

# University of Texas Bulletin

No. 2315: April 15, 1923

## THE TEXAS HISTORY TEACHERS' BULLETIN

Volume XI, No. 1



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**The benefits of education and of useful knowledge, generally diffused through a community, are essential to the preservation of a free government.**

**Sam Houston**

**Cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy. . . . It is the only dictator that freemen acknowledge and the only security that freemen desire.**

**Mirabeau B. Lamar**

# The Texas History Teachers' Bulletin

Volume XI, Number 1\*

Editors: The History Staff of the University of Texas

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The Texas History Teachers' Bulletin is issued in November, February, and May. The history teachers of Texas are urged to use it as the medium of expression for their experience and ideals and to help make it as practicable and useful as possible by contributing articles, suggestions, criticisms, questions, personal items, and local news concerning educational matters in general. Copies will be sent free on application to any history teacher in Texas.

Address

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PUBLICATIONS  
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\*No History Bulletin was issued for year 1922-23.



## CALDWELL PRIZE IN LOCAL HISTORY

BY WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB

“Evidently the approach to history must begin nearer home and nearer now.”—*Esarey*.

In order to stimulate an interest in local history, Mr. C. M. Caldwell of Abilene has contributed the sum of \$100.00 to be given in prizes for the best essays in local history submitted by high-school students. The contest will be conducted by the editorial staff of “The History Teachers’ Bulletin,” and the prize-winning and special mention essays will be published in “The Bulletin” in the spring.

“The Dallas News” will also support this plan to arouse interest in local history. The editor of “The Dallas News” has agreed to publish the prize-winning essays in the columns of “The News,” and to pay to the author of each essay the sum of \$5.00 in addition to the prize award. This co-operation on the part of “The News” will bring the winners of these prizes to the attention of thousands of people in Texas and the Southwest.

With reference to “The News” offer, the editor writes, “We are making it solely because we believe the local history contest is an excellent idea and calculated to do good in that it will have the effect of familiarizing students with the history of the places in which they live.” The whole purpose of the contest could not be better expressed. The generosity of Mr. Caldwell in making this contest possible, together with the interest and support of “The News,” offers every promise of an activity in local history hitherto unknown in the state.

The following prizes will be offered:

	Caldwell Prize	Dallas News	Total
First Prize.....	\$35.00	\$5.00	\$40.00
Second Prize.....	15.00	5.00	20.00
Two Prizes.....	10.00 each	5.00 each	15.00
Two Prizes.....	5.00 each	5.00 each	10.00
Four Prizes.....	2.50 each	5.00 each	7.50

Ten special mention essays will receive an award of \$1.00 each.

*Conditions and Regulations*

The contest will be conducted subject to the following conditions and regulations:

1. The contest is open to every high-school student in Texas who is in or above the eighth grade.
2. Each school, regardless of size, may submit not more than three essays. The essays to be submitted shall be chosen by a local committee of three or more members. The head of the history department of the school shall be chairman of this committee, and another member of the committee shall be chosen from the English department by the superintendent, and these two members shall choose a third to serve with them.
3. The length of the essays should not exceed 2000 words, exclusive of bibliography, though 2500 words will be permitted in subjects which seem to require that length.
4. Essays should be typewritten on a good quality of paper, size 8x11. Double space and leave wide margins.
5. The name and address of the contestant *should not* appear on the manuscript. The full name and address of the contestant should be placed in a plain envelope together with a 200 word sketch of the writer's life. Seal the envelope and write the title of the essay on the outside of the envelope. Mail this envelope *with* your essay.
6. The contest will close May 1, 1924. Essays mailed after that date will not be considered. The essays should be mailed flat. *Do not roll.*
7. No manuscript will be returned. Students should retain copies of their essays.
8. Prize winning essays will be announced on or before June 15, 1924.
9. The Committee reserves the right to limit the prize awards should the response to the contest seem to justify it.
10. The essays will be read and judged by a committee composed of and appointed by the history faculty of the University of Texas. The decisions of this committee shall be final.



*How the Essays Will Be Judged*

This is a contest in local history, as distinguished from state history or national history. Local history is the history which may be found in your own community. It is the history of your school, your church, your town, courthouse, or of some interesting person. The story of an Indian fight that occurred near your home is local history, as is the account of a drought, a flood or a fire. Local history is not the story of important men or of great events. It is likely to be the story of the unimportant. In detail it is likely to be extremely interesting; in the aggregate it is of great importance. From both points of view it is worth having. All essays, then, should treat of local subjects, and of subjects that are not too widely known.

The essay, which first of all must be on a local subject, will be judged on the following points:

1. Originality. No paper will be considered that is not based on original sources. That is to say, no essay will be considered that is based wholly on books. Books may be used, but they must be supplemented by other investigation.
  2. Evidences of Careful Investigation. The completed essay must show signs of thorough investigation of the subject.
  3. Interest. This does not mean that the paper should be written in rhetorical style. The interest should be inherent in the subject. The story should be told in a clear, straightforward way without literary flourish.
  4. Historical Technic. This has to do with form and appearance.
  5. Bibliography. A complete list of all the sources used should be included. This bibliography should comprise not only all books, magazines, newspapers, and other sources consulted, *but it should also include the names and addresses of all persons who gave material for your story.*
- For instructions as to historical technic and bibliography see "The Complete Bibliography," below.

*Subjects for Local History*

The subjects for local historical essays are too numerous to catalog. The pupil is free to choose anything that interests him and that seems to offer sufficient material. The

following list is meant to be suggestive. Study this list carefully and pick out a subject that is adapted to your particular community.

1. History of the County.
  - a. First settlement.
  - b. Name of town.
  - c. First town.
  - d. Location of county seat.
  - e. Historic events that have happened in the county.
  - f. Part county has taken in national affairs.
2. History of the Town.
  - a. First settlement, reason for, date.
  - b. Name of town.
  - c. Coming of railroad.
  - d. Other important events.
3. History of Buildings and Institutions.
  - a. Courthouse.
  - b. Churches.
  - c. Forts.
  - d. Missions.
  - e. Newspapers.
  - f. Schools.
  - g. Residences.
  - h. Saloons.

Where possible, pictures of the buildings should be submitted along with the essay.
4. History of Development of Natural Resources.
  - a. Mines.
  - b. Oil fields.
  - c. Mineral wells.
  - d. Farms and ranches.
5. History of Foreign Settlements.
  - a. German.
  - b. Italian.
  - c. Polish.
  - d. Jewish.
  - e. Swedish.
  - f. Bohemian.
  - g. Slavery.
6. History of Your Own Family. The advantage of writing on this subject is that you would have access to all the materials which your family has preserved. The disadvantage is that you would have difficulty in telling the story in the required length. It would perhaps be better to tell the story of some important

- member of the family. In writing of your own family, do not use such terms as "My father," "My uncle," etc., but speak of them by name, "Mr. J. B. Jones," "B. F. Wright."
7. Biography of Interesting Persons.
    - a. Soldiers.
    - b. Texas Rangers.
    - c. Politicians.
    - d. Preachers.
    - e. Farmers.
    - f. Cattlemen, Cowboys, Trail Drivers.
    - g. "Bad Men."
    - h. Sheriffs and Peace Officers.
    - i. Old Settlers.Pictures of these persons should be sent where possible.
  8. History of Events.
    - a. Indian fights and Indian treaties.
    - b. Political campaigns.
    - c. Cattle stampedes.
    - d. Droughts.
    - e. Floods.
    - f. Feuds.
    - g. Lynchings.
    - h. Revival meetings.
    - i. Law suits.
    - j. Bank robberies.
    - k. Fairs.
  9. Miscellaneous. Under this head may be placed subjects that do not seem to come under the above headings, for example, local legends, stories of mines, legends about old houses or forts.

### *Sources of Local History*

The materials from which history is written are called the sources of history. In this contest, historical sources will be classified as (1) oral, (2) published, (3) unpublished or manuscript sources. Each of these will be discussed briefly and illustrated.

1. Oral Sources. In writing local history, oral sources will be of much importance. This material can be gathered only by talking with the people of the community, old settlers, soldiers, Indian fighters, county officers, and others. It is often very interest-

ing to gather this material, and in doing so, one hears many curious tales of "the good old times." These accounts should be written down in a notebook just as they are given, with the date and the full name of the narrator. Thus the oral source will be reduced to a written source. The oral source is not the best historical source, but in local history it is indispensable, and often has a human interest lacking in the written sources.

2. Printed Sources. There are three classes of printed sources: books, magazines, newspapers.
  - a. Books. Outside the cities there are a few books that deal with local affairs. However, a thorough canvas should be made for such as exist. There are several county histories, and where these exist they should be consulted. All books dealing with your particular locality should be consulted, but it should be borne in mind that the essay can not be based wholly on books.
  - b. Magazines. Magazine material is likely to be more difficult to find than material in books. Though there are certain Texas magazines which will prove valuable provided you can get access to them. *Hunter's Magazine*, *Texas Magazine*, *Frontier Times* are examples. If these magazines have published articles about your locality, you may find copies of them in some home.
  - c. Newspapers. Newspaper files will prove a most valuable source. Every town has its local paper, and every editor keeps a file of his own paper which goes back over a period of years. The local editor will gladly give you permission to read these files. If you wish information about some important event that occurred in the town in September, 1900, you can turn to that date in the newspaper and find the accounts which were written of this event.
3. Unpublished Sources. These are your most valuable sources. The pupil who bases his work on these sources will have an excellent chance in the contest. There are many varieties of such sources, some of which will be listed below.
  - a. Letters. Letters are perhaps the best historical sources. If you are writing an account of a soldier who was killed in war, his letters to his family and to his friends, will be of greatest value. Every

family preserves certain letters, and many of them preserve all their letters over a long period of years. It may be that you will find among these files letters of famous men. There may be letters from generals, governors, or other important historic characters.

- b. Diaries. It is often the case that some individual has kept a diary in which he recorded from day to day his experiences. For example, one man in San Antonio went with a cattle herd from near San Antonio to Kansas. Each day he wrote down the things that happened that day. This diary makes a valuable source for the history of the Cattle Trail. Pupils should canvas the whole town and community for such diaries.
- c. Scrapbooks. Scrapbooks are less valuable as source material than letters and diaries, but still they are of worth. In them you are likely to find odds and ins of newspaper clippings, pictures, verse, and various items which happened to interest the maker. Sometimes you may find a combination diary and scrapbook.
- d. Manuscript. It is often the case that some person will write an account of his life, or of interesting events which he has witnessed, and never publish it. One man may write a long account of his experience in the Civil War in order that he may leave the record for his children and grand children; another a history of his county; a third the history of the town. An effort should be made to discover any such manuscript. The county court house is rich in manuscript sources. The surveyor's office, the county clerk's office, the county school superintendent's office, and other offices are filled with records about land, marriage records, and school affairs.

#### *Where to Look for Material*

In the discussion of sources, the probable location of material has been indicated. However, for the convenience of the pupils and for the sake of thoroughness, a fairly complete list of "places to look" is set down.

1. Homes. The homes of old families will yield the richest historical material. Private letters, diaries,

scrapbooks, all will be found in the homes. Scrupulous care must be observed in using these sources. Unless the owners are convinced that their material will be carefully handled and not injured in any way they will prefer not to be bothered.

2. Public Library. In towns and cities that have a public library pupils will be able to find newspaper files, books and other records of interest. The librarian will be glad to aid and advise you.
3. Local Historical Society. In many places there are local historical societies whose members devote themselves to local history. These frequently contain collections of material which will be of great service. Consult the president, secretary, or librarian of your historical society.
4. Newspaper Office. The local editor will always have in his office a file of his own newspaper over several years, and may have files of other papers too. By all means consult these files, and talk with your editor about subjects in which you may be interested.
5. The County Court House. In the offices of the county court house you will find the public records of the county. You should talk with the various county officers; and if possible, get access to their records in which you are interested. This may not be an easy matter, but if you are tactful, you can secure much material.

The following officers should be visited:

- a. County Judge, who can give information about political conditions, and about famous cases that have been tried in court.
- b. County Clerk, who records all the public transactions in the county, land deeds, marriage certificates, etc.
- c. Sheriff, who can give information about criminals, law-breakers, mobs, and important cases that have been tried in court.
- d. Surveyor. The surveyor will be better acquainted with the county than any man you will find. He can give information about old land marks, Indian encampments, land disputes and law suits.
- e. County School Superintendent. In his office you will find the records pertaining to the schools of the county. From the Superintendent you can learn when schools were established, how they were built, and how they developed.

6. The City Hall. In the city hall you will find the records for the city. You should consult the police department and the fire department for information.
7. Individuals. In every town and community there is some individual who is a teller of good stories, some one who is full of reminiscences of the past. It is fun to draw out these stories and write them down. There is no rule by which you can find these individuals, but you will recognize them when you find them. They may be as full of legends as of fact, but in this case the legends are valuable too, provided they are of local interest. The legend often represents what the people think is true, and it is therefore of historical importance.

### *Steps in Writing Local History*

After the student has chosen his subject and located the material, he should then proceed in a systematic manner to the preparation for the writing of the essay. This preparation will consist of two parts: (1) Reading and Note-taking and (2) Organizing and Writing.

Directions for preparation of your Paper:<sup>1</sup>

1. Reading and Note-Taking.
  - a. Having chosen your subject in consultation with your instructor, begin to collect your material. Read the books and whatever material you may find on your subject in order to get the facts well in hand.
  - b. Take notes on all that you read or hear that bears on your subject. This note-taking is of the greatest importance. Your notes may be taken from books, magazines, newspapers, scrapbooks, or from narratives which are told to you. But take these notes *you must*. Take notes on *loose cards* or *sheets* of paper of convenient size. You may use a bound note book in getting oral stories, but you can later transfer these notes to cards or loose sheets.  
Place but one note on each page. Write on but one side of the paper. Write the subject of the

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<sup>1</sup>These directions are taken largely from Tryon, *The Teaching of History in Junior and Senior High Schools*, pp. 139ff.

note at the top and the reference at the bottom, using (in case of book) the last name of the author, title in abbreviated form, volume and page. In taking oral stories, note the name and initials of your informant, and the date on which you heard the story.

- c. Before leaving a reference on which you have taken notes secure your complete bibliographical data. For a book give author's full name, title of work, date and place of publication, and the volume number. For magazines and newspapers, give name of publication, date of the issue you have used, and the page. Also, where possible, give name of author of the article.
  - d. In taking notes you may paraphrase, quote directly, summarize or outline. The first and second of these forms will prove of the most value when you come to write your paper. Occasionally thoughts will come to you when reading a reference; if they do, jot them down at once.
  - e. All notes should be legible. Great care should be taken with direct quotations, where spelling, punctuation, and capitalization must be exactly as they are in the matter quoted. To make sure of this on finishing your copy always check it against the original.
2. Organizing and Writing.
- a. When you have finished your reading, go through your notes and classify them. They will be likely to fall into three or four large groups.
  - b. Make a brief outline of the paper as you propose to write it. You should write with the greatest care. Make every effort to present the facts clearly and accurately.
  - c. Form for completed paper.
    - (1) On the first page write nothing but the title and the number of words. Do not write your name.
    - (2) On the second page give a brief foreword or preface. In this state what you have tried to accomplish in your paper, point of view, and special difficulties you have had. Tell briefly how you collected your material, whether it is based primarily on books, magazines, newspapers, unpublished letters and manuscript, or on oral report. If you are writing about your



- family, do not say "My father, etc.," but call the person by name.
- (3) On the page following the preface repeat the title; skip two spaces or lines and begin the body of your paper.
  - (4) Place the bibliography last. Include in it only references actually used in the preparation of your paper and arrange them in alphabetical order.
  - (5) Write your final draft on regular typewriter paper, size 8x11. Leave wide margin and double space the lines.
3. Footnotes. Footnotes will not be required in this contest, but they may be used to advantage in certain instances. It is particularly advisable to use footnotes when giving direct quotations, as it saves giving the name of the author and title of the book in the body of the paper. The footnote should be placed at the bottom of the page. Your teacher will instruct you as to the proper form. See example in this article.
  4. The Complete Bibliography.
    - a. Confine your bibliography to the titles actually used in working up your paper.
    - b. Arrange it alphabetically by authors.
    - c. The order of detail is illustrated below:

Olmstead, F. L. *A Journey in the Back Country*. New York, 1860.
    - d. Include in the bibliography the full name and address of all persons who contributed material to your essay.
  5. When your paper is finished, you should check over it carefully to see that you have followed directions. Mail it before May 1, 1924. Mail it flat. *Do not roll your manuscript*. Be sure that your name does not appear on the manuscript, but be equally certain that you have your name, age, address, and a brief sketch of your life in a sealed envelope. Send this envelope with the manuscript.

Address W. P. WEBB,  
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## THE APPROACH TO HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

BY LOGAN ESAREY,  
PROFESSOR OF WESTERN HISTORY, INDIANA UNIVERSITY

The hard plain highway to mathematics is by the multiplication table. A great deal of time has been wasted by teachers in vain attempts to find an easier road for children but sooner or later all such teachers have, together with their classes, been lost in the byways. They have been compelled to return to the hard straight, plain road. The every-day mathematics to every-day children is addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and these processes must be learned. It can neither be avoided nor delayed.

The fundamental ideas of geography are land, water, climate, distance, direction, people and the products of all these singly and in conjunction. These lie all about us in our immediate presence. Teachers of geography have finally come to recognize that the only approach to their subject is through the immediate neighborhood to the world at large.

Teachers of biology have long ago quit requiring primary pupils to commit to memory the so-called laws of life and have begun by learning the concrete facts of life in the neighborhood. The plants, birds, insects, animals and their habits are the textbooks.

Language teachers have ceased to teach, as introductory language work, the abstract rules of grammar and composition and are using the ordinary speech of ordinary folks as used in their ordinary experiences.

In spite of the plain warnings from these sources history teachers in large numbers still cling to the old idea of beginning history teaching at and with the beginning of history. It would seem there is as much reason for beginning zoology with the first animal life on earth; botany, with the

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<sup>1</sup>This article appeared in the *Indiana Magazine of History* for June, 1921, and was written with reference to Indiana. Because of the interest and clarity of the article, and the soundness of the analysis presented, it is reproduced for Texas teachers by permission of the author.—*Ed.*

first plant life; or language, with the efforts of the cave man to communicate his mind to others.

History deals with man in his struggles for freedom from the restraining circumstances of his environment. In this struggle many organizations or institutions have been developed. It is a mistake to assume that social life or institutions were simpler in the beginning of history. The whole tendency of civilization is to simplify human life and its institutions, just as law and order are simpler than chance and violence. And even if early life were simpler the difficulty in procuring evidences of and the changed environment around early society would make it impracticable to begin history there. Only the most highly trained imaginations can realize the conditions of society in the remote ages. And if this were not reason enough the fact is that the early institutions were so entirely different from ours at present that a thorough knowledge of them would be of no more advantage to a citizen than a knowledge of the surgery of ancient Egypt would be in a modern clinic.

In Indiana we have not yet entirely discarded the culture epoch theory in our primary history. For years our children struggled with the imaginary problems of Kablu as he labored to develop Aryan institutions under the shadows of the Altai and Hindu Kush mountains; or attended imaginary popular assemblies with Wolf the Saxon in the swamps and shades of north Germany. For years all the preparation for citizenship in Indiana obtained in the primary schools of the state was obtained from the puerile stories of the Ten Boys or Ten Little Sisters. These books might, at least, have been written so as to acquaint the children with the language of history, but even this was neglected.

A variation of this culture epoch program consists in arranging the present people of the earth in a series according to their development in civilization and making the history course accordingly. Thus the first grade would begin with life in Aryan and Egyptian times, tent dwellers, shepherds, nomads, passing to the Phoenicians, Hottentots and Indians, thence in the middle or grammar grades to

Medieval history and in the seventh and eighth grades to modern civilization. The redeeming feature of this scheme, it is said, is that the child is always studying that period of civilization which corresponds to his own nature.

Still another variation of this widespread culture epoch theory in history teaching is the dramatic or literary plan. These teachers assume that history is an epic or drama. Thus to the young child history becomes a fable or fairy story; to the more advanced it becomes a heroic legend, or saga, to the still more advanced, an epic; to the highest grades it is drama, the drama of life. All this is very beautiful and is based on that favorite "bed-rock principle of pedagogy," natural interest. The only serious objection to it is it has no history in it. Other objections need hardly be considered. If a citizen's duties consisted principally in attending movies, theatres or opera this would be ideal preparation.

The culture-epoch theory of education it may be stated, in conclusion, rests on two assumptions. First, there is a uniform progress in civilization common to all people. Second, this progress is from the simple to the complex. Both assumptions are unsupported by historical evidence and if they were as certain as the theory of gravitation two far more important pedagogical principles would be violated by the culture-epoch program. First, no conclusion of history should be presented to a class without its supporting evidence. Second, education in general proceeds from the known to the related unknown. History is read and understood, if it is understood, through the "here" and the "now."

A second approach to history, almost as widespread as the culture-epoch and equally vicious, is the heroic. This theory of history is upheld by Rousseau, Carlyle and Emerson among others. Briefly stated it assumes that history is the biography of heroes. Great forward movements are the socialization of the thoughts of a single man and are established by the efforts of some far-seeing individual. The masses are to institutions only what brick and mortar are to a building—mere unthinking passive material. The

idea permeates and vitiates history writing as well as history teaching.

We have the history of England in *Heroes of English History*; of America, in *Heroes of American History*; of Germany in *Heroes of German History* and so of Greece, Rome, Spain, Jewry and the world. Three principal considerations support this theory.

First is the ethical. The biographies are chosen for their moral content. It is the intention that the mind and conduct of the pupils shall be moulded by the thoughts and conduct of the hero studied. Here begin insuperable difficulties. No hero fills the bill exactly. The hard choice must be met of teaching doubtful morals or of falsifying history. No hesitation has been shown to choose the latter as the lesser of the two evils. Beginning with Plutarch a long list of historians have idealized and moralized biography until it is rare indeed to find a sound biography. They have given us expurgated heroes from Adam to Roosevelt. The stuff has been washed out, softened, sweetened, and sugar-coated till red-blooded children even have turned away with disgust. On such a foundation no teacher can hope to build, later, an appreciation or understanding of history. Rousseau, who first insisted on biography as an approach to history, demanded for *Emile* a truthful biography. We need not stop here to inquire how valuable such teaching is for ethics. We need only note that these biographies are not written from sound evidence and hence can have no value for history.

A second argument for the hero in history is that he is an epitome of his times. Some biographies do come up to this definition—such as Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, Hay and Nicolay's *Life of Lincoln*, or Thayer's *Life of Cavour*, but there is no danger of these becoming texts in primary history. Such voluminous biographies are necessary to show the tremendous influences of the times on the man. To teach that the times have no influence on the man is to falsify history and no method which does not entirely recognize the integrity of its subject matter can be valid. In other words scholarship is a condition of both teacher and

teaching which cannot be violated. To say that the American Revolution is but a biography of Washington, or of Washington, Franklin, Henry and any number of their companions is to neglect the evidence of history. Napoleon and Cromwell were successful so long only as they were supported by the people. Washington and Lincoln were more successful because they went no farther than the public opinion of their times would support. In other words every leader, except perhaps a few military captains, is to be tried by a jury of his peers rather than worshiped by a choir of servants. It leads to a belief in the mythical super-man of which we have entirely too much in the United States at present. A nation of people which accepts its leaders' statements without the proof to support them is worthy of a despot and will soon have him. The chief secondary aim of history, the training of independent, self-reliant judgment, is not only neglected by hero history but is violated. Quite recently such heroes as John Jacob Astor, Vanderbilt, Rockefeller and Carnegie have been set up as models of thrift in Indiana. This is hero-worship gone mad and if it were not so dangerous would be ridiculous. The German school children were fed for generations on hero stories until a distorted patriotism led them to view their leaders and German Culture with veneration if not worship. The late disaster in Europe is traceable directly to vicious historians and history teaching. It is hardly necessary to point out that German methods have obtained a powerful foothold in our schools.

The third argument for the hero or biographical approach is that biography is simpler than history and therefore more easily understood. The last part of this statement goes back for its justification to the old and pervasive fundamental of Rousseauistic pedagogy that children should be taught what they prefer or what they like. This is said to be the natural method. In spite of much that is said to the contrary it seems best to preserve the school for work. Work does not follow lines of least resistance. It goes over and through obstacles rather than around them. History requires work just as arithmetic, grammar, or spelling. It

takes mental exertion to comprehend a problem in arithmetic, a rule of grammar or the Battle of Bunker Hill. No amount of play, which follows lines of inclination or least resistance, will ever acquire this or any other knowledge worth while. There is no accomplishment to the children or promise to the teacher in this recreation pedagogy.

The claim of simplicity is a valid claim if true. It is worth while to approach any problem in teaching at its simplest point. Admitting this, however, is not admitting the proposition that an individual is more easily understood than an event or even an institution. Biography is exactly the storm center of history. Cause and effect are large factors in events. Few children of the age of twelve but will follow step by step from evidence to event and from event to event up to the outbreak of the Revolution, but how many will understand why the wealthy, aristocratic Washington should have been its leader? One can understand Samuel Adams or John Hancock, whose business was interfered with, more easily. One can appreciate why the theoretical, impulsive young Jefferson should sit on the committee that wrote the Declaration but how about the aged, prosperous, happy, respected, practical, prudent, Franklin? A more plausible reason for the biography seems to be that the hero furnishes a thread or unity to the action hard to attain otherwise. A human being is certainly more concrete and comprehensible than an abstract idea but to substitute Washington for patriotism, David for religion or Lincoln for justice is of doubtful efficacy and may lead to a reaction or a backslide later in life which will more than undo all that has been accomplished.

Still another large number of teachers use children's histories. Some of the texts were extremely simplified by being written in words of one syllable. The game is mere byplay. A thought cannot be simplified any more than a proposition in Euclid by being stated in simple language. Every writer of history, deserving the name, tells his story in the simplest, clearest manner. No two authors write with equal force and clearness. The text which excels in

these qualities, both being equally trustworthy, is of course the best; but the child-language text is a farce.

One of the chief purposes in primary history is to acquaint children with the language of history, in fact when this acquaintance is complete the work of primary history is complete.

We may then dismiss the idea of adulterating or diluting history to make it easier for the earlier grades. Some events of the Revolution may be singled out and taught because they lead immediately to concrete results, but it is not necessary to use in the teaching anything but the authentic evidence of history; it is not necessary to teach anything which later will be found useless or have to be repudiated. The Boston Tea Party is a simple event, easily led up to and easily understood; but to connect that with the Vigilantes in San Francisco eighty years later is far more difficult. There is no lack of such concrete material in history, entirely authentic which when learned will never have to be repudiated as a childish story learned in the grades.

Just here, however, is the grave error in most history teaching and the beginning of the downfall of most history students. How many teachers can picture in their minds the scene in old Boston on the night of December 16, 1773? To the ordinary sixth-grade pupil in Indiana practically every element in the picture is strange. Nor is there any means at hand by which the teacher can make it real—the old city, the streets, the costumes, the ship, the wharf. Come to think about it, how much preparation would be required to teach so simple an event? Evidently the approach to history must begin nearer home and nearer now.

Perhaps some member of the class—and this might be done in any of the early grammar grades—has attended a woman's club, some boy has had personal experience of a farmers' meeting or a political meeting; another may know about the nearest church, a brick yard, a tobacco field, a cotton field; a factory, a political convention, a camp-meeting, a hospital or one of the hundreds of events, customs, associations, businesses, buildings, offices or institutions



that make up the neighborhood society. If all this is learned in a year good progress will have been made.

The next step involves a considerable power of imagination and accordingly as it is well done will the capacity and appreciation for history be developed. From the immediate society of the neighborhood the second step should take the class to events which they cannot observe, either remote in time or place, or both. The less remote usually the easier will be the problem. Society in Indiana at the time of the Civil War furnishes an excellent field for this training. It should be kept in mind that the principal purpose is to learn how to study history at the same time keeping in mind that what is learned is valuable and reliable. Indiana in 1860 was in the homespun age. The typical farm home, a double log house or red brick, contained a loom, spinning wheel and reel; there were also the fireplace, the big, high beds, the trundle-bed, perhaps a fireplace in the kitchen fitted up with cranes, hooks and pans for cooking; in the spring house were the milk and butter, the apples, potatoes and turnips were in the cellar or holed up in the ground (if it were winter). In the barn and barnyard were horses, oxen, cattle, hogs, sheep, geese, chickens of all breeds and appearances. A class of farm children could spend a month profitably studying the farm stock as described in the old Indiana Agricultural Reports, comparing them with the stock on the farm at present. In the barn might be found a scythe, a cradle, a cycle, a breaking plow most probably with a wooden mould-board, a jumping shovel, hoes, hand rakes, a wagon and perhaps a carriage. In the fields, orchard and garden almost everything used for feed, food, or clothing will be growing. From the old ash hopper comes the lye for soap-making and there sits the big 40-gallon iron kettle "for soap, sap or soup" as a writer of the times observes. There are the sheep from whose backs come the wool for clothing; there are the hogs to be butchered along near Christmas time and meat put up for the year; there in the smokehouse is the box of dirt where the fire is made to smoke the hams and middlings hanging on hickory hooks fastened to the joists above; yonder is the grove where the sugar is made

in early spring. When the flour and meal are all gone you might make an imaginary trip to the old water mill, meet dozens of farmers from all parts of the county, wait your turn till your grist is ground. About once a year, usually in the fall, all the marketable produce on the farm was loaded into the farm wagon and a trip was made to the nearest city to trade. Sometimes this trip consumed a week. All the fine things in the stores were seen and some of them bought—perhaps a cook-stove, an organ or a sewing machine. Still more important would be making a flat-boat, loading it, and running it down to New Orleans. The old-fashioned home life of the fifties and sixties was rich in picturesque historical material. There was a whole round of social gatherings—the log rolling, quilting, singing school, spelling match, barbecue, debate, camp-meeting and literary.

In the city the change has been equally great. The city of the fifties had no street, no sewer, no police, no street lights, no street cars, but there were taverns, lyceums, theaters, churches, stores and some fine houses. Its life was not nearly so rich as that of the farm. To these might be added a visit to the old district school, to the old-fashioned court, to the legislature and other institutions of the time.

No attempt need be made here to complete the outline. From society in the fifties in Indiana one might pass to the old plantation south, to colonial New England, to Indian life, to hunters, trappers, to the soldiers of the Civil War, to the Mexican War, to the Revolution. These are the elements of history. Once a child has learned the meaning of these terms and how to picture them from the printed page it is ready to take up the systematic study of history. If the training has been successful there will be no need nor thought of memorizing words or dates in history any more than there is in mathematics or science. It is a question of understanding. Words fade away into the pictures they are intended for. The drudgery of history disappears but work, absorbing work, in plenty remains.

## TEACHING CIVICS IN THE SEVENTH GRADE

BY J. B. LINDQUIST, PRINCIPAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
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“Learn by doing.” This, it seems to me, is the best method of teaching such “intangible” subjects as civics to the pupils of the seventh grade. For this reason I decided to initiate the class into project work. I shall go somewhat into details for the benefit of those who may desire to try similar work in their classes.

The first project assigned this year was the local board of trustees. This subject was the shortest and easiest and interesting as well, because it was a “home product.” I asked the class to find out what the general purpose of the board was, who composed it, how the members were elected and for what terms, and, lastly, the specific duties of the board. The response was enthusiastic. One recitation was devoted to oral reports. The class was then required to write out the information in their note-books in a specified form. They next studied the local city government in the same manner, and I got equally good results from this. The other classes in school were electing their class officers, and, naturally, the seventh grade wanted to do the same. Instead of having the class election as it is usually held, I decided to carry out the method used in our state primary elections, and in this way visualize that chapter in our text. This was especially interesting to the class because it was something different, and, of course, the pupils thought they would miss one or two lessons in civics. I set a day on which the “candidates” should announce for president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. Only twenty-two from a class of forty-eight announced, and, as usual in our state elections, politicians were abundant. One week was allowed for campaigning. None were more enthusiastic than these candidates. The only issue was—the best man wins. In the meantime, I explained to the class all details of the election, and the duties of the elec-

tion officials. I prepared the ballots and the election materials and placed them in a sealed package with the notation on the outside: "Not to be opened before the date of election and then only in the presence of the election officials." I divided the class into two precincts and appointed one election judge and five clerks for each precinct. On election day the officials took this oath: "I promise faithfully and impartially to conduct this election." The election booths were marked off and no talking was permitted within these limits. Only two voters were allowed in the booth at a time. The registration cards were used for poll tax receipts. Upon presenting the receipt to the election judge, who marked it "voted, date," the voter received the ballot which had been initialed by the judge. After marking the ballot with a black pencil (no other is allowed in a state election) the voter handed his folded ballot to the election judge who numbered it. This number and the name of the voter was recorded by two clerks. The judge then placed the folded ballot in a sealed box. After all had voted the judge opened the box and read the ballots while three other clerks recorded the vote on their respective tally sheets. Only the election officials were allowed to hear the count. After all votes were counted, each official signed the certification on the back of each sheet, certifying that, "according to the best of his knowledge, the above are correct." The judges then placed these papers in a sealed envelope and the ballots in a sealed box, and delivered these to the chairman. In the presence of the class the envelopes were opened and the returns from each precinct placed on the board. As a majority was required for election, a "run-off" election was necessary for the secretary-treasurer. All of the usual excitement at elections was evident. The boys agreed not to vote for the girls, and *vice versa*, but on account of a few friends, etc., some of the boys weakened and two girls were elected. A committee later canvassed the returns. An account of this election was also written in the note-books.

The president appointed a committee of six to work with me in drawing up some election rules for the class. One

rule provided that no one should be allowed to vote unless he had passed in at least three subjects the previous month. The president posts a notice of a class meeting three days in advance. Officers will be elected again at the end of the first semester.

I have been well pleased with the results of these projects, and I think they have been very beneficial to the class. When we move into the new High School I plan to develop a semi-self government in the junior high school. The success of it remains to be seen, but I consider the time and effort well spent. In this way "our citizens of tomorrow" learn by doing today, and we instill in their minds the duties and responsibilities of good government, and "make our country safe for democracy."

## TO THE TEACHERS OF HISTORY

If the effort that is being made to stimulate an interest in local history is to prove a success, the credit will be due to the teachers of history. They alone can produce the results that are desired. The money for the contest has been provided, the medium of publication is at hand, the rules of the contest and minute directions for carrying them out are set forth in *The Bulletin*, the material for local history lies deep on the field of every community, and curious and eager students are now in every school ready to plunge into this game if once they learn of it. These are factors which must be present, but all of them together will not function unless the teacher co-operates. It is the teacher who must present the contest to the students, who must guide the inexperienced toward the right subject, who must eliminate topics that are unfit, and in general direct this enterprise. The business of the director is not to produce, but to get production, to see that others produce. In this case the history teacher in his capacity as director must bring together all the elements of this undertaking, combine them and set them going. We hear much in this day of service, a word so abused that we are not quite sure just what it means. But in this contest the opportunity for doing something for Texas boys and girls lies plainly before us. In school the teacher often feels that he does too much for the student, but in this local history contest the real service consists in giving the student a chance to do something for himself.

The teacher may ask what remuneration he may expect from his efforts in this contest. He can expect no direct remuneration, and perhaps no immediate return. But certain advantages and certain values, intangible thought they may be, will accrue to the teacher who participates. A few of these may be indicated. First, the teacher who takes up this work will create among his students an interest in history perhaps hitherto unknown. If he does this, his task as teacher will become easier. Second, he will give his stu-

dents training in the historical method, teach them how history is made up. Third, he will develop in them an increased interest in their home community, and in their fellow man. Fourth, he will himself develop an interest in the community and in the people of the community. If he is interested in the community, then the people will be interested in him, and will give him that staunch support that comes from full confidence. All these values and advantages will accrue to the teacher whether his students are successful in the contest or not. They are the real returns.

It would be possible to point out other more direct returns which will come to teachers whose students are successful. There are ten prizes, and the ten teachers whose students win these prizes will be pre-eminent in their county and community, and eminent in the state. To them will come new opportunities, promotion in pay and in rank, as it comes to those who achieve in their own fields.

Another phase of the work which the teacher should not overlook is the opportunity to do historical research in local history. The time has come when local history in Texas must receive some attention. Because a teacher is cut off from a college library is no reason why he can not do historical research. It is possible for a teacher, especially one who is near the county seat, to write the history of his county and present it for a Master's degree. Through his students he can get much valuable material on the social and institutional phases of the county's past. The idea that one can do research only behind the walls of a university is fallacious. The opportunities are best there, but they are good everywhere if one has the imagination to see them and the courage to realize them.

In conclusion, it will be well to point out that, though there are ten prizes, these are comparatively few in proportion to the number of contestants. All can not win. Every student and every teacher who participates in the contest should enter in a spirit of good sportsmanship determined to win if possible, but prepared to abide by the decision of the judges.

*To County Superintendents*

The county school superintendent bears somewhat the same relation to the teachers as they bear to their pupils and students. The editor of *The Bulletin* is sensible that the interest in local history will depend primarily on the history teachers, but the county superintendents can do much to stimulate this interest in the county by calling attention of all history teachers to the contest and commending it to them. Miss Mary Ship Sanders, County Superintendent of Williamson County, has furnished an example of what may be done in local history. Not only is Miss Sanders an active member of the Williamson County Historical Society, but she has taken further steps. She publishes a monthly paper, *The Broadcaster*, devoted to the interest of rural schools, and in it one may find local history sketches of great interest. To read its pages, one would almost think it was devoted solely to local history. Williamson County is one of the old Texas counties and is very rich in local history and tradition. It is too much to expect every county in the state to be as active in the study of local history as it is, but it is decidedly worth while to know that there is such a county, and that there is in it a school superintendent who undertakes to direct the attention of every teacher to the importance of local historical investigation. The editor of the *The Bulletin* will be glad to send county superintendents a sufficient number of bulletins to distribute to all teachers who may be interested in local history.



## THE TEACHING OF CURRENT EVENTS

BY GRACE DELLMARE GROOS, ALLAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL,  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Scarcely is there a school of any repute that does not include in its course of study current events. By current events we mean history that has been made too recently to be included in a history text-book—history in the making.

No tenable argument can be advanced against the study of current history in the schools, while almost countless sound arguments can be advanced in favor of studying it. The pupil who begins to study what is going on around him finds that most of it is intelligible in the light of what has gone before and will realize for himself that only by the study of the past can we understand the present. Its study makes him a careful and intelligent reader of worthwhile newspapers and magazines, and through which he may develop a healthful interest in civics and political affairs. In brief, some of the chief values attributed to this work by enthusiastic teachers are,—that it gives the pupils an insight into history in the making; correlates present-day problems with the past; and helps the pupils to discover present-day interests and tendencies.

It is agreed by most history teachers that some current event work should be done in each history class. Not all topics will be adapted to every class, nor can the same method be employed in presentation,—that will have to be decided by the teacher; but certainly, every history class should have some current events.

There are various methods to be used in the teaching of current events. The pupils may all be asked to subscribe to the same periodical, or they may not be asked to subscribe to any magazine at all, and merely left to bring in their material from any source available. In the latter event, the teacher will find that constant attention must be called to choice of material. The pupils will, in many cases, depend upon some unreliable paper or magazine to

which the family at home subscribes. Where the teacher does the choosing of the periodical, and it is uniformly adopted by the class, much better results will be obtained. The use of magazines in schools is a movement yet in its infancy; but certainly there has been no other recent movement with such possibilities for effective and intelligent citizenship.

In choosing a magazine great care should be taken by the teacher to see that it is one of high standard. Gathany in his "Using Magazines in History Classes,"<sup>1</sup> gives the following points that a good magazine should have:

1. Use of good and precise English.
2. Clearness and definiteness of presentation.
3. Unquestioned scholarship.
4. Painstaking care in giving to its readers only trustworthy and authoritative information.
5. Lack of partisanship.
6. An aggressive policy for public good.
7. Its power and purpose to arouse public conscience.

A number of excellent magazines are easily available for the teaching of current history. Gathany considers the *Outlook* the best one for this use. The choice depends, of course, on the point of view of the teacher. Following is a list of the most substantial periodicals from which to choose: *Literary Digest*, *Outlook*, *Current Events*, *Review of Reviews*, *Survey*, *World's Work*, *Independent*, *Colliers* and *Current Opinion*.

Current events should be done regularly once a week and the author has found that one whole period of forty-five minutes is not too much. The day best suited for the lesson is Monday or Friday, because either does not break into the continuity of the regular history lessons.

In choosing the topics for the lesson not more than three leading ones should be attempted. There are so many topics which appeal to the teacher that she feels they must all be discussed. This should be guarded against, for if too

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<sup>1</sup>*History Teachers' Magazine*, V, 288 ff.

much is attempted the result is the class will get a worthless smattering of nothing in particular.

In the first lesson it will be necessary to give a foundation for the leading topics. This is done by the teacher. For each important topic assigned, every child is held responsible and must come to class with a short digest or outline in a note-book, together with an illustration or cartoon bearing on the subject. Material may be divided up for discussion and for note-book filing into State, United States, International or Foreign, and Miscellaneous.

At every recitation one or two pupils should be called on for some special report that has been previously worked out with the aid of the teacher. The class should take notes on this. It is well to give over the last part of the period to informal recitation, for each child will be impressed with some miscellaneous topic that he wants to talk about, the last radio achievement, or some new invention.

In the teaching of current events certain difficulties that are not met with in the teaching of history will be encountered. This is only natural; for, while the phenomena of which both history and current events treat are much alike, there is a difference in degree of completeness, definiteness, accuracy, and finality about them that makes a corresponding difference in the method of approach necessary. Much and continual preparation must be made on the part of the teacher. Current events brought into history classes challenge comparisons, and all teachers know the dangers of comparisons which have not been carefully worked out.

The teacher must be ever on guard to keep up the interest of the class which will lag at times unless great care is taken. To sustain interest the teacher should change the method of conducting the work; give current event matches, the girls against the boys; allow comparison of note-books in class; and have special days when the best note-books are set up around the room for display. Dramatization may even be introduced. A lively debate always creates inter-

est, and if a few guests are invited in for the occasion, each pupil will exert himself to do his best.

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A splendid article, well outlined, giving: (1) the results of a test in current events in a certain high school; (2) facts showing to what extent attention is being given to the teaching of currents in the leading high schools of Washington.

TRYON, ROLLA MILTON, "The Teaching of History in Junior and Senior High School." Gin & Co., New York, 1921.

A very helpful book, written in the interest of better history teaching. Emphasis is put on class room problems and the technique of teaching.

## BOOK REVIEW

*Problems in American Democracy*, by Thames Ross Williamson, Assistant Professor of Economics and Sociology in Smith College. D. C. Heath & Co., 1922. Pp. XV+567.

*Problems in American Democracy* is the title of a book by Thames Ross Williamson. The book was written by a teacher of economics and sociology in Smith College to be a text in the secondary schools. Professor Williamson in the preface expresses his purpose in writing the book in the following passage:

There is an increasing demand for a text-book which will bring the student into direct contact with the great current issues of American life, and which will afford practical training to those who soon must grapple with the economics, social, and political problems of our time. It is with the hope of meeting such a demand that this text has been prepared.

In accordance with this aim, the author divides the problems presented in the book into those dealing with the economic, social, and political phases of life in our own country. In order to assure full faith in and credit for his presentations of such problems, he cites in his "Acknowledgments" some of the most prominent scholars in those fields in America.

Proceeding upon his psychologic principle that the boy must know before buying his tools whether he is going to build a mouse-trap or a boat, Professor Williamson presents his problems before giving the mechanism of government. Thus the book follows the simple, logical plan of an introduction, presenting the foundations of American democracy; and then the mechanism of government, national, state, and local.

Although he covers a broad field in taking up these phases of American life, the author specifically states that the text aims to present only the outline of the subject. But

in his presentation he has so constructed his plan that in each field the prominent problems of the day are clearly explained, such problems as the general nature of socialism, the basis of the capitalistic system, the single tax, the distribution of the income of industry, the short ballot, and others.

To facilitate the presentation to the high-school pupil, the book is divided up into short chapters. Each chapter is followed by such teaching helps and suggestions as: (1) easy questions on the text, (2) required readings to supplement the text, (3) questions on the required readings, (4) topics for group work on the everyday experience of the pupil, and (5) topics on material for written work. The general bibliography includes those authors cited at the end of each chapter and suggests other works.

A possible criticism that the book attempts to cover too broad a field is precluded by Mr. Williamson's statement in the preface that the book is so written that the teacher may take up any one of the phases presented if the course of study does not give time enough to complete the book.

On the whole the book is admirably adapted to the high-school student. Its dark blue binding and gilt-lettered title are pleasing at first sight. The language of the book is simple, direct, and adapted to the high-school plane. Where technical terms are necessary, they are fully explained, either by definition, synonymous terms, or foot notes. The sentences are not long, but varied enough in structure to give a pleasing effect.

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## HISTORY IN THE SUMMER SCHOOL OF 1924

Since the University of Texas adopted the plan of running a full term of three months during the summer, the enrollment in the advanced and graduate courses have increased most remarkably. Especially is this true of the History Department. Each summer the classes in history grow, the number of advanced students increase as well as the number of candidates for the Bachelor's and Master's degree. This increase is derived largely from the ranks of teachers in the high schools who wish to utilize the long vacation for study. Old students enjoy living again on the campus; but in coming to summer school they get an opportunity to study with visiting professors from all parts of the United States. It is the policy of the History Department to bring in as many outside teachers during the summer as possible, and it is often the case that men of the first rank in scholarship will come to Texas to teach in summer school who could not be procured at any other time. During the summer of 1924 the following outside men will teach at the University: Thomas of Arkansas, Ambler of West Virginia, Walker of Rice Institute, Bieber of Washington University, St. Louis, Gammon of Austin College, McKay of Ohio State University, and Carnathan of Southwestern. In addition to the visiting professors, several members of the regular staff will offer courses. These are Professors Riker, Gutsch, Martin, Webb.

There will be given in summer school the usual survey courses covering the whole field of United States history, the history of England, and the Nineteenth Century. Old students will know these courses as History 5, 74, and 10 of the long session. All these courses are open to freshmen in the University. In addition there will be advanced courses in United States history which will deal with the Formation of the Constitution, Jackson's Administration, Civil War and Reconstruction, Recent United States, the West, Foreign Relations; in English History with the devel-

opment of the Constitution, the English Reformation, the British Empire; in Modern European history with various aspects of the Nineteenth Century. During the first term there will be a course on the Teaching of History. Teachers who expect to work for the Master's degree during the summer should communicate with some member of the department with reference to the work contemplated.









