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## HOME OF HEROES

### The Story of the Holland House

CECIL E. BURNEY

About three and one-half miles out of Anderson on the Anderson-Navasota Highway is what is believed to be one of the oldest Anglo houses in Texas—the Francis Holland House. Dating from the earliest days of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred, the house has been the scene of more tragedy than triumph. Strategically located on the early immigrant trails, the dwelling was a place of hospitality for early colonists as they headed toward the La Bahia crossing of the Brazos River and down to San Felipe de Austin. It was a gathering place for colonists as they came to cast their votes for officers in the Austin Colony. During the spring of 1834, as dreaded cholera crept up the Brazos, disease almost wiped out all of the residents of the house.

Most significantly, however, this sturdy double log cabin was the boyhood home of heroes in the Texas cause. From its door went forth three young men to answer the call to arms in the autumn of 1835. Within days they were fighting Mexicans at the old Mission Concepcion near Bexar. One brother, Tapley Holland, stayed on for the storming of San Antonio and to give his life for Texas at the Alamo.

This is the Holland House. But there are no Hollands anymore. The father, Francis, and his wife and the four Holland sons all died in the brief historic decade of the 1830's. Disease, Indians, and war took their relentless toll, and only the house itself remains today as a physical reminder of their sacrifice.

The house was built by a colonist named Millican in 1821, who sold it to Holland in 1822. According to W. P. Zuber, Andrew Millican settled on the Coshattee Trace in 1821 on the "southwest side of Ten Mile Creek," where he erected a set of substantial log houses, and enclosed and cultivated a farm, on which he raised one crop of corn.<sup>1</sup>

The Coshattee Trace was a section of the old "Contraband Road" which ran through Grimes County and which was used by smugglers of contraband goods in their illicit traffic between Alexandria, Louisiana, and the Rio Grande. This section of the road got its name from the Coshattee Indians who used it in their hunting expeditions.

Francis Holland migrated from Canada to the Scotia River region of Ohio where he and his brother married the Buck sisters. From this point he journeyed to Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana. In 1821, he moved from Cheneyville, Louisiana, to what is now Sabine County, Texas. He arrived in Grimes County in 1822 with a large group of relatives and camped near the Millican place. Holland found this area to his liking, while Millican wanted to move westward; Holland bought Millican's improvements. He located his headright league on the "Ten-Mile" Creek so as to include the improvements erected by Millican. The creek flowed lengthwise through his land—his land extended up the creek on both side for two leagues and extended laterally half a league. Since he was the first permanent settler on this creek, the name became "Holland's Creek."<sup>2</sup>

During the next eight years, Francis Holland's was the nearest residence to the site on which Anderson stands.<sup>3</sup>

A road, branching from the Old La Bahia Road a few miles north of his residence, ran close by Holland's house toward the Gulf Coast.<sup>4</sup>

E. L. Blair, Grimes County historian, reports that in the fall of 1821 Stephen F. Austin's first colony of three hundred families began to arrive in Texas. He relates that Andrew Millican came to Texas that year:

One was Andrew Millican, a ranchman from Millican Bend, Arkansas . . . Millican remained only one winter within the limits of the present Grimes County. He sold out to the Hollands in 1822 and moved into what is now Brazos County.<sup>5</sup>

In reporting upon the arrival of Francis Holland to Grimes County, Blair says:

In 1822 Francis Holland conducted a large group of relatives from Louisiana into what is now Grimes County . . . Following the old Coshatee Trace, they came upon the log houses belonging to Andrew Millican on the southwest side of Ten-Mile Creek. Francis Holland bought all the improvements from Millican and located his league along both banks of the creek.<sup>6</sup>

Irene Taylor Allen, Anderson historian, reports that Andrew Millican was the first arrival in Grimes County. She describes his activity:

The first settler in the Anderson vicinity was Andrew Millican who settled on the old Coshatee Trace on the southwest side of Ten-Mile Creek, now Holland's Creek.

He erected log cabins about three and one-half miles southwest of the present site of Anderson on the hill to the right of the road and near the present bridge crossing Holland's Creek on the Anderson and Navasota Road, Highway 90.

Andrew Millican enclosed and cultivated a farm on which he raised one crop of corn.

In 1822 a large company of immigrants from Louisiana, all related to each other, came and camped near Andrew Millican's cabins.

No one was home but the newcomers realized that white men lived in the cabin, so they remained for a few days until the return of Millican . . .<sup>7</sup>

Mrs. Allen lists among "the interesting old houses in Anderson," the Francis Holland home "located on Holland's Creek." She reports that it was "built prior to 1834." In 1957, the home was owned by Ray Haley, who has since moved to Houston. Mrs. Allen says that the "stranger's room" was a point of special interest to visitors.<sup>8</sup>

Francis Holland, a native of Canada, had been born in about 1770. He was a rough man, very limited in education, improvident, but contented. He had moved from place to place over a lifetime, seeking a locality in which he could willingly reside during the rest of his life. He found it in Austin's

Colony. W. P. Zuber, a historian of Holland's day, says that Holland was of "good sense, well informed on some subjects, strictly honest, generous, hospitable and charitable."<sup>9</sup>

Holland's dwelling was a substantial hewn-log building, with two rooms, each twenty feet square. There was a good chimney in each room. One of the rooms had one door while the other had two. Each had one small window with wooden shutters and no glass. There was a twelve-foot hall between them. The rooms were built on the ground, and "Mother Earth" served as a floor to each apartment. There was little furniture. Holland's own description of the house in February, 1831, is quoted by W. P. Zuber as:

My house contains two large rooms, each with a good chimney. My sons have cut and hauled abundance of wood for our winter's supply. We have but little furniture . . . Some Indian neighbors house their corn in one of my cribs . . .<sup>10</sup>

As one of the "Old Three Hundred,"<sup>11</sup> Holland obtained the grant to the land on which his house is located from the Mexican government. Procedurally, Holland was first interviewed by Stephen F. Austin, who reviewed his character certificate and examined his recommendations. Austin then issued a permit for Holland to select his land, and after Holland had selected it, Austin checked his records to insure that he had not granted the land to someone else.<sup>12</sup> At this stage, Holland made his formal application for the land:

To the Honorable Commissioner Baron de Bastrop

I, FRANCIS HOLLAND, originally of the United States of America, and an actual resident of this Province of Texas before Your Honor say, that having removed to the said point with the intention of locating in the colonial establishment conceded by the Supreme Government of the Mexican Nation, to Empresario Estevan F. Austin, I hope that admitting me with my family, as one of the settlers of said County, you will kindly apportion to me and place me in possession of the quantity of land which the law gives to the colonists in the class which I am; that I may soon cultivate that which is assigned to me, subjecting myself in all cases to the laws which govern and to defend the rights of independence and liberty of the country, wherefore I pray your honor to please do as I say wherein I may receive favor and justice.

Town of San Felipe de Austin, August 7, 1824.

FRANCIS HOLLAND<sup>13</sup>

The next step was taken by the Baron de Bastrop, who represented the Mexican Government. He wrote Austin:

Town of San Felipe de Austin, August 7, 1824.

The Empresario ESTEVAN F. AUSTIN will state if the circumstances and requirements exist in the petition to merit the favor which he solicits.

BASTROP<sup>14</sup>

Austin then recommended that Francis Holland be granted a league of land:

By virtue of the foregoing decree of Your Honor, I have to say that the settler represented in the person of Francis Holland is worthy of the favor which he solicits and may be properly admitted as a colonist in this new colony by reason of his good qualities and circumstances and noteworthy application to agriculture, he being a worker for wages and industrious, and with these considerations he may well be granted a league of land.

S. Felipe de Austin

ESTEVAN F. AUSTIN<sup>10</sup>

Austin and the Baron then granted Holland a deed to the land. Austin signed the deed to evidence Holland's good character while the Baron signed to effect the passage of title from Mexico. The deed is translated:

We, the said Commissioner Baron de Bastrop, Empresario Don Estevan F. Austin, the witnesses Wm. Munison, David Mauser, Bowlin Whiteside, the neighbors, and surveyor Bartlett Sims, and the petitioner, FRANCIS HOLLAND, repaired to the aforesaid league situated upon a branch of the Navasota River called in English 'Ten Mile Creek,' three leagues more or less from Navasota. We placed the said Francis Holland in possession of the said land walking about with him, saying in a loud and distinct voice, that in virtue of the command and authority found in us and in the name of the government of the Mexican nation, we put him in possession of said land, with all its uses, customs, rights and involvements unto him, his heirs and successors. And the said Francis Holland in acknowledgement of finding himself in real and personal possession of the said land, without opposition whatever, cried aloud, uprooted herbs, drove stakes, and performed the necessary ceremonies, he being warned of the obligation that he must cultivate the same within the period of two years prescribed by law and that it may thus appear, we the said Commissioner Baron de Bastrop and Empresario Estevan F. Austin and witnesses signed for want of a notary according to law, to which we attest.

In the town of SAN FELIPE DE AUSTIN, on the tenth day of the month of August in the year eighteen-hundred twenty-four.

EL BARON DE BASTROP  
EST. F. AUSTIN

Of Assistance: JOHN AUSTIN

SAM M. WILLIAMS<sup>10</sup>

When recording of the deed was sought, an affidavit was required to prove its authenticity.

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Before me, Gwyn Morrison, clerk and recorder of the County aforesaid personally came Charles B. Stewart and Charles Garrett, and being duly sworn made oath to say they are acquainted with the handwriting of Estevan F. Austin, from having frequently seen him write and they verily believe the signature to the foregoing deed from the Government to Francis Holland to be the true and genuine signature of said Austin as he usually wrote it.

CHARLES B. STEWART  
CHARLES GARRETT

Sworn and subscribed before, the 11th day of May, 1839.

Filed for record and recorded the 11th day of May, A.D. 1839.

FRED KESSLER, Deputy  
Recorder<sup>17</sup>

It is interesting to note that the representative of the Government of Mexico in this transaction, the Baron de Bastrop, was a genial international con-man who crossed into Texas from Louisiana in 1805, accompanied by a small but richly liveried retinue of servants. He introduced himself as a loyal Spanish subject, unwilling to live under the rule of the United States which had bought Louisiana, now seeking a new home in Spanish Texas. It would be nearly a century and a half before this 46-year-old immigrant would be correctly identified as Phillip Hendrick Hering Bogel, a Dutch colonial officer's son who had absconded with the proceeds of his work as a tax collector in Holland. Bogel had left a wife and several children when he fled to the new world.<sup>18</sup>

Curiously enough, it was Bastrop who helped Moses Austin obtain permission for the settling of the "300 like-minded former subjects of the King, all good Catholics." According to a memorandum left by Stephen F. Austin, Moses Austin had been turned down by the Spanish officials in San Antonio and was ordered to leave Texas immediately. Bastrop saw Austin there and recognized him as the man with whom he had spent an evening in an inn in Kentucky some twenty years earlier. He took Austin to his room, arranged for a delay in his ordered departure, rewrote Austin's application to establish the colony, then helped get it approved. In 1823, the Baron was named Commissioner of Colonization in Austin's Colony with authority to issue titles to the land.<sup>19</sup>

Holland's companions located their land so as to form one contiguous block of land.<sup>20</sup> Among those accompanying Holland were William Holland, a brother; Mrs. Mary Peterson, widowed sister of the Hollands; her two sons, John and William Peterson; and William Burney, Holland's future son-in-law.<sup>21</sup>

According to Zuber, Holland's library in the house consisted of "precisely five books," which he studied constantly:

Webster's Spelling Book  
 Aesop's Fables  
 Goldsmith's History of Greece  
 A poem of about 50 pages  
 A translation of some of the laws of Coahuila and Texas<sup>22</sup>

On July 14, 1829, Francis Holland brought home an order of supplies which he purchased from Moore and McKinstry's store at San Felipe de Austin. An examination of the list of items reveals a great deal about Holland's life in early Texas days:

10 lbs. powder	\$10.00
24 lbs. lead	3.00
50 lbs. salt	2.25
4 H—— @ .50	2.00
16 H—— @ .30	4.80
1 Pr. ——	10.00
16 balls thread	1.00
1 paper needles	.25
6 butcher knives @ .50	3.00
4 doz. flints	1.00
1 box blacking	.37
9 drinks	.56
20 lbs. coffee	7.50
Amount former bill furnished	9.44
Rum and whisky	.12
25 lbs. salt	1.12
1 pair earrings	1.25
	<hr/>
	\$57.66

It would appear from the record of the transaction that credit was extended to him as it was on several other occasions. In March, 1830, he owed McKinstry two notes and an account payable.<sup>23</sup>

It is pleasing to note that an order for ten pounds of powder and twenty-four pounds of lead was accompanied by a sentimental purchase of a pair of earrings for his lady.

The Francis Hollands had six children.<sup>24</sup>

*Susan Holland* was born in Ohio around 1802. She married William Burney, a native of Louisiana, in about 1825. Burney had come to Texas with the Hollands in 1822 and settled on an adjoining league of land.<sup>25</sup> The Burneys had 11 children.<sup>26</sup> Susan married one Vandine after Burney's death in 1845.<sup>27</sup> She died sometime after 1850.<sup>28</sup>

*Nancy Holland* was about three years old when her family came to Texas. She was born about 1819 in Ohio,<sup>29</sup> and lived in Grimes County until her death

in about 1880.<sup>30</sup> She married William Berryman in 1835. They had three children.<sup>31</sup> She inherited the "Holland House" upon the death of her parents and her four brothers.<sup>32</sup>

For many years after the Civil War, Grimes County and area officials often visited the Holland House as a result of Mrs. Berryman's generosity. Due to the economic conditions, bonds were hard to obtain, and Mrs. Berryman served as surety on many of the bonds that were required of public officials. She made no distinction between political parties, and when a newly elected official found that he could not obtain a bond elsewhere, he made the trek to Mrs. Berryman's.<sup>33</sup>

*James Holland*, like his brothers, never married. He was born in Ohio about 1808, and began fighting Indians when he was 17.<sup>34</sup>

At one time at San Felipe James Holland helped guard Hiram Friley, who had been accused of horse stealing and murder. In September of 1830, the Ayuntamiento authorized the payment of nine dollars to Holland for this service.<sup>35</sup> He secured a quarter league of land in Austin's Colony on April 7, 1831. In his application he gave his age as 21 and said that he had come from Ohio. He related that he was single.<sup>36</sup>

James and two of his brothers joined the Texas Revolution as members of Captain Joseph L. Bennett's Regiment as soon as they received news of the battle near Gonzales. They fought at the Battle of Concepcion in San Antonio under Captains Fannin and Bowie. James became sick with measles and pneumonia complications, and returned to Grimes County under the care of Francis, who escorted him home.<sup>37</sup>

James and Francis Holland proposed to return to the service as soon as James was well enough to do so, but he never recovered and Francis was required to stay with him to care for his needs until his death in the fall of 1836. James wanted to serve his country, and deplored his sickness mainly because it kept him out of the service. Zuber concludes that but for the sickness of James, doubtless he and Francis would have died with Tapley at the Alamo. All three boys distinguished themselves at the Battle of Concepcion by their cool courage.<sup>38</sup> A contemporary reports that they "were all brave, patriotic and self-sacrificing young men."<sup>39</sup>

When his administrator brother-in-law, William Burney, filed the inventory of James' estate, his total estate was valued at \$588. It included twenty head of cattle, one gray mare, one bay mare and a colt, and pay due him from the military.<sup>40</sup>

*Francis Holland, Jr.* was born in Ohio about 1812. He joined his two brothers in the Battle of Concepcion. After returning home to attend his sick brother, James, he was enrolled on "Capt. Eli Seal's list of Rangers," on November 17, 1835, and helped to provide "home front" protection until he was discharged on January 25, 1836.<sup>41</sup> Later in 1836, as shown by the June 30, 1836 list of volunteers, he provided further protection for the area as he joined his two brothers-in-law, William Berryman and William Burney, in volunteering for duty in the "Texas Army, East of the Brazos, Washington County," under Captain J. G. W. Pierson.<sup>42</sup> He was discharged on September 30, 1836.<sup>43</sup>



In 1838, Francis Holland was employed by an association of land-locaters and surveyors headed by William F. Sparks to accompany them beyond the frontier as their huntsman. Near the source of Richland Creek, about 12 miles from the present city of Corsicana in Navarro County, a band of Indians killed Holland. It is an ironic turn of fate that this expert Indian fighter, well trained by his old Indian fighter father to protect himself, should be killed by an Indian. His companions realized the extreme danger that faced them and returned home. A year or two after the occurrence, a friend found Holland's bones and buried them.<sup>44</sup>

*William Holland* was an invalid from his birth in about 1820. His place of birth is unknown. He had curvature of the spine and died in the Holland House in 1834 shortly after his parents' death.<sup>45</sup>

*Tapley Holland*, hero of the Alamo, was born in about 1810. While the records in the Alamo do not reveal his place of birth, it is believed that he was born in Ohio. Zuber relates that the Hollands had "four sons and two daughters, all born in Ohio probably excepting the youngest two."<sup>46</sup> In another work, however, Zuber stated that James and Francis Jr. were born on the Scotia River in Ohio.<sup>47</sup> In his application for land, James Holland reported that he was "from" Ohio. The two youngest children were Nancy and William. In the censuses of 1850 and of 1860 Nancy's birthplace is given as Ohio,<sup>48</sup> leaving only William's nativity uncertain. If Nancy, who was younger than Tapley, was born in Ohio, then it is reasonable to assume that he too was born there.

In June, 1831, Tapley served as a chain bearer on a survey team headed by Captain Horacio Chriesman. The only known signature of Tapley appears on a receipt for payment for this service. Apparently, he was due sixteen dollars and he directed that it be paid to Arciniega, the Mexican land commissioner in Austin's Colony. Of the sixteen dollars Tapley directed that four dollars be paid for the account of James Holland, who had purchased a quarter league of land from the government, and twelve dollars be paid for the account of Francis Holland, who had received a league of land on which payments needed to be made.<sup>49</sup>

Tapley joined his brothers in enlisting in Captain Joseph L. Bennett's regiment, and fought his way through the Battle of Concepcion and the Siege of Bexar to the Alamo.<sup>50</sup> In San Felipe de Austin, the *Telegraph* and *Texas Register* printed the tragic news from Bexar as the reports spread throughout the Colony. In the issue of March 24, 1836, the name of Tapley Holland is printed in a casualty list. According to the Moses Rose story, Tapley was the first to volunteer his life when Colonel Travis drew the line at the Alamo.<sup>51</sup> He died on March 6, 1836, the day the Alamo fell. His heroism is recorded on a monument on the Courthouse grounds in Anderson,<sup>52</sup> and his portrait hangs in the Alamo with this plaque:

#### TAPLEY HOLLAND

Tapley Holland was the second son of Francis Holland, who came with his wife and six children from Louisiana to settle in what is now Grimes County, Texas.

From the first the father, Francis, took part in public affairs in his district, which was considerably larger than the present Grimes County.

In 1836, his three sons volunteered for service in the first Texas Army. They saw action in the fighting at Concepcion and in the storming of San Antonio in December of 1835. Afterwards, two brothers returned home, but Tapley remained in the garrison of the Alamo.

Travis addressed the men, saying there was no longer hope for reinforcement and gave them their choice of attempted escape or staying to fight to the end. For an instant, there was silence, then, with a bound young Tapley went across the line, saying:

Let me give a life for Texas!<sup>53</sup>

In one respect the plaque inscription is in error, for only Tapley Holland participated in the storming of San Antonio in December, 1835. Zuber,<sup>54</sup> as already stated, says that Francis and James returned home, and this evidence is borne out by the fact that Francis enrolled in Captain Seal's ranging company on November 17, 1835.<sup>55</sup>

On May 4, 1846, Tapley's heirs received a Bounty Land Warrant for 1,920 acres of land in which it was recited that he served in the army "from 13 December 1835 until 6 March 1836 and having been killed at the Alamo with Lieutenant Colonel W. B. Travis' command."<sup>56</sup> Since Tapley was at the Battle of Concepcion on October 13, 1835, the dates on the certificate are obviously wrong.

In 1834, Francis Holland and his wife both died in their home on Holland's Creek.<sup>57</sup> By the time administration was had on Holland's estate by his son-in-law, William Burney, and the inventory of his estate was filed in the Probate Court of Robertson County, Texas, on May 28, 1838, only one-half of his original league and an unlocated labor of land remained. The half league was valued at \$2,214, while the labor was listed at \$150.<sup>58</sup>

Although Holland apparently died in 1834, his name appeared on the first tax roll of Washington County, Texas, in 1837. This part of Washington County later became Grimes County.<sup>59</sup>

Nancy Holland inherited the portion of the Holland league which contained the house and other improvements. In 1835, she married William Berryman, a farmer, who lived on the Holland land until his death on January 10, 1863. Mrs. Berryman died on the same place in 1880.<sup>60</sup>

A Grimes County abstractor reports on his search of the County records as follows:

I can't find any recorded evidence of the partition of Francis Holland's half league among his heirs. Mrs. Nancy Berryman's maiden name was Nancy Holland, and she was the daughter of Francis Holland, deceased. She inherited one-fourth of the Francis Holland league.

She married William Berryman in 1835 in Montgomery County, Texas.

William Berryman died in Grimes County on January 10, 1863. Mrs. Nancy Berryman, his widow, never married again.

By deed dated November 21, 1879, recorded in Book R, Page 500, Deed Records of Grimes County, Texas, she conveyed the property to her son, William Berryman, Jr., and her grandson, W. T. Schumacher.

Nancy Berryman died in 1880.<sup>41</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. William Holland died a few years after their settlement in Austin's Colony, and their three daughters moved into the Francis Holland house, where they lived with their aunt and uncle.<sup>42</sup>

According to Zuber, Holland owned no Negroes and his sons performed the labor on the farm,<sup>43</sup> but the *Handbook of Texas*<sup>44</sup> and the Census of March, 1826,<sup>45</sup> show him as having two servants.

Francis Holland taught his sons to trail Indians—he was an expert in Indian lore. A band of friendly Delaware Indians, under a chief named Sullivan, lived on Francis Holland's league. They did some farming and housed their corn in Holland's crib.<sup>46</sup>

Zuber relates a story of how, in February of 1831, his family was traveling across country and camped near the Hollands. The weather was bitter cold and there was rain, sleet and snow. They had no tents for camping. Holland, noticing this, moved the furniture out of one room of his house and moved the Zuber family into the vacated room.<sup>47</sup>

In 1857, the Commissioner of Claims issued several commissions to take interrogatories concerning the death of Tapley Holland at the Alamo. One of those requested to answer the interrogatories was William Berryman, son-in-law of Francis Holland, who then resided in the Holland House. Berryman testified that he first knew Tapley Holland in 1834, and that in 1835 both "he and his brother started from my house when they went in the expedition or campaign against the Mexicans under Travis." He swore that "his brother returned to my house" after the expiration of three months.<sup>48</sup>

As to Tapley Holland, Berryman recalled that "he had brothers and sisters then living in the vicinity and a number of acquaintances and made my house his home part of his times before he went into the army . . ."<sup>49</sup>

At the time of the settling of the "Old Three Hundred," Texas was divided into districts. In 1822, the Holland House was located in the Brazos District which in 1825 was renamed as the Bravo District in honor of a Mexican general who was then the Vice President of the Mexican Republic. The government of each district was headed by an alcalde.<sup>50</sup> An alcalde has been compared to a mayor with judicial functions. In the early days the judicial duties of the alcaldes were not heavy, but the officers were important agents in Austin's

system of government. They "served as his local correspondents, receiving, promulgating, and executing his orders, and keeping him informed of local conditions, supervising militia elections; keeping their districts free of prowling Indians and vagabonds; settling quarrels; attesting contracts; and performing what passed in effect, until the arrival of a priest, as a civil marriage ceremony."<sup>11</sup>

Francis Holland sought election as alcalde for the Bravo District in 1826. He was defeated when Coles received 22 votes, while Holland received 17 votes.<sup>12</sup>

However, various accounts of Holland's life show that he served several terms as alcalde.<sup>13</sup> Recorded history of the Ayuntamientos is scarce and the names of many of the persons who served as alcalde have been lost. Zuber reported that Holland's alcalde district covered much of Grimes, Montgomery, and Walker Counties, as they are now constituted. An account of the way Holland conducted court is given by Zuber:

He presided in Court, neither aided nor confused by lawyers—quite unconscious of need of them. Some complex cases, with conflicting evidence, were presented, but he was skillful in comparing and weighing evidence, and decided not according to law and evidence but *in accord with evidence and justice* and his decisions were generally approved by disinterested observers.<sup>14</sup>

In 1828, the Ayuntamiento, or "governing body," became the real unit of local government. There was one Ayuntamiento in each municipality. A municipality in early-day Texas had jurisdiction over a wide area. The Ayuntamiento was composed of alcaldes, rigidores, and a sindico. If an alcalde compares to our modern mayor, then rigidores compare favorably to an alderman while a sindico seems to have been sort of a combination notary and city attorney.<sup>15</sup>

In those towns where Ayuntamientos could not be established, local administrative affairs were administered by a comisario and a sindico (constable). Comisarios were to take the census of their precincts, keep a record of families moving into them and of the places from which they came, assist in the collection of taxes, execute the orders of the Ayuntamiento, arrest disturbers of the peace and preserve public tranquility, and report "idle and vicious persons" to the alcalde. In addition, the comisario had minor judicial authority similar to that of a justice of the peace.<sup>16</sup>

On December 13, 1830, an election was held for comisarios of the Precinct of Viesca, and Frances Holland was elected.<sup>17</sup> He ran again in 1831, and when the votes were counted, John Bowman received twenty-one votes for comisario while Holland received only six.<sup>18</sup>

The Holland House was the site fixed for the holding of various elections during the times Texas was a part of Mexico. After determining from a census that the municipality had "more than 2,800 souls," and that under Mexican law they were entitled to "one alcalde, four rigidores and one sindico procurator," the Ayuntamiento, on November 27, 1829, voted that a proclamation should be

issued calling an election on the second Sunday of the "coming month." Among the points fixed for the election was "Francis Holland's House, where Jesse Grimes will preside."<sup>79</sup>

On November 7, 1831, the Ayuntamiento found that the municipality had grown to over 5,000 inhabitants and that they were entitled to a greater number of officers under the Mexican law. They then called an election to be held on December 11 and 12, 1831, among other places, in "the Precinct of Viesca . . . at the house of Frances Holland, to be presided over by the said Holland."<sup>80</sup>

On April 20, 1824, Francis Holland signed a document appointing Baron de Bastrop as elector to vote for the colony at the election for a Deputy to the Convention of the Eastern Internal State.<sup>81</sup> From January, 1824, until his death in 1827, Bastrop was a member of the Legislature of Coahuila-Texas. There he served well in the interests of Texas' Anglo-American settlers. His salary, made up of contributions from his constituents, was meager. Despite the fact that he had made several fortunes, when he died, he had no cash and the members of the Legislature took up a collection to bury him.<sup>82</sup>

Late in the year 1830, the Ayuntamiento invited the various precincts of the Austin Colony to nominate citizen representatives to meet with the body and prepare grievances for presentation to the State Legislature. Among the persons who appeared and presented the certificates of their nomination at the Ayuntamiento meeting November 15, 1830, was Francis Holland. Holland thus represented his district as the Ayuntamiento, discussing such wide-ranging subjects as judges, trial by jury, land-grant schools, appointment of translators, and removal of restrictions against the sale of land. It was the ultimate failure of the Mexican government to honor such grievances as these that led to the growing dissatisfaction of the colonists and the war for independence.<sup>83</sup>

Francis Holland was a delegate from the District of Washington to the 1833 Convention of Texas which was held at San Felipe de Austin from April 1-13.<sup>84</sup> His death in 1834 prevented his participation in the Texas Revolution. That he would have been ready and willing to serve in a military capacity may be inferred from the fact that he was named as second sergeant in the first militia organized in the municipality of Austin, March 21, 1829.<sup>85</sup>

Holland's district in the convention of 1833 had no name. He related a discussion in the convention over the lack of a name, in which he remarked:

"I am the oldest settler in it."

To which Sam Houston jocosely replied:

"Then we will call it New Holland."<sup>86</sup>

In later years the Holland name was used as the first designation of Navasota. During the 1850 period the present city of Navasota was a village of tents and a few log huts and was called Hollandale. In 1857, the H. and T.C. Railroad came through this area, thence on up the Brazos River to Millican, where it stopped, until after the Civil War. On September 15, 1859, the U. S. Post Office established Hollandale, Grimes County, at the depot, and this name remained officially until October 18, 1865, when the post office was changed to Navasota.<sup>87</sup> The U. S. Census of 1860 also calls the village Hollandale.

Records of the United States Post Office Department indicate that the post office established as Hollandale was on Route 8517, from Hempstead, by Hollandale, Booneville, Wheelock, Owensville, Eutaw, Alta Springs, Marlin, Blue Bluff, to Waco Village and back. Mail on the Hempstead, Hollandale route was delivered three and one-half times a week and in four-hour coaches, with F. P. Sawyer and B. A. Fisher of Austin, Texas, serving as contractors.

In 1832, Francis Holland sold the east 1,107 acres of his headright land to an Englishman, Henry Fanthorp, for 25 cents an acre. This land included the present site of Anderson and the famous "Fanthorp Inn."<sup>88</sup>

Two orphan children were also in the household in 1850.<sup>89</sup> They were John Grissett, 11, and his brother, William (Holland) Grissitt, 9. They were the sons of Sarah Holland and W. H. Grissett, both of whom died about 1844. (Sarah Holland Grissett was the second daughter of William Holland, and a niece of Francis Holland).<sup>90</sup> Some years earlier, Sarah and her two sisters had also moved into the Francis Holland home following the death of their parents.<sup>91</sup>

The two little Grissett boys, reared in the Holland House by the Berrymans, grew up with the Alamo story. Mrs. F. M. Bell, of North Zulch, the former Mary Ella Grissett, daughter of William Holland Grissett, assisted the Alamo Library in 1946 during the research for a Tapley Holland picture at the time the Holland painting was done for the Alamo.<sup>92</sup>

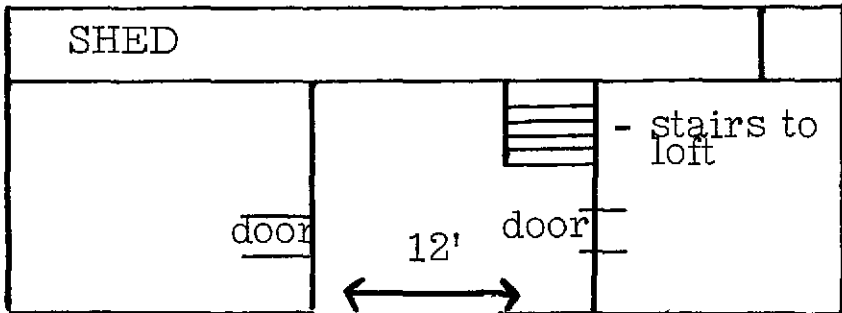
As previously stated, the Holland House was transferred by Nancy Berryman to her son, William, and her grandson, W. T. Schumacher, on November 1, 1879. Subsequently, Schumacher conveyed his interest to William Berryman. Subsequent transfers shown on the deed records of Grimes County, Texas, are as follows:

- (a) W. H. Forrester to S. L. Neblett—1884
- (b) Sterling P. Neblett and wife to Chris Becker—1885
- (c) Chris Becker to Henry E. Becker—1919
- (d) Estate of Henry E. Becker to Joe P. Marek—1946
- (e) Joe P. Marek to Walter B. Ellis—1946
- (f) Walter B. Ellis to R. M. Haley
- (g) R. M. Haley to M. R. Wicham—July 6, 1957

C. W. Becker, of Anderson, descendant of the Beckers who acquired the house in 1885, in 1967 recalled aspects of the Holland House. Mr. Becker, who was born in 1886, says that in his early childhood the house was known as "the old Berryman place." He said the house was originally "an old log house but after Joe Marek bought it he sided it up."<sup>93</sup>

Mr. Becker recalls that the house "had a big wide hall and a big room with exposed logs." There were two cisterns, one in the front and another in the back and water was brought up in a bucket with a rope or chain. His recollection of the plan of the house follows:

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Mr. Becker recalls that "My daddy spent money trying to get water there. He went down 50 or 75 feet and got water, which was kept in stone jars."

Mr. Becker also recalls the old crib of cedar logs southwest of the house.

The old road went north of the Holland House, instead of south as does Highway 90 now.

"I have danced in that house and visited there many times," Becker recalls.

Dayton Kelley, Assistant Director of the Texas Collection at Baylor University, writes in his column, "Texas and Texans":

"The house in which they lived still stands just outside the historical little town of Anderson . . ."

The Holland House has fallen into bad times. Pigeons roost in the "Stranger's Room" and hay fills its rooms. The porch is falling away. The rain and the elements are taking their toll. Surely, someone can turn the key to preserve for future generations this "Home of Heroes."

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>W. P. Zuber: June 26, 1903, *Unpublished Letter to T. P. Buffington*; Archives, University of Texas.

W. P. Zuber was born in Georgia on July 6, 1820. His family migrated to Alabama, thence to Louisiana, and then to Texas in 1830. They established their permanent home in Grimes County in 1833. It was on their journey to Harrisburg in 1831 that they camped on Francis Holland's place and were the recipients of hospitality that Zuber never forgot.

Zuber served in the Texas Army from March 1 to June 1, 1836. Later he served in the army during several Indian campaigns, and in the Civil War. He served as justice of the peace in Grimes County.

A charter member of the Texas State Historical Association, he developed a great interest in Texas history. His article in the 1873 Texas Almanac on the escape of Moses Rose from the Alamo recorded for posterity the story of Travis' drawing the line at the Alamo. He was a prolific writer and his unpublished manuscripts are in the archives of both the University of Texas and the State Library. Because of his longevity he was able to record much of the early day history of Texas before his death in 1913.

It is noted that Zuber refers to the location of the Holland House as being on the "southwest side of Ten Mile Creek" and that other historians have, on the basis of Zuber's writings, used the same direction. It is impossible to reconcile completely this direction with the location of the house long known as the "Holland House." According to early maps, the Ten-Mile Creek had many branches meandering over the area, and it appears that Zuber may have used one of these branches to determine his directions.

<sup>2</sup>Zuber: *Ibid.*

Richardson, *East Texas, Its History and Its Makers, Vol III, 951.*

Some doubt exists about the identification of Millican as Andrew Millican. When W. P. Zuber wrote his first account of this occurrence in *Francis Holland, Immigrant of 1822*, he identified him as "a Mr. Millican." In a footnote to this biography he related:

"Among the Old Three Hundred were three Messrs. Millican: James and Robert and William. All these located their headrights in what is now Brazos County; and all received patents July 16, 1824, but I know not which of the three first settled on 10 Mile Creek. (See *Quarterly of Texas State Historical Association*, Oct. 1897, 115)."

Later, on June 26, 1903, Zuber wrote to T. P. Buffington, and this time he identifies him:

"In 1821, Andrew Millican settled on the Coshatee Trace . . ." In the same letter Zuber goes on to say that after Millican sold his improvements to Holland, he "removed to a point between the Brazos and Nava-sota Rivers, a few miles above their junction. There he started what became known as the Millican settlement, on which the town of Millican now stands."



A check of the *Handbook of Texas* and of the reference indexes in the Archives of the State Library and in the General Land Office reveals no Andrew Millican in Texas at that time.

An Andrew Millican received a league of land on December 13, 1832, but for some unknown reason he is not listed in the Application Book in the Archives of the General Land Office. In such Archives, there is no record of Andrew Millican other than the title to his land.

In 1826, Robert Millican had four boys who would have been old enough to receive a land grant in 1832.

<sup>1</sup>Zuber: *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup>W. P. Zuber: *Francis Holland, Immigrant of 1822*, Unpublished Manuscript; Archives, University of Texas.

<sup>3</sup>E. L. Blair: *Early History of Grimes County*, 77.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>5</sup>Irene Taylor Allen: *Saga of Anderson*, 28.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>7</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>L. G. Bugbee: "The Old Three Hundred," *Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association*, Volume 1, 51 and 54.

<sup>10</sup>Allen: *Saga of Anderson*, 25.

<sup>11</sup>*Deed Records, Grimes County, Texas*, Volume 83, 232.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 233.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 233-234.

<sup>15</sup>*Montgomery County Transcribed Deed Records*, Volume D, 168-171.

<sup>16</sup>Dutch Histo-Wall, Institute of Texas Cultures, San Antonio.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>Survey Map, Grimes County, Texas.

<sup>19</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>20</sup>Zuber: *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>Records of Moore & McKinstry, *Samuel Williams' Papers*, Rosenberg Library, Galveston.

<sup>22</sup>Affidavit of Heirship executed by Susan Parker before the Chief Justice of Robertson County, dated 30 August 1857; now in State Archives.

<sup>23</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>20</sup>Biographical Sketch of Richard Burney, *History of McLennan, Falls and Coryell Counties, Texas*.

<sup>21</sup>*Probate Court Records*, Grimes County, Vol. 1, 103.

<sup>22</sup>Blair: *Early History of Grimes County*, 106.

<sup>23</sup>*U. S. Census*, Grimes County.

<sup>24</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>25</sup>R. L. Jones, Abstractor, Anderson, Texas.

<sup>26</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>27</sup>Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*, Unpublished Manuscript in Archives, University of Texas.

<sup>28</sup>Barker, "Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin for year 1830," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXIII (1919-20), 70 and 73.

<sup>29</sup>*Applications for Land*, General Land Office.

<sup>30</sup>Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*.

In the fall of 1835, Capt. Joseph L. Bennett lived in Montgomery County and recruited his volunteers from that neighborhood. By late October the Bennett volunteers were part of a group of some 1,000 men at the headquarters which Stephen F. Austin, Commander in Chief of the Army, established about eight miles from Bexar. In the official report of the Battle of Concepcion filed by Bowie and Fannin to General Austin, it was reported that the Bennett company occupied the north side under the immediate command of Bowie. The report states that, "a small detachment of 92 men thus gained a most decisive victory over the main army of the central government (Mexican), and . . . every man was a soldier, and did his duty." James Holland and two of his brothers were members of Captain Bennett's company.

<sup>31</sup>Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*.

<sup>32</sup>Zuber: *Letter to Buffington*.

<sup>33</sup>*Capt. Eli Seal's list of Rangers, January 1, 1836*, State Archives.

*Muster Roll of The Ranging Company raised under the Superintendence of Silas M. Parker agreeably to order from the Council of Texas*, State Archives.

<sup>34</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>35</sup>*Names of Persons who enrolled themselves as Volunteers for a term of three months' service in the Texas Army, East Side of the Brazos, Washington County, June 30, 1836*, State Archives.

<sup>36</sup>*Discharge signed by Capt. J.G.W. Pierson, 30 September 1836*, State Archives.

<sup>37</sup>Wilbarger: *Indian Depredations in Texas*, 360.

Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*.

<sup>44</sup>Inventory of Estate of Francis Holland, Jr., *Probate Records of Montgomery County, Texas*.

<sup>45</sup>Zuber: *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup>Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*.

<sup>47</sup>*U. S. Census*, Grimes County.

<sup>48</sup>Tapley Holland Receipt, *Samuel Williams' Papers*, Rosenberg Library, Galveston, Texas.

<sup>49</sup>Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*.

<sup>50</sup>*The Texas Almanac*, 1873, 81-85.

Zuber: *Letter to General William Steele*, September 14, 1877.

*Ibid.*: September 24, 1877.

Rufus Grimes: *Letter to Hon. E.M. Pease*, July 20, 1876.

R. B. Blake: *Rose and His Escape from the Alamo*.

Lon Tinkle: *13 Days to Glory*.

Walter Lord: *A Time to Stand*.

<sup>51</sup>State of Texas Marker.

<sup>52</sup>Plaque in Alamo.

<sup>53</sup>Zuber: *James and Francis Holland, Brothers*.

<sup>54</sup>*Capt. Eli Seal's List of Rangers*, January 1, 1836, State Archives.

<sup>55</sup>*Tapley Holland's Bounty Land Warrant*, State Archives.

<sup>56</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>57</sup>Francis Holland Estate, *Probate Records, Montgomery County, Texas*.

<sup>58</sup>Worth S. Ray: *Austin Colony Pioneers*, 122.

<sup>59</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>60</sup>R. L. Jones, Abstractor, Grimes County Abstract Company, Anderson, Texas.

<sup>61</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>62</sup>Zuber: *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup>*Handbook of Texas*, Volume 1, 825.

<sup>64</sup>Marion Day Mullins: *First Census of Texas*, 46.

*First Census of Austin's Colony*, 1826, Spanish Archives, General Land Office.

<sup>65</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*. This was a census taken in Austin's Colony.

<sup>66</sup>Zuber: *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>"Commission to take Interrogatories concerning Tapley Holland, c/c Vouchers, 16, File (H-L), General Land Office at Austin.

<sup>7</sup>"*Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup>"E. C. Barker, *History of Texas*.

<sup>9</sup>"Barker, *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, 125.

<sup>10</sup>"Barker, "The Austin Papers," *Annual Report of American Historical Association*, 1919, Part II, 1552.

<sup>11</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

Blair: *Early History of Grimes County*, 104.

Zuber: *Buffington Letter*.

*Biographical Directory of Texan Conventions and Congresses* (1941).

Zuber refers in one place to Holland as being a "sub-alcalde" which he said, in 1903, was equivalent to a justice of the peace. In another place he refers to Holland as having been a "District Alcalde." Since no actual evidence of his election as an Alcalde for a Municipality has been found, it is believed likely that he only served as a "Comisario" which, in the precinct, was an office which involved minor judicial duties much like our present justice of the peace.

<sup>12</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>13</sup>Barker, *Life of Stephen F. Austin*, 211.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 211-212.

<sup>15</sup>Eugene C. Barker, "Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin, 1828-1832," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXI, No. 4 (April 1918), 415.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, XXIV, No. 2 (Oct. 1920), 161.

<sup>17</sup>Barker, "The Austin Papers," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1919, Part I, 772.

<sup>18</sup>Dutch Histo-Wall, Institute of Texan Cultures, San Antonio, Texas.

<sup>19</sup>Barker, "Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin for year 1830," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXI, 71-72.

<sup>20</sup>Blair: *Early History of Grimes County*.

Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

*Biographical Directory of Texas Conventions and Congresses* (1941).

<sup>21</sup>Blair: *Early History of Grimes County*, 19.

Barker, "Minutes of the Ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXI, (1918), 408-409.

<sup>22</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>23</sup>Records of Postmaster General, Washington, D.C.

<sup>81</sup>Allen: *Saga of Anderson*, 29.

<sup>82</sup>*U. S. Census*, Grimes County.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup>Blair: *Early History of Grimes County*, 106.

<sup>85</sup>Zuber: *Francis Holland*.

<sup>86</sup>D.R.T. Library, Alamo.

<sup>87</sup>Interview with Kara H. Burney, Anderson, 1967.

<sup>88</sup>Column published in various Texas newspapers.