of Marshall and constitutes a portion of the original grant. I am indebted to the late William F. McFarland for his courtesy in allowing me to examine the abstract during the time he and the late Charles A. Fry, his brother-in-law, owned the property.

[11]Charles P. Roland. *Albert Sidney Johnston, Soldier of Three Republics,* (Austin, 1964), 101-02.

[12]Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston,* 102.

[13]Recorded in Vol. S, 275-77, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[14]Recorded in Vol. S, 408, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[15]Recorded in Vol. A, 111-13, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[16]William Preston Johnston, *The Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston, Embracing His Services in the Armies of the United States, The Republic of Texas, and the Confederate States,* (New York, 1878), 121.

[17]Johnston. *The Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston,* 123.

[18]Johnston, *The Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston,* 129.

[19]Johnston, *The Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston,* 129.

[20]Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston,* 101-02.

[21]Johnston, *The Life of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston,* 130.

[22]Recorded in Vol. I, 604, Civil Minutes of the District Court of Harrison County,

Texas.

[23]Recorded in Vol. I, Civil Minutes of the District Court of Harrison County, Texas.

[24]Recorded in Vol. P, 351-2, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[25]Recorded in Vol. J, 165, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[26]Recorded in Vol. X, 236-7, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[27]Recorded in Vol. Q, 280, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[28]Recorded in Vol. Q, 279-80, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[29]Recorded in Vol. R, 363, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[30]Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, 235.

[31]Roland, *Albert Sidney Johnston*, 235.

[32]Recorded in Vol. S, 605-6, Deed Records of Harrison County, Texas.

[33]Walter P. Lane, *The Adventures and Recollections of General Walter P. Lane, A San Jacinto Veteran, Containing Sketches of Texan, Mexican and Late Wars, with Several Indian Fights Thrown In*, (Marshall, Texas), 1928, 111-2.

[34]Recorded in Book J, 356, Probate Minutes, Harrison County, Texas.

[35]Recorded in Vol. F, 125, Probate Minutes, Harrison County, Texas.

[36]Recorded in Book J, 356, Probate Minutes, Harrison County, Texas.

[37]Recorded in Book J, 357, Probate Minutes, Harrison County, Texas.

[38]Recorded in Vol. I, 604, Civil Minutes, District Court of Harrison County, Texas.

[39]Recorded in Vol. I, 600, 603, Civil Minutes, District Court of Harrison County, Texas.

[40]Recorded in Vol. J, 38, Civil Minutes, District Court of Harrison County, Texas.

CIVIC ELITES AND URBAN PLANNING: HOUSTON'S RIVER OAKS

by Charles Orson Cook and Barry J. Kaplan

Americans responded in a variety of ways to the problems that attended rapid urbanization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Among those were reformers who, often led by a civic-commercial elite, attempted to rationalize and control urban growth. Recent scholarship has acknowledged the public role of prominent businessmen in the cause of structural reforms, the adoption of professionalized urban planning, and the "City Beautiful" movement. Less well known were the private efforts of businessmen to achieve the same goals of stability, order, and beauty through the formation of planned, exclusive residential communities. With varying degrees of success, these "residential parks," (as they were called by their builders) appeared in practically every metropolitan area by the 1920s. In Baltimore, Frederick Law Olmsted designed Roland Park; in Kansas City was the elaborate and prototypical Country Club District; Cleveland had its Shaker Heights, Dallas its Highland Park, and in Houston was River Oaks.[1]

Although certainly not the first of its kind, Houston's River Oak District is a typical example of urban planning by business and civic elites who sought order and stability in a rapidly growing city. The founders of River Oaks successfully employed urban planning, deed restrictions, and centralized community control to create a model of permanence, beauty, and stability within the burgeoning city of Houston. As a private enterprise, the successful development of River Oaks stands in contrast to the failure of public planning and zoning in the city. The zoning movement not only paralleled the development of River Oaks chronologically, but it also included many of the same personalities. Seen in this context, River Oaks is more than a real estate venture—it is a significant historical phenomenon that reflects the values and goals of Houston's business planners.

Houston, apparently, has been bursting at the seams forever. Architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable wrote that since 1945 unprecedented expansion and a lack of public land use controls had made the city a physical nightmare, a "breathtaking affront to normal sensibility." According to Huxtable, Houston, unlike other cities, "is totally without the normal rationales of geography and evolutionary social growth;" it is, essentially, "all process and no plan." She did note, however, at least one exception to Houston's uncontrolled sprawl; located almost in the heart of the "Bayou City's" urban chaos:

> Directly behind the freeways, one short turn takes the driver from the strip into pine and oak-alleyed streets of comfortable and elegant residential communities (including the elite and affluent River Oaks). They have maintained their environmental purity by deed restrictions passed on from one generation of buyers to another.
>
> Beyond these enclaves, anything goes.[2]

In a city where the lack of zoning allows anyone to build anything almost anywhere. River Oaks is indeed an island of tranquility. Developed in the genesis of the automobile age of the early 1920s, the district's eleven hundred acres are a model of planning. Natural boundaries like Memorial Park and

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Buffalo Bayou and man-made buffers like the River Oaks Country Club golf course provide geographic security against the city whose downtown business district is only three miles to the east. Internally, sophisticated landscape architecture with heavy Beaux Art overtones blends with an atmosphere of rural romanticism. Gently curving boulevards, formal esplanades, *cul de sacs* and a series of small neighborhood parks contrast sharply with the traditional grid pattern of Houston's city streets. Deed restrictions have accomplished in River Oaks what zoning only promised for the rest of the city: permanent homogeneous neighborhoods.[3]

Although accounts vary, the notion of developing River Oaks probably first occurred in 1923 to two prominent young Houstonians—Mike Hogg, the youngest of the affluent and civic-minded Hogg brothers, and his college room-mate, Hugh Potter, a promising local attorney. Impressed by the natural beauty and market potential of an area that was then immediately west of the Houston city limits, they obtained an option to purchase two hundred acres surrounding the recently completed River Oaks Country Club.[4] As Hugh Potter later recalled, it was at this point that his partner's eldest and more influential brother, William C. Hogg, became involved in the venture. Hogg asked, "Why buy only 200 acres? Why not buy 1,000 acres more? Why not make this something really big, something the city can be proud of?"[5] With the support of Will Hogg, River Oaks became exactly that.

Hogg financed the development company, Country Club Estates, which was organized in the spring, 1924, with Hugh Potter as its president. Six months later, the Houston *Chronicle* reported that "River Oaks is booming,"[6] By mid-1927, the Hogg brothers had poured $650,000 into improvements, a sum that increased to over three million dollars before Will Hogg's death in 1930 ended the family interest in the enterprise. By 1928, improvement expenses had driven the Country Club Estates into the red by more than a hundred thousand dollars. The Corporation's losses had climbed to almost a quarter million dollars by the fiscal year 1929.

A modest rate of lot purchases and home-building in the project's early months accounted for part of the company's losses; however, that trend had reversed by 1928. More importantly, Will Hogg's extravagance in making his "pipe dream" a reality created most of the deficit.[8] He had always been interested in residential development; typified by his earlier short lived partnership with Houston financier J.S. Cullinan in a small project called "Shadyside."[9] But it was the potential inherent in River Oaks that captured and held his interest for the rest of his life. Impressed by the success of J.C. Nichols' residential park in Kansas City—the Country Club District—Hogg saw in River Oaks the possibilities for another planned, elite community in Houston.[10]

The relationship between the Kansas City suburb and Hogg's plans for River Oaks was a close one. One of the first acts of the Houston Country Club Estates was to send its officers to study similar projects, including Nichols' Country Club District. Before one such trip to Kansas City, Hugh Potter announced that "we expect to gain many new ideas . . ., in many respects River Oaks . . . is like the Kansas City Development." Although the Houstonians made additional studies of projects in California and Florida, it was the Country Club District with which River Oaks was most often compared.[11] Even Nichols helped to link the two when he visited Houston in 1925 and found that Hogg's development "ranks high among the best subdivisions of this country . . ." He observed that the area was not only "technically correct, but . . . very pleasing." The layout in River Oaks, Nichols concluded, was "in accordance with the best

modern scientific planning."[12] Hogg and his associates were no doubt pleased with Nichols' assessment, but probably not surprised. After all, they had retained the Kansas City firm of Hare and Hare, the landscape architects who had planned Nichols' suburb.

Like the Country Club District, the design of the Houston development was drawn to protect the environmental integrity and the natural beauty of River Oaks. To enhance the sylvan setting, utility lines were placed underground. Similarly, by eliminating the alleys and all but three intersecting streets, the planners sought to discourage traffic noise; two years later they banned commercial traffic altogether. Country Club Estates followed traditional landscape design by planting a wide variety of trees and shrubs and removing trees except on curves and esplanades to project a sweeping vista. Even the plethora of non-residential structures—the automobile shopping center, the elementary school, and the corporation offices—conformed to the standards of "City Beautiful." Finally, to maintain the planned beauty of River Oaks, the developers provided a full-time staff of gardeners, repairmen and architects. As its founders promised, the beauty of River Oaks was to be "for all time."[13]

As important as the physical surroundings was the project's emphasis on exclusivity. River Oaks was never meant for everyone. Although there was a wide variance in lot size and price, even the cheapest, at $2500, was well beyond the reach of the ordinary buyer. To make sure it remained that way, the Country Club Estates used deed restrictions to prohibit homes costing less than seven thousand dollars. Beyond setting minimum expenditures, the subdivision required every home design to be approved by a panel of architects and citizens who eliminated any residences that might conflict with the dominant pastoral theme. Typical was Kirby Drive, one of the suburb's major thoroughfares, where the restrictions allowed only homes of English Tudor or American Colonial style.[14]

A series of written controls detailing post-construction land use further limited private property rights. Ranging from renovation of existing structures to the placement of garbage cans and clotheslines, these standards rigorously enforced land use conformity. Predictably, the restrictions also excluded non-white residents, and, by means of the infamous "gentlemen's agreement," Jews as well. Advertisements emphasized that in River Oaks "you will have good neighbors, you may be sure,"[15] indicating that River Oaks was zoned socially as well as geographically.

Obviously, beauty and exclusivity were goals for many residential developments. Many other cities had created large subdivisions. What makes River Oaks distinctive is its reliance upon centralized planning to create and preserve a particular urban environment. To be sure, planning was a factor in other residential subdivision, but beyond basic platting and service provisions, they did not attempt to formulate a total community. The profit motive of most developers led them to build clusters of homes rather than planned communities. The founders of River Oaks and their contemporaries in Shaker Heights, Highland Park, Beverly Hills and other elite residential communities, however, had a more sophisticated understanding of planning. Beyond providing basic urban needs, they viewed planning as a technique to mold the environment, ensuring the desirable qualities of beauty, exclusivity, and especially security.[16]

Security was the watchword for the new residential park—security against the disorder of the city, security against undesirable neighbors and land uses, and above all, security of neighborhood integrity. Country Club Estates spent thousands of dollars on advertising each year in order to make one point clear:

River Oaks' security was permanent. "The object is not merely to sell homesites," Hugh Potter wrote a friend, "but to sell them in such a way as will ensure the permanence and charm of the community and make each estate an asset of ever increasing value." Potter repeated that same message to his sales staff as the best method to promote the prestige of River Oaks. As long as Houston's growth remained uncontrolled and unzoned, permanent security remained the mainstay of River Oak's appeal. River Oaks, Potter reminded a prospective home buyer, "already offers you the advantage of a *restricted residential* (italics theirs) zone of more than one thousand acres." Will Hogg made the same point when he observed that "the curse of American civic development and the biggest blight on the beauty of the cities . . . has been the failure to foresee, gauge, and direct the dynamic rapidity of expansion and growth . . . ." In the Country Club Estates, he continued, "we have absolutely insured the . . . (River Oaks) residents against such a contigency for at least thirty years."[17]

Part of River Oaks' emphasis on security and permanence was simply good advertising. The Country Club Estate's marketing director, Don Riddle, turned out not only full page newspaper ads and billboards, but also a barrage of pamphlets, brochures and even bound volumes to beckon new residents. Through them all ran the consistent theme: River Oaks was a totally planned community that included every possible amenity from a country club to shopping centers and schools, while preserving the integrity and the beauty of private residences.[18]

The sales department rhetoric struck a responsive chord with many Houstonians. The same manifestations of urban disorder that makes today's River Oaks a sanctuary, existed in the early 1920s. By that time, Houstonians generally and the planning fathers of River Oaks in particular, were aware that the city had become, in the words of one historian, "the perennial boom town of the twentieth century Texas." At the turn of the century, Houston's population barely exceeded that of Galveston. But by 1910, its size had almost doubled, and in 1920 the city had tripled its population. Because of the post-World War I growth of its new port and a concomitant expansion of petroleum exports, Greater Houston's population soared beyond 250,000 by the end of 1924, an unprecedented four-year increase of more than fifty percent. Ten years later, Houston had become Texas' largest city.[19]

Houstonians were justifiably proud of their city's growth. But along with that pride was uncertainty about the direction and the outcome of the rapid expansion. In 1925 one of Hogg's contemporaries observed that "Yesterday Houston's problem was to build a compact city, guarding her inhabitants against the isolation and rigors of the open. Today," he continued, "the problem is reversed . . ., Houston is seeking spaces where the sky and the grass companion men in their domestic hours."[20]

Houston, like other twentieth century cities, had its advocates of city planning and zoning who were disturbed by the disorder and ugliness of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization. In the vanguard of the city planning movement in Houston were William C. Hogg and Hugh Potter, the seminal figures behind River Oaks. Hogg's name, in fact, was attached to practically every major civic improvement crusade in the 1920s. He engineered the annexation of a number of city parks and spearheaded the drive to construct Houston's downtown civic center. Hogg was the principal organizer of a citizens action group, the Forum of Civics, that publicized a number of beautification and planning projects. Not surprisingly, Hogg served as the Chairman of Houston's Planning Commission

in 1927 and as the spokesman for the abortive zoning movement the same year.[21]

So intense was Hogg's paternalistic devotion to planning and urban improvement, that he often went to unusual extremes. He apparently spent enormous sums from his own pocket to finance traffic counts in Houston in an attempt to aid the city in the formulation of a master plan. On one occasion he offered to buy trees for any property owners who wished to beautify their neighborhoods. His zeal extended far beyond Houston's urban problems, and he once proposed an ambitious urban renewal project to the Vatican to beautify St. Peter's Square with partial financing by the Hogg fortune.[22]

Hogg's planning concepts were in the tradition of the earlier "City Beautiful" movement which he combined with the dominant planning theories of the 1920s: The "City Functional or City Efficient Movement." For Hogg, efficiency and a pleasant environment were inseparable. City planning, he told one audience, "is no longer thought of as a scheme merely to beautify the town, to put 'feather duster' festoons on the City Hall and plant a bunch of shrubbery in front of it . . .," rather, urban planning was "the same and practical method of combining usefulness with beauty." He was fond of observing that planners had discovered "that we can make a city beautiful while we are making it practical." Above all, Hogg was convinced that the nemesis of cities was "the hit-or-miss fashion of letting a city sprawl as it will." When city growth was uncontrolled, the inevitable result was the destruction of older desirable neighborhoods by incompatible land uses.[23] It was for this reason that Hogg supported zoning as an integral component of planning. By segregating its industrial, business, and residential districts, the city not only became more stable and reational, but also more beautiful. Although Hogg's hopes for zoning in Houston were never realized, his efforts in River Oaks were. If Houston remained unplanned and chaotic, River Oaks would stand as a permanent example of successful urban planning.

Hugh Potter, the president of the Country Club Estates, shared Hogg's enthusiasm for planning and zoning. Like Hogg, he also served on the city planning commission and supported its zoning proposals. In one of the most articulate and comprehensive defenses of public planning, Potter demonstrated that he was able to apply theories that Hogg only vaguely understood. It was Hugh Potter who provided the link between public urban planning and residential developments like River Oaks. "What City Planning accomplishes by operation of law throughout the whole city," he noted, "the modern developer accomplishes by private contract in a particular section of the city." Potter asserted that the residential developer "is really planning your cities today and especially so in Houston because it is unzoned." Thus, according to Potter, private residential developers became nascent public planners in Houston. Without any public agency or legislation to provide centralized planning and zoning, the task fell, almost by default, to private developers.[24]

As both Potter and Hogg saw it, River Oaks was more than just another subdivision, it was a civic project. Hogg expressed that idea when he wrote Potter that "we are interested in Houston first, the success of River Oaks second, your advancement third, and our own compensation last." The corporation's newspaper advertising echoed that theme:

> By this time even the most skeptical are convinced that River Oaks is primarily a Civic undertaking—that its commercial aspects have been made secondary to the desire to insure Houston's having the most complete, the most attractive and best protected residential section in the South . . .[25]

The assumption of the founders that River Oaks would be annexed to the city was consistent with the view that River Oaks was a civic improvement. Unlike similar developments in other cities that remained politically autonomous—Shaker Heights in Cleveland or Highland Park in Dallas for example—River Oaks operated independently for only the first three years of its existence. Moreover, evidence indicates that Hogg intended that River Oaks be the model for surrounding residential areas. "We have convinced ourselves," he said, "that in a comparatively few years residential Houston will grown around River Oaks and be beautified by it."[26]

It is plausible that River Oaks was only a part, albeit a significant one, of a larger plan to zone and beautify Houston's entire West Side. The Hogg family had engineered the annexation of Memorial Park just west of the city limits in 1924. Shortly after founding River Oaks, Will Hogg, Hugh Potter and others organized property owners in that area with the goal of planning "residential Houston, as it takes its inevitable course westward under pressure of expanding commercial and industrial enterprise on the opposite side of the city." Perhaps to ensure that the West Side remained residential, Hogg and the Country Club Estates opposed the expansion of hospital facilities near River Oaks, claiming that property values would decline. Similarly, they kept a professional baseball team from playing in Memorial Park in an effort to exclude commercialism from the West Side. Hogg and his associates even concocted a plan of "voluntary segregation" based upon a system of racial zoning which they hoped would insure residential homogeneity in Houston.[27]

Whatever Hogg's grander schemes, River Oaks survives as an enclave of planning surrounded by urban chaos. Had Hogg and Potter succeeded in their total effort, River Oaks would have been the rule, not the exception. Instead of merely providing the model for a few scattered and affluent neighborhoods, it would have been almost indistinguishable from the rest of the residential Houston. For to its founders, River Oaks was a civic improvement as well as a status symbol and a retreat for wealthy. Ironically, exclusivity was both the strength and weakness of River Oaks as a standard of urban planning. On the one hand, its elitist nature helped guarantee its success. On the other, that same elitism prevented the project from ever becoming more than a limited private response to a problem that was essentially public. No doubt, the adoption of city planning with strict zoning ordinances would have extended some of the benefits of River Oaks to more Houstonians. As it is, River Oaks remains an island of affluence and only a monument to the aspirations of Houston city planners in the 1920s.

NOTES

[1]See Samuel Hays, "The Politics of Reform in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (October 1964), 157-169; James Weinstein, "Organized Business and the City Commission and Manager Movements," *Journal of Southern History*, 28 (May 1962), 166-182; Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962); Blaine Brownell, *The Urban Ethos in the Twentieth Century South* (Baton Rouge, 1975).

[2]New York *Times* February 15, 1976.

[3]For general descriptions regarding River Oaks see: *A Home in River Oaks* (Houston, 1926); *River Oaks, A Domain of Beautiful Homes* (Houston, N.d.); Hogg Brothers, *Our Story of River Oaks* (1926); Don Riddle, "Homes to Last for All Times; The Story of Houston's River Oaks," *National Real Estate Journal*, clipping in Houston Metropolitan

Research Center, River Oaks Scrapbook #7 (henceforth called HMRC scrapbook); *River Oaks + Eighteenth Year* (Houston, n.d.); Houston *Post* April 18, 1971; Houston *Chronicle* June 8, 9, 10, 11, 1976; Wendy Meyers, "River Oaks, Still the Satin Slipper Suburb," *Houston Home and Garden* 22 (August 1976), 41-48, 134-135; transcript of an interview with architect John Staub, designer of many River Oaks homes, HMRC March 17, 1975; and the W.P.A. file, HMRC.

[4]These varying accounts can be found in the material listed in note number three. For more detailed fiscal information see: a letter from K.E. Womack, President of the River Oaks Country Club to members of the River Oaks Country Club, June 5, 1924 in HMRC scrapbook #1; Will C. Hogg to Hugh Potter, May 17, 1924 in Will C. Hogg Papers, University Archives, University of Texas at Austin (henceforth cited as WCHP) Box 6/72.

[5]*River Oaks + Eighteenth Year*, no pagination. Another version appears in the *Houston Gargoyle*, April 10, 1928, 11.

[6]Houston *Chronicle* November 12, 1924.

[7]In the Hogg papers see: O.J. Cadwallader to William C. Hogg, March 16, 1925, HC 4/12 section 3; W.B.F. to William C. Hogg and Mike Hogg, March 20, 1930, HC 6/73; Country Club Financial Analysis from W.B.F. to William C. Hogg, December 29, 1924, HC 4/12 section 3; W.B.F. to Mike Hogg March 22, 1929, HC 6/73; clipping, unidentified newspaper, September 7, 1924, HMRC scrapbook #9. These reports must be analyzed carefully because of the intricate corporate organization. For instance, the Hogg's loaned the Country Club Estates the money, therefore, while the corporation did not make money, the Hoggs did. Also, in 1927 the Corporation was severed into two corporate entities: the Country Club Estates and River Oaks. And while one corporate structure lost money, it is not clear how it affected the other, financial statement, December 31, 1927, WCHP-HC 4/12 section 2. The total sum invested in River Oaks is in John Lomax, *Will Hogg, Texan* (Austin, 1956), 30.

[8]The River Oaks Property Owners Scrapbook located in the River Oaks Corporation Offices, Houston, Texas, compiled January 15, 1970, lists the rate of sales and homebuilding. Will Hogg was aware that his grand vision was creating financial problems. See his memo entitled "Comments on Real Estate," April 13, 1925, WCHP Box 6/72, in which he warned that the Corporation was spending more on the lots, approximately $3,000 per acre, than their worth.

[9]For general information regarding Shadyside, see the Houston *Chronicle* April 11, 1976. An examination of the agreement creating Shadyside, January 1, 1917, reveals similarities to River Oaks. Utilities were placed underground and there were detailed clauses regarding land use. The Shadyside material is in the J.S. Cullinan Papers, Special Collections, University of Houston Library, File m-2, F 562.

[10]John Staub interview, 5, 6, 12; J.C. Nichols to Will C. Hogg, June 23, 30, 1925, WCHP-HC 4/11 folder 1.

[11]Clippings, unidentified newspapers, August 10, 17, 1924, June 1, 1924, HMRC scrapbook #1; Houston *Post-Dispatch* September 15, 1925; Houston *Chronicle* September 14, 1925; Hugh Potter to William C. Hogg, September 27, 1928, WCHP-HC 4/12 section 1.

[12]Clipping, unidentified newspaper, (n.d.), HMRC scrapbook #2; also reported verbatim in the Houston *Post* June 21, 1925. For Nichols' Houston visit see: clippings, unidentified newspapers, January 16, 17, 30, 1925, HMRC scrapbook #1.

[13]Quote from Riddle's "Homes to Last for All Times," last page of unpaginated article, HMRC scrapbook #7. Most of the appropriate descriptive material is listed in note number three. The advertisements of the Corporation are excellent sources. See the

HMRC River Oaks Vertical File as well as the clippings in the HMRC scrapbook: October 3, 27, 1926, January 5, 1927, February 11, 13, 20, 1927, March 6, 1927, scrapbook #4; August 17, 1924 scrapbook #1; Houston *Post-Dispatch* August 30, 1925.

[14]Houston *Post-Dispatch* December 29, 1926; Advertisement, (n.d.) 4 pages, HMRC River Oaks Vertical File; *A Home in River Oaks* (1926) *Ibid.*, A plat of the Country Club Estates March 5, 1925 indicating prices of the lots, HMRC scrapbook #1; "Agreement Creating a Residential District in River Oaks," WCHP Box 4/11 folder 2.

[15]For the quotation see an advertisement in HMRC River Oaks Vertical dated 1926. A copy of the deed restrictions spells out the requirements and limitations on private land use: *River Oaks Corporation, Houston, Texas, Reservation, Restrictions and Convenants in River Oaks Addition* (Houston, 1924), 12 pp. The "gentlemen's agreement" is in a letter from Potter to Hogg and the June and July 1930 resume of the River Oaks Corporation. Potter wrote to Hogg that a Jew bought a tract of River Oaks land from the owner, not the Corporation, and the Corporation attempted to get the original owner to take it back. As Potter noted, "the Jew" refused to sell it to Corporation but sold it to another party. This led Potter to observe that, "Perhaps he resents our attitude. Any way [sic] we have gotten rid of him," Hugh Potter to Will C. Hogg December 27, 1926, WCHP-HC 4/12 section 2. The second case was similar and the June 1930 resume declared that the Jew "would hurt the property badly." River Oaks resume by Hugh Potter, July 1930, 3 June resume, 3, *Ibid.*, 6/72.

[16]Sam Bass Warner notes that small subdivisions were "planned" in Boston by thousands of small developers in order to provide services, but not "planned" in a manner to manipulate the environment. Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs* (Cambridge Mass., 1962). In Chicago and Los Angeles, for example, large subdivisions were usually built by the owners of the streetcar companies that serviced the subdivisions, but no thought was given to the creation of a particular type of environment through planning. Howard Chudacoff, *The Evolution of Modern Urban Society* (New Jersey, 1975), 79 and Robert Fogelson, *The Fragmented Metropolis, Los Angeles, 1850-1920* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 85-107.

[17]Hugh Potter to Frank Atwater, April 6, 1925, HMRC scrapbook #1; Potter to Robert S. Abbott, n.d. *Ibid.*, #4; *Our Story of River Oaks*. For examples of the advertising campaign see the HMRC River Oaks Vertical File.

[18]So effective was the River Oaks advertising campaign that it won first place in the National Association of Real Estate Boards meeting in Boston. Houston *Post-Dispatch* June 28, 1929.

[19]Writers Program of the W.P.A., *Houston: A History and Guide* (Houston, 1942) 112; Norman Henry Beard (ed.), *The City Book of Houston, 1925*, 40; David McComb, *Houston: The Bayou City* (Austin, 1969), 122, 206; *The Texas Almanac and Industrial Guide* (Dallas, 1926), 72.

[20]James Wallen to Mr. [W.C.?] Hogg, May 18, 1925, WCHP-HC 4/11 folder 1.

[21]Hogg's involvement in the Houston planning and zoning movement can be found in the Hogg Papers: Hogg to Mayor Oscar Holcombe, June 22, 1926, HC 4/7 section 2; Potter to Hogg, May 7, 1927 HC 4/12 section 1; R.C. Shaffer (secretary of the Forum of Civics) to the American City Planning Institute, November 27, 1926, HC 4/7 section 2; P.B. Timpson to W.C. Hogg, October 21, 1926, HC 4/7; W.C. Hogg to Alex F. Weisberg, December 10, 1926, HC 4/7 section 2; Louis Brawnlaw to Will Hogg, January 8, 1928, HC 4/8; Kessler Plan Association to Will Hogg, February 25, 1927, HC 4/7; unidentified newspaper clippings, September 22, 27, 1927, HMRC scrapbook #6; October 2, 10, 1928, *Ibid.*, #7; June 21, August 7, 1926, *Ibid.*, #3; Houston *Post-Dispatch* July 14, 1927; Houston *Chronicle* July 1, 1927 and the Dallas *News* March 24, 1928. For a study of Will Hogg as a

reformer see Bruce Weber, "Will Hogg: Southern Progressive," a paper delivered to the Southwest Social Science Association, Spring, 1977.

[22]Staub interview; Houston *Post* April 21, 1927; Will C. Hogg to Miss L. Gibson October 21, 1929, WCHP Box 4/8.

[23]For background material on the "City Beautiful" and "City Functional" movements see Mel Scott, *American City Planning Since 1890* (Berkeley, 1967), 47-269. The first quote is in Hogg's address to the annual meeting of the Kessler Plan Association in Dallas in 1928, Dallas *News* March 24, 1928. The final quote is from *Our Story of River Oaks.*

[24]Potter's discourse on city planning entitled, "Modern Residential Development in Relation to City Planning," reprinted by the Houston *Chronicle* March 21, 1926. Potter's views on city planning, his role on the City Planning Commission, and biographical data can be found in the Houston *Post* May 5, 1929, the Houston *Press* May 21, 1929, the Houston *Post-Dispatch* March 19, 1926, the Houston *Chronicle* March 19, 1926; and a letter from Alex Weisberg to Hugh Potter, January 18, 1927, WCHP-HC 4/7.

[25]Will C. Hogg to Hugh Potter, April 25, 1925, WCHP Box 6/72; Houston *Post* April 26, 1927.

[26]*Our Story of River Oaks.*

[27]*Ibid;* Houston *Chronicle,* November 20, 1926 and December 28, 1929; Telegram series, Potter to Hogg, January 1-3, 1927, WCHP-HC 4/12, section 1; Buffalo Drive Beautification Society to Mayor Oscar Holcombe, et al., November 21, 1927, *Ibid,* HC 4/12; Hogg to Mrs. James L. Autry, December 29, 1927, *Ibid,* HC 4/7, section 1. For the "voluntary segregation" scheme see Hogg to Herbert Hare, May 25, 1929 and Hare to Hogg, May 28, 1929, *Ibid,* HC 4/8.

Child or Beast?: White Texas' View of Blacks, 1900-1910

by Bruce A. Glasrud

"It was just, it was right, it was imperative he should die" proclaimed a white Texas writer in the aftermath of a 1905 lynching of a black Texan.[1] This comment echoed the thoughts of many whites in the state during the first decade of the twentieth century. Blacks frequently faced white displeasure and wrath; whether white contempt and fear assumed violent or nonviolent forms, blacks were reminded often of white racism. Whites were haunted by fear of racial amalgamation, a fear expressed in their apprehension about sexual relations between black males and white females. They worried also that blacks might arm themselves for retaliation against brutal treatment.

The overwhelming white domination attained during this decade fashioned two basic attitudes—that blacks were either childlike or beastlike. Few whites supported the concept of racial equality. For some whites, paternalistic concern, rooted in an assumption that blacks were inferior beings who required white help and guidance, superceded fear and contempt for the black race. Others saw blacks as beasts subject to rigid control, whipping, and, too often, lynching. The best indications of white public opinion can be found in utterances of public officials, in newspaper editorializing and treatment of Negro news, and in the general white acceptance of the violence and intimidation that were a part of the pattern of race relations in the Lone Star state.

Senators Charles Culberson and Joseph Bailey voiced the dominant opposing racial attitudes of the first decade. A paternalist, Senator Culberson emphasized that demands for equality menaced whites, and that

> aside from its impossibility, social equality would lead imperceptively to more intimate personal relations, to lower standards and ideals of ultimately, if fully attained, to marriage and partial or complete amalgamation, with the consequent debasement, degradation or destruction of the white race.

However, Culberson advocated providing black Texans with "education, forbearance, moral training, just treatment, [and] opportunities for labor"; he did not endorse destructive tactics.[2] Although a paternalist, Culberson's fear of racial amalgamation engendered lynching and other forms of violence as surely as the contempt articulated by his colleague in the Senate, Joseph Bailey.

Senator Bailey, the nearest approximation to a demagogue the state has produced, illustrated the other side of racial beliefs. Bailey frequently brought the issue of race into his campaigns and speeches and criticized both Democrats and Republicans for being too friendly toward blacks. In 1904, after condemning President Theodore Roosevelt's association with Booker T. Washington, Bailey asserted that "I believe more in the purity of the Anglo-Saxon race than in the principles of democracy."[3] In a speech at Fort Worth the Senator emphasized that blacks should not live side by side with educated whites; since blacks were trained for servitude "nothing in the world could be more supremely foolish than to spend the people's money in trying to educate a race of menials." However, Bailey reminded his audience, "lest I be misunderstood, I have no prejudice against the negro in his place, but I think his place is the white man's kitchen and

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not the white man's dining room." According to Bailey, blacks must remain in their place: "I want to treat the negro justly and generously as long as he behaves himself, and when he doesn't I want to drive him out of this country."[4]

Other politicians[5] expressed views similar to those of either Bailey or Culberson. After Theodore Roosevelt invited Booker T. Washington to the White House in 1901, Texas Congressman Albert Sidney Burleson denounced the President and refused to attend social functions at the White House for the remainder of Roosevelt's administration. Governor Joseph Sayers reminded the Texas legislature in 1901 that "the negro is . . . the weaker race and in matters of legislation, he is altogether dependent upon the white man." Governor S.W.T. Lanham, although willing to use troops to protect individual blacks, warned Negro Baptists in 1904 to keep "out of partisan politics" and to "respect the social limitations between the races. If these are transcended there will be trouble."[6] Four years later, M.J. Denman, who opposed John Nance Garner for the Democratic nomination to Congress, advocated sending all blacks to the Philippines in order to alleviate racial tension. The next year a member of the Texas legislature introduced a resolution opposing any appropriations to the black school at Prairie View on the grounds "that the cotton field is the proper place for the negro."[7] The essential difference between these politicians and Senator Bailey was that Bailey emphasized the question of race and probably profitted politically from it.

Not only did white politicians voice their racial views, they also acted by restricting blacks from participation in politics. Neither the Democratic nor the Republican party sought black members during this decade. In fact, the Democrats in the state legislature established a poll tax as a prerequisite for voting in Texas elections with the result that the size of the black electorate was substantially reduced.[8] And, when the legislature enacted the Terrell Election Law establishing a direct primary system, the Democratic state executive committee allowed local committees to bar blacks from the Democratic primary. The Republicans, who in the nineteenth century became a viable political force by attracting the black voter, turned to a "lily white" strategy in the twentieth. The Republicans refused to contest local and state elections where victory was dependent upon black votes, and distributed patronage to whites only.[9]

Disfranchisement and political ostracism[10] were not the only indications of hostility to blacks; Texas politicians also perfected an elaborate segregation code. Both *de facto* and *de jure* Jim Crow existed in Texas from before the Civil War, but during the first decade of the twentieth century the most rapid expansion of legal segregation took place. Legislation of the period 1900-1910 decreed segregation on all forms of public transportation, in railroad depots, and in eleemosynary and penal institutions. In 1907, any place of public amusement or recreation was permitted by law to segregate blacks or to bar their admission. The same legislature stipulated that no white couple could adopt a black child, and that no black couple could adopt a white child.[11]

Even when the law made no differentiation on the basis of race, the legal system operated against blacks. Those convicted of a crime usually received longer and harsher sentences than whites convicted of a similar offense. For example, a white charged with attempted assault of a black girl received a sentence of two years, but a Negro charged with assaulting a white girl was punished with thirty-eight years in prison.[12] Since the presence of blacks on juries was virtually non-existent, white juries had little sympathy for the black defendent. Texas courts frequently ruled that the lack of blacks on a jury was not sufficient evidence of discrimination. The presence of a Negro on a jury was

sufficiently unusual that newspapers reported the incident. In 1908, when Washington Williams was a juror, *The San Antonio Daily Express* commented that "it is very seldom that a negro is taken on a jury."[13]

The white sentiments which led to violence or disfranchisement or segregation were faithfully reflected in Texas newspapers; the newspapers helped to mold them as well. News coverage accorded blacks in the white press consisted of three types: crime reports, humorous incidents, and news of lynchings or other forms of white violence directed against blacks. Accounts of Negro criminal acts were scattered throughout Texas papers. For example, the December 26, 1901 issue of the *Houston Daily Post* carried brief stories from around the state on the deaths of three blacks, the wounding of three others, and the shooting and stabbing of whites by blacks. No other information concerning blacks was in the paper. Humorous stories depicting the black Texan as childish and unlearned were common. *The Dallas Morning News* carried a cartoon in the Sunday edition entitled "Sambo," which displayed the childlike qualities supposedly inherent in blacks.[14] Social, economic, and political reports of interest to blacks were suppressed. The inevitable result of such reportorial bias was a picture of blacks as simple or sinister; one or the other view fitted the preconceptions of most whites.

Editors became increasingly sensitive to the image of the state in reporting clashes between white and black. At the turn of the century, newspapers reserved page one and bold headlines for news of lynchings. But, early in the twentieth century, accounts of lynchings were frequently remanded to inside pages and received less sensational coverage. National publicity, Senate criticism, and the frequency of the violence were responsible for the diminished reports. Often, stories of lynchings were not carried in the press; some papers reported a given lynching while others did not. Yet, the suppression on lynching news was less frequent than the suppression of other news about blacks in the state. At least one paper could be counted on to provide lynch news; little mention was made of the accomplishments of life style of black Texans.

The press not only ignored Negro accomplishments and activities, but the terminology used in accounts of race violence was indicative of the prejudices of the era. Newspapers often referred to the Negro "beast," the Negro "fiend," or the Negro "brute." Other blacks were described as "insolent," "idle," or "trifling."[15] The editor of the *Lubbock Morning Avalanche* characterized blacks as "kinky headed coons." A short time later, he opposed the entrance of blacks into Lubbock since "negroes are like Johnson grass when it comes to taking root and increasing in a town."[16] Press approval of lynchings was implicit in the terms used to describe the victim. Guilt was assumed; he was a murderer, a rapist, or a trespasser, and the lynching was probably needed. Referring to a lynching at Whitesboro in 1901, *The Dallas Morning News* headlined the "Negro murderer is burned."[17]

Some newspapers approved burning and hanging as punishment and warned blacks of an armed white repression. A Nacogdoches paper declared in 1903 that "you can say what you please, but the negro will never rise in respectability or even be classed as a human being, until he ceases his damnable outrages on women. He has either got to stop it, leave the U.S., or be exterminated." The same year a Carthage paper expressed similar views; according to *The Panola Watchman*, "the negro can stop lynching tomorrow. Let him let white girls alone." A newspaper editorial from Longview argued that:

> almost every day some negro brute assaults a white woman in this state, and often one to a half-dozen murders are committed in an effort to hide

> the crime. . . . If rape and murder by brutish negroes are to become common, the negro must expect extermination. . . . Burning or hanging the culprit does not seem to check it and if nothing else will do, the people will rise in their might and put an end to it.

The same year, 1905, some white Houstonians asked Governor S.W.T. Lanham to allow mobs to punish blacks guilty of assaults upon white women. They asserted that these assaults must be stopped "even if it is necessary to wipe out the race."[18]

Other papers seldom expressed themselves as openly, but their failure to condemn the mobs and their recitals of extenuating circumstances for lynchings implied approval. In 1910, for example, after a mob estimated at well over 5,000 persons took Allen Brooks, a black man under indictment for assault, from the courthouse at Dallas during a recess in the trial and hanged him from a pole, *The Dallas Morning News* refused to condemn the lynching. Instead, the *News* asserted that:

> something may be said, in certain instances, not in justification, but in extenuation of the conduct of those who resort to lynching . . . . Many of them are moved by their contempt for the delays, reversals, and failures of courts.[19]

The inconsistencies of white attitudes were also reflected by the press. The white paternalists' capacity for holding contradictory views could be observed in newspaper editorials inveighing against race prejudice while supporting separation of white and black. According to the editor of *The San Antonio Daily Express*, "there is and must always be race distinction, but there is absolutely no excuse for race prejudice." A writer for the *Houston Chronicle* noted that "the negro is inferior not because he is black nor is he black because he is inferior, but he is inferior because he belongs to an inferior race."[20]

An extreme example of race prejudice took place in 1910 with white Texans' response to a boxing match between the world heavy-weight champion, Jack Johnson, a Galveston black, and Jim Jeffries, the "white hope." Johnson defeated Jeffries to the delight of blacks and the consternation of whites. Minor disturbances arose, and whites demanded that films of the bout be prohibited. The belief prevailed that if blacks watched their champion defeat a white in a boxing match, full-scale outbreaks would occur.[21] Texas Governor Thomas M. Campbell was widely applauded after he asked the state legislature to bar showing of the film. Although the legislature responded by enacting a law banning movies of prize fights, some members of the legislature attempted unsuccessfully to ban only those fight pictures in which blacks were participants.[22]

The Johnson-Jeffries fight and its aftermath epitomized the racial dogmas which produced this period in Texas history. The irrational belief in white supremacy and the concomitant emphasis on forcing blacks into a subordinate and separate caste permeated all classes of white society; few raised voices of opposition. Perceiving blacks as childlike and/or beastlike led to treating blacks with paternalistic concern, or to dominating their lives. Yet, definite improvements in race relations in the Lone Star state eventually took place; violence continued to occur, but the year 1910 marked the end of an era when it was used with impunity against black Texans. Blacks struggled successfully to acquire a more equitable status in Texas society, and more and more whites made genuine efforts to extend the rights of full citizenship to all Texans. In the matters of race the 1970s are much different from the first decade of the twentieth century.

NOTES

[1]*Waco Weekly Tribune*, August 12, 1905.

[2]*The Dallas Morning News*, November 21, 1901. For additional information on Culberson see James William Madden, *Charles Allen Culberson* (Austin, 1929). White paternalism can also be noticed in a book written by a white Texas minister, James Jefferson Pipkin, *The Story of a Rising Race: The Negro in Revelation, in History, and in Citizenship* (New York, 1902). Pipkin claimed that "what the Negro needs is encouragement in every line of lawful endeavor, all the aid that can be extended to him by generous whites without inducing idleness, an open recognition of whatever manhood he evinces in the inevitable struggle of the poor and lowly, and the arousing of renewed determination to do his part in the uplifting of his people (v)."

[3]Sam Hanna Acheson, *Joe Bailey, The Last Democrat* (New York, 1932), 171; *Houston Daily Post*, September 7, 1904; *The City Times* (Galveston), September 24, 1904; *The Dallas Morning News*, October 23, 1904. The former Democratic Governor, James S. Hogg, disagreed with Bailey and declared that "I don't want the young men of the this country to understand that they are to make any attack upon any human being unless it is by due process of law." Hogg received national publicity and a letter of thanks from G.W. Jackson, black president of the Central Texas Negro Fair Association of Corsicans for his response to Bailey. Robert C. Cotner, *James Stephen Hogg: A Biography* (Austin, 1959), 562-563; *The Dallas Morning News*, October 13, 1904. Also see Bob Charles Holcomb, "Senator Joe Bailey: Two Decades of Controversy" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1968), on Bailey's checkered career.

[4]*The Dallas Morning News*, March 22, 1907. Politicians were not the only ones to express such views. William Hayne Levell, minister for the largest Presbyterian church in Houston, asserted that lynching was a needed punishment for the rape of white women by black men. It was also needed to keep blacks from "getting the upper hand." William Hayne Levell, "On Lyncing in the South," *Outlook*, LXIX (November 16, 1901), 731-733.

[5]Politics and politicians of the period have been studied in a number of different ways. See, for example, Alwyn Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform: Texas Politics, 1876-1906* (Austin, 1971); Maurice Henry Sochia, "The Progressive Movement in Texas, 1900-1914" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Southwest Texas State Teachers College, 1959); and James A. Tinsley, "The Progressive Movement in Texas" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1953).

[6]Adrian Norris Anderson, "Albert Sidney Burleson: A Southern Politician in the Progressive Era" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1967), 81; *The Dallas Morning News*, January 11, 1901, September 15, 1904. On Sayers, see James Leighton Tenney, "The Public Services of Joseph Draper Sayers" (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Texas, 1933); and on Lanham see Martha Lanham, "Governor S.W.T. Lanham" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Baylor University, 1930), and Ruby Lee Martin, "The Administration of Governor S.W.T. Lanham, 1903-1907" (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Texas, 1937).

[7]*The Galveston Daily News*, June 22, 1908; *The San Antonio Daily Express*, May 1, 1909.

[8]On the poll tax in Texas see Dick Smith, "Texas and the Poll Tax," *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, XXIV (1964), 167-173; Donald S. Strong, "The Poll Tax: The Case of Texas," *American Political Science Review*, XXXVII (1944), 693-709; Laura Snow, "The Poll Tax in Texas: Its Historical, Legal, and Fiscal Aspects" (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Texas, 1936); Judith Kidd Rudoff, "The Poll Tax in Texas: Political Panacea" (Unpublished Master's thesis, East Texas State University, 1968);

Edwin Larry Dickens, "The Poll Tax in Texas" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Texas College of Arts and Industries, 1963). However, the most accurate treatment of the poll tax and its background in Texas is found in Lawrence Rice, *The Negro in Texas* (Baton Rouge, 1971), 22-25, 132-139.

[9]*General Laws of the State of Texas*, regular session, 1903, chapter CI, section 93; first called session, 1905, chapter II; *The Dallas Morning News*, March 30, 1903, April 19, 1904; Paul Casdorph, *A History of the Republican Party in Texas, 1865-1965* (Austin, 1965), 7-97. The position of the two parties during this period can also be seen in Ernest William Winkler (ed.), *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas* (Austin, University of Texas Bulletin No. 53, 1916), 411-519, and Barr, *Reconstruction to Reform*, 188-208.

[10]Systematically denied political participation by the Republicans and Democrats by the end of the decade, some blacks turned their attention to the prohibition crusade which culminated in an important election in 1911. Some whites asserted that blacks needed to be on the prohibition side because blacks were "about to exchange the slavery of the white man for the slavery of drunkenness." Thomas S. Henderson to L.L. Campbell, May, 1911, Thomas S. Henderson Papers, University of Texas Archives. Additional information concerning blacks and prohibition can be found in Anti-Saloon League, *The Brewers and Texas Politics*, 2 volumes (San Antonio, 1917).

[11]*General Laws of the State of Texas*, regular session, 1907, chapters XIV, section 1, XXXVI, XLVII, section 1; regular session, 1909, chapter LVI, article 2949; second called session, 1909, chapter XIII, section 1; first called session, 1910, chapter X, section 36; third called session, 1910, chapter III; *The Dallas Morning News*, July 12, 30, 1907. Secondary studies of Jim Crow and its background in Texas include Bruce A. Glasrud, "Jim Crow's Emergence in Texas," *American Studies*, XV (1974), 47-60; Leonard Brewster Murphy, "A History of Negro Segregation Practices in Texas, 1865-1958" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Southern Methodist University, 1958); Barry A. Crouch and L.J. Schultz, "Crisis in Color: Racial Separation in Texas During Reconstruction," *Civil War History*, XVI (1970), 37-49; George E. Hopkins, "The Origins of Jim Crow Laws in Texas" (Unpublished Paper delivered at annual meeting, Texas State Historical Association, 1966); Artis Hill, " 'Jim Crow-ism' in Several Areas of Twentieth Century Life Relative to the Negro: Transportation, Eating and Lodging Places, Public Parks, and Movie Theaters" (Unpublished Master's thesis, Abilene Christian College, 1969).

[12]*The Dallas Morning News*, August 30, 1904, October 18, 1905; *The Galveston Daily News*, February 2, 1910.

[13]*Smith* v. *State*, 69 SW 151 (1902); *Thomas* v. *State*, 95 SW 1069 (1906); *Hanna* v. *State*, 105 SW 793 (1907); *Thompson* v. *State*, 74 SW 914 (1903); *The San Antonio Daily Express*, February 29, 1908. Without legal protections, black Texans reverted to other means for protecting their rights and resisting the implementation of segregation codes; see August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, "The Boycott Movement Against Jim Crow Streetcars in the South, 1900-1906," *Journal of American History*, LV (1969), 756-775.

[14]*Houston Daily Post*, December 26, 1901; *The Dallas Morning News*, March 22, June 21, 1908.

[15]*The Dallas Morning News*, May 26, 1902, April 1, 1905, November 26, 1906; *Semi-Weekly Courier-Times* (Tyler), March 5, 1910; *The Times-Clarion* (Longview), October 5, 1905; *Houston Daily Post*, November 16, 1900, November 23, 1902, September 8, 1905; *The San Antonio Daily Express*, July 15, 1908.

[16]*Lubbock Morning Avalanche*, November 18, December 4, 1909.

[17]*The Dallas Morning News*, August 21, 1901.

[18]*Nacogdoches Weekly Sentinel*, 1903, cited in David W. Livingston, "The Lynching of Negroes in Texas, 1900-1925" (Unpublished Master's thesis, East Texas State University, 1972), 110; *The Panola Watchman* (Carthage), August 26, 1903; *The Times-Clarion* (Longview), October 5, 1905; *New York Times*, October 7, 1905.

[19]*The Dallas Morning News*, March 4, 1910.

[20]*The San Antonio Daily Express*, May 1, 1909; *Houston Chronicle*, October 22, 1902.

[21]Richard Bardolph, *The Negro Vanguard* (New York, 1961), 268-269; David G. McComb, *Houston: The Bayou City* (Austin, 1969), 161; *The Dallas Morning News*, July 7, 8, 1910. Studies of Johnson's life include Jack Johnson, *Jack Johnson in the Ring and Out* (Chicago, 1927); Denzil Batchelor, *Jack Johnson and His Times* (London, 1956); Finis Farr, *Black Champion: The Life and Times of Jack Johnson* (New York, 1964); and Al-Tony Gilmore, *Bad Nigger! The National Impact of Jack Johnson* (New York, 1975). Johnson has also been the subject of a play by Howard O. Sackler, *The Great White Hope* (New York, 1968). Part of the reason for the white southern antipathy toward Johnson was because he associated with white women. See Al-Tony Gilmore, "Jack Johnson and White Women: The National Impact," *Journal of Negro History*, LVIII (1973), 18-38.

[22]*The Dallas Morning News*, July 7, 8, 1910; *General Laws of the State of Texas*, third called session, 1910, chapter VIII.

KARLE WILSON BAKER: FIRST WOMAN OF TEXAS LETTERS

by Edwin W. Gaston, Jr.

From shortly after the Anglo-Americans' arrival in Texas to the present, women have been numbered among the foremost writers of the place even if they have generally been less recognized than such men as J. Frank Dobie and Walter Prescott Webb. Mary Austin Holley, a cousin of the colonizer Stephen F. Austin, was the first woman author. In 1833, she published in book form a series of twelve letters[1] intended to encourage immigration to the area still under Mexican rule. Her more notable nineteenth century successors after Texas nation- and statehood included Augusta Jane Evans, a teenager when she wrote a novel about the Alamo; Mollie E. Moore Davis, author both of novels and poetry; and Amelia E. Barr, also the author of a novel about the Alamo.[2] Then, from that nineteenth century beginning, such twentieth century Texas women as Ruth Cross, Katherine Anne Porter, and Dorothy Scarborough have fashioned successful careers in fiction; and Ruth Averitte and Vassar Miller have earned renown in poetry.[3].

But the achievements of all those women writers notwithstanding, the position of "First Woman of Texas Letters" properly belongs to Karle Wilson Baker. She followed Mrs. Holley, Miss Evans, Mrs. Davis, and Mrs. Barr, but preceded the others. An essayist, fictionist, and poet, Mrs. Baker was the first Texan—woman or man—to earn international recognition for her works and the first woman to be elected a Fellow by the prestigious Texas Institute of Letters.[4] And if her fiction has been somewhat overshadowed by Miss Porter's psychological depth and her lyric poetry somewhat eclipsed by Miss Miller's wider range in content and form—in either or both events, Mrs. Baker's overall achievement in three literary genres has preserved her place of eminence.

To the novelist and poet Dorothy Scarborough, Mrs. Baker once wrote wryly, "I am the possessor of a biography without facts."[5] Her characteristic understatement, however, did not obscure the story of her distinguished career. Born October 13, 1878, in Little Rock, Arkansas, she was the daughter of William Thomas and Kate Florence Montgomery Wilson. She studied at Little Rock Academy and the University of Chicago, the latter then including on its faculty the poet William Vaughn Moody and the novelist Robert Herrick. Both Moody and Herrick deeply influenced Karle Wilson, who, in 1910 following Moody's premature death, acknowledged her indebtedness in her elegy, "W.V.M." Later, Mrs. Baker would study at Columbia University and the University of California. The only institution that awarded her a degree, however, was Southern Methodist University, which in 1924 conferred an honorary Doctorate of Letters degree upon the author. Mrs. Baker once remarked, "I am embarrassingly shy on degrees;"[6] but the apparent deficiency was more obvious to her than to the students who attended her college and university lectures and to her many admirers in the academic community at large.

Karle Wilson taught four years at schools in Bristol, Virginia, and Little Rock, and then in 1901 joined her family that had moved to Nacogdoches, Texas. At that point in her life, she regularly hiked, rode horseback, and played tennis. As a tennis player, in fact, she quickly earned admiration in Nacogdoches, but dismissed the acclaim by saying, "Oh, they just thought I

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played well because few women played tennis then."[7] Indeed, she minimized all her activity in those days, declaring that she was just "hanging around" the town.[8] In actuality, however, Nacogdoches and its abundance of natural beauty—its flowers, trees, and wildlife—were impressing her as almost Edenic. And she was absorbing the impressions that would become translated into her major literary subjects and themes.

With Nacogdoches, then, Karle Wilson was associated for the remainder of her life. There, on August 8, 1907, she married Thomas E. Baker, a banker; reared a son and daughter, the latter herself an accomplished author and illustrator;[9] taught from 1923-34 at Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College (now State University); and wrote essays, poems, and novels. In Nacogdoches, too, Karle Wilson Baker died November 9, 1960, and was buried.

Essays, poetry, and short stories comprised the first literary genres in which Mrs. Baker worked. Later, she also wrote novels and historical articles. But poetry represented her finest achievement even though she once told an interviewer she "did not intend to become known as a writer of verse" nor had "ever worked toward that end."[10] Mrs. Baker's early work appeared in such notable journals as *Atlantic Monthly*, *Century*, *Harper's*, *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, *Scribner's*, and the *Yale Review*. Then, the Yale University Press published her first volume, ninety-two lyric poems collected under the name of the title poem *Blue Smoke* (1919).[11] Yale also published a second collection of her poems *Burning Bush* (1922),[12] as well as two prose volumes discussed later in this paper. A third and final volume of Mrs. Baker's poetry, *Dreamers on Horseback* (1931),[13] was published by the Southwest Press of Dallas. Even though *Dreamers* represented her final published collection, it was followed by the frequent publication of individual poems in journals.

Between *Blue Smoke* and *Burning Bush*, Mrs. Baker's *The Garden of the Plynck*[14] had appeared in 1920. Ostensibly stories for children, *The Garden*, as Dorothy Scarborough aptly observed, had "charm" for adults as well.[15] Then, following *Burning Bush*, Mrs. Baker's second prose work, *Old Coins*,[16] had been published in 1923. It consists of twenty-seven short allegorical sketches. Both *The Garden* and *Old Coins*, like Mrs. Baker's first two volumes of poems, were published by the Yale University Press.

With the publication of *Old Coins*, Mrs. Baker began devoting her work primarily to prose. In 1925, she published *The Texas Flag Primer*,[17] a Texas history for children that was adopted for use in the public schools. A revised version of it, entitled *Two Little Texans*,[18] appeared in 1932. Between the *Flag Primer* and its revision came Mrs. Baker's nature essays *The Birds of Tanglewood* (1930).[19] Tanglewood was the name that Mrs. Baker gave to a pristine area around her parents' home immediately north of the high school campus on Mound Street in Nacogdoches. The property passed to Mrs. Baker and her own family about 1917, who lived there until 1925.

Mrs. Baker's most notable prose works, however, were two novels published when she was in her late fifties and early sixties, an atypical age for a beginning novelist. *Family Style* (1937)[20] is set against the background of the East Texas oil boom but finally is a study of human motivation and reaction. *Star of the Wilderness* (1942)[21] is a historical novel in which figures Dr. James Grant, the Texas revolutionary in the 1830s. Both were published by the prestigious Coward-McCann of New York.

Of Mrs. Baker's prose works, the *Tanglewood* essays and the two novels should be considered further here. *Tanglewood* consists of four essays, the first of which is the title piece. That initial essay constitutes something of a social

register of the birds that came in the summer of 1901 to the "tangle of grapevines and underbrush and great forest trees" around the author's parents' new home in Nacogdoches. Mrs. Baker finds that the thrush looks middleclass even though it is a poet at heart. Her favorite blue bird has a "high seriousness" of soul; but the mockingbird is not the Shakespeare of birds, as Lanier declared, but a dazzling second-rater.

The second essay, "Window Lore," was written by Mrs. Baker as the result of an illness that had imposed upon her a close view of the bird visitors to the sill of a window by which she lay for months. It abounds in description of the color of the birds' eyes, the shape of their eyebrows, and the ways of special crippled ones.

"An Aerial Harvest," the third essay in *Tanglewood*, records a storm in April, 1922, in Nacogdoches that left a wreckage of dead and injured birds. Mrs. Baker and her daughter carefully nursed and then set free the survivors, and they accorded "Christian burial" to the victims. During the course of this strange visitation, they identified about twenty-five species of birds, including the rare Redstart and the Blackburnian warbler.

The fourth and final essay, "Domesticity—With Wings," describes Mrs. Baker's own new home, "West Windows," successor to "Tanglewood" as a haven for birds. It includes an extended chronicle of the Titmouse family that the author christened in Dickensian fashion, and an account of a visit of a Whippoorwill's nest in the vicinity of the Lone Star Church in Nacogdoches County. The essay evaluates Mrs. Baker's association with nature:

> Indeed, in looking back over the memories and written notes of more than twenty years of bird study, I have been lately struck by the comparative meagerness of my records of domestic life. Certainly this has not been due in any degree to a lack of interest; for my own ideal has always been precisely that of the birds—domesticity with wings . . . Thus, though I have at last gained the thrush as a householder, I have not lost him as Idea. As I had realized long ago, he comes from the realms of things that 'age cannot wither . . . nor custom stale.' But even if it were not so; even if, being human, I have bartered adoration for tenderness, exchanged a mystery for a friend, and left some heavy coin of dream, never to be redeemed, in the hollow of his root-lined nest; yet is life kind to the stumbling worshipper of wings.[22]

The *Tanglewood* essays, however, are about more than birds. Like Burroughs, Mrs. Baker endows the creatures with human traits; and, like him, she uses them as a springboard to philosophize about life in general. But she goes farther than Burroughs in finding symbolism in nature—in seeing a kind of allegory in birdlife. The resulting mysticism is reminiscent of that in her poetry.

Mrs. Baker's first novel, *Family Style*, is set in and around Kilgore and Longview before and during the East Texas oil boom that began in the early 1930s. The novel ostensibly derives its title from signs seen often in those days in the bustling communities springing up with the boom: "Meals Family Style." But actually the title results from the concern of the novel with family life styles related to sudden riches—that is, to family success and failure in ethical and moral ways.

The principal character, Kathleen Priest, wife of young Duke, looks forward to the oil activity as a means of enabling the two to fulfill dreams that could not be realized from the marginal farming in which Duke and his father have engaged. Prior to the boom, the area—a 50-mile stretch of red hills and

sandy flats of blackjacks and pines—had depended primarily upon small cotton farms for its precarious livelihood. Kathleen's father-in-law, Matt Priest, likewise hopes that the boom will bring financial security to his family; but his wife resents the intrusion of the activity upon their lives. Ultimately, the elder Mrs. Priest goes insane. Oil indeed does gush from the Priest land, but the well is devastated by a fire that lasts for days. While Duke Priest helps fight the fire, Kathleen opens a small restaurant (meals served family style) to supplement the family income. She also undertakes the care of the invalid boy Henry, ultimately becoming the guardian both of his person and his property enriched by oil discovery. Finally, then, Duke and Kathleen successfully make the adjustment to the new way of life that Duke's mother cannot accommodate and with which Duke's father Matt dies.

But if the Duke Priests adjust successfully, Duke's cousins do not. Fred Priest, a lawyer, accumulates vast wealth from his own oil property and also that which he swindles from others. But his marriage to Marie ends in dissolution because of his unethical conduct and drinking. And Harlowe Priest's marriage to Rose Anne ends, when she leaves him for an oil-field supervisor.

Mrs. Baker's other novel, *Star of the Wilderness*, has as its background the Texas Revolution in 1836. But rather than focusing upon the more famous battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto, it concentrates on the ill-fated Matamoras Expedition. That attempt by Texans to invade Mexican territory was led by Dr. James Grant, who died with all of his fifty men except one in an ambush March 2, 1836, near San Patricio, by Urrea's Mexican forces. More centrally, however, the novel focuses upon the trials of home life in Nacogdoches, Texas, during those historic times. The opening sequence takes a well-to-do-family from its home in Cincinnati down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers on the luxurious river boat "Star of the Wilderness", which partly inspires the title of the novel; then up the Red River to Natchitoches, Louisiana, on a much less comfortable boat; and thence to Nacogdoches most uncomfortably by carriage. The journey to Texas, however, would not itself have been so bad if the husband, Paul McAlpine, had shown good sense and if his wife, Jessie, had not been pregnant.

Settling Jessie and their two children—a son Mac, 11, and a daughter Ione, 10—in Nacogdoches, Paul McAlpine journeys on to Mexico to join his cousin Dr. James Grant. Jessie struggles to provide for her family, taking in boarders and working in other ways in the frontier community. In 1836, seven years after the start of the novel, Dr. Grant's dreams of uniting the northern tier of Mexican states (including Texas) with the American Union are shattered in the ambush at San Patricio. There both he and Paul McAlpine die. Meanwhile, other of Santa Anna's Mexican forces, having crushed the Texan defense of the Alamo, move toward Fannin's men at Goliad. Having grown to young manhood, Paul McAlpine's son Mac is a member of the Goliad force. However, Mac manages to escape before the massacre of Fannin and the others. The novel concludes with Santa Anna's capture at San Jacinto, the battle which established the Lone Star of Texas as a Republic and then as a state of the American Union. Finally, then, the title of the novel assumes a two-fold meaning: the "Star of the Wilderness" which brought the McAlpines to a new land is transmuted into a nation-state that was itself a star in the wilderness.

Despite relegating history to a background function, the novel still has historical import. The critic and historian Sam Acheson called *Star of the Wilderness* the "best fictional account of the Texas Revolution" that had been written by 1942.[23] And the critic Louise Field praised the work for its "clearly drawn pictures of the manners and customs of those early days of the nineteenth century."[24]

But, to repeat, poetry remained Mrs. Baker's chief accomplishment. It was the art form for which she received a prize in 1925 from the Poetry Society of South Carolina, as well as numerous other regional and national honors. Poetry was the art form for which she received international recognition through the inclusion of representative examples in literary anthologies. In 1958, two years before her death, she was acclaimed by the Poetry Society of Texas as an honorary vice president. The honor enhanced that afforded her by other societies in which she held membership: the Authors League of America, the Philosophical Society of Texas, the Poetry Society of America, and others.

Mrs. Baker was once called the "poet of quiet things" by Dorothy Scarborough,[25] who took the idea from one of Mrs. Baker's own poems:

I shall be loved as quiet things
Are loved—white pigeons in the sun,
Curled yellow leaves that whisper down
One after one.[26]

But as Mrs. Baker asserted in another poem, "Labels," she was impatient with being categorized:

I think I'll be going
A creature that sings
Can't wait for the labels
To stick to her wings!

If it's worth your while, catch me
(At least, if you're able:
Aristides himself
Was no match for a label.[27]

And, indeed, Mrs. Baker wrote about a variety of subjects—people, place, and event—as the poet Pamela Lynn Palmer has shown:

> Throughout Mrs. Baker's poetry her identification with her region and her subjectivity are apparent. Her most common speaker is herself or a personality or mood of herself. The people she writes of reflect home relationships, especially the mother-child relationship which was important to her as the mother of two children. She writes of her immediate surroundings—her town [Nacogdoches], trees, birds, and when she occasionally leaves her town, she absorbs the atmosphere of her new surroundings [for example, Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, all subjects of Mrs. Baker's poems] in the same way . . . It really would not have mattered where she established her roots; her point of view would have remained subjective and regional. For her, anywhere led to everywhere, and that truth allowed her to see the universal in the particular.[28]

L.W. Payne, the Texas literary historian at whose invitation Mrs. Baker lectured on several occasions at the University of Texas, called Mrs. Baker the "truest and most intrinsically artistic poet Texas can lay claim to today."[29] Dorothy Scarborough added that Mrs. Baker was "worthy to stand beside Sara Teasdale and Edna St. Vincent Millay in the 'essential fire' of her poetic thought and the tooled beauty of its form."[30] Further attesting to her place among the foremost national poets of her day is the correspondence that Mrs. Baker conducted with such literary artists as Witter Bynner, Willa Cather, Carl Van Doren, Theodore Dreiser, Kathleen Norris, and Carl Sandburg.[31]

Despite such praise, which truly entitles Mrs. Baker to be recognized as the "First Woman of Texas Letters," Mrs. Baker discounted her accomplishments in her poem "Half-Way Stone":

I have not much to show for all
The dedicated years:
A little tree of ecstacy,
A little jar of tears.

No lordly forest of sweet shade
To make my name be praised;
No pyramid of living stone
Such as my masters raised.

Not even any knotted scourge
Or serpent-wreathed rods
Shall lie upon the altar steps
To prove I served the gods.

I shall not leave a noisy name,
But there'll be two or three
Who'll want me, not for oracle,
But just for company.

They will be glad of one who went
So softly on her quest,
Still as an oak or daffodil
Or bird upon its nest.

Who lived alone with lovely things
And did not cry or strive,
But waited, singing to herself.
To keep her soul alive.

Who meant to wed the sun, at first,
But finding him so far,
Sat down at last upon a stone
Abashed before a star.[32]

But the disclaimer notwithstanding, Karle Wilson Baker—first in time to bring honor to Texas letters—remains secure in that initial reputation.

NOTES

[1]Mary Austin Holley, *Texas* (Baltimore, 1833). A more accessible edition is *Letters of An Early American Traveler,* ed. Mattie Austin Hatcher, (Dallas, 1933).

[2]Augusta Jane Evans, *Inez, A Tale of the Alamo* (New York, 1855); Mary E. Moore Davis, *Minding the Gap and Other Poems* (Houston, 1867) and *Under the Man-Fig* (Boston, 1895), the latter a novel; and Amelia E. Barr, *Remember the Alamo* (New York, 1888). For a more detailed discussion of Miss Evans, Mrs. Davis, and Mrs. Barr, see my literary history *The Early Novel of the Southwest* (Albuquerque, 1961).

[3]Representative works: Ruth Cross, *The Big Road* (New York, 1931); Katherine Anne Porter, *Flowering Judas and Other Stories* (New York, 1935); Dorothy Scarborough, *Can't Get A Redbird* (New York, 1929); Ruth Averitte, *Salute to Dawn* (Dallas, 1936); and Vassar Miller, *My Bones Being Wiser* (Middletown, 1963).

[4]The Texas Institute of Letters was founded in 1936. A charter member, Karle Wilson Baker served in 1938-39 as president of the organization. Her election as the first woman but third Fellow followed that of J. Frank Dobie and Walter Prescott Webb.

[5]Dorothy Scarborough, "Karle Wilson Baker," *Library of Southern Literature*, eds. Edwin Anderson and others, vol. 17 (1923), 147-52.

[6]*The Pine Log* [Nacogdoches, Texas], February 25, 1928, 1.

[7]*Ibid.*

[8]*Ibid.*

[9]Karle Wilson Baker's daughter, Charlotte Baker [Montgomery], is the author of such novels as *A Sombrero for Miss Brown* (1941) and *Hope Hacienda* (1942), as well as of numerous children's books which she herself illustrates. She resides in Nacogdoches, Texas, as does her brother, Thomas W. Baker, a banker.

[10]*The Pine Log, op. cit.*

[11]Karle Wilson Baker, *Blue Smoke* (New Haven, 1919).

[12]Karle Wilson Baker, *Burning Bush* (New Haven, 1922).

[13]Karle Wilson Baker, *Dreamers on Horseback* (Dallas, 1931).

[14]Karle Wilson Baker, *The Garden of the Plynck* (New Haven, 1920).

[15]*The Dallas Morning News*, March 16, 1924.

[16]Karle Wilson Baker, *Old Coins* (New Haven, 1923).

[17]Karle Wilson Baker, *The Texas Flag Primer* (New York, 1925).

[18]Karle Wilson Baker, *Two Little Texans* (New York, 1932).

[19]Karle Wilson Baker, *The Birds of Tanglewood*, illustrated by Charlotte Baker, (Dallas, 1930).

[20]Karle Wilson Baker, *Family Style* (New York, 1937).

[21]Karle Wilson Baker, *Star of the Wilderness* (New York, 1942).

[22]Karle Wilson Baker, *The Birds of Tanglewood, op. cit.*, 89.

[23]Sam Acheson, review of *Star of the Wilderness* in *Saturday Review* (May 16, 1942), 37.

[24]Louise Field, review of *Star of the Wilderness* in the *New York Times Book Review* (April 26, 1942), 22.

[25]Dorothy Scarborough, "Karle Wilson Baker," *op. cit.*

[26]Karle Wilson Baker, "I Shall Be Loved As Quiet Things," *Dreamers on Horseback, op. cit.*

[27]Karle Wilson Baker, "Labels," *Dreamers on Horseback, op. cit.*

[28]Pamela Lynn Palmer, *Subjective Regionalism to Cosmopolitanism: A Study of Three Texas Poets* [Karle Wilson Baker, W.E. Bard, and Arthur M. Sampley], unpublished master's thesis (Nacogdoches: Stephen F. Austin State University, 1973), 30-31.

[29]*The Pine Log* [Nacogdoches, Texas], (February 28, 1931), 1.

[30]Dorothy Scarborough, "Karle Wilson Baker," *op. cit.*

[31]A substantial number of letters in part comprising Karle Wilson Baker's correspondence with these and other notable persons may be found in the Baker Collection of the R.W. Steen Library at Stephen F. Austin State University.

[32]Karle Wilson Baker, "Half-Way Stone," *Dreamers on Horseback, op. cit.*

EAST TEXAS COLLOQUY

by Bobby H. Johnson

Approximately one hundred persons attended the Association's spring meeting held on the campus of Texas A&M University in February. In a special evening session on Friday—a "first" for the Association—Col. Harold B. Simpson of Hill Junior College spoke on "Contributions of East Texas to Hood's Texas Brigade." Saturday's sessions dealt with a variety of topics. John M. Brockman of Bee County College delivered a paper entitled "From Jefferson to Fort Worth via Austin: The Political History of the Texas and Pacific Railway Company." Panola Junior College's Bill O'Neal presented "Feudists and Gunmen: An Examination of East Texas Violence During the Nineteenth Century." The third session featured papers by Jean S. Duncan of Sam Houston State University and Terry Booker of Hudson High School. Duncan spoke on "An East Texan at an Oriental Court: Richard Bennett Hubbard, Ambassador to Japan, 1885-1889." Booker's paper was entitled "The Woodlake Cooperative Community: A New Deal Experiment."

The luncheon address was delivered by Dr. Haskell Monroe, Dean of Faculties at Texas A&M, who spoke on "Allan Nevins' Visit to Texas: A Personal Reminiscence." This session met in the Memorial Student Center, and was attended by about fifty persons.

The Association's fall meeting was set for September 23-24 in Nacogdoches. Named to the fall program committee were Dr. Milton Nance of Texas A&M, Dr. Robert Cotner of the University of Texas at Austin, and Dr. Calvin Hines of Stephen F. Austin State University.

Because the *Journal* is published only twice a year, we are often late in reporting new publications and historical activities. Some events are worth reporting, however, despite the lack of timeliness. One such item is the publication of a book on Wood County. Entitled *The History of Wood County, Texas,* the work contains stories on old-timers and other information on the county. Even at this late date, it may still be available. If you're interested, write the Wood County Historical Society, P.O. Box 337, Quitman, Texas, 75783.

The activities of various historical societies and commissions continue to impress upon us the high degree of interest in historical matters. The Smith County Historical Society is an especially active group. Their publication, "Chronicles," treats the history of that area in a professional and interesting manner. An upcoming issue, prepared by Linda Brown Cross, will deal with the town of Omen, or Old Canton. "Chronicles" is available for $7.50 a year plus five per cent sales tax. Subscriptions may be entered by writing to Mary K. Haynes at 918 Camellia, Tyler, Texas, 75701.

The Shelby County Historical Society is another active organization. As reported in December of 1976, their membership rolls include more than 150 persons. Mrs. Birdie Childs served as president during the bicentennial year.

On the state level, one of the more active historical attractions is the Star of the Republic Museum at Washington-on-the-Brazos. An attractive newsletter chronicles the events associated with the museum and park located near Brenham. One of the museum's projects last year was a juried exhibition of

ceramics. Piero Fenci, a faculty member at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, won first place in the competition. Reva Jo Brown of Austin won second and Ellen Watts of Dallas was third. The competition was sponsored as part of the museum exhibition, "Texas Pottery: Caddo to Contemporary."

The park recently acquired about 94 additional acres, bringing the total park acreage to about 154 acres. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is to be complimented for its efforts to preserve this historical Texas site.

"Tyler and Smith County Texas: A Historical Survey" has been published by the American Bicentennial Committee of Tyler. Composed of nine chapters, the work also includes photos and sketches. Perhaps copies are still available. Write to Tyler Bicentennial Publishers, P.O. Box 181, Tyler, Texas, 75702.

Another book on local history, *Houston County Cemeteries*, has been published by the Houston County Historical Commission. Some 18,000 names appear in the book, which lists 145 cemeteries. This was a limited edition affair, but you may want to check your local library.

The Houston County group is hard at work again this year under the leadership of president Eliza Bishop.

An interesting happening is on tap for November in Kerrville. "I Love Old Things," described as "the only seminar for antique dealers and collectors that combines the wisdom of experts and the beauty of vacation settings," is scheduled for November 8-12 at Schreiner College. Sponsored by Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College near Terre Haute, Ind., the seminar will meet at a number of places throughout the nation. A similar program was offered in 1976.

Most of our readers are by now aware of the losses suffered by the Jefferson Historical Society and Museum. Fortunately, most of the good books have been returned, but the group is still interested in regaining other articles missing from the Museum. Curator Lucille Bullard has asked for assistance in locating the items. If you can be of any help in finding the following items, please contact Lucille at 223 Austin, Jefferson, Texas, 75657.

87 WHITNEY PERC. PISTOL, 3015 36 Cal.
96 MANHATTAN NAVY PISTOL 1859, 34761, 36 Cal.
99 DERRINGER PISTOL, PHILADELA, 2¼ inch barrel, 40 Cal.
100 DERRINGER PISTOL, PHILADELA, 2 inch barrel, 40 Cal.
103 DERRINGER BROWN PISTOL (Southerner) 4840, 38 Cal.
107 DERRINGER REMINGTON PISTOL (over and under), 41 Cal.
111 PEPPER BOX PISTOL, ALLEN THURBER, 32 Cal.
THREE BAYONETS, 18" blade, back of blade ribbed, U.S. Springfield .45-70 Caliber, complete with clasp
THREE BAYONETS, 18" blade, back of blade ribbed, U.S. Springfield .45-70 Caliber, complete with clasp
THREE BAYONETS SAME AS ABOVE, EXCEPT WITHOUT CLAMP

146 DIRK, 8¾ inch blade, 13¾ inch over all, triangular blade, horn handle
SWORD FROM SWORD CANE
ONE DOUBLE BARREL SHOTGUN, marked with initials of owner DBH over 100 years old.
BRASS BUTT OF HENRY RIFLE
115 ALLEN AND WHEELOCK, NAVY, SIDE HAMMER, 133, 36 Cal.
125 GERMAN LUGER PISTOL, 1260, 7.65 mm
127 MAUSER AUTOMATIC PISTOL, 379134, 7.65 mm
ONE FRAME OF INDIAN ARROW POINTS ABOUT 10x12 size frame
Star shape Indian artifact
One Indian pipe
Turquoise beads
MEERSCHAUM PIPE

BOOK REVIEWS

Cavalier in the Wilderness: The Story of the Explorer and Trader Louis Juchereau de St. Denis. By Ross Phares. Gretna, La. (Pelican Publishing Co.), 1976. Preface, Bibliography, Index, Illustrations. p. 273. $12.50 (cloth), $3.95 (paper).

Louis Juchereau de St. Denis came to the Louisiana country with his cousin, Pierre Le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville early in January, 1700, and remained there, except for travels into New Spain and among the Indians of the frontier until his death in June, forty-four years later. Those years found him first as commander at Ft. Mississippi on St. John Bayou; the leader of at least two trading expeditions deep in Spanish held territory where he was (1) married to the daughter of the Governor of San Juan Bautista (2) arrested for smuggling (3) tried, and finally released, whereupon he returned to New Orleans, Biloxi and Mobile. Later he settled among the Natchitoches Indians and became commandant of the Cane River, and finally of Natchitoches, the westernmost outpost on the French-Spanish colonial frontier, a post he held until his death twenty-two years later.

St. Denis' saga, like the careers of other early explorers, traders and settlers reads as though it were the result of a flighty and somewhat tipsy novelist's imagination. His stature among the Indians is almost too much to believe, and his continual tweaking of the noses of Spanish officialdom leads one to have faith, almost, in the real existence of the Three Musketeers. Indeed, if the reader allowed the swashbuckling story Phares tells to lead him astray, he might, and probably would, miss a significant point: were the French such inept colonists in America as most historians have led us to believe?

Phares makes no effort to deny that some of the French were rapscallions of the lowest order, but he makes clearer the fact that Louisiana was a living hell, that some Frenchmen were responsible, farsighted men serving king and self no less than others conquering a new land. He also points out that men at home in France who formulated policy and, though slowly but almost inexorably enforced it, must finally bear the responsibility for France's failures on the North American continent.

It is not thinking unhistorically to suspect that had France sent more men such as Louis Juchereau de Saint Denis into the southwest, the western two-thirds of a map of North America would have been, and possibly still would be, colored green.

Ert J. Gum
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Calligraphy on the Spanish Borderland. By Gerald P. Doyle. Beaumont (Privately printed for the Beaumont Art Museum and the San Jacinto Museum of History), 1976. Illustrated, Bibliography. p. 48. $7.50.

This provocative study of the penmanship of the clergical, civil, and military officials who inhabited the borderlands of New Spain will quicken a new appreciation in those who spend portions of their time pursuing archival hŏldings. This book, published in conjunction with an art exhibit on Spanish calligraphy being shown at the Beaumont Art Museum and the San Jacinto Museum of History, explores much more than its title implies. It traces the history of Spanish penmanship from the pre-Christian period to the demise of the Spanish empire in the early nineteenth century. Romanic, Visigothic, Islamic and Oriental influences have definitely left their mark on handwriting practices in the borderlands.

Because of isolation, Indian depredations, disease, and political instability which were characteristic of the Spanish borderlands, it is surprising that those who wrote clung so rigidly to a pride in their work. The author informs us that literate borderlanders wielded their pens with *gallardia*, an expression not only of aesthetic beauty but also of supreme individualism. Often in a shortage of paper, Spaniards included in their writing the

boldness of capitalization, especially intial letters in introductory words; the *rubrica*, a flourish appended to one's signature for verification of authenticity; and the *rasgo*, an uninhibited stroke of the pen. These combined ingredients make borderland calligraphy unique in the history of penmanship. Doyle states, "One marvels not only at the beauty of these . . . (capitalization, *rubrica*, and *rasgo*) but at the confidence with which they were executed when paper was precious and revision or retouching was out of the question" (p. 19).

One-half of *Calligraphy on the Spanish Borderlands* is devoted to illustrations of borderland handwriting. Examples of hand-drawn maps, civil service scripts, clerical copying, forms, form letters, and pictographs are included in this section of this work. These illustrations as well as those contained in the art exhibit are principally taken from the Bexar, Nacogdoches, New Mexico, Laredo Archives and other sources housed in a host of libraries throughout the American and European continent.

Lamentably, the text is not footnoted; however, a bibliography points the reader to other works on this subject. If the art exhibit even approaches the beauty and originality of this book, every student of calligraphy and borderlands history will want to make plans to see it.

James M. McReynolds
Stephen F. Austin State University

Struggle for the American Mediterranean: United States-European Rivalry in the Gulf-Caribbean, 1776-1904. By Lester D. Langley, Athens, Ga. (University of Georgia Press), 1976. Notes, Index. p. 226.

In this synthesis, Lester D. Langley summarizes the English language scholarship, while at the same time developing this own thesis. Langley's thesis contends that while the United States was expanding westward, southward and southwestward, it was constantly conscious of the European presence, which it was continually trying to weaken and undercut. Similar to the findings of the David Pletcher in his recent fine study, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon and the Mexican War*, Langley points out that the United States annexed Texas "in order to undermine European diplomatic maneuverings along the Gulf-Caribbean world." (p. ix) Langley recounts the sporatic but insistent United States interest and intrigues in the Central American states, Mexico and Caribbean islands throughout the 19th century. He cites humanitarianism and a desire for progress as motor forces. Still, he sees, if only vaguely, that the United States' desire for humanatarian improvement and progress in these areas was inexorably linked to its conception of its own progress and growth. Perhaps Langley best summarizes his case when he asserts that "where European colonialism had failed, it was argued, American paternalism would succeed." (p. ix)

Although the other chapters treat broader aspects of United States or Southern expansionism into the neighboring fringe areas for territorial or economic fulfillment of dreams and schemes, chapters 3 and 5 discuss matters central to Texas history. In chapter 3, Langley views the role of Texas in this American Mediterranean over the three decades beginning with Latin American independence in about 1821. He concludes that "the war with Mexico was looked upon by Americans as a mission to extend the frontiers of republicanism to the Pacific and as a way of checking European influence in the continent." (p. 52).

This is a competent study. Yet is clearly reveals the need for American historians to treat foreign relations from broader perspectives. While using much of the English language materials, as is so common among North American scholars, Langley's approach overlooks the role played by the Mexican, Central American and Caribbean

leaderships in shaping and altering American policy in this crucial area. Admittedly their role was seldom decisive. However, equally clearly it was often significant and always present as a limiting or delimiting factor. Yet, to end in a positive vein, Langley does invite us to consider the inter-relationship and linkage between such apparently unrelated areas as Florida, Texas, Cuba, Costa Rica and Mexico and the other little islands and countries in this geographically large, and commercially and strategically very important area.

Thomas Schoonover
University of Southwestern Louisiana

Susanna Dickinson: Messenger of the Alamo. By C. Richard King. Austin (Shoal Creek Publishers), 1976. Bibliography, Notes, Index. p. 166. $7.95.

This popular history of Susanna Wilkerson Dickinson has been long awaited by collectors of Texana and is suitable for both the general public and adolescent readers. Scholars have avoided lengthy studies of Susanna, the only Anglo-American, adult survivor of the Alamo, because of the lack of source material. This hardy pioneer woman was illiterate and thus left none of the traditional letters, diaries, or reminiscences treasured by historians.

The author, a fourth generation Texan and professor of journalism, has used public records and newspaper accounts admirably to augment family tradition and folklore to produce a readable, reliable biography. C. Richard King relied on the standard secondary sources for the 1835 skirmish at Gonzales, the fall of the Alamo, and the journey from San Antonio to Sam Houston's army encamped at Gonzales, the only documented episodes in Susanna's life; he carefully pieced together the remainder of her days using original source material in a creative manner. While a few serious researchers will question some of King's historic interpretations, the overall narrative is reasonably accurate.

Beginning with her marriage in 1829 to Almeron Dickinson, a Tennessee blacksmith, King traces the couple from Tennessee to Gonzales in the early 1830s and then the fatal move to San Antonio. During the early months of 1836, after the surrender of the town by General Cos and before the retreat into the ruined missioned at the end of February, Susanna took in boarders and laundry to support the tiny family. Unfortunately, in an effort to make the story vivid, King allows his historical characters to "gallop" about shouting improbable commands, participate in stilted, unconvincing conversations, and worst of all (from a historians's point of view), states positively that William B. Travis was thinking as he presented his cat's eye ring to Susanna's infant daughter, Angelina. (See pages 34-35, 40, 41, 48).

The remaining chapters trace the Widow Dickinson to Houston and later Austin, and the author handles conversation in an admirable manner by excerpts from testimony and other legal documents. Susanna gained a somewhat notorious reputation in Houston between 1837 and 1857, partially because of her three unsuccessful marriages. In 1857 she married Joseph W. Hannig and moved to Austin where she gained respect as the wife of a merchant. She was often interviewed about her experience at the Alamo, and was remembered as a "dignified old lady . . ." by one interviewer. (p. 97-98).

Almost as central to the story is Angelina Dickinson, the "Babe of the Alamo," who touched the hearts of Texans in the years immediately following independence from Mexico. In 1851, her mother urged a rather unsuitable marriage on her seventeen year old, city-bred daughter, and in 1857, then the mother of three, Angelina left her farmer husband, John Maynard Griffith. The unhappy young woman went to New Orleans where she died in 1870, the subject of gossip because of her many liaisons.

Susanna survived her daughter by a number of years, dying in Austin in 1883, at the

age of 68. Her descendants through Angelina D. Griffith still live in Texas and contributed their knowledge of the "Messenger of the Alamo" to the author.

Margaret S. Henson
Southwest Center for Urban Research
Houston

The Yellow Rose of Texas: Her Saga and Her Song. By Martha Anne Turner. Austin (Shoal Creek Publishers), 1976. p. 136. $7.45.

Martha Anne Turner has made "The Yellow Rose of Texas" her theme song. In an earlier book, she explored the origins of the song. In this one, she narrates the events that allegedly gave birth to it and traces its variations and uses through the years.

The book is a mixture of legend and fact. It retells the story of the Battle of San Jacinto, with emphasis on the story of the slave girl with whom Santa Anna dallied at the beginning of the battle. Miss Turner has gathered every scrap of evidence about the girl and has treated the evidence with imagination, interpreting the girl as a patriot who deliberately detained the Mexican general in order to gain advantage for the Texans. Tacked on to the book in an appendix is another legend, suggesting that Santa Anna was Kentucky-born and attended West Point before beginning his controversial adventures in Mexico. As the author admits, this legend is based on "a slender framework of historic fact."

The factual part of the book, and the most useful, concerns the variations of the folk song. Miss Turner traces The Yellow Rose from the first extant manuscript copy through the Boogie Woogie transcription of 1956, and includes the music for several variations.

In an introduction, C.L. Sonnichsen calls this book "grass roots history" and that is perhaps the best overall description of it. It is for those who like history laced with legend—and set to music.

Marilyn M. Sibley
Houston Baptist University

Blood Over Texas: The Truth About Mexico's War With the United States. By Sanford H. Montaigne. New Rochelle (Arlington House), 1976. p. 160. $8.95.

Sanford H. Montaigne's *Blood Over Texas: The Truth About Mexico's War With the United States* is a study of the causes of the Mexican War and the events leading up to the war. The book is colorfully written and well documented.

In recent years it has been fashionable for historians to regard the Mexican War as an example of American imperialism against a small, helpless country. Most theories regarding the causes of the Mexican War place a heavy burden of guilt on the United States. Interpretations such as the Slave Power Conspiracy, Manifest Destiny, and the Mercantile Theory largely ignore the role of Mexico in precipitating hostilities.

Sanford Montaigne subscribes to the theory that Mexico was totally to blame for the Mexican War, and that the United States made every effort to avoid war.

Blood Over Texas is divided into two parts; the first part is devoted to showing how Mexico, under the leadership of Santa Anna, rode rough-shod over the Mexican Constitution of 1824, thereby driving Texas to seek independence. After being defeated by Sam Houston's forces at San Jacinto, Santa Anna signed the Treat of Velasco which granted independence to Texas. Montaigne shows that Mexico never accepted Texas as a department of Mexico in a state of rebellion, and tried repeatedly to subjugate Texas.

The second part of the book deals with the conditions which developed between Mexico and the United States.

As soon as Mexico realized that the United States was entertaining the idea of annexation, diplomatic relations between the two countries deteriorated. Mexico continued to charge that Texas was a department of their country, and that any effort to annex Texas would result in an immediate declaration of war.

In February 1845 Congress passed a joint resolution inviting Texas to enter the Union. On March 1, 1845, President Tyler signed the resolution, and General Juan N. Almonte, the Mexican minister to the United States, broke off diplomatic relations.

Mr. Montaigne presents evidence that the Polk Administration was not to blame for the outbreak of the war. Every effort was made to send representatives to Mexico City. As a result of communications between the American confidential agent, Dr. William S. Parrott and the new Mexico Minister of Foreign Relations, Manuel de la Pena y. Pena, John Slidell was sent to Mexico City in December 1845. Once there, however, the Herrera govenment refused to see him. Slidell's mere presence was enough to trigger a revolution in which a militant figure, General Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga, came to power. Mr. Montaigne states that Paredes and his generals plotted for war.

The author draws the conclusion that the Mexican military incited their own people to expect the subjugation of Texas, a feat made impossible by American annexation. Blinded by their own fantasies, they could retain power only by advocating the impossible: the conquest of Texas.

Dennis Stuart
Longview, Texas

Second Fatherland: The Life and Fortunes of a German Immigrant. By Max Amadeus Paulus Krueger. College Station and London (Texas A & M University Press), 1976. Edited with an introduction by Marilyn McAdams Sibley. Index, Pp. xix + 161. $10.00.

To revise an edition of a 1930 publication, which was itself a translation of an original German manuscript, is a considerable undertaking; and to keep it relatively free of error, while adding information "at appropriate points" from notes in the possession of the author's family, it indeed an achievement. Ms. Sibley has succeeded in producing a readable work, adding color and clarifying detail to what—at times, at least—must have been somewhat incohesive presentation.

Minor flaws, whether due to typographical error: "Griefswald" (p. xiv) or possibly to translation problems of tense in the original: "This brutal murder has (had) been committed . . ." (p. 65), or perhaps to a translated idiom: "At nights . . ." (p. 71), do not detract from the value of the work. Its true value lies in the vivid depiction of the central experiences in the life of a struggling, unfortunate, yet successful immigrant to Texas over a century ago.

Max Krueger's Odyssey takes him in a few pages from hunger and sickness in Germany through France, Spain, Cuba, and New Orelans to his second fatherland: Texas. Here, as a stevedore, well-digger, factory hand, miller, cowboy, merchant and industrialist, Max moves through a panorama of colorful experiences from the life of a nearly penniless immigrant to that of a wealthy industrialist with capital investments of a million dollars.

This first person narrative portrays not merely the active efforts of an individual endowed with strength of character and perserverance in struggle with a frequently hostile environment, but also a perceptive, sensitive soul capable of renewing his spirit through contacts with a beautiful, gentle and benign nature.

Addition of eight pages of photographs of various members of Krueger's family, the dwelling house at Twin Sisters, the Theodore Roosevelt letter, and the map of Krueger's Texas round out nicely this very readable book.

Recommended for those who are interested in Texas frontier history and to others who revel in man's indomitability.

Carl Keul
Stephen F. Austin State University

A Ranching Saga: The Lives of William Electious Halsell and Ewing Halsell. By William Curry Holden. San Antonio (Trinity University Press), 1976. Drawings, Notes, Index. p. 568. $25.00.

This two volume set is an excellent biography of the lives and times of William Electious Halsell and his son Ewing Halsell. The narrative focuses on the history of the Halsell family from the entrance of William Electious into Texas in 1854 until the death of Ewing in 1965. This ranching story chronologically spans from the birth of the cattle industry to the present. Geographically, it stretches from the Rio Grande River to Kansas and from the Arkansas River Valley to the High Plains of Texas. The dominant theme is a compatible intermingling of the weather cycles of the land and of the life cycles of the Halsell family. The plot is essentially a character study of William Electious and Ewing.

The narrative is very readable and is well-documented. The book is both an important contribution for the western history scholar and an enjoyable story for all readers. Prior to 1900 the basic sources include newspaper accounts, legal documents, a limited amount of correspondence, and verbal reminiscences of family members, friends, and acquaintances. After 1900, these same sources continued to be used, but the principal depository of data became the Halsell Collection of records. During his research Dr. Holden interviewed more than 150 people who have known either William Electious, Ewing, or both, and this insight adds a more human dimension to the text. The humanistic quality of the narrative also provides important glimpses into the lives of other significant persons, such as Will Rogers, Shaghai Pierce, the Dan Waggoner Family, and numerous employees of the Halsell Family.

The text reflects the history of ranching from the colorful open range period to the sophistication of the modern cattle industry. Throughout the impact of these changes on the method of cattle operations, the individuals involved emerge with their identity and integrity. The reader is constantly reminded that although the cattle business has become increasingly complicated due to the growing complexities of our economic and mechanized environment, the individual continues to dominate his surroundings with his personality intact.

In addition to Dr. Holden's wife, Frances, three other individuals deserve mention for their contributions to the success of this two volume work. Jose Cisneros for his talented drawings, and Miss Helen Campbell and Mr. Gilbert Denman, Jr. for their remembrance of the principal characters of this history and for their technical assistance.

Duncan G. Muckelroy
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900-1940. By Mark Reisler. Westport (Greenwood Press), 1976. Bibliography, Index. p. 258. $14.50.

This volume attempts to relate and analyze the experiences of the 1.5 million Mexican immigrants who entered the United States between 1900 and 1940. In a crisp, direct writing style, the author traces the ebb and flow of those migrations into the Southwest, and their

eventual spread into urban areas across the nation. The book's main thrust is that this founding generation of today's Chicano population met isolation and poverty rather than the acceptance and economic betterment which lured them north from Mexico.

The Mexicans came for many reasons. Reisler points out that disastrous economic conditions and revolutionary turmoil pushed them out of their homeland, while the promise of jobs by American entrepreneurs pulled them into agriculture and industry. But when the economy of the United States dictated, and when nativist racism presented itself forcefully, many thousands of these exploited, hard-working newcomers were hustled back to Mexico. Those who remained sweltered at the bottom of American society.

The chief merit of this study lies in its value as an introduction for the beginning student of Mexican-American history. The author outlines all major legislation affecting the immigrants, and summarizes most of the forces which molded those governmental enactments. Also, he describes how the Mexicans generally viewed the United States once they arrived, and how they coped with their existence.

At best, however, *By the Sweat of Their Brow* is a scholarly synthesis of what is already known. It contains little new or exciting material. Attempting to give a grand overview, Reisler only skims the surface, and neglects certain important facets of his topic such as illegal entrees, the ever-present *mojados* and *alambristas*. Also, he short shrifts the nineteenth century background of the Mexican in the United States leaving the impression that the immigrants of the twentieth century moved into an attitudinal vacuum.

These omissions, and others, might have been avoided had the author delved into Mexican and Southwestern sources with the same diligence that he pursued American national archives. In the end, the study's primary contribution is to remind us of the serious scholarship yet needed in Chicano history.

Thomas H. Kreneck
Houston Metropolitan Research Center

The Making of History: Walter Prescott Webb and the Great Plains. By Gregory M. Tobin. Austin (University of Texas Press), 1976. Bibliography, Index, Map. p. 184. $10.95.

Since Walter Prescott Webb's death in 1963 his name and works are being perpetuated through memorial lectures, endowed chairs, reappraisals by senior historians and former students, and biographical studies by a younger generation of historians who came along too late to know him first-hand. The most recent examination of his career represents the work of an Australian scholar who began graduate work at the University of Texas in 1969 and subsequently obtained his Ph.D. in American History at the institution where Webb spent most of his adult life.

Although Tobin utilizes some of the same materials as those examined by Necah Stuart Furman (*Walter Prescott Webb: His Life and Impact*, University of New Mexico Press, 1976), he approaches his subject from a different direction. Whereas Furman presents a well-rounded, concise biography of Webb, Tobin orients the Texas historian within the framework of his intellectual and social setting. Both write with the advantage given an outsider to detect more easily the man's faults, along with his many virtues. Tobin does not write as evenly or as uncritically as Furman, but at times he demonstrates a surprising and incisive appreciation of the role of the frontier in American history. Moreover, his objective account of the celebrated conflict between Webb and his defenders on the one hand and Fred A. Shannon on the other is excellent. Shannon unquestionably was correct on many minor points in his criticism of the thesis that broad environmental factors shaped the Great Plain's history and character. But Webb examined the forest rather than the trees, and his book remains a classic that has not been out of print or revised since 1931.

At times the author flirts with psycho-history, whatever that is, and his narrative suffers from redundancy and awkward chronology. Perhaps the most interesting section of Tobin's book relates to the planning and writing of *The Great Plains*. Except that he fails to mention contributions by Webb's students in testing his ideas, a development which Furman properly recognizes, the Australian traces with considerable skill the intellectual maturing of the Texas historian and the evolution of the environmental determinism thesis. At the same time, Webb himself recognized the limitations imposed by his academic training, a fact which made it difficult for him to function as a professional historian in the traditional practices of most of his colleagues.

Critics charged that Webb sometimes framed his conclusion before searching for evidence to support it. Others said, perhaps facetiously, that he never let facts stand in the way of the truth. And although he retained an open mind and a gentle spirit, he undoubtedly came to feel toward some of his more irrational detractors much the same way that Rhett Butler looked upon Scarlett O'Hara at the end. I can almost hear him now, speaking with subtle wit and without rancor: "Frankly, sir, I don't give a damn."

W. Eugene Hollon
University of Toledo

The Promise Kept. By Kurth Sprague. Austin (The Encino Press), 1975. Notes, Bibliography, p. 93. $10.00.

Well deserved were the honor and prize awarded *The Promise Kept* by Kurth Sprague at the 40th anniversary banquet of the Texas Institute of Letters for "the best of class." This beautiful and extraordinary book was the recipient of the Paul Voertman Poetry Award of $200. Together with this honor the book won Honorable Mention for the best book design offered by the Texas Collectors' Institute. The drawings are by John Groth and the book is published by Encino Press of Austin.

Long overdue is an account of the treatment of the red man by the white man who took his land, killed his buffalo and constantly drove him westward from his homeland to barren reservations.

The title comes from the words of a Sioux Indian:

"They made us many promises,
More than I can remember,
But they never kept but one.
They promised to take our land and they took it."

The nineteen griping stories are told in blank verse and on first reading are a bit difficult to grasp but the author has included helpful notes on each poem "for the enlightenment of the literary peasantry."

Filled with stunning imagery are the poems, particularly the story of the reinterment of Quanah Parker from the Post Oak Cemetery to the Fort Sill Cemetery when he is carried by giant grandsons whose hands were like "freckled hams."

Poignantly sad is the Cherokees' Trail of Tears as told by the Reverend Jesse Bushyhead, a searing litany that remains long with the reader. There are harsh words and beautiful words. The short poem on *Santa Fe* describes an old Indian with "cataract frosted eyes" and the heavy-faced whores promenading in "the heliotrope dusk."

The slaughter of the buffalo is immortalized in *The Song of the Buffalo* and in the rhythmic *Ballad of a Buffalo Hunter*.

Sad and heartbreaking is the concluding poem about Sergeant Frederick Wyllyams, graduate of Eton, killed by Cheyennes in June 1867.

As the writer states, these poems contain his reactions to scenes in American history and his concern for the American Indian. It is a beautiful book, one that you would like to own and cherish.

Gene Lasseter (Mrs. E.H.)
Henderson, Texas

San Antonio, St. Anthony's Town. By Leah Carter Johnston. San Antonio (The Naylor Co.), 1976. Bibliography, Index. p. 155. $7.95.

San Antonio: A Historical and Pictorial Guide. By Charles Ramsdell. Austin (University of Texas Press), 1976. Sources, Index, Maps. $4.95.

San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century. By the San Antonio Bicentennial Heritage Committee. San Antonio (Clarke Printing Co.), 1976. Glossary, Bibliography, Index. p. 139.

In 1936, the Librarians' Council of San Antonio published *An Introduction to Our San Antonio de Bexar*. The material was edited and narrated by Mrs. Leah C. Johnston who for years was Director of Children's Work in the San Antonio Public Library. A revised edition also narrated by Mrs. Johnston and illustrated by Eduardo Cardenas was published in 1947. Now this official San Antonio Bicentennial Edition, completely revised and updated, is dedicated to the memory of Leah Carter Johnston.

San Antonio, St. Anthony's Town attempts to tell almost three centuries of the city's history in a little over 150 pages and only partially succeeds. Chapters on the San Antonio legends and the particular missions are excellent. However, some chapters are too abrupt in their treatment of such subjects as the San Antonio Arsenal, monuments, transportation and city and county governments. In several cases, only one pages constitutes a "chapter." As a result, the reader is left with the feeling of having read a company's inventory sheet and often it was just as interesting! Perhaps a better integration of related subjects into one chapter to be treated at length would make a better impression on the reader.

The staff which compiled this edition seemed to recognize this problem but decided not to remedy it for as is stated in the preface, "if some chapters read like mere catalogues of factual material, please remember that these facts are wanted and it is better not to confuse the reader by adorning them with fancy." This statement does not give much credit to the minds of prospective readers. Yet the staff expresses the hope that "this story of San Antonio will interest readers of all ages." Perhaps it might, but it seems to belong more the elementary school reader than the adult readers.

A new edition of Charles Ramsdell's popular guide which was published first in 1959 has been issued. Carmen Perry has completely updated and revised this edition published by the University of Texas Press. The San Antonio of today is reflected against the panorama of Texas history from its perspective. The book relates in great detail the "biography" of the city in relation to the nearly three centuries of change through which it has evolved.

This book is particularly valuable for its clear and up-to-date maps. Maps of downtown San Antonio, HemisFair Plaza, Brackenridge Park, Mission Road, Alamo Plaza and other areas are included. There is also a walking tour map of the downtown area which highlights some 95 different churches, landmarks, shops, markets and much more.

The only drawback to the book's format would be its awkwardness in opening. The book measures 5" x 8" and opens along the short edge. Since it is a paperback edition, the book is then rather floppy and unwieldy for a tourist to read while on a walking tour. Otherwise it is a very useful guide, giving both interesting history and practical information which the tourist needs.

Individual chapters are given to the Alamo and its history, La Villita, the Paseo del Rio and the fiestas for which San Antonio is justly famous. For these features and others such as museums, parks, galleries, etc. - *San Antonio* furnished addresses, hours, and admission prices when charged. Throughout the book are photographs, drawings and etchings which make *San Antonio* of special interest to former and current residents of the city as well as to the sightseer.

San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century is the product of an idea conceived by the late Henderson Shuffler (Institute of Texan Cultures) and Vivian Hamlin. After the Historical Research Committee was formed and began functioning, their project grew both in size and scope and resulted in the present publications.

The book is a cooperative effort with its seven chapters and epilogue written by eight different authors. They undertook the task of providing a record of San Antonio in the eighteenth century, or more precisely from 1718 to 1784. A variety of other books, periodicals and publications have described the frontier conditions, the hostile Indians, the missionary achievements and the political endeavors. Until now, however, a survey of the community in a single work was lacking.

Various works and many documentary sources were pulled together to provide the narrative. A particular effort was made to reveal the people of the time—Indians, missionaries, settlers—and the conditions in which they lived.

San Antonio in the Eighteenth Century is at once scholarly and readable. At the end of each chapter detailed footnotes are given. It might be wished, though, that they had been given on each page to allow for easier reference. A glossary of Spanish terms is given and the various photographs and drawings from the Institute of Texas Cultures give added interest to the book. At the conclusion, a six page bibliography of manuscript collections and secondary works is cited along with a detailed index. Though *San Antonio* is a work of high caliber, it is also a story that should interest and intrigue any reader.

Miss Ann Elizabeth Heslop
Silver Spring, Maryland
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What's Going On? (In Modern Texas Folklore). Edited by Francis Edward Abernethy. Austin (Encino Press), 1976. Illustrated, Contributors, T.F.S. History, Index, p. 309. $12.50.

To many of us interested in folklore, Francis Edward Abernethy is at the same time the heartbeat and the nerve center of Texas Folklore. If anyone is in a position to know what is going on in folklore today, it is Ab. In his vital position as Secretary-Editor of the Texas Folklore Society, he is preeminently qualified both as a contributor and as the editor of the Society's latest volume, *What's Going On? (In Modern Texas Folklore).*

One of the limitations on written communication is that it is essentially linear in nature; it starts at one point and ends at another with a succession of things in between. This may be relatively easy to do in a book with one author, one subject and one purpose, but not so when a book has twenty-two authors, with a variety of subjects and purposes. Ab's task must have been something like that of attempting to describe a three or higher dimensional object in a one dimensional framework, for *What's Going On* certainly exists in several dimensions. It is a collection of articles from a representative sampling of Texas folklorists. Folklore is beginning to take on multimedia modes of expression, and this was reflected somewhat in the numerous photographs used to illustrate the articles.

Most, if not all, of the articles have been presented as papers to meetings of the Texas and other Folklore Societies. Professional folklorists might cringe at my definition of folklore, which is that folklore is stories about everyday people doing whatever it is that makes them who they are. The book fits this definition because it is about us.

A person skilled in higher dimensional geometry knows that a complex object can often best be examined by looking at it in only one of its dimensions at a time. One of the dimensions in folklore is time. Traditionally, folklore papers have concentrated on lifestyles and events in the rather distant past. Joe Lomax, who contributed

"Zydeco—Must Live On!" is one of the younger generation of folklorists, and he has contributed to the recognition that folklore is a current phenomenon, and his influence undoubtedly helped set the stage for a volume dedicated to "modern" folklore. All of the articles in *What's Going On*, from "Neiman-Marcus Lore from the Inside" by Stanley Marcus and "You Gotcha Ears On?" by Archie P. McDonald to "Preparing the Fatted Calf" by William C. Martin and "The Improbable Rise of Redneck Rock" by Jan Reid are distinctly modern.

Another dimension of the book is the range of writing skill displayed in the articles. Some of the articles, such as "Western Swing" by Guy Logsdon were obviously thoroughly researched, but held up better when presented orally than in writing. "Texas Tea and Rainy Day Woman: The Folklore of the Underground Press" by Hermes Nye was well-researched, but more importantly, written in Hermes' inimitable delightful style; and Bill C. Malone's "Growing Up with Texas Country Music" is written with such authority that you know he has first-hand information.

Still another dimension of the book is the tracing of a socio-political theme that touches each of us. We are living in a time when change is occurring so rapidly that it is difficult to be aware of one change before another has occurred. *What's Going On* lets us see into the kaleidoscope that is life in Texas in the twentieth century. If the book has main subtheme, it has to be music. Since most of us spend so much time hearing if not listening to music, it seems fitting that the last two-fifths (no-pun intended) of the book be devoted to tracing the evolution of music in Texas. From the childrens' taunt, "As the Hearse Goes By" by Charles Clay Doyle and the childlike enjoyment of gospel singing in "Give the World a Smile Each Day" by Francis E. Abernethy through western swing to young adults challenging tradition with protest songs in redneck rock and harder rock, and finally to the more placid country western in "Backwoods Beer Busts" by Stanley G. Alexander, who himself provided much of the impetus for change, the book recounts the changes Texans have wrought on the music world.

There is something here for everyone and something here about everyone. *What's Going On* is both entertaining and educational, and well worth the price of a membership in the Texas Folklore Society.

Bob Groce
San Augustine, Texas

Texas: A Bicentennial History. By Joe B. Franz. New York (W.W. Norton and Co.), 1976. Bibliography, Maps, Illustrations, Index. p. 222. $8.95.

Joe B. Franz's *Texas: A Bicentennial History* represents our state in the Norton fifty-one volume States and the National Series [the District of Columbia story is included]. Morton Smith, the General Editor, notes that a meaningful review of the Revolution considers what the country has become as well as what it was. Smith invites the reader to a volume in which the author was asked to give "interpretive, sensitive, thoughtful, individual, even personal" accounts of what seems significant in interpreting his state. The Texas "photographer's essay" [following p. 114; a 16 pp. supplement to the 222 pages], created by A.Y. Owen, represents a skilled photographer's "own personal perceptions of the state's contemporary flavor." These personal approaches provide both the strengths and the weaknesses of the volume.

A readable history of Texas in 222 pages must necessarily compress some incidents and personalities and omit some completely in order to amplify others. Thus Ben Milam gets fuller treatment than Sam Houston during the Texas Revolution. Fine. Six pages are allotted the Battle of the Alamo, with a final "three-quarters of an hour" of "barbarity," of "brutal, close-in orgiastic fighting"; the Battle of San Jacinto gets six lines. Again, fine. But, will San Augustine, that august "gateway," really understand its omission? The maps show a Piney Woods area in the eastern part of the state, but some of us could discover that Franz's personal view is not from East Texas by the way he spells "east Texas."

Too, while most of Owen's photographs are excellent, there is not a single forest illustrated. Surely the creation of the Big Thicket National Park is both contemporary and significant. A graphic image of Texas' forests would help dispel the stereotyped image of Texas geography.

Franz demonstrates the ability to use human interest material. He also has a gift for summarizing. Ending one chapter he notes that a 16th exploration party constituted the "first European-African Texans," the hyphenated addition referring to Estevanico. In a later chapter, after establishing Jane Long's career in some depth, he concludes: "When the first white [here meaning non-Spanish??] men came to Texas to stay, she was there to meet them . . . One has been called 'The Mother of Texas' . . . The other [her slave] could be . . . 'The Mother of Black Texas.' "

Franz's annotated bibliography, organized topically, probably includes more than most people really want to know about Texas. It would be more valuable, however, if the biography section were enlarged from the nine works cited. He cites no works in progress.

The most serious flaw in the book is the incomplete index. For examples, neither Nacogdoches nor William B. Travis appear in the index, and both receive rather extensive treatment in the text.

That Franz can provide fresh analogies is a delightful discovery, especially after the mixed metaphor in the opening sentence of his preface. I think he was oversimplified a complex idea in his opening paragraph to Chapter I, but I leave Turner's thesis to the professional historians. I leave the question of whether Jim Bowie or his brother invented the famous frontier knife to trivia enthusiasts.

Ouida Dean
Nacogdoches, Texas

The Forest Service: A Study in Public Land Management. By Glen O. Robinson. Baltimore (Published for Resources for the Future, Inc. by The Johns Hoplins University Press) 1975. Notes, charts, index. Pp. xv + 286.

This study of the United States Forest Service was written by Glen O. Robinson, formerly professor of law at the University of Minnesota and currently a member of the Federal Communications Commission. The volume is attractively designed, carefully documented, and objectively written. It provides a perspective, primarily economic, of the Forest Service by an outsider who is committed neither to the federal bureaucracy nor to the environmentalists.

This is not a history of the Forest Service although the author begins with a short historical sketch in the first chapter. Instead, it is a study of this federal agency, its organization, decision-making process, and current problems. Beginning with the parent Department of Agriculture, Robinson has examined the several echelons of control from the Chief Forester down to the Forest Ranger, the "man on the ground." Here he discussed service philosophy, direction and control, planning and direction. The Forest Service emerges as a self-conscious bureaucracy with a proud heritage, high ideals, and a thoroughly professional attitude. At present, however, it is somewhat confused and uncertain because of the confrontations and litigation by citizens who disagree with its management policies and challenge its decisions.

In some detail the author has examined the various resources supervised by the Forest Service, giving a chapter to each. He discussed the timber resource, including inventory, growth, long-term outlook, administration of sales, harvest, and reforestation. Then he examined such problems and conflicts as the multiple use controversy and the clear-cutting issue. Robinson has rejected the charge that the Forest Service is a captive of the timber industry. He concluded that markedly decreasing the cut in the National

Forests will result in escalating increase in the price of lumber and it is probably unrealistic to expect much greater production from private industry. On the other hand, significant increases of timber cut from public forests could be obtained only through substantial investment in intensive management programs.

In like manner the author has examined Outdoor Recreation, Wilderness, the Range, Wildlife, Water and Watershed. He covered agency policies, developments, and current controversies. At the end of each discussion Robinson analyzed the salient points of confrontation and suggested alternate solutions and their long-range effects. What is apparent in each of these areas is that there are no easy solutions and frequently no compromise which will please all of the claimants for use of the forest resources.

Written primarily for the interested general public rather than for professional foresters or trained ecologists, this study gives a clear, objective view of the Forest Service and its present situation. Professor Robinson neither rushes to defend nor to denounce the agency in its current confrontations but seeks to understand the problems. He has presented a reasoned study of the Forest Service, explained how it operates, and analyzed its principal problems and controversies. It is recommended reading for all who are interested in the American forests and wise use of their resources.

Robert S. Maxwell
Stephen F. Austin State University

BOOK NOTES

The Governors of Texas. By Ross Phares. Gretna, La. (Pelican Publishing Company), 1976. Bibliography, Index, Illustrations. p. 184. $12.50.

Assembled in this volume are capsule biographies tracing the careers of more than 80 individuals who have occupied the highest office of Texas. The work documents the leadership—failures as well as successes—that accompanied the development of the modern state.

From the formative period under the rule of France, Spain and Mexico, to the Republic, and finally to the contemporary state, author Ross Phares brings to life the personalities, the conflicts, the sweep of history from which the Lone Star State evolved.

The Corps at Aggieland. By Bill J. Leftwich. Lubbock (Smoke Signal Publishing Company), 1976. p. 148.

To Texans accustomed to the mixed appreciation of graduates and students of that institution on the Brazos known as Texas A & M University, which varies from the familiar, uncomplimentary Aggie joke to dewey-eyed, throat choked emotion at Silver Taps in a Twelfth Man service, comes a beautiful little book on the corps. Handsomely bound in white with maroon lettering, it is dedicated to all who serve the corps, past, present and future. Chapters are devoted to the corps' development, the Aggie band, and the Ross Volunteers, among other pertinent subjects. Special attention is given to the evolution of the corps uniform, Medal of Honor recipients, officers of flag rank, and an especially interesting section entitled, "Aggie Lingo." The book is extremely well illustrated, both with photographs and the author's own and often humorous drawings. Nothing says it so well as his uniform illustration on a nobby-kneed Maggie.

Old Ranches of the Texas Plains. By Mondel Rogers. College Station (Texas A&M University Press), 1976. p. 124. $27.50.

In eighty paintings, mostly reproduced in color, this volume by Mondel Rogers presents a breath-taking image of the development of ranch architecture on the West Texas Plains. Here are dugouts, huts, log cabins, adobe dwellings, and gracious mansions. Using dry-brush watercolor and egg tempera techniques, Rogers paints the structures in current decay or grandeur, and includes many of the state's most famous spreads, including the Matador and the 4 6's. Rogers is a native of Sweetwater and knows his subject. In an introduction, he describes the sources of his interest in the old ranches and gives a brief history of their architectural features.

Documents from Texas History: Facsimile Reproductions of Significant Historical Documents. Austin (Archives Division, Texas State Library), 1976. $1.00.

Facsimiles of five significant documents from the Texas State Library's Archives Division have been published by the State Library and are now available. William B. Travis' Letter from the Alamo, the Texas Declaration of Independence, the Annexation Offer Accepted in Convention of the People of the Republic of Texas, July 4, 1845, the Proclamation Convening the First Texas Legislature, and the 1861 Ordinance of Secession all date from the twenty-five years from 1836 to 1861.

A booklet that accompanies the packet of facsimiles includes a description of the setting in which the documents were written and the printed text of the documents. The facsimiles themselves make the documents available to students and others in the original form.

The publication is part of the Texas State Library's effort to make materials in its collection more widely accessible. The packet may be purchased from the Archives Division, Texas State Library, Box 12927/Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711. The cost is 95 cents plus 5 cents sales tax. Mailing charges are 50 cents for one packet. Persons buying more than one copy should contact the State Library about bulk postage rates. The documents may also be purchased at the Texas State Library, 1201 Brazos, Austin.

Travis' letter from the Alamo to the "People of Texas and All Americans in the World" has long been considered one of the most significant written pieces of the Texas Revolution. The remaining four documents deal with changes in the form of Texas governance.

The Written Word Endures. Washington D.C. (Office of Educational Programs, National Archives and Records Service), 1976. Index. p. 112. $12.50.

The Written Word Endures is a testimony to the National Record Service and other archival institutions who hold custody of the nation's records. The volume at hand contains excellent illustrations of the following documents and related materials: the Declaration of Independence, the Northwest Ordinance, the Constitution, the Louisiana Purchase Treaty, Marbury v. Madison, the Monroe Doctrine, the Oregon Treaty, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Cotton Gin Patent, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Homestead and Morrill Acts, the 15th, 16th, and 19th Amendments, the Incandescent Lamp Patent, the Treaty of Versailles, the Volstead Acts, the Immigration Quota Act, FDR's Inaugural, the Japanese Surrender, and the Marshall Plan. A useful text accompanies the illustrations, and there is a list of suggestions for further reading.

What distinguishes this volume is its attention to social aspects of the political events its chronicles.

Biographical Register of the Confederate Congress. By Ezra J. Warner and W. Buck Yearns. Baton Rouge (Louisiana State University Press), 1975. Bibliography. p. 306. $15.00.

This book is of vital importance to Civil War scholars. Modeled after Ezra Warner's two fine earlier biographical tools, *Generals in Blue* and *Generals in Gray*, it contains biographical sketches of the men who served in the Confederate Congresses. Each sketch includes the place and date of birth, family background, education, means of livelihood, politics, public-service record, and degree of financial and political success of each congressman. Unfortunately, there is not a photograph of each congressman, an important part of the military volumes.

The entries describe each congressman's attitude toward secession and detail the circumstances of his election to the Congress. A prominent section of each sketch is devoted to the congressman's activities while in office, his position on major issues, the measures he sponsored, and reasons why many left the Congress. Post war coverage is also provided, including date of death and place of burial.

Warner's associate, Buck Yearns, is already well-known in the field for writing *The Confederate Congress.* Together they have produced a valuable book.

Louisiana: The Pelican State. By Edwin Adams Davis. Baton Rouge (Louisiana State University Press), 1975. Appendix, Index. p. 362. $10.95.

Edwin Adams Davis in many respects *is* Louisiana historiography. Despite the handicap of not being a native of Louisiana, it is difficult to imagine how one could be more involved in the study of that state's history by the mere coincidence of native birth. Since the early 1930s he has lived and worked there, mostly on this subject. Still, he found time to complete doctoral work at LSU, to become a professor and later department head there, and ultimately to serve as special assistant to the president; during these four decades he also helped to found the Southern Historical Association and was first managing editor for its *Journal.* In the 1950s he also became editor of *Louisiana History,* and was a guiding hand for the LHA. To a doctoral candidate at LSU from the wilds of Texas, Davis provided friendship and understanding. I am not going to confess the messes he helped me through; I will merely say he is a fondly remembered mentor whose classes on Louisiana History were popular electives and whose text book had just appeared when I arrived there in 1960. Widely used in Louisiana schools, it is now re-issued in a fourth edition. It is well-written and beautifully illustrated, and is a good public school text which reminds this wild Texan of Ralph W. Steen's *The Texas Story.*

North Carolinians in the Continental Congress. By David T. Morgan and William J. Schmidt. Winston-Salem, NC (John F. Blair), 1976. p. 150. $7.95.

According to Morgan and Schmidt, this is the story of North Carolinians who served in the Continental Congress between 1774 and 1789, thus including the Revolutionary War years. The authors claim that this story has never been told in a single work, but has been gathered from original documents, general histories, and articles from periodicals. The organization is both chronological and topical but deals throughout with North Carolina's seventeen delegates and their mission which changed with the fortunes of the times. Pre-war, war, and post-war objectives were quite different, and this is the story of how the delegates adjusted. Since many 19th century Texans were ex-Carolinians, this study has value for students of Texas history.

The Rhetoric of History. By Savoie Lottinville. Norman (University of Oklahoma Press), 1976. p. 258. $9.95.

The purpose of this book, claims its author, is "to help the person committed to history to become an effective writer in that inviting field." It contains principles of writing and illustrative examples, and emphasizes that writing must be understood and practiced as a discipline. Its theme is that research and the resultant writing of history are two different things, and while symbiotic, they must be mastered individually. This book, then, concentrates on the latter exercise. It discusses the tasks of writing, analyzes the varied techniques the historian-writer must employ, and gives examples of style extracted from the work of noted historians of the United States and Europe.

Hood's Texas Brigade, Its Marches, Its Battles, Its Achievements. By J.B. Polley. Introduction by Richard M. McMurray. Dayton, Ohio (Reprint by Morningside Bookshop), 1976, Illustrations, Addenda. $20.00.

History of the Campaign of Gen. T.J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shennandoah Valley of Virginia from November 4, 1861 to June 17, 1862. By William Allen. Maps by Jed. Hotchkiss. Dayton, Ohio (Reprint by Morningside Bookshop), 1974. Maps. $15.00.

The Morningside Bookshop of Dayton, Ohio (Box 336, Forest Park Station, 45405), is an established leader as a clearing house for Civil War materials in general and for reprinted materials in particular. These two recent offerings will interest Texas readers, albeit for different reasons. The first is the classic history of Texas' famed Hood's Brigade, written by a member of that illustrious unit. Col. Harold B. Simpson, who has written voluminously on this subject in the modern period, has given us several excellent histories graces by humor, pathos, and scholarship; but for the "you-are-there" quality, Polley needs to be included in the reading of Civil War Texas.

The Brigade, composed of 1st, 4th, and 5th regiments of the Texas Infantry, and joined at one time or another by units from Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Arkansas, captured the hearts of many Virginians who saw them fight in the Eastern theatre at Gaines' Mill, Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, Gettysburg, Chickamauga, or the Wilderness. They were usually where the fighting was the hardest and the casualties the highest. McMurray states that their Texas origin and the romantic notions with which most easterners held about them meant that such men could not fail the Confederacy, and they did not.

Allan's and Hotchkiss' book on Jackson's Valley Campaign of 1862 is also a classic Civil War study. Originally published in 1880, this volume offers the narrowness of the participant, the depth of the scholar, and the freshness of the enthusiast. It is among the first studies of what many consider the most brilliant independent campaign by a Confederate commander; it became a model for military tactics which was used as late as World War II. For those who like maps, Hotchkiss' multi-colored topographical classics show why he was the finest map-maker of the Civil War period. The blending of Hotchkiss and Jackson formed one of the great teams of the era; the daring general, who had no real gift for grasping the lay of the land, and the civilian engineer, who literally led him over the terrain where he did his best fighting, where and are without peers in American military history.


EAST TEXAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
1962