The Day Book of Benjamin Walker, 1846

Emmitte R. Walker

Judith F. Russell

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Benjamin Walker was born on December 27, 1811, in South Carolina, and moved with his family, friends, and kinsman to the newly opened Mississippi Territory around 1815. His father, Samuel Walker, Jr., had been a state legislator in South Carolina and became involved in Alabama politics soon after the state was formed from the Mississippi Territory. Samuel Walker served several terms in the Alabama House of Representatives, and, before his death in 1841, was the speaker of the Alabama House. Benjamin's mother, Fannie Eddins Walker, was one of a large Eddins family, the children of Benjamin Eddins of South Carolina, a revolutionary war hero.

When Benjamin Walker's father died, he bequeathed the "plantation on which he now lives in Lincoln County, Tennessee" to Benjamin. Soon thereafter, Benjamin was on the move along with many other people of the time, heading West. In 1846, about the time his wife Susan gave birth to their first child, Benjamin Walker was living in Aberdeen, Monroe County, Mississippi, and from there he set out to Texas to assess the prospects of the newly admitted state. He was accompanied by his second cousin, Benjamin Holloway. The namesake of both of the cousins was probably their great grandfather, Benjamin Bell of South Carolina, said to have been killed in a Cherokee uprising in 1779. Their family line also included their grandmother Martha-Jefferson Bell Walker, second cousin of President Thomas Jefferson.

Among the supplies that Benjamin bought for his Texas trip was a four-by-six-inch leather-bound journal. One the first page he wrote "Benjamin Walker's Day Book, Bot in Aberdeen, Monroe County, Miss. September 3rd, 1846." The Day Book is still in the possession of the Walker family in Austin, Texas, and has been transcribed by family members. Some of the penciled pages are growing dim, but the pages written in ink are as clear as when they were written almost 160 years ago and the handwriting is legible.

The Day Book's pages chronicle one person's impressions of life of East Texas in the autumn of 1846. Benjamin wrote about Texas prospects ("good prairie land, but badly timbered") and dangers ("a cure for snake bite"). While traveling more than a thousand miles looking for land, he recorded, in addition to the everyday details of the journey, many folk remedies that he heard about, including one he thought would interest his wife: how to keep calico from fading.

The travelers often stayed with friends and family members. Benjamin, the record keeper, carefully noted each expense, however small, not only for himself but also so that he could settle up with his cousin — it seems that they had agreed to share expenses equally. Although they may have been self-reliant when it came to finding game for food, they had to spend hard cash for whiskey and for each of the river crossings they made by ferry. Many cross-
ings are listed; usually the price was $1.00 per person, which was about the same amount that they paid for their overnight stays.

At one point in the journey, or possibly on an entirely different trip, Benjamin visited the city of New Orleans. He made notes in his Daybook as he outfitted himself in good style, buying "2 pair casimer pants" at $5 each, at a time when cattle sold for $3 a head and land for less than $1 per acre.

After his trip to Texas, Benjamin bought land in Arkansas, recording the transactions in his Daybook. From 1849 until the mid-1850s he purchased at least seven Military Warrants for land in Arkansas, plus some other acreage, and within a few years he had moved his family there. The family members are recorded in Polk Township, Arkansas County, Arkansas, in the Census of Population of 1860, but sometime after 1865 they moved to Texas. Benjamin died about 1868 in Hornsby Bend, Travis County, Texas. His descendants are now spread throughout the western states. His Daybook, transcribed below with his spelling and grammar intact, is his legacy to his twenty-first century family and readers.

Benjamin Walkers
DAY BOOK
Bot in Aberdeen
Monroe County Miss
September 3rd 1846

Shackelford ___________
Bot __________ 124 lbs Rope [?]

B.T. Emry hickory ______
The probate court to be holden [?] in the post On the 3 ______ Monday in July

Colic in Horses
Take one pound of Epsom Salts. dissolve it in not more than a half gallon of boiling _____ water. drench the animal with it when you can hold your finger in it two seconds. don't be afraid of scalding the animal and a cure will result.

This is a note book of Grandpa Walkers.¹

A Receipt for the Cure of Pneuralgia

6 grains of Bromide of Pottassium daily
One month. Decrease one grain each month until cured.

We arrived on the Sabine Riv on the 30th of Sept 1846. Crofossed over into Texas Sabine County thence up the river to Jas. M. Burroughs² through a poor pine hill country from thence on the 1st of Oct to San Augustine a poor Pine Hill country within a few miles of San Augustine where we came to good looking ____land which produces pretty well but badly timbered. stayed all nite 11 miles west of San Augustine at Garrett's from thence on the 2nd of Oct to Nacogdoches 3rd from thence across the Angelina and up too miles to Sackville

*****

[Page torn out]²

*****
EAST TEXAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Easters & stayed until Monday morning the 5 Oct from thence acroßs some poor Prairies & acroßs the Nechees River.

*****

Wm. W. Hill
Washington County Independence
15 miles up the Brazos Cavinaugh
Washington County F___ guhas 3 miles
___ Thomas [?] Birdwell near _____

Sackville A. Easter addreßs
Nacogdoches County Douglas Texas
L.[S.?] A. Easter in Cherokee County
John G. Berry San Augustine Texas

*****

From Judge Lipscomb to Washington [18?] From thence to Montogomery 30 miles from Montogomery to Huntsville 30 miles from thence to Crockett 30 miles from thence to Easters 40 from thence to Nacogdoches 25 miles from thence to San Augustine 35 from thence Olford 40 from thence to Grays 37 from thence to Iquines 38 miles from thence to Sicily Island 32 from thence to Rodney 35 from thence to Port Gibson 26 and to Eddins 11 from thence to Raymond 36 from thence to Clinton, Livingston, Canton 38 from thence Koscinsko 45 to Starkville 63.

*****

Washington Oct 24 .50
Ferriage acroß Beaos [Bravos?] Oct 29 one flask wiiskey .25
Oct 30 3.00
Boots for Holloway [Oct 31 for _____in Cincinnati .50
____ shoerin J.H. horse 2.00
Nov 1 for staying all nite at Dillards' 2.00
Paid ________ .50
Whiskey
Staid at Mack Master 2.00
Ferriage at Nechea .20
Nov 5 for whiskey ____ 1.00
Loß in exchange .25
At Nacogdoches 2.00
At San Augustine 2.00

Coß [loss?] in exchange .35
Ferriage at Sabine .25
At Olford 8 Nov 184_ .00
At Nachitochis 3.00

*****

Ferriage acroßs the Bonge [?] in Louisiana .20
At Grays 2.00
Paid at Squires 2.00
At ____ whiskey .20
Ferriages at Washiton .40
Paid at _____ on Sisily Island 2.00
Ferriage at Mißs River 1.50
Ferriage at Te_____ .50
Paid at Rodney 4.00
At Port Gibson for apple .30
At Lotts 2.50
At Jones 2.00
At Beamons 2.00
At Irvines 2.00
For whiskey at Spring _____t .40
At ______ 2.00

Settled

*****

B. Walker bot from John Shackelford 2789 lbs of fodder a 1 cent per pound.

*****

B. Walker paid for horses at Helena 4.50
Paid for Mr. Sergant 2.25
_____A _____Brown's 2.25

Settled  Paid

Holloway paid $6.00
Wm. Coopwood 5.00
Walker 5.00
Wm. Coopwood 10.00
Holloway 2.00
Holloway 1.00
Holloway 5.00

Expenses of Coopwood, Holloway ______Walker to Arkansas October 1847

Coopwood paid to Walker $15.00
Holloway paid 14.00
A receipt for the cure of Dysentary.

Take equal portions of peach tree & elder bark the out side bark scraped off. make a tea & drink freely. is said to cure in 12 hours.

| Coopwood paid | 15.00 |
| Holloway do. | 14.00 |
| Walker do. | 15.20 |

Due to Coopwood | 26 2/3 Cts.
Due from Holloway | 75 1/3
Due to Walker | 46 1/3

Bill of Expenses to Arkansas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Details</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paid first nite Pontotoc</td>
<td>$4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nite Oxford</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferriage at Talhatchy</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Esq. Ellisons</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 at Robertson</td>
<td>[??]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. at Houston</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. at Helena</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. at Bro _ona</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferriage across the White River</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. at Robertson</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. at Wm Robinsons</td>
<td>[??]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. at the gun ____Comills</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. at Stillwell</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Montgomery</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A weed called croßwork. It grows various height. the leaves grow out of the stem to a T at a place opposite each other. The two next leaves come out from opposite sides of the stem and so croßing or changing sides as they grow __, the leaf is long ___narrow and the top side quite rough. take the roots stem ___ leaves, bruise and boil in sweet milk. take it _____ _____ apply some to the bite to affect a cure.

B. Walker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Details</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At Wm Robinsons</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendy</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croßing White River</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holloway &amp; Walker at Pike</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Helena</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferriage at Helena</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferriage at Coldwater</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Poone</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Coffeville</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Houston</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Pikeville</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. McClendon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Details</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cts.</td>
<td>$44.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lbs bacon</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for corn</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAID</td>
<td>15 stacks fodder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weighing</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1227 lbs ech</td>
<td>7.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>18405 at ? ct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9202</td>
<td>$92.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Holloway due to Walker | $6.63 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 stacks fodder</td>
<td>$6.63</td>
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<td>weighing</td>
<td>.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>18405 at ? ct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9202</td>
<td>$92.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

44.20 [divide by 3] 14.73 1/3 | $44.20 |

To 108 head stock hogs at 1 dollar | $108.00 |

$ cts per head | $108.00
15 head stock cattle at $3.00 per head $45.00
1000 bushel corn at 25 cts per bushel $250.00

The above receipts and certificates enclosed by Registered letter to W.H. Halliburton of Dewitt Arkansas at McDade Bastrop Co. T."

Due 1st Nov 1849

Benjamin Walker Bot of Joel M. Acker one land warrant No. 9251 calling for 160 of land and issued in the name of William Cothran late a corporal in Capt. Stewarts company Battalion MiBs Voluntary under date of May 30th 1849.

Benjamin Walker Bot of Benjamin L. Howell late a Sergant of Capt Ackers company 2nd regiment MiBs Volunteers one land warrant No. 51580 calling for 160 acres of land issued to said Benj. L. Howell 22nd day of March 1849.

Jan 28th 1885"

D.R. James to T.J. Walker
To 180 lbs pork at 5 cts. 900

James, Goyens
To 664 lbs pork at 5 cts 3320

Rect of P.J. Crutchfield of State of Arkansas


W.W. Adams ___ of State of Ark. Certificate of Comtion by Benj. Walker of Mil Land warrant no. 43180 in name of Mich'l Sheridan for 160 acres of land also of Mil Land warrant No. 47130 in name of Wm. Calvert for 160 acres also M.L. Warrant no 13801 in name of Hardy Robinson for 80 acres land

M.L. W. 38489 in name of N.C. Hawkins for 76.88 acre all ___ 9 Nov 1852.

Infuse three gills of salt in one gallon of boiling water and put the calico in while hot and leave it till cold and in this way the colours are sun dried permanent.

Portage from Miller to N. Orleans Bot in New Orleans 2.00
2 pair casimer pants 10.00
1 ___ common ___ 2.00
1 vest 2.50
1 Blanket coat 2.00
1 shirt 1.50
1 pocket knife 1.00
1 purse .25
Take 1 Dram Ext Bark
_ oz aloes
_ oz Rhubarb
7 oz Black Snake Root
1 oz Pesuman Barks

Put the above mixture in one quart of good speritts. Take a common dram morning noon & at night so as cause at least 2 loose stools every 24 hours

[signed] Dock Jas. B. Vaught
[signed] James B. Vaught

Take 20 grs of Blue MaBs - 10 of specie - 15 of Calomel - mix & make in to six Pills. Take 2 pills every 4 hours - until you have taking the last 2 pills. If they should not purge in two hours after taking last 2 pills - take a tea cup of strong sima tea every 2 hours until they have purged some four or five times. Any motion over five restrain by taking Landinains opium or paregoric - thus commences your Batters War _ - _ n teas as Drinks.

September the 12th 1846 loaned S. Holloway 50 cts. Paid.
Walker bot for Saml Holloway ___ pounds of pork _____ in 1846. $5.46 Paid
Due Walker from S. Holloway $2.30. The above is paid except 30 cents. [signed] B. Walker

-----

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Holloway</th>
<th>10.37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At Nacogdoches</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holloway paid at Jones</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Beeman</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Theens</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be taken from</td>
<td>23.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.C. &amp; I. W. Alday</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walker loaned to S. Holloway on the 24th of January 1848 $25. 00 to pay for Whiting gin.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Scratch page of additions. subtractions, and divisions of costs]