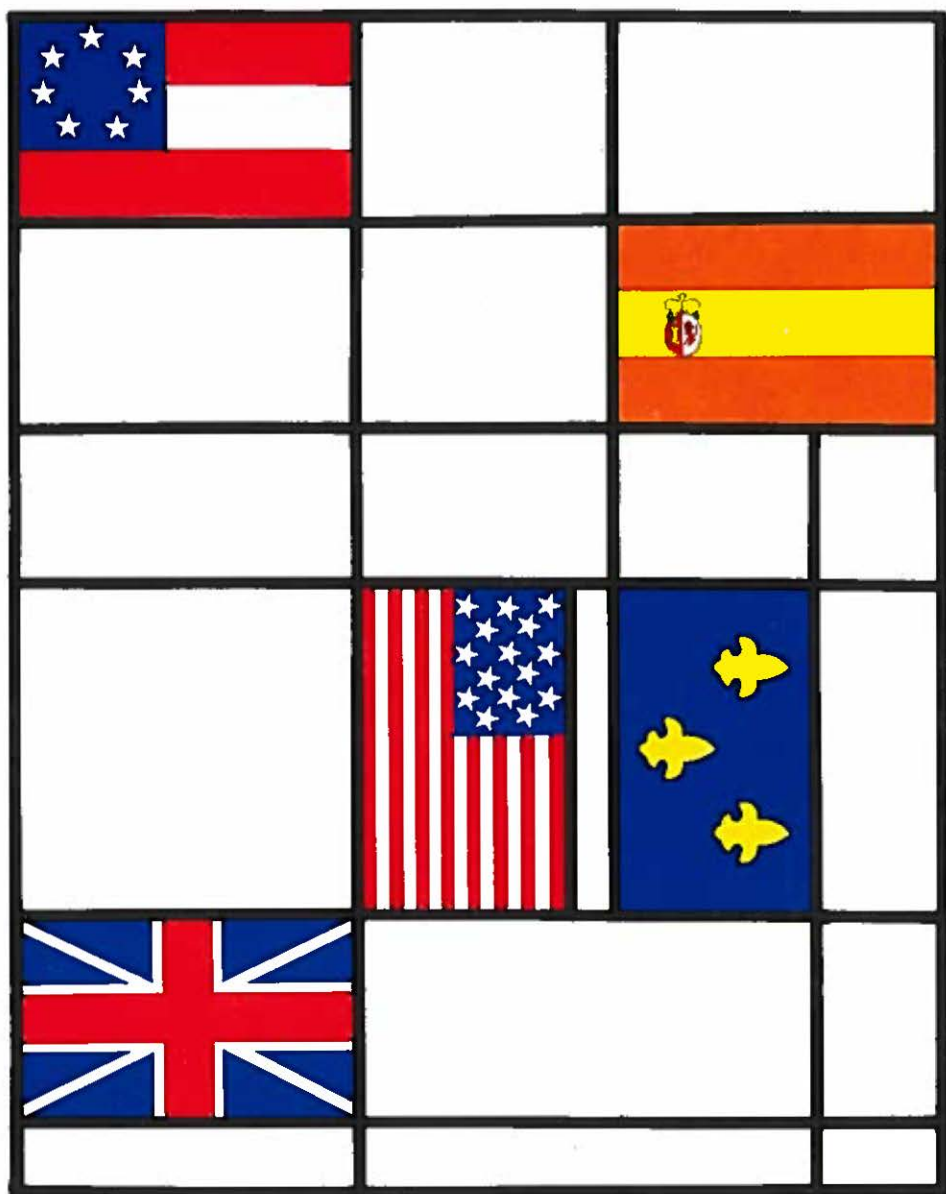


G/C Gulf Coast **H/R** Historical Review

Vol. 5

No. 1



G/C Gulf Coast H/R Historical Review

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Fall 1989

No. 1

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From the Editors. . . .

With each fall issue we are conscious that the *GCHR* is another year older. As we start our fifth year it's hardly accurate to say that the time has flown by, but it has brought changes and, we hope, improvements in this journal. In some ways each issue gets easier to produce but the challenge to bring our readers good articles remains. When we succeed, thanks are due to our contributors, and we think that the quality of submissions keeps getting better and better. That may be because our journal is getting better known all the time, and if so, that's thanks to the continued support of our subscribers. Without you we wouldn't have survived long enough to attract the attention which is now bringing us such worthwhile contributions.

Our connection with the Gulf Coast History and Humanities Conference has also helped. As you recall our previous issue (Vol. 4, No. 2) was the *Proceedings* of the 1986 conference on the Civil War. By the way, it has been well received and is "selling like hot cakes," at least by the standards of scholarly publications. Next spring we will produce the *Proceedings* volume for the Maritime history conference held in Mobile in March 1989. The Conference itself was very successful and we feel sure that the *Proceedings* volume will be outstanding. The next conference, which will be held in Pensacola October 3-5, 1991, will focus on exploration and discovery in celebration of the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World. The papers presented at that meeting will appear as our Spring 1992 issue. For more information about that conference, contact Dr. W.S. Coker, Chairman, Department of History, University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL 32514.

With two *Proceedings* volumes bracketing this issue, we have modified our usual format. Because there is no space for book reviews in our *Proceedings* numbers, we are bringing you four times as many as usual in this issue. The range of titles and the quality of reviews is a tribute to the diligence of our new book review editor, Dr. James McSwain. It would have been a shame to hold this material for another year, and so we bring it to you even if it means the temporary deletion of our articles featuring historic photos and a visit to a Gulf Coast historic site. They'll return in future issues as we re-establish the rhythm that the publications of two *Proceedings* volumes has temporarily disturbed.

In addition to reviews, this issue has three outstanding articles and a fine account of the newly established archives in Meridian, Mississippi. The articles examine the visit of Ulysses S. Grant to Mobile in 1880 and the nature of the reception he received, the Civil War's impact on the Catholic Church in the sprawling diocese of Galveston, and finally, excerpts from a remarkable diary kept by a young woman in rural Washington County, Alabama early in the twentieth century. Taken together the three articles span just over two generations of Gulf Coast history, yet the diversity of experience they portray is truly remarkable.

We hope you enjoy this issue and we look forward to hearing your reactions to the journal. Naturally we hope to hear unending praise, but need to hear the truth, so tell us what you think. Your comments have helped us shape the *GCHR* for the last four years and your subscriptions have kept us going into our fifth year. Don't stop now . . . with comments and subscription renewals.

.....

As some of you may already know the University of South Alabama Archives building was struck by a tornado at 9:30 p.m. Friday, May 19. The building was severely damaged and we had no choice but to remove the collection as fast as we could. For three weeks we worked to transfer the archives to the space which had earlier been assigned to it in USA Springhill Avenue. Although it will be several months before we are back in full operation, the collection is safe and survived the experience with virtually no damage. Our new location promises to be a tremendous improvement in every way — but we would never have gotten there without the hundreds of manhours provided by students, faculty, and friends after the tornado struck. Our mailing address is University of South Alabama Archives, USASA 0722, Mobile, AL 36688. The telephone number is (205) 434-3800.

So, the archives' brush with Mother Nature provides another example that it is an "ill wind which blows no man to good," as Shakespeare said in *Henry IV*, Part 2.

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*U.S. Grant and Political Rivals, Frank
Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper,
April 10, 1880*

*W. S. Hoole Special Collections
Library, University of Alabama*

“The Past is Gone” Ulysses S. Grant Visits Mobile

William Warren Rogers, Jr.

Following his second term as president, Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia, embarked in 1877 on a much publicized trip around the world. The American couple spent over two years traveling through England, France, Germany, nearly every other European country, Egypt, the Holy Land, China, and Japan before returning in 1879. During Grant's absence, and increasingly following his return, he was mentioned prominently by Republicans as a candidate for president in 1880. That Grant desired a third term is clear. He did not, however, admit to that ambition. Instead, possibly at the urging of managers who believed it correct political strategy, he and Julia began another extended journey. After spending Christmas in Washington, D.C., the Grants headed south. Fred Grant, the President's oldest son, his wife, General and Mrs. Phillip Sheridan, and several others accompanied them. Traveling by train, and moving down the eastern coast, the party reached Florida in early January. Later that month, the Grant entourage sailed from Key West to Cuba, and after a two-week layover, on to Mexico in the middle of February.¹

The final leg of that trip began in Texas at Galveston on March 23. If Grant doubted his welcome in Texas, he did not do so long. Cheering Galvestonians lined the streets, and in a style befitting a foreign potentate, the Union hero was escorted through town. Several days of banquets, excursions, and praise set the tone for the southern tour. Jefferson Davis could not have been honored more. On March 26, having been invited by a delegation from San Antonio to visit the Alamo City, Grant left Galveston. In San Antonio, and then in Houston, the ex-president attracted large crowds. He spoke approvingly of the progress toward healing sectional wounds. Intending to board a steamer later and sail up the Mississippi River toward home in Ohio, the group moved on to New Orleans on March 31. Grant planned to stay a week in the Crescent City. Not everyone welcomed the former adversary to Louisiana, a state where Reconstruction had been especially bitter. Still, the mood was generally exuberant. Grant praised his hosts at a St. Charles Hotel banquet and proclaimed, “the past is gone.”² By then the ex-president had accepted an invitation from the Mobile Cotton Exchange to visit that Alabama city.

In 1880 Mobile was the largest city in Alabama and claimed a population of about thirty thousand residents. A large minority of the citizens were black. As a port of commerce, and having contact with northern states and Europe, the city also had a relatively high number of residents born outside the South. Mobile even looked different. Its bending live oaks, magnolia trees, and gardens imparted to one observer “a semi-tropical appearance.” Fundamentally, however, Mobile was a city populated by Alabamians with a southern outlook. Its citizens had enthusiastically supported the Confederate cause and attempted

unsuccessfully to defend Mobile and the harbor from Union attack late in the war. Like other white Southerners, Mobilians resented Republican political domination during Reconstruction. A riot resulted in 1867 when citizens took violent exception to the remarks of a visiting northern Republican.³

Economic problems had compounded difficulties during the years of post-war adjustment. Adversely affected by city fiscal mismanagement and the Panic of 1873, Mobile was just emerging from several years of sharp economic decline. Only a year before Grant came to Mobile the Alabama state legislature had abolished the insolvent city government. Authority was vested in the Port of Mobile under the new arrangement. A City Recorder, three Port Commissioners, and a nine-member Board of Police Commissioners comprised municipal government. Against this backdrop, the ex-president's invitation, tendered by the Cotton Exchange, was especially revealing. Some leading businessmen had organized the Cotton Exchange in 1871 to promote Mobile as a center for handling and exporting cotton. That end — facilitating trade and commerce — was foremost in the minds of those who invited Grant. The port could not accommodate deep-drawing ships, and congressional appropriations were badly needed to dredge the harbor. If Grant made a personal inspection and was reelected President, support might be forthcoming. Editor William Screws of the *Montgomery Advertiser* framed the invitation in its proper context: "It is said that Grant stands by his friends." Once the general was elected, the *Advertiser's* editor surmised, "He will not have the heart to say to Mobile, 'Depart from me I never knew you.'"⁴

As Grant left Texas and moved on to more acclaim in Louisiana, Cotton Exchange officials asked the Board of Commissioners to co-sponsor the invitation. Commissioners Frank Adams put the question before the board on March 26. Concerned about the reaction, Commissioner Price Williams



MOBILE, ALABAMA.

Bird's eye view of Mobile

*Mrs. Carter C. Smith
Collection*

suggested that the city government delay consideration. In the meantime, the officials determined to "learn the opinion of the people of Mobile on the question."⁵

Some Gulf City residents approved of the projected visit. As members of the Cotton Exchange and other business-minded citizens realized, to invite Grant was to seize an opportunity. Welcoming the northern hero was also a gesture of reconciliation and an affirmation of a New South. And, as the large crowds that turned out when he arrived indicated, many Mobilians were simply curious to see Grant. For blacks, who felt an obvious debt to the general, and had voted for him for president in 1868 and again in 1872, the event was especially momentous.

Among Grant's admirers was Jones Mitchell Withers. He seemed an unlikely supporter. Withers was a native Southerner, a Democrat, and a former-Confederate Brigadier General. He had lived in Mobile since 1841 and acted as a commission agent and practiced law. Between 1856-1860 and 1865-1866, he served as mayor.

Yet, two weeks before Grant arrived, Withers praised the ex-president in a long letter to the *New York Times*. He also assessed past and present southern political developments. The South, Withers claimed, must look inward to affix blame for the turmoil of Reconstruction. A large white Democratic majority had erred by accepting the obstructionist course of ex-president Andrew Johnson. Unfortunately, Withers continued, the hostilities caused by the war and Reconstruction still remained. Noting the building momentum for a third term, he defended the ex-president's record. Grant should not be held personally accountable for the unpopular "Radical" Reconstruction policies. The former mayor further reasoned that Grant might be the only individual able to unify the country.⁶

Withers did not speak for a majority of white residents. Most considered Grant less a hero than a villain. His identification with the Republican Party antagonized a partisan Democratic population. Although Grant had not been the architect of Republican Reconstruction policy, he had helped implement unpopular "Radical" legislation. White Mobilians noted that he had presided over a period of extreme government corruption. A final consideration inevitably involved Grant's role in the Civil War. More than any single individual he had been responsible for the South's defeat. The citizens of the state where the Confederacy was born were unlikely to forgive the hero of Vicksburg and the man who had captured Richmond. Anticipating Grant's visit, one particularly embittered Mobile woman promised, "if he comes in one door she would go out the other."⁷ The war remained a vivid memory fifteen years after Appomattox.

Some indication of Grant's unpopularity was evidenced by a long editorial that appeared in the *Mobile Register*. Joseph Hodgson, an outspoken Democrat and former Confederate colonel, edited the influential *Register*. Hodgson responded to Withers's letter several days before Grant entered the city. The editor could not imagine a worse scenario than a third Grant

administration. Eight years was long enough to suffer a man who acted as president of his "party" rather than of the "Union." During Grant's tenure, white Southerners had felt the brunt of military rule and degradation. Neither was the president above the corruption that had characterized his administration. Learning of the "Whisky Ring" conspirators, Grant had sternly declared, "Let no guilty man escape." Even so, Hodgson reminded his readers, he had permitted most of the guilty to avoid punishment. The journalist labeled Withers a "Grant eulogist" and defended the South's past course. To have followed a path of less resistance would have been tantamount to "moral suicide."⁸

Despite the vacillation of city government officials and some criticism, members of the Cotton Exchange formed a Committee on Arrangements and began preparations. Joining in the spirit of hospitality was the black community. At a meeting on April 2, blacks adopted resolutions inviting the president to Mobile. What remained was Grant's acquiescence and Lyman C. Dorgan received that. Dorgan was a native of Mobile and a partner in the cotton-buying firm of Dorgan and Abbot. As chairman of the Committee on Arrangements, he traveled to New Orleans on April 2, and invited the former chief executive to visit Mobile as a guest of the Cotton Exchange. Grant had mentioned in Galveston that he hoped to visit Mobile. He agreed to come on Friday, April 9, although he regretted that his tight schedule would prevent him from spending the night. Dorgan wired acknowledgement of Grant's acceptance.

A small but revealing controversy surfaced immediately. The *Mobile Register* had earlier printed a list of individuals belonging to the Committee on Arrangements. The name of George A. Ketchum had appeared on the list. Ketchum was a prominent doctor and a former Confederate surgeon. In a note, published on the front page of the *Register*, Ketchum declared that he had never belonged to the committee and asked that his name be removed. He did not mention Grant, but the retraction indicated a disapproval that many Gulf City residents shared.⁹

The reaction of a solidly Democratic state press to Grant's invitation ranged from angry despair to seeming approval. Editor Screws of the *Montgomery Advertiser* opposed Grant's reelection, but he understood why he had been invited to Mobile. He pointed out that the city was dependent on commerce and the cotton trade. Well aware that Grant might be returned to the White House, the city's business leaders had acted out of a sense of economic expediency. Hosting Grant was a pragmatic act. Mobile has "heard the piping," explained Screws, and "she is going to dance."¹⁰ The editor of the *Tuscaloosa Times* was less understanding. John Warren flatly asked, "What has Grant done that any Southern man or men should offer him a welcome?" That question might best be answered by one-armed Civil War veterans, Confederate widows, and owners of homes burned down by invading Yankee incendiaries. Warren was "ashamed" at the "spirit of bootlicking."¹¹ James Stanley, editor of the *Greenville Advocate*, had recently

visited Mobile. Inevitably, he overheard the Grant speculation. The *Advocate* referred to the ex-president as the "God of Battle" and wished him a pleasant visit.¹²

Private citizens also made their opinions known. An unidentified reader of the *Mobile Register* criticized the lavish entertainment of Grant in Texas and Louisiana and commended Hodgson for not kowtowing to the "Grant idol." The unreconstructed Mobilian considered Grant undeserving of favorable consideration and added, "we owe him nothing and the North nothing."¹³ The self-styled "Oconee" corrected the *Montgomery Advertiser's* contention that Mobile was catering to Grant for future political leverage. The anonymous contributor accused Screws of misrepresenting the situation. Only a few "thoughtless" men were responsible for inviting Grant. Proof was provided by George Ketchum, who had refused to lend his name to the Committee on Arrangements. The "true and noble" Mobilians, according to Oconee, objected to a man who had signed the Civil Rights Act of 1874, lobbied for the Force bill, and generally abused the office of the presidency.¹⁴

In the meantime plans were finalized. Grant was expected to arrive early in the afternoon of April 9. He would be taken by carriage downtown to a reception and lunch at the Manassas Club, a private mens' organization. Across the street, at the Customs House, a reception given by Mobile's blacks was scheduled for later that afternoon. Aware of the General's love of horses, his hosts planned an excursion to the Magnolia Race Course still later. A banquet at the Battle House Hotel would conclude events that evening.

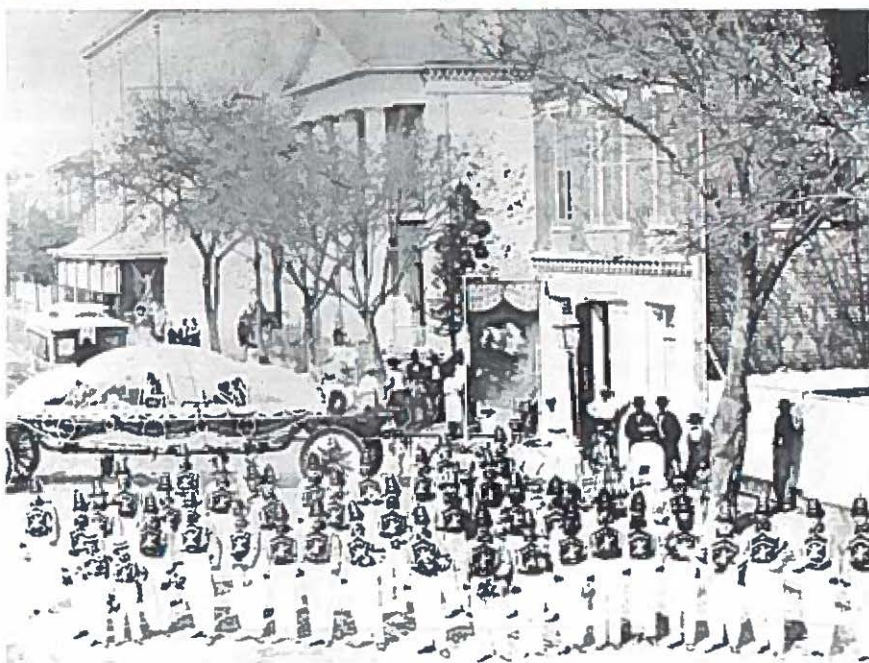


Government Street L&N Station,
c. 1900

Historic Mobile Preservation
Society

On April 8, Albert Bush, Lyman Dorgan, Frederick Ingate, Julian Whiting, and Louis Kennerly, all respected men in Mobile, traveled to New Orleans. A special train had been engaged to take Grant from New Orleans to Mobile and back. The next morning, at nine o'clock, the train left the Crescent City. Aboard was Grant, the Mobile contingent, the ex-president's doctor, his private secretary, a few friends and several newspaper correspondents.

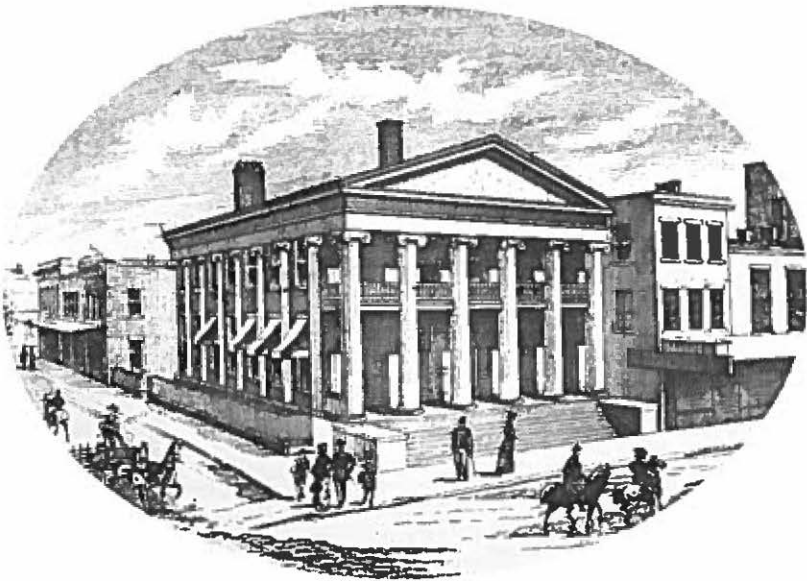
Mobile lay one hundred forty miles east of New Orleans. Following brief stops at Mississippi towns where crowds had gathered, the presidential train reached the Gulf City around one o'clock. A crowd of eight to ten thousand citizens, composed mostly of blacks, had assembled at the train depot near the foot of Government Street. Members of the Alabama State Artillery fired cannon blasts announcing his arrival. Moments later, at Grant's appearance, the Washington Blues, a black military company, saluted him with several erratic rounds of musketry. William Gardner, President of the



Fireman's Day Parade, c. 1880

Mobile Public Library

Cotton Exchange, was among those who greeted the ex-president inside a roped-off cordon. Typically, Grant wore a well-tailored dark suit. He soon stepped into a carriage, and the horse-drawn carriage, led by a brass band, set out for the business district. The procession moved slowly through crowds of enthusiastic blacks described by a Chicago *Interocean* reporter as "completely crazed with ecstasy."¹⁵ More detached white spectators looked on curiously from balconies and behind windows. Grant's arrival coincided



Manassas Club, c. 1880

University of South Alabama Archives

with Fireman's Day. Whether the crowds that lined the streets had gathered to see the firemen or the hero was uncertain. At any rate, the handsomely dressed members of the hook and ladder companies added to the pagentry (and the confusion).

It took the presidential carriage an hour to travel the mile route between the depot and the Manassas Club, located at the corner of Royal and St. Francis streets. Some of Mobile's leading citizens had gathered in the tastefully decorated upstairs club rooms. Among them was John Welch. A former surgeon in the Union Army, Welch had moved to Mobile with his family after the war. Welch was an exception. Most of those present had fought opposite Grant. William Gardner, who had served in the Confederate Army as a captain, called the reception to order. Emphasizing that prosperity required burying past differences, Gardner welcomed the ex-president on behalf of the Cotton Exchange and Mobile merchants.

Despite their initial caution, Public Recorder Robert Owens and other city government officials were present. A succession of recent receptions had apparently not dulled the ex-president into a lethargic display of interest. He conversed politely with his hosts and a New Orleans *Democrat* correspondent reported that "good feeling and jollity reigned."¹⁶ John Welch was among those who spoke and shook hands with the dignitary. The local doctor (who probably mentioned his Union service record) later told his family that Grant "looks exactly like his picture."¹⁷ Leaving the Manassas Club momentarily, the General appeared on the gallery and acknowledged the blacks who had collected on Royal Street. Some of the crowd cried out for a speech.



United States Customs House, c. 1880

USA Archives

Often reticent and uncomfortable as a public speaker, Grant did not oblige them. After lunch at the Manassas Club, he crossed the street and met with black citizens in the handsome granite Customs house. The man second only to Abraham Lincoln in the affections of freedmen shook hands with men, women, and children until he became tired. Parodying Grant's well-known aggressive military tendencies, a journalist reported that "for once he had to fall back."¹⁸

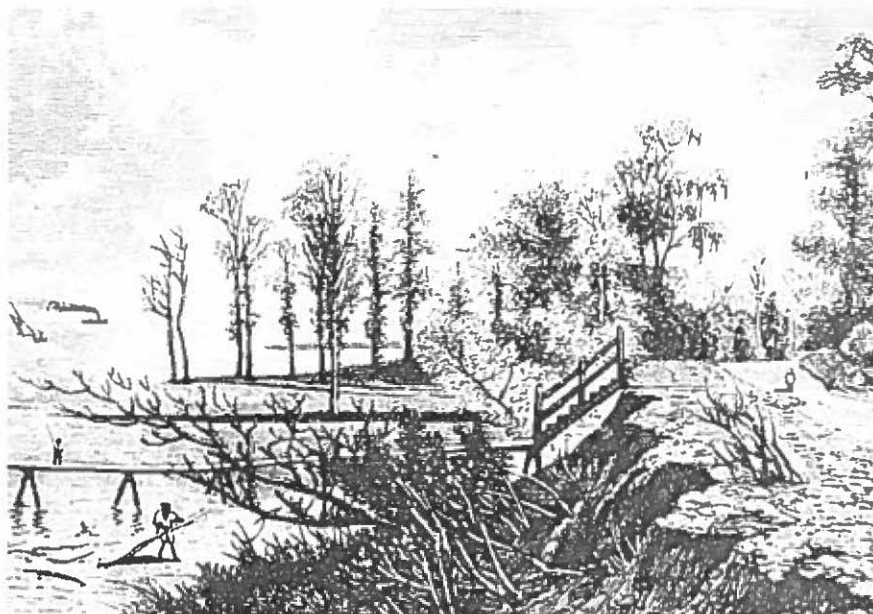
A little later that afternoon Grant accompanied several of his hosts on a carriage ride out the Bay Shell Road. The purpose was two-fold. Some of Mobile's most impressive residences were located there, and visitors were often taken along the picturesque magnolia-lined road which skirted the bay. Secondly, the road led to the Magnolia Race Course. Horse racing was traditionally popular in Mobile and William Cottrill, a local citizen, was one of the most respected horse breeders in the country. "Kimball" was presently the pride of the Cottrill stables. As a member of the escort explained to the ex-president, the dark chestnut was the best three-year-old colt in the country. Grant admired "Kimball" and recalled two stallions given him by the Sultan of Turkey. The presidential party soon returned to the Battle House Hotel and rested several hours before the banquet.¹⁹

The Battle House had been completed in 1852, and having over 275 rooms, was the most regal hotel in Alabama. In the chandeliered dining room, where the banquet was to be held, three long tables had been set up to accommodate two hundred guests. Carefully arranged flowers added to the decor. About 8:30 p.m., as the dinner began, the guest of honor took

his seat at the head table between State Supreme Court Justice Amos R. Manning and William Gardner. Grant had dined sumptuously throughout his journey, and the fare in Mobile was no exception.

The meal, prepared in French haute cuisine, began with a local specialty: oysters on the half shell. Green Turtle Soup Imperial, Broiled Pompano, Tenderloin of Flounder, and various hor d'oerves followed. Guests selected from a list of entrees that included Epigram of Chicken a la Montpelier, Cotlette de Agneau en Macedon, and Filet de Carnard a la Zingara. Prepared variously — baked, broiled and often sauteed — the entrees ended the first course. Punch a la Tomaine (iced fruit) began the second course which featured thirteen different desserts. Although confused by the French titles, the guests enjoyed Pyramid of Macaroons, Gateaux de Petivier, Blanc Mange, Charlotte Russe and other delectable choices. Sherry, claret, and champagne, served after dessert, completed the feast.

It was not until eleven o'clock, when William Gardner raised his glass to Grant, that the first toast was made. The guest of honor spoke next. Rising from his seat, Grant prefaced his remarks by apologizing for repeating comments that he had made in Texas and Louisiana. Yet, as his experience in Mobile had further impressed on him, great harmony existed between the South and the "section from which I come." He noted the warm receptions offered him from Texas to Alabama. Grant's endorsement of local efforts to develop Mobile's resources especially interested Cotton Exchange members



*Looking south along the Bay Shell
Road, c. 1880*



Battle House, c. 1880

USA Archives

and other commerce-minded citizens. Grant forecast continued cooperation and thanked his hosts for allowing him to visit their city. His remarks, characteristically short, were punctuated by applause, and as he sat down an ensemble struck up "Hail to the Chief." Grant's only public comment, delivered without a text, and consisting of 273 words, took less than three minutes.

Several other individuals also offered toasts. In keeping with Grant's theme, Supreme Court Justice Manning spoke of improving sectional relations. Alabamians believed in the indivisibility of the Union, he declared. Borrowing Grant's well-known axiom, Manning urged (to loud applause) "Let us Have Peace."²⁰

Sometime after midnight the banquet broke up, and members of the presidential party made their way to the Government Street depot. The train departed for New Orleans at one thirty. Weary but content, Grant relaxed with a bottle of Bass's ale and several cigars. His often noted stoic manner belied the pleasure and satisfaction he took from displays of public adulation. He considered his first and only trip to Alabama a success.

GEN. GRANT'S VISIT TO MOBILE

RECEPTION AND ENTERTAINMENT BY THE COTTON EXCHANGE.

He Shakes Hands with the Colored People
at the Custom-house.

Mobile Register, April 10, 1880

Museum of the City of Mobile

Grant left Mobile unaware of the controversy his presence had provoked. He had wanted to visit the Gulf City and he was not disappointed. Civil pride and a community-wide sense of hospitality allowed a discredited ex-president and former military foe a warm welcome. Not a little calculation on the part of the Cotton Exchange also played a role.

Just below the veneer of good will, a strong current of resentment and dissatisfaction existed. The day following Grant's departure, Editor Hodgson reiterated that the visitor had come under the aegis of the Cotton Exchange and not the city. He maintained correctly that most whites had nothing to do with Grant's invitation, or, once in Mobile, his entertainment. Marcy Welch, the daughter of Dr. John Welch, realized the consensus. She explained in a letter to an Australian cousin that the "cotton men" had invited Grant in defiance of "the most prominent men in the city." That some of the "cotton men" numbered among Mobile's elite was not mentioned. Aware of animosities, she had worried that the president might be insulted or worse. The opposite had occurred. Mary Welch informed her cousin that "the instinct for politeness common to our people carried the day." Grant had been "received well — outwardly." ²¹

The Republican convention was held in Chicago two months after Grant left Mobile. Of the nomination, Grant had written a friend in the South, "it is a matter of supreme indifference to me" ²² That was not so. He wanted the nomination badly. Although Grant commanded significant support, other Republicans offered a clean break with the corruption that had stained his final administration. Among those seeking the nomination were James G. Blaine, George F. Edmunds, James A. Garfield, and Elihu E. Washburne. Capturing 304 votes, Grant led on the first ballot. Sixteen of the twenty Alabama delegates supported him. Yet the convention deadlocked, the Union hero lost momentum, and James Garfield received the nomination and was elected president in 1880.

Other personal setbacks followed for Grant. Various poor investments left him destitute by 1884. That same year he became sick with cancer. Grant summoned his strength and began working on his memoirs. The ex-president finished the critically acclaimed two volume work shortly before dying on July 23, 1885. In a rambling final chapter, completed days before his death,

Grant wrote of the country's future. Repeating essentially what he had made clear to his Mobile hosts five years earlier, Ulysses Grant predicted "I feel that we are on the eve of great harmony between the Federal and Confederate." ²³ The past had gone.

Notes

¹ *New York Times*, January 7, 23, February 14, 1880; William S. McFeely, *Grant A Biography* (New York, 1981), 479; William B. Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant Politician* (New York, 1935), 431-34.

² *Chicago InterOcean*, April 6, 7, 1880; *Galveston News*, March 24, 25, 1880.

³ *Tenth Census, (1880)*, "Report of the Social Statistics of Cities" (Washington, 1887), 19:195; "Population," 1:96, 380; a number of studies of Mobile have been completed. See Harriet Amos, *Cotton City: Urban Development in Antebellum Mobile* (Tuscaloosa, 1988); Caldwell Delaney, *The Story of Mobile* (Mobile, 1981); Jay Higginbotham, *Mobile City by the Bay* (Mobile, 1968); Melton McLaurin and Michael Thomason, *Mobile: The Life and Times of a Great Southern City* (Woodland Hills, CA, 1981); Charles G. Summersell, *Mobile: History of a Seaport Town* (Tuscaloosa, 1949); Alan Smith Thompson, "Mobile, Alabama, 1850-1861: Economic, Political, Physical, and Population Characteristics" (Ph.D. diss., University of Alabama, 1979); Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins, "The 'Pig Iron' Kelly Riot in Mobile, May 14, 1967," *Alabama Review* 23 (January 1970):45-50.

⁴ *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, April 6, 1880; *Tenth Census (1880)*, "Social Statistics of Cities," 19:194; McLaurin and Thomason, *Mobile*, 70-73, 78-79; Summersell, *History of a Seaport Town*, 43-44.

⁵ "Minutes of the Mobile Police Commissioners" (1880), 319, 323, 333-34, City of Mobile Police Commissioners Records, 1.15, Mobile Municipal Archives.

⁶ *New York Times*, March 29, 1880; Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (Chicago, 1921) 4:1792-1793.

⁷ Mary Welch to Sarah Welch, April 1880, printed transcript of letter in Ulysses S. Grant Manuscript File, Museum of the City of Mobile; *Mobile Daily Register*, April 2, 1880.

⁸ *Mobile Daily Register*, April 2, 1880; Owen, *Dictionary of Alabama Biography* 3:823-24.

⁹ John E. Land, *Mobile: Her Trade and Commerce and Industries 1883-4* (Mobile, 1884), 108; *Mobile Daily Register*, April 6, 1880; *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, April 3, 1880; *Galveston Daily News*, March 24, 1880; Owen, *Dictionary of Alabama Biography* 3:968.

¹⁰ *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, April 6, 1880.

¹¹ *Tuscaloosa Times*, April 7, 1880.

¹² *Greenville Advocate*, April 1, 1880.

¹³ *Mobile Daily Register*, April 6, 1880.

¹⁴ *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, April 7, 1880.

¹⁵ Chicago *Interocean*, April 10, 1880; *Mobile Daily Register*, April 10, 1880; New Orleans *Democrat*, Mobile 10, 1880; *Mobile Directory, 1880* (Mobile, 1880), 25, 52, 97, 107, 217; "Rules of the Manassas Club, Mobile," (Mobile, 1862), 3, Manassas Club Manuscript File, Museum of the City of Mobile.

¹⁶ New Orleans *Democrat*, April 10, 1880; *Mobile Daily Register*, April 10, 1880; Chicago *Interocean*, April 10, 1880; Pat Roberts, *Emily's Journal* (Richmond, South Australia, 1986), 62.

¹⁷ Mary Welch to Sarah Welch, April 1880, Grant Manuscript File, Museum of the City of Mobile.

¹⁸ *Mobile Daily Register*, April 10, 1880; McFeely, *Grant*, 154.

¹⁹ *Mobile Daily Register*, April 10, 1880; Chicago *Interocean*, April 10, 1880; Race Track Manuscript File, Museum of the City of Mobile.

²⁰ *Mobile Daily Register*, April 10, 1880; Amos, *Cotton City*, 45.

²¹ Mary Welch to Sarah Welch, April 10, 1880, Grant Manuscript File, Museum of the City of Mobile; *Mobile Daily Register*, April 10, 1880.

²² James Grant Wilson, ed., *General Grant's Letters to a Friend 1861-18??* (New York, 1897), 105-106.

²³ Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant* (New York, 1885) 2:553; McFeely, *Grant*, 508-517.

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*Jean Marie Odin, first bishop of Galveston
and later archbishop of New Orleans*

Catholic Archives of Texas, Austin

The Diocese of Galveston and War, 1861-1865

James T. Moore

When the Civil War began in 1861, the Roman Catholic diocese of Galveston, which included the entire state of Texas, was only fifteen years old. Although the Catholic Church was first established in Texas during the days of the Spanish Empire and for many decades carried out vigorous missionary work among the Indian tribes, only after the formation of the Republic of Texas in 1836 did the papacy consider establishing a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction just to include Texas. Rome first established a jurisdiction for Texas known as a "vicariate apostolic" in 1839, and in 1846 this became a full-fledged diocese. The bishop's headquarters were located in the port city of Galveston on the Gulf Coast, and St. Mary's Cathedral was erected there for the new diocese of Galveston. The diocese of Galveston was part of the ecclesiastical "province" of New Orleans as was all of the Gulf Coast from Texas to Florida. The bishop in New Orleans was an archbishop and presided over periodic meetings of the bishops of the dioceses in the New Orleans province. In 1861 these were, in addition to the archdiocese of New Orleans, the dioceses of Mobile, Natchez, Little Rock, Natchitoches and Galveston.¹

The first bishop of Galveston was Jean Marie Odin. Born in France in 1800, Odin joined the Vincentian order, more formally known as the Congregation of the Mission, and came to the United States in 1822. After spending many years in frontier mission work in Missouri and Illinois, Odin served first as "vicar apostolic" of Texas and then as the first bishop of Galveston. Although Odin left Galveston in 1861 to become archbishop of New Orleans, it was he who presided over the diocese of Galveston at the time of secession and then continued to oversee the diocese from New Orleans until war conditions allowed a successor to arrive on the scene in 1863.²

With the fragmentation of the Democrats in the spring of 1860, the victory of the Republicans in the presidential election that year was virtually assured. Although the Republican Party was not officially "abolitionist" in its 1860 platform, it was nonetheless perceived as being such by the vast majority of the white population of the South.

Despite Abraham Lincoln's assurances throughout 1860 that while he opposed the extension of slavery into the territories he would not tinker with the institution in those states where it was legal, he was viewed nonetheless in the South as an abolitionist virtually of the same ilk as William Lloyd Garrison. Bishop Odin concurred in this estimation of Lincoln. In a letter to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in Lyon, France, written immediately after the November election, Odin referred to the president-elect as an "abolitionist" whose election had put all of the South in a state of anxiety.³

In 1856 the new Republican Party sought support from Irish Catholic immigrants by publishing an alleged account of how an Irish Catholic joined the party when he decided that the Republican position on slavery was more acceptable than that of the Democrats from the standpoint of Catholic morality. This effort probably did not result in very many Irish immigrants joining the Republicans, but publicity such as this helped further convince the Catholics of the South that the new party was ineluctably opposed to their economic interests.⁴

The influence of the Catholic Church in some areas of the South tended to mitigate some of the barbarities of slavery: the Church insisted, for example, that the slaves of Catholic slaveholders be taught the Catholic faith, that the sacraments must be available to blacks as well as whites, and that slave marriages were as inviolate as those of white Catholics. This influence occurred of course precisely because Catholics were involved in slaveholding. Sometimes, the clergy themselves were slaveholders. For instance, the cook and servants for Bishop Odin at his residence in Galveston were legally his slaves. The Vincentian Order owned slaves who served as cooks and maintenance workers at several of its religious institutions in Missouri and Louisiana. In 1847, Odin purchased an entire family, the husband, whose name was Clem or Clement, and his wife, Emily, together with their children, who previously had worked at the Vincentian school at Cape Girardeau, Missouri.⁵

While it would be a mistake to see Bishop Odin or his successor in the diocese of Galveston, Claude Marie Dubuis, as partisans on the question of slavery, like other southern bishops they accepted slavery as part of the society in which they lived. Bishop John England of Charleston, South Carolina, for instance, held that while slavery was an evil, the abolitionists were wrong to call for its sudden removal since this would produce an equally evil social disruption. The French-born Bishop of Savannah, Georgia, Augustine Verot, proclaimed in a sermon that slavery was both a duty and a burden for the slaveholders: that the slaveholders were morally bound to properly feed, shelter, and clothe their slaves; that Catholic slaveholders were also bound to see that their slaves were trained in the Catholic faith, and to respect their marriages as inviolate; and he condemned the separation of families and other evils of the slave trade.⁶

Since the Catholic slaveholder was supposed to provide religious education for his slaves, this meant that on some plantations priests and catechists were allowed to hold instruction classes for the slaves, and some slaves learned to read and write this way. However, while the Catholic Church in the South improved the lives of some slaves, it did not fight the institution of slavery as such. Occasionally, there were problems of conscience over the slave system, but this could easily give way to a spirit of accommodation. For instance, when the French Daughters of the Cross established their convent and school at Cocoville, Louisiana in 1855, their superior was repelled by the institution of slavery, but as time passed, she came to terms with the social order and purchased some slaves for her community.⁷

It is not surprising, therefore, that Galveston's Bishop Odin viewed negatively the results of the 1860 election. He perceived Lincoln's victory as the catalyst for the disruption of society, the harbinger of disunion and war. In the early months of the war, Odin would speak of Lincoln's "maliciousness" since the new president was determined to subdue the seceded South.

Lincoln's maliciousness increases every day...and it is believed that he would like to vent his wrath upon the maritime cities exposed to the gunfire of his boats.⁸

Neither Odin nor his successor in Galveston, Claude Dubuis, wanted a war fought to perpetuate slavery, but they subscribed to the typical southern view: that the South only wanted its independence, and the North brought on the war to prevent it. They saw the North then as standing for disruption and war, and war ran counter to the interests of the Church and society. They had little sympathy for the southern "fire-eater," on whom they might with more justice have blamed the war, but in their world after the spring of 1861, the blockade along their coast was a Union blockade and the invader wore a blue uniform.

When the war came the bishops of the province of New Orleans readily supplied chaplains for the Confederate army and blessed its banners. In their churches prayers were regularly offered for the Confederacy and Jefferson Davis.

Texas officially seceded from the Union on March 5, 1861. This was done over the opposition of Governor Sam Houston. Seven years before, in 1854, to the consternation of his party and most Texas voters, Houston, then serving in the senate, voted against the Kansas-Nebraska Act on the grounds that it would lead to more confusion and a further weakening of the Union. During much of 1860, Houston vainly sought to keep Texas Unionist sentiment alive by backing the presidential candidacy of the Constitutional Union Party nominee, John Bell of Tennessee. This party formed in the aftermath of the Democrats' collapse to give the southern voter a Unionist alternative to the "fire-eater"-backed Democrat, John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky. Some of Houston's finest oratory was spent in support of the Bell ticket in a courageous effort to thwart the promoters of secession. He spoke at a campaign rally at the San Jacinto Battleground: supporters wore lapel ribbons and distributed handbills urging their fellow Texas to come out to San Jacinto for one more cheer for "Old Sam." There was a cheer, but it wafted weak in the midst of the din of a surging tide of defiance.⁹

To further complicate matters for Catholics in the Galveston diocese, as war broke out on the heels of secession, Bishop Odin, the only bishop they had known, left Galveston to assume his new position in New Orleans. The see of Galveston became vacant at one of the most vulnerable times imaginable.

The year before, on June 20, 1860, Archbishop Antoine Blanc of New Orleans had died.¹⁰ This was a personal loss to Odin, for Blanc had been a good friend and loyal supporter through all his years in Galveston. Odin, as senior bishop in the province, set about to poll the other bishops of the province for suggestions regarding a successor for Blanc. And because New Orleans was an archdiocese, the other American archbishops were asked to submit candidates as well.¹¹ Odin's own choice was the bishop of Natchez, Mississippi, William Henry Elder. Well-known in Louisiana, Elder was energetic and in the prime of life. But some of the other bishops expressed strong support for Odin, so his name was among those sent to Rome. As Archbishop John Baptist Purcell of Cincinnati pointed out to Odin, Blanc's successor should be of French origin and familiar with conditions in the archdiocese of New Orleans. Odin fulfilled both these requirements.¹²

Odin probably did not want to be Blanc's successor. In part, this was because he was sixty years of age. But there was another reason as well. Odin liked Texas in spite of the hardships; he wanted to live and die there in the midst of what he helped to build, working with familiar priests and religious in whom he had high confidence. Also, he believed the Galveston diocese would suffer without him: its financial structure was always tenuous, but he understood it and feared it might collapse under someone unfamiliar with it. Nonetheless, on Thursday, April 18, 1861, a papal appointment to the provincial see of New Orleans arrived at the bishop's residence in Galveston.¹³

The appointment was forwarded there by Archbishop Francis Patrick Kenrick of Baltimore. It arrived at no ordinary time. As the document was in transit from Baltimore, Ft. Sumter was fired on on April 12 and surrendered on the fourteenth. President Lincoln issued a call for volunteers to form an army to save the Union and in response Virginia left the Union on the seventeenth. Had the appointment come a few months later after the blockading of Galveston and the rest of the southern coast by the United States Navy, it might never have reached Galveston at all, and like the see of Little Rock, Arkansas, New Orleans might have remained vacant until the end of the war.

After some hesitation, and at the urging of Archbishop Kenrick, Odin resolved to accept the appointment to New Orleans.¹⁴ Prior to leaving Galveston, Odin appointed Father Louis Chambodut as the administrator of the diocese to serve until a new bishop could be appointed and arrive on the scene. During this period, as archbishop of New Orleans, Odin continued to exercise oversight over the diocese to the degree that war and distance allowed.

By June 1861 Odin was in residence in New Orleans. One of the first problems he had to face was the process of filling the vacancy in the Galveston diocese. Already for those within the Confederacy communication was difficult with areas outside the seceded states. In some instances Odin had to depend on private individuals to carry his letters to fellow bishops in Union states.



*Rev. Louis Claude Marie Chambodut,
vicar-general of the diocese of Galveston*

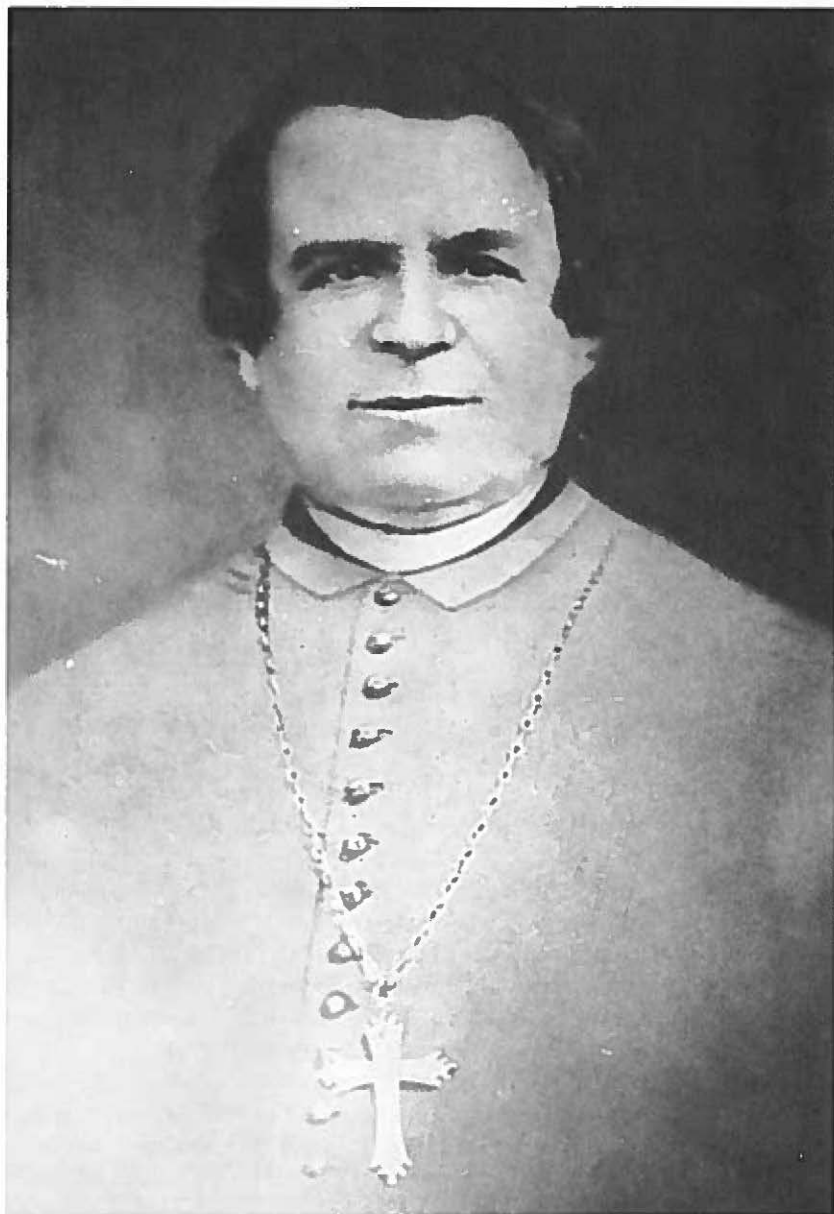
Catholic Archives of Texas

In late June he was able to get letters through to Archbishops Purcell in Cincinnati and Kenrick in Baltimore.¹⁵ To the latter he wrote, "The Mission of Texas needs a man acquainted with the English, Spanish and German languages, and ready to lead a life of privations and hardships." The vast majority of Catholics in the diocese of Galveston lived in scattered villages

of five, ten or fifteen families. A bishop must be prepared to visit these villages as well as the large towns; therefore, wrote Odin, he must be an experienced frontier missionary. To that end, Odin told both Purcell and Kenrick that he wished to submit to Rome the names of Fathers Claude Dubuis, Pierre Parisot and Louis Chambodut for consideration as his successor in Galveston. All three of these men met Odin's standard of being "able to lead a life of privations and hardships." Dubuis, like the other nominees, was a native of France. He had served on the western frontier of the Galveston diocese since 1846.¹⁶ Parisot was a member of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and had served in Galveston, the missions of East Texas and in Brownsville. Parisot first arrived in the diocese in 1852.¹⁷ Chambodut, now the administrator of the diocese, had served as vicar-general for several years. He first arrived in the diocese in 1846 and served as a missionary in East Texas before going to Galveston to assist the bishop.¹⁸

For the diocese of Galveston the absence of a bishop only compounded other problems caused by the war. The United States Navy began a blockade of the Texas Gulf Coast that summer. Galveston was Texas' main port of entry. The fact that blockading ships could be seen in the Gulf off Galveston was a source of concern not only there but for those living hundreds of miles inland as well. Sister St. Marie, writing from her Ursuline convent in San Antonio to Odin in New Orleans, described the impact the blockade of the Gulf Coast was already having on the life of that city during the summer and fall of 1861. Many families were leaving. Businessmen were going to Monterey where, under the protection of a neutral country, they could carry on their enterprise as usual, able to import goods freely through the unblockaded Gulf ports of Mexico. Many workmen, now unable to find jobs in San Antonio were going to Monterey as well. There was a general fear that Texas, in spite of its long coastline, would be cut off completely from the outside world. Rumor was rife: it was told in San Antonio in mid-July that two blockade ships sitting off Galveston had recently taken five blockade runners in one day. All mail would cease, the San Antonians feared. And since the Ursuline sisters deposited much of their funds in New Orleans, as did the Galveston diocese itself, Sister St. Marie feared her order's school might become destitute. Prices were already rising: coffee was up to a dollar a pound in San Antonio, she wrote, and other more necessary goods were becoming scarce. In October rumor had it that Union troops were going to invade at Indianola on the Gulf and also by way of New Mexico in the west. Since most of the Ursulines were French, they were considering obtaining a French flag to fly over their school and convent. One of the few bright spots in Sister St. Marie's experience that fall was that, paradoxically, her order's boarding school enrollment unexpectedly increased when many Mexican students arrived; for these students, civil turmoil was nothing new; what San Antonians feared, they had already learned to live with in their native land.¹⁹

In a short postscript to Odin in a letter of October 14, 1861, Sister St. Marie asked, "Where, then, is the Bishop of Texas?" Little did she know that it would be more than a year and a half later before a new bishop arrived in the Galveston diocese.²⁰



*Rt. Rev. Claude Marie Dubuis, bishop of
Galveston*

Odin tried to exercise a measure of oversight over the Galveston diocese by communicating by mail with Chambodut and other diocesan officials in Galveston. For instance in September 1861, Odin directed the diocesan chancellor, Father Joseph Anstaett, to cease all church-related building construction in Galveston since coastal cities were in danger of naval bombardment. Whether such directives reached their intended destination, of course, depended on whether the blockade could be penetrated or military conditions allowed mail to be transported across western Louisiana into Texas.²¹

Claude Dubuis, Odin's first choice as Galveston's next bishop, had accompanied Odin to New Orleans in the spring of 1861. He was ill at the time, and Odin believed he might have a better chance of regaining his strength quickly in Louisiana. Whatever the case, Dubuis was soon able to work in the parish at Mandeville, north of New Orleans across Lake Pontchartrain. He was there by June 10 when he performed his first recorded baptism in the parish and worked there at least intermittently until May 1862.²² During his year of work there, Dubuis officiated at numerous baptisms and several weddings. Among those married were two slave couples, who, as Dubuis noted in the parish records, "had the licence of the Master."²³

Health problems still plagued Dubuis, however; in September 1861, he asked Odin's permission to visit his native France where he believed his health would further improve, and he could recruit new missionaries for the Galveston diocese. Such a trip of course required leaving New Orleans on a blockade-runner which could successfully elude Union ships. He wanted to embark in April 1862.²⁴ Events occurred, however, making an April departure date impossible, even for an intrepid Texas frontier missionary.

While Dubuis was still in Mandeville, in the late winter and early spring of 1862, a large Union naval flotilla under the command of Admirals David G. Farragut and David D. Porter assembled at a Union fort on Ship Island about ten miles out in the Gulf off the Mississippi coast. Its object was New Orleans, the Confederacy's greatest port by which it effectively controlled the lower reaches of the Mississippi River. In addition to the flotilla, Union troops were assembled on Ship Island to be placed on transport ships to follow the navy into the mouth of the Mississippi. These troops were to become an occupation force for the city of New Orleans and as much of the rest of south Louisiana as might fall into Union hands. Everyone in New Orleans knew the force was forming there and for what reason. But Confederate New Orleans felt secure. Lake Pontchartrain did not afford proper access to the city for such a force; only the river could do that, and the Confederates believed they had successfully closed the vast stream to the invader. South of New Orleans were two forts on each side of the river: Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip. Between these a giant cable was stretched across the river, and all kinds of flotsam, from old steam boilers to half-wrecked barges, was pushed against it by the current. General Mansfield Lovell, Confederate commandant at New Orleans, assured Richmond that the forts' guns, the cable and the flotsam guaranteed the safety of the city. And they almost

did, but for the determination of David G. Farragut. In April, his strategy led to the penetration of the barrier across the river and the surrender of the forts. By the end of the month, New Orleans and its environs were in Union hands.²⁵

Although the Union occupation of New Orleans was a serious blow to the Confederacy, it did make it possible for Dubuis to go to Europe (but not to Galveston) unhindered by the blockade. Odin decided to join Dubuis in his journey; they could both recruit priests and religious for their respective areas, but Odin could go on to Rome to press the urgency of filling the vacancy in the Galveston diocese and to urge the appointment of Dubuis as well. In Rome in September, Odin was delighted to learn unofficially that Dubuis was indeed to become the next bishop of Galveston. On October 22, Pope Pius IX issued the necessary documents to this effect.²⁶

In Lyons, France, on November 23, 1862, in a chapel of the major seminary, Odin, along with the former bishop of Toronto, Armand de Charbonnel, and the current bishop of Valence, Jean Paul Lyonnet, consecrated Dubuis to the episcopacy.²⁷

A French newspaper account of the ceremony described Galveston as "this episcopal town of Texas occupied and menaced by fire and pillaged by the brutal army of the North."²⁸ While such language reflects the prevailing French attitude toward the Union, the account may also indicate that news of the shelling of Galveston by Federal gunboats in October and the subsequent evacuation of its small Confederate garrison had reached France by the time of Dubuis' consecration.²⁹

On February 4, 1863, Dubuis and fifty-nine priests, nuns, and seminarians left Le Harve on a French ship bound for New Orleans. Their crossing took sixty days. The sea was bad in the English Channel which alone took eight days to get through. Taking a southerly route, the weather soon became balmy, and Dubuis was able to have a religious community on shipboard during the long crossing: the breviary was prayed in common on the deck, and courses in English and theology were taught each morning. One missionary later recalled:

In the evening, because of the heat, we stayed up very late on the bridge and took part in some very agreeable talks. [The Bishop] . . . spoke to us of Texas, of his first years, of the dangers that he was able to overcome. He told us of different medicines for this hot country. Then would come different games in which . . . [the Bishop] took an active part, which made our evenings . . . [joyful].³⁰

On the solemnity of the Annunciation, a pontifical high Mass was celebrated on the bridge. When no thurible was found for the incense, a missionary emptied a tin of its preserves and fashioned it onto one.

Because of French attitudes toward the Confederacy and French activity in Mexico, Dubuis feared their ship might not be allowed to land in New



Bishop Dubuis and secular priests at their departure from LeHavre, February 4, 1863: seated (from left to right) Claude Fauvre, Etienne Marie Buffard, Bishop Claude Marie Dubuis, Stephane Savoye, Jean Antoine Forest; standing (from left to right) Jacques Chaland, Louis Chaland, Joseph Martinier and Claude Jaille

Catholic Archives of Texas

Orleans. However, three French warships were sighted as they entered the Gulf of Mexico, and Dubuis concluded that they had called at the port of New Orleans. He may have been correct, for on April 4, Good Friday, the new bishop of Galveston arrived in New Orleans without incident.³¹

Since Dubuis and his retinue of missionaries gave their ultimate destination as Texas, it was necessary for them to take an oath before Federal authorities in New Orleans that they would never take up arms against the United States. They had no hesitation in doing so, but the entire process was troublesome and consumed one whole day in the lives of the weary, hungry travelers. Dubuis learned from Odin that only a few people remained in Galveston; most had gone inland to Houston to escape the clash of forces which the coastal seaport invited. Although he learned that Galveston was by then back in Confederate hands, he wondered what changes had occurred there, especially when Odin told him that in New Orleans some had had their houses and furnishings seized and were then exiled into the countryside because of their pro-Confederate stance.³² Odin summed up his view of current conditions thusly:

Hate increases every day. The North wants the destruction of the South, and the South, rather than give in, is determined to fight to the last drop of blood.³³

At the very time the new bishop of Galveston arrived in New Orleans, thousands of Union troops were up river near Vicksburg involved in the ultimately successful effort to wrest that city from the Confederates. Dubuis feared that skirmishing might break out over wide areas of Louisiana outside the environs of New Orleans. In view of this, he decided not to attempt to go overland to Galveston. He could not get there directly by ship either since Galveston was blockaded. The only thing to do was embark across the Gulf for the Mexican city of Matamoros and then cross the Rio Grande to Brownsville. Leaving the seminarians and religious in New Orleans, the new bishop, following this route, finally reached Brownsville and his diocese on April 24, 1863.³⁴

When he arrived in Brownsville, he discovered a terrible drought, with many horses and cattle dying; for thirty days he had public prayers for rain offered in the Brownsville church. Dubuis recorded that ample rains began to fall during this time. As for the rest of his diocese, he was told that most places had enough food, but the economy was suffering because of the continuing decline in value of the paper Confederate dollar, down by then to twenty-five cents. Everything had two prices, he found, one in specie, the other four times higher in paper.³⁵

The French, Dubuis discovered firsthand, had troops along the border at Matamoros. The new bishop recorded no displeasure at seeing them there. Indeed, most Texans were pleased since the French presence strengthened Confederate hopes of ultimate success.³⁶

By the time Dubuis reached Texas, Federal and Confederate troops had clashed several times along the Texas coast. In August 1862 Union troops were repelled when they attempted to land at Matagorda Bay and Corpus Christi. The following month Union troops destroyed the fortification at Sabine Pass, moved up briefly as far as Beaumont, destroyed the depot there and two railroad bridges and then retreated to the Gulf. And, of course, Galveston had been lost and then retaken by the Confederates.³⁷

During this uncertain period, Father Louis Chambodut had done his best to maintain the diocesan administration. Though communication with the outside world was difficult, whenever mail did make it through the blockade from New Orleans, there was often a packet of newspapers sent by Odin to Chambodut: for many people along the coast these packets became the only source of news from the outside.³⁸

Chambodut was not aloof from politics: he was an ardent Confederate. For instance on August 15, 1861, a colorfully impressive ceremony took place in St. Mary's Cathedral in the presence of a company of troops about to leave for Virginia where they later became part of Hood's Texas Brigade in the Army of Northern Virginia. This particular company was made up of southeast Texas Catholics of French ancestry. The cathedral was packed that day to witness the blessing of their banners by Father Chambodut, who delivered a stirring patriotic address.³⁹ Chambodut was later rumored to have been the only Catholic priest ever to pull the lanyard of a field piece in defense of the Confederate cause. If it happened, it would have occurred either when Galveston was lost or retaken by the Confederates.⁴⁰

Since there could be no doubt about Chambodut's loyalties, it is not surprising that the Confederate military authorities held him in high regard. General John B. Magruder was sent by Richmond to take command in Texas in October 1862. Although the Union navy forced Confederate troops off Galveston Island that same month, they did not send their own troops into the city until December. This enabled Confederates to be in constant contact with Galveston, and one of those whom they contacted was Chambodut. He seems to have been informed beforehand as to when Magruder intended an attempt to retake the island. According to a preconceived plan, Magruder sent an orderly to Chambodut who had lain awake awaiting him on New Year's Morning 1863. About three o'clock in the morning, Chambodut heard the tinkling of spurs outside his door: the orderly called out, "Father Chambodut, General Magruder — the convent." This was to alert Chambodut that the operation was in motion and that the Ursuline convent and academy were needed as a hospital.⁴¹

During the ensuing violence of January 1, 1863, the sisters at the convent impartially served the wounded of both sides. Chambodut went from cot to cot trying to bring some comfort to the wounded regardless of creed or politics. For many months to come the bloodstained floors of the convent were mute, but grim reminders of the suffering that had gone on there. The ceilings too were stained in places where blood had seeped through into the



St. Mary's Cathedral, Galveston during the 1860s *Diocese of Galveston Archive*

first floor.⁴² Among those who died in the hospital during the fighting was a young Confederate lieutenant from a Catholic family well-known to the Ursuline sisters. He was Sydney Sherman, Jr., son of General Sydney Sherman, a venerated hero of the Texas Revolution. The convent was filled with dying men in both blue and gray, but Reverend Mother St. Pierre Harrington, who had known young Sherman for much of his life, would not allow the youth to die alone, and held him in her arms until life left him as the horrified students of the Ursuline academy looked on from an upper balcony. As Civil War battles go, this was a minor engagement, but for many in Galveston that morning war had truly become "hell."⁴³

Galveston remained under Confederate control until the end of the war. Magruder's successful strategy had involved moving troops across the railroad bridge from Virginia Point on the mainland and using several riverboats and barges loaded with troops protected by cotton bales to attack the Union fleet in Galveston harbor. When one Union gunboat was captured and another ran aground, the Union fleet evacuated the harbor. About six hundred Union troops were captured by the Confederates.⁴⁴

St. Mary's Cathedral was shelled during the fighting as was almost every other building in Galveston more than one story high. Until the war's end either streaks of sunlight or streams of rain greeted those who attended Mass there. The Strand, what Odin called "the most beautiful street in Galveston" was now lined with pock-marked buildings.⁴⁵

Following the Confederate victory at Galveston, more Union than Confederate wounded convalesced in the convent-hospital: mostly from the 42nd Massachusetts Regiment. The island was in Confederate hands, but the blockade was still very much a reality. Several days after the battle, a Union ship decided to open fire on the white building on the beach which was that part of the Ursuline convent used as a hospital. Since some weapons were stacked on the grounds, the convent must have been mistaken for a military installation. The floors shook and the beds rattled at several near misses. A patient who was a Union officer told the sisters to get some yellow cloth, the military hospital color, so he could display it from the building. When no such cloth could be found, Mother St. Pierre ran to the chapel. While she prayed, an old yellow petticoat was found by some of the other sisters, and the officer raised the "flag" on the roof of the building. The ship's guns turned in another direction, and the convent made it through the entire war intact, saved, as the Ursuline historian, Sister S.M. Johnston put it, "by a quick-witted Yankee, a yellow petticoat, and a prayer."⁴⁶

It was during the following April, almost four months after the Confederate re-capture of Galveston, that Dubuis arrived in Brownsville from New Orleans on his return trip from France. Brownsville was the center of missionary work along the lower Rio Grande directed by priests of the order known as the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. These priests were on the verge of completing a new masonry church in the town. After remaining several weeks in Brownsville, Dubuis began a tour of the western area of the diocese. By mid- August, he was in San Antonio. Many Germans and other European colonists lived in this area of Texas, and pro-Union sentiment was unusually high. Only the year before some of the Germans had lost relatives when a group from Gillespie, Kerr, and Kendall Counties, trying to get to Mexico in order to join the Union service, were ambushed and massacred by Confederates sent by the governor to suppress Unionist activity. In September returning to Brownsville from Laredo, Dubuis fell ill with a fever for three weeks at the village of Roma, but by October 2 he was back in Brownsville.⁴⁷

Several weeks before, on September 8, 1863, while Dubuis was returning to Brownsville, a four thousand man Union force under General Nathaniel P. Banks converged by sea on Sabine Pass, far up the Texas coast, in an attempt to invade and occupy southeastern Texas. By that time, the fortification at Sabine Pass was back in Confederate hands. This invasion attempt resulted in a battle in which forty-six Confederates under the Irish-Texas tavern owner, Lieutenant Richard Dowling, after sinking a boat in the right place in the channel, turned back the entire Union force and thoroughly thwarted General Bank's invasion plans. Dowling was a prishioner of St. Vincent's Church



Immaculate Conception Church (now Cathedral), Brownsville during the 1950s

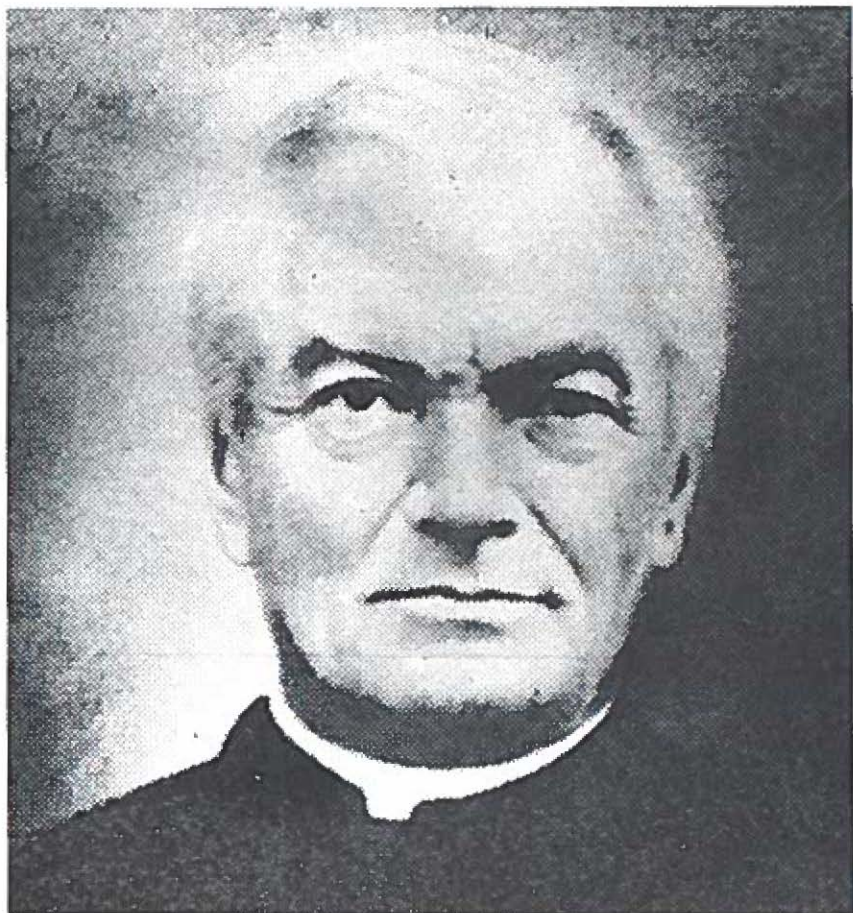
Oblate Fathers, San Antonio

in Houston, and the banners of his men had been blessed there by Father Felix de Connobio, a Franciscan who was also a Confederate military chaplain.⁴⁸

Although he was a fellow Catholic and a Confederate, and they doubtlessly admired his heroism, the Oblate Fathers of Brownsville did not appreciate

all the fruits of Dick Dowling's victory, for now Banks aimed his efforts along the Gulf Coast in their direction. Bishop Dubuis had once more left Brownsville for San Antonio, this time on his way to Galveston, when Banks invaded the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Brownsville fell on November 6, and a Texan cavalry unit in Union service under the command of a former Texas judge and future governor, Edmund J. Davis, cleared the river of Confederates as far up as Rio Grande City. Some of the men under Davis' command were Hispanic Catholics from south Texas, a reminder to the Brownsville clergy as well as the bishop that not all of the flock were in agreement on the issues at hand.⁴⁹

Dubuis finally entered his battle-scarred see-city and cathedral in December 1863.⁵⁰ Had he still been at Brownsville when it fell into Union hands, he might not have been allowed to leave. The commander of the Union garrison there was convinced that the Catholic clergy were so extremely



*Rev. Pierre Parisot, O.M.I., missionary at
Brownsville during the Civil War*

homes. Eugene and May Jordan were also both agents for patent medicine companies.⁵

According to her younger sister Anna, May's health was delicate, although this is not at all evident to anyone reading her diary. Her condition certainly did not prevent her from hunting, digging ditches, sleeping on the ground in the middle of winter, or travelling the rough roads day after day. Eugene Jordan kept May with him so that he could treat her. He had received some medical training and was known in the community as a "faith doctor."⁶ Unfortunately, when he became gravely ill in the fall of 1914, he was unable to care for May who died on October 2. Eugene Jordan died a month later on November 18.

The family continued to farm but lost their homestead because of unpaid taxes. In 1916 they moved to Mobile to find work after the hurricane of that year ruined their crops.

May's prose raises questions regarding her reasons for keeping this diary. She often addresses members of her family directly, "Well Mama I will have to go to the fire or I will freeze Bye. bye," and "Well Dear Mother and Sisters and Brother And friends we are in Chatom." These phrases seem to indicate that she intended her diary to be read, though her sister Anna never saw the diary until after May's death. The conversational aspect of the diary also suggests another explanation. The diary may have been a way of bringing her closer to her family during long periods of physical isolation. Her commitment to writing is compulsive at times. She writes when her fingers are so numb she can hardly hold the pencil or when it is almost too dark to see. She writes at sunrise while her father is still asleep and late at night after an exhausting day.

Relief from loneliness was one of the most common motivations for diary-keeping among frontier women.⁷ In this respect, May's diary is typical of many earlier frontier ones. There is much courage, and humor too, in her attempts to overcome her loneliness. "Here's A little cure for the blues," or a similar phrase, frequently precedes a funny story. Other themes in pioneer narratives — hard work, exposure to inclement weather, homesickness, acceptance of one's lot — are present in May's diary as well.

The ability of frontier women to adjust to primitive conditions varied greatly and usually depended on the kind of life each woman had known previously. Unlike many older frontier women who left established homes and social relationships and who experienced severe dislocation and a great sense of loss, May's diary more closely resembles memoirs of women who relocated as children, or who were born on the frontier. For them it was a time of freedom, discovery, and joy of life close to nature.⁸ Perhaps because May had never known a different life, she was able to accept the hard work and discomfort and concentrate on their positive aspects. "I have been helping Effie and Hannibal rake pines all day and I am tired and sleepy," she writes. "We have enjoyed our selves Just as much as if we had been Idle all day." She also expresses a deep enjoyment of outdoor pleasures, hunting and fishing

Diary of May Jordan, Washington County, Alabama, 1912-1914

Elisa M. Baldwin

In December 1912 Mattie May Jordan began a diary recording her day to day activities in Washington County, Alabama. Located in the southwestern part of the state between the Tombigbee River and the state of Mississippi, Washington County is bounded by Mobile County to the south and Choctaw County to the north. May Jordan wrote regularly until March 1913 but then recorded only a few events that occurred during the spring and summer. When the hunting season began in October 1912, she resumed daily entries and continued until its close in March 1914.

May, the oldest of ten children of Eugene Clifford Jordan and Sarah Ellen Green, was born in Adams County, Ohio on September 1, 1889. Between 1893 and 1904, however, she lived in Bracken County, Kentucky where her parents had been born and married, and then moved with them to Scioto County, Ohio. In December 1912 May writes in her diary "I have lived in sunny Dixie Land for 8 years." The family must have left Ohio shortly after the seventh child was born in 1904.¹

A physician advised Eugene Jordan, who had lost a lung, to move to a warmer climate. Although land was available to homesteaders in Florida as well as Alabama, the family chose the latter state because Sarah Ellen feared tropical storms and alligators. They finally settled on 160 acres in Washington County near Chatom, the county seat.

The transition was apparently not an easy one. Although Eugene Jordan had farmed in Kentucky and Ohio, he knew little about farming in this warmer climate and different soil. Black farmers in the area were very helpful to him in this regard.² On the other hand, many of the white neighbors, were suspicious of this northern family and shunned them. The Jordans grew cotton as a cash crop, but by 1913 the boll weevil had made cotton "just about a thing of the past." May remarks that corn, peanuts, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and other vegetables will "have to take the place of King Cotton for the future." Eugene also joined the Farmers Union, an organization formed to educate the farmer in better management, crop improvement, and cooperative marketing.³

During the hunting season, Jordan travelled around the county in an enclosed mule-drawn wagon buying furs. He was not a novice in this business, for May writes that he had also bought furs in Missouri, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Virginias. Between October 4, 1913 and January 22, 1914 he shipped seventy-six hundred furs on the southbound train to a merchant in Mobile.⁴ May accompanied her father on these fur trips, cooked meals, helped prepare the furs for shipping, and stayed with the mule and wagon when the roads were so bad that her father had to walk to his customers'



The Jordan Family, c. 1912. Left to right: Hannibal, Bertie, Sarah Ellen and Henry, Eugene and Dolly Ellen, Lewis, Anna, May, Effie.

Mrs. Anna Busby

- ⁴² Perrichon, 133.
- ⁴³ Johnston, 119-123.
- ⁴⁴ Connor, 198.
- ⁴⁵ Perrichon, 132.
- ⁴⁶ Johnston, 123.
- ⁴⁷ Dubuis to Odin, October 2, 1863, in CAT.
- ⁴⁸ Diocese of Galveston, *Centennial, 1847-1947*, (Houston, 1947), 76; Connor, 198.
- ⁴⁹ Dubuis to Odin, October 2, 1863, and November 28, 1863, in CAT; Connor, 199.
- ⁵⁰ Dubuis to Odin, November 28, 1863, in CAT.
- ⁵¹ Parisot, 101-102.
- ⁵² Mother M. Patricia Gunning, *To Texas With Love* (Austin, 1971), 86; Perrichon, 168-169.
- ⁵³ Parisot, 107-108.
- ⁵⁴ Odin to Martin John Spalding, September 7, 1864, in CAT; Thomas W. Spalding, *Martin John Spalding: American Churchman* (Washington, D.C., 1973), 161-162.
- ⁵⁵ Connor, 199.
- ⁵⁶ Connor, 199-200.
- ⁵⁷ Perrichon, 133.
- ⁵⁸ Dubuis to Odin, April 25, 1864, in CAT; personal account of one of the missionaries, quoted in Perrichon, 133-135.
- ⁵⁹ Dubuis to Odin, November 10, 1864, in CAT.
- ⁶⁰ Dubuis to Odin, June 30, 1864; September 20, 1864; November 10, 1864, in CAT.
- ⁶¹ Dubuis to Odin, November 10, 1864, in CAT.
- ⁶² T. Lindsay Baker, *The First Polish Americans, Silesian Settlements in Texas* (College Station and London, 1979), 77.
- ⁶³ Dubuis to Odin, February 10, 1865, in CAT.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ⁶⁵ Connor, 200, 210.
- ⁶⁶ Reverend James Vanderholt, "C. L. M. Chambodut," in *Biographies of French Diocesan Priests in Nineteenth Century Texas* (privately published, 1978).
- ⁶⁷ Connor, 210-211.
- ⁶⁸ *Catholic Directory for 1867*, (Baltimore, 1868), 144-148.
- ⁶⁹ Mother Aloysia Chambodut, "Father Chambodut."
- ⁷⁰ Louis Claude Marie Chambodut to Justine, August 8, 1869, in CAT.

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- ¹⁰ Odin to Francis Patrick Kenrick, June 27, 1860, in CAT.
- ¹¹ Castaneda, 7:121; Odin to Kenrick, June 27, 1860, in CAT.
- ¹² Castaneda, 7:121.
- ¹³ Odin to Kenrick, April 22, 1861, in CAT.
- ¹⁴ Odin to Etienne Rousselon, April 24, 1861; Odin to Kenrick, June 25, 1861, in CAT.
- ¹⁵ Odin to John Baptist Purcell, June 25, 1861; Odin to Kenrick, June 25, 1861, in CAT.
- ¹⁶ Castaneda, 7:478-479.
- ¹⁷ For an account of Parisot's life, see Rev. P.F. Parisot, *Reminiscences of a Texas Missionary* (San Antonio, 1899).
- ¹⁸ Mother Aloysia Chambodut, O.S.U., "Father Chambodut, The First Secular Priest Ordained for Texas, Biographical Sketch," unpublished memoir in archives of Ursuline convent, Dallas, Texas.
- ¹⁹ Sister St. Marie to Odin, May 26, 1861; July 2, 1861; July 18, 1861; August 6, 1861; October 14, 1861; and November 30, 1861, in CAT.
- ²⁰ Claude Marie Dubuis to Odin, April 29, 1863, in CAT.
- ²¹ Odin to Anstaett, September 10, 1861, in CAT.
- ²² Rev. Canisius J. Bleumel, O.S.B., pastor of Our Lady of the Lake Church, Mandeville, La., to Most Rev. Laurence FitzSimon, D.D., Bishop of Amarillo, March 3, 1952, in CAT.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ Castaneda, 7:123.
- ²⁵ Samuel Carter III, *The Final Fortress: The Campaign for Vicksburg, 1862-1863* (New York, 1980), 26-33.
- ²⁶ Odin to Rousellon, September 22, 1862, in CAT; Castaneda, 7:123.
- ²⁷ Abbe Jean Perrichon, *The Life of Bishop Dubuis, Apostle of Texas* (Lyon, 1900), unpublished translation by Hectorine Piercey on loan to author from the archive of the diocese of Galveston-Houston, 112-114.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ Connor, 198.
- ³⁰ Perrichon, 116.
- ³¹ Perrichon, 120.
- ³² Perrichon, 120-121.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ Dubuis to Odin, April 29, 1863, in CAT.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Connor, 198.
- ³⁸ Mother Aloysia Chambodut, "Father Chambodut."
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ Sister S.M. Johnston, *Builders by the Sea* (New York, 1971), 122.
- ⁴¹ Mother Aloysia Chambodut, "Father Chambodut."

that same year, and twelve more were preparing for ordination. There were eight schools for girls and eight for boys, an increase of five and three respectively over the pre-war figure. The diocese of Galveston not only had survived this worst of American wars, but was once more on the move.⁶⁸

During Reconstruction, many ex-Confederates, of course, lost their right to vote. One such was the vicar-general of the Galveston diocese. On being turned away at a polling place in Galveston, Chambodut "laughed heartily as he declared that he was sorry for the effect, but did not regret the cause."⁶⁹ Whatever the political views of the bishop and clergy of the diocese may have been, however, their work and the work of their diocese went on. They could only be grateful for their diocese's renewed life and that of the city and state around them. Four years after the war's end, Chambodut wrote with pride to his niece in France of the city she had last seen from the deck of a Confederate blockade-runner:

Galveston is growing fast . . . changed for the better in every way. The buildings are more substantial than in your time. Some of them are really magnificent. Sauter's fine store is totally . . . [eclipsed]. We have street cars [horse-drawn] and for 5 cents you go where you please, so I do not keep a horse, for I have no use for him.⁷⁰

Notes

¹ Carlos Eduardo Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas*, 7 vols. (New York, 1976), 7:111.

² Castaneda, 7:487; Claude M. Dubuis to Jean M. Odin, April 29, 1863 in Catholic Archives of Texas, Austin, Texas. The original or a photostatic copy of the original of all letters cited is to be found in the Catholic Archives of Texas, hereafter referred to as CAT.

³ Jean Marie Odin to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon, January 26, 1861, in CAT.

⁴ *Official Proceedings of the Republican Convention Convened in the City of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, on 22 February, 1856* (New York, 1856).

⁵ Copy of "Bill of Sale of Clement and family," January 9, 1847, in CAT.

⁶ James F. Vanderholt, "Slavery and the Church," *East Texas Catholic*, April 11, 1986; Peter Clarke, *A Free Church in a Free Society, The Ecclesiology of John England, Bishop of Charleston, 1820-1842*, (Hartsville, SC, 1982), 41, 394-396; Michael V. Gannon, *Rebel Bishop, The Life and Era of Augustin Verot*, (Milwaukee, 1964), 40-55.

⁷ Vanderholt, "Slavery and the Church; Sister Frances Jerome Woods, C.D.P., "Congregations of Religious Women in the Old South," in Randall M. Miller and Jon L. Wakelyn, eds., *Catholics in the Old South, Essays on Church and Culture*, (Macon, GA, 1983), 101, 112-114.

⁸ Odin to Joseph Anstaett, September 10, 1861, in CAT.

⁹ Seymour V. Conner, *Texas, A History* (Arlington Heights, IL, 1971), 194-195; Campaign literature in possession of San Jacinto Monument and Museum, San Jacinto Battleground State Park, Texas.

within an inch of its original position, thus avoiding further danger either to the building or to the worshippers who continued to use the damaged building in spite of shot, shell, and weather.⁶³

As the fortunes of the Confederacy faded during February of 1865, Dubuis noted what he thought was a commensurate increase in religious fervor in the Galveston diocese. There were numerous conversions, and he was convinced that much anti-Catholic prejudice, left over from the Know Nothings of the previous decade, was being dispelled.⁶⁴

After Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Generals E. Kirby-Smith and John B. Magruder, supported by Texas Governor Pendleton Murrah, issued a call to continue the war in Texas. To that end, a meeting was called by Murrah in Marshall in May. There, it became evident that everyone but a few fanatics wanted the war to end. On May 13, at Palmito Ranch near Brownsville, was fought the last skirmish of the Civil War in Texas; ironically the Confederates routed the Federal troops.⁶⁵

Ardent Confederate though he was, Father Louis Chambodut, vicar-general of the diocese of Galveston and its administrator from 1861 to 1863, wrote of the war's end:

Thank God the war is over! It is impossible to describe how the people have suffered for four years. I will not talk of the last two weeks of the Confederation in Texas.⁶⁶

What Chambodut would "not talk of" was the anarchy that spread through the state when it became known the Confederate government had collapsed and a simultaneous flood of hungry, disillusioned, often angry Confederate veterans began returning to their home state. By early June, state and local government in Texas collapsed. Governor Murrah and a number of army officers fled the state for Mexico. There were no Federal forces as yet in Texas except at Brazos de Santiago, so anarchy had no opposition. Hungry veterans, many of whom had been unpaid for months, broke into buildings believed to contain Confederate military provisions which they reasoned belonged to them. Of course, some did not stop with the looting of government property.⁶⁷

On June 19, 1865, Federal troops under General Gordon Granger arrived at Galveston to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation and begin twelve years of military occupation.

Available statistics indicate that the Galveston diocese made a rapid recovery from the Civil War. By the end of 1866, only a year and a half after the end of hostilities, there were fifty-five Catholic churches or chapels functioning within the diocese. In spite of the war and its attendant hardships, this figure showed an increase of ten over the reported number in 1860. There were now sixty-five priests, an increase of twenty-five over 1860. Bishop Dubuis was once more off to Europe in 1866 to recruit additional priests and religious for his diocese. At least ten men were ordained to the priesthood

traveling together must be soldiers. As it turned out, the captain was an acquaintance of the bishop and treated them all quite hospitably.⁵⁸

After returning to Galveston, Dubuis went west to San Antonio in June 1864, and remained in that part of his diocese until fall. He reported that an abundance of food was everywhere in the Galveston diocese: generous rains had helped provide a lush harvest. Hardly anyone had any money, however. Confederate paper was virtually worthless now and specie was scarce. The presence of French troops at points along the border continued to cheer the spirits of many in Confederate Texas, however. "The most cordial understanding holds sway" on the Rio Grande, Dubuis noted. All along his way, he reported, there was "but one cry — 'honor and glory to the French.' " ⁵⁹

Despite the abundance of food and encouragement from the French presence, disease took a severe toll in the Galveston diocese during the last half of 1864. Yellow fever broke out in Galveston and along the surrounding coast. Inland, in an area running from Alleyton, west of Houston, to San Antonio then south to Brownsville on the coast, cholera and typhoid took their toll. Three Ursuline sisters and one of the Christian Brothers who were operating St. Mary's College-Seminary, died from yellow fever in Galveston. Dubuis himself came down with "choleric fever" for two months while in San Antonio during the summer.⁶⁰

In contrast to circumstances faced by those making trips to the outside world, travel conditions and communication remained surprisingly good within the Galveston diocese during 1864. The few railroads remained in good working order. Houston, forty-five miles from Galveston, was the hub of this mode of transportation. That fall, the bishop rejoiced that the company of Sappington, Risker and Hall opened a new stage line from Alleyton near Columbus all the way to Brownsville. The stage line connected with the railroad at Alleyton, which provided service through Houston on the Galveston and Beaumont. The stage trip from Alleyton to Brownsville took four days and cost forty dollars, but mail carried this way had a good chance of reaching New Orleans. this was another reason Dubuis welcomed the French presence at Matamoras: a slow but dependable mail service from the border to New Orleans was assured. As long as the French were on the Rio Grande, the mails would be allowed to move across the border and avoid the blockade.⁶¹

Early in February 1865, Dubuis reported to Odin in New Orleans that peace was now the ardent desire of his fellow citizens. One Polish Texan later wrote of this time, "At last God took pity on us: the Confederacy was defeated."⁶² Galveston itself bore the scars of war and war-imposed neglect more than any other city in Texas. In early 1865, its shell-damaged cathedral narrowly escaped a fire which destroyed many buildings around it. Also, during heavy rains which fell along the Texas Gulf Coast in the winter of 1864-65, the vaulting over the cathedral's chapel of the Blessed Virgin gave way causing the supporting arch between the chapel and the nave of the building to shift, threatening to bring down the entire structure. Dubuis obtained some strong iron bars from Houston and was able to restore the arch to

the manpower of the Galveston diocese. He went there to bring to Galveston the seminarians and religious he had brought from France and left in New Orleans to study the year before. Though Dubuis at that time had gone by ship from New Orleans to Matamoros to avoid the blockade and possible military action in Louisiana, this time he decided to brave the difficulties of a trip through western Louisiana and the Union lines. It would be quicker than the other route which also involved a long overland trek from Brownsville to Galveston. Dubuis set out from Galveston just as Banks' army began to move up the Red River toward Texas. He managed to avoid encountering these forces, as well as the gangs of thieves who took advantage of the general chaos and operated as close to New Orleans as New Iberia. He also had to be careful of Union troops in the occupied areas, since he believed he would be arrested if it was discovered he was coming from Confederate Texas. In spite of all, Dubuis safely arrived in New Orleans on Easter Sunday, Marcy 27, 1864.⁵⁷

Remaining there only a few days, Dubuis, accompanied by the seminarians and religious, began to retrace the long, dangerous trek back to Galveston. In spite of travel and wartime difficulties, Dubuis' health held up surprisingly well, and his stay in New Orleans allowed him to enjoy briefly the hospitality of his mentor, Archbishop Odin, and gain strength for the return trip to Galveston.

What Dubuis learned in New Orleans about Union operations aimed at Texas may have caused him to make his stay there so brief. On the return trip, Dubuis and his party were two days on board a steamboat on the Mississippi, then for two more on a flatboat which had no provisions on board. They disembarked at a small hamlet where Dubuis knew a priest was ordinarily in residence, hoping to get food there. However the priest was away, his house empty, but Dubuis instructed everyone to make themselves at home, and soon chickens from the priest's chicken coop were roasting in the kitchen.

By April 25 the party had reached Grand Coteau, Louisiana, where there was both a convent of the Religious of the Sacred Heart and a Jesuit residential house. There, they received word of the "good news" of Banks' defeat at Mansfield. Dubuis managed to buy a horse and wagon so the women religious traveling with him would not have to walk and also to provide a means of carrying the baggage. Later on the journey the wagon got stuck in a stream, and two of the seminarians had the miserable experience of falling into a hog wallow in the middle of the night while going for help.

Food was a problem on the entire trip; both armies had carried away so much of it. Once, while still in Louisiana, a wealthy creole woman, a Catholic planter named Le Blanc, saw the group from afar, recognized their clerical attire, and sent one of her slaves to make certain the travelers came to her house so she could feed them.

Just after entering Texas, a Confederate cavalry unit, their weapons at the ready, bore down suddenly on them. The troopers assumed that a group

pro-Confederate that they might resort to spying for the South. Perhaps this was because the Confederacy favored the presence of the French in Mexico who were aligned there against an anti-clerical republican government and because the Oblate clergy of Brownsville, like Dubuis, were natives, of France. Summoned to make a sick call twelve miles from town soon after the beginning of the Union occupation, Father Pierre Parisot, had great difficulty in getting a pass to leave Brownsville; when he finally did so, he was stopped by four sets of pickets, sent, he later learned, to see if a message was concealed beneath his cassock.⁵¹

In contrast to the Oblates, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament in Brownsville seemed to have been shown respect by both armies. The wives of officers from both sides were often housed in the convent, and the sisters were left in peace.⁵²

General Banks himself visited the Oblates' residence on one occasion saying that he wished to learn Spanish. The fathers gave him a lesson, but he never came back for a second. The priests discovered later than Banks believed they were keeping government property in their house. Later, only with difficult did they prevent a search party from breaking down several doors in their residence. Following this episode, the Oblates in Brownsville were ordered by Banks to pray for the president of the United States as the Catholic and Episcopal churches in the North did at the appropriate places in their liturgies. Parisot responded to the authorities that since the bishop of Galveston had ordered him to pray for Jefferson Davis, he was conscience bound to do so until directed otherwise by him. The general finally decided to let the Oblates pray as they would.⁵³

In this result, the Brownsville Oblates were fortunate: in the summer of 1864, the Catholic bishop of Natchez, Mississippi, William Henry Elder, was arrested and told to pray publicly for the president and congress of the United States or be exiled from his diocese and have all his churches closed. He refused and was briefly sent out of the diocese, but his churches were not closed. After some months, he was allowed to return.⁵⁴

Brownsville was retaken by Confederates under Colonel John S. Ford on April 30, 1864. Brazos de Santiago, at the mouth of the Rio Grande, however, remained in Union hands until the end of the war.⁵⁵

While Federal troops were losing ground along the Rio Grande, General Banks, who had gone to Louisiana, was planning another attempt to invade eastern Texas. With a force of twenty-five thousand, Banks moved up the Red River in Louisiana toward Texas. General Magruder and General E. Kirby-Smith, the Confederate commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, hastily assembled an army to stop the new Union threat to Texas. At Mansfield, Louisiana, near the Texas' boundary, on April 8, 1864, Confederate troops under General Richard Taylor successfully stopped Banks' invasion effort.⁵⁶

In this time of renewed hostilities Bishop Dubuis made a daring overland trip through eastern Texas and Louisiana to New Orleans in order to increase

Washington D.
Chatham A. L.

Page 1.

Box 47

Dec 3 1912,
Papa and Mays fur trip.

I am. A little Alabama Girl living
on the frontier Where the Wild
animals is plentiful. My home is on
Log run. the waters of Pine barren
I have a beautiful home. The shade
trees is Cedar and China trees. In the
Summer when the roses are in bloom
It is the Prettiest Place on the old state
line road. We have Coffee Jessamines
And orange blossoms for Bouquets
I think the fig trees is beautiful. The
Pear trees are in bloom now.
There is no Change in the Color of the
Pines they are always green. Our Church
is two miles away. It is A Baptist
Church. There is Church every 3 Sunday
in each Month And I sure enjoy going...

Dec 2.

or just rambling through the woods, and an appreciation of the beauties of nature. Her description of landscapes at sunrise and sunset sometimes acquire an almost poetic quality.

Though she comments on the beauty of nature, May certainly experiences many of the hardships and challenges of earlier frontier women. "I am a little Alabama Girl living on the Frontier where the wild animals is plentiful," she writes at the beginning of her diary. She encounters bears and hears wildcats screaming around the campfire at night. Although there had been settlers in this area since the eighteenth century, Washington County was still a frontier in 1912. The early pioneer migration and settlement patterns described by Frank Owsley in *Plain Folks of the Old South* were still evident. The Jordans travelled from settlement to settlement, often miles apart. These scattered communities were formed by groups of friends and relatives who had lived in the same area, moved out together, and established new homes. At least one of the folkways Owsley mentions was still practiced as well. Each spring stock herders would burn the woods to remove dead grass and young underbrush from the cattle range.⁹ On several occasions May writes of the woods being on fire.

However, by 1912 this pocket of inner frontier was rapidly disappearing. May Jordan's diary documents the transformation of the area. She describes places where the timber had all been cut and "ever thing that is big enough for A cross tie is taken away." The pine forests which provided such an excellent range for the cattle and swine herds of the early settlers were vanishing. Farming was taking the place of herding even though the soil in many places was not well suited for it, as May also notes.¹⁰

Washington County remained a frontier longer than many other parts of Alabama because much of it was inaccessible. Waterways were the principal means of transportation for people and goods in the county until the turn of the century. The condition of the roads was a constant concern to the Jordans. They were often impassable after heavy rains. Once May and her father found themselves hemmed in by swollen creeks and rivers. They could not go ahead or turn back. On another occasion they had to travel forty miles out of their way because of mud. Travelers depended on each other for warnings about hazardous conditions. Landowners were required by law to maintain certain sections of public roads within ten miles of their property.¹¹ May writes that she and her father "fixed the road between Basset Bridge and the 1 mile post." The public roads also improved somewhat as a result of the Good Roads Movement.

The rapid growth of the lumber industry after 1899 was tied to railroad construction. Lumber companies built their own lines to connect with the Tombigbee River and with other larger railroads. One of these, the Tennessee Valley Railroad, was converted to a common carrier and became part of the Alabama, Tennessee and Northern Railroad in 1912.¹² The Jordans usually shipped their furs from Chatom to Mobile on this line.

As the lumber industry grew, so did the population. The 1880 Census lists 3,919 persons living in the county. The population grew from 7,935 to 11,134 between 1890 and 1900. By 1910 it had increased to 14,454. In addition to logging, the turpentine industry became one of the main businesses in the county beginning in 1904. The Jordans passed through "crude orchards," and prosperous little turpentine towns like Tibbie. The turpentine forests and stills were mostly run by the large timber owners, but many small farmers "chipped and dipped" to bring in extra cash.¹³ May describes one settlement where "People has to work turpentine or starve The land is so poor that they cant make a living farming." In another settlement some blacks were trying to obtain crude from short leaf scrubby pines. "A cricket would starve to death on the crude such pines runs," she observes.

The inhabitants of Washington County had a reputation for being "illiterate, wild and savage."¹⁴ Some of this is conveyed in humorous stories that May enjoys telling about preachers carrying the gospel to the backwoods. She often remarks that the people in a particular settlement are "all Christian here" or "all nice religious people." She also writes about travelling in some very wild country where the sheriff was held up for a bottle of whiskey. Although Prohibition had been in effect in Washington County since 1887, there were obviously many areas where the law was not observed.¹⁵

A diary presents special problems for the researcher. Since it records a particular moment and the personal response to it, the historian must determine whether it is an anomaly or whether the individual's response to the experience is representative.¹⁶ The publication of *Women's History Sources; A Guide to Archives and Manuscript Collections in the United States* (New York & London, 1979), edited by Andrea Hinding, has revealed a wealth of materials by and about women. However, there are few personal papers to draw upon for the experiences of southern rural women, particularly during the early twentieth century. In the South where the literacy rate was especially low, the record is skewed toward white middle and upper class women such as Mary Boykin Chestnut.¹⁷

The experiences of rural southern women are more likely to be found in oral history collections.¹⁸ These accounts, however, lack the immediacy of a diary, and early memories are often colored by later experiences. A diary such as May Jordan's is a rare find. Her fresh and lively account bears close similarity to an oral narrative. Her sentences blend into one another, there is an abundance of concrete detail, and she frequently uses popular expressions.

Very little scholarly work has been done on rural women in the South.¹⁹ Julia Cherry Spruill's *Women's Life and Work in the Southern Colonies* (1938, New York, 1972) provides a starting point for the study of southern women. From census records, deeds, wills, newspapers, and traveler's accounts, Spruill reconstructs the lives of hard-working farm wives and plantation mistresses. Standing in sharp contrast to the experience of Spruill's colonial women is the situation of early twentieth century white tenant farm women

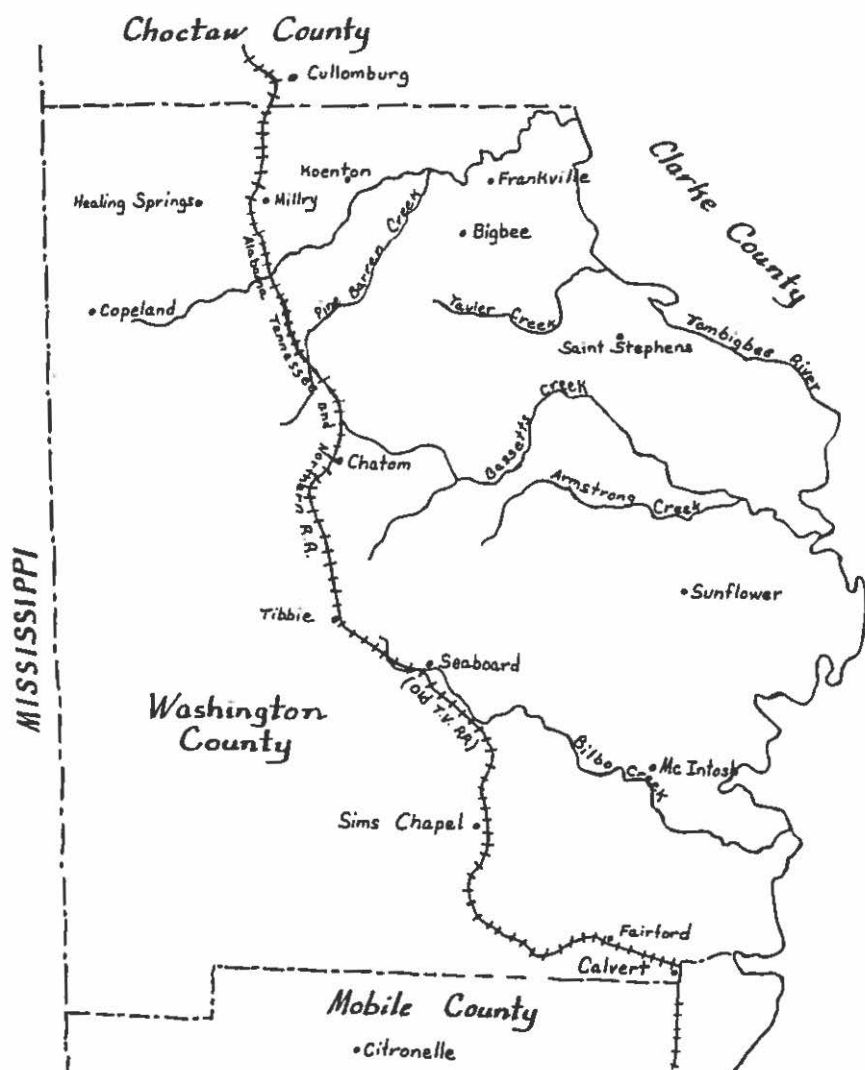
in the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama which Margaret Hagood describes in *Mothers of the South* (1939, Westport, CT, 1969). To help understand May Jordan's observations about life in Washington County, we can turn to Frank Owsley's *Plain Folk of the Old South* (1949, Baton Rouge and London, 1982) even though he does not focus on women of the farming class. An article by D. Harland Hagler, "The Ideal Woman in the Antebellum South: Lady or Farmwife," in *The Journal of Southern History*, 46, no. 3 (August 1980) provides an interesting account of the socialization and training of young farm women. Two studies by Joan Cashin, "Family, Kinship and Migration in the Antebellum South, 1810-1860," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1985) and "Women's Work and Culture in the Old Southwest," a paper presented at the Southern Historical Association in 1988, are the most recent contributions to this area of women's history.

The late development of a women's culture in the South is discussed by Jean Friedman in *The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900* (Chapel Hill and London, 1985). But May's concerns are far removed from those of southern women living in regions affected by modernization. Nowhere does she mention women's suffrage or missionary work. Like other women living in traditional rural societies, she identifies with family and community rather than gender. In this sense, May Jordan's diary is a rich source of information about a region undergoing rapid change.

The following excerpt was taken from the beginning of the diary. It follows the original exactly with regard to punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. The editor has not attempted to emmend or "improve" the text. Jordan's grammar offers valuable information about her educational background, and her phonetic spelling may also be of interest to linguists. Editorial omissions of varying length made for the sake of continuity are indicated by ellipsis points enclosed by brackets. Dates and other clarification also appear in brackets.

Washington Co.
 Chatom Ala. Page 1.
 Box 47
 December 3 1912.
 Papa and Mays fur trip.

I am A little Alabama Girl living on the Frontier Where the Wild animals is plentyful. My home is on Log run. the waters of Pine barren I have a beautiful home. The shade trees is Cedar and China trees. In the summer when the roses are in bloom It is the Prettiest Place on the old state Line road. We have Cape Jessamines And orange blossoms for Bouquets I think the fig trees is beautiful. The Pear trees are in bloom now. There is no change in the color of the Pines they are always green. Our church is two miles Away. It is A Baptist Church. There is church every 3 Sunday in each month.



Map of Washington County

Jerry Dixon

And I sure enjoy going To preaching. We never can learn to much about our Saviour Who suffered so upon the cross And humbled hisself when he could but lift his hands and strike them down. Well Boys I am going to give you my experiences on buying furs through Alabama. And my Adventures with animals And the history of the country as seen by and Alabama girl. I have lived in sunny Dixie Land for 8 years and sure love the Land of flowers. My Dear Father and Mother was borned and raised and married in Braken County Kentucky and then moved to Adams County Ohio And there I was Borned Part of my sisters and brothers was borned

in central Ohio and Part in Kentucky and two here in the bright and sunny South where the Mocking birds sings all the time And where the sleigh bells never Jingle Now I will tell you of the first trip after furs [. . .] Tuesday 3 we started for the Koenton settlement. Traveling the St Stephen and State Line road one mile west of home then we turned to the right and come to the Chatom and Koenton road we Journeyed onward to Mr Joe Phillips and got A coon hide from him then on to Mr Martin Carpenters and bought A cowhide and then on to A colored man by the name of mat Whigum and got two coon hides And then we Journeyed onward [. . .] to Mrs Ruth Carpenters And got furs. Such as coon and fox. And then on to Mr. Bud Carpenters and got furs to A finish and then we come to camp close to Mr Carpenters. And while I was cooking supper Papa went to Mr Willie Irbys and got furs to A finish. And he sure looked funny coming back with the coon hides swinging on his back. Well the country is broken The timber is principaly pine. We had company Mr. Carpenters folks and certainly enjoyed their company. Well after they went home we had A very close shave with A wildcat but managed to get him in the wagon with us. Wednesday 4 [. . .] we come 2 1/2 miles from town [Chatom] and had to camp for A storm was coming we camped at the Crease old place and then A terriable storm cought us. I cooked supper in the rain I built A log heap and put my skillet on the top of it. I am cooking in an old fashion skillet and lid. Like our Grandmas used to cook in. And I certainly enjoy eating like old time that are gone never to return. Thursday 5 At home A pleasant time Well Friday 6 we started for Chatom and turned to the left and went by the old Chatom schoolhouse and went to Mrs Maggie Mosses and got furs and then we come back to the schoolhouse and camped there. It is A very pretty place with its pretty grove of shade trees But very lonely. [. . .] Well I sure enjoyed my first trip But then I enjoyed my self better after I got better Acquainted. Saturday Dec 7. Well we started to Chatom and fixed up the furs by the Chatom barbacue grounds and then we went to town and shiped them and then we come back to the Barbacue ground and then where the roads forks we turned to the left and traveled on by Mr Turner Moselys and then we Journeyed across the creek and turned to the left on the old Chatom and Springbank road and then we come to where the roads goes every way and there we stoped and waited Patiently until some one to come along. Well bye and bye Mr. Lawrence Moss come by going to Chatom And described the road for us. Well we got way out in the woods and there we could not go any farther for roads had ever way at once And then we decided that we would camp As it was raining and the night was as dark as A stack of black cats. And about 10 oclock we heard some one coming and when he come up to our fire it was Mr. Moss again and he wanted us to go to his home we was 1/2 mile from there but we thanked him very Kindly. Well we had a very close shave with A big catamount and after wrestling with him for awhile we final Killed him and then we skined him and taken his pelt along with us. Well Boys I sure thought our

time had come when Brother wild cat got in to camp we tried to please him we offered him A box to set down on and then we offered him something to eat and a cup of coffee but he was ill natured and he would not have any of our hospitality no sirs he would not so we Just taken him along And dont you think we done right [. . .] [n.d.] Well my friends I heard a Preacher tell this in the pulpit. He Jumped off the cars in the back woods and come up to Mr. Guys house and inquired the way to the school house. Mrs. Guy told him she didnt no how far it was but she guessed it was about two sights and 3 yells to the schoolhouse. And So he told her in their conversation that Jesus died for to save sinners. And she said a you dont tell me so. But I might have known something was going to Happen for John never does take the newspaper as I always want him to. So how do you like this for a grown Person [. . .] Jan. 7 [1913] At home A Jolly time Jan. 8 we went to Chatom Papa Bertie And I. Chatom is A little village 4 stores A P.O. [post office] 3 hotels And Also the county seat The Courthouse And Jail are beautiful Jan. 9. At Springbank close to Boykin Tie camp. The timber is being cut for crossties. Jan 10 At home Jan 11 At home Jan 12 At home And All sick. Jan 13. 5 mi of home close to Faith Moseley On the Peevey landing road. The roads is in very bad condistion from hauling bales of cotton. [. . .] Jan. 15. On Toiler [Tauler] Creek 5 miles of home Land Broken. The Aligators is thick We Landed one 5 ft Long. Jan. 16. 5 mi south of Chatom close to Fairhope Church. on our way to Tibbie it is raining today I am cooking in the rain I am setting on A cross tie Papa is setting in the wagon. Jan 17. 22 1/2 mi of home At Mr. Noah Howards he has got lots of fur. He is trapping he has to carry A big caliber rifle with him Jan 18. 18 mi of home in Tibbie It is raining tonight. Tibbie is a prosperous little turpentine town 3 stores And A. P.O. Jan 19. 3 mi of Chatom on old camping ground Very reasonable roads. Jan 20. At home [. . .] Well Tuesday morning [January 28] and on the way to Bigbee Well the road is in very good condistion so far no boggy places. Well we are at Toiler Creek now waiting for Papa to come he has gone to Mr Jake Napers after furs Effie is with me And I am not so lonesome now. We are talking at the rate of one hundred miles An hour. We had A very close shave with A Panther Effie got the butcher knife and Papa the old 45 by 70 Army rifle and I had the Shotgun and our little dog helped to shake him around and then we final got him in the wagon. And then we come on to Toiler. We have started for Mr Silas Irbys today. We are going to listen to the Phone[ograph] to A finish. [. . .] The sun is shining bright But my hands and feet are cold. Only two travelers has Passed. Mr. Henry Dumas and Mr. John Grimes Effie thinks if she had eat cream for breakfast she would have been churned sure. We are on very reasonable roads considering the roads we have traveled. I will have to Pull Effies Teeth if she talks to George [Irby] to much so I cant hear the music good. Ha, Ha. Don't you think so? We have not seen Any game to speak of only A Jaybird And redbird and cows and sheep And A hog. He had to walk

on crutches He was so fat. [. . .] Well We are at Mr Irbys they have got furs to A finish. We Passed the night with them and had A fine time. [. . .] Friday Morning Jan 31. On our way to Mr. Noah Howards Over A very reasonable road. We journeyed Part of our way through the belt of Timber known as the Widow Sages Timber it A very beautiful sight the Pines is Always bright and green And when the sun is shining the needles just Glistens. We cooked dinner beside the road A fine spring is in the bank Above the road. While cooking only two Travelers Passed by. Mr. John Parnell he was hauling crosssties And Mr. Taylor he was on A pleasure trip. Well we are at Mr. Howards home now. He has got lots furs. Such as the following. Bear Lynx Panther Wildcat fox Raccoon skunk Opossum Weasel mink Otter Badger and Beaver. We had A fine time getting supper Mr. Sim Howard helped me get supper And Mr. Elijah helped get Breakfast And Mr. Noah helped wash dishes We had fun Alive. Well This is Saturday morning Feb 1. And the sun is just rising the east is All red and Beautiful Mr. Noah And I watched the sun raise over the trees. This morning Well it is certainly chilly this morning We are on our way back to Tibbie. I cooked dinner. In the streets of Tibbie we had company for dinner Mr. Richard Howard And Mr. Dennis Howard. We had a fine time Jokeing each other About our table it was the store gallery And we couldnot turn it over. I set on the Table but did not put my feet under it. Well I must hurry and wash the dishes Papa wants to go. Well we waited for the old T.V [Tennessee Valley] train to come. It is like waiting for the Judgement day to come We waited until night And it come At 6 oclock. The train is coming slow but sure if she dont stump her toes and fall off the track or forget where she is going. [. . .] Well Monday Feb 3. This morning is very dismal we had company Mr. Baxters Boys. Well I must help hitch up and Pull for Chatom And Home. We started for Fairford and Calvert but the roads are in such A condistion we cant travel them And still raining. Miles Creek is very full. The water on the bridge is up to the Wagon Axle. Well Dear Mother and Sisters and Brother And friends we are in Chatom Now And Everybody is lively as crickets Oyes Marna the Groundhog seen his shadow if he looked quick enough yesterday. Well Marna and Sisters and Brothers I will be with you by evening if Nothing Prevents us. There is A storm coming it is all Black in the North and the thunder is roaring and the Lightning is flashing. [. . .] [February 6] We met A Pack of Wolfes And had A very narrow escape But we managed to carry them Along with us. We reached Springbank At 5 oclock. P.M. Over very reasonable roads The county is having the roads around Chatom worked. Papa And I fixed the road between the Basset Bridge And the 1 mile post the road had washed so it was Almost Past traveling. Well we had company tonight. Mr. Charles Harrison And Mr. Will Murphy And Mr Bud Loper They have gone now. we had A very pleasant conversation. We are Alone now. This is A very dark night. There is no moon or stars shining. We are in A thick settlement now. Bye, Bye. [. . .] [February 7] We are at Mr. Martin Lopers now Miss Reta Loper

is playing the organ And singing. I had Avery Pleasant time I have spent A beautiful time Listening to The pretty Music. Well bye. bye. Well we Journeyed East to Mr. Taylor Hills home and had A pleasant time. Mr. Hills folks is certainly clever People and religious People Papa has gone to Mr. Simmy Reynolds After furs. Well while Papa was gone I had company. Mr. Isam Brown He is A great singer. And very interesting to talk to And I certainly enjoyed his company. Well I am Alone now. Only My faithful little dog for company. [. .] It has been chilly All day. We traveled facing the wind. And when we come to camp we could hardly strike A match our hands was so cold. Well we are Back on our old camping grounds to night All of the neighbors in this settlement are fine People. All Nice religious People We have traveled in some very wild country where the sheriff was held up He must have carried A bottle of Whiskey with him for we never had anytrouble with them we carried A coffee Pot and good coffee. The People had been cheated out of their fur. And we Paid them Honest Prices for their furs. We gave them good coffee instead of whiskey And was treated as fine as if we was in our own settlement. And when they come up to our campfire we treated them nicely So you see Boys it Pays to carry coffee instead of something to make People drunk. Well God be with you till we meet again. Bye Bye Saturday 8. [. .] We have shiped up to the Present time over 1600 furs. Boys it dont look like there is that many varmints in the county. And get double every time we go around on our routs Well I am at home now we had A very Pleasant time. Well good morning this is Sunday the 9. And A very Beautiful sun shiney Sabbath day. We will start for Culum [Cullomburg, Choctaw Co.] tomorrow Monday 10 And All wayside towns And villages. going first to Koenton The land Around Koenton is Broken soil is sandy Loam clay bottom. Timber Pine Principally. Turpentine And farming is the occupations All fine People. Monday 10. [. .] Koenton is A little village 2 cottongins A Postoffice schoolhouse And church. It is A Prosperous little Village two stores. We have company. Mr. Milton McDowell he is A Prosperous Merchant A fine Gentleman This is A very thick settlement All fine Christain People. Miss Sadie Callier is teaching one room of this school. We have been treated fine here Well I must hurry and cook supper for I am hungry Tuesday. 11. Well good morning to All. This is A very pleasant morning We are in A beautiful grove of pines and sweetgums. Close to Mr. Milton McDowells home. And Mrs. Sarah Calliers [. .] Mr. McDowell is sure A faithful friend He Aided us when we first came to our homstead And Thier Kindness is sure Apreciated And always remember Them all in our Prayers. [. .] Papa and I are setting Around the campfire. of rosen pine. It is just breaking day [. .] We are in range of the sea breeze every morning About 8 oclock it begins to blow unless there is A storm between here and the sea. [. .] We are on our way to Cullomburge And all Wayside towns And villages. [. .] The land is very rough. The People is all Christains. The Devil never finds his way here. for he would get lost All any one can see is timber and

hills People has to work turpentine or starve The land is so Poor that they can't make aliving farming. They dare not turn their horses heads straight down the hill if they do they will upset. The roads are sand and mud Bye. Bye. Well we arrived At Cullum. At 2 oclock P.M. On A cloudy day The country is Broken soil is Black Loam. And white sand. Cullum is A prosperous little Village 2 stores A Postoffice And Hotel. And two churches. It is A Pretty Place on the T.V. railroad. We came through Rusty Ville. The county roads here is in good condisation so far. The People here seems to be doing well. There is several Large Plantations. Cullum is A Large watering resort. [. .] [February 12] We are on our way to Millry it is chilly this morning And I had A very bad time getting breakfast. We camped closed to Bella white they are good Colored folks And we put our team in his stalls. His name is Hilton white. His little boy is going to go with us part of the way. We got in the bog last night And our team was worried. [. .] We bought A big mule She weighs 13 hundred pounds And Our little Pony weighs 7 hundred pounds. And had to walk so fast to keep up with that mule in the mud his trace chains sung like fiddle strings Well sir that mule went so fast through Dry Creek that all the fish died from fright. Up At Cullum burg Every body thought there that A cyclone was coming But it was the noise of our wagon coming over the mountains And jumping over stumps and rocks in the road And espically red Mountain It is A wilderness country. [. .] This is Thursday 13. We are going to start for Copeland in the morning if The roads Permits us we will be near Springbank tomorrow night. It sleeted this morning And towards noon snowed The moon and stars is shining bright tonight. It is still very chilly. Papa is dressing furs. well bye bye it is half past nine now. Friday 14. Good morning And how is All this morning. This is the coldest morning we have had this winter Ice freezes in the Pans and buckets as soon As the fire is shut away from them I am sitting by the fire by myself Papa is Asleep now. [. .] Well day is breaking And the Dawn is Pretty All colors that no artist can Paint. [. .] This is A good farming country here around healing Springs. The chickens is crowing for day and the country is sure ringing. There is plenty of Wild animals here such as Wildcats Bear Wolves and Panther And Dear and wildturkey and other small Animals. We are on the frontier of Alabama. Where we have some wild People And then we have good People here You know it takes all kinds of people to Make the world. [. .] [February 17] We are on our way to Bigbee it is A prosperous little turpentine village 5 dwelling houses A postoffice And store and A cotton gin and sawmill And gristmill And turpentine still. We have traveled very reasonable roads to day. Well good morning This is Tuesday 18 And smooth cloudy. We are both very well We had Bad Luck last night our mule Broke loose and is gone Papa is hunting her this morning. I am Alone 3 miles from Bigbee in the woods. [. .] O I am sad this evening. O so sad Papa Dear Papa has walked All day to find the mule. And now he is on his way home to see if she has gone there. I have had some Adventures with Wild animals scince I have

been traveling But O this is the worst expericince I have ever stood To Kiss
 Dear Papa Goodbye And turn my face away while he walked out of sight
 of me Alone. God be with him and all till we meet again. [. .] Well good
 morning This is Wednesday 19 And raining Papa is still gone. Hannibal
 come to me last night And I certainly was glad. he went home this morning
 To tell Papa that we heard from the mule. He took my faithful little dog
 with him. Well I am with Kind friends Mr. John Goldman got his sons
 Jubes mule and hauled the wagon to his son Mr. Georges for me. Brother
 and I spent the night with them. They are certainly fine Ladies and Gentlemen.
 [. .] Well Goodbye for Awhile the tears is courseing down my cheeks so
 I cant hardly see. Thursday 20. Good morning Well Papa has come back
 with the mule We are on our way to Frankville and then Home. Will write
 more As Papa is in A hurry Well we found the roads in very bad condistion
 But No boggy places. We went to Frankville And then we went to Mr.
 Reynolds and then to Mr Elijah Wrights. he sure is Death on Opossums
 Papa has bought two hundred from him this winter. We are at home now
 We sure have had A Jolly time. We got furs to A finish on this trip After
 having such bad luck. [. .] Well good morning this is Thursday 27. And
 we are in Sunflower this morning. It stormed last night and Also this morning.
 The wind nearly turned our wagon over But our faithful mule pressed against
 the wagon to break the rain off her and saved it from turning over. [. .]
 There is Plenty of crude around Sunflower. It is A prosperous little turpentine
 town The country here is Lowland. We are in A very thick settlement now.
 Everybody seems to be doing well here they all live in good houses. I Am
 alone now Papa has gone after furs now. [. .] Well we Journeyed on the
 Mobile road towards the Pretty little town of Mcintoish [McIntosh]. We
 crossed Armstrong Creek they are building A new bridge It is Iron the old
 one is wood. The country is still Level timber is all cleared [. .] Mcintoish
 is A little village 3 stores A postoffice some very pretty dwelling houses.
 We will travel south from here to fairford. [. .] Well good evening this
 is A very pretty place to camp we are on the bank of Belboe [Bilbo] Creek
 tonight We are hemed in with water creeks on three sides and the river
 on the other. We cant neither go A head nor turn back the heavy rains
 lastnight and this morning is raising the creeks and the back water is forcing
 up the creeks. Well I am setting on A bundle of cowskins writing. [. .]
 the wild cats is screaming around the camp tonight. Well we must go and
 Please them with powder and balls. O yes the frogs is singing so loud tonight
 it sounds like A brass band. Bye Bye I am sleepy and tired. Good morning
 this is Friday 28 And A pretty day Papa is gone after furs And I am Alone
 now. The water has run down Alot this morning. The woods and fields
 are ringing with singing Beautiful spring has come with green fields and beautiful
 flowers and pretty weather Everybody is busy plowing and planting and putting
 up Patent cups preparatory for chipping boxes. [. .] There is crude orchards
 all the way from Basset Creek bridge on the Mobile road to Simschapel
 and Several on the way to Seaboard. Saturday March 1. I am Alone now

Papa has gone to Seaboard now it is 2 miles away. We pasted the night at the Lunda schoolhouse And it is A very pretty place. We got caught in a A cyclone and our wagon would have upset if we had not been in A thicket of pines it rocked like A rocking chair. But thank God it did not upset it. The land around Seaboard is Lowflat country Belboe Creek is impassable from hauling heavy loads over the ford. Well we have got one fur that Puzzles everybody. My father has bought fur in Kentucky and Both Virginias and Tennessee and Missouri and Ohio and Indiana and also in Alabama. And he never seen any thing like this Animal. It was killed on Basset Creek It is pure white with only A black spot on his head. And it climbs trees for it was Shot out of A tree. It was marked Just like A black skunk. Only where the black on them is it Was white [probably an albinistic skunk]. Well we will travel North from Mr. Lundas through A very lonely flat boggy country. We are starting for Mr. Sellers this morning. We will only pass one house between here and there And that is Mr. Taylors 1/4 from here then we will travel A half day in the lonely woods by our selves. Well we bogged in the first flat but final got out and traveled on the ridge A little piece then in the mud again [. . .] then we bogged our faithful mule so we could hardly think she could possibly get out but by the help of our Heavenly father we managed to Jump out of the wagon and by wading the mud nearly waist deep our faithful mule pulled through. then we stoped on top of the Hill to let her rest. And looking far acrossed the plains we seen A gentleman riding horseback and coming our way we waited until he come within A 1/4 of us Papa went to met him and inquired the way to Mr. Sellers. And after A pleasant conversation he went with us in Sight of Mr Sellers he was hunting Cattle. Then after Thanking him we Journeyed onward to Mr Sellers And there we spent A very pleasant time Papa Ask Mr. Sellers if he would sell him some fodder. But Instead of selling it he said he never done such a thing. He said that he might be traveling and come up to our house and then we could return the Accomadation then. Mr. Sellers is getting well on in years But he is Prepared to meet his Saviour When the summons shall come. [. . .] Well Mr. Sellers discribed the road so plain to us we found the way with out any trouble to the head waters of Belboe Creek. Mr. Sellers folks is certainly fine people. His wife is dead and rests in her home where tears and Pain shall trouble her Know more. And leaving her little Daughter Vinnie to take care of her aged father Although she is very young only 15 years old And her only nearest neighbor is 3 miles Away She is certainly A brave hearted child. [. . .] we was only 15 miles from Chatom when we was at Seaboard but had to go around the mud making us travel About 40 miles out of our course to get home. because we heard the cyclone tore the country around Chatom up so we was uneasy about home and they was the same about us so we hurried home [. . .] Well this is Sunday morning March 2. It is still chilly this morning. Well we Journeyed onwards to Chatom this morning and crossed miles Creek bridge And the water was runing over the flooring of the bridge. The roads



The Jordan Family, c. 1909. Left to right: Hannibal, May, Eugene and Anna, Sarah Ellen and Henry, Effie, Bertie, Lewis. Mrs. Anna Busby

are in very good condistion between Chatom and Tibbie Thanks to Mr. James he is the overseerer Well we arrived in Chatom At 11 oclock A.M. And the cyclone last thursday 27 Tore Mr. J. C Koens store down and also Dr. Cranberrys office And sure tore the country west of Chatom up. The roads between Chatom and home is almost impassable. [. .] Well good morning this is Monday 3 At home still. Effie and Papa went to Chatom this morning. Bertie and I burned A tobacco bed this morning. And sow some tobacco seed Beautiful spring has come again for spring comes but once A year Bringing good cheer I think spring and summer is the prettiest times of the year. [. .] Tuesday 4 Papa and Effie started on their Journey this morning. It is the first time Effie has gone with Papa Alone. I taken sick and she went with him in my place God bless them. Well Bertie And I sowed tobacco seed and beded sweet Potatoes this morning. [. .] Well this is Wednesday March 5. Well Bertie And I burned the valley of grass below the stable and had A very bad time fighting fire We had to watch It all day. And then we had to chop down A big pine tree to keep from spreading the fire it was About 20 feet high in the tree. And the wind Just spread the sparks 30 feet from the tree Well this is Thursday 6 And A very beautiful morning sun shining bright. Well I will be ditching the valley today and Bertie and Hannibel will be chopping logs Well I have spent nearly A week at home And have had A Jolly time. Friday 7 Good morning this

is a very pretty day but chilly all day the north wind is blowing [. . .] There is nothing so Pleasant as to look around And see everyone in his or her place. I have often spent very lonely hours when we were on our trips So much time spent by my self. When Papa was gone after fur where we could not drive to the houses. And have know one to talk to I most generally sung or sewed on my embroidery are in drawing some fancy flower or vines to work Any thing to while away the time while Papa was gone. Well the North wind is blowing chilly all day. It is getting colder this evening. So I cant dig on the ditch anymore today. For I have to stand in the mud and water nearly over my shoe tops Well Papa and Effie has not come home yet but we are expecting them now [. . .] [n.d.] Well my friends I heard A minister tell this he was Traveling in the back woods and come up to Mr Crossways and inquired the way to the the house of God and she said she did not no for she had never heard of such a fellow. He ask if she had not heard of him and she said No. Who are you and he said that he was A minister of the gospel of Jesus and said that he was looking for the lost sheep of isreal. And then she said I told John that some fellow would be along here looking for that sheep that went through our lane last week. Well I suppose that preacher thought that he was in A wise settlement where the Blessed gospel should be preached constantly to enlighten such wise folks. [. . .] [March 14] Well the Dogwoods are nearly in bloom then for the fishing Hooks and lines and Poles and bait cans. And Hurrah for the fish fries Just to talk about the fun then makes me wish I was on the creek pulling the finny beauties out of the water Well the fur season will soon be over Then away to the Green fields and woods and the farm. I certainly love A farmers life better than A city life. [. . .] Well arrived at home 7 oclock last night. The road are washed so bad that the wagon axels was dragging on the center of the road we sure had A very unlucky time on this trip bogging and we broke our Harness and had hardly got them mended until we boged again. [. . .] Saturday 15. Goodmorning to all. It is smooth cloudy this morning Well Papa and Hannibel has gone to Mr Doc Goldmans after furs. The road is washed so that we can't travel the old State Line and St Stephen road with A wagon. So he decided to walk down there. They had to go to the dogwood Springs. 8 miles from here and 4 miles from St Stephen Well I have sure enjoyed my self at home. I dressed the furs this morning and I sure had A pretty bad time but Thank goodness I had plenty company to talk to while working Well I am tired so will say bye, bye, for A while. Well he [Doc Goldman] did not have any furs so Papa had A long walk for nothing Well when they got back home they was sure tired My Brother said he would not start to buying furs if that was the way we had to do walk along way and then not get furs. Well we are all together again And sure enjoying ourselves fine. But will start out again Monday. Then for the rough roads again. But old washington County is going to get better roads they are trying to work to everybodys interest and scince they Passed A law to work the prisoners on

the roads they are fixing first class roads. [. . .] [March 17] Well farming time is here again and the fur season will be over this week. We are going on our last trip after furs this spring. [. . .] Well we arrived in town [Chatom] and fixed up the furs by the courthouse. And my Brother Lewis and Sister Annabelle was helping bundle the furs. And then after we got the furs all ready Lewis and Papa carried them to the express office and sent them off. Then I fixed dinner And sure had A jolly time while eating dinner. We Joked each other about our fine mahogany finished table and chairs. We could not turn our table over for it was Gods green earth. Well after dinner we all got in the wagon and drove over to the postoffice then attended To business then come the sad good byes and then we parted from the children they started home and We started for Tibbie. Well while traveling towards town we seen Mr Isaih Turner he was burning his turpentine orchard getting ready for business. We sure spent A pleasant time with him while we was waiting for the fire to burn away from the side of road so we could get through to go onward. Well we did not see any one else after passing Mr. Turner until we come to town all we seen before we reached there was only some Jaybirds and crows and then we come unexpected across A crowd of Animals that was holding a counsil. [. . .] There was an old grey Lizard Sitting on A log rest for he had heard that the fur man and his Daughter was coming and he started forthwith Just as fast as he could run ahead of us to tell his friends to keep away from the road or Mr Jordan would get their pelts and then he sent A big turkey buzzard down the road below Tibbie telling all to be careful and let everybodys chickens alone or he would sure get them. Well we arrived in town at five oclock and Laughed and talked with our friends in town we started on our Journey to wards Seaboard. [. . .] Well this is the dawning of A new day and we are one day nearer the Judgment. Tuesday 18 Well goodmorning Ladies and Gentlemen how are you all this morning Well I hope I am fine. We are setting closed to A fine big fire. The wind is blowing from the East and sure is chilly to this morning Well day is dawning pretty and bright the birds is Just begining to Sing the chickens are sure doing their best to crow so loud to wake everybody up this morning. We sure spent A comfortable night here. We had company last night Mr. Will Taylor he had just come from Seaboard And he told Papa he could not get to Seaboard on this road it is the Sims Chapel and Chatom road And he told Papa his horse boged down to her body. And he was riding horse back If he had not told us we would have drove in to the mud without knowing it and then lost our mule and wagon. Everybody here will tell A traveler about the roads before they get into the bogs And they never tell them any thing that is untrue so any one can depend on whatever they say. All fine clever people here. Mr Taylor spent A very pleasant time with us and we sure enjoyed his company. We will go to Tiger this morning we are closed there now we can see the town from our camp. Well we will cross the T.V. this morning and go back to Mr. Taylors O yes I forgot to tell you that the dirt roads are so boggy the old TV has took

a notion to keep pace so the train bogged yesterday and never got out until 10 oclock last night and after runing 15 or 20 miles. The enginer decided that the engine needed rest so he stoped here at Tiger until 15 mins past three this morning before going to its Journeys end for fear that he would get in another bog and in that case she would be so tired she could not manage to get out. Well this is Wednesday 19 [. . .] this is our last trip buying furs for this spring And I am sure glad for I am tired of camping I certainly have had A lot of fun this winter And of course I have been in awful bad weather and was cought in several storms. But praise the Lord we was not hurt any way. And I sure had A terrible bad time cooking in the rain But thank God I never taken sick and had to stay at home until the last two weeks of the season Just think of it I have been camping Papa ever scince December 3 1913 and what with boggy road and having to wade the mud and water Helping Papa pry the wagon out I certainly have been Bless sure enough. [. . .] Well we did not get home without being cought in the rain. We seen A fellow bogged down and he had plowed up the road so it looked like A big road plow had Just been drove along he was hauling A wagon load of bricks he had on his wagon five hundred and his wagon was in the mud so for he had to unload before 2 yoke of oxen could not pull it out Papa helped him reload some of them Then we throwed pine knots in the road and turned out into the woods and so escaped the mud. Well we started from Chatom At 1 oclock P.M. And had to move A big tree out of the road before we could get by with out hiting against A pine tree. Papa got out of the wagon and moved A log out of the road at Basset Creek and then we come on home. Well we arrived At home Sweet Home at 4.25 P.M. after working the road. [. . .] Well we are going to farming. The fur season is over for this spring. And I am sure glad for I am tired of being shaken around so. For the roads are in such a terriable condistion. That A spring vehicle is worse then A Jolt wagon. For when the wheels runs over A drop off the springs rocks for A half hour and then before they stop there is more rough places to go over. In fact it is all the time rocking. [. . .] I am tired of camping and cooking out of doors and glad I wont have to cook on A skillet and lid like our grandmother used to. give me a stove to cook on every time instead of A country oven. [. . .] But of course I have been in very bad weather I have cooked in the storm and the rain But A person can't have fun all the time We have to have some trouble and not all Joy. Well I certainly enjoyed my last fur trip to Tibbie. Better than I have for along time. I was not by my self very much some one was with me nearly all the time And I was sure glad to have company. Well the fruit trees are blooming filling the air with sweet perfume. I dearly love beautiful flowers and the green grass and then I enjoy my self fine. And then on bright summer days after working all day then to go out in the yard and set down under A beautiful shade tree. And watch the sunset [. . .] And then on bright Sabbath days to go rambling amid the wild flowers and green forests and when tired to

lay down on the grass and think how good our Saviour is to us all. I am like some one lost when I get home. Where I am not by self so much. I sure love to wander around if the roads was smooth so the wagon would not shake me so. Papa is Just as glad as I am to get out of the wagon back to Home Sweet Home again. [. . .] We have sure seen lots of our county and also Mississippi and adjoining counties. But old washington Co suits me best.



Mrs. Anna Busby, 1988

Michael Thomason photo

Notes

¹ Eugene was born in 1868, Sarah Ellen in 1870. Four of their children were born in Kentucky: Mollie Elizabeth, who died as a baby (n.d.), Gertrude "Bertie" (1893), Hannibal (1896), and Effie Edith (1898). Two more children were born in Ohio: Charles Lewis (1901) and Anna "Annabelle" (1904). The last three were born in Alabama: Henry (1909), Dolly Ellen (1911), and Lillian (1914). Unfortunately, the family does not appear in the 1910 census for Washington County, Alabama. I am grateful to Mrs. Anna Busby for providing information about her family as well as making her sister's diary available to the University of South Alabama Archives. USA Archives has an electrostatic copy and a transcription of the diary for research use.

² Banana trees were a novelty to May Jordan. "They are curious looking things to be called trees," she writes on March 6, 1914. "We buried them last fall and the out side rotted off and left the fruit stem bent and ready to leaf."

³ Jacqueline Anderson Matte, *The History of Washington County* (Chatom, AL, 1982), 105. May mentions that she and her father attended a barbecue held by the Farmers Union on September 5, 1913.

⁴ The furs may have been shipped to Taylor, Lowenstein & Co., Naval Stores, 23 Bank of Mobile Building. *R.L. Polk & Co.'s Mobile City Directory* (Mobile, 1913). The family purchased their groceries wholesale from this business firm. Interview with Mrs. Busby, November 13, 1988.

⁵ Eugene Jordan was an agent for the United States Medicine Co., his mailing address is stamped on the back of several pages of the diary. According to Mrs. Busby, her sister was an agent for an Indian herb company. Interview, November 13, 1988. On December 30, 1912 May writes that she sold a box of herbs to a man to cure a cold.

⁶ Mrs. Busby recalls her father relieving her fever when she had meningitis and "raising up" and unconscious woman at church. Neighbors would call for him when the local doctor could not help them. Interview, November 13, 1988.

⁷ Gayle R. Davis, "Women's frontier diaries: writing for good reason," *Women's Studies* 14 (1987): 8-9.

⁸ Several western diaries provide interesting comparisons to May Jordan's diary. See *Let Them Speak for Themselves: Women in the American West, 1849-1900*, (Hamden, CT, 1977) edited and introduced by Christiane Fischer; *Mollie: The Journal of Mollie Dorsey Sanford in Nebraska & Colorado Territories, 1857-1866*, Pioneer Heritage Series, Vol. 1 (Lincoln, NB, 1959); and Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*, (New York, 1982).

⁹ Frank L. Owsley, *Plain Folks of the Old South*, 1949, (Baton Rouge and London, 1982), 61-62, 110.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 216-219.

¹¹ Legislative Act #453, February 24, 1860, Matte, *The History of Washington County*, 100.

¹² *Ibid.*, 99-102.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 109, 283. Between March and November, turpentine trees were chipped and fitted with drip irons. A cup was hung under the iron to catch the crude or gum that dripped from the tree. This was dipped from the cups once a month, put into barrels, and taken to a steam distillery where it was made into turpentine.

¹⁴ Commissioner Kirby to Thomas Jefferson, May 1, 1804, *ibid.*, 27.

¹⁵ Legislative Act #295, February 24, 1887, *ibid.*, 98.

¹⁶ Lillian Schlissel examined more than a hundred diaries of women travelling the Overland trail in *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*. From this large sample certain patterns emerged with great regularity.

¹⁷ C. Vann Woodward, ed., *Mary Chestnut's Civil War* (New Haven, 1981).

¹⁸ The Mississippi Oral History Program of the University of Southern Mississippi contains two such interviews. Mrs. Eva Beets (b. 1898), a native of Columbia, Mississippi and member of a pioneer family, recounts details about farm and small town life in the early twentieth century (vol. 168). Miss Mary Elizabeth Brown (b. 1876), a resident of Richton, Mississippi, describes the life of a self-sufficient rural family (vol. 81).

¹⁹ Joanne V. Hawks and Sheila L. Skemp, eds., *Sex, Race and the Role of Women in the South* (Jackson, MS, 1983), 133-137. See also Ann Firor Scott, "Historians Construct the Southern Woman," *ibid.*, 95-110.

Elisa Baldwin is an associate editor for the *Gulf Coast Historical Review*.

Book Reviews

Richard M. Bernard and Bradley R. Rice, eds. *Sunbelt Cities: Politics and Growth Since World War II*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983, x, pp. 346. \$12.95.

SUNBELT CITIES

POLITICS AND GROWTH SINCE WORLD WAR II



Edited by Richard M. Bernard and Bradley R. Rice

When it first appeared in 1983, *Sunbelt Cities* filled a conspicuous gap in the history of urban America by providing sketches of twelve of the nation's sunbelt cities. The appearance of a second paperback printing in 1988 suggests that the book continues to be of value to students of sunbelt growth by providing a helpful introduction to the urban sunbelt phenomenon.

The editors have done a good job in both organizing and introducing the book. Their introduction not only provides a concise overview of urban sunbelt development since World War II, but also explores the problems of defining the sunbelt. The rest of the book is divided into chapters examining individual cities. Those cities included are: Atlanta, Miami, Dallas-Fort Worth,

Oklahoma City, San Antonio, Albuquerque, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Diego and three Gulf Coast Cities, New Orleans, Tampa and Houston. The essays are well-written and informative. Arnold Hirsch's treatment of New Orleans and David Clark's overview of Los Angeles are particularly useful. The other sketches reflect the limits imposed on the authors by a scarcity of scholarly secondary literature on their cities. Indeed, many of the essays had to rely on journalistic accounts to supply much of their information.

Unlike many edited works, this volume proved quite coherent because each essay focused on the common themes of urban growth and political change since 1945. All the cities benefitted not only from World War II, but also from post-war defense spending and a broad expansion of federal government. Most of the cities also grew because of a favorable business climate and an attractive quality of life. High tech and service industries such as tourism particularly spurred economic growth.

The book outlined some broad political trends in these cities. It traced the transfer of political power from a business elite to a constituency that included racial and neighborhood groups. Furthermore, the book linked the decline of the central city business district elite's political power to the growing strength of sunbelt suburbs.

The portraits of the twelve cities also underscore the diversity of the urban sunbelt. For instance the three Gulf Coast cities, New Orleans, Tampa, and Houston, showed different paths of development. Since 1945, New Orleans experienced slower growth, more racial diversity, less urban sprawl, and enjoyed a greater historical consciousness than other sunbelt cities. Tampa, on the other hand, enjoyed a stronger industrial base before 1945 than most sunbelt cities, but suffered from a corrupt, machine-dominated government after World War II longer than most other sunbelt cities. Of the three Gulf Coast cities discussed in this book, only Houston, "the buckle of the sunbelt," seemed to fit the general model of sunbelt cities set forth in the introduction.

This book is strongest when discussing the economic similarities shared by these sunbelt cities. It is less convincing when it attempts to link political changes to the rapid urban growth experienced by sunbelt cities after World War II. The increased fragmentation and the rise of neighborhood organizations found in the urban sunbelt during the 1960s and 1970s were not unique to that part of the country. For that matter, neither were the spatial developments nor the economic changes.

This does not discredit the importance of this book. It provides a helpful introduction to the long neglected urban history of the southern rim of the United States. Further, it places the urban sunbelt within the context of post-World War II urban America. It will undoubtedly foster detailed scholarly studies to enrich further our understanding of sunbelt urban history.

Robert B. Fairbanks

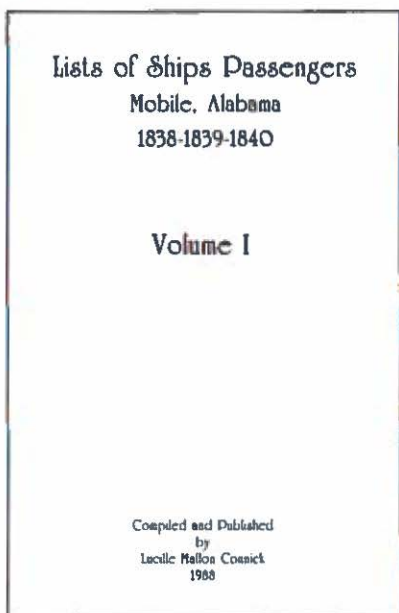
University of Texas at Arlington

Lucille Mallon Connick, comp. *Lists of Ships Passengers, Mobile, Alabama*. Vol. 1, 1838-1839-1840. Vol. 2, 1841-1860. Mobile: 1988-1989, pp. 234, 238. \$39.50 per vol.

For many years, Lucille Connick has worked diligently to preserve and to disseminate the valuable genealogical and historical data contained in old public records. Like most researchers who work with ancient documents, she has seen deterioration, natural or manmade disasters, and careless handling destroy many old records. To alleviate this problem, Mrs. Connick has copied and published much vital source material which might otherwise have been lost. This two-volume compilation is a continuation of her efforts, and it may well be her most important work.

During the antebellum period, Mobile's economy and its population grew dramatically. Improved steamboat transportation brought constantly increasing volumes of cotton, ships' stores, and other commodities down Alabama's rivers to Mobile for export to other U.S. cities and to foreign ports. The rapid expansion of commercial activities was matched by a flood of new residents. In 1830, Mobile was a small river town inhabited by three thousand permanent residents. By 1860 more than twenty-six thousand new citizens had crowded into the city, bringing its population to nearly thirty

thousand. This two-volume compilation of nineteenth-century passenger lists provides important information about some of those new Mobilians.



During the period in question local authorities required ship masters arriving at Mobile to report the names of all passengers aboard their vessels. Mrs. Connick has painstakingly deciphered and copied more than twelve hundred documents. The first volume, covering 1838 to 1840, lists more than five thousand people who arrived in Mobile, and volume two names another eight thousand passengers who sailed into the city's harbor from 1841 to 1860. The lists are far from uniform. They vary in content and in historical and genealogical value.

Some masters met only the minimum requirements and reported only their passengers' names. Fortunately, however, the majority were more generous with their information.

Most expanded their lists to include passenger age, occupation, and permanent residence. Many added the place of birth and a passenger's final destination. A few lists even include brief physical descriptions. The value of these names and vital statistics is obvious.

In these two volumes, genealogists will find the names of more than thirteen thousand people who arrived in Mobile on specific dates, aboard ships that had sailed from designated American ports or from foreign countries. Such a large pool of names, dates, and points of origin constitute a "gold mine" of genealogical source material. But, these compilations contain much more. Family historians fortunate enough to identify ancestors in these books will reap significant bonuses of additional information. They may discover an ancestor's age, place of birth, profession, residence, and final destination on the trip that brought him or her to Mobile.

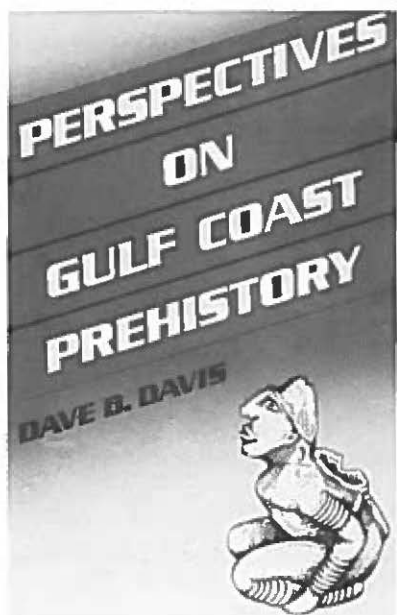
Researchers with broader interests in Mobile's past will also find these compilations of names and vital statistics significant. Of course not all of those whose names appear on these passenger lists were newly-arrived Mobilians. Some were returning to their already-established Mobile homes from trips to other parts of the United States or abroad. Some were visiting, and others were only passing through on their way to other localities. Many of those listed were moving into the city, however, and they became members of the antebellum society, and therefore shaped Mobile's intellectual, economic, political, and social characteristics. The data in these volumes provides insight into the composition of pre-Civil War Mobile society.

Mrs. Connick is to be commended for deciphering and publishing these two volumes of information about so many early Mobilians. They should become standard references for historians and genealogists interested in Mobile's history and in its early settlers. Copies may be obtained by writing to Mrs. Connick, 5814 Antoine Road, Mobile, AL 36693.

Col. Glen R. Johnson

Certified Genealogist, Mobile

Dave Davis, ed. *Perspectives on Gulf Coast Prehistory*. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1984, pp. 379. \$30.00.



Although this book developed out of a conference on Gulf Coast archaeology, it is not the usual collection of papers loosely related to a general topic. This is a well-integrated and organized work whose central theme is that the region, by virtue of being coastal, had sufficient impact on its prehistoric inhabitants to warrant special attention. Although not part of a distinct cultural area, people of the Gulf Coast exhibited broadly similar characteristics from what is now Texas to the Florida Keys, despite a variety of cultural differences throughout the southeast interior.

Because there are few excavated sites from earlier periods, the focus of the book is on Woodland and Mississippian prehistory. The editor makes it clear that the book does not present a comprehensive archaeology of

the entire Gulf Coast, but instead a "cross-sectional sampling" of geography, time and theory. However, his efforts to maintain a sharply defined perspective on the theme and its implications are obvious.

There is also consistent emphasis on filling in gaps in archaeological knowledge by synthesizing information from other fields, including geology, ethnohistory, physical anthropology, and the archaeology of the region's interior. For example, the first article on the geology of the gulf shore demonstrates how a distinctive natural zone created by the interaction of terrestrial and marine processes produce uniquely coastal ecosystems, in turn influencing people's habitats and site locations.

Other articles consider economic adaptations and subsistence patterns, demographic changes, social organization, and political processes all along the coast line. Some very important themes emerge from these considerations.

For instance, the coastal peoples developed highly specialized adaptive patterns and were not the “rather opportunistic generalists” that archaeologists had previously assumed them to be. Also, some coastal populations integrated a “specialized delta horticulture” into their economies. Thus, these prehistoric peoples utilized a broader range of economic strategies than previously thought. Furthermore, ceramic similarities throughout the region may have been due, not to “diffusion,” but instead to frequent population interaction resulting from continually shifting political alliances.

An intriguing article calling for innovative archaeological research techniques and models examines the Calusa culture in southwest Florida. The Calusas present a difficult archaeological problem because they developed a highly centralized social organization even though their economic system was basically hunting/gathering. (Unfortunately, the authors too readily accept a simplistic economic determinist argument to explain the paradox — that the abundant food supply required a complex social organization to efficiently exploit it.)

The weakest part of the book is the last chapter. It is a transcript of one of two roundtable discussions of conference participants. The editor did this to capture the authenticity of the participants’ remarks. However, readers who are not well-versed in archaeological terminology and those who are not adept at reading dialogue will have trouble evaluating this material. It would have been better if the editor had also provided a succinct summary of what was, apparently, a very key part of this conference.

The language of the book is technical, but not enough to keep the interested generalist from finding valuable information about the unique archaeological qualities of the region. Of course, as more information is acquired, one gains a greater appreciation of the degree of cultural specialization of the prehistoric peoples of the Gulf Coast.

Maribeth Durst

Saint Leo College, Saint Leo, Florida

Eli N. Evans. *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate*. New York: The Free Press, 1988, xxi, pp. 469. \$36.50.

Few nineteenth century American Jews achieved the prominence of Judah P. Benjamin. Despite a humble Charleston childhood, by the 1840s Benjamin enjoyed a lucrative New Orleans law practice and a flourishing political career. Following stints in the Louisiana legislature and United States Senate, Benjamin served the Confederacy in several cabinet positions, most notably as Secretary of State. After Appomattox, he made a harrowing escape to England, where he rose to the position of Queen’s Counsel, the highest level of the English bar.

Eli N. Evans takes a sympathetic look at the oft-told story of Benjamin’s public life and offers a sensitive description of Benjamin’s personality and unhappy family life. He focuses on four themes: 1) the “Jewish context” of Benjamin’s life; 2) Benjamin’s relationship with Jefferson Davis; 3) his attitude

toward slavery; 4) and the contrast between Benjamin's early hunger for fame and his later penchant for privacy. Evans fairly convincingly attributes Benjamin's post-war reticence to the notoriety he earned during the Civil War as the sponsor of several ill-fated Confederate espionage attempts and to the lingering rumors of Benjamin's mythical role in Abraham Lincoln's assassination. Evans also provides a useful analysis of Benjamin's involvement in the Confederate government's quixotic attempt to forestall defeat by emancipating and arming southern slaves.



The author is less successful in presenting Benjamin's relationship with the Confederate president and in his attempts to place Benjamin within the context of his Jewish heritage. It is ironic that Jefferson Davis, who wrote a single sentence about Benjamin in his own fifteen hundred page memoir should at times dominate this biography of "the dark prince" of the Confederacy. Evans portrays Davis and Benjamin as different sides of the same coin, men who had begun life as outsiders, but who had achieved status and wealth in the South through fortunate marriages and hard work. Benjamin needed a patron while Davis needed a loyal subordinate; their respective temperaments allowed them to fulfill their respective needs. It is at times a compelling argument,

but Benjamin's life is too often submerged in the better-known and better-documented life of the melancholy Mississippian.

The paucity of sources also plagues Evans in his most important theme — that Benjamin's "Jewishness" shaped his life in ways that previous biographers have ignored. Both of Benjamin's parents actively participated in Charleston's Jewish community, and Judah was confirmed and raised in a religious environment but apparently did not retain the faith of his fathers after he matured. Evans's own family's experience as southern Jews inform his analysis, yet the book is filled with "could haves" and "must haves" about Benjamin's religious attitudes that find little support in the available sources. Evans effectively portrays the anti-semitism of the period, and he is no doubt correct in attributing much of the public hatred of Benjamin to those prejudices. Nevertheless, Evans fails to make the connection between Benjamin's actions and his ethno-religious background. Furthermore, he does not pursue this strand of his story into Benjamin's post-war career in England.

Chapters devoted to minutiae from the life of Jefferson Davis, to standard descriptions of Civil War military campaigns, and to discussions of many of Benjamin's contemporaries contribute little to this biography of Judah Benjamin. In addition, although Evans writes with verve, he tends at times

to overwrite, as when he describes Richmond in the spring of 1862, "cradled in the mist and gray clouds...suspended momentarily in the almost mystical landscape, as if unconnected from the suffering in its war-strained streets." (p. 160)

Evans strongly argues that Benjamin lived his life under the double burden of being a Southerner and a Jew. While the narrative is itself burdened by an extravagant number of details and the intrusion of what amounts to a mini-biography of Jefferson Davis, *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate* provides a dramatic account of a man who, for the most part, overcame both of those handicaps.

James Marten

Marquette University

Laura Nan Fairley and James T. Dawson. *Paths to the Past: An Overview History of Lauderdale County, Mississippi*. Meridian, MS: Lauderdale County Department of Archives and History, 1988, pp. 208. \$31.80.

Most local histories contain laundry lists of the famous, well to do, or "first" families of a given area, in addition to a hodge-podge of photographs and other images chosen because of availability, rather than artistic or explanatory value. Laura Nan Fairley and James T. Dawson have avoided these mistakes and produced a very well written and impressive county history.

Paths to the Past

An Overview History
of Lauderdale County, Mississippi



by Laura Nan Fairley and James T. Dawson

The historical portion of *Paths to the Past* has ten chapters. Two additional chapters focus on famous folk and the towns and localities of the county. The volume is well illustrated with photographs and drawings that compliment the clear, understandable prose.

The history is impartial and well documented. It provides a good vehicle for displaying the holdings, as well as the spirit, of the Lauderdale County Department of Archives and History (LCDAH). Jim Dawson, the driving force behind LCDAH, also demonstrates his dexterity as an author. Fairley's journalistic style keeps the narrative flowing smoothly, blending contemporary quotations skillfully and harmoniously throughout the course of the work.

Native Americans and blacks, two groups often omitted in local histories, are well treated. Women's contributions are also noted; excerpts from their diaries add a point of view rarely found in many general histories.

This reviewer expected to find the Civil War and Reconstruction chapters filled with dated and flawed history. Once again the authors offered a pleasant surprise. The Civil War chapter was not merely a eulogy to the Confederacy. Instead the reader gains an interesting view of the effect the war had on both black and white citizens of Lauderdale County.

For example, the authors set the stage with an overview of the Civil War in and around Lauderdale County and then focus on specific events. Of particular interest is an 1863 railroad accident. As a result of the deterioration of the Confederate rail system, a passenger train loaded with over one hundred people plunged into the Potachie Creek. In response to the cries of the wounded, members of the First Battalion of Choctaw Indians, C.S.A., who were stationed near the scene of the wreck, arrived to help. They rescued over a dozen people from the torrent and secured for themselves a place in Confederate and Lauderdale County history.

The Reconstruction chapter examines the economic aftermath of the war, demonstrating the ruin left behind after four years of conflict. The writers point out that there were hardships for both races. However, Dawson and Fairley do not omit the violence of Reconstruction, nor do they ignore the role of the Freedmen. Any major flaws in these chapters are matters of interpretation rather than facts.

The book has some minor faults. The reproduction of some of the photographs could have been better. More space should have been devoted to politics. Overall Fairley and Dawson have written a useful book that chronicles the history of Lauderdale County and demonstrates that local history need not be ancestor worship, chamber-of-commerce propaganda, or just bad history. *Paths to the Past* is remarkable in its scope and content. It is a standard by which to judge local history.

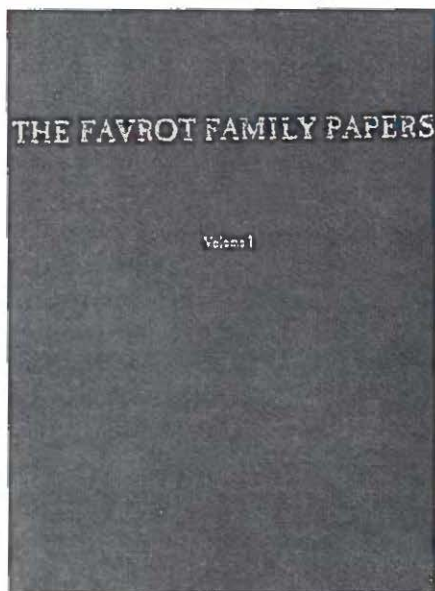
Joseph E. Brent

Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Guillermo Nañez Falcón, ed. *The Favrot Family Papers: A Documentary Chronicle of Early Louisiana*, 3 vols. and *Separatum*. New Orleans: Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane, 1988. xliii, 321; xxiii, 286; xxxix, 327; xiii, pp. 26. \$15.00 per vol.

Tulane University is to be commended for the publication of the translations of the Favrot Family Papers which serve to illumine much of eighteenth-century Louisiana history. The University has been assisted by members of the Favrot family both through their deposits of family manuscripts and by their financial support in this venture. Three cloth volumes are followed by a small paperback titled *Separatum I: Pierre-Joseph Favrot's Education Manual for His Sons A Precis of Knowledge For An Eighteenth Century Louisiana Gentleman*. In 1936 under the auspices of the Historical Records

Survey of the Works Progress Administration work began on the transcription of more than nineteen hundred French and Spanish documents. That effort reached completion in 1984 when the Tulane University Library published Volume XVII of the *Transcriptions of Manuscript Collections of Louisiana. The Favrot Papers*.



In the fifty years since the transcription effort began, knowledge of French is less common in Louisiana, and computers have significantly enhanced translation. This led to the decision to produce translations of the Favrot Papers edited by Guillermo Nafiez Falcón. The result is a remarkable collection of skillfully translated and edited manuscripts which offer a view of a single family spanning the colonial period of Louisiana history. Subsequent volumes will present those papers which reach into the nineteenth century. Falcon happily supplemented the family papers with materials from archives in France and Spain to broaden our understanding.

The progenitor of the Louisiana Favrots was Joseph-Claude Favrot (1668-1739) who enjoyed a fine reputation in the service of France as a cartographical engineer. His second son, Claude-Joseph Favrot (1701-1768) received a Royal Commission as a second lieutenant and was sent to Louisiana. Joseph-Claude served as commandant of Pointe Coupe^{le} and spent years in the Chickasaw Wars. After he married Louise Brusle in New Orleans in 1735, he saw service at Pointe Coupe^{le}, English Turn, Natchitoches, Mobile, and finally as commandant of the garrison at New Orleans. Promoted to Captain in 1750, he retired from the French Army in 1763 and returned to France about 1766 or 1767. At his death in 1778 he owed money to the convent for his keep. His only son, Pierre-Joseph Favrot (1749-1824), a native New Orleanian, followed the family military tradition in the service of France. Unhappy with his prospects, he decided to return to Louisiana in the service of the King of Spain. Don Pedro Favrot, as he became known, led a company in Galvez's capture of Baton Rouge and was named commandant of Baton Rouge as a reward. Volume I ends in 1782.

The second volume spans the years 1783-1796 and, like its predecessor, contains an array of governmental correspondence. It includes useful genealogical tables, photographs of Favrot family portraits, and reproductions of contemporary maps and documents. Don Pedro Favrot served first at Baton Rouge, then Mobile, where he helped implement Governor Estevan Miro's Indian policy. In 1787 Favrot returned to New Orleans and evidently

spent about five years in the Crescent City. His home and rental property were destroyed in the fire of 1788. In 1792 Governor Carondelet ordered Favrot to Baton Rouge. Promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1795, he became commandant of Fort St. Philip at Plaquemines the following year. The physical setting near the mouth of the river posed serious discomforts for military and civilians, but the importance of the position could not be denied.

Within the military correspondence can be found the formal contract of Don Pedro Favrot's marriage to Marie-François Gerard in 1784, a report of blocks of ice in the Mississippi River, a census of the Mobile district dated January 1, 1787, a schedule of fees to be paid public scribes at Mobile in 1787, baptismal records of five of his children, two detailed descriptions of travels up the Mississippi River from New Orleans to Natchez, as well as Carondelet's instructions for the defense of Plaquemines (Fort St. Philip, Fort Bourbon, and La Balize). The military material details the structure of Spanish governmental activity in the lower Mississippi River valley as well as the relationships which evolved between major figures in the Spanish military and governmental apparatus.

The third volume covers the years 1797-1802, the period during which Spain began to lose her grasp of the Louisiana colony. Governor Carondelet, an able colonial official, was promoted to Quito and replaced by Manuel Gayoso de Lemos who died unexpectedly in 1799. By that time Spain's deteriorating position in Europe and continuing financial stresses created serious problems for Spanish officials in Louisiana. Favrot, commandant of Plaquemines, found it difficult to pay his troops, to combat endemic diseases, to protect the mouth of the river from English corsairs, and to cope with convicts who provided the construction forces at Fort St. Philip and Bourbon.

In March 1799 Favrot left Fort St. Philip for New Orleans. In September he commanded the military at Baton Rouge. There Favrot acquired a plantation and petitioned the new governor, Casa Calvo, to be allowed to remain at Baton Rouge for at least a year. In 1800 Favrot was ordered back to Plaquemines where he remained until the end of the colonial period. Conditions at Fort St. Philip were extremely difficult, marked by rotten food, spoiled powder, insufficient funds, and inadequate maintenance of levees and fortifications. The third volume includes material about family life and the problems of raising and educating children in such an uncomfortable and remote a place.

Work continues at Tulane on the remainder of the Favrot papers which include materials dealing with War Reconstruction in Louisiana. If future volumes maintain the same level of excellence, the Favrot Family and Louisiana history will be well served.

Virginia O. Foscue. *Place Names in Alabama*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989. pp. 152. \$12.95.

Smoke Neck • Birmingham • Opp • Havana • Pine
 Apple • Zip City • Wedowee • Royal • Jacobs
 Mountain • Cochrane • Rabbit Town • Puppy
 Creek • Ariosto • Bug Tussle • Yarbo • Boaz •
 Normal • Arab • Octagon • Malcolm • Tuscaloosa
 • Coesada • Scant City • Fatama • Sunny South
 • Rough Log • Windham Springs • Judy Creek •
 Sixx River • White Plains • Plevna • Avon • Dog
 Town • Carroll Creek • Rash • Alexander City •

Place Names in Alabama



Virginia O. Foscue

Palestine • Bashi • London • Six Mile • Athens
 • Comer • Octagon • Wing • Selma • Excel •
 Lively • Murder Creek • Jasper • Dublin • Cuba
 • Vinegar Bend • Titus • Leon • St. Stephens •
 Three Notch • Wren • Hartford • Drag • Uchee
 • Frog Pond • Nottingham • Elba • Gravel Hill •
 Hollywood • Wait • Mobile • Zebulon • Goshen

First, go to your dictionary. Look up “etymology.” “Easy,” you say, “that’s the study of words.” Not exactly. Etymology: “The origin and historical development of a linguistic form as shown by determining its basic elements, earliest known use, and changes in form and meaning.” Now, look up “onomastics.” Gotcha!! “The study of the origins and forms of words; the system that underlies the formation and use of words.” (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 1982)

Virginia O. Foscue, professor of English at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, has taken her interest in these sciences and, with assistance from her graduate students, compiled an impressive dictionary of place names in Alabama. Her findings will become part

of a comprehensive study entitled *Place Names Survey of the United States* compiled nationally by scholars doing research on onomastics. Although the main body of this work is in the form of a dictionary, the text also includes an informative introduction, an impressive bibliography, and an appendix of maps showing the development of counties in Alabama.

Foscue includes in this text approximately twenty-seven hundred names out of the estimated fifty-two thousand geographic locations and features in Alabama. She has included the names of all towns of one hundred settlers or more according to the 1980 census as well as names of other locations such as creeks, mountains, and valleys. Each entry includes the name of the place, a phonetic pronunciation, the geographic location in latitude and longitude, the origin of the name, a classification of the name (such as a person’s name or an inspirational concept), and the earliest known date of the usage. The derivations of names in Alabama are usually either Indian (e.g., Tuscaloosa), European (e.g., Bayou la Batre), frontier (an early resident, a soldier, or a president, e.g., Jackson), religious (e.g., Abel who was killed by brother, Cain), inspiration (e.g., Equality), literary (e.g., Aberfoil for Sir Walter Scott’s Aberfoyle in *Rob Roy*), creative (e.g., Abanda for Atlanta, Birmingham, and Atlanta Railroad), humorous (e.g., Dog Town, Chigger Hill, Licksillet), or sometimes unclear (e.g., Eclectic, the explanation for which is that a local citizen took an eclectic course in college, understood it to mean “that which is best,” and decided the word perfectly described his town).

I received my copy of *Place Names in Alabama* at just the time that Fyffe, Alabama, was enjoying its fifteen minutes of fame. Tabloid newspapers and television shows reported that citizens of the area had seen banana-shaped UFOs. Having never before heard of Fyffe, I turned to my trusty handbook and instantly learned that in 1958 in DeKalb County at 35° 26' 48" N, 85° 54' 15" W, the city of Fyffe (for reasons unexplained it is spelled Fyffee in this text) was incorporated and given an "elaborate" spelling of the musical wind instrument, the fife. I decided to check the same citation in W. Stuart Harris' *Alabama Place Names* (Strode, 1982), a book that invites comparison with Foscue's. Harris' work is neither as comprehensive nor as precise as Foscue's, but it is somewhat more readable (locating site by nearby towns or county); Harris clearly has a more historic than linguistic bent and purpose. In the case of Fyffe, their works are quite similar.

Harris and Foscue, however, agree that their works are important because geographic or place names reveal much information about the character and personality of both the land and those who inhabit it. *Place Names in Alabama* makes a significant contribution to the study of linguistics and etymology, and it simultaneously provides the general audience with both a readable and accessible reference tool — and a good source for popular history. Foscue's work, while serious in purpose, scholarship, and format, is a *Trivial Pursuit* fan's dream. You discover here that there is one Fairfax, two Fairfields, one Fairhope, and three Fairviews. Did you know that Woodville #1 became Milltown in Chambers County, Woodville #2 became Gordon in Houston County, Woodville #3 in Jackson County used to be Old Woodville, which is now a dead town, and Woodville #4 became Uniontown in Perry County?

Margaret E. Armbruster

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Céline Frémiaux Garcia. *Céline: Remembering Louisiana, 1850-1871*. Edited by Patrick J. Geary. Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1987, pp. 277. \$25.00.

Social historians have become greatly interested in personal narratives which illuminate the ways in which ordinary people lived, felt, and behaved. Thus it is that a modest memoir such as Céline's has finally seen the light of day. Céline Frémiaux Garcia's recounting of her childhood and adolescence provides no information about historical events, but brings a wealth of details about people's perceptions of the happenings and their ways of coping. Céline's memoir offers an especially interesting insight into the trials, tribulations and rare joys of growing up in a middle-class French Creole family trying to resist Americanization.

The narrative stresses trials and tribulations, for Céline was born into a tension-ridden family. Her mother, "Ma," a dominating, domineering figure came from aristocratic French lineage. Whether Caroline's family was as grand and distinguished as she remembered is not an issue. Real or imaginary, her exalted background made her feel superior to her husband, who was a mild, fun-loving civil engineer, well educated but the offspring of a lowly Napoleonic *demi-solde* and a midwife. Caroline determined that her children, particularly her eldest daughter, Céline, would grow up well-mannered, well-lettered, well-behaved European upper-class children despite what she considered to be the unacceptable permissiveness of the Creole environment. Her children were therefore set at their lessons as soon as they could hold a slate and made to conjugate French verbs, to memorize mythology, and to study geography, history, and other subjects befitting their station. Caroline's methods were harsh. Fighting to inculcate decorum and self-control in her babies, she bullied, beat, scolded, humiliated them, determined to break their will, to submerge their identity, and to impose her way. "Ma" emerges as the central character in Céline's narrative, the loving but weak father having surrendered the reins to his strong-willed wife.



The tensions between French and American cultures infuse the narrative. As Céline presents it, the Frémiaux lived in a self-imposed isolation. "Ma" avoided intercourse with her husband's relatives, received few friends, seldom paid social calls, and the children grew up to feel in some ways strangers in their own country. Even though Céline learned English when she went off to boarding school in Alabama, she remained "Frenchy." And she clung to the French ways and standards of her mother, expressing contempt for the coarseness of Anglos and distaste for girls less refined than herself. Yet, whether abdication before the sweep of Anglo-American culture, or unconscious rejection

of "Ma" and her world, this French Creole girl so well schooled in her mother's native tongue, wrote her memoir in English.

Besides the interest it presents for its depiction of French-English cultural struggle in ante-bellum and Reconstruction Louisiana, Céline's memoir is most informative about the Civil War as lived on the home front. Great events, battles, treaties, alliances do not figure much in Céline's story. The Battle of Bull Run appears only in the humorous story of the proper southern lady who, unable to utter so crude a word as "bull," referred to the battle as "Gentleman Cow's Run." Yet the middle chapters are dominated by the day-to-day realities of the war as the southern way of life crumbled: a party

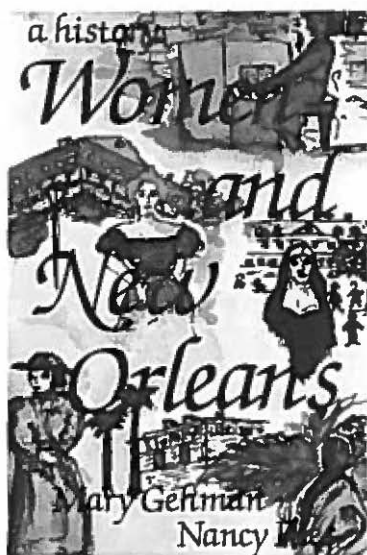
at school with all the nice little girls dressed in "the finest swiss muslin," but barefooted; the occasional turnip, welcome as seasoning for the measly corn meal; and hunting for small animals whose bones could be cracked so that soap might be made from the marrow. These homely details underscore the devastation of southern life as no statistical tables ever could.

As always, the University of Georgia Press has produced a handsome volume, pleasant to hold and easy to read. Professor Patrick J. Geary, the editor of the memoir, has provided an excellent, sensitive introduction and good notes which identify most of the persons and places mentioned in the text. The resulting volume is a useful addition to the growing body of information about non-plantation life in the antebellum South and an interesting contribution to the history of the family.

Mathé Allain

The University of Southwestern Louisiana

Mary Gehman and Nancy Ries. *Women and New Orleans: A History*. New Orleans: Margaret Media, Inc., 1988, pp. 137. \$9.95.



Mary Gehman and Nancy Ries have compiled an entertaining catalogue of famous and infamous New Orleans women. *Women and New Orleans* traces the involvement of a variety of women, from the founding of the city to the 1970s, in activities from night club entertainment and small businesses to social reform.

Mary Gehman, a journalist and teacher, employs a lively anecdotal style. Like many histories of women written for popular audiences, the book is a collection of "firsts": the first coffee vendor, the pioneer in education, the first urban developer. As a book intended for a wide audience, it is accessible, readable, and quite likely to spur further interest in the subject. It has the added advantage that, unlike many popular histories, the selection of women is

remarkably eclectic. Gehman is sensitive to the variety of experience among women of different faiths, ethnic, economic, and racial groups. She includes information on Indian, French, and creole women, and women of color. In the process, she stresses the central role played by women's economic, social, and institutional activities in the evolution of the city of New Orleans.

To her credit, Gehman also does not shrink from what some might find delicate issues. Perhaps some of this grows out of attitudes endemic

to New Orleans in the twentieth century, a city which seems quite willing to embrace its shady as well as its more lustrous past. The recognition she gives to prostitution, for example, might merely have been swept under the rug by others. Yet, prostitution was and is an important part of the urban experience in New Orleans as elsewhere, and the lives of prostitutes radically differ from those of other women. She also explores the racial attitudes present in early New Orleans in her stories about the complex system of double families, and what can only be called the "mistress caste."

Gehman boldly exposes the questionable reality of certain flattering traditions. Her healthy skepticism regarding the pure lineage of the female ancestors of old French families, for example, implies an intertwined racial history of women in this urban culture.

Women and New Orleans is generously illustrated with ninety-three black and white archival and contemporary photographs, taken and compiled by Gehman's co-author, Nancy Ries. A professional photographer, Ries has selected images of buildings, pottery, and tombstones as well as individual women. The book is indexed with names of people and places. There are no footnotes, in keeping with the popular tone of the book. However, there is a list of suggested readings for those interested in pursuing particular avenues. Through its laudable demonstration of the variety of women's urban experiences, *Women and New Orleans* is a fine example of popular history worthy of imitation. It is designed to interest the general reader in the subject of women in history, and within this objective this book is far better than most in its genre.

Angel Kwolek-Folland

University of Kansas

Benjamin W. Griffith, Jr. *McIntosh and Weatherford, Creek Indian Leaders*. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1988, xii, pp. 322. \$26.95.

Biographers of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Indians must rely upon dubious and often contradictory sources that are usually biased by white ethnocentrism. It takes considerable bravery to enter this historiographic "purgatory," the kind of daring displayed by Benjamin W. Griffith, Jr. in his important work on two early nineteenth-century Creek leaders.

Griffith avoids many of the pitfalls intrinsic to his project by practicing sound historiography. He meticulously combs and cross-references the relevant primary sources to create detailed portraits of two very important Creek figures. Almost contemporaries, William Weatherford and William McIntosh were born around the time of the Revolutionary War and died in the 1820s. They came from similar *métis* backgrounds and both became highly regarded and wealthy planters. Despite these similarities, they fought on opposite sides in the Creek Civil War. This important *divergence* seemingly provides Griffith's book with a perfect symmetry.

Yet the symmetry is not as well-balanced as could be desired. While McIntosh was wholeheartedly on the side of the U.S. in the Creek War, it is fairly clear that Weatherford was a reluctant "Red Stick" (the Red Sticks, mostly Alabamas and other Upper Creeks, fought the U.S. and "friendly" Creeks in 1813-1814; the "red stick" was the traditional Creek battle club.) In contrast to many other rebels, Weatherford's participation flagged very quickly, and his "repatriation" after the war was remarkably swift and painless. In spite of Weatherford's immense dramatic appeal and his high profile in Alabama folklore, Weatherford is by no means the best representative of the Red Stick side. Weatherford was peripheral to the insurgent movement.

A far better representative of the Red Stick cause would be the elderly Tallassee chief, Hopoithle Micco, or one of the Alabama prophets, most of whom were also *métis* and young. Though the sources on these latter figures are rare, they are not that much more shadowy than William Weatherford. By selecting Weatherford to represent the Red Sticks, Griffith, like many previous historians, has avoided coming to terms with this important movement of insurgency. The Red Stick cause is not illumined, and the book reinforces long-standing stereotypes of intransigent reactionary "savages."

Since William Weatherford sided with the Red Sticks, his biographer should have explored the social, economic, geographic, and ideological roots

of the revolt, and offered some explanation of its evident drawing power. Such an analysis is not forthcoming, and Griffith's book suffers for it. Because this kind of analysis is lacking, Red Eagle's decision, as Griffith portrays it, sounds hackneyed, a little too much like Robert E. Lee following the course of his beloved Virginia even though he knows his people will lose.

The book also contains factual errors concerning the Red Stick leaders. According to the late J. Leitch Wright, Jr., Jim-Boy and High-Headed Jim were not the same person. Also, Hopoithle Micco, the Tallassee King, was not killed at the battle of Calebree Creek, but died as a prisoner at Fort Jackson. And finally, Griffith fails to relate some vital details concerning the Treaty of Fort Jackson, namely, that the *friendly* Creeks drew up their own part of the Treaty, and that Jackson promised to deliver this document to Washington, but it was mysteriously lost.

McIntosh and Weatherford,



Creek Indian Leaders

Benjamin W. Griffith, Jr.

If the author eschews analysis of the causes and champions of the Red Stick revolt, he relishes chronicling the skirmishes and major battles in which they fought. Readers will find Griffith's treatment of this war exceptionally detailed.

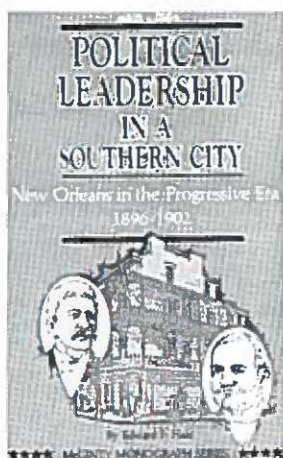
Another commendable strength of the book is the author's treatment of William McIntosh, the Coweta *métis* chief executed in 1825 for ceding the Creek's remaining lands in Georgia. Griffith ably taps the record to portray the complex and difficult decisions faced by this important, sometimes villified, Indian leader.

By boldly entering the "purgatory" of Indian biography, Griffith risked getting burned. He *does* get burned a bit, but he survives well enough to demonstrate that Indian biography is a vital part of southeastern history.

Joel W. Martin

Franklin and Marshall College

Edward F. Haas. *Political Leadership in a Southern City, New Orleans in the Progressive Era, 1896-1902*. Ruston: Department of History, Louisiana Tech University, 1988, pp. 175. \$15.95.



Political Leadership in a Southern City opens with a brief overview of New Orleans history during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. "Population growth, urban crowding, ethnic rivalry and racial friction" intensified social turmoil in the Crescent City. A large city debt, widespread political corruption, and a Democratic organization that used fraud and violence to challenge Republican rule also characterized New Orleans after the Civil War.

Following the removal of federal troops in 1877, the Democratic organization forged during Reconstruction dominated local politics. Opposed to the continuation of strong-armed tactics, dissidents opposed the Regular Democrats in the municipal elections of 1878. For the remainder of the decade groups of reformers under different names regularly appeared to challenge the Regulars. The author has provided a convenient chart of the different New Orleans political organizations from 1868-1899.

Traditional interpretations of Reconstruction and municipal reform weaken this chapter. Curiously, since this is a book about political leadership, there is no description of the form of local government nor of the structural changes that took place in 1882. A comparative dimension is also missing. New Orleans is not viewed from the perspective of other southern cities, many of whom wrestled with similar problems. Memphis, for example, also had a race riot in 1866 and a heavy municipal debt that had more complex causes than Reconstruction corruption alone.

Chapter Two begins with the electoral triumph of New Orleans reformers in 1896. Organized as the Citizens' League and allied with Republicans and Populists, members of the city's economic and social elite captured most of the municipal offices after revelations of corruption caused a wave of revulsion against Mayor John Fitzpatrick and his Regular Democratic colleagues. Fitzpatrick's rise to power and his organization's response to defeat are chronicled. Under Fitzpatrick's leadership Regular Democrats created the Choctaw Club of Louisiana along the lines of Tammany Hall in New York and the Iroquois Club in Chicago.

Fortified with patronage from the governor, the Choctaws quietly prepared to regain power. To forestall future collaborations between reformers and Republicans, the Choctaws played a leading role in disfranchising black voters at the constitutional convention of 1898. As a result of their strong ward and precinct organization and other painstaking groundwork, the Choctaws had little difficulty defeating the disorganized forces of reform and dominating New Orleans political life during most of the following half century.

The remainder of the book is a study of the 235 "men of prominence and principle" who became charter members of the Citizens' League in 1896 and of the 407 "men of stability and influence" who belonged to the Choctaw Club in 1902. Reformers and Regular Democrats are compared as to birthplace, immigrant parentage of the native-born, distance of residence from the city core, residence by ward, date of birth, occupation, education, taxable wealth, religion, and organizational membership. Chapter Three summarizes the author's findings for members of the Citizens' League, and Chapter Four does the same for the Regular Democrats. Twenty-six tables at the end of the book present the information in statistical form for the Citizens' League and then for the Choctaws. Two appendixes list individual members of each organization alphabetically with the information noted above. Twenty-seven League members who crossed over to the Choctaw Club were counted twice.

Members of the Citizens' League tended to be older, richer, and more likely to live in the suburbs, but in a number of other respects they did not differ significantly from the Choctaws. Treating the two groups separately in the text and in the tables exaggerates their differences in subtle ways, and makes it difficult for the reader to compare them. However, in those categories where information is "unknown" for a sizeable portion of either organization, as in education, taxable wealth, and religion, comparisons are shaky at best. Important differences did exist between them. The Choctaw Club embraced a wider social and economic range than the Citizens' League, and the political amateurs in the League were no match for the seasoned political professionals of the Choctaw Club.

A bibliographical essay concludes this study of turn-of-the-century New Orleans political leaders. Sources of biographical information on members of the Citizens' League and Choctaw Club and secondary works on New Orleans history and politics are covered in detail. Two important articles on New Orleans government by members of the Citizens' League are missing. *The Proceedings of the National Municipal League* included contributions

by Walker B. Spencer in 1895 and by Citizens' League President Charles Janvier in 1897.

Despite its narrow focus and other shortcomings, *Political Leadership in a Southern City* provides a solid base of information about New Orleans political leaders in the Progressive Era that will enable historians to compare the experience of New Orleans with that of other cities. Future studies of the Crescent City during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries will also benefit from the extensive research that undergirds this book.

Lynette B. Wrenn

Memphis

John H. Hann. *Apalachee: The Land Between the Rivers*. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1988, xiii, pp. 450. \$37.00.

Until recently, when one heard or read the name *Apalachee*, it probably brought to mind the destruction of that Spanish province of northwest Florida at the hands of English and Creek Indian slave raiders. Now, due to ongoing archaeological excavations at several Apalachee mission sites and the indefatigable archival research of John Hann and other historians, we have gained new insight into the lives of the Apalachee Indians and their Spanish colonizers, long overshadowed by the tragic events of 1704.



Hann reviews the early and hostile contacts between Apalachees and Spaniards in the early sixteenth century, but his main interest is the seventeenth century, the "forgotten century" in American history, so termed by Robert S. Weddle in his recent book *Spanish Sea*. Beginning in the 1630s, Franciscan missionaries gradually converted the sixteen thousand Apalachees, while unwittingly introducing Old World infectious diseases that halved the Indian population in fifty years. This population decline coincided with a slow influx of Spanish settlers who found ideal grazing lands for their cattle in recently abandoned fields, soldiers who protected the missions and conducted illicit trade with the Indians, and administrators who maintained an official presence in the province and looked after their personal gain. By the end of the

century, the Apalachees and Spaniards had developed a complex system of religious, political, and economic relationships. Hann's treatment of this intercultural tension, with its inherent potential for the development of a Hispanicized Indian society in southeastern North America, is one of the highlights of the book.

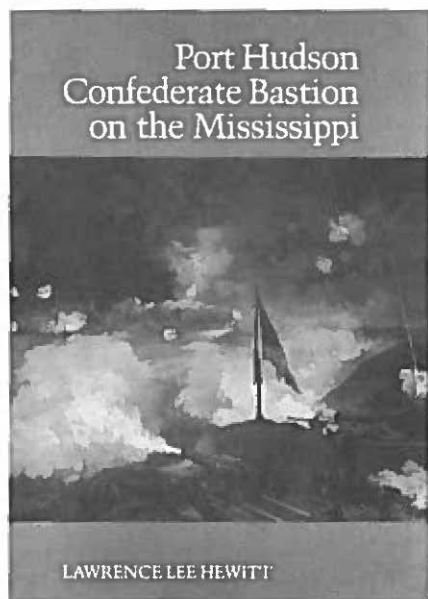
In other chapters he reconstructs changing settlement patterns and populations trends, and explores Apalachee culture, language, economy, and relations with neighboring Indian groups. Here Hann interweaves a considerable body of evidence for the existence of a trading network extending from Apalachee far across the interior Southeast, long before the better-known deerskin trade began in South Carolina in the late seventeenth century. The book's final chapters deal with the growing disillusionment with Spanish control that contributed to the destruction of the missions and the dispersal of the Apalachees. Throughout the book, Hann meticulously presents his interpretations of often ambiguous manuscript sources with a keen eye for significant ethnographic accounts of Indian lifeways. Particularly important in this regard is his inclusion, as an appendix, of a translated document dating to 1677 on the "Origin and Beginning of the Game of Ball."

Apalachee will interest readers who want to learn more about the cultural landscape of the colonial-period Southeast, with its long-decayed villages, forts, mission churches, cattle ranches, and trading paths, all peopled with a varied ethnic and linguistic mix. John Hann has provided us with a valued rediscovery of what we can no longer consider the "forgotten century" in Florida.

Greg A. Waselkov

University of South Alabama

Lawrence Lee Hewitt. *Port Hudson, Confederate Bastion on the Mississippi*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987, xvi, pp. 221. \$19.95.



In any account of the Civil War in the Mississippi River Valley, the one campaign that dominates all the histories is Vicksburg. Largely because Vicksburg was so central to the outcome of the war in the West, the Confederate defense of Port Hudson, Louisiana, some two hundred miles to the south, has received comparatively short shrift from historians. In this new book Hewitt, who is scholar-in-residence at the Center for Regional Studies at Southeastern Louisiana University, attempts to correct this neglect. Although Hewitt's book is simply too short to develop a complete strategic context for the campaign, he does provide readable and fast-paced coverage of the two

principal Federal campaigns against the Confederate bastion: Admiral David G. Farragut's naval assault in March 1863, and Major General Nathaniel P. Banks's overland attack two months later. The writing is clear and vivid, and Hewitt's use of anecdotal eyewitness accounts is particularly evocative.

Hewitt praises highly the courage and determination of the officers and men on both sides, with the single glaring exception of Banks whom Hewitt portrays as manifestly incompetent. First, Hewitt notes that Banks failed to press home the feint against Port Hudson that was supposed to distract the Confederate defenders from Farragut's passage of the fort in March 1863. Then two months later, Banks delayed his own attack a critical twenty-four hours — a delay that Hewitt believes made the difference between success and failure. Finally, when Banks did attack, he committed his troops piecemeal making his overwhelming superiority in numbers useless. Hewitt's final comment is that Banks demonstrated an "incompetence equal to that displayed by George B. McClellan at Antietam." (p. 155)

Hewitt offers two interesting conclusions in a brief final chapter. First, he speculates that in the long run the Confederate success in defending Port Hudson hurt their cause. He argues that if Banks had succeeded in taking Port Hudson, he could have moved upriver to join Grant. Since Banks was senior to Grant, he presumably would have taken command of the siege of Vicksburg and perhaps even received credit for its fall. If so, it might have been Banks, and not Grant, that was elevated to supreme command in 1864. Given Banks's general incompetence, such a chain of events could only have helped the Confederacy. Such speculation is interesting but unsubstantiated. Hewitt's second argument is that the publicity gained by the black troops during Banks ill-fated attack on Port Hudson helped promote not only the creation of new black regiments in the Federal army, but also forwarded the social revolution that would be the biggest legacy of the war.

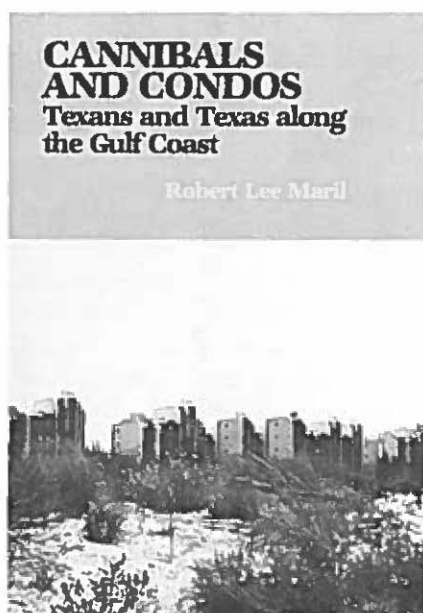
Hewitt ends his coverage of the Port Hudson campaign rather abruptly with the failure of Banks's assault in May 1863. He justifies his decision to do so on the grounds that details of the siege "would only prove anticlimatic...." (p. xii) Even with this omission, Hewitt's book surpasses Edward Cunningham's *The Port Hudson Campaign* (1963). Unfortunately, Hewitt's own criticism of David C. Edmonds's *The Guns of Port Hudson* (1983-84) that it "does not place Port Hudson in the context of the war" could also be applied to Hewitt's own work. Though his narrative accounts of the naval attack in March 1863 and the Union army's assault are excellent, this history of the Port Hudson campaign is still not definitive.

Craig L. Symonds U.S. Naval Academy

Robert Lee Maril. *Cannibals and Condos: Texans and Texas Along the Gulf Coast*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986, xi, pp. 114. \$13.95.

John Edward Weems. *A Weekend in September*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, second printing 1988, pp. 180. \$12.85.

Here are two books about “the sights and sounds of the beach” (Maril, p. 91). They are two very different perspectives of the same ribbon of sand that acts as a bulwark against tide and ocean tempest. Maril explores the broad geography of this thin line of land, noting how the wild character of Gulf shores — lifeways and untrammelled spaces, symbolized by his reference to Karankawa Indians (the Cannibals) — has retreated before the arrival of bland and tame tourist havens (the Condos), most visible along Padre Island.



Weems, on the other hand, pays close attention to a moment in time when a brutal hurricane, moving in from the vast seascape, blasted a particular spot on the beach — Galveston, Texas on September 7, 1900. Two authors have selected the shifts in giving and taking that typify the relationship between land and water on the edge of North America.

Cannibals and Condos is a popular, nostalgic account of one man's sojourn on and around the Texas Gulf Coast. Maril prefers his beaches in winter when scavenger gulls are leaner and forced to be more resourceful in fending for themselves. He chats with the tough shrimpers, whose crews of undocumented workers find it harder to be in port than free in the open Gulf. He shows the sand and surf to his children and prefers to watch fish

rather than to catch them. In a series of twenty-one casually wrought essays, teacher Maril offers glimpses of coastal lives and landscapes. He joins beach regulars in lounging, in watching a beach season's stages and cycles, and in observing his unused whaler slowly disintegrate under the onslaught of salt and sand.

Weems attends closely to his narrative. He opens with a picture of daily life in Galveston, but then introduces the beginnings of doubt. Weather observers note a wind shift accompanied by darkening heavens. Big swells turn into spectacular breakers along the outer beach. Those who know the signs and hear wire reports anticipate the coming of a mighty storm out in the ocean. This 166-page book reconstructs how city functionaries grow increasingly anxious as the water in the streets, instead of falling grows deeper until, within twenty-four hours, most of Galveston is flooded. Rising water and fierce winds crack and topple wooden homes and stores. Residents retreat to substantial shelters, then head upstairs and take to roofs as tidal surges pursue them. The storm demolishes more than two-thirds of this fair city on the Gulf, often from a battering by wrecked buildings which the sea crashes into those still standing. There are heart-rending scenes of human anguish. People are carried away in turbulent waves, struck by debris flung by shrieking winds, and slip under water as homes fall in on them.

There are moments of heroism when individuals make sacrifices for one another. There are moments of madness, especially after the tragedy. Some residents kill themselves out of remorse and grief. Weems has written a compelling book that an early reviewer termed "one of the best...documentaries of disaster." This is a reprint of the 1957 edition which the publishers have done well to bring to readers in a state soon to face another round of storm devastation. Interestingly, Maril has a section on hurricane Allen which fell apart before the lower valley could take its full brunt of it in 1980. It is his most effective essay, and captures the tension that infuses the story of the earlier Galveston tragedy. We share in his uncertainty — checking reports, shoring up the house, and storing possessions. We also experience anticlimax in the storm's lack of punch, and may risk becoming blase about the strength of hurricanes to come.

Maril's treatment of that "immense, flat, isolated strip of land unlike any stereotype of what a beach should be" (p. xiii) is unfortunately stereotypical. There is little new or surprising in his ecological or cultural characterization of the Gulf Coast. He appears comfortable in speaking with locals: fishermen, anglers, beach people. And there are tourists, panoramas of tidal flats, but little in the way of interesting detail that Stephen Harrigan's *A Natural State* conveys. Harrigan turns to the subtleties of dune, vegetation, wildlife, wind and weather. Maril's eye is on the middle ground. He revels in the experiences of those of us who are infrequent beach goers, scattering plastic wrappers and popping stranded jelly fish. He reminds us of mindless bureaucracy that fails to control polluters, of school kids nervous about voicing opinions for a healthier beach, and of the need for planning and zoning. We are used to such admonitions. We also recognize the commonplace scenes everytime

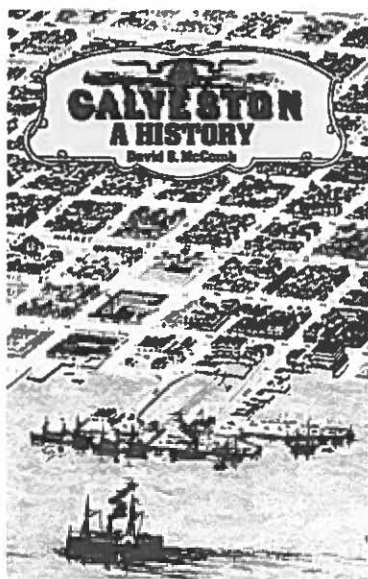
we go — the trash, vehicles, sunsets — and in the end risk becoming bored by it all.

Robin W. Doughty

The University of Texas at Austin

David G. McComb. *Galveston: A History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986, pp. 267. \$28.50.

When the Spanish landed on the Texas coast in 1528, the Karankawa Indians inhabited Galveston Island. They remained until the Republic of Mexico assumed control of the island in the 1820s. After Texas gained its independence, Galveston became the leading port city for the new republic and later for the state. Harbor improvements countered the railroad-building activities of such rivals as Houston and Dallas, so that Galveston thrived as the state's principal exporter of cotton throughout most of the nineteenth century. The largest city in Texas in 1880 and the state's most cosmopolitan metropolis at the turn of the century, Galveston's population leveled off, and its volume of trade ebbed in subsequent years. The city lost eight percent of its population in the 1960s and the total number of inhabitants stabilized at 61,900 by 1980. Although the Texas Gulf Coast boomed after the Second World War, Galveston did not share in the prosperity. According to David G. McComb, the limitations imposed by location and nature determined the city's fate as a medium-sized community. "It was too risky, too reckless, and too uneconomic," he states, "to place extensive businesses or population on an unstable edge of nature."



In this urban biography McComb develops several themes. One is the way in which Galvestonians have used technology to combat the destructive forces of nature. Hurricanes, tornadoes, cyclones, and other tropical storms buffeted the island city periodically, often resulting in awesome devastation. The famous 1900 hurricane killed more people (an estimated six thousand) than any other natural disaster in U.S. history, destroyed thirty-six hundred homes, and resulted in a \$30,000,000 loss of property. To forestall such calamity in the future, the survivors erected a seawall, raised the grade of the city, and built a weatherproof bridge to the mainland. (The city also adopted a commission government not so much to facilitate reconstruction, but to attain control of city hall by the local

elite.) These and other technological improvements allowed the city to survive, if not to flourish.

McComb also writes at length about Galveston's reputation as a wide open city in which local government and law enforcement authorities maintained a lax attitude toward gambling, drinking, and prostitution. Hailing back to the early nineteenth century when the flamboyant Jean Laffite dispatched his pirate fleet from Galveston, the city has been known as a haven for criminals and pleasure seekers — so much so, says the author, that “vice in Galveston was the chief feature of its history in the first fifty years of the twentieth century.”

David G. McComb's *Galveston: A History* capably traces the development of the city throughout its colorful past. The author effectively describes the importance of the city's largest employer, the University of Texas Medical Branch, and fleshes out the influence of several elite families. The book has a few shortcomings, however. Politics are given cursory and sporadic attention. The Depression and New Deal merit but one paragraph. Also, the author says that many immigrants “walked over the docks on their way to somewhere else,” but he tells us little about the ethnic composition of the city itself. Indeed, there is minimal discussion of race, ethnicity, and demographic trends. These omissions notwithstanding, the author tells us much about why Galveston failed to match the growth of its Lone Star rivals, and this book will serve as a useful source for urban historians and general readers alike.

Roger Biles

Oklahoma State University

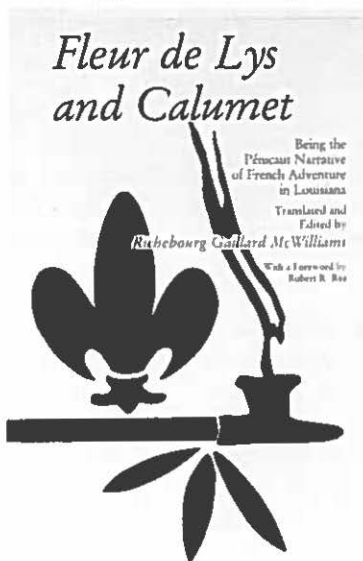
Richebourg Gaillard McWilliams, ed. *Fleur de Lys and Calumet, Being the Pénicaut Narrative of French Adventure in Louisiana*. Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1988, xlv, pp. 282. \$15.95.

The first edition of Richebourg Gaillard McWilliams' translation of the Pénicaut Narrative appeared in 1953. This reprint, with a foreword by Robert R. Rea, provides a new generation of scholars easy access to this fascinating and valuable description of the early years of French rule in Louisiana.

André Pénicaut was a ship's carpenter who came to Louisiana with Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville's first expedition in 1699. Until blindness forced him to return to France in October 1721, Pénicaut was an eyewitness to most of the important events in the colony and an active participant in expeditions throughout the Gulf Coast region from Florida to Texas and up the Mississippi as far north as present day Minnesota. An able linguist, he quickly learned several Indian dialects and served as an interpreter on several occasions.

Pénicaut's account is divided into chapters that relate the principal events of each year. Although the chronology, especially for the early years, is sometimes confused, this chronicle gives one of the most complete overviews of early French settlement in Louisiana. The author brings alive many of

the main actors in this story, telling not only of their deeds but also adding anecdotes that reveal character traits. Although Biloxi and Mobile were the main centres of French activity during Pénicaud's time, he also witnessed the founding of New Orleans and the establishment of plantations along the Mississippi under the auspices of John Law's Company of the Indies.



Pénicaud's observations were not confined to the French colony, but dealt with the surrounding native peoples as well. He spent several winters living among important tribes (the Natchez, Acolapissa and Natchitoch, for example) when insufficient food supplies made the French rely on Indian hospitality for survival. His description of the customs of these peoples is an invaluable ethnographic source for the region. Since the colony's existence depended on relations with local Indians, much of the narrative outlines diplomatic and military activities aimed at protecting the French from hostile Indians as well as from Spanish and English intruders.

Although personally involved in almost every event he describes, Pénicaud manages to remain a fairly anonymous

figure. He rarely takes note of his contribution to the founding of the colony, and there are few hints that could help us discover who he really was. However, sentences such as "The wine consoled us for the loss of the favors of their girls" (p. 116) indicate that he enjoyed the company of Indian girls and good drink. According to the parish registers at Mobile, two sons were born of his marriage to Marguerite Catherine Prévot, but he never mentions the boys. The only reference to his wife is found at the end of his book when he states that he left her and his slaves in Louisiana. Nothing is known of Pénicaud after the manuscript was completed sometime in 1723.

This narrative was probably intended to support the author's petition for a government pension. Given this objective, it is not surprising that Pénicaud is careful never to criticize prominent figures and to paint a rather idealistic picture of the colony. Indeed, despite glowing descriptions of the abundant flora and fauna of the region, hardly any mention is made of the obvious drawbacks that had contributed to Louisiana's poor reputation: mosquitoes are passed over quickly; the rattlesnake is mentioned once; alligators are completely absent; yellow fever and the other semi-tropical diseases that killed off many of the early colonists are never discussed. Had the manuscript been presented to Law in 1717, it would have been a huge success. In 1723 American Utopias were no longer in style.

Editors can rarely please everyone. McWilliams, however, has done a creditable job providing enough information in footnotes to satisfy the curious reader while not cluttering up the overall presentation. When *Fleur de Lys and Calumet* was first published, reviewers unanimously praised the high quality of the translation, and this reviewer can only echo their sentiment. This book provides thoroughly enjoyable reading for both the specialist and the general public.

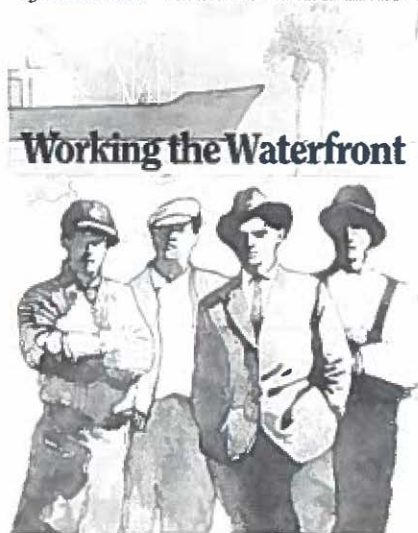
John A. Dickinson

Université de Montréal

Gilbert Mers. *Working the Waterfront: The Ups and Downs of a Rebel Longshoreman*. With an Introduction by George Green and an Appreciation by Eugene Nelson. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988, pp. 274. \$19.95.

Gilbert Mers notes that this memoir was written by "one of the losers, a bit player, not the star of the drama" of history. Admittedly less "than a scholarly work," it is nonetheless a rewarding account of events in one southern industry, longshoring along the Gulf Coast. Beginning with vivid depictions of screwing cotton, trimming raw bulk sulphur, and stowing lead, the book explores the nature of waterfront labor and race relations, the fragmentary nature of longshore craft unionism, and southern labor and political activism.

The Ups and Downs of a Rebel Longshoreman
by Gilbert Mers WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY GEORGE GREEN



For over four decades, Gilbert Mers worked as a longshoreman, union official and organizer, political activist, and social critic. In 1929 at the age of twenty-one, he began a long career on the waterfront of Corpus Christi that ended with his retirement in 1971. During the 1930s, he served as an elected local union official in the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) and helped to found and inspire the short-lived and largely ineffective Maritime Federation of the Gulf Coast. He joined the Communist Party for a brief period, and later campaigned for the American Federation of Labor against efforts by Harry Bridges' International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union and the CIO

to secure a foothold in New Orleans in 1937. During the Second World War, Mers was a military policeman on army docks. After the war, he joined the Industrial Workers of the World, which by then was little more than

a shadow organization that gave Mers "something to believe in, something that offered at least a vision of...working class goals beyond narrow trade unionism."

Having begun his career as a longshoreman and union activist in the early years of the Great Depression, Mers found not only low wages but also waterfront working conditions "pretty much determined by management and imposed by each walking foreman after his own fashion. The ILA offered little help to Texas longshoremen by preaching conciliation with anti-labor, open shop employers. In contrast Mers advocated a militant policy of resistance. Although employer opposition remained strong, and strikes failed to restore wage cuts in the early 1930s, rank-and-file longshoremen demonstrated that solidarity placed some limits on their exploitation. Texas longshoremen waged successful, small-scale guerrilla warfare over the size of loads and the number of bales to be stowed, supervisors performing work, the charging of gangs for cargo damaged during unloading, and the barring of men from employment for indeterminate periods.

Although he worked within the ILA during the 1930s, Mers shared the critique of a handful of Industrial Workers of the World who viewed each AFL union "as an island unto itself," making solidarity difficult to achieve. Mers persistently worked to overcome, or reduce, the fragmentation of longshore and maritime unions. Always an advocate of solidarity across craft lines, in 1936 he sought to emulate the success of the powerful Maritime Federation of the Pacific by establishing a Gulf Coast body to unify longshoremen, warehousemen and seamen. Jurisdictional divisions remained too strong, however, and the Maritime Federation of the Gulf Coast remained little more than a paper organization. Even if that body accomplished little that was "visible to the naked eye," Mers concludes, it "popularized to a considerable extent the idea of respecting picket lines and acting in solidarity." In subsequent years, Mers and his allies fostered cooperation between AFL and CIO locals in violation of official ILA policy.

The world of the southern waterfront in the mid-twentieth century witnessed both interracial collaboration and racial segregation, and Mers reveals glimpses of the complex codes governing race relations on the docks. "Segregation was a fact of life.... Black and white worked the same vessel, true, but the blacks did their work and we did ours." In Corpus Christi, and elsewhere, employers hired all white and all black gangs, and each group of workers belonged to its own union local. Interaction between black and white union members remained limited unless "a grievance arose that became a cause for joint action." The occasional joint meetings that brought both groups together followed the southern ILA custom, with blacks sitting on one side, whites on the other. Chairmanship of joint meetings alternated between officers of the white and black locals. Mers' organizing activities took him to ports along the Gulf, where he observed biracial union patterns in Houston, Galveston, New Orleans, and Pensacola as well. Indeed, despite the existence of a racially divided labor force and the constant threat of racial competition on the docks, a broad biracial union structure within the southern ILA operated

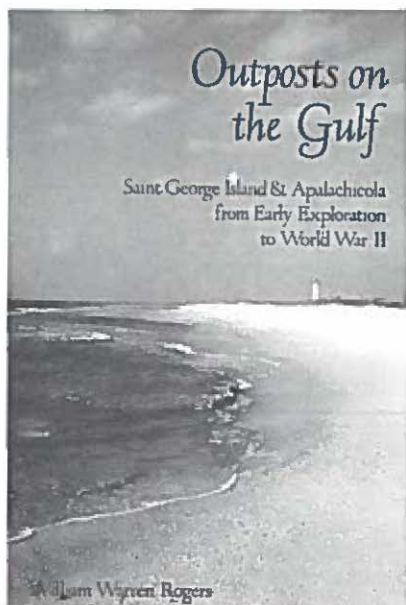
to reduce friction and to coordinate action. Both black and white longshore unions participated in the local and district Dock and Marine Councils, sent delegates to conventions, and served on contract committees. All ILA strikes involved close black-white participation.

While *Working the Waterfront* concentrates on the longshore and maritime trades, Mers' organizing activities brought him in contact with telephone workers, teamsters, hod carriers, fishermen, and others, as well. His recollections remind us that considerable research remains to be done for the memoir reveals a hitherto unexplored world of political radicalism (and conservatism), repression, race, and labor relations along the twentieth-century Gulf Coast. Historians would do well to follow the many leads that Mers' book offers. *Working the Waterfront* may not be a "scholarly" study, but it is well worth the examination by all those interested in the world of the waterfront, race relations, and the southern labor movement in the twentieth century.

Eric Arnesen

Harvard University

William Warren Rogers. *Outposts on the Gulf, Saint George Island and Apalachicola from Early Exploration to World War II*. Pensacola: University Presses of Florida/University of West Florida Press, 1986, xxv, pp. 297. \$29.95.



William Warren Rogers is associated generally with the history of the postbellum American South. His *One-Gallused Rebellion*, a study of Alabama populism, is a classic. His numerous other works treating labor, race, and other themes of the recent South are equally strong. *Outposts on the Gulf*, however, reveals him at work on a relatively small area in the South, — Saint George Island and Apalachicola —, a place he surveys from its natural-habitat origins as part of Florida's eclectic Big Bend area to the end of the William Lee Poppin era in the late 1930s.

In the process Rogers keeps in front of the reader the dominant factor of geography. He emphasizes water, wind, sand, pine trees, and sea life in the area's unfolding human dramas. Indeed,

whether or not the reader of this work has plowed the waters of Apalachicola Bay at six o'clock in the morning, he must conclude nonetheless that there are more similarities than differences to the recurring waves of human

technology, economics, and politics in the history of the Saint George Island and Apalachicola area.

For people who are not historians but who spend time in the Big Bend area, this book is an enjoyable, supremely literate depiction of the region. The reader will discover that Bubber Segres was an excellent guitar player around Eastpoint in 1912; that Edward G. Porter, lighthouse keeper, had hogs and cattle on Saint George Island at about the same time; that both Union and Confederate forces considered the mouth of the Apalachicola Bay strategically important; and that oysters are about one-fourth inch long at the end of their first two weeks of life. For professional historians, or the serious lay reader, this book is additionally a model of social history. It contains lucid writing, attention to ecological detail (including the human personality), lively narrative interwoven with scholarly analysis, careful footnotes, and helpful bibliography.

Outpost on the Gulf concludes with a lengthy, fascinating analysis of the real estate activities of irrepresible William Lee Poppin — who ultimately went to jail in the late 1930s. For the “post-Poppin” period, Professor Rogers plans a second volume. In view of the development that has occurred in the Big Bend since the late thirties, and also some careful planning (especially at neighboring Dog Island), this will be an exciting sequel. I hope Volume II will include a prologue or an epilogue which reaches back into the material of Volume I and outlines the curious connection between man and his environment. In ways that go beyond the contemporary environmental movement, that relationship is a poignant part of this story.

Tennant S. McWilliams

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

James A. Servies, ed., introduction by Robert R. Rea. *The Log of H.M.S. Mentor, 1780-1891: A New Account of the British Navy at Pensacola*. Pensacola: University Presses of Florida, 1982, xi, pp. 207. \$11.75.

Captain Robert Dean's log of HMS *Mentor*, a twenty-gun copper-sheathed ship, bought into the Royal Navy at Jamaica in March 1780, covers fifteen months important for the North American Gulf Coast. After the fall of Mobile to the Spanish during the same month that the *Mentor* was commissioned, the British, anticipating an attack on Pensacola, their last foothold on the Gulf Coast, recognized that ships of war would be the town's principal defense. The *Mentor's* log recounts her part in that defense: cruises, the capture of Spanish transports and merchant ships, participation in the strike against the village, across the bay from Mobile, and in a dramatic, day-by-day account, the siege of Pensacola.

The University of West Florida's John C. Pace Library acquired the manuscript log through the Synergistics Fund, established in 1974. Within a short time, J. Barton Starr made use of the acquisition in his study of *Tories, Dons, and Rebels: The American Revolution in British West Florida* (Gainesville, 1976). None of the earlier standard works on the

Revolutionary War in Florida cited the *Mentor's* log, now held by the Public Record Office, which ends before the beginning of the siege of Pensacola. Thus, the decision of the University's Director of Libraries, James Servies, to purchase the copy retained by Captain Deans was appropriate.

The Log of H. M. S. *Mentor* 1780-1781

A New Account of the
British Navy at Pensacola

Introduction by Robert R. Rea

Edited by James A. Servies

By publishing the log, Servies has made it accessible and intelligible to those unfamiliar with nautical usage. The fully documented introduction by Robert R. Rea, a scholar of eighteenth-century England and co-editor of *The Minutes, Journals, and Acts of the General Assembly of British West Florida* (University of Alabama, 1978), describes Dean's career, the ship's adventures (including her earlier life as the privateer *Who's Afraid*), her crew, and the Battle of Pensacola. The brief chapter explaining the form of the daily log entries is practical reading for those using any English-language logbooks from the age of sail. Editorial procedures, while retaining spelling and grammatical peculiarities, spell

out all contractions, supply punctuation, and modernize capitalization to aid the modern reader. The illustrations include facsimiles of pages from the manuscript, recourse to which demonstrates the reliability of the transcription. Helpful charts track the *Mentor's* several cruises. A glossary of "Names and Technical Terms" notes the first appearance in the volume of nautical terms, proper names, and obscure events.

I have a few captious quibbles. James Willing may have plundered, but being a Continental Army captain, he was not a "freebooter." The nautical day commences at noon, not 1:00 p.m., on the day previous to the civil day. The glossary does not explain "*dead tickets*". The definition of *frigates* should have stated that they are three-masted and square-rigged warships. The description of *keel* as "the backbone of a vessel" is inadequate, and it is disconcerting to find the Naval Air Station located on a map of the siege of Pensacola!

Students of the Revolutionary War in the Gulf will welcome publication of this valuable source-document in a well-edited and handsome volume.

Michael J. Crawford

Naval Historical Center, Washington

Elizabeth Silverthorne. *Ashbel Smith of Texas: Pioneer, Patriot, Statesman, 1805-1886*. College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1982, pp. 259. \$24.50.

Ashbel Smith of Texas

Pioneer, Patriot, Statesman, 1805-1886



By
Elizabeth Silverthorne

Ashbel Smith's career was notable for its breadth of accomplishments and sustained prominence. Rarely out of the public eye and often the center of controversy, Smith was inextricably involved in the complex issues of nineteenth century Texas — politics, medicine, economic development, education, and agriculture.

Born and reared in Connecticut, Smith was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Yale, and shortly thereafter immigrated to Salisbury, North Carolina, to teach school. In 1826 he returned to Yale to earn a medical degree and then went back to Salisbury to practice medicine for several years. He studied surgery at the Necker Hospital in Paris, France, during a virulent epidemic of cholera (1831-32) and wrote

a well-received medical pamphlet on the disease. While in Paris he became proficient in the French language and was an acquaintance of James Fenimore Cooper and Samuel F.B. Morse.

Returning to Salisbury, he established a large practice, but more and more became involved in politics. As editor and part owner of the *Western Carolinian*, a nullification newspaper, he criticized severely the policies of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. In 1837 James Pinckney Henderson of North Carolina, a recruiter for the Texas army, encouraged Smith to immigrate to the new Republic of Texas.

Shortly after his arrival in Texas, Smith was appointed surgeon-general and shared quarters with General Sam Houston with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. In quick order Smith expanded his role as chief medical officer, pursued several real estate ventures, and helped negotiate a treaty with the Comanche. After resigning as surgeon-general, he went to Galveston where he aided in combating the yellow fever epidemic of 1839 and purchased a rustic estate on Galveston Bay where he conducted experiments with crops and animals for the rest of his life.

From 1842 to 1844 Smith was charge' d'affaires to England and France and thereafter became secretary of state for the Texas republic. Newspapers in Galveston and New Orleans criticized his opposition to annexation. After serving briefly as a physician in the Mexican War, he was instrumental in creating state medical and agricultural societies, was a U.S. representative

to the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London, assisted Gail Borden in marketing a new meat biscuit product, encourage railroad construction from Galveston to the interior, and served in the state legislature.

Always an ardent Democrat, he spoke against abolitionist sentiment and supported secession. During the Civil War he was wounded at Shiloh and commanded the Second Texas Infantry at Vicksburg and, later, at Galveston Island.

As a member of the postwar legislature he opposed the Fourteenth Amendment and criticized the Loyal Union League. Focusing his attention on the cause of education, he worked to establish the Texas Medical College and Prairie View State Normal School for black youth, and served as first president of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas in Austin. In the latter capacity he decided on curriculum, selected capable faculty, and urged that the medical branch be located in Galveston.

This exhaustively researched volume is the first full biography of Smith and should be considered the definitive account of the man. Although the author is highly sympathetic, she is not uncritical and carefully notes Smith's outbursts of temper, his bachelor vanity while dealing with women and his relentless pursuit of office and influence. Based upon extensive letters, speeches and legal papers contained in the Smith Papers at the University of Texas, this is a well-written and informative study of a volatile, complex, yet endearing leader who was an important part of Texas Gulf Coast history.

Dorothy D. DeMoss

Texas Women's University

Thomas E. Simmons. *The Brown Condor: The True Adventures of John C. Robinson*. Silver Springs, MD: Bartleby Press, 1988, pp. 198. \$14.95.

While initially difficult to determine if *The Brown Condor* is a novel or a biography, after a few pages the reader discovers that it is a very good story. Using the few available written records, Thomas E. Simmons combined these with interviews to produce a truly engrossing, even inspiring, tale of the remarkable life of John C. Robinson, — the "Brown Condor."

Robinson was born at the turn of the twentieth century in a shanty in the black part of Gulfport, Mississippi. In those days, rigid southern segregation and thoroughgoing racial prejudice proscribed a black child's future. Young Robinson's ambition to become a pilot, in itself an unusual occupational goal for anyone in pre-World War I America, seemed like a fantasy to his parents who knew that most whites were convinced negroes were too mentally and physically inferior to drive a car much less to fly an airplane. Robinson, however, was determined, and his desire to fly took him first to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. There, he studied automobile mechanics and after graduation moved to Detroit, where a young black man's chances for making good were somewhat better than in Gulfport. Robinson worked to make his dream a reality and after finagling his first airplane ride, moved to Chicago,

where through persistence he gained admission to the Curtis-Wright School. He earned a pilot's license and shortly thereafter opened his own flying school to teach other blacks how to fly and to maintain airplanes.



Through aptitude and determination Robinson overcame many obstacles. Even so it was war that propelled him, and by association, other blacks interested in aviation, forward. In 1935 Robinson volunteered to serve in Emperor Haile Selassie's fledgling Ethiopian air force. Ethiopia's hodgepodge of antiquated planes proved no match for Italy's Regia Aeronautica. Although the Ethiopian cause was doomed from the start, Robinson, appointed a colonel in the Ethiopian military, returned to the United States where whites as well as blacks hailed him as a hero.

Robinson used his growing prestige to advance the cause of aviation for blacks. He persuaded Tuskegee to open an aeronautics department and worked to

establish a government-sponsored training program to prepare blacks for service in the Army Air Corps. Despite opposition from the Army, which was determined to bar blacks from the cockpit, Tuskegee became in 1941 the first Negro college enrolled in the Advanced Flying Program to train military pilots. Some six hundred black aviators graduated from Tuskegee, including Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the first Black general in the Army Air Forces, and General Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr., the first black four-star general in the United States Air Force.

Robinson never gained the kind of recognition that many blacks acquired after the civil rights struggles of the 1950s and 1960s. He returned to Ethiopia in 1946 to organize a post-war Ethiopian air force and was killed in an aircraft accident there eight years later.

Brown Condor soars as an inspirational story. It would make a fine script for a motion picture and should be read by every disadvantaged youngster. *Brown Condor* reminds us that the human spirit can overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles and that determination and hard work can go a long way in erasing even the most formidable barriers.

Earl H. Tilford, Jr.

Center for Aerospace Doctrine,
Research and Education, Montgomery

William N. Still, Jr. *Iron Afloat: The Story of the Confederate Ironclads*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1985, x, pp.262. \$21.94.

William N. Still Jr.

Iron Afloat



*The Story of the
Confederate
Armorclads*

It is always nice to be able to welcome a friend back after a long absence, and anyone familiar with the naval history of the Civil War will recognize Bill Still's *Iron Afloat* as a friend whose absence has been long lamented. The University of South Carolina Press is to be congratulated for rescuing this work from the "land of the out of print."

Although the Confederate Navy was part of the "lost cause," it fought valiantly and succeeded, if not in defeating the enemy, at least in delaying his victory and adding to the cost. Leaving aside the epic adventures of such high seas raiders as the *Alabama*, the South's naval accomplishments came with the employment of ironclads along the coast and down the rivers. At first

Stephen Mallory, Confederate Secretary of the Navy, saw ironclads as a device to break the Union blockade. *Merrimac* (*Virginia*) was viewed as a powerful weapon capable of surging forth and driving off blockaders. Her stalemated battle with *Monitor*, however, and her later suicide altered Mallory's view. By the summer of 1862 it was clear that with the Federal navy's capacity to build more and better vessels, the Confederacy could never break the enemy's line. Yet, if the Confederacy could not break out, it could at least prevent the Federals from charging in, and that became Mallory's strategic goal. He used his ironclads as a deterrent, which in combination with shore fortifications, held the Federals at bay. This was, as Still rightly points out, a successful strategy that deserves recognition. In the case of Mobile, for example, Farragut's concern with Confederate ironclads, and their irascible commander, Franklin Buchanan, caused the Admiral to delay his attack while awaiting reinforcements. Similar problems were faced at Charleston where the Federals were constantly on the alert lest they be attacked by enemy ironclads. In these instances the Confederates made good use of the "fleet in being."

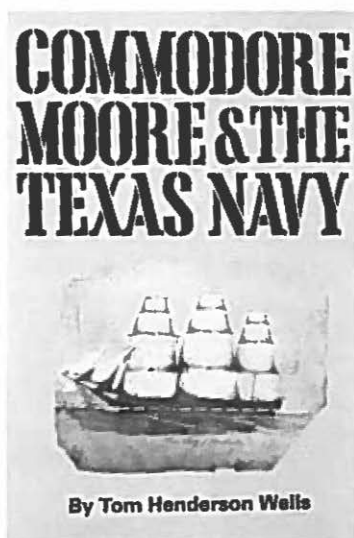
The Confederates made imaginative and brave use of what they had. There are, for example, few exploits in the annals of the war to match *Arkansas's* fiery dash past the Union squadron at Vicksburg or *Tennessee's* valkyrie-like assault on Farragut at Mobile Bay. The Confederates were, nonetheless, hampered fatally by a lack of resources. The South did not have the material to build sufficient ships, nor the transportation necessary to

transport the resources. They did have building sites. However, of the approximately fifty Confederate ironclads whose keels were laid, only twenty-two made it into service. Even more revealing is the fact that of the ships in service only one, *Albermarle*, was destroyed by an enemy weapon. The remainder ended up either captured or scuttled. Small wonder that in its own time and in the writings of historians after the war, the Confederate navy has not fared well. Still tries to set this record straight. He has done it with such skill and completeness that nearly two decades after its first appearance *Ironclads Afloat* remains a definitive work.

William M. Fowler, Jr.

The New England Quarterly

Tom Henderson Wells. *Commodore Moore and the Texas Navy*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988, viii, pp. 218. \$9.95.



A broad spectrum of people interested in mid-nineteenth century naval lore, the story of the hectic years of the Lone Star Republic, and the diplomatic and political struggles that embroiled Mexico, Texas, and Yucatan in the years between 1839 and 1845 will applaud the decision by the University of Texas Press to republish in paperback Commander Tom Henderson's action-charged monograph that first came off the press in 1960.

Commander Wells, a retired and decorated naval veteran, tells his story of the Texas navy and the Republic's ordeal in maintaining a precarious independence from Mexico by focusing on the life and times of Commodore Edwin W. Moore.

The years have been unkind to Commodore Moore and his accomplishments, and, but for the research and writings of Commander Wells and Jim Dan Hill, Moore's significance to the history of Texas and Mexico would be unknown.

Moore, after a fourteen-year career in the United States Navy that saw him rise from midshipman to first lieutenant and spend much time at sea in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, resigned his commission to command the Texas navy. Moore was confronted by awesome responsibilities. The navies of the western world were racked by changes and stresses caused by technological revolutions in motive power and weaponry. The new nation lacked a seafaring population, shipbuilding yards, a naval depot that could repair the engines of *Zavala*, the steam-powered pride of its navy, and an armament industry. To supply these critical needs, Commodore Moore and his government looked to the United States. But to do so, they had to keep

a low profile and trust to the sympathy of local officials to keep Washington from invoking United States neutrality laws. This was vital because Mexico refused to recognize the independence of Texas. Moore, however, successfully overcame these obstacles to build a small but effective navy.

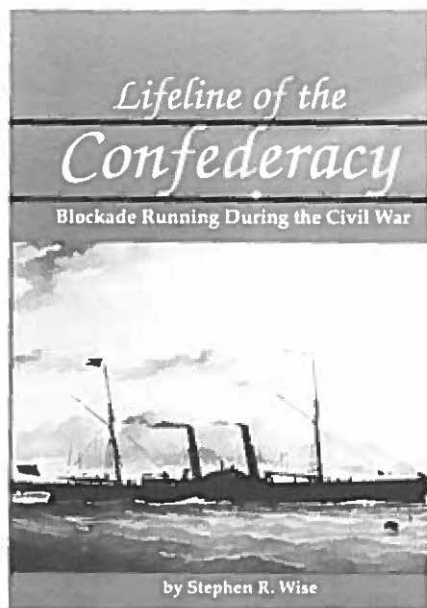
The Texas navy under Moore played a pivotal role in the diplomatic and military struggles for hegemony in the Gulf of Mexico. If Mexico were to crush Texas, she had to look to her navy to defeat or to neutralize Moore's fleet and to open the way for an amphibious attack on the Lone Star Republic. The deserts and mountains south of the Rio Grande posed formidable obstacles to an invading army.

A revolt in Yucatan by people determined to break away from Mexico gave the Texas government the opportunity for a foreign adventure that would divert the Mexican central government and compel it to acknowledge Texas' independence. In return for a subsidy the Texans became allies of the Yucatecos, and Moore's fleet was no longer laid-up because of lack of monies to pay its debts and its officers. Moore's ships embarrassed and frustrated efforts by the Mexican government to crush the Yucatecos. To challenge the Texans' power afloat, the Mexican government purchased and outfitted two powerful steam warships in Europe. The ships, when they sailed for the Gulf of Mexico, would be officered and largely manned by veterans of Her Majesty's navy.

A more serious threat to the Texas navy and Commodore Moore's career emerged even before the new Mexican warships arrived in Mexican waters. In mid-December 1841 Sam Houston, the hero of San Jacinto and one of the architects of Texas independence, was inaugurated as president. Houston, an old soldier with no appreciation of the significance of sea power, was opposed to the Yucatan and expansionist adventures of former President Mirabeau Bonaparte Lamar. Diplomacy, not coercion, would be Houston's tool in his campaign to establish normal relations with Mexico.

Commander Wells details the ensuing contest of wills between President Houston and Commodore Moore. As a former naval officer, the author sides with Commodore Moore. Drawing on a wealth of source material, both published and unpublished, Wells has produced an exciting and fast-moving story. Houston triumphed, and Moore was court-martialed and humiliated. The Texas navy, after scoring several spectacular successes, was scrapped or laid-up to be sold to the United States following the annexation of Texas. Moore, because of Commander Wells' research and writing skills, strikes one as a dedicated and disciplined officer who, with a keen sense of the significance and purpose of sea power, embraced naval doctrines subsequently espoused by Alfred Thayer Mahan, when Mahan was a baby in swaddling clothes.

Stephen R. Wise. *Lifeline of the Confederacy: Blockade Running During the Civil War*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988, pp. 402. \$24.95.



My high school history teacher told me that the South lost the Civil War because it was overwhelmed by the North. The southern soldiers were braver, the Rebel generals were tactically superior, but there were just too many Yankee troops. The Confederacy fought the good fight, but it was indeed a lost cause.

I did not stay in high school forever, and a new generation of historians has challenged that explanation of the defeat of the South. Recent literature contains a myriad of interpretations. Some suggest that Southerners' Celtic background led to their defeat, while others postulate that their failure to develop national unity spelled disaster. These theses hint that by early 1865 the South still

possessed sufficient manpower, supplies, and material and economic strength to continue the war. However, it lacked the will to win. Stephen Wise's *Lifeline of the Confederacy* lends credence to this school of thought.

Once the war began the South quickly realized it lacked the industrial base to supply a modern army or a merchant marine large enough to transport foreign-made war material. The only solution to this dilemma lay with cultivating the support of Great Britain. A blend of patriotism and profits soon opened a lifeline of supplies which began in the industrial heartland of England, flowed through Bermuda, Nassau, and Havana and ended in the Confederacy. As long as southern ports remained open, blockade runners delivered enough supplies to keep a viable Rebel army in the field. Once these seaports fell southern dreams of independence quickly vanished.

Lifeline of the Confederacy is a comprehensive overview of southern blockade running efforts. The book chronicles the nautical as well as business, diplomatic, political, and logistical structure of this important Confederate operation. Although Confederate efforts to run the Federal blockade were at best haphazard, the results were nevertheless impressive. Just over three hundred steamers challenged the Federal blockade. These sleek-hulled vessels attempted thirteen hundred voyages and claimed a success rate in excess of seventy-five per cent. They supplied sixty per cent of the rifles, thirty-three percent of the lead, seventy-five per cent of the saltpeter (the main ingredient

in gunpowder) and virtually all of the paper for cartridges, in addition to the cloth and leather used in uniforms.

Lifeline contains two chapters, "New Orleans: Lost Opportunity" and "Failures in the Gulf," which focus on the Gulf Coast. In Wise's opinion New Orleans, not Charleston and Wilmington "should have been the South's most important blockade-running port." Its capture, early in the war, dealt the Confederacy a staggering blow and forced the Rebels to shift blockade running efforts from the Gulf to the East Coast. For the remainder of the war, government and business officials underutilized the maritime potential of the Gulf Coast.

Lifeline of the Confederacy is a well researched and organized book. It contains detailed maps of the entire southern coastline and major seaports. The photographs and sketches of famous blockade runners enhance the credibility of the book. The author's extensive use of appendixes (almost one-half of the book is appendixes and bibliography) is impressive. The only weakness is a stilted writing style. Overall this is a significant contribution to Civil War bibliography. Stephen Wise's *Lifeline of the Confederacy* is the finest book yet written on Confederate blockade running efforts.

Donald Willett

Texas A&M University at Galveston

From the Archives . . .

Lauderdale County Department of Archives and History: Doing Local History Right!

Joe Brent

On December 23, 1983, as part of the Lauderdale County, Mississippi sesquicentennial celebration, the county's Board of Supervisors passed a resolution creating the Lauderdale County Department of Archives and History (LCDAH). The new archives was to be "responsible, in conjunction with the office of Chancery Clerk of Lauderdale County, for the collection, preservation, maintenance and organization of the official records of Lauderdale County. . . ." The resolution went on to say that no funds would be expended for the archivist or the archives by the county.

Unfortunately as is the case with many local endeavors, there is moral support from the community, but no funds. The people in Meridian are luckier than most because they have Jim Dawson. Dawson, who helped engineer the sesquicentennial celebration, was named director of the archives by the Board of Supervisors in early 1984. A longtime resident of Meridian, he proved to be the catalyst needed to make the archives more than a paper tiger.

From the beginning Jim Dawson had a vision of the archives' mission. "It could really be something of lasting value to the county and its people. It could and would tell the story of the past, but it will take time, work and the cooperation and support of the community." The archives secured a room in the courthouse annex, the old Lamar Hotel, and was organized as a non-profit organization in 1984.

The fledgling department still had no staff or funding, but undaunted, Dawson set out to secure both. He solicited membership in the organization and gathered a staff of volunteers to begin work. The volunteers came from the ranks of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. Without these civic minded folks the archives would have never gotten off the ground.

Preserving and indexing the oldest county records was the first task that awaited the eager senior citizens. The material included justice, county, and circuit court records, all covered with dust and spider webs and tucked away in the basement of the courthouse. Dirt and arachnids did not stop the archives' volunteers, who began their work in 1984 and to date have accomplished a great deal, which the lengthy list of LCDAH publications prove.

Jim Dawson, realizing that his young organization needed a direction, once again took action, this time in the form of a planning grant from the Phil Hardin Foundation. The goals established under the grant were: 1. to develop an archives to house, organize, and make available local records 2. to create a museum to house and interpret artifacts important to understanding the history of the county and 3. to write an accurate, readable



*Jim Dawson (right) and Mike Vance
confer during renovation of the archives*

*Lauderdale County Department of
Archives and History*

history of Lauderdale County. All of these goals, with the exception of the museum, have been accomplished. Nan Fairley and Jim Dawson have written a history entitled *Paths to the Past: An Overview of Lauderdale County*, which has received good reviews, [including Mr. Brent's in this issue, ed.] and the archives has become established with the help of a major grant.

The final piece of the jigsaw puzzle was securing the outright grant of some \$70,000 from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. Enlisting the aid of Dale Foster, who served as archives consultant, the grant was obtained and went into effect in May 1989 when LCDAH hired Will Henson to be the permanent archivist and records manager. In addition Lee Skelton and Anita Jo Swain Ross were hired as assistant archivists for one year to help set up the archives and records management program.



*Lobby of the renovated Lauderdale
County Courthouse annex*

Joe Brent photo

Henson, a graduate of East Carolina University, hopes to continue the tradition begun by Jim Dawson. He explained the goals for his first year in Meridian: "We intend to inventory county and city records, begin developing retention/disposition schedules, arrange and describe our archival holdings

after appraisal, and publish a guide to our archive and manuscript collections. This effort will be greatly augmented by the special skills of our two assistant archivists." Indeed both Ross, a graduate of Ole Miss, and Skelton, a graduate of Livingston University, have skills that will prove invaluable. The former has worked with the Lauderdale County Chancery Clerk's office and is very familiar with the records. The latter has a computer science background, and will help set up the department's automation system.

LCDAAH has worked to strengthen its ties with the community. It was in that spirit that Fairley and Dawson, again with the assistance of the Phil Hardin Foundation, produced a book for the local school systems called *Bringing History Home*. Designed for use in all school grades, it helps students gain an appreciation of history by relating it to their home county.

The Lauderdale County Department of Archives and History exemplifies the way local historical efforts should be conducted. Beginning with nothing more than an idea, Jim Dawson and his people have built a program that would make any city proud. The holdings at the repository date from 1835 with a remarkably intact collection from 1837 for the county records and 1868 for the city of Meridian. There is a total of some four thousand cubic feet of public records which will be of interest to historians and genealogists alike. LCDAAH has created a scholar in residence program, written a good history of the county, and published over forty indices, abstracts, and other monographs relating to Lauderdale County's history and people. Located in a newly renovated portion of the second floor of the old Lamar Hotel in downtown Meridian, LCDAAH's address is P.O. Box 5511, Meridian, MS 39302, phone (601) 482-9752.

Query

Augusta Elmwood is collecting references to any phase of beekeeping and honey/wax production in the French, Spanish, English, Dutch etc. colonies in the New World. Some questions being addressed: Who brought the hives to the new world (scientists, farmers, merchants, clergy)?; how did the hives fare on the voyage over?; what methods and equipment were used?; to what extent were hive products used in industry and trade? ANY references/citations from original documents or contemporary works would be greatly appreciated. Answers are needed to fill the information gap between ancient beekeeping (information gathered from archaeological digs) and 1852 (invention of the Langstroth movable-frame, modern hive). Please write/call: 1514 St. Roch Ave., New Orleans, LA 70117. 944-4908.