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LEGENDS OF TEXAS

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LEGENDS OF TEXAS

EDITED BY
J. FRANK DOBIE

PUBLICATIONS *of the* TEXAS FOLK-LORE SOCIETY

Number III
(SECOND EDITION)

PUBLISHED BY THE TEXAS FOLK-LORE SOCIETY
AUSTIN, TEXAS, 1924

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University of Texas Press
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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The assembling of the legends of my own state has been with me no light matter, though it has been a joyful business. Might I as editor spend as much of the next three years as I have spent of the last three in talking with people, in riding on horseback into remote places, in writing letters, in searching through Texas material, the result would no doubt be more satisfactory. The satisfaction, however, would not lie in an increased number of legends, nor in an added variety or worth, for all the widely known legends of Texas are, I think, here presented, and the swelling size of this volume has already ruled out many legends as representative and as interesting as some of those included. The increased satisfaction resulting from further research would lie in the establishment of relationships, in the tracing out of origins, and, most of all, in the fullness of the bibliography. Files of Texas newspapers would come first as a printed source for additional legendary material. These I have but dipped into, my removal to a place in which they are altogether inaccessible having cut short the investigation of them that I had planned. Considerable new material might be gained from original Spanish and Mexican documents. Texas magazines and Texas books of fiction, history, biography, and travel have been fairly well examined. The chief source of legend in a virgin field of folk-lore like that of Texas is the folk themselves; that field is not likely to be exhausted soon.

No attempt has been made at comparing the legends of Texas with those of other lands. An attempt has been made to relate the legends to each other and to the life and history of the state. In the grouping of them, logic has been plainly violated. The groups overlap. They would overlap in any other manner of arrangement, even a geographical one. With few exceptions, and those important for their relationships, all legends not residing among Texans of white skin and English speech have been excluded. Thus certain negro tales, certain Mexican legends unassimilated by English speaking Texans, certain Indian legends have been ruled out. Of course, a vast majority of the legends transmitted by white settlers in Texas are derived from folk of other races.

Various factors have combined to determine just what legends should be included. A few legends have been printed on account of their geographic interest. The legends of buried treasure and lost mines are arranged according to place. The geographic center of such legends in Texas is the Llano and San Saba country. Hence the legends of that region have been put first; then come in order those to the south as far as Brownsville, those of the west clear to the Guadalupe Mountains, those of the north against Red River, those of the eastern part of the state, and finally those of the south-central and east. My own intimacy with the southwestern part of Texas has probably led to the inclusion of an undue proportion of treasure legends from that section; I can only plead that I have excluded almost as many as are included. A considerable number of excellent legends of Texas are available in recent books and newspapers and have, therefore, not been reprinted. The legends of the Alamo and other missions of San Antonio are first in importance among legends of the state. They are not included in this volume because happily they have been preserved in at least three local histories.¹

If the ballads of a nation are as important as its laws, its legends are almost as important as its ballads. Here I must confess a great hope that some man or woman who understands will seize upon these legends and use them as Irving used the legends of the Hudson and the Catskills, as Whittier used the legends of New England. People of Texas soil still have a vast body of folk-lore, and whoever will write of them with fidelity must recognize that lore as surely as Shakespeare recognized the lore of his folk, as surely as Mr. Thomas Hardy has recognized the lore of Wessex.

The names of nearly two score contributors to this volume testify to the eagerness with which people from every quarter of the state have joined in the enterprise of gathering together their legends. Many whose names are unsigned have contributed with equal sympathy and intelligence. As editor, I desire to express gratitude to all who have helped. First I must record the eager

¹*History and Legends of the Alamo and Other Missions in and around San Antonio*, by Adina De Zavala, San Antonio, 1917; *San Antonio de Béxar, Historical, Traditional, Legendary*, by Mrs. S. J. Wright, Austin, 1916; *Combats and Conquests of Immortal Heroes*, by Charles Merritt Barnes, San Antonio, 1910. The last named of the three books is now very scarce; the other two are obtainable at reasonable prices.

sympathy and aid of many former students of mine at the University of Texas. I owe much to the encouragement and counsel of Dr. L. W. Payne, Jr., Professor of English at the University of Texas. Mrs. Adele B. Looscan of Houston has time after time contributed invaluable information. Mr. E. G. Littlejohn of Galveston has for years kept clippings of legends that appeared in Texas newspapers, and he has put his collection at the disposal of the editor. Miss Elizabeth H. West of the Texas State Library and Mrs. Mattie Austin Hatcher, Mr. E. W. Winkler, and Miss Annie Campbell Hill, all of the Library of the University of Texas, have given generously of their time and information. Since my removal from Austin seven months ago, Mr. W. P. Webb, Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Texas, and Miss Louise von Blittersdorf and Mr. Hartman Dignowity, students, have often verified certain references or run down certain information not procurable elsewhere than in the libraries of Texas material at Austin. My wife, Bertha McKee Dobie, has "o'er look'd each line" of manuscript and proof, and the debt to her cannot be set down. Mr. A. C. Wright, Manager of the University of Texas Press, has done far more than a mere business obligation required. The list grows too long. It is impossible to extend it to include the names of all those who have assisted.

MORE LEGENDS WANTED

Finally, let it not be thought that this volume will conclude the collection and publication of Texas legends. I make an appeal at once personal and official: it is for more legends, new or variant, to add to the ripening second volume that I trust may come forth at no very remote date.

Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College,
Stillwater, Oklahoma,
April, 1924.

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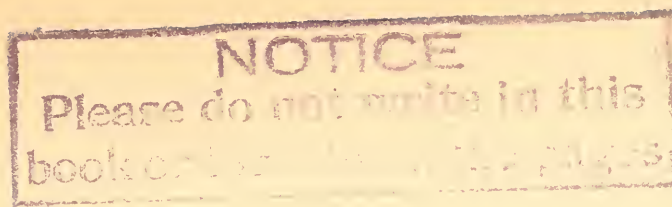
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LEGENDS OF BURIED TREASURE AND
LOST MINES



AN INQUIRY INTO THE SOURCES OF TREASURE LEGENDS OF TEXAS

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I

However many legends of other kinds there may be, the buried treasure or lost mine legend is the typical legend of Texas. Just how representative it is is demonstrated by the varied examples in this section of "Legends of Buried Treasure and Lost Mines." The McMullen County group well illustrates how numerous are the legends. The group is by no means unique in either number or variety. Pertaining to the country up the Colorado and its western tributaries, there are literally hundreds of lost treasure legends. Scarcely fewer legends cluster around the old Fort Stockton-Fort Lancaster country, around the Victoria-Refugio-Goliad country, around the Big Bend country, and along certain sections of the Red River country. In lumber mills of East Texas buried treasure is the frequent subject of tale and speculation. The Nacogdoches country, the San Jacinto country, the San Augustine country, the country all along the Brazos from head to mouth, to mention only a few other localities, are replete with buried treasure legends. Moreover, instead of diminishing in number, these legends are constantly increasing.

The people who tell these legends represent many standards and strata of life, but the ultimate source of their legendary gold and their tales is common—Mexican or Spanish. In some of the legends the pioneer Texan, the Indian, or the negro plays a part, but in nearly all the Spaniard and the Mexican enter as both actors and transmitters. The native Texan frequently makes no distinction between "Spaniard" and "Mexican"; the wealth of legend, however, is generally Spanish. And that wealth would fade the actual riches of Potosi into paltriness. Now, how comes it that illimitable wealth is so popularly ascribed to the long Spanish dominion in Texas and to the brief Mexican occupation that intervened between the downfall of Spanish sovereignty and the achievement of Texas independence? Were the Spanish great gainers in Texas? Did Santa Anna's armies mark their trail with gold?

The facts are that the Spanish in Texas were always hard up, that the occupation of the territory was a financial loss, that Texas was occupied as a buffer,¹ first against the French in Louisiana and then against the United States, with but little attempt at mineral exploitation and always with a drain on the treasury. The Spanish soldiers and settlers often led a wretched existence, even on occasions having to root in the ground for starches and to hunt wild berries for sugars. According to Mrs. Mattie Austin Hatcher, one old San Antonio Mexican did write that the Spanish soldiers there were rolling in wealth. "They will spend a hundred *reales* for a dinner," said he, "as easily as we spend a *centavo* for a glass of beer." But he was a revolutionist inflamed with hatred of Spanish tyranny. So far as we know from the records—and again I quote Mrs. Hatcher for authority—only one cargo of money ever came to Texas from south of the Rio Grande; that was during the Mexican Revolution, in 1811. An expedition of revolutionists set forth from Coahuila to San Antonio, seeking escape to the United States. They had with them a considerable amount of bullion and money belonging to the revolutionary party. They were caught in Texas and hanged, and nobody knows what became of their wealth.

According to authenticated history, the Spanish worked but one mine in what before 1836 was the state of Texas.² That was Los Almagres on the San Saba River, opened about 1757. Though the history of the San Saba mission and of the San Saba presidio is clear and sufficiently full, little is known of the history of the mine. It is doubtful if it ever paid much. Certainly, captains and commanders were always urging the Spanish viceroy to equip a large presidio on the San Saba to protect the mines. A certain Captain Villareal, too, is reported to have sent an urgent plea to the viceroy for more troops to protect a mine "two days' ride from Corpus Christi," which, he said, had been taken by Indians.³ But such advice from the Spanish commanders must not be taken too seriously. Many of them were notorious graft-

¹See Bolton, H. E., *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, p. 4. I am indebted also to Mrs. Mattie Austin Hatcher, Archivist in History at the University of Texas, for information in her unpublished (1923) book on *The Opening of Texas to Foreign Settlement*, particularly Chaps. II and V.

²Brewster County, in which mines were worked, was not in the old Mexican state of Texas and Coahuila.

³Sutherland, Mary A., *The Story of Corpus Christi*, Houston, 1916, pp. 2-3. Mrs. Sutherland does not give her authority.

ers, paying their men in goods with enormous profit to themselves, and frequently carrying on their payrolls the names of men whom they had enlisted only to discharge, or whom they had not enlisted at all. Their meat was more men.⁴ Yet these old reports have furnished "documentary evidence" to many a treasure hunter.

Santa Anna's army, although it was well furnished when it crossed over into Texas from Mexico, and although it provided some fair plunder to the Texans at San Jacinto,⁵ could not, thinks Dr. E. C. Barker, Professor of American History in the University of Texas, have dropped off any chests of money in Texas. According to Dr. Barker, the Mexican troops in Texas, especially garrison troops, were often poorly paid.

If we turn from the Spanish and Mexicans to the early American colonists of Texas, we find that the prospect of mineral riches had little part in motivating their colonization. Though Stephen F. Austin "denounced" a mine—perhaps coal—on the upper Trinity,⁶ and though the Bowie brothers, with a small band of men, staked their lives on the chance of gaining silver ore from the San Saba country,⁷ thereby giving basis to the most remarkable of all Texas legends, nevertheless, the pioneer settlers of

⁴Bolton, H. E., *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, p. 9; Priestley, H. I., *José de Galvez* (University of California Publications in History, 1916), p. 288. According to Priestley, some presidios were established by the Spanish in America to protect the special interests of large landholders.

Don Pedro de Terreros, banker and wealthy mine owner of Mexico, who advanced the money for the establishment of the Mission of San Saba, may not have been so altruistic as Bancroft, Dr. Dunn, and Dr. Bolton have all implied. The government must bear the cost of military protection for the mission. With government protection and Indian labor, the mines at San Saba, which Miranda had in his famous reports made so promising, would richly pay any individual working them. Don Pedro had an interest in the mines. The Terreros records, if extant, might throw a great deal of light on the subject.

⁵About \$11 around for each man in the Texas army, besides \$3000 that was voted to the Texas navy. There was \$11,000 in specie in Santa Anna's military chest. His "finery and silver" were auctioned off at \$1600 and his rich saddle at \$800. See "An Account of the Battle of San Jacinto," by J. Washington Winters, *Texas State Historical Association Quarterly*, Vol. VI, pp. 139-144; "Memoirs of Major George Bernard Erath," by Lucy A. Erath, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 266-269.

⁶Austin Papers in University of Texas archives. Information given by Mrs. Mattie Austin Hatcher, Archivist.

⁷See "The Legend of the San Saba, or Bowie, Mine."

Texas came hither to plough and herd, to trade and labor, not to prospect.⁸

II

If the Spanish, then, occupied Texas for military and not pecuniary reasons, at large expense; if the brief Mexican regime meant nothing more than the maintenance of costly armies; if the original Texas colonists came without a dream of Spanish treasure—whence *now* among their descendants the amazing wealth of legends about lost mines and secreted treasures pertaining to the Spanish-Mexican eras? The full answer can be found in no one factor, but it can be largely found in the Spanish genius as it expressed itself in America. The answer involves a review of early Spanish wealth in America, real and imaginary, and an understanding of the influence of the Spanish genius upon Anglo-Saxons in the Southwest. The Spanish found immense wealth in America. They became credulous of mythical wealth. Later ages and folk, failing to inherit their wealth, inherited their credulity.

For treasure the Spanish explored and ransacked the whole of one continent and the half of another. And treasure they found. The indeterminate lake of Tezcucó is yet uneasy with the wealth of Montezuma lost in it by the overwhelmed army of Cortez.⁹ The ransom of Atahualpa, head inca of Peru, promised in golden vessels to Pizarro at Andamarca, was to fill a room twenty-two by seventeen feet to a height of nine feet above the floor.¹⁰ And most of that ransom was actually delivered! Quesada did not find El Dorado, but in the country of Bogota he piled up golden booty in a courtyard so high "that a rider on horseback might hide behind it."¹¹ For four centuries the silver mines of

⁸Dr. Barker, in treating of "Land Speculation as a Cause of the Texas Revolution," *Texas State Historical Association Quarterly*, Vol. X, p. 76 ff., ignores all idea that reputed mineral riches had anything to do with the land speculation.

An unfounded but popular view to the contrary is offered by Captain Marryat, who says: "The dismemberment of Texas from Mexico was affected by the reports of extensive gold mines, diamonds, etc., which were to be found there."—*Narrative of the Travels and Adventures of Monsieur Violet in California, Sonora, and Western Texas*, Leipzig, 1843, p. 147.

⁹Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, Book V, Chapter III. I am aware of the fact that some historians question the loss of any great treasure.

¹⁰Prescott, *Conquest of Peru*, Philadelphia, 1874, I, pp. 420-422; 453 ff. Also, Bandelier, A. F., *The Gilded Man*, p. 19.

¹¹Bandelier, p. 26.

South America have been the richest in the world. What wonder that the Spanish dreamed of wealth wherever the unknown stretched, and that buoyantly they followed their dreams! Led by rumor, they found in some places what they had come to America to find; thus they came to expect to find it wherever rumor pointed. The assertion of a naked Indian led Balboa to gaze first of all Europeans upon the great "South Sea." An Indian told Pizarro of the vast nations of the Incas and of the fabulous treasures of Cuzco. Indians with their tales of the wealth of the Aztecs and the Muisecas "guided Cortez to the rich capital of Montezuma, and Quesada to the opulent plateau of Cundinamarca."¹²

What wonder then that Sebastian de Benalcazar listened to a lone Indian tell the tale of the Gilded King, El Dorado,¹³ in 1535, and that in that puissant age of energy, exploration, and imagination, the tale was echoed in the camps of soldiers under the Andes, by the hearths of peasants in Navarre, on the smacks of Devonshire fishermen, in the counting-houses of Augsburg bankers, and in the council chamber of Queen Elizabeth as well as in the courts of a century of Spanish monarchs? To seek El Dorado, the *conquistadores* for a hundred years and more marched and countermarched from one extremity of half of the western hemisphere to the other, spending the lives of tens of thousands of men and the wealth of prodigal treasuries, enduring starvation, fever, cold, thirst, the pests of swamps and the pitilessness of deserts—all with an intrepidity that comes now in our tame "Safety First" age like a stirring cup brewed by the giants. At first a man, El Dorado came to mean a place somewhere in the western part of what is now Colombia, then in any, every direction. At sixty-three Great Raleigh came out of twelve years of imprisonment to fare forth a second time on the quest. And two centuries after he had died the same quest was occupying whole bodies of men; and even yet it is the tale, so it is said, of sanguine souls scattered over all South America.

When the seekers did not find it, always the treasure was

¹²Zahm, J. A. (H. J. Mozans), *Through South America's Southland*, New York, 1916, p. 361.

¹³For full accounts of the El Dorado history and legends, see Adolphe F. Bandelier's *The Gilded Man*, New York, 1893, and Z. A. Zahm's (H. J. Mozans) *The Quest of El Dorado*, New York, 1917. Both are readable and distinguish well between history and legend. Bandelier is the more scholarly of the two writers.

más allá, on beyond. The search for La Ciudad Encantada de los Cesares,¹⁴ inspired by the fabrication of an Indian, was but the duplication of the sublime and ridiculous El Dorado error. And so was Cabeza de Vaca's quest for the legended wealth of Florida¹⁵—a quest that had its ironic conclusion on the other side of the continent in Coronado's expedition. So, too, were the fabled Palace of Cubanacan in Cuba;¹⁶ the mythical wealth of the mythical Amazons;¹⁷ the Laguna de Oro in New Mexico;¹⁸ the Pueblos del Rey Coronado of the West;¹⁹ the Cerro de la Plata,²⁰ which was perhaps Los Almagres of Texas;²¹ the Concho River, bedded with pearls richer than those of the Indies or of the Gulf of California;²² the "Peak of Gold,"²³ in either Texas or New Mexico; the nebulous treasures of a Casa del Sol;²⁴ and the Gran Paytiti, or Gran Moxo,²⁵ again in South America. Always beyond and beyond, lured by the talk of whatever chance savage, the Spanish quested. Thus the tale of a captive Indian, who wanted to get back eastward, led Coronado from the empty pueblos of the Zuñi in Arizona, whither he had been guided by an ignorant negro in search of the Seven Cities of Cibola, to make his astounding march on eastward all the way to Kansas in quest of the Gran Quivira²⁶—a place that never existed, a people that wandered naked at the heels of the drifting buffalo.

¹⁴Zahm, J. A. (Mozans), *Through South America's Southland*, pp. 353-362.

¹⁵Bandelier, *The Gilded Man*, "The Seven Cities," p. 125 ff.

¹⁶Skinner, Chas. M., *Myths and Legends of Our New Possessions*, Philadelphia, 1902, p. 103.

¹⁷Bandelier, *The Gilded Man*, "The Amazons," p. 113 ff.

¹⁸Bolton, H. E. (Editor), *Spanish Explorations in the Southwest*, New York, 1916, pp. 130, 156, 184, 186.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 130.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

²¹Bancroft identifies the "mountain of silver" with "the famous iron mountain near the city of Durango."—*History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, I, p. 100.

²²Bolton, *Spanish Explorations*, pp. 313-317.

²³Lummis, Chas. F., *The Enchanted Burro*, p. 161 ff.

²⁴Zahm, J. A., *The Quest of El Dorado*, p. 6.

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 197-200.

²⁶Bandelier, *The Gilded Man*, "Quivira," p. 223 ff.

Dr. Bolton points out that the Spanish searched in Texas for "the Kingdom of Gran Quivira, where 'everyone had their ordinary dishes made of wrought plate, and the jugs and bowls were of gold'"; also "for the Seven Hills of the Aijados, or Aixaos, where gold was so plentiful that 'the

The imagination of simple-lived folk abhors failure, and the poorest in circumstances are the richest in legend of treasure. A remote disaster becomes a hope for present success. "I have remarked," says Washington Irving,²⁷ "that the stories of treasure buried by the Moors which prevail throughout Spain are most current among the poorest people. It is thus kind nature consoles with shadows for the want of substantials." When Coronado told his men the truth of his barren search, they deserted him unbelieving. Following his expedition in 1542, a mission was established in southeastern New Mexico. For a hundred years explorers continued to search east and west for the Quivira. Finally the poor little mission was destroyed, and then the mixed-blooded descendants of the Spanish fortune hunters came to believe that it had been a rich cathedral in which was hoarded illimitable wealth.²⁸ The dreamer may die, but the dream of treasure lives on.

When the Texas pioneers inherited the Spanish *sitios* and *porciones* of land, the leagues and labors, marked off by *varas* and *pasos*, they inherited too from the Spaniard and his Mexican successor something of the lure of ungained treasure. The imagination that images a cave in the Llano hills filled with five hundred jack loads of silver bullion is hardly so audacious as that which pictured the Seven Cities shining with their jeweled portals in the sun and peopled mostly by goldsmiths; but it is the same imagination, different only in degree, tempered by race and by temporal environment. The *maletas* of doubloons, the chests and stuffed cannon of Mexican army money, the caves bursting with Spanish bullion and plundered jewels—the very stuff of Texas treasure legends—are directly derived from the Spanish who made the multiform story of El Dorado immortal. I do not mean to say that the treasure legend is peculiar to the Spanish-tempered Southwest; I do mean to assert that the treasure legends of this Southwest are peculiarly of Spanish origin. It would, indeed, be interesting to contrast the treasure legends of the world before the Spanish discovered American wealth with those that have taken form since.

natives not knowing any of the other metals, make of it everything they need, such as vessels and the tips of arrows and lances.'"—"The Spanish Occupation of Texas, 1519-1690," by Herbert E. Bolton, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, pp. 1-2.

²⁷*The Alhambra*, "The Journey."

²⁸Bandelier, *The Gilded Man*, p. 223 ff.

III

One cannot neglect the immense effect on the imaginations of North America made by the discovery of gold in California and later in Alaska. Snively's wild goose expedition up the Rio Grande in 1867²⁹ could hardly have been supported by the settlers of Texas before '49. There is evidence to show that popular interest in, and therefore legends of, Texas lost mines blazed up synchronically with the California gold excitement of 1848-1850. In 1849 Charles W. Webber published a novel that makes much of the San Saba tradition.³⁰ In the early fifties, Texas newspapers carried items on "Gold" as well as on "Cotton," etc., and there was a mining rush up the Colorado and its western tributaries.³¹ The time afforded occasion for the revival of Spanish-Mexican and Indian traditions concerning Spanish mining operations in Texas. Note should be made of the fact that the majority of Texas buried treasure legends presuppose rich mines.

IV

Two kindred qualities of man, hope and credulity, remain to be considered among the sources of treasure legend in Texas. These qualities are not coördinate with the historical forces; rather, they have been acted upon by the historical forces. Yet they have a certain localized source like the legends themselves. For as the tradition of modern treasure goes back to El Dorado, so the Mexicans who lure Americans into the quest of treasure are direct descendants of the Indians who lured the early Spanish. These Indians often pointed the eager Spanish on beyond in order to get rid of them; so the modern Mexican frequently inspires credulity in American treasure hunters in order to gain a small reward.

There seems to be a more or less regular traffic in charts—*platas*—to buried treasure. One Mexican paid for medicine at a

²⁹See "The Snively Legend," *infra*.

³⁰Webber, Chas. W., *The Gold Mines of the Gila*, New York, 1849, especially pages 189-191 and 196-197. Webber concludes the book with an actual proposal to readers to join him in an expedition after the treasure. He had been a ranger with Jack Hays a short time and he claims to have gotten his information about the San Saba deposits from the talk of men in camp. Use is made of the same legendary material in Webber's *Old Hicks the Guide*, 1848.

³¹Galveston *Weekly Journal*, May 13, June 6, June 16, 1853.

drug store with his chart and story; another got pasturage for his burros at the same price; a third parted with his directive legend, which he believed in, to a white man for befriending him in sickness. Some of the *platas* purporting to be a century old are written with pencil on the cheapest of modern paper. The late John Warren Hunter asserted that at one time the chart business was a regular industry in San Antonio.³² Only recently a man was indicted in Fort Worth for fraudulently obtaining money on pretense of organizing an expedition to seek \$5,000,000 in gold nuggets in a cave in Mexico.³³ How the nuggets got in the cave involved a long story around an Indian, General Custer, Jesse James, and Pancho Villa. It was a good story!³⁴

However, it would be grossly wronging the chief purveyors of treasure charts and legends to ascribe their action even primarily to avarice. It is as easy to promise gold as it is to promise rain, and in a country in which neither is plentiful the Mexican shows his desire to please by predicting both. Many a treasure legend has originated in motives as innocent as those of Uncle Remus.

V

Where there is so much smoke there must be some fire, many people familiar with the great body of treasure legend will say. I have no disposition to refute the argument. According to legend, much money has been found. I myself know of a few small finds. I know of eight hundred Mexican dollars having been found under a mesquite tree in Atascosa County many years ago; I know of about four hundred dollars in Mexican coin that were rooted up by hogs in Frio County forty years ago. Doubtless other actual finds over the country could be recorded. Whatever the facts, few men of imagination can listen to the enthusiasm of the true treasure hunter without becoming infected with his glamour.

After all, one need not patronize or pity these modern seekers of El Dorado. The law of compensation always works. At least

³²"The Hunt for the Bowie Mine in Menard," in *Frontier Times*, Bandera, Texas, October, 1923, pp. 24-26. The article is full of concrete evidence not to be questioned.

³³San Antonio *Express*, October 21, 1923, p. 1.

³⁴For good satire on Texan credulity in Mexican mines, see *On A Mexican Mustang Through Texas*, by Alex E. Sweet and J. Armory Knox, Rand, McNally and Co., New York, 1892, pp. 439-452.

they have kept alive that "knack of hoping" that made Oliver Goldsmith so charming. They have something in them as precious perhaps as the "ditches of footnotes" that authorize this treatise on them. They have dreamed something of the dream of Great Raleigh; and when one has known them as I have known them, he comes to respect something rightly simple and sincere in their lives, as there is, indeed, something rightly simple and sincere in their legends.

In some towns and back in certain unproductive hill districts of Southwest Texas, a considerable number of people live to hunt treasure. With them treasure hunting is a high passion. Others—and among them mingle people of some means—"dig" occasionally. However, few ranch and farm people of the Southwest make a practice of hunting lost treasure, and the majority even laugh at folk who do; yet most of them sometimes tell these legends, and nearly every man, under the sanguine spell of realistic circumstance, has at some time or another taken stock in one or two of them. Thus the legends in a large way, not easily defined, express the genius of the people to whose soil they pertain.

THE LEGEND OF THE SAN SABA OR BOWIE MINE

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I

The epic legend of Texas is the legend of the San Saba, or Bowie, Mine. In Spanish chronicles it is known as La Mina de Los Almagres, or simply Los Almagres; also as Las Amarillas; sometimes as La Mina de las Iguanas, or Lizard Mine, from the fact that the ore was said to be found in chunks called *iguanas* (lizards). *Almagre* means red earth.

"To discover a rumored Silver Hill (Cerro de la Plata) somewhere to the north, several attempts were made before 1650 from both Nuevo Leon and Nueva Vizcaya, but were frustrated by Indian hostilities."¹

"Sir, . . . the principal vein is more than two square bars thick, and from a distance the upper part of it looks to be more than

¹Bolton, H. E., *Spanish Explorations in the Southwest*, pp. 283-284.

thirty bars wide. . . . We met Indians who assured us that on beyond the *almagres* were still larger and richer...and that there we might find an abundance not only of ore but of pure silver But the mines of Cerro del Almagre are so numerous that I pledge myself to give the inhabitants of the province of Texas one each, without any man's being prejudiced in the measurements." Thus reported Bernardo de Miranda as a result of his prospecting tour for minerals in the Llano country in 1756.² And partly "because an opulence and abundance of silver and gold was the principal foundation upon which the kingdom of Spain rested" ("*por que la riqueza y abundancia de plata, y oro, es el fundo principal de que resuelta los reinos de España*"),³ as the royal viceroy of Mexico took occasion to remind his subordinates, an immediate establishment of mission and presidio on the San Saba River was undertaken and the mining enterprise presumably launched.

Thus the rumor of the Hill of Silver developed into the epic legend of Texas. History has recorded clearly the foundation and the failure of the San Saba mission and presidio, and there is no occasion for repeating the story here.⁴ It has been singularly reticent on the subject of the mines. Dr. Dunn says nothing on it. Dr. Bolton tells of having "identified the mine opened by Miranda with the Boyd Shaft" on Honey Creek, fifty or sixty miles from the mission and presidio that were near what is now Menard on the San Saba.⁵ The fullest essay yet made at treating the debatable subject of the mines is to be found in a pamphlet by the late John Warren Hunter, entitled "Rise and Fall of the Mission San Saba," to which is appended "A Brief History of the Bowie or Almagres Mine."⁶ The implication from

²"Miranda's Expedition to Los Almagres and Plans for Developing the Mines," a Spanish transcript from original documents in the archives of Mexico, now in the history archives of the University of Texas, "1755-1756, A. G. I. Mejico, 92-6-22, N' 16A." See also another transcript from original sources: "Report on Disposition of San Saba," listed "1767, A. G. I., Guad., 104-6, 13."

³"Miranda's Expedition to Los Almagres," etc. *Vide ante*.

⁴For a succinct history, see Dunn, William E., "The Apache Mission of the San Saba River," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XVII, 379-414; also, Bolton, H. E., *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, pp. 78-93.

⁵Bolton, *supra*, p. 83.

⁶This is an interesting but somewhat confusing document. It was printed in 1905 and is already so rare as to be almost unobtainable. It is in neither

history is that the mines were closed with the abandonment of the San Saba presidio, 1769. However, inasmuch as the nearest military protection was more than fifty miles away and was unable to hold its own against the Comanches and other hostile tribes, it is doubtful whether the mines were ever worked to any extent. Hunter finds, on doubtful evidence, that they were still being operated in 1812.⁷ Again, it is claimed that Mexico was preparing to reopen the mines when Iturbide fell in 1823.⁸

But with the evidence at hand it would be idle to go further into the history of the mines. All that I myself know is what I have read in and of Miranda's reports; and these reports were the propaganda of an ambitious promotion seeker, made before, not after, practical exploitation. The mines may have been worked consistently for a while. They may have paid. According to one report in the Miranda documents, the ore assayed eleven ounces to the pound.⁹ Hunter says that a report made in 1812 by Don Ignacio Obregon, who signed himself "*Inspector Real de las Minas*," announced an analysis of \$1680 to the ton;¹⁰ but this Don Ignacio's reports of assays have been only a little less ubiquitous than peddled charts.¹¹ According to a recent United States Government report, the Llano country shows no evidence of gold or silver in paying quantities.¹²

the Texas State Library nor the Library of the University of Texas. I am indebted to Mr. E. W. Winkler for use of his presentation copy. Mr. Hunter was living at Mason when he issued the pamphlet and had a rare first-hand knowledge of the ground and of traditions as well as access to some original documents.

⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁸*History of San Antonio and the Early Days of Texas*, compiled by Robert Sturmberg, San Antonio, 1920, Chap. III.

⁹"Report on Disposition of San Saba." *Vide ante*.

¹⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 48.

¹¹See, for instance, "The Lost Gold Mines of Texas May Be Found," by W. D. Hornaday in the *Dallas News*, January 7, 1923.

¹²U. S. Geological Survey, Bulletin 450, "Mineral Resources of the Llano-Burnet Region, Texas," by Sidney Page, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1911.

But note the following dispatch in the *San Antonio Express*, February 26, 1924, p. 5:

"AUSTIN, Tex., Feb. 25—Sam Young, Llano banker, was in Austin Monday and reports much activity in that region in the mineral line. Young says experts think they have found gold in paying quantity, also graphite, and that capital now is being interested in the deposits with the early prospects of real mining and shipping of valuable ores and probably the refined products. Many small deposits of precious metals have been found near Llano in recent years, but the new finds are said to be large enough to warrant exploitation and give that section a new and valuable industry."

Thus history never tires of repeating itself; thus the dream of treasure once dreamed lives on.

It is true that Miranda was ordered to take thirty mule loads of ore to Mexico to be carefully assayed. According to some traditions, all the ore of Texas mines was transported to Mexico to be smelted; on the other hand, the ruins of sundry smelters have been reported by hunters for the mines. The point is that a great many legends about "seventeen," "thirty," or "forty jack loads" of buried *bullion* may have been derived from the actual transportation of a pack train of crude ore.

II

Where history is doubtful, legend is assured; and a volume of the most engrossing narratives might easily be compiled on the Almagres Mine. The legend, in its color, variety, and luxuriance, has reached into the literature of England and continental Europe,¹³ reverted with thousand-fold increase to the Mexican land of its birth, and flourished in the camps, households, and offices of a century of American cowboys, rangers, miners, farmers, bankers, lawyers, preachers, and newspaper writers of the Southwest; entering, on one hand, into professed fiction,¹⁴ and on the other hand, leading hundreds of men into the grave business of disemboweling mountains, draining lakes, and turning rivers out of their courses.

¹³Fournel, Henri, *Coup d'oeil . . . sur le Texas*, Paris, 1841, p. 23, speaks "*des richesses métalliques depuis longtemps signalées par les Espagnoles.*" I am unable now to verify the reference, but I am sure that Gustave Aimard introduces the subject in one of his romances, probably *The Freebooters*.

Of course the rumor of the mines had a wide vogue in Spain, where the viceroy's reports went direct.

An English novel published in 1843 has this sentence: "The Comanches have a great profusion of gold, which they obtain from the neighborhood of the San Seba [*sic*] hills, and work it themselves into bracelets, armlets, diadems, as well as bits for their horses, and ornaments to their saddles."—Marryat, Captain, *Monsieur Violet*, etc., p. 175.

¹⁴As examples of fictional uses of the legend in America, see Webber, Charles W., *The Gold Mines of the Gila*, New York, 1849, pp. 189-191; Webber, *Old Hicks the Guide*, New York, 1848. In this last named book, the use is so vague and general that no particular pages can be cited. Other examples are "The Llano Treasure Cave," by Dick Naylor, *The Texas Magazine*, Vol. III, pp. 195-204, reprinted in the *Dallas Semi-Weekly Farm News*, with T. B. Baldwin as the name of the author, July 11 and July 14, 1922; *The Three Adventurers*, by J. S. (K. Lamity) Bonner, Austin, (no date given).

It is a great pity for the sake of romance that we have no biography of Bowie such as we have of Crockett. James Bowie must have been a colorful and spirited soldier of fortune as well as free-hearted patriot. We know that he was a successful slave runner. We know that in the early twenties he and his brother Rezin P. Bowie came to San Antonio and that from the beginning he had one eye open for a quick fortune. According to Sowell, he prospected for gold and silver on the Frio River.¹⁵ He must have been rather credulous, as is natural to men with untrained imagination and bounding lust for adventure. Witness his precipitate action in the so-called "Grass Fight."¹⁶ While he was in hot-headed quest of the San Saba Mine, he engaged in one of the most brilliant Indian fights of early days.¹⁷ Thousands of men have believed and yet believe that he knew where untold riches lie. He died in the Alamo, carrying with him a secret as potent to render him immortal as his brave part in achieving the independence of Texas.

I shall now briefly sketch Colonel Bowie's connection with the mine that bears his name. My information is based somewhat on Hunter's pamphlet, but I have heard the legend in a dozen different forms and shall attempt nothing more than an amalgamation.

"In the first place," says West Burton of Austin, a most persistent seeker for the mine, "never be fooled into thinking that there is any such thing as the *Bowie Mine*. You can follow a lead if you hit it and locate any mine, but there is not any lead to the so-called Bowie Mine. That wasn't a mine at all, but a storage for bullion taken from the San Saba or Los Almagres mines

¹⁵Sowell, A. J., *Early Settlers and Indian Fighters of Texas*, pp. 405-408.

¹⁶"Several days previous to the fight it was currently reported in Camp that there was a quantity of silver coming from Mexico on pack mules to pay off the soldiers of General Cos. Our scouts kept a close watch, to give the news as soon as the convoy should be espied, so that we might intercept the treasure. On the morning of the 26th, Colonel Bowie was out in the direction of the Medina, with a company, and discovered some mules with packs approaching. Supposing this to be the expected train, he sent a messenger for reinforcements."—Baker, D. W. C., *Texas Scrap Book*, p. 92.

¹⁷The Battle of Calf Creek, 1831, in which eleven Texans fought one hundred and sixty-four Indians under the leadership of Chief Tresmanos of the Lipans. Only one of Bowie's men was killed. Rezin P. Bowie wrote an account of the battle that has often been quoted in Texas histories. The account by James Bowie seems not so well known. It is to be found in John Henry Brown's *History of Texas*, Vol. I, pp. 170-175.

proper. Remember that the Spanish fort on the San Saba was destroyed three times and that the Indians were on the warpath constantly. Under such conditions, a strong and secure place had to be found for storing the bullion as it was smelted out. That place was somewhere on the Llano. In it were stored five hundred jack loads of silver bullion when the Indians ran the Spanish out the last time and destroyed the mines. It was that storage that the Lipans showed to Bowie and that he tried to get."

Over the Llano region roamed and ruled a band of Lipans. Their chief was named Xolic, and for a long time he was in the habit of leading his people down to San Antonio every year to trade off some of the bullion they had captured from the Spaniards. They never took much at a time, for their wants were simple. The Spaniards and Mexicans in San Antonio thought that the ore had been chipped off some rich vein; there was a little gold in it. Of course they tried to learn the source of such wealth, but the Indians had a tribal understanding that whoever should reveal the place of the mineral should be bound and tortured to death. No Lipan broke his agreement. At length the people of San Antonio grew accustomed to the silver-bearing Lipans and ceased to try to enter their secret. Then came the curious Americans.

Bowie laid his plans carefully. He at once began to cultivate the friendship of the Lipans. He sent back East for a fine rifle plated with silver. When it came he presented it to old Chief Xolic. A powwow was held and Bowie was invited to join the tribe. Formally, by the San Pedro Springs, he was adopted into it. Now followed months of life with the savages. Bowie was expert at shooting the buffalo; he was foremost in fighting against the enemies of the Lipans; some say that he married the chief's daughter. He became so thoroughly a Lipan and was so useful a warrior that his adopted brothers finally showed him the source of their precious mineral. He had expected much but he had hardly expected to see millions. The sight seemed to overthrow all caution and judgment. Almost immediately he deserted the Indians and returned to San Antonio to raise a force for seizing the treasure.

He was between two fires. He did not want too large a body of men to share with; he must have a considerable body to force the Indians. He took some time in arranging the campaign.

Meanwhile old Chief Xolic died, and a young warrior named Tresmanos succeeded to his position. Soon afterwards he came with his people to San Antonio on their annual bartering trip. There he saw Bowie, accused him of treachery, and came near being killed for his insolence. The time was at hand for Bowie to start on his campaign. Thirty-four men had promised to accompany him. In actuality, only ten put in their appearance, among whom were his brother Rezin P. Bowie and a negro slave. The fewness of numbers, however, did not deter him. He was determined to reach the site of the mineral—whether smelted bullion or natural veins of crude ore legend does not agree—and to establish a stockade there and proceed with exploitation.

Some distance north of San Antonio in the hills he met a friendly band of Indians who warned him that Tresmanos was on the warpath against him and his rumored invasion. Bowie pressed on. November 21, 1831, near Calf Creek, in what is now McCulloch County, the little party was attacked at sunrise by 164 Indians. The Texans had one man killed and two wounded and all their horses lost; the Indians, according to their own subsequent report, had eighty men killed besides a great number wounded. In 1905, Hunter described the remains of the barricade hastily constructed by the Bowie party as being "still traceable," and added that the barricade "would be almost intact but for the hand of the impious treasure seeker."

It is generally said that the battle of Calf Creek marked Bowie's last attempt to get to the San Saba Mine, and that the remaining few years of his life were taken up with the duties of a patriot. According to one legend current in the San Saba country, on the word of Mr. Carlos Ashley, a native, Bowie was seeking the San Saba treasure in order to finance the Texas army. This is the patriotic theme also of a Texas novel in which Bowie is the hero: William O. Stoddard's *The Lost Gold of the Montezumas—A Story of the Alamo*. Mr. Matt Bradley, editor and publisher of *Border Wars of Texas*, says that only three months before Bowie fell in the Alamo he was trying again to reach the riches of which he alone among white men knew the secret.¹⁸ Some years ago a man named Longworth, who is now in Kansas, paid a Mexican in San Antonio \$500 for a document purporting to have been taken

¹⁸A signed article on the Calf Creek fight in the *Dallas News*, January 28, 1923.

off Bowie's body by a Mexican lieutenant who entered the Alamo immediately after the last defender had been silenced. The Mexican who sold the document claimed that lieutenant as a paternal ancestor. He swore that it gave directions to the mine, but somehow Longworth could not follow them.

Thus we see that, in fact, Bowie had nothing more to do with the mine than to hunt it. But because he was its greatest hunter and because he is presumed to have found it, his name has come to be linked with it. However, this linking is of a comparatively recent time. I doubt if the name "Bowie Mine" was used at all until after the Civil War. All the earlier histories and books of travel that mention the mines—and they are many—refer to them as the San Saba Mines. "Bowie Mine" is a popular coinage of the last half century, and now the legend of the mine is living to no small extent by virtue of the legend of the man.

III

We have seen that the San Saba presidio was fifty miles or more away from the mines it is supposed to have protected. Not all lost mine hunters, by any means, have agreed with Dr. Bolton in locating the mine, or mines, on Honey Creek. It has been located now on the Llano, now on the San Saba, up and down, across and beyond. Many hunters assert that numerous mines were scattered over a wide belt extending in a general way from the Colorado westward along the courses of the Llano and San Saba to the Nueces canyon, El Cañon, as the Spanish called it.¹⁹ A vast part of the bullion buried in Texas legends is supposed to have come from the mines in this area.

Some of the early Texas writers credulous of mineral deposits in the state have had an immense influence on hunters for the San Saba Mines, who are often readers of old and out of the way books. These hunters argue that as the early writers were nearer the sources of history than their skeptical successors, they must be more reliable.

An article from the now stilled pen of John Warren Hunter recently appeared in the *Frontier Times* (Bandera, Texas), de-

¹⁹"Command El Cañon and Los Almagres to deliver up their known treasures," wrote De Mézières in an effort to stimulate Spanish activity in Texas.—Bolton, H. E., *Athanase de Mézières*, II, 297.

tailling a few of the enterprises that have been undertaken to recover the San Saba Mine. I quote from the article:²⁰

“The poor, credulous tramp prospector has not been alone led off by the lure of the Lost Mine. . . . Ben F. Gooch, a one-time wealthy stockman at Mason, was so sure that he had found the Bowie Mine that he spent \$1500 sinking a shaft that is yet pointed out as ‘Gooch’s Folly.’ A judge of the Supreme Court spent \$500 in another hole near Menard. W. T. Burnum invested \$1500 in machinery with which he pumped out a cave on the divide north of the old mission. Failing to find the coveted mine at this place, he moved the machinery and pumped out a small artificial lake just above the town of Menard. . . . The Spanish had created this lake for a purpose. . . . The Almagres Mine entrance was at the bottom of the lake, which had been flooded by the Spaniards at the last moment.”

LOST GOLD OF THE LLANO COUNTRY

BY E. G. LITTLEJOHN

The first of these two legends is adapted from an account signed “S. S. P.” that appeared in the *Galveston News* years ago. It is attributed to one of the rangers who made the find. The second legend appeared in the *Galveston News* also, signed by Nancy Evans Bower, of Cherokee, Texas, who got it direct from Medlin.

I

THE BROOK OF GOLD DISCOVERED BY LOST RANGERS

Back in the early '40's the main camp of McCulloch's rangers was located in Hamilton's Valley on the Colorado. From this point they scouted far and wide against hostile Indians. While two of the rangers were out on one such scouting expedition, their horses got away during the night, and in attempting to find them next morning they got lost themselves in a dense fog that enveloped the hills and valleys. They wandered all day in a vain attempt to regain their camp. It was hot summer, in a time of long

²⁰Vol. I, No. I, October, 1923, p. 25.

drouth, and they were in a region utterly devoid of water. When night came they lay down, suffering from hunger and thirst. The next morning they struck out early, hoping to "find themselves" before the heat of the day came on, or at least to find some water. But though they climbed many rugged hills to view the land, every prospect was desolate and unfamiliar.

At length, from the summit of a low range of hills, they discovered a narrow green valley, and down it, by a line of green trees, they traced the course of a mountain brook. Descending, they soon stood on the banks of a stream of clear water, which danced over a pebbly bottom of fine, almost pure white gravel, with here and there shallow pools sparkling under the noon-day sun. Here they rested and refreshed themselves, lying flat upon the margin and taking long draughts of the crystal waters.

As one of the rangers, after the first pangs of his thirst were satisfied, lay looking into the sparkling waters, he was startled to discover that the entire bottom was strewn with minute shining particles. Calling to his companion, he said: "We have lost our horses, saddles, and guns, but here is something better. Here is gold, gold, world without end!" The particles, which were as thick among the sand and gravel as if sown by the handful, were yellow like gold and of the size of very coarse corn bran.

Before leaving the place, the rangers gathered a quantity of the yellow particles and tied them up in a handkerchief. On their way out they stopped to rest high up on the western shoulder of a long, rugged hill. Here they discovered in the fork of a stunted live oak tree an ancient rust-eaten pick, its handle gone, and one end so encased in the growth of the tree that the pick could not be removed. The other end pointed toward the head of the little stream they had left. Then they realized that they were not the first to have discovered the gold mine, but that some prospector, overtaken perhaps by sudden death, had left his mark. Late in the afternoon the scouts saw looming in the distance Packsaddle Mountain on the Llano, and from this well-known landmark they found their bearings and were soon safely back in McCulloch's camp at Hamilton's Valley.

Later they exhibited their bandana of gold in the village of San Marcos. A man there versed in the subject of minerals pronounced it virgin gold and said that it was what miners knew as "drift gold," which had been washed downstream from a mother lode. That mother lode, he said, might be miles away, but wher-

ever it was it must be exceedingly rich. On many a long tramp and ride in after years the rangers sought the golden pool, but they never found it again. The mute finger of the old pick on the mountain side perhaps still points to the spot where the lost mine may be found, and the grim hills of the Llano country still stand silent guard over the secret of their hidden wealth.

II

THE SMELTER ON THE LITTLE LLANO

In the early part of the last century mining parties composed principally of Mexicans, but usually led by two or more white men, were quite common in the mineral belt of Texas. The mining was carried on under great difficulties and in a crude way. The country was a wilderness inhabited only by roving bands of hostile Indians and wild animals. The only means of transportation were the small Mexican burros. Panniers made of cowhide and packed with provisions, tools, and other necessities of the miners, were strapped to the backs of these patient, docile little animals. After the furnace was constructed, the burros conveyed ore from the mine to the furnace.

The mineral was buried as it came from the smelter, for no one knew at what moment the Indians might sweep down. It was also a rule among the miners, when moving or returning to the settlements, to bury their mineral treasure at night and build their campfire over it, thus having it securely hidden in case of an attack by the Indians.

In the year 1865 an ancient man came to San Saba County in search of an old furnace. After searching for it alone for several days, he confided to some ranchmen in the vicinity that in 1834 he and another white man and thirty-five Mexicans were engaged in mining near the Little Llano River. They had found, he said, a rich mine and had taken out 1200 pounds of gold and silver, which they buried together with \$500 in Mexican silver coin. It was their custom to conceal the opening to the mine after conveying a month's supply to the furnace. They had just completed a month's run and were preparing to return to the mine for another supply when the Indians swooped down upon them, killing all except the two white men and a Mexican girl, who were at the spring some distance from the furnace.

The stranger went on to say that the treasure was buried on a high hill half a mile due north from the furnace; that seventy-five yards from the furnace, in a direct line between the furnace and the spot where the treasure was buried, stood a pin oak tree, in a knot hole of which a rock had been driven. He offered \$500 to anyone who would guide him to the furnace. Some half-dozen men turned out to assist in the search, but it proved fruitless. He then informed the ranchmen that he and his partner and the Mexican girl, after their escape from the Indians, made their way to Mexico, where they filed a chart of the mine in the Mexican archives, as was required by the laws of Mexico, of which Texas was at that time a part. A copy of the chart was retained by his partner, who was then (1865) living in St. Louis, he having married the Mexican girl. The old man then started on a long overland ride to St. Louis to induce his partner to aid him in the search for the treasure buried in 1834. A short time afterwards it was learned that while he was mounting his horse in Williamson County, his gun was accidentally discharged, killing him instantly.

No further attempt was made to locate the furnace till 1878, when a man named Medlin, hearing the story, engaged to herd sheep for a ranchman whose ranch was situated in that section of the country. Every day while herding sheep he prosecuted his search for the furnace. Within the year his search was rewarded with success. He found the ruins of the old furnace, the spring, the tree with the rock in the knot hole, and also the high hill half a mile due north, but he did not find the treasure.

He did find, however, on digging into the furnace, the skeleton of a man, and by its side a "miner's spoon" made of burnt soapstone, used for amalgamating minerals with quicksilver. Nancy Evans Bower, who told this story in the *News*, says that Medlin, while showing her the spoon, told her the story substantially as related above. Shortly afterwards Medlin left for South America. She, too, from Medlin's description, found the furnace and the tree with the rock in the knot hole. She believes that the story is true; that the treasure is there; and that anyone who will take the trouble to procure a copy of the chart from the archives of Mexico can easily find it.

LOST MINES OF THE LLANO AND SAN SABA

BY JULIA ESTILL

I

A LEGEND OF THE BLANCO MINE

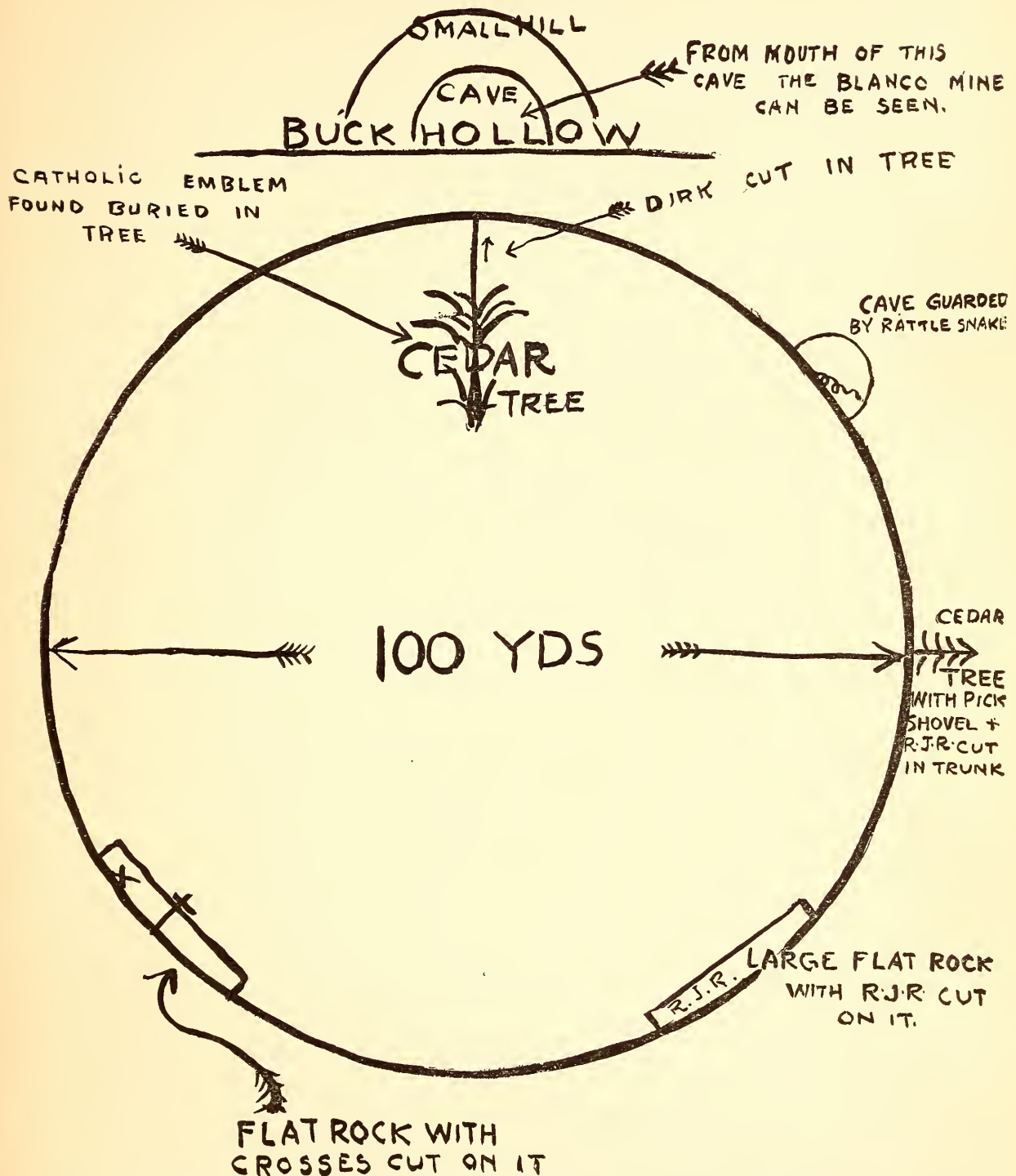
[There seems to be some dispute as to whether or not the famed Blanco really existed. Tradition has it that the Blanco River was named for him. However, Z. T. Fulmore in his *History and Geography of Texas as Told in County Names*, page 270, says that the name Blanco, which means white, "was given to that stream" because it flows "almost its entire length through a white, chalky limestone region." Almost the same story as that related here is told concerning the Bowie Mine. One treasure hunter told me of "the magic circle," which is reproduced herewith, as belonging to the Bowie Mine, and in my possession are copies of letters from the R. J. Roland referred to by Miss Estill, describing the site of the Bowie Mine.—EDITOR.]

Some time before the Mexican War, a Mexican, Blanco by name, discovered a silver and lead mine somewhere in the Llano country, so the story goes. My grandfather, J. W. Wiley, a pioneer of this section of Texas, now an old gentleman of eighty-four, declares that he has been on the verge of discovering the lost mine several times. Even now, he is certain, were he in the hill country and given leave by his "tyrannical relatives" to climb Packsaddle Mountain alone, he could go to the very spot where the richest vein of silver and lead ore in Texas lies hidden.

Packsaddle Mountain is in Llano County near Kingsland, close to the junction of the Colorado and the Llano rivers in the red granite section of Texas. The mine is said to be in a cave somewhere on or near Packsaddle.

Many years ago, a man by the name of R. J. Roland found the mine, but in order to conceal its whereabouts he placed a huge flat stone over the entrance and covered the stone with loose soil, which in time became so overgrown with grass that no one has been able to locate it. Roland, however, was careful to leave his own marks so that at any time he might return to take from his treasure cave all the ore he wanted.

One day he did return with a pal named Chaney, who was so anxious to locate the mine that he offered Roland one thousand dollars if he would disclose the secret.



AN IMAGINARY CIRCLE IS DRAWN WITHIN THE CIRCUMFERENCE OF WHICH THE LANDMARKS LIE : "KEYS", IT IS SUPPOSED, TO THE LOST BLANCO MINE.

It was agreed. The two men wandered over Packsaddle searching in vain. Finally, Chaney, becoming weary and impatient, told Roland emphatically that he was "tired of foolin' "; and his wary companion answered, "Show me the money, and I'll show you the mine!"

Chaney, however, refused to produce the price unless he was shown the whereabouts of the mine; whereupon Roland turned shortly on his heel, and saying tersely, "Go to hell!" strode angrily down the mountain trail.

That night Roland spent with Mr. Wyatt, an old pioneer living in a cabin surrounded by cedars in a gap at the foot of Packsaddle. Of course, the guest related the incident to his host that evening as they smoked their pipes by the huge fireplace. And when it was time to "turn in," Roland rose nonchalantly from his seat by the dying embers and, wearily stretching his arms to their full length while yawning portentously, drawled: "And do ye know, Mr. Wyatt, at the very time I tole Chaney to hand me over them thousand dollars, I was a-standin' right on top uv that there mine!"

A day or so after the stranger's departure, Mr. Wyatt climbed Packsaddle. In his explorations he found a cave with a wild animal skin upon the floor. In the center of the cave on the skin lay a huge nugget of silver.

Needless to say, mining enthusiasts who were let into the secret came from far and near to search for the lost mine; but, to this day, no one has discovered the hidden vein of metal.

II

THE MYTHICAL BOWIE MINE

In the fall of 1876, when my father, J. T. Estill, and a lawyer friend, D. Y. Portis, who had both been attending district court in Mason, were on their way in a two-horse buggy to court in Menardville, Mr. Portis related to my father "the true story" of the fabulous Bowie Mine. Mr. Portis, an elderly man of perhaps seventy years, was a typical old Southland planter who owned a large farm in Brazoria County. He was a learned man and splendid at repartee; so the two companions, jogging slowly along the long trail to Menard, kept up a lively conversation; while now and then the woods resounded with their hearty laughter.

About fifteen miles from Mason, the soil suddenly changes from a light color to a deep red; and, as the travelers approached this "divide," father remarked: "This is the beginning of the Red Hill region of the San Saba. We must be in the neighborhood of the old Bowie Mine."

Quick as a flash his companion answered: "The Bowie Mine is all a myth. I was personally acquainted with a man who, I knew, had been with Bowie on his expedition into the San Saba hills. One evening when a crowd of us young fellows were smoking our pipes around the fire, this old adventurer related unusually marvelous tales of the Bowie Mine and its rich silver ore, which, he said, could just be 'hacked off with a hatchet.' The entire crowd became wild with enthusiasm in consequence of his tales, and immediately resolved to fit out an expedition to search for the lost mine. Wagons, teams, and supplies to last several months were gathered, guards were hired to protect us from the Indians, and we set out confidently to seek the mine."

About this time my father and Mr. Portis reached a place on the road overlooking the valley of the San Saba River; whereupon Mr. Portis expressed surprise that the country had changed so little and pointed out several places where the searching party had camped. Presently he continued: "The old guide would tell our party where to camp; and when camp had been pitched, he would go out into the woods, sometimes remaining all day, presumably hunting for the lost mine. Then we would move and the search would begin all over again."

"Thus the search continued for four or five days without any results. Finally, the party concluded either that the old man knew nothing whatever of the Bowie Mine, or that he would not tell. So the leaders of the expedition took him aside and forcibly expressed their opinions to him, saying that now if he *knew* where the mine was located, he must tell them—or *hang*."

"The old guide then broke down and cried: 'There is no Bowie Mine! It is true that I was with Bowie on his expedition into the hill country, but, candidly, we found no mine. The Indians attacked our party, and I was one of the few that escaped. Then I commenced telling the story of the fabulous mine. And I've told it so often that I have actually got to believing it myself. Gentlemen, I have told you the truth. Hang me if you will.'

"Needless to say, the foolish young silver seekers returned to the Brazos bottom, disappointed, yet determined never to tell of their failure to find the famous Bowie Mine."

TREASURE LEGENDS OF McMULLEN COUNTY

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

Here are some sixteen legends out of a comparatively small section of one county. They will illustrate the fertility in buried treasure legend of all that stretch of Texas, for the most part yet unploughed, lying towards the Rio Grande and populated by Mexicans and by Texans of frontier stock. McMullen County itself has as yet neither railroad nor bank. The people are as yet unhackneyed by the plow or commercial secretary. They still talk a language seasoned with Mexican idiom and honest with the soil's honesty; they have their old-time dances; they welcome heartily any decent stranger. On the whole, they are as enlightened as the populations that have their ideals molded by real estate agents. Just now oil boomers and railroad promoters threaten to bring their "progress." Until they bring it, the people will remain individual.

THE ROCK PENS

Excepting the Bowie Mine and the Nigger Gold Mine, no other purported lost treasure in Southwest Texas has caused so much discussion or enticed so many seekers as that of the "Rock Pens." These "Pens" are variously placed in Live Oak, La Salle, and McMullen counties, generally in McMullen. The "way-bill" quoted below was given me by Mr. E. M. Dubose of Mathis, Texas, who has spent months, perhaps years, in trying to follow out its directions. Many of the details as I give them are also due to him, but the legend has been so familiar to me from my childhood up that I can hardly say to whom I owe it.

The story is that thirty-one mule loads of silver bullion, together with various fine images and other precious articles, were being brought from the mountains of Mexico by Texas bandits who had made a great robbery. They had crossed the Rio Grande in safety and were proceeding north to their rendezvous at San Antonio when they found that the Indians were closing in on them in the rough country west or south—for the river often changes its course—of the Nueces. They knew that an attack was imminent, and they picked the best place they could find in which to make their stand. It was by a small ravine in which

was a spring of water, and here they threw up some crude breast-works in the form of two rock pens. In one of the pens they buried the bullion, and then, in order to hide all signs of their secret work, they ran the mules around and around over the disturbed earth. The fight soon followed, and in it all of the Texans but one are supposed to have been killed. He, Daniel Dunham, on his deathbed in Austin, fifty-one years ago, dictated the following "way-bill."

Austin Texas

April 17th 1873

About six or seven miles below the Laredo Crossing, on the west side of the Nueces River near the hills, there is or was a tree in the prairie. due west from that tree at the foot of the hills at the mouth of a ravine there is a large rock under the rock, there was a small spring of water coming from under the rock, due east from that rock there is a rock pen or rocks laid around like a pen and due east a few yards there is another pen of rocks, in that pen is the spoils of thirty one mule loads

[Signed] DANIEL DUNHAM

This remarkable document was at his death, which occurred during the eighties, in the possession of a man named X. He had shown it to his sons a few times, but there was an accompanying paper that he had never shown. This accompanying paper he destroyed shortly before his death, or else his wife destroyed it immediately thereafter. One of his own sons conjectured, and certain circumstances have led others to conjecture, that X himself was one of the Texas bandits who invaded the Mexican mines and robbed a rich Mexican church. It is known that X held the way-bill as peculiarly veracious but that he had an overwhelming feeling against undertaking to follow out its directions.

Whether any attempts to find the Rock Pens were made before his death I do not know. A fact is that not long after his death an expedition, of which one of his sons was a member, set out to find the pens. Other "gold hunters" are known to have gone on the search. Therefore it must be that there were other directions in existence than those left by X. Men yet living claim to have seen the pens years and years ago before they knew that there was any significance to them, but though various old rock heaps

have been found since, none has ever been found to answer to Daniel Dunham's description.

The Laredo Crossing mentioned in the way-bill is supposed to be the Nueces crossing on the old San Antonio-Laredo road. That is generally conceded to be on the Henry Shiner Ranch in McMullen County. Nearly all the land in that part of the country is still in large pastures. Much of it is rough, the San Caja, Las Chuzas, and other so-called mountains being in the vicinity. Where it was once open, the country during the last fifty years has grown up in brush so that no man can be sure the pens do not exist until thousands and thousands of acres of uneven land covered with prickly pear, mesquite, black chaparral, "gran haney," and other thorned brush have been combed. The rocks were never piled high. They have been scattered, perhaps covered over with soil washed down from the hillside. In time of drouth it is a desolate country, and many a tale tells of early travelers perishing in it of thirst. Before the advent of the automobile one treasure-seeking expedition lived for days on jack rabbit meat, so remote were they in that region from supplies.

Sixty or seventy years ago Pate McNeill was coming from Tilden, or Dog Town as it was then called, down to Lagarto with his young wife. They were in a buggy, leading a horse, saddled. Somewhere in the Shiner country they saw a fine looking maverick cow. McNeill got out of the buggy, jumped on his horse, and took after her. When he had roped her and tied her, he looked around and saw that he was right in a kind of pen of rocks. At that time he did not know that great riches appertained to rock pens; so he calmly ran his famous brand of **P A T E** on the cow and went on down the country. Years later when the story of the Rock Pens came out, he went back and tried to locate the rocks, but the country had changed so much with brush and "washes" that he could never find anything.

"Uncle" Ben Adkins, a veteran of Beeville who guarded the western frontier during the Civil War days to keep cow thieves from driving cattle off to California, tells of a hunter who once stumbled into the pens and thought that he was in a deserted goat camp. Like others, he did not know at the time how close he was to millions.

Pete Staples, an old negro trail driver, tells how, when he was once hunting wild turkeys with Judge Lowe of McMullen County, they stumbled into some curiously placed rocks. "Huh, what's

this?" he said. "Looks mighty funny to me for rocks in this place. Where'd they all cum from and how cum this way? Ain't no other rocks like thesen for a mile."

"Natural rocks all right," said Judge Lowe, "but this is an old pen." Judge Lowe died something more than a year ago. I have heard that he afterwards tried to find the pens, but failed. Pete, having a firm conviction that it is dangerous to "monkey" with money that some man now dead buried, has never been back to look for the pens, though he declares that men have tried to hire him as a guide and that he *could* find them, but "ain't a-guine to." The pens, according to Pete, are in the Guidan Pasture, which joins the Shiner and comprises some twenty or thirty thousand acres of land.

Another time, a good many years earlier, says Pete, a Mexican who was being chased by an Indian in the Las Chuzas country leaped over a spring of water and as he leaped saw a bar of silver shining in it. Later he went back and hunted for six months without ever finding the spring, much less the silver. It does look, as Pete expresses it, as if that money "ain't meant" for any of the people who have looked for it. When the man comes along for whom it is "meant," he will just naturally find it without even trying. Nevertheless, some people are still trying.

The cheering thing about looking for the Rock Pens is that even though the search for them be fruitless, one may stumble upon some other treasure at almost any time, for the whole San Caja Mountain country is rich in lost and buried treasure. Some of the legends follow. For much of the material I am indebted to that interesting tale-teller and one-time eager treasure-hunter, Mr. E. M. Dubose, of Mathis, already referred to. For material not derived from him I try to give specific sources. However, some of it is such common talk in the country and has for so long been a part of me that I cannot always cite exact sources.

A WEEK TOO LATE AT THE LAREDO-SAN ANTONIO CROSSING

Neal Russell was out with two other cowpunchers on the Nueces River. They had extra mounts and a pack outfit and were well supplied. One day while they were hunting cattle they came up on two very old Mexicans. The Mexicans looked scared and acted peculiarly, but they were so old and worn and thin that Russell paid little attention to their secret manner. Finding that

they were out of something to eat, he told them where camp was and invited them up for a fill and a rest.

Well, after Russell and his men had come in and waited around a while, the Mexicans appeared. They ate and then, evidently feeling at ease with the Texans, who were talking Mexican like natives, they asked if anyone knew where the old San Antonio and Laredo crossing was.

"Why, yes," replied Russell, "it is not two hundred yards from here, right down the river. I'll show it to you in the morning."

The Mexicans now seemed to think that they had as well take the Texans into confidence, and what seemed the older of the two made this explanation. "I was through this country the last time in 1836. I was with a small detachment of the Mexican army taking a load of money to San Antonio to pay off General Cos's men. We had gotten a day's ride north of here when we heard by courier of Santa Anna's defeat. We knew that it was foolish to go on and so turned back, expecting at any hour to hear the Texans coming up on us. Just before we reached the east side of the Nueces, the front axle of our wagon broke square in two. There wasn't anything to do but to cut a tree down and from a post hew into shape another axle. We managed to pull out of the road a little way, and set to work.

"As I told you, we were expecting the Texans at any time. As a precaution against their coming we dug a hole right beside the wagon. Then we went off a way and cut two posts, in case one turned out bad. After we had got them back to the wagon and were at work, we all at once heard a galloping as if a whole troop of cavalry was coming down the hills. *Pronto, pronto* (quickly, quickly), we threw the new logs into the pit we had dug, spread a few skins down, piled the load of coin into them, covered the pit up, turned the wagon upside down over the fresh dirt, and set fire to it. It blazed up; we mounted our horses and rode westward. I don't know whether what we heard was Texas cavalry or not. I am inclined to think now that it must have been a herd of mustangs. Anyway, we left confident that signs of our digging would be wiped out by the fire and that the Texans would think we had burned our baggage to keep it from falling into their hands.

"So far as I know, I am the only survivor of that escort of Mexicans. I know that no Mexican has ever been back to get the money. I am come now with my old *compadre* to get it. You

see how we are. We started out poorly prepared. Now we are afoot and without provisions. If you will help us, we will share with you."

The next morning, according to Russell, all five of the men started out with the camp ax and spade. They went to the old crossing, then out a few rods down the river. The old Mexican led them to a row of three little mounds—the knolls common in that country along the river valley. Beyond those three knolls was a stump, and beyond the stump was another knoll.

"That is the place," whispered the ancient Mexican. He was so eager that he was panting for every word.

The white men rode on slowly, for the Mexicans were on foot and the older was walking in a kind of stumble. When they got fairly around the mound, they saw a pile of fresh dirt. Pitched across it were two old logs. Mesquite lasts a long time, you know, when it is under ground. The men looked down into the hole. It was not very deep and apparently it had not been dug a week. The prints of the coins were yet plain on some of the dirt, and a few tags of rotted skins were about.

Russell said that the Mexicans did not say anything. They were a week too late. When he last saw them they were tottering back to Mexico with what provisions the cowboys could spare.

THE CHEST AT ROCK CROSSING ON THE NUECES

General Santa Anna was going from Laredo to Goliad.¹ While he was fording the Nueces at the old Rock Crossing in the Chalk Bluff Pasture, once a part of the George West Ranch, the Rock Crossing being about twelve miles below the Shiner Crossing, his "pay cart" broke down and a very heavy iron chest filled with gold fell into the river. The river was up; Santa Anna was in great haste to reach Goliad; there was little travel in the country. He decided to leave the chest in the river; so he had it chained to a tree, intending to get it on the way back, for he expected to make short work of subduing the insurgent Texans.

In after years, Pate McNeill, the same man that tied down the

¹Santa Anna, according to Brown, did cross into Texas at Laredo, but he went to San Antonio, not Goliad. See Brown, John Henry, *History of Texas*, Vol. I, p. 569 ff. Another Santa Anna chest is said to have been dropped off near Lockhart on the road to Nacogdoches. Of course, Santa Anna never went from San Antonio to Nacogdoches.

maverick heifer in one of the Rock Pens, found a piece of chain tied around an elm tree on the east bank of the river. Still later Dubose found the tree bearing the marks of a chain, but the chain itself was gone. Encouraged by the markings, he, with Stonewall Jackson Wright and Wright's brother-in-law, Albert Dinn, went to Beeville, about fifty miles distant, and got a four-horse load of tongue-and-groove lumber. They sank a shaft about eighteen feet deep in the middle of the river, a little below the crossing itself, accounting for the push of water. They were able to wall out the water but made poor way with the boiling quicksand.

The first night after the shaft had been started, Stonewall Jackson Wright and Dinn got to arguing as to what disposition should be made of the chest. Wright was in favor of taking it to his ranch, twenty or thirty miles down the country, before opening it. Dinn declared that he would open it at once and that the prize should be divided then and there. The argument waxed so hot that only Dubose's reminder that they had not yet found the chest prevented a collision.

There is a possibility, some claim, that a part of Santa Anna's army may have passed back over the same route and have taken the chest with them. However, there is in existence a Mexican way-bill to the treasure. Mr. Whitley of McMullen County says that the chest was buried on the bank under a tree that had a limb straight out over the water, and that the chain around the tree trunk was a piece of log chain from an ox cart. But the tree caved in long ago, the water changed its course, and now there is no sign to go by, though doubtless the chest is somewhere in the vicinity of what is still known as Rock Crossing, a mere name, for it has been decades since a road ran that way.

SAN CAJA MOUNTAIN LEGENDS

The name "San Caja" is significant, though its meaning is in dispute. Some people who should know say that it means Holy, or Sainted, Box; that the word *caja*, meaning box, alludes to the chest, or chests, of treasure hid in the mountain. But a white man who is native to the San Caja country told me that a very old Mexican once told him that the name was originally Sin Caja, *sin* meaning without, and *caja* also meaning coffin; hence, Without

Coffin.² According to the Mexican, the name was derived from the fact that a man had once been buried on or in the mountain without a coffin, perhaps not buried at all but left out in the open. Either interpretation is appropriate to the legends of the mountain.

Under the mountain is a cave, the entrance to which is on the west side halfway up the mountain. Mexican bandits who preyed on the wagon and mule trains that traveled the San Antonio-Laredo road were accustomed to ride their horses into that entrance. They had a great room underground that they used for a stable. Back of it was their treasure room, "*el aparto* [*apartado*] *del tesoro*," in which were heaps of gold and silver coins, Spanish doubloons and old Mexican square dollars, golden candlesticks, silver-mounted and jewel-studded saddles, bits and spurs of precious workmanship, plated firearms, all manner of costly plunder meant for the grandees and the cathedrals, as well as the bullion of mines near at hand—for there were rich mines in that country in the old days of the Spanish.

According to Mexican tradition, after the *bandidos* had accumulated all this treasure, a terrible dragon came and killed some of them and ran the others away. The dragon had a spiked tail and two heads, and at night one might see fire flashing out of his nostrils. He came to be called *el celador del tesoro*—the warden of the treasure; and there are Mexicans today who would not think of violating the premises that he still guards.

An addition to the legend was told me by Mr. Whitley. Years ago, as he had heard the story, a certain white man who bore the marks of a borderer was visiting the penitentiary at Huntsville when he suddenly heard himself called in Mexican. He paused. At his side appeared a Mexican, begging to talk to him. The guard consented, and then in his own language the Mexican poured out his tale.³ He was serving a life sentence in the penitentiary, the sole survivor of a band of murdering brigands. All their booty was still in a cave to the south of the San Caja. If the

²This latter explanation is more probable. The feminine *Santa* is never apocopated in Spanish, and *caja* is feminine.

³A tale common to both legend and roguery. I have a copy of a letter written in 1911 by a prisoner in Madrid to an American at Aguas Calientes, Mexico, in which the prisoner offered to share \$273,000 concealed on the American's land, provided the American would send funds for passage of the prisoner and his wife.

white man would get it, he might have half, using the other half to free the prisoner. He gave directions about as follows: Go to the southeast side of the mountain; thence go about a mile to two little knobs, then on down a kind of ravine about the same distance, where an opening will be found that enters into the booty hall. The white man set out to follow directions, but he was already old, and death overtook him before he could search out the treasure.

"There are," says Mr. Whitley, "two knobs on the southeast side of the mountain, but two miles down instead of one, which shows that a Mexican has no sense of distance. In giving directions he always says *un (s)pedacito*—a little piece—which may mean a half mile or five miles." Anyhow, the country does not seem to fit the Mexican's measurements.

To the northwest of the San Caja are the San Cajitas (Little San Cajas), where, according to Mr. Whitley, is another robbers' cave stored with fine saddles and other plunder left by Mexican *bandidos*. In it are ladders that were used to descend a hundred feet to the treasure floor. But no man has since the days of the bandits been down into this cave. It is said to be "alive" with rattlesnakes.

While Joe Newberry was bossing a ranch "down in the Sands" twenty-five years ago, an old Mexican who was headed west to hunt for the Rock Pens gave him a chart to nine jack loads of silver bullion buried on top of the San Caja, a certain number of *pasos* west of a *chapote*, or persimmon tree, and covered over with a great rock. The Mexicans who buried it were on their way to to the City of Mexico from up the Nueces canyon, where the Spanish operated mines long since lost. It was during a terrible drouth; the Nueces had dried up, and the travelers had missed finding the lakes that they had vaguely heard of; they and their animals were perishing of thirst, and they realized that their nearest water was the Rio Grande seventy miles away across a desert of rocks and sands. To reach it they must lighten their loads as much as possible. Their mistake was in not having buried the bullion earlier, for they were so exhausted and the way was so hard that all but one man perished in the attempt to reach the Great River. This solitary survivor for some reason did not return, but he made out a chart, which must have been fairly well circulated, for another Mexican coming north in

search of the famed Casa Blanca cache also had directions to this San Caja treasure.

Dubose and his fellow explorers blasted a certain likely looking rock off and found under it a *tinaja* (rock hole) six feet deep, but no bullion in it.

According to "Uncle" Ben Adkins of Beeville, the San Caja treasure consists of money that was buried by Mexicans who were on their way to San Antonio. Just as they got to the Rock Crossing they heard that the Mexican army was being slaughtered in the Alamo and turned back in such haste that they left their precious freight on top of the loneliest "mountain" in Southwest Texas. A Mexican in Austin told me something like the same tale. He said that a detachment reached the river in winter time when a big rise was on, were unable to swim their treasure-laden mules across the flood, and while they were waiting for the waters to go down, heard that a band of Texans was close on their heels. They hastily took their freight to the mountain and left it there.

On the south side of the San Caja are said to be two cowhides of gold doubloons. Travelers out of the City of Mexico headed for the San Antonio missions lost their road and, perishing of thirst, began to look for water in the *tinajas* and crevices of the rocks. They found a little, enough for themselves, but not any for their poor beasts, which were in greater need than the men, for the men had had canteens of water for a day or two this side of their last watering. The party really had not traveled a great distance in coming from the Rio Grande, but they had been wandering lost over a rough country for days, keeping no general direction. The burros finally played out and the Spaniards hid their cowhides of doubloons in a crevice and placed over them a flat rock on which they marked with pear-apple juice a red cross. Over that they placed a second rock. Joe Newberry got the facts as to this treasure from a Mexican bandit on the Rio Grande who had come over on this side in hiding. Dubose actually found two flat rocks stacked up as if by hand, and under the first he found an Indian arrow-head, but nothing more.

THE MINES

Five or six miles to the southwest of the San Caja, the Spanish are believed to have operated a silver mine by the name of Las

Chuzas, called so from its proximity to Las Chuzas Mountains. In later times Texas pioneers found that Indian bullets lodged in the spokes and felloes of their wagons were almost pure silver, and the Indians are supposed to have got their material for bullets from the Chuzas ore. The Indians would never tell where they got it. While Dubose and a man named Wallace McNeill were riding the country in quest of the Rock Pens they found the shaft of the mine at the foot of one of the Chuzas Mountains. That shaft is said to be lined with silver bars covered over with clay, but as the men were looking for the "thirty-one mule loads" and fully expected to find them, they did not investigate the shaft.

Some ten miles away, in the Guidan Pasture, and about six miles from the Nueces River, is what is known as the Devil's Water Hole, and there the smelter is supposed to have been located. Burnt rocks to this day evidence its existence. In the vicinity of White Creek, in the foothills below the Devil's Water Hole, were some other silver mines that used the same smelter.

Somewhere between the old Las Chuzas Mine and the Nueces River there is said to be a pile of silver bullion, crude, unformed, in the very hue and shape of the rocks around. How it came there or why, nobody knows. It just came there, so the Mexicans still say.

Fifteen or twenty miles beyond the San Caja in a westerly direction on what is now known as Los Picachos (The Peaks) Ranch, an early settler named Crier, according to John Murphy, a ranchman of the vicinity, actually used to operate a silver mine that yielded about twenty dollars to the ton of ore.

LOMA DE SIETE PIEDRAS

In the same general direction from the San Caja as Los Picachos is the Loma de Siete Piedras, or Seven Rocks Hill, on which the Mills Ranch is located. Near this hill, as I have the tale from Mr. Whitley, the Mills boys unearthed some human bones while digging post holes. They themselves had never dug for treasure, for though they had always heard that there was treasure stored away somewhere in their country, they had never been able to get the details that would guide them to it.

Naturally they talked of the rather unusual find, and not long after the event a gang of eleven or twelve Mexicans rode up to the Mills Ranch. Now, the San Caja country is in all ways a

border country, and in many places one can cross the Rio Grande without meeting a river guard or seeing a customs officer; nowadays it is the rendezvous of *tequilleros* and *mescaleros* with their smuggled liquor from the other side. When the Mills boys saw the horses that the Mexican gang were riding, they knew at once from the brands that they were smuggled; and the saddles, ropes, bits, and other paraphernalia showed that the riders were fresh from old Mexico.

The spokesman of the band began by saying that one of their number was a descendant of a Mexican who, with his entire party, had been killed by Indians in that vicinity years ago. Their mutilated skeletons, scattered by the coyotes and buzzards, were known to have been buried months later by a Mexican freighter who came across them while he was hunting a mule that had broken away. The freighter had put a cross of mesquite sticks over the bones, but the cross was doubtless rotted away a long time ago, and now these men were come to put up another, if, by the will of God, they could find the place where the bones lay. Could anyone in the country give them the necessary information?

From the number, equipment, and general looks of the Mexicans, it appeared to the Mills boys that the mission of the gang might not be so altogether pious. They smelled a nigger in the woodpile, and told the Mexicans as much.

The Mexicans beat around the bush a while longer and consulted with each other for a few hours while their horses picked up mesquite beans down in the hollow. Then their leader came back to the Mills boys and let out that they were looking for the bones of men who had been killed while they were escorting seven jack loads of silver bullion from above—*de arriba*—to Mexico. If they could find the battle ground marked by the bones, they had a *plata* (plat) that would take them to the treasure.

At that the Mills brothers offered to show the bones provided they should get half the find. True to their nature, the Mexicans refused to go in on halves, and they left, trusting no doubt to come back some *mañana* and find the bones and bullion.

THE METATE ROCKS OF LOMA ALTA

Just west of the Hill of Seven Rocks towers in primeval roughness Loma Alta, the highest point of the whole country. John Murphy told me this story connected with it. An early settler

named Drummond had a squat near the foot of the mountain. One time an old Mexican came to him looking for some bullion that he claimed had been buried in the vicinity by ancient *parientes* (kinsmen) in flight from the Indians. His *plata* called for a mesquite tree on the southeast slope of Loma Alta marked by a certain sign. Murphy thinks that the sign was a cross but does not well remember. The *plata* called also for a line of smooth, oblong rocks that bore a resemblance to the stones used for grinding corn on the *metate*. They had been culled from the hillside and laid to point to the hidden bullion. Drummond and the Mexican found the tree but rode around for days without being able to find the rocks. They finally decided that generations of horses and cattle had scattered them so that they could no longer be recognized as forming a line, and gave up the search.

The Mexican left, Drummond died, and years passed. Then one day while Murphy was holding down a wormy calf out in the pasture to doctor it, he raised his eyes and saw three or four of the *metate*-like rocks lined up in some thick chaparral. He was down on his knees, so that he could see under the brush. He thought of the tale that Drummond had told him, and looking about further, he found, badly scattered, yet preserving a kind of line, other such rocks. But he could never settle on a place to dig, and so far as he knows no one has ever dug on that side of Loma Alta.

WHEN TWO PARALLEL LINES INTERSECTED

An old-timer of McMullen County, Kenney by name, tells of a fellow county-man, named Snowden, who was led by a negro to believe that a certain boulder out on a plain ten or fifteen miles from the San Caja marked the site of buried money. In the first place, the boulder really did look to have been placed where it was by human agency, for there was not another rock of its kind within miles. Snowden went to San Antonio to consult a fortune teller. The fortune teller, without ever having seen the country, drew up a chart of the whole territory, marking down on it the position of the boulder. He told Snowden to draw two parallel lines from the northwest and southeast corners of the boulder, respectively, and to dig at the intersection of the lines. Snowden paid a nice fee for the information and came back to Tilden and organized an expedition.

When they came to draw the parallel lines, they found that they

would not meet and sent back the chart for correction. But it was not returned, and becoming impatient for the treasure, the gold diggers twisted about the directions somehow so that the "parallel" lines would intersect. There they dug and dug. Finally, one of the party in disgust swore that he would sell out his interest "for two-bits' worth of Bull Durham tobacco." Snowden took him up. Presently all the other members had sold out on the same terms, leaving Snowden to pay the expenses of the whole work.

A LUCKY POST HOLE

Tilden (old Dog Town) is, remember, the county seat of McMullen County. Not far from it is what is still known as the "old Tolbert Ranch," though a man named Berry bought it years ago. I have heard the following story so many times in so many places that I have halfway come to believe it true.

Tolbert was a miser in early days when men kept their money about them. It is said that he would never kill a maverick no matter how hungry he was but would always brand it. He never bought sugar or molasses; bacon was a rare luxury; he and his men lived principally on jerked venison and javelin meat. When he "worked" and had an outfit to feed, he always told the *cocinero* to cook the bread early so that it would be cold and hard before the hands got to it. When he died none of his money could be found. So, even till this day, people dig for it around the old ranch house. One man who was working on the place some fifteen years ago saw two men in a wagon go down a ravine that runs near the ranch. He thought that they were hunters; but when the strangers passed him on their way out the next morning, he noted that one of them had a shotgun across his knees. When the ranch hand rode down into the ravine a few days later, he found that the wagon tracks led from a fresh hole under a live oak tree and that near the hole were pieces of old steel hinges that looked as if they had been cut off with a cold chisel. However, not many people think that the two strangers got Tolbert's money.

Berry got that, and he never hunted for it either. He had moved on to the ranch when he bought it and a number of years had passed. One day when he had nothing else for his Mexican to do, he told him to put some new posts in the old corral fence,

which was made of pickets that were rotting down. The Mexican worked along digging post holes and putting in new posts until about ten o'clock. Then at about the third post from the south gate he struck something so hard that it turned the edge of his spade. He was used to digging post holes with a crowbar and a tin can, and so he went to a mesquite tree where the tools were kept and got the crowbar.

But the crowbar would no more dig into the hard substance than the spade would. The sun was mighty hot, anyhow; so the Mexican went up to the house where *el señor* Berry was whittling sticks on his gallery, and told him that he couldn't dig any more, that at the third post hole from the south gate it looked as if the devil himself had humped up into a rock that nothing could get through. Berry snorted around considerably at first, but directly he seemed to think of something and told his man, very well, not to dig any more but to saddle up and go out and bring in the main *remuda*. Now, only the day before they had had the main *remuda* in the pen and had caught out fresh mounts to keep in the little horse pasture. By this time the other horses would be scattered clear away on the back side of the pasture. The Mexican wondered what the *patrón* wanted the *remuda* for again. But it was none of his business. Well, the ride would take him all the rest of the day, and at least he would not have to dig any more post holes before *mañana*.

After the Mexican had saddled his horse and drunk a *cafecita* for lunch and fooled away half an hour putting in new stirrup leather strings and finally got out of sight, Berry slouched down to the pens. He came back to his shade on the gallery and whittled for an hour or two longer until everything around the *jacal*, even the Mexican's wife, was taking a *siesta*. Then he pulled off his spurs, which always dragged with a big clink when he walked, and went down to the pen again. The spade and the crowbar were where the Mexican had let them fall. Berry punched the crowbar down into the half-made hole. It almost bounced out of his hand, and he heard a kind of metallic thud. No, it was not flint-rock that had stopped the digging.

Berry went around back of the water trough to the *huisache* where his horse was tied and led him into the pen. Then he started to work. He began digging two or three feet out to one side of the hole. The dry ground was packed from the tramp of thousands of cattle and horses. He had to use the crowbar to

loosen the soil. But it was no great task to get out a patch of earth two or three feet square and eighteen or twenty inches deep. Berry knew what he was about, and as he scraped the loosened earth out with his spade he could feel a flat metal surface that seemed to have rivets in it. It was the lid of a chest, and when he had uncovered it, Berry drew up one of the firm, new posts to use as a fulcrum for the crowbar. With that he levered up the end of the chest. As he suspected, it was too heavy and too tightly wedged for him to lift out. He kicked a chunk under the raised edge and then looped a stout rope about the exposed end. He had dragged cows out of the bog on his horse, and he knew that the chest was not so heavy as a cow. He had but fifty yards to drag it, and that down grade, before he was in the brush, where he could prize the lid off.

When the Mexican got back that night his *mujer* told him that Señor Berry had gone to San Antonio in the buckboard, and that he had left word for the *remuda* to be turned back into the big pasture and for the repair of the corrals to be continued. "They say" that the deposit that Berry made at the Frost National Bank was a clean \$17,000, nearly all in silver.

LEGENDARY SPANISH FORTS DOWN THE NUECES

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

Many people of pioneer stock in Southwest Texas speak of "a string of old Spanish forts" that extended from a fortification near Point Isabel in Cameron County to another near what is now "Old" Pleasanton in Atascosa. The names of these two extreme "forts" I cannot recall, but southward toward Laredo from the Pleasanton location was Fort Ewell, on the Nueces River, in La Salle County. Fifty miles to the east as the crow flies, but double that distance as the river runs, was El Fortin, otherwise known as Fort Merrill; next, not more than twelve miles to the south, and some five or six miles off the river, came Fort Ramirez, on the Ramireña Creek; sixteen miles southward, again on the Nueces, was Casa Blanca; near it on the Bluntzer Ranch was Fort Planticlan; next, due south, Petronita; then, Las Animas; last, the "fort" near Point Isabel. In such a string the first three so-

called forts made a kind of crescent, and the remainder a long, almost straight, line, the whole figure resembling an old-fashioned wagon axle-wrench, or *gancho*. History, so far as I have read, has nothing to say about this fine "string of old Spanish forts," but its existence is often a premise to legends connected with the several stations. Of the forts in the string Casa Blanca and Ramirez seem to be the most fertile in legend. As best I can gather from oral tradition, Fort Ewell and Fort Merrill were built about 1840 and used by the early settlers and rangers for protection against the Indians and Mexicans. Both places are mentioned by the historian Brown, though he has nothing definite on the origin of either.¹ Other not well identified ruins in Southwest Texas are frequently pointed out as the sites of old Spanish missions or presidios.²

FORT RAMIREZ ON THE RAMIREÑA

Fort Ramirez is in the southern part of Live Oak County on my father's ranch. When I was a boy some of the old rock walls were ten or twelve feet high, though they were crumbling. As far back as I can remember or have heard men tell, there were holes that had been made by treasure seekers all along the walls, inside the room, and for hundreds of yards out from the place. When I revisited the location last summer, I found the walls all down, most of the rock lugged to one side, and indeed a large part of the foundation dug out. Some of the excavated stones weighed, I dare say, two hundred pounds. The ruins are on the point of a hill that overlooks the immense but dry bed of Ramireña Creek, which, nevertheless, back in the days of the open range was nearly always running, men of that time say. A deep but short gorge called Ramirez Hollow runs up near the hill.

I

There are two distinct legends about the old place: in one it is

¹"The company, being six months' men, were discharged at Fort Merrill on the Nueces, on the 4th day of May, 1851, but reorganized as a new company for another six months the next day."—Brown, John Henry, *History of Texas*, Vol. II, p. 356. See a report to the Secretary of War: Sen. Ex. Doc. 1, 32d Cong., 1st Session, Serial 611.

²See, for instance, "The Mission de Los Olmos, near Falfurrias," by Marshall Monroe, reprinted from the *Houston Chronicle*, in *Frontier Times*, January, 1924, pp. 44-45.

a fort; in the other, an old sheep ranch. Of later years, the fort idea seems to have gained ground. Mr. E. M. Dubose of Mathis says that he first got "the straight" of the matter from an old Mexican who was looking for the Casa Blanca site. According to this Mexican, a band of *bandidos* had in early days captured the fort from Spanish priests who were using it as a kind of ungarrisoned mission. The bandits pillaged the place of a cross of precious metal, golden candle-sticks, and other costly paraphernalia, and took up their headquarters in a secret cave a short distance east of the building. Later they were run out of the country by the Texans, leaving in the cave all their churchly plunder as well as much money that they had robbed from freighters and ranchmen. The problem with treasure seekers has been to locate the cave, of which there is now no sign.

In trying to make the location, Dubose and his party used at first a "gold monkey," or mineral rod. This "monkey" was supposed to oscillate towards rich mineral until it got over it, then to halt. It oscillated all right, and under its guidance the treasure seekers dug two holes, both to the west of the fort.

Then Dubose went to Victoria to consult a famous mulatto fortune teller. The fortune teller described Fort Ramirez satisfactorily and said that he could and would locate a buried chest of money near the place for \$500. The agreement was made, and one dark night Dubose drove the mulatto to the fort. The fortune teller led at once to the north corner and, walking thence east a few paces, planted his foot down and said: "Here it is. With this spot as the center, dig a round hole ten feet in diameter." The two went back to Wade's Switch that night, and when they got there the negro demanded his \$500. Dubose told him that he would have to wait until the money was dug up, and offered to allow him to be present at the ceremony, but he refused to stay. He declared that unless he was paid his fee at once, "spirits would move the box" and that it would be useless for anyone to try to find it.

He was not paid at once, but in spite of the threatened futility of digging, a few days later two white men, aided by two or three Mexican laborers, were digging a great hole circumscribing the point marked by the fortune teller. When they had got down six or seven feet, they came upon a loose soil that was different in color from the contiguous earth. It appeared to be "the filling" in some old hole. Hopes became feverish, but after about a barrel

of the extraneous earth had been removed, the foreign matter petered out, and at the depth of twelve feet the men quit digging.

II

The legend that I grew up knowing was that the "fort" had been the ranch of a Mexican or Spaniard named Ramirez who became immensely wealthy raising sheep. He is supposed to have lived there more than a hundred years ago. Ramirez had a tunnel connecting his house with the creek. One time the Indians surrounded him. After withstanding the siege for days until he saw that he must leave or starve, he buried his money somewhere within the rock walls, and left by the tunnel. He was cautious and left in the night, but the next day he was captured, together with his small household, and all were put to death, leaving the place of his hidden thousands a secret.

Some people will tell you that it is useless to hunt for the treasure any longer. They say that fifty years ago Tol McNeill, who owns a fair-sized ranch adjoining the pasture in which the fort is situated, found \$40,000 there and with the money bought and stocked his land. But I am sure that hunters for riches around the place are increasing in number.

Years ago I remember that a white man with a Mexican beside him drove up to our house in a buckboard. He had come from Runge, seventy miles northeast. He told my father what he was after and asked permission to dig at the fort, which was readily granted. His Mexican claimed to have been digging at the south wall some ten years before when all of a sudden, just as he was sure that his *telache* had struck the lid of a chest, he heard an unearthly yell behind him. He did have enough presence of mind to kick a few clods back into the hole, which was a small one; but he had been too much frightened ever to return to the scene or even to tell anyone of his experience before he found the *patrón* that was with him now. I guided the buckboard through the prickly pear to the fort; when the Mexican got there he appeared never to have seen it before.

A field was put in near the place and a Mexican *jacal* built about half a mile down the creek. The Mexicans living there tell of seeing lights play around the hill at night, and to them, as to folk of other races, the lights are a sign of precious metal under the ground.

Last summer a Mexican, named Genardo del Bosque, who has been on the ranch for a quarter of a century, gave me considerable information about "*la casa de Ramirez*." Antonio de la Fuente, now dead, came to the country years and years ago as a child with his parents. They had a little money and as land was then very cheap and as the old fort was yet in tolerable condition, the walls all standing, and all that it needed to make it habitable being a roof of thatched beargrass, they considered buying it. One day while they were approaching it, a white lion, or perhaps it was a white panther, leaped out, and when they came within Antonio saw many and various coins on the walls and on the floor. But he was afraid and so were his parents to touch the coins, and of course they would no longer consider a purchase. The white animal was the soul of the dead owner of the treasure there to watch over it.

However, it is rather strange that Antonio and his parents took none of the money, for a white object (*un bulto blanco*) is a good spirit, and a white cat, a white calf, a white dog, or a white mule, or a woman dressed all in white may appear to people to lead them to buried treasure. But if *un bulto negro* appears, let them look out! The established Spanish custom in old times was to bury the treasure first and then over it a dead man. If this dead guardian was not the owner, then often the spirits of the two are in conflict. Hence, if a man digs close to the treasure, he is usually frightened away by outlandish noises heard behind him. The noises are generally as of many chains (*cadenas*) rattling and clanking. Since Antonio saw the white panther so long ago, no strange animals have been observed near the fort, only lights, lights, always between the fort and the creek, never at the fort itself.

THE LEGEND OF CASA BLANCA

Old Casa Blanca, which is several miles from the railroad switch by that name, is on the Nueces River in what is now Jim Wells, but was a part of Nueces, County. "Of the history of this old ruin," says Mrs. Sutherland,³ "no one knows a word." The record of it is preserved in legend alone, and of legends there are many. Mrs. Sutherland links the place with a certain purported silver mine and recalls a tale of "a find" made there in 1868.

³Sutherland, Mary A., *The Story of Corpus Christi*, Houston, 1916, pp. 2-3.

In its past, Casa Blanca was both Spanish fort and mission. So runs the legend told by Mr. E. M. Dubose. After the priests left it, it was occupied by a Mexican sheepman who prospered mightily. Finally he sold out his sheep and land for cash, but stayed on a while at Casa Blanca to wind up his affairs. Now the fact that he had thousands and that he kept them within the walls of the building was corroborated to Mr. Dubose by a man named Reems, who once lived in Pearsall. Reems stayed with the old sheepman three or four days just before the latter was killed and got a hint as to the location of the money. After the murder, he returned to Casa Blanca and found a worn hole in the very spot that he had "figured out" to be the hiding place.

Not long after it became known that the sheepman had acquired his cash, some Mexicans captured him and tortured him until he told where the money was, whereupon they put an end to his life. At this juncture, they found that they were being spied on by a second set of robbers. Under the concealment of night they hid their booty in a kind of rock pen near the fort, throwing the body of the murdered sheepman on top of it. They spent the night under protection of the walls, hoping to fight their way out the next morning.

The battle began at daybreak. The besiegers far outnumbered the besieged, and in desperation the latter scattered into the brush. There one of them named Carbal was cut off, and as he fell from a deadly shot he saw his own younger brother bend over him. It was the brother whom years ago he had taught the first lessons of outlaw life, and now that brother in ironic ignorance had paid for the lesson. Carbal understood the ignorance and with his dying words told where the loot was hid. Even as he told, the last of his companions was killed.

But the victorious desperadoes were never to reap the golden harvest of their victory. In the fight they had suffered losses, and now upon their heels came the terrible Texas Rangers. Retreating towards the Rio Grande, they were all "naturalized"⁴ on Texas soil but one or two who managed to reach the security of Mexico. From that one or two has come down to us, in confused form, the story of the rich sheepman, his lost money, and the blood spilled over it. Ed Dubose got the story, together with a

⁴A euphemism of the Texas Rangers.

chart, from an old Mexican whom he made drunk on tequilla. Later he tried to find the "kind of rock pen" near Casa Blanca, but could locate no trace of it.

LUTZER'S FIND AT FORT PLANTICLAN

About fifteen miles below Casa Blanca, in Nueces County, not very far from the Nueces River, and near a huisache lake, are the remains of what is known as the Planticlan Fort. In a great Indian uprising the Spanish were forced to evacuate it, and when they did, they left everything but their guns, including three jack loads of silver bullion. The retreating Spanish were taken by the Indians and butchered, with the exception of one man who survived long enough to reach his people and tell them about the abandoned treasure on the Nueces.

More than half a century ago three Mexicans came with a chart to seek that hidden silver. After digging an immense hole, they found it, and there on the brink of the excavation they were polishing some of the blackened silver bars when Nick Lutzer happened upon them. (Lutzer is not the real name.) He was riding after cattle and, hearing low voices in the brush, he at once suspected cow thieves. He dismounted and, rifle in hand, crept through the bushes. He had often heard of the riches supposed to lie in the neighborhood, and so he was not surprised at the sight that greeted his eyes. The Mexicans were too intent on their business to sense his presence. Lutzer was a true and quick shot. He killed two of the Mexicans with his rifle and then drew his six-shooter in deadly fire on the other. In a minute he rolled all three of the dead men into the freshly dug pit and covered them.

Later he went to New Orleans, sold the silver ore, and came back and bought and stocked an immense ranch, which still goes by the name of the Lutzer Ranch.

TREASURE CHEST ON THE NUECES

BY MARY A. SUTHERLAND

Riverside Ranch is in Nueces County on the Nueces River. Fifty years ago while the owner was putting up a house near a

ford, said to have been used by Indians of the most remote times, a Mexican with three pack burros came into camp. He and his beasts were travel worn and he asked permission to camp and rest his stock. The permission was readily granted, and true to class the Mexican hobbled his burros and then lay up in the sun and took life easy for several days.

Then the men working on the house noticed that he was apparently hunting after various herbs and plants and making a close study of the ground. After he had investigated for about two weeks in his solitary manner, the Mexican seemed very much depressed. One night he came to the camp of the Texans and asked for the owner of the land. Then he told his story. He and his burros had come over the long trail from the interior of Mexico to seek a buried chest of treasure. His trail had ended; he had not found the treasure. The history of that treasure he gave thus:

"When my father was a boy, he left home to go with a party of Spaniards to the seacoast. They had three big wagons and a grand carriage, the carriage for the captain, one wagon for the cook, and two wagons for the guard. They started at midnight from a mine belonging to the captain, and as they set forth they made a great show to the stars. They traveled to and across the Rio Grande without trouble, and then, *señor*, the sands,¹ the terrible desert. They were days getting across, and then, with the tough Spanish mules worn to the bone, they camped in the nearest spot where there was water.

"They prepared to rest for a week, but in the night the Indians charged, killed one man, and got off with two mules. The party started again at dawn, the Indians following. The Spanish captain decided to leave one wagon; so he took out the heavy boxes and put them in the carriage with himself. Thus the *pobrecitos* traveled till they came to the Nueces, on this very trail, and here on this bank they camped. That night they got out the heavy boxes, and the captain and three men dug a great hole and buried them, while the rest of the party stood guard.

"At dawn they crossed the river at the ford, hoping somehow to escape and make it back to Mexico for more guards. Five days later the Indians came on with a great whoop and every soul

¹Old-timers still call much of the "Magic Rio Grande Valley" by nothing else than *The Sands*.—EDITOR.

was killed except the boy, my father. He slid out into the tall grass, and after many months got back home. Now he is *muy, muy viejo* (very, very old), and he has sent me to get as much of the gold as I could pack on three burros. They buried the gold, he says, at the foot of a tree and put some stones above it. But the tree is gone and there are stones everywhere. I go tomorrow. If you find the Spanish gold, it is yours. *Adios!"*

Needless to say, for a few days the woods were full of treasure hunters, but so far as is known not one was successful. Yet the story that there is a chest of gold buried on Riverside Ranch has held from those early days to this time.

THE BATTLEFIELDS OF PALO ALTO AND RESACA DE LA PALMA IN LEGEND

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

The Battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma were fought May 8 and 9, respectively, 1846. The battlefield of the latter is about three miles from old Fort Brown on the Rio Grande.

I

According to John Lewis, who was boss on the Collins Ranch, in Cameron County, on which is the site of the battle of Palo Alto, seven cartloads of pay money for the Mexican army were buried on the battlefield. In proof of the claim, he found a part of an old-fashioned Mexican cart while he was digging on Agua Dulce Creek, which runs close to the battlefield.

A Mexican named Santiago in Austin claims that one of his ancestors helped bury seven cartloads of army money on Palo Alto battlefield. Taylor's army was pressing the Mexicans. To save time the Mexicans had to lighten baggage. The officer in charge of the pay-carts had orders to bury the money. He told off his detail and ordered them to dig a trench by a gully or little creek lined with mesquite brush. When the trench was made, the officer ordered the money transferred to it from the carts. While the last cartload was being put in the trench, Santiago's ancestor ran, for he knew that the men who made the trench would have to fol-

low the treasure. He had no more than got out of sight in the mesquites when he heard shots that told very plainly he had acted prudently in leaving.

II

This account was given to me by Mr. Bob Nutt of Sabinal, who got it from an old ferryman named Ramón down on the Rio Grande. Ramón claimed to have been ferryman when the Mexican troops crossed over into Texas at the beginning of the war between the United States and Mexico.

"It took me three days to get the army over," Ramón would tell, "crossing and crossing back, day and night. And, oh *señor*, I had *muchas ganas* (many desires) to go with the troops. There was *música*, oh, so lively, and there were the *banderas* (flags) all bright in the air, and the men were all happy and singing. But I did not go, and in three days more here they were back, but without any *música* or *banderas* and not needing any ferry boat. They came in flocks, running and crawling like *tortugas* (turtles), and they fell into the water flat on all fours like *tortugas* and never stopped till they were into Mexico.

"They had been at the fight of what we call La Resaca de La Palma, and I was very glad that I had not been with them. They did not have time even to bring back the *señor general's* chest of money or any of the silver *platas* that he ate out of. There was a great *bulto* of it, and it was left in La Resaca de La Palma. There three tall palms make a triangle and in the middle of that triangle it is buried. They dug a hole and put the chest and the silverware and a golden cross in it, and then filled up the hole and made a great fire on top of it so that it would look as if some military stores had been burned. And then they came back here into the river like so many *tortugas* and *los Americanos* were so *bravos* that no one of those who helped hide away the *tesoro* ever would go back to it. Besides, most of them were killed at Monterrey."

HOW DOLLARS TURNED INTO BUMBLE BEES AND OTHER LEGENDS

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

This group of legends came to me from an old darkey named Pete Staples. In them may be seen the blended elements of negro,

Mexican, and pioneer Texan lore. Pete was brought to Texas from Mississippi before the Civil War. He was raised in the border country among the Mexicans and drove cattle up the trail to Kansas. He married a Mexican woman and lived for some time in Mexico. When he told me these stories in 1922 he was cooking for a Mexican cow camp in Live Oak County. The other hands had "unrolled their blankets" early, and Pete's tones were confidential as we talked by the burnt-out campfire.

I

"One time there was a white man who had got wind of a lot of Mexican dollars buried down below Roma. He had the place all located, and was so sure of hisself that he brung in an outfit of mules and scrapers to dig away the dirt. He was making a reg'lar tank digging down to that money when a Mexican living down there what I've knowed all my life comed along.

"This Mexican, when he come along clost to the tank that the white man was digging, stopped a minute under a mesquite tree to sorter cool off, and when he did he saw a hoe laying down on the ground half covered up in the dirt. He reached down to pick it up and then he saw a whole *maleta* of coins. A *maleta*, you know, is a kind of bag made out of hide. This *maleta* was old and rotten, and when he turned it over with the hoe it broke open and the gold money jest rolled out in the dirt.

"D'reckly, the Mexican went over to where the white man was bossing the teams, and he asked him what he was doing. The white man told him that he was digging up some buried money.

"'Well, you's digging where it ain't no use to dig,' said the Mexican. 'The money ain't there; hit's over here. If you want to see it, come along and I'll show it to you.'

"The white man laughed like he didn't believe what the Mexican was telling him, but he come along. When they got to the mesquite there wa'n't no money in sight, but there was a hole down at the root of the tree kinder like a badger hole and bumble bees was going in and out making a roaring sound and the dirt was fairly alive with great big bugs, maybe tumble bugs, only they was humming and making a sizzling noise and working around awful like.

"'Huh, is this what you call money?' says the white man, stamping down on the tumble bugs. 'I'll eat all the gold what they roll up.'

"‘That’s all right,’ says the Mexican. ‘There was dollars of gold and silver too here. But there ain’t now, I admit, ’cause them dollars’s evidently not intinded for you. White man didn’t hide that money and it ain’t meant for white man to find it. No matter how much you dig or where now, you won’t find nothing.’

"Shore enough, the man kept on digging and he didn’t get nothing. One time I asked the Mexican why he didn’t go back and take out the money.

"‘I didn’t want none of it,’ he said. ‘I never put it in the ground. ’Twa’n’t mine any more’n that white man’s.’

"A few days after he saw the money, though, he went back and scratched around in the dirt a little and picked up an old Mexican square dollar. He brung it to Roma and bought some flour and some coffee and some candy, and give some of the candy to my wife. She was living down there and knowed the man well and she’s told me many a time how she et some of the candy that the Mexican bought with that old square Mexican dollar. I always have thought that that money was intinded for him, but you know how some people are, and I can’t say as I blame him for not teching what he hadn’t a right to. If buried money like that is intinded for a human, he’ll come by it jest easy and nach’ral. If it’s not, he won’t come by it, no matter how much he hunts. Even if he did find it and it wa’n’t intinded for him, it ud prove a curse. I’d be afraid of it myself.

II

"One time over in East Texas two young fellers was going along when they met a man. He looked perfectly nach’ral, and they was clost to a tree.

"‘Dig there,’ said the man to them, like he knowed that they was looking for something, which they was. ‘Dig there,’ was all he said, and when he said that he pointed to the root of the tree.

"They swung down their grubbing hoes and hadn’t more’n scraped the crust off’n the ground when a great big bulldog come right out of the earth. He jest fairly appeared like out of nowhere, ’cept that he come out of the ground. He was monstrous big and sorter white looking, but he didn’t growl nor nothing. And those fellers never even went back to get their grubbing hoes."

III

"Something like the same thing happened down at the old Carmel place below Lagarto. You know it’s only about two or

three miles north of Casa Blanca, what they tell so much about. I don't know what the truth is about that Carmel place, but as sure as you're bawn, things has happened there. Some says that Spanish priests buried money there what they was trying to get back to Mexico with. And Mr. Ed Dubose, once when I was cooking for him and some other gentlemens that was looking for buried money, said that he saw the print of an iron box in a hole close by. The rust was still on the ground all 'round the hole where the box used to be, and they was jest a day late getting down there. Some other feller had beat 'em to it—but it's a good thing, I speck. There's an old grave made out of rock and cement at that Carmel place.

"Some says that there's a mine for silver or gold down there too what the Spanish used to work, but now it's hid so nobody can't find it.

"Some says that there was a man drug to death what was traveling through with both saddlebags full of money. He was sleeping on his saddle for a piller and the Mexicans supprised him and roped him and drug him to death. Old Captain Cox used to have a house close down there, you know, and sometimes he'd wake up in the middle of the night hearing what sounded like a wagon rumbling. He'd get up and go to the door and couldn't hear nothing. Then maybe he'd hear d'reckly sounds like somebody galloping on horses and dragging an old dry cow-hide. Sometimes this dragging and rumbling would go on all night so he couldn't sleep. Some Mexican cotton-pickers that was camped there heard that hide being drug all around their camp one night, and next day they left.

"Old man Miller was always projecking round trying to get his hands on that money. He tried to get his *pastor* what kept a herd of goats down on the south side of the ranch next to the Carmel place to look out for signs. One time that *pastor* discovered that he'd lost a big billy goat ouden his herd. He set out to look for him, and he tramped around for three days before he comed across ary a track. Then one evening nigh about sundown he saw the old billy goat standing off on one side of a ravine and nibbling grass jest as nach'ral as life. He set out to where the goat was, but when he got there, there wa'n't nothing but two dead hackberry trees. It was a nach'ral clearing and there wa'n't no other hackberry trees in a mile. He said he knowed those

trees was not there when he started. And he couldn't find not even a sign of the billy goat, not even a track."

IV¹

"Down there sommers below Realitos there's an old dug well with six jack loads of Mexican silver in it, and nobody ain't never going to get it neither. How it come there was this way. Six Mexicans was making for the Rio Grande with it when they was overtaken and killed. But the bandits that killed them was being followed likewise and didn't have time to get away with the silver. The fight had been right by this old well, and what the bandits did was to shoot the jacks that was not shot already and to pitch dead Mexicans, jacks, silver and all right into the well. In the fight that followed, the bandits was cleared out. The men after them was rangers, I guess. Anyway, one of them found out somehow about the six jack loads of silver.

"Well, when everything had quieted down like, he went and bought the land on which the well was placed and set a bunch of Mexicans to clean it out. Of course, the well had got filled up with dirt and so on from caving in. After they'd dug a while the Mexicans struck bones. They hollered up to the white man that they had struck bones and that all they lacked now was to pull up the goods. The white man, he hollered down to them that they needn't do any more digging and for them to come on up so as to let him down. Nach'rally, being as they had struck them bones, the Mexicans wasn't very slow about getting out.

"When the white man got down there, the first thing he done was to grab hold of a corner of an old *maleta* what he seen sticking out among the bones. He jerked it out and it had the dollars in it all right. Then he looked up and yelled to the Mexicans to pull. He hadn't more'n got the words outen his mouth when he seen a tall skileton standing alongside the wall of that well. Its feet was close to him and it must have been twenty, maybe forty, feet tall. It reached clear up to the top, and its face away up there was a-looking down at the white man. He couldn't take his eyes offen it, and all the way up while those Mexicans was a-pulling him slow and jerky he had to look that skileton in the face.

¹This last legend was printed in the *Dallas Times-Herald*, October 22, 1922, and in other papers over the state about the same time, I having given it to the press in the hope of creating a wider interest in legends.

He forgot all about that *maleta* of money and dropped it back, and when he clumb out he was so weak that they had to help him on his horse. They managed to get him home and put him in bed, and that night he died. And there ain't nobody what I know of as has undertook to get out them six jack loads of silver since."

NATIVE TREASURE TALK UP THE FRIO

BY FANNIE RATCHFORD

His name was Zeno, but he answered with equal indifference and slowness to Bruno, Juno, and Zero. He was a goat-herder who had been hired to help with the fall shearing, and though he was not more than fourteen years of age, long following after flocks of goats along dusty roads had given him the slow, shambling gait of an old man and fixed on his small, wizened face an expression not unlike that of the patriarchs of the flocks he drove.

One night at the supper table my cousin expressed disgust that a certain Mexican, upon whom he had been depending for help with the shearing, had seen some sort of supernatural light on the mountains, and had betaken himself off to hunt for the buried treasure that such a light indicates. As the conversation turned upon the subject of this superstition, I saw Zeno's face light up with an expression of interest and intelligence altogether new to it. But he said nothing. Indeed, I think, up to that time I had never heard him speak.

After supper, when he and a small boy who lived on the ranch had withdrawn to the darkness of the lawn, I heard a thin, shrill, defiant voice saying, "That's the truth, and anybody can laf that wants to."

Scenting an interesting story, I joined the boys on the grass, and asked, "What's true, Zeno? Tell me the story that you were telling Wayne."

"'Tain't no story, hit's the gospel truth, and if you'll take me up there, I'll show yer," was the defiant answer.

After several more questions, I got this story. Near the head of the Frio River, between Leakey and Concan, there is a mountain with a rather steep, bald face. Anyone who has the temer-

ity to linger in the vicinity until night begins to fall will see the tall, willowy figure of a woman all in white moving slowly down the mountain-side, carrying a lighted torch in one hand, while with the other she strikes about her with a rod or switch.

"Where does she come from," I asked, "from behind the mountain or from out of the top?"

"She don't come from nowhere," was the indignant reply. "She just—just—"

"Just appears," I suggested.

"Yeh, just 'pears," Zeno agreed.

"But what is she striking at?" I persisted.

"At ever'thing, and if she hits yer, you don't feel no lick. Yer just have a shivery feeling like a puff of cold, wet wind had struck yer."

"What is she doing there?" I insisted. "Was there a murder committed there?"

"She's a-watching all the money that's buried in that there mountain, of course," was the pitying reply. "Once on a time some Spaniards were going along there with a lot of money packed on mules, when the Indians came along, and they had a big fight, and they wus all killed, but first they had buried their money, and nobody hain't ever been able to find it, 'cause they is always a spirit guarding it. Grandma Christmas, she can tell yer all about it; she's 'most a hundred years old, and she's lived up there 'most since the time of the fight.

"Paw and me, we found some arrerheads up there, and Paw, he's seen the spirit with the light and ever'thing."

"Has your father ever dug for the money?" I asked.

"No, he ain't never dug on that mountain, but he's dug in another place, I ain't saying where, but not more'n a hundred miles from there," he answered mysteriously.

"My uncle, he first seen a light in this here place where Paw dug—a funny sort of light that didn' burn anything up—"

"Like Moses and the burning bush," I suggested, but he ignored my interruption, and went on.

"—and he first shot through it with his pistol, and then he tried to touch it with his hand, but he never could get near enough to it. It always moved away as he went toward it.

"But anyway him and Paw found the right place to dig. They knowed it was the right place, 'cause they found two machete knives stuck way down in the ground. They found a funny sort

of place, like a well all walled up with rocks that had been filled in with dirt, and had grass and ever'thing all grown over it.

"Paw and my uncle taken time about digging and watching, and once when Paw was digging, he come to the bottom of the well. The bottom was covered with pieces of flat rock like pieces of pie with their points together in the middle. Paw started to prize one of these pieces up, when a bright light flashed right in his face, and he heard a terrible noise like a hundred men a-running on horses, and fighting, too. He got out of there quick as he could, but it took him a long time to catch up with my uncle, who had heard the noise first.

"No, he never did go back there, but he told another man, who did go, and found the place too, but the man what owned the place run him away.

"Not long after that, Paw went to a fortune teller, and he told him that they was a whole lot of money right there in that hole, an' if he had just lifted the rock on the other side he would a found it, but it wouldn't do him any good to go back, for the spirits were watching that money, and they wusn't no man on the green earth that could get it until he could lay them spirits."

Zeno was now thoroughly warmed up to his subject, and as soon as this last story had had time to soak in, he started again.

"They's another place, too, up on the Frio where they's money buried. Ever'body knows hit's there, but nobody ain't ever been able to find it. My uncle was hunting up there once, when he found a funny piece of old, old iron chain, and after a while he saw some rocks with the funniest kind of marks on them, that wusn't put there by no white man, either. He come back to get Paw, and they hunted and hunted for the place, but they never could find the rocks ner the marks ner nothing. The fortune teller told Paw that the spirits always turned them away just when they were about to find the right place."

"I am sorry you can't tell me exactly where those places are, Zeno. Do you suppose your father could tell me?" I asked.

"He kin tell yer all right if he wants to," was the canny answer. "He knows where just about all the money in Texas is buried, I guess."

Needless to say, I took occasion to go to Paw's place of business not long after, but found to my disappointment that Paw had gone to California to pick grapes.

THE SILVER LEDGE ON THE FRIO

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

This legend and others were given me in the summer of 1922 by Mr. Whitley, a small ranchman of McMullen County. At that time, he was more than seventy years old, though he was still an eager and agile horseman. From his front gallery one could see the San Caja Mountain, which his land ran against. We began talking on the subject of buried treasure a little after dark, and it was long after midnight before he suggested that we "unroll our blankets." When I think of the place, the time, the man, his tones—the whole environment in which these as well as other legends were told, I realize that the most faithful transcription of the words can give hardly more than a shadow of the original effect.

"When I was a young man I got to know an old, old Mexican at Refugio, who had been raised by the Indians. His name was Benito. They had captured him down in the Rio Grande country when he was a boy and taken him north with them. In those days the Indians were friendly with the Mexicans at San Antonio, and every year they would come down from the upper country and trade, but when they got in the vicinity of the San Antonio settlement they always hid their Mexican captive, keeping him back with the squaws.

"The main thing that these Indians brought in to trade off to the Mexicans and Spanish was silver and lead. Benito said he knew that they were getting it from somewhere about the head of the Frio, but for years did not know just where, for he was never allowed to go to the mine. The attempts of Mexican prospectors to get on to the whereabouts of the mineral made the Indians very particular. Finally, though, they trusted their captive with the location. He found that there was a vein of ore. It seemed to be a lead and silver compound almost solid. From it the Indians simply chopped off bars to be used in trading or in moulding bullets.

"Now, as old Benito used to tell, after he was grown he slipped away from the Indians, and with two or three Mexicans that he took in as partners went back and tried to get the ore himself. The Indians got on his trail, though, and killed his companions before the party ever got to the ore. He alone escaped, and for years and years he was afraid to go back.

"When I knew him he was over a hundred years old, I am pretty sure, and he would tell me often about the rich silver vein. I wanted to go in search of it, and he thought that he could make the trip in spite of his feebleness if we fixed it so that he could ride in a hack. He knew that he could find the mine if he ever got up the Frio Canyon, but he would not go unless a good-sized party went. He said that he would pick six Mexicans to go and that I could pick six white men.

"Well, we got everything about ready, wagons, provisions, and so forth, when the man in our party who was bearing most of the fitting-out expense up and took down sick. So we naturally had to put the trip off. The man got well, and a while after that we got ready to go again. But luck seemed to be against us, and the old Mexican guide was taken down. It was out of the question for him to go. He was dying. He gave us, though, the clearest directions he could and thought that we could follow them. From what he said, the vein of silver could not be got to horseback. It was in the south bank of one of three arroyos that ran into the Frio close together. At it the creek made a sharp turn, and a man would have to get down and go afoot along the bank. No doubt it was concealed, for the Indians always covered it up well after they had hacked off what they wanted. The old Mexican said that if he could only get one sight of the lay of the land, he could tell which one of the three arroyos the vein was in. But he never got that sight; so he gave the best way-bill he could and died.

"The treasure hunting party broke up and things rocked along for years without me doing anything. Meanwhile a brother-in-law of mine had moved into the upper Frio country. I decided to go up and visit him and my sister, and to find the ore at the same time. I took my dogs along, and the first thing we struck the very first morning that we rode out to look up those three creeks was a bear. Well, sir, I got to hunting bear, and we never did get to hunting that silver, and to this day I know good and well that if I had left my dogs at home, I'd a had it.

"I say I know, because my brother-in-law found it after I left. I gave him the directions and he agreed to notify me if he made the find. Well, he made it and was leaving his place to come down the country to tell me, when he was murdered in cold blood. But that is another matter. He had confided to his wife about finding the silver and told her the purpose of his trip, warning

her not to tell anybody. Of course, after his death she told me all that she knew; he had never told her, though, where he had located the vein.

"You see I have known two living witnesses to that treasure. There is enough of it to make anybody rich. If I just had time, I believe that I could go and find it yet."

LOST MINES NEAR SABINAL

BY EDGAR B. KINCAID

I

THE QUICKSILVER MINE OF THE RANGERS

When the Sabinal country was just settling up, a company of rangers camped for some time about four miles north of Sabinal on the Sabinal River. They often practiced shooting, and some of the men from ranches round about practiced with them. Then the rangers were ordered on.

Thirty or more years passed. One day one of the old rangers showed up in Sabinal in search of their former camp. He looked around for a while, took no one into his confidence, and quietly left. Within a short time he returned with another member of his all but forgotten company. They secured the help of some of the oldest settlers and definitely located the old camp site. Next, the former rangers drew up a contract with the owner of the land allowing them to mine quicksilver. Then they told their story.

When they were camped in the Sabinal country in the early seventies, one of the members of the company shot a ground squirrel on the edge of its hole. On picking up the dead squirrel, he bent so that he could see into the hole. The sun was shining at just the right angle to throw a light down it; it must not have been very deep. Anyway, what the ranger saw in the bottom of the hole was quicksilver. He got a can, dipped up some of it, and passed it around for his comrades to examine. Some of them rubbed their guns with it.

The old rangers started to work and dug many trenches about the former camp site, but they could never find a sign of what

they were after. That site is near a great fault that has exposed millions of tons of igneous rock. It is said that quicksilver is sometimes found under just such conditions; but to this day the quicksilver once glimpsed by the rangers has not been found, and their story has passed into the tradition of the country.

II

LOST LEAD MINE

North of Sabinal in early days lived a ranchman named Hoffman. He had come from California, and he used to sell lead to occasional settlers who went to his cabin to buy it. One day Will and High Thompson, brothers, were helping Hoffman brand calves on his ranch, now known as the Nixon Ranch, when they said something about needing lead to mould into bullets. Hoffman said that he had plenty and that if they would keep on working he would get them all that they wanted. The Thompson boys kept on working; Hoffman rode away, and in about two hours returned with the lead. He said that he had got it out of his mine and that just as soon as he could sell his cattle he was going to work the mine. He did sell his cattle soon afterwards, but almost immediately was killed by the Indians.

The Thompson brothers then began to hunt for the mine. One day while they were searching, High called out to Will to come and see "this great, big, blue cow chip." The cow chip proved to be lead. They were at the mine. Very shortly afterwards, Will, who was always leader, was killed either by Indians or by robbers. The mine was forgotten for a time, and the land passed into hands of people who would not allow any but their own kin to hunt for the lead.

In after years Henry Taylor, a brother-in-law of the landowner, got High Thompson to try to locate the mine again. He made a location and sank several shafts, but never found any lead. The mine is still a lost mine, talked about by many and perhaps even searched for by some.

THE NIGGER GOLD MINE OF THE BIG BEND¹

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

Wherever men talk of the Bowie Mine, of the Rock Pens, of lost mines of the West, they tell of the Nigger Gold Mine. The site of Reagan Canyon varies from south of Dryden in Terrell County to a hundred and seventy-five miles west in Brewster County, in some accounts being identified with Maravillas Canyon. Likewise, the gold lead shifts from one side of the Rio Grande to the other. Mr. Carl Raht has put into print an account of the Nigger Gold Mine² but he has not stressed the legendary features. For material I am indebted to R. R. ("Railroad") Smith of Jourdanton, who got his information from Tex O'Reilly and others who know Campbell, the railroad conductor; also to Edgar Kincaid of Sabinal and West Burton of Austin. I tell the legend as it is told, not as history would sift it.

The Reagan brothers were camped down close to the Rio Grande in the Big Bend country on a canyon that now bears their name. Reagan Canyon opens into the Rio Grande, affording an excellent passage for stock, and the Reagans used it to smuggle stolen cattle and horses back and forth between Mexico and the United States. Some say that they were in partnership with a gang of horse thieves that operated "a chain" all the way to the Arbuckle Mountains in Oklahoma.

One time when one of the Reagan boys was in Valentine he came across a negro tramp. He picked him up in his spring wagon and brought him back to camp and put him to work. Not long afterwards a horse got loose with a saddle on—some say with merely a drag-rope—and the men in camp scattered out to find him. When night came and the men returned, nobody had

¹The mine is often referred to as the "Nigger Ben Mine." I have not been able to learn why, but I have a guess. In the early seventies a half-breed negro-Mexican named Ben Hodges, but known as "Nigger Ben," went up the trail to Kansas with a herd of Texas cattle. "Nigger Ben" remained in the vicinity of Dodge City and became a notorious, almost legendary, fraud. He claimed to possess a Spanish grant to lands on the Rio Grande on which were located wonderfully rich mines. It would be very much in the manner of legend to blend "Nigger Ben's mine" with another mine on the Rio Grande claimed by another negro. For an account of "Nigger Ben," see Wright, Robert M., *Dodge City the Cowboy Capital*, Wichita, Kansas, 1913, pp. 273-280.

²Raht, Carl, *The Romance of Davis Mountains*, El Paso, 1919, pp. 331-334.

found the horse, but the negro rode in with a *morral* full of something heavy, and calling off one of the Reagan men, he said, "Mr. Reagan, jes' looky here; I'se found a brass mine."

"Damn your brass mine," said Reagan as he scattered the contents of the *morral* with a kick. "I'm not feeding you to hunt brass mines. Why in the hell didn't you find that horse? He's got a new saddle on him worth three brass mines."

With that the negro kept still, and next morning early all hands turned out again to hunt the lost horse. About six or seven miles out from camp the same Reagan brother who had kicked the *morral* met the negro circling towards him. They exchanged observations; neither had found any sign of the horse. "But, Mr. Ben," went on the negro, "we'se right over here now clost to that brass mine. Lemme show you."

It was along late in the afternoon and Reagan was fretted and hungry. "I told you once," he blurted out, "that I didn't care anything about your mine. What I want is that horse, and I'm a damn sight hungrier for some *frijoles* than I am for brass anyhow."

The two horse hunters parted, and when the negro got into camp that night the cook called him off and told him that "Mr. Ben" was "on the warpath." And here the story prongs. According to one version, the Reagans saw that they had antagonized the negro and that he was going to leave. Their pasture was full of stolen stock at the time and they did not want the negro to talk; so they forthwith shot him and pitched him into the Rio Grande. Mr. J. M. Kincaid of San Antonio, who years ago ranched in the Big Bend, says that this is a confusion of stories, that a negro was pitched into the Rio Grande all right, but that some train robbers drowned him because he would not go in with them as he had promised to do.

According to the more prevalent version, the negro culled a stray horse from the Reagan *remuda*—some say a fine Reagan stallion—and made back east or else into Mexico. After he was gone and the Reagans had cooled down, they began to think about the "brass" and picked up some of the ore that had spilled out of the *morral*. They saw that it was rich in gold. Then they tried to get the negro back, spending and offering large sums in the attempt. The negro heard of the efforts and hid out the farther. He thought that the white men were after him for taking the horse. The Reagan boys searched in every direction

for the gold deposit, meantime continuing their stealing and smuggling. Later the Rangers came down into the Big Bend and broke up the gang. They killed one of the boys, one died, one went to Mexico, where he now lives with the Yaqui Indians.

But when he left, the negro had held on to his samples of ore. He knew that he had something valuable. He sent specimens to be assayed at El Paso and Denver. The analysis showed either ninety-two per cent gold or else \$92,000 gold to the ton, the figures vary. No matter how rich the ore, however, he was afraid to go back into the Big Bend. He disappeared. Other people than the Reagans had heard of the negro and his "mine" and they set to searching for both. It is estimated by some men that fully \$20,000 have been spent in trying to find the negro. Some say that he died in Louisiana; some, that he is still in Mexico. I know one man who claims to have known him in Monterrey a good many years ago. There the negro went by the name of Pablo, had a peculiar scar on his face, was a noted drinker and gambler, rode a fine horse often at full speed down the street, whooping and shooting. He always had plenty of money, and it was claimed that he loaded two pack horses every three months with ore from his secret mine.

But the *real* story of the Nigger Mine is forever linked with the name of Campbell. Campbell was a conductor on the Southern Pacific Railroad. He is yet living in San Antonio and may enjoy in life the legendary fame that only a few men attain to in death. Before the negro left Texas, he gave Campbell some of his ore. Campbell had it assayed, with the same rich results that the negro's assays had shown. He quit work to go out and see the mine. Then he discovered that the negro had stolen a horse and run away. He tried to find the mine himself and failed. All that he knew was that it was within seven or eight miles of the old Reagan camp. He spread abroad offers of a high reward for information that would lead him to the negro. Thus the whole country came to know about the mine and to search for it.

Then the excitement gradually died down and people had begun to talk about ordinary subjects when a miner by the name of Fink who had taken up the search found, or claimed to have found, the mine. He confided his success to some friends, who decided to take the mine for themselves. Under the guise of friendship they went with him to El Paso to help him file his

mineral claim. As yet he had told no one of the exact location of the deposit, and their plan was to get him drunk enough to talk and then to double-cross him. They gave him all the whiskey that he could drink and he had "a high old time." He drank too much whiskey to talk at all. In fact, he drank so much whiskey that it killed him, and with him died his secret.

But Campbell had not given up. He alone of all the searchers has been consistent and persistent. Others have searched far and near, now on one side of the Rio Grande and now on the other. He has kept to his eight mile radius. He grub-staked an old Dutch prospector to search, giving him a pair of burros and telling him that he might go away from camp as far as a burro might take him out and back in a day. Solitary, often not seeing a human being for months, the old Dutchman examined ledge after ledge, rock after rock. He was looking for a kind of blue rock. Then one day he found it! He put some of the ore on his pack burro, loaded on his bed and a little "grub," and started for Valentine. On the road he got sick. He was feeble anyhow. When he reached Valentine he was too sick to talk. Only the ore in his pack told his tale. He died before he could give directions to his find. Campbell has had other men searching since. All he knows to tell them is that they may search as far as a burro will walk out and back in a day. But who knows that the old Dutchman did not tire of his tether and wander out in the mountains, camping where night overtook him, and that he did not make his discovery far out?

Some say that there never has been a mine, that the negro merely stumbled on some ore that a certain old California prospector with a sense of humor had "salted out." Some say that the negro found a lead under a cliff that later caved down and covered it up. Who knows? What does it all mean? Romance.

MYSTERIOUS GOLD MINE OF THE GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS

BY MARVIN HUNTER¹

Twenty years ago, an old Mexican, of Tularosa, who had been captured by the Mescalero Apaches when five years old, related

¹In *Hunter's Frontier Magazine*, October, 1916, I, 6, 177-179. Further testimony to the existence of "the Sublett Mine," given by an old buffalo hunter and prospector named Dixon, is printed in *Frontier Times*, March, 1924, Vol. I, No. 6, pp. 1-3. Dixon heard of the mine in 1879 from his sweetheart, daughter of a Mescalero Apache chief.

that his captors took him along on a hunting trip to Guadalupe Mountains and that while there he saw them gathering nuggets of gold in a gulch.

A Mescalero Apache informed the late G. W. Wood, of El Paso, for whom he worked in the Jarilla mines, that if he sought gold, he should go to the mountains called "Smoky" over the line in Texas, where . . . his people used to go and gather gold.

Another story is that of John Kilgore, a Texan and a man of undoubted veracity, who said that an old Mexican once told him that he was captured by the Indians when he was about fourteen years old. One day, the Indian who kept him in his wigwam in the Guadalupe called him to his side, blindfolded him, and led him into the fastness of the mountains, telling him to sit down on a flat rock and wait for his return, which he did. The Indian went away and in a short time returned with a buckskin sack filled with gold. This he handed to the Mexican boy, gave him a pony, and told him to go back to his people. The Mexican said he afterward tried to locate the place shown him but could never do so.

Green Ussery, a rich cattleman of West Texas, was walking along a gulch near the Chico Ranch in the Guadalupe when he saw Lee Church, a friend who was with him, pick up a gold nugget from the ground, worth \$20.

Several years ago, Cicero Stewart, under sheriff of Eddy County, New Mexico, was up in the mountains hunting for the lost mine. He relates that "Grizzly Bill," a cowboy, was in camp in the Russell Hills of the Guadalupe Mountains, and came across a gold deposit. He abandoned his cattle and went to Pecos, where he had a great spree, displaying his gold. While trying to ride a wild horse he was thrown off, breaking his neck.

F. H. Hardesty, residing in El Paso, was induced to relate his own experience as follows:

"About a year and a half ago, Lucius Arthur stopped at my place to get water for himself and pack animal, and remained over night. Becoming confidential, he divulged to me the secret that he was making a trip to a mountain range, three days' journey due east, for the purpose of trailing two Mexicans who left Ysleta the night before.

"He said he had followed them at other times nearly to the mountain, but had been compelled to return before reaching it for want of 'grub' and water. He was known as 'Frenchy' in

Ysleta, being a native of France. He had been professor of athletics in Austin, Texas, and while there heard a story about these two Mexicans, and had come to find the gold mine they visited.

"One Mexican, he said, would come from down in Mexico, and meet the other (his brother-in-law) in Ysleta, and start out in the dead of night horseback. The one from Mexico belonged to a wealthy old family who had known for generations about the mine and had kept the location a secret. But some member of the family would go every year and bring back gold.

"I told Arthur he ought to be better equipped for the journey, and offered to stake him with all funds needed. He accepted my offer and agreed to take me as a partner. He left with two months' supplies and good equipment. After an absence of a month and a half, he returned, saying that he had at last found the hidden mine, and brought me as a proof plenty of rich gold quartz broken off the ledge near the brink of a chasm, which he could not descend into, because its walls were perpendicular. He stayed with me a few days, and providing himself with a strong rope, set out for the mine. This chasm was 80 feet long, east and west, by 40 feet wide, he said.

"From his place of concealment, he said, he saw one of the Mexicans descend by a rope, and bring out several filled sacks. After their departure he slipped down to the place and saw a large opening like a cave in the vein, 60 feet down. The chasm appeared to have widened to 100 feet at that point. Loose broken rock in front of the cave showed that work had been done lately. He was unquestionably at the place where the Mexicans had for generations got their yellow gold.

"Frenchy never returned to me," concluded Mr. Hardesty.

But the most realistic and marvelous story of gold, in comparison with which the stories of the lost "Cabin Mine" and "Nigger Ben Mine" and similar legendary mines pale into insignificance, is one familiar to nearly every one in Roswell and Carlsbad, New Mexico, and told by cowboys and ranchmen in the winter nights around their camp fires in the Guadalupe Mountain country.

It is the story of a mystery—that of a lost gold mine in the highest and most precipitous, canyon-rent, and rugged mountains in the Southwest, rising 5000 feet above the plains. The lost mine in the fastness of this range is a gold mine (as the story

goes) that is fairly bristling with the precious metal; its value is estimated at millions, and it is known in Texas and New Mexico as the "Lost Sublett Mine."

Two men now living have actually seen this famous mine, but neither now remembers its exact location. One is Ross Sublett, son of the original discoverer, who is a prominent business man of Roswell, New Mexico. The other is Mike Wilson, a former crony of "old man Sublett," who is believed to be on his death bed in a little hut in the Guadalupe Mountains, vainly trying to remember the location of probably one of the richest gold mines in the world.

"Old Ben Sublett" was a native of Missouri, and belonged to an old family of that name in St. Louis. In early life the "call of the wild" and the lure of gold led him to go to the Rocky Mountains with his young wife and three babies, whom he took on all prospecting trips. For years luck never favored him, and while others found mines and grew rich, he continued poor. He was in rags, and his wife and children were hungry. They passed through the Guadalupes and finally settled in Odessa, Texas. Here they made their home in a little hut. Mrs. Sublett did washing and sewing to support the children, while Sublett worked on a ranch just long enough to get money to buy a "rickety old buckboard and a bony horse."

He spent most of his time in the Guadalupes. He had the "hunch" that in its labyrinthine solitudes he would find gold. Occasionally he brought in a little nugget, hardly of value enough to buy grub for his return trip. His wife vainly begged him to quit the mountains, to settle down to some vocation in which was a sure living; he was stubborn, taking no advice from anyone.

Although the mountains were then filled with the bloodthirsty Mescalero Apaches, ever ready to kill the lonely prospector or trapper, Sublett never carried arms, and by some strange fate was never molested. The old prospector laughed at those who warned him and advised him to be careful. These trips continued; and every time he returned, his return was a surprise to the people of the town. They scoffed at his crazy mode of life.

One day the old man drove up to Abe Williams' saloon and strode boldly to the bar, inviting everybody present to "join" him. They thought that he was joking, as he was supposed to be penniless, but when Old Ben threw down a buckskin sack filled with

nuggets and said that he had found a rich gold mine and could buy out the whole town and have plenty left, the crowd was wild with excitement. He went out to his buckboard and dragged in a canvas sack filled with gold so pure, it is said, that a jeweler could hammer it out. "My friends, have all the drinks you want," he said, "for I have at last found the richest gold mine in the world. I can buy Texas and make a backyard out of it for my children to play in."

After that Sublett would frequently slip out to the mountains and return in less than ten days with about \$1500 worth of gold. He built a fine home for his family, and of course made many "prosperity" friends. All tried to get him to show them the location of his mine, but he would shake his head and say: "If anyone wants my mine, let him go and hunt for it like I did. I hunted twenty-four years and wasted the best part of my life at it. The valley of the Pecos and the peaks of the Guadalupe are my home; I want to be buried there when I die, and I am going to carry this secret to the other world, so that for years and years people will remember me and talk about the rich gold mine 'that old man Sublett found.' I will give them something to talk about."

His son, Ross Sublett, who has made several attempts to find the mine, says: "I have a faint recollection of it. I was only a small boy when my father took me there. We drove out in an old buckboard. I know the mine was about six miles from a spring. The spring is in what is known as the Russell Hills of the Guadalupe. I paid no attention at the time as to where we went, and was always glad when my father was ready to return home. Father got the gold out of a hole or cave, but it seems that it was in plain sight on the ground outside of the cave. When my father was on his death bed I tried to get him to tell me how to go back, but he said it would be useless, that I could never find it."

Sublett once described the mine to Mike Wilson, who afterward went out to the Guadalupe and found the mine. He emptied his sack of provisions, and put in as much gold as he could carry and began the journey back home. Without recuperating from the effects of the hard trip, Mike went on a spree for three weeks, and when again he tried to go to the mine he became bewildered and lost his bearings.

Old Ben Sublett just laughed at Wilson's bewilderment, and refused to direct him again. He refused to tell anyone else where it was. "If anybody wants it, let him go and hunt for it like I did," was all he would say. Later Sublett died and carried the secret with him. This was eighteen years ago.

LOST COPPER MINES AND SPANISH GOLD, HASKELL COUNTY

BY R. E. SHERRILL

[Haskell, King, and Stonewall counties all corner near the junction of the main forks of the Brazos, and this legend told by Mr. Sherrill should be read in conjunction with the one immediately following told by Mr. Bertillion. It makes no difference that one legend has to do with a copper mine and the other with a lead mine. One could probably find another that has to do with a silver mine in the same vicinity. I must think that both legends go back to the same tradition. And the tradition of a mine—some kind of a mine—up the Brazos is very old. It began with Spanish credence in an Indian story; the earliest American settlers in Texas carried it on. In 1774, years after Los Almagres mines were abandoned, De Mézières reported men gone in search of mines which Indians said were "in the direction of the Brazos de Dios."¹ In 1823 Daniel Shipman and two other men, guided by "an old Red River hunter," went up the Brazos River to Flint Creek (which I have been unable to identify) on the west side in search of "an inexhaustible silver mine."² It proved to be red clay. In 1836 the Reverend David B. Edward was strong in his belief in a mountain of iron on the headwaters of the Brazos—as well as in an abundance of gold and silver on the branches of the Colorado.³—EDITOR.]

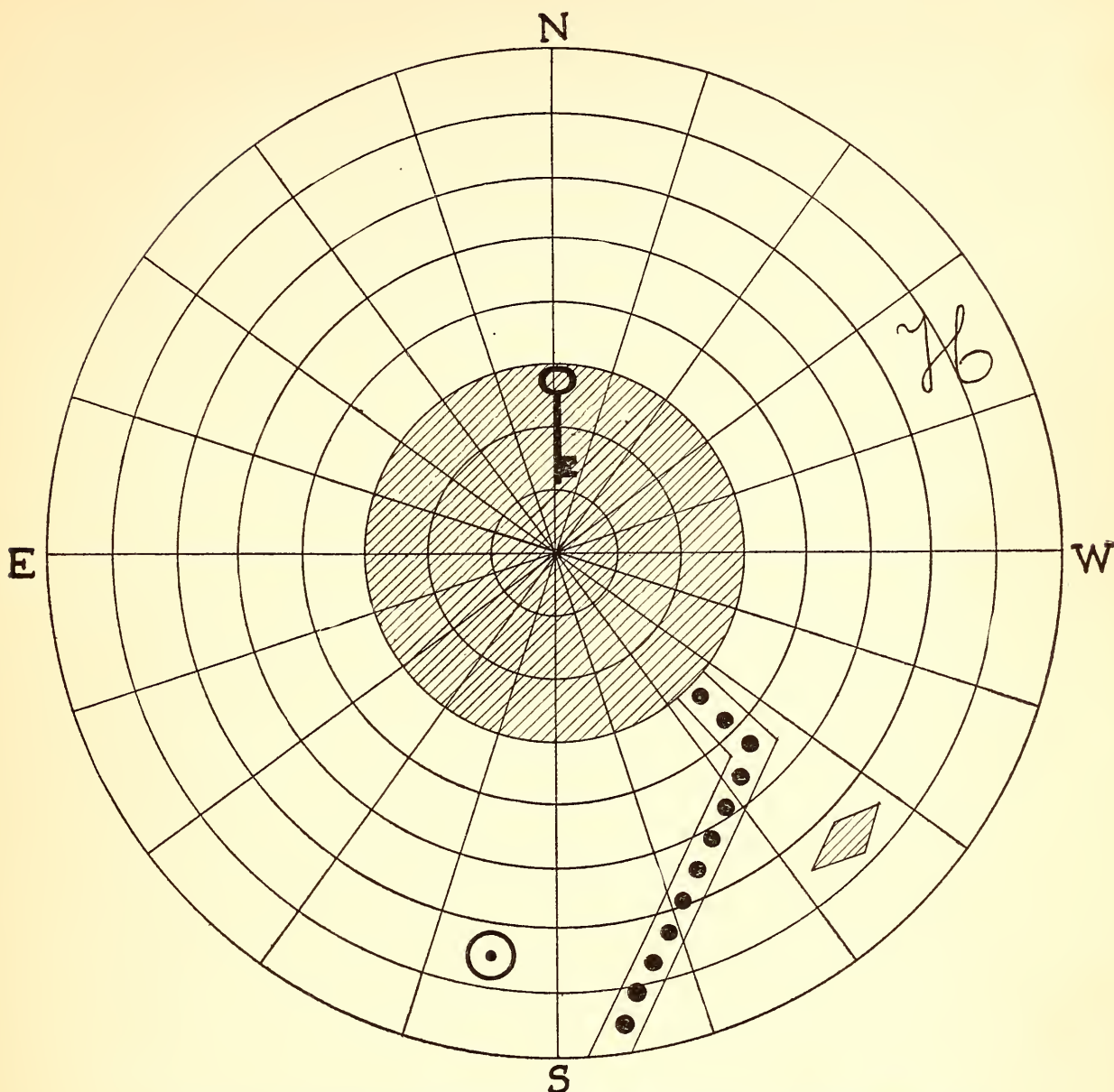
As far back as the first settlement of white men in this part of the state, a tradition has been floating around through the country that at some indefinitely early date Spanish prospectors worked copper mines a little above the junction of the two main branches of the Brazos River, the Salt Fork and the Double Mountain Fork, in what was formerly a part of Haskell County but is now included in Stonewall County. Furthermore, they are supposed to have had, and left here, a vast quantity of gold.

Various people have come from unknown parts hunting this supposed treasure, but no special headway was made until, in

¹Bolton, H. E., *Athanase de Mézières*, II, 33-34; see also p. 47; also, Vol. I, p. 104.

²Shipman, Daniel, *Frontier Life: 58 Years in Texas*, 1879, pp. 23-26.

³Edward, David B., *History of Texas*, Cincinnati, 1836, pp. 44-45.



**"SPIDER ROCK" UNCOVERED BY GOLD HUNTERS IN
HASKELL COUNTY**

The "Spider Rock" (or "Plat Rock") was found eight or ten inches under soil, on a small hill south of the Salt Fork of the Brazos River, in 1907 or 1908. The diagram as reproduced above was cut into the rock, except as indicated. The shaded center of the diagram represents a copper plate, on top of which lay a copper key pointing north and south. The circle with a dot in it at the lower left represents a hole plugged up with a kind of stopper rock, in the top of which was scooped a depression about the size of a cherry. The diamond shaped figure to the lower right represents a copper plate fitted and cemented into the rock. The letter H almost above the copper diamond was the letter that the Mexican goat herder said would lead him to the treasure after the "Plat Rock" had been found. The angular lane of little circles to the lower right, however, gave the finders of the rock the most concern. They interpreted it as representing a tunnel that led to the treasure sought. Each one of the little circles as drawn on the diagram is for a depression in the rock filled with some kind of substance: one depression had in it charcoal, one red dirt or clay, one yellow shale, and on through varying kinds of earth substance. Various other figures on the rock are not given here.

1907 or 1908, a large old gentleman, whose name I cannot now recall, suddenly appeared in our sleepy little town from somewhere on the Mexican border and quietly began inquiring about the topography of the country and the tradition of Spanish treasure. Having learned all that he could, he took into his confidence a few select men and explained to them that he had gathered certain definite information from reliable Mexicans on the Rio Grande, and that he proposed to search for the key to the hidden wealth.

Adding his own information to what he heard from the native people, the stranger gradually let out a tale that ran somewhat as follows. At an early date, when Spanish miners were gathering great quantities of gold in Mexico, a company of them, in search of further treasure, had wandered far to the northwest, taking with them a large store of the precious metal. In their wanderings, directed by some Indian or by their own keen instinct for such things, the Spanish had located the copper mines on the Brazos and had proceeded to work them. In some way they aroused the hostility of the native Indians and were in danger of massacre. They hastily hid their treasure and escaped for their lives. Before leaving they made a plat of the country, carefully noting directions and distances from prominent points of nature. This plat they took with them, but the Indians continued so hostile that they could never return to take away their gold. Amidst the turmoil and dangers of Mexico at that time, the plat was delivered for safe-keeping to a faithful Mexican convert who was attached to the Spanish party. It remained in his hands until the old man, approaching death, delivered it to some friend or to a member of his family as a passport to immense wealth. Thus the plat passed along for two or three generations until Texas fell into the hands of the hated gringos and it became certain that no poor Mexican could ever get possession of the treasure. Finally, for some small favors and a little money, a Mexican turned the plat over to the American who had now come with it and its tale to Haskell County.

Here he organized a small company to assist him in locating and digging up the treasure. The plat was guarded most carefully and its information kept most secret. But the detailed intricacy of that information was very confusing to the possessors of it. The map covered a large territory, including the two branches of the Brazos, Kiowa Peak, and numerous minor features

of the vicinity. It called for many specified rocks and many marked trees. The rocks had been covered with soil or the markings on them had been weathered away. Most of the trees had perished in fires long years past. An explanation was given to some of the signs, but the meaning of more had to be guessed at.

The search was thorough and long continued, and a deal of money was spent in digging. Most of the prospecting was right along the river, and a Mexican who was herding sheep in the neighborhood began to enter into the counsels of the treasure hunters. He said that the Mexican government knew all about this treasure, that it knew, too, of five or six very rich mines in Texas, some of them the richest in the world, but that it would never reveal these secrets to Americans. He added that certain priests in Mexico could locate this treasure that was being sought on the Brazos.

Thus the Mexican *pastor* convinced the treasure seekers that he knew something about the matter, and to use his information they made him a partner. As soon as he was made a partner, he announced that if a certain rock was found with a certain letter on it, the picture of which he drew, he could find the gold. Only a few days after this, the party did uncover, about eight or ten inches under the surface of the soil, a rock that they called the "Spider Rock."

The rock had many curious markings on it, among them the letter H, in curious old Spanish chirography, as the Mexican had called for. He pretended to explain the markings on the rock. He said that the little hill on which the Spider Rock was found was underlaid with the "base rock"; that underneath the "base rock" were buried a great many bodies; and that nineteen steps to the west of the dead bodies would be found buried a large bone of some prehistoric animal. He said that in excavating the diggers would find a kind of wall, as if a trench had been dug and then filled in with a much harder substance.

Fired with hope, the treasure hunters set to digging for the "base rock." They did find a wall of very firm substance, wider at the top and narrower at the base, as if a trench had been filled in. When they had got down some fifteen or nineteen feet, they were met by such a stench that they could hardly work. They found a great many decayed bodies and many relics of various kinds. Furthermore, at the specified distance, they found the

bone of the prehistoric animal. It was of about the thickness of a man's body and very porous.

The Mexican now directed that the diggers go to the bluff a little farther to the west. He said that there they would find under a rock a great bone like the first and other things buried by the Spaniards. The bone was found, and with it were an old-fashioned sword, some copper ornaments thought to be epaulets, some silver ornaments also, about forty-two gold buttons, and a great number of beads.

But here ended the findings. A majority of the relics found were placed in Doctor Terrell's drug store at Haskell, and were lost in a fire about 1909. The treasure hunting expedition is said to have turned up more than an acre of ground, the depth of the excavations varying from a slight distance to nineteen or twenty feet. The diggers dispersed to their farms, the large man from the border left, and after remaining around a few weeks the Mexican disappeared. Many men think that he knew more than he would tell. Not long after he vanished, a skeleton was found several miles to the east across the river, in the opposite direction from that in which the Mexican had led the Americans. Near the skeleton were two small, heavy copper pots, one shaped oblong somewhat in the form of a canoe, the other round and of the capacity of a gallon and a half, built much stronger than any vessel now made for commerce and capable of holding itself full of the heaviest metal. The popular conclusion is that the Mexican took from these copper vessels at least a part of the vast Spanish treasure. A man in Haskell now is trying to organize an expedition to seek the remaining part of the treasure and to gather more relics.

Nearly every man of that searching party of seventeen years ago was a friend of mine. I wish to give an illustration of the sanguine nature of these treasure seeking folk. At one time the party believed that they were within a foot or two of their treasure, but they feared to uncover it before they had made arrangements to take care of it. They were afraid, so one of them confided to me, to put much of the money in local banks, lest the banks be robbed; they wished, he said, to entrust it to our private vault, where no one would suspect its presence. I agreed to take care of the money and was to be notified a little after midnight. The amount to be deposited was \$60,000 in gold. I was never called to open the vault.

Regarding the copper mines that the Spanish are said to have worked in this country, I can add little. It is known that a company of wealthy men, principally from Baltimore and Washington, came out near Kiowa Peak in 1872 to locate a copper mine. H. H. McConnell, "Late Sixth U. S. Cavalry," in a book published in 1889, *Five Years a Cavalryman*, page 294, gives a concise account of the expedition. It consisted, he says, of about sixty men and was almost luxuriously provided for. Its distinguishing feature was the character of its "bosses," ranging as they did from a Virginia congressman of ante bellum days to an orientalist named Kellog, and including Professor Roessler, "sometime State Geologist of Texas." According to McConnell, who was with the party, it did little but travel leisurely and "locate ten or twelve sections of land" near Kiowa Peak. The clue on which it set forth was a report of copper deposits on the Wichita and Brazos rivers made by some prospectors who had been driven back by Indians before the Civil War.

LOST LEAD MINE ON THE BRAZOS, KING COUNTY

BY L. D. BERTILLION

Thirty-five years ago, at some horse corrals on Chickamauga Creek, just west of Dalton, Georgia, I heard Thomas Longest tell of having discovered a ledge of lead on the Salt Fork of the Brazos. I do not know whether this story is popularly told or not. Longest did not, I think, leave a way-bill to the mine.

In 1886, Thomas Longest of New York City decided to travel southwestward in search of a basis for horse dealing. He settled in Dalton, Georgia, forming a partnership with Luke Callaway, and established a livery, feed, and sale stable. In 1887, horses went up in price, and the partners came to Texas to buy five carloads of horses. They bought the horses; and then Longest remained to look over the country.

On the east side of the Brazos River at a point where the Double Mountain Fork intersects with the Salt Fork, Longest saw a steer with a very fancy head of horns. He desired to have the horns removed from the animal that he might send them to a friend in New York. Upon learning what he wanted, however, the cowboy who was with him told him that these horns

were little compared to what might be found a day's ride to the northwest. Longest promptly set out to make the ride, the cowboy going with him only far enough to show him a crossing safe from the quicksands, and telling him the general direction of trails to what he designated as the Croton Creek.

After he had ridden a good many hours, a storm came up, and Longest took shelter in a break of a very rough and desolate looking country. Here, back under the bank of a canyon, he noticed a rusty piece of iron. Upon closer investigation, he found it to be an old pick. With it he prized around in the dirt and uncovered the remains of a shovel. Longest kept on investigating and presently discovered a ledge of ore. From it he broke off a piece weighing about four and one half pounds. He was sure that it was silver and returned to Georgia at once.

As soon as he had disposed of his horses in the East, he sent the ore to New York to be assayed. To his great disappointment, it was pronounced lead, but seventy per cent pure—a valuable find.

Longest at once set about interesting a mining company in the ore and by the spring of 1888 had arranged to show its representative the mine. However, during his trip the year before he had contracted a severe cold, which developed into tuberculosis. He put off the trip in the hope of getting better, but in a few months he was dead.

Thus became a second time lost what is perhaps one of the richest lead mines in America. From the descriptions and directions given by Longest, it would appear that it is located in either Stonewall or King County, more likely in the latter.

THE ACCURSED GOLD IN THE SANTA ANNA MOUNTAINS

BY J. LEEPER GAY

[I have little doubt that the negro who figures in this legend is a survival of the Moor, "Black Stephen," who preceded Coronado's gold seeking expedition of 1541, though the real "Black Stephen" never returned to Mexico to tell his tale.—EDITOR.]

This story was told me by a Mexican who said that he heard it from his grandfather in Sonora, Mexico. It well represents the many legends that cluster around the so-called Santa Anna

Mountains and are believed in by various inhabitants of that region. It is a tradition of the country that the mountains and town are erroneously named; that they should be called Santana instead of Santa Anna, it being believed that the Indian chief often referred to as Santa Anna was really named Santana. He is supposed to lie buried among the mountains in a cave stuffed with gold from the San Saba mines. The Spanish had started with a few cart loads of it on their way to St. Louis, when they were overtaken in a certain mountain pass. This pass was frequently used by the Spanish at San Saba, according to legend, in order to communicate with another fort at what is now Colorado, Texas.

Years and years past while Mexico was still under Spanish rule, stories came sifting down far into Mexico that somewhere in Colorado was a great tribe of Indians with many sacks of gold in their tepees. Finally a troop of cavalry was fitted out and sent north to explore, and if there was gold to bring it back. Hardened raiders as they were, even they had fear of such a long and wild adventure. At last they came into the region where the tepees of gold were believed to be situated. They made a swift attack, which was fiercely resisted, but all they found was about fifty pounds of gold dust and gold nuggets.

The repulsed Indians rallied and made a counter attack. The Spanish were driven back. They retreated slowly, in good order, steadily followed by the Indians. At each attack upon their rear, the Indians became fiercer, bolder, and stronger in numbers. The exhausted Spaniards were losing hope of ever reaching the Rio Grande with their lives, much less their treasure. A month after their assault on the Indian village, they were camped for the night on a little creek not far from what are now called the Santa Anna Mountains in Coleman County. A lookout who had been dispatched in the late afternoon to make observation from the nearest mountain had not returned. At dark all fires were extinguished and the camp waited. Some time before midnight the lookout dashed in to report that a large band of Indians was advancing within a few miles. The commander of the expedition ordered his men to entrench themselves as best they could and to maintain silence. With them was a very strong negro who had acted as a kind of guide. He was well able to dig a hole for the gold, and he was detailed with some of the exhausted Spaniards to hide the treasure. They buried it on top of a hill, under a flat

rock on which they carved three M's. It is estimated that pure ore to the value of about ten thousand pesos was buried.

The detail had barely returned to camp when the Indians began their attack. They rushed the camp in overwhelming numbers. Only three prisoners were taken, two Spaniards and the negro guide. The Spaniards were burned at the stake at once. The negro was kept as a slave. He alone lived to tell the tale.

Some years after his capture, broken and crazed from continual cruelty, he escaped into Mexico. There he seemed always thinking of the death of his troop, and the Mexicans shunned him as bad company except when some raider wanted to get his tale of buried gold. He refused many times to guide parties back to it. According to him, there was a curse on the gold for whoever should find it. No one has ever found it, and if it ever was buried in the Santa Anna Mountains, it is buried there yet.

THE HOLE OF GOLD NEAR WICHITA FALLS

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I am indebted for this legend to Mr. Bob Nutt of Sabinal. Once in the early days a band of men who were going across the Plains to trade in New Mexico were attacked by Indians somewhere near the present town of Wichita Falls. They made a corral of their wagons and fought off the Indians as long as they could, but when night came they were so thinned in numbers and the Indians were so strong that they decided to break for their lives. They broke, and all but one man were speedily overtaken, killed, and scalped.

The man who escaped saved his life by stumbling into a hole that lay concealed near a little ravine. It was a kind of pothole with rounded pebbles at the bottom; among them the man soon noticed what looked like gold. He was in a hole of gold nuggets! He remained there for three days, and during all that time he was sorting the nuggets from the rocks, digging out the gravelly bottom with his bare hands. He said afterward that there must have been a barrel of the nuggets. Finally, when he could no longer hear Indians, he peeped out. Seeing that the way was clear, he bundled up what nuggets he could carry and

set out for a distant fort. The Indians had burned all the supplies, with the wagons, and on his way to the fort he nearly starved. He had his gun but he was afraid to disclose his whereabouts by shooting at game. At length he grew so weak that he had to throw away all the gold but two or three specimen nuggets. He was hardly conscious of the loss when at last he staggered into the army walls.

It was several years before he could get back into the Wichita country. Meanwhile, day and night, he never ceased to think of the hole of gold nuggets. The country around it was pictured clear in his memory. The exact spot would be located by the irons of the burned wagons. For a long time the man was afraid to tell his secret. At last he returned, but no hill or draw of the region seemed familiar, and he could never come upon the wagon irons or the pothole of nuggets. Some years ago he died in Wichita Falls, leaving his descendants a few nuggets that bore testimony to the truth of his often told tale.

BURIED TREASURE LEGENDS OF COOKE COUNTY

BY LILLIAN GUNTER

[In 1759 Parrilla marched from San Antonio with a force of about six hundred men and attacked the Taovayas villages on Red River somewhere in the vicinity of what is now Montague County, Dr. Herbert E. Bolton says near the present Ringgold. Parrilla found the Indians "intrenched behind a strong stockade with breastworks, flying a French flag, and skillfully using French weapons and tactics." A sanguinary battle followed, resulting in heavy loss on both sides. The Spanish withdrew, leaving "two cannon and extra baggage behind."¹ Seventeen years later the cannon were recovered.² In my mind there is no doubt that the long unexplained "Old Spanish Fort" of Miss Gunter's legend was the fortification attacked by Parrilla.³ The source of the relics mentioned by Miss Gunter is accounted for also.

Thus is seen again how legend has preserved in a vague way what history long ignored but eventually established. Comparison should be made with "The San Gabriel Mission in Legend."⁴ Again, "Old Spanish Fort" was

¹See Bolton, H. E., *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, pp. 89-90, for an account of the Parrilla Expedition.

²*Ibid.*, 129, 414. See also Bolton's *De Mézières*, II, 187-238.

³After having written the above, I was informed by Mr. Joseph B. Thoburn, secretary of the Oklahoma Historical Society, that he had received a letter from Dr. Bolton identifying "Old Spanish Fort" with the fortification attacked by Parrilla.

⁴See page 99.

the name given by Westerners to the ruins of the San Saba presidio before the history of the site became generally known.⁵ The deduction need not be made that legend is always correct in anticipating history!—EDITOR.]

I

The buried treasure legends of Cooke County, so far as I have been able to investigate, center around two localities. The first legend with its variants is current in the Cross Timbers and relates to that part of the county immediately northwest of Burns City, extending to within a few miles of Gainesville. An outcropping of the legend persists also in the Cross Timbers near Dexter. The descendants of the first settlers, some of whom still live in the country, tell of many hunts for buried treasure made by different people who were guided by maps or oral directions furnished by Mexicans.

Marks of fish, turtles, serpents, and other easily drawn animals were once found on trees and stones; but no master mind, such as reveals itself in Poe's "Gold Bug," came to deduce their true meaning. So the treasure has never been found, although an effort was made to locate it quite recently. Most of these marks have long since been removed or destroyed; however, it has been the writer's fortune to see the outline of a crudely cut fish upon the side of a large boulder, probably the only mark of its kind left in the county.

It may interest Texas readers to know that in support of the claim that this part of what is now Cooke County was visited by Spanish explorers, there now repose in the Cooke County museum, which is a part of the county library, a one-pound brass cannon ball, picked up one mile northwest of Burns City, and a brass spear-head, found in a gravel drift near Dexter. Brass cannon balls went out of date long before Americans ever reached this part of Texas; and, as an old Texas ranger has pointed out, the only metal that the Indians used for their spear and arrow heads was iron—not brass.

II

By far the most widespread and generally known legend of Cooke County and vicinity deals with the Red River front; *i. e.*,

⁵See Roberts, Capt. Dan W., *Rangers and Sovereignty*, San Antonio, 1914, pp. 185-186.

that part of it extending from Spanish Fort Bend on the west nearly to Preston Bend on the east, thus extending into both Montague and Grayson counties.

Mr. Pete Davidson, who came to Cooke County about 1856 to live with his two uncles, Captain Rowland of the Texas Rangers, and Doctor Davidson, proprietor of the first station west of Gainesville for the Overland Stage Route, his station having been located on Blocker Creek, relates that he made his first trip to Spanish Fort in 1857. "At that time," he says, "the earthworks were still plainly discernible and would hide a cow or horse from observation from the outside. Good-sized trees were then growing from the top of the earthworks, showing that a long time had elapsed since they were thrown up. The country was still virgin prairie, and every once in a while you could see the bleached bones of a human skeleton, showing that some sort of battle had been fought there; but some of the skeletons were so small that they must have been of women or children who were among either the Indians or the soldiers of the fort." Just before his death in 1922, Mr. Davidson told me that he had recently made a trip to Spanish Fort Bend, though not to the fort itself, with a man who was seeking to trace the locations on an old Mexican map that called for a tree on a bluff where the river touched and turned south. This tree, so the man claimed, was the location of the long sought buried treasure; and, indeed, the old Mexican map and the lone tree on a bluff skirted by the water are essentials of all the Red River legends of buried treasure.

For years an old fellow dug for treasure on the Oklahoma side, just across from Sivill's Bend where the river turns south to make in a twenty-mile sweep the biggest bend in its whole course. West of Dexter, near Walnut Bend, tradition calls for another location of similar marks, but here the treasure is said to be buried on the Texas side.

III

It is noticeable that none of these legends refer to gold and silver but always to treasure. As I have been able to piece it together, the legend is this.

In a very early day a Spanish exploring party passed through this country, going in a northeasterly direction. As was the custom, the expedition included a large number of monks and priests with all the holy vessels and rich paraphernalia necessary to ad-

minister to the spiritual needs of the party itself and to convert the heathen Indians according to the ritual of the Catholic church. Unfortunately the aborigines proved unfriendly and disputed the way to such an extent that the ranks of the Spaniards were decimated, and the remnant saw that they were going to be hard put to it to make an escape. Rather than have their holy vessels, valuable in a material way, but more precious spiritually, desecrated by savage touch, they decided to bury them. In selecting a suitable place for this operation they bore in mind that it must be stable, above the reach of the mighty river or the changes made by the hand of man under ordinary conditions; so they selected a bold promontory on the river, as stated above.

When the treasure was buried, not one, but several rude maps of the location were undoubtedly made, probably each by a different person. These maps were in the nature of things ambiguous, and the legends touching them furnish much food for speculation.

THE TREASURE CANNON ON THE NECHES

BY ROSCOE MARTIN

[The treasure rammed cannon is more or less common to Texas legends. The early Spanish in Texas sometimes buried cannon on account of military expediency,¹ and it may be that the modern tradition connects back with such disposition of artillery, although the tradition is doubtless widespread.² A Spanish cannon stuffed with treasure is supposed to lie deep buried in a lake near Carrizo Springs, Dimmit County.³ On the banks of the Big Sandy (or "Sandies") of Lavaca County, legend has buried a third cannon. Mr. Whitley of McMullen County told me the story connected with it. He heard it half a century ago from a veteran of the "Mexican War" (War of Texas Independence) in the Refugio country. The veteran was named White, as I remember.

¹Bolton, H. E., *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, pp. 114, 391; Cf., also, pp. 90, 414.

²According to Charles M. Skinner, *Myths and Legends of Our Own Land*, Vol. II, pp. 279-280, the Hessian troops, after the surrender of Burgoyne, packed their plate, pay, and jewels into a howitzer and buried it somewhere near Dalton, Massachusetts.

³I have never heard the details of the legend, though I have heard of it from several sources. Mr. E. G. Littlejohn sends in a legend clipped from the *Galveston News* of 1909, in which a Spanish prince, besieged by Indians about the year of 1700, cast a great quantity of "gold, silver, and jewels" into Brand Rock Water Hole, of Peña Creek in Dimmit County.

When the Mexicans were retreating from San Jacinto towards Goliad, White was in the pursuing party of Texans. The Texans camped for the night on the eastern bank of the Big Sandies, and the next morning when White walked out to gather some firewood, he discovered that the Mexicans had been at the same site twenty-four hours before. Besides the usual camp signs, there was the trail of something that had been dragged to a motte of trees and buried. The marks of the digging were as plain as daylight. White supposed that one of the wounded Mexicans had died and been buried.

Years later he fell in with an old Mexican who turned out to have been in the retreat from San Jacinto. Naturally the two veterans reviewed their march.

"There is one thing I have often thought about, though it seemed simple to me at the time," said White one day to the Mexican. "That is the drag-trail I saw at you-all's camp east of the Big Sandies. What made it, anyhow?"

Then the Mexican told how he had helped to drag a small cannon plugged full of rings, jewels, and money, and had seen it buried. The Mexicans intended to come back for it very soon, he said; they were bent at the time on getting away with their bare lives. But when it was known that Texas had won her independence and that the country was settling up with men bitter towards Mexico, the scattered men who buried the cannon were afraid to come back.

The upshot of the Mexican's explanation was that he and White went to the Big Sandies in search of the precious cannon. They found the country cut up by fences and fields and grown up in timber so that they could not locate a single landmark.

It will not harm Mr. Martin's vivid narrative to remark that after the battle of San Jacinto, Burleson with a detachment of troops followed the Mexicans westward across the Brazos and San Bernard, instead of going northward. At the time of the battle, General Ganoa, with a small number of Mexican troops, was at Fort Bend on the Brazos with orders to proceed to Nacogdoches; but immediately after the battle he received orders to retreat to Mexico and he joined in the general retirement.⁴—EDITOR.]

In the fall of 1920 I was one of a hunting party that camped for about two weeks in Tyler County on the Neches River. Our guide for the trip was "Uncle Jimmy" Clanton, a typical old hunter and pioneer, whose head was full of stories of Indians and buried treasure. Some of these stories were obviously concoctions of his own mind, but others were based on historical facts, with, of course, touches of glamour and romance which had grown into the story gradually through constant telling and retelling. His best-loved story, one which I took great delight in listening to more than once during those two weeks and which was common chatter among the backwoodsmen

⁴Wooten's *Comprehensive History of Texas*, Vol. I, p. 292; Brown, John Henry, *History of Texas*, Vol. II, pp. 46, 66, 67.

of the locality, is related below. It was, I think, on the second night of our camp that he lighted his pipe, settled down with his back to a tree, and told us the following tale.

“My father was in the Texas Revolution of 1836. He was in all the earlier fights and skirmishes of the war, and was one of the men who helped capture Santa Anna at San Jacinto. After the treaty of peace was signed, or maybe it was just before the war ended, he was sent to Nacogdoches in a company under Burleson to drive out the Mexicans that held the fort there. This is really where my story begins. You-all have likely read some of this in history, but I’ll tell you some things that never got in history at all.

“Burleson’s bunch got to Nacogdoches late one evening and decided to wait till morning to storm the fort. They camped for the night a mile or so away, and bright and early next morning they marched on the fort. They were some surprised at not getting fired at, and still more surprised when they got up close enough to see that there wasn’t a soul stirring in or about the fort. Burleson ordered a grand charge, and his army of about fifty men charged, only to find nobody there to receive them. The men nosed around a little, found the Mexicans’ trail leading due south, and determined to follow them. The trail was fresh and the Mexes were traveling with wagons; so they figgered they could come up on them before dark. You see, the men had been hearing stories about the bunches of gold the Mexicans had; so they were pretty keen to catch up with them wagons.

“Well, they pulled out down the trail, traveling full speed ahead and making good time. They rode all that day without seeing the enemy, but they knew they were getting close because the trail was getting fresher. They camped that night about fifty miles from Nacogdoches, and hit the trail agin early next morning. About ten o’clock they come upon a couple of wagons, and figgered that the dagoes were getting scared and leaving all unnecessary junk behind. They pushed on without stopping for dinner, and about three o’clock sighted the Mexicans trying to cross the river at Boone’s Ferry. That ferry is about two mile up the river. I can show it to you in the morning.

“As soon as the Texans saw the Mexicans, they made a dash, hoping to get a fight before they had time to cross the river. Just as they got up within shooting distance, the ferry-boat landed on the opposite side of the river with a wagon and three Mexi-

cans. The wagon drove off, but the Texans were too busy at the time to notice any details. The Mexes took to the timber and there was a right lively little scrap. Paw was lying behind a log firing away, when he looked up in time to see three men on the other side rolling a cannon along toward the river. They rolled it up to a high bluff and dumped it right off into the deepest hole in ten miles. He said he wondered at the time what the idea was, but was more interested in number one than in cannons; so he didn't take time to investigate.

"To make a long story short, about fifteen of the Mexicans were killed and the rest captured. That is, they were all captured except the three men that got across the river. A detachment was sent after them, but they got away. The wagon, empty as a last year's bird's nest, and one dead Mexican, were found about a mile and a half away from the river, but the other two had disappeared completely. Burleson rounded up his bunch and his prisoners, and found that he had lost only one man, who had drowned when he got chased off the bluff into the river. He reported to Houston with his prisoners, and that was the end of the expedition.

"As soon as Paw got out of the army, he come back up into this country and settled. His old homestead is about eight mile from here. He used to take me up the river often and show me where the battle took place, where the ferry-boat used to land, and where the cannon was pushed into the river. He used to talk a whole lot about that cannon, and to wonder what the idea was in dumping it into the river. He also wondered a good bit about what was in that wagon that the Mexicans had been so anxious to get across the river with. We never could quite decide why they were so bent on crossing the river with an empty wagon.

"Well, the things that happened in the next few years won't interest you any. Paw died when I was ten years old, but I remembered all he had ever told me about the fight. When the Civil War broke out, I joined the Confederate Army, fought through the war, then come back to my folks here. About 1875 things begin to happen that made me remember everything I had ever heard about the fight at Boone's Ferry.

"In or about that year, a slick-haired young Mexican come into the neighborhood and begin nosing around. He didn't appear to have any particular business here, but seemed to be just looking around for somebody or something. After he'd been here for a

month or two he come to me one day and says that, as I was the oldest man in these parts, he'd like to make me a proposition. I didn't get the connection between my age and his proposition, but agreed to listen; so we got down to what he wanted. He had a map that he claimed he got in an old monastery in Mexico, and that map proved to be right interesting. It outlined a piece of country beginning at Nacogdoches and coming due south. The end of the trail marked off was just about a mile and a half across the river, and the crossing was marked 'Boone's Ferry.' I become all eyes and ears at once, specially when he started his story. He asked me if I knew where Boone's Ferry was, and I says, 'Sure.' Then he opened up:

"My grandfather was with the Mexican band that was defeated by Burleson at this ferry. He was one of the two men that got away. Are you by any chance acquainted with the details of the battle?"

"And I says, 'Some. My paw was in the fight, and has told me about it many a time.'

"Did he ever tell you about seeing a cannon shoved off in the river?"

"Many a time,' says I.

"Mr. Clanton, did it ever occur to you to wonder just why that cannon was thrown into the river?"

"Well,' I says, 'I've wondered about it lots of times.'

"I'll tell you why,' he says, getting kinder excited, but lowering his voice. 'It was filled from end to end with gold!'

"Gold!' I whistled. 'So that's it.'

"Yes, that's it,' he says. 'Not only that, but I have in my pocket another map giving the exact location of more gold, beginning with the ferry as a center. You see, the wagon that crossed the river carried a chest of money. The three men that were with it went on till they became afraid of being overtaken; then they buried it. They had a quarrel over it, and one of them shot another to shut him up. Then he and my grandfather took down some landmarks on a crude map, and pulled for Mexico. On the way the other Mexican died, leaving my grandfather with the map. He died before he could come back and get the money. My father was killed by bandits; so I was left with the one and original map of the buried treasure. With your help, your knowledge of the country around here, and so forth, we should be able to locate that chest and the cannon easy. Now, I propose to

give you half of whatever we find. If we don't find anything, you don't get anything. What do you say?"

"You-all can easily guess that I jumped right on his offer. He showed me the other map, and I located the landmarks as near as I could on the map; we got our tools together, and started our treasure hunt. We looked for the cannon first, because I knew exactly where it should be. We dredged and dredged and fished and fished for that thing, but never could locate it. You see, it took about a forty-foot jump off into the river and it had had about forty years to settle; so I guess it must have been several feet deep in river mud when we were hunting it. We finally gave up hopes of finding it and went to hunting the chest. The map called for three landmarks all an equal distance apart. The chest was supposed to be buried in the center of the triangle made by these points. We found the first one, a big rock in a funny shape, without any trouble at all. The others were big pine trees, but all the trees in that country had been cut down and rafted down the river since the map was made; so we couldn't ever find the other two marks. We sighted off places by every tree-stump in that neighborhood and dug down at the points we found, but must not ever have sighted by the right stumps. Anyhow, we hunted gold for about two months and never found a cent of anything. The Mexican finally got discouraged and went home, but I got a copy of his map and have been looking for that money off and on ever since.

"And I guess that's about all there is to it. If any of you-all want to see where the ferry was and where the cannon was rolled off into the river, we'll go up there in the morning and look around."

THE DREAM WOMAN AND THE WHITE ROSE BUSH

BY MARY A. SUTHERLAND

This story, or legend, or what you will, was told me by an ex-Confederate soldier, an intelligent man.

"After the war I got back to Texas broke, as were all my people, but I bought a little farm in Leon County on credit, married, and began to build a home. I was progressing fairly well when one summer I had a dream, or vision. I was sleeping on the gallery, my wife and two small children occupying the bed just inside the door.

"I saw a woman come into the yard through the gate, a strange looking woman with strange headgear and queer dress, and I marveled that my fierce watch dogs did not attack her. She came to the side of the gallery and said in a clear voice: 'Dig in your little pasture and you will find treasure.'

"I sat up and watched her go out of the gate, just as she had come, and could hardly persuade myself that what I saw was a dream. The next morning I told my wife of the dream—and then forgot it. Now the little pasture was a few fenced acres near the house where we kept our milk calves. It was drouth stricken; the soil was hard and dry and had no growth except a few brambles.

"Not many nights later while I lay as before, the same woman came again. I saw her plainly in the moonlight. She spoke, very quietly but distinctly, the same words: 'Dig in your little pasture. Dig beneath the white rose.'

"Now I knew that there was no growth in the little pasture excepting the few brambles I have mentioned. But on my telling my wife of seeing the woman again in a dream, she said: 'Come on; let's look for roses.' And catching my hand, she laughingly dragged me to the pasture. There, as sure as I am a Reb, we found a rose bush with two white flowers on it. Then we got busy, but, after digging down about two feet, I found a large rock and quit.

"The story got out and I became the butt of many jokes. A few months afterward my brother-in-law offered me a fancy price for the place and I quit farming. Later on in the year I noticed that the little pasture had been plowed—the only mark of improvement noticeable. About the same time I noticed my brother-in-law buying property, including a fine family carriage, sending his daughter to boarding school, and getting himself elected to the state legislature. Maybe there was something under the roses."

After the "Reb" had told me the foregoing story, I heard from his wife that a legend about their farm was current in the settlement. According to the commonly told account, three men camped one night in the vicinity of the "little pasture." In the morning one of them went to a settler's cabin nearby to borrow tools, saying that one of their party had died during the night from wounds received in an Indian fight a few days before. The man declined all offer of help from the wife and daughter of the settler

—the settler himself being absent—but after the campers had departed, the women went out, smoothing the ground over the mound and placing a stone above it.

Now what they buried or why no one knows to this day, but, as was remarked at the time, their horses bore marks of long travel. The women of the cabin saw three men arrive; they saw the mound; they saw three men depart. If a dying comrade was with them, they asked no aid.

It only remains to be said that, though a fine man, Mr. H—, the teller of this story, was the kind of man who would miss a chance at wealth rather than incur the ridicule of neighbors or exert himself in raising a stone.

STEINHEIMER'S MILLIONS

BY L. D. BERTILLION

It seems that almost all of the people in the rural districts of Bell, Falls, and Williamson counties must know something of Steinheimer's ten jack loads of hidden treasure, for it is continually being searched for and has been searched for over a long period of years. The search has extended to many places, the locations varying as much as seven miles. Some claim that the treasure is buried at Reed's Lake; others, at Bugess Lake; but the general opinion is that it is buried at what is known as the Three Forks. All of these places are in Bell County. The Steinheimer map is believed to be in the hands of persons residing in old Mexico, but how it got to Mexico no one seems to know. However, Mexicans searching for the treasure have claimed to have the map or a duplicate of it. Various white men have worked with these maps; others have used "gold rods" and similar instruments.

My own version of the story I secured from a man named Frank Ellis. He secured his information from a man named Nalley Jones, who, in turn, got his account from three Mexicans who spent three months searching for the treasure. There are forty other versions in and around Bell County. Some people will give you the exact amount of the treasure in dollars, but the consensus of opinion is that it was what could be carried on ten

Mexican jacks. I have termed the treasure "millions" and consider my version of the story as nearly correct as any.

According to legendary information, Karl Steinheimer was born near Speyer, Germany, in 1793. At the age of eleven he ran away from home, became a sailor, and, in spite of his limited school attendance, acquired the fluent use of seven languages and a fair knowledge of three other languages. While yet in his teens he took a prominent part in several piratical expeditions, and by the time he had reached the age of twenty-one, captains commanding pirate vessels frequently sought his advice, for which he was liberally paid.

Among the pirate captains who came to Steinheimer was Louis Aury,¹ who sought counsel relative to traffic in negro slaves between Cuba and America. Steinheimer gave his advice and ended by furnishing a considerable amount of capital to the enterprise. Later, when Aury visited the Island of Galveston, which Steinheimer had recommended as a rendezvous, he was so well pleased with Steinheimer's ability that he and others concerned unanimously made him dictator over the gang of slave dealers and sea terrors. However, on account of a broken leg, Steinheimer left the island but once during his dictatorship. That was when he made a run to Cuba in 1817. This hugging of a land berth by Steinheimer brought about a break with Aury, which resulted in a dissolution of partnership and the abandonment of the island by the slave smugglers.

Soon after the break, Steinheimer went far into the mountainous interior of Mexico and became interested in mining operations. In March, 1827, news reached him that Hayden Edwards, the noted Texas empresario, had started a revolution for the purpose of freeing Texas from Mexico, and had established the Republic of Fredonia.² Thereupon Steinheimer, in the hope of becoming dictator to a new country, decided to make his way to Edwards' forces and to offer his assistance in person and in

¹In 1816, Luis de Aury, well known in Texas history as a slave smuggler and privateer, was, by the incipient republic of Mexico, made civil and military governor of the province of Texas. He stationed himself on Galveston Island and among other acts made an alliance with the romantic Colonel Perry. See Bancroft, H. H., *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, Vol. II, 34-39. Dyer, J. O., *The Early History of Galveston*, Galveston, Texas, 1916, pp. 4-9, has a rather detailed account of Aury.—Editor.

²The Republic of Fredonia was announced December 16, 1826.—Editor.

money. However, when he reached Monterrey he learned that the revolt had been put down and that Edwards and his followers had fled to the United States. Thus disappointed in his plans, Steinheimer returned to his mines in Mexico. Here he was prosperous and contented until the latter part of 1838, when he suddenly learned something that turned all his plans upside down and eventually brought about his death.

He learned that a sweetheart of his boyhood days in Europe was living in St. Louis, and was as yet unmarried. Immediately he arranged to leave for St. Louis. His affairs closed, he found that his fortune amounted to ten jack loads of silver and gold. His purpose was to carry the entire fortune with him, and he picked two men to aid him.

When Steinheimer got to Matamoras, he found that, notwithstanding Santa Anna's defeat nearly three years before, Mexico still hoped to repossess Texas. As a preliminary to conquest, one Manuel Flores with a few warriors was preparing to start from Matamoras early in 1839 for Nacogdoches, his mission being to instigate an Indian uprising in Texas. Learning further that the Apaches were both numerous and hostile north of the San Antonio road, Steinheimer decided to wait for Flores and his party. He waited until early spring and then the entire company set out. When they reached the Colorado River, they were dismayed to learn that General Burleson was advancing on them and that an engagement was only a matter of hours. Here we may safely presume that there was a secret compact between Flores and Steinheimer. At any rate, the adventurer was permitted to slightly out-distance Flores and to switch his men and burros some miles north. Consequently, when Flores met his doom,³ Steinheimer was unknown to the Texans.

After a complete rest for his men and animals, he cautiously picked his way across prairies and canyons, avoiding all trails, until he reached a place where three streams intersect and combine into one. Here he decided to bury all of his fortune but one small package of gold that might be needed for immediate use. Accordingly, he unpacked the burros and concealed their freight.

³Manuel Flores, Mexico-Indian agent, with a party of twenty-five men, was met by Lieutenant James O. Rice, with seventeen men, near Austin, May 14, 1839, and Flores was killed. Burleson shortly afterward met and defeated Vicente Cordova, Flores' aid. See Yoakum, *History of Texas*, Vol. II, 257-261.—Editor.

The only mark made to designate the spot of concealment was a large brass spike driven into an oak tree some forty or sixty feet away, the spike being of the type used to take the place of bolts in early boat construction. The animals that had so faithfully borne the treasure over mountains and deserts were now liberated, and with his two trusted men Steinheimer took a south-eastern direction.

When they had traveled, as he judged, some twelve or fourteen miles, they came to what, in his meager descriptions that have come down to us, he terms "a bunch of knobs on the prairie," from the tops of which they could see a great valley skirted with timber some ten miles east. While they were getting their bearings from these knobs, the party was attacked by the Indians. Steinheimer's two aids were both killed outright, and he escaped badly wounded. He hid himself on the center hill of the group, and here it was that he buried his remaining gold, with the exception of six Spanish coins, the place of deposit not marked. In the encounter he had lost his mount and supplies, though he still had gun and some ammunition.

He set out afoot, choosing a northern direction, subsisting as best he could off roots and water, for he was afraid to shoot at game until he was out of the vicinity of the Indians. Finally he got to where he could kill meat. But now his wounds were growing more painful, and at the juncture when he thought that gangrene was setting up in them, he fell into the hands of some travelers.

Realizing the threat of immediate death, he made a crude map as best he could of the region of his buried millions and wrote to his early sweetheart a concise account of his fortunes and misfortunes, informing her of the critical condition in which he was writing. He explained that the strangers to whom he was entrusting this message knew nothing of his name or history and would get nothing of his but the six Spanish coins. Finally, he requested that she keep his message secret for three months. If he recovered, he would, he explained, reach St. Louis by the expiration of that time; if he did not arrive, she was to understand that he was dead and that his fortune was hers. These are the last tidings of Steinheimer; it is, therefore, to be presumed that death was quite as near as he had supposed.

In the course of time the letter reached its destination, but a number of years passed before conditions in Texas were such

that the relatives of the lady felt that they could look for the treasure with any degree of safety. Then after months of search and inquiry they were convinced that the three streams referred to in the directions were the Nolan, the Lampasas, and the Leon, which unite not far from the present town of Belton to form what is now called Little River. Here must lie the vast fortune. In consequence, it is deduced that the small parcel of gold could not be over two or three miles from the town of Rogers, in Bell County also, as near it are what are, indeed, still called the Knobs, a small bunch of hills lying between the Santa Fe and "Katy" railroads, at about the charted distance from the Three Forks.

While, as I said in the beginning, the history of Steinheimer's buried wealth is at present known to many persons, there is no evidence that any part of it has ever been found, despite the great amount of time and money that have been spent in quest of it. Alike unknown is the place of the death and burial of the man Steinheimer, though he was once notorious both on land and sea. Unknown is he, too, to the histories of the several countries in which he lived. The relatives who came to Texas in search of the vast fortune bequeathed to the lady in such a strange manner were careful never to reveal her name. And this is perhaps the first time that the name of Steinheimer has appeared before the general public.⁴

THE SNIVELY LEGEND

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I

Major, or Colonel, Jacob Snively (also spelled Schnively) led the kind of life that inspires legend.¹ In 1843 he headed an ex-

⁴According to his own statement, Mr. J. O. Webb of Alvin, Texas, who is writing a history of Galveston, has never met the name of Steinheimer in his researches.—Editor.

¹For a history of his first expedition, see any Texas history, but particularly "The Last Stage of Texan Military Operations Against Mexico, 1843," by William Campbell Binkley, in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXII, pp. 260-271. Perhaps a juster estimate of the motives of Snively is to be found in J. W. Wilbarger's *Indian Depredations in Texas*, Austin, 1889, pp. 51-58.

An excellent account of the highly romantic second expedition is "Reminiscences of the Schnively Expedition of 1867," by A. Whitehurst, Texas State Historical Association *Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, pp. 267-271.

pedition to capture a great Mexican wagon train on its way from St. Louis to Santa Fe; but he was balked in his design by United States troops, and his men were disarmed in New Mexico and sent back to Texas. A quarter of a century later, in 1867, he aided in raising a second expedition of about one hundred men to go up the Rio Grande in search of gold reputed to be inestimably plentiful. His base of organization was Williamson County, and one would fain identify this Snively with the Snively of Miss von Blittersdorf's legend of Milam County, which adjoins Williamson. It is known that Snively was at one time looking for the old San Gabriel Mission, cornering on which he claimed thirty leagues of land.² If he found the ruins, his nature would certainly have provoked him to do a little treasure hunting. However, Colonel Snively is said to have died in Arizona, a citizen of California.³ A little personal investigation among the records and oldest inhabitants of Williamson and Milam counties would no doubt disclose interesting information about Colonel Snively and probably establish a close relationship between him and the Snively of Miss von Blittersdorf's legend. I regret that I have been unable to conduct such investigation.

From a veteran, more than eighty years old, of the Texas Rangers and of the Civil War, the elder Mr. Burton of Austin, two legends connected with Snively's two respective expeditions have come to me.

II

When Snively's men were disbanded in New Mexico in 1843, they came back to the Texas settlements more eager than ever for Mexican prey. About the time of their return a Mexican train was going across the Republic with a cargo of money for St. Louis. By agreement with the Texas authorities it was accompanied by a detachment of Texas Rangers, who traveled nearly a day's ride behind. The Mexicans distrusted them; yet they wanted them, for they were afraid of the Snively gang. At Red River they expected to be met by United States troops, who could not cross into Texas. When the advance scout of the

²Smithwick, Noah, *The Evolution of a State*, p. 267.

³Brown, John Henry, *History of Texas from 1685 to 1892*, St. Louis, Vol. II, p. 291.

train came in sight of Red River, he saw two men riding towards him, and at once concluded that they were Snively bandits. He galloped back and reported them as such to the train. The Mexicans at once began a retreat and a safe disposition of their precious cargo.

On a hill about a mile south of a cottonwood tree that grew on the bank of Red River, four or five hundred yards below an old Spanish crossing, they buried five hundred dollars. On the top of the next hill south of that they buried five hundred more. These two deposits were to be markers and were buried in shallow holes. On the third hill they buried the remainder of their money, many thousands. Then they destroyed their wagons and beat back towards the Rio Grande as best they could. They had become convinced that their escort, even though kept a day's ride behind, was in collusion with the supposed Snively gang. Very shortly after this event the Mexican War broke out, and by the time it was over and affairs had settled down in Texas so that Mexicans could travel inland with security, most of the little band of gold transporters had died or had been killed in battle. The remnant had forgotten the location of the money. Men, though, still look for the tree on Red River bank, below an old crossing, with a line of three hills to the south.

Mr. Tom L. Walker of Montague County, which fronts on Red River, has supplied me a legend somewhat similar to the foregoing. He says that it is current in the county. About 1856 four white men and six Mexicans were transporting a wagon load of gold bullion across Texas from Mexico to St. Louis. Near the Illinois Bend of Red River they were set on by Comanches, and dumped their gold into a lake. Only one of them, a Mexican named Gonzales, survived the attack. He would never return to the site of his terrible experience. In 1890 some men went from Montague County to Mexico City to interview the old man. They found him, but he was blind, crippled, and feeble. He could only tell them that the gold was "on the south side of the largest of the lakes." Time had so shifted the positions of the lakes, however, that the men who got the information could never determine where to make a thorough excavation.

III

Snively's second expedition belongs in a large way to lost treasure lore. In *Hunter's Magazine* for January, 1911, page 5, John

Warren Hunter has an article on "The Schnively Expedition," in which he quotes "Bud" (W. H.) Robinson's account of the two gold hunting expeditions that Snively and Colonel William C. Dalrymple, of Williamson County, organized in 1867 and 1868. The first was made up of only sixteen men and was turned back by the Indians; the second, much larger, was able to ward off the Indians, but it could not locate the gold that had been so luringly promised by Snively.

"From the Pecos," says Robinson as quoted by Hunter, "the expedition went forward and finally reached Eagle Springs, not a great distance from the Rio Grande. This was to be our camping place, as Mr. Schnively had told us that the gold mine was in the vicinity of the springs. He said he had first received information from a dying soldier touching the existence of gold in the region and later he had prospected and found the mine. He knew right where to go to point out the location, he said."

But evidently Snively did not know. His men came to believe that he had never before visited the place but had raised the expedition in order to have protection in his prospecting. In anger and in disappointment the expedition broke up, the men scattering to the four winds. And here my informant, the old Texas Ranger, takes up the tale. Some of the men, he says, came back home; some went on to California and to Colorado; some continued prospecting in a westerly direction. Three of them got lost in the desert, and while trying to make their way to the Rio Grande came into what must have been the Apache Canyon.

In that canyon they stumbled upon two Mexican carts loaded with gold bullion. About were the bleached skeletons of men and oxen, the remains of some old Spanish gold plundering expedition that had perished in the desert. Some men used to say that Coronado's men must have started back with this gold. The three Texans loaded themselves with the precious metal, but before very long they had to cast it away in their struggle to reach water. Fortunately, they did reach water and were saved. Later they equipped themselves and went back into the desert to take the immense wealth. They could never find it. Landmarks are scarce in that country. Very likely, too, the shifting sands of the desert had covered the wagons with their freight of gold. They may be uncovered some day; if so, it will likely be for only a day or an hour, and the man who sees them will probably be

perishing for water, so that the sight of them and the white bones near will strike him as a terrible prophecy rather than as a lifetime of hope realized.

BURIED TREASURE LEGENDS OF MILAM COUNTY

BY LOUISE VON BLITTERSDORF

These legends were told me by Mr. Mike Welch, an old gentleman living near Thorndale.

I

THE SAN GABRIEL MISSION IN LEGEND

[Although up to ten years ago Texas history had hardly recognized the existence of the San Gabriel missions, legend had kept the fact and the place green for generations. In April, 1914, an article by Dr. Herbert E. Bolton, on "The Founding of the Missions on the San Gabriel River, 1745-1749," appeared in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. The next year Dr. Bolton's book entitled *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century* was issued by the University of California Press; in it pages 135-278 treat of "The San Xavier Missions." These are the main and almost only accessible sources for whoever would know the history of the San Gabriel missions. There were three missions, the principal and most enduring one being the Mission San Francisco Xavier de Horcasitas (1748-1755). The name San Xavier was later corrupted into San Gabriel.¹ The San Gabriel missions had trouble with the Indians, and it is a fact that a priest, Father Ganzábal, as in the legend, was killed by them.²

Before the mission was abandoned in 1755, legend had seized upon it; and when Dr. Bolton discovered the site hardly a dozen years ago, he found that legend had kept treasure hunters familiar with the grounds and ruins.³ He quotes Father Mariano,⁴ priest of the time, on legendary causes that contributed to the final abandonment of the mission: "The sacrilegious homicides having been perpetrated, the elements at once conspired, declaring divine justice provoked; for in the sky appeared a ball of fire so horrible that all were terrified, and with so notable a circumstance that it circled from the presidio to the mission of the Occisos [Orcoquiza], and returned to the same presidio, when it exploded with a noise as loud as could be made by a heavily loaded cannon. The river ceased to run, and its waters became so corrupt that they were extremely noxious and intolerable to the smell. The air became so infected that all who went to the place, even though merely passing, became infected by the pest, which became so ma-

¹Bolton, H. E., *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, pp. 140-141.

²*Ibid.*, 260-261.

³*Ibid.*, 138, 227.

⁴*Ibid.*, 268-269.

licious that many of the inhabitants died, and we all found ourselves in the last extremes of life. Finally, the land became so accursed that what had been a beautiful plain became converted into a thicket, in which opened horrible crevices that caused terror. And the inhabitants became so put to it, in order to escape the complete extermination that threatened them, that they moved more than thirty leagues away, with no other permission than that granted them by the natural right to save their own lives."

We learn how rich was the San Gabriel Mission, for whose cross of solid gold men have blithely sought, when we read that the total properties transported from it and its two sister missions, including six bells, were inventoried at \$1804.50.⁵—EDITOR.]

In the early days of Texas, when the missionaries were bringing old world civilization to the new world, there stood a mission on the San Gabriel River between what are now the towns of San Gabriel and Rockdale. The mission was a thriving one, and before many months a large rock church had been built. The crowning glory of this church was a solid gold cross on the steeple.

Many converts were made to the new religion, and the small community soon became so powerful that the Indians began to fear it and decided to put an end to it. Accordingly, they murdered the priest there. The surviving Spaniards decided to abandon the mission at once. First, they buried the body of the murdered priest; then they took the cross from the steeple of the church and buried it, together with some gold found in the priest's possession, until they should have time to return for it and carry it away. By covering the gold with charcoal and ashes, they took precautions that no mineral rod should locate it.

Many years later a church was being built in Mexico, and an old Mexican who had heard from his ancestors the story of the buried cross and treasure, came to the priest and prevailed upon him to go to the San Gabriel River and try to find the gold cross to put on the new church. During the journey the Mexican died, leaving with his companion directions for finding the cross. Duties back home were urging the priest's return, and when he met a young Irishman named Mike Welch, he entrusted him with the secret and obtained his promise to carry on the search. With two men to help him, Mr. Welch went to the site of the old mission. Digging a certain distance from a specified tree, the men unearthed the skeleton of the priest together with a small crucifix. Then, according to directions, they measured the distance from the grave to the nearest corner of the church and began to dig

⁵*Ibid.*, 275-276.

again. They came at last to some charcoal and ashes and knew that they were near the object of their search. One of Mr. Welch's men took sick, however, and, as it was nearly dark, they decided to postpone further digging until morning. That night the other man slipped away from camp. As soon as Mr. Welch discovered next morning that one of his helpers was missing, he went to the unfinished hole. There he saw where a large pot had been taken out. It is well understood that the gold cross and other treasures were found and stolen away. The thief left that part of the country and has never been heard of since. Mr. Welch kept the crucifix until a few years ago, when it was lost.

II

THE GOLD PROTECTED BY SNIVELY'S GHOST

An old man by the name of Snively once lived near what is now Thorndale in Milam County. He owned a great deal of property along the San Gabriel River. One night some Mexicans with nine jack loads of stolen gold passed near Snively's house. The times were troublesome, and traveling was beset with dangers. When the Mexicans neared the river, they decided that it would be well to bury their cargo here and wait for more peaceful times to carry it on into Mexico. After they had put it in the ground and covered it over with isinglass to prevent its being discovered by a mineral rod, they realized that the only sure and safe protection would be to bury a man with the gold. No one of them seemed willing to give his life to such a cause; so in search of a victim they rode back to the house they had passed. They found Snively alone. They made him swear to protect the gold, then killed him and buried him with it. Then they marked the site and went on their way—never to return.

Many have searched for the treasure since but have failed to find it. Snively has taken care of that. Mr. Welch claims that he once found the place where it was buried, but that before he could dig for it, a flood came down the river and covered the place. When the water subsided, it left no trace of where the gold was buried. Snively will always have the help of the elements, if necessary, to protect the gold.

On dull, rainy nights a light may be seen going across the field. It is not carried by anyone, but moves of itself. People say that

the light leads to Snively's grave and the nine jack loads of gold, but, because of the rain perhaps, no one has ever followed the light and it is still a mystery.

Another story in the Thorndale neighborhood very much like this one asserts that some Mexicans, wishing to protect buried gold, killed a priest and buried him with it, and that whenever anyone starts to dig where the gold is buried, he is run away by an angry bull that has fire coming out of its nostrils.⁶

III

POPE'S GHOST AT THE GAP

Pope was a man who lived in the post oak grove near what is now Thorndale. He lived entirely alone, and, as that part of the country was then newly settled, there was not a house within miles of Pope's log hut. It would, therefore, be easy to attack him some night as he came along the road, kill him, and steal his hoard of gold. The murder could be committed, and the murderer could escape into Mexico and live in luxury on the stolen money, with nothing to fear save his own conscience. Such must have been the idea of the villain who murdered Pope one dark night just as Pope turned into the gap to go to his hut. Perhaps the gold was hidden too well for the murderer to find it. No one knows. At any rate, after Pope's body was found and decently buried, his spirit was apparently not at rest; near the gap for a long time thereafter a strange dog was seen. It was undoubtedly the ghost of Pope, for no other dog would venture near it, much less fight it. Horses shied at it when they met it in the road. When a man hit it with a stone, it refused to move, and a bullet had not the slightest effect upon it. Some tried to touch the dog, but when they were about to lay hand upon it, it disappeared. Whoever rode by the gap at sunset was almost sure to see it;

⁶The legend may be compared with that of *La Vaca de Lumbre* (the Fiery Cow) of the City of Mexico, fabled to come forth at midnight from the *Potrero de San Pablo* and gallop through the streets like a blazing whirlwind, breathing from her nostrils smoke and fire. Janvier connects the story of *La Vaca de Lumbre* with that of the goblin, *El Belludo de Grenada*, "who comes forth at midnight from the Siete Suelos Tower of the Alhambra and scours the streets pursued by hell-hounds." See Janvier, Thomas A., *Legends of the City of Mexico*, "La Vaca de Lumbre," Harper Brothers, New York, 1910.—Editor.

often, however, if a party of several persons came by, it would be invisible to all save a particular individual. The ghost dog continued to appear for several years, but after a time he disappeared forever.⁷ The gate, however, that has taken the place of the gap near which Pope was killed, will not stay shut. No matter how you close it, it will open of itself and remain open.

THE WAGON-LOAD OF SILVER IN CLEAR FORK CREEK

BY L. W. PAYNE, JR.

The following legend was written up at my suggestion by Mr. Tom Gambrell of Lockhart. He says that it is well known in the neighborhood of Lockhart, and that he has followed accurately the account as given by the two oldest inhabitants of Lockhart.

The last trouble that the early settlers in Caldwell County had with the Indians was just before the great war between the states. At that time about twenty of the savages suddenly swept down from the north, plundering and devastating where they would. They had with them a wagon into which they put stolen valuables, and by the time they got to Lockhart it was pretty well filled with silver in various forms. Here they seized a white woman, and then turned to follow along the eastern bank of Clear Fork Creek, which runs directly south about two miles west of town.

The whites hastily united to pursue the Indians and soon were close upon them, for the marauders could not flee very fast with their wagon-load of silver. As soon as they saw their peril, they unhitched the horses, emptied the silver into the creek, left their wagon on the bank, and continued their flight with the woman still their captive. The white men passed the wagon and con-

⁷Skinner tells a tale of two young men who were digging for a treasure chest supposed to have been lost by a Spanish galleon at New London, Connecticut, in 1753. "They had dug down to water-level when they reached an iron chest, and they stooped to lift it—but, to their amazement, the iron was too hot to handle! Now they heard deep growls, and a giant dog peered at them from the pit-mouth."—Chas. M. Skinner, *Myths and Legends of Our Own Land*, II, 282-283.

See also Pete Staples' story of the ghost-dog as a guardian of treasure, page 54.—Editor.

tinued the chase. Nearer and nearer they drew on the Indians, who had now turned southwest and were approaching the steep hills and treacherous valleys that surround Round Top Mountain, some eight miles southwest of Lockhart. Here the Indians used to build their fires to call together their warriors. The whites were within half a mile of the redskins when the latter, beating their horses furiously and riding at full speed, entered this almost impenetrable region. The Indian who was carrying the woman in front of him realized that his horse was overburdened and that he himself would certainly be caught unless he lightened the load. Consequently he knocked the woman in the head with his tomahawk, threw her off, and entered the border of the thicket at increased speed. When the whites reached the woman, she was dead. They pursued the brutes a little farther, but soon found out that the Indians were the better runners among the underbrush, and gave up the chase.

On returning, the men took up the corpse and carried it close to town, where they buried it. Many years later, the Prairie Lea-Lockhart road was laid out. The grave, neatly arched with stones, lies close by the roadway, and can be seen by any one who will go from Lockhart about a mile and a half down that road.

Owing to the death of the captive woman and to the near approach of night, the whites did not search for the silver that evening. But next day they went to the creek and looked for the booty. They found none, but carried away the wagon. Since then others have sought in vain for the treasure. The creek has been dredged and seined, and its bottom gouged, but no silver has been found. Some say that the Indians returned that night and recovered it. Others believe that it has sunk into the boggy mire of the creek bottom.

However this may be, the grave is still a visible evidence of the essential truth of the legend. A number of the pursuers of the Indians said that they saw the silver tumble into the water. And the two surviving pursuers, recognized as reliable and honorable men, insist that the whole story is based on fact.

MORO'S GOLD

BY FANNIE E. RATCHFORD

I heard the story of Moro's gold first, when a very small child, from my mother, who herself remembered it from her tenth year,

and from my grandmother, who, except for its tragic outcome, would have forgotten the whole incident in her busy life as mistress of a large plantation. I heard it when several years older from my father, who knew it merely as a family and neighborhood legend, and I heard it again a few years ago from my mother's cousin, Judge W. P. McLean of Fort Worth, who as a young man was living in my grandfather's home at the time the incident occurred. The story as I give it here contains elements of all four slightly varying accounts.

Before the Civil War, my grandfather, Preston R. Rose, lived on a large plantation, called Buena Vista, lying along the Guadalupe River, seven miles from Victoria, near the Indianola road. Late one afternoon, two years before the Civil War began, he was sitting on the porch reading, when my mother, who was playing near, called his attention to the unusual sight of a stranger coming across the field from the direction of the river. The stranger was of small stature and dark complexion, evidently a Spaniard. When he had reached the porch, he addressed my grandfather in the easy, courteous manner of a gentleman and an equal, and requested hospitality for the night, explaining that his pack mule had gotten away from him and that he had exhausted himself in a fruitless search.

His request was granted without question, and Moro took up his residence at Buena Vista, which on one pretext or another lasted for several months, in spite of the suspicious and disquieting circumstances that soon arose. The first of these was the report brought in by the negroes the next morning after Moro's arrival, that a mule with a pistol shot through his head had been found partially buried in the river bottom. Another was the fact that Moro was never seen without a glove on his right hand, not even at meal time. The negro boy who waited on him in his room reported that he once saw him without the glove when he was washing his hand, and described a strange device on his wrist that was probably a tattooed figure. But the most disturbing circumstance connected with Moro was his eagerness to get rid of money. He distributed gold coins (of what coinage, I never heard) among the household servants like copper pennies, until Grandfather rather sharply requested him to stop.

Though there was not much to be bought in the little town of Victoria, Moro never came back from a trip to town without the

most expensive presents that could be bought for all the family in spite of the fact that they were invariably refused. My mother seems to have been particularly impressed by a large oil painting which he once bought from a local artist at an impossible price, as a present for my grandmother. When she refused to accept it, he asked permission to hang it in the library, and there it hung as long as the house was in possession of the family.

Frequently Moro proposed the most extravagant things. Once he urged Grandfather to allow him to build a great stone house of feudal magnificence to replace the colonial frame house in which he lived. Again he proposed that he take the entire family to Europe at his expense, leaving the girls there to receive an elaborate education in the best schools to be found on the continent.

One day as Moro was walking about the plantation with Grandfather, the question of plantation debts came up, and Moro remarked in a significant tone that Grandfather was at that minute standing within fifty feet of enough gold to enable him to pay all the debts of the plantation and still be a rich man, even if he did not own an acre of land or a negro slave. Grandfather's anger prevented his continuing the disclosure that he was evidently eager to make. The only landmark of any kind near was a large fig tree about fifty feet away.

In the meantime the negroes had caught the idea of buried treasures, and many were the tales they told of seeing Moro digging about the place at night.

A guest staying in the house one night reported that he had been drawn to the door of his room by an unusual noise, and had seen Moro painfully heaving a small chest up the stairway, step at a time.

My grandfather was a man in whom the spirit of adventure was strong. He had left his plantation to the direction of his wife while he went adventuring into the California gold fields in '49. Consequently Moro was able to catch his interest by the story of buried treasures down on the Rio Grande, and Grandfather consented to go if he were allowed to make up his own party. The party as finally organized consisted of friends and neighbors, most of whom were well-to-do planters, but there was one man included somewhat out of the social class of the others, though well known and trusted throughout the neighborhood. To this man Moro objected strenuously, saying that he would

either prevent their finding the treasure, or if it were found, would murder them all to get the whole for himself. Grandfather insisted, and the man went.

Moro was nervous and sulky from the start, and so aroused the suspicions of the party that by the time they reached the Rio Grande, he was not allowed out of sight. But despite the close watch kept upon him, he finally made his escape by diving from one of the boats in which the party was crossing the Rio Grande to the point where he said the treasure was to be found. The man whom Moro feared would have shot him as he appeared above the surface of the water if Grandfather had not prevented.

There was nothing left for the party to do but return home, for Moro had given them no map or directions that would enable them to make an independent search. But before setting out on the return, Grandfather foolishly accepted a dare to swim the river in a very wide place, and in doing so caught a severe cold that developed into "galloping consumption," from which he died a few months later.

The rest of the story, so far as there is any, is confused and contradictory. A few weeks before Grandfather's death, some of the negroes on the place came to the house, begging for relief from Moro's ghost, which was seen almost nightly digging at various spots on the plantation, but most often near the big fig tree in the field.

Grandfather was too ill to make any investigation for himself, but he questioned the negroes closely, and came to the conclusion that all the stories had grown out of one real incident—that Moro had probably come back to recover money that he had buried on the place.

The man whom Moro feared went to Mexico to escape service in the Confederate Army, and his sudden rise to fortune, coupled with a wild story he told on his return of having met with Moro in Mexico, convinced my grandmother that he had in some way come into possession of the treasure.

Judge McLean, who was a member of the original party, believed the story of buried money on the Rio Grande to be nothing more than a ruse on the part of Moro, representing a band of border outlaws, to kidnap Grandfather and hold him for a ransom. He was very positive that he saw Moro hanged as a Yankee spy during the Civil War, while he was stationed on the border near Rio Grande City.

The legend of buried money still lingers around the old plantation of Buena Vista.¹ About ten years after the Civil War, my father bought the part of the plantation on which the home was situated, and during the years that he lived there was much annoyed by treasure seekers who begged permission to dig for "Moro's gold," or who came at night and dug without permission. In telling me the story, as he had heard it from various members of my mother's family and from the negroes on the place, he expressed his belief that Moro had at one time buried money there. He told me that one day as he was showing a "free negro" how to run a straight furrow in the field not far from the old fig tree, the horse stumbled and his right foreleg sank in the ground up to the shoulder. The thought of Moro's gold seems not to have entered my father's mind at the time, but later he remembered it, and said that he was convinced that if there had ever been any money buried on the plantation it was in that spot.

¹For a brief account of "Moro's Gold," see Rose, Victor M., *Some Historical Facts in Regard to the Settlement of Victoria, Texas*, Laredo [1883?], pp. 36-37.—Editor.

LEGENDS OF THE SUPERNATURAL

THE LEGEND OF STAMPEDE MESA

BY JOHN R. CRADDOCK

[Of all the legends in this volume "The Legend of Stampede Mesa" shows most of native originality. Like all true legends, it has had a wide vogue, though I have never heard it in the cattle country of the border. A few years ago a young man from the Panhandle, named Roy Ainsworth, gave me this abbreviated variant of it. Back in the days when range men paid in coin rather than in checks, a certain cattle buyer on one of the big ranches of Northwest Texas is believed to have been murdered for his money and his body put away in a shack or dugout near the principal round-up grounds of the ranch. After the murder, whenever an outfit tried to hold a herd of cattle on these grounds at night, they were sure to have a stampede. Cowboys reported many times having seen the murdered man's ghost wandering about among the cattle in the darkness and, of course, stampeding them. Naturally, the place came to be avoided for night herding.—EDITOR.]

Among cattle folk no subject for anecdote and speculation is more popular than the subject of stampedes. There has always been a certain mystery surrounding the stampeding of cattle. Sometimes they stampede without any man's having heard, seen, or smelled a possible cause. The following account of how Stampede Mesa got its name, together with the legend, told in many variations, of the phantom stampede, is current among the people of the Panhandle and New Mexico. I was a mere child when I heard it first, and I have since heard it many times.

Stampede Mesa is in Crosby County, Texas, about eighteen miles from the cap rock of Blanco Canyon, wedged up between the forks of Catfish (sometimes called White or Blanco) River. The main stream skirts it on the west; to the south the bluffs of the mesa drop a sheer hundred feet down into McNeil Branch. The two hundred acre top of the mesa is underlaid with rocks that are scarcely covered by the soil, though grazing is nearly always good. Trail drivers all agree that a better place to hold a herd will never be found. A herd could be watered at the river late in the evening and then be driven up the gentle slope of the mesa and bedded down for the night. In the morning there was water at hand before the drive was resumed. The steep bluffs to the south made a natural barrier so that night guard could be reduced almost half. Nevertheless, few herd bosses of the West would now, if opportunity came, venture to hold their herds on Stampede Mesa. Yet it will never succumb to the plow. Scarred and high,

it will stand forever, a monument to the days that are gone, a wild bit of the old West to keep green the legend that has given to it the name, "Stampede Mesa."

Early in the fall of '89 an old cowman named Sawyer came through with a trail herd of fifteen hundred head of steers, threes and fours. While he was driving across Dockum Flats one evening, some six or seven miles east of the mesa, about forty-odd head of nester cows came bawling into the herd. Closely flanking them, came the nester, demanding that his cattle be cut out of the herd. Old Sawyer, who was "as hard as nails," was driving short handed; he had come far; his steers were thin and he did not want them "ginned" about any more. Accordingly, he bluntly told the nester to go to hell.

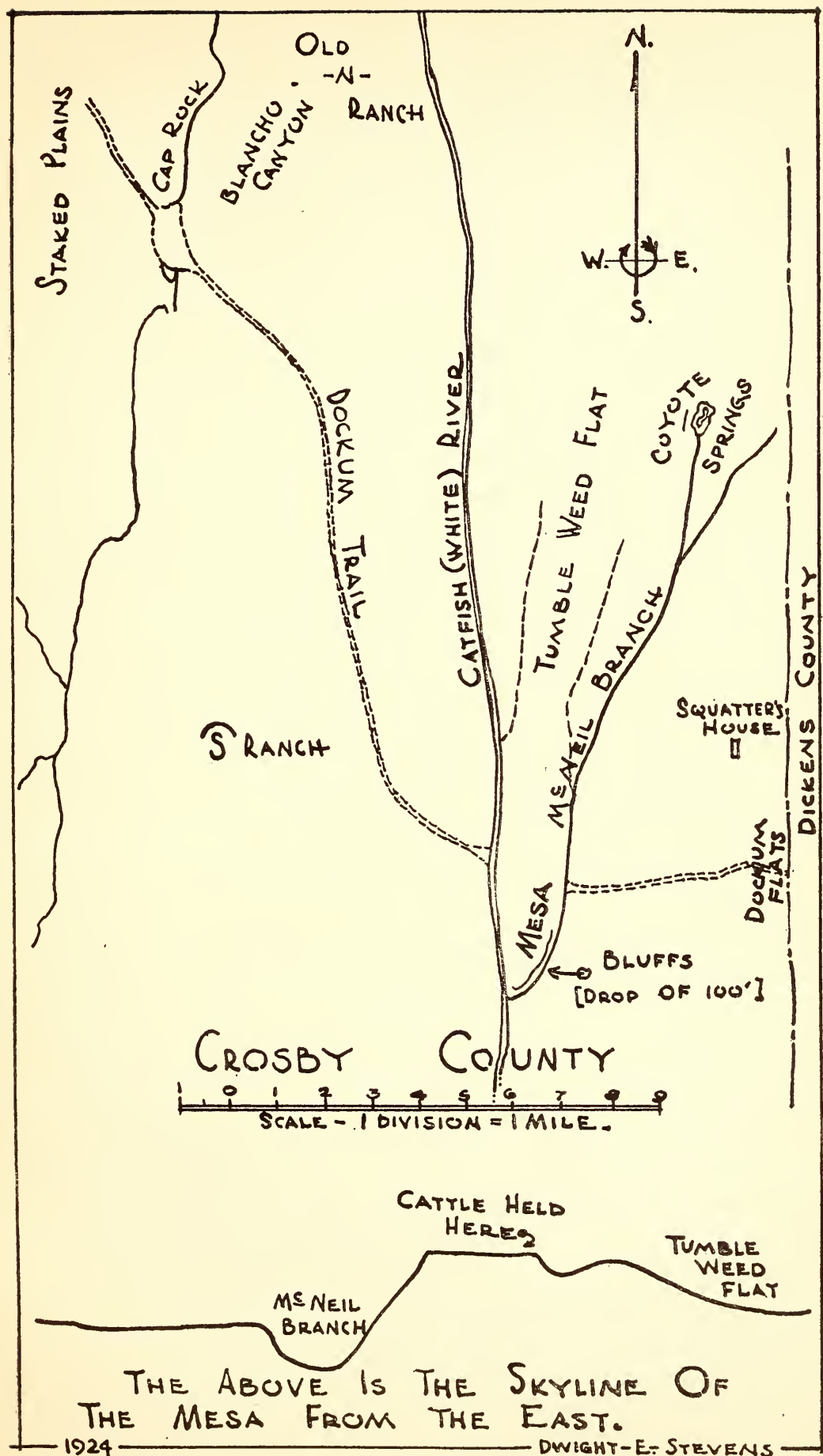
The nester was pretty nervy, and seeing that his little stock of cattle was being driven off, he flared up and told Sawyer that if he did not drop his cows out of the herd before dark he would stampede the whole bunch.

At this Sawyer gave a kind of dry laugh, drew out his six shooter, and squinting down it at the nester, told him to "vamoose."

Nightfall found the herd straggling up the east slope of what on the morrow would be christened by some cowboy Stampede Mesa. Midnight came, and with scarcely half the usual night guard on duty, the herd settled down in peace.

But the peace was not to last. True to his threat, the nester, approaching from the north side, slipped through the watch, waved a blanket a few times, and shot his gun. He did his work well. All of the herd except about three hundred head stampeded over the bluff on the south side of the mesa, and two of the night herders, caught in front of the frantic cattle that they were trying to circle, went over with them.

Sawyer said little, but at sunup he gave orders to bring in the nester alive, horse and all. The orders were carried out, and when the men rode up on the mesa with their prisoner, Sawyer was waiting. He tied the nester on his horse with a raw-hide lariat, blindfolded the horse, and then, seizing him by the bits, backed him off the cliff. There were plenty of hands to drive Sawyer's remnant now. Somewhere on the hillside they buried, in their simple way, the remains of their two comrades, but they left the nester to rot with the piles of dead steers in the canyon.



And now old cowpunchers will tell you that if you chance to be about Stampede Mesa at night, you can hear the nester calling his cattle, and many assert that they have seen his murdered ghost, astride a blindfolded horse, sweeping over the headland, behind a stampeding herd of phantom steers. Herd bosses are afraid of those phantom steers, and it is said that every herd that has been held on the mesa since that night has stampeded, always from some unaccountable cause.

* * * * *

I have a tale connected with two of these noted stampedes that I will relate here in the words of Poncho Burall, who told it to me.

"It was in the fall of 1900. This country was just beginning to settle. I was working for old man Jeff Keister's outfit then, taking a herd through to New Mexico. We'd been on the trail some ten days, I guess, when we came to a ranch in a valley down on the Salt Fork. Keister says a friend of his lives there, and he rides off. After a while two boys ride up and tell us that they will herd the cattle while the outfit goes down to the ranch to dinner.

"When we rode down to the house, Keister and an old man were sitting under a brush arbor that represented the front porch. First thing I noticed about the old man was that one of his arms is only about two-thirds as long as the other, and that he has to put it where he wants it with his other hand. We meets him and sets down to wait for dinner, not saying much but listening some.

"'You'll find a-plenty good places to hold 'em nights, Jeff, but about the third night out you will be some'ers near Stampede Mesa. Don't you try to hold them thar.'

"'I'm aimin' to hold them right there, Bill,' Keister says.

"'Now, Jeff, you ain't forgot that stampede in '91, have you? Well, maybe you have, but I hain't. I carry a little souvaner that won't let me forget. There was phantom steers in that herd that night. You recollect as how them steers went over the steep side of the mesa, Jeff? I must a been a sight when you found me. It's right nigh onto twenty year now, and I ain't moved this old arm since.'

"Well, the wife called dinner just then, and the old man got strung out on something else, but that stampede business jest stuck to my mind.

"Along late one evenin' old Keister and I were riding the

drag, when he puts the dogie he's been a-carryin' on his saddle down on the ground, and says, 'Taint fer now, yuh kin walk. We are campin' on Stampede Mesa, as they call it.'

" 'I guess yuh noticed that feller's arm, back there in the valley,' says Keister, jerking his hand back toward the way we come.

" 'Yes,' I said, waiting for him to go on.

" 'Well, he got it up there on the south side of that mesa. Hoss went plumb crazy. Bill's allys said they wuz ghost steers in that herd that night. I think I seen 'em too. They jest came a-sailin' through the herd and right past your horse. I don't believe in hants, but it wuz scary.'

" 'Well, we drove 'em up on the mesa and let 'em graze. A feller and me took first guard that night. The herd settled down pretty soon, but I couldn't get that stampede tale out of my mind; every time a cow moved I thought something was going to happen. It was a mixed herd, and they lay as quiet as a bunch of dead sheep. It got so quiet that I could hear my pardner's saddle creak, away off to one side. The moon set, and it got darker. Just about then something passed me. It looked like a man on a horse, but it just seemed to float along. Then there was a roar, and the whole bunch stampeded straight for the bluffs. I rode in front of one critter like, and he jest passed right on, jest kinder floatin' past me. Then some old cow bellered and we milled 'em easy—but they wouldn't bed down again that night and it took every derned one of us to hold 'em.'"

* * * * *

There are some who say that the phantoms of this legend are tumble weeds, blown by the wind. But there are many honest men who will tell you of the weird calls of the phantom nester and of the galloping phantom steers. Knowing the story, you cannot look at the mesa, branded by the white scar of the old trail, without a strange emotion.

THE WOMAN OF THE WESTERN STAR: A LEGEND OF THE RANGERS

BY ADELE B. LOOSCAN

(With apologies to the memory of Judge Hugh Duffy.)

Judge Hugh C. Duffy, to whom I am indebted for this legend, was identified with the interests of Bandera County for fifty-four

years. As host of the Duffy Hotel, his genial gifts made friends of all who shared his hospitality. His acquaintance with the rangers enabled him to gather from them and others a rare collection of tales, which he related with convincing accuracy of detail. *The Pioneer History of Bandera County*, by J. Marvin Hunter, contains an appreciative sketch of his life and a tribute to his many fine qualities.

I tell the tale now as it was told to me, when the moon was full and shone on a merry group of friends seated on the ground, in the neighborhood of Polly's Peak. The narrator began with these words: "It was on just such a night as this." Then followed the legend in the time-honored style sacred to legendary lore, impossible for me to imitate.

A more charming landscape cannot be found than the hills and dales of Bandera County. The Indians loved this country, and every year resorted thither, to fish in the waters of the Medina and to hunt deer and turkeys on the mountains. But their intentions were not always so peaceful, and Texas Rangers were not infrequently called upon to protect the few white settlers who were bold enough to call this region home.

In the summer of 1844, there had been some fierce conflicts between the white and the red men; the latter had fled precipitately, showering their arrows behind them upon the rocky ground. The battle having ended with slight loss to the victorious rangers, they were taking their rest near the base of a conical eminence, afterwards known as Polly's Peak.

The moon was at its full. The rangers lay at ease near their camp fire, whose glowing coals of red and yellow seemed to vie with the moon's glorious golden hue. The story-hour had come, and each in his turn told of his own or another's thrilling experience or hairbreadth escape. A mocking bird, perched on the topmost bough of a gnarled oak, poured out the melodious measures of comedy and tragedy that make up his wonderful repertoire. The story tellers were forced to listen to him and interpret, as best they might, the infinitely varied notes of his song.

Now it seemed a human voice, calling, "Come here! Come here! Come here!" Now, a cry of distress, as of a captive frog in the toils of a snake; again, household words pealed forth: "Tut! Tut! Tut! Chick! Chick! Chick! Mew! Mew! Mew!"; then came high pitched trills of bewildering sweetness, rivaling those of the most gifted prima donna, followed by a low, soothing, caressing lullaby.

The song ceased suddenly and left as its echo an uncanny stillness. The breeze had entirely died away; the leaves on the near-by trees seemed to stand at attention, as if awaiting orders. From whom? A voiceless presence commanded an attitude of motionless silence.

The rangers felt its strange influence and looked inquiringly at each other; meanwhile not a word was uttered. The tense silence became painful. A cloud, veiling the face of the moon and dimming its light for a few moments, invited them to watch its passing, and, as they gazed upon its flitting shadows, there suddenly stood in their midst a tall, beautiful Indian woman.

Her hair hung in long braids over her shoulders; her brow was crowned by a circlet of sparkling crystal beads; countless strings of colored beads and shells adorned her body; a skirt of a filmy blue fabric reached nearly to her ankles. She carried a bead-embroidered quiver at her side, and swung across her back was a bow of bois d'arc. The rangers arose and gazed in amazement at her majestic attitude, and several minutes elapsed before their captain controlled his voice to ask: "Where do you come from, and why are you here alone?"

Quietly folding her arms, she replied: "My people are tired of fighting. So many of our braves have fallen, victims of your death-dealing weapons, that we are helpless. I come to ask that the path between my people and yours be again made white! I come alone, because I know not fear. The Great Spirit is my father!"

She laid three polished arrows at her feet and stood for a moment looking up into the sky, while the moonlight glittered on her shining ornaments, and the blooming white yucca that surrounded her gleamed like silver. She turned toward the west and, pointing to a star, wonderfully brilliant in spite of the moonlight, exclaimed, "That star is my home! I go there!"

Her listeners, almost breathless from amazement, were men accustomed to danger; it was their daily duty to meet it. They now saw no threatening danger, no indication of a cowardly ambush; but the silence, like that of the desert, created a feeling akin to awe, and acted like an admonition. But for a hasty sign of the cross, a slight movement of the lips on the part of a few, they stood as lifeless as a group of statuary.

A dark cloud had been rapidly gathering about the summit of Polly's Peak, but the rangers, bewildered by the strangeness of

the situation, seemed transfixed as by some magic spell, and saw naught but the graceful figure and pointing finger of the woman. Their senses were dulled as in the mazes of a dream. The plaintive note of a whippoorwill began to tell his mournful tale, the piercing shriek of an owl startled the little company, and a blinding flash of lightning and crash of thunder broke the spell of their enchantment.

They sprang to their stack of arms, seized their guns, and made ready to face an enemy. Some cursed, with wild unreason. Others cried: "Where is the woman, damned siren that she is, who made it her business to bewitch us men, while the red devils of her tribe prepare to attack and kill us! Let's find and follow her! Look for the arrows she laid at her feet!"

One swore he had seen her caught up into the black cloud as it opened to emit the thundering electric bolt—plain proof that she was an emissary of the devil.

While confusion thus reigned, some tried in vain to find the arrows, which might give a clue. With the earliest dawn, a careful and persistent search failed to discover the arrows, or the presence of a single Indian within the radius of a hundred miles.

The presence and disappearance of the "Woman of the Western Star" must be classed as a mystery, and, like many another mystery, its influence was not only felt at the time, but had lasting beneficial effect. Henceforth the Indians came and went peacefully, committing no depredations, and unmolested by the white men. At a certain season of each year, they placed flint arrow-heads and beads of many colors in the grave of their most noted chief and planted a peace feather at its head. In the long ago, he and his tribe had resisted the Spanish invasion and he had fallen, mortally wounded, in battle against them. On a high cliff overlooking Bandera Pass, his grave could still be seen thirty years ago.

THE DEVIL AND STRAP BUCKNER¹

BY N. A. TAYLOR

[The legend of "The Devil and Strap Buckner" reprinted here in a much abridged form, through the courtesy of Mrs. Natalie Taylor Carlisle and

¹Reprinted from *The Coming Empire or Two Thousand Miles in Texas on Horseback*, by H. F. McDaniel and N. A. Taylor, A. S. Barnes and Company, New York, 1877, pp. 49-73.

Miss Grace B. Taylor, of Houston, daughters of the deceased author, affords sufficient perplexity to the folk-lorist. There is no doubt that the legend as told is based on a pure folk tale; there is no doubt that the author in telling it took many liberties with it, much as Washington Irving took liberties with the legends of the Hudson; and there seems little doubt that the legend has perished from the folk among whom it once existed. The book in which it is preserved is very scarce, hardly procurable at any price.

Colonel Nathaniel Alston Taylor came to Texas shortly before the Civil War and began his travels of "2000 miles on horseback," concluding them after the war was over. I should say that in addition to being the most delightful of all Texas books of travel, his book contains the most incisive information on the social conditions of pioneer Texans. According to Mrs. Carlisle, though the name of H. F. McDaniel is printed as an associate author, he had absolutely nothing to do with the authorship. Mr. Taylor needed financial help to publish the book and McDaniel gave it on the condition that his name should be used as joint author. Mr. Taylor left manuscript journals containing notes on his travels in which the legend is mentioned; and Mrs. Carlisle writes:

"As told me by my father, the legend of Strap Buckner is really folklore. It was told to him in very simple form by a 'dapper young man' explaining why the creek was named Buckner's Creek. The young man said that Strap Buckner came to Texas with Austin's colony and gained his queer reputation for good naturedly knocking men down, and that he had several times knocked down the great Austin himself; he would not hesitate to knock down anything. My father remarked, 'He'd try to knock down a bull, wouldn't he?' Thereupon the young man said that it was related that Strap Buckner had tackled and put to flight, with his bare fists, a great black bull that occasionally made himself obnoxious in Austin's colony. But Strap became unpopular and betook himself to the La Grange vicinity, where he settled in a log cabin of his own construction near the creek. Here he 'tried to be good,' but finally again began knocking men down, and knocked down the Indians and even the chief and his 'queen' and the chief's daughter. The Indian chief admired him so much that he presented him with the swiftest horse he had, a gray nag. This recognition of 'his genius' so aroused the spirits of Strap that he became gloriously drunk and declared himself 'the Champion of the World' and challenged any and everybody to fight—the whole Indian tribe, the Devil himself. At this point, a terrible tempest arose, during which the air was charged with brimstone, and the Devil appeared, and a dreadful fight took place, lasting all the day and night. The Devil conquered, and carried Strap and his gray nag away on a cloud of pale blue smoke that arose from the 'battle ground.' My father was so impressed by the tale that he added to it with the result to be read in his book."

In hope of finding some survival of the legend in the La Grange neighborhood, I sent a copy of it to Mrs. W. H. Thomas, a member of the Texas Folk-Lore Society, who has long lived at La Grange. She and her son, Mr. Wright Thomas, circulated the legend widely without being able to get a surviving trace of it. Nevertheless, there is a large creek that empties into the Colorado River near La Grange called "Buckner's Creek." The country up it "used to be considered wild and rough," says Mrs.

Thomas, "and when I was a child and we wanted to describe anyone as rough, rude, or illiterate, we would say that he must have come 'from high Buckner.'"

Mr. Wright Thomas interviewed an old German woman known as "Aunt Vogt" who came to the settlement in 1840. She says that a carpenter named Buckner lived in the country before she came but that she never heard any legend connected with the name.

The legend of a hero of superhuman strength is as old as the imagination of man. In America it has thrived, particularly among the lumber camps of Maine and of the Northwest, in the myth of Paul Bunyan and his wonderful Blue Ox, "Babe," "seven ax-handles wide between the eyes"—some say, "forty-two ax-handles and a plug of chewing tobacco." In the *Century Magazine* for May, 1923, pages 23-33, Hubert Langerock has reported in detail, as from original folk sources, concerning "The Wonderful Life and Deeds of Paul Bunyan." In West Virginia, according to Margaret Prescott Montague, the performer of deeds of superhuman strength is known as Tony Beaver. See her article called "Up Eel River," in the *Atlantic Monthly* for May, 1923. The superhuman hero in the Southwest has thrived in the person of Pecos Bill, who really belongs in a large part to Texas. Those who would know of him are referred to "The Saga of Pecos Bill," by Edward O'Reilly in the *Century Magazine* for October, 1923, pages 827-833. Thus we see that Strap Buckner, no matter what his derivation or what his lamentable death, is no alien to our soil. It is a pity, though, that he is not thriving like his brothers Paul Bunyan, Tony Beaver, and Pecos Bill.—EDITOR.]

A mile above the ferry, I entered a charming valley leading from the west. It was a succession of farm after farm. The song of the plowman was merry in the air, and there was an odor of the newly-turned soil, which showed just a tint of the coloring matter of the Colorado, proving that the mighty river had invaded the valley with its back-water. Gentle slopes and eminences and detached groves of oak looked upon this pleasant valley from either side. Through the middle of it flowed a small stream known as Buckner's Creek. I had ridden a few miles up this attractive valley when a young horseman cantered up by my side, traveling the same direction with myself. I said involuntarily as he checked his prancing steed beside me and bowed politely: "A young gentleman and a scholar!"

After an interchange of courtesies and some pleasant conversation, I asked why the sparkling brook was called Buckner's Creek, and why it had not been named for some water nymph, who, in the mythological days, must have chosen it for her haunt; or for some Indian princess with a musical name who had lived and loved on its banks?

"Ah," said he, turning upon me with his beaming eyes, which grew larger and brighter, "and thereby hangs a tale—a tale of

the olden time. And as I perceive that you are one who loves knowledge, I will tell it to you if you will have the patience to hear me."

I thanked him and begged him to proceed.

"You must know then," continued he, "that this vale in which you are riding is one that has witnessed strange company and remarkable events. In the olden time there came to Texas with Austin, who, you are aware, brought 'the first three hundred' Americans who founded this great commonwealth, a youth whose name was Strap Buckner. Where he was born, whence his lineage, or why he bore the name of Strap the records do not tell. Certain it is, he was of giant stature, and of the strength of ten lions, and he used it as ten lions. His hair was of the redness of flame, as robust as the mane of a charger, and his face—it was freckled. He was of a kindly nature, as most men of giant strength are, but he had a pride in his strength which grew ungovernable. With no provocation whatever, he knocked men down with the kindest intentions and no purpose to harm them. He would enter a circle of gentlemen with a smiling visage, and knock them all down; and when any received bruised or broken limbs, he nursed them with more than the tenderness of a mother, and with a degree of enthusiasm, as if his whole heart was bent on restoring them to health as soon as practicable, in order that he might enjoy the pleasure of knocking them down again. His genius was to knock men down. He knocked down Austin's whole colony at least three times over, including the great and good Austin himself.

"He could plant a blow with his fist so strongly that it was merry pastime with him to knock a yearling bull stark dead; and even the frontlet of a full grown animal could not withstand him. In those days a huge black bull appeared mysteriously in Austin's colony, who by his ferocity became a terror to the settlement, and was known by the dread name of Noche. Strap challenged this bull to single combat, and invited the colony to witness the encounter. When the day came, the entire colony looked from their doors and windows, being afraid to go out, every one, probably, praying that both Strap and the bull would be slain. He threw a red blanket over his shoulder, and walked on the prairie with the air of a hero who goes forth to meet a mighty foeman. He bore no weapon whatever. When the bull perceived him, he tossed his tail, pawed the earth, and emitted a

roar of thunder. Strap imitated him, and pawed and roared also; which perceiving, the bull came toward him like a thunder-bolt clothed in tempest and terror. Strap received him with a blow on his frontlet from his bare fist, which sent him staggering back upon his haunches, and the blood flowed from his smoking nostrils. Recovering from his surprise, Noche, to the astonishment of all, turned his tail and fled away, bellowing. He was never more seen in those parts.

"Strap's fame greatly arose, insomuch that men looked upon him in awe, and maidens and strong women pined in secret admiration. He became a great hunter, using no other weapon but his fist and an iron pestle, or mace. About this time also Strap became addicted to strong drink and grew boisterous, to such a degree that people shunned him in spite of his kindly nature. No man would meet him alone; but when he was seen approaching, men would shut themselves up in their houses, or collect in knots, all with guns and pistols cocked. Strap now determined that he would seek other fields of glory. So, early on a bright spring morning he arose, and throwing his bundle of raiment over his left shoulder, and bearing his iron pestle in his right hand, he turned his back upon the unappreciative community.

"He traveled west over the great plains. After days of wonders Strap reached the site where La Grange now is, and to his surprise found a solitary trading house, where Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall exchanged beads and liquor with Indians for furs and skins, and for horses they might steal. He liked the country greatly, and whiskey being accessible, he determined to abide in these quarters. On the first day of his arrival, he knocked down both Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall, but so handsomely and with such an air of unspeakable kindness that they could conceive no offense. Before a week had elapsed he had knocked down every Indian brave who dwelt within ten miles round; and finally he knocked down the great king himself, Tuleahcahoma. The Indians called him the Red Son of Blue Thunder. The great king held him in such reverence that he presented him with a gray horse with a bob-tail, which, though ugly and lank to look at, was famed as the swiftest horse known to all the Indians.

"Now this great king and his powerful tribe dwelt in this fair valley in which you ride. Strap saw it, and he loved the beautiful land. He resolved to settle within it, and chose yon lovely

site, and there built his residence of cedar posts. He procured a jug of whiskey and set up housekeeping, an object of great reverence to his neighbors. Daily he went forth and knocked down many Indians with great grace. At last they conceived that they did not like this, and they determined to abandon the vale. On a dark night they silently stole away, and next morning Strap found himself alone. When he beheld the deserted valley, but yesterday teeming with braves and fair maidens, he wept in the kindness of his heart. 'Other friends,' said he, 'have left me before. Such is the common penalty of greatness.'

"Two days he pondered on his greatness and his misery, and the struggle between his genius and his better spirit was terrible. He who hath genius hath a heaving ocean or a volcano in his breast. At length, a dark light gleamed in Strap's impatient eyes; it was his genius startled and indignant. He arose with a proud air, admiringly gazed upon his enormous fists, and groaned deeply for the presence of some one whom he might knock down. His bosom heaved and swelled. And then a sweet gentleness stole into his eyes, as his better spirit spoke to him in a soft voice: 'Ah, Strap, hast thou not glory enough? Hast thou not knocked down many times nearly every man in Texas. . . . even the great Austin and the mighty king Tuleahcahoma? Come, gentle Peace; encircle thy pleasant arms about me and bathe my brow with kisses. My laurels are sufficient, and the great man shall have repose.'

"He felt a thirst, and he reached forth his hand for his jug, but found it empty. 'Ah!' said he, 'this will not do.' He called his swift gray nag, and holding his jug in one hand and the rein in the other, hied away, his long red hair streaming like a meteor behind him. When he rose on the east bank of the Colorado, as fate would have it, he saw twenty-two Indian braves, who, having exchanged their skins for whiskey and trinkets, were having a gay dance under the boughs of an oak. Strap dismounted, and stepping lightly into the circle of braves, knocked them all down. He then turned to each one and bowed with exquisite grace, and the gentleness on his countenance was sweet. You see how treacherous genius is, and how feeble are the best efforts to withstand it. He that hath a genius must needs let it work. Lightly he stepped into the trading house, smiling as the dawn, carrying his clenched fists before him. He met Bob Turket at the door, and instantly knocked him down. His eyes

sparkled, his genius was aglow. Bill Smotherall, beholding the light of his countenance, essayed to escape, but a powerful blow overtook him between the shoulders and felled him face downward to the floor. Strap jumped upon the counter and flapped his elbows against his flanks, and crowed a crow which rang among the hills and forests of the Colorado. His genius for the first time had overcome his kindness of heart; for never before, in all his achievements, had he uttered a note of triumph. I fear me it was a mark of the decadence of his noble spirit.

HE COMETH!

“But all of this perhaps had not been so bad had he not now resorted to whiskey. Calling for his jug, he ordered it filled, and seizing a quart measure, he drank at one draught all it would hold. Instantly, as might be supposed, his genius broke all bounds; it raged. Filling the quart measure with water, he made with its contents a wet ring on the floor, in the center of which he leaped like a savage beast. He smote the air with his fists and exclaimed in a loud voice: ‘Behold in me, Bob Turket, Bill Smotherall, and ye red men of the forest and prairie—behold in me the champion of the world! I defy all that live. I wager my swift gray nag. I defy the veritable old Devil himself—him of the cloven hoof and tawny hide. Black imp of hell, thou Satanas, I defy thee!’

“Scarcely had he uttered these words when a singular murmuring sound issued from the forests of the Colorado, which, growing louder and louder, at last seemed to quiver under the whole heavens. Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall looked at one another, speechless and pale. The braves gathered about the door stricken with terror. Said the great Medicine Man, sounding his big bongbooree: ‘It is—it is—it is he! The Great Father of the Red Son of Blue Thunder has descended from the clouds. He cometh to aid his great son.’

“Outspake Bob Turket: ‘Mighty champion of the world, norate to us what is that!’

“The champion of the world, still occupying the center of the ring, responded: ‘It is not the Great Father of the Red Son of Blue Thunder. I know that familiar voice: it is Noche—it is dread Noche! I conquered him once before, and I will conquer him again. Black, dread Noche, I defy thee!’

"The singular murmuring sound again issued from the deep forests of the Colorado, growing louder and louder, till the everlasting hills trembled with the reverberation, and the great oaks bowed their heads. It articulated distinctly, according to the true report of Bob Turket: 'Ah, Strap—ah, Strap! Remember, Strap, remember!'

"The champion seized his jug by the handle, and pouring out a quart measure of the treacherous liquid, imbibed it at a single draught. He then mounted his swift gray nag and sped away with the fury of a whirlwind. Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall watched him as he passed out of view, and then listened to the rapid clatter of hoofs till they died away in the distance, but durst not venture out of their doors. . . . Strap entered his cabin.

LA NOCHE TRISTE

"Night was rapidly falling, and rolling clouds involved the heavens in pitchy blackness. Fearful thunder resounded through the deserted vale. A storm of wind and rain burst upon the cabin with terrible fury. In the midst of it Strap proceeded to cook his supper of hoe-cake and fried bacon. The bacon sizzled deliciously, and the hoe-cake grew to a rich brown. When all was ready, he spread his table, and was invoking an earnest blessing on him who invented fried bacon and hoe-cake, when suddenly an impetuous blast of the tempest blew open one of his windows. Strap raised his eyes and saw two fiery balls, about four inches apart, staring at him through the open window. 'Ah,' said Strap, 'Ocelot—wildcat—hast thou come to interview me?—or wouldst thou forget thy sorrows in a sip from my jolly jug?—or wouldst thou take a little fried bacon and hoe-cake?—or is the tempest too much for thy glossy skin that thou comest to implore refuge with me under my roof? Truly, I might accord thee of all these and feel myself blessed to do it, but thy glaring, infernal eyes betray thee, and say that thou wouldst return villainy for these mercies. Speed thee away! What! Starest still? Wouldst fight? Then take this!'

"He plucked a stone from his hearth and threw it with all his might at the glaring balls, but it missed its mark and they did not move.

"'Ah, thou art brave,' said he, 'and my hand is unsteady. Wouldst beard me in my den? Then let me try thee with my

pestle!' With that he seized his iron mace and strode with it uplifted to the window. He drew back to plant the blow of a giant between the glaring balls. The blow fell, but it struck only against the window-sill, with such force that it sank half through the heart of oak. The balls disappeared in the outer darkness. Strap then barred the window more firmly than before, and sat down to sup.

"He was chewing a lengthy piece of bacon, whose ends protruded from each corner of his mouth, when a blinding flash of lightning fell, accompanied with a burst of thunder. For a moment Strap felt himself stunned with the flame and concussion. 'Bless me,' said he, 'now has the Father given us enough of lightning and dire thunder! But what, ye gods, is this?'

"He beheld, dancing on the floor before him, a remarkable black figure, with insolent eyes of fiery redness. It was in the shape of a man, but was not three feet high, it had two red horns on its head, and its feet, which were large, were cloven like the hoofs of a bull. Its nose was prominent and hooked like the beak of an eagle, and its face was gaunt and thin. Though so small of stature, its visage was hard and wrinkled, and showed age and infinite villainy. As it danced before him, it placed the thumb of the right hand against its nose and made at Strap the insulting sign of derision; but it spake not.

"Strap was amazed, but he was not overcome. He let the long piece of bacon drop from his mouth. The singular object ceased to dance, and stepping by Strap's side, took a seat unbid in a chair upon the hearth. As it did so, it commenced growing, and did not stop until it had grown to twice its original proportions. It drew from between its legs a long tail, with a hard pronged point, which Strap had not observed before, and twirled it over so that the point fell on Strap's knee. This disgusted Strap. He hastily pushed his chair away to the opposite corner of the hearth, and observed: 'Keep thy prolongation to thyself, strange visitor!'

" 'Skin for skin,' said the figure. At the same time he twirled his tail over again with such force and accurate aim that the sharp point of it stuck deeply into the mantel-piece, and there it hung fixed.

" 'What might thy name be,' said Strap, 'who visitest me at this unseemly hour? Speak! thy name and thy business!'

" 'Sir,' said the object, rising from the chair, extracting its tail from the mantel-piece, and advancing a step toward Strap, 'men

call me by many names. Thou hast called me "black imp of hell, thou Satan!" So be it. Skin for skin! Thou hast thrice challenged me to duel, and thrice have I accepted. I have come to meet thee now, or to fling thy challenge into thy teeth.'

"He seized his tail in his right hand, and held it like a javelin about to be thrust. Strap gazed upon this singular instrument, and meditatively spake: 'Good Sir Devil, take a seat. Wouldst thou attack a gentleman in his cups? None but a thief and coward would do that. Put thy prolongation away, I prithee. Leave me to my sleep and restoration, and I will meet thee man to man. Tomorrow morning at nine o'clock will I meet thee.'

"The Devil advanced again, saying: 'Give us thy hand, Strap Buckner; skin for skin: tomorrow morn at nine o'clock, under yon oaks that overlook thy dwelling from the south.' They shook hands heartily. 'Now,' said he, 'will I leave thee to sleep and restoration. Truly, he hath neither courage nor honor who would attack a gentleman in his cups.'

"The Devil then stepped toward the door. Strap moved forward to unbar it and let him out, but the Devil made a bound for the key-hole, and passed through, tail and all, in the twinkling of an eye. As he did so he filled the room with a strong odor of brimstone. The champion burned a few cotton rags to deodorize the room, and then sat quietly by his table and ate a hearty repast of hoe-cake and bacon. Afterward he walked his cabin an hour to promote digestion.

THE DAY OF EVENTS

"Day had dawned, but its light struggled almost in vain with the storm which held carnival in the valley. Strap arose refreshed and vigorous. He breakfasted on the remnants of the hoe-cake and bacon of the night's repast. The merry jug stood near, but he turned away from it with a look of reproach. Donning his garment of buckskin, he said: 'The hour arrives!' Then taking his iron limb in his right hand, the only aid he asked from art, this matchless hero stepped out into the storm, called his swift nag, and rode away to war.

"He had advanced but a few paces when the Infernal Fiend, in the form of a skinny, ugly dwarf, appeared before him, dancing a jig, but he did not make the insulting sign of derision. He bowed politely and said: 'Hail to thee, Strap Buckner! I see

that thou art a man of honor. Receive my obeisance to a man of courage! I will lead and thou wilt follow.'

"'I dare follow where the Foul Fiend leadeth,' said Strap. And both moved onward through the storm, the Fiend in advance. A white flame of lightning illuminated the valley, and when Strap looked again the Fiend had disappeared, but an enormous bull, black as night, strode before him. 'Ah,' said Strap, 'this is my old friend Noche, I perceive. How is thy frontlet, Noche? Hast thou had the screw worms picked out of thy wounds? Better betake thee to a pretty, protected nook, and eat cowslips and make calves for an honest milk-maid.' Again the blinding lightning came, and when Strap recovered his sight, Noche had departed; in his stead the Fiend in stately form marched before him.

"They had now reached the foot of the upland that looks into the vale. Silently they ascended to a cluster of noble oaks. The green sward was rich and level around them. Rather seemed it a place for fairies to dance under the moonlight than for Fiend and hero to meet in the struggle of death. Strap dismounted and, turning his gray nag loose, said to him: "Charge thyself with grass, whilst I charge myself with the Devil. Prosper my work like thine!" The gray nag wagged his bobtail, and said, 'I charge.' Without the tremor of a nerve, without air of fear or air of boast, this matchless hero confronted the Fiend. As he did so, the latter meanly commenced to grow, and ceased not to grow till he had achieved such stature that his head was a hundred and ninety feet in the air, and he was eighty feet in girth. His tail grew in correspondence, till, seizing it, he gave it a twirl, and the point struck in the bosom of a black cloud. As he had a right to do, Strap complained of this injustice. Said he: 'Foul Fiend, thou art no fair man to ask me to fight with thee on unequal terms. If thou chooseth such terms, I brand thee villainous coward.'

"The Fiend looked down from his lofty stature, and with a voice that confused all living things within a vast circumference, said: 'Put aside thy iron limb, thy mace, thy pestle, and I will accommodate me to thy size. Skin for skin!' Strap tossed his pestle aside, whereat the Fiend commenced shrinking, and ceased not to shrink till he had shrunken to Strap's size—all save his tail, which still remained hitched in the bosom of the cloud. He now took position before Strap in the attitude of a boxer, and Strap took position before him in the same attitude.

He kept his eye on Strap, and Strap kept his eye on him, either guarding against any advantage or cheat by the other. The Fiend now drew back for a pass at Strap, but just at that moment the black cloud in which his tail was hitched was rapidly passing beyond its length, and it drew the Devil backwards and upwards with great force, causing him exceeding great pain at the point of its juncture with the body. Now had Strap but used the advantage which offered itself to him, what infinite fame would be his. Instead of this, under a false sense of honor, and in the kindness of his heart, he proffered the Fiend assistance to unhitch his tail! The Devil leaped up in the air and rolled himself up in the coils of his tail till he had reached the cloud, and there, with the help of claws and hoofs and horns, succeeded at last in unhitching it. Immediately, back he sprang, and stood before Strap in the attitude of a boxer.

“The battle raged with varying fortunes all day, till the Devil grew again to monstrous size, and at last wore Strap out on the unequal terms, till the mighty champion sought quarter, crest-fallen and utterly overcome. The country for a great circuit round rang with the hideous noise of battle, and Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall and forty Indian braves stood on the bank of the river and hearkened to it, amazed. As night fell they saw a great gray horse riding through the air down the valley, with the dread form of a red monkey astride his back in front, and the form of an overpowered man dangling across him behind. The horse and riders lit on the top of yon cedar-covered mountain that looks down upon La Grange from the north, and then all disappeared in the forest. On the spot of the dread encounter no earth has ever accumulated, and no green grass or tree has ever grown there since; but it remains, and will forever remain, in black deformity.

HE RETURNS

“Three months passed, and one morn as Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall were counting their skins, they were stricken with amazement to see Strap Buckner ride up before them on his swift gray nag. He dismounted and stood before them, and they were the more amazed. And he looked distant and sad and solemn, as if he were contemplating things afar off. He spake to them not; but they fell on their faces before him, and

said: 'Mighty champion of the world, depart hence!' He said simply: 'Skin for skin!' and sadly and slowly rode away. Bob Turket and Bill Smotherall watched him depart, and counted no more skins that day.

"Three months he dwelt in his cabin, and thrice weekly he visited the trading house, where he walked about like one contemplating the dead, with a sad and distant air. He was a changed man. He would drink no whiskey, and would knock no man down. Finally, one night, a great blue flame rose far above the valley, and cast a pale, deathly light over the land. On the top of the blue flame appeared a great gray nag, and astride him sat the dread form of a red monkey, and behind the red monkey sat the form of a gigantic man waving a gigantic iron pestle, whereat the dread form of the red monkey seemed to cower. When morning arose, Strap's house was in ashes and cinders.

"*Evasit, abiit!* Since that mysterious and perhaps fatal night, he has never been seen in his proper person as in the olden time. Yet often at night when the tempest howls and the thunders roar, his form, or shadow, or image, or whatever it be, is seen to stride this valley in which we ride, on his swift bob-tail nag. When a Buckner's Creek baby cries, whether from pure perverseness or from colic, only say to him 'Strap Buckner' once, and he will forthwith scrooch up in his cradle, and you will hear no more from that baby for hours. Behold in him the titular divinity to whom all the cowboys lift up their emulation and prayers."

"I perceive, sir," said I, "that thou art a true poet, and I thank thee."

"And I perceive, sir," said he, "that thou art a true epilogue, and I thank thee. This is the road which bids me depart from thee. Farewell!"

He turned his horse and departed from me, as other friends had done before.

THE LEGEND OF CHEETWAH

BY EDITH C. LANE

[To me, this legend sounds like some naive excuse invented by the Spanish to account for their great overthrow by the Indians of the Southwest in 1680. Just as likely it is an Indian boast of that overthrow. An observation recorded by the observant Josiah Gregg in 1844 seems to me luminous

here. Gregg says that, according to tradition, numerous and productive mines were "in operation in New Mexico before the expulsion of the Spaniards in 1680; but that the Indians, seeing that the cupidity of the conquerors had been the cause of their former cruel oppressions, determined to conceal all the mines by filling them up, and obliterating as much as possible every trace of them. This was done so effectually, as is told, that after the second conquest (the Spaniards in the meantime not having turned their attention to mining pursuits for a series of years) succeeding generations were never able to discover them again. Indeed it is now generally credited by the Spanish population, that the Pueblo Indians, up to the present day, are acquainted with the *locales* of a great number of these wonderful mines, of which they most sedulously preserve the secret. Rumor further asserts that the old men and sages of the Pueblos periodically lecture the youths on this subject, warning them against discovering the mines to the Spaniards, lest the cruelties of the original conquest be renewed towards them, and they be forced to toil and suffer in those mines as in days of yore."—Gregg, Josiah, *Commerce of the Prairies*, Philadelphia, 1855, Vol. I, pp 162-163.—EDITOR.]

Upon a northwestern peak of Mount Franklin, near El Paso, there stands out against the brilliant blue of a western sky the distinct outline of an Indian's head. It is plainly visible at almost any hour of the day and is an object of wonder and speculation to the majority of beholders.

According to the legend told me many years ago by an old, old Indian, Cheetwah was the chief of an ancient tribe in New Mexico. He was accustomed to go into old Mexico every few years, and often at the point in the mountains where the Indian head now shows, he with his followers encountered hostile wanderers, whereupon followed battles short but fierce.

Finally, after about two centuries of goings and encounters, Cheetwah came upon a band of another and a strange race, the Spaniards. With much pomposity, they commanded him and his people to surrender to them all their gold and silver and then to be gone. The order so incensed Cheetwah that, climbing to the top of the peak, he sent forth a great call to all the Indians in the spirit world to rally to his assistance and rout the haughty Spaniards forever from their usurped power in Mexico.

After a battle in which the Indians seemed guided by some supernatural power, the Spaniards were vanquished. Then Cheetwah and his men vanished into the mountains, there to keep vigil through all the centuries that no alien should prosper from the mineral wealth of their land. Eventually the pale-faces came back, but it was further decreed by the Great Spirit that for all time the face of Cheetwah should remain upon the peak

whence he had issued his great call, a reminder that, though conquered outwardly for a time, the Indian shall yet come back into his own and rule the mighty country that his ancestors possessed in freedom. Thus stands Cheetwah today, aloof and majestic, biding his time.

THE MYSTERIOUS WOMAN IN BLUE

BY CHARLES H. HEIMSATH

So far as I know, the first mention of the legend of the "Blue Lady" is in the *Memorial* of Fray Alonso de Benavides, 1630. Benavides was (1621-1629) Father Custodian of the province of New Mexico, and his *Memorial* was written to present Philip IV of Spain an account of the "treasures spiritual and temporal" which that remote province contained. In the course of this highly entertaining document Benavides recounts at length, and with pious zeal, the miraculous conversion of the Jumano tribe of Indians. Benavides was at that time (probably 1629) somewhere in the upper Rio Grande valley. In this region, he states, the Jumano Indians had been demanding missionaries for "years back." Finally he granted the missionaries.

"And before they went," to quote the document literally, [we] asked the Indians to tell us the reason why they were with so much concern petitioning us for baptism, and for Religious to go and indoctrinate them. They replied that a woman like *that* one whom we had there painted—which was a picture of the Mother Luisa de Carrion—used to preach to each one of them in their own tongue, telling them that they should come and summon the Fathers to instruct and baptize them, and that they should not be slothful about it. And that the woman who preached was dressed precisely like her who was painted there; but that the face was not like that one, but that she [their visitant] was young and beautiful. And always whenever Indians came newly from those nations, looking upon the picture and comparing it among themselves, they said that the clothing was the same but the face was not, because the face of the woman who preached to them was that of a young and beautiful girl."¹

¹Benavides, Alonso de: *The Memorial of Fray Alonso de Benavides, 1630*, translated by Mrs. Edward A. Ayer; annotated by F. W. Hodge and Charles F. Lummis, R. R. Donnelley and Sons, Chicago, 1916, pp. 58-59.

Another early reference to this mysterious lady appears in a letter of Fray Damian Manzanet to Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Gongora, 1690. In it the writer goes on to say as follows:

"At that time I was living in the Mission Caldera, in the province of Coahuila, whither I had gone with the intention of seeing whether I could make investigations and obtain information about the country to the north and northeast, on account of facts gathered from a letter now in my possession, which had been given in Madrid to the Father Antonio Linaz. This letter treats of what the blessed Mother Maria de Jesus de Agreda made known to the Father Custodian of New Mexico, Fray Alonso de Benavides. And the blessed Mother tells of having been frequently to New Mexico and to the Gran Quivira, adding that eastward from the Gran Quivira are the kingdoms of the Ticlas, Theas, and Caburcol. She also says that these are not exactly the names belonging to these kingdoms, but come close to the real names. Because of this information brought by me from Spain, together with the fact of my call to the ministry for the conversion of the heathen, I had come over and dwelt in the missions of Coahuila."²

And in the same letter a little further on Manzanet recounts this incident:

"For lack of more time I shall only add what is the most noteworthy of all, namely this: While we were at the Tejas Hasinai village, after we had distributed clothing to the Indians and to the governor of the Tejas, that governor asked me for a piece of blue baize in which to bury his mother when she died; I told him that cloth would be more suitable, and he answered that he did not want any other color than blue. I then asked him what mysterious reason he had for preferring the blue color, and in reply he said they were very fond of that color, particularly for burial clothes, because in times past they had been visited frequently by a beautiful woman, who used to come down from the hills, dressed in blue garments, and that they wished to do as that woman had done. On my asking whether that had been long since, the governor said that it had been before his time, but his mother, who was aged, had seen that woman, as had also other old people. From this it is easily to be seen that they referred to the Madre Maria de Jesus de Agreda, who was frequently in those regions, as she herself acknowledged to the Father Custodian of New Mexico, her last visit being in 1631, the last fact being evident from her own statement, made to the Father Custodian of New Mexico."³

²Casis, Lilia M.: "Letter of Fray Damian Manzanet to Don Carlos de Sigüenza Relative to the Discovery of the Bay of Espíritu Santo," *Texas State Historical Association Quarterly*, II, pp. 282-283.

³Casis, *ibid.*, pp. 311-312.

It appears, therefore, that after the publication of his *Memorial* in 1630, Benavides visited Maria de Jesus de Agreda. She was already famous because of the publication of her *La Mistica de Dios Historia Divina de la Virgin, Madre de Dios* in 1627,⁴ in which she recounts, among other preposterous things, what happened to the Virgin while she was in the womb. The mind of this woman, therefore, filled with the most extravagant fancies, was fertile for the story of Benavides. She immediately assumed the identity of the unknown female missionary; and, in the course of the visit, which lasted probably two weeks, elaborated fully the exact method of the holy visitations. Benavides with his charming medieval mind readily accepted her story. Because of the prominence of the two, and because of the universal interest in the New World, it obtained rapid and wide circulation and credence.

The story must have reached America quickly. Manzanet, in the above quotations, speaks of it as being in general circulation thirty years later. That it spread is also indicated by the fact that De Leon in a letter, May, 1689, accounts for the religious knowledge of the Texas (or Tejas) Indians through the ministrations of a woman. The following extract from his letter reveals the fact that he was not so well acquainted with the Benavides account as Manzanet had been:

"They [the Texas] are very familiar with the fact that there is only one true God, that he is in Heaven, and that he was born of the Holy Virgin. They perform many Christian rites, and the Indian Governor asked me for missionaries to instruct them, saying that many years ago a woman went inland to instruct them, but that she has not been there for a long time; and certainly it is a pity that people so rational, who plant crops and know there is a God, should have no one to teach them the Gospel, especially when the province of Texas is so large and so fertile and has so fine a climate."⁵

And Shea asserts that "the Franciscan writers all from this time [when Benavides published his account] speak of this marvelous conversion of the Xumanos by her instrumentality as a settled

⁴A copy at St. John's College, Fordham, New York.

⁵"Carta en que se da noticia de un viaje hecho a la bahía de Espíritu Santo, y de la población que tenían ahí los franceses." In Buckingham Smith, *Documentos para la historia de la Florida*.

fact.”⁶ The legend must have had wide acceptance in the Southwest in the last half of the seventeenth century. Among the important historians who take account of it are Bolton, Chapman, and Hodge. Bolton calls the story a “classic in the lore of the Southwest”;⁷ Chapman refers to Maria Agreda as “the celebrated ‘Blue Lady’ of the American Southwest”;⁸ and Hodge as editor of the translation of the Benavides *Memorial* gives a full account of the story in his excellent notes.⁹

So far as I know, the identity of the Blue Lady has been accounted for by no one except Benavides. What is the real basis of the story? Could there actually have been a female missionary who labored in the wilds of New Mexico and Texas before the coming of the Fathers? Or was there some young priest whom zeal led into that romantic region ahead of the most daring, and whom the natives mistook for a beautiful woman because of his youthful face and priestly robes? I wish I could answer.

THE HEADLESS SQUATTER

BY JOHN R. CRADDOCK

A little to the right of where the old “Kenzie” Trail winds around the head of Presslar’s Draw, on the — C Ranch in Dickens County, Texas, stands a lone cottonwood tree that has for many years been a landmark. Just below the tree, one of the most beautiful springs of the western country empties out, and a short

⁶Shea, John Gilmary: *The Catholic Church in Colonial Days*, New York, 1886, p. 197. Vol. I of *A History of the Catholic Church Within the United States*, 4 vols.

⁷Bolton, H. E., *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XVI, No. 1, July, 1912, pp. 8-9.

⁸Chapman, Charles E., *The Founding of Spanish California*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, p. 333, footnote.

⁹Hodge also recounts the legend in his “Bibliography of Fray Alonso de Benavides,” *Indian Notes and Monographs*, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 11-13.

[In addition to the references given by Mr. Heimsath, the following may be added. The story is told in the *History of San Antonio and Early Days in Texas*, compiled by Robert Sturmberg, and published by St. Joseph’s Society, San Antonio, 1920, Chapter IV. The legend is discussed in “Ven. Maria Jesus de Agreda: A Correction,” by Edmond J. P. Schmitt, *Texas State Historical Association Quarterly*, Vol. I, 121-124; also in a note by M. M. Kenney, *ibid.*, I, 226-227.—EDITOR.]

distance from the bank are the remains of a dugout—once the home of the first settlers in the country. By some miracle, the spring and the land immediately about it have escaped the ravages of progress and are as wild today as they were when the McKenzie Trail was dusty with travel. Only now, so the people say, the grass grown trail near by, with its rain-washed ruts cut deep, and the ruins of the long ago abandoned dugout, with broken bits of domestic utensils still strewn about, have become the habitation of phantoms—the haunt and the haunted.

Years ago, Ben ————— and Burl ————— squatted here and made what they called the Cottonwood Claim. They were firm friends and shared alike the joys and hardships of frontier life. Travelers came but seldom, and in their lonely seclusion the two men came to know each other and to depend on each other for human understanding as few brothers ever know or understand one another. When the cottonwood Burl had planted reached a height of some twelve feet, the country began to settle and land values to soar. Ben wanted to hold the claim, while Burl wished to sell out and return to the East. Their differences developed into a dispute that ended in a tragedy.

The dispute came to the point that neither of the men spoke to the other. For weeks they lived in sullen silence, wrath and hatred damming up for some terrible outbreak. It came one evening when Burl was digging out a grub with his spade. Ben was standing by, the ax that he had been chopping with in hand. Suddenly, while Burl was bent over almost to the ground, Ben swung the ax with a great choking cry and curse and at one blow cut his head off. Then he buried the body under a small cliff not far from the spring.

A few months afterward Ben became crazy, driven, it is said, into insanity by the ghost of his dead partner, which was constantly appearing before him as natural as in life—except headless. Of nights as Ben sat by his fire the ghost of his partner would steal in and take the vacant chair. As soon as he had done with supper and had sat down, Ben could hear a horse coming up the trail; he could hear the creaking of the saddle; he could hear the whir of the spurs as the ghost came in from the darkness; and then seated in his old chair, it mattered not whether the room was lighted or in darkness, would appear the murdered squatter. Sometimes when Ben was riding far out on distant ranges he would suddenly hear the galloping of a horse, and there alongside

him would be coming the same apparition, headless, always headless.

Thus hounded, Ben finally told the story of his deed to a sheriff. But he had already acquired the reputation for being "cracked" and the sheriff paid no attention to him. Then one day a rider found the bloated body of Ben hanging from a limb of the cottonwood. Beyond all doubt he had killed himself.

The folk of the country still tell this tale, and they say that at night the phantoms can be seen crossing the old Trail or stealing about the dugout. Some say that they have heard the cry of "O-O-O, Ben" come as from far away and then a cry of despair answer back from the cottonwood tree.

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC IN THE SAN BERNARD RIVER

BY BERTHA MCKEE DOBIE

[Material for this compilation, with the exception of Mr. Morris' accounts published in the Freeport *Facts* and Mrs. West's folk tales, was supplied through the Editor.]

The mysterious music in the San Bernard River at Music Bend in Brazoria County is not so haunting as the siren strains against which Ulysses waxed his ears or as the luring song of the Lorelei. But perhaps all that it lacks is its Homer or its Heine. This Texas music, if less enchanting, is less deceptive. It draws no one on to his destruction. The legend of the San Bernard is widely known and, like all truly popular legends, as yet unfixed by a master's using, has many forms.

The account most expressive of the folk that has come to my notice is that supplied by Mrs. West of Velasco. This account is chiefly concerned with the character of the music and with the apparitions that appeared to Mrs. West's mother and brother. According to Mrs. West, the music never plays for those who laugh at it or doubt it, but those who row out over Music Bend with an open mind may hear music sweeter than any played with hands. It sounds, she says, like the music of violins. Sometimes it is preceded by a very dreadful noise, resembling the sounds made by a steer which, having been knocked in the head, falls, kicking and beating the ground and bellowing in pain. After the noise has passed, the violins begin to play. Mrs. West

is the only one of my authorities who mentions the dreadful noise. Mr. Eugene Wilson, Jr., writes in "Mysterious Music on the San Bernard," *The Gulf Messenger*, Volume VII, December, 1894: "It has been likened to a number of musical instruments, by a few to the soft, sweet notes of the Aeolian harp." This last is the sound most frequently heard by Mr. J. W. Morris of Freeport, though he also mentions the violin, the flute, and the human voice.

There is equal variation, indeed contradiction, in accounts of the time when the music may be heard. Mrs. West, who grew up on the San Bernard, says that the music may be heard by day or by night, though not continuously or regularly even by those who "believe in it." This testimony is corroborated by Mr. F. D. Letts, an abstract of whose article, published years ago in the *Galveston Daily News*, has been supplied by Mr. E. G. Littlejohn. Mr. Wilson, in the article referred to above, states that it is audible at night only, and can be heard most distinctly when the moon is full. Miss Lorene Cook, who lived for a time at the mouth of the river, limits the music strictly to the time of the full moon, between the hours of twelve and one. Mr. Morris, in three separate accounts, published in the *Freeport Facts*, 1922, records impressions of the music at night, but does not expressly state that it cannot be heard during the day.

One point of interest, to which several auditors testify, is the permeating quality of the music. Some of them, in attempting to describe this quality, fall back upon other senses than hearing. Mrs. West says that she could almost see the sound, which began softly, as if at an elevation, and slowly came down to the boat. Miss Cook reports that the sound was "so close at times that I felt as if I could touch it with my hands." Mr. Wilson's article contains this sentence: "On first coming within its limits, one can easily perceive that it proceeds from under the water, but in a short while it is impossible to locate it, as it gets under the seats, in the bow and in all parts of the boat, overhead and around; in fact, it seems to pervade the atmosphere."

I have heard of no apparitions in connection with the music except those seen by Mrs. West's mother and brother. However, as they illustrate very well the workings of folk imagination, I record them here. Mrs. West's mother, Mrs. Mary Ducroz, was one of a considerable party rowing at midnight on the river. Just as the boat drew over Music Bend she saw a man, with a

bridle over his arm, come down to the water, turn, and go back into the woods. She could see only the upper part of his body. He seemed not to walk but to glide. He was not visible to any other member of the party, though Mrs. Ducroz tried very hard to make the others see him. She is quite certain about having seen him herself, as the moon was very bright. At another time Mrs. West's brother, then a boy of fourteen years, was riding horseback at night when he saw before him a man and a woman sitting in the middle of the road. They did not seem to see at all a very large ant bed just in front of them. The boy had seen the ant bed many times in passing along the same road. Now he saw the most beautiful horse he had ever seen, dappled gray, tied with an extremely large and knotted rope to a tree at the side of the road. The horse evidently belonged to the man and woman who were sitting in the middle of the public way. The boy urged his horse forward, but the horse refused to go. Then the boy remembered that he was just above the ghostly Music Bend, and turned his horse about.

To Mrs. West I am also indebted for a relation of the effect of the music upon some of those who have heard it. When she was a child, an old gentleman boarded for a time at her father's house. The old gentleman used to row out over the Bend day after day on the chance of hearing the music, and return at night to tell his hosts that surely they imagined the music. They knew that they did not imagine the music, but thought that perhaps the old gentleman could not hear it, as it is not given to all to hear such ghostly music. One evening, however, he came back in terror. Suddenly, as his boat was over the Bend, he had begun to tremble as if in a chill, and his hat seemed to rise from his head. At once he had begun to hear the sweetest and most terrible music that ever he had heard. He never wished to hear it again. In 1920—Mrs. West is again my informant—two girls were drowned in the San Bernard; and when the searchers told of finding the bodies, they told also of hearing the most beautiful funeral music that ever they had heard. But it was music that they hoped never to hear again.

The real legend of the music is the story of its origin. The several versions have only one point of identity: that a fiddler who played on the bank in life plays on in the waters in death; and in one version the fiddler played from a boat. One common story is that two men who froze to death beneath a tree at Music Bend

were fiddlers. As Miss Lorene Cook has heard the tale, an old hermit fiddler was murdered by pirates who sought refuge in the San Bernard River during a storm. Mr. Wilson's account explains: "The negroes really believe it to be a ghost. They say that many years ago, on a dark and stormy night . . . a sloop with two sailors aboard . . . was forced to seek shelter in the San Bernard; that one of the sailors was a fiddler, and that as soon as the winds began to lay, he began to fiddle for joy; that his mate, desiring to sleep, was so enraged that he attempted to stop him by force, and that in the scuffle the fiddler fell overboard and was drowned; that the other sailor, while angry, threw the fiddle and bow into the river; and that on that very night the ghost of the dead sailor played so touchingly that the living mate could not sleep, and that every night since then it has played the same tune, again and again."

In most of the stories the musician lived alone at the Bend. The most romantic of them is that retold by Mr. J. W. Morris in the Freeport *Facts* with certain variations. "In life the musician lost his fiancée a few hours before they were to have been married. She walked to the river to pluck a white water-lily to braid in her shining hair for the marriage, but as she reached for the flower, a snake head sprang forth and bit her on her white neck and she fell dead in the water." The musician then threw himself, with his violin, into the river. According to another account of Mr. Morris' the lover moved to a small island in the stream, and there lived. At his death his violin and bow were buried with him, and still he plays strange, sweet music.

Another version of the love legend has been contributed by Miss Sarah S. King of San Antonio, who heard the story from Miss Arline Rather. In it the maiden was accustomed to go to the stream each evening for water, and there to meet her lover. One day an arrow struck her down. Her lover, approaching, called and played his liveliest tunes, and then found her dead in the waist-high ferns. As in the preceding account, the musician then flung his violin and himself into the river.

The version supplied by Mr. E. G. Littlejohn has considerable circumstantial detail. According to this account, the young hermit, son of a wealthy Eastern gentleman, had been jilted in a love affair, and had come to the lonely hut on the San Bernard in hope of forgetting his grief. This was long before Texas gained her independence. The young gentleman was a violinist

of so much repute that the officers of a military post in Central Texas sent two troopers to engage his services for a ball. They found the violinist lying dead upon the floor, and near him an ax covered with congealed blood. His murderer had taken from the shack everything of value, even wearing apparel, except the violin, which hung still in its accustomed place on the wall. The troopers buried the body under an oak tree, and took the violin and private papers to the commanding officer of the fort. But on a spirit violin the young hermit has played for a century.

THE DEATH BELL OF THE BRAZOS

BY BERTHA MCKEE DOBIE

[More than one early Texan was concerned with slave-running. Yoakum¹ says that the three Bowies, Rezin, James, and John, made sixty-five thousand dollars in this trade. Fannin also ran slaves, operating from Cuba to Texas under the name of J. F. Walker. With him, as with others, the Brazos was a port of entry. Writing from "Velasco, Rio Brazos, Prov. Texas, Aug. 27, 1835," he says: "My last voyage from the island of Cuba (with 152) succeeded admirably."² On May 26, 1837, it was reported from New Orleans to the British minister, Pakenham, that "some slaves were brought from Cuba and landed in Texas by the Am. Schooners Waterwich and Emperor. A some few Months ago a Cargo was run at the Brazos River by a Vessel under the Texas Colors."³ Until a few years ago the ruins of a house near Velasco were pointed out as marking the habitation of a man whose business had been the buying and distributing of smuggled slaves.

Charles D. Hudgins, a lawyer who grew up near the mouth of the Brazos, says in his book of poems called *The Maid of San Jacinto*: "It is said that shortly after Texas obtained her independence, a ship loaded with slaves from Africa was chased into the Brazos by a United States man of war; that she had a number of sick negroes on board; that the well negroes were landed and hurried through the woods, while the sick ones were weighed down with chains and thrown into the river."⁴

However, Mr. Hudgins does not connect the "mysterious music" of the Brazos with the slave ship, though such a connection is common in the vicinity. He continues: "Three miles above the mouth of the Brazos River

¹Yoakum, *History of Texas*, I, 184.

²Lubbock, Francis Richard, *Six Decades in Texas* (edited by Raines), Austin, 1900, p. 32.

³*British Diplomatic Correspondence Concerning the Republic of Texas*, edited by Ephraim Douglass Adams, Austin, "Crawford to Pakenham," p. 13.

⁴Hudgins, Charles D., *The Maid of San Jacinto*, New York, 1900, pp. 12-13, footnotes.

is what is known as the haunted Labore. Twain causes conspire to give rise to the superstition among the ignorant with regard to this spot. The first is a grave near the bank of the stream; the second is a peculiar humming noise, that can be heard there on still summer nights—this noise is soft, like the notes of an Aeolian harp, and superstition, coupling it with the grave, has woven many a tale of the haunted Labore.”⁴—EDITOR.]

This legend is set down in the words of Mrs. A. F. Shannon of Velasco.

“This is the account I heard as a child of the music in the Brazos. About 1836 or 1838 Texas passed a law forbidding the bringing of slaves from Africa. But boats, slave runners they were called, used to come from Africa to Cuba and wait there until they thought they could slip across the Gulf. One of these ships with three hundred slaves nailed down into the hold—they brought them over like freight—put into the Brazos. But before it could reach the safety of the timber, it was followed by—I don’t know exactly what it was, whether it was a revenue cutter or what, but anyway a government boat. This boat gained on the slave ship, and seeing that they were lost, the crew of the slave ship scuttled it, and it went down with its three hundred negroes in the hold, at Seaview Bend, about four miles from Quintana.

“When I was a child we could hear every evening at sunset the ringing of a great bell. Very plain it was. The negroes called it ‘the death bell.’ Mammy Kitty had stayed on with my grandmother after the Civil War, and when I was a child was about eighty or ninety years old and always sat in the ‘chimley corner.’ Every day when the bell tolled at sunset I would run to Mammy Kitty and put my head in her lap. She would run her hands over my head and croon until the bell stopped. The other negroes whispered ‘the death bell,’ and stood still while it rang. They thought the bell was ringing for the three hundred negroes in the scuttled ship. And then whenever we passed over Seaview Bend we could hear faint music like that of a guitar played at a distance. Since the jetties have been built and there has been so much traffic on the river, the music has gone away, and I have seen no one who has heard it of late years. I know now that ‘the death bell’ must have been the sunset bell of a big sugar plantation ten or twelve miles up the river. The water carried the sound down. But I still hear the death bell ringing in my ears and feel Mammy Kitty’s hand passing over my head.”

THE LEGEND OF THE SALT MARSHES (SAN LUIS PASS,
BRAZORIA COUNTY)

BY BERTHA MCKEE DOBIE

This legend was told me by Mrs. A. F. Shannon of Velasco. San Luis Pass is the narrow entrance from the Gulf into a small and sheltered bay on the Texas coast. It is a wild and mournful spot, where sea gulls scream and breakers roar. It is especially wild and mournful when the wind is east, as the few settlers say. Then three great billows roll in successively from the Gulf, overtake each other on the bar, and break together with the sound of thunder. This breaking together of the billows is called the boor¹ on the bar.

A great many years ago a fisherman lived with his wife and young child at the Pass. One day when the wind was east and the boor was on the bar, he went out in his boat to fish. The wind blew stronger, the billows rose higher, and a great tide came in, flooding the salt marshes that border the Pass. The fisherman did not return. A few days later other fishermen found the young wife, quite demented, wandering in the salt marshes and calling, "Come back! Come back!" Since that time, when the wind is east and the boor is on the bar, the white form of the woman flits over the marshes and cries, "Come back! Come back!" in warning to fishermen whose boats are on the water.

It is probable that the white wings and the hoarse cries of the giant gulls that come in to the marshes only when there is a high east wind and the lives of fishermen are threatened have given rise to this legend of the salt marshes. Such an explanation, at least, was suggested to Mrs. Shannon by Mr. Lon Follet.

RHYMES OF GALVESTON BAY

BY JOHN P. SJOLANDER

Years ago, when I used to run vessels on Galveston Bay and along the coast, I gathered up some stories told by old boatmen

¹An old corruption of *bore*.—Editor.

on nights when we lay wind-bound. Later I put them into rhyme and I may have tried to ornament them with some phrases of my own. Some of the "Rhymes" were published in the *Galveston News*, 1910, and later came out in the *Texas Magazine* (Houston).

THE BOAT THAT NEVER SAILED

(NOTE: In the early 70's the hull of a boat, all overgrown with vines and briars, was found at a place then known as Hungry Cove, on San Jacinto Bay. The story of it was told me by an old boatman who had been a settler of that section of the country for many years.)

Like the moan of a ghost that is doomed to rove,
Is the voice of the wind in Hungry Cove.

And the brier bites with a sharper thorn
Than the fang of hate, or the tooth of scorn.

And the twining vines are as cunningly set
As ever a poacher placed snare or net.

And the waves are hushed, and they move as slow
As fugitives making headway, tiptoe.

For Nature remembers, as well as Man,
The time and the place, and the Mary Ann.

The time, man-measured, was long ago,
Some seventy fleeting years, or so.

The place, where the sea was with light agleam,
And the shore shone white as a maiden's dream.

And the Mary Ann—how a prayer prevailed!—
Was the name of the boat that never sailed.

For the men who built it, a blackguard twain,
Had taken a maiden's pure name in vain.

And she prayed that for taunts, and for many mocks,
The boat would not move from its building blocks.

But the builders laughed at the maiden's prayer,
And spit on her name they had painted there.

And they swore, in defiance of God and man,
They would launch the boat they had named Mary Ann.

But when they stood ready at stern and stem,
The boat fell down on the heads of them.

And no one came to where crushed they lay,
And no one will come until judgment day.

For their guards are briars with thorns that bite
With a pain as keen as the sting of spite.

And their only dirge is the song of the loon,
When the sea is black, in the dark of the moon.

THE PADRE'S BEACON¹

(NOTE: Boatmen, at night, staring into the fog and haze in search of certain marks and objects, often think to see them, only to have them disappear again when they blink their eyes. These visual illusions are called Padre's Beacons. An old boatman, many years ago, told how the name originated, and his story is here set down in rhyme.)

With eager eyes an Indian peered
Into the darkness of the night,
And his canoe he swiftly sheered
From right to left, from left to right;
For lost within the blinding fog,
He saw the mad waves roll and toss,
And found both snag and sunken log
But not the Padre's beacon cross.

He dipped his paddle in the sea,
And found its depth now less, now more;
And where he thought the Pass would be
He only found a weedstrewn shore.
He questioned of the hidden star,
And counseled with the waning moon,
But found no answer, near or far,
Only the lone cry of the loon.

And he had steered by wave and wind
To where the beacon cross should be,
That marked the place where all might find
The way into the Trinity.
For there, 'mong cypress trees grown gray,
The padre's little hut showed white,
Beneath a shining cross by day,
And in a taper's gleam by night.

But vandal hands had cut adrift
The padre's beacon in the night,
And without prayer, and without shrift,
A sea wrecked soul at dawn took flight.
And now who sails the bay at night,
And scans the dark with eager eyes,
Out of the sea, grown gray with light,
Can see a beacon cross arise.

For since that night long, long ago,
When clouds hang wide and fogs lie deep,
For him that laid that beacon low
There is no rest in death, or sleep;
All night he lifts it from the sea,
All night he strives, and strives in vain;
He stands it up, but when set free
It sinks into the sea again.

¹Cf. Southey's "The Inchcape Rock."—Editor.

BAFFLE POINT

(Baffle Point is on the north side of Bolivar peninsula, in what is known as East Bay. Many small sail-boats have been dismasted and upset in the vicinity of this point.)

A boatman loved a maiden, long ago,
And good and fair was she;
A maiden loved a boatman, even so,
And strong and true was he;
And one dark night the lovers sailed away
To where the good priest dwelt, across the bay.

A father's heart grew fierce with raging hate,
And cruel as could be;
But he would plan and work, and work and wait—
A cunning man was he;
He swore that boatmen all, excepting none,
Should penance pay for the sin of one.

He planned and worked, and then he worked and planned,
Not idle night or day;
Sentinel sandhills raised he on the strand
In some mysterious way;
On sloping hills he planted phantom trees
That changed their shapes with every changing breeze.

Now when the south wind, singing, came inshore,
As gentle as could be,
For it he opened wide a cavern door
That none but him could see;
And then the trees would groan, and cringe, and sway,
Casting long shadows over shore and bay.

When the work was done as he had planned,
He laughed and danced in glee;
Then as the waters of the bay he scanned,
A boat his eyes did see;
And then the south wind in the cavern pent
Over the hills down to the sea he sent.

When he saw the wind in madness reel,
And strike the little boat,
And how down went the mast and up the keel,
A glad cry left his throat.
The waters grew quiet and dull as a sea of lead;
A man and woman at his feet lay dead.

By them, some boatmen found him, long ago,
As dead as he could be;
Deep, deep, they dug two graves, and all arow
At night they buried three.
Since then the winds are ever out of joint,
And play strange tricks and pranks at Baffle Point.

POINT SESENTA

(NOTE: All that is left of Point Sesenta—presumably so called from the sixty (*sesenta*) trees—is a reef known as Fisher's Reef, on the north shore of Trinity Bay. The story of the Point was told to me by Captain James Armstrong, just as it had been told to him by an old Indian chief whose tribe used to visit the bay shore many, many years before the Republic.)

The mocking birds sang in the sixty trees,
And Inez walked in their shadow;
The soft winds came laughing from southern seas,
And the bay seemed a green-waved meadow;
But a wealth of song, and of wind and water,
Requites not the love of an Indio's daughter.

Don Miguel's pastures lay far and wide,
His herds by peons were tended,
But all he possessed was as naught beside
Fair Inez so young and splendid.
Still his heart was sore, for the winds kept saying:
"The trees sesenta are graying, graying."

Inez the fair walked 'neath the moss-grown trees,
By the side of her gray-grown lover;
And oft times she dreamed that o'er many seas
He had come like a brave young rover;
But when for sight of him her dark eyes gleamed
They met dim eyes in a face deep seamed.

Then out of the north came a viking ship,
With a viking young and brawny;
A snare for love was his tender grip,
And a net were his locks so tawny.
Wherever man goes over hill and hollow,
There a woman loving him dares to follow.

Ah, that is the tale told in every zone,
A story told over and over.
Don Miguel one morning found Inez flown,
And the ship, and the bold young rover.
And the winds were hushed, and the trees unshaken,
And the birds had fled, their nests forsaken.

The boatmen passing beheld the trees,
Saw how they all were dying;
The winds grew fierce and angered the seas,
And the flurrying sands went flying,
Until Point Sesenta was quite departed,
And left but a name and a place uncharted.

GUMMAN GRO

(NOTE: Gumman Gro is phonetic Swedish for "The Woman Gray." Skell, master of Sweet Cecilia, was a Swede; he and his boat disappeared from Galveston Bay one night and were never heard of again.)

They said that Gumman Gro had a great store
Of private treasure hid in Lone Tree Cove;
That she with cunning eyes watched sea and shore,
And that a curse was upon all who strove,
Always in vain, to cross the line afar
That she had marked outside of shoal and bar.

And it was said that many who had rushed
Upon the Cove with favoring wind and tide,
Had come away with heart and spirit crushed,
Bereft of courage and of manly pride,
To live their lives perpetual exiles,
Beyond the reach of cheering songs and smiles.

And so the boatmen, sailing up and down,
From Lone Tree Cove would sheer their boats away;
For on the shore a small hut loomed up brown,
And in the doorway stood a woman gray;
Whence she had come, or when, none seemed to know,
But Skell, the boatman, named her Gumman Gro.

And Skell would laugh the hearty laugh that springs
Straight from the hearts of men when young and strong,
While with a merry jest at men and things
He sailed his course, and hummed a seaman's song;
Oft in passing Lone Tree Cove he'd sheer
His boat more close, and shout a word of cheer.

Then one dark night a storm swept o'er the bay,
And the mosquito fleet was scattered wide;
And many men and boats until this day
Have not returned to watch for wind and tide;
And 'mong the missing ones that all loved well,
Was Sweet Cecilia, and her master, Skell.

Often on nights when winds and tides are fair,
On nights of calm, when God's stars search the deep,
Sounds from afar, like multitudes in prayer,
Across the waters to lone boatmen creep,
And then they see the dead sail to and fro,
But none knows whence they come, or where they go.

After the storm, when winds came from the west
On nights like these, Skell's ghost from Lone Tree Cove
Set sail, so seamen saw; then on Skell pressed
To shun the shoals; straight out for the deep he drove,
But just so far he came, and then he stopped,
As if an anchor sternward had been dropped.

Then from the shore a cry, half laugh, half pain,
Mocking and pleading, rose, and dipped, and fell,
Stirring the waters like a shower of rain,
While Sweet Cecilia, and her master, Skell,
A moment wavered like a light wind blown,
Then flashed across the darkness and were gone.

Thus every night, when out of sunset land
The warm winds came and drowsed upon the bay,
Skell and his Sweet Cecilia left the strand,
And sailed and sailed as if to sail away;
And every night that cry, half laugh, half pain,
Would pleading come and call him back again.

This is the tale that old-time boatmen told,
One to the other, long, long years ago;
But not the greediest for shining gold
Would risk the fearful curse of Gumman Gro—
He'd hope, at last, whatever else befell,
Death would not land him where it landed Skell.

LEGENDS OF LOVERS

LEGENDS OF LOVERS

Legends of lovers are almost as numerous as those of treasure; in Texas, at least, the lovers are generally hapless and are nearly always associated with precipitous cliffs. Indeed, legends of lovers' leaps principally make up this group. Some well known legends, such as those about the Lovers' Leap at Waco and about the Lovers' Leap at Denison, have been omitted. Reference to them is made in the bibliography near the end of this volume. On the other hand, various versions of certain other legends of lovers' leaps are given in detail that the manner of legend growth may be fully illustrated. The lovers' leap legend was popular in the time of Sappho (see Spectator paper Number 33, by Addison), and probably had vogue for as many years before her time as have passed since. A feature to be remarked about the lovers' leap legends of Texas is that seemingly all of them purport to be of Indian derivation. The state is yet so young that to go back to anything like remoteness one must go to the time of the Indian—and all legend runs to remoteness. One need not be learned in Indian lore, however, to know that in many instances the basic customs of Indian marriage are violated in these legends; the attributing of his own customs of love-making and marriage by the white man to the Indian is indeed naive.¹ As a class, I should say that of all our Texas legends these of lovers are least indigenous and least varied.—J. F. D.

THE ENCHANTED ROCK IN LLANO COUNTY

BY JULIA ESTILL

[The fame of the Enchanted Rock in Llano County, as Miss Estill has pointed out, goes back a long time. There are various references to it in Texasana, as the bibliography will show; but it is noteworthy that none of the early accounts of the Enchanted Rock even so much as refer to the legend of the lovers, the details of which are very similar to those in the most popular version of the legend of Mount Bonnell. However, in more

¹An adequate treatment, in a brief space, of the marriage customs of the Plains Indians is to be found in Chapter II of *North American Indians of the Plains*, by Clark Wissler, published by the American Museum of Natural History. The volume includes a good bibliography of works on Indian life.

recent years the lover legend seems to have had a wide vogue. It has appeared in print various times, once in the form of a German novel, *Die Tochter Tehuans*, printed at Fredericksburg, and my correspondence files indicate an extensive popularity of the legend. The Indians no doubt had an awe for the mountain that they expressed in narrative detail; the early Texans heard these accounts; then the descendants of those early Texans invented a story in which the Spaniard played a part to fit the legendary atmosphere of the mountain. Thus should I account for the genesis of the legend that is now told.

Writing from "Colorado River, Texas," October 31, 1834, W. B. Dewees tells of what must be the Enchanted Rock of the Llano. He says: "A short time since, a few of our young men started to go up to the headwaters of the Colorado and Brazos rivers to examine a large rock of metal which has for many years been considered a wonder. It is supposed to be platinum. The Indians have held it sacred for centuries, and go there once a year to worship it. They will not permit any white person to approach it. It is almost impossible to make any impression on it with chisel and hammers. When struck it gives forth a ringing sound which can be heard miles around. The party were successful in finding the rock, but were unable to break off any specimens to bring home." Dewees, W. B., *Letters from an Early Settler of Texas*, Louisville, Kentucky, 1852, p. 152. (Mr. E. G. Littlejohn contributes this reference.)

Doctor Alex. Dienst of Temple, Texas, sends in an item copied from the New York *Mirror* of October 20, 1838, in which a traveler, lately returned to New York from a prospecting tour in the San Saba country, tells of having found an "Enchanted" or "Holy Mountain" on the upper waters of the Sandy—beyond all doubt the Enchanted Rock of other accounts. The traveler reports that "the Comanches regard this hill with religious veneration, and that Indian pilgrims frequently assemble from the remotest borders of the the region to perform the Paynim rites upon its summit."

Samuel C. Reid, Jr., in a book published in 1848, *The Scouting Expeditions of McCulloch's Texas Rangers*, pages 111-112, says, in connection with a scouting trip that Captain Jack Hays had made into the then unsettled vicinity of the Enchanted Rock:

"We are unable to give to the reader the traditionary cause why this place was so named, but nevertheless, the Indians had a great awe, amounting almost to reverence, for it, and would tell many legendary tales connected with it and the fate of a few brave warriors, the last of a tribe now extinct, who defended themselves there for many years as in a strong castle, against the attacks of their hostile brethren. But they were finally overcome and totally annihilated, and ever since, the 'Enchanted Rock' has been looked upon as the exclusive property of these phantom warriors. This is one of the many tales which the Indians tell concerning it."

Reid goes on to tell that at one time Hays saved himself from such a tight place in a fight with the Indians near the Enchanted Rock that they became more convinced than ever that "Devil Jack" bore a charmed life.—EDITOR.]

In the southwestern part of Llano County, very near the Gillespie County line, lies a huge mound of solid granite covering 640 acres and known far and wide as the Enchanted Rock. At

night spirit fires dance on the summit, and by day millions of isinglass stars glint in the sunlight. During an early morning shower in the hills, when the sun shines out from under the passing cloud, the streams of water coursing down the sides of the massive boulder resemble sheets of molten silver. Then above the gigantic dome there forms a rainbow-path which will lead the seeker directly to a mine of gold, so the old legend goes. In fact, the sands of the sluggish stream winding lazily around the base of the rock testify of gold in the vicinity. And the oldest pioneer in the neighborhood will tell you that there is a lost mine somewhere near the rock, the shaft having been sunk by Spaniards in the eighteenth century.

The Indian legends woven about the enchanted mound are, however, far more interesting to the folk-lorist than is the story of a fabulous mine. My great-grandfather, Thomas A. Likens, who was first lieutenant of Captain Highsmith's Company of Texas Rangers when, in 1847, they camped near the Enchanted Rock, told my grandfather, William H. Estill, of the remarkable veneration the Comanches had for the Rock, and of the awesome fear they manifested when at night the spirit fires danced aloft on it. The daring ranger always knew that if he could induce his sure-footed pony to climb the Rock, horse and rider would be safe from the pursuing savage, for the Comanche would not follow, nor would he direct an arrow toward the white man who sought the protection of the Spirit of the Rock.

At the foot of the enormous boulder the Indians offered sacrifices—sometimes a beautiful captive snatched from the white man's clearing at the edge of the woods. Then, for months, perhaps, the Spirit of the Rock would smile on the savage tribe, and success would attend their raids down the river valleys to the south.

On one such expedition, according to the story told by Father Hörmann,¹ a priest at one of the missions near San Antonio, the marauders ventured farther than usual and were within attacking distance of Mission San José, near San Antonio, when José Navarro, commander of the mission, learned of their designs. Forthwith, preparations for the defense of the mission were begun, Don Hesu Navarro, a recent arrival from Spain and a bold soldier of fortune, aiding enthusiastically in strengthening the defenses.

¹Author of *Die Tochter Tehuans*.—Editor.

Now, within the mission lived the Indian chief Tehuan and his beautiful daughter, christened Rosa by the good fathers of the mission. The dashing young Spaniard fell desperately in love with the pretty dark-skinned maid, and succeeded in winning her love in return. Soon, though, came a desperate separation. In the attack by the Comanches that had been expected, Don Hesu fell by an Indian tomahawk and pretty Rosa was carried away by the alien savages. Fortunately, however, the young Spaniard had received merely a stunning blow, and, after a time, revived and dragged himself back within the mission walls, only to find his beloved gone. From an Indian boy, the distracted lover learned that Rosa was being taken away to the Enchanted Rock to be offered as a sacrifice to the Spirit of the Rock.

Realizing the futility of a single-handed combat with the fleeing Indians, Don Hesu hastened to Goliad for aid, and, together with a daring band of Spaniards and Texas colonists, started in pursuit of the Comanches. Upon discovering the camping place of the savages, the impetuous Spaniard proposed an immediate attack; but the remainder of the party, who were better versed in Indian ways and beliefs, persuaded Don Hesu that a better way would be to play upon the superstitious beliefs of the savages. Accordingly, the party secretly harassed the Indians by stampeding their horses and assaulting their guards in the dark. And the red men, believing that the spirits were incensed by the recent attack upon the mission, mounted their mustangs, and, with the captive maid safe in their midst, galloped away to the hills, where they intended to offer to the Spirit of the Enchanted Rock the fair prize they had won at San José.

The pursuers followed as best they might. However, when they reached the gulch between the Enchanted Rock and a neighboring peak, they saw, to their horror, that the beautiful captive was already bound to the stake, the faggots piled high around her. The rescue party was divided into two sections, one section skirting the peak so as to surprise the Indians encamped on the north while Don Hesu and a few chosen men rushed upon the guards who stood in the gulch. Frenzied by the sight of his beloved at the stake ready to be offered as a sacrifice, Don Hesu, fighting like a demon, succeeded in freeing the captive maid and escaping with her beyond the reach of the savages. Thus was the Spirit of the Enchanted Rock once, at least, deprived of the joy of a human sacrifice.

FRANCESCA: A LEGEND OF OLD FORT STOCKTON

BY L. W. PAYNE, JR.

This legend of old Fort Stockton was written for me in short-story form in 1911 by Miss Josephine Brown, on whose father's ranch in Brewster County are the ruins of the old fort. The legend is frequently related by ranch people as well as by Mexicans in West Texas.

Fran———ces———ca! Fran———ces———ca!

I straightened up, listening. The low wailing sound that seemed to pronounce a name came again.

"Juan, what makes that noise?" Juan did not answer, and I turned in the seat to look at him. He was terrified. His eyes were stretched wide open, and he gasped out something about praying to the Virgin.

"What's the matter, Juan? Tell me!"

"Oh, *señor*, that noise! The Virgin protect us!" he exclaimed. He began whipping the horses.

"Juan, stop! The road is rough. Be careful. There, give me the reins."

He began saying his prayers, and I could occasionally distinguish the word "*espiritus*."

I was very curious to know why he was so excited, but I thought I would wait until he calmed down a little before I asked him. Finally he became more calm, and I handed him the reins.

It was a cold, rainy night in the late fall. The big, piled-up mountains, at one side of the road, were barely visible through the rain. The creek, which ran on the other side, made a subdued, rustling sound. I could scarcely distinguish the road, and knew when we went up or down a hill only by the movement of the vehicle. We ran over a rock in the road, and the jolt seemed to loosen Juan's tongue.

"You saw those big piles of rocks back there, *señor*? They are all that's left of old Fort Stockton. Long time ago, in Indian times, there were a lot of soldiers here, and they lived in those houses. I've heard the padre tell tales of them. That one with the walls still standing is what was the church, and that's where Ferenor"—here he interrupted himself to say some prayers.

"Well, Juan?" I said encouragingly.

"That's where Ferenor calls for his sweetheart," he said.

"Why?" I asked, as he seemed loath to continue.

"Get up, Maria! Steady there, Pierto. You see, *señor*, she was the most beautiful girl in all the country. Many young men wanted to marry her, but she loved Ferenor, the padre's nephew, who was almost a padre himself, for he had taken some of the vows. His uncle preached to the soldiers and lived there behind the church. There were lots of Indians in those times, and one of the chiefs wanted Francesca for his wife. All this time Francesca was in love with Ferenor, but she couldn't marry him on account of his vows.

"But one day Ferenor got desperate and swore he would marry Francesca anyway. That night, about this time of the year—and a night like this, only worse—they went to the padre to be married. Of course, he would not marry them, for it is unlawful for a young priest to marry. They begged and implored, but the padre refused to comply with their wishes. Finally the padre became very angry, and opening the door, he commanded them to go. Somehow, in the storm, they missed the trail to Francesca's house, and after wandering around a while, they realized that they were lost. On and on they wandered, until Francesca was ready to drop with fatigue.

"Suddenly Ferenor exclaimed, 'A light, Francesca!' There was a light in the distance. They started toward it but Francesca dropped to the ground exhausted.

"'I can't go, Ferenor,' she sobbed.

"'I'm too tired to carry you that far, Francesca. You stay here, and I'll come back for you when I get help.'

"He started out toward the light, but walking brought him no nearer to it. It seemed to move and lead him astray. He was very cold and sleepy. And where was Francesca? He knew; right over there she was waiting. He started to the place where he thought he had left her. Suddenly he slipped and fell, hitting his head on a stone. It was several hours later, just about dawn, that he regained consciousness.

"'Francesca! Francesca!' he cried, starting up. Vainly he searched. She was gone. Neither of the lovers was ever seen after that. Several months later a rumor was heard that just such a girl as Francesca was in the camp of Red Blanket. And Ferenor? On such a night as this, at this time of the year, he wanders around the old Fort, searching for his sweetheart, and

always calling her name, 'Francesca, Francesca.' And *señor*, when a lover hears it, it means there is danger to him or his betrothed. Santa Madre preserve us!" Here Juan began saying his prayers again.

"What is that light, Juan?" I asked a few minutes later.

"That's the headquarters of the H-Triangle, *señor*, he said.

A good fire and jolly company did not altogether dispel the memory of the weird tale that Juan told me when we heard those strange sounds made by the wind in the ruins of the old Fort.

LOVER'S RETREAT AND LOVERS' RETREAT (PALO PINTO)

BY J. S. SPRATT

I

Lover's Retreat, or Lovers' Retreat, as some would have it, is in Palo Pinto County, four miles west of the town of Palo Pinto. I got the first version, in which Lover makes his escape, from my father, Dr. J. T. Spratt. He heard it from a man named W. H. Walker, who related it in an address delivered while he was state secretary of the I. O. O. F. Walker said that the escape was made in the neighborhood of 1870 and that he was lying out on the prairie near by on the night that Lover eluded the Indians.

The other version I remember from a paper read in an English class in the Palo Pinto High School. I do not remember who wrote it, but I remember that we had a discussion over the place at the time, and that when I gave my version as to how Lover's Retreat had got its name, none of the class had ever heard it, though most of them had heard the tale of the Indian lovers.

II

LOVER'S RETREAT

By 1870 the Indians had for the most part abandoned all that part of Texas east of the Colorado River. However, a few scattered bands still, on occasions, roamed over the territory

east of the river, plundering lonely settlements and, when an opportunity presented itself, killing the pioneers. There is a story connected with one of these Indian raids into what is now Palo Pinto County.

Some four miles west of the town of Palo Pinto is a rough and beautiful ground covered with immense boulders. The enormous rocks have been left in an arrangement that reminds one of the streets of a badly surveyed old town. Vegetation of all colors and sizes grows on top of the old rocks and hangs down over the edges. Occasionally a tree rooted in some deep crevice reaches up thirty or forty feet, brushing the tops of the rocks. One has but to start climbing over the roots and gulches and through the breaks to think of what a good place it is to hide in. More than one man has found it to be such a place.

In the early seventies a man by the name of Lover was camped on a prairie near the place, loose herding a bunch of cattle. He had taken the bridle off his horse and was letting him graze out a short distance with the saddle on, when along late in the afternoon he was suddenly aware that the horse had stopped chewing and was watching something. Lover looked in the direction towards which the horse was pointing his ears. Just beyond the rigid animal, he saw a band of Indians coming at a long gallop through the soft grass. They were so close and were so increasing their speed that he did not have time to catch his horse. There was but one thing for him to do. He made for the rocks.

Running with the superhuman speed of deathly fright, he managed to reach them a little ahead of the Indians; but the Indians were so near that they would be upon him before he could climb down the side of the boulder that he had run up on from the sloping side. If he jumped, he was likely to kill or cripple himself. For the fraction of a second he wavered. Then he saw a tree below him. He leaped, caught a branch, and slid and swung to the ground. When less than two minutes later the warriors peered over the edge of the cliff, he was not to be seen.

In the little time that remained till night, Lover managed to dodge them. Then for hours he knew that they were watching for him to move. But when morning came, probably thinking that he had somehow slipped out past them, the Indians left, and Lover was safe. Since that time the place has been known as Lover's Retreat.

The old tree that Lover is said to have slid down still stands,

although it has been dead for several years and has fallen over against the bluff from which Lover made his desperate leap.

III

LOVERS' RETREAT

Many years ago, in the northern part of Texas, lived a small band of Indians among whom were a young brave and a young maiden lost in love. For the sake of convenience, we shall call the young brave Running Elk and the maiden Laughing Water. She was the daughter of old Chief White Eagle, but in the veins of the warrior lover there was no royal blood, and the father refused to allow the marriage that both of the lovers so greatly desired.

The refusal was not, however, based primarily on the difference in rank. Running Elk was an ideal young brave. He was the best hunter in the band; no other could run so swiftly, ride so skilfully, or shoot an arrow so truly as he. His bravery had been tried more than one time. In a battle he had once, single handed, fought and killed six of the enemy. Many a chieftain would have been proud to claim such a warrior for son-in-law. Indeed, Chief White Eagle was pleased with the suitor, but his tribe was a weak tribe and he wanted his daughter to marry into a strong tribe. Such an alliance he regarded as necessary against powerful enemies.

After many pleadings with the old chief and as many refusals, the lovers saw that there were but two courses left to them. They could give up all hope of marriage and let the negotiations that were already under way for the marriage of Laughing Water into a powerful tribe proceed; or they could run away and seek united refuge in a strange tribe. They chose the latter course.

It was dark midnight when Laughing Water met Running Elk at the outskirts of the Indian village. He had two ponies ready, and the lovers were on their way immediately. They rode during the remainder of the night and almost all the following day. Late in the afternoon they saw a cloud of moving dust rising perhaps an hour's ride behind them. The pursuers were gaining ground rapidly.

The runaways were now in the edge of a strange, mountainous country. Their horses were tired and farther journey on them

meant capture, the torture. Running Elk called a halt, and when the girl had dismounted, he tied a thorny stick to the tail of each horse, gave the horses a slash with the thong of buffalo hide that he used for a bridle, and saw them disappear down a draw. Then he and the maiden set out on foot, selecting rocks and hard gravel for a path. Their tribesmen would be baffled by the trail for a little time at least.

After the couple had traveled in this way for what seemed to them a long while, they reached the top of a mountain covered with cedar, walnut, and scrub oak. All at once they came upon a wide crevice. They turned their direction and were as suddenly confronted by another crevice, narrow and forty or fifty feet deep. This they descended, taking care not to loosen rocks or earth.

The two Indians were surprised to find that this break led to a network of such passages, the widths of which varied from a foot to twenty or thirty feet. The walls were of solid rock and rose to a height of from forty to sixty feet. On the tops of these rocks had formed a soil that sustained a variety of vegetation. A greenish moss covered the sides of the rocks and against them clung straggling vines; from the tops and from niches along the sides, prickly pears hung; here and there a tree grew up out of the bottom of the fissures and swept its branches over the tops of the cliffs. A cold spring trickled from the bottom of one of the rock walls.

The lovers knew that there must be a cave somewhere amid such surroundings. They began to search for it, and had searched only a little while when they came to a small mountain lake. It was at a kind of gateway between mountain and plateau, and on the mountain side was the cave. It opened into the lake, its floor well above the level of the water, and extended back into the enormous boulder.

Running Elk swam to the mouth of the cave and climbed in, and with his senses as alert as those of the panther explored the darkness. He found that the recess ran back some twenty feet and that it was clear of harm. He swam back to the shore, got his beloved, and returned to the cave. The two had not been hidden ten minutes when they heard their tribesmen making camp by the water. Presently a few of the young bucks went into the lake for a swim. One of them discovered the mouth of

the cave and called to his companions. They all came to him and began to talk of exploring the place.

Huddled close to each other in the remotest part of the cave, the lovers waited. Though they were themselves in pitchy darkness, they could see the world outside; however, dusk was approaching. Then they saw one of the bucks raise his body into the edge of the cave. He paused, fixed himself, and reached down to give a hand to a companion. Just then the lovers heard a wild shouting. They recognized the voice of their Medicine Man. He was screaming to the braves to come away from the cave, and telling them that all caves with their openings in or just above water were inhabited by evil spirits. The braves left the cave with frenzied strokes and soon the silence told that all the Indians had deserted the region of the lake. Again the lovers breathed freely.

But they would not leave their refuge until they were sure of safety. All that night, all the next day, and all the next night, they remained in hiding. Then they left in search of a friendly tribe to take up with, and the story generally goes that they found hospitality and security.

The white man has changed the looks about the picturesque region where the couple wandered and hid; but the cave and lake where they evaded their pursuers bears in memory of them the name of Lovers' Retreat.

LOVER'S LEAP IN KIMBLE COUNTY

BY FLORA ECKERT

[This legend, like others of its kind, is on all sides asserted to have come down from the earliest pioneers. When, less than a century ago, settlers first moved into any part of Texas where there is a cliff, what was their initial act: to get a meal, to start out hunting for buried treasure, or to christen the cliff with a tale of lovers? At any rate, thirty years ago, in 1894, Mary J. Jaques, an English lady who had resided for a time on a ranch in the Llano country, saw in London the fresh pages of her book, *Texan Ranch Life*; and in that book on page 255 is a version of the legend of Lover's Leap in Kimble County:

"The lover of Leona, a beautiful Indian girl, having been sent on a distant raid, she promised to light a beacon fire on the cliff each night of his absence. But alas! weeks grew to months, but he didn't return, and the old chief, her father, ordered her to marry 'another.'

In despair one night Leona threw herself down the precipice, ever after known as 'Lover's Leap.' The gorge below is still haunted by her restless spirit."

Slightly different in detail is a version that was given to me in the summer of 1923 by Miss Grenade Farmer of Junction City, in Kimble County, a form of the legend from the same source having been written out by Miss Velma Crank. Miss Farmer's father was a pioneer settler on the upper Llano and he has often told this legend to her, Miss Farmer says.

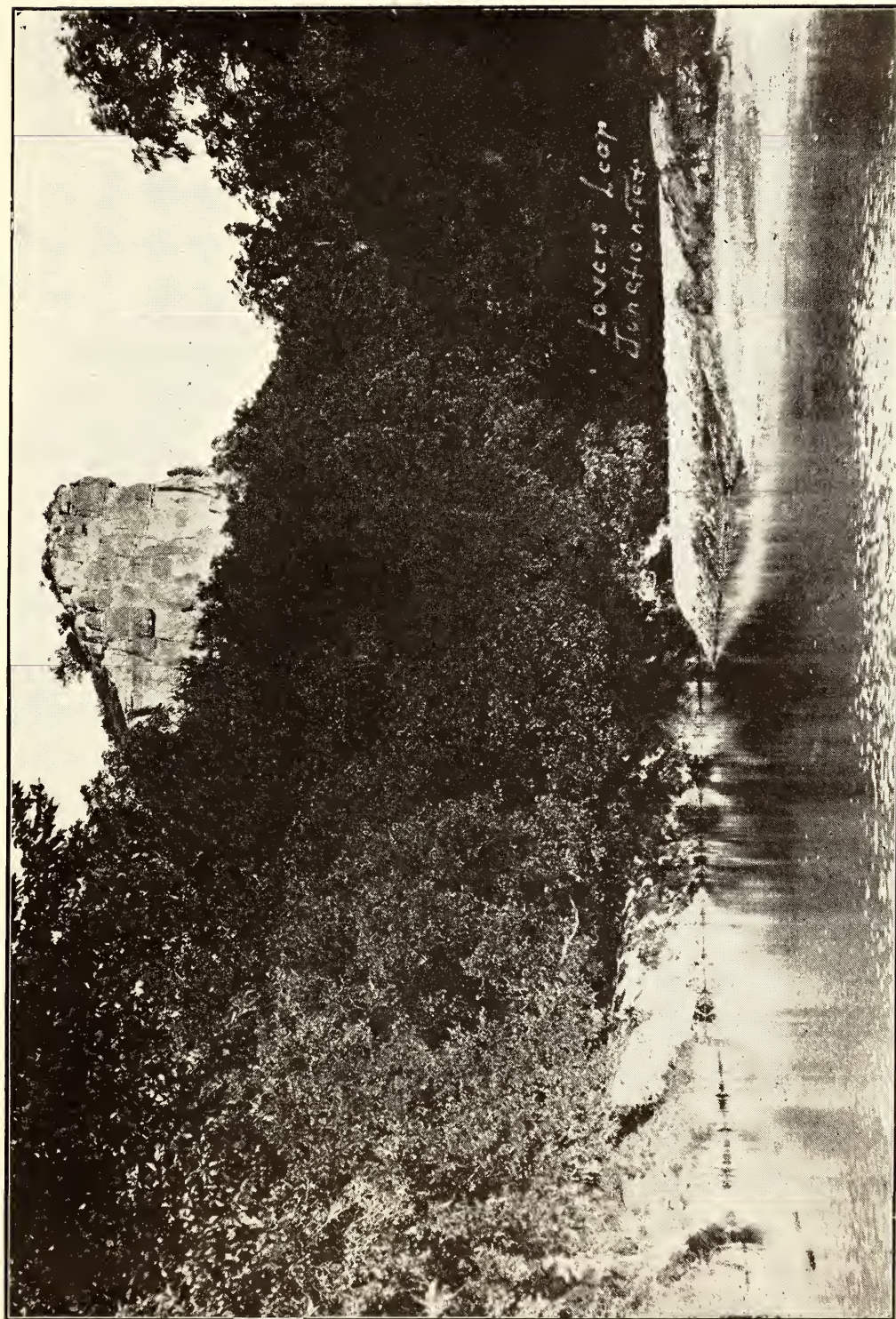
About seventy years ago there was an Indian village at the base of the bluff now called Lover's Leap. The chief had a brave and handsome son; he fell in love with a maiden of his tribe "who was beautiful and good but who was not his equal in rank or fortune." The father forbade the marriage desired by the lovers. In the obedient way of Indian youth, the son obeyed his father, but he continued to meet his love in secret, always under the bluff. In some way the unchanging nature of that great pile of rocks seemed to have an influence on the souls of the lovers. They, like it, would be unchanging in their devotion. So, when one day the youth received an order from his father that he must marry in order to perpetuate the noble line, he resolved with his sweetheart to preserve their fidelity by death.

They climbed the cliff and cast themselves into the gorge below. A few days later their bodies were found and were buried on top of the bluff.
—EDITOR.]

The cliff called "Lover's Leap" by the inhabitants of the Llano Valley stands today a rock-bound sentinel and watchtower, even as it stood during the legendary times of Texas. At its foot flows the cool, sparkling mountain stream that joins the Llano only a short distance beyond. Its sheer face forms a perpendicular wall that is one of the least accessible in a land of inaccessible cliffs.

Legends concerning the days of the Indians cluster about this sentinel rock. They are still told by pioneers to their children and are often related to the summer tourists of Junction, the little town that lies almost within the shadow of Lover's Leap. Perhaps the most beautiful and plausible of these legends is the one that tells of the Indian maid, Winona, and her lover, Mewanee, both of the Comanche tribe.

In those days there was an Indian encampment at the foot of this cliff. No other situation for miles about was so well adapted to the needs of the tribe. Fish teemed in the clear stream; deer and other game roamed in the woods; the climate was mild at nearly all times of the year, and in winter the camp was protected from the fierce norther by the sheer wall behind it. It was mainly because of this shelter that the place had been chosen by the scouts of the party; but they had also another reason. This particular cliff reared its head higher than any of its sister cliffs



LOVER'S LEAP, NEAR JUNCTION, KIMBLE COUNTY

along the river and therefore afforded a more distinct view of the surrounding country. In fact, it was the veritable sentinel of the valley. And such a watchtower was then a prime necessity.

The quiet beauty of the inclosing hills and the calmness of the deep pools of the stream were not reflected in the hearts of the Indians, who had, indeed, much cause for disquiet. Forty miles to the north the hated Spaniards had reared a hastily-built wooden structure to serve as a mission, and had filled it with soldiers and priests. This mission and all those connected with it were bitterly hated by the remnants of the tribes of Comanches, Cheyennes, Apaches, and Arapahoes. The priests endeavored to dissuade them from their age-old religion and to force new beliefs and institutions upon them. The soldiers, in jest and in earnest, treated them with brutal cruelty.¹

The band of Comanches in the Llano Valley had special reason to distrust and hate the Spaniards at Menard, for Don Juan, one of the boldest of the soldiers there, had looked upon Winona, the fairest maiden of the Comanches, with lust and desire in his eyes. This evil look had not escaped the eye of the chief, White Cloud, whose daughter Winona was, nor of Mewanee, Winona's favored lover. Therefore, the departure of the tribe from the mission had been abrupt. A double vow of vengeance was solemnly sworn as the councilmen gathered about the council fire in the chief's tent there on the Llano. It was a vow to revenge

¹Originally there were two Spanish sites in the Menardville vicinity, both founded in 1757: the presidio, San Luis de Las Amarillas, on the north bank of the San Saba River, and the mission, San Sabá, three miles south. In 1758 the Comanches destroyed the mission; then the presidio was strengthened and maintained until 1769. The remains of it are yet to be seen at Menard. The mission was established for the benefit of the Apaches; their hereditary enemies, the Comanches, from the north, regarded the Spanish policy of trying to Christianize the Apaches as an act of war. In the middle of the eighteenth century, it is hardly necessary to say, the Comanches and Apaches were not yet "remnants." The Cheyennes and Arapahoes never got as far south as the San Saba. The whole story of the San Saba settlement is to be found in two monographs by William Edward Dunn: "Missionary Activities among the Eastern Apaches Previous to the Founding of the San Sabá Mission," *Texas State Historical Association Quarterly*, XV, 186-200; and "The Apache Mission on the San Sabá River; its Founding and its Failure," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XVI, 379-414. Dr. Bolton in his *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, pp. 78-101, gives a succinct account of "The Apache Missions and the War with the Northern Tribes."—Editor.

the insult upon Winona and to destroy the mission which menaced the peace of the red men.

Many councils were held and the plans were carefully laid. The date of the attack was chosen in accordance with the Indian belief in time and season. Mewanee, as one of the most stalwart warriors, held an honored place in these councils. Meanwhile, high upon the cliff, the scouts kept a steady watch for the Spanish, who were believed to be on the trail of the rebellious Comanches.

Of all the sad, heavy hearts in that camp, Winona's heart was the saddest and heaviest. It was partly because of her that the attack was being planned. Furthermore, Mewanee, she knew, in the zeal of his rage against Don Juan, would be heedless of the most perilous danger. Winona's dark eyes plainly showed the anguish in her heart. Mewanee's solemn and dignified mien reflected the gravity of the situation. The pain of parting was heavy upon them both.

To add to their grief, White Cloud issued an order forbidding marriages while the tribe was preparing for its attack of vengeance, for the most cherished plan of the lovers was that they should be married on the day preceding Mewanee's departure. Now, however, their plans were broken. All Winona's pleadings were in vain. White Cloud, her father, shook his head in obstinate refusal of their marriage. At their farewell meeting, even Mewanee allowed his love for Winona to show as he comforted her and promised eternal faith. His love, he told her, would reach out to her from the Happy Hunting Grounds and beckon her to him. And Winona whispered that she would come at his slightest call. As their lips met in a last, long, unaccustomed kiss, the drum signaled the inevitable separation.

And so, among the other braves, Mewanee rode away to the north to begin the raid on the mission. Winona was left at camp—to wait. Days passed with no word of the warriors or of the result of their undertaking. Then suddenly, just at noon, when the watcher on the summit of the cliff could see farthest over the valley toward hated Menard, he gave a mighty shout. He could discern the returning warriors. They traveled swiftly, and in a short time reached the camp. Even at a distance the watchers perceived that the raid from which their braves were returning had been successful. Each was weighted with plunder from the soldiers and from the mission. But their faces and their scanty number gave the lie to all these signs of success.

It was at once evident that fewer men, by far, were returning than had gone out. Winona's quick eye gave her instant proof that her lover had not returned.

His companions told her of his death at the hands of a Spanish soldier who had stabbed him in the back while he was engaged in a violent hand-to-hand combat with his enemy, Don Juan. Winona heard the story as in a dream. More real to her was a spirit voice calling, calling insistently.

When the moon rose over the cliff that night it outlined a solitary figure upon the bluff. Only for an instant, however, did the silhouette remain stationary. With a gesture of grief and longing, the figure flung out its arms and dropped over the edge into the vast darkness below. The water flowed on, lapping against the rocks upon which Winona lay, broken and lifeless. Her soul had answered the call from the Happy Hunting Grounds. And to this day the cliff, called "Lover's Leap" because of this wild plunge, stands as an everlasting monument to the exceeding love and faith of the simple Indian maiden.

Some facts relative to the legend follow. 1. The headwaters of the Llano River were once a refuge for Indians. 2. There was a mission near Menard. It was destroyed by Indians. 3. Evidences of the camp at the foot of the cliff are plain. 4. In tribal emergencies marriage was sometimes (perhaps rarely) forbidden. I realize that there are slight grounds for such a statement, but it is a part of the legend as given by my informants. 5. The legend is given as told me by Frank H. Wilson and N. R. Skaggs (about seventy-five years old) of Junction.

THE WAITING WOMAN

BY JOHN R. CRADDOCK

This legend, though it cannot be said to be retold in his exact words, came to me from a wood-cutter named T. W. Williams, who while hauling wood about the streets of Austin had time enough to stop and talk.

Out in the hills of Williamson County, a certain old path can still be found leading down to the San Gabriel River. If you follow the ancient path from the west bank of the Gabriel for a

distance of some two hundred yards, you will find there on the hill the remains of the old Lazy J ranch house. If you follow the path from the east bank, you will soon come to its end among the rock-strewn hills. Years ago a foot-log connected the parts of the path, and at it in days now long past a man and a beautiful young woman were accustomed to meet. The girl came from the ranch house on the hill, and the man, a cowboy, came from somewhere out beyond the trail's end, no one now knows where.

A little before sunset one evening, the girl walked down to the crossing to meet her lover. A few minutes later the cowboy sprang from his horse on the opposite bank, and, scarcely waiting to tie his mount, started across the foot-log. The ride had been long, and the man was unsteady on his feet after being for such a long while in the saddle. He wore heavy leggins and Mexican spurs, and in his haste he lost his footing on the log and fell into the river. He was never again seen.

The sight of the tragedy and the loss of her lover caused the maiden to become, as people believed, insane. Every evening at sunset throughout the remaining days of her life, she went to the foot-log to meet a phantom lover who came, as in life, to meet her. Her dying request was that if she lived until sunset, she should be carried to the bank of the stream. This request was complied with, and her attendants, on reaching the spot, witnessed a strange and pathetic ritual. The dying woman raised herself on her elbow and spoke a few words to the invisible lover, and then fell back lifeless on the stretcher. They buried her there by the foot-path, and the good folk will tell you yet that at dusk you can hear the lovers as they whisper by the path, or that sometimes in the coming shadows you can see the phantom woman drooped and waiting at the place where the foot-log used to be.¹

¹Through the courtesy of Miss Nell Andrew, librarian of Texas Christian University, I have seen a poem by A. Clark, Jr., that relates a similar tale. A phantom lover on the Rio Grande diurnally meets his love. The poem is called "Legend of the Great River" and was published in *Add-Rann* (T. C. U.), Vol. IV, No. 8, 1898.—Editor.

LOVER'S LEAP AT SANTA ANNA¹

BY AUSTIN CALLAN

Tradition tells us that long ago an Indian village nestled at the foot of "Santana Peaks," called Las Mesas. It was before the white man's ambition for new territory led him into the wild haunts of the savage; before Anglo-Saxon enterprise transformed the West from a wilderness of romance to a vulgar land of farms and ranches. Herds of buffaloes and deer roamed the prairies; wild turkeys, geese and game birds were as plentiful as the leaves on the trees; and the people were happy and indolent.

Among the inhabitants was Fox-Deer, who had taken unto himself a pale-face for a wife. He had an only daughter, called Lentalopa, Laughing-Eye, and he loved her poor, heart-broken mother, whose soul he gave to the Great Spirit in the forest, and whose body was laid to rest among the flowers on the "Little Table."

One evil day a band of white men, with a great train of wagons and an Indian guide, passed through the gap of Las Mesas and were soon in view of the little village. Immediately the war-whoop rent the air. The soldiers and teamsters barely had time to corral their wagons and prepare for battle before the fierce red devils were circling round and round them, leaning low on their horses and gradually drawing in. The lieutenant gave orders not to fire until the enemy came near enough to the wagons to make every shot count a dead savage.

Each man stood in place, sighting down his musket, waiting breathlessly for the order. Fox-Deer, clad in a buckskin suit ornamented with silver, turned his horse towards the wagon corral and gave a signal. In an instant every warrior was charging the temporary barricade, all howling like a pack of fiends in hell. Then, from behind the wagons, there came a hundred puffs of smoke, and a hundred Indians fell lifeless on the sward.

Fox-Deer led his redskins back to the base of Las Mesas; the soldiers reloaded their muskets and made ready for a second attack. In the meantime several of the men reported to the lieutenant that the savages had a beautiful white girl in cap-

¹This legend is reprinted from a small pamphlet called *Santa Anna Beautiful*, published by Clay P. Morgan, Santa Anna, Texas, 1907. It is the only signed article in the pamphlet, which was designed for commercial purposes.

tivity. . . . The lieutenant immediately sent two men under a flag of truce to the Indians, with the information that he would withdraw and leave them alone if they would surrender the white prisoner into his hands.

The answer came back, as quick as a flash of lightning, from the ashy lips of Wounded Hawk. He said that Laughing-Eye belonged not to the pale-faces, that he had won her heart for bravery in fighting the battles of Fox-Deer. "We love each other," he said in tones of pathos to the Indian guide, who acted as interpreter; "we have asked the beautiful moon to melt our hearts into one, and its spirit came down and danced for joy on the bosom of the silvery stream, because we were happy. Go away and leave us alone, leave Laughing-Eye among the flowers and the birds, close to her mother's grave."

The men returned and reported the effort to compromise with the Indians unsuccessful. Wounded Hawk's story was put down as one of those slick lies characteristic of his race, and it was decided to attack the village at once and finish the job of whipping the devils, who had been rendered inferior by their first charge. As the soldiers drew up near the wigwams, the golden sun was hanging over the western point of the mountain. A beautiful valley swept off for miles to the north, and in the green grass droves of antelopes and deer were playing. Around the wigwams several squaws were seated upon buffalo robes and among them was Laughing-Eye, downcast and frightened.

Fox-Deer asked for permission to send his child to a cliff on the mountain where she could watch the battle without danger. "If the Great Spirit decides against the poor Indian," he said, "the white man can take her, but if He answers her prayer, she will remain in the forest with Wounded Hawk and be happy."

Laughing-Eye gave the signal for battle by waving a branch of cedar from the brow of Las Mesas, and a savage yell went up, as fierce as mortal ever heard. Fox-Deer led his warriors forth, playing for two of the highest earthly stakes—the happiness of his daughter and his own life. In an instant the whites were surrounded. The Indians, riding at full speed and lying low on the off-side of their ponies, poured volley after volley of deadly arrows into their dismayed ranks. The lieutenant fell mortally wounded; a dozen others were dead upon the ground. Closer and closer the savages came and more hideous grew their war-whoops. Laughing-Eye knelt upon the cliff to pray; no doubt she had

learned to lisp the name of God at her mother's knee, and I fancy she asked Him to restore safe to her bosom the young chief she loved. But the tide of battle turned, turned at a moment when Wounded Hawk felt the flush of victory and was almost ready to wave his love back to the joy of the wigwam.

The surviving soldiers formed a little square, dropped to their knees, and prepared to receive the last desperate charge of the savages. Fox-Deer brought his men up, this time in silence. Pointing to the girl on the brow of the peak and giving a signal which they all understood, he led a mad rush. A deadly stream of fire poured forth from the little group of determined whites, and then they sprang to their feet with bayonets fixed. For a moment the fate of Wounded Hawk hung in the balance. The struggle was as fierce as opposing forces ever waged. Indian and Caucasian fell together, with the cold steel in each other's breasts, and their mingled blood crimsoned the grass-spears and the daisies. There was a hush; a little flag bearing the Stars and Stripes shot up just as the sun was setting. From the overhanging cliff a scream of agony rent the air. Laughing-Eye understood and leaped upon the rocks below, into the arms of death.

ANTONETTE'S LEAP
OR
THE LEGEND OF MOUNT BONNELL
BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I

The legend of Mount Bonnell is among the half dozen most widely known Texas legends. It has been printed again and again, both in prose and in verse; it is still told in many quarters; and the details of the various versions have come to a wide divergence. So far as I can learn, the oldest printed account of the legend is that given by Morphis, published in 1874. For other accounts, the reader is referred to the bibliography.

In the main, there are three versions of the legend: first, the Morphis account in which an Indian chief steals a Spanish belle, who is rescued by her lover only to perish later with him at the cliff; second, a version, the details of which are similar to those

of various other Lovers' Leap legends, in which an Indian maid and an Indian brave make an interdicted elopement and are finally forced to the leap; third, a version in which an Indian maiden in love with a white man is forced to a precipitate death. It is an interesting fact that all the versions hitherto printed follow very closely the Morphis story, all being revampings of it. Noteworthy variations seem to exist in oral accounts only. As Morphis' history has long been out of print, his version of the legend is here reprinted.

The word *Antonette* belongs to no language: the French spelling is *Antoinette*; the name in Spanish is *Antonia*. No lady of pure Castilian blood would have borrowed a French translation for her name. Yet *Antonette* is the spelling generally given in the legends.

II

THE LEGEND AS TOLD BY MORPHIS¹

The following legend of the Colorado Valley was related to me years ago by that reliable gentleman, good citizen, and gallant soldier, George L. Robertson of Austin.

Mount Bonnell was called by the early settlers of Colorado Valley, *Antonette's Leap*, which name was given to it in consequence of the self-immolation on that picturesque spot, at an early day, of a most lovely and accomplished señorita, who came over from Spain at the first settlement of the mission of San José, San Juan, Espada, and the Alamo.

"The fame of *Antonette's* beauty and intellectual charms was spread abroad through the settlements, and even extended to the hunting ground and camp fires of the red men of the forest. It came to the ears and inflamed the passions of Cibolo, the chief of the Comanches, who selected a band of his favorite warriors, made a raid upon the settlements, captured the beautiful *Antonette*, and carried her far away to his camp in the wilderness, on the headwaters of the Colorado.

"The parents and friends of the unfortunate señorita mourned her as lost forever, except Don Leal Navarro Rodriguez, her betrothed lover, a brave and elegantly educated young Spanish caballero, of fine personal appearance and honorable, as well as brave to a fault, who determined to follow the murderous Indians

¹Morphis, J. M., *History of Texas*, New York, 1874, pp. 510-513.

to their homes and rescue his beloved Antonette, or perish in the attempt.

"Don Leal mounted his favorite steed and, well armed, started from the Alamo alone in pursuit of the Indians, and after many hair-breadth escapes, *undiscovered*, descried the camp of the savages. Selecting a dark night, he entered it, and by imitating the mocking bird, of which Antonette was very fond, and whose singing they could both imitate to perfection, he soon discovered at what spot inside the encampment she was, then came into the very tent which she occupied and found her tied securely to prevent her escape.

"In an instant the lover severed the bonds which confined the dear idol of his heart, and with her cautiously returned to where he had left his horse when he entered the Comanche camp; then quickly mounting and taking Antonette up behind him, he started to regain the Mission of Alamo.

"The fury of Cibolo in the morning, when he discovered the escape of his fascinating captive, knew no bounds. He raved and blasphemed terribly; then, sounding the alarm, with a hundred chosen warriors, he hastily started in pursuit, leaving the main body of his tribe to await his return.

"For several days Don Leal and his beloved Antonette made good speed toward the settlements, subsisting most bountifully upon game, which was easily obtained through Don Leal's rifle, and at night sleeping under the forest trees; but on the seventh day, leaving the prairie land, they became tangled in the mountains bordering the Colorado. Early in the morning of the eighth day the lovers discovered themselves surrounded upon all sides by the cruel savages. All attempts at further flight were hopeless.

"The wrathful Cibolo, with cow horns on his head and face horribly painted, advanced in all pride of power to where they had fled as a last refuge, but when he was about fifty yards off, Don Leal, who had firmly resolved to fight and die rather than surrender, raised his rifle to his shoulder and, taking deliberate aim, fired! In an instant the savage chief bounded in the air and fell to the ground a corpse; but in another instant at least twenty arrows pierced Don Leal's body, and he, too, fell to the earth and expired without a groan.

"After surveying the situation and revolving in her mind the miserable fate awaiting her from the merciless Comanches, . . . the poor, unfortunate girl bent over the prostrate and lifeless

form of her lover and kissed his dear lips. Then rising, with her eyes toward heaven, and murmuring her last prayer to God, she plunged headlong down the precipice and struck the rocks beneath, mangled, bleeding, and dead!

"For a long time the place where these rare, devoted, but most unfortunate lovers met their sad and untimely fate was called 'Antonette's Leap,' but years ago a wandering Bohemian, who happened to pass a few days in Austin . . . blotted it out and substituted his own, and now Antonette's Leap is Mount Bonnell."

III

For the details of the second version of the legend as here summarized I am indebted to Mr. Billy Minter, a West Point cadet from Austin.

Once two tribes of Indians living far to the north were at deadly enmity with one another; one tribe lived in what is now Oklahoma, the other in what is now the Panhandle of Texas. One day the son of the chieftain of the southern tribe was walking in the woods. It was springtime, the time to be in the woods, and there he met the daughter of the chief of the northern tribe. It was springtime; their hatred was forgotten, and often thereafter they met under the trees. But one day a brave of the northern tribe discovered the lovers. He was afraid to fight with this strong young Indian of the south whose fame as a warrior was already far known; so he watched from the bushes and then slipped away to tell the maiden's father what he had seen.

When the lovers were parting, they discovered the trail of the watcher. They realized that they could never meet thus again and that if the maid returned to her people she would be terribly tortured. They fled to the south, hoping to find refuge in some friendly tribe that knew nothing of the quarrels of their ancestors. The next morning the father of the maiden sent to the enemy's camp a demand for his daughter. Then the elopement was revealed. A truce was made and forthwith fifty picked trailers and warriors from each tribe were sent to pursue and capture the fugitives.

For many days the lovers fled, followed closer and closer by the warriors. At length they found themselves hemmed in on top of a mountain that faced precipitously on the Colorado River. Out of the scrub cedars and from over the gullies, they saw the

cordon of pitiless pursuers nearing; beneath them they saw the swollen waters of the Colorado whirling over the rocks. On the one hand, was a captivity worse than death; on the other, the river below. "With one last prayer to the Great Spirit, the lovers embraced and, still locked in this embrace, leaped into the hungry water."

"This," concludes Mr. Minter, "is the legend of the Lovers' Leap as told to me when I was eleven years old by an old settler, himself the son of a pioneer. He lived near the place, and told me the story while I was camped on Mount Bonnell. Last week (July, 1922) I went again to try to find him and have him retell the story, but I found that he had been dead for two years, and so I have not been able to use the names of the lovers, of the chiefs, and of the tribes, as well as many other minute circumstances that he made the tale vivid with. The river does not touch the foot of the cliff at the Lovers' Leap. Indeed, it is a good stone's throw from it to the water's edge. The old man explained this discrepancy by saying that the legend was ages old and that at the time of the leap the river did touch the bottom of the cliff when it was on a big rise."

IV

The third version of the legend was given me by Miss Etta Maddrey, a student at the University of Texas in the summer of 1922, who in turn heard it from an Austin woman who worked at the Driskill Hotel. This woman claimed that the witness in the circumstances that follow was one of her ancestors.

A pioneer couple had built a log hut near what is now the road to Deep Eddy. It was near a spring in some woods, and sometimes Indians camped near by. In the band was the tribal chief, and he had a daughter. He had, too, a hardened and cunning warrior who was in love with the daughter, and the chief was pleased at the match. The daughter was not pleased, and soon the brave came to realize that he was being repelled.

One evening when the settler's wife was going to the spring for water, she saw in the dusk a tender greeting between the Indian maid and a young white man of the settlement. She saw too the form of a slinking Indian warrior spying on the lovers. The next evening the meeting was repeated, and the man and the young woman sat on a rock and watched the sunset. They parted; the paleface disappeared; the girl turned to go back to

her camp and was confronted by the giant and menacing form of her spurned suitor. With vivid gesture he pictured the wrath of the father and chief when he should learn that his daughter had scorned one of his tribe for a hated paleface, and he gloated as he told how he would report her treachery.

The girl broke away from her tormentor. Perhaps she thought to return to her father and ask forgiveness; but the folly of such a course must have been apparent to her. Perhaps she thought of taking refuge with her lover, but then his helplessness in protecting her must have flooded her mind with the conviction that by such an act she would only bring about his death. A moment after she left the warrior she bounded out of the woods in a direction to the north. On and on she ran until she reached the topmost point of what is now Mount Bonnell. Below her was the dark river. "There was but a moment's hesitation, and then the fatal leap—lover's leap then, certainly; and Lover's Leap today."

PIRATES AND PIRATE TREASURE IN
LEGEND

From SUNSET IN AUGUST: GALVESTON BEACH

BY STANLEY E. BABB

[“Sunset in August: Galveston Beach,” from which the following lines are taken, is one of a group of poems entitled “Arrows of Loveliness.” The group won the first prize from the Poetry Society of Texas in 1922. The poems were printed in the Poetry Society’s *Book of the Year*, 1922. In addition to giving a picture of the great Texas pirate, the lines illustrate what a poet may do with legend.—EDITOR.]

Old Jean Lafitte once paced along these sands,
Surveyed the misty sea for Spanish galleons
Sweeping up from Panama with gold
And precious freights—and lusted for the sharp
High clamour of battle: rattle of pistol-shots—
Thunder of broadsides—crash of falling spars—
Loud cries to Christ for quarter—shouts of joy—
Spurts of hot blood—surrender—sharp commands—
And then the scuttling of the captured vessels:
The wild red laughter of the rioting flames
Above a littered sea . . .

Old Jean Lafitte once wandered down these sands,
And watched the day’s red death, the swirling gulls,
The golden doubloon of the rising moon,
Remembering days of splendour: mornings when
He buried gold ashore on Los Muertos,
Midnights when his little schooner “Pride”
Cut past Nigger Head with all sails drawing,
Wild battles with great storms off Yucatan,
And nights with wine and girls at Porto Bello . . .
Old Jean Lafitte once paced this beach and cried
From wanderlust that shook his heart, and looked
Up to the sky for winds and clouds, and told
His aves on the rosary of stars,
And then along the last bleak beach of life,
He proudly strode, and out across the sea
Into the white mists of oblivion . . .

LIFE AND LEGENDS OF LAFITTE THE PIRATE

BY E. G. LITTLEJOHN

[The pirate legends of Texas are all so bound up with the name of Lafitte that they may well be prefaced by a sketch of that remarkable personage. Perhaps there is as much legend about the man as about his treasure. Even his name seems to be in dispute, for, whereas he is generally known

in this country as Jean Lafitte, the *Nouveau Larousse Illustré Dictionnaire Encyclopédique* denominates him, the "*corsaire français*," Nicolas Lafitte. A historian can hardly write of him without arousing controversy. Dr. J. O. Dyer, of Galveston, in a letter to the editor says: "Lafitte was no pirate, but the head of two noted buccaneer or privateer camps. . . . He never went to sea; he was a poor sailor because he suffered from sea-sickness; he never was in any fight on the sea."—EDITOR.]

I

JEAN LAFITTE: MAN AND PIRATE

The European wars of the early part of the nineteenth century, the consequent passage of the Embargo Act by the Congress of the United States, and the act prohibiting the importation of slaves after the year 1808, all conspired to bring about a great volume of clandestine trade at the ports of the United States. This trade was especially active along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. Here resorted the privateer and the smuggler, the one to dispose of his booty, the other to receive it and to distribute it.

The labyrinthine waters of lower Louisiana were the smugglers' paradise. Here they could carry on their business almost without fear of detection. Just prior to the War of 1812, a flourishing establishment of this kind sprang up on the island of Grand Terre, some sixty miles west of the mouth of the Mississippi, under the management of the two brothers Lafitte, Jean and Pierre, former blacksmiths of New Orleans. At first, the brothers were mere agents and distributors for the privateers who resorted to Grand Terre, but they soon got vessels for themselves, and began privateering on their own account. Letters of marque and reprisal were granted to them by the Republic of Cartagena, erstwhile a colony of Spain, and with this authority they went forth with other Robin Hoods of the sea to ravage and to plunder. They soon grew immensely wealthy and their business became so extensive as to almost paralyze the legitimate trade of New Orleans.

The governor of Louisiana, on being appealed to by the merchants of the city, issued several proclamations against "pirates and smugglers," who were bringing disgrace and ignominy upon the state, ordering them to disperse and threatening dire punishment in case of their refusal to do so. When his fulminations went unheeded, he offered a reward of five hundred dollars for the capture of Jean Lafitte, now become the leader of the smugglers. Lafitte promptly responded by offering fifteen thousand

dollars for the capture of the governor. The merchants then appealed to the United States government for protection, and Commodore Patterson was sent with a fleet to break up the Grand Terre establishment. This he succeeded in doing, taking a number of prisoners and much valuable merchandise. The brothers Lafitte, with the greater number of their followers, fled to the woods and so escaped capture.

Shortly after this event, when the battle of New Orleans was impending, we find Jean Lafitte, who seems to have cherished no animosity for his summary ejection from Grand Terre, informing the United States authorities of the plans and movements of the British fleet, and offering his aid in defending the city. At first declined, the proffered assistance was later accepted by General Jackson, and Lafitte with several of his lieutenants fought with conspicuous bravery in the memorable battle of January 8, 1815. In his report of the battle, General Jackson spoke in the highest terms of these "gentlemen," and recommended that they be pardoned for any offences they might have committed against the laws of the United States. This recommendation was promptly acted upon by President Madison, who issued a full and free pardon to Jean Lafitte and such of his men as participated in the battle.

With the close of the war, Othello's occupation was gone, and Lafitte returned to his old practices of privateering and smuggling. This time he established his headquarters on Galveston Island, then uninhabited, where he built a fort and a town which he called Campeachy. His followers at one time numbered fully one thousand men, and these he ruled with a rod of iron. He became very wealthy and lived in lordly style. The "Red House," Lafitte's residence, so called on account of its color, was the scene of many princely entertainments given in honor of distinguished visitors. Colonel James Gaines, who was on the island in 1819, states that while he was there several rich prizes were brought into port, and that Spanish doubloons were as "plentiful as biscuits."

Though Lafitte claimed to make war only on Spanish commerce, he showed little squeamishness in attacking vessels of other nations when no Spaniard was in sight. In 1820 an American vessel was captured and plundered and then sunk in Matagorda Bay. This act spelled the ruin of Campeachy. Early the next year the United States Government dispatched a man-of-war to break up the establishment. Lafitte went out to meet the captain,

conducted him to Red House, and entertained him in a magnificent manner, in the meantime trying to persuade him from executing his orders. But the captain was not to be influenced by blandishments or money. His orders were peremptory. Lafitte must leave the island. Bowing to the inevitable, Lafitte convoked his followers, supplied them with money, and dismissed them from his service. Then, with a chosen few, in his favorite vessel, the *Pride*, he sailed away from Galveston forever.

II

CREDENCE IN THE LAFITTE LEGEND

As Captain Kidd, according to legend, left more wealth on Long Island than the vaults of Wall Street have measured, so Lafitte is reputed to have secreted immense treasures on Galveston Island and the adjacent mainland. Early inhabitants of Galveston can tell of many a midnight quest for the hidden hoards of pirates; and in sundry places certain mounds, with accompanying depressions on one side, were but recently pointed out as "where they have been digging for Lafitte's treasure." Unlike Captain Kidd, however, Lafitte left no screeching Hannahs to guard his treasures. No such dog-in-the-manger spirit was his. On the contrary, he seems to have desired that they should be found and put to some useful service. I have an old letter purporting to reveal the hiding place of this treasure. It was written in the late fifties by a strong-headed old lawyer, who at one time held high office in the Republic of Texas, to a scientist of considerable reputation in that day. The letter is too long to quote, but it recounts in detail Lafitte's attempt through a medium at a "sitting" of spiritualists to reveal the whereabouts of a ship-load of concealed treasure. According to the lawyer, the Lafitte "influence" yearned to have the directions corroborated so that the investigators might be filled with sufficient faith to go after the waiting treasure.

III

THE HORROR GUARDED TREASURE OF THE NECHES

This story, under the title of "Seeking for Buried Treasure," appeared many years ago in the *Houston Post*. It was said to have been related by a Mr. Marion Meredith of Port Neches.

Said Mr. Meredith: "It was before the Civil War that a neighbor of mine got hold of a chart from an old Mexican woman purporting to locate a vast treasure hidden by pirates in the marsh near the mouth of the Neches River.

"It was said that the vessel bearing this treasure was so closely pursued by a Spanish craft that the crew cut their cable and left their anchor. The man who got the chart felt so sure of finding the treasure that he concluded to go alone to seek it in order that he might not have to divide it. He located the spot where the vessel was reported to have left her chain and found the chain there without any trouble. He soon found where the treasure should be and began to dig. After he had dug a few feet, some unseen power seemed to seize him and he fled from the place. A few days later he died without having been able to speak.

Mr. Meredith subsequently obtained the chart and, knowing the circumstances of the former effort, he associated with a man noted for his bravery, an old Texan who had roughed it for years. We will call this man Clawson. After making all necessary preparations, he and Clawson proceeded to investigate. They found the old rusty chain, whence, a certain direction and distance, the chart called for a tree with a heart cut in the bark. They located the tree. The heart was there; then in a certain direction and at a certain distance they found the spot sought for. It was located on a small island, a mere shell bank in the marsh. The tools of the former treasure hunter were there, and the hole he had dug. They began digging and soon found a human skeleton, which they carefully removed from the hole and laid upon the bank. Meredith dug till he was tired, when Clawson relieved him. He was resting on the edge of the hole, expecting every turn of the spade to uncover the treasure, when suddenly Clawson clambered from the hole, his face drawn and pale. Clutching Meredith's arm, he said in a husky voice, "Come, for God's sake, let's get away from here."

"What's the matter? What have you seen?" asked Meredith.

"I have seen hell and its horrors. Come away from here," and he pulled Meredith to their boat. They left so hurriedly that they forgot to take their tools. No other explanation could be got from Clawson, but he begged Meredith, if he valued his life, not to dig there again. Years afterwards Meredith met Clawson in Beaumont and begged him to tell what had frightened him. "For God's sake," he answered, "don't ask me about that; it has haunted me all these years."

After a time Meredith returned to the spot, recovered his tools, and buried the skeleton in the hole, but he had so much confidence in Clawson that he could not dig again. Since then he has several times visited the spot. Once a party of young men volunteered to go with him and dig up the ghost and the treasure. His reply to them was: "I will take you there and stay with you, boys, but there is not enough money in Texas to get me to dig in that hole."

IV

PIRATES AND THEIR SACKS OF GOLD

This story appeared many years ago in the *Galveston Daily News* as a "special" from Corpus Christi.

"One morning far back in the receding past, just as the sun was casting his first golden beams of light over the lovely prairie, then robed in the sublimity of wild solitude, Lafitte and ten or fifteen of his buccaneers called at the humble home of an old lady and her husband who then lived on Kellar, or Cox, Creek in what is now embraced in Jackson County. Here these pirates got their breakfast and then handed the old people \$1000, in which sum were found coins from the then leading commercial governments of the world. During their stay at this house the pirates made frequent references to the hot pursuit of English or American war vessels. After they had dispatched the morning meal, they shouldered what purported to be sacks of gold and departed, going toward the head of Cox Creek, presumably to bury or secrete their ill-gotten treasure. After a few hours they passed back by this house, going in the direction of Cox Bay. They were never seen or heard of again by the old people who supplied them with breakfast."

In the article from which the above excerpt is made, it is stated that some years ago certain respectable citizens of Corpus Christi who had enlisted the services of a lad with an "affinity" for gold made an extensive search for the supposed hidden treasure. The expedition was a failure, but the leader was confident that somewhere between Cox Bay and the mouth of the Lavaca River large sums of the pirates' coins would some day be found, and intimated that they would be fished out of Swan Lake.

V

LAFITTE'S TREASURE VAULT

Legends of Lafitte's treasure in Louisiana often come down the Texas coast and become Texan by adoption. In the Abbeville

country, Louisiana, there is a legend, handed down from the last century, to the effect that Lafitte and his pirate crew, having run a schooner up into White Lake (Louisiana coast) through a bayou which has long since been filled and grown over with marsh grass, at some spot along the shore built a brick vault in which they stored a vast amount of their ill-gotten treasure.

About the year 1908 a man named C——— claimed to have stumbled upon the vault while hunting alligators. He further claimed to have torn away, though with much difficulty, portions of the brick work, revealing untold wealth in gold coin, the hidden treasure of Lafitte.

Numbers of persons to whom this story was told became interested in making a search for the treasure. Owing to the swampy condition of the country and the inaccessibility of the spot where the vault was located, C——— advised the digging of a small canal as the best means of reaching it. This idea was adopted, money was advanced for the purpose, some five or six thousand dollars, and the digging of the canal was begun. After weeks of toil, of chopping through dense canebrakes, and of floundering through the swamp mud, the party reached a lone cypress tree that was supposed to stand sentinel over the crypt. The treasure could not be found.

Disappointed in their quest and disgusted at their own credulity, the treasure seekers caused the arrest of C——— on the charge of having taken their money under false pretenses; C——— claimed as the reason for their failure that he had lost his bearings. Who knows?—Adapted from a story in the *Galveston News*, October 27, 1908.

THE UNEASY GHOST OF LAFITTE

BY JULIA BEAZLEY

“Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it.”

* * * * *

“It faded on the crowing of the cock.”—*Hamlet*.

Within the memory of men still living, Texas coast dwellers used to gather around firesides on northerly winter nights, and while the rich juice of sweet potatoes roasting among the ashes oozed through the jackets, tell tales of "the Pirate of the Gulf." Not a few of these tales centered about an ancient and dilapidated house at Bayshore Park, La Porte, in Harris County. Under it, so they say, is the blood marked booty of Lafitte; and though old tales and old times and old houses pass, anyone hardy enough to spend the night in this deserted building may yet, according to report, receive a visit from the guilt-harried spirit that sometimes in distress and sometimes in anger is still trying to win absolution for his earthly sins.

The legend runs that upon a certain occasion Lafitte and his buccaneering crew sailed up to what is now Bay Ridge (which is opposite the haunted house of La Porte). He anchored his schooner offshore, and rowed to the beach with two trusted lieutenants and the heavy chest which none dared touch except at his orders. When the skiff grounded, the watchers on the schooner saw their chief blindfold his helpers; then they saw the three disappear with the chest behind a screen of grapevine-laden trees. Two hours later Lafitte returned alone. He was in a black mood and no one had the temerity to question him. It was supposed that he had caught one of his helpers trying to mark the location of his cache, and had killed them both. Some say that he led them back to the pit they had dug and filled up, made them reopen and enlarge it, and while they were bent down digging, shot them dead. Soon afterwards Lafitte and his followers went down together in a West India hurricane, and his crime-stained treasure still lies buried in its secret hiding place.

Yet to many, as I have intimated, that place has not been secret. It is under the old house. As faithfully as I can follow the tale, I shall relate an experience connected with that old house as it was told me by a Confederate veteran who has now passed on. For personal reasons I shall call him Major Walcart, though that was not his real name. The tale, however, is a genuine legend in that it has long been current in the vicinity of La Porte.

"It was on a February night back in the eighties," the Major used to say. "The early darkness of a murky day had overtaken me, and I was dead tired. I do not think mud ever lay deeper along the shore of Galveston Bay, or that an east wind ever blew more bleakly. When I came to a small stream I rode out into the open water, as the custom then was, to find shallow passage.

A full moon was rising out of the bay. Heavy clouds stretched just above it, and I remember the unearthly aspect of the blustering breakers in its cheerless light. The immensity and unfriendliness of the scene made me feel lonesome, and I think the horse shared my mood. By common consent we turned across before we had gone far enough from shore, and fell into the trench cut by the stream in the bottom of the bay.

"We were wretchedly wet as we scrambled up a clayey slope and gained the top of the bluff. A thin cry which I had not been sure was real when I first heard it now became insistent. It was like the wail of a child in mortal pain, and I confess that it reminded me of tales I had heard of the werewolf, which lures unwary travelers to their doom by imitating the cry of a human infant. By the uncertain light of the moon, which the next moment was cut off entirely, I saw that I had reached a kind of stable that crowned the bluff, and from this structure the uncanny summons seemed to come.

"The sounds were growing fainter, and I hesitated but a moment. Dismounting, I led my horse through the doorless entrance, and now the mystery was explained. Huddled together for warmth lay a flock of sleeping goats. A kid had rashly squeezed itself into the middle of the heap, and the insensate brutes were crushing its life out. I found the perishing little creature, and its flattened body came back to the full tide of life in my arms. Its warmth was grateful to my cold fingers, and I fondled it a moment before setting it down on the dry dirt floor.

"I tied my horse to a post that upheld the roof of the stable, and with saddle and blanket on my arm started toward the house, which I could make out in its quadrangle of oaks, not many yards distant. The horse whinnied protestingly as I left him, and when the moaning of the wind in the eaves smote my ears I was half in mind to turn back and bunk with the goats. It was a more forbidding sound than the hostile roar of the breakers had been in the bay.

"I called, but only the muddy waves incessantly tearing at the bluff made answer. I had scarcely hoped really to hear the sound of a human voice. The great double doors leading in from the front porch were barred, but the first window I tried yielded entrance. Striking a match, I found myself in a room that gave promise of comfort. Fat pine kindling lay beside the big fireplace, and dry chunks of solid oak were waiting to glow for me the whole night through.

"I was vaguely conscious that the brave fire I soon had going did not drive the chill from the air so promptly as it should, but my head was too heavy with sleep to be bothered. I spread my horse blanket quite close to the cheerful blaze, and with saddle for pillow and slicker for cover I abandoned myself to the luxury of rest.

"I do not know how long I had slept when I became aware of a steady gaze fixed on my face. The man was looking down on me, and no living creature ever stood so still. There was imperious command in the unblinking eyes, and yet I saw a sort of profound entreaty also.

"It was plain that the visitant had business with me. I arose, and together we left the room, passed its neighbor, and entered a third, a barren little apartment through whose cracks the wind came mercilessly. I think it was I who had opened the doors. My companion did not seem to move. He was merely present all the time.

" 'It is here,' he said, as I halted in the middle of the bare floor, 'that more gold lies buried than is good for any man. You have but to dig, and it is yours. You can use it; I cannot. However, it must be applied only to purposes of highest beneficence. Not one penny may be evilly or selfishly spent. On this point you must keep faith and beware of any failing. Do you accept?'

"I answered, 'Yes,' and the visitant was gone, and I was shivering with cold. I groped my way back to my fire, bumping into obstructions I had not found in my journey away from it. I piled on wood with a generous hand, and the flames leaped high. I watched the unaccountable shadows dance on the whitewashed walls, and marked how firebeams flickered across the warpings of the boards in the floor. Then I dozed off.

"I do not know how long I had been asleep when I felt the presence of the visitant again. The still reproach of his fixed eyes was worse than wrath. 'I need your help more than you can know,' he said, 'and you would fail me. The treasure is mine to give. I paid for it with the substance of my soul. I want you to have it. With it you can balance somewhat the burden of guilt I carry for its sake.'

"Again we made the journey to the spot where the treasure was buried, and this time he showed it to me. There were yellow coins, jeweled watches, women's bracelets, diamond rings, and strings of pearls. It was just such a trove as I had dreamed of when as a boy I had planned to dig for Lafitte's treasure, ex-

cept that the quantity of it was greater. With the admonition, 'Do not force me to come again,' my companion was gone, and once more I made my way back to the fire.

"This time I took up my saddle and blanket and went out to the company of my horse. The wind and the waves were wailing together, but I thought I saw a promise of light across the chilly bay, and never was the prospect of dawn more welcome. As I saddled up and rode off, the doleful boom of the muddy water at the foot of the bluff came to me like an echoed anguish."

But Lafitte does not appear to every one who spends a night in the house, and any person seeking the treasure from purely selfish motives is likely to rue his pains. A story is told of an acquisitive and enterprising man who came hundreds of miles with the purpose of helping himself to the chance of finding pirate gold, but who abruptly changed his mind after spending a night in the house. As Lafitte steadily pursues his object of finding a fit recipient for his dangerous gift, never succeeding, his disappointment is sometimes terrible, so they say, and some simple folk believe that when there is a particularly dolorous moan in the wash of the waves, it is the despair of the pirate finding voice in the wail of the waters.

LAFITTE LORE

BY J. O. WEBB

John Smith and W. C. Callihan of the old town of Liverpool, Brazoria County, are each eighty-four years old; each is sound in mind and body; and each has spent practically his entire life in the vicinity of Liverpool. These men speak familiarly of Warren D. C. Hall, of Lamar, and of Lafitte's lieutenants. The legendary material here given is based on their separate statements. However, the stories told by them coincide to a remarkable degree. Liverpool is situated on Chocolate Bayou, and is so near Galveston Island that the early history of the two places is closely related. Consequently Smith and Callihan are familiar with the lore bearing on Lafitte's life. What they have to say is not based so much on legends in general circulation as on the stories told them by Lafitte's associates. One of these followers of Lafitte was Jim Campbell, who, after the departure of his chief

from Galveston Island in 1821, settled on what became known as Campbell's Bayou. The other was an odd character called Captain Snyder.

No story of Lafitte proceeds very far without referring in some way to buried treasure. The lives led by the two strange characters just mentioned caused many to believe that they had stored away some of their chief's wealth. According to Smith and Callihan, these ex-associates of Lafitte never lacked money, although they were engaged in no profitable business. Long after the death of Jim Campbell, it was generally believed that his widow knew where money was buried but was unwilling to reveal the place.

Captain Snyder was likewise known to have plenty of money. He was engaged in carrying some kind of trade from the Brazos to Liverpool, for which he used a one-eyed mule, but he got little income from this occupation. His actions at times, too, were rather strange. Smith was often on the boat with him, and when they would approach Galveston Island, Snyder would frequently get off and go ashore. There he would go to a clump of bushes, and apparently try to get his bearings for some point.

Some of the buried treasure stories, however, are based on more direct information. In the fifties, according to the authorities already quoted, there appeared at the mouth of Chocolate Bayou a small vessel, which remained in that vicinity for several days. During the daytime it would go to the opposite side of the bay, and at night it would return to the near shore. This odd procedure aroused a little curiosity, but would doubtless have been soon forgotten had not an important discovery followed. A few days after the vessel had gone, Smith and Callihan paid a visit to the mouth of the Bayou and, to their surprise, found that excavations had been made. Beginning at the shore, a long trench had been opened, and at the end of this a large hole had been dug. Apparently, a chest of some kind had been taken out, for the imprint of the box—even to the handles—was plainly visible. As further evidence, there was lying to one side a broken earthen jar that had been sealed with sealing wax, and upon its fragments were imprints of coins.

A less realistic story is told of the region around what was called Dick's Camp, on Chocolate Bayou. A Mrs. Adams who lived in the vicinity had had a persistent dream of buried treasure. For three successive nights she had the same dream, and in these dreams she was told that \$100,000 in gold was buried near

Dick's Camp. The exact spot was to be found by sighting with three stakes due east from a certain point. Mrs. Adams was so impressed with the repetition of this dream that the third morning she and her son set out in search of the hidden treasure. On the way they were joined by Smith, who at first was not told the purpose of the excursion. On reaching the spot they did not find any stake set up, but they did find three china trees in a line running due east. The son, whose name was Brunner, began sighting and measuring, and finally he said, "Here it is."

"What?" asked Smith.

"\$100,000 in gold," replied Brunner.

Excavation was begun at once, but had not proceeded far when the treasure hunters dug into an oyster bed. Thinking there was little hope of finding treasure in that medium, the search was abandoned and, so far as is known, it has not been renewed.

Captain Snyder, who has already been mentioned, was a strange character. Those who knew him declare that he slept with one eye open, and that often he would cry out in his sleep, "Boys, the Spaniards are coming." He told many Lafitte stories. He had seen service with his chief on voyages against the Spanish. According to his description, these encounters with the Spaniards were bloody affairs. Blood ran off the decks like water, and when the fight was over, the enemy dead were thrown into the sea. One of the most remarkable incidents related by Snyder, however, pertained to the storm of 1819. Lafitte, with his four ships, was in the bay when the hurricane arose. The storm became so intense that he decided to go with his vessels to the high seas and take his chances there. He headed toward the channel, but, as the wind was blowing from the east, he was unable to get out that way. He therefore came back and drove his vessels straight across the island in six or seven feet of water.

THE PIRATE SHIP OF THE SAN BERNARD A LEGEND OF THEODOSIA BURR ALLSTON

BY J. W. MORRIS

Rumor of a pirate ship wrecked at the mouth of the San Bernard River, Brazoria County, has persisted for more than a century. Colonel Hunnington, who is seventy-eight years old, and

who has lived near the mouth of the San Bernard for sixty years, heard of the wrecked privateer from the McNeill family, which established itself on the Bernard in 1822. Colonel Hunnington says that the ship was wrecked *about* 1816. It had put into the river to escape a great hurricane. The crew buried their golden pillage, some say ten million dollars, before the water rose to their destruction. When the storm passed, only one pirate remained alive. Colonel Hunnington says that the buried money has never been found, and he believes that it still lies where pirate hands placed it more than a hundred years ago. Captain William Sterling, who died a few years ago at the age of eighty, gave me corroborative evidence concerning the pirate ship. He said that during his boyhood he knew a solitary fisherman on Matagorda Peninsula who claimed to be the sole survivor of the wrecked privateer. He often showed the boy gold coins, which he called Spanish doubloons.

A wild and fascinating legend of the storm-wrecked ship was told me many years ago by Doctor Sid Williams, who was then a practicing physician near the mouth of Old Caney in Matagorda County. Mr. Jacob Smith told the same story. It is ascribed to a chief of the Carancaguas Indians, who spoke broken English and often visited the white settlers. He said that his tribe had always lived along the coast—a fact substantiated by history. A small band, of which he was chief, lived in the timber a few miles from the San Bernard River, along which clear to its mouth grew live oak trees and tough salt cedars. One day a great storm came out of the Gulf; the wind blew with fury that increased as the darkness came, and the waters rose upon the land. The chief and his people climbed into the salt cedars, which bent with the wind but did not break. After two days the storm passed and the tidal waters fell back. Many of the huge live oaks were destroyed utterly, and the remainder were so twisted and broken that they soon died. Since that time there has been no forest along the lowest reaches of the San Bernard.

As soon as the storm abated, the chief went from his camp to the bank of the river, where a pale-face lived alone. He found the hermit's body tied with a rope to the splintered stump of a tree. There the waves had overwhelmed him. The chief also saw, partly in the water and partly on the land, the wreckage of a great ship. As he looked, he heard a faint voice. He followed the sound to what had been a cabin, and saw the ghost-like form of a white woman chained to the side. She stood with

difficulty, and presently fainted, perhaps from weariness, perhaps from fright at seeing an Indian savage, for the chief made a habit of wearing deer antlers on his head. He broke the chain from the wall and carried her to the shore and laid her on the sand. He bathed her face in cold water, and she revived. She told him that her father had been a great chief away back somewhere, but that he had been misunderstood and had had to leave his country. Her husband was governor, she said, of a great state. She had been in a ship on the ocean when pirates destroyed the ship and killed all aboard it except herself. She was put on the pirate ship, which, returning to its Gulf headquarters, had been encountered by the storm and driven inland. There was, she said, a chest of gold on the wrecked ship, but the Indian could not find it. He did find the captain and some of the crew lashed to parts of the wreckage, dead. The chief made every effort to revive the woman, but she grew steadily weaker. She took from her neck a chain and locket and gave them to him. She began to sing, very faintly and beautifully. The Great Spirit spread a white wigwam around her so that the Indian could not see her. The voice sang on into the night, more and more faintly. When the morning star rose, the voice was still. At daylight the white wigwam was gone, and the woman lay dead. The Indian dug a grave with broken pieces of the wrecked ship, laid her there, and covered the grave with a broken door from the wreck. No man knows where that grave lies.

The Indian took the locket and chain to some white men, who read on the locket the word *Theodosia* and found within pictures of a fine-looking man and a little boy. Long afterward coast dwellers told this story in explanation of the mysterious fate of Theodosia Burr Allston.¹

¹Theodosia Burr Allston, daughter of Aaron Burr and wife of Joseph Allston, Governor of South Carolina, 1812-1814, set sail from Charleston in December of 1813 on the *Patriot* bound for New York. The vessel was never heard of again, and it is supposed to have been wrecked off the coast of Hatteras. "Some forty years afterward, however," according to Lamb's *Biographical Dictionary of the United States*, Vol. I, pp. 76-77, "a romantic story found credence and went the rounds of the press, to the effect that a dying sailor in Detroit had confessed that he had been one of a crew of mutineers who, in January, 1813, took possession of the '*Patriot*' . . . and compelled the crew and passengers to walk the plank." *The New International Encyclopedia* says that "a tradition of uncertain origin" has the *Patriot* to have been taken by pirates.—Editor.

LEGENDARY ORIGINS OF TEXAS
FLOWERS, NAMES, AND
STREAMS

AN INDIAN LEGEND OF THE BLUE BONNET

BY MRS. BRUCE REID

[Considering the popularity of Texas blue bonnets, it is rather strange that legend concerning the flower is not more widespread. Corroborative versions prove conclusively that there is a legend. The first version is supplied by Mrs. Mattie Austin Hatcher, of the University of Texas; it was given her by a Mrs. Lida Lea of Austin.

When the first Spanish missionaries came to the Southwest, they brought with them the seeds of a blue flower which grew originally on the hillsides of Jerusalem. They planted the seeds first within the walls of the mission gardens; they sprouted, and, though the soil was alien, the flowers grew and bloomed and soon spread far beyond the mission lands. Thus came the blue bonnet to Texas.

Another version of the legend was given to Mrs. Hatcher by a Mexican lady from the City of Mexico. She said that she had always heard that the flower came to the Southwest in this manner: There was a terrible pestilence in the land of the Aztecs. The prayers of the priests and the pleadings of the people had brought no relief. At length the voice of the god to whom they prayed proclaimed that a living sacrifice of some sinless human being must be made to atone for the wickedness of the people. A certain Aztec maiden offered to make the sacrifice. Her offer was accepted. When she went up to the altar on the hillside, her little bonnet dropped from her head without being noticed, and the next morning the ground around the altar was covered with flowers in the pattern and color of her bonnet, each splotched with the hue of her spilt blood. The pestilence passed. Now the Mexicans call the flower *el conejo* (cotton-tail rabbit), but in Texas it is the blue bonnet.

This legend is very characteristic of the Southwest. Mr. J. H. Tipps of San Antonio saw a cross high on a hill near Roma, Texas. He asked an old Mexican why it was there. The Mexican said that it was to commemorate the life of a girl who had saved the community by prayer. A terrible drouth was ruining the country, the most terrible ever known. There was not a sprig of forage for animal kind to eat; the people were starving. Then the girl went up on the mountain to pray for rain. For a long, long time she prayed. She prayed until she was no longer conscious. Then it rained, but the girl died before she could be brought down. She gave her life, and the cross was erected on top of her Mount of Olives.

Comparative folk-lorists will associate the springing of the blue bonnet from human blood with the Greek legends of the hyacinth and the narcissus. It is related, too, to the legend of the bleeding heart shamrock, said to have first appeared in Saint Roche's Cemetery at New Orleans, from the blood spattered on some clover by a lover who stabbed himself to death over the grave of his sweetheart.

The legend told by Mrs. Reid must have come from the Comanches rather than from the Cherokees (who did, however, bring with them to Texas the legend of the Cherokee Rose). The Cherokees were in Texas only twenty

years, and then hardly into the blue bonnet lands. See "The Last of the Cherokees in Texas," by Albert Woldert, *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, issued by the Oklahoma Historical Society, June, 1923, pp. 179-226.—EDITOR.]

The teller of legends often adds details to his narrative in order to give it reality. I do not pretend that all of the details in the following legend are as I heard them, but something like this legend was told me by the late "Jack" Mitchell, whose people lived for fifty years among the Indians of the piney-woods and cross-timbers of Texas. My understanding is that the legend came to him either from the Cherokees or the Comanches. There is another Indian legend about the blue bonnet. It has to do with a fight among warriors in the happy hunting grounds, during the course of which they knocked from the sky chunks of blue that fell to the earth and assumed the form of the blue bonnet.

There had been a great flood followed by a greater drouth, and then on the drouth came a bitter winter of sleet and ice. Even in the far south, where the cold breath of winter is seldom felt, the woods and grasses of the coastal plains were sheathed with a rattling icy armor. All the game was dead or gone. The Indian people were starving to death. A dreadful disease had broken out among them. It was clear that the Great Spirit had indeed turned his face away from his children. Day and night the medicine men chanted their incantations, danced to the music of the sacred tomtoms, and mutilated their bodies in agony for a promise from the angered Spirit. At last the Great Spirit spoke. This was his message. In penance for the wrong-doing that had brought the evils upon the tribe there must be a burnt offering of its most valued possession, and the ashes of this offering must be scattered to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south.

Now among those who sat in discreet and becoming silence, beyond the anxious warriors gathered about the fires, was a little maid, too young for the heavy burdens of Indian womanhood to have yet begun to fall upon her small shoulders. Hidden among the folds of her scanty garments she tightly clasped a tiny figure of white fawn-skin, rudely shaped into the likeness of a papoose, with long braids of black horse-hair, and eyes, nose, and mouth painted on it with the juice of various berries. This figure the little maid had robed in a skirt, mantle, and high head-dress, out of the feathers of a bird of the rarest of hues in nature—the big, proudly crested, black-collared bird that calls "Jay! Jay!" through the topmost branches of the tallest and largest trees. Very, very

beautiful were the feathers of this bird, soft, richly blue as the late afternoon skies when they clear after showers which have lasted through a day; and as an older mother loves her living child, so did the little maid love her deer-skin baby. Almost would she rather have died than have parted with it. Well she knew that it was by far the most precious of things owned by the tribe; and her heart was very heavy indeed for the rest of that day, and the part of a night that she lay beside her mother in their tepee, sleepless for that she saw her duty so clearly.

At last she arose, and stooping to lift from the smouldering fire within the tepee a bit of wood, one end of which was a glowing coal, she slipped out into the night. Under the twinkling, frosty stars she knelt, and prayed that her offering might be accepted and the fact of the acceptance made known to her.

Then blinking her eyes to keep back the tears, which an Indian child early learns must never be shed, she made a fire of twigs and grasses, and thrust her beloved papoose deep down into the glowing heart of the blaze, till the last bit of skin and shred of feather were consumed to ashes. The ashes she carefully scooped up in the hollow of her hand and scattered, to the east and the west, to the north and the south. Then putting out what remained of the fire, she patted the earth smooth and flat again.

As she did this last she felt beneath her palms something as fine and soft as the plumage with which she had clothed her doll—something that had not been in that place upon the ground when she cleared it to make her little fire. Believing that this might be the sign for which she had prayed, she would have picked up what lay against her hand, but she found it to be rooted in the soil.

So, returning to the tepee, she waited until morning and then with her mother, whom she told of what she had done, she went to the place where she had burned the little deer-skin papoose. But all about, as far as the ashes had traveled upon the early spring night breeze, was nothing but a blanket of such flowers as had never before enriched the landscape; and their thick tassels, in so great a profusion as nearly to hide the tender green of their leaves, were of the same deep, deep blue as the feathers of the bird that calls "Jay! Jay!" through the high tree-tops.

When the chief of the medicine men heard the story told by the mother and daughter, and saw for himself the expanse of blue flowers, he called the tribe together, and solemnly informed them that the command of the Great Spirit had been obeyed and

the sacrifice accepted, and that the evil which had for so long pursued them would now be at an end.

It was even so. At once the plains and the open places, between lines and clumps of trees, began to renew their verdure, scattered over with gayly colored wild flowers; the birds and four-footed things came back to raise their families; and the tribal crops, natural and cultivated, gave every sign of abundant harvest.

In place of the name the little maid had borne, another was given her, a name of many musically flowing syllables, the meaning of which, in the red men's tongue, was "she who dearly loves her people."

Because the great shaggy animals, whose herds of old thundered across the far-flung prairies, were so fond of its succulent green abundance, the blue flower was called an Indian name which the pale-faces translated into "buffalo clover." After the manner of its class of plant, it bore prodigious quantities of fertile seed and rapidly extended the limits of its growth.

HOW THE WATER LILIES CAME IN THE SAN MARCOS RIVER¹

BY BELLA FRENCH SWISHER

[This sentimental legend is not an invention of Bella French Swisher's, who was given to turning legends to literary uses, but not to manufacturing them. I have heard of it from a lady who grew up on the San Marcos and was familiar with the story of the Indian lovers forty-five years ago. It is akin to another Indian legend of the same flower, *Castalia elegans*, according to which a star maiden fell in love with the red people of the earth and came down to live among them in the form of a water lily. This latter legend is quoted from the Grolier Society's *The Book of Knowledge*, by Kate Peel Anderson in the *Houston Chronicle*, September 16, 1923, page 8. The San Marcos version is probably appropriated from some other stream. —EDITOR.]

¹Reprinted from *The American Sketch Book (Texas Pioneer Magazine)*, Vol. I (Vol. IV), 1879, p. 146; "republished by request" in Vol. II (Vol. V), 1880, pp. 91-92.

All pearly and bright, by the day and the night,
(Beautiful, beautiful river)
Reflecting the sky and the clouds passing by,
Flows the San Marcos forever.

The lilies arise in their damp paradise,
And they open their petals in glory;
But on every leaf is written, in brief,
Such a sweet little Indian story!

Far back in a day when the red men held sway,
On the banks of the beautiful river,
An Indian maid of the world grew afraid,
And gave back her sweet life to the Giver.

A princess was she of a royal degree,
Who had loved far beneath her high station;
She suffered the blame, the sorrow and shame,
Like a maid of some wealthier nation.

But her heart-strings were torn, when one bright April morn,
He was slain—her most worshipful lover.
On the green banks he lay, all the long, weary day,
With only the sky for a cover.

But just at the night, when the star-beams were bright,
Her despair gave her power to sever
The terrible bands, that imprisoned her hands,
And she fled to the banks of the river,

To the spot where he lay 'mid the shadows so gray,
Colder still than the bright pearly water.
Just a prayer and a breath, and they met there in death,
The slain lover and the chieftain's mad daughter.

But the breath and the prayer, as a seedling fell there,
Though the waters were ever so chilly.
They discovered her not, but morn found on the spot
Where she died, a white water-lily.

Since then, waxen and white, in the sun's golden light,
And as well in the evening glooming,
May ever be seen, 'mid their foliage green
In the water, the white lilies blooming.

And e'er since that day, tradition doth say,
Have the Indians shunned the fair river;
Though pearly and bright, by day and by night,
Flows the San Marcos forever.

THE LEGEND OF EAGLE LAKE

Reprinted from the *Morning Star*, Houston, 1839

[The following legend (reference to which was contributed by Mr. E. W. Winkler, Librarian of the University of Texas) is taken from the first daily newspaper of Texas, the *Morning Star*, Houston, June 13, 1839, Vol. I, No. 56, pp. 2-3, which in turn reprinted it from the *Richmond Telescope*. A week after the *Morning Star* printed the legend, the *Telegraph and Texas Register* reprinted it, June 19, 1839. A few typographical errors have been corrected in this reprinting and some of the original punctuation has been

redistributed. The legend of how Eagle Lake got its name has persisted down to the present day, but this version is probably the oldest that we shall ever find.

A version with many changes was published in *The American Sketch Book* (*Texas Pioneer Magazine*), Austin, Vol. VII, No. 2 (1881), pp. 99-102. The article in which it is embodied is unsigned, but the legend itself is said to be "fresh from the pen of Mrs. F. Darden" [Mrs. F. A. D. Darden], and it is apparently quoted from some other publication. According to this version, one of the lovers, Sonoto, was old and fierce; the other, Gray Cloud, was youthful and bold. The tree that the rivals climbed was a cottonwood. Gray Cloud reached the nest first and had grasped one of the eaglets to bring it down when he was assaulted by the fierce parent eagle. Sonoto seized the opportunity to hurl his opponent to the ground a hundred feet below. Out in the lake were the Indians, watching the contest from their canoes. When she saw her lover's fate, the maiden, Forest Flower, began the death chant; then she leaped into the water and was drowned. Later the two lovers were buried side by side at the foot of the tree.

The Eagle Lake *Headlight*, according to its editor, Mr. Bruce W. McCarty, printed in 1903 a version of the legend written by Mrs. Emma Duke, now dead. A year ago another version, in verse form, "written for the Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce" by Mrs. H. W. Carothers, formerly of Eagle Lake but now of Houston, and printed on a folio leaflet for popular distribution, was sent me by the mayor of Eagle Lake. It shows all the crassitude of modern "boosting." In it a smug young Indian gets the eaglet and presents it to the maiden—his success an emblem of "the spirit of endeavor" that characterizes the modern "progressive" inhabitants of Eagle Lake! Mr. Louis Landa, who is Oldright fellow at the University of Texas and whose home is at Eagle Lake, says that the legend in one form or another is common in the vicinity.

Thus may be traced over a period of almost a century the progress of what was originally a very simple, a very dramatic, and a beautiful legend.—EDITOR.]

Eagle Lake is a beautiful sheet of water, about seven miles in circumference, and is connected by a bayou bearing the same name—a kind of outlet—with the Colorado. That body of land through which Eagle Lake Bayou passes may be said to be without exceptions the most fertile in the world. Besides its qualities of unsurpassed fruitfulness, there is no part of the known western hemisphere where the common grape grows so abundantly or abounds so spontaneously.

A large sycamore tree is shown on the west shore of the lake, where a large eagle, the *Falco Washingtonianis*, built her nest. The remains of the nest are there, consisting of branches of trees and tufts of grass, which hang fully 110 feet from the surface of the earth below. The bird was called by the inhabitants of the country the king eagle, and its nest was considered inaccessible.

The "king eagle's nest" and "eagle's water's wave" were proverbial phrases with the various tribes of Indians in western Texas.

The daughter of an Indian chief—a beautiful, dark-eyed girl—was wooed by two young warriors of equal pretensions to consideration among the Indians. Each was anxious to obtain the hand of the fawn-like damsel of the woods, and each, no doubt, loved with all the ardor and fervency, simplicity and sincerity, of a rude youth of the forest. To say which should become the husband of his daughter was a great perplexity to the mind of the maiden's father. He had his political interests to strengthen and his views to carry out, as have greater men in greater nations. After many cogitations he resolved upon the following plan by which the suitors themselves could give a decision.

It was in the summer season, and the "great eagle" had hatched her young. The old chief's plan was no more nor less than that the young man of the two in question who could bring him the young eagles alive, by a certain time, without cutting down the tree, should have his daughter. The proposition was accepted, and the rival lovers set out to procure, if possible, the young eagles. Each prepared himself with a raw-hide rope to throw over some limb of the tree, which could be fastened and facilitate the ascent. They both arrived alone and about the same time at the king eagle's tree.

Each had precisely the other's means to come at the young eagles, and the other's means seemed to each so sure to succeed that neither would consent for the other to make the first attempt; whereupon arose a dispute, a quarrel, and a fight, which terminated in the immediate death of one, and the infliction of a mortal wound upon the other, who died a few days after the combat upon the spot where they had fought, being unable from debility to leave it.

Meantime the maiden, becoming anxious for their return, and apprehending some such catastrophe, seized her father's spear and hastened to the place. She arrived there in the afternoon of the day on which the last one of the two lovers breathed his last. Frantic with frenzy and despair, she plunged the lance into her own breast, and died as she had always lived, in the language of the Indian who related the story, "the wife of no one."

Ever afterwards the spot was regarded with a superstitious veneration by every tribe of Indians to whom was related their hapless story. Once in every seven moons the young men and

maidens assembled to consecrate the spot, and each time they erected a cenotaph of flowers to their memory. Thus Eagle Lake took a name by which it is now known and will ever be.

THE HOLY SPRING OF FATHER MARGIL AT NACOGDOCHES

BY E. G. LITTLEJOHN

[Fray Don Antonio Margil de Jesús was one of the most active of Spanish missionaries in Texas during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, preaching and founding missions. Legend has remembered him well. The Margil Vine is named for him, the legend of which is told in *History and Legends of The Alamo and Other Missions*, by Miss Adina de Zavala, under the title "Legend of the First Christmas at the Alamo." But the most remarkable Margil legend—and this told by Mr. Littlejohn is but a variant of it—is that connected with the origin of the San Antonio River. It has been realistically told by Major Charles Merritt Barnes in his *Combats and Conquests of Immortal Heroes*, pages 76-79, and retold by Mrs. Wright.¹ According to Major Barnes, he heard it in 1875 from a venerable San Antonian of Spanish blood.

Father Margil was with a company of priests and soldiers spying out the land when they were almost overcome by the heat and drouth. At length they came into a valley where there was green grass for the horses but not a drop of water. The priests kneeled under a tree to pray for water, and as he prayed Father Margil's eye fell on bunches of mustang grapes above him. With praises to God, he began to climb for the juicy fruit. While he was reaching for a cluster, he fell. In falling, he swung to the grapevine and somehow uprooted it with a sudden jerk. Then from the hole left by the root a plenteous and refreshing spring of water gushed out. Thus was the origin of what is now called the San Antonio River.

Finally, at the very moment of his death, which was in the City of Mexico, August 2, 1726, all the mission bells in Texas, so legend runs, rang out of their own accord, without hands.²—EDITOR.]

The story of the "Holy Spring of Father Margil," as it is called in the country around Nacogdoches, was told by H. C. Fuller in the *Galveston News* more than twenty years ago. The spring is situated just back of the city cemetery of Nacogdoches, overlooking La Nana Creek. Every other spring in the neighborhood has gone dry, but this one has never been known to cease its

¹Wright, Mrs. S. J., *San Antonio de Béxar*, Austin, 1916, pp. 121-122.

²De Zavala, Adina, *History and Legends of the Alamo and Other Missions*, page 150.

abundant flow. By some devout people its waters are thought to have healing power. The story of its miraculous origin runs as follows.

In 1716, or thereabout, the zealous Franciscan missionary, Father Margil, visited the Nacogdoches country, preaching to the Indians and projecting missions. His work accomplished, he and a few devoted followers started back for San Antonio, then the headquarters of the missionary movement. It was midsummer, the heat was terrific, and a burning drouth had made the whole country as dry as a rock. As Father Margil's band traveled on and found no water, they began to suffer from thirst, but they felt sure that they would come to water in La Nana Creek. Imagine their disappointment upon arriving to find the bed as parched as the banks.

Overcome with heat, thirst, and fatigue, the entire party, with the exception of Father Margil, sat dejectedly on the ground. Taking his walking staff, Father Margil set out down the creek in search of water. About four hundred yards from where his companions lamented, he observed signs of moisture upon a high bluff overlooking the creek; here he knelt and prayed that like Moses he might be allowed to find water. Then with full faith he arose and smote with his staff the rock whereon he stood. Immediately there issued forth a living stream of cool, clear water. He tasted of it and hastily ran for his companions. Then they all drank and went on their way rejoicing at their miraculous deliverance.

INDIAN BLUFF ON CANADIAN RIVER¹

BY L. W. PAYNE, JR.

This story, or legend, came to me in 1911 from a University of Texas student named W. Higgins, who got it from a guide called "Doctor" Barton on a camping trip up the Canadian River near the Oklahoma boundary line. Mr. Higgins admits that he has used his imagination somewhat in writing the legend, but says that its basis is real legend.

"Well," began the "Doctor," "see that tall rocky cliff over there? There's kind of a legen' 'bout that. Seems like durin' early times

¹Note the striking resemblance in plot to Lanier's ballad "The Revenge of Hamish."—Editor.

there was a man an' his family a-livin' out here on this side the river, not so fur away. He had a mighty beautiful little baby, 'bout two years old. Besides her, there was three or four older children; then their ma and pa. There was lots of Indians livin' on th' other side the river, near the bluff; and some lived in the cliff. Yes, they did. But I think they just kept their bows and arrers in there, for I don't see how they could breathe good. An' in this day an' time everybody's tryin' to get all the fresh air they can. But maybe them kind of people didn't need air. Well, anyhow, some of them Indians was on mighty good terms with these white folks. One old Indian in partikler. He used to climb down the cliff an' come 'cross the river in his boat to see his neighbors. He used to take th' little two-year-old in his canoe for a ride, sometimes. Mighty queer they would let him do it, but they did anyhow.

"One day the white settler an' the Indian had a fuss. What 'bout, I don't zactly recollect; but seems like the white man hit the Indian with a piece of wood. He had tried to make the Indian do some dirty work for him, an' when the red-skin refused, the white man beat him nearly to death. The Indian swore revenge. He went home terr'ble mad. He didn't go to see the settlers for a long time. They kind-a missed him too.

"But one day they looked out and saw him a-crossing the river. They didn't know whe'r to be glad or sorry. The Indian dragged the canoe up on the shore and came straight to their hut. He looked happy and glad to see them. They was glad to see him too, I can tell you.

"Finally he took the little girl and started down to the canoe. He pushed 'cross the river. It took him a long time, for you all know this here river is pretty wide. He climbed the cliff with the child in his arms. He'd never done this before. The white man got scared. He called loud to the chief to come back; for an answer the Indian turned 'round and looked at the man with a horrible grin. Then he climbed on to the top of the cliff. When he reached the top, he stopped, threw up his hand to the anxious folks on the other side, and with a deadly Indian whoop, leaped over the cliff into this here river.

"'What did the child's parents do?' you ask. Nothin'; there wasn't nothin' to do. The Indian and baby was both dead. But the folks moved away and never was heard of agin. We call the place Indian Bluff, and now you know why."

HOW MEDICINE MOUNDS OF HARDEMAN COUNTY GOT THEIR NAME

BY L. W. PAYNE, JR.

This legend was contributed by a University of Texas student named W. A. Darter, from Hardeman County, a number of years ago. He says that though some of the details are "made up" the main incidents are based on legendary material current in the country of the Mounds.

The Medicine Mounds, as they are called today, are located in Hardeman County, about nine miles southeast of Quanah. They are four in number and extend north and south in a direct line. The tallest one stands to the north two thousand feet above the surrounding country. The lowest one stands to the south of the other three, fifteen hundred feet lower than the tallest one. The other two are of such heights that if a line were determined by their peaks, it would pass through the top points of the two extreme ones. To the west of these mounds, running almost north and south, is a deep-worn trail said by the old settlers to have been a buffalo trail. About these mounds and about this trail especially are to be found today many flint arrow-heads that the Indians let fly at the buffaloes as they passed back and forth on these hills.

On the top of the tallest mound, there is a great, flat, overhanging rock. This rock, the Indians used to say, was the dwelling place of a good spirit. From this position one can see the surrounding country for miles and miles; and it was on this account that the good spirit took up its abode there. While the red man was in search of game, the good spirit would direct his arrows straight toward the mark; and while he was on the war path, this good spirit would also help him to defeat his enemies.

Now, during early days, a tribe of Indians were roaming over this rich country, killing big game with their arrows and big fish with their spears. And in this tribe, as in every tribe, was a medicine man. This medicine man had a beautiful daughter who had been asked to become the first squaw of the brave young chief. But she was sick with a fever, and she became worse as time passed on. Her father had done all he could for her. He had driven away all the evil spirits that, by his many devices, he could drive away, and at the same time he had brought in all the good spirits that he could in order that they might help her;

but his beautiful daughter only grew worse. He had mixed his different medicines in every way that he could think of, but all in vain. At last he despaired of saving her. He went outside of the little wigwam, squatted down, and prayed to the good spirit that dwelt upon the high rock.

Instantly almost, the expression of his face changed from gloom to hope. The idea had come to him that if he would but mix his medicine on the rock, the remedy would in some way receive the power of the good spirit. He returned for one more glance at his daughter, and then, pulling his bright-colored blanket about him, left for the high rock.

It was not long before he returned. He found his daughter resting well. He felt her face; it was not so hot as it had been when he left. He stopped and looked. Had he lost her? Then he thought of the good spirit and the medicine. It was his last hope. He gave it.

Outside the wigwam, the medicine man once more drew his blanket tightly about him and squatted down. He prayed for many hours—he knew not how many. It was nearing evening when he heard a faint voice calling him by name; it was the voice of his daughter. He rose as if he had been on springs; and in two steps, he was by her side. The fever had left her while he was away, and she had simply fallen into a deep sleep. The good spirit had saved her.

From this time on, the medicine man did not forget the good spirit on the high rock; and it is said that every year thereafter he went regularly to these mounds in order to instil some of this good spirit into his medicine. From this habit of the medicine man, these hills have been called the Medicine Mounds.

THE NAMING OF METHEGLIN CREEK, BELL COUNTY

BY ALEX. DIENST

Metheglin Creek of Bell County is the only creek, so far as I can learn, in the United States bearing its name. The account of how it got its unique name I have derived from old-timers familiar with the naming, and just this year the facts as given below were confirmed to me by the son of the pioneer Morrison.

One of the oldest pioneer settlers of Bell County was a ranchman named Morrison. He settled in the extreme northwest part

of Bell County, and his land extended into Coryell County. His home was close to an unnamed creek. Like many other pioneers of unexceptionable character, he was inclined to imbibe too freely at times. His wife never called him by any other name than "Honey," a fact well known to the neighbors. One day his wife asked "Honey" to fetch her a bucket of water from the creek. He was pretty well "shot" when he leaned over to fill the bucket, and fell into the creek. A waggish neighbor who witnessed the accident instantly christened the creek "Metheglin"—a mixture of honey and water. And Metheglin Creek has been the name ever since.

Metheglin was a favorite improvised drink of Texas pioneers. It was a mixture of honey and water, boiled, fermented, and then spiced to suit.

HOW DEAD HORSE CANYON GOT ITS NAME

BY VICTOR J. SMITH

This brief account of a name was secured from Mr. E. E. Townsend, sheriff of Brewster County. Shortly after 1880 General Geno, of the United States Army, and a party of surveyors were making their way down the Rio Grande when they entered the upper mouth of a rugged canyon. To proceed with their horses meant a detour of many miles via Fort Stockton. To continue travel directly meant that they must abandon horses and use the river for transportation. It was finally decided to proceed down the river on rafts. In order to prevent their mounts from falling into the hands of Indians and being used in forays against the whites, the exploring party shot all their horses, some thirty or forty head. To this day the rugged canyon through which the Rio Grande winds its way for several hundred miles above Del Rio is called Dead Horse Canyon.

HOW THE BRAZOS RIVER GOT ITS NAME

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

The Spanish word *brazo* means arm. The word, like its English equivalent, has a wide pictorial use; thus the Spanish speak of *un brazo* (an arm) of the sea, and as applied to streams the word

may mean fork or branch. The complete name of the great Texas river as given by the Spanish was Los Brazos de Dios—The Arms of God. The name is remarkable, and in attempting to explain its origin legend has been no less remarkable. Old histories have contributed to the legend. At last, the history of the naming of the stream is clear; yet the name itself has something of mystery that will always provoke speculation.

According to Miss Eleanor Claire Buckley,¹ when the Spaniards of the Aguayo Expedition in 1621 struck what is now called Little River, in Bell County, they called it "Espíritu Santo (Holy Ghost), having reached it on the eve of Pentecost. As will be remembered, the Brazos had, in 1690, been given the name of Espíritu Santo or Colorado by De León, who, however, had struck it before its branching (*Diario*, entry for May 14). In the next expedition, 1691, Massanet, though he knew that it had been called the Espíritu Santo, named it the San Francisco Solano (*Diario*, entry for July 24); while Terán, 'though the natives called it the Colorado,' named it the San Geronimo (*Demarcación*, entry for July 25). Espinosa and Ramón, in 1716, crossed Little River just above its junction with the Brazos. The former did not give it any name; the latter called it la Trinidad. Both of them called the Brazos proper la Trinidad, thinking doubtless that it was the river that De León had named thus in 1690 (*Diario* and *Derrotero*, entries for June 14). Rivera called it the 'Colorado o de los Brazos de Dios' (*Diario*, entry for August 30)." "It may be noted," adds Dr. Bolton, "that the name los Brazos de Dios was applied to the Little River and to the main Brazos, and not to the main Brazos and the Little Brazos."

But why the arms *de Dios*? asks legend. I have heard that Corpus Christi was named through belief that the sacred words would act as a protection against harm to the inhabitants of the place. Probably the old custom, still maintained in Catholic countries, of giving holy or sainted names had its origin in some such belief. Many other streams in Texas than the Brazos were given holy names; as, the Trinidad (Trinity), the Navidad (Nativity), and the Arroyo de las Benditas Animas (Creek of the Blessed Souls). Thrall says that the Trinidad and Navidad were so named because they were discovered on Trinity Sunday and Christmas day respectively.² He offers no authority.

¹In a note to "The Aguayo Expedition into Texas and Louisiana, 1719-1722," Texas State Historical Association *Quarterly*, Vol. XV, p. 39.

²Thrall, H. S., *A History of Texas*, New York, 1876, p. 37.

The version of the Brazos legend to be quoted presently from Mollie E. Moore Davis' *Under the Man-Fig* goes back at least a century to Austin's colonists, who, in all likelihood, derived it from the Spanish. It is probably the source of all the other versions and seems to be by far the best known. Incidentally, it appears in a book replete with folk-lore—one of the half dozen best Texas novels. The scene of *Under the Man-Fig* is Columbia, on the Brazos River, in Brazoria County. Now, among the oldest inhabitants of Columbia is Mr. J. P. Underwood, whose mother was one of the "first three hundred" of Austin's colonists. Acting upon a request, Mrs. V. M. Taylor of Angleton secured from Mr. Underwood his version of how the Brazos got its name. Mrs. Taylor writes:

"Hostile Indians were pursuing a body of Indians under the care of the Catholics who were trying to reach the Tockanhono, 'mighty water of the Tejas.' They reached it in time to gain the opposite shore, but the hostiles trying to follow were swept away by a mighty current. The joy of the padre and company was expressed by their calling the Tockanhono (Indian name) 'Los Brazos de Dios'—The Arms of God. Mr. Underwood gave me the account as above, saying that it is *the true version of the origin of Los Brazos as he heard it from old settlers of Austin's colonies.*"

It will be noted that Mr. Underwood says nothing of the "mission" that figures so largely in Mrs. Davis' account. There was no Spanish mission on the Brazos; Nuestra Señora de la Luz was a mission on the not distant Trinity, and at it there was a miraculous escape, but from fire, not from water.³ The mission is but ambiguously hinted in a song entitled "Los Brazos de Dios,"⁴ written years ago by Mrs. Laura Bryan Parker, formerly of Houston, now of Washington City. Another poetic version,⁵ printed in

³Captain Rafael Martínez Pacheco, 1763, escaped unseen and unscorched from the presidio in which he was besieged. According to Mrs. Mattie Austin Hatcher, Archivist in History at the University of Texas, the legend is to be pieced out from the Bexar archives. For some facts of the case, see Bolton, *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, pp. 111-112.

⁴For a copy of the song, I am indebted to Mrs. V. M. Taylor of Angleton.

⁵"The Arms of God" by Claude M. Girardeau of Galveston, in *The Texas Magazine*, Houston, May, 1897, II, 431-434. About this time Mrs. Davis' books seem to have been popular with readers of *The Texas Magazine*, two reviews of her work having appeared in it during the preceding twelve months.

1897, makes use of the mission, but the details of this poem seem to have been taken entirely from Mrs. Davis' narrative. It may be, after all, that the mission is borrowed from the San Saba, and that the fifth and last version of the legend given in this compilation is the oldest of all versions.

It is to be observed that in its lower reaches the Brazos does not come down with a sudden sweep like a mountain canyon, a fact that would still further indicate a borrowing from some up-land stream, such as the San Saba or higher Colorado.

But it is high time to get to Mrs. Davis' complete, if somewhat belletristic, tale.⁶

II

THE MIRACULOUS ESCAPE

"The name of the river is *Los Brazos de Dios*, which is to say, The Arms of God.

"The bed of it is very deep; and the color of the water—when it creeps sluggishly along between its banks, so shallow in places that the blue heron may wade it without wetting his knees—is the color of tarnished brass. But when it comes roaring down from the far-away Redlands, a solid foam-crested wall, leaping upward a foot a minute, and spreading death and destruction into the outlying lowlands, then it is as red as spilled blood.

"On its banks, more than a century and a half ago, a handful of barefoot Franciscan friars, who had prayed and fought their way across the country from Mexico, founded the Presidio of St. Jago, and corralled within the boundary walls a flock of *Yndios reducidos*.

"There were the stately church, cloistered and towered and rose-windowed—a curious flower of architecture abloom in the savage wilderness—and the blockhouse with its narrow loopholes, and the hut into which the Indian women were thrust at night under lock and key.

"The mighty forest and open prairies around teemed with *Yndios bravos*, who hated the burly, cassocked, fighting monks, and their own Christianized tribesmen.

"These came, in number like the leaves of the live oak, to hurl themselves against the Presidio. And, after many days of hard

⁶Davis (Mrs.), M. E. M., *Under the Man-Fig*, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Boston, 1895, pp. 1-3. Reprinted by permission.

fighting, the single friar who remained alive turned his eyes away from the demolished church, and, under cover of smoke from the burning blockhouse, led the remnant of Yndios reducidos (who because they had learned to pray had not forgotten how to fight) out of the enclosure by a little postern-gate, and down the steep bank to the yellow thread of the river below.

“Midway of the stream—thridding the ankle-deep water—they were, before the red devils above discovered their flight. The demoniac yell from a thousand throats pushed them like a battering ram up the opposite bank, whence, looking back, they saw the bed of the River Tockonhono swarming with their foes. Then the Yndios reducidos opened their lips and began to chant the death-song of the Nainis; and the friar, lifting his hand, commended their souls and his own to the God who gives and who takes away.

“But, lo, a miracle!

“Even as the waves of the Red Sea—opened by the rod of Moses for the passage of his people—closed upon Pharaoh and his host, so, with the hoarse roar of a wild beast springing upon his prey, the foam-crested wall of water fell upon the Yndios bravos, and not a warrior of them all came forth from the river bed but as a bruised and beaten corpse.

“So the friar, falling on his knees, gave thanks. And the river, which was the Tockonhono, became from that day Los Brazos de Dios, which is to say, The Arms of God.

“Such is the legend of the river.”

III

HOW PERISHING SEAMEN NAMED THE RIVER

The following account comes from Mrs. A. F. Shannon of Velasco, who was reared near the mouth of the Brazos. Velasco, be it remembered, was, in ancient days, a port of many ships—the rival of Galveston. Whether or not this legend is indigenous to the mouth of the Brazos cannot be asserted; however, it is but natural that in such a place the legend should be connected with the sea.

Now this is Mrs. Shannon's version: “My uncle said that he always heard the story like this. A ship out in the Gulf was without water, and the crew were parched with thirst. Suddenly, one of them saw a muddy current reaching far out into the clear

blue of the salt water. The ship followed the current to a wide river, which was on a great rise and so threw its muddy waters far out to sea. It must have been a Spanish ship. The crew drank the saving fresh water, and in gratitude named the unknown stream Los Brazos de Dios—the Arms of God.”

IV

THE GREAT DROUTH AND THE WATERS AT WACO

The third legend is connected with the famous “Bowie,” or Los Almagres, Mine on the San Saba. Like many other legends, it came to me from West Burton of Austin. He got it from an old man named White, now living out in the Big Bend country, but formerly of Mason or thereabouts. According to Burton, White got the account, written on a parchment, from a grateful old Mexican whom he had befriended in a spell of sickness. The Mexican claimed to have secured the parchment from his grandfather, the date it bore being over one hundred and fifty years old. When the aged Mexican took sick on Mr. White’s place in Mason County, he was traveling through the country with a crude Mexican cart and two burros, looking for two dugouts somewhere between the old San Saba Mission or mines and the site of the Waco Indian village, which was located at about the present site of Waco. As the parchment reads, thirty-six (or it may be forty-six, Burton says) jack loads of silver bullion were buried in these two dugouts.

It was a time of terrible drouth. The drouth had lasted two years and the little colony of Spaniards at San Saba had gone on mining with their captive Indians and their peons until the Indians had deserted, the peons had died, and there was absolutely no water left in the river or springs. Each month the band of Spaniards hoped that the next new moon would bring rain, but no rain came, and they knew that in the nearly always dry region towards Mexico, the drouth must be even worse. So, instead of going south towards San Antonio as they would normally have gone, the Spaniards set out eastward toward the village of the Waco Indians. They had often heard of a great river flowing by the Wacos’ camp, and there they hoped to find water. They left not a soul or a hoof behind, but packed on the burros their little store of provisions and what bullion they had accumulated, well knowing that they could not return until the drouth was broken.

At Las Chanas (the Llano), they found a dry bed; the Colorado was as dry as the top of a rock. Arrived at the Lampasas Springs, they found a little water, a great deal of mud, and dead buffaloes covering the ground. They pulled some of the dead buffaloes out of the bog, got a little stinking water, and slowly moved on. But the burros were poor from want of grass and starved from want of water. To carry the heavy bullion much farther was impossible. The provisions had to be taken at any price. So two small dugouts were made in the side of a hill, the bullion was buried therein, and after the captain of the band had called on all to witness the marks of the place, the cavalcade moved on.

The trail on eastward was marked by dead beasts and dead men, but at last, depleted in numbers and wasted in fortune, the travelers arrived at the village of the Wacos. There they found a great river flowing clear and fresh, and when they had drunk and had seen their beasts drink, they knelt down to give God thanks, and the padre with them blessed the stream and called it Los Brazos de Dios—the Arms of God.

The Spanish built a kind of rude fort and waited. The drouth kept on for three more years. Los Brazos still flowed clear and sweet, and memories of the rich mines and the rich bullion left behind began to grow dim. But at last the drouth broke and the grass and weeds sprang from the earth with a great rush. The grass grew so quickly that a powerful and fierce tribe of Indians was down upon the Spaniards before they could leave. Their little settlement was annihilated. Only one man lived to get back to Mexico, and that years later when he was old and feeble; he was so broken that he had no desire ever again to come into the region of the terrible drouth. But a while before he died he wrote out on a piece of parchment the history of that search across the desert for water, the directions, as well as he could give them, to the buried bullion, and this account of the settlement and disaster on the river called Los Brazos de Dios. The hidden dugouts with their wealth have never been found, and history has forgot to record that tragic episode of the first Spanish settlement on the Brazos.

V

A MIRACULOUS SWIM

The meager details of this legend were supplied by Mr. Charles B. Qualia, Instructor in Spanish at the University of Texas. He

says in explanation: "I heard or read the story when I was a child—where or under what circumstances, I know not."

A Franciscan, so the legend goes, was running for his life from some terrible pursuer. He came to the river, which was so swollen and turbulent that no human being could hope to swim across it. The waters were swirling around tree tops on the banks, and in the middle of the stream great drift trunks were sweeping by. Nevertheless, he plunged in and was miraculously enabled to reach the other side. After he had looked at his helpless pursuer standing far away on the opposite bank and after he had gazed steadily at the waters he had escaped, he kneeled, and, thanking God, said that his deliverance was by "*los brazos de Dios*." After that time the phrase came to be applied to the river.

In some way this version may be connected with the "Legend of the Monk's Leap" as told by Gustave Aimard, in his *The Freebooters, A Story of the Texan War*.⁷ In this legend a pursued monk is helped over a gorge near Galveston by two angels. However, Aimard was one of the most brazen liars that ever lived, and he probably made up the legend as facilely as he made up history and geography.

VI

ARMS AVENGING AND SAVING

The following account from Kennedy's History of Texas⁸ has been contributed by Mr. E. G. Littlejohn. As I have suggested, it may, after all, be the original of the better known version quoted from Mrs. Davis. The endless confusion among the earlier Spanish regarding the nomenclature of rivers is fully set forth in the extract from Miss Buckley's article on the Aguayo Expedition already quoted. Thrall makes the matter a little too simple perhaps when he says: "The Spaniards gave the name of Brazos de Dios to the Colorado, and Rio Colorado to the Brazos, but blundering geographers afterwards interchanged their

⁷Aimard, Gustave, *The Freebooters, A Story of the Texan War*, Chapter XXIII, Philadelphia [date not given]. The novel came out in France around 1858 or 1860.

⁸Kennedy, William, Esq., *Texas: The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas*, R. Hastings, London, 1841, Vol. I, pp. 167-168.

names.”⁹ A French map dated 1733, in the University of Texas archives, has the Brazos River marked the “Therese” and the San Marcos the “San Markos or Colorado.” Mr. Littlejohn’s “Indian legend” of a flood, which follows this legend, seems largely based on the early Spanish confusion of the Brazos and the Colorado.

“About thirty miles from the mouth of the San Saba, there was once a Spanish mission and fort, the destruction of which is thus recorded in Mexican tradition:

“Prosperity reigned at the post, which carried on an extensive trade with the Comanche Indians, and a large revenue was derived from certain silver mines in the vicinity. The mines occupied about one hundred laborers; the post was protected by an equal number of soldiers, and there were some women, who manufactured articles for the Indian trade. At a time when all the soldiers, save about a dozen, were absent on an expedition, the Comanches appeared, under pretense of traffic, and were admitted to the fort in great numbers. At a signal from the chief, the Indians drew weapons concealed under their buffalo robes, and massacred the small guard and the women. The laborers in the mines fled, and were butchered in detail. The priest alone escaped, and by a miracle. The holy man having fled to the Colorado River, the waters divided, permitted him to pass through, and closed upon the pursuing Indians, consigning them to a common grave. After great suffering, the priest reached the Spanish mission of San Juan, at that period the only settlement on the San Antonio River. The absent soldiers, returning in a few days to the fort, where lay the mingled bodies of their companions, found the banks of the Colorado covered with dead Indians, and as they could discern no marks of violence upon them, they pronounced it a retributive miracle, and named the river Brazos de Dios, or ‘the Arm [*sic*] of God! In the ignorance of after times, it received the name of Colorado, which previously distinguished the red and muddy stream now known as the Brazos. The preceding tradition is devoutly believed by the old Mexicans about San Antonio.”

⁹Thrall, H. S., *A History of Texas*, p. 37. Thrall goes on to say that “in old maps the San Antonio is marked as the Medina and the Guadalupe as the San Marcos.” For additional evidence as to the confusion of the Brazos and the Colorado in nomenclature, Mr. Littlejohn cites Bolton’s *Spanish Explorations in the Southwest*, pp. 376, 413.

HOW THE BRAZOS AND THE COLORADO ORIGINATED

BY E. G. LITTLEJOHN

[It is hardly necessary to point out that this is not an undiluted Indian legend, the names and other elements in it showing Spanish and even American influence. La Salle is said to have called what is now the Colorado "The River of Canes"; the Indians—and again we go back to Thrall¹ for authority—called it the "Pashohono."—EDITOR.]

The following legend is an adaptation of "An Indian Legend of the Flood," signed by Jas. Spillane, reprinted a number of years ago in the *Galveston News* from the *Philadelphia Times*.

Long, long ago, long before the coming of the white man, in all the country drained by the Brazos and the Colorado, there was but one great river. It was a mighty stream, the Caney (Old Caney). To the east lived and hunted the Caranchuas; to the west the Ripas, the Lipans, and the Tawakonies. The Wacos lived to the north. The Ripas were warlike and powerful. They made war on the Caranchuas and drove them far to the east, stealing their squaws, killing their young men, and forcing the remnant of the tribe to flee to the islands of the sea. Likewise the Lipans, the Tawakonies, and the Wacos were driven from their hunting grounds, and the Ripas were masters of the whole land.

The Great Spirit was angry with the Ripas. He sent a messenger to them telling them to restore the squaws that they had stolen, and the horses and cattle, and to make no more war upon his other children. But the Ripas would not listen. They thought themselves more powerful than the Great Spirit himself, and determined to make war upon him. They sought out the messenger with defiance in their hearts, to challenge the Great Spirit to battle. But no messenger could be found. They searched the woods, the prairies, the river, the sky, but he had left no trail.

Then a great fear fell upon them, and some of the chiefs wanted to make peace with the Great Spirit. They called their wise men together to take counsel as to what they should do to turn away the anger of the Great Spirit. And while they held talk the heavens opened, the rain fell, the thunder roared, and the sky seemed all afire. In the midst of the fire the messenger appeared, his face glowering, his hand raised in menace. The Ripas threw themselves on their faces and begged the Great Spirit for mercy.

¹A *History of Texas*, p. 37.

And still the rain poured, the lightning flashed, the thunder crashed, and the whole earth rocked and shook as with an ague. The water soon rose and covered the earth. Then the Ripas ran for the trees. The wind blew down the trees and many of the Ripas were killed or drowned. The water rose higher and higher, and the rain and the thunder and the lightning lasted for many days. And there was no earth; all was water.

Then the Great Spirit smiled. The Ripas were no more. The waters had swallowed them up. To the Caranchuas on the islands came the messenger. He told them of the fate of the Ripas. He bade them return to their homes.

When the Caranchuas returned, all was changed. Where had been the great river was now but a small stream, Caney. The great river was now two rivers, the white man's Brazos on the east, the red man's Colorado on the west. Between the rivers were the hunting grounds of the Caranchuas, the gift of the Great Spirit.

MISCELLANEOUS LEGENDS

THE WHITE STEED OF THE PRAIRIES

BY W. P. WEBB

The wild horses of the plains were descendants of the Spanish horses that escaped from the *conquistadores* of the sixteenth century. Under the favorable conditions these horses multiplied and spread from Mexico and Texas up the great plains corridor to Canada. They went in large herds, each led by a stallion. Now, this stallion was leader because he was the best horse in the herd. He led by fleetness of foot, by courage to fight, and by strength sufficient to kill or drive out every horse that disputed his supremacy. Not only did he lead the horses, but he actually herded them, controlled them, dominated them. By the very law of survival he had to be unusual. Not only did he have to be strong and fleet, but he had to be wise and wary as well, full of good horse sense.

When settlers began to push on to the plains of the West, and to capture and domesticate wild horses, it was quite natural for the leaders of these herds to captivate the imagination of the *vaqueros* and cowboys. The stallion leader of the herd was the object of desire of every man of the West. Where a man was little better than the horse he rode, he naturally desired a good horse above all else, save a saddle to house him under. Now, the leader of the herd was not only a good horse; he was the *best* horse, with all the endurance, speed and intelligence that were so dear to the riders of the plains. These qualities made him the object of desire of every plainsman, and the hero among them was the man who could take the stallion leader. But to take the leader today was not to destroy leadership. Tomorrow another stallion would lead the herd. There was always a leader. The individual horse might be captured, but the quality of leadership could never be caught—it resided in the herd because it was a part of it. Now, it was this *quality* of leadership that became the object of desire. But since this quality of leadership could never be captured, the desire for it was a desire for the unattainable, the impossible.

Out of these conditions and facts grew the legend of the White Steed of the Prairies, that superb horse, a super-horse that had all the desirable and unusual qualities, all the speed, all

the endurance, all the beauty that imagination could give him. Since he had all these attributes, everybody wanted him, but nobody could take him. He was ubiquitous, ethereal, a mere ideal, a phantom of the plainsman's mind, and he ranged from Canada to Mexico.

One of the best accounts of the White Steed of the Prairies, or the Pacing White Stallion, as he was sometimes called, was given by Kendall,¹ when writing of his experiences in Texas in 1841.

"Many were the stories," he says, "told that night in camp, by some of the old hunters, of a large white horse that had often been seen in the vicinity of the Cross Timbers and near Red River. That many of these stories, like a majority of those told by gossiping campaigners, were either apocryphal or marvelously garnished, I have little doubt; but that such a horse has been seen, and that he possesses wonderful speed and great powers of endurance, there is no reason to disbelieve. As the camp stories ran, he has never been known to gallop or trot, but paces faster than any horse that has been sent out after him can run; and so game and untiring is the 'White Steed of the Prairies,' for he is well known to trappers and hunters by that name, that he has tired down no less than three race-nags, sent expressly to catch him, with a Mexican rider well trained to the business of taking wild horses. * * *

"The Mexican who was sent out to take the wild steed, although he mounted a fresh horse as the one he was riding became tired, was never near enough the noble animal to throw a slip-noose over his head, or even to drive him into a regular gallop. Some of the hunters go so far as to say that the white steed has been known to pace his mile in less than two minutes, and that he can keep up this rate of speed until he has tired down everything in pursuit. Large sums of money have been offered for his capture, and the attempt has been frequently made; but he still roams his native prairies in freedom, solitary and alone. The fact of his being always found with no other horse in com-

¹George Wilkins Kendall gave this account in his *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition*, New York, 1844, pp. 89-90. Prior to this Kendall had written some sketches for the New Orleans *Picayune*, one of which was about the Pacing White Stallion. It was this account that he incorporated in the book. Doubtless many of the later written accounts are based upon Kendall's.

pany is accounted for, by an old hunter, on the ground that he is too proud to be seen with those of his class, being an animal far superior in form and action to any of his brothers. This I put down as a rank embellishment, although it is a fact that the more beautiful and highly formed mustangs are frequently seen alone."²

Kendall's account in the New Orleans *Picayune* inspired the poet to sing of this wonderful horse. The following, by J. Barber, appeared in *The Democratic Review* for April, 1843:³

THE WHITE STEED OF THE PRAIRIES

Mount, mount for the chase! let your lassos be strong,
And forget not sharp spur and tough buffalo thong;
For the quarry ye seek hath oft baffled, I ween,
Steeds swift as your own, backed by hunters as keen.

Fleet barb of the prairie, in vain they prepare
For thy neck, arched in beauty, the treacherous snare;
Thou wilt toss thy proud head, and with nostrils stretched wide,
Defy them again, as thou still hast defied.

Trained nags of the course, urged by rowel and rein,
Have cracked their strong thews in the pursuit in vain;
While a bow-shot in front, without straining a limb,
The wild courser careered as 'twere pastime to him.

Ye may know him at once, though a herd be in sight,
As he moves o'er the plain like a creature of light—
His mane streaming forth from his beautiful form
Like the drift from a wave that has burst in the storm.

Not the team of the Sun, as in fable portrayed,
Through the firmament rushing in glory arrayed,
Could match, in wild majesty, beauty and speed,
That tireless, magnificent, snowy-white steed.

Much gold for his guerdon, promotion and fame,
Wait the hunter who captures that fleet-footed game;
Let them bid for his freedom, unbridled, unshod,
He will roam till he dies through these pastures of God.

²The reason some of the mustangs were alone was due to the fact that the stallion leader had driven the younger and weaker horses from the herd. Since these horses were young, they would naturally often have good form. The color is hard to account for. Many of the mustangs were vari-colored, but it is doubtful if there was ever a solid white horse.

³The poem appeared in *The Democratic Review*, XII, 367f., accompanied by a condensation of Kendall's story taken from the *Picayune*.

And ye think on his head your base halters to fling!
So ye shall—when yon Eagle has lent you his wing;
But no slave of the lash that your stables contain
Can e'er force to a gallop the steed of the Plain!

His fields have no fence save the mountain and sky;
His drink the snow-capped Cordilleras supply;
'Mid the grandeur of nature sole monarch is he,
And his gallant heart swells with the pride of the free.

The legend of the White Steed of the Prairies has almost died out. One can pick it up now only from the older generation, from those who have recollections of the open country when Texas was held together by rawhide and dominated by horsemen. When one of these early Texans was asked if he had heard of the Pacing White Stallion, he replied: "Yes, I have heard of him from the Canadian to the Llano." But one finds little variation in these stories. There is no room for the White Steed of the Prairies in a country where horses are no longer wild and free. He is now all but a forgotten memory of a past unreality.⁴

THE LEGEND OF SAM BASS

BY W. P. WEBB

Sam Bass was born in Indiana—that was his native home,
And at the age of seventeen young Sam began to roam.
He first came out to Texas, a teamster for to be;
A kinder hearted fellow you scarcely ever see.

This bit of biography of the Texas bandit was probably the first poem the writer learned outside the home circle. He learned it at the age when it was a great privilege to be permitted to pad along in the freshly plowed furrow at the heels of the hired man, Dave. Not only was Dave the hired man, he was a neighbor's boy, and such a good poker player that he developed later into a professional gambler. But at the time I write of Dave was my tutor in Texas history, poetry, and music, all of which revolved around Sam Bass. To me and to Dave, Sam Bass was an ad-

⁴Destined to be preserved for generations yet in his offspring in Emerson Hough's *North of 36*. Zane Grey has also introduced him into fiction, in *The Last of the Plainsmen*.—Editor.

mirable young man who raced horses, robbed banks, held up trains, and led a life filled with other strange adventure. At length, this hero came to an untimely end through a villain named Murphy, "who gave poor Sam away." It was a story calculated to capture the imagination of young men and small boys. All over Texas hired men were teaching small boys the legend of Sam Bass, a story which improved in the telling according to the ability of the teller.

Not only was the story thus told. Men of high station in life, the lawyers, judges, and oldtimers, congregated around the courthouse of this western county and told of how Sam rode through the country at night after one of his daring robberies. Once a posse organized to go out and take Sam Bass. The leader of the posse was a lawyer, a smart man, and he knew exactly where Sam could be found and how he could be taken. He bravely placed himself at the head of a group of heavily armed men; he assured them that they would take the bandit and share the liberal reward that had been set on his head. They rode away into the night, they approached the lair of the fugitive; they *knew* they had him—at least the leader knew it. But that was the trouble. Sam did not run; therefore, the posse could not pursue. Sam seemed too willing to be approached; that willingness was ominous. Sam was such a good shot, so handy with a gun. The posse paused, it halted, consulted with the leader. The leader's voice had lost its assurance. The posse that had ridden up the hill now rode down again. Sam Bass *could not be found!* And until this day, when old-timers get together in that county some one is sure to tell the story of that hunt. The wag of the courthouse, a lawyer, reduced it to writing, and on such public occasions as picnics and barbecues, he will read the account of "How Bill Sebasco Took Sam Bass." It was cleverly done and made as great hit with the public as did Dave's rendition of the song and story to the small boy. In both cases all sympathy was with Sam Bass, all opinion against Murphy and Bill Sebasco.

Thus in West Texas, from the judge in the courthouse to the small boy in the furrow behind the hired man, was the story of Sam Bass told. What was taking place in this county was occurring, with proper variations, in every other county in the state, especially in those of the north and west. The legend of Sam Bass was in the process of becoming. Today it would fill a volume.

Few are the facts known relative to Sam Bass, but some of

them are these: Samuel Bass was from Indiana. He was born July 21, 1851, came to Texas, raced horses, made his headquarters in Denton County, participated in some bank robberies and train holdups. He became the recognized leader of his band and enjoyed a wide reputation, which he achieved before he was twenty-seven years old. In the summer of 1878 he left Denton County with the intention of robbing a bank or train. With him were Murphy, the man who had arranged to sell him out to the officers of the law, also Seaborn Barnes and Frank Jackson. The plan was made to rob the Round Rock bank on Saturday, July 20, 1878. En route to Round Rock, Murphy sent a note to Major John B. Jones, adjutant general of Texas, giving their plan. The result was that when Bass reached Round Rock the town was full of Texas Rangers and other officers of the law. On Friday Bass with Jackson and Barnes went into Round Rock to look over the ground before their attempt to rob. While purchasing tobacco in a store adjoining the bank, they were accosted by officers of the law, and a battle ensued. Barnes was killed on the spot, along with an officer. Bass escaped with a mortal wound, was found next day in the woods, and died the following day, Sunday, July 21, 1878. On that day he was twenty-seven. Frank Jackson made good his escape and has never been heard from since.

From these facts, the legend of Sam Bass has grown. Legend and fact are inextricably mixed. I shall make no effort to separate the one from the other, but shall set all down, much as I heard it.

Bass died gamely, as he lived. He refused to give any of his comrades away, though he was rational until the end. "If a man knows any secrets," he said, "he should die and go to hell with them in him." Bass said that he had never killed a man, unless he killed the officer in Round Rock. Frank Jackson wanted to remain and help Bass, but the latter, knowing he was near the end, persuaded Jackson to leave him, and gave him his horse to ride.

Bass and his men had camped near some negro cabins at Round Rock, not far from the cemetery. Bass had an old negro woman, Aunt Mary Matson, to cook some biscuits for him and to grind some coffee. When she had done this, Bass gave her a dollar. He then asked, "Have you ever heard of Sam Bass?" She told him she had. "Well, you can tell them you saw Sam Bass," he said, and went away.

His generosity was well known. He always paid for what he

got from individuals. He was particularly considerate of poor people. He would give a poor woman a twenty-dollar gold piece for a dinner and take no change. He paid the farmers well for the horses he took from them, though sometimes he did not have time to see the farmer.

Sam Bass relics are scattered over the country, everywhere. Some say that he gave his gun to Frank Jackson. Others declare he surrendered it to the officers who found him. His belt with some cartridges in it is in the library of the University of Texas. A carpenter at Snyder has a horseshoe from Bass's best race horse nailed to the top of his tool chest. Near Belton are some live oak trees that Bass is said to have shot his initials in while riding at full speed. Horns of steers supposed to have been killed by Bass sell over the country at fancy prices. In Montague County there is a legend of \$30,000 of loot buried by Sam Bass. Again, he is supposed to have left treasure in the Llano country. At McNeill, near Austin, there is a cave in which Sam Bass hid when he was in retirement. There he kept his horses and from there he made his forays.

Finally, when Sam was dead, legend wrote an epitaph on his monument which is not there. The legendary epitaph reads:

"Would That He Were Good as He was Brave." No such inscription can be deciphered on Bass's monument. The monument has been badly mutilated by souvenir collectors, but the inscription remains.

Samuel Bass
Born
July 21, 1851
Died
July 21, 1878
Aged 27 Years

In the lower right hand corner of the block on which the inscription appears is the name of the maker, C. B. Pease, Mitchell, Indiana. The people of Round Rock say that the monument was erected by a member of his family about a year after Bass's death.

More interesting than Bass's rather pretentious monument is that of his comrade, Seaborn Barnes, who sleeps the long sleep by his side. A rough sandstone stands at the head of this grave. It has been chipped away until the name is gone. The inscription, however, remains along with the date of his death. Were there

no legend of Sam Bass in Texas, this inscription would make one. It is written in language Bass would have loved; it has a certain impertinence to law abiding people in the nearby graves, a certain pride in the leader at whose heels Barnes died. The epitaph contains seven words. The spirit of the person who wrote the seven words of that epitaph is the spirit that has created the legend of Sam Bass in Texas.

He Was Right Bower to Sam Bass

THE HORN WORSHIPERS

BY L. D. BERTILLION

[From an ethnological point of view, the legend, or more properly myth, of "The Horn Worshipers" is the most interesting in this collection of legends. None of the scholars at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Society held in New York, December, 1923, knew any parallel for it among the aborigines of America.

However, horns have been significant among many primitive peoples. Many of the Plains Indians of America, notably the Sioux, wore buffalo horns, and if I mistake not the totem of one tribe was a head of buffalo horns. However, the buffalo horn was to the Plains Indian merely a symbol of the power that he admired, an emblem of the animal that he was so far dependent on for food and shelter. In the *Asia Magazine* for December, 1922, is a picture of a pair of ox-horns fastened over the entrance to a village near Rodosto, Turkey. The horns so fastened are said to bring good luck to those who pass under them.

The medicinal properties ascribed to horns among primitive peoples have a corollary interest here. In a letter accompanying his legend of "The Horn Worshipers," Mr. Bertillion says: "As late as ten years ago I bought a beautiful pair of buck horns, several points of which I had to sharpen because they had been sawed off a half inch or more for the purpose of curing some disease, which, to the best of my memory, was measles, the cure being a dose of pulverized horn, about a teaspoonful."

In the same letter, Mr. Bertillion encloses a clipping from a syndicated article appearing in the McKinney, Texas, *Examiner*, November 9, 1922, which tells of an Indian rhinoceros horn presented to Pope Gregory XIV in 1590 as a protection against poisoning. According to the article, "The horn given to the pope by the prior and brothers of the monastery of St. Mary of Guadalupe in Spain, was credited with sweating in the presence of poison, by the way of warning, and if powdered and taken internally, with acting as an antidote. The tip is missing. It was cut off in 1591 and administered to the pope in his last illness."

I myself recall as a pioneer remedy for distemper in horses, the smoke of burning horn-chips and rags, funneled through a horn up the horse's nostrils. The Mexicans sometimes used the same remedy for colds.

The underground palace of this legend of "The Horn Worshipers" is a feature common to the lore of many peoples. "The Aztecs," says Lewis Spence,¹ "believed that the first men emerged from a palace known as Chicomoztoc (The Seven Caverns), located north of Mexico. Various writers have seen in these mystic recesses the fabulous 'seven cities of Cibola' and the Casas Grandes, ruins of extensive character in the valley of the River Gila, and so forth."² Then Spence adds a comment on the number seven pertinent also to the legend of "The Horn Worshipers": "The allusion to the magical number seven in the myth demonstrates that the entire story is purely imaginary and possesses no basis of fact."

The legend of the underground palace has various forms even in Texas. There are rumors of an underground palace near Leander in Williamson County and of another on the Blanco River. Some such story is connected with the Devil's Cave on the Devil's River; with a vast underground passage that workmen are said to have discovered while excavating for the foundation of the second Austin dam; and with the Carlsbad Mammoth Cave, located on the Texas-New Mexico line in the Guadalupe Mountains.

Mr. Bertillion says that he knows a man who claims to have discovered about fifteen years ago a great house within a mountain in West Texas, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet below the surface. This man was out with a surveyor. Searching for a place to set up the flagpole, he discovered a small hole in a rock, "not larger than an ordinary apple." Secretly, he flashed sunlight into the hole by means of a pocket mirror, and down in a great cave he beheld a wonderful edifice. The details he has kept secret, for he intends to return to the place some day and make his fortune.

Back in the sixties, according to his own account, a Mexican living in Fort Stockton (1911) was carrying the mail between Fort Davis and El Paso. On one trip a band of Indians led by some renegade Mexicans confiscated his mail and express, burned the mail coach, and took him and his horses into an unknown region afterward identified as the Guadalupe Mountains. There, high up on a barren peak, he discovered some giant mahogany logs, "so big that there never has been a car on the Southern Pacific Railroad that could have hauled one of them." Query: For what else than the palace of the Horn Worshipers could these mighty logs have been transported to that region?

Finally, the palace of the Horn Worshipers inevitably suggests the great legend of the Cave of Montezuma, a version of which follows this.—EDITOR.]

I am a great lover of horns and have collected and sold many fine pairs. In order to make my collections I have had to keep constantly inquiring for specimens. On one such expedition, a good many years ago, down on the border, I met a very old Yaqui Mexican, by the name of Pedro Osabia, as I remember.

When I made inquiry after long-horned cattle, he told me

¹Spence, Lewis, *Myths and Legends*, Vol. VII ("Mexico and Peru"), p. 123.

²It should be remembered that some of the ancient peoples grouped with the Cliff Dwellers inhabited natural caves. See Goddard, Pliny Earle, *Indians of the Southwest*, Handbook Series No. 2, American Museum of Natural History, p. 38.

that the long-horned cattle were all dead and that their worshipers were all dead, but that the spirits of the Horn Worshipers never die, but enter into new men when the bodies they inhabit decay. He said that if I continued strong in the worship, some day I would find plenty of long horns.

Further interrogation brought out the story that long years ago—more years than man can count—this whole world belonged to one man, and that this one man lived in a grand temple, such as men do not know how to build any more, and that this temple is located inside one of the great peaks of the Jeff Davis Mountains. This Ruler of the whole world had his subjects scattered over all the earth wherever caves could be found or made in cliffs. And every seven years these subjects journeyed from their caves and their cliffs to the Great Palace to worship, each worshiper bringing the longest horns he had collected from any animal during the seven years. Then the horns were hung in the great hall of horn worship, and the Supreme Ruler stood amidst the horns as judge. The man bringing the longest horns received the first blessing and was not subject to the laws of the great Ruler for seven years, and those bringing the second and the third longest horns received second and third blessings and were immune from the laws for five and for three years. Furthermore, those who willfully refused to bring horns to the general worship were made servants of those bringing the longest horns to the shrine, and would eventually become dead in soul, thus losing the power to rise after death and enjoy the great horn worship in the wide, free spaces and the open air, where search for food would no longer be a necessity.

Finally, though, a great bird came and flew to the cliffs, and destroyed the dwellers throughout the world, and then, when none came to worship at the great palace, the great Ruler died of grief. Our present race is the offspring from a man who had been banished from some colony for his refusal to contribute horns and to join in their worship. Consequently, the great bird on his flight of destruction missed this outcast, who, having lost his blessing through neglect to worship, was doomed, he and all his generations, to work for a living.

Before he died of his grief the great Owner of the world, knowing that some day the mountain would decay and the deserted palace be exposed, placed a magic wand in the greatest

horn in the great horn room. It is there now, waiting for the hand of some one of the soulless to touch it. Finally when the horn is touched, it will rise into space and draw all those who worshiped in full faith to the great horn worship above, where manual labor and death shall be forever unknown.

Such is the story of the first world of men, who were probably the Cliff Dwellers, or the Horn Worshipers!

THE CAVE OF MONTEZUMA

BY LEEPER GAY

[This legendary "Cave of Montezuma" is in Mexico, but so persistent and numerous are rumors of it across the border in Texas that I do not hesitate to include it among Texas legends. Mr. Gay knows many legends, and he has told me that he has often heard Texans mention Montezuma's Cave; I myself have heard of it from treasure hunters in Texas. Indeed, legend has placed an Aztec cave, presumably Montezuma's, in Texas. I am indebted to Mr. W. D. Notley, superintendent of public schools at Del Rio, for the following account:

On the south edge of Del Rio there is a mound of considerable size called Sugar Loaf. Legend has it that it was built by the Aztecs and stored with treasures. In the troublesome times that followed the conquest by the Spanish, the Aztecs built an *acequia* (irrigation ditch) around it, or alongside it, so as to cut off entrance through the subterranean passage that once led to the great storehouse.—EDITOR.]

I have at last learned one complete version of the legend of the Montezuma Cave. It cost me seven hours' hard work, a delay of twenty-four hours in getting home, a deal of cheap drink, a headache, and the suspicion of my relatives; but the man who told me the story was alone worth the price. He is a broken-down newspaper man, "whose story is the story of every man that ever went down into Mexico. It is the story of a coward, the story of a man with a yellow streak down his back." I was sitting on the plaza at Juarez, absorbed in a religious dance of the Festival, which was being held in front of the cathedral by people dressed as Indians, when Alec Martin came strolling along and sat down beside me. He was a colorless blond, white-faced, and rather small of figure, his neat dress falling into untidiness. His pale blue eyes were supplemented with powerful shell-rimmed spectacles, and as they continued to watch the dancers, I asked him how he liked the dancing. "But you should see the Festival of

la Cruz Verde, at Tepic," he replied without turning his head. From this auspicious beginning, we drifted into conversation, and he told me the legend of the Cathedral de la Cruz Verde. It is a simple story, such as, he explained, overruns Mexico. Observing that he wore no overcoat, although the day was cold, and that he shivered at frequent intervals, I suggested a hot Tom and Jerry. He was not slow in accepting, and since I had begun to find his company excellent, I suggested another, and then a glass of Bordeaux as a lid. He seemed quite shame-faced about not paying for the drinks, and somehow I believed him when he told me that, whatever he was at present, he had been a gentleman at one time.

He could not stay away from the subject of Mexico for long at a time, and since he continued to tell me legends, I asked him for the one about the Montezuma Cave. The liquor that he had taken in the course of the day had begun to affect him, but he would not say anything about the Montezuma Cave except that it had broken him. Presently he insisted that he take me to a bar up next to the Market, where he had credit. I went with him, and we began to drink sotol, which is said to be a fiery liquor, but which I found no worse than red whiskey. But whenever I asked him for the particulars of his story, he would say: "But that is not the important thing; a drink is all that matters." In the course of time, however, he became thoroughly inebriated, as he confessed to me in a precise, though sometimes uncertain voice. Finally, while my relatives waited in El Paso and my train left without me, he told his story and the legend of the Montezuma Cave. This is the legend that he told me.

When Montezuma was killed by Cortez at the City of Mexico, the room full of gold that had been offered as a ransom for Montezuma was too heavy for Cortez to carry with him in his flight to the coast. Montezuma had foreseen this, and before his death had ordered that the gold be stored safely, where it could lie without danger until his tree fell and he came back to save his people. The Aztec generals, having seen the lack of respect for their gods that the Spaniards had shown, were afraid to bury the treasure in the tomb of Montezuma, and instead had it taken to a cave in the mountains. This cave was at the end of a long canyon, a mere crack in the rock only a few feet wide, although the walls were hundreds of feet high. At the mouth the canyon was twelve feet wide, but it became narrower toward the cave, until there was not passage for a man, unless he crawled on his

belly for the last few hundred yards. The Indians worshiped the cave as a shrine after the treasure of Montezuma had been stored there, and made pilgrimages to it, although none but priests were allowed to enter the cave itself. The guardians disposed of unwelcome visitors by dropping rocks on them as they wormed up the narrow canyon.

After the Aztecs perished as a nation, the cave was in Yaqui territory, what was called the Sonora Mountains, and the Yaquis continued to guard the shrine. Renegades and half-breeds sometimes whispered the story of the cave to the Spaniards, but since none of the men who went to hunt for it ever returned, the story became a legend.

Some hundreds of years later, a very drunk Mexican told the story to Martin, who remembered it the next day. At that time he was a correspondent to certain American newspapers, and when he told the story to two of his friends, they wanted to go after the treasure immediately. The Mexican agreed to go with them, and claimed to know where the cave was, having seen the canyon for himself. The expedition was so carefully planned and executed that the little party camped within a few miles of the cave without being discovered by the Indians. That night they went into the cave, taking water and food enough to last them the following day. The next night they came out safely, each carrying about one hundred and fifty pounds of gold. Their good fortune did not desert them, and they were out of Yaqui country before the loss was discovered. When they arrived at the City, they cashed the gold for forty thousand dollars apiece, and for some months lived in great state.

Then, having spent all of their fortune, they decided to return to the Montezuma Cave and to bring out a little more this time. This gold was to be invested, so that each could live off his interest. As they had done before, they camped a few miles from the mouth of the canyon, and entered the cave at night. The next night they started out of the canyon, but as they stepped out on the plain in front of the canyon, they were taken quietly in charge by the Yaquis, who had watched them from the time that they had first come into the country. The Mexican was sacrificed to the old gods, for he was part Indian and had betrayed the secret of the cave, but the Americans were first tortured and then kept about the camp as slaves. In a few weeks two of them died. Martin finally escaped, but not until he was broken physically.

From that day on, his bad luck had followed him. He had

come back to El Paso, on his way to Mexico, but on the morning that he arrived, he had broken the mirror in his room and the friends that he had expected did not arrive. His savings had gradually dribbled away, until he had sold his watch and pawned his overcoat, with winter almost at hand.

When the story was finished, Martin added, somewhat lamely: "This Mexico has broken me; it's made a bum and a drunkard out of me, but I love it. I can't stay away from it. I've been out of it fifteen months this time, and now I'm going into it again."

THE FIRST CORN CROP IN TEXAS

BY A. W. EDDINS

Have you ever heard how Grandma when she was a young girl made the first corn crop in Texas, and how the only tools she had to make it with were a hound dog and a big stick? This is the way she told the story.

After Stephen F. Austin had secured the grant of land for his colony in Texas, he returned to his home and gathered the families to settle it. He leased the schooner *Lively* at New Orleans, loaded it with farm tools and supplies, and sent it to the mouth of the Colorado River to meet the colonists. The *Lively* was lost, and no word of her or her crew has ever been heard.¹

Meanwhile, Grandma and her family were on their way in an ox wagon. She walked nearly all the way with her sister behind the wagon. They entered Texas at the Red River, and reached the mouth of the Colorado about Christmas. Here they built a cabin and waited in vain for the *Lively*. The men hunted and the women kept house. They ate venison for bread and fresh bear steak for meat. They needed bread, but had no tools for planting the corn.

Now the Colorado River bottom was covered with a heavy growth of reed cane. The dogs ran a bear into this canebrake and the boys set it on fire, and as it burned the cane popped and roared like guns in a battle. When the fire was out, where

¹History has disproved this once common tale of the *Lively's* never having been heard of. See Garrison, George P., *Texas (American Commonwealths)*, pp. 144-145.—Editor.

the canebrake had been was a wonderfully clean field, covered with ashes and as loose and mellow as plowed land.

Grandma took a sharp stick and punched the holes, and her sister dropped a grain of corn in each hole and then covered it with her foot. In a few days a beautiful crop of corn was growing, but the ground was also covered with young shoots of cane. The planters had neither plow nor hoe but they took big sticks and went in the field and knocked down all the tender cane shoots; they did this three times and then the corn was big enough to shade out the cane. But when the roasting ears began to make, the coons began to destroy the crop. So Grandma tied an old hound dog in the midst of the corn field, and he barked all night and scared the varmints away. The colonists soon had plenty of bread, and before time to plant the next crop they had secured farming tools from the East.

LA CASA DEL SANTA ANNA

BY A. W. EDDINS

The children in the Navarro School of San Antonio often express some original and interesting ideas in their Texas history classes. They do not know such a thing as the Alamo; to them it is "La Casa del Santa Anna" (Santa Anna's house), and they have many interesting stories of what "*mi padre grande*" said about this old landmark in Texas history and the remarkable things that have happened there.

A very interesting story that seems to be known and believed by nearly all the pupils is that of the old cave, or underground passage, that formerly connected the Alamo with the San Pedro Springs. The entrance to this cave was covered with a big round stone in the very middle of the Alamo. By lifting the stone and going down the steps and following the dark, crooked path, first down, then up, through some water and some mud, one finally came out in a clump of bushes near the big spring in what is now the San Pedro Park. The priests often used this passage to communicate with their friends when the Indians made it unsafe to leave the Alamo by any other way.

Santa Anna learned about it from an old priest, and by this means was able to get his men inside of the Alamo on the last,

fatal day of the siege. Since that time the cave has been partly filled and cannot be used any more, but the place where it formerly opened in the park is still pointed out by the old people, and the children are strong in their belief of its existence.

LOST CANYON OF THE BIG BEND COUNTRY

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I

The legend of a lost canyon somewhere in the Big Bend country has had a long and wide circulation. When I was in the Big Bend country some fourteen years ago I heard of it as being "an old story." A version of the legend came out in the *Western Story Magazine*, December 2, 1922. Early in 1923, the "Cattle Clatter" department of the San Antonio *Express* reprinted an enlarged version of the *Western Story Magazine* legend, giving its source as the *New York World*. A syndicated feature article was probably the source of both versions.

According to the *World* legend, a Mexican by the name of Lopez had come into Sanderson from an exploring expedition initiated on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande. He and a Mexican *vaquero* had followed up a gorge that emptied into the Rio Grande until the gorge widened out into a green valley, an oasis, wherein were grazing a herd of perhaps five hundred buffaloes.

In all of the legends the valley is stocked with buffaloes, notwithstanding the fact that buffaloes were never in the Big Bend country.¹ The wild and inaccessible nature of this country, however, gives color to the idea of a lost canyon. Maps in the State Land Office at Austin still show a stretch of unsurveyed territory along the river. Akin to "Lost Canyon" must be the "Lost Mountains," which are said to lie beyond the Davis Mountains.

¹Says Carl Raht in his *The Romance of Davis Mountains*, El Paso, Texas, 1919, p. 25: "According to these authorities ["Bandelier and other writers who have examined the records of the early Spanish explorers"]—and present-day research has failed to refute their statements—the buffalo never frequented the Rio Grande in the Big Bend region." "I never saw a buffalo west of the Pecos": quoted from an old buffalo hunter in *Frontier Times*, March, 1924, p. 1.

The idea of a "lost" land is probably as old as any legend of mankind; it luxuriates in the lore of modern seamen; but it may not be generally known that regions of the modern West other than the Big Bend also claim "lost" areas. No longer ago than February 2, 1923, the San Antonio *Express* published a news story to the effect that Zane Grey had discovered a lost plateau in Arizona inhabited by mustangs that had some secret pass, unknown to man, down to water in the valley. Six days earlier the same newspaper printed a dispatch from Scenic, South Dakota, descriptive of a legendary oasis in an uncharted Bad Lands. According to a tradition handed down by the Sioux Indians, inaccessible bluffs and walls enclose a garden-like place "rich in food, sunlight, warmth and pure running water." Before the coming of the pale-faces this protected spot was the home of Wankinyan (the Thunder Bird), and no man has ever entered it to return. The story suggests that the legend of the Lost Canyon in the Big Bend may be of Indian origin.

There is a legend connected with another secret canyon of the upper Rio Grande country that seems to owe its existence to the Indians. Walter B. Stevens in his *Through Texas*, published in 1892, tells of "The Mystery of Diablo Canyon."² The canyon, so the legend goes, was sacred to the Indians, and only a few of their number knew its nature. In it was an abundance of game and of pure water, but no white man could ever find the water. Dry hides, sprinkled with sod and covered with grass, concealed it cunningly.

II

West Burton of South Austin and I were on a hunting trip down below San Antonio. The talk had been, as usual, on old days and lost mines and trails. I brought up the subject of Lost Canyon. "Yes," said he, "I have heard of the place many times, but I never believed that it existed till I met an old prospector in Mexico who had once been in the place.

"This prospector was a broke man when I saw him, broke in more ways than one, but he could tell his story straight. He was prospecting down the Rio Grande in a skiff or canoe, putting in at various canyons and gorges to examine for minerals. At a certain rapids his boat got snagged so that he could not fix

²Stevens, Walter B., *Through Texas*, St. Louis, 1892, pp. 28-29.

it, and there was nothing for him to do but to strike out afoot. He made up a small pack of a blanket and some provisions, and with a rifle struck north up a steep ravine, intending somehow to reach the Southern Pacific Railroad.

"The ravine that he took up was so narrow and rough that in some places he could hardly travel, but after a while it began to open out, and imagine his surprise when it spread into a kind of basin that stretched out farther than he could see. The grass in it was as green as a wheat field, though there was a drouth on, as usual, and there were springs of pure, sweet water; but the thing that made him rub his eyes was a herd of buffaloes, perhaps a hundred or more. The prospector killed one for meat, and camped for two or three days by a spring, while he got a good fill of the meat and jerked as much as he could take with him. Then he set out towards the north again.

"He found when he tried to get out that the basin was rimmed in by a high bluff up which there was apparently no trail. But after he had trailed himself around a good deal, he discovered a kind of gorge that he climbed out through. No buffalo could ever get out or in through it, he said. When he got up on top of the rim he was in the Chisos Mountains, unfenced, even unclaimed, some of them, I guess. He was in a country that no outpost of a range rider ever comes into, that no trapper has ever entered. There's no reason why a human being should go into that country. The wonder to me is that this prospector tried to make his way over it. His way was crookeder than a devil's walking cane—if you have ever seen one of them. They are about the only things that grow in that country, you know. But he kept on generally north. He nearly perished for water, and only the moisture of the jerked buffalo that he had had sense enough not to salt kept him from parching to death. He threw away all of his pack but that jerkie.

"Finally, somehow, by the help of the Lord, he reached the railroad somewhere between Sanderson and Marathon, and as luck would have it, he stumbled right into the camp of a construction gang. The cook of the outfit was an old Mexican who had worked for his father and knew him. This cook gave the prospector only a little beef broth and would not let him have that except in sips. And so in a few days he got over his terrible experience.

"From the camp he went on to Sanderson and actually raised

an expedition to go back and find the canyon of buffalo. But he never could find the way back across to it. He says that he knows now that the only way ever to reach it is to enter it from the Rio Grande, up that narrow gorge."

A TRADITION OF LA SALLE'S EXPEDITION INTO TEXAS

BY ALEX. DIENST

The original of the letter that follows is in my possession, having been given to me by Governor George C. Pendleton, to whom it is addressed. It is my impression that the writer of this letter was, in 1891, connected with the Department of Statistics, History, and Insurance, at Austin. De León could not have been "Governor of Texas and Coahuila" in 1688, for the states were not united until long afterward.¹

Austin, Texas,
September 9th, 1891

Hon. Geo. C. Pendleton,
Belton, Texas.

Dear Mr. Pendleton: You will please accept my thanks for your note of the 5th inst. I appreciate very highly your promise to obtain for me such information as you can in reference to La Salle. I would however, be very sorry to give you any trouble about the matter.

I have obtained a copy of the official report made by Gen. Alonzo De Leon, Governor of Coahuila and Texas, to the Spanish Government. This report contains the account of a Frenchman who was reported to be living in Texas where he had congregated several thousand Indians together and had acquired such authority over them that they not only recognized him as their chief, but treated him with the greatest reverence; always kneeling when in his presence. Gen. De Leon alarmed lest the authority of this Frenchman might be used by the

¹Although not a legend, this letter illustrates the popular speculation and tradition concerning La Salle—his followers, his fort, his death, even his treasure—that once flourished, first among the Spanish and then among the Anglo-Saxon Texans, but that now seem to be subsiding. As many places as claimed "Homer dead" have claimed the last resting place of La Salle. One informant writes that some Henderson County folk imagine that La Salle's grave is on the west bank of the Neches in their precincts and that they have made recent excavations in search of treasure supposed to lie in the grave. De León made more than one expedition in search of the French; he did find an old man who had been with La Salle. See *A School History of Texas*, by Barker, Potts and Ramsdell, Chapter II.—Editor.

French Government to assert a claim to Texas organized an expedition for his capture. After traveling in a northeast direction for forty leagues from what is now Monclova, Mexico, they reached the Rio Grande and twenty-five leagues beyond that stream, still in the direction of northeast, they found the Frenchman, whom they, with the use of a good deal of diplomacy and artifice succeeded in persuading to accompany them back to Mexico. This occurred in May, 1688; and this Frenchman is said to have been the last survivor of La Salle's Expedition. I have translated from the Spanish the account of this Frenchman and De Leon's Expedition. It is a very curious and interesting incident in the early history of Texas, and it was in connection with it that I wished to ascertain if there was any tradition of La Salle having been killed in Bell County as the Frenchman indicates. . . .

Yours Most Respectfully,

Betty B. Brewster.

BIG FOOT AND LITTLE FOOT

BY MRS. S. J. WRIGHT

This legend was given me by Mrs. Jack Hardy, now of El Paso, whose home was for several years in Alpine, Brewster County. The time of it goes back only thirty or thirty-five years, and the appearance of the footprints is vouched for today by some of our substantial citizens who were cowpunchers then.

In the Big Bend country campers would awake in the mornings to see tracks of moccasined feet leading to and from the vicinity—apparently of a man and a woman following. Sometimes, after having been trailed for miles, sometimes for shorter distances, suddenly the trail would be lost.

A cowboy sleeping out would awake and say: "Well, boys, 'Big Foot and Little Foot' have been here"; and there would be the ghostly footprints. By whom they were made, whence they came, whither they led, is still a mystery. Leaving their mysterious tracks, the treaders came and went as the winds and the rains, and with as little warning.

THE WILD WOMAN OF THE NAVIDAD

BY MARTIN M. KENNEY

[This account of "The Wild Woman of the Navidad" has been supplied from her father's manuscripts by Mrs. Margaret Kenney Kress, Instructor in Romance Languages in the University of Texas.

The line between history and legend is not always definitely drawn. Mr. Kenney called his narrative "a true story": it is "true" in that it sets down many of the speculations and some of the probably unsubstantiated tales connected with "The Wild Woman." Herein, the derivation of legend from fact is admirably illustrated, for I must think that all legends, even such improbable ones as that of Romulus and Remus, have their inception in fact. The universal practice of transferring legendary lore concerning one place or person to another place or person does not disprove the theory that fact is at the basis of legend.

The theme of the wild man or the wild woman is not uncommon in legend. People want wild men or wild women to thrill their imaginations. Twenty-five years ago a number of the inhabitants of Live Oak County, Texas, were aroused over tales of a "wild woman." Two or three deputy sheriffs on her trail stayed at our house one freezing night. The next day they found her huddled in a Mexican *jacal*—an addle-brained negro woman who was trying to get through the country afoot. Fifteen years later stories in the same county circulated about a "wild cave man." His diet, according to the tales, was as miraculous as that of the fabled chameleon; his elusive powers as incomprehensible as those of Fortunatus. Rumor grew riotous and fearsome. Finally, some cowpunchers rode the "wild man" down and roped him. He proved to be a Mexican moron who was in hiding for having murdered another Mexican.

Mr. Kenney gives 1837 and 1850 as the dates between which "The Wild Woman of the Navidad" flourished. Victor M. Rose, who treats of the subject sketchily, gives the dates as 1840 and 1850.¹ Both speak of the wide newspaper publicity given the "woman"; and it is interesting to note that during this time of publicity other sections were claiming their "wild men." Marryat, who cribbed most of his wild west material from current newspapers, published in 1843 an account of a purported "wild man" on Red River.

"One day," he says, "a report was spread in the neighborhood of Fort Gibson, that a strange monster, of the ourang-outang species, had penetrated the cane-brakes upon the western banks of the Mississippi. Some negroes declared to have seen him tearing down a brown bear; an Arkansas hunter had sent to Philadelphia an exaggerated account of this recently discovered animal, and the members of the academy had written to him to catch the animal, if possible, alive, no matter at what expense."²

The man, it seems, had endured all manner of adventure, which he related to some hunters who shot him. Later he became a wealthy river captain, but probably tales about him as a "wild man" grew even after his death.

Again, in 1851 there was a "wild man" in the Arkansas woods. On May 26th of that year, the *Galveston Weekly Journal* reprinted a report from the *Memphis Enquirer* of May 9th, concerning this "wild" being. He is described as long-haired, gigantic in frame, with a footprint thirteen inches in length.—EDITOR.]

¹Rose, Victor M., *Some Historical Facts in Regard to the Settlement of Victoria, Texas*, Laredo [1883?], pp. 71-72.

²Marryat, Captain, *Narrative of the Travels and Adventures of Monsieur Violet in California, Sonora, and Western Texas*, Leipzig, 1843, p. 278.

Rising in the gentle hills, between the Colorado and Lavaca rivers, the Navidad River, after a short course, expands into a deep stream which creeps sluggishly through the wide and dense forests that cover the alluvial lands near the sea. Some of the earliest settlements in Texas were made on the Navidad. The dense growth of trees and cane in the river bottom was the haunt of all species of wild animals, which, through fear or ferocity, seek the recesses of the forest.

About the year 1837 there appeared in the settlements of the lower Navidad a phenomenon. The barefoot tracks of two human beings were frequently seen, but the persons who made them kept themselves carefully from sight. It was inferred from the size of the tracks that one was made by a boy and the other by a girl or woman of delicate feet. The two sometimes invaded the sweet potato fields and sometimes helped themselves to a few ears of corn, but seemed to avoid any mischief and took only something to eat. Many conjectures were made, and abandoned as fast as made, as to who they could be. At first they were thought to be runaway slaves. But the size of the tracks demonstrated that they were not negroes, and they avoided making themselves known to the negroes of the country. Then it was supposed that they were some wandering remnant of Indians, and this conjecture was favored by the smallness of the feet. But their conduct was foreign to the Indian character. Indians would not have been so secluded; they would have committed more mischief—or less. The most probable conjecture seemed to be that they were lost children who had become separated from their friends during the hurried retreat of the American settlers from the invading army of Mexico in 1836. It was supposed that they had become so alarmed that, believing the whole world hostile, they kept themselves in innocent ignorance secluded from mankind. But there were grave objections to this theory also. If the supposed lost children had been old enough to maintain themselves in the wilderness, they would not have lacked discretion to make themselves known when their friends returned. Altogether, the riddle remained unsolved. After some years the larger track was no more seen, but the small and slim track frequented the country. Some time later a party of hunters noticed some bones protruding from a pile of sticks and leaves in the woods, and upon investigation discovered there the skeleton of a man. Nothing was noticed by

which his race or nation could be determined; indeed, but little was thought of the matter at the time, but afterward it was concluded that the larger of the two strange recluses, who was probably a man, had died, and that his weaker mate, covering his body with sticks and leaves, had furnished as best she could his primitive shroud and sepulture.

However this might be, the small track was often found in the potato fields, where the strange wild being frequently came by night and, after grappling a few potatoes with the hands, went away as stealthily as she came. From the impress of the fingers left in the garden mould it was judged that the hands were small and slim; and from the tracks, which were only a span long, it seemed certain that the author of these little depredations was a woman, and not of the black race, whose feet are all large, flat, and ill-shaped. She was now called "The Wild Woman," though some called her "It."

Curious to know what manner of being she was, some young men set a watch at a potato patch where were the signs of her recent depredations. As she was harmless and possibly ignorant of speech, they planned to seize her with their hands, and for this purpose they concealed themselves between the high ridges of the potato vines and waited in silence. At a late hour she came, and as near them as they had expected. The night was dark, but they could see the shadowy form. It was slim and apparently unclothed, but the color could not be distinguished. They sprang out to seize her, but, though they were active young men, she was more agile still, and bounded away as silently and quickly as the flitting of a shadow, and was instantly lost in the darkness.

For a long time she was not heard of. But at length fresh signs of her appeared in a manner that raised curiosity. The settlers were obliged to keep vigilant and fierce dogs to protect the houses and domestic animals against beasts of prey. Trained to guard against the stealthy approach of wild cat and cougar, and accustomed to battle with bear and panther, the dogs were trusted security against the clandestine approach of man or beast. The houses of the early settlers were constructed on the general plan of two log pens connected by a wide porch or hall open at both ends, all under one roof, shade and ventilation being the chief requisites in the southern climate. The saddles, ropes and other horse-gear hung against the wall in the porch;

the guns were stacked in the corners of the rooms or rested in racks over the mantels and doors, ready for instant service; and the inmates of the house, skilled in the use of weapons, were scarcely less vigilant than their dogs. Thus guarded, they felt secure from prowling beasts, and confident that no human being would be foolhardy enough to venture clandestinely upon the premises. In the summer time the doors and windows stood open day and night, and all wayfarers coming in good faith were welcome.

To such a house in summer, on a bright moonlight night, when everything was still and the inmates were asleep, The Wild Woman came and entered, stepping over dogs, it would seem. What other search or exploration she made is not known, but she entered the dining room, in which there was an open cupboard containing a plate of meat and a loaf of bread. She took part of the meat, and, breaking the bread in two, she took one half and left the other; and with this mute explanation of her motive, she departed as silently as she came. Not a dog whimpered, and the people of the house were none the wiser until the morning, when this excusable theft excited their curiosity and compassion. But they wondered at the dereliction of the dogs.

The woman did not return to that house for a long time. But she soon entered another house of the same style, guarded by particularly vigilant dogs. In this her search was extended, as shown by the things she moved; but it was also obvious that her motives were not venal. There were gold watches hanging over the mantel, where she moved bottles and powder flasks, and she must have seen them, as the moon was shining brightly in the room. There was silverware in the cupboard, but she took only some scraps of food, taking, as before, only half and leaving half; and she effected her departure without disturbing man or dog. She afterward entered numerous houses in the same strange manner; not a dog would notice her. The negroes became superstitious about her. They called her "that thing that comes," and for *her* they used the neuter pronoun.

One winter it was found that she was in the habit of taking corn from a crib. The amount she took was wholly trifling; but from motives of curiosity the opportunity was taken to capture her. All that needed to be done was to watch when she entered the crib, then close the door. The watch was kept for

several nights without result, but at length the desired opportunity occurred. The man on watch was inside the crib with his hand on the door. He had fallen into a doze, when the stealthy rustling of the corn husks awoke him. The thing had come. He had only to push the door and call the people. But a superstitious horror seized him. The thought of being shut up alone in the dark, even for a few moments, with the mysterious creature was accompanied by a sudden dread that he could not control. In his fright he cried out, and before he could move a limb the creature was gone with a single bound through the door into the enveloping night.

The compassion of the people arose with their curiosity. The poor creature was welcome a hundred times to what she took in her little forays, harmless to others but so dangerous to herself. Every means was used to communicate with her. Diligent search was made in the canebrake and in the great hollow trees, some of which afforded almost a house. But all in vain; she avoided black and white alike, and no signs of her dwelling could be found in the dark forests where she roamed like some wild animal. Sometimes no sign of her would be seen for months or even years, and the people would cease to think of her; then suddenly she would appear with some trick, if it might be so called, more curious and mysterious than any before.

On one of the plantations the woodworkers' tools, essential to the early settlers, were kept under an open shed where there was a rough work-bench. From this the owner missed his handsaw, drawing knife, and some other tools. At first he suspected some petty thief. But several weeks afterward the tools were all found returned to their places, the handsaw scoured and polished as bright as a looking glass. What could this mean? It must have been the work of The Wild Woman. The polish put on the saw was wonderful. No one knew before that this familiar metal was susceptible of such a gloss, nor did anyone know the process by which it could be effected. Why did the woman take these tools? Was she building a hut or fixing her residence in some hollow tree? Was she making weapons, rafts, boats? For any imaginable purpose the assortment she took was incongruous, deficient, or superfluous. Why did she return the tools so soon? What could be the meaning of the curious but useless pains she had taken with the saw-blade? Was there some symbolic meaning, a message? Thus speculation ran.

Some time afterward a neighbor missed a log chain. The negro

teamster gave it as his opinion that "dat thing what comes must have tuk it." But a chain twelve feet long weighing thirty pounds or more—what use could that wild animal have for it? The owner said that if he ever "whipped a nigger for being a fool," he would "skin" that one. Not long afterward, The Wild Woman did come to his house and made the usual round among unconscious watch dogs and sleeping people to her usual prize, the cupboard, where she found a pan of milk, two loaves of bread, a plate of butter, and other things. She took half the plate of butter, dividing it neatly, took one of the loaves, poured half the milk out of the pan into a pitcher, and, taking the latter, departed. Two or three weeks afterward, upon awakening one morning, the family found the pitcher standing on the bare ground before the door and the log chain coiled around it. The chain was scoured and polished as bright as the saw had been. To bring this chain and coil it before the door would seem to have been necessarily a somewhat noisy operation, but the dogs had taken no notice.

The people ceased to wonder at the recusancy of the dogs; it had become an established phenomenon. For seven years or more this strange creature had haunted the country, and all sorts of dogs and several generations of them had been tested. They were mysteriously insensible to the coming of The Wild Woman.

Her next exploit surpassed all and set curiosity on tiptoe. A farmer had a hog fattening in a pen near the house. A bear attempted one night to take it off, but the dogs seized the beast and after a severe fight killed it. The combative spirit of the dogs was so raised by this occurrence that they kept a lively watch, especially on the hog pen; and expecting every night to be treated to another bear fight, all were fiercely alive to the slightest alarm. One night during this state of matters, The Wild Woman brought a poor hog out of the woods and put it in the pen, taking the fat one out and making off with it safely, and not a dog barked or growled. The farmer said that he would have killed every dog on his place if he had thought that they were at themselves when "that thing" swapped hogs with him. There was but one explanation possible: she had bewitched both hogs and dogs. There was no use in fattening the new porker; the negroes would not have eaten a mouthful of it short of starvation. During several years "the thing" repeated this mysterious performance at numerous places. There was one inconvenience attending it: the substituted hog was often the property of a neighbor.

Numerous attempts were made to trail her with dogs, as it was thought that she could not carry so heavy a burden as a fat hog to any great distance. But the dogs always lost the trail as soon as the people following were left out of sight. When the hog taking achievement had ceased to be a wonder, some hunters came accidentally upon one of her camps, and here was material for fresh curiosity. There were piles of sugar cane, which abounded in the neighboring fields. Much of it had been cut into short lengths and chewed; hence it was evident that she knew the use of a knife. There were some curious strings twisted of the outside bark of the cotton plant. There were no signs of fire and no implements. A secret watch was kept on the camp for some time, but the creature did not return. Sometime afterwards, fresh signs of her having been seen, a general hunt was resolved upon. Dogs were procured that had been trained to follow runaway negroes. They came upon the trail and pursued eagerly enough; but the trail led through the ponds of water that abounded in the swamp and soon put the dogs at fault.

A long time followed during which she was not heard of; then her camp was found again at a considerable distance from the former one; she had removed to another section of the country. This fresh evidence raised curiosity to fever heat. There were several things of her own manufacture, baskets and a curious snare made from the fibrous bark of the cotton plant, seemingly intended to catch rabbits or other small animals. There were several articles taken from houses, a spoon, some table knives, and a cup. There was no clothing; her bed was moss and leaves; and there had been no fire. But what excited most curiosity was several books, and these had been kept dry. In one of the books was a letter of old date, containing tender sentiments and addressed to Miss ————. One of the books was a Bible, and in it were the names of the members of a well-known family in the neighborhood.

What then? Could this strange being not only talk but read? Was she some too high-strung heart that had been so overstrained or embittered in the buffets of the world as to renounce human society and resolutely for many years keep herself secluded in the shadows of the forest? Was it some wild romantic sentiment which had prompted her to seek the savage life of the woods with a companion, and losing him to vow so strange and rude a hermitage? And after so many years was the aching heart seeking

solace in the company of old books? Or was she seeking for one book only, taking volumes at random in the dark until the light of morning should reveal the name? Seeking one book, wherein from old is written the way from this bad world to a better one? Such were a few of the thousand questions and conjectures which the discovery of the books suggested. The matter got into the newspapers.

Sympathy and curiosity rose together. If the creature could read, as it seemed by her taking books that she could, why not write her letters and place them where she would be most likely to find them? Letters plainly written in simple language were posted at her recent camp and other places entreating her to make herself known. Home and friends were offered her.

This strange and serious drama was not without a comic side scene. There was an eccentric old bachelor in this country at that time by the name of Moses Evans, who had been nicknamed "The Wild Man of the Woods." Since there was now a veritable Wild Woman of the woods, it seemed to the wits of the time an eligible match. Several love letters notable for droll wit, over the signature of "Moses Evans, the Wild Man," addressed to the unknown Wild Woman, were published in the newspapers and widely copied through the United States. But the letters which had been posted on trees at the camp of the poor recluse remained untouched, and nothing occurred to indicate that she understood them.

By this time a general resolution had grown up that this riddle must be solved. A more systematic and cautious plan was adopted. A number of hunters formed extended lines and drove through the woods with leashed hounds, while others, well mounted and provided with lassos, took "stands." Several fruitless hunts were made, but at length the hunters became satisfied late one evening that the woman was in a neck of woods running out into a prairie something more than a quarter of a mile wide. The men with the lassos took positions along the edge of this prairie while others drove through the skirt of woods with the hounds. It was night before the men were well arranged, but a bright moon shone. It is well known that men accustomed to hunting with hounds, can readily tell what kind of game they are pursuing by the nature of their cry. Scarcely were the men at their posts when the hounds raised a cry never heard before. They were following the track of some strange creature. Pres-

ently the breaking of little sticks and the hurried rustling of the brush near one of the lasso men announced the approach of something, which immediately bounded with a light and flying step into the open prairie in the bright light of the moon.

It was The Wild Woman. She ran directly across the prairie in the direction of the main forest. The man was mounted on a fleet horse, and it needed all his speed to bring his rider to an even race with the object of his pursuit. But the horse was so afraid of the strange creature that he could not be urged within reach of the lasso. Three times he came up but each time shied to right or left too far for his rider to throw, while the flying figure each time turned her course to the opposite hand and ran with the speed of a frightened deer. They were now nearing the black shadow of the great forest, which was projected far on the plain. Spurring his horse with angry energy, the pursuer came this time fairly within reach and threw his lasso; but at the instant of throwing, his horse shied as before, and the rope fell short. In an instant the pursued creature was in the shadow of a vast forest and further pursuit was useless. Though disappointed in capturing her, one point was gained: the man had a good look at her as they ran together across the prairie for several hundred yards. She had long hair that must have reached to her feet, but that flew back as she ran. She had no clothes, but her body was covered with short brown hair. The rider did not see her face, as she was between him and the moon, so that whenever she turned toward him her face was in the shadow. Once or twice he thought he caught a glimpse of wild eyes as she cast a frightened glance over her shoulder. She had something in her hand when he first saw her, but she dropped it either from fright or to facilitate her escape. After the chase this was sought for and found. It proved to be a club about five feet long, polished to a wonder.

A long time passed without anything further being seen of her. She seemed to have disappeared. But during the severe winter of 1850, when there was a great sleet and the ground was covered with snow, her camp, or its camp, or the thing's camp, was found in the brush of a tree that had recently blown down in the tangled thicket of a canebrake in the dark recesses of the woods. At this place there were large piles of sugar cane, much of it chewed. There was a rude bed of moss and leaves, but no fire. There was the strangest set of snares, made like those found before, of

the bark of cotton stalks, but these were much more complex. The tracks in the snow were numerous and a span long. A watch was set, but the creature had taken alarm and did not come back.

The winter passed, and some fresh signs being seen, another great muster was made; and equipped with horses, hounds, and ropes, the pursuers made a favorable start on the track. The men took up stations in line and closed in from all sides. In the last resort, as was expected, the creature climbed a tree and was soon looking down with a frightened stare at the troops of baying dogs and the faces of the men upturned in eager curiosity. But here was another disappointment. Instead of the man-like ape to which the glimpse on the prairie had directed general conviction, there was only the well known ape-like man of tropic Africa. The wild creature they were pursuing had, it seemed, by accident or design crossed the trail of a runaway negro; the dogs, taking the latter scent, had been misled, and instead of the wonder they expected the hunters had treed only a negro man. Now they could remember that the cry of the dogs changed during the chase, and it was thought that by going back in time the trail might be recovered.

But this negro was somewhat of a curiosity himself, and they stopped to investigate him. He was entirely nude, an unknown condition for runaways. The hunters bade him come down, but he made no sign of obeying. They asked him to whom he belonged, but he made no answer. They threatened him, but he did not seem to understand. To frighten him into obedience they pointed guns at him, pretending that they would shoot him, but he motioned with his hand for them to desist and go away. They then climbed the tree and took him down by force. He trembled, but said nothing. While looking at him they observed his feet and hands. Could it be, after all, that this was the wild being who had so long evaded the sight of man! They led him through a muddy place to see the track he made. It was measured and found to agree with the measure often taken of the strange wild one. The man was kept confined for some time, and the news of his strange capture was published far and wide. But no owner came forward nor could anything be learned concerning him.

At length a wandering sailor came that way who had been at one of the Portuguese missions on the coast of Africa, and knew the captive's tribe and spoke enough words of his barbarous

language to learn his history. The negro had, when a boy, been sold by his parents for "knife and tobacco" to slave traders, who had him with many others for a long time in a ship at sea. They came at last into a river, where they were landed and kept for some days in a large house, where they had plenty of sugar and sugar cane. He and another, a grown man of his tribe, made their escape and wandered for a long time in the woods, crossing a great many rivers and prairies, he did not know how many. Often they were nearly starved to death, but his companion, skillful to throw the club, had as often taken some animal with which they sustained life. At length they came into the section of the country where he afterwards remained so long. They saw the people passing about, and they saw that some of them were negroes, but were afraid of their clothes; they feared that the negroes were cannibals. His companion died after several years, and ever since he had been alone.

As he was now a man in middle life, he had probably been brought across the sea between 1820 and 1830. His small feet received some explanation. It appears that there is a tribe on the west coast of Africa, perhaps more than one, which have very small feet. We learned from the savage what we did not know before, that there is a certain hour in the night, which varies somewhat with the moon, when the most watchful dogs are sunk in insensible sleep, and a man may walk among them and step over them with impunity. His most extraordinary feat of exchanging the hogs was very simple, but if made known it might get some of his improvident race into trouble.

He was advertised as a stray negro and sold on public account. The purchaser turned him loose among his other negroes, and according to the nature of his race, he remained contented in his new home. The Wild Woman was never afterwards heard of. Public curiosity speedily died away, and nothing more being heard from the negro, he also disappears from history and legend.

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CONTRIBUTORS

From the brief sketches of contributors that follow, something is revealed of the humanistic interest in their own social inheritance that is stirring among men and women over the State of Texas. If culture is a cultivation of the inherent rather than a grafting of the extrinsic—and history shows that it is—then surely no small debt will be acknowledged to these individuals by the growing number of children of Light who claim also to be children of Texas.

Stanley E. Babb, a young man of Galveston, has written some genuine poetry of the sea. He is literary editor of the *Galveston News*.

Julia Beazley of Houston is a gatherer of Texas folk-songs as well as of legends.

L. D. Bertillion's business of mounting horns has carried him into many parts, and apparently he has always traveled with open ears. Only lack of space has prevented the inclusion of other legends of his gathering. He lives at Mineola.

Austin Callan, who used to live at Santa Anna, is a newspaper man.

John R. Craddock is a true product of the rangy West, and he is gathering all manner of folk material from the old-time Plains people. Only one to the manner born can seize a legend as he has seized "The Legend of Stampede Mesa." At present Mr. Craddock is ranching in Dickens County. He has written good ballads and has been a student at the University of Texas.

Dr. Alex. Dienst of Temple is a well known scholar in Texas history. He has contributed to the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* and is engaged on a bibliography of Texasana.

Bertha McKee Dobie has from childhood been familiar with the country of the Brazos and the San Bernard rivers.

Flora Eckert is a native of the Llano region. At present she is teaching in the Fredericksburg Public Schools.

A. W. Eddins, who is engaged in school work in San Antonio, has contributed to both preceding *Publications* of the Society. He promises more lore from the Mexicans.

Julia Estill is president of the Texas Folk-Lore Society and one of the most useful members that the Society has ever known. Last year she contributed an article to the *Publications* on German lore of Gillespie County. She is principal of the Fredericksburg High School.

Jord Leeper Gay has played tramp, cowboy, treasure hunter, and collegian. At present he is attending the School of Mines at El Paso.

Lillian Gunter is librarian of the Cooke County Free Library at Gainesville. There she has a county museum and is inspiring a widespread interest in local history.

Charles Heimsath is instructor of English at the University of Texas.

Frontier Times, issued monthly at Bandera, is, to one interested in Texas folk-lore and pioneer reminiscences, the most interesting magazine ever published within the borders of the state. Of it *J. Marvin Hunter* is editor and publisher. During the eight months that *Frontier Times* has appeared it has printed as many Texas legends, in addition to folk-lore of other forms. One who is interested in folk diction, folk metaphor, etc., will find in this magazine invaluable source material. Mr. Hunter compiled the two volumes of *Trail Drivers of Texas* published by George W. Saunders of San Antonio. He has written also a history of Bandera County.

Martin McHenry Kenney (1831-1907) was born in Illinois and at the age of three came to Texas with his parents, members of Austin's colony. He was a forty-niner, captain of a company in the Confederate Army, a Texas Ranger, and for thirteen years Spanish translator of the State of Texas. He was a diligent student of Indian life and knew the Indians at first hand. He wrote "The History of the Indian Tribes of Texas," which is included in *Wooten's Comprehensive History of Texas*.

Edgar B. Kincaid is a ranchman of Uvalde County.

Edith C. Lane is an active member of the El Paso Archaeological Society.

E. G. Littlejohn is well known among Texas historians. He is the author of *Texas History Stories*, familiar to many school children of the state. He is secretary of the Texas Historical Society at Galveston and principal of the Alamo School.

Adele B. Looscan, president of the Texas State Historical Association, has made many valuable contributions to the history of Texas and has largely encouraged the cultivation of literature in this state. Her home is in Houston.

Roscoe Martin is a student at the University of Texas.

J. W. Morris is a lawyer at Freeport. He has written various legends of the coast country that have been published in the *Freeport Facts*.

L. W. Payne, Jr. has perhaps done more than any other man to keep alive the Texas Folk-Lore Society. He was the first president of the Society, having been largely instrumental in founding it, and has been a constant contributor to its *Publications*. Dr. Payne is now gathering the folk-songs of Texas for a proposed volume. He is Professor of English at the University of Texas.

Fannie Ratchford is assistant in the Wrenn Library, in connection with which she has done interesting research.

Mrs. Bruce Reid, of Port Arthur, has put a series of legends into story form for children. She acknowledges her inspiration to Mrs. E. C. Carter, until recently Chief Librarian of the Memorial Library at Port Arthur. In this library Mrs. Reid's folk-stories are read and told to children. Mrs. Reid has made extensive studies of birds.

R. E. Sherrill, a business man of Haskell, has written a history of Haskell County. Working through the public schools, he has stimulated a lively interest in the history and lore of his county.

John P. Sjolander, a veteran of seventy-three years, will long be remembered as a pioneer Texas poet. He was born of a noble family in Sweden, was educated in England, and came to Texas more than half a century ago—as a seaman. For a long generation he has lived at Cedar Bayou, cultivating poetry and the art of life. He has translated many folk-songs from the Swedish and has contributed to various magazines of this country and Sweden. A sketch of his life by Hilton R. Greer is to be found in *Library of Southern Literature*. Only some of his "Rhymes of Galveston Bay" are here reprinted.

J. S. Spratt, recent student of the University of Texas, lives at Mingus in Palo Pinto County.

Mary A. Sutherland is the author of *The Story of Corpus Christi*, an interesting history not only of her home city but of the lower Nueces country. She contributed to the *Publications* of 1923.

Victor J. Smith, a member of the faculty of the Sul Ross State Normal College at Alpine, is the acknowledged representative of the Texas Folk-Lore Society for the Big Bend country. He combines anthropology and folk-lore and contributed an article of such blend to the 1923 *Publications*.

As editor of *The American Sketch Book*, which she brought to Texas from the north and continued to edit under the sub-title of *Texas Pioneer Magazine*, *Bella French Swisher* was during the eighteen eighties rather prominent in Texas literary circles. Her romantic nature took her to California, to the stage, and to a young husband. She died some fifteen years ago.

In the note to "The Devil and Strap Buckner" something is said of the author's life. *Nathaniel Alston Taylor* was born in North Carolina, 1835. He graduated from the University of Virginia, came to Texas, and served as colonel in Polignac's Brigade during the Civil War. After the war he settled in Houston.

Louise von Blittersdorf is an enthusiastic worker in the Texas Folk-Lore Society. Her home is in Austin, and she is a student in the University of Texas.

J. O. Webb, Superintendent of Schools at Alvin, is writing a history of Galveston for his Master's thesis at the University of Texas.

W. P. Webb perhaps knows more about Texas Rangers and frontier outlaws than any other man living. He has written various articles on Texas history and Texas folk-lore; at present he is working on a book having to do with Texas Rangers. Mr. Webb is Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Texas.

Mrs. S. J. Wright is the author of *San Antonio de Béxar, Historical, Traditional and Legendary*, which contains a number of legends pertaining to San Antonio. Mrs. Wright is a leader in Texas women's club work. San Antonio is her home.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NINTH ANNUAL MEETING (1923) OF THE TEXAS FOLK-LORE SOCIETY

The Society met April 27-28, at Austin, in the Y. M. C. A. Auditorium, in three successive sessions. The program was as follows:

I

Annual Public Address (given under the joint auspices of the University of Texas and the Texas Folk-Lore Society): *Folk-Lore of the Central West*, Doctor Louise Pound, University of Texas.

II

President's Address: *Folk Thought and the Modern Mind*, Professor Will H. Thomas, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas; *This New American Language*, Mr. Samuel B. Dabney, Houston, Texas; *A Mexican Popular Ballad*, Mr. W. A. Whatley, Ohio State University (read by Professor Lilia M. Casis of the University of Texas and sung by two University girls); *Some Texas Songs*, Dr. L. W. Payne, Jr., University of Texas; *Superstitious of the Northern Seas*, Mr. Hartman Dignowity, Denison, Texas; *Two Legends of the Llano Country*, Miss Julia Estill, Fredericksburg, Texas; *Strokes Shared*, Dr. J. R. Reinhard, University of Texas.

III

Some Indigenous Architecture of Texas (illustrated by lantern slides), Professor Samuel E. Gideon, University of Texas; *Negro Folk-Songs*, sung by Austin negroes; *Some Typical Buried Treasure Legends of Texas, with Notes Thereon*, Mr. J. Frank Dobie, University of Texas; *Some Negro Plantation Songs*, Mr. John A. Lomax, Austin, Texas.

The Secretary made the following report:

Cash on hand at the beginning of the year 1922-1923.....	\$ 88.47
Aggregate income during the year.....	441.36
Total assets for the year.....	<u>\$529.83</u>
Total disbursements for the year.....	\$517.00
Cash on hand	12.83
	<u>\$529.83</u>

The assets of the year came from annual dues, the sale of a few of the 1916 *Publications* at \$2.00 each, the donation of a patron's fee by Mr. Sam P. Cochran of Dallas, and a subsidy of \$100 granted by the Board of Regents of the University of Texas to further publication by the Society. The disbursements were principally for printing and postage.

A paid-up membership of 178 members was reported, distributed as follows: Patrons, 1; Life Members, 26; Members with Journal of American Folk-Lore Society Privileges, 8; Annual Members, 143. Of the 178 members, 114 had joined during the current year.

Officers for the year 1923-1924 were elected as follows: President, Julia Estill, Fredericksburg; First Vice-President, Samuel B. Dabney, Houston; Second Vice-President, S. N. Gaines, Fort Worth; Third Vice-President, Mrs. J. C. Marshall, Quanah; Councillors: A. J. Armstrong, Baylor University; George Summey, Jr., Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas; Maud D. Sullivan, El Paso; Secretary-Treasurer, J. Frank Dobie, Austin (now of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

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Texas Tales of the Soil

Legends of Texas, edited by J. Frank Dobie. Austin, Tex.: The Texas Folk-Lore Society.

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opinion. The extreme opinion is that he never went to sea at all, but was really the shorekeeping head of two noted buccaneer or privateer camps. However, that may be, Lafitte, like Kidd, was and is popularly believed to have hidden much treasure, and in consequence has set many a spade at work trying to uncover some of it. And of course there are bandit legends, among them the legend of Sam Bass, of whom said the poet:

Sam Bass was born in Indiana—that was his native home—
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He first came out to Texas, a teamster for to be;
A kinder-hearted fellow you'd scarcely ever see.

Taken altogether this publication of the Texas Folk-Lore Society is a book of tales that may well serve to while away the casual reader's evening: and that may well claim a place also as a serious addition to Americana, and a likely source book for a responsive searcher after literary material. R. B.

Leon Bourgeois has played a joke on the Comédie-Française which may end him up in the law courts. It is reported in this week's Living Age that Bourgeois sent in under his own name a little known play of Corneille's. It was rejected and the joke was promptly spread abroad in the Paris newspapers. An angry official of the theater is now demanding legal action.

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legends and use them as Irving used the legends of the Hudson and the Catskills, as Whittier used the legends of New England."

Texas, as may here be read, has legends of all kinds, legends of romance, of the unknown and unknowable, of the origin of names for places and flowers, of miscellaneous events and personages; but the typical Texas legend has to do with hidden or lost treasure. In sober fact, however, there seems to be little foundation for these treasure legends, and Mr. Dohle begins his book with an inquiry into their sources, which leads usually and ultimately to Mexican and Spanish gold. Yet the Spaniards when they were in Texas had little superfluous gold, and were indeed historically hard up, nor does the Mexican occupation account for much real money.

One must go back to the wealth found by earlier Spaniards in America, with this natural consequence that these earlier Spaniards became credulous concerning unearned wealth, and that later generations inherited and carried on their credulity. "The Mexicans who lure Americans into the quest of treasure," says Mr. Dohle, "are direct descendants of the Indians who lured the early Spanish." So it comes about that even today "there seems to be a more or less regular traffic in charts—pistas—to buried treasure;" and some "purporting to be a century old are written with pencil on the cheapest of modern paper." Historically, again, the Spanish operated but one mine in what is now Texas territory, and that one of doubtful value, yet the majority of Texas treasure legends presuppose rich mines. The legends are older, but they seem to have come into a kind of popular revival when the world was startled by the gold discoveries in California.

Space is here lacking to retell even a sample legend, but the multiplicity of them may well surprise the reader. McMullen County alone supplies 16; and Mr. Dohle's description supplies a background for them. The county, he says, "has as yet neither railroad nor bank. The people are as yet unhackneyed by the plow or commercial secretary. They still talk a language seasoned with Mexican idiom and honest with the soil's honesty; they have their old-time dances; they welcome heartily any decent stranger. On the whole they are as enlightened as the populations that have their ideals molded by real estate agents. Just now oil boomers and railroad promoters threaten to bring their 'progress.' Until they bring it, the people will remain individual."

There are also pirate legends. It is interesting to find that Texas had its "Captain Kidd" in the person of Jean Lafitte concerning whom there seems to be similar differences of

opinion. The extreme opinion is that he never went to sea at all, but was really the shorekeeping head of two noted buccaneer or privateer camps. However, that may be, Lafitte, like Kidd, was and is popularly believed to have hidden much treasure, and in consequence has set many a spade at work trying to uncover some of it. And of course there are handit legends, among them the legend of Sam Bass, of whom said the poet:

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