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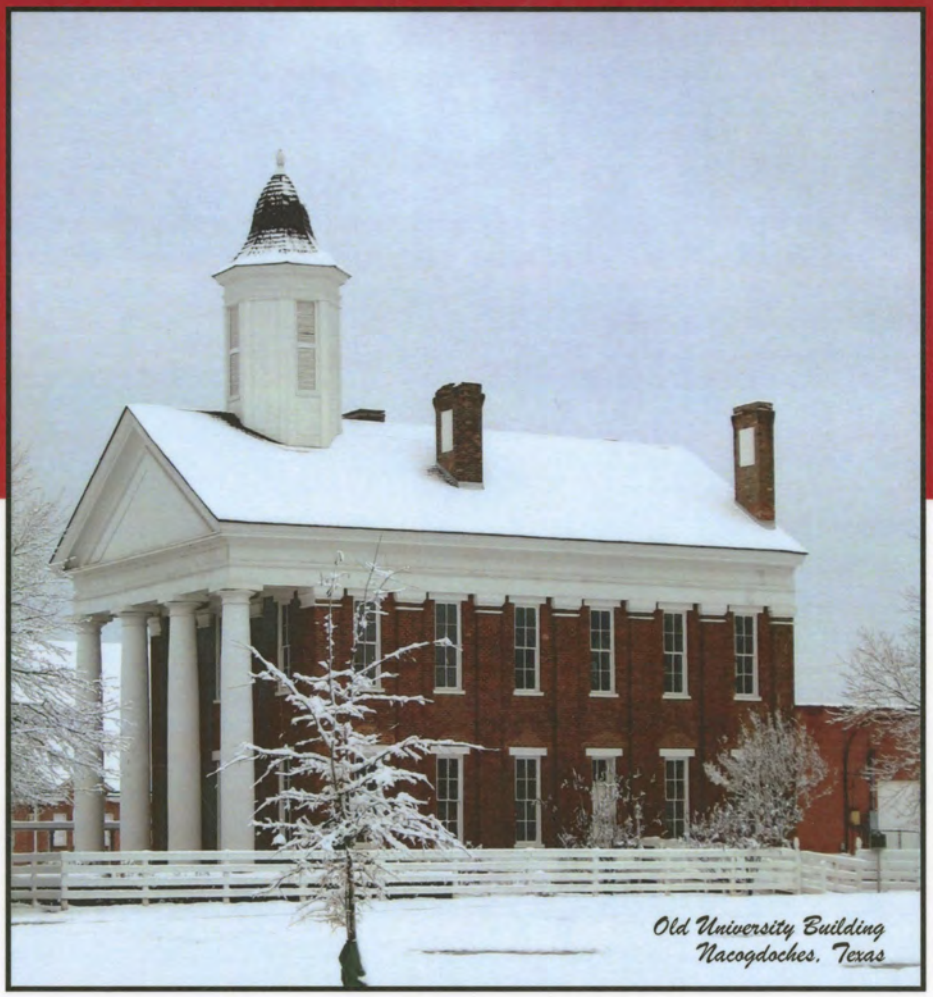

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"A Curious War:" Franklin A. G. Gearing in the Civil War

By Richard B. McCaslin

Many Texana collectors must have been intrigued when a photograph of an officer in Hood's Texas Brigade was offered for sale on a popular internet auction site in the fall of 2013. Much about the item seemed genuine. The image of a young man wearing a Confederate lieutenant's uniform was a carte de visite, a format popular during the Civil War. It bore the back mark of a New Orleans partnership active during the war, Samuel Anderson and Austin A. Turner, and there was a wartime Federal revenue stamp attached. Identification of the subject was relatively easy; clearly written on the back was "F. A. G. Gearing Galveston Texas." Internet-savvy buyers could quickly discover that Franklin A. G. Gearing lies buried in the Masonic section of the Silver Terrace cemetery in Virginia City, Nevada, beneath a marker that claims that he was a major for the Confederate States of America. But any further investigation, as the online seller admitted in his description of the item he listed, revealed complications. While the name on the gravestone is correct, as well as the years of birth and death that are engraved on it (1840 and 1921), Gearing never became a Confederate major. Instead, the personal history that he created after the Civil War proved more durable in popular memory than the arguably more interesting true story of his experiences in that conflict. A deeper inquiry into his life can not only enhance the value of a collectible image, it can help internet chroniclers correct their records, provide an interesting insight into the travails of Texas blockade runners, and provide an effective lesson on the superiority of carefully

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researched history over the shallow assertions of popular memory.

The informative website for the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Nevada, maintained by members of the Lt. Dixon - CSS Hunley Camp No. 2016, reports that "Major" Gearing served from September 1, 1862, to April 18, 1865, in Company L of the 1st Texas Infantry and suffered "several injuries and disabilities." A link provides interested readers with a picture of Gearing's marker. The popular Find A Grave website has the same image, as well as several others, and a correspondent for that site has added complete dates for Gearing's birth and death (March 24, 1840, and September 1, 1921), as well as a birthplace, Raccoon Bend in Austin County, Texas. The same writer repeats the information that Gearing became a major in the 1st Texas Infantry, but he expands the dates for his service, back to 1861. Unfortunately for these websites, and for the perplexed internet seller who wanted to properly identify the image he was selling, much of this additional information is not correct. The dates of service are wrong, and Gearing was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, far from Raccoon Bend on the Brazos River about fifty miles from Houston. How he came to Civil War Texas, and how he had his picture made in Union-occupied New Orleans wearing what appears to be a Confederate uniform, can perhaps be best explained briefly with a cryptic phrase he wrote to his mother from Fort Pickens at Pensacola, Florida, in January 1863: "This is a curious war[;] circumstances makes us what we are[,] and yet we had nothing to do with the circumstances." But such a declaration only begs further explication.

Franklin A. G. Gearing arrived in Texas in late 1860. Only twenty years of age, he nonetheless served as a business agent for his father, Charles Gearing, then living in Pittsburgh. The elder Gearing built and operated steamboats, and his son was entering the business with him. As the nation began to divide bitterly, Charles Gearing had borrowed as much as $25,000 and invested in two new steamboats built at Pittsburgh: the *John F. Carr* and the *Colonel Stell*, both named for prominent Trinity River businessmen who were apparently friends of the Gearings. Carr was a prosperous resident of Smithfield, where he had constructed a cotton gin, grist mill, and sawmills. John D. Stell, a successful Leon County planter who had served as a legislator in Georgia for many years, represented his home county in the Texas legislature from 1859 to 1861. The steamboats that bore their names were substantial; the *Colonel Stell* was a sidewheeler, 138 feet in length

and 24 feet in width, and it weighed 199 tons. The *John F. Carr*, which was also a sidewheeler, reportedly had similar dimensions. Both vessels could carry hundreds of bales of cotton, and thus they would make a lot of money for their owners.

The original plan was for Franklin to meet the steamboats at the junction of the Red and Mississippi rivers and bring them by way of New Orleans to Texas, where they would be bought by Carr and Stell. But in late November 1860 Franklin wrote to his father from Texas that there was little or no chance of selling a steamboat, or even shares in a steamboat, in the Trinity River region. Political turmoil, low river levels, and crop failures had ruined any immediate prospects for an investor. He did assure the older man, however, that there was plenty of freight business to be had, and this would improve as the other factors lessened. This should have been troubling for the Gearings, because at the time that Franklin reported on affairs in Texas, the *John F. Carr* was already at Cincinnati and headed downriver, and the *Colonel Stell* would soon be licensed for operations. Instead, Charles Gearing saw it as an opportunity. Already disgusted with the victory of Republican Abraham Lincoln in the presidential race, during which he had strongly supported John Bell of the Constitutional Union Party, he climbed aboard the *Colonel Stell* and left Pittsburgh for Texas, which Franklin had assured him would soon leave the Union.

Franklin and Charles Gearing were motivated to move south through an interesting mix of political beliefs and a desire for profit. Franklin ardently supported the Confederacy in his letters written during the first two years of the war, and a judge for a postwar claims court wrote that he remained an unapologetic Confederate. Charles was no less outspoken in his criticism of Lincoln as he left Pittsburgh in late 1860, and perhaps it should be noted that family friend Stell supported disunion as a delegate to the Texas Secession Convention. While Franklin admitted in November 1860 that he was not certain whether Texas would be a Confederate state or again an independent republic, it is obvious that the Gearings welcomed leaving the Union, at least during the first years of the conflict. Their zeal may have dwindled by late 1863, when the Confederacy faltered, but the Gearings remained focused on another vital goal: making money. They had Pittsburgh creditors to pay, and they also wanted to support their family: Charles Gearing left his wife Elizabeth Addington Gearing with three sons (ages 18, 5, and 5) and four daughters (ages 16, 11, 4

and 2) in Pittsburgh. Perhaps it is revealing that many wartime letters from Franklin to his mother discuss plans laid by him and his father to bring the family out of the North. None of these came to fruition, but they reflect a blend of political alienation and economic concern.

Charles Gearing after the war told a federal claims court that Carr and Stell refused to accept the boats, so he had to operate them himself. Regardless of whether they expected to operate the steamboats themselves or had the opportunity thrust upon them when an investor balked, the Gearings did well during the first few months of their Texas operations, at least with one of their boats. In what may have been its first trip on the Trinity River, the *John F. Carr* arrived at Galveston on December 29, 1860, from Parker's Bluff with 770 bales of cotton. It delivered another 925 bales at Galveston on February 9, 1861, as well as 279 hides and 23 passengers. Low water on the Trinity slowed these efforts, and the Gearings prepared to take their boats to New Orleans. An ironic intervention by Confederate authorities brought these preparations to a complete halt. Told that the Gearings were abolitionists, officials confiscated their steamboats. Letters from Pittsburgh, apparently gathered by Franklin during a quick trip, and the intervention of Masonic comrades proved the stories were not true, and the two vessels were returned in three weeks. By that time the lucrative cotton shipping season had passed, so the Gearings stored their steamboats on Buffalo Bayou.

The Gearings resumed their maritime operations in the early fall of 1861, but this time they had a new customer who paid handsomely. Confederate officials repeatedly chartered both the *John F. Carr* and the *Colonel Stell.* According to surviving records, Franklin A. G. Gearing, as business agent, received $22,587 for eight months of service, from September 29, 1861, to May 31, 1862, during which time his steamboats carried troops, supplies, and ordnance. They also served as picket boats, floating platforms from which to watch the growing fleet of Union blockaders. When the Federals threatened to take Galveston in May 1862, Franklin became the captain of the *John F. Carr* and helped to ferry people and military stores out of the port city. He wrote to his mother that his Texas comrades "cannot contind [sic] against their ironclad Boats," but all efforts had been made to ensure that "their victory will be fruitless." He added that as soon as Union forces moved outside of the range of their ships' guns, they would be "whipped." After all, he explained to his mother in Pittsburgh,

the Federals could only win at places like New Orleans, where their "monster iron gun Boats" gave them an advantage. Once such cities were taken, they feared to venture further afield. As the summer weeks passed without a Union landing at Galveston, or a new Confederate contract, the Gearings again stored their boats.

As the war raged through its second year, the Gearings developed a scheme to repay their Pittsburgh creditors and convey some money to their family as well. They decided to buy a ship, load it with cotton, and send it through the blockade. The bales could be sold in a neutral port like Havana, and the proceeds could be distributed to those whom the Gearings either owed or loved. Their contact in Pittsburgh would be James Millingar, who had married Charles Gearing's sister. As early as April 1861, on his trip home, Franklin Gearing as his father's business agent had signed an agreement with his uncle, and both Franklin and Charles Gearing discussed the details with Millingar when they again traveled to Pittsburgh, the older Gearing in September of 1861 and the younger in early 1862. Initially the duo intended to buy Texas cotton at a discount and sell it at a great profit when Union troops occupied Galveston, but that did not happen soon enough. So 288 bales were bought and loaded on a small schooner, the *Reindeer*, renamed the *Jefferson Davis*. The Gearings gave $15,000 for the cotton and $10,000 for the ship, both times paying in gold. Despite their later assertions to federal claims court judges that they were never paid for their Confederate services, it appears that Franklin's wartime boasts to his mother about their success in Texas were much more accurate.

Unfortunately for the Gearings' plans, the *Jefferson Davis* was captured in the Gulf of Mexico about two hundred miles east of the point where it had emerged from the mouth of the Brazos River. Becalmed on the morning of September 17, 1862, the Confederates managed to evade their pursuers aboard the *USS William G. Anderson*, a bark assigned to the West Gulf Blockading Squadron, for about ten hours. Then the Union commander lowered two launches. Hard rowing resulted in a successful boarding, and the blockade runners became prisoners. The triumphant Federals soon discovered that the *Jefferson Davis* was not seaworthy, so plans to take it to a prize court in New York had to be scrapped. Instead, the Gearings' schooner went to New Orleans, was consigned to the Navy, and quickly disappeared from the official records. More important, the 288 bales of cotton were shipped to New York, where a judge for the Southern District Court

arranged for its condemnation and sale on March 18, 1863. But on February 27, 1863, before the case was settled, Millingar convinced the court to set aside 73,533 pounds of cotton (about half of the total cargo) as his property, not subject to condemnation. He argued that the money Charles Gearing spent on this portion of the cotton, through their agreement, was in fact what he owed to Millingar. Franklin and his father knew about this transaction and were encouraged that their family would at least receive some of the money. The foundation for later bitter clashes was laid, however, when Millingar made a handsome net profit of $25,949.70 on the sale of this cotton but did not pay any other creditors or Gearing's wife, his sister-in-law.

Money was not the most immediate concern for Franklin after the confiscation of the *Jefferson Davis.* Included among the prisoners captured on the blockade runner, he was taken to Pensacola along with at least five of his crew. After six miserable weeks aboard the *William G. Anderson,* the prisoners were transferred to better quarters at Fort Pickens, where many captive Confederates were held. Some confusion ensued about paroles or exchanges; it was not clear if Franklin and his crewmen were actually Confederate naval personnel, and thus subject to the usual practices, or if they were in fact civilians involved in a criminal activity. Franklin proudly refused to sign any parole that did not suit him, and he wrote to his mother that all but one of his crew did the same. Therefore he and most of his men remained at Fort Pickens for six months while authorities discussed terms and Gearing family members tried to secure a release. The conditions for the prisoners were not too bad until Franklin led a failed escape attempt in mid-January 1863, after he spent five weeks cutting through a grating with a penknife. Recaptured within less than a day, he and others were shackled for forty days. He wrote to his mother after his release, when he did not have to worry about prison censors, that he was bound in retaliation for Jefferson Davis' order to execute white Union officers captured while in command of black troops. Franklin added that his close confinement ended only after Maj. Gen. Simon B. Buckner, commanding at Mobile, threatened to retaliate against his Federal prisoners if the mistreatment of the Confederates at Fort Pickens did not cease.

Franklin was released from Fort Pickens on April 13, 1863, with only an hour's prior notice. Sent to Mobile and then on to Vicksburg, he was formally exchanged for a Federal captain, which he believed

was a tacit recognition of the status he had been claiming. He and the former first mate of the *Jefferson Davis*, an Ohio-born carpenter from Galveston by the name of Benjamin O. Hamilton, left Jackson, Mississippi, for Texas on April 19. They crossed the Mississippi River at Natchez on a skiff, made their way to Alexandria by way of Natchitoches, and then started for Galveston. They arrived there on May 7, 1863, after six long days on the road. Safe in Texas, Franklin angrily denounced the Lincoln administration in a letter to his mother, claiming to have seen evidence of the horrors it had imposed on the nation. As for his own experiences, Franklin added, "The scripture says those who goes [sic] out in ships see the wonders of the deep – but I say those who runs the blockade in [a] schooner see something profane to ears polite."

Franklin certainly enjoyed being back in Texas, especially since he was able to reunite with his wife. He had married Elizabeth Virginia Marston of Galveston on April 15, 1862, and was clearly smitten with her. Her father, Daniel Marston, served as a quartermaster for the Confederacy, and that was how the couple met. They were the same age, and both were from the North: Virginia, as she was known, had been born in Massachusetts, while her parents were from Maine. Franklin wrote to his Pittsburgh relatives that "she is one you will be proude [sic] of she is none of your affected gold and tinsell [sic] women made up by her milliner." He assured his mother that his new bride could dance and sing and sew and cook great meals. In sum, she "will be a shining orniment [sic] where ever her lot is cast." During his imprisonment, he understood that his new bride had been a great comfort to his worried father, who was almost as infatuated as his son with her. As an added bonus, the reunited couple's first child, a daughter, was born soon after her father returned. He gushingly wrote to his family in Pittsburgh, "Our little Confederate baby is the sweetest thing this side [of] the Atlantic."

Turmoil in the family business in Texas quickly tainted Franklin's happiness. He had written to his mother from Fort Pickens that he and his father had "plenty of means left and have money invested in the best stock in the South, being Negroes and other property which we think as good as Gold." The loss of an investment of $25,000 with the *Jefferson Davis* and her cargo was an inconvenience for Pittsburgh investors and family members, but he declared that it would not derail the Texas operations. But in October 1862 Maj. Gen. John Bankhead Magruder

came to Texas and began making preparations to retake Galveston from the Federals, who occupied the harbor that same month. Magruder needed ships, and so he impressed the *John F. Carr* and the *Colonel Stell.* Reportedly Charles Gearing received compensation for his steamboats, but he was temporarily out of the lucrative transportation business. He rebounded in early 1863 by investing in a Pennsylvania-built sternwheeler, *the Cora*, with Richard King and Theodore Gripon. By June 1863, with the help of Franklin, Charles had smuggled 88 bales of cotton to Matamoros, and arrangements had been made to send another 100 bales. Franklin bragged in yet another letter, "there is nothing like running the blockade if one is successful I am now in the best trade in Texas." He declared that the Union navy would not catch him again because "I never get out of fresh water," but if by some chance he was captured he would burn all of his bales rather than surrender them. But in August 1863 Charles sold his interest in *the Cora* to King, leaving both of the Gearings stranded in Matamoros without a boat of their own.

Franklin refused to quit. While his father traveled as far north as Arkansas and then on to Natchez in search of more cotton to buy, the younger Gearing handled their business matters in Matamoros and Monterrey. He planned to sail for New York, whence he intended to travel to Pittsburgh. There he would settle all of the Gearing debts, although the creditors would have to receive their money from the American consuls in either Matamoros or Havana. He bragged that there were great opportunities for anyone who could get cotton to Matamoros, where payments were always in specie. It helped that his only competitors were "white warshed Inglish men [sic] who the Texians hate as bad as they do a Yankee." He added strangely, "I think I shall turn greaser or Mexican as there is more credit in being one than in being an American." He and his father bought another boat and made plans to build three schooners, in partnership with Mifflin Kenedy. Again, though, circumstances turned ugly. Cotton shipped aboard *the Henrietta* by the Gearings apparently never generated a profit for the family, and Confederate officials seized as much as 264 bales cached by the Gearings. Franklin then took a ship loaded with 110 bales out of Matamoros. Caught in the breakers off the mouth of the Rio Grande, he jettisoned his cargo, and then took passage on board a British vessel bound for Cuba. He wrote to his mother from Havana in mid-October 1863 that American consuls now refused to help

with money exchanges, so that scheme had to be cancelled. To make matters even worse for Franklin, his uncle, James Millingar, convinced his sister-in-law not to join her son in Havana, his father's proposal to build at least one gunboat at Galveston for the Confederates was ignored, and Union troops landed at the mouth of the Rio Grande in November 1863, hindering the cotton trade at Matamoros.

Seeking a way to sustain his financial operations, Franklin embraced a scheme apparently suggested by Leonard Pierce, the United States consul in Matamoros. He notified his mother in November 1863 that he would see her soon in Pittsburgh. He added, "Mother do not think too hard of me for what I have done I can I think explain when I see you to your satisfaction." As a bonus, he expected that his father, in Louisiana on business, would be with him when he arrived in Pittsburgh. Matters became clear when Franklin wrote from New Orleans in early February 1864: "I am now in the service of the Federal government." He and his father had stockpiled 800 bales of cotton near Alexandria, and with reports circulating of a Union campaign up the Red River, it seemed the best plan to join the invaders and ship the cotton when it fell within Federal lines. Franklin had secured a position with refugee Texas Unionist Alexander J. Hamilton, who had a commission as the military governor of the Lone Star State. Allegedly he had assured the younger Gearing that he would assist him "in any thing I wish to undertake." Already Franklin had issued orders for the ships he controlled to come to New Orleans, and he intended to meet his father in Union-held Natchez, where they would discuss "unsettled business in Matamoros" and depart for Pittsburgh. There the Gearings could consider "measures" with Millingar for the recovery of the *Jefferson Davis*. He concluded, "You may not fully understand the course I have taken but when we meet I can then justify myself in your opinion and the opinions of my friends as for my enemies I care not what they think I can settle with them otherwise."

Once again the Gearings' plans failed. When Union forces advanced up the Red River, retreating Confederates burned the portion of the Gearings' cotton that had not already been stolen by "jayhawkers." To make matters worse, when Franklin went to Natchez, he ironically was captured by Confederates. His father slipped away and returned to Houston, but Franklin was taken to Mobile, where friends secured his release upon some very peculiar conditions. He wrote to his long-suffering mother from Greeneville, Tennessee, in late March

1864 that he was "now here temperarly [sic] attached to the Rebel army." He assured her that he would be on his way to Pittsburgh "as soon as I can so do without implicating my friends here." He admitted that he was "in a very bad fix," adding that "the least misstep could put me out of the way," but he insisted that he was "out of danger now." After all, "but some two weeks ago I thought I should have to swing or lay in prison till the war was over," now "I will soon be out of their clutches." Franklin was so confident of his impending return to the Union army that he asked his mother to contact Lt. Col. Daniel Kent of the 19th Iowa Infantry and "tell him of my trouble and that I will soon be with him again explain everything to him tell him we will be in better condition to raise our Regiment when I get out of this as I will yet be of service to the government." When last seen by Gearing, Kent was either struggling to replenish his own unit, which had lost many men captured during the Overland Campaign in Louisiana during the fall of 1863, or he had begun trying to recruit another regiment. Either way, Kent's efforts and Franklin's pledges of support were a moot point by late March 1864, because by that time Kent had resigned his commission and Franklin was definitely not going to Pittsburgh.

Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, commander of the I Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia, had his headquarters at Greeneville, Tennessee, in March 1864. Among his units was Hood's Texas Brigade, which included the 1st, 4th, and 5th regiments of Texas infantry. Willingly or not, Franklin A. G. Gearing, late of Galveston, was mustered as a private into Company L of the 1st Texas Infantry by Capt. William A. Bedell. The commander of Company L and also the regimental mustering officer, Bedell had been severely wounded in the face at Antietam (where the 1st Texas suffered a loss of 82 percent), then endured months as a prisoner before being exchanged in time to lead his company again at Gettysburg, in the Devil's Den. He probably was not interested in explanations or excuses from Gearing. Hood's Texas Brigade and the rest of the I Corps rejoined Gen. Robert E. Lee in Virginia and almost immediately plunged into horrific fighting in the Wilderness. On May 6, 1864, the Texans, after insisting that Lee retire to safety in their rear, made a costly assault to block a Union advance. Bedell again was wounded, but he recovered to command the 1st Texas through the remainder of the war and signed a parole at Appomattox in April 1865. Gearing was not quite so lucky when he followed his new captain into combat. Severely wounded in the left shoulder, he spent

several months in a series of hospitals before returning to Galveston, where he signed a parole on June 24, 1865. Perhaps in an effort to ingratiate himself with the Army clerk, the reluctant Confederate veteran noted that his residence was Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (in other words, Pittsburgh).

When Franklin returned to Galveston in the waning months of the Civil War, he did not find his father there. Charles Gearing had abandoned his efforts in Texas and gone to Pittsburgh, where he was arrested as a "spy" in September 1864. He always believed that Millingar had him detained for spite, but in fact the culprit may have been DeWitt C. Bidwell, who was married to Millingar's sister and apparently gave the military court many of the letters written by Franklin A. G. Gearing. After five weeks in jail, Charles Gearing was acquitted and released, but he did not leave Pittsburgh. He won a suit in the state district court against Millingar for the settlement of debts using some proceeds from the sale of the cotton on the *Jefferson Davis*, then after the war, filed a series of unsuccessful suits for federal reimbursement for the postwar seizure of the *John C. Carr* and the *Colonel Stell.* Gearing also tried to get Theodore Gripon to join him in a suit to recover their losses with *the Cora*, but there is no record of that case proceeding. He then returned to building steamboats; the 1870 census taker for Pittsburgh listed him as a moderately successful "wood joiner" living with his wife and six children, four girls and two boys. In a few years the family had become known as the "Goehrings," according to church records. Charles Goehring was still alive in 1880, when the census listed him as a 64-year-old "carpenter" with a wife and five children living with him, but he must have died soon afterward. When Elizabeth Addington Goehring died in June 1895, her ashes were interred beside her husband's remains in Allegheny Cemetery at Pittsburgh.

Franklin Gearing refused to abandon Texas as easily as his father. Federal authorities at Galveston advertised for bids on July 29, 1865, for anyone wanting to contract to operate seven steamboats in their possession, including the *John F. Carr* and the *Colonel Stell.* Within a month the latter steamboat was making regular runs between Galveston and Houston, carrying privately consigned goods (including cotton) as well as government cargoes. It is not clear who operated the boat at this time, but by mid-January 1866 it and the *John F. Carr,* which made less regular trips from Galveston, had been returned

to their "former owners." By the end of the month the *Colonel Stell* was reported at Houston with James R. Richardson of Pittsburgh, Charles Gearing's original partner in the construction of the boat, at the helm as its captain. Franklin worked "in the office," serving as an onboard business agent. The return of the boats was later reversed by the Treasury Department, but both craft were subsequently sold and the team of Richardson and Gearing continued to run the *Colonel Stell* from Houston to points as far distant as Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The *Colonel Stell* finally sank, with a load of cotton, in the Trinity River in January 1867, but the fate of the *John F. Carr* is unknown. Because the latter sold in 1866 for $900, far less than the $2,200 price paid for the *Colonel Stell* at the same time, it may have been in much worse shape, and so it did not last as long.

Regardless of how he lost the steamboats, Franklin was out of the transportation business by 1869, when he worked as a traveling salesman for P. H. and M. P. Hennessy of Galveston. They had a store on the busy Strand that sold household goods, appliances, and metal-working supplies. Apparently this was not a very lucrative position for him, because the 1870 census for Houston records that he was living with his in-laws, Daniel and Emily Marston, along with his wife, Emily, and two daughters, aged seven years and six months. Gearing described himself as a "newspaper correspondent," and he in fact was the "Traveling Texas Agent" for the Houston Telegraph, having served previously as the local agent for the Houston Union. He did, however, understand the potential importance of one of the Hennessy operations: they were manufacturers of "Hydro-Carbon Air Gas Machines," which produced gasoline vapor to be burned in lamps for illumination. During June 1872, Franklin, in partnership with Charles Gearing of Pittsburgh, who was either his father or his brother, successfully filed for a patent for his own device to produce illumination gas. Within a year, the Gearing device was being used to produce the "illuminating gas" for the town of Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania. But that was also the same year that Franklin Gearing was last mentioned in Houston newspapers, indicating that once more things were not going well for him in Texas.

There are many indications that Franklin had a bright future in Houston, but there were troublesome signs as well. He was elected to the auditing committee for a local fire company in April 1870, indicating some stature within the community. When the Democratic

Club of Harris County organized on August 6, 1870, he was one of four officers elected. Interestingly, it was the first time he was ever referred to as "major;" the title was bestowed upon him and William P. Hamblen when they were elected to serve as secretaries. Like Gearing, Hamblen had never been a major in Confederate service; instead, he served as a private for four months in the 13th Texas Volunteers (Bates Regiment) before furnishing a substitute. For Hamblen, involvement with the Democrats as they rallied to end Reconstruction in Texas proved successful, and he later became a legislator. Gearing on the other hand became mired in a minor scandal. When John Watson shot and killed John Eikel in an Austin saloon in July 1870, it was rumored that Gearing was Watson's intended target, and that Watson was a recruit for the State Police. The source of the rumor proved to be Gearing himself, seeking to slander Republican state leaders and enhance his own stature. A writer for the Houston Union, the Republican rival to the Democratic Houston Telegraph and a former employer of Gearing, opined that while Republican leaders should target Gearing for his "basely malicious and false" dispatches, he in fact lied when he claimed to be that important to them. The deaths of his nine-month-old son in 1870 and four-year-old daughter in 1871 in Houston certainly did not improve his attitude toward the city, and the theft of a pony from his barn in early 1873 may have proven to be the last straw for him.

Texas had provided a series of disappointments for Franklin Gearing, and he decided to find a new life. The birth of another daughter, Mary Edna, in Pittsburg during April 1872 may indicate some consideration of a return to his home town, but instead he moved west, to Virginia City, Nevada. There he worked as a mining engineer and became the "deputy inspector" for gas meters in the community. A local newspaper explained that he was a "gas engineer" with "great experience both in putting up gas apparatus and in the manufacture of gas." Gearing confidently announced that the gas provided by the Virginia Gas Company was the "best made in the United States," while of course the second best could be found in Galveston. He also was apparently a popular speaker, speaking on such subjects as a solar eclipse in 1878. Through the years he tried several occupations, including mining gold, surveying mines, and painting carriages, but his old war wounds may have limited his opportunities. He told a recorder for the 1890 veterans census for Nevada that he had been shot in the left leg and right side, and so had lost the use of his left arm and

left shoulder. Oddly, he claimed to have been a captain in the 1st Texas Regiment from January 10, 1862, until April 18, 1865, which of course was impossible in light of his wartime experiences. He admitted he had been a prisoner of war, but he said he had been held at Fort Pulaski--in Savannah, Georgia—for three months. Again, there was a kernel of truth in what Gearing said, but his assertions were far from entirely truthful.

Gearing's claims regarding his Confederate service facilitated his creation of a new public persona. "Maj. F. A. G. Gearing" of the "Army Northern Va." marched in the "Decoration Day" procession in Virginia City with other Union and Confederate veterans in May 1876. When the Organization of Union and Confederate Veterans formed the next month in the Odd Fellows Hall in Virginia City, Major Gearing served on several committees, including at least two that hosted annual balls. An explanation for how he was accepted without challenge may be that there were few veterans from the Army of Northern Virginia in Nevada, but there is a darker answer. Soon after his arrival, Gearing established himself as a champion of Southern honor, willing to fight anyone who spoke ill of his adopted homeland. In early November 1874, he bristled at remarks by Thomas H. Williams, the Democratic former Attorney General of California, published in the Virginia Chronicle. Williams told an audience that the Democrats in Texas had regained control "By murder, robbery, and arson; by shooting colored voters down at the polls, and assassinating and driving white Republicans from the state." In all, six hundred people had been murdered in Texas, "including preachers and teachers," and the violence still continued, even after Democrats took control of the state. An exchange of notes followed, with Williams clearly not interested in a duel. Gearing fired a last verbal salvo before dropping the matter: "While I am willing to wait upon a gentleman, I am too cautious to be trapped by a trickster. I am reluctantly constrained to think the General Williams is one of those soldiers who prefers a contest with a statute rather than with a sword, and hence am again compelled to appeal to the public to judge between us." Ever pragmatic, Gearing at the same time joined the Cosmopolitan Republican Club, because Virginia City was a town dominated by Republicans.

While Gearing convinced his new associates that he was a devoted defender of Southern honor, he in fact abandoned his family when he moved to Nevada. He was twice listed in census records as married,

and twice described by census takers as single. His wife Virginia and three surviving daughters—Maggie, 17, Pearl, 10, and Mary, 7, lived with her parents in 1880, along with her married brother and his wife and daughter. Within a few years her parents both died, and Virginia opened a boarding house, which she operated for many years. After living briefly with her daughter and son-in-law, Madeleine and Louis E. B. Krausse, she did live in a house or apartment on her own, or had one of her daughters living with her, until her death on June 14, 1924. There is no indication that she got any support from her husband, and by 1907 the city directory for Houston listed her as a widow. She was buried in Glenwood Cemetery at Houston, far from where her husband, who had died in 1921, was interred in Virginia City. Interestingly, her parents and all of her five children were buried near her, including Mary Edna, who was the only one born in Pittsburgh. Mary lived with her mother as late as 1910, when she was 37 years of age. Two years later, she joined the faculty of the University of Texas at Austin, where she established the home economics program and became the first woman to achieve the rank of professor and chair a department. Decades after her death, a building was named in her honor on that campus.

So when did Franklin A. G. Gearing have his picture taken in a Confederate lieutenant's uniform in New Orleans? During early 1864, when he was in the city, he certainly would not have worn a Confederate uniform while serving on the staff of the Union military governor of Texas. He played many roles in wartime Texas, for both sides, but he was never a lieutenant. There are two possible answers. There is a large gap in the records between the time he left a Confederate hospital in Richmond in late November 1864 and the day he signed a parole at Galveston in June 1865. For Gearing, it would not have been difficult to tarry in New Orleans as he traveled to Texas from Virginia. The partnership of Samuel Anderson and Austin A. Turner were producing photographs in that city during that period, and this is supported by the revenue stamp affixed to the back. These were only used from 1864 to 1866. Perhaps, though, Gearing began trying to upgrade his Confederate image before he left for Nevada. He checked into the City Hotel in New Orleans, where ironically he had stayed in early 1864, in October 1865. He would not have been the only veteran after the Civil War to don a uniform bearing a higher rank than he had during the war in order to have a photograph made, and while the firm of Anderson and Turner was defunct by that time, Anderson

was still making cartes de visite in New Orleans. It would not have been impossible for Anderson to be using old card stock for images. Gearing thus may have taken his first steps in creating the postwar image that proved to be more enduring than the truth at New Orleans in the fall of 1865. Wearing a borrowed jacket, he had a picture made that better suited the memory he wanted than the truth he had lived.

ENDNOTES

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Nott and Huntington, Cases Decided in the Court of Claims, 166-167, 170, 174-175; Galveston Weekly Civilian and Gazette, Jan. 1, Feb. 12, Mar. 5 and 16, and Apr. 9, 1861; Proceedings of a Military Commission . . . Sept. 24, 1864 (Unfiled Papers), 7. On the same day that the John F. Carr arrived at Galveston with a load of cotton, December 29, 1860, the Colonel Stell was reported at New Orleans with Charles Gearing as captain. New Orleans Daily True Delta, Dec. 29, 1860.

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Almanac Extra, Jan. 6, 1863. The Cora was also taken into Confederate service by late November 1863, and it ironically operated in tandem with the John F. Carr in several operations. It was captured off Brazos Santiago on March 24, 1865, bound from Corpus Christi to Bagdad, Mexico with a cargo of lumber. See OR Navy, Ser. I, Vol. 20: 853; Vol. 21: 49, 857-858; 22: 116-117, and Stephen A. Townsend, The Yankee Invasion of Texas (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006), 27-28, 62.

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"Texas Must Be a Slave Country:" Slaves and Masters in the Texas Low Country 1840-1860

By John R. Lundberg

When the Anglo settlers aboard the schooner *Lively* set sail from New Orleans for the Texas coast in November, 1821, they brought with them more than just their possessions; they also brought with them the culture of the lower South and they brought with them their slaves. Stephen Austin chose the mouth of the Colorado River as the site of his new colony but when the *Lively* went ashore at the mouth of the Brazos River instead, it set into motion a chain of events that would transform that area of the Texas coast into a haven for slavery and a slave culture that differed little from the slave culture that dominated the South Carolina low country or the Louisiana cane country. Austin stated perhaps more than he knew twelve years later when he wrote: "Texas must be a slave country." After the Texas Revolution, Austin decided to make his home with his sister Emily and her husband James Perry at Peach Point Plantation, a large sugar plantation near the mouth of the Brazos. Peach Point and other plantations like it became the epitome of the culture that defined the Texas low country.[1]

The idea that Brazoria County constituted a neighborhood that differed little from the South Carolina low country or the Louisiana cane country is not to suggest that no differences existed between these places separated by time and space. Every neighborhood of the old South contained many factors and differences that made that particular place unique. Other historians who have examined slavery and the antebellum culture of Brazoria County have located the Gulf prairie within the context of a borderland society influenced by

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Spanish and Mexican customs and law, German immigrants and slaves imported directly from Africa. There is no question that Texas existed within a unique paradigm in the old South; that the above-mentioned factors contributed to a unique culture. However, other historians have located the region squarely in the center of a culture borrowed almost completely from the lower South. Both of these schools of thought are partially correct; the lower Brazos River region did initially contain all the hallmarks of a borderland society, but as time passed, the culture became more and more a part of the lower South and less and less a borderland society. Texas constituted an empire for slavery, and by 1860 Brazoria County had become the most like the South Carolina low country or the Louisiana cane country of any region in the state. Texas historians have long battled against the erroneous idea that slavery in Texas differed dramatically from slavery elsewhere in the South. Locating Brazoria County primarily within the context of a borderlands society helps to further this mistaken impression. The larger point of exploring the antebellum culture of Brazoria County is not to show what that society looked like under Spanish or Mexican rule, but to demonstrate how that society evolved in the twenty years prior to the Civil War. Slavery in Texas had not reached its natural limits by 1860, and as such was continuing to expand even while the older sections of the state like Brazoria County shed the characteristics of a borderlands society and became more like the society of the lower South. In the twenty years prior to the Civil War, the Gulf prairie transformed from the culture of a borderland society to a society similar to areas of South Carolina and Louisiana. The point of this article is to focus on the ways that Brazoria County society imitated other regions of the lower South in the way it evolved in the two decades prior to the Civil War and to show how the area evolved beyond the concept of a borderland society.[2]

The government of the Republic of Texas organized the area around the mouth of the Brazos and San Bernard Rivers into Brazoria County in 1836. This area provided a subtropical climate where the temperature rarely dropped below freezing and rainfall exceeded fifty-four inches a year in some areas. The prairie, dominated by peach trees, huge live oaks festooned with Spanish moss, oxbow lakes and the rich alluvial soils in the river and creek bottoms provided the perfect setting for the establishment of huge sugar and cotton plantations. These plantations, with the large gangs of slaves that worked them in

turn created the Texas low country. Although other nearby areas such as Matagorda and Fort Bend Counties produced a similar culture, because of its climate, soils and large sugar plantations, Brazoria County became the epicenter of this low country.

In addition to the subtropical climate and heavily rainfall, by the late 1840s, the Texas low country shared nearly all the characteristics of the South Carolina low country and especially the Louisiana cane country. Palatial plantation houses dotted the landscape with their accompanying slave quarters and large fields of sugar and occasionally cotton. These plantation lords almost invariably came to Texas from the lower South and brought with them their large gangs of slaves. By 1852 the twenty-nine sugar plantations in Brazoria County produced more than 7,000 hogsheads of sugar per year and roughly twelve times that amount in barrels of molasses. To work these plantations the Texas sugar planters collectively employed more than twelve hundred slaves in 1850, and by the end of the decade bondsmen comprised more than seventy percent of the population of Brazoria County. The sugar planters themselves increased their slave holdings by seventy-five percent in the 1850s. The Texas planters often remained absent from their plantations, traveling to further their business interests, and left their overseers to manage their plantations. Like the cotton and rice planters of South Carolina and the sugar masters of Louisiana, these Texans often sent their children away to some of the finest colleges and universities in the country and they also continued to import and buy African slaves far into the 1830s, long after the outlawing of the international trade.

Slavery played a central role in the antebellum history of Brazoria County. Although other Texas counties contained larger total numbers of bondsmen before the Civil War, Brazoria County by 1860 had the largest concentration of slaves relative to the white population. The nature of slavery in Texas has always been the subject of debate among historians. Prior to the last two decades, historians of Texas and the Old South maintained that somehow slavery was milder or more humane in Texas than in the rest of the South. Interestingly enough the debate among historians has centered on the study of a single plantation, Peach Point, in Brazoria County. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Slavery in Brazoria County was just as harsh and unforgiving as anywhere else in the South.

One of the primary differences between slavery in South Carolina

or Louisiana and the Texas low country was the mortality rate. From existing records it appears that the mortality rate in Brazoria County remained much lower than in these other areas, only about three percent per year. Several factors probably contributed to the lower mortality rate. First Brazoria County, despite its fairly constant temperature is still vulnerable to cold fronts from the northwest or hurricanes from the Gulf of Mexico that served to occasionally kill enough of the mosquitoes to prevent widespread malaria, unlike South Carolina or Louisiana. Second, for reasons that remain obscure, Texas planters in the low country tended to build their slave quarters from brick, with mostly wooden floors instead of the more unhealthy wooden shacks with dirt floors prevalent through much of the rest of the South. However, other than the mortality rate, plantation slavery in Brazoria County had become virtually identical to that in the rest of the South by the time of the Civil War.[3]

Most of the slaves in Brazoria County lived on the large sugar plantations and as such faced a life filled with constant work and abuse. To escape this existence they resisted slavery in every way possible, from religious expression, reliance on family and constant attempts to escape. These African Americans endured forced breeding, harsh punishments for escape attempts, and year-round back-breaking labor planting and harvesting sugar, cotton and corn, as well as tending to the small plots of land often allocated to them to grow their own crops. In many instances the slave quarters were separated from the big house by a skirt of trees, allowing the slaves to build their own community largely in private, away from the prying eyes of the master and overseer. Religious tolerances on the part of the planter differed from plantation to plantation, but the evidence suggests that at least a plurality if not a majority of planters allowed their slaves to attend church on the plantation. At times the planters also employed African American slaves as overseers, and like the most of large planters in the Old South, often fathered children by their female slaves, although in one case a Brazoria planter openly kept one of his slaves as his mistress and carried on a marriage-like relationship with her. Finally, punishments for resisting slavery varied in form from whipping, more severe torture, the wearing of slave collars and even on occasion murder.

The culture and outlook of the Texas sugar planters informed nearly everything about white society in Brazoria County. The

importation of the plantation culture of the lower South into Texas began almost as soon as Anglo settlement began and although separated by just a few hundred yards stood in stark contrast to the world inhabited by their slaves. At the urging of Stephen F. Austin, James Perry and his wife Emily, Stephen's sister, moved to Brazoria and began one of the earliest cotton, later sugar plantations in Texas. In December 1832, with slaves and family in tow, James Perry moved to Brazoria and established Peach Point plantation west of the Brazos River and only seven miles from the Gulf of Mexico. By the fall of 1838, Perry employed fifteen slaves as cotton pickers in his three fields, and Perry had commenced raising sugar cane by at least 1848. In 1850, Perry added a sugar mill to his considerable holdings. In that year, Perry owned forty slaves worth fourteen thousand dollars and a sugar mill worth eight thousand dollars. In 1852, Perry produced 260 hogsheads of sugar (approximately 1,100 pounds apiece), a few bales of cotton and four thousand bushels of corn. Perry spent most of his time attending to the needs of the plantation, using wagons to haul his crops the nine miles to Aycock's store in the settlement of Brazoria. From there the crops went to Crosby's landing where slaves loaded them on steamboats for transport to New Orleans. Perry purchased the supplies for his plantation from James Reed & Company in New Orleans, and the firm of Robert and David Mills in Columbia, Texas. He also constantly tried to purchase new slaves for his enterprise. He appears to have purchased most of his bondsmen in either Houston, Galveston or in the Upper South and by 1860 he had increased his labor force to sixty-five bondsmen. There is also some evidence to suggest that Perry engaged in the African slave trade.[4]

The Perrys planted fruit trees and raised a variety of vegetables near the plantation house. Emily (Austin) Perry insisted on maintaining the culture and education of her family. She had attended "The Hermitage," a women's finishing school in New York, and her son by her first marriage Guy Bryan graduated from Kenyon College in Gambier Ohio, where his half-brother Stephen Perry also attended. The youngest son of the family, Henry Perry, graduated from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. While attending Kenyon College, Guy Bryan befriended one of his classmates, Rutherford B. Hayes, who visited Peach Point in 1849 and recorded the details of his visit. Hayes wrote in his journal: "The House was beautifully situated on the edge of the timber, looking out upon a prairie on the south, extending five

or eight miles to the Gulf, with a large and beautiful flower garden in front. Social life here afforded no end of entertainment—balls and parties rapidly followed one another, the guests riding ten, fifteen or even twenty miles, arriving in the early afternoon and remaining for nearly twenty-four hours, the great plantation house supplying room for all." Hayes also described riding to the mouth of the Bernard River to "fish and eat oysters." Peach Point was neither a large nor a small plantation by Brazoria County standards, and the lifestyle at Peach Point, however lavish, did not come close to the finery exhibited by other planters in the county.[5]

Jared Ellison Groce became the first planter to come to Texas, establishing Liendo, on the Brazos in what is now Waller County, in 1822. On December 5, 1827 Groce's daughter, Sarah Ann, married John Harris Wharton, an attorney and graduate of the University of Nashville. In 1829 William and Sarah Wharton established Eagle Island Plantation on land given to them by Jared Groce, on the Brazos River, seven miles from the Gulf of Mexico. William Wharton, and after his death in 1839 his son John Austin Wharton, established Eagle Island as one of the best sugar plantations in Brazoria County. Wharton had two sets of the machinery for his sugar mill manufactured in Philadelphia in case of breakdowns. He also had the sugar mill, slave quarters and overseer's residence constructed of brick and employed some slaves solely to hunt game for his dinner table. Later in the antebellum period the Whartons built a large frame house a story and half in height with at least fifty-five hundred square feet of floor space. They also constructed an office in the yard, and the family was known to entertain at least thirty guests at a time for weeks on end and kept a large library in the plantation house. In 1850 the Wharton's owned fifty-eight bondsmen and in 1852 the sugar mill turned out 240 hogsheads of sugar. By 1860 the family held 138 slaves and produced 185 hogsheads of sugar, 16,000 barrels of molasses, 100 pounds of wool and 150 bales of cotton.[6]

Other examples of the plantation owners of Brazoria County included Abner Jackson, who owned three plantations, the largest of which was Lake Jackson, on the banks of the lake by the same name, with a large plantation house said to have cost $25,000 and an artificial island for parties in the middle of the lake that cost $10,000 to construct. Jackson also possessed 285 bondsmen. He sent his sons to Norwich University in Vermont, and in 1853 his three plantations produced 1,157 hogsheads of sugar.

Greenville McNeel's Brazoria plantation, Ellerslie, was a palatial estate that possessed twenty-two rooms in the plantation manor alone, a house adorned with Italian marble furnishings from Paris. At the gates of Ellerslie carved oak greeted the visitors in the shapes of a heart, diamond, spade and club. One hundred and seventy-six slaves worked the plantation's brick sugar house and lived in the brick slave quarters. Gerorge W. McNeel, the son of Greenville McNeel, also attended a northern university, Rutgers. George McNeel graduated from Rutgers in 1860 and began graduate study at Princeton. At the outset of the Civil War, George returned home, only to die in battle fighting for the Confederacy in 1864.[7]

The sugar planters of Brazoria County were above all businessmen, epitomized by Robert and David Mills, who owned a large mercantile business that sold almost every type of goods imaginable to the planters from their large warehouse in Columbia. In addition to their mercantile business, the Mills owned three plantations with a combined 343 slaves that produced, at their height in 1855, 1,280 hogsheads of sugar along with 23,000 bushels of corn and 56,720 barrels of molasses.[8]

Economically, these planters fared extremely well for themselves. Even the smallest sugar plantation required a minimum of anywhere between $43,000 and $50,000 in startup money. The average bondsman, for instance, owned by the Mills' brothers was valued at $600 in 1860, but with sugar selling for $40 per hogshead in the 1850s and cotton selling for eleven cents per pound, the planters made big profits. Taking an average of seven cents per pound of granulated sugar, the production on the three plantations belonging to the Mills' brothers would have yielded $51,200 in sugar in 1860 alone. The Whartons, who grew both sugar and cotton, by the measures given above, in 1860, would have made $9,600 in sugar and $7,425 in cotton, for a total of $17,025. With the plantations producing enough corn, other vegetables, hogs and even cattle to sustain themselves, nearly all of this profit could go into maintenance, leisure and of course expanding their holdings in land and slaves.[9]

However, these profits, like all profits, were wages stolen off the backs of the workers, in this case the human chattel who occupied the sugar plantations of Brazoria County. The enslaved workers on the Brazoria County sugar plantations arrived there from a number of different places. In the beginning, the earliest planters brought their slaves with them from the lower South but as time wore on, plantation

owners either traveled themselves or sent agents to purchase bondsmen from the slave markets in Houston, Galveston, the upper South, or illegally obtained them from Africa via the Caribbean. Perhaps the most common way to obtain workers came from the slave markets in Houston and Galveston. A number of firms and auctioneers in these cities kept bondsmen constantly on hand for prospective buyers to inspect and these dealers advertised that their prices were as low as those in New Orleans. Most of these slaves appear to have been imported from Virginia and North Carolina. In 1859 Sally McNeill, the granddaughter of Levi Jordan, one of the large plantation owners in Brazoria County, wrote that her grandfather entrusted an agent named John Evans with $10,000 to purchase slaves. In September, 1860 Evans returned from North Carolina with "a dozen negroes. Grandpa will take ten or eleven...." Jordan also took a number of trips to Galveston to procure new slaves.[10]

The fact that many of the slaves living in Brazoria County came from the upper South obscured the fact that in the 1830s, up until the last cargo arrived in 1840, the large plantation owners of Brazoria smuggled in hundreds of African-born bondsmen who constituted at least half of all slaves living in the county in 1838. Leander and Sterling McNeel, Benjamin Fort Smith and James Fannin all traveled to Cuba in 1835 and brought back hundreds of Africans to their plantations in Brazoria County. In February, 1836 Monroe Edwards and his business partner Christopher Dart brought roughly 170 Africans up the Brazos River to their plantation, Chenango. Nancy Antwine, a freedwoman told an interviewer from the WPA in 1938 that her father had been captured in battle in Africa and brought to Texas via Cuba one hundred years earlier. A Freedman's Bureau worker in 1867 wrote to his superior, reporting that he had found five hundred African-born men in Brazoria County, most of them in their fifties or older. In 1913 J.P. Underwood of Brazoria County interviewed a freedman named Ned Thompson, a native African, "who remembered well the battle in which his tribe had been defeated by a rival tribe and he had been taken prisoner, only to be sold by his captors to a slave trader. He remembered the trip over, first to Cuba and then straight to the mouth of the Bernard [River.]" Ned claimed to have been twenty years old when captured in Africa and in his nineties when Underwood interviewed him. Ned Thompson was a part of what has been claimed as the last shipment of Africans to arrive in the United States, in Brazoria County, in 1840.

Cinto Lewis, a freedman who had belonged to James G. McNeel, one of the large sugar planters, told a WPA interviewer that the slaves his master had recently acquired from Africa needed watching the most due to their propensity to frequently run away. Most of the Africans remained concentrated on Chenango, in the central part of the county, the Mims plantation on the San Bernard River, and on almost all of the plantations within just a few miles of the Gulf of Mexico. This heavy concentration of Africans, found nowhere else in Texas, also clearly delineates Brazoria County as the Texas low country.[11]

Texas sugar planters also had other methods for attempting to increase their workforce. They encouraged marriages between their slaves and also practiced forced breeding. Sarah Ford, an enslaved woman who lived on the Columbus Patton plantation (what is now known as the Varner-Hogg Plantation), recalled that "they just put a man and a breedin' woman together like mules. If the woman didn't like the man it didn't make any difference, she better go or they [would] give her a whipping." Likewise, Pinkie Kelly, who lived on Greenville McNeal's plantation, recalled that one day her mother pointed out a man whom she told her was her father "because children then didn't know their pappys like children do now." Planters also encouraged marriages. On the Levi Jordan plantation Sally McNeil recorded in her diary on January 16, 1860 that there was "quite an excitement... among the Blacks, by the marriage of Jane and Bos, Saturday-night. The Bride appeared pleased and the Groom elated. How easily they are made happy in their simplicity." Likewise, on March 30, 1861 she wrote: "Tonight Sam & Irene, a girl of hardly fifteen, are to be married. This is the fourth marriage since Christmas. The ice once broken & others follow in rapid succession! Several of the lately married have already had matrimonial quarrels."[12]

The rhythm of life on these sugar plantations left little time for leisure and required constant back-breaking labor on the part of the enslaved. In addition to sugar cane, these plantations also produced corn, livestock and cotton. On top of all of this, the planters allowed the enslaved to plant and maintain small gardens to supplement their diets. Work began in January with the planting of sugar cane, weather-permitting. Coopers (mostly slaves) remained busy making barrels and could average two to three barrels per day for either the hogsheads of sugar or the molasses. Cleaning ditches, chopping wood, clearing the cane, painting the plantation buildings and a number of

other activities occupied the enslaved from "can" until "can't" see six and sometimes seven days a week. Most planters (but not all) allowed their slaves to take off Sundays, attend religious services, rest, and tend to their own gardens, but some only allowed their workers to take off until noon on Sunday. In February they planted corn and nourished it until ready for harvesting in August and September. March brought the planting of the cotton, which they tended until late August and early September when they harvested it, finished harvesting the corn, and prepared to harvest the sugar as well. From October to late December, during sugar harvesting season, no one got any time off as the slaves rushed to get the sugar cane in before the first freeze. There were exceptions to this rule. According to Sarah Ford on the Patton plantation women with small children did not have to work as hard during this time. Typically from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. they took off to care for their children, went back to work, and took off for the day at 3 p.m. Texas sugar planters operated more like neo-capitalists than farmers and ran their plantations more like factories than farms. Like factory workers, all of the slaves had a role to play as cogs in the machine. Sarah Ford recalled that her father was a tanner, her uncle a "sugar man," (meaning he worked the kettles in the sugar mill) and another relative a shoemaker. During the harvest season, even after nightfall when the work for the day was officially "done," Pinkie Kelly recalled that on Greenville McNeel's plantation all of the slaves, even the children, had to shell a bushel of corn before they slept and that they were so tired they did not have time for anything else.[13]

Life in the slave quarters reflected the realities of life for African Americans in Brazoria County. Although the slaves on the plantations generally seemed to have been well-fed, and the annual mortality rate only approached three percent, one former slave who lived on the Patton Plantation pointed out that even if your stomach was full and you had good clothes, "dat bullwhip on your bare hide make you forgit the good part...." The probable explanation for the low mortality rate lay in the fact that almost all of the planters in Brazoria County had brick slave quarters constructed with wood floors; a far more healthy environment than found in the Louisiana cane country or the South Carolina low country. In addition, the same weather elements (hurricanes and the occasional freeze) that prevented the Texas sugar country from ever becoming as well-developed as the Louisiana cane country also cut down on the mortality rate because this occasional cold weather served to kill off bacteria and protozoa that induced

increased death among other slave populations.[14]

Despite the relatively low mortality rate, illness still remained a problem. Cholera was the most common complaint, although measles, influenza and worms also ran rampant among the enslaved. One former bondswoman reported that if you got really sick they would call the doctor, but for minor ailments a fellow African American woman would tend to you with tea made from local vines. On the Greenville McNeel plantation a woman named "Aunt Becky" tended to the fellow slaves in a building they called the hospital with chamomile tea or turpentine, depending on the ailment. At least one doctor advised John Adriance, one of the planters, to treat cholera among his slaves with "congiac brandy, good cayenne pepper and mustard." Whether or not this cure worked remains unknown.[15]

Religion also played a role in the life of the enslaved on these plantations. Religious practices differed from plantation to plantation, but it appears that a majority of slave owners allowed their slaves to practice Christianity. Several planters even constructed permanent churches on their plantations. John Adriance constructed Ethiopia Baptist Church on his plantation, Waldeck, where white ministers preached to a crowd of both whites and slaves, often encouraging the latter to do their Christian duty and remain faithful to their masters. On the Patton plantation they held church services in an arbor, and even allowed a slave of advanced age named Lew to preach. Sarah Ford recalled that one Sunday Lew made the mistake of stating that the Lord had made both whites and blacks equal to each other. Enraged, Charles Patton ordered his overseer Jake to put Lew to work in the fields the next day. Church was not allowed on the McNeel plantation, but occasionally the slaves stole off into the woods to have a worship service anyway, at great peril to their well-being.[16]

The slaves in Brazoria County fought back against slavery in every way possible, although the most common ways seem to have been running away or working slowly. For both of these offenses they often received severe treatment, primarily from the overseers, some of whom were fellow slaves. All of the eyewitnesses to slavery in Brazoria County recorded running away as a common occurrence, usually as a result of severe whippings on the part of the masters and overseers. Other punishments for running away included being chained up for days after being caught, sometimes in the slave quarter themselves, or somewhere else on the plantation. Sally McNeil recalled that on February 17, 1859 a fire broke out in one of the slave cabins belonging

to Jacob, and that "Calvin rescued old Lydia who was chained to the chimney." Some slaves ran away so often they were fitted for metal collars with high spikes attached to make it more difficult for them to maneuver through the underbrush and under low-hanging branches. One such man named Lew had the collar permanently put on him so that the others began calling the contraption "Lew's horns." When an enslaved individual did run away, packs of dogs pursued them, including one pack that belonged to an African American man named Kelly. Most slave catchers, though, were white, and some, such as F.M. Snead listed their occupation on the 1860 census as "Negro catcher." Sally McNeill reported that her grandfather often gave the best horses and saddles to those men chasing the runaways and on one occasion described the use of hounds to track down a man named "Mose." "The hounds caught 'Mose the runaway' she reported on October 12, 1861, "who was fettered with a stiff-leg of iron, so that he could neither outrun the dogs or climb out of the way, consequently was bitten in several places....he is idle at work & runs to escape it and the lash. And is treated with severity when he is caught, besides being half-starving in the woods. Our negroes are treated well in general, much better than those of the surrounding Plantations they say themselves, yet discipline must be maintained. The tears rose indignantly to my eyes, when 'Mose' was led up that evening ragged and bleeding. I could say or do nothing, for he brought the pain & trouble on himself. Words of abuse & ridicule only were given him. Mr. S.[nead] highly elated at 'catching' him....I learned the next day that he was severely whipped to make him tell the truth...--moaning and confined in the stocks without food or water."[17]

In addition to whipping, other punishments for running away on the Columbus Patton plantation were extremely harsh. Patton appointed "Jake," a slave of apparently large stature, as his overseer, and Jake appeared to take a particularly sadistic pride in his work. Sarah Ford recalled that her father, a tanner, ran away often, and once, when he returned to the plantation after some time, Jake staked his hands and feet to the ground, rendering him immobile. At that time he brought out a piece of iron that looked like a block of wood with holes in it which he filled with grease and place in the fire. When the fire had heated the grease to the boiling point, he dripped the grease slowly on the back of the man staked to the ground. After that he whipped him up and down and placed him in the stock house, chained up with nothing

to eat for several days. The occurrence of this event and others like it is confirmed by the testimony of at least two other slaves who lived on the Patton plantation. Punishments like these lowered the morale of the enslaved on all of the plantations and made running away an even more frequent occurrence.

Fears of slave rebellion and insurrection also stalked the white residents of Brazoria County. On August 14, 1860, in the midst of the report of the Texas Troubles, Sally McNeill related in her diary that the wife of one of the planters allowed nightfall to come as she traveled home in a carriage with her four small children and African American driver. She got spooked because of the reports of slave rebellion, sent her servant to a nearby house for help, and hid herself in the woods, although it turned out to be a false alarm. Thinking of the impending Civil War in November, 1860, McNeill also wrote "Our worst foes are in our midst. Negro insurrections will be constant and bloody, under the guidance of the abolitionists." No major rebellion ever developed in Brazoria County, but the fear and constant threat of it often kept the white residents of the county afraid, very much like the South Carolina low country and the Louisiana cane country.[18]

Although the relationship and attitudes between plantation owners and the enslaved were mostly antagonistic, at least one relationship scandalized the county and shed an interesting light on the often complicated relations between masters and slaves. Columbus Patton, the owner of a large plantation, remained single throughout the antebellum period, but he did take for himself a consort from among his slaves known as Rachel. Although not legally married Columbus and Rachel certainly carried on like a married couple. From all accounts Rachel accompanied Columbus to church on Sundays, sat with him on a pew for whites only, lived in the plantation house with him, and gave orders to the other slaves on the plantation. She also held accounts in all of the local stores in Columbia and apparently functioned in every way as the wife of Columbus Patton. Charles Grimm, Columbus Patton's one-time overseer, testified that:

> "The Negro woman Rachel occupied the position of a white woman as much as any I ever knew....I should say she was the mistress of the plantation. I never saw her do anything more than pour out coffee and wait on the table...I thought they lived more like

> man and wife and that she had more control over him than I ever saw a lady have over her husband or as much so."[19]

Similarly, Isaac Tinsley, a white resident of Brazoria County, recalled, regarding Columbus Patton and Rachel that:

> "We had a slight misunderstanding which lasted for about three months...This Negro Rachel was in the habit of attending church and upon one occasion she took her seat with the ladies near my family. She had done so several times before, but upon this occasion took up more room than usual. It was in the Methodist church at East Columbia & I spoke to Mr. Duncan (the pastor). I asked him to speak to her and let her know which seats was intended for slaves. I understood from Mr. Duncan that he had spoken to her on the subject & after that Mr. Patton & I were not friendly...."[20]

Anthony Christopher, one of the enslaved on the Patton plantation, recalled that Rachel was his sister, and that because of this he and his parents often escaped the punishments and work regimens prescribed to other slaves. Needless to say Patton's relatives and neighbors looked down on this pseudo-marital arrangement, although he was not ostracized from the community.

In 1853, due to an apparent tumor of the brain that was first treated in 1851, Columbus went insane and his family placed him in an asylum in South Carolina. On September 29, 1856 Patton died of typhoid dysentery, and long drawn-out litigation over his estate began. In his will dated July 1, 1853, Patton stipulated, among other things, that four of his slaves including Jacob Steel (Jake, the overseer mentioned above), Solomon, Rachel and Maria should "remain the property of my estate and let them live with whom they wish without hire and one hundred dollars per year given to each of the women out of my estate so long as they live." He also instructed that $5,000 should go to Henry Patton, who was apparently his son from his union with Rachel.[21]

Patton's family attempted to have his will overturned, citing his insanity and the idea that his relationship with Rachel sprang out

of that insanity. His brother Charles Patton took over running the plantation, and to the delight of the other slaves, put "Miss Rachel," as they called her, to work in the fields. Ultimately in 1858 the family agreed to uphold Patton's will after a protracted legal battle and it appears that at least Rachel received her pension of $100 per year and was allowed to live with a family on the plantation. Rachel stayed at or near the Patton plantation until 1860 when she relocated to Cincinnati, Ohio. She remained in Ohio during the Civil War, but moved back to Brazoria County in 1867 and on the 1880 census listed herself as "Rachel Patton," a widower, sixty years of age. The story of Rachel and Columbus Patton, although somewhat unusual in most of the slaveholding south, was not all that uncommon, particularly on large plantations in South Carolina, Louisiana, or Texas.[22]

The culture that developed in Brazoria County between 1840 and 1860 shared most of the characteristics of the Louisiana cane country or the more famous low country of South Carolina. Three elements prevented the Texas low country from spreading much beyond Brazoria County or from developing as fully as in South Carolina or Louisiana. First, time militated against the further development of the Texas low country. With only twenty years before the Civil War simply not enough time passed to allow Texas to develop a low country as widespread as South Carolina. Secondly, the climate also played a role with only Brazoria County possessing the environmental elements necessary to sustain large sugar plantations and the culture that accompanied them. Finally, the last remnants of a borderlands culture also prevented the Texas low country from expanding much beyond the boundaries of Brazoria County. German immigrants, some of whom opposed slavery, large numbers of slaves who had come directly from Africa and Mexican law and customs all combined to provide a unique culture on the lower Brazos River, although, compared to the neighborhoods to the north and west, Brazoria County contained the fewest hallmarks of such a borderlands society. The most prominent characteristic of Brazoria County by 1860 remained the county's striking resemblance to other areas of the lower South. Anglo settlement in the county, which began just forty years prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, had rapidly transformed what was once a borderlands society into what can be fairly characterized as the Texas low country.

ENDNOTES

1 Randolph B. Campbell Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 104; Stephen F. Austin to Wiley Martin May 30, 1833 in Eugene C. Barker (ed.) The Austin Papers Vol. 2, (Washington: The Government Printing Office, 1928), 981; Gregg Cantrell Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 240.

2 For the argument that the lower Brazos region constituted a borderland see Sean M. Kelly Los Brazos de Dios: A Plantation Society in the Texas Borderlands 1821-1865(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010). For the position that Brazoria County fit squarely within the context of the lower South see Randolph B. Campbell An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas 1821-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989) Under the argument presented by Kelly the Louisiana cane country could be counted as a borderland society with its strong Spanish colonial, French creole, African and Caribbean influences, as could the South Carolina low country with its heavy Caribbean, African and American Indian influences. These areas of the lower South more closely resembled the Caribbean than they did the rest of the United States.

3 On the mortality rate in Brazoria County see Schedule 4 of the 1850 United States Census, Mortality Rates for Brazoria County Texas. For those in Louisiana, see Richard Follett Sugar Masters: Planters and Slaves in Louisiana's Cane World 1820-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005) 74. Abigail Curlee fired the first shots in the historiographical debate over slavery in Brazoria County and on Texas plantations in general in her article "The History of a Texas Slave Plantation 1831-1863." Curlee claimed that James and Emily Perry went above and beyond to treat their slaves fairly. In her doctoral dissertation "A Study of Texas Slave Plantations 1822-1865," Curlee repeated her allegations, using Peach Point as the center of her argument, and went so far as to characterize the Perry's slaves as "the free slaves of Peach Point." In his seminal work A History of the Old South, Clement Eaton picked up and repeated Curlee's allegations. Even though Randolph B. Campbell in his An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas 1821-1865 successfully refuted the idea that slavery was somehow milder in Texas, as late as 2009 Light Townsend Cummins in his Emily Austin of Texas 1795-1851 repeats the arguments of Curlee and Eaton regarding Peach Point. Abigail Curlee, "The History of a Texas Slave Plantation 1831-1863," The Southwestern Historical Quarterly Vol. 26 No. 2 (October, 1922) 79-127; Abigail Curlee, "A Study of Texas Slave Plantations, 1833-1865," (doctoral dissertation the University of Texas at Austin 1932) 65; Clement Eaton, A History of the Old South (New York: Macmillan Company, 1975)

253; Randolph B. Campbell An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas 1821-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989) 257; Light Townsend Cummins Emily Austin of Texas 1795-1851 (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2009) 163.

4 Curlee, "The History of a Texas Slave Plantation," 92-113; ad valorem tax rolls, Brazoria County, Texas, 1852, 1860.

5 Hayes as quoted in Curlee "The History of a Texas Slave Plantation," 113-14.

6 Abner J. Strobel The Plantations and their owners of Brazoria County, Texas, (Lake Jackson Historical Association: 1930), 48-52; ad valorem tax rolls, Brazoria County Texas, 1852, 1860.

7 George W. McNeel enlisted in Company B, Terry's Texas Rangers (later 8th Texas Cavalry) on September 7, 1861 in Houston, and was elected first lieutenant of his company. Subsequently he transferred to the staff of Brigadier General Thomas Hindman. On January 8, 1863 McNeel resigned his post and joined the staff of Brigadier General John A. Wharton, his neighbor from Brazoria County. By early 1864 McNeel had obtained the rank of major and Adjutant Inspector General on the staff of Brigadier General Hamilton P. Bee. He was Bee's Aide de Camp but temporarily serving on the staff of Major General John A. Wharton again as Acting Assistant Adjutant General when he was killed on May 7, 1864 while reconnoitering the lines of the Union 13th Corps on Middle Bayou near Alexandria, Louisiana. Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from Texas. National Archives Publication M323, Microfilm Roll 0051; Robert N. Scott (ed.) The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891) Series I, Vol. 34, pt. 1, 277.

8 Abner J. Strobel The Plantations and their owners of Brazoria County, Texas, (Lake Jackson Historical Association: 1930), 54-56; ad valorem tax rolls, Brazoria County Texas, 1853, 1860. The Smithsonian Magazine Final Farewells: Singing a Yearbook on the Eve of the Civil War, Fall, 2010, is devoted to the signatures and messages in George W. McNeel's 1860 Rutgers yearbook.

9 James A. Creighton A Narrative History of Brazoria County (Angleton, Tex.: Brazoria County Historical Society, 1975), 207. On February 9, 1860 Sally McNeil, the granddaughter of Levi Jordan, one of the large plantation owners in Brazoria County, recounted that a man came to her grandfather asking for a loan of $5,000, but that her grandfather refused, as he intended to use all his means "to purchase negroes." In April, 1860 she

recorded in her diary "Grandpa is taking in so much land! Intends to buy more (land) & negroes also." Ginny Raska and Mary Hill (eds.) The Uncompromising Diary of Sally McNeill 1858-1867 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 54, 100.

10 Curlee, "A Study of Texas Slave Plantations," 52-56; Raska and Hill (eds.) The Uncompromising Diary of Sally McNeill, 45, 100. Sally McNeill was another product of opulent lifestyle afforded her family; she attended and graduated from Baylor University before returning to her grandfather's plantation.

11 Sean Kelly "Blackbirders and Bozales: African-Born Slaves on the Lower Brazos River of Texas in the Nineteenth Century," Civil War History, Vol. LIV, No. 4, 2008: 406-423; scrapbook of J.P. Underwood, Brazoria County Historical Society Archives, Angleton, Texas; Creighton, A Narrative History of Brazoria County, 171; Cinto Lewis interview in Benjamin A. Botkin (ed.) Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves (Washington, D.C., 1941), Vol. XVI, pt. 3, 1-3. The presence of these bondsmen, imported directly from Africa, has been used as proof that this area represented a borderlands society, but this type of illicit trade took place in Louisiana and South Carolina in earlier decades. The presence of these Africans served to further tie the culture of Brazoria County to that of the Louisiana cane country or the South Carolina low country. For the idea these slaves created a borderland society see Sean Kelly Los Brazos de Dios, 3.

12 Sarah Ford interview in Benjamin A. Botkin (ed.) Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves (Washington, D.C., 1941) Vol. XVI pt. 2 pp. 41-46; Pinkie Kelly interview in Benjamin A. Botkin (ed.) Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves (Washington, D.C., 1941), Vol. XVI pt. 2, 253-254; Raska and Hill TheUncompromising Diary of Sally McNeil, 50, 100.

13 Few, Sugar, Planters, Slaves and Convicts, 181-188; Sarah Ford interview "Slave Narratives"; Pinkie Kelly interview "Slave Narratives."

14 Sarah Ford interview "Slave Narratives."

15 1850 U.S. Census mortality schedule Brazoria County Texas; Sarah Ford interview "Slave Narratives"; Kelly Pinkie interview, "Slave Narratives"; E.D. Nash to John Adriance dated "Columbia July 21, 1850." Adriance Papers Box 2A127 Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, The University of Texas at Austin.

16 Creighton, Narrative History of Brazoria County, 190; Sarah Ford interview "Slave Narratives"; Cinto Lewis interview in "Slave Narratives."

17 Raska and Hill The Uncompromising Diary of Sally McNeill, 42, 110-111; The 1860 Census for Brazoria County, Texas; Levi Jordan plantation archives; Sarah Ford interview "Slave Narratives." A man named J. Portice placed an advertisement in the Brazoria Texas Planter, the local newspaper for the county, for a "pack of negro dogs," and advertised his rate as $25 or $5 a day. Brazoria Texas Planter February 1, 1854.

18 Raska and Hill The Uncompromising Diary of Sally McNeill, 82-83, 89.

19 Testimony of Charles Grimm, Brazoria County Probate Records, Case #453, File 2, 1857 (Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Angleton, Texas).

20 Testimony of Isaac Tinsley, Brazoria County Probate Records, Case #453, File 2, 1857 (Brazoria County Clerk's Office, Angleton, Texas).

21 Anthony Christopher interview in George P. Rawick (ed.) The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography: Supplement (Greenwood Press, Westport CT, 1979), Series 2, Vol. 3 pt. 2 pp. 719; Case #690, Probate Records of Brazoria County; Case #453 Probate Records of Brazoria County; Will of Columbus Patton, dated "July 1, 1853," Brazoria County Clerk's office, Angleton, Texas; "Varner Historical Narrative," Varner-Hogg Plantation Archives, Brazoria County, Texas.

22 Case #690, Probate Records of Brazoria County; Case #453 Probate Records of Brazoria County; Will of Columbus Patton, dated "July 1, 1853," Brazoria County Clerk's office, Angleton, Texas; "Varner Historical Narrative," Varner-Hogg Plantation Archives, Brazoria County, Texas; 1880 U.S. Census, Brazoria County Texas.

"Well, Bless Your Heart!": Rhetoric and Power in Dallas Women During the Progressive Era

By Emily Clark and Patricia Gower

"A good club woman...is a woman imbued with a noble purpose of exalting humanity, beautifying and making happier her home, of becoming a comrade and coadjutor to her husband and a guardian angel to her children."

As the nineteenth century came to a close, middle-class anxieties surrounding the growth and disorder of cities continued to grow stronger. Many of the ills evident in urban life became the focus of both religious and secular organizations. Poverty, prostitution, illiteracy, epidemics, and urban corruption all emerged as targets for reformers of many persuasions. Particularly in the South, religious rhetoric still resonated strongly in most communities and could be employed to motivate philanthropic endeavors. In an effort to gain the support of the religious community, reforming organizations often couched their rhetoric in terms of moral uplift and rejuvenation of the urban life, including women's clubs and female journalists. Writing under the name "Grace Greenwood," Sara Clarke Lippencott commented in the *New York Times*:

I have been sharply rebuked by my brothers, as an indiscreet sister- "speaking out in meeting," and revealing the secrets of the vestry, the deacons, the elders, and holy men generally. I have been roughly reminded that I was a woman, and told that I ought to be sternly remanded by public opinion to women's proper sphere, where the eternal unbaked pudding and the immemorial unattached shirt-button await my attention.[1][2]

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Lippincott used the religious and gendered rhetoric imposed upon women after the Civil War to underscore the gap between women's and men's participation in public life.[3]

Lippincott's acerbic description of the censoring of women activists demonstrates the early and common argument that women, the "angels of the house," logically needed to be involved in the "housekeeping" of society. The middle-class drives to dominate municipal politics, the extension of public services, debates over public ownership or regulation of utilities, and campaigns to improve the appearance of cities were all characterized as struggles against moral decay as well as corruption and vice.[4]

After the end of the Civil War, women slowly began to participate in public affairs, albeit in circumscribed and limited ways. Through increasing reliance on shopping as opposed to home production, women became constant and largely autonomous figures in the urban landscape. With the introduction of the department store and access to leisure time, middle-class women increasingly functioned as the main consumers and purchasers of goods for the home. While these women maintained all of the desirable traits of a "true woman," they also embraced social and economic changes which allowed them to move beyond the home, although in restricted circumstances. This increased presence in downtown areas acquainted many more women with the emerging problems of public spaces and encouraged them to enter the campaign for urban reforms.[5]

In addition to accessibility of public areas, education became more available to women after the Civil War. This education was usually tightly controlled and often simply aimed at producing potential mates for male students. One advocate of women's education announced that college education would produce models of "intelligent motherhood and properly subservient wifehood."[6] Education available to women often simply attempted to promulgate and reinforce the tenets of "True American Womanhood" that stressed home and child-raising as the proper spheres for women. In this framework, it was believed that women only sought education in order to establish successful families and raise a new virtuous generation. However, despite efforts to control women's access, women did achieve higher education in growing numbers. With this often came both increased awareness of problems and the increased desire to actively pursue reform. This shift began women's attempts to either rebel against or manipulate rhetoric

used to limit their involvement to the private sphere of the home.[7]

By the 1890s, many more middle-class women became adept at manipulating this Cult of True Womanhood and the moral aspects of reform in order to enlarge their sphere of activities. They sought acceptable vehicles of public participation that would both defuse male resistance and sidestep societal prohibitions. One of the problems of women asserting their increased presence in the public world was the idea that respectable women functioning in the public space might be equated with prostitutes. Therefore, one acceptable avenue that offered acceptable public activity for women was social work. As a way of claiming their right to an increased place in public life, often from within the framework of church activities, women stressed the roles of ministering to the poor and other unfortunates. For example, as early as 1878, Methodist women in Texas began forming societies to support missionary activities as well as clubs for women.[8]

For many women, the road to social activism or participation began during their college education. College education, in its gender specific nature, often created a new sense of identification with other women and a new sense of feminine consciousness. This new consciousness helped middle-class women to identify problems specific to women even of different classes. Problems of child raising, alcoholism, proper nutrition, and brutal working conditions in the lives of poor women and children became increasingly recognized. As higher education became more acceptable, advanced degrees opened to women in growing numbers and more women sought employment after college. Most women found that using their new education was difficult and very limited. Many times, jobs in the teaching field were readily available with no requirements even for a bachelor's degree. As a result, many of the first generation of college-educated women sought new ways to become involved and maintain contact with each other. Social work emerged as an approved avenue for employment or voluntary activity, often sanctioned by churches. By incorporating ideals of womanhood as preservers of society's virtue and Christian tradition, women attempted to find new areas in which to use their education and talents.[9]

Middle-class women who did not go to college sought other ways to overcome isolation, improve their education and enter into a safe public space. Clubs, both literary and social, provided women with chances to speak in public while still struggling to retain their

traditional roles. Many of these women did not want to violate cultural norms or admit that their activism reflected real change. Women's clubs proved to be places where a broad range of women could participate at their comfort level. In 1868, Jane Croly organized the Sorosis Club, the first club expressly for women and also became to first historian of the club movement. In her history, she wrote clubs provided a source of companionship, education, literary study and reform activities despite male resistance.[0]

Women's clubs took several forms. Early on, many devoted themselves exclusively to serious literary endeavors with assigned reading and reports. Others concentrated on the study of history or specific authors. Often the reports and research papers became the first attempt of the frequently terrified women to speak in public. These forums became training arenas for middle-class women to address an audience in a way that was sheltered. In addition, speaking in front of other women did not usually directly threaten male prerogatives and thus often avoided the intense antagonism aroused by more public speeches.[1]

Women in clubs often possessed little or no knowledge of the process of organization. Even missionary societies in churches were usually administered by men. In order to shape their new association, many clubs turned to the speech "How Can Women Best Associate?" by Julia Ward Howe and used it as a guidebook for organization. Some newspapers printed sample constitutions to provide a guide for women to work with. Like Jane Croly, most women were determined that the clubs should operate completely free from the influence, disapproval or manipulation of men. Therefore, the clubs copied each other and exchanged information on constitutions and procedure. Most clubs worked under well-developed constitutions and parliamentary procedure. In this way, the women in their clubs announced their serious intentions and protected themselves from accusations of frivolousness.[2]

Most clubs did not devote themselves exclusively to study for very long. Membership of clubs was drawn from predominantly middle-class, prosperous and conservative women of the commercial and social elite. Many believed that their access to "leisure came with responsibility."[3] Many of these white, mainstream Protestant women felt deeply that their positions in society as the wives of prominent businessmen and politicians carried obligations to serve the

community. However, these women generally remained uninterested in any kind of professional career and treasured their amateur status. Despite this, women's clubs became increasingly important in civic affairs in the 1890s.[4]

Several forces led women to concentrate on reform and social activism as opposed to literary study. As more women gained college educations, clubs for women could cease serving as surrogate alma maters and study became less central. In addition, clubs gained greater acceptance in male circles as middle-class men increasingly exploited the benefits of associations in order to carry out reforms. The shift to service also served to defuse criticism that some clubs occasionally encountered. Clubs founded as literary enterprises seemed to some to be selfish and self-absorbed enterprises for women and threatening to the sanctity of the home, although purely social clubs for men faced no such criticism. However, undertaking tasks of "municipal housekeeping" justified women's organizations to many critical of women taking time from homemaking for study or companionship. In fact, organizers of literary or study clubs often justified literary study by illustrating that reform was nourished by study and reflection. These kinds of rationalizations proved especially important in the South where resistance to public roles for women remained strongly entrenched for some time after gaining some acceptance in other areas.[5]

By the 1890s, Texas remained in many ways a southern frontier state. Women's clubs came later to the state than to more settled areas but soon flourished in both cities and small towns. There were a few early clubs such as Dallas's Pearl Street Reading Club, which was established by 1880, but the majority originated later. These usually copied the organization and focus of clubs from areas that had older and better established club traditions. Literary clubs served as the primary vehicles to introduce clubdom to Texans and like their sister organizations in other states, they strove for serious study and attention to parliamentary administration.[6]

Although Texas women came late to the club system, they began to shift to philanthropic and reforming efforts more quickly than those clubs in the Northeast. Once they began to claim their right to "municipal housekeeping," women throughout the United States stressed issues that fit into this category. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, which had already emerged as the earliest female

organization to gain widespread acceptance in the South, was the first group to move past their initial focus into other reforms. By 1890, the WCTU attacked many social problems from the eight hour work day for women to woman's suffrage. However, as women's clubs became more socially active, these organizations usually focused on issues that had more immediate impact on the lives of their cities. One of the earliest concerns became the building and equipping of public libraries. These institutions fit easily with the ideal of nurturing learning within literary clubs and with the image of women as Bearers of Culture. Many women's clubs began the drive to take advantage of the offer of Andrew Carnegie to endow libraries in cities and towns that proved willing to help raise the money to build and maintain a public library.[7]

The involvement of women in civic and political life required that they find indirect ways of entering the predominantly male conversation. This was accomplished by first manipulating existing gender rhetoric and ideology which restricted women to polite discussions about domestic concerns. However, as they gained a foothold in public housekeeping their reliance on feminine rhetoric lessened and they instead depended upon the power of their size.[8]

As clubs began to face the challenge of reforms, women realized that individual clubs usually failed to muster the needed support, both physically and financially. Women like Jane Croly recognized the need for larger organizations that could function nationwide in order to operate more efficiently. In 1890, Croly formed the General Federation of Women's Clubs as a national association to help women's clubs confront the problems of society. Federated association could avoid overlap and duplication and provide greater collective effort. Croly studied and used techniques polished by the WCTU to organize women into a powerful tool for reform.[9] However, women were still conscious of the ways in which they navigated the "public" world: "in 1894, at its second meeting the Women's Congress changed its name to 'The State Council of Women of Texas.' The word 'congress' was 'too political,' they decided and they defined ambitious, if somewhat vague, purposes."[0]

State and local federations followed the establishment of the GFWC and copied its organization in order to streamline the reforming initiatives of the clubs. These associations formed a vast network that quickly spread news and helped form tightly knit and well coordinated efforts. The Texas Federation appeared in 1897 and by 1898 had set as

a primary goal the building of public libraries in Texas. Texas women had clearly claimed their rights to activism on behalf of municipal improvement.[1]

In Dallas, 1898 proved to be an important year for women. Dallas became one of the first Texas cities to form a citywide federation of women's clubs. Dallas already had a vibrant club population and women had previously recognized the need for a public library. Under the leadership of the Dallas Shakespeare Club President May (Mrs. Henry) Exall, women from clubs such as the Pierian Club and Oak Cliff's Quatro Club agreed to pool their resources and work together to gain a library. These energetic women proved to be as determined in their pursuit of a goal as their husbands in business or politics. They decided to push the city into supporting their goal of a public library by raising the initial money and contacting Andrew Carnegie about their desire for a grant.[2]

The Federation formed the Dallas Public Library Association to carry out the library campaign. Their goal was to quickly raise $12,000 to prove their determination and dedication to the project to Carnegie and also pressure the city to donate a site and pledge yearly maintenance. The *Dallas Morning News*, particularly on its woman's page, aided in their campaign. George Dealey began showing his commitment to civic improvement by throwing his weight behind the library drive. The clubwomen quickly raised $10,000 in only two months. Impressed by their organization and accomplishments, Mayor John Traylor made the library a central issue of his Annual Report in 1899.[3]

The Commercial Club weighed in on the side of the women by announcing their admiration for their success in raising funds and by calling on the city to support the clubwomen's efforts. After the city agreed to donate a site and pledged $4,000 a year for maintenance, Andrew Carnegie offered Dallas $50,000 towards the construction of the library. Mayor Traylor quickly accepted and on October 30, 1901, the Carnegie Library opened with 10,000 volumes. Prominent women appeared regularly before the city council to report on acquisitions. In addition, at least two women were regularly appointed to the library's board of directors.[4]

Before the library even opened, women had become involved in other initiatives to improve the city. In the financial recovery of the late 1890s, boostering increased in Dallas and the drive for greater growth accelerated. Businessmen began to recognize in the women of Dallas

natural allies in their struggle to improve the image of their city. In the successful 1903 Oak Cliff annexation drive, efforts were made to allay the fears of Oak Cliff women about the local option even though women could not vote in the election.[5]

In 1899, businessmen began a drive to make Dallas a more attractive place to live and work. Articles appeared in the *Morning News* highlighting the dirty condition of the city's streets and fouling of the Trinity River with "dead pigs floating and negroes fishing."[6] Hoping to set a good example, the *DMN* placed waste cans outside their building. By May, the drive had gone beyond simple exhortation and example-setting. George Dealey and other businessmen established the Cleaner Dallas League with vice presidents in every ward to oversee cleaning of the streets and sidewalks. The influence of women and their interest in city affairs was recognized early when women were invited to join Cleaner Dallas and Dealey and the other organizers called for a woman vice president in each ward in addition to the male representative.[7]

Women became involved in other drives to make Dallas more livable and attractive. Their clubs bombarded city council with suggestions for ordinances to improve behavior of men in the name of sanitation and health. In 1902, a petition was submitted requesting an anti-expectoration ordinance. However, on September 24, when the council considered the ordinance, an amendment was attached that prevented the anti-spitting regulations from applying to public buildings if no cuspidors were provided. In 1908 and again in 1910, the Dallas Federation submitted another petition calling for an ordinance to prohibit chickens and ducks from running loose in Dallas streets[8]

The Texas Federation and the Dallas Federation also took up the issue of trying children in adult courts. The incident that galvanized them was the jailing of two youngsters for the theft of some thread. Working through male organizations such as the Texas Association of County Judges and Commissioners and the city council, the federation gathered information on new types of juvenile courts and detention homes. Their efforts finally came to fruition in 1907 when Texas established separate legal procedures for minors. The Dallas women also saw to the hiring of a juvenile probation officer by paying the salary for one until the city agreed to take over the appropriations.[9]

In 1906, the clubwomen pushed for improvements in the food and milk supply of Dallas and all of Texas. In the first pure food and drug act in the state, they succeeded in forcing the creation of a City Board

of Health. Instrumental in this effort was the Dallas Forum, a new organization formed by the Federation and dedicated to pushing for changes to problems that fell under the aegis of women's concerns. On April 11, 1908, the women pushed the new commission to create a new office of City Chemist to help enforce pure food and drug ordinances. In 1907, with the Texas Federation the Dallas women called for the establishment of a state-wide Pure Food and Drug Bill recommending that a woman serve as Deputy Food Inspector.[0]

In March 1910, the DFWC came before the council again to present a petition to establish regulations and restrictions on motion pictures. Like women in other localities, the women in Dallas believed that movies were too suggestive. In February 1911, the council responded to this pressure and unanimously voted to create a board of Censors. They continued to hear reports from the Board for many years about the efforts to maintain the moral rectitude of Dallas citizens.[1]

Women in Dallas also dedicated themselves to securing the services of a matron for the supervision of white female prisoners. The pressure for a police matron actually began in 1899 under the WCTU. In 1906, when the city council refused to hire a police matron, the Federation hired a matron and paid her salary until the city council agreed to take over the payments. They also hired a juvenile officer and paid the salary until the council admitted the usefulness of the position. They raised the money for these initiatives from the sales on Tag Day when women sold tags on downtown streets. The tags read "I have been tagged for the children of Dallas" and were bought by businessmen. On this first Tag Day, the women of Dallas raised $4,121.35 for neglected and delinquent children and received full page coverage in the *Morning News*. In addition to Tag Days, the clubwomen developed other "feminine" tactics or venues like receptions and teas in order to raise funds and solicit support when they could not lobby or recruit using traditional methods reserved for men.[2]

Another issue of civic betterment that absorbed the energies of the Federation was the establishment of city parks with playgrounds and well-maintained and supervised equipment for the city's children. A long campaign began in 1908 to convince the city council to build city parks. The Forum had previously been involved in the pure food and drug effort and the juvenile court issue and now it worked to convince the city to hire a park superintendent as well as to improve school playgrounds and city parks. In 1909, with the proceeds of a Tag

Day, the women bought equipment for schools and purchases and equipped a city park. They met emphatic rejection by the council to their demand for a paid superintendent until they employed the by-now-familiar strategy of hiring and paying the salary of a supervisor. They paid the salary of the supervisor until the city agreed to pick up the tab.[3]

With increasing confidence in their abilities and in their right to supervise matters relating to children, the Dallas Federation allied with another strong group, the Dallas Congress of Mothers, to announce another initiative. With this effort they took at step that, while not unprecedented, pushed them farther onto the public stage than before. One of the areas claimed by women by virtue of their roles as mother and nuturer was supervision of children. In their eyes, this naturally involved supervision of children who were not simply juveniles in trouble or neglected children. Now, some women demanded a role in overseeing their children and their education.[4]

In 1908, they proclaimed the need for women to serve on local school boards. In the eyes of many women around the country, the solution to the problems of public schools lay in the election of women. Pauline Periwinkle, the *Morning News* women's columnist, wrote that women had more time than busy men to give to education. Schools suffered from lack of attention to safety and poor, unsuitable equipment and women stood ready to push for needed improvements. Periwinkle's argument concerning education extended to many of the issues spearheaded by the clubs. Elizabeth York Enstam chronicles the response by Sarah Elizabeth Weaver to complaints in the *DMN* by again suggesting that women possessed more time than men. However, Enstam also points out that "however circumspect [Weaver's] phrasing, the fact remained that women's solutions to social problems challenged the policies, political decisions, and concepts of government established by men."[5] The apparent gap between the women's rhetoric and the results of their activism widened as their involvement and Periwinkle's agency increased, causing tension between the clubs and male politicians. After several articles and columns setting the stage by illustrating the positive aspects of women in public, Pauline Periwinkle announced that two women would run for the chance to sit on the Dallas City School Board in the next city election. Adella Turner, the wife of a prominent Dallas businessman, and Mrs. P. P. Tucker ran for two places on the school board.[6]

They faced the resistance of several men including the president of the school board. At the Jewish American Constitution Club, Victor J. Hexter, the president of the school board made a speech in which he dismissed the women's efforts at election. He did not take the approach of decrying women leaving the home for politics but instead, he stated that he did not want voters to be fooled. He did not believe that the race by the two women should be taken seriously because they had no chance or real reason to be running. However, other businessmen jumped in quickly to support the candidacy of the women. In its traditional manner of raising support, the *Morning News* carried many letters and columns with the announcements promoting the service of women on school boards. One article stated many believed that putting women in politics would lower the "standards of womanhood" and that women should maintain their purity by staying in the home and out of politics. Other articles then appeared illustrating that many businessmen believed that women could provide valuable service in support of children. Prominent businessmen lined up behind the paper's efforts to raise support and publicly announced their backing of women on the school board. The women, both mothers of four children, declared their determination to campaign in all areas of the city. However, they did not include black neighborhoods or areas with brothels in them in their campaign.[7]

As the election approached, drawings for position on the ballot took place. The top six vote-earners would win positions on the board and some believed that position near the top of the ballot increased a person's odds of winning. Sam Dealey, one of the candidates for school board, offered to let the women draw first and possibly get a top position on the ballot. He believed that the women faced some obstacles because of their late entry into the race. The women declined his offer and announced they did not want to be treated any differently than other candidates. Victor Hexter refused to run with the women, so supporters of their candidacy had to find others willing to run with them. When the election took place, the voting was very close. Victor Hexter was defeated for the presidency of the board by Mr. Johnson. The voting for the board was very tight and the last position was not determined until the last box was counted. Both women won but Mrs. Tucker defeated Col S. F. Moss by only 23 votes in very light turnout. Dallas had about 13,000 qualified voters and of this number, only about 6,500 turned out. The pattern of very few voters deciding important

issues in Dallas continued as this election not only brought women to the school board but also saw the defeat of an effort to establish a municipal electric plant.[8]

In all of these drives for change, the Dallas clubwomen were aided by the sharp and humorous columnist of the *Dallas Morning News*, Pauline Periwinkle. Her real name was Isadore Sutherland Miner Callaway and she began shaping Dallas opinions as soon as she arrived in 1893. Hired by George Dealey, she came to Dallas by way of Michigan and Ohio. In Toledo, Ohio, she edited a magazine, *Good Health*, which she used as a vehicle for advocating rights for workers and women workers in particular. From the outset, she emerged as a powerful voice on a wide range of issues. She served as president of the Dallas Federation, spoke for woman's suffrage and helped spearhead many of the civic campaigns undertaken by clubwomen.[9]

One of her earliest campaigns was the establishment of the Texas Woman's Press Association and she also worked to unite women's groups in Dallas. By 1896, she became the first women's editor for the *Morning News*, and then began a weekly page for women called "A Woman's Century." Beginning in 1898, through her regular column, she established Pauline Periwinkle as an influential voice in Dallas and statewide. For the next twenty years, she pushed a wide variety of issues ranging from better education for young women to the need for women to stop using stuffed birds as ornaments on their hats. At one point, when the Texas Legislature began consideration of a bill regulating the length of hatpins, she gravely suggested that perhaps legislation controlling firearms might be more helpful to the safety of Texas citizens. Speaking out forcefully for change, she pushed for anti-expectoration ordinances, pure food and drug regulations, juvenile reform, and the Kessler Plan for city planning. She was especially concerned about poor children and the need to find ways to prevent delinquency.[0]

In some columns, she used current scientific knowledge to convince her readers that education and good health were necessary for women to produce healthy and intelligent children. She called for sensible clothing, property rights for women and other advances for women in Texas. Confronting the antagonism of men, she tried to point out the absurdities in their positions. Writing of male resentment of young women winning too many awards in higher education, she suggested the only future for young women in higher education might

hinge on females seeking suitably mediocre levels so they would not win too many honors from men.[1]

Pauline Periwinkle attempted to inculcate civic responsibility of all kinds in women. She waged a long campaign to convince women of the cruelty and waste involved in the use of stuffed birds on their hats. In column after column, she called on women to stop using birds and to use ostrich feathers as an alternative. She also lamented the lack of grammar in high schools, decrying increasing illiteracy among applicants for college. Another issue that involved her interest in cleanliness and hygiene was the anti-spitting crusade. She entered the fight over this issue in several articles. She also responded energetically to criticism of women's clubs. When she heard of claims that these clubs led to neglect of children, she wrote angrily of the ignorance of the men's criticism and in several column spoke of the benefits to the family of a woman who studied and learned.[2]

Her most passionate columns centered on issues of learning and study. She emerged as an early participant in the library drive. She also led in the drive for free kindergartens in Dallas and constantly pushed for greater educational opportunities for young women. She advocated the establishment for juvenile courts and helped lead the charge for parks and playgrounds for children in Dallas. She was also a constant advocate of a cleaner city, pure food and unpolluted water.[3]

Periwinkle always enjoyed the support of George Dealey and the newspaper. Why did Dealey support such an outspoken advocate of women and children in a city that was so socially conservative? She and the other women always presented themselves as municipal housekeepers, bearers of culture and civilizers in order to fit societal expectations. In reality, these women acted an enthusiastic boosters and salespeople of Dallas with the same enthusiasm evinced by their husbands. While often unstated, at times these goals of boosterism emerged clearly as when Pauline Periwinkle stated that the efforts of women to institute reforms not only aimed at promoting good citizenship but also at "building a newer, better Dallas."[4] As she urged reforms, she constantly stated that these efforts would improve the city and make it more attractive to new residents and businessmen. When the council resisted women's efforts to get city funding for different programs, she scolded them with blunt language. In the drive to clean up the city, she said in her column that "the growing city, just out of village knee pants, is always complaining about poverty where you ask

it to dress accordingly to the status it assays to occupy."[5]

In reality, women's demands for changes often sounded more radical than they actually were. Pauline Periwinkle, along with the other clubwomen in Dallas, usually reserved their compassion for white people only. While they did reach out to poor children, they also carried all the biases common to the middle-class of the day. Pauline Periwinkle blamed African-Americans in part for the problems of dirt and disorder in Dallas and stated in a column that "the Average African" was superstitious, ignorant and indifferent to health matters. If any change came to minority areas, these citizens frequently had to organize and push for reform themselves and could expect little support from middle-class women. Middle-class women and men wanted and worked for significant reforms in the city but never sought radial social changes.[6]

Dealey and businessmen like him appreciated the contributions that the women made towards improving the image of Dallas and showcasing it as a progressive, modern place. The women believed that their efforts helped Dallas improve and prosper, and businessmen supported them in many of their reforms. The Citizens Association also generally stood behind women's efforts unless the cost became too high. As long as women sought reforms that helped Dallas's image and did not entail threats to middle-class control or demand significant costs by city government, they worked easily with the power structure of the city. Often the women's actions were accepted by the city when opposed by everyone else. Told at a state party convention to "'lift your skirts and step out of the dirty mire of politics never to return,'" a suffragist replied that we will "'lift our sleeves and houseclean these conventions until they are fit places for decent men as well as women.'"[7] Clearly Dallas helped pave the way for many reforms of the State of Texas by women.

Endnotes

[1] May Guillot Potter, "The Work of Dallas Women's Clubs" *History of Greater Dallas* vol. II, 394.

[2] Jacquelyn Masur McElhaney, *Pauline Periwinkle and Progressive Reform in Dallas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 13-14.

[3] Joan Marie Johnson, *Southern Ladies, New Women: Race, Region, and Clubwomen in South Carolina, 1890-1930* (Tallahassee: University of Florida Press, 2004), 4. Johnson reinforces the Southern ideals evident in women's reform rhetoric which "provided a means through which South Carolina Women not only swept municipalities clean through social reform efforts but also taught themselves, their children, and the public about the meaning of Southern history." Thus, Johnson also explicates the influence which southern identity, feminine rhetoric, and activism function as a whole. Although Johnson's book focuses on South Carolina, the culture of the south she explores mimics that of Dallas and North Texas.

[4] Paul S. Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1978), 124, 128, 146-150, 169-170; Karen J. Blair with a preface by Annette K. Baxter, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980), 8, 12-16; Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 14.

[5] Anastatia Sims, *The Power of Femininity in the New South: Women's Organizations and Politics in North Carolina, 1880-1930* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), 1. Elaine S. Abelson, *When Ladies Go A-Thieving: Middle-Class Shoplifters in the Victorian Department Store* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 5-6, 16; *Women in Public*, 16-17.

[6] Ronald W. Hogeland, "Coeducation of the Sexes at Oberlin College: A Study of Social Ideas in Mid-Nineteenth Century American," *Journal of Social History* 6 (1972/1973): 167; Megan Seaholm, "Earnest Women: The White Woman's Club Movement in Progressive Era Texas, 1880-1920" (PhD dissertation, Rice University, 1988), 27-29.

[7] *The Power of Femininity in the New South*, xi. Sims recalls that during this time "that while all ladies were women, not all women were ladies." Judith N. McArthur, *Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas,1893-1918* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 78; Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987) 26-27; "Earnest Women," 42-43.

[8] Frances Hazmark, "The Southern Religious Press and the Social Gospel Movement, 1910-1915," (MA thesis, Lamar University, 1979), 82-84; Jeanne Boydston, Mary Kelley, and Anne Margolis, *The Limits of Sisterhood: The Beecher Sisters on Women's Rights and Woman's Sphere* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988) 4-5; *The Sound of Our Own Voices*, 28-29; Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), 140, 158, 161; *Earnest Women*, 13; Elizabeth Hayes Turner, "Women's Culture and Community: Religion and Reform in Galveston,` 1880-1920" (PhD dissertation, Rice University, 1990), 5; Mattie Lloyd Wooten, "The Status of Women in Texas" (PhD dissertation, University of Texas, 1941), 246, 249.

[9] Ellen Fitzpatrick, *Endless Crusade: Women Social Scientists and Progressive Reform* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 8-9, 26; *Limits of Sisterhood*, 4-5; *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 36, 37, 43-44.

[10] Sophonisba Preston Breckinridge, *Women in the Twentieth Century: A Study of Their Political, Social and Economic Activities* (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1933), 3-5, 11, 26; Jill Conway, "Women Reformers and American Culture, 1870-1930," *Journal of Social History* 5: 166-168, 174; Jane Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: H. G. Allen and Co., 1898), 15-16; "Women's Culture and Community," 452.

[11] *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 67; "Women's Culture and Community," 274-275; "Earnest Women," 94, 220.

[12] "Earnest Women," 84, 91, 220; *Sound of Our Voices*, 65; "Women's Culture and Community," 274; *DMN*, October, 10, 1898.

[13] *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 70.

[14] "Earnest Women," 90,97-98; "Women's Culture and Community," 11; *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 70, 79-81.

[15] *The Power of Femininity in the New South*, 3. "When North Carolina women translated private domesticity into public housekeeping they contributed to a redefinition of the proper role of government."; *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 88-90, 93, 97; "Women's Culture and Community," 273, 277; *Sound of Our OwnVoices*, 84, 118-119, 173; "Earnest Women," 86, 93, 117-119.

[16] Margaret Nell Price, "The Development of Leadership by Southern Women Through Clubs and Organizations," (MA thesis, University or North Carolina, 1945), 159, 162; Marian Day Mullins, compiler, *A History of the Woman's Club of Fort Worth, 1923-1973* (Fort Worth: Evans Press, 1973), 85, 88, 105; "Women's Culture and Community," 278, "Earnest Women" 207-208, 218-222, 228.

[17] Emma Louise Moyer Jackson, "Petticoat Politics: Political Activism Among Texas Women in the 1920's" (PhD dissertation, University of Texas, 1980), 2, Judith N. McArthur, "Saving the Children: The Women's Crusade Against Child Labor, 1902-1918," *Women and Texas History: Selected Essays* Fane Downs and Nancy Baker Jones, eds., with a keynote essay by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1993): 59-60; Mary Ritter Beard, *Women's Work in Municipalities* (New York and London: D. Appleton and Co., 1916), vii, 43; "Women's Culture and Community," 258, 278; *The Woman's Club of Fort Worth*, 107.

[18] Elizabeth York Enstam, *Women and the Creation of Urban Life: Dallas, Texas, 1843-1920* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), xix.

[19] "The Development of Leadership," 131; "Petticoat Politics," 2; *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 93, 94; "Earnest Women," 340.

[20] *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, 99.

[21] *DMN*, April 8,1898; "Petticoat Politics," 2-3; "The Development of Leadership," 131-135; *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 53; *A History of the Woman's Club Movement*, 1095; "Earnest Women," 340-343.

[22] Members of the Past Presidents' Association of the Dallas Federation of Women's Clubs, eds., *History of the Dallas Federation of Women's Clubs, 1898-1936* (Dallas: Clyde C. Cockrell and Son, Publishers, 1936), 1,4, 15-16; *DMN*, April 8, 1898, November 22, 1903; *The History of the Woman's Club Movement*, 1095-1096; Elizabeth York Enstam, "They Called It Motherhood" *Hidden Histories of Women in the New South*, Virginia Bernhard, Betty Brandon, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Theda Perdue, Elizabeth Hayes Turner, eds. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1994): 72.

[23] *History of the Dallas Federation*, 4, 16; *City Minutes*, Vol. 25, 71; Jacquelyn McElhaney, "Pauline Periwinkle: Prodding Dallas into the Progressive Era" *Women and Texas History*: 42, 46.

[24] *DMN* January 7, 1899; March 7, 1899; Dallas *Daily Times Herald*, September 17, 1899; *Annual Reports of the City of Dallas, 1907-1908*, 159; *Dallas Rediscovered*, 82-83; "Pauline Periwinkle," 46; "Earnest Women," 273.

[25] *DMN*, March 13, 1903.

[26] *DMN*, May 6, 1899.

[27] *DMN*, May 19, 1899; "Pauline Periwinkle," 48.

[28] *City Minutes*, Series 1, vol. 28, 153, 214;Series 2, vol. 2, 9 , vol. 4,

491(in this last instance, the petition came from the Dallas Home Garden Association rather than the Federation); "They called It Motherhood," 80.

[29] *History of the Dallas Federation*, 33; "Pauline Periwinkle," 49; "Earnest Women," 296-297; "They Called It Motherhood," 79, 81.

[30] *City Minutes*, vol. 2, 159, 160; *History of the Dallas Federation*, 36; *Annual Report of the City of Dallas*, 1906; *DMN*, July 31, 1905; *Women's Work in Municipalities*, 60; "Pauline Periwinkle," 51; "They Called It Motherhood," 83.

[31] *City Minutes*, vol. 4, 417, vol. 5, 639; *Women's Work in Municipalities*, 146.

[32] *History of the Dallas Federation*, 11; *Dallas Daily Times Herald* September 13, 1899; *Women's Work in Municipalities*, 148; "Pauline Periwinkle," 48, 50; "They Called It Motherhood," 81, 84; *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, 153.

[33] *History of the Dallas Federation*, 53; *Women's Work in Municipalities*, 136-139; "Earnest Women," 295-297, "Pauline Periwinkle," 49-50; "They Called It Motherhood," 86.

[34] *DMN*, March 9, 1908, March 25, 1908; *Women's Work in Municipalities*, 39, *History of the Dallas Federation*, 61,77.

[35] *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, 136.

[36] *DMN*, March 24, 1908, March 24, 1908, March 25, 1908; April 2, 1908; "They Called It Motherhood," 87, *Women's Work in Municipalities*, 190; *History of the Dallas Federation*, 61-62.

[37] *DMN*, March 24, 1908, March 23, 1908; April 2, 1908, April 5, 1908, April 6, 1908, "They Called It Motherhood," 87-88.

[38] *DMN*, March 31, 1908; April 2, 1908, April 8, 1908; *City Minutes*, vol. 2, 151; *History of the Dallas Federation*, 159-162; "Earnest Women," 292.

[39] "Pauline Periwinkle," 43-44; *History of the Dallas Federation*, 39, 41, 43.

[40] Jacquelyn Masur McElhaney, *Pauline Periwinkle and Progressive Reform in Dallas*, (College Station: Texas University Press, 1998),7. Periwinkle was also one of the first women to address gendered rhetoric in politics. In 1897 in response to the argument that women ought to keep silent in church and not "meddle" in politics, she replied with 2 Kings 21:13: "'and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.'" *DMN*, October, 24, 1898; November 21, 1898; March 13, 1899,

March 20, 1899; March 17, 1913; "Pauline Periwinkle," 48, 49, 51; *History of the Dallas Federation*, 44

[41] *History of the Dallas Federation*, 43, 47; *DMN*, April 4, 1898; May 16, 1898; October 7, 1901; "Pauline Periwinkle," 47.

[42] *DMN*, May 16, 1898; October 3, 1898, October 17, 1898; November 7, 1898; December 5, 1898; April 3, 1899.

[43] *History of the Dallas Federation*, 39, 43, 46-47; "Pauline Periwinkle," 55; *DMN*, April 11, 1898; November 7, 1898; March 13, 1899, March 27, 1899; April 17, 1899; January 5, 1903; February 2, 1903; January 5, 1903; March 7, 1908, March 16, 1908.

[44] *DMN*, January 5, 1903.

[45] *DMN* March 16, 1908; "They Called It Motherhood; Linda Pritchard, "Community, Women and Religion on the Nineteenth Century U.S. Frontier," paper presented at the Comparative Frontier Symposium, San Antonio, Texas, November 3-5, 1995.

[46] *DMN*, March 2, 1908; "They Called It Motherhood," 82, 94; "Pauline Periwinkle," 55, 56.

[47] *Women and the Creation of Urban Life*, 157.

A Defiant River, a Technocratic Ideal: Big Dams and Even Bigger Hopes along the Brazos River, 1929 – 1958

By Kenna Lang Archer

With turbines groaning and blades wheeling, Hoover Dam came to life. Then-President Franklin Delano Roosevelt oversaw the structure's dedication in September of 1935, and by October of the following year, the hydroelectric capabilities of Hoover Dam had generated power that lit the infrastructure of Los Angeles and the imaginations of Los Angelenos. It would have been no exaggeration to insist that a new era had begun along this nation's rivers, one borne explicitly of engineering expertise and technological achievement. Hoover Dam was not the first large-scale dam to be built in the United States. Nor was it the first dam to be built in this nation using either the arch or the gravity structure, designs that now characterize most oversized dams in the United States. However, this mass of concrete and steel was the tallest dam in the world upon its completion and one of the first truly multi-purpose structures to dot the western half of the United States so it quickly came to symbolize the promise and the potential of technological intervention in the western states.

Hoover Dam effectively became a vehicle by which Americans could gaze forward, anticipating the ways in which irrigation, reclamation, and electricity might change the water resources (and, thus, the land usage) in states such as California, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada. The construction of Hoover Dam and the creation of Lake Mead, however, also extended a subtle hand to the past. More specifically, these structures echoed an enduring faith in technology.

The technocratic conviction that was revealed in a very palpable

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way with the completion of Hoover Dam had already constituted a central feature of the American character for more than a century, shaping the nations economic and social frameworks and also creating an ideological structure onto which such ideas as imperialism and manifest destiny would be built.

During the first Industrial Revolution, manufacturing and scientific innovations began (gradually but surely) to commoditize the natural world, to privilege machine power, and to exclude muscle power in ways that diverged noticeably and enduringly from the proto-industrial innovations of decades past. As the 1800s progressed and ultimately folded over into a new century, faith in technology – the belief that scientific knowledge and industrial forces could address practical concerns and issues of efficiency – grew apace. By the time that F.D.R. consecrated Hoover Dam in 1935, the idea that scientific advancement could resolve issues of aridity, canalization, and flood control as well as questions of public health and industrial production had become well established. Indeed, the average American, as they read excerpts from the Boulder dedication or braved the stifling heat to witness the moment in person, likely would have agreed both with Roosevelt's contention that this was "the greatest dam in the world" and with his assertion that completion of Hoover Dam marked "an engineering victory of the first order—another great achievement of American resourcefulness, American skill and determination."[1]

Like Roosevelt himself, many Americans put an astounding amount of faith in engineers, scientists, and other technical experts, elevating these purveyors of modernity to progressively more prominent positions within the federal government. This faith in technology shaped projects as geographically and chronologically dispersed as the construction of New York's Erie Canal during the early republic, the creation of a regional water system in arid Southern California during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the erection of multiple dams by the Tennessee Valley Authority during the interwar and post-war years, and even the transnational diversion projects of the 1970s. The expectations that Americans attached to their requests for improvement or change or resolution were not always realized, but there was no denying the general optimism with which the American public crafted a narrative of technical progress.

Indeed, there is something rather remarkable about the commitment of Americans to scientific expertise and the faith that

Americans place in scientific and industrial solutions. Americans have constructed dams, canals, mines, and even towns with government assistance, enabling legislation, and a sheer determination to mold the land to their designs, but such moments of technological success reveal but part of the narrative. Despite its importance to the broader American character, that narrative of progress accepted by many scholars is incomplete. The need for a more nuanced idea of development is especially clear in the study of this nation's rivers. The men and women who advocated improvement of America's waterways erected lock-and-dam structures and then watched rivers shift course, built dams and then watched floodwaters course over the concrete rims of those titanic structures, constructed levees and then looked on as unstable soils collapsed beneath the burden of expectation as well as the physical weight of the improvements themselves.

It is true that the Colorado and Columbia Rivers, dammed extensively, now generate water for reclamation, space for recreation, and power for personal and commercial use. It is likewise correct that navigation has been realized along the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers through the construction of locks and levees and that rivers from the southeast to the northwest have electrified rural households, urban centers, and political careers. However, developers have also struggled to transform the natural world and, more to the point, to control the pathways of this nation's waterways. These incomplete efforts to capitalize on America's water resources suggest that failure has played an uncomfortably significant role in the story of American progress and prompt a re-evaluation of long-accepted ideals of technocracy and progress. This paper highlights that imperfect technocracy, granting abandoned blueprints and ineffective dams a greater space in the narrative of riparian development along Texas' longest in-state river, the Brazos River.

The Brazos has not shaped empires outside of the short-lived Republic of Texas or even carved a space within the national imagination, and it flows through a state that defies easy categorization as either west or south. However, improvement of the Brazos River and its adjoining watershed has been especially difficult; its refusal to be harnessed is acutely evident and the determination of its boosters, long-lived and at times on display in near bombastic glory. These developmental difficulties are most clearly revealed during the era of dam building. To put it simply: a study of Brazos River dams highlights

a more nuanced process of development than might be suggested by the cultural might of Hoover Dam or the study of rivers that have been more extensively made over. The story of dam building along the Brazos River between 1929 and 1958 unveils the importance of technocratic faith to the national narrative of development but also complicates that long-held belief in technology and progress by accentuating what might be called the reality of developmental interruption.

The story of big dams along the Brazos River actually begins with a completely different vision for the watershed. Although improvement of the Brazos River in the years under discussion fit snugly within the model of federal funding, dam-construction, and power-generation that was laid out in western-lying states during the early- and mid-twentieth century, development in the watershed did not always prioritize flood control or reclamation. Instead, lawmakers, boosters, and engineers had emphasized navigation and the growth of an agricultural economy in the years before 1929 (figure 1). As early as the 1830s and continuing into the 1910s, boosters worked to construct a canal that might connect the Brazos with the shipping infrastructure of Galveston Bay. That same period saw work on a port at the mouth of the river. By the start of the 1890s, developers had turned to more ambitious projects to secure navigation on the river. Engineers proposed a series of lock-and-dam structures between the cities of Waco and Washington that would, in their minds, allow for extended navigation of the river and the expansion of an agricultural market. Various organizations also undertook dredging operations and the construction of jetties during this time.

By the 1920s, the individuals who lived within or otherwise engaged life within the Brazos watershed had begun to develop a new vision for the river, one that prioritized flood control and a consistent stream-flow over navigation. The shift in focus away from these earlier riparian models reflected ongoing changes to both the local and the national landscape of development. On one hand, local frustrations with floods and droughts began to swell during the first two decades of the twentieth century, ultimately bursting forth in op-ed pieces and congressional bills that called for flood control and reclamation rather than navigation and agricultural economies. This budding interest in flood control spoke to a continuing problem with overflow events. Despite prior attempts at development, newspapers still spoke of "fatal cloudbursts;" witnesses still lamented "scenes of woe and misery;"

and, streets continued to transform into rivers.[2] That little permanent change had been realized with the navigation projects only justified further the transition to a new developmental focus.

On the other hand, the flow of federal monies into western development projects provided frustrated Brazos dwellers with a vision for improvement that matched their perceived needs and engaged their emerging expectations. The adoption of the 1902 Reclamation Act, the creation of an independent Bureau of Reclamation in 1907, and the Depression-Era decision to use public works projects as a form of unemployment relief elevated riparian development to a position of greater importance within the federal budget. For people living within the western states, a solution to the long-standing problem of aridity seemed finally to have emerged. Although the era of big dams would come together only gradually during the difficult years of the Great Depression and the Second World War, the era of large-scale riparian projects had informally begun and would ultimately culminate in the 1950s in what Marc Reisner famously called the "Go-Go Years" of dam-building.[3]

Acting on some combination of resignation and genuine anticipation, developers surrendered their hopes for navigation on the Brazos River in exchange for a more attainable dream. The river traffic that Brazos dwellers had sought to encourage in prior decades was all but forgotten as flood-control surpassed navigation as the pressing issue. In fact, lawmakers and laypeople began to view navigation as, at best, an unattainable ideal and, more likely, as a distraction and an irresponsible use of funds. Congressman O.H. Cross of the 11th District in Texas made the point clearly when he testified before the Committee on Flood Control in the House of Representatives during a 1935 hearing: "We do not expect to have this stream navigable ... I do not think it is feasible for navigation. We do not expect anything like that."[4] The *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, in a memorable article from 1951, claimed that "'Not even a rowboat' could navigate the Brazos River in Texas 250 miles from the Gulf of Mexico."[5]

That desire to move beyond the issue of navigation and to shoulder instead the banner of flood control became institutionalized in 1929, when Texas lawmakers agreed to form the Brazos River Conservation and Reclamation District. According to a pamphlet published in 1936, the Texas Legislature unambiguously created this agency "to control flood waters on the Brazos River."[6] An undated application for Public

Works Administration funds confirmed that emphasis, stressing the District's desire to alleviate the damage caused by "recurrent, devastating floods in the valley of the Brazos River."[7] The Reclamation District, renamed the Brazos River Authority in 1953, marked a turning point in the way that policymakers approached river development. The State of Texas created this extra-governmental agency to coordinate development of the largest in-state river; never before had a public agency been given oversight over the entirety of a major river basin.[8]

The politicians who dealt with the political debris that resulted from Brazos outbursts, men such as W.R. Poage and George Mahon, knew that floods were a pressing problem within the basin. They also understood that many rivers in this nation undergo fluctuations in their streamflow. It was not enough for Brazos boosters to ask for federal monies to be spent on improvement; instead, the men and women involved in Brazos River development needed to demonstrate the urgency and the legitimacy of their requests for funding. To that end, the Brazos River Conservation and Reclamation District and the House of Representatives Committee on Flood Control sought testimony from local residents for a 1935 hearing on the need for flood control structures. A Mr. Buchanan provided a particularly distressing look into the devastating nature of these frequent flood events:

... I myself and two or three others were staying on top of the house, and had to stay there 5 or 6 days, because the ferryboat was leaking. We would take turn about bailing the ferryboat out night and day to keep it from sinking and losing those mules. Every now and then a house would rise up and go off down the river. Houses floated by with chickens on them eating bugs. They did not know where they were going; they were on their way, and they went.[9]

In an effort to further illustrate his feelings about that 1921 flood, Buchanan penned a poem that suggested he, at least, had found a solution to the Brazos perils: "Farewell to the Brazos bottoms, I bid you a long adieu. I may migrate to hell some day, But I'll never return to you."[10] Mr. Buchanan was but one individual to provide testimony, and congressional representatives ultimately found meaning in the sheer volume of letters sent in by sheriffs, farmers, mayors, and housewives.[11] These witnesses may have exaggerated the frequency or severity of flood events, but overflows did visit the Brazos basin on a near yearly basis so there was some truth to a reputation in which wastefulness and disorder ruled over productivity and restraint.

It was no surprise to these Brazos dwellers that newspapers of the 1930s balanced their descriptions of the "monstrous flood hazard of this stream" and a "rain-gorged Brazos River" with pieces suggesting that dams would limit loss of life and property.[12] It had even become commonplace during the 1930s for newspapers to speculate, in the days following flood events, on what damage could have been prevented by the presence of a dam structure. However, people living in the watershed had come to believe by this point that only a series of dams would address the "urgent necessity" of flood control.[13] "The butcher, the baker, the candle-stick maker – yes, everyone in Bell County is interested in the Brazos River dam project" – in the opinion of John Clarkson (and, presumably, many others), only a succession of dams could hold back the waters that periodically surged forth from the banks of the Brazos River.[14]

Whatever the validity of these perspectives, they set in a motion a series of dam projects along the Brazos. These projects would not pacify the river, but they would bring to light the centrality of a dam-centric model of development in Texas and the difficulty of applying that model to the Brazos watershed. Specifically, the Brazos River Conservation and Reclamation District, in conjunction with the State Board of Water Engineers and the Ambursen Engineering Corporation, drafted what came to be known as the Brazos River Project in 1936. The Brazos River Project, which advocated the construction of thirteen dams, constituted the Brazos River Authority's first Master Plan for the river and the first coordinated dam project for the Brazos basin. The plan tentatively sited thirteen large-scale dams at the following locations: Breckenridge Dam (Clear Fork), Seymour Dam (Salt Fork), Possum Kingdom Dam (Brazos River), Turkey Creek Dam (Brazos River), Inspiration Point Dam (Brazos River), de Cordova Bend Dam (Brazos River), Bee Mountain Dam (Brazos River), Whitney Dam (Bosque River), Lampasas Dam (Lampasas River), Leon Dam (Leon River), San Gabriel Dam 1 (San Gabriel River), San Gabriel Dam 2 (San Gabriel River), and Navasota Dam (Navasota River).[15]

The House Committee estimated that the project would cost $35 million for the construction of these major dams and an additional $15 million for the construction of what they called "minor dams."[16] Given the rather substantial price tag for this project, flood control alone could not justify extensive expenditures on the Brazos, not in light of the failed projects of earlier eras. An application for Public

Works Administration funds confirmed as much, admitting that "If it can be said that the District has a primary objective, that objective is flood control" but also conceding that "flood control dams cannot be self-liquidating and for that reason dams and reservoirs designed exclusively for flood control are not contained in this application."[17] As a result, while the project centered on flood control, the purposes of the Brazos Project were four-fold: (1) flood control, (2) water conservation for irrigation, industrial, and municipal purposes, (3) soil conservation and reclamation, and (4) hydro-electric power production.

The era of big dams commenced along the Brazos River with the construction of Possum Kingdom Dam – authorized in 1935, begun in 1938, and completed in 1941. This project was funded by the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act and constructed by the Brazos River Conservation and Reclamation District.[18] Works Progress Administration funds could have been used on any of the thirteen dams, but the Brazos River Conservation and Reclamation District (in conjunction with the civic leaders from several Brazos River counties) decided that a dam at this location would contribute to flood control and drought alleviation in greater and more lasting ways than at any other Brazos site. The area chosen for the dam also lent itself to a large-scale structure, something that could not be said along much of the Brazos River. The site for Possum Kingdom Dam, for example, incorporated limestone cliffs that facilitated the erection of abutments for a dam structure.[19]

After completing Possum Kingdom Dam, developers began work on Whitney Dam. Although engineers and developers believed that Possum Kingdom Dam would provide the greatest amount of flood control for the Brazos River basin, they argued that Whitney Dam would also play a crucial role in flood control efforts along the river.[20] Specifically, developers believed that the Whitney Dam could eliminate increased stream-flow and, consequently, floods along the Middle Brazos River in the same way that Possum Kingdom could eliminate these flows upstream. With these words of faith and hope in mind, popular support grew quickly for this second Brazos Dam.[21] Representatives from the Chambers of Commerce for the cities of Cleburne, Meridian, Waco, Whitney, and Hillsboro even planned a celebration "to be held when the first dirt is broken on the Brazos River dam project at Whitney."[22]

Mapping work commenced for the site as early as 1937. However,

construction did not begin until 1947, and the dam itself was not completed until 1951, delayed by on-going war and by the allocation of funds to that cause. The cost of the dam was initially estimated at $8.5 million in 1939. Depending on the source, the final cost increased to somewhere between $30 million and $42 million by the late 1940s. Whatever the actual tally, these numbers outpaced the initial figures estimated for individual Brazos dams. In addition to Whitney Dam, proponents of the thirteen-dam project also succeeded in building a small dam on the Leon River. Engineers and Corps officials completed the surveys and mapping for the Leon River damsite in 1937, and after beginning work in 1949, the Army Corps of Engineers completed construction of what came to be called Lake Belton Reservoir in 1954 at an estimated cost of $17 million.

Despite the early successes of the Brazos River Project, completion of the remaining dams proved difficult. Developers struggled to overcome a slew of geological, political, and economic crises, but problems with the Brazos Project did not halt dam-building momentum along this river. When the thirteen-dam project stalled in the 1950s, lawmakers and developers drafted a new project for the Brazos River, a six-dam project that centered on the Brazos River tributaries.[23] This dam plan revolved around a flood control proposal drawn up not by the Brazos River Authority but by the Army Corps of Engineers. At the start of the 1950s, the Secretary of the Army recommended that six flood control dams be built on the tributaries of the river. The Public Works Sub-Committee in the House of Representatives authorized $40 million for the project with a total estimated cost of between $92 million to $158 million. Even for one of the longest rivers in one of the largest states, that represented a sizeable expenditure.

This six-dam project proposed dams on the Bosque River in McLennan County (an expansion of Lake Waco), the Leon River in Comanche County, the Lampasas River in Bell County, the San Gabriel River in Williamson County, the Navasota River in Brazos County, and on Yegua Creek in Burleson County.[24] The Corps of Engineers succeeded in building several of the proposed structures, but the process of funding and constructing these dams extended through four decades. For example, the Corps completed mapping and fieldwork by 1940 for most of these locations but would not complete Stillhouse Hollow Lake on the Lampasas River until 1968. They completed the Granger Lake Dam on the San Gabriel River in 1980.[25]

The Brazos River Conservation and Reclamation District proposed yet another six-dam project during the 1950s, a project which both complemented and competed with the thirteen-dam project and six-dam project discussed above.[26] Proponents of improvement would have recognized the dams in this project: these dams, staggered along the main-stem of the river, were originally included in the larger thirteen-dam project. However, developers and engineers proposed these dams not for flood control but for hydroelectric power generation. The Brazos River Authority, in fact, considered these dams "to be valuable primarily for power" and to possess only "incidental flood control storage benefits."[27]

Proponents of development immediately weighed in on this newest manifestation of a century-old quest for riparian control. The Reclamation District, by now known as the Brazos River Authority, and its legislative backers hoped that power generation at these dams could fund the full cost of construction.[28] Developers and boosters hoped that this variation of the multi-dam project would trap the "wasted water" that continued to flow through the river's banks by building a "250-mile chain of lakes that will make the river, in effect, one great lake from Whitney Reservoir upstream to Possum Kingdom Reservoir."[29] The luckless inhabitants of the often-flooded towns along the Brazos River simply hoped for some relief from the problems of water feast and famine.

This project proposed the enlargement of Possum Kingdom and the construction of reservoirs at Hightower, Bee Mountain, Inspiration Point, de Cordova Bend, and Turkey Creek; its cost was estimated somewhere around $181 million. Despite the fact that the Authority hoped to finance part of the cost through the sale of power, developers and engineers only succeeded in building one of the six-dams: de Cordova Bend Dam, an earth-filled structure near Granbury, Texas. Even at the de Cordova Bend Dam (which impounded Lake Granbury), the building process never proceeded smoothly. Authorities completed the surveys and mapping work in 1937, attempted to begin construction in 1951, stalled, received a state permit in 1966 to formally begin construction, and completed the dam in 1969.[30]

As would later be the case at Sterling C. Robertson Dam on the Navasota River, the Authority used monies earned from the sale of power to fund the construction of de Cordova Bend dam. Whether the

model could have been successfully incorporated into the construction of the remaining dams was debatable, but it hardly mattered. Opposition to the Authority's six-dam program mounted quickly. Engineers reported as early as 1956, for example, that the costs of the project clearly outweighed its benefits.[31] However, economics did not undermine the six-dam project. Although a handful of individuals believed that a "holiday land" would grow up around these dams, most Brazos dwellers simply did not support a project that so strictly prioritized power generation.[32] Some water users preferred the focus on power but thought that the power generated at these dams would actually cost more to produce than it would ultimately be worth on the market. There seemed to be little reason to support the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars on these dams if they would not, in fact, lower costs for the individuals who purchased power through Brazos utilities.

Many individuals opposed the emphasis on power generation outright. On one hand, flood control continued to be a fixation for many people living along and working with the Brazos, despite the official interest in power generation. This was especially true along the Middle Brazos River, where the original dam project had been proposed. In a world where floods wrought havoc on Brazos lands with some regularity, opponents argued that the six-dam project focused too little on flood control.[33] A sizeable number of Brazos dwellers prioritized flood control over power production, an issue that shaped their daily lives in less damaging and dramatic ways, and they preferred projects that adopted the same emphasis. Glossy pamphlets and thoughtfully worded releases, in other words, could not sway the average Brazos dweller into adopting, wholesale, this new representation of a developed river.

On the other hand, many people living along the Lower Brazos River feared that they would see a decline in the quality and the quantity of their water if the Authority succeeded in building these dams along the upper reaches of the river. The Lower Brazos River Water Users Committee, for example, published a pamphlet in which they declared that they supported the six-dam project of the Army Corps of Engineers over that of the Brazos River Authority Project because they believed that it offered more equitable use of the river's resources.[34] Residents from Cameron, Texas, likewise, wrote to Senator Poage in 1956 to comment on equitable use of Brazos water, declaring that "It

was rather irksome to us in Cameron to know that people on the Gulf by the mere giving of notice could have water released for industrial purposes when we had so much difficulty securing a release of a very small amount of water for municipal purposes."[35]

In the face of mounting opposition, the Brazos River Authority published a circular in 1957, titled "Let's Build Dams!"[36] The circular addressed a variety of issues, speaking to the concerns of people whose homes would be flooded by the creation of a new reservoir, people who might see a decline in their water quality due to sedimentation in the river, and people concerned with an increase in electric rates due to privatization of power. This last question proved to be particularly important. Questions over the sale of power had plagued Brazos development as early as 1936, when some Texans became concerned that the proposed construction of Possum Kingdom as a hydroelectric dam would do nothing to lower electricity rates in Texas.[37] Such concerns spoke to unease over strict financial calculations, a more general distrust of government involvement in public utilities, and a combination of the two preceding fears. However, concerns over power became more problematic with this six-dam dam scheme because it seemed to sacrifice flood control entirely for electric rates still deemed too high.

In addition to the projects discussed above, the Brazos River Authority proposed a five-dam project that targeted the Upper Brazos. Focusing almost exclusively on the formative tributaries of the river, the Authority began discussing these dams during the 1940s but did not formulate a cohesive plan for this collection of dams until the 1950s. The dams proposed as part of the five-dam project included: South Bend (Brazos River), Breckenridge (Clear Fork), Nugent (Clear Fork), and the twin Seymour Dams (Salt Fork and Double Mountain Fork). As with the other dam projects, this development scheme included dams that were initially considered as part of other projects. The Authority hoped that these dams would, like their hypothetical predecessors, prevent the "'waste' of flood waters" by controlling the flow of the Brazos River and maximizing effective use of the river's waters.[38] Small, municipal dams had been constructed in the region previously, but they only fleetingly resembled the dams that had been envisioned by these mid-century boosters of large-scale projects (figure 2).

Because the region highlighted by this project experienced more

famine than feast in terms of water levels, developers intended that the dams would prioritize reclamation. Local and regional populations along the Upper Brazos River arguably feared a water shortage above almost any other form of riparian problem because it was the most frequent visitor of destruction. The Mayor of Stamford, Texas, perhaps phrased it best when he noted that "We've grappled for six years now with a serious water situation. It has been alarming at just how close we were to the edge."[39] The dams also intended to address the problems with salinity in the region, as many people living in this section of the watershed believed that only the Double Mountain Fork was potable. In the words of the *Abilene Reporter-News*, "the two 'Seymour' dams are needed to separate the 'bad' water of the Salt Fork from the 'good' water of the Double Mountain Fork."[40]

Despite a good deal of support for the project, especially in the northern and western counties of Texas, the plan never gained much traction. Ranchers in particular opposed several of these dams, notably the Breckenridge Dam.[41] The reservoir, if constructed, would have covered roughly 15,500 acres of prime ranch land in an area early settled by pioneering, ranching Texas families. The Matthews Family, who owned much of the land that would have been inundated by the dam, expressed the sentiments of many when it published a statement noting, "We will not fight a new lake, if they really want to build one on the Clear Fork ... but we will certainly fight one at this site."[42] Such displacement was a common consequence to dam building, but it was still an undesirable prospect for the families who would have fallen victim to permanently heightened waters and felt, justly or not, that they lacked a regional voice.

Complementing these series of dam projects was a proposal for an independent dam on the Upper Brazos River in the 1940s. Although little is known about this project, contemporary newspaper articles referenced a reservoir to be sited on the Double Mountain Fork, the Bob Baskin Dam. This project, which would have involved the Bureau of Reclamation in the process of Brazos River dam building, proposed "a dam on the Double Mountain Fork that would serve, among other purposes, the function of recharging irrigation wells in the Haskell County area."[43] Proponents of this dam, like the proponents of the Authority's Upper Brazos River plan, emphasized different ideals than the individuals living in the water-rich, flood-prone areas of the Lower and Middle Brazos River. Flood control factored into the equation

only tangentially. These dams sought instead to secure a water supply for municipal and agricultural uses.[44]

The Bureau never built this dam, never even moved into the construction process. As with dams along other stretches of the river, economics and hydrology undermined the hopes of Bob Baskin developers. Engineers estimated that construction of the dam and reservoir site would have cost $25.5 million. Given concerns over evaporation from the reservoir and the potability of the water, the cost for the large reservoir could simply not be justified, particularly when the structure would almost exclusively aid irrigation interests over municipalities. Whether or not the individuals opposed to the Bob Baskin Dam acted with a bias towards urban centers is unclear. What is clear is that economic considerations played an important role in shaping the future of this project. Benefits for irrigation alone were not sufficient to justify the increasing costs of dam building.

Finally, in addition to a thirteen-dam project, a six-dam project, a second six-dam project, a five-dam project, and a single-dam project, a handful of boosters began talking during the 1950s and 1960s about a 23-dam project for the Brazos River.[45] Boosters proposed this especially enormous dam project as part of a comprehensive state water project that included other reclamation proposals. Few newspapers or letters mentioned the largest of projects; they did not even publish a list of the dams. Yet, proponents of the project very clearly insisted that they hoped to provide benefits "for all the people" and to integrate these many structures into an "over-all pattern for fullest development of the river's potential."[46]

As evidenced by the long list of would-be dams, developers struggled to corral the waters of the Brazos River. The people of this watershed – men and women, lawmakers and laypeople – sincerely believed that their thirteen-dam plan would succeed despite the problems with money and geology and politics, and they believed, likewise, that the six-dam plans of the Brazos River Authority and the Army Corps of Engineers would manipulate the waters of this river to the desired ends of the Brazos populace. As a result of such confidence, proponents of development could, and indeed did, argue that a multi-dam project would ultimately allow them to tame the "Old Man River of Texas, the Brazos" and to trade "a 900-mile pain in the neck for a natural resource which would rival oil in value."[47] Despite this unified vision for dam-centric development, development did not play out

more easily within the Brazos basin that it had in decades past. The ratio of failed or abandoned projects to completed projects still skewed dramatically towards the former, as it had during the age of levees, jetties, and locks. True, thirteen dams would ultimately be constructed within the Brazos River watershed, but developers from the Bureau of Reclamation, the Brazos River Authority, the Army Corps of Engineers, and various Texas cities had proposed twenty-three, thirteen, six, five, and single-dam plans.

Still, the individuals who lived within or otherwise engaged the Brazos basin continued to propose, to promote, and to fund projects that might employ, tame, or otherwise bind the river. They envisioned big dams and acted on even bigger expectations for riparian change. A similar resolve has characterized the broader commitment to technocracy in this nation. American faith in technological advancement has shaped the political, economic, social, and physical face of the nation for centuries – there is no doubt about the veracity of that relationship. What is less obvious, but no less true, is the realization that the technocratic narrative at play along this nation's rivers is large enough to integrate the monumental success of Hoover Dam as well as the (occasionally fruitless) efforts of lesser-known development projects.

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Prejudice and Pride: Women Artists and The Public Works of Art Project in East Texas, 1933-1934

By Victoria H. Cummins

When the first New Deal program for artists' relief came to Texas in late 1933, women artists' experiences with it varied greatly. The Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), which lasted only a few months from late 1933 until the summer of 1934, constituted one of the least known relief projects of the New Deal. Nevertheless, it enjoyed the historical distinction of being the first time in the nation's history that the Federal government paid stipends from public funds directly to artists in order to underwrite the creation of art, in this case works destined for government buildings and other public places throughout the United States. The Roosevelt Administration implemented the PWAP to give work to unemployed artists as part of a larger relief effort designed to provide employment for laborers on public construction projects. In Texas, this art program was also ground-breaking because it involved an unusually large number of women artists.

This proved noteworthy because, up to the early 1930s, the world of professional art had been mostly a man's domain and cherished notions about "woman's proper place" hindered their acceptance as equals by their male counterparts. The inclusion of women artists in the Public Works of Art Project can be clearly seen in the case of East Texas, especially in the cities of Houston and Dallas. The administrators of the PWAP in Texas (all men) openly debated among themselves the role that women should play in the program. Differences in the existing attitudes of male program administrators in Dallas and Houston towards professional women in the visual arts impacted rates of participation and levels of compensation. Because women artists

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were better established as professionals in Houston than in Dallas, they gained more benefits under this locally administered program. Because of the opportunity the PWAP offered its participating artists, Texas women artists, older as a group than their male counterparts, were able to further their professional careers, thus advancing the role of women professionals in the visual arts.

By the winter of 1933-34, Texas was firmly in the grip of the Great Depression. At first Texans had not been hit too hard by the stock market crash. The East Texas oil field had brought a measure of prosperity to the area. Rural Texans felt the farm economy could weather the downturn, and had little sympathy for the growing ranks of the unemployed in the cities. In 1930-31, private charities had addressed the needs of the growing numbers of the urban unemployed, but the rapid expansion of unemployment had overwhelmed these sources of aid by late 1931. City governments created work programs like beautification projects to put more people to work and augment the relief programs of the private charities. At this point, many Texans were opposed to government relief programs because they objected to tax money being used to help individuals with economic problems, especially if it would help minorities. The economy contracted, state revenues fell, and economic desperation soared in 1932 and 1933, and the Texas legislature wouldn't pass a relief bill.[1]

The depression was a particularly hard time for creative artists, "as the economic crisis deepened after the stock market crash of 1929, collectors stopped collecting, galleries went out of business and museums across the country found their sources of money dwindling."[2] In 1932, the Houston Museum of Fine Arts lost seventy-five percent of its subsidy from the city due to budget cuts. In San Antonio, the Witte Museum had to slash employee salaries, cut its days and hours of operation, and begin charging admission on certain days in order to survive.[3] Established artists found commissions and sales diminishing, but the situation was dire for those just starting out. "Cut off from contact with an interested public and unable to sell their work, unestablished painters and sculptors faced the alternatives of starving or turning to other occupations."[4] Work relief programs forced artists away from their vocation and into manual labor in order to survive.

Times were hard for Texas artists too. The Dallas Artists League met weekly at the Alice Street Coffee Club in the home of May and Cyril Wyche. Each Tuesday meeting started with "cheap meals for depression stricken artists"[5] for which the artists donated what they

could afford. Dinner was followed by a program and discussion. Often the conversation turned to how hard it was to earn a living as an artist. Some artists had to barter their work for needed services. Starting in June 1932, the Dallas Artists League sponsored a several day long art carnival to give the artists a venue in which to sell their work directly to the general public. Prices were low; prints and sketches sold for as little as $.50 and seldom for more than $5. The seventy-six exhibitors at the first Alice Street Art Carnival took in just over $500.00 in three days. This was considered successful enough that the carnival became an annual event until World War II.[6]

The first relief program in Texas targeted especially to help visual artists was sponsored by the Federal government. The Public Works of Art Project was a program designed to meet the needs of artists such as those that met on Alice Street in Dallas. When Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in March of 1933, national level recovery measures began. In 1933, the Congress passed the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) which operated through two separate agencies, the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA). The PWA, headed by Harold Ickes, was an agency that built major Public Works projects in order to create jobs and create infrastructure. Ickes was very cautious in issuing contracts; he moved slowly and carefully. However, times were desperate and voices in the Roosevelt administration, (especially that of Harry Hopkins, a former social worker), were calling for an immediate relief program. FDR agreed and in late 1933 authorized the creation of the Civil Works Administration (CWA) to be funded with part of the allocation for the PWA. The CWA would put people to work rather than supply direct relief. Some participants would come from relief programs in the states, others benefiting would be those who could not meet the states' qualifications for direct aid. The CWA would give the unemployed an income, and the dignity of working for it. The program was shut down by FDR in June of 1934 due to charges of excess and maladministration, and because FDR was worried that American workers would become dependent on these work programs. However, in its short life, the CWA employed some 239, 264 Texans,[7] over ninety of them artists hired through the PWAP.[8]

Out of CWA funds, the United States government introduced a pilot program targeting the needs of artists, the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP). This relief program was the brainchild of lawyer George Biddle, a prep school friend of President Roosevelt. Biddle was

also a painter and had visited Mexico, where he had met mural painter Diego Rivera. Biddle was impressed by the results of the government supported Mexican mural renaissance of the 1920's and 30's. He also believed that artists as a group had been neglected in terms of relief programs and deserved special attention. Biddle proposed copying the Mexican government's program of paying "plumbers' wages" to artists to create public art for public buildings.[9] He proposed to President Roosevelt a relief program for artists similar to those being offered for other workers in the winter of 1933-34 under the Civil Works Administration (CWA). The Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), authorized in December 1933, was the first attempt of the New Deal to do this.[10] This program, funded at a little over $1,000,000, was administered by the Treasury Department under the direction of Edward Bruce, technical director Forbes Watson, and assistant technical director Edward B. Rowan. Bruce and Rowan were both avocational painters. Like Biddle they had been impressed by the Mexican muralist movement of the 1920's and 1930's, Forbes Watson was a well-known art critic.

In original conception, the PWAP was an economic relief program. It was designed to pay weekly wages for up to two months of work. The PWAP paid unemployed artists weekly wages which were equivalent to those the Civil Works Administration paid to skilled laborers. Each section head was allotted funds for quotas of artists divided into three categories: Class A artists were to be paid $42.50/wk., Class B would be paid $26.50/wk., and Class C, the equivalent of laborers' helpers, $15.00/wk.[11] The regional directors were told to "classify in groups according to experience and financial needs."[12] Maximum numbers of artists in each category were assigned to each region.[13] The artists hired by the PWAP then created art work for the decoration of buildings of institutions supported by federal, state or local taxes.

To create an administrative structure quickly, PWAP administrators divided the country into sixteen geographical sections and invited regional arts administrators to serve without pay as the heads of the sections. Each head then assembled a committee of volunteers (also unpaid) to help him/her identify artists and dole out the money. There were no funds for office space, but limited funds were granted for secretarial help.[14]

To apply for the weekly wages, individual artists had to present proof of artistic production and of need to the regional committee. Once an artist was granted support by the regional director, oversight

was fairly loose; artists were allowed great freedom in choosing the style, subject and medium, and they were encouraged to participate in arranging where the work(s) of art would be installed.[15] All art work produced under the PWAP would be the property of the US government, which legally had the final say on placement. However, in practice the regional committees were allowed to place the art, as long as it went to institutions that were at least partially supported by state, local, or federal taxes and the permission of the head of the institution had been secured –whether post office, library, courthouse or school.[16] Artists could create easel paintings, prints, drawings or sculptures, but the PWAP particularly encouraged artists to paint murals for public spaces. Inspired by the nationalism of the Mexican muralists, artists were encouraged (although not required) to use local society and culture, even possibly local history, as themes. Regional directors were told that, "the American Scene should be regarded as a general field for subject matter for paintings."[17] They were advised to solicit local input regarding the choice of subjects.

While many female artists were in need of this aid, nationally three-quarters of those employed under this program were men.[18] This disparity reflected prevailing ideas about women and work and about women artists as professionals.

The Depression was a difficult time for almost all Americans, but women who worked for a living, whether single, married, or widowed, could face particular problems due to commonly held assumptions about woman's proper place being at home. Men were the breadwinners and women were supported by them. By 1933-34, in the face of double-digit unemployment, many Americans questioned the presence of any women in the workforce. The prejudice was that women were taking jobs that men needed to support their families, even though numerous studies, done then as well as now, indicate that in economic hard times downwardly mobile male workers do not move into jobs identified as "women's work." [19] It was also assumed that women did not need to work, since men took care of their economic support. Married women especially, whatever their personal accomplishments, were assumed to be supplied with income by their husbands' labors and not in need of work. Not only men, but also many non-working women held these same ideas about acceptable roles for women.

This prejudice effected women artists, who were additionally disadvantaged by assumptions that, while they might be talented amateurs, they were not dedicated professionals like the men. Of course,

amateurs would not need or deserve government aid. Since woman's proper place was in the home, not the workplace, involvement in the arts was acceptable only if it did not challenge this notion of the proper female sphere. Women could participate in arts advocacy and even in arts management at the volunteer level, but while an avocational interest in art was considered acceptable and ladylike, the desire to be a professional and compete with men was not. Housewives banding together to "civilize" Texas communities by promoting the visual arts was acceptable as it was good for business and the community, but professional women artists were perceived as taking on male roles. Women artists were sometimes called "strong" or "virile" which could be a compliment, but more likely was meant to convey that they were mannish or unladylike.[20]

These notions shaped public perceptions of women artists so strongly that even as committed a professional as Emma Richardson Cherry, Houston's first professional artist, would carefully couch her career in terms acceptable to the general public. This pragmatic and independent professional artist presented herself in the mid-1930's as being a successful woman because she did not allow her painting to interfere with her proper roles of wife and mother. She admitted that there were conflicts between these roles, but these were resolved by subordinating the role of artist. A newspaper reporter observed, "She says without complaint that she never in her life felt that she was just on the verge of doing something really big in her work but that some one in the family became sick or just "something came up."[21]

Regarding her studies in France and the various study trips to Europe without her husband the same article explained, "She has made many trips abroad. She says it is because her family was so good to her. There was always a sister or brother, or a niece or nephew, also her daughter around to look after her family and her husband was always ready to give the extras for the trips."[22] The article goes on to declare her "an inspiration for young artists" because "beginning in a day when women were considered to have no life outside of her home interests, Mrs. Cherry kept her art and home both going and intertwined them..."[23]

Cora Bryan McRae, writing of Mrs. Cherry in the *Houston Chronicle* a few years later (1941) held her up as an example: "Mrs. Cherry is the rare example of a woman's career being successfully moulded (sic) with the happiness and care of her family."[24]

Despite the PWAP's origins in CWA funding, Edward Bruce,

Forbes Watson, and E.B. Rowan wanted to stress artistic production over relief for their own reasons. Unlike other relief programs, there was no means test to establish need. Edward Bruce only asked that the money not be spent on "...people of affluence," but on "... competent artists...who are out of work."[25] Bruce conceptualized it more like economic stimulus than relief "...what we want is to put money into the hands of men who will spend it and who genuinely need the employment."[26] The program for artists was not to compete with relief agencies work, "...so that sentiment or need should not be the prime factor in selection of artists."[27] Most artists had seen their incomes diminish in the early 30's and some were in dire financial straits. Yet many that participated had some work, perhaps enough to feed themselves and their families. The need for work in a time of no demand seems to have motivated some artists to participate in the PWAP as much as a dire need for money.[28]

In terms of both its administration and participants, the PWAP was mostly a male affair. The federal workforce reflected the gender divisions and discrimination found in the general workforce. In fact, the federal government in the depression would not employ married couples, causing many women due to their holding lower paid jobs than their husbands to quit the workforce. Thus, most federal employees, and virtually all above the rank of stenographers and secretaries, were men; only with the appointment of Frances Perkins as Labor Secretary in 1933 did women reach cabinet-level appointments for the first time. The personnel at Treasury in charge of the PWAP, Edward Bruce, Forbes Watson and E.B. Rowan, were all men.[29] Among the sixteen regional directors only one was female, Mrs. Juliana Force (the Director of the Whitney Museum of American Art) who administered Region II comprising the New York Metropolitan area.

The PWAP money was allocated quickly. The first Texas projects were proposed in Dallas in mid-December 1933 and approved in early January of 1934. [30] By March the money was running out and by May the PWAP was shutting down. Committee members recommended known artists for A-level pay positions and beginning artists were recommended by their teachers as B-level artists or C-level helpers. Because the PWAP was a short-lived program, administered by volunteers in haste before funds could run out in Washington, the fastest way to identify worthy artists was to use the existing networks of Texas artists. In particular, those artists in the networks of friendship

and patronage of Dallas Museum of Fine Arts Director Dr. John Ankeney and Museum of Fine Arts Houston Director James Chillman, Jr. benefitted from the PWAP. Between them, Ankeney and Chillman were responsible for securing employment for just over half the Texas artists put on the federal payroll.[31]

Ankeney and Chillman's approach to hiring reflected the gender differences in the Dallas and Houston arts communities. Art historian Susie Kalil has described the difference between the acceptance of women in Dallas and Houston in her article "Pioneer Artists 1836-1936." Regarding Dallas, she wrote:

> From the outset, Dallas was a male-dominated art colony. This is not to suggest that women in Dallas were denigrated or excluded from the art scene, but neither was there an effort to liberate them. For many years women were caught between the shifting roles of Sunday painters, educators and society mothers. The families who sent their little girls to art clubs were the same ones who later regarded their female "bohemian" artists as a social stigma.[32]

By way of contrast, MS. Kalil observed that:

> Unlike Dallas, art in Houston was a woman's concern. As the men transformed Houston into a commercial city, culture was invariably provided by the women – the schoolteachers and local "ladies" who had attended the finer Eastern institutions. Organizations were largely spearheaded by a few strong-willed women who set their sights on pushing forward an art movement... energetic Houston women formed collectives dedicated to raising aesthetic consciousness and hell-bent on reinforcing creative activity. [33]

Kalil's characterization of the Houston arts community in the early twentieth century echoed James Chillman Jr.'s own assessment. Writing in 1971, he remembered that,

> during the first two decades of the twentieth

> century the development of music and the visual arts was initiated, encouraged and promoted by women. Of course, there were men who understood the significance of the arts in a healthy society and lent moral and some practical support to what we have come to call the cultural aspects of life, but art in Houston was a woman's concern.[34]

For example Mrs. E. Richardson Cherry, Houston's first professional artist, in 1900 was one of the founders of the Houston Public School Art League which later led to the foundation of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The earliest art teachers in Houston were E. Richardson Cherry, Penelope Lingan, Stella Hope Shurtleff and women teaching art in the public schools. Stella Hope Shurtleff was the first person to teach art appreciation and art history at the Museum of Fine Arts of Houston.[35]

PWAP Region XII, comprising Texas and Oklahoma, was headed by Dr. John S. Ankeney, the director of the Dallas Museum of Fine Art. His official advisory committee of nine museum directors, academics, architects and arts administrators was all male, although at least one woman was consulted regarding Texas artists.[36] His most influential committee member was James Chillman, Jr., head of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Ankeney put Chillman in charge of Houston, Beaumont and east Texas, while he directly administered Dallas and north central Texas.

Dr. Ankeney's official correspondence reflected some of the gender prejudices current in the U. S. At one point he wrote to his advisory committee members, "In some parts of our region a few contracts were let to people who really were not eligible. We must watch in the future and absolutely eliminate those who have other resources of livelihood, such as a husband or wife employed who is earning a living wage."[37] A woman was much more likely to have an employed spouse than a man. In his correspondence Ankeney also seemed ambivalent about whether women should be treated as professional artists equal to the men. However, James Chillman, Jr. MFA Houston Director and Ankeney's expert on east Texas artists thought differently.

John Ankeney had a tendency to refer to all of his artists as men, e.g. "I believe the experiences the men are getting will mean that in some years from now we will get some very fine work if the people will

just respond and employ our best artists to put their work in banks and other buildings where art work is very much needed"[38]

Ankeney was particularly committed to producing murals. He wrote PWAP Technical Director Forbes Watson, "I feel we must not lose this chance to give our artists the experience of doing serious work in public buildings and also of showing our public what can be done."[39] Projects that Ankeney controlled, whether carried out by men or women, were almost all murals. In fact, Region XII, comprising Texas and Oklahoma was the only region in which the majority of the artists employed produced mural works. Most murals were not frescos, but were painted on wood or canvas panels and later affixed to walls. Lack of money to pay for materials, lack of experience with fresco technique, and limited funds to pay laborers dictated this. For the same reason, not all completed sculptures were cast into statues. Only if local money was available to pay for the casting could the clay sculpture be turned into a finished work.

Because of his emphasis on mural work, which Ankeney felt required "strong" (i.e. masculine) artists, he seemed to think that his best and most deserving artists were men and sought them over women: "...we want to get good work from artists who are in need of work.

Fortunate for me in my section of the state practically all of our best men have suffered terrible cuts in their income and really need the work."[40] He chided James Chillman for hiring so many women in East Texas: "Of the artists who seemed eligible when I was in Houston, the majority seem to be women. If you would care to consider having any of the strong men [from Dallas] who would take an appointment in one of your schools, City Hall, etc. with some of your local people to help him please advise me."[41] Later in the project, frustrated by the slow pace of the women doing murals for the Houston Public Library, he told Chillman, "I feel very much interested in the work of the young men who are starting projects, as they should do something quite strong and good. I regret that the women have undertaken such large things, as it does not seem that they have enough power to carry it through."[42]

James Chillman, Jr. disagreed with Ankeney on these points, reflecting his knowledge that women had been largely responsible for the promotion of the visual arts in Houston up to the 1930's.[43] He not only selected both single and married women to receive PWAP

support, but also defended the quality of their artistic output. When Ankeney suggested that women were not strong enough to complete mural projects, Chillman wrote back, "I don't know that I agree with your inferences that women would not be able to carry out strong and successful murals..."[44] He went on to explain that the delays were due to one artist's illness, and lack of money to pay for materials and installation. He also cited the work of Grace Spaulding John, a Houston artist with enough commissions not to qualify for PWAP work, as an example of a strong woman artist who painted murals. [45] In Chillman's final report on the artists working on projects in Houston and southeast Texas, in aggregate he rated the women as high or higher than the men.[46]

Because of Chillman's advocacy, overall the PWAP provided good opportunities for women in Texas. Region XII reported one of the highest percentages of women employed in any region, about thirty-six percent, while the national ratio was only one-fourth to one-fifth of the total. Women were much better represented in relation to their population than either Native Americans with only five artists or African American with none at all.[47]

Whatever John Ankeney wrote about women having problems completing murals, Region XII sponsored mural projects for a number of women in East and north central Texas, among them Virgie Claxton and Stella Shurtleff for Houston Schools, Adele Brunet and Laura Buchanan at the old Parkland Hospital, Ruby Stone and Maud West at the Highland Park Town Hall, Maurine Cantey for the Fair Park Auditorium, Emma Richardson Cherry, Ruth Pershing Uhler, and Angela MacDonnell for the Houston Public Library, Bertha Louise Hellman for the Houston post office, Katherine Green for a Beaumont High School, and Hellen Spellman for the Library at The College of Industrial Arts, now TWU.[48]

Established women artists from other parts of the state like printmakers Mary Bonner of San Antonio, Elizabeth Keefer Boatright of Austin, and Blanche McVeigh of Fort Worth; sculptor Evaline Sellors and painters Margaret Littlejohn and Sallie Mummert of Fort Worth; and Leola Freeman of El Paso also were hired. Other well-known artists like painter Grace Spaulding John of Houston and sculptor Allie Tennant of Dallas were excluded only because they lacked financial need and did not apply to the program.

A comparison of age groups among female and male PWAP

artists for whom birthdates are available (91% of women and 85% of the men) shows an interesting pattern. The women employed under the PWAP were considerably older than the men. Nearly half (47%) of the women were mid 40's or older, having been born before 1890. At 75, Emma Richardson Cherry was the oldest artist employed by the PWAP in Texas. Only about one third (31%) of the women were born in the twentieth century and thus were under age 34. There were equal numbers of women aged 45-54, 35-44 and 25-34.[49]

In contrast to this, only one fifth (20%) of the men with known birthdates were born before 1890 and more than half of them (53%) were born in the twentieth century and under age 34. Forty percent were young men aged 25-34, born in the first decade of the twentieth century.[50]

What could explain this difference? Two things come to mind: household responsibilities and professional status. The large number of women artists over 40 speaks to a reality of female existence. Women with dependent children had little time to devote to a vocation or avocation in art. There were many fewer women in their 20's and 30's (child bearing age) and less than half were married.[51] As mentioned earlier, it was still more socially acceptable in the 1930's for women artists, especially if married, to present themselves as talented amateurs whatever their training. In Dallas, public exhibits in the early 1930's, the majority of artists showing work were women, but the ranks of professional artists and the arts establishment were dominated by males. The PWAP offered no employment to amateurs.

The number of women employed in relation to men and the equity of pay differed around the state. In Dallas, where John Ankeney took charge himself, less than thirty percent of the artists employed were women, below the average of thirty-eight percent for Region XII. By way of contrast in East Texas, where James Chillman, Jr. made the recommendations, just over half the artists employed were women.[52] In Dallas, two-thirds of the women artists, without regard to age or status in the arts community were paid as B-level artists, but forty percent of the men were on the A list. In Houston, most women were treated like the men. About half were paid at the A level and the rest were paid B- or C- level wages. [53]

The demographic profile of the artists chosen by Ankeney and Chillman are also different. North Texas and Dallas reflect the general pattern throughout the state. 34% of the men were born before 1900,

and 43% were born in the first decade of the twentieth century. In contrast, 80% of the women were born before 1900 and were thus older than 34. 60% were over age 44. In Houston, the distribution of ages is far more equitable than either in north Texas or statewide. 55% of the women and 50% of the men were born before 1900. Half of both the women and men hired by Chillman were under age 34.

A sampling of women artists working in the Houston area and North Texas illustrates their diversity in age and experience as well as the range of artworks they created. At 75, Emma Richardson (Mrs. Dillin) Cherry had worked as an artist, art teacher, and arts activist for over half a century when she went to work for the federal government in 1934. She had joined the Art Students League in New York in 1883 and had studied with William Merritt Chase. She arranged the meeting that organized the Houston Public School Art League and was an early leader in the campaign to found an art museum in Houston. She made numerous trips to Europe to study and sketch,[54] had mastered modern trends in painting including abstraction, and was attracted to cubism, but mostly painted floral still lifes and landscapes because that was what people wanted to buy and she needed to sell her work.[55] Mrs. Cherry let her own instincts govern her artistic choices. When she received her contract for PWAP murals for the lobby of the Houston Public Library, she heard the project leadership's directives and ignored them. She declined to paint the contemporary "American Scene" in favor of historical subjects, did not adopt the social realist style favored in Washington, and even failed to consistently depict Texas. She produced four large oil on canvas murals for the second floor lobby of the Houston Public Library (now the Ideson Branch) painting the homes of Robert E. Lee in Arlington Virginia and Jefferson Davis in Biloxi, Mississippi as well as Sam Houston's home and the first Capitol building in Texas. She surrounded each with a border of flora appropriate to the location of the home. In addition to Mrs. E. Richardson Cherry, the other older women had had long careers as professionals, not amateurs. Martha Simkins, called Mattie by family and friends, was 65 years old when she participated in the PWAP. She had had a 30 year long career as a portrait and still life painter, splitting her time between New York and Dallas (University Park). She returned to Texas for good in 1934, just in time to participate in the PWAP. The most likely reason for her return may have been a financial move, since she appears to have been in reduced financial circumstances. However,

it might have been to care for her elderly mother at the family home on McFarland Blvd., or at age 68 and single, to retire in the town where she grew up.

Although she wished to be an artist as a girl, Simkins attended the University of Texas in the 1880's and took a degree in English to prepare for a career in teaching. By 1892, however, she traveled to New York City to begin training as a student at the Art Students League. She also studied in Europe and opened a studio in New York.[56] In Dallas she cultivated women's organizations and groups to attract commissions. She painted many children and civically prominent men based on these connections, but her strong association with women' voluntary groups may have marginalized her as a "painting woman." The advent of the regionalist movement in Dallas from the late 1920's to the early 1940's also marginalized her in the arts scene. She wasn't interested in the American Scene and her style owed more to William Merritt Chase than social realism. Still, she combined the artistic credentials with financial need required for a PWAP contract. Since she specialized in portraits she was commissioned to paint a portrait of Edwin J. Kiest, owner of the Dallas Times Herald, Director of the First National Bank, leader of the Dallas Art Association, and patron of the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts.[57]

Angela MacDonnell was also a well-established artist, although relatively new to Houston. Originally from Galveston, MacDonnell studied art in New York at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago. She worked in the New Orleans area from the beginning of the first decade of the century to the late 1920's.[58] In the mid-1930's she had a studio in Houston teaching private students and working in a range of media from plaster reliefs and prints to oils and watercolors.[59] Her three lunettes (half-moon shaped murals to fit into arched hallway recesses) "Toledo," "Avila," and "La Rabida," addressed the contribution of the Hispanic heritage to Texas. MacDonnell had spent a year researching and sketching in Spain in the early 1930's. That influenced her to create these historical lunettes. She had a decorator's eye for detail. As James Chillman, Jr. observed at the time, she chose her color scheme to blend with the wall color of the hallway![60]

Women aided by the PWAP included mid-career artists in their 30's and 40's struggling as teaching jobs and commissions dwindled, trying to maintain careers begun in the 1910's and 1920's. Ruth Pershing Uhler was an established artist nearly 40 years of age when

she received permission to paint a mural for the Houston Public Library. Born in Pennsylvania, her family moved to Texas when she was a child and she grew up in Houston. She returned to Pennsylvania for advanced education, taking a bachelor's degree at the Philadelphia School of Design in 1921.[61] She taught in Pennsylvania for several years and returned home to Houston in 1926 to set up a studio. Uhler later recalled being invited by James Chillman, Jr., along with "Mrs. Cherry and Miss MacDonald (sic)," to do murals for the Houston Public Library.[62] For her library mural she chose to depict the efforts of the community to start a library in the 1860's. She researched her mural carefully. She read the minutes of the Lyceum Committee which raised money and sought book donations to start the library. She borrowed daguerreotypes from old Houston families in order to depict furniture and costume accurately. Because the Lyceum committee excluded women, and she wanted to recognize the contributions of women to founding the library, Uhler painted committee members visiting a family in search of subscriptions. The central panel of "The First Subscription Committee 1864" was begun in January 1934 in her Houston studio. She special ordered a large piece of canvas sailcloth for the 11' x 18' panel and worked out a recipe for an adhesive to adhere it to the staircase wall.[63] She planned two smaller panels about 2 ½' x 10' each for the sides and at least one was painted, but these were never installed.[64]

Ruby Stone was about 36 when she painted her two historical murals "Pioneer Life in Texas," and "The Perils of the Trail" for the Highland Park Town Hall.[65] A native of Louisiana, she arrived in Dallas with her first husband in the mid-1920's and began taking classes at the newly established Dallas Art Institute. She showed an early ability in portraiture and by 1930 was invited to teach at the Dallas Art Institute. Soon she won one of the Art Institute's first scholarships to study in Europe. She returned to teaching in Dallas and later studied in New York.[66] She had a studio at the Stoneleigh Court Hotel in the 1930's, where she painted her 4' x 6' murals on wood panels.[67] Her mural "The Perils of the Trail" was honored by having a photo of it hung in the *National Exhibition of Art by the Public Works of Art Project* at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington D.C. in the spring of 1934.

A very few younger women in their 20's and early 30's who were trying to start their careers in a tough art market were hired. Maurine Cantey, 33, was from Fort Worth but making a name for herself in

Dallas in the 1930's. Her painting "Pagan Holiday" had won a purchase prize at the 1933 Allied Arts Show in Dallas.[68] She worked with architect William Anderson on the largest single item produced for the PWAP, the 2 ½ ton 65' x 37' front drop curtain at Fair Park Auditorium. She replaced an earlier painted decoration with the mural "Modern Texas," providentially done in silver and blue.[69] John Ankeney singled out Maurine Cantey's project for praise noting that "the great curtain (26 by 60 feet) is being repainted from an atrocious piece of crude naturalism to a really fine symbolic decoration."[70]

Bertha Hellman, 34, was an unmarried professional. She had lived in Houston for a number of years, had studied at Rice, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and with cubist painter Andre l'Hote in Paris.[71] The 6' x 10' allegorical mural she painted on canvas in her Houston studio and then installed at the Post Office had as its central figures Peace and man.[72] In her early 20's Helen Spellman, from Forney, was a recent graduate of the Texas State College for Women/ College of Industrial Arts (now TWU) in Denton. Her older sister, Coreen, was a young faculty member at the college. For the college library Helen painted scenes of campus life: "the May fete, the Christmas assembly and choral singing, the Christmas dinner, and commencement exercises," surrounded by lettered borders.[73] A notable aspect of the work was the fact that "Yards and yards of strips of invisible tape served as the immediate background of the paintings; the strips were crossed causing the appearance of different color tones on the hundreds of squares noticeable in the paintings."[74] Sadly, not even an image of this murals still exists.

The Public Works of Art Project extended economic relief to female Texas artists. It put almost 40 under- and unemployed women artists to work producing murals, paintings and other art objects which utilized and showcased their talents in a way beneficial to themselves and the public. Libraries, courthouses, hospitals, and schools all over Texas received murals, easel paintings, and a few sculptures created by PWAP artists. In many cases the income from a month or two of work with the PWAP sustained them in their chosen careers despite the hard times of the early 1930's.

There were also psychological benefits for the women artists. For example Bertha Louise Hellman, 34, was recommended by James Chillman, Jr. both because "she needed the work badly" and because he liked her sketches for a proposed series of murals for the Houston

Post Office.[75] Hellman had sketched a series of murals on the theme of world peace for the lobby, but there was only enough money to pay her to create one of them for the post office.[76] Yet she was not frustrated but found the experience exhilarating. She wrote to John Ankeney, about "...the thrill I get in being a part of this really historical event for the advancement of art in America....I wish to express my gratitude to you for helping me to have this opportunity."[77] Similarly, Angela MacDonnell wrote to the editor of the *Public Works of Art Project Bulletin*, "Have fully enjoyed my work with the P.W.A. (sic) and feel that it is the greatest opportunity that artists have had, and certainly not one, that in the wildest moments of imagination hoped to experience."[78]

However, not all the women were completely happy with the program. Some quietly accepted whatever classification was awarded them; others did not. When Angela MacDonnell was asked to accept B-level pay for a month in order to finish her lunettes for the Houston Public Library she was so indignant that John Ankeney decided to pay her for 3 weeks at A level instead of 4 at B level "to salve her pride."[79] When Virgie Claxton of Houston was recommended to work at the B rate by Chillman, she objected on the grounds that her financial need and professional status were equal to male artists she knew to be paid in the A category. She did add, however, that she would do the work at whatever rate she was paid.[80]

The most extreme complaint about treatment was lodged against Dr. John Ankeney. Maud West, a widow of about 50 originally from Cleburne, arrived in Dallas in 1933 after decades of work as an art educator in the public schools of Houston and New Mexico.[81] When assigned in January 1934 to paint a mural, "Indian Dance" for the Highland Park Town Hall[82] as a B level artist she sent an irate telegram to President and Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt at the White House charging Dr. John S. Ankeney with "discrimination" and "professional jealousy." She complained that "amateurs" had been put to work at the $42.50 a week class A wage and were assigned helpers, while she was classified a B artist at $26.50 and refused the helper she requested. Claiming extreme financial need due to illness and the foreclosure on her home, she asked FDR to secure an A classification for her and make Ankeney give her the differential in back pay.[83] When she did not receive a prompt reply (the White House having referred the complaint to the wrong government office) she sent a second telegram a few weeks later.[84]

The matter was mistakenly referred to FERA, so it took some time for it to pass to the head of the CWA (which funded the PWAP), who contacted Edward Bruce the Head of the PWAP Advisory Committee. Ankeney had written Bruce characterizing West as a crank and malcontent as well as being a mediocre artist at best.[85] Bruce's response took Ankeney's side. The PWAP directors agreed and she was written off as a difficult person.[86] Undeterred, West then wrote Eleanor Roosevelt an even more detailed complaint: "His rating me class B was an insult to my standing as an artist and was an effort to embarrass (sic) me and hurt my standing as an artist before the Dallas public – where I have to paint for a living."[87] She also charged that Ankeney gave her only one month with no helper to paint her panel (either true or dry fresco) while "able-bodied men" got two months' pay and a helper (presumably she was referring to the massive City Hall mural project undertaken by two young men with helpers).[88] Nothing further seems to have come of this, either because it had already been referred and answered, or because the PWAP was about to end in April 1934.

The PWAP was also a success in terms of the aesthetic goal of producing quality art for the masses. In the project's national newsletter women artists were praised for their mural work: "...they are turning out distinguished work, a number of them undertaking murals. In many cases they are setting a high standard for most of the men. American women in the past four years have had a chance to show their caliber and they have not been found wanting."[89]

Although in Texas PWAP artists did produce some pedestrian artworks, on the whole both the administrators in Washington and the committee members in Texas found the level of accomplishment to be very high. James Chillman, Jr., in his final report rated Cherry, Uhler and Green's mural work as of excellent quality.[90] Even Angela MacDonnell's lunettes, which Chillman considered to be of average quality, he explained away as being designed with a color palette to match the already painted walls of the hallway. He also wrote that "the work of Bertha Louise Hellman looks very well in the Post Office."[91] Emma Richardson Cherry, Ruth Pershing Uhler and Bertha Hellman, inspired by the excitement generated by even this modest level of government patronage, chose to spend additional time off the payroll to complete more ambitious and higher quality works than they were required to do to get their paychecks.[92]

Much of the PWAP art in Dallas and Houston has been lost

or destroyed, including Hellman, Green, Cantey, Stone, West and Spellman's murals, but the Houston Public Library murals still exist. The opportunities that the PWAP provided to undertake public art projects gave a tremendous boost to women artists in Texas. Most were able to establish or continue careers in art. Ruby Stone continued as a professional portrait artist in Houston and New York.[93] Helen Spellman married and moved to east Texas. She became an art teacher in the Beaumont public schools. Maurine Cantey moved to Port Arthur in 1935 when her husband got a job with the PWA and established herself there as a portrait and landscape painter. She continued to show her paintings in Texas with success throughout the 1940's' Moving back to Dallas, she was giving individual art instruction to children and teenagers in the early 1950's.[94] Emma Richardson Cherry and Martha Simkins continued to teach private students and paint well into the 1950's. At age 95 Simkins was still able to spend time in New York attending classes at the Art Students League.[95] Angela MacDonnell remained an active artist at least into the 1940's.[96] Ruth Pershing Uhler gave up painting in the early 1940's to become the full-time Curator of Education for the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. She taught classes in and ran the museum school, gave talks, organized tours and gallery talks for groups of all ages, ran an evening program and, in short, became a fixture around the museum for the next 25 years. Grateful Houstonians created a scholarship fund named in her honor.[97] These represent careers in art, launched or sustained by federal help in the depths of the Great Depression.

Sadly, the recognition women artists enjoyed during the PWAP did not last. The PWAP existed for only six months between December 1933 and June 1934, but it led to further federal support for the arts; it was succeeded by broader, better funded programs designed to bring relief to artists and create high quality art for government buildings. The most important of these programs for Texas was the Section of Painting and Sculpture of the Treasury Department. In October 1934, 1% of the funding for new federal buildings was set aside for decoration. Commissions were awarded nationwide through anonymous competitions.[98] These federally funded programs proved a great stimulus to mural painting in the southwestern United States. Almost 100 murals and reliefs were produced for Texas post offices and federal buildings under this program between 1934 and 1943. However, few women artists succeeded in securing commissions for

Texas.[99] Additionaly, in his analysis of women artists' participation in the 1936 Texas Centennial Exhibition, Dr. Jack Davis found that prejudices against women as non-serious amateurs persisted. Although sixty percent of the artists displayed were women, Men were more prominently highlighted in press releases and the catalog. The best locations in the exhibition were also dominated by the art of male artists.[100]

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48 Information from a List of Texas PWAP artists able compiled by the author from various sources.

49 Statistics from a List of Texas PWAP artists able compiled by the author from various sources.

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The Dismissal of Rupert C. Koeninger: Cold War Hysteria, Academic Freedom, and the Creation of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 1960-1966

By Carolyn A. Carroll and Jeffrey L. Littlejohn

On May 6, 1961, after more than a decade of devoted service at Sam Houston State Teachers College (SHSTC), Professor Rupert C. Koeninger received word that he would soon be dismissed from his position as chair of the school's Sociology Department. Surprised by the news, the fifty-four-year-old academic naturally questioned the president of the Huntsville, Texas campus, Harmon Lowman, about his pending dismissal. Lowman could offer little in the way of clarification, however. The president had not initiated proceedings against Koeninger, nor had he received any complaints from students, faculty, or staff members about the sociologist or his work. In fact, as Lowman hesitantly revealed, he had been pressured by the Texas State Teachers College Board of Regents to decline Koeninger's contract because of allegations made against him by right-wing politicians and activists who opposed his stance on civil liberties and civil rights.[1]

Although elements of the Koeninger dismissal story have been told before, no one has ever been able to uncover the real players behind the events until today. Using archival evidence that has only recently become available, this article pushes beyond the contemporary accounts of Koeninger's dismissal by journalist Ronnie Dugger, historian C. Vann Woodward, and faculty-activist William J. Kilgore. While these authors each offered their own elegantly-written interpretation of

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events, their investigations and arguments were constrained by the secretive nature of the men responsible for Koeninger's dismissal. Although all three authors recognized the critical role that the Texas State Teachers College Board of Regents played in Koeninger's case, none of them knew where the charges against the professor originated or what the significance of his dismissal might be. Indeed, even the most recent scholarship on the Koeninger case -- by historians Amilcar Shabazz and Jo Ann Williamson-Lott -- fails to identify the parties who orchestrated Koeninger's dismissal or the ultimate significance of it.[2]

In order to enhance and correct the existing narrative, this essay links the behind-the-scenes machinations of four key individuals who were responsible for Koeninger's dismissal: James A. Franklin, Jr., the business manager of a little-known Bible College in Tehuacana, Texas; John V. Dowdy, Sr., the powerful Congressman from the Seventh Texas Congressional District; William H. "Bill" Kellogg, the chair of the John Birch Society in Walker County; and finally C. Smith Ramsey, the chairman of the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System. Archival evidence shows that these radical right-wing ideologues ran roughshod over Koeninger's academic and personal liberty in a vicious act meant to silence his support for civil liberties and civil rights. In the process, however, these radical forces overplayed their hand and prompted state and national organizations, including the Texas Association of College Teachers (TACT) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), to defend Koeninger and his academic freedom.

In the fall of 1962, TACT members censured the Texas State Teachers College Board of Regents and SHSTC's president, while the following spring AAUP members placed SHSTC on its list of censured administrations. As a result of these groups' vigorous activities and the misdeeds that they brought to light, state legislators including Charles "Charlie" Wilson and Franklin Spears pushed for the creation of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Although the board was created for many reasons, Koeninger's dismissal, and others like it, served as a key factor in the campaign to reform higher education in Texas. By exploring the new legislation that came about because of the censures, as well as the paper trail between SHSTC administrators and AAUP officials during the seven years that the college remained on the censure list, this essay presents a fresh examination of Rupert

Koeninger's dismissal and its broader significance for higher education in the Lone Star State.

Born on March 13, 1907, in a log cabin that sat on the boundary between Wise and Jack counties in northwest Texas, Rupert Koeninger was the grandson of German immigrants who had migrated to the state in the mid-nineteenth century. Although Koeninger's father, August, worked as a school teacher in Wise County, and his mother, Lina, was the daughter of a pioneering doctor, the family never had much money. Even so, Koeninger enjoyed a happy childhood with his close-knit family in Mineral Wells, a small settlement about eighty miles west of Dallas. Then, at 18, he moved with his parents and five siblings to Plainview, where he completed one year of high school education at Wayland Baptist Academy. Although Koeninger showed great promise as a student, his father informed him that the family simply could not afford to pay for college. So, the tenacious young man took out a promissory note of his own in June 1926 to pay for tuition, and enrolled at the local Wayland Baptist Junior College. After a year of "sleeping in a coal bin on a pallet of quilts, and earning [his] meals by waiting on tables and washing dishes," he graduated from Wayland in 1927, briefly toured the American West, before finishing off his undergraduate studies at Lubbock's Texas Technological College in 1929.[3]

Just as Koeninger graduated from college, however, the Great Depression and Dust Bowl came to Texas. Pushed by these events and drawn by his desire to return to the West, he packed up and hitchhiked to Montana, where he took a job at Glacier National Park. Following a summer of backbreaking construction work, he received a teaching position at a tiny public school in Fairview, Montana. He stayed at the post for four crucial years, during which he witnessed the deprivation caused by the Depression and determined to do something about it through a career in education.[4]

In 1933, while on a hitchhiking vacation from Montana to New York City, Koeninger stopped off at two spots that proved critical to his later life and career. The first was in Chicago, where he visited the World's Fair, known as the "Century of Progress," and became acquainted with his future graduate school, the University of Chicago. Then, at a second stop in Lawrence, Kansas, Koeninger visited a YMCA friend whom he had known at Texas Tech. The friend introduced him to fellow Texan, Ethel Browning Childers, a YMCA Secretary in Kansas City, Missouri,

and a year later Koeninger and Ethel were married. Following his wedding, Koeninger moved with his new bride to Chicago, where he pursued a Master's degree in the nation's preeminent graduate program in sociology and befriended the economics professor, social activist, and later U.S. Senator Paul Douglas. Following his graduation from the University of Chicago in 1935, Koeninger moved his family to Columbus Ohio, where he enrolled in the doctoral program at Ohio State University, which was chaired by Professor Frederick E. Lumley, a specialist in the field of propaganda and democracy. Koeninger received his PhD in Sociology in 1939 and embraced Lumley's warnings about the dangers that propaganda posed to democratic discourse.[5]

Although Koeninger rarely discussed his time in graduate school, the lessons that he learned there became apparent over the course of the subsequent decade, as he accepted teaching positions at Marietta College, Central Michigan University, and Sam Houston State Teachers College. Prior to his employment at SHSTC, Koeninger received 3 post-doctoral awards that helped to shape the contours of his future research and activism. The first, from the General Education Board, funded Koeninger's work on the problems of juvenile delinquency in Michigan high schools. The second, from the Alfred E. Sloan Foundation, enabled him to develop educational opportunities to help low-income groups to improve their economic status. And, the third, from the National Council of Christians and Jews, afforded him the time and funds to work with the Chippewa Indians in Central Michigan in an economic development program. All of these post-doctoral research projects resulted from Koeninger's commitment to helping the underprivileged empower themselves as they struggled to find a place in America's broader democracy.[6]

In 1947, after nearly a decade of working in Michigan, Koeninger moved with his wife and four children back to Texas to continue his career as head of the Sociology Department at SHSTC. Koeninger's daughter, Frieda, remembered that her father pursued work in Huntsville because the city had so many fascinating complexities. It was a small town with both rural and urban problems; it was a diverse town with both racial and economic tensions; and, it was a historic town with both the oldest teachers college and the oldest prison in the state. Together, the location and particular challenges associated with Huntsville made it the perfect place to continue his work.[7] In fact, Koeninger proved to be one of the most successful and beloved

academics at SHSTC. During his tenure at the school, the Sociology Department grew from one to five faculty members and earned a national reputation for excellence. He oversaw the department's 174 undergraduate majors and helped them achieve both academic degrees and professional training that would serve them later in life. And, it soon became clear that these accomplishments were not lost on local leaders. Two years after moving to Huntsville, Koeninger also received an appointment as director of the Bureau of Classification at the Texas Prison System, which required that he oversee vital aspects of the state's criminal justice system and teach one class every year within the prison walls.[8]

As Koeninger established a leadership role for himself at SHSTC, he also emerged as an important, if controversial, figure in Huntsville. Since his earliest days in the teaching profession in Fairview, Montana, he had always been an engaged scholar, and he found plenty of social work that needed doing in Huntsville. To begin with, Koeninger set out to address the racial inequities that existed in the city in the early 1950s. At that time, most local retail stores and restaurants simply refused to serve African Americans, while the city's movie theaters, gas stations, and banks offered only second class, segregated services. Black residents could not swim at the public swimming pool, nor were they allowed in Huntsville State Park, which, ironically, was built by an all-black unit of the Civilian Conservations Corps. An example of the park administration's strict adherence in preventing blacks from enjoying the park's amenities took place in the late 1950s, when Koeninger invited African American Reverend William "Bill" Lawson of Wheeler Baptist Church in Houston to speak before his sociology class. During a lunch break, Koeninger, Lawson, and the students went to the park with lunches in tow. To his disgust, however, the park ranger refused entrance to Reverend Lawson and asked the group to leave the park.[9]

To counteract this system of racial discrimination, Koeninger engaged in a number of activities that aimed to improve relations between whites and blacks. After his arrival in Huntsville, for instance, he joined the Texas Commission on Interracial Cooperation (TCIC) at the suggestion of his friend and colleague, Joseph Lynn Clark. A former TCIC vice president and director of SHSTC's Division of Social Sciences, Clark encouraged Koeninger to become active in the TCIC's efforts to improve educational opportunities, health care facilities, and

social welfare programs for African Americans in Texas.[10] The group proved too conservative for Koeninger, however, and he soon pressed beyond the TCIC's modest agenda of yearly meetings and letter-writing campaigns. In place of these activities, he pushed for direct action, encouraging the students in SHSTC's Young Democrats club to conduct voter registration efforts in local stores that were frequented by African Americans. Much to the chagrin of Mary Vick Arnold, the county tax collector, and local commissioner John Yelverton, Koeninger allowed students to set up tables at the stores and offer themselves as agents to receive poll taxes from voters. Although county attorney John Phillips acknowledged that such action did not violate the law, which allowed anyone to "go out and get voters to appoint them as their agents," County Judge Amos Gates said that the procedure "could lead to interference by unauthorized people" and suggested that it be stopped.[11]

Although Koeninger's local civil rights activities rubbed many whites in Huntsville the wrong way, his real trouble with the Texas State Teachers College Board of Regents did not begin until 1960, when he agreed to teach an extension course on sociology at the Mexia State School near Waco. This position brought Koeninger into contact with new students and community members who knew little about him or his long-time service at SHSTC. Koeninger's outsider-status in Mexia would have likely gone unnoticed at another time in Texas history, but the winter of 1960-1961 proved to be a particularly tense period in the Lone Star State. As school desegregation cases filled the federal court system, and young people conducted sit-in demonstrations to integrate public businesses, white Texans recognized that the dawn of the 1960s had ushered in a fundamental challenge to their traditional way of life. No one understood this better than Mexia's newest local conservative, James A. Franklin Jr.

Franklin served as the business manager for the Westminster College and Bible Institute in the nearby town of Tehuacana and following one of Koeninger's local appearances, he called for an investigation of the professor's activities in December 1960. Franklin had begun his employment at Westminster College, which was supported by the Methodist Church, in 1958. Shortly after his arrival, Franklin, an ordained minister, began speaking before local organizations such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Rotary Club. His speeches centered on the threat posed to America by

communism. He cautioned many groups against complacency toward communism and stressed that Americans stood on the "threshold of destruction" and could only be saved through the "preaching and teaching of God's word."[12] Franklin vigilantly pointed out those people whom he suspected of subversive acts, and he wrote to Donald L. Johnson, the legal assistant to Congressman John Dowdy, about Koeninger's work at Mexia that December.

Franklin informed Johnson that he had learned that Koeninger had launched a tirade of anti-Americanism by speaking ill of the anti-communist House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) and its film "Operation Abolition." This film portrayed college student protests at a HUAC hearing at San Francisco's City Hall in May 1960 in a negative light. The film contended that the student protests had been Communist-inspired and led. The purpose of the film was to show how well-meaning and college-educated Americans could fall prey to Communist deception.[13]

Franklin wrote to Johnson and Dowdy because the pair had made frequent visits to Westminster over the past year. Dowdy had delivered an address at a special chapel service about "patriotism and the straight gospel" on December 9, 1960, and it was shortly after this visit that the supposed tirade by Koeninger occurred. Franklin wanted Koeninger removed from the public education system in Texas. He asked Johnson to provide any background material on Koeninger, his connection with subversive organizations, and other information that could be used against the professor. Franklin informed Johnson that the administrative staff at Westminster planned to appear before the president of SHSTC and the state educational officials to request Koeninger's dismissal.[14] Johnson forwarded this information to Congressman Dowdy, who in turn wrote to the chairman of HUAC, Francis E. Walter. Dowdy asked Walter to provide him with any information on Koeninger that might possibly connect him with communist front organizations, but he mistakenly misspelled Koeninger's first name on his memorandum.[15]

Although Dowdy did not appear to recognize Koeninger's name -- despite a confrontation the two men had had during Dowdy's congressional campaign in the spring of 1960 -- he launched an investigation at Franklin's request.[16] As an ardent fighter against the communist threat, Dowdy, like other ultra-conservatives, relied heavily on the religious community to support his anti-communist campaign. Although Franklin was not in Dowdy's voting district, the

Congressman worked on his behalf in order to ferret out any wrong doing.[17] Dowdy believed that the communist conspiracy was an ever present danger to America, and he, along with other like-minded Southern congressmen, linked Moscow, Beijing, and the red threat to ongoing domestic disturbances, especially those of the civil rights movement. Dowdy promised to do all in his power to help throw suspected communists and traitors out of office and out of places of power within the nation.[18] Koeninger, holding the Chair's position in the Sociology Department at SHSTC, had power over both faculty members and students. Dowdy feared that Koeninger's liberal views may have stemmed from Communist beliefs, and worried that Koeninger may have used his status within the college to indoctrinate his students in Communist ideology.

Indeed, Dowdy kept his word to James Franklin and contacted his long-time friend, William H. "Bill" Kellogg of Huntsville, to inquire about Koeninger's reputation. Kellogg, a forester for over 50 years and former president of the Walker County Farm Bureau, served as the chair of the local John Birch Society.[19] With his wife, Ava Louise, Kellogg acted as Dowdy's informant on liberals and leftists in Walker County. Dowdy and the Kelloggs kept in frequent contact with each other, while coordinating events to promote anti-Communist propaganda, such as the film "Operation Abolition." Kellogg accompanied Dowdy to Westminster in March 1961 to show the films "Communism on the Map" and "Operation Abolition."[20] Mrs. Kellogg also corresponded with Congressman O. C. Fisher, a native of Junction, Texas. In response to one of her letters in regard to desegregation, Fisher wrote that "he wished we had more people like you who take an active interest in this nefarious movement that is always cropping up."[21] Along with the Kelloggs, Dowdy also was quite involved with former Texas Representative Ed Gossett, who at the time of Koeninger's case was one of the newly elected members of the Texas State University System Board of Regents that oversaw Sam Houston State Teachers College. Apparently Gossett was involved in the making of the anti-Communist film "Communist Encirclement" in which he was a commentator. Dowdy was most interested in getting copies of the film and showing it his congressional district.[22]

After receiving Dowdy's letter requesting information on Koeninger, Kellogg immediately responded to Dowdy, correcting the congressman's misspelling of Koeninger's first name. Kellogg

then suggested that Dowdy request that HUAC run a new search on Koeninger. (The Federal Bureau of Investigation did eventually create a case file on Rupert Koeninger).[23] Then, Kellogg proceeded to brief Dowdy on Koeninger's position at SHSTC, and he enclosed a copy of a 1955 *Houston Post* article, which covered a speech that Koeninger had given at a Southern Conference Education Fund (SCEF) event held at the YWCA in Houston. Expressing the conventional wisdom of the time, Kellogg wrote that the SCEF had been cited as a communist front organization and sarcastically wrote that the reason this organization had met at the YWCA was that no one in Washington was "so brash as to even breathe that these Christian Associations might somehow be involved in the subversive plot to destroy America and Christianity too."[24] Kellogg stated that Koeninger seemed to always find himself in some sort of controversy and was a liberal Democrat. Kellogg also referenced Koeninger's attempt at a "cozy little integrated picnic" at Huntsville State Park. He went on to write that the park ranger spoke of Texan's attitude toward this sort of "brother hooding" and had asked Koeninger and his group to leave. In Kellogg's closing statement to Dowdy, he wrote: "I can sympathize with James Franklin, of Westminster College, with his desire to have this man placed where he can do less harm. We have discussed the matter locally and there is some sentiment for keeping him here where he is so well known rather than having him go elsewhere spreading poison where he might be more respected as an educated man of stature."[25]

William Kellogg was not the only person in Huntsville contacted by Dowdy. Attorney J. Philip Gibbs, Jr., whose ancestors founded Gibbs National Bank in 1890 (now known as First Bank of Huntsville), received an inquiry from Dowdy dated February 9, 1961. Gibbs promptly responded to Dowdy, saying that he considered Koeninger wildly liberal in his views. He also pointed out that Koeninger's wife, Ethel, was very nice and worked at the bank. The letter suggested that Koeninger had a tremendous influence on SHSTC students "for the bad." Gibbs believed that Koeninger indoctrinated the students with socialistic and near-communistic ideals, and he personally hoped that Koeninger would move on to another institution in a more liberal area, like California. Gibbs further wrote that "at least two of his friends on the Board of Regents" agreed with him, and they were "simply waiting for a good reason to clobber him." In his closing sentences to Dowdy, Gibbs asked that his name be kept out of the discussion since

he lived in the same town as Koeninger. Gibbs wanted to avoid any embarrassment.[26]

The following month, Dowdy received a letter from Regent C. Smith Ramsey, a San Augustine County attorney and brother of Ben Ramsey, the state Railroad Commissioner and former lieutenant governor. The well-connected Regent requested that Dowdy share any information that he had "regarding some faculty members at SHSTC that the Board of Regents should have before they hire faculty at the annual May meeting." Ramsey continued with the letter by writing, "If you think the Board might need this information, I would appreciate that you pass it on to me, so I might bring it to the Board's attention." Two things are worthy of further attention, when reviewing this letter. First, Ramsey was quite cautious to avoid incriminating himself; he did not mention any faculty names (this seemed to be a pattern with Ramsey and other board members); and second, at the bottom of the letter he carbon copied J. Phillip Gibbs, a move that definitely got a reaction. Gibbs immediately wrote Dowdy and denied that he had brought the Koeninger investigation to C.S. Ramsey's attention and expressed his concern that he not end up in the middle of a college explosion. Gibbs also wrote to Ramsey and reiterated much of what he had written in his response to Dowdy's February inquiry letter. Gibbs asked Ramsey to keep his name out of any future discussions; he did not want to feel responsible for a man losing his job.

As this informant decided to remain silent, Ramsey reached to William Kellogg for information about a confrontation that he had recently had with Koeninger during the showing of "Operation Abolition" in Huntsville. Ramsey wanted to know the details of the night's events, which Kellogg happily provided. Apparently the story made an impression, because Ramsey then put additional pressure on SHSTC President Harmon Lowman to get rid of Koeninger. Liberal Koeninger had provoked some powerful enemies, and it was clear that he would no longer remain at SHSTC.[27]

A week before graduation, on May 6, 1961, President Lowman finally acted on the pressure that he had received from Ramsey and the Board of Regents. That afternoon, he summoned Koeninger to his office and informed him that "the Board has let you out."[28] Koeninger, who felt that he had done nothing to warrant such action, felt dumbfounded at first and then questioned Lowman about the Board's decision. Lowman responded that the Board took the position

that Koeninger had once previously been warned, referencing a May 1960 politicking incident, in which Koeninger had signed a public petition showing his support for E.R. Wright, a candidate who was running against incumbent District Judge Max Rogers of Huntsville.[29] Moreover, Lowman reminded him of the more recent complaint that Koeninger had spoken in opposition to the film "Operation Abolition." Other possible contributors toward Koeninger's dismissal were allegations that he had engaged in an intense political discussion with a student in an extension class of SHSTC located at the Mexia State School, and that there was knowledge that Koeninger had spoken before an alleged Communist front group -- the SCEF -- a result of information gathered from a security check. Despite these vague and undocumented allegations, the names of Koeninger's accusers were never divulged to him. Nor did he have the opportunity to confront them in any way.[30]

After meeting with SHSTC's President Harmon Lowman, Koeninger realized his job was truly in jeopardy. He stated in his diary notes, "At first I had the urge to tell the Board to hell with all of them and the job and quietly fade away."[31] However, Koeninger truly believed that if he acted on this gut reaction that no faculty position would be safe. Someone could complain about a teacher resulting in the Board firing that teacher without due process and this was exactly what happened to him. Koeninger had been fired without any hearing and received no formal charges. With Koeninger's employment with SHSTC scheduled to end at the close of the Spring 1962 semester, he drafted a letter to the Board stating that he could not see "how a responsible Board of Regents, acting upon gossip and hearsay and without making any charges, can relieve me of my work and dedication to the service of my fellow man." He then went on to paraphrase the Declaration of Independence, stating that "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind require that the Board set forth the reasons for such a separation." Koeninger independently pursued information from various Board members, but as it became more apparent to him that his dismissal was politically based, he solicited help from members of TACT and the AAUP. Koeninger first drafted a letter to AAUP General Secretary William Fidler, requesting an investigation in regard to his dismissal. Within days of notifying the AAUP, Koeninger wrote TACT's Elton Abernathy asking for formal consideration of his case by the Professional Standards Committee. Koeninger apprised Abernathy

that he had contacted the AAUP in hopes that the two organizations could combine their resources.[32]

According to the AAUP Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (1940), faculty members at colleges and universities had an obligation to "exercise appropriate restraint" when interacting with the public. They were to "show respect for the opinions of others, and [to] make every effort that [they were] not an institutional spokesman." At the same time, college and university administrators had a responsibility to treat faculty members with respect and to provide due process (including written notice and a hearing) when a faculty member was to be dismissed.[33] Since Koeninger was not afforded the opportunity for due process, TACT and the AAUP intervened on Koeninger's behalf to investigate and to censure the responsible parties. An agreement to take Koeninger's case marked the first time the Professional Standards Committee dealt with a violation of academic freedom and tenure. Elton Abernathy stated that since it was the first venture into this field, TACT should wade carefully, with dignity, and with complete respect for procedure. Koeninger replied, "We should not allow this opportunity to pass by default or inactivity." Upon TACT's acceptance of the case, Koeninger informed his colleagues at SHSTC as well as other professional colleagues. He stated that his dismissal had ceased to be purely a personal issue, but now was a college issue, and furthermore, all faculty members would be affected by the outcome of the case.[34]

Despite the overwhelming support that Koeninger received, Robert Van Waes of the AAUP cautioned Koeninger against sharing and distributing to colleagues information pertinent to the case. Van Waes did not want to put the TACT investigation in jeopardy. Alice Calkins, executive secretary for TACT, concurred with Van Waes and sent a memo to the TACT policy committee urging them to keep the matter out of the press until the Board of Regents' May annual meeting. Van Waes and Calkins, both feared publicity might upset the efforts to negotiate a solution.[35] The TACT Professional Standards Committee appointed Dr. Corwin W. Johnson, a former member of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and then professor of law at the University of Texas, and Dr. Edmund Heinsohn, a retired minister of the Methodist Church and former practicing lawyer, to serve as the organization's investigative panel. Johnson and Heinsohn planned a visit to SHSTC's campus on March 21, 1962 to speak with Koeninger, President

Lowman, and other members of the faculty and administration. The panel also reached out to the members of the Board of Regents to schedule interviews. Upon their arrival at the college's campus, they discovered President Lowman was out of town until the third day of April. Johnson and Heinsohn requested a meeting for after that date, but Lowman declined. The panel attempted to meet with Regent Ramsey and he too declined.[36]

After consideration of the information gathered, Johnson and Heinsohn soon concluded that the person responsible for Koeninger's dismissal was Regent C. S. Ramsey because of pressure from Huntsville's John Birch Society. Johnson and Heinsohn, by letter, asked Ramsey to advise them whether it was true that the Board had indeed decided to terminate Koeninger's employment and, if so, what grounds. Having received no reply, the panel recommended that TACT issue a statement to the Board of Regents about Koeninger's case and the nature of the principles involved. They also recommended that TACT include within this statement the panel's findings, stress the potential for adverse effects that Koeninger's dismissal would probably have on the College as a whole, and reiterate the Board's violation of academic freedom and tenure. The panel also suggested that Koeninger petition signatures of faculty members as SHSTC in a show of support. The Board of Regents received a petition signed by 170 of the roughly 190 faculty members at SHSTC. The petitions requested that the Board reconsider its decision concerning the employment of Koeninger and afford him the full protection of their announced policies, including those governing the termination of services of faculty members. Upon approval of the TACT Policy Committee, the executive committee implemented Johnson and Heinsohn's recommendations and advised Koeninger that he should ask for a hearing before the Board of Regents and seek legal counsel for representation at the hearing. In a letter to the Board of Regents dated April 16, 1962, Koeninger requested that he be given a written statement of charges and granted to be heard at the Board's May annual meeting. Koeninger obtained, Gibson R. Randle, an attorney from Austin, Texas, as his legal counsel. Randle would represent Koeninger at the May 1962 Board of Regents hearing and remain in contact with Koeninger until the AAUP censure that occurred in April 1963.[37]

For some time, Koeninger waited anxiously for the Regents' invitation to speak at their May 1962 annual meeting. As Koeninger

awaited word, the AAUP created an ad hoc committee to start their investigation of the Board of Regents violation of academic freedom and tenure. This came about because of the failed attempts by attorney Gibson Randle, TACT, and Koeninger to get a bill of particulars or a promise of a hearing from the Board or President Lowman. William J. Kilgore, a Professor of Philosophy at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, chaired the AAUP investigating committee. Kilgore was very active in the AAUP and prior to that, was active in Texas communities as the Vice President of the Texas Commission of Racial Relations; he had succeeded Dr. J. L. Clark of Huntsville.[38]

On the afternoon of May 21, 1962, Randle and Koeninger received word that the Board of Regents was willing to listen to what Koeninger had to say with provisions attached. Koeninger could meet with the Board the next day, May 22, provided that Randle and Koeninger waived their request for a bill of particulars. Regent Ramsey made the request verbally to Randle in the hallway outside of the Regents' meeting room. This action showed the continued pattern of the Board and Ramsey to keep documentation in the Koeninger case out of official records. Randle and Koeninger accepted Ramsey's conditions, although Randle made the remark, "This was like a blind man fighting man who can see." Randle attempted to get answers from the Board members, but Regent Ramsey interrupted Randle and stated that Board members were not going to answer any questions for him or anyone else. At the end of the Board meeting, Ramsey met with the reporters covering the hearing, as well as Koeninger and Randle. Ramsey reported that the Board had reaffirmed, by a majority vote, its decision not to re-employ Koeninger. Journalist Ronnie Dugger covered the hearing and noted in his resulting article that in the middle of the Board meeting William Kellogg walked in and delivered a written report to each of the Board members. Dugger interviewed Kellogg after the meeting questioned him about the documents. Kellogg replied that the Board members wanted his view about American society and clarification about his part in the Koeninger matter. In Kellogg's opinion, the report did not contain any "startling statements about the matter at hand." Kellogg denied that the John Birch Society caused Koeninger's dismissal, but said that he personally was in favor of it. With that said, the Board's action created not only a media firestorm, but also reinforced TACT and AAUP determination to move forward with censuring the college's regents and its president.[39]

Within days of the May Board Meeting, TACT and AAUP members strategized on how to proceed with censure plans against SHSTC and how to obtain assurances that future members of the Board of Regents were persons of integrity who would adhere to the rules governing Academic Freedom and Tenure. TACT's Alice Calkins corresponded with attorney Gibson Randle and informed him that members were in the process of apprizing Governor Daniel of the situation and their dissatisfaction with some of the current appointments to the Board of Regents. Calkins asked Randle for names of people who might be able to influence Governor Daniel's choices when it was time to appoint new members in the place of C S. Ramsey and William V. Brown, whose terms were set to expire in 1963. In Ronnie Dugger's article and correspondence between TACT members, there was mention of Brown's anti-Koeninger views; Brown did not approve of Koeninger's position and activities in regard to racial matters and had seconded the motion made by Regent Ed Gossett at the May1962 meeting to dismiss Koeninger.[40]

Toward the later part of June 1962, TACT president Wade Hartrick sent Governor Daniel a copy of TACT's Statement of Recommended Censure. Hartrick explained the document was the action of the State Executive and Professional Standards Committee, which met in Austin on June 23. Hartrick further commented that TACT members deeply regretted that the action of the Board of Regents of the Texas State Teachers Colleges made this statement necessary. (The vote by TACT members to approve of the censure was scheduled to occur at the upcoming fall meeting. Alice Calkins stated that the term censure did not mean that TACT would blacklist SHSTC, but the word implied an expression of displeasure. She further stated that the violation of academic tenure "handicapped Texas in attracting and retaining superior teachers.") Also mentioned in Hartrick's letter was the reiteration of TACT members' desires that Daniel appoint persons of integrity when filling vacancies on the Board. Koeninger's attorney, Gibson Randle, also drafted a letter to the governor, hoping to see that the vacancies would be filled by persons of the same caliber as Regents Rassman and Gresham. In addition, Randle asked that the governor consider doing something on Koeninger's behalf. Randle suggested to Daniel that if this did occur, Daniel would have rendered a "very single public service in these closing months of his tenure." Governor Daniel gave TACT members the impression that he would carefully examine

the documents presented to him regarding Koeninger's dismissal and possibly intervene. Later, however, Daniel made it quite clear that his intentions in reviewing Koeninger's dismissal were "solely to the viewpoint of what should be done about such matters in the future." Daniel would not go against the Board's decision.[41]

In September 1962, TACT sent letters of inquiry to the two major-party nominees for the office of Governor in the coming November 1962 general election. TACT wanted to know where the candidates stood on various issues. Three of the five questions the organization asked, dealt with academic freedom and tenure. One question specifically asked for what guidelines the nominee would follow in the appointment of members to the Board of Regents to ensure adherence to the principles of academic freedom and tenure. After losing his bid for a fourth term as governor, Daniel left the task of filling the three vacancies to the Board of Regents to Governor-elect John Connally.[42]

TACT executive committee members scheduled their state meeting for November 17, 1962. They realized that TACT would not receive any assistance from Governor Daniel, and that William Kilgore, the AAUP investigating committee chairman, had met with the governor to discuss Koeninger's dismissal. They also knew that, in all probability, an AAUP censure would be forthcoming. Therefore, TACT's vote to censure took place at this meeting. Alice Calkins sent out a memo to the state and local officers informing them of the date and shared with them a letter Texas Representative Charles N. Wilson of Trinity had sent to Regent Ramsey. Wilson, a former student of SHSTC and champion for individual's rights (especially those of women and minorities) was quite disturbed over Koeninger's dismissal. He wrote, "It is beyond imagination that a responsible body of Texas public officials in the United States of America in 1962 would arbitrarily use their authority to maliciously take revenge upon a respected citizen because he exercised his basic political freedom." Wilson further requested that the Board publicly make known the reason for Dr. Koeninger's discharge. In Wilson's closing statement he wrote that "I feel that such a revelation would be in the public interest as it would restore the prestige of the Board of Regents in the eyes of many citizens, and would disprove the accusation that your body is now prescribing adherence to your own political philosophy as a prerequisite for a professor to hold his job." Furthermore, he said, "It would be a disgrace to our State's great tradition of individualism and personal freedom

for such an accusation to go unanswered. I am confident that you, as Chairman of the Board of Regents, will make public your undoubtedly valid reason for the separation of Dr. Koeninger."[43] According to Alice Calkins, Ramsey refused to comment when asked for a statement by reporters who had received copies of Wilson's letter.

With Ramsey's refusal to answer questions from TACT members and political allies who defended the rules of academic freedom and tenure, the case for censure by TACT and the AAUP continued to build. TACT's censure statement drafted in June 1962 made it clear that the association's censure was directed toward both the Board of Regents of the Texas State Teachers Colleges and President Lowman, since all were responsible for the termination of Koeninger. Although the majority of SHSTC faculty supported the censure of the Board of Regents, many became unhappy with the censure of President Lowman. According to TACT, members of the Executive Committee and the Professional Standard Committees stated that the censure was warranted because of Lowman's refusal to answer Regent Gresham's question in regard to the reconsideration of Koeninger for the 1962-63 term, and his refusal to meet with the TACT investigating committee. The committee concluded that Lowman's refusal to cooperate constituted an abdication of his responsibility as chief administrative officer of SHSTC. According to Kenneth Russell of the Huntsville chapter of TACT, faculty members understood the action from an intellectual standpoint, but felt that there were too many exonerating circumstances that should prevent the censure of Lowman.[44]

At TACT's state meeting, delegates voted 34-0 to censure the Board of Regents of the Texas State Teachers College. Several chapters abstained from voting and other chapters argued for the removal of President Lowman's name from the censure. Delegate E. M. Scott of the SHSTC chapter received instructions to support the censure of the Board, but to delete reference to Lowman. Scott stated, "We are loyal to Dr. Lowman." The censure resolution included a note of commendation for the regents who voted against dismissing Koeninger. Since the official Board minutes from the May 1961 and May 1962 meetings only documented the names of the person who moved to make a motion and the person who seconded the motion, how each regent voted is speculative. There are conflicting reports from TACT documents and newspaper articles as to which regents abstained or voted to dismiss Koeninger. The only remaining constant was that Regents Gresham

and Rassman voted against the dismissal.[45]

During the whole process leading up to TACT's censure, the AAUP ad hoc investigating committee diligently worked on their case against the Board of Regents and the administration at SHSTC. William J. Kilgore, chair of the committee, submitted his group's findings to the national AAUP Committee on Academic Freedom. According to Kilgore, his ad hoc committee found sufficient evidence that showed a violation of the academic freedom and tenure of Koeninger. Koeninger, with fourteen plus years of service at SHSTC, had served more than twice the maximum probationary period for tenure as stated in the AAUP's 1940 Statement of Principles, and Koeninger had not received due process. In Kilgore's oral memoirs, he clearly explained the AAUP's relationship with TACT, in regard to the Koeninger case. He stated that TACT primarily concerned themselves with "bread and butter" issues, such as faculty appropriations and other conditions affecting faculty in the state run institutions, while the AAUP monitored violations of academic freedom and tenure. He further explained, the problem the AAUP experienced with TACT in jointly investigating the Koeninger case was that TACT leadership wanted the AAUP to act as both activist and judge. Kilgore explained that the AAUP Committee on Academic Freedom "held at that time, that in its official investigations involving possible national censure, it needed to have a judicial role." Kilgore contended that had the AAUP played an activist role by trying to resolve this case through political pressures, it would have lessened the effectiveness of the censure.[46]

At the Forty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the AAUP held in San Francisco in April 1963, Committee A recommended the censure of the administration of SHSTC, which resulted in the AAUP delegates' censure vote, and SHSTC remained on the Association's list of censured Administrations until 1970. Nevertheless, Koeninger did not see the censuring of SHSTC by the AAUP as a personal triumph. He stated that the censure "fell equally on the administration, the teachers, the students, and my friends, instead of on those members of the board who were responsible for my dismissal."[47]

While TACT and the AAUP moved to sanction SHSTC, Texas Representatives Robert "Bob" Eckhardt of Houston, Horace "Dick" Cherry of Waco, and Charles "Charlie" Wilson of Trinity introduced House Bill 77 (HB 77) to the Texas House State Affairs Subcommittee. HB 77 was intended to "protect the right of public employees to exercise

all rights and privileges of citizenship and to prohibit certain boards from affecting tenure of certain public employees." Representative Eckhardt told the Associated Press that the bill was "an outgrowth of the firing in May of R.C. Koeninger."[48] In fact, Koeninger appeared in support of the bill before the legislators to recount his dismissal. Several college professors attended the hearing, including Elton Abernathy of TACT. However, because HB 77 introduced at the 58th Legislative Session did not leave this committee, it did not come up for a vote.[49]

The following month, Texas Senator Franklin Spears of the 26th District wrote Koeninger informing him of the hearing date of Senate Bill (SB 45). Spears authored the bill that related to the grounds and procedures for the termination of employment of a faculty member of any state institution of higher education. In his letter, Spears indicated that he wanted Koeninger to attend the hearing. Spears also informed Koeninger that he had contacted William Kilgore and other professors, requesting their appearance as well. Spears' version of SB 45 submitted to the Committee on State Affairs was sent back to the Senate with the recommendation that it not pass, but that another version of SB 45 by the Committee Substitute "in lieu thereof do pass and be printed." The substituted version excluded key elements that would ensure due process for faculty members. One key element removed from the original bill was the section that afforded a faculty member an impartial hearing before a committee of his peers, the right to counsel, and the right to confront and question witnesses against him.[50]

Representative Charles Wilson and others did not let their defeated HB 77 keep them from pursuing legal alternatives. The following year at the 59th Texas Legislative Session, Wilson and others submitted an amended version of HB 1, first introduced and passed at the 54th Legislative Session, for passage. The amended version created The Higher Education Coordination Act of 1965. Under this act, the governor would appoint 18 members to serve on a board that represented all higher education institutions under state authority. After passage of the bill, this board became the state's highest authority for issues of public higher education. Today known as The Texas College and University System Coordinating Board, members follow the guidelines provided in Section 14, Paragraph 2 of HB 1 designed to aid Texas colleges and universities in developing minimum standards to ensure academic freedom, academic responsibility, and tenure. Regent Newton Gresham, whose expired term on the Texas State Teachers

College Board of Regents coincided with the 1965 formation of the Coordinating Board, became one of the first members appointed by Governor Connally. In an oral interview, Gresham stated that he was certainly surprised at the appointment, one he did not look for or ask for. He attributed Connally's appointment to being a former member of the Texas State Teachers College Board of Regents; he would therefore have the experience and background to deal with issues in higher education. Gresham served 18 years on the Coordinating Board.[51]

Under the watchful eye of the AAUP, the Coordinating Board worked with colleges and universities in the implementation of new procedures. Frequent correspondence between the national officers of the AAUP, SHSTC's new president Arleigh Templeton and the college's local chapter of the AAUP demonstrated a strong desire for each agency to work together on having SHSTC removed from the censure list. Templeton, prior to his appointment at SHSTC, had served as Executive Director of the Governor's Committee on Education Beyond the High School. This committee was the stepping-stone to the establishment of the Coordinating Board in 1965. In a letter dated February 22, 1966, Templeton informed the AAUP that with close ties with Governor Connally and members of the Texas Legislature, he had worked to have appropriate standards for academic freedom adopted on a statewide basis. Templeton felt he had made great strides with SHSTC's new administration and governing board and strongly felt the censure should be lifted. It would take SHSTC's administration another four years, however, before the AAUP agreed to remove the college from the censure list.[52]

This investigation into the dismissal of Rupert C. Koeninger illustrates how members of the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System, U. S. Congressman John V. Dowdy, Sr., and local political activists, including James V. Franklin, Jr. and William H. Kellogg used the anti-Communist rhetoric of the 1950s and 1960s to justify a violation of academic freedom and tenure. By exploring the cultural temperament of the time, this paper helps put into context the circumstances that led to the actions of those who opposed Rupert Koeninger. Koeninger's dismissal was the direct result of the cultural temperament of a time when political and ideological views clashed with far reaching results. The investigations pursued during the writing of this paper also provided additional findings and resources to add to the historiographies regarding Koeninger's dismissal, as well

as violations of academic freedom and tenure at Southern Universities and Colleges, circa 1950s and 1960s. For the past 50 years, scholars and journalists assertions, that the local John Birch Society and Regent Ramsey were the main contributors in Koeninger's dismissal, came by default. The first articles in 1962 reported that the Koeninger dismissal had been orchestrated by the JBS and Ramsey, while the most recent scholarly work largely reiterated past scholarship. By introducing new evidence, this paper has shown that James A. Franklin, Jr., along with the help of Congressman John V. Dowdy, Sr., gave the majority of the members of the Board of Regents cause for action against Koeninger.[53] Because of this unwarranted action, the Texas Legislature took action to protect the academic freedom and tenure of collegiate faculty members in a step that transformed higher education in the Lone Star State.

ENDNOTES

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10 Gary Zeller, "The Integration of Huntsville Independent School District 1934-1968" (Master's Thesis, Sam Houston State University, 1994), 15, 26-27.

11 "Court Frowns as Students Act as Poll Tax Agents," *Houston Chronicle*, no date, in Lowman Presidential Papers.

12 "Dr. Franklin Is Guest Speaker At Tehuacana PTA," *Mexia Daily News*, October 10, 1958, 3; "Dr. Franklin Speaks At Rotary Club Meet," *Mexia Daily News*, September 9, 1959, 1.

13 Bradley S. Greenberg, "Operation Abolition vs. Operation Correction," *Audio Visual Communication Review*, Vo. 11. No. 3 (1963): 40-46.

14 James Franklin to Donald Johnson, January 13, 1961, and John Dowdy to Francis Walter, January 17, 1961, JDP, Box 229, File 8; *Westminster Minute*, January 15, 1961, JDP, Box 229, File 8.

15 Ibid.

16 John Dowdy to James Franklin, February 3, 1961, JDP, Box 229, File 8. In Dowdy's January 1961 letters to Donald Johnson and Francis Walter, the Congressman spelled Koeninger's first name incorrectly. In both cases, he wrote Robert Koeninger, which leads to the conclusion that Dowdy did not recall that he and Koeninger had crossed paths before. In addition, Dowdy's letter in February 1961 to Franklin further supports this position because Dowdy wrote that HUAC did not find anything on Robert Koeninger, but that he would conduct further inquiries *on this person.*

17 Of historical note–Franklin would not remain at Westminster for very long. He resigned in September 1961, ran unsuccessfully in 1962 for county judge of Limestone County, and in November 1963, moved to Bridge City, Texas in Orange County, a county historically known for racism.

Shortly after Franklin's exit from the college, he wrote a letter to the editor of the local paper and stated that he was bothered by the lack of concern that area citizens showed in regard to the government's foreign relations with communist countries. He further wrote, "A prayer meeting is needed to ask God to give us some real American Statesmen to help remove some elected politicians. "Franklin Resigned," *Mexia Daily News*, September 11, 1961; "Letters to the Editor," *Mexia Daily News*, November 19, 1961; Political Ad announcing Franklin's run for county judge, *Mexia Daily News*, April 12, 1962.

18 John Dowdy Campaign pamphlet, JDP, Box 138.

19 J. Allen Broyles, *The John Birch Society: Anatomy of a Protest* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), 40, 60, 114.

20 James Franklin to John Dowdy, March 24, 1961, JDP, Box 228, File 8.

21 O.C. "Clark" Fisher to Ava Louise Kellogg, July 20, 1956, JDP, Box 180, File 93.

22 Ed Gossett to John Dowdy, December 15, 1961, JDP, Box 228, File 8.

23 Under the Freedom of Information Act, Koeninger obtained a heavily redacted copy of his file in 1976. Perhaps this file came about as a result of Dowdy's inquiries. I have since requested another copy to further investigate this matter, but received a reply from the FBI that the file most likely has been destroyed; Clifford Koeninger email correspondence to Carolyn A. Carroll, October 1, 2013; Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington D.C., FOIPA Request for Koeninger files by Carolyn A. Carroll response, October 24, 2013 and October 30, 2013; U. S. Department Justice Office of Information Policy, response for Koeninger files, December 16, 2013.

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29 Rupert Koeninger, Diary Notes, RCKC, Box 1 Folder 2; William H. Gardner, "2 SHSTC Professors Scored for Politicking," *Houston Post*, May 14, 1960.

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31 Quoted material is drawn from Rupert Koeninger, Diary Notes, RCKC, Box 1 Folder 2.

32 Rupert Koeninger, Diary Notes, RCKC, Box 1 Folder 2

33 Walter P. Metzger, "The 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure," *Law and Contemporary Problems* 52, (Summer, 1990): 3-77.

34 Rupert Koeninger to Elton Abernathy, February 17, 1962, and Elton Abernathy to Rupert Koeninger, February 20, 1962, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 4.

35 Robert Van Waes to Rupert Koeninger, March 22, 1962, and Alice Calkins memo to TACT Members of the Policy Committee, April 16, 1962, RCKC, Box 1, Folders 4-6.

36 Texas Association of College Teachers, Edmund Heinsohn, and Corwin Waggoner Johnson, *In The Matter Of The Termination of Tenure of Professor Rupert C. Koeninger At Sam Houston State Teachers College*, Austin, Texas May 12, 1962.

37 Texas Association of College Teachers, Edmund Heinsohn, and Corwin Waggoner Johnson, *In The Matter Of The Termination of Tenure of Professor Rupert C. Koeninger At Sam Houston State Teachers College*, Austin, Texas May 12, 1962, 13; Report of Edmund Heinsohn and Corwin Johnson, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 6,

38 Transcript, William J. Kilgore, interviewed by Daniel B. McGee, June 21, 1952 - August 14, 1972, 63-65, Baylor University Program for Oral History, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

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40 Alice Calkins to Gibson Randle, May 31, 1962, and Alice Calkins to Governor Price Daniel, June 6, 1962, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 8; Dugger, "Koeninger Case Study," 7.

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42 Wade Hartrick to Governor Price Daniel, June 27, 1962, and Gibson Randle to Governor Price Daniel, June 26, 1962, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 8; "The TACT Bulletin" October 1962; Dugger, "Koeninger Case Study," 7.

43 Alice Calkins TACT memos to state and local officers, July 24, 1962 and July 31, 1962, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 8. In the July 31 memo, Calkins inserted Rep. Charles Wilson's letter.

44 Alice Calkins to Rupert Koeninger, August 1, 1962, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 8, including a "Statement of Recommended Censure by The Texas Association of College Teacher," 3, 4.

45 Bo Byers, "State Regents Censured for Firing Professor," *Houston Chronicle*, November 18, 1962, 1; "Teachers Ready Censure Move on Dismissal," *Galveston News*, November 20, 1962, 3.

46 Transcript, William J. Kilgore, interviewed by Daniel B. McGee, June 21, 1952 - August 14, 1972, 74, Baylor University Program for Oral History, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

47 "College Draws Censure After Firing Professor," *Big Spring (Texas) Herald*, April 28, 1963, 10-A. Redress for Rupert Koeninger came in the form of monies collected from individual faculty donors at SHSU. The amount of $10,000 was collected and put into an annuity for future payouts. Because of the University's compliance with AAUP standards and the settlement, Committee A recommended SHSU's removal from the Association's censure list. The concurrence of all attending members of the Association officially removed the censure during its Fifty-sixth Annual Meeting held in Los Angeles in April 1970. Letter from TIAA-CREF agreeing to accept money on Koeninger's behalf, April 16, 1970, and AAUP cover letter and copy of check, April 27, 1970, RCKC, Box 1, Folder 1; William J. Kilgore and Joseph A. Slechta, "Academic Freedom and Tenure: Sam Houston State Teachers College," *AAUP Bulletin* 49 (March 1963): 44-51; Correspondence between Arleigh Templeton and Robert Van Waes, January 22 and 28, 1966, AAUP/SHSTC Censure 1961-1973 vertical files, University Archives, Newton Gresham Library, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas; Sanford H. Kadish, "Report of Committee A," *AAUP Bulletin* 55 (June, 1969): 165-177; "Record of Council Meetings: Los Angeles California, April 23 and 26, 1970," *AAUP Bulletin* 56 (Sept., 1970): 315-318.

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53 Joy Ann Williamson-Lott, "The Battle over Power, Control and Academic Freedom at Southern Institutions of Higher Education, 1955-1965," *The Journal of Southern History*, Volume 79 (November, 2013) 879-920.

Institutional Members

A.C. McMillan African American Museum, Emory
American Legion Post 3140, Longview
Angelina College, Lufkin
Bancorp South, Nacogdoches
Camp Ford Historical Association, Tyler
Cherokee County Historical Commission, Jacksonville
Commercial Bank of Texas, N.A., Nacogdoches
East Texas Baptist University, Marshall
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First Bank & Trust East Texas, Diboll-Lufkin-Nacogdoches
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Harris County Flood Control District, Houston
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