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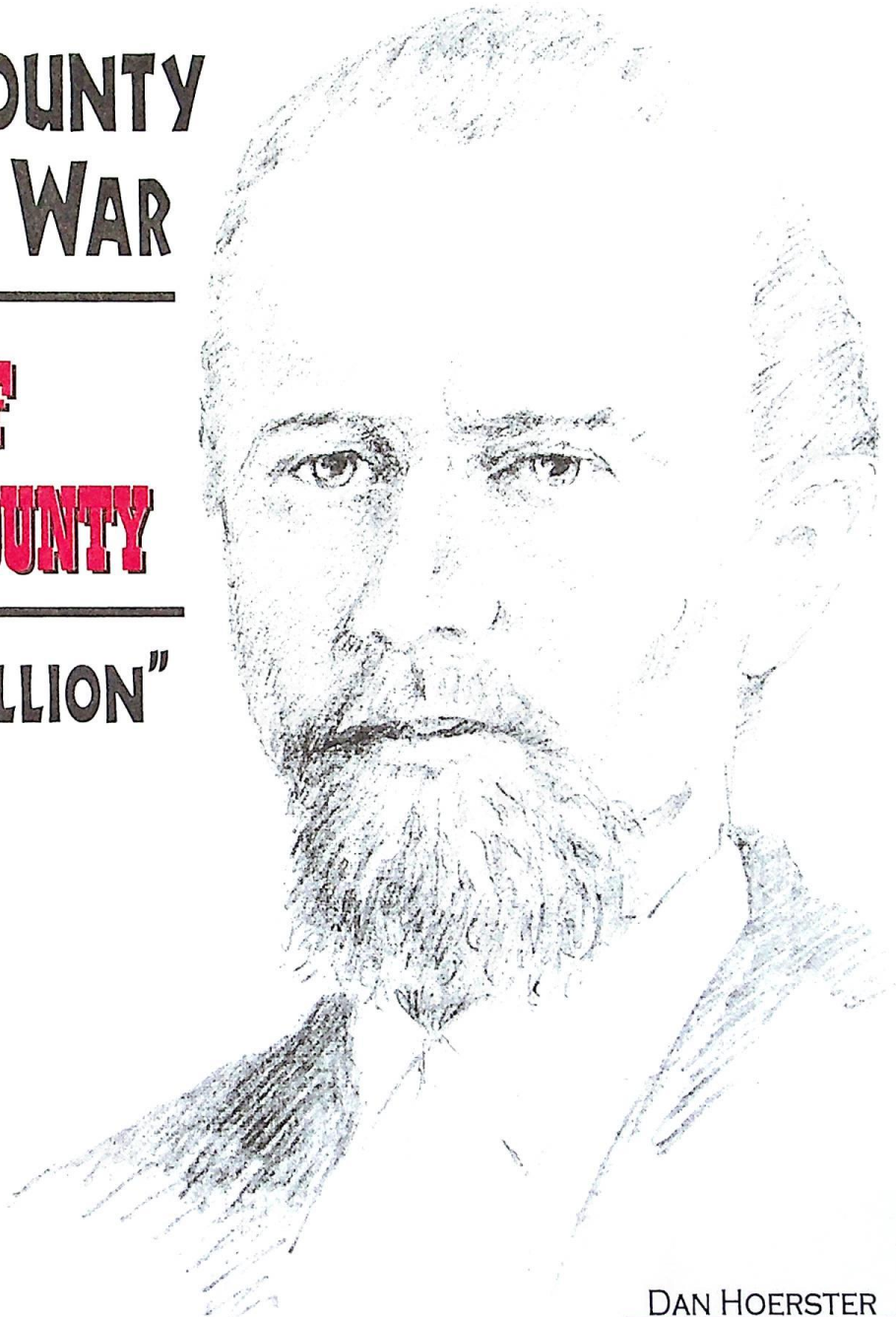
VOL. 5, No. 2
JULY/AUGUST 1998

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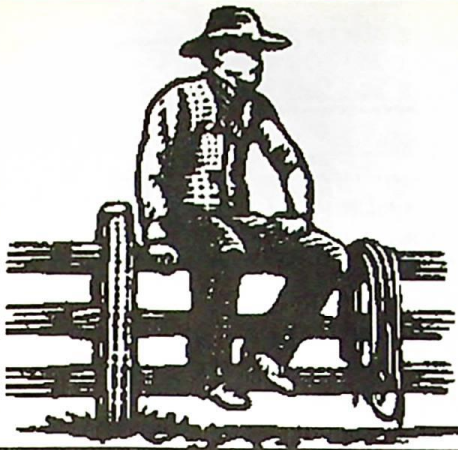
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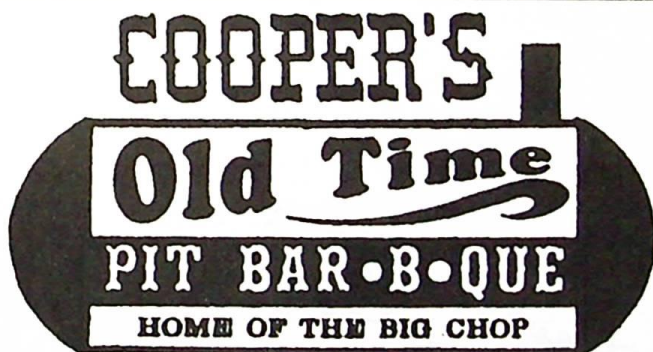
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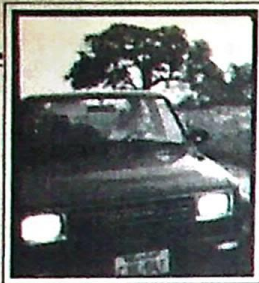


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FROM MS. INTREPID

NIGHTLIFE ON TRIPLE CREEK

Things just don't get more intrestin' than the other night. At about 1 AM I woke up to a crash, a bang and the sound of glass breaking—I thought I was back in Los Angeles getting another earthquake wake up call—I rolled Ira out of bed (no easy task, mind you) and told him what I heard.

Ira grabbed the .410 turned on every light in the house and pronounced it "all in my imagination" and then went back to bed. Giving the house a once over, I then went back to sleep.

At 5 AM I heard Ira up again, closin' the doors to the back room. "What's goin' on," I ask? Ira says "We've got a coon in the back room." Ira's gone mad. I think, now he's giving them privacy? I turned on the lights in the back room and there is the son of a gun perched up on the window casing with his nose buried in the furring, and not moving. Thoughts of just shooting him passed through my mind, but a hole in the house would not sit well with our landlord. Finally, I pulled the screen off of the bedroom window, grabbed a broom and prodded, swept, hissed, cursed and shoed his sorry self out that window.

Now, to the bigger question—how'd that bugger get in. Ira held that he opened the back door—sure—and cows fly. I'm wonderin' the same while I'm starting to do the dishes. I notice that the window over the sink is closed. I use a 1/2 gallon mason jar to prop it up, and there it was, broken, in the sink. Then I see that the screen has been bent back—there is a huge hole in the screen (the new screen, mind you, that we had to have repaired when they tried to gnaw their way into the kitchen last March). There was hair all around the hole—the devil incarnate had left his calling card..

In the morning, Ira went into Mike McPherson's and got the old live trap fixed and borrowed the "mother of all live traps"—we've had it with them coons—blood's gonna get spilled on Triple Creek.

Ira baited the traps and sat up on the front porch to wait for the nocturnal marauders to arrive. I went to bed. My theory is that you catch them in the live trap while you sleep, then in the morning, get a .22 and tell them say "Hi" to God for you. Ira took the more aggressive path. Bang! There went the .410. I went out and sure enough there was a critter writhing around in the live trap. One down.

As an aside, Ira baits the traps, I dispose of the carrion. I am a firm believer in taking precautions, especially around wild critters, rabies is something that you don't want to mess with. So, up I get, don my disposal outfit—a yellow slicker, yellow rubber gloves and ropers—over my nightshirt (if my mom in Palm Springs could see me now) and dispatch him to the front pasture. Clean off the live trap, re-bait it and go back to bed.

Bang! The .410 again. This time a possum who didn't even make it into the trap. Bang, Bang, Bang. Ira had him on the run up the drive. "Ira," I say, "give it a rest." He had already fallen asleep on the porch, twice—ha, the mighty hunter, indeed.

I awaken at 6, and sure as shootin' there are two of the little devils in the traps. Two shots with the .22, and I'm changing into disposal gear. The dead possum, looking more like swiss cheese, was halfway up the drive.

For the next week, we average 1.5 coons a night—the buzzards are so full that flight, without a long taxi is neigh onto impossible. Then the final coon deterrent arrives—Puma. Polly Hughes' Retriever and whatever else, with golden eyes, who terrorizes any critter smaller than him, up here while Polly is in Houston. This dog loves to chase and tree varmits—my kind of dog.

Peace reigns. I return to my normal chores, without yellow slickers and the like. The chickens, Conan the rooster, Thelma and Louise are spending nights safely in the coop, instead of over the sink in a canary cage. Fritz, the cat, is holed up in the back room avoiding Puma. Ever on patrol, Puma is ensconced on the front porch—tranquility. But not for long—it seems that the other night, while at the "O" Bar Ira ran into Don Lee, and with one thing leading to another, Ben arrived. A Lacey puppy, wrapped up in cute. Great, I think, what's another mouth to feed?

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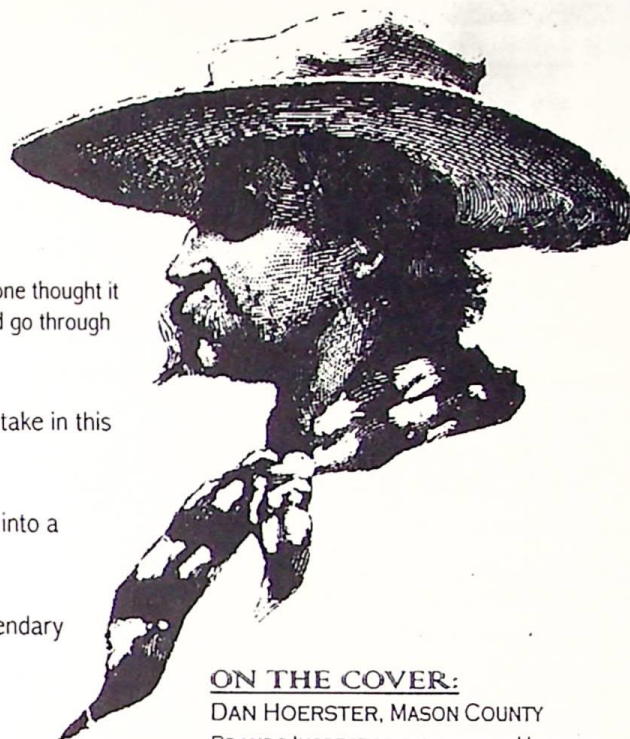
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ON THE COVER:
DAN HOERSTER, MASON COUNTY
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WAR, BY IRA KENNEDY

L. Kelly Down Is on Hiatus - He will return Next Issue

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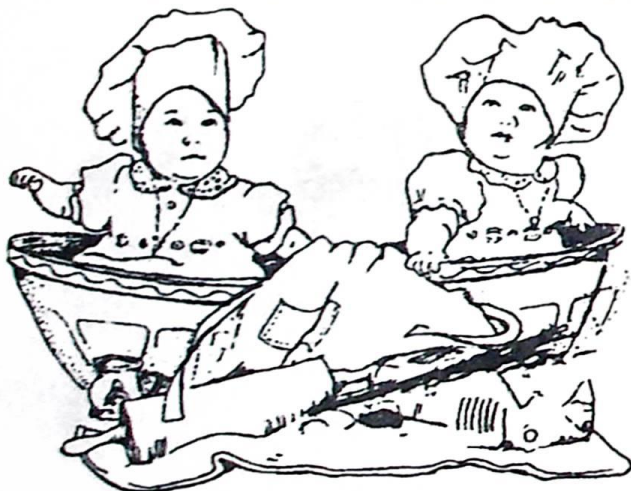
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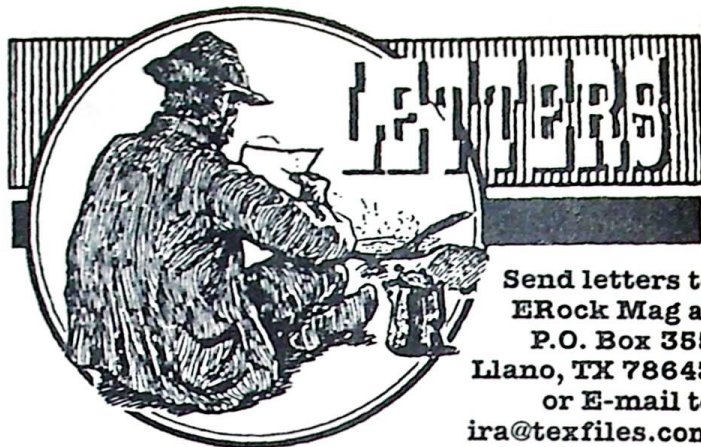
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ON THE MURDER MAVERICK

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed this years writer's rendezvous. McPherson's bar-be-cue gets better every year. I also wanted to say that I thought the May/June issue was one of the best yet. I grew up in Richmond, Texas and I remember that monument on the old courthouse square to the victims of the Jaybird-Woodpecker War Gary Brown wrote of.

I noticed in C.F. Eckhardt's "The Murder Maverick" he mentioned that he did not know of the story ever being used in a television or movie. I well remember in my youth the "Murder Maverick" appearing in the popular 60's TV series Raw Hide. I can't recall the entire plot, I think it had something do with a man who was using the Murder Maverick to haunt one of the drovers he felt had killed his brother. I do however remember the ending to the episode. The cattle drovers were sitting in camp having there evening meal as Wishbone (the cook) and Mushie (his helper) listened to them. As they discussed the events surrounding the murder steer one of them ask "what happened to that animal anyway?" Wishbone replied "what do you think your eating." At that the drovers lost their appetite.

Glenn Haderl
Austin, Texas

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RENDEZVOUS EXPERIENCE

A "Texas-Size" Thank You to Ira and Holly for hosting the Enchanted Rock Writer's Rendezvous! What a wonderful experience—sitting around a campfire with others who have similar interests and are exploring their passions of history, the love of the land, and even the many mysteries of our great state!

I had never actually met Ira and Holly until then—but after about 2 minutes with them and meeting other writer's, I felt like part of a huge, loving family! I can't wait to do it again next year!

The company was exciting, the food and hospitality were great, Jim Inks tour of his historical and spectacular ranch a true highlight! A special thanks to Jim, also, for getting me close to a place that warms my heart! Thank You Jim!!

Thank you, *Enchanted Rock Magazine*, Ira & Holly, and all the "crew" for such a memorable experience and for our bi-monthly escape into history and enchantment!

Another thank you to Holly for convincing me to finally get on-line!

P.S. Say hello to Thelma,
Louise, and Conan for us!

Love,
Pam Moorman

PEG LEG QUERY

In a book I am reading there is mention of an old stagecoach stop named PEG LEG in Kimble county. Do you have any info on this?

Sorry, but if any of our readers know they can contact the magazine and we will forward you the information to you, or if on-line they can e-mail you directly. Please let us know if you get a response. Ira

Thanks,
Scott Day
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TEXIAN HERITAGE

This is just a note to let you know that the Texian Heritage Society, Inc. web site has moved. We've grown so much in the past year that we needed more space for our web site so we've signed on with a new ISP. Our new URL is:

<http://users.constant.com/~ths/>
our new email address is: ths@nabi.net

KXAM-TV 14 REPORTER

Thomas Aitchison joins the KXAM-TV14 as Hill Country reporter. Prior to joining KXAN, Mr. Aitchison worked in Midland, Texas for KWES-TV 9 where he covered the city beat as well as the school district. He is a graduate of the School of Journalism at University of Texas and started his journalism career at KVRX 91.7 FM

WELCOME

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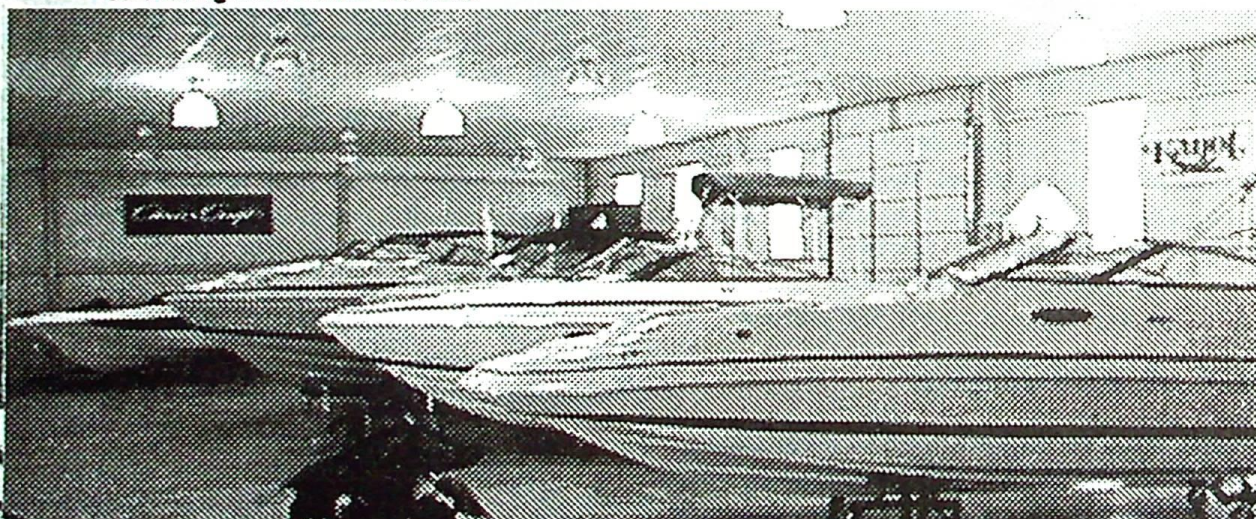


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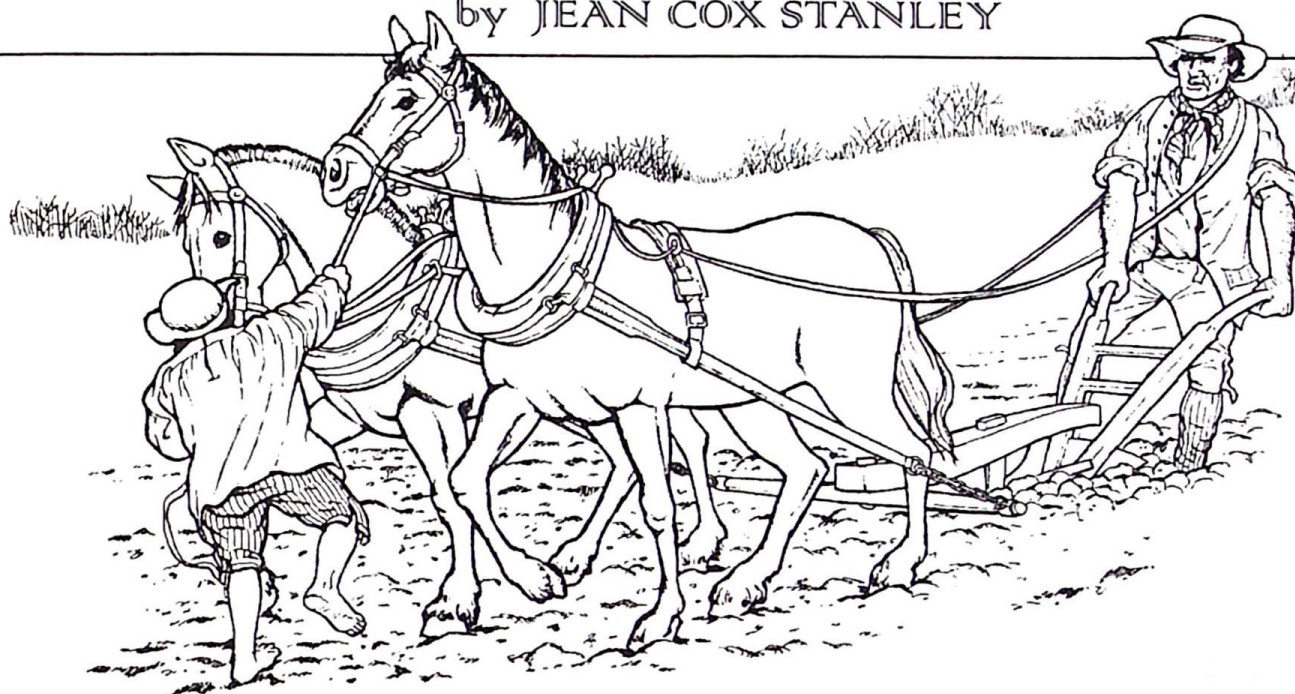


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THE HISTORY OF BLANCO COUNTY

by JEAN COX STANLEY



INTRODUCTION:

There are a number of histories written of Blanco County. My purpose in writing this short one is to pass on my knowledge and feelings about the county of my birth. ♦ It is my hope that if this history is read by family members they will see it as the story of not just any pioneers, but that of our ancestors. You will find that some of our physical characteristics, vocabulary and speech patterns, as well as some of our strengths and weaknesses come from these early settlers. In reading about these courageous men and women, it is my wish that you will gain respect and admiration for their perseverance and accomplishments. ♦ Remember that you are the branches of the family tree and your strength comes from your roots. ♦ Some of the things I have written about might seem to contain too much explanation or description. I have read that you should write these papers as if you assume the person reading them has no knowledge of where or what you are talking about. Possibly some great-grandchild in New York City in the year of 2050 might read this. Hence, the superfluous detail.

THE BLANCO PIONEERS AND HOW THEY LIVED

Benjamin Milam received a contract from the Mexican government in 1826 to colonize and settle two hundred families within his grant. Milam's grant took in that area of the Edwards Plateau lying between the Colorado and Guadalupe rivers included present day Blanco County. These rights were sold several times, and ultimately to the Bering Brothers in London. Nothing further was done with it.

The Ben Milam spoken of is the famous Milam of Texas history. He helped defend Goliad and is known for his words,

"Who will follow old Ben Milam?". He was speaking of the battle called the Capture and Storming of Bexar. Milam County, Texas as well as Milam Park in San Antonio was named after Ben Milam.

When the pioneers entered the area, the movement of the frontier was from east to west. This opposed the major drainage systems of the Colorado and Guadalupe rivers and their tributaries which was from west to east through Indianola on the Texas coast.

By the end of the Mexican period of Texas history in 1836, the first known American land surveyors had entered the area that is now Blanco County. They surveyed land grants lying

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along the Blanco River. The J. L. McCrocklin grant is the oldest grant within the present limits of Blanco County. It was granted by the Mexican government in June, 1835. It is identified as being on the Martin's Branch of the Blanco River about seven miles east of the present townsite. This is near the area where the Coxes later settled.

It can be said that the history of Blanco County had its real beginning when James H. Callahan, a Texas Ranger and surveyor, camped in the Blanco valley. He was so impressed that he returned seventeen years later with family and friends to settle in the area. The group came from Caldwell County near Luling and settled on the Martin's fork of the Blanco River. If Captain Callahan had camped in the Blanco valley in the spring, it is understandable that he would want to return there, for in that season there was something new at every turn.

As he entered the Hill Country, the air was cleaner and direr. The countryside was carpeted with wildflowers; such as the blue-bonnets, Indian head and paint brush, and other flowering plants. The hills were full of game. In 1854 it was the undisputed domain of the Indian, the bear, the panther and the deer, as well as much small game. Wild turkeys strutted in grandeur along the ridges. Honey bees thrived and honey was in the trees for the taking. "It is paradise", wrote one of the early pioneers.

Years after Callahan and the Coxes came into the area, I sat in our cabin at Blanco following my drive from New Braunfels. I agree with the person who said "It is paradise", but I know some of the Hill Country's adversities. The pioneers were soon to realize it was not always faultless. In the spring it still had much to offer. The same species of wildflowers bloom in abundance. The trees still have the beautiful "Irish Green" that they have in the early spring. The turkey's gobble as I arrive at the cabin. Thinking of childhood years, I remember going with my grandfather when he robbed the bees of their honey. He did this by using a smoker that he directed toward the bee in order to stun them. I hid behind a tree at a safe distance in order not to be stung.

Even now, as I sit here writing, I hear the call of the turkeys again. Is it any wonder that I enjoy time spent here? It is a time of renewal.

We can only wonder: how many years will we experience these marvels of nature. When we built our cabin in 1980 and I began spending time as an adult in the Hill Country, there has been an apparent decline in the evidence of wild life. Only occasionally do I hear the call of the turkey or the yelp of the coyote. So what is the problem? Too many people, fire ants and cedar. Perhaps the wildlife still abounds in these hills, but are unseen because of the proliferation of cedar. Should we pull up stakes and move on as my early ancestors would have done or clear the land at great expense? At this writing the Federal government forbids the clear-cutting of mature cedar. If continued, this land will be worth very little as far as productivity is concerned.

One of the things that made the Hill Country so beautiful was its grass. As beautiful as it was, it was a trap—a trap baited with grass. If the pioneer entered the Hill Country in the early spring within the streams were flowing and the grass was green, it was hard to realize it could become an arid zone. Rain could be plentiful for a few years and then the cycle could shift. Hondo

"Papa put words together as he put rocks together in making fences. He had an eye for rocks. A feel, I should say, because he was nearly blind. I remember a day that he was building fence and I was learning. 'Rocks must fit as close as words', he said as he put a rock in place to see if it would be content. It was a trick he had learned from nature and he had the patience to do it right. He never put a stone where it didn't want to stay. 'Work with nature, not against it', he said, 'if you want a fence to stand.'"

Crouch, the much celebrated "Mayor" of Luckenbach, a small community near Blanco, knew how to describe the terrain after a rain. He said, "She's got her Sunday clothes on." Nature did not always remember to wear her Sunday clothes or use her best manners.

My great-great-grandfather and family came into this area in 1854. Soon there was a great drought. Small streams dried up and cattle died of thirst and starvation. When the rains finally came, there were floods and the creeks and rivers overflowed.

With the introduction of cattle to the area, the grass situation worsened. The cattle were eating the grass that had been holding the thin Hill Country's soil in place. The bed rocks were the reality. It had taken many centuries to bury them but only a few years to reveal them. As the grass grew sparse, more rocks were exposed. The pioneer now had another problem to contend with—erosion. But even the rocks were put to good use. Fences were built of wood as late as 1859 with cedar the preferred material. Soon the Germans of the area began building fences of flat stones. Entire families labored for months or even years to build stone fences on their farms.

The amount of work involved and the volume of stone moved staggers the imagination. By 1860, it is estimated that several hundred miles of stone fence had been built in Comal County, with many more under construction. A German family in Gillespie County, a neighboring county to Blanco County, had twelve hundred acres enclosed with a stone fence. Closer to home or shall I say closer to family, their comments about fence building came from Sidney Cox, my father's cousin. Sidney was speaking of his father, John Cox, when he said, "Papa put words together as he put rocks together in making fences. He had an eye for rocks. A feel, I should say, because he was nearly blind. I remember a day that he was building fence and I was learning. 'Rocks must fit as close as words', he said as he put a rock in place to see if it would be content. It was a trick he had learned from nature and he had the patience to do it right. He never put a stone where it didn't want to stay. 'Work with nature, not against it', he said, 'if you want a fence to stand.'"

Great Uncle John Cox, the fence builder, was also the story teller in the family. He spoke much as the respected author, James Thurber, did.

It is hard for the later generations to understand the hard-

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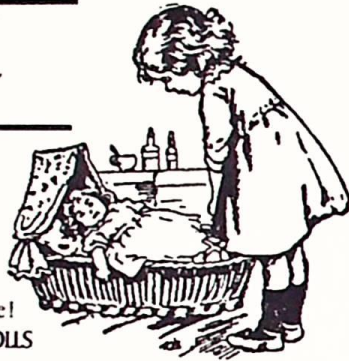
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ships and inconveniences that the early pioneer had to contend with. The settlers first work was to build cabins for their families in order to keep themselves, food and gunpowder dry. After that, the pioneers prepared to defend themselves and their cattle from the Indians.

A number of Texas Rangers were stationed in Blanco County. Indians were much in evidence, especially the Comanche and several groups of Apaches. Many of the Lipan had died of smallpox brought in by the Europeans. The rough terrain of Blanco County provided an excellent point of rendezvous for raids and defense. Trouble was to continue with the Indians until well after the Civil War. The returning veterans drove the encroaching Indians one hundred miles to the northwest, their pre-war position.

Many schools had to be closed. Men took their weapons with them at all times, even to church. My grandfather, Andrew Sidney Cox, born in 1867, said that he did not remember being bothered by the Indians. However, he did say that on the night of a full moon, known as "Comanche Moon", he and his brothers had to stay awake to watch for them. Many Indian artifacts such as arrowheads, spear points and hatchets have been found along and near the Cove Creek on our place in Blanco County.

After the pioneers had built their cabins and cleared the land for farming, they found that farming was not an easy task in the rocky Hill Country. For two centuries, the American pioneer had been working out a technique for the utilization of the humid region east of the Mississippi River. But in crossing the Mississippi, they were in an environment for which they had no experience. The result was a temporary break down of the machinery and ways of agriculture. East of the Mississippi, civilization stood on three legs—land, water and timber. West of this line it stood on one leg—land. Texas historian, T. R. Fehrenbach says this about the conditions; "Not only did the frontier families have to learn to cope with land, they had to learn to cope with isolation. These were the years when the frontier in Central Texas was terrible in its isolation. Families which moved to this area in the 30's, 40's and 50's left civilization far behind. Many who came did not stay, as all did not have the courage and energy." It also took adaptation and some capital. The men were able to adapt to the changeable weather, distances and fear better than the women.

The diaries and letters of the women tell of the loneliness and deprivation that could drive them mad. Noah Smithwick in his book, *The Evolution Of A State* says, "Men talked hopefully of the future, children reveled in the novelty of the present, but the women bore the burden." One elderly lady said, "Texas was heaven for men and dogs, but hell for women and oxen." Perhaps the men were better able to adapt because they could find some escape in hunting game or in a battle to fight. Fehrenbach has this to say about the Anglo-Texan of 1835; "Texas was drawing men who sought violence like strong drink. If they could not find a war, they were disposed to make one."

In spite of all the hardships, the settlers continued to come. Not long after Captain Callahan and E. C. Hines moved to the Blanco valley and built cabins on opposite sides of the river, others followed. There were so many that real estate entrepre-

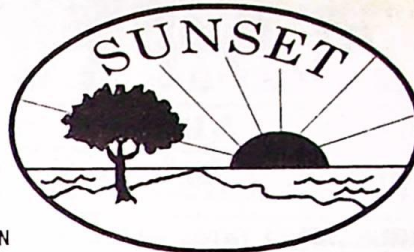
neur, John Pitts laid out a town in about 1855. The name of the town was Pittsburg. In 1858, Blanco County was created and the county seat was located across the river from Pittsburg.

The court met for several years under a tree and later in a log schoolhouse. Later the name of the town was changed from Pittsburg to Blanco. The name Blanco means 'white'. The town got its name from the river cliffs. The river was named by the Spanish Aguayo expedition which explored Texas in 1720. This expedition gave names to many natural objects. A few of the names survived.

It was not until 1855 that the town of Blanco was incorporated. Comal County included the land that is now Blanco City until Blanco County was organized in 1858. Soon after the establishment of Blanco, the Civil War broke out. This brought on very hard times for many people. Mail was brought in once a week and everyone met the mail wagon. This was a moment of much rejoicing or much sorrow. If there was mail from a loved one, it was a happy time. Bad news, or no news, were sad times indeed.

Other hardships had to be faced also. These were the days when a woman received bulk cotton and rode 10 or fifteen miles to a neighbor's spinning wheel. There she would spin the thread and weave the cloth on a loom before making a garment. It was also the duty of the women and children to help in the fields with work that the men at war usually did. Many of the former slaves remained loyal and the work carried on would have been impossible without them. My great-grandfather, Andrew J. Cox, and his brother, Aaron W. Cox were in the war, as well as a brother-

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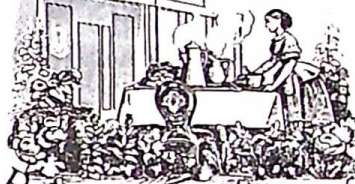
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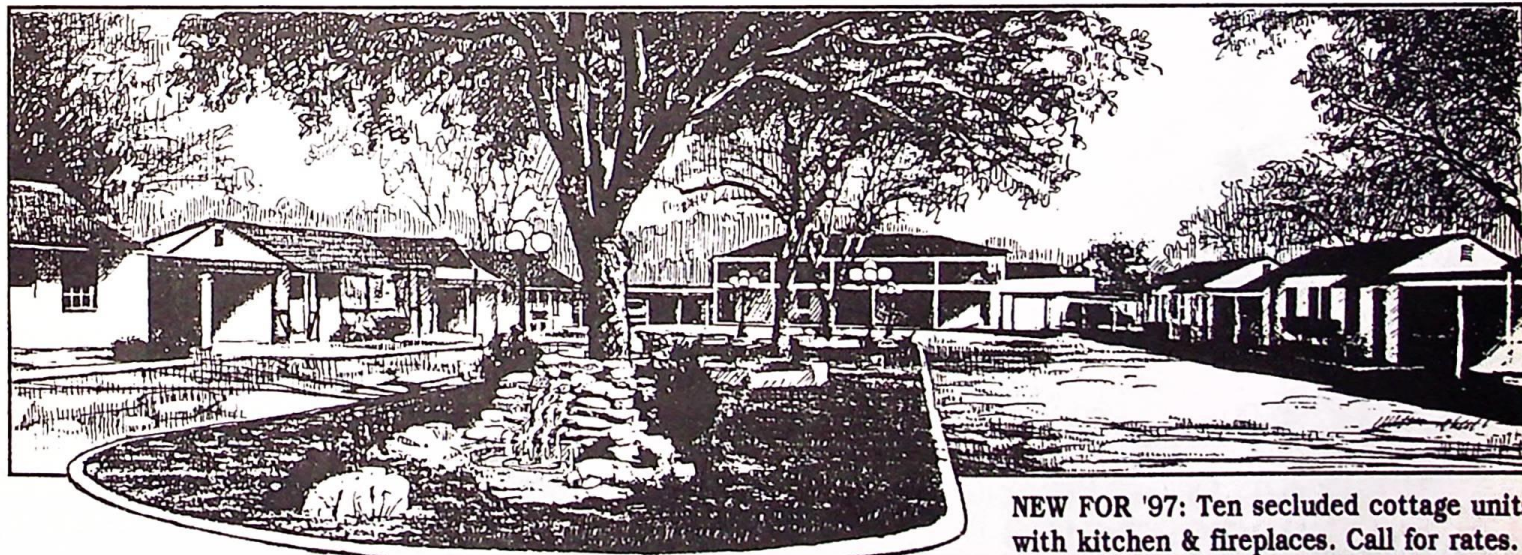
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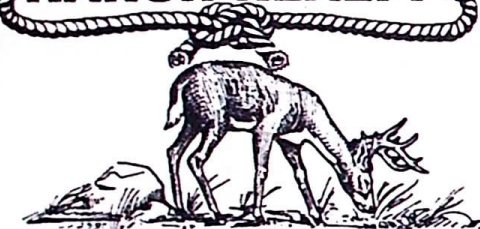
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in-law to the Coxes. All were from Blanco County. My paternal grandmother had both her father and grandfather from the Wagner family in the Civil War. They were living in Tennessee at the time but moved to the Blanco area soon after the war.

During and after the Civil War, progress depended on freight. Most of the provisions used in the Blanco area were hauled from Austin, San Antonio, San Marcos or New Braunfels. Great grandfather Andrew J. Cox did some of this freighting. It was something that had to be done and it was a quick way to get cash in the years when crops failed.

This freighting was usually done with six mules, two abreast. Often oxen were used. I have been told that my great-grandfather did much of the freighting after the Civil War to Columbus, T. On one return trip, his wagon broke down where my brother Howard now lives, near Blanco. This great-grandfather left his wagon, went home and did no more freighting. I suppose he had one too many breakdowns.

The early farmers living in the Blanco area took their grain to the New Braunfels mills. There they bought tobacco, sugar, gunpowder and other supplies needed but not grown or produced on the farm. Family stories related that great-grandfather Andrew J. Cox bought several bolts of cloth at a time in New Braunfels. He took the material home for his wife to make clothing for their large family and perhaps sheets, curtains, tablecloths, etc.

During the Civil War, many cattle browsed the range with little or no care. When the soldiers returned, there were many unbranded cattle. The men who were the most expert with the rope and branding iron got more than their share of the cattle.

History books are full of talk of cattle drives as well as many other interesting life struggles. Animals other than cattle had to get to market. Less has been written about these drives. Turkeys were driven to market as were hogs. One hog drive that was of special interest to me was told in a story by Herman Fischer, a friend of my grandfather, Sidney Cox. Mr. Fischer has this to say about this particular hog drive: "In the 1880's, there was a heavy acorn crop and hogs fattened early. Five or six hundred were gathered from the woods and driven from Llano to Blanco City, Fischer Store, and over the Devil's Backbone to San Marcos. The hogs were lead by a wagon loaded with corn. An old man sat in the back of the wagon, called to the hogs and scattered corn to keep them moving."

By 1870 cotton was being grown in Blanco County. Eli C. Hines was one of the very early settlers to raise sheep and cotton in Blanco County. The Cox brothers, my great-grandfather and his brother grew cotton by this time. The cotton had to be hauled in seed form to New Braunfels. There it was ginned. Some years later a number of cotton gins were built in and around the Blanco area. About 1900 a cotton gin was established on the site that would later become our home place. A book found in the Blanco library states that a gin valued at \$1,200 was on Cox property. As children, my brothers, sisters and I enjoyed playing around the parts of the gin that still stood.

Hines, the early grower of cotton and raiser of sheep is quoted as saying; "Some years floats in grease. The year 1878 was that kind of year. Grass was fine. All kinds of grain was good and cotton just outdid itself." Perhaps the Cox brothers made a good profit that year also.

"In the 1880's, there was a heavy acorn crop and hogs fattened early. Five or six hundred were gathered from the woods and driven from Llano to Blanco City, Fischer Store, and over the Devil's Backbone to San Marcos. The hogs were lead by a wagon loaded with corn. An old man sat in the back of the wagon, called to the hogs and scattered corn to keep them moving."

Progress continued in Blanco County. The courthouse was erected in Blanco City in 1885. It was designed by noted architect, F. M. Ruffini, who crowned its relatively unadorned square limestone body with an elaborate mansard roof. The courthouse was Blanco's pride and joy. It served its intended function for only five years. Three elections were held in the county and it was voted that a new county seat would be at Johnson City, a town fourteen miles north of Blanco. This move caused many hard feelings between the two towns, including a killing.

A great uncle, Aaron Cox, known as "Judge", was sheriff of Blanco County at this time. Blanco citizens schemed for years after the Johnson City move to reestablish Blanco as the county seat, but all efforts failed.

The old courthouse has served many a purpose. It has served as a bank, newspaper office, hospital, opera house, school, union hall, museum, restaurant, etc. Few towns can claim a vacant courthouse which became so useful for so long. There is a continual effort by the Blanco Preservation Society to save it.

As soon as population density allowed, the settlers pooled their resources and established churches, schools and newspapers. Even before Blanco City was created the Methodist Church was founded. The Christian Church was organized in 1857 and the Baptist Church in 1859.

I recently found numerous records which indicated that my father, mother and grandmother Cox had been active in the Methodist Church in Blanco. The present church was built in 1883. This is the church in which my husband and I were married on February 8, 1948. My parents were married by a Methodist minister in my mother's parents Blanco home on June 20, 1914.

My great-grandfather, Josiah Cox, was a Methodist minister. In the early times this meant that he rode a horse to different homes or places of worship on Sundays. James Wagner, another great-great-grandfather was a Baptist minister. He performed the marriage ceremony for my grandmother Mary E. Wagner and grandfather Andrew Sidney Cox.

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TELLING WAR STORIES

BY WES WILLIAMS

THE WASTED WAR

One of the earlier settlers along the Tonkawa coast was Captain Ayllet C. Buckner. Buckner was a captain of militia and kept a trading post near Matagorda on the coast at a place called Bay Prairie. Now Captain Buckner had occasion to fight the Indians from time to time and fight them he did—but he also profited from them, every chance he got. One bright day as he sat smoking on his porch, the good captain saw a party of Karankawa coming with arms loaded full of trading material—this would be a good day. The Karankawa announced that they'd come to trade for guns, powder, and shot—an unusual request for they normally wanted coffee, sugar and shiny trinkets. They seriously informed the trader that there was to be a great war with their hated enemies the Tonkawa. With word and sign they told Buckner something like the following:

"He, it is, who is our enemy. He, we will fight and rub him off the face of the Mother Earth. We, are they who have brought the skins of many animals, the oil of the Great Water Lizard, shells from the Big Water to the South to trade for the Thunder Sticks of the White Men. These, they are what will make us strong in our War with those who are the Person-Eaters."

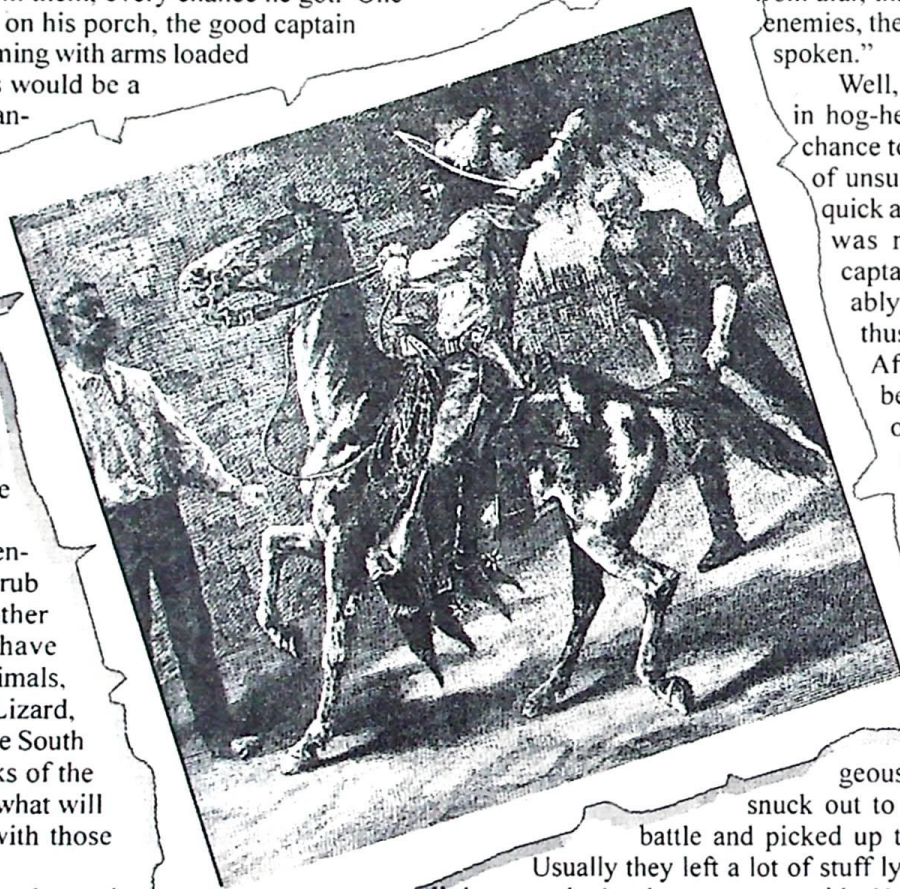
Buckner smelled money to be made here and promptly, though not too promptly, made a deal for a few old trade-guns and small amount of powder and shot with his Karankawa "brothers". He may even have smiled at who was calling who bad names. Some time later as a new curl of smoke drifted up from his pipe, he noticed another group of Indians coming from the north—Tonkawa. They were loaded down with trade goods as well and made the same request of Buckner—guns, powder and shot. Oh, well, the captain knew what was coming when they began to sign something like this:

"Our Brother, He, who is our hated enemy and lives by the Big Water in the South, He we will make War on and rub from the Earth. We are they who have come to our Brother to trade these skins from the True Dog (wolf) and the Little Running Dog (fox), the Deer and Bear. With you, our Brother, we will trade for the magic Thundering Iron that kills from afar, that we may rub out our enemies, these Dog Eaters. I have spoken."

Well, Captain Buckner was in hog-heaven. Here was the chance to get to another bunch of unsuspecting traders. So, quick as a wink, another swap was made—much to the captain's favor. He probably smiled and waved enthusiastically as they left. After all, he'd gotten the best of both groups, two one-sided trades in short order—he must have wished that everyday would be like that.

Then a thought came to him—something that could make this day even more fiscally advantageous to him. What if he snuck out to the site of this great battle and picked up the spoils afterwards. Usually they left a lot of stuff lying around after their little wars, that's what everyone said. He might even get back some of the armaments he'd just traded. Eureka, here was gold. So Captain Buckner gathered up the things he'd need for the trip, including a good telescope, and kissing the good Haus-Frau and assorted sniffly kinder he set off for his turn of good fortune.

A short while later the good militia captain ensconced himself in a safe spot with a good view of the open prairie where the great Indian War was presently to take place. With telescope in hand, Captain Buckner merely awaited the opening bell of a profitable afternoon. He didn't have to wait long for soon each side of the prairie came alive with the painted and festooned bodies



of the participants—it was almost time.

Breathless minutes passed by as the trader waited in his hideout. The two warring parties just stood and faced each other silently, as if each side was sizing up the other and waiting for the Medicine to be right. At over half a mile they stood quietly glaring at each other—as if on cue, both sides suddenly broke forth in shouting and yelling of insults, the exposing of buttocks and genitalia as a sign of derision and contempt. After several moments of this both sides suddenly raced at one another as the damp coastal air was rent with the screams and shouts of the two incensed war parties—here it came.

But, all came to a halt some quarter of a mile apart as the air again came alive but this time with arrows and musket smoke in a veritable barrage. The smoke lay across the prairie in

a great haze. For several moments it was hard to tell what was happening—though, by God, it sounded like singing. As the gentle breeze finally cleared the air the sight meeting the captain was one of surprise and shock. Not one body lay on the field of battle; not a single arrow stuck up from the ground. Seems the participants had satisfied their honor, after all, had these brave warriors not properly insulted their hated enemy with every offense and obscene gesture in their arsenal of insolence? Was not honor and their good names satisfied? Had not this been a good war? Had they not retrieved all the enemy's arrows that had been fired toward them? Had they not won?

Well, let's close the curtain on the good Captain Buckner and the Great Indian War that, at least for him, went nowhere—'tis only kind.

THE FLYING JACKASS ARTILLERY



One of the early Spanish settlers to South Texas who'd received a land grant from the government of New Spain in Mexico City was Don Martin de Leon. Don Martin ran a large horse and cattle rancho with huge holdings around De Leon's Town, later to become the City of Victoria, Texas.

The rancho was on the lower Guadalupe River, some 30 miles inland from San Antonio Bay on the Gulf of Mexico, near the border of the Tonkawa and Karankawa areas of control.

Don Martin had suffered problems with the Comanches raiding south through the Tonkawa lands to steal his horses, and the Karankawa raiding north to steal his cattle for meat. The Comanches were very nomadic and raided nearly to the coast and were very strong and fearsome, but the Karankawa were close at hand and lived in settled villages. So it fell on the Karankawas to be both closer and more continually troublesome and it was upon them that Don Martin decided to make a punishing raid of his own.

He had many *vaqueros* (the true Mexican cowboy) working for him and although they were not professional soldiers, they were at least enthusiastic to help their *Jefe*. So the good Don rounded up a group of them, made sure they were armed, and for what he reasoned would give him the firepower advantage, lashed a small swivel cannon to the back of one of his mules.

It was only a matter of time before Don Martin's armed expedition came upon some of the miscreants and gave chase as the Karankawa fled and ran to cover in a large brush motte on the salt marsh. Now dislodging a crowd of PO'ed Karankawa warriors and their families from a mesquite motte was going to be stout work and Don Martin was beginning to sense some lack of enthusiasm among his *vaquero* cowboys. What to do? Oh yeah, the cannon. He could blast the Karankawas from their lair on the motte with the gun, a perfect solution. Then it was discovered that in their haste, one of the troops had forgotten to pack the gun mount for the 2-pounder. By the Sweet Saints—what was to be done now? Don Martin didn't relish waiting until his men could cobble together some sort of a make-shift substitute mount, so what could be done to prevent the Karankawa from getting away? Suddenly it came to him.

In a flash, Don Martin had the mule with the swivel gun barrel lashed across its back brought up and turned sideways to the Karankawas brush hide, powder was rammed in followed by musket balls, horseshoe nails, and other assorted sundry—then a

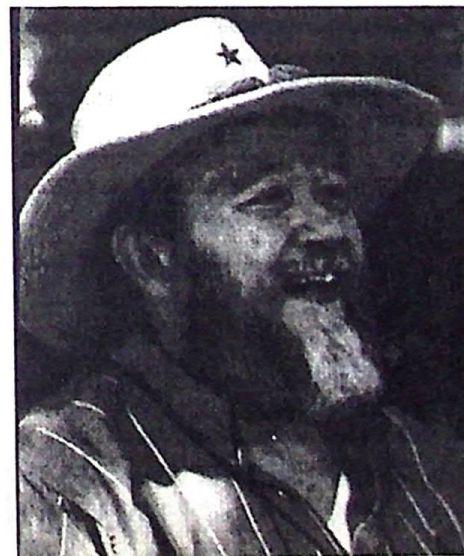
flaming torch was put to the touchhole and KA-BOOM

The gun's concussion and recoil flipped the mule in a perfect somersault, landing in an indignant flaying mass of kicking feet and angry braying. Now, there are fewer things in this world more contrary than a severely frightened and misused mule, especially a misused Texas mule who has ended up inverted atop a smoking cannon barrel.

The *vaquero* gun crew had scattered like a covey of spooked quail, but were called back to help the *Jefe* solve the problem with the mule. The mule couldn't right himself, by himself, not with a bronze two-pounder acting as an anchor, not with his harness all twisted around. Don Martin finally got some of his *vaqueros* to get all around the mule and try to turn him over and get him up for a second shot—rather a difficult undertaking considering the flaying of sharp hooves and biting teeth, not to mention the weight of the cannon barrel below. As Ranger Noah Smithwick, mentioned previously, understated, the mule “philosophically declined to rise until released from his burden.”

Well, folks, that's what had to be done, with some of the more adventurous *vaqueros* sneaking up to the thrashing mule and cutting the swivel-gun loose. During the melee, the Karankawas had departed for parts unknown and if any had been felled by the cannon shot, no sign remained of any casualties.

Ranger Smithwick fails to mention how Don Martin de Leon and his merry band of *vaqueros* got the gun back home, but you can bet it was on the back of a different mule.



WES WILLIAMS.
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MEET "BET-A-MILLION" GATES

BY JEFF CARROLL

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that a Texas longhorn steer could go through anything
constructed by man, if he had a mind to.

There are more over achievers in the world than we would like to admit. Most of them didn't start that way. Most of them rolled through at least a part of their lives like a ball in an old pin-ball machine—falling in some holes, ringing some bells, but eternally being swatted back to try it again. In his poem *The Men That Don't Fit In*, Robert Service described some of these as:

They say: 'Could I find my proper groove,
What a deep mark I would make!
So they chop and change, and each fresh move
Is only a fresh mistake.

And yet, some do find that "proper groove" and our heritage and economy are the better for it.

There may have been some bigger and more colorful businessmen in history—but you've got to hunt for them. Although John W. Gates was born in 1855 in Northern Illinois, you might say that, from the beginning, he and Texas were made for each other and we wouldn't be the same without him.

In the days when a young man was often apprenticed to learn a trade at ten or twelve, John just didn't fit in and it wasn't until he was nineteen that he finally landed a job with a fellow who was a friend of the husband of a woman who was distantly

related to his mother. It's not that John wouldn't work, you understand, it's just that his ways were, well, unique. Most employers just didn't cotton to him. However hard it was for him to land that job, once he did, he never looked back.

You see, the fellow who hired him was unique, also. They called him "Colonel Ike" Ellwood and he had a strange new product to sell—barbed wire. And that is how John Gates came to be on the Military Plaza in San Antonio near the end of the year in 1876.

San Antonio in the 1870's was everything that the modern movie makers would have us believe, and more. The city was old, older than Texas, and had been the crossroads of empire, battleground, seat of government, bastion of the Church and, then, the capitol of a cattle empire. It was in the hotels and saloons and on shaded plazas of San Antonio that the new "Lords of the Cattle Hoards" planned their campaigns to send millions of Texas cattle over the trails to railheads in Kansas. And, it was there that "Colonel Ike" sent John Gates to peddle a brand new invention.

Barbed wire was new. Not only was it new, it was "Yankee", and no one thought it would work. Why, everybody knew that a Texas longhorn steer could go through anything con-

structed by man, if he had a mind to.

So, John had an idea. He got permission from the city officials to build a corral on the Military Plaza between San Fernando Cathedral and the old Spanish Governor's Palace. It was a good location. His work attracted a lot of attention, and comment. The posts were too far apart. There were no planks in evidence to build the fence. "What's that fool Yankee think he's doing, anyhow?"

According to Chris Emmett, who wrote the biography of "Shanghai" Pierce, Gates then strung his wire and said: "This is the finest fence in the world. Light as air. Stronger than whisky. Cheaper than dirt. All steel, and miles long. The cattle ain't been born that can get through it. Bring on your steers, gentlemen!"

Some folks later reported that they put twenty-five long-horn steers in the pen and hazed them from horseback. Others said there were sixty, and some said 135, and men hazed them with torches at night. Bets were made. Whether or not Gates actually "Bet-A-Million" the name caught and held. So did the fence. By nightfall "Bet-A-Million" Gates had sold hundreds of miles of barbed wire at the going rate of eighteen cents a pound.

Barbed wire had come the Texas and "Bet-A-Million" Gates had made a personal fortune, a name for himself, and a place in Texas history as the one who made systematic management of cattle possible. If the story stopped there, we'd have more than enough for a legend—but it didn't.

John "Bet-A-Million" Gates became one of the shakers and movers of the industrial revolution. He followed his barbed wire success with years of "unique" salesmanship and business. He wasn't always successful, but, in January of 1901 he was again in the right place at the right time. His American Steel and Wire Company had gone into the combine that became the world's first billion-dollar corporation, United States Steel, and being semi-retired, he had a few million to invest. He had an interest in the Kansas City Southern Railroad and was in the process of building the city of Port Arthur, that rail's southern terminus, when, on January 10, 1901, Spindletop blew the top off the future of oil.

Spindletop is another story but in the months that followed the discovery of what was then the largest oil field in the world, oil was available, and cheap. But, you had to get it to market. Due to his location on both rail and water shipping routes and his available cash, "Bet-A-Million" Gates did it again and provided operating capital and much needed facilities to the small Texas Fuel Company in exchange for a seat on the Board. With his backing, they changed their name and *Texaco* was born.

Cattle and oil—the Texas legacy. Where would we have been without "Bet-A-Million" Gates.



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




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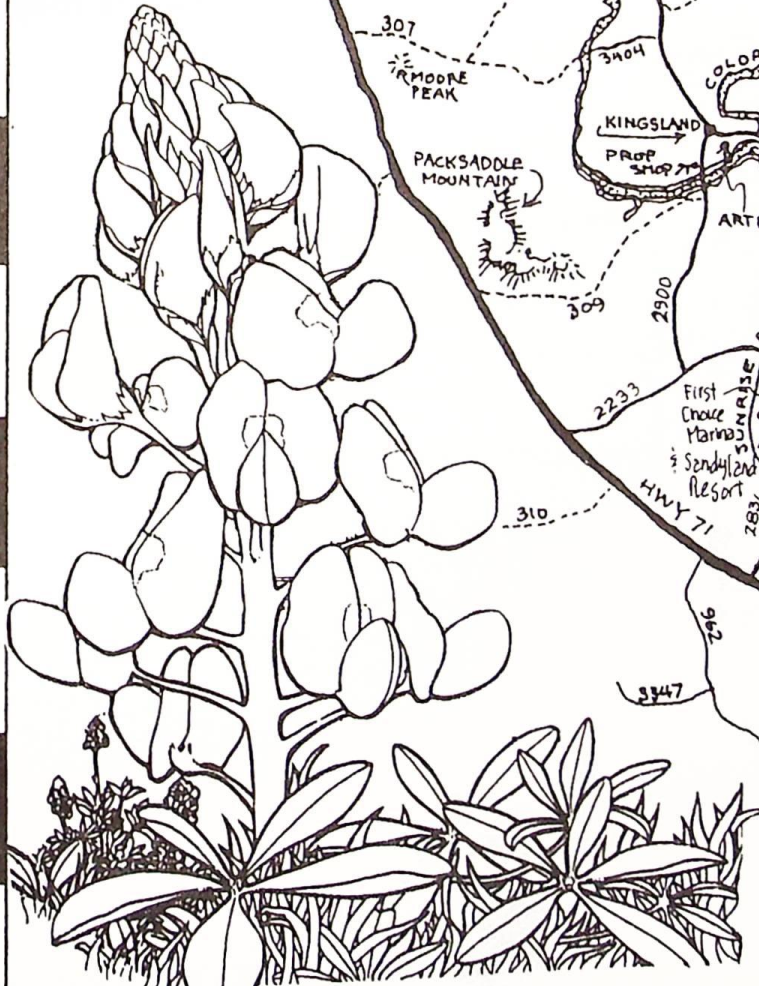
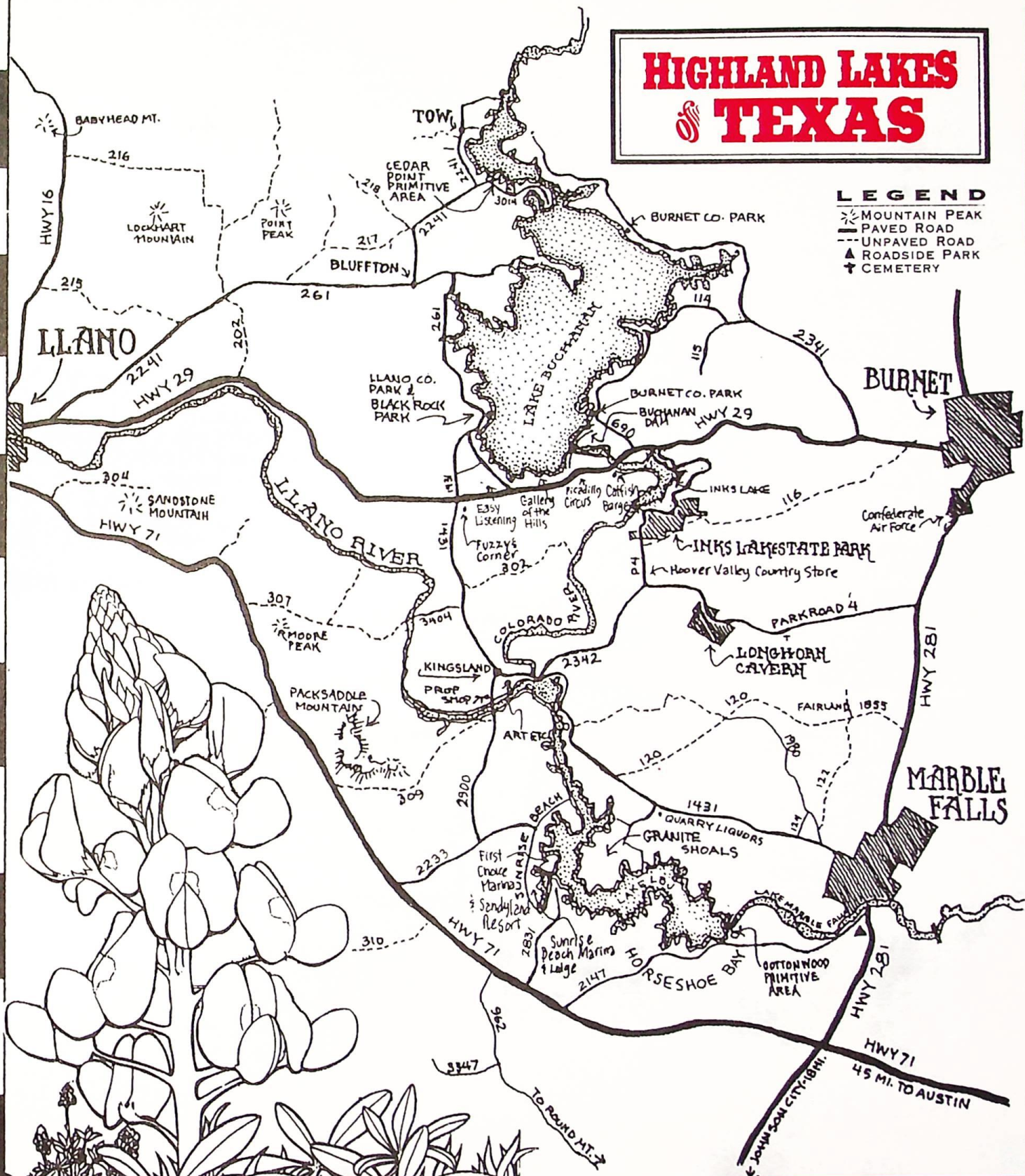
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7th ANNUAL LAKEFEST DRAG BOAT RACES

Fast, Spectacular, High-Tech boat racers from all over the country will be in **Marble Falls** this year from August 14-16 for the premier Boat Racing Event in the United States. Lake Marble Falls is a perfect course for this type of racing and for six years racers have looked forward to returning to the Hill Country for this race.

The Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce presents the 7th annual Lakefest Drag Boat Races. For the first time ever, the race is sanctioned by the International Hot Boat Association, however, racer members of the Southern Drag Boat Assoc. will also receive "points" for attending.

Marble Falls population more than triples that weekend with more than 20,000 spectators enjoying the race and excitement. The topography of the lake, and the beautiful park setting make the race a favorite for spectators, who travel from afar to see boats skimming Lake Marble Falls in access of 220 mph in a liquid quarter mile. Sponsors this year include Budweiser, Coca-Cola, Sonic, Frank's Supermarket, Snap-On Tools and KXAN. An added attraction for the second year is the Circle Boat Liquid Derby Race which will held each day along with the Drag Boats.

Daily ticket prices are \$5 on Friday, \$15 on Saturday and \$18 on Sunday. Children ages 6-12 tickets are only \$5 for each day -- children under 6 are free. Advance purchase 3 day tickets can be purchased for \$30 before August 1. All tickets include a \$5 discount for a one-day admission to Sea World of Texas. Advance tickets are on sale at the following locations: Marble Falls/

Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce, Security State Bank (Marble Falls and PaleFace), First State Bank (Wal-Mart, MF), HEB (MF), K & K Auto Parts, and BlueBonnet Cafe. For more information, contact the Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber at (210) 693-4449 or 1(800) 759-8178. **Lakefest -- Not Just Another Boat Race - But A Boat Racing Party In Marble Falls, Texas!**

FIRST ANNUAL MARKET DAY

The Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce is excited about hosting a new event for the Hill Country area. Past President, Pat Burton, along with a committee of many have worked diligently to put together the First Annual Market Day. It really quite simple. ANYONE ... individuals, organizations, clubs, churches, schools, ... are all invited to set up a table on **Main Street on September 26**. Arts, crafts, food, garage sale items, are all welcomed. Main Street will be closed all day with the event taking place from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Booths are 10' X 10' in size and are already available to reserve at the Chamber office. Booths reserved before August 31 are \$17, and go up to \$20. after that. This year's Market Day is sponsored by HomeCorp. Mortgage Co and Service Title Company. **For more information**, contact: Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce, 830-693-4449 or 1(800)759-8178, Pat Burton, 830-693-5758; Debbie Brown, 830-693-1080 or 512-288-2148; or, Fay Brady, 8330-693-3096.

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ON THE HISTORIC SQUARE IN LLANO

GET ALONG RANCH, TEXAS
BY DIANA FINLAY

TASTES OF SUMMER

THE FAMILY GARDEN



UNCLE FAYBERT AND THE GARDEN. PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR.

As I sit in the glow of this laptop computer screen, my toes are stained the color of the Texas prairie and my shoulders ache in an admirable way that comes from honest labor as my mind wanders down a country lane between Lockhart and McMahan. And, for one brief shining moment on this hot June afternoon, it's a wish come true. We appear to have more homegrown tomatoes than squash - but not for long...

Uncle Faybert's farm is our closest link to reality in this high tech, climate controlled world. Sitting on his back porch and catching an occasional southern breeze, we have solved many of the problems of the world - and forgotten most of the rest. A sort of freedom has come to all who drive through the gate and pull up behind the house.

Well, sort of...Most of the time.

It's peak gardening time at Uncle Faybert's right now. And that means all hands to the field—and we are the hands.

A garden at Uncle Faybert's is nothing new. Of his seventy summers, very few have been spent away from the land. A veteran of WWII, he spent a few springs too far from Mother Earth, but in the last half-century he has made up for that absence. He garners more from his years than the basic four seasons found on a regular calendar. He marks the cycles of the year by the harvest. Cabbage and Cauliflower. Okra and Tomatoes. Onions and Potatoes. Black-eyed Peas and Green Beans. And for a couple of weeks in June, its fresh corn season. Eat up.

His Tennessee bride, Linda, and her mama, Ginger, help Uncle Faybert and my cousin Jack keep us supplied in okra, squash, peas and beans, tomatoes and onions. No one ever leaves the farm without a sack full of something.

This year the picturesque garden is different. It's bigger. It's hotter. On some recent afternoons, if we took a vote, we might agree that it's grown into the family truck farm from hell. And its our fault. Mostly mine. And Uncle Faybert just grins. And enjoys every minute of it.

This all started in February. Remember that unseasonably warm weekend when the air was crisp but the southern sun was so warm we were ditching sweaters for t-shirts and digging shorts from the bottom drawer? That was when it all began.

We were sitting on the back porch at Uncle Faybert's, soaking up the sunshine and talking about how good summertime homegrown vegetables are and how there are never enough. Craving just one "real" tomato and a mess of fried okra; wishing for a supper of fresh yellow squash, boiled tender crisp, with a dollop of butter and lots of black pepper; and arguing over the exact bill of fare for the perfect summer feast - sliced tomatoes and onions, fresh black-eyed peas and okra, spring potatoes and green beans, cool vinegared cucumbers with fresh dill, hot cornbread and cold sweet milk.

On that February afternoon, with our feet propped up, we sunned ourselves like lizards in the Texas sun. And we were hungry for summer season garden fare.

Looking back, I clearly see my cousin Jack leaning back in his chair, shaking his head. Jack is as committed to the garden as Uncle Faybert. He sat there that day and read the writing on the wall. But did this *older and wiser* cousin (by a full three weeks) tell me that I was volunteering into something over my head. No. He just sat there agreeing—probably already knowing full well even then that this was going to be the hottest summer on record.

And that afternoon, we agreed that we ought to get out there and work that garden like never before and really wind up with more than we could ever eat. Seven families would need to share in the bounty of this plot. We could do it. It's be fun, I think I said. All for one and...whatever.

Looking back, I see a flaw here. Maybe it was something about winter memories. Cabin fever. Because "more than we could eat" from Uncle Faybert's garden has never been an unat-

tainable goal in the past. There has always been enough... But it was February. And we were hungry. I think we hadn't had supper yet.

Well, Uncle Faybert took our words to heart and doubled—tripled—quadrupled the size of the garden with the good faith that we would do our share. Every Sunday, I would go out to the farm to check on the progress of "our" garden, and he would have plowed another row.

The garden plot grew deeper and wider than ever before. The rows were long and straight. The dirt, tilled and turned, was as rich and supple as prairie gold. And finally, only the road and the pasture fence kept it from expanding any further.

And we went to work. Well...

Okay, from here on, for the sake of a good story, I am going to say "we" and let's pretend I contributed a whole lot to this gardening project. But hey, I do my part - and I am pretty faithful. And very supportive.

I was there for the planting. While Ginger and I were planting our rows of peas and okra, we got to talking to Jack about everything *except* the fact that he went down a whole row planting yellow squash. Yep. A whole row. We have a half row of zucchini and a quarter row of flat white patty pan - which is more than plenty for the seven families who will feed from this garden -- and one whole row of yellow squash. And now that it is up and producing, it looks like we're gonna have enough yellow squash to feed all of us *and* a third world country.

And while we are being critical, Linda and I planted the corn a little thick but we went back and pretty well thinned it up. The okra is beginning to look promising. (Sterling and Skip are planning the world's biggest okra fry this summer) And the corn IS as high as an elephant's eye.

But you ought to see the tomatoes. You wouldn't believe them. Twenty or so tomato plants that are about chest high to Uncle Faybert. Drip irrigation and Miracle Grow have made our tomato plants look like something out of a seed catalog. This week, the most talked about vegetable was one tomato that I missed actually seeing by a day, but heard about first hand. It was so big it wouldn't fit through the wire and Uncle Faybert had to work it up to the top of the cage, hand over fist, to get it out.

Talk about your fish stories. Wait until you hear our vegetable stories. We couldn't be more proud if we'd given birth to these babies!

I really like saying "we" here—let's forget for a moment the daily chores and continue the idea that I am a big part of this gardening venture - or adventure. Keep in mind that I am still at the level of participation that makes me think this gardening effort is really fun.

And here we are, the middle of June. The peak of harvest time. We have already dug about 300 pounds of potatoes (more or less, depending on whether you were doing the digging out or the watching), and about 100 pounds of onions. We've picked well over 100 pounds of tomatoes and they are still producing in spite of the blistering heat. Barrels filled with fresh herbs line the fence, adding to the bounty.

Though they first shrugged us off as sentimental grown-ups, the kids are getting into the act. Home from college for the summer, Jenni came around to become quite proficient at picking beans after she tasted the first pot of green beans and new potatoes this summer. And even though she calculated that considering our labor, equipment, etc., these vegetables were costing an average of \$15 per pound, our 6th grade math whiz HalleyAnna took pride in shelling several quarts of black-eyed peas for the

freezer; and Sterling, who is working full time on the farm this summer, has already fallen into a routine of weeding a little of the garden when he gets there a little after sunrise every morning before he starts the daily work.

And Kent comments that this is surely how it feels to be a king, eating his fill of homegrown tomatoes for breakfast, dinner and supper.

The sandy loam permanently stains my feet to the color of a burnt sienna crayon as I work the garden in river sandals, my version of common labor shoes. The sun blazes down on my shoulders and back, bouncing off an old straw hat. Muscles in my arms and legs occasionally whine with pain as they are rediscovered after years of hiding. A faded, damp bandana wipes the stinging salty sweat from my eyes.

And I sit here tonight drifting away and holding fast to the memories we're making. Wanting to freeze them or can them or put them up for some faraway February day when we can only dream of the taste of summer.

Watching Uncle Faybert drive the tractor down the rows, straight as an arrow. Feeling the grit of dirt under my fingernails and sweat dripping from my brow. Releasing the cool scent of fresh basil and lemon thyme with a gentle touch. Savoring the taste of a sun warmed cherry tomato, straight from the vine

And soaking up the sounds of family.

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CAROLYN'S GRILLED ZUCCHINI

(Especially good when prepared on the outdoor grill)

• 1 lb. zucchini • 2 tbsps olive oil • Salt and freshly ground pepper
Juice of one large lemon • 1/2 tsp hot pepper flakes • 1 tbsp fresh basil, cut in slivers

Slice zucchini on the diagonal so that you have longish, oval slices, about 1/4 inch thick. Salt and let sit in colander 30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry. Heat the broiler and place zucchini on oiled baking sheet. Brush with olive oil. Grill about 10 inches from heat source, until browned around the edges, about 5 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to serving dish. Sprinkle with the hot pepper flakes. Chill until shortly before serving. Just before serving, sprinkle on the lemon juice and basil.

UNCLE FAYBERT'S FRIED BUTTERMILK SQUASH

(The buttermilk is the secret to his method of frying zucchini - as the squash turns out crisp and light and is good alone, or served with ranch dressing or marinara sauce for dipping.)

Wash and slice zucchini and sprinkle with lemon pepper.

Heat one inch of oil in iron skillet.

Dip slices of zucchini in flour, then into buttermilk and finally coat with cornmeal. Cook in oil, turning once. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately.

SWEET HOT PICKLED SQUASH

This recipe makes two quarts, and it keeps beautifully refrigerator up to two weeks - It's best served after 24-48 hours when the flavors blend.

• 2/3 cup salt • 3 quarts water • 7 or 8 cups thinly sliced yellow squash
• 2-1/2 cups sugar • 2 cups white vinegar • 2 teaspoons mustard seed • 2 white sweet onions, thinly sliced • 2 serranos or jalapeno peppers, whole (optional) • 2 green bell peppers, thinly sliced • 1 4 oz. jar sliced (not diced!) pimiento, drained

Dissolve salt into water in large bowl and add squash. Use a heavy plate to hold the squash slices underwater, as they have a tendency to want to float. Cover and let stand 3 hours. Drain and set aside.

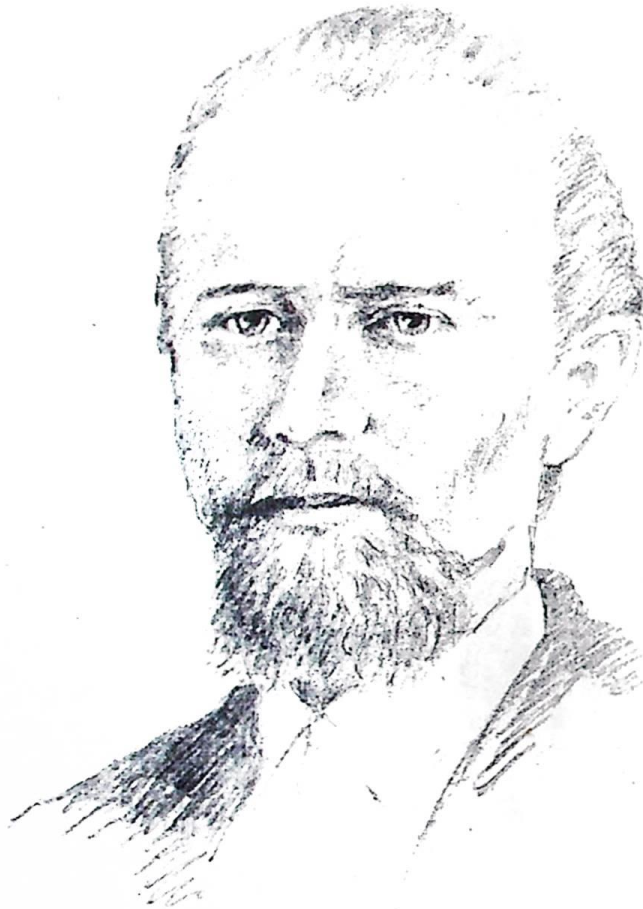
Bring sugar, vinegar and mustard seed to boil in large non-aluminum stockpot, stirring until sugar dissolves.

Add squash, onion, serrano, bell pepper, and pimiento and return to a boil, stirring very gently so as to not break up the squash. Remove from heat and cool. Store in Mason jars in refrigerator for up to two weeks.

TERROR IN THE HILLS

THE MASON COUNTY "HOODOO" WAR

PART ONE OF TWO PARTS



By GLENN HADELER

"Hoodoo": It's an old an old term for bad luck or what brings it, and in 1875 Mason County had plenty of both. People would bolt their doors and post guards for fear of what might come with the next day; but, this terror was not wrought from the usual frontier threat of Comanche raiders or wild beasts, those had been subdued for some time. No, this fear was of their own neighbors, and perhaps even one time friends. So bitter were the passions that spawned this strife that it even divided the Texas Ranger Company sent to quell the bloody affair.

DAN HOERSTER, PICTURED ABOVE, WAS MASON COUNTY BRANDS INSPECTOR AND "A WELL KNOWN LOCAL GERMAN, A BIG MAN WHO WOULD NOT RUN FROM A FIGHT."

A

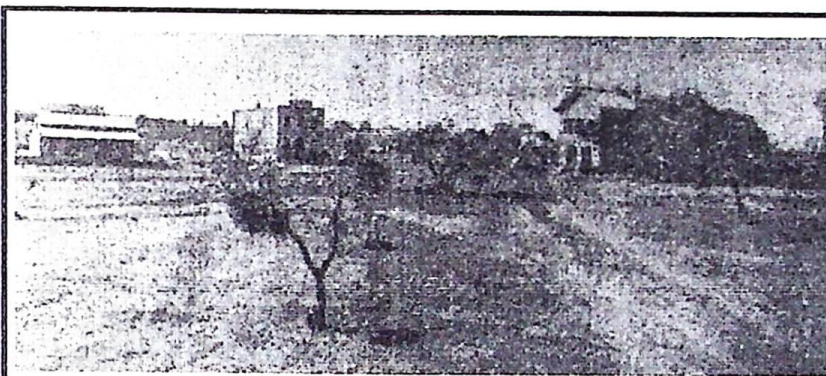
s I drove up Highway 29 toward Mason one morning in June, I was taken by how green the Hill Country was. Cattle grazed in the fields in a pastoral setting of perfect tranquillity. I had owned land in Mason County for some time, but had only recently become aware of the violent conflict which raged over the hills some 120 years before. My curiosity on the subject had led me to make an appointment with the local authority on the feud, Mrs. Jane Hoerster. Jane was the head of the Mason County Historical Society, and had a special connection to the war. Her late husband was the grandson of Dan Hoerster, one of the victims of the feud. I pulled up to the stylish new library building in the town of Mason and went inside where I was introduced to Jane, a short, silver haired lady in her seventies who embodied the feisty, outgoing nature common to a woman raised in the rural Texas hill country. Jane took me to an outer office and began bringing out books and news paper articles written by persons who had witnessed the war first hand. I began to understand the background which led to this turmoil. The first thing I learned was that the trouble did not begin with cattle rustling in the 1870s, but many years before.

In the late 1840s thousands of German immigrants came to Texas under the sponsorship of the ill-fated German Immigration Company, or "Adelsverein". Despite the fact that these immigrants occupied land well beyond the boundary of any white settlement at that time, they were still greeted with a certain amount of national prejudice by the Anglo-Texans. The Germans had been drawn to Texas by promises of free land in a vast tract between the Llano and Colorado Rivers, known as the Fisher-Miller Land Grant. Although the land grant contract was eventually annulled by the Texas Legislature, the State upheld the right of any immigrant who arrived under an agreement with the Immigration Company to claim land within the grant, including parts of what would later become Mason County. As Anglo settlers followed in the stampede to settle the Hill Country, friction arose between the two peoples when the Texans discovered that headrights to much of the premium lands were owned by German immigrants, despite the fact that they had never laid eyes on the property they claimed.

The animosity hit its peak with the onset of the Civil War. Most Germans were small farmers who did not own slaves and felt a deep loyalty to their adopted nation. They thus openly pro-

fessed their support of the union government which caused them to be viewed as nothing less than traitors. Some became the targets of random acts of violence such as the hanging of four Germans on Grape Creek in Gillespie County. In 1862 the Germans were regarded as such a threat that the entire town of Fredericksburg was placed under martial law and garrisoned by Confederate militiamen. In August of that year, a band of young men from the Fredericksburg and Comfort area attempted to make their way to Mexico to avoid conscription into Confederate service. They were pursued by a group of Confederate partisans, many of whom held old hostilities against the Germans. On August 10, 1862 their camp near the Nueces River was surrounded and attacked. The so called "Battle of Nueces" ended with 32 Germans being killed, including 9 wounded who were summarily executed on the spot. Two days later 8 more Germans were shot as they attempted to cross the Rio Grande into Mexico.

The end of the Civil War and the hardships of the reconstruction period did nothing to relieve the bad blood between the two groups. The Texans held a deep resentment toward the Germans. The rise of the "Cattle Kingdom" years further aggravated the relations between them. Early each Spring vast cattle herds were rounded up on the edge of the frontier and driven along the Chisholm and Goodnight-Loving Trails to the north where they brought high prices. The Anglo stockmen thought nothing of gathering herds from any "maverick" cattle they came across. There seemed to be an understanding between cattlemen that "if you brand some of my calves, I'll brand some of yours". This did not



IN FEBRUARY OF 1875 A POSSE FORMED AND MADE A SWEEP NORTHWEST OF THE TOWN OF MASON, WHERE THEY FOUND A LARGE HERD OF CATTLE UNDER THE CARE OF A GROUP OF MEN LED BY PETE AND LINGE BACCUS. THE CATTLE FOUND IN THE HANDS OF BACCUS BROTHERS WERE SAID TO HAVE HAD ALMOST EVERYONE'S BRAND BUT THEIR OWN. SEVEN MEN WERE ARRESTED AND BROUGHT BACK TO MASON WHERE A SECOND POSSE WAS RAISED WHICH SWEEPED SOUTH ALONG THE JAMES RIVER. PHOTO: MASON COUNTY CIRCA 1875, COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR.

sit well with the Germans. Most of them held small gentle herds, but without fences it was impossible to keep strays from wandering off, and the loss of a yearling to these small spread "sod busters" was a loss they could not afford.

Adding to the tension were a number of men who had wandered into Texas following the Civil War. These men victimized the sparsely settled frontier with all forms of lawlessness, but their chief means of support was cattle rustling. In 1872 the German majority in Mason County elected two men to office they felt they could trust. John Clark was elected Sheriff and Dan Hoerster was made the County Brands Inspector. Little is known of John Clark before this time. He seems to have found



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THEY WATCHED AS THE MOB TOOK FIVE OF THE MEN AND RODE OUT OF TOWN ON THE ROAD TO FREDERICKSBURG. AS SOON AS ROBERTS AND CLARK HAD GATHERED ENOUGH MEN TO TAKE PURSUIT, THEY FOLLOWED THE MOB UP THE ROAD FOR ABOUT A HALF MILE WHERE THEY FOUND THEM IN THE PROCESS OF STRINGING UP THE ACCUSED CULPRITS. SHOTS RANG OUT AND CLARK AND ROBERTS RETURNED FIRE AT THE MOB, FLEEING IN THE DARKNESS. WHEN THEY ARRIVED ON THE SCENE THEY FOUND THE BACCUS BROTHERS DANGLING FROM A TREE ALONG WITH ABE WIGGINS AND TOM TURLEY.

his way into Mason County and made himself very popular among the Germans. He was reported to have been a union soldier, as Captain Dan Roberts of the Texas Rangers referred to him as "one of the blue hen's chicks". Hoerster on the other hand, was a well known local German, a big man who would not run from a fight. Both men pledged to stop the rustling that had plagued the area. They soon found that this was easier said than done. Many Anglo stockmen lived in the northern part of the County and made it difficult to prosecute offenders. The Germans found that it was practically impossible to prove the ownership of a stray calf, and brands were easily changed. Even the State laws seemed to favor the cattlemen. Under the law a man who found a neighbor's cow on his land could sell the cow, as long as he turned the money over to the cow's owner. Thus by 1875 the situation had reached a crisis.

In February of 1875 a posse formed and made a sweep northwest of the town of Mason, where they found a large herd of cattle under the care of a group of men led by Pete and Linge Baccus. The cattle found in the hands of Baccus brothers were said to have had almost everyone's brand but their own. Seven men were arrested and brought back to Mason where a second posse was raised which swept south along the James River. This posse, led by Sheriff Clark, succeeded in locating another herd of stolen cattle, but the rustlers who had possession of this herd had seen Clark's men coming and fled the area. The second posse returned to Mason, where the imprisoned men were to stand trial for the crime of rustling.

On February 15, 1875 a man named Adam Brayford was traveling between Llano and Mason and saw a body lying beside the road. Brayford got out of his wagon and found a dead man with a note pinned to his back, saying "Here lies a noted cow thief". The young cowboy was Allen Bolt and as far as can be determined he was the first victim of the lawlessness that would come to be known as the Mason County "Hoodoo" War.

Three days later on the evening of February 18, the silence

of the evening air in Mason was shattered by a woman's screams. A group of men had broken into the home of Clark's German deputy John Wohrle and forced him to give up his keys to the jail. The men then proceeded to the jail and began to take out the prisoners awaiting trial for cattle rustling. John Clark was alerted by the uproar and went to the hotel where he found Captain Dan Roberts of the Texas Rangers, who was visiting Mason to buy grain for his men's horses. The two hurried to the jail but could do nothing against the overwhelming numbers they faced. They watched as the mob took five of the men and rode out of town on the road to Fredericksburg. As soon as Roberts and Clark had gathered enough men to take pursuit, they followed the mob up the road for about a half mile where they found them in the process of stringing up the accused culprits. Shots rang out and Clark and Roberts returned fire at the mob, fleeing in the darkness. When they arrived on the scene they found the Baccus brothers dangling from a tree along with Abe Wiggins and Tom Turley. Sheriff Clark cut down the prisoners but found that Pete and Linge Baccus were both dead. Abe Wiggins was still alive but had most of his skull shot away and Tom Turley was nearly dead. The fifth man, Charlie Johnson was nowhere to be found. It was later discovered that when the posse began shooting at the mob, he had not yet been hung and was able to throw the noose off his neck. Despite being barefoot with his hands tied, Johnson was able to leap a tall fence beside the road and raised dust across a plowed field making his escape. The bodies of the Baccus brothers along with the wounded Abe Wiggins and Tom Turley were brought back to the Mason County Courthouse where Wiggins died the next morning. The reign of terror had begun.



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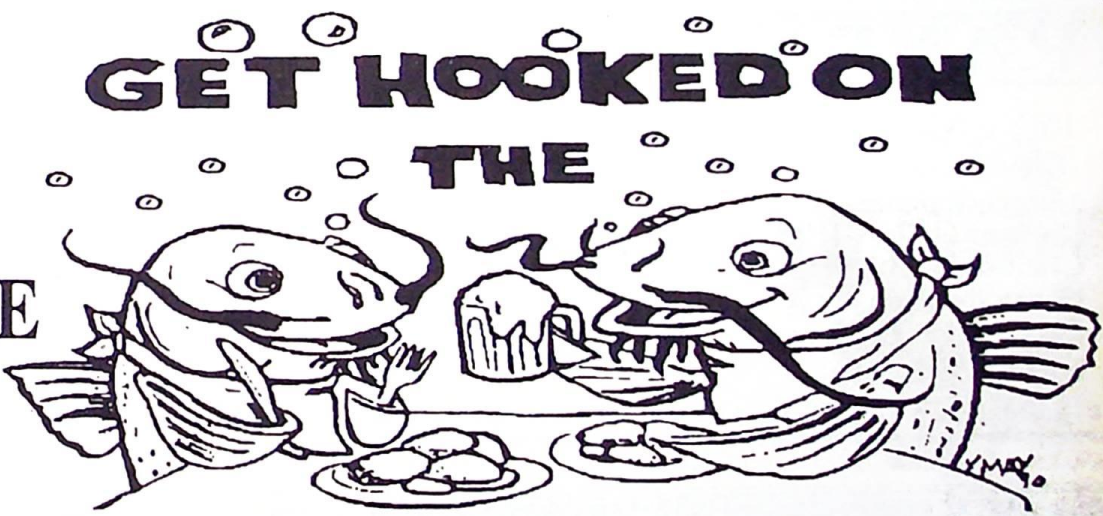


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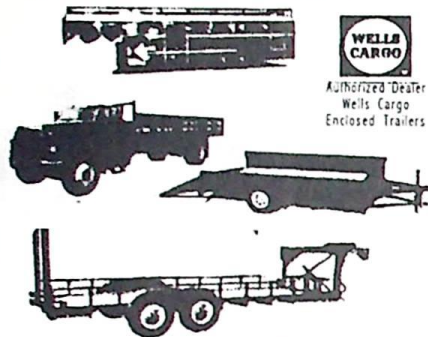
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After Tom Turley had recuperated he was returned to the jail house. By mid March he was joined by Caleb Hall, who only a few weeks before had been a member of the posse headed by Sheriff Clark, but was now also accused of being a cattle thief. Another member of the Clark posse named Tom Gamel later stated that the idea of lynching the Baccus gang had begun among some of the members of Clark's posse, and Gamel had voiced strong opposition to the suggestion. In the coming days rumors began circulating the town that Turley, Hall, and Gamel, were all slated to be the guests of honor at another "neck-tie party". The rumor was taken seriously by all three. Turley and Hall tunneled out of the jail one night and fled the county. Tom Gamel preferred a more offensive approach. He gathered around thirty stockmen from the surrounding area and rode into Mason to confront Sheriff Clark and the Mob. As soon as Gamel's party arrived at the edge of town, Clark made a hasty retreat out the other end. For the next couple days Gamel's stockmen held the town, then departed.

On March 24 Sheriff Clark returned to town leading a party of some 60 armed men, all Germans. On Clark's return Gamel quickly gathered his forces and returned to town, and it looked as though a battle was about to be fought in the streets. The two parties met at the Courthouse square and for a few tense moments conferred with each other. Then suddenly both parties stacked their arms and began mingling as friends. A truce was proclaimed under the condition that the mob justice would end. The truce might have held had other old quarrels not intervened. Some weeks before the lynching of the Baccus gang a man by the name of Tim Williamson had been arrested for possession of a stolen yearling. Williamson was a popular 33 year old cowboy employed by Carl Lehmborg who ran a sizable cattle operation from the nearby community of Castell in Llano County. Lehmborg, who ironically was himself a German, had agreed to pay Williamson five dollars a head for every stray calf he brought in, and thus had added to the tension between the two sides. Upon Williamson's arrest, Dan Hoerster had posted bail for him and he was released. Aside from this incident, Williamson also owned a home in Loyal Valley which Clark, as County tax collector, had appraised at an inflated value, even higher than the property owned by John O. Meusebach who operated a store in the settlement. Clark showed up at Williamson's home to confront him over the unpaid taxes and found Williamson not at home. He unleashed a tirade of abuse on his wife instead. When Williamson discovered this he rode into Mason and suggested that the two settle the matter man-to-man but Clark refused. This set the stage for the next tragedy of the feud.

On the morning of May 13, Deputy Sheriff John Wohrle arrived at Carl Lehmborg's ranch and informed Tim Williamson that his bond had been withdrawn. He was to accompany Wohrle to Mason and be held until a new bond was posted. Carl Lehmborg offered to post bail for Williamson however the bond would have to be made in Mason. The two men agreed to go with Wohrle but before they left Wohrle disarmed Williamson and forced him to trade his young horse for Wohrle's old plug. The trio had traveled about ten miles when they were set upon by a party of about a dozen masked men. Wohrle and Lehmborg bolted up the road but Williamson was abandoned to the mob and may have had his horse shot out from under him. The next moment Williamson lay in the road riddled with bullets. He re-

portedly recognized one of his assailants as a German farmer named Peter Bader and begged for his life, but old acquaintances were now disregarded. Williamson was a rustler and rustling had to stop. Bader shot him dead.

The members of the "Hoodoo" mob could not have imagined what they had unleashed in their zeal to end stock thefts. Anglo cattlemen all over the area began carrying arms and talking of vengeance against the Dutch. In response the Germans kept to themselves and began traveling only in groups. It wasn't long before revenge killings began. On a hot July night three Germans named Henry Doell, August Keller, and Fritz Kothmann were camped on the open prairie near Willow Creek, when they were fired on from the darkness. August Keller was hit in the foot. Doell was shot in the stomach and died several days later. The shooting was blamed on Indians, but cigarette butts found near where the ambush occurred proved the assassins to be whites. When the term of the Grand Jury was convened in Mason, Charlie Johnson, who had been found wandering the countryside after his escape from the mob, was questioned about the identity of the mob members. Johnson however, would say nothing, perhaps because some of the faces he had seen in the mob were now staring at him from the jury box.

While the Grand Jury was conducting their inquiry, a young man appeared in Mason and quietly began conducting an inquiry of his own. He took particular interest in anything people had to say about Williamson's death. He had his gun worked on by the local gunsmith Miller and when he later picked it up he proclaimed "now I'm about ready to use it". Around August 10, Deputy Sheriff Wohrle was helping a man named Harcourt and a hired hand dig a well on the west edge of town. The young man rode up and began conversing with Wohrle. He asked for a leather strip to tie his rifle to his saddle and Wohrle complied to his request. The two bid farewell and Wohrle began helping the hired hand pull Harcourt up from the bottom of the well. As soon as Wohrle was busy doing this the mounted man pulled his gun and leveled it at the back of Wohrle's head. The shot went through his head, killing him instantly. The hired hand dove for the brush and Harcourt fell to the bottom of the well where he was knocked unconscious. The man then leaped from his horse and shot Wohrle five more times before taking out his knife, mutilating the body and finally taking his scalp. The fiend then remounted and rode off waving the scalp in triumph. This man was Scott Cooley.

CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE

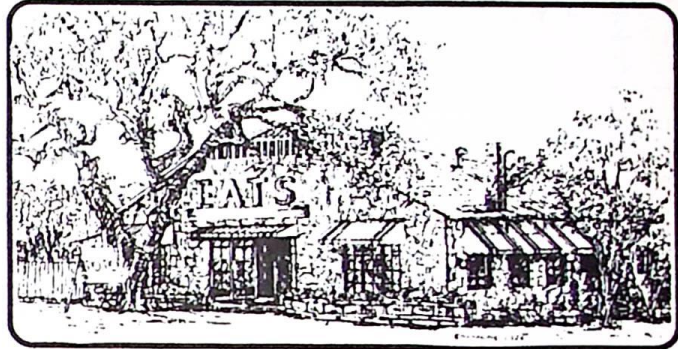
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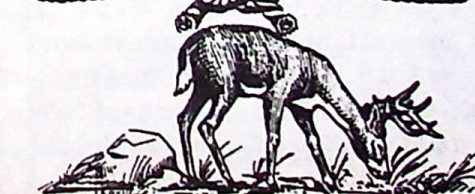
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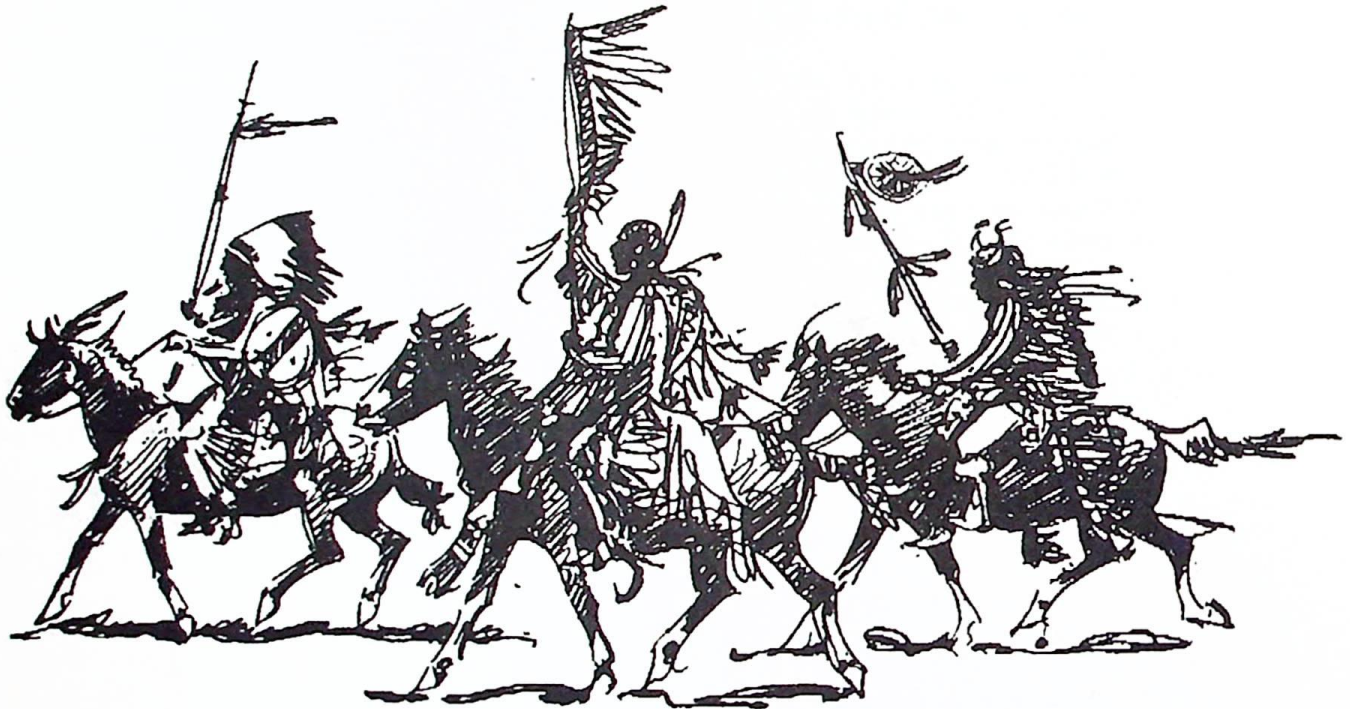
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SCALPED ALIVE

The Story of Josiah Wilbarger

by C.F. ECKHARDT



My grandmother, Many Ann Lane, who later married Dr. George F. A. Eckhardt, was born in a dogtrot log house at Hornsby Bend, Texas, in September of 1873. Her father was Addison Earldom Lane, a black smith and livery stable owner in Austin. Her father's sister, Eliza Ann Lane, married one of the sons of Reuben and Sarah T. Hornsby. They had one child, Mandana Eldora Hornsby—don't ask me where they got that name, but my grandmother called her 'Cousin Mandaynee'—who married a man named Gilbert. Their descendants are a houseful of doctors and lawyers named Gilbert all over Austin.

My grandmother's eldest sister, Pauline Lane, known as 'Pinky', married J. Malcom Hornsby, Jr., who was known as

'Buddy Make' to distinguish him from his father, J. Malcolm Sr., who was known as 'Make'. Aunt Pinky died very young and their one child, Lawrence, died in infancy. 'Uncle Buddy Make', as we still knew him, remarried, fathered a houseful of children, and was widowed a second time. In 1943 and 1944, after my grandfather died in 1942, Uncle Buddy Make came to Austin from Manor to spark my grandmother. He came in on the train—there were six or eight passenger locals per day then—and, extravagance of extravagances, *rode in a taxicab* all the way from the station down on First Street to our little house on 42nd. He also *rode in a taxicab* all the way back to the train station when he'd finished his visit. My grandmother didn't consider marrying Uncle Buddy Make, though, because he was so much older than she was—she was barely 70, while he was past 80—and besides, he wanted her to move back to Manor where she grew

up, and she didn't want to leave Austin because her remaining two sisters and her only remaining brother lived there.

The story of Josiah Wilbarger came down to me through my grandmother from my Hornsby shirt-tail kin, and the one I got differs considerably from the version Steven Yuhas told in *Enchanted Rock* in the May/June 1998 issue. The problem lies not with Steve, but with the erratic and often extremely creative memory of one William W. W. "Bigfoot" Wallace. It was Bigfoot, one must recall, who once told General John Baylor that there were gold nuggets "...as big as cows' livers' sticking out of the sandbars on the upper Nueces". When General Baylor asked Bigfoot why he didn't bring one back with him, the famous scout replied; "The Injuns won't let a feller stop runnin' long enough to pick nothin' up in that country."


Josiah Wilbarger came to Texas from Indiana in the 1820's. He may have passed through Missouri on the way, but his family lived in Indiana. He was a young man, but already an experienced woodsman and long hunter. He made his headquarters at Hornsby's Fort—the blockhouse Reuben and Sarah Hornsby built to fortify their homestead at Hornsby Bend against Indian attack. Hornsby Bend is the bend of the Colorado River that lies just downstream of present day Montopolis bridge in east Austin. Though the Hornsby's later built a regular house, my grandmother could recall the old log blockhouse still standing when she was a little girl, before her father moved the family to Manor in the 1880's. It was being used as a barn at the time.

Wilbarger participated in several exploring forays into the hills north and west of present Austin and became familiar with the country. That, coupled with the hunting and woodsman skills he brought with him, soon allowed him to hold himself out as a guide for explorers, hunters, surveyors, and clandestine mineral prospectors.

In April, 1832, while he was leading a party of surveyors into that area, he and his party were ambushed by Indians only an hour or so after leaving Hornsby's Fort. Wilbarger, in the lead, was first to fall. He was struck in the neck by a large musket ball, which passed entirely through his neck, miraculously failing to damage his spine, windpipe, jugular vein or carotid artery. It did, however, severely bruise his spinal cord, leaving him completely paralyzed—he couldn't even blink his eyes—but also completely conscious. (When early Texans captured wild horses, one of the most effective methods of capturing a horse was to 'crease' the animal—shoot across the top of the animal's spine, bruising the spinal cord, which completely paralyzed the animal for several minutes, allowing the horse hunter to rope and hobble it before it recovered. The occasional hunter who has accidentally 'creased' a multi-pointed buck and put it in the car with him, only to have the deer come to life on the way to camp, also provides a good story.)

Two men at the end of the column turned their horses and rode Hell-for-leather for Hornsby's Fort, where they gasped out the news of the ambush and the massacre of their companions. This hit one of the hornsby daughters particularly hard, as she and Wilbarger were, in the parlance of the day, 'sweet on each other'. She and Josiah were eventually married, incidentally, and when my great-great aunt Eliza married one of the Hornsby boys they became sisters-in-law.

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Wilbarger's life was spared by the ball that hit his neck. It paralyzed him so completely that he was unable to react in any way, and the Indians believed him dead. While his companions were repeatedly lanced, tomahawked, and stabbed before being scalped, he, being presumably dead and therefore not an item of *coup*, was only scalped. He later stated that he looked the Indian who scalped him directly in the eyes, that he felt "a dull pressure" as the knife cut through his scalp, and hear a sound, "like distant thunder" when his scalp was torn free of his skull.

At some point Wilbarger finally lost consciousness. When he awoke it was late in the afternoon and he was able to move. His companions were all dead, scalped and thoroughly mutilated. The Indians had taken all their weapons and horses and stripped them naked. The survey instruments they smashed. The only remaining item was a single sock on one of Wilbarger's feet, which the Indians somehow missed.

He crawled to the nearby creek, pulled off the sock, soaked it in the creek, and put it atop the bare place on his skull. Then, crawling and staggering, he set out for Hornsby's Fort. He traveled perhaps a mile before he realized he could go no farther. He sat down at the base of a large tree—there's an historical marker on the site today, or at least there was forty-five years ago, the last time I was there—"composed myself as decently as I could", and waited to die.

In the twilight he saw, standing in front of him, his sister, whom he knew was back in Indiana. He was, he decided, delirious. She said, "Have no fear, Brother Josiah. Help is on the way." Then she 'disappeared'—Wilbarger never gave any particulars on how she 'disappeared'—going in the direction of Hornsby's Fort. From the sound of it, she simply walked off into the twilight.

In the meantime, the Hornsbys and their neighbors had 'forted up' in the blockhouse, which was the common practice when Indians were reported in the area. With the stock brought in and under guard and the blockhouse 'forted up', Reuben and his wife Sarah went to bed. About an hour after they went to sleep Sarah suddenly sat upright in bed and shook Reuben awake. "Wilbarger is alive," she told him. "He is wounded and asked, but alive. He is lying at the base of a big tree on the creekbank.: When she told Reuben she'd 'seen' Wilbarger in a dream he told he to go back to sleep.

Almost as soon as she drifted off to sleep the dream repeated, in more and clearer detail. Again she woke Reuben, and again he told her to quit imagining things and go back to sleep. When the dream returned a third time she was able to describe Wilbarger's location and situation in such precise detail that her husband recognized the tree she was talking about. She told her husband that Wilbarger had been scalped, and that he had "a cloth of some sort" on his head to protect the wound, but no other clothing. She was so insistent that Reuben got out of bed, roused their older sons, got horses—and at Sarah's insistence hitched up a wagon, which they padded with quilts and blankets—and set out to find Wilbarger. They found him exactly as Sarah described, even to the 'piece of cloth'—a sock—on his head.

Wilbarger's convalescence was a long one—over a year—and during it he received a letter from his family in Indi-

ana. His sister—the one who appeared to him as he lay under the tree—died of ‘fevers’ the day before he was ambushed. As he lay unconscious on the creekbank she was buried. When she appeared to him she was beginning her first night in the grave.

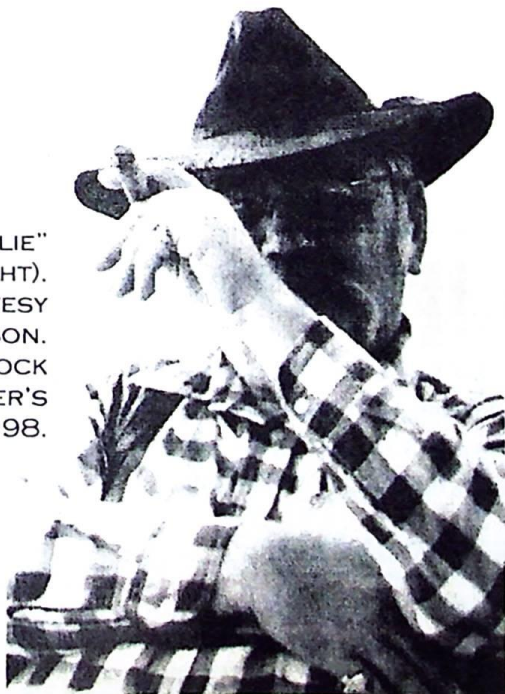
The Hornsbys later said they had gone to bed ‘about an hour after good dark’ that night. ‘Good dark’ follows about half an hour after twilight. From the tree where Wilbarger was found to the site where my grandmother said the Hornsby’s old blockhouse stood when she was a girl, so my grandmother told me, was about an hour and a half’s walk. According to her, she, her older brother and her two older sisters walked the path several times, and it always took them just about an hour and a half.

During his convalescence Wilbarger married his Hornsby sweetheart. He lived until 1843. He wore a silken skullcap to cover the bare place on his skull where the skin never grew back. He built the first cotton gin at Hornsby Bend, and one day in 1843, while going through a low door, struck his skull on the lintel. His skull was fractured and he died within a few days.

Wilbarger County, Texas, upstream on the Red River from Wichita Falls—the county seat is Vernon—was named for Josiah Wilbarger. Many years after his death his nephew and namesake, J. W. Wilbarger, wrote a book called Indian Depredations In Texas, in which he told his uncle’s story—along with many others. You’ll also find the story in Annie Doom Pickrell’s Pioneer Women In Texas, in the Sarah T. Hornsby chapter. John Salmon Ford, in his long-unpublished memoirs, recently published as Rip Ford’s Texas, also recounts the Wilbarger story but dismisses Sarah T. Hornsby’s dreams as ‘imaginary’. There are other versions in print as well.

The version I consider most accurate is the one my grandmother told me, which I have recounted here. You see, she told me the story as she heard it from her Aunt Becky—Rebecca Hornsby. Aunt Becky told the tale as he heard it from her mamma. Aunt Becky’s mamma was Sarah T. Hornsby—who had the dreams.

C.F. “CHARLIE”
ECKHARDT (RIGHT).
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Llano Goes World-Wide

A "virtual community" website, **llanotexas.com**, will go on-line Wednesday, July 15. Created and designed by Ira Kennedy, editor/publisher of *Enchanted Rock Magazine* and **texfiles.com**, the site will include many historic articles which have appeared in the publication which is now in its fifth year.

In addition to articles on the greater Llano community, **llanotexas.com** will provide detailed information on recreation, entertainment and special events in the county. **Any local organization** wishing to have their schedules of meetings or fund-raisers posted should mail or e-mail their information to the addresses appearing at the conclusion of this article.

Information on **llanotexas.com** will be submitted to Internet search engines in the U.S. and abroad. Currently the existing website **texfiles.com** which only went on-line four months ago receives **over 10,000 "hits" a month**—approximately **280 from foreign countries**. Kennedy believes the visitation to **llanotexas.com** will be even greater than that for **texfiles.com** which he expects will reach 20,000+ hits per month by year's end.

llanotexas.com is also offering web pages and links to web pages for **area businesses** at very competitive rates. A brochure is available upon request.

llanotexas.com promises to be a definitive and valuable resource on Llano County for residents and for visitors who frequently browse the Internet for information while planning their day-trips and vacations.

For details contact Ira Kennedy or Holly Scott.
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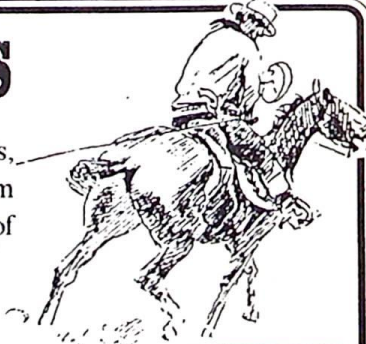
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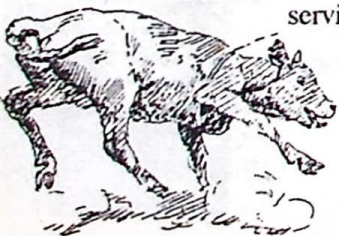
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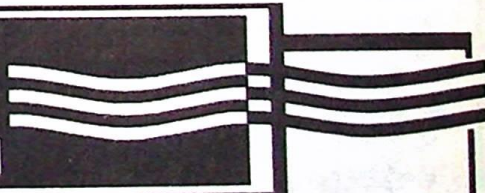
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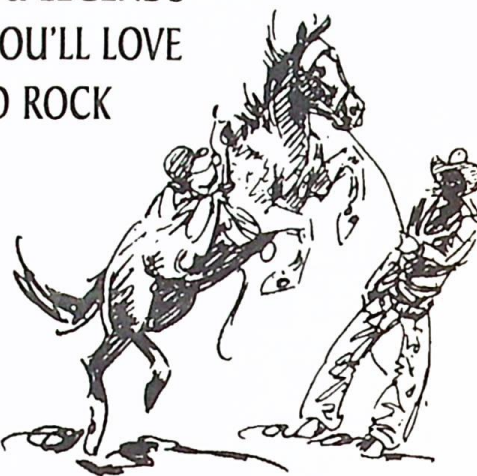
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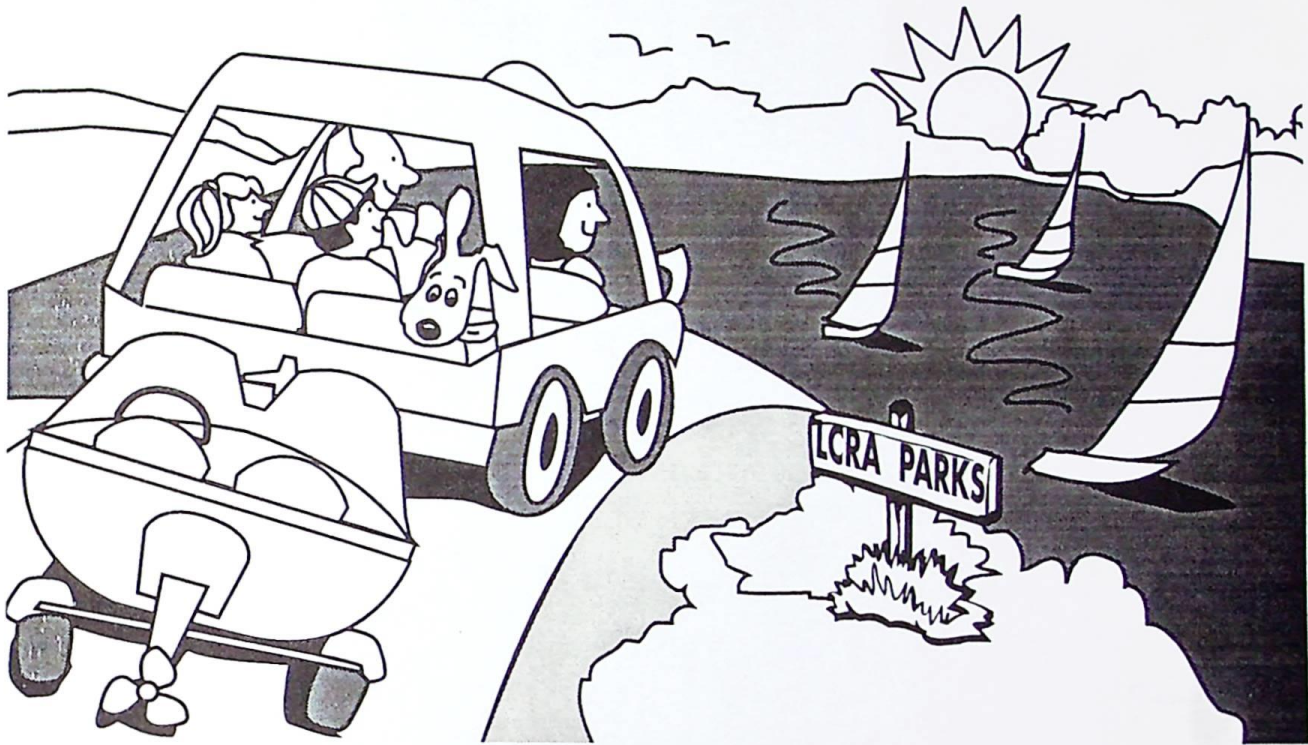
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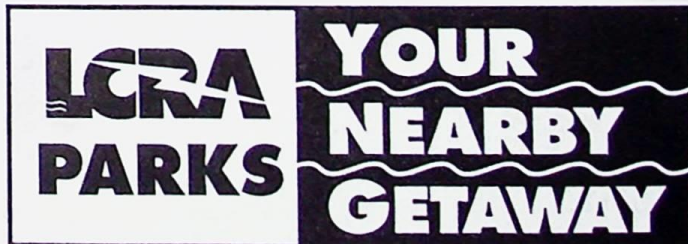
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