Issue 18, Fall 2005

The Texas Ranger Dispatch™

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Issue 18, Fall 2005

TEXAS RANGER ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

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TEXAS RANGER DISPATCH Magazine

Illustraion courtesy Sabine River Authority

Water Moccasin

By Bob Arnold

Gray McWhorter tells this story about the first time that he met Red Arnold. Gray lives in Pittsburg and became friends with the men of Company B before he became a director of the Texas Ranger Association Foundation. In the early 1970s, he was invited to join several Rangers for a weekend of work and fellowship at the Company "B" cabin on Lake of the Pines. Red Arnold, Glenn Elliott, Bob Mitchell, and Max Womack were among those that were at the cabin. Some work was done, many stories were told, and a few cards were shuffled as well.

After working at the cabin for most of the day, Red decided to take a little nap. He removed his sweaty clothes, crawled in between the sheets of one of the bunk beds, and went to sleep.

It wasn't too long before one of the Rangers working outside saw a water moccasin slithering through the grass between the lake and the back side of the cabin. He hollered out in a loud voice that there was a snake, and some commotion from other nearby Rangers soon followed.

Hearing the noise, Red immediately got out of the bunk, quickly pulled on his boots, grabbed his .45 automatic pistol, and headed out the back door. Seeing the snake retreating toward the lake, Red raised the pistol, took aim, and shot. You will have to ask Gray if Red killed the snake with the shot from his gun or whether the snake died of fright when it looked up from the grass and saw a naked Ranger . . . a naked Ranger wearing nothing but his boots and taking aim down the barrel of the .45 automatic.

Glenn Elliott and Red Arnold. ©2005, Courtesy of Glenn Elliott.

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Horses have always been part of the Texas Rangers' team. "There will always be a place for the horse with the Texas Rangers," says Ranger Calvin Cox. "In situations where you need them, there's nothing better. Photo ©2005, TRHFM & Jerry Circelli.

Texas Rangers

by Jerry Circelli

Reflecting on the six years he rode with the Texas Rangers, from 1875 to 1881, James B. Gillett penned three sentences that captured the history of the legendary lawmen, defined their mission and set the standard for their future.

“Night and day will the ranger trail his prey, through rain and shine, until the criminal is located and put behind bars where he will not molest or disturb peaceful citizens,” Gillett wrote. “For bravery, endurance and steadfast adherence to duty at all times, the ranger is in a class by himself. Such was the old ranger, and such is the ranger of today.”

In Gillett’s time, Texas was a haven for lawless individuals; some things haven’t changed. From the rugged mountains and desert valleys of West Texas to the thick blanket of pine forests in the east – lawbreakers still think they can get lost here.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice officials Royce Taylor (left) and Darrell Lambert (right) are responsible for providing horses and tracking dogs for use by

Texas Ranger Calvin Cox (center) and his colleagues.

Desperados continue to find, however, that they can run, but they can't hide, when the Texas Rangers are on their trail.

Texas Department of Criminal justice officials Royce Taylor (left) and Darrell Lambert (right) are responsible for providing horses and tracking dogs used by Ranger Calvin Cox (center) and his colleagues. Photo ©2005, Jerry Circelli.

Rangers Still Saddle Up

Today's elite force of 117 who wear the Texas Ranger badge still track down criminals and bring them to justice.

"We use whatever means is available to us to apprehend a suspect," says Lt. Jerry Byrne of Company B in northeast Texas. Most rangers are divided into six companies – labeled "A" through "F" – that identify specific geographic locations around the state. All rangers, however, have jurisdiction throughout the Lone Star State. In addition, the rangers maintain an unsolved crimes investigation team and a headquarters unit.

"We all have helicopters, heat sensors and many sophisticated tools at our disposal," Byrne says. "We'll do what it takes to track down criminals, and if that means riding a horse all day and all night, we'll do that, too.

"Typically, a fugitive or suspect is spotted and runs from a highway patrolman as long as he can in a high-speed car chase, drives through fences, runs the car until he blows the engine or it can't go anymore. Then he takes off on foot. Before you know it, he's lost somewhere out there in thick brush. That's when you need the horses and the tracking dogs."

Although early day peacekeepers had no alternative mode of travel, manu current day Rangers still enjoy the time they spend on horseback. Riding horses in manhunts offers a number of advantages over engine-powered vehicles. Photo ©2005, TRHFM.

Horsepower Advantages

The rangers rely on personnel at 34 Texas Department of Criminal Justice prison units around the state to supply horses and dogs for manhunts. Although the state maintains a 1,700-horse herd, usually only the top five horses at each prison are trained for the manhunt rigors.

On most searches, a ranger's accompanied by two TDCJ officers in charge of the tracking dogs. Horses, dogs and lawmen make an unbeatable combination for apprehending criminals in the remote countryside. Horses, in particular, offer advantages that no other mode of transportation provides.

"A horse gets you over rough terrain where a four-wheeler can't," Byrne says. "And when you're on those loud machines, the person you're chasing hears you a lot sooner than you can hear him. It gives away your position. Also, you have the advantage of sitting up about 10 feet on a horse. Your perspective is better.

"And when you lope horseback toward an individual, he gets intimidated really quickly. You can literally stop him in his tracks. Horses are big, powerful animals, and a lot of people are naturally afraid of them anyway. When a suspect sees a horse running right at him, he'll often give up the fight right then and there."

Not every criminal, however, throws up his hands at the sight of a Texas Ranger horseback.

Crime Still Doesn't Pay

One notable ranger chase took place in April 1997, during a standoff with anti-

government extremists near Fort Davis in the Davis Mountains of West Texas.

When not on duty with the Rangers, Sgt. Calvin Cox competes in team-roping events near his home in Abilene, Texas. Photo ©2005, Jerry Circelli.

Group members claimed to represent the "Republic of Texas" and said the Union illegally annexed the state in 1845. Their goal: establish an independent nation, including all of Texas, half of New Mexico and parts of Oklahoma, Colorado and Wyoming.

Trouble with the rebellious clan came to a head when the extremists shot their way into a couple's home, injuring the husband in the gunfire. The group took hostages, whom they called their "prisoners of war," and began making demands.

A situation, which could've proven deadly for area residents, was diffused when Company E Capt. Barry Caver negotiated the hostages' safe release the next day. All but two group members later surrendered.

Flushing out those last two became the task of Byrne, several fellow rangers and their TDCJ associates. All had worked to end the standoff, and were ordered to mount and begin the fugitive manhunt. The teams searched some of the most treacherous mountain terrain in the state. As they tracked the suspects on horseback, there were clues.

"We found a cracker with a bite out of it," Byrne explains. "There were no ants in it yet. We knew the fugitives couldn't be far." After a nearly two-day search, the rangers and other officials caught up with the two men. Shots rang out in a river bottom and echoed off the mountainsides. As the rangers headed toward the gunfire, they discovered three dogs had been shot.

The lawmen called in a helicopter, with an armed ranger, to help pinpoint the suspects. One suspect was fatally shot; the second was apprehended months later near Huntsville, Texas.

Photo ©2005, TRHFM.

Rough-and-Ready Rangers

Company E Sgt. Calvin Cox accompanied Byrne on the mounted search at Fort Davis. Like his fellow rangers, who can be called on at any time, Cox is always prepared to saddle up.

Rangers commonly keep spurs, boots, chaps, chinks, gloves, jackets and riding gear in their vehicles so they can be ready for a manhunt in a moment's notice. An 18-year-ranger, Cox knows these searches never occur at convenient times.

"If it's at night, you go. If it's raining, sleeting, snowing – it doesn't matter, you go," Cox says. "It's all about cutting time and distance between you and the suspect." He and his colleagues use the term "chase" instead of manhunt, and for good reason. In these mounted pursuits, eager tracking dogs run through creeks, over

uneven terrain and rocks, and through thick brush, while horses work hard to keep up.

Remaining on the horse requires a well-balanced rider who can get the big picture of obstacles in his path. If there's an obstruction ahead, explains Cox, rangers must handle their horses accordingly. Expecting the horse to "take care of the rider" in those cases, could result in a sudden dismount.

"The horses are interested in one thing," Cox says, "and that's keeping up with those dogs. It's what they're trained to do, and it's the world they live in. Your job is to hold on and go along for the ride."

Other than armed suspects, range fencing presents one of the biggest dangers on a chase, Cox admits. For that reason, when riding at night, rangers keep the reins in one hand and a flashlight in the other, constantly sweeping the light beam in the anticipated direction of travel.

"Sometimes, you can't see a fence that's down and covered by grass," Cox explains. The first tip off: vegetation around it grows in a different pattern from surrounding grasses. Recognizing these details is part of the rangers' training.

The aggressive pursuit might present challenges for the riders, but ultimately helps the lawmen win. "In every chase in remote areas, the horses are invaluable. You're not going to stay with the tracking dogs any other way," Cox says.

Lt. Jerry Byrne has served in a number of roles in his 50 manhunts as a Texas Ranger —everything from riding horseback to serving as an observer from a helicopter flying overhead. ©2005, Jerry Circelli.

Preparing Horses

One man who ensures Cox and other rangers are mounted on fast, well-trained chase horses is TDCJ Sgt. Darrell Lambert, a calf roper on the gold-medal U.S. team during the 1988 Winter Olympics in Alberta, Canada. A 12-year pro-rodeo veteran, Lambert signed on with the TDCJ French Robertson prison unit in Abilene in 1993, and has worked with the horses there ever since.

On the prison grounds, Lambert stables 25 head of horses and kennels 35 tracking hounds. It's Lambert's responsibility to train dogs to track suspects and ensure that

horses follow in close pursuit. For eight to 10 hours a day, five days a week, horses and dogs are trained and put to the test. Lambert also works the horses and dogs at night, since many manhunts take place after sundown.

In selecting horses for the job, Lambert looks for many of the same attributes found in solid ranch horses. "They have to go anywhere you ask them to. That means brush, cactus, rocks, whatever. I look for horses with good feet and good conformation – I want tough hoofs and strong legs."

Lambert likes to train chase horses from the time they're colts and doesn't consider them ready for the job until they're 8 to 10 years old. He seeks horses 14.3 to 15 hands to work through the brush. Additionally, horses need to be sound, capable of traveling hard for several hours. Horses must have willing dispositions and "never act the fool," insists Lambert. The sergeant won't tolerate a horse that kicks, and the animal must be comfortable at all times with dogs running in its path and circling in a pack around its legs.

The horses also must carry supplies, rifles and other articles, and must be willing in any kind of weather, day or night.

When the rangers call for horses and dogs, Lambert and his assistant, Royce Taylor, normally roll down the highway with the animals within 15 minutes.

"The horses and dogs aren't hard to load," Taylor says. "They know where they're going and what they need to do." Rangers and animal handlers agree the thrill of the chase brings out the animals' best.

"They know what's going on. I think they can just sense it," Lambert says. "You can definitely see the difference in them. They get all keyed up, and they're really alert on an actual chase. When we pull up in our trailers, they're like, 'It's show time. Let's get to work.'"

Texas Rangers still use horses to track down criminals. However, Rangers are also at the forefront of technology, using everything from high-powered firearms to helicopters in their quest to keep the peace. Photo *©2005, TRHFM.*

Rangers Get Their Man

David Hullum recalls hitting the ground running with Lambert and his horses and dogs on an intense chase in Stephens County in central Texas. The ranger, dogs and horses were called when a man fled on foot after a car chase with local authorities. The suspect led rangers on a challenging chase.

“We covered 15 miles in about six hours across some of the roughest country you can imagine,” Hullum recalls. “It was hilly, rocky and brushy, and when this guy figured out we were chasing him with horses and dogs, he started crisscrossing a creek and did that about eight times.”

Oil and gas pipelines, buried throughout that part of Texas, and often emerging at a high bank of a deep creek bed and crossing to the opposite side, provided a bridge for the fugitive and a challenge for the horses. Horses and riders had to negotiate 15-foot drops into the creeks and climb the steep, slippery slopes on the other side.

But horses, dogs and rangers don’t quit a chase. “We did a lot of sliding,” Hullum says. “It was pretty intense the whole time. We alternated between a walk, jog and lope for six hours.” The chase concluded when the fugitive tried to outrun the horses. While looking back at the horses behind him, he ran into the path of law-enforcement officers on foot, who apprehended him.

In most cases, according to the rangers, suspects simply give up, because they’re worn out from a chase. Eventually, they realize they can’t outsmart the dogs, outrun a horse or outlast a Texas Ranger.

Riding as a ranger on manhunts, “is like no other riding I’ve ever done,” says Hullum, who owns four Quarter Horses he uses to work cattle at a family ranch. “Most rides are at night. It’s dark as a cave, and you have to rely on your horse to see better than you do. You’re not going to be able to shine that flashlight everywhere. You trust the horse, and he trusts you. You’re looking straight ahead, and he’s checking side to side. You better not be an amateur rider, and you better be in tune with your mount.”

In High Places

An 18-year veteran, Sgt. Coy Smith, of Company D in south Texas has developed an appreciation for versatile horses that can traverse any terrain. When not on assignment with the rangers, Smith works as a farrier and competes in Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association steer-roping events.

Like many fellow rangers, Smith was at the Fort Davis standoff. He scouted some of the area's highest elevations horseback. In fact, on that manhunt, he and fellow rangers rode to the top of Mount Livermore, at 8,378 feet, one of the Lone Star State's tallest mountains.

"It was a 2 hour climb, and the closer we got to the top, the steeper it got. Our horses were digging in, trying to climb, lunging forward," Smith recalls. On another occasion in the Edwards Plateau of south Texas, he tracked an armed, attempted-murder suspect for three days from Rock Springs to Sonora - a 50-mile journey through brush and rock. Endurance was critical for both horses and riders, says Smith, who, with Byrne, successfully concluded that chase.

It's a Texas Thing

Despite the rigors and dangers, officers riding for the Texas Rangers wouldn't trade a day in the saddle for a day behind the desk.

"It feels good to do your job on a horse and carryon the age-old tradition of the Texas Rangers," says Hullum.

No one's roots run deeper in that tradition than those of Tony Leal, now a lieutenant with the unsolved crime unit [recently promoted to Captain of Company "A"

headquartered in Houston]. During his decade of Texas Rangers service, Leal has mounted up on many occasions to track down everyone from escaped prisoners to cattle rustlers.

Leal's father, Antonio, was in charge of training and caring for the horses at the TDCJ Central Unit in Sugarland in the 1950s and '60s. The family actually lived in a home on the prison grounds, where his father was close to the horses and his work.

Every day, at 4: 30 a.m., Leal's father headed out horseback to work cattle, help supervise inmates working the fields and perform any number of tasks. For young Tony, the most exciting times occurred when the rangers knocked on the front door.

"I'd see these rangers with their guns, badges and big white cowboy hats. They'd need my dad to outfit them with horses for a manhunt. That left a big impression on me. I wanted to be just like them, and that's the reason I'm a ranger today.

"And I love horses. I've been around them all my life," says Leal, who also competes in team-penning and working ranch-horse competitions with his two Quarter Horses. "It's not just me. I'd guess that at least 50 percent of our rangers are involved in some way with horses. Being a Texas Ranger is the pinnacle of law enforcement in the state. And, horses and the western lifestyle are still a part of that guy who wants to be a ranger today.

"It's a Texas thing," Leal continues. "When I'm in my ranger gear sitting on a horse, there's nowhere else in the world I'd rather be. A ranger in 2005 still riding a horse - only in Texas."

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21st Century Shining Star:

Lt. Jerry Byrne

By Robert Nieman

Lieutenant Jerry Byrne of Company B never wanted to be anything but a Texas Highway Patrolman. And why not? He has never known anything else. His father, Jerry Sr., is a retired Highway Patrolman, and his mother, Mary, is currently the jail administrator at the Tom Green County (San Angelo) Jail. Jerry is the oldest of their four children and the only boy. His three sisters are Suzette, Jennifer, and Robin.

Jerry was born in Upshur County in 1960, but this native Gilmerite soon found himself in Reeves County, which is as deep in West Texas as Upshur County is in East Texas. He attended his freshman year of high school at Balmorhea and the last three years at Pecos High School, from which he graduated in 1979. Sul Ross State University in Alpine was his choice of college, and he received his bachelor of science degree in agri-business in 1983. After graduation, he applied for and was accepted into the Texas Department of Public Safety. He had known for some time that this was his chosen path:

> *During high school, I spent the majority of my spare time on the VH Ranch near Balmorhea. I helped my good friends build fences, repair windmills, work cattle, and perform other ranch jobs. I also found time to do a lot of hunting, trapping, and riding. During my college years, I worked on several ranches in the Big Bend area and briefly considered ranch work as a career. It didn't take me long, however, to realize there was only a remote chance that I could land a ranch job with any benefits other than the one of being satisfied earning a day's pay for a day's work. I fell back on my first desire: to become a Highway Patrolman.*

During an earlier summer break from college, Jerry had gotten his first official job in law enforcement as a Smith County (Tyler) jailer. In January 1984, he became a member of the Basic Recruit Training class A-84. In eighteen weeks, Texas's newest Highway Patrolman began his duties in the Panhandle city of Dimmit.

> After three years in the Panhandle, the last two in Matador, Jerry transferred back home to Balmorhea in 1987. The Highway Patrol

then lost a good man because, in January 1992, Jerry promoted to sergeant in the Motor Vehicle Theft Division of the Texas Department of (Public Safety) Transportation. He was transferred to Texarkana, which is as far as you can go in East Texas and still be in Texas. His career in the Highway Patrol, however, remains a proud part of his life:

If I had to choose a career other than the Texas Rangers, I have no doubt it would be the Texas Highway Patrol. I can honestly say that, while on patrol, there was never a dull moment: one minute you would be wrestling a drunk, the next you would be traveling in high-speed pursuit after a fleeing felon. As a Highway Patrolman, I generally went to work early and stayed past my shift just to find someone who needed to be taken off the road.

In 1987, after transferring from the Panhandle to Balmorhea, I worked for the best THP sergeant I believe DPS ever produced, Melton "Ras" Rasberry of Pecos. The only negative thing I can recall Ras ever saying to me was during an evaluation. He told me I needed to go home a little more often.

I believe I had an above-average career as a Highway Patrolman, and Ras deserves a lot of the credit for that. He encouraged me to pursue my interest in criminal investigation and supported my criminal work, which consisted of numerous weapon, drug, and cash seizures; stolen vehicle recoveries; and hundreds of arrests for wanted felons.

Jerry was with the Motor Vehicle Theft Service in Texarkana for only a short time. There was a higher calling awaiting him, one that had been at the back of his mind:

I honestly can't say that I always wanted to be a Ranger, but as far back as I can remember, I knew I wanted to be a peace officer. In 1969, I was present when my dad graduated Basic Recruit Training as a Texas Highway Patrolman and, from that point, my desire was to follow in his footsteps. Growing up in a law enforcement family, I had casually known several Rangers as a kid, but being a Highway Patrolman was my main desire.

The best I can recall, the first time I ever gave any thought to being a Ranger was while in the Basic Recruit Training school. There were a couple of Rangers that visited our class, and they really impressed me with their command presence, professionalism, traditionalism, and reputation. However, I also recall that the thought of becoming one of them was quickly diminished when the Ranger speaking to our class told us that you needed at least eight years of law enforcement experience to be a Ranger. He also said, "We are kind of like the US Marines: we are looking for a few good men, but don't call us, we'll call you." When he made this statement, it meant to me that, if you're eligible and doing a good enough job as a Highway Patrolman or criminal investigator, then the Rangers might be interested in you.

As a Highway Patrolman, I had a half a dozen or so cases that I worked with my good friend and mentor, Ranger Joe Coleman, also of Pecos. Joe had encouraged me to go into the Rangers

and gave me one the best compliments I have ever received. When I had about five years as a Highway Patrolman, he told me that he was disappointed that I had not taken the latest Ranger exam. When I explained that I wouldn't be eligible for another three years, he said that he wanted me to take his place in Pecos when he retired. I had not made my desire to become a Ranger known to Joe, and I couldn't believe that he would think I could possibly take his place. I was really encouraged, and from that moment on, making Ranger was always in the back of my mind.

I am sad to say that both Joe and Ras passed away before I had the opportunity to test for Ranger.

In June 1994, Jerry Byrne was accepted into the Texas Rangers as a member of Dallas's Company B. He was stationed in Mount Pleasant, about midway between Texarkana and Dallas.

The opportunity to transfer back to West Texas arose in August 1995, and Jerry transferred to Ozona as a member of Midland's Company E. He stayed there until January 1999, when he took over the duty station in San Angelo. This position had come open with the retirement of Ranger Joe Hunt. In September 2003, Jerry promoted again and became Company B's lieutenant.

Jerry feels that his success is due in great part to the encouragement of his family. He met his wife Robin in 1986, and they married a year later. Today, they have two daughters. Speaking of his wife and daughters, he says:

[They] have loyally supported me throughout my career and have tolerated several relocations through transfers and promotions. I have to give them credit for the successful years of service I've had with DPS and the Rangers. They have painfully left many good friends over the years while moving into unknown areas of the state, but they continued to seek new friends. I am proud at the way they have handled these situations and the way they have bloomed at each of the new stations.

There can be no question that Lieutenant Jerry Byrne is a captain in the making. The Texas Rangers and the citizens of Texas could do no better.

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Capt Jim Riddles ©2005, TRHFM
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20th Century Shining Star:

Capt. Jim Riddles

Few Rangers have been held in higher esteem by his peers than was Jim Riddles. On September 27, 1910, in the tiny community of Windom in Fannin County, this future Hall of Fame Ranger came into the world. After graduating from nearby Honey Grove High School, Riddles attended Austin College in Sherman. Texas. There he earned his bachelor of science degree in business administration in 1936 and returned to Windom to teach math and coach the high school baseball team.

Future Texas Ranger Glenn Elliott, also a Windom native, was one of Riddles's players. In his book Glenn Elliott: A Ranger's Ranger, Elliott tells of Riddles's demand for executing the fundamentals—for himself and his players. This applied to both baseball and, later, the Rangers. According to Elliott, Riddles would not tolerate big swingers, and he hated strikeouts—unless, of course, they were his pitchers striking out adversaries. If his batter swung at a ball during practice and missed, Riddles insured that his hitters made future contact with the ball with his ever-present paddle, which would not miss that player's back end!

Unfortunately for the Texas school system but fortunately for the Texas Rangers, teaching school did not pay as well as the Texas Department of Public Safety. Riddles became a Highway Patrolman in 1941, but he did not remain there long. As most men were doing after America's entry into World War II, he joined the Army and was assigned to the Military Police. His

leadership abilities were soon apparent, and he was placed in Officer Candidate School. By the end of the war in Europe, Riddles had risen in rank to captain and was a veteran of both the Battle of the Bulge and Remagen Bridge. After the end of the war, he became the first provost marshal of Berlin. By 1946, he was out of the Army and back in the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Riddles entered the Texas Rangers on December 1, 1952. During the next fifteen years, he honed his skills as an investigator and interrogator. In 1967, he became the captain of Midland's Company E.

During his years as captain of that company, Riddles earned enormous respect from his men. He stated, "My Rangers don't need supervision in the field. If they needed field supervision, they wouldn't be Rangers." That kind of faith in his men inspired incredible loyalty from Riddles' Rangers, as they called themselves. One of these men summed it up best when he said, "I would have rather shot myself in the foot than have disappointed my captain."

Riddles never passed up an opportunity to impart his vast knowledge of law enforcement techniques throughout Texas and the country. Tragically, his great contributions were cut short by a fatal heart attack in 1975. Every Ranger in Company E attended the funeral of Jim Riddles in Honey Grove, Texas, many traveling from two hundred to seven hundred miles to do so. It was a final tribute to their fallen leader.

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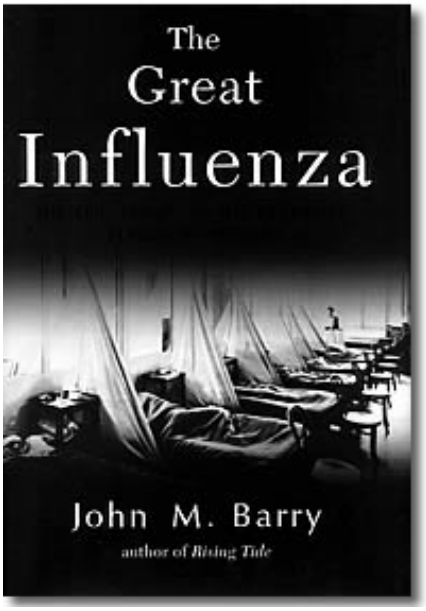

Book Review

The Great Influenza: the Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History

By John M. Barry

Review by Robert Nieman

John M. Barry, The Great Influenza: the Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History. (New York: Penguin Group, 2004). 546 pp. photos. ISBN 0-670-89473-7. $29.95 hardcover.

This book is scary—real scary.

No, this is not a Texas Ranger book, but it is one that needs to be read. Rangers were undoubtedly involved in the aftermath of this epidemic as were law enforcement agencies all over the world. Not only can this type of plague happen again, but many medical experts say it is only a matter of time until it does!

In the winter of 1918, history's most lethal influenza virus, H1N1, was born. It flourished over the next year, killing as many as 100,000,000. This is no typo—100,000,000 (one hundred million!). More people died in twenty-four weeks than AIDS has destroyed in twenty-four years; more perished in a year than during the century of the Black Death in the Middle Ages. In one ten-week period starting in mid-September 1918, the plague eradicated more American military personnel than the number who died during the entire Vietnam War! In the United States alone, the Great Influenza killed 675,000, and the population at that time was only 105,000,000. Adjusted to today's population of approximately 300,000,000, the dead would total more than 2,000,000!

This virus did not start in some far-off, undeveloped country. Though it cannot be proven absolutely, the strongest evidence suggests that this massive killing machine began in rural Haskell County, Kansas.

In the 1918 epidemic, there were many echoes from the Middle Ages. Victims turned blue-black, and clergy in some of the world's most modern cities drove horse-drawn carts down the streets, calling upon people to bring out their dead.

Amid the death, heroes just as great as Audie Murphy and Alvin York arose.

Heroes that, I regret to say, I never heard of. These were men from the medical field with names that should be as familiar as Murphy and York: William Henry Welch, Simon Flexner, William Gorgas, Oswald Avery, William Park, Anna Wessel Williams, Rufus Cole, Paul Lewis, and Richard Shope, to name but a few. These were the people who led America into the forefront of modern medicine as they battled this unseen killer that did not discriminate between men, women, children, age, sex, religion, or race.

On the one hand, this is a terribly depressing book, with all the savage deaths. On the other, however, it is very uplifting when reading of the dedication of the just-mentioned doctors and scientists who made our lives so much better.

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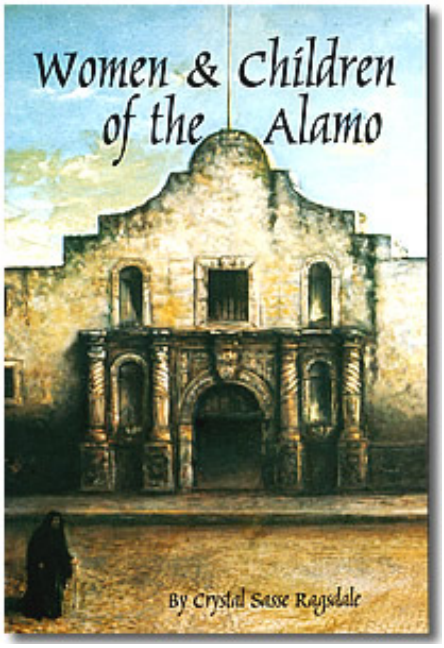

Book Review

Women & Children of the Alamo

By Crystal Sasse Ragsdale

Review by Robert Nieman

Crystal Sasse Ragsdale, *Women & Children of the Alamo* (Abilene, Texas: State House Press, 1994). 114 pp., photos. ISBN 1-880510-13-8. $14.95 paperback.

Crystal Ragsdale has addressed an obvious but long overlooked fragment of Alamo history. This short book, 114 pages, provides thumbnail sketches of the lives of the women and children who survived the Alamo. The most famous, of course, are Susanna Dickinson and her infant daughter Angelina.

Ragsdale also looks at the lives of Juanna Navarro Perez Alsbury, Madame Candelaria, Concepcion Gotari Losoya, and Ana Salazar de Esparza and her son Enrique Esparza.

Though there is little new information, Ragsdale does package available knowledge into one volume. This is a nice starter book for anyone just beginning to study the Alamo, THE most hallowed place in Texas history.

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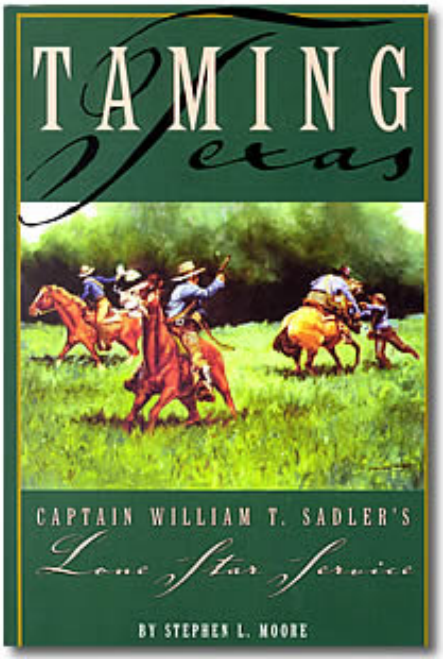

Book Review

Taming Texas: Captain William T. Sadler's Lone Star Service

By Stephen L. Moore

Review by Robert Nieman

Stephen L. Moore, *Taming Texas: Captain William T. Sadler's Lone Star Service* (Austin, Texas: State House Press, 2000). 387 pp. numerous photographs and maps, extensive bibliography and notes, index. ISBN 1-880510-68-5. $34.95 hardcover, $24.95 paperback.

The *Dispatch* is pleased to have Steve Moore as a regular contributor. He is a leading scholar in pre-Civil War Texas Ranger history, the author of *Eighteen Minutes: The Battle of San Jacinto* and *The Texas Independence Campaign and Savage Frontier: Rangers, Riflemen, and the Indian Wars in Texas – 1835-1837, volume I.*

Personal connection often plays a role in what historians will research. Moore is a direct decedent of William Sadler. If he were not, Sadler's place in Texas history probably would remain a mere footnote—which would be a lot more than he wanted. If he were alive today, this extraordinarily modest Texas hero would probably disapprove of this focus on his life. In a letter to relatives,

Sadler left instructions that "the world would not be notified of my death." Thankfully for Texas history, Sadler's grandson thought his life should be honored.

Traveling with Mirabeau Lamar, the future Republic of Texas president, Sadler arrived in Texas from Georgia in 1835. From that time until his death in 1884, he served unselfishly for the Lone Star state as a Texas Ranger, soldier, politician, and citizen. He fought at the Battle of San Jacinto and, in the ensuing years, helped protect East Texas against marauding Indians. This defense was a job he found particularly satisfying considering his wife and infant daughter were killed in the Edens-Madden Massacre near Augusta, Houston County, in 1838. Sadler also served as congressman in the government of the Republic of Texas and as a state representative in the state of Texas legislature. By the time the Civil War started, the sixty-four-year-old Sadler served as a member of Terrell's Texas Cavalry.

Moore provides insightful portraits of men that Sadler served with and fought against: Cherokee Chief Bowles, James Box, and Kelsey Harris Douglass. He also gives us glimpses of towering figures in Texas history with whom Sadler became intimate during his years as a Ranger and politician: Sam Houston, Thomas Jefferson Rusk, Sidney Sherman, Mirabeau Lamar, and David Burnet, to name but a few.

As expected from Moore's previous works, he provides exhaustive muster rolls, land records, bibliography, and endnotes. This book is an absolute must for Texas historians, whether your interest is Texas Rangers in particular or Texas history in general.

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TEXAS RANGER DISPATCH Magazine

Criminals Clyde Barrow and Bonniue Parker.

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What Were You Thinking?

Ted Hinton and Bonnie & Clyde

As told by Joe Hinton to Robert Nieman

Lawman Ted Hinton

Joe Hinton and I are privileged to serve on the board of directors of the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum. Joe's uncle, Ted, was a member of Frank Hamer's posse, which brought an end to the murderous rampage of Bonnie and Clyde.

After a recent board meeting, I asked Joe if his uncle ever talked about the fatal day back in May 1934 when Bonnie and Clyde were ambushed and killed. He remembered one story in particular.

Uncle Ted was visiting with his brother, who was Joe's father. Joe Sr. asked Ted what he was thinking immediately after the gunfire ended.

Ted replied that, as he walked toward the bullet-riddled car, all he could think was,

"I hope we haven't just blown an innocent farmer and his wife all to hell!"

Related Information:

http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/11/Pages/Hamer.htm

http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/dispatch13.htm

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Beverly Tucker's father and mother, Walter and Leota Tucker. Leota loaned $5000 to a busted oilman named H. L. Hunt in order to get him into the East Texas oil business. ©2005 East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas.

Beverly Tucker Was There

By Robert Nieman

Seventy-five years ago, October 3, Dad Joiner and his mysterious geologist Doc Lloyd started it all when the Daisy Bradford Number 3 gushed forth the riches that lay less than 3,500 feet below the derrick floor in the Woodbine Sand. No matter what name you use—the Great Black Giant or the East Texas Oil Field—when the oil ripped through the wooden derrick's top, the world changed forever.

On the first weekend in October, Joiner's monumental discovery was celebrated with festivities in Gregg and Rusk Counties. In the last few years, it has been my honor to spend many, many hours with various seasoned citizens talking about the boom years of the fabulous East Texas Oil Field.

On Saturday, October 1, at this year's celebration, it was my privilege to spend time with Pat Hill and several members of her family at the London Museum. We talked about the discovery well, the people, and the events from the boom years.

Pat's mother was the late Beverly Tucker. Yes, the Beverly Tucker, who is one of the main characters in Kilgore College's play, The Daisy Bradford 3, performed several times during the festival weekend. Few people were more qualified to speak of Dad Joiner, Doc Lloyd, and Daisy Bradford than Beverly. You see, Dad Joiner stayed with her parents, Walter and Leota Tucker of Overton, while drilling the Daisy Bradford.

I had the honor of interviewing Beverly on February 1, 1994. The following is a summary of our lively and very interesting discussion:

Dad Joiner, wearing the tie, shakes hands with Doc Lloyd. The man with a cigar and in the straw hat is H. L. Hunt. ©2005 East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas.

During our interview, it soon became evident that Beverly was a real character. Although she was born on July 15, 1909, and was a little hard of hearing, she still bounded around with perpetual energy. At the time, she spent her time between Fort Worth with her daughter Pat and Troup, Texas, with her sister Mary Tucker Johnson. She said she would stay with one until she got mad at whomever she was with; then she would go stay with the other. Settling comfortably in the living room of Pat's beautiful home in Fort Worth (I guess she was mad at Mary at the time), we quickly started talking about Dad Joiner, Doc Lloyd, Daisy Bradford, and the boom years.

Beverly was a young teenage lass the first time she saw Dad Joiner. He was sitting in her father and mother's store in Overton, eating cheese and crackers. Beverly recalled that she did not think much about Dad Joiner at the time; as far as she was concerned, he was just another person passing through. After all, people were always hanging around the store, and a few even paid their bills. Beverly laughed when she remembered the way Dad walked from the Overton depot to her parent's store: "He walked stooped way over, his arms fanning his backside. My sister Mary, my brother John, and I used to call him 'Old Fan Ass.' With his arms flailing away, he looked like he was trying to put out a fire on his backside."

When Dad Joiner first came to Overton, he did not live with the Tuckers, and Beverly did not remember where he did reside during that time. Regardless, it was not long before her softhearted father Walter had invited Dad to stay in the backroom of their store. Soon, Walter caught Dad's dream of untold riches lying just below the surface of the Texas soil.

Dad had been drilling, but had run out of money. In order to continue, he had to raise cash, and this presented the old wildcatter with a major challenge. In East Texas, most people were poor dirt farmers who did not have two cents to rub together, so the only way Dad knew to raise the needed funds was by selling oil leases for whatever he could get. Being able to raise only nickels and dimes created a problem that took a lot of ingenuity and courage to resolve. But desperate men do desperate things: Dad sold the same leases over and over and over.

In order to sell the leases, Dad had to be able to travel, but he had never learned to drive. Therefore, Beverly's parents volunteered her to drive him around East Texas as he raised enough money to drill his wells. Admittedly, Beverly did not find her job attractive, being a young lady and all. No matter, though, because her opinion of the job was not asked for. She drove.

Thousands wait for the oil-core sample at the Daisy Bradford Number 3 on September 3, 1930. ©2005

East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas.

I asked Beverly if there was anything in particular she remembered about Dad, and there were several. One of her favorites was his saying, "Hup, hup! It's about time for that fast mail train," every time they crossed the railroad track in Arp. When she asked him what he meant, he told her that once a train had almost run over him at that very crossing.

Pressing forward, I asked Beverly if Dad drank, smoked, or told jokes; was he neat or a slob? She answered, "No, he was very neat in his dress, and he kept his room the same way. Mother would not have tolerated anything else. I never saw him drink or smoke. In his eyes, life was far too serious to make light of it by telling jokes."

Doc Lloyd (l), Daisy Bradford (center), and Dad Joiner (r). ©2005 East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas.

I asked Beverly the same questions about Doc Lloyd. A huge smile came to her face when she said, "Oh, Doc, he did it all! I liked Doc!" This was a sentiment shared by many people, especially women. Multitudes of females claiming to be Doc Lloyd's wives had arrived in Kilgore to claim their part of his fortune after his picture appeared alongside Dad, Daisy, and H. L. Hunt in newspapers and magazines throughout the country.

This picture of Kilgore is typical of the towns in the boom area. Kilgore was a sleepy hamlet before it went from a village of 800 to 8000 in twenty-four hours! ©2005 East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas.

For the next several hours of the interview, the stories poured forth. Regretfully, I have used up my allotted space, and that is unfortunate. I have just started on Beverly's tales of Dad, Doc, and Daisy. Believe me, what I have not told is a lot better than what I have! For instance, Beverly's relationship with Daisy Bradford is drastically different than that portrayed in The Daisy

Bradford 3, and there is a hilarious incident concerning Beverly and the play. Another tale relates the time Beverly's mother Leota loaned a broke oilman named H. L. Hunt $5,000 so that he could get into the oil business in East Texas.

Not all the memories were pleasant or funny. The worst memory of Beverly's life, as it was for thousands of others, ocurred on March 18, 1937, when the New London School exploded.

Overriding all the memories was that glorious day in October 1930 when the Daisy Bradford Number 3 came roaring in, and East Texas went totally crazy.

And Beverly Tucker was there for it all.

Things were rough during the 1930-1934 boom years. Lone Wolf Gonzaullas and thirty-nine Rangers could not control the wild and wooly oil patch adventurers — neither could the addition of several thousand National Guardsmen. ©2005 East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College, Kilgore, Texas.

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Rangers in the Field

Company "B" in Kilgore, Texas

Recently, Company "B" (Dallas) completed their mandatory, biannual, firearms training in Kilgore at Kilgore College's Police Academy.

After completing the exercise, everyone retired to Lloyd Bolton's Danville Farms in Kilgore for a fish fry. Retired Texas Ranger Charlie Fleming and Jerry Paul Higgins were the cooks, and it was universally agreed that it was the best catfish that anyone had ever eaten. Everyone had a wonderful time of fellowship and general good times.

Company "B" Rangers at the firing range. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Capt. Richard Sweaney and Lt. Jerry Byrne. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Retired Ranger Glenn Elliott with Sgt. Richard Shing. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Museum Director Byron Johnson with Sgt. Brad Harmon. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Retired and Active Rangers after Qualification at Danville Farms. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Retired Rangers Glenn Elliott, Johnny Waldrip, and Charlie Fleming. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Rangers Chris Clark (Dallas), A P Davidson (McKinney), and Richard Shing (Dallas). ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Glenn Elliott (blue shirt), Gray McWhorter, Max Womack, and Texas Ranger Association Foundation Emeritus Director Bob Bustin enjoy a game of dominoes. ©2005, Robert Nieman.

Retired Texas Rangers Brantley Foster and Johnny Waldrip.
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TEXAS RANGER DISPATCH Magazine

Texas Ranger Ed Sieker.
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19th Century Shining Stars:

The Sieker Brothers: A Quartet of Texas Rangers

By Chuck Parsons

The marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Armon Sieker Sr. was a solid one. Four of their sons became Texas Rangers, indicating the values of honesty, integrity, and good work that were instilled in them from an early age. These sons, members of the Frontier Battalion, were Lamartine Pemberton, Frank E., Edward A. Jr., and Thomas.[1] The seven Sieker children were probably all born in Baltimore, Maryland, with the exception of Thomas. He was born in New York City while his father was practicing medicine there.

Of the Sieker quartet who served the Rangers, all in Company D, Frank was the only one who lost his life while in the line of duty. His birth date is uncertain. He first came to Texas with younger brother Albert B., and the two began seeking adventure, ending up in San Angelo. In 1879, they joined a party of buffalo hunters, and it was there, no doubt, that Frank improved his shooting skills. He later went to Menard, where his married sister lived.[2]

Frank Sieker, born about 1858, was the youngest of the brothers. On September 23, 1884, he joined Company D in Uvalde. His service record shows that his first pay period from September 23 to November 30 brought him only $68.00. However, his next two pay periods, through May 31, 1885, were three months each at $30 per month for a private. Frank was a private during this time, and his commanding officer was his brother, Captain L. P. Sieker, who had been in the service since 1874.[3]

At that time, Company D was stationed in Maverick County on the Rio Grande. The camp was probably close to where the three counties of Maverick, Dimmit, and Webb meet. This is north of Laredo and south of Eagle Pass, the respective seats of Webb and Maverick Counties.

Toward the end of May, a number of convicts escaped from a prison camp on

the Brazos River. Captain L. P. Sieker was notified of this break and was ordered to be on the alert for the escapees. When the captain was called to San Antonio on business, he left brother Frank in charge of the camp.

On the 31st of May, Sergeant Benjamin D. Lindsey took a squad of six Rangers scouting to the southeast part of Dimmit County.[4] Besides Lindsey, the Rangers were C. W. Griffin, Ben Reilly, Ira Aten, Frank Sieker, C. D. Grant and Oscar D. Baker. Near San Ambrosia Creek in Maverick County, they observed two Mexicans leading a horse and chose to investigate. Lindsey may have suspected the pair was among the escaped convicts or he may have suspected they had stolen the horse.

In any event, the Rangers advanced toward the two men and demanded their surrender. Ranger Reilly reached out to take one of the guns when "suddenly and without warning," the man holding the weapon began firing. Frank Sieker, whose horse had bogged down but now had caught up with the others, rode up. As he did, one of the Winchester bullets found its mark and "killed him dead on the spot."

A furious gun battle ensued, with the Rangers and the Mexicans shooting at each other at close range. In haste, the two Mexicans ran off to Rancho Losa nearby. Sergeant Lindsey followed them, arrested them, and placed them in the Laredo jail.

The gunfight concluded with the two Mexicans wounded. Three Rangers were also casualties: Frank Sieker, dead; Reilly, shot in the thigh; and Griffin, suffering from a broken collar bone and shoulder injury when his horse fell on him.[5]

That is the version as recorded by the Rangers. The two Mexicans, however, expressed what happened quite differently. A reporter for the *Galveston Daily News* visited the pair in the Laredo jail, and identified them as Apolonio Gonzales and his son Pedro. According to Gonzales, he and his son had left their ranch to round up a horse that had strayed. They had located the animal and were returning home with it when, about a mile from the Rancho Torro, Pedro called his attention to riders approaching. They "were about 600 yards to our left and all fully armed and advancing towards us." At first, Pedro wanted to run to the ranch "where we would be safe," but Gonzales told him no. The Rangers surrounded them and then demanded to know who they were. Gonzales claimed that he identified his son and himself, explaining that they were well known at Rancho Torro, where there were Americans who knew them and would verify that they were not horse thieves. However, the Rangers said they would take them to their own camp, some twelve miles up the river.

"I thought that they intended to murder us and told my son to make a dash for the Torro ranch," explained Gonzales. "He started at a gallop and was instantly fired upon. He returned the fire with the result of killing one American and wounding another."

At that point, Webb County Deputy Sheriff Prudencio Herrera rode up. He demanded that the two Mexicans be taken to Laredo instead of Carrizo Springs, where the Rangers had their camp.

The *News* correspondent was able to physically examine the two wounded Mexicans. The father had been shot through the fleshy part of the left shoulder, and the son's injuries included wounds through the left hand and also in the left shoulder. Supposedly, the pair were relatives of Webb County

Sheriff Dario Gonzales. The wounded father was "one of the oldest and most highly respected Mexicans in this whole section of country."

No charges were placed against the Gonzales men, at least immediately. Therefore, the sheriff released them, and they "were escorted through the streets by quite a crowd of friends."[6]

Captain Dan W. Roberts' quarters. Captain Roberts and Sgt. L. P. Sieker standing by the ambulance. Photo by Ragsdale, 1878." ©2005 TRHFM. All Rights Reserved.

Many believed the entire affray was the result of a misunderstanding. Prior to Sieker's company being sent to the area, it had been patrolled by Captain Joseph Shely. He had been there for some time and knew many of the inhabitants. According to the News correspondent, the "bloody work . . . [w]as caused by a frightful mistake, and from no malice on either side."

In contrast to how the wounded Mexicans were treated, Rangers Lindsey, Grant, Aten, and Baker were jailed and charged with assault with intent to murder Apolonio Gonzales and his son Pedro! Ira Aten managed to obtain bail for himself and the others, and after several telegrams arrived from the adjutant general's office, the Rangers were finally released.

When Captain L. P. Sieker learned of the shootout and its aftermath, he hurried to attend to his brother, who was buried in Eagle Pass. He also arranged for medical treatment for his wounded men.[7]

Brother Thomas Sieker was the only son born in New York, and he arrived on September 28, 1852. The family then moved to Baltimore, where Tom was raised into adulthood. He recalled that, in late 1876, "my brothers wrote me that if I would come to Texas they could find me a place with the rangers." He made up his mind to do so.

Tom arrived in Austin without incident and "[w]ithout knowing in the least what ranger life was like." He left Austin with a freighter named Dave DeLong, who was headed for Mason. From there, he found his way to Menard and met up with Captain Frank M. Moore's Company D at Fort McKavett in Menard County.

> ***He [Moore] was looking for me. He enlisted me, provided me with the ranger outfit, and told me to keep away from Fort McKavett until I had learned something of the ways of the frontier, since the soldiers there were rough in their treatment of tenderfeet."[8]***

The date was November 13, 1876. Tom served under Captain Moore until his discharge in Kimble County on November 30, 1877. He then served under Captain Daniel W. Roberts from September 1, 1878, until March 31, 1879. Apparently, his Ranger service was relatively uneventful, as the records fail to show he engaged in any major confrontations with Indians or outlaws. He certainly served well; his name was simply not singled out for any particular action.

Following his resignation from the Rangers, Tom went to West Texas and then to Arizona in 1885, searching for gold with his brother Albert. After about twelve months, they went to California for a year but returned to Texas in 1887. Tom then established residence in Dallas and worked as a bartender and was employed in the grocery business. Tom Sieker died in Dallas on January 19, 1935, and is buried in Forest Lawn Burial Park in Dallas.[9]

Edward Armon Sieker Jr. was born in Baltimore in 1853, but he was raised in Virginia. When Governor Richard Coke reorganized the Texas Rangers in 1874, Ed enlisted on the first day, May 25, under veteran Indian fighter and soldier, Captain Cicero R. Perry. Ed was a Ranger for a much longer period than brothers Tom or Frank. Through the six years and more that he served, he worked under Captains Perry, Roberts, and Moore. Although Ed may have resigned from the service for one pay period, he served nearly continuously from May 25, 1874, through November 30, 1880.[10]

As a private, Ed initially earned $40.00 per month. He was mustered into Captain D. W. Roberts's Company D on September 1 and served until November 30, 1874, earning $120.00. However, he had some debts: $1.00 to the state for sidelines and hobbles, $13.70 to the firm of Todd and Mebus for an unidentified purchase, $43.00 to James B. Gillett, $10.45 to George T. Price, and $11.15 to T. W. Weed. Thus his paycheck had was reduced by $80.30, leaving him a mere $40.70.[11]

In 1880, Sergeant Ed Sieker experienced his most dangerous scout. Due to the large number of robberies in the Fort Davis area, Ed and a small detachment were sent there. A scout was prepared and, on the night of July 1, the group started out. It was made up of Sergeant L. B. Caruthers, Ed Sieker, Samuel A. Henry, D. T. "Tom" Carson, R. R. "Dick" Russell, George R. "Red" Bingham, and Clato Herredia, a deputy sheriff who served as guide.

On that night, the Rangers left Fort Davis, traveling in the direction of Presidio del Norte. When about eighteen miles from del Norte, "we discovered four men, with pack horse, going towards the rough mountains." Ed explained what happened next:

> ***We advanced on them, they commenced running & drew their guns & fired on us. We shot at them & a running fight lasted for 1-½ miles. When they run up on a large mountain, we followed. As soon as we were on top of the mtn., we soon discovered they were concealed behind a ledge of rocks, as a solid volley was fired at our little band. As there were but three of us up to that***

time, before we dismounted, a shot cut Carson's hat brim, and another passed under his leg, cutting his stirrup leather & wounding his horse in the side. They shot volley after volley at us, at forty yards range in open view & they behind the rocks. Carson shot one of the party in the side, but he was determined to "sell out," & kept firing, around our heads, very closely. When I saw him stick his head out to shoot, I shot him between the eyes, coming out at the back of his head. Bingham was to my left, and about 35 yards to the rear, when he was shot through the heart. We charged the party and took their stronghold. Then we had the advantage, for the first time, and then they surrendered. Had I known Bingham was killed, at that time, I should have killed them all. But we had disarmed them before we knew it. They then prayed for mercy.

In this engagement, Caruthers did not participate because he was "riding a little pony," and Henry was not a part of the action as he "was on a packhorse." Bingham was killed in the first volley, Ed Sieker recalls "leaving Carson, Russell and myself to do the work." He commented that it was a very sad sight, as that night they were a mile and a half from the road, on top of a mountain.

To see the two bodies, covered with blankets[,] prisoners tied with ropes lying by a little brush fire [was a dreary sight] . . . [o]ur little squad showed [Bingham] all the respect we could. We formed and fired three volleys, over his grave, and with saddened hearts, we wound through mountain passes, to [Ft.] Davis, arriving safely with our prisoners.[12]

Following his Kimble County discharge, Ed Sieker settled in Menard. There, on February 14, 1883, he married Sarah J. Gay, the daughter of early settlers Colonel and Mrs. Thomas A. Gay. The couple gave three children to the world: May, Gay, and Lamar.[13] Ed was later elected justice of the peace, became a successful cattleman, and then was an oil inspector for the state of Texas. Edward Arman Sieker Jr. died on April 17, 1901, in Menard and is buried in the Pioneer Rest Cemetery there.[14]

Lamartine "Lamb" Sieker possibly in a Texas Volunteer Guard Uniform.
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Lamartine Pemberton Sieker, who served longer than any other man in the Texas Ranger service, was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on April 8, 1848. He had two desires in life: to conduct his affairs in a military manner, and to serve as a Texas Ranger. He achieved both goals in a

most impressive manner.

In 1900, L. P. filled out Circular No. 8 for the adjutant general's office and related his military background. He had entered the Madison Military Institute in North Carolina in the "first part 1862" and then the Washington Military Academy in Virginia in the "latter part [of] 1862." He did not graduate. When giving his experience during the war, he states that he was a private in Parker's Battery, Hughes's Battalion, and Longstreet's Corps from July 1863, to April 9, 1865. The battles he participated in were Chickamauga, Lookout Mountain, Loudon, New Philadelphia, Campbell's Station, the Siege of Knoxville, Strawberry Plains, Bean Station, Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, North Anna River, South Anna River, Second Cold Harbor, Bermuda Hundreds, Sailors' Creek, "and numerous minor engagements."

Between the Civil War and his Ranger service, L. P. also served as a 1st lieutenant of Company A, 11th Regiment of the Texas Volunteer Guard from February 6 to July 15, 1873, when he was honorably mustered out. This group was known as the Wichita Colony Guards.

On the circular, Sieker identified his service as a Texas Ranger:

> May 25, 1874: enlisted as a private, Company D, Frontier Battalion
> September 1, 1876: promoted to corporal.
> July 13, 1878: promoted to 2nd sergeant.
> January 1879: promoted to 1st sergeant.
> October 1, 1881: promoted to 1st lieutenant.
> September 1, 1882: promoted to captain.
> October 15, 1885-February 1, 1893: served both as quartermaster and as captain.
> April 11, 1899: reappointed captain and quartermaster of the Frontier Battalion.

From October 15, 1885, to February 1, 1893, L. P. was also assistant chief of ordnance. He served as colonel and aide-de-camp on the staff of Governor John Ireland in the Galveston encampment on August 3, 1886, and was acting assistant general from April 11, 1899 to 1900.

L. P. also noted on the form that, besides the battles he participated in during the Civil War, he had been in several Indian fights. He stated that, since 1882, he had been sent by different governors to scenes of various riots and disturbances such as the Fort Worth Railroad Strike and also those in Laredo, Wharton, Richmond, Angelina County, Bastrop, and others.[15]

L. P. Sieker resigned in 1895 and tried his hand at ranching, but he returned to administration in 1900, hence the necessity of completing Circular No. 8. He resigned for good in 1905 and went to Brazoria, where he operated a hotel.

In his personal life, Sieker married Nannie K. Dill on September 12, 1887. The old Ranger died in Houston on November 13, 1914, and is buried in Glenwood Cemetary.[16]

Notes

1. E. A. Sieker Sr. and his wife Anna R. gave at least seven children to the world: Emma, L. P., E. A. Jr., Thomas, Albert, Frank, and Florence. Traditionally, the father is described as a doctor, but the 1850 census shows his occupation as a merchant. The 1860 and 1870 censuses both show him as a teacher.

2. A brief sketch of Frank L. Sieker is found in Robert W. Stephens's *Texas Ranger Sketches* (privately printed, 1972), 143-44. Hereafter cited as Stephens, Sketches.

3. Sieker's Texas Ranger service record is found in the Texas State Archives, Austin.

4. Stephens, *Sketches*, 83-86.

5. This version of the gun battle is from the report appearing in the *Galveston Daily News*, June 2, 1885, reporting news from Eagle Pass dated June 1. Also from Captain Sieker's monthly return dated June 30 and from Ira Aten's memoirs, *Six and One Half Years in the Ranger Service Fifty Years Ago*, 1-8. (Typescript copy in the Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.) Several writers dealing with Texas Ranger-Mexican American difficulties might be surprised that, in this instance, the Rangers, who easily could have overpowered the pair, did not shoot them down and later claim that the prisoners had been killed "while attempting to escape."

6. *Galveston Daily News*, June 3, 1885, citing a special report to the News from Laredo, dated June 2.

7. *Galveston Daily News*, June 4 and 7, 1885.

8. J. Marvin Hunter, "A Tenderfoot Joins the Texas Rangers," *Frontier Times*, August 1942, 19:11, 399-401. The main portion of this article was originally printed in the Dallas News in 1929, apparently related by Thomas Sieker to reporter W. S. Adair. Reprinted later as "A Texas Ranger's Story" in *Frontier Times*, 24:1, October 1946, 261-63.

9. Thomas Sieker's service record is found in the Texas State Archives, Austin. A brief sketch of Sieker is found in Stephens, *Sketches*, 146-47.

10. Stephens, *Sketches*, 142-43.

11. Edward A. Sieker's service record is found in the Texas State Archives, Austin.

12. This description is from Sieker's report to Captain D. W. Roberts, who then sent it on to Major John B. Jones on July 12, 1880. This engagement with the Jesse Evans gang of outlaws is thoroughly discussed in Ed Bartholomew's *Jesse Evans: A Texas Hide-Burner* (Houston: The Frontier Press of Texas, 1955), 47-56.

13. "Serg't. Ed. A. Sieker." No author given. *Frontier Times*, 4:11, August 1927,

4.

14. Stephens, *Sketches*, 142-43.

15. Completed Circular No. 8 found in Sieker's service record, Texas State Archives, Austin. This is a printed form of four pages, which Sieker or a secretary typed. At the time, his office was in the Capitol building. Sieker completed this form on November 10, 1900, signing it "Capt & Actg Asst Adjt Genl."

16. Stephens, *Sketches*, 144-46.

For Further Reading

Bartholomew, Ed. Jesse Evans: *A Texas Hide-Burner.* Houston: The Frontier Press of Texas, 1955.

"Colonel Lamartine P. Sieker, Texas Ranger." No author given. *Frontier Times*, November 1927, 5:2, 56.

"Last Buffalo Hunt Held in the Lone Star State." No author given. *Frontier Times*, January 1928, 5:4, 177-80. This article originally appeared in the *Dallas Morning News*, August 9, 1925, and was sent to Frontier Times editor, J. Marvin Hunter, by the Sieker brothers' sister, Mrs. Emma Sieker Mears of Menard.

"Mother Mears of Menard." No author given. *Frontier Times*, November 1927, 5:2, 94-95. This is a brief sketch of Mrs. Emma Sieker Mears, sister to the Sieker brothers and wife of J. W. Mears. She was involved in law enforcement work, as her husband was Menard County sheriff from November 4, 1884, to November 2, 1886.

Utley, Robert M. *Lone Star Justice: The First Century of the Texas Rangers*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Wilkins, Frederick. *The Law Comes to Texas: The Texas Rangers*, 1870-1901. Austin: State House Press, 1999.

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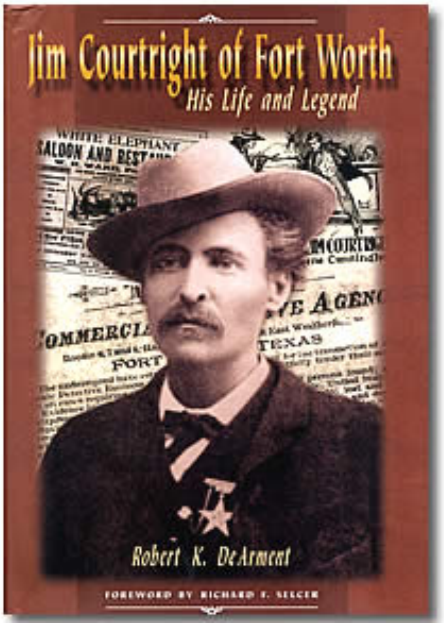


Book Review

Jim Courtright of Fort Worth: His Life and Legend

By Robert K. DeArment

Review by Chuck Parsons

Robert K. DeArment, *Jim Courtright of Fort Worth: His Life and Legend* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 2004). Foreword by Richard F. Selcer. xvi + 287 pp., 36 photographs, one map, extensive notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 0-87565-292-1. $24.95 Hardcover only. P.O. Box 298300, Fort Worth, Texas 76129. 1-800-826-8911.

Robert K. DeArment has long been established as a top-notch historian of the Old West. His works range from a 1979 biography of lawman-gambler Bat Masterson to a 1997 work on the outlaw adjutant general of Oklahoma, Frank Canton. All his works are highly researched, conservatively written, and authoritative. This biography of T. I. "Jim" Courtright is no exception.

Courtright is best known as a lawman. At one time, he was a deputy marshal, jailer, and volunteer fireman in Fort Worth. He then became city marshal of Fort Worth, a private detective, a man hunter (after Sam Bass in particular), a professional gambler, and a fugitive, on occasion. It was as a fugitive that the Texas Rangers figured into his career.

On May 6, 1883, two men were murdered in the American Valley of New Mexico, and Jim Courtright and five others were the killers. Following the murders, Courtright returned to his familiar turf of Fort Worth, where he accepted an appointment as deputy U.S. marshal and Tarrant County deputy sheriff! In spite of his good work as a lawman at this time, the New Mexico governor offered a $500 reward for Courtright's capture and return to New Mexico justice.

It was not until October 18, 1884, that Lieutenant Albert Grimes and Corporal J. Hayes of Texas Ranger Company C managed to locate and arrest Courtright in a Fort Worth hotel. When friends learned he had been captured, they aroused the city, and at least seven hundred of Courtright's friends surrounded the hotel. Only after the intercession of several influential local authorities was Courtright taken into custody and placed in jail.

In spite of the watchfulness of Lieutenant Grimes and Corporal Hayes, however, Courtright managed to escape. He had convinced the general populace of Fort Worth that the men he was accused of killing were Mexicans. Due to the general prejudice against this race in that time and place, it was easy to remind friends and associates of the Mexican involvement at the Alamo and Goliad.

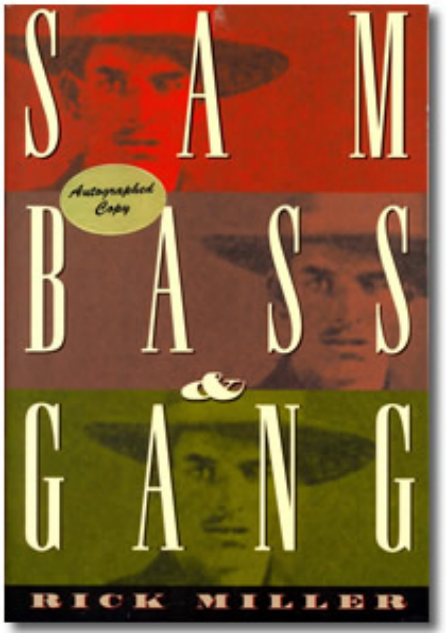
The Rangers, therefore, had to not only guard their prisoner but also contend with the power of a mob. Friends obtained pistols (delivered by a waiter on a covered tray) when they stopped in a restaurant for a meal, and secretly got the hidden pistols to Courtright. Surrounded by many who were convinced Courtright was getting a raw deal, Lieutenant Grimes had no choice but to allow his prisoner to escape. Death was the only alternative.

If the odds had been more equal, Courtright would not have been able to make his celebrated escape from the Rangers. In spite of the apocryphal "one riot, one Ranger!" of Bill McDonald legend, this was a case of a couple of Rangers surrounded by hundreds of armed men who would give them no quarter if they resisted. As it was, Grimes and Hayes lived to fight another day.

Months later, Courtright tired of his life as a fugitive and surrendered, ready to stand trial. Ultimately, the charges against him were dismissed for lack of witnesses.

Robert K. DeArment has researched his subject thoroughly. Seemingly every item ever printed or written about T. I. Courtright has been gathered in and analyzed. We now learn that Courtright's Civil War experiences were made out of whole cloth, and his acquaintance with Wild Bill Hickok was also a creation of his own making. In addition, it is shown that Courtright's almost uncanny ability with six-guns served him only while showing off: the only standup, face-to-face gunfight in which he engaged was his last.

Jim Courtright of Fort Worth is an important contribution. It provides as near a definitive biography of Courtright as we may ever have, and it provides an explanation of how a legend is created, not only through Western novelists F. Stanley (Father Stanley Crocchiola) and Eugene Cunningham but also others who followed them. This book is so well written than one wishes there were a few more chapters after the White Elephant shooting, in which Courtright lost his life to gambler-gunfighter Luke Short.



Book Review

Sam Bass and Gang

By Rick Miller

Review by Chuck Parsons

Rick Miller, *Sam Bass & Gang* (Austin, TX: State House Press,1999), xii + 412 pages, index. extensive endnotes. 58 photographs and map. ISBN 1-880510-65-0. $34.95 hardcover, 1-880510-67-7 $24.95 soft cover. Limited edition of 50 numbered and signed copies, slipcased $150.00.

Wayne Gard's 1936 biography of noted outlaw Sam Bass has, up to now, been the only solid effort to present a complete biography of the Indiana-born thief who has become a popular Texas legend. Rick Miller, a highly respected historian of Texas gunfighters, has now taken research and solid writing well into the second millennium with Sam Bass & Gang. Not only do we learn much new information about Bass and his immediate family, but we also find a great deal of new material on the gang members and the lawmen who worked hard to run them down. Wayne Gard could not have envisioned the amount of new biographical information Rick Miller has uncovered.

Tracing Bass from humble beginnings in Indiana, Miller provides in great detail the events that brought Bass to Texas. Once here, the fast life of being a sporting man, racing horses and playing cards, slowly steered Bass to illegal acts. Ultimately, his efforts at "cowboying" led him to his career of

crime: he drove the herds to market and sold them—but then kept the money!

Once Bass's first step into criminal activity had been taken, it was easy to continue. He joined up with the Collins Gang in the Dakota Territory and tried to get rich robbing stagecoaches. This failed miserably. After their disappointments in the Dakota Territory, the gang found great success in the Nebraska Territory. Here, they robbed a Southern Pacific train of $60,000 in newly minted, gold coins. This triumph, however, ultimately led to their destruction as it brought virtually every able-bodied lawman to hunt and capture them—and get the reward!

Bass split from his pals in the Collins Gang and made it safely back to Texas. There, by 1878, he formed a new gang.

Several train robberies in the Dallas area created a new maelstrom of lawmen now chasing Bass and his gang. The thieves eluded capture for the most part, occasionally exchanging gunshots with local lawmen and also Texas Rangers under Captain June Peak.

However, Bass and his gang met their Waterloo at Round Rock, north of Austin. The bank there was a tempting target for a July 19, 1878, forced withdrawl. A traitor in the gang brought in the Texas Rangers, and Bass and his gang were attacked in a violent gun battle. Gang member Seaborn Barnes was killed on the street, and Bass was severely wounded. He managed to get out of town, however, thanks to his companion Frank Jackson. But Bass quickly knew he was a dying man, and he convinced Jackson to leave him and save himself. Bass was captured the next day by Rangers, under squad leader Lieutenant Charles L. Nevill of Comany E.

In this book, Miller describes clearly how traitor Jim Murphy betrayed Sam. He also depicts the efforts of Major John B. Jones of the Frontier Battalion in planning the action that resulted in the battle with the gang as well as the hard work of Lieutenant N. O. Reynolds to get to Round Rock in time with his squad. Reynolds did not make it for the street fight, but it was his man, Nevill, who found the dying Bass. The next day, Nevill brought Bass in to Round Rock doctors and, within hours, his grave.

Bass never ratted on his pals, which was an honor to him. He died on his twenty-seventh birthday from the deadly effects of bullets from the guns of Rangers Richard C. Ware and George Herold.

There is a significant amount of material in Sam Bass & Gang devoted to the law's efforts at tracking, capturing, and killing Bass. This is as much a worthwhile book on lawmen—essentially Texas Rangers—as a biography of Bass, the outlaw.

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Ask the Dispatch

Ask the Dispatch

Thanks for emailing me the Dispatch news. I really appreciate it. Take care, old friend.

Danny Rhea
Texas Ranger, Retired

Great issue, Bobby; one of the best ever. I especially enjoyed the reunion and other pictures.

Congratulations,
Bob [Utley]

In Issue 16, Spring 2005, we published a story of the horrible New London School Explosion on March 18, 1937. Carolyn Jones, a survivor of that terrible day, sent us the following correspondences she exchanged with Doug Manning, an inspirational counselor, lecturer, and author:

Dear Mr. Manning,

I want to thank you for the work you are doing. As I may have told you in our brief exchange, I suffered for many years because people didn't understand that children (I was nine years old) can feel a traumatic event deeply even though they don't know how to express it. I somehow thought that there was something wrong with me, and I shut down emotionally for fear of losing control. Emotions were not expressed in our family, at least not by the

children.

Reconnecting with the other survivors of the school explosion has been very good for me. An amateur historian found me and persuaded me to come back to a reunion. There I spent days weeping, like others who return after so many years. The researcher [our managing editor Robert Nieman] has interviewed about forty survivors on tape and contributed them to the archives at the museum across the street from the reconstructed school building (now West Rusk High School.)

Where did your friend who was a mortician work? I think I told you that the bodies of my sister and my uncle were sent back to Ardmore, Oklahoma, to be cared for and buried.

At long last, the explosion is being recognized. A play, a novel, and a safety curriculum have been written, and others are in progress. Unfortunately, most of the survivors are gone. I am one of the youngest, if not the youngest, at 78.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have and help you to incorporate the experience at New London into your message.

Bless you and your work,
Carolyn (Jones) Frei

Thank you for your email, and thank you for sharing your story with me. I have already used the illustration of holding in emotions for fear of losing control at least twice. I hope you do not mind my telling your story. It has helped some people and will do so many more times.

The funeral director was Mack Tegue. He died a few years ago in a small town south of Dallas. I am not sure where he worked at the time of the explosion; I just remember his telling me how traumatic the event was and what an impact it had on his life. He was deeply involved in identifying the children and preparing them for burial. I wish I had written his story down so I would have more details. I often told him I was going to tape a conversation with him because I thought his story should be preserved. Had I known there was an organization of survivors, I would have personally brought him to one of your meetings. I think you and your group would have found a great deal of understanding by hearing from someone who was on the recovery team. Some things we will have to learn when we get on the other side of life.

Thanks again,
Doug Manning

Editor's note: For the New London School article, see or click the following:

http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/16/pages/New_London/London_School.htm

I see that Robert Utley writes for the Dispatch from time to time. I just finished his book, Lone Star Justice. I just wondered if anyone at the Dispatch has any idea when volume two may be released. Thanks for any help you may give

me.

Best Wishes,
Gary Godwin

I am on the home stretch, hoping to have a draft manuscript by the end of the year. That may be optimistic. A manuscript takes a year to wend its way through the press. I'd predict the second volume will be on Oxford UP's spring or fall list in 2007.

Bob Utley

I am writing to you from Sydney, Australia, and just wanted to go on record as saying how much I enjoy the Texas Ranger Dispatch. Back in 1983, while visiting the Lone Star State, I was greatly assisted by one of your Rangers when my bags went missing. With the Ranger's help, my problem was solved in short order. To my everlasting shame, I have lost the Ranger's name, but his help was, as you Americans often say, "above and beyond the call of duty."

I did have the good fortune at a later time to stop by Fort Fisher at Waco. There I met the director, whose name I believe was Gaines De Gaffenried (or similar). Sir, your museum is magnificent and must surely be one of the greatest of its kind in the world and a fitting monument to an extraordinary bunch of men. I certainly hope to return there some day.

Best Wishes from Australia,
N. Paul Anley

I'm afraid that we in Texas have become so accustomed to Texas Rangers serving "above and beyond the call of duty" that we take this extraordinary group of law officers' efforts as the norm.

Dear Mr. Stroud,

I have a Winchester Model 1873 38 WFC. It is in great condition, and I would like to find out more about this rifle, if I could. Hope you can help me.

Thank you,
Troy Eddie

Thank you for your letter requesting more information on your '73 Winchester. To learn as much as possible about the weapon, you might begin by reading my overview of the Winchester in the Dispatch, Issue 7, Summer 2002. http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/7/Winchesters.htm

Then look at the books I used to get the information for the article. Many of these are collector's items and quite expensive, so you might see if your local library has any of them. You might also request them on inter-library loan. One of the books, Norm Flayderman's Guide to Antique American Firearms, can be found at local bookstores. It has a section devoted to the Winchester

and contains estimated values.

Also, Winchester's records are housed at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center, 720 Sheridan Avenue, Cody, WY, 82414 (307.578.4031). For a modest fee, they will provide a historical letter especially for your Winchester if you provide the model and serial number.

If you send me the serial number of your '73, I will tell you what year it was made. You can also find information in George Madis's Winchester books.

Hope this is of help.

David Stroud

I have just reviewed your website with great interest but did not find any reference to the character known as the Lone Ranger. Is this a part of the aura they are trying to avoid, or have they just not gotten around to it?

Sincerely,
David Shane, PhD

Please check Issue 4, Summer 2001 (click or cut and paste the lin below) , where Bill O'Neal presents a very informative article entitled, "Who Was That Masked Man?"

http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/4/LoneRanger.htm

Thank you.

I am doing some research on Palo Pinto County and have picked up on bits and pieces about the Keechi Indians being in that area in the Keechi Valley. Information is very hard to come by, so I am asking anyone and everyone I can reach if they can help me. I understand they were not a tribe but a small band, some friendly but some hostile, in and around Denton County.

If you can help me, I will be grateful.

Respectfully,
Jerry Kelly

I'm afraid this editor has extremely limited knowledge about the Keechi Indians. Perhaps one of our readers might be able to assist Mr. Kelly.

There has never been a real diary-like write-up on Jack Hays and the Texas Rangers and what they accomplished in [the Mexican War]. If this is available, this story would certainly enhance your magazine's value. We will probably never know how very, very important Colonel Jack Hays was to the republic

and state of Texas unless this subject is more explored between 1837 and 1848. This man had no equal in the annuals of Texas history.

I hope you will be kind enough to look into this man's time in Texas and fully explore all the sources available. [This would] once and for all time tell the world how fortunate this state of Texas was to have this great man in the saddle!!!

Sincerely,
Charles Irvin

There is an excellent book about the Rangers in the Mexican War—Frederick Wilkinson's* The Highly Irregular Irregulars*. You can buy it through the museum's bookstore. The* Dispatch *highly recommends this book, which is reviewed in Issue 6, Spring 2002 (click or cut and paste the link below)

http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/6/HighIrregular.htm

Also in our inaugural issue of the Dispatch, Bill O'Neal wrote an excellent article on Hays entitled, "Captain Jack Hays." You will find it in Issue 1, Fall 2000 (click or cut and paste the link below)

http://www.texasranger.org/dispatch/1/Hays.htm

We agree with your assessment of Captain Jack and his importance to the state of Texas.

My grandson, Ty Henry Holman, who is already a Junior Texas Ranger, lives in Killeen, Texas. Three weeks ago, my daughter's home in Killeen caught fire, and many mementos were lost, one of which was [Ty's] Junior Texas Ranger badge and certificate. What do I have to do to replace these? I gave him his membership when he was two months old, and he is now three. I've used his membership in the Junior Texas Ranger Program as a guideline as how to live his life the right way. Please let me know how to replace these items for my grandson [so he can] understand and enjoy them for the rest of his life.

Thank you, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Hank Dykstra

Thank you for the touching comments. We will be glad to replace your grandson's membership materials for him, and please convey our condolences to your daughter for her losses in the fire.

Byron A. Johnson, Director
Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum

Recently, my son-in-law visited the Texas Rangers Museum and claims he saw a machine gun in .30 caliber. Do you know of such a weapon? If there is one, who was the manufacturer and what is the model number? He said it was long-barreled and was a shoulder-fired weapon.

Thanks for any help you might be able to render.

Robert D. White

The firearm he mentions is the Colt Monitor, a version of a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) made for police and bank guards. The one we have in the collections was used by Ted Hinton in the ambush of criminals Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow.

Byron Johnson, Director
Texas Ranger Hall of Fame & Museum

I wonder if you can tell me if there were any standard-issue guns for the Texas Rangers during the 1920s and 1930s. I know many Rangers carried their own privately acquired guns, but I seem to remember a list of side arms and long arms that were issued to those that didn't provide their own weapons. Can you help me with this question?

Many thanks!

Sincerely
Hans Vortisch

The State issued "standard" firearms to Texas Rangers only after the formation of Texas DPS in 1935. Prior to that time, Rangers were usually required to supply their own arms and ammunition. If they could not do so, the state sometimes "sold" the Rangers sidearms and rifles through payroll deduction. We also know of several instances in which Rangers arranged to purchase weapons through local sheriffs' or police departments.

After 1935, most Rangers still preferred to provide their own arms. Prior to the 1950s Texas DPS records regarding equipment distribution are extremely rare, and we are currently unaware of any such lists covering the 1920s and 1930s.

Good luck with your search.

Tracie Evans
Collections Manager

TEXAS RANGER DISPATCH Magazine

The converted Whitney Navy Revolver. ©2005, David Stroud. All Rights Reserved

Guns of the Texas Rangers

Converted, Nickel-Plated, Whitney Navy

By David V. Stroud

As mentioned in a previous Dispatch article, I began collecting Civil War Colt revolvers while attending Stephen F. Austin State University in 1968. In those long-ago days, a nice '60 Army or '51 Navy could be had for less than $200. By saving change from my $178 monthly G.I. Bill check, I was able to travel to Houston to meet my gun-wise cousin Robert Ashby, who volunteered to escort me on my first buying trip.

We parked at the largest sporting goods store that this Henderson native had ever seen. I exactingly opened the car door, beat Robert inside, and then walked quickly past hundreds of sporting rifles to the pistol case filled with modern revolvers and automatics. There was one old, nickel-plated revolver placed at the far end of the display as if the owner did not want it anywhere near his contemporary firearms.

"May I look at that real old one?" I asked, pointing at the "ugly duckling."

"It's a conversion," the sales clerk explained, handing the revolver to me. He continued, "Black powder, post-Civil War. Nobody wants these things."

Conversion number 49 on underside of barrel, and serial # 19422

on original loading gate. ©2005, David Stroud. All Rights Reserved

I asked permission to cock the gun, and then did so. The Texas Navy's battle scene of the Mexican fleet had been worn completely away, but the old cylinder turned perfectly as the hammer locked in firing position. I tried to hide my excitement while carefully lowering the hammer. Turning the revolver on its left side, I used my sleeve as its rest while I held the wood grip in my right hand. I saw a small nicked R and a worn groove where an S once fit.

"How much y'all want for this one?" I asked. Without smiling, and trying not to look interested, I added, ". . . seeing that nobody wants it."

"A hundred," the sales clerk answered. "We take cheeks and credit cards."

I looked at Robert. "What you think?"

"Buy it," he said. "That may have belonged to Rhett Butler Stroud."

I did. When I got home, I grabbed the only Colt book I had and searched the pictures until I found one just . . . like . . . mine! [1] It was a Richards Conversion, one of the nine thousand 1860 Armies altered from percussion firing to metallic cartridge between 1873 and1878.

The Whitney on pages 428-429 with its photographs above, below and upper right. ©2005, David Stroud. All Rights Reserved

So I thought.

A few years after trading in the hundred-dollar Colt for $100 to offset the $1,000 that the Jackson Arms antique dealer's shop wanted for a First Model Colt Dragoon, I found the old Colt of "Rhett Butler Stroud" pictured in an American Rifleman magazine. It was a conversion, all right, but a "mystery conversion," one of eight known at the time of the article. [2]

Every collector has these stories to tell about gun-store counters and tables filled with pre-1898 weapons. I have even more tales, including the time I sold my First and Second Model Colt Dragoons for the same price I had given for them just so I could acquire my newest collection interest.

The first cartridge patent was granted by France to inventor Jean Samuel Pauly for a "self-contained, self-primed center fire metallic cartridge" in 1812. Then, in 1854, fellow Frenchman Eugene Lefaucheux obtained French and English patents for his pistol, which fired a self-contained, pin-fire, metallic cartridge. In 1861, Colonel George Schuyler bought 10,000 of the 12mm pin-fires for Lincoln's army. When the war ended, Union soldiers were allowed to take them home as souvenirs. [3]

As noted in a pervious *Dispatch*, Smith & Wesson received the first U.S. patent for a revolver cylinder bored through from end to end, which allowed metallic cartridges to be inserted from the rear. Once the Rollin White patent expired in 1868, most American revolver producers jumped onto the metallic bandwagon. When designing new handguns and long arms, they converted cap-and-ball revolvers to fire metallic cartridges in order to keep costs down.

Eli Whitney, Jr. was no exception. The cotton gin inventor's son received U.S. Patent No. 51,985 on January 9, 1866, for a metallic-cartridge revolver incorporating a cylinder cap that also acted as a cartridge extractor by gripping the metallic cartridge flanges. Amazingly, Whitney never produced such a revolver. Instead, the Whitneyville plant made a few Navies using the Remington New Model Army conversion method.

Remington New Model Army Conversion. ©2005, David Stroud. All Rights Reserved.

Such is the case of the Fourth Type Whitney pictured in this article. [4] This Whitney-converted Fourth Type has a 7 ½ inch, octagonal barrel and is a .36 caliber with a six-round cylinder. The top of the barrel is marked, "E. Whitney/ New Haven." The cylinder engraving is of an eagle, lion, and naval engagement. The shield-barring rib is marked "WHITNEYVILLE" and is completely worn away. [5] This conversion exhibits two post-Civil War characteristics:

1. The most obvious is the nickel plating. Although Europeans experimented with nickel plating as early as 1842, one of the first U.S. patents was granted to an American named Adams in 1869 for a solution of nickel ammonium chloride. Later, several patents were granted for various types of baths until O. P Watts developed a rapid nickel-plating bath in 1916 that is still in use. [6]

2. The second characteristic is that this model is a cartridge-firing, Remington-type conversion. The Whitney has matching serial numbers throughout as well as the conversion number of 49. The method of converting was to machine the cylinder so it would fire .38 accept-rim fire cartridges rather than the .38 ball, to add a cylinder extension, and to cut the frame to accept a backing plate. A loading chamber was milled through the right-hand recoil

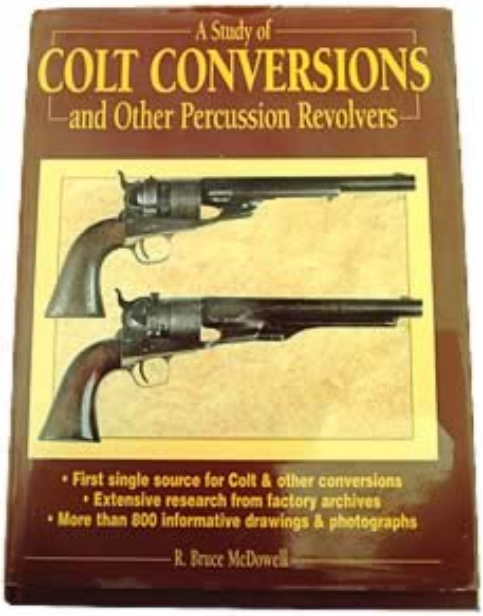
shield and the nose is slightly reshaped. [7]

As with most western firearms, those "unwanted" guns of the past are eagerly sought today, and conversions are some of the rarest. Although converted Whitneys are extremely scare, I feel sure a few were carried in the holsters of Rangers, lawmen, and outlaws of the Old West.

NOTES

1. James E. Serven, *Colt Firearms from 1836* (La Habra, California: The Foundation Press, 1954). This was the first Colt book I bought in 1968. I do not have it anymore and have long since forgotten the page number. It was reprinted in 1992.

2. *The American Rifleman* magazine was discarded years ago because I no longer owned my old "Rhett Butler Stroud" Conversion. Issue, date, and page number are long forgotten, but the number 8 sticks in my mind. More information on the mystery conversions is in McDowell's study (below).



The late R. Bruce McDowell's outstanding book on conversions.

3. John D. McAulay, *Civil War Pistols: A Survey of the Handguns of the American Civil War* (Lincoln, RI: Andrew Mowbray, Inc., 1992), 51-53.

4. R. Bruce McDowell, *A Study of Colt Conversions and Other Percussion Revolver*, (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1997), 427-429.

5. Norm Flayderman, *Flayderman's Guide to Antique American Arms…and their values,* (Iola WI: Krause Publications, 2001), 257. The Whitney Conversion is not mentioned in Flayderman's Guide. I believe this offers documented proof of the Whitney Conversion's rarity rather than lack of documentation.

6. Nickel Plating Primer, online feature article. http://www.pfonline.com/articles/040102.html

7. McAulay, *Civil War Pistols*. 427-9.