

TEXAS ★ HISTORY & ADVENTURE

# ENCHANTED ROCK

MAGAZINE

VOL. 4, NO. 8  
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1997

\$2.00

PULL-OUT  
2-MAP INSERT

## SECOND BATTLE OF THE ALAMO

A Damn Yankee  
Comes to  
Leon County

## THE ELECTRA MONOPLANE

THE TEXAS NAVY



**CLARA DRISCOLL**  
BY IRA KENNEDY



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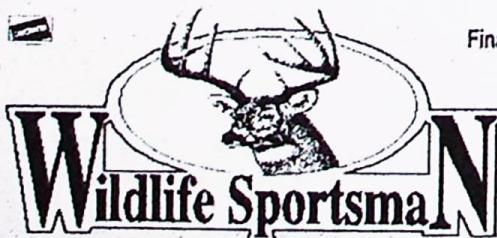
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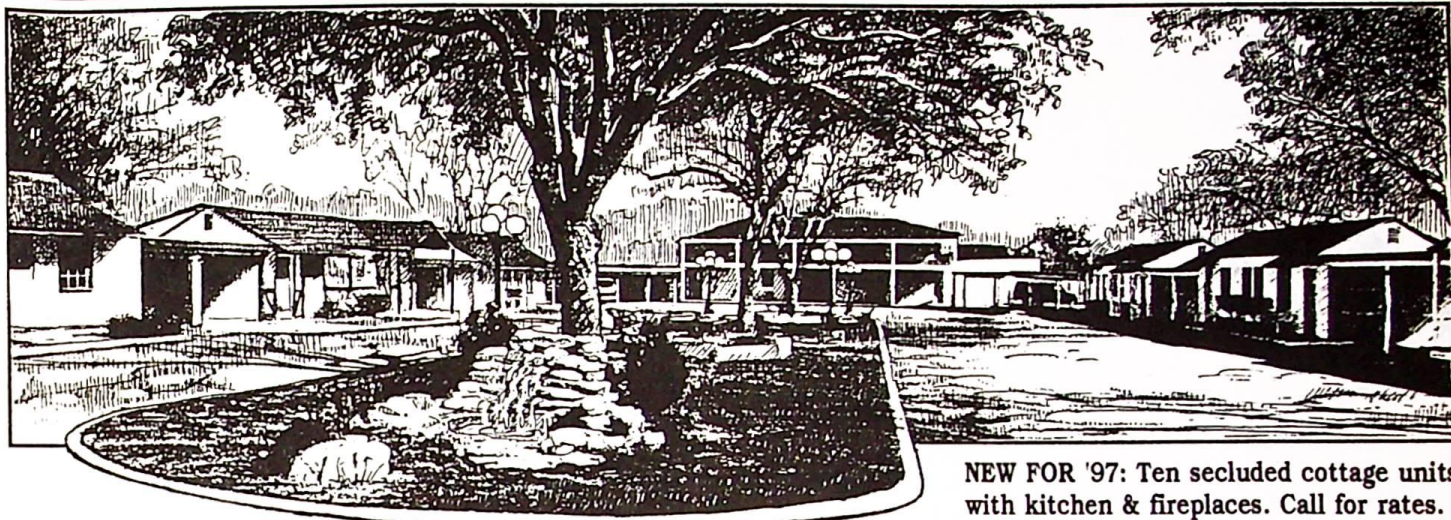


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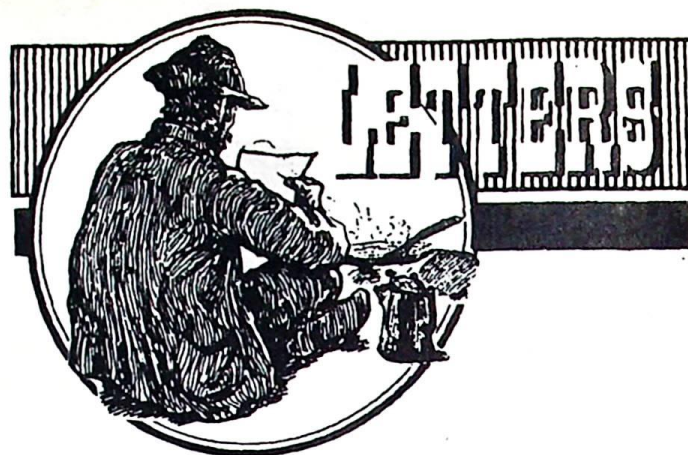
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## RETURN OF THE JAGUARUNDI

I have seen your publication at the Dutch mountain and Pecan Creek Guest Lodges, managed by Gene Reagor. She keeps copies in each lodge and her Bed & Breakfast. I was hooked immediately!

After losing our 45 year, year-round family deer lease on the old Bar-O Ranch (off of Hwy. 16 at Oxford) a few years ago, we were completely lost, without a place to come and rejuvenate ourselves and enjoy nature at it's best. I grew up around Big Sandy Creek and Graze Mountain and my children did the same. The late owner, Mr. Mark Moss, was like a Grandfather to me all of those years. He used to take me to his prized "Turkey Knob" pasture, in his old Model T, and show me his "new" animals from all over the world. I grew up listening to his stories. He also showed me his own "Indian Burial Ground", as he called it, just up from Big Sandy.

I don't really think it's a burial ground, but there are many mortar and grinding holes, lots of flint chips, some very unusual round, ground level holes (in solid rock), that are at least two and one half to three foot deep or more and at least twelve to eighteen inches in diameter. I thought perhaps they were old wells, but boy would I like to find out what they are.

We also had been excitedly witnessing cougars coming back to the ranch. I saw a few when I was very young in the 50's but didn't see another until about 1985. After that we saw them at least once a year, in the same rough valley—not too far from Watch Mountain. We were so excited about them and very, very protective of them. We never even told the foreman of the ranch—I was afraid he'd think we were crazy—and he was a good friend of the family.

We can still get into the ranch, when it is out of season—for the old foreman's family has known us for many years, and knows what the land means to my family. We go out there every trip. Dr. Buttery inadvertently broke our hearts when he went up so high on the lease, after all those years. (I personally think that old Mr. Moss was rolling over in his grave when we were forced out by a monetary issue.) But I guess that is the fact of life.

Quite by accident, I met Gene Reagor who owns Dutch Mountain Ranch, just across from our old stomping grounds. After visiting on the phone, I realized that she was Mr. Moss' great niece. We have become quite good friends.

Another tidbit of information for you that we were very thrilled about is our sighting of a jaguarundi in March 1996, as

we left Dutch Mountain. He crossed right in front of us going from the hills over to McDavid's place. It was 3:00 PM and we watched him going through the brush for at least ten minutes. I was sick that I had already packed the camera away. He had the unmistakable 'flat' type panther head and long wavy tail. Not very big—but stocky and muscular. It looked like a miniature black panther.

I had seen one about sixteen years ago while hunting on Turkey Knob. It went through the brush around a man made dike over towards Inks place. Only then, I had no idea what it was. That same trip, I was at a gathering for hunters on various Bar-O leases and two other hunters reported seeing a small black cat that looked like a miniature panther. We then compared notes and began researching as to what it was. The following spring we saw one near the highway, between Cherokee and San Saba—same unmistakable characteristics.

I have been pondering the idea of letting Mr. McDavid know what to watch for and for him to make sure no one tries to shoot one. It's so neat to know that many magnificent wild creatures are coming back to the Hill Country.

Well, I've rambled on enough. I wish you great success and thank you for sharing your information with all of us who love the Llano area so much.

Sincerely,  
Pam Moorman  
Arlington, Texas

## FIRST ONE THING, THEN ANOTHER

A Note To ER Readers Who Know Texas' Geography,  
Re: "The Werewolf Of Devil's River"

The Devil's River runs into the Rio Grande, *not* the Pecos. I've crossed it enough times to know, by car, pickup, train, and once, back before Amistad Lake, on a jugheaded *Trigueno* gelding. When I saw "above its junction with the Pecos" in the story, I was prepared to say something to Ira and Miz Intrepid about a knowledge of Texas' geography being somewhat of an essential in editing stories about Texas. I even went to the wonderful magic writebox and pulled up the page with "junction with the *Rio Grande*" on it to mail it to Ira to emphasize the point.

Trouble was, when I pulled up the original it didn't say "junction with the Rio Grande." It said "junction with the *Pecos*." It wasn't Ira's or Miz Intrepid's fault, it was my very own, what I done all by my ownself without no help from nobody. They always told me my mind would be the first thing to go...

Charley (C. F. Eckhardt)  
Seguin, Texas

## WELCOME

We extend our welcome this month to new subscribers in Woodland, GA; Evergreen, CO; Colorado Springs, CO; La Cresenta, CA; and Baytown, Beaumont, San Antonio, Bobstown, Bluffton, Georgetown (2), Llano (3), Austin (5), Midland, Menard, Odessa, Plano, and El Paso, Texas.

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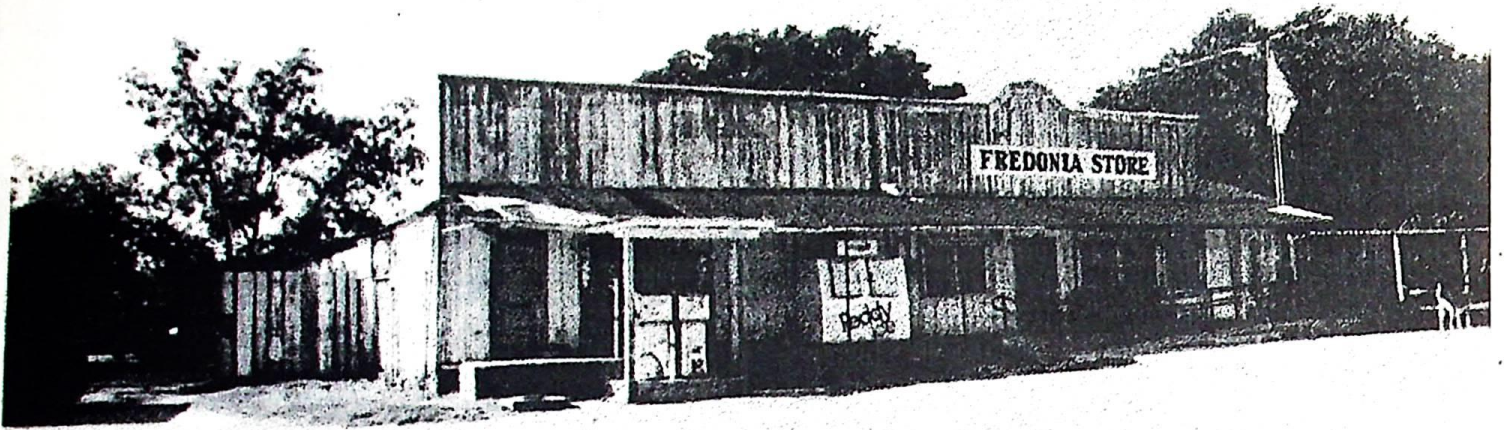
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# SEVENTY-ONE YEARS IN TEXAS



**BY T.M. KNATCHER**  
FREDONIA, TEXAS

WRITTEN BY HIS GRANDDAUGHTER, VIVIAN KEESE, MEDINA, TEXAS.  
PUBLISHED IN THE *FRONTIER TIMES* MAGAZINE, NOV. 1927  
REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM WESTERN PUBLICATIONS.

Thomas Knatcher worked his way around Texas. He hired on at a cotton gin and lumber mill, he hauled freight with a team of five yoke of oxen, and rode with several outfits as a cowhand. He lived in over twenty-two Texas communities in 71 years before he settled down in Fredonia, Mason County, Texas.

**I** was born in Karnes County, Texas seven miles below Helena, on the San Antonio River, October 2, 1856. My father, Jim Knatcher was a blacksmith and wheelwright and moved from Karnes County to Gonzales County in 1857, locating at Big Hill post office. Here we lived until after the Civil War, then moved to Hope, Lavaca County, and from there to Morales in Jackson County.

My first work for myself was driving a horse power cotton gin, in 1868. Later, I carried the mail from Morales to Hallettsville. In 1871, I began riding after stock for White and Adkinson, who put up a herd of 2500 head of cattle and started them up the trail. We got as far as Fort Worth and sold the herd and I came back to the ranch and worked the rest of the year.

In the spring of 1872, I began working for the Traller brothers. This was the wettest year I ever saw. We gathered the herd of 2500 cattle and started with them and when we reached Davis' Store on Red River, Downin Ward, myself and 2 negro boys went back to Austin to meet another herd which was to

have been started a month later. When we got to Austin we could hear nothing of the cattle, so we went to the ranch and found the herd had never started.

In 1873, I went with Bill Terrell and Frank Millby into the San Patricio and Nueces Counties, to the mouth of the Nueces River to skin dead cattle, which had died during a severe drought. The dead cattle were lying so thick you could walk on their bodies for half a mile without touching the ground. Many hundreds of cattle were starved to death in that section during that awful drought.

In 1874, I began driving a team of 5 yoke of oxen, hauling lumber from Austin to Prairie Lea. Luling was then beginning to start up and I hauled the first loads of lumber that started the town of Luling. We hauled the lumber from Waelder for Josey and Styne. Next, I hauled lumber from Austin to San Antonio.

In January 1875, I went to Uvalde County and began working on a ranch for the Wimberley brothers, between the Nueces

and Rio Grande Rivers. I helped to round and brand several herds that were sent up the trail and I did not go along. These Wimberley brothers moved to Wimberley in Hays County and bought stock in Blanco County and I stayed and worked on the ranch for the Bates brothers. We put up a herd of 2000 cattle and delivered them at White Bluff, at the mouth of the Nueces canyon to a man from the north who knew very little about cattle. It came a very heavy rainstorm and caused the cattle to stampede and we had a very hard time getting them rounded up again. This man wore a cap, and some of us boys decided to have some fun at his expense, so at the first opportunity we had we stole that cap.

The man thought it had blown away during the storm and he went around bare headed for days. Finis Bates suggested that some of the boys make him a cap out of moss, and this was done, and he wore the buzzards nest looking thing for several days until one of the boys brought forth an old flopped hat and gave it to him.

As the days began to grow cold and dreary. I went back home to Wimberley and remained there for a short time, working for my old employers. the Wimberley brothers. Later. I went back to the old cow range and worked for Bailus Bates and Lum Akers near Uvalde. Lum Akers, who was a one armed man, was a fine cowman and gentleman. I have not seen him since 1876. We went down to a ranch at the mouth of the Rio Grande and received cattle these men had bought and when we got back to the ranch, we had 3800 in the herd. Mr. Bates bought 40 Spanish ponies and had them ready for us, and next day the flu' began, the boss roped and led out every man's mount and it seemed to me that he had selected the worst in the lot for me. I saddled him and got on, but I never stayed very long. Being

a little foolish French boy, I had no better sense than to try again. We started up the trail and went up the Frio to the head of the divide between the Frio and Nueces, and on to the head of the Llano and San Saba Rivers. We camped one night there where Rocksprings now stands. There was only a sheep camp there then. We went out by Fort McKavett, over to the Brady, and ranged our cattle within a mile of where Eden now stands. This was in 1876, and there were only 2 families living in that section, Riley Gordon and Ben Hardin. I remained there until late December and went back to Hays County to spend Christmas. Then I went to Gillespie County, where Willow City now stands to visit Uncle Ben Weed. The next spring I worked for George Riley and Polios, rounded up a herd and delivered them at Big Flat, Llano County.

In 1878, I was married to Miss Tursa Leach of Gillespie County. She was born January 1, 1857 (the first day of the week, the first day of the month, and first day of the year). To us were born 9 children, 6 girls and 3 boys, 6 of whom are living.

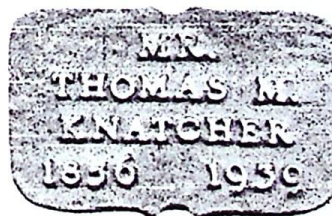
being Mrs. Lizzie Keese of Pontotoc. Texas; Mrs. S. A. Keese of Medina, Texas; Mrs. Hattie Humphreys of Mason, Texas; Mrs. Oleva Holt of San Angelo, Texas; T. B. Knatcher of Houston, Texas; and W.H. Knatcher of Fredonia, Texas. My first move from Gillespie County was to Hays County, then back to Willow City, where I began to farm, from 1879 to 1883. Then we moved to Big Foot in Frio County, also Pearsall and left there in 1886.

The last work I did was working stock for Blocker, Griskler and Davis. I went from Pearsall to Uvalde with Ab Blocker as boss with 3300 cattle. About 9000 cattle were received in Frio County in 1886. I quit the herd at Uvalde and started home. I left camp at day-break and reached home about dark, traveling a distance of about 100 miles on horseback. My horse was a dandy saddle pony and seemed to be as anxious to get home as I was.

From 1887 to 1888, I lived at Hunter, Texas. In 1889. We lived at Somerset in Atascosa County, next moving to Bexar County and then to Lytle. Ten years later. I moved to Bandera County and lived there 16 years. In 1911, I moved and located in Mason County, near Fredonia, and have lived here on Jennings Farm 16 years, renting from Jim and Mike Jennings, men of honor and principle. My father, Jim Knatcher, was born in Kentucky. His parents with 3 children, 2 boys and a girl came over from France. The girl soon married and returned to France. The 2 brothers, Morgan and Jim Knatcher, went to Galveston Island, where Morgan joined a surveying company and helped survey the Northwestern states. The 2 brothers never met again. Jim Knatcher was married to Miss Louisa Williams at

Gonzales in 1850. My mother was born in Jasper County. She was a French creole. There were 6 children born; Jane, Annie, Tom, Louisa, Hester and Mat. Only two are now living, my youngest sister, Mrs. Hester Sinks of Miguel, Frio County, and myself.

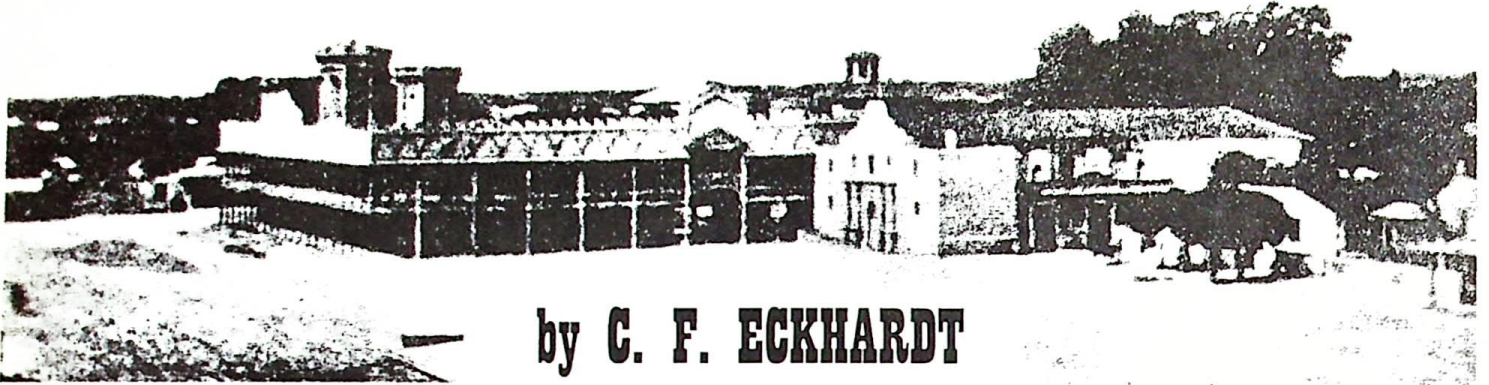
If any of the old boys who worked on the ranches, or others remember me, I would be very glad to see them.



Photos: Top left: Fredonia General Store at it appears today. The local postoffice was moved to this building in 1889. Although the store recently closed, the postoffice is still in operation. Photo. Ira Kennedy.

Above: Thomas and Tursa Knatcher. Photo courtesy Bill Wooten. Left, plaque on Knatcher's gravestone.

# THE SECOND BATTLE OF THE ALAMO



by C. F. ECKHARDT

Educated back East at Miss Peebles and Thompson's School in New York, and later at a French convent on the outskirts of Paris, Clara Driscoll returned to Texas with a sense of style and a knack for politics. She donated Laguna Gloria to the Texas Fine Arts Association, and established a children's hospital in Corpus Christi, and saved the Alamo from ruin.

I don't like to write about the Alamo. It's not that I don't understand and admire its significance, the great symbol it is for Texans—I can't read Travis's letter on the wall there without my eyes blurring, and I know what a first-water (expletive deleted) he was in his personal life. Still, *everybody* has written about the Battle of the Alamo. I've read the stories and the research histories—the two best I've ever found are Walter Lord's *A Time To Stand* and John Myers' *The Alamo*, neither of which, incidentally was written by a native Texan. I've read the best Alamo novel ever—Lon Tinkle's *Thirteen Days To Glory*, which was the basis for the John Wayne movie, *The Alamo*. One, called *The Blazing Dawn*, was written by a native Texan, James Wakefield Burke. The other, W. O. Stoddard's *The Gold Of The Montezumas*, written early in this century, is the apparent source book for those who insist there is a great horde of gold hidden somewhere around Alamo Plaza.

But what about the Alamo? Not the symbol or the fight, but the building itself? What's happened to the physical basis of the Shrine of Texas Liberty in the last 161 years? I'm going to write about the Alamo—not the battle, but that stone building in downtown San Antonio—and how we treated it at first, how we almost lost it forever, who saved it and how, why we still have it, and who we have to thank for that.

What we see today in downtown San Antonio is not the Mission San Antonio de Valero, but merely the mission's chapel and a portion of another structure, which we now call 'the Long Barracks'. All the walls around the Alamo, all the pathways, the gift shop, the library—all are 19th or 20th century constructions. The original mission's plaza took in most of the land surrounding the site. The west wall of the mission's compound was located where the back walls of the business buildings across Alamo Plaza are now. James Bowie died in a

small room built into the now-destroyed south wall, near where the gazebo in Alamo Plaza now stands. Travis apparently died somewhere near the Cenotaph. The ground in front of the Alamo chapel—that structure we call the Alamo—is soaked with the blood of the men who died in that battle, both Texans and Mexicans.

On the morning of March 7, 1836, the Alamo mission's chapel and compound were a gutted, smoking ruin. The chapel itself was roofless, its bell-towers were gone, its walls had gaping holes from Mexican artillery. Santa Anna, not wishing a shrine to the 240 odd men who died there, ordered the ruin razed—not a single stone to be left atop another.

The ruin was not razed. In spite of direct orders from Santa Anna, the walls of the Alamo chapel were left standing. Not that there was much there—the facade was badly damaged and crumbling, the walls in many places were no more than head high on a tall man. Still, Santa Anna gave a direct order—'Knock down the walls!'—and it wasn't done. Why not?

Nowhere in records, Texan or Mexican, will you find that Santa Anna rescinded the order to knock down the walls. Nowhere will you find any explanation for why the order was ignored. Still, when Santa Anna's troops marched out of San Antonio in pursuit of the rabble Sam Houston was trying to turn into a fighting force, the battered walls of the Alamo chapel were still standing.

Where we do not have records we have stories. The stories—from Mexican sources as well as from San Antonio—say Santa Anna's engineers and sappers went to the chapel to carry out the orders—and turned tail and ran. According to those stories they saw something—perhaps several some-

Above: The Alamo Plaza circa 1892 shows the Hugo & Schmeltzer Building is to the left of the Alamo Chapel. Right: Clara Driscoll by Ira Kennedy.

things—standing guard over the walls. What they saw, they described as ‘glowing men with flaming swords’.

Maybe it’s just an old ghost story somebody made up. Maybe the guys who were sent to tear down the walls went to the cantina instead, and after too much mescal and what was left of the powerful gringo whiskey, they couldn’t tear the walls down. Maybe so. But look at the description of what they said they saw. ‘Glowing men with flaming swords.’ Where have you seen that before? Isn’t it a pretty close approximation of the description of guardian or avenging angels in both Christian and Jewish lore? Maybe they weren’t seeing things, after all.

Guardian angels may have protected the Alamo’s walls from Santa Anna’s engineers, but they seem to have been sent off on other assignments shortly afterwards—or perhaps they felt the Alamo’s walls shouldn’t need protection from the physical and spiritual heirs of the men who died defending them. During the ten years of the Texas Republic, the Shrine of Texas Liberty was *not* treated with reverence. The mission was built of cut limestone—already cut and just lying around, and nobody was using it. Much of that stone was cannibalized to build other buildings in San Antonio. The outer walls of the compound disappeared entirely, as did the gates and gateposts. Jim Bowie’s death room was carried away piece by piece, and no one today can say where the stones that took his blood are sited. Eventually the two mostly intact buildings, the ‘long barracks’ and the chapel itself, began to disappear piece by piece.

By the time Texas was annexed to the US, the facade of the chapel was a total shambles and the rest of the walls were perhaps waist-high on a grown man. Then the US Army came to San Antonio, which became the headquarters of the Department of Texas. Uncle Sam wanted a storehouse—a warehouse—in which to store grain and supplies, and there wasn’t one available. There was, however, right north of the main part of town, that old ruin which, with work, could be restored and used. The army took over the ruin of the chapel and rebuilt the walls, then reroofed it. The present facade of the Alamo—the step and arch profile that’s recognized the world over—is not the one that was there in 1836. At that time the chapel had a flat top and a bell tower at each of the two west-side corners. What we recognize as ‘the Alamo’ was built by the US Corps of engineers in the 1840’s. That distinctive shape that has graced and identified, among other things, the Alamo motel in North Augusta, South Carolina to a lonely Texas kid, Charley Eckhardt, back in 1961 while he was assigned for training to Fort Gordon, just outside Augusta, Georgia, across the state line from North Augusta—and it made that lonely Texan a long way from home, whose fiancée had just dear-johned him, feel a little more comfortable—was entirely unknown to Buck Travis and Jim Bowie.

By the 1870’s the Army had pretty much outgrown its downtown headquarters and was moving operations to the newly-established Fort Sam Houston, far to the north along the New Braunfels road, entirely outside San Antonio itself. It no longer needed its storehouse with the peculiar roof line. At

## In 1903 Clara Driscoll was simply a wide-eyed young lady, crusading for the preservation of what has become the single most widely-visited historical site in Texas.



that point controversy enters the story, because nobody knew, for sure, who owned the chapel, which continued in use as a warehouse by a local merchant. By the 1890’s it was being to some extent exploited as a tourist attraction—“Yeah, folks—that fight went on right there in my warehouse”—but tourism was not big business. A frame retail store adjoined the stone building, and there certainly was no reverential treatment of what some called ‘an eyesore of an old pile of rocks’.

The army occupied the old chapel as its warehouse until the opening of Fort Sam Houston in 1876. At the time there was some question as to the ownership of the chapel. Both the city of San Antonio and the Roman Catholic Church’s Archdiocese of Texas claimed it. There was considerable litigation over title to the old chapel, and eventually courts decided in favor of the Catholic Church. The state of Texas bought the chapel itself and the ground it stood on—but no more—from the Archdiocese of Texas. All the rest of the land surrounding the Alamo chapel—the land on which the battle was actually fought—passed into private hands.

Texas didn’t do much with the chapel—there was no restoration, no effort even to preserve the crumbling walls. It was just there, Texas owned it, and that was it. Title to much of the land north of the chapel, where the old convento (now called the Long Barracks) stood, was held, in the 1890’s, by Hugo & Schmeltzer, a firm of wholesale merchants. They had a huge frame warehouse and salesroom built adjacent to the Alamo chapel, and at least some of their offices were located in the old convento.

In 1903 Hugo & Schmeltzer was closing down for good and selling off its assets—and one of the assets up for sale was the land to the north of the Alamo chapel. About three years earlier a young woman named Clara Driscoll, whose grandfather, Daniel Driscoll, was a San Jacinto veteran, returned to Texas after having spent seven years in school in Europe. Clara, in Europe, was impressed with the way Europeans preserved and protected their historical sites, and when she saw the condition of the Alamo chapel and the land on which the Alamo battle was fought, she was furious. She began a letter writing campaign to newspapers around the state, the stated objective being the preservation of the Alamo and as much of its grounds as possible. She joined the DeZavala Chapter of the Daugh-

ters of the Republic of Texas in San Antonio and immediately began campaigning to acquire the Hugo & Schmeltzer property to add to the Alamo chapel, in order to begin the proper preservation of the Shrine of Texas Liberty.

**N**ow, Clara was a salty ol' gal, there's more than rumor that she liked her nip—or several of them. She lived much of her later life in and around Corpus Christi, and at one time—now demolished—there was a luxurious hotel called the White Plaza 'on the bluff' in Corpus Christi, overlooking the bay. Clara and several cohorts tried to check into the White Plaza one night—and were refused registration because they were, quite frankly, stewed to the ears and the management thought they'd disturb the other guests.

"By God," said Clara, "I'll build a hotel right next to your hotel, an' it'll be bigger an' finer'n your hotel, an' when I get it finished I'll spit on your damn hotel." (For the record, she didn't say 'spit', but that's what the tour guides have to say she said.) She built the hotel, incidentally—the Driscoll—right next door to the White Plaza. At the top of the Driscoll, attached to the old penthouse, was a projection that overhung the roof of the White Plaza. It was from that projection, they say, that Clara did what she said she'd do on the White Plaza—and she didn't say 'spit'.

That was a long time later—in 1903 Clara Driscoll was simply a wide-eyed young lady, crusading for the preservation of what has become the single most widely-visited historical site in Texas and one of the most widely-visited in the US. She and members of the DeZavala, DRT, approached Hugo & Schmeltzer about selling the property adjacent to and directly north of the Alamo chapel.

"Sure," said Hugo & Schmeltzer. "You got seventy-five thousand bucks?"

The DeZavala Chapter of the DRT didn't have \$75,000, and Hugo & Schmeltzer was demanding \$5,000 for a one-year option on the property, with an additional \$20,000 to be paid when the option expired and five annual installments of \$10,000 at 6% interest would be paid over the next five years. The DeZavala Chapter—and the DRT—immediately set about to raise the option money.

Almost immediately a new player entered the game. An eastern syndicate wanted to buy the Hugo & Schmeltzer property for a hotel, and it was offering better than \$5,000 for a year's option. Clara, together with Judge James B. Wells of Brownsville and Floyd McGown of San Antonio went directly to Charles Hugo, the surviving partner of Hugo & Schmeltzer, to try to preserve the property for Texas. Hugo agreed to give a 30 day option on the property for \$500, cash on the barrel right then, and an additional \$4,500 to be paid in about 11 months. Clara reached in her purse, pulled out her checkbook, and wrote the \$500 check that ultimately preserved the grounds of the Alamo as they are today.

The DeZavala Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas immediately called for a statewide appeal to raise the needed \$4,500 by April 17, 1903—the date the 30 day option expired. Though the legislature was in session, it declined to appropriate the money to pick up the option. The DRT sent a delegation to the legislature—Clara Driscoll headed it—and an amendment was placed on an appropriations bill to provide the \$5,000 to pick up the option and reimburse Clara her \$500.

Before the appropriations bill could pass the time ran out on the 30 day option. Rather than lose the property to the

eastern syndicate, Clara pulled out her trusty checkbook again and put up the remaining \$4,500. The property was safe for a year, and the ladies waited for the legislature to act. The bill passed—but Governor S. W. T. Lanham vetoed it. Clara was out \$5,000 and there was no guarantee the Daughters could raise the \$20,000 that would be due in a year, much less the \$10,000 a year for the next five years—plus interest—to complete the purchase.

By February 10, 1904, the DRT had managed to raise \$5,666.23. The option was expiring and the eastern syndicate was sitting in the wings with the money to buy the property for cash. Out came Clara's checkbook again, and she wrote a check for \$14,333.77 to cinch the sale. She also signed, in her own name, five notes for \$10,000 each at 6% per annum to complete the payment. She was now obligated for another \$50,000 plus interest, in addition to taxes and insurance on the property—all for 'an unsightly old pile of rocks'. The deed of transfer included the words "this property is purchased by Clara Driscoll for the use and benefit of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, to be used by them for the purpose of making a park about the Alamo, and for no other purpose."

There's something peculiar about Texans—we love a fighter. Our history—and our legends—are full of one man—and one woman—fights for what the fighter thought was right. Clara's fight to preserve the land around the old chapel in San Antonio brought an immediate outpouring from the state. Money rolled in—and so did sympathy. By August of 1904 the Democratic state convention made the purchase of the Alamo property a plank in the party's platform. On January 26, 1905, the 29th legislature appropriated \$65,000 to complete the purchase of the Alamo property, and Governor Lanham signed the bill. The bill also provided that the Daughters of the Republic of Texas should be custodians of the property. Clara formally transferred the property to the State of Texas, and Governor Lanham conveyed custody of the property to the DRT. Just in case you consider the funds don't quite add up, the DRT had already raised \$10,000, which it kicked in—and yes, Clara got her \$19,333.77 back, but without interest.

The initial purchases that would ultimately expand the Alamo property into the park we know in downtown San Antonio today had been made, but at a terrific cost. The DRT as an organization, was very nearly broke, and Clara Driscoll's magic checkbook had taken a terrific beating. The very last thing the DRT needed in connection with the Alamo was an internal squabble—the sort of thing that would cause the doomsayers of Texas, of which the state has never had a dearth, to say things like 'see, those derned ol' women can't even get 'long amongst themselves. How're they gonna run the Alamo?' Unfortunately, that's just what they got.

Probably the single most tireless worker for the preservation of the Alamo's old convent, today known as 'The Long Barracks'—outside of Clara Driscoll and her magic checkbook—was Adina de Zavala of San Antonio. Adina de Zavala was the president of the De Zavala Chapter of the DRT, one of the earliest DRT chapters organized, and it was named for her direct ancestor, Lorenzo de Zavala, the first vice president of the Republic of Texas and the man who could, without much exaggeration, be called the father of public education in Texas. She worked at least as hard if not harder than Clara Driscoll, persuading and lobbying, to get the Alamo's grounds and surviving structures preserved, but she simply didn't command the one thing the DRT desperately needed—and Clara had. In

spite of all other efforts, if Clara Driscoll hadn't come up with the money at the time it was needed, there would be no Alamo park today.

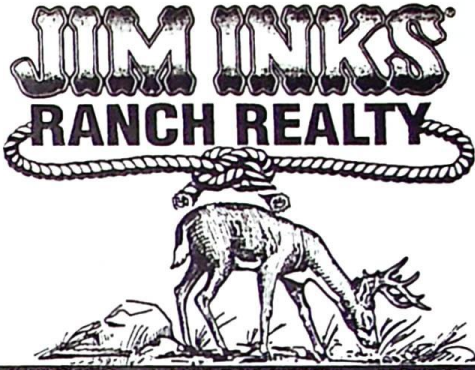
**A**dina de Zavala's contribution to the saving of the Alamo should never be belittled, for she did much. Unfortunately, she also assumed much. Somehow she became obsessed with the idea that the Alamo park and its management were the prerogative of the De Zavala Chapter, DRT, and not of the organization as a whole, and in particular that Adina de Zavala possessed—in her own words—the “divine right” to manage the Alamo. The result was a comedy that, like all great comedies, held within it the elements of tragedy.

On October 4, 1905, Governor Lanham, by official letter, formally transferred possession of the Alamo and the grounds to the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, “To be maintained by them in good order and repair, without charge to the state, as a sacred memorial to the heroes who immolated themselves upon that hallowed ground; and by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas to be maintained or remodeled upon plans adopted by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, approved by the Governor of Texas; provided that no changes or alterations shall be made in the Alamo Church property as it now stands, except such as are necessary for its preservation...” Upon receipt of this letter the President General of the organization, Mrs. Anson Jones, widow of the Republic's last president, and the chairwoman of the DRT's executive committee, appointed Clara Driscoll temporary local custodian of the Alamo church and surrounding property. Adina de Zavala promptly went ballistic.

Immediately she went to the mayor of San Antonio and represented herself as the duly-appointed custodian of the property. The mayor, not knowing she wasn't gave her the keys to the Alamo church—which she promptly locked to keep Clara Driscoll or her associates from entering it. During the fight to preserve the Alamo property a lot of relics had surfaced across Texas—and the US—that were associated with Alamo defenders. Most of these had been sent to the DRT in care of the De Zavala Chapter because, at the time, the De Zavala Chapter was the unofficial but only practical custodian of them. Adina de Zavala proceeded to strip the Alamo chapel of almost all the donated or loaned relics, claiming them to be the property of the De Zavala Chapter and not of the DRT as a whole.

Clara was the appointed custodian, but Adina had the keys—and the relics. The state conveyed the property to the DRT as of October 4, 1905, but it wasn't until the DRT filed a civil action against Adina that she surrendered the keys to Clara on November 13. Now Clara had the chapel, but Hugo & Schmeltzer still had the old Convento. Over the next two years Adina de Zavala made life miserable for everyone concerned with the Alamo project, so thoroughly disrupting the 1907 convention of the organization that it was forced to adjourn *sine die* without accomplishing anything at all. Clara Driscoll, who was a member of the De Zavala Chapter herself, became so disgusted with the whole mess that she resigned from the organization.

In the meantime factions formed, as they will in any dispute, and charges began to fly. One of the charges leveled by Adina's faction was that the DRT as a whole planned not on tearing down the frame Hugo & Schmeltzer building at all, but on opening it as a saloon and vaudeville house, including—horror above horrors—women dancing in short skirts with their



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legs bare. This, the rumor-mill insisted, would never happen if the 'rightful custodians' of the Alamo, Adina de Zavala, and the De Zavala Chapter, were in charge. The thing finally reached such an absurd level that, on April 20, 1907, the attorney general of Texas, R. V. Davidson, was compelled to issue a three-paragraph opinion stating that the duly-elected executive committee of the DRT—not Adina de Zavala's rump-convention executive committee—was the only body authorized by the Legislature to "demand and receive and receipt for rents and profits of the (Alamo) property." The opinion went on the state that the Legislative act "places the care, control and custody of this property in the hands of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, as a State organization, and not in the care, control and custody of any one of the chapters of the organization." Even the attorney general's opinion didn't stop Adina's monomaniac attempts to seize control of the Alamo, and finally, on July 20, the main body of the DRT managed to get an injunction to get her out and get the relics back.

Adina wasn't quite finished. In February of 1908 the Hugo & Schmeltzer building was at last being vacated. Without the knowledge of Hugo & Schmeltzer, Adina de Zavala managed to get into the building. With the help from someone—still unnamed—she changed all the locks and literally barricaded herself in the building. At midnight on February 10/11 the possession passed legally to the DRT, and at that time Miss Emma K. Burleson, the DRT's appointed representative, two other DRT members, Judge J. E. Webb, the DRT's attorney and the Bexar County Sheriff all went to the old frame structure to take legal possession. The doors were locked and barred from the inside, and a man inside refused to open them.

Apparently Judge Webb had been expecting this, because he came prepared—with an ax. In the presence of the three ladies and the county sheriff he applied it to the door, and the party entered just in time to see the man disappear up the stairs. They chased him and caught him on the second floor. He was asked who was in the building with him, and replied "No one."

Lots of people knew Adina de Zavala had gone in the building but nobody saw her leave, so Sheriff Tobin had a look around. He found her on her hands and knees, hiding under a desk. He took out a copy of the injunction to read aloud in her presence, at which point Miss Burleson's report says "she put her fingers in her ears and refused to listen." Adina refused to leave as well, and the sheriff declared he had to have a court order to eject her forcibly.

As soon as the standoff became public knowledge the newspapers, of course, had a field day. In a masterful demonstration of the accuracy of news reporting, one Texas paper reported that Adina de Zavala had barricaded herself "in the very room where James Bowie died"—which had been torn down and lost nearly fifty years before. Newspaper reports—fueled by Adina herself and her associates—told of her "parched lips" and "starving countenance", and alleged that she was only allowed to sip coffee through an aperture in a door, the cup being held outside the door by whatever the early 20th century newspaper epithet for 'member of a goon squad' happened to be.

In fact, the 'goon squad' was made up of two Bexar County deputy sheriffs, W. T. Ingle and Nat Harlan. Those two unfortunates were the target for every calumny a headline seeker could pile on them, and all they were trying to do was maintain an official presence in the building and see to it that nobody went nuts and torched the place. They guarded the Hugo

& Schmeltzer building—not “the Alamo”, as the news reports stated—from midnight Monday, February 10/11, until the final disposition of the situation on Thursday, February 15. In a letter to Miss Burlison, who was somewhat concerned that there might be some truth in the newspaper reports—Bexar County’s deputy sheriffs were not known for gentle and understanding natures—they recounted the situation somewhat differently. “(W)e treated her with every possible consideration and respect, and during that time she had plenty to eat, and as far as we know, was as comfortable as she desired to be.

“She did not drink coffee through an aperture in the door, as stated by the papers; in fact, she stated that she did not drink coffee, and on one occasion refused coffee offered to her. She was not a prisoner in the building, but was at liberty to go at any time she chose. She had the use of a telephone and electric light.

“The newspaper reports regarding Miss de Zavala’s ‘parched lips’ and suffering, from our observation, have no foundation in fact. The building is filthy and unfit for occupancy, and was full of rubbish and trash. During the daytime we brought her all the water she wanted, made fires for her, and were in every way respectful. We also answered phone calls for her, and would answer calls at the door and notify her that parties desired to speak to her at the door. Respectfully, W. T. Ingle/Nat Harlan.”

Adina de Zavala was finally ejected from the old building on February 15, the necessary court order having arrived, but she—and the De Zavala Chapter of the DRT—promptly filed a civil suit to try and recover control of the property. Control of the property was placed directly in the hands of the Governor of Texas, to be held by him until the litigation was settled. On March 10, 1910, all appeals on the part of Adina de Zavala and the De Zavala Chapter having been exhausted, the Alamo property was formally released to the DRT as a whole. The courts decided that Adina de Zavala and the twelve members of the De Zavala Chapter who had pursued the suit no longer had any claim to membership in the DRT, nor could they use the DRT’s name or symbols in connection with their activities. This effectively dissolved the De Zavala Chapter. Former members of that chapter who had long before resigned in disgust at Adina de Zavala’s actions formed a new chapter in San Antonio for the express purpose, under the auspices of the DRT’s state organization, managing the affairs of the Alamo. That chapter, still in existence, is called The Alamo Mission Chapter, DRT.

**W**ell, the Daughters had the Alamo and what we today call the Long Barracks, but they also had an unsightly monstrosity of a frame building built over and around the Long Barracks, and they were very nearly broke from all the litigation. There wasn’t much they could do until they raised some more money. First on the list of improvements, though, was the demolition of the frame structure built on the Long Barracks.

This raised a controversy. The original Convento had been two story, but how much of the original second story remained was questionable. In addition, the Hugo & Schmeltzer structure had been around a while, and there were people who actually believed it was part of the original structure. One of those seems to have been Governor Colquitt, who insisted that he, and he alone, could control what was demolished or built on the Alamo grounds. The Daughters were required to go

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back to court once more, and finally, in 1912, the Legislature settled the problem with an act that gave the Daughters control of the grounds and structures. Controversy has raged ever since as to whether or not there was enough of the second story of the old Convento to salvage, and both sides insist they are right to this day. The winners, at least, insisted there wasn't and that what there was—which wasn't salvageable—should be removed so that the view of the chapel from the northwest wouldn't be obstructed.

During 1920, '21 and '22 the old 1849 roof on the chapel began to collapse. Working entirely from donations and organizational fund raising projects, and with a gift from the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, which had belatedly come to realize that 'the old pile of rocks' was a great civic asset, the DRT reroofed the Alamo. Not one cent of taxpayer money was involved.

In 1925 the Daughters and the City of San Antonio came to an agreement whereby the property to the immediate north of the chapel—including a large stone building which served as a city fire house—was transferred to the Alamo park. That old San Antonio fire house today is the Alamo Hall—the souvenir shop for the chapel. That fulfilled a long DRT dream—to get all commercial activity out of the Alamo chapel and to make it a true shrine.

During all this time the floor of the Alamo chapel was the original floor—dirt. Alamo steady influx of tourists, plus dampness, often churned this into mud. In 1935-'36—again working entirely with Daughters of the Republic of Texas raised and privately donated funds—the stone floor still in the chapel was laid. At the same time the State, private donations, and the DRT's fund raising efforts commissioned the art deco cenotaph to commemorate the Alamo dead that stands in Alamo Plaza today. At least four previous efforts to raise funds for an 'Alamo monument' had failed.

For ninety-two years the Alamo and its grounds have been in the charge of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. During that time not one cent of State money has been spent in the reconstruction, renovation, or conservation of the Shrine of Texas Liberty. With the exception of the money that went into purchase of the actual ground, not a cent of taxpayer money has been spent. All operating expenses for the Alamo shrine, including the salaries of the management personnel and grounds people, have been paid for through that little donation box inside the chapel, or through the sale of souvenirs of the Alamo.

At the same time, no one—neither Texan nor tourist—has ever been charged a single cent to walk through the most sanctified structure in Texas. Nowhere else in the United States—and quite possibly in the world—is that true. Every other park or shrine has an admission fee of some sort, whether state-run, federally or, outside the US, nationally operated, or privately maintained and operated, operates on admission fees. At the Alamo, though, any schoolchild can walk were Jim Bowie and David Crockett walked—and it won't cost a cent.

The Alamo is unique—not just in being the Shrine of Texas Liberty, but in being the only major tourist attraction in the United States and perhaps in the world that has been efficiently managed for nearly a century without becoming—even during the Great Depression of the 1930's—a burden to the taxpayer. In the meantime, what has happened to the rest of the parks and shrines in Texas?

If you've tried to enter most state historical parks, you've found that there's an admission fee of some sort. You've also found that they are pretty much in a state of dilapidation. The San Jacinto monument had to be closed a few years back because its maintenance had been so sorely neglected for so long that the monument itself was unsafe. It cost you, the taxpayers of Texas, a bundle to fix it. The forts of a later era on what was once the Texas Frontier, are for the most part, preserved in a state of 'arrested decay'. That means they were falling apart, so the state went in and put some cement in strategic places so they won't fall apart any worse.

What about in other states? Texas has perhaps the lowest park-use fees in the lower forty-eight. When my wife and I lived in Kentucky, we tried to visit some of the more famous spots there—among them Andy Jackson's home, The Hermitage; Fort Boonesboro State Park, Federal Hill Plantation House, which is the original 'Old Kentucky Home' about which Stephen Foster wrote the song; and the Shaker settlement in Kentucky. Admission fees—in the mid sixties—were \$5 per person and up, just to tour the houses.

Have you tried a National Park recently? In 1994, when we visited my wife's relatives in Washington State, it cost us nearly \$20 per car to get into Mount Ranier National Park. We understand the fees are substantially higher at other National Parks.

Yet here in Texas, to visit the most famous site in the state—one that's known the world over—it doesn't cost you a cent. Now, why is that?

The Daughters of the Republic of Texas—the 'li'l ol' blue-haired ladies'—made that possible. By efficient management and volunteer help, they've made it free, for nearly a century, to visit our greatest shrine. Now some people in Austin want to take the Alamo away from them. We might be moved to ask why.

As a fact, the Alamo is the single most widely visited historical site in Texas. If it were run by, say, the Parks and Wildlife Department, with—suppose—a \$2 entry fee for adults, 50¢ for children, it would furnish a sizeable part of the Parks side of Parks and Wildlife's budget every year. That, perhaps, would be beneficia; but it would also mean that the revenue from the Alamo would be going to support other state parks and historical sites, and it's entirely possible that the Alamo and the grounds around it wouldn't be anywhere as well maintained as they are today.

For ninety-two years the Daughters of the Republic of Texas have made the Alamo the best-run, most efficiently managed tourist attraction in Texas and probably in the United States. Instead of thinking about taking it away from them, we might suggest that the state of Texas make the Daughters custodians of all *our* historic sites. From all indications, they'd do a better job than has been done to date.

I tip my hat—be it Panama or John B—to the ladies of the DRT. Ladies, you have done a magnificent job of preserving and protecting one of the most significant historical sites in the world. You've made it where any schoolchild can enter the Alamo and walk where Travis, Bowie and Crockett fought and died—and it won't cost them the price of an Alamo Plaza *raspa* to do it. About no other site in Texas—nor in the US—and probably not in the world—can that be said. You haven't cost the taxpayers of Texas a cent in the process. May your shadows on Alamo Plaza never diminish.



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# THE BONUS

BY L. KELLY DOWN

**L**ordie, the traffic was so thick around the square this morning you'd think that there was a special price on funerals. I come by just at daylight and when I got to the Old Fools Coffee Shop, Sue Ann, our favorite young waiting on tables gal, looked frazzled plum out. She only said two words and rolled her eyes back in her head—them words was all I needed—"Deer Hunters". Must really be getting old, hunting season slipped up on me this year.

After I got my coffee—had a sweet roll, too—I heard one of the best Hill Country deer hunting stories.

Leon, you remember we was in the first grade together, well, he told of his oldest son who is a lawyer fellow down in Houston. Seems that his boy went to work for this big law firm, and he did good, too. So this boy was made a junior partner. Then he would share in the profits of the firm plus get his monthly salary, too. Well, things were sure looking up, they had their middle of the year big meeting and guess what? If things were as good at the end of the year as they were at the middle, Leon's boy was in line for his share—and that share would be big. There would be enough money so's it would let him build that lake house he had been a-wanting and it would be free-and-clear—even after taxes.

Then comes the end of September—same report—only better. Leon's boy drempt 100 more acres on to his lake house. The first week in October the senior partner—read the big bucks owner—of that law firm took all them lawyers down to the brand new Bay House that the firm had just bought; had the firm's brand new boat there, too. Guess you might call it a ship—slept 10 and it had a full time crew.

The next thing all them lawyers had to do was draw numbers to find out when they would get to go hunting deer in the Hill Country. Leon's boy got lucky—got the opening day. Now, when he read where they was going to hunt, his heart sank. It was old man Zeerman's ranch that joins Leon's to the south. Hunting so close to home wern't much of a bonus.

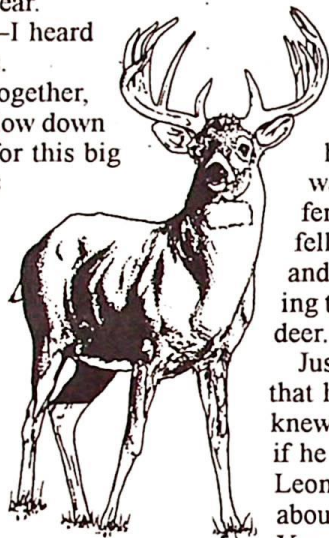
Come opening day, them lawyers came up to the Hill Country early, had a few cool ones night before, a good meal and a wake up call at 4 AM. This here guide man feeds them breakfast, drives them to Mr. Zeerman's ranch, puts them in the stands right near where a deer feeder had been throwing corn for the last sixty days. But like so many city folks they didn't watch or hear no weather and there wasn't any talk of it over breakfast. A blue norther came in just before daylight. So here are all these Houston lawyers stuck in blinds freezin' to death, but scared to come out fearin' they might be shot.

Well, Leon's boy stuck it out. Said he could have kilt a good buck but it was going north, so it was on his daddy's land by jumping that bob-wire fence; besides, Leon's boy didn't know that this guide fellow would clean the deer and he wouldn't have to, and Leon's boy, being from the Hill country, wasn't going to get messed up, get cold hands and such, just for a deer.

Just then the boy spotted some of his daddy's cows that had drifted through a weak place in the fence. He knew what that meant—hard work for a cowhand, even if he is a city lawyer fellow. So when the guide came, Leon's boy drove quick as he could home and told Leon about the break in the fence. That drill you all know. Yep, rest of the weekend was cow working and fence fixing. All them lawyers got back to Houston in time for Monday morning lawyering.

Come the end of the year and it was time to divvy up—you got it right—Leon's boy's lake house and acreage was nothing more than that colder than Old Billy Hell deer blind. He got just enough cash outta the deal to buy a second hand pop up trailer.

I talked to him later at breakfast having biscuits and gravy like a proper cowhand lawyer should—he said he was real happy with Hill Country deer hunting—long as he didn't have to clean the critter or pay for the lease. Strange what a person's background does to what is considered fun and what ain't.



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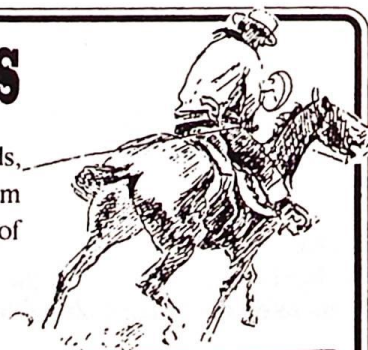
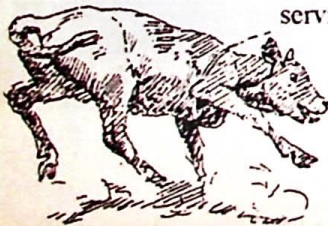
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# A Modern Indian Goes to School in Mason

PULL-OUT  
2-MAP INSERT

BY IRA KENNEDY

Sometimes you never know who you're talking to until you quit doing the talking. There are other times when you meet someone and know right away to listen, and that's what happened to me a few weeks ago.

James Coffey invited me to Mason so I could meet Wallace Coffey, past Tribal Chairman of the Comanche Nation. Before a misunderstanding sets in, let me explain that these two Coffeys aren't related. Jim, who works with the Education Service Center, Region XV, out of San Angelo is all white and Wallace is pure Indian. I was to meet them for lunch at Zavala's Mexican Restaurant. Despite numerous phone conversations, I'd only met Jim once and as I entered the restaurant I wasn't sure I'd recognize him. Right off I spotted Wallace sitting at a table with Jim who I would have recognized even if he hadn't been sitting next to a Comanche Indian with the appearance and bearing of a senator or maybe a movie star.

With long raven-black hair, white shirt, elegant tie, a double-breasted grey coat, and black slacks and a fifty-one year old face that should be in movies, Wallace was the picture of a modern Comanche.

Jim had arranged for Wallace to give a talk at the Mason middle school and after lunch I went along to listen. During lunch I learned that Wallace had been Tribal Chairman for six years and that he held a Master's degree from Harvard.

But before I take up more space on the lunch meeting I'd better move on to his presentation.

Once all the children settled down on bleachers in the gym all eyes turned to Wallace. He opened a bag fashioned from an Indian blanket and commenced by explaining why it's important to be well dressed if you want to be taken seriously in today's world. Then he removed his tie and replaced it with a black scarf held at the neck with a silver concho. Next draped a broadcloth blanket, red at one end, black on the other, over his shoulders. Then came a mescal bean bandolier which he wore off the shoulder. All this was topped off with an Otter hide cap complete with eagle plume. Finally, he applied red ocher paint to his cheeks and with that the transformation was complete. What now stood before the youngsters was a real live Comanche.

Next he asked the group if they wanted him to change back into the coat and tie, and the room filled with pleas and commands to stay just the way he was. That done he let the students pass around an eagle feather and an old pair of moccasin which belonged to his grandfather.

When one student asked Mr. Coffey how old he was, Wallace responded, "Fifty-one" Whereupon another student chimed in

"You don't look a day over forty-eight."

He had the students enraptured with his humor, gentle nature and charismatic presence. I have never witnessed one person hold the attention so completely of our restless youth as did Wallace.

He sang many songs for them, in Comanche, and explained their meaning. After The Cedar Song he said:

"The cedar tree is very important to our people.

It is green year-round so it does not die.

It lifts its branches up to heaven. Its incense purifies the spirit and clears the mind. The Cedar Song and the incense have the power to heal people. But you can't use just any cedar, you must use the one with the red and blue berries."

When he held out a palm full of dried cedar from his medicine pouch the children flocked around; each took a little pinch of cedar and handled it like gold dust.

Then Wallace asked if there was anyone who had a birthday on that day. A young girl, Sonya, reluctantly stepped forward. Wallace sang Happy Birthday alternating between English and Comanche, then with an eagle feather and the cedar incense which he had started at the beginning of the session, Wallace gave a Cedar Blessing the young girl. When he finished the room filled with applause.

"We have songs for every occasion," Wallace explained, "they make us feel better and heal the spirit.

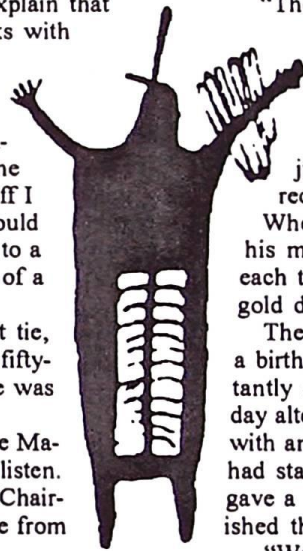
"Do you have a song for someone who had died?" a boy asked.

"Yes," he smiled, "but I can't sing that at this time."

He explained that in Indian sign language Comanche was illustrated with the motion of a snake that comes backward. "Springtime is the new year when a snake sheds its skin. The shed snake skin means that another Comanche is born. If you come upon one it means that you are going in a new direction in your life, a better way, or that you should change your habits.

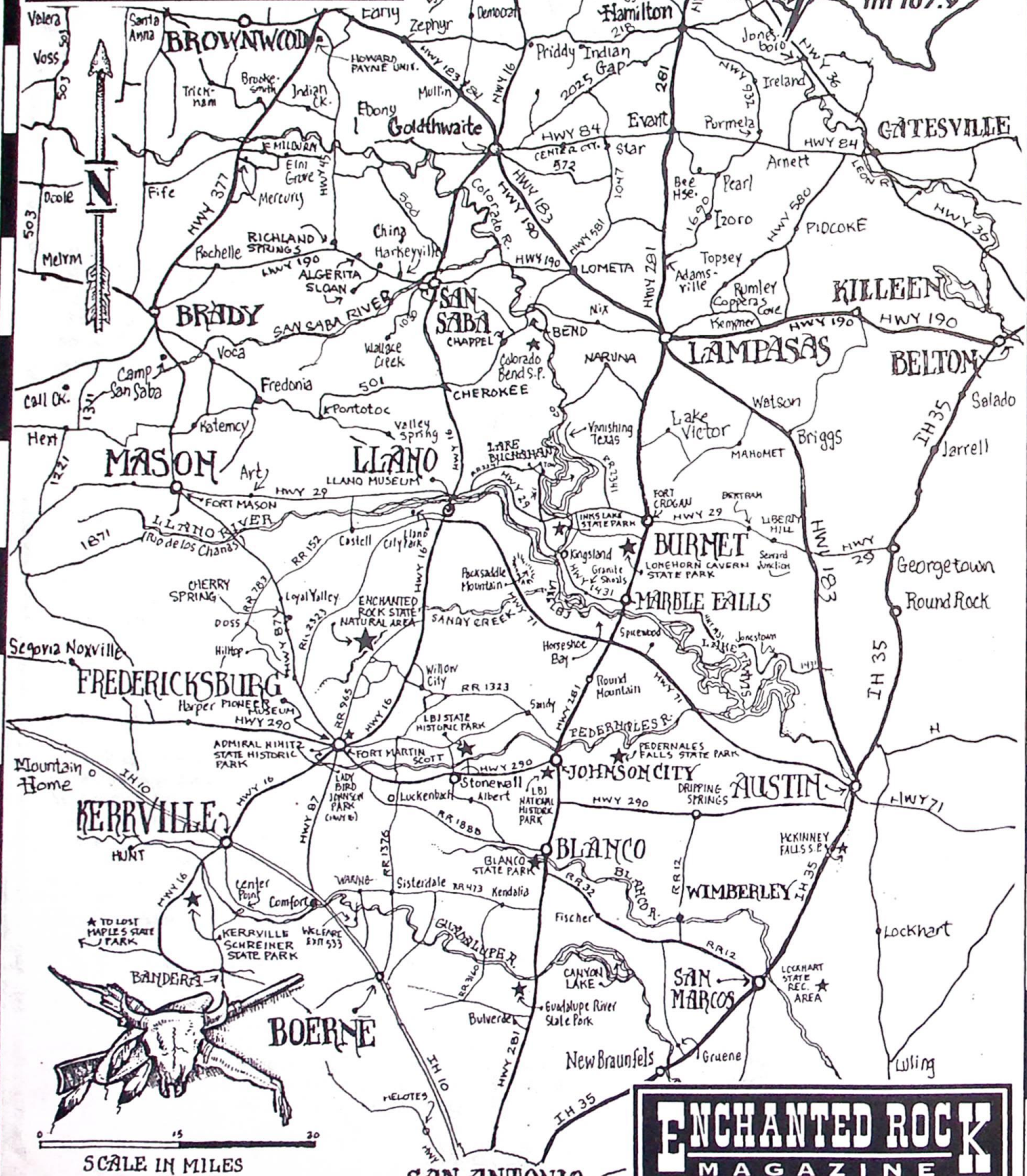
While on the topic of sign language, Wallace held up both arms high in the air. "Do any of you know what this means?" When they were reluctant to hazard a guess he said, "Touchdown!"

After the talk concluded and the children moved on to the rest of their school day, a few teachers gathered 'round and explained, with more than a little emotion, that the birthday girl had recently experienced a series of misfortunes not of her making, and they knew that Wallace, by treating her so special had lifted her spirit.



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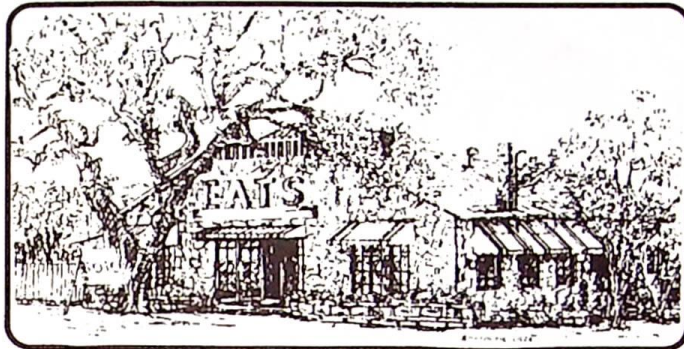
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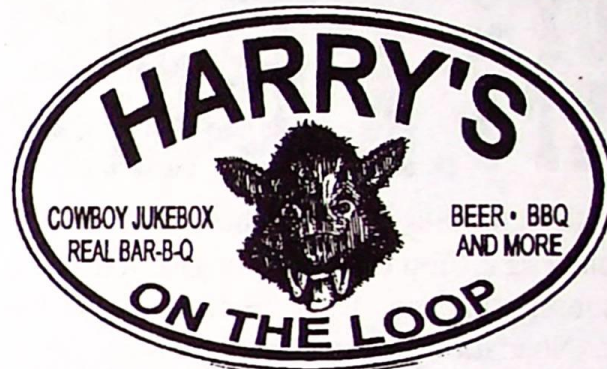
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## ENCHANTED ROCK MAGAZINE

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# THE BEST OF NUNN

**W**hile stranded in London, England back in 1973, Gary P. Nunn penned "London Homesick Blues", the now famous anthem for Austin City Limits, and Texan expatriates world wide yearning for their home state. Over the years, Gary has played with the likes of Michael Martin Murphy, Jerry Jeff Walker and Willie Nelson, before forming his own band, "The Sons of the Bunkhouse". He has also had many a hit song recorded by music legends such as Willie Nelson and Roseanne Cash.

Gary has come to represent the true Texas song master. Although born and now living in Oklahoma, which he calls "forced exile", Gary spent his youth and college years in Texas. He currently travels around Texas and the Southwest forty-eight weekends a year performing to enthusiastic crowds.

To the delight of his fans, Gary and his record label, **Campfire Records**, have compiled a collection of his greatest hits to be released in November. Both regular fans and new listeners will not want to miss the release party to be held right before his regular monthly performance at **The Broken Spoke** in Austin on **November 29th** from 6-8 PM.

"We've had, over the years, numerous requests to release a CD containing our most popular records," Gary explains. "It's a difficult task to select just which tunes should be included, but after several late nights of working with various sequences, I have come up with one that feels pretty good."

"What I Like About Texas" kicks off the release of 18 hits lyrically expressing his devotion to the wonders of Texas. Songs relating to the many Chili Cook-Off's and road trips include "The Chili Song", "Roadtrip", "Meet Me Down in Corpus" and "My Kind of Day on Padre". And ironically, the artwork for the cover is done by world renown Armadillo World Headquarters artist, Jim Franklin.

Always ready to shake hands and visit with fans, Gary P. Nunn says, "They are the cream of the crop, quality people who gravitate to the western life-style." And then with a little laugh he said, "They dress well, behave themselves and are all great dancers."



If you can't make it to the Broken Spoke in November, Gary will be at Blanco's Bar & Grill in Houston on Dec. 12; the Broken Spoke again on Dec. 19; the Quota Club in Monroe, LA on Dec. 20; and he will be celebrating the coming of the new year at the oldest dance hall in Texas, Gruene Hall, near New Braunfels.

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# A DAMNYANKEE COMES TO LEON COUNTY

BY MARION K. TAYLOR



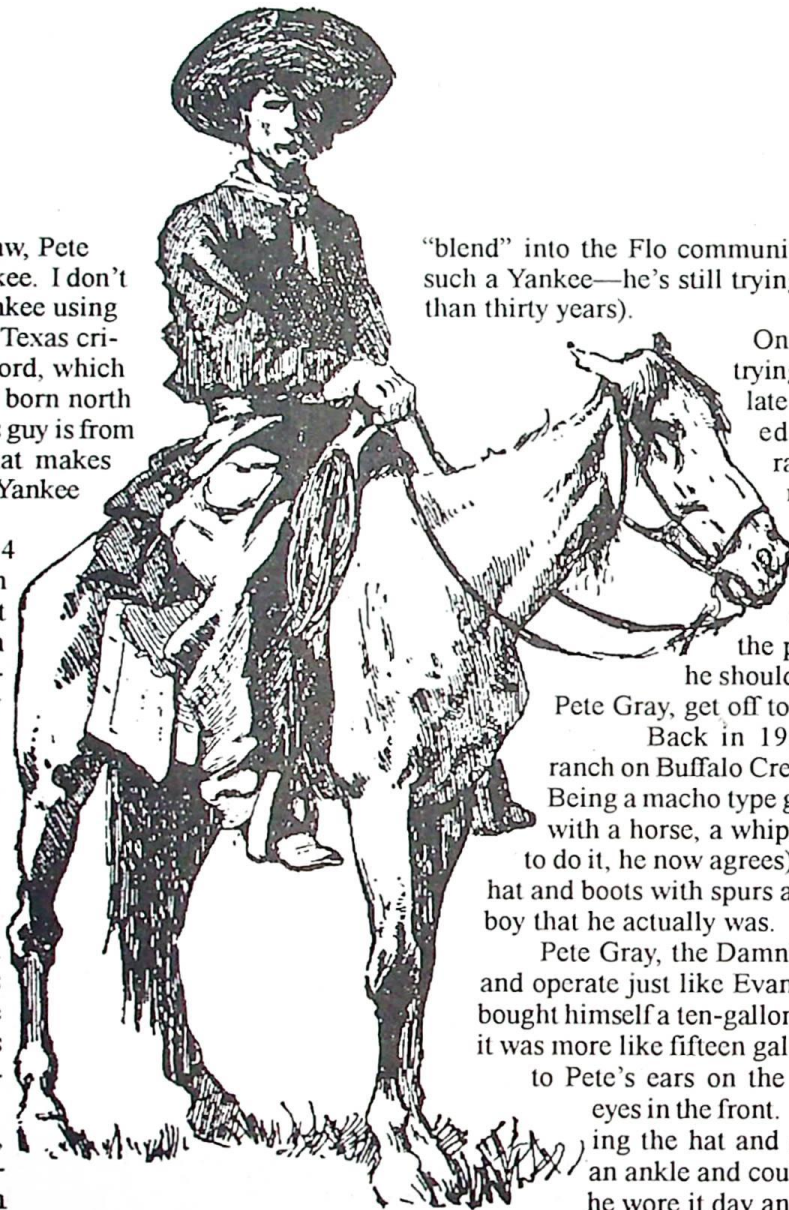
My brother-in-law, Pete Gray, is a Yankee. I don't call him a Yankee using the usual Flo, Texas criteria for the word, which means anyone born north of Dallas. This guy is from Indiana, so that makes him the worst kind of Yankee, a Damn Yankee (notice that it is a single word).

Before my father died in 1954 all three of his male children had grown up and moved away from Flo. I won't go into all the reasons why, but I can assure you they were numerous. Perhaps the main one was to get away from the type of life we had lived up until we were teenagers, and were afraid we might have to continue to live for the rest of our lives.

After my father's death none of the three brothers would agree to come back to Flo and live on the old homestead, even though all the land that my father and mother owned was available for use, free of charge, to the one who would return. A few years passed without the old homestead being occupied by anyone.

In the meantime our sister, Edith, met this small Yankee and married him. They moved to his home in Indiana to farm. Things didn't go so well there for various reasons, primarily because Pete liked to work every day farming until around midnight, then sleep late the following morning. His father didn't keep those kinds of hours and was pecking on Pete's door about daybreak every morning, demanding that Pete get up and get with it. I guess he felt this privilege was his since he owned the farm that Pete was farming.

To make a long story short, Pete and Edith sold out in Indiana and moved to Flo to the old homestead, Pete wanting to



“blend” into the Flo community (an impossibility for such a Yankee—he's still trying to blend in after more than thirty years).

One of Pete's methods of trying to blend in was to emulate a well respected, knowledgeable, no-nonsense rancher that lives in Flo named Evan Moore.

Evan is only about four years older than Pete. Evan, with the stamina of a horse and the patience of Job, decided he should help his new neighbor,

Pete Gray, get off to the right start in Flo.

Back in 1957, Evan owned a big ranch on Buffalo Creek and had lots of cattle. Being a macho type guy, he handled his cows with a horse, a whip and a dog (not the way to do it, he now agrees). He wore a big cowboy hat and boots with spurs and looked like the cowboy that he actually was.

Pete Gray, the Damn Yankee, wanted to look and operate just like Evan. He went to town and bought himself a ten-gallon cowboy hat. Edith said it was more like fifteen gallons since it came down to Pete's ears on the sides and down to his eyes in the front. On his way home, wearing the hat and new boots, he sprained an ankle and couldn't get his boot off, so he wore it day and night for a week until his swollen ankle went back to normal size.

The day after he bought the hat and boots he went to Evan and asked him to help him locate and buy a saddle horse, so that he wouldn't look out of place in Flo. Evan, in his usual efficient manner, found a horse that he thought Pete might learn to handle. When they got ready to load the horse in the truck, however, it balked and they could not get it into the truck either by leading it, pushing it or whipping it on the rump. Pete decided that loading it was a physical impossibility and was ready to give up, but Evan, being an old hand, decided that he would

ride the horse into the truck. He mounted the horse and tried at least a dozen times to get it into the truck. No luck. He then rode the horse out about a hundred yards, turned it around to face the rear of the truck and spurred it into a dead run. He raked it with his spurs, whipped it with his hat and yelled his head off as he approached the truck. At the last instant the horse made a mighty leap and landed in the truck, which stopped him so quickly that Evan, had he not been a veteran horseman, would have continued over the cab of the truck.

Pete ran over and put up the tailgate of the truck and congratulated Evan on how well he could handle horses. "Nothing to it," Evan said in his usual nonchalant voice.

A few days later, Pete was riding in the woods when he rode up on Willie Lynch, standing on her property across the fence from our place. She had two dogs with her and was fingering a .30 caliber Winchester in a manner that Pete can describe only as "menacingly".

Willie Lynch was a widow (called "widdier-woman" in Leon County), a self-made woman, independent as a Cheshire cat and was not afraid of anything in the entire world, especially the men that owned property around hers in Flo. Our father had difficulty with her for years. Her cows and hogs would sometimes get through the fence onto our place and sometimes ours would get onto her property. It was always a very delicate situation to set things right with her one way or another. She was known to shoot her rifle over your head at times, just to make sure she had your attention.

Pete knew about Willie Lynch, of course. He had heard of her from our father, from Evan and others, and from my brothers and me.

When Pete saw Willie, he proceeded to tie his horse's reins to an overhanging limb of a tree just as Evan had taught him to do, got off his horse, walked over to the fence and tried to talk to Willie. Willie could understand very little of what he was saying for she had never heard a Yankee voice in her life. I'll leave it to your imagination as to how this conversation went between this pint-sized Yankee and this Amazon of the woods named Willie Lynch.

Finally the conversation ended, or more likely stalled, and Pete turned and with great dignity walked over to his horse, put his foot in the stirrup and with what he hoped was a flourish tried to lift himself into the saddle. The stirrup broke and he ended up sitting on the ground with the stirrup in his lap.

Pete didn't look at Willie. He got up slowly, moved calmly around the horse to the other side, put his foot in the other stirrup and tried to mount the saddle a second time. The girth broke and he ended up flat on his back with the saddle on top of him. He heard choking and gasping from across the fence where Willie was trying her best to control her laughter. He still didn't look at her.

Pete untied the horse and led it away from Willie through the brush toward home. He never rode the horse again, nor did he bother to go back for the worn-out saddle.

The first year Pete lived at Flo, he raised a corn crop in one of our fields. It was a good corn crop, better than most corn crops grown at Flo. Those mid-Westerners do know how to raise corn.

When the corn got to the roasting ear stage, Pete noticed that the raccoons were knocking it down and eating it. He could tell this from all the raccoon tracks in his cornfield. He went to his friend, Evan, to seek his advice. Evan came over and walked through the cornfield with him and told Pete that

Pete Gray, the DamnYankee, wanted to look and operate just like Evan. He went to town and bought himself a ten-gallon cowboy hat. Edith said it was more like fifteen gallons since it came down to Pete's ears on the sides and down to his eyes in the front. On his way home, wearing the hat and new boots, he sprained an ankle and couldn't get his boot off, so he wore it day and night for a week until his swollen ankle went back to normal size.

some hogs were knocking the corn down and eating some of it, and that the raccoons were coming in later and finishing it off. Pete didn't quite believe him.

Evan had a pasture leased for his cows that joined the field Pete had his corn planted on. One day Evan was riding his pasture and saw a wild sow with three shoats go through Pete's fence into the cornfield. He saw that they were very fat, something rarely seen in wild hogs, and immediately knew that these hogs were the ones that had been eating Pete's corn. He told Pete about the hogs. By this time, Pete had finally become convinced that Evan had been right about the hogs eating his corn.

Pete's solution was to "gather" his corn while it was still green to prevent further loss to the hogs. He rented three barns in the area and spread his corn out in the barns so that it wouldn't go bad from overheating in a fermenting process. The sow and shoats kept coming onto Pete's place, but he didn't care so much now since he had his corn in the barns.

Later in the fall, Pete and Evan noticed that there was an excellent acorn crop on all the oak trees that grow wild in Leon County. Hogs have been traditionally fattened on acorns for a hundred and fifty years there. Pete and another local rancher, Frank Lee, went a hundred miles south of Flo and bought two truck loads of hogs, one for Frank and one for Pete. Pete turned his hogs loose, after a few days, on the farm where he had raised the corn. He expected them to get fat over the winter by eating the acorns.

Although the wild sow that had come onto Pete's place to eat his corn was wild as a deer, she nevertheless had been marked; that is, had certain cuts in her ears to identify who she belonged to. This had been done several years before when she was a pig or shoat. She had been running wild ever since. Evan knew how to do these things, so he found out that the sow really belonged to a woman that lived in Pleasant Springs, a settlement somewhere back in the woods fairly near Pete's place. Her husband had died and another man, named George Hopkins, now spoke for her at times. Evan went to him and asked him to tell the lady that he and Pete would catch and return her sow to

**Pete didn't hesitate. He dived in on the fighting sow, something even a redneck born and raised in Flo would be afraid to do, and somehow in the hubbub of barking dogs and head slinging, squealing sow, he managed to get his wire loop over the sow's snout. Evan was completely surprised. He guessed that Pete's chances were about one in a hundred, if not one in a thousand.**

her if she would give the three shoats to Pete for their effort. A few days later he got the word that she had agreed to his offer.

In the meantime the wild sow and the three shoats had joined up with the other hogs Pete had brought onto his place; however, they were still wild as the wind and could not be caught or penned with the other hogs.

That winter Evan and Pete got word from a Mrs. Dodds, who lived in the brush near Pete's place, that she had located the wild sow and the three shoats in the woods on Pete's farm. The next morning Evan and Pete were at her place at sunrise. Evan was on his horse, wearing leather chaps, a leather coat, a big cowboy hat and spurs on the heels of his cowboy boots. He had two hog dogs with him. You couldn't say he didn't come prepared. Pete looked like his gentlemanly self, Yankee-like, not like a Leon county redneck ready to chase a wild hog through the brush at sunrise.

Evan's plan was simple. The dogs would bay the hogs and keep them bunched. Most of the hogs were Pete's tame hogs, but the wild sow and shoats were with them and wouldn't leave the herd. Evan, ever sure of himself, took a bag of corn with him, tied to his saddle. He planned to rope the wild sow.

The dog's bayed the hogs and kept them bunched. Pete walked while Evan rode his bay mare on the way to the hogs. Evan saw a strange contraption in Pete's hand, and being a polite Southerner and all, asked him something like, "What the hell is that damned contraption you're carrying, for God's sake?"

"It's a hog catcher," replied Pete as if what he was doing made some sort of sense. Pete showed Evan the hog catcher. It was a four-foot long metal pipe with a steel cable running through it. When you pushed the cable into the pipe it formed a loop at the other end, which you slipped over a hog's snout to subdue and control him. Going wild hog hunting with it seemed to Evan about like going bear hunting with a sling-shot. He didn't say anything, however, because he was so amazed that he simply couldn't talk.

They arrived at the hogs and Evan immediately went into his hog cajoling act using the corn. He spread a little corn near the hogs and they would mill about watching the dogs, which were continuously circling them and barking constantly. Finally the hogs relaxed a bit and began to eat the corn; all but the wild sow. She was eyeing the dogs and would have run for it on her own but was afraid to leave the herd because the dogs would have been on her instantly.

Evan dropped more corn. The hogs relaxed further and even the wild sow picked up a little corn and ate it. He was

edging her out of the brush to where he could drop his lariat over her. Suddenly out of the corner of his eye he saw Mrs. Dodds and her six year old granddaughter walk up.

Oh, it was a grand morning. Just like in the frontier days. There was a smell of wood smoke in the frosty air. The rumble of a freight train passing through Buffalo, ten miles away, could be heard clearly. The dog's barking was echoing across the valleys through the woods. A cool fog was lying in the low places. The air was crisp and fresh. It was one of those unique days when you feel like shouting, just to hear your voice echo across the wilderness.

Mrs. Dodds must have felt that way too, for she suddenly let out a yell that could raise the hair on a dead dog. She did it not to scare the dogs or hogs but through sheer exuberance. Some folks in Flo always thought that she might be part Indian and would have been certain of it had they been there that morning.

The hogs froze in place, their ears standing straight up. The dogs, with great difficulty, kept the hogs from bolting. Mrs. Dodds' voice kept coming back as echoes from far distant creeks, hills and valleys for what seemed to be at least five minutes.

Evan said nothing, but just dropped more corn. Soon he had the hogs settled down again and had enticed the wild sow out into the open. Just as he was ready to drop his loop over the sow, Mrs. Dodds let out another of her ear-splitting screams.

That did it! Hogs went in every direction, scattering like quail. The wild sow tore through the brush toward a place called Devil's Den, a sink hole in the creek about a half mile away. Devil's Den covers about an acre or two of marsh, quicksand, briars, trees, potholes, myrtle bushes and grass. The dogs were after her but she was outrunning them. If she could make it to Devil's Den she was home free. Ten men couldn't have gotten her out of it in a week.

Evan, feeling good and his horse feeling good, took up the chase. His horse was running full speed through the brush, dodging through it where it could and busting holes in it where it couldn't find an opening. Evan would pull his hat down over his face and hang on. Pete, Mrs. Dodds and her granddaughter were left far behind.

Just before the sow got to Devil's Den, she had to pass through a small glade about thirty steps across that was free of bushes. Evan knew that if she made it across the glade she was free and clear. He removed his lariat from the horn of his saddle, shook out a small loop about three feet across and started swinging it over his head. When he broke out into the glade the wild sow was already halfway across it. He took one mighty swing of the loop and threw it at her as hard as he could. It was his last desperate shot at capturing her. Just as the lariat played out and the loop began to close, he saw the loop drop over her head, more like an accident than technical skill. When the horse saw the lariat play all the way out it slammed on its brakes. The sow ran right through the loop except for one hind foot which the lariat tightened up on. The hog now began to fight the rope and the dogs, while traveling in a circle around the horse, fighting like a tiger, slinging her head savagely at the dogs. The dogs couldn't get a grip on the sow's ears in order to hold her. Evan knew that all the sow had to do was get a bit of slack in the lariat and she would kick free of the loop, so he kept his horse backing up and turning to keep the rope tight.

Suddenly, out of the brush and myrtle bushes came

Pete Gray on the dead run, hog catcher in hand, loop ready to capture this wild hog. In desperation, knowing that he would lose the hog any second, Evan screamed, "Catch her, Pete!"

Pete didn't hesitate. He dived in on the fighting sow, something even a redneck born and raised in Flo would be afraid to do, and somehow in the hubbub of barking dogs and head slinging, squealing sow, he managed to get his wire loop over the sow's snout. Evan was completely surprised. He guessed that Pete's chances were about one in a hundred, if not one in a thousand.

Pete reared back on the hog catcher and hung on like a bulldog. The sow, caught at both ends, flopped to the ground on her side. Evan got off his horse in a flash with a pigging string in his teeth and tied the sow's three loose feet together. He then added the fourth foot and had the sow at their mercy. Evan dragged the sow through the woods with his horse to a place where they could drive the truck. Then they got the pickup truck, loaded the sow, and took her to Pleasant Springs and delivered her to the lady that owned her. She took the sow to Crockett the next day and got one hundred dollars for her. Pete kept the three shoats until the following spring and sold them for seventy-five dollars each, which paid for the corn they had eaten out of his cornfield.

This little episode changed Evan's mind forever about what one small Yankee with a hog catcher could do to a three hundred pound wild sow in the brush. He swears that Pete has always looked about a foot taller ever since that time. He felt so strongly about it that he went to town the very next day and ordered a hog catcher of his very own.

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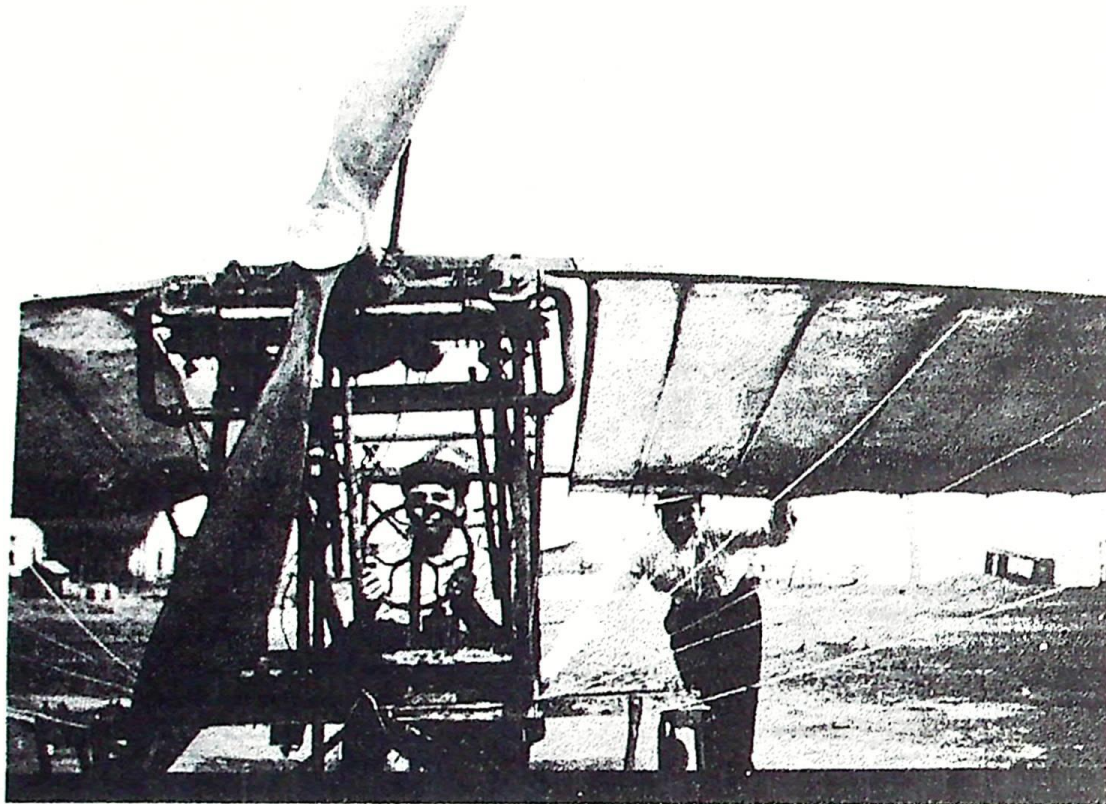
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# THE ELECTRA MONOPLANE



**by David C. Morrow**

**About 1911 in the town of Electra my maternal grandfather, Robert B. "Bob" Richardson, built and flew what was probably north Texas' first airplane.**

**H**e was born in Philadelphia in 1895 and came with his family from Liber, Ohio, to the newly opened town of Electra in 1907. Created out of the Waggoner Ranch, Electra was then a frontier community full of pioneer spirit. Photos on souvenir postcards show cowboys breaking horses between widely spaced houses. According to my grandmother, Indians often came over from Oklahoma creating much excitement among the locals. Several saloons inflamed Prohibition sentiments. Moody brothers, both barkeepers, fell into bitter conflict with the Richardson's friend, anti-booze newspaperman, Les Crawford.

Soon after the town was formed, mule teams were hauling oil drilling equipment through the streets. My great-grandfather, a wealthy pharmacist, A. M. Richardson, bought a farm, a house, and some downtown buildings. One of the latter became his drugstore, which doubled as the post office during his terms as Postmaster, and one of the others was where he established the Electra Masonic Lodge.

As always in American history and memory, this was a transitional era. Arthur N. Richardson drove a sporty Apperson Jackrabbit, and though a farm owner, he located his wife and kids in town. Bob Richardson, his son and my grandfather, was trained in music and a 1908 photo shows him with his

trumpet in The Electra Cowboy Band. However, he was also mechanically gifted and followed the latest technological developments. So it was there that, living near the old cattle trails, he taught himself all he could about the Wright brothers and other aviation experimenters and made his own contribution to local progress.

In the absence of newspaper accounts I have had to reconstruct his venture from photos and the lamentably sparse notes I was able to make of his and other's recollections. His pictures appear to have been taken in the wintertime, so he likely began the planning and construction of the monoplane in the fall of 1911 and first flew in early 1912. This span covers the end of his sixteenth and beginning of his seventeenth years and probably accounts for his remembering the experiment being "about 1910 or 1912".

With his father's money to overcome any problems locating materials, he made the aircraft parts in a tin garage opening onto the alley behind the Richardson house at 707 Harrison Avenue. During the winters, a wood stove or kerosene heater were all he had to warm the shed. Bob was aided by his lifelong friends, Wesley Moore, Jim Fisher and John O'Donoghue—whose brother had married Bob's sister, Norma. He must have frequently worked after school, and with meticulous craftsmanship, followed plans he'd drawn with his silvered instruments.

Bob's plane was built in pieces and assembled where it was first flown. Although his plans have vanished, he documented some of his project's stages photographically. In one photograph, there is a side view of the basic fuselage which shows a wooden frame tapering back to an end. A rectangular structure inserted near the rear, which is not visible in other pictures, looks like it could be the rudder. Triangular supports attach the front landing gear (bicycle wheels separated on an axle) to the wooden superstructure while one vertical bar seems to hold a rear bike wheel. In another photograph, this time with a front view, Bob stands inside the square frame holding a lever, while a wooden element not unlike a window without panes showing above and behind him serves as the horizontal stabilizer's frame. No vertical fin appears in any picture. Designed in this way, the pilot had to lay on his stomach or crouched behind the steering wheel, looking through the propeller.

When the monoplane was complete, the side of the tin garage had to be removed to get the wings out. As to why he opted for a single wing when most of the aircraft of the day were biplanes, I have no clue, but maybe it was easier to build. The wings themselves seem designed to catch the wind like a kite; for this they angled downward toward the rear. With an apparent span of about fifteen feet, they appeared to have been canvas stretched between ribs linking wooden rails bolted to the metal motor housing and anchored by wire or cordage.

A clear photo shows him clutching the steering wheel, which was probably an auto or even a railcar brake. Though a lever appears in the head-on frame shot, this wheel is the only unmistakable control device. Every strut and line is clearly visible, as well as the bolts holding the metal piping overhead frame that supports the propeller. The propeller mount is cleanly beveled and has an upright rod behind it that likely held a line running back to the tail assembly. The propeller must have been made by Bob, as no source for it can be found. Though the play of light on texture leaves its material unclear, it was almost certainly wooden.

One can only guess what kind of engine was used, but

**More than a mechanical triumph, the flight involved real danger. There were no emergency medical teams. The nearest hospital was probably twenty-six miles southeast in Wichita Falls, and in case of accident someone would have to find a telephone, maybe make several calls, even drive place to place before locating a doctor. The danger must have upset my great-grandmother. Sue Dale, my future grandmother, who was fourteen in October of 1912, once mentioned going out to see Bob fly and hearing Mrs. Richardson exclaim, "Bob and Wesley have gone out to kill themselves!"**

a good bet would be a motorcycle engine, which was small enough to fit in the overhead frame and light enough to fly. The gas tank was likely housed in the metal frame as well. How original Bob's plans were and whether he made any innovations are perhaps now impossible for even an aviation historian to discern.

When the monoplane was finished, assembled, and photographed, early in 1912, Bob took to the air. He stated that it was "pulled along the railroad tracks by Jim Fisher's four cylinder Maxwell." The railroad was the longest unobstructed straightaway available. The mind boggles to think of three boys roaring down the tracks, pulling a hand-made flying machine not knowing if success or death is eminent. At any rate, the engine revved, the plane lifted, Bob disengaged the line, and flew about a mile, maybe fifty feet up in the air. The monoplane landed undamaged and nobody was injured. It is easy to visualize the young men in their long sleeved dress shirts and their ties, donning boaters and caps as they retrieved their coats, jubilant with their victory over gravity on the stark Texas prairie.

More than a mechanical triumph, the flight involved real danger. There were no emergency medical teams. The nearest hospital was probably twenty-six miles southeast in Wichita Falls, and in case of accident someone would have to find a telephone, maybe make several calls, even drive place to place before locating a doctor. The danger must have upset my great-grandmother. Sue Dale, my future grandmother, who was fourteen in October of 1912, once mentioned going out to see Bob fly and hearing Mrs. Richardson exclaim, "Bob and Wesley have gone out to kill themselves!"

The monoplane's first flight wasn't its last. Bob and his friends flew the plane at least several more times and probably found it a good way to meet girls. Electra was a small town so it brought a measure of local fame. Newspaper accounts are lost, but a couple of Bob's pictures of his plane exist on the same souvenir postcards that commemorate such noteworthy subjects as cowboys, oil rigs and building fires, and Electra's Trade and Sale Days.

The Electra monoplane was so much a part of the frontier momentum that pressed toward the technological future John's unusual hobby was accepted as a normal part of community life. Once the novelty wore off, people already became used to the idea of powered flight and so to its reality. Many dis-

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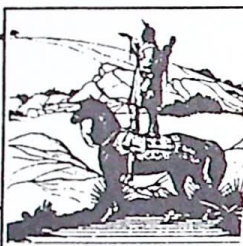
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missed flying as a fad, a rich kid's toy, others surely wondered what use it had besides amusement. Practical applications probably did occur to many, but apparently not to the young aviators. There weren't any landing facilities and they couldn't continue using public land and the property of others. Where they kept the plane is not clear; maybe it was disassembled between flights, maybe stored intact in a barn, maybe either as occasions required.

No one had ever flown over that piece of land before. It must have been exciting to briefly see the countryside from above, red dirt and gray cement roadbeds, miles of glinting rails, grass waving with patterns of wind where panicked rabbits scampered. People would look up and wave, including children inspired then and there with flight; but the startled livestock and scattering chickens must have annoyed farmers and ranchers. The possibility of a crash was irritating to the older generation. The young pilots probably found flying had limited entertainment value considering the hassles of hauling, towing, finding the right time and place to get airborne, the cost of gasoline and not to mention weather problems. Eventually wear and tear and rough landings damaged the airplane.

The Electra Monoplane's pieces gathered dust in the tin garage or someone's barn, or rusted away in snow and searing wind. Likely his brief aviation career contributed largely to his mother's decision to send Bob to Indiana, where she had relatives, to attend the Valparaiso School of Music and spend summers at Culver Military Academy.

Bob Richardson returned to Electra in 1916 and soon married Sue Dale, but his flying days weren't over. The military had found a practical use for aircraft and Bob joined the Army Air Corps when the US entered World War I and trained at Call Field near Wichita Falls, a base long since turned to

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tract housing. Just before he was to ship out to France the War ended. He may have quit flying to support his family, though his job search during the Great Depression resulted in a career at the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station. I never heard of any other reasons for his later opinions about aviation's stunning progress.

In 1965 I managed to get some information about his airplane from my grandfather, a man so modest as to be almost self-effacing, when we went to an open house at the naval air station. When I bought us tickets for a brief city flyover in an already outdated DC-3 he said that it was his first flight in almost fifty years. It was also his last before his death a few weeks before his eightieth birthday. As that decade reached its frantic conclusion he declared NASA a waste of money, weather satellites superfluous, lunar exploration worthless and he remained a staunch Prohibitionist to the end.

As a man who also insisted that history is useless, Bob Richardson would be surprised that his early flights would be interesting to people other than his family.

Americans take to technological development because we enjoy the freedom and challenge to experiment with science and its applications. Our government has never had to impose material progress because its means are available for experimentation, whether to young aeronauts in 1910 or young cybernaughts in 1990. I doubt that my grandfather would see his teenage adventure the same way he would the doings of computer hackers, but he and they are participants in the same democratic process of technological development.

He lived through the very end of the Texas frontier and contributed to the heartland's popular acceptance of a new technology simply because he thought aviation would be fun, and he had the means and ability to let his imagination take flight.

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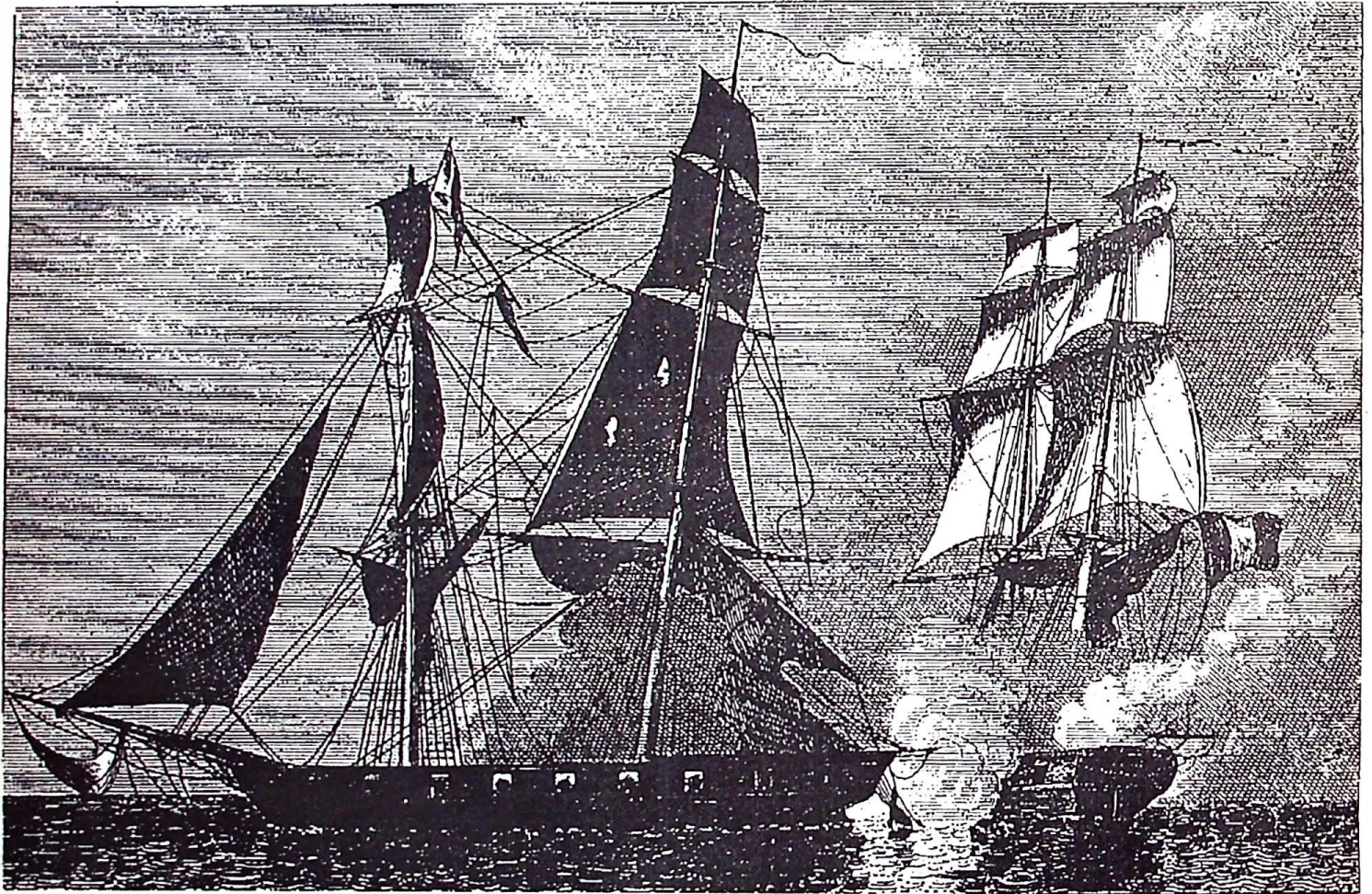
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# PATRIOT PIRATES

by STEVEN L. YUHAS



Historians have long focused on the ground war in winning Texas independence. Most people still do not realize that Texas had a Navy, let alone that it played a decisive role in the fight for freedom. In fact, the war began at sea and the last shots to be fired before the Republic became a State were in naval engagements.

To quote Theodore Roosevelt Jr., "It is no exaggeration to say that without it (the Texas Navy), there would probably have been no Lone Star Republic and possibly the State of Texas would still be a part of Mexico."

In April 1837, because of the incident with the Pocket, Captain Brown was replaced by Henry L. Thompson as captain of the *Invincible*. Likewise, due to his unauthorized voyage to New York, Captain Hurd was removed from command of the *Brutus*, replaced by James D. Boylan. After the change of command, Secretary of the Navy, S. Rhodes Fisher, decided he needed a sea cruise for his health and took the *Invincible* and *Brutus* on a prolonged trip on the Mexican Main. The controversial and exciting trip began out of Galveston on June 10th. The first contact came off the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula where they burned all of the fishing boats they could find. A larger vessel was overtaken and found to be loaded with logs. Captain Thompson, not being able to use the logs, extracted \$600. This he divided among the crew. The two raiders then sailed to Sisal and cannonaded the fort and town for three hours. That was just to let them know that the "Los Diablos Tejanos" were still in the area.

Repeated landings were made, burning at least nine coastal villages to the ground. Two vessels of about eighty tons each were captured, manned with prize crews and sailed to Matagorda. After capturing one schooner and burning another, they sailed to Alacran island, located north of the Yucatan.

No sooner had they dropped anchor, when a lookout from the *Invincible* spotted a sail coming from seaward. Captain Thompson, hoping to act as a decoy, hoisted the Mexican flag. The stranger changed course, showing signs of making a run for it. Captain Boylan raised the Texas flag and gave chase with the *Brutus*. After receiving two warning shots, the schooner hove-to and raised the English flag.

Captain Boylan could give a hoot less that the ship was British. He boarded and checked her papers. The schooner proved to be the 180 ton *Eliza Russell* loaded with goods consigned to a Mexican merchant. Captain Joseph Russell was furious, charging Captain Boylan with piracy, and threatening to bring the British Navy in to make reprisal. Captain Boylan brushed aside the threats, took over the ship and sailed back to the *Invincible*.

On the way back to Texas they captured the Mexican schooner *Correo* and *Rafaelita*. Once outside of Galveston harbor, the *Brutus* towed her prize across the bar, while the *Invincible*, having a greater draft, laid off to await the tide.

During the night, two Mexican warships, the *Vencedor del Alamo* and the *Libertador* had slipped up and at first light opened fire on the *Invincible*. The *Brutus* immediately set sail to go to the aid of her sister ship, but in her haste ran aground on the bar. Once the firing began, the citizens of Galveston came out to watch the uneven battle.

It was close work, the *Invincible* fighting gallantly, while the two Mexican ships took turns firing broadsides at her. Between the two Mexican ships, they mounted twenty-four guns, the *Invincible* eight. The Texas ship continued to fight until her guns got too hot to load. Then she made a run for the harbor. At first it looked like she would make it, but her deep draft caused her to run aground. The crew abandoned ship while the two Mexican warships came in for one last broadside. A storm was brewing, so the two battered enemy ships broke off the engagement and headed for Matamoros.

That night, the storm turned into a full scale norther. Both ships lay stuck on the bar until the furious winds and waves destroyed them. With the loss of the *Invincible* and the *Brutus*, the Texas Navy expired and the Gulf coast lay unprotected.

Late in 1838 Texas did not have a navy, but thanks to the war between Mexico and France, neither did Mexico. The war gave enough breathing time for Texas to regroup and assemble her second navy.

It wasn't until 1838 when Texas bought the brig *Potomac*, which was used as a receiving ship at Galveston. It was March, 1839 when a paddle wheel steamer was purchased and named in honor of the first Vice-President of the Republic of Texas, Lorenzo de Zavala. The *Zavala* carried eight guns and attained a top speed of nine knots. She was important to the navy because she could operate in calm weather and on rivers.

The new president of Texas, Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar, who unlike Sam Houston, was a firm believer in a navy to guard the Texas coast. He convinced Congress to allocate \$280,000 to have six ships built in Baltimore by Frederick Dawson. They were well designed, built and rigged. All of the ships were delivered between June 1839 and April 1840. The first to be delivered was the schooner *San Jacinto* with eight guns, then the schooner *San Antonio* of eight guns, the *San Bernard* of eight guns, the brig *Wharton* with sixteen guns, the brig *Archer* with sixteen guns, and the *Austin*, a 600 ton sloop-of-war with thirty-eight guns, for a total of eight ships and one-hundred and two guns.

For their new Commodore, they selected the twenty-nine year old Edwin Ward Moore, a Lieutenant with fourteen years in the American Navy. In December of 1839 he made the *Austin* his flagship. Next he went to New Orleans to recruit the crews to man his ships. Not all of the men were experienced but he filled his ships.

In Mexico, the Province of Yucatan was in open revolt. The distraction caused a delay in Mexico's plans to re-invade Texas. Under international law, any agreement made by a captured leader (*Santa Anna*) of a country is not valid. Thus, the Central Mexican Government felt that Texas still belonged to her and at the first opportunity, intended to get her back.

Therefore, President Lamar thought it prudent to give what aid Texas could to prolong the Yucatan rebellion. Accordingly the fleet was sent to patrol the Mexican coast, but ordered not to fire unless fired upon. Finally, towards the end of October a Mexican shore battery opened fire on the *Austin* and offensive action was taken. A base was set up on the Arcos Islands north of the Yucatan.

Before any defensive action could be taken the *San Jacinto* was lost. In a violent storm she slipped her anchor chain and was driven ashore, resulting in a total loss. Meanwhile, Moore had arranged a plan with the Yucatan rebels. The *Zavala* towed the *Austin* seventy miles up the Tobasco River to the town of San Juan Bautista. The joint effort forced the surrender of six hundred Mexican soldiers. Moore, short of funds, demanded \$25,000 tribute. If it was not paid, he threatened to destroy the town. The money was paid in silver coin brought out in leather bags. The ransom enabled Moore to make repairs, pay debts and refit in New Orleans with provisions to last ten months.

On the return trip the *San Antonio* got her digs in and captured a prize that later sold for \$7,000. There was a darker side, this was to be *Zavala's* last cruise. She had stopped to collect firewood when an unexpected storm forced her out to sea. The storm battered the little ship for three days. She had lost her rudder, a paddle wheel was damaged and her magazine flooded. A jury-rigged rudder and other repairs were made to make her seaworthy. Furniture and the interior bulkheads were sacrificed to feed her boilers. Only the superior seaman-

ship of Captain Lothrop brought her back to Galveston. Unable to raise \$15,000 for repairs, she deteriorated to be a loss to the Navy.

When Moore returned to Galveston, he expected to return to raid the Mexican coast. Instead, the San Bernard was sent with Texas diplomat James Webb to negotiate with the Mexican Government to recognize Texas as a Republic. France and then England had already done so. While negotiations dragged on all through the summer and fall of 1841 Moore engaged in mapping the Texas coast.

Some parts of the charts at hand were plotted as far as 75 miles from their actual location, with channel depths off by as much as a fathom. The Commodore did such a good job, that the new charts became the standard navigational tools for the United States, Great Britain and the Texas Navies.

Once again negotiations broke down: President Lamar took it upon himself to make an agreement with the still rebellious government of the Yucatan. Basically the Yucatan was duplicating the actions of Texas in 1835. But her rebellion would be the key factor in keeping Mexico from immediately re-invading Texas.

Lamar's agreement was that Texas would provide the full services of her navy to aid in fighting the Central Mexican Government. In return the Yucatan would pay an initial \$8,000 for fitting out the fleet, then \$8,000 per month while in active service. All spoils of war were to be divided equally between the two parties. The agreement was consummated without the consent of Congress. It was a personal contract between Lamar and the Yucatan.

It was a shrewd move because it kept the Mexican armies occupied with the rebellion and the cost of running the navy was being paid for by the Mexicans. To ready his ships Commodore Moore was forced to use his personal credit in New Orleans. He set sail for Vera Cruz on the last day of Lamar's administration, December 13, 1846. The very next day second term President Sam Houston ordered the return of the fleet, but Moore had already sailed. Houston thought the navy too costly and had a personal dislike for Commodore Moore.

The Texans kept their end of the bargain, by blockading ports and capturing four Mexican merchant ships. The cruise ended on 26 April, 1842, when the Yucatan paid out its last \$8,000 installment and began negotiations with Mexico.

While the expedition continued around the Yucatan, the San Antonio was sent back to New Orleans for provisions and additional crew. On the evening of 11 February, 1842, the San Antonio lay anchored in the Mississippi off New Orleans. Captain Seegar had gone ashore leaving orders with Lieutenant Fuller not to grant any shore leave until his return.

The men had been at sea for some time and were more than anxious to get ashore for wine, women and song. Somehow, some rum had been smuggled aboard. Under the false courage of liquor Sergeant Oswald, Seaman Pumpilly, and the other mutineers, went to the officer of the Deck, Mr. Dearborn and demanded liberty permits. This same group had previously plotted a mutiny off the coast of Mexico. Then, they planned on taking over the ship and selling it at Vera Cruz.

When Mr. Dearborn refused the request and ordered them below, the men, using loud and foul language, decided to leave without authorization. The commotion brought Lieutenant Fuller up from below. He quickly assessed the situation and told Mr. Dearborn to arm the marine guard and have the men arrested.

On that command Oswald pulled a tomahawk from his belt, swung at Lieutenant Fuller but missed. Then Pumpilly pulled a pistol from his belt and with one shot killed Lieutenant Fuller. The officers, although unarmed, joined in the fray. Midshipman Allen rushed in with flailing fists, and was clubbed to the deck with a belaying pin. Midshipman Odell charged after Allen and took a bayonet in his side. Mr. Dearborn was awkwardly knocked backward into an open hatch.

The mutineers then lowered a boat and headed for shore. But the shot and the cries of the wounded alerted the US revenue cutter Jackson, which overtook the mutineers before they could reach shore. The mutineers remained in jail for over a year before Commodore Moore returned to have them court-martialed.

Punishment of the mutineers took place on board the flagship Austin on the return trip to Mexican waters. Before the trial Sergeant Oswald had escaped and Seaman Pumpilly died in prison. As for the rest of the offenders, one was acquitted and another pardoned. Three received 100 lashes each and four were sentenced to hang.

At 12 o'clock on 26 April, 1843, the four prisoners sentenced to hang were taken to the quarterdeck and placed on a scaffold. After the crew was assembled and addressed, ropes were placed around the necks of the condemned men. At 12:20 a signal gun was fired and the four prisoners were run up to the foreyard. One hour later the prisoners were lowered, funeral services held, and their remains committed to the deep.

In April of 1842, Sam Houston sent orders that upon the squadrons return, they move to New Orleans for extensive repairs, after which they were to blockade all Mexican ports. However, he allocated no funds to pay for the refitting. In fact, Houston had withheld funds from the navy for over a year. The Commodore who had to use all his influence and credit to try and get his fleet into battle. In the process the hatred between Houston and Moore grew more intense.

Houston was pushing for annexation of Texas into the United States. He used all his power of office to prevent Mexico from recognizing Texas as a republic. In the meantime, Mexico was rebuilding her navy. She purchased two schooners from New York City and two paddle steamers from England. Many predicted that as soon as the Yucatan rebellion was resolved, Mexico would launch another invasion of Texas.

When it looked like Moore would get a ship ready to sail, Houston sent the Wharton to New Orleans. Badly in need of repairs, she would add to the time and cost of getting the fleet back into action again.

Come August the San Antonio was ready for sea. Out of money, Commodore Moore sent the San Antonio to the Yucatan to renew their \$8,000 per month contract. Making a stop at Galveston, Captain Seegar was warned that there were still men who plotted mutiny aboard his ship. The San Antonio left Galveston on August 27th with three months rations never to be heard of again.

There was much speculation about what happened to the San Antonio. Some say she went down in the same terrible storm that ran the San Bernard aground in September. Others said the ship was taken over by a mutinous crew and became a pirate ship flying the Jolly Roger.

The US brig Boxer added yet another story of an encounter with a ship that matched the description of the San Antonio near the Isle of Pines. After running up the French then the

American flags with no response, the Boxer chased the ship for two days but never caught her.

Later, two sailors showed up on Dauphine Street claiming to have been former members of the San Antonio's crew. After a couple bottles of rum they were reported to say '...The San Antonio's in good hands and you'll be hearing from her soon from San Jago de Cuba.' To give credence to their story, a dark, low slung schooner was frequently reported sailing off the southern coast of Cuba. England sent a frigate to search for the mystery ship and found no trace of the San Antonio. There were no further sightings. The San Antonio joined the roster of ships listed as lost at sea.

With the Zavala rotting at the dock in Galveston, the Texas Navy had dwindled to the leaking Austin and the unseaworthy Wharton. European powers had convinced Houston to lift the blockade on Mexico. It was time for Mexico to rebuild her navy and for Moore to raise the money to get his ships ready to fight.

One of the two steamers that Mexico bought from England was the Guadalupe, armed with two 68 pound Paixhan pivot guns and two 32 pound guns. She was the first ironclad with watertight compartments. The Paixhan shells were designed to explode after penetrating the ship. It had never been used in combat and the European countries were anxious to see how effective it really was.

Commodore Moore received word from friends that President Houston was planning on disbanding the navy. Without funds, Moore managed to get enough of an advance from the Yucatan to outfit his ships. His two ships only mounted thirty eight guns—eighteen 24 pounders and twenty 18 pounders.

On the other side the Mexicans had seven ships including two steamships, one of them an ironclad. Distributed among the fleet were forty-five cannon. Two of the ships were commanded by British officers. Despite the odds the undermanned Texas crews were chomping at the bit to have at the Mexicans.

Moore received order after order to return to Galveston, but ignored all of them. He had several reasons for his actions: First, Houston was going to disband the Navy. Second, he had a lot of his own money invested, besides the notes he had signed. Third, he had made a contract with the government of the Yucatan.

On 16 January, 1843, Houston had Congress hold a secret session and passed an act to disband the Navy and sell all of her ships. With a legal act in his hand, Houston sent Colonels James Morgan and William Bryan to New Orleans to fire the Commodore and bring the ships to Galveston. On February 25th Moore was presented with orders to leave the flagship. The Commodore refused, he was in the process of refitting with the money sent from the Yucatan.

The two Naval Commissioners sent a letter back to President Houston that Moore refused to abandon his agreement with the Yucatan. That he would only obey his initial orders to blockade the ports and would not give up his ships or report to the Department of the Navy.

On the 21st of March, new orders again relieved Moore of his command. Once again the Commodore refused and went about his business. The Commissioners then ordered Commander Lothrop to take command. Lothrop refused, under the premise that he had no orders from the Department of the Navy to do so.

On April 3rd, Moore received a notice from the Depart-



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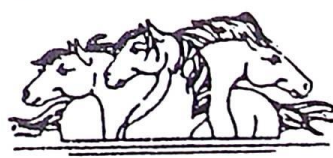


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ment to place himself under arrest and report to the Department. The grounds for his arrest were: Repeated disobedience of orders, failure to keep the Department advised of his operations and failure to settle accounts at the Treasury within three to six months as required by law.

Moore paid no attention to the dispatch and continued with his work, promising the Commissioners that he would proceed to Galveston as soon as he was ready to go to sea. The Commissioners took a liking to the young commander and allowed him to continue. Moore's zeal to keep the Navy alive became infectious.

Lieutenant C. B. Snow was in command of the decaying brig Archer, docked in Galveston. When he heard the news of Moore's planned adventure, he bluntly told the Navy Department that he was going to abandon the Archer and join the Austin in New Orleans. Fog delayed Austin's sailing for five days, which was just enough time for the Lieutenant to get on board. The Navy Department charged Snow with desertion and ordered him to report forthwith under arrest. An order which he of course ignored.

Before they sailed, Colonel Morgan volunteered to sail with the Austin. As an excuse, he claimed he had received word that the Mexican Navy was planning on sailing to Galveston to sack the base. In his heart, he knew that if the fleet went to Galveston it would be disbanded.

While giving the news to Moore, Morgan stipulated that he saw no reason not to go to Galveston via the Yucatan. The other Commissioners agreed. The Austin and the Wharton weighed anchor at 5:45 PM on 20 April 1843. Their course was for Telchac, where it was rumored that the schooner Montezuma lay in anchor.

Shortly after Moore's ships cleared for the open Gulf a proclamation from President Houston arrived. The long and wordy document stated that Commodore Moore on five different occasions refused to obey the lawful orders given him. Therefore, all orders prior to 29 October 1842 were null and void and for the Commodore was to obey subsequent orders. If the Commodore had already gone to sea, the Republic of Texas would not be responsible for his actions. Houston further requested that all nations friendly to Texas seize the ships Austin and Wharton and with their crews be brought back to Galveston. He proclaimed that E. W. Moore was committing piracy. As of the 23rd of March 1843 Moore was, in the eyes of the world, a Pirate.

The main battle at Campeche took place on 16 May 1843, ending in a victory for the Texans. It was an incredible feat of seamanship for two sailing ships dependent on the wind to defeat two steam ships.

On April 28th the two Texas ships spoiling for a fight, came up on Telchac but found they had missed the Montezuma by a matter of hours. She had sailed off to join four other ships at Campeche. The Texans followed and positioned themselves across the mouth of the harbor.

At dawn on the 30th five enemy ships came in sight. It only took a few minutes before the Mexicans opened fire. Their rounds went over and short, failing to hit the Texas ships. The Austin replied with five broadsides, most hitting their mark. An hour later there was a ten minute exchange with the Mexican steamer. All of the Mexican shots went high, while the Texans were again on target. Captain Boylan brought out the small and poorly armed Yucatan fleet. They were more of moral

support for the Texan than they were a threat to the enemy.

Just short of noon several broadsides were exchanged between Austin and the Mexican vessel. Only two shots were worth mentioning. One of the 68 pound rounds whooshed between Commodore Moore and Lieutenant Gray. Another went through the poop deck into the cabin and out the stern. At 12:40 the Mexican ships broke off the action and headed for safer ports. The Texans anchored in Campeche Harbor.

When the Texans went ashore they were greeted with cheers from the citizens of the town. Moore called on the Governor, who loaned him two 18 pound guns that found a berth on the Austin.

It was not until 16 May 1843 that the winds favored the sailing ships for a fight. During the lull, the Mexicans were reinforced by the steamer Regenerator and two small brigs. The details of the engagement came mainly from the decks of the Austin.

At 5:30 AM the Austin weighed anchor, followed by the Wharton and the Yucatan armada. The Mexicans backed off until 11:00 when the wind eased. Then the Mexican steamers started closing. While still out of range of the 24 pound guns and the two borrowed long reaching 18 pounders opened fire. The second shot took out the Guadalupe's flagstaff. A few minutes later, the Mexican Eagle sent a 32 pound shot that went through the No. 7 gun port wrecking the gun and wounding three men. A 68 pound shot from the Guadalupe took away Austin's starboard main top gallant, breast backstay, after shroud, main top gallant rigging, starboard main royal halliards and passed through the main top gallant sail. The second shot cut the starboard and fore top gallant steering sail. Sails, spars and rigging came tumbling to the deck.

A little past noon, Moore maneuvered his ship to run between the Guadalupe and the Montezuma firing broadsides to either side. There really was thunder on the Gulf with three ships at close quarters firing broadsides. The steamers, not liking close quarters and so many hits, pulled away. The Eagle was next in line but put on sail and did not re-enter the fight.

The Wharton took on the Montezuma, keeping her occupied for the duration of the battle, with Captain Lothrop skillfully maneuvering for the best shots. Guadalupe was carrying the brunt of the fight for the Mexicans. She fired many a round that went between the masts, but the English gunners were finding the range. Two 68 pounders fired at the Austin cut away the starboard main rigging and a foot rope of the main topsail. The battle raged unabated for over an hour.

About two o'clock a well aimed shot cut the Austin's main royal most, passed through the deck into the wardroom, went through the No. 3 storeroom, the pursers storeroom and lodged in the armory, wounding two men at the No. 9 gun. Another 68 pounder hit below the No. 1 gun, splitting the copper covered planks, creating a major leak. More shots tore away rigging and destroyed the No. 5 gun port. All of the top rigging was now cut away. Her rigging hanging askew, her decks strewn with debris, she continued to take the fight to the enemy.

The Austin had also found the range. One of the paddle wheels of the Guadalupe was badly damaged and many of her crew lay sprawled on the deck. It was three o'clock when the Guadalupe swung seaward. Commodore Moore signaled his ships to retire to Campeche and the battle ended.

The Austin had fired 530 rounds, her magazines very close to empty. Of her crew, three were killed, eight severely wounded

and seventeen lightly wounded. The Wharton only suffered two men killed and those caused by an errant gun crew.

Days later, deserters came in with news of Mexican losses. The Guadalupe had forty-seven killed, ninety-six seriously wounded and the ship badly mauled. The Montezuma's total was forty killed and over twenty wounded. The blockade of Campeche was broken and the city was able to hold off a ground attack. The two ship Texas Navy had earned their pay.

While the ships were being repaired, the Commodore and Colonel Morgan went ashore and read Sam Houston's proclamations. Neither of them believed that Houston could have gone that far. As of that moment the Mexicans could hang the lot of them without repercussions. As soon as both ships were seaworthy, they slipped out of the harbor to face the wrath of another enemy, Sam Houston.

Once at sea, Moore gathered the men to inform them of Houston's proclamation and his intention of sailing back to Galveston. He also stated that if somewhere along the route should capture become imminent, it was his intention to blow up the powder magazine and sink the ship. The men cheered the decision.

When the "Pirates" hove-to in Galveston Harbor on 15 July 1843, they were greeted with a twenty-one gun salute and a parade down the streets of Galveston. Before the cheering died out, Moore found the Sheriff and surrendered himself as a "pirate and an outlaw". The Sheriff wanted no part of it and refused to act until he received orders from Houston. While everyone was waiting, gala events were thrown for the heroes, while Houston was burned in effigy.

They did not have long to wait. On July 25th, Houston sent a directive that upon receipt, E. W. Moore was dishonorably discharged from the Navy, as was Captain Lothrop for refusing to take command and Lieutenant C. B. Snow, who had abandoned his command. It was all high-handed and illegal without a court martial. When the news came out, all the Officers on board both ships resigned. The men soon packed their bags and left their ships.

In February, a Congressional Committee deemed that Captain Moore was entitled to a fair trial. Moore went before a military court on the 21st of August. He was charged with misapplication of money, embezzlement of public property, neglect of duty, disobedience to orders, contempt and defiance of the law, treason and murder.

Even though Houston put three close friends to sit on the Board of Judges, Moore was acquitted of all counts except disobedience of orders. Moore's fellow officers were also acquitted. Houston tried to veto the decision but was voted down by Congress who added a resolution to honor Moore. The "Lord Nelson of the Texas Navy" was given the honor of having a county named after him in the Texas panhandle.

Houston did manage to put the ships up for sale at auction, but the citizens of Galveston bought them and gave them back to Texas, so the navy remained in tact. When Texas became a state, part of the terms of annexation were to incorporate its navy and all goods pertaining to its operation into the U. S. Navy.

In June of 1846, one last twenty-one gun salute in Galveston Bay marked the end of the Texas Navy. Never again would the Lone Star proudly wave across the Gulf.





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