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“I’ll Be Home For Christmas”

BY JAMES THOMAS

In late June 1945, as the biggest, most destructive war in human history was winding down to its last few weeks, Juarene Brown received a letter from her fiancée Jack Bennett. The two were meant for each other, in love before either of them even knew what love was. As neighbors in the small central Texas town of Crawford, Jack and Juarene had known each other nearly their entire lives. They each had big plans for their future. As soon as Jack returned from the Pacific, that future would begin. By the time Juarene read his latest letter, however, Jack was already dead. Within weeks, the war was over and soldiers, sailors and Marines would start coming home. Jack was one of millions of young men who never came home, who died for their countries during World War II, and Juarene one of the countless millions of friends, family members and loved ones who suffered loss in that war. For each young man lost, for everyone grieving their loss, there is a personal story of pain and despair. This is one of those stories.

Horace Dan Bennett, nicknamed “Jack,” was born 12 February 1921 in the little town of Speegleville, near the Bosque River to the west of Waco, Texas. His family had to leave Speegleville—along with almost all of the families living there—in 1929, when the Army Corps of Engineers damned the river and created Lake Waco. Today there are just a handful of homes scattered around that side of the lake, but no town remains. Eight year old Jack and his family left the soon to be nonexistent town of Speegleville and moved to Crawford.

Mary Juarene Brown was born in The Grove, Texas, 3 August 1925. Unlike Speegleville, The Grove still stands, but it is listed in the United States registry of ghost towns because few people live there anymore. In the 1920s, though, it was a prosperous little agricultural community of several hundred people. Olivia Humphreys Brown, called “Livvy,” chose the name Juarene for her baby girl because she had heard the name somewhere and thought it sounded beautiful, just like her daughter. Juarene herself grew up not liking her name, and was especially unhappy because no one could ever seem to spell it or pronounce it.

James B. Thomas is a Professor of History at Houston Community College
Juarene was the first child Olivia and Homer Tilman Brown had together, although each had a child from previous marriages. The Spanish Flu Epidemic which swept through the United States at the end of the Great War had claimed both of their spouses. Olivia had a son named Isaac Lytton Leach and Homer had a daughter named Jeffie Day Brown. Homer and Olivia had both grown up in large farming families and would make their own family bigger by adding two more children a few years after Juarene’s birth. Sammie and John would be the two little brothers who plagued older sister Juarene’s childhood, but would also provide love and support for the rest of their lives. Although Isaac and Jeff, as most called Jeffie Day, would move out on their own while the other children were still small, the family was close and warm and secure.

Homer was the banker in The Grove, making annual agricultural loans for farmers in McClennon County, as well as helping residents buy houses and even the occasional new automobile. Unfortunately, the almost idyllic life of the Browns came crashing down, as it did for so many Americans, in those years that the U.S. economy began its downward spiral into depression. The effects of the Great Depression hit The Grove in about 1930. Quickly the drying up of currency supply and economic collapse forced the closing of Homer Brown’s bank and soon the town of The Grove itself died. Residents moved away, each family finding ways to cope with the Depression. Luckily for the Browns, Homer found work as the accountant for Travis Chevrolet a few miles north in the town of Crawford; the Travis’s were cousins, and families during the 1930s helped each other out whenever they could. This extending of help was not only for families of course. Often in evenings, Olivia would walk down to the tracks that ran through the center of Crawford and retrieve hungry, unemployed men who had been riding the rails and take them in for supper, despite the family’s own limited resources.

Settling in a new home went smoothly, as both Homer and Olivia had friends and family all around, from Waco to Valley Mills to McGregor and on farms in between. For little Juarene, the first Christmas in Crawford was difficult, but then holidays without much in the way of presents became the norm, and Christmas meant singing songs around beautifully decorated trees, not gifts.

A block to the north was the Bennett home. Jack’s father, Horace Dunne, was the manager of the general store, and his mother Anne Edith Trautvetter Bennett—usually called Annie when she was young, but a fearful “Mrs. Bennett” when older—became the music teacher at Crawford
High School. Jack was their only child. It was music, in fact, that first brought Jack and Juarene together. From early childhood, Juarene would walk or ride her bicycle over to the Bennett house to take piano and voice lessons from Mrs. Bennett. Combining a natural gift with hard work and parental pressure, Juarene became Mrs. Bennett’s star student years before she reached high school and Crawford High’s music classes. Once in high school, however, she really blossomed, playing recitals, in musical productions and was the featured performer at her own graduation. She was such an excellent student in every other area as well, so much so that she skipped a couple of grades in elementary school and finished high school in 1942 when she was still only sixteen years old.

Jack was four years older and had also graduated early, when he was seventeen in 1938. He was a fine student, but made his mark in Crawford High athletics. Football, baseball and swimming were his top sports. He also loved horseback riding and hunting—Juarene loved to ride horses as well, and both had plenty of opportunities to ride with all the farming and ranching relatives they each had. After high school, Jack went to Baylor College (later University). Like so many incoming college students he had a plan but ultimately did not stick with it. He enrolled in the Bachelor of Business Arts program with an Accounting major, but after three years decided to drop out and go to work.

Most of the time Jack had been matriculating at Baylor and Juarene at Crawford High, the Second World War was raging. Adolf Hitler’s Germany had invaded Poland the year after Jack graduated high school, and by the following summer, 1940, most of Europe was under Nazi control. Only Britain still held out, despite the constant pounding from the Luftwaffe’s bombers. During the summer of 1941, Hitler expanded the war ten-fold with his massive invasion of the Soviet Union.

As bad as things were going in Europe, it was worse in Asia. The Japanese had invaded Manchuria in 1931, gained control of it—calling it Manchukuo—by 1932, and then spent the next decade decimating China. The Japanese Empire aggressively expanded throughout the rest of southeast Asia and the Pacific rim, killing countless thousands of people and taking control of more and more of China, Korea, Vietnam and then eastward across the Pacific and to the west toward Burma and eventually even India. Now in alliance with Germany, the only stop to the Japanese advance was the British, French and Dutch Empires and territories of the United States. Clearly, Japan had their sights set on those lands as well.

All of these events unfolded for the American people in newsreels and
newspapers and Jack and Juarene, like every other American, knew that the United States would not stay out of this war forever. In 1939 Congress passed the Selective Service Act, and Jack dutifully registered for the nation’s first peacetime draft. Selective Service was one element of President Franklin Roosevelt’s “Preparedness” program; wartime industrial development was another. Factories around the country began a massive buildup of war material, both for sale to the British and Soviets as well as to prepare the U.S. for its own potential entry into the war. Jack decided to take advantage of the newfound prosperity this brought the country. He dropped out of Baylor and took a job as an inspector at an aircraft production plant in California.

From the summer of 1941, the same time Germany invaded the U.S.S.R., until March 1942, Jack worked in San Diego at Consolidated Aircraft Corporation. Interestingly, while there, perhaps because of a problem with payroll or even Social Security, Jack had to get his father to file a birth certificate for him. As was often the case with home births in small rural towns, none had been filed before then and now he needed one. So Mr. Bennett filled out the proper paperwork, got the doctor’s signature and in front of a notary got Jack a real birth certificate. The notary who witnessed the signatures back in Crawford was none other than Juarene’s dad, Homer Brown.

The Consolidated plant made the big and bulky B24 “Liberator” bomber. While not as elegant or indestructible as the B17 “Flying Fortress,” the B24 had remarkable range and bomb carrying capacity and would become a solid workhorse during the war, especially in the extreme distances necessary for bomb and reconnaissance missions in the Pacific. It is unclear if Jack even liked airplanes before taking this job, but it certainly seems to have helped drive him toward a love of aircraft from then on. His job at the factory was to make sure wings and landing gear were properly put together. Back home in Crawford, Juarene was quickly growing up, and they exchanged letters continually as Jack found himself for the first time so far from home. Having been friends throughout childhood, the familiarity and connection they shared as he ventured out into the world was turning their relationship into something more than just friendship. They exchanged photos also, perhaps as a way for Juarene to assure him that she was no longer the little girl down the street.

It was while Jack was in California that Japanese carrier-based aircraft attacked the United States Naval and Army facilities at Pearl Harbor and abruptly ended U.S. isolation. Japanese Admiral Yamamoto purportedly
said that the December 7th attack merely "awakened a sleeping giant," and it certainly seemed to be the case in that giant's little town of Crawford, Texas.

December 7 was Juarene's little brother John's birthday, and a party had been planned for that afternoon. After church, the Browns were all busily cleaning the house in preparation for John's friends to come fill the house with the noise of children, when the music on the radio was interrupted by a news report. As Homer, Olivia and the kids listened, they heard about the attack so far away. Mrs. Brown stopped what she was doing and walked over to the nearest shelf in the front room of the house. She quietly and systematically began to pick up every item on each and every shelf and mantel. One by one she turned each object over, looked where it was made, and anything that was labelled "Made in Japan" dropped from her hands onto the hardwood floor. After she had worked her way around the house, there was a little trail of broken pieces of glass, china and metal, which she then dutifully swept up, tossed into the garbage before sitting back down to listen to the radio. That quiet resolve and determination to strike back in any way possible was typical of the American response to Pearl Harbor.

Jack continued to work for Consolidated Aircraft for a few more months before coming back home to Texas. That May he got a job near Crawford, in the town of MacGregor as an electrician. For the next seven months he ran wire, installed switches and sockets and all the jobs that come with building houses. Two months into his job at Bluebonnet Construction Company his number was called and he got his draft notice. In July 1942 he reported to his draft board in Waco. In August he had his induction physical, and after being declared 1-A, in excellent health, he was named an E-1 Reservist with the Air Corps. He then returned to his regular civilian life and job, waiting until Uncle Sam needed him.

Although she was only 16 years old, Juarene was far from being a child during that same summer of 1942. On her own she moved to Waco, got a job and considered herself a "grown up." Independence and self-reliance qualifies one for that term more than chronological age, and she had certainly proven she was possessed of those qualities. In a picture she sent to Jack, she still looks quite young, but there is a confidence that radiates from her that belies her age.
In October, Jack left his job in MacGregor and getting a job with Layne-Texas Company, Water Developers, moved to Houston. Layne-Texas drilled water wells for the multitude of Army camps that were being built all around as the generally warm year-round weather made Texas ideal for military training in the rapidly expanding armed forces of the United States.

Hoping to get into flight school and fly for the Air Corps once called up to the Army, Jack took civilian flight training, learning to fly in a little 60 horsepower Taylorcraft private airplane. Before he qualified as a pilot, he had racked up an impressive 100 hours flight time. The Army Air Corps called Jack to active duty in March 1943.

In order to increase his chance of acceptance into Army pilot training, he passed another physical, took his hours of civilian flight time, and secured three impressive letters of recommendation. The Postmaster of Crawford, who had "known him all his life," and the Superintendent of the Crawford Independent School District both wrote glowing recommendations. The most impressive, however, was the letter written by the President of Baylor and former Governor of Texas, Pat Neff. Neff was an icon in Texas. Prior to taking the position of President of Baylor, Neff had been a very powerful, very popular governor of Texas and was from a remarkable Texas family. In his letter, Neff wrote, "While here [Baylor] he made a good record, bore a good name . . . a young man of sterling worth and
moral character.” All were excellent reasons to allow him into flight school. Based on his recommendations and qualifications, the Army accepted Jack into pilot training. What followed was a long series of schools to teach Jack not simply to be able to fly, but to be a combat fighter pilot. Since the beginning of air warfare, fighter pilots have been the elite, with the most dangerous, most sought after and most romanticized jobs in aviation. That March, Jack spent nine weeks in Primary Flight Training at Thunderbird II airfield, Scottsdale, Arizona. That summer he had racked up enough hours to solo in the Stearman, P17 biplane. He sent Juarene a picture of himself, taken right after he touched down, grinning from ear-to-ear with pride standing against the beautiful airplane that was the beginning aircraft of so many of America’s flyers.

He flew a multitude of great aircraft in his training, learning to fly several single-engine planes including the Stearman and the other principal training aircraft the AT6, called, appropriately enough for Jack, the “Texan.”
From Arizona, Jack then went to Basic Flight Training for another nine weeks in Chico, California. Following outstanding performance there, he moved to Advanced Flight Training in Santa Rosa, California. It was there that he truly found his element as he began training in the twin-engine P38, the single-engine P39 “Airacobra” and the P63 “Kingcobra.” Qualifying in all of them, the Air Corps determined that his primary airplane would be the sleek, fast and powerful P38. The P38, called the “Lightening” was as innovative as it was beautiful. With its distinctive twin booms and twin engines, it was fast, powerful and nearly infinitely maneuverable. Heavily armed, it could out-fly and out-shoot most of what the Germans and Japanese had in the air—and Jack did not yet know which foe he was destined to face.

Pilots loved the P38 and Jack was no exception; seen here at Ie Shima

Jack next transferred into a regular squadron and trained more in the P39, which he did not love quite so much as the P38. It was a bit bulky and slower and not as pretty a plane, but the Army wanted him skilled in more than one aircraft, even if flying the P38 was to be his primary job. In the middle of all the flight training, 2nd Lieutenant Bennett also trained in what the army called Fixed Gunnery. Presumably to make sure pilots could fight their way on the ground as well as in the air, Jack was taught to fire the M1 carbine and the standard U.S pistol, the 1911 Colt .45 ACP. Not surprisingly, as he grew up hunting in central Texas, he qualified
as “Expert” in the tools of the infantryman as well. In May 1944, after months of training, Jack finally went home on leave. For nearly a month, until the first week of June, Jack was back home in Texas to visit with his family and of course, Juarene.

As soon as Jack had gone out to California for flight training, Juarene had moved to San Antonio, Texas, advancing her own pay grade. It seems likely that his letters describing his adventures in moving place to place and learning more and more influenced her desire to see more of the world as well. Living with her older half-sister Jeffie Day and Jeffie’s husband George Northen, Juarene got a job at Camp Stanley, an Army base outside of San Antonio, near Camp Bullis, a huge infantry training facility. Again well in advance of her chronological age of 18, Juarene worked as office administrator, responsible for accounting, supply and distribution of the war materiel shipped into and out of Camp Stanley. In her case, this was primarily shotgun shells which machine gunners—especially aviators—used for practice on moving targets. Cheaper than .50 rounds and with a pattern of shot rather than a single bullet, it was a much more efficient way to teach and learn. For the massive war industry of the U.S. it was just one of the countless processes involved; for Juarene it was a lucrative job that taught her a great variety of skills. The Army officers who did her regular performance ratings cited her admirable qualities and exceptional work ethic.

That Spring of 1944, these two skilled and conscientious cogs in America’s war machine had a chance to be together again. By most accounts, Jack spent little of his leave with his parents, but a great deal of it with Juarene. They went dancing and dining. They went skating and to the movies and spent every moment they could together. Most of all, they laughed together. Jack’s friends always spoke of his wonderful sense of humor, and Juarene would say that after an evening spent with Jack, her sides would hurt from laughing. If they had not realized how much in love they were before this, they most certainly did now.

Although they could not have known it was their last time together, they were fully aware of the dangers of the war, especially for a fighter pilot. Like most wartime couples, however, they lived for the “here and now” and not the “what ifs.” They must also have believed that the war would not last forever. Shortly before his return to duty, the greatest invasion in history began as the men and machines of the five Allied Nations poured ashore at Normandy, France on June 6, 1944. Clearly, the good guys were turning it around and everyone began to feel that it was only a
matter of time before all the boys came home for good. The popular song *I'll Be Home For Christmas* became their theme. If not the Christmas of 1944, then certainly the one after he would come home and everything would once again be right with the world. Perhaps it was hopeful optimism for the future, or fear of that same future, but they solidified their plans to be together forever when he came back for good. When he had first come home his face was bandaged from the effects of a rough landing, when his head had banged around the cockpit. Perhaps his injuries, though relatively minor, were frightening enough to evoke the promises they made to each other that June, 1944.

When Jack reported for duty on 9 June, he was no longer a student, but a skilled pilot and was made an instructor to train other pilots in the P39. He spent nearly three months in Moses Lake, Wisconsin in this position. In late August he was finally posted to prepare for combat, assigned to the 73rd Fighter Squadron of the 318th Fighter Group, his squadron was formed in California and spent the next months in combat training with the P38. He now had hundreds of hours behind the stick and he and his squadron mates were profoundly qualified to face the enemies of the United States. The 318th Fighter Group was then posted to the Pacific Theatre of Operations (PTO) to take on the Japanese Empire. In September his squadron was ferried with their aircraft to Hawaii and in November to the actual combat zone, operating out of Ie Shima, Ryukyus Islands.
Upper circle, Shimo-Koshiki,
By this point in the war, the Japanese were certainly not on the run, but had been steadily losing ground—and water—as the forces of the United States were steadily forcing them out of the Pacific, while the British were pushing them out of their control of the land. The “Island Hopping” campaign through the Solomons, Gilberts, Marshalls, Marianas and Carolines, as savage and brutal as the fighting had been, was showing results. By the time Jack joined the fight the United States Navy had broken the once mighty Imperial Japanese Navy, Marines and soldiers had shown their toughness and would not be stopped as they were crushing the Japanese on the ground, and the United States Navy and Army Air Force flyers were dominating the sky.

Jack and the other fighter pilots’ job was to support ground troops, protect bombers, shoot down any Japanese aircraft that ventured into the sky and destroy by strafing and firing rockets, any “targets of opportunity” that might present themselves, whether that be ships or trucks or personnel. Once Iwo Jima and Okinawa were taken, this included striking at the Japanese homeland itself. As American bombers, now the giant B29 “Super Fortresses,” were pouring destruction on Japanese population centers and military positions alike, Jack and his fellow fighter pilots were flying hundreds of hours in a variety of missions. By June, 1945, Jack had been nine months in the combat zone, had flown 21 combat missions, had been credited with .5 kills and was at the height of his game.

Jack strapping himself into his P38

On June 19th Jack received word that he had been promoted. He was now 1st Lieutenant Horace D. Bennett and entitled—at long last—to wear the silver bar on his collar instead of the gold. In further recognition of his skills, he had been awarded the Bronze Star, the Flying Cross and upon the
second award of the latter, oak leaves. That week he wrote a letter home to Juarene. Along with the usual endearments and tidbits of allowable news from the front, he noted with some disappointment that they had given him a P47 as his new aircraft. A good solid fighter, the “Thunderbolt” lacked the lines and sleek characteristics of the P38 he was accustomed to flying. Because the plane’s body was so thick and graceless, he said he was not going to name it after Juarene . . . she was more like the beautiful P38. Still, he would do his job and could not wait to be back home to her; and that should not be too much longer.

On the morning of 21 June, a group of P47s, including new 1st Lt. Bennett, took off from their base at Ie Shima to fly up to Japan to see if they could find something to shoot at. Two aircraft crashed on take-off. In fact, over the past few weeks, the P47s had been having a wide range of mechanical problems and most of the pilots had occasionally had some sort of power loss in their aircraft. None of the reports give many details about what happened this time, but as they had just cleared the northeastern tip of the Japanese island of Shimo-koshiki-jima one of the other planes—piloted by Jack’s wingman Lieutenant Gerald Heagney, went down. Whether from enemy fire or mechanical problems is unclear, but the plane went down. It may have been another inopportune power loss, as those others in the squadron had recently experienced. Regardless, Heagney had splashed and was in the water. Jack and Gerald were flying buddies and good friends. Gerald had shared the kill with Jack the previous January, giving them each half credit for a Japanese aircraft shot down. Heagney had cleared his aircraft and was in the little yellow emergency raft each pilot had. There were a couple of naval vessels nearby and they had picked up the signal of a man down. USS Burke moved to the scene to pick him up. Knowing how hard it was to spot one little raft floating in the ocean, Jack circled overhead so the ship could see him and come to the proper place to scoop Gerald up. The other pilots were also flying nearby, and all witnessed what happened next.

Jack made two passes and then flew in low, right above his friend, but as he pulled out and throttled up, the plane did not respond properly. Stalling, or losing lift so close to the water proved catastrophic. His wingtip hit the water, flipping the aircraft nose-in and Jack was gone. It is possible that he was expecting the characteristic response of the more nimble P38 he was more accustomed too, but whatever happened or did not happen in that second killed him. The aircraft slammed into the water, probably killing him on impact or at the very least rendering him unconscious, and
then sank without making much more than a great splash. The ship and other planes picked up Heagney and circled around the spot hoping Jack would clear his airplane and come up to the surface, but he never did. After searching and waiting, the other planes returned to base without him.

As customary in the United States in wartime, soon after the flight returned without him, a telegram was sent to Annie Bennett back in Crawford. The brief message simply said that her son was missing at sea and presumed dead. Within a few weeks, letters confirming his loss from the War Department, Jack’s commanding officer and the squadron began to arrive in Crawford. These letters all spoke of the impossible hope of lessening a mother’s grief but also of the great loss they were feeling as well. Lt. Bennett was a very popular officer. They noted that at his memorial service, not only did all the other pilots and officers attend, but a great many enlisted men did as well. Considering the often huge gulf between officers and men in the military hierarchy, this alone is great testament to Jack’s personality, his humor, kindness and compassion.

Juarene of course, since she was not family, only heard of his loss second hand, but was devastated. Still living in San Antonio, she had left her job at Camp Stanley as war production was winding down, and was working downtown in the Majestic Building with a new friend, Mary Helen Crane. One day while Juarene was at lunch, Mary Helen got mad at their boss and quit, storming off in anger. Mary Helen was not someone to be trifled with. She had only recently returned to civilian life after serving the past years as a WASP. The Women’s Air Service Pilots was a group of women trained to fly every aircraft made in the United States for use in the war. The WASPs ferried the aircraft from factories to airbases around the nation and for delivery to combat zones. Mary Helen had flown everything from the AT6 to the B17 and was as “tough-as-nails” and “no-nonsense” as any man pilot, and qualified in more aircraft than most men.

When Mary Helen was infuriated at the boss, she simply told him to “shove it,” and walked out. She ran into Juarene about to get onto the same elevator she was stepping off of, told her she had just quit, so Juarene, no longer motivated to do much of anything at the moment, said, “I guess I’ll quit too.” She went to her desk, got her things and also walked out. The two of them got other work, but decided that maybe the thing to do would be to go back to school. They applied to and were then accepted by Southwest Texas State Teachers College (SWT) in San Marcos, Texas. Juarene, trying to bury her loss, would return to her music and make that her career.

Their first semester, fall term 1945, the two young women were room-
mates in Harris Hall dormitory. That Christmas, Mary Helen’s little brother Tilman Robert Thomas, Jr, called “Robert” by his mother’s side of the family, came to San Marcos to visit his sister. Robert, or “Bob” as Juarene would take to calling him, was a Marine who had also fought in the Pacific. He was in Marine air wing and had flown hundreds of hours as a bombardier and photographer for VMD 154, the Marine reconnaissance unit stationed at Edson Field, Espiritu Santo, today’s Vanuatu.

Bob was funny and charming, and he and Juarene hit it off. He decided to enroll at SWT also, not having any other real plan set out for what to do with his life. He was accepted conditionally because he did not have a high school diploma. Back in 1941, his mother had lied to keep him out of jail after an incident at Brackenridge High School in San Antonio. She told the Marine Corps he was 17—he was only 16—and he became a Marine six months before the attack on Pearl Harbor. He grew up in the Corps and was now responsible and respectful and Juarene liked him. His first semester, her second, they took the same math class, which she helped him pass, they went on a couple of dates and decided to get married that February. The war had caused life to move fast and post-war couples did not wait around for things to happen; they had both seen such sudden death and wanted what they wanted immediately. They had a baby girl, Cheryl, the following October, Juarene dropped out of school and went to work, Bob studied to be a teacher, and the little family was on its way.

Through the next years, two boys were added to the family, Tilman Robert III, called “Tommy” and James Brown, called “Jimmy.” Careers came and went, the Thomas family went through all the ebbs and flows of life for World War Two generation raising their baby-boomers, but the family was successful, generally content and prosperous. Throughout it all, however, Juarene carried a sadness just beneath the surface. Her younger son, James, was the one who, for whatever combination of reasons, she felt comfortable talking with, in very small pieces over the years, about Jack. It may have simply been that she needed someone to talk to about him. James, “Jimmy,” was consumed, growing up, with an almost obsessive curiosity about family stories and history, and asked way too many questions. Once when he was about ten or eleven, she gave him a silver-plated .50 round, telling him it had been given to her by a pilot friend during the war. He was taken aback that her eyes were filled with tears as she gave it to him. Once when he built a model of a P38, she seemed to know more about that particular airplane that one might expect a mom would know about aircraft, especially since she had adamantly refused to have anything
to do with her husband's private airplanes. Once when watching the Ed Sullivan show, the Supremes were singing their hit, *Someday We'll Be Together*, and Diana Ross said, "This is for the boys over in Vietnam," and Juarene began to cry. One of the things that always confused Jimmy more than anything else was singing Christmas carols. The Thomas' were a musical family, and especially at Christmas all would crowd around the piano while Juarene or Cheryl would play and everyone would sing. Whenever the song choice was *I'll Be Home For Christmas*, Juarene would always get wistful, and if anyone looked at her long enough to notice, there were tears in her eyes.

As he grew up and pieced together the story and then eventually grew up and pursued a career as an historian, he began to ask her more directly and more specifically about Jack. When she was in her 80s, and the world of the internet was available, he found photographs of him posted on Air Corps sites and veterans' organization pages. Looking at the photos James printed out for her, she put her hand on his images from so long ago and began to cry. Each time he and his family went to Hawaii as a regular travel destination—thanks to a very kind mother-in-law—he or they would visit the Punch Bowl, the National Cemetery on Oahu, and visit Jack's name engraved on the Tablets of the Missing, and sign for him in the memorial book.

![Jack's name on the Tablets of the Missing, the Punch Bowl](image)

When Juarene died, sixty-five years after Jack did, her son took some of her ashes to the Punch Bowl and scattered them around Jack's place on the Tablets. A little bit of her had always been with Jack, and now a little bit of what was left of her would be where a little bit of him will always be remembered. There is also a memorial with his name and picture in Craw-
ford Cemetery, not too far from Juarene’s family’s graves. Although he is not there, his name is surrounded by everyone who knew him.

It has now been 70 years since 1st Lt Horace “Jack” Bennett’s plane sank into the cold Pacific near Japan. There are thousands and thousands of other sailors, soldiers, airmen and Marines who share the same watery grave, and many thousands of others whose remains are scattered in marked and unmarked graves from Japan to Germany and all points in between because of that horrible war. Some lessons have been learned, many others clearly not, and the memory of the millions of individuals lost are fading into history. What must never be forgotten, even if the specific details are, is that each one of those men and women and the friends and families they left behind were once a complete story unto themselves. Perhaps remembering that at least will somehow, in some way keep a little bit of their memory alive.

Juarene Brown Thomas was my mother. It is ironic, perhaps will be seen as odd by many, that I feel such a need to tell Jack’s story. The only reason I exist is because he died and Juarene was able to marry Tilman Thomas, my father. Had he survived the war and they married and lived happily ever after, I would not be here to tell any stories about anyone, and so none of my children or their children, would ever be. Still, knowing the enormity of pain his loss gave my mother, the depth of that loss and how it still hurt her a literal lifetime after it happened is worth remembering and describing and honoring. Jack was a fine man in his twenties and would have been, I am sure, a fine man in his fifties or sixties or nineties. As with so many other young men, no one would ever know, as his life ended and he was frozen in time at only 24, and was swallowed up in the march of time as much as he and his aircraft were swallowed up by the sea.

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1 Juarene is pronounced “Wareen.”

2 The Grove is a fascinating place to visit today. The town itself is basically a museum, where visitors can wander around and look at the buildings that once made up the community. Homer Brown’s bank is really just a section of the general store, but the safe, counter and transaction window are all still there.

3 The United States Army had had control over aviation since World War I when aviation first began to play a role in warfare. Soon the Army Air Corps began its evolution to Army Air Force until finally, after World War II it was split off from the Army completely to become its own branch of the armed forces as the United States Air Force.
Both the Stearman and AT6 were standard training aircraft for virtually all pilots in the United States regardless of other aircraft they would ultimately specialize in.

The Airacobra was a workhorse for the Air Corps but was difficult to fly and had some mechanical and design issues. The Kingcobra was supposed to be an improvement on the P39 but had its own set of problems, and most ended up in the Soviet Air Force, and not used by the United States.

The Army generally had three levels of qualifying with rifle and pistol, from minimum scoring “Marksman” to “Sharpshooter” and the highest level “Expert.”

There is a very good webpage devoted to the 318th with many excellent photos, including several with Jack http://www.home.earthlink.net/~atdouble/~318thFighterGroupIndex.html. Ie Shima is a small island off the coast of Okinawa, the largest of the Ryukyus and site of the last great island battle of the war.

Shooting down an enemy aircraft was considered a ‘kill.’ If a pilot shared a kill with another pilot, as in Jack’s case earlier in the year, they each got half credit for the downed enemy.

The Bronze Star and Air Medal are both awards for bravery and accomplishment in action. When a serviceman was awarded the same medal twice, in the Army an oak leave cluster would be added to the ribbon.

He had not named his P38 after her either, despite his comparison. He called it “Gremlin’s Paradise.”

Shimo-koshiki is the southernmost of three islands that make up the Koshikijima Islands off Kyushu, Japan.

Sadly, perhaps even ironically, Heagney was shot down and killed in action later, during the Korean War in 1951.

While it was obvious to all who were there that he had gone down with his aircraft, it was not until January 1949 that the Army finished all investigation, and through a final board examining the incident, declared beyond all doubt that he in fact was deceased and his remains unrecoverable.

Many years later, when she was well into her 70s, she was still an outstanding pilot, mock-strafing crowds at an airshow and hand ‘propping’ her bother’s airplane... and to the author was a fairly frightening driver on city streets.
The CWA in Anderson County, Texas, 1933-1934

BY LYNN M. BURLBAW

During, and since, the economic downturn of 2008 much was made of the possible role of the Federal Government in reprising the public work projects of the New Deal Era to stimulate the economy and return people to work. The passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was an obvious attempt to reverse the economic trend of the country.

On Feb. 13, 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 at the urging of President Obama, who signed it into law four days later. A direct response to the economic crisis, the Recovery Act has three immediate goals:

- Create new jobs and save existing ones
- Spur economic activity and invest in long-term growth
- Foster unprecedented levels of accountability and transparency in government spending

The Act provided for numerous types of aid, such as

- financial aid directly to local school districts,
- expansion of the Child Tax Credit,
- underwriting the computerization of health records,
- infrastructure development and enhancement:
  - weatherizing of 75 percent of federal buildings and more than one million private homes,
  - construction and repair of roads and bridges,
  - scientific research,
- expansion of broadband and wireless service

One condition many of the funded projects were to exhibit was what was
referred to as "shovel ready." The projects were to put people to work immediately, not in 6 months or a year but immediately upon funding. The stated goal of immediate employment echoes the requirement and need seen in 1933 when unemployment in the United States was approaching 25% of the work force. When President Roosevelt announced the Civil Works program in November of 1933, the

Regulations required that all projects should be operated on public property, should be socially and economically desirable, and of such nature as to be undertaken quickly. All projects were operated by force account and could not be used to reduce the normal expenditures of State and local government. Projects that would meet the criteria of "socially and economically desirable, and of such nature as to be undertaken quickly" were not described as a part of the program announcement in the fall of 1933 during the height of the Great Depression; several of these did not even exist at that time. However, creating and retaining jobs and spurring economic activity were goals Roosevelt directed Harry Hopkins to achieve in a few weeks.

Soon after taking office in the spring of 1933, Roosevelt began to address the issue of unemployment and job loss. An early agency was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration which instituted, among other programs, the Projects Works Administration (PWA). However, under the leadership of Harold Ickes, the PWA moved slowly in its task of approving projects and hiring unemployed workers and getting money into the hands of needy families. With the coming of winter 1933, predicted to be extremely harsh, Roosevelt's concern over families and children increased.

President Roosevelt formally created the new CWA by Executive Order on November 9, 1933. He diverted $400 million from the PWA budget to finance short-term, light construction and named FERA head Harry Hopkins in charge of the operations through his state and county relief organizations.

While FERA would continue to supply direct relief, particularly to special groups like transients, drought victims, and self-help cooperatives, the CWA would employ 4 million on public projects. Conceived as an emergency stop-gap to create jobs, the CWA was an uneasy hybrid of social work compassion and engineering know-how.
The CWA was seen as an immediate relief activity, one that would provide unskilled or low skilled workers with means to earn money instead or receiving handouts from soup kitchens or government agencies. Schlesinger (1959) wrote

CWA jobs, moreover, had to be easy to learn and short in duration; winter weather limited the type of project available; necessary tools were in short supply.

CWA tackled a tremendous variety of jobs. At its peak, it had about 400,000 projects in operation. About a third of CWA personnel worked on roads and highways. In the three and a half months of CWA’s existence, they built or improved about 500,000 miles of secondary roads. Next in importance came schools—40,000 built or improved, with 50,000 teachers employed in country schools or in city adult education, and large numbers of playgrounds developed. CWA gave the nation nearly 500 airports and improved 500 more. It developed parks, cleared waterways, fought insect pests, dug swimming pools and sewers.

With the focus on getting money into the hands of Americans, Hopkins had to rely on existing networks and agencies to implement his plans. He had little time to develop an agency if he was to hire 4 million people in 30 days.

Of course, Hopkins paid a price for speed. In money, the cost was considerable – in the end, nearly a billion dollars. And there were administrative lapses to which Hopkins characteristically exposed before his critics could discover them. In January 1934 he lashed out at evidence of political interference and graft in CWA operations. “I never anticipated anything of the kind,” he told newspapermen. “I suppose I’m naïve and unsophisticated, but that’s the truth. I didn’t, and I feel badly about it.” He ordered investigations, shook up incompetent or tainted state organizations and began to bring in Army officers to strengthen the program against corruption.

Several authors, the two previously cited, Schwartz and Schlesinger, T. A. McCormick and Clark Tibbitts, William Leuchtenburg and Forrest Walker
have written about the CWA. These authors, as well as the *Analysis of Civil Works Program Statistics*, completed in 1939 provide a broad overview of the CWA, as quoted above from Schlesinger, but no author has written about the details of the various projects undertaken by states. This may be appropriate as the CWA only lasted 6 months; however, the broad overview fails to show the ingenuity and desire of men and women to engage in productive work, however short-term that work may have been. This paper looks at the projects in one state, Texas, and in one county in Texas, as a way of understanding the types and scope of the work completed during that 6 month period.

CWA Projects in Texas

Texans enthusiastically and immediately embraced the CWA. Between November 1933 and March 1934, Texans submitted applications for 7218 county projects designed to put men and women to work in the State. Several projects were submitted at the state level which applied to multiple counties — there projects were primarily agricultural and related to land stabilization and reclamation. Project applications were submitted from 249 of the State’s 254 counties. The counties not submitting applications were Irion, Jack, Kenedy, King and Kinney. Even Loving County, in west Texas with a population of only 195 people, submitted 3 applications for aid. These projects ranged from parent education to school teacher salary to building roads, clearing brush, painting buildings and, in the case of Willacy County in South Texas, cleaning up after the hurricane which hit the Texas coast in the fall of 1933.

Map 1, Texas Projects by County, shows the number of projects submitted by each of the counties. This representation, however, is distorted in that the population of Texas was not evenly distributed and counties such as Bexar (San Antonio), Travis (Austin), Harris (Houston) and Tarrant (Fort Worth) show up as having more projects. According to this map, the major portion of projects were in the area today known as the I-35 corridor (Dallas/Fort Worth to San Antonio) and North Central Texas.
Possibly a more representative display, although there is distortion here also, in Map 2 which shows the applications per 1000 population of the counties. In this map, Loving (population 195 in 1930) and Andrews (population 736) counties in west Texas appear to have had numerous projects.
Projects Per 1000 County Population (1930 Census)

Map 2 shows that the projects were fairly evenly distributed when normalized by population.
Projects in Texas

Data for this project analysis comes from two documents related to the CWA in Texas. The first is the *Application for Approval of Civil Works Project*, C.W.A. Form L-3A, consisting of 4 pages. The second document is the *Report of Completed, Transferred, or Discontinued Projects*, C.W.A. Form S-16 consisting of 8 pages. The application form for all 7200+ projects in Texas are available through microfilm. The second report is available for approximately 7000 of the 7200 projects.  

According to the archivists at the National Archives and Records Administration in College Park, MD, there is no comprehensive listing of the projects, neither applications nor completion reports – the project numbers are available on microfilm. Preceding the project papers is a numeric listing of the projects in the county. Likewise there is not a guide to understanding the coding used to give projects identification numbers.

The classifications of categories for the projects was based on an inductive evaluation of project descriptions and coding. Each project has a three part identification; a project number, corresponding to number given the application, a category letter, and, for a lack of other direction, a classification number. (e.g., 20360-S-16). This number refers to project for La Feria Independent School District: 20360 was the project number, S refers to the category of funds used to pay teachers to finish out a school year, and classification number 16 identifies it as a project for educators. Other classification numbers refer to materials purchase, labor for road work, etc.

To provide data to analyze for this project, information about each project was entered in an Excel spreadsheet, one sheet for the L-3 Applications and one sheet for the S-16 Reports, when available. The entries were marked so that the researcher would know if there was both the application and report available for a project. Included in the entries was all information completed by the applicants and reporting agencies for each project.

Analysis of projects by the classification numbers provides the most information on a gross level of the types of projects submitted. The following table shows the number of projects for some of the categories based on the classification number.
Table 1: Selected Project types, description and frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification Number</th>
<th>Description, brief</th>
<th>Number of Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ground work around school buildings</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sanitary work, including sanitary toilets</td>
<td>528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Road Projects</td>
<td>2892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Water Projects, run-off and waterway works</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Repairs to Schools, outside</td>
<td>881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>School Construction, new and remodeling</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Clerical Support, school-based health program personnel, administrative districts</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>School lunch Programs</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One example of a project under classification 6 (947-D-6) is the application from Lawrence McLester, Aransas County Commissioner, Precinct #2, who asked, on November 7, 1933, for $163.80 for "Road repairing and cleaning from Sparks Colony to Market Street" (Document D711431). The S-16 report on this project was filed on April 17, 1934, and showed that the work was started on November 20, 1933 and was completed on December 2nd with the expenditure of 592 man-hours. The project received a supplemental appropriation of $47.25 making the total estimate of $211.05 but the work was completed under budget for a total cost of $210.80 (Document D711430).

Numerous road projects were submitted. On the S-16 report on Project 1882-D-6 in Bexar County, only part of the work was completed as the project was discontinued by the closing of the CWA. What was done though was

Hauled 4200 cubic yards of gravel on 2 miles of Miller Road and grubbed two acres. Length of gravel haul 6 miles. Hauled 2100 cubic yards of gravel on 1 mile of the Judson Rd. Length of haul 6 miles. Grubbed 16 acres on Blanco, Jones, Maltsberger, Lockhill-Selma Rd. County forces prepared subgrade.
This work was completed for a sum of $10837.25

An example of sanitation work is the application from Kemp in Kaufman County which read

Removal of old chemical toilet system and installation of 12 closet combinations, inventory, urinal, drinking fountains, shower, bath and sewage connections (Project 6655-E-5).\(^{15}\)

Further analysis of projects within a classification number reveals finer details. For instance, in classification number 16, Teachers, three category letters are found: R, S, and T. Projects with the R category were to support school and community libraries; hiring of librarians but also the repair and cataloging of books. For example, in Hill County, the Superintendent of Schools submitted a request:

Circulating library established in the office of the county superintendent for the purpose of supplying reading material to the rural schools and homes. The books in this library are to be checked out by some responsible person in the community, read for two weeks, then returned to the central library and a new selection of books taken out. (Project 10190-R-16).

S-type projects sought money to pay public school teachers for a number of months ranging from 1 to 3. This salary money was sought so that schools could remain open for the full nine months of their academic calendar, a happening that was threatened by a lack of school tax money collection in various counties. In Trinity County, the school district requested money

To make it possible to continue the school the full nine months term as it has heretofore operated. Last year, it was pay, thereby consisting one month’s salary. This district is so heavily in debt that every dollar of local maintenance money collected is needed to pay old obligations for furniture, equipment, bonds, and interest. It will require $2,700.00 for teachers’ salaries over and about our income for that purpose and unless the aid in this amount can be secured the schools will have to close the 8th month (Project 20735-S-16).
Finally, T-types of projects were to pay teachers to teach in programs outside of the public school setting. Projects of this type were adult education, Americanization programs, English as a second language, and kindergarten. A few of these T-type projects included day care programs for poor mothers for whom lack of child care would have prevented them from taking available jobs. In Athens, TX, the county requested funds for four teachers:

One nursery teacher for children under six years of age whose parents are on the relief rolls; one teacher for the instruction of adults on relief rolls of this district; one teacher for the instruction of negro adults on relief rolls; one teacher for vocation education instruction (Project 9226-T-16).

Anderson County, Texas

Examination of the projects proposed by one county provides greater details about the program. “Anderson County is located in East Texas between the Trinity and Neches Rivers. . . . Between 1880 and 1940 Anderson County was predominantly agricultural. Corn, cotton, sweet potatoes, hay, and, by the 1920s, peanuts were the most important crops. The timber industry gained importance in the 1930s.” Between 1920 and 1930, the county’s population grew 15% but during the decade of the 1930s, population growth was nearly non-existent (0.1%).

Anderson County officials submitted 38 applications and 4 supplements between November 13, 1933 and March 8, 1934; almost half of the applications, 18, were submitted in the month of November. Five projects applications were submitted for city improvement (Palestine, Frankston and Elkhart), twenty-three were submitted by the county, and thirteen were submitted by school districts (Elkhart, Slocum, Neches Consolidated, Palestine and Anderson County). H.B. Grigsby, the CWA official responsible for approving applications, had an office in Palestine; as a result, the time between submission and approval was very short. The applications submitted on November 13 and November 17 were approved the same day, thus allowing men to begin working and drawing a pay-check almost immediately. Applications submitted on November 25 were approved on December 4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Unskilled/Skilled*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1735-C-6</td>
<td>Reconstructing and repairing Grandstand, and building and repairing fence around the municipally owned ball park, Palestine.</td>
<td>City - Recreational</td>
<td>(1) 9466-C-1</td>
<td>(6) 1090.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4020-C-5</td>
<td>Grading, graveling, and ditching and general improvement of Elkhart Texas City Streets.</td>
<td>City - Streets</td>
<td>1735-C-6</td>
<td>(7) 3930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13577-D-11</td>
<td>The laying of a supplementary sewer line to serve portion of the City not served by the present system.</td>
<td>City - Water</td>
<td>4020-C-5</td>
<td>(170) 24,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11911-D-11</td>
<td>This work pertains to office work in the Negro county agent's department. Due to excessive amount of work required by the Federal Government in its various activities, requires additional office assistance.</td>
<td>County - Clerical</td>
<td>13577-D-11</td>
<td>(1) 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8950-B-5</td>
<td>Building of pit type toilets, and general sanitation work in Anderson County.</td>
<td>County - Health</td>
<td>11911-D-11</td>
<td>(1) 144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4964-0-6</td>
<td>Improve roads Loper store on highway 22 to Henderson County line Precinct #4. Improve Montabla-Tennessee Colony Road Sand clay.</td>
<td>County - Roads</td>
<td>8950-B-5</td>
<td>(6) 1620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793-D-6</td>
<td>Improve Boston road Precinct #2. Improve gravel, repair culverts and bridges.</td>
<td>County - Roads</td>
<td>4964-0-6</td>
<td>(6) 1620</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Numbers in this column follow the same protocol as in previous column; however, the first set of numbers (those before the /) represent semi-skilled workers, the second set represents skilled workers.* Numbers in this column indicate the number of people employed (in parenthesis) and the amount in dollars paid for that classification on these projects.
In Table 2: Illustrative CWA Projects from Anderson County, below, are the descriptions of some of the funded projects with the unskilled/semi-skilled hours required by the project and the ultimate status of the project. The table illustrates the wide variety of projects proposed and completed in the county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>Type/Number of Projects</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Unskilled*</th>
<th>Skilled*</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9134-D-6</td>
<td>School - Building (5)</td>
<td>Place gravel on sand beds and clay hills and generally improve roads in Precinct #1</td>
<td>12530</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>184-E-10</td>
<td>This project constructs the City of Elkhart Consolidated High School with a girl's physical instructor. There are more than 150 intermediate and high school female pupils enrolled who have no physical instructor or account of physical education funds to hire the past. In order to fill this important position in the school curriculum.</td>
<td>(1) 84</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11902-E-10</td>
<td>This project will be a community of canning kitchen 18x24 feet. It will be covered with boards and built with logs. This building will be located on the Slocum School Campus, Slocum, Texas.</td>
<td>(7) 366.95</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9411-E-10</td>
<td>Building of an additional room in Lincoln-Douglas Colored School, Palestine, and general repairs to building.</td>
<td>(10) 336</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10181-R-11</td>
<td>It is requested in this project that Elkhart Consolidated High School be supplied with a secretary to the school faculty and in addition, assist in all CWA road projects insofar as the district is affected. Practically all school bus lines are being improved in said district out of CWA funds. All of which requires secretarial assistance that the district is unable to supply.</td>
<td>(1) 84</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Numbers in this column follow the same protocol as in previous column; however, the first set of numbers (those before the /) represent semi-skilled workers, the second set represents skilled workers.
Table 3: Employment Information Summary for Anderson County shows the employment figures for the 6 months that the CWA was in effect in Anderson County. As shown on Table 2, the majority of the projects were classified as completed with a few cancelled and some transferred to the Work Projects Administration.

Table 3: Employment Information Summary for Anderson County (selected items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Men* Employed</th>
<th>Average Hourly Rate</th>
<th>Hours Employed</th>
<th>Total Salary Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>2066</td>
<td>$0.37</td>
<td>502,502</td>
<td>190,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Skilled</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>50,632</td>
<td>18,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>23,776</td>
<td>16,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>12,990</td>
<td>14,205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The reports make no distinction between male and female workers.

Other examples could be given and more details could be provided for each of these projects, however, reading numbers and descriptions of places unknown to many listeners is probably of little value. Of more interest, more numbers, is information about the numbers of people employed and the money they earned.

By November 23, 1933, 133,179 people had been hired in Texas, almost 17% of the total 806,015 hired nation-wide on that date. The high point of employment in Texas was January of 1934 when the January 18th payroll was distributed to 239,264 Texas workers. For the month of November, a short month for the payroll, a total of $3,023,534 was paid to workers in Texas; by the end of the program, Texans had earned $29,842,554.

By the time the CWA was discontinued in April of 1934, nationally, a total of 172,400 work projects had been completed. Of the projects, 56,460 were road and highway projects, 33,810 were public building, 13980 were sanitary projects, 3,720 were for waterworks and other utilities, 2,830 were for recreation, 3,190 were for waterways and flood control, 12,740 were for erosion control, 1,420 were done at airports, 7,440 were for public welfare and health, and under public education, arts and research, 14,660 projects had been completed for education and
the arts at a cost of $25,675,000 for this last category, 93% of which had gone directly to workers — no administrative costs are included in these figures.

For a hastily put together program, Hopkins was able to get unemployed Americans working and earning money in the cold winter of 1933-1934 (reports of weeks long sub zero temperatures were reported in the New York papers). In 1979, Forrest Walker wrote

The Civil Works Administration has been, however, largely overlooked by writers on the Great Depression. Neglect of this early New Deal enterprise is understandable, for it existed only four and a half months, and, although nearly a billion dollars were spent in its short operational period, it was soon dwarfed by the expenses and achievements on ensuing New Deal measures. Nevertheless the CWA merits a closer analysis than is usually given to it. A bold experiment, it was the first attempt by the federal government to give work to the unemployed instead of aiding the states in the problem of relief.

This article has provided a closer analysis of the work accomplished by men and women in one county in Texas in the early days of federal programs to relieve unemployment and improve the lives of Americans during those cold days of the winter of 1933-1934.

1 The Recovery Act, retrieved from http://www.recovery.gov/About/Pages/The_Act.aspx

2 Ibid.


6 Ibid., 270-271.

Harrington, op cit.

Maps were created by the author.


NARA, op cit.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Harrington, op cit.

Ibid.

Walker, op cit: ii.
Galveston represented the promise of the New South better than any other Gulf-side town. Connecting the state’s cotton-producing hinterland to the wider Atlantic world, the island’s port served as a regional marketplace for both commerce and credit and was dubbed by its own boosters the “Wall Street of the Southwest” or “the New York of the Gulf.”\(^1\) By 1880, the island’s wharf district was crisscrossed by train tracks and dotted by warehouses, cotton press operations, and mercantile firms; the two-mile train trestle to the mainland and the well-protected deep-water port along the bayside (north shore) ensured an export capacity of a half-million cotton bales per year. This geographically small wharf was a busy one, with an average of 185 ocean-going ships clearing annually.\(^2\) The revenue and the economic development that flowed from this sector enabled the island to declare itself, in 1891, the “wealthiest city in the world of its size.”\(^3\) The accompanying promise of good jobs led to influx of migration and extraordinary demographic growth, so that between 1850 and 1880, the number of residents increased at an annual rate of 5.6 percent, surging from 4,177 to 22,282 inhabitants. As in the much larger cities along America’s east coast, migrants moved to the island from throughout the United States as well as from all parts of Europe.

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\(^1\) An earlier draft of this paper was presented at UHD’s Social Science Lecture Series and the East Texas Historical Association Fall 2015 Meeting. The author thanks Theresa Case, Michael Botson, Austin Allen, Melissa Hovsepian, and the participants at both meetings for their comments and encouragement.
This pilot project sets forth to develop a new approach to the social history of the international labor force that made up Galveston’s maritime sector, through an analysis of person- and household-level data drawn from the 1880 U.S. census. Using machine-readable, complete-count records made available by the University of Minnesota’s Population Center (MPC), the following tests the long-held position that seafarers and dockside laborers were set apart from the larger community. While there are limitations to this census-based approach, which will be discussed below, these records are the only basis for piecing together the ethnic composition, marriage patterns, and household structure of the men who were most closely tied to the island’s export sector.

IPUMS DATA
The data for this analysis are drawn from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) for the 1880 census year, which is freely available through the MPC website. Unlike other public-use census files, the 1880 dataset is a “complete count,” in that it presents to us a machine-readable file that incorporates every household and every individual enumerated in the United States. The comprehensive nature of these figures makes it a rich resource for community studies such as this one.

Census taking on Galveston Island in 1880, as was the case throughout the United States, was conducted during the first two weeks of June. Census enumerators were instructed to record information such as the household’s street address and the number of households within each dwelling, but much of their work targeted person-level information. In addition to the name of each household member, enumerators took care to record basic demographic information, so that the manuscripts include each individual’s race (“color”), sex, age, relationship to the household head, marital status, birthplace, and even parent’s birthplace. Fortunately for the purposes of this project, the census also includes each individual’s occupation, which along with the above-mentioned information (excluding of name), was integrated into the 1880 IPUMS dataset.

While the MPC data includes the universe of all people enumerated on the island, there are a number of factors that prevent the identification of the entire maritime workforce. In addition to the straight-forward censoring attributed to sailors being at sea during the enumeration, the census design failed to adequately identify the industry in which each employed person worked. Thus, some 1,100 men living in Galveston were identified as “laborers,” with no indication of the specific sector in which they
worked. It is likely that many of these nondescript workers—and others, such as those labeled “drayman” and “carriage drivers”—were actually working along the waterfront, side-by-side with those who were clearly identified as dockworkers. The timing of the census taking further exacerbates this undercount problem, given that June was one of the slowest months for maritime work; many, who held dockside jobs during the busy cooler months, were likely to have drifted into other areas of the Galveston economy or have simply left the island in the late spring. Similarly, oystering and fishing may have pulled these workers closer to other off-island communities, thus further contributing to the potential undercount of Galveston’s maritime workers in the census. The final caution regarding under-identification of maritime workers is the possibility that some unknown proportion of laborers who were on the island, but never recorded by the census takers. As was reported in the local press on the final day of the census, enumerators were unable to identify all those living in “hotels,” such as the “Tremont, owing to its large proportions and the number of persons residing within its walls.” Thus, one must keep in mind that these data are a seasonal sample that likely excluded those who were the least rooted on Galveston Island as well as those who held non-descript positions along the wharf side.

Keeping in mind the known and suspected limitations embedded the dataset, this study uses the transcribed occupational field (OCCSTR) in order to identify those individuals who were clearly working in the maritime sector. Of the 8,216 people employed workers in Galveston in 1880, just over six percent (492 workers) can be identified as either seafarers or as working within the onshore marine sector of the economy. While this figure does not capture those who may have been working the docks at other points in the year (and excludes those who failed to give a detailed description of their work) the person-level nature of these census data provides a powerful tool for the analysis of demographic and migratory information about these workers and their families; there is simply no other source that provides as much insight into the lives of Galveston’s sailors and dockworkers.

**OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ETHNIC ORIGIN**

As a point-of-comparison, the census identifies that nearly 400 (or five percent of Galveston’s workforce) worked in the overland transport industry, either as railroad employees or as teamsters. Although these workers are not included in the universe of maritime workers, the labor that these men
provided was inextricably tied to the export sector of the island economy, and indeed laborers, drayman, and carriage drivers worked on two sides of the cotton transport business, ferrying cotton from the railcars to the cotton presses and then moving bails from the cotton presses to the wharf, where they would be loaded by longshoremen. According to Cliff Carrington, September through March was the most intense period for all those connected to the export of cotton, with merchants and their agents contracting with stevedores to organize teams of dockworkers, including specialized longshoremen dubbed “screwmen.” These workers, who were the elite among Galveston’s dockworkers, not only loaded bound bales onto deep-water ships, but also further compressed the cotton cargo into ship holds by using specialized tools, such as block-and-tackle rigs and screw jacks (hence the “screwmen” job title). This shipboard work was frenetic, yet demanded skill, care, and experience in order to achieve safe and efficient hull rim. The onshore marine service occupations found in the 1880 census can best be broken into three subcategories: Sales and Management; Construction, Boat Building, and Maintenance; and Dockside Labor. The frequency distribution in Table 1 shows that at the time in which the census was taken, there were at least 202 men involved in wharf-side work, with Dockside Laborers making up 70 percent (127) of this subpopulation. Just under half of the enumerated dockside laborers (60) were listed as “screwman,” which is far short of the approximately 250 men registered as belonging to the Screwman’s Benevolent Society, the powerful trade union that represented these skilled laborers. The variance between these figures is likely due to the abovementioned seasonality of loading cotton and the timing of the census: James Reese notes that there was simply not enough dockside work to go around during the summertime, when “screwmen and longshoremen had to seek alternative work,” such as house carpentry, painting, fishing, and even serving as crew on private yachts. Yet, even with this likely undercount in mind, this seasonal-determined sample of screwman conforms to some known features about this category of worker, most notably its all-white composition: before the mid-1880s, the trade union that represented these workers succeeded in excluding black men from entering this line-of-work in Galveston. This segregationist agenda, however, apparently mirrored more subtle barriers placed upon blacks working on the wharf, given that men-of-color made up less than 10 percent of workers within this subsector; with the exception of the 14 men-of-color, dock workers were white.
Table 1: Distribution of Galveston’s Maritime Occupations by Race, 1880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONSHORE MARITIME SERVICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sales &amp; Management</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping Merchant/Ship Broker/Agent</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship Chandler</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction &amp; Boat Maintenance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Builder/Repair</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dock Builder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailmaker/Rigger</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dockside Labor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Shoreman/Stevedore/Wharfinger</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screwman</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevedore</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchman</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>127</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>190</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEAFARING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Water Transportation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain/Officer</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boatman/Sailor</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook/Steward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer/Fireman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>216</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fishing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oysterman</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>252</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>442</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
African Americans, however, did aspire to work as screwman and longshoremen and there two men-of-color that held middle management roles, as stevedores, but one of the two, James Rogers, was not African American, but an immigrant from Scotland, where both his parents were also born. Recorded as a “Mulatto” by the census taker, Rogers lived with his Texas-born “Black” wife, Hattie, and their three “Mulatto” sons on Avenue M, south of Broadway and just under a mile from the wharf.

Rogers was unusual in that he was a “mulatto” working within a profession dominated by whites, but the census data shows us that the Atlantic nature of his ancestry, and his own biography, is not at all unusual among 1880 dockworkers: less than 3 percent of this subpopulation was Texas-born and over 80 percent of the 141 dockside laborers were European born. There was only one other worker from Roger’s native Scotland, but 18 percent of this class of laborers came from other parts of Great Britain. Ireland was place-of-origin for some 20 percent of dockworkers and Scandinavian countries supplied another 18 percent to this pool. Roughly 14 percent were born in Germany, which was approximately the same concentration of Germans among the entire Galveston workforce. Men involved in boat construction or maintenance were also disproportionately foreign born in comparison to the general population, but not nearly as much as the cargo handlers: two-thirds of working Galvestonians were American born, while two-thirds of shipwrights, carpenters, riggers, and the like were foreign born. For these boat builders and maintenance workers, German-born men comprised a plurality of these tradesmen, but no single ethnicity in these data dominated either the construction or rigging trades: one also finds within this class of worker a Canadian, an Italian, a Norwegian, two Germans, a couple of Swedes, a Scot, and seven U.S.-born riggers/sail makers.

White-collar wharf workers were the least foreign born of the dockside category of workers. The 11 clerks identified in this subpopulation were all native born, whereas the seven out of the 11 categorized as brokers/merchants/shipping agent were foreign born. These figures, however, do not include the dizzying number of non-descript Galvestonian “merchants” and merchant employees that appear in the census, but are not clearly identified as being part of the maritime community and are, therefore, excluded from this analysis.

Perhaps surprisingly, sailors were less international than the population of cargo handlers: according to the census data, approximately 60 percent those employed in the “water transportation” sector were foreign
This pattern was similar for both crew and officers, with one-fourth of the total having been born in England, Ireland, Norway, or Scotland. Men-of-color had better employment opportunities as sailors, boatman, or fishermen than as dockworkers, with 12.5 percent of this category being identified as either black or mulatto. As with the case of James Rogers, not all these men were technically African American, with five people-of-color stating a West Indian nativity, one French sailor declaring Mauritius ancestry, and another identifying himself as Indonesian. Whether one classifies these workers as "black/mulatto" or not, the point should be taken that the proportion of men-of-color who worked as sailors or fishermen was far smaller than the 20 percent concentration of African Americans seen in Galveston's wider workforce. Based on this census rendering, one concludes that Galveston's dockworkers and sailors were primarily white and disproportionately migrant, with over two-thirds identified as foreign born.

**FAMILY DEMOGRAPHY**

The preponderance of foreign-born workers among the cargo handlers and sailors meant that this workforce was slightly older than the average worker's age on the island. The growth in the Galveston labor force was largely a function of in-migration, with over three-fourths of employed workers having been born outside Texas. Of the nearly 10,000 island workers who were non-native to Texas, roughly 4,400, or 36 percent of the total workforce, were foreign born. Naturally, the minority who were born in Texas were, almost by definition, more youthful than migrants, with an average age of 24.8, while workers who migrated from other parts of the United States were, on average, ten years their senior (34.9). The oldest migrants in the census were immigrants, who were 38.6 years of age, on average. Thus, the typical maritime worker was older (36.9) than the typical Galvestonian, but these men were younger than the typical Galveston immigrant workers; cargo handling or long stints at sea meant that these professions valued those with the strongest backs or those who were the least homebound.

While marriage rates for the maritime sector, in aggregate, were similar to the overall pattern of working men on Galveston Island, sailors, boatman, and fishermen more-often-than-not eschewed marriage. The nature of seafaring involved regular stretches from home, so workers attracted to this line of business were disproportionately unattached and more youthful than the typical male employee. For example, the average age of the 246 sailors and boatman identified in the census was only 35.2, which was two
years younger than that of the average age of the entire maritime workforce. Only 46.9 percent of these seafarers stated that they were ever married, compared to two-thirds of all Galvestonian working men. Fishermen, whose average age was higher than the typical worker in the maritime sector (38.7), were similarly single, with only 45.7 percent of this subgroup having ever been married. The only class of worker in Table 1 that was younger than seafarers were the dockside office clerks and "laborers," who were the least likely to have been married (40 percent and 45.5 percent, respectively).

The majority of married dockside workers and sailors did not migrate to Galveston with their spouses. Only 44 percent of the 270 wives of maritime workers were foreign born, even though the majority of married men were immigrants (72 percent). The women betrothed to maritime workers were three times as likely to have been born in Texas, in comparison to their husbands (19 percent Texas born vs 5.6 percent). The tendency of maritime migrants to pair with native-born American women was more pronounced than that of the wider population of immigrant men in Galveston: whereas 44.6 of maritime immigrants attached themselves to American-born women, only 33.2 percent of married foreign-born working men in Galveston married women who were born in the United States. Further, only one-third of foreign-born maritime workers were paired with women from their own country of birth, whereas 48.8 percent of their foreign-born counterparts (who worked outside the maritime sector) were married to fellow countrywomen. Of the universe of married maritime workers, dockside workers were the least likely have shared their birthplace as their wives (only 29 percent of marriages), while married boat builders and those who maintained vessels shared birthplaces with their spouses 45 percent of the time.

The census data suggests that Galveston's maritime sector offered many married men and their families an opportunity to achieve the nineteenth-century American goal of a single-bread-winner household. In aggregate, the women who married Galveston's maritime workers removed themselves from the labor market with greater frequency than the general population of married women: only 5.2 percent of maritime worker's spouses identified themselves as being employed compared to 8.9 percent of the wives of all Galvestonian workingmen. The 14 working wives from maritime households were nearly all laboring in low-skilled positions, such as laundresses and domestics. Work for these women was likely an economic necessity, but there was maritime wife, a Mrs. M. E. Dycus, who
apparently built a career as a music teacher. Yet, even in this instance, Dycus’s participation in the workforce may have been essential to the maintenance of her middle class household: her husband, a “well known in Galveston as a steamboat captain” named Green Berry Dycus, disclosed to the census taker his neuralgia disability (chronic headaches). In the main, however, the database suggests that maritime families mirrored the nineteenth-century, separate-sphere ideal — with wives focused on “Keeping House” and providing care to children—with greater frequency than the general population of working families.

Household living arrangements of married maritime workers also tended to map onto the nineteenth-century ideal, with almost all of these men (95.9 percent) identified as household heads. The proverbial 2.2 children was the norm for these families, which was a nearly identical crude fertility rate for all island couples (2.1 children). The children of maritime workers were, more often-than-not, non-participants in the labor force. Whether or not a 13 through 17 year old’s father labored in the maritime sector or in some other field had little bearing on his or her workforce participation (25 percent vs. 24 percent). Apparently there was little pressure for children of maritime workers to join their father’s trade, with only one teenager entering the maritime economy.

Given the typicality of family size and child workforce participation, it is somewhat surprising to find that maritime families were far more likely to be living in single-family accommodation in comparison to the typical male headed household (employed men). Only 26.7 percent of Galveston’s maritime families occupied dwellings shared with other families, whereas one-third of married working men in Galveston (either the foreign born or American born) lived in multi-family units. One might deduce from these data the married maritime workers were better compensated in comparison to the typical Galveston worker, thus giving these workers, on average, a better opportunity to enjoy a private family life.

Roughly half (222) of maritime workers were either never married (191), widowed (11), or not living with their spouse at the time of the enumeration (20). These men, however, rarely lived alone. Of the 22 who did live by themselves, five were recorded as widowers and six were listed as never married. Widowers, unsurprisingly, were the oldest category, with an average age of 60.4, but even the half-dozen never-married heads-of-household were older than the typical married household head, with an average age of 40.2. These affluent heads-of-household bachelors were atypical, however, and, on average, unmarried maritime men were
four years younger than their married co-workers. Typically, these young workers lived as either boarders or lodgers (68.9 percent). The youngest maritime workers, with an average age of 22.5, were those who were not only unattached, but also identified as children of household heads. Living with their parents, these young men were disproportionately seafarers, with two thirds being classed as sailors, boatman, or officers.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION
From the end of the Civil War to 1880, Galveston underwent a commercial and residential construction boom in order to accommodate both economic and demographic migration to the island. Accompanying the widening of the wharf’s footprint was the construction of substantial buildings in the commercial district. An 1875 visitor to the island claimed “The business portion of the city cannot be surpassed for the elegance and solidity of its structures,” while the “private residences” were said to be “neat and often showy, with tasteful yards and shrubbery.” Commuters could move along railways “to any portion of the city,” thus giving some dockworkers, such as the above mentioned Scotsman, James Rogers, the flexibility to reside some distance from the wharf. Thus, by the final two decades of the nineteenth century, the eastern end of the island had fully “transformed itself... from a village of dirt streets and clapboard buildings to a town of [oyster] shell streets and iron-front brick emporiums.”

Table 2: Percent North-South Geographic Distribution of Avenue Residents by Maritime Occupation, 1880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Fishermen</th>
<th>Sailors</th>
<th>Dockside Workers</th>
<th>Boat Builders</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Saloon Management</th>
<th>All Maritime Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North of Broadway (Avenue J)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway and South</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Σ</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>137</strong></td>
<td><strong>96</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Establishing the exact geographic distribution of each worker’s residence based on the census manuscripts is not possible because the enumerators were very inconsistent in recording house numbers. In most cases, the census takers only recorded the street name along the left-hand side of the manuscript. Yet, despite this missing information, the grid arrangement of the roads—where the letter-designated avenues ran parallel with
the bay shore and the numbered streets reached across the island--permits
an approximate estimation of the distribution of maritime homes along a
northeast-southwest and a northwest-southeast axis. Table 2 indicates the
percentage of distribution of the 300 maritime workers that can be identi-
fied as living on Broadway or south of Broadway (Avenue J), the island’s
primary thoroughfare, commonly referred to as the “St. Charles [Avenue]
of Galveston.” Dockside workers, sailors, boat builders, and boat main-
tenance workers disproportionately clustered on the north side of Avenue
J, toward the bayside harbor. While no longer residential today, the wharf,
itself, was also home to some 21 men who were enumerated as residents
of the Bean, Brick, Kuhn’s, or “New” wharf. The only subset of maritime
workers who could be found in an equal distribution, both to the north
and the south of Broadway, were Fisherman—who presumably could work
wherever the fish were—and white-collared workers, who could afford the
extra commuting cost in exchange for cooler breezes.

Table 3: Percent East-West Geographic Distribution of Street Residents by Maritime
Occupation, 1880

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Fisherman</th>
<th>Sailors</th>
<th>Dockside Workers</th>
<th>Boat Builders</th>
<th>Hall A</th>
<th>Maintenance</th>
<th>Sal/call Management</th>
<th>All Maritime Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East of Bath Ave (25th St)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath Ave and West</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>72</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>132</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency of street names permits an approximation of the dis-
tribution of maritime workers’ homes along an east-west dimension. The
numbered roads stretch across the island, from the Gulf northward to the
bay. What is striking about the distribution in these data, presented in Ta-
ble 3, is the concentration of worker’s homes east of 25th St (Bath Avenue):
nearly three fourths of this subpopulation of maritime workers lived on this
part of the island, which is unsurprising since much of the residential de-
velopment that stretched in this easterly direction. Figure 1 provides a bit
more precision in describing the data, showing that there is a bell-shaped
pattern clustering of the numbered streets, centered on 16th St., just east of
the commercial district. This frequency distribution, combined with that
of the Avenue data in Table 2, permits a triangulation-based estimate of
the geographic concentration of maritime worker’s homes, which suggests that the greatest density of maritime residences clustered in the neighborhood south of Church Street and in-between 22nd and 12th Streets; maritime workers settled in the area just beyond the freight railway terminus and the Galveston Oil Co. Works. Dockside workers, in particular, clustered on between 19th and 16th St, inclusive, while the center of gravity for sailor residences laid slightly to the west, clustering around 18th and 21st street as well on Bath Street.
CONCLUDING REMARKS

The U.S. 1880 Census data situates dockworkers as predominantly foreign-born laborers who were living domestic lives that conformed to the American ideal. These men married with similar frequency as the general population and unlike other foreign-born men in Galveston, they more-often-than not married American women. These homes tended to be single-family and single-income and the spouses of these dockworkers went into the labor force only when economic imperative demanded. While this perspective on the household structure of dockworkers confounds the widely-held portrayal of these men as outsiders, it is important to keep in mind that these data are skewed by the timing of the enumeration. Because wharf-side work was seasonal, the men sampled in 1880 were those stevedores, laborers, and screwmen who held the most stable and best jobs on Galveston's docks. Nonetheless, it is striking how well this sector in the Galvestonian economy rewarded its foreign-born laborers who acculturated surprisingly quickly.

1 Susan Wiley Hardwick, Mythic Galveston: Reinventing America’s Third Coast (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 60-1.

2 Q. A. Gillmore, Galveston (New York: Charles Scribners and Sons, 1879), 13. On Galveston's unique connectivity to the Houston rail network and Texas's booming cotton production in 1880, see Clifford Farrington, Biracial Unions on Galveston's Waterfront, 1865-1925 (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2007), 52.

3 “Map of the County and City of Galveston, Texas,” (Galveston: Island City Abstract and Loan Co., 1891) Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, Digital ID: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4033g.la000981.


5 Farrington notes a number of researchers who emphasize the strong solidarity among dockside workers, generally. He further explains that "respectable society kept longshoremen as a group at a distance, regarding them as being among the lower elements of society." Farrington, Biracial Unions, 32-37.

6 Industry was not formally recorded by the U.S. Census until 1930.
According to a 1915 overview of the Texas oyster industry, there were some 70 vessels involved in the Galveston Bay oyster business, which employed 140 sailors and another 100 onshore workers. The bay produced 85,000 bushels, annually at that point in time. However, a Texas Almanac and State Industrial guide, published 11 years earlier, state that “In 1880 the only oyster shippers in the State were located at Galveston and they handled only a few oysters each year.”

“Closing their Labors,” Galveston Daily News June 15, 1880) col 3, p. 4. Two days later, “Mr. Ed. H. Callaway,” supervisor of the census, was still requesting the un-enumerated to come forward “The Enumerators,” Galveston Daily News (June 17, 1880) col. 1 p. 4.

Farrington, Biracial Unions, 32.


Reese, "The Evolution of an Early Texas Union," 178, 183. Farrington also notes observes that "screwmen and longshoreman had to seek alternative work during the summer."

Farrington, Biracial Unions, 148.

While Galveston's total population was 75 percent white, dockworkers were slightly more than 90 percent white.

Reese, "The Evolution of an Early Texas Union," 179-80. The competing Black screwman's union, the "Cotton Jammers and Longshoremen's Association was permitted to work on the wharfs in the 1890s. They quickly developed "the reputation of doing the best work of any cotton screwmen" in Galveston. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, ed., Some Efforts of American Negroes for their Own Social Betterment (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1898), 26.

A Scotish-born James Rogers was also listed “Assistant weigher, guager, & etc.” for the United States Treasury, District of Texas, Port of Galveston during the 1870s. He first held this position in September of 1870 and made $3 per day. The States Treasury Register, Containing a List of All Persons Employed in the Treasury Department (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), 143. It is difficult to say whether or not Rogers held African ancestry or if he was subverting Texas' anti-miscegenation laws by declaring himself a mulatto. Charles F. Robinson II describes a court case from Galveston County in the 1890s, when the interracial LaMarque couple, Calvin and Katie Bell, were charged with violating Texas miscegenation law. In this case, Mrs. White was condemned to two years prison for being white (after it was discovered that her claim of being mulatto was false) and married to an African American. Robinson explains that “white Texans [sometimes] demonstrated an ability to endure black/white sexual mixing[,]” it was “taboo” to “formalize interracial relationships.” See “Legislated Love in the

16 Galveston Census Manuscript, Enumeration District 68, page 133, lines 113.


18 Note that the age distribution of the two populations of wives is similar, with the average age for both groups equal to 33 years.

19 Enumeration District 71, page 182, line 11.


23 Between Bath Avenue and 19th street (and South of Post Office Ave) was the city's commercial district.

In 2004, Hattie Butler prepared to move into a nursing home in Lufkin, Texas. She was eighty-two years old, and her severe rheumatoid arthritis had reached a debilitating point. Her older sister, Malissia Butler Price, was joining her in the home, and the two had to consolidate decades of furniture, pictures, clothing, and knickknacks into one small room. Out of all the pictures and decorations, Butler chose to make sure that her plaque for twenty-five years of service to Temple Industries came with her, and she made special provisions for her service pins and a jade ring the company gave to her with family members. Butler had worked long and hard hours in Temple owned plants from 1958 to 1975, coming home covered in sawdust and with aching joints. Nevertheless, she felt a deep gratitude and fondness for the company that gave her a livelihood and helped support her sister’s family, with whom she lived nearly her entire life. Instead of being a burden to the sister who had taken her in as a child, Butler was able to become an asset. The heavy brass plaque for twenty-five years of service, therefore, confirmed Butler’s hard work and remained in her room at the nursing home until her death in 2008.¹

Hattie Butler was not an exceptional woman in terms of her work history. Many women across the nation worked outside of the home in the postwar years. The difference between the majority of wage-earning women and women like Butler in the forest-products industry was the type of work done. Most women across the nation worked in the service or white-collar industries as clerical workers or in traditionally feminine occupations, such as teaching and nursing.² Women in East Texas mills and plants, on the other hand, operated saws and heavy machinery in a manner similar to their male counterparts. Subsets of women across the nation were working
in blue-collar industry in the postwar years, but scholars have largely fo-
cused their attention on unionized factories. Non-union working women
in the postwar era remain relatively voiceless. Temple Industries, which
never successfully unionized, provides an excellent case study of mana-
gerial strategies and gender in a non-unionized setting. Although females
working in the forest-products industry in East Texas may have seemed
nontraditional by national standards, the companies feminized certain
work through deskilling and gender divisions by job description, a practice
replicated in other factories and mills in different industries.

Primarily located in Diboll and Pineland, Texas, plants and mills
owned by the Temple family produced multiple forest products in the post-
war years. The Temples first hired white women in their mills in the early
1930s, and the presence of white female labor continued in Temple Indus-
tries well into the postwar years. Despite their presence in a non-cultur-
ally normative position, however, women employed by Temple companies
achieved little progress in terms of wage and promotional equality. Fe-
male employees who faced similar risks to health and safety as their male
coworkers in non-skilled positions found themselves barred from equal
opportunities for advancement or wage equity.

East Texas Timber Revolution: Temple Industries in the Postwar Years

Diboll, a typical sawmill town, sprang from the vision of Virginian
businessman Thomas Louis Latane Temple, known as T. L. L. Temple.
After a failed attempt at beginning a lumber company in Arkansas, Temple
created Southern Pine Lumber Company in 1893. He moved to densely
forested Angelina County in order to take advantage of the big timber. As
the mill began operation, the workers and their families formed an active
town. Temple continued expanding his operations, opening more sawmills
in Diboll and opening new mills in nearby Pineland.

Temple began diversifying his operations prior to the beginning of the
Depression, creating other timber products in addition to sawed boards,
and opening a box factory in the 1920s as a subsidiary company, Temple
Manufacturing. Employees at the box factory manufactured all kinds of
wooden boxes, particularly fruit and vegetable crates and egg cases. They
cut the boards to size and put them together as boxes and crates on an as-
ssembly line. During the difficult years of the Depression, when the com-
pany was operating in the red due to the extensive capital investments of the
1920s, it increased the number of women working for the box factory. The
Diboll box factory was a major employer of local white women in manufacturing jobs and laid the foundation for women’s further employment in the area’s forest products industries. A 1935 photograph shows all of the box factory employees in front of the building. Females account for nearly a quarter of those pictured. The ages vary from young teenagers to elderly women, and there is not a single racial minority, male or female. According to personnel records, many of the women pictured remained with the factory into the 1940s, and more women joined them during World War II. There is no evidence of what kind of reaction men in the town and company had to the new female employees. The actions of Temple Industries appear extremely unusual when juxtaposed against the national trends during the Great Depression. Most companies in the nation did not hire women, especially married women, for industrial jobs in the Depression years. Traditional views of married women’s domestic roles became further entrenched as male unemployment continued to rise. Temple Industries, however, was over two million dollars in debt, due to their expansion in the pre-Depression years, and was desperate for cheap labor.

During the Depression, the women of Diboll, who had watched as their husbands received drastically reduced pay and their family economy suffered, were more than eager to join the labor force, and the management of the box factory knew it. It is possible that Temple Manufacturing Company’s management felt a philanthropic urge that prodded them to hire women during the Depression years. On the other hand, the fact that new machinery allowed women to work on a repetitious assembly line in non-skilled, low-wage positions was probably also a factor. Sawmills at the time were dangerous and required physical strength, even with new technology, that women usually did not possess, but the new industries, like box factories, were neither overly hazardous nor as physically demanding. Regardless of the company’s motivations, the opening of the box factory, and, in 1939, the Temple-White Company handle factory, provided women with their first blue-collar industrial positions in the East Texas sawmill communities several years before the first Rosie hit the rivets during World War II.

East Texas and the lumber industry mostly followed the same path as the rest of the United States during World War II. By 1943, the government counted East Texas sawmills and timber products plants as essential defense industries. Timber was vital to the war effort. Angelina County’s timber went into barracks, training planes, railroad equipment, ammuni-
tion and blood plasma boxes, rifle stocks, and charcoal, to name only a few.12 The number of women employed in entry-level positions in timber skyrocketed, and, for the first time, Temple Industries began to hire African-American women. Few women of either race rose past that entry-level status, though their options in the sawmills and other timber industries were not as limited as those in the local foundry. The only area women at Temple Industries were not permitted to enter was “sawing in the woods.”13

In the immediate aftermath of World War II, heavy industry contracted. The East Texas timber industry, on the other hand, thrived. With the growth of housing developments and the beginning of a building boom, the East Texas timber industry entered a new era of profitability. New possibilities opened up for the industry, in addition to the continued production of solid wood board. The Temple family’s operations demonstrate how the timber industry expanded in the postwar years. In 1949 alone, the Temples opened two more sawmills, a planer mill, an expanded handle factory, a wood floor plant, and a timber treating plant in Diboll. The following year, they rebuilt the box factory, which had burned in 1946.

Nationally, women experienced a drop in employment rates after the war, and East Texas was no exception. The entry of women during the Depression years in Deep East Texas timber, however, put that particular area of the labor force on a different trajectory. Unlike industrial areas that first saw widespread female participation during World War II and could explain their appearance, and resulting layoffs, as an emergency of war, the timber products industry in Deep East Texas, including Temple, had hired women before the war and continued to hire women after 1945. Women had proven to be a cheap and dependable source of labor in the Depression and World War II, and East Texas timber companies acted accordingly.

The postwar world proved a boon for Temple Industries. Innovation and technological advances allowed for further diversification. In 1958, Temple opened a fiberboard plant. Bound with synthetic resin, fiberboard forms when machines press leftover sawdust and wood fibers into boards used in furniture, housing, and insulation. Similarly, changes in synthetic bonding allowed for the use of southern yellow pine to make plywood. A product of the early twentieth century, plywood is made of thin layers of wood, known as veneers. Southern yellow pine, with its notoriously thick resin, could not become plywood until scientists developed new synthetic bonds. In 1964, the Temples opened the first southern yellow pine plywood plant in Diboll. The concept spread rapidly. Southern yellow pine plywood, by the 1970s, accounted for a quarter of the plywood market.14
The production of these new materials, for the most part, did not require the same amount of upper-body strength as most sawmill jobs in the postwar years still did but rather relied upon machines and unskilled labor to operate them. In a ten-year period following the war, the timber products industry of East Texas added thousands of these new, unskilled jobs. At a time when rural blue-collar women needed jobs, the timber products industry needed cheap, unskilled laborers for the new fiberboard and plywood plants, as well as other ventures. Although representatives for Temple later claimed that the company was an equal opportunity employer long before government mandates, the fact that women worked for lower wages at Southern Pine may have also been an enticement to find women employees. Thus, in the East Texas timber products industry, the kind of work in which women participated changed little between the war and the 1950s and 1960s, although their opportunities for employment in the new positions and plants increased.

Vernon Burkhalter, the personnel director for Southern Pine, went to Oregon and Washington to examine plywood plants in preparation for the opening of Diboll’s plant. When shown the jobs that were “men only,” Burkhalter replied, to the disbelief of the plant managers in the Pacific Northwest, that he had women in Diboll who could do those jobs just as easily. He recalled, “When we started doing our hiring, we started putting women on those jobs.” This episode between Burkhalter and the managers of the company in the Pacific Northwest highlights just how different the hiring practices between the East Texas timber products industry and the same industry in other areas were in the immediate postwar era. Women did participate in sawmill and other timber operations all around the nation during World War II, as they did in East Texas. One of the most studied operations was a sawmill in New Hampshire, the Turkey Pond mill. That mill opened in 1942 as a war emergency to process salvaged timber from a 1938 hurricane. The federal government ran the all-female operated mill until its closure in 1945. Due to a massive labor shortage in the area, women operated all of the machines and processed all of the lumber, although they were under a male supervisor, and the sawyer (person responsible for operating the plant’s saws) was also male. Additionally, they worked for a cheaper rate compared to male laborers. After the salvaged wood was processed and the war ended, the mill closed and most of the women returned to the home or a traditionally feminine occupation.

The Pacific Northwest held on to the historical memory of masculine participation in the timber products industry, personified by the solitary,
flannel-wearing, hypermasculine lumberjack, into the postwar years, discouraging female participation. In contrast, the East Texas timberman did not enter the state's roster of legendary figures alongside cowboys and wildcatters. As sociologist Ruth Allen explained, "The actuality of the present [1960s] mocks any romance that might be generated about the [timber] worker and his work." East Texas timberworkers had low pay and harsh conditions with nothing to glorify. Pacific lumberjacks were a part of the "colonizing" effort in the West, widely romanticized, as opposed to East Texas timber workers participating as a part of the "industrializing" effort in Texas. Their work did not fit into the pantheon of Texas mythology. Thus, there was no memory of male-only enclaves, where men could live without their families and beyond the scope of civilization, that women wanting to enter the occupation in East Texas had to combat. This also meant that timber products companies did not have to justify their decision to hire women to the larger community. They simply hired women because they needed them.

A Need for Labor Meets a Need for Work

Across the nation the kinds of work in which women generally partook changed in the postwar years. More women held production jobs in 1950 than in 1940, in spite of a sustained attempt by the media and other opinion-shaping outlets to promote the nuclear family with a stay-at-home mother. The blue-collar jobs they obtained, though, were in deskilled positions, not in the higher-paying skilled areas. In 1959, labor analyst Robert Smuts concurred that women in factory positions worked as assemblers of small items and machine operators, and "most jobs [were] still assigned on the basis of sex, and the best ones [were] still reserved for men." The most rapidly growing industries, however, were in the service and clerical fields and relied upon female labor. Government employment agencies in 1946 found 40 percent of female applicants in service jobs, 13 to 15 percent in semiskilled positions and fewer than 5 percent in skilled work. These were menial and poorly compensated positions. Women earned an average of less than sixty-five cents an hour in 70 percent of the jobs available to women. This meant that 75 percent of all men earned more than the average women.

Why did women continue in the labor force after World War II in spite of the media's opinions, low wages at their jobs, and little recognition? Similar to East Texas women who remained in the workforce throughout the mid-twentieth century, women entered the workforce out of econom-
ic necessity. The postwar economy, dependent on consumer participation, demanded more income than many families with one breadwinner possessed. After years of deprivation during the Depression and World War II, families wanted new commodities, like televisions, cars, and appliances. Competitive consumption was necessary to achieve the middle-class American dream. Consequently, women pursued employment to help the family budget but did not wish to equal or surpass the income of their husbands. The typical middle-class working woman of the 1950s and 1960s was supplementing her family’s livelihood, not challenging the male breadwinner. Additionally, rising earnings, fewer children, and the completion of childrearing relatively early in life left middle-class women free to find employment.

For working-class women, the economic situation was more dire. In the cultural debates over whether or not women should work, few scholars and journalists paid attention to poor women in both rural and urban areas. Although the end of the war brought new consumer goods, it also heralded inflation and rising costs. Meat prices alone increased 122 percent in two years. The rising prices increased pressure on families already dealing with inadequate incomes. East Texas, in particular, was an area with deep poverty. In 1950, seven out of the twelve counties in the Deep East Texas Council of Government had more than 20 percent of their families earning less than $2000 a year, the cut-off line for deep poverty, as defined by the United States Census Bureau. In 1950, the median annual income of southern male workers, including those living and working in Deep East Texas, in logging was $1,151; in sawmills, $1,545. Only private household servants, earning $763, were lower. The median for all workers in the state of Texas was $2,332, making the wages for sawmill and lumber workers significantly lower than those in other occupations.

In company towns and the rural outposts of East Texas, the typical white-collar industrial jobs, like clerical work and teaching, were not widely available and also demanded an education few working-class women in the region possessed. Sociologist Ruth Allen claimed, in her 1961 work on East Texas lumber workers, that few female-oriented service industries, like clothing stores and beauty salons, existed around sawmill towns during the lumber boom at the turn of the century. That did not change with the end of World War II, since companies maintained control of their towns and the businesses within them, including all of the boarding houses and restaurants and nearly all of the retail stores. Although the lumber companies would probably not have objected to a beauty salon or another female
enterprise in their town, few women had the necessary capital to start such a venture. With so few options, the same timber industries that employed their husbands and fathers provided the answer for women’s search for gainful employment. Due to a labor shortage caused by many Deep East Texas citizens moving to Houston, Beaumont, and other major industrial centers, the fact that women worked for lower wages, and the absence of a masculine mythology around the East Texas lumber industry, unlike that in the Pacific Northwest, the East Texas timber products industry welcomed women into the plants.

Screwdrivers and Forklifts: Gendered Work in Temple Mills and Plants

Though Temple Industries enthusiastically recruited women for positions in their many plants, management worked to insure that the female workforce would remain at an entry-level, and, therefore, cheap, position. Women worked in a multitude of positions throughout the plants, often operating the same machines as male coworkers, but subtle differences precluded them from the same access to promotion and advancement.

One of the largest employers of women within the Temple industries was the Temple-White handle factory. The factory originated from the 1910 White Wood Products company out of Martinsville, Indiana. H. B. White created a way to utilize sawmill waste by making mop and broom handles. For two years the sawmill and handle factory worked together, and in 1912, the handle factory moved to Spencer and later Crotherville, Indiana. In 1922, the Whites moved their factory again to Bogalusa, Louisiana, after the Great Southern Lumber Company sawmill there agreed to give its waste products to the Whites. The Great Southern Lumber Company, however, fell prey to its own practices. In 1938, it ran out of timber after not using any type of conservation or reforestation and shut down, leaving the White Wood Products company without a supplier. That same year, the company negotiated a contract with the Temple-run sawmill in Diboll and moved into a new plant there, forming a new company: Temple-White. Production began in February 1939. In 1949, the factory could finish roughly 50,000 handles per eight-hour day.

The Temples built a large building, six hundred feet long and one hundred feet wide, for the new handle factory. Oneta Hendrick, payroll clerk for Temple-White and wife of the factory’s superintendent, remembered the building as “maze-like.” At the front was the square shack, where the raw material for handles arrived and laborers stored it. By the late 1940s,
Temple-White had sixteen suppliers, including multiple Temple-owned plants, cutting waste products from their sawmills into squares for their handles. Women and men stacked the squares in the yard to dry, then moved them under a large shed, and as the factory required more raw material, they pulled squares from the shed. The work in the square yard was so grueling, due to the labor intensity and exposure to the elements, that the Temple employee-run newspaper, the Buzz Saw, singled out the women at Temple-White’s yard for commendation. One article stated, “We’ll have to hand it to Dick Hendricks’ crew of women who stack squares at Temple-White. Theirs is a never-ending job in good weather and bad, in hot summer and chilly winters.” This comment demonstrates how much the company relied on women to do undesirable jobs and that their male co-workers did acknowledge their labors.

The first area inside of the plant was the turning room where machines turned squares into dowels. That room also housed the lathe machines, which shaped the dowels into handles, and the automatic chucking and boring machines, which rounded the ends of the handles and bored a hole for the broom or mop wire. Sanders smoothed the handles before they were moved to the next area, shipping. Women operated all of the aforementioned machines, but they were not responsible for upkeep or taught how to maintain their machines. Full-time skilled craftsmen fixed broken machines. According to Oneta Hendrick, “How many women could break a machine down and work it? Few women are mechanically [adept]. And that’s what men did, things like that.” Women could run the machines, but the male-dominated management and many of the women themselves did not think the female workers were capable enough to understand them.

After sanding, the handles moved to the paint room. Customers could order handles in any color they desired. Women, according to Oneta Hendrick, “did all of the painting. The men didn’t like to paint.” Mixing the paint, however, was considered too difficult for women. As Hendrick said, “It required men’s work really, just like a woman mixing paint, you were paint from here down. And they were five gallon cans. How many women can lift a five gallon can all day long?” The supervisor in the paint room was also male. Women began by painting the handles by hand, a tedious job that involved dipping the handle in large tanks of paint and endeavoring to remove the handle without allowing the paint to run back on the handle. Eventually, by the late 1940s, the company added painting machines, which the women ran, doing the same job that they had done by hand.

At the Temple-White handle factory, thirty-three year old Jewel Min-
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Ton went to work in January 1948. She painted more than three thousand mop and broom handles by hand a day. After a machine entered the plant, she was able to dip six thousand handles into the machine in eight hours, a feat that only she and one other woman ever accomplished. To those who remarked on her abilities, she replied, “You had to concentrate. It was compared to rubbing your head and patting your stomach at the same time.” She worked for the handle factory for sixteen and a half years where, despite her experience, she never received a promotion.

After the painting process, workers moved the handles to the shipping room. Women and men stacked handles by orders, moved them onto one of the Texas-Southeastern (the company’s railroad) railroad cars, then the train pulled the handles to Lufkin, where major railroads shipped them out of the state. Customers for handles were numerous and scattered throughout the United States, even reaching Cuba and South Africa. Temple-White continued to have a contract with the United States military after World War II, and biohazard cleanup for the armed forces proved a boon for the company, which made nearly all of the mop handles used by the military.

In box production, women were also limited to low-skilled positions. Women continued to work after the war for Temple Manufacturing’s box factory. The box factory typically had a female workforce of 40 percent of all the workers, although some employees estimated the number at a peak of 80 percent during the Korean War. Nannie Braezeale began working for the box factory at the age of fifteen in 1931. She participated in all areas of box manufacturing until the factory burned in a fire in 1946, resulting in the loss of 135 jobs. One quarter of those jobs belonged to women, including Braezeale. The factory reopened as Temple & Associates Box Factory (commonly referred to as Temple Associates) in 1951 with a proportion of two women to every male employee. The factory made ammunition boxes for the U.S. Department of Defense as well as vegetable crates for California and South Texas, and Temple Associates quickly made a reputation for themselves. They broke defense records for war manufacturing, reaching one million boxes by May 1953.

Braezeale remembered that women at the box factory “did a little bit of everything.” She pulled out bent nails, operated a stamping machine which placed the Temple logo on the boxes, and various other odd jobs around the production line. “It was hard work at times,” she recalled. “I was really sore some days; one man even quit because the work was so tough.” A photograph of Braezeale in 1951 shows her sawing boards on a massive circular saw. Women like Braezeale were on the rapid assembly
line, operating nearly all machinery, but never maintained or fixed their machines.

Jocie Swallows began working at the box factory in 1953. Swallows’s husband began complaining that money was too tight on only his salary as a fireman at the sawmill to support their nine-person family. Hoping to alleviate the financial strain, Swallows began work after her last child went to school. Like Braezeale, Swallows did a number of things. In one of her first jobs, she worked in the area directly behind the saws, stacking the small, newly-cut pieces of wood into frames. After a few weeks there, she moved behind the nailing machine where she put boards onto the bottom of the box for the nailer to fix in place. The work was more labor intensive than she thought it would be. “I was still out of shape after seven babies,” she remembered. “I turned around and picked up two boards and turned around to the box. I worked that fat off; I got pretty lean to the tune of about three hundred boxes a day.”

The supervisors moved women like Swallows around throughout the year, so they rarely had the chance to become well-acquainted enough with a particular machine to understand how to repair it. In this way, management prevented women from gaining enough experience to become classified as a skilled machine operator. Swallows recalled how some women became so familiar with their machine that they did not need assistance from one of the male mechanics. Referring to the nailing machine, “sometimes it would miss a nail or something, and she [the woman operating the nailer] got to be a pretty good mechanic. She could do little things that made it operate without calling a man up.” Most women, however, did not have that opportunity, and those who did never benefitted from their expertise.

At the box factory, Marie Hutto was a screw-setter. Panels had to be screwed into place for the box to take shape. She set the screws into the hardware of boxes on the conveyor belt before the next person on the line used an automatic screwdriver to secure the wood panels. Some employees at the box factory were paid by the box, including Hutto, “So you really had to work hard to make any money.” The most Hutto ever brought home in a week during her two to three years at the box factory was thirty-five or forty dollars. It is unclear why some women at the box factory were paid piecework and some were not.

Lola Carter also began working for the box factory at the same time as Marie Hutto and in the same position. Carter saw little differentiation between what men and women did at the factory, describing how “girl jobs was just everything.” Women, however, did not use the electric screw-
drivers on the assembly line. They set the screws in place, but men operated the machines. It is unclear why women could operate other machines in the plant but not the electric screwdrivers. They were a newly introduced technology, so that may have played a role in men’s unofficial monopoly. Similarly, after the box factory purchased a new nailer in 1951, it was several weeks before management allowed women to operate the machine. Men may have deemed the new items as too skilled for women to operate. Once management established that the technology was not tied to a skilled occupation, women could operate them. By the 1970s, for example, almost all of the forklift drivers in Temple industries were women and the position lower on the payroll scale, whereas in the previous decades, the company unofficially classified forklift driving as male and paid, proportionately, more.

In the final stage of the box production process, the men inspected the boxes. “These men were working by the piece,” Swallows remembered, “and boy did they move, but... if there was a nail missing in those boxes, they were supposed to catch it and put that nail in there. It had to be inspected to see that those nails were there and that the screws were there before they loaded it in them trailers.” Women did not act as inspectors at the box factory, as it was considered another male domain. Temple-owned industries did not promote a female to inspector status until the early 1960s. As with forklift driving and electric screwdriver operations, male management probably deemed inspecting as requiring too much skill for a woman and, presumably, since it involved the judging of others, it implied superiority.

Swallows moved to the furniture-making plant of Temple Associates after the closure of the box factory. She ran saws, cut cleats, drove legs down into chairs, and ran a sander. Her longest running job was running a clamp that made headboards. She usually worked an eight-hour shift, but it was an uncertain schedule. The plant often ran out of parts to make the furniture, which shut down the entire line. “They were liable to walk by any time and tell you to ‘go fishing’... You never knew when you were going to have a full week or a full day.” The unstable working conditions and wages added a great deal of stress to Swallows’ life. In 1970, the furniture factory shut down, and Swallows moved to the planer mill, which smoothed out the surface of the sawed boards before shipment. There she wrapped and packaged lumber for shipment until her retirement in 1982 at the age of sixty-seven. Like Swallows, quite a few women worked at the planer mill as low-level laborers. Some worked in shipping, like Swal-
Hutto also moved to the Temple Associates furniture factory. She began as a sander, using sandpaper or hand sanders to prepare furniture for paint. “Needless to say, your hands were pretty rough at the end of the day,” she recalled. In the early 1960s, Temple Associates promoted Hutto to final inspector of furniture at the plant, the first female inspector in a Temple-owned business. She received a small raise, ten cents above minimum wage, for her extra duties. When asked what other jobs women did at Temple Associates, Hutto replied that they worked on nearly all parts of the assembly line. Men, however, were responsible for fitting drawers. The supervisors considered that job too challenging and difficult for women.

Two counties east from the Temple Associates Box Factory, in Sabine County, the Temple family owned and operated several industries, including two sawmills, a plywood plant, a flooring unit plant, and a toilet seat factory, in Pineland, their company town. Mary Russell went to work at a Southern Pine Company flooring unit plant in Pineland during the late 1950s, cutting knots out of boards with a large saw. Although Russell had attended college in Tyler, where she graduated with a degree in business, there were no job opportunities for a college-educated woman in Pineland. Shortly after her first job at the saws, the plant offered her a job as a grader, determining the fitness of different boards for sale. This had been a traditionally male occupation. Her husband, though, was one of the managers for the company, and, therefore, her promotion was not typical. Furthermore, she only remained in the position for three months, when she quit due to pregnancy. It did, however, pave the way for other women in the occupation.

In the mid-1950s, Temple opened a toilet-seat plant in Pineland. The toilet-seat started at the pressroom, where workers mixed leftover sawdust from the nearby sawmill with glue, pressing the two mixtures together, and heating it in a large oven. Further down the line, men and women sanded the seats, dipped them into paint, and nailed bumpers on the bottom. They were then packed and sent to various stores, like Sears. Leona Stephenson was the second woman hired at the newly opened factory. Stephenson’s husband, J. B., was a foreman at the plant and, as such, found his wife the job. Management at the company hired women, according to Stephenson’s daughter, Dorothy Price, because “women’s fingers were small enough that they could handle the little instruments to put the lids on the seats.” Through a complicated boiling process, Stephenson removed chemicals
from the lumber used to make the seats. The lumber for the toilet seats came from salvaged lumber from the sawmill and was considered too poor for usage as boards, plywood, or particleboard. Stephenson remained with the company until her retirement in 1973. As one of the first women hired in the Pineland plant, Stephenson was the only woman in the company's retirement photo for that year, surrounded by fourteen men, including her husband. Despite the many women working in entry-level positions in the Depression, World War II, and postwar years, few made their work into long enough careers to retire.

The Question of Pay and Promotion Discrimination at Temple Industries

A major factor in the low wages for women in the East Texas timber products industry was the similarly low wages for men. The Deep East Texas timber products industry, including all Temple-owned plants, in the postwar years was, for the most part, not unionized, contributing to timber wages significantly lower than wages in other industries. Furthermore, Diboll and Pineland were company towns. As the company newspaper reminded employees, in 1947, "... the saving we get in low house rent, free water, free garbage collection, low gas and electricity rates in Diboll really amounts to something. ... Ask the man who has lived in other East Texas towns during the past few years! My guess is that he'll tell you we should all be pretty thankful for what we have here." This editorial reminded workers that, although their wages were not as high as the nearby, newly unionized, foundry, Diboll had lower expenses that justified the difference in payroll.

Although wages were low for both men and woman in the timber industry, they were also unequal. In 1954 at Southern Pine, Temple's sawmill operations, women of both races and African American men earned 80 cents at an entry-level job, and white males earned 85 cents at the same level. Former management at Southern Pine claims that the policy changed in the postwar era, and they based the pay at all plants by 1960 on a job rate; everyone who worked in a certain category received the same wage. For example, a lumber grader working for any Temple industry in 1951 made between 85 cents and $1.10 an hour, with the person with more seniority presumably receiving the higher wage. Unfortunately, few surviving payroll records exist to allow for an analysis based on equality of position, number of years served, and gender. Only one record exists that indicates that Southern Pine discriminated against women employees on
wages. Annie L. Williams, a white woman, was hired in 1947 to be an end matcher for boards. At the same time, a man was hired for the same job, and the company paid him ten cents an hour more.

The women who worked for the same company at the same time have differing stories. Mary Russell, an employee at Pineland’s toilet seat factory and, later, a lumber grader, insisted that Temple did not pay women the same wage for equal work. When asked if women received equal pay for equal work, she laughed and replied, “Are you kidding? No!” She continued, “That was one thing my husband [a plant manager] always brought up at meetings, that a woman doing a man’s job should draw the same pay. He just thought it was unfair, and it was.”

Jocie Swallows, Louise Clark, Oneta Hendrick, and Marie Hutto, on the other hand, asserted that they received the same wages as men. Why would these women confidently say that? In the case of Oneta Hendrick, her husband, Dick, was a supervisor and later a plant foreman for the Temples. A condemnation of the company’s policies may have been a reflection on her husband, who tied his identity to Temple. For the other women, the consistent gratitude and affection for the company seem to surpass all criticisms, so perhaps the women honestly believed Southern Pine’s pronouncements that they treated every employee equally or as equally as they deemed appropriate. Furthermore, unlike Mary Russell, perhaps the other women simply did not know if they were being paid equally or not. What is significant is that, when interviewed, no female employee of the timber products industry, other than Russell, perceived themselves as unequal. Even when wage discrimination was blatant female timber products employees did not protest, at least not publicly. Bound to their jobs by their families’ financial need, a lack of better positions, and loyalty to a company that was the major employer for the town and had made an effort to hire women in the first place, women faced few other options for employment.

In terms of promotion, Jocie Swallows remembered that there were few opportunities for advancement in any of the Temple plants, and most women stayed at the bottom with very few exceptions. White men, on the other hand, could enter the company at an entry-level position and expect to rise through the ranks at a predictable rate. Swallows worked for Temple from 1953 to 1970 at the box and furniture factory only making ten cents over minimum wage at her highest earning point. When she moved to the planer mill in 1970, the company removed even that small raise, and she spent three months at minimum wage before receiving another raise. Though Swallows worked for nearly twenty years at practically minimum
wage, with no chance for further raises, she still maintained that the com-
pany treated her equally, in terms of wages, to her male cohorts.

Further complicating the advancement process for women, if a fe-
male employee in the Temple industries left to have a baby, she returned
to work at a beginning wage, not the wage at which she left. That was if
she returned within three days of giving birth; employees who took four
or more days did not receive reinstatement at all. All employees received
a physical examination before being employed by the Temple industries.
If pregnant, the employee was not hired. Some women hid their condi-
tion, though this could meet with tragic results. In 1956, a female Temple
employee miscarried at work, to the consternation of Vernon Burkhalter,
the personnel director, who wrote a letter sternly reminding the company
doctor, S. L. Stevenson, to note any suspicions of pregnancy in the employ-
ment records.

Texas timber products companies employed few female supervisors in
the postwar era. The Buzz Saw reported on the promotion of Juanita Nixon
in 1949, the only recorded female supervisor in Temple Industries between
1945 and 1975. Nixon oversaw the buffing and waxing of handles for
Temple-White. Rather than focus on the qualifications and skills that led
to her promotion, the paper applauded her ability to work “under the great
‘say a few thousand well chosen words,’ and we hear she listens well so we
believe all will be fine in Mr. Davis’ [who was over all handle production]
department.” In the same article, the author, Herb White, Jr., mentioned
that W.E. Bryce also became a supervisor but made no comments on his
ability to listen or his tendencies to talk. White had to assure his audience
that the new female supervisor would listen and avoid unnecessary chatter-
ing, implying that the male supervisor would automatically refrain. This
subtly reinforced the stereotype of women as incessant talkers with few
exceptions.

No other female supervisor at any Temple or local timber products
appear in the archival records until Delores James in 1975. James became
a plywood plant supervisor, but the newspaper article on her promotion,
headlined “The boss is a lady,” emphasized her womanly qualities, stating,
“...she certainly has proven that being cute and feminine has no draw-
backs to the job.” James supervised thirty-five people and was the only
female supervisor in any local timber operations in the company’s records.
She had attended business school and worked for Temple’s real estate divi-
sion before becoming a supervisory trainee in June 1974. Her experience
in business probably helped her gain the position over other women who had worked for the company longer and did not have degrees.

**Splinters and Cuts: Accidents and Risks**

One explanation that appeared in the oral histories of the company for women’s pay differentiation between men in unskilled labor positions and their own, as well as their lack of promotion can be that they were not in the dangerous sawmills or operating risky machinery. Certainly, in the years before forest products diversification, one of the primary reasons women were not hired in sawmills was the extremely high accident rate, which could reach the casualty levels of a World War I combat infantry company. Those horrific accidents were, by the 1950s, however, a rare occurrence. Accidents still happened, but the rate was lower, and the level of trauma shrank. Working conditions were still not pleasant for men or women. The precariously perched stacks of lumber, whirling saw blades, and flying debris created a treacherous work environment that led to injuries to both men and women. Postwar accident reports, the supervisor’s explanation for all accidents in the company, for Temple Industries offer a snapshot into what women did in the plants as well as how the company handled accidents.

As with male accident claims, the list of injuries to female employees varies greatly in terms of severity. For example, a hand drill operator at the handle factory drilled through her little finger in 1946, and that same year another drill operator dropped the entire drill on her right foot, nearly breaking her bones. In a time before safety equipment, quite a few injuries came from pieces of sawdust or trash blowing into unprotected eyes and were not as severe as drilling injuries. In 1947, Nina Fox, a trim saw operator, had a piece of trash blow into her eye, as did Lillie Roach, a buffer operator, in 1946. Considering that the women were working with wood, splinters, often as large as three inches long, were extremely common. Maurine Windham, while pushing handles into the automatic chucker, got a splinter in her thumb that was large enough to require a doctor’s visit. Other hazards could include misplaced footing, slips, and falls. One woman had a square of wood fly back and break her nose, while another tried to haul too much and pulled a muscle in her back. While hauling squares from the yard to the plant, one of the boards between a truck and the plant that Laura Mae Sikes was walking on broke, causing her to hit the bed of the truck. This caused a great deal of bruising and, since she hit the truck
bed astraddle, some unspecified gynecological damage.

The worst injury to a female machine operator at Temple-White on record happened in February 1947 and highlights the difficulty some women had in gaining their compensation. Alice Myres worked on one of the boring machines, and the machine smashed her finger, causing an eventual amputation. She filed for workman’s compensation through Temple’s insurance company, but the company chose to fight the claim. The insurance company hired investigators to interview Myres’s neighbors, hoping to ascertain the extent of the injury. Once the courts established that Myres really had lost part of a finger, she finally received $750 in December 1948. It is unclear from the available records why the insurance company fought against Myres’s claim.

The company did have a history of discriminating against African-American female employees in disability cases since their first appearances on the payroll during World War II. When A. V. Copeland sought compensation from Southern Pine for a 1944 knee injury that resulted in broken bones and a permanent disability, the company investigated her personal life, arguing that, due to her recent marital separation, Copeland was not deserving of work compensation. Copeland sued and, three years after her injury, won her original compensation and an additional fifty dollars. Another African-American woman, Sarah Little, did not receive her insurance compensation from Southern Pine for a shoulder injury after the company discovered that she had syphilis. They argued that her sexually transmitted disease caused her shoulder pain, and, probably not wishing for news of her condition to spread, she did not press the issue. African American women were much more likely to have to sue for their compensation than white women, appearing twice as much in the company’s lawsuit records than their white counterparts, despite their lower numbers in employment.

The hazards and difficulties female employees faced in the mills did not go unnoticed. Male employees recognized the strenuous labor facing many of the handle factory female employees. The paint room, in particular, was an awful place to work and was almost entirely populated by women. In February 1948, an article in the Buzz Saw appeared applauding the paint room women. The author stated, “They don’t have the most comfortable place in the plant by any means, especially during the summer, because even with the temperature high outside, the steam is on inside—and then there is the odor of paint thinner hanging heavy in the air all the time.” Indeed, every woman who worked at the handle factory, whether inside the painting room or in another location, remarked on the noxious
fumes and intense steam in the painting room. Furthermore, the repetitive action of dipping the handles, before the arrival of the machines, hurt the women’s hands. Emma Pitts reported having muscle spasms in her right index finger after beginning work as a handle dipper in July 1946. The supervisor in the paint room remarked that, “There is no help for this as all new dippers have to get their fingers toughened.”

As at the handle-factory, women at the box factory filed multiple accident reports. The box factory did not have safety glasses for their employees, and, as at the handle factory, sawdust could, and did, fly into workers’ eyes, causing burning and a temporary work stoppage. Slips and falls were also common, as seen in the case of Sadie Read, who worked on the saw line, tripped, fell, and strained her knee. Machines were another ever-present source of danger. Varma Simmons, a rip saw operator at the box factory, caught a finger in the saw on June 20, 1946, and lost a fingertip. This did not stop Simmons from returning to work on July 8, 1946.

Conditions inside the box factory were different from the handle factory. Unlike the closed-off handle factory, the building for the first box factory “was open all around” with a railroad track running on one side. As a result, the building allowed a breeze to blow through in the summertime, relieving the oppressive Texas heat and humidity but becoming miserably cold in the winter. Workers could add only so many layers of clothing. Pearl Havard, who worked at the first box factory until it burned in 1946, remembered, “I wore a sweater, and working there, I couldn’t, because the sleeves, we was afraid it would catch in the machine.” The design of the second box factory, completed in 1951, mirrored that of the first box factory. During the winter of 1951, however, the box factory management closed the building in “on all sides with tin materials in an effort to keep the winter weather from hampering the employee’s work.”

From accident reports and the accounts of employees, we can see that women faced work hazards in a similar manner to the men in the box and handle factories. Thus, an argument that they did not receive employment past entry-level status due to their inability to be employed in hazardous positions does not work. Instead, women, as low-cost employees, helped form a foundation upon which the Temple family constructed a massive enterprise into the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

On the surface, women in East Texas timber plants appear at odds with common perceptions of postwar femininity. That appearance is de-
ceptive. Although they were working in a blue-collar industry, operating heavy equipment, using physical labor, and risking in most cases, as much injury as men, there was still a gendered aspect to their work. As seen in the many examples above, management relegated women to low-paying, low-skilled jobs in the timber plants across East Texas. Women could paint handles, but they could not mix the paint. They could operate nailing machines, but they could not repair them. They could operate saws, but they could not drive forklifts.

Thus, the years after World War II represented continuity in the timber products industry for women’s employment. The uniqueness of women’s participation in the timber products industry lies in the fact that, from 1935 to the early 1970s, very little changed. Unlike nearly every other heavy industry in the nation, women did not enter timber in World War II and leave or see their ranks depleted soon after; they commenced work in 1935 and never stopped. Furthermore, the nature of their work did not evolve until the 1970s. They remained in primarily deskilled, machine operator, and common labor positions. The number of those positions, and, therefore, the amount of women in them, however, expanded as new products, technological change, and expansion came to the industry.

Women in the East Texas timber products industry acted in a different role than their counterparts in pink-collar jobs across the nation, but they remained in the same gendered system. If working as a nailer or saw-operator in East Texas did not detract from a woman’s feminine status in postwar America, neither did it provide her with many opportunities for advancement. As in industries across the nation, women very rarely became supervisors or obtained the knowledge for a higher-paying job at Temple Industries in the postwar years. Maintaining the status quo of high-skilled, high-paid men and low-skilled, low-paid women and minorities was a subtle but definite form of discrimination. The female employees did similar work to their male co-workers and faced similar risks and injuries but often did not reap the same benefits. For many, though, they came to love their work. After her retirement from Temple, Jocie Swallows made a stop at the Lufkin paper mill with her granddaughter. "I was just standing around and those lifts and stuff was running and oooohhh," she shivered with delight at the over thirty-year-old memory. "I can’t explain it, but I wanted to get out there among them so bad.” Thus, Temple Industries offers a glimpse into the largely unexplored world of non-unionized blue-collar gender dynamics and the circumstances of the many "Rosies" who did not leave, as well as those, like Jocie Swallows, who followed.
Dorothy Price, niece-in-law of Butler, interview by Meredith May, Huntington, Texas, January 2, 2011. The plaque, pins, and ring remain in the possession of the family.

Susan Estabrook Kennedy, If All We Did Was to Weep at Home: A History of White Working-Class Women in America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 204. The scholarship on women and work is extensive. For an excellent overview, see Alice Kessler-Harris, Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).


As far as available records show, African-American women were not hired prior to World War II in any of the Temple-owned plants except as janitorial staff.


While it does not appear that African-Americans worked in the box factory (except for scattered evidence of janitorial staff), they did fill a large number of positions in Temple’s sawmills and in the forests. They typically held deskilled and menial positions. Jonathan Gerland, “1935 photograph features box factory employees,” The Diboll Free Press, February 24, 2000, pg. 3A.

“List of Temple Employees for the Month of August 1947,” Box 223, Temple Industries, Forest Collection, East Texas Research Center, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX.

Arthur Temple, Jr., interview by Megan Lambert, Diboll, TX, April 8, 1985, Diboll History Center.


Vernon Burkhalter, interview by Mary Potchemnick Cook, Diboll, TX, July 1994.


Louis Landers, Archivist, Diboll History Center, e-mail to Meredith May, April 27, 2011. Though the pay difference varied from employee to employee, it appears that women started off at the same pay level as a man employed for the same task, then received fewer raises.

Vernon Burkhalter, interview by Meredith May, Diboll, Texas, April 1, 2011.


Ibid.

Blackwelder, Now Hiring, 131.


Hartmann, The Home Front and Beyond, 91.


Ibid., 149.

Kennedy, If All We Did was to Weep at Home, 203

Ibid., 20

Allen, East Texas Lumber Workers, 6. Those counties were Jasper, Newton, Polk, Sabine, San Jacinto, Trinity, and Tyler.
29 U.S. Census, 1950, Pt. 43, Texas, Table 86.
31 Ibid.
33 Oneta Hendrick, interview by Meredith May, Diboll, Texas, July 26, 2011.
35 Oneta Hendrick interview.
37 White, “Handles Play Major Role,” 2.
38 Oneta Hendrick interview.
39 Oneta Hendrick interview.
40 Ibid.
41 Jewel Minton, interview by Marie Davis, October 7, 1988, Diboll History Center.
42 Oneta Hendrick interview.
44 Louis Landers, Archivist, Diboll History Center, e-mail to Meredith May, March 23, 2011.
45 Nannie Brazeale, interview by Jonathan Gerland, Diboll, Texas, March 23, 2000, Diboll History Center.
47 Nannie Brazeale interview.
49 Jocie Swallows, interview by Meredith May Lufkin, Texas, February 12, 2011.
50 Ibid.
51 Marie Hutto, interview by Meredith May, Dallas, Texas, April 9, 2011.


Vernon Burkhalter, interview by Meredith May.

Jocie Swallows interview. Marie Hutto interview.

The second box factory was dependent on military contracts from the Korean War, and after the war came to a close, so did the factory. To their credit, the management at Temple industries tried to move many of the women to other factories within the company; many women dispersed to other Temple industries, including Josie Swallows, Marie Hutto, and Lola Carter.

Jocie Swallows interview.

Marie Hutto interview.

Mary Russell, interview by Meredith May, Pineland, Texas, January 22, 2011.


Dorothy Price interview.

“I Might Be Right...” The Buzz Saw, Volume I No. 5, October 31, 1947, 1.

Louis Landers, Archivist, Diboll History Center, e-mail to Meredith May, April 27, 2011.

Vernon Burkhalter interview by Meredith May.

Arthur Temple collection, Box 13, Folder 30, HC.

Temple Industries collection, Box 303, Folder 16, ETRC.

Mary Russell interview.

Oneta Hendrick interview.

Jocie Swallows interview.

Louis Landers, conversation with Meredith May, July 11, 2011, Diboll, TX.

Letter from Vernon Burkhalter to Dr. S.L. Stevenson, December 15, 1956, Temple collection, Box 304, Folder 1, ETRC. The Pregnancy Discrimina-
tion Act of 1978 was added to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It forbids these types of practices.


74 Mary Russell interview.

75 Sitton and Conrad, Nameless Towns, 159.

76 To place it in perspective, men losing arms or being decapitated in a Temple sawmill happened astonishingly frequently throughout the 1910s. By the postwar period, the most common form of maiming in the sawmill was the loss of a fingertip, not a whole arm.

77 Imogene Sowell, interview by Mary Potchernick Cook, Diboll, Texas, July 1994.

78 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 37 and 23, History Center, Diboll, Texas. Hereafter cited as HC.

79 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 46, HC.

80 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 37, HC.

81 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 37, HC.

82 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 46, HC.

83 Temple Industries collection, Box 215, Folder 15, East Texas Research Center, Ralph W. Steen Library, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX. Hereafter cited as ETRC.

84 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 72, Folder 2, Diboll History Center, Diboll, TX.

85 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 72, Folder 62, Diboll History Center, Diboll, TX.

86 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 72, All Folders, Diboll History Center, Diboll, TX.

87 “Hot off the Handle…” Buzz Saw February 27, 1948, 4.

88 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 37, HC.

89 Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 42, HC.
Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 7, HC.

Clyde Thompson collection, Box 84, Folder 5, HC.

Pearl Havard, interview by Meredith May, Lufkin, Texas, July 13, 2011.


“Box Factory Nearing End of Present Contract,” 5.

The building products division of Temple-Inland, which includes the operations in Diboll, was sold in early 2013 to Georgia-Pacific.

Jocie Swallows interview.
Texas, Banks, and John Nance Garner

BY GEORGE COOPER

Good evening and thank you for attending tonight. Let me start by telling you how I got into this topic. A number of years ago, my friend Keith Volanto recommended that I speak at one of the TSHA seminars for teacher certification. The topic was open as long as I focused on the Great Depression and the New Deal. What came out of that was another presentation that I made a couple of years ago at this very conference in Nacogdoches, “South Texans in Washington during the New Deal.” That was eventually published as an article in the Journal of South Texas, since my focus was primarily on South Texans and Alberto Rodriguez the editor was present in the audience that day.¹

One of those South Texans, John Nance Garner was designated the point man on the Emergency Banking Bill of 1933 by President Roosevelt. It gnawed at the back of my brain for a while, and then I did the one thing that Jessica Brannon-Wranosky says a historian should never do, I asked why? That question is leading me on a “long and winding road,” to quote the Beatles.² Notice I said is, not has.

The first topic to be addressed was John Nance Garner, himself. What did I know about him? Described by John L. Lewis as “a labor-baiting, poker-playing, whiskey-drinking, evil old man,” he was the son of John Nance Garner III, a confederate veteran, who moved to Texas not too long after the Civil War where he became a cotton broker and local politician. His mother was the daughter of a banker.³ The fruit never falls far from the tree. John Nance Garner was born in Detroit, Texas November 22, 1868. He was educated in rural schools in Bogata and Blossom Prairie, Texas. At age eighteen he left Texas, went to Nashville and entered Vanderbilt University. He only remained at Vanderbilt for one semester, why we are not sure. The reason most frequently put forward is ill health, but some have argued that the educational preparation he had received in Texas was not adequate for the academic rigors of that particular school.⁴

George Cooper is the immediate past President of the East Texas Historical Association. This is an expanded version of his Presidential Address.
However, despite his lack of success at Vanderbilt, Garner had already decided that he wanted more out of life than the arduous work on a farm.5

Upon returning to Texas, Garner chose to read for the law in Clarksville, the county seat of Red River County where he had grown up. It only took him three years before he was admitted to the bar in 1890. Two years later he moved to Uvalde, supposedly for health reasons, which would lend credence to his departure from Vanderbilt because of ill health as opposed to poor preparation. Arriving in Uvalde, he quickly developed a successful law practice in addition to a real estate business. Along the way, he obtained the Uvalde newspaper in a legal settlement and obtained a title company, renaming it The Garner Abstract and Title Company. In 1895, the position of County Judge in Uvalde County was vacant. Garner entered the race, and won the Democrat Primary, essentially winning election.6 His opposition in that race was a woman, Marietta (Ettie) Rheiner, the daughter of a local rancher. Mind you, this is an age when women could not express their political opinions in public, much less vote or run for office. She opposed Garner because of his reputation as one who had a fondness for whiskey and poker, neither in my opinion, a disqualifying factor for public office. Garner took care of the matter in the best way possible. After a short courtship, he married the young lady, thus removing the main opposition to his holding public office in Uvalde. Shortly after Mr. Garner was elected county judge, the Victoria Advocate, which was not in Mr. Garner's county, published the statement that, "The Democrat party is the only party on earth whose members are clueless about voting."7 While they may not have had Garner specifically in mind, it does give one pause to wonder exactly whom they had in mind. But that is a discussion for another time.

In 1898, Garner was elected to the Texas State Legislature. He spent two terms in Austin, learning the process of legislation. While he sponsored few bills, he became known as a strong advocate of the Prickly Pear Cactus as the Texas state flower. Obviously that proposal lost to the Texas Bluebonnet, but his staunch support earned him the nickname of "Cactus Jack" which he would carry forward for the rest of his career. He did, while there, quickly ascend into committee leadership, a trait that would mark the rest of this political career. With an increase in population in the 1900 census, Texas obtained additional congressional representation, which meant new districts. As chairman of the Teas House Committee on Congressional Districts, Garner carved out a district, the Fifteenth Congressional District, which ran from Corpus Christi, to Brownsville, to Del Rio, and which, of course, included Uvalde. In 1902, when the first elec-
tions were held for someone to represent the Fifteenth Congressional District, John Nance Garner would become that someone, and he was off to Washington. This it was also the same year that Texas instituted the poll tax effectively eliminating much of the majority Mexican American population of his district from voting.⁸

A back bencher, Garner spent a good bit of time again learning the ropes in the national legislature. For the most part, he worked behind the scenes not sponsoring bills, but doing the legislative work that needed to be done by his patrons. His wife Ettie worked as his secretary and organizer, both serving the Fifteenth District. His hard work and organizational skills paid off when he was elected Party Whip when the Democrats won control of the House of Representatives in 1910, and later the position of Minority Leader after the Republican landslide of 1928. That would change with the election of Richard M. Kleberg to take the seat of the Republican Harry Wurzbach following Wurzbach’s death in 1931. Garner was then elected Speaker of the House, succeeding his close friend Nicholas Longworth, husband of Alice Roosevelt. During his time in the House of Representatives, as Minority Whip, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and Speaker of the House, Garner was viewed as a coalition builder and one who could work with Presidents, regardless of party.⁹ Further, by the time Garner achieved the speakership, the position had recovered from the rebellion of twenty years earlier, and was again recognized as the leader of the majority party, an extremely powerful position.¹⁰

With the seemingly insolvable problems of the Great Depression, at least for Herbert Hoover, it was a foregone conclusion that any Democrat capable of being nominated by the party was going to win the presidency in 1932. The 1930 Texas State Democratic Convention endorsed John Nance Garner as its preferred candidate for the party nomination for president in 1932.

Having said that, the Nacogdoches Herald excoriated the party for endorsing Garner and discussing the repeal of the 18th Amendment to the exclusion of all other topics at the convention. In the words of the Herald, “So far as the convention was concerned and apparently so far as Texas democrats know, there is no depression.” Other problems The Herald felt should have been discussed included disarmament, war debts, recovery of export markets, tariffs, and the budget.¹¹

Going into the national convention in Chicago two years later, the Governor of New York, Franklin Roosevelt was leading in the delegate
count, but under the archaic rules of the party he lacked the necessary two-thirds needed for nomination. Garner, favorite son candidate of Texas stood third in the ballot count, holding delegates primarily from Texas and California, the latter under the sway of William Randolph Hearst. In what may or may not have been a corrupt bargain in the Jacksonian sense, Garner released his delegates before the third ballot, Roosevelt was nominated and Garner became his vice-presidential candidate.

After the election of Roosevelt and Garner, their being sworn into office on March 4, 1933, they immediately set to work to alleviate the problems of the country. Roosevelt called a special session of the new congress to address the legislative program he set before them. That “First One Hundred Days” became the standard by which all subsequent new presidential terms have been judged. Included in the program which became known as The New Deal were sweeping reforms to the banking system. Garner, now vice-president and presiding officer of the Senate was charged by Roosevelt with shepherding the Emergency Bank Bill of 1933 through Congress and getting it passed. It is at this point that I first asked that question, why? Why Garner? Garner was a legislator, attorney, and businessman, but did Roosevelt designate Garner for this job because he was good at manipulating votes, or was there something deeper, more complex at play here? Well, it turns out that there was. Garner was also a banker. He purchased the First State Bank of Uvalde in 1913. He also was one of the individuals involved in the founding of the First State Bank of Three Rivers, not far from Uvalde. Question solved, right? Not really, because there is still that confounded question, why? And it is at this point that I really begin that long and winding road that I referred to earlier. When one starts looking at the history of banks in the United States, much less in Texas, one starts dealing with banking law, questions of currency, gold standard, bi-metalism, populism, and manifold forms of popular distrust of the haves by the have nots. I had originally hoped to focus on banks in Garner’s Fifteenth Congressional District, for obvious reasons. Hopefully I will get to that eventually. The deeper I dug, however, the more I realized I needed to address the issues of banking in Texas period.

The issue of banks in Texas has always been amongst the most divisive issues to confront the state. From its very beginning as a Republic, Texas has reflected a basic Jacksonian distrust of banks. There were proposals for the creation of a national bank at the Constitutional Convention in 1836 proposed by Branch T. Archer. Asa Brigham put forth a resolution to create such an institution and that the provisional government grant such
a charter. But once it became known that Sam Houston, Andrew Jackson’s erstwhile protégé, opposed a national bank, the creation of a Bank of Texas was specifically prohibited in the Constitution. The Constitution of the Republic of Texas included the provision that “No bank nor banking institution nor office of discount and deposit nor any other moneyed corporation nor bank establishment shall ever exist during the continuance of the present constitution.”

To repay its indebtedness, the Republic of Texas issued promissory notes to individuals and businesses throughout the country. These notes were backed up by the value of land, of which the Republic had a surplus. However, most of the land in question had not even been surveyed, much less evaluated. As a result, the promissory notes were soon being discounted throughout the Republic, and in New Orleans, the Republic’s primary outlet for its cotton, by as much as fifty percent. Additionally, because the promissory notes were issued with rather large valuations, merchants and other individuals throughout the Republic began issuing their own bills which frequently could not be redeemed for specie. Specie, for the most part, had been driven from the republic, or was being hoarded by those few individuals who actually possessed any. In a report to the Senate of the Republic of Texas on April 16, 1838, the Committee on Finance proposed a bill, entitled “A Bill to establish the Bank of the Republic of Texas,” which would authorize the creation of a bank of which the Republic of Texas would own all of the stock. The committee further proposed that capitalization be a minimum of $3,000,000, but the bank could not begin operation until at least $1,000,000 had been paid in specie. Notice the phrase “paid in” as opposed to subscribed. The bank would loan money to deserving individuals and business at an interest rate of ten per cent per annum. The Houston National Banner, editorialized that the regulation of currency was the most important function of the national government. Sam Houston was still the president, Mirabeau B. Lamar was not inaugurated until December 10th, so nothing came of the proposal at that time. Six days after Lamar entered office, however, the Congress of the Republic of Texas did pass an act chartering the “Texas Railroad, Navigation, and Banking Company.” Capital was to be $5,000,000, and the company would be permitted to start operation as soon as twenty percent of the capital was subscribed. Subscribed this time, not paid in. Although Branch T. Archer, Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin, and Augustus Allen all were among the incorporators, eventually at least Houston and Austin failed to participate in the final formation of the company. The company collapsed quickly, largely because
of the opposition of Anson Jones, but also because the economic crises of 1837 in the United States was quickly having an impact on Texas.\textsuperscript{17}

In 1845, as Texas prepared to become part of the United States, a new constitution was drafted. It was public knowledge that Houston was willing to accept the creation of a State Bank, given how the Republic had struggled with the issue of currency and credit throughout its existence. However, Houston was not present at the Constitutional convention, having returned to Tennessee because of the imminent death of his mentor, Andrew Jackson. Once the delegates to the convention learned of Jackson's death, they donned black arm-bands, and with Jackson's ghost hovering over the convention, they deleted the provision authorizing the Texas Railroad, Canal and Bank Company from operating a bank. When the Redeemers drafted a new Texas State Constitution, some members wanted to authorize the chartering of state banks in Texas, and although Houston was no longer present, the spirit of Jackson must have still been luring around the capital. The new state constitution was specifically silent on the issue of state chartered banks, neither permitting nor prohibiting banks in Texas. Into the void stepped merchants in communities throughout Texas, many acting as repositories of excess funds for their customers, some actually performing banking functions, but always without any oversight or control by any authority.

The single biggest issue of banking during the period was the question of currency. In 1863, the Congress of the United States created a new national banking system to help finance the Civil War. Since the need for money outstripped the supply, under the terms of the National Banking Act of 1863, banks chartered under the Act were permitted to issue notes, referred to as Greenbacks, with a tax paid to the federal government on those notes. The amount of greenbacks issued by a given bank should not exceed 10% of the banks total capital. Supporting this act was a secondary act "An Act to support a National Currency, secured by the pledge of United States stocks [or bonds], and to provide for the Circulation and Redemption thereof."\textsuperscript{18}

This removed the United States off reliance on specie, gold specifically, for commercial transactions. In 1875, under the leadership of Senator John Sherman, Congress passed the Specie Payment Resumption Act, effectively returning the United States to the gold standard.\textsuperscript{19} It was the Specie Resumption Act, and the following deflationary cycle, which brought the entire system back into political discussion as it now failed to serve the needs of the entire country.
Again there were arguments heard throughout the country, not just in Texas, that the national banking system should be eliminated. According to this, some banks chartered by states should again be allowed to issue notes that could be used as legal tender throughout the country. Charles F. Dunbar, in his 1897 article in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, logically made the argument that this would again throw the monetary system of the country into chaos. Dunbar went on to argue that the then existing system, while needing improvement, was the best option, as everyone understood that the United States government lent stability to the currency then in circulation. Further, the uniformity of bills issued by nationally chartered banks, made business transactions on a nationwide basis easier to undertake. That did not mean, however, that some nefarious individuals did not attempt to print their own bills. The Rockdale *Messenger* found it necessary to publish a brief notice that if anyone questioned the validity of a bank note in their possession, all that was needed to verify was to dampen the note in question with a sponge. On a valid bank note the watermark would stand up to the test, but that on a forged note would wipe off.

Texas citizenry and merchants were forced to rely on Federally Chartered Banks for their banking needs. The federal law worked well, within limits. Under the federal banking law of 1868, banks were required to post a minimum capitalization of $50,000 to obtain that charter, and they were prohibited from taking land as collateral for loans. Both were problems for the residents of cash poor, land rich Texas. With the withdrawal of greenbacks by the federal authorities, the nation fell back on gold and silver coins for the transactions of business. In the areas of the old Confederacy, including Texas, there was a lack of both. While the Federal Banking Law was amended in 1900, making some beneficial changes, the restrictions on taking land as collateral remained, leaving Texas farmers with both a shortage of physical money and dependable credit facilities.

While the lack of money in circulation was a continuing problem, the admission of six western states in the years of 1889 and 1890 brought increased pressure in the Senate, if not the House, to convert to a bi-metallic system, as all six of the states then admitted had large silver mining operations. Despite a lack of interest in going to a bi-metallic system in the House, the block of twelve new senators with this common goal managed to get the Sherman Silver Purchase Act passed through both houses of Congress in 1896 by linking it to the McKinley Tariff which did have support in the House. Silver, purchased at a ratio of 16 ounces of silver for each ounce of gold, led to silver coins which helped ease the monetary crises.
In 1900, the problem of a federally chartered banking system was compounded by the monopolization of the banking industry by trusts, just as every other industry in the country was. In the eyes of Texas newspapermen this was even more criminal than the domination of other industries. While reporting that the United States government, as of December 21, 1899, had a national debt of $1,590,000,000, and cash on hand of $1,050,000,000, the Victoria Advocate also noted that John D. Rockefeller’s Standard Oil Trust controlled eight banks and ten trust companies in New York, with tentacles that reached into and controlled banking in such cities as Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, New Orleans, and San Francisco. The article goes on to list several of the bank and trust companies owned by the trust and noted that its combined capital was $170,527,880, and deposits of $229,206,000, and outstanding loans of $943,413,000. I suspect that the only thing the author of the article was complaining about was the concentration of that much wealth in the hands of so few. When one considers that even if all the deposits were demand deposits and that amount was added to all the outstanding loans, the combined capital holdings represented fifteen percent of all potential losses, a ratio that any bank would be happy to maintain.

The banking, or one should say currency, issue had been a large part of the presidential campaign in 1896. Not only did the selection of William Jennings Bryan as the candidate of both the Democrat and People’s Parties leave the latter as a mere shadow of what it had been by time of the 1900 presidential campaign season its selection of Wharton Barker as its candidate in 1900 further damaged its message. Wharton, a banker himself, publicly stated he chose to ignore the money issue. With the nomination of a “me too” Progressive by the People’s Party, the voices of those who railed against the national monetary and banking system was once again muted by the big national banks.

Over the next five years ending September 20 1905, Texas led the nation in the chartering of new National Banks with 228 banks and over $12,000,000 in paid in capital. Still the demands for amending the state constitution to permit the chartering of banks by the State of Texas continued. If the only viable collateral a person had was his land, he ended up going to a private individual such as Wm. C. Whyte, who advertised in The State Herald, that he had money to lend on “Improved Black Land Farms,” at seven percent interest. The interest rate wasn’t intolerable, but in a market of declining cotton prices, there was a good chance the farmer would not make enough money to pay off his loan. The state legis-
lature finally passed a bill in 1905, authorizing the chartering of state banks and creating the Texas State Banking Commission. The requirements for chartering a “State” bank were lower than those for a federal charter, but perhaps more importantly, land could be taken as collateral for loans under the terms of the state banking law. Not one of the first wave of state banks chartered The First State Bank of Uvalde, was organized in John Nance Garner’s hometown in 1907, after the election of Tom Campbell, who supported much of this reformist legislation as the “progressive” candidate in the Democrat Party primary in 1906. While Garner wasn’t one of the original incorporators, he obviously kept an eye on this new endeavor in his home town. Remember, he was also involved in real estate in Uvalde.

In 1909, to protect depositors of failed banks, the State of Texas joined with Oklahoma and seven other states which had created their own Depositors Guaranty Funds. The debate within the banking community, and the population in general, about the creation of some type of fund to protect the deposits of individuals in banks was carried out in the newspapers throughout the state. In an editorial reprinted in The Rockdale Reporter, the Dallas Times argued that the only way to get “timid investors” to get their money out of their mattresses and into a bank was to assure them that if the bank failed the government would make them whole again. The editorial went on to note that many bankers were opposed to the idea because it would “level” the competition, removing the advantage of good banking, good bankers, and knowledgeable management, thereby costing them deposits, and without saying it, profits.

Two months later the Mexia State Herald reported that the Oklahoma State Banking Board had formulated a procedure whereby the national banks in that state could participate in the Oklahoma State Bank Guaranty Fund. The implication, of course, was that Texas was falling behind in the matter of depositor’s insurance. And that same day, the same paper ran a notice that an application had been filed for the establishment of a National bank in Stanton with capitalization of $25,000, now permissible under the revision of the National Banking Act made in 1900.

Eighteen months later the Bell County Democrat provided their readers with another reason for the creation of a state guaranty fund when it reported that a fraud order had been issued against the Bank Depositors Insurance Company of Washington, D.C. which had been in business for approximately one year. The firm, capitalized in the amount of $1,000,000, promised to pay the depositors in the event of an insured bank’s failure or closure. However, when The Defiance Bank of Defiance, Ohio, which had
purchased a policy with an $80,000 limit, failed, the company neglected to indemnify the depositors as it had contracted to do. The Bank Depositors Insurance Company was not regulated by the state banking or insurance regulatory Agency in Ohio, it was a private firm domiciled in the most unregulated city in the country, Washington, D.C. That same day, on the second page of the *Bell County Democrat*, in the Letters to the Editor section, was a letter from a reader “Yarrell,” who argued that Congress needed to pass legislation creating a national depositors insurance fund so that the fifty million or so depositors in national banks could sleep at night.

In 1913, Congress created the Federal Reserve System, providing additional support for the banking system. This fundamentally restructured the nations monetary system, and provided what some felt finally stabilized the financial system of the United States. It included stipulations for state chartered banks to become members providing they met the same requirements as federally chartered banks.

At this point, John Nance Gamer, conservative businessman that he was, finally felt it safe to get involved in the banking business. In 1913, he bought the First State Bank of Uvalde. In addition, the very next year, he is listed as one of the incorporators of the First State Bank of Three Rivers. The town really didn’t exist yet, the railroad was just reaching the site where Three Rivers, originally Hamiltonian, would be developed. Again, the key here is that Gamer was a businessman, taking advantage of the opportunities that presented themselves. He could now make money by selling the real estate in the community, building the houses on the land he sold with his construction company, proofing the titles to the land through his title company, and providing the mortgages with his bank, whether in Uvalde or Three Rivers. Andrew Carnegie would have been proud.

So, back to my original block of questions, why did Roosevelt choose Gamer to shepherd his Emergency Bank Bill through Congress. Gamer, as a banker, certainly understood the problems present in the banking community, both locally, nationally and internationally, so who better to oversee a program to save the banking industry. Why was Gamer a banker? Simply because he stood to make additional money from the banking services he sought to render to himself and his customers. Why did he not become a banker until 1913? Because he was a conservative businessman, not inclined to take unnecessary risk, and it was not until 1913 that all the pieces were in place to take the leap and risk his own capital on a banking endeavor. First, because federal requirements for the establishment of a bank were quite steep, and they restricted what could be taken as collateral.
to exclude real property, he wasn’t interested in owning or participating in a federally chartered bank. Second, once state bank chartering was created in Texas the qualifying monetary requirements were more reasonable and land could be taken as collateral, but that didn’t happen until 1905. Third, the creation of a state depositor’s insurance fund would attract additional deposits into banks and therefore provide additional reserves for loans. Fourth, the creation of the Federal Reserve System with membership of state banks further strengthened the banking system again increasing the attractiveness of the industry for investment purposes. All of this finally drew Garner into the banking industry, but not until these conditions had been met.

As a closing note, Garner would retain ownership of the First State Bank of Uvalde until 1960, when he would sell it to another prominent Uvalde businessman/politician, Dolph Briscoe, Jr., who was elected Governor of Texas in 1972. The Briscoe family still owns and heads up the bank today.

1 Cooper, George M., “South Texans in Washington During the New Deal,” The Journal of South Texas, Volume 29, No. 1 (Fall 2015), p. 82 - 89


14 Constitution of the Republic of Texas, 1836, quoted in Grant & Crum, Ibid.


16 Grant & Crum, Ibid., 8.


21 Dunbar, Ibid., 2 - 3

“Our Currency,” *The National Banner* (Houston), April 4, 1838, p. 3

24 *The Victoria Advocate*, January 3 1900, 2

https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth741494/m1/4/ (accessed May 2, 2017)

https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth290774/m1/14/ (accessed March 21, 2017)

27 *The State Herald*, December 12, 1902, 5.
https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth290774/m1/5/ (accessed May 31, 2017)

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29 “As to Banks,” *The Rockdale Reporter*, December 12, 1907, 7
https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth752098/m1/7/ (accessed March 17, 2017)

30 Oklahoma Bank Insurance,” *The State Herald*, February 13, 1908, 3


32 “Fraud Order Issued,” *Bell County Democrat*, November 24, 1908, 1,
https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth232368/metapth232368/m1/1/ (accessed March 23, 2017)

33 “Fellow Citizens,” *Bell County Democrat*, November 24, 1907, 2.
https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth232368/m1/2/ (accessed March 23, 2017)

34 Fleming, James S., 102.
For many Texans, the story of Texas independence and subsequent decade as an independent republic is a point of pride that centers on the contributions and experiences of Anglos. Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, and the other men of popular lore take center stage in the developments of the 1830s and 1840s. However, editors Kenneth W. Howell and Charles Swanlund put together an interesting collection of essays that challenge this "traditionalist" perspective. The book attempts to answer several questions: "Who were the Texans of the Republic era? What were the experiences of Tejanos, African Americans, American Indians, foreign-born immigrants, and women living in the Republic? In what ways did various ethnic and racial groups influence the development of Texas during this era?" (6) The editors readily admit that this collection does not definitively answer each of these questions, yet the insight provided will open the door for future research. Taken together, the sixteen essays in Single Star of the West demonstrate the cultural milieu that shaped the trajectory of the revolution, republic period, and annexation of Texas into the United States.

The collection is organized into four thematic sections, addressing issues surrounding the buildup to the Texians' struggle for independence, the revolution itself, political and economic issues during the republic period, and social and cultural developments during the republic era. The range of issues covered in the collection is impressive. From Richard Bruce Winders's essay that places the secession of Tejas from Mexico in the broader context of political debates and a civil war within Mexico between, to Gary D. Joiner's examination of the contribution of the Texas Navy during the revolution and republic period, to three essays each dealing with the presidents of Texas by James L. Haley, Kenneth W. Howell, and Charles Swanlund, and culminating in a John Storey's essay on religion in the republic, the coverage is thorough and will undoubtedly appeal to a broad range of interests.

Several essays bring enlightening new perspectives on the Republic of Texas. The biographies of the Texas presidents reveals political turmoil
and policy debates in the context of the personalities of each man. Particularly interesting is Charles Swanlund’s examination of the role and contributions to the Republic of Texas of Anson Jones, a man he dubs the “forgotten president.” (233) Part IV: Social and Cultural Vistas elaborates on the several important contributions of and limitations placed on women, American Indians, African Americans, and Tejanos in the republic era. Most impressive, however, is Walter L. Buenger’s essay, “Across Many Borders: Persistence and Transformation in the Texas Economy and Culture, 1830-1850. Buenger situates the economy and culture of Texas in the context of the larger Atlantic world. Instead of seeing Texas’s cultural and economic developments as monolithic or focused around Texas exceptionalism or rugged individualism, he argues that Texas’s connection with the larger Atlantic world “created distinctive and evolving cultural pockets or island communities in the diverse regions of Texas. Instead of a ‘regular Texas’ at least six types existed.” (306)

While essays, such as Buenger’s, offer interesting new perspective, some of the arguments put forth in the essays will be familiar to historians of the era. Essays exploring conflicts between and the political struggles of Sam Houston and Mirabeau B. Lamar, the larger fight between Santa Anna’s central government in Mexico City and the several states of Mexico (including Tejas), and the development of the legendary and infamous Texas Rangers are engaging, yet ultimately fairly well-known in academic circles. Despite the familiarity, these essays still provide much needed context and insight into the multiple forces at work during the era.

This minor critique does not, however, detract from the overall success of the collection. Taken as a whole, Single Star of the West offers perhaps the most wide-ranging coverage of the Texas Republic and elucidates the variegated forces that shaped much of the history of Tejas, the war against Mexico, the republic era, and finally the annexation of Texas as the twenty-eighth state in the Union. Historians of Texas will undoubtedly find much to celebrate in these essays, and for anyone generally interested in the history of the state, particularly the revolution and republic era, this collection is a must read.

Brandon Jett
Stetson University
Dr. Deborah Liles and Dr. Angela Boswell, provide a masterful counter-narrative to the monolithic view of women's experiences in Texas during Civil War. The anthology, awarded the Liz Carpenter Prize for the best book on the history of Texas women, incorporates a broad perspective of women's lives and their contributions to a complicated story. In this book, Liles and Boswell piece together essays written by notable historians who address critical questions about gender and class on the home front during the war. Additionally, the essays tackle the experiences of African American women, Mexican American women, and women who supported the Union after Texas seceded. The central argument of the book, as Boswell points out in the introduction, sets out to challenge the hegemonic narrative of southern women and shows “the hardships were numerous and their history is interesting and diverse.” (1)

Like the title suggests, Liles and Boswell organize the book around diversity and dissidence and either highlight a particular woman or group of women to address questions of gender, class, and identity. In the first essay, Vicki Betts, combines notions of the traditional historical narrative that shows women engaged in support and recruitment of the war, and generally focused on the upper class. Yet, she points out how women challenged the social construction of their traditional roles by assuming responsibilities of the household as the men left for war. In Dorothy Ewing’s essay on Caroline Seedberry embodies the traditional narrative as seen through her correspondence with her husband. As the time passed, however, women like Seedberry gained confidence in their abilities to manage the business at home and also discovered a conviction in their own voice. In the third chapter, Beverly Rowe also expertly uses archival letters between several family members to deconstruct the thoughts of both men and women and the role gender plays on the issues of slavery, the war, and loyalty. Brittany Bounds then writes on how the women’s support for the war culminated into organizing aid societies, sewing groups, or church groups formed by both rich and poor to provide the necessary material needs to soldiers. Bounds also briefly addresses the issue of prostitution in during the Civil
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War, but quickly shifts the view back to the appalled women writing to newspapers who found the "questionable women" an "annoyance." (84) While the book begins with what readers may see as a typical story of upper-class white women's experience during the war, the essays are used to demonstrate a self-reliance not typical to their stories.

In the second half of the book, the essays address the experiences of women who veered away from the southern cause and do not fit the common narrative of women in the Confederacy during the Civil War in Texas. Bruce Glasrud, for example, writes about African American Texas women and their experiences during the "Freedom War." He argues "the lives of black women, whether free of enslaved, were controlled either by white owners or white law." (100) This highlights their vulnerable position living in Confederate Texas, and Linda Hudson explores this vulnerability through court cases. Hudson also shows the agency enslaved women displayed through court appeals. Jerry Thompson and Elizabeth Mata focus on the lives of Mexican-American women in Civil War Texas. An often over-looked narrative, the authors write about the expanded roles women assumed in South Texas while their husbands left home to fight. They also explore the dynamic of mixed marriages and what that meant to Texas-Southern identity. In chapters eight and nine, Judith Dykes-Hoffman and Rebecca Sharpless explore the lives of Unionist women in Texas. While Dykes-Hoffman focuses on the German Women and Sharpless on the women of North Texas, both provide an under-explored story of women who opposed the Confederacy and its politics. Candice Shockley's chapter does bring the narrative back to elite women, but demonstrates the hardships of women labeled "refugees" and fleeing other parts of the war-torn south. In the final chapter, Liles examines the lives of women in the frontier. "Not your typical Southern Belles," as Liles writes, like the previous chapters, brilliantly demonstrates how women in Civil War Texas did not fit the mold of "traditional women" but acted on their own behalf and endured hardships not typically found in the historiography.

The book is accessible to all levels of readers and includes extensive archival information, in addition to maps and pictures. This well-researched narrative on Civil War Texas is valuable to any history class that explores questions on gender, war, and race.

Leah LaGrone Ochoa
Texas Christian University
Society tends to make heroes of mortals with feet of clay. The media feasts on the public’s love for heroes, be they a “Captain America” or a “Wonder Woman.” At the time of the Twentieth Century’s beginning a real-life hero was in the making, a common man to all appearances, but that man, Graham Barnett, would enter into the “Roaring Twenties” and become a mythical figure. The authors present the life story of this dangerous man, his background, why he became the man he did and how his life style resulted in his becoming a near legend in his lifetime.

Joseph Graham Barnett was his birth name, born on August 28, 1890 and almost as a precursor to his lifestyle an acquaintance stated that he “came from an eye-for-an-eye kind of people.” (13) Indeed, ranching along the Rio Grande almost guaranteed the problems of survival, as besides the lack of rain, the fluctuations of livestock markets, animal diseases and four-legged predators there was the revolution taking place just across the river. That close to the river also attracted two-legged predators, and Graham Barnett learned quickly that if he showed meekness and lack of fight he would not survive.

This notion resulted in Barnett becoming an expert with weapons, whether it be a six-shooter or a rifle. One incident involved recovering his own horses from bandits from south of the river. He and an uncle trailed the stolen mounts, found where they had been hidden and at daybreak stole them back, along with the horses of the thieves. This required not only the tracking skills to locate them but also the nerve to handle the recovery. The incident was told and retold, probably growing more exciting with each telling. Another story involved Barnett sitting on the bluffs on the Texas side and shooting at any Mexican who showed himself on the other side. It was supposed that he may have actually shot Mexicans rather than just shooting at him. The actual events and the retelling gradually led many citizens to fear Graham Barnett. This was considered an advantage for him, as many who otherwise might want to cross him now avoided him.

Perhaps the major incident which led to the growing amount of fear of Barnett was the last act of his feud with the Babb family which grew
out of a land dispute. An argument in Dodd’s general merchandise store in Langtry between Will Babb and Barnett escalated to the street where Graham had to defend himself with a .32 Savage pistol. Babb was killed instantaneously, but the feud only continued.

Graham Barnett now was forced to always be on the lookout for those wanting to avenge Will Babb’s death. Whether it was self-defense or cold blooded murder mattered little. Rumors circulated that the Babb family had placed a $10,000 bounty on Barnett’s head, payable on proof of death. At a time when some laborers earned less than one dollar a day this could be an attractive chance to take.

That may have been only a rumor, but Graham Barnett believed it was true and became even more watchful. It changed him, and he became more of a gunman than a rancher. This did not deter him from joining the Texas Rangers in 1916 in Company B captained by J. Monroe Fox. This was during a low period in ranger history as rumors of wholesale killing of Mexicans were rampant. Thus Barnett lived with the reputation as a gunman but at the same time was a bona fide officer of the law, sworn to uphold the laws of the state of Texas.

This story of a dangerous man has been told only in brief episodes but never has received a full length treatment by competent historians. While his legend grew, Barnett served in many capacities: cowboy, deputy sheriff, oil field security man, Texas Ranger, city marshal of Presidio, private investigator in San Angelo, as well as ranchman, husband and father. Authors Coffey, Drake, and Barnett have wisely consolidated their research with primary and secondary source materials as well as numerous interviews Drake had conducted with witnesses to Barnett’s life and times. This biography is a valuable research tool for those wanting to know the real conditions of the early 20th century life and times in South Texas.

Chuck Parsons
Luling, Texas

The garrulous and always entertaining Bob Alexander has spun yet another Texas Ranger yarn for his devoted readership, this time regaling us with the story of Bazzell Lamar Outlaw, a fearless enforcer of the law gripped by the scourge of alcoholism throughout his life which would ultimately lead to his undoing on an El Paso street. The irony of his last name pitched inexorably against his illustrious if untamed Ranger career would ultimately define him in the annals of frontier justice.

Born in 1854 near Seguin, Texas, Baz Outlaw’s brief thirty-nine years of life were nonetheless packed with several lifetimes of adventure and misadventure as he made his way across Texas from saloon to gunfight to saloon and so on. Serving more than two decades as both a Texas Ranger and then Deputy U. S. Marshal, Outlaw worked at the task of keeping law and order in the 19th Century American West with a fervent eagerness, while at the same time mired in an unforgiving cycle of drinking and manic behavior. His bravery in the face of “six shooter finality,” as author Alexander puts it, was as admired and respected by his peers and superiors as his confounding unprofessional alt-behavior was perplexing. The unpredictable Ranger could hunt down and retrieve a dangerous fugitive in one moment, then turn on his own fellow lawmen in the next. In fact, the cold-blooded murder of a fellow Ranger sparked the last moments of his life as he himself was brought to justice by the business end of El Paso Constable John Selman’s gun, the “bullet smashing into Outlaw’s upper left chest causing him to copiously leak blood and whiskey onto South Utah Street.” (280) Bob Alexander’s unexamined yet somehow charming biology notwithstanding, the callous and imbibed character whose tale is told here has met with the perfect writer of the kind of unbridled prose that befits Outlaw’s enigmatic career of law and lawlessness wrapped around a bottomless bottle of whiskey.

Baz Outlaw’s occasionally illustrious years as a lawman carried him from train robberies to main street shoot-outs, and from chasing down vigilantes to becoming one himself on too many occasions. His captains never knew whether to pin an award on his chest or place him in handcuffs, but neither were any of them ever able to settle him down or get him sober. As
a wanton drunk of the first order, Ranger Outlaw was certainly not the only lawman haunted by alcohol. In fact, even Rangers as highly respected as Captain J. A. Brooks could never finally outwit the whiskey in their veins. But many, like Brooks, were at least able to contain the disease that would ultimately strike them down while they worked behind the badge. Not Baz Outlaw.

For those who enjoy the trail drive campfire chatter that Bob Alexander always brings faithfully to his prose, this next installment of the wild west of the Texas Rangers will be welcome.

Paul N. Spellman
Wharton County Junior College

Dr. McCaslin, known for his 19th century history of Texas, expanded his scope to detailed local history when researching Sutherland Springs, Texas, a small community in Wilson County. Some thirty years ago, he visited the community on a graduate school fieldtrip led by Terry G. Jordan and Robin Doughty. Along the way he became intrigued with Whitehall, headquarters of an early settler’s agricultural enterprise. Later the home served as boarding house for the owner’s widow. In his work McCaslin discovered a wide range of sources, insights into the lives of more than the founding elite, and the path a small town followed from its beginning to an apex of success before the ultimate decline.

Farmer and rancher Joseph H. Polley who lived at Whitehall and Doctor John Sutherland, Jr. settled on opposite sides a Cibolo Creek, southeast of San Antonio in the 1840s. Polley valued the constant water flow from several springs for use in his farming and ranching ventures while homeopathic trained doctor Sutherland saw medical value in the waters. By 1860 the community was a thriving farming center in the newly created county of Wilson. Sutherland Springs was the social center of the area with a church, private schoolhouse, hotel, and businesses. The usual vices of early day Texas were present with drinking, horseracing, and gambling. Dozens of slaves lived and worked on the farms and ranches.

The Civil War and Reconstruction brought the first setback. But in 1874 the weekly newspaper proclaimed the town was on “another start uphill.” (87). In addition to being a farming center, the town relished the growth of its mineral spring resorts. Stagecoaches and later trains brought visitors from nearby San Antonio and other areas. Entertainment promised to lure more tourists. Residents voted for prohibition in 1876 with hopes of creating a family centered resort. Rumors of potential oil fields, such as those in East Texas, spurred on more speculators. Developers sold lots and later pre-fab home kits. But the downturn of agriculture in the 1920s and 1930s along with weather that dried up the springs caused Sutherland Springs to fall into a downward spiral. With no oil production or agricultural output the community lacked a base for prosperity. As medical
science increased mineral springs were used less and less for treatments. Loss of railroads, closure of churches and schools, and lack of mercantile businesses finally caused the community to acquire the moniker of ghost town.

Dr. McCaslin periodically added to his collection of notes. When he turned his attention again to Sutherland Springs and Whitehall he used family papers, newspapers, legal documents, census records, photographs, and other memorabilia of Sutherland Springs. His work presents an accurate picture of the community from 1840 through the present. While the author clearly represents those who built the town through their money and hard work, he also focuses on women, Hispanic laborers, and immigrants from East Europe. Former slaves built a Freedom Colony outside of the white community before abandoning it to move away searching for jobs. He clearly delineates the Progressive Era speculators and land developers as more interested in their potential wealth than in community support. Making the transition from agriculture to resort never quite happened although a semblance of the community still exists.

Carol Taylor
Greenville, Texas
As an insider of 33 years, author Walt Davis narrates the arc of change that began with the preservationist vision of Judge T. Edward Sewell and transformed over the next nine decades into a science center that attracted over a million visitors in its first year by walking the tightrope of education and entertainment. Told through the lens of his own experiences and combined with stories of major participants constructed from interviews and exhaustive research, Building an Ark for Texas reads like a travelogue. More than an institutional history, it is an environmental history of the state, a primer on educational theory, and a compendium of biographies of scientists, educators, civic leaders, artists, supporters and students that had an impact on the evolution of the Texas Museum of Natural History, later the Dallas Museum of Natural History (DMNH), into the Perot Museum of Nature and Science.

In three sections, Davis chronicles the need to preserve Texas’ environmental landscape, the response embodied in the mission of the DMNH, and the changes that led to the privatization of the museum and the birth of the Perot. He begins the journey where all museums begin – with major change. In The Manual of Museum Planning, Gail and Barry Lord reduce our fears and passions to the simple equation: “Change is the catalyst and preservation is the reaction.” Early advocates of wildlife conservation in Texas observed massive change to native populations. In the late 1800s, the ‘war of extermination’ described by a writer of Science magazine devastated more than American bison populations. Deer, turkey, quail, songbirds and waterfowl all suffered terrible losses. As a witness to the ongoing slaughter at the end of the nineteenth century, Ed Sewell feared the worst and matched his fears with a correspondingly outsized dream of an, “ark for Texas.” The maiden launch of this ark was the Texas Museum of Natural History. Sewell and early collaborator, Willie Mayer, had three guiding principles: “The museum would focus on Texas. It would deal with all the state’s plants, animals and mineral resources. And it would be an educational institution.” (p.25)
A recurring topic of discussion on this road trip is the challenges museums face in providing learning experiences that inform behavior; transformative experiences. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the American Museum of Natural History introduced the concept of habitat groups displayed in simulated environments. The diorama was the cutting edge tool for educators looking to inspire audiences with an appreciation of nature and a corresponding desire to preserve the environment. This new tool traveled to the DMNH with its first director, F.W. Miller, and stayed for more than forty years. In the same timespan, museum staff launched educational programs centered on fieldwork and hands-on learning that served the core mission of conservation education.

The narrative takes the reader on a number of side trips. Tracing the herculean effort involved in building the 1936 museum at Fair Park, Dallas’ success in acquiring the 1989 Ramses the Great exhibit and the 1984 formation of the Dallas Paleontological Society by DMNH volunteers recruited to clean and repair a Trinity River mammoth skeleton, these excursions, and others, help the reader make sense of the journey. For example, Ramses the Great was a phenomenal success financially and attracted record numbers of visitors but ultimately did not raise the museum’s profile.

At the end of the road, Davis takes the reader back to the beginning. In 1922, Judge Sewell asked, how do we inspire and motivate the public? Eighty years later, educators and wildlife conservationists were asking the same question and they were coming up with different answers. Walt Davis walks the reader through the educational and economic shifts affecting not only the DMNH but also the museum community at large at the turn of the twenty-first century, and leaves the reader with a challenge that could have been framed by Judge Sewell himself, “who and what will be on board [this small blue planet] when its next centennial census is taken?” (p.192)

Carolyn Spears
Stephen F. Austin State University
Stone Fort Museum
If you ever have the chance to drive across the Lone Star state, you might catch a glimpse of a sign with a cowboy kneeling in prayer, with his hat off, horse by his side, and in front of a cross. That’s them—the Cowboy Christians. According to CowboyChurch.Net, which provides a directory of Cowboy Christian ministries, approximately 1,042 Cowboy Churches dot the U.S., not to mention Canada, Australia, Russia, and Kenya, but Texas leads with 438 of those (42%), while Oklahoma is a distant second with 75 (about 7%). As for East Texas, with only 8% of the state’s total population (2,086,808), it has 85 Cowboy Christian ministries—or 19.3% of the state’s total—while West Texas, the region most robustly associated with the iconic Texas cowboy, has 84 (19.1%). While no doubt of growing popularity in East Texas, Marie W. Dallam’s *Cowboy Christians* is about the broader history and development of the Cowboy Church.

While not formally divided into parts, it nevertheless might help readers to mentally organize the book into four logical parts. The first part, chapter one, is the introduction whereby Dallam defines Cowboy Christians: “These are people whose religious identity is Christian, and who closely identify with a North American subculture [Western Heritage Culture] revolving around a matrix of cowboys, ranch workers, rodeos, rural life, and nostalgia for aspects of the ‘Old West’” (3). Dallam first contextualizes Cowboy Christian churches as part of a new religious movement, but firmly within the custom of American Protestant evangelism, then identifies the unique niche market and imagery they cling to and spread in the iconic cowboy of the mythic West. The second part, chapters two and three, concentrate on the deep roots of this movement, going back to the historic cowboy himself, the role of religion (or lack thereof) in his life, the changing but romanticized image of the cowboy (whereby he is thoroughly Christianized), and the history of cowboys in song, film, and on the radio through the early-to-mid-twentieth century. Dallam next traces early cowboy preachers and rodeo ministries as antecedents to the modern movement. While perhaps most intriguing here is her forays into the various ministries and leaders, Jeff Copenhaver and the origin story of the truly first Cowboy Church at Billy Bob’s Honky Tonk in Fort Worth steals the show (yes, you read that correctly!).
The third part, chapters four and five, is where Dallam is at her best. She makes extensive use of oral histories and her own experiences participating in the church. She makes the reader empathize. The words and perspectives of Cowboys Christians shine through. Dallam does this to focus on the modern church, exploring its key characteristics, especially through its missionary zeal to attract new comers via a “low barriers model” meant to attract congregants, especially men who self-identify or otherwise find meaning in Western Heritage Culture. The contention is that so-called traditional churches’ expectations of “church dress” and religious emotionalism produce a religion that lacks true heart-felt commitment to Christ. Therefore, by not obsessing about dress and seminary jargon, by embracing Western aesthetics (including barn-like church buildings and adjoining rodeo arenas!), country-style worship music, and clothing, Cowboy Christians maintain they can better reach the so-called unchurched. Dallam then pauses to consider gender in depth, explaining not only that the church is designed to appeal to men, but is intimately connected to a longer history of “muscular Christianity” dating to the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At her richest, Dallam then surveyed and interviewed Cowboy Christian women about their own perceptions of their roles in an otherwise man’s church (the results were beautifully mixed). The fourth and final part, chapter six, serves as a conclusion. Dallam rightfully situates the Cowboy Church within both the larger world (i.e., on cable TV and online) and development of evangelical Protestantism, showing readers how they (mostly Texan by the way) “are forging new ways of being a Christian community” (185) in the twenty-first century.

Dallam’s *Cowboy Christians* is truly a first. As such, it suffers a few problems, but problems she is aware of, principally race and class. Dallam is forthright in her lack of racial and class analysis. But rather than to ding her for this, she deserves high kudos for what she did do, acknowledging that the next wave of scholarship to come, which Dallam will no doubt inspire, can address such areas moving forward.

Paul J.P. Sandul
Stephen F. Austin State University

The authors of this lively volume have separately written many books related to the American West. Both are retired university professors who remain prolific writers and recognizable principals in western writing and national historical associations.

Their book on U. S. Presidents and the American West is a compelling study, clearly written and absorbing. While perhaps not altogether new in its general approach, the book nonetheless reviews with methodical attention ten Presidents (plus far too briefly four recent ones) whose policies impacted the West in substantial ways. It offers perceptive analyses into Presidential thinking and action and examines sometimes unforeseen circumstances that resulted in inconsistencies in political attitudes and shifting positions on major events occurring during each executive’s time in office.

Of the ten chief executives who get multi-layered consideration there are few surprises. The ten include Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan, with conceivably only Johnson and Carter questionable selections. The four recent Presidents, who each get about 2½ pages, are the George H. W. and George H. Bush, William “Bill” Clinton, and Barack Obama. It is a powerful, but 20th century-dominated lineup presented in chronological order. The roster with its emphasis on recent chief executives perhaps represents the growing role of the West in American politics. It might also reflect the increasing trend toward an imperial presidency.

In organizing and writing the impressive work, two purposes governed much of the authors’ intent: as the title of the book suggests, to “show how presidential decisions shaped the West” and to “understand the presidents through their interactions with” the region (p. 3). A thoughtful secondary theme relates to how the authors see the presidency changing with ever-shifting western issues. Nonetheless, presidential personalities guide the work.

For Jefferson, Jackson, and Polk there are few new revelations—the Louisiana Purchase, Indian removal, and Texas annexation and war with Mexico, respectively, get much of the attention. The chapter on Lincoln
shows how the President’s policies, although overwhelmingly influenced by the Civil War, changed the West. They reoriented the country on an East-West axis, the authors argue, promoted something of a state liberalism in politics, and laid the basis for our National Park System. The chapter contains thought-provoking conclusions. Appropriately, the two Roosevelt chapters emphasize the men’s important and numerous environmental contributions, which, of course, produced critical changes in the region—although the authors do not overlook Franklin Roosevelt and World War II in the West.

Eisenhower was not an active politician or president. The authors suggest that his negative Indian policy—termination—and his immigrant deportation matters are offset by some positive actions of crucial value: Alaska and Hawaii statehood, parks and wilderness areas in Alaska, interstate highway system, and Brown v. Board of Education, for example.

As for Johnson, well the Vietnam War crushed Johnson’s domestic policies and what achievements that occurred were as much national as regional: civil rights acts, voting rights act, and War on Poverty among them. The Carter chapter emphasizes the President’s inability to connect with the American West.

Ronald Reagan identified with the West, and his leading advisors were from that section. His defense policies and military spending greatly enriched the region and he supported amnesty to millions of undocumented immigrants in the West. Such efforts, the authors write, were positive, but his cuts in domestic spending negatively impacted Native Americans, most of whom lived in the West. Still, they judge him as “near-great” in his impact.

Finally, the authors organized the ten key chapters in parallel fashion. That is, in each there was a brief introduction to the President, a bit on his presidency, a section on his western issues and policies, and a summary/conclusion related to his western legacy. Altogether, it is a fine book, analytical in its presentation, rich in its interpretations, and absolutely enjoyable to read.

Paul H. Carlson
Texas Tech University, emeritus
As I began to read the latest issue from the Texas Folklore Society (TFS), it seemed as if I was not reading but instead sitting and having a conversation with Dr. Abernethy. “Ab” always wrote with a unique style, one that made the reader feel that he was just telling you, and you alone, a personal story. The selections in Thirty-Three Years, Thirty-Three Works certainly conveyed that style. It was a joy to read. Folklore is a companion study to history, a genre that gives the past “life,” and in many ways picks up where the actual chronicles end. Abernethy’s writing made legends and myths appear real. As the old saying goes, “you should ever allow the truth to get in the way of a good story.”

Abernethy came up in a hard-scrabble manner. He was born, as he often said, just in time to endure the Great Depression. He grew up in the Texas Panhandle as his family tried to eke out a meager existence on a small cattle ranch. His mother abandoned the family when he was quite young, leaving young Abernethy and his father on the ranch until they were, as he put it, “dusted out” during the depths of the catastrophic “Dust Bowl.” Abernethy’s life during that era had a great influence on him, one that was often reflected in his work.

Abernethy’s writing was meticulous and careful, and obviously labored over each line to make sure each detail was perfectly used to tell the proper story. In the chapter on “how to build a proper outhouse,” he took care to explain precisely how the door should be placed, and in his story on the pecking order in a hunter’s camp his particular language described the camp to the reader as if he/she shared the campfire with the hunters. It did not hurt that Ab loved the outdoors and felt a special connection with nature. He spent as much time enjoying the flora and fauna of the East Texas home that he came to love as he could.

Abernethy also loved music, and when he played it during TFS meeting one could tell that his passion for the expression radiated from his soul. That was one reason why he so treasured the “hootenanny” portion of TFS meetings. He reflected the same passion in his chapter on the “Yellow Rose of Texas,” and his story about Emily West, the mulatto freedwomen behind
the iconic song. Abernethy believed that music was one of the centers of folklore, and one of the ultimate forms of communication.

Abernethy was also a traveler, and he made treks all across Texas. What he loved more than anything was to observe the land and converse with the people he met. His writing reflected that. When he wrote of a place, or the actions of its people, you knew that he had not just read about it but he had been there. He captured the “spirit” of Texas and its people like very few have before him or since. He had a knack for portraying his subjects with great depth and character, again like one was meeting and conversing with them instead of reading of their experiences.

One person who had the same “knack” for such descriptions was J. Frank Dobie, who was—naturally—Ab’s mentor and predecessor at TFS. Ab had a great love for Dobie, and he wrote about him with great conviction. And like Dobie, he could then use that same conviction when describing the habits and usefulness of snakes. In essence, the new volume from TFS editor Untiedt and Kira Mort perfectly captures “Ab” Abernethy’s soul, the way he thought, and the way he wrote. I highly recommend it.

Winston B. Sosebee
Nacogdoches, Texas
United States army generals policing the American west in the late 1800s found themselves in a frustrating, contradictory, and ambiguous situation. They had gone from leading thousands of civilian soldiers against the Confederacy during the Civil War to commanding a few hundred professional troops in remote areas against American Indians skilled in insurgency tactics. While their colleagues back east were preparing the army for twentieth century warfare, these officers were participating in—some would say directing—the final act of a long-running drama that had been an important part in American history since the first European settlers set foot on the North American continent. This difficult and thankless role ended with the subjugation of American Indian tribes and the destruction of their traditional way of life.

Inspired by Thomas Ricks’ groundbreaking prosopography of American generals during and after World War Two, noted western historian Robert Utley examines and evaluates seven of the military department leaders in the west after the Civil War in *The Commanders: Civil War Generals Who Shaped the American West*. Utley concludes that all seven officers—Generals Christopher Augur, George Crook, Oliver Otis Howard, Nelson Miles, Edward Ord, John Pope, and Alfred Terry— influenced and shaped the west to important and varying degrees, and rates them in their different capacities. The result is a solid, albeit conventional, collective biography of interest to both military and western historians.

Utley offers readers plenty of material to chew on in this well-researched and articulate account. He uses a narrative approach to scrutinize the parts that these generals played in the evolution of the west by examining their formative years, Civil War records, and performances in their various western posts. In the process he touches upon the logistical, tactical, strategic, command, and ethical difficulties these men faced in their dealings with American Indians, local civilians, and the federal government. Utley challenges and balances out the standard historiography by, for example, pointing out Crook’s limitations, Pope’s surprising thoughtfulness, and Miles’s resourcefulness. He does so without falling prey to political correctness or romanticism. Instead, he judges these officers by their own
standards. Perhaps the best part of the book is the background chapter that summarizes the problems the post Civil War army faced in issues of rank, organization, promotion, logistics, and everyday life.

By limiting himself to the departmental level, Utley omits the important roles that higher-ranking generals such as William Sherman and Philip Sheridan played in the west. His decision to explain each officer in separate chapters also limits and narrows his efforts. Finally, his narrative sometimes bogs down in the minutiae of the military operations in which these generals participated. On the whole, however, *The Commanders* is traditional military history in the best sense of the word — clear, accessible, interesting, and practical.

Stephen R. Taaffe
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