



Texas Ranger Dispatch™

*Magazine of the Official Museum, Hall of Fame, and Repository
of the Texas Rangers Law Enforcement Agency*

Rangers Bob Goss and M. T. “Lone Wolf” Gonzauillas

Picture taken circa 1931 in the East Texas Oil Field near Kilgore.

During the Depression, 1931-1934 were the boom years of the oil field, and thousands of people poured into the area in search of work. Most of them were honest and hardworking, but a few were not. This is where the Texas Rangers entered the picture.

At one time or another in the course of these years, approximately forty Rangers worked the oil field, and thousands of National Guardsmen kept a lid on the violence. In 1931, there were four Rangers on permanent duty: Hardy Purvis in Henderson; Dan McDuffie in Gladewater; Bob Goss in Kilgore; and the legendary Lone Wolf Gonzauillas, who was the sergeant in charge of all Rangers, permanent or temporary.

Photo: Robert Nieman



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Ask the Dispatch



Wanted: Individual photograph of Texas Ranger Captain Henry Lee Ransom for a forthcoming Texas Ranger book. Any information as to a possible source of [this] photo would be appreciated. We have checked with all of the most likely sources, and with the exception of a couple of group photos that Ransom is in, we have come up dry.

Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler
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Once again, I really enjoy the articles. My father retired from the job after 27 years back in 1991, and I now have almost 9 years in myself.

I appreciate the history of the people who paved the way, giving us what we have today. They did the job for much less pay, with less equipment and training than we have today. I tell people, "I don't pretend to be from the old school, but I am cut from the old cloth." Only to express my respect for those who are from the old school.

Thanks again for passing on some of the history of our profession.

Officer E. C. Pate 3023
Crime Scene Search Unit
Fort Worth Police



I have often heard of his [Red Burton's] work in Waco against the KKK [Klu Klux Klan]. Is the story true? If you have done an article on him, I would like to read it. If not, please consider doing one. I really enjoy the stories you put in the Dispatch.

We have not done an article on Hall of Fame Texas Ranger Red Burton—yet. For more information on Red Burton go to:
http://www.texasranger.org/halloffame/Burton_Marvin.htm



I was wondering if you have ever seen anything or done a story on my grandfather, Captain Raymond Waters of Company C Lubbock Texas. By what I have found, he was captain longer than anyone else since the 1930s. Just checking; doing some research on him. Thanks for listening. Please let me know if you have anything.

Bill Waters
Carlsbad, New Mexico

Captain Waters is another Ranger that is most deserving of a paper. We hope to present one in the future.



I would like to see an article on Texas Ranger Jim Nance, as he was the Ranger who worked this area when I came on El Paso Police Department thirty-eight years ago.

Thanks,
Lieutenant C. S. Harvey
El Paso Police Department
CRC-CID

Yet another needed paper on a deserving Ranger.



In what year were African-Americans first allowed to participate as Texas Rangers? Also, what role did the Texas Rangers play in enforcing the role and rule of the Confederacy in Texas? Where can I find more information on these subjects?

The first official African-American in the Rangers was Lee Young in 1988. However, we do have mention of a "colored" Ranger in the 1870s that we are still trying to verify. Also, there is a rumor of a light-skinned black who was able to "pass" as white in the 1910s or 20s – we are still trying to track that one down. In the 1880s, blacks were serving as teamsters and cooks in several companies. Jim Werner was a teamster but seemed to be considered a member of the company he served with and was even included in the official company photograph.

It is possible that African-Americans served in early Ranger companies, but since race is not mentioned on muster rolls and surnames aren't any clue, it will be difficult to



document black service before the modern era. It is also very possible that some of the Indians used as scouts may have been black Seminoles.

The best book on the subject of Rangers in the Civil War is David Paul Smith's *Frontier Defense in the Civil War: Texas' Rangers and Rebels* (College Station: Texas A & M Press, 1992).

On the Civil War question, the role of the Rangers in the Civil War was frontier defense. The legislation from 1861 and again in 1864 makes it very clear that these men were called up to continue to protect the frontier against Indian incursions. They were not part of the Confederate Army, and they were not under Confederate military control. Towards the end of the war, they were called upon more and more to deal with the problem of deserters who had moved into the frontier areas of the state and were taking advantage of the lack of law enforcement. So I don't know that you could say the Rangers had any part in enforcing the role and rule of the Confederacy.

For more on the Rangers during the Civil War, go to this article in Issue 1 of the Dispatch: <http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/1/ForgotRangers.htm>.



Having been in law enforcement over twenty years myself, [humorous incidents] have happened to me. Are there any humorous Ranger stories?

Sergeant Buz Hodges
PGPD
Prairie Grove, IL 60012

We, too, enjoy Ranger humor, especially from Rangers like Lee Young, Lewis Rigler, and David Byrnes. We will try to make this a regular feature of the *Dispatch*. In this issue, check out "Gunsmoke" by retired Ranger Lewis Rigler.

Rangers in the Field

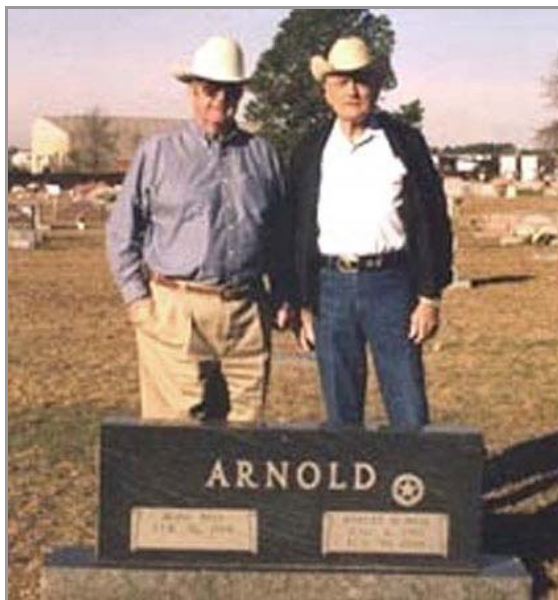


(Left) The newest commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, Louis Sturns, attended the last firearms qualifications of Company B in Kilgore. Commissioner Sturns is flanked by Senior Texas Ranger Captain Ray Coffman and Company B commander Richard Sweaney.

Photo: Robert Nieman



The only father-son Texas Ranger captains, Randy and Bob Prince. Randy is currently the captain of Company C in Lubbock. Before his retirement Bob was the captain of Company A in Houston and later Company F in Waco. *Photo courtesy of Sharon Johnson*



Retired Rangers Max Womack and Glenn Elliot at the grave of Ranger Red Arnold.

Photo: Robert Nieman

(Right)
Representing Company B board members of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation, Steve Sikes (right) presents Company B commander Richard Sweaney with a limited edition print of Bruce Greene's "The Ranger Code."

Photo: Robert Nieman



(Left)
A few retired Rangers and Ranger Association members get together for lunch and fellowship. Left to right: Ranger Max Womack, Ranger Glenn Elliott, Ben Choate, Gray McWhorter, Ranger Lewis Rigler, and Paul Chapman.

Photo courtesy of Glenn Elliott

(Right)
The editor of the *Texas Ranger Dispatch* recently had the pleasure of visiting with retired Ranger Captain David Byrnes and Ranger Ralph Wadsworth at Captain Byrnes' office in Kaufman, Texas (near Dallas). Captain Byrnes is currently the sheriff of Kaufman County.

Photo: Robert Nieman





Retired Texas Rangers Max Womack, Glenn Elliott, Lewis Rigler.

Photo courtesy of Glenn Elliott



Retired Texas Ranger captains Jack Dean and Bob Mitchell at the grave of Hall of Fame Ranger and Texas governor Sol Ross in Waco.

Photo: Robert Nieman



“A very proud father” is how Ranger Richard Shing (right) described this picture. His son Eric, age 25, is a USAF Security Forces veteran with foreign service in the Middle East. He graduated the twenty-one-week 178th Basic Course in Applied Police Science at the Regional Police Academy in Arlington, Texas, and received a basic police certification with TECLOSE. He is now employed at the Rowlett Police Department.

Photo courtesy of Richard Shing



Glenn Elliott’s daughter Diane and son Dennis recently gave their father an 80th birthday reception. Left to right: Glenn Elliott, retired Ranger Max Womack, businessman O.D. Hughes, and retired Ranger Howard “Slick” Alfred.

Photo: Robert Nieman

Who Cleans the Crime Scenes?

Not the house maid,
that's for sure!

By Breck Porter



Reprinted by permission
of the *Gulf Coast Police News*, July, 2006

Cleaning up a crime scene is not a pleasant task and it is not something that typical house cleaning services, maintenance people or other untrained persons should be doing.

Who would even ask their house maid to mop up after a shooting or knifing where large amounts of human blood had been spilled or splattered all over the walls and ceilings? What about a place where a suicide had occurred or a person had just died a natural death but had not been discovered for a week or more? These are the types of calls that are most offensive and unpleasant for police and first responders.

“We do a lot of suicides and decompositions where they may have laid there for a week or two before they were discovered,” says Robert Demaret, owner of USA DECON, a professional trauma/crime scene remediation company. “By then all the body fluids have leaked out and they have bloated and sometimes they pop. Of course when they decompose the odor is a serious problem.”

Why call companies like USA DECON to do these often sickening jobs? Federal regulations specifically provide that an employee cannot be placed in a position and be exposed to blood spills with first fulfilling training requirements. Financial penalties to the employer for the violation of the standard are very severe.

It is very common for those contemplating suicide to find a place away from their home to do the dirty deed. Hotel or motel rooms are popular places chosen by many to end



their lives. Some use firearms, others overdose on drugs or take poisons. After death they may lay in the room for two or three days before being discovered and by then they are “ripe.” to use a term frequently used by those who are dispatched to these scenes.

“The first thing we do is decontaminate all the biological issues” says Demaret. “We don’t know the dead person so we treat them all as if they had aids and hepatitis and everything under the sun.

“We use EPA approved, hospital grade disinfectant and we spray all the body fluids down first so that any virus’ that were in those body fluids are dead. The body is usually gone when we get there and all that remains are the body fluids. We clean all that up and deodorize the house. We have special ozone machines, odor neutralizing chemicals and we use different methods depending on the severity of the case. We remove all the bio hazards and deodorize the premises.

Demaret continues, “In the case where carpet is contaminated we take it up with the pad. Often the fluids get into the concrete slab under the carpet pad. The concrete is porous so we remove what we can and let it dry then reseal the concrete before new carpet is put down.

We have done second floor apartments where the fluid has actually gone through the floor, through the insulation, through the sheetrock of the ceiling of the downstairs apartment and started dripping from the ceiling. In that case we must cut the floor out of the upstairs apartment, remove the insulation then cut the sheetrock out of the downstairs apartment and clean the rafters. We can’t cut the rafters out because they are load bearing, but we clean and decontaminate them and reseal them. That establishes a physical barrier.

“We can’t do much for stains but we make sure there are no viruses or disease left the in the area. We put up a physical barrier and then new sheetrock and carpet can be installed.

“Unattended deaths where bodies have decomposed comprise about 50% of our work. Another 40% are suicides where there is also decomposition or a massive blood spill and body fragments, and the remaining 10% are homicides, shootings, stabbings and accidents.

“We even get calls from department stores and other large stores where a customer may have fallen and busted their head on the corner of a shelf and left blood. Anywhere somebody spills blood is where we go and clean it up.

“We have done jobs where the deceased person was HIV Positive, but we treat all jobs that way because we can’t afford the luxury of taking that risk. The clothing that we wear



has to be rated for blood born pathogens. We wear eye protection, splash protection, respiratory protection, two pair of gloves, a full set of coveralls and two pair of booties. We're covered from head to toe. Nothing can get on us.

"If we are working a suicide that happened only yesterday, our personal protection equipment would be different than if we were working where a body had decomposed for a month or so because we are not dealing with odors. We have full face respirators that have filters on them that purify the air and reduce the odors that we smell.

"If apartments or hotels or motels were to send their own maintenance crews in there to do that kind of cleaning, they would be in direct violation of OSHA regulations. Employee's must be trained and certified in blood born pathogens and the use of personal protective equipment," concluded Demaret.

To learn more about USA DECON call toll free 877-627-7458 or visit their website <http://www.usadecon.com>.



Dispatch E-Books

Several months ago, the Dispatch launched its E-Book page in an effort to assist Texas Ranger researchers and for general reading. At E-Book you will find numerous oral histories, master's thesis's, and several books.

Below is an insert from one of those books, *Three Years Among The Comanches* by Nelson Lee, who served as a Ranger during its early history.

For a complete listing of our E-Book page go to
http://www.texasranger.org/E-Books/Main_Page.htm.

Read, learn, and enjoy.

Three Years Among the Comanches

The narrative of Nelson Lee, the Texas Ranger

Baker Taylor Company
Albany, New York
1859

Chapter 6

The intelligence we brought back to Seguin, with the evidence of the captured saddles to corroborate our story, immediately aroused the town. Experience had taught us with infallible certainty that the party we had surprised and so singularly put to flight would hasten, without delay, towards the Rio Grande. In doing so they would necessarily cross the Guadalupe, at the Seguin ford, a mile above the town, the Lipan ford, six miles farther up, or the San Antonio crossing, fifteen miles distant, the present site of the flourishing village of New Braunfels. It was, however, generally considered that, in all probability, they would direct their course towards the latter point.

Arrangements were made accordingly—the citizens marching out on foot to the lower ford, while a small party, as well mounted as the scarcity of horses, under the circumstances, would allow, proceeded to the upper crossing.



We reached it towards midnight and having carefully examined the white sand of the shore, discovered they had not arrived. Secreted in an ambush near by, we waited patiently their coming all the long night. In the morning, we determined to sally out in pursuit of them, but were scarcely seated in the saddle when they were espied at a long distance, coming towards us, across the prairie. Falling back out of sight, we silently awaited their approach, as long as concealment was necessary or politic, and then dashed upon them. Instead of turning back upon their course, they fled towards a belt of timber on the river bank three miles below, losing three men in the flight, and passing through it, plunged into the stream, seeking shelter on an island there situated. This island may be perhaps fifty yards in length, grown up with cottonwood, against which logs and brush have drifted down in seasons of high water, and lodged, forming a kind of breastwork. The space between the east bank and the island, which they crossed in reaching it, is narrow and shallow, but on the west side the stream is deep and rapid, and the shore, though neither rocky or perpendicular is high and difficult of ascent.

The Mexicans, when we came up, were concealed behind the breastwork of driftwood, but aware that a few minutes only would elapse before we would be upon them, plunged, one after another, into the stream, striking out towards the west shore. The strong current, in spite of their lusty efforts, bore them down the river, bringing them in range of our rifles. Three only escaped, one of these, sorely to our mortification and chagrin, being the ever fortunate Christolphe Rubio. And not only did he effect his own deliverance, but as if some magic power had turned aside the bullets that whistled round him, succeeded in partly dragging, partly coaxing his horse, the only one saved, up the embankment.

This horse was known as the Calahan pony, a round, tough, short-legged specimen of his race, and destined thereafter to figure conspicuously in the history of Christolphe Rublo. He was one of the number stolen at Seguin, the property of one Calahan, who, in order to make the assurance of his safety doubly sure, on the night of the invasion of the robbers, had placed a chain around his neck and fastened it with a padlock, the other end being passed through a hole in the door of his house and carefully secured within. Padlocks, however, offered but slight resistance to Mexican greed and ingenuity, and the astonished Calahan, in the morning sought to lighten the burden of his indignation by indulging in commentaries on the whole "magnanimous nation," far more profane than elegant.

Another who escaped enjoyed a reputation for villainy second only to Rublo. He was the son of a Roman Catholic priest who officiated in the ancient Cathedral of San Antonio. His mother was an obscure woman belonging on a neighboring ranche. Not allowed to bear his father's name, and not desiring to assume that of his mother, he came to be distinguished simply as the Ranchero, an appellation



signifying, substantially, "the farmer." From a neglected boy, he grew up into a vicious vagabond, and following the natural bent of his inclinations, finally became renowned as a reckless and bold marauder.

Though fortunate on this occasion in eluding his pursuers, he was doomed to bear away with him a ragged wound upon the shoulder. The third that escaped was unknown to fame.

Besides these three, another had crossed in safety and was out of reach of danger, but dropping his maleta, a sort of leathern haversack, while ascending the steep bank, with a foolhardiness unexampled, he turned back to secure it. Bending down to pick it up, a rifle ball crashed through his brain in the twinkling of an eye, bringing to the ground his brawny form, which rolled down and sank, with a great splash, in the river.

Afterwards one of our company swam over and secured the maleta. An examination of its contents disclosed three hundred silver thimbles, a number of silver butter knives, and several letters written by one Azaras la Ture, a French Mexican of Gonzales. This correspondence informed the party of Antonio Perez of the situation of a large number of horses in his neighborhood, and of the manner in which they could be stolen without danger of detection. It proved an unfortunate discovery for La Ture; the citizens of Gonzales, on inspection of evidence so conclusive, feeling constrained to relieve him from the further burden of existence by summarily suspending him from the limb of a tree. The silver knives and thimbles were ascertained to have been sold by a firm in Bexar to some traders going over to Mexico, and who were undoubtedly waylaid, robbed, and murdered on the way, as they were never heard of afterwards.

We had now succeeded in recovering all our stolen property, excepting the Calahan pony and one other, accidentally shot in the melee, besides having visited upon the offenders severe punishment. If we had been fortunate enough to have secured Christolphe Rublo, our labors would have been crowned with complete success. As it was, however, we directed our course homeward with the rescued animals, indulging a reasonable amount of satisfaction.

I was selected, as being the best mounted, to carry intelligence of our operations to San Antonio, the headquarters of the Rangers, and to notify them that Rublo was in the neighborhood. Leaving the party at the Lipan ford, I struck across the prairie, and leisurely pursued my journey. The excitement and labors of the two days past, together with the entire loss of sleep the previous night, now began to force upon me the absolute necessity of rest. At dusk, therefore, I dismounted on the outskirts of a grove, gave Black Prince a wide range to graze,



and throwing myself on the ground, enjoyed a long and refreshing sleep. In the morning I continued on the way, reaching San Antonio somewhat before noon.

As soon as I arrived, I sought out Jack Hays, who cut short his salutation to tell me that Christophe Rublo had been in the city that morning before daylight, and that he had just learned from a Mexican spy that he represented his party had been attacked by the Comanches in the mountains, from which only himself and two companions had escaped alive. Recounting to him all the particulars above related and the cause of my visit to town, we set about considering the best plan of accomplishing his arrest. Inquiries were everywhere instituted to ferret out his hiding place, until reliable information was finally received that he had gone down the river nine miles, and had taken refuge in the mission of San Juan, where he expected soon to be joined by a reinforcement. A party of some twenty was collected and started in pursuit. Arrived at the mission, we surrounded it, while Captain Hays and Colonels Howard and Cook were deputed to enter and seize the prisoners.

The mission of San Juan is situated near the bank of the river, and is surrounded by a high, thick wall. It is entered through massive folding gates, which open into a spacious courtyard, having been erected long ago after the fashion of old times, and had been used both as a safe retreat in war, and a quiet abode in peace, but latterly had become rather a den of thieves than a place of prayer.

Admission being demanded, the huge gates swung back, and Hays and his companions entered. They passed onward into the courtyard, and were received by the priest in charge, and disappeared in an adjoining apartment. At that moment Christophe Rublo and the unknown Mexican who had escaped with him from the island darted out, the former running in one direction, the latter in the other. Aware of our approach, and intuitively comprehending the object of our mission, they had, with the notorious cunning of their class, stationed themselves against the wall, and as the great gate swung back, it concealed them from the observation of those who passed within. Rubio, in his flight, stumbled into a deep ditch, which had been excavated for the purposes of irrigation, and was speedily captured, while his companion plunged into the river under a sharp fire, and swam to the other shore. The report of firearms brought out the workmen in a gristmill, just below the point he had succeeded in reaching, on seeing whom he recrossed, making directly towards the spot where I stood, with great difficulty, and evidently suffering intense pain. I took him by the hand and drew him out upon the bank, presently discovering he was unable to stand upon his feet, having a fractured thigh. He was carried into the mission and left in charge of the Holy Fathers who presided over it, while Christophe and his comrade, the Ranchoero, who was found in bed, suffering from his shoulder wound, were conducted back as prisoners to San Antonio.



Entering the city, we were surrounded by the populace, who clamored for their blood. With the utmost difficulty we were enabled to protect them, but finally succeeded in confining them in the office of the alcalde, which, however, was defended by a guard. Jack Hays announced, and in a manner which meant precisely what he said, that any man who laid violent hands upon the prisoners in the city of San Antonio would do so at the forfeit of his life, but pledging his word they should be forwarded to Seguin, in charge of the Rangers, to be dealt with by the outraged citizens of that town as they might think proper to determine.

When this announcement was made, the great body of the populace demurred, saying, in the first place, it would be unsafe and imprudent for the Rangers to leave the city unprotected, and in the second, that unless the robbers were guarded on the way by such an escort, they would certainly be rescued by the many secret adherents of Antonio Perez. Hays, however, apparently adhered firmly to his expressed determination, communicating privately, however, to one Escue and myself, the plan he had resolved on—a plan which will be developed as we proceed.

Two hours before sunset, Rublo was bound fast upon the back of the Calahan pony, which we had also captured at San Juan, and the Ranchero on an old Spanish gelding, whose hobbling gate and decrepit aspect indicated beyond mistake he had well-nigh traversed the last quarter of his life. The Rangers, therefore, were called out and ordered into line. They left the city, led by Jack Hays, taking the road leading toward Seguin, Escue and myself leading the animals which bore the prisoners, in the rear, and in this order we journeyed onward to the Salado ford.

Just before reaching this point, however, agreeably to a previous understanding, we fell back a considerable distance from the main body, and turning to the right, silently led the prisoners out into the plain, guided by no trail, but steering as near as possible in the direction of Seguin. Hays, thereupon, wheeled about and marched back to San Antonio, the object of these maneuvers being to prevent both the rescue of the prisoners and an attack upon the town.

It was some time after nightfall when we separated from the Rangers at the Salado ford, yet we took the precaution to wrap ourselves and captives in dark buffalo skins, in order that we might not be discovered, even in the darkness. We soon realized the advantage resulting from this foresight, inasmuch as we could plainly discern numbers of Mexican horsemen in their white shirts scouring the prairies round us, while we remained unobserved. As night advanced it began to rain, and the darkness became intense. We reached at last, the bank of the Cibolo, having accomplished in safety the first half of our journey, but here we became



confused, and considering the danger of an attempt at crossing at random, resolved to halt until morning.

Removing Rubio from the pony, I bound him firmly, and sat down by his side with a pistol in my hand. I knew well the unpleasant reception that awaited me at home—that it might cost me as much as my own life was worth—should the prisoner escape through my neglect; and consequently determined not to close my eyes through the night. Before falling asleep, which he did at last, the hardened desperado, conscious that his deliverance, on the morrow, into the hands of the men of Seguin would close his mortal career, boasted of the many outrages he had committed—his robberies and murders—and grinding his teeth, spit upon his enemies, and bade defiance to the terrors of death and the torments of hell.

Escue, with his charge, had chosen a spot whereon to pass the night some rods distant from me, alleging it afforded better pasturage for his horse. Ranchero complained bitterly of the pain in his wounded shoulder, and begged piteously that his arms might be unloosed in order to relieve him. His request was finally granted, and drawing his sombrero over his eyes, and nestling between two buffalo skins, he sank into an apparent slumber.

Escue tied one end of his long cabalos, or halter, round his horse's neck, the other end to his ankle, resorting to this measure for two reasons: first to restrain his horse within proper limits, and second, believing the action of the halter on his ankle would keep him awake. But Escue for some nights back had "murdered sleep," and withal, during the day, had partaken somewhat freely of his beloved whisky; wherefore, as the night wore on, and the exhilaration passed away, a sense of drowsiness pressed down his eyelids with a force more ponderous than he was able to resist. Several times through the night I spoke to him, in a voice loud as prudence would permit, and roused him from his napping.

The first faint light of morning disclosed to me, as I looked in his direction, that something was out of place. I could not discern his horse, though perhaps it might be in consequence of an intervening cluster of bushes. "Is everything all right, Escue?" I called out in a half-doubting tone. Drawing up his leg, he felt the halter was still fastened to his ankle, and looking down, beheld Ranchero's hat, to all earthly appearance with his head in it, and answered, "all right." "But are you sure?" I continued. This second interrogatory opened wide his eyes, when, raising the buffalo robe, his face assumed the expression of complete astonishment, as if the voice of an invisible thimble-rigger was whispering in his ear, "You see, my unsophisticated friend, the little joker is not there!"



A moment's further investigation was sufficient to inform him that his horse had mysteriously vanished also. The other end of the halter instead of encircling his neck, was fastened to a musquete limb which admirably counterfeited the motion of the horse, as it swung to and fro. The cunning Ranchero had performed this feat in a manner the shrewdest juggler might, indeed, have envied. The first point gained was the liberty of his arms, which enabled him to untie the cords that bound his feet. Seizing, then, the favorable moment, he slipped away, leaving his hat undisturbed, the buffalo skins naturally separated by upright sticks—and tying the cabalos to the limb, moved off with the horse, noiselessly as a cat. For some time Escue stood dumb with astonishment, but when the faculty of speech returned, he declared the feat was utterly unparalleled, inasmuch as his eyes had been on him constantly from the moment he lay down, and swore, if he ever had the good fortune to meet him again, he would treat him with the awe and reverence due to a supernatural wizard.

The sun was fairly risen before we were ready to proceed. I had placed Rublo astride the Calahan pony, his arms firmly pinioned, and was in the act of securing his feet, when, turning my eyes towards the prairie which gradually ascended as it stretched back from the spot we occupied, I beheld, perhaps a mile distant, a company of horsemen. A brief period sufficed to enable us to distinguish our stolen horse in advance of the troop, with Ranchero on his back.

A critical moment had now arrived. Not the fraction of an instant was to be lost. Escue was without a horse—the old Spanish gelding being utterly useless under the circumstances. To retain the prisoner was impossible, and to release him would be to set free a remorseless bloodhound, and to bring down upon our heads the anathema of the community. He sat upon the pony, with outstretched neck, gazing intently towards the rapidly advancing horsemen. An eager, sinister, half-malicious, half-triumphant expression overspread his countenance, suggestive of the certain presence of a devil. My resolution was instantly formed, and instantly executed. Drawing a revolver from my belt, I shot him.



Ranger Flores' Chiefs Special

By David V. Stroud

Gun photos courtesy of David V. Stroud

If you have read my previous articles, you are more than aware that my interest in weapons is concerned more with history than shooting. As a 1968 history major with a GI Bill wallet, I began collecting Civil War Colts and Remingtons while viewing—and wishing I could afford—the few examples offered with presentation-inscribed back straps. Over the years, my interest expanded to include western gunfighters, outlaws, lawmen, and Texas Rangers. Except for exchanging the GI Bill for a teacher's paycheck, nothing has changed.

Therefore, when I am provided the opportunity to purchase a weapon with a *known* historical association—and *if* I can afford it—I buy it. Such was the case a few years ago with Texas Ranger George W. Chapman's Winchester Model 7¹ and Robert G. "Bob" Goss' church-wearing Smith & Wesson (a future article). More recently, I purchased Sergeant William Rodolfo "Rudy" Flores' back-up and off-duty, nickel-finished, two-inch barrel, .38 Chiefs Special.²

Sergeant Flores was born in Galveston, Texas, and graduated from Ball High School. He has been a Texas peace officer since 1982, having previously served with the Galveston County Sheriff's Office, Galveston Police Department, and Texas Department of Public Safety as trooper and sergeant. He holds a TCLEOSE certification as a master peace officer, instructor, firearms instructor and special investigator. Rudy regularly instructs in crime-scene and criminal investigations at local police academies, sheriff's offices, and police departments. He has been accepted in state and federal courts as an expert in bloodstain-pattern analysis. Rudy is one of seven who developed



Sergeant Rudy Flores

*Photo: Texas Ranger Hall of Fame
& Museum*

¹ Dispatch, Spring 2004.

² William Rodolfo Flores, 08/02/2006. email.



an advanced crime scene investigation program for the Texas Rangers, and he currently teaches the course. He does this while completing “year 22 of a 23-year plan to get a 4-year degree in criminal justice” and then a master’s degree at Sam Houston. ¹

In 1949, with off-duty lawmen and suit-wearing deactivates in mind, C.R. Hellstrom, of Smith & Wesson, requested his engineers design a small-frame, five-shot revolver capable of firing the more powerful .38 Special cartridge. The new J-frame revolvers (larger than the I but smaller than the K) made its public debut on October 24, 1950, at the Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police in Colorado Springs. The gathered chiefs were asked to vote on an appropriate name for the J frame, and the winner was “.38 Chiefs Special.” ²

The original Chiefs were available with nickel or blue finish and a two-inch barrel with round butts. Because many lawmen expressed interest in a longer barrel, three-inch barreled Chiefs were added to Smith & Wesson’s inventory on December 6, 1950. However, even with longer barrels, large-handed shooters found the small revolvers difficult to handle. To help solve the problem, square-butt Chiefs were added to Smith & Wesson’s inventory on October 14, 1952.

They began with serial number 21,342 of the Chiefs Special series. In 1957, Model Number 36 was assigned to the Chiefs, and that stamping began with serial number 125,000. ³



Since then, the spring, cylinder-stop plunger, screw lock in front of the trigger guard, and large-side plate screw have been eliminated. The hammer’s base changed from a ball socket to a slot-and-pin using a fork-type mainspring strip. Finally, the thump piece to open the cylinder was contoured. Regardless of the changes, the name *Chiefs Special* has never appeared on the J Frame Revolver. T. ⁴

The featured revolver is stamped *Smith & Wesson* on the left of the two-inch barrel and *.38 S & W Spl* on the right. The left side of the frame is marked *S & W* over the trademark and *registered US Patent Office* below. The frame’s right side bears *MADE IN USA / MACAS REGISTRADAS / Smith & Wesson / Springfield. Mass.* The Chiefs

1 Ibid., 08/24/2006.

2 Roy G. Jinks, *History of Smith & Wesson* (North Hollywood, California: Beinfeld Publishing, Inc., 1992), 225.

3 Ibid., 225-226.

4 Ibid.



Special "was shipped on July 8, 1980, and delivered to Bill Story Law Enforcement Co., Oklahoma City, OK." ¹

When Rudy Flores purchased the Chiefs Special from a deputy with the Anderson County Sheriff's Office in 2001, it was outfitted with rubber grips. He therefore obtained the DPS Authorization to Carry Other Than Issued Firearm from his firearm instructor and district commander on October 24, 2001. Flores replaced the rubber grips with stags he bought the same year from retired State Trooper Tom Ball in Cherokee County.

As for the weapon, I have always been particularly fond of revolvers. I often carried that one as an off-duty weapon or as an "in addition" weapon (a secondary weapon while on duty). I like the reliability of a revolver and would either clip it to my belt with a snap-on holster I made or slip it into an easily accessible pocket.

When off-duty, Flores carried it in an ankle holster he has now owned for over twenty years. ²

Once Sergeant Flores learned that I had added the revolver to my collection, he went the extra mile and provided some personal information about the Smith & Wesson .38 Special that I have used in this article. He also added, "I hope you enjoy owning the revolver as much as I did." ³

I'm sure I will.

1 Roy G. Jinks, Office of Smith & Wesson's, 08/29/2006. historical letter.

2 Flores, 08/02/2006 and 08/24/06.

3 Ibid., 06/16/2005.

John James Dix

Texas Ranger
and Confederate Soldier
during the Civil War

By Dan R. Manning

All photos courtesy of Dan R. Manning unless otherwise noted.



On May 17, 1860, at the conclusion of the Cortina Campaign, John James Dix was discharged from the Texas Rangers Rio Grande Squadron.¹ He returned to his ranch on Ramireña Creek in Live Oak County, relieving his twenty-year-old wife Cynthia from her temporary management responsibilities. For four months, she had overseen the livestock operation in addition to caring for their two small children (another child had died at birth). Soon after Dix came home, she suffered the birth and soon the death of a fourth child, a daughter named Mary Isabel.² In addition to the common hardships faced by a pioneer family, an impending civil war also threatened their future.

Governor Sam Houston was staunchly opposed to the separation of Texas from the Union. In Austin, he reluctantly watched the Ordinance of Secession pass through the Texas legislature on February 1, 1861, and then become ratified on February 23. The “Hero of San Jacinto,” who had helped conceive the Republic and form the state, had probably reasoned that the majority of Texans were loyal Unionists since they had voted him into office a year earlier. After he refused to take the Confederate oath, however, he was eased out of his position of power and replaced by Edward Clark in mid-March.

1 Ranger muster roll, Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin.

2 John James Dix family Bible, in possession of Don Rollins, a great, great grandson. Don Rollins collection, Colorado Springs, Colorado (hereafter cited as Don Rollins collection).

The children (4 girls, 6 boys) of John James and Cynthia Dix:

Frances Victoria, b. September 13, 1857, and lived to maturity

John Archibald, b. November 2, 1858, and lived to maturity

Mary Dobie, b. October 11, 1859; d. at birth

Mary Isabel, b. September 2, 1860; d. December 6, 1861

Blanche Alma, b. July 16, 1862; d. August 11, 1863

Ford, b. August 23, 1865, and lived to maturity

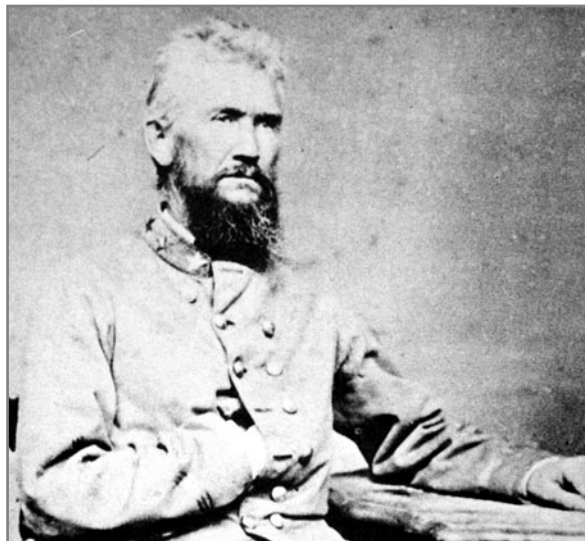
Peyton and Olwyn (twins), b. December 9, 1866 (Peyton), and December 10, 1866

(Olwyn). Olwyn died May 19, 1867, and Peyton died 6 days later on May 25, 1867.

Hayes, b. January 5, 1868, and lived to maturity.

William, b. May 20, 1870 (stillborn)

(Sam Houston, the tired, old veteran of so many military and political campaigns, died on July 26, 1863.)¹



John Salmon "Rip" Ford
Photo courtesy of Robert Nieman

Dix's former Ranger leader, John Salmon "Old Rip" Ford, had been a delegate at the Secession Convention and had received an appointment to the Committee of Public Safety from Chairman Oran M. Roberts. As commander of an expedition to demand the surrender of Fort Brown, Ford left Austin after authorizing Mat Nolan, John Littleton, and John Donelson to raise and organize a force to join him on the Lower Rio Grande.² Ford tactfully negotiated the takeover of Fort Brown without forcing immediate warfare, which had been a distinct possibility. Peacefully, federal troops vacated all Army posts and military warehouses by mid-March.

When Union General David E. Twiggs surrendered his soldiers without bloodshed, he removed a shield of protection for the border that the U.S. Army had provided since 1848. Consequently, Texans began to restructure a network of self-defense. Home guard units were organized to protect the coastline from Yankee invasions while ranging companies of volunteers patrolled along the frontier to ward off Mexican bandits and Indian raiders. During the summer and early fall of 1861, Rip Ford commanded the Military District of the Rio Grande, a thousand-mile stretch of land from the mouth of the river to a point beyond El Paso.³

Ford also finessed an action to sidestep the federal blockade at Brazos Santiago Island by promoting an unimpeded route for Confederate goods through Texas. The improvised system of commerce enabled steamboats owned by Charles Stillman, Mifflin Kenedy, and Richard King to avoid seizure by flying Mexican flags.⁴

To allow a period of much-needed rest for Ford, Colonel Phillip N. Lockett, who had been a consulting physician during the birth of John James Dix's second child, accepted command of the lower Rio Grande. Governor Clark sent Colonel Charles Grimus

1 John Hoyt Williams, *Sam Houston* (New York: Touchstone, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1994), 340, 341, 342, 344, 362.

2 John Salmon Ford, *Rip Ford's Texas*, ed. Stephen B. Oates (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), 318.

3 Ford, *Rip Ford's Texas*, 325-326.

4 Ford, *Rip Ford's Texas*, 329.



Thorkelin de Lovenskiold from Corpus Christi to muster out any of Ford's men who were not transferring into the regular Confederate Army.¹ As Provost Marshall of Nueces County, Lovenskiold tendered a commission to John James Dix in January of 1862, asking him to raise a company for the Confederacy. Lovenskiold regarded Dix as "an honest and good citizen, honorable in all his dealings, and reliable in every way." However, Dix declined the position²

John Dix, the father of John James, was a Union sympathizer. He had encouraged his son to remain near Cynthia and the children rather than travel east to risk his life in battles on foreign soil. According to the elder Dix, "We have our frontier to protect against the uncertain Mexicans, and wily Indians, and I think it cannot be your duty to leave your family on this exposed frontier for any other scene of action."³

John James Dix soon had another calling. In November of 1861, Frances R. Lubbock was elected as the governor of Texas, replacing Clark. He formulated a protective line along the Mexican border and instructed counties to raise 100-man companies for the Texas Frontier Regiment of Mounted Volunteers. Ranking officers were appointed on January 29, 1862. They were Colonel James N. Norris, Lieutenant Colonel Alfred L. Obenchain (soon to be murdered), and Major James Ebenezer McCord. Locations for eighteen outposts and military campsites were designated between March 17 and April 17.⁴ Dix joined the Frontier Regiment and quickly sought other recruits:

TEXAS RANGERS
ATTENTION!
DO NOT WAIT TO BE DRAFTED

The undersigned having been authorized by his excellency, the Governor, to raise a company of Rangers, under the provisions of the frontier of Texas, and approved December 21, 1861, has been granted the privilege to receive men from any portion of the State, with a view to select the very best material the country affords, that efficient service may be rendered. The act requires each man to furnish his own horse, arms and accoutrements, and I need not say that I wish them to be of the best kind available—double-barreled shot guns, light rifles and six-shooters, if possible.

1 Thomas W. Knowles, *They Rode for the Lone Star* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1999), 191.

2 Charles Lovenskiold to John James Dix, affidavit, June 28, 1862, Lanham-Napier collection, Fredericksburg, Texas (hereafter cited as Lanham-Napier collection).

3 John Dix to John James Dix, July 21, 1861, Lanham-Napier collection.

4 David Paul Smith, *Frontier Defense in the Civil War: Texas Rangers and Rebels* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1992), 42, 44, 45.



The pay offered by the State Government is very liberal and equal to the most favored troops in the service—equal to the pay of any troops of the same class in the Confederate Army.

All persons desirous of availing themselves of this last opportunity of serving their State, are invited to rendezvous at Concrete, De Witt co., on the Guadalupe river, on the last day of February, 1862, for the purpose of enrollment and organization the following day, from which time they will be provided for by the Government.

JOHN J. DIX
McMullen Co., Feb. 11, 1862. ¹

Captain Dix recruited several family members to serve with him in the Frontier Regiment. His brother Benjamin became 2nd Lieutenant, and brother-in-law Thomas P. McNeill was 4th Sergeant. Privates in the company included another brother-in-law, Marvel E. McNeill; his sister-in-law's brother, William Ferrell; and Cynthia's nephew, James H. Roark.²

One-half of Dix's Company K was posted where the Sabinal-Uvalde Road crossed the Rio Frio in Uvalde County, and it became known as Camp Dix. The other half of the company was stationed at Camp Nueces, a point on the San Antonio-Eagle Pass Road where it crossed the Nueces River.³

Patrols, consisting of an officer and five privates, would routinely depart from their campsites on two-day intervals toward an adjacent camp. They were in search of tracks indicating foreign traffic toward populated regions. If a suspicious trail was cut, scouts followed it, while others rode to gather a larger force in expectation of trouble.⁴

The Frontier Regiment managed to kill twenty-one hostile Indians in combat and recapture over two hundred horses during their initial six months of service. Organized for the purpose of warding off Indian raids and renegade Mexican incursions from across the Rio Grande, the ranging companies were eventually called to the onerous duty of chasing down deserters and draft dodgers.⁵

Meanwhile, a non-field Confederate appointment as superintendent of conscripts came to Rip Ford on June 2, 1862, and he endured the undesirable position as the state's

1 Knowles, *They Rode for the Lone Star*, 193. This is a broadside initiated by John James Dix.

2 Muster roll of the Frontier Regiment Texas Mounted Volunteers, John James Dix papers, Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin.

3 Smith, *Frontier Defense in the Civil War*, 46.

4 *Ibid.*

5 Knowles, *They Rode for the Lone Star*, 194, 196.



draft officer for over a year. During his tenure, he discovered that homebound wives were fabricating excuses to gain leaves of absence for their husbands stationed on the East Coast. Ford deliberated an official statement to quell this unpatriotic practice. His directive, the Order of the Sons of the South, was a disquisition of the principals enunciated in the Constitution of the Confederate States. Ford attributed a portion of the dissertation to fellow patriot John James Dix.¹

Six months after the formation of the Frontier Regiment, Dix issued an order for 1st Lieutenant John C. Terrell to supervise the construction of a grain storage and commissary facility.² As the ongoing period of drought afforded little forage for saddle horses and pack animals in the field, the detail was considered high priority. Two weeks earlier, Terrell had sent a message from Camp Dix to Major McCord, complaining of abusive treatment. Sidestepping the regular chain of command, the obvious bootlicker stated that Dix was demanding more “than any two men could possible do.”³ Apparently, he was unused to working to his limit—unlike the discipline followed by his captain, who would not require any task from subordinates beyond his own capabilities.

One month later, Terrell begged Dix’s pardon and acknowledged the true character of his superior officer. A desperate man, in an attempt to prolong his trip to the gallows, falsely accused Dix of misappropriating horses during the Cortina Campaign. Dix requested letters from associates to show proof of his integrity, and Terrell was one of those who complied. Dix then forwarded twenty-seven affidavits to Governor Lubbock. Captain Dix’s credibility was affirmed by the governor, who stated that “the charges preferred are without foundation in fact or truth.” He encouraged Dix to disregard the accusation by assuring him that “this matter is now at rest and that you will most energetically and diligently discharge your duties as the commander of your Company.”⁴

While he was in the field, Dix had made arrangements for his family to stay in Corpus Christi with his parents John and Mary. That did not prove to be an especially safe haven, for the elder Dix was threatened throughout the war with charges of treason. Nevertheless, he would not forsake his religious beliefs, political affiliations, or national loyalties by aligning himself with a secessionist government.

An estimated one-third of the Texas population supported the Union during the Civil War in varying degrees of active or passive resistance. Another approximately one-third stayed neutral, while the remainder favored and fought for the Confederate cause.

1 Ford, Rip Ford’s Texas, 334, 335, 337.

2 John James Dix to John C. Terrell, August 1, 1862, Lanham-Napier collection.

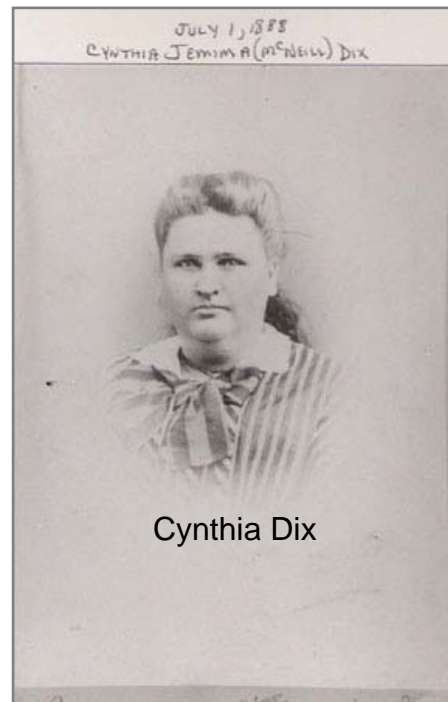
3 John C. Terrell to James Ebenezer McCord, July 12, 1862, Lanham-Napier collection.

4 Frances R. Lubbock to John James Dix, August 31, 1862, Lanham-Napier collection.

Martial law was eventually declared throughout the state in order to keep Unionist activity at a minimum.¹

During August 1862, Corpus Christi was under surveillance from Union ships. John W. Kittredge, a federal captain, requested the citizens to surrender, but they refused his offer. Most residents evacuated before shelling commenced. Two cows and a Newfoundland dog were killed, and a great number of homes were damaged. A bay-shore battery, manned by a dozen amateur artillerymen, fired thirty shots toward the attackers. They eventually hit a gunboat, fending off the projected landing.²

During one Union invasion of Corpus Christi, a tedious altercation ensued when the elder John Dix brought forth an American flag to display its colors from his rooftop. Cynthia, his outraged daughter-in-law, was determined to interrupt the flag-raising ceremony by confronting the head of the household at the foot of the stairs. Armed with a shotgun, she sternly brought him to task by warning, "My husband, your son, left me here with you to protect and take care of, not to insult, and while I am here if you attempt to raise that flag over this house, over my head, I will shoot you off the roof." Upon consideration of Cynthia's threat, Dix failed to fly his banner, proud though he was of its stars and stripes.³ Arrested and imprisoned three times and nearly hanged for being an unflinching Unionist, old John Dix would one day be remembered as "of that peculiar temperament that knew no compromise or half-way ground. If he meant Union he meant it all over, and no argument or opposition could change him."⁴



At her parents' home in San Antonio, Cynthia Dix had given birth to a daughter on July 16, 1862, but the child died on August 11, 1863, as a result of "dysentery from teething."⁵ In a letter of sympathy, the elder John Dix offered his son a few words of

1 Ralph A. Wooster, *Civil War Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 40.

2 Maria von Blucher, *Maria von Blucher's Corpus Christi: Letters from the South Texas Frontier, 1849-1879*, ed. Bruce Cheeseman (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2002), 130, 131.

3 Mrs. Frank DeGarmo, *Pathfinders of Texas 1836-1846* (Austin: Press of Von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1951), 34, 35.

4 Obituary of John Dix, *Peninsula Courier & Family Vistant* (Ann Arbor, Michigan), March 18, 1870.

5 Birth and death records of Blanche Alma Dix, John James Dix family Bible, Don Rollins collection.



comfort: “When infants die we have a hope for them that we cannot have for adults, unless we can have some evidence that they have made their peace with God.” Concerned for his son’s state of mind, the old man was also “sorry to hear you say that if you could be certain of the welfare of your family for the future, you would cheerfully go into the army and yield up your life in the cause of your country.”¹

In the house divided, William Henry Harrison Dix, the second-oldest son of patriarch John Dix and his Mary, was probably urged to join the federal Army by his parents and a Yankee wife. He had gained previous experience from September 1, 1852, to March 13, 1853, as a 4th sergeant under Ranger Captain Gideon K. “Legs” Lewis in Nueces County with the Texas Mounted Volunteers.² Harrison, as family members called him, enlisted as a Union private in Company K, 14th Regiment, Illinois Infantry, on December 24, 1863. He was captured at Moon’s Station, a few miles from Atlanta, Georgia, during a skirmish on October 4, 1864, and he endured terrible conditions as a prisoner of war at Andersonville before being paroled nineteen days after Lee’s surrender to Grant.³ (William Henry Harrison Dix resided in Illinois after the war and died there on January 12, 1891.)⁴

In 1863, following one year as a captain with the Frontier Regiment, John James Dix returned to the Nueces Valley. He joined a Home Guard unit led by Captain Norwick Gussett and served as a sergeant in charge of scouting squads until 1864.⁵

In November 1863, General Nathaniel P. Banks landed with a force of 7,000 Union soldiers at the mouth of the Rio Grande, capturing Brownsville. This action temporarily interrupted river trade on a route formerly declared freely navigable. Banks sent detachments upstream to Rio Grande City and along the coast toward Corpus Christi. A large number of Union regulars were transferred across the Gulf of Mexico for a major offensive in Louisiana, which inadvertently allowed Rip Ford to reclaim the captured area. By mid-summer of 1864, Old Rip once more occupied Brownsville, and the Rio Grande was again opened for business under his protection. Union troops located to a garrisoned position at Brazos Santiago, an island near the mouth of the river.⁶

On April 12, 1864, Ford recommended John James Dix to become a commissioned officer in the Confederate Army. By way of qualifications, he confirmed that Dix had

1 John Dix to John James Dix, August 30, 1863, Lanham-Napier collection.

2 Texas Rangers, muster roll, Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin. W.H.H. Dix, age 22, enlisted at Corpus Christi, September 1, 1852.

3 William Henry Harrison Dix, service file, NATF, National Archives, Washington D.C.

4 Dix family chart, unidentifiable maker, 1882, James Kevin Purcell collection, San Andreas, California.

5 John James Dix, autobiographical sketch, 1907, Dix collection, Austin, Texas.

6 Ralph Wooster, “Civil War,” in Ron Tyler et al., eds., *The New Handbook of Texas* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996) (hereafter cited as NHT), II:125.



raised a cavalry company near the beginning of the war and served on the frontier with a commission from the state government until the expiration of his term of enlistment. He also accredited Dix:

. . . [for] being active in assisting to defend the country west of the Nueces after its abandonment about one year ago, and of the frontier State organization was the only man who volunteered with this command upon its organization for this field of action, and being especially fitted by his intelligence, energy, and industry has been employed since then and until his recent assignment, to an agent of the Comisry [commissary] and Qr Mr Depts [quartermaster departments].¹

Charged with acquisitioning food, arms, livestock, and various other materials, Dix utilized his organizational skills. Huge quantities of beef, pork, lard, vinegar, molasses, coffee, rice, beans, pickles, flour, salt, sugar, and tobacco were procured by him for from 1,200 to 1,500 men. As a designated purchasing agent, he was also responsible for gathering hay and corn to feed saddle horses, pack animals, and wagon teams. One particularly ominous commodity Dix ordered was 500 feet of lumber for making coffins.²

The Civil War had created opportunities for making huge profits in the vicinity of Brownsville and Matamoros. During his collection rounds, Dix received contributions of thousands of dollars in gold and silver from Charles Stillman, Jose San Ramon, Mifflin Kenedy, and Humphrey Eugene Woodhouse, all wealthy businessmen. Even so, those of lesser means also made an effort to support the cause. Old Rip Ford chipped in a Spanish doubloon while thirteen members of the Texas-Mexican population donated fifty cents apiece. Most officers donated Confederate notes from their Army pay. Overcoming Union sympathies, even old John Dix gave seventy-five dollars to support his son's service to Texas.³ No doubt, he had very little to spare, even though it had been reported that federal agents "paid several visits to Corpus Christi," furnishing to "local citizens rations at King Abe's expense. Old Captain Dix it is said gave them a cordial reception to his house," and by accepting foreign aid, he was quoted as not being "patriotic enough to starve."⁴

On March 18, 1865, E. Kirby Smith, commanding general of the Trans-Mississippi Department headquartered in Shreveport, Louisiana, appointed Dix as agent of the

1 John S. Ford to Captain L. G. Aldrich, Sam Lanham collection, Fredericksburg, Texas (hereafter cited as Lanham collection).

2 John James Dix, memorandum book, 1864-1865, Dan R. Manning collection, Fair Grove, Missouri.

3 Ibid.

4 Galveston Weekly News, January 27, 1864, quoting the Goliad Messenger, January 13, 1864.



Subsistence Department. His duty was to receive pay and allowances as a commissioned Confederate captain of infantry.¹

During the same month that Dix received his promotion, Union Major General Lew Wallace arranged to meet Rip Ford and James E. Slaughter at Brazos Santiago to negotiate a peaceful atmosphere along the Texas-Mexico border. It was reasoned that continued warfare in the region would offer little hope to the struggling Confederacy. Wallace offered amnesty to the Rebel officers if they would pledge allegiance to the United States. As President Abraham Lincoln's agent, the Union general was also attempting to create an effective military force to assist Benito Juarez in overthrowing Mexican Imperialists. The intricate plan failed to attract the interests of those in command of the Department of Texas. Deprived of serious consideration, the conciliatory proposition eventually died.² (Major General Wallace later served as governor of New Mexico and also wrote the novel *Ben Hur*.)

Heavy rainfall did not deter federal soldiers as they obeyed orders from Colonel Theodore H. Barrett on May 11, 1865. Their mission was to overthrow the Confederate stronghold in Brownsville. Around noon, senior officers Slaughter and Ford were informed that 1,600 Union troops could be seen advancing on their position. Slaughter thought a hasty retreat was in order, but Old Rip preferred to bring his brave Texans up to the line of battle. He declared, "You can retreat and go to hell if you wish! These are my men, and I am going to fight." He sternly warned his superior, "I have held this place against heavy odds. If you lose it without a fight the people of the Confederacy will hold you accountable for a base neglect of duty."³

Skirmishing commenced just below San Martin Ranch, twelve miles east of Brownsville, when 300 federal soldiers under Lieutenant Colonel David Branson challenged Captain W. N. Robinson's cavalry. Ford considered the possibility that "this may be the last fight of the war, and from the number of Union men I see before me, I am going to be whipped." He placed himself at the head of all Confederate troops when Slaughter failed to appear. The battle continued throughout the afternoon and, as artillery and cavalry horses began to lose their strength, Old Rip withdrew his forces. He said, "Boys, we have done finely. We will let well enough alone and retire." The action of May 12 ended with neither side declaring a victory on the field.⁴

On the following day, Ford brought up a battery of 6 cannons to improve his odds of overpowering the Union force. He had Robinson's cavalry moved into position as the twelve-pounders began a steady barrage upon the 34th Indiana, a New York regiment

1 John James Dix, appointment to captain of infantry, from General E. Kirby Smith, commander, Trans-Mississippi Department, Lanham collection.

2 Ford, Rip Ford's Texas, 388-389.

3 Ibid., 389-390.

4 Ibid., 390-391.



known as the Morton Rifles, the 62nd Colored Infantry, and several dismounted companies of Texas cavalry under Colonel James L. Haynes. Union Colonel Barrett called for a retreat, suffering 30 field casualties while 81 of his men drowned trying to avoid capture. Ford's men were holding 113 prisoners, who began passing word to their Confederate guards that an armistice had been signed the previous month to end the war. This is how Ford learned of General Lee's surrender.¹

Slaughter eventually arrived at the battle scene and excused himself for having missed the fight in lieu of an expected attack by Cortina from Brownsville. He recommended forcing the fatigued Union soldiers into another altercation. Ford, however, declined because his men were not rested enough to continue. Slaughter advanced with his troops, but he found that the federals had deserted the field in the diminishing daylight to regroup on their campgrounds.²

The long day of combat at Palmito Ranch concluded when a teenage boy was disturbed from sleep by an exploding artillery shell. He swore loudly while shaking his fist in the air and then fired a wild shot in anger to punctuate the final episode of the American Civil War.³

Soon after prisoners were exchanged, a visit was arranged between the opposing forces. In a peaceful manner, a Union lieutenant named Magee entered Brownsville to initiate the interaction. In charge while Slaughter was again absent, Ford cautiously agreed to an informal meeting. To discourage the federal officers from misrepresenting their purpose through conversation with Texans, Ford warned that nothing of a military manner could be discussed.⁴

As guests of the Confederates, six Union officers were entertained for several days in Brownsville. One of them, admittedly out of character and knowing that his wife would have difficulty believing the unlikely circumstances, sipped a friendly eggnog at Ford's private residence.⁵ Fraternizing with the enemy was considered unbecoming an officer, even during a truce.

Lengthening the impromptu armistice, Union guests were led on an excursion across the Rio Grande. Dix was one of the escorts who guided the group into Matamoros, where they witnessed a Sunday-morning military mass and firearms salute. General Tomás Mejía arranged for a full-dress review of his troops, stationing himself on the gallery of a two-story house. The party of Americans viewed passing Mexican soldiers from the opposite side of the main plaza. Those marching in ranks recognized differing

1 Ibid., 392-393.

2 Ibid., 391-392.

3 Ibid., 392.

4 Ibid., 396.

5 Ibid.

uniforms and asked, "Is it peace in the United States? What does it mean?" They were rewarded by Ford's quick response: "I am only trying to show these friends of mine something of the Mexican Empire."¹

During a final unofficial peace negotiation, breakfast was prepared for the combined assemblage and served to them in the rear of John Church's Matamoros restaurant. Ford made a grand show of parading his guests past seated French military personnel, who appeared surprised, much to Old Rip's amusement.²

Following the friendly truce, Ford completed the disbanding of his Cavalry of the West in mid-May of 1865. He accredited John James Dix with having been an officer who "rendered essential service" and remained "on duty till the troops broke up and went home. He was always an advocate of right and justice to all men."³



Mary & John Dix
with their youngest son, Olwyn Trask.

One of Ford's postwar activities was the seizure of \$20,000 in silver from Slaughter, who had secretly arranged for the sale of war surplus cannons to Mejia. Old Rip promptly distributed the money among his men after counting out a portion for himself as partial back payment for services rendered to the Confederate States of America. With Mejia's consent, he remained in Matamoros after the war, diligently arranging paroles for many of his fellow Texans.⁴

Through an ironic twist of justice, John James Dix's father, who had been captured for being "a traitor and communicating with the Yankees" on December 31, 1864,⁵ received an appointment as Nueces County judge. He had narrowly avoided prosecution because his indictments had been absolved upon the timely federal occupation of Corpus Christi.⁶

Even though his father had been absolved, John James took his immediate family members to live with him in Brownsville. Cynthia, pregnant with their sixth child,¹ was

1 Ibid., 397.

2 Ibid.

3 John Salmon Ford, memoirs, typescript, Vol. VI, 1070, Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin, VI:1070.

4 W.J. Hughes, *Rebellious Ranger: Rip Ford and the Old Southwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 242-243.

5 Thomas J. Noakes, diary, Local History Room, Central Library, Corpus Christi, Texas.

6 Frank Wagner, "John Dix, Sr.," NHT, II:657.



forced into semi-seclusion in makeshift quarters with her husband and two small children (three children had died in infancy.)² They eventually returned to Rancho Ramireña, where Dix once again made a modest living by raising livestock until moving to Corpus Christi to focus on his surveying career. After relocating to San Diego in 1876, Dix served for many years as the Duval County district surveyor. The business was put on hold during the 1890s when Dix was elected to one term in the state legislature before finding employment for two years at the Texas General Land Office in Austin.

Dix's days of battlefield combat were over, as were those of his good friend Ford, who gained opportunities to represent his region in Texas politics. The old veterans, who had once fought side-by-side, corresponded throughout the "sear and yellow leaf of life."³ For many years, they exchanged historical comments and humorous quips, always remaining on the best of terms. According to Ford:

We have been thrown together so often; have been associated in some right ugly affairs; have never even quarreled, or entertained bad feelings for each other, and have entertained for each other that friendship which never wanes—the devotion of one soldier for another.⁴

In his final days, Old Rip" bluntly regarded "Viejo Dix" to be "the remains of a once veritable Ranger, who fought for Texas because he loved the noble land, and hated whoever hated her people."⁵

1 Don Rollins collection. Ford Dix, namesake of John Salmon Ford, was born August 23, 1865, in Corpus Christi, Texas. On January 9, 1892, he received a commission from Adjutant General W. H. Mabry to perform duties as a Special Ranger during the Catarino Garza rebellion. Adjutant general service records, Archives Division, Texas State Library, Austin.

2 Cynthia J. Dix to Mary E. H. Dix, January 30, 1865, Dix collection.

3 John S. Ford to John James Dix, September 20, 1896, Lanham collection.

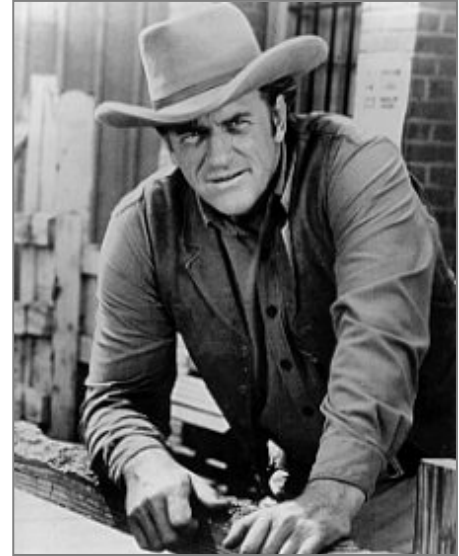
4 Ibid.

5 Ford to Dix, July 17, 1897, Lanham collection.

Gunsmoke

Chance Encounter with James Arness

By Lewis Rigler, Texas Ranger, Retired



I attended the grand opening of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum on October 25, 1968. One of the honored guests was James Arness, Marshal Matt Dillon of television's longest running drama series, ***Gunsmoke***.

Waco Chief of Police Calvert and I had been friends since our boyhood school days. One of Chief Calvert's many duties that day was escorting Mr. Arness during the ceremonies.



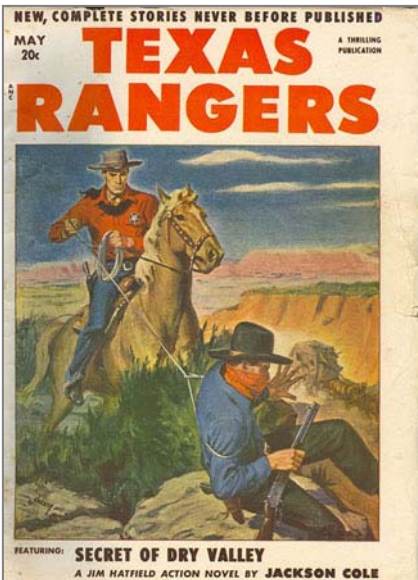
Lewis Rigler

*Photo courtesy of
Robert Nieman*

Lunch was being held at Baylor University and the chief asked me to join him and Mr. Arness. Just as we were getting ready to leave, Calvert was needed elsewhere. He asked Mr. Arness and me to go on ahead and he would join us later. Entering the building where the meal was being served, Mr. Arness said he needed to use the washroom. So we went there before going to lunch.

When I got home, I told my wife about the day. She was a great fan of *Gunsmoke* and Marshal Dillon. The first thing she asked me was, "Did you meet Matt Dillon?"

I announced, "Not only did I meet him, I urinated with him!"



Trackdown

On the Twisting Trail of Elusive Texas Ranger Artifacts

By James J. Griffin
author of the *Jim Blawczyk, Texas Ranger* novels

All photos courtesy of James J. Griffin

Like most kids growing up in the mid-1950s, I spent hours on end playing cowboys with my friends. When I wasn't pretending to be cowboys, I was watching them on television: Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, the Lone Ranger, Hopalong Cassidy, and the Cisco Kid. I watched them all, but my favorite cowboy show—the one I would never miss—was *Tales of the Texas Rangers*. There was just something about Rangers Jace Pearson and Clay Morgan that captured my youthful imagination. I collected the Dell comic books series, *Tales of the Texas Rangers*, which was based on the show. When my cousin got a Texas Ranger cap pistol before I did, I was beside myself with envy. Once I'd discovered the Rangers, I never wanted to be one of the bad guys whenever my friends and I played cowboys. Heck, I didn't even covet the role of sheriff. I only wanted to be the ultimate western hero—a Texas Ranger. While I might have gotten gunned down by the bad guys many times in the course of a day's play, by the time suppertime rolled around, I'd captured or killed every one of those low-down outlaws just like those Rangers on TV.

Of course, childhood always gives way to adolescence. My fascination with the Texas Rangers waned, taking a back seat to the concerns of high school and then college. My toy guns and Texas Rangers comic books eventually ended up lost somewhere along the way. In the era of Vietnam, somehow the heroes of my youth seemed less important. Still, my interest in the Rangers was always just below the surface, and I read any article about them I happened to come across. During my junior year in college, I bought my first horse, a pinto named Sam, and I was back in the days of my childhood. I was a Texas Ranger riding tall in the saddle as that old horse and I raced through the woods and fields. When I moved to San Diego, California, Sam came along with me. One of the highlights of our journey west was driving across Texas. The trip across the Lone Star State included an overnight stay just outside of Midland. There, I got to ride my trusty pinto over the sandy soil and along the mesas of west Texas, just like the Rangers of old.



Several years after graduating from college, I took a job with a firm and remained there for quite a few years. Just down the road from my office was a bookstore that specialized in used paperbacks for twenty-five cents apiece. The store had quite a stock of westerns, especially Popular Library books featuring a Texas Ranger named Jim Hatfield. I grabbed every one of those I could get my hands on. Sure, a lot of the stories were clichéd, and the inconsistencies from one book to the next were amazing. Nevertheless, Jim Hatfield was a true hero, a Ranger who always came through and defeated the outlaws.

For quite a few years, my collecting of Texas Ranger-related items was limited to paperback books and novels. Then in 1991, *Walker, Texas Ranger*, made its television debut. At last, after years of absence from the mass media, the Rangers were on the small screen once again. While the show had little basis in reality, and the Walker character was hardly the true image of a Texas Ranger, Walker stood for right and took no nonsense from the bad guys, just like the heroes of my youth.

Walker, Texas Ranger, unexpectedly sent my search for Ranger-related, popular-culture artifacts into high gear. In the first few seasons of the series, Walker was more of a cowboy type and less of an urban detective. He had a spectacularly beautiful American paint horse named Amigo, who suddenly disappeared. As a longtime paint horse owner myself (my current mount is a chestnut paint gelding named Yankee), I was curious as to what had happened to that gorgeous animal. Since I'd finally been dragged kicking and screaming into the computer age by 1999, I decided to use that confounded new contraption to see if I could find out Amigo's fate. Not even knowing where to begin, I logged in with a couple of online forums dedicated to the Walker show. It didn't take long to find out that the horse that portrayed Amigo had tragically died of colic. My horse Sizzle, Yankee's predecessor, had also succumbed to that illness.

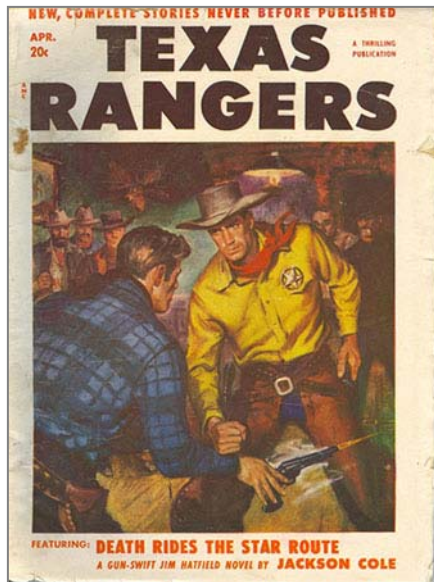
While I was messaging with one forum, I mentioned that I would like to track down copies of the Dell comic books, *Tales of the Texas Rangers*, which were based on the 1940s radio and 1950s television shows. I'd had most of those comics as a kid, but of course they'd been lost or discarded over the years. As it turned out, one of the forum's members ran a used comic book store, and she had a couple issues of *Tales of the Texas Rangers*. She also mentioned that the best source to find the others would be eBay. I purchased the issues she had, and then I turned to the giant auction site.

I had no idea what I was getting into that fateful night I went to eBay and clicked on "Texas Rangers." Besides the comics I was seeking, there were several listings for *Texas Rangers* magazine, featuring Ranger Jim Hatfield. For the first time, I had discovered the western pulp. Naturally, I had to have a few copies. My first few bids on eBay were successful, and it was with great anticipation that I awaited the arrival of the first *Texas Rangers* magazines in my mailbox. When they came, I could hardly wait to rip open the packages and once again delve into the adventures of Texas Ranger Jim

Hatfield. After reading the first few Hatfield stories, I realized the Popular Library paperbacks I'd purchased years before were, in fact, reprints of the pulp stories.

Once I was finished with those first few pulps, I had to have more. In fact, I was determined to find out how many issues of *Texas Rangers* had been published and to track down each and every one of them. A monster had been created. Once I learned there were 206 issues of the magazine published in all, the hunt was on in earnest.

When I began the search, little did I know where it would lead me. Besides the 206



issues of *Texas Rangers* I was seeking, there were all sorts of other Ranger memorabilia and artifacts up for auction on eBay. The very few genuine items even available were way out of affordability. By default, I decided to concentrate on items that reflected the image of the Ranger in the mindset of the general public. These were the popular culture items that so many people were familiar with. Naturally, my main focus was in finding all the issues of *Texas Rangers*. As I would learn, these started with the issue of October 1936 and ended with the final copy of February 1958. I also went after any other item I could afford to bid on. I especially wanted anything related to the old *Tales of the Texas Rangers* television series, my favorite childhood television show. There were candy boxes, coloring books, toy badges, games, and puzzles that I had never known existed, all of which had been tied in

with the show. Best of all, there were also videos available. Of course, I was now on the trail of *all of the Dell Tales of the Texas Rangers* comics, not just the ones I'd had when I was a kid.

At first, finding issues of *Texas Rangers* at reasonable prices was fairly easy. After a while, however, it became apparent that quite a few issues were very rare, and obtaining them would take much searching and more money than I had originally planned to spend. The October 1936, volume one, number one, was obviously a much sought-after copy. More of a mystery was the November 1949 issue, which always went for quite a few dollars. It took me several frustrating tries before I finally won a copy. Now, November 1949 just happens to be the month and year I was born. By some weird coincidence, the Jim Hatfield story in that issue is "Guns of Fort Griffin," and Griffin is my last name! I like to claim that connection is the reason for the November 1949 *Texas Rangers* being so valuable. However, the truth is that there is a short story in that issue written under the pseudonym W.R. Colt, who in actuality is L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology. Whenever anything by him becomes available, many of the Scientologists try and scoop it up. Therefore, that is the real explanation of



what drives the November 1949 *Texas Rangers* price sky-high. Other issues of *Texas Rangers* have short stories by Louis L'Amour, making those copies highly sought-after. The articles are listed under either his own name or the pseudonym Jim Mayo. Some of the issues have stories by Sam Brant, another popular writer.

Gradually, I was closing in on my goal of owning all 206 issues of *Texas Rangers*. By the middle of 2000, I had obtained more than half of them. It was also in 2000 that the first and most unexpected twist in my collecting happened. I had occasionally been bidding against an individual whose eBay identity was "Ranger's Wife." The items we were both seeking weren't *Texas Rangers* pulps but were mainly old postcards and other ephemera. Therefore, I didn't bid very high, so she always won. Then came the day when "Ranger's Wife" listed several issues of *Texas Rangers* that I needed. I bid on them and won. When I emailed her to finalize the sale, I asked if she were indeed married to a Texas Ranger—not a baseball player but one of the lawmen. I received a reply back within minutes saying, "Yes, she is, and this is the Ranger, not the wife!" Oops! Just what I needed: a Ranger now on my trail who thought I was after his wife.

However, that first awkward communication introduced me to Texas Ranger Jim Huggins, who is attached to Company F in Waco. For someone who has had a deep interest in the Rangers since childhood, this was the ultimate thrill for me. Jim and I have become friends since then. I've even visited him and his family in their home town of Centerville, where I was privileged to see his Ranger office. Jim has helped me with technical information for my *Jim Blawczyk, Texas Ranger* novels, and I've written him into the books—as a Texas Ranger character, naturally. We've also got a food exchange going. Jim sends me Texas foodstuffs like barbeque sauce while I, in turn, mail him items like New Hampshire maple syrup. Jim has also presented me with some hard-to-find Ranger items. When I visited the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum for the first time in 2001, my friendship with Jim also got me an invitation to visit Company F Headquarters. I'm going to take this opportunity to thank Jim for his friendship and assistance. He's a great guy with a wonderfully dry sense of humor, and he is definitely everything I had pictured a Texas Ranger to be.

Over the next several years, I gradually closed in on my goal of collecting every issue of *Texas Rangers* magazine. By 2004, I had 204 of the 206 issues in my possession, and I had read every one of them and filed each in order of issue dates. I also copied a few of the covers I liked most on photo paper and framed them for my walls. I even got quite a few duplicate issues for my then ten-year-old nephew Ronny, who had developed an interest in my collection. Along with the pulps and all of the Dell comics, I amassed quite a collection of other popular-culture Texas Rangers artifacts, most related to the *Tales of the Texas Rangers* television show. These items included an extremely rare and hard-to-find board game and an equally rare *Tales of the Texas Rangers* Baby Ruth candy box.



Now the questions began to form in my mind: What should I do with this collection? What would happen to it if anything should happen to me? Most likely, it would be broken up, or worse, sold for pennies at a tag sale or merely discarded as worthless. In addition, I thought that it seemed a shame for all these rare items, in many cases, to just be hidden away in file cabinets in my closet. As I considered this, it became more and more apparent that I needed to find an appropriate and permanent home for my collection. The obvious choice to me was the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco. I recalled seeing several issues of *Texas Rangers* magazine on display there during my visit in 2001. They were issues that, at that time, I didn't have and would have loved to pry from their display cases. So, in early 2005, I contacted the museum and was put in touch with Tracie Evans, collections manager. She assured me that the museum would be thrilled to have my collection. She said that it would have a permanent home where it would be safe and could be enjoyed by thousands of visitors each year. After the arrangements were made, my collection was packed up and sent off to Waco, where it arrived in February of 2005.

The arrival and display of the collection in the museum didn't end my search for more items. I especially sought the August 1937 and February 1938 issues of *Texas Rangers* magazine, which were the last two elusive copies that I'd never been able to find. In mid-2005, the August 1937 issue appeared on eBay. I won the bidding and finally owned a copy of that issue, which I then sent to the museum. In the midst of my writing this article, I saw on Ebay the February 1938 issue, which was the first copy I'd ever seen available and which some collectors have been seeking for over twenty years. I held off finishing this piece until I saw if I would win that rarest of *Texas Rangers* issues. It was a hard fight, but I was successful in the end. Once I read the issue and scanned the cover, I sent it to the museum in August of 2006, thus successfully completing the collection after seven years of searching. All 206 issues of *Texas Rangers* magazine are now in the possession of the Texas Ranger Museum.

Besides becoming friends with a genuine Texas Ranger Jim Huggins, my collecting of Ranger artifacts has led to several other rather surprising results. In the course of my searching, I joined a Yahoo egroup, Western Pulps, which is dedicated to fans and collectors of old western pulp magazines. One of the members, Al Tonik, is a dedicated collector of *Texas Rangers*, and his research proved invaluable to me. After much effort, he catalogued all of the issues, including listing the various authors who wrote Jim Hatfield stories under the "Jackson Cole" house name. (Using these multiple writers explains the amazing inconsistencies from one Hatfield story to the next. As long as the authors churned out a story in time for the next deadline, the editors evidently didn't care whether or not they wrote the Hatfield character and his horse Goldy the same from one issue to the next.)

The moderator of the Western Pulps group is author James Reasoner. He has written quite a few western novels in his own right, including the *Cody's Law* series, featuring



Texas Ranger Sam Cody. James also wrote three *Walker, Texas Ranger*, novels based on the television series. James's wife Livia is also a western author of some note, writing under her professional name, L.J. Washburn. One of her better-known westerns is the Texas Ranger novel, *Bandera Pass*. James knows that I am a horse owner. In 2002, he asked me a few questions about horses that he needed answered for one of his forthcoming westerns. In return, he promised to write me into one of his books as a Texas Ranger. Needless to say, I readily agreed. In 2003, Texas Ranger Captain Jim Griffin made his appearance in *Savannah* and *Appomattox*, the ninth and tenth volumes in James's *Civil War Battle Series*. While I will never be one in real life, in the pages of James's novels, I'm a hard-ridin', straight-shootin', no-nonsense Texas Ranger just like the heroes of my youth.

James insisted that I had the skills to write westerns, particularly Texas Ranger stories, and he kept after me to make the attempt. With his encouragement and advice, I wrote *Trouble Rides the Texas Pacific*, my first *Jim Blawczyk, Texas Ranger*, novel and had it published in 2005. When the book proved popular, I followed it up with the second and third of the *Blawczyk* series, *Border Raiders* and *Trail of the Renegade*. The fourth, *Ranger Justice*, has just been released, and a fifth, *Big Bend Death Trap*, will be coming out later this year through Condor Publishing, Inc. These are all traditional westerns featuring a strong Texas Ranger hero, Lieutenant Jim Blawczyk. *Big Bend Death Trap* will introduce a new Ranger character, Cody Havlicek.

In May of this year [2006?], I drove to Washington DC for my nephew's wedding and then went on to Texas. After calling on Ranger Jim Huggins, I again visited the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum. There I finally met Tracie Evans in person, along with Byron Johnson, the museum director. Words can't describe how thrilling it was to see quite a few of the of the Texas Rangers popular culture artifacts that I'd collected now on display and to watch visitors enjoying the exhibit. I need to thank Byron, Tracie, and the staff for their courtesy during my visit and, indeed, for their help and assistance through the entire process of having my collection transferred to the museum.

The past seven years of collecting Texas Rangers memorabilia have been challenging, exciting, sometimes frustrating, even aggravating at times, but certainly never dull. I am still constantly looking for more artifacts, which will continue to be added to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum's collections. For those of you who have not had the chance, I urge you to stop and visit there if you are ever in the Waco area. It is well worth the visit.



Stuart Dowell
1932 – 2006

Photo courtesy of Robert Nieman

Stuart Dowell

On May 17, 2006, retired Texas Ranger Stuart Dowell passed away at Mother Francis Hospital in Tyler, Texas. He will be greatly missed by his many friends and peers.

Stuart was born along the banks of Rio Grande River in McAllen, Texas, on January 20, 1932. Shortly after his birth, his parents William and Stella moved their family to the eastern Oklahoma city of Poteau.

Stuart joined the Oklahoma National Guard's 45th Infantry Division when he was sixteen years old. After graduating from Poteau High School in 1950, he worked on a farm until his unit was called to active duty on September 1, 1950, a few months after the Korean war exploded. Stuart completed basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana, and the 45th was sent to Japan for additional training. They remained there until November 1951, when they shipped out to Korea.

Staff Sergeant Stuart Dowell and his Company I, 180th Infantry, 45th Infantry Division, landed at Inchon and immediately boarded a train that carried them just north of the 38th Parallel. Detraining, they marched to a cornfield just behind the front line and were told to get some sleep. Since the temperature was five to ten degrees below zero, sleep did not come easily. At daylight, the men were roused out and moved to the front to relieve some Ethiopian troops. This was a United Nations action. Until May 1952, when he left Korea, Stuart saw heavy combat. His unit had only been on the line a short time when he saw the horror of war firsthand on Pork Chop Hill:

This kid was ammo bearer for 57 mm recoilless rifle and there hadn't been any shots and no warning, everything was just real quiet. Artillery had been shelling this hill for probably twenty minutes before we started our final assault. We had stopped at the base of the hill and while the artillery was shelling that probably lasted for twenty minutes and then we started on up.



And when our artillery stopped it was just dead quiet you know, wasn't a sound. And one mortar round came in, the first of several, but it hit him, he was about fifteen yards to my left. It must of hit him right in the chest, because it still is just as clear today as it was then. His body . . . the shells on his back exploded at the same time and his body just disintegrated from the hips up. There was nothing left. And for just an instant his legs were standing up and then they fell over. There was nothing from his hips above the waist.

It was on that same killing field that Stuart came as close to being killed and living to tell about it as any man can. The Chinese had made an all-out attack on the American lines and had broken through. There was only one thing the American troops could do: fall back—fast:

I fell down as we was going across that snow and my gunner was carrying a carbine. He stopped to help me up and he looked back . . . a Chinese soldier [was] aiming at me. He [the Chinese soldier] had [on] one of these Mickey Mouse hats...caps. They've got earflaps and they're fur lined and when he stopped it had turned around and the flap fell down over his face. He was trying to get that flap back up when this kid [James Mills from South Carolina] shot him . . . three times I think.

When Stuart's company landed in Korea in November 1951, there were 350 men in Company I. When he left in May 1952, there were only 27 left. (Stuart remained in the National Guard until he retired in March 1987.)

Back in the States and no longer on active duty, Stuart had to find a job. When he heard that the Corpus Christi Police Department had a position open, he applied and was hired as a patrolman.

In 1957, the Texas Department of Public Safety was hiring, and they paid thirty-five dollars a month more than the Corpus Christi PD. On Thanksgiving Day, 1957, Stuart entered the DPS training school in Austin. He had heard that the physical components were tough, but he thought, "If I can make it through the Army, I can make it through that." He had not been there long, though, before he "began to wonder." One hundred eight candidates started the school; Stuart was one of the thirty-eight who graduated.

Stuart was sent back to Corpus Christi and placed in the driver's license division. As he put it, "I hated every day of driver's license." At the time, a rookie had to stay in the service he was assigned to for a period of nine months before he could request a move. As soon as possible, Stuart transferred to Hallettsville, where he remained for a year and a half and then transferred to Victoria in 1962.



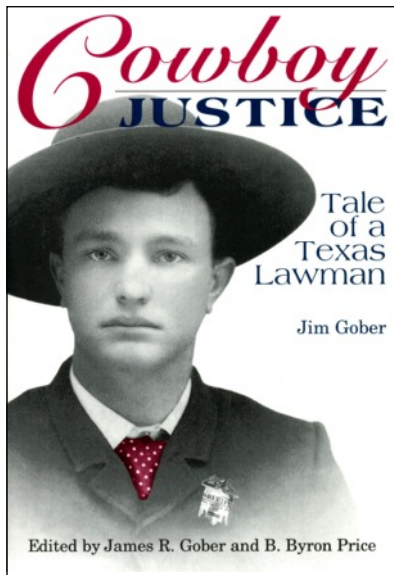
When he was a young patrolman in Corpus Christi, Stuart first met A. Y. Allee, the legendary captain of Company D: "I was in awe of him." Through the years, he had other contacts with the Ranger captain and definitely heard the legendary stories of his exploits. (Corpus Christi, Hallettsville, and Victoria are all part of Company D.)

Stuart himself applied for a position with the Texas Rangers, and on October 1, 1969, he became the newest member of Captain Bill Wilson's Company B in Dallas. On January 1, 1972, Bob Mitchell promoted to sergeant and transferred from Tyler to Austin. Stuart applied for and was granted Mitchell's vacated station.

Stuart quickly settled into a heavy workload, one that never slackened. Through the years, he gained the respect of his peers and the citizens he worked for. Until his retirement on March 1, 1987, he never ceased to be a Texas Ranger in whom every Texan could take pride.

See also:

http://www.texasranger.org/memorials/Stuart_Dowell.htm



Book Review

Cowboy Justice

Tale of a Texas Lawman

By Jim Gober and B. Byron Price

Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech University Press. xxiv + 328 pages. 42 photos and maps. Drawings by H.D. Bugbee. ISBN 0-89672-373-9.

Only a few 19th century lawmen left their autobiographies for succeeding generations. We are fortunate that James Ransler Gober (1864-1933) did, for he lived through exciting times in an exciting place. His memoir presents firsthand observations on late 19th and early 20th century events of the Texas Panhandle and western Oklahoma. His various careers included being a cowboy, ranch hand, saloon owner, bank guard, and private detective. He was the first sheriff of Potter County, Texas, serving from August 30, 1887, to November 4, 1890. Gober was also a husband and father.

Gober wrote his memoir between 1924 and 1930, revealing his early years as typical of the time. After leaving home, he found work as a cowboy and met such notables as Temple Houston and Sheriff Jim East. He trailed herds to Dodge City, Kansas, and witnessed the cowboy strike of 1883 (although he didn't participate). By 1887, he was a deputy under Oldham County Sheriff Tobe Robinson.

Although never a Texas Ranger, Gober met and worked with three of the better known captains: Sam A. McMurray, William J. McDonald, and John L. Sullivan. Gober was perceptive in his dealings with these men, and he shares without reservation his observations on their different leadership styles.

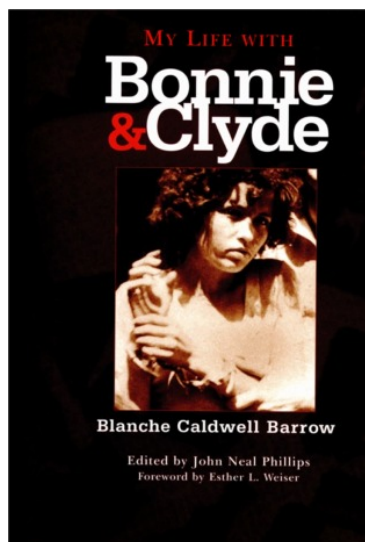
Gober writes not only of his adventures but also of his personal failings and tragedies. His wife was murdered in 1905 by a man who then committed suicide. To deal with the grief, Gober expressed his sorrow in poetry, revealing his ability to be introspective. However, he also sought solace in the bottle. More than once, he became intoxicated and suffered the embarrassment of being jailed for drunkenness.



Gober was not always the ideal lawman, and he did not always cooperate with others in the profession, finding fault where perhaps it was deserved. He called John L. Sullivan (who also recorded his memoirs) a man of “Texas Ranger bull and some fame.” [p.182] Also, readers may question Gober’s accuracy in describing Frank Jackson, survivor of the Sam Bass Gang that fell before the guns of Texas Rangers. Gober pictures Jackson as a man who made good after a youthful criminal career. According to him, Jackson traveled to Colorado and found respectability as a miner, living down his outlaw career in Texas. Unfortunately, Gober does not provide satisfactory proof that this man was the same as the Jackson of the Bass gang.

Western enthusiasts will find plenty of excitement in this memoir. Gober’s recollections are worthy of preservation and study in spite of some discrepancies, which are typical of men who write their memoirs years after the events they describe.

Review by Chuck Parsons



Book Review

My Life with Bonnie and Clyde

By **Blanche Caldwell Barrow**
John Neal Phillips (editor)

Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005. 81 photos, 320 pages. \$19.95 paperback. ISBN 0-8061-3715-0.

Had it not been for the 1967 movie *Bonnie and Clyde*, this murderous duo would be, at best, no more than a footnote in 1930s outlaw history. But there was a movie, and the names of Bonnie and Clyde are as familiar as those of Billy the Kid or Jesse James. One person we met via the movie was Clyde's sister-in-law Blanche Barrow, played by Estelle Parsons. As is common in reality versus Hollywood, the real Blanche Barrow bore little resemblance to Estelle Parsons' version.

In 1931, Blanche married escaped convict Marvin (Buck) Barrow, though she claimed not to know he was a criminal at the time. Six months after their marriage, she convinced Buck to surrender himself to the authorities and finish his sentence, knowing they would never live anything resembling a normal life as long as he was on the run. On March 22, 1933, Governor Miriam "Ma" Ferguson issued Buck a pardon. This was fifteen months after his surrender.

Returning to their hometown of Dallas, Buck and Blanche were together only a few days when they were visited by Buck's brother Clyde and his girlfriend Bonnie Parker. It didn't take long for Buck and Blanche to join the couple and head for Oklahoma and then Joplin, Missouri, where a desperate shootout with the police left two policemen dead. A little over three months later, it all ended for Buck and Blanche in an abandoned amusement park in Dexter, Iowa. Buck was dead, and Blanche was on her way to a Missouri prison. On a lonely, rural, Louisiana road ten months later, the end came for Bonnie and Clyde.

While in that Missouri prison, Blanche wrote a memoir of her time with her beloved Daddy (Buck), her brother-in-law Clyde, and Bonnie Parker. After her release, it seems that she put the manuscript in a box and stuffed it in a corner of her closet. In the



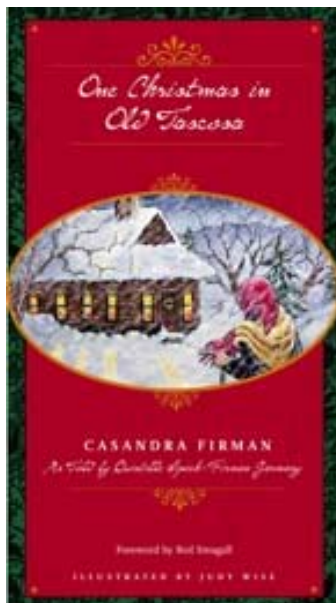
ensuing years, Blanche shared the existence of the manuscript with only her close friend Esther Weister.

Twelve years after Blanche's death in 1988, Weiser remembered the memoir. Weiser, who was the executor of Blanche's will, placed the manuscript with editor John Phillips. He had interviewed Blanche before her death and had written *Running with Bonnie and Clyde: The Ten Fast Years of Ralph Fults*. (Fults was a one-time running buddy with Bonnie and Clyde.)

Phillips does a very good job of annotating Blanche's writing and does not try to excuse her actions. He also does not attempt to paint Buck and Blanche into a black corner. Obviously, Blanche is not a subjective observer of Buck's actions or of her own. In fairness, though, she does not try to paint herself or Buck as saints.

Phillips proves himself a superb historical authority on this subject. This book is highly recommended by the *Dispatch* to any student of Bonnie and Clyde.

Review by Robert Nieman



Book Review

One Christmas in Old Tascosa

By Casandra Firman

as told by

Quintille Speck-Firman Garmany

Texas Tech University Press;
ISBN 0-89672-588-X. hardback, 89 pages.

Tascosa, Texas, was a wild, booming town in the 1880s. There were Indians, outlaws, saloons, and gambling, as well as gunfights that increased the population at Boot Hill Cemetery. Although the Texas Rangers are not mentioned in this book, history shows that they were busy in this violent Panhandle town. By December 1931, however, the residents of Tascosa were living in a ghost town, suffering from the Great Depression and the bone-dry conditions of the Dust Bowl.

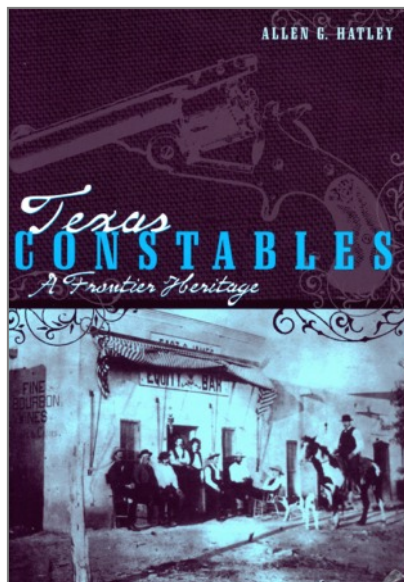
The true story related in this short, easy-to-read book occurred on a cold December day in 1931 and was told to author Casandra Firman by her mother, Quintille Speck-Firman Garmany. For seventy years, the memories had been buried in Quintille's mind. Then, as she and her three daughters were preparing for Thanksgiving in November 2004, Quintille looked at the cloudy sky over Puget Sound, and the traumatic events of that day in her childhood came flooding back.

Seven-year-old Quintille and her eleven schoolmates had been preparing for their Christmas pageant. The students were excited because their parents were coming to the show, and they were bringing treats for everyone to eat. The Christmas pageant had not gone as planned, however, because an unexpected blizzard arrived that same day. The wind howled, and the snow blew with such fierceness that the parents could not get to the school. That was a huge disappointment for these children who had so little to brighten their lives. As Quintille recalls, "We knew only that the glorious moment we anticipated had been stolen from us. We were as low in spirits as we could be and just plain sorry for ourselves—sorry, cold, and afraid." But that wasn't the end of the story. Something had happened that long ago day that changed Quintille's feeling of hopelessness to one of hope. This story is about that "gift" and the impact it made on her life.



I recommend this book. There are no issues to prove or topics to debate. The story is about events of a forgotten time that had a lasting effect on a young girl. What memories lie dormant in your mind? Maybe this delightful story will trigger some of a specific event or a special person that impacted your life.

Review by Nancy Ray



Book Review

Texas Constables

A Frontier Heritage

By Allen G. Hatley

Lubbock, Texas: Texas Tech University Press (ttup@ttu.edu), 1999. xviii + 237 pages. 73 black and white illustrations, endnotes, bibliography, index, appendices. \$34.95 cloth; \$18.95 paper.

Allen G. Hatley's interest in Texas constables is natural, as he was elected constable of Bandera County in 1992 and again in 1996. While campaigning, he realized that few Texans had "a clear understanding of the duties and the long history of Texas constables as peace officers, even though they voted for one every four years." (ix)

This work certainly sets the record straight as to the history of Texas constabulary, and it also gives useful insight into the position elsewhere. Hatley traces the term *constable* from the earliest times, originating in the Latin *comes stabuli*. He then discusses how it became integrated in England's long history. The work performed by constables crossed the Atlantic to the American colonies, and by the 1640s, was similar to what is done by Texas constables today. Hatley discusses the progression of constabulary in Texas from pre-statehood via historic periods as well as geographical areas.

In Austin's Colony in the 1820 to 1836 period, a civil and criminal code of justice was promulgated by Stephen F. Austin himself, taking effect in 1824. In the civil portion, constables were designated to execute processes of the *alcaldes* (mayors). Thomas V. Alley and John H. Austin were the first constables selected in what later became Texas.

After the 1836 Texas Constitution was ratified, the process of establishing local and county government proceeded slowly. It was not until May 12, 1838, that elections were held to choose constables—in Nacogdoches County. Over the next ten years, thirty-eight constables were elected in twelve Texas counties, the most in Harris County.

Hatley continues relating the development and changes in the duties and responsibilities of constables throughout the book, at the same time providing an overview of the state's history. Although some of the individuals discussed are well



known, certainly to most Texans, attention is also given to lesser-known individuals and incidents.

Among the more famous figures in the book is John Selman, who killed John Wesley Hardin. Also included is Pat Garrett, who was a Texas law officer after his Billy the Kid days. Hatley's interest in lesser-known incidents is shown by the attention given to the Lynn Flat affair of 1871 in which two Texas state policemen and Constable John Birdwell, with a posse, engaged in a difficulty in Nacogdoches. Before this affair ended, two men were killed and others wounded. Unfortunately, the final resolution is not recorded in this study.

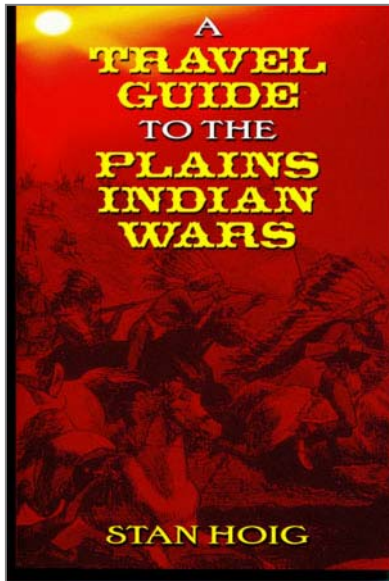
To this reviewer, therein lies one problem with the approach taken by historian Hatley. The overview of the role of constables in Texas is clearly presented, but too often in discussing specific events and characters who may or may not have been constables, we are left with no firm resolution of the incident described. An example of this is the event of April 21, 1900, in which Curg Border shot and killed San Augustine County Sheriff George Wall. The incident led to a feud between the Border and Wall families, both well known and prosperous in their area. Later, a company of state militia was summoned in an effort to "preserve the peace." But what was Constable John Matthews' role in the sequence of events from the first shot fired until the final resolution of the troubles? Did he indeed play a significant role at all, or was he merely a minor player? We are not informed.

Perhaps tracing the development of the constable's position in the state's long and colorful history is too complex for a single volume, or maybe there are too many fascinating personalities and interesting incidents to do the subject justice. Hatley's goal may have been to stimulate interest to such a degree that readers would pursue the topic. This can easily be done with the book's useful bibliography, and the three appendices are also helpful. Appendix A discusses some constables outside of Texas, including some well known individuals such as the Earp brothers and "Mysterious Dave" Mather. Appendix B looks at today's constables and their specific duties and responsibilities. Appendix C lists those constables and deputy constables killed in the line of duty in the 20th century, a total of twenty-five men.

If Allen G. Hatley intended to present enough history of Texas constables to whet the reader's appetite for more, he has admirably succeeded.

Review by Chuck Parsons

Book Review



A Travel Guide to the Plains Indian Wars

By Stan Hoig

University of New Mexico Press, May 2006. 217 pages.
29 maps. \$21.95 paperback. ISBN 0826339344

Novice and seasoned historians of the Indian Wars of the West will find this book insightful, informative, and useful. Divided into two parts, the first half will be especially helpful to the novice. It provides a thumbnail sketch of the Indian Wars, reaching from Texas to Montana and everywhere in between.

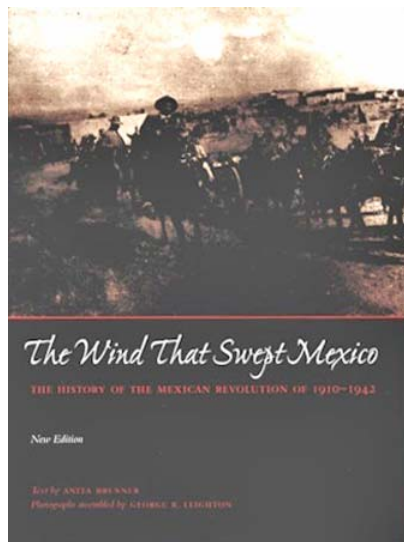
On the other hand, everyone will appreciate the second half. All historians have suffered the frustration of trying to locate historical sites. Far too many times, we only know “about” where an event occurred. It is often the case that the site has been tragically lost to history. Hoig helps to correct this problem. He provides state-by-state maps and directions to all major engagements and also to minor sites that would possibly be gone forever.

Example from *A Travel Guide to the Plains Indian Wars*:

Bird's Fort: Marker one mile east of site on FM 157, one mile north of Trinity River in Arlington [Texas], the site of the post was established during the winter of 1840-1841 by Capt. John Bird and his company of Texas Ranger to promote the initial settlement of Dallas-Fort Worth region. A treaty conducted at the fort in 1843 attempted to draw a line between Texas and Indian territories.

Review by Robert Nieman

Book Review



The Wind that Swept Mexico

The History of the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1942

By Anita Brenner

Photographs assembled by George R. Leighton

Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1984. Reprint of 1971 edition. 310 total pages; 184 pages photographs. \$24.95 paperback. ISBN 0-292-79024-4.

With the border problems now facing the United States and Mexico, this book is as relevant today as it was sixty-three years ago. Initially published in 1943, this was the first book that presented the Mexican Revolution from its beginning in 1910 through the end in 1942.

At the start of the Mexican Revolution, Porfirio Diaz had been the president of Mexico for thirty-four years, but the winds of change were blowing. In the wake of the storm, Diaz, the “Strong Man of the Americas,” was out of power.

Brenner’s 106 pages of text skillfully present the reader with a thumbnail history of the Mexican Revolution. Included within are the men who made it happen: Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, Victoriano Huerta, Francisco Madero, Plutarco Calles, Lazaro Cardenas, Venustiano Carranza, Alvaro Obregon, Portes Gil, Abelardo Rodriguez, and Ortiz Rubio, to name a few.

Anita Brenner (1905-1974) was a Mexican native. She wrote the book *Idols Behind Altars* about the arts and cultures of Mexico, and she also penned many children’s books. During the Spanish Civil War, she was a correspondent for the *New York Times* and the *Nation*, and for many years after, she edited the magazine *Mexico This Month*.

The 184 pages of photos are worth the cost of the book. For the sake of clarity, many were cleaned and re-photographed by the renowned Walker Evans. The photographs were assembled from many sources by George Leighton, with the aide of Brenner.

Review by Robert Nieman