



East Texas Historical Journal

A Publication of the East Texas Historical Association

Volume 59 Issue 1

Article 1

2021

ETHJ Vol-59

The East Texas Historical Journal is a publication of the East Texas Historical Association (ETHA). The ETHA is a membership organization founded in 1962 to support research into the unique histories of East Texas and to educate and engage others in the effort.

More information about the ETHA is available at www.easttexashistorical.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

[Tell us](#) how this article helped you.

[Provide feedback](#) to ETHA.

Recommended Citation

(2021) "ETHJ Vol-59," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 59: Iss. 1, Article 1.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol59/iss1/1>

This Full Issue has been accepted for inclusion in the East Texas Historical Journal by an authorized editor of ETHA and SFA. This Full Issue is brought to you free and open access by the Journals at SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu.

F
381
.E2

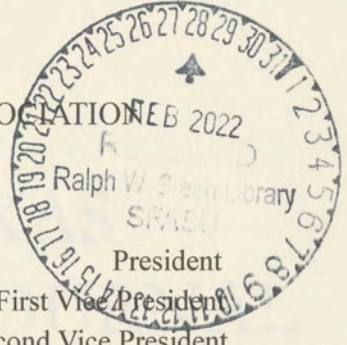
ast Texas



Historical Journal

EAST TEXAS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

2021-2022 OFFICERS



Mary Jo O'Rear
Jeffrey Littlejohn
Deborah Liles
Christal Gill

President
First Vice President
Second Vice President
Secretary/Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Kyle Childress	Nacogdoches	2021
Carol Taylor	Greenville	2021
Dan Utley	Pflugerville	2021
Jonathan Gerland	Diboll	2022
Mari Nicholson-Preuss	Houston	2022
Keith Volanto	Dallas	2022
Donaly Brice	Lockhart	2023
Michael Phillips	Plano	2023
Mark Stanley	Farris	2023
Gwendolyn Lawe	Dallas	Past President
Heather Green Wooten	Kemah	Past President

EDITORIAL BOARD

Brandon Jett	Gainesville, FL
John Caraway	Clyde, TX
Perky Beisel	Nacogdoches, TX
Leland Turner	Wichita Falls, TX
Meredith May	Kilgore, TX
Gary Pinkerton	Houston, TX
Rachel Gunter	Plano, TX



EAST TEXAS HISTORICAL JOURNAL

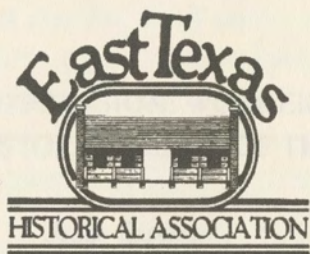
MEMBERSHIP

- INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS pay \$100 annually
- NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONAL pay \$50 annually
- LIFE MEMBERS pay \$400 or more
- PATRONS pay \$90 annually
- BENEFACTORS pay \$75 annually
- FAMILY MEMBERS pay \$55 annually
- REGULAR MEMBERS pay \$45 annually
- K-12 EDUCATORS pay \$20 annually
- STUDENT MEMBERS pay \$15 annually

Journals \$10.50 per copy
Address: P.O. Box 6223
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, TX 75962-6223
936-468-2407
sosebeem@sfasu.edu

Vol. 59 Spring 2021 Number 1 & 2

EAST TEXAS HISTORICAL JOURNAL



www.easttexashistorical.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EDITOR
M. Scott Sosebee

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
John R. Lundberg

VOLUME 59 NUMBER 1 and 2
Spring/Fall 2021

CONTENTS

GOLDEN MOMENTS AND HIDDEN HEROES: JOHN CLARK, DAVID MEDLOCK, AND THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

☞ 7 *Mary Jo O'Rear*

THE ROOTS OF OPPRESSION: WORKER EXPLOITATION, SURVIVAL, AND STORYTELLING OF THE BRACERO PROGRAM

☞ 21 *Jesus Esparza*

CAVALCADE OF TEXAS: THE 1936 CENTENNIAL'S GRAND PAGEANT

☞ 47 *Keith Volanto*

TEXAS ARTISTS JOIN THE SOIL SOLDIERS: THREE TEXAS ARTISTS IN CCC CAMPS DURING THE NEW DEAL

☞ 58 *Victoria Cummins*

**Golden Moments and Hidden Heroes:
John Clark, David Medlock, and the
Southern Baptist Convention**

MARY JO O'REAR

Golden moments are life-brightening events: receiving an award, seeing a loved one graduate, watching a grandchild carrying an armload of books to a check-out counter. They come rarely, both personally and professionally, and often are unnoted. But, three such incidents occurred in the story of East Texas religion, which merit relating.

The time was late spring 1844, and the country was humming with tension. Women were speaking out publicly as part of anti-slavery gatherings; Senators were debating the annexation of Texas, all too aware that the sitting President might render their decision pointless; party activists were marshaling their energy, determined to make Manifest Destiny the keynote of the upcoming Presidential election. And, in the commodious Green Street Church in New York City, Methodist leaders from across the nation were debating the Christianity of slavery. The question actually framed was whether the Reverend James Osgood Andrew, first native Georgian to be elected bishop in the church, should be allowed to keep his post. But its ramifications extended far beyond the rudiments of a single man losing his job; the question harkened back to the very roots of Methodism.

Founded in the 1700s originally as an offshoot of Anglicanism, Methodism was a religion of the people, embracing “miners, farmers, day laborers, and others who found themselves less than welcome” inside established churches. Spreading to colonial America, it proselytized among townspeople and country families alike, enthraling hearts with the promise that God was available for all who professed Christ. Strong among its characteristics was its bishopric, a post like that of superintendent, exercising authority over specific areas and chosen by the general conference. To be appointed a bishop was to

Mary Jo O'Rear was the President of the East Texas Historical Association from 2019-2021. This was her Presidential Address.

assume a position of honor and esteem not accorded most. Consequently, it was of some note that a personage like James Andrew, elected as such some twelve years earlier, was now fighting for his office.

At issue was Andrew's ownership of slaves in an era of abolitionism. Aroused by the fervor of the early century's Second Great Awakening, reformers had massed to correct alcohol abuse, asylum depredations, and prison atrocities. But the most prominent had addressed slavery itself, among them William Lloyd Garrison, who condemned the United States Constitution and its Three/fifths Compromise as "an agreement with Hell." It was Frederick Douglass, however, in his lecture tours and later writings, who spoke the sentiment most echoed in the hearts of many Methodist ministers: "I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land." Was not slavery, as others asserted, "an awful breach of the Divine Law?"

The question had been looming for some time. Unwilling to demand outright abolition, for fear of dissolving a church just recovering from two break-ups in less than twenty years, the conferences had quietly accepted lay slaveowners. But the idea of a Methodist bishop owning humans was against established practice; tradition banned it. Even when Andrew was consecrated, years earlier, he owned none, the ones he had now only inherited through marriage. So when the resolution was submitted to the 1844 General Conference—"that' Bishop Andrew desist from the exercise of his official duties during the time that he shall remain in any manner connected with the institution of slavery"—delegates knew there would be conflict. The view that heaven approved slavery as a regrettable but humane action had been spreading among religions in the South for decades. "God... established slavery by law...[and]...Jesus... recognized it as a relationship established...by his Father," one Virginia minister asserted. A South Carolinian agreed: "The right of holding slaves is clearly established in the Holy Scriptures." Another from South Carolina concurred: "It is not a moral evil...it is a merciful visitation and...is by Divine Appointment." The question of Christian slavery had become as regional as it was doctrinal.

Consequently, as tempers frayed and anger mounted during the days preceding a vote on the resolution, one thing was taken for granted: that delegates from the Methodist South would be united in the fight to preserve their bishop's right to own slaves.

But they weren't—one demurred, John Clark, an established leader in the church in Texas and “a favorite with both preachers and people.” Born in New York state and licensed to minister while still a teenager, Clark went to his first General Conference in 1832, the same one that appointed Andrew bishop. It was there that he requested he be sent to proselytize among Native Americans just emerging from the horrors of the Black Hawk War. Nine years later, with his wife and young son, he set his sights on the emergent Republic of Texas, “a territory, large and productive, which, by its spiritual condition, called for laborers.” So there they traveled, with renowned Bishop Thomas Asbury Morris, in early 1843. As Presiding Elder, Clark's responsibilities were vast, “including nearly all the settlements then established on the Colorado, Brazos and Guadalupe Rivers.” And people grew to love him, considering him a “man sent by God to help the church.” For just as he had held the Chippawa in highest respect, so he held Texans, African and White, preaching to both groups generously during the many camp meetings held in his district. Eventually, “having the utmost confidence in his piety and good judgement,” fellow ministers elected him delegate to the General Conference in 1844. Now Clark stood at a crossroads.

He knew that Andrew had come into his bondspeople by inheritance; he had not purchased them. Moreover, he was fully aware of the anguish the beleaguered prelate was experiencing. “Bishop Andrew...could not bear the thought of being the occasion of a division within the Church,” the cleric remembered later. “He felt inclined to resign his office.”

But he hadn't, and Clark, who strongly believed in the “policy... distinctly maintained... since 1784,” that “the episcopacy [be] free from slaveholding,” stood alone among the delegates of the South. His vote would not be decisive. The abolitionist contingent outnumbered the slavery contingent almost two to one in the Conference. But his vote would cement his relationship with the people of Texas whom he had grown to love, or it would destroy it.

Initially, he tried to abstain but was refused. "There was therefore no alternative left to me," he admitted later, "but to either stand up to the question, and vote as my conscience dictated; or, in contempt of the body, retire, like a coward behind the bar. This I could not do." So John Clark voted to remove Bishop Andrew from his episcopal duties.

Clark never returned to Texas, dying later in Illinois, ministering to congregants during a cholera epidemic. His vote did not go unnoted within the state, however. For the next few years, Quarterly Conferences and religious journals abounded with castigations, insults, and accusations against his name. At the same time, the Methodist Episcopal church split yet again, and in 1846, the first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was called to order in Petersburg, Virginia, Bishop John Osgood Andrew presiding. Just months earlier, the Texas Methodist Conference had met in Houston. "All the members declared their adherence to the Southern Church," the secretary wrote and recorded the following statement, "The unanimous opinion of the Conference is that the church has nothing to do with the relation that exists between slave and master." The one man who would have disagreed was gone, but his memory lingered: the moment when John Clark chose to vote his conscience, and never "retire, like a coward, behind the bar."

It had been a long trek. David Medlock was already forty-one years old when the Stroud brothers decided to leave their Georgia farms and transport slaves, livestock, and equipment eight hundred miles to Texas. Their reasons were sound: the area had just recently declared itself a Republic so was free of entrenched politics, its land was famously fertile, a far cry from depleted fields around Pike County, and the ownership of bondsmen was a given. Some people even felt the whole reason for Texans freeing themselves from Mexico was their belief in the peculiar institution of slavery.

Reasons, however, made little difference to Medlock. Getting the household together and keeping mules, wagons, kinsmen, and baggage safe as the caravans rolled westward were his concerns. That and keeping his family secure—his wife Betty had already given birth to

several children, including young David Junior and his twin brother John. Already strapping youths of twelve, they had proven their worth to their owner. Now they would be even more valuable as Ethan Stroud set up a new home in Robertson County. A few years later, they were all on the move again—farther north—to become part of more extensive Stroud holdings near the Navasota River. One of Ethan's sons, Logan, held land about a mile from its banks, and the fields of another, Napoleon, were even closer to the river. Other family members owned plantations close by. It was to them that David had seen his children, mostly grown, be sold, his namesake, David Jr., already close to the age his father had been when moved from Georgia to Texas. Now working the estate of Memory Stroud, David Jr. had his own family to preserve, a family that had seen as little change in their lives as his Dad had seen in his, once the move to Texas had been made. For the Strouds were unyielding masters, as little to embrace new ideas as they were to free their bondsmen.

For them, as for most slaveowners along the Navasota, the right to control the very essence of their charges—their bodies, their minds, their spirit—was considered inherent. Consequently, few actions of the Medlocks or any of their cousins and kin were free from oversight, either by a Stroud or an overseer. Even time after work or running errands was monitored. But time after lights out wasn't, and it was then, periodically and only after ensuring that none but a secure few would know, that the Medlocks and Connors and Cottons and Simpsons met in prayer.

They came together at night, "in the shadows of their cabins," creeping quietly but eager to meet. For their owners, unlike many others in Texas, "objected to the slaves worshipping God." So they huddled in the dark, turning an empty iron pot "down with a stone on one side," to absorb the myriad pleas for deliverance they addressed to heaven. Songs they sang, as well, releasing anguished pain into hymns of hope. And some among them preached, but it was a hurried preachment, muffled into the pot and hastened with the fear of discovery. For discovery brought flaying or being set upon by dogs.

So the Strouds maintained their unchanging institution, and so Medlock and his kin endured—until one late June morning, 1865. Rumors had spread for weeks, as word of one rebel general after another surrendering to the Yanks mixed with horror tales from deserters skulking home. But rumors were cheap and had plagued the Black community for all the near five years of war. It was not until they were called together in the yard of the Logan Stroud plantation and heard the words, “The people of Texas are informed, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free,” that realization struck. Freedom, freedom! No more bondage! No more Missy! No more Masser! No more work from “can see to can’t!” No more whippings! No more hell.

Ecstasy! Banjos twanged as couples danced and women laughed and children shouted. Grown men wept and jubilation reigned. Release! Liberty! Deliverance!

But as energy began to flag, and reality set in, some wondered. What now? What was to happen to them? Were they to stay with the Strouds, who had made sure everyone knew that, if they left, they were to “empty the straw from their pillows and mattresses and take to the woods. [L]ike dumb driven cattle,” they would be.

But to stay? In these hated fields? With these hated memories? Faces turned somber, voices lowered, laughing stopped. People began to turn, to look at each other, to fear.

And then, from above, a voice sang out. They turned, looked, and saw David Medlock, so old now he had been nick-named “Grandpa Davey,” the same David Medlock who had led them and their parents from Georgia to Texas. The old man had hoisted three planks across the corner of a spilt-rail fence and with the help of a friend had lifted himself atop it. There he raised his hands to his people, most of them his own progeny and all of whom he loved, and he preached. Out in the open, in God’s bright light, free of any restraint or of any reprisal, in the airy goodness of a Texas summer, he preached as no one had ever before. He spoke of salvation, he spoke of gratitude, and he spoke of grace. He spoke of responsibility and of obligation and of survival. He called to heaven with his people, and he led them in joyous,

spontaneous peals of song and praise. And he brought them hope. In a world so drastically different from that they had awakened to that very morning, he gave them a future.

They grabbed it. Many stayed to work with the Strouds. Others left in a few years, some to establish communities like Springfield or Rocky Crossing, others to become militant ministers, defending their people “with a shotgun leaning against [the] pulpit.” David Medlock Jr. became a Congressman, serving three years in the Twelfth Texas legislature where he worked to stabilize the finances of Limestone County.

They survived and they grew and they flourished, spreading “into all sections of this county and others,” a historian wrote. And they owed it all to the man who “kept them from destruction” and, in that glorious moment of freedom, gave them hope: David Medlock.

The 1891 convocation of the Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, had come close to being a disaster. The building—largest in the city—was so packed a speaker had to be boosted through a window and handed through the crowd to make it to the podium. Attendees were frustrated—too many issues had been thrown upon the floor for majority approval and too little time had been given to study them. Even the location was a problem. Birmingham was easily accessible for attendees from states like Alabama and Georgia and Tennessee, but congregations from north Louisiana, rural Texas, and east Florida had a hard time financing messengers that far. How could an entity practicing consensual opinion on the interpretation of the Scriptures shut out so many contributors?

And how dare it? For nearly fifty years the Southern Baptist Convention had fostered autonomy of its congregations and dedication to their institutions. That indeed had been the reason it had removed itself from the General Missionary Convention in 1845—so that owning slaves would not prohibit members from spreading the Word. Like Methodists of the same region, Baptists considered slavery to be an issue only between master and bondsman. They even rejoiced when separation from the North was complete. “There is a pleasing degree of unity.... now that “the southern brethren are all slave-holders,” one

wrote." But most especially, they gloried in Biblical approval: did not Moses detail the manner of branding slaves and specify whom to enslave? Was it not Paul who urged bondsmen to "obey your masters... with fear and trembling," and Peter, who urged them to "be subject... not only to the good and moderate [masters] but also to the severe." Surely such was "Divine Law;" slavery was not "an immoral action."

Whether it was a legal action was settled by Lee's surrender at Appomattox, and forty-six years later, the only thing appearing relevant to the Southern Baptist Convention was its surging growth. Its original reason for existence—the slavery question—was pushed behind the curtain along with slavery's aftermath, racial discrimination. For decades, their wraith-like presence quietly haunted Southern Baptists. As they did other denominations.

In the midst of bloody race riots in Memphis and New Orleans during the year following Lee's surrender, no white church publicly rose to champion the woman burned to death or the veterans beaten and killed. Nor did any regional congregation seem to protest murders of Blacks in Texas that year, and in late 1868, when sheet-wearing marauders began pulling freedmen from their homes and hanging them, no established minister or preacher appeared to intervene. As the power of white militants grew, federal officers banned the wearing of masks and newspaper editors anguished. But religious leaders stayed quiet, and Southern Baptist messengers looked to the re-organization of their Convention.

There they devised a system of decision making that guaranteed congregants equitable representation while preserving majority rule. Pivotal were the numerous commissions encompassing Baptist life. Throughout the year (sometimes longer), these committees would hear motions, debate them, dismiss those inappropriate, support those viable, and then present them, in resolution form, to the Annual Conference, to be voted on, yea or nay. Those approved emerged, never as edicts nor creed, but as consensual statements of guidance.

And it was one of those commissions that ultimately released the twin wraiths from behind the curtain, but it took a while. Formed immediately preceding World War I, in the midst of torture hangings

in Georgia and burnings at the stake in Tyler, the Social Service Commission devoted itself to educating its constituency on “the evils of...liquor...motion picture[s]...and race-track gambling.” As mobs torched Blacks in Florida and Ku Kluxers marched in Galveston, it worried about obscene literature and divorce. While race riots raged during the twenties, thirties, and forties—and religious groups put on blackface to raise money—it deplored lack of attendance at Sunday services.

Until the mid-fifties. By that time, the Commission had become the Christian Life Commission, and when the Supreme Court ruled that “separate but equal” violated the 14th amendment, it took a slight stand: “Resolved: that we urge Christian statesmen...to use their leadership... toward...proclaiming...a democracy that will commend freedom for all peoples.” It was not much, and it certainly did not mitigate veterans being forced to the back of the bus, or colleges refusing admission, or students turned away from public libraries, or schools run in intolerable conditions. Nor did it address the violence: four little girls bombed in Birmingham, three Freedom Riders murdered in Mississippi, and children ravaged by dogs in Alabama.

Then fellow Baptist Martin Luther King was assassinated in Memphis, and Southern Convention leaders spoke up: “We are a nation that declares the equality and rights of persons irrespective of race. Yet...we have condoned prejudices which have damaged the personhood of blacks and whites alike....As Southern Baptists...[w]e therefore declare our commitment...to... respect every individual as a person possessing inherent dignity and worth...and...refuse to be a party to...racism or violence or mob action.” The resolution passed, although nearly thirty percent of the Conference opposed it.

It took another generation—of integrated seminaries, of integrated congregations, and of integrated speakers—for the Convention to bring its hidden wraiths of slavery and racism out from behind the curtain and acknowledge them. But it did. In 1995, on a bright June morning in Atlanta’s Georgia Dome, the head of the Christian Life Commission read the following resolution: “Whereas many of our Southern Baptist forbears defended the right to own slaves, and either participated in,

supported, or acquiesced in the particularly inhumane nature of... slavery; and whereas in later years Southern Baptists failed, in many cases, to support, and in some cases opposed legitimate initiatives to secure the civil rights of African Americans; and whereas Racism has led to discrimination, oppression, injustice, and violence...throughout the history of our nation...[B]e it resolved that we...repudiate... slavery...that we apologize to all African Americans for condoning racism...and that we ask forgiveness."

And thus, with the overwhelming approval of twenty thousand delegates in the largest domed stadium of its kind, the Southern Baptist Convention admitted it was wrong.

Monumental moments vary—they may be a stand on conscience by a loner, a stand on a fence by a septuagenarian, or a stand before mankind and the world in a sports arena. But each in its own way defined a moment in time that was pivotal to the people involved, and golden for humanity.

Endnotes

1 “A Brief History of the People of the United Methodist Church,” *Interpreter Magazine*, <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/a-brief-history-of-the-people-of-the-united-methodist-church> accessed May 10, 2018.

2 Gary B. Nash and Julie Roy Jeffrey, Eds., *The American People: Creating a Nation and Society* (New York: Pearson Longman: 2008), 377; Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave. Written by “Himself,”* Electronic Edition (Chapel Hill, NC: National Endowment for the Humanities: Documenting the American South, Beginnings to 1920. 1999), 118 <https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/douglass/douglass.html> accessed April 1, 2020; Robert A. Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People, 1607-1972* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974), 156.

3 “A Brief History of the People of the United Methodist Church” [controversy]; E.L. Shettles, “The Clark-Wells Controversy,” *Texas Methodist Historical Quarterly*, I (January 1910), 265, 257; “John Osgood Andrew,” *Oxford Historical Society* www.oxfordhistoricalsociety.org/james-osgood-andrew.html accessed May 11, 2018; Thornton Stringfellow, “The Bible Argument: Or, Slavery in the Light of divine Revelation,” in E. N. Elliott, ed., *Cotton Is King and the Pro-Slavery Arguments*, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?sm-tID=3&psid=280 accessed April 2, 2020; Richard Furman, “Exposition of the views of the Baptists relative to the coloured population in the United States in communication to the Governor of South-Carolina (1838),” at <http://www.furman.edu/>, quoted in *Religious Tolerance* http://www.religioustolerance.org/chr_slav.htm accessed April 2, 2020; J.C. Postell, quoted in *The Bulwarks of American Slavery by An American* (Newburyport: Charles Whipple, 1842) 18.

4 B. M. Hall, *The Life of Rev. John Clark* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1856), 224, 198, 219, 222, 255-256; Marilyn McAdams Sibley, “Bishop Morris in Texas,” *East Texas Historical Journal III* (October 1965), 149-150.

5 Settles, “The Clark-Wells Controversy,” 264.

6 Settles, “The Clark-Wells Controversy,” 265.

7 Settles, “The Clark-Wells Controversy,” 265; Hall, *The Life of Rev. John Clark*, 224.

8 Hall, *The Life of Rev. John Clark*, 257, 229-230; Settles, “The Clark-Wells Controversy,” 258-259, 261-262, 270-271; “John Osgood Andrew”

[Petersburg, Va]; Phelan Mecum, *Early Methodism in Texas: A History: 1817-1866* (Nashville: Lamar and Burton, 1924), 254.

9 Tony L. Carr, "David 'Grandpa Davey' Medlock, Sr." *Find a Grave* <http://www.findagrave.com/memorial/144124934/David-medlock> accessed April 9, 2020; L. Patrick Hughes, "Many a Cause, Many a Conflict: the Texas Revolution" <https://www.austincc.edu/lpatrick/his1693/causes.html> accessed April 10, 2020; Andrew J. Torget, *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 139-141.

10 Paul M. Lucko, "Medlock, David, Jr.," rev. by Anthony L. Carr, *Handbook of Texas Online* <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmeqg> accessed April 9, 2020; Carr, "David 'Grandpa Davey' Medlock, Sr."

11 Ron Tyler and Lawrence R. Murphy, eds., *The Slave Narratives of Texas* (Austin: State House Press, 1997), 54-55.

12 Walter f. Cotton, *History of Negroes of Limestone County from 1860 to 1930* (Mexia, TX: January 1939, re-released Groesbeck, TX: Bond Bookstore, 2004), 3-4.

13 Trevor K. Plante, "Ending the Bloodshed: The Last Surrenders of the Civil War, *Prologue Magazine*, National Archives (Spring 2015), <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2015/spring/cw-surrenders.html>; "This Juneteenth, celebrate Freedom Day at an Interior Site," U.S. Department of the Interior, <https://www.doi.gov/blog/this-juneteenth-celebrate-freedom-day-interior-site> accessed June 17, 2021; Thad Sitton and Dan K. Utley, *From Can See to Can't: Texas Cotton Farmers on the Southern Prairies* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997), cover.

14 Cotton, *History of Negroes of Limestone County from 1860 to 1939*, 11.

15 Cotton, *History of Negroes of Limestone County from 1860 to 1939*, 11.

16 Cotton, *History of Negroes of Limestone County from 1860 to 1939*, 11-13; Lucko, "Medlock, David, Jr."

17 Cotton, *History of Negroes of Limestone County from 1860 to 1939*, 15.

18 Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and its People*, 406, 398.

19 Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and its People*, 166-168; Lucius Bowles quoted by Frederick Douglass, "Baptists, Congregationalists, the Free Church, and Slavery: An Address Delivered in Belfast, Ireland, December 23, 1845," from The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition <https://glc.yale.edu/baptists-congregationalists-free-church-and-slavery> accessed June 11, 2018; Exodus 21:6, Leviticus 24:44; Ephesians 6:5; 1 Peter 2:18; Furman, "Exposition of the views of the Baptists relative to the coloured population in the United States in communication to the Governor of South-Carolina (1838);" Richard Furman, Baptist State Convention: "Letter to South Carolina Governor," *Christian Slavery: Bad News about Christianity*, www.bad-newsaboutchristianity.com/gaa_slavery.htm accessed May 14, 2019.

20 Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and its People*, 317.

21 "The Memphis Riots," *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin*, May 8, 1866, May 18, 1866; "The New Orleans Riots," *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin*, August 1, 1866, August 8, 1866; "The City," January 2, 1866, and "Texas Items," January 30, 1866, both from *Houston Tri-Weekly Telegram*; "Local Intelligence," *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin*, June 9, 1866; "Local Intelligence," October 4, 1868, "The Situation at Jefferson, August 5, 1868, both from *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin*; No title, October 22, 1868; "What Next," October 24, 1868; no title, October 30, 1868; "Specials," November 7, 1868, all in *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin*; Manie White Johnson, *The Colfax Riot of April 1873* (thesis, written about 1929) copy in author's possession; "Important Order," October 20, 1868 and "Texas Items," December 15, 1868, both from *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin*; Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People*, 414.

22 "SBC Executive Committee, boards, commission, seminaries, committee nominees announced," *The Baptist Press*, April 22, 2019 <http://www.bpnews.net/52773/sbc-executive-committee-boards-commission-seminaries-committee-nominees-announced> accessed April 17, 2020; Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and its People*, 406-409, 460.

23 Gary B. Borders, *A Hanging in Nacogdoches: Murder, Race, Politics and Polemics in Texas's Oldest Town, 1870-1916* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006) 58-63, 134-135; "Florida Negro is Burned for Attack on White Woman," March 16, 1919, "K.K.K. in Galveston to Hold Mardi Gras Soon," February 20, 1919, both from *Corpus Christi Caller*; "Four Injured in Race Riots in Longview," July 12, 1919; "Martial Law is Declared in Longview," July 14, 1919, both from *Corpus Christi Caller*; Bruce Glasrud, ed., *Anti-Black Violence in Twentieth-Century Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press,

2015), 95-107, 108-113, 116-130; "Knights of Columbus Celebrate Building Fund Minstrels," *Corpus Christi Caller*, March 2, 1919; Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People*, 440.

24 Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People*, 415; Norman Delaney, *An Oral History of the Naval Air Station Corpus Christi During World War II* (Corpus Christi, TX: Department of Defense: Project 1104, 1995), 90-91; "Negroes Enter Guilty Pleas in Library Case," May 3, 1960; "The Threat of Racial Discord," April 28, 1960, both from *The Shreveport Journal*; "Negro Group Warned After Library Entry," *The Shreveport Times*, April 12, 1961; "This Day in History: Four black schoolgirls killed in Birmingham church bombing," *History* (A&E Television Networks, February 9, 2010) <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/four-black-schoolgirls-killed-in-birmingham> accessed May 1, 2020; "This Day in History: The KKK kills three civil rights activists," *History* (A&E Television Networks, November 13, 2009), <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-kkk-kills-three-civil-rights-activists> accessed May 1, 2020; Corky Siemaszko, "Birmingham erupted into chaos in 1963 as battle for civil rights exploded in the South," *New York Daily News* <https://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/birmingham-erupted-chaos-1963-battle-civil-rights-exploded-south-article-1.1071793> accessed May 1, 2020.

25 "A Statement Concerning the Crisis in Our Nation," http://baptiststudiesonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/08/a-statement-concerning-the-crisis-in-our-nation-_1968_.pdf accessed April 20, 2020; Baker, *The Southern Baptist Convention and Its People*, 415.

26 David Roach, "Ethnic Participation in Convention Ministry: A Historical Perspective on the Election of Fred Luter," *Racial Reconciliation* <http://www.sbclife.net/article/2135/ethnic-participation-in-convention-ministry-a-historical-perspective-on-the-election-of-fred-luter> accessed March 27, 2020; "Resolution On Racial Reconciliation On the 150th Anniversary Of The Southern Baptist Convention, Atlanta, Georgia-1995," *Southern Baptist Convention*, www.sbc.net/RESolutions accessed February 5, 2020; Gary Carter, "An Apology for Racism," *The Washington Post* <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/06/21/an-apology-for-racism/25ce442e-8733-47de-85b1-Odd7c7fd62ec/> accessed February 5, 2020.

**The Roots of Oppression:
Worker Exploitation, Survival, and Storytelling of the
Bracero Program**

JESSE ESPARZA

In 2009, the National Museum of American History launched an exhibit called “Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program, 1942-1964”, the largest bilingual exhibit to date dedicated to examining the experiences of bracero workers.¹ With over 700 personal testimonies and countless of photographs that illustrate the experiences of its participants, this exhibit has contributed significantly to erasing the “historical amnesia” regarding the program, its participants, and their families. Moreover, the exhibit has also encouraged others to uncover more of this history in very creative ways. One of the earliest works to deal with the Bracero Program is Ernesto Galarza’s 1964 analysis *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story*, in which he offers an examination of gaps between workers and the agricultural firms whom Galarza argues profited the most from inexpensive Mexican labor.² More recently, there is a more sizable body of scholarship on this topic with several works serving as critical examinations of the program including Lori Flores’ *Grounds for Dreaming*, Mireya Loza’s *Defiant Braceros*, and Neil Foley’s *Mexicans in the Making of America*. While these works and the efforts of others have illuminated an otherwise obscured moment in our national and bi-national history, much work remains to be done to fully understand the experiences of Braceros and acknowledge their contributions to building the nation because while some see and recognize the historical significance of the Bracero Program, many do not.

Some even remained unconvinced that the Bracero Program impacted the United States and Mexico or that the experiences of workers and their families warrant further examination.

Jesse Esparza is an Assistant Professor of History at Texas Southern University

As part of its efforts to connect in genuine ways to the Latino community, in 2016, the Holocaust Museum in Houston, Texas housed a portion of the Bittersweet Harvest exhibit for several months and participated in a variety of educational programming surrounding this historical period. The next year, the Museum partnered with faculty from the Department of History at Texas Southern University and launched a small oral history project aimed at capturing the experiences of Bracero workers and their families. Coming out of this partnership was a venture called the Houston Bracero Oral History Project which captured seven interviews between January and May of 2017 of Braceros, their descendants, and those who worked alongside them. The interviews, currently housed at a local repository, vary in length and cover a variety of topics from the type of work they performed to the kinds of foods, medical care, and housing they received. Some of these interviews provide cause for celebration, most, however, offer a glimpse of the misery experienced by workers and their families. Surprisingly, they all ended on a sense of hope and left this viewer appreciating the strength and resolution on the part of workers and their families for enduring those kinds of hardships. Houston was chosen as the site for this project because it became the home of many Braceros either after their contracts expired or following the program's termination as many would locate and settle throughout the city attracted by the abundant job opportunities Houston experienced under a post-war economy. Moreover, the goal of the oral history project was to conduct, preserve, and make available the stories of workers and their families from the Houston area to compliment the Bittersweet Harvest exhibit housed at the Holocaust Museum. This oral history project, while small in scale, certainly played a role in uncovering more of the history of the Bracero Program and for students, teachers, and community folk in Houston, it shed light on an otherwise hidden history.

A closer examination of these oral histories, however, reveal what others have already concluded about the Bracero Program, that it was one of the largest, most corrupted enterprises which took advantage of workers. While the Bracero Program contributed significantly in numerous ways to the nation, particularly during the World War II years,

it quickly became an unfair industry that benefitted growers, agricultural firms, other businesses like the railroad and timber industries, as well as both the Mexican and American economies. In *Grounds for Dreaming*, historian Lori Flores makes the case that through the Bracero Program both Mexico and the United States were able to generate an incredible amount of wealth off the backs of foreign laborers who became to the most poverty-stricken working-class group in the country. Mireya Loza in *Defiant Braceros*, echoes similar sentiments making the case that Braceros had taken up the mantle as “beasts of burden.”⁴ In other words, Braceros had become the new sharecroppers of America, and like those before them, they not only toiled in the fields from “sun up to sun down” but lived with entrenched racial discrimination and severe poverty. The Bracero experience, unfortunately, is not unique and certainly not new but is instead part of a historical and systemically corrupt method of treatment of agricultural workers in the United States which often fell directly in line with the political and racial dynamics for sustaining an underpaid workforce. The Bracero Program, therefore, is but a moment in a long history of worker exploitation, racialized workspaces, and inexcusable atrocities committed against poor people.^v

This essay, therefore, intends to craft a brief narrative of the Bracero Program using oral histories of workers, their families, and of those who worked alongside them from the Houston area. While there exists a wealth of seminal works that deal with the Bracero Program, much of the literature favors a West Coast analysis. A goal of this essay, therefore, is to reposition Texas in general and Houston specifically within the story of the Bracero Program to offer a more balanced history of this period as indeed Braceros lived, worked, and resettled everywhere throughout the United States. Moreover, using oral histories of ex-Braceros living along the Gulf Coast is a sound approach for ensuring that history of the Bracero Program is recorded, preserved, and made available to students, teachers, and researchers. While the challenges of using oral histories as it relates to memory and accuracy can be frustrating, they remain, nevertheless, excellent sources for uncovering histories too often overlooked. Furthermore, in telling these

stories, Braceros, their families, and those that worked alongside them firmly believe that their history is worth sharing and that they, like anyone else, "should be recognized as genuine...history makers."⁶

World War II and Opening the U.S. Border:

During World War II, the U.S. underwent major migration patterns as agricultural workers, and rural folk left the fields and either went to war abroad or to urban centers to work in war-related industries. These migration patterns resulted in massive agricultural labor shortages and eventually into food shortages as well. In response to this, the governments of Mexico and the United States developed a deal called the Bracero Program, a binational agreement between both countries started in 1942 designed to bring workers from Mexico to the U.S. to work mostly on farms during the war.⁷ Officially designated as the Mexican Farm Labor Program Agreement, it technically formalized a system of recruitment that had been in place informally for many years. It would also be established strictly as a war-time measure but found itself renewed several more times long after the WWII concluded.⁸ As a result, between 1942 and 1964 some 4.6 million labor contracts were issued to at least 2 million Mexican men that allowed them to enter the U.S. as temporary guest workers.⁹ For its part, Mexico had an essential role in developing this program. Looking to end its recession, Mexico hoped that by entering into this agreement with the U.S. that it could get American currency pumped back into the economy by way of remittances to stimulate it.¹⁰ So while this was indeed a war-time measure for Mexico, it was also an opportunity to cash in on a lucrative business venture.

Braceros would come from every state in Mexico using, at times, very creative methods for making it into the U.S. Scholar Mireya Loza in *Defiant Braceros* informs us that Braceros took out loans, cashed in heirlooms, or sold what they could to help pay for their way to the north.¹¹ They occupied mostly agricultural fields but also found work in the mining and construction industries as well.¹² The agreement also included a Railroad Program which placed Braceros as early as 1943 in places like Ohio, Illinois, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.¹³

Contracts for these jobs went exclusively to men most of which were typically younger; between 16 to 20 years of age. Policarpo Escalante from Baja California, for example, would be processed into the Bracero Program at a very young age in 1958 finding work in South Texas and Arkansas harvesting cotton, in California harvesting tomatoes and lettuce, in Idaho harvesting potatoes, and in Wisconsin working with apples and cucumbers.¹⁴ Natividad Rodriguez, of Lagunillas, Michoacán, was first contacted as a Bracero in April of 1959 when he was just 26 years old.¹⁵ Eduardo Lopez also out of Michoacán was contracted to work as a young man in San Diego, California picking tomatoes, cucumbers, and peaches.¹⁶ Daniel Galvan was about 15 years old when news of the Bracero came to his hometown of Dolores Hidalgo, Guanajuato.¹⁷ To qualify also, these men had to be in “good standing,” that is, they must not have had any prison time. They also had to prove that they were field workers or that they can withstand the rigors of agricultural labor such as working long and exhaustive hours. Daniel Galvan, for example, remembers having to work in pumpkin patches for at least 8 hours a day.¹⁸ Moreover, field workers also had to prove they could endure using a tool called “el cortito” which was a short-handled hoe preferred by growers but despised by workers since it forced them to bend over for long periods causing much trauma on the body.¹⁹

Braceros would secure employment in some thirty states within the U.S., but the region which offered higher wages were states along the Pacific Coast. In the Pacific Northwest, for example, Braceros could earn an hourly wage of \$1.21 compared to hourly wages of \$0.70 in the Texas-Louisiana region, \$0.61 in the Florida-Georgia-Carolinas region, and a mere \$0.53 in the Mississippi-Alabama-Tennessee region.²⁰ However, not all U.S. states participated in this program. Texas, for example, was blacklisted by Mexico because of issues regarding blatant discrimination against ethnic-Mexicans and did not qualify for participation.²¹ It would not be until 1948, after several attempts by state legislators to convince Mexican officials that Texas would treat Bracero workers justly, did the state join in on the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement Program.²² To participate in the program, growers, or any associations that they might have belonged to within a particular state,

banned together to petition the U.S. Department of Labor with the number of workers they needed for a season or harvest. This figure then would get filtered throughout Mexico to the registration sites where officials there attempted to fill the order. States could do this as often as they needed and could request as many men as they needed, but each state had a quota, and so that figure was often regulated. Once processed and in the U.S., Braceros were then contracted to work for those associations or growers for a set period, usually between 6 to 12 to sometimes 18 months. Contracts could be renewed once expired, but by law, all Braceros had to return to Mexico to be reprocessed after 18 months of living and working in the U.S. Contracts, however, were not easy to secure. Daniel Galvan recalls being sent home once his expired and finding it challenging to get another.²³ That was how it was at times. There was no consistency in assigning worker contracts.

Also inconsistent was the pay men received. There was no standard rate of wages set within the program, and while Mexico did include language that guaranteed Braceros get paid wages comparable to native-born workers, that was far from reality. Instead, growers set the terms. Natividad Rodriguez, for example, recounts receiving \$0.15 for each box of oranges filled.²⁴ Eduardo Lopez had his worker's card hole punched when baskets of produce were full.²⁵ Hole punches showed his work and determined how he got paid.²⁶ Payment could go much lower especially during a bad harvest. Mr. Rodriguez once received a check for \$0.7 following a poor harvest; all the men did.²⁷ The only thing that seemed consistent regarding wages were that they were low, and that Braceros received less pay than native-born workers.²⁸

As part of the deal, Mexico insisted on several provisions that would ensure protection over the men while they lived and worked in the U.S. and inserted language about their rights. Provisions, to be enacted and enforced by the Immigration and Naturalization Service along with the U.S. Employment Service, included having agricultural firms finance their trip to the U.S., having access to medical services, or making sure Braceros received wages equal to native workers.²⁹ Other provisions called for providing these men with reasonable living and working accommodations and that they had access to public facilities

like restaurants, grocery stores, and theater centers without facing segregationist policies.³⁰ The purpose of these provisions was to shield Braceros from discriminatory and punitive laws. They proved ineffective, however, as Braceros still encountered exploitation, inadequate living conditions, zero access to health care, and various forms of discrimination such as working long, exhaustive, and back-breaking hours.³¹ They also resided in uninhabitable labor camps earning starving wages or denied wages altogether, and indeed, they could not frequent public places in the towns they worked.³² If braceros were injured, for example, they had to self-remedy.³³ Alternatively, when they were afforded necessities, it came with a cost. Natividad recollects getting a check upon arriving at a farm for buying extra clothing suitable for working in the fields but that was not free money or a bonus or anything like that; instead, growers would deduct the amount of the checks from what Braceros eventually earned once the work commenced.³⁴

Questions about exploitation within the program surfaced immediately. As early as 1943, Mexico placed a moratorium on the recruitment of additional workers after receiving reports of improper treatment of some 4,200 men.³⁵ Braceros rarely complained to growers, however, in fear of losing their jobs. Additionally, they did not have union representation that could offer any recourse, so complaints typically came from activists within the U.S. or by native-born workers. Policarpo Escalante adamantly refused to participate when some of the men tried to form a union. He wanted no part of that out of fear of losing his contract.³⁶ The language of the bi-national agreement prohibited Braceros from unionizing which made it extremely difficult for workers to get the rights and protections they were not only promised but entitled to receive. Braceros in the Railroad Program, on the other hand, did have unions and could unionize but it too was plagued with problems, specifically involving the payment of wages, providing safe working conditions, and equipping the men with adequate supplies for working in the "cold zones" of the American north.³⁷ So Braceros simply looked out for each other as best they could. Eduardo Lopez was known to "lookout" for the men. He made sure they got paid, or

that they had proper clothing like long sleeve shirts and hats to protect from the sun, and handkerchiefs also over their noses and mouths to prevent breathing in dust or poisonous sprays.³⁸ They did this for each other; they had to.

Still, this proved extremely frustrating especially since the U.S. government had already promised to fix race relations at home to preserve and improve race relations abroad specifically with Latin America. As an effort to win the war, the U.S. in the 1940s attempted to create hemispheric solidarity with Latin America against the Axis Powers through something known as the Good Neighbor Policy.³⁹ Through this policy, the U.S. promised to stop any unwarranted interventions into Latin America and promote instead strong economic and cultural reciprocity; especially with Mexico.⁴⁰ After the war, President Harry Truman, looking to maintain a robust post-war economy, launched the Fair Deal, a program that increased minimum wages, offered federal assistance in the construction homes, offered support for education and health care initiatives, and finally created more employment opportunities in public works.⁴¹ Moreover, Truman also reinstated the Fair Employment Practices Commission which was designed to end racial discrimination in the workplace.⁴² All of which were things that Braceros could undoubtedly have benefited from but none of those things proved to be true as Fair Deal policies were inadequately enforced and almost never applied to laborers in the agricultural industries. Very quickly leaders from Latin America saw the Good Neighbor Policy as a front for the U.S.'s real intentions; access to Latin America's raw materials and workers for its fields. What that meant was that Braceros were nothing more than tools necessary for large-scale wartime mobilization for the U.S. home front and a sustainable, exploitable labor force for a post-war economy.

The travel north for many of the men was unpleasant. The lucky ones arrived by train or by bus packing small edible items for sustenance.⁴³ Trains were bursting at the seams with hundreds upon hundreds of men; among them was Natividad Rodriguez who recalls having to sleep in the seats or on the floor during the journey.⁴⁴ All were eager to arrive at the processing and contracting Centers along Mexico's

northern border which could be jampacked with thousands of people. The Centers were a horrible experience. Under-staffed facilities translated into endless waiting periods for the men that had already been registered earlier at processing centers elsewhere throughout Mexico's interior. The wait for the men that did not sign up at a registration site but that just showed up looking to get their names on the list was even longer. Because of bureaucracy and massive backlogs, these men would wait for days, weeks, even months. Very quickly Centers were overrun by men with no jobs, no food, no money, and no place to stay. Some were able to find work near or around the Centers, but most did not and, so they just waited. The wait was arduous. Victor Escalante remembers that as a child in Piedras Negras, the sister town to Eagle Pass along the Texas-Mexican border and home to what was called the Bracero Center, that there were always long lines of men standing and waiting to get processed and approved for work.⁴⁵ As part of the approval process, Braceros underwent barbaric and intrusive medical examinations including being stripped naked, medically search, and fumigated with poisonous gasses like dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane or DDT; a toxic chemical used for cleaning.⁴⁶ The spraying of these gases spoke to larger implications regarding the race and biology of immigrants. The belief was that they brought diseases and that they had to be decontaminated upon arriving at the U.S. This was a very racist and nativist perception but one that permeated several government agencies including the U.S. Department of Labor. For their part, Braceros could have objected to the use of these chemicals but then be at risk of not getting the opportunity to work; so many Braceros stayed silent and were basically at the mercy of agents and the medical examinations.⁴⁷ The spraying of DDT also resulted in several medical complications for the men and many today still have post-traumatic stress disorder as a result.

The Bracero Center in Eagle Pass was one of the busiest centers along the U.S.-Mexican border.⁴⁸ So full was this facility that government officials would often solicit volunteers from throughout the city to come work at the Center and help process Braceros.⁴⁹ They were not employees of the INS but were invited instead to help on a

volunteer basis.⁵⁰ All kinds of people worked at the Center on a regular basis where they inventory the men, examined them, asked about their work history, and took their photographs.⁵¹ Getting the men process was a laboring effort. On good days it took several hours, on bad ones, it took several days. There were just too many men and too much paperwork to fill out.⁵² The Center had a cafeteria and medical staff on standby, so that was good, but still, the work and the waiting were unbearable.⁵³ One of the few good things that came out of the Bracero Center in Eagles Pass was that volunteer workers had the chance to meet and speak with some of the men and learn about their families and their hometowns.⁵⁴ Volunteer workers also learned that some of the men were degreed and had credentials and licenses and that they were professionals back in Mexico, but because of forces out of their control, they had to seek employment opportunities where they presented themselves, and so many opted for life as agricultural workers.⁵⁵

Also, unsettling was the new-found difficulties on the part of families left behind who had to come up with alternative ways for earning a living. That usually became the responsibility of women who shouldered the most significant burden while their spouses, sons, or brothers migrated north. Victor Escalante's mother worked as a house servant for different families while his father was away in the U.S.⁵⁶ For some women, the burden became permanent as countless Braceros never returned to Mexico but instead started new families in the United States. Most families in Mexico, however, were able to get by especially if money from the U.S. continued to pour in but many still had to find new revenue streams. Causing much stress for these families also was the unforgiving separation. Braceros could be away for months and if they renewed contracts, as was often the case, time apart could quickly turn into years.⁵⁷ Graciela Magana remembers that her father was away for months at a time and while his return always meant a heavy shower of American gifts, from shoes to clothing, to toys, she preferred his permanent return.⁵⁸

The Bracero Program also affected native-born field workers in profound ways. The Villarreal family was from Orange Grove, Texas, in Jim Wells County, just west of Corpus Christi but often migrated

to Lubbock to do seasonal work which is what brought them in direct contact with Braceros.⁵⁹ The Villarreal family, like many native-born ethnic-Mexicans, worked alongside Braceros.⁶⁰ While they worked together in the fields with Braceros, however, they did not live in the same area as them. The Villarreal family lived on one part of the farm and Braceros on another, in barn-like dwellings.⁶¹ Regarding food, Jose Villarreal remembers Braceros mostly eating beans and rice with tortillas and can goods. Now and then, they would eat meats and other kinds of foods, but that was rare as they did not have access to much else.⁶² Braceros also did not have access to doctors or medicine and, so they had to treat themselves if they got sick with home remedies, folk medicine, and curanderos.⁶³ Jose Villarreal was only a child when he and his family met and worked with Braceros, but their struggles and lack of resources made a lasting impression on him.

Gabriel De la Fuente was a troquero, meaning he was a truck driver whose job it was to transport Braceros from the Mexican border to fields and farms throughout the U.S.⁶⁴ From Harlingen, Texas, Mr. De la Fuente would drive a huge truck filled to the max with Braceros; caravan style to farms in Blytheville, Arkansas.⁶⁵ It took about two days to drive there. Mary Helen Cavazos was only a child during this period but has strong recollections about these trips and this program such as having to park on the side of the road to sleep.⁶⁶ For food, they usually tried to pack lots of it and ate on the road especially since in some places they were not served or turned away altogether.⁶⁷

Once at the farm in Blytheville, Mary Helen and her family would come to work with and get to know Braceros. Very quickly, they saw the horrid conditions in which they lived. The housing provided to them, for example, was a one-room structure with a small kitchen.⁶⁸ They wore simple clothing and owned very few things and subjected to a rigorous regimen that included rising early and toiling in the fields until it became too dark to see.⁶⁹ Work consisted mostly of harvesting cotton which was exhausting work. Fingers ached and bled, and hands harden like a stone.⁷⁰ Picking cotton was also physically punishing as it required the field hands to be hunched over for long periods until they filled their sacks to the rim. Once filled, sacks, which could easily

weigh up to 50 pounds, were taken to the cotton gin and scaled for weight measurement. The weight of the sacks determined pay and so pickers tried to make sure that they were always super heavy.⁷¹

Regarding food, Mary Helen sometimes saw Braceros cooking their food but mostly eating sandwiches.⁷² Occasionally, the men would be taken to the grocery store to buy food and other essentials. Mary Helen's dad, Gabriel De la Fuente, for example, would take them to the grocery store or to the post office to get their checks or to send money to their own families.⁷³ That was the kind of person he was; always ensuring that growers that were good to Braceros and that the men received good housing.⁷⁴ Because Mary Helen and her family worked along-side Braceros and spoke their language, naturally friendships were made, and things like knowing that the men loved to sing or learning about their families came to impact them in profound ways.⁷⁵

The Cold War and A Nativist Backlash:

The Bracero Program was designed to exist through the war period only but following the end of WWI and termination of worker contracts, many men found incentives to stay and continue working in the U.S.; at times, for the very same growers who previously contracted them. The same was true for Braceros that worked with the Railroad companies. Many continued to work for them without contracts post-1945.⁷⁶ It was growers that challenged the government's attempt to dissolve the program, and as a result of their petitions, Congress agreed to keep the agricultural component of the Bracero Program.⁷⁷ Having become dependent on low-cost Mexican labor growers were able to secure a short-live guest worker program sanctioned by the federal government long after the war concluded.⁷⁸ What followed, however, was a contentious debate in the U.S. over Braceros; their bodies, the work they did, and their very existence. At the start of the program, Braceros believed that the American people would be grateful for their efforts and that they would welcome them, but once in the United States, Braceros quickly learned that was not the case. Instead, most found a hostile reception filled with racial bigotry. Racialized as dark-skinned, primitive, and poor Indians from Mexico

who took jobs away from Americans, Braceros immediately became unwelcomed.⁷⁹ This reception was disconcerting for many Braceros who bought into the ideals of hemispheric solidarity and cooperation. Natividad Rodriguez, for example, was saddened to learn that many Americans did not want him or other Bracers in the U.S. anymore.⁸⁰ This nativist attitude, “against a Cold War backdrop of...repression, xenophobia, and heightened border surveillance,” soon manifested itself into aggressive legislation.⁸¹

In 1954, the U.S. government initiated a campaign designed to deport Mexican immigrants out of the U.S. called Operation Wetback. A product of the Cold War, this para-military initiative, headed by Joseph Swing, the INS Commissioner and a veteran himself, ran over four years.⁸² While this operation went after “illegal” immigrants, Braceros were easy targets and often found themselves caught up the massive raids and sweeps as well.⁸³ All laborers from Mexico, the argument was, created labor shortages for native-born Americans. During the post-war period, Attorney General Herbert Brownell was being pressured to “seal” the border with Mexico and the perception of immigrants, documented and undocumented, was that they were deviants who had engaged in subversive activities, code for communist activities, and should, therefore, be arrested and deported.⁸⁴ In the presidential election of 1952, Dwight D. Eisenhower had swept into office on a conservative tide as a hardliner on communism and communist sympathizers within the country. The conservative tide proved especially problematic for Braceros because although they were invited to work legally in the U.S., most Americans saw them as nothing more than foreigners which translated into them being un-American, and anti-American, and spies, therefore, for Moscow. Compounding this belief was the Second Red Scare that had swept across the nation after WWII. A who’s who list of politicians, like Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin, spearheaded a crusade against communist influence within the United States. Convinced that the U.S. was under severe attack from within, their mission had become to purge all known and suspected communist from the country, including Braceros. The crusade against communists was wide and deep, and it applied to

non-immigrants as well. Before leaving office, President Truman had made it mandatory for people across the nation to sign loyalty oaths and for anyone refusing or failing to do so could find themselves in various kinds of problems including fines, firings, incarcerations, and deportations. Complicating matters was the Internal Security Act, a law passed that authorized the federal government to deport those suspected of being a member of communist organizations and the McCarran-Walter Act which called for the denaturalization of immigrants found to have been communist sympathizers.⁸⁵ All these things came together to create a state of hysteria throughout the county; a hysteria that would have a consequential impact on many Americans and definitely on immigrant communities. Once deported, Braceros no longer had access to their earnings.

Implementing this operation took on quasi-military characteristics as local law enforcement agencies, along with several branches of the U.S. military, collaborated with Border Patrol to round up, apprehend, and deport thousands upon thousands of undocumented immigrants by "land, sea, and air."⁸⁶ Eventually, the government, having been pressured by civil rights and immigrant rights groups as well as agribusiness and other agricultural firms, ended Operation Wetback. Immigrant Rights and Civil Rights groups like La Asociación Nacional México Americana (ANMA), for example, objected to the mean-spirited and damaging effects of forcibly removing persons out of the country especially as it related to the separation of families.⁸⁷ Agricultural firms, on the other hand, protested the removal of Braceros and other undocumented immigrants because of what that meant for their production and gains and losses tied to running an industry. It was not unusual to see undocumented workers toiling in the same fields as Braceros, and so occasionally there were immigrant raids.⁸⁸ Galvan recalls seeing agents come by now and then to check their work visa which they were all required to carry.⁸⁹ At times, growers would even sponsor workers from Mexico and help them with paperwork for returning to the U.S. "legally" to work.⁹⁰ Citizens from Mexico also protested this policy and were extremely outraged to learn that their government had secretly supported Operation Wetback by promising to provide transportation

services to deportees.⁹¹ Instead of condemning the American government for forcibly removing thousands upon thousands of men and women out the U.S., Mexico said nothing and did nothing.

Ultimately, the pressure by activists and farmers worked because Operation Wetback did end. However, the damage had been done as migrant and immigrant communities specially and the Latino community, in general, had been targeted and terrorized by countless INS agents. While an accurate number of persons apprehended and removed from the U.S. as part of this operation is difficult to calculate, the Immigration and Naturalization Service boasted, on record, of having deported over a million “illegals.”⁹² Also removed from the country, unfortunately, were the American-born children of Braceros.⁹³ The most significant number of deportees were recorded during the early months of the operation and began to wane throughout the next several years. The region to have had the highest concentration of those apprehended as part of Operation Wetback was the American Southwest with Texas and California leading the pack. There is much debate regarding the numbers of deportees especially since the INS gave the million-figure probably also included plenty of undocumented immigrants who repatriated or “self-deported” just before the start of Operation Wetback. INS officials, themselves, admitted that nearly half a million immigrants voluntarily returned to Mexico.⁹⁴

In 1960, CBS aired a documentary entitled “Harvest of Shame,” which exposed Bracero abuses.⁹⁵ It immediately caught national attention and even influenced policymakers in Congress. It also caught the attention of the President. In 1963, John F. Kennedy began taking measures toward finally closing the program extending it for just one more year.⁹⁶ By 1964, the Bracero Program officially ended. There were just too many protests by families in Mexico and activists within the United States against human rights violations of field workers.⁹⁷ Labor unrest, however, also contributed to its demise. Despite consumerism and affluence, the postwar economy was still tempestuous as wages steadily went down, inflation was on the rise, unequal pay was rampant, and employees continued to work in some of the most dangerous conditions. Responding to this, labor organizers demanded

increased wages, better working hours, safer working conditions, and equal pay. They also protested programs that brought in foreign-born workers seeing them as detrimental to securing the benefits they felt native-born workers deserved. Because of the Bracero Program, some argued, the U.S. had an abundance of workers and employers, having access to more "replaceable" workers than ever before, refused to comply.

Tied to this labor unrest were the efforts of activists who in the 1940s began organizing towards improving worker's rights. Activist and scholar, Ernesto Galarza, for example, in 1947 teamed up with the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU) to organize both domestic and bracero workers.⁹⁸ By 1951, in partnership with several unions in Mexico, Galarza and the NFLU launched a series of strikes against the agricultural firms.⁹⁹ Just a few years later, he published *Strangers in Our Field* which he hoped would bridge the gap between foreign and domestic-born workers.¹⁰⁰ While Galarza hoped to coalesce all workers under the same protective union, other labor rights activists did not share his point of view. Instead, they worked tirelessly at unionizing native-born workers exclusively and dismantling guest workers programs altogether. Galarza, himself, would eventually hold similar sentiments having already suffered the frustration of organizing workers from Mexico and the U.S. For Galarza, like for many Mexican American field workers, the Bracero Program was problematic as it translated into economic competition. Some, for example, had been displaced as workers because of the program and others forced to move to new regions to find employment.¹⁰¹ For those looking to improve the working conditions of Mexican American field workers, the Bracero Program further posed a challenge because how could they secure better wages and better hours if governments in Mexico and the U.S. maintained a program that provided an endless stream of cheap laborers. Growers, they were convinced, deliberately pushed to hire Braceros because they saw those men as an inexpensive workforce who were less likely to strike. So, as the 1960s rolled around, activists like Dolores Huerta, Cesar Chavez, and the National Farm Labor Union (United Farms Workers Union) fought to end the Bracero

Program seeing guest workers as detrimental to their efforts at securing rights for native field workers.¹⁰² The UFW would not be the only ones to protest the Bracero Program; Latino groups such as the National Congress of Spanish-Speaking People, the League of United Latin American Citizens, and the American G.I. Forum argued that Braceros took jobs away from Mexican American citizens and that the program was economically bad for Latino communities.

Also, responsible for the conclusion of the Bracero Program, however, was a staunch conservative and nativist resistance against Latino civil rights activism in general and Latino immigration specifically. Organizations like the White Citizen's Council, and other white supremacists' groups like the Ku Klux Klan, for example, not only opposed the integration efforts of Mexican Americans throughout the country but also vehemently objected to what they considered an uncontrollable "wetback" invasion in to the U.S. They too demanded that programs that brought in more "wets" end immediately.

In the end, several factors played a role in ending the Bracero Program including adverse publicity, labor unrest, the mechanization of cotton, political pressure by several organizations, and a nativist backlash. What also ended the program, however, were complaints of human rights violations of workers whose exploitation was criminal. The atrocious low pay, wage theft, a lack of union representation, inadequate living quarters, long, exhaustive hours, and blatant racism and discrimination were but a few examples of the criminal exploitation of Bracero workers. Once contracts expired or the program officially ended, Braceros were to return to the southern border and wait for transport from the borderlands back to where they lived.¹⁰³ A poor implementation of a transport system on the part of Mexico, unfortunately, left thousands of Braceros idle and "stuck" in the American Southwest.¹⁰⁴ Many attempted to get home themselves again resorting to unique and creative methods for doing so. Others just stayed in cities and town along the border and found new work opportunities.¹⁰⁵ Braceros, their families, and laborers, in general, became angered and saw this epic failure on the part of Mexico as a blatant example of the sheer neglect it was notoriously guilty of committing.¹⁰⁶ At the start of

the program and when the potential for both governments to benefit from a lucrative arrangement seemed possible, busses and trains were endless, but when all that ended, so too did the efforts to accurately and without delay return these men home. While some workers took their chances and stayed in the U.S., most returned home. For those that did go home, their return was bittersweet. It was also dangerous, as dangerous as their initial journey to the U.S. as many had to cross deserts exposing themselves to asphyxiation, dehydration, or heat stroke. Back in the U.S., facilities associated with the Bracero Program closed down or became occupied by other enterprises. The Bracero Center in Eagle Pass, for example, was used for other things before being demolished.¹⁰⁷ Other jobs related to the program likewise were canceled. Truckdriver, Gabriel De la Fuente who transported Braceros from the border to farms in the Midwest was no longer contracted to do so.¹⁰⁸

Conclusion: Renewing Historical Memory Through Oral Histories:

The Bracero Program was more than a binational agreement derived out of a war-time emergency, but if that is the only lens through which we examine this arrangement then Braceros, as Neil Foley has indicated, are unequivocal "soldiers on the farm front" who contributed to "winning the war."¹⁰⁹ While Braceros were responsible for feeding Americans at home, American troops abroad as well as their allies, and a good portion of the world during both WWII and the Korean War; their experiences, however, go untold and unrecognized by both citizenry and governments in Mexico and the United States. History textbooks throughout the U.S., for example, suffer from historical amnesia and pay minimal attention to this program. Chapters of World War II or the Cold War offer little information about this program perhaps because the contributions of Mexican men seem unworthy of history telling or perhaps because of the terrible shame that comes from how horrible both the U.S. and Mexico treated these men. Photos and stories of journalists like that of Leonard Nadel, along with the work of local historians, students, and indeed the families of Braceros, however, have done much to capture the history of this program. Through these efforts, we now have a better historical understanding of the Bracero Program.

Although the personal testimonies of Braceros and their families captured through oral history projects have paved the way for uncovering this significant moment in American, Mexican, Borderlands, and Migrant history, much more is still needed to fill the gaps. Using oral histories, for example, we can learn more about the Braceros who stayed in the U.S. and who joined the growing number of migrants already in the country. Using oral histories, we can learn more about the experiences of the families of Braceros, spouses in particular who also sacrificed and suffered and who also protested against the program. Moreover, using oral histories, we can do comparative studies of guest worker programs past 1964 as that too warrants further examination. In 1986, for example, Congress enacted the Immigration Reform and Control Act which created two labor programs for guest workers and since then several more agricultural labor importation programs have been developed so that most of the guest workers programs that exist in the U.S. follow the model and methodologies of the Bracero Program developed in the 1940s.¹¹⁰ What this means is that we have not learned from our past mistakes and that both the American and Mexican governments have yet again seized the opportunity to exploit field workers. In the end, using oral testimonies is perhaps the most effective way for filling in the gaps that exist in the history of the Bracero Program. They are excellent tools for centralizing marginalized histories. Moreover, they convey the powerful message that the history of ethnic-Mexicans is American history and worthy of study.

Endnotes

- 1 Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program, 1942-1964. National Museum of American History. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/bittersweet-harvest-bracero-program-1942-1964>. Accessed 1.30.2019.
- 2 In *Merchants of Labor*, Galarza argues that for war-time measures, that the Bracero Program was successful but that following the war, it became detrimental especially to domestic born field workers. See *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story*, published by McNally and Loftin, 1964.
- 3 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 3.
- 4 “Loza, Mireya. *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Page 4.
- 5 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 3.
- 6 Oropeza, Lorena. “Fighting on Two Fronts: Latinos in the Military.” *American Latinos and the Making of the United States: A Theme Study*, National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. Page 251.
- 7 Escobedo, Elizabeth. *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013. Page 47.
- 8 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 126.
- 9 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 42.
- 10 *Ibid.* Page 55.
- 11 Loza, Mireya. *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Page 2.

12 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 42.

13 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 131. See also, Maria L. Quintana. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Page 400.

14 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.

15 OH 0619 Natividad Rodriguez, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.

16 OH 0618 Graciela Magana, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 10, 2016, Houston, Texas.

17 OH 0617 Daniel Galvan, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 5, 2016, Houston, Texas.

18 *Ibid.*

19 Opportunity or Exploitation: The Bracero Program, America on the Move, http://amhistory.si.edu/onthemove/themes/story_51_5.html. Accessed April 2018.

20 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 131.

21 *Ibid.* Page 59.

22 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Pages 78-89.

23 OH 0617 Daniel Galvan, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 5, 2016, Houston, Texas.

24 OH 0619 Natividad Rodriguez, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.

25 OH 0618 Graciela Magana, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 10, 2016, Houston, Texas.

26 *Ibid.*

- 27 OH 0619 Natividad Rodriguez, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 28 Anonymous Personal Interview, February 28, 2017, Houston, Texas.
- 29 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Pages 126, 132.
- 30 *Ibid.*
- 31 *Ibid.*
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.
- 34 OH 0619 Natividad Rodriguez, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 35 Quintana, Maria L. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Page 400.
- 36 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.
- 37 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 131.
- 38 OH 0618 Graciela Magana, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 10, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 39 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Pages 56-57.
- 40 *Ibid.*
- 41 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 132.
- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.

44 OH 0619 Natividad Rodriguez, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.

45 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.

46 Loza, Mireya. *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Page 1. See also Lori Flores, *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 2016. Page 46.

47 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.

48 Anonymous Personal Interview, February 28, 2017, Houston, Texas.

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*

55 *Ibid.*

56 OH 0616 Victor Escalante, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 1, 2017, Houston, Texas.

57 *Ibid.*

58 OH 0618 Graciela Magana, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 10, 2016, Houston, Texas.

59 OH 0615 Jose Villarreal, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on March 24, 2017, Houston, Texas.

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*

62 *Ibid.*

- 63 *Ibid.*
- 64 OH 0594 Mary Helen Cavazos, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 65 *Ibid.*
- 66 *Ibid.*
- 67 *Ibid.*
- 68 OH 0617 Daniel Galvan, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 5, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 69 OH 0594 Mary Helen Cavazos, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 *Ibid.*
- 72 *Ibid.*
- 73 *Ibid.*
- 74 *Ibid.*
- 75 *Ibid.*
- 76 Quintana, Maria L. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Page 401.
- 77 *Ibid.*
- 78 Loza, Mireya. *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Page 1. See also, Neil Foley. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 146.
- 79 *Ibid.* Pages 35-36. See also, Neil Foley. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 147.
- 80 OH 0619 Natividad Rodriguez, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 81 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 9.

- 82 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 141.
- 83 De Leon, Arnoldo, and Richard Griswold del Castillo. *North to Aztlan: A History of Mexican Americans in the United States*. Illinois: Twayne Publishers, 1997. Pages 137-138.
- 84 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 140.
- 85 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 80.
- 86 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 142.
- 87 De Leon, Arnoldo, and Richard Griswold del Castillo. *North to Aztlan: A History of Mexican Americans in the United States*. Illinois: Twayne Publishers, 1997. Page 146.
- 88 OH 0618 Graciela Magana, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, interviewed on November 10, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 89 OH 0617 Daniel Galvan, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, interviewed on November 5, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 90 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 158.
- 91 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 142.
- 92 *Ibid.*
- 93 Quintana, Maria L. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Page 402.
- 94 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 142.
- 95 Quintana, Maria L. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Page 402.

- 96 *Ibid.*
- 97 De Leon, Arnoldo, and Richard Griswold del Castillo. *North to Aztlan: A History of Mexican Americans in the United States*. Illinois: Twayne Publishers, 1997. Page 146.
- 98 Quintana, Maria L. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Page 401.
- 99 *Ibid.*
- 100 *Ibid.* Page 402.
- 101 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 145.
- 102 Flores, Lori. *Grounds for Dreaming: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the California Farmworker Movement*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Page 95.
- 103 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 132.
- 104 *Ibid.*
- 105 *Ibid.*
- 106 Loza, Mireya. *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Pages 103.
- 107 Anonymous Personal Interview, February 28, 2017, Houston, Texas.
- 108 OH 0594 Mary Helen Cavazos, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Interviewed on November 18, 2016, Houston, Texas.
- 109 Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014. Page 145. See also Loza, Mireya. *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Political Freedom*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. Pages 3.
- Quintana, Maria L. "The Bracero Program, 1942-1964." In *50 Events that Shaped Latino History*. Edited by Lilia Fernandez. Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2018. Pages 402-403.

**Cavalcade of Texas:
The 1936 Texas Centennial's Grand Pageant**

KEITH VOLANTO

Taking place at Dallas's Fair Park from June to November 1936, the Texas Centennial Exposition marked the culmination of a two-year-long commemoration of the 100-year anniversary of the Texas Revolution. The main purpose of the expo was to celebrate the supposedly unique past of the Lone Star State while promoting its bountiful present and future. While a myriad of exhibits touted Texas as a great economic and cultural "empire" within the United States, the premiere attraction of the entire showcase proved to be its historical pageant – the "Cavalcade of Texas" – which sought to bring to life in grand theatrical fashion the story of that empire's history from the 1500s through the late 1800s, following the Centennial's official theme of "Texas under Six Flags."

Though certainly not the first historical pageant to take place in Texas, the Cavalcade was nevertheless the largest and most attended, marking the climax of almost four decades of historical pageantry depicting elements of the state's history using the Six Flags motif. Beginning in the Progressive Era, hundreds of smaller pageants had been produced by schools and communities as part of a greater effort promoted by a coalition consisting of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, state and local political leaders, and many enthusiastic members of the public to inculcate the citizenry with the idea of Texas's unique history and inherent greatness. As Gregg Cantrell and Walter Buenger have previously described, the Progressive Era in Texas witnessed a full-court press by elements of this coalition to reimagine Texas as a special place with a prideful history, deemphasizing (though certainly not erasing) the defeated Confederacy from the public's consciousness.¹

The craze of civic pageants in the United States during the early 1900s has been largely forgotten, but in 1990, historian David Glassberg published a fascinating book on the phenomenon entitled *American*

Keith Volanto is a Professor of History at Collin College.

Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century, in which he discusses its origins in England as part of a revival of the medieval storytelling genre, now undertaken to promote local history. In America, historical pageantry was promoted not only by civic leaders wishing to boost pride in their communities, but also by many progressive educators who saw in the medium of pageantry a way to educate the public through theatrical participation. Indeed, school children and the amateur public, rather than a bevy of professional actors, would be the show's performers. By direct involvement in "re-living" various dramatic moments in the life of a locality, in authentic costumes and accompanied by appropriate music and dance from the various periods on display, it was hoped that participants would get far more educational attainment from the experience than through traditional study involving the rote memorization of facts. The pageant structure involved performers presenting a set number of historical episodes displaying a progression over time building towards a positive climax leading everyone involved hopefully coming away from the experience not only with a better understanding of local history, but also a greater feeling of community pride and unity.²

Glassberg primarily focused his research on the Northeast and Midwest, with the South given only nominal treatment. Had he delved deeper, he would have found that pageants during this era were widespread in the Lone Star State, though they mostly deviated from the national norm in that they largely promoted statewide history rather than touting local subject matter. Whether performed by adults in a community performance or by children as part of a school production, the historical pageant with the Six Flags theme had become a ubiquitous mainstay of Texas cultural life by the mid-1930s when the Centennial's "Cavalcade of Texas" took place.

Before addressing the Cavalcade itself, a few important points should be made regarding the background of the Six Flags paradigm, whose origin has been forgotten to modern Texans, but is recoverable as it clearly began with the 1897 publication of Mollie Evelyn Moore Davis's amateur work of juvenile history *Under Six Flags: The Story of Texas*. A narrative work consisting of assorted stories from the Texas

past, *Under Six Flags* depicts the region as a land of excitement being claimed by valiant white men from an assortment of nations, beginning with the arrival of La Salle and the French (first flag), through the settlement of Texas by the Spanish (second flag) and the subsequent Mexican period (third flag), with the bulk of the book focusing on the Anglo settlement period and the heroic spirit of the men who fought the Texas Revolution. When the Republic of Texas (fourth flag) ended with U.S. annexation, the American period (fifth flag) is briefly interrupted by the Civil War and the establishment of the Confederacy (sixth flag), before the Union was restored (fifth flag, Part II) and Texas triumphantly prepares to enter the 20th century. Though the book was used as a supplementary reader in many Texas classrooms for decades, the main impact of *Under Six Flags*, far more than the actual content of the book, was actually the popularity of the Six Flags framework derived from the book's title, which fit very well with the progression of scenes displayed in historical pageant productions, as each flag period received its own episode on stage, culminating with Texas proudly entering the 20th century.³

While perusing Texas newspapers published during the first three decades of the 20th century, focusing especially around Texas Independence Day and San Jacinto Day, one cannot help but be struck by the ubiquitous descriptions of the Six Flags theme being used for classroom skits, graduation ceremonies, place settings at women's club luncheons, topics of discussion at club meetings, and, most numerous, the hundreds of school and community historical pageants that proliferated across the Lone Star State between 1900-1936. Thus, by the time that the Centennial was being organized, the state's population had already been primed to think of Texas history in terms of the story of a special place with a unique history, control of which was contested and claimed at various times by six separate "empires."

It would seem only natural that a state with such outwardly chauvinistic sensibilities would seek some sort of grand display to highlight its version of the past to outsiders coming to Fair Park for the Centennial to take in all things Texana, while reaffirming such views for those Texans already long-familiar with them. As Kenneth Ragsdale

has shown in *The Year America Discovered Texas*, organizers had originally planned to enlist Cecille B. DeMille to produce the grand show, but ultimately turned to Mark Hamilton, a stage and motion picture veteran, to direct the production which would be based upon an original script written by Texas journalist and screenwriter Jan Isbelle Fortune.⁴ In the weeks leading up to the Centennial, newspaper accounts began appearing across the state reporting on the tone of the planned pageant, touting a "romantic history" filled with "pomp and color" in presenting the "story of Texas under six flags" -- "the saga of the building of a mighty empire from a wild and barbarous land."⁵

The newspapers also detailed the ambitious plans for the show's production, including a cast of 300 to perform on a massive 300-foot wide, 100-foot deep stage with a 45-foot high "mountainous" backdrop -- all to be constructed in the infield of the Fair Park race track. To facilitate set changes in between episodes, a series of 40-foot-high water jets would be deployed to shield the audience seated in the race-track grandstand from the rotating stages operating behind the water screen. An elaborate lighting arrangement would be deployed for night shows, along with a massive sound system not only to complement the action, but also to pipe in the voice of the narrator as well as the actors' dialogue. Because of the immensity of the set and its distance from the audience, the stage actors would actually be performing in pantomime, synchronizing their speech with voice actors operating in a nearby sound booth. To add to the "realism" of the experience, large numbers of longhorn cattle and horses, teepees, stagecoaches and covered wagons, replica weapons, and even a boat operating on an artificial stream and lagoon were promised.⁶

A host of problems plagued the Cavalcade, especially at the beginning of the production, which did not premiere at the opening of the Centennial as originally planned. Despite an Associated Press story stating that officials viewed a rehearsal and determined that "additional equipment and more elaborate scenic effects were needed," the main issues proved not to be the huge technical demands, but simply the enormously ambitious script -- after weeks of rehearsals, Director Hamilton modified Fortune's script in certain places for theatrical

effect but not with regard to its length. The script, clocking in at well over three hours, was simply too long and unwieldy for a show with multiple performances planned nightly.⁷

On June 10, four days after the Centennial opened, it was announced that the pageant's debut would be further delayed a few more weeks. Special events official A.L. Vollman was placed in charge of overseeing a quick reorganization, in order to (in the words of a Dallas Morning News writer) "solve the terrifying problems" of the Cavalcade – the "stupendous and expensive pageant now bogged down in the impracticality of its wild conception." Vollman began by firing Director Hamilton, who had refused to shorten the script, and replaced him with lighting director Blanding Sloan. The main goal was to revise the script by removing numerous scenes while skillfully using narrator dialogue to interweave many of the deleted scenes with the episodes that would be shown, all in an effort to reduce the pageant's length to a more manageable 90 minutes. This unenviable task ultimately fell to screenwriter Clinton Bolton. Hollywood film director D.W. Griffith (of *Birth of a Nation fame*) was asked to observe a rehearsal and advise the staff on further needed revisions.⁸

The Cavalcade finally debuted two weeks late on June 21, and, with the exception of a major storm that hit the set and knocked out operations for four days in late July, multiple shows (always sold out) took place nightly through the end of the Centennial in late-November. Daily matinees were eventually added to the schedule, and on some special occasions as many as six performances were held during a single day. Reported attendance figures for the shows indicated that, on average, over 2,000 people saw each performance. By the end of August, over a half million visitors, about 1 in 5 Centennial attendees, were able to catch a performance.⁹

So what did the Cavalcade audiences actually witness? Unfortunately, a copy of the script, either Jan Fortune's lengthy original or the final version used in the show, has yet to surface. For now, the closest we can get are snippets from assorted accounts, as well as the synopsis printed in the souvenir program. Based on these sources, a quick summary follows: The show began with a booming musical overture

before a spotlight beamed upon a solitary Native American figure (really a white actor spray-painted with a reddish pigment) standing on the heights of the center stage as the narrator, Tol Ware, began his dramatic telling: "Out of the pages of history comes the story of the Cavalcade of Texas, marching onward through four hundred years up the steep peaks of empire." A gathering of natives then joined together in a stereotypical Indian "chant to the Sun God" concocted by the original director Hamilton, soon followed by two other native chants before the tempest-tossed Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca stumbles upon the scene. Francisco de Coronado and his explorers then trekked across the stage, followed by the Frenchman La Salle and his crew arriving on the life-sized sailing vessel. After he is killed, Spanish friars appear to begin the mission period, followed by the Mexican period and the arrival of the Americans. After two quick scenes, the Texas Revolution – the episode with the most numerous scenes – erupted. The rebel army of brave fighting men was assembled, San Antonio was captured by the rebels, then besieged by Santa Anna, independence was soon declared, the attack on the Alamo simulated, followed by the fighting at Coleto Creek, Fannin's capture, and the Goliad Massacre – all avenged by Sam Houston and his brave heroes who triumph at San Jacinto. The Republic period received its due with a depiction of Houston's presidential inaugural ball, the Comanche raid resulting in the capture of Cynthia Ann Parker, a fictitious meeting between Houston and Andrew Jackson, the Black Bean Episode of the Mier Expedition, and Anson Jones' salutary speech at James Henderson's gubernatorial inauguration after the U.S. annexation of Texas. Secession and the Civil War were dispensed with quickly as Houston's stance against secession was made clear, though the reasons for secession were not. The war quickly ended with the nation reunited before a cattle drive was shown and Judge Roy Bean dispensed some frontier justice west of the Pecos before all the characters who had appeared in the show returned to the stage, including flag bearers holding the Six Flags of Texas, for one last grand review in the finale.¹⁰

Commenting on the quality of history presented in the show, a *Dallas Morning News* writer raved: "With the dramatic narration

which links the Cavalcade together, and the swift sequence of important scenes, every visitor to the Cavalcade leaves the grand stand with a splendid working knowledge of why Texas is what she is today."¹¹ The veracity of this statement gets to the heart of any analysis of the Cavalcade as public history: Did every audience member leave with a "splendid working knowledge" of why Texas was what she was to that day"? My response would be a resounding "No."

Despite the limitations imposed by the absence of a surviving script, some preliminary conclusions based upon what we know about the Cavalcade can still be asserted.¹² To begin, the Six Flags theme that served as the basis for the show bestowed historical importance only on the grand story that Texas was a special place primarily because it was contested by numerous Western nations, ultimately claimed by a special breed of person—the Anglo Texas male—who would supposedly hold their unique virtues into perpetuity.¹³ The contributions of countless groups and individuals not befitting this narrative were ignored. Native Americans, for example, in addition to being depicted in a stereotypical manner as uncivilized wild men, appear mainly as part of the harsh landscape needing to be conquered. African American characters rarely appeared, and only as part of the background, such as the white actor in blackface portraying a servant at Sam Houston's inaugural ball, and a loyal slave appearing in the Runaway Scrape scene aside white women fleeing Texas to escape the oncoming Mexican army.¹⁴ Women of all races and nationalities had no major parts, except as the daughter of a Spanish governor who became a love interest for the Frenchman St. Denis during the Spanish Period and the aforementioned Cynthia Ann Parker. Non-Anglo immigrants to Texas, such as the Germans, are completely ignored, as were any Anglo Texans who did not contribute to the grand narrative of triumph.

Potentially controversial subjects were ignored, being swept under the historical rug. Slavery was not addressed in any way, either by itself or as the driving force behind secession. Dispossession of land from Tejanos, acts of violence among Texans, labor strife within the state, Populism, and so on, were avoided on the stage as they would be avoided in the history books of the day, which also tended to reiterate triumphalist narratives.

Even the effort to tell the story of Texas through the prism of nations falls short. The Six Flags paradigm quite frankly overinflated the influence of the French, who occupied a sliver of Texas for a length of time that translates into a cup of coffee historically, yet they received a flag in the pantheon of contributing "empires." The motif also consciously gave nationhood status to the Confederacy. Though secession and the Civil War were quickly dispensed with (again, with absolutely no mention of slavery), the inclusion of the Confederacy was a way of bestowing legitimacy to an entity not deserving of the status, though most Texans at the time certainly would not have thought twice about it.

In the final analysis, what can we make of the legacy of the Cavalcade? Like Disney versions of American history one can witness today, the show did not produce anything new, displaying instead snapshots of existing popular ideas that had been floating around Texas for decades. Ultimately, what made the Cavalcade distinctive was its scale of production, not the actual themes being presented. It allowed attendees the opportunity to be amazed by such visuals as running gun battles and a large French ship emerging on stage with a performer portraying the swashbuckling La Salle splashing ashore in dramatic fashion rather than the amateur version of the same scene that many children produced in their class skits or adults witnessed in their numerous local pageants.

The limited versions of history as displayed in the Cavalcade would continue to be delivered to the Texas public in one form or another (smaller-scale pageants, textbook chapters, motion pictures, etc.) for many decades afterwards, with the Six Flags theme being revived on a grand scale yet again in 1961 with the opening of Angus Wynne's amusement park in Arlington, with the name altered from Davis's original "Texas under Six Flags" to "Six Flags over Texas,"¹⁵ but that is another part of the story to be told another time.

Endnotes

1 Walter L. Buenger, "Texas and the South," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 103 (January 2000): 308-24; Gregg Cantrell, "The Bones of Stephen F. Austin: History and Memory in Progressive-Era Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 108 (October 2004), 145-78.

2 David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980). See also: Angela Bartie, Linda Fleming, Mark Freeman, Tom Hulme, Alexander Hutton & Paul Readman, "'History Taught in the Pageant Way': Education and Historical Performance in Twentieth-century Britain," *History of Education* 48:2 (2019), 156-179; Leigh Clemons, *Branding Texas: Performing Culture in the Lone Star State* (Austin: University of Texas Press), 40-59.

3 M.E.M. Davis, *Under Six Flags: The Story of Texas* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1897). A search of the phrase "Six Flags" in the Portal to Texas History yielded no results with regard to the historical paradigm before the publication of Davis's book.

4 Kenneth B. Ragsdale, *The Year America Discovered Texas: Centennial '36* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), 185.

5 *Graham Daily Reporter*, February 26, 1936; Denison Press, July 27, 1936.

6 *Dallas Morning News*, March 1, 1936; March 15, 1936; June 7, 1936.

7 *Denton Record-Chronicle*, June 8, 1936.

8 *Dallas Morning News*, June 10 and June 17, 1936. While the June 10 article in the *Morning News* stated that Centennial director of radio operations Art Linkletter was tasked with revising the script, and Linkletter himself later claimed credit for revising the script, as Kenneth Ragsdale has pointed out, Linkletter's name was not included in the program credits. Jan Isabelle Fortune and Clinton Bolton later copyrighted the Cavalcade script and Linkletter's name is noticeably absent. See Ragsdale, *Year that America Discovered Texas*, 250, n.30; Interview transcript, Part 2, pp. 19-20, Art Linkletter Collection, 1940-2005, Special Collections & University Archives, San Diego State University.

9 *Dallas Morning News*, August 28, 1936 and September 1, 1936; Ragsdale, *Year America Discovered Texas*, 251. The audience at the Saturday 4pm show on September 19 received a special treat when Gene Autry performed a song on the Cavalcade stage that was included in his Republic Pictures film *The Big Show* that brazenly integrated the Centennial into the movie's plot to capitalize on the exposition's popularity. *Dallas Morning News*, September 18, 1936.

10 Synopsis, Cavalcade of Texas Souvenir Program (Dallas: Texas Centennial Exposition, 1936), page 5.

11 *Dallas Morning News*, July 12, 1936.

12 An example of how possession of the actual script could help in this regard is evidenced with the script from a Six Flags pageant performed at John Tarleton College in May 1936. The transcript reveals a version of history with numerous sins of omission (such as having the narrator describe Mirabeau Lamar's education policy while President of the Republic of Texas but not his ethnic cleansing campaigns against Native Americans), sins of commission (such as the narrator describing the causes of the Texas Revolution in this overly simplistic manner: "In 1835 Santa Anna placed Texas under military rule. Skirmishes resulted. Texas found herself in a state of rebellion"), as well as overtly racist sentiments, such as the script referring to slaves on multiple occasions as "plantation darkies." Centennial Pageant Script, May 16, 1936, UA42, SC Box 2, Folder 5, Tarleton State University, Dick Smith Library, Archives and Special Collections, Stephenville, Texas.

13 As the Centennial Board of Directors claimed in their full endorsement of the Cavalcade placed at the end of the souvenir program: "Today, the spirit of Texans remains but little changed from that of their predecessors....Men who are willing to take chances, and able to make their hazards become certainties, still dominate this State, which is bigger, in area and resources, than many nations. Such Texans, in proud recognition of the one hundredth anniversary of the conquest of Texas by Anglo-Saxons, have outdone all previous celebrations in their determination to make the Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas truly worthy of the series of tremendous events it commemorates.... "Cavalcade of Texas," of course, being foremost of such attractions."

Cavalcade of Texas Souvenir Program (Dallas: Texas Centennial Exposition, 1936), page 30.

14 James David Boswell, "Negro Participation in the 1936 Texas Centennial Exposition," (master's report, University of Texas at Austin, 1969), 23.

15 A famous story, not confirmed, credits Angus Wynne's wife Joann with changing the name of the park from the traditional "Texas under Six Flags" moniker to "Six Flags over Texas," supposedly because of her belief that "Texas isn't under anything!"

**Texas Artists Joins the "Soil Soldiers": Three East Texas
Artists in CCC Camps During the New Deal**

BY VICTORIA CUMMINS

Modest efforts were made to help unemployed artists during the first years of the Franklin Roosevelt administration. The first two attempts, the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) and the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW, later the Civilian Conservation Corps or CCC) were short lived and paid poorly. However, their success led to better funded art programs, while at the same time allowing artists to follow their vocation at a time when the market for art and for hiring artists had collapsed.

The PWAP was a relief program for artists suggested by George Biddle, an artist and prep school friend of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Biddle had earlier visited Mexico and talked to Diego Rivera. He had been impressed by the results of the government supported Mexican program to paint murals in public spaces which had created the "Mural Renaissance" of the 1920's and 30's. Biddle advocated copying the Alvaro Obregón administration's program of paying "plumbers' wages" to artists to create public art for public buildings. He proposed to President Roosevelt a relief program for artists like those being offered for other workers during the winter of 1933-34 under the Civil Works Administration (CWA). The Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), created in late 1933, was the result.¹ Its goal was to provide work for artists around the country under the auspices of the Civil works Administration.

The program was administered by Edward Bruce of the Treasury Department and existed for only a few months in 1933-1934. It was later succeeded by other federal programs designed to provide jobs for artists and create high quality art for government buildings. The PWAP employed about 3,500 artists nationwide, who created about 500 murals and thousands of smaller works of art.² These federally funded programs proved a great stimulus to mural painting in the United States, and to promoting public recognition of the value of American artists and their work.

Victoria Cummins is a Professor of History, Emeritus, at Austin College

The PWAP paid unemployed artists weekly wages of \$25.50 to \$42.50, which were equivalent to those the CWA paid to skilled laborers.³ The artists created artwork for the decoration of the buildings of institutions supported by federal, state or local taxes. The PWAP was primarily an economic relief program. It paid artists who qualified for relief weekly wages for up to two months of work. Oversight was fairly loose. To apply for the weekly wages, individuals had to present proof of artistic production and personal financial need. Once granted the support by the regional director, artists then had great freedom in choosing their style, subject and medium. They could suggest where a work of art should be installed.⁴

The Emergency Conservation Work Camps (later the Civilian Conservation Corps) was created by executive order #6101 on April 5, 1933. It was a work relief program targeting single men aged 18-25, mostly from families on the relief rolls. The idea was to help these young men and their families by giving them paid work plus room and board: \$22 to \$25 of their monthly \$30 wage had to be sent back to their families. Soon another executive order authorized the recruitment of World War I veterans, although older and generally married, to enroll under the same rules, and reserved ten percent of CCC jobs for them.⁵

CCC enrollees would be organized in companies of 200 men and put to work doing a variety of conservation tasks, including reforestation; construction of roads, bridges and dams; and controlling erosion. The camps in which CCC companies lived and worked varied depending on the location, terrain availability of building materials and permanence. All the camps began as tent cities set up by the enrollees themselves. In some places, the recruits were put to work building permanent barracks, mess halls, and other buildings for administration and other activities. However, in warmer climates, the tent city might remain, although weatherized with wooden floors, siding and stoves, while permanent buildings were built for mess halls and other uses.⁶

The daily routine was similar at all CCC camps. Reveille was at 6 am, followed by physical exercise and breakfast. By 7:45 am crews had left for work details. Lunch from noon to 1 pm was usually sandwiches,

dessert and coffee eaten at the worksite. The workday concluded at 4 pm, and after a 5:30 dinner enrollees could take classes or participate in recreational activities until lights out at 10 pm. Weekends were free, and the usual public holidays observed. Recruits could go into nearby town or go home for the weekend if close enough.⁷ The main work of each Texas CCC camp was easily identifiable by the letter prefix to its number. S meant state forest; P meant Private; national forests were F; state parks, SP; and soil conservation SCS.⁸

Funding for the PWAP ended in April 1934 and all artists were taken off the payroll. In May, FERA was given the task of making arrangements to finish incomplete projects and to see too the disposition of unassigned art works.⁹ Since there was no succeeding federal art program in place yet, Edward Bruce tried to find additional ways to further support at least some of his artists. In May 1934 he wrote to Robert Fechner, the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, asking him to support art projects in the CCC camps around the country. "I recommend very strongly that thirty artists be engaged for the summer and fall to act as camp educational advisors. I understand these advisors receive \$165 a month as base pay."¹⁰ Bruce's plan was that outstanding artists could be selected to teach art to enrollees and make a pictorial record of the camps. After discussing the matter with FDR, Fechner wrote Bruce that the president would approve it, but under somewhat different circumstances. The artists would be paid only what other enrollees were paid. They would also receive the same benefits of food, shelter, clothing and medical care.¹¹

Fechner agreed to take 100 unemployed artists, to be assigned one to a camp with the participation of Edward Bruce in their selection. The army, park service and forest service would decide which camps received artists. The artists would be enrolled and treated like other enrollees, and count against the number of regular enrollments. Additionally, Fechner stipulated that "they will not be furnished with drawing or painting materials," but the art produced would belong to the federal government.¹² Early results were expected to be simple drawings: "Due to the fact that the Artist must furnish his own materials, he is permitted, upon going to camp, to work in any medium and

it is not unusual to have an artist confine himself to pencil or crayon until he has received his first month's pay enabling him to resort to a more expensive medium."¹³ Assignment of the 100 artist enrollees passed to the Section of Painting and Sculpture of the Treasury Department under Technical Director Edward B Rowan.¹⁴ Artists in the ECW camps would send their work to Rowan's office. Rowan wrote Fechner that "my understanding with Mr. Bruce is that this work is eventually to be turned over to you."¹⁵ In the end, the best of the work was framed and allocated in Washington and the rest (some 219 water colors, oils, and ink and pencil drawings) either sent back to the camps to decorate buildings or to high schools or libraries, usually in the same state as the camp or the artist's home town.¹⁶ Administrators reported that "The Best Stuff – some 200 water colors, drawings and oils reflecting "Life in the CCC" was officially put on display at the National Museum."¹⁷ The Smithsonian show, opened by Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, ran from June 4-20 1935. Its organizers bragged that "while it is true that a number of the artists employed are youthful beginners, practically all of them have had a thorough training in their field and several no little success in their field before the depression."¹⁸

James Douthitt Wilson was a promising Texas artist who benefitted from PWAP and CCC work. Douthitt Wilson, as he preferred to be known, was born in Holland in Bell County in 1903. He grew up near Tyler and received his art education at the Dallas Art Institute from 1926-1929, studying with Olin Travis.¹⁹ In the early 1930's he worked in east and south Texas at jobs as varied as road engineer and day laborer, all the time painting the small town life he was observing.²⁰ Wilson had his first success exhibiting in the late 1920's at the Annual Allied Arts Exhibition in Dallas and in the early 1930's was a part of the Dallas art scene.²¹

By 1933, Wilson's art work was attracting favorable attention from people like Dallas Morning News art critic Jerry Bywaters. Bywaters, being a regionalist artist in his own right, wrote

It is ...refreshing to encounter the work of an artist who is such a normal person that he uses his medium to express a dominant

interest in people and a zest for taking active part in their way of living....As a result we see canvases showing the life of rural communities from the inside....Few rites typical of the country have escaped this commentator in paint. There are cotton-pickers, mules at the harness rack, oil rig workers, carpenters, building stores, play-parties, quilting bees and funerals. Not a one of the subjects has been rendered tritely...²²

Bywaters found Wilson's subjects to be well suited to designing murals, and Wilson realized this as well. By 1933 "Wilson [had] worked out an inexpensive method of converting his work to large scale decorations and is now – like most mural painters- trying to find walls"²³ The PWAP provided the perfect opportunity for artistic expression, as well as providing welcome employment for the young artist.

Early in the PWAP program Wilson received approval for a project to create "...decorations over the mantel in the reading room" of the Carnegie Library in Tyler.²⁴ The "inexpensive method of converting his work to large scale decorations" mentioned by Bywaters may help explain his prolific production for the PWAP. Engaged to create decorations around the fireplace mantel of the library reading room, Wilson's ambitious project grew to a series of more than a dozen mural panels titled "Industrial and Agricultural Development of East Texas."²⁵ The historical sweep spanned pioneer times to the present and the overall size of the finished work (all panels in aggregate) was 72' x 28' 9". Finally, Wilson added one more panel, "Modern Agriculture in East Texas," to complete his work.²⁶ Today, these murals are in their original places in the building now housing the Smith County Historical Association. John S. Ankeney said: "I feel that this work has helped develop certain men who are outstanding in this group from the standpoint of mural treatment.... J.D. Wilson...has done a fine series of East Texas paintings in the Tyler Public Library."²⁷

Shortly after completing the Tyler murals, Wilson was offered the chance to be assigned to an Emergency Conservation Work Camp as an artist. Camp SP 14 was located in Palo Duro Canyon. Six CCC Companies, four made up of World War I veterans and two of African

Americans, built a state park there in the years 1933-37. Made up of 28, 928 acres in Armstrong and Randall Counties, it was the largest of the CCC park projects in Texas. CCC enrollees built some eleven miles of two-lane roads to connect the floor of the canyon to the rim. They also constructed bridges, culverts, low water crossings, trails, buildings and even furniture for the park. Wilson spent several months at Palo Duro Canyon in 1934, painting watercolors of the canyon and camp life. He was impressed and moved by the morale and attitude of the veterans and young men who comprised the enrollees.²⁸ In the late 1930's Wilson exhibited oil paintings in a number of exhibits at the Dallas Museum of fine Arts. After he secured a job as an analyst with the Texas Employment Commission in Dallas in the late 1930's, he worked for the State of Texas for the rest of his career, relocating first to San Antonio and then to Austin in 1944.²⁹ Although pursuing a full time career outside of the art community slowed his subsequent production, he continued to exhibit into the 1960's in the San Antonio-Austin area.³⁰ He died in Austin at age 70 in 1973.³¹

William Lewis Lester was just starting his career when the depression hit hard. Lester was born in Graham but grew up in Dallas and graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1929. He considered himself to be largely self-taught as an artist, although he attended summer art camps with h Alexandre Hogue and Olin Travis and studied at the Dallas Art Institute with Thomas Stell. Until he was laid off in 1932, he worked as a draughtsman for Texas Power and Light and painted landscapes in his spare time.³² After he lost his job, by default Lester became a full-time artist. He barely scraped by, living in rented rooms on \$30.00 per month he borrowed from a relative. Some days he became very discouraged, but he was determined to try being a full-time artist even with no hope of earning a living at it. Working in Dallas gave him the intellectual and artistic stimulus he needed. He became part of a circle of younger artists that would dominate Texas art in the 1930's: Jerry Bywaters, Alexandre Hogue, Harry Carnohan, Perry Nichols, Emile Guidroz, Otis Dozier and John Douglass. He also met older Dallas artists like Frank Reaugh, Edward G Eisenlohr and J.B. Martin. Because of these connections, although only in his early

twenties and at the dawn of his career, Lester was chosen to participate in the Public Works of Art Project. He was not particularly attracted to the work he was assigned – panel murals for Woodrow Wilson High School and Boude Storey Junior High in Dallas -. He was not interested in doing murals, which he later damned with faint praise as “highly stylized, quick decoration on a wall, which has its place and sometimes can be very fine.” He also was not interested in painting people or Texas history, He wanted to do easel paintings of landscapes, but he was desperate for the money and the work, the PWAP in Dallas preferred American Scene painting, so that is what he produced.³³

Still strapped for income, later in 1934 he enrolled for a tour as an artist in a CCC camp at Palo Duro Canyon. Subsequently, he was sent to a CCC camp at Camp Sill in Oklahoma, because there was no place to put him in a Texas camp. In truth, recording the daily life of men in camp wasn't very attractive to a landscape painter: “...that was an assignment that really wasn't for me, but I was so desperate...” So, he took the job, but this time he mostly painted landscapes, which did not go over well in Washington, D.C. When he sent in his pictures, his bosses told him that while beautiful, they were not what they wanted. They wanted pictures of men digging ditches and depicting life in camp, not landscapes.³⁴ When Lester was able to get back on with TP & L, he left the CCC. He never did paint people, which he did not think was his kind of aesthetic, but he did not consider his time in the CCC wasted; he won an “Honorable Mention” at the Seventh Dallas Allied Artists Exhibition in 1935 for his oil painting “From Palo Duro,” and his landscape, “Oklahoma Rocks,” was accepted for the Texas Centennial Exposition art exhibit in 1936. Lester got the idea for both paintings the from his CCC experiences.³⁵ After teaching at the museum school of the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts from 1940-42, he joined the new Art Department at the University of Texas at Austin, where he taught for thirty years. Having moved more and more towards abstractions in his works, he remained an active exhibitor and influential teacher into the 1970's. The CCC experience kept him going as an artist and helped launch his career.³⁶

The most experienced Texas artist to enroll in the CCC was Donnell Adair (Don) Brown. He led a charmed life in the 1920's, only to have it

all fall apart with the onset of the Great Depression. Luckily, these two government relief programs, the PWAP and the CCC artists program, helped him to survive the hard times and continue his career in art.

In the 1920's Don Brown sojourned in Paris, studying art and mixing with the other expatriates of the lost generation. He met young journalists, novelists, poets and other aspiring artists as he covered art shows and traveled the café circuit as part of his job as a reporter for the Paris Edition of the Chicago Tribune. In the 1920's the dollar was strong, and the franc was weak. Living modestly in Paris for an American was as inexpensive as it was exotic. For an aspiring artist, the aesthetic and intellectual milieu was glamorous and stimulating. However, it all ended when the Great Depression hit France.

By 1932-33 the depression had hit hard in Paris. The large seasonal flocks of American tourists were gone; fewer Americans were able to come to live in Europe; and many expatriates were returning home for good. Some businesses that catered to Americans were closing their doors due to diminished demand for their products and services. These things all negatively impacted advertising and circulation for the English-language papers. By March of 1932 the already low-paid employees of the *Tribune* took a salary cut; the alternative would have been to cut the staff. Still, staffers who left were no longer being replaced, so workloads increased.³⁷ In response to these conditions, Brown, his wife Nelle, and 22 month old daughter Mary, who had been born in Paris, came back from France in late September 1932.³⁸ At age 33 Brown moved his little family in with his parents in Marshall. For the next two years he cobbled together a living by teaching art classes at the College of Marshall, writing and illustrating articles for the Shreveport *Times*, and taking whatever art commissions he could get.³⁹ In order to increase his meager income, in 1934 he secured two projects for the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP), and even served as an artist in a CCC forestry camp to help support his family.⁴⁰

In the summer of 1934, Don Brown signed up with the Civilian Conservation Corps to work in Emergency Conservation Work Camp P-52 on private land at Pineland, Texas, between Jasper and San Augustine.⁴¹ Established on June 14, 1933, it was one of two CCC camps in Sabine

county, the other being near Milam. At Pineland, Company 893 worked with the Texas Forest Service, planting seedlings for reforestation. The Pineland camp was one of the few integrated camps in the CCC.⁴² That Brown qualified to be in Company 893 testifies to his low pay at College of Marshall and the family's lack of income that summer. Although the local newspaper story presented this as an art commission, in fact Brown joined the CCC under similar conditions to other volunteers. He would receive room and board, medical care, and clothing, live at the camp in the same accommodations as other volunteers, eat army food, be subject to the same rules of military discipline as the other recruits, and would be paid the same \$30.00 per month. The difference from other recruits would be that instead of doing manual labor, for 40 hours a week he would make paintings and drawings of the men and their work at the camp. Out of his meager \$5 per month Brown would have to buy his own art supplies. For that reason, like many other CCC artists Brown did a lot of his work in pencil and crayon to save money. These art works would be government property and sent to Washington D.C. to document the work of the CCC.⁴³

Brown was assigned to an ECW camp relatively close to home, consistent with CCC policy. Pineland was a small lumber town southeast of Marshall near the Sabine River. In the summer of 1934, the camp was very rustic. In the first year of its operation, the men had built simple unpainted wooden buildings to house the mess hall and a building for training and enrichment classes. Wooden plank sidewalks ran between the buildings. However, the men still lived in six-man tents lined in long neat rows in an open field. When it rained, the tents leaked; when it rained hard, water flowed through some of the tents. In the long hot Texas summer, they moved their cots outside and slept in the open to escape the heat. Laundry facilities were rudimentary. Each man did his laundry by hand in a bucket and hung it up to dry. In their free time, men played basketball or baseball or took classes to improve their job skills or pursue hobbies. Camp life was rough-and-tumble. The men worked hard and played hard. There were lots of fistfights, many of them fueled by liquor.⁴⁴

In 1934, Brown was in his mid-30's, old enough to be the father of some of the teenage recruits. However, as a former corporal in the American Expeditionary Force during World War I, he was no doubt prepared for the somewhat primitive conditions at camp. Besides having joined the army as a teenager, in his late twenties he had lived in a shack while he painted on Cypress Bayou; that was probably far more primitive than conditions for a CCC volunteer.

Brown produced a number of sketches during the summer of 1934 and more detailed drawings as well. Edward B. Rowan, the Treasury official in charge of the artists in the ECW Camps, commented that "I see a nice quality of draftsmanship in your work" and kept several of the works for possible inclusion in a show in Washington D.C.⁴⁵ When the show at the National Museum ended First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt chose 26 works to display at the White House. Brown's crayon drawing "Portrait" was among them.⁴⁶ Another drawing, "Typical Recruit," was later used as an illustration for a story about young CCC volunteers published in the *New York Times Magazine* January 5, 1936.⁴⁷

Brown left the CCC at the end of the summer of 1934 in order to take a job offered him at Centenary College in Shreveport, Louisiana. Like other enrollees, artists could obtain honorable discharges and leave before their enlistments were up in order to take jobs.⁴⁸

Although working in the primitive conditions of a CCC camp for \$30 a month represented a precipitous decline from his glory days of Paris in the twenties, and even from the work he did for the PWAP earlier in the year, Brown's choice proved beneficial. Brown's government work led to further opportunities. The regional PWAP director attributed both a mural commission Don received from the College of Marshall and his employment as a part-time art instructor at Centenary College to the exposure he had gotten from his PWAP work.⁴⁹ The months in the CCC camp tided his family over financially in the summer of 1934 until he could cobble together a living from teaching part-time at two institutions, taking cartoon commissions for the Marshal newspaper and giving private lessons. He was then able to build the job at Centenary College into a full-time position, thus establishing his career as a college art teacher.

Endnotes

- 1 Edward Bruce Address, December 1933, Congressional Record; Mark Barron, "Just One Year Ago Mr. Biddle Made U.S. Patron of the Arts," *Dallas Morning News*, April 28, 1934; "Civil Works Administration to employ artists on public works of art," Federal Emergency Relief Administration Press Release No. 464, Monday December 11, 1933, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter NARA) RG 121 Entry 111 Box 1 folder Press Releases #1.
- 2 Public works of Art Project, *Extension of Remarks of Hon. Frederick C. Walcott of Connecticut in the Senate of the United States, Tuesday, May 22 (legislative day of Thursday, May 10), 1934. Address by Edward Bruce Before the Association of Adult Education May 21, 1934*, (Washington D. C.: USGPO, 1934), 4, NARA, RG 121, Entry 115, Box 1.
- 3 Francine Carraro, *Jerry Bywaters, a Life in Art*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), 86.
- 4 "Minutes of Meeting of regional chairmen of the Public Works of Art Project on Monday February 20 in Room 68 of the Treasury," NARA RG 121, Entry 110.
- 5 John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps: A New Deal Case Study*, (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1967), 30-31, 36; James Wright Steely, "The Civilian Conservation Corps Invades East Texas, 1933-42," *East Texas Historical Journal* Vol. XL, no. 2 (2002): 36.
- 6 Alison T. Otis, William D. Honey, Thomas C. Hogg and Kimberly K. Lakin, *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1986), 1, 71-72.
- 7 Salmond, 137-142.
- 8 John Wayne Garbutt, "We Were Soil Soldiers: The Civilian Conservation Camps of the Lufkin District," (MA Thesis, Stephen F. Austin State University, 2007), 32.
- 9 Letter, Edward Bruce to Robert Fechner, May 21, 1934, Records of the CCC. General Correspondence 1933-42, NARA RG 35 Entry 2 Box 74; "Public Works of Art Project. Report Covering its Activities and Liquidation. To Arthur Goldschmidt Acting Director of Professional Projects. From Ann Craton In

Charge of the Art Section, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, October 1, 1934- June 22, 1935. NARA RG 121 Entry 115 Box 1 Folder 8 PWAP Report.

10 Bruce to Fechner May 21, 1934.

11 Letter, Robert Fechner to Edward Bruce, May 22, 1934, Records of the CCC. General Correspondence 1933-42, NARA RG 35 Entry 2 Box 74.

12 Letter, Robert Fechner to Major General James F. McKinley, Adjutant General, War Department, June 4, 1934; "Assignment of the 100 artist enrollees passed to the Section of Painting and Sculpture of the Treasury Department under Edward B Rowan," Records of the CCC. General Correspondence 1933-42, NARA RG 35 Entry 2 Box 74.

13 "Exhibition of C.C.C. Artists," n.d. NARA, RG 35 Entry 63, Box 4.

14 "Public Works of Art Project. Report Covering its Activities and Liquidation. To Arthur Goldschmidt Acting Director of Professional Projects. From Ann Craton In Charge of the Art Section, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, October 1, 1934- June 22, 1935."

15 Letter, E.B. Rowan to Robert Fechner September 22, 1934. Records of the CCC. General Correspondence 1933-42, NARA RG 35 Entry 2 Box 74.

16 "Public Works of Art Project. Report Covering its Activities and Liquidation. To Arthur Goldschmidt Acting Director of Professional Projects. From Ann Craton In Charge of the Art Section, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, October 1, 1934- June 22, 1935."

17 Ibid.

18 "Exhibition of CCC Artists," n.d. NARA RG 35 Entry 63 Box 4.

19 John Powers and Deborah Powers, *Texas Painters, Sculptors & Graphic Artists. A Biographical Dictionary of Artists in Texas Before 1942*, (Austin: Woodmont Books, 2000), 557.

20 Jerry Bywaters, "Human Being of the Palette. Douthitt Wilson, 30, and Some of His Work," *Dallas Morning News*, n.d., Dolph Briscoe Center for American History the University of Texas at Austin (hereafter cited as CAH), Vertical File/ General Biographical Wilson, Douthett (sic).

21 Powers and Powers, 557; Bywaters, "Human Being."

- 22 Bywaters, "Human Being."
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 "Mural Project at Tyler Approved," *Dallas Times Herald* (afternoon) January 10, 1934, NARA, RG 121, Entry 111, Box 1, Folder Region 12.
- 25 Receipt for PWAP Art, 10/29/34, Smithsonian Archives of American Art (Hereafter AAA), Roll DC-13, Frame 0556.
- 26 Esse Forrester-O'Brien, *Art and Artists of Texas*, (Dallas: Tardy Press, 1935), 394.
- 27 Letter, John S. Ankeney to James Chillman, Jr., 3/1/34. AAA Roll DC-13, Frames 0614-0615.
- 28 "Extracts from a letter received from J. Douthitt Wilson, Artist at E.C.W. Camp, SP-14, Canyon, Randall County, Texas," n.d., AAA Roll DC - 1, frame 0393.
- 29 Powers and Powers, 557; "Obituary. James Douthitt Wilson," *Austin American Statesman* November 14, 1973.
- 30 Powers and Powers, 557.
- 31 "Obituary. James Douthitt Wilson," *Austin American Statesman*.
- 32 "Portrait of the Artist as Teacher," *Daily Texan* January 5, 1962 Powers Collection, Cushing Memorial Library Texas A&M University Library, College Station Texas (hereafter Powers Collection).
- 33 William Lester interviewed by Sarah Hunter, May 3, 1984. Dallas Historical Society Archives. Hall of State, Dallas Texas; "Lester, William Lewis," Earl D. Weed and Paul D. Lester, *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 15, 2019 <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/flezzr> .
- 34 Lester interview; "Lester, William Lewis," Earl D. Weed and Paul D. Lester, *Handbook of Texas Online*.
- 35 Lester interview; Biographical Note, William Lester Artwork and Papers, A guide to the Collection, Hamon Library, Southern Methodist University, Dallas Texas; Dallas Museum of Fine Arts. Seventh Annual Dallas Allied Arts Exhibition, pamphlet, [1935]; Dallas, Texas. (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph183289/>: accessed June 14, 2019), University of North Texas Libraries,

The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Dallas Museum of Art.

36 Press Release, The University of Texas at Austin May 29, 1972, Powers Collection.

37 Ronald Weber, *News of Paris. American Journalists in the City of Light between the Wars*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006), 129; Waverly Root, *The Paris Edition. The Autobiography of Waverly Root 1927-1934*, (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1987), 65..

38 New Orleans, Louisiana Passenger Lists of 1903-1945, NARA RG 085, Microfilm T905, Rolls 1-189.

39 Mrs. Harry (Octavia) Brown, "Donnell Adair Brown: 1899-1958. Craftsman with Pen, Staff and Paint Brush. Journalist. Educator. Pilot. Boat Builder. Writer. Artist: Cartoonist. Muralist. Etcher. Portraitist. Water Colorist," Handwritten, August 1970, Vertical File, Don Brown, Harrison County Historical Museum, Inez Hartley Hughes Research Library, Marshall, Texas (hereafter HCHM).

40 Brown was at Camp P-52, in Company 893. Addresses of artists in ECW camps, 1934, NARA RG 35 Entry 63, Box 4.

41 "Marshall Artist Sketching at CCC East Texas Camp," N.p., n.d., Don Brown Scrapbook Volume II, HCHM.

42 Rachael Larkin, "Pineland Civilian Conservation Corps Camp," *East Texas History*, accessed June 3, 2018, <http://easttexashistory.org/items/show/105>.

43 "Marshall Artist Sketching at CCC East Texas Camp," N.p., n.d., Don Brown Scrapbook Volume II,; Letter, W. Frank Persons to State CCC Agencies, September 14, 1934, General Correspondence of the Division of Selection 1933-42, NARA RG 35 Entry 36, Box 3.

44 McCann, Connie Ford. [Various photographs of the Pineland, Texas CCC Camp], photograph, 1933/1934~; (texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph121773/; accessed June 4, 2018), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting UNT Libraries Special Collections; Connie Ford McCann, [McCann's diary kept during his time in the Civilian Conservation Corps], book, 1933/1934~; (texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph121794/; accessed June 4, 2018), University of North Texas

Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting UNT Libraries Special Collections..

45 Letter, Edward B. Rowan, Director, Section of Painting and Sculpture, to Don Brown October 30, 1934, Correspondence with and about Artists in the Civilian Conservation Corps Camps 1934-37, RG 121, Entry 142, Box 1.

46 "Don Brown Work in White House. Local Artist's Work Selected by Mrs. Roosevelt for Exhibit," N.p., n.d., Don Brown Scrapbook Volume II, HCHM; "CCC Workers' Art To Hang in Capitol," *New York Times* June 16, 1935.

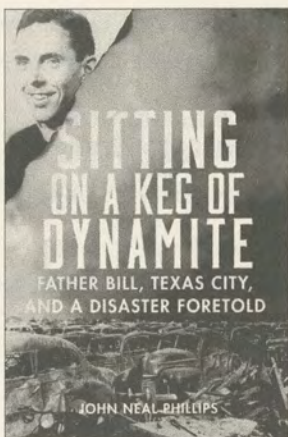
47 Partial clipping, Don Brown Scrapbook Volume I, HCHM.

48 "Exhibition by C.C.C. Artists," NARA RG 35 Entry 63 Box 4.

49 Letter, John S. Ankeney to Edward Rowan, November 9, 1934, AAA Roll DC-13 Frames 0453-4.

Institutional Members

- OIL MUSEUM EAST TEXAS, KILGORE, TEXAS
- A.C. MCMILLAN AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM, EMORY, TEXAS
- CHEROKEE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION, RUSK, TEXAS
- PANOLA COLLEGE, CARTHAGE, TEXAS
- LAMAR COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION, PARIS, TEXAS
- MUNTZ LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, TYLER, TEXAS
- TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, DENTON, TEXAS
- CITY OF EMORY, EMORY, TEXAS
- STARK FOUNDATION, ORANGE, TEXAS
- THE HISTORY CENTER, CITY OF DIBOLL
- WOOD COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION, WINNSBORO, TEXAS
- HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, MARSHALL, TEXAS
- HISPANIC HERITAGE CENTER, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
- EAST TEXAS HERITAGE MUSEUM ASSOCIATION, TYLER, TEXAS
- BEAUMONT HERITAGE SOCIETY, BEAUMONT, TEXAS
- TEXAS FORESTRY ASSOCIATION, LUFKIN TEXAS
- WILLIAM C. LIPSCOMB, HOUSTON, TEXAS
- CHAMBERS HOUSE MUSEUM
- SANDRA E. ROGERS, HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS
- TYLER JUNIOR COLLEGE, TYLER, TEXAS
- VINSON & ELKINS, L.L.P. , ATTORNEYS AT LAW, HOUSTON, TEXAS
- COMMERCIAL BANK OF TEXAS, NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS
- SMITH LIBRARY, SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY, GEORGETOWN, TEXAS



Sitting on a Keg of Dynamite

*Father Bill, Texas City, and
a Disaster Foretold*

By John Neal Phillips

A gripping reinterpretation of Texas's
most infamous industrial disaster

\$24.95 PAPERBACK 9780806190709



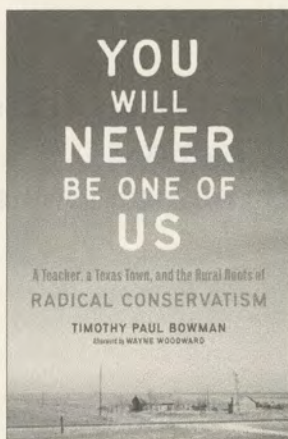
Battle for the Heart of Texas

Political Change in the Electorate

By Mark Owens, Ken Wink,
and Kenneth Bryant Jr.

What Texas voters are saying
about their state as an American
political battleground

\$34.95 HARDCOVER 9780806190747



You Will Never Be One of Us

*A Teacher, a Texas Town, and the Rural
Roots of Radical Conservatism*



By Timothy Paul Bowman

A small-town Texas story offering
insight into America's late-
twentieth-century culture wars

\$32.95 HARDCOVER 9780806190389



1 800 848 6224 EXT.1 | OUPRESS.COM

CONNECT WITH US  

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION. WWW.OU.EDU/EOO

FROM SFA PRESS



COLLEGIALITY
and the
CONSTITUTION:

The United States District Court
For the Eastern District of Texas
1846-2006

Mark Barringer

*Collegiality and the Constitution:
The Eastern District of Texas
1846 to 2006*

BY MARK BARRINGER

\$35.00 HARDCOVER 9781622882991

www.tamupress.com

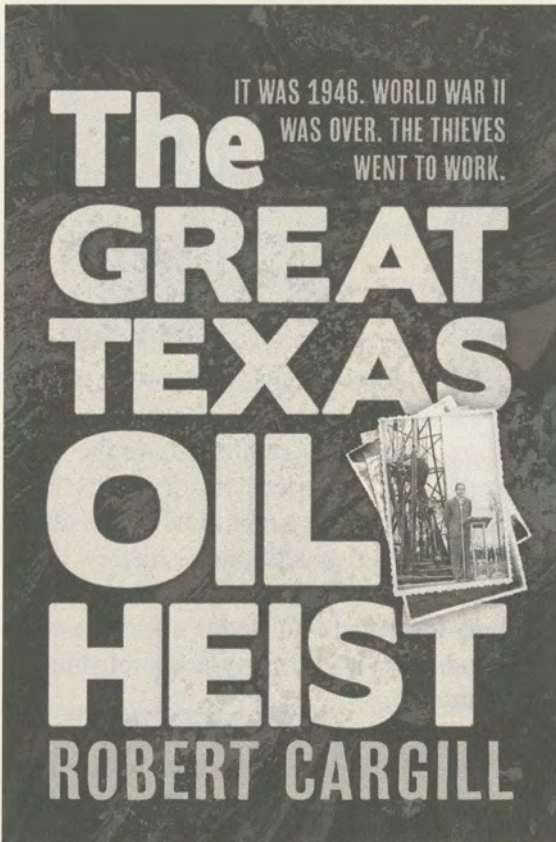
AUTHOR MARK BARRINGER has done a superb job of collecting and describing the most important cases and trends in the Eastern District's history. This book provides a multitude of benefits to legal practitioners, history buffs, East Texans and anyone interest-

ed in a good read. It expanded my historical knowledge about the court and reinforced my respect for, and pride in, its many accomplishments and its healthy organizational culture.

In my 23 years with the court, I had the privilege of working with a number of legal giants and superb leaders, including Judges Fisher, Justice, Steger, Parker, Schell, Brown, Cobb, Hall, Hannah, Heartfield, Folsom, Ward, Davis, Clark, Crone, Schneider, Gilstrap, Mazzant and Schroeder. The practice of law that they insisted upon was "warm zeal" in the representation of one's client(s), informed discourse about the facts and applicable law, and a genteel, respectful attitude towards opposing counsel and the bench.

David J. Maland
Clerk of Court (Retired 2015)
United States District Court
Eastern District of Texas

FROM SFA PRESS



\$25.00 PAPERBACK
978-1-62288-402-5
194 PP

“In *The Great Texas Oil Heist* Robert Cargill tells the story of the slant-hole drilling scandal of the 1960s with both the thoroughness and the verve it deserves. Impeccably researched and clearly written, this work is a well told and compelling tale of how politics, geology, money, and human nature combined to create a uniquely Texan scandal and how it was finally broken up. Cargill has done a service by shining a bright light on this long-running episode of criminality that has been talked about but never before explored in such meticulous detail.”

MELISSA KEAN
Centennial Historian, Rice University

distributed by www.tamupress.com

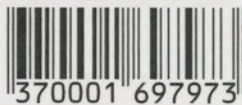
IN THIS ISSUE:

★ VICTORIA CUMMINS

★ JESUS ESPARZA

★ MARY JO O'REAR

★ KEITH VOLANTO



2 370001 697973