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FEBRUARY, 1997

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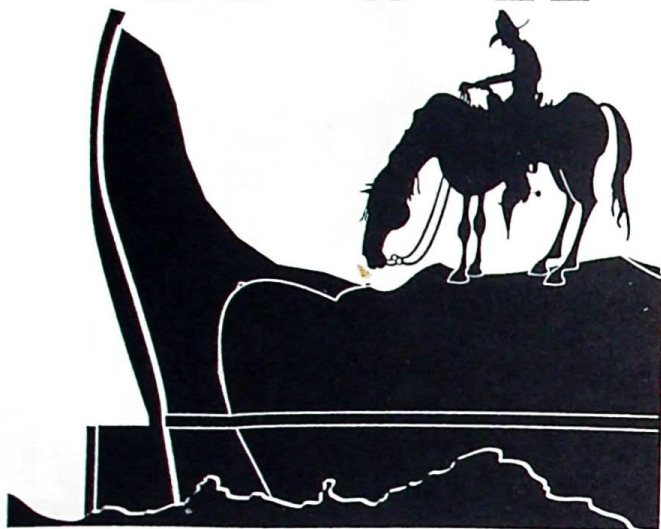


by IRA KENNEDY





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# TEXAS SEARCH

by Bill Mosley

## CAPITOLS OF TEXAS

Can you find the names of the Capitols, Countries, and States that have ruled Texas in this Puzzle? Can you find them on the map? Hidden words may be spelled horizontally, vertically, across, or on a diagonal; they may also be spelled backwards. Can you find the TEXAS EXTRA? Clue: Which nations that ruled this land.

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|                                |                                      |          |
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| Guila (state)                  |                                      | Austin   |
| Monclova                       | CSA. (Confederate States of America) |          |
| Atlix                          | Richmond, (Virginia)                 |          |
| San Adaes                      | Montgomery, (Alabama)                |          |
| San Felipe (de Austin)         |                                      |          |
| Washington) on the Brazos      |                                      |          |
| Harrisburg                     | USA.                                 |          |
| Waco                           | Washington, (D.C.)                   |          |
| Santa Anna's) Army             |                                      |          |
| Reason for moving the capitol) |                                      |          |

SOLUTION ON PAGE 29



# Gallery of the Hills

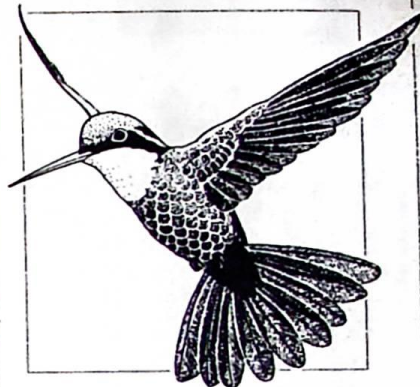
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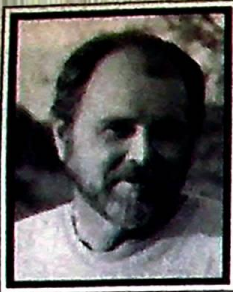
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## FROM THE EDITOR

# REST IN PEACE WITH GOD, COWBOY

"Lay the kelly down." James C. Cornett told me that was the last thing said over an oil well. When the gusher played out, either in the ground or on the stock exchange, it was shut down and capped off. Jimmy spent his youth as a cowhand down on the Matagorda under the influence of legendary cowhands Shanghi Pierce and Shanghi's trail boss, Mr. Clay McPerrin—Jimmy's mentor. Often as not Jimmy would be out all day, from sunup to sundown, for low pay working cattle and running fence lines. One day, out on a less romantic errand, he had occasion to drop by a nearby ranch that was leasing quail hunts, running cattle and drilling for oil. The place was in full harvest, above, on, and below the ground. Jimmy watched as the hands came in from the oil fields that Friday night. They picked up their high wages, slicked themselves up all shiny and smelling good, and headed for town and the dance halls "where all the fair ladies was just a waitin."

On the spot, Jimmy determined he was in the wrong line of work and switched to the oil "bidness". Over the years millions of dollars slipped through his fingers—some while he was looking the other way. Also, somewhere along the line, Jimmy was a Marine, and always sported the corps insignia on his cowboy hat.

Jimmy retired, through disability, from a life in the oil fields of the world to live in Llano. We met, nine months ago, at his favorite watering hole and started swapping stories. At first, he "spoke close to the line." Then, the next thing I knew he was telling me how bad the drought was, and about the new low for cattle prices. To illustrate his point, Jimmy told me a local rancher had recently stopped at roadside inn. When the rancher went in for a cool one he had three head of cattle in the trailer with a sign marked "FREE". When he came back outside there were four head in the trailer.

Jimmy and I became friends from the start and it wasn't long before I convinced him he should write for the magazine. Under his chosen pen name, L. Kelly Down, Jimmy took to the writing business something fierce. At first, he submitted his stories on tape, but eventually he settled in to writing on yellow legal pads.

A few months ago, somehow, he knew his days were runnin' out. He'd show up for morning coffee with five or six stories. A few days later he would be back again with another pile. One day, at the watering hole, he presented me with three pages covered with titles for story ideas. I went through the list and picked out about a dozen. Later, I was told Jimmy was disappointed I didn't choose twice as many; so I apologized and told him anything and everything he wrote was the work of a top hand and I'd take the whole lot. So I got that, and more. A

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couple of weeks ago, Jimmy helped us move out into the country by hauling out as much as would fit in his car—two or three times a day. While us younger men were unloading everything, Jimmy stood outside leaning over the hood of his car, writing. Jimmy said he was coming out Friday morning, January the 24th, but he didn't. About the time he was supposed to arrive the phone rang and I learned then and there Jimmy wasn't going to show, not now or ever. Jimmy had passed on during the night.

Almost a week has come and gone since then, and the truth of his death hasn't completely settled in. I listen to his voice on tape, and go through a pile of stories I have yet to read, and he's still there—alive. In this issue we're publishing the last two stories he wrote. We still have a couple of years worth to go, and we're not about to "lay the kelly down."

Right about now I figure Jimmy is back on the Matagorda serving up dutch oven biscuits with cane syrup to Shanghi Pierce and Mr. Clay McPerrin. Jimmy's listening close, like always, not just to the words, but the way they're said; and in the evenings he's sittin up in the bunkhouse filling legal pads with cowboy tales.

*Ira Kennedy*  
IRA KENNEDY

## ENCHANTED ROCK MAGAZINE

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## THANKS

I really enjoyed the one issue I received about Lake Buchanan. We had a lake house there when I was a kid growing up and I never knew about the minerals there. I'm looking forward to all back issues.

Terri Maxwell  
Liberty Hill, Texas

## FROM THE COAST

I live between Houston and Galveston and ran across the latest issue of *Enchanted Rock Magazine* at a Book Stop here. In your editorial, you mentioned the real story of Texas—the tales and myths—and I don't know of any magazine on the Gulf Coast area of the state that prints this type of material.

I am enclosing a 1250-word "tall tale" based loosely on a story about my grandfather right after World War II. The story has a Texas Gulf Coast slant to it and I realize your magazine is central-Texas oriented, however since you are marketing your magazine down here I wondered if you might be interested in reviewing the story for possible publication.

I really enjoyed your current issue—particularly the article on the camels of Camp Verde.

Gary Brown  
Friendswood, Texas

FROM THE EDITOR: Actually, we are widening the scope of the magazine to include the entire state. Gary's article can be found on page 12 of this issue.

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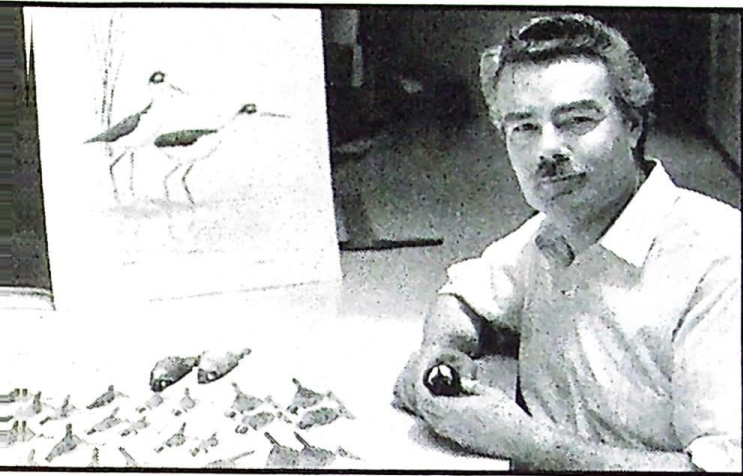
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# NEW WORLD BIRDS EXHIBITION



DR. JOHN P. O'NEILL

One of the most important art exhibits ever to be displayed in the Hill Country will open on February 10 at the Gallery of the Hills in Buchanan Dam. The exhibit will feature the works of the most noted avian artists in the United States.

Birders, art lovers, and artists everywhere will be inspired by the exceptional quality of the paintings and photographs on display. The Smithsonian Magazine, the New Yorker, the Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding, Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, the National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America, to name a few notable sources, have either published or exhibited the works of the artists represented in the show.

A special Artist Reception will be held on Saturday, February 22 from 3-7 p.m.. Artist Dr. John P. O'Neill will attend the reception along with many of the others featured. O'Neill has been named Artist of the Year for 1996 by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. His work has also appeared in Audubon Magazine, National and International Wildlife, Encyclopedia Britannica, and numerous other books. His newest book is as yet untitled but will contain fifty of his original bird illustrations. This summer, O'Neill will again set out on an expedition to the tropical rain forest of Peru, where he has gone to study birds almost every year for the last thirty years.

Other artists featured include Johathan Alderfer, F.P. "Tony" Bennett, Melanie Fain, Keith Hansen, Kenn Kaufman, Greg Masley, Terry O'Nele, John Schmitt, John L. Tveten, Mimi Hoppe Wolfe, Dale Zimmerman, David Sibley, James Coe, Benita Giller, Cindy House, Daniel Lane, Larry McQueen, Hans Peeters, John Sill, Sophie Webb, Julie Zickefoose and Richard Salucci.

"Birds of the New World" will be on exhibit from February 10 to March 7 at the Gallery of the Hills. The gallery is located on Hwy 29W at Lake Buchanan between the Colorado River and the intersection of Hwys 29 and 1431. Call 512/793-2341 for additional information on the exhibit and lake accommodations.

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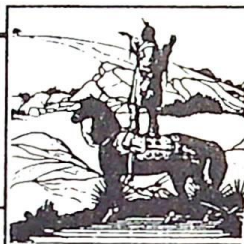
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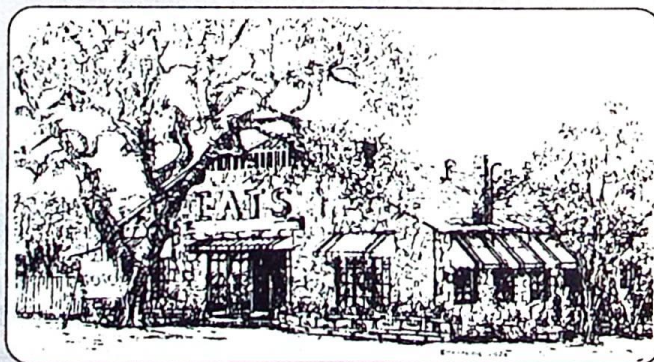
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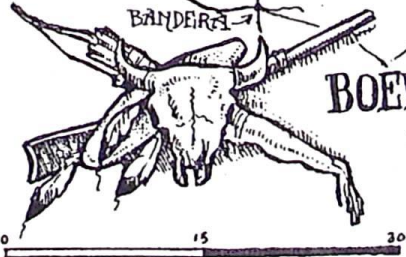
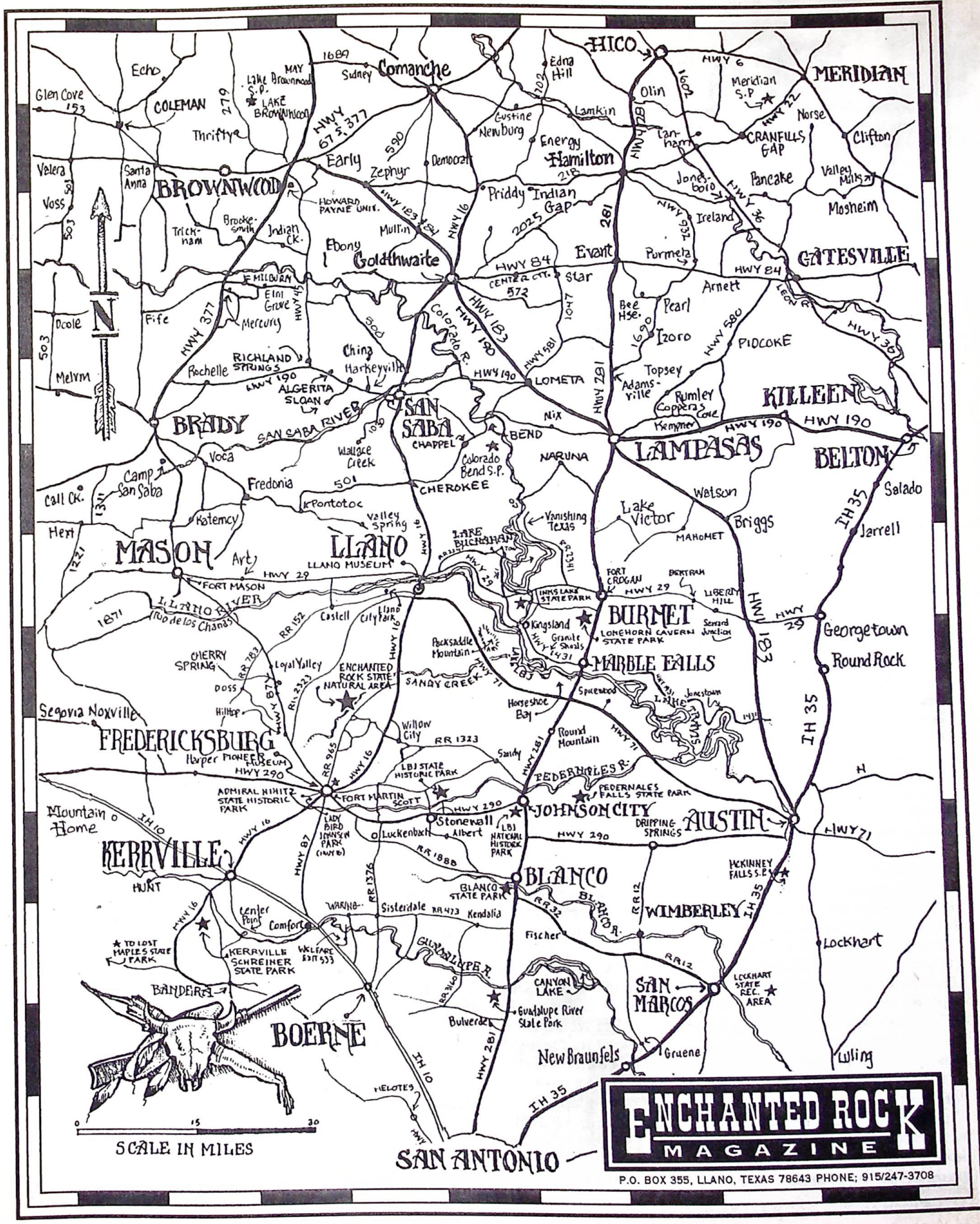


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# DAYS OF TOIL

by SARAH HARKEY HALL



I never remember spending idle days. Father always had employment for me and all the children. When he began making molasses, I carried a small hatchet and a little block and cut the heads off the cane after it was stripped of the fodder and cut down, which was not hard work. Nothing ever seemed hard to me that he told me to do. When the fodder was to be hauled out which had to be done very early of mornings, I helped carry it to the fence where it would be convenient to get to. I would begin long before daylight and work until breakfast, eat my breakfast, wash the dishes next, then care for the baby until dishwashing again. Somehow I was very unfortunate about breaking dishes. It seemed like every time I washed dishes, I broke a piece. I never will forget one Sunday morn I went to my dishwashing, as usual. I had a great large stack washed and stacked on a large, round, flat tin. I had the tin on a chair and all at once it became unbalanced and such a crash there was; just one plate and one cup and saucer left. Such a punishment I got. I never did forget it. Our neighbor, Mr. Brown, was there. He scolded Mother for punishing me so. That made it seem harder still to me.

We never had to buy anything. Father produced everything we used; raised his tobacco, too. We had to worm every morn and when it matured, we cut it and let it lay until it took so much dew, then we brought it in and stemmed it and twisted it ready for the press. He made his press for that purpose. When he pressed it in the caddy, it was then put away for use. He also invented a wooden pump and had his tobacco patch near the water's edge and irrigated his tobacco. I remember once he sent me to worm the tobacco and I had seen the down leaves pulled and used in pipes to smoke, so I thought I would chew some. I pulled off a leaf and took a large chew of it. Oh my, I was the sick little girl. I never tried any more down leaves.

We were constantly busy at something, but were always on guard; always expecting to be picked up by the Comanches. When we started any place we went, we didn't have to be told to hurry, as children do now. I remember so well one raid the Indians made, striking in below where we lived, going across by churches, and capturing Elon Todd, a young

girl. The mother had gone to warp a piece of cloth. Captain Todd went with her and he took his little daughter up behind him. One their way to the neighbor's house; the Indians ran upon them. They started to run, but they captured Mrs. Todd instantly and Mr. Todd's horse began to pitch and threw his little daughter off and they captured her. They tortured Mrs. Todd so cruelly, scalping her by degrees, while yet alive. She took off her outside garments and gave them to the unmerciful cruels, but that only increased their cruel desire. She at last thought she would seem dead and so she lay perfectly still and lifeless and they left her for dead. When found soon after, she was alive. She lived twenty-four hours in such a condition. They carried her daughter off with them and kept her for years. Finally she was brought back, but she had got accustomed to their ways and was never satisfied with her people anymore. She had several children by the chief; said she loved her children and wanted to go to them.

Every occurrence like this would make us more cautious. I had seen the Indians rush horses up in the corners of Father's field fence and catch them. They lit on them in a hurry, for they knew they would be chased. In fifteen minutes there was a scout rushed in from the Colorado River, twelve miles north of Richland Creek. They gave them a hot chase, but never killed any. The Frontiers formed a company and kept out a scout all the time and by those means they were kept whipped farther west and their raids were only expected on light moons, which was a great relief to the frontier settlers. Now we could feel more safe. We could go to the head of the Springs and gather beads that would boil up with the beautiful white pebbles and the water so pure and clear.

When I reflect back to those days and behold the beautiful landscape of a gradual slope south, to the height of one hundred feet to the top of the hills, where so many times those redskins had tread the little paths to the cooling source of those springs, I can't help shuddering to see our danger; though I feel that the Lord has watched over me always.

Now, my father's health began to fail and had to depend on my two oldest brothers a great deal. He was putting in a dam to irrigate from the springs. The boys worked every



spare day on the dam and I always carried their dinner to them when they worked. I would take it to the bluff and go along under the ledges which extended near where they worked, sometimes crawling up and peeping up on the level to see if I could see or hear anything, then drop back and continue my journey. Sometimes I would pick a handful of berries or pull a few plums, but any noise would make me start and I could hear my heart thump like horses feet, and often have wondered at having any mind at all. Those days are days never to be forgotten by me; they are stamped on my heart, never to be blotted out.

All our long summer days of toil were ended and all preparations were made for winter, which consisted of gathering sweet potatoes and pumpkins and holing them up, and hog killing, rendering out lard, then carrying water to run lye to make up soap for winter, which was a task that fell on the small children. It was one hopper of ashes after another. We had to drip until all the soap was made.

By that time, Father had all a pair of shoes made who were entitled to them, and those were the oldest children. Mother had knit a pair of socks and stockings for each of them.

Then came our happiest days. We all had a bluebacked speller and reading of some kind, and Father would send us to the log hut to study. He gave us ample time to prepare our lessons, then began at the oldest to hear lessons and so on, until we

had all recited. When recess came, we all made it convenient to play about the potato hills, and what a time we had eating raw potatoes and making cornstalk horses and riders.

When night came all had their chores to do and had to go after chaff for the oxen way across the field south of the house. It was an easy matter to go, but facing the bleak north winds coming back would almost chill me through. I remember one very cold morning he told me to drive the calves to the field on the north side of the creek. I turned them out and tried to drive them but, when they got opposite the house, they would turn their heads from the north wind and start back. My hands were so cold and stiff, I would run in to get warm. He would have me rub my hands in cold water and try again. I made the third try before I could get them to the creek, then one of them wouldn't cross. I picked up a small stone and threw it and struck it somewhere about the head and it dropped like it was shot and fell like it was pierced in the heart, but in a second or two it began floundering around and got up. Oh, how I was relieved and went on without any more trouble and put them in the field.

I always had a great desire to know how to do all domestic work. I watched Mother knit and knew in my mind that I could knit. I slipped out and selected two nice slim straws and then slipped out some yarn and began my experience of knitting. I threw on my stitches and proceeded to knit back and forth and soon knit. Oh, what a great accomplishment I had made in my childish mind, and I really had. I never had more than a change of clothing and when my frock became so tattered and torn, I would examine it closely to see if I could remedy it, that it would appear more neat. I soon saw by taking out the whole front and putting in a new one, it would be whole; but

were was I to get the cloth? All had been consumed and not a piece left over. Then I felt so bad! My clothes had to last until spring until Mother could card and spin and weave cloth to reclothe me if they wore out. I had to do without. I remember once in the spring of the year, my second frock was completely worn out and my frock was compelled to be washed and Mother made me put on my father's shirt to have my dress washed. Before it was ready to wear, Captain Wood came to have my father to do some writing for him. Oh how embarrassed I felt! I tried to shy his presence, but my little duties had to be performed without respect of my childish modesty. I can reflect back and behold my pale face and frail form with matted hair and tattered garments. **A pitiful little creature I was with an envious heart to arise to the elevation of Queen Elizabeth, but woe to the path I have wed;** always striving for right and never intending wrong. It almost breaks my heart to look upon a little helpless child, half clothed and barefooted, shivering in the cold.

**When I reflect back to those days and behold the beautiful landscape of a gradual slope south, to the height of one hundred feet to the top of the hills, where so many times those redskins had tread the little paths to the cooling source of those springs, I can't help shuddering to see our danger; though I feel that the Lord has watched over me always.**

Father gradually grew worse in health and was getting more unable to work; would seek every way to get along and provide for us. He invented a wine press and in 1863 there was a world of wild grapes. He had my two oldest brothers yoke the oxen and take the ox wagon and all us smallest children and go gather grapes to press. He sent us north, seven miles from home on a little creek called Wilbargo Creek. We found all the grapes

we could gather. They pitched camp and went to work. He told us where to go at night. When night came, we went to the thicket where he had told us to go, and ate our supper and began to fix our pallets, when we looked out and saw him. He had gotten uneasy and came to see about us. He saw us safe in the thicket and went back home. We heard a bunch of wild hogs in the night grazing on acorns. We were frightened almost to death, for we thought them Indians. We lay perfectly still, not a word was said nor an eye closed for sleep. Next morning he came back to see if we were there; gave no instructions how to proceed with caution, and went back. We soon gathered a load and went home unharmed; pressed the wine and bottled it for sale. He sold every quart at seventy-five cents per quart.

He grew weaker every year and being way out on the frontier of Texas, it was impossible to get any medical aid of importance. The quacks continually treated him, but he did not improve any. Now the Civil War had been in progress for nearly three years, but the frontier never suffered from it. Often the report was noised abroad that all the Union men would be forced to go. That caused Mother and we children great grief for Father was a Union man, but he strictly attended his own business and never was forced to go.

This is the third and last chapter reprinted from *Surviving on the Texas Frontier*. This chapter was edited for space. Its original title was, "My Father and Mother's Conversion." Reprinted with permission from the publisher, Eakin Press. To obtain copies of the book (\$19.95 hardback) contact your favorite bookstore, the publisher, Eakin Press by calling 1-800-880-8642, or writing P.O. Box 90159, Austin, TX 78709, or you may obtain autograph[ed] copies from the editor, Meridell Henry, P.O. Box 1627, Kingsland, TX 78639, great-granddaughter of the author.





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# GRANDPA JOE'S "COLD TRAIL" HOUNDS

by GARY BROWN

**N**ot many people can come down to Texas and beat these locals at telling tall tales, but my Grandpa Joe did it right after the war. Not only did he spin a classic yarn, but he sold the local prison warden two black and tan Benton County, Missouri bloodhounds that sired the line of what is now the K-9 Corps of the state prison system.

Grandpa Joe was born in Benton County in 1891 and I don't think he ever left the Ozark mountains until World War II. A widower, he moved to Freeport, Texas in 1942 to be with my mother while my father was stationed in Laredo. His wooden leg kept him from military service, but he worked as a civilian security guard at the Dow Chemical plant until the war ended.

By then his health was failing and he never returned to Missouri. He died in 1947, but he never stopped being a hillbilly even here in the flat, almost treeless Brazoria County on the Texas Gulf Coast.

When he left Missouri in 1942, he packed all of his belongings in a single suitcase, crated his two "bloods", and moved to Texas by train. Bloodhounds weren't used too much down here since you could see for miles most anywhere, but Grandpa kept his dogs because they reminded him of home.

By the end of the war, his health was bad and he would sit with the old-timers outside the Velasco Grocery and Ice House in the afternoons with his two hounds at his side and swapping stories with the locals.

Not surprisingly, the stories would get more exotic with each telling. Although I was too young to remember that period, I know that some of those stories are still around: an armadillo that could point quail or the chicken found stuffed in a Pepsi bottler after the last hurricane.

Grandpa Joe told stories with the best of them during those two years after the war until he passed away. His stories were always about the mountains—always about home, and they usually involved his "bloods".

Like I said, bloodhounds weren't real common down here because of the terrain. Brazoria County has a large state prison farm, however, and one day the warden stopped by the ice house and joined the group sitting out front.

Now, the warden had a reputation for telling some real whoppers himself, but this day he was serious. He wanted to develop a group of really good bloodhounds to track escapees and field convicts, he told Grandpa, and he might be interested in buying the two black and tans. He leaned back and asked Grandpa just how good of trackers his two bloodhounds were.

Grandpa thought awhile before he spoke. "There are two types of bloodhounds," he finally said, "and they're either 'hot trail' or 'cold trail' dogs."

According to the version of the story I've always heard, the warden just remained quiet while Grandpa continued.

"A 'hot trail' hounds follows a fresh scent," he told the



warden, "sometimes even after a good rain."

"And your dogs?" the warden asked, glancing at the two black and tans lying beside Grandpa's stool.

"Warden," Grandpa told him, "these two hounds are what we in Missouri call 'cold trail' dogs. You can't teach it to 'em, they have to be born with it. They can follow a trail that's weeks, even months, old sometimes. I've seen these two follow a trail when you had to shovel three feet of snow to find the footprints."

"You think these two could track a convict on the run?" the warden asked.

"You'd have to go to the Ozark hills of Missouri to find another dog to match them," Grandpa told him, "and then you'd have to look hard."

Now, being a sporting man himself, the warden was really enjoying Grandpa's story. "How 'bout you showing me what these two can do down here in Texas?"

Grandpa, I've been told, just kinda leaned back and thought awhile. "How 'cold' of a trail you talking about, Warden?" he asked.

"Coldest trail they can find," the warden answered. "Have 'em show me what a Missouri hound can do."

Well, Grandpa couldn't pass up a challenge like that, so he got up from the stool, stretched, and invited the warden to walk over to his house nearby. About four or five of the old-timers also got up and followed.

When they got there, Grandpa went around and ran some tap water in an old washtub. After the hounds had had a good drink, he clapped his hands together three times and said, "Squirrel, squirrel, go!"

Well, it seems the two dogs began running circles sniffing the ground. All of a sudden, the male let out a yelp and took off walking down an old path through the knee-deep grass behind the house with the female following.

As Grandpa and the others followed, the warden asked, "Aren't they supposed to be howling and running after the trail?"

"Nah," Grandpa replied, "a 'cold trail' hound knows the trails weeks, maybe months old and there's no use running."

According to the story, they followed the dogs for about a quarter mile through the scrub brush and saltgrass until they came to a single, old Live Oak tree standing alone in the field.

The male hound walked to within about ten feet of the tree and sat down. The female caught up and sat down beside him. After a few seconds they both coiled back on their rear haunches and jumped about three feet into the air and then ran to the tree and started pawing at a hole around the roots.

When Grandpa and the warden got to the tree, Grandpa Joe knelt down and reached into the hole. When he pulled his hand out and stood up, he was holding the remains of a squirrel's skeleton. "That 'cold' enough for you?" he asked the warden.

From what I've been told, the warden knew he'd been

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had. Out of curiosity, though, he asked Grandpa, "But why'd they jump in the air back there?"

"Well, Warden," Grandpa answered, "twenty years ago there used to be a fence there."

I understand the warden just threw his hands in the air and offered Grandpa \$200 for the pair of hounds. Grandpa knew he was going to die soon and wanted a good home for his hounds so he offered to give them to the warden, not wanting any money for them. Since the dogs would become state property, however, they settled on \$2 to make the transaction legal.

Grandpa Joe died about two months later and the black and tans sired the beginning of what is now the bloodhound stock for the Texas prison system.

Now, I'm not swearing this story is true. There are some that say Grandpa had trained the dogs to do what they did. But I do know the state prison farm is still located in Brazoria County and when you drive down old state road 521 during the summer you can see the convicts working in the cotton and rice fields while being watched by horse-mounted officers and a pack of black and tans.

According to some of the old-timers, the hounds are direct descendents of the Benton County stock Grandpa brought down here in '42. You can't find better tracking dogs anywhere in Texas, it's been said. Their only fault is that sometimes they jump in the air for no apparent reason. But I ain't swearing that's true either.





# PARDNERS TOGETHER

## THE TRUE STORY OF PECOS BILL AND SLUE-FOOT SUE

BY WARREN LEWIS

### HOW SLUE-FOOT SUE PUT ONE OVER ON PANCHO VILLA

**A**fter Pecos Bill got hisself all swoll up like a snake-bit pup over Slue-Foot Sue's armadillos, and he headed fer the hills, Sue was on her own fer a while. Most of the boys upped and tailed after Bill—Mushmouth and Fat Adams did, and so did Bullfrog Doyle, Pretty Pete Rogers, and Bean Hole (the cook), and Legs. Only two of the outfit stayed on with Sue—Curly Joe and Moon Hennessey. And that jist goes to show how some things works out worse'n others.

It's kindly funny to think about the two that stayed on with Sue. Curly Joe was Bill's best sidekick, so you'd'a thought that Joey might've tailed along with. But Curly Joe was smart as well as purty—Bill'd taught him the use of the long lariat, and ol' Joe could rope a whole herd of a hunderd or more longhorns at a whack, same as Bill. Nosir, Curly Joe stayed behind to watch out fer Bill's woman. 'Course Slue-Foot didn't need no watchin' out fer by no man, but she let Joey keep on thinkin' that he was helpful thataway, 'cause it made him feel so useful.

Moon Hennessey, by the way, was a diff'rent kittle of fish. He was the sorriest cowthief of the lot, and truth to tell, he stayed behind to move in on Billy's woman, if'n he could. 'Course, there was about as much chance of Moon Hennessey a-movin' in on Sue as there was need of watchin' out fer'r by Curly Joe. Mooney was the one always had been a little sweet on Sue hisself, but that didn't make Sue no nevermind. Mooney weren't worth the shot it'd've took to shoot 'im. 'Bout all he ever done was (as folks still says) moon around fer Sue, and make trouble.

Handy as these two ol' boys was, Sue had to rustle herself up some new waddies. She done that mostly as she went ridin' around Texas on the backs of her armys a-follerin' her forty-'leven head of plowin' dillies. One mornin', Sue was churnin' up ground down on Padre Island, fixin' to plant the dune grass so the sand wouldn't blow away, when she seen a strange sight. Here come a man runnin' faster'n any human body that Sue ever had seen move. He

was a-steppin' out, all right, makin' about fifty yards at a stride. Sue taken notice, moreover, that he was wearin' iron-rimmed wagon wheels on each of his two ankles, like big round spoked bracelets. Each one of 'em would've weighed a good 80 or 90 pound.

"Howdy, Pardner," says Sue. "Where you headed fer so fast?"

"Howdy, Ma'am," says the wheelrunner. "I had breakfast in Monterrey this mornin', stopped fer dinner in Brownsville, and hope to make Galveston by supertime."

"If ye'r in that big a hurry," Sue comes back at him, "then how come yer a-wearin' them wagon wheels round yer legs?"

The wheelrunner grins all humble-like and says, "If you go slow, you don't make so many mistakes."

Sue laughed and said, "How do you do. My name is Slue-Foot Sue, and I could shur use a feller like you. How'd you like to throw in with my outfit?"

"Slue-Foot Sue," he seemed to reco'nize the name. "I'd be mighty proud to ride with you, Ma'am." So the wheelrunner taken off his wagon wheels and hired on with Sue.

'Bout noon, when they was havin' a bite to eat, Sue seen some ol' boy a-lyin' on the ground with his ear right down in the dirt. She thought he was prob'ly dead or takin' a nap.

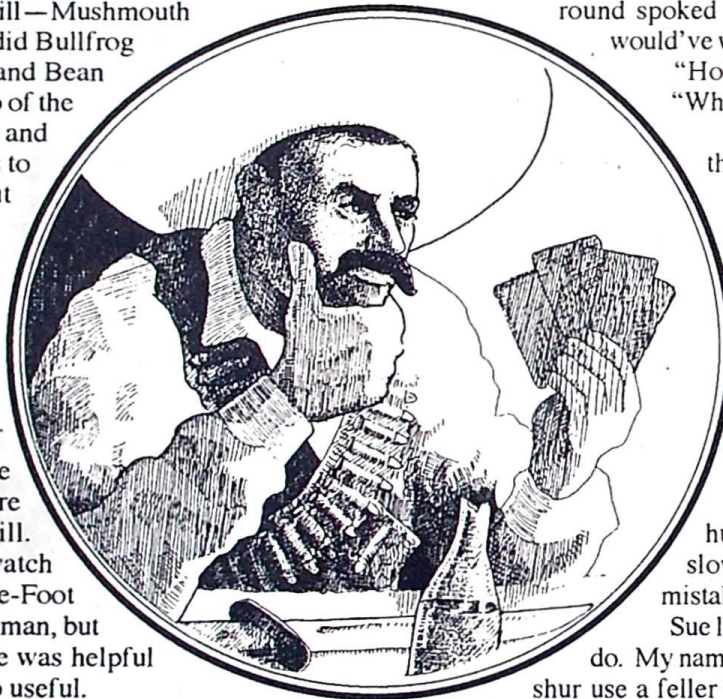
"Howdy Pardner," says Sue, in case the feller was awake or alive. "What'r you a-doin' a-lyin' down'ere on the ground?"

"I'm a-list'nin to the grass grow, Ma'am," say the feller real polite-like, still lyin' on the ground.

"Well, I swan!" Sue was amazed.

"Aww, that ain't nothin'," says the groundlistener. "Grass is easy. Over'n Corpus Chrischy, I can hear the pirates a-havin' a shindig; and up in San 'Tone, the Messikins is havin' a fiesta."

Sue had only thought she was amazed the first time, when





he told her about listenin' to the grass grow; but ears that was long enough to hear from Corpus to the Hill Country was a wonder. Furthermore, she noticed that the groundlistener had been list'nin' with his ear to the ground fer so long that the grass had growd right up into one ear, plumb through his head, and was stickin' out the other ear. And not only that—the grass had done gone to seed.

Sue laughed and said, "How do you do. My name is Slue-Foot Sue, and I could shur use a feller like you. How'd you like to throw in with my outfit?"

"Slue-Foot Sue," he seemed to reco'nize the name. "Yessiree, Ma'am, I reckon I'd be proud to." So the groundlistener got up, wiped the dirt out of his one ear and pulled the grass out of the other, and hired on with Sue.

That evenin', as they was headin' in fer supper, Sue and her hands was ridin' up towards Aransas Pass, when they spied a old geezer a-sittin' out in front of his cabin in the last light of sundown, a-chawin', and a-spittin'. He'd chaw up a mouthful of that delectious brown likker, and then he' hold his nose together with his pointer fingers and brace his front teeth agin his thumbs and fill hissself up with air till he looked as round as a melon and about to bust, and then he'd let'r rip. He'd spit out a blazin' stream of tabaccy juice right straight up into the evenin' sky, and whatever flutterin' bullbat or high-flyin' dove headed home to roost happened to be passin' over, he'd knock it right out of the sky. The bullbats he fed to his cat, and the white-wings he put in a sack fer his own supper. Sue watched the geezer chaw and spit fer a spell, and while she was a-watchin', he taken aim at a hawk circlin' overhead about a mile up; he hit it, too, but he only stunned it.

"Howdy, Pardner," says Sue. "My goodness gracious, but you are a beautiful spitter."

"Thank you, Ma'am," says the geezer, wipin' his chin real tidy-like. "You orghta see what I can do in the daylight."

"I'd admire to do that," says Sue, and stuck out her hand to shake. "How do you do. My name is Slue-Foot Sue, and I shur could use a feller like you. How'd you like to throw in with my outfit?"

"Slue-Foot Sue," he seemed to reco'nize the name. "Why, it'd be a honor, Ma'am" The geezer grinned a brown-toothed grin and wiped his chin; he tossed his sack full of doves into the chuck wagon, brung his cat along, and hired on with Sue.

**T**hat night, after they'd made camp, one of them t'rrible hurrycane storms blowd in from off the Gulf, unexpected-like, and Sue and her boys thought shur they was done fer. It spooked the horsés, turned over the chuck wagon, and blowd 'em all clean outa their bed rolls. But whilst they was a-chasin' after the ponies, they taken note that, all of a sudden, the wind stopped, and then started blowin' the other way. Sue thought they must be in the eye of the storm, and that onc't it had passed over, the second blow from the backside would be worst than the first. And then, in the dark, Slue-Foot seen an amazin' sight.

A great ol' big ol' feller—Sue guessed he must've been a Swede—was a-standin' on the beach down by the Laguna Madre. He had one of his pinkies rammed up inside one side of his nose, and he had his head cocked in sech a way that when he blowd out of the other side, he could aim the blast of air at the storm. He was blowin' and blastin' and snortin' that hurrycane in sech a way that them waves started rollin' back on top of each other and stackin' up and up, till the hurrycane backed itself down and right on out into the Gulf. Sue could see that, somewhere along the line, the

**When Slue-Foot and the boys rode into Pancho Villa's hide out, they knowd right from the start that they was in a fix. There was more Mexiquitas in that mountain hideaway then Slue-Foot thought she ever had seen in one place before; and come to find out, some of Pancho Villa's ol' bandido buddies was there, too. They had heard the Slue-Foot Sue was comin' fer a visit, so they'd all buried the hatchet long enough to take a look at the most famousest woman in the Great Southwest.**

noseblower had blowd his nose so hard, he'd blowd a chunk right out of the tip-end of it, makin' that nose-hole bigger'n th' other one, which prob'ly accounted fer how ferocious a wind he could whup up.

"Howdy Pardner," says Sue. "We're mighty 'bliged to you fer headin' up the storm, but couldn't you do a better job if you used both sides of yer nose?"

The noseblower pulls his pinkie out of his nose, ketches his breath fer a minute, takes off his hat real respectful-like, and says, "Ja, sure, yew-betcha. But dey say dat Floreeda ist on de udder side over de Golf, and I vouldn't vant to blow it away."

"Mighty thoughtful of you," says Sue.

"Tank yew," says the polite ol' Swede.

Sue stuck out her hand to shake: "How do you do. My name is Slue-Foot Sue, and I shur could use a feller like you. How'd you like to throw in with my outfit?"

"Vel," says the nose-blower, "Dat is might toughtful of you, too, Missus, Sue. Tank yew."

Sue couldn't tell whether the Swede had ever heard tell of her or not, but she was pleased to make his acquaintance.

Some days later, after Sue's crop of dune grass was growin' good, and Padre Island was safe from blowin' and washin' away, word come up from Mexico that Pancho Villa was on the move agin. Now, as you prob'ly already know from yer history books at school, Pancho Villa was jist about the biggest bandido in all of Old Mexico—he made raids over the border and killed a bunch of people, rustled some cattle, and even carried off some horses. Pancho Villa was the meanest bandido there ever was—folks said that he was so mean, he couldn't even git along with the other bandidos that was jist as mean as he was. After a while, President Woodrow Wilson send General John J. Pershing and several thousand soldiers down into Mexico, and they chased that rascal all over the State of Chihuahua, but they couldn't ketch him. So Governor Jim "Pa" Ferguson taken time off from gittin' hissself impeached, and he sent a wire to Slue-Foot, wonderin' if mebbe she could do somethin' about Pancho Villa.

Sue 'llowed as how she thought she could handle it, so she formed up a posse out of most of her hands—excludin' Mooney, o' course—and they headed down fer South of the Border, loaded up with six-guns and deer rifles and several boxes of cartridges. Naturly, by the time Slue-Foot and her man got to the mountains of Chihuahua, ol' Pancho already knowd she was a-comin', so he was ready fer her. But instead of bushwhackin' her, ol' Pancho





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sent out a flag of truce and asked if Sue and them didn't want to come on up into camp and set a spell.

When Slue-Foot and the boys rode into Pancho Villa's hide out, they knowd right from the start that they was in a fix. There was more Mexiquitas in that mountain hideaway then Slue-Foot thought she ever had seen in one place before; and come to find out, some of Pancho Villa's ol' bandido buddies was there, too. They had heard the Slue-Foot Sue was comin' fer a visit, so they'd all buried the hatchet long enough to take a look at the most famoset woman in the Great Southwest. Carranza was there, and Huerta was there, and Zapata was there; and they had all brought their bandido armies along with them—about a hunderd thousand caballeros strong, each one a-wearin' his tengallon sombrero, his bandoleras (that's a couple of cartridge belts criss-crosst acrost over his chest, in case you didn't know), and carryin' his razor-sharp machete (that's a long kind of real sharp knife that Mexiquitas uses to chop cactus with to make tequila, and sugar cane to make rum, and to carve gringos fer fun).

Wellsir, Sue seen right then and there that it was time to cut her visit short, so she said the thought she'd be goin' now.

Pancho Villa, howsomever, said it wouldn't be polite fer her to leave till after they'd had a hand or two of poker. And he said that if Slue-Foot won, she could leave all right, and that if she lost, Sue could go ahead and leave, but she'd have to leave her cars behind with him.

Sue taken a good look around at the hunderd thousand bandidos a-crowdin' in all around her with their bandoleras and their machetes, and so she said that sounded fair to her, and then she sat down and cut the cards.

**T**here they all sat: Slue-Foot Sue, backed up by her men, and Pancho Villa and his three sidekicks, backed up by their men. Carranza pulled out his machete and laid it on the table with a grin, and Huerta pulled out both his six-shooters and laid them on the table with a wink, and Zapata bit the neck off a tequila bottle and stood it on the table right in front of Sue with a nod. Each one of them mistrustful bandidos was a-cyein' the others, as well as Sue, and they was a-twistin' their moustachios and lickin' salt and suckin' lemons and tossin' back tequilas.

Sue 'llowed as how she thought she'd pass on the tequila, this time; but, not to be outdone, she propped her buffalo boots up on the table and leaned back in her chair. Sue thought about layin' her own shootin'-iron out on the table like theirs, but she thought she jist might need it after a while, and besides, she didn't want to skeer them bandidos too much. Instead, she pulled her hat down low over her eyes, and she said: "Deal."

After they'd played a few hand of stud, and draw, and Mexican sweat, Sue could tell that there wadn't no gringos was goin' to win at cards that day, not in Chihuahua, not the way them bandidos was dealin'. She'd already lost all of her money and most of her cartridges; and besides that, Sue was beginnin' to git a little edgy. Ever' last one of them hunderd thousand bandidos was fingerin' the cartridges in his bandoleras and keepin' his machete loose in his belt, and watchin' ever' card that Sue played, and either laughin' or suckin' air through his teeth jist as she laid it down. Nosireebob, Sue knowd that what she was headed into was the worst kind of a Mexican standoff, so she figgered it was time to up the ante.

Next time the bandidos passed around the tequila bottle, Slue-Foot snorted: "This'ere poker-playin's thirsty work. Ain't you amigos got a drink fittin' fer a lady? Hows about a beer."

Now Mexicans—even bandidos—is always hospitable



"Deeshwater?" says Pancho Villa in his best English.  
 "Posible jou has som bettera cerveza in Tejas, Senora."  
 "Yer durn tootin' we do," says Sue, standin' up  
 proud and strong fer the Great State. "Lone Star beer—  
 the best there be. I'll stack up my one Texas beer agin'  
 all you've got, and if you amigos don't agree that Lone  
 Star is better'n any beer South of the Border, I'll forfeit  
 the game, and you can have my ears to boot."

people. So Pancho Villa barked out the order, and quicker'n a barber can slit yer throat or a lawyer can cut yer purse, Sue had her set-up.

"Cerveza para la Senora Eslupie," shouted Pancho.

"Cerveza, cerveza para la Senora," shouted all them other bandidos like a hunderd thousand echoes.

They had Dos Equis, and Corona, and Azteca, and several other kinds of Mexican beer, and one or two that even Sue hadn't never heard tell of before—'bout a dozen different kinds in all. Slue-Foot picked up the first bottle, clinched the edge of the bottle cap 'tween her teeth, jerked it off, and chuggalugged the first beer. That done, she picked up the second bottle, opened it the same way, and downed it jist like she one the first. Right on down the line, Sue knocked over all twelve bottles, one right after t'other, whilst all the bandidos watched, mighty respectful-like.

Finished, but not done, Sue wiped her mouth on her sleeve, and, without smilin', she said: "You fellers call that beer? That ain't beer—that's dishwater."

Dishwater! Sue had called Mexican beer—Slue-Foot Sue had called **all** Mexican beer, ever' last one of 'em—dishwater. About a hunderd thousand rifles went click, cocked. About a hunderd thousand razor-sharp machetes flashed in the sunshine. Carranza and Huerta and Zapata twirled their moustachios, and Pancho Villa smiled.

"Deeshwater?" says Pancho Villa in his best English. "Posible jou has som bettera cerveza in Tejas, Senora."

"Yer durn tootin' we do," says Sue, standin' up proud and strong fer the Great State. "Lone Star beer—the best there be. I'll stack up my one Texas beer agin' all you've got, and if you amigos don't agree that Lone Star is better'n any beer South of the Border, I'll forfeit the game, and you can have my ears to boot."

Now, a rumble of Mexican amazement ran through a hunderd thousand dry and tequila-thirsty throats. "Ai, carramba." This gringa was a gambler.

"Ees a bet, Senora Eslupie. Do jou has 'som Lon' Estar cerveza wi' jou?"

"You let me worry about that, Generalissimo," says Sue, and she turned to whisper somethin' in Curly Joe's ear.

Then, whilst Curly Joe whispered somethin' in the wheelrunner's ear, Sue laid it on the line to Pancho Villa: "They brew Lone Star in San Antone, but I'll have enough bottles her fer all four of you caballeros afore sundown—on one condition."

"Si, Senora, que es esto?"

"If I hold up my end of the deal, and win the bet besides, you, Senor Villa, have got to agree to give up politics. No more makin'

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war north of the Rio. If I win, you've got to settle down and start bein' a ranchero and stop bein' a bandido." (Right there was when Slue-Foot made her only mistake, 'cept she didn't know it, yet. She'd cut a purty good deal with ol' Pancho, all right, but none at all with the other three bandidos.)

When they heard Slue-Foot's offer, a hunderd thousand Mexican bellies laughed a hunderd thousand Mexican bellylaughs, and specially did Carranza and Huerta and Zapata laugh, knowin' Villa, as they thought they did.

"Si, Senora," says Pancho Villa, real dignified-like and unwillin' to be treed by a female, "Estoy de acuerdo." (That means he took the bet.)

None of them other bandidos could believe what their ears was a-tellin' 'em, but by then, it was too late. Their jefe (that means "chief") had done spoke, and Pancho Villa was a man of his word.

Now, what Curly Joe had said to the wheelrunner was this: "Wheelrunner, Sue says she's be might 'bliged if you'd pick her up a case or four of Lone Stars in San 'Tone, and git back here by suppertime."

"Nothin' to it," said the wheelrunner, and he taken off, headed northeast. Naturly, he'd left his wagonwheels at home that mornin', so he made better time than usual. He got to San Antonio middle of the afternoon, bought four cases of Lone Star—one each fer the four head-honcho bandidos—strapped two on each leg, and started back. Trouble was, when he crossed the border back into Mexico, he jist naturly got sleepy and felt like takin' a little siesta. So, he found hisself a mesquite tree, and laid down in the deep shade fer a spell.

**B**ack at Pancho Villa's hideout, his womenfolks was already beginnin' to clear the cards and money and cartridges and beer bottles and tequila bottles and pistolas and machetes off the table, so they could put out the frijoles and tortillas and salsa and carne asada. The sun was goin' down, and the wheelrunner weren't nowheres in sight.

When Sue seen that it was jist about suppertime, she steps over to the groundlistener and tells him to ear down on that wheelrunner. The groundlistener, he lays hisself down on the ground and puts his ear right down on the dirt. A hunderd thousand and more bandidos got still as leaves on the trees on a windless night, a-watchin' and a-wonderin'.

"I hear 'im a-snorin'," says the groundlistener. "He's takin' a siesta somewheres jist this side of Del Rio."

Turnin' to the old geezer, Sue asks, "What can you do about that?"

"We're purty high up in these here mountains, ain't we?" The geezer takes a look around, bites a chaw off'n his plug of Reynold's Natural Leaf, and commences to work up a good mouthful.

Ever'body agrees, they was purty high up, all right.

Then the old geezer pinches his nose together with his two pointer fingers and braces his front teeth agin' his thumbs, takes in air till he looks like a fresh-fried sopapilla, and lets fly with a stream of tabaccy juice that reaches all the way from the high mountains of Chihuahua past the Big Bend and mighty nigh unto the Rio Grandy River.

Purty soon, the wheelrunner wakes up, and he cain't figger out why it's a-rainin' tabaccy juice, but he takes notice that it's gittin' on towards evenin', so he ups and strides on into camp with his four cases of Lone Star strapped to his legs—to a general commotion among the Mexiquitas and a generally improved



mental disposition on the part of the Texicans.

Wellsir, whilst the bandidos was givin' it all they got to down their cases of Lone Star, and arguin' over whether or not it really was better'n Mexican beer, Slue-Foot and her bunch taken a notion to leave. They hit leather and high-tailed it outa Pancho Villa's camp down off that mountain lickitysplit as fast as their horses could run, hell-bent for Texas.

Now, you'll have to agree, ol' Pancho and Carranza and Huerta and Zapata had a hard roe to hoe fer four patriotic Mexicans, however pleasant their chore did turn out to be. By the time they had drank theirselves to the bottoms of them four cases of beer, they had to agree that Lone Star was, hands down and no doubt about it, better'n any Mexican beer they had ever swallered. Lone Star was—how they hated to admit it!—Lone Star beer was so good, in fact, it made 'em mad. It made 'em mad all over agin, I tell you, to think about how Santy Anny had lost Texas. Furthermore, they had to give in that Slue-Foot had set 'em up afore sundown, jist like she'd said she would.

Bein' a man of his word, Pancho Villa didn't have no other choice but to git hisself a ranch—which he done over near Parral, in Chihuahua State—and, right honorable-like, jist like Sue had told him and he'd agreed to, Pancho retired from politics. Them other three bandidos, howsomever, hadn't made Sue no bets nor deals; so them and about a hunderd thousand other bandidos, each one well-armed, as was aforesaid, mounted up and taken out after Sue and her posse with a whoop and a holler.

And they might've caught 'em, too, 'cause when Sue and the boys got to the Rio Grandy—danged, if that durn river weren't on a rise, like it almost never is. There weren't no way they could wade it ner swim it, and there weren't no bridges in them days, and the bandidos was a-closin' in fast from behind.

Wellsir, you've prob'ly already figger'd out how Sue got outa this one. Whilom that big ol' Swede rammed his pinkie up inside one side of his nose, and cocked his head, and commenced to blowin' at the river out of the other side of his nose with the end blowed out, and backin' up the waters, Curly Joe whipped out his long ropin' rope and—jist like Pecos Bill'd showed 'im—lasso'd the legs of about the first thousand Mexican ponies, and yanked 'em all together, which caused the next ninety-nine thousand or so to pile up on top of the ones in the lead and on top of each other.

By the time the Mexicans had unscrambled theirselves, Slue-Foot Sue and her outfit had crossed over the river—like the children of Israel crossin' the Red Sea—on dry ground. Naturly, when the Swede quit blowin' his nose, the ol' Rio started rollin' agin, sech that the bandidos was stalled in their tracks. You've gotta hand it to the Mexiquitas, howsomever, 'cause they was a heep smarter'n ol' Pharaoh and his men was. Them Messikins was all Daily Bible Readers, i guess; anyhow, they had better sense than to ride on into a river and git theirselves downed. Meanwhile, Sue and her boys was safe in Texas.

When Sue got back to Pecos, she sent Governor Ferguson a wire. She told his Honor that her and her posse'd taken care of Pancho Villa, like the Governor'd askt her to; but, she said, there was other bandidos down'ere in Mexico, and as the job had turned out to be jist a little bit bigger than she'd counted on, she wondered if maybe he orghn'ta send in a Texas Ranger. Which he done.

**CONTINUED NEXT MONTH**

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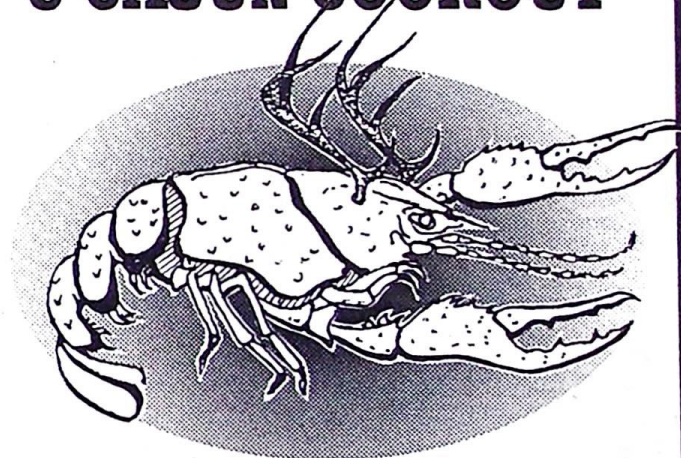
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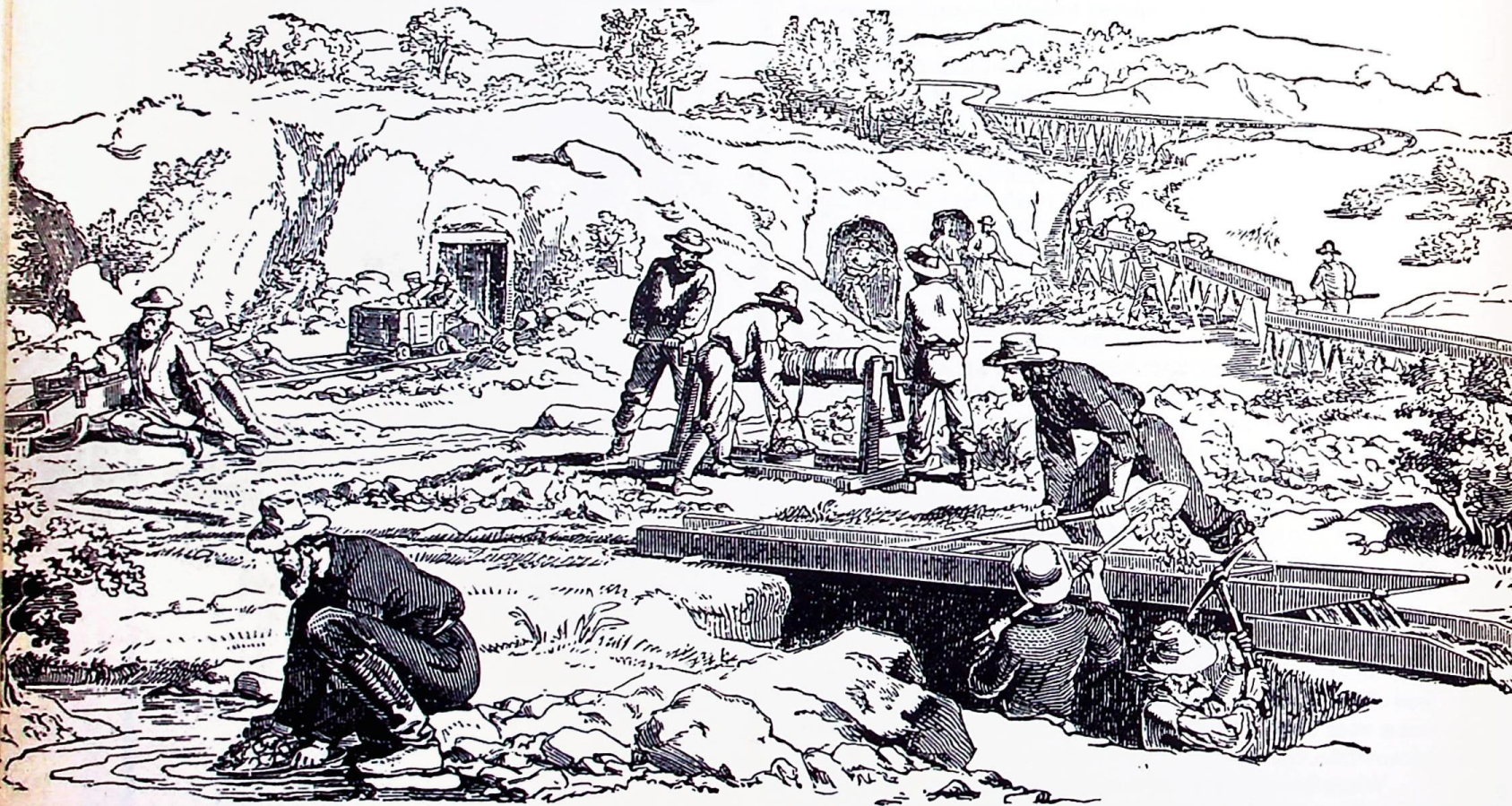
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# PANNING FOR TEXAS GOLD

by IRA KENNEDY



**If you're going to search of gold in Texas, first you need to know where to look. Next you need to know how to get at the stuff. And last but not least you need to remember, in the words of Mark Twain, "A gold mine is a hole in the ground with a liar at the top."**



**R**eports of gold and silver in central Texas have been carried in books and memories for 250 years. As a journalist and historian I've read and heard these stories for more than three decades—secretive miners have shown me bars of silver the size of the largest Hershey bars and five times as thick. On one occasion a miner placed a droplet of gold in my palm the size of four dimes, stacked. It had been extracted from far too much ore. If the miner hadn't done the work himself, the labor would have cost more than the gold was worth.

One fellow told me *about* where there was a vein of silver three feet wide and twenty yards long. Right on the surface. Unfortunately he didn't own the land, but he was scheming. On another occasion I was told of a gold mine just north of Enchanted Rock that was closed after a gang of Mexican laborers lit out with several pounds of gold—the result of months of mining. I've also heard about a gold nugget found in Bull Head Creek, northwest of Enchanted Rock and the San Saba rancher that discovered gold while digging a well.

Then there are the ristras, granite bedrock milling stones found in and along creek beds. According to the legends these were used to crush the ore in gold mining operations. Located in San Saba, Llano, and Blanco counties, they are said to be either Spanish or Mexican in origin. One such stone is in a stream *somewhere* in Sandy Valley, near Click.

The stories are legion, however, for this article, I've mined a few books for salient facts. When you're writing about gold in Texas it's best to have a few folks with better credentials backing you up.

## **IN THE BEGINNING**

In the Central Mineral Region, legends and rumors of lost mines have been circulating since the Spanish discovered silver on Riley Mountain near Llano back in 1756. Eventually the rumors brought with them a tide of prospectors who braved the elements and the Indians to find the fabled riches of gold and silver.

In 1838 the *New York Mirror* published an account of a prospecting trip on the San Saba River that included mention of an "Enchanted" or "Holy Mountain" near the headwaters of Sandy Creek. That same year, Comanche Chief Buffalo Hump camped at Enchanted Rock with the White captive Ms. Webster and her two children. After her escape two years later, she told of gold and silver mines, and brilliant stones the Indians possessed that looked like diamonds. The 'diamonds' were actually quartz crystals which were found in the area and were, for the Indians, sacred objects. Mrs. Webster's stories simply confirmed what the Texans already believed: there was gold and silver in the Texas hills.

**METHODS OF MINING IN THE EARLY DAYS:** CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: DEPICTED HERE IS THE MOST BASIC MINING METHOD OF A MAN PANNING FOR GOLD. JUST ABOVE IS A MAN USING THE CRADLE WHICH STRAINED THE ORE FROM CREEKS. THIS HAD TO BE USED NEAR A WATER SOURCE TO THE OPERATOR COULD FEED THE CRADLE WATER BY HAND. IN THE BACKGROUND AND CENTER WE SEE BEDROCK MINING WITH THE NECESSARY WATER LUCES.

**G**ravels in tributaries of the Llano River, such as the Little Llano River, Pecan Creek, Babyhead Creek, and San Fernando Creek are known to carry gold values. Sandy Creek, south of Llano is noted for its placer gold. Tributaries of Sandy Creek, such as Walnut Creek, Comanche Creek, Coal Creek, and Crabapple Creek are also noted for their placer gold.

While many adventurers left San Antonio in search of lost Spanish mines, British diplomat William Kennedy visited San Antonio to mine the rich vein of tales regarding the mysterious frontier. Kennedy's book, *Texas: the Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas*, published in 1841, was so well received in Germany it became the catalyst that shaped the destiny of the Texas frontier. In his book, Kennedy retold the rumors of lost gold and silver mines. Although he noted he was relying on local lore, in print the stories carried the weight of fact.

Back around the turn of the century a newspaper article was published in San Antonio which was typical of the many legends of lost mines in the area of Llano and San Saba Counties. According to the article D.F. Brooks, "says he has discovered on Riley Mountain, west of the Packsaddle group in Llano County, an old Mexican or Mormon gold mine, and the remains of an old smelter a half mile west of Honey Creek and three miles west of the Packsaddle Mountains. The ledge, he says, is a true fissure, forty-five or fifty feet deep. The mine has a six-foot entrance, and both the foot and hanging walls are "pockety". In the center an eighteen inch pay streak of decomposed sugar quartz is yellow as gold itself."

Pure gold, no matter which way you turn it, always looks like gold. Samples of mica and pyrite (common "fool's gold") "wink" when light reflects from the faceted minerals.



**RIGHT: GROUND  
SLUICING IN  
THE EARLY DAYS.  
FAR RIGHT: MINER  
OPERATING THE  
CRADLE.**



**As any placer miner knows, all of the little gold-bearing veinlets and stringers, when eroded over a broad area, can produce enough gold to form important accumulations in placer gravels. Such is the case in the area of the Llano Uplift. Gold can be panned from numerous creeks and gullies in the region.**

## **ENCHANTED ROCK COUNTRY**

Detailed maps of the Enchanted Rock area indicate, not far to the north, two creeks which feed into Sandy Creek—one is Silver Mine Creek, the other, Gold Mine Creek. Located five miles northeast of Llano is the legendary Heath Mine. Discovered in the early 1890s the mine was in production from 1896 to 1899. During the Civil War several residents of Llano county panned for gold in Sandy Creek earning less than a dollar a day for their efforts. Even Gail Borden, the founder of the Borden milk company once owned a gold mine on Sandy Creek.

According to Roselle M. Girard, "A little gold has been found in the Llano uplift area of central Texas. It occurs in quartz veinlets that cut through some of the Precambrian metamorphic rocks of Llano, Mason, northeastern Gillespie, and west-central Burnet counties." [*Texas Rocks and Minerals.*]

"As any placer miner knows, all of the little gold-bearing veinlets and stringers, when eroded over a broad area, can produce enough gold to form important accumulations in placer gravels. Such is the case in the area of the Llano Uplift. Gold can be panned from numerous creeks and gullies in the region. Whenever a streamcourse flows across outcrops of the Packsaddle Schist, there's a good chance for finding specks and flakes of gold. Several areas are especially noted for placer gold. The Llano River flows through the region, and gold can often be found in bars and banks of the river. In addition, gravels in tributaries of the river, such as the Little Llano River, Pecan Creek, Babyhead Creek, and San Fernando Creek are known to carry gold values.

"Sandy Creek, south of Llano is noted for its placer gold... Tributaries of Sandy Creek, such as Walnut Creek, Comanche Creek, Coal Creek, and Crabapple Creek are also noted for their placer gold. — "Gold in Central Texas," by Edgar B. Heylmond Ph.D

## **OUT WEST**

In addition to the Hazel Mine, located north of Van Horn, and the Quitman Mountains of West Texas "Gold, silver, and some lead are found in the Shaftner district, located on the south flank of the Chinati Mountains, overlooking the Rio Grande Valley and the border towns of Presidio and Ojinaga. Presidio is also the name of the district's and the state's major historic precious metal mine. The Presidio Mine opened in the 1880s and was active until 1942. During that time it is believed to have yielded more than 92 percent of the state's total silver production and at least 73 percent of Texas' total production of gold." [Eric R. Swanson, *Geo-Texas.*]

## **& ELSEWHERE**

According to Roselle M. Girard's, *Texas Rocks and Minerals: An Amateur's Guide*, "Small amounts of gold have been reported from other parts of Texas. Some of these localities are in Eocene Tertiary sandstones in the Gulf Costan Plain, in Cretaceous limestones in Irion, Uvalde and Williamson counties, and in sand and gravel in Howard and Taylor counties. None of these deposits have been found to have any commercial value."

## **PLACER GOLD**

"Few prospectors had book learning in geology, but most of them absorbed enough miners' lore to understand where they were likeliest to find gold, and how it got there. They knew in a general way that, ages ago, gold-bearing rock had risen in molten form from the depths of the earth, driven upward by the violent forces that built mountains. Most of the vein matter was worthless quartz or other rock, which the miners called *gangue*. But enclosed in the *gangue* were precious metals,





sometimes blended with it and sometimes occurring as separate particles and threads.

"Wherever the lodes were exposed to the weather, erosion gradually broke down the gangue into crumbling chunks, then successively into fragments, sand and powder. The indestructible gold was thus released to be carried downhill by rain and mountain streams. Naturally, nuggets or large flakes of gold traveled only a short distance, while the tiny light particles called flour or flood gold went much farther—even to the ocean." [find this source in the library...]

Being heavier than the other minerals, gold travels only a short distance before finding its way down to bedrock, particularly where natural obstacles form. This happens where a creek suddenly widens and its current slows. Look for gold-bearing black sand in gravel bars protruding into the stream, along the high-water line, on the cut-bank side of a bend in the stream, on the roots of grass and bushes, or transverse ridges of bedrock granite in the stream. Potholes often form at the base of the ridges and these basins become natural collectors where nature pans for the heavier gold.

### THE MOTHER LODE

"Usually a lode was first located by following signs of placer gold up a creek, then up a hillside to where a gossan was found." Gilbert L. Campbell notes in his booklet, *Wet Plates and Dry Gulches*, "The gossan was the weathered, oxidized outcrop of a group of gold bearing minerals. The gold might originally have been dispersed in pyrite or fools gold which filled crevices in quartz. At the surface the pyrite, a sulfide of iron was weathered into a rusty oxide by the action of rain, air, and

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sunlight. It often would swell, and crumble the surrounding quartz. Rain would wash away the lighter quartz, and dissolve some of the iron compounds, leaving concentrations of the gold in place... Brown stains in white quartz became known indicators of gold and were easy to dig."

### PANNING

Panning for placer gold is the most common, and least expensive method for recovering gold. Jim Chude wrote the following details on panning for Enchanted Rock Magazine back in June, 1995: "A gold pan, a circular steel dish ten to sixteen inches in diameter at the top, and from two to two and one-half inches deep, has sides that slope 34 to 40 degrees to the horizontal. You place a pan of your collected gravel in water and stir it by hand to break up any lumps or clay; then you pick out larger stones and give the pan a shake to settle any heavier particles. From time to time you tilt the pan and with your extended thumb push off the surface layer and continue shaking. If you do all of this right, at the end of the operation you should have black sand (magnetite) and gold. What a sight when you hit paydirt! An experienced panner can pan about a cubic yard of gravel a day."

"When working gold placer deposits in a river or stream, prospectors use gas powered siphons to dredge the sand and gravel in the cracks and pockets of the bedrock on the bottom of the waterway. Prospectors then run the material through a sluice box to catch the gold. Sounds simple; but someone has to dive down and operate the siphon hose.

"These gold concentrations are called placers. In a dry wash, you must dig down in the gravel until you hit bedrock. Then with a dust pan and a small broom, carefully brush the dirt from the cracks into your dust pan and dump it into a big bucket. (Some people use a portable wet/dry vacuum.) After you have filled several buckets, you head for the nearest stream and "pan" for the gold."

Well, that's about all you need to know, except that virtually all of the land in Llano county is privately owned. You must get permission from the property owner before panning. They may think you're crazy and grant you permission on that basis. But don't be deterred. There are small quantities of gold in the Hill Country and other parts of Texas.

Good Luck!

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# BUFFALO & BORDER CROSSINGS

THE THIRD LEG OF A THREE LEGGED JOURNEY



## GOODBYE BIG BEND, HELLO DEL RIO

STORY & PHOTOS BY CHARLES TISCHLER, EDITOR-AT-LARGE

BUFFALO ALONG THE ROADSIDE WEST OF SANDERSON.

**D**ixie and I woke up a little late in one of the motel-styled rooms of the Chisos Mountain Lodge in the basin of Big Bend National Park. Javelinas had frequented the lodge parking area each morning and afternoon and whitetail deer eased across the paved sidewalks as easily as on natural rock ledges.

We ate breakfast at the dining room of the Lodge and then piled our stuff into the Trooper and started off toward the east. As we passed through Panther Junction and then turned left on the Marathon road, I got the feeling that comes when, on a journey, you come about and start the homeward reach.

Big Bend had been glorious on last Columbus Day weekend, but now we were working our way back toward Marathon, Sanderson, Langtry, Del Rio, and Ciudad Acuna. I was disappointed to find the northern visitor's center closed and locked. More cutbacks I suppose.

We were making good time in the autumn sunshine. A pea-green Border Patrol Blazer closed on us and I gave the Llano county high sign, a raised index finger from the steering wheel. It was not returned. A female officer was at the wheel and in that

split second as we passed she seemed agitated in some way. Within minutes we were pulling into the Border Patrol's immigration checkpoint and the Border Patrol officer alone on duty came out. He seemed a little agitated and glared at the soiled Trooper as he strung out the preamble to the all important question, "Are you both US citizens?" We answered yes and he continued to give us the hairy eyeball and finally motioned us on.

We pulled into Marathon and stopped at the Gage Hotel for a pit-stop. As I walked through the double hung screen doors I immediately noticed that the mounted white bison head which had been hanging above the great fireplace in the lobby during our over night stay on the way west had been replaced by a brown one. Bill Stevens, general manager happened to be coming in the front door as Dixie and I were heading out and I questioned him about the long gone white bison head. "We took it down and moved it to the museum that we're opening. Everything is a fruit basket turnover around here." We said good bye and piled back in the Trooper and headed east on Highway 90.





THE 1890 HOUSE, BED AND BREAKFAST INN IN DEL RIO.

Some miles west of Sanderson something Will Hill, the park maintenance worker back in Big Bend, had mentioned came back to me. A joint that sold buffalo burgers. I started paying attention. It wasn't long before we sped by a ramshackle abandoned building with its hand lettered message on a sheet of weathered plywood, "Buffalo Buggers". Dixie first pointed out the blunder and we were still laughing over the image as I began to see great brown beasts out beyond the fence. Buffalo!

Not just a lone creature but as I slowed and pulled off the road in the right-of-way I began to make out small groups of four or five and then another group much further back in the mesquites and then a group hanging around a little closer to the road. I stopped and got out and fished out my camera bag from the back seat. I put on the 135mm lens, wishing for a longer one, and walked out to the heavy fence. The images through the view finder were disappointing. The sun was harsh and the animals too small, but I took pictures anyway and started counting the buffalo. Done, I worked my way through the weeds back to the Trooper and said to Dixie, "Mama, I think there are over thirty buffalo!"

For the past six years I have thought about buffalo. And dreamed of the day when they might again shake the wild lands of the American West. This find of over thirty animals was the most I had seen since a trip to Yellowstone back in 1966. My spirits were upbeat as we resumed our eastward progress. Within a minute I could see more buffalo on the same side of the road. This time some of them were quite close to the road near a water-trough. Again I pulled off the road and carried my Nikon to the heavy fence. I got close enough to smell them. Again I counted as best I could and realized that all together there were more than 60 of the great beasts on that south side of the road. On a gate I noticed lettering that said "Bruce Ranch." I felt that in some small way my dream was coming true before

my eyes. I had read a few years ago in the *National Geographic Magazine* that the estimated buffalo population in North America was over 200,000 and growing.

In Sanderson we spotted the couple from Köln, Germany, who we had met in Boquillos, Mexico the day before. They were looking around downtown as we pulled through and looked bewildered as we honked and waved.

We stopped there in Sanderson to fill up at the Diamond Shamrock station where we had stopped four days earlier on the way out. I topped off the tank and went in to pay. By his stature, stance and the ravages of the West Texas sun I could tell that the cashier was really a cowboy. I told him of the buffalo west of town on the Bruce Ranch and he said there were more than two hundred on that ranch. They're coming back and maybe some day travelers from around the world will be able to thrill to the sight of thousands thundering back from the very brink of extinction.

We said farewell to Sanderson with its aged Art Deco buildings before the rugged Chihuahuan landscape and headed eastward through Dryden and on toward the Pecos.

All morning, from Marathon east, we had seen plenty of pea-green Border Patrol vehicles and more black and white Highway Patrol cars than I had seen along any stretch of highway since the '95 Willie Nelson Picnic back in Luckenbach. We had read about a big crack down on illegal aliens entering this country along the Rio Grande and this was a real show of force.

At Langtry we stopped and toured the visitor's center there with the little dioramas of history of Judge Roy Bean and the Jersey Lilly. Out back the Jersey Lilly still stands and beyond that, along a walk, an excellent display of native plants with detailed descriptions as to their various uses.

Across the street we stopped in at the tourist trap and I spied a French couple stocking up on souvenirs, including a Texas-sized cigar . . . just the essentials I suppose.

East of Langtry we crossed the Pecos River on the high bridge and pulled into the scenic overlook which offers up a great view of the River that defines West Texas. The drought still hadn't loosened its grip on this region and from the overlook high and dry boat ramps awaited nature's change in mood and the white marks of Lake Amistad's waters told of the water level in wetter times. There was a good flow coming down the Pecos and where it narrowed downstream from the bridge, and three hundred feet below the overlook, I counted thirteen Great Blue Herons strategically positioned to ambush bait fish in the current.

The couple from Köln had made the same stop and still looked a little bewildered as we said hello again . . . I think they were afraid we were trailing them.

Then it was on eastward past vistas of diminished Lake Amistad, some thirty feet below normal, but still one whale of reservoir between Mexico and Texas.

By mid afternoon we made Del Rio and started our search for The 1890 House, a Victorian home that now serves as a bed and breakfast, where we had reservations for that night. I tried to navigate by the seat of my pants, but got turned around a couple of times and we found ourselves retracing our route up and down old Las Vacas street that runs from San Felipe Creek to the Rio Grande. I marveled at the old canal that runs along the road in the shade of huge pecan trees continuing their hundred year drinking binge. We stopped at a convenience store and called The 1890 House. Laura Galvan, matron, quickly gave us simple directions to the place a few blocks away. Within minutes we



pulled up in front of the fine two story white frame home. Giant pecan trees shaded the grounds and to the south ran the canal bringing San Felipe Spring water in unending quantities to nurture the lush landscape.

Laura Galvan met us at the front door and proudly showed us through the place, ending with the Victorian suite with its King-sized four poster bed, fireplace and a jacuzzi whirlpool bath. All this seemed light years from the modest accommodations back in the Chisos the night before. It wasn't long before we were moved in and Dixie was test-piloting the jacuzzi. I went out onto the upstairs balcony and started counting the White-winged doves that were coming into the giant trees.

Laura's husband, Alberto arrived before long and brought us killer margaritas served up in stemmed hand-blown Mexican glassware. Alberto and Laura stayed and talked with us out on the balcony and it wasn't long before Laura was insisting that she drive us over the international bridge into Ciudad Acuna. She could visit her elderly mother on the other side and then pick us up when we had finished our evening meal at Crosby's.

Dixie and I piled into Laura's Jeep Cherokee and we were off. Laura explained that while her ancestors had inhabited Texas for over two hundred years, and while she had been born in Del Rio, her mother was a citizen of Mexico and had to restrict her visits to Texas.

As Laura had told us, most of the shops in Ciudad Acuna close by 7 pm. But there were still a few open and we shopped for a little while. Then we entered Crosby's there on the main street and were warmly greeted by the wait-staff and seated at a table with a rich green table cloth and napkins that matched the uniforms of the staff. The walls of the restaurant are covered with photographs of the Mexican revolution with Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata glaring at us through the ages.

We both went for combination plates and little Carta Blancas. Before long I noticed a couple at a table just across the way. I eavesdropped on their conversation for awhile, but I not only couldn't make out what they were saying, I couldn't make out the language, though they seemed European. Finally, I excused myself and asked them where they were from. Genoa. The ancient city-state from which Christopher Columbus sailed all those years before.

We settled our bills and then fell into conversation out in front of Crosby's. They were Paola and Luciano Angelini, originally from Genoa, but operating a hotel by the name of Albergo Dente del Gigante below Monte Blanco in the Italian Alps. They asked us how we planned to get back over the border and I said they could catch a ride with us in Laura's Jeep. As per Laura's instructions, I went into the bar there at Crosby's and asked for the local phone. I placed the free call to the number she had given us and in no time at all the Jeep appeared and we piled in. Laura was not phased by our guests and soon fell into conversation in Italian, relating that she had relatives in Milano.

After being asked to step out of the Jeep by US Customs inspectors who looked through the vehicle which was absolutely empty, we dropped the couple off at the parking lot next to the bridge on the US side. Laura invited them to breakfast the next morning.

Soon we were back at The 1890 House and sleep came easily in the four poster bed. The next morning the Angelinis arrived and we enjoyed a perfect breakfast of omelettes and fruit and breads and conversation ranging from European experiences to

**Then we entered Crosby's there on the main street and were warmly greeted by the wait-staff and seated at a table with a rich green table cloth and napkins that matched the uniforms of the staff. The walls of the restaurant are covered with photographs of the Mexican revolution with Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata glaring at us through the ages.**

the Austin music scene. It wasn't long before the Angelinis left and Alberto hauled me across the street to meet his neighbor, John G. Prude.

Mr. Prude is a real piece of Texas art, in his nineties, his family operates the Prude Guest Ranch in Fort Davis. Mr. Prude still drives his Cadillac to and from Del Rio on a weekly basis. He was born on the ranch at the turn of the century and grew up as a sure enough cowboy who still loves to share the western ways. As we talked I calculated the time frame of his upbringing and asked him the improbable question, "In your early times out in the Fort Davis country, did you ever see an Indian, I mean a wild Indian?"

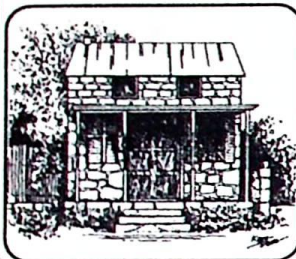
His greying eyes snapped sharply and he said, "One". In addition to his guest ranching activities Mr. Prude taught psychology and Mental Hygiene at Sul Ross University for more than twenty years.

But, it was time to cross the border once more, for that final sorte with all the shops open and that set of Mexican blankets and a pair of silver earrings and just because.

Laura had told us about the little bus line that runs folks to and fro from downtown Del Rio to downtown Ciudad Acuna. We purchased tickets at the bus depot just across the street from the old courthouse. They weren't much, maybe a buck and a half round trip. The bus was tired from so many crossings and tired from long service in some metropolitan Transit commission. I thought I might have recognized it from the early 70s in Austin. The run across the river carried a light load of men women and children who live along the river in both worlds. The transmission, the suspension and the brakes wailed from the ravages of time, but we made a perfectly trouble-free crossing and disembarked at the square just beyond the bridge. We strolled the main street quite a ways out and then cut over a block and came back. Acuna was busy on that Tuesday, but not choked as is often the case in Nuevo Laredo, further down the Rio Grande. We criss-crossed the main shopping street hitting the places that carry blankets and silver, comparing, selecting, ruling out, while I studied the cow skulls on sale in almost every shop. One of the most interesting aspects of those skulls, as I have seen up



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and down the river and in funky shops further north, is the one half inch hole above and between the empty and gaping eye sockets. Usually there is just one clean hole, but another might exhibit a misplaced shot and another, or even more rarely an additional blunt fracture added to a group of those half inch holes. Some go down hard.

We opted to hire a taxi for the ride back over and in twenty minutes we were back at The 1890 House. Laura asked if we could stay another night, but the pull of home was upon us and we struck off in the mid afternoon for Jollyville via Highway 90 to San Antonio and its hair-raising traffic on Loop 410 and then North on I-35 to Austin's far North side via Highway 183 to Jollyville and the animals back at home. But the trip wasn't over.

We rested on Wednesday and then on Thursday we ran out to Fredericksburg with our two dogs, Chester and Sammy. Dixie shopped the Hauptstrasse and we dined at the Altdorf and talked with Gina there just before she went off duty. On the way back to Austin we made our first run to the Bat Tunnel and discovered the Grape Creek Shuetzen Verein where the shooting culture from Germany has been maintained for more than a century. We zigzagged on county roads through Sandy on to Highway 281 and headed north. I was telling Dixie to keep an eye out for buffalo on the left side of the road and sure enough, just south of Round Mountain we spotted a lone buff. I slowed and then pulled into the bar ditch because something didn't seem right. The young bull heavily favored his left front leg. I studied him. He moved with great pain, turning his head with each step toward the side with the injury. Finally I could see great swelling in the joint at his elbow.

We pulled up to the Auction facilities, and found a rancher backing a goose neck stock trailer into the pens. I told him about the buffalo and he directed me to the offices up front. I left Dixie and the dogs in the Trooper and walked around front and through the metal framed doors of the combination Post Office and law offices of Morasund, Morasund, and Morasund and one of the headquarters of the giant Arrowhead Ranch. In the first office on the left I found an attorney and told him about the buffalo with the swollen elbow. From around the corner came a vaquero who smiled and said he had been watching the animal for three days. The attorney thanked me and the two of them disappeared around the corner.

Back home that night I came down with a whale of a cold. I was sick as a dog Saturday.

Earlier in the year I had agreed to address folks at Hamilton Pool west of Austin that Sunday as part of a series of special programs to encourage use of the facility.

The next afternoon I found myself on the little beach at the mouth of the pool and a group of folks including a Boy Scout group, couples, and fathers and sons. In the shallows of the pool in the shade of a willow I counted twelve blue catfish and there were Monarch butterflies in crystal blue air. I carried on about the ancient human life that had called the Hill Country home and the way things were back in the pioneer days when Texas Confederate Governor Hamilton hid-out at that place that now carries his name. I had a fever and leaned upon my little beaver-made walking stick that has served since I snaked it out of the Pedernales six or more years ago.

My audience was attentive for the most part although at some point the more active scouts disappeared.

About an hour and ten minutes into the ramble a woman asked if the Apache really did the terrible things that they were



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attributed with. I cast my eyes down and used the little walking stick to trace my thoughts into the sand, working on a response.

Then something caught my attention from the left side of my vision. There were deep royal red robes floating like the wings of butterflies and I looked up to see a procession of three Buddhist monks in fine regalia walking through my audience toward the grotto of Hamilton's Pool. My eyes were drawn to the last Monk, a young American woman with a shaved head and round glasses who was looking back serenely smiling at me.

"Tibetan?"

She paused and nodded. I then looked to the first in line, a fifty year old man from Asia with close cropped hair and sixties style underwire black frame tinted glasses who was looking over his right shoulder and as our eyes met he serenely lowered his head in acknowledgement and I responded in kind. And they were gone.

I tried to gather my thoughts, asked the woman to repeat her question and then responded that to people at war who have lost everything a person is capable of losing, sometimes it seems that killing is just not enough.

My talk didn't last too much longer and ended with more questions that I did my best to address. And then Travis County Park Ranger Amber Arnes drove me out of the canyon in the park's Kawasaki Mule to the Trooper. As I made my way back to Jollyville, I felt the three legged journey was over, that I was finally home.

Some helpful information:

Del Rio Chamber of Commerce, 1915 Avenue F, Del Rio, Texas 78840 (210) 775-3551, 1-800-889-8149.

The 1890 House Bed and Breakfast Inn, 609 Griner Street, Del Rio, Texas 78840, 1-800-282-1360.

The Prude Guest Ranch, P.O. Box 1431, Ft. Davis, Texas 79734 (915) 426-3202.

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# THE LATIN COLONY IN THE TEXAS HILLS

Compiled by Elizabeth Gray Hudson,

Boerne Area Historical Preservation Society.



*The uncivilized area of western Texas seemed an unlikely place to find a colony of cultured intellectuals in 1848 and 1849. However, educated Germans were settling in the valley where Sisters Creek flows into the Guadalupe River.*

In most provinces of the United States, where there was German immigration before 1850, a Latin Colony could be found. Here intellectuals discussed philosophy, literature, science and the arts. Initiating a colony of this kind would be a few musicians, mathematicians, noblemen, scientists, geographers, artists, men of the gymnasium or others choosing to separate themselves, to some degree, from the working people. Most could speak several languages, among them, Latin. Because of this, they were often called "The Latiners" or "The Latins".

Desiring to maintain the high level of intellectual activity they had known in Germany, they continued to practice the "Kultur" respected in their Fatherland. Nightly or weekly meetings in the Latin Colonies allowed them to continue their studies and kept them abreast of recent thought. Though homes were of logs, with no floors or glass windows and tables were hewn of native wood, the finest books were piled in the corner and works of art were displayed on the walls. Fine china, musical instruments, and other signs of aristocracy were to be found in their homes. Such a community was Sisterdale in Central Texas.

Into the valley moved Baron Ottmar von Behr, Professor Ernst Kapp, Doctor Adolf Douai, Professor Julius Froebel, August Siemering, Julius Dressel, Gustavus Theissen, and Baron von Westphal (the brother-in-law of Karl Marx). They built their homes and held their meetings.

Social life was most genteel and reached its height when Prince Paul of Wurtemberg, a brother of the king of Germany, visited. He participated with amazement and pleasure in the cultivated studies and exchanges on the Texas frontier. A well-known naturalist and botanist, he spent time studying the plants and animals of the Guadalupe. Other noblemen who visited in the village were Baron Meusebach, the Countess of Coreth, Count von Roggenbach, Count von Stockmaus and Prince Adolph von Westphal.

Ottmar von Behr was the second resident in the area. His father was the Premier of the Duchy of Anhalt. Behr was a chemist and mineralogist who had published several books at Leipzig. He had known Alexander von Humboldt, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Bettina von Arnim. His house was perched on the edge of a steep cliff for protection from the Indians. Behr built a separate structure for his extensive library which by 1852 became a lending facility. Unfortunately it burned in the late 1850's and was never replaced.

Professor Ernst Kapp was a professor of cultural geography, his liberal publications led to his arrest in Germany. He escaped and fled to Texas. Kapp experimented with natural cures for physical illnesses. In advance of its time, he predicted environmental pollution and dehumanization due to machinery.

#### More Information on The Latins?

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Ernest G. Fischer, *Marxists and Utopias in Texas*, Burnet, Texas: Eakin Press, 1980

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Glenn Lich, *German Culture In Texas*, Boston, Mass.: Twayne Publishers, 1980

Photo: IRA KENNEDY



**B**luebonnets. It's hard to imagine, sometimes, just how important iddy-biddy flowers can be to our economy. We don't sell 'em cause they grow wild in these parts. Some folks buy and plant the seeds, and generally they never come up, but that doesn't effect sales the following year. And there's no telling just how many thousands of rolls of film are developed annually with snapshots of folks plopped down in a big patch of them. Bluebonnet paintings, T-shirts, soaps, scents, and events—after all, it is the state flower—and the their appearance is cause for celebration.

But when the bluebonnets don't produce, like last year for example, the event can be catastrophic. Now if we had been hit by an earthquake, or a comet or something we'd make national news, get federal relief, and everyone would feel kinda sorry for us. Instead, on a bad year, folks coming here from all parts of the nation sometimes think us locals are just keeping the best places a secret. Or, like the weather forecaster taking blame for the whims of Mother Nature, we feel guilty for what we had no control over and wouldn't have done if we did.

Well, last year was last year. We kept hoping against hope that the season was late. Maybe it was—about a year. The fact is, the bluebonnets of spring depend on a hard winter. When we get snow, or a soaking rain that freezes 'till the entire landscape looks like it was fashioned out of crystal our optimism about the bluebonnets rises considerably. You see, those bluebonnet seeds have hard shells (or whatever the botanical types call that outside part). But when they get a good soaking rain and then a freeze the shell cracks and the plant starts growing to the light. (So, if you buy bluebonnet seeds, spray them with water and place them in your freezer for a couple of days before planting. And plant in the winter.)

Unless you've been in a coma since last Thanksgiving, or you're from out of state, you know we've had snow and freezing rain here in the Hill Country. All in all, conditions have been perfect. I do alot of driving in my line of work, and lately I've been pulling off the road to check for signs of bluebonnets. They're coming up alright, and looking good. While I was making my rounds delivering the magazine I decided it would be a good idea to get a few opinions from folks who live close to the land and keep an eye peeled for such things.

Out at Crabapple Crossing Country Store near Enchanted Rock I put the question to Ricky and Donna Bauman. A couple of years ago their campground was nearly a solid blanket of bluebonnets, so if we were going to have a good showing this year the Baumans might know. Sure enough, Ricky said, "I was out in the field just the other day and noticed the plants were everywhere. A good year? With just a little rain it could be one of the best."

Next I stopped out at Luckenbach Inn to chat with Matt Carinhas and he told me the same thing. Being on the road alot himself he said he always liked the drive on Ranch Road 2323 between Llano and Fredericksburg. "On a good year the roadsides and fields along there are as pretty as anywhere in the state. But not many people drive that way. They don't know what they're missing."

Next, I stopped by Harry's on the Loop in Willow City to chat with Harry and Rosemary. Last year, visitors touring the Willow City Loop would stop by demanding to know where all the bluebonnets were. Evidently they missed the one growing out by the road right in front of the place.

Seems Harry has developed a local reputation as a

# BLUEBONNET FORECAST

by **IRA KENNEDY**

**Unless you've been in a coma since last Thanksgiving, or you're from out of state, you know we've had snow and freezing rain here in the Hill Country. All in all, conditions have been perfect. I do alot of driving in my line of work, and lately I've been pulling off the road to check for signs of bluebonnets. They're coming up alright, and looking good.**

long-term weather prognosticator ever since he decided to hold his First Annual Hog In last February. No one in these parts is crazy enough to hold an outdoor event in February. But Harry said, "It's going to be 80 degrees and the sun will shine." And sure enough it was. So I put the question to Harry.

"Bluebonnets?" Harry exclaimed, "This is going to be the bluebonnet season from hell!" That's his way of saying it's going to be a bumper crop of pretty flowers.

Next, I talked to Luke Rogers over a cool one at the Badu House in Llano. When you see the weather reports from Llano—temperature, rainfall, etc.—it comes from Luke's weather station out on Wolf Mountain. Last summer's drought that was given so much coverage in the Austin news wasn't a drought at all. According to Luke's records we had more than the average annual rain—it just came at the wrong time of year. (Back during all this drought talk, Bart Freeman of Llano said, "I got rid of my rain gauge a long time ago, 'cause I got tired of people calling me a liar.")

First, Luke explained the necessary conditions for optimum results in the life cycle of bluebonnets. Then he reviewed the recent weather patterns. The two matched up perfectly, so in his way Luke agreed this was going to be a good year.

So, if you're expecting wildflowers this spring you won't be disappointed. Remember, lodging and campsites fill up quick so make your reservations for March and April now. Next month we'll publish three maps in the magazine, complete with county roads; plus we'll share a few secrets on some of our favorite routes.

Y'all Come!



# COWBOY TALES



by L. KELLY DOWN

Some jobs takes years to learn good,  
like dutchoven biscuits to be as light as mine be.

Others takes only at most a second—

I guess the fastest be bobcats.

Well, just shush you selfs up and I tell you why.

## BOBCAT BILL

You dern tootin it be cold! You girls got to fall out of this here nice warmish bunkhouse and if you be mooneyed cow hands—keep them cows moving in this rain and sleet. No, no thankee, but I do believe I will pass on the pure joy of riding a jughead horse at night with freezing water a-running down my neck. I done learned you how it be done, so soon as supper be gone—slap some leather like the bossman said.

Some jobs takes years to learn good, like dutchoven biscuits to be as light as mine be. Others takes only at most a second—I guess the fastest be bobcats. Well, just shush you selfs up and I tell you why.

You all knows old Billy, he be a mite young for our Old Fools Coffee Club, but we lets him in to visit being he is a-growned up here local boy. Well, Bill he'd seed these here great big bobcat tracks out on he ranch—down towards the draw like. So he takes hisself to the feed store and gets one of them "don't hurt no critter" traps. You understand they must been eleven or ten of them "clamp the leg" traps hanging in the barn from his way back kin, who also had bobcat troubles, I do believe. Some over one hundred year old if they be a day, that's a fact.

Anyways, Bill being a kind hearted type—has to be, cause of them orphan type fair ladies he always be taking out and feeding—he gets the trap. He sat it just like a boy a-growing up in these hills would—just right—as all them knows just how to trap lots of things. He check it twice a day so no bobcat going to go long without no water you see. A few days go by and Bill runs hisself into town—getting bacon and eggs I do believe. He

meets some friends and maybe lifted a cool one or two. On he way home he swing by to check the trap.

He got a bobcat—a big one.

What happen next ain't nobody real sure but all agree it were fast as lightening.

Bill whips out he handgun—shoots it plum empty into that trap. Didn't want that cat to have no extra pain you understands. Next he opens up the trap door—now this is where you learns fastest.

He ain't hit that cat a-tall. That cat ain't only a mite riled up, but he be mad too. He come out that trap with all four feet flying and scratching. Now, if'n Bill had been a younger type buck he could have been hurt real bad—but he weren't—being married up some—he knowed how to protect hisself, and did. He got his arms, chest, hands clawed some good, even three or two hurt places on he face. He did fog that cat off and they both took off. Story is, Bill was faster but I done some bobcatting myself and that don't seem close to the line.

Bottom line I guess is, it do pay to learn some fair lady fighting ways after all.

So, you see, some jobs you learn real quick. Bill? Oh, he were heard to say that if he caught another bobcat this next cat just going to have to spend the night in the trap, or he getting ten friends, each with a 12 gauge twice barrel shotguns. No more dead bobcats for Bill, that's for sure.

Now get you and work like you is paid to. Kitchen Closed.

## SMELLING STUFF

I knowed as being a nice warmish night and a full moon you hands would be kind of slow coming to my supper bell. I is tired and bossman done let my helper go home for the weekend to see his sick mama, so I got to wash dishes myself—unless one of you will? I didn't think so. Anyways, that is why you got such a pile of fried onions tonight. If you girls ever needs to draw peoples in close to eat something—fry onion—gets them every time, even if they hates onions. It be the smell, that's a fact.

You study on it, and smellers of peoples you will find is used a lots more than peoples think. Not near like a horse or cow, you understand, not even speaking of a good dog. But, on a dance floor if'n you got some "draws them close" shaving juice on, it do work—maybe, too dern good even for future ex-wives.

You get downwind of a pasture of Hill Country flowers in the spring of the year—or of a real ripe dead cow and you sure knows how good you smells. Smoke from a campfire sure makes you feel different than smoke from a after midnight bunkhouse fire's smoke. One make a days work good, the other running time, don't you know.

If you been in a cowboy beer joint, even with tobacco smoke so thick you can slice a piece and take it outside—stale cool ones and even other normal stuff you can till smell a fight a-coming. Sure it be peoples fear smell. Even if you is the meanest in the valley you still gets a tinge of fear. Just might be time you is whipped, you see. Ain't never been a man yet that if he fights a-tall ain't going to be beat up good someday. Every man knows this, so that fear smell, they notice. Get a bad cold and even my dutchoven biscuits and peach cobbler don't come up to they



usual snuff, top drawer eating. You smeller be broke, you see.

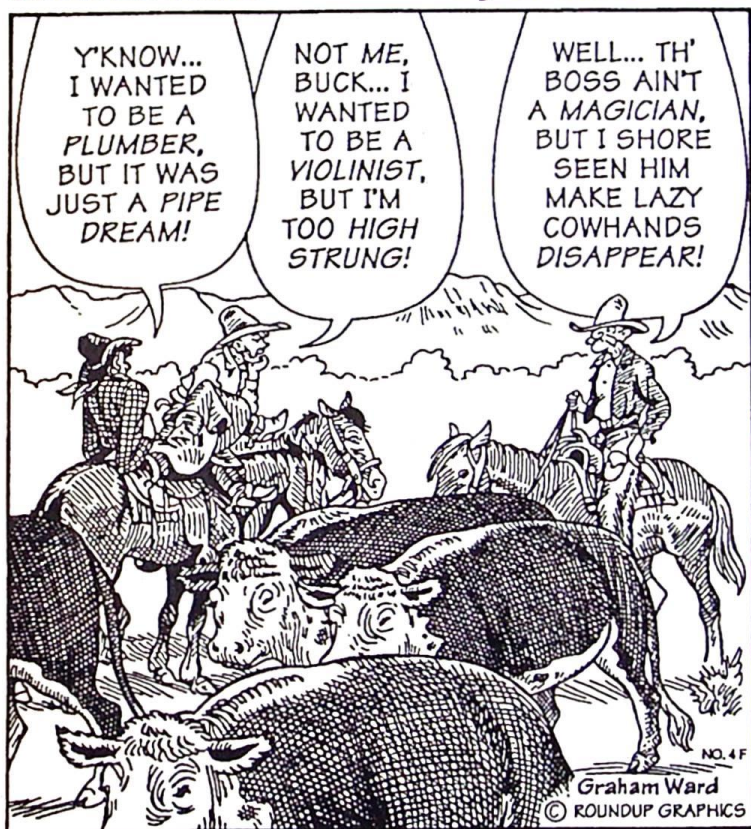
So you girls takes more notice of you smeller—trust it just as you does you ear on a rattlesnake warning you is getting a mite too close. Way late on a dark moonless night you has to smell you way around cows. A fresh sucked cow, or a calf that done it, smell sweet—a bull on the prod, smell kind of sour like. A steer you had to run hard and be put in a herd will smell—maybe you ain't goin to notice but your horse and the rest of the cattle will. So you got to know what critters does from smells just like you does about what peoples does with they smells. Learn good and you may live so you can tell young bucks about smells—and other stuff—like I does.

Speaking of smells—without even looking I can tell you that peach cobbler be getting nice and brown on top, bubbling them peach slices real fine—about ready.

Well, I be diggity dog—I is right as usual.

## SADDLE PALS

By Graham Ward



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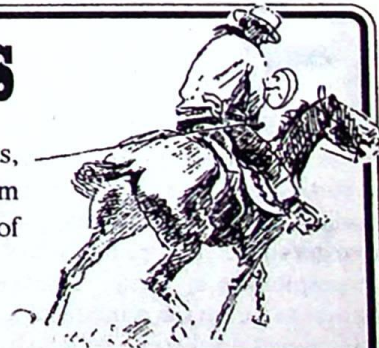
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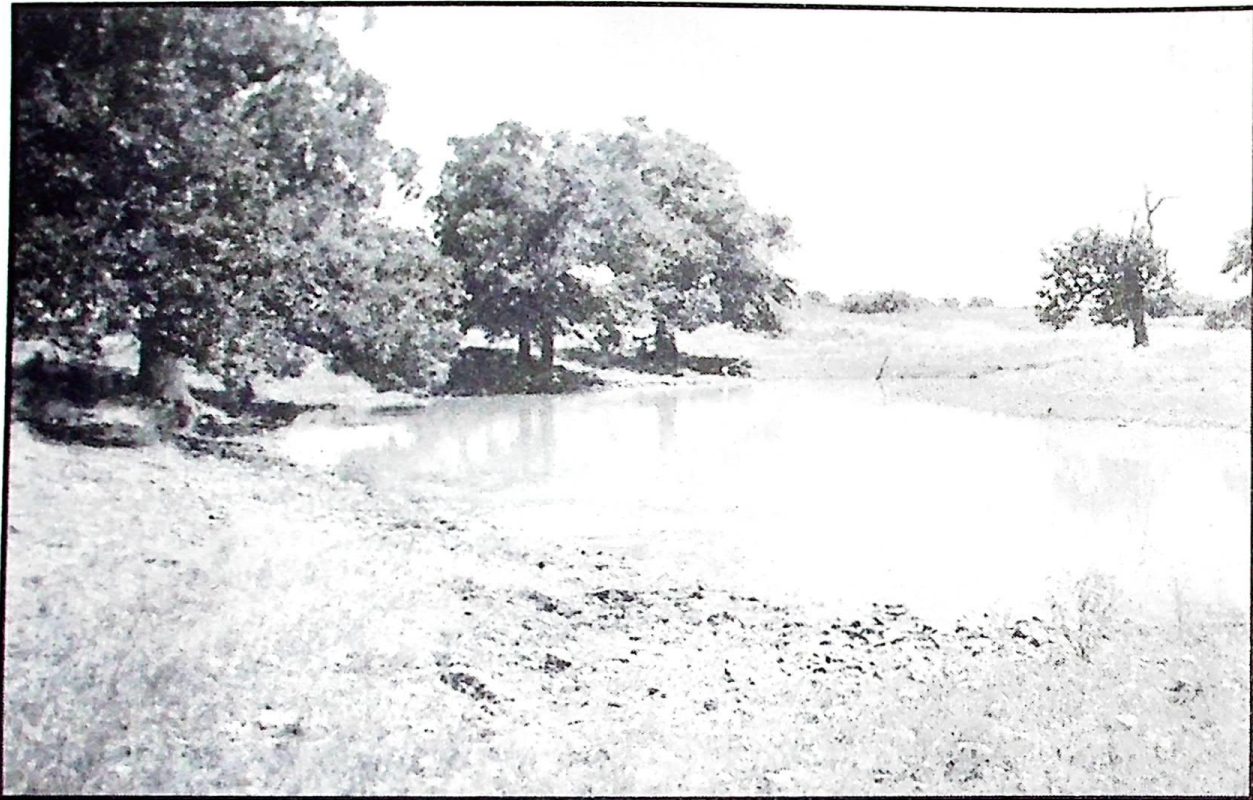


**915/247-4161**



# SPANISH TREASURE OF DRY POND

by BILL TOWNSLEY & DAVID AULDRIDGE



**In a labyrinth of tunnels, just a few miles northeast of Goldthwaite, Texas, ten jackloads of silver and gold were buried by the Spanish. Is it still there? Some are betting that it is.**

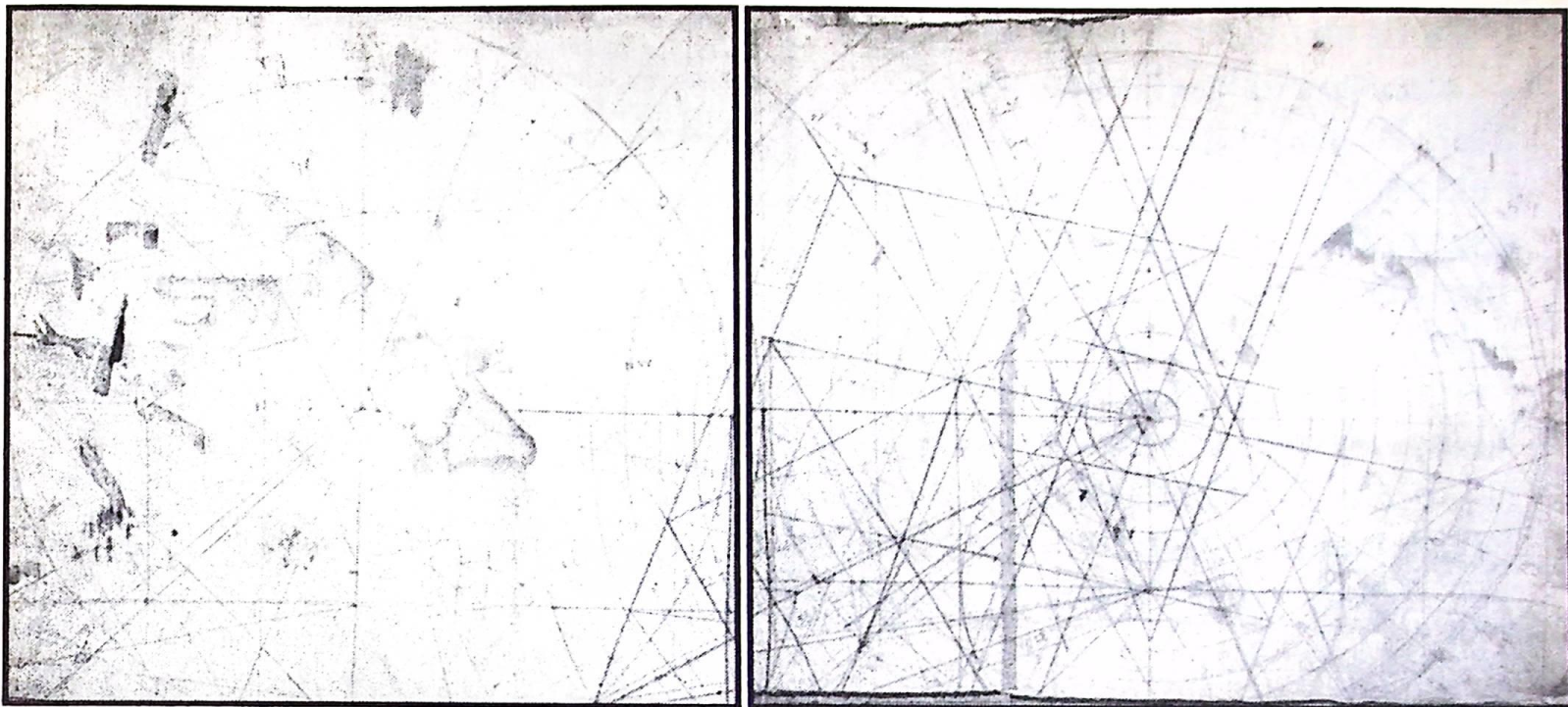
**A** puzzling turn-of-the-century recovery of two copper spikes embedded into a liveoak tree; a rock, with a Spanish mule train carved onto its surface; copper disks, one round and the other triangular in shape, both having additional markings on them; three (possibly four) copper boxes, discovered three and one half miles (more or less) northeast of the courthouse at Goldthwaite, Texas, is certainly one of the most intriguing lost treasure mysteries the Lone Star State has to offer. Archeology students, treasure hunters, professors, medical doctors, sheep farmers, an Arizona author, and a large list of others, have attempted to solve the perplexing mystery. Tons of earth have been moved in an attempt to locate the remains of a legendary 233 year old Spanish mission and what some believe to be mining attempts by Spanish Argonauts.

As a result of research that was being conducting in Mills County, Texas, the authors located descendants of Dr.

James Dyer Kirkpatrick.

Kirkpatrick, Will Harris, Bob and Will Urbach, J. T. Prater, and Mr. Barker began excavating the areas, referred to by "Goldthwaithians" as Dry Pond in 1900, after a foreigner arrived in Mullin, Texas, with a map showing the location of a mission or mining headquarters. Kirkpatrick, who had been trained as a surveyor, began constructing a surveyor's drawing—mapa or derrotero, if you will. (The persons in possession of the map do not want a rash of visitors seeking to see the almost century old document.) They did however, allow the authors to photograph and make a video tape of Dr. Kirkpatrick's drawing. Surprisingly, the drawing has never been reproduced in any publication or book, until now. It is as interesting as the hand-hammered copper boxes, rosaries, crucifix, and other articles that Kirkpatrick found at Dry Pond. In the fall of 1995, they stepped up the research pertaining to the searches and discoveries that have taken place on a continuing basis near Goldthwaite, since before J. Frank Dobic, copyrighted the





**CANVAS SURVEY OF DRY POND BY DR. JAMES DYER KIRKPATRICK, CIR. 1901.**

story, *The Pictured Copper Plates*, in his book *Coronado's Children*, (1930).

Historians tell us in 1683 Domingo Jironza Petris Cruzate replaced Antonio de Otermin as Governor of New Mexico. Otermin had led an unsuccessful attempt to reconquest New Mexico after the Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1680. In December of 1683, Fray Nicolas Lopez, custodian of the El Paso missions, along with Fray Juan Zavaleta joined Juan Dominguez de Mendoza's expedition into west-central Texas. Mendoza's entourage traveled into the interior of Texas, possibly as far east as the Colorado River, where they remained encamped for six months. At this place they constructed a fortified structure and crude mission.

The precise location of Nicolas Lopez's chapel and Mendoza's fort has been debated by scholars for years. Some believe the mission, San Clemente, was located fifteen miles southeast of present day Ballinger, Texas. Jesse Wallace Williams, president of the West Texas Historical Association (1952-1953), later concluded the mission was on the Llano River, a few miles southwest of Junction, Texas. Some people, mostly 19th century treasure hunters, believe both sites are incorrect and that the actual location of San Clemente is even further northeast than Junction or Ballinger, Texas. Perhaps, the stone foundation that was once located at the Dry Pond site is that of another mission, one not recorded by history.

Possibly, Daniel E. Fox, member of the Texas Archeological Society, holder of a Masters Degree in Anthropology from Texas Tech, summed it up best when he said, "...there has not been enough public and financial support for well-designed, intensive investigations, even though archeological studies have helped to verify the location of Spanish Colonial settlements and have recovered information about the material things of life in eighteenth-century Texas."

Jim Mitchell, of Ft. Worth, Texas, can most likely tell you more about "Dry Pond" (so named because it will not hold water, for extended periods of time) and the legend associated with that part of Central Texas than any living man. Mr.

Mitchell, seventy last year, has spent forty-one years attempting to unravel the secrets possibly hidden since 1762. Mitchell told the authors he had kept a notebook since he began searching in 1954 with renowned, Augila, Arizona, author Barry Storm. Storm, is better remembered for books and articles written in the 1940's and 1950's, about Arizona's *Lost Dutchman's Mine* believed to be in or near the Superstition Mountains. Storm and Mitchell spent three years cleaning out some of the tunnels beneath Dry Pond. *The Goldthwaite Eagle*, page 1, August 26, 1954, carried a story entitled, *Padre Lopez Map Tells Of Buried Treasure On Dry Pond Near G'Waith*. The article retold some of the original story and of Mitchell's and Storm's search:

"The pockmarked treasure mountain known as Dry Pond, some two miles northerly of Goldthwaite, upon the Proc McCullough Ranch was found by Barry Storm, well-known writer/adventurer of such mining books as *Thunder Gods's Gold*" and *Practical Prospecting*, to be the actual site of the Mendoza-Lopez Expedition of 1683, one of the first to lay claim to West Central Texas for the King of Spain. With it goes a harrowing tale of Indian intrigue which caused Fray Nicolas Lopez, Custodio of New Mexico Kingdom, to leave a fortune behind in gold doubloons and escondos."

Included, was a photograph of a tree near the pond with a musleshoe carved onto it. The article indicated that some of the Mendoza documents had mysteriously disappeared, "sometime after 1898, when Dr. Herbert E. Bolton, reported their contents."

Mitchell told the authors, he had made 264 trips to Dry Pond in the last forty-one years. He said he never stayed less than two days or more than two weeks at a time. "If you were to compare the amount of work I've done to an eight hour day, five day a week job, it would amount to fifteen years." When asked, if he had been inside the horizontal tunnels, he said, "there were vertical shafts twenty to twenty-four feet deep on the east side of the pond. Each intersect, horizontal tunnels, which run east and west and southeast. You got a big round hole, it's natural, about the center, you'd say. When you drop



**Harris told Mitchell, about an old man who showed up at Goldthwaite about 1887. He had a master map drawn on an old buffalo skin. The old man returned again in 1900 and Dr. Kirkpatrick saw the map. The old man returned a third time about 1909, stayed a few weeks and left with a team and wagon that was loaded heavy. Mitchell calls the old man 'White Beard' ". Williams also said, "I don't think there's anything left at Dry Pond. But the tunnels were real enough."**

down to the bottom of it, you got three tunnels and one of them runs out there at the edge of the pond. That would be kind of northwest, roughly northwest. The other, runs roughly northeast. It makes a fork. The other one runs southeast. I never did put a compass on them but I know where they are. I could drill down and hit them, I know exactly where they're at. Barry Storm and I found a lance head and a drill steel seventeen or eighteen inches long near the end of the southeast tunnel. We worked half a day, prying it out from between a crack in the floor. Barry, wanted them, and I let him carry them back to Arizona. I have pictures of them."

Truett Auldridge, of Goldthwaite, who owns property adjoining Double "O" Smith's property (Smith owns the property on which Dry Pond is located) related the story about a hermit, who lived in a dugout near the present windmill and searched for the treasure believed to be located there. Truett Auldridge couldn't remember the man's name. He said, Hartal Langford Blackwell, who has studied the history of Mills County and published a book, *Mills County—The Way it Was*, would know the old man's name.

According to Mitchell, the hermit's last name was Brown, and that the high school kids called him Buzzard Egg Brown. Mitchell said, Brown died in bed at the dugout in 1940 or 1945, and had come to Goldthwaite from someplace in Montana.

When the body was taken to the local funeral home, it was suspected the county would have to pay for the burial.. But, Brown was wearing a money belt containing over \$500.

Truett, also told the co-authors of a man and wife team who had searched the area during 1936 and 1937. They too, lived in a dugout near the windmill. Their last name was Henderson. Mr. Henderson's first name was Mont. Mitchell continued, "The longest tunnel, the one that runs northwest is 40 feet long. You can walk standing up into it. The next longest is northeast, it's the one that has the vault in it and the side alter, it's 34-35 feet long. The ceiling was smoked up in the northeast tunnel. The tunnel that runs southeast, where we found the drill steel, the lance head and the big rock is about twenty feet long."

When asked about the copper disks or plates Mitchell said, "There's a picture of them in Frank Dobie's book. They were found east of the pond. I talked to two people, who saw the plates. One of them was Mr. Harris. He saw them several times, not just once, several times. The ones in the book were not accurate. They're partly right and part of it's wrong. Dobie didn't see the original plates, he wrote his book in '29 and by then the plates were gone. In 1954 I talked to Dr. Kirkpatrick's niece, up in Brownwood, she was a retired school teacher. She said Frank Dobie interviewed her in 1928. She told Barry Storm and me that Dobie talked to her for about two hours. She said he got some of the things a little mixed up. Harris said, the plates were beautiful, very artistic, and had a lot of Spanish writing on them."

During a conversation at the Pond on October, 1995 Mitchell told the co-authors and Lynn Jones of Arlington, Texas, that Mr. Harris told him a rectangular copper plate depicting a deer's head was found east of Dry Pond— the rack had 22 1/2 points.

Another researcher, Steve Wilson, writing in *True Treasure Magazine* (Vol. 5 No. 12, December 1971), interviewed W. L. Baker, who was eighty-eight years old. Baker remembered the deer having 23 points.

Mitchell gave the authors several photographs. One of the pictures showed Barry Storm holding a steel object in his right hand. Written in pencil on the back of the photo were the following notes: "A sharpened steel weapon that appears to be an old Spanish lance head found in S. E. tunnel in caverns at Dry Pond. It was lying in a layer of powdered limestone on a rock floor against the wall. The head was pointing E. 20 S. It was S. E. of a Shield Rock that had been shaped by a stone mason. It was about 9 feet from drill steel under the Shield Stone to Lance Head." The other photograph showed Storm holding another metal object. On the back of the photo was the following

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notation: "An old Spanish drill steel found in S. E. tunnel, driven underneath large shield rock, between bottom of shield rock and rock floor. It was pointing S. W. of West or about 56 degrees W of S. It was 17 inches long. The point was 56 degrees W. of S. The head was 56 degrees E. of N. It was 17 Span. inches long. Found July 1955."

In October 1995 the authors traveled to Grapevine, Texas to meet with Willy Williams. Williams had hunted for treasure at several Texas sites with Alex Fernandez (from Paraguay) and Theron Bonham (Ft. Worth, Texas). Bonham owned a helicopter, which allowed them to conduct extensive aerial research. The trio spent \$3,500 drilling at the City Park in Menard, Texas in the late 1980's. Larry Williams, (From California) was also involved in the Menard, Texas, Park Excavation. Willy Williams, had dug on the Dry Pond site in the 1970's. Williams said, "Harris told Mitchell, about an old man who showed up at Goldthwaite about 1887. He had a master map drawn on an old buffalo skin. The old man returned again in 1900 and Dr. Kirkpatrick saw the map. The old man returned a third time about 1909, stayed a few weeks and left with a team and wagon that was loaded heavy. Mitchell calls the old man 'White Beard' ". Williams also said, "I don't think there's anything left at Dry Pond. But the tunnels were real enough."

Noel O. Cleckler and Aubrey Cleckler, both of Abilene, Texas, filed a lease agreement on the 13th day of January, A.D. 1976 at 11:00 A.M. The lease was for 149.07 acres of land out of the east part of the SW/4th of Section No. 48 E. T. Ry. Company survey, Certificate No. 21/431, issued by S. Crosby. Commissioner of the General Land Office, November 14th, 1863. In part the lease read as follows: "All buried treasure and other personal property located or to be located on the real property described in Exhibit A hereto. This financing statement is to be filed in the real estate records of Mills County, Texas. The record owners of the real estate described in Exhibit A hereto are the Secured Parties." The Secured parties were listed as Florence Elizabeth Smith Brown, Paul Michael McCullough, James P. Smith and Mary Angeline Smith Gage. Ed Deavors worked with Aubrey and Noel Cleckler. Aubrey Cleckler told Townsley that Noel Cleckler found a smelter and some silver slag north of the site from where they were digging. The smelter was located on another man's property. Aubrey said, "We got a strong reading near a cliff on the old Freeman place, but we couldn't get a lease on the property." The Cleckler brothers interviewed Benton Alldredge, who showed them where a stone foundation once stood. He thought it may have been the foundation of a mission. Benton Alldredge also showed the Cleckler's what he believed to be an open-air altar.

Mitchell said that Alldredge told him that Spanish coins were found near the altar by another group of hunters. Mitchell showed the site to Townsley, David Aldridge and Jones in October of 1995. During this visit, Townsley showed Mitchell a photograph of the Kirkpatrick survey. The stone foundation was located over the top of a natural cave. The cave runs east and west for a length of approximately 100 feet. In this cavern, Mitchell found a small glass bottle with animal talon in it. He supposed it had been used as a candle.

Townsley and David Aldridge visited the grave of Kirkpatrick in September of 1995. James Dyer Kirkpatrick was born December 3, 1850 and died December 1, 1903. He was 52 years and 11 months of age when he died. Kirkpatrick was a member of the Woodsmen of the World. During this trip Aldridge and Townsley located news articles in *The Goldthwaite Eagle*, pertaining to searches for buried treasure at Dry Pond. *The Eagle* reported on Friday, August 6, 1948 in an article titled, *Buried Treasure, Caluable Mines, Being Hunted 3 Miles Northeast*, L. M. Matlock of Richland Springs had signed a contract with Proc McCullough calling for a split of two-thirds of anything found going to Matlock and one-third to McCullough. The contract was worded the same as the contract signed by McCullough and D. W. Stevens (of San Saba County) and T. B. Oglesby (of Stevens County) in 1932. According to the article, Oglesby and Stevens found a second copper box. Matlock had been a silent partner in this endeavor.

The partnership dissolved when a six-inch rain caused water to flood the tunnels. The article printed a further account of Kirkpatrick's search and said he (Kirkpatrick) had "become interested in hunting for the buried treasure from the Lost San Saba Mine". The article supplied additional information concerning the efforts in 1901; "Several objects were found around the site that intensified the search. Two copper plates bearing legible engravings were found showing the tree triangle, the entrance to a cave, and a jack loaded with bullion headed for a tunnel; a flat limestone rock four feet long was dug up at the stump of the tree from which the spike had been taken. one side of the rock was covered by a picture of ten pack burrow trailing across the stone as if to enter the mouth of a cave, the packs and cave entrance bearing small half-moons, the sign for treasure."

*The Eagle* reported on August 13, 1948; "Matlock and Crew Digging New Shaft At Dry Pond". Accompanying the article were photographs of George Ellis (Mullin mail carrier), W. McCullough (owner of Dry Pond), J. A. Hester (local wool and mohair dealer), Charles T. Wilson (*Goldthwaite Eagle* editor), and Ernest Jones (*Brownwood Bulletin* editor), standing beside the newly opened shaft. Another photograph showing



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ancient shoring timbers and a rectangular tunnel 20 feet below the surface was included with the article.

Also located were articles dated September 2, 1954, August 20, 1948 and August 27, 1948. The articles yielded other names who were or had been involved in other searches. They included: Mr. and Mrs. Archer E. Allen and daughter, Beverly Claudette of Port Neches, Texas. Allen claimed to have a chart and information obtained in Mexico.

Mr. J. L. White who owned the old James Cook place near the Colorado River. White, Believed the remains of a Spanish mine was located on his property. Peeler Montane, known as "Mexican Peeler", claimed to have a map of a lost mine, in which San Saba Peak was one of the main bearinglines. A man named Sylvester from Austin, Texas and another man from California named Holmes used a Gold Dot Metal Detector at Dry Pond. Bill Shultz, owned property approximately two miles east of Dry Pond, on which Jim Guthrie worked for 30 years (1887-1917) digging a vast labyrinth of caves. A man named Brooks from Oklahoma searched with Guthrie and Kirkpatrick. Dutch Hollenback, a battery man named Doc, and Roach Fox found another copper box in 1932. This may have been the box found in 1932 by Stevens and Oglesby or it may have been another copper box.

A September 1954 article from the *Goldthwaite Eagle* revealed an ancient five gallon bucket that had been found by Hollenback—it was handmade of copper and iron. Benton Alldredge and Jim Rouse searched the area and found a copper box. Alldredge was from Goldthwaite and Jim Rouse was from Bowser, Texas. Alldredge said three mules were etched upon one side of the box and four mules were on the opposite side with other markings. Inside the box was a bundle of papers that crumbled into dust when the box was opened. The box turned up missing after it was sent to the University of Texas' Archaeology Department to be examined. Other treasure hunters included George Puryear, W. Stevens and T. Oglesby who searched in the 1935; and on May 29, 1950, J. W. Fisher and J. R. Latham of Del Rio Texas, used an M-Scope at the site.

In July of 1995, Noel Cleckler told the authors there was a rock 1/2 mile east of the Pond with a cross carved on it. Cleckler gave the authors photographs of the Cross Rock. One of the photos showed Ed Deavors standing beside the large boulder. The rock was standing on its edge. Cleckler also gave the authors a copy of what was on one of the copper boxes.

Later, the tracings were shown to Jim Mitchell. They compared it to a copy that Mitchell had obtained from Roach Fox. The tracings were similar, but some of the marking and symbols were different. The Cleckler document had what appeared to be three hounds on it, while the Fox/Mitchell parchment had what appeared to be a deer. Spanish writing and a cross was etched onto the copper box. "Mapa Oriental sudeste 2500 gaja fuerte mucho dinero jeados escudos vaja bjondea cuatro bjondea ocho deigratia peated Padre Lopes 1762".

The Kirkpatrick document has three figures resembling deer on two lines labeled 67 1/2. They are facing west northwest and west southwest. Townsley, Auldrige and Lynn Jones located the Cross Rock in October of 1995. The top portion of the cross pointed 45 degrees northeast of magnetic north. Jones noted in some of the photographs taken of the Cross Rock and "X" with a circle around it. Jones, a Sr. Engineering Technician for a Ft. Worth, Texas based oil company, noted Dry Pond was due north of San Antonio and thought it would be interesting to prepare a mapping grid of the Dry Pond site and other carved rock findings.



When the authors showed Jim Mitchell the Kirkpatrick map, Mitchell commented how it reminded him of the Spider Rock Maps (Three stones discovered in the late 1900's). Perhaps Mitchell was not the first to recognize a similarity, for Dr. Joe Woods (Abilene, Texas, treasure hunter, of Spider Rock fame) visited the site in the 1930's. Woods told Cleckler, he bought the searchers a "bill of groceries". Mae Featherston's, *Silver Dreams and Copper Plates*, published in the *Texas Folklore* in 1937, made reference to Mr. Woods. In the summer of 1996, Steve Wilson, Director of the Institute-Great Plains Museum, referenced similarities to the artifacts discovered with the Spider Rocks and those discovered at Dry Pond. According to Mitchell a cache of buffalo robes had been found in a natural cave north of Dry Pond.

In the summer of 1995, Mitchell spent \$4,500 drilling holes eighteen inches apart trying to intersect this tunnel. According to Mitchell, the attempts were unsuccessful. In 1959 a man from Houston, Texas, by the name of Phillips, approached Jack and J. D. McKenzie convinced there was silver bullion buried on their ranch, southeast of Goldthwaite.

In 1960, Phillips, J. D., Ben and Jack McKenzie used a D-7 Caterpillar to dig a trench to a depth of sixteen feet. According to Jack's son, Robert D. McKenzie, at the sixteen foot level they hit solid bedrock. An air compressor, jackhammer and dynamite were used to sink a shaft an additional forty-four feet. Believing they had missed the store house of bullion by thirty feet, a horizontal tunnel was started approximately twenty-five feet down in the initial trench. Concerned with safety and fearing a cave-in, the group stopped the excavations. Phillips returned to Houston with intentions of seeking someone who could shore up the trenches and tunnels. Phillips never returned to the site. Later Ben McKenzie learned he had died.

For years Ben McKenzie continued the search. South of the Jackson Bridge Crossing, on Pecan Bayou is an older crossing, where a flat bed of rocks made it easy for pack train to cross the creek. In 1914 men from the community of Chesser Valley used teams and scrapers to dig a depression on property then owned by the Chesser family. They were searching for ten burro loads of gold, that legend say was hidden when Mexicans were attacked by Indians (Hartal Langford Blackwell, Mills County—*The Way It Was*, Copyrighted 1976, Mills County Historical Commission, Published by the Eagle Press, Goldthwaite, Texas).

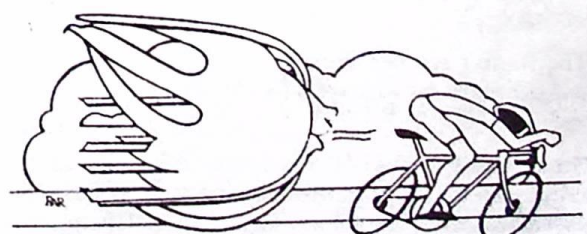
When the authors spoke with Mitchell on January 8, 1996, Mitchell said he had signed another lease agreement on January 2nd with Double O Smith. He revealed during this conversation a site west of Dry Pond, in Rannels County, where there is evidence of an area where a large group of men must have camped for an extended period of time. The site is near Ballinger, Texas.

As had been done many times in the past, our discussion with Mithcell turned to the artifacts—the copper boxes, disks, rosaries, gold crucifix, the stone markers. At least some or one, must surely still be in existence, somewhere, in an antique shop, in a box or a trunk in someone's attic or in a storage building, barn or curio cabinet. Are they still in Mills County or in California, where Dr. James Kirkpatrick's young widow moved and remarried shortly after his death? We do not have the answers to these questions. Perhaps you do. If you have any information pertaining to the perplexing Texas mystery, you are welcome to contact the authors at the following address: Bill Townsley, 22557 Waterview Cr., Flint Texas, 75762; David Aldridge, 308 Applewood Ln., Hewitt, Texas 76643

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# A VISIT TO BASTROP

by MARBYETH GRADZIEL

**B**astrop, the home of the Lost Pines and Houston Toads, was a meeting ground for the Tonkawa and other Southwest Indians long before Europeans set foot on the New World. It was an important Colorado River Crossing for Spanish adventurers on the Old San Antonio Road, El Camino Real. Stephen F. Austin found the area and decided to build a settlement here in 1821, receiving a land grant in 1827. The colony was named after Philip Hendrick Nering-Bogel, a colorful Belgian land developer who called himself The Baron De Bastrop. In the 1830s, Bastrop became the cradle of rebellion against Mexican rule. Three Bastropians signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, 11 died at the Alamo, and some 60 fought at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Today, Bastrop still has over 100 historic homes, many of them with gorgeous gingerbread trim—the settlement was just down river from early sawmills. Historic attractions include a Confederate Arms Factory, Historical Society Museum, County Courthouse & Jail, and the Old Bastrop Opera House, as well as

several fine old churches and shops. Golfers delight in two fine local courses, Pine Forest Golf Club and the new, luxurious ColoVista Country Club, both in beautiful Loblolly pine woods, as well as a number of other courses nearby.

Bastrop, like any other tourist-friendly Texas town, has an abundance of barbecue joints and other restaurants. But the best food in town, by far, can be found at the Common Ground Cafe, a new place tucked just out of town on a quiet nook of the old highway. Catherine Lewis started her cafe and natural food store just half a year ago, and it's already grown into a community gathering spot. Visitors can browse through unusual magazines, check the bulletin board, get a short in-chair massage, and shop for arts, crafts and health food supplies as well as enjoy superb healthy homestyle cooking.

Create your favorite meat/cheese or vegetarian sandwich, all on home-made bread, or choose Middle-Eastern or Mexican food, lasagna or quiche. There's a children's menu too, complete with crayons for coloring... Daily specials are always delicious,

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—Anonymous Pilgrim to New Sarov  
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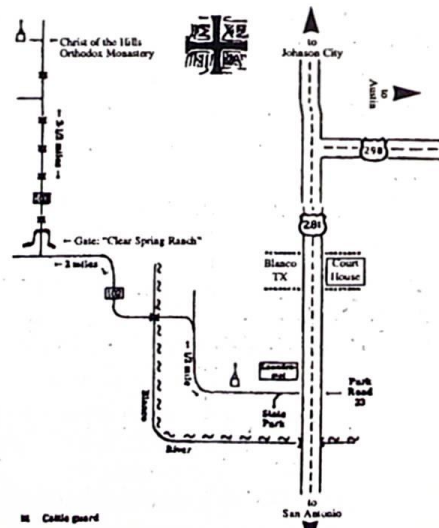
June, July, August: .....7 days per week

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Compline .....8:30 pm  
Vigil (Saturday Night) .....8:30 pm  
Sunday Divine Liturgy .....10:00 am

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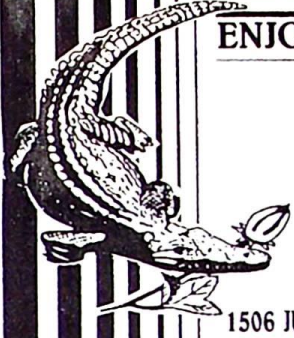
Historic attractions include a Confederate Arms Factory, Historical Society Museum, County Courthouse & Jail, and the Old Bastrop Opera House, as well as several fine old churches and shops.

such as the creamy mushroom and cheese pie with spinach crust I enjoyed, as delectable as it was original. The house salsa, made fresh daily is memorable with crisp corn chips, and home-made soups, thick with vegetable chunks, are wonderfully warming in winter weather. Super-fresh salads are made to order with a variety of enticing dressings. My choice, tahini-garlic, was yummy and, like everything else, home-made. The Common Ground serves the best coffee around, as might be expected, and do save room for dessert. Catherine's cakes are legendary, (and she's happy to cater parties as well).

Though I initially was shocked at the size of my slab of chocolate raspberry cake, I savored every crumb. There's live local music on Friday nights, Sunday brunch is sensational, and so much is happening at this little cafe that you'll just have to keep stopping in to see what's new.

The Optimum Health Institute is another new addition to the Bastrop area. In Bluebonnet Acres just west of town, this natural health care retreat center is an offshoot of the extremely popular OHI in San Diego. For less than the cost of a hotel stay, guests spend three weeks learning to develop the body's natural defenses against disease through natural foods and exercise.

All in all, Bastrop is a natural, uncrowded treasure. Only here can you hear endangered Houston toads singing entrancing mating trills from sandy ponds in piney woods on damp warm February nights. Bastrop and Buescher State Parks, with stunning stone buildings created by the 1920s Civilian Conservation Corps, are two of the most popular camping and hiking sites in the state. Lake Bastrop, Fisherman's Park, the Old Iron Bridge, and the Colorado River offer endless opportunities for outdoor activities, and countless antique stores appeal to the indoor crowd. The Old Bastrop Opera House has excellent local live theater year-round. Yesterfest, a celebration of pioneer life, and the Salinas bluebonnet art festival are both April 26, land well worth planning ahead to attend.



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# PINK GRANITE & YOUR GARDEN

by MARYBETH GRADZIEL

**P**ink granite accounts for much of our gorgeous Hill Country scenery. Back in olden days, Hill Country homesteaders also added powdered Llano pink granite to their gardens. Those pioneer farmers knew what they were doing. Local soil expert George Altgelt has found that Texas pink granite is forty percent potassium feldspar, an excellent source of potassium.

"The advantage of pink granite is that it doesn't overwhelm the soil with potassium. It is broken down slowly, but it is constantly being released. The carbon dioxide which is exhaled by the microorganisms combines with rainwater to form a weak carbonic acid which breaks down the potassium feldspar. Soils with granite tend to hold their pH even when watered with alkaline city water."

The granite also has interesting para-magnetic qualities: it picks up twelve cycles per second in the radio band and rebroadcasts it. Altgelt found that plant roots develop using this frequency, and that it is the same frequency used by traumatized flesh to heal.

Altgelt studied biology at the University of Texas, then, became a partner in Austin's first organic nursery, The Jungle Store from

1971-78. There he created Amazon River Basin Potting Soil, the first potting soil into which especially-selected microbes were deliberately inserted. He also experimented with adding rock powders and minerals into his soil mixtures, and discovered the value of powdered pink granite. He opened GeoGrowers a couple of years ago, selling microbially-activated, para-magnetic organic composted soil — small mountains of black gold piled behind Hill Country Herbs just east of the Oak Hill "Y" on Hwys 290 & 71.

"Last year, my Brussels sprouts lived all the way into the summer and did not attract harlequin beetles," Altgelt explains. "The only way you can account for that is that the granite, with its twelve-cycles-per second, has facilitated excellent plant sap circulation. I'm going to keep them going and see how they do."

George Altgelt is always happy to help anyone grow a better garden. He's been featured several times on Cecilia Nasti's *Growing Concerns* radio show and now writes a soon-to-be syndicated gardening column: Roger Rototiller. "I recommend that people grow all kinds of peas. Peas need soil rich in calcium. The NPK minerals are important, yes. However, if you neglect the calcium side of the equation for fertile soil, you will have undermined your corps' productivity and vitality," George adds, "it's important to have your soil rich in trace minerals. Abundant trace minerals can be supplied by compost and pulverized rock powders. Rock powders are good sources of both major and minor plant nutrients. All your greens, radishes, garlic, onions, parsley, shallots, turnips, beets, and carrots can be planted now. Even ornamental Kale is edible, and delicious when steamed."

Happy Gardening, and don't forget the Llano pink granite!

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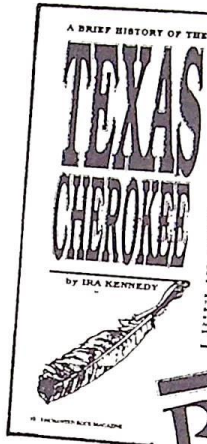
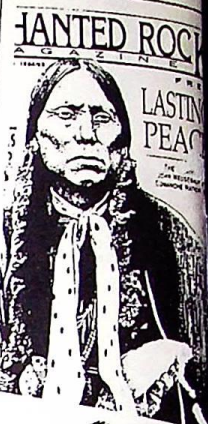
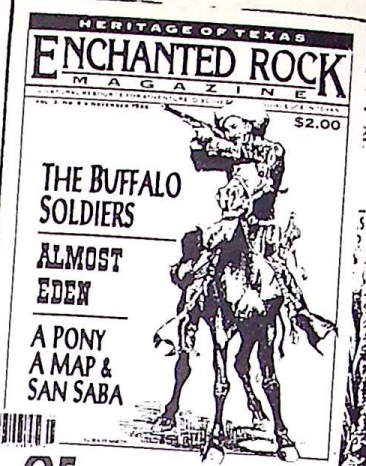
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ON A QUEST FOR LOST SOULS AND SILVER MINES THE SPANIARDS VENTURED INTO THE HILL COUNTRY OF TEXAS ON THE BANKS OF THE SAN SABA RIVER THEY FOUND A SETTLEMENT ONLY TO BE BETRAYED BY THE SOULS THEY CAME TO HAVE AND LOSE THE MINE SOME SAY THEY FOUND



Since the 1700's scores of abandoned or lost Spanish mines and treasure in San Saba and adjacent counties have lured the imaginations of thousands of treasure seekers. The following items, from the San Saba News, cover well the excitement these seekers go through around the turn of the century.

...the hill country...  
...the hill country...  
...the hill country...