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TRUE BELIEVERS: TREASURE HUNTERS AT HENDRICKS LAKE

By Gary Pinkerton*

The front page of a local newspaper on any given day is a barometer of current events. On November 7, 1957, the *Beaumont Enterprise* provided compelling insight into the times. Front-page stories reflected worries about racial strife, dangers from hazardous chemicals, and the communist “Red threat.” The paper described the relief of a Tennessee boy and his dog who managed to avoid abduction by aliens, who landed in the pasture in front of his house dressed like “Germans”. On that same front page, a tale almost as far-fetched brought an old East Texas legend back to the surface. A group of Houston oil men began a search for Spanish silver—the legendary treasure of Hendricks Lake.¹

Hendricks is an oxbow lake near where Rusk, Harrison, and Panola counties meet a few miles north of Tatum, Texas. Oxbow lakes result from a river’s course change, in this case the Sabine River just to the north. Hendricks Lake is an arc of dark water almost a mile long, about one hundred feet wide, and forty feet deep in places. Sloping banks shaded by low hanging oak and cypress limbs draped with Spanish moss dominate one side. Marshy lowlands on the other side drain off toward the current course of the Sabine.

Trammel’s Trace, the first road into Texas from the United States territories to the north, passed right by Hendricks Lake in the early 1800s.² Trammel’s Trace was a backwoods trail for smugglers and horse thieves, including Nicholas Trammell, Jr., the man for whom the trail is named, was a secretive trader and the subject of many tales linking him with thievery and contraband. During his short stay near Nacogdoches, Trammell became involved in events leading up to the Fredonia Rebellion in Nacogdoches in 1826.³

Hendricks Lake made page-one news at the end of 1957 due to a lingering treasure myth. As early as 1884, locals actively searched for treasure based on the persistent retelling of an account filled with detail but short on evidence. The legend told of the pirate Jean Lafitte and how his men plundered the Spanish brig *Santa Rosa* in Matagorda Bay in 1816. The buccaneers reportedly loaded six wagons with pure silver bars and struck out for St. Louis, where the silver could be pressed into coins for easier disposal. According to some accounts, the pirates joined with one of Nicholas Trammell’s caravans of stolen horses while transporting the silver. The band of thieves were camped near Hendricks Lake on their way up Trammel’s Trace when a scout alerted the band to Spanish soldiers fast approaching to recover the silver. To try and preserve their spoils for another day, the men rolled the wagons to the edge of Hendricks Lake, cut loose the mules, and sank the wagons loaded with silver in the murky depths. So the story goes.⁴

Stories about lost treasure hidden during pursuit are common across the

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Southwest.⁵ Many treasure myths included similar decisions by cornered thieves to abandon or bury their loot to return another time. Of course they never do, and the reported inability to find their haul allows myths to persist. Two such myths are connected to Nicholas Trammell. Rumors about treasure he supposedly buried at the site of an old Choctaw village along Trammell's Trace farther north resulted in the founding of Hughes Springs in Cass County.

The legend of Hendricks Lake evolved and grew over the years, varying often in its details and unsubstantiated by verifiable facts. Dates range from 1812 to 1818. The treasure was a leather bag full of coins in some versions. In others, it was three, six, or nine wagonloads of silver, along with a hogshead (a barrel) full of gold nuggets. Gaspar "Hot Horse" Trammell is also associated with the tale, though no other mention of this Trammell name has been found outside the legend. Reportedly a man named Robert Dawson survived the attack and reported the story in a St. Louis newspaper, but no source has been found. More recently, details about three fishermen hauling up a bar of silver in the 1920's revived the legend, but again, no substantiation has been found. A Spanish vessel by the name *Santa Rosa* did indeed operate as late as 1821 between Cuba and Spain, after the reported dates for the plundering, but the ship's log accounted only for trade goods, not silver.⁶ A recent comprehensive history of the brothers Lafitte names many vessels that came under their control, but does not mention a brig named *Santa Rosa* as part of their plunder.⁷

A shortage of verifiable facts has not prevented the interest of treasure hunters. The earliest documented search for Hendricks Lake silver was by a son of the founder of Tatum, Texas. Paul "Uncle Fox" Tatum and his family settled south of Hendricks Lake in 1865. Paul Tatum was described as eccentric, creative, and somewhat of a trouble-maker in spite of his prominence. In 1884 Uncle Fox had the right combination of ingenuity and resources to conduct a search for the Hendricks Lake treasure. Stories about his attempt described his construction of a steam-operated conveyor with buckets attached with which he intended to bail water out of the lake and expose the suspected treasure.⁸ In spite of his resources, Uncle Fox was never taken seriously. The *Galveston Daily News* poked fun at his focus on the treasure.

*The Henderson Times says the visionaries who have undertaken to pump the water of out of Hendricks lake, in order to recover fabulous wealth from the bottom, are still at work, though the water has not been lowered to any considerable extent. They should transfer their operations to the Gulf of Mexico. A good deal of wealth has been left under its waters by shipwrecks.*⁹

Apparently it was not just a distant newspaper writer who made light of Uncle Fox's attempt to find the treasure. Only two weeks later, Paul Tatum clubbed a man to death in a quarrel about the draining of Hendricks Lake.¹⁰

It is likely there were other undocumented attempts to find the treasure after 1884. A richly illustrated, full-page wire service story in 1935 related the legend in great detail, and described how a new highway bridge over the Sabine had obliterated all evidence of the treasure.¹¹ The fact that the bridge was actually miles downstream from Hendricks Lake would only have

deterred those who did not know the area. Hendricks Lake was undamaged. The treasure legend surfaced again in 1957. Harry E. Rieseberg, a self-described treasure hunting expert, inspired a search reported by the *Beaumont Enterprise* in November 1957. Rieseberg had published numerous books and written hundreds of articles for adventure magazines such as *Argosy* and *Esquire* beginning in the 1930s. A prolific writer but a suspect diver, Rieseberg was prone to exaggeration in his tireless efforts to promote his projects. A 1939 article described how he had been attacked by a giant octopus. He claimed to have applied for patents for mechanical tongs that could bring a sunken vessel to the surface, as well as a vehicle he described as an underwater tank. His writing career reached its pinnacle in 1953 when Universal Pictures produced a film called "City Beneath the Sea" based on one of his treasure stories.¹²

Rieseberg made a living embellishing and publishing tales of undersea exploits read by a growing number of people eager for adventure. He may have learned about the Hendricks Lake treasure legend from the broadly distributed wire story in 1935, or could have even been the unnamed author. Rieseberg lived in Galveston for a short time and repeated the legend in a 1936 *Galveston Tribune* article he authored. Rieseberg hoped to attract the interest of potential investors for his own underwater treasure expeditions.¹³ A similar search for investors in Washington DC the previous year resulted in much publicity, but ended with Rieseberg breaking his leg onboard the prospective treasure ship while docked on the Potomac.¹⁴ In his 1942 book, *I Dive for Treasure*, Hendricks Lake was listed among hundreds of other treasure caches just there for the taking.¹⁵ It was one of Rieseberg's magazine stories in April 1957, however, that led directly to the expedition on Hendricks Lake the following November.

Rieseberg's story titled "Sunken Galleon Silver" made Hendricks Lake the object of national attention.¹⁶ Treasure seekers flooded *True West* magazine's offices, all asking for the location of the treasure lake in East Texas. According to one local treasure hunter, "all hell broke loose" after the article was published.¹⁷ Obvious outsiders appeared in Tatum and Carthage, asking questions and looking for inside information. After the article created a stir, Harry Rieseberg received a call from a Houston oilman asking questions about the treasure. Andrew C. SoRelle, Jr. and his brother Henry SoRelle were successful independent oilmen from Houston who came to the lake with a plan to find treasure using some of the same equipment they used to locate oil. Twenty-eight-year-old Henry SoRelle was the group's expert on leasing and contracts, while his older brother A.C. was the treasure hunter who spearheaded the expedition.¹⁸ Rieseberg offered them enough information to stimulate their interest, and they had the equipment and financial wherewithal to undertake a serious effort.

Silver was not the only treasure the Texan oilman pursued. A.C. SoRelle Jr. was one of several born-again Christians who drilled for oil in Israel based on their interpretation of certain Scripture references.¹⁹ SoRelle, along with partners from both geological and religious circles, later drilled a well at Alite on the coast south of Haifa.²⁰ They based their site selection on a scripture ref-

erence indicating oil would be found at the "heel of Asher."²¹ That the scripture might refer to olive oil rather than petroleum was up for interpretation by others, but not for SoRelle. He abandoned the project after investing \$13 million when a drill bit broke off at 21,000 feet. The kind of passionate belief that led A.C. SoRelle to drill for oil in places where faith overcame geological evidence was the same passion that led him to look so fervently for Spanish silver in Hendricks Lake. The SoRelles had all the resources they needed, but it was their contact with a local treasure hunter in October 1957 that set them on their way to the edge of the lake.

Barnie Lee Waldrop of Carthage was an amateur treasure hunter who had a strong interest in Hendricks Lake but little capital to conduct a search.²² He became the focal point of inquiries about the treasure following the Rieseberg article in *True West*. Waldrop had his own plans for Hendricks Lake and developed electronic equipment for underwater searching before 1955.²³ Waldrop also held the treasure hunting rights on property bordering the lake for a number of years, hedging his bets that an investor would come along. When SoRelle expressed an interest in conducting a massive effort to find the treasure, he had to go through Waldrop to get there.

As a result of their contacts with Rieseberg and Waldrop, the SoRelles and a group of fifteen partners hoping for their cut of the treasure mounted an ambitious and well-financed effort to find the Hendricks Lake silver. The group spent the last two weeks of October 1957 using an instrument from their oil exploration to detect underground minerals.²⁴ Under the cover of darkness, they floated the instrument to possible locations on the lake and marked potential spots for digging the next day. After a methodical search, they focused on a small area at the southwest end of the lake. If their dredging resulted in a silver find, they planned to build a dam on either side of the hot spot and drain that section of the lake. What they found encouraged them to continue. They scooped up an old singletree, the wood and metal connection fitted between a mule team and a wagon. This tantalizing clue matched the legend.²⁵

Despite his interest and experience, Barnie Waldrop watched from the banks of Hendricks Lake with two local men, Carthage Police Chief Lorenzo Elden "Cush" Reeves and Corbett Akins, former sheriff of Panola County, who were the primary landowners and provided access to the lake for a cut of the treasure. Both were well known as hard-nosed lawmen. Akins reportedly encouraged oilfield transients he found sleeping downtown to move on by squirting lighter fluid on their feet and setting fire to their shoes.²⁶ A simple no trespassing sign with the sheriff's name written at the bottom was all it took to keep onlookers and curiosity seekers at bay.²⁷ Reeves and Akins hoped all they had to do to strike it rich was let SoRelle and his group go to work and collect their percentage. Akins declined to say much to the newshounds about his cut because he did not "want a lot of Internal Revenue boys on our necks." He later implied his potential take was about ten percent.²⁸ Waldrop was not as easily engaged; he was a treasure hunter, not one to stand idly by with curiosity while treasure was found on his home turf. Waldrop wanted to be more directly involved.

Under the watchful eyes of landowners, reporters, and stakeholders, the largest search for Hendricks Lake silver ever conducted kicked into high gear. Joe Titsworth of Kilgore started removing the bottom mud with a dragline, assisted by R.V. Oldham of the Oldham Construction Company in Longview. After a week of fruitless digging, the team decided the dragline was too small to penetrate the twenty-foot layer of silt, gumbo, and lignite. The SoRelles called in a friend, Casey Jones owner of Jones Boys Moving Company of Beaumont, to help penetrate the "blue mud" at the bottom of the lake.²⁹ The Jones Boys motto was "we move anything," but Casey admitted this was the toughest challenge he ever encountered. He brought in a 100-ton barge crane to do the heavier work, and Henry SoRelle recalled they almost tipped the big crane over into the lake because the dig was so difficult.³⁰ Kell Jones, Casey's eleven-year old son, was at the lake with his father during the holiday break from school. Kell saw one bucket scoop come to the surface with glittering bars sticking out of the mud. Since silver bars were the object of the search, everyone present became excited. What they found instead of Spanish silver were petrified logs long buried in the bottom of Hendricks Lake, their crystalline specks glistening in the sun.³¹

Record setting rainfall ended 1957 and carried into 1958. Heavy rains in the area on the 12th and 13th of November indefinitely delayed any further work with the dragline. The SoRelles called off their initial search by the end of November 1957, with nothing to show for their efforts.³²

While the SoRelles waited out the winter and spring rains, Barnie Waldrop made his own plans. Waldrop had dreamed of Hendricks Lake treasure for years, but never had the resources to mount a serious effort. He was ahead of everybody on the deal, according to the local paper, and worked on the project even before the Rieseberg article appeared in 1957.³³ No longer content to be just a spectator, Waldrop formulated a plan and gathered investors during the weather delay and got his own search underway on Monday, June 16th, 1958. Waldrop searched on the south end of the lake in partnership with an unnamed Carthage business man and Thomas W. Bolton, an oilman from Dallas. Armed with publicity and interest, Waldrop unveiled his "ace in the hole," a specially designed underwater metal detector. His description of the device displayed the combination of boastfulness and secrecy with which every treasure hunter must be endowed.

If other methods fail, I am confident that my personally designed metal-locating device will find the treasure. I spent months designing and perfecting this device and had it built to my own exact specifications. Briefly, not to give away any technical secrets, it consists of a dial panel, headphones, 100 feet of insulated cable, and a search coil three feet in diameter that houses hundreds of feet of copper wire. The search coil is lowered into the water from a boat. As the coil scans the bottom of the lake, the operator listens through the headphones for the variance in sound that would indicate the coil has come in contact with or has approached metal. The equipment would be operated from the boat through use of the dials I have designed. A constant hum in the earphones would be interrupted only by presence of metal.³⁴

Waldrop and his partners were not alone at Hendricks Lake in the summer of 1958. When he and the SoRelles disagreed on the best location to search, independent searches for the treasure began at the same time on opposite ends of the lake. Just two weeks after Waldrop started scanning the lake bottom with his underwater metal detectors, the SoRelles picked up their search at a new location at the end of June 1958.³⁵

We contacted the lake owners, and they told us a Carthage man already had the treasure hunting rights for the lake. But he's looking for the silver at the southern end of the lake where people believe Trammell made his crossings. We think the treasure is in the north end of the lake — where the high banks mentioned in the account of the dumping are located. So we were able to strike a bargain enabling us to look for the silver in the north half.³⁶

The SoRelles search during the sweltering July heat was brief, in spite of their passions for the treasure. Newspapers reported them digging one day and gone the next. The obstacles were great, and money and interest waned.³⁷

Richard Carder, Jr., a Scagoville, Texas pharmacist, teamed up with the SoRelles on their first attempt, but continued the search with Waldrop after the SoRelles gave up. It was Carder who placed explosive charges at the bottom of the lake in an attempt to dislodge the mud.³⁸ The team gave Diana Waldrop, Barnie's 14-year-old daughter, the memorable task of detonating five sticks of dynamite.³⁹ Diana touched off the explosion and then crawled into a boat with her father to investigate the results. When fish and snakes teemed on the surface after the blast, she climbed out of the boat onto a floating platform and up a pole to get even farther away.

By the end of July 1958 Waldrop admitted publicly what he already knew privately. His underwater metal detector, no matter how complex its construction, was either going to find random chunks of metal or nothing at all beneath the thick gumbo mud covering the hard, lignite bottom of Hendricks Lake. Nonetheless, Waldrop refused to give up. Even though he had downplayed the idea before, Waldrop once again talked of plans to drain the lake when the summer drought lowered water levels.⁴⁰ The self-described "cagey old timer at this business" always seemed to know more than he would fully reveal. Waldrop hinted he found something to confirm the legend. Not to be upstaged by Harry Rieseberg, Waldrop published his own article about Hendricks Lake in the Fall 1958 edition of *Frontier Times* magazine. Barnie was a little put out by Rieseberg's grandstanding in his territory, so he used the article to grab a little well-deserved glory.

... there are naturally some things I won't divulge. But, just as a hint, consider this: six wagons bore that load of silver into the slimy depths of Hendricks Lake. While diving to explore the bottom of the lake, I brought up an ancient metal wagon tire such as might have been used on one of those wagons. I took it to a metallurgist, who estimated it to be over 100 years old.⁴¹

A photograph of Waldrop holding a wagon rim almost six feet in diameter appeared in the *Houston Chronicle Magazine* in October 1958. Waldrop's trophy was a tempting prize linking past and present and a come-on for

investors. Every treasure hunter needed financial support, and every patron needed a little encouragement—something more than legend. Bernie's wagon wheel was his proof that Spanish wagons filled with silver still lay buried at the bottom of Hendricks Lake.

Layers of fact and fiction surround every treasure legend and this one was no exception. In a later photograph, Waldrop displayed a different wagon rim, this one larger in diameter and thinner in width than the one in the *Chronicle* story. Which one came from the lake? Were either of them from an old Spanish wagon, or were they tossed into the water by someone only wanting to tantalize the true believers? Waldrop's wife, witness to many fruitless endeavors, simply wrote "closest to success" across the family's clipping of one of the photos.

The SoRelles, Waldrop, and all the other treasure hunters hoping for their percentage were gone by the end of the summer of 1958 with no silver to show for their efforts. They searched underwater with electronic equipment, dredged and dynamited with no success, but gave up before trying to drain the lake as Uncle Fox Tatum had in the past. SoRelle and Waldrop organized the largest and most expensive salvage efforts in the history of the legend, but they were not the last to look for the Spanish treasure.

Waldrop's article about Hendricks Lake treasure in *Frontier Times* in 1958 did much to prolong interest. Bernie Waldrop organized another search in 1960. A treasure seeker named Holcombe from nearby Longview made a brief attempt in 1962 and sank a cylindrical metal well into the lake to create a searchable dry spot. He gave up his attempt when water pressure collapsed the walls of the pipe casings. Bernie Waldrop made another attempt in 1963, and a syndicate from Iowa made several trips in 1965.⁴² A group from Mississippi contracted to simply drill holes on the bank in 1969, but instead brought in a bulldozer, dug a little harbor, and generally made a mess before leaving under cover of darkness. Bernie Waldrop was back again at Hendricks Lake in 1976, asked by business investors from Milwaukee and Los Angeles to mark sites along the edge of the lake for possible exploration.⁴³ The publisher of the *Trammel Trace Tribune* in Tatum got another round of phone calls from San Francisco, Fort Worth, St. Louis, Dallas, and Houston after a brief article appeared in *Southern Living* magazine in March, 1981. As long as the legend treasure remains unrecovered the lack of definitive proof will only encourage other endeavors.

What the treasure hunters did discover was that their adventures generated publicity. SoRelle, Waldrop, and Sheriff Akins attracted so much attention to themselves and Hendricks Lake that they became page one news in the *Wall Street Journal* in 1958.⁴⁴ Rather than focusing on the legend, the article examined how the frenzy surrounding treasure hunting in the 1950's led enterprising business owners to a different conclusion — selling supplies to treasure hunters was more profitable than treasure hunting itself. Maps, books, diving equipment, metal detectors, and lots of other gear were sold all over the world to would-be adventurers excited by treasure tales. Annual sales of metal detec-

tors were between three thousand and five thousand during the mid-1950s. When they published a booklet listing possible sites in 1955, requests for treasure maps overwhelmed The Library of Congress. Fearful it was misleading the public, they stopped publication when they ran out of copies after three printings. Profiting from that fervor may have been what Harry Rieseberg had in mind when he formed a corporation called Lieut. Harry E. Rieseberg Associates, to market his personally designed treasure maps to would-be prospectors and salvors.¹⁵

No one ever matched the SoRelles in expense and effort, and none of the treasure searches ever turned up even a single ounce of Spanish silver. A newspaper account reported the Iowa group found a coin from Madagascar on the banks of the lake, but a member of the expedition later admitted it was placed there as a joke on the group's leader and most fervent believer in the treasure story.¹⁶

Today, Hendricks Lake is a place where deer camps, oil leases, and memories of treasure hunts past are found. The gate to the oil company road on the south end of the lake is closed by a string of padlocks, one for each of the authorized lease holders. The old wagon wheel rim, the "closest to success" any treasure hunter came to finding any real evidence, just made the legend more enticing. Even fifty years later there are clues that might tempt another treasure hunter. One of the old wagon wheel rims Bernie Waldrop held in the photograph is exactly the same size and width as those on a two-wheeled Mexican cart over a hundred years old at a stone supplier's business in Houston.

Will someone else, armed with today's technology and equipment, give it another try? Will the curiosity needed to search for Spanish silver found only in legend once again overcome the lack of evidence? As Bernie Waldrop once said, "¿quien sabe, amigo?"

NOTES

¹Ellis Sweatte, "Lafitte 'Treasure' Defies Hendricks Lake Diggers," *Beaumont Enterprise*, November 7, 1957.

²For general information about Trammel's Trace, see the *Handbook of Texas*. See also an article by the author online at *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*, s.v. "Trammel's Trace" <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=3793>. A summary of the author's research on the Trace and a sketch map can be found at <http://www.trammelstrace.org>.

³Jack Jackson, "Nicholas Trammel's Difficulties in Mexican Texas," *East Texas Historical Journal*, Volume XXXVIII, Number 2, pp 15-39.

⁴This is the common retelling of the treasure legend. Variations and embellishments to it are found in numerous print and online sources.

⁵Mary Rogers, "Legend of the Lake," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Sept 16, 2007.

⁶C.A. Stotlar of LeClaire. Iowa conducted a brief search of Hendricks Lake in 1965. In May 1965, Stotlar wrote to the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, Spain asking for information about the Spanish brig, *Santa Rosa*. In a letter dated October 25, 1965, the director apologized for his delay in responding. His search of 44 files turned up only one reference to the *Santa Rosa*. In 1816, the brig sailed from Havana to Cadiz with a cargo of cane liquor, sugar, mahogany wood, and hard tack.

¹⁷William C. Davis, *The Pirates Lafitte: The Treacherous World of the Corsairs of the Gulf* (New York, 2005).

¹⁸*The Independent*. Calliope, Iowa. October 16, 1884. From www.newspaperarchive.com. "...several steam engines and powerful pumps have been engaged and the hunters are hopeful."

¹⁹*Galveston Daily News*, September 22, 1884. No copies of the source of this story, the *Henderson Times*, for that period have been located.

²⁰*Galveston Daily News*, October 3, 1884.

²¹"All Trace Now Lost of Pirate Jean Lafitte's Mightiest Treasure Haul," *Washington Post*, October 6, 1935, p. SM2. This full-page article appeared in dozens of newspapers across the country.

²²By his own account, Lt. Harry E. Rieseberg published over a dozen books and almost 4,000 articles on treasure hunting. His adventures were greatly exaggerated. For a short biography, see Barbara Harte and Carolyn Riley, Eds. *Contemporary Authors: A Bio-Bibliographical Guide to Current Authors and Their Works*. Vol 5-8, 1968, pp 956-957.

²³Sam Weiner, "'Thar's Gold in Them Thar Seas,' Is Belief of Man Who Plans Lost Treasure Expedition," *Galveston Tribune*, January 6, 1936.

²⁴Thomas Austin, "Bathysphere, Diving Device, in Washington," *The Washington Post*, May 26, 1935. Rieseberg claimed in his 1942 book, *I Dive for Treasure*, that he broke his leg during a storm at sea on a treasure cruise. However, in the article by Sam Weiner cited above, Rieseberg admits that he slipped on deck while the ship was docked.

²⁵Harry E. Rieseberg, *I Dive for Treasure*, Robert M. McBride & Company, (New York, 1942), P 301.

²⁶Harry E. Rieseberg, "Sunken Galleon Silver," *True West*, March-April, 1957, p. 16.

²⁷Barnie Waldrop, "Sunken Silver Stampede," *Frontier Times*, Fall 1958, p. 29. A *Panola Watchman* article on November 11, 1958 reviews the story.

²⁸In a telephone conversation with Henry R. SoRelle on February 5, 2005, he reviewed his recollections of the 1957-58 treasure searches to the author. He was also a source for Mary Rogers in her *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* article cited earlier.

²⁹SoRelle was founder of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship in Houston as well as the organization's President for eleven years.

³⁰William P. Barrett, "Divining for Oil: Bible Leads Texan to Israel Site," *Dallas Times Herald*, November 8, 1982.

³¹James P. Dawson, "In the Days of Peleg," From <http://www.jp dawson.com/peलगnet/pelchap7/Chap7.html>.

³²Barnie Waldrop (1901-1983) is buried at Waldrop Cemetery. Waldrop Cemetery is two miles northwest of Fairplay, Texas in Panola County.

³³Edwin Tillery, "Treasure Sought in Lake Bottom," *Marshall News Messenger*, November 1, 1957. In a personal interview with Barnie Waldrop's daughter, Diana Waldrop Herring, she reported the family home burned in 1955, delaying his efforts at searching for the treasure.

³⁴Sweatte, p. 3.

³⁵Herbert Corder, "Treasure Hunters Digging For Silver Near Tatum," *Henderson Daily News*, November 1957.

³⁶Thad Sitton, *The Texas Sheriff: Lord of the County Line*, (Oklahoma, 2006), p. 115.

³⁷Telephone interview by author with Henry R. SoRelle, February 5, 2005.

³⁸Bill McAda, "Buried Treasure Hunt in Panola to Resume Monday," *Marshall News Messenger*, November 10, 1957.

³⁹Jones and SoRelle were both members of the Full Gospel Business Men organization, an association of evangelical Christian business men.

⁴⁰Telephone interview, Henry R. SoRelle.

⁴¹In a telephone interview with Kell Jones on January 11, 2005, he recollected his time at Hendricks Lake with his father, Casey Jones.

³²"Buried Treasure Hunt To Be Revived Soon," *Panola Watchman*, December 12, 1957.

³³"Pirate Treasure Hunt to Be Renewed at Lake Hendricks," *Panola Watchman*. June 19, 1958, p. 1

³⁴"Barney's Own Story of Sunken Lake Treasure." *Panola Watchman*. December 25, 1958. This story used much of the same article Waldrop published in *Frontier Times* magazine, Fall, 1958.

³⁵"Hunt for Pirate Gold to Begin on Texas Lake," *The Kerrville Times*, June 22, 1958.

³⁶Burt Schorr, "Will Three Houston Oilmen Write Last Chapter of Pirate's Tale?" *Houston Press*, 1958. From vertical file of Depot Museum, Henderson, Texas.

³⁷"Off Again, On Again, Gone Again!," *Panola Watchman*, July 17, 1958.

³⁸"Another Chapter Added to Saga of Hendricks Lake," *Panola Watchman*, August 7, 1958.

³⁹In a telephone interview with Diana Lee (Waldrop) Herring on January 8, 2005, she recounted her experiences at Hendricks Lake and about her father's treasure hunting adventure.

⁴⁰"To Try for Solution of Lake Treasure Puzzle," *Panola Watchman*. July 7, 1958.

⁴¹Barnie Waldrop, "Sunken Silver Stampede," *Frontier Times*, Fall, 1958, p. 30.

⁴²"Will Syndicate Solve Hendricks Lake Mystery?" *Panola Watchman*, June 17, 1965.

⁴³John R. Dulin, John R. *Remembering Rusk County*. (Henderson Texas, 1992).

⁴⁴Gene Bylinsky, "Treasure Hunters: They Build a Boom for Sellers Maps, Tools – But They Find Little." *Wall Street Journal*, September 18, 1958.

⁴⁵"Legal Notices: Certificate of Business Fictitious Firm name," *Van Nuys News*. April 24, 1952.

⁴⁶Frank X. Tolbert, "Tolbert's Texas: 1299-dated Coin Found in 'Lafitte Lake,'" From vertical file. Depot Museum. Henderson, Texas. Tolbert's Texas ran as a syndicated column in many newspapers across Texas. This article refers to the search carried out by C.A. Stotlar in 1965.