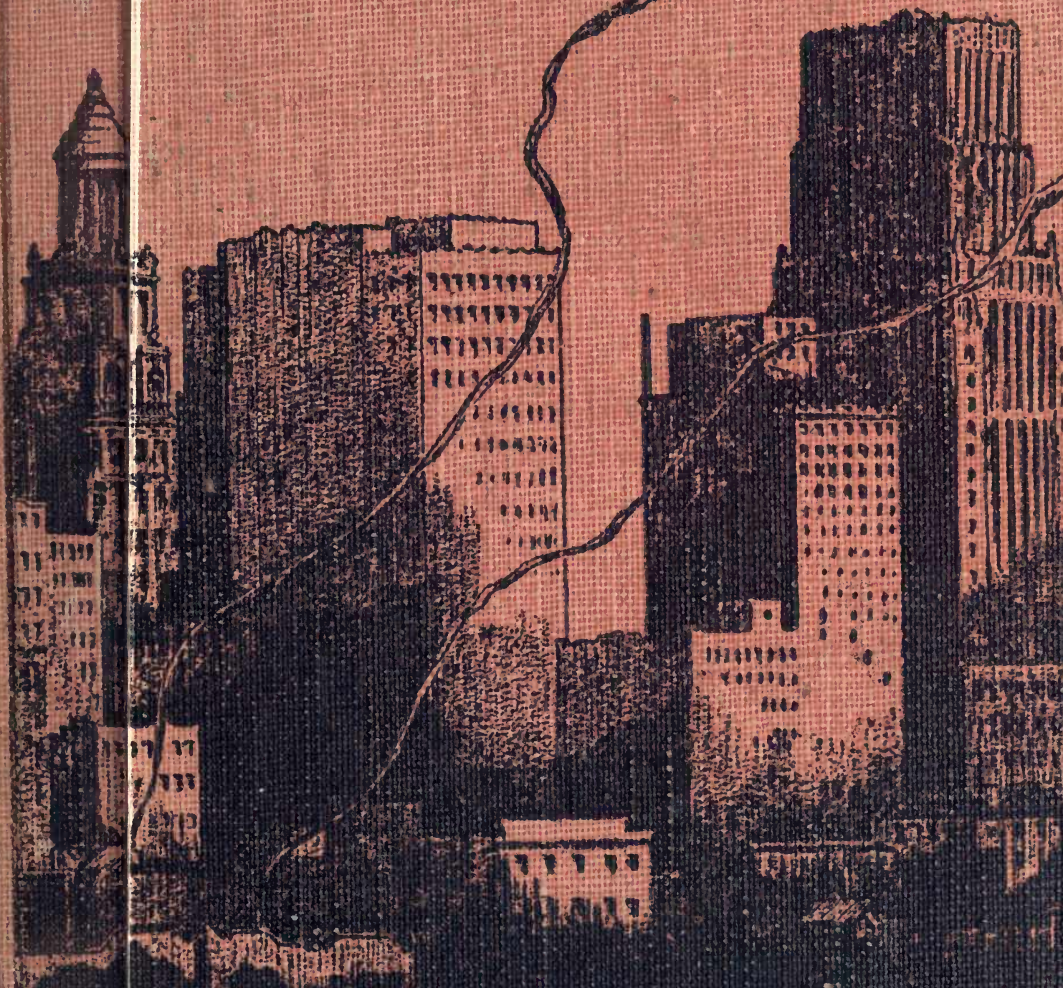


# HOUSTON



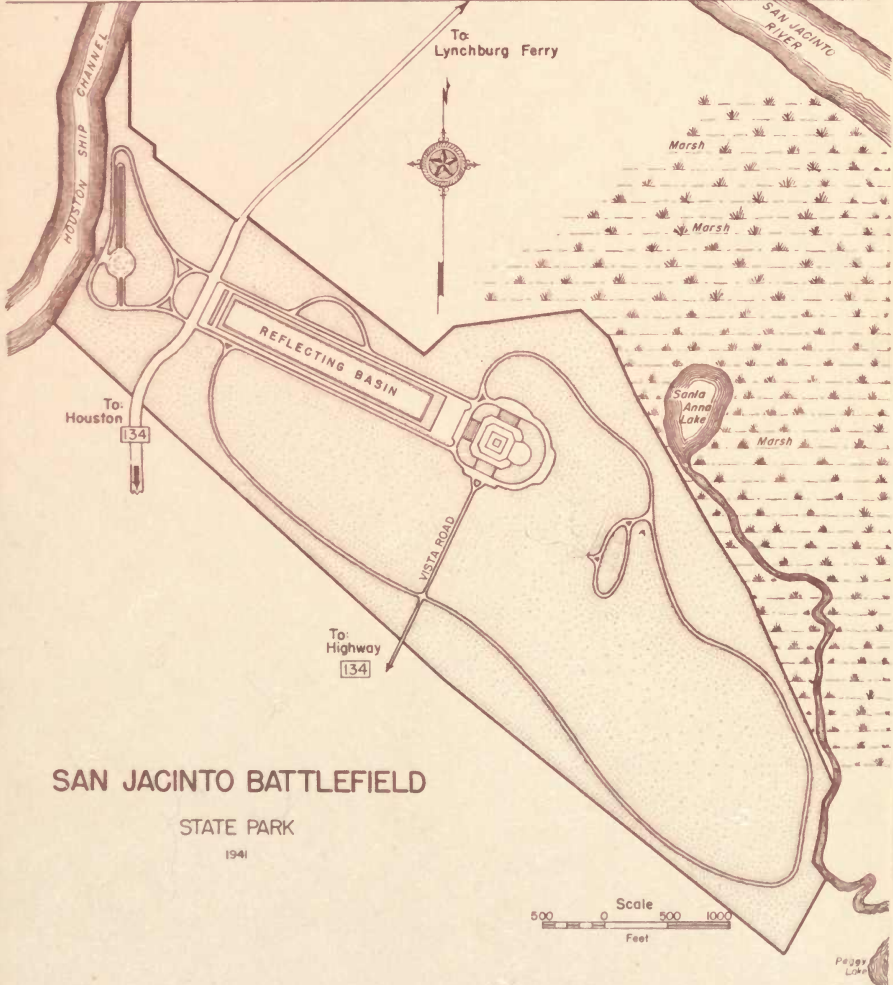
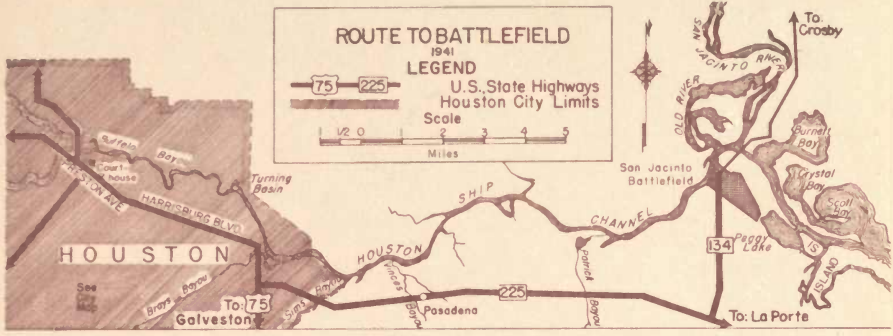
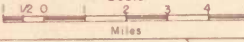
AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES

# ROUTE TO BATTLEFIELD

1941

## LEGEND

U.S. State Highways  
Houston City Limits  
Scale

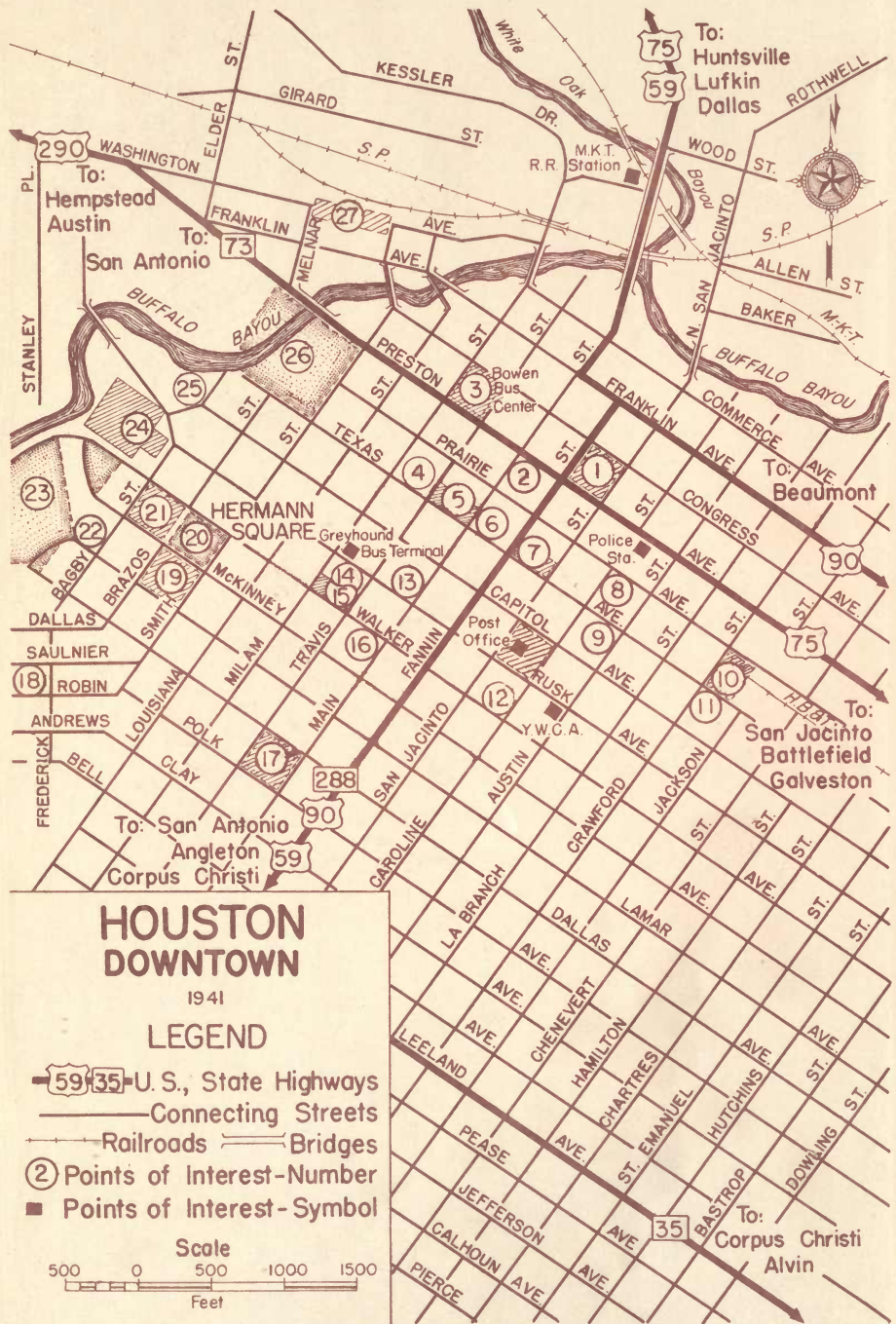


# SAN JACINTO BATTLEFIELD

STATE PARK  
1941





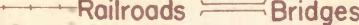



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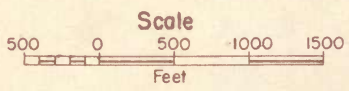


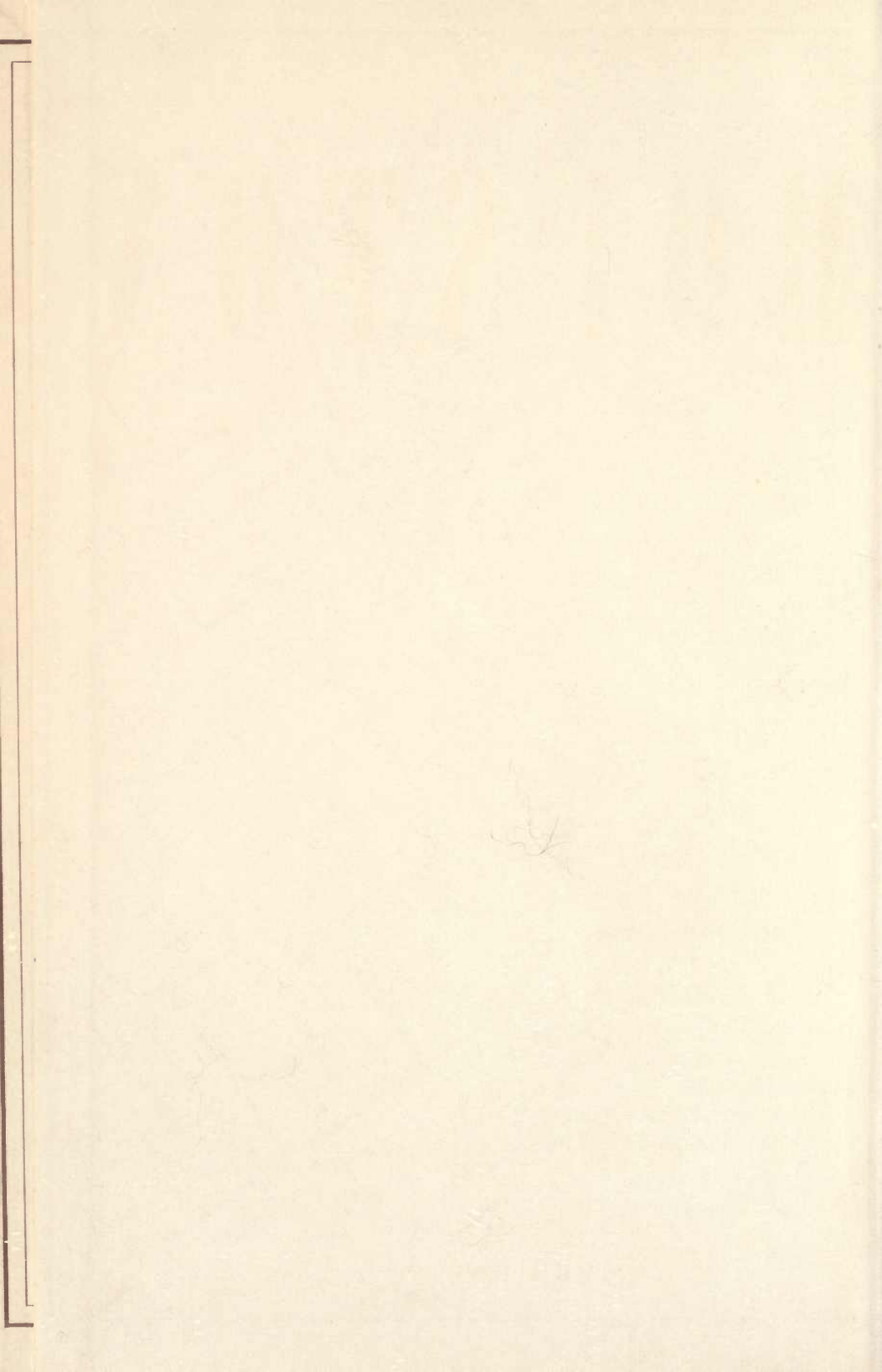
# HOUSTON DOWNTOWN

1941

## LEGEND

-  U. S., State Highways
-  Connecting Streets
-  Railroads
-  Bridges
-  Points of Interest-Number
-  Points of Interest-Symbol







# HOUSTON



## A HISTORY AND GUIDE

*Compiled by workers of  
the Writers' Program of the  
Work Projects Administration  
in the State of Texas*

AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES

Illustrated

Sponsored by the Harris County Historical Society, Inc.

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## PREFACE

ON THE BANKS of an almost impassable bayou fifty miles from the Gulf of Mexico, a village, laid out by two promoters and named for the President of the new Texas Republic, was selected to be the national capital while it still was little more than lines drawn upon a map. That village has become a powerful industrial and commercial city, largest in the State, and the bayou is a deep tidewater ship channel through which pass great steamships bound to and from the ports of all the seas.

This book attempts to tell accurately and adequately the story of Houston from its beginning in 1836, and to picture the city as it is today. It is one of a series of books on Texas cities, material for which has been gathered, written, and edited by members of the Texas Writers' Project. Its maps and drawings were made by project workers; many of its illustrations are from original photographs.

In the course of the volume's preparation the archives of the City of Houston, Harris County, the Port Commission, and the Houston Public Library have been searched exhaustively. The files of the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Houston Post*, the *Houston Press*, and of earlier newspapers, have supplied much material. Descendants of pioneer families and old residents have contributed from their documents and recollections. Members of the Houston Chamber of Commerce and of other civic, patriotic, and fraternal organizations have aided in the collection of facts and statistics. A great number of consultants, including many members of the Harris County Historical Society and others prominent in their special fields, have painstakingly checked the book's content for errors or omissions. To these, and to all others who have cooperated to make possible the completed work, grateful acknowledgment is given.

J. FRANK DAVIS,  
State Supervisor,  
Texas Writers' Project.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

*Area:* 73.3 square miles.

*Altitude:* 53 feet.

*Population:* (U. S. 1940 Census) 384,514; metropolitan area, 510,397.

*Railroad Stations:* Grand Central Station, 329 Franklin Ave., for Southern Pacific Lines. Union Station, 501 Crawford St., for Missouri Pacific Lines, Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Ry., and Burlington-Rock Island R. R. Missouri-Kansas-Texas Station, 3 N. Main St., for Missouri-Kansas-Texas Lines. Interurban Terminal, 700 McCarty St., for Houston North Shore R. R. (electric).

*Airports:* Houston Municipal Airport, 10 m. SE. of city on Telephone Rd. (State 35), for Braniff Airways, Inc., Eastern Air Lines, Inc., and Chicago and Southern Airlines, Inc.; airport taxi \$1.50, time 45 min.; complete facilities for servicing aircraft day and night; sightseeing trips and charter service. Main Street Airport, 6 m. SW. of city on US 90, charter service, flight instructions and repairs, taxi 70c. Minor Stewart Airport, 12 m. S. of city on Almeda Rd. (State 288), sightseeing trips and charter service, taxi \$1.50. Modern Transportation, Inc., Holmes and Griggs Rds., charter service, flight instructions, airport taxi service (no charge). Cunningham Airport, Inc., US 90 and State 19, sightseeing trips, charter service, and flight instructions, taxi \$1.50; Sportsman's Field, 12000 Market St. Rd., sightseeing trips, charter service, and flight instructions, taxi, \$1.50.

*Bus Stations:* All American Bus Lines, Inc., 618 Travis St., for Bowen Motor Coaches, Inc., and Missouri Pacific Trailways. Bowen Bus Center, 300 Travis St., for Bowen Motor Coaches, Inc., Missouri Pacific Trailways, Bayshore Bus Lines, Airline Motor Coaches, Inc., Texas Bus Lines, Beaumont, Sour Lake & Western Bus Lines, and Highway Transportation Co. Greyhound Bus Terminal, 713 Milam St., for Southwestern Greyhound Lines, Inc., Airline Motor Coaches, Inc., Kerrville Bus Co., Inc., Bayshore Bus Lines, and Texas Bus Lines.

*Sightseeing Busses:* Houston Sightseeing Service, 2 daily tours cover greater Houston, Ship Channel and Turning Basin, busses leave principal hotels 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. daily, 33-m. trip, \$1.75.

*City Bus Service:* Fare 10c, 4 tokens 30c, good on express lines upon payment of 2c. Children under 12, on local lines, 4c, others 5c; weekly passes, 25c, entitle holder to 5c fare on local lines, to 7c fare on express busses; all transfers free.

*Taxis:* Fare 25c (1 to 5 people) for first 2 m., 10c each additional m.

*Traffic Regulations:* Speed limit 30 m., except in school and parkway zones, 20 m.; left turns permitted on and into Main St. on Congress, Franklin, Prairie, and Preston Aves. No left turn on Gray Ave., and Main St. Parking meters downtown, 5c fee for varying periods from 20 min. to 2 hours, except legal

holidays and Sun., no fee. No parking on Main St. between Commerce and Polk Aves., 6 a.m.-9 a.m. One-way streets, Walker Ave. from Crawford St. to Bagby St.; Rusk Ave. from Bagby St. to Crawford St.

*Street Order and Numbering:* North-and-south thoroughfares are designated as streets. Intersecting streets, east and west, are avenues. Exceptions include Houston Ave., running north and south.

*Accommodations:* 106 hotels, 1 for Negroes; adequate rooming houses, tourist lodges and trailer camps, with wide price range.

*Information Service:* Chamber of Commerce, 914 Main St.; Motor League of South Texas, mezzanine floor, San Jacinto Hotel, 820 Main St.; Public Relations Institute, and San Jacinto Centennial Association, Kirby Building; Soldiers Service Bureau, 914 Main St.

*Radio Stations:* KPRC (950 kc.) (*open 6 a.m.-12 midnight*), Lamar Hotel, Main St. and Lamar Ave.; KTRH (1320 kc.) (*open 6 a.m.-12 midnight*), Rice Hotel, Main St. and Texas Ave.; KXYZ (1470 kc.) (*open at all times*), Gulf Building, 712 Main St.

*Theaters and Motion Picture Houses:* Little Theatre of Houston, 707 Chelsea Blvd.; Houston Players, 1708 Main St.; Houston Children's Theater, 3403 Yupon; Miller Outdoor Theater, Hermann Park, S. Main Blvd. between Hermann Ave. and Marlborough Dr.; Town Hall, 407-9 Main St.; Music Hall, 810 Bagby St.; Recreation Playhouse, 406 Buffalo Dr.; Houston Negro Little Theater, Dowling St. and Elgin Ave.; 31 motion picture theaters for whites, 6 for Negroes.

*Auditoriums:* City Auditorium, 702-8 Texas Ave., road shows, concerts, and local productions; Museum of Fine Arts, S. Main St. and Montrose Blvd., concerts and lectures; Sam Houston Coliseum, 810 Bagby St., industrial exhibits, livestock shows, rodeos, road shows, concerts.

*Football:* Rice Stadium, 6500 S. Main Blvd., college games; Buffalo Stadium, Calhoun Ave. and St. Bernard and Hussion Sts., high school games; Baldwin Park, Elgin Ave. and Crawford St.; Hermann Park, S. Main Blvd.; Sam Houston Park, 212 Dallas Ave.; Hennessey Park, Lyons Ave. and Maury St.; Mason Park, 75th St. and Lawndale Ave.; Milby Park, Galveston Rd. and Park Terrace; MacGregor Park, S. MacGregor Dr.; Memorial Park, 6200 Washington Ave.; Moody Park, Fulton and Hays Sts.; A. P. and Laura Root Park, Clay Ave. and Austin St.; Settegast Park, Congress Ave. and Paige St.; Sabine Field, Sabine St. and W. Capitol Ave.; Stude Park, Michaux and Usener Sts.; and George Washington Park, 4900 Harrisburg Blvd.

*Baseball and Softball:* 10 baseball and 20 softball diamonds in various city parks and playgrounds; 2 for Negroes. Buffalo Stadium, home of the Houston Buffaloes, Texas League team; Southern Pacific Athletic Field, 1900 Oliver St.; Sportsman Softball Stadium, 2202 Houston Ave.; West End Ball Park, 601 Andrews St.

**Golf:** Heights Golf Course, 1104 Wakefield Rd., 18 holes, 45c; Hermann Park Golf Course, Hermann Park, 18 holes, 50c; Memorial Park Golf Course, Memorial Park, 18 holes, 50c; Glenbrook Golf Course, Park Place Blvd., 18 holes, 40c weekdays, 75c Sat., Sun., and holidays; Lindale Golf Course, 5420 E. Montgomery Rd., 9 holes, 25c.

**Polo:** Houston Riding and Polo Club, 8 m. SW. on Westheimer Rd., adm. 50c; Post Oak Road Field, across Post Oak Rd. from Memorial Park, adm. free. Dates of matches announced in local newspapers.

**Gymnasiums:** Y. M. C. A., 1600 Louisiana St.; Y. W. C. A., 1320 Rusk Ave.; City Auditorium; A. P. and Laura Root Park.

**Riding:** 5 private stables, rates 50c to \$1 an hour; municipal bridle paths in Hermann, MacGregor, and Memorial Parks.

**Swimming:** Three municipal pools (*open May-September, 8-10:30 daily, 10c and 25c*); Mason Pool, Mason Park; Stude Pool, Stude Park; Emancipation Park (for Negroes); Heights Natatorium, 200 Harvard St.; Linder Lake, 515 Melbourne St.; Dodson Lake, 6.5 m. N. of city.

**Tennis:** 41 public tennis courts in parks and recreation centers, 11 lighted, free except when lighted for night playing (*make reservations at Houston Recreation Department, City Hall, 901-21 Bagby St.*).

**Trapshooting:** Houston Gun Club, 7 m. SW. on Westheimer Rd. (*open Sun.*); Main Skeet Club, 7 m. SW. on US 90.

**Horseshoe Pitching, Dominoes, and Checkers:** Horseshoe pitching in 23 Houston parks; annual tournament in Mason Park; equipment for dominoes and checkers free in following parks: Baldwin; Charlton; Park Place Blvd.; Cherryhurst, 1700 Missouri St.; Hennessey; Mason; Milroy, W. 12th and Yale Sts.; Montie Beach, Coronado and Northwood Sts.; Proctor Plaza, Temple and Watson Sts.; River Oaks, 3600 Westheimer Rd.; A. P. and Laura Root; Settegast; Stude; and George Washington.

**Fishing:** In near-by bayous, rivers, lakes, bays, and Gulf of Mexico.

**Hunting:** Along streams, Gulf coast, and in rice fields.

**Public Parks:** 62 public parks for whites, 2 for Negroes; total area, 2,983 acres.

**Automobile Racing:** Midget Auto Speedway, Calhoun Ave. and St. Bernard St., regular meets during season.

**Boxing:** Olympiad Arena, 701 Lincoln St.

**Wrestling:** City Auditorium, matches Fri. night, adm. varies.

**Soccer:** Alpha Soccer Field, E. Montgomery Rd. (*free*).

**Archery:** N. side Hermann Park (*free*).

**Shuffleboard:** Free in the following parks: Cherryhurst, Mason, River Oaks, Root, Settegast.

*Basketball*: City Auditorium, college games; Y. M. C. A. gymnasium, high school games; 11 other courts in city parks and playgrounds.

*Volleyball*: 13 courts in parks and playgrounds (*free*).

*Handball*: A. P. and Laura Root Park (*equipment free*).

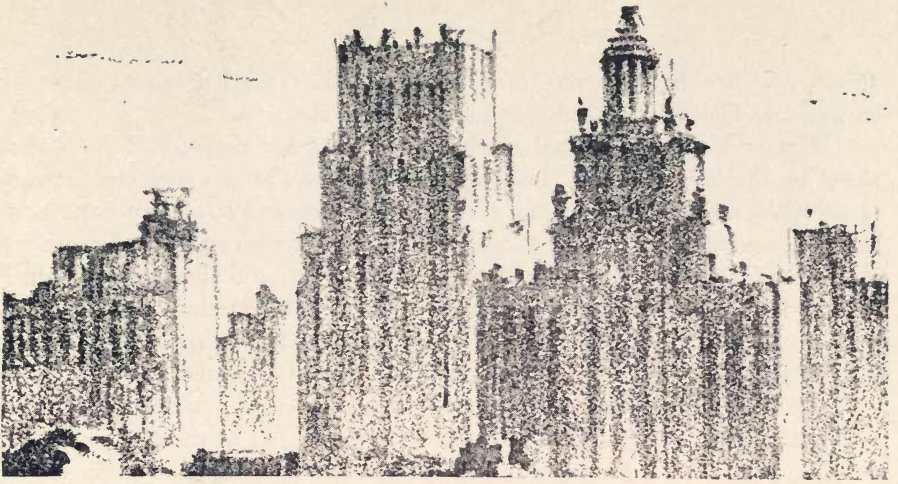
*Badminton*: A. P. and Laura Root Park (*equipment free*).

*Recreation Centers and Playgrounds*: Equipment in the following parks: Charlton, Cherryhurst, Baldwin, Hennessey, Mason, Milby, Milroy, Montie Beach, Proctor Plaza, River Oaks, Root, Settegast, Stude and George Washington; Recreation Club, 402 Buffalo Dr. For Negroes, in Crawford Park, 1500 Jensen Dr.; Emancipation Park; and Gregory Park, 1400 Wilson St.

*Playground Equipment for Children*: In the following parks: Baldwin, Charlton, Cherryhurst, Hennessey, Mason, Milroy, Montie Beach, Proctor Plaza, Root, Settegast, and George Washington.

*Libraries*: Houston Public Library, 500 McKinney Ave. Branches: Carnegie, 1209 Henry St.; Heights, 1302 Heights Blvd.; Colored Carnegie, 1112 Frederick St. Sub-branches: Central Park, 6901 Ave. I, Edison School; Eastwood, 200 Telephone Rd.; Harrisburg, 811 Broadway, Harris School; West End, 5100 Washington Ave.; Ripley House, 4400 Lovejoy Ave. Harris County Library, basement Harris County Courthouse Annex, 1223 Elder St., 41 branches in county. Harris County Law Library, 5th floor Harris County Courthouse, 311 Fannin St.

*Shopping*: Milam, Travis, Main, Fannin, and San Jacinto Sts. between Commerce and Polk Aves. comprise the main shopping district. Neighborhood shopping districts lie especially along principal highways into the city.



## ARGUMENT FOR HOUSTON

*Made by the Promoters to the Texas Congress in 1836*

“**I** CONSIDER that the seat of government ought to be on the coast, because it combines the advantage of a safe and speedy communication with the United States and the interior of the country at the same time; because we will have more speedy and certain information of the operations of the enemy on the sea, and because the government will possess so many more facilities of communicating with the army and furnishing it with the necessary supplies.

“What place, I would inquire, possesses more advantages in this respect than the town of Houston? I boldly assert, None. It is one of the most healthy places in the lower country, as the experience of those who have lived for years in the neighborhood proves. It is a most beautiful site for a town, with most excellent spring water, and the most inexhaustible quantity of pine timber for building. The bayou is navigable at all times for boats drawing six feet of water, and is within ten hours' sail of Galveston Island, and there is no place in Texas that can be more easily supplied with everything desired from the United States. Fish, oysters and fowl can be had there in abundance; and the country around is capable of supplying the town with all the substantial necessities of life.

“This town is situated at the head of navigation — in the very heart of a rich country. It was selected as a town which must become a great interior commercial emporium of Texas. The trade of upper Brazos, the Colorado, of

Trinity and San Jacinto rivers, of Spring and Lake creek settlements, must find its way into Galveston bay through the town of Houston.

“Capitalists are interested in this town, and are determined to push it ahead by the investment of considerable capital, and at this moment contracts exist for the sending of 700,000 feet of lumber there; and I can assure the members that several stores of much capital will very soon be established there. A steamboat for the place has already been ordered out, and Colonel Benjamin F. Smith is now engaged in getting out the lumber for a large house of public entertainment, and within four months from this time I can safely say that comfortable houses for all necessary purposes will there be erected.

“Should the Congress see proper to locate the seat of government at Houston I offer to give all the lots necessary for the purposes of the government. I also offer to build a State house and the necessary offices for the various departments of the government, and to rent them to the government on a credit until such time as it may be convenient to make payment. Or, if the government sees proper to erect the buildings, I propose when the seat of government is removed to purchase the said buildings at such price as they may be appraised at.

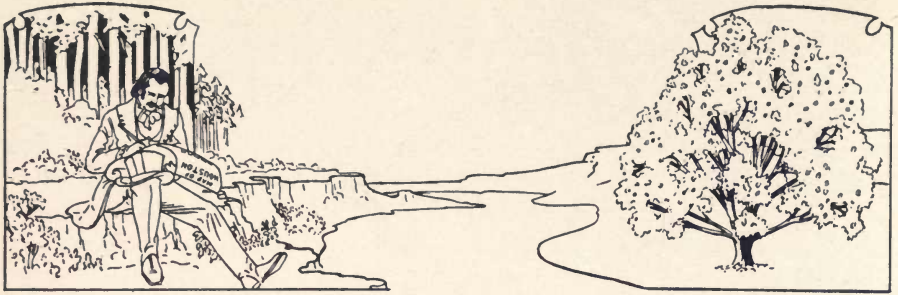
“In conclusion I assure the members that houses and comfortable accommodations will be furnished at Houston in a very short time, and if the seat of government is there located no pains will be spared to render the various officers of the government as comfortable as they could expect to be in any other place in Texas.

“JOHN K. ALLEN, for A. C. & J. K. ALLEN.”



PART I

HOUSTON AND ITS HISTORY



## CHAPTER I

### TEXAN METROPOLIS

**H**OUSTON, fifty miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico at the head of a man-made ship channel, sprawls across seventy-three square miles, a great, youthful, growing civic and commercial giant. Skirted by rich Texas prairies, tremendously productive of oil wells, cotton, lumber, and cattle, the city combines major industrial developments that are like the East, the culture and lush verdure of the South, and the enterprise of the West, plus a medley of pine trees, smokestacks, huge moss-hung oaks and arriving and departing ships that is entirely its own.

Rapid changes and developments cause new suburbs to spring up almost overnight. These gleam for a time with new roofs and fresh paint, which soon mellow under the subtropic sun and become a part of the city's century-old mosaic.

Houston has become Texas' largest city, with a 1940 U. S. Census population of 384,514 within its boundaries, and 510,397 in the metropolitan area. Through it poured such large volumes of cotton, petroleum, and other products that the city stood third among United States deep-sea ports in cargo tonnage handled. Before the second World War, in 1939, brought about a curtailment of exports, Houston was the largest spot cotton market in the world. It is an important and rapidly growing manufacturing center.

But while the city is known chiefly for its industry and shipping, it has a rich background of history. Within it lies the site of a capitol building of the Republic of Texas. Here lived and are buried many of those who helped shape the Republic and bring it to Statehood. Through its embryo port passed thousands of settlers. Caravans of 1849, bound for the gold fields of California, were outfitted in Houston's pioneer stores. Here, too, were made plans for the Civil War, in the local headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi Department of the Confederate army.

Near by is the battlefield of San Jacinto, where in 1836 a little army under Gen. Sam Houston defeated a Mexican force under Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, and thus won the freedom of Texas. A large park and a towering

monument commemorate that battle, and keep alive the memory of the past and its ideals.

The story of Houston has always been that of its port. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* remarked editorially in 1837, following the arrival of the first steamboat to pass through snag-infested inland waters to the town site, that it was "a proven fact that Houston will be a port of entry." On May 2 of the same year it added the prophecy:

The City of Houston. This place is yet merely a city in the embryo, but industry, enterprise and the amount of capital which is now ministering to its greatness will soon elevate it to a prominent rank among the cities of the older countries.

Today, giant, oceangoing vessels slide along an inland tidal waterway hailing one another with deep-throated whistles, while fussy tugs and smaller, hurrying craft create a shrill obbligato. On the rippling surface of the channel great seaplanes sometimes rest, pulling at their moorings like captured birds.

A little more than a century ago Houston's waterways knew only the swish of the paddle of a passing canoe or pirogue, and the bellow of alligators. On the heavily timbered banks, rasping and scraping sawmills turned out pungent lumber, that new settlers might have houses.

Forests, lush prairie grass, and steaming swamps once lay where today towering stacks of chemical plants and refineries belch forth odorous smoke that sometimes blankets the ship channel; where high-density compresses crush bale after bale of compact cotton, and many-sized oil storage tanks gleam in the sun. Silence, only ten decades ago, held moss-draped bayou shores where now the noise of air hammers and the scream of tortured metal pierce the air; and the arcs of welders' torches flare brighter than day where once old oaks made dense shade.

The trails of the wilderness have grown into a maze of streets and highways, and the dim thoroughfares of the pioneers have lengthened until they link town after town, uniting many a growing community to the rim of the far-reaching city. Here mustangs, and Indians, and daring explorers once found their way through rank growth fostered by moist black earth and a warm climate. Today broad highways are crowded with the automobiles of commuters, with thundering trucks bearing pine logs or supplies for oil wells, with the vehicles of farmers bringing produce to Houston's sidewalk vegetable and fruit stands.

Houston is approximately in the center of Harris County, a heavily wooded, bay-studded area split by the broad San Jacinto River. More than forty-four miles of bayous are within the city, and landscapers have used the natural beauty of their banks for parks, private and public grounds. Yaupons, cottonwoods, elms, swamp hickories, sycamores, pin and water oaks, pecans, willows, bois d'arcs, magnolias, and sweetgums provide a green background for the sprawling city. Wild flowers bloom in season on vacant lots or along the streams, especially bluebonnets and phlox. Many of the finer suburban areas have taken their names from the spreading oaks—University Oaks, Garden

Oaks, Shady Oaks, and River Oaks, the latter a section of handsome residences set in large grounds. Tangled woodlands lie along the bayous, in parks, in back yards. The air is spicy with the smell of giant pines.

Houses in Houston, whether large or small, share a common attribute — almost invariably the setting is green, framed by tall, old trees. The average city block is enriched by the exotic purple of bougainvillea blossoms, the orange-red of the trumpet vine's flowers, the dazzling hues of hibiscus and roses. Banks of blood-red poinsettias often grow as high as two-story houses. Azaleas are so popular that garden clubs conduct tours, in season, through grounds devoted to them. Wild honeysuckle and mustang grapevines climb wherever they can reach; hyacinths grow in pools. Ivory-tinted magnolia blooms and the gray of Spanish moss lend a Southern touch, and cypresses and water elms are the natural growth of this land of bayous. Purple wistaria blossoms and the coral spray of *regina corona* — "queen's crown" — adorn many a graceful white pillar or stone wall.

In this wealth of subtropical foliage are most of Houston's residential sections. Local architecture runs the gamut from pure Greek Doric to modern American. In the city are buildings with the glass walls, flat planes, and simple lines of 1941, and great turreted houses built by seafaring men who had seen the minarets and temples of the East; there are imposing piles of stone in the best Tudor manner, and the grace of pine, painted white, in the most beautiful of Georgian or Southern plantation tradition. A worn old house once owned by a Mississippi River boat captain, its ballroom tattered and tawdry, still stands near the heart of Houston, its wrought iron from New Orleans as lacy as that of any mansion along St. Charles Street. The wealth of pine in near-by forests has caused a preference for dwellings built of lumber in simple, homelike patterns, many of the newer houses adhering to the best type of early Texas construction. The pioneer ranch-house, with a "dog-run" or wide hall through the center and a porch in front, is popular in modern Houston.

Downtown, Houston is typically a modern American city. It is noisy, crowded, streamlined. Main Street, the principal thoroughfare, is shaded by office buildings. A few architectural relics of other years are jammed against the skyscrapers; but those low, quaint business houses of pioneer Houstonians are so overshadowed by towering steel and stone that they seem like ghosts of an old town that once was here. The roar of traffic, the tunes of nickelodeons, the chimes of church bells, and the rush of feet make a mighty modern symphony that seldom is stilled.

Examples of the city's cosmopolitan character are found on any busy downtown street corner where impatient crowds await the flash of the traffic light. Here are sailors from United States Navy tankers docked at the petroleum-loading wharves of the ship channel; cattlemen striding along in high-heeled boots; soldiers from near-by army training centers; customs officials in gold-buttoned uniforms; cowboys who contrive to "roll their own" despite the continuous Gulf breezes. Oil field and steel workers in stained clothing rub

elbows with retired sea captains and multimillionaire oil and lumber kings. Professional fishermen in the city on holiday are as brown as the Mexicans who toil in the cotton fields.

Because it is so big, and because it is growing with prodigious strides, Houston has countless contrasts. It has dim, Old World beer gardens where thrifty *hausfraus* scrub turkey bones and use them for mustard spoons, and where the food, music and language is largely European. In one such place a mild-mannered woman — daughter of the garden's owner — serves as manager and bouncer, attending to her duties with the docile attitude of any *hausfrau*. Near by is one of the myriad sophisticated beauty parlors of Houston; there are so many of these "salons" that local women are said to have the smartest and most up-to-date coiffures in all Texas.

Before any one of dozens of open sidewalk vegetable markets, modishly dressed matrons shop for produce that graces these stands — a wide variety, including, in season, yellow pumpkins, purple grapes, striped watermelons and lemon-colored honeydew melons, all raised on Harris County soil. In strange contrast with these farmers' markets are the smart shops of downtown Houston, where models display modish gowns.

Negroes idle in doorways or sing over their tasks, and catfish stew is popular in the sections where they live, in rows of "shotgun" houses. Mexicans walk in close little groups. Many of them are farm laborers, men who work outdoors; and in a butcher shop window, in their quarter, stands a gilded plaster cow, object of much admiration, for their favorite food is *carne de vaca* — meat of the cow.

There are dark alleys in the poorer districts, yet against the midnight sky great flares always burn — the ignited gas leaks of near-by oil wells. Houston is in the center of a great oil-producing area. Five producing fields within a radius of ten miles almost surround the city, with one field inside the northwestern city limits.

In the great industrial district which hugs the ship channel and stretches back from it, numerous petroleum supply houses display rigs and oil well machinery with all the care and plate glass usually to be found in jewelers' windows. Boats, too, are shown behind great surfaces of plate glass, boats of many sizes and kinds. And in back yards, boys build toy sailboats.

Houston's port section is girdled by tall pines, and yet possesses an authentic, salty atmosphere. It is a far cry from the first docks at the foot of Main Street, where in 1837 the skipper of a stern-wheel steamboat — after hacking his way for three days through sixteen miles of snags and overhanging trees — concluded the earliest recorded navigation of Buffalo Bayou from the coast. Today oceangoing ships ride the land-locked waters of the Turning Basin, and the flags of many lands fly where once only a few small craft dared venture. Drive-ins featuring beer and barbecued meats, rooming houses with nautical names, seamen's clubs and maritime shops surround the port area. Streets have appropriate designations, such as Navigation Boulevard. As though to add the

final touch of authenticity, sea gulls and terns fly lazily above the ship channel, and here and there along the banks a heron stands comfortably on one long leg.

Sailors lounge in front of a seamen's institute. As bascule bridges open, sirens sound, shrill against the deep-voiced whistles of the ships. Negro longshoremen sing as they load cotton or grain, red flags fly the danger signal as huge pipes from storage tanks convey petroleum into blackened holds. And as the loaded vessels nose toward the sea, riding the placid waters of the ship channel or those of the Intracoastal Canal, the big hulls loom large over the flat prairies that roll up to the banks of these inland waterways. Ships appear to be piercing the land in their journeys toward the Gulf. Hereford cattle graze close beside the channel banks, oil derricks rise near by, and farmers plow within a few feet of the man-made canal.

Houston has beer parlors in abundance, and an equal abundance of church spires.

Seafood is advertised in many restaurants, from one-window cafes where a "fish dinner" costs a dime, to swanky grills where *oysters a la Rockefeller* are a menu staple. In some of them alien tongues are common, but not necessarily an alien spirit; there is the Italian restaurant proprietor who, wishing to display his intense patriotism, changed a sign that read "Italian spaghetti" to proudly proclaim, "*American spaghetti served here.*"

Great chemical, tool and machine plants, guarded in 1941 to prevent sabotage, are flanked by free-and-easy drive-ins, where the costumes of car hops or waitresses range from Turkish to that of the Texas cowgirl. Houston's scores of drive-ins have attained national attention for their variety of food, the fanciful costumes of the waitresses, and because of the number of such places. On one street corner a Negro waiter wearing a starched white linen jacket rings an old-fashioned dinner bell, proclaiming that "Fried chicken am ready," while at an establishment in another part of Houston car hops must weigh 200 pounds and upward.

Cotton is piled high on covered platforms near the port, in trucks, at compresses — and downtown stores feature rayon fabrics. There are, in "greater Houston," such additional contrasts as boisterous sailors and Negro nuns; chanteys and vesper bells; the hum of factory wheels and, within the city's limits, silent and unpeopled places where bullfrogs croak in the still waters of bayous. And against the whistling of hundreds of locomotives, mocking birds sing.

Ranging in altitude from twenty-five feet at the Turning Basin to seventy-five feet in Houston Heights, the land upon which the city is built slopes from wooded inclines in the northwest part to the business district, which is the lowest section, then rises gently to an almost treeless expanse along the southern limits. Natural surface drainage is into the bayous, most of which flow from west and north to east and south. Buffalo Bayou, the largest, which in the heart of the business district is met by White Oak Bayou and its tributary Little White Oak, is part of the Intracoastal Canal, great inland waterway that connects Houston with Galveston and New Orleans.

The annual mean temperature is about seventy degrees. The average annual rainfall is 45.5 inches.

Houstonians have a wide selection of year-round recreational activities. Bays, bayous, rivers and the Gulf of Mexico—all within fifty miles of the city—offer excellent fields for the sportsman. Less than twenty miles from downtown Houston, rice fields attract large numbers of ducks, and shooting from blinds is excellent. Along the streams, and in many pools and ponds, ducks, geese and other waterfowl are numerous. Guides are usually available, and leases can be obtained from landowners. Pole-and-line fishermen sit in the shade of oaks along the streams and catch huge catfish—a staple item on local markets—or big fat perch. Deep-sea fishermen prefer the Gulf, where tarpon, kingfish, and other game fish afford fine sport. Along the sheltered bays south and east of Houston pine-clad shores are dotted with week-end homes, and the waters with small craft.

Within the city are sixty-two parks and playgrounds, covering 2,983 acres. Extensive development of these areas has made possible many types of recreation, from indoor games to horseback riding, golf, target shooting, and swimming. On the outskirts of Houston are many kinds of amusement concessions.

Houston's population invariably has been cosmopolitan. Its founders were settlers from many parts of the United States, with a large percentage of Southern planters. It has received infusions from the Middle West. Many Houstonians have inherited the informal cordiality and friendliness that was typical of the pioneers, and the city has not grown so large that its people have lost those characteristics. Strangers are often surprised at the large proportion of people walking in leisurely fashion along the streets, for although the city's tempo is quickened by its fast-moving industrial structure its residents have not lost the ability to play. Still in ample evidence is the easy-going, gracious spirit of those who, in earlier days, kept latch strings hanging out and met travelers with a hearty "Howdy, Stranger."

## CHAPTER II

### EARLIEST INHABITANTS

1528 - 1820

**H**ISTORY in the bayou land where modern Houston lies, although it marked time for long periods before the ascension of the Lone Star, goes back to the earliest white man to see the interior of Texas. The first impression of the country and its people was recorded in the narrative of the unfortunate Spaniard, Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca.

With a few companions who had survived the expedition of Panfilo de Narvaez to Florida, De Vaca was shipwrecked on the Texas coast one November day in 1528. The half-drowned Spaniards crawled ashore on or near Galveston Island. Soon they were virtually enslaved by the Indians, whom De Vaca called "Capoques" and "Hans." During his stay on the island, which he named *Malhado* — misfortune — De Vaca's only immediate hope was to escape his cruel captors and flee to the mainland. After a year he succeeded and was received by a tribe he called "Charrucos." These Indians encouraged him to become a trader, and in this guise he explored much of the mainland north and east of Galveston Island. Extraordinary is the picture of this blond-bearded Spaniard, half starved, clad only in a cloak of skins, traveling unmolested among the Indians along the streams of this region with his peddler's pack of sea shells, ochre, flint, and medicinal beans. Later he wrote:

The hardships that I underwent in this [exile] were long, as well as full of peril and privations from storms and cold. Oftentimes they overtook me alone and in the wilderness; but I came forth from them all by the great mercy of God, our Lord. Because of them I avoided pursuing the business in winter, a season in which the natives themselves retired to their huts and ranches, torpid and incapable of exertion.

Not until 1534 did Cabeza de Vaca abandon this region, for even though he might easily have escaped from the friendly Indians, and possibly have found his way to the Spanish settlements of Mexico, he lingered near Galveston Island to rescue a Spaniard who had stayed there as a slave. At last he carried the man across the waters to the mainland and marched inland by way of Oyster Creek, the Brazos, the San Bernard, and Caney Creek. On a journey that finally brought him to Mexico, De Vaca, who had become a medicine man among the tribesmen, encountered other Indians more cruel than those who had allowed him to trade among them — in the vicinity of present Houston — and who had permitted him to thoroughly explore the area. And so, the first businessman and the first explorer Houston can claim left a picture of tolerant Indians, the earliest inhabitants of record here.

According to De Vaca, the Indian islanders swarmed to the mainland each



spring in search of better hunting. Certain island customs had spread among the inland tribes. One of these, if the evidence left in refuse dumps can be believed, was cannibalism.

Accepting Frederick Hodge's *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico* as authority for the identification of De Vaca's "Capoques" as the Cocos, a Karankawa group, and his "Hans" as Attacapas, it is possible to reconstruct the tribal story of the region now occupied by Houston. A map made by Bernardo de Miranda, Spanish surveyor, disposed of the inhabitants with the word "Carancahuases" written large across the breadth of the area that is now Harris County. Later authorities thus identify tribes of the region as members of the linguistic group called Karankawa.

Expeditions into the wooded and well-watered hunting grounds along Buffalo, White Oak, and Bray's Bayous came from the north as well as from the south. Authorities disagree as to the identity of the stream the Spaniards called *Arroyo de Santa Rosa del Alcazar*; some maintain that it was Buffalo Bayou, but a majority contend that it was Spring Creek. In any case, Santa Rosa was the approximate population center of the semi-agricultural Orcoquisacs. Somewhat farther to the northwest lived the Bidais, who, according to their own traditions, were the Indian pioneers of the country thereabouts.

Most of the Indians of the Coastal Plains were nomadic or seminomadic. It is certain that many a Karankawa camp occupied strategic points where modern Houston stands.

Padre Juan Agustin Morfi, in his *Memorias for the History of Texas*, said of the Karankawas:

[They] are a vile nation, pusillanimous, treacherous, and extremely cruel. . . . They are always scattering and wandering without a fixed place of abode.

Of later generations of the tribe, Noah Smithwick, pioneer Texan, wrote:

[They] . . . lived mostly on fish and alligators, with a man for fete days when they could catch one. . . . Many . . . were six feet in height with bows and arrows in proportion. Their . . . faces were rendered hideous by the alligator grease and dirt with which they were besmeared from head to foot as a defense against mosquitoes.

The Attacapas, by the literal translation of their name, were admittedly man-eaters. Cabeza de Vaca's "Hans" ate fish and roots during the winter, and even then went naked, except the women, who wore garments of Spanish moss. Father Morfi held them in no higher esteem than his "Caranguases," and evidently had little more love for the Cocos.

Of all the tribes that lived along the bayous, the Orcoquisacs seem, in the light of history, to belong most peculiarly to the story of Houston. The legends of the Orcoquisacs survive; and their influence on the destiny of the section was greater than that of any other group. None of these legends is more often retold than that of the maiden White Doe.

In a village of the Orcoquisacs, where the winds from the salt bay swung the long moss that hung from the live oaks, there lived a maiden so comely, whose manners were so gentle, that she was held in awe and respect by other members of the tribe. The eyes of the chief fell upon the girl, and soon marriage festivities were being celebrated by everyone, including the neighboring tribes.

Shortly after the marriage, however, an epidemic began to decimate the tribe. Far into the night the wailing of the squaws rose in supplication to the Great Spirit, beseeching him to release the Orcoquisacs from this pestilence. Because she had nursed the others, the chieftain's wife soon fell victim to the disease. As she lay dying, she called her husband and the braves to her side.

"When I reach the happy hunting grounds," she whispered, "I shall seek Manitou and ask him to have compassion on my race. I shall implore him to stop this dread disease." As she made a gesture of farewell, a white doe appeared and walked to her side.

Sorrowfully the tribe turned inland to find another place in which to live, where there would be no scourges. For thirty years they lived in peace, but the wise men never let the people forget the incident of the snow-white deer nor the belief that the dying maiden's spirit had entered the doe. Consequently, no hunter was allowed to kill such an animal.

Then, one day, squaws, papooses, and warriors again fell sick of a plague. The medicine men decided that the only way to escape certain death was to find a new camp site. As they prepared to leave, a white doe came from a near-by thicket and indicated that she wished them to follow her.

After traveling many miles, the tribesmen saw a hill on the horizon. The deer trotted toward it, looking back to be sure that she was followed. As she reached the great mound she disappeared into the sunrise. But the medicine men found healing springs, whose waters cured their fevers forever.

Most of the east Texas tribes lived in peace until about the time of the founding of New Orleans, when French traders began to invade the territory west of the Mississippi. During the latter part of the seventeenth century, the Bidais were reported to be the chief intermediary between the French and the Apache tribes to the west in the distribution of firearms, a situation which disturbed the Spaniards greatly.

The threat of English settlement along the Gulf Coast also caused much concern among the rulers of New Spain. Because of it the French redoubled their activities among the Indians between the Sabine and the Trinity, and their emissaries, including a knight-errant named Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, rode deep into Spanish territory. St. Denis in 1714 blazed the *Camino Real*—the royal road—from Louisiana to the Rio Grande. Nor were the French unaware of the wealth of game and pelts to be found on the bayou-drained prairies. Both to check French encroachment and to explore the country, many Spaniards passed north and west of modern Houston, but the lower reaches of the bayous and streams for long remained unvisited by the *conquistadores*.

As late as 1740 the lands between the mouths of the Trinity and the Brazos

were *terra incognita* to the Spanish masters of Texas. Governor Prudencia de Orobio y Basterra wrote that year to Father Santa Ana:

With respect to the rivers . . . Brazos de Dios [and] Trinity, . . . I only know, and it is certain, that they empty into the Gulf of Mexico.

A kinsman of the governor, Capt. Joaquin Orobio y Basterra, commandant of the garrison at La Bahia, in 1745 reported rumors of French activity in the east Texas region. Soon he was ordered to explore the uncharted coastal area north to the Sabine. No Spaniard had mapped this route, and he proceeded as blindly as if he had been the first explorer in all the Province of Texas. His first plan was to build boats and explore the coast by water. But the Guadalupe, his starting point, was obstructed, and he was forced to go overland. With only twenty-one men he wandered through the Indian country, following the route that today would take him to Houston from Goliad by way of Nacogdoches. An Indian guide finally conducted the expedition over the Bidai Trail toward the south, in the direction of the still-undreamed-of city of Houston. The Bidais said that these were the first Spaniards they had seen, but they knew the French and had their trade goods and guns.

On the return journey the captain paused at a place he called San Rafael, believed by Dr. Carlos E. Castañeda, the historian, to be on Spring Creek, west of the San Jacinto River. In *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936*, Castañeda wrote:

Here he found two Orcoquisac villages. The Orcoquisacs were even more surprised than the Bidais to see *Yegsa*, as they called the Spaniards in their territory. Both the Bidais and the Orcoquisacs explained that the French visited them frequently. For six years traders . . . had been coming by land. Others came by water and ascended the Neches, Trinity and Brazos Rivers. No permanent settlement had been made, but last summer a party, who had come by sea, had chosen a site and told the Orcoquisacs to notify the Bidais, the Deadoses, and the Tejas to bring their bearskins, buckskins, and buffalo hides to this place to trade. The site chosen appears to have been on the San Jacinto, some distance from its mouth.

His curiosity whetted, Captain Orobio y Basterra asked the Indians to take him to the site specified by the Frenchmen for their trading post. They conducted him to a stream they called Aranzazu, which Castañeda believes "was in all probability the San Jacinto." According to the historian, Herbert Eugene Bolton, the captain afterward described the country as marked by beautiful prairies, forests of oak, pine, walnut, and cedar, many lakes, and fine fields of corn.

A description of the lands of the Orcoquisacs was supplemented with details about the people. The captain believed the headquarters of the tribe was "on a western branch" of the San Jacinto, probably Spring Creek; and a short distance from the junction of the two, Chief Canos had a village. The leader of the tribe

was closely associated with the French. Chief El Gordo—Fatty—had a village near by.

Orobio y Basterra found no Frenchmen, but his report inspired trade with the Indians of the region. On later visits to the Orcoquisacs, Spaniards found them tilling a few fields, but living chiefly on game, fish, and wild fruits. They were friendly with all neighboring tribes but the Karankawa.

By 1755 the Presidio de San Agustin de Ahumada, on the Trinity, was serving as a gathering point for the Orcoquisacs. A year later a mission was authorized, *Nuestra Senora de la Luz*. But a badly chosen site hampered development, and caused most of the Indians to return to their villages and hunting grounds on the San Jacinto. The threat of French colonization had become a reality, and the Orcoquisacs and Bidais were divided internally by the propaganda of the day; one faction favored the Spaniards, another the French. Chief Canos, who apparently held sway over a region extending into present-day Houston Heights, became a clever diplomat. His favor courted by two nations, he accepted a Spanish captaincy from Governor Jacinto Barrios, and many gifts from the French, including fine clothing and a trip to New Orleans.

Franco-Spanish-Indian intrigue revolving around the control of trade with coastal tribes centered in the village of El Orcoquisac, on the Trinity. When the French attempted to arm these Indians, Governor Barrios sent a force of soldiers under Lieutenant Del Rio to shower gifts upon Canos and other chieftains of the Orcoquisacs and the Bidais. Among the villages reported as visited by the Spaniards was that of El Gordo.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, activity in the country—due to the rivalry of the Europeans—had created the *Camino Real Orcoquisac*. The *camino* was the overland route from present-day Laredo to the presidio and mission at the mouth of the Trinity. It crossed the San Jacinto River about half-way between the mouth of Buffalo Bayou and Spring Creek, the first recorded channel of commerce of the Houston region.

Despite renewed vigilance on the part of the Spanish, French traders continued to operate throughout east Texas, as far as the San Jacinto. This condition caused more attention to be given the country of the Orcoquisacs than would otherwise have been the case.

Frequent floods, an unhealthy climate and other drawbacks caused an order for the removal of the Presidio de San Agustin de Ahumada and the mission to the San Jacinto, in the autumn of 1756. The site chosen was Chief Gordo's village, about twenty miles west of the San Jacinto at a spot believed to have been near the junction of Mill and Spring Creeks, near the northern limits of modern Harris County. A survey of the new site cost the Spanish royal treasury 300 *pesos*. Preparations were made for a civil settlement, and the governor suggested that the settlers be provided with "silklined hats, fancy stirrups and bridles, silk shirts, Spanish shawls, and kid shoes." An establishment such as the governor planned would have cost about 45,000 *pesos*, Castañeda estimated. A *Junta* on March 3, 1757, recommended the settling of twenty-five Spanish

families on the San Jacinto, approved the site chosen for the presidio and mission, and according to Castañeda, suggested details of colonization:

It authorized giving each family aid for one year, to allow them three *reales* a day for subsistence while *en route*, and to furnish them through the governor, the necessary arms, as well as certain goods and equipment. It recommended the purchase of three hundred and fifty yards of woolen cloth for overcoats, fifty axes, fifty hoes, fifty harrows, fifty *machetes* (cutlasses), fifty *metates* (grindstones), fifty clay pots, one hundred and fifty *comales* (flat cooking irons), enough woolen cloth to make one skirt for each woman, fifty half silk shawls, fifty pairs of Brussels hose, fifty pairs of shoes, ten iron bars, one for each five families. These were to be acquired by the royal treasury. The Governor of Texas should be ordered to buy one hundred horses, one hundred and fifty mares, fifty stallions, one hundred and fifty cows, fifty bulls, two hundred sheep, fifty rams, and fifty yoke of oxen.

But the viceroy of Mexico, wishing to learn more about the site of such an expensive settlement as the one proposed, sent Bernardo de Miranda from Mexico City to explore and make a report. In 1757 Miranda traveled through the region, and described the San Jacinto area as the "heart of the country of the Orcoquisacs." The viceroy, satisfied with the description of the lands to be settled, on April 30, 1757, authorized funds for the purchase of livestock and supplies. But now Governor Barrios reversed his opinion about the advisability of removing the presidio and mission to the San Jacinto country, and in October declared it "unfit for settlement." He charged Miranda with misrepresentation, and said that after a personal inspection he believed "although the site was most pleasing to the eye, the appearances were deceiving because irrigation was impractical." To save his face, he offered to buy the goods that had been purchased for the new settlement, and thus prevent a loss to the Spanish treasury. In 1764 the presidio at El Orcoquisac was burned, and the project of the San Jacinto colony was soon thereafter abandoned.

Athanase de Mezieres, a Frenchman employed by the Spanish as an emissary among the Indians, reported in 1774 that two traders named Jeronime Mataliche and Juan Hamilton "go in by land as far as the Bidais nation and try to arouse the interior tribes." English and French traders still ventured into the bayou country where modern Houston stands, and the French, especially, seemed determined to lay claim to this fertile soil. In 1815, after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, many of his followers fled the country and came to the United States.

An account of the adventures of some of these people has been preserved in the *Story of Champ D'Asile as Told by Two of the Colonists*, translated by Donald Joseph. As reported in one Hartmon's *Journal*, the party left Amsterdam for New York City, arriving on October 16, 1817. From there they went to Philadelphia, finally sailing for Galveston on December 17 aboard the schooner *Huntress*, under the command of Lieutenant General Rigaud.

On January 16, 1818, they came in sight of Galveston and ran aground. The

pirate, Jean Lafitte, then on Galveston Island, bearing a commission from the Mexican government, went aboard and assisted in extricating the vessel.

The party remained on the island until the beginning of March, when they set out to found a colony on the Trinity River about twenty leagues from the Gulf of Mexico—a plan which finally resulted in their expulsion by the Spaniards. They were joined by other Frenchmen until the colony contained well over 400 people. One of this group was a Mr. Millard, who left an account of his travels in the Houston vicinity:

The coastline of Texas is low, sandy and swampy. As one goes into the interior, he finds vegetation and a great quantity of shrubs; but to find fertile land one has to go from thirty to forty leagues. The temperature of Texas is that of the south of France, and many trees preserve their foliage throughout the year.

Millard added that the “surrounding country offers enchanting views, carpets of green adding to the richness of the landscape, while beautiful plants and the rarest birds made this section a delightful spot.” He wrote:

Forests, which the ax has spared until the present day, cover a part of Texas, and from time to time prairies are found, where European crops could be grown. Through the foliage of trees a column of smoke often betrays the presence of savages. A great number of animals and wild beasts are encountered in these forests, above all the wild horses which the natives have been skillful enough to capture and tame.

This pioneer writer about Texas was, unknowingly, something of a prophet. The land of which he wrote was indeed suitable for European crops—and much more.



## CHAPTER III

### ENTER, ANGLO-AMERICANS

1820-1832

IN THE FIRST YEARS of the nineteenth century, isolation held the bayou country where modern Houston stands. There was no indication that soon a historic movement of Americans was to bring into the solitude of these wilds the whine of sawmills, the whistles of steamboats, the creaking of wagons, the sound of axes biting into pines that would be used to build log cabins.

The explorers and missionaries of New Spain had left no lasting mark here. But now from the east, from beyond the dark, swampy Neutral Ground — the no man's land that separated Spanish soil from that of the United States — Anglo-Americans began to come, entirely without invitation. Some of them had goods to trade for furs in the tepees of the Indians. Others brought only long rifles.

Scores of adventurers joined abortive attempts of filibusterers to wrest the land called Texas from Spanish rule. Among expeditions that were to camp near the site of modern Houston was that of Dr. James Long of Mississippi. In 1819 he led an army across the Sabine. More than 300 of his followers helped erect trading posts on the Trinity and Brazos Rivers, built a fort near old Washington, mingled with the buccaneers of Jean Lafitte — who was still master of Galveston Island — and finally were killed or scattered by superior Spanish forces. A small number of Long's men remained at Bolivar Point, where their leader rejoined them after reorganizing his forces, and led them to La Bahia (modern Goliad). But the invaders were soon killed or captured, and Long was sent to Mexico.

One of the filibusterer's companions was John P. Austin, who was later to own the land that became the site of Houston. Austin was in Mexico City when Long was assassinated there. Meantime, the twenty-year-old wife of the adventurous doctor waited at Bolivar Point for the return of her husband. She had only a Negro girl and a baby daughter as companions; she withstood the Karankawas, hunger, and the cold of a merciless winter. Jane Long was to be called the Mother of Texas.

Although the filibusterers were unsuccessful in their efforts to take Texas, the hold of the *dons* upon the land between the Sabine and the Rio Grande was steadily becoming more tenuous. Mexico's cry of freedom persisted. Under the revolution-beset, dying rule of Spain in the New World the first non-Latin traders and adventurers walked through waist-high prairie grass over the site of today's city of Houston. Their names have been forgotten, but their spirit and courage were to grow until at last cabins marked the courses of Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto. Yet for two decades of this century the Karankawas remained masters of the region.

Then in 1820 an elderly stranger rode a borrowed gray horse through the pine woods west of the Sabine, and the story changed. Moses Austin had come to ask permission to settle 300 families — Anglo-Americans — on Texas soil. He was a New Englander, once a merchant and lately a mine operator in the wilds of the Territory of Missouri. His fortunes needed mending. Also, he had heard of this undeveloped empire and he had dreamed of transplanting farmers, tradesmen, other Americans who, like himself, wanted to brave the dangers and hardships of a new land in return for its bounties. Austin was on his way to San Antonio de Bexar to see the Spanish governor.

Spain was hostile to foreign settlement on its soil. Governor Martinez in San Antonio ordered Austin to leave the capital "instantly and the province as soon as he could get out of it." But as Austin was departing he met an old friend, Felipe Enrique Neri, Baron de Bastrop. That Dutch soldier of fortune was seven feet tall, so tall that once he had served in Frederick the Great's "Regiment of the Giants." The baron was in the service of Spain, and he successfully interceded for Austin; the governor promised to forward the petition for a colony to his superiors.

On March 28, 1821, Moses Austin wrote:

I returned from St. Antonio, in the province of Texas, after suffering everything but Death. For these sufferings I have been fully repaid by obtaining a grant, for myself and family, of land, and also for 300 families. I shall settle on the Colorado, within 2 miles of the sea and three days' sail from the Mississippi.

On the long trip back across the Louisiana border Austin, still riding the borrowed horse, had been forced to live for eight days on roots and acorns. He died of exposure and the hardships endured on that journey. All the plans he had made for a new empire fell upon the shoulders of his son, Stephen. In law school he had been called "Little Stephen," for he was not very tall. As a boy he had helped his father in the mining venture; at twenty-one he had been a member of Missouri's territorial legislature, and, in 1820, was appointed a circuit court judge in the Territory of Arkansas. Now, aged twenty-seven, he undertook the first Anglo-American colonization of Texas.

"Little Stephen" was accepted by Spanish officials as his father's successor, and in 1821 he began a survey for the selection of land. Dr. Eugene C. Barker's map of Austin's journey, published in *The Father of Texas*, shows how close the colonizer came to the site of Houston. In his wanderings Austin explored a region later embraced in twenty-three Texas counties. North of present-day Houston the map was marked only by the route of a Comanche trail and as a range for buffaloes and deer. Among those who accompanied Austin as far as La Bahia was Baron de Bastrop, who later surveyed much of the colony's land adjoining the San Jacinto River and Buffalo Bayou.

For three weeks, in 1821, Stephen Austin explored the prairies, forests, and streams of a rich domain utterly devoid of settlements other than the villages and camp sites of Indians. At last he chose the region between the Colorado and



Brazos Rivers for his colony. Thus the site of Houston was once more left on the fringe of development. But Austin's colonists were to be the first Anglo-American settlers to come into this region—courageous people who would build their cabins outside the boundaries of civilization.

In Louisiana, where many details of his venture had been planned, Austin published his terms of colonization. The first rule was, "No person will be admitted as a settler who does not produce satisfactory evidence of having supported the character of a moral, sober, and industrious citizen."

The schooner *Lively* was purchased, and upon it Austin placed seventeen men who were to plant crops and store the harvest against the coming of the three hundred. In November, 1821, the schooner sailed for the mouth of the Colorado but, driven off its course, it finally landed its passengers at the mouth of the Brazos. When the *Lively* departed, the seventeen settlers were left alone; they tried to raise a crop, but failed. At last they were forced to wander away on trails which they hoped might lead back to the United States.

Austin returned to Texas during the early part of 1822. The *Lively* had carried seeds and supplies, and the colonizer journeyed first to the Colorado. He found only rumors that the schooner had been lost. A number of settlers had been coming to the site of the colony, and Austin needed the *Lively's* cargo. He waited until "both food and hope were exhausted," in the words of Barker, and then journeyed again to San Antonio. There he learned that Mexico had won its independence from Spain, and that his colonization grant was no longer considered valid.

In the meantime the *Lively* had returned to New Orleans, and had sailed again for Texas with more colonists. This time it was wrecked off Galveston Island near San Luis Pass. Later the passengers were removed from the lonely shores of the island by the schooner *John Motley* and landed at the mouth of the Colorado. In the *Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*, in the Texas State Library, an entry numbered 2447 contains this contemporary account:

The 'Lively' was the first vessel sent out to hunt the mouth of the Colorado. She was wrecked and lost somewhere below the mouth of the River—the crew were saved but the provisions and cargo were all lost. The men took up their march in search of some settlement—They soon divided; one half of them taking one direction, and the other, another—one party met the Karankaway Indians who told them the way to the mouth of the Colorado—whither they went and thence wandered up the river—and let [sic] the other party who camped up the river. . . . The crew suffered greatly from hunger, several starved to death; others reached Borns & other settlements &c.

While Austin traveled to Mexico City to plead for the restoration of his colonial grant, settlers continued to arrive, many on ships that met disaster in the treacherous waters of the Texas coast. These shipwrecks, scant records indicate, led a number of colonists to enter the present Houston area. In the region adjoining Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River, some of the newcomers re-

mained on land that was without benefit even of the uncertain sanction of Austin's first grant.

Among the *Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar* are notes left by William Pettus, one of the earliest settlers in what is now Harris County. Pettus, with a party of colonists, sailed from Alabama in 1822 on the *Revenge* for the mouth of the Colorado. Forced instead to land on Galveston Island, they found there a Frenchman, believed to have been one of Lafitte's men, who demanded customs duties under an order from the Mexican commandant in San Antonio. Pettus wrote that the colonists "compromised by . . . giving the Frenchman provisions &c to support his life." From him the settlers heard about Jane Long, who was still at Bolivar Point. Pettus went with a party to call upon Mrs. Long and invite her to join them:

She was prevailed upon to accompany the emigrants up the San Jacinto—Her reply was that she could not go—that her husband had left her at Bolivar, and upon his return would expect to find her there—& there she would remain for his return—The emigrants departed up the Sanjacinto about 15 to 20 families, together with as many or more young men—They settled 10 miles above Lynch.

The settlement was composed of the immigrants who had been aboard the *Revenge*, and of passengers from the *James Monroe* and other schooners that had arrived off Galveston Island. Among the families was one named Smith, which, according to Pettus, "in number were about 20 including children, negroes & all." One of their daughters was named Sally because the Smiths came from Bayou Sally in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana. The Smiths had made the trip to Texas in a pirogue.

Two former pirates of the Lafitte settlement on Galveston Island piloted the colonists up the San Jacinto. Pettus named these first settlers of the Houston area:

The families were two Smith, Dennis Brasere, Danielle Kentucky, Dr. Jeter, Virginia Bradly of Kentucky, Talley Kentucky, Bailey Kentucky, Hughes of Kentucky, Hoppensville, Pettus, Herrington, Lynch, Vines, Pickayune Smith, Dr. Hunter & Others—The unmarried men were Rankin, James & Randle Jones Mitchel & composed one family; the Jones' had a negro man—Pettus & the Smiths had some negroes.

These people traveled twenty-five miles by water, and finally landed at White's Settlement on the east side of the San Jacinto River, about ten miles above the site of Lynchburg. The settlement had been named for Walter C. White, who, at the time of Long's expedition, had burned off a canebrake and raised a crop of corn here.

Pettus recorded that "on their arrival at the settlmt [sic] they commenced planting corn, the young men huntig." An armed band of Cooshattis visited the spot, and through an interpreter, Bill Ash, accused the strangers of trying to "encroach upon them & dispossess them of their Hunting ground." Pettus wrote:

The Immigrants replied that they were aiming for the Colorado, but mistaking their way and being in leaky vessels, they had come up the

Sanjacinto, with a view of remaining only the season and then proceeding to the Colorado — The Indians expressed themselves satisfied. . . . They were friendly to the Immigrants — sold them horses & cattle — & have remained friendly.

Early in the autumn of 1822 thirty more settlers arrived. They came in a 120-foot keel boat, and were searching for the Austin Colony. These newcomers were also Alabamans, from Florence. They had come by way of Vermilion Bay. Pettus recorded that "from this source the emigrants on the San Jacinto received timely supplies." The pioneers had been existing on game and were "greatly distressed."

Among the second group was "a very old couple" whose son had anchored the keel boat at "Vinces on Buffalo Bayou." The old people died after a very short stay at Lynchburg, and the newcomers were split by a quarrel. Some of them wanted to remain, others were anxious to return to Alabama. Pettus said that "The quarrel was settled by having the Boat [then at Vinces] sawed in two, one half was fitted up for the return of the disaffected to the U. S. — they embarked 17 in number . . . leaving Mrs. Wilkins & two daughters." The two pirate pilots were hired once more. Those who left were never again heard from, although "their bones," Pettus wrote, "were found near the mouth of the Culque-shoo [sic], supposed to have been murdered by the two pirates in their employ."

About a year later, according to Pettus, the San Jacinto settlement failed and most of its members wandered away. Dr. Hunter stayed; Britt Bailey moved westward to a prairie that in 1941 still bore his name; and Pettus went "to the Brazos near San Phillippi." The capital of Austin's colony, San Felipe de Austin, was founded in 1823, about forty miles from the future site of Houston.

As the Indians became increasingly troublesome, several men of the San Jacinto area were sent to San Antonio for ammunition. There they found Austin, who had returned from Mexico in June, 1823. He sent word back by these colonists that his grant had been confirmed. On hearing this, Pettus returned to the United States to bring back his family, and on the way scattered Austin's handbills "from the Brazos to the Sabine and Mississippi."

The *empresario* — colonizer — on his return found many of the settlers in poverty. A drought in 1822 had ruined their crops. Some of the isolated colonists had been forced to kill and eat mustangs — wild horses. The news that Austin could at last grant lands spread through the colony and beyond it. From the Colorado, Austin sent word on the procedure necessary to establish grants of land. Hungry, lonely settlers felt at last that their hardships were repaid. The prospect of land ownership had brought most of them to the wilds, and for that they would stay. The settlement of that part of Texas lying between the Colorado and Brazos was now assured, and with it, the story of Houston began.

Austin at once had to establish land titles and survey property. Surveyors went into the region, armed against Indians. The *empresario* began a journey across his grant, to check upon inroads made by Indians during his absence, and to determine the number of colonists now on his lands. He found the tribesmen

becoming unmanageable, and many of his colonists dissatisfied with conditions of settlement. Austin had charged twelve-and-a-half cents an acre for each grant. The Mexican government had given him 100,000 acres in exchange for the colonization program, and many of the settlers believed that Austin should consider himself paid in land. The colonizer argued that the small fee barely covered the cost of surveying, maintaining peace with the Indians, and other expenses. In August, 1823, he wrote:

I will receive any kind of property that will not be a dead loss to me, such as horses, mules, cattle, hogs, peltry, furs, beeswax, homemade cloth, dressed deerskins, etc. Only a small part will be paid in hand. For the balance I will wait one, two, and three years, according to the capacity of the person to pay.

When Jose Antonio Saucedo, Mexico's acting provisional governor, visited San Felipe de Austin on March 18, 1824, he told the settlers that they were to obey Austin's orders and pay the fee. But in May Saucedo reversed these instructions, set his own fees, and ruled that every settler must pay the land commissioner \$127 for signing the deed to each grant. Nearly \$200 in fees were now ordered paid to various Mexican officials. Austin told his first settlers that he would refund the expenses they had incurred in becoming established in his colony. To a relative he wrote:

I took upon myself the task of getting secure and valid titles for their land, and to furnish each emigrant with solid grounds on which to build the hopes of his family and his humble 'forest home.' . . . I had read of the withering march of the bloodhounds of war over the fairest portions of the old world, spreading fire and famine and desolation and death in their course, and sweeping whole nations from existence—all to promote the happiness of mankind. I could not understand it, but I could understand how that happiness might be promoted by conquering a wilderness by the axe, the plough and the hoe.

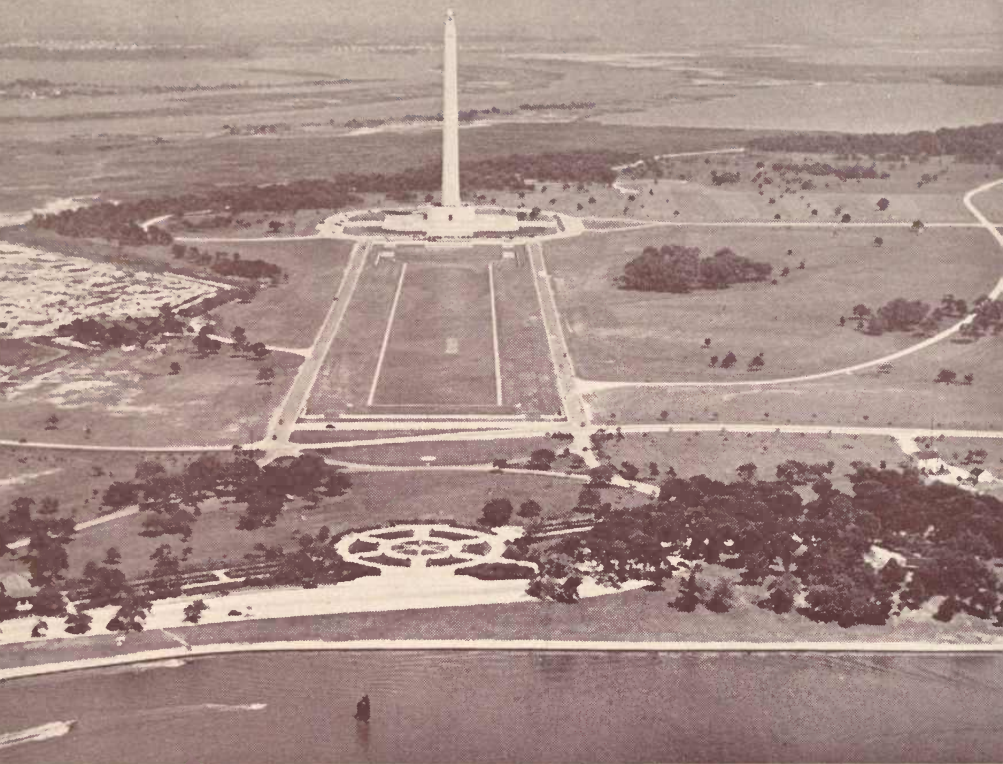
A record of the settlers' reactions to the manner of distributing and the method of payment for lands was left by William Pettus in the *Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*. Many colonists were unable to pay the land fees, and were forced to give some more prosperous person one-half the grant to clear the property. Pettus wrote:

Austin being the sole judge could not make such an arrangement with the applicants — he accordingly got his brother, James Brown Austin, to clear out lands for him, that is Stephen F. Austin was to have one half of the emigrants lands for clearing it . . . but was to hold it in his brother's name.

The work of surveying proceeded so rapidly that by July, 1824, it was possible for Baron de Bastrop, the land commissioner, to issue grants. During that month the baron, with Austin and Samuel May Williams — acting secretary of the colony — went into the San Jacinto River area. A notice had been sent to the settlers asking them to gather at the house of William Scott, on the east side



*San Jacinto Battlefield Monument and Museum*



*San Jacinto Battlefield*

*Old Port Harrisburg*





*Site of Capture of General Santa Anna*

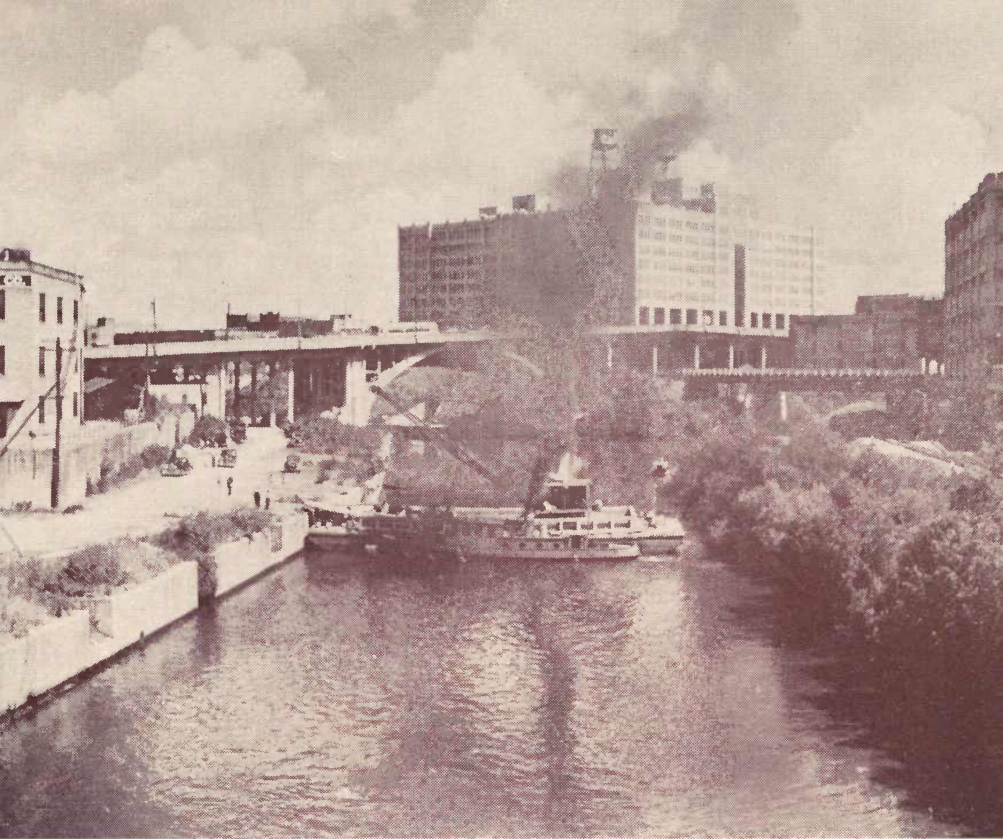


*Milby House*

*Glendale Cemetery, (Old Harrisburg)*



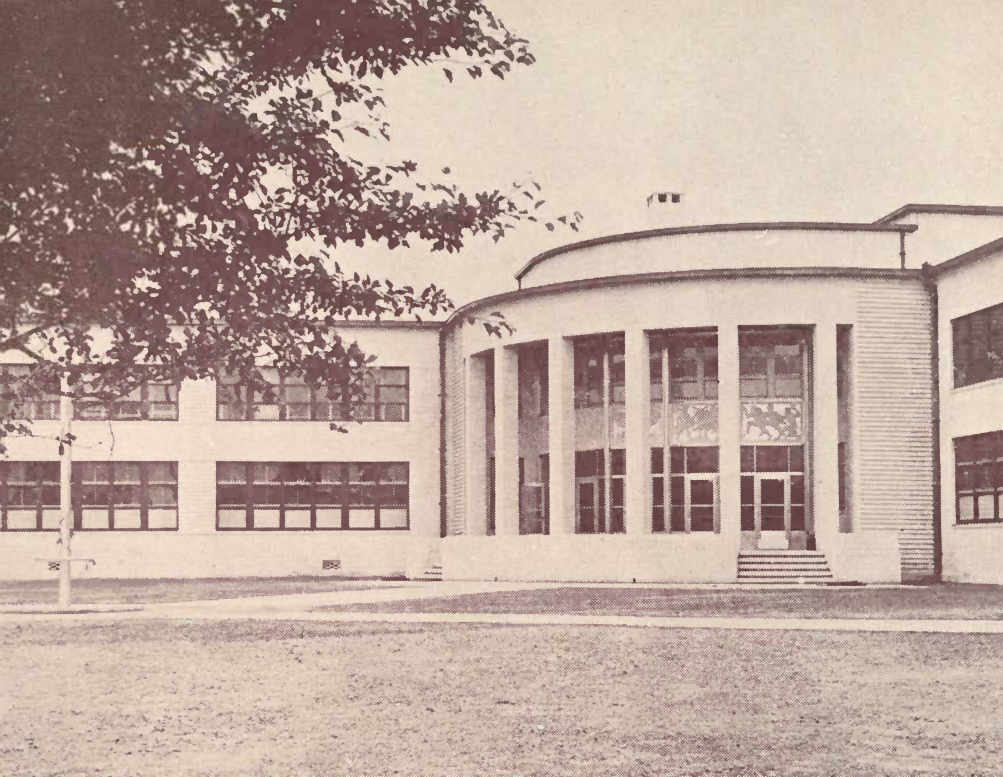




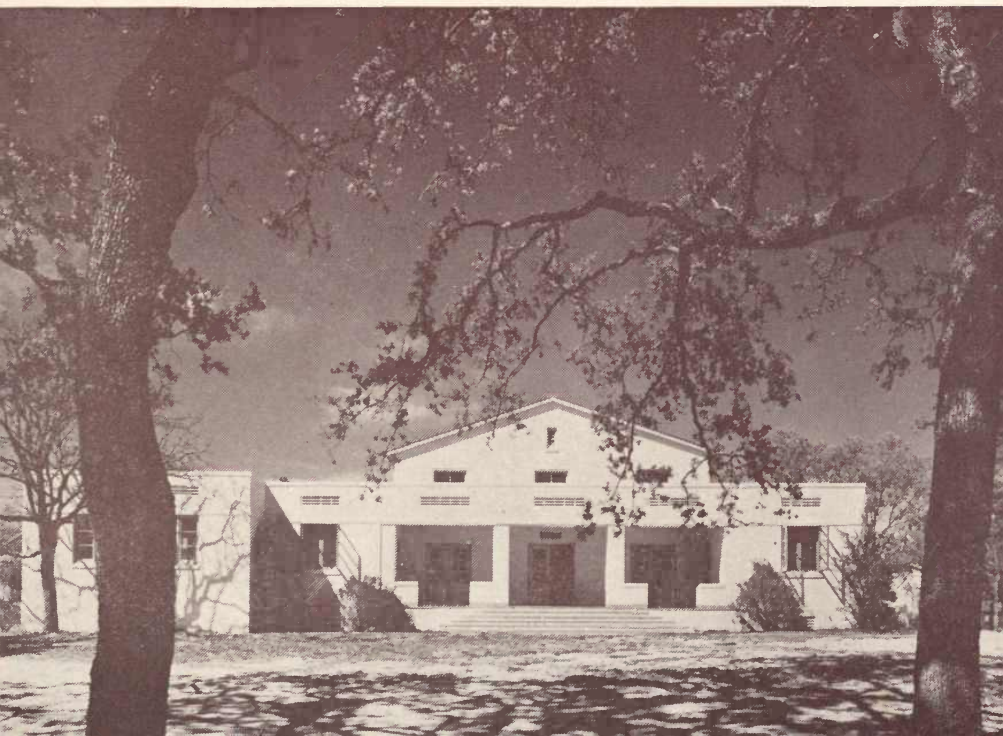
*Site of First City Wharves*

*Cherry House*





*Daniel and Edith Ripley Foundation Center  
Administration Building, DePelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau*





*Sam Houston Monument*



*Houston Young Men's Christian Association*

*Eastern States Petroleum Company Refinery*



of the San Jacinto River below the settlement of Nathaniel Lynch, near present Baytown. This spot had been chosen because of its central location. When Austin's party arrived the settlers had gathered in front of a log cabin. Austin made an informal speech, explaining the colonization laws and giving such other information as his hearers needed in order to complete their applications for grants.

The meeting was harmonious, except for a single happening described in *Burke's Texas Almanac for 1879*:

One of the incidents of the day was a fight between two of the settlers; William Vince, becoming enraged at Ezekiel Thomas, knocked him in the head with a blacksmith's hammer, which was near at hand, and laid him out senseless for about an hour, much to the disgust of the Mexican Commissioner; but under the skillful treatment of Dr. Knuckles, he was restored and was sent home and recovered.

Among those receiving grants at this time was John Richardson Harris, who had arrived on the coast of Texas in 1823 aboard his own vessel. He had left New Orleans in response to Austin's advertisements for settlers. Harris visited a number of spots along the coast, finally sailed over Red Fish Bar at the mouth of the San Jacinto River, and made his way on inland waters to the junction of Buffalo and Bray's Bayous. He considered that point the head of navigation. Harris had observed the houses of a number of settlers along the waterway. He first applied for and obtained "one sitio of land lying on the southern bank of the river called in English Buffalo Bayou in the colony, without means of irrigation and only with the use of the permanent water of which we will give him possession." Then he erected a trading post.

Another who received his grant as a result of the meeting at Scott's was John Austin, distant relative of Stephen Austin, who asked for two leagues of land (about 8,856 acres). In regard to this grant, Stephen Austin, in the deed record in the Harris County Courthouse, wrote:

I must say that the settler John Austin deserves the favor he asks for and can be admitted as a resident in the new colony on account of his qualifications and means, his application to agriculture, rearing of cattle and industry.

The deed, written at first in Spanish, described the site as "two leagues of land in the form of a square on the Buffalo Bayou at the place where the two main branches of said Bayou come together to swell the stream." It said further:

We gave to John Austin possession of said land taking him by the hand over it, telling him in a loud and audible voice that by virtue of the Commissioner and Powers granted to us and in the name of the Government of the Mexican Nation, we give him possession . . . and the said John Austin, on being given the real and personal possession of said land, without objection from anyone, shouted loudly, pulled grasses, threw stones, planted stakes, and performed the other necessary ceremonies, being notified that he is under the obligation to cultivate it inside of two years, as being the terms prescribed by law.

Others who received grants in 1824 were Enoch Brinson, Moses Callahan, and Allen Vince, John Cooke and Isaac Hughes, John Dickinson, Thomas Earle, William J. Harris, Johnson Hunter, David Harris, D. Carpenter, Humphrey Jackson, Nathaniel Lynch, Luke Moore, Arthur McCormick, Frederick Rankin, William Scott, James Strange, John D. Taylor, Ezekiel Thomas, William Vince, Richard and Robert Vince, John R. Williams, Amy White, William Whitlock and Reuben White.

Saucedo had decreed that Austin's jurisdiction extended from the Gulf of Mexico to the San Antonio Road, and from the Lavaca River to Chocolate Bayou. But in November, 1824, the eastern boundary was extended to the San Jacinto River. The families of that area were thus included in Austin's colony, becoming part of his three hundred.

Meantime, John Harris had established such a good trade that he believed the time had come to lay out a town site. He employed Francis W. Johnson in 1826 to make a survey. The embryo town was named Harrisburgh.

On March 7, 1827, the governor amended his boundary definition on the basis of a colonization law passed by the legislature of the Mexican State of Coahuila and Texas on March 24, 1825. This law prohibited foreign colonization within ten leagues of the coast. The southeastern point of the Austin Colony was set by this new decree at a point on the west bank of the San Jacinto River, ten leagues from the coast; the boundary thence ran up the river to its source, north from there to the San Antonio Road, along the road westward to a point due north of the head of the Lavaca River, south along this line and the east bank of the river to a spot ten leagues from tidewater, and thence eastward to the starting point.

Before the passage of the colonization law, many people had settled within the forbidden coastal area. In a petition by Stephen Austin to the Mexican government on June 5, 1826, he had called attention to the large number of settlers in the region, and asked that he be permitted to take that territory into his colony. Approval of the plan was given on July 17, 1828. Austin now planned to settle 300 additional families.

Austin wanted to establish his people along the lower reaches of the San Jacinto, Colorado, and Brazos Rivers, and it was important that a port be created on Galveston Island. Most of the settlers had been in Texas long enough to have a surplus of crops; this they wanted to ship. The Mexican government informed Austin that a provisional Port of Galveston had been arranged for. The mouth of the Brazos was used by the settlers as a port, although it was never given an official status.

Austin tried to establish trade with Mexico and Europe. As early as 1825 colonists wanted to ship lard, cotton, and corn to Mexico. In *The Life of Stephen F. Austin*, Eugene Barker told the experiences of Stephen Richardson of Brazoria, who chartered the *Little Zoe* in July, 1826, and with a cargo of corn and lard, sailed for Campeche. There was a famine in Yucatan, and the Mexican President urged that foodstuffs be imported. Barker wrote:

He [Richardson] had a copy of the president's proclamation, a passport from the political chief; and a certificate that the cargo was of domestic production; but the captain of the port refused to let him land and ordered him away within forty-eight hours. Expostulations proving futile, he sailed to Tampico, but after a month's detention . . . the cargo spoiled and he threw it into the sea.

Though commerce was limited by Mexican customs restrictions, the Austin Colony prospered. Harrisburgh grew so rapidly that soon its founder found it necessary to ask his brothers, David, William Plunkett, and Samuel Harris to come from Cayuga, New York, to help in its enterprises. In 1828, Joseph Chambers Clopper wrote in his diary:

Harrisburg is laid out on the west side of this bayou [Buffalo] just below its junction with Bray's bayou — it is yet in the woods consisting of 6 or 8 houses scatteringly situated — the timber consisting principally of tall pines and oaks so excluded the prairie breezes as to render the summer's heat almost intolerable, but this can be the case but for a short time — being situated at the head of navigation without any local cause for unhealthiness and surrounded by a vast quantity of timber which in this country must prove immensely valuable. There is only wanted a population a little more dense and a few capitalists of enterprise and energy to render it one of the most important towns in the colony.

Here with his sons, Joseph, Andrew, and Edward, Clopper spent a few winter weeks in a small log pen with a place for a fire at one end. Across Bray's Bayou they built a large warehouse with a shed dining room, hewing timbers with their axes. There they spent the remainder of the winter, although they complained of the lack of "gentle women's converse." There were several married women, "but these are seemingly of as rough a mold as their uncultivated and disagreeably rustic partners," he continued. There were but two unmarried "females in the quarter, unpossessed of the winning graces of which their sex is so susceptible."

The Cloppers cleared about two acres of ground and planted cane, corn, beans, and a variety of garden vegetables. As time passed, they bought two houses and cut timber for another. Finally they tore these buildings down and made a large raft. On this they sailed to a place once called Hunter's Point. They bought it and it became Clopper's Point, a name it retained for years.

An election was called on February 2-4, 1828, for the choice of officials in the Austin Colony. Thomas M. Duke, who lived near the mouth of the Colorado River, was elected *alcalde*, or executive officer of the *ayuntamiento* — a governing body corresponding to a municipal council. Humphrey Jackson, whose home was on the San Jacinto River, was elected a *regidor* or alderman.

By 1829, Harrisburgh had become a thriving port with sloops and schooners owned by the Harris family arriving from United States ports almost every week. The streets were dusty trails, and the houses far from permanent, but the town was the commercial and shipping center of the region. Settlers moved through it in deerskin or homespun clothing, stopping to learn the latest news from the

"United States of the North" when vessels docked. Each ship brought supplies and settlers.

Harris had early realized that the laborious process of hewing logs for houses was too slow, like grinding corn by hand. Accordingly, he built a combination grist mill and sawmill, which stood almost opposite the Harris store on a point of land at the junction of the two bayous. The enterprising founder of Harrisburgh had also established a trading post at Bell's Landing on the Brazos River, where settlers in other parts of the colony could obtain supplies.

John Harris went to New Orleans in the summer of 1829 to buy belting for the mill. A yellow fever epidemic was sweeping the city, and the *Texas Gazette* on October 3, 1829, thus reported his death:

The fatality of yellow fever this season in New Orleans has deprived this colony of one of its citizens, who for the enterprise which characterized him, was not only a very useful and important member of this young community, but one to whom it is indebted for the undertaking of a very valuable and considerable branch of mechanical industry. . . . He died on Friday evening, the 21st of August last, in that city after five days' illness.

Harris' death threw his property into litigation in the Mexican courts, which at best were slow. Although his brothers attempted to carry on the business, the death of the town's founder proved to be a serious blow to the future of Harrisburgh, but a fleet of vessels continued to operate between New Orleans and the colony.

Other *empresarios* had meantime obtained grants in the State of Coahuila and Texas. David Burnet had obtained permission in 1826 to settle 300 families, while Joseph Vehlein, a German merchant of Mexico City, had made his first contract to settle a similar number. The grants of these two colonizers covered a large part of the area northeast of Houston's present limits. In 1828 Vehlein obtained a second grant to settle 100 families. Lorenzo de Zavala, who had aided Austin in his contacts with the Mexican government earlier in the decade and was deeply interested in the development of Texas, was the third *empresario* in the group whose grants were in the vicinity of modern Houston. In March, 1829, De Zavala agreed to settle 500 families.

The grants of these three colonizers formed a compact region in east Texas. Upon their failure to complete their contracts, they transferred the title to their holdings to the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company, on October 16, 1830. Then began what historians have described as one of the greatest real estate promotion schemes in the history of the country. The Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company was formed in New York, ostensibly for the purpose of organizing colonization for the Texas *empresarios*. But for some reason its officials did not obtain permission from the Mexican government to function in this capacity.

In the United States the company received widespread publicity. Anthony Dey was president and trustee; William Sumner of Boston and George Curtis of New York were trustees; Lynde Catlin, George Griswold, John Haggerty, Ste-



phen Whitney, William G. Buckner, Barney Corse, and Dudley Selden were directors. John P. Austin wrote on December 16, 1830:

Its [the company's] board of directors is composed of the most respectable and influential men among us, with the President of one of our first banks at its head.

Stock in the company, and land scrip were offered the public. The scrip conveyed no land, merely authorizing the holder to settle in Texas after meeting all colonization requirements. Despite this, many people believed that the scrip gave them title to land, although they had paid only five or ten cents an acre for it. Henry Austin wrote Stephen Austin from New Orleans on March 15, 1831:

The Galveston Bay land company in New York are running wild in their operations. Selling land by hundreds of thousands of acres at 5 cents pr acre, etc. Sending out steam machinery for mills, boats, etc. I fear they will do much harm by calling the attention of Govt. too much to that quarter.

On December 29, 1831, the first of the settlers attracted by this scheme arrived off Galveston. They had been sent to Texas to prepare for the first of the immigrants expected from Europe, for the advertising had been designed to interest Swiss and German settlers. This vanguard was not allowed to land. In time, however, the company was able to have its contracts validated, and it proceeded with colonization plans.

Many New Yorkers bought the promotion company's land scrip. Among them were Augustus C. and John K. Allen, employees of the firm of H. & H. Canfield. Augustus had graduated from Polytechnic School at Chittenango, New York and had taught mathematics there. He became a bookkeeper, and a little later he and his brother purchased an interest in the Canfield company. Augustus Allen had married Miss Charlotte Baldwin, daughter of J. C. Baldwin, founder of Baldwinsville, New York.

The lure of promotional advertising and the promise of cheap land caused the Allens to quit New York for Texas. They journeyed in 1832 to San Augustine, then went to Nacogdoches, where they bought land certificates, paying \$100 for a league. John Henry Brown in his *Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas* wrote:

Other citizens laughed at them and said with many a wiseacre wink that they were green from the States. When the elder brother however went to Natches, Mississippi, and sold one of the leagues for \$5,000 the 'O'er wise' failed to see anything to laugh at and themselves began to purchase certificates.

Thus started the real estate promoter's dream that was to assume reality in less than four years in the creation of the Town of Houston.

CHAPTER IV  
REVOLT AND REVOLUTION  
1832-1836

**A**LONG THE RIVER named by the Spaniards for Saint Hyacinth — San Jacinto — and the snake-like course of Buffalo Bayou, many changes had occurred by the third decade of the nineteenth century. Chimney smoke replaced the signal smokes of Indians. Contentment, even a little prosperity, had come to the men and women who here had won a wilderness. Calico curtains, brave in color, hung in cabin windows. Even if farmers carried rifles while they plowed, the corn grew very tall.

And then the Mexican colonization law of 1830 closed the door of immigration to other Anglo-Americans from the United States. *Empresario* contracts yet unfulfilled were canceled. The convicts of Mexico were to be sent to Texas as soldiers. For the first time the peaceable farmers of Stephen Austin had bitterness in their hearts.

With the first Anglo-American settlers had come dissatisfaction with Mexico's laws on religion, and with the lack of full representation in government. Now, in the summer of 1830, Gen. Manuel de Mier y Teran came marching across the Rio Grande with a rabble army, sent to man the garrisons and customhouses nearest the non-Latin settlements of Texas. Settlers along the lower reaches of Buffalo Bayou, accustomed for six years to reasonably unhampered commerce, felt the pinch of new taxes. Customhouses were opened along the coast; those at Anahuac and the mouth of the Brazos especially restricted and taxed the trade of the Austin Colony. Such a policy was dangerous.

Too many of Austin's colonists were sons of those who had fought for American independence in 1776. Too many had come a long way, down the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Cumberland, the Wabash, the Missouri — across mountains, deserts, and even the Atlantic Ocean, to a land they thought was free.

In 1832 the explosion came in an episode that has been called the "Boston Tea Party of Texas." It happened at Anahuac, not far from modern Houston, and it involved many of the settlers of the area where the city today stands. Col. John Davis Bradburn, a Kentuckian in the service of the Mexican army, was in charge of the enforcement of customs duties near the harbor of Galveston. He was openly unfriendly toward the Anglo-American settlers. At last, when William Barret Travis went to Anahuac to secure the release of two fugitive slaves, Bradburn detained him, even had a jail built especially for his imprisonment.

Travis, called the "gallant captain," a young and dashing lawyer from South Carolina, had many friends. He was among the first to toast the freedom of Texas. Travis and his compatriots now called themselves Texians (which spelling later became official and was followed until after the days of the Republic), and they needed only a spark to ignite a kindling outbreak.

That spark was the arrest and detention of the firebrand Travis. The colonists appointed Francis W. Johnson as their leader, and chartered two vessels owned by the Harris brothers of Harrisburg — as its name was now spelled — the *Rights of Man* and the *Machauna*. At Anahuac, where they had gathered, they demanded the release of the prisoners. Bradburn agreed to their demands, after an exchange of shots; but, when the attackers withdrew, he strengthened his position. The colonists paused at Turtle Bayou to pass a resolution declaring that they were not rebelling against Mexico but “cooperating with Santa Anna.” Thus appears a name that was to be written in blood across Texas — that of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, at this time the leader of a revolt in Mexico, and by his assertions a liberal who would grant Texas colonists the rights of free men.

While the settlers were passing their resolution, John Austin had gone to get some cannon. Meantime Colonel Piedras had arrived with Mexican reinforcements. He promised the colonists that Travis and other Anglo-American prisoners would be released, that property Bradburn had confiscated would be paid for, and that the command of Anahuac would be given to someone less hostile. Thus bloodshed was averted. The Anahuac garrison a few days later declared for Santa Anna, and the Mexicans boarded the Harris ships and set sail for Mexico. David Harris was skipper of the *Rights of Man* and successfully landed his passengers. But the *Machauna* foundered on the bar of Soto la Marina on the Mexican coast, although the soldiers landed without mishap. The Harris brothers neither got nor expected remuneration for a service they believed it was their patriotic duty to perform. Bradburn went in disguise to Louisiana.

The Anahuac incident caused little comment beyond the bayou region, but it set the stage for the Battle of Anahuac three years later. Dr. N. D. Labadie, writing for the *Texas Almanac*, said, “By means of these two vessels . . . we got rid of the Mexicans. . . . Thus was Anahuac relieved from the presence of the Mexican garrison.”

Juan N. Almonte, who in the 1830's made a survey of Texas for the Mexican government, probably was confused about the location of the 1832 incident when he made a statistical report of the towns in the area, for he wrote:

Harrisburg is eighteen to twenty miles from Galveston on Buffalo Creek, has a sawmill for cutting boards and lost its importance when troops stationed there were removed.

The settlements were growing rapidly, and that on Buffalo Bayou was no exception. In the *Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris*, which is a combination of the diary of her father, Dr. Pleasant W. Rose, and her own recollections, Mrs. Harris described the village of Harrisburg as she first saw it on April 30, 1833, when she arrived with her parents aboard a keel boat. The vessel on which they had embarked at New Orleans had run ashore on the beach near Clopper's Point. She wrote:

In the morning we were received with open arms by the good people of Harrisburg. Father was very sick and had to be carried. . . . There

was not a dray nor a wagon in the place. A Mr. Andrew Robinson came to see father, & said he had a new house half a mile from town, which he could have. . . . Mr. Lytle had a cart & one yoke of oxen & he moved us. He wouldn't take any pay for his work, said that was not the way in Texas.

The family moved about sundown, and when they arrived at their new house, found that the women of Harrisburg had sent milk, honey, meal, butter, and eggs; they not only had the place in order, but had prepared supper. The frame house that the Rose family occupied was considered unusual, for most of the buildings in the village were of logs. Boards used in it had come from a saw-mill on the bayou.

While the family found the new country different from anything they had known, Mrs. Rose said that she would prefer remaining to crossing the Gulf of Mexico again, and set about making her family as comfortable as possible.

Of the village, Mrs. Harris wrote:

[There was] no church, nor preacher, school house nor court house. *They had no use for a jail*; everybody honest. . . . There were two dry goods stores. . . . The export trade consisted of cotton & hides. Twice a year, a schooner would bring groceries & other necessaries from New Orleans.

They had been in the new town only a short time when a stranger died. "Mr. Lytle with his cart & oxen," Mrs. Harris recorded, "conveyed the corpse, men, women, and children walking. . . . Mr. Choate conducted the burial. The man was a stranger in a strange land, but was nursed & buried by the good people & mourned by all."

Most of Harrisburg's houses had no floors; the few that had been made were of rough logs between which were large cracks. Furniture consisted of a few cherished pieces brought from "back home", or it had been crudely made of local materials. Chairs were fashioned of saplings put together with pegs, the seats of rawhide stretched until it was taut. Moss piled upon the floor and covered with skins often served as beds; others used four stout poles or pegs driven into the ground, with skins suspended from the poles to form a sort of hammock. Mattresses were of Spanish moss.

There were few dishes or household utensils. Pieces of wood were hollowed out, scoured satin-smooth with sand, and used for plates. There was little silverware; bones or pieces of wood were crudely fashioned into "eatin' tools," as some of the pioneers called them. Where possible, rock fireplaces were constructed at one end of each cabin. Mud-cat — earth and stick — chimneys served. Cooking often had to be done out-of-doors.

Food was coarse, unless settlers brought a supply of delicacies with them. Except when ships brought it, there was no flour in Harrisburg. Available "sugar" was usually a sticky brown syrup made from sugar cane — when cane could be grown. Corn was taken to the grist mill on the bayou for grinding, and corn-bread was a staple food. Game and fish were plentiful.

There was at first no cloth except that brought by schooners. When space was needed for other supplies, it usually was the first item to be omitted. As a result, women of the community soon were spinning cotton into cloth. Dyes were made from roots gathered in the forests, or from indigo grown by the settlers. Hats for men were made of straw and palmetto, while for bonnets, women often used the bonnet squash.

Mexican hair ropes were made of hides and hair from horses' manes and tails. Mrs. Harris described the rope-making process, which she had learned as a child:

The Mexicans only used 2 sticks of wood to twist the hair. . . . First they would stretch a large hide on the ground & cut a piece in the center the size of a dollar. Then they would cut round & round till they had four strands. They scraped off the hair & soaked the hide in ashes & water. After it was greased, it was wound in 4 balls & hung up & platted. The name of the rope made this way is lariat, a Mexican word.

During the Rose family's first summer in the community, floods occurred in the Brazos and Colorado Rivers. The waters of Buffalo Bayou ruined most of the crops; there was not enough corn, and Harrisburg's only industrial venture, the mill, was forced to close. One day a week it operated to grind meal—when there was corn. Most of the men were unemployed, for they had worked at the mill.

Dr. Rose decided to move fifteen miles away, to Stafford's Point. Since Harrisburg was the nearest trading center, it was often necessary to go there for supplies. By this means, it was possible for Mrs. Harris to keep in touch with Harrisburg's story.

The Mexican government, meantime, had eased its restrictions on the entrance of foreigners into Texas colonies. In March, 1834, contracts were renewed on the grants upon which *empresarios* had expended ten thousand dollars or more; the temporary result was increased colonization. But, two months later, Santa Anna dissolved the Mexican congress and state legislatures, made himself dictator under the title, "El Presidente," and at once launched a campaign of suppression against all who opposed his methods.

In January, 1835, Capt. Antonio Tenorio reopened the Anahuac custom-house. A deputy collector was stationed in Brazoria. At both points, import regulations were enforced so strictly that again the colonists objected. They held a meeting at the home of Benjamin Freeman on May 4, 1835. A memorial to the Mexican government was drawn up; the Texans tried to show their inability to pay high customs duties on every-day necessities.

Young DeWitt Clinton Harris sailed from Harrisburg on June 10, 1835, to purchase merchandise from Andrew Briscoe, a merchant of Anahuac. When Harris was ready to load his vessel, Captain Tenorio forbade the removal of goods until duties were paid, and posted guards to enforce the edict. Feeling ran high in the town. When a Texan attempted to ballast the Harris boat with boxes packed with bricks, Mexican guards stopped him and an argument between them

became a melee. One of the Anglo-American participants was shot. Briscoe and Harris were charged with inciting the trouble and were jailed, but Harris was released the next day. The youth departed at once for Harrisburg, and when he reported the incident, a courier was sent to San Felipe with the news. Since court was in session and San Felipe was crowded, his tidings caused great excitement.

On June 4, in a meeting at Harrisburg, an agreement had been drawn for a rendezvous on June 6. The settlers had decided to march on Anahuac. This document, badly torn, is among *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*. It said in part:

Therefore we have come to the cool determination to submit to no more imposition of this kind that will prove ruinous to the country, by destroying the commerce and stopping the emigration [sic]. . . . We will meet at Harrisburg on Saturday the 6th inst. and after electing our officers proceed to Anahuac.

As planned, the settlers gathered and selected Travis for their leader. The sloop *Ohio*, under the command of David Harris, was prepared for the emergency. A cannon was mounted on sawmill truck wheels, and placed on the deck of the *Ohio*. Travis and his company of twenty-five men sailed to attack the Mexican garrison. As they came upon it, they fired one six-pound shot—and the battle was over. Mexicans departed in every direction. The colonists landed and took sixty-four stands of muskets and ammunition. Captain Tenorio signed articles of capitulation and left for San Antonio to report to his superiors. Briscoe was released from jail and customs duties were summarily abolished.

Mexican authorities issued orders for the arrest of Travis and others who had participated. This had the effect of further uniting the Texans, and on October 16, 1835, a consultation was called to meet at San Felipe. Santa Anna was now preparing to crush the Texans, whose tattered volunteer army was laying siege to San Antonio de Bexar, military stronghold of the Mexicans. But the settlers were determined to oppose the Mexican dictator.

Fourteen governmental areas that had been under the Department of Brazos were to be represented at the convention. Men who attended from the Jurisdiction of Harrisburg included Lorenzo de Zavala, C. C. Dyer, John W. Moore, M. W. Smith, David B. Macomb, and George M. Patrick.

When officers of a provisional Texas government were elected on November 12, with Henry Smith as Governor, William P. Harris was made a member of the General Council. Sam Houston was elected major general of a "regular army of Texas," not then in existence, although the volunteers at San Antonio were winning skirmishes with the Mexicans. Texas mail routes were now established. Harrisburg was on Route Number 5, which ran from San Felipe by Hunter's, Harrisburg, and Lynchburg to Liberty.

On November 19, John W. Moore of the Municipality of Harrisburg was appointed "contractor to purchase and transmit supplies to the army . . . and

. . . vested with full power and authority to pledge the public faith for the payment of such debts as he may contract."

The General Council of the provisional government passed a resolution on December 13, following the capture of San Antonio by the Texans, calling a convention of delegates of the people to meet on March 1, 1836, for the purpose of framing a declaration of independence and a constitution. Washington on the Brazos was selected for the meeting place. Harrisburg was to elect its representatives.

As December drew to a close, the council passed an ordinance defining the boundaries of the Municipality of Harrisburg:

Beginning at the entrance of Clear Creek into Galveston Bay, running up said creek with the line of the municipality of Brazoria and with said line to the Brazos River; thence up said river to the upper line of a league of land granted by the Mexican government to Isaacs; thence along said line to the northeast corner of said league; thence northwardly to include the settlements on Spring Creek, to the southern line of the Municipality of Washington; thence eastwardly along said line of the Municipality of Washington, and so far eastwardly as to intersect the line dividing the department of Brazos and Nacogdoches; thence southwardly along said line to Galveston Bay; thence to the place of beginning.

The second section of the ordinance decreed that the town of Harrisburg should be the "place for transacting the judicial and municipal business of said municipality and for the deposit of the archives of the same." This ordinance was approved by the Governor on January 1, 1836.

William P. Harris was appointed collector of the revenue district and port of Galveston. Through a newspaper he notified the public that "The Custom House for said district and port is at the east end of Galveston Island, where all persons having business with the same may apply."

As the time for the March convention approached, Harrisburg selected as delegates Lorenzo de Zavala and Andrew Briscoe. They participated in the adoption of the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2. Thus the region of today's Houston could claim a share in the creation of the Republic of Texas.

The *Telegraph and Texas Register* of San Felipe, in its issue of March 5, 1836, announced that the "whole Mexican army, amounting to not less than eight thousand men are on our frontier. The inhabitants of Power's and McMullin's colonies have abandoned their homes, and are flocking into the colonies. . . . In ten days the people of the Colorado and Brazos will share the same fate unless all turn out, to conquer or die." Santa Anna was laying siege to the Alamo in San Antonio, where Travis, David Crockett, James Butler Bonham, James Bowie, and less than 200 other Texans were facing more than 5,000 Mexicans. On March 6 the Alamo fell and all its defenders died. Now the fury of Santa Anna's wrath could be unleashed against the remainder of Texas.

The convention adjourned on March 18, having in seventeen days adopted a declaration of independence, formed a constitution, and established an executive government for a new nation. David G. Burnet had been elected President ad interim, and De Zavala, Vice President. Both were from Harrisburg Municipality, now a county of the Republic.

With Sam Houston's army slowly retreating before Santa Anna, Burnet and De Zavala advocated the establishment of a temporary seat of government in their own community, which was still distant from the operations of the Mexican army. Officials of the new Republic of Texas and residents of the center of the Austin Colony hurriedly packed and fled in panic toward the east. The officials met Captain Logan and his company of sixty men from Liberty, marching toward General Houston's headquarters; and while this gave confidence to some of the refugees, it only speeded the flight of other Texans over roads choked with every conceivable means of transportation. The sound of firing toward the west was reported by Moseley Baker as only a skirmish between spies of the two armies. But it hastened the flight of hundreds of women and children, old folk, and slaves who thought that the Texas army had been dispersed and that Santa Anna's vengeful thousands were upon their heels.

So headlong did the flight become that General Houston issued orders to a Committee of Safety at San Felipe to arrest deserters from the army, and added, "All persons leaving the country . . . will be required to return or their arms taken from them for the use of the army." This had no effect, and the rout called the Runaway Scrape continued.

On March 24, Capt. John Eberly with a company of thirty men from the San Jacinto region passed through San Felipe on their way to join Sam Houston. On that day Burnet and his cabinet reached Harrisburg. Mrs. John R. Harris, whose house was the largest in the neighborhood, invited them to make it their headquarters. Harrisburg was filled with apprehension. Santa Anna's massacres had left no hope of mercy, and he was coming across the prairies. Slowly, carefully, Houston was still retreating before him.

An independent volunteer company was organized locally under the joint command of Capt. Andrew Robinson and Lt. Archelaus Bynum Dodson.

Within the Harris house, affairs of government were overshadowed by military news. San Felipe, beloved center of the Austin Colony, had been burned to prevent its seizure by the Mexicans. Other disasters caused grave concern. President ad interim Burnet, in spare moments, designed a naval flag for the Republic. He spoke frequently of the advantages of choosing Harrisburg as the future seat of government, for he firmly believed that the Mexicans would not march that far east.

Following the Texas government to Harrisburg was the staff of the *Telegraph and Texas Register*. The press was brought from San Felipe, and the first issue printed here was dated April 14, 1836. It was announced that the newspaper, which had become the official organ of the ad interim government of the Republic, had changed hands. A partnership between Joseph Baker, Thomas



H. Borden and Gail Borden, Jr., had been "dissolved by mutual consent," Baker having retired to join the army. One of the owners wrote that they did not expect the government to move from its present seat "without necessity; and we promise the public of our beloved country that our press will never cease its operations til our silence shall announce . . . that there is no more in Texas a resting place for a free press."

But even as this edition was being run off on a hand press, most of the residents of Harrisburg were in flight at Santa Anna's approach. Members of the government hastened aboard the *Cayuga*, one of the Harris vessels. It had been planned to load the press on the *Cayuga*, but the Mexican forces were so near that the captain proceeded at once to Lynchburg. The refugees arrived there on the night of April 15.

Gen. Ramirez y Sesma had left San Antonio on March 11 under orders to proceed to Anahuac and cut off General Houston's retreat. At Fort Bend his army was joined by General Santa Anna, both divisions awaiting further reinforcements. Upon being informed that President ad interim Burnet and his cabinet were at Harrisburg, "El Presidente" hurried to that place, motivated largely by a deep hatred for De Zavala, who had once served Mexico and was now a leader among the Texans.

In the *Mexican Side of the Texas Revolution*, by Carlos E. Castañeda, the Mexican leader is quoted:

I entered Harrisburg the night of the 15th, lighted by the glare of several houses that were burning, and found only a Frenchman and two North Americans working in a printing shop. They declared that the so-called president, vice-president, and other important personages had left at noon for the island of Galveston in a small steamboat: that the families to whom the houses belonged were making their way to the same place: that the fire had been accidental, they having been unable to put it out: that the families had abandoned their homes by order of Houston, who was at Groce's Crossing with 800 men and two four-pounders.

General Santa Anna, in a rage at finding his quarry gone, ordered all of the town's buildings burned. The newspaper said, when publication was resumed later, "Amidst the conflagration that ensued, our establishment was consumed."

Juan Almonte and part of the Mexican army swept on toward New Washington, present-day Morgan's Point, where a few buildings had been erected. Here the Mexicans obtained supplies and burned warehouses. Meantime, Burnet and the Texas cabinet were in a refugee camp on Galveston Island.

Houston's men had followed him across Texas, from Gonzales to the Brazos; they had been somewhat disciplined to fight as an army, and they were impatient. Some of the soldiers believed that "Old Sam" intended to fall back to the Sabine, where United States troops were waiting; and most of these wanted to to their own avenging. The property of many of them had been destroyed, their relatives killed, their families scattered. They were in no mood

to continue a retreat. Nerves were taut as they approached a fork in the road; one branch led to Nacogdoches, the other, to Harrisburg. There was talk of mutiny if Houston took the route to the Sabine. But when they came to the fork, the general led them toward Harrisburg and battle.

The weary army arrived opposite Harrisburg on the morning of April 18. As the troops rested, two Mexican couriers were captured. From their despatches Houston learned definitely that the enemy army was split into scattered parts, and that "El Presidente" in person was leading the forces to the east of his position.

On the morning of April 19, opposite the charred ruins of the pioneer town of the bayou country, Sam Houston addressed his men. They were going to attack Santa Anna's army, he told them, and they were to avenge the Texans who had died by the dictator's command.

And now the moment came for the beginning of a march that was to lead the Texans to the plain of the San Jacinto, and to victory. But there were sick soldiers who had to be left behind, and there was baggage that would hinder the business in hand. So Houston ordered that a guard be selected to remain in the camp opposite Harrisburg with the helpless sick and the army's impedimenta.

And now "Old Sam" marched down the left bank of Buffalo Bayou toward a battleground where he would win undying fame, and Texas its freedom from Mexico (see TOUR TO SAN JACINTO STATE PARK).

## CHAPTER V

### TOWN OF HOUSTON

1836-1837

THE APRIL DAYS of 1836 held no outward sign that the stirring story of the Town of Houston was beginning. Women and children and old people still floundered through the mud of a prolonged rain, seeking escape from an overwhelming Mexican army; cabins stood deserted or in ashes, Harrisburg was a black scar on the bank of Buffalo Bayou, children cried with hunger. All that had been won here so dearly by men with long rifles and women in calico seemed lost.

Then the distant roar of battle told some of the panic-stricken settlers that a decisive clash had occurred. Yet, lacking means of communication, they had no way of knowing whether Sam Houston and his Texans had been victorious — a slim hope, one they hardly dared hold — or whether the Mexican dictator had added another triumph to his conquest. On the prairies leading to the Sabine the helpless ones waited under dripping skies, huddled beside sputtering campfires.

Mrs. Dilue Harris, one of the refugees, wrote that "We were as wretched as we could be, for we had been five weeks from home and there was not much prospect of our ever returning. . . . Mother was sick and we had buried our little sister at Liberty. . . . We continued our journey through mud and water.

"Then we heard someone calling from the direction of Liberty. We could see a man on horseback waving his hat . . . and we thought the Mexican army had crossed the Trinity. . . . When the rider got near enough for us to understand what he said it was: "Turn back! The Texas army has whipped the Mexican army and the Mexican army are prisoners. No danger! Turn back!"

And the Anglo-American civilization of Texas turned back to reclaim its home sites and its weed-grown fields. It was not an easy return; the way was through a war-ravaged land. Mrs. Harris described the journey of the Rose family:

There was a bayou to cross over which there was no bridge and the only way to pass was to go three miles through the bay to get around the mouth of the bayou. There were guide posts to point out the way but it was dangerous. If we got near the mouth of the bay there was quicksand. If the wind rose the waves rolled high. The bay was infested with alligators. A few days before our family arrived at the bay a Mr. King was caught by one of them and carried under the water. . . . There were several men present and they fired their guns at the animal but it did no good. It was not in their power to rescue Mr. King.

The ruined towns that greeted the returning settlers would have discouraged a less hardy breed. The sawmill at Harrisburg, means of livelihood for many of the men of the community, had been destroyed; on the Stafford plantation,

alone, the Mexicans had wiped out a sugar mill, cotton gin, blacksmith shop, grist mill, and a crop of corn that might have fed many of the lean Texans. Yet Mrs. Harris echoed the common attitude when she said, "Mother was despondent; but father was hopeful. He said Texas would gain her independence and become a great nation."

Bread was scarce and many of the homeward-bound settlers stopped at Harrisburg, for few of the refugees knew that it had been burned. Failing to get supplies where they usually had found them, they trudged on, and the more fortunate colonists along the route shared with them the little they had. Mexican prisoners were put to work at rebuilding houses that their superiors had ordered burned; many of these victims of the fortunes of war were the means of restoring shelters for the refugees, of salvaging crops and herds of livestock. The people of New Orleans, having heard of the plight of Texas families, sent a schooner loaded with supplies to Harrisburg; and Mrs. Harris recorded that the "provisions" were distributed without charge to those in need.

Meantime, an idea had been born that would soon eventuate in the Town of Houston.

Augustus C. and John K. Allen had fared well at Nacogdoches in the barter of Texas land certificates, had witnessed the steady onrush of settlers from across the Sabine, the Red River, and by way of the dangerous Gulf; they had shared venison and corn pone with the intrepid frontiersmen of Texas in cabins well equipped with rifle portholes, bullet molds, and powder horns; in short, they had come to see that the Anglo-Americans intended to keep this land and to develop it. After their success at San Jacinto there seemed little reason to doubt that this determination would succeed, for the Mexican dictator was a captive, his army fleeing Texas, and the taste of victory was so sweet to "Old Sam's" soldiers that it would not soon be forgotten. While General Houston lay wounded on the field of his triumph, and cabins speedily rose from ashes and undaunted farmers again planted crops, Augustus Allen nursed a vision of a town to replace the charred ruins of Harrisburg.

Not long since a professor of mathematics, a bookkeeper, and a dealer in lands, Augustus Allen yet had the stuff of his pioneer forefathers who had withstood Indians in early New York. He had become a pioneer in his own right, in revolution-torn Texas. Even before Harrisburg had been burned, the Allen brothers had approached the heirs of John R. Harris with an offer to buy all or part of the Harris family's interest in their town. But the death of Harrisburg's founder had so thoroughly involved his estate in litigation that such an alliance as the Allens proposed became impossible. So the brothers turned their attention to the rich bayou- and stream-studded lands of the vicinity, and were especially interested in the region at the junction of Buffalo and White Oak Bayous. Settlements in the vicinity were thriving; that on Spring Creek had families who had settled there in 1831, and other pioneers were on Cypress Creek, also north of the spot that had won the favor of the Allens. This land belonged to the widow of John Austin, who had died in a cholera epidemic of 1833. Austin,

owner of a cotton gin and a steamboat, had been granted the land by the Mexican government before his participation in the Battle of Velasco. His brother, William T. Austin, also a Texas patriot and a member of Stephen Austin's three hundred, still lived near by.

Some historians believe that by 1836 the Allens may have settled in the community of Germantown, in a bend of Buffalo Bayou a short distance below its junction with White Oak. Maj. George Bernard Erath in his *Memoirs* wrote:

Immediately after the battle [of San Jacinto] men continued to arrive from the United States and from Eastern Texas. . . . Men were also leaving. During the first week in May, we marched to the Brazos, recrossing it at Fort Bend. . . . I was away from the company several days, going up the Bayou in a steamboat to Allen's Landing, a single warehouse.

Since the records are not clear about the removal of the residence of the Allen brothers from east Texas to the vicinity of modern Houston, it is only known that Augustus Allen very much desired the land beside the bayous. He had decided to lay out the plan of a "city" on the highest elevation. First, he had to find John Austin's widow; she had married Dr. T. F. L. Parrott and resided in Brazoria. Allen discovered that John P. Austin, father of the colonist, had obtained title to the western league of his son's grant from Thomas F. McKinney, who had administered the property. The elder Austin was a resident of New York, and under Mexican law it had not been possible for a non-resident to hold title to Texas soil. In the town of Columbia on August 24, 1836, William Austin obtained a court release from McKinney, and immediately deeded the property to the Allens. This historic document stated:

And in consideration of the price of one dollar per acre, one half of which has been paid in hand, the receipt of which is acknowledged . . . and the other half is secured by promissory note, which becomes due in 18 months from about the 20th June last . . . Austin sells . . . said land to A. C. Allen & J. K. Allen.

Two days later, at the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Parrott in Brazoria, the Allens acquired the south half of the lower league, "granted to her [Mrs. Parrott's] late husband John Austin, which is the lower league of the two lying near the head of tide on Buffalo Bayou, which said land she acquired by inheritance." The price paid for this property was \$5,000, of which \$1,000 was in cash and the balance secured by notes.

Dr. O. F. Allen, nephew of the Allen brothers, in *The City of Houston from Wilderness to Wonder*, wrote that when Augustus Allen had completed the purchase of the land, John Allen "was afraid that his brother had gone too far up Buffalo Bayou, but upon personal inspection of the location he found his sagacious brother had looked into every detail of requirement in this project, having spent days in making surveys and soundings in a skiff and recording every sounding showing shoal water or deep, and proving that ample depths of water prevailed for all purposes of navigation."

The *Telegraph and Texas Register*, now published in Columbia, on August 30 had three items of interest to settlers along the San Jacinto and its tributaries:

LAND SALES THIS WEEK — One league and a half on Buffalo Bayou: terms — half a league for \$5000, one league at \$1 per acre, part cash, part credit.

And —

We call the attention of our readers to the advertisement of the town of Houston, by Messrs. A. C. & J. K. Allen, who are well known in this country for their persevering enterprise as business men. From all we can learn, the location they have selected possesses as many advantages as any other interior town in Texas, and on account of the easy access to Galveston and the facility for procuring timber, as well as its central location, this town, no doubt, will be a rival for the present seat of Government of Texas.

The Allens' advertisement, its first words calculated to catch attention, began:

The town of Houston, situated at the head of navigation, on the west bank of Buffalo Bayou, is now for the first time brought to public notice because until now, the proprietors were not ready to offer it to the public, with the advantages of capital and investments. The town of Houston is located at a point on the river which must ever command the trade of the largest and richest portion of Texas. By reference to the map, it will be seen that the trade of San Jacinto, Spring Creek, New Kentucky and the Brazos, above and below Fort Bend, must necessarily come to this place, and will at this time warrant the employment of at least ONE MILLION DOLLARS of capital, and when the rich lands of this country shall be settled, a trade will flow to it, making it, beyond all doubt, the great interior commercial emporium of Texas.

It also pointed out that there were great quantities of "Pine, Ash, Cedar and Oak in inexhaustible quantities: also the tall and beautiful Magnolia grows in abundance. In the vicinity are five quarries of stone." There appeared a request by the *Telegraph and Texas Register* for the insertion of the advertisement in the *Mobile Advertiser*, *Washington Globe*, *Morning Courier*, *New York Enquirer*, *New York Herald*, and the *Louisville Public Advertiser*.

Readers of these newspapers could not know, of course, that the "Town of Houston" still was merely a wide place on Buffalo Bayou. Houston existed only in the minds of the Allens, in the crude plan drawn by Augustus on his stove-pipe hat, and on the more elaborate town site plan platted to show prospective residents. Dr. Allen described the difficulties facing the founders:

One could hardly picture the jungle and swampy sweetgum woods that a good portion of the city is built upon. These swampy grounds had to be cleared and drained. . . . The labor of clearing the great space was done by negro slaves and Mexicans, as no white man could have endured the insect bites and malaria, snake bites, impure water, and other hardships.

After a space had been cleared it was necessary to import lumber for buildings, for although pines grew tall here, there was no sawmill. Dr. Allen said that the promoters returned to New York for a short time in the summer of 1836, "and transacted business matters connected with their Texas development projects." But they were back in time for the opening of the Republic's Congress at Columbia on October 3; as a member of that body, John Allen exerted all of his influence toward the selection of the yet-unbuilt Town of Houston as the site of the Texas capital.

Mrs. Dilue Harris, writing of the summer of that year, contributed a description of the "Town of Houston":

There was so much excitement about the city of Houston that some of the young men in our neighborhood, my brother among them, visited it. After being absent for some time they said it was hard work to find the city in the pine woods and that when they did, it consisted of one dugout canoe, a bottle gourd of whisky and a surveyor's chain and compass and was inhabited by four men with an ordinary camping outfit. We had a good joke on the boys at their disappointment. We asked them at what hotel they had put up and whether they went to church and to the theater. They took our teasing in good part and said they were glad to get home alive. They said the mosquitoes were as large as grasshoppers and they thought they would have a nice clean bath but in a few minutes the water was alligators [sic]. One man ran out on the north side and the others, who had run out where they went in, got a canoe and rescued him. He said a large panther had been nearly caught but that it had run off as the canoe approached.

No false modesty inhibited the promotion campaign of the Allens, as General Houston, his staff, and congressmen from the settlements of the Republic of Texas assembled in Columbia. Harrisburg County was represented in the House by Jesse H. Cartwright of Harrisburg, and in the Senate by Robert H. Wilson, elected from Harrisburg and Liberty Counties. John Allen represented Nacogdoches. The selection of a future capital—for Columbia was only a temporary seat of government—was an absorbing topic among the Texans gathered here to launch the now independent Republic on its career as a full-fledged nation.

In the *Telegraph and Texas Register* of November 19, 1836, was the comment, "We have received communications respecting the future seat of the Government. And many places have been named, such as Houston, Brazoria, Washington, Nacogdoches, and others. . . . We shall give the matter due consideration and express our opinion honestly on the subject." In that issue of the newspaper was an announcement that "We have at length, and almost without the use of mathematical instruments, completed a plan for the CITY OF HOUSTON which can be seen at the Senate Chamber." The plan showed the boundaries of the town extending "back from the bayou six squares and parallel that stream for twelve blocks." Here the business section was to stand.

Congressman Allen now addressed a document to his colleagues, and in it

set out the advantages of the Town of Houston. He said that he believed it was "the most eligible place for the seat of government under the existing state of things" (see ARGUMENT FOR HOUSTON).

On November 30, Congress met in joint session to decide upon the capital site. The place to be chosen that day was to be only a temporary capital to serve until 1840, but the town decided upon naturally would assume much new importance. Francis White Johnson in *A History of Texas and Texans* wrote, "When the selection of a capital came before Congress . . . some sixteen locations were proposed and there was acute rivalry among the proponents of the different sites." A *viva voce* ballot showed Houston, Matagorda and Washington as the strongest contenders, and on the fourth roll call Houston was chosen "by a bare majority of twenty-one votes." Anson Jones in his memoirs said, "The selection of the site, naming of the place, the presentation of the advantages of securing the temporary location of the seat of government, constitute a high testimonial to the shrewdness and sagacity of the promoters of the city of Houston. It marked the beginning of one of the few successful speculations of this time, so numerous in that day."

The vote of Congress was ratified by an act passed on December 15. It specified that "the president be and is hereby authorized, to cause to be erected a building, suitable for the accommodation of the congress of the republic and such other buildings as may be necessary . . . Provided, the sum or sums so expended, shall not exceed fifteen thousand dollars." When Congress adjourned on December 21, it had voted to convene in Houston on April 1, 1837. A part of the dream of the Allens had been fulfilled.

By this time they had designated land which they had decided to donate for a "Congressional Square," a "Courthouse and a School House Square," and lots for a "Church Reserve." Slowly the semblance of a town was emerging from the forest along the banks of the bayou.

One of the first to fall under the spell of the indomitable Allens and their glowing pamphlets was Francis Richard Lubbock. In *Six Decades in Texas* Lubbock left a description of these men as he first saw them in December, 1836: "J. K. Allen was a very bright, quick man, with much magic about him, and well calculated to enthuse the young. A. C. was more taciturn and settled; he was a married man, with his family then in Nacogdoches." After much discussion the Allens induced Lubbock to ship a stock of goods to Houston. With John Allen the prospective merchant sailed late in 1836 aboard the steamer *Laura* for the much-advertised new capital; below deck was Lubbock's stock of groceries. The steamer ran aground in Galveston Bay; after several days the voyage was continued without mishap to the site of Harrisburg. "No boat had ever been above this place," Lubbock wrote, "and we were three days making the distance to Houston, only six miles by the dirt road, but twelve by the bayou. The slow time was in consequence of the obstructions we were compelled to remove as we progressed. We had to rig what were called Spanish windlasses on the shore to heave the logs and snags out of our way, the passengers all working faithfully.



. . . Capitalist, dignified judge, military heroes, young merchant in fine clothes from the dressiest city in the United States, all lent a helping hand."

It was not possible to navigate the stream by night, so "in the evenings we had a good time dancing and frolicking with the settlers on the shore," wrote Lubbock, adding:

Just before reaching our destination a party of us, becoming weary of the steamer, took a yawl and concluded we would hunt for the city. So little evidence could we see of a landing that we passed by the site and run into White Oak Bayou, only realizing that we must have passed the city when we struck in the brush. We then backed down the bayou, and by close observation discovered a road or street laid off from the water's edge. Upon landing we found stakes and footprints, indicating that we were in the town tract. This was about the first of January, 1837, when I discovered Houston. For though I did not accompany Columbus when he discovered America, as is asserted, I certainly was in at the discovery of Houston, the Laura being the first steamer that ever reached her landing.

Trudging up the bank of the bayou and the freshly cleared street, Lubbock found a few small tents and another larger one, the latter used as a saloon. "Several houses were in the course of erection," he recalled. "Logs were being hauled in from the forest for a hotel to be erected (where the Hutchins House now stands) by Col. Benjamin Fort Smith. . . . A small number of workmen were preparing to build cabins, business houses, and this hotel."

But the appealing advertisements of the Town of Houston attracted many who came in covered wagons, in schooners and sidewheel steamboats, horseback, bringing a few heirlooms and souvenirs of the past, and an abiding faith in the future. The Town of Houston had been born in the wilderness.



## CHAPTER VI

### NATIONAL CAPITAL

#### 1837-1839

IF THE TOWN OF HOUSTON in January of 1837 had any of the beauty mentioned in the Allen brothers' glowing advertisements, it was the beauty of nature. Oak, pine, magnolia, cypress, sweetgum, wild peach, and cedar grew in a dim forest that stood on both banks of Buffalo Bayou. At the foot of a trail that was to become Main Street the bayou was about thirty yards wide, its steep banks covered with great trees. Overhead the limbs were so interlaced that sunlight scarcely ever struck the water. Palmettoes and hyacinths choked the ponds, and Spanish moss was long and green. The south bank here was a steep bluff rising sixty feet above the bayou, and beyond this spread the prairie grassland, dotted with groves of pine for a distance of two miles.

The town site had been accurately described as "well watered," for rains were frequent and mud was deep. Everyone wore boots, and oxen often bogged in the mire. Mosquitoes and water moccasins flourished in the numerous baygalls.

Early in the spring of 1837 the tents of pioneers stood beside boggy trails. In the wooded sections settlers were felling pine, cypress, and cedar, dragging the logs with ox teams to some relatively dry spot to build crude cabins or more ambitious single-pen houses. Mexicans, prisoners taken after the Battle of San Jacinto, were used by the more prosperous settlers as laborers. These were at work at haphazard drainage projects; and a few were clearing squares for the proposed government buildings.

Into this village of mud, tents, and log cabins the government of the Republic of Texas was to move on April 1. Before the pine bar of the Round Tent Saloon men in homespun and men in broadcloth, men always in muddy boots, stood in the sawdust and drank cheap New Orleans liquor, discussing the issues of the day. Topics were localized, for news from the "States" was almost as rare as steamboats on Buffalo Bayou. In addition to speculation about the coming of the governmental offices, there was the traditional return of the singing martins each March 1, the possibility of a military campaign against Matamoros, and the burning question of whether Andrew Jackson had influenced General Houston in the matter of Santa Anna's release. Those professing a wider knowledge of affairs spoke of the overdue recognition of Texas independence by the United States, and argued that the slave-holding South would be impregnable with Texas in the Union.

The politer anecdotes, even in the relative gaiety of the Round Tent, were somewhat depressing. The *Telegraph and Texas Register*, which had removed its press to Houston from Columbia on April 16, reported one:

A gentleman traveling through the country a few days since, was asked by a lady, what new candidate is that out electioneering? On being an-

swered, I know of none; she replied, there is one, he stopped with us last night, and on leaving this morning gave the children cakes and apples, so I know he must be a candidate.

Successful candidates for offices in the newly created County of Harrisburg were John W. Moore, sheriff; William Little, coroner; James S. Holman, district court clerk; and DeWitt Clinton Harris, county court clerk. Capt. Andrew Briscoe had been elected chief justice by the Republic's first Congress.

The senators and representatives arrived late in March and, seeing the unfinished condition of Houston, postponed the opening of Congress until May 1; meantime, the Allens bestirred themselves. Because lumber ordered from Maine for the capital had not arrived, Col. Thomas W. Ward, construction contractor, persuaded enough carpenters to leave other jobs and the bars of the Round Top and the Last Chance, to begin work on a makeshift capitol on April 16, the day the Republic's archives arrived from Columbia.

Growing pains had already attacked Houston. There were not roofs enough in the town to shelter members of Congress, let alone the steady stream of pioneers coming up the bayou and across the prairie. Newcomers often slept under thatches on poles, but many slept in the open on beds of Spanish moss. Food, with the exception of game and beef, was scarce. Flour sold at fifteen to thirty dollars a barrel; coffee and tea were three times as high as in New Orleans. Sweet potatoes sold at four dollars a bushel, corn at five dollars. Chickens were a dollar each, eggs a dollar a dozen. The numerous herds of cattle in the vicinity—left by ranchmen of the Spanish and Mexican eras—were estimated by a writer of the day at 500 to 4,000 head, but included no dairy animals; butter was seventy-five cents a pound. The one cheap food was beef, which was good and plentiful at two to four cents a pound. Table board could be had at two dollars daily, but one boarder at a "hotel" near the bayou complained that the taste and smell of onions followed him day and night like a nightmare.

Other commodities were as dear as food. Cloth that sold in the United States for six dollars a yard cost twenty dollars in Houston. Hats bought at three dollars wholesale brought fifteen dollars. Six-dollar boots cost eighteen dollars a pair. Lumber, in this forest-bound prairie land, sold for as much as \$150 a thousand feet. Whisky was high too, but an Ohio visitor observed that Texans nevertheless drank as they fought—in platoons. Furthermore, the etiquette of the day demanded that no man should drink without inviting everyone in the house to join him, and the man who drank alone had to be fast with his side arms.

Land speculation had reached a peak. With town lots selling for as much as \$5,000, bankruptcy awaited heavy investors. Yet discharged soldiers arriving with no assets except their headrights to land were forced to sell their grants to speculators for a song.

Now a town of perhaps 500 people, Houston prepared to celebrate the first anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto. Particular attention was directed to the rounding up of a sufficient number of women for the ball, for Houston was a man's town. By the evening of April 20 a flagpole had been erected on Main

Street at the corner of the trail called Commerce Avenue, and groups of women began to arrive from points as distant as the Brazos River and Oyster and Caney Creeks. The heroes of San Jacinto, the solons of the unhoused government, and the merchant princes of the capital greased their boots and trimmed their whiskers for Houston's first polite social event.

San Jacinto Day, 1837, dawned gray, but no rain fell. Salutes boomed out as a feminine boatload arrived from Harrisburg, and the gay blades at the Last Chance tried to keep from spilling birch beer and rum on their waistcoats. At mid-afternoon citizens and visitors assembled at the flagpole. The unfurling of the Lone Star banner was to be the signal for a parade to be led by President Houston and Joseph Tucker Crawford, an agent of the British consular service.

Just as the flag was placed on the halyard, the rope slipped from the pulley at the top of the liberty pole. The flag could not be raised. President Houston mopped his brow. Spectators grew impatient and shouted advice to those trying to remedy the slip. Even the British consul began to fidget. The first volunteer to climb the pole fell into the arms of the crowd below. The second was a sailor from some stanch vessel that had navigated the bayou. The tall pole swayed under his weight, but the Lone Star was soon rippling in the fresh south wind. After the parade President Houston rewarded the sailor by deeding him a town lot. The afternoon festivities took place in an unfinished but gaily decorated frame building owned by Kelsey & Hubbard. Only the select were able to crowd inside for the orations.

Evening brought the climax of the celebration. President Houston, already the outstanding figure of the day, distinguished himself further at the ball by appearing in a black velvet suit trimmed with gold cording, a ruffled shirt, and a scarlet waistcoat. With his red-topped, silver-spurred boots, he was able in spite of his wounded ankle, received at the Battle of San Jacinto, to lead the first cotillion with the wife of Capt. Moseley Baker. Accompanying the President to the ball were the Bakers, Francis Lubbock and his wife, John Birdsall, and Miss Mary Jane Harris. The sight of the national hero dancing with Mrs. Baker in the light of home-made candelabra and amid garlands of wild flowers was something that the Town of Houston long remembered with pride.

At midnight the guests retired to Capt. Benjamin Fort Smith's hostelry, which was also unfinished, and enjoyed a supper of turkey, venison, coffee, cakes, and wine. Dancing continued until morning.

The San Jacinto Day celebration was still news when another survey of the town was made and a new map drawn. This map extended one tier of blocks beyond Rusk Avenue to the south, another beyond Crawford Street to the east, and another beyond Clay Avenue to the west. A square was indicated as extending across Main Street, bounded by Travis and Fannin Streets and by Texas and Rusk Avenues. An accompanying legend stated:

This square is intended and will be offered to Congress as the Capitol Square, but in the event that it is not accepted, it will be laid off into lots to correspond with the other blocks of the city.

Another inscription on the map said:

The plan of the town of Houston, as it is here exhibited and extended from the original survey made by Messrs G. T. and T. H. Borden, is the one by which all lots are sold, not included in the plot of the town as made by said Bordens, in evidence of which I sign the same in the city of Houston [thought to be April] 1837.

As the time for the meeting of Congress approached, officials were much in evidence, adding more color to an already colorful community. In spite of almost impassable trails and roads they had arrived on horseback, in carriages, and in wagons. Many had come on river boats, which were running fairly regularly. It seemed as though one of the Allens was always in sight. John Allen walked briskly about the new streets, stopping to examine buildings and talk with friends. Slight in stature and always dressed with meticulous care, he carried a green bag filled with titles, papers, and deeds to lots which he gave any new settler, provided that individual promised to make the necessary improvements.

By May 1 the Capitol still was unfinished, lacking even a roof. Branches were cut and fastened to the ridgepole, and the two houses of Congress met in separate chambers. Francis Lubbock wrote that "The adjourned session of the First Congress met in the respective chambers fitted up and furnished for business. Next after organization of the two houses, came the imposing ceremonies attendant upon the delivery of the President's message."

At twelve noon on May 5 the President, dressed in a velvet suit, entered the House of Representatives accompanied by departmental heads and other officials, and preceded by a joint committee from the Senate and the House. With the President was Joseph Crawford, representing the British government. The members of the two houses stood with uncovered heads as the President was conducted to a seat of honor; dignitaries were placed on each side of him. The President's speech was short, and, as one biographer said, "was intended as much for the ears of his Majesty's representative and for Washington, as for the republican legislators."

A few days later, several Indian tribes came to Houston and camped in the forest on the north bank of Buffalo Bayou. A "big talk" was arranged with the President and his cabinet; the British representative was also asked to be present. As the chiefs, braves, and squaws trooped into town for the meeting, they passed the flagpole erected for the San Jacinto Day celebration. Impulsively the Indians began a tribal dance about the pole, chanting as they danced. Finally they proceeded to the residence of President Houston, a double-pen log house with a windway through the center. Francis Lubbock described the pow-wow:

The chiefs consisted of some six elderly and very sedate, grave gentlemen, who were seated around a table and communicated through an interpreter. The latter appeared a very intelligent, middle-aged man, and seemed to possess the implicit confidence of the chiefs. General Houston acquitted himself with his usual tact on such occasions, and aroused a real enthusiasm by his talk to the redmen.

When the meeting adjourned, presents were given the visitors. There was plenty of liquor, and as the Indians became drunk they began to run about Houston, brandishing tomahawks and yelling. Finally they became so noisy that the President ordered the tavernkeepers to give no more fire-water to the braves.

John J. Audubon, the French naturalist, arrived in Houston at this time and found drunken Indians stumbling about in the mud, "whooping and hallooing." Groups of dejected Mexican prisoners stood about watching their antics as the Frenchman and his party came up the hill from the docks at the foot of Main Street. Audubon found himself in a town of about 800 houses, some frame, some of logs, many unfinished. Everywhere were newcomers of many nationalities. Mud was about a foot deep, and men wore their trouser-legs tucked into the tops of their boots.

"I could not understand," he wrote in his diary, "where so many people could be lodged. I soon learned that the prairie was dotted with tents; these tents were partially concealed by the tall coffee bean weeds which were cut down just enough to make room for the tents."

To develop the fertile river bottom lands of the Republic, Congress offered inducements to planters. Public lands were offered for one half the price of similar lands in the United States. The Republic sanctioned slavery. On May 18, 1837, the *Telegraph and Texas Register* commented, "We were credibly informed a few days since, by a gentleman direct from Natchitoches, there were near two thousand persons—one half slaves—camped in that vicinity, who were on their way to Texas. Many planters, it is reported, have left their farms with a crop newly planted, and started for Texas with their Negroes."

On May 26 it was reported that a bill prohibiting gambling had passed both houses of Congress, and four days later the *Telegraph and Texas Register* announced that "beneficial effects of the . . . act have already become manifest in the disappearance of the little faro banks, and the 'roly boly'." The gamblers were dumbfounded. A rich field had been snatched from under their very noses. Even the familiar hardplaying "Zip Coon" reported that he was going to work, as were a number of his comrades.

Most of the money in circulation in Houston was in Louisiana and Mississippi bank notes, gold, and silver. Everyone coming from the United States brought his own money, which was immediately bought up by speculators. Gold and silver were used in making purchases from the Mexicans, who would have no other money. Before the end of the summer money had become so scarce that it was necessary to issue "shin plasters."

With the establishment of tariff rates, prices of commodities rose. An Ohio visitor recorded the condition in the *Hesperian or Western Magazine*:

The merchant of New York after he had paid a profit to the importer upon the original cost and duty sells to the merchants of New Orleans at a living advance upon the whole. The latter on his sales to the merchants of Texas feels authorized to add at least thirty per cent of his profits. The Texian then pays a duty of twenty-five per cent upon the

invoiced price to his government; and when we consider that he is not satisfied with less than one hundred per cent upon the entire cost, it is not difficult to see how it is that the consumer in this circle of trade has the worst of the bargain.

When Congress adjourned on June 13, after passing a resolution to meet annually thereafter on the first Monday in November, Houston had thrown off much of its frontier atmosphere, although the lawless element still worried respectable citizens. On Main Street were two large hotels, each two stories in height, with long galleries; a number of two-story stores, painted white; another block of eleven stores, the rent of which was set at \$500; and several two-story dwellings. On the cross streets were a number of one-story buildings, although most of these thoroughfares were still merely indicated by stakes.

During the summer of 1837 the town was organized and incorporated. On August 1, Andrew Briscoe, chief justice, issued an order for a city election to be held on August 14. Returns announced by Isaac Batterson, justice of the peace, showed that James S. Holman had been elected with a total of twelve votes; Francis Lubbock had eleven, and Thomas W. Ward, ten. A treasurer, collector, and eight aldermen were also elected. Holman advertised that he, as agent for the Houston Company, would conduct a sale of lots on November 15, with sales continuing until all were sold. An advertisement in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* of August 12 boasted the merits of Houston:

Situated at the head of navigation on Buffalo bayou, it must ever command the trade and produce of the country to the north of it; and for years to come will be the stopping point of emigration through Galveston bay. The Texas railroad, navigation and banking institution is located at this place, and fifteen thousand dollars has already been appropriated by the directors to the building of a banking house; and we are assured the bank will commence operation next November.

As the time approached for a new session of Congress discussion centered on the opening of the Land Office of the Republic of Texas, and dissatisfaction with the lack of accommodations for congressmen. The members were described as quite different from those who had attended the first session in Houston, for there were among them "a large proportion of grey heads, and men of tried abilities and integrity. We notice also but few red noses; this we consider," the *Telegraph and Texas Register* conceded, "an indication that this congress will afford but few, possibly none of those more base, most grovelling, and most despicable of creeping things,—Drunken Legislators."

By the end of the year, Houston had become an established town of approximately 1500 people. In *Letters of an Early American Pioneer* by Mattie Austin Hatcher, Mary Austin Holley described her visit to Houston at that time:

The main street of this city of a year extends from the landing into the prairie — a beautiful plain of some six miles wide, & extending, with points and islands of timber quite to the Brazos. . . . The Capitol [is] 70 feet front — 140 rear — painted peach blossom about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the

landing. . . . We kept our lodge in the boat. . . . The President . . . dined with us 2 wing one of which was Sunday & gallanted us to the Capitol, in one wing of which is a gallery of portraits of distinguished characters of the last campaign.

When the steambot departed, the party was invited to the home of the Allens, whom the newcomer described as "a very genteel people & live well. Have a good house & elegant furniture (mahogany—hair sofas—red velvet rocking chair &c) all nice & new, & in modern style."

Rumors of a second invasion by Mexico, a favorite subject in parlor and taproom, increased toward the end of 1837. Newspapers from the United States reported Galveston and Velasco blockaded by the Mexican navy. The blockade, said the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, was "like Mexican promises—totally unworthy of regard." Nevertheless, Congress authorized the purchase of a ship carrying twelve eighteen-pound guns, and Houston defied the Mexican navy. On Christmas day the alert *Telegraph* cried: "To Arms! To Arms!" in its largest type, reporting a Mexican attack on San Antonio. Immediately Adj. Gen. H. McLeod of the militia issued a general order commanding brigadier generals to organize their brigades. As many as 600 Houstonians enlisted in the militia in a single day, and public subscriptions totaled \$3,000. Of Houston's various defense measures, Mrs. Holley wrote:

From Mrs. Allens gallery we could overlook the whole town in motion like bees swarming—clusters of men in confab—a rushing to the Presidents house next door—every body in movement. Nobody was afraid, but everybody busy. We were at the house of Mr. Labranche (the U. S. Minister, whom we saw often) . . . he promised us the protection of his flag—if necessary. We did not let all this interrupt our plans. Everybody knew the Mexicans could not get into the country.

As weeks passed and no Mexicans appeared on Main Street, Houstonians resumed their prevailing habit of challenging one another to duels, most of which were never fought. The possibility of annexation by the United States held first place in political discussions. In far-away Boston 3,000 young women signed a petition protesting the possible annexation of the Republic, and this immediately drew a response from the bachelors of Houston. By mail they described the resources of the Republic, proposed marriage to the hostile New England women, and promised each of them a dower of two-thirds of a league of land.

With the removal of the tariff on many items, merchants stocked their stores with assorted cargoes from all parts of the United States. So many vessels arrived in port that prices of dry goods and groceries fell from twenty to thirty per cent. Residents of the interior, where prices were still exorbitant, were urged to rush to Houston and lay in supplies.

On April 14, 1838, President Houston addressed both houses of Congress on current conditions, reminding them of several things recommended in his last annual message which they had not seen fit to act upon. He suggested that a proposed act empowering the President to borrow \$5,000,000 should be



modified. His speech, according to the reporter for the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, "was received with approbation. We regret that we have been unable to procure a copy of it for publication. The sketch prepared by the reporter has been withheld at the request of the President." On July 13, announcement was made that the presidential and congressional election would be held on September 3, 1838.

In 1838 a direct wagon road from Houston to San Antonio was opened by way of Richmond and Texana, traversing country now so well populated that travelers were able to reach a house each night. Culture made its appearance in Houston with the opening of a theater, the organization of the Philosophical Society of Texas—now a year old—and a classified advertisement in the *Telegraph* for "A GENTLEMAN capable of undertaking the charge of a SCHOOL. He must be well qualified to teach the English language, together with arithmetic and the several branches of a polite education."

Counterfeit Texas Treasury notes made their appearance in the capital. A Sunday school was organized. The labor movement had its beginning with the organization of the Typographical Association. Navigation on Buffalo Bayou reached a new high, with several arrivals and departures daily; a record time of nine hours between Houston and Galveston was established.

No respecter of persons was the yellow fever scourge of the summer of this year. On July 24 John K. Allen, youngest of those who had first dreamed of the city on the bayou, contracted the disease. Returning home from the funeral of his friend James Collinworth, he complained of headache and fatigue. Fever followed, and on August 18, at the age of 28 years, he died. He was buried beside his friend in the old City Cemetery.

Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar was elected President, and David Burnet Vice President of the Republic in the September election. In Houston "the utmost good order prevailed," the *Telegraph and Texas Register* commented, "with not a single quarrel or brawl . . . to disturb the general harmony." The total number of votes polled in the county was 734, while the town had 555.

Lamar was inaugurated on December 10 outside the Capitol in an impressive ceremony. Visitors and representatives from foreign countries were introduced, and Houston delivered a farewell address. The Speaker of the House then proclaimed the result of the election. After administering the oath of office the Speaker presented President Lamar with a copy of the Republic's laws, neatly bound, and Vice President Burnet with a copy of the Constitution and the rules of the Senate. Lamar was unable to deliver his address because of ill health, and it was read by Algernon Thompson, assistant secretary of the Senate. Houston was once again launched upon a season of oratory, heated political debate, and prosperity inspired by the presence of the congressmen.

But the lusty well-being of the young town ceased suddenly when yellow fever returned in the summer of 1839. The newly organized Board of Health did everything except drain the breeding places of mosquitoes. Of Houston's 2,000 residents, 240 died before cold weather halted the epidemic. At the height

of this disaster Texas currency, never a preferred medium of exchange, depreciated in value to ten cents on the dollar. As a rumor spread that the seat of government was to be removed from Houston, New Orleans merchants began to refuse credit to local merchants.

As capital of the Republic, Houston had become a social center; entertainment committees no longer had to ride afar to recruit dancing partners for the town's gay blades, for there were some 500 women in Houston, many of them as style-conscious as today's debutantes. Houston belles of 1839 wore décolleté gowns, silk stockings, and French heels, while their escorts appeared in fluted waistcoats and flowing ties. When skirts became longer, Houston's new daily paper, the *Morning Star*, protested editorially.

A constant stream of merchants, gamblers, adventurers, politicians, cut-throats, and immigrants disembarked from the five steamboats serving Houston on regular schedules. Stage lines connected the community with surrounding towns.

Meantime, the commission appointed to select the site of a permanent capital had chosen Waterloo, modern Austin. The announcement of this decision was a staggering blow to Houston. There had been a great deal of debate about making Houston the permanent capital, and "east" and "west" factions—so named for their geographic preferences in the matter of a site—had developed throughout the Republic. Lamar had visions of a nation extending to the Pacific and believed that the capital should be in a spot nearer the center of the country. Commissioners at length reported that they had purchased land for the seat of government on the east bank of the Colorado River.

On September 10, 1839, the frame structure erected by the Allens to house the lawmakers of the new nation ceased to serve as the Capitol, as the *Morning Star* reported:

This is the day designated for the removal of the different departments of the government to the new seat of government; we imagine, however, that they will be delayed a few days in order to make the necessary arrangements. We are informed that thirty teams have been contracted for to remove the papers, furniture, &c., at the rate of eleven dollars per hundred. There are many of our citizens who remember that not very long ago the archives were removed in a pair of saddle-bags.

The wagons, finally loaded, rolled slowly out of Houston and across the prairie to the new capital. Many people followed, and those who remained found that much of the life of the town had gone. The *Morning Star* reported on September 25:

A person visiting the Capitol in this city, at the present time, would really feel like one who 'treads alone, some banquet hall deserted.' The numerous offices, which were so recently filled with desks, books and papers, and people, some waiting to have business done, and some doing it for them, are now desolated and empty. . . . The owners still hesitate to rent it for any length of time, lest it should be needed by the govern-

ment again, before the winter is over. Accounts from the new city render it quite probable that such a necessity may exist.

That the progressive spirit of the town on the bayou had not departed with the government was evident in Houston's healthy self-criticism. The editor of the *Star* complained that the town had a theater, a courthouse, a jail, and even a capitol building, but not a single church. Churches were soon to come. In far-away New York City the Texas consulate was still selling wholly unnecessary passports, at four dollars each, to emigrants for whom the magic name of the Republic spelled a new life in a new land.

Houston still had youth, vigor, and faith in itself. There still was Buffalo Bayou, whose waters—at times “so bad that the rats found it necessary to take to gin”—nevertheless flowed into the waters of the oceans of the world. Houston would survive.



## CHAPTER VII

### FROM LONE STAR TO ANNEXATION

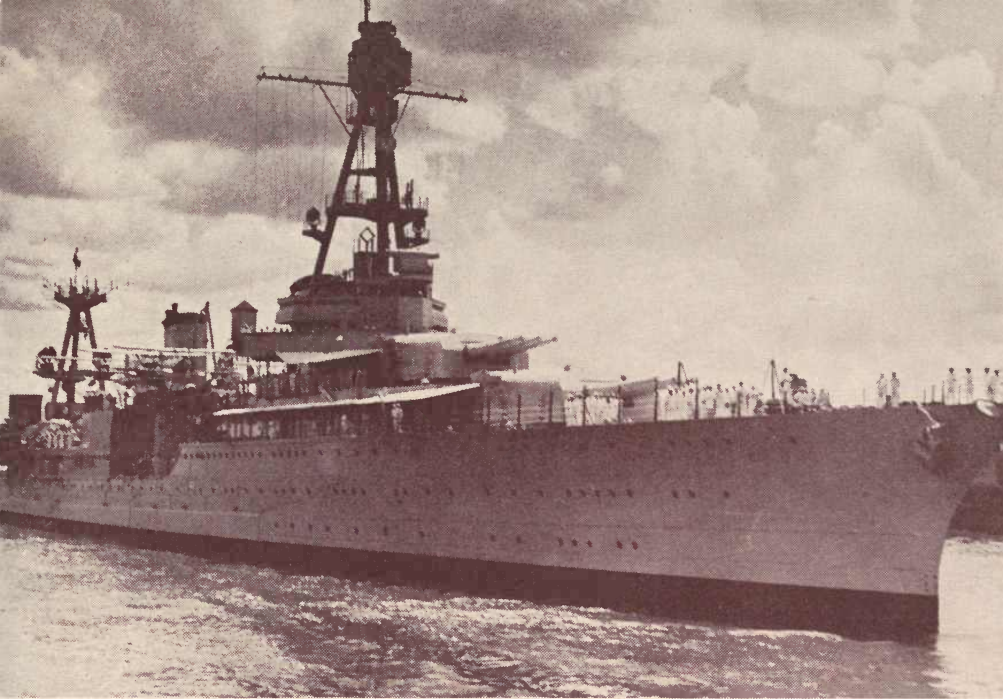
1839-1846

THE WINTER of 1839-40 seemed unusually bleak in Houston. The proud Capitol, whose halls had echoed to the utterances of Sam Houston, now rang on the Sabbath with hymns and the exhortations of pioneer ministers of the Gospel. Houstonians welcomed the opportunity to attend religious services, but they nevertheless missed the familiar figures of Senators and Representatives moving with dignity along the board sidewalks. Young blades loafing in front of Kesler's Arcade reflected the dejection of Houston, the ghost town. Attracted by the noise of a horse chewing its hitching rail one day, a member of the group remarked, "Gentlemen, this is clearly an American horse, and he is only whittling because at the moment he has nothing else to do."

As cold weather halted the ravages of another epidemic, merchants sensed fresh threats to Houston's prestige. Harrisburg County in December had become Harris County by an act of Congress, but Harrisburg the town was rising again to commercial importance. Galveston, too, historic seat of newly formed Galveston County, was achieving importance as a seaport. Houston's answer to the challenge was a petition to Congress asking a charter for a Houston Chamber of Commerce. The organization, said the petition, was "required by the mercantile community as tending to diminish litigation and to establish uniform and equitable charges." The charter was issued on January 25, 1840, to the following incorporators: Thomas M. League, Henry R. Allen, William D. Lee, J. Temple Doswell, T. Francis Brewer, George Gazley, E. Osborne, Charles J. Hedenburgh, John W. Pitkin, Charles Kesler, E. S. Perkins, and DeWitt Clinton Harris, all local merchants.

Estimates had been made that more than 100,000 immigrants would arrive in Texas during the year. A traveler from the States had reported late in December, 1839, that for fifty miles on the Texas side of Natchitoches there were loaded wagons, with such large numbers of men, women, and children waiting to cross the Sabine River that it was necessary to keep the ferry in operation day and night. Merchants hoped that this influx would check the depreciation of Texas currency. They began to have new hope for a revival of prosperity.

Boards laid across mudholes began to disappear in downtown areas as brick sidewalks were laid by storekeepers. These sidewalks were hailed as great improvements, especially by the women, who no longer had to stay at home because of mud. The *Morning Star* hoped "to see continuous sidewalks, if not around the principal squares, at least in front of the stores from the President's mansion to the brow of the hill."



*USS Houston*

*Along South MacGregor Drive*





Main Street



*Doctors' Row*

*South Main Street*





*Houston Turnverein*

*Elks' Home*





Early in 1840 business conditions in Houston improved, and the *Star's* editor pointed out that despite the epidemic, the "almost worthlessness of our currency," and many other difficulties, there was evidence of local growth and increased commerce. Stocks in most stores were usually low, not because of financial reverses but because of a thriving trade with the interior, where prices were still high. One storekeeper announced for sale: "Gentlemen's dress and frock coats; black cassimere pantaloons; figured vests; gentlemen's boots, half boots, brogans, shoes, pumps and slippers; ladies' brogans and prunella gaiters; shoe blacking; butter; lemons; Grecian wines; kummel; velvet corks; letter paper; steel pins; black and red ink; sand and blotting paper; nails; trunks; soap; tinware; flour; two new Philadelphia carts; and twenty good likely young negroes of both sexes." Terms were cash, but it was announced that if the "merchandise" was not soon sold it would be auctioned.

On January 6 Charles Bigelow was elected mayor. Other officials were: Lewis Way, constable; D. W. Babcock, recorder; John Carlos, George Stevens, E. Osborne, Henry R. Allen, John W. Niles, William M. Carper, Ferdinand Gerlach, and John W. Moore, aldermen. One of the new administration's first official acts was to examine the wharves at the foot of Main Street with the purpose of making them more durable and more accessible to vessels. When it was decided to rebuild the wharves, the plan met with enthusiasm.

New buildings began to appear in Houston, while many temporary structures were enlarged and made more durable. Farmers' wagons moved slowly through the streets, laden with produce to be exchanged for merchandise. The only people not busy, according to the *Morning Star*, were the physicians. "They seem," that newspaper reported, "to have retired on half pay. Their case would be hard had they not reaped so full a harvest during the fall that they can afford to be idle the rest of the year."

The town was startled by the news of its first major jailbreak shortly after midnight on January 18, 1840. While the usual Saturday night crowds were thronging the streets, five prisoners in the Harris County jail had been engaged in boring through the floor, removing dirt from one side of the building, and crawling out. The *Morning Star* carried details in its issue of January 20:

These five jail birds with a wonderful knowledge of the locality of the best horses in the place, went to Mr. Osborn's stables and stole seven of the finest in the town, mounted and made their way to parts unknown. . . . Pursuit was made early on Sunday morning, but conjecture is at a loss whether they have taken the 'Sabine shute' or are on their way to the Federal army.

While efforts were made to put the town on a substantial business basis, the beautification of private and public grounds was not overlooked. Many people had utilized the abundance of trees, scores of years old when the town was laid out, to shade their houses. But they were quick to buy fruit trees and black locusts when Ennis and Kimball announced them for sale. These trees had just been received from New York by river packet together with an assortment

of "fresh garden seeds warranted the growth of 1839 and put up in boxes for retail." Their advertisement appeared in the *Morning Star*: "Also Italian spring wheat, timothy blue grass seed, 2000 boxes Mile's celebrated tomato pills, for all billious affections, 500 Vancoavers' fever ague powders, 12 dozen bottle superior tomato ketchup . . . 1 barrel beans, and a few new and fashionable coats, pants and vests."

On February 4 it was announced that Maj. I. N. Moreland had been elected chief justice of Harris County. At the same time it was learned that a citizen of Brazoria County had been appointed postmaster at Houston. The appointment threw residents into an uproar; a mass meeting was held at the courthouse to protest the appointment and to "express their sentiments in regard to this unprecedented outrage upon their integrity and capacity." Told that George Stubblefield had been recommended by Patrick C. Jack of Brazoria and Edwin Waller of Austin, the people demanded to know if the "voice" of the citizens of Houston was to go unheard. But Stubblefield's appointment was not revoked.

In the midst of this furor, valiant efforts were made to clean the streets and take other measures that might prevent an epidemic during the summer. It was suggested that a "Houston Anti-Rat Society" should be created; a bounty of "a bit a head" was recommended as a sure way of enticing loafers and boys to exterminate rodents. It was also suggested that residents clean their own premises and demand that the municipality clean public property. The city council passed an ordinance prohibiting the sale of unwholesome food, and requiring owners of recognized businesses to pay license fees. Another ordinance called for the removal of the liberty pole on Main Street to some public square. On February 24, 1840, the council voted to accept the municipal seal that had been purchased by Francis Moore.

As President Lamar's antagonistic policies toward Texas Indians began to reap trouble in the Redlands and around San Antonio, the call for volunteers was sounded in Houston. Residents decided to equip 112 local volunteers, but only fifty-six men could be outfitted. Later, other volunteers were sent to the frontier.

During March another Board of Health was appointed, with a "committee of visitation" which had full powers to abate all nuisances. Attention was paid to drainage, each property holder being required to build sidewalks and wooden gutters in front of his property, and to keep the ditches open at all times. There was considerable agitation for the grading of Main Street, but the council decided that this could not be done until the new wharves were completed.

Five acres of land on White Oak Bayou, to be used as a burying ground, were purchased from the Allens in part payment of their 1840 taxes. Other burial places near Houston had been nearly filled during the 1838-39 epidemic.

So active were members of the visiting committee of the Board of Health that at almost every council meeting some resident was fined for not having filled the low places on his lot, cleaned up the rubbish, or used the small cart

provided to haul trash. Even the ground under buildings was inspected by committee members.

With the coming of spring rains, most of the roads leading into Houston became so muddy that teamsters could not get into town from the country. Business was again almost at a standstill, although some supplies were received by river boat. Rents had skyrocketed, and building continued active, although stores were nearly deserted. The *Morning Star* reported on April 30, 1840:

There is not the least shade of a shadow of news—a general dullness seems to pervade space—bipeds look languid & sleepy—and the quadrupeds ditto. Dogs are so lazy they lean against the house to loll—and as to barking it is out of the question.

Summer passed without an epidemic, and as autumn approached, rumors of difficulties with Mexico became persistent. Militia companies stood at their full strength, and as rapidly as they could be supplied with arms, ammunition, and supplies, were sent to join the Texas army.

On October 10 the Medical and Surgical Society of Houston published the fee list it had adopted on February 3, 1840. The list, the Society stated, was "regulated by fees customary in other countries. In New Orleans and other cities of the Union and of Europe 5 dollars is the ordinary fee for a visit; and surely the physician who ventures into the frontier country, and exposes himself to the dangers of a southern climate, should be entitled to at least an equal remuneration for his services." Fees were payable in par funds and in advance, and doctors were to charge double for night trips, \$2 for mileage, \$2 for bleeding and for each tooth extracted, and \$5 for cupping.

The British ship *Ironsides* docked at Galveston in December with a cargo of fine cattle, hogs, and sheep. A number of these animals were brought into the Houston area, one of the earliest local efforts at improving livestock.

Late in December a letter appeared in the *Morning Star* suggesting the establishment of a force to be called the National Guards of Texas:

They should meet annually at some central point for the purpose of field exercise and camp duty. Such a body with very little intrusion on their leisure, with intelligent officers would be in a short time a nucleus for our militia to rally around and it would be a certain force to be relied upon in case of invasion, or internal tumult in supporting the laws.

During the last week of the year all mail contracts in Texas expired. As the act creating new contracts had been suspended by Congress, Houston was left in ignorance of proceedings in the Republic's capital.

Rumors of an advancing Mexican army inspired an editorial in the *Morning Star* of December 31, 1840, headed "WAR." It declared that the country could no longer continue in its state of apathy and demanded that active measures should be taken against the Mexicans:

We should not wait for any demonstrations from the enemy; we must carry the war into Carthage. Let the tocsin be sounded. . . . Five

thousand volunteers raised on this plan would be . . . sufficient with the cooperation of the navy, to conquer the country of Monterey.

As the time approached for the municipal elections of 1841, local officials discovered that there were nine districts where the law required the election of two justices of the peace, making a total of eighteen for Houston. The result, it was pointed out, was that no magistrate had enough business to support himself. The elections were held on January 4, 1841, and charges of illegal voting and drunken judges were heard at a meeting of the retiring city council; after sessions lasting several days, the election was voided. At a second election held on January 16, Col. J. D. Andrews' mayoralty vote was almost six times larger than that in the first one. Those who had contested the first vote were unable to find any reason for opposing the second.

One of the first examples of abolitionist propaganda to be received by Houston newspapers appeared on January 23, 1841. It was the story of a British ship's captain who reported that he had just arrived from Texas, "where slavery exists in all its horrors"; he then described conditions as he saw them. The story was for days discussed in Houston, and the narrator of the tale branded as "one of the gang who have it for an object to excite insurrection and murder in the slave-holding countries which they visit."

In April the road from Houston to Austin, once so bad that the stagecoach fare was raised automatically from \$20 to \$30 in rainy weather, became Texas Star Mail Route No. 30. Maintained by the Austin Turnpike Company, the toll road was Houston's first improved highway.

Meantime, President Lamar's ambitions for the westward expansion of Texas had resulted in plans for a "friendly" march on Mexican soil, in the present State of New Mexico. Houstonians had little love for Lamar, for he had caused the removal of the capital to Austin; but the prospect of a good fight was a different matter. A company called the Houston Pioneers, with Radcliffe Hudson as captain and Thomas S. Lubbock as first lieutenant, was organized. On May 22 the Pioneers rode away on the new highroad, to join the ill-starred Santa Fé Expedition.

Warm weather renewed the threat of fever, and the Board of Health recommended better drainage. A teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda was prescribed as a cure for mosquito bites; and citizens on the drunkards' list were warned that they were peculiarly susceptible to infection. Galveston was quarantined in September, and again the yellow fever menace threatened the town.

The third national election infected Houston with another kind of fever. Both candidates for the Presidency of the Republic of Texas had held the position before. Houston marched to the polls in September and once again helped elect the hero of San Jacinto.

Hope for the recovery of the seat of government was renewed with the election of Sam Houston. Additional encouragement came with persistent rumors that Texans everywhere, with the exception of those in Austin, were

apprehensive for the safety of the Capitol and its archives. Linnville had been attacked by Comanches only a year before, and a force of Mexicans had more recently attacked Refugio. The streets of Austin were said to be filled with Indian spies.

In the meantime, as though buoyed by the possibility of again becoming the capital, Houston made several progressive advances. The merchants met on October 12 to draft a memorial to Congress asking a charter for the Exchange Bank of the City of Houston. The municipal council enacted an ordinance establishing sanitary regulations at the Market House. A brass and iron foundry was built on the corner of Travis and Preston Streets.

On November 6 General Houston and his wife, the former Margaret Lea, arrived for a visit, and the town turned out for its gayest social event since the first anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto. Cannon roared throughout the day; a parade with martial music was followed by a reception at the home of Colonel Andrews, and a round of oratory at the new Presbyterian Church. In the evening an invitation ball was held at the City Hotel, with the Houstons as guests of honor.

The charming bride of the President-elect remained in Houston, while her husband went to the capital. Immediately after his inauguration the ax of national economy fell on every governmental department; the President even cut his own salary in half. He offered the peace pipe to the Indians, and courted both the United States and Europe to win favor and support for the Republic. Texas currency began to rise in value. A merchant on Long Row reported that it "went at ten for one on New Year's Eve, and on the next day candy and pies could be bought for Texas money at sixteen for one."

In mid-January, 1842, the first news of the Houston Pioneers and their comrades of the Santa Fé Expedition reached the town. The Texans had been taken prisoners, and were being marched to Mexico City. First organizing a fire department, citizens immediately adopted resolutions calling out the local militia for training. Enlistment in Houston's various military units was heavy. A committee of vigilance was appointed to assist in securing equipment, chiefly by donations from the citizens. But when the Houston Independent Light Guard was called to mobilize on Market Square, the members were told to supply themselves with blankets, pistols, and hatchets. Those who still did not have mounts were supplied with arms and saddles. Horses were to be purchased later.

A wave of temperance swept Houston, with meetings held almost daily. After one large gathering in the courthouse, a list was made of those who wished to become "teetotallers," and the list posted in a downtown store.

A company of volunteers from the United States passed through Houston on its way to the frontier. Officials of the Republic arrived from Austin and reported that many families had fled before the Mexican invasion but had since returned. The people of Austin bitterly opposed the removal of the archives to Houston.

On May 25 the President issued the proclamation for which Houstonians

had been waiting. A crisis was declared to exist, and Congress was summoned for a special session in Houston on June 27. James B. Shaw, comptroller, was sent to remove the Republic's official stationery to the new seat of government. Austin folk, believing Shaw had come for the archives, sent his horse back, and guarded the Capitol. A secret effort was made on December 30 to remove the archives, and wagons loaded with the Republic's records got as far as Brushy Creek before the irate Austiners overtook them. The retrieved archives were returned to Austin. But diplomatic papers were a small matter to a besieged nation with an empty treasury, no mail service, and a navy forfeited to creditors. More important were the President and Congress, and Houston had them both, at least temporarily. The *Telegraph* crowed:

In the course of a few days we may expect to see Congress again in session at Houston. We have some rumors that some of the western members will refuse to meet at this place. We hope for their own interest and the interest of the country at large, that they will not absent themselves from the legislative halls at this period.

The legislative halls had by this time seen hard use as the Old Capitol Hotel, and a second remodeling of the building was impractical. The Senate met in the Odd Fellows' Hall, but only three members were present—"Messer. Greer of San Augustine, President protem; Jones of Austin and Moore of Harris." Patrick Jack of Brazoria was reported in town but too ill to attend.

The House of Representatives, meanwhile, assembled in the Presbyterian Church, and a quorum had gathered by the first afternoon. A resolution was passed asking those clerks and other officers of the last session who were in town to perform their former functions. A committee was appointed to notify the Senate that the House was ready to proceed with business. Four more Senators came to Houston, and the *Morning Star* announced that "should one more Senator arrive, a quorum will be formed in the Senate today." Jack was still ill, so his fellow Senators reassembled in his room. By Wednesday a quorum was present in both Senate and House, and at a joint session held in the Presbyterian Church, the President delivered his message. In addition to the members of Congress, almost every man and woman in town crowded inside to hear the speech, in which the chief executive advocated the invasion of Mexico. The *Morning Star* of June 30 concluded its account of the session with the statement that "All parties appear to be well pleased with the message and . . . a general disposition is manifested by the members present to carry out so far as practicable, the policy suggested."

Congress had been in session but a few days when a resolution was introduced in the House ordering the President and the department heads to return to Austin immediately after adjourning. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* and the *Morning Star* raised a storm of protest and directed blasts of ridicule at Congress.

At last the bill authorizing an invasion of Mexico went to the President for his approval. To the consternation of both Senate and House, the President

vetoed the bill, claiming that the section authorizing Congress to call out the militia was illegal. Already challenged to a duel by Albert Sidney Johnston, the President could be seen at night through the windows of the makeshift executive mansion, pacing the floor; in the dark streets there was talk of his assassination. But veterans of San Jacinto remembered the silence of their commander in the days before the battle.

Congress adjourned on July 23, and before the end of the month the President called for volunteers to make up a force of 1,300 men from the counties west of the Trinity. In August the surviving prisoners of the Santa Fé Expedition arrived here, their return from Mexico having been financed through the United States Embassy. The Houston city council undertook to repay the Embassy by public subscription.

In September one of the strangest cargoes ever to pass down the bayou was placed aboard the steamboat *Mustang* and shipped to Galveston. William P. Smith, who had been employed by the Earl of Derby to collect botanical, geological, and ornithological specimens in Texas for shipment to England, was in charge. Included were bears, deer, antelope, panthers, leopards, lynxes, squirrels, foxes, wild hogs, wolves, coyotes, crows, prairie hens, and other specimens. There were, in addition, 1,400 plants. As Smith boarded the vessel he was handed a \$9.60 bill for wharfage. When he reached Galveston he protested the charge and stated that a similar fee in Galveston had been about half the amount. No action was taken.

On September 11, Gen. Adrian Woll and his Mexican army took San Antonio, and the Houston volunteers awaited an order to march. Soldiers filled the streets. There were frequent reports of firearms and the sound of drums as the troops trained. Letters from Texans in the field complained that the soldiers had no sugar, salt, coffee, or tobacco. It was suggested that the Houston council purchase these supplies and forward them. The owner of a team and wagon volunteered to haul the supplies.

While troops moved out of Houston, proudly bearing new standards presented to them by local groups, the President and officials of the Republic departed on September 29 for Washington on the Brazos—a town less liable to attack—to resume their work. Once more Houston had lost its position as capital. There were anxious days and nights now as Texas awaited further Mexican invasions; the removal of the seat of government was not so harsh a blow this time.

On December 19 the Texas volunteer army was ordered to disband by Gen. Alexander Somervell, who had crossed into Mexico with a small force—including many of the Houston volunteers—and had decided that an invasion would be fruitless. Six captains and their companies refused to obey the order. Col. W. S. Fisher was elected to command them, and they moved forward against the Mexican town of Mier. On Christmas night, 1842, they entered the town and, following a battle with a Mexican force, surrendered.

Texas weather proved especially unpredictable in the spring of 1843. A

late freeze killed dogwood and peach blooms; "This proves," said the *Telegraph*, "that the old adage that frost never comes after the dogwood blooms has failed."

Capt. M. C. Houstoun now brought from England an "extensive apparatus for packing beef according to a late invention." The process included injecting saline solutions into veins and arteries of carcasses. Captain Houstoun announced that he intended to erect a large establishment for the preparation of beef for export, and the *Morning Star* said: "We may expect . . . to have an inexhaustible market opened for the cattle of our prairies which have hitherto been almost as useless for exportation as the wild buffalo." British agents were active now, visiting local plantations and promising owners of slaves the protection of the British government if slavery were abolished.

Survivors of the Mier Expedition passed through Houston in the autumn of 1843, and many bazaars and plays were given to raise funds for their relief.

A bridge 100 feet long, supported by piers 26 feet high, was built across Buffalo Bayou. The *Telegraph* attacked President Houston's endeavors "to curtail the freedom of the Press." As the year ended, Houstonians were elated by news that Great Britain's opposition to the acquisition of Texas by the United States had strengthened the cause of annexation in Washington.

In April, 1844, residents were stirred by a meeting of Gen. Robert C. Murphy, son of the United States Minister to Texas, and President Houston. After rejection by the United States Congress of the proposed annexation treaty, the *Telegraph* advocated a return to "the absolute and unqualified independence of Texas," and charged the President with increasing the national debt by \$3,000,000.

Annexation, mosquitoes, the establishment of a circulating library, and increasing business occupied the minds of citizens during the early summer. As the time for an election drew near, Secretary of State Anson Jones gained favor in Houston as a Presidential candidate, despite his supposed opposition to annexation. When, after his election, he failed to mention the burning question in his inaugural address, Harris County citizens planned mass meetings to demand an expression.

Meantime the Republic had been occupying the attention of United States officials in Washington. After long debate Congress accepted an annexation resolution on March 1, 1844, and President Tyler offered statehood to Texas. Houstonians were jubilant. Said the *Telegraph*:

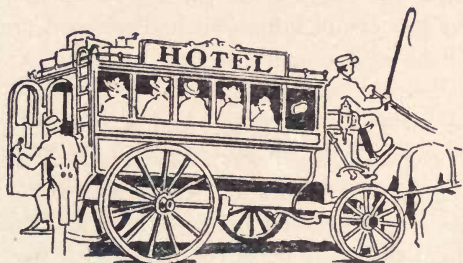
The news of the passage of the annexation resolutions was hailed with a burst of enthusiasm by our citizens that has never been exceeded. The news of the victorious battle of San Jacinto scarcely excited such general and enthusiastic rejoicing. The sound of the drum and other musical instruments, the roar of cannon, the loud shouts of the multitude resounding long after midnight, indicated the ardent longing of our citizens to return . . . under the glorious eagle of the American Union.

When a convention of Texans agreed to the terms of annexation in 1845,



Houston raised the Stars and Stripes on its flagpoles, fired cannon, and adopted many resolutions of approval.

The transition to statehood, now almost complete, could not wholly overshadow local civic enthusiasm or bitter rivalries between Houston and Galveston. In November the *Telegraph* contributed to both by quoting records of the Galveston Customhouse as proving the claim of two Houston merchants that they had imported and sold more goods in 1845 than had all the merchants of Galveston combined.



## CHAPTER VIII

# UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES

1846-1861

WHEN ON FEBRUARY 16, 1846, President Anson Jones of the Texas Republic lowered the Lone Star flag and raised Old Glory in its place, Houstonians faced the transition with varying emotions. To many, annexation was just another event to celebrate in the taverns along Congress Avenue. The timorous were apprehensive about the new State's financial affairs, but most people felt a reassuring sense of security. Threats of invasion by Mexico now were ridiculed; Indian raids were less feared than mosquitoes and yellow fever. Once the metropolis of a nation, Houston was now merely another town in the United States, but on Long Row, merchants were already filling their tills with good American dollars.

Earlier in the year James Bailey had been elected mayor. Captain Tod had arrived with "official copies of the resolutions for the admission of the State of Texas, and the acts of the U. S. Congress extending the laws of the United States over Texas." A circus had come to town; an informal convention of those interested in the advancement of education had adopted uniform textbooks for use in the State; and the city council had levied a wharfage charge of ten cents a barrel on both wet and dry merchandise.

Houston in the spring of 1846 took on a broader political and social consciousness. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* added the word *Democratic* to its masthead, explaining that annexation "restores us to the political party with which we invariably acted previous to our removal to Texas. . . . We rejoice that the great principles that distinguish the Democratic party of the Union are the best calculated to advance the true interests of the people of Texas." The town fathers undertook to prevent the appearance of smallpox by arranging to place vaccine "within the reach of every family", and drainage projects were begun in anticipation of the perennial threat of yellow fever.

Texas' new-found place in the Union could not make Houstonians forget San Jacinto. On April 21 a picnic was held on Market Square, with veterans of the revolutionary army as guests, and in the evening the Capitol Hotel was the scene of a "grand ball."

Physically, Houston had changed more in size than in general appearance. Buffalo Bayou, its vapors maligned as a cause of yellow fever, still flowed at the foot of Main Street beneath magnolias and long moss. The "new" wharves had been outgrown and boats from Galveston often ignored them, mooring along a mudbank where Negroes with two-wheel, horse-drawn carts waited to haul passengers' luggage to the hotels. Although private rooms were not always available there, the Capitol was still the leading hostelry, its columns rising one

story above most of the frame store buildings along Main Street. Brick sidewalks had been replaced with levee-like embankments; pedestrians had to descend their slopes to street level at intersections. There were relatively few pedestrians, for most Texans rode horses.

The citizens of Houston were a motley group, and only a stranger like Ferdinand Roemer, who came in 1846, would have attempted to classify them as simply as he did. At the Capitol Hotel he encountered "a number of men, clad mostly in coarse woolen blanket-coats of the brightest colors—red, white and green," who whetted bowie knives and "engaged in lively conversation." But he preferred the company of "the elegantly dressed gentlemen [who] stuffed their trouser legs into their boots. . . . Instead of the coarse blanket-coat made of woolen horse-blankets, the black frock coat was worn, the universal mark of the American gentleman." Roemer was not favorably impressed by accommodations at the Capitol Hotel, but he admitted that:

The numerous saloons . . . drew my attention. Some of them (considering the size of the City) were really magnificent when compared to their surroundings. After passing through large folding doors, one slipped immediately from the streets into a spacious room in which stood long rows of crystal bottles on a beautifully decorated bar. These were filled with divers kinds of firewater—among which, however, cognac or brandy were chiefly in demand. Here also stood an experienced barkeeper, in white shirt sleeves alert to serve the patrons the various plain as well as mixed drinks (of which latter the American concocts many) . . . the saloons were always well filled.

To this town of frock coats, crystal decanters, and elevated sidewalks came the news in May, 1846, that President Polk had signed a declaration of war against Mexico. When the adjutant general called for four regiments of volunteer riflemen from Harris, Galveston, and Jefferson Counties, the community by the bayou responded characteristically, as the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* reported on May 13:

A company of volunteers under the command of Capt. Snell, started from this city on Tuesday morning for the camp of Gen. Taylor. Another departed to-day under the command of Capt. O'Stronder. Harris County now, as heretofore, furnishes her full quota of volunteers to meet the call of the commander in chief. There has been no necessity of a draft in this country; such has been the enthusiasm here, that several daring spirits, impatient of delay, dashed off to the seat of war long before the Governor's Proclamation arrived.

The four regiments from the bayou county filled the entire quota of Texans called to the colors by Governor J. Pinckney Henderson, and more than a hundred of the volunteers were prominent men of Houston. Despite the war the town continued its steady growth. There were no vacant houses; contracts for the construction of twelve brick structures were awarded to one builder; and the city council displayed a favorable attitude toward road improvements.

Steamboats regularly operating between Houston and Galveston were chartered by the Federal government, and for a time Houstonians feared that business would suffer from lack of water transportation. Although it was December before shipping again became normal, the war had brought little hardship to Houston, and even the dread fever had failed to appear.

Snow fell in Houston on January 10, 1847, whitening the ground for the first time in eight years. In that month the Capitol Hotel underwent "thorough repairs" and boniface John K. Mabray announced that "There is attached to the house a large and commodious Stable." Stores along Main Street and Congress Avenue advertised varied and intriguing wares: "Castor oil . . . for sale by the bbl. or gallon" . . . "Brandy Fruits and West India Preserves" . . . "Negro Family for Sale" . . . "Java Coffee and Rio Coffee" . . . "A Few Copies of Dallam's Digest of the Laws of Texas" . . . "table diaper" . . . "Looking-plates and Looking-escapes" . . . "Swedish and American Iron, cast steel, English blister steel, and American can steel," and "Balsam of Wild Cherry." Staple items included saleratus, English quinine, French calomel, Smyrna figs, Malaga raisins, foolscap, sugar kettles, chalk balls, bear's oil, alabaster paste, whisker brushes, millstones, and "sieves, screws, and riddles." Allen and Whitfield's Daguerrian Gallery, above Lockhart & Company's Main Street store, suggested that passers-by "Secure the Shadow, ere the Substance fade."

Announcing that the Houston Arsenal was dilapidated, the United States Government removed all arms and stores to the Ordnance Depot at Galveston. The change was criticized in Houston, for it was remembered that several years previously stores had been removed from Galveston to Houston because of the effect of salt air on the metal.

A new road between Houston and Huntsville, crossing the San Jacinto River at White's Ferry, was opened in the summer of 1847. The outlet from Houston on a bridge over White Oak Bayou was considered one of the best in the State. The *Morning Star* reported that during the year past more than 100 dwellings and ten or twelve large brick stores had been erected, and, in addition, six large stores and two warehouses were being built. In December, William G. Evans, Harris County official, announced the results of a census he had made: the population of Houston was 4,737, and there were 607 qualified electors and 622 slaves. The white population of the county was 6,557, slaves numbering 1,016.

Houstonians were more interested in the report of the city treasurer in January, 1848, than in Mexico's recognition of the independence of Texas after the United States had emerged victorious from the Mexican War. The bottom of Houston's treasury had been reached long since, and liabilities of \$1,300 were outstanding; nevertheless, B. P. Buckner was reelected mayor. In July the Whigs of Harris County met in the courthouse and elected three delegates to the party's State convention at Huntsville. The Democrats, greatly outnumbering the local Whigs, met that month and enthusiastically ratified nominations made at the national convention.

During August yellow fever appeared in New Orleans, and residents of

Houston were warned to take precautions. The epidemic failed to develop until late in September, when six guests of the Columbia Hotel, near the bayou, died suddenly. It was believed that the deaths were caused by "pestilential vapors" rising from the water. Residents were advised to keep streets, yards, and vacant lots clean and well drained; merchants spread lime along the west side of Main Street from the Houston House to Market Square. At noon on September 30 the temperature stood at ninety-four degrees; by morning it had dropped to sixty-four degrees. Many victims of the fever died soon after this sudden change. Visitors were advised not to remain in Houston overnight, but to transact their business during daylight hours. On October 16 a flock of geese flew over the town, and the editor of the *Telegraph* hoped that "we may soon look for cold weather" and the end of the epidemic. A committee was appointed to determine the cause of the outbreak of yellow fever, and on October 18 the members reported that, in their opinion, the disease had been introduced by two discharged soldiers from Vera Cruz who had stayed at the Columbia Hotel. The sexton announced that 105 residents had died since September 1. The pestilence ended when frost fell, late in October.

Meantime, the agitation among merchants and city and county officials for the improvement of roads leading into Houston continued. The *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* commented that while improvements on Main Street indicated a high degree of prosperity, and the town was a "full head and shoulders taller than it was a year ago," the residents "never work the roads leading into the city. This must prove a serious drawback to the trade of Houston. Fortunately the last two winters have been dry and the roads, even in their rough and unimproved condition, have been passable."

As political gatherings increased, newspapers gleefully baited the Whigs, who were purported to be holding "great mass meetings." Torchlight parades and speakers on street corners became common as the time for Texas' first participation in a United States election approached. News of the election of Zachary Taylor, who had opposed Texas' claims to New Mexico, was overshadowed by the death of Gen. Moseley Baker, a pioneer resident and veteran of the revolution.

In the "golden year," 1849, Houston occupied a strategic position on the road to California. Gold fever began to infect Houstonians before the end of January. Under the head, "Routes to California," the *Telegraph* admonished potential prospectors:

At this junction, when the public mind is so intensely excited in regard to the gold region of California, and when thousands and perhaps tens of thousands of our citizens are preparing to hasten to that El Dorado of the west, it is important that the public journals of the country should be duly cautious, lest, in publishing accounts of new and untried routes, they induce the ignorant and unwary emigrant to enter upon paths that 'Lead but to the grave.'

In the same issue the *Telegraph* reprinted a story from the *St. Louis Reveille* on the three best routes to the gold fields: Route No. 1 was Major Bonne-

ville's from Independence, Missouri, by way of Fort Laramie and Salt Lake; Route No. 2 was General Arbuckle's, between Santa Fé and Salt Lake; Route No. 3 was that recommended by General Kearny and Maj. George Cook, and of it the *Reveille* said:

From Houston to Fredericksburg there is a plain wagon road practicable at all seasons for wagons, and the distance between these places is about 200 miles. Here then is an excellent route, practicable at all seasons for wagons, abounding with good pasturage and well furnished with water, extending from Houston to El Passo, and only 540 miles long.

Provisions and equipment suggested for each man included: 150 pounds of flour, 150 pounds of bacon, 25 pounds of coffee, 30 pounds of sugar, 75 pounds of crackers, dried peaches, rice, a keg of lard, a good rifle, a pair of pistols, 5 pounds of powder, 10 pounds of lead, and a kit of carpenter's tools. It was added that instead of pack animals the gold seeker should have the lightest available wagon sufficiently sturdy to carry about 2,000 pounds. The Houston route was obviously considered best by the local newspaper, which explained that the traveler might journey the entire distance from Houston to San Diego "without expending even as much as \$20. . . . [This is] emphatically the emigrant's route . . . for on it he can transport his family and agricultural and mining implements more speedily, more safely and with less expense than on any other route yet explored."

Several cases of cholera in Houston failed to halt the influx of prospectors and settlers on their way to the far West. On June 7 a committee was appointed to attend a convention at Memphis, Tennessee, for the discussion of a proposed transcontinental railroad. By August reports from Houston's forty-niners were received; McNeel's and Terry's companies had reached Presidio. The *Telegraph* declared that temperatures on the Pacific Coast were "warmer than that of Texas in summer, and colder in winter. The changes from the extreme heat of noonday to the chilly cold of midnight are so great that only the most hardy and robust constitutions can bear up."

The singing martins, traditional harbingers of spring in Houston, came four days early in 1853, on February 25; and along Main Street, farmers who had come to town reminded one another of the Indian adage, "When martins come, plant corn." Residents were still arguing the merits of W. M. Wood's invention, a steam wagon for hauling cotton over Texas roads without horses. In this year Houstonians had an opportunity to vote on the proposed removal of the State capital from Austin; a large majority voted against changing the seat of government.

A new record in stagecoach travel was established in August by the driver of a Brown and Tarbox coach who drove from Austin to Houston in thirty-six hours. The stage from Washington made the trip to Houston in ten hours. That autumn the *Telegraph* boasted:

The streets of Houston have been completely crowded with wagons for the past three or four weeks. It is estimated that over seven thousand bales of cotton have been received here this season, and that goods to the amount of over a million dollars have been sent into the interior.

Early in December rumors of cholera in Houston spread through the State, threatening to injure the town's commercial prestige. Oysters, long a favorite food, were believed to be carriers of the virus, and immediately became a drug on the market. The number of cholera cases soon decreased.

Ice could be bought from James House in May, 1851, and mixed drinks became even more popular in Main Street bars. The public health remained good, and trade promised to surpass that of the preceding year. Railroad development was rapidly making Houston a pioneer transportation center (see OXCARTS TO AIRPLANES). Meantime, construction was proceeding on a telegraph line between Houston and Galveston. Winter clothing in Main Street emporiums included "fine French cloth dress and frock coats, frock and sack gro-de-ta, Doe skin and gro-de-ta pants." Silk, satin, and Marseilles vests were offered in buff and white, and "linen bosom shirts" were described as beautiful.

An ordinance prohibiting the discharge of "guns, rifles, pistols" within the town's limits was approved on July 15, 1853. The municipal limits were thus defined: "Commencing at the corner of Lamar Street and Liveoak Avenue; thence along Lamar street to Brazos street; thence along said Brazos street to the Buffalo Bayou; thence along the meanders of said Bayou to Liveoak Avenue; thence along the Avenue to the place of beginning."

On August 19, 1853, the *Telegraph* reprinted from the *Western Texan* an announcement of the death of Mirabeau B. Lamar; "The life and character of Gen. Lamar form one of the bright pages in the history of his adopted State, upon which the eye of every friend of Texas can rest with infinite satisfaction and admiration." The Houston editor added:

The above mentioned hero and patriot, Gen. Mirabeau B. Lamar, is now in Houston safe and well. He has read his obituary and says he 'don't believe a word of it.'

In these comparatively uneventful 1850's melodeons and guitars were popular, and temperance meetings were well attended. In 1854 "Doctor Rawlings, the celebrated Biologist," delivered a lecture on "Spiritual Rappings, Clairvoyance, &c," but his demonstrations were "hampered by damp weather." The nineteenth anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto was observed in 1855 with the "first celebration of the great victory . . . gotten up on so large a scale." Many survivors of the battle, with members of the Galveston Guards, marched to the battlefield, and the *Telegraph* reported:

Capt. Peter Duncan pointed out the battle ground and the manoeuvres of the opposing force to Gen. McLeod, who repeated the explanation to his Company. Several volleys were fired on the ground, and the Company performed several well executed military evolutions.

An ordinance enacted in May, 1855, closed saloons, billiard parlors, and bowling alleys on Sundays; other measures imposed new sanitary requirements and regulated free Negro tenantry. J. S. Taft, dealer in sheet music, was selling many copies of "Pop Goes the Weasel," "The Mont Blanc Polka," "Light and Shade," "Brooklyn Lafayette Guards Grand March," and "Our Boys"—the last composition dedicated "to the Young Men of America." Books of New York publishers were offered by M. A. Dwight; best sellers were *My Courtship and Its Consequences*, *Intellectual Philosophy*, *South Side Views of Slavery*, *Son of the Sires*, *Life and Beauties of Fanny Fern*, *Life of Benjamin Franklin*, and *Life of Sam Houston*. A Mrs. Parker lectured on "the science of Mnemonics," and amateur concerts became popular. The Houston Lyceum held Saturday evening debates at the courthouse; typical subjects were, "Are theatrical exhibitions beneficial to Society?" and "Is not the Mechanic the more useful member of society than the Merchant?" Four railroad lines were building toward Houston as the year ended. The *Telegraph* blamed the Crimean War for the current decline of a fourth-cent in the price of cotton. The iron horse came to Houston in 1856, and the *Telegraph* rhapsodized:

The whistle of the noble locomotive, the Ebenezer Allen, is continually sounding in the ears of our citizens. To see her start on a trip up the road under a full head of steam is a 'thing of Beauty,' and will be a 'joy forever' to every inhabitant of Texas.

Houston was booming; cotton was now being hauled into town so rapidly that bales were stacked on sidewalks, and land values rose, stimulated by the converging railroads. The *Telegraph* on May 14 reported:

Boats are constantly arriving and departing, travellers coming and going, steam engines snorting, everybody working, politicians scheming, the Germans smoking and the Irish joking, the ox drivers cursing, and finally the clouds are raining, while some sidewalks and most of the street crossings are . . . bad.

In August, 1856, local Democrats, aroused by abolitionist propaganda, boisterously approved the nomination of James Buchanan as a Presidential candidate; a Galveston group announced its support of Millard Fillmore, of the Free-soil Party. The *American Union*, a Fillmore newspaper, appeared in Houston in September, and the *Weekly Telegraph* greeted it: "The more the merrier! Let it be a stand up fight gentlemen—fair play all around—and leave the consequences to the backers." A month later the *Telegraph* reported a straw poll:

A vote was taken down street the other day, under a shelter where were congregated about fifty or sixty persons; all Fillmore men were requested to step into the street, and Buchanan men to stay under the shelter. Every feller stayed under the shelter—unanimous for Buck and Breck. Who ray!

Anson Jones, last President of the Republic of Texas, committed suicide in the Capitol Hotel on January 11, 1858. Two Galveston banks in which he



was a depositor had become heavily involved in cotton speculation, and closed. Jones left a two-volume history of Texas, many of its pages devoted to Houston.

Such minor matters as the new patent sewing machine at Storm's tailor shop and the performances of Signor Donetti's trained monkeys, dogs, and goats at Lone Star Hall occupied public attention until March 30, when a lyceum debate was held on the question, "Is it to the interest of the South to dissolve the Union?" The argument aroused such feeling that it was continued for five days.

In July, 1858, a local census gave Houston a population of 4,815, and Harris County, 9,105. More than 10,000 bales of cotton were stored in local warehouses in November. By the end of the year the Houston Academy had occupied a new \$20,000 building, part of Main Street had been partly paved with shell, and the construction of Houston and Texas Central Railroad shops had begun. The editor of the *Quitman Herald*, who was in town to buy newsprint, wrote: "The city of Houston is a clever looking town, and we would have been glad to have remained a few days within her limits, but the risk of yellow fever was too great."

And now Sam Houston, who had completed a term as Senator in Washington, defeated the regular Democratic candidate for Governor of Texas, and threw the weight of his office and influence against the growing threat of secession. Houstonians had voted overwhelmingly for their favorite, but tried to heal a widening breach in their ranks. Political discussions and gatherings became stormy.

Mirabeau B. Lamar died of apoplexy at his home near Houston on December 19; he had retired as United States Minister to the Central American governments only a few days previously. The funeral was held in Galveston, where, according to the *Weekly Telegraph*, "the obsequies . . . were the most imposing of any that occurred there since those in honor of Gen. Jackson."

Early in January, 1860, the Texas Telegraph Company opened service to Galveston and announced that messages would soon be accepted for all parts of the United States; on January 31 the first formal news dispatch was received:

BY TELEGRAPH! Special Dispatch to the Houston Telegraph.  
Galveston . . . 12 M. . . . The first train over the Galveston and  
Houston road is expected to leave this city next Monday morning.

In this year women's bustles became lighter with the introduction of "the new patent corrugated springs, reducing the weight of skirts and increasing their strength nearly one half." Young Dick Dowling announced that he had chartered a bank at the corner of Main Street and Congress Avenue "for the purpose of dealing in the exchange of liquors for gold, silver and bank notes." A newspaperman who had climbed to the roof of the unfinished Hutchins House thus described Houston as it looked from a height of four stories above the east corner of Travis Street and Franklin Avenue: "In every direction new houses appear. Away out on the prairie to the south and west, away over the bayou and even across White Oak, the city is spreading out street by street, until it is impossible to find the landmarks as they were even three or four years ago, while nearby stately brick stores are rising on every block."

The San Jacinto Day celebration at the battlefield was turned into a political meeting, and Sam Houston was informally nominated for the Presidency of the United States—"conditional on the Charleston Convention nominating Douglas." The maneuver merely gave a temporary vote of confidence to Governor Houston. Meantime, a new popular song began sweeping Houston, and the *Telegraph* protested: "Dixie will be the death of us yet. . . . Dixie is screeched from morning to night."

As national election day approached, Gen. George Bickley, president of the Knights of the Golden Circle, an organization of ardent Southerners, arrived in Houston and established local units. On October 31 a large crowd assembled in the courthouse to hear General Bickley, who declared that the Knights were inspired by his "deep and settled hatred of abolitionists." Soon he reported that he had had the offer of several fully equipped military companies, ready for duty, from communities north of Houston.

In the national election, which was locally without violence, Breckenridge received a majority of Houstonian votes. But when returns began to come in over the "electric telegraph," residents were aroused. The editor of the *Crockett Argus*, who was in the office of the *Telegraph* when the election of President Lincoln was confirmed, later wrote for his paper:

Never shall I forget the scene. It was not only dramatic, but positively thrilling in its effects. Every man present—and there were at least twenty gentlemen there—received the news in their own peculiar way. Some seemed pleased at the result, others again, who had still some hope for the perpetuity of the Union under whose flag they were born, and under whose flag they had fought the battles of the country were dejected by the sad news. A 'declaration of independence for Texas' was written out by a man distinguished in this state for many years as a leader of the opposition and signed by all present. A call for a meeting of all the citizens was also written out and numerous signed. Business was entirely suspended.

The battle flag of San Jacinto was raised on the tallest pole in town, and the song of Sam Houston's army, "Will You Come to the Bower," became as popular as "Dixie." Almost every Houstonian wore the symbol of secession on his hat—a blue rosette with a silver star in the center. On November 24 a Lone Star flag forty feet long was raised on a new 100-foot liberty pole in Courthouse Square, to cannon salutes and a fireworks display. At a mass meeting of Harris County people, held in the Market House, a memorial was drawn up requesting Governor Houston to assemble the State legislature, urging the resignation of all Federal officeholders, and asking other Texas counties to do likewise. Another meeting held on December 1 at the Houston Academy heard the report of a committee appointed to wait upon the Governor; the meeting declared that "our social institutions are doomed to ultimate destruction under the domination of . . . Republicanism." Believing that resistance in some form was necessary, leaders urged attendance at a meeting of Texans to be held in Austin on the fourth Monday in January, 1861. Excitement mounted daily as rumors spread through

the town. The Knights of the Golden Circle, members of the Southern Rights Association, and other groups held numerous torchlight processions. Military companies which had become little more than social organizations fined members who did not attend drills.

Sam Houston spoke early in December at the Houston Academy before one of the largest crowds ever assembled in the town. Local women, according to the *Weekly Telegraph*, "were out in large numbers to greet the old man, who with all his faults . . . has yet the heart of many of the people and most of the ladies." Governor Houston staunchly opposed the secession of Texas; but his remarks fell upon many hostile ears, and he was frequently interrupted and asked why he had not convened the legislature.

A salute of fifteen guns was fired on the morning of January 1, 1861, in honor of South Carolina. The *Telegraph* declared that "Texas will always respond to the movement of South Carolina with votes, with men, or with gun powder as the occasion may demand."

On January 14, 1861, Houston voted overwhelmingly for the secession of Texas. The Secession Convention at Austin on March 2 formally declared the union of Texas with the Confederate States of America. When Governor Houston refused to take the convention's oath of allegiance to the Confederacy, he was deposed. Stormy though the issue had become, many of the old warrior's friends regretted this. President Lincoln offered to intervene, and Houston issued a statement which brought further sorrow to the community that had honored him often:

I love Texas too well to bring strife and bloodshed upon her. . . . It is perhaps meet that my career should close thus. I have seen patriots and statesmen of my youth one by one gathered to their fathers, and the government which they have reared rent in twain. . . . I stand the last almost of my race . . .

CHAPTER IX  
IN THE CONFEDERACY  
1861-1865

ON MARCH 26, 1861, three days after the Constitution of the Confederacy had been ratified by Texas, the alert *Weekly Telegraph* reported "a proposition to remove the seat of government" from Austin, and reminded Texans that Houston's railroads "extend in every direction. . . . In a year or two more scarcely any person in the State will have to travel more than seventy-five or a hundred miles to get to a railroad terminating in this city."

The Bayou Guards and the Here We Are Guards were now drilling daily, and the Gentry Guards had gone to Galveston to be mustered into the Confederate army for service at Fort Brown. The *Weekly Telegraph* on April 16 announced:

THE WAR BEGUN — Our dispatches today bring the intelligence that the war is begun. . . . We know not how this turn of affairs will be received among the masses at the North. In the South all is enthusiasm, and the Southern armies will be filled up with more men than are wanted. Never was there more military spirit in any country than now prevails in the Confederate States.

That day a salute was fired on Courthouse Square to celebrate the fall of Fort Sumter, and in the evening at a public meeting in the Market House the mayor authorized Gen. W. P. Rogers, Henry Sampson, and A. N. Jordan to organize a home- and coast-defense battalion. The city finance committee was asked to raise \$5,000 for military needs, and a site near Harrisburg was selected for training volunteers. By the end of April, 500 Houstonians of the Confederate Guards, the Bayou City Guards, the Turner Rifles, and an artillery company were "ready for immediate campaign service." When Houston received the news of Virginia's secession, the streets rang with rebel yells.

Meantime, a water vender employed by the city sprinkled Main Street regularly. A baseball club was organized. Clark's Dramatic Troupe was playing to large audiences in Perkins' Hall. More local military companies were organized as the Federal fleet blockaded Galveston and the Texas coast. A man who called himself "Myers the deer stalker" walked into the office of the *Telegraph* early in June and declared that he was "good for anything with his rifle at 200 yards"; he refused to fight for pay, but offered to carry messages through dangerous country. Houston's Turner Rifles, on duty in Galveston, exchanged the first shots with Federal troops on August 3, when they were fired upon by the gunboat *South Carolina*. Two Houstonians, Frank Terry and Tom Lubbock, both of whom had fought at Manassas, returned to Houston to organize a regiment of rangers for service in Virginia.

On August 14 it was announced that Col. B. F. Terry had accepted Capt. J. G. Walker's Company, the ninth company from Harris County to join the Confederate army. Captain Proudfoot's Infantry was stationed at Ringgold Barracks; Captain Stafford's Cavalry was at Fort Bliss; Captain Schneider's Riflemen, at the Galveston Batteries; Captain Botts' Bayou City Guards were scheduled for service in Virginia; and among those not yet assigned posts were Capt. William Gentry's Volunteers, Captain Timmons' Confederate Guards, Capt. Ashbel Smith's Bayland Guards, and Capt. Hal Runnell's Van Dorn Infantry. Part of the garrison at Fort Brown, and some of the Rangers on the lower Rio Grande, were also from Harris County. About 150 men from Houston's floating population had been recruited for the regular army and to fill companies in other counties. Remaining in Houston were Capt. E. F. Gray's Sumter Guards, Capt. J. H. Manley's Houston Artillery, Capt. F. O. Odum's Davis Guards, Capt. P. W. Gray's Texas Grays, Capt. D. McGregor's Home Guards, and Capt. A. T. Morse's Houston Cavalry. When the Davis Guards, recruited among the Irishmen of Houston, were accepted for the Van Dorn Regiment, the *Telegraph* declared:

We now think Harris County has done enough. The balance of her population is needed for home service. . . . We think, under all the circumstances, it will be but right to ask the remainder of our volunteer forces to stay at home and give the rest of the State a chance.

Six companies from Camp Van Dorn, near Harrisburg, camped at the Houston depot of the Texas and New Orleans Railroad on the night of August 20. Bands played and crowds cheered as two trains left the station early the next morning to carry the Texans to the Neches River, where they were to be transported by river boat as far as Niblett's Bluff, on the Sabine River. N. A. Davis, a soldier, described the trip in a letter:

The road being new, it was exceedingly rough. Some-times we made about twenty miles to the hour, and again we went a little minus nothing. For we would have to back down and take a new start. We were several times swamped in the grass, and one time, the boys said, we were bogged down in the cockleburrs . . . I have seen corn, potatoes, and goober peas in the grass, but this is the first railroad I ever knew to get in the grass.

When the first company of Terry's Texas Rangers arrived in Houston they won the enthusiastic admiration of soldiers and civilians; each of its 104 men was armed with a double-barrelled shotgun, a six-shooter, and a two-edged knife twenty-four inches long and weighing about three pounds, called a "Texas toothpick," which "could cut another's head off and not half try." The Rangers rode their half-broken cowponies like Cossacks. They mounted and dismounted on the run, and picked articles off the ground while riding at full gallop. It was reported that Capt. J. C. Walker, commander of the Harris County company of the regiment, was riding up Main Street at a slow pace one day when suddenly, touching his horse's flank with a spur, he jumped his

mount over an ox team. As additional companies of the regiment rode into camp just outside Houston, their feats and exploits were on every tongue. Until they rode away to Louisiana, the town was theirs. The *Weekly Telegraph* predicted, "The Regiment will be the pride of Texas. . . . Let the enemy beware when the Terry-fiers get on their track."

The State election of 1861 aroused little local interest. Governor-elect Francis R. Lubbock had just returned from a conference with President Jefferson Davis when a warning came from Gen. P. O. Hebert at Galveston:

Texans — it is more than probable that your State will soon be invaded by her sea coast. The enemy's resources for such an attack would seem to be formidable. Yours to meet and defend it lie almost entirely in your own strong arms, brave hearts and trusty rifles. . . . Remember the days of yore when your own red right hands achieved your independence. . . . Our enemy may succeed, from his superior naval armaments, in ravaging your sea coast, but God willing and you abiding, he will never hold a foot of your soil—never!

Confederate notes had appeared in Houston a month earlier, and cotton dealers had offered to accept the currency at face value. Now merchants warned inland planters to ship no more cotton to Houston, for should the city fall with Galveston, every bale of cotton would be burned. Prices of all commodities rose sharply, and some merchants were accused of profiteering. As the Federal blockade of Galveston tightened, Houstonians experimented with such substitutes as ground dried okra for coffee, castor oil lamps, and wrapping paper for stationery.

Early in December a partial evacuation of Galveston began, and Confederate batteries were removed from the beach. Patients from the Galveston Hospital were placed in a rented building in Houston, and public records were removed to the comparative safety of the inland town. The December 11 issue of the *Galveston News* was printed upon brown wrapping paper on the *Telegraph's* press. Another appeal for reinforcements came from General Hebert, and it was rumored that Governor Lubbock had ordered Galveston destroyed if its surrender became necessary. Naturally, each rumor or development affecting Galveston was echoed in Houston, for its closeness to the island made any military action there vitally important to the town on the bayou.

By 1862 many local stores were empty; some merchants had entered new occupations. S. Geiselman announced that he had gone into the tanning business; Frank Faby established a soap and candle factory; Dr. W. H. Eliot, druggist, fitted up machinery for the manufacture of printer's ink. Two large flour mills, two iron and brass foundries and six printing offices—one the plant of the *Galveston Civilian*—were in operation. John Kennedy leased to the Confederacy his two-story brick building on Travis Street just north of Congress Avenue, for use by the ordnance department. On March 19, R. Lockart, ordnance officer of the Sixteenth Brigade, ordered the people of Harris County to send him "all arms of every kind and description, which can

be conveniently spared." The building became an arsenal, filled with cannon, small arms, bombs, and ammunition, at which a heavy guard was maintained day and night.

The burning of the local office of the *Galveston News* on March 24 was attributed to the scarcity of water in Houston wells, a condition said to have been caused by numerous army camps near the town. At the request of the mayor all saloonkeepers closed their doors on May 9, and Houston became "as quiet as a country village." The unfinished courthouse was converted into a cartridge factory, and women and children volunteered as workers.

In May, when the threat of occupation became serious, the people of Galveston began a flight to the mainland and swarmed into a Houston overflowing with soldiers. The refugees came in boats loaded to the gunwales, in wagons filled with household goods and decorated with Texas and Confederate flags, and in trains with passengers riding on top of the coaches. Houston "tightened its belt" and opened its doors.

Conscription of all able-bodied men brought an additional 228 residents of Harris County into the Confederate army. In June fire destroyed the Alexander McGowen Foundry, on Preston Avenue near the bayou, which was working on large Confederate government contracts. William and John T. Brady sailed two ships through the blockade in July, bringing needed munitions and clothing to Houston. Food prices during this period resembled those of pre-revolutionary days: flour was \$10 a sack; tea, \$5 to \$6 a pound; molasses, \$20 a barrel. But bacon and butter were only 20 cents a pound, and eggs 25 cents a dozen.

On October 1 news arrived that Sabine Pass, where many of the defenders were Houstonians, had been attacked by the Federals. A few days later Commander William B. Renshaw demanded the surrender of Galveston, and on October 9 took the city. Yellow fever and fire added to the anxieties of embattled Houston; and when news of the landing of Federal troops on Galveston Island spread the length of Main Street, residents and refugees became wildly excited.

The Christmas of 1862 was not merry. To the south, Galveston was in the hands of the "Yankees;" to the north, Sam Houston lay ill of pneumonia at his home in Huntsville. At the foot of Main Street the steamboats *Bayou City* and *Neptune*, closely guarded by soldiers, were taking on cotton. While stevedores lined the decks with bales, boatmen fitted the prows with barbed bowsprits to ram the enemy. When the boats cleared, they apparently were ordinary Galveston-bound freighters, but behind the bales were artillerymen and sharpshooters, and in the packets' wake steamed the *Lucy Gwinn* and the *John F. Carr*, loaded with infantrymen.

Details of the New Year's Eve Battle of Galveston reached Houston on January 2, 1863. The *Bayou City* and the *Neptune* had attacked the United States gunboat *Harriet Lane*; the *Neptune* was sunk but the *Bayou City* rammed and captured the Federal cruiser, and the *Westfield*, the Federal

flagship, had run ashore and been blown up by its crew. Meantime, Gen. John Bankhead Magruder's infantry had engaged the Federal garrison on the island. Galveston and several hundred prisoners were in Confederate hands. The *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* reported on January 2:

This action will take its place as the most brilliant, all things considered, of this war. On the one hand, the enemy safely afloat in the terrible gun-boats that have proved such a bugaboo elsewhere. On the other a couple of bayou boats fitted up for the occasion, one of which, last Friday morning was lying at the wharf in Houston as little like a gunboat as it well could be.

The *Bayou City* returned to Houston a few days later, flying a bat of cotton above the *Harriet Lane's* ensign at her masthead, and was greeted by the whistles of the "Magruder Fleet," a flotilla of "cottonclad" bayou boats. About 350 Federal prisoners were marched down Main Street and interned in a warehouse on the present site of the Merchants and Manufacturers Building; one of them remarked that he and his comrades were "better off" than before their capture, as their chances of returning home alive were improved. On January 21, General Magruder and his staff were honored with elaborate ceremonies, including a Main Street parade and a ball at Perkins' Hall.

Prices soon rose higher than 1862 levels: flour sold at \$50 a 100-pound sack; milk at \$1 a quart; and beef at 25 cents a pound. Tea and coffee had disappeared from cupboards, and additional substitutes were tried. Rents had more than doubled, with hotel rooms at \$5 a day. The Confederate money in use had greatly depreciated. Merchants asked \$30 for a pair of garters, \$20 for a bottle of brandy, \$100 for a pair of boots. Civilians, fearing sabotage, complained that "Yankee" prisoners were allowed the freedom of Houston's streets. On February 13 a warehouse fire destroyed \$12,000 worth of cotton and food supplies.

By the end of February, Houston had become military headquarters for the Confederate District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. To protect the town from invasion by water, dirt breastworks were thrown up on the north side of the bayou near the Galveston Railway depot. But the finished fortifications, it was discovered, were too difficult of access to warrant occupation, and they became popularly known as Fort Humbug.

Funds for the relief of soldiers and refugees were raised in many ways, as reported by the *Tri-Weekly News* on March 14: "The 'Taxable Patriotism' of our citizens seems to be inexhaustible. Their contributions to every new Concert, Fair, or Festival . . . seems to exceed those given at the preceding entertainment." Despite wartime hardships, an air of gayety prevailed, and hostesses cheerfully wore gowns of crude home-made materials. Many families contributed cherished possessions to be sold by lottery; at such a sale on March 21 the contributions included two sewing machines, a five-octave melodeon, a guitar, an "elegant white crape shawl," two acres of land near



town, a gold watch and chain, a fine table cover, a model of the *Harriet Lane*, and an oil painting. Linen cloth was used for bandages, while carpets were cut into blankets for the soldiers.

On the evening of August 11, 1863, after a long illness, Sam Houston roused from a stupor and gasped the names of the greatest loves in his dramatic and fruitful life: "Margaret!" and "Texas!" They were his last words, and the town that bore his name remembered his last public appearance there five months before, when he had said, "The welfare and glory of Texas will be the uppermost thought while the spark of life lingers in this breast." The *Huntsville Item* echoed the attitude of many Houstonians:

This will cause regret to the people of Texas especially, who had hoped to see the old hero live till the close of this base war; and to the people of the Confederacy generally it will send a pang, for with all his faults, they loved him still.

On September 11 there was cause for local pride when news was received of a battle at Sabine Pass. That strategic point commanded railroads and important thoroughfares, and the Confederate command had information that the Federals were planning to capture the pass with its mud fortifications, called Fort Griffin, and thence march into the interior of Texas by way of Beaumont and Houston. Long before, Richard W. Dowling, the young Irish proprietor of the popular Bank of Bacchus Saloon on Congress Avenue, had mixed the last drink behind his shining bar, and had marched away with the Davis Guards for duty at Fort Griffin. Although Capt. F. O. Odum was commander of a small garrison at Sabine Pass, Dick Dowling and his Houston Irishmen manned the six guns that, on September 8, 1863, repulsed an attack of four Federal gunboats and a threatened landing of 4,000 Northern troops, resulting in the capture of the *Sachem*, the *Clifton*, and Federal prisoners. The heroism of the Houston company, composed of between forty and forty-seven men, was praised by Col. Leon Smith, who wrote, "The Davis Guards, one and all, God bless them. The honor of the country was in their hands, and they nobly sustained it." A volunteer from Beaumont, Joe Chasteen, told of Dick Dowling, called "the kid," and "half a dozen of his men . . . taking possession of the *Clifton* and disarming the crew." The importance of the engagement was stressed by those high in the Confederate command, who said that if the battle had been lost to the Federals, Texas undoubtedly would have been taken and the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department cut in half. Houston, it was believed, could not have escaped capture.

Father Zoppa at once began soliciting subscriptions, at the suggestion of the city council, for the price of a silver medal to be presented Houston's heroes by their townsmen. Because of the scarcity of silver in any form, residents were asked to contribute "for this purpose, old fragments of silver, such as broken spoons, thimbles, etc."

By December, Houston had become the nerve center of the Trans-Mississippi Department; gray-uniformed officers galloped along the streets, sabers

rattling, as they rode toward the arsenal or the quartermaster's depot. When the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* on December 7 printed a report from the coast that the Federals again were approaching, many civilians fled farther inland. New military companies, including men past the age limit and others who had been exempt, were organized. Squads of boys were drilled for possible combat service. The *Telegraph* reported:

We are informed the people of Houston are arousing and organizing for the fray. They understand well that their city is the tempting bait that is luring the enemy on. In attacking successively Brownsville, Aransas . . . and Velasco, he is but attacking the out posts of Houston. These were the picket stations. The pickets have fallen back from one after another. The battlefield will take place nearer the citadel. Houston . . . must be defended at all hazards. Every man in the army or out of it must throw himself into the breach and make everything he has count. The more volunteers are added to our forces the further from the citadel will the decisive battle be fought.

Late in December the Houston Videttes encountered a Federal force near the mouth of Caney Creek, where Captain Henderson's company of "exempts" was surrounded; but the soldiers escaped to Matagorda in boats, leaving their horses. Another company, sent to rescue the Videttes, used frail boats that were swamped in a severe norther; many were drowned, and those who reached shore froze.

Meantime, at Brown's Regiment Camp near Cedar Bayou, scouts reported that Federal troops had landed on Bolivar Peninsula. A brigade immediately went into action, and the Union troops retreated toward Galveston. The Confederates had to break ranks in the marsh lands, and the Federals escaped.

During January, 1864, old houses and warehouses were torn down to provide firewood. There was little salt, even at the prevailing price of seventy-five cents a pound. Hogs ran wild in the wooded sections. Rumors of invasion increased, and the *Telegraph* warned of "sensational reports brought by persons from the army. A rumor is sure to grow as it travels and every one who visits the interior is sure to bring something new. The Yankees have not attempted to advance of late, they are still under cover of their gunboats awaiting reinforcements." Despite such warnings, the exodus from Houston continued; to prevent the flight of conscriptees, the military demanded passports of westbound stage passengers. Military police patrolled Houston streets.

On April 11, 1864, General Magruder recommended that the families of men who had joined "the enemy" should be permitted to leave the country, pointing out that in many instances they were "living Post-Offices from whom they [the enemy] receive and to whom they send communications. . . . Their husbands and relations are in service of the enemy, and from [them] they are receiving goods which they are selling for gold." Magruder added that he could furnish an escort as far as Eagle Pass "to prevent their being molested and to see that they are safely conveyed to that place."

After the Battle of Sabine Pass, Federal forces made no major attacks on

the coast of Texas. The opinion that the war was "in some respects a favorable time for Houston" was expressed in Albert Hansford's *Texas State Register*:

Never invaded or seriously threatened she became the highway, and the mart for the overland trade with the Rio Grande. True the city had to mourn many of her brave sons lost in battle. But the roar of hostile cannon was not heard at Houston. Building only ceased for want of material such as our manufacturers did not supply. To the end of the strife, the city increased while other places less favorably located declined.

News of the surrender of Gen. Robert E. Lee at Appomattox caused bitter disappointment in Houston. A soldier encamped near town wrote the *Telegraph*: "It is true beyond a doubt that every family that falls behind their lines will lose their property, and will soon be robbed of their provisions and finally forced to leave their homes." A Houston woman declared, "I am a secessionist as firm and unflinching today as ever. I will take my son and fly to the islands of the sea first, and live there in everlasting solitude before I will live the subject of a conqueror." A Confederate officer was quoted: "I look to have some bad reports from beyond the [Mississippi] river, but I don't believe the people there are whipped, and if they are, we are not, and can not be whipped here."

But the cause had been lost, and now Houston faced the aftermath.



CHAPTER X  
RECONSTRUCTION  
1865-1874

THE SPRINGTIME of 1865 was the winter of the Confederacy. In Houston the streets were filled with restless soldiers and refugees. Dwellings were overcrowded, and yellow fever had broken out wherever sanitation had been neglected. Houstonians, hospitable even in extremity, reopened the Soldiers' Home to receive the gray columns of homeward-bound troops.

On the night of May 22 a mounted detachment of Confederates from DeBray's Brigade patrolled the quiet town. Scenes enacted the next morning were described in the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of May 24:

The confused, disorderly division of Government property among the soldiers, that has been going on for several weeks all over the country, from Hempstead to Shreveport, commenced here yesterday morning by the breaking in to the ordinance department and the distribution of Six-Shooters, Muskets, Ammunition, etc. etc. From thence the distribution proceeded to the clothing bureau, where with surprisingly little excitement and noise, considering the amount of work being done, the large stores of cloth, blankets, made up clothing, etc. were parcelled out by the crowd regardless of claim, merit, or anything else. He was most fortunate who had the strongest arms or the most capacious sacks. . . . The number of the troops participating in the affair must have reached two or three thousand, besides quite a number of women, children, negroes and men in citizens garb. Every man seemed to get all he could carry away, and altogether, carried away all there was. . . . The estate of the Confederacy seemed to be administered without regard to law. . . . The melee began at about 8 A. M. The first we saw of it there was a large crowd in front of the issue office of the clothing department, and men coming out loaded with plunder. . . . The excitement continued till about 12 o'clock when the goods all having been taken, the executors of the estate gradually separated and went to their several places of rendezvous to count the proceeds. . . . There was but little drunkenness seen yesterday. All the liquor shops were closed. Most of the liquor in town had been destroyed before, in anticipation of something of the kind.

Charles William Ramsdell in his *Reconstruction in Texas* added the information that "Later in the day other troops arrived from Galveston, and finding the booty gone, angrily threatened to pillage the town; but some of the citizens produced some of the stores, and they were redistributed among the late comers."

The next day General Magruder and the distraught Governor Pendleton Murrah sent Col. Ashbel Smith and W. P. Ballinger to New Orleans in a fruitless attempt to negotiate "an honorable peace" between the United States

and Texas. Late in May, Gen. E. Kirby Smith arrived, upbraided the soldiers for ruining his plans to continue hostilities from Houston, and notified Federal authorities that the Trans-Mississippi Department was open for occupation. On June 2, aboard the U. S. S. *Fort Jackson*, he and General Magruder were met by Brig. Gen. E. J. Davis, and formally surrendered Texas to the Union.

Soon Houston witnessed a new procession of refugees as "unreconstructed" Southerners fled toward Mexico, among them Gen. Joseph O. Shelby, two former Governors of Louisiana, ex-Governor Edward Clark of Texas, and Governor Murrah, who had said, "The voice of the law is hushed in Texas." President Andrew Johnson appointed A. J. Hamilton, former United States Congressman from Texas, as provisional Governor of the State. Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger landed at Galveston on June 19 and proclaimed the freedom of slaves in Texas, giving the State's Negroes their own emancipation day, popularly called "Juneteenth," which ever since they have joyfully celebrated in Houston.

The chaos and strife prevailing elsewhere in the South was reflected in Houston, which found itself with an empty city treasury. On June 20 the 34th Iowa Regiment and five companies of the 114th Ohio Regiments arrived. A Negro regimental cook was killed. By June 23 United States troops had taken formal possession of the State, and military authorities at Houston had notified the mayor that they had no intention of interfering with municipal government but would "protect the rights and property of citizens . . . establish peace and good order . . . and [would give] all assistance to city authorities in maintaining law and order within the corporate limits." When the Amnesty Office of the provost marshal was opened on June 25, Mayor William Anders and many other prominent Houstonians swore allegiance to the United States and were readmitted to citizenship.

United States flags were displayed and salutes fired in Houston on the Fourth of July. Food prices dropped toward normal levels as stores reopened with fresh stocks. Municipal credit was restored, trains and boats arrived, and "omnibuses" were in operation along the principal streets.

Houston shared with the entire South the problems arising from the new status of the Negro. The Freedmen's Bureau was kept busy hearing complaints of mistreatment and discrimination, while a tide of ex-slaves flowed into Houston from the bottomlands of the Brazos and Trinity Rivers. On July 7 the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* commented:

We cannot help but pity the poor freedmen and women that have left comfortable and happy homes in the country and come to this city in search of what they call freedom. Nearly all the old buildings that were not occupied . . . serve as homes for these . . . people. Many of these buildings are not fit for stables.

Some of the Negroes set up shoe shops and demanded specie in payment for their work. A new city ordinance authorized the board of health to enforce sanitation in Negro districts. Meantime, the streets had been improved and cleaned by military authorities. With building materials and labor plentiful,

many business buildings were repaired. The *Telegraph* advocated still another improvement:

The old rat promenade called the market house is a disgrace to the city and should be at once pulled down, and one erected in its place.

For a brief period Houston again rose to prominence as a cotton center, as the market demand brought forth bale after bale that had been stored inland at the command of the Confederate government. These sales put gold and silver into circulation and brought Houston a sudden, brief peak of prosperity. When the cotton supply was exhausted business decreased proportionately.

In January, 1866, crowds of idle Negroes daily loitering in the shade of downtown buildings were viewed with alarm by many Houstonians. But civic and economic recovery continued; voters of Harrisburg cast "an unanimous vote for incorporation," and ships brought cargoes of merchandise from the East. G. A. Forsgard advertised a "Patent Baby Tender or Magic Spring Cradle," which could be "instantly converted into A Reclining Couch, a High Chair, A Baby Walker, A Nursery Chair, A Baby Jumper, A Hobby Horse, A Spring Chair, or an Ottoman." In April, Charles Stone, violinist, assisted by S. Morcella, "mimic and buffoon," gave a series of concerts at the Rusk House. *Camille* played to good audiences, but *Love's Sacrifice* and *The Widow's Victim* were better received, while *East Lynne* filled the aisles. Brick buildings rose two or three stories high along Main and Travis Streets, and Massie's Drug Store now remained open all night. Professor Eika's "tonorial saloon" boasted six baths, equipment for heating water, and eight barbers. Dick Dowling, hero of the Battle of Sabine Pass, reopened his Bank of Bacchus Saloon at the corner of Main Street and Congress Avenue and offered Eau-de-vie brandy, Monongahela Whisky, champagne, and Texas wines, "in exchange for drafts and acceptances." Women began to wear a new type of bonnet called the "Gypsy," described as "a sort of cross between a stove pipe and a soup plate—fits close to the head, like a monk's cowl, and turns up at the side like the eyes of a facetious canary." A newspaper commented that while "other goods may have declined, . . . the rise in hoop-skirts on the streets is, at times, quite startling."

Houston's first "Juneteenth" celebration included a banquet given by the freedmen and their families, with their former mistresses and masters as guests of honor. The parade of the Firemen's Celebration featured a float on which a beautiful girl in chains symbolized the defeated Confederacy, as reported by the *Evening Star*: "She did not represent the Goddess of Liberty (as some of the Federal officers supposed) but the South, the down trodden, the oppressed South." No American flag was carried in the parade, and no national airs were played, but cheers were heard for Jefferson Davis.

By the end of 1866 twenty-five brick buildings were rising downtown, and in residential sections brick dwellings were going up. Many of the latter were described by the *Daily Telegraph* as "large, portly, roomy, suburban residences . . . [of] the merchant princes. Others are neat box-houses, or cottages

built in the Gothic style, painted in different colors, white predominating. These mark the industrious, hard-working man. . . . Others are merely huts built by planking and waste timber. These are occupied by Negroes, of whom there is unfortunately a superfluity in Houston, and there are sometimes twenty or thirty congregated in a little hovel not over ten feet square. There are, however, a few Negroes who have bought lots and erected thereon some very nice cottages."

The municipal election of January, 1867, resulting in the selection of Andrew McGowen for mayor, was unmarred by a single fight. The *Telegraph* on January 9 exclaimed: "What a quiet and peaceable city Houston has become! But few cities of the size and population of Houston can boast such a record the day after a city election." Houston was too quiet for the merchants, who were still suffering from the effects of the war. When yellow fever appeared in neighboring towns, local authorities failed to declare a quarantine; by September the pestilence had become one of the worst epidemics in Houston's history. A story of a supposed victim who kicked the lid off his coffin on the way to his funeral was being told along Main Street while the only doctor in Harrisburg succumbed to the fever. Houston's popular Dick Dowling died, the *Daily Telegraph* of September 25 commenting: "He will be remembered throughout the country as the hero of the Battle of Sabine Pass, an achievement not only not equalled during the war, but hardly matched by the renowned affairs of Thermopylae." On September 29, *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin* reported:

The people of Houston are now most sorely overwhelmed with the waters of affliction, and have our warmest sympathy. . . . Funds, then, being all that Houston can need in the way of assistance, let Galveston, who know [s] so well how to suffer . . . put her shoulder to the wheel and help her stricken neighbors at Houston. The Howards have started it with a contribution of \$500.

Scores of unacclimated Northern soldiers died. Great vats of tar burned in army camps, a "preventative" also used by civilians; but the disease continued to attack officers and men, black and white. Sexton H. G. Pannell was badly overworked, according to an incident described by Dr. S. O. Young in *True Stories of Old Houston and Houstonians*. The sexton hired "negroes with drays, negro grave diggers and extra carpenters to make coffins, but with all that he was swamped." An irate commandant sent for the sexton, who was noted for his "unreconstructed" attitude:

He was taken before the commander who said to him: 'Mr. Pannell, they tell me you dislike to bury my soldiers.' 'General,' said Pannell, 'whoever told you that told a damned lie. It's the pleasantest thing I've had to do in years and I can't get enough of it. I would like to bury every damned one of you.' The interview ended abruptly, for the general ordered Pannell to jail. He did not stay long, for his services were in too great demand and he was released and went back to work.

On November 1, *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin* announced that for the first time in weeks it had received a copy of the *Telegraph* "without a mortuary report, and we congratulate the people of that good city upon a cessation of the dreadful scourge among them, which has decimated the State, and almost depopulated the cities."

By 1868 continuous dredging had almost removed the bend in Buffalo Bayou at the foot of Main Street, making it possible for large ships to put about without ramming their sterns into the mudbanks of White Oak Bayou, and there was a resultant increase in water-borne traffic. In March a horse car began operating on the Tap Railroad; it ran every forty-five minutes, and the fare was ten cents. The Houston City Railroad placed a street car in operation on McKinney Avenue on April 6. San Jacinto Day was celebrated with a free barbecue at the Battlefield; three days later Houstonians held a complimentary ball at the Hutchins House for the 17th United States Infantry, on the eve of its departure for "the frontier."

The Ku Klux Klan made its appearance in April with a story credited to several Negroes who had fled from the "Shrouded Brothers of the Tiger's Den" in the woods near the edge of town. Soon the Klan attempted to select members of the city council.

A correspondent of the *Brownsville Ranchero* visited Houston in May and reported several changes:

Two months ago . . . you might plod your way home through the dark and mud to the great danger of being knocked down or being garroted at every corner, or else hire a hack at heavy expense to obviate the difficulty and danger, but now the streets are illuminated with gas. . . . Two of the principal streets . . . are traversed with street railroad cars, which offer cheap facilities for those who travel from necessity or pleasure. . . . Other railroad enterprises are in progress. Within two months . . . street cars will traverse the entire city in connection with those already running.

But Houston was unable to pay the wages of municipal employees that summer, and military authorities ordered the removal of the mayor, recorder, and marshal. The appointment of a "carpetbagger" as mayor aroused such indignation among taxpayers that ex-Governor Francis R. Lubbock was drafted to lead a movement urging the revocation of the appointment. On August 2 the *Telegraph* reported:

The appointment of Mr. J. R. Morris to the office of Mayor of this city, since removals are inevitable, gives general satisfaction. It is generally conceded by all that he is moderate in his political views, and in every other respect, just the go-ahead sort-of-a-man to raise the city out of its present lethargy and start it again on the high road to prosperity and prominence.

By mid-September trade was brisk; Market Square was crowded with teams of horses and mules, yokes of oxen, and occasionally a horse harnessed to a cow,





*Palmer Memorial Church*



*Church of the Annunciation*



*Villa de Matel*

*St. Thomas High School*





*Christ Episcopal Church*

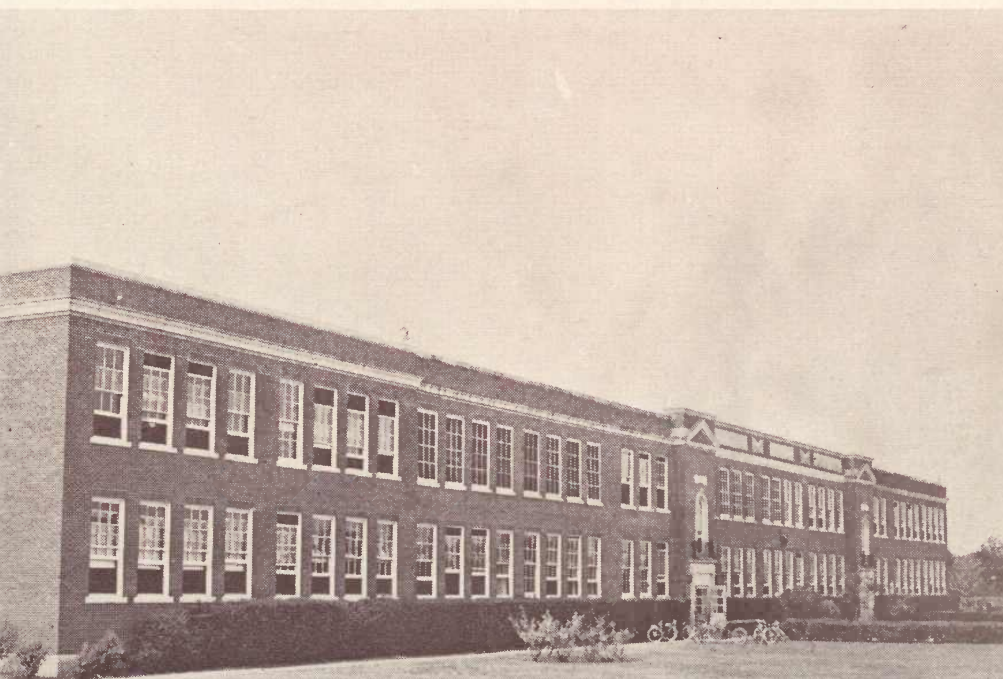
*Temple Beth Israel*

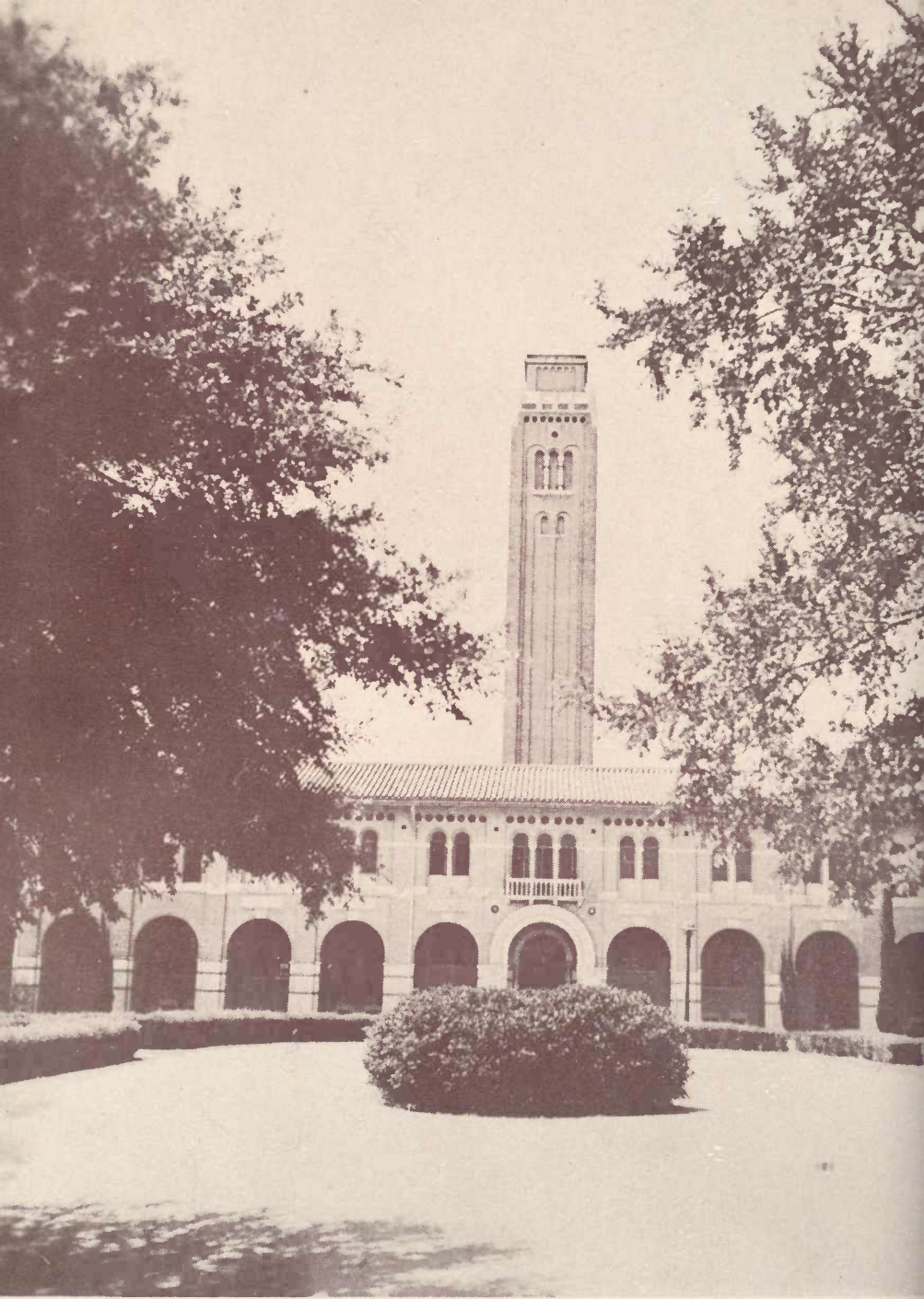




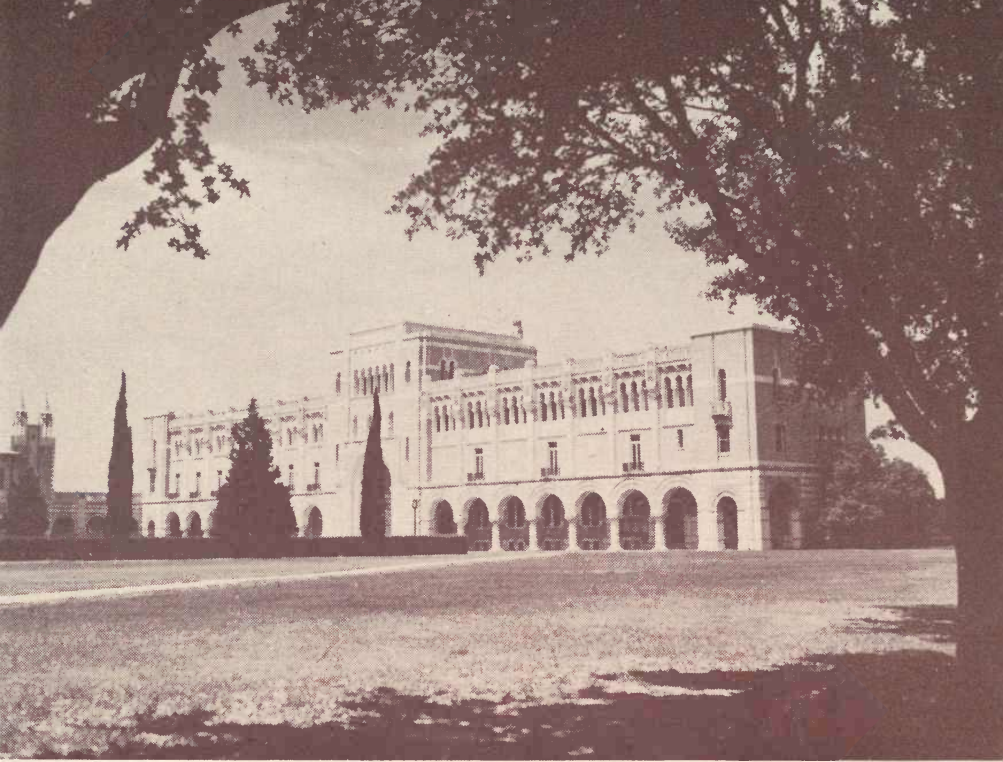
*St. Paul's Methodist Church*

*Jack Yates High School*





*Campanile, Rice Institute*



Administration Building, Rice Institute

*Texas Dental College*



Dr. Mary Walker, pioneer woman suffragist, shocked Houstonians by wearing trousers on Main Street.

Mlle. Zoc, "the Daring Gymnast," delighted Houston Music Hall audiences in the spring of 1871. Adventurous young men were becoming cowboys in the employ of cattlemen who were sending herds of longhorns up the trails to Kansas. In May, Horace Greeley made a speech at the Fairgrounds, advising young farmers to "come southwest." Former members of the 8th Texas Cavalry, Terry's Texas Rangers, met at Temperance Hall in June and created an organization, with Gen. Tom Harrison as president. In September the mayor visited several Eastern cities, returning to Houston with plans for asphalt paving, iron bridges, parks, and a new city market, and reported:

Some New York Capitalists have Texas 'on the brain' and if we of Houston had the same confidence in its growth and prosperity, that many sagacious capitalists and business men outside of Texas have, we would go to work and improve the city, develop all its resources. . . . The day is not far distant which will see Houston the Chicago of the South.

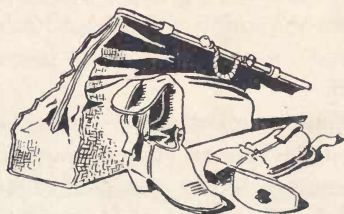
Meanwhile, protests against Governor Davis's Radical administration were increasing. Erastus Carter, Negro, since June had served as supervisor of education in Harris County. Democrats held parades with banners reading, "Carpetbaggers to Your Holes!" and Radicals made speeches "offensive as assafoetida" against the "rebels." As the time for the State's congressional election approached, the *Telegraph* reported that a white voter attempting to register had been told that "A small contribution of twenty-five cents was essential to enable him to pass safely through the Reconstruction mill." The newspaper added that a telegram from Austin had directed the election registrar "not to exact the sum of two bits from colored men." Democrats of Harris County formed a "recruiting party" to bring voters to the polls, but the registrar "ran out of blanks." Democrats had identical registration forms printed, but these were refused. The *Telegraph* observed that "still it was noticed by keen eyes that Negroes were admitted or registered through closed doors." When three cases of rifles arrived from Austin for J. E. Whittlesy, election officer, Democrats were advised to vote fast. Arrested twice for false registration, members of the registration board were finally released, and the election proceeded. Democratic candidates were victorious, a sign of waning Reconstruction.

Houston was "as cold as Omaha" early in 1872, and on January 25 a horse-drawn sleigh appeared on icy Main Street. Policemen were now wearing brass-buttoned blue uniforms, and the *Telegraph* was printing Associated Press dispatches. By July a \$75,000 storm sewer had been completed for Caroline Street and Congress Avenue. In August the municipality had an indebtedness of \$836,033. Mayor Scanlan was reelected in November, along with a board of Radical aldermen, but Houston Democrats rejoiced in a statewide vote that had given their party a majority in the Texas legislature. This soon wrecked the Davis machine and led to the passage of laws relieving Houston taxpayers of additional obligations. A bill dated June 3, 1873, prohibited the city council



from contracting debts, issuing bonds, or entering into a contract or lease to extend beyond January 4, 1874; another legislative act permitted reincorporation. The *Telegraph* said of the city hall and market house completed that summer, "The new City Hall is a princely building, and the debt it has entailed of the City is also princely."

A "Colored Caucus" was held in Houston during August, and it was rumored that the object was "to deliberate whether the colored voters are longer to be made mere catpaws for Carpetbaggers and Scallawags, or whether they shall continue, at least in Houston, to support and keep alive a party solely for the benefit of adventurers, who care no more for the 'colored man and brother' than for the dwellers of Madagascar." Houston Radicals saw the handwriting on the wall, and when charges of bribery inspired a demand from a citizens' committee that the aldermen resign, the board met and "surrendered the trust to those who gave it." The victory for Democracy was more than local. In November, Richard Coke was elected Governor, and with his inauguration in January, 1874, Reconstruction ended in Texas. In that month Houston received a new charter. Governor Coke removed Mayor Scanlan and appointed James T. D. Wilson, who chose Democratic "prominent citizens" for aldermen. "Carpetbag rule" was over.



## CHAPTER XI

### NEARING MATURITY

1874-1890

**D**ESPITE a depleted municipal treasury, the collapse of the Old South's economic structure, and the galling trials of Reconstruction, Houston in 1874 faced an era of unprecedented progress, characterized by a renewal of community spirit. Immigrant "colonels" from Virginia, Kentucky, the Carolinas, and Tennessee, who had sought new fortunes in Texas at the close of the Civil War, had worn out their gray uniforms; but they had transplanted into this bayou region much of the charm and elegance of the ante bellum Deep South. This infusion revived the traditions of early plantation days in Houston, and at the same time inspired customs new to the town.

Typical of the activities thus introduced were annual "tournaments" conducted by the socially elect. Guests came on horseback, the men in velvet doublets, tights, and plumed hats; their ladies rode side-saddles, and wore picture hats and skirts that almost reached the ground. The "knights" jostled with lances, charging full gallop at swinging rings, and he who captured the most rings won the privilege of choosing and crowning a "queen." Each tournament ended with a ball at the Hutchins House, after the guests had changed to colonial costumes to dance the Virginia reel and the minuet.

Equally brilliant were spring and autumn dress parades. Shortly past mid-afternoon on the appointed day, the best-dressed men and women of Houston mounted thoroughbred horses or climbed into phaetons, barouches, landaus, or sulkies, and joined the growing procession on Main Street. There, young blades bowed from the saddle to belles riding in carriages with white-haired women and bearded men. Many of the participants remembered San Jacinto as well as Shiloh.

Less spectacular but more important was Houston's physical and commercial expansion. Early in 1874 Preston Avenue east of Main Street was given a topping of shell, Chenevert Street was ditched and graded, and Sunday markets were temporarily abolished. A new ward, the Sixth, was created on April 18, 1874, while the dredge fleet had deepened Buffalo Bayou as far as Morgan's Point. By May a street railway system was in operation, with turntables at the Fairgrounds, on Main Street, at the Market House, and at the Union and Central Depots. The *Telegraph* described a trip on the main line:

There were twenty-three persons on the car, which was drawn by one mule with perfect ease at the rate of fully ten miles an hour. . . . The cars seem to be smaller than those we have seen elsewhere.

Houston gentlemen amused themselves that summer by playing billiards at the hall of Messrs. Prindle and Holmes, sculling on the bayou in the new paired-oar boat of the Andax Rowing Club, or drilling with the Light Guards. Women joined the Dramatic Club, read and discussed Mark Twain's new novel, *The Gilded Age*, and quoted couplets from the pen of Nettie Bowers Houston, Texas poet.

In August, Charles Morgan contracted to open a deep-water ship channel to Clinton. In October the Houston Savings Bank announced that it accepted deposits of "one dollar and upward, and allows six per cent interest on all deposits of ten dollars or over remaining sixty days or longer."

The old Capitol Hotel closed its doors in February, 1875, and a picture of the Houston Opera House appeared in volume nine of Appleton's *New American Cyclopaedia*. When a performance of the "can-can" at Perkins' Hall was condemned as "intolerable" by refined theatergoers, the mayor banned other performances. Jefferson Davis attended the Sixth State Fair in May; Houston had a "prismoidal" single-track railroad in operation. On June 24 the *Telegraph* commented:

One of the mistakes made in laying off the city of Houston was in putting it ten miles too far up the bayou. But the mistake has gone into history, the town is established here, and the error cannot be remedied. . . . Houston is here, and the center of the city must practically be within a stone's throw of the crossing of Main and Congress streets for all time. . . . But a greater mistake than the location was made in the manner of laying off the streets. . . . Our streets are far wider than are or ever will be needed for business. . . . What should be done with the streets of Houston, is to narrow them by at least fifteen to twenty feet.

Discontent was voiced by residents of the Fifth Ward, who, mudbound and without public utilities, vainly petitioned the city council to allow "secession" of the "City of North Houston." A September hurricane inflicted \$50,000 damage upon buildings, bridges, and fences, but property owners rebuilt immediately.

During an election in February, 1876, a riot threatened when a Negro was arrested for attempting to vote a second time; and on February 16 the *Telegraph* reported, "We saw one darky yesterday hawking his vote around trying to get \$20 for it. Others were offering theirs cheaper, and towards night they were worth about \$9 a dozen." Harris County Radicals overwhelmingly voted against the State Constitution of 1876, but Texans had voted 156,606 to 56,652 for its ratification. The constitution had been written by the Conservatives, and voided Radicalism; its provisions are still in force.

Free public schools opened in March, with Ashbel Smith as county superintendent. Meantime, the speed limit for trains inside the corporate limits had been raised from four to six miles an hour. A survey of temperance societies revealed a membership of 300 "teetotalers" in a community of 30,000,

served by thirty barrooms. The Market House burned on July 8; and when on October 7 a million-dollar fire swept Congress Avenue, the Galveston fire department came to the town's aid by sending equipment and a company of firemen by train. The mayor and seven aldermen were arrested by the sheriff of Harris County on December 7, charged with contempt of a district court's order to pay a judgment of \$8,957 to a Third Ward property owner; the town fathers remained in technical custody until December 23, when the district court's order was overruled by the Court of Appeals.

The municipal election of January, 1877, was "a Waterloo defeat for the Republicans." Meantime Houston, through a rail connection with the Clinton docks, had become the terminus of the Morgan Steamship, Freight and Passenger Lines; and on January 10 the first carload of freight bound for San Antonio left Houston. In July two local firms announced that since the first of April they had shipped thirty carloads of vegetables to Chicago, Denver, St. Louis, and other points, over the network of railroads spreading outward from Houston. By the end of the year luxurious passenger travel was available in the parlor cars and "dining room cars" of the International and Great Northern Railroad. On January 3, 1878, the *Texas Baptist Herald* reported:

A Telephone has been successfully established between Houston and Galveston Union Rail Road Depots. Conversations, singing and laughter can be distinctly heard. Some improvement is needed for convenient use in business.

As the time approached for a military encampment of volunteer troops of the State at the Fairgrounds, the *Houston Daily Telegram*, successor of the *Telegraph*, announced on June 18 that J. W. Stacey, manager of the local office of the telegraph company, had ordered a telephone of "the latest improved construction, which he will put up for use . . . from the Fair Grounds to [a] library room in the Telegram Building, and everybody wishing to have the pleasure of conversing with a friend a mile distant, will have the opportunity." On June 26 the newspaper reported that the telephone had been liberally patronized and that "Folks can talk through it quite plainly." The Houston Lyceum announced on November 19 "a phonographic entertainment" at Lyceum Hall. A contract for the construction of a municipal waterworks, "using the water of Buffalo Bayou above tide water," was signed in December by the mayor, and James Lowrie of New York.

A. J. Burke, who assumed office as mayor in January, 1879, said in his opening speech to the council:

We commence the new administration under embarrassing circumstances, burthened with a heavy debt . . . an empty treasury and much that ought to be done for the improvement of the city but must remain undone until we are in possession of funds to accomplish these ends.

But Houstonians did not let the mayor's "burthens" weigh too heavily. The *Houston Daily Telegram* described a typical Sunday afternoon in spring at a local park: "The young folks danced to the inspiring tones of an open air concert band . . . those of maturer years sitting around tables, played cards, joked and quaffed the frothy beer." The Houston Lyceum announced that its library would be open each evening, except on Sundays, from five to nine, and that its reading room was "free to the public." A chess club and an archery club were organized. By the end of the year Houston workers were receiving a combined annual wage of \$3,300,000. The *Telegram* thus described "Christmas in Houston":

A more quiet and uninteresting day could not have been experienced. . . . Thursday morning dawned clear and crisp. . . . Among the church going people a feeling of reverence was manifested. . . . The residence of Mr. Henry A. Davidson was destroyed, with all its contents by fire. . . . Later . . . the residence of Major D. L. McGary . . . was burned to the ground. . . . A lad named Johnnie Moon was shot through . . . the thigh. . . . Sheriff Noble made glad the hearts of the prisoners at the county jail by setting for them an excellent dinner and regaling them with plenty of number one egg-nog.

On March 29, 1880, 5,000 Houstonians "cried themselves hoarse in calling for Grant! Grant!! Grant!!!" when the former Federal general and ex-President arrived on the first train to enter the new Union Station. A crowd followed the visitors to the Hutchins House, where the balcony almost collapsed under the weight of those who insisted upon being near the distinguished guest; at a reception later in the day General Grant said:

In regard to the receptions which have been tendered me elsewhere throughout the circle of the globe, I can assure you that none go nearer to my heart than those given me by my own countrymen. Especially is this gratifying in a section of the country that was so recently in conflict with us. I agree in the sentiment that we are a happy and united people, and it would take a stronger power than any one man now in existence to separate us. . . . United as we are, we are the strongest nation on earth. . . . We, a great nation, have what we call a standing army of twenty thousand men, while Europe, with double our resources for protecting life, supports ten million armed men. I never want to see it come to that, and if we are true to ourselves we never will. We don't want to fight among ourselves; and if we don't nobody else will want to fight us.

Soon after Grant's visit, Nicholas Linzza installed Houston's first electric arc street light on a pole at the corner of Main Street and Preston Avenue, and four more lamp poles were ordered for Main Street. One night the town marshal slapped Linzza on the back as the electrician was seated upon an insulated stool trimming a carbon electrode. Both men were knocked to the ground by the resulting shock. Linzza was threatened with arrest "if his

electricity got fresh again," but thereafter he found that people stepped off the sidewalk at his approach.

The first scheduled passenger train from Houston to New Orleans made its run on August 30. On October 6 a United States marshal served two alternate writs of mandamus on Mayor W. R. Baker, requiring the City either to pay or to levy a tax for the payment of judgments against it. William D. Cleveland's sale of 3,071 bales of cotton to A. H. Lea for \$150,000 was termed "the largest single cotton transaction ever made in Texas."

The purchase by the United States Government of the Morgan interests in the Houston Ship Channel early in 1881 raised taxpayers' hopes of relief from a municipal debt of \$1,745,624. But a report copied from a New York newspaper by the *Houston Post* announced that "the . . . city of Houston, Texas . . . proposes to adjust this debt by giving one new bond for three of the old ones." Twelve miles of water pipe were laid during the year, and on December 31 the last brick was mortared into the walls of the new five-story Capitol Hotel, on the corner of Main Street and Texas Avenue. The eighty-room hostelry had marble floors, a reading room, billiard room, laundry, passenger elevator, waterworks, and electric bells and lights.

The first shipment of "through freight" from San Francisco, a carload of salmon consigned to G. L. Porter, reached Houston on January 15, 1882. A telephone installed in Christ Church in May was used to "broadcast" music and sermons to parishioners unable to attend services, and a balloon ascension at Brashear Park attracted crowds. Twenty-two young women organized a "broom company," called the Light Guard Sweepers, and drilled on summer evenings. When Christ Church caught fire during the morning service on Sunday, December 3, all available equipment was already in use at a larger fire that was destroying the International compress; a Mr. Mead, described as "a gambler," chopped a hole in the church roof and extinguished the blaze with water from a garden hose.

By the end of the year Houston had ten railroads, electric lights, telephones, a mile of plank "paving," eighteen blocks of graveled streets, and two blocks of stone pavement. The *Post* commented:

Messrs. Kendall & Jones of the bar and billiard saloon of the New Capitol, paid a gas bill for the month of November of \$168. Now the two electric lights they will use . . . giving a more brilliant light, will cost them \$45 per month. . . . Last night there were fifty electric lights burning in the city, and a beautiful light they made. The electric light in the Houston Daily Post office was turned on at dusk and flooded the office with a perfect burst of white light. The light is soft, steady and diffusive. . . . The streets at night present a very animated appearance, being crowded with strangers and citizens going from place to place admiring the wonderful electric light and holiday goods displayed in the various stores.

When telephones were installed in the Market House and all fire engine houses, the following instructions were sent to the mayor with the request that a copy be displayed beside each instrument:

This telephone is to be used exclusively for fire alarm purposes and must not be touched for any other purpose except by permission of the chief engineer. . . . When the bell rings, take the telephone from the hook, place it firmly against your ear and listen. The operator at the central office will say: 'Hello, Stonewall, are you there? Protection, are you there? Mechanic 6, are you there? Hook and Ladder, are you there?' and as the name of your company is called you will say 'Here.'

Residents of the Fifth Ward, having twice threatened secession from Houston, were appeased in January, 1883, with "handsome new busses" and an order for the construction of an iron drawbridge across Buffalo Bayou at the foot of San Jacinto Street. Patrolling the town's six wards were six policemen, four on the night shift. Houston and Galveston were connected by telephone during the year; the cornerstone of a new courthouse was laid; and the Howard Oil Mills Company installed a hundred incandescent electric lights. An industrial survey disclosed that Houston now had two ice factories, two breweries, five carriage and wagon factories, two bottling works, a manufacturing drug and medicine house, a soap factory, two artificial stone works, two soda and mineral water factories, a factory for the manufacture of bone black and spirits of ammonia, seven planing mills and lumber yards with a combined daily capacity of 400,000 feet of dressed lumber, four iron works, two compresses, a cotton oil mill, and five banks. Navigating the ship channel on regular schedules were seven tugs, two steamboats, eighteen barges, ten steamships, and twenty-two schooners.

John L. Sullivan gave a sparring exhibition at Pillot's Opera House on the evening of April 8, 1884, and the mule races at the Fairgrounds in August were pronounced "rare sport." "Vagrant cows" became a major problem to the force, and to solve it, the marshal "imported a real live cowboy . . . entrusted exclusively with the enforcement of the stock ordinance." A large panther was seen "jogging leisurely" down Montgomery Road on a Sunday morning, shortly before the new courthouse was completed. On September 23 the *Evening Journal* reported:

Freedmantown is in a ferment over the 'Thing' which . . . looked as if it was a skeleton dressed in a mother hubbard with the bones shining through.

The next day the *Journal* announced:

The 'Thing' again materialized last night in Freedmantown . . . flaunting its dusky garments in the faces of many of the children of Ham, who are terror-stricken. . . . Some rascally correspondent has telephoned the St. Louis Globe-Democrat that the appearance of the

ghost, is but a ruse of the Committee of Twenty-one to force the straight out Republican voters to vote the mongrel ticket for county offices.

And again the following day:

Several hundred shots were fired by the Anti-Ghost Club . . . Deputy Glass placed his men around the gullies and alley-ways . . . the Davis Rifles held the bridge . . . reinforced with a strong detachment of the Light Guard. . . . The 'Thing' remains a mystery.

When bolting Republican "Mugwumps" helped 'elect Grover Cleveland to the Presidency in November, Houston Democrats and Texas Old Guards assembled at the Moss Rose Saloon, and marched down Main Street; across the bayou a battery fired a "salute of 125 guns."

In 1885, New York holders of Houston's municipal bonds became alarmed because of the election of Labor's mayoralty candidate, D. C. Smith, and his board of aldermen; but the resulting compromise of Houston's debts was welcomed by the Tax-Payers' Protective Association, organized that year. A local unit of the Knights of Labor was formed. One of a series of minor strikes was reported on July 14 by the *Post*:

The *Post* comes out this morning with all its excellencies and short comings, as made up by a non-Union force, the entire former force having been discharged for disobedience and insolence.

The next day the newspaper gibed:

HA! HA! HA! Ten minutes before the first side of THE POST was due last night (11:50 p. m.) THE POST pressman, John Wilson, and George Fortney, a feeder, sneaked out the rear door, kindly sending a message to the third floor that there would be no paper in the morning! To make matters doubly sure, they deluded poor negro Odum into following them. The prompt appearance of THE POST this morning, is a surprise all around, and the fact that it does appear is another evidence of the proprietor's wisdom in thinking themselves able to run the paper.

Houston now had acquired new brick paving and "immediate delivery" postal service, but it was still dangerous, so it was said, to walk on Milam Street after dark. The "head lady of fashion in one of the bazaars . . . that make Houston known far and wide," decreed:

This season all dresses are made wide at the top. A lady wearing this dress with a Warner corset and three or four underdresses would have the appearance of having a very slender waist and wide hips. . . . Here is a pair of ladies' hose that cost fifty dollars. They are handsomely embroidered and made of web silk. . . . Every purchaser of a pair of these stockings must learn to kick . . . she can — if she has the kick down fine — find many opportunities for showing off her stockings.



Dr. Ashbel Smith, former minister to France from the Republic of Texas, died at "Evergreen," his home on Buffalo Bayou in Harris County, on January 21, 1886, and was buried in the State Cemetery at Austin. Curious Houstonians thronged Preston Avenue in February for a glimpse of laundryman Sam Lee's bride, newly arrived from the Orient—the first Chinese woman to become a local resident. Meantime, strikes at the Southern Pacific railroad yards and the Houston Rolling Mills were settled amicably. A recommendation of the Tax-Payers' Protective Association resulted in the submission of a formal request early in 1887 to the State legislature that Houston's charter be repealed.

Edwin Booth played *Hamlet* to a packed house at Pillot's Opera House on January 23; other tragedies were played in Houston's half-world. On May 1, the *Post* reported: "Last night . . . in 'Tin Can' alley . . . Bettie Butcher's throat was . . . cut from ear to ear." Two artesian wells were drilled during the year, and the new three-story Central Depot was completed.

Public utilities prospered in 1888. The gas company had twenty miles of mains; six streetcar lines, fourteen miles of track; and the telephone company, 265 subscribers. Houstonians and Harrisburgers held meetings to raise funds for the construction of a shell road between the two towns, and Houston spent \$1,000,000 for new buildings during the year. The city council announced that the payment of interest on municipal bonds would not empty the treasury when the obligation was met on New Year's Day.

On April 1, 1889, little more than a month after a silver spike had been driven ceremoniously into the new Louisiana Street bridge across Buffalo Bayou, city officials were served with a court order to show cause for the nonpayment of a judgment of \$15,380 against the municipality. Encouraged by a newly organized Citizens' General Committee, the mayor refused to pay the judgment and advised taxpayers to ignore any special tax the council might levy for the purpose. No such tax was levied, and under a new city charter granted by the State legislature that year, all municipal debts were finally settled. Relieved at last of its onerous fiscal burdens, Houston faced a new era. How profoundly political conditions had changed since Reconstruction appeared on December 11, 1889, when business was suspended while memorial services were held in the Market House hall for Jefferson Davis; from the new Government building at Fannin Street and Franklin Avenue the flag of the Union flew at half-staff for the late President of the Southern Confederacy.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GAY DECADE

#### 1890-1900

HOUSTON entered the last decade of the nineteenth century with justifiable optimism. In 1890 it was the rail center of a State which in twenty years had advanced from twenty-eighth to third place in the country's railroad development. Since Governor Richard Hubbard's "come to Texas" speech in 1876 at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, Houston's population had greatly increased. The census of 1890 gave it 27,557, three times that of 1870.

Society was becoming more sophisticated in this metropolis of cotton planters, railroad builders, and lumbermen, a natural result of twenty years of unbroken prosperity. Too, scores of well-to-do businessmen of the North and East were coming to Houston, attracted by agricultural, railroad, and port development, and confident of the opportunity that lay in the lusty commerce of the growing town. Just as migrating Southern aristocracy had brought new social graces at the conclusion of the Civil War, so did these newcomers.

On Quality Hill, a small area in the northeastern part of the town, south of Buffalo Bayou, stood great houses shaded by the big oaks that lined narrow thoroughfares. Gardens of flowers surrounded houses screened by tall hedges. Here the manner of life was thoroughly in keeping with the setting. Wealthy businessmen wearing high silk hats drove downtown in velvet-upholstered carriages, to spend a few hours in offices resplendent with red plush. In harness with gold or silver buckles prancing horses drew gleaming victorias as fashionable women took their regular afternoon drives. On warm days, ice tinkled in mint juleps. Black "mammies" presided over huge kitchens where wild game was still a staple of diet; a host was judged by the quality of his food and wine. By starlight, groups of Negroes from cabins in the rear of the big houses entertained their "white folks" with songs of the Old South.

Typical of Houston's mansions was that of William J. Hutchins, pioneer merchant, whose daughter Ella married Lord Stewart. Silver plate and fabulous jewels, including the "black diamond" once owned by Mary, Queen of Scots, had been brought from England by the nobleman. More fashionable than the plantation-type houses of pioneer Houstonians were the rambling, turreted, mid-Victorian mansions of the wealthier newcomers. Intricate "gingerbread" ornamentation characterized these newer structures; iron lions and other ingenious devices were used as hitching posts.

The socially elect, like other Houstonians, still became mired in the omnipresent mud of the residential districts. Once the belles of the town rode to a dance in an ox-drawn wagon, thus sparing satin slippers black devastation and their escorts the problem of "navigating" the streets; for in those days the best

horse-drawn conveyance often became ignominiously stuck in quagmires. On Main Street, paving blocks "glistened like the 'white marble streets of Rome' after a heavy rain," and other downtown arteries had been topped with shell or plank; in the outlying districts, however, thoroughfares were little more than country lanes. In the *Houston Chronicle* of May 26, 1929, R. M. Farrar recalled that Houston then was "famous chiefly for its Light Guard, its citizenship, its rain, mud, mosquitoes, typhoid and malarial fevers." Within twenty years drainage would remove most of the "mud, mosquitoes, typhoid and malarial fevers," but in 1890 it was confined to the small downtown area.

The unpaved streets presented social as well as physical problems. Dandies were often compelled to wear boots to fashionable *soirees*, although black patent leather shoes were in vogue. Mrs. A. B. Looscan, local historian, recalled that her husband went booted to a reception held by James Stephen Hogg, crusader against trusts and railroad monopolies, who became Governor of Texas in 1890. Despite Governor Hogg's successful campaign against the State's policy of granting railroads vast slices of the public domain in return for the extension of rail lines, the roads radiating from Houston continued to expand, and in 1891 twelve companies daily operated 234 trains to and from the town.

Although men could with impunity wear boots to balls, Houston's women were compelled by the dictates of fashion to wear long kid gloves. Stiff brocaded taffetas, lustrous beaded satins, ostrich plumes, and flowing trains were affected alike by *grande dame* and *debutante*. Impoverished widows and spinsters "took in sewing," taught school, or conducted boarding houses, for to enter the business world meant the loss of social caste. Yet at least three Houston women succeeded in voting in a city election more than a quarter of a century before the adoption of national woman's suffrage, for on February 16, 1891, Mrs. Corra B. Foster and two other female property owners appeared at the polls and demanded ballots.

In the "gay nineties" euchre was popular in Houston. Dancing was formal, with the dignified lancers and graceful waltzes most favored. Dowagers, some with snowy lace caps over graying curls, kept strict vigil at balls; budding beauties might show faces lightly dusted with rice powder, but a hint of rouge might start a serious scandal.

While decorous conduct was demanded of the belles, young men were shown indulgence even by policemen, who bundled inebriated dandies into hacks and sent them home. The saloons never closed; each had a specialty for which it was known, and here men gathered for beer and Dutch lunches, priced at ten cents in the more expensive establishments, or for thick cuts of roast beef and imported wines. Personalities of the period were as colorful as the embroidered vests affected by the "more elegant gentlemen." Henry Scherffius, elected mayor in 1890, had been a blockade runner in Gulf ports during the Civil War.

The first important event of the decade was a "Deep Water Meeting" held in Galveston at the Tremont Hotel on January 6, 1890; at the conclusion of its labors, a committee composed of prominent businessmen returned to Houston by boat, landing at Magnolia Park, where 3,750 magnolia trees were

in bloom. Col. John Brady conducted the party through the new park. Soon the Houston Belt and Magnolia Park Railway established service to the park and Constitution Bend, and the Deep Water Committee had its efforts rewarded when President Benjamin Harrison signed a Rivers and Harbors Bill, providing for port improvements.

In 1891, William Marsh Rice gave an initial endowment of \$200,000 "for the foundation of an institute for the advancement of literature, science, and art;" President Harrison came in April for a brief visit; and in June electric streetcars appeared to create a sensation.

The development of Houston Heights began in 1892. Texas Democrats split the party at the State convention held in Houston that year, and as a result George Clark unsuccessfully opposed Governor Hogg's re-election.

By 1893 the municipal limits enclosed nine square miles; Houston had an estimated population of 50,000, and a total assessed property valuation of \$18,000,000, including four railroad shops. George Hermann offered the municipality the choice of two sites for a charity hospital. The Magnolia Brewery was opened. According to a survey made in November, Houston had more Negro home-owners among its 20,000 residents of that race than any other two cities of the State; most of their houses were valued at between \$2,000 and \$5,000. One Negro resident owned fifty rent houses. Negro charities included an orphanage, a shelter for the blind, and one for the aged.

Social welfare groups were organized in 1893-94, among them the Associated Charities, which established the Friendly Inn for the care of the indigent; Sheltering Arms, a home for aged women, was conducted by women members of Christ Episcopal Church.

Among visitors to Houston in 1894 were Governor Hogg, who attended the Dick Dowling Camp Confederate Ball as the guest of Maj. M. Looscan; James J. Corbett, world's heavyweight boxing champion; and the captive Geronimo, Apache chief, who passed through town with a trainload of Federal prisoners. Labor Day was celebrated locally for the first time. The organization of a local chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy was announced in November; a shell road to Harrisburg was completed before the year ended.

Local estimates of Houston's population in 1895 ran as high as 70,000. An auditorium constructed on Main Street especially for a national reunion of Confederate veterans had a seating capacity of 5,000. Among the 8,000 visiting veterans was Miss Winnie Davis, "Daughter of the Confederacy," who was honored with a reception held at the residence of Judge Masterson. In a demonstration of the long-distance telephone at the Hutchins House on July 11, Mayor Brown of Houston talked over the wires with Mayor Frank P. Holland of Dallas. All Houston mourned when Mrs. Charlotte M. Allen, wife of A. C. Allen, one of the founders of the city, died on August 3.

In the autumn of 1895 a young jack-of-all-trades, Sidney Porter, went to work on the *Houston Post* at a salary of fifteen dollars a week. Porter was assigned to write a column called "Some Postscripts," and he whose later work

as "O. Henry" was to have a lasting influence upon American literature created of provincial Houston a sort of Bagdad-on-the-Bayou. In the *Post* of December 16, 1895, an unsigned story titled "When the Train Comes In," recently identified as Porter's work, described a Houston scene:

At the Houston Grand Central Depot when the trains come in there are to be seen laughter and lanterns, smiles and sandwiches, palavering and popcorn, tears and tamales. . . . The waiting room is bright with electric lights. The line of omnibuses and hacks line the sidewalk on Washington Street, and the drivers are crowding close to the dead line on the south side of the depot. . . . From the buzz of voices fragments of connected words can be caught that read something like this: ' . . . yes, I'm going to Galveston . . . a daisy, you bet; blond hair, dark eyes and the prettiest . . . No, sir, don't keep the *North American Review*, but here's *Puck* and *Judge* . . . Houston is the city of Texas . . . Toot—toot-toot.'

Ignace Jan Paderewski played "before an audience of thousands" at the auditorium on January 31, 1896. Property owners of Houston Heights voted eighty-seven to ten for the incorporation of their village, and Brunner Addition voted to incorporate. In the Heights' first municipal election, held in August, W. G. Love was elected mayor.

Another thumbnail sketch of Houston by Porter appeared in the *Post* on May 24, 1896:

A *Post* reporter stood on the San Jacinto Street bridge last night. Half of a May moon swam in a sea of buttermilky clouds high in the east. Below, the bayou gleamed dully in the semi-darkness, merging into inky blackness farther down. A steam tug glided noiselessly down the sluggish waters, leaving a shattered trail of molten silver. Foot passengers across the bridge were scarce. A few belated Fifth Warders straggled past, clattering along the uneven planks of the footway. The reporter took off his hat and allowed a cool breath of a great city to fan his brow. A mellow voice, with, however, too much dramatic inflection, murmured at his elbow, and quoted incorrectly from Byron: 'Oh, moon, and darkening river, ye are wondrous strong; Yet lovely in your strength as is the light of a dark eye in woman.'

Two months after the publication of a story entitled "An Odd Character," Porter was summoned to Austin to answer a charge of embezzlement committed, according to later evidence, while he was a resident there. He entrained for the capital, but at Hempstead changed to a train returning to Houston, continued to New Orleans, and was next heard from in Honduras—whence, ultimately, he returned to face trial and be convicted.

William Jennings Bryan delivered an address at the auditorium on the evening of January 20, 1897. An electric "horseless carriage" was demonstrated on Main Street in March. By the provisions of an amended charter for the City of Houston, adopted in April, the fire, police, and health departments were placed under Civil Service regulations. Employees of the Houston Electric

Street Railway were called out on a successful one-day strike in July, and Westheimer & Brother announced the operation of "wagonettes" on Main Street and on Washington, Congress, and Liberty Avenues. In December voters approved a bond issue for the construction of a municipal power plant; in that month Houston's first asphalt street paving was laid between Franklin Avenue and Buffalo Bayou.

On February 17, 1898, flags on the post office and the city hall were flown at half-staff in honor of the men who had lost their lives in the sinking of the U. S. S. *Maine* in Havana harbor two days before. Within a week a thirty-ton cannon, ordered for the protection of Galveston, was under guard at the Congress Avenue depot of the International and Great Northern Railroad.

Five days after Congress had authorized the spending of \$50,000,000 for national defense, employees of the street railway again went on strike. Refusing to pay the twenty cents an hour that the trainmen demanded for a nine-hour day, the company made no attempt for a time to operate its cars; on the evening of March 18, 1,000 trade unionists staged a downtown sympathy parade. After an attempt to operate cars with strikebreakers, an assault upon an official of the company, and the explosion of a power plant boiler that killed two men and darkened the streets, guards were placed on two cars for a "trial trip." These cars took on no passengers and encountered pickets carrying signs that read, "I Don't Ride with Scabs." On March 28 the *Houston Daily Post* reported:

Yesterday was a day that will long be remembered in Houston [for] . . . the exciting scenes upon Main Street, when disorder prevailed to such an extent among the sympathizers of the street car strikers. . . . The Mayor was forced to call out the militia . . . to establish order in the downtown district.

On March 31 the newspaper announced:

The street car strike has been settled . . . most of the 49 new workers will be retained. . . . The pay per hour will range from 13 to 17 cents, according to the length of time the employee has been in service . . . [for] nine hours a day. . . . The four militia organizations that have been under arms since Sunday, were dismissed yesterday.

The San Jacinto Day celebration at Forest Park that year featured a pyrotechnical representation of the sinking of the *Maine*, and by April 25—when Congress declared that a state of war existed with Spain—Houston's fighting spirit had been well aroused. Immediately after the declaration of war came a message from Adj. Gen. W. H. Mabry of the Texas Volunteer Guard ordering all military companies in Houston to prepare for service, and on May 4 the Light Guards and the Emmet Rifles left for Austin. A recruiting station was opened at 209 Main Street; Theodore Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, acknowledged an offer of the services of the Houston Yacht Club. The Brunner Old Man's Club, made up of "ex-Johnny Rebs and Johnny Yanks," offered to defend the Texas coast from Spanish invasion.

On the night of May 30, Colonel Roosevelt and a trainload of his Rough Riders stopped at Houston for six hours. Many of the Texas-trained cavalrymen came downtown to see the sights, while the officers remained at the Sunset station yard to attend an informal reception held for them by prominent Houstonians. On May 31 the *Post* reported:

A *Post* representative visited the train and found Colonel Roosevelt pacing up and down the cindered yard by the train side. He seemed to be in a deep study and impatiently strode back and forth, now and then stopping to answer questions propounded by the men, or in response to the courtesies of the citizen visitors. In response to a query as to what caused his seeming perturbation of mind he said that everything was moving too slow for himself and men, and what they wanted was to reach their destination and get some action.

Camp Tom Ball was established at Forest Park, just east of Heights Boulevard; the first troops to arrive were the Smith County Rifles. The Ladies' Military Aid Society and similar organizations began making clothing and surgical dressings for the soldiers. In the midst of these and other military activities, the *Post* on August 8 announced:

Society has taken up the cake walk. . . . There will be an exhibition at the Auditorium tonight, bringing the new fad into the Bayou City.

On September 28 the troops at Camp Tom Ball broke camp, after hostilities had ended. Again Houston found interest in local happenings, including the news that Ed Taylor's new water well at Pierce Junction had turned into a "big gas well." Yellow fever raged in New Orleans, causing a local quarantine against railroads operating from the danger zone; Doctor Guiteras, a Government expert, found four cases of the disease in Houston, and rigid measures against the spread of the fever were enforced. More important locally than the treaty with Spain, signed in December, was Andrew Carnegie's offer of \$50,000 for the establishment of a free library.

A Mexican who claimed to have been one of General Santa Anna's bodyguards during the Texas Revolution created "something of a stir" in Harrisburg in April, 1899, by offering to share two caches of treasure with anyone willing to finance explorations. One cache was said to be buried in the bank of Buffalo Bayou near Sam Allen's house; the other was in the "Lost Cave," in north Texas. The Light Guards and the Emmet Rifles returned on April 19, and made the San Jacinto Day celebration memorable. Work on Houston's first "flat house," the Butler Flats, on Fannin Street at Rusk Avenue, was begun in October; on November 15 the first local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was organized. Because owners of land on San Jacinto Battlefield had refused offers of the State to purchase their holdings, condemnation proceedings were instituted in a Harris County court on November 20; the State thus acquired title to 135 acres.

Night life now offered great variety. Besides the innumerable bars, favorite

resorts were the Turf Exchange, the Karlsruhe Beer Garden at Harrisburg, Okasaki Tom Brown's Japanese Restaurant at 1111 Congress Avenue, the Grand Central Hotel Dining Hall, Stude's Bakery and Coffee Saloon, and Mike Genora's restaurant on Congress Avenue. The Turf Exchange advertised "Direct wires to all race tracks throughout the country." In conjunction with his bookmaking establishment, Capt. John Mueller served excellent and abundant meals on a long counter. Ten-course dinners costing fifty cents were offered at the Grand Central Hotel Dining Hall, 713 Washington Avenue, and entrees included suckling pig, larded quail, and green goose, served with calf's foot jelly, English plum pudding, and fresh strawberries. Stude's Coffee Saloon, at 810 Preston Avenue, remained open all night; there George Hermann, donor of Hermann Park, and other prominent men of the day used to line up before a small window for doughnuts or sweet rolls to eat with their coffee. Colby's Cafe, near the courthouse, specialized in game dinners, turtle soup, and frog's legs, and advertised widely. Before its entrance was a display of venison, ducks, geese, partridges, snipe, and turtles, and inside was a tank for bullfrogs. During watermelon season the waiters are said to have skated from table to table in the melon juice that covered the floor.

New Year's Eve, 1899, found Houston, by the claims of the *City Directory*, the largest railroad center south of St. Louis and the seventy-fifth American city in population. Congress had approved the construction of a deeper ship channel, and prosperous Houstonians had reason to be gay. From Quality Hill to the Two Orphans Saloon they welcomed the New Year with unusual enthusiasm.





## CHAPTER XIII

# WEALTH, AND WORLD WAR

1900-1918

THE MOLDING OF HOUSTON was still incomplete in 1900. Its transition from pioneer village to youthful city had been accomplished, but many of its social and political problems remained unsolved. The oil fields of Harris County and the upper Texas coast lay undiscovered, while the world port-to-be still awaited years of labor. Prosperity, disaster, war, and unprecedented expansion lay just ahead, and miles of prairie were marked for invasion by the growing community.

Organized labor made news early in 1900 by enlarging its ranks and striving for union demands. On February 8 the Stenographers' Association of Houston was organized, with a membership of 400. Master and journeymen plumbers went on strike; a compromise with employers was soon effected. The city council enacted an ordinance providing weekly pay checks for municipally employed laborers. In April the local carpenters' union demanded \$2.50 for an eight-hour day; the *Houston Daily Post* soon reported, "Some employers are paying the scale demanded." Before mid-April, a thousand building trades unionists had walked out; the Brewers' Union pledged \$1,000 to a general strike fund, and the strikers soon won most of their demands.

Books of stamps were a novelty when they were placed on sale at the post office in May, but party lines were still unknown to the 1,200 subscribers of the telephone company. The new five-and-ten-cent store at 415 Main Street was a seven days wonder, and the introduction of a new style for men inspired the organization of the "Shirt Waist Dozen," who gave "shirtwaist hops."

On September 8, 1900, disaster struck the Texas coast. A gale with a velocity of sixty miles an hour swept Houston, wrenching signs and awnings from buildings and shattering windows. Communication with Galveston was broken, and soon local telephone and power lines were down. The hurricane continued into the next day, uprooting trees, leveling fences, and demolishing small houses. Many churches, business houses, and industrial plants were damaged, and one death was attributed to the storm.

From Galveston finally came word of catastrophe. Parts of the island had been swept by tides and lashed by a 110-mile-an-hour wind, taking 6,000 lives and leaving other thousands homeless and temporarily helpless. Their own resources crippled, Houstonians sent the chartered steamboat *Lawrence* down tide-flooded Buffalo Bayou with a cargo of water and provisions, while the railroads strove to establish connections with the stricken island. In less than a week Galveston-bound trains carrying food, clothing, medical supplies,

money, and rehabilitation workers were passing through Houston. On September 10 the *Post* reported:

While Houston was scarred by Saturday's storm, the damage was nearly all property. For ten hours the wind raged, twisting and tearing buildings and doing terrific damage in all parts of the city, yet Houston's loss of life was one killed and that only incidentally to the storm. . . . No record was kept of the wind's velocity. Mr. McNabb from his observations says the *Post's* estimate of from 50 to 60 miles an hour is about correct. Rainfall was 4.22.

Refugees filled Houston in the weeks after the storm, more than 300 finding shelter in the auditorium; local newspapers published the names of rescued Galvestonians. Country-wide contributions for the relief of the storm's victims continued to pour into Houston until November, when the local Red Cross relief station concluded its rehabilitation work by ordering a million strawberry-plants for distribution among berry growers along the coast.

Meantime, word had been received of the death of William Marsh Rice in New York City. By the terms of a deed, the name of the Capitol Hotel was chanced to the Rice Hotel. As the year ended, all Houston was discussing the death of the man whose fortune was to build Rice Institute.

On January 30, 1901, the *Post* reported:

A deal was consummated yesterday whereby Mr. P. M. Granberry leased the property known as Forest Park to a company made up of Pennsylvania and Houston capitalists. The company leases the entire ground, the consideration being that the leasees are to sink an eight-inch oil well to a depth of 2,000 feet.

No pay sand was encountered at Forest Park, although the diffused flares of producing wells can now be seen from Heights Boulevard on misty nights. But the first "wildcat" well of the Spindletop field, near Beaumont, had blown in on January 10; as the nearest wholesale point, Houston had already begun its spectacular career as an oil center. Hotels were soon filled with "lease hounds," and oil companies were formed and chartered almost overnight.

Progress moved swiftly now in Houston: in March the Left Hand Fishing Club bought an automobile, one of the first in the city; a site on Travis Street at McKinney Avenue, adjoining the First Presbyterian Church, was selected for the new Carnegie Library. President William McKinley made an address in the auditorium on May 3. Disaster intervened when fire destroyed the Market House in June; the Hutchins House burned in October. On December 8 the *Post* reported: "During the past twelve months, Houston's two breweries have sold more than 200,000 barrels of beer. . . . Most of this was used in Houston." The Harris County Bar Association was organized on December 14, with Col. O. T. Holt as president. On December 21 the *Houston Chronicle* commented: "Automobiles have come to Houston . . . for more than a month now the agile, swift-moving steam machines have been dashing back and forth over the downtown streets."

Local estimates in 1902 claimed that Houston had risen from third to first place among Texas cities in the volume of industry and commerce. Its population was, by the 1900 census report, 58,203; according to the *City Directory*, the figure should have been 87,783. There were seven banks, twenty-five newspapers, six post office substations, and offices of thirty oil companies. The Southwestern Oil Company's Heights refinery had a capacity of 1,000 barrels daily. There were thirty-one miles of paved streets, and a new automatic street sweeper. Texas rice growers, with a \$6,000,000 crop in prospect, looked to Houston for their principal market. Suburban districts began spreading southward; on July 22, the *Houston Chronicle* reported "the purchase . . . of the tract of about 44 acres adjoining the terminus of the South End car line . . . to be made a residence addition to Houston, to be called 'Westmoreland.' The features include a fine boulevard 100 feet wide through the center, with a beautiful entrance at the junction of Louisiana street and Berry avenue." At the annual autumn Carnival in November, Jesse H. Jones was crowned "King Nottoc IV."

In February, 1903, a smallpox epidemic caused a panic when municipal and county authorities, quarreling about the financial and regulatory responsibility, failed to enforce measures to halt the spread of the disease. Victims in the first stages of smallpox wandered about the town, and at length Doctor Brumby, city health officer, confined a case to his office in the City Hall, declaring, "He remains here until the dispute between the city and county as to which shall assume charge of the smallpox patients has been settled." The State attorney general finally ruled that the responsibility was the county's, but the city health officer voluntarily assumed charge of the patients; by March the epidemic was under control.

A new city charter, granted by the State legislature in March, increased the corporate area of Houston by seven square miles. The Preston Avenue underpass was authorized in June, the tunnel to be completed by September, 1904. Jesse H. Jones opened a lumberyard in August, and was awarded the contract to furnish lumber for the Texas building at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, to be held at St. Louis in 1904. Houston was rapidly acquiring a skyline of multiple-story buildings. Among those finished or under construction were the new City Hall and Market House on Travis Street, the Grand Central Hotel, the seven-story office building of John H. Kirby at Main Street and Rusk Avenue, the six-story Stowers Building on Main Street at Capitol Avenue, and the eight-story First National Bank Building on Main Street and Franklin Avenue. Oil development at Humble was largely responsible for the sudden building boom. Successful rice culture in the vicinity was attracting hundreds of farmers who arrived daily on Southern Pacific excursion trains; by September, these prospective settlers swarmed through the city. Schools were crowded to capacity, a shortage of houses existed, and Harris County's wealth, set at \$38,688,883, led the counties of Texas.

Below the skyline, just off Preston Avenue near the Grand Central

Station, Houston still had part of its old-time "Tin Can Alley." Here a 300-pound "Auntie" sold cocaine, and brawls were as common as mongrel cats; policemen assigned to the district were constantly busy. The Alley was no longer "the toughest place in the South," as it had been when its squalid thoroughfare led to Vinegar Hill; but cocaine addicts still frequented its dives. Near it was a section called "Schneider's quarters," hidden by the brush of White Oak Bayou, where "cocaine fiends rage at heart's content and no one is disturbed." Here in shanties on stilts, thieves once hid; a gypsy campground was near by.

Not far uptown from such slums, municipal officials moved into the new City Hall in January, 1904. On April 1, members of the Houston Golf Club selected fifty-six acres of land across the bayou from Glenwood Cemetery, and began practicing the new game. Construction of the Houston-to-Galveston electric interurban line began on April 29; four days later the employees of the local street car company went on strike. When strikebreakers were put to work, a mob that the police chief and seven bowler-hatted officers were unable to disperse formed in front of the Travis Street office of the company, but strikers and bystanders fled at the approach of the Houston Light Guards. Scattered instances of violence continued until October, when the strike was settled. After rats had destroyed several money orders at the post office, postal officials acquired a "Government cat" with six toes and six claws on each foot; soon the *Chronicle* reported, "the 'government kitten' . . . caught its first rat."

In a December election, Houstonians voted for the adoption of the commission form of government, a system inaugurated in Galveston soon after the storm of 1900.

Drillers, "lease hounds," roustabouts, and oil promoters filled Houston early in 1905, attracted by news of gushers in the Humble field. A visitor from Indiana wrote in a letter:

Houston — the moving, bustling, active, thriving, industrious, wide-awake, growing city is today the metropolis of Texas. Forty-one thousand in 1900 — has almost doubled in five years. It has more railroads, and better wagon roads than any Texas city. It's growing so fast, hotels are not adequate, churches not large enough, post office entirely too small . . . and the city clock has to be moved up. . . . Houston is fifty miles from the gulf, but has tide water, in a deep sea canal on which the government is expending \$4,000,000 this year. People from all sections of the United States are hitching on to Houston — It's got what they are looking for — opportunity.

Two sections of the ship channel had been completed by September 1, and ships sailed daily through the Irish Bend cut-off several miles below Harrisburg. A newly enacted municipal ordinance forbidding "goo goo eyes" and flirting was being rigidly enforced late in 1905, when Carrie Nation arrived in town. The militant prohibitionist's first call was at the Carrie Nation Saloon on the corner of Wood and Willow Streets, in the "Bloody Fifth," where

she addressed barkeep O'Brien: "I told you to take my name off that sign two years ago, and now I'm here to do it for you." With that she hurled a rock against the backbar mirror, shattered a whisky case and a door pane with two more rocks, and then, according to the story, drew her hatchet. O'Brien succeeded in preventing further destruction, and later declared that publicity gained from the episode was worth far more than the \$700 damage to stock and fixtures.

The members of the commission form of government took office on April 1, 1906, and in May the municipality bought the plant and properties of the independent Houston Water Company. Three State banks were opened that year, and total bank clearances were more than a billion dollars, of which \$4,000,000 was remitted to the trustees of Rice Institute by executors of the Rice estate. On May 13, 1907, a "new moving picture show," the Orpheum Theater, opened at 418 Travis Street, and soon an ordinance was enacted forbidding Sunday shows. Lumber production in the region was approaching its peak, and a building boom was animated by a price war between lumber dealers. On May 30 a cyclone destroyed much property, especially along the Harrisburg Road; during the storm, the pesthouse used for smallpox isolation was blown into the bayou. The city health officer raced along the bayou banks in his automobile, and at length succeeded in roping the timbers, anchored the pesthouse, and rescued its one occupant.

That autumn Houston suffered two great fires. On September 2, four blocks in the Fifth Ward were destroyed; on December 1, the city's most valuable downtown buildings, in the area between Main and Fannin Streets, Congress and Preston Avenues, were burned. Included in the loss were Federal Court records.

"Wildcatting" in the Goose Creek oil field made news in 1908. New buildings under construction included the ten-story Chronicle Building, the twelve-story Scanlan Building, the \$400,000 Federal Building, a new courthouse, and the Hermann Building. President William Howard Taft spoke to "ten acres of people" from a balcony of the Rice Hotel on October 23, 1909. Local estimates of the city's population now rose to 100,000. The police department adopted motorcycles to enforce the speed ordinance; automobiles had become so popular that Main Street *modistes* were displaying new "motoring apparel" for women. On October 7, the *Post* described the latest headwear:

A few seasons ago the motoring women were hideous creatures to view. They were shapeless bundles of unhappy-looking clothes with two goggle-shaded eyes and heads tied on as though they were afraid they would blow off. . . . The new fall model in motor millinery [is] a soft felt in the shape of a Panama or cowboy hat. . . . The growth of the motor veil is quite remarkable. Not content with being three yards long it has been expanded into three yards wide as well.

On October 1, 1910, the *Post* reprinted a report from the *Montgomery Advertiser*: "Colonel A. J. Houston, son of General Sam Houston, is running for governor of Texas on a prohibition platform." O. B. Colquitt, antiprohibitionist, was elected, however. In June, President Taft signed a bill appropriating \$1,250,000 for the completion of the ship channel. Ground was broken for the first building at Rice Institute in July, and in August the Union Station was opened. In October the Houston Business League became the Chamber of Commerce. The sixteen-story "Carter's Folly"—today, with six added stories, the Second National Bank Building—was completed in December despite the contention of most Houstonians that an attempt to lay bricks so high above ground was unsafe. The 1910 census set Houston's population at 78,800; to that figure the *Chronicle* added an estimated 25,000 suburbanites, maintaining that greater Houston had a population of 103,800.

In 1911 the city had six department stores, nine hotels, eight office buildings, nine banks, six schools, and four theaters. By the end of the year more than 150 new real estate additions had been recorded at the courthouse. The \$500,000 post office was opened on December 1. Houston firemen answered an average of four alarms daily between January 1 and February 26, 1912, but the "most destructive fire in the history of the city" occurred on February 21, when forty blocks of North Side dwellings burned. Building permits for 1,000 new houses that year totaled more than \$1,000,000, while almost two million tons of freight was handled on the ship channel.

The 1,650-foot Main Street viaduct was opened in 1913, the year parcel post delivery was inaugurated. The Intracoastal Canal between Matagorda Bay and the Brazos River was finished in May. Main Street's first suffragette parade was led by Mrs. Angelina Pankhurst in November.

Motor busses were placed in operation on Main Street south of Franklin Avenue in 1914, and the Missouri-Kansas-Texas passenger station was opened. The *Chronicle* viewed with alarm the lack of an ordinance requiring "the separation of sexes in the motion picture shows," and recommended that policewomen patrol the darkened aisles of theaters. The *Press* praised a new traffic law, declaring that it would "forever end jay-walking in Houston."

The rise of "Farmer Jim" Ferguson, pioneer champion in Texas of the "have nots," his election as Governor, the outbreak of war in Europe, and the subsequent collapse of the cotton market failed to dominate completely Houston's story in 1914. On May 30 George H. Hermann gave the municipality 278 acres of beautifully wooded land near Rice Institute, nucleus of the present Hermann Park. That summer the deepening of the ship channel to twenty-five feet was completed, and on November 10 Port Houston was formally opened.

Houston was war-conscious; eleven thousand soldiers, the Second Division of the Regular Army, had camped briefly on the suburban prairie in April. Sham battles became popular; thirty Rice Institute students organized a military unit.

The Houston Light Guards and Cavalry Troop A of the National Guard had seen border duty and returned home; flags flew from every staff in town.

An "official flag" of Houston was designed by W. A. Wheeldon in June, 1915; the municipal ensign was a white star enclosing the city seal, on a field of blue. A "municipal song," sung to the tune of "Tipperary," was dedicated at the Fourth of July celebration in the new City Auditorium. On August 15 the barometer began falling, and a gale which became an eighty-mile hurricane struck Houston, taking three lives, causing property damage estimated by the Associated Press at between one and two million dollars, and filling hotels and houses with refugees from the bayshore. Barometric pressure readings reached a new low of 28.21 during the storm, said to have been the third worst of its kind "in the world since records had been kept." In October, Houston claimed the first all-woman's fair ever to be held, an event inaugurated by a parade in which more than 2,000 women participated. The purpose of the fair was to further the interests of women in vocational fields and the home-making crafts. While it was in progress, the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* reported:

The first college women's banquet to be held in the South, and probably in the United States, was given . . . Saturday afternoon. Present were 275 women representing 78 colleges, schools and universities in the United States and two abroad.

On the evening of November 18, Houstonians rode the city's 300 "jitneys" to the Grand Central Station to gaze for an hour at the Liberty Bell, confident that President Woodrow Wilson's recent re-election would "keep us out of war." By December the jitneys had to stop at the corner of Main Street and Texas Avenue, where Police Chief Davidson was trying out a traffic semaphore. The cotton market had recovered somewhat before the year's end, and Houston spot quotations were called "the highest in the world."

Main Street's first "preparedness" parade marched on June 3, 1916. The old Federal Building at Fannin Street and Franklin Avenue was repaired for use as United States Army, Navy, and Marine Corps recruiting offices; Port Houston became congested with shipments of war materials to the Allies. Harris County experienced another oil boom that autumn, as gusher after gusher blew in near Goose Creek.

While rumors of impending United States entry into the war increased early in 1917, the Houston cotton market broke \$16.25 a bale; on the cessation of diplomatic relations with Germany on February 3 the price advanced \$5. When war was declared on April 6, prices of staple commodities rose sharply. Troop movements through the city soon became commonplace; although only eighty Houstonians enlisted in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps on May 5, designated as Recruiting Day, local records had been broken the day before by enlistments of eighty-one men in the army and twenty-seven in the navy. By June, 12,272 men were enrolled in the local selective service registration, and Liberty Loan subscriptions totaled more than two and a half million dollars.

Construction work at Camp Logan, National Guard mobilization camp

just beyond the western city limits, was begun on July 24. On August 17, three companies of Illinois Guard infantry arrived in Houston, to find a Negro battalion of Twenty-Fourth Infantry regulars on duty at the camp. Trouble between local police and Negro soldiers culminated in a riot on August 23 (see Points of Interest, *Memorial Park*). Houstonians immediately found their city under martial law, with Brig. Gen. John A. Hulen in command; order and civil authority were restored on August 27. Thirteen Negro participants in the riot later were hanged at Fort Sam Houston.

Texas Gulf Coast oil workers went on strike on October 31, demanding a minimum wage of \$4 daily; 2,000 troops were stationed at oil fields, refineries, and pipeline pumping stations to prevent sabotage. Meantime, the construction of Ellington Field, \$1,000,000 airport for training army flyers, had started near Genoa, and a strike of laborers there brought two companies from Camp Logan for guard duty. Seventy-five thousand people participated in a street dance given for the camp's 33,000 soldiers on November 17, as fourteen bands played for dancers along Main Street between Lamar and McGowen Avenues, a distance of almost a mile. "Bootleg" whisky was plentiful in November, but sugar and butter were scarce, and Tuesdays became "meatless days" at hotels and restaurants. On December 20, the Red Cross sold kisses at the Bender Hotel for \$1 each. Before the end of the year Governor Ferguson had been impeached. But such news was overshadowed by the American declaration of war against Austria-Hungary, new taxes, and reports of American troop action in France.

Events of 1918 moved swiftly and dramatically toward a climax. Turmoil occurred at Rice Institute in January when students protested against military training and regulations by putting the power plant out of operation, breaking windows, and turning a fire hose on military officers until "the captain was driven out without his sword." "Co-eds" joined the protest, declaring that "in addition to being treated like criminals, they were forced to wear ill-fitted khaki dresses and campaign hats." Other local news concerned the evils and blessings of statewide prohibition, the annexation of Houston Heights, the "first snowstorm since 1895," whale meat, war gardens, "wheatless days," "heatless days," and "lightless nights."

By early spring United States troops were in action on four sectors of the Western Front; twenty Houstonians of the Twelfth Aerial Squadron from Ellington Field had landed in England; and nine members of the city health department were with the medical corps in France. Secretary of the Treasury William Gibbs McAdoo was enthusiastically cheered at the City Auditorium in April. The Thirty-third Division left Camp Logan for "over there" in May, the month that brought news of the death of Donald Gregg, a Heights boy, first Houstonian to die in action in France. Bellaire became a municipal corporation in June; in July, 15,640 women registered for the first time for a national election. But local affairs held little interest for a city whose attentions were focused upon the battlefields of Cantigny, Belleau Wood, and Chateau Thierry.



"Spanish influenza" attacked the home front in September; between 600 and 700 cases were reported at Camp Logan. When the Texas prohibition law was declared unconstitutional in October, many Houstonians tried "rock and rye" for the "flu," which by then had attacked almost half the residents; on October 14, deaths totaled 111. The epidemic had begun to abate by the time Ream Field, aviation camp of the Second Provisional Wing, had been established at Park Place.

News of the signing of the armistice was received by the *Houston Post* at 1:45 o'clock on the morning of November 11. Officers at army posts were notified, but newspapermen withheld the report from others until their extra editions reached the streets. On November 12 the *Post* described local reaction:

At 4:15 the *Post* was on the street and then the city rubbed its eyes and awoke. First the cry of the newsboys, then the honking of automobile horns then far out in the city came the rattle of the city's private arsenals of light pocket artillery. The locomotives then got into action and gradually all the factory whistles and sirens for miles around. No one able to get up remained in bed. Lights gleamed in every dwelling and people poured down into the business district. . . . Until late in the day the revelry continued. Monday night it was renewed with greater vigor. . . . At 6 o'clock the downtown streets were well filled, at 7 they were crowded, at 8 they were jammed, at 9 they were choked and from then on it was one wriggling, squirming, squeezing mass of humanity, awakened rudely from sleep but joyously from a horrible nightmare which had lasted four years.

Almost as welcome as peace was the Government's approval, in December, of a plan to increase the depth of the ship channel. The announcement of the impending construction of a big plant for the Crown Oil and Refining Company was also cheering, and indicated something of the great growth that awaited Houston in the years just ahead.



## CHAPTER XIV

# FOURTEEN YEARS OF PROGRESS

1918-1932

THE YEARS 1918-19 ushered Houston into big business circles; the community had at length reached economic maturity. Although growth had been so rapid in the new century that Houston sprawled awkwardly, a city's skyline rose now above the prairie, and many smokestacks traced a black fretwork against the magnolias along the bayou. Coming of age during the war years, Houston entered its adult estate with a soberness induced by the 200 white crosses that marked the graves of its soldier dead.

On April 6, 1919, the *Houston Post* echoed the common local attitude:

If there is a human being in Houston who still believes that this city of ours in the Southwest is not rapidly approaching the metropolitanism of the great cities of the country he has only to be told of the big new movements that are being born here . . . that only a city like Houston would be able to start such big, democratic movements . . . as the Art League, Renaissance Society, the Free Arts Society, and now — the Little Theatre. . . People of Houston who are thinking along universal lines are earnest and unafraid . . . and believe that within ten years a population of 300,000 will call Houston home.

Early in 1919 the Government earmarked \$3,500,000 to improve the Houston Ship Channel and increase its depth to thirty feet; two new refineries were erected beside the waterway; almost a million feet of lumber were required for the construction of barges built in local shipyards. Among the dozens of important industrial additions were plants of the Pittsburgh Steel Company, the American Wire and Steel Company, and the Southern Motor Manufacturing Company. Typical of the times was the change at the corner of Walker Avenue and Louisiana Street, where the building of the Barnett School gave way to a motor assembling plant; the old structure had housed Confederate headquarters in the days when the dashing General Magruder had "helped in princely fashion to win the war for the South." Where graceful white columns had supported wide verandas, utilitarian factory walls rose to make a landmark of progress.

In March, 1919, the Houston Inter-American Mercantile Syndicate was organized to operate a steamship line to South America. A spokesman for the Texas Ports Traffic Association announced that "Texas ports including Houston . . . will cease to squabble among themselves and co-operate in an effort to divert legitimate tonnage from the West and Northwest States." Through Port Houston tonnage valued at \$31,637,331 had passed in 1918, with shipments of shell the largest single export in point of volume.

The homecoming of United States soldiers revived the military parades and music of wartime; each returning contingent was welcomed by crowds of cheering residents, and invariably a shower of blossoms pelted the doughboys. The municipality played host at banquets and other entertainments. On April 6, the 132nd Field Artillery was tendered a "general reunion . . . and eats" at the auditorium. That week the *Houston Post* reported: "Ellington Field is all astir; mechanics are working overtime on hangars and fields preparing all available planes for flight . . . to make the Flying Circus to be staged by American aces, foreign flyers and Ellington Field men, a complete success." A few days later the newspaper announced, "Plans to make Ellington . . . the greatest aviation field in the world were consummated Monday when officials of the air service . . . recommended immediate purchase of several hundred acres of land contiguous to the present flying field. . . . Officials of Washington have recognized the natural advantages that Houston offers as a flying center." In April, ex-service men met in the city and elected Col. John S. Hoover as commander of a temporary organization called the League of the Great War; in November, this became the first local post of the American Legion. Asked to subscribe \$7,593,800, Harris County people on April 19 witnessed a "gigantic Victory Loan parade." On San Jacinto Day, veterans of the Houston Light Guard Association held a reunion near the city, its members swapping yarns of the Spanish-American and World Wars, and the Punitive Expedition into Mexico. At a meeting of the Houston Teachers' Association on April 28, more than 250 members became members of the American Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor. On May 14, the *Post* reported, "Tuesday was Rainbow Day in Houston. For 151 men of the 117th Supply Train, Houston's own war-weary, travel-stained but happy heroes . . . returned home." The War Mothers donated a bronze flagstaff, placed on Main Street at McKinney Avenue; inscribed upon its base were the words, "Erected in recognition of our heroes who served in the world war for liberty." When the 359th Infantry returned on June 17, a street dance was held between Capitol and Walker Avenues, with 6,000 Houstonians participating. Wounded soldiers were hospitalized at Camp Logan. Still another reminder of the war was the German U-Boat 88, which was tied up in the channel for a week and inspected by thousands.

By June, local cotton receipts had reached a million bales; a month later Port Houston was seriously affected by a maritime strike which spread throughout Texas Gulf ports. In August, the city's first community chest for social welfare was launched, and a local branch of the Federal Reserve Bank opened. Labor showed increasing interest in organization; among Houston groups now becoming affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, or forming independent unions, were the city firemen, employees of the municipal street and bridge department, and telephone operators.

A tropical hurricane which lashed Corpus Christi on September 14 was little felt in Houston, but news of the disaster brought quick response. A relief train and a detachment of the National Guard were sent at once, and

\$50,000 was raised in voluntary subscriptions. That month the *Post* reported eight oil fields in the Houston area, with an annual production of 30,000,000 barrels; refineries along the ship channel included those of the Sinclair, Galena, Humble, Crown, Deep Water, Circle, Mary Owens, La Porte, Hoffman, Transatlantic, and Pierce companies; mixing and storage plants were operated by the Texas, Magnolia, and Gulf companies. Port Houston now had facilities for berthing a dozen or more ships at a time, and new wharves were being built in the steadily growing industrial zone along the ship channel.

During 1919 Houston had spent \$4,000,000 in new building, fifty per cent more than during 1918. Not included in this total was the \$4,000,000 packing plant of the Texas Union Packing Company and the Texas Union Stockyards, a project started late in December. Houstonians learned from the census report in February, 1920, that their number had grown to 155,000, an increase of 10,000 population in a year. Property values were assessed at \$100,000,000, and industrial plants worth \$600,000,000 lined the ship channel. Houston had become the largest lumber market in the State; its gross annual cotton receipts had reached 3,000,000 bales; and within a radius of a hundred miles, more than a million head of Herefords grazed. The city's 1,293 business houses now had an annual retail trade worth \$63,000,000.

Gen. John J. Pershing was the city's guest on February 5. Railroad shop employees struck in July, and again in October. By the autumn of 1920 Houston's trade with Mexico was valued at \$20,000,000, and several local firms were engaged in wholesale trade with Europe. On November 16, the *Post* reported, "Houston . . . occupies approximately 40 square miles of the county." The dairying industry now did \$6,750,000 of business annually. A \$1,000,000 fire swept the Southern Pacific Railroad shops on December 17; two days later the *Post* commented, "with 18 railroads meeting here, and the innumerable steamship lines which connect with those overseas, Houston may well be proud of the claims of her citizens that it is the heart of the Gulf Coast oil industry. The production of oil from . . . 14 fields is roughly estimated to be not less than 111,265 barrels." Included in oil development was the Blue Ridge State penal farm, now marked by forty-five derricks.

On January 1, 1921, the *Post* reported that in the preceding year 10,400 vessels had called at Port Houston, carrying 1,210,204 tons valued at \$82,301,162. Houston now became the concentration and shipping point for the State's wool clip, after its selection for this purpose by the Texas Wool Growers' Association. Among new industrial plants were a flour mill, coal bunkering plant, and several big petroleum refineries. The year started with the installation of Houston's first traffic "cops," stationed at the corners of Congress, Preston, Prairie, Texas and Capitol Avenues, to "eliminate the ever-present traffic jam which has caused more 'cussin' among motorists during the past year." Another "big city" development was widely discussed when Will C. Hogg built a penthouse on top of his building at Louisiana Street and Preston Avenue;

the roof of the skyscraper, it was announced, had a "grassy lawn and flower garden."

In April, Oscar Holcombe, often to be chosen mayor, was elected to succeed Mayor A. E. Amerman. That month the Young Men's Business League merged with the Chamber of Commerce, and Houston was placed on the route of one of the country's eight transcontinental air lines, a service operating between San Diego, California, and Savannah, Georgia. In November, 600 longshoremen went on strike, and cotton for shipment to foreign ports temporarily remained in the warehouses. Big buildings were going up throughout the business district, and labor was scarce. Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France visited in December, the month when 2,051 Houstonians were inducted into the Ku Klux Klan in a single mammoth ceremony "on the prairie a short distance south of Bellaire." Building permits for 1921 passed the \$10,000,000 mark, yet real estate operators announced that 10,000 newcomers could not find houses. The population was estimated at 138,276.

Houston's sleek fire horses, long the pride of the fire department, were replaced in 1922 with motorized equipment; traffic signals were installed downtown, and streetcars were routed around Main Street to lessen traffic congestion. That year scrap iron was added to Houston's growing export list, the first shipments going to Italy. The ship *Irmgard* sailed in May with the first cargo of cottonseed cake to be processed in Houston.

On January 29, 1923, Houstonians attended the opening of the new \$1,000,000 Majestic Theater; a month later Ignace Jan Paderewski delighted a local audience after an absence of thirty years. In March, the abandonment of Ellington Field was completed, and equipment valued at \$100,000 was sold at auction for \$14,700. War broke out between jitney drivers and streetcar interests; in June, the city voted that the jitneys might continue to operate. A gigantic project was instituted to drain 80,000 acres—the watershed of Bray's Bayou, which was widened and deepened near Houston, thus removing a flood hazard. New industrial plants on the waterway now represented a \$150,000,000 investment. Fifteen fires in 1923 destroyed property worth almost \$2,000,000.

Building permits for the year totaled nearly \$20,000,000; not included was millions of dollars' worth of industrial construction along the Houston Ship Channel. Houston's population early in 1924 was 202,590, an increase of 46.5 per cent over the United States Census figure for 1920. In January, jitney service was abolished by a vote of the residents; the Houston Electric Company announced the purchase of new busses. On February 4 the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* reported:

William Jennings Bryan scathingly scored infidels, modernists and biological professors teaching the doctrine of Darwin in a speech under the auspices of the local Y.M.C.A. Sunday night at the City Auditorium.

The Bassett Blakely Ranch near Houston became a center of attention as motion picture folk and equipment arrived in August for the filming of part of Emerson Hough's *North of 36*. Luna Park with its electrical riding devices, together with marathon dances and bobbed hair, occupied much attention that year. The fire hazard in the business district was reported by thirty-three insurance companies as "appalling." An outbreak of hoof and mouth disease among cattle of the region brought a rigid quarantine; dogs, cats, pets of all kinds, and livestock moved through the disease zone were shot. So stringent did enforcement of the quarantine become that pilots of airplanes were forbidden to "rise or land" in the infected territory. The wholesale slaughter of stricken cattle was conducted by inspectors brought from as far away as California. A flurry was caused in October when a case of yellow fever appeared in the city; the disease, however, did not spread.

Sleet covered Houston when a blizzard struck on December 19; the city was temporarily cut off from the outside world. A northbound Santa Fe passenger train was derailed, but there were no injuries; trees broke under a load of sleet, and streetcar service was blocked by ice. The roof of a hangar fell under the weight of sleet and ice, with a loss of \$100,000.

On April 13, 1925, the annexation of several additions extended the municipal area by twenty-five square miles; bond issues totaling almost \$5,000,000 were voted, and Jefferson Davis and Hermann Hospitals opened. Suburbs and outlying rural districts felt a second quarantine for hoof and mouth disease in September, at which time also the Mexican government placed an embargo on Pullman and passenger cars from Houston. Cotton receipts for a single day, October 19, were 68,704 bales, with a total of 1,784,404 bales for the season. November rains falling for nine consecutive days, stopped motor travel from the city, disrupted telephone and streetcar service, and made unpaved streets impassable. On December 10, building permits for 1925 reached the \$30,000,000 mark, and increased another \$5,000,000 the next year. Port tonnage records and those for municipal improvements, including school construction, were smashed in 1926. By this time forty-two steamship lines were making Houston a port of call, and eighteen railroads met them at shipside.

Snow covered Houston on January 23, 1926. Natural gas, piped from Refugio County fields at a cost of \$5,000,000, was turned on for domestic and industrial use in May. A diesel-motored fireboat, the *Port Houston*, was purchased to protect plants along the waterway, and the Negro Hospital, a gift of J. S. Cullinan, was dedicated on June 19. Houston's population was estimated by the new *City Directory* at 284,446, and Port Houston was ranked among the country's eleven first ports in the amount of water-borne foreign commerce. New \$1,000,000 freight terminals were being erected by the Southern Pacific and Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroads, and great docks and wharves of the Morgan Line were nearing completion at Clinton. The municipal limits were increased to about seventy square miles in December,

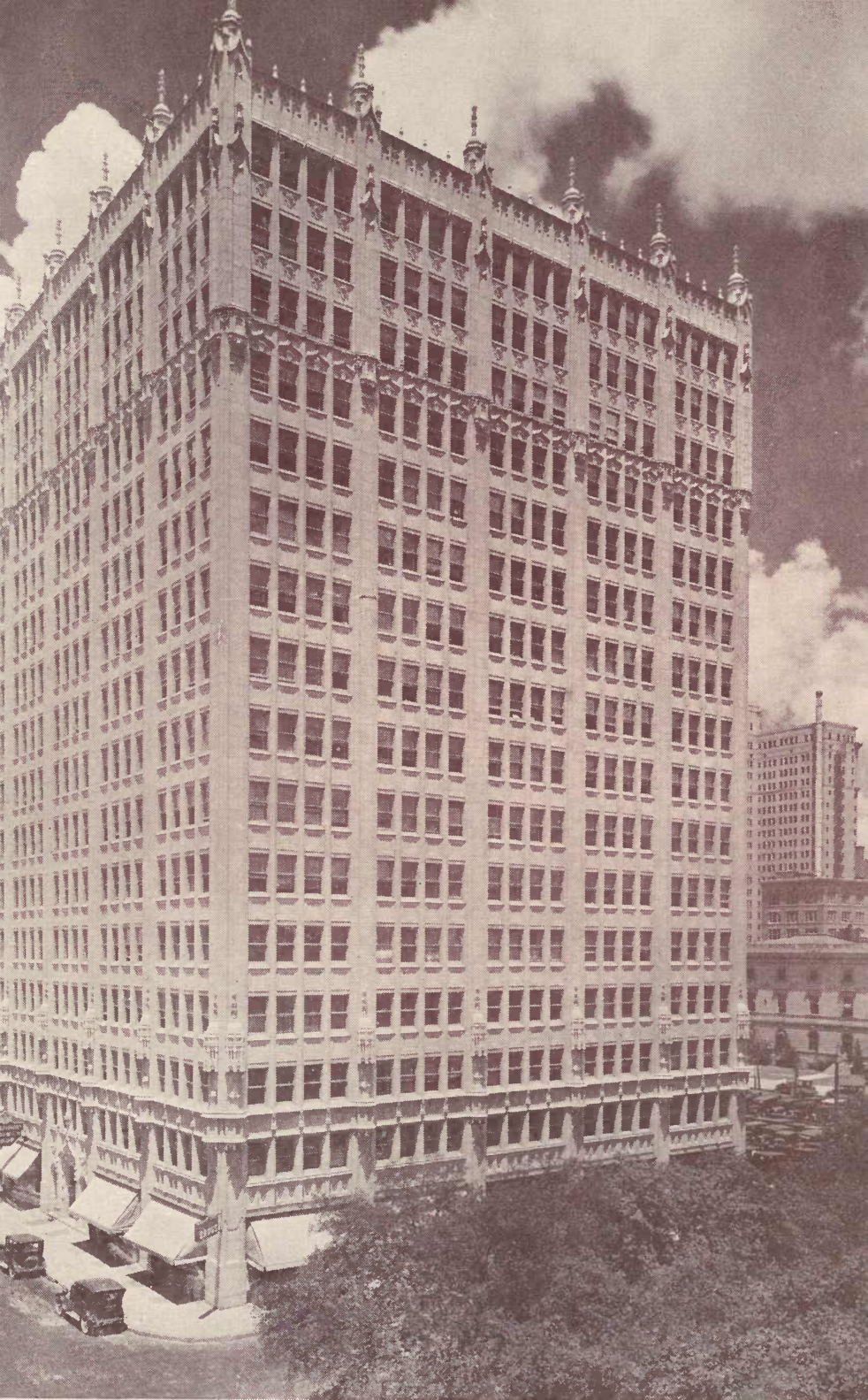


*Commerce Building*



Gulf Building







Esperson Buildings



Petroleum Building



*First National Bank Building*



*Rice Hotel on site of Texas Republic Capitol*

*Merchants & Manufacturers Building*





*Humble Building*

after the annexation of Harrisburg, Memorial Park, River Oaks, and Cottage Grove.

The year 1927 was notable for the erection of the Niels Esperson Building and other skyscrapers. A \$6,975,000 municipal bond issue was authorized; the Civic Center site was purchased; and industrial and oil developments were extensive. In 1928 Mayor Holcombe supplied jobs for the unemployed, paying them \$1.50 a day on municipal projects. In this year real estate transactions broke all records, with 19,139 deeds filed. Almost \$35,000,000 in new building was contracted for, including an auditorium near Hermann Square to house the Democratic National Convention. Under construction were the Gulf Building, then the tallest west of Chicago; the first unit of the Farmers' Market, and three bank buildings. On February 6, 1928, a black-and-gold Pitcairn biplane landed with the city's first air mail; the outgoing mail contained a quart of buttermilk. Houston's municipal airport was officially opened on March 2. The old Allen warehouse near the junction of White Oak and Buffalo Bayous was demolished to make way for the Merchants and Manufacturers Building.

A flood roared down Buffalo Bayou in May, 1929, doing damage estimated in the millions of dollars; six dredges were required to remove shoals caused by the floodwaters. Christmas in 1929 was "white" with snow and sleet. That year Houston attained first rank in Texas as an industrial center, and ranked sixth among the country's ports. On March 22, 1930, bond issues totaling \$13,270,000 were approved. A dozen more skyscrapers were added to Houston's downtown district, including the Sterling Building; the value of manufactured products totaled \$181,181,000. Planters of the region rejoiced when a fleet of airplanes, equipped to treat boll-weevil-infested cotton fields with poison, arrived at the Houston Airport. On July 4, balloon races attracted 300,000 Houstonians, who watched the takeoff from the Bellaire Speedway. Another big occasion was the visit of the cruiser *Houston*, which tied up at Pier 14 on October 25; later the flagship of the Far East Squadron, this was the largest vessel ever to visit the port. Spreading unemployment in 1930 caused Mayor Walter Monteith to appoint a committee to study local problems; headquarters were established in the Hampshire Building, where emergency relief was dispensed to those in need. Houston's population now was 292,352.

More of Houston's landmarks fell before the expanding needs of commerce, in 1931. One was a little house on Prairie Avenue and Louisiana Street, built by Emile Simmler in 1841. Simmler, a mattress maker, had used Spanish moss for filling. The Brazos Hotel, known for its Brazos Court where the socialites of Houston once dined, was razed to make way for the new Southern Pacific depot, the *Houston Press* remarking:

Farewell Brazos, old friend. Your day has come at last. . . . The heels of many famous ones have clicked across the white floor of your lobby. . . . Sarah Bernhardt's hand fluttered over the pages of your

register . . . the great heavy fist of John L. Sullivan made an ink smudge for your record . . . 'Gentleman Jim' Corbett wrote his name in a bank clerk's script . . . the doors flung wide and the heavy tread of Taft echoed against your walls . . . Roosevelt's smile flashed and Mansfield's voice rolled across your rooms.

In May, 1931, unions affiliated with the Houston Building Trades Council went on strike, but a compromise between building contractors and strikers soon ended the difficulty. Old memories were revived on May 29 when the *Custodian* and the *Tatsuha Maru* raced on the waterway leading to the Turning Basin for the honor of carrying Houston's two-millionth bale of cotton; the contest, called "the wildest race of the Ship Channel," was won by the *Custodian*, a British ship. A week later the *Karlsruhe*, giant of the North German Lloyd Lines, and the *Guadeloupe*, a French liner, docked in the ship channel; as the *Press* commented, "Never before in the port's history has the Channel held two such mighty visitors at one time." On July 16, Houston's cotton trade inspired the *Press*:

Strange names, unknown ports, unusual people, the romance of the unseen—all these are combined on a little slip of paper on which every year the Houston Cotton Exchange renders its accounts. From the grey barren shores of Barent's Sea on the northern coast of Russia, the Lapp port, Murmursk, to humid, tropical Buena Ventura on the equator in Colombia, and from the fresh beauty that belongs to Southern Spain and the port of Malaga to dirty, villainous Shanghai, age-old seat of romance and adventure, that little piece of paper takes you. Sixty-six ports, representing 21 countries, are listed . . . to which cotton freighters from Houston thresh a tortuous way.



## CHAPTER XV

# SKYSCRAPERS AND GREAT SHIPS

1932-1941

HOUSTON faced an eventful period when, in 1932, it began calling upon its tremendous natural reserves. It was to know economic slumps and booms while the depression swept the country, but never was it to feel as keenly as many another American city the full force of the national business recession. Almost simultaneously with the stock market collapse, oil replaced cotton as the most important single product of the coastal prairies; and the ship channel had become important to a widespread petroleum industry. Meantime, Houston had risen to first place in population among the cities of the State, and the local spurt in construction had not spent itself.

The county government began the year by awarding contracts for the paving of seventeen roads, a project financed by a bond issue of 1930. The ship channel was undergoing its most ambitious improvements since 1925, which included dredging from Morgan's Cut to Harrisburg, and the construction of Turning Basin docks. Downtown, the chatter of riveting machines proclaimed a four-story addition to the main post office. Air passenger service between Houston and Atlanta was inaugurated on June 4. Because of adverse business conditions, the Esperson Building, the Post-Dispatch Building, the Sam Houston Hotel, and the Warwick Hotel were sold at auction, and ownership of the Sterling Building changed hands during the year. But permits for the construction of two big buildings were granted in March, and cotton export figures and Port Houston tonnage totals reached new highs before the year's end.

Texas experienced its worst effects from the economic crisis late in 1932 and early in 1933. In the 1932 elections, local voters had reaffirmed their faith in Fergusonism, the Democratic Party, and one of the State's "favorite sons," John Nance Garner. In the dark days of the "bank holiday" Houston stores offered their own checks as "change," utility companies extended discount periods, the streetcar company opened a credit department, and theaters accepted "I.O.U.'s." When the moratorium ended in March, 1933, Houstonians discussed President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's promise of a "New Deal," trimmed the municipal budget, and displayed the blue eagle of the National Recovery Act.

Tomball, pioneer stagecoach stop in northern Harris County, became the center of considerable oil activity that summer, and in July the Houston offices of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation were opened. In August, Harris County voted overwhelmingly for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, and on September 29 Houston's first legally produced beer in fifteen years came from the new \$1,000,000 plant of the Gulf Brewing Company. On Thanksgiving Day, 27,000 people attended the opening of Epsom Downs, a handsome new race track

on the Humble Road, and legally bet more than \$113,000 on their favorite horses. These and other new enterprises and agencies kept the wolf from many Houston doors; but when registration of the jobless began on December 11 at the City Auditorium, the National Reemployment Office had already assigned 7,500 people to Civil Works Administration projects, while 6,000 more applications were on file. By December 16, the CWA in Harris County had given employment to 11,089 workers. Meanwhile, Public Works Administration road projects had begun in several parts of the county, and the Harris County Board of Welfare and Employment had provided jobs for 8,000 men.

Strikes of oil field workers, packing-plant employees, and textile workers harassed public efforts to relieve unemployment in 1934; but early that year the Public Works Administration allotted \$250,000 for county road work and \$403,000 for sewers. In June, the Post Office Department announced plans for a new parcel post station. Ship channel improvements brought \$1,043,000 in Federal funds in July, and in September an application for a \$1,219,000 PWA loan for the construction of a new city hall was approved. Large-scale private construction matched the pace of Federal spending; the opening of the Rath Packing Company plant occurred in January, and the new Grand Central Station was completed in August. Other construction included the seventeen-story Humble Building annex, the Sanitary Farms Dairies Creamery, and a \$100,000 addition to the plant of the Continental Can Company. In November, Houston voters re-elected Oscar Holcombe as mayor for his sixth term. By the end of the year, local bank clearances showed a gain of \$194,033,934 over 1933. A 9.37 per cent increase in tonnage was handled at Port Houston.

The first of eighty-three families selected to occupy Houston Gardens, a Federal subsistence project north of the city, took up residence in February, 1935. In June, the Senate approved Port Houston's application for \$3,400,000 of Federal money for deepening the ship channel to thirty-four feet; a month later, the Interstate Amusement Company awarded a contract for the construction of the first of four suburban theaters. Violence and death characterized a longshoremen's strike at Port Houston, while the Houston Centennial Subcommittee announced a Federal allocation of \$400,000, and a State appropriation of \$250,000, for the erection of the San Jacinto Memorial Shaft. Four Works Progress Administration projects employed 589 men that autumn, and the construction of a new City-County Hospital, Jefferson Davis, with PWA funds was approved by the city council in November.

Heavy rains in the first week of December sent Buffalo Bayou over its banks. This "worst flood in the city's history" caused more than \$1,000,000 damage to property, threatened the municipal water supply, and reportedly drowned six people. National Guard troops were assigned to patrol the downtown flood area, where boatmen rowed past the inundated first floors of office buildings. A two-story building, undermined by water, collapsed into the bayou. In the warehouse district, at the foot of Main Street, many of Harris County's unemployed found the flood an undisguised blessing. From the swirling waters they fished out boxes

of canned food, clothing, furniture, and electrical goods, while on the bridges a few enterprising men hawked merchandise salvaged from the bayou. Clearing-house and port figures showed phenomenal growth in 1935, the "worst year of the depression;" debits to personal bank accounts were \$294,563,623 more than for the preceding year, while the port's business increase was almost 2,000,000 tons.

Texas paused in 1936 to observe its centennial. Houston had only to survey the three previous years to find much reason for celebration; those years had seen depression yield before a healthy rise in the prices of Port Houston's traditional cargoes, cotton and oil. At some unmarked time after 1919, Houston had ceased to be merely another large city and had assumed the aspect of a modern metropolis.

Awakened to the need for systematic flood control, the city fathers now conferred with United States Army engineers on plans for rechanneling high water from Buffalo Bayou. Parking meters appeared downtown in April. On April 21, Houstonians, Texans, and visitors to the State attended the most impressive ceremony ever held at the San Jacinto Battlefield, when an elaborate military field Mass was celebrated to commemorate the Texans' epic victory. On June 11, following a tumultuous popular reception in Houston, President Roosevelt delivered an address at the battlefield.

New records for civic and industrial progress were established in 1937, but to Texans the noteworthy event of the year occurred at the San Jacinto Battleground, where the Memorial Shaft was dedicated on April 21. During the first half of the year, the number of building permits raised the city's rank to eighth in the nation in new building, with a construction total of \$11,844,385. Fourteen bond issues for municipal construction and improvements were approved by voters in April. That August the *Post* reported that "Houston, with 84,272 telephones, has more telephone connections than any other city in the State or in the South;" the post office announced an increase of twenty-six per cent in incoming mail. The clearing of debris from Buffalo Bayou's downtown "bottleneck" area in October became the first step in an extensive program of flood control. Sam Houston Coliseum and Music Hall was opened on November 26 to the Texas State Teachers' Convention.

Landmarks disappeared rapidly in 1937. First to be torn down was the old Main Street Auditorium, where Central High School students had produced amateur plays and danced at junior class balls. In August, the old Post Office Building at Fannin Street and Franklin Avenue was wrecked to make room for a new ten-story Federal office building. The former residence of Col. J. D. Andrews, at 410 Austin Street, built of lumber brought from Maine in 1837, was leveled by wreckers in October; the Scanlan house, in the 1900 block of Main Street, was razed in November. Thus the face of Houston continued to be constantly and rapidly altered. Building permits for 1937 totaled more than \$18,000,000; before the end of the year the city had annexed Braeswood and

Briarwood additions, a newly opened western section of River Oaks, and other suburban territory on the west.

The "Scanlan oak," the spreading branches of which had overhung Main Street for a quarter of a century, was cut down in January, 1938. That year Houston became the fourth ocean port in America, and acquired 26,881 new residents. Building permits totaled \$25,005,548; postal receipts hit an all-time record of more than \$2,000,000; more than 12,000 new automobiles were sold; and more than 100,000 barrels of oil were produced in the Houston area. Fifty new factories began operations, and industrial firms distributed more than \$1,000,000 in Christmas bonuses.

Oscar Holcombe took the oath as mayor of Houston for the seventh time on January 2, 1939. Within the first ten days of that year the city's building permits exceeded \$1,000,000. On February 11, the telephone company installed its fourteenth exchange, the Keystone, announcing that the fifteenth, Channel View, would be added in April. The National Flower Show, held at the Coliseum in February, counted a total attendance of 140,000 people. A little more than a week later the Houston Fat Stock Show and Livestock Exposition opened at the Coliseum; 15,000 visitors attended. Before the month ended, Harris County taxpayers had voted approval of a \$500,000 bond issue for a flood control and drainage program which, when completed, would cost \$23,000,000; building permits for the first two months of the year rose to \$4,118,815.

The construction of new business buildings and residences continued on a large scale throughout the year, including the erection of the Houston Municipal Airport's administration building, and the Daniel and Edith Ripley Foundation Center. The first floor of the old city hall was remodeled for use as a bus station, and several downtown avenues were made one-way streets in an effort to solve ever-increasing traffic problems. A Federal housing project for Negroes, Cuney Homes, was begun in September, and soon a similar project for white families was planned. Total construction for the year reached \$25,373,545, while bank clearings amounted to \$2,713,697,452. Houston had achieved first rank among Texas cities in population, the number of dwelling units, building permits, bank deposits, new and total motor car registrations, the number of electric meters and appliances, the number of gas meters, telephone connections, its corporate area, school enrollment, and newspaper circulation. Estimates for 1939 gave Houston first rank in the State in the value of its manufactured products, income tax returns, and the number of residents gainfully employed.

On December 30, 1939, bank deposits were at an all-time high, \$309,238,228. Municipal control of a 2,500-foot strip of land extending twenty miles from the city limits on each side of the ship channel was upheld by the State Supreme Court on January 24, 1940. That month Houston had a record-breaking, three-inch snow and temperatures that dropped to ten degrees above zero. In February, more than 6,000 Boy Scouts staged their first merit badge show, the largest event ever presented by local Scouts.

Approval of Harris County's flood-control plans by a board of army engineers was announced on February 20. Ground was broken at Alameda Road and Binz Avenue for the city's eighth Interstate community theater. Arrangements were completed in April between the Houston Electric Company and the municipality for the abandonment of streetcar lines and the inauguration of an all-bus system; in the transaction the City was given the old interurban right-of-way for a planned four-lane highway to Galveston. The last electric streetcar to operate in Houston completed its final midnight run on June 9; for the first time since the 1870's there was no rail transportation on the streets of Houston.

On June 19 the first airplane to be commercially manufactured in Texas was turned out by the Southern Aircraft Corporation plant near the city. The military primary trainer, built to army specifications, was housed in a hangar of the Thirty-sixth Division, Texas National Guard, at the Houston Municipal Airport.

Ground-breaking ceremonies for the \$742,477 Young Men's Christian Association Building at Leeland Avenue and Louisiana Street were held on June 30. Statistics showed material progress for the first half of 1940: postal receipts were \$85,291 over the 1939 period, motor vehicles showed a gain of 1,018, and bank clearings were up ten per cent, to a total of \$1,243,364,997. Harris County's school census reported 96,996 scholastics; the preliminary report of the Federal Census Bureau estimated the population of the county at 529,479, and that of Houston at 386,150, a gain of 32.08 per cent over 1930.

Milby Park, occupying an eighty-acre tract of rolling, wooded land adjacent to the Galveston Highway, was formally presented to the municipality on July 14. The Houston Housing Authority and Work Projects Administration announced the results of a 1939 survey which showed that 25,680 of Houston's families lived in substandard dwellings. With an appropriation of \$585,000 from the United States Housing Authority on July 21, the local authority started a second low-rent project, San Felipe Courts, the first unit for white residents. The site, on Buffalo Drive near the new Jefferson Davis Hospital, covers about thirty acres.

"Houston is the champion parking meter city in the world," the *Houston Chronicle* announced on August 30. With a total of 3,700 meters, it was reported "far higher than that of any of the 185 other American cities using parking meters." By late summer, Houston was stimulated by the national defense program, which accelerated the metropolitan area's expanding industrial activity. As in other cities of the country, National Guard armories were crowded as guardsmen prepared for camp life, Marine Corps reserves were ordered to report for mobilization, and virtually all reserve officers had been summoned to training centers. At Baytown, plans were made for a toluol plant of the Humble Oil and Refining Company for producing the basic ingredient of TNT from petroleum. Ellington Field soon echoed to the bustling activity of World War days, while Camp Wallace at Hitchcock also was made ready for soldiers. Many Houston

industrial plants received contracts for furnishing Government supplies, and accelerated production. The nation's first peacetime draft called 77,177 young men of Harris County to registration offices on October 16; in the autumn months, 11,973 aliens were registered at the post office.

Plans for a \$500,000, eight-story addition to Memorial Hospital were announced in October; the site occupies the corner of Smith Street and Dallas Avenue. The first ocean-going tanker ever built in Houston was launched, a 212-foot, all-steel ship built for a foreign oil company. Establishing a record, Harris County's 1940 assessment rolls totaled \$360,332,085 in November. That month, the first unit of 500 Houston national guardsmen, members of the 56th Cavalry Brigade, entrained for a year's service at Fort Bliss, in El Paso.

Labor troubles were few during the year. Taxi drivers struck, and service was curtailed until, on July 13, the drivers returned to work at increased pay. Elevator operators, maintenance men, and other employees at the Commerce Building struck for union recognition, on September 27. As the holiday season approached, Houston dairies and the Milk Drivers' and Helpers' Union were deadlocked in a strike that prevented milk deliveries except to schools and hospitals.

Late in 1940, heavy rains throughout the State sent rivers and bayous over their banks, flooding Harris County lowlands, twice isolating Goose Creek and the Tri-Cities area, and threatening a repetition of the disastrous inundations of 1929 and 1935. Meantime, a \$32,000,000 Federal and county flood-control program was approved by the Government, and Harris County sold \$3,500,000 of bonds authorized by a special act of the legislature which allocated for county use part of the State ad valorem taxes. Much preliminary clearing and straightening of streams had been done by the Work Projects Administration. The plan calls for the retention and diversion of floodwaters by a reservoir, to be constructed about fifteen miles west of Houston; two canals will be built, one to extend from White Oak Bayou to the San Jacinto River, the other, extending from a detention dam on Buffalo Bayou to Galveston Bay, designed to protect the city and harbor from "superfloods."

One of the greatest musical events in Houston's history occurred in December, when 450 singers from sixty-five church choirs, and seventy members of the Houston Symphony Orchestra, presented Handel's *Messiah* to capacity audiences. A new air route between Houston and Memphis was planned. When Braniff Airways moved some mechanics from Love Field, Dallas, to the Houston Municipal Airport, the company announced that its maintenance and operation staff of 332 employees, representing an annual payroll of \$1,000,000, would be moved to Houston unless adequate facilities were immediately made available in the up-State city. Dredging operations were started on the ship channel between Manchester and the Turning Basin, the last section to be deepened to thirty-four feet. Plans were announced for a \$2,500,000 recycling plant for producing natural gasoline in the Katy gas field, northwest of Houston.

Petroleum, the largest local industry, now supported more than half of

the county's population, according to the *Houston Post* of December 31. Its payrolls were \$62,000,000 in 1940, with total expenditures of \$86,000,000. More than 1,300 Houston companies were engaged in the oil business and allied industrial enterprises. Investments in all types of plants beside the ship channel exceeded \$200,000,000, with more than 12,000 employees at work, earning a daily payroll of \$60,000. Port Houston was again the third seaport of the nation, surpassed in tonnage only by New York and Philadelphia. Traffic was a major problem; fatalities for the year totaled sixty-two, the third largest number of deaths in the city's history.

Bank clearings stood at \$2,568,518,417, a gain of \$181,769,953 over 1939. Building permits totaled \$24,253,888. For the seventh consecutive year postal receipts showed an increase, reaching \$3,167,266. Houston's population was officially announced as 384,514, making it the twenty-first city of the nation, a gain from twenty-sixth place in 1930. The year closed with bank deposits the largest in local history: on January 4 it was announced that \$348,527,187 was on deposit. Port earnings for the year showed an increase, despite war conditions.

In 1940, the municipality collected \$8,546,285 from all sources, closing the year with a cash surplus of \$67,105. Gross receipts of \$29,101,928 were reported by the five utility companies, a gain of \$937,472 over 1939. The Harris County budget for 1941 was fixed at \$3,508,115, a sum \$101,755 smaller than that for 1940. Houston's public school budget was set at \$6,181,260, compared with \$6,102,703 for the previous year.

Harris County entered 1941 with a cash balance of \$202,910. On January 2, Oscar Holcombe, completing his seventh term as mayor, was succeeded by C. A. (Neal) Pickett. An influenza epidemic, the worst since 1918, claimed 80,000 victims within three weeks, but subsided early in January.

Early in the year, construction was started on a \$7,000,000 shipyard on Irish Bend Island, in the ship channel, by the Houston Shipbuilding Corporation; thirty-seven vessels for the Government were to slide off the nine ways of the yard. Radio Stations KTRH, KPRC, and KXYZ increased their power to 5,000 watts. Low-rent housing projects under construction or planned numbered five, three units for whites and two for Negroes. Plans for the construction of an \$800,000 high school stadium and athletic plant were approved (see EDUCATION). Bids were asked on a \$600,000 First Presbyterian Church building, to be erected on a site facing South Main Boulevard between Oakdale and Berthea Avenues; later, a \$75,000 addition was planned for the Second Presbyterian Church, on Main Street. Other new construction included the erection of toluol plants at Baytown and Deer Park; a plant near Pasadena to manufacture synthetic rubber from petroleum gasses; and a \$17,000,000 plant for the Sheffield Steel Corporation of Texas, on the mainland near Irish Bend Island. Contracts for the erection of the \$580,000 Melrose Building, a unit in the expansion of the local telephone company, and for a \$600,000 addition to Memorial Hospital, were signed in March. That month, a threatened strike at the Shell Oil Company's Deer Park refinery was averted.

Included among important defense developments in the Houston area early in 1941 was a contract to build four steel submarine chasers for the United States Navy, awarded to the Platzer Boat Works on a bid of \$2,552,000; and an additional \$2,000,000 expansion of facilities in the Houston Shipbuilding Company yards. Industrial development on and near Irish Bend Island made necessary the expansion of school facilities and housing; the Galena Park Housing Authority planned a 2,000-unit residential project, requesting \$8,000,000 in Federal aid. The Soldiers Service Bureau and the Women's Defense Service League were established to coordinate defense social service and welfare work in the Houston district.

The city's fourth commercial radio station, that of the Greater Houston Broadcasting Company, Inc., was issued a charter in March. Near the end of the month, the Italian freighter *Mongioia*, tied up in the harbor, was taken over by the United States Coast Guard; the ship had been damaged, and its captain and crew were indicted for sabotage.

On April 1 Houston became still more a military center, with the announcement that an ordnance depot soon would be established on a 4,700-acre tract on the ship channel, opposite the San Jacinto Battlefield. Storage will be provided not only for arms and munitions, but also for tanks, planes, and for coast artillery and anti-aircraft equipment. Along an extensive frontage upon the ship channel, slips and docks were to be constructed; this depot will serve as a storage and distribution point for all leased military bases along the Gulf coast and in the Middle West. Power and ammunition will be stored in 200 concrete and steel magazines. The *Chronicle* announced, on April 22: "More than \$250,000,000 will have been spent in Houston and its immediate trade territory by the Federal Government for defense preparations before the end of the year." Included in that estimate was the contract of the Houston Shipbuilding Corporation for vessels to cost \$59,800,000, and an appropriation of \$455,300 for improvements at the Municipal Airport. Ellington Field's first contingent of army flyers arrived for training in April. Sportsman's Field, privately owned, occupying 131 acres on Market Street Road, opened later that month.

National attention was focused upon the Houston area when Gen. Andrew Jackson Houston, eighty-six-year-old son of Sam Houston, was appointed by Governor W. Lee O'Daniel to serve the unexpired term of the late Senator Morris Sheppard. The appointment was announced on April 21, anniversary of the day the venerable Senator's father led the Texans to victory at San Jacinto. Senator Houston took the oath of office on June 2; he died in office on June 26.

United States Census Bureau figures placed Houston's metropolitan population at 510,397, in the South's second largest urban area. Other developments of late spring were a reduction in the rates of the Houston Lighting and Power Company, which agreed to furnish an additional 3,500 street lights without cost to the municipality; the adoption by local voters of a \$5,400,000 highway improvement bond issue; and the celebration of its golden jubilee by Houston Heights. Telephone rates were reduced, giving subscribers an annual saving of



\$403,998. A second unit for the toluol plant at Deer Park was announced by the Shell Oil Company, thus making possible an annual production of 40,000,000 pounds of trinitrotoluene.

In May, Harris County's assessed property valuation for 1941 was placed at \$370,536,440, an increase of \$10,000,000 in a year. Headquarters were opened for the Defense Contract Service, Office of Production Management, an agency for coordinating defense efforts with Gulf coast industrial plants, its services extending over forty-three Texas counties. On May 23, the reorganization of a municipal defense department was announced, to serve with other agencies for the coordination of the program in the Houston region. Meantime, local employment had increased 1.7 per cent over the figure for May, 1940; payrolls showed an increase of 3.7 per cent; and local business, stimulated by defense activities, was greater by from sixteen to thirty-four per cent.

The Hughes Tool Company announced a \$3,725,000 expansion program, after it had been awarded contracts for the manufacture of bomber parts for the United States Army and Navy; more than 1,500 additional employees were required for this work. Late in May, Houston was made headquarters for the United States Marine Corps in a district extending from El Paso, Texas, to Louisiana.

Monthly steamship sailings from Houston to Chile were announced by the Grace Line late in May, thus providing the only direct service from a Texas port to the west coast of South America. The first vessel to be constructed locally under the defense program was launched by the Seabrook Yacht Corporation: a combination wrecker and ambulance ship, called an aircraft rescue vessel.

The year's total in building permits had reached \$10,000,599 on June 7; that week's total was \$1,375,615. Early in June, reports of the United States Bureau showed that in a decade, Houston's trade territory had yielded more than \$600,000 in increased business; the buying power of the area was estimated to be \$1,122,786,000, of which \$306,112,000 was indicated for Harris County. Other estimates of the bureau showed that the county had moved from fifth to first place in Texas in the number of cattle, with 106,437 head; it is third in the number of hogs and chickens.

Despite the European war, which had greatly reduced foreign sailings, Houston led American ports during the six-month period ending in June, 1941, in the shipment of cotton, with a total of 321,979 bales. The coastwise shipment of cotton had jumped from a record total of 241,069 bales in 1939-40 to 270,755 bales during the first six months of 1941.

An evidence of the city's physical expansion appeared in the total of building permits for 1941—\$19,157,431.

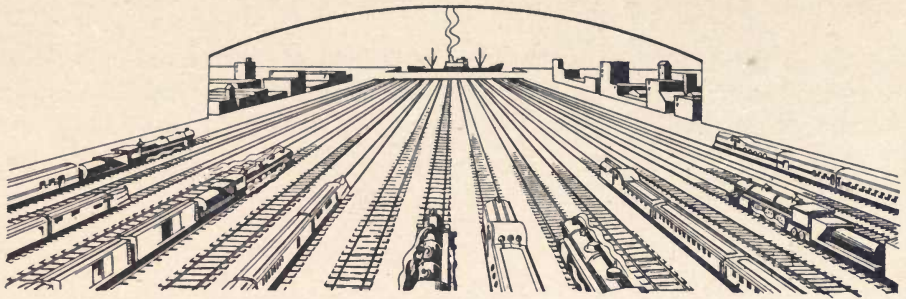
Houston no longer is called the Bayou City, because the identity of the silt-filled bayou of the past has become lost in that of today's busy ship channel. Altered through the years to meet the city's needs, only the name of Buffalo Bayou has not been changed since the days of Sam Houston and O. Henry—since the brothers Augustus C. and John K. Allen blazed the pines' trunks on its

south bank with their bowie knives to mark the site of a "great interior commercial emporium of Texas." Spreading miles across the prairie, far beyond the bayou where it was born, Houston in 1941 had fulfilled their predictions and their dreams.



PART II

IN SPECIAL FIELDS



## CHAPTER I

### CANOES TO OCEAN LINERS

SINCE THE DAYS when the dugouts of Indian hunting parties nosed into its inlets, the stream that was early called Buffalo Bayou and is now a part of the Houston Ship Channel has served travelers well. Before the coming of their conquerors the war canoes of Karankawas sped up its waters, paddles flashing where sunlight shone through the canopy of cypress branches. The bayou of the bison and the river of St. Hyacinth were natural waterways; and without the bayou the village of 1836 and the Houston of today might never have existed.

When in 1745 Capt. Joaquin Orobio y Basterra marched from La Bahia to seek elusive French traders, he tarried beside a strategic stream that he called Aranzazu, now believed to have been the San Jacinto River. Other Spaniards explored the bayou and the river in the years that followed, and Frenchmen conducted a lively trade along them. In 1817 the pirate Jean Lafitte "repaired, wooded and watered" his ships near the mouth of the San Jacinto. Then in the 1820's the first non-Latins ventured up the dangerous waters. Accounts of the earliest navigation of the bayou by the vessels of these settlers are many and controversial. Schooners owned by John Richardson Harris, described as "oceangoing," began to serve the port of Harrisburg soon after its founding. Cotton from the plantation of Jared Groce is said to have been shipped down the bayou in the 1820's, and small locally owned craft had navigated the stream. The diary of Joseph Chambers Clopper described Buffalo Bayou as "crystal clear and teeming with fish. . . . Flowering shrubbery . . . overhang its grassy banks and dip and reflect their variegated hues in its unruffled waters."

Up the "unruffled waters" came the tide of pioneers, leaving towns along the "grassy banks"—Buffalo, Louisville, San Jacinto, Lynchburg, Pockersville, Hamilton, and, farthest upstream, Houston.

The difficulties of navigation upon Buffalo Bayou, snag-infested and overhung with trees, were vividly described by Francis Richard Lubbock in his story of the voyage of the *Laura*, which he claimed was the first "steamer"

ever to venture as far as the site of Houston (see TOWN OF HOUSTON). In 1837, the year of the *Laura's* arrival, Sam Houston wrote a letter to Dr. Irion of Nacogdoches:

On the 20th of January a small log cabin and twelve persons were all that distinguished it [Houston] from the adjacent forests, and now there are upwards of 100 houses finished, and going up rapidly (some of them fine frame buildings), and 1500 people, all actively engaged in their respective pursuits. . . . The steamboat, 'Yellowstone', 120 feet long, arrived yesterday with a cargo of goods and 140 passengers. The 'Laura' is expected in a day or so. A schooner from New Orleans also came up yesterday.

Some writers believe that the schooner *Rolla* was the first sailing vessel to reach Houston, arriving on April 21, 1837, four days out from Harrisburg. On June 1 of that year, the old one-time warship *Constitution*, then in the merchant service but which had been a forty-four-gun frigate in 1797, sailed up the bayou to the boat landing in Houston; her captain had been engaged by the Allens to attempt the hazardous voyage. The editor of the *Telegraph and Texas Register* could "hardly trust the testimony of his eyes" when he beheld the big ship "safely moored at the landing in this city, and towering in pride above the peaceful waters of the bayou." When the master of the *Constitution* had pocketed his \$1,000 fee from the Allens, he found that he could not put his ship about. At length, at the bend in the bayou — a place whose importance in the development of Houston was to become second only to the waterway itself — the ship was turned without beaching, and the spot was promptly named Constitution Bend. Today at this bend the world's greatest cargo ships are turned downstream, for this became the Houston Turning Basin.

On August 5, 1837, the steamers *Leonidas* and *Branch T. Archer* were placed in service between Galveston and Houston. The *Friendship* and the *Laura* were soon added, and by the end of 1838 ships were making daily runs between the Bayou City and the island. From ports in the United States and along the Texas coast came the vessels *Sam Houston*, *Kosciusko*, *Crusader*, *Cumanche*, *Correo*, *Wyoming*, and the *Warsaw*. Passenger rates were \$25 to Matagorda, \$15 to Velasco, and \$10 to Galveston.

Bayou navigation presented many problems; ship captains soon found that small boats were best in these waters and that side-wheel vessels with two independent engines could round the bends with less danger. Piloting called for great skill and precision, and at short bends it was necessary to operate one engine in reverse. This called for two engine crews as well as two pilots. Passenger boats frequently stopped while their cooks went ashore to kill beeves. Passengers often sat on deck and watched the boat's wheels "cutting off slices of banks in some of the abrupt turns of the bayou." Many boats ran aground; shoal water off Clopper's Point, now Morgan's Point, delayed passenger and mail boats so often that the *Morning Star* suggested:

"If boats will drop buoys along line of channel over this bar, boats always passing in same track will rub channel deep enough for convenient passage." The first speed record for the round trip between Houston and Galveston was established by the *Correo* in March, 1838; her time was thirty hours.

The improvement of the bayou channel was begun in 1839 with funds raised by subscription and through lotteries. The *Telegraph* on March 27 urged that public pledges be made "as early as practicable . . . as the work has been commenced . . . under the superintendence of Mr. Pile, engineer and contractor." The Buffalo Bayou Lottery was held in April, 1840, with twelve winning tickets among the seventy-five sold. Five per cent of the money realized was paid to the mayor and aldermen; with the remainder Pile had snags dug from the bayou and overhanging limbs sawed from trees along its banks.

A municipal ordinance establishing the Port of Houston and fixing wharfage rates and rules was adopted on June 8, 1841. The port included all of the bayou within the corporate boundaries of Houston, and vessels of more than ten tons were required to dock at the municipal wharf. Charges were from \$5 to \$10 a day, depending upon the size of the ship. Cargo rates ranged from \$1 for a "pleasure carriage", to a cent each for hides. The charge for a horse, mule, wagon, or cart was fifty cents; for candles, soap, and claret, three cents a container; and for blankets in bales, crates of bottles, and tierces of rice, twenty-five cents each. The ordinance provided "That payment of wharfage . . . shall not be receivable on other currency than gold or silver or the par money drafts or change notes of said city." Charles Gerlach was appointed wharfmaster. During the period between June 1, 1841, and May 5, 1842, 4,260 bales of cotton, 72,816 feet of lumber, and 1,803 hides were shipped down the bayou from Houston.

Mrs. M. C. Houstoun wrote an interesting description of life on the bayou during the winter of 1843, in *Texas and the Gulf of Mexico, or Yachting in the New World*. Mrs. Houstoun and her husband left their yacht *Dolphin* moored at Galveston and took passage on the steamer:

She was a small vessel and drew but little water . . . there is a balcony or verandah, and on the roof is what is called the hurricane deck, where gentlemen passengers walk and smoke. On the occasion of our taking our passage, both ladies and gentlemen's cabins were quite full, and I therefore preferred spending the evening in the balcony in spite of the cold. I had many kind offers of civility. . . . The question addressed to me of 'do you liquor ma'am?' was speedily followed by the production of a tumbler of eggnoggy which seemed in great request, and I cannot deny its excellence.

For almost two decades navigation conditions on Buffalo Bayou remained unimproved. Snags, collisions, and explosions added the spice of danger to boatmen's lives. The story of an immigrant girl who fell overboard from the *Billow* and floated a quarter of a mile, buoyed up by her bustle, was one of

the countless yarns that captains traded with their pilots. Passengers or members of the crew could always find a bar aboard and get a drink of "Baker Rye" or old Yannissee. In 1849 John Sterrett operated the only Buffalo Bayou vessel on which hard liquor was banned. Impromptu races were sure to add zest to many a run. When bay and bayou became dull, it was likely that steamboat stacks would begin belching plumes of black smoke as boats raced along the channel to or from Houston. Passengers and crew alike thrilled at the breath-taking speed, but newspapers heaped editorial condemnation upon the practice.

After 1845 larger and more luxurious boats—described as equaling those on the Mississippi River—were in operation upon Buffalo Bayou. The municipality had purchased a dredge, and now the waterway was widened and deepened. A new era began with the arrival of the packet steamer *Ogden* from New Orleans; according to the *Telegraph* of August 16, 1849, she was the first regular packet to make the direct run between New Orleans and Houston, and her significance was well heralded:

Our citizens were highly elated on her arrival. Long before the steamer reached the landing the banks of the Bayou were lined with crowds of people eager to welcome the expected vessel.

The *Ogden* was loaded with 150 head of cattle for the New Orleans market, and Captain Kelsey predicted that she would carry livestock each trip. Cattle could then be bought in Houston for from \$5 to \$7 a head and sold in New Orleans for \$15 to \$20. The *Telegraph* predicted "a new trade . . . almost as lucrative as the cotton trade. . . . The business capital of Houston might thus be increased . . . to the amount of more than half a million of dollars."

Even then the bayou channel excited the wonder of visitors. An article in a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, newspaper, reprinted in the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of July 21, 1858, said:

This steamboat route is one of the curiosities of inland navigation, and is the principal steamboat route in Texas. . . . Buffalo Bayou . . . is narrow, crooked and deep . . . its navigation by side wheel steamers 170 feet in length, was always a marvel to us; with the trees overhanging and brushing the chimnies, with the shore on either side so close that you could readily step off the guard to the cypress knees which fringe the bayou . . . while the pilot is working 'hard up and hard down'—now hard back on starboard and go-a-head on larboard, now slow, now a little harder, the steamer with her living freight of people, works her crooked, romantic marvelous way up into the heart of the principal inland commercial town of Texas, and makes fast at her dock.

Buffalo Bayou's early steamboat era reached its zenith in 1860. High wharfage charges in Galveston increased the practice of loading barges for Houston directly from foreign ships in the island harbor; cotton exported

from Houston in 1860 totaled approximately 100,000 bales. Further development of the port was delayed by the Civil War. Early in 1861 the bayou became a Confederate waterway, and the next year the Northern blockade was clamped upon Galveston. For a while side-wheelers continued shuttling up and down the bayou, but as Galveston's foreign trade diminished, Port Houston also suffered. Steamboats carried fewer passengers; and in their saloons, where sumptuous dinners had once been served, the menu was reduced to beef, cornbread, and barley water. Running the Yankee blockade became a favorite sport near Galveston Bar; sloops, schooners, and steamers, loaded to the scuppers with cotton, waited for a favorable sea, then stole past the patrol of Federal gunboats. Most of them discharged their cargoes in England and loaded with munitions. Late in 1864 a Confederate shipyard was established at the mouth of Goose Creek, near Baytown; here the man-of-war *Bagdad* was built.

After Appomattox, shippers of Houston took fresh interest in channel improvements. Under the direction of the newly organized Houston Direct Navigation Company a channel was dredged and cleared over Clopper's Bar, Redfish Bar, and Half Moon Shoal in Galveston Bay. As the accumulated silt and snags were removed, hope was revived in Houston for a deep-water port. Twelve boats were serving the town regularly by January, 1866, and the construction of new wharves began. The *Evening Star* reported on June 7:

Capt. Bradbury is still gouging away in the bayou with his dredge boat, cleaning out the most needy and difficult places, liable to interfere with steamboat navigation, while Capt. Ewing is progressing slowly with the wharf. His operations are much retarded for want of lumber to go ahead with.

During January, 1867, the *Carnelia*, of Liverpool, arrived with a cargo of assorted foods, beverages, building materials, blankets, piece goods, and other articles. Her arrival was interpreted locally as an indication that the improvements would pay.

In the summer of 1868 the Houston Ship Channel Company was organized for the purpose of dredging the bayou to a minimum depth of nine feet. It was capitalized at \$500,000; the City of Houston took three-fifths of the stock, and the remainder was sold locally at not less than seventy-five cents on the dollar. Leading figures in the movement included T. W. House, J. R. Morris, Eugene Pillot, John Brashear, Henry S. Fox, A. Groesbeck, J. T. D. Wilson, William Christian, Thomas B. Howard, Henry R. Allen, John Shearn, C. B. Sabin, E. W. Cave, W. A. Daly, Alexander McGowen, Joseph Bailey, T. H. Scanlan, J. W. Henderson, D. Binz, E. H. Cushing, C. E. Gregory, Benjamin A. Botts, C. S. Longcope, J. H. Manley, J. H. Perkins, George Goldthwaite, John T. Brady, Robert Brewster, and M. A. Levy. Improvements made through the company in 1868 included the removal of the bend at the foot of Main Street. The *Telegraph* on December 10 estimated the cotton movement through the port that season at 150,000 bales.



When State officials agreed in January, 1869, to allow land grants for ship channel improvements, the Buffalo Bayou Ship Channel Company was formed to act for the City. Most of its organizers had been members of the Houston Ship Channel Company. A. Groesbeck was elected president and T. W. House, treasurer. Dredges were put to work on Clopper's Bar, at the foot of Main Street, and elsewhere along the bayou. The *Telegraph Weekly* reported on July 22, 1869, that residents had subscribed \$100,000 for improvements and the municipality \$30,000, with credits up to \$100,000; that the organization had land bonuses valued at \$700,000; and that "It is proposed to widen Buffalo Bayou and make it navigable for ships, so that they can come direct to Houston." Although the organization failed to complete its dredging projects, its activities reduced freight rates by water and attracted new capital. Cotton mills and meat packing plants were built along the waterway. Business boomed for passenger boats, and several captains installed calliopes on the decks. On August 14, 1870, the *Diana*, a steamer built at a Pennsylvania shipyard especially for use on Buffalo Bayou, docked; she was a handsome 170-foot side-wheeler with a 32-foot beam.

Meantime, a disagreement between the Morgan Steamship Company and Galveston port authorities attracted Morgan interests to Houston. In the spring of 1875, dredges were removing 2,425 cubic yards of dirt daily from the Morgan's Point pass. On February 22, 1876, *The Age* announced that the Morgan line was planning a double-track railroad from the mouth of Sims Bayou to Houston, where it was to connect with other rail lines. The channel through Morgan's Point was completed in the spring of 1876. On April 22 the first ship flying the Morgan star arrived at the new docks—the *Clinton*, from New York, with a cargo of 500 tons of steel rails. The next day the *Telegraph* exulted:

Houston . . . adds, as a new tribute in its honor, the successful opening of her grandest enterprise, the Ship Channel to the Gulf of Mexico. . . . To Houston belongs the honor of inaugurating, and to Commodore Charles Morgan the honor of crowning with success the Ship Channel.

The rail line to Sims Bayou was placed in operation in September, 1876. Again the *Clinton*, loaded with sixty carloads of freight, sailed up Buffalo Bayou.

Charles Morgan, called the father of the Houston Ship Channel, died in New York City on May 8, 1878, and the transportation system he had dominated passed into the hands of interests that, in the 1890's, acquired the Galveston, La Porte and Houston Railroad. A deeper channel was dredged across Galveston Bar, giving the island harbor greater advantages over Houston's bayou port. Once more the Morgan terminal was established in Galveston, and Houston's Clinton docks had only the side-wheelers. When a Galveston merchant, Sampson Heidenheimer, shipped six barges loaded with salt to

Houston and lost his cargo overside in a cloudburst, the *Galveston News* chortled:

HOUSTON AT LAST A SALT-WATER PORT;  
GOD ALMIGHTY FURNISHED THE WATER;  
HEIDENHEIMER FURNISHED THE SALT.

Congress approved Houston Ship Channel improvements in principle on March 3, 1899; plans called for a twenty-five-foot canal from the Main Street landing to Bolivar Roads in Galveston Bay. Under the program a channel eighteen and a half feet deep was dredged from Bolivar Roads to Harrisburg. By an act of Congress on March 3, 1905, the head of the waterway was fixed at Long Reach, and from this point to the sea the channel was completed to a depth of eighteen feet by the summer of 1908.

Since the era of the Harris schooners, cotton had soared above Houston's other exports in value and tonnage, but now lumber became an important cargo item. Railroads from east Texas had reached Houston early in the twentieth century, bringing thousands of feet of lumber for shipment. Then oil fields at Spindletop, Dayton, Humble, Blue Ridge, and other near-by points offered an even greater export commodity. Houston's leaders realized that a channel with a depth great enough to float oceangoing vessels had become necessary. A delegation was sent to Washington with the proposal that Harris County pay half of the construction costs of a twenty-five-foot channel from Bolivar Roads to the Turning Basin, and provide adequate, publicly owned water terminal facilities. In its turn, the Federal government was to award a continuing contract for dredging to the stipulated depth. The proposal was promptly accepted and a Congressional appropriation made to complete the channel, at an estimated cost of \$2,500,000. The dredging contract was awarded in June, 1912, on a bid of \$3,365,711. By January of the following year twenty-four dredges were at work in the Turning Basin section. Freight was still moving down the channel to Galveston, where it was transferred to oceangoing vessels. The Direct Navigation Company launched a fleet of steel barges, and the first of these made its maiden trip from Houston on December 19, 1913, carrying 1,800 bales of cotton.

Completed in the summer of 1914, the new channel was fifty-one miles long and twenty-five feet deep, with a bottom width of 100 feet. At eleven o'clock on the morning of November 10, President Woodrow Wilson, using remote control, fired the cannon that signaled the official opening of the new world port. A few seconds later Miss Sue Campbell dropped a wreath of flowers into the waters of the Turning Basin, and Port Houston was christened. Twenty-one salutes rang out from the United States revenue cutter *Windom*; pennants spread to the breeze on vessels of various sizes. Cheering crowds were massed along the banks of the channel and the Turning Basin. Aboard the *Windom*, the official reviewing boat, were dignitaries of Houston, Texas, and the United States. Craft from almost every city and town on the Gulf

Coast participated in a boat pageant. That evening the celebration was continued downtown, with a "Ships of All Nations" parade. According to the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* the procession was "two miles long and viewed by 60,000 people. . . . The battleship *Texas*, an exact replica of the real ship [was] escorted by a number of mounted sailors and marines."

The *William C. May*, first deep-water ship to use the new channel, had docked at Clinton six weeks before the christening; and the tanker *Wimifred*, with a cargo of crude oil from Mexico, was the largest vessel that had used the new waterway. But the *Satilla*, owned by the Southern Steamship Company, inaugurated ocean commerce at Port Houston. She was scheduled to dock on August 19, 1915, initiating regular New York-to-Houston service, but was delayed by a hurricane; she arrived on August 22 and cleared five days later with a general cargo that included 1,300 bales of cotton. Before the end of 1915 several ships were making regular sailings between Houston and north Atlantic ports. During Port Houston's first year, 86,000 tons of freight was handled at the municipal docks. The first ship to sail from Houston to a foreign port was the *Baltimore*, departing for Havana on January 13, 1917. For the second time bayou traffic was influenced by a major war; on February 9, 1917, came news that the *Satilla* had been sunk by a U-boat. Two shipyards holding contracts of the Emergency Fleet Corporation launched seven wooden ships in the Houston Ship Channel before the end of the first World War.

Houston's meteoric ascent to a position of prominence as a world port began soon after the war. Shifting economies had created a growing demand for Texas raw materials, oil production had been increased in the Houston area, and the State was undergoing new industrial development. Traffic for the year 1918 at Port Houston totaled 1,756,916 tons. A Congressional bill signed by President Wilson on March 3, 1919, authorized widening the channel and increasing its depth to thirty feet. At this time industrial plants in the ship channel area employed 5,592 people, with an annual payroll of \$8,828,000. Construction costs for the channel reached \$5,000,000; and wharfage and docking facilities represented an investment of \$3,000,000.

By 1926 private investments along the channel totaled \$125,000,000. For dredging the waterway, \$12,029,250 had been spent, of which the county had paid \$2,771,297. An additional \$7,700,000 for water and rail terminal facilities had been expended by the City of Houston and Harris County. The minimum depth of the channel was thirty feet. During the year ending June 30, 1926, a total of 1,240 oceangoing vessels called at the port, and cargo handled was valued at \$457,823,882. Leaders of the port began urging a minimum depth of thirty-five feet.

The development of Port Houston and Buffalo Bayou became closely interwoven with the city's industrial progress. Oil, lumber, cotton, livestock, steel, banking, wholesale trade — each owed its growth to the ship channel. With the increased demands of commerce and industry, a deeper channel was

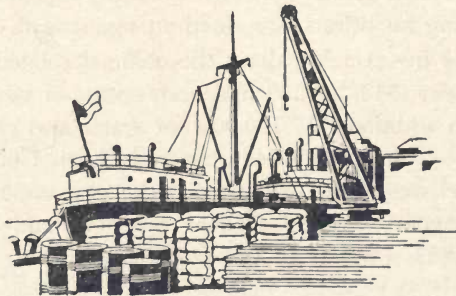
needed. A survey was made in 1928 with the hope of obtaining a minimum depth of thirty-two feet and a bottom width of 250 feet. Widening and deepening of the channel began in 1933, and before the work was completed a minimum depth of thirty-four feet was approved. The channel was also straightened in many places.

The completion of its part of the Intracoastal Canal in 1934 linked Houston with ports of the Great Lakes and the upper Ohio River system through an inland waterway. The canal, with a minimum depth of nine feet, permitted barge trains to transport cargoes thousands of miles at low cost. The first shipment through the Intracoastal Canal was two barge loads of steel that came from Pittsburgh by way of New Orleans and arrived at Houston on August 18, 1934. The barges were towed over the 405-mile route in five and a half days.

By 1939 Houston had become the first port in the South and third in the United States. Cargo movements that year amounted to 28,174,710 tons, carried in 6,153 vessels and valued at \$624,859,006. Cotton, petroleum products, wheat, grain, rice, scrap iron, carbon black, wool, mohair, and copper billets were principal items of export. Passenger service from Houston to New York was inaugurated on May 29, 1940, by the Clyde-Mallory Lines, but because of war conditions, was discontinued after February 5, 1941.

Improvement projects under way in 1941 included one to increase the channel depth to a maximum of thirty-seven feet, and another to widen the channel across Galveston Bay to 400 feet, with widths scaling down to 200 feet from Norsworthy to the Turning Basin. Harbor facilities consisted of fifteen public wharves with berthing space for eighteen vessels, and twenty-one private wharves with facilities for forty-three ships.

Shipments through the Port of Houston during 1940 totaled 27,793,616 tons, valued at \$641,572,400.



## CHAPTER II

### OXCARTS TO AIRPLANES

**F**EW PIONEERS of the present Harris County arrived by other means than boat. The unmarked overland route was beset by hostile tribesmen, renegade white men, and escaped slaves. Yet while Texas was still under Mexican rule, a start had been made to develop inland transportation. The wood-burning paddle-wheelers that brought sugar, flour, whisky, and gunpowder from New Orleans to Harrisburg were sometimes loaded on their return with cotton from the plantation of Jared Groce, who in a single season hauled from his fields in the bottoms of the Brazos a hundred bales. His wagons bumped along a trail hacked through underbrush and giant trees — a trail that wound across the future site of Houston.

Attending the Congress of the Republic at its session in Columbia in the autumn of 1836 were many promoters, some with schemes as wild as the country. They sought charters for dream cities and mythical business enterprises. Among the franchises granted was that of the Texas Railroad, Navigation and Banking Company in 1837, the first railroad to be proposed in the newly founded Republic. Bitterly assailed by newspapers and politicians, it could not sell its stock, and failed.

Down the waterways in 1837 steamed river boats, dodging snags and sandbars, but only oxen could haul freight through prairie mud into the interior. Stout wagons drawn by oxen — sometimes as many as seven yoke — carried average loads of a dozen bales of cotton or their equivalent. Without oxen the frontier housewife would have waited long for calico, and the isolated merchant would have had empty shelves. The produce of the plantations — chiefly cotton — and the butter and eggs saved by thrifty farm women to exchange for "store-bought" goods could not have reached a market without the great lumbering wagons and their intrepid drivers, who averaged about \$60 a trip in freight fees. Oxen foraged by the roadsides, and their cost of replacement was only \$50 a yoke. Where the Civic Center stands today the freighters' campfires burned in the 1830's. Their teams grazed on the prairie grass around the circle of wagons.

Before Houston was three years old the problem of passenger transportation was solved by the inauguration of stagecoach service. Until then most land travelers had ridden horseback or arranged to ride with wagon trains. The stagecoaches, drawn by mules, were little more than wagons. When it rained, women passengers opened umbrellas, often to the discomfort of the men who received the drippings down their collars. If the stage bogged down in mud, even the dandies aboard, resplendent in patent leather shoes and velvet pantaloons, were expected to help push; and many a tragic word picture was painted of such bedraggled blades. Way-stations on routes from

Houston to isolated inland towns kept fresh teams for the stage lines, and taverns and inns afforded limited refreshments and accommodations, but often it was necessary for weary travelers to spend the night lying on rain-soaked ground or shivering around a campfire during a howling norther.

In 1839 a toll ferry began to operate from Harrisburg across Bray's Bayou, and continued for almost a half century. The ferry charge was six and a quarter cents for each person or animal, twenty-five cents a wheel for unloaded wagons, and double that amount for those with loads.

In 1840 Andrew Briscoe made the first local attempt to construct a railroad. Convinced that a rail line through the rich Brazos plantations would pay, he was granted a charter for the Harrisburg and Brazos Railroad, and in May, 1840, the *Morning Star* reported, "It is gratifying to notice the progress made by the enterprising proprietors of this work. A large number of laborers are engaged at present in throwing up the track and preparing it for rails, at an early season, and a greater number will soon be employed." Two miles of roadbed extended southwest from Harrisburg, and along it lay 3,000 ties. But Briscoe encountered financial difficulties and abandoned the project.

Augustus Allen had meantime become president of the City of Brazos Company; his proposed new town lay fifty-three miles northwest of Houston, and he launched a scheme to build a connecting railroad, the Houston and Brazos. Construction was started in July, 1840, but the company failed. The following year Briscoe promoted the Harrisburg Railroad and Trading Company, which was to be financed by the sale of Harrisburg lots. It, too, was a failure.

When the capital of the Republic was removed to Austin, the resulting loss of business inspired a campaign in Houston for greater trade with the interior. Bridges were built across Buffalo, White Oak, and Bray's Bayous, and roads were improved. A highway was built to Richmond, another to Huntsville, the Austin Turnpike afforded a toll road to the capital, and two main thoroughfares were constructed across Harris County. Once again long wagon trains loaded with cotton, hides, and produce came to Houston. Encouraged by the results of their road-building program, local businessmen united in May, 1850, to organize the Houston Plank Road Company, which charged tolls on the road it built to the Brazos River. By this time stagecoaches had been improved, as the *Texas State Gazette* reported in its issue of May 4, 1850:

Messrs. Brown and Tarbox have completed another of their superior coaches, for the Houston and San Antonio lines. It is christened the 'General Taylor.' . . . Its running gear is strong ash, the body and panels are of magnolia; its leather springs and its axles were forged in their own shop; the boxes were cast and polished at McGowen's furnace. Thus from the tire to the top railing, from boat to pole, it is nothing else but Texan and Texan workmanship. The painting is done in a tasteful manner. The panels are ornamented with a spread eagle, bearing in his beak a scroll, on which appears the name of the coach. . . .

The fore wheels have a larger diameter than usual. The body is long, narrow and trim, giving ample room for three rows of passengers.

Late in the 1840's Gen. Sidney Sherman acquired control of the defunct Harrisburg Railroad and Trading Company, obtained a new charter in 1850, and changed its name to the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado Railroad. General Sherman obtained financial backing in the East, and in May, 1851, the *Houston Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* reported, "A large quantity of the iron for the road has been shipped . . . and a contract has been made for the lumber. . . . A large sum of money has also been placed at the disposition of the company to prosecute the work." Among the incorporators of the road were Sherman, Jonathan F. Barrett, Hugh McLeod, John G. Tod, John Angier, E. A. Allen, William M. Rice, W. A. Van Alstyne, James H. Stevens, B. A. Shepherd, and W. J. Hutchins.

Businessmen met in Houston during October, 1852, to plan a railroad that would link Houston and Galveston with north Texas. Paul Bremond, who became president of the resultant Galveston, Houston and Red River Railroad, had had his interest in the project aroused in a curious way, according to the *Houston Daily Times*:

While sitting in his room, he was addressed by some invisible being. He was urged to build a certain railroad. Mr. Bremond spoke of his want of means, asking his invisible visitor how he could achieve such work without money. The spirit merely replied, 'Proceed with the work.' It often repeated the visit. Finally Mr. Bremond did go to work, without, he says, a dollar in the world, but he succeeded.

This railroad, the second in Texas, was started on January 1, 1853, and was to cost \$30,000,000 before it was completed; part of that price was paid by the State, which loaned \$6,000 a mile after the road had reached Cypress, twenty-five miles from Houston.

In August, at Stafford's Point, a "gala gathering" awaited the arrival of the first train from Harrisburg over the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado tracks. At last the wood-burning engine *General Sherman* snorted into view, its funnel-shaped chimney trailing a long black plume. To the cheering people there was awe-inspiring power in its single pair of five-foot driving wheels. F. A. Stearns, master mechanic from Massachusetts, was the engineer aboard the twelve-ton "monster." This was the first railroad to be completed in Texas, and the second west of the Mississippi.

The *General Sherman* had been built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in Philadelphia. Boxcars were small and the coaches gaily colored; the latter were secondhand streetcars bought in Boston, and had hard benches running lengthwise. When sparks threatened to ignite the wooden cars, the *General Sherman*—billowing embers as well as smoke—was ignominiously placed in the rear to push instead of pull.

The Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado offices were established in

Harrisburg, and later a two-engine roundhouse stood near the present intersection of the Southern Pacific and the Galveston, Houston & Henderson railroad tracks. One day when Parmenas Briscoe, son of the railroad pioneer, was passing the roundhouse he saw fire licking into the roof of the building, and ripped away the flaming shingles, receiving severe burns.

But though Harrisburg had its train, Houston still had only ox teams and creaking wagons. In May, 1855, the *Houston Telegraph* announced that "not less than 4,000 bales of cotton had arrived in this city in the last two weeks on ox-wagons, giving employment to 4,690 yoke of oxen and 670 wagons and drivers." The newspaper also reported that at least 200 wagons bearing other commodities had arrived. During 1854, according to the *Telegraph*, 38,000 bales had been freighted to Houston. It was estimated that more than 25,000 yoke of oxen and 1,500 wagons were then in use by Houston freighters.

The Galveston, Houston & Henderson Railroad, started in 1854, encountered difficulties at Clear Creek. Irish laborers were hired to move tons of earth for a high embankment on the east side of the stream.

In the meantime the railway inspired by Bremond's ghostly adviser was slowly reaching its goal, and on January 26, 1856, the *Galveston News* reported, "This has been a proud day for Houston. . . . The first car, the *Ebenezer Allen*, upon the Galveston, Houston and Red River Railroad was this day put in motion. About 4:00 o'clock P. M. amidst the huzzas and cheers of an enthusiastic multitude assembled to witness the starting of the iron horse, he was brought forth . . . and placed on the road, seemingly in fine traveling order. . . . Quite a large number of our citizens availed themselves of the privilege of taking the first ride on the locomotive, which continued to make short excursions back and forth, the distance of some half a mile during the afternoon."

By March the *Ebenezer Allen*, named for a Galveston patron of the road, was making excursions six miles distant to a Mr. Wolf's place, and daily receipts rose to more than \$20.

In 1856 the City of Houston built the Houston Tap Railroad to Pierce Junction; about seven miles of track connected it with the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado. Regular passenger and freight schedules were inaugurated by the latter on October 20. The Galveston and Red River line was renamed the Houston and Texas Central; the Sabine and Galveston Bay Railroad and Lumber Company was chartered, and three years later became the Texas and New Orleans.

The hazards faced by passengers on the early railroads are illustrated by stories of the bridge over the Brazos at Richmond. The Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado had a pile bridge here with a movable section in the center to permit the passing of steamboats. Log chains supported or braced the center, and steep embankments led to the bridge. Engineers were forced to open the throttle and cross at full speed if they had long trains, for that



was the only way to negotiate the upgrade. Twice trains fell into the river, causing several deaths. Consequently, before the bridge was reached, passengers were given their choice of crossing the Brazos on the train or on the ferry.

Railroads brought wealth to Houston. In October, 1858, the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* announced that "the largest train that ever came into Houston with cotton was on Friday. There were nineteen cars with 522 bales. . . . A large amount is left at the depots every day, which they [the trains] are unable to take." By 1859 the Houston Tap & Brazoria Railway, also called the Sugar Road, had encircled the sugarcane plantations — then producing 10,000 hogsheads of sugar and 16,000 barrels of molasses a season — and to the west ran the rails of the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado into a livestock and cotton district. Another cotton kingdom was pierced by the Houston and Texas Central. Eastward crawled the tracks of the Texas and New Orleans; the Galveston, Houston & Henderson, nearing completion, also brought new trade territory within Houston's reach.

So prosperous were the railroad builders and Houston businessmen that they decided upon a celebration. Pierce Junction, where the Houston Tap & Brazoria road crossed the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado, was selected for the occasion. On March 28, 1859, the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* reported:

The first meeting of locomotives in Texas occurred on Friday afternoon, at the Tap road junction, four in number coming from four directions. The J. D. Waters from Houston, the Stevens from Sandy Point, the Columbus from Richmond, and the Sherman from Harrisburg, each with trains. It was a happy scene, while the loud greeting of their whistles echoed over the prairies, a loud huzza for Texas and her railroads. It looked like business.

At the close of 1859 rails were laid across a 9,600-foot pile bridge from Virginia Point into Galveston on the Galveston, Houston & Henderson Railroad. On February 1, 1860, the first train passed over the bay into Galveston.

Just before construction was halted by the Civil War Houston had become the rail center of Texas, with approximately 371 miles of track spreading into rich agricultural sections, while the remainder of the State had only 121 miles. Locomotives were puffing cautiously across streams and through swamps between Houston, Beaumont, and Orange on the line under construction to New Orleans; another road had reached Alleyton, and the Houston and Texas Central had cars moving to Millican. From Columbia came produce, and from Galveston rolled carload after carload of freight.

But the bankrupt Galveston, Houston & Henderson Railroad was sold in 1860 at public auction for \$28,000, the result of severe losses sustained from storms. The next year the Houston and Texas Central was sold for debt to W. J. Hutchins and David H. Paige for \$10,000. Then the war disrupted normal business and brought widespread difficulties. The Confederate forces managed to keep sections of different roads in repair so that supplies and

troops could be moved, but during the conflict rails in several places were torn up and made into bullets.

The Texas and New Orleans Railroad, completed in the spring of 1861 between Houston and Orange, transported troops to Beaumont, on their way to the battlefield in Virginia. Other lines carried army and hospital supplies without charge. Freight was scarce because of the Federal blockade of Galveston, and wages went unpaid. The *Weekly Telegraph* on August 14, 1861, carried this dispatch:

Camp Earl Van Dorn, Harrisburg. Aug. 6th. . . . Last evening our Capt. Powell received information from Capt. Botts of the Bayou City Guards, to the effect that the workmen on the Rail-Road near Harrisburg had revolted and threatened to destroy the engine, unless they were allowed their pay — and in consequence thereof he desired our Captain to detail 12 men of the 'Waverly Confederates' to assist in guarding the engine.

In November, 1861, Governor Francis R. Lubbock issued a proclamation forbidding railroads to haul cotton in Texas, particularly mentioning the traffic at Galveston Bay and Houston. He declared that "every bale of cotton so placed, is an additional incentive to the cupidity of our avaricious and unnatural enemy." But cotton was moved secretly; sometimes it was hauled to the Brazos River by rail, and loaded there on blockade runners.

The Galveston, Houston & Henderson Railroad brought 350 captured Union soldiers and eighteen Federal officers to Houston on January 2, 1863. At the depot crowds had assembled to see the prisoners, but the train was stopped a half mile away and the prisoners, under heavy guard, were marched downtown to barracks at the junction of Buffalo and White Oak Bayous. Victorious Federal troops arrived in Houston during June, 1865, aboard a train from Galveston. In the first years of Reconstruction vast stores of supplies began moving from Houston into the interior.

The first local horse car was put into operation early in 1868, as announced by the *Daily Houston Telegraph* on March 25: "A Horse Car, on the Tap Railroad will start from opposite the residence of Mr. Dechaumes every morning at 5 o'clock for Court House Square; returning at 5:45, and continuing to run until 8 P.M. . . . Fare, 10 cents; children half-price." By April 9 the Houston City Railroad Company had laid sufficient wooden rails on McKinney Avenue for the operation of the first mule-drawn streetcar.

Although railroads were replacing wagon trains, oxen still hauled cotton to Houston, and the investment of the freighters amounted to \$5,000,000.

The *Daily Houston Telegraph* on June 6, 1869, had this announcement:

We are requested by Maj. Baer to say that the hand cars will commence on Monday to make regular trips on the Texas and New Orleans Railroad to Beaumont, twice a week, carrying the mails and passengers.

In 1870 the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado Railroad was purchased by Thomas W. Pierce, J. F. Barrett, John Sealy and associates, and the line's

name changed to the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad. About this time the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado was extended toward San Antonio, Del Rio, Sanderson, Van Horn, and El Paso, where it was later absorbed by the Southern Pacific. Convicts from the State penitentiary were employed on the construction of the Houston and Texas Central as it was built northward. At length Chinese coolies brought from the Pacific Coast completed the road.

The International Railway Company opened Houston offices in 1870. The Houston and Great Northern Railroad Company purchased eighty acres on the north side of Buffalo Bayou and the construction of docks was started almost immediately, as the road was built toward Huntsville.

The first major labor difficulty in Houston was announced by the *Weekly Houston Telegraph* on November 27, 1870:

A Strike. — We learn that the engineers, brakemen, and other hands on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad struck for fifty cents per day more . . . on account of the extra night work. . . . The company, however, refused to pay the amount desired and discharged all hands, and put on a new set of them.

In 1873 the Houston and Texas Central Railroad reached Denison to meet the rails of the Missouri, Kansas and Texas, and Houston had its first northern out-of-State outlet for freight. New trade territory was opened in 1875, when the Texas Western Narrow Gauge Railway Company reached Pattison near the Brazos.

Houston in the 1870's imposed a tax on freight to Galveston, and in retaliation, George Sealy and other prominent Galvestonians chartered the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway and routed it to the interior without touching Houston. The Houston-Alvin section of this line was not built until eleven years later.

Paul Bremond received a charter for the Houston East and West Texas Railway Company on March 11, 1875, and built it toward Shreveport. Traversing the east Texas forests, it added lumber to Houston's wealth. This line was soon purchased by the Southern Pacific. A merger resulted in the creation of the International and Great Northern Railroad, with its terminus in Houston. It encountered difficulty shared by other railroads of the region, described by the *Houston Daily Telegraph* on December 7, 1876:

The International and Great Northern passenger train reached here . . . about ten hours behind time. . . . The road used windmills instead of steam engines for pumping water into the tanks, and as they will not work without wind, and the tanks had been exhausted . . . all trains delayed getting water.

When yellow fever raged, areas through which the road ran were quarantined, and officers were kept aboard trains to enforce strict health regulations. One day Quarantine Officer Mulcahey found a merchant from

New Orleans on a train of the International and Great Northern, and as "yellow jack" had appeared there, the merchant was put off at the village of Spring, whose townsfolk promptly put him back on his coach. Officer Mulcahey again ejected the unfortunate traveler, and the reaction of the citizens of Spring was described by the *Houston Daily Telegram* on August 28, 1878:

The cars pulled up to the station and were hardly still before men were rushing through it searching for the quarantine officer. The conductor signalled the engineer to go ahead, but a fellow with a six-shooter had stepped into the cab and told him not to touch the throttle. . . . They were told that the officer . . . was not on board. They gave fair warning that this must be the last time any officers put off a man from any infected point there. Twenty men with blunderbusses and quirts went very far to show that business was meant.

Despite the transportation facilities offered by railroads and streetcars, there were those who still desired other types of conveyances, and to meet their needs, J. G. Baldwin, local livery stable owner, announced his charges for a horse and buggy: "1 o'clock to 7 p.m. \$4.00; 1 o'clock to 9 p.m. \$6.00; 1 o'clock to 12 mid-night, \$8.00. Carriages at rates fixed by the city ordinance."

By 1889 steel rails had replaced the wooden tracks used by Houston streetcars; in the stables were fifty mules to haul twenty cars. On June 12, 1891, the first trial trip of an electric streetcar proved successful, and the event threw the town into a hubbub. A jury was hearing a case, and at news that the new car was approaching the judge recessed the court. Judge, jury, and officials—the spectators had already left the courtroom—rushed to the street just in time. Later the judge said, "I felt that no person over whose actions I had immediate control, should miss this strange and novel sight." Many Houstonians looked askance at this contraption that moved with nothing apparent to push or pull it. They shook their heads and declared that horses and buggies or their own feet were good enough for them. But the Negroes hailed the electric cars as something delightfully new and exciting. They saved their pennies to ride on them; one night when a car loaded with Negroes blew a fuse with a shower of sparks, pandemonium broke loose. Passengers poured out of windows and doors and ran in every direction.

Soon the city council passed an ordinance regulating the speed limit of the trolleys. In the downtown districts they were not to exceed six miles an hour, and in residential and industrial areas, eight miles an hour.

Then another contraption arrived. The *Houston Daily Post* announced on March 16, 1897:

Yesterday . . . an electric horseless carriage was seen on the streets. . . . J. Frank Pickering, traveling agent for Montgomery Ward & Company of Chicago, accompanied by a Post reporter drove over the city streets. . . . This horseless carriage was built especially for the above company at a cost of \$3,000 . . . as an advertising novelty. It is run by a set of storage batteries, twenty-eight cells . . . the tires are solid rubber . . . the carriage weighs about 2000 pounds.

George W. Hawkins is believed to have been the owner of the first gasoline automobile in Houston. When he arrived with his Oldsmobile, a Mrs. Adams was driving a steam car, a Mobile. Among the first purchasers of automobiles were John H. Kirby and Howard Hughes.

Early in 1903 C. L. Bering made the first overland automobile trip from Houston to Rockport. He had no tire chains but carried a quantity of manila rope. Every town cheered him on and city officials bade him welcome. He and his passengers found the prairie road blocked by cattle at one point. Bering tried to stampede the herd by sounding his horn; instead, the cattle lowered their heads and charged. The autoists escaped unharmed.

On April 1, 1903, the first automobile driver to be arrested for a local traffic violation, one T. Brady, was fined \$10 and costs for "fast driving" down Main Street. He had exceeded the six-miles-an-hour speed limit and had caused a disastrous runaway.

The Houston Belt & Terminal Railway was organized in 1905 by the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe and affiliates. It has been claimed that "July, 1907, was the biggest 'railroad month' in Houston's entire history. Three new roads completed their lines into the city within the first 18 days of the month, two of them on the same day, the 18th." These lines were the Beaumont, Sour Lake & Western Railway, the Trinity and Brazos Valley Railway, and the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway, bringing Houston's total to seventeen. The Houston Belt & Terminal Railway, under the guidance of Samuel Lazarus of St. Louis, became a powerful adjunct to local freight and passenger facilities. Eighty-five passenger trains passed through Houston each Sunday.

Although automobiles were now common, county and State highways were so poor that little overland traveling was done. On June 21, 1909, the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* reported:

The first local party of automobilists to successfully make a trip from Houston to Galveston and return in a single day made the run on Sunday, leaving here at 6 o'clock in the morning . . . returning . . . about 9 o'clock in the evening.

On August 29, 1911, the first all-steel train ever to operate in Texas left Houston for Galveston. In 1911 service was inaugurated on the Houston-Galveston Interurban Electric line, which continued in operation until 1938.

The city's first airplane exhibition was held at South Houston on February 18, 1910, when more than 2,500 people paid a dollar each to watch a barnstorming French aviator, Louis Paulhan, take off and land several times. When asked to make a flight over Houston, he refused because it was "too dangerous," and he refused another request that he fly to Galveston for an exhibition there because the distance was "too great."

Among those who watched Paulhan's exhibition were L. L. Walker, L. F. Smith, and Guy C. Hahn, all of whom entered the virtually unexplored field of aviation. Walker completed the construction of an airplane in August, a forty-

horsepower monoplane, and it flew. Hahn and Smith finished a plane a little later at a cost of \$13,000. They were so pleased with it that they established an airplane factory in South Houston and built several airplanes. During the Cotton Carnival of 1911 an air show was part of the program. Five Houston-made planes were among those at the Harrisburg race track on November 14, when the barnstormers took to the air.

In 1914 Harold D. Hahl and I. J. Kelly opened a flying school near the intersection of present South Main and Bellaire Boulevards on a level stretch of ground. In a few months a pupil was killed in an unauthorized hop, and the venture soon collapsed.

The opening of a division office of the Texas State Highway Department at Houston in 1917 encouraged the construction of good roads. Previously the Old Spanish Trail had been paved to the San Jacinto River and macadam covered the Galveston Road by way of La Porte; both were favorite speedways of automobilists. Paved and shell roads were constructed during the next few years through efforts of the Texas State Highway Department, the Texas Good Roads Association, automobile clubs, and civic and State organizations.

Three free ferries were placed in operation by Harris County, one across the channel at Morgan's Point, the Lynchburg Ferry on the San Jacinto Memorial Highway, and one across the channel at Pasadena on the Clinton Road. In 1941 they were still in operation.

The Southern Aircraft Company was the first commercial air line to enter Houston, in 1919. S. E. J. Cox, Houston oil man, in that year purchased a Curtiss JN 4D plane, called a "Jenny;" in 1920 he bought two Curtiss "Orioles." The ships were used for business and publicity. His pilot, Hal Block, made the first all-air trip from Houston to New York, leaving Houston on June 20, 1921; his flying time was nineteen hours and forty-eight minutes.

In July, 1924, railroads serving the city organized the Port Terminal Railroad Association, taking over the old Houston Belt & Terminal line and its twenty-two miles of trackage along the Houston Ship Channel and around the Turning Basin. This association established equalized switching facilities and freight handling. Houston's railroads during 1925 had 30,000 miles of trunk line railroad or one-eighth of such railroad mileage in the United States.

In 1925 several makeshift bus lines were operating from Houston, a service inaugurated four years earlier by Webb Green. Schedules were as uncertain as those of the first railroads. C. T. English established a bus line to Dallas in 1925; during wet weather the trip took from thirty to forty hours.

One of the country's largest railroad mergers occurred in 1925 when the Missouri Pacific extended its lines into Houston, taking over the International and Great Northern Railroad, the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway, the Beaumont, Sour Lake & Western Railway, and the Houston North Shore Railway — the latter an electric line to Baytown.

In 1927 the Houston Airport Corporation was organized by local businessmen, who opened a 193-acre field on Telephone Road and named it the



*Jefferson Davis Hospital*

*Harris County Courthouse*





*Colored Carnegie Branch of the Houston Public Library*

*Houston Negro Hospital*







*Miller Outdoor Theater*

*Houston Museum of Fine Arts*





*Hermann Park Zoo*

*Civic Center*

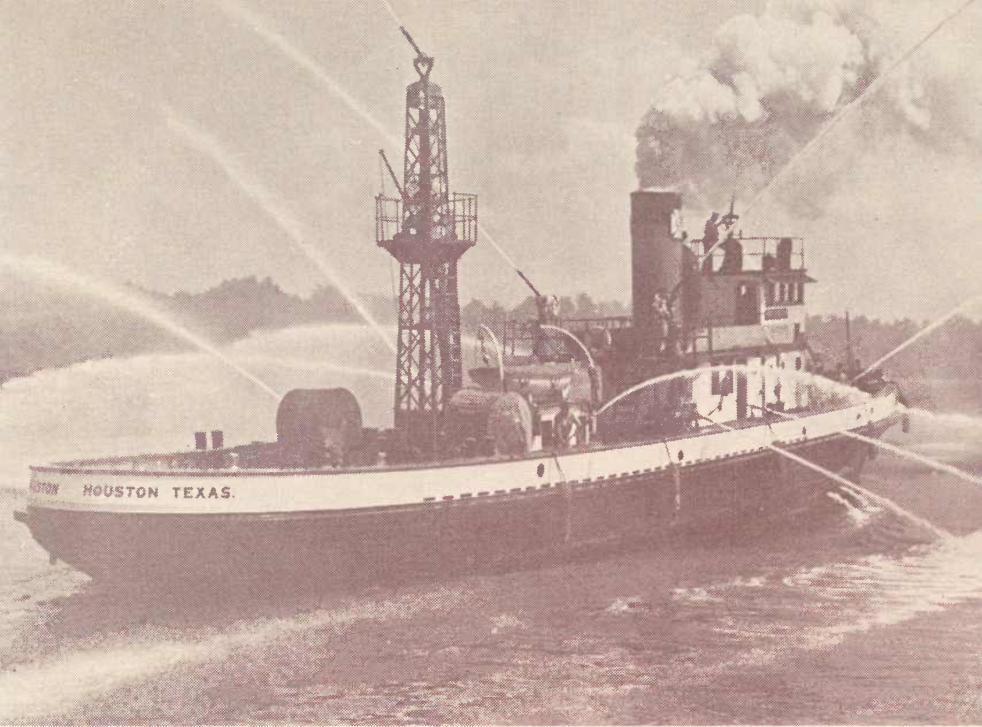




*Houston Public Library*

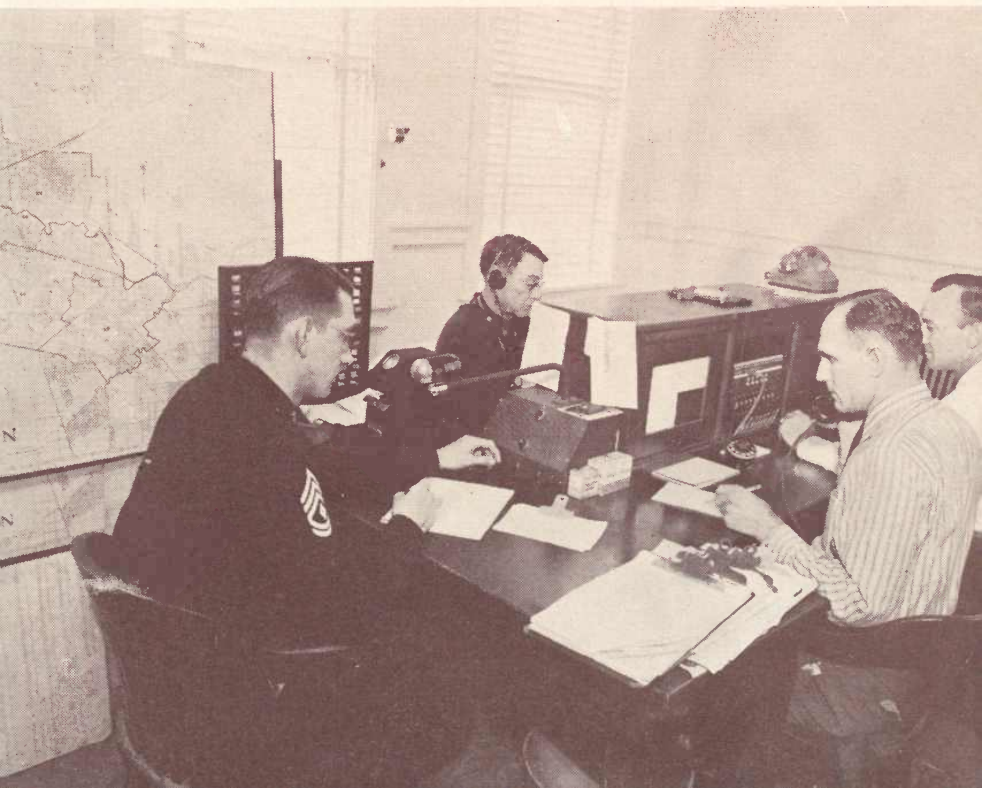


City Hall



Fireboat Houston

Communications Division Houston Police Department





*Boy Scouts, Camp Hudson*

*Founders' Memorial Park*



Municipal Airport. Lt. Comdr. Frank Hawks, the noted flier, was the first tenant. Air mail service was inaugurated on February 6, 1928, with a ceremony in which 113 army planes participated.

Motor lines by this time were moving many tons of freight along the highways to and from Houston, and this method of freighting has grown more popular each year. Great warehouses and truck fleets have been established.

In 1937 the air field on Telephone Road and an additional tract were purchased by the municipality, and plans made for improvements. The construction of a new Administration Building and hangar at the Houston Municipal Airport began in 1939, and by midsummer of 1940 had been completed and occupied.

Competition of air lines and bus companies had brought improved railroad facilities by 1936. The *Sam Houston Zephyr* was the first all-metal, diesel-powered streamliner in Texas; it traveled 100 miles an hour on the Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth run, on the tracks of the Burlington-Rock Island Railroad. During 1937 the *Texas Rocket* was placed on the Houston-north-Texas run. The Southern Pacific added two steam-powered, streamlined trains for use between Houston and Dallas.

Modern Houston, with its airplanes and streamline trains, shares with the frontier village of a century ago an appreciation of the vital importance of transportation.



## CHAPTER III

### INDUSTRY, COMMERCE, AND LABOR

SINCE ITS FIRST sawmills were built on the banks of the bayou a century ago, Houston has progressed to first place in Texas in the value of manufactured products, which in 1940 totaled \$161,000,000 for the city and \$405,000,000 for Harris County. Houston vies industrially with Louisville and New Orleans for first place in the South; Harris is one of two Texas counties ranking among the first fifty in the United States in the value of its manufactured goods. With 589 urban factories employing 19,000 people, and 655 factories in the county with 32,000 employees, the annual payroll for Houston is more than \$24,000,000, and for Harris County, \$40,000,000. The county's manufactured products account for twenty per cent of the value of the State's total output.

Industrial payrolls show the trend of the Houston area's recent development: in the first eight months of 1940 the wages of those employed by the lumber interests of the vicinity totaled \$95,118,000, and the petroleum industry's payroll was second, at \$50,000,000. Ship channel workers earned \$42,235,120, and manufacturers paid employees \$31,669,476.

A year after the founding of Houston the *Telegraph and Texas Register* became prophetic: "The City of Houston — This place is yet merely a city in embryo but the industry, enterprise and amount of capital which are now ministering to its greatness will soon elevate it to a prominent rank among the cities of older countries." The soundness of that prediction was soon apparent in the number of vessels docked at the foot of Main Street, in the caravans of wagons freighting goods to the interior, in the array of "mercantile establishments." Into this busy frontier town the cotton planters of the Brazos brought the first great wealth. In their long-tailed coats, flowered silk waistcoats, puffed shirts, and pantaloons, cotton barons traveled somewhat in the style of foreign nobles and were received with pomp and ceremony by frontier merchants and innkeepers. Cotton factors received two and a half per cent for selling the crops. But Houston's first industrial ventures were sawmills and gristmills, to which settlers brought timber to be ripped into planks, or corn to be ground. In these enterprises men of the early settlements found employment.

In 1837 a surplus of labor was due to the large number of soldiers whose release from the Revolutionary army had left them without employment. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* advised "all those of our citizens who are in want of laborers . . . to give notice immediately in this city," because the soldiers were "anxious to obtain situations in different sections of the country, where they may be usefully employed." Farm work was then performed largely by slave labor; Robert Mills and his brothers had 800 slaves on a single Brazos River plantation. Among the first skilled laborers to advertise in Houston's newspapers were painters, cabinetmakers, carpenters, and brickmasons. Women



had little business opportunity in this frontier community, and a "widow lady who has been accustomed to the instructions of children" sought "a position in a private family, salary no object."

The informality of Houston's pioneer businesses is echoed in an advertisement in the *Telegraph* on June 24, 1837: "Provisions:—Butter, Lard, Pickles, and Buckwheat Flour, just received and for sale at Mr. Canfield's boarding house." Other advertisements of the 1830's echo primitive business methods: "Boots, Shoes, Sadlery and Cotton Goods, will be offered in a few days in exchange for cotton, hides, skins, wax, tallow, venison, hams, cows, and calves—Harvey Whiting;" and, "Sales at Auction—Every Monday, Thursday and Saturday . . . by O'BRIEN AND EVERETTE. Consisting of every description of Merchandise, Dry Goods, Groceries, &c. In front of our store . . . opposite Liberty Pole. N. B. Sales of Lands, Building Lots, Houses, Carriages, Horses, Mules, &c. (in fact anything that can be sold) will meet with attention and despatch." A Main Street commission firm advertised "Cash or merchandise paid for Hides, Deer Skins, Bear Skins, Fox and Raccoon Skins, and all kinds of peltries well dried . . . also pecans and black moss if well dried and put up in bales."

Goods offered by pioneer Houston merchants included "Frock coats, Roundabouts, Pantaloons . . . Silk Gloves . . . Cider . . . Ale . . . Bitters . . . Whiskey . . . Champaigne . . . Readymade Linen— together with cloths and stuffs;" "friction matches;" "Ladies Martingales . . . and Nails;" "Real Principie Segars . . . Cavendish and Honey Dew Tobacco . . . Earthen Ware by the crate, Hats;" "Superfine London Clothing . . . Also Indian corn, Yellow Soap, Sperm Candles, and a fine lot of Goshen butter;" "a full assortment of Indian articles, rifles . . . beads, paints, bells and other ornaments." The *Telegraph* advertised "Bibles and black and red ink."

Early businessmen were sometimes criticized for their methods and prices. The *Telegraph* said, in June, 1838: "Ice is selling in this City at 50 cents a pound! This exorbitance should make the bosom of a Craesus warm with indignation." Again the newspaper commented, "A man in market yesterday morning, demanded one dollar and seventy five cents per dozen for eggs. We have a great curiosity to know what his conscience is made of." Merchants sometimes lacked the customary enthusiasm: "AUCTION—On Tuesday, the 20th inst. [March, 1838] . . . I will sell at public auction for cash . . . one lot of Bacon, and sundry items too tedious to enumerate. J. Cormick, Jr." Hart & Donaldson "respectfully beg leave to intimate to the citizens of Houston and the public generally, that they have commenced the Baking business." But the lackadaisical ones were outnumbered by those who promised much in service or merchandise, such as:

ATTENTION PUBLIC \*\* FANCY BAKERY. — Loveridge & House . . . will be found at our post at our Bakery in Main Street . . . where we will keep constantly on hand . . . ornamental, pound and sponge cakes; fancy sweet biscuit . . . confectionaries of all kinds, equal

to any made in the United States. . . . Orders for ball and marriage suppers thankfully received and promptly despatched.

On April 28, 1838, journeymen printers met and formed the Texas Typographical Association, the first organized labor group in Houston. The chief objectives, as expressed in the constitution, were to promote the interests of this group throughout the Republic of Texas and to establish a uniform scale of prices. The first president was J. Smith, with N. W. Travis as vice president and J. M. Wade as secretary and treasurer.

The rush of settlers during the heyday of the Republic of Texas was a boon to the uncertain business enterprises upon the banks of Buffalo Bayou, for each new settlement in the interior brought demands for the output of local mills, stocks of merchandise, and cargoes bought by commission merchants. The *Telegraph* on May 5, 1838, reported, "Our city has presented quite a mercantile appearance within the last few weeks. Hundreds of baggage wagons have been constantly arriving from the upper country, and return loaded with merchandise. Our merchants, who but recently entertained fears that the market was completely overstocked with merchandise, are hardly able to account for the astonishing change which is taking place in the appearance of their stores."

One of Houston's early businessmen was J. M. Everett, who opened a "tailoring business over the Shakespeare Coffee House." Not the least of the town's first commercial ventures were the numerous saloons, including one named the *Finish* and another called the *Boomerang*. Watkins Clay announced that he was "prepared to shoe the most unruly horse, by raising him off the ground with a lever and belt." Quinton N. Kinman made "coaches, gigs, sulkies, carts, wagons, drays," and orders were "executed on short notice." G. Kelly, "on account of the misfortune of losing my wife and child," disposed of his stock of calico, spectacles, and carpenter's tools. Among the pioneer merchants were the Allens, and they, together with other businessmen, often lost needed supplies when river craft were wrecked. But by February, 1839, the *Telegraph* reported that "the harbor presents quite the appearance of an Atlantic port. . . . Our commerce was formerly confined almost exclusively to New Orleans, but . . . many of our merchants are beginning to form connections in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore." Houston's commercial and industrial development was from the beginning largely dependent upon and greatly affected by transportation facilities and progress (see *CANOES TO OCEAN LINERS*, and *OXCARTS TO AIRPLANES*). Three years after its founding, largely because of increased shipping, Houston had, according to the *Telegraph*, "stores well filled with the conveniences, and many of the luxuries of life. . . . Our wharves present the appearance of quite a large commercial city. . . . While such is the case no ordinary occurrence can check the advancement of our city in commerce, in population, and in wealth." Yet the newspaper reported that a Houstonian "actually paid . . . five dollars for four pounds of flour." Its usual cost in local stores that year was \$40 a barrel; sweet potatoes sold at \$5 a bushel, and butter at \$1 a pound. Despite the high prices of staple groceries

Houston's stores increased their business threefold, and G. Brissoneau and P. Cottey opened the *Restaurant of the Four Nations*, boasting that they had, "without doubt, the best cook in town."

In 1839 the master carpenters organized to adopt a uniform wage scale, the resolution accompanying it stating that "we exact no more than our services justly deserve, believing that the mechanic is worthy of his hire."

By 1840 large-scale cotton production prospered in the Houston area, the *Morning Star* reporting that a single planter had "engaged with a commercial house in this city to deliver six thousand bales." That newspaper announced on March 23, 1840, that a painter had promised to paint, by Monday, a sign with the words, *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi*, "but having a press of business could not complete it till Tuesday; and supposing the motto intended to designate the day on which the sign was finished inscribed as follows: '*Sic Transit Gloria Tuesday.*'"

The dairy business was regulated by city ordinance in 1840, and merchants advertised refrigerators, "a yankee contrivance for keeping things cool." When people of Austin bought vinegar in Houston, the *Morning Star* tartly commented:

It is in active debate here, whether the large quantities of this article which have been ordered for the seat of the government are to be devoted to the pickling of Comanches, or to preserving Austin from stagnation.

Cedar and live oak timber was contracted for by a New York City firm. Houston now had two steam sawmills but their capacity was small. In 1841 merchants met to establish a "Bank of Exchange," petitioning Congress for a charter; by this time not only cotton, but also tobacco, rice, sugar, and other products were reaching Houston by river boat and wagon, for export down the bayou. By 1844 a cotton compress and warehouse were built by N. T. Davis, yet Elam Stockbridge still used three oxen for power at the town's gristmill.

"We believe that the commerce of Houston now exceeds that of any other two cities or towns in any portion of Texas," exulted the *Telegraph* in 1845. "Our streets now present quite an animated appearance. They are daily crowded with teams loaded with cotton, hides, etc. from the interior. . . . It is estimated that at least 16,000 bales of cotton will be shipped from this city this season." Three years later wool was added to local exports, and in 1850 spiced beef from the packing house of Russel, Williams & Company was being shipped. Old Tallow Town, the site of another packery, was offered for sale as real estate values began climbing. Henry Sampson in 1852 became the first life insurance agent of record, offering to "take risks on the lives of WHITE PERSONS and SLAVES, on the most favorable rates."

In the summer of 1855 a visitor declared that he had "never witnessed a more active business scene than is presented on Main Street. . . . Broadway in New York was never more crowded with busses than is Main Street with ox teams. . . . The laborer finds full employment, the mechanic high prices for his

services. . . . New storehouses are going up, and new stocks of goods are being opened."

By 1856 cotton from a wide radius was being brought to Houston for shipment. The *Weekly Telegraph* commented, "In old times, the bills of lading commenced as follows, 'Shipped, by the grace of God, in good condition;'" but when pious merchants objected to this formula a Doctor Franklin, who printed bills of lading, advertised that he sold them "with or without the grace of God." Five big cotton warehouses now stood beside the bayou, and this year a million bricks were made locally and used in Houston buildings. A single steamboat, the *Sam*, brought 70,000 feet of lumber for new buildings in the town. The firm of William M. Rice and Company, cotton factors, dealt also in groceries, liquors, plantation supplies, dry goods, and medicines.

The Adams Express Company was established in 1857 for the speedy transportation of "Specie, Bank Notes, Jewelry, Valuable Parcels, Merchandise, &c." This year was the first in which local merchants chartered a ship to transport a cargo of cotton to Europe. Peter Gabel's brewery was doubled in size; the brewer had started on such a modest scale that for some time he delivered beer in a quarter of a barrel carried on his shoulders.

In 1858 the *Telegraph* reported that Houston during the year past had exported 60,000 bales of cotton, 20,000 hides, and other produce valued at \$3,500,000. This was compared with exports in 1844, valued at \$175,000.

J. DeCordova in *Texas, Her Resources and Her Public Men*, published in 1858, reported that "in the immediate vicinity of Houston there are several factories and several fine cotton warehouses and there is considerable anxiety among the leading men to establish a cotton factory in or near the city. . . . On the San Jacinto River is a body of fine cypress and pine timber, which gives ample employment to a number of steam saw-mills. . . . From the appearance of the large herds of horned cattle to be found on her extensive prairies, we feel justified in pronouncing this an excellent stock country. . . . Stock cattle at the present time can be purchased for six dollars per head. . . . The city of Houston . . . is destined to be a very important point."

Yet "the stealing of horses tied in the streets is getting to be a nuisance," the *Telegraph* observed, and "our advice to young men in the country is to stay where they are . . . learn a trade, or go into the cotton field and earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, rather than join the army of pale-faced clerks." In 1859 local carpenters had a social organization, planters were obtaining a bale an acre from their cotton fields, and C. C. Bier proposed the use of "Rosin oil gas" in the Houston Gas Works. Negro roustabouts were earning \$40 a month. Texans still looked askance at banks, the *Telegraph* declaring that they were "a crazy contrivance that always goes to pieces at the first shock." In 1860 a large meat packing plant was established by J. E. and J. W. Schrimpf.

Rumblings of war in 1861 led customers to buy sparingly; many Houston businessmen volunteered, and their stores stood empty. Flour sold at \$98 a

barrel as the Federal blockade tightened on the Texas coast (see IN THE CONFEDERACY). The steamboat trade vanished, railroad facilities were taken over by the military, and Houston's largest market was the Confederate government. Produce was costly; the *Telegraph* reported that "watermelons have been selling in our market for a dollar and a half. . . . Who wouldn't be a farmer?"

The close of the conflict brought renewed trade with the interior; merchants complained that heavily laden oxcarts passing on the unpaved streets "give the town the appearance of a Sahara sandstorm." On May 7, 1866, the *Evening Star* announced that "the National Bank building in this city is nearly completed, and the institution will commence operations in a few days." On January 13, 1867, the *Sunday Telegraph* heralded the fact that the "Eureka Mills . . . now turning out fine sheetings and drills . . . will in a few days put in the market their various goods . . . and test the question of profit and loss." The Houston City Mills "will be erected this spring on the bayou. . . . Judge Munger who is the Superintendent of both enterprises, is a go ahead man." A year later two beef packing plants were established, and the Eagle Car Works was manufacturing boxcars. In May of that year the Harris County Industrial Association, organized "to encourage and promote industrial pursuits," was chartered, with J. T. Brady as president. On December 23, 1869, the *Houston Daily Times* commented:

Among the Houston creations, may be noted dredgeboats, railroad cars, various kinds of machinery, wagons, carriages, harness, saddlery, castings, plows, cloth of different sorts, guns, pistols, clothing, boots and shoes, sash and doors, furniture, sofas, mattresses, books, extracts of beef, &c. &c.

An ice factory established in 1869 failed for want of customers. In 1870 the Houston Manufacturing Company, a needlework factory, was established by several pioneer businesswomen. Two years later the Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union No. 1 of Texas was organized.

Something that "had long been wanted" was supplied in May, 1875, when "R. Cotter & Co.'s Drug Store" began dispensing sodas from "an elegant and costly fountain." By the autumn of 1876 the Houston Elevator Company was prepared to receive grain, and a year later Houston dealers shipped thirty carloads of vegetables. By 1880 the town had its fourth cotton compress.

In 1880-81 the Texas Transportation Company shipped 45,768 tons of merchandise valued at \$91,075,750; the largest shipments by water consisted of cotton, hides, wool, livestock, and grain. Gross sales for the year totaled \$14,000,000, of which wholesale groceries accounted for \$5,000,000, and wholesale liquor sales, \$500,000. The *Directory of the City of Houston*, 1882-83, estimated the investment in cotton presses at \$450,000, in factories at \$1,000,000, and announced that bank deposits stood at \$700,000. Only New York City surpassed Houston in cotton sales in 1883. Local industrial plants now included a soap factory, five carriage and wagon manufactories, two bottling works, a

chemical plant, and seven planing mills and lumber yards. By this year Houston's wholesale firms had "drummers" selling merchandise in a large trade territory. Among the older and wealthier firms was that of T. W. House, whose founder was banker, wholesale grocer, cotton factor, commission merchant, and manufacturer of syrups made on his own sugarcane plantation. Henry Henke, wholesale and retail grocer and liquor dealer, maintained a wagon yard that had become an institution; here farmers gathered annually to exchange produce for supplies, and to camp for several weeks near the big store that was fragrant with the odors of spices, wine, harness, and cheese.

The Southern Cotton Oil Company bought a site for a mill in 1886, and a year later the Houston Car Wheel and Foundry Company was established. Houston now boasted the First National and the Commercial National Banks; a third bank, the South Texas National, opened its doors in 1890. In that year local manufacturing and industrial plants totaled 160, employed 5,000 workmen, and had an annual payroll of more than \$2,000,000.

On December 9, 1893, the *Houston Daily Post* announced that "Prosperous Houston . . . has . . . five National Banks and one private bank . . . four express companies. . . . Four large railroad shops. . . . One of the largest car wheel works." Two years later Houston had become the world's second largest cotton market. In 1897 cotton firms with local offices numbered thirty-three; within twelve months the 1,003,473 bales shipped from Houston placed it "ahead of all other markets of the world, not only interior, but port," according to the *Post*. The Milkmen's Protective Association was organized at Market Hall on May 15, 1898; in August, the Butchers' Protective Association was formed. Businesswomen met at the real estate office of Mrs. Nette Bryan, on August 31, and founded the Working Women's Association. Within a few days, Houston cooks and waiters organized.

By 1903 Harris had become the wealthiest county in the State, its commerce based largely upon agriculture. Houston's receipts for 1904-05 totaled 17.7 per cent of the cotton produced in the United States. Improved shipping facilities and a steadily expanding industrial structure maintained a lusty prosperity. On September 1, 1911, the *Post* reported, "To Houston . . . belongs the distinction of being the greatest inland cotton market in the world." In addition, it had become a lumber center, with twenty-six manufacturing and wholesale lumber plants, and a large export trade in yellow pine. By 1913 there were 347 factories manufacturing goods valued at \$50,000,000. Two years later, the coffee processed in the city was valued at \$1,500,000, and Houston's thirteen banks had deposits of \$42,859,401.

Expansion of transportation facilities, wider and more diversified agricultural production, and the discovery of oil in near-by fields further stimulated Houston's commercial growth. When a million bales of cotton were exported in the 1923-24 season, the first great cotton textile mill was built. Houston's \$30,000,000 building program in 1925 reflected the general upswing of business. In 1932 the city was first in cotton exports, had a \$4,000,000 annual dairy business, and was an oil

center. By 1936 the American Can Company had occupied its six-acre site and the Gulf Portland Cement Company's plant was under construction. These were only two of a score of large industrial developments whose extensive operations were reflected in bank clearings of \$2,713,697,452 in 1939.

As in the past, much of Houston's modern commercial strength is based upon cotton. In 1941 there were twelve high-density compresses, five mills manufacturing more than fifty cotton by-products, and warehouses with a combined storage capacity of 3,000,000 bales. Twenty lumber companies with extensive timber holdings and many sawmills had Houston offices; leading exports are Southern pine, hardwoods, oak, cypress, and cedar lumber.

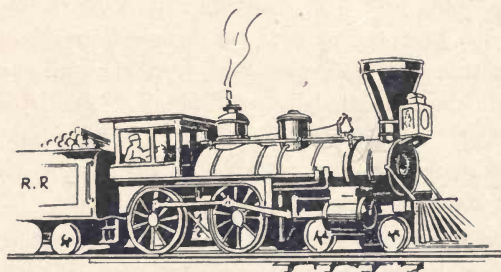
Cement plants with an annual output of 3,000,000 barrels stand beside the Houston Ship Channel, using shell dredged from near-by bayous and bays instead of the usual limestone as raw material. Five rice mills process half of the State's crop, and a single flour mill daily produces 3,600 barrels. The manufacture of steel and iron products is one of the city's important industries. Store, office, and bank fixtures are fabricated, and there is a large furniture factory. Chemical products made in local plants include sulphuric acid, bone carbon, bone oil, fertilizer, caustic soda, chlorine, hydrogen, tannic acid, and resins. Two factories make paint and varnish especially for the Gulf Coast climate. The manufacture of bags and bagging is an important industry, with six companies turning out products for national distribution. One of the largest local concerns is a pulp and paper mill, occupying a \$6,500,000 plant and employing between 600 and 700 workers. In 1940 a tool manufacturing company purchased a seventy-acre site for a munitions plant. South America ships bones to Houston for processing into fertilizer and other products, and South and Central America annually send about 25,000 tons of green coffee for roasting, packing, and distribution through local firms. With rail lines offering special livestock shipping rates to Houston, the city has become a major independent meat packing and distribution center.

Houston factories manufacture such varied products as cotton piece goods, fruit juices, glassware, hardware, machinery, and sausage casings. Among other industrial enterprises are breweries, automobile assembly and body plants, wood, metal, and corrugated box factories, rope and twine mills, food products plants and feed mills, bakeries, creosote and dress manufacturing plants. Raw products handled locally include sulphur and mineral salts. Coastwise shipping of vegetables in 1939 totaled 50,545 tons; copper, 42,248 tons. In that year exports were valued at \$186,732,240.

The city's gigantic oil industry has a major place in its modern commerce (see BLACK GOLD). Products manufactured locally include gasoline, kerosene, lubricants, naphtha, butane gas, carbon black, oil well supplies and machinery, and bunker oil. In 1939 crude oil and its products, exported through Port Houston, totaled 3,076,433 tons, including 1,920,401 tons of gasoline. Coastwise shipments, for domestic use, totaled 4,276,250 tons of gasoline; 433,287 tons of kerosene; 9,505,759 tons of crude oil; and 629,078 tons of bunker oil. In

addition, oil and its products shipped on the Intracoastal Canal totaled 285,482 short tons.

Houston has 147 trade union groups, with a combined membership of more than 40,000 workers, including railroad men. The American Federation of Labor has 120 local unions for white members and fifteen for Negroes; the Congress of Industrial Organizations has a dozen affiliates, with white and Negro membership totaling 8,000. The most serious local strike occurred in 1934 when longshoremen clashed with non-union workers and company guards; several fatalities occurred before Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins brought about a settlement. Most of the threatened disputes of recent years have been settled by arbitration. A notable example was the action of Local 333 of the Oil Field, Gas Well and Refinery Workers, who in 1936 refused to strike despite the sanction of a walkout by the national president of the union; in voting to remain at work the members declared that they "did not wish to incite trouble," and accepted a compromise. The Houston Labor and Trades Council, chartered by the American Federation of Labor in 1902, serves as a clearing house for its local unions.





## CHAPTER IV

# BLACK GOLD

THE STORY OF PETROLEUM is of tremendous economic and industrial significance in modern Houston, for through the port flows such a tide of the "black gold" and its products that today the city is one of the oil capitals of the world. Houston stands in the center of rich coastal fields where derricks tower above flat prairie pastures or cast reflections in the waters of sheltered bays. Girdling the city are eleven producing fields; by day, clouds of smoke hang over burning waste, and the night sky is reddened by flaming gas flares.

Along the banks of the ship channel stand ten big refineries, and around them, like giant silver-colored chicks hovering about a hen, squat the tanks of extensive "farms" where enormous quantities of petroleum are stored. Tankers line the refinery wharves that dot the winding course of the ship channel. Workmen swarm around these vessels, gas flares lighting their labors by night, for the loading and unloading of oil is a continuous task. Oil also moves through Houston on long trains that snake in and out of the refinery yards. Miles of buried pipe lines converge on Houston, bringing crude oil from New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Kansas. Much of the refined oil is conveyed to inland destinations by this network of pipes. A large proportion of Texas oil is piped to Houston for refining and export.

In the city are the headquarters of branch offices of 1,205 oil companies, some of which are engaged in widespread operations. These and allied industrial plants employ 40,000 people on an annual payroll of \$50,000,000. With assets valued at more than a billion dollars, they hold 6,000,000 acres of producing land. Six firms with local offices operate internationally. Houston is one of the country's largest concentration points for oil well equipment; approximately 300 firms manufacture or distribute machinery and supplies, and large warehouses are maintained by several companies with factories elsewhere.

Nearest Houston are the fields of Aldine, Eureka Heights, Goose Creek, Humble, Mykawa Old, Mykawa New, Pierce Junction, Satsuma, South Houston, Tomball, and Dyersdale; in 1940 this area contained 1,107 flowing wells and 437 pumping wells. Several of these fields, like many of the eighty-nine in twenty-eight near-by counties, are under development and exploration.

So extensive is development in the Houston region, and so large and numerous are the allied industrial plants in operation, that in one month of 1938, twenty-eight oil companies throughout the nation removed their offices to the city. Oil interests erected several skyscrapers that bear names familiar in the world of petroleum: the Humble, Shell, Gulf, and Texas buildings; the Petroleum Building houses many oil company offices, and the Continental Oil Company erected the Oil and Gas Building.

Although petroleum development in the coastal fields is comparatively

recent, dating from the first years of the twentieth century, a company was organized in Houston to drill for oil soon after the Civil War. On June 4, 1866, Richard W. Dowling, hero of the Battle of Sabine Pass, and John M. Fennerty entered into a contract "for the discovery and acquisition of lands in . . . Texas and elsewhere in the territories of the United States which appear likely to afford valuable minerals and petroleum. . . . Mechanical operations in mining and boring for oil shall be commenced." The venture inspired mirth among local businessmen, echoed on June 7 by the *Houston Evening Star*:

The Local of the Telegraph says it is rumored that some body has 'struck ile' some where near Houston.

The outcome of this pioneer venture is unknown, but historians believe that there is some connection between the explorations of Dowling and Fennerty and a story in *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin* on July 11, 1866:

Three reliable gentlemen visited our city this week, [and] informed us . . . concerning what they suppose to be the existence of petroleum in the section of country lying between the Angelina and Neches rivers. . . . Such indications corroborate the statement of a gentleman who came to Texas . . . a short time ago . . . a geologist . . . [who said] that there is a wide belt of country running east and west through Texas that will one day yield an immense amount of oil. The many efforts made to procure it may not prove renumerating at first; yet there is no doubt that some parties will be well repaid for their labor.

But the general attitude was that petroleum, like the mythical gold mines of the *conquistadores*, merited serious attention only from the foolhardy. In December, 1869, the Houston Gas Company advertised that "COAL GAS is much cheaper and every way safer than the DANGEROUS OILS produced from Petroleum." Texas oil and gas development continued on a small scale until 1900, when shallow wells produced almost a million barrels of petroleum. But the great coastal fields near Houston were untried, and there was nothing to indicate that with the new century the city would undergo its greatest economic changes through the development of oil resources.

Sudden and dramatic evidence of the wealth that underlay the Houston area was given on January 10, 1901, when the discovery well at Spindletop, near Beaumont, Texas, the Texas coast's first great gusher, came in spouting oil over the derrick. On January 13 the *Houston Daily Post* reasoned:

Houston will largely share in the results, for the reason that this find of oil solves the fuel problem for manufacturing uses. If . . . four barrels of crude oil will equal one ton of coal for fuel, it can readily be seen that at . . . 50 cents per barrel . . . it fills the requirements of coal at more than 50 per cent discount. . . . Houston, with her distribution facilities, must of necessity become a great beneficiary.

Four large tanks were built in Houston to store Spindletop oil; a special wire linked the city with the new field; soon land was being leased in the

Houston area. While the Spindletop boom was still a disorganized stampede a contract was signed by Gus Warnecke to start "boring for oil" on the Ed Taylor property near Pierce Junction, in Harris County. Much unproductive land was leased in the prevailing excitement. The few experienced oil men on the local scene were unfamiliar with the Gulf Coast's peculiar salt dome formations, and amateurs depended upon the opinions of bogus prognosticators, even upon signs and portents (see **THE PEOPLE, THEIR FOLKWAYS AND FOLKLORE**). Even the doodlebug was an "indicator," for many believed that where it burrowed, oil could be found. From this early belief, "doodlebug" came to be the name applied to divining rods.

Although the selection of sites for wells sometimes was based upon superstition more than upon science, operators had little difficulty in finding men anxious to gamble fortunes on development. In January, 1901, Houston businessmen and some from Pennsylvania leased acreage in Forest Park; the People's Oil and Gas Company was organized; and soon the J. M. Guffey Company, the developer of Spindletop, began leasing land in Harris County. By late spring local operators included the Florence Oil Company of Houston, the Southeast Texas Oil and Mineral Company, and the Twentieth Century Oil Company of Texas. On June 6 the Houston Oil and Stock Exchange was established, soon becoming important to local business; organized to protect investors from wildcat schemes, it dealt in sound Texas oil stocks.

On July 5, 1901, the \$30,000,000 Houston Oil Company of Texas was chartered, holding mineral rights to 881,319 acres in Texas, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Louisiana; John Henry Kirby, lumberman, was its backer. In September, the Houston Mining Company was established; two months later, the Southwestern Oil Company had completed a large refinery on the boundary between the city and Houston Heights. A significant development was reported by the *Chronicle* on November 13, 1901:

First Vessel To Use Oil.—Steamer Eugene Being Fitted For New Fuel.—Work has been commenced in changing the first vessel on the bayou from a wood consuming monster to a smokeless oil consuming steamer.

In November, Pattillo Higgins, pioneer Beaumont oilman, organized the Higgins Oil Company, which began to construct a pipe line between Beaumont and Houston. A few days later, the Gulf Refining Company was organized with J. M. Guffey, Andrew Mellon, R. A. Greer, E. L. Hall, and J. A. Reed as officers. This company, then merely the refining unit of the J. M. Guffey Petroleum Company, soon became a mighty influence in Gulf Coast exploration.

By the end of 1901 more than fifty of Houston's industrial plants were using fuel oil; the first local freight train with a locomotive using oil instead of coal was run by the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. On January 15, 1902, officials of the Southwestern Oil Company announced that machinery was being installed in the "largest independent refinery in the world."

On April 7, 1902, the Texas Company was chartered; headquarters were in Beaumont, but a branch office was opened in Houston. Among its directors were such giants of the oil industry as L. H. Lapham and Arnold Schlaet of New York; John W. (Bet-a-Million) Gates and J. C. Hutchins of Chicago; Joseph S. Cullinan, Corsicana; Rod Oliver, Dallas; R. E. Brooks, Walter T. Campbell, and E. J. Marshall of Beaumont. The Higgins Standard Oil Company was organized in July, and Higgins sold his Beaumont interests, removing his headquarters to Houston. By September the Southern Pacific Railroad "proposed to . . . erect a 50,000 barrel fuel oil storage tank" in the city. Seven States were now using the products of the Southwestern Oil Company refinery.

The first actual development came in 1903, when, upon the discovery of oil in a forty-foot water well on the property of George Parker, in the suburb of Brunner, a company was organized to test the area. But the first oil and gas came from a well drilled at Cross Timbers in August; gas was struck at thirty feet. That month Sid Westheimer began drilling at Humble. On October 14, the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* claimed, "Houston . . . is the center of the oil industry with over 30 incorporated companies here." J. C. Watson of Indianapolis, Indiana, during a visit to the city, commented, "One of the greatest sources of undeveloped wealth around Houston . . . is natural gas. . . . It will make Houston a great manufacturing point in a very short space of time."

Meantime, J. H. Slaughter, a farmer living near Humble, found a trace of oil and gas in a water well; the ignited gas leak burned brightly. Fewer than fifty people comprised the little crossroads community of Humble in the summer of 1904. There was a showing of oil in the Higgins well on October 27; and on November 6, the "Moonshine" well of Sharp Brothers came in, an event reported by the *Houston Chronicle and Herald*:

They've got oil. . . . Excitement is intense. . . . The Granberry well is expected to come in any minute.

Humble boomed as new wells were spudded in; land sold at \$12,000 an acre. The field's discoverer was Charles E. Barrett, who, starting on a shoestring, persisted in drilling, until other oilmen became interested. Houston's first oil field lay only seventeen miles from the city. Within a few months, Humble became a town ringed by wooden derricks. In 1904 the Humble field was menaced by fire, but this disaster was offset on January 9, 1905, when "Beatty Number 2" came in as a 15,000-barrel gusher. On July 23, 1905, lightning struck a tank and started another extensive fire. By the end of the year, however, the Humble was the largest field in southeast Texas, with a production of 18,066,482 barrels in twelve months.

In 1906 the Pierce Junction area became another producing field, and offices of the Texas Company were removed to Houston; two years later drilling started in the Goose Creek region, where, before the end of 1908, there were thirty wells. In 1910 the near-by fields produced 13,000,000 barrels

of oil. On January 20, 1911, the Humble Company was formed, with R. S. Sterling as organizer and first president, and the Gulf Coast Oil Company on October 17. Large oil companies operating in coastal fields now had local offices, and several were engaged in refining or other industrial aspects of the oil business. Intensive development continued, and in 1916 a new Houston stock exchange was opened, serving as a clearing house for stocks, leases, and purchases of oil.

By 1916 Humble had a population of 10,000, and its wells were daily yielding 70,000 barrels of oil. A 25,000-barrel gusher in the Goose Creek field inspired a boom described by the *Houston Daily Post*:

For several nights hundreds of men slept in the open . . . under the trees along the bay. . . . Wagonloads of household goods—to be placed in what house is a mystery—roll in. And always there is . . . load after load of machinery. . . . Before the geyser of oil was put under control, it had sprayed the landscape for hundreds of yards. Trees drip with petroleum, and their leaves glisten in greasy splendor. . . . Pools of oil stand at every turn, and spill themselves across the road.

Late in October, C. T. Rucker leased the town site of Goose Creek for \$5,000, and the residents were notified that they must move. Main Street, 200 yards long, was removed a short distance, and derricks rose where the town had stood. Yet Goose Creek remained "dry," with only soda for the thirsty. In August, 1917, the Gulf Producing Company completed a gusher in Tabbs Bay; the next day, the Simms-Sinclair Company brought in the largest well in the United States, a 30,000-barrel gusher. Feverish activity inspired by these developments reached the Houston Ship Channel, where seven pipe line companies now had facilities; new refineries were being built along the waterway.

Houston oilmen had developed a lore of their own (see THE PEOPLE, THEIR FOLKWAYS AND FOLKLORE), and a jargon which none but initiates understood. Storekeepers were "nipple-chasers," inexperienced workmen, "boll weevils," Logs were kept in "knowledge boxes;" those who fished for tools were "cherry pickers," weighted explosive charges, "go-devils." An ordinary shovel became an "idiot's stick;" a certain type of drill bit was a "Mother Hubbard," and a valve assembly was a "Christmas tree."

In the 1920's fire often menaced fields, tank farms, and refineries. The Humble field suffered a million-dollar conflagration in November, 1922, after lightning had ignited a tank. The tank farm at Webster, an adjunct of the Humble field, suffered a \$150,000 loss by fire in August, 1923, and the next May sustained damage of \$600,000.

On November 26, 1924, the *Houston Press* reported that Harris County fields had produced between one and a half and two per cent of the oil output of the country for the year; the county's twenty-four fields had yielded 500,000,000 barrels.

The decade of the 1920's was characterized by the growth of the major companies, larger capitalization, and greatly increased oil production. But

with the vast increase in Texas oil production after the discovery of the east Texas field in 1930, dangerously low prices prevailed. When it became apparent that regulation was necessary, proration was inaugurated to curb overproduction. Under that plan a limit was placed upon the amount of oil that could be produced within a specified period; with this system, fields of the Houston area continue to yield a large part of the oil produced in Texas.

By June, 1930, the Goose Creek field had produced, since its discovery, 60,000,000 barrels of oil; as a result, three prosperous towns called the Tri-Cities—Goose Creek, Baytown, and Pelly—had appeared, separated only by derricks. Their combined population totaled 15,000 by 1933. That year the total production of the Humble field reached 100,000,000 barrels. Tabbs Bay was dotted with the submerged wells of the Goose Creek field, the first of their type to come into production in Texas.

Houston entertained 50,000 oilmen, including visitors from Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Burma, Trinidad, Germany, Holland, and Great Britain, in May, 1933, at the fourth annual Oil Equipment and Engineering Exposition, the first international event of its kind to be held in this part of the United States.

Pay sand was struck in the neighboring Conroe, Eureka Heights, Mykawa, and Tomball areas in the mid-1930's. A single development, the construction of a refinery by the Shell Petroleum Corporation, brought 1,000 new families to the city. The South Houston field, opened in June, 1935, and the Eureka Heights field brought derricks to Houston's boundaries. The Satsuma field, fifteen miles west of the city, was added in 1936.

The death of Joseph S. Cullinan on March 11, 1937, removed one of the local oil industry's most colorful figures. A pioneer operator in Corsicana, where he had settled in 1897, he had fathered many early developments. On St. Patrick's Day he had always raised the Irish flag at his home in Houston, and from the Petroleum Building had flown the skull and crossbones, "as a warning . . . that liberty is a right and not a privilege."

In 1938 the Humble Oil and Refining Company bought 30,000 acres from the J. M. West estate for \$8,500,000 cash, one of the largest such transactions in local oil history. Included in the purchase was acreage in the southern part of Harris County.

The modern importance of oil in Houston was described in the magazine *Fortune* in December, 1939:

Without oil Houston would be just another cotton town. Oil has transformed it into a concrete column soaring grotesquely from a productive substratum. Derricks rise bleakly in the suburbs; near by are famous fields. . . . To these fields—to the distant fields of East Texas, West Texas, and the Panhandle—and beyond these . . . reach the throbbing pipe lines that . . . bring some twelve per cent of U. S. production to Houston for processing and shipping. Baytown, twenty miles down the Ship Channel, is a maze of refineries; it all represents the mightiest concentration of its kind on the face of the earth.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PEOPLE: THEIR FOLKWAYS AND FOLKLORE

HOUSTON'S racial elements have so completely blended into a typically cosmopolitan American community that today few groups exert a distinctive influence upon the city's life and culture, yet certain customs of other lands remain.

Comparatively few of Houston's people are foreign-born, although many Europeans and a few Asiatics are farmers in the vicinity. Most of the population is thoroughly Americanized, for the largest migrations from overseas occurred between 1836 and 1860. Only the Mexicans and Negroes live in their own sections of the city.

The Indians made an outstanding contribution to local lore and folkways. Among their tales none is more fanciful than that of the origin of the cannibal "Fish-Eaters." The first Karankawa, so the legend goes, was the child of the sun god and the moon goddess, and his cradle an oyster shell that rocked gently upon a cloud. One day while his parents quarreled the cradle was knocked from the sky and fell into the Gulf of Mexico; the tears of the goddess account for invariably abundant rainfall along the coast. Karankawas revered the oyster.

Jean Lafitte's occupation of Galveston Island and his journeys up the near-by streams gave rise to much treasure lore. As late as 1912 a chest containing old Spanish coins, believed to have been cached by pirates, was unearthed by fishermen after W. D. Warren had found a crested silver cruet at the mouth of the San Bernard. Legends have persisted of gold buried by Spaniards and Mexicans, and so diligent have been the searchers that Dead Man's Lake has twice been drained and excavated: first by Dr. W. F. Dearen, and in 1930 by the Sullivan brothers of Houston. A story that the gold of General Santa Anna lies buried somewhere in the salt marshes of the San Bernard has inspired many a futile search; yet in 1929 a pot of gold estimated to contain \$2,000 was dug up at the corner of Houston and Washington Avenues where a filling station was being erected. That discovery brought forth almost forgotten tales. Great holes yawning along the shores of San Jacinto Bay, where pirate ships once anchored, and others along the routes followed by Spanish and Mexican caravans, indicate the perennial labors of treasure hunters.

Many of Houston's earliest non-Latin settlers came from the Deep South or from England, bringing heirlooms and gentle customs to the frontier town; soon they were humbly learning wilderness remedies and crafts from friendly Indians or trying home-made potions used by slaves. Housewives were taught by the Indians to make root dyes for coloring thread, to fashion crocks of clay, and to use "spring houses," excavations dug beside running springs where meat, milk, and butter could be kept cool. From the Negroes came such remedies as the use of bullnettle necklaces for teething infants. "Grandma cures" and the

panaceas of "tea doctors" had to suffice in a land where experienced medical men were few and the distances between cabins were great. A woman practitioner treated warts by rubbing them with doodlebugs, administered fish-tail stew for skin poisoning, and assured victims of the common cold that they could be cured within thirty days if they held a coin in the mouth during the first stages of the ailment. "A bitter tonic of peach bark made stoics of small boys who otherwise were prone to languish in the springtime." There are painful memories of prickly pear poultices. These cure-alls were often less harmful than the prescriptions of spurious doctors. Barbers, including Frederick Seabalt, one of the first in Houston, pulled teeth and advertised "cupping and bleeding done on reasonable terms."

Even the great men of Houston's first years are said to have cherished certain superstitions. Sam Houston reputedly was advised by "Old Hickory" to bite the bullets he intended to use in a dangerous encounter, and many believed that he followed that advice.

Barbecues, balls, picnics, quilting bees, and horse races provided social events for pioneer Houstonians, and usually these occasions were prolonged as much as possible by people who were lonely most of the year. Mrs. Dilue Harris described a Fourth of July barbecue of the 1830's: "The ladies spent the day in conversation and work, the young people dancing in the yard, the children playing under the trees, and the men talking politics." The musicians included two Negro "fiddlers," a man who beat time with an iron pin fastened to the end of a cart shaft, and another man beating a tin pan. "Well, the young people danced to that music from three o'clock in the evening till next morning. . . . We ate barbecued meat, all sorts of vegetables, coffee, fowls, potatoes, honey and corn bread, but no cakes, as there was no flour in the country." The hospitality of the settlers was simple, unbounded, and unailing, as described in 1844 by Mrs. M. C. Houstoun:

In this colony there exists a spirit of good will, and mutual helpfulness very pleasant to see. I believe this is the case in most new settlements, before refinement begets selfishness and the indulgence of luxuries hardens the heart. If a settler happens to require the aid of his neighbour's hands, or working tools . . . the assistance is rendered as readily as it is asked. . . . I have reason to speak gratefully of the courtesy and civility of the Texans.

As Mrs. Houstoun's travels were largely in the region between Galveston and the town on the banks of Buffalo Bayou, her descriptions of "repeated instances of good will" pictured a local trait often described by contemporary writers.

The vast capacity of the pioneer to endure hardship was echoed in humorous tall tales that exaggerated details of his mode of life, or in comic songs such as "Susan Jane," composed in the 1830's near Harrisburg and published by J. Frank Dobie:



Her mouth was like an oven,  
Her foot was like a ham,  
Her eyes were like the owl's at night  
And her voice was never ca'm.

She looked so long and hollow,  
She looked just like a crane,  
Oh, I'm going away to leave you now,  
Goodbye, my Susan Jane.

Favorite lore dealt with the vagaries of the weather. Thus it was said of marshy regions that steers learned to get about by fastening their horns in the vines of mustang grapes, swinging from one cypress tree to another. A saving sense of humor was reflected in the lives of Houstonians and colored their customs; it was unconsciously echoed by an unnamed writer for the *Morning Star* in reporting a dangerous mission of a local company of volunteers:

[A] company . . . went out with Captain Lewis some six weeks since in pursuit of Comanches, and for sport generally. A determination was expressed . . . to remain out during the whole summer unless a respectable body of Indians could be found sooner.

Earliest among fraternal organizations in Houston was a lodge of Freemasons. Members of that order in Brazoria had opened the first Texas lodge in December, 1835, under dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, for whose Grand Master it had been named Holland, No. 36. Anson Jones was its Master. When Santa Anna's soldiers seized Brazoria all the properties of the lodge had been destroyed — except its charter, which was delivered to Dr. Jones during Sam Houston's march toward Harrisburg and was in his saddlebags at San Jacinto — and after the war its members were scattered. Most of them were in Houston in 1837, and in October of that year they reconstituted the lodge here.

By this time two other lodges had been organized in Texas under the Louisiana Grand Lodge, Milam of Nacogdoches and MacFarlane of San Augustine, and on December 20, 1837, a meeting was held in the Senate chamber to form a Texas Grand Lodge. President Sam Houston presided, Anson Jones was secretary, and Thomas J. Rusk was a delegate from Milam Lodge. Anson Jones was elected Grand Master. He and his associate officers (who included Gen. Edward Burleson as Grand Junior Deacon) were installed by Sam Houston on May 11, 1838. The three lodges then surrendered their Louisiana charters and received Texas charters. Holland Lodge of Houston became No. 1.

A lodge of Odd Fellows, Lone Star No. 1, met in 1839 on the second floor of a school building (see POINTS OF INTEREST, Site of the First Public School and the Earliest M. E. Church). By 1841, fraternal, social, and business organizations had become numerous, including the Order of Equal Fellows, the Bible Society, the Literary Society, and Volunteer Protection Company Number 1, the latter a group of fire-fighters whose "soirees" were "high-toned affairs."

Much of Houston's social life centered in organizations. Dancing was a popular pastime, as shown by many advertisements in early newspapers; the balls of the 1830's and 1840's were often elaborate. In April, 1839, J. R. Codet of New York opened a "Dancing and Waltzing Academy," offering Houstonians "inexpensive instructions in these elegant accomplishments."

The Milam Guards and the Washington Light Guards early had the "smiles and admiration of the women," and were a new social factor. Military companies flourished even into the twentieth century; among the best known were the Houston Dragoons, the Houston Light Guards, the Fannin Artillery, and the Davis Guards.

Houstonians have invariably celebrated holidays, especially the Fourth of July, with gusto. A typical observance was that of July 4, 1839, when a "Barbecue and Ice" were held at Beauchamp Spring, where "visitors could refresh themselves with lemonade or a glass of wine." The event was described by the *Morning Star*:

At 11 o'clock the 'Milam Guards' paraded on the Court House square, where they were joined by the pupils and teachers of the Houston Sabbath-School, to the number of seventy, and many citizens moving thence in procession to the Senate Chamber which was soon densely filled. . . . Rev. Wm. Y. Allen . . . read the 6th chapter of Deuteronomy . . . followed by 'Watchman tell us of the night,' sung by the children. . . . The Declaration of American Independence was then read by J. W. Eldredge, Esq. followed by an address from D. Y. Portise, Esq., on behalf of the Milam Guards.

Cheerfully the Houstonians of a century ago held social gatherings where they could. On March 22, 1841, Henry Corri gave a "Grand Masquerade and Fancy Dress Ball," the tickets selling at "\$1 par money . . . ladies respectfully invited free of charge;" guests were not allowed to carry firearms or knives. Cotillion parties were popular, the proprietors advertising "excellent music . . . for an agreeable and genteel amusement." As late as 1849 Houstonians erected a rustic throne for the "Queen of the May," concluding the coronation by "repairing to the new Schrimppf Hotel, where an excellent collation had been prepared." That year the Sons of Temperance held a "regular jubilee," climaxed by a ball where the "fair votaries of fashion" danced late.

Since those early years, Houston people have fostered a pronounced spirit of fraternalism manifest in the modern city in scores of organizations; yet on holidays the whole population celebrates, social distinctions or differences laid aside. Strangers find a cordial, democratic attitude that has survived through a century, from the time when a public barbecue was advertised as a "feast of reason and a flow of souls."

Thousands of immigrants were attracted by advertisements issued during the era of the Republic of Texas, and a large proportion of them landed at Galveston or Houston. As the town on the bayou was young and lusty and its founders took care to publicize its advantages, Europeans often chose to visit it

before proceeding to the destinations they had previously selected. Also, Houston was a logical supply center for those journeying inland by oxcart or wagon. A card in the *Galvestonian* on March 27, 1839, announced that "G. Everette [is] Director of Texian, American, European and Foreign Agency, Office No. 1, City Hotel Building, Houston, Texas, for selling, locating and settling lands of every description." The impending expiration of the Republic's generous land policy on January 1, 1840, caused a large migration of Europeans before the end of 1839; aboard the British ships *Agnes* and *Norman Castle* came Englishmen bringing implements and provisions to found a colony under the auspices of the English Association; soon the *Marion* brought additional British settlers. The French barque *Fils Unique* anchored in Galveston harbor in the autumn, the disembarking colonists carrying olive trees in their baggage. The *Morning Star* on December 8 announced that "It afforded us much gratification to be appraised of the arrival of a large number of Dutch emigrants in our city on their way to find some place . . . to locate themselves on. . . . We have considerable partiality for the Dutch." More than 200 Germans arrived aboard the steamer *Correo* during December and were sheltered in the old Capitol building.

By 1840 Houston had seventy-five resident German families; many from other foreign groups remained here. Each had its own organizations and preserved many of its national customs; the Germans, for example, organized the *Deutscher Verein fur Texas* at a meeting held on November 22, 1840, in the boarding house of Franke and Lemsky on Prairie Avenue and Travis Street. A Czech soldier named Frederick Lemsky is said to have played on his fife an old love song, "Will You Come to My Bower," as Sam Houston led his Texans to the attack in the Battle of San Jacinto; Lemsky was but one of hundreds of Czechs who were entering the Republic by way of Houston. Most of them moved on to colonies between the Brazos and the Colorado, but so many remained that today a twentieth of the State's Czech population resides in Houston.

Houstonians with French forebears remember tales of New Year's Eve, 1842, when M. Snider Pellegrini gave a ball in the large warehouse he had built in Harrisburg, and served French wines and confections. The event was a success but Pellegrini's French colony was not, and the colonizer, called the "mad castle builder" because of his grandiloquent dreams, was forced at length to return to Europe. But in the years before the Civil War his countrymen continued to land at the foot of Main Street.

A great wave of German immigration rolled upon the shores of Texas in 1844 and continued for a decade. Although at first their port of entry was Carlshafen (later Indianola), so many Germans were soon arriving that the Association for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas could not meet their requirements, and thousands huddled in makeshift shacks along Galveston Bay or made their way to Houston, seeking land or employment. Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, commissioner-general of the society that conducted one of the largest migrations from Europe in American history, wrote in *Texas, 1844-45*:

Houston on Bouffalon Bayou has more houses than citizens. . . . Since the Brazos is navigable from there, the farmers bring their cotton there and sell it to the native businessmen, who in turn transport it by water to Galveston. This alone affords the town some life. Otherwise it would be only a gathering place for loafers of the surrounding bottom lands, who go there mainly to gamble and to trade horses with the hope of defrauding someone.

By 1847, 6,000 Germans were reported "about equally divided between Harris and Galveston Counties," and Viktor Bracht in *Texas in 1848* quoted a letter to the effect that "Immigrants will not take advice—seem to prefer the marsh prairies along the Buffalo Bayou near Houston where all of them will soon perish like flies."

Among newcomers in Houston during the 1840's were Jewish immigrants from many lands. Jacob de Cordova was a leader of that group of pioneers; in 1845 he established the first local Minyon, its meetings held in the residences of its members. A congregation which later became that of Temple Beth Israel was established in 1852. The *Jewish Herald-Voice*, a newspaper, is published in Houston for approximately 14,000 Jewish residents.

S. W. Swenson is believed to have been the first local Swedish settler; he established his plantation in the early forties and named it "Lattarp" for the town of his birth. His relatives and some friends followed him to Texas, coming to Houston aboard the *Reliance*; they wore native dress. Swenson's home near present Sugarland became a gathering place for his countrymen, some of whom early became Houston residents.

When the *Eclipse* docked in 1853, the passengers included Frenchmen on their way to a colony near Dallas; their leader was Victor Considerant, described by Dr. O. Fisher Allen in *The City of Houston—From Wilderness to Wonder*:

A large number of French people disembarked and formed a procession, and at their head walked a tall gentleman in a velvet coat and wearing a three cornered hat. He carried a drawn sword in his hand and a tri-colored flag of France floated above his head. His long white hair streamed over his shoulders.

Colorful processions of foreigners now often toiled down muddy Main Street, and each group added to Houston's folk culture. In June, 1855, Polish, Bohemian, and Swiss immigrants arrived, and in November the *Semi-Weekly Telegraph* announced the coming of 700 Poles: "They were composed of men, women and children, all dressed in their national costumes." Irish immigrants of the 1850's contributed most of the members of the Davis Guards, who won fame in the Battle of Sabine Pass and other Civil War encounters.

In January, 1870, the first Chinese came to Houston: 300 laborers dressed in native garb, each carrying a bed mat, rice bowl, and chopsticks. The next year 500 immigrants were brought in by the Scandinavian Club of Houston.

The harvest festivals of the Czechs and Scandinavians, the wakes of the Irish, the afternoon tea of the English, and the musical groups of the Germans

had become part of Houston's social structure by 1880. The Germans now had a Turnverein, a Schutzen Verein, and two musical organizations, the Liederkranz and the Saengerbund. Great conventions of German singing societies provided mammoth choruses as the organizations of various Texas communities combined in statewide Saengerfests. French residents organized the Societe Francaise, the Mexicans had their Juan Patriotica Society, and Italians organized the Christoforo Colombo Association. The German peasant farmer read prayers for sick livestock, some Mexicans used incantations for toothaches, and the Italians ceremoniously celebrated the feast of Madonna del Balzo on August 18. Houston had become truly cosmopolitan, a characteristic described in *Harper's Magazine* (Volume 81, 1890) in an article entitled *A Study of Texians in 1890*:

Pursuing the old, the new, and the characteristic takes the tourist to the Saturday evening market held at Houston. . . . The German farmers come in from distances of twenty miles and more, hauling their produce in wagons. . . . Near by on the side walk a Chinese peddler displays his wares. . . . This thin-faced Italian had a wagon laden with game, all killed close by. . . . The respectable looking colored man and woman . . . sell cold food — fried catfish to tender chicken, hard-boiled eggs and heaps of golden cornbread and roasted potatoes. . . . The butchers are nearly all Germans, with a Frenchman and an American or two. . . . In and out of the building they surge, for all of Houston is here . . . black, white, brown and yellow — Negroes, Americans, Mongolian, Irish, Dutch, French, German, Italians, and Spanish — they are all there, laughing, teasing, talking, quarreling, gesticulating, bargaining, staring, keeping appointments and making new ones, being proper or improper, polite or rude as the case may be.

Today when crowds gather in Houston there are fully as many nationalities represented as the Market House sheltered in 1890. In certain sections of the city the larger racial groups have centers for social or religious activities; here sharp distinctions of race or nation prevail, although there are few residential areas where one group predominates. For example, the Czechs reside throughout Houston, yet have two centers where they gather for social activities. Houston Pokrok Club, 1140 Robbie Street, under the management of the Slavonic Benevolent Association, contains the Texas Czech Historical Museum and a library of 1,000 volumes, and is headquarters of the Sokol Organization of Houston and of the Hlahol Singing Society. The hall has facilities for recreation, drama, dancing, and lectures. At the Bohemian Club, 5508 Nolda Avenue, in Cottage Grove, social and cultural activities are under the supervision of Czech leaders. The study of their native language is an accredited subject in local high schools.

Residents of Polish descent, many of whose forebears settled in the Houston area after the uprising of 1863 in Poland, maintain the Polish Club at 2706 White Oak Drive. Here are headquarters of the Tadensz Kosciuszko Group 165 of the Polish National Alliance.

The largest local Mexican settlement is in Magnolia Park, near the Houston Ship Channel. In this area Mexicans have restaurants, drug stores, shops and

many small places of business. Services in the churches of this section are in Spanish. The Lorenzo de Zavala School, 800 North 75th Street, is attended by Mexican children. Another Mexican district lies near the 1400 block of Houston Avenue, and a third is adjacent to the Anson Jones School, 914 Elysian Avenue. Many Mexican men work in refineries, on the wharves, and in industrial plants, while the women are employed as domestics or workers in textile mills and other factories. Houston's Mexican quarter has little of the distinctive atmosphere found in Texas towns near the international border, although it has its tamale vendors with tiny carts, and sellers of artificial flowers. A few cafes feature Mexican foods, and some of these, in exclusive districts, place emphasis upon authentic atmosphere. A Mexican chamber of commerce, with seventy-five members, was organized in 1940.

Although most of them are rice farmers, Houston's Japanese form a close little group. The largest settlement is near the town of Webster, where pioneer Japanese immigrants had such success with rice culture that others followed and bought farms. The population of this settlement in 1940 was sixty men, eight women, and two children. Other Japanese operate truck farms near Houston, selling most of the produce locally. Two orange orchards and a nursery are owned by Japanese in the Houston area. An agent of the Japan Foreign Trade Bureau has offices in the city.

The first Negroes in Houston were brought as slaves by planters, and most of them spent their lives in the cotton fields along the river bottoms. A few free Negroes resided here as wards of the Republic; several had participated in the Texas Revolution, notably Samuel McCullough, a member of James Collingsworth's Goliad garrison, and Hedrick Arnold, one of Erastus (Deaf) Smith's spy company — credited by some historians with guiding Ben Milam into San Antonio when the Texans stormed that Mexican stronghold in December, 1835. A Negro named Dick beat the drum that "carried consternation into the ranks of Santa Anna's myrmidons" during the Battle of San Jacinto, and was present at the San Jacinto dinner in Houston in May, 1850. Soon after the Civil War a Negro debating society and the Thespian Club were organized. In 1871 a Negro delegate from Houston was elected to the National Labor Convention, and soon the Colored Farmers' Convention met in the Negro Baptist Church on Rusk Avenue. The Negroes of the city have subsequently maintained an active interest in labor conditions.

Houston has a large Negro population. Sections inhabited by this race form an almost continuous belt between the older residential areas around the downtown district, and the newer outlying additions. More businesses are owned and operated by Negroes here than in any other Southern city. Local Negroes have more than 100 churches, twenty-eight public schools and a college, three newspapers, a Young Men's Christian Association and a Young Women's Christian Association, three branch libraries, a hospital, and an active chamber of commerce. Emancipation Park, 2900-3200 Dowling Street, and John T. Finnigan Park, on Lockwood Drive, are for their use. In 1941 it was estimated that a

larger number of Negroes owned houses in Houston than in any other city of the South, and that they had \$7,000,000 on deposit in local banks.

"Frenchtown," on Liberty Road near the northern city limits, is inhabited almost exclusively by descendants of Louisiana Negroes who have preserved their patois. They issue a publication in the native dialect. These people are ambitious and for the most part independent. The women are known for their creole cookery, but usually will not accept employment as cooks. The men are skilled as mechanics, carpenters, sawmill laborers, and brickmasons. Their children are given the best possible education, and are often sent to schools in the North. The lives of these people center in Our Mother of Mercy Roman Catholic Church and the adjoining convent school. This part of the Negro population has a characteristic passion for music and dancing, and performs elaborate rituals through both mediums. Nearly every person in the Frenchtown community can play a musical instrument.

On the Texas Negro's Emancipation Day, June 19, a celebration is held in Emancipation Park around pits of barbecued meats. Special trains to Galveston carry those who prefer to frolic on a reserved section of the beach.

Houston's educated Negroes no longer enjoy "dance songs" or patronize stores that dispense magic powders and charms; but at least one such store still advertises "Spell Breakers," "Louisiana Luck Wishing Bottles," "New Orleans Lucky Scrub," and "Moses Ashes Incense." Of the latter a circular says, "A little burned every morning is said to help with any money affair or business." Another paragraph asks, "Are you lucky at cards, dice, policy or games of any kind? It is said by many that Black Bat Oil has great power in this line when a few drops are rubbed into the hands before entering any game. 1 oz. . . . \$3." Among other items of stock are listed "Spanish Love Powder . . . Controlling Powder . . . Attraction Powder . . . Van-Van Oil . . . Come-My-Way Powder . . . Hot-Foot Powder . . . War Powder . . . Sweet Mama Powder . . . Lucky Dog Perfume . . . Paradise Seed . . . John Conquerer Root . . . High John Conquerer."

Negro children of Houston play song games, including that of the "Courtin' Song," in which farm characters are portrayed. Another is "Chickamy, Chickamy, Crany Crow;" when the child who plays the part of a witch "captures" hapless players, they become "dogs" to serve the whims of the "witch."

Houston's smaller Negro congregations have services that often last throughout Sunday, and their spirituals are largely indigenous, ranging from "sorrow songs" for funerals to "shout songs" expressing religious fervor and a zest for "here and hereafter." A typical local revival song of Houston's poorer Negroes is "What Shall I Do":

What yo' gonna do when death come  
knockin' on yo' do?  
What yo' gonna do when death come  
knockin' on yo' do?  
Run sinner run and find yo' a hidin' place,

Run sinner run and find yo' a hidin' place,  
Cryin' Oh my Lord, Oh my Lord,  
What shall I do?

Perhaps the newest of Houston's lore is that springing from the oil fields. Inventors of devices for locating oil swarm in the offices of local development companies. Dr. L. W. Blau, geophysicist for a local company, has examined more than 1,000 divining rods, "wobble sticks" of all descriptions. Even radio transmitters have been used by Houston "oil finders." One "finder" claimed that oil exhibits female characteristics; after years of search he had found a liquid with male attributes, he stoutly asserted, and that liquid, carefully preserved in a jug, was sure to "find"—through an indicator—pools of hidden petroleum. A woman of Orange, Texas, claims to have located fields near Houston simply by dancing on unproved territory until her petticoat dropped off. C. D. Lockwood, Houston publisher of the *Texas Oil Report*, recalled a devout minister who claimed that he suffered a violent headache each time he walked over a pool of oil.

Houston's modern lore echoes the diversity of its resources; Paul Bunyon, the fabulous lumberjack, lives in the lumber camps in many a new tale; in the cotton fields are born fresh versions of Br'er Rabbit's adventures, and fishermen have a lore of their own dating back to early days when a monster fish, half alligator and half dragon, was believed to haunt the bayous.

And the city still is a melting pot; the 1940 United States Census listed the following foreign-born groups: Germans, Italians, Russians, English, Poles, Canadians, Austrians, Irish, Czechoslovakians, Greeks, Scotch, Swedes, French, Syrians, Danes, Swiss, Norwegians, and Hungarians.



## CHAPTER VI

### EDUCATION

FORMAL education in Houston began less than a year after the first public sale of lots in the gangling town. On October 21, 1837, the *Telegraph and Texas Register*, in a story about E. A. Andrews, the miniature and portrait painter who had taken the President's house, stated:

Mrs. E. A. Andrews also gives notice that she will open a school at the same house on the first Monday in November next, principally for young ladies, yet a few boys under the age of 12 years will be received until further notice. The various branches of English education will be taught.

This pioneer school was soon unable to meet the educational needs of Houston's increasing population, and two other private schools were opened the following year. A school for children under ten years of age, "situated on Congress between the houses of Mr. Parker and Mr. Pliant," was opened by a Mrs. Hamilton. Young men and boys were acceptable at a school founded by Mylard and Thompson. Tuition fees varied from four dollars to eight dollars a month.

An abortive attempt to establish public school education was made in 1838, during the administration of Mayor Francis Moore, Jr. A two-story schoolhouse was erected by the City of Houston, aided by Lone Star Lodge of Odd Fellows, "on the prairie in the upper part of the city." Instruction, however, did not begin at once. For unknown to the town's fathers and members of the order, the deed to the prairie schoolground reposed in the saddlebags of the Rev. Littleton Fowler, chaplain of the Senate, who had ridden into the interior on some ecclesiastical errand.

Investigation disclosed these facts: The first map of Houston, made when the town was laid out, designated the area bounded by Texas and Prairie Avenues and Fannin and San Jacinto Streets as School House Square. A half block on Travis Street between Texas and Milam Avenues was labeled "church reserve." The Allen brothers had executed a "donation deed" of the Travis Street property in favor of the Methodist Church, represented by the Reverend Mr. Fowler. But the deed had been forgotten, and in the year 1838 the early map was obsolete. On the new map of Houston the church property bore the legend "school reserve." The City Council and the Odd Fellows had acted in good faith.

Compromise between the City and the Methodist Society resulted in a division of the property. Houston's first free school was allowed to remain on its uptown prairie, where the *Houston Chronicle* Building now stands. Opening of classes was delayed until the next year.

On Monday morning, February 11, 1839, R. Salmon, principal of the

school and secretary of the school board, proudly counted 104 students as they trooped into the schoolhouse, and the *Telegraph* reported on February 20:

By a resolution of the board of aldermen, the price of tuition has been fixed at three dollars per month for each and every branch of study. . . . The Principal will be happy to attend to a class or two in the Latin and Greek languages, or in the higher branches of the mathematics, should there be a sufficient number of students. . . . Parents whose circumstances will not permit them to pay the price of tuition, are also notified that by applying to the mayor or to the board of aldermen, they can obtain a certificate which will authorize them to send their children to the city school free of any charge.

Average daily attendance during the first term was about half the total enrollment. In 1840 yellow fever caused the closing of the classrooms for a time, but the school survived. The Odd Fellows met in an upper room, concerts were given there occasionally, and sometimes religious meetings were held. By 1845 the city council had decided to acquire full title to the building and grounds. A financial report from the council's minutes of January 26, 1846, contains this item: "For sale of school house, \$105.00 Less amount paid for Odd Fellows claim, \$75.00."

The first parochial school of the Roman Catholic Church, established in 1842, stood on the corner of Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street, and was administered by the Church of St. Vincent de Paul.

In 1844 H. F. Gillett, already a well-known teacher, opened his Houston Academy in the *Telegraph* Building, at Main Street and Preston Avenue. The academy offered college preparatory work; a monthly fee of two dollars was charged for reading, writing, and orthography. Courses in currency, arithmetic, grammar, and geography cost three dollars. Latin, Greek, and other advanced subjects cost four dollars. At this time W. J. Thurber established a school on the second floor of Dibble's Building, just two blocks down Main Street from the Houston Academy. In addition to the usual courses, Professor Thurber offered night classes in English grammar. Storekeepers observed an increased demand for textbooks, and laid in stocks of Smith's *Arithmetic*, Volney's *Geography*, Murray's *Grammar*, and Battas' *History*. James E. Hile opened a second night school, offering courses in bookkeeping. On January 9, 1846, Houston was host to a pioneer convention of instructors in primary education.

With all this educational activity, Houston still had no free public school. During the first four years of the Republic, Congress had authorized appropriations for free schools, but no money had been made available. Houston newspapers advocated a school tax, and in 1847 their campaign bore fruit. Mrs. N. J. Longley, prominent churchwoman, opened a free school in the vestibule of the Presbyterian Church, and pupils attended in such numbers that they overflowed into the church auditorium. This school was conducted for several years.

The first Lutheran school was established in 1853 by the Rev. Caspar Braun, of the German Lutheran Church. Children of both German and American

parentage attended classes at the little church building on Texas Avenue between Travis and Milam Streets. The Reverend Mr. Braun, although known among his religious flock as a humanitarian, believed in the schoolmaster's rod. Boys who misbehaved were sent to an attic over the schoolroom, and after their classmates had been dismissed were brought down to taste the pastor's wild peach tree switch.

The newspapers continued the campaign for free schools, and many residents joined the crusade. Members of the wealthier families, some of whom were sending their children to school in other States and in Canada, opposed free education. A free school system, they contended, was a form of charity, and the resulting mixture of social groups would be undesirable. The more liberal groups held mass meetings and demanded action. The legislative act establishing the State school system went into effect on January 31, 1854. The *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of November 17, 1856, reported that approximately \$1,900 had been allotted Harris County by the State for paying the tuition of children of indigent parents.

The education of Negroes in Houston began before the Civil War. On November 17, 1858, the *Telegraph* announced: "Mrs. M. L. Capshaw will resume her school in African Methodist Church, Monday, Nov. 22." An estimate of the white scholastic population made about this time placed the total at between 500 and 600—far more than the four or five city buildings could accommodate. When James H. Stevens left the City a bequest of \$5,000 for school purposes, residents raised \$20,000 more by subscription, and an ambitious brick building was begun. Late in 1859 the two-story columned building was opened as the Houston Academy. It had accommodations for 400 pupils, with separate classrooms for boys and girls. Dr. Ashbel Smith was appointed superintendent at a salary of \$1,500 yearly, and there was a faculty of five assistant teachers. The Second Ward Free School, financed by public subscription, was opened in 1860, with 108 children attending. The *Telegraph* for May 12, 1860, stated that the teacher, the Rev. W. E. Compton, "will furnish books when required and the tuition is entirely free, and this arrangement is permanent."

The *Telegraph* on the same day also undertook to defend Houston's educational rank from an attack in *Moore's Rural New Yorker*. The Northern editor had written: ". . . there is neither jail nor school house in Houston, Texas." Countered the newspaper:

We wager our quoin box against yours that there is not a town of the same size in the State of New York that has a better school house than the public school house of Houston. . . . Our school house cost us \$25,000. . . . We will also put our furniture against yours, that we have more schools in Houston than any town in the State of New York of the same size.

To increase Houston's prestige as an educational center, classes were added in fencing, painting, languages, gymnastics, and dancing.

Except for the Academy, Houston's public and private schools remained

open during the Civil War, but only about a fourth of the scholastic population was enrolled in municipal schools. The Houston Academy was converted into a military hospital; its library of 600 volumes was put at the disposal of wounded soldiers.

State and municipality were impoverished after the war, and school funds were low. Mayor William D. Andrews donated his salary for the year 1865 toward paying tuition for the indigent, and teachers halved their fees. The *Evening Star* aroused public indignation with its account of a school for freed Negroes conducted by a white schoolmistress, and soon three Negro schools were established by the Freedmen's Bureau. In July, 1866, Houston was again host to a convention of Texas teachers. By 1870 the Freedmen's Bureau schools had been replaced by the Gregory Institute, housed in an \$8,000 building at Jefferson Avenue and Louisiana Street.

Meantime, the parochial school of St. Vincent de Paul Church had been conducted intermittently since the days when Mrs. Mary B. Brown instructed young ladies in conduct. On September 13, 1870, the Reverend Father Querat, first regular pastor of St. Vincent's, reopened St. Vincent's School. The Reverend Father Carolan was principal, and Mother St. Augustine was in charge of the girls school. Enrollment was 49 boys and 50 girls. In 1873 Mother M. Gabriel and two Sisters of the Order of the Incarnate Word came from Victoria to teach at the Franklin Avenue monastery. In that year the school occupied its own building, on the corner of Capitol Avenue and Crawford Street. The classroom for girls and young boys was on the second floor, and it was the boys' duty to carry water and firewood upstairs.

Houston's school system was reorganized as a result of State and local legislation of 1875 and 1876. The City assumed exclusive control of all public schools within its limits. Affairs of the system were administered by a board of trustees and a board of examiners, each composed of three members appointed by the mayor. Tuition was abolished, and compulsory attendance for four months was required of all children between the ages of eight and fourteen.

The *Telegraph*, once the advocate of free education, said on March 3, 1876:

Free schools commenced all over the city yesterday. What a farce they are under the present law—or rather what a farce the law is. Teachers get ten cents a day for each day that each pupil attends. When it rains and only half the children attend school, the teacher has to work just as hard as usual on 'half rations' of pay. And they won't last over two or three months at most.

Houston's scholastic census of 1878, taken by the tax collector, showed 2,466 children of compulsory attendance age; about half of these attended school. Pupils under eight years and over fourteen were charged tuition fees of four dollars or less a month. In 1879 the city's five Negro schools had an enrollment of 716 pupils. The School Board increased the upper age limit

to eighteen in 1881, making the high school course free, and at the same time extended the annual term to nine months.

By 1882 the school system had become so well established that the support it had been receiving for five years from the Peabody Educational Fund was withdrawn. In this year the State Board of Education established a Normal Institute for Negro teachers in the Gregory Institute Building. During December the first convention of public school superintendents to be held in Texas assembled in Houston and established the *Texas Journal of Education*. First published in San Antonio, the *Journal* was removed to Houston in April, 1883. Miss Hattie Scott opened a kindergarten at 172 Rusk Avenue in October, 1884. Pupils between the ages of three and seven paid a fee of seventy-five cents a week.

Miss M. B. Brown's school on McKinney Avenue was called "The Vassar of the South" in the *Houston Post* on August 27, 1886. In this year the Incarnate Word Academy held its thirteenth annual commencement exercises in the Annunciation Church. A Hebrew high school under the direction of Dr. DeLevonite was opened on July 6, 1886, on the corner of Prairie Avenue and Crawford Street. The first Negro high school was built in 1892-93.

The new century brought storm, fire, and other troubles to Houston's schools. The hurricane of September 8, 1900, damaged buildings and delayed the opening of classes. At the Fannin School, children sat under umbrellas during heavy rains, and holes were bored in the floor to allow water to escape. The building was damaged by fire in December. Bats infested several school buildings. At the Taylor School 63 children were crowded into one small room.

By 1902 Houston's city schools had 273 teachers and 7,500 pupils, of whom one-third were Negroes. Buildings were so overtaxed that the Houston High School held midwinter commencement exercises in January, 1903, and the next year a three-story annex was added to the building. Other buildings added in 1904 were a new high school on the corner of 12th and Yale Streets, the Hawthorne School Annex, and the Longfellow School.

Parochial schools began expanding in 1905, with the erection of the St. Agnes Academy building on Fannin Street. St. Agnes was the first Roman Catholic school to affiliate with the University of Texas. The Incarnate Word Academy built a three-story brick annex, and St. Patrick's School, at Providence and Maury Streets, was erected.

Houston led all other Texas cities in scholastic population in 1906. The appropriation for the 8,114 white and 4,440 Negro school children was \$65,698. Taxpayers complained that public money was being squandered when the first free night school in the State was opened in the Cascara School (later called the Sidney Sherman School), but many leading residents, including several judges, enrolled. Domestic science, manual training, and commercial courses were added to public school curricula, and these, with the influence

of the Art League, stimulated vocational education. Soon courses in stationary engineering were being sponsored by the National Association of Engineers. George Shires, the engineering instructor, continued his work after the classes were taken over by the Houston Independent School District.

The High School Cadets were organized in 1908 at the Houston High School, with uniforms and rifles supplied by the Federal government. Soon the first Boy Scout troop was created and the Middy Girls were organized. In 1911 the first night classes for Negroes were held at Bruce School.

Rice Institute, created from an endowment fund established by William Marsh Rice, opened its doors on September 23, 1912.

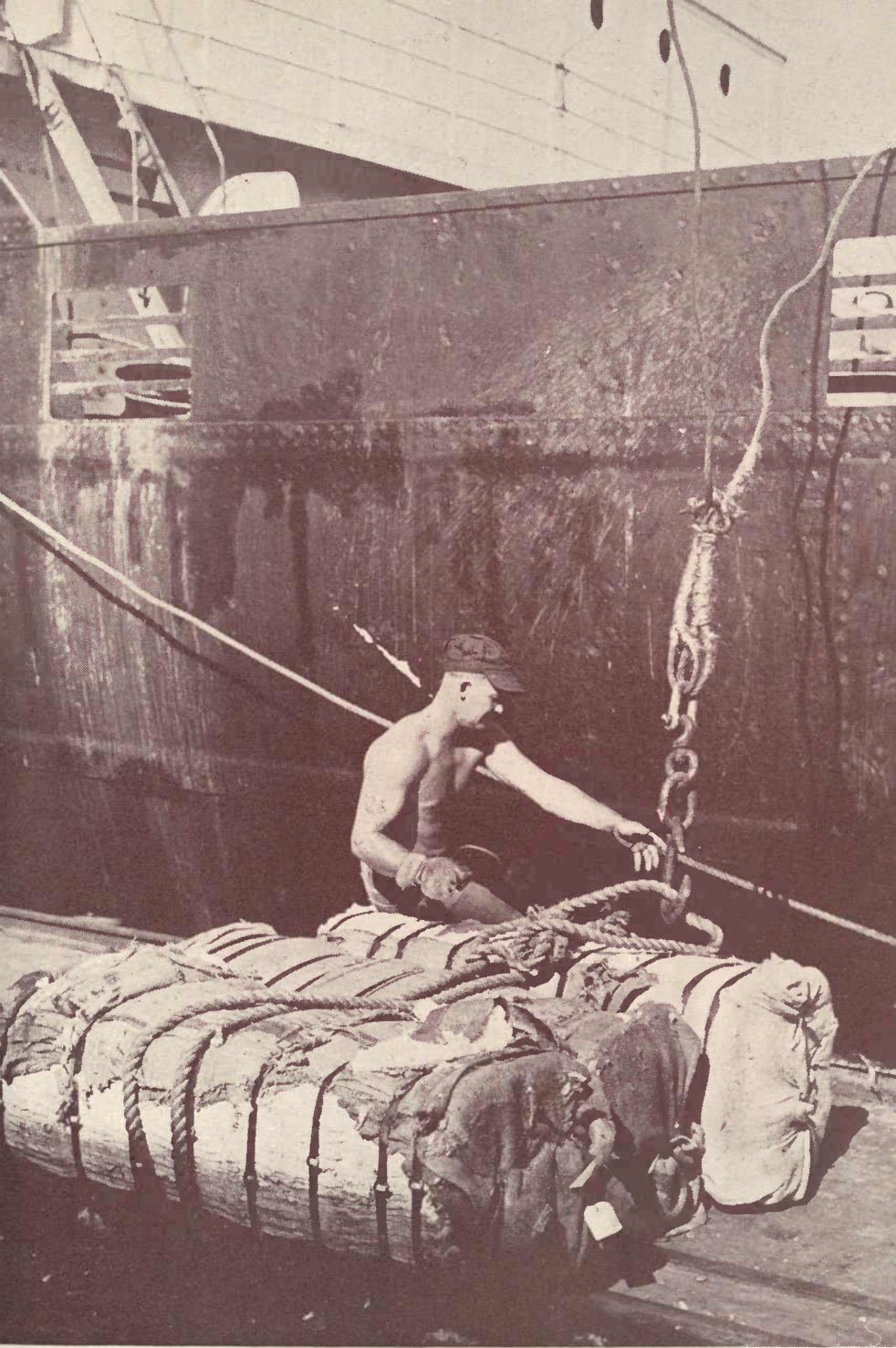
After September, 1915, the city provided free textbooks for children of the first eight grades, and during the next year all pupils were given books. Attendance increased as a result of the new compulsory attendance law of 1915, and one of the city's frame schoolhouses for white children was replaced with the brick and stone Taylor School. Fire escapes were installed, and regular fire drills held. By 1916 Montrose, McGowen, Eastwood, Port Houston, and Crawford schools had been added to the system, as well as the Travis Annex and another Negro school.

The first World War and the establishment of Camp Logan brought 500 school-age children to Houston, and the new City Auditorium was converted into a schoolhouse. Central High School offered a course in wireless telegraphy. Ten thousand school children aided in Red Cross work. The influenza epidemic caused the closing of all schools for two weeks in 1918, but at Christmas 200 children sang carols to the patients at the Ellington Field base hospital.

On the night of March 18, 1919, the Central High School building was destroyed by fire with a loss of \$25,000, including \$10,000 worth of municipally owned textbooks, but classes were continued at the South End Junior High School, where 198 Central pupils were graduated in May. A new \$500,000 building on the site of the Central High School was opened on January 24, 1921. Houston Heights High School, opened in September, was the community's seventh.

The municipality spent \$1,156,902 for maintenance and operation of its public schools in 1922, and the budget for the next year was increased to \$1,804,310. In April pupils cooperated in a campaign to raise the proposed 25-cent increase in the school tax rate and to authorize a \$3,000,000 school bond issue. They paraded to the music of school bands, and students of public speaking harangued passers-by on downtown street corners. The bond issue was approved by voters in June.

Dr. E. E. Oberholtzer was elected superintendent of the Houston School system in 1924. With the \$3,000,000 already voted and an additional \$4,000,000 in bonds approved in February, 1926, more high schools were built. They were Albert Sidney Johnston, Stonewall Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Sidney Lanier, James S. Hogg, John H. Reagan, and Jack Yates, the last a



*Cotton for Export*



Stephen F. Austin, Bastrop and Colonists, 1823 — John McQuarrie  
(MURAL IN GRAND CENTRAL STATION)

Houston Municipal Airport







*Sam Houston Entering the New Town, 1837* — John McQuarrie  
(MURAL IN GRAND CENTRAL STATION)

*Sam Houston Coliseum and Music Hall*

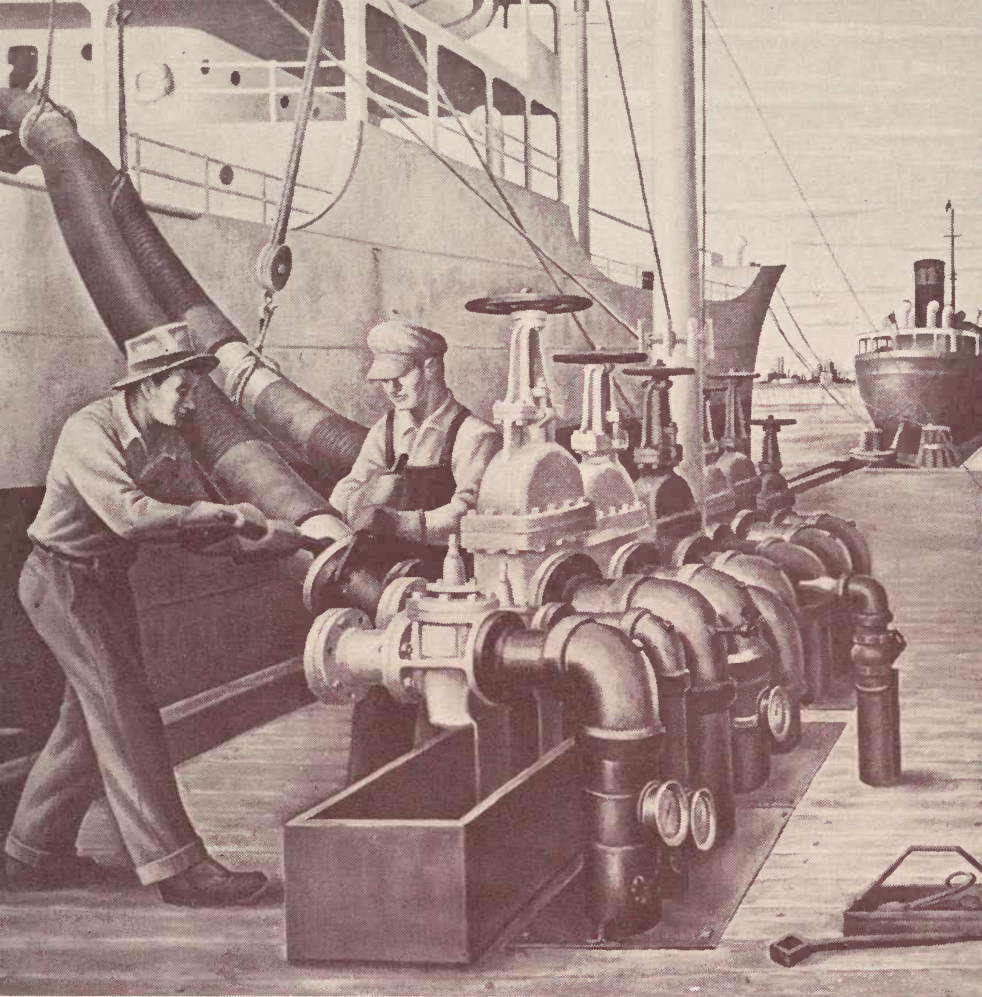




Loading Cotton — Jerry Bywaters  
(MURAL IN PARCEL POST BUILDING)

*St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church — Long Point Road*





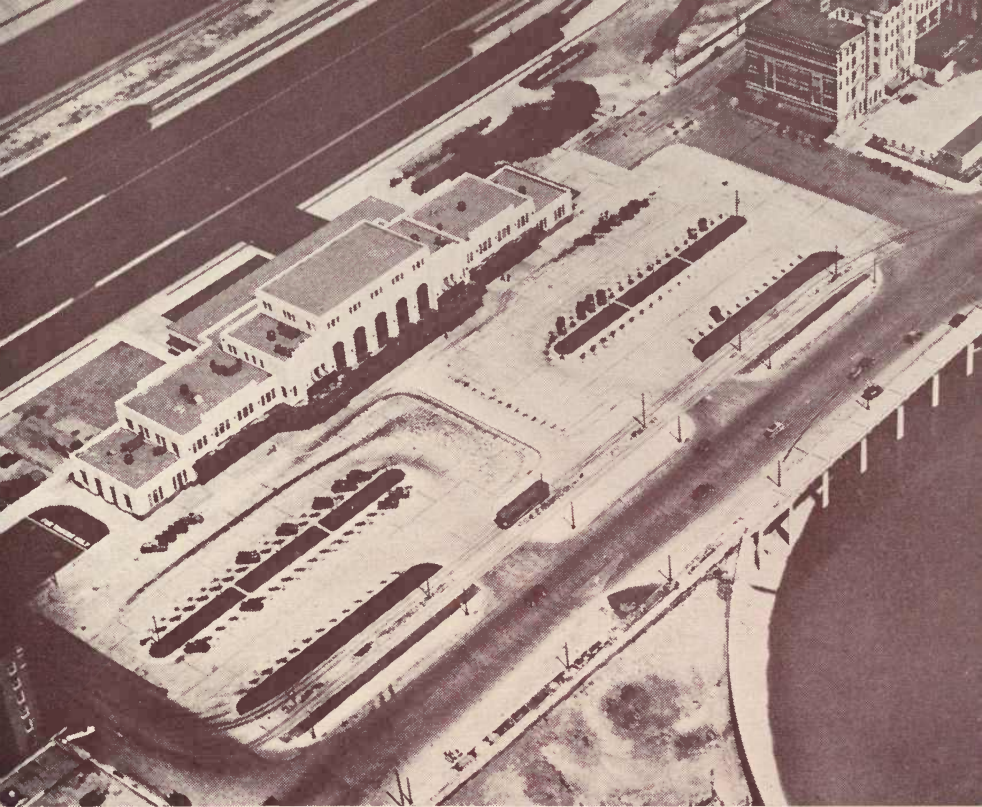
Loading Oil — Jerry Bywaters  
(MURAL IN PARCEL POST BUILDING)

*San Felipe Courts*



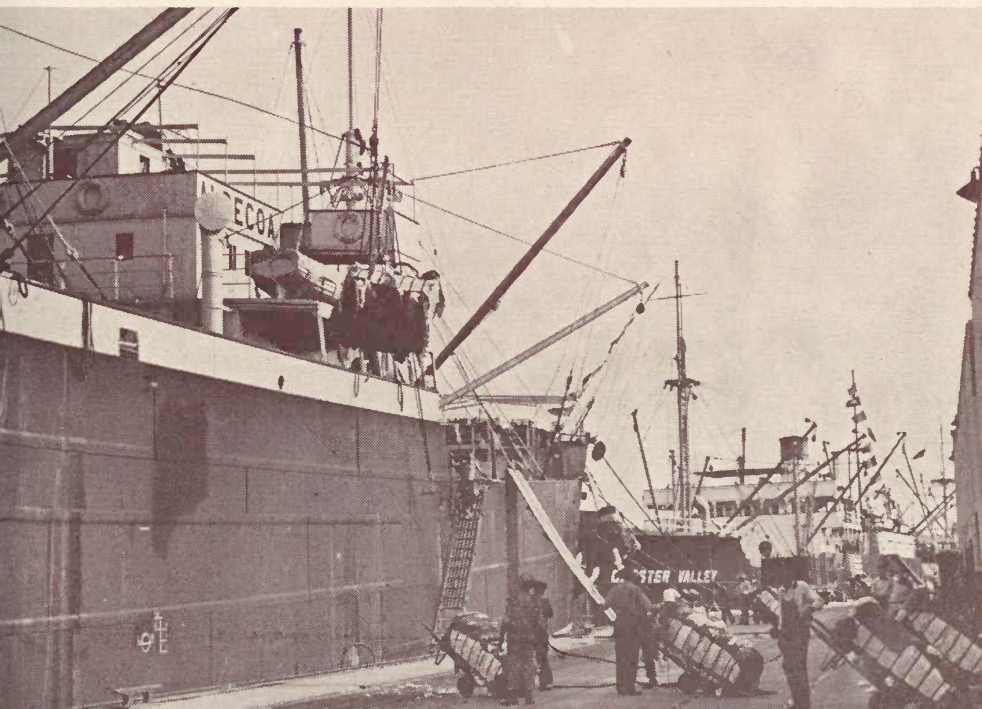


Site of Congress and Market Squares



Grand Central Station

Houston Docks





*Manchester Terminals*

Negro high school. The Woodrow Wilson Elementary School was built, and a total of 250 classrooms were added to older buildings, also one gymnasium, one swimming pool, twenty-two auditorium-lunchrooms, two auditoriums, one shop, and much equipment. During this building program a full-time architect, Harry D. Payne, was employed by the school board. Central High was renamed Sam Houston High School. Work on the Charles R. Milby High School was begun before the incorporation of Harrisburg by the City of Houston. The annexation of the Brunner Independent School District, Magnolia Park, Harrisburg, Houston Heights Annex, Cottage Grove, and Park Place accelerated the ambitious building program.

The Young Men's Christian Association sponsored the South Texas School of Law in 1922. Under the direction of A. L. Turner the law school secured standard rating in 1924; graduates receive the LL.B. degree. By 1925 a coaching class organized fifteen years earlier at the Harris County Courthouse had become the Houston Law School. In that year the Kinkaid School moved into a new building on Richmond Road at Graustark Avenue. The Y.M.C.A. School of Technology, offering University of Texas extension courses in commerce and finance, became qualified in 1930 to confer a bachelor's degree.

In the meanwhile church schools had continued to progress. By 1925 the Roman Catholic schools occupied thirteen buildings housing 2,600 pupils and 100 teachers. In 1926 Christ the King Parish School was built and St. Anne's Parochial School completed. St. Nicholas, Roman Catholic school for Negroes, was erected soon afterward and several other parochial schools were planned.

The new Taylor School Annex, built primarily for vocational training, was opened on January 27, 1930, offering courses in mechanics, business administration, radio, and beauty culture. Day courses in vocational training started with the 1923-1924 term at Sam Houston School. For several years vocational training had also been conducted at the Dow School. The Houston Junior College, housed at San Jacinto High School, became the University of Houston in 1934, when a campaign was begun to raise \$2,000,000 for buildings and equipment. In 1935 voters approved a \$2,102,000 bond issue for a new building program. Augmented by Federal funds, the bonds financed the construction of the \$883,493 Mirabeau B. Lamar High School, at Westheimer Road and River Oaks Boulevard, the \$643,500 Stephen F. Austin High School, in the East End, a new \$277,650 west wing for San Jacinto High School, three new elementary schools, and additions of 210 classrooms to other buildings. By 1939 the University of Houston had occupied its own buildings at St. Bernard Street and Wheeler Avenue.

In 1940 Houston's new \$22,000,000 public school system was one of the largest enterprises in the city, with 2,250 teachers, 74,000 pupils, and 115 buildings. There were sixty-five elementary schools for whites and twenty-four for Negroes; five elementary junior high schools for whites and one for Negroes; ten junior high schools for whites, three junior-senior high schools for Negroes, and seven senior high schools for whites. Visual education and

outdoor class sessions had been adopted, and there were cafeterias in all schools. Nearly 1,500 underprivileged children received free lunches through a Work Projects Administration fund. High schools had many R.O.T.C. units, musical organizations, and athletic teams.

With the opening of the 1940-41 term, the number of grades in the Houston school system was changed from eleven to twelve and the credit requirements for high school graduation reduced from twenty to eighteen. The plan does not affect pupils already in high school, but provides an extra year in elementary grades.

Early in the summer of 1941, construction was started on the Houston Independent School District Stadium and Recreational Center, erected upon a 59-acre tract at 3800 St. Bernard Street. On its completion, the project will cost approximately \$1,000,000 in land, buildings, and equipment; and it is a self-liquidating investment. Designed for year-around use, the improvements include a field house, stadium, athletic field, and a physical education area.

The two-story-and-basement field house is built of reinforced concrete and steel, with masonry walls; buttresses, columns, and steel trusses support an insulated sound-absorbing composition roof. Four entrances on the south side lead into a broad lobby, which opens upon a basketball court with a seating capacity of 2,500. Beneath the seats are rooms for storage, laundry, and equipment, as well as showers, dressing rooms, and ticket booths. The building is designed to serve for a variety of indoor and outdoor sports; at the rear is a sodded terrace rostrum for the presentation of pageants, school concerts, commencement exercises, and other school functions.

North of the field house is the stadium, built in two sections, with a normal seating capacity of 20,000, and an emergency capacity of between 35,000 and 40,000. Each unit is built in crescent shape, of concrete and steel, with concrete walls. Illumination is directed from four towers at the rear of each section, with batteries of lights directed in different intensities upon the playing field or the stands. Designed for use in the most adverse weather conditions, the gridiron is five feet higher than the street level, and has a specially constructed base to provide adequate drainage. Around the field is a quarter-mile cinder track, with two 220-yard straightaways at the north end. Pits and sections for special events are provided; the area can be used for many sports, such as soccer, speedball, field hockey, and archery, and for drills, reviews, and inspections.

Parts of the tract not bounded by the stadium and field house are enclosed by a thirteen-foot heavy-gauge, chain-link fence. In the southern corner, separated from the field house and stadium by a curving drive, is an enclosed physical education field. In it are eight tennis courts and two softball fields, with facilities for other athletic activities, such as volleyball and horseshoe pitching. Portable steel bleachers are available for spectators. Planned for future development is a swimming pool 60 by 165 feet long, to be constructed southwest of the field house.



Harry D. Payne designed the buildings; landscape development and drainage of the site was under the direction of Hare and Hare of Kansas City. A wooded section 100 feet wide bounds the tract; parking areas are separated by shrub-bordered walks and drives. The different parking zones are coded according to the seats in the stadium, so that spectators and their automobiles occupy sections having identical numbers.

Houston's educational progress through the years is sharply indicated by this description of a frontier schoolhouse by Mrs. Dilue Harris, who wrote in her diary:

The school house was built of rough planks and consisted of two rooms. The boy's room was without a plank floor, and there was no shutter to the door, nor glass to the window. Rough planks placed on barrels and nail kegs served for desk and chairs.



## CHAPTER VII

### CHURCHES

HOUSTON'S tall church spires and many houses of worship are linked across a century with little log churches half hidden by the wilderness, and their story is that of zealous men who brought the gospel to a wild frontier.

First to plant the cross here were the missionary Franciscans who had traveled barefoot beyond the Rio Grande and over the long miles toward the Sabine 130 years before the arrival of the Anglo-Americans. Many of their chapels had decayed before Protestant circuit riders rode horseback into a land that could better understand the message of the long rifle than the words of St. Paul. The earliest ministers brought pistols as well as Bibles in their saddlebags.

Under the Mexican constitution of 1824 the Roman Catholic faith was the official religion of the country, and settlers technically became members of that church when they took land in Texas. Best known among the *padres* who baptized, married, and buried the first non-Latin Texans was Father Miguel Muldoon, subject of many a story. Especially between 1830-33 was he in demand; under Mexican law the only recognized marriages were those performed by a priest, and Father Muldoon was charged with ministering to the whole Austin Colony. In the absence of a priest a marriage might be performed "in bond" by an authorized official, to be solemnized later by the church, and several times each year the *padre* made his rounds and performed wholesale marriage ceremonies.

Not all the "bond-wed" couples found it possible or convenient to avail themselves promptly of the priest's offices. A tale is told—doubtless exaggerated—of a time when many couples had lined up to be married by Father Muldoon, and a woman became hysterical because her husband by bond could not be found. The word went out to "round him up," and at length the errant spouse, unperturbed, appeared just in time to lead his bride—the mother of his twelve children—to the altar to be legally wed.

A contributing cause of the Texas Revolution was the lack of religious freedom; with the new nation's independence all churches became equal under the law. Houston's first recorded Protestant religious service was one held by the Rev. Z. N. Morrell, militant Baptist minister from Tennessee, called a "canebrake" preacher—one who frequently held revival meetings in the wilderness. He delivered his sermon in March, 1837. This occasion was described in an article that appeared in the *Hesperian or Western Magazine* of Columbus, Ohio, in 1837:

The first sermon that was ever preached in Houston was attended by some circumstances of deep interest. . . . When it was announced that a sermon was to be preached, the novelty excited general attention. All resolved to attend that they might at least have the satisfaction in after

days of saying it was their lot to have heard the first Christian service that was ever performed in the new capital of Texas. The day arrived and the citizens with but few exceptions, collected beneath the shade of the timber that grew upon the edge of the town. . . . There was a respectful decorum and serious attention visible in the audience who had assembled in the grove.

Contrary to established precedents in frontier towns, a vigilance committee was organized in May, 1837, not to guard the morals of Houstonians, but to protect the public against fraudulent clergymen. Its members were the Reverend Mr. Morrell and a Doctor Marsh, Baptists; a Doctor Smith and the Rev. H. Matthews, Methodists.

The committee was organized because an imposter, during the absence of the Reverend Mr. Morrell, had visited the town of Washington and preached under Baptist auspices. He had represented himself as sadly in need, whereupon some kind person collected a purse for him. Soon the stranger was seen in a Houston grogshop, and still later at a race track, where he appeared to be on intimate terms with gamblers. After a notice had been published in the *Houston Telegraph*, no newly arrived minister could be recognized until he produced authentic credentials from his denomination.

Charles Shearn, a Methodist merchant of Houston, had as his guest during the summer of 1837 the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, and services were held out of doors. In November of that year followers of the Rev. Littleton Fowler met in the Capitol and organized the first local congregation of the Methodist Church. The Reverend Mr. Fowler had been appointed by the Board of Foreign Missions to the Republic of Texas. Upon his arrival in Houston he said he found "gaming and vices and any number of doggeries, but no church." Later in his ministry he accompanied the President and members of Congress to Galveston and recounted details of the trip:

Saw *great* men in *high* life. If what I saw and heard were a fair representation, may God keep me from such scenes in future. . . . On our return on Sunday afternoon about one-half on board got mildly drunk. . . . Their Bacchanalian revels & blood curdling profanity made the pleasure boat a floating hell. The excursion to me was one of pain & not pleasure.

Within a month of his arrival the Reverend Mr. Fowler obtained from the Allen brothers a half block on the corner of Travis Street and Texas Avenue for the site of a church building. The Senate Chamber of the old Capitol was then used for religious services, conducted by any minister available, but attended by members of all faiths. The general congregation included Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Roman Catholics.

The Presbyterians formed a congregation during 1838 in the Senate Chamber with the Rev. William Y. Allen as pastor. The Protestant Episcopal Church of Houston had its beginning in the Capitol the next year.

Three lots on the northwest corner of Main Street and Capitol Avenue were donated by the Allen brothers for a church building site, the deed stipulating

only that the property be used by all local religious groups until each could acquire its own house of worship. Every active denomination except the Methodists joined in erecting a small building on this site. The Presbyterians at length acquired that property, and the other denominations obtained separate buildings.

On May 13, 1838, Houston's first Sunday school was organized; it was interdenominational. According to the Reverend Mr. Allen of the Presbyterian congregation, that was "a day of small things. The school was commenced with twenty-six pupils, with few books, very miscellaneous, and a few teachers extemporized." Nineteen years later there were six local Sunday schools.

Father John Timon, a Lazarist, celebrated Mass for a Houston Roman Catholic group on January 4, 1839. The service was held in a room furnished by "a Protestant lady." A former member of Napoleon's army described the "joyful welcome" given Father Timon and a companion priest. In a report of the Rt. Rev. Anthony Blanc, Bishop of New Orleans, the priest wrote that only 300 of Houston's 5,000 inhabitants were Roman Catholics. Father Timon was later invited to preach in the Capitol, and among the many legislators and notables present were Sam Houston and David G. Burnet, President and Vice President of the Republic of Texas.

Father J. M. Odin, who succeeded Father Timon as pastor, made this graphic entry in his diary:

Jan. 4th, 1841. (Austin) We celebrated mass and started for Houston. Put up at night at Mr. Miller's, a Presbyterian preacher; 8th, we arrived at Houston and put up at Mr. De Chene. 10th, we celebrated mass in Mr. Bernard Carsher's store. Father Timon preached in the evening in the old Senate room. Large audience. Opened subscription list. 11th, after having appointed Messrs. Donnellan, De Chene and Carsher a business committee, we started for Galveston about 11:00 a.m. Very rainy weather. We put up at Mr. Peter J. Menard (founder of Galveston) and fixed an altar at Menard & Co.'s warehouse. 21st, started on a skiff for Harrisburg, but the current being too strong, we took up a pack horse and arrived at Houston late in the night, after walking 9 miles, knee deep in water and mud. 22nd, dried our clothes and said mass. Started for Nacogdoches.

In a letter from Houston Father Odin wrote, "In the States a log church may at least be put up, but here in Texas there is nothing to be done without money, and money can be had nowhere . . . crops have failed . . . sickness has been quite fatal."

The first local church building, that of the Presbyterians, was begun in 1840 but was left unfinished. When in August, 1841, a church was under construction for the Roman Catholics, a writer said the Presbyterians had decided that "if the Catholic Church is completed first we design attending meeting there regularly . . . for a large portion of our citizens are desirous of attending religious worship in a house consecrated to the Most High, and they are in a measure indifferent to the creed or sect, to which such house may

belong." That story is said to have inspired the completion of their building. On November 27, 1841, to the firing of cannon and with a band playing martial music, a procession led by President Houston entered the first Presbyterian church.

In early years several Baptist ministers preached in Houston, but that denomination was not organized here until May 22, 1841, after the arrival of the Rev. James Huckins, who had come to Texas under the auspices of the Home Mission Society of New York. Among the founders were Barnabas and Abigail Hascall, Martha Mulryne, Obedience and Gardner Smith, Israel B. Bigelow, Piety L. Hadley, and Hannah Town. Services at first were conducted in the Presbyterian Church building at the corner of Main Street and Capitol Avenue. Baptists who preached in Houston during these days included Judge Robert E. B. Baylor and Dr. Rufus C. Burleson, founders of Baylor University. Judge Baylor was elected to the Texas Republic's Congress while Houston was the capital, and although there was a law prohibiting preachers from serving in that political capacity, an exception was made in his case. Baylor offered prayers at the second inauguration of President Houston on December 13, 1841.

Doctor Burleson, who became the local Baptist pastor in 1848, is credited with the conversion of Mrs. Susanna Dickinson, who had been spared by the Mexicans in the Alamo massacre of 1836, together with her child Angelina, the "babe of the Alamo." Her conversion attracted much attention and, according to the Reverend Mr. Burleson, "at least 1,500 people crowded the banks of Buffalo Bayou to see her baptised."

On July 17, 1842, Bishop Odin conducted the first services held in St. Vincent de Paul Church, on Caroline Street and Franklin Avenue. Bishop Odin in 1843 requested Bishop Blanc of New Orleans to send forty pounds of block tin by the boat *Neptune* to De Chene in Houston, this material being needed, he said, for "two bells that some Germans are casting, one for Houston and the other for Galveston. It is so disagreeable on Sundays not to have some means of calling the people in. They will weigh 200 pounds each."

In the meantime the Methodists had met in rooms above stores. Their first local house of worship, which later became the Shearn M. E. Church, South, was opened with services in May, 1844.

Until 1847 there were only three church buildings in Houston, those of the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics. These buildings were used by houseless denominations and also as community halls. It was not uncommon for people to gather in the Presbyterian Church for a program and "afterwards repair to the Methodist Church for refreshments." Gen. Sam Houston, Gen. Thomas J. Rusk, and other prominent figures made public addresses from the pulpits.

The Baptists in 1847 began construction of a building on the southeast corner of Travis Street and Texas Avenue. When a campaign was launched to raise funds for the building, a wag contributed a worn-out mule, which was fed by members of the congregation until it became fat and sleek, when it was sold

for a good price. Some members considered the first building too ornate; they were scandalized when the church leaders installed a melodeon and organized a choir. One zealous objector slipped into the building one night, stole the melodeon, and threw it into the bayou, from which it was later scooped out by a drédge.

Seventeen newcomers from Saxony founded St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1848; a year later they erected a log house of worship at Spring Branch, nine miles west of Main Street on the Long Point Road. The log church sufficed until 1864, when a frame building was constructed; this is the present St. Peter Church, the oldest such building in the Houston area. Wilhelm Rummel, one of the donors of the site, and his son selected the timbers and lumber as each piece came from the mill, remarking, with each selection, "This piece goes into God's house." Sills and framework are of twelve-inch heart pine. So well was St. Peter Church built that only painting has been necessary, although an addition was built. This was an independent congregation until 1887, when it became part of the Evangelical Synod of North America.

The First German Evangelical Lutheran Church was founded on July 1, 1851. Under Pastor Caspar Braun services were held in the Presbyterian Church building for a year, and for another year in Christ Episcopal Church. On Christmas Day, 1854, the Lutherans dedicated a new house of worship on the southeast corner of Texas Avenue and Travis Street.

Beth Israel, the first Jewish congregation in Houston, was organized on December 28, 1859, by acting Rabbi Isaac Posner, but because of unsettled antebellum conditions no building was erected. The cornerstone of Beth Israel Synagogue was laid in June, 1870, with the interdenominational cooperation that had characterized Houston's early religious history. In a long procession to the new building, many religious denominations and civic organizations were represented. A blessing was asked by Henry S. Jacobs, chief rabbi of the New Orleans Portuguese Synagogue, and the Freemasons were in charge of the ceremonies.

Their church having been destroyed, the Presbyterians held services in the community hall erected by the Allen brothers for the use of all denominations, but this building burned in 1860, whereupon they worshipped in the courthouse until it was commandeered as barracks during the Civil War. They then used Turner Hall until 1865, when a brick building was erected on the site of their first church structure.

With the organization of the Freedmen's Bureau, Negro churches began to flourish in Houston. Seven had been organized early in 1870, with a total membership of 650, and five had their own buildings and regular pastors.

St. Vincent de Paul's was the sole house of worship for Roman Catholics until November, 1871, when the Church of the Annunciation was completed at Texas Avenue and Crawford Street. Internal dissension in the First German Lutheran Church led to the founding of another congregation, today called Trinity Lutheran Church. In 1876 the Second Presbyterian Church was founded,

and the First Christian Church congregation was organized in 1885. The latter group held its first local meetings in 1869 in the office of Dr. J. A. Throckmorton, at the rear of Dr. W. H. Eliot's drug store at 115 Main Street. Many Russian and Polish members seceded in 1887 from Beth Israel (Reform) Congregation and founded a second Jewish group, the Orthodox Congregation of Adath Yeshurun.

The first Christian Science Church in Houston was organized on February 2, 1898. A church building was erected in 1901 and opened for services on Easter Sunday. This denomination now has four churches, the newest, at Montrose Boulevard and Barkdull Street, one of Houston's finer church structures.

On September 13, 1903, the First Church of Christ was organized with only seven members. Today there are more than 3,000 members in twenty congregations, and the denomination owns property valued at \$300,000. Two new buildings were erected in 1940.

St. Paul's Methodist congregation had its inception in 1905 when the Texas Conference appointed the Rev. George S. Sexton to organize a group in the south part of Houston, and to use as a nucleus those communicants of Shearn Methodist Church who lived in that section. This parish was organized in 1906, with 153 members. The Evangelical Temple, or First Church of the Full Gospel, 1301 West Capitol Avenue, was organized in 1909. This congregation grew steadily under the militant leadership of Mrs. Nancy Breeding (Mother) Hudson, who had served successively as a teacher in Houston's public schools, dean of Houston Normal School and superintendent of public instruction at Caldwell, Texas.

At the close of 1911 there were eighty white and sixty-seven Negro congregations in Houston. In 1926 the church census showed fourteen denominations locally represented, with 124 white and 142 Negro churches, and twenty-nine nondenominational bodies.

The First Baptist congregation split into two bodies in 1927, and dissenters established the Second Baptist Church at Milam Street and McGowen Avenue.

In 1928 the First Unitarian Church was organized, and erected a building at 5200 Fannin Street, with the Rev. John C. Petrie, well known lecturer, as pastor.

In 1936, many church buildings in disrepair were remodeled and enlarged. As Houston's population grew and as the city expanded, church structures were erected in community centers and outlying districts to accommodate increasing membership.

Houston in 1941 had approximately 250 churches representing twenty-two denominations and fifty-two independent groups, and 268 Negro churches of various denominations. The Baptists lead in local membership, with sixty-one churches for white members and twenty for Negroes.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CULTURE AND THE ARTS

HOUSTON'S cultural character was shaped when, as the seat of government of the Republic of Texas, it became the center of the refinements and arts of the young nation. Most of the pioneer poets, painters, and musicians selected local themes, and those who since have attained national recognition have shown a devotion to Houston, depicting in story, on canvas, or in song its history, natural beauty, types of people and activities.

From the day in 1528 when Cabeza de Vaca and other Spaniards were shipwrecked on the coast near Houston, writers have told of this part of Texas. De Vaca gave the literature of the region its earliest contribution in *La Relacion de Cabeza de Vaca*, published at Zamora, Spain, in 1542. Containing accounts of the country and of the Indians, the *Relacion* particularly described the cannibal Karankawas, who, on learning the plight of the half-dead Spaniards, howled "like brutes over our misfortunes."

The pioneer writers of Houston were outspoken, leaving unvarnished accounts of life in the infant town. Francis Lubbock in his *Six Decades in Texas*, while describing the windowless houses of 1836 wrote, "when air and light were wanted, a board was knocked off." The Rev. Z. N. Morrell, author of *Flowers and Fruits From the Wilderness*, told of the tent town of 1837, with its "large round tent . . . used for a drinking saloon." He found "it was quite a novel thing then to hear preaching, and some, to enjoy the novelty, and some no doubt with the purest motives, went to work, and very soon seats were prepared in the cool shade on that beautiful spring morning." Morrell, a canebrake preacher from Tennessee, was typical of many writers of early Houston; he had traveled 300 miles in a wagon, crossing streams in flood, to buy powder and lead so that his settlement could "answer a little argument" with Indians. Like a number of contemporaries, Morrell made writing a secondary consideration; first he bought the powder and lead, then preached to Houstonians, and at length, described them. Another such writer was the Rev. W. Y. Allen; in Allen's *Reminiscences of Texas, 1838-1842*, he mentioned an address by President Sam Houston to Congress, adding that it was followed by "a fight in front of the Capitol and a murder in the afternoon. . . . The murderer and murdered were both heroes of San Jacinto — rum's doings." Reporting conditions exactly as he saw them, Edward Stiff, in *A New History of Texas*, wrote this memorable account of a homecoming of President Houston:

The president entered the town escorted by the Milam Guards, whose white pantaloons were in strange contrast with the torrents of rain descending, and the half-leg-deep mud in the streets, which at short distance gave each man the appearance of a pair of black boots drawn over his inexpressibles, and the illusion might have been complete,



had not a shoe occasionally been lost, in the mud which caused the heroes to halt until the barefoot man could recover his understanding. Arrived at the white house the door was thrown open . . . the president entered followed by as many thirsty and hungry beings as was ever congregated in the most refined society. Here followed the formality of receiving the guests who hurriedly shook the hero of San Jacinto by the hand, flattered his vanity by obsequious bows, and fulsome eulogies, and turned into the next room to enjoy his wine and bacon.

Artists were soon attracted by the natural beauty of the capital; among the pioneers was Maj. J. Strange, who, in 1836, "took likenesses of General Santa Anna and Colonel Almonte" which were used in "an historical painting." Meantime, an adventurous actor, G. L. Lyons, planned to open a theater in Harrisburg before the destruction of the town by fire; returning to the United States, he recruited a company and sailed from New York City. In April, 1837, an advertisement announced his intention to launch a theater in Houston, and "thereby establish the drama permanently in the Republic." But this, heralded as "the first temple dedicated to the dramatic muse in Texas," failed to materialize, because the vessel bearing the theatrical company was wrecked in a gale, and only two of its members survived. Houston soon had a theater, however, for in May, 1838, handbills announced that John Carlos had rented a building and was "fitting it up in a remarkable neat and handsome style" for theatrical performances, and that a "respectable Theatre corps" was on its way from New Orleans. On June 16, 1838, the *Telegraph and Texas Register* reported:

The Theatre in this city was opened no Monday evening last; The house was crowded to overflowing, and many citizens were compelled to wait on the outside, being unable to obtain seats. The opening address was delivered with general applause. It was pleasing to note the remarkable forbearing disposition that was shown by the audience for these pioneers of the drama. Indeed, we believe that if the playing had been of the most ordinary character, it would have been commended on this occasion by our citizens, with the most cordial good nature: fortunately, however, indulgence has not in the least degree been required, as the actors have exceeded the expectations of their most sanguine friends. It must be exceedingly gratifying to every true friend of the drama, to behold its infancy in our country attended by such favorable auspices.

The first production was "Sheridan Knowle's celebrated Comedy of the HUNCHBACK. . . . The whole concluded with the popular farce of the DUMB BELLE, or I'm Perfection." One of the early performances of the Houston theater was marked by an episode that echoed the temper of the infant town. A section near the front had been reserved for President Sam Houston, his staff, and the Milam Guards, but gamblers occupied the seats, and when the honor guests arrived and the sheriff threatened to oust the intruders, the latter drew weapons. Mrs. Dilue Harris, writing in 1899, reported, "It looked

as if there would be bloodshed, gamblers on one side, soldiers on the other, women and children between, everybody talking, women and children crying. The president got on a seat, commanded the peace, asked those in front to be seated, ordered the soldiers to stack arms, and said that he and the ladies and children would take back seats. This appeared to shame the gamblers. One acted as spokesman and said that if their money was returned they would leave the house, as they had no desire to discommode the ladies. . . . After the gamblers left, the evening passed very pleasantly." On July 28 the *Telegraph* announced that "Mr. Barker, one of the theatrical company engaged by Mr. Corri, committed suicide in this city, on the evening of Tuesday last. He died from the effects of *Laudnum*, of which he drank nearly a gill in the presence of his wife, saying at the time to her, 'I drink this to thee!'" Mrs. Harris attributed the suicide to the unpleasantness caused by the gamblers, commenting, "Mr. Barker . . . left his family destitute, the mother sick, with three small children, in an open house without a fireplace or stove. As soon as the people buried the corpse, there was a meeting to find means to help Mrs. Barker. The gamblers gave money freely, but it was impossible to get a good house. Gen. Sam Houston came to the rescue, and said that the destitute family could have the president's mansion and that he would board. The family was moved into the mansion until Mrs. B. was able to travel to her friends."

Houstonians so liberally supported the theater that on July 7, the *Telegraph* announced: "We rejoice to learn that success . . . has stimulated Mr. Carlos to further exertion. He is now making preparations to erect a large and beautiful THEATRE upon the scale commensurate with the liberal patronage of the citizens of Texas." In the troupe were actors from London, New York, Boston, and New Orleans; there also was "a full and efficient orchestra," with Madame Thielman as the singer. Costumes had been made by Madame Dirosa, "the celebrated courtouriere of New Orleans."

After two months difficulties arose between the manager and Henry Corri, a veteran actor, who soon opened his own theater in a rented building. On August 25, 1838, a "prospectus for building a New Theatre in the city of Houston" was published in the *Telegraph*; the estimated cost of \$15,000 was to be obtained through the sale of stock to Houstonians. The building was erected on the north side of Congress Avenue between Travis and Milam Streets, across from Market Square, and the opening of the theater was a major social event in the Republic's capital.

Mirabeau B. Lamar, Houston's first poet, helped to organize the Philosophical Society of Texas "for the diffusion of knowledge," and more particularly to encourage Texans "in the collection and diffusion of correct information regarding the moral and social condition of our country; its finances, statistics and political and military history; its climate, soil and productions; the animals [that roam] over our broad prairies or swim in our noble streams; the customs, language and history of the aboriginal tribes who hunt or plunder

our borders; the natural curiosities of the country; our mines of untold wealth and thousands of other topics of interest which our new and rising Republic unfolds to the philosopher, the scholar and the man of the world." Launched late in 1837, the organization's membership included many prominent men, a group that exerted great influence upon Houston's early cultural life. Its slogan, "Texas has had her captains, let her have her wise men," was a challenge to the boisterous new town. The Franklin Debating Society made its appearance at about this time, and the subject of its first debate was, "Shall Texas in her present contest with Mexico pursue an offensive or defensive system of warfare?" Meetings of these pioneer organizations were held in the Capitol, where many a discourse and debate occurred between 1837 and 1839.

An early interest in good literature was manifest in the number of book dealers, who advertised English and American classics. At Number 1 Long Row, Main Street, the "Stationery and Fancy Store" of H. F. Byrne in 1839 had a circulating library which afforded subscribers an opportunity to read the latest books from the United States at \$20 a year. The Houston Young Men's Society debated whether "the Crusaders have been beneficial to mankind," and, "Have theaters an immoral tendency?" The *Nation* at Boston commented that Houston had "a theatre, fifty gambling houses, and nearly a hundred grog shops and no house of public worship . . . a disgraceful fact." But a representative of the American Bible Society was in Houston, and the *Telegraph* urged the town to support him in order "to destroy those unfounded prejudices which exist in the minds of many persons in the States and elsewhere in regard to our moral character." Soon a temperance society was organized as a further refutation of the Boston criticism.

In 1839, Theodore Lehmann, portrait painter, opened a studio in the Capitol, as the *Morning Star* reported in announcing that "Mr. Lehmann has enjoyed great celebrity in France, and the United States . . . as an artist of the first reputation and standing. To those who are desirous of having correct resemblances of themselves or friends and who delight in the exhibition of talent of the finest order, to see the lips speaking—the eye of beauty flashing and the form heaving with emotions from the canvas we say go to the room of Mr. Lehmann."

For the autumn season of 1839 the Market Square theater had been remodeled, and the opening was the subject of frank discussion by the *Morning Star*:

The Drama—Mr. Corri . . . has again opened his house for the amusement of the public. We have not paid him a visit and hence cannot say anything about the force of the company. . . . The exhibitions of the stage under proper arrangements can be made instructive, and useful. . . . Our friend Corri has struggled through many difficulties to the introduction of the corps theatrical, and . . . should now be careful to suffer none of the vulgar low comedies . . . that are so often served up to the mortification of the boxes and the uproarious applause of the galleries. And above all he should prevent

the uproar occasioned by low ruffians who by their boisterous and unmannerly conduct have driven ladies from the theatre disgusted with everything they saw or heard, and dreading to return.

Corri abolished the "galleries" and offered such conservative attractions as *My Sister Dear*, while the orchestra "executed Reini's celebrated overture to *Il Tancredi*, to be followed by the popular operetta of *Turn Out or the Engaged Politician*." Police were hired to enforce the strictest order. Parquet seats sold at \$2; private boxes, \$3. In 1839, Corri presented *The Milesian*, a drama in five acts written by an anonymous Houstonian, and the *Fall of the Alamo*, written by Francis Nona of the Texas army. Some sixty Houstonians with a histrionic urge trod the boards as spear-bearers in *Mazeppa*. During this period Lamar was Houston's dramatic critic, and his poems were appearing in the *Telegraph*. Best known of Lamar's verse is the "Daughter of Mendoza":

O lend to me sweet nightingale,  
Your music by the fountain;  
And lend to me your cadences,  
O river of the mountain,  
That I may sing my gay brunette,  
A diamond spark in coral set,  
Gem for a prince's coronet —  
The daughter of Mendoza.

How brilliant is the morning star,  
The evening star, how tender:  
The light of both is in her eye —  
Their softness and their splendor.  
But for the lash that shades their light,  
They were too dazzling for the sight,  
And when she shuts them, all is night —  
The daughter of Mendoza.

Among poems inspired by local themes were Lamar's "Home on the Brazos," and "San Jacinto." A dozen writers visited Houston while it was the capital; few remained long enough to write more than a chapter or two about the town. The Englishwoman, Mrs. Houstoun, and the German, Ferdinand Roemer, arrived in the 1840's, and from widely different viewpoints wrote of the customs, manners and physical attributes of the region. Mrs. Houstoun, floating up the bayou on a river boat, wrote that "the scene, lighted by a clear frosty moon, was so beautiful, and to me so novel, that I could not make up my mind to leave it," while Roemer, a scientist, was interested in the species of trees and shrubs lining the bayou banks. Writers of the period included Gen. Henry Stuart Foote, who came from Mississippi to gather material for a history, *Texas and the Texans* (Philadelphia, 1841).

Music had been fostered by the Carlos and Corri theaters; James Bolton was Houston's first conductor. An actor named Sames gave lessons on the flute, and in February, 1839, D. Gray, Number 6 Long Row, advertised "a New York premium Piano Forte of very superior tone, and finished in first rate

order." In December the Sacred Music Society was organized "both for the purpose of rendering public worship and also as offering an agreeable way of passing the winter evenings." Extensive musical development came with the German immigrants of the 1840's, whose singing societies contributed much to Houston's cultural life. The *Morning Star* in October, 1840, reported a serenade by "some Germans under the direction of Mr. Heerbrugger, the most accomplished musician that has ever visited this country." Emil Heerbrugger's concerts were popular.

In 1830-40 Houstonians, borrowing old tunes, lustily sang songs composed in commemoration of the heroic deeds of Texans. A favorite song, "The Battle of San Jacinto," echoed each April 21 to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne":

On San Jacinto's crimson plain  
 Brave Houston met the foe,  
 And set his sturdy heel upon  
 The chief of Mexico.

When Santa Anna's star went down  
 The Lone Star rose on high,  
 And blazed aloft a brilliant light,  
 In freedom's cloudless sky.

Meantime, in the spring of 1840, a group of amateur actors had organized the Houston Dramatic Society, the proceeds of their performances going to the needy in the town. Their maiden effort was "Kotzebue's celebrated tragedy in five acts entitled 'Pizarro' or the 'Death of Rolla,' which was concluded with the farce 'Lottery Ticket.'"

Between 1839 and 1845, Houston enjoyed only an occasional professional theatrical attraction, for Henry Corri had spent \$5,778 more than he had collected, so he announced, and John Carlos advertised "Theatrical Property for Sale . . . low for cash." The *Morning Star* commented, "We understand that the theatre is closed for the present due to the indisposition of some of the company — or else the indisposition of the people to attend and see good pieces murdered." In 1845, Newton's stock company revived local interest for a short time.

Judge C. W. Buckley built a theater in 1854 on Main Street, between Congress and Franklin Avenues; the stage was seldom used, although the bar was popular. In 1856, Henry Sigler, barber, offered as an inducement "a few tunes of good violin music" with each haircut. During this period lectures and concerts were held in the courthouse and in Lone Star Hall, where Miss Ada Theodore gave Shakespearean readings, J. B. Strong offered dramatic recitals, and concerts were presented by the German Opera Troupe, Madame Louis and Troupe, the Apollo Minstrels, and others. The Presbyterian Church installed an "organ harmonican" in April, 1859, and soon other churches had instruments; public and private classes in sacred music were conducted.

The Civil War caused virtual suspension of the theater, although the *Daily Telegraph* reported on November 27, 1866, "The manner in which *Camille* was

performed last night reflects the greatest credit upon the actors and actresses engaged in it. As for Mrs. Bates' rendition of the difficult character of Camille, it is useless for us to attempt a description." In 1873 a theater was opened in the new city hall; officially named the Academy of Music, Houstonians called it the Opera House.

Among the performers in Canterbury Hall, a variety theater erected by E. L. Bremond, son of the railroad builder Paul Bremond, was Milt Barlow, famous minstrel, who gave his noted impersonation of "Old Black Joe."

In the 1870's Houston had a number of musical and literary societies, including the Philharmonic and Philalethian Associations. In 1875, the Houston Literary Society was organized, and the next year the Houston Economical and Debating Club appeared; another active group was the Horticultural and Pomological Society. In 1876 the Houston Historical Society was founded. A German musical group, the Liederkranz, purchased an old schoolhouse on La Branch Street and gave concerts. With larger auditoriums, especially Pillot's Opera House, many favorites of the stage and music world appeared, including "Mrs. Langtry, the Jersey Lily . . . at \$2000 a night," in 1882.

Additional cultural groups organized during the 1880's included the Ladies Reading Club, the Audubon Society, the Texas Association of Natural History, and the State Historical Association, the last organized at the house of Mrs. A. C. Allen in 1889. Mrs. George McDonnell organized the Woman's Club of Houston in December, 1893; it fostered development of the arts and helped to create the Houston Public Library (see POINTS OF INTEREST). Among the organizations in the City Federation, as the century closed, were the Shakespeare Club, the Civic Club, and the Pen Women; musical organizations included the Beethoven Society, the Harmony Club, and the Treble Clef Club. Each of these groups sponsored lectures and concerts.

Sousa's Band played for the opening of the Houston Auditorium on May 7, 1895. Among the celebrities who later appeared in this hall were Madame Lillian Nordica and Nathan Franko of the Metropolitan Opera Company. In 1902 the State Federation of English Singing Societies used the auditorium for a mammoth music festival.

By 1904 theater expansion had become necessary, and the Sweeney and Coombs Opera House, built in 1884, was remodeled by the Greenwall Theatrical Circuit and renamed the Houston Theater. This building, later called the Prince, had a colorful history; many of the great in the American theater appeared upon its stage—among others, Sarah Bernhardt, Maude Adams, and James K. Hackett. The Prince was destroyed by fire in 1907 and the municipal auditorium took its place. In 1905, Karl Hoblitzelle opened a vaudeville theater, the Empire, and two years later opened the Majestic on the corner of Texas Avenue and Milam Street, Houston's largest playhouse. Nickelodeons were now in operation, showing one- and two-reel motion pictures: the Rex, Gem, Star, Dixie, Key Pastime, Crown, Crescent, Texas, Crystal, and others.

Houston was the first Texas city to have a municipal band, which appeared

for its first concert on May 5, 1912. This group, called the Lewis Military Band, gave free summer concerts in the parks. A year later the Houston Symphony Orchestra was organized by Uriel Nespoli, with Julian Paul Blitz as conductor; he was succeeded by Frank St. Leger. In the 1940-41 season, seventy-seven musicians comprised the orchestra, conducted by Ernst Hoffmann; six annual concerts are presented during the winter season, two of popular music and one for children. Open-air "Music-for-Everybody" concerts during the summer season were inaugurated in 1940, and became a popular attraction at the Miller Outdoor Theater. That year, in October, Houston's first Junior Symphony Orchestra, directed by Harry Kononovitch, was organized to provide a wider opportunity for talented children. The initial membership included a hundred boys and girls between the ages of nine and twenty-one. Membership is open to any child with sufficient ability. The organization is sponsored by a board of directors composed of interested adults; members of the orchestra elect their own officers.

The Grand Opera Company of Canada played here in 1914; subsequently Houston has enjoyed presentations by the Chicago Grand Opera Company, the Scotti Opera Company, the Russian Opera Company, the New York Philharmonic and the New York Symphony orchestras, and many others.

Houston's contemporary musical activities, besides the Symphony Orchestra and the Junior Symphony, range from a Civic Opera Association to numerous church choirs and an extensive public school program. Organized by Mrs. John Wesley Graham, the Houston Civic Opera group of 1,500 singers attracted national attention in 1934 when it presented Verdi's *Aida* to an audience of 54,000 people at Soldier's Field, Chicago, during the Century of Progress Exposition. Mrs. Graham also organized the First Methodist Church Choir of eighty to ninety members, best known for its rendition of the Deane Shure *Atonement* each Easter. Choirs of the Sacred Heart and Annunciation Churches are noted for their music at Christmas and Easter Masses. The First Baptist Church has a choir of seventy-five, a fifteen-piece symphony orchestra, a twenty-piece boys band, and two male quartettes. The public school musical program is varied and extensive. Each school has its band, orchestra, and choruses; a band composed of pupils from schools throughout the city is conducted by Victor Alessandro, nationally known bandmaster. The Parent-Teachers Association has organized a group called the Mother Singers.

Many spirituals, ballads, work and play songs have been composed by Houston Negroes whose names are unknown (see also **THE PEOPLE, THEIR FOLKWAYS AND FOLKLORE**). Typical of religious songs is "Steal Away":

My Lord calls me, He calls me by the thunder;  
The trumpet sounds within my soul.  
I ain't got long to stay here.

Green trees are bending, poor sinners stand trembling;  
The trumpet sounds within my soul.  
I ain't got long to stay here.

Reflecting the influence of railroad yards, "I Am A Pilgrim," used in local churches, ends thus:

As you roll across the trestle, spanning Jordan's swelling tide,  
You behold the Union Depot, into which your train will glide.

In a radically different mood is "My Gal":

My gal, she's de big town talk,  
Her foot covers de whole sidewalk.  
Her eyes is lak two big balls o' chalk,  
Her nose is lak a long cornstalk.

Unlike the foreign groups, which preserve the music of their homelands, local Negroes make their own tunes and words as the mood suggests, and many of their best songs are composed on the docks.

In the twentieth century a number of influential cultural organizations have flourished, including the Art League, Renaissance Society, and the Free Arts Society. In 1919 the Little Theatre was founded by Mrs. March Culmore with the assistance of Eugene Pillot, playwright, author of *Two Crooks and a Lady*. The Little Theatre owns a playhouse at 707 Chelsea Boulevard, produces half a dozen plays each season, and conducts a drama school. In the Houston Children's Theater, an independent organization, two plays are presented each year. Other dramatic groups in 1941 included Le Petit Theatre Français, founded by Jules Verne, instructor of French at the University of Houston. Verne, awarded a gold medal by the French Academy for his work, directs between five and eight French plays each season. The Red Mask Players, the Art Guild Players, and the Temple League Players are nonprofessionals; the Community Players are sponsored by the City Recreation Department. Houston's downtown and community motion picture houses occasionally present road shows, including vaudeville. Major dramatic attractions are presented each season, usually in Sam Houston Coliseum.

The organization of a Houston Negro Little Theater was effected on September 11, 1941. The group meets and presents its productions in the clubhouse in Emancipation Park, Dowling Street and Elgin Avenue.

Since Lamar wrote poems in the log-cabin town on the bayou, many writers have brought renown to their native Houston. Among the pioneers were Mollie E. Moore Davis, novelist, historian, and poet, author of *Under the Man-Fig*, and Maude Fuller Young, best known for *Cordova, a Legend of Lone Lake*. Newspapermen who have contributed to local literature include William Sidney Porter (O. Henry), and Judd Mortimer Lewis, author of three volumes of verse: *Sing the South*, *Lilts O'Love*, and *Toddletown Trails*. Capt. John W. Thomason, Jr., author of *Jeb Stuart*, *Lone Star Preacher*, *Gone to Texas*, *Salt Winds*, and other books, was a reporter for the *Houston Chronicle*, and his graphic newspaper stories attracted much attention. Also one-time *Chronicle* reporters were Burton Davis and his wife, Clare Ogden Davis, who, under the name Lawrence Saunders, wrote *Smoke Screen*, a mystery novel with Houston as its scene; Asa Bordages, author of a novel, *The Glass Lady*; and Jerry Donoghue,



whose essays on the Texas scene have appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Frank Colby, an advertising man in Houston, has achieved recognition as a lexicographer, and his syndicated feature, "Don't Take My Word For It," is used in newspapers throughout the United States.

Writers once identified with Houston include Sigman Byrd, author of *Tall Grew the Pines* and *The Redlander*, creator of Hector Tutwilder, the "drugstore detective" of the east Texas "Piney Woods," and other characters familiar to *Saturday Evening Post* readers. Charles Curtis Munz wrote *Land Without Moses*, a story of tenant farmers. *Mystery Camp*, a boys book with Seabrook as its locale, and *Secrets Inside*, a book for girls, are the best known works of Marie Millicent Dancy McClendon. The Fox Corporation filmed *House of Refuge*, by Grace S. Leake, who was born in Houston and educated at Rice Institute. Margaret Bell Houston, granddaughter of General Houston, used Texas characters in *Hurdy-Gurdy* and *Magic Valley*. Royal Dixon is best known for his nature books, *The Human Side of Plants*, *Forest Friends*, *Ape of Heaven*, and many others. Heinrich Meyer, novelist, and A. D. McKillop, critical biographer, are professors at Rice Institute. A textbook, *Readings for Creative Writers*, is by George Williams; textbooks are written in French by André Bourgeois. Philosophy is the field of R. A. Tsanoff, and biology that of Edgar Altenburg. Brochures on architecture are written by William Ward Watkin, author of *The Church of Tomorrow*. The law has inspired three volumes by Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr., author of *Law as Liberator*, and Oveta Culp Hobby's *Mr. Chairman* is a book on parliamentary law. The wide variety of work by Houston authors embraces the oil industry, represented in John R. Suman's *Petroleum Production Methods*, and in Charles Albert Warner's *Texas Oil and Gas Since 1543*. Popular in Texas is *Mammy Lou's Cook Book*, by Betty Benton Patterson.

Called the dean of Texas poets, the late John Peter Sjolander of the Cedar Bayou community, near Houston, was widely known for his homespun poems, and especially for "The Texas Bluebonnet." A native of Sweden, he wrote poetry that reflected his adopted land. Katie Daffan's poems became known through the *Houston Chronicle*; she is the author of four volumes, two on Texas history. The poetry of Sunshine Dickinson Ryman appears in newspapers and magazines. Olive Patterson wrote *Amber from the Moon*, a volume of poems.

Local historians include Sam Houston Dixon, author of several books on Texas historical subjects; his *Heroes of San Jacinto* was written in collaboration with Louis W. Kemp, who also wrote *The Signers of the Declaration*. Clarence R. Wharton, prominent attorney, was the author of *The Lone Star State*, a condensed history for high school use, the *History of Fort Bend County*, and other historical works. Andrew Jackson Houston, son of the General, wrote *Texas Independence*, a history based largely upon manuscripts in the Houston collection. Oswald Mueller translated Dr. Ferdinand Roemer's *Texas, with Particular Reference to German Immigration and the Physical Appearance of the Country*. Much historical material is included in *Czech Pioneers of the*

*Southwest*, written by Dr. Henry R. Maresh in collaboration with Estelle Hudson. Birdsall P. Briscoe, writer on architecture and historical subjects, is the author of *In the Face of the Sun*. Fiction with a historical background is written by Harry Van Demark. George O. John's best known work is *Texas History: An Outline*. Jesse A. Ziegler's *Wave of the Gulf* contains reminiscences of Houston and Galveston.

Among Houston's early artists were Thurstan J. Donellan, whose portrait of Sam Houston is outstanding, and Mrs. Penelope Bailey Lingan, who in the 1880's began teaching art, chiefly small sculpture and portrait painting. Prominent contemporary artists include Helen Cruickshank Davis, member of the National Association of Miniature Painters; Edward M. Schiwetz, known for his watercolors; and Mrs. E. Richardson Cherry, whose medium is oil, and whose studio has long been a center of art development (see POINTS OF INTEREST, the Cherry House). William Houliston, Jr., finds in Texas "color, glamour and vitality . . . not found elsewhere," and has many murals in public buildings. Evelyn Byers Bessell, nationally known for her oils, watercolors, and charcoal studies, is a faculty member at the art school of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Grace Spalding John has stressed local themes, and is known particularly for her painting, "Pirates," in the Buccaneer Hotel, Galveston. Frederick Browne, art instructor in the University of Houston, is noted for his oil and charcoal landscapes of France and the Mediterranean countries; many of his paintings are on exhibition in the Museum of Fine Arts. Bernhardt Wall, a Houstonian by adoption, is a widely known etcher. Julian Rhodes Muench, who painted a life-size, oil study of General Houston from a faded lithograph, is represented in the permanent collection of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts by his "Portrait of Dr. Stockton Axson" and a study in oils, "A Portrait." A sculptor also, Muench designed the sundial on the San Jacinto Battleground.

Sculptors who are Houstonians by birth or adoption include William M. McVey, who designed the large frieze on the base of the San Jacinto Memorial Monument; other of his works are the monument to James Bowie in Texarkana, a statue of David Crockett in Ozona, the bronze doors of the Texas Memorial Museum in Austin, and the stonework sculptures of the approaches. Recently McVey made two sculptures in bas-relief for the lobby of the Federal Building on Franklin Avenue and Fannin Street: "Travis' Alamo Letter" and "Houston's San Jacinto Report." They are in Tym stone, a cement and plaster process which produces a dark gray composition. Enrico Filberto Cerracchio, born in Italy, created the statue of Gen. John A. Wharton in the State Capitol, Austin, and the equestrian statue of General Houston at the entrance to Hermann Park. His most recent local work is "Adoration," the figures of a man and a woman.

Art museums, public schools, and a number of organizations foster the training of young artists. Here, as in other fields, expression is most often inspired by the city and its background.

## CHAPTER IX

### PRINTER'S INK AND RADIO

WHEN *The Telegraph and Texas Register* printed its first Houston edition in May, 1837, the newspaper was already a year and a half old and — although it had missed many an issue — had been published in three other communities. For more than a year it had been an official organ of the Texas government.

It had first been printed at San Felipe de Austin on October 10, 1835. The three proud publishers who there saw its damp sheets run through a Smith medium hand press were Joseph Baker, Thomas H. Borden, and Gail Borden, Jr.

From its beginning the newspaper played its part in the struggle for Texas independence, and its coverage of important news was prompt and efficient. The Texas Declaration of Independence was signed at Washington on the Brazos March 2, 1836. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* told the story on March 5, and at the same time carried a description of the national flag.

When President ad interim Burnet and his cabinet removed the seat of government to Harrisburg as Santa Anna's armies swept eastward, the newspaper followed close upon their heels. Joseph Baker was no longer one of the publishers; he had joined Sam Houston's army, in which he was to fight as a sergeant at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Santa Anna arrived at Harrisburg on the night of April 14. Most of the inhabitants had fled, terror-stricken, and government officials were on their way to Galveston. Buildings were burning. But the town was not completely deserted; three of the Borden printers remained, two of them natives of the United States, the other a Frenchman. They had set the type for an edition, made the proof corrections, locked their forms, started the press, and run off six copies of the paper when the Mexican army came. The printers, taken prisoners, were released the following day. The building and its contents were burned.

In this the Mexican dictator showed little understanding of the advantages that lie in controlling the printed word, as was later pointed out in a revived *Telegraph and Texas Register*:

The destruction of the press by Santa Anna, at a time when he believed he had full possession of the country, and when he could have continued its operation without cost or trouble, and issued his proclamations and printed his officials with all the facilities desirable, clearly proves that he . . . 'prefers darkness rather than light.'

The Revolution won, Columbia became the seat of government, and there the Borden brothers made efforts to secure the wherewithal for new equipment. With scattered settlements and poor communications, a newspaper was needed to disseminate information about discussions and acts of the Congress, and the *Telegraph and Texas Register* received a donation of \$50 from the almost empty

national treasury. The Bordens mortgaged land, and took in as a partner Francis Moore, Jr., who had come from Ohio with the Buckeye Rangers to fight in the Revolution. The newspaper resumed publication at Columbia on August 2, 1836. Nine months later it was established at Houston, when the town became the national capital. Its publishers found the transportation of their plant and its establishment in the new city a dismal business. Some of their troubles were recounted in the first Houston edition, on May 2, 1837:

We left Columbia on the 16th ult. in the steamer Yellow Stone, expecting that we should be enabled to issue this number of the *Telegraph* in the course of the same week, but disappointment met us at every turn. At Velasco, we were detained a week on account of the surf upon the bar. The tide left us fast aground one day at Clopper's bar and prevented us from reaching Lynchburg until the evening of the 26th. A great part of the ensuing day was spent in groping at the rapid rate of one or two miles an hour, to the very crown of the 'head of navigation of Buffalo Bayou' at the City of Houston. We immediately proceeded in search of the 'nearly finished building intended for our press,' our search was fruitless. We succeeded in renting a shanty, which although like the capitol of this place, 'without a roof, and without a floor; without windows and without a door,' it is the only convenient building obtainable during this session of congress. N. B. Our troubles have not yet ended. The shanty is falling about our ears, and driven the workmen outside to safety, the devil alone looks smiling on the mischief.

Still misfortune came. First, rain poured through the sieve-like roof. Then the dirt floor became a bog and made work impossible. Another building was rented. Days later the *Telegraph and Texas Register* appeared in a skimpy edition because slow-moving sailing vessels and slower oxen failed to arrive with paper. And on June 20 the distracted editor lamented:

No ink! No ink! The want of this black article has kept our subscribers in the dark for the past week.

During this month the Bordens sold their interest to Francis Moore, Jr., and J. W. Cruger, who had come to Texas with Moore in the Buckeye Rangers. Moore became editor, and the name of the paper was lengthened by placing "Houston" before it.

The policy of the newspaper was bold and courageous. This was a day when bullets often settled personal differences over public as well as private affairs, yet the editors did not hesitate to express strong opinions on politicians, gun-fighters, and others of whose conduct they disapproved. But the criticisms were constructive, and citizens appreciated the newspaper's valuable promotional publicity. Moore and Cruger continued as publishers for sixteen years, and Moore for an additional two years.

The *National Banner*, published by J. W. J. Niles, appeared on April 25, 1838, and ceased publication the next year.

The *Morning Star*, the first daily newspaper in Texas, began publication

on April 8, 1839, using an old press in the office of the *Telegraph and Texas Register*. Its publisher, E. Humphreys, died of yellow fever seven months later, and was succeeded by James F. Cruger, who in the following year was joined by D. H. Fitch.

Meantime, among other short-lived publications, there had been the *Civilian*, a political sheet edited by Hamilton Stuart and first published on June 7, 1838, and the *National Intelligencer*. In March, 1840, the *Daily Times* was started, which was thus welcomed by the *Star*:

A new paper styled the Times made its first appearance in our city on the evening of Wednesday last: But as we did not rise 'betimes' yesterday morning we neglected to notice it. It is a neat looking sheet and is edited by A. M. Tompkins, who says that the Times has taken the place of the Intelligencer. We sincerely hope that it may not be so far behind the times as its predecessor.

With the annexation of Texas to the United States the publishers of the *Telegraph and Texas Register* added the word "Democratic" to the paper's name. New publications in 1848 were the *Texas Christian Advocate*, of which the Rev. O. Fisher was editor, and the *Mercantile Advertiser*, published by L. A. Abbotts. In 1849 appeared the *Houston Gazette*.

Editor Moore purchased the interest of his partner, J. W. Cruger, in 1850, and the rival *Texas Wesleyan Banner* spoke highly of him:

Dr. Francis Moore has been editor and part owner ever since its establishment in Houston. It is the oldest paper in Texas and for many years has nobly battled with the various popular vices peculiar to a new country, such as duelling, gambling and drinking. Dr. Moore, its veteran editor, is now its independent owner.

In 1852 Moore sold the *Telegraph* to Harvey H. Allen, who had business interests elsewhere, and the newspaper suffered. When new equipment and materials were needed in 1856, subscriptions were invited for a half ownership. The subscribers were represented by E. H. Cushing, who became manager in October, 1856. He subsequently bought out the interests of Allen and the other owners. When he assumed the management, the *Telegraph* had its offices on Congress Avenue between Main Street and Courthouse Square. It was published on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and sold at six cents a copy. A year's subscription was \$8, in advance.

A graduate of Dartmouth, Cushing had taught school in Galveston, Brazoria, and Columbia. His editorial policies reflected a vast civic pride and a desire to uplift his fellow men. He had not long been sole owner of the *Telegraph* before he began a crusade against the publication of lottery advertisements by other Texas newspapers. A Presbyterian of broad views, he declared one day that "the *Telegraph* is a moral paper, but its Editor has his own notions of morality and is particularly prejudiced against pinning his faith on any one's coat tail." His home in the southern part of town, where he cultivated flowers

and shrubs and had an excellent library, was a meeting place for scholars and for aspiring musicians, artists and writers.

The *True Southron* — which lived seven months — and the *Commercial Express* were born in April, 1860.

The *Weekly Telegraph* was strongly for the dissolution of the Union. In January, 1861, after the votes had been recorded at the polls, its headlines read:

THREE CHEERS FOR HOUSTON  
AND HARRIS COUNTY  
SECESSION TRIUMPHANT  
HEAVIEST VOTE EVER POLLED IN THE COUNTY  
THE PEOPLE AROUSED  
WE SEND OUR GREETINGS TO THE STATE AT LARGE

A special correspondent attended the convention in Austin on March 5 at which Texas passed the ordinance of "Acception" to the Southern Confederacy, and reported that the convention members were composed of "some of the best men of our State . . . the people having nothing to fear at their hands." The raising of the flag of the Confederacy in Houston on the morning of March 14 was enthusiastically described.

On April 16 the newspaper recorded that the war had begun and declared that "Southern armies will be filled up with more men than are wanted." It was bitter with Sam Houston for having opposed secession, and when the old General made an address in the city late that month it remarked that it had given no coverage to his address but was "informed that the only new features introduced into the speech were charging the 'dime extras' of the *Telegraph* with the war, and saying he would throw his crutch at the enemy if he ever came this way. He hates the press as Old Nick does holy water and don't believe the country will ever be saved until the press is destroyed."

To get more war dispatches into the copies sent into the interior, the *Telegraph's* editor arranged with the Houston and Texas Central Railroad to dispatch its morning train at a later hour. When, with the edition of July 31 waiting, wires to the East were out of commission, the newspaper gave credit for its coverage by announcing that it was "much obliged to our friend, Turley, for the New Orleans papers from which we made up our telegraphic news on Monday morning." Friend Turley had gone to Liberty on a railroad handcar to obtain them. This method of getting news from the east was much used later in the war, four Negro employees pumping the handcar to Orange and return. Before the war ended, a pony express had been established between Houston and Mississippi River points.

In that same July 31 edition, for which New Orleans newspapers supplied the "wire" news, the *Weekly Telegraph* announced that it had sufficient paper on hand to last several months and "an order in Liverpool for a large quantity by the first vessel that comes." But there was a shortage of newsprint before

winter. Small amounts came in by land from New Orleans or by blockade runners, but the stock that evaded the blockade cost Cushing \$1.28 a ream. In November, 1861, he reduced the size of the pages, suspended advertising, and printed all reading matter in agate type. Already he had been forced to declare himself on the matter of job printing donated for the public good, announcing on October 9:

Notice is hereby given that this office will print no more posters, circulars or anything else to be charged to patriotism. At the beginning of the war, Patriotism had a good truck and dicker and credit here, but we have found notwithstanding we have charged Patriotism over two hundred dollars for printing. . . . Consequently our business dealing with Patriotism will hereafter be in cash.

In April, 1862, both the *Weekly Telegraph* and the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* accepted Confederate postage stamps, corn, bacon, sugar, flour, or any other article of value, in lieu of cash.

That summer, when the Federal blockading squadron was threatening to attack Galveston, Publisher William S. Richardson of the *Galveston Weekly News* brought much of his printing plant to Houston and set it up on Travis Street, between Congress and Preston Avenues, publishing his first Houston issue on July 22, 1862. Power for the plant was supplied by a large, raw-boned, dun mule on a treadmill. By 1863 the publication, renamed the *Galveston Tri-Weekly News*, had added a column to its width.

The issue of the *Weekly Telegraph* on September 3, 1863, was printed on green wrapping paper and had four pages of five columns each. Eventually newsprint became so difficult to obtain that even wallpaper was utilized. Before the war was over, subscriptions to the *Telegraph* and the *News* had risen to \$12 a year.

After the war Cushing sold the *Telegraph* to D. C. Gillespie, who became its editor. The *Galveston News* removed its plant to its own home city.

The *Union* was established during Reconstruction, with J. G. Tracy as editor, and on February 13, 1869, the *Houston Daily Times*, a newer publication of which Somers Kinney was editor, carried this paragraph:

The editor of the *Union* . . . enjoys the reputation in this community of being a coward. We don't know how he came by the reputation; we did once see . . . a card going the rounds, in the form of a handbill, denouncing one J. G. Tracy as a liar, coward and scoundrel.

When Tracy and Kinney met on the street the next day they took several shots at each other, and a bystander was fatally wounded.

Tracy succeeded Gillespie as publisher of the *Telegraph*, which had become a daily, and the newspaper was subsequently sold to Gen. J. W. Webb. It languished, and after the failure of an appeal to readers to save it by buying stock, its leading editorial on October 16, 1873, declared, "Farewell, We Die." At a sheriff's sale the plant was purchased by A. C. Gray & Company, who resumed publication on April 15, 1874. It was again suspended in 1877, follow-

ing which employees took it over, renamed it the *Houston Telegram*, and ran it for a time on a cooperative basis, with Col. J. T. Bartow as editor.

After more than forty years, the name Gail Borden again appeared on a Houston newspaper masthead in 1880. Jehu W. Johnson, whose wife was Philadelphia Wheeler Borden, daughter of the famous Gail, had come to Houston from West Virginia before the Civil War. Their son, Gail Borden Johnson, wished to follow in his grandfather's footsteps, and when he was twenty his parents prepared to establish for him a newspaper to be called the *Evening Post*. Type and machinery were ordered from New York, and when their arrival was delayed, a temporary publication called the *Houston Afternoon Post* was printed on a hand press in the upstairs plant of W. H. Coyle at 61 Main Street. Issued on February 19, it was a six-column, four-page journal, bearing the name of young Gail Borden Johnson as editor; Col. J. O. Bartow, late of the *Telegram*, as chief editor, Dr. S. O. Young as associate editor, Dudley D. Bryan as city editor, and Joe Abbey as paragrapher. Jehu Johnson, whose name did not appear, was in fact both editor and publisher. Bartow had sold his interest in the *Telegram* to become chief editor, but soon disagreed with the elder Johnson on the conduct of a mayoralty campaign, and resigned. When new type and machinery arrived, the newspaper became the *Evening Post*, and how quickly it participated in the turbulence of the day is evident in an item from its columns of March 12, 1880:

TAKE WARNING — The Post, following the example of some of the leading journals out west, has employed for the use of this office an ex-prize fighter, who is in excellent training, and carries two hundred pounds of solid flesh. This gentleman is under contract, to settle all disputes, and to soothe any excitable party who wishes to raise a row with any member of the editorial staff. If a man comes scooting out of the office like a roman candle with his pants kicked up under his hat and both ears chewed off, the law can't touch the Post for it as the public has been solemnly warned.

Whether it ever became necessary for the athletic gentleman to soothe excitable persons in this manner is not of record.

A weekly edition of the *Post*, in which important news was summarized, appeared early in April, with an initial printing of 5,000 copies.

In financial straits and with a quarrel raging between its owners which eventuated in an injunction, the *Telegram* suspended publication for a few days late in 1880, but John T. Dickinson refinanced it with money borrowed from the elder Johnson, publisher of the *Post*. Gail Johnson had anticipated that the newspaper would become his property on his twenty-first birthday, but his mother died a few weeks before he became of age and made no mention of it in her will. In the estate's division the elder Johnson received half of the property, and Gail one-sixth of the other half. In January, 1881, the *Telegram* finally passed out of existence; Jehu Johnson secured its stock, and the *Post* took over its offices.



The *Houston German Post*, with C. B. Midlenka as publisher, appeared on May 7, 1881. The *Sun*, a morning paper, and the *Evening Age* were merged as the *Age* on January 1, 1882. The *Evening Journal* and the *News-Weekly* were established in 1884. W. H. Baker had meantime become president of the *Post*, but in August, 1884, Jehu Johnson again took charge. Dr. S. O. Young became part owner, and J. W. Mitchell manager. Young, Mitchell, and other newspapermen then launched the *Houston Morning Chronicle* on October 26, 1884. Its city editor was William H. Bailey, a North Carolinian who had come to Houston that year.

Involved in further financial difficulties, the *Houston Post* was sold under attachment to W. R. Baker for \$5,600. On April 4, 1885, the *Evening Journal* and Dr. Young's infant *Morning Chronicle* published their final issues, and on the next day "merged their talents, resources and good will, and much of the *Post's* plant and equipment" to resurrect the *Post*. William H. Bailey began publication of the *Herald* a month later. William Cowper Brann, who later achieved fame in Waco with his *Iconoclast*, was a member of his editorial staff. The *Herald* said of the recent triple newspaper merger that "the *Chronicle* and *Journal* swallowed each other and became as rigid as a *Post*."

To the new *Post* came Julius Lewis Watson, a Kentuckian, who had run a river store-boat on the Mississippi, written for newspapers in Texas, and had been treasurer of the old Pillot Opera House in Houston. Another member of the editorial staff was Renzi Melville Johnston, who had edited a country newspaper in Georgia, fought in the Confederate army, and become known for his political writings in the *Austin Statesman*. Sidney Porter, who was to become famous as "O. Henry," worked here somewhat later as a reporter and columnist, and years afterward the staff was joined by a stocky Ohioan, Judd Mortimer Lewis, who had been working in Houston as a stereotyper.

Watson had become president and editor-in-chief before his death in 1897, when he was succeeded in both positions by Renzi Johnston. During his administration the *Post* had installed a linotype machine, said to be the first used by any newspaper west of the Mississippi. More important to the future newspaper history of the city was an addition that Watson had made to the editorial staff in 1893, when Marcellus E. Foster came to Houston from Huntsville, where he had been a correspondent.

With the blowing in of the great Spindletop oil field near Beaumont in 1901, small speculations became fortunes. One of these speculations had been made by Foster, and although the fortune that it brought him was a relatively modest one, it enabled him to make a dream come true, as the *Post* thus reported:

Houston is to have a new evening paper known as the *Houston Chronicle*. . . . The *Chronicle* will be published at 1011 Texas Avenue, the company having leased a three-story building. . . . The directors: Marcellus E. Foster, Sterling Meyer, Camille Pillot, E. R. Richardson and G. Herbert Brown.

From that day to the present, the *Post* and the *Chronicle* have been published without interruption.

The *Chronicle* absorbed William H. Bailey's *Herald* in 1902, and issued the *Chronicle and Herald* on July 3. Copies sold at two cents, an innovation in Texas. The *Post* completed a new building at Texas Avenue and Travis Street and occupied it in the autumn of 1903. On October 16, 1904, the *Chronicle* inaugurated a Sunday edition; in 1907 that newspaper and Foster bought the property of the Shearn M. E. Church on Texas Avenue between Travis and Milam Streets, on which was built a ten-story building, completed in 1909. George M. Bailey became editor of the *Post* in 1908, and under his direction the journal attracted national attention. Other newspapers had come and most of them gone. The *Daily News* had made its appearance in 1886; the *Houston Times* in 1888; the *Texas World* and the *Evening Press* in 1891; *Der Texas Anzeiger* in 1892; the *Texas Truck Grower and Shipper's Guide* in 1903.

In 1910 a new *Houston Times*, the *Houston Record*, the *Sunday Morning Advertiser*, and the *Texas Tradesman* were founded, and in 1911 the *Houston Examiner* appeared, none of them destined to long life. The third newspaper to establish itself solidly in the modern city was the *Houston Press*, first issued on September 20, 1911, from a plant at 709 Louisiana Street. A unit of the Scripps-McRae publications, it originally sold its copies at one cent each. For the first fifty-eight days it was published without a line of advertising, its management maintaining that as yet its circulation did not warrant investment of any advertiser's money. Paul C. Edwards was editor. In May, 1913, it was established in a new building at Capitol Avenue and Bagby Street.

In 1917 Roy Garrett Watson, son of the newspaper's former editor, became president of the *Post* company, and new administrative policies and methods brought about the departure from the staff of some of its older and better known members. An afternoon edition, the *Evening Post*, appeared in 1922, but was discontinued in 1924.

On September 4, 1923, was printed the first issue of the *Houston Dispatch*. Its stockholders owned no publishing plant, and although the newspaper secured a considerable subscription list, its advertising support was insufficient for success; within less than a year it was taken over by Ross S. Sterling, oil millionaire, who had advanced it approximately \$400,000. Sterling then bought the *Post*, at a reported price of more than \$1,000,000, and combined the two papers as the *Post-Dispatch*. William P. Hobby, a former State Governor, and R. L. Dudley were associated with him in the venture. The first issue under the new name was published on August 1, 1924.

Sterling built a three-story building designed for a modern newspaper plant at Polk Avenue and Dowling Street, and occupied it in March, 1925. He then began construction of the 22-story *Post-Dispatch* Building at Texas Avenue and Fannin Street, which cost \$2,000,000 and was completed in 1926. George M. Bailey, who for more than twenty years had been active in Houston newspaper work, was the paper's editor at the time of his death in 1927. Sterling suffered

financial reverses, and in 1931 the property was sold at auction for \$750,000. Controlling interest passed to J. E. Josey, chairman of the board of the National Standard Life Insurance Company. The newspaper's earlier name, the *Post*, was resumed in 1932. An annex was erected at Polk Avenue and Dowling Street in 1939, as part of a \$175,000 improvement program. New equipment installed included a Scott high-speed press of eight units, capable of printing 45,000 sixty-four-page newspapers each hour.

Meantime another newspaper ownership change of importance had occurred, when Marcellus Foster, having directed the destinies of the *Chronicle* for a quarter-century, sold his interest to Jesse H. Jones in June, 1926. Foster continued for a short time to write signed articles for the *Chronicle*, but in February, 1927, became editor of the *Press*, and ten years later was made editor emeritus. The *Press* opened its new building at Rusk Avenue and Chartres Street in February, 1928.

A \$750,000 expansion program was undertaken by the *Chronicle* in 1938. Equipment was increased, and a four-story annex was built on Travis Street, just north of the *Chronicle* Building, to house new presses and the editorial and advertising departments.

Newspapers devoted to the interests of Negroes have had a place in the city's life since 1916, when a group of Negro businessmen, led by C. F. Richardson, began publication of the *Houston Observer*, a weekly. Three years later Richardson withdrew from the group and founded the *Informer*. In 1930, following litigation between Richardson and some of his associates, the *Defender* came into existence, and the *Informer* became the *Informer and Texas Freeman*. The *Negro Labor News* began publication as a semi-monthly and became a weekly in 1940.

Many publications of special types and appeals have existed for longer or shorter periods over the years. In 1941 Houston had four daily newspapers—the *Post*, *Chronicle*, *Press*, and *Daily Court Review*. Weeklies include the *Defender*, *Eastender*, *El Tecolote*, *Examiner*, *Heights Citizen*, *Houstonian*, *Hyde Park News-Journal*, *Informer and Texas Freeman*, *Jewish Herald-Voice*, *Labor Messenger*, *Labor Record*, *La Tribuna Italiana*, *La Voce Della Patria*, *Negro Labor News*, *Texan Weekly*, *Texas Journal of Education*, *Times*, and *West End News*. Trade and special publications include the Chamber of Commerce magazine *Houston*, the *Cotton Digest*, *Gulf Coast Lumberman*, *Medical Record and Annals*, *Oil Weekly*, *Petroleum Marketer*, *Refiner and Natural Gasoline Manufacturer*, the *Shield*, official organ of the Houston Police Department, and *Southwestern Baker*.

Radio in Houston had its devotees in the earliest days of crystal sets and earphones, and the Houston Radio Club was organized in 1919, with James L. Autrey as president and J. W. Weatherford as secretary and treasurer. A school was conducted for beginners, most of the sets being made by the operators themselves. Among the owners of early licensed stations were Autrey, Clifford Vick, and J. Grosse. The first local commercial station was WEV, owned and

operated by Hurlburt Still, which conducted its broadcast from a garage at McKinney Avenue and San Jacinto Street.

The police Bertillon department, working with G. M. Douglas, installed a radio transmitter on the roof of the police station in the spring of 1922, and on May 21 the *Houston Post* broadcast a Sunday concert from the radio plant of A. P. Daniel, 2504 Bagby Street. Later that year the Houston Conservatory of Music sent out programs over Station WGAB. Other small stations—some of five and ten watts—went on the air.

In 1924 the *Post-Dispatch* absorbed a station operated by Will Horwitz for his theaters and established it as KPRC, which from the newspaper building made its debut on May 9, 1925. A marriage ceremony was broadcast by this station the following year, with a June wedding advertising feature which indicated the trend about to be taken by American radio systems.

Several new stations were licensed, and a number of consolidations took place during the next few years. Jesse H. Jones entered the field in 1932, and in 1934 his KXYZ station increased its power to 1,000 watts and became established in the Gulf Building; its single mast above that structure is among the tallest in the South. KTRH became the *Chronicle* station in 1937 the same year KPRC removed its studio to the Lamar Hotel.

Improved reception was obtained in 1936 by Stations KPRC and KTRH through the installation of one broadcasting plant for sending out waves of both stations simultaneously. Situated at Deepwater, near Pasadena, it was the second of its kind in the world. Each of the stations increased its power to 5,000 watts. The vertical radiator rises 375 feet and weighs twenty-eight tons. It is surrounded by beacon lights to warn aircraft.

The Houston Police Department installed Station KGZB in 1933. Call letters were changed to KHTP in 1936, and in 1937 power was increased from 200 watts to 500 watts.

As a guide to aviation, the 350-watt U. S. Airways Communication Station, operated in connection with the Municipal Airport, was installed by the United States Department of Commerce in 1936. Operating on 332 kilocycles, it furnishes radio beam and weather information for planes within a 150-mile radius.

In the city are approximately 200 amateur stations. One of them is W5DPA, owned by the Amateur Radio Club of Houston.

## CHAPTER X

### SPORTS AND RECREATION

**B**EAR STEAK or a good "mess" of fish meant more to the pioneer Houston hunter or fisherman than a few hours of sport, for without an abundance of wild game and fish the settlers along the San Jacinto and the bayous would often have known hunger. Hunting and fishing were a very serious business with the Indians and colonists, and sometimes they were forced to eat mustang meat to survive. Usually they could shoot a day's supply of game within a few yards of their homes. Inland streams and near-by salt waters furnished many kinds of fish. Even after the founding of Houston the hunter and the fisherman supplied the tables of frontier residents and of wayside inns.

The changes a century has brought to hunters of Houston are reflected in a story written by Mrs. Dilue Harris. While her family was moving in 1833 to Stafford's Point from Harrisburg her father killed a deer, for "we had bread, but no meat." To get firewood, the men of the party "had to stand in the water, cut down a tree, cut it up, tie it to their saddles and walk back." Meantime, wolves had surrounded the camp where the deer had been dressed; Mrs. Harris wrote, "Father would have shot one, but said if he killed it the others . . . would kill the oxen. Our woodmen got back, and made a big fire, which scared the wolves. They ran a short distance, sat down, faced the cart, barked and howled all night." The camp was now "surrounded by wolves and water," and in a sycamore tree near by buzzards were roosting. Mrs. Harris' mother "said it was a night of horrors. . . . She said the owls were singing a funeral dirge, and the wolves and buzzards waiting to bury us."

Houston was the principal rendezvous of a frontier horse-racing fraternity during its early years, and since that era the interest of its people in sports has been unailing. In the 1830's there was not only horse racing, but boxing, fencing, hunting and fishing, and even a "Buffalo Bayou Lottery." The first local races were announced in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* on January 27, 1838:

The spring meeting will commence on the 21st day of February, 1838, and continue four days. . . . The proprietor takes great pleasure in calling the attention of the public to the New Market Course, which is believed to be inferior to none upon the continent, either in its profile or soil. Stables and ample accommodations may be had.

Houston then had about 200 dwellings. The men far outnumbered the women in the community and consequently, social life was negligible. The residents looked forward eagerly not only to the race meets, but to dances planned to attract "the beauty and fashion of the republic."

So popular were horse races that a Jockey Club was organized. Four- to six-day racing events were scheduled twice each year. Among the officers of this club were Dr. B. T. Archer, president; Gen. Felix Huston, first vice president; Gen. Thomas J. Rusk, second vice president; William H. Wharton, third vice president; Edwin Waller, secretary; and Col. R. D. Moore, proprietor.

The *Telegraph and Texas Register* on April 14, 1838, carried this announcement:

COLUMBIA RACES. — The annual racing over the MILAM TURF will commence on Thursday the 19th April, 1838, and continue for three days.

And on October 27:

HOUSTON JOCKEY CLUB RACES. — The first meeting over the Houston course will commence on the fourth Monday in November next and continue five days. First day JC purse mile heats \$200. Second day JC purse 2 mile heats \$400. Third day JC purse 3 mile heats \$600. Fourth day JC purse 4 mile heats \$800. Fifth day mile heats, best 3 in 5 for the entrance money of preceding days: 12½ per cent entrance to the purses, free for all horses complying with the rules of the club.

JOHN F. HUNTINGTON Sec.

N. B. The regular meeting of the club will be held at 'Kesler's Arcade' on Monday evening next 29th inst.

The horses belonged to the rich planters of the Brazoria section and made the circuits regularly. Interest in the "sport of kings" had so greatly increased that in 1840 four Jockey Clubs had been organized in Houston. One had "six full stables of imported horses" and another, "a great number of first blood" in training. The *Morning Star* of October 10, 1840, announced the autumn races:

THE TURF — A meeting of those citizens who wish to encourage the sports of the turf, took place on Thursday evening, at Kesler's Arcade. A resolution was passed to raise sufficient money, by subscription to furnish one or two purses for the coming races, and to place them under the control of the Post Oak Jockey Club. The best horses in the country will be here; a great number of the first blood are now in training and by the time the sport comes on, they will be in the finest condition for running.

One form of competition that brought condemnation in the town's editorial columns was the tendency of steamboat captains on boats plying between Houston and Galveston to race each other down the narrow bayou and across the bay.

The first public notice of a local boxing exhibition appeared in the *Morning Star* on March 21, 1840:

John W. Campbell from the Boston gymnasium, respectfully informs the citizens of Houston and vicinity that he will give an exhibition of the noble and manly art of self-defense, in the ballroom of the

French exchange, opposite the market, this evening, Saturday, March 21. On this occasion he will be assisted by Mr. William, from the London ring, well known as the *Pet of Fancy*; also several young gentlemen of this city, pupils of John Hudson, Jim Sandford, Andy M'Lane and John Sheridan. J. W. C. is open to spar with any gentlemen that may offer, for a belly-full, in friendship, with the gloves on.

Doors open at 6. Sparring to commence at 6. Admission \$2. Tickets to be had at the door.

N. B. The gentlemen teaching the small sword exercise have kindly volunteered their services for the amusement of the lovers of the above science.

But boxing and prize fighting failed to achieve the popularity in Houston that it had in towns of the East.

A quaint record of a hunting privilege is filed in the office of the Harris County Clerk in Houston. It was given by Gen. Moseley Baker, a hero of the Texas Revolution, to William Douglas Lee, Pall Mall:

Galveston 23rd Dec, 1840  
 By these presents know all men,  
 That Moseley Baker of Evergreen  
 Doth forever grant the right,  
 At every hour of the day and night  
 To William Douglas Lee, Pall Mall,  
 To shoot & slay 'twixt heaven & hell,  
 Every bird of every feather,  
 In rainy & in pleasant weather,  
 That ever was or will be seen  
 Upon the Isle of Evergreen.  
 Around the island, too, he may,  
 Without respect to feather, slay,  
 And big & little guns may crack  
 As long as ducks & geese do quack —  
 The price of this said Lee has paid  
 As pretty a jar as e'er was made,  
 Of pottery clay or other earth,  
 Since Grandma Eve to Cain gave birth —  
 And Moseley Baker doth agree  
 For all his heirs, as well as he,  
 As long as time & ducks shall be,  
 To grant this right to the heirs of Lee.

A fencing school was announced by the *Morning Star* on March 4, 1840:

Mr. Louis who has recently arrived in the country from France, has opened a Fencing School in this city, and we are informed by the best judges of the art that he is a perfect master of the profession. We know him to be a polite and intelligent gentleman and it would be well for all who expect to be called upon to wear a sword and who are not already perfect masters of its use to attend the lessons.

An account of a foot race appeared in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* on December 14, 1842:

TALL WALKING — We had a foot race in this city yesterday, between Mr. Herring and a 'Colorado Boy,' named Craft. The distance was fifty yards, which Mr. Craft run in three seconds and beat Mr. Herring by about two feet. Mr. Craft resides near Bastrop, and it is said he often runs down rabbits in the open prairie merely for sport.

Although there was no legal sanction of gambling, laws of the Republic exempted lotteries. Thus the Buffalo Bayou Lottery operated by George Elgin was immediately popular. The first notice appeared in the *Morning Star* on March 29, 1840:

Buffalo Bayou Lottery. . . . This is a 75 Number Lottery — 12 Drawn Ballots. The plan will be published with the Scheme on Monday next. . . . The Lottery will be drawn in four drawings under superintendence . . . the proprietor pledges himself that the same promptness and punctuality which characterized his Tennessee and Georgia Lotteries, shall be strictly observed in this; his old and favorite motto of *Promptness without delay and 'Punctuality with Dispatch'* shall be strictly complied with.

The municipal council passed a resolution on April 2 authorizing Elgin to conduct his lottery providing he "keep a correct account of all the tickets sold, and make his returns to the Mayor within two days of the drawing of each and every lottery under oath." When the first drawing was held on April 14, the mayor and aldermen and other prominent Houstonians were invited to supervise it. The second drawing took place at the Houston House on the afternoon of April 16 for a cash prize of \$1,000. The money was on hand to pay the winner. A capital prize of \$10,000 was divided among three winners in the third and last drawing on April 18.

Houston hunters often read in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* items like the one printed on October 22, 1845:

Important to Sportsmen — We learn that many of the inlets of Galveston Bay are literally filled with wild ducks, *brant, geese &c.* Several thousand are often seen in a single flock. Col. Morgan informs us that one of his slaves lately killed sixty-five ducks in about two hours.

In May, 1858, an 118-pound turtle measuring four feet and six inches in length and twenty inches across was taken from the bayou.

But bigger game was available in the Houston vicinity. Up to the Civil War there were many bears, especially along the San Jacinto River bottoms. They frequently killed and carried away calves and hogs. Bear meat was relished by the settlers, and the fur had numerous uses. An early-day beauty aid was derived from bear grease, which was rendered and used for hair oil and to wax moustaches. Said the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* on December 22, 1858:



To the Lovers of Bear Meat—A *Fine Fat Bear* will be killed and cut up on Friday next, and will be for sale on Saturday morning, Christmas, at J. W. Schrimpf's stall.

James Robertson, proprietor of Our House Restaurant announced that he would feature bear steak on the Christmas Day menu.

By December, 1859, a chess club had been organized. Boxing made another bid for attention when the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* announced that a sparring exhibition would be held at Liberty Hall on December 17. "Gentlemen who wish to visit this exhibition are assured that the strictest order will be enforced."

The first regatta of the newly organized San Jacinto Yacht Club was held on April 12, 1860 on a forty-mile course between Lynchburg and Clopper's Point. On April 11, 1861, the *Weekly Telegraph* announced the creation of a baseball club:

A meeting for the purpose of organizing a Base Ball Club, was held over J. H. Evans' store. . . . After the organization of the meeting, and the adoption of the name of the Houston Base Ball Club, a ballot was had for permanent officers, with the following result: President, F. A. Rice; Vice President, E. H. Cushing; Secretary, W. H. Campbell; Treasurer, H. J. Evans; Corresponding Secretary, John S. Clute; Directors, G. A. Ellsworth, J. C. Baldwin, and C. C. Clute.

The players agreed to be on hand at five o'clock on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, "weather permitting," for "field exercise" in Academy Square.

During the Civil War there was a complete lack of organized sports. At the close of the war professional entertainers included a Monsieur John Dernier, who gave an exhibition of rope walking at sundown on May 30, 1866. The *Evening Star* commented, "The windows, doors, house tops, and cross streets for a great distance were crowded to their utmost capacity. . . . His feats were astonishing, and to our judgment dangerous in the extreme, but were performed by him with the cool bravery of a dashing cavalier. He will give his last performance . . . in the character of a Brazilian ape."

The *Daily Telegraph* published a column on a baseball game between the Houston Stonewalls and the Robert E. Lees of Galveston at the San Jacinto Battleground on April 21, 1868. The heavily laden steamboat *Whitelaw* left the Houston landing to the music of a German band. Aboard—heroes of the day—were the Houston baseball players in their showy uniforms consisting of red caps, white flannel shirts, and black pants. Several veterans of the Battle of San Jacinto were also aboard and they fought the battle over with no more personal modesty than was absolutely necessary. A barge equipped for dancing was attached to the *Whitelaw*. The *St. Clair* of Galveston beat the Houston boat to the San Jacinto landing by a half hour.

Captain Doswell of the "Stonewall" team and Captain Forrest of the "Lees" tossed for innings, and the latter won. W. J. McKernan of the Empire Base Ball

Club of St. Louis was umpire; Jack White was scorer for the "Stonewalls," while L. W. Hertz acted in that capacity for the "Lees." The first nine of Houston's club consisted of Doswell, Paulson, Williamson, Van Patton, Myer, Robinson, Noble, Sterne, and Hogan. The story concluded:

The contest now commenced in good earnest . . . but from the first innings it was apparent to the most disinterested looker on that the Lees (although the vaunted champions of the State) had at last met more than their match. . . . At the conclusion of the eighth inning, the Lees disheartened by the success of their antagonists, gave up the game and acknowledged themselves beaten, fairly and squarely. The runs being counted, it was found that the score stood, Stonewall's 34, the Lee's 5. Mr. McKernan, the umpire then declared the Stonewalls the Champions of the State of Texas. Three cheers were then given for the Lee Club, three for the Stonewall, three for the umpire and scorers, and three for San Jacinto, when the bases were taken up, everything gathered together, and all started for Lynchburg, for the ball.

Soon after this the Negroes of Houston announced that they had a baseball club. This notice appeared in the *Daily Houston Telegraph* on July 14, 1868:

Black Ballers — There is a Base Ball Club in this city, composed of colored boys bearing the aggressive title of 'Six Shooter Jims.' They wish us to state that they will play a match game with any other colored club in the state.

The Houston Turnverein established the first local bowling alleys late in the 1860's. Interest in horse racing was revived in May, 1868, with the announcement that "Messrs. Westheimer, Butts & Co." had bought 100 acres from W. R. Baker for the purpose of "laying out a Trotting and Racing Park and Fair Grounds." This mile track, known as the Houston Racing and Trotting Park, was to the "right of the line of Main street and two miles distant from the Court House." October 13, 1868, was "Derby Day" at the park; according to the *Daily Houston Telegraph*, all might see the horses run for "50c specie or 75c currency." "Derby Day" had inaugurated "the first regularly planned and built race course in the State," the newspaper added. Between 2,000 and 3,000 fans lined the rails for the event. Late in 1868 horses were trained here in preparation for the "Great Christmas Sport on the Houston Turf." Here, for a week, the money of strangers from New Orleans, Mobile, the upper Mississippi Valley, and of Texans changed hands at the track.

In the meantime the *Daily Times* announced that a "main of 21 game cocks will be fought for \$5,000 a side" during the meet, and on December 22 added that "Cock Fighting has been active in the vicinity of Market Square." A cockpit was "fitted up in the Rice Building" with an admission price of fifty cents.

Then velocipedes became popular, and a Velocipede Academy was opened by R. J. Reese & Co. in Buckner's Hall. On January 23, 1869, the *Daily Houston Telegraph* reported:

The Hanlons were on the streets today with their new fashioned locomotives. They managed them with great skill as they wheeled rapidly on the pavement, and excited the admiration of all boys and grown people on the streets. The velocipede is destined to be an institution; but at present we prefer our mule.

Early in 1869 the *Daily Times* announced that a "rat pit will be inaugurated tonight," remarking that "Mr. Bynes has on hand several hundred large rats." Several terriers had been entered, and Bynes announced that he would pay ten cents in coin for all full-grown live rats delivered to him at the cockpit, "from this time until the demand is supplied."

In January of this year two celebrated horses, "Rebel" of Texas, owned by a Mr. Harper, and "General Ewell" of Mobile, owned by Col. T. S. Moore, competed in a distance race. The *Weekly Telegraph* thus reported the event:

By long odds this was the most magnificent race upon Texas soil; three mile heats, or six in all, between such noted horses as the Alabama champion and the great Texas favorite. Gen. Ewell led, but on the first turn Rebel adroitly took the inside, and shot in advance, maintaining a short length lead throughout the three miles till the outcome, amid the almost frantic shouts of his friends, who were betting five to one. Time, 6.33½.

A "Grand State Fair," held in the spring of 1869, offered among its attractions a "velocipede trial of speed between several dashing experts."

Before the year ended a club was organized at the Hutchins House to prevent the indiscriminate slaughter of birds out of season and "to elevate the tone and character of field sports in this State."

An unofficial race occurred on Preston Street late in the 1870's when a man tried to catch a rabbit. Every time the rabbit jumped, it bogged, and every time the man put his foot down, it stuck in the mud. A crowd gathered to watch the performance, shouting encouragement to the pursuer. At last the rabbit got completely stuck, and the race summarily ended when the pursuer collapsed on the rabbit.

Skating came into favor during this period; tournaments were considered "dead loads of fun." E. H. B. Schneider, one-time barber, soldier, and an athlete, opened the Houston Bathing and Swimming Rink and promised prospective patrons he would have on hand "appliances for bathers and swimmers."

Schneider and other German sharpshooters of Houston participated in annual Schutzenfests. A number of Houstonians met at the store of L. T. Noyes on May 29, 1878, and organized the Houston Gun Club, with Dr. T. Robinson as president, D. W. C. Dunn as vice president, and T. C. Dunn as secretary and treasurer. In 1883 gun clubs of the State held a tournament in Houston.

On June 24, 1884, the *Houston Evening Journal* announced that a meeting "of the National Base Ball club was held last night" and added that a committee had been appointed to solicit stock subscriptions and to confer with other Texas clubs about organizing a league. It was soon announced that the first league game

would be played at Galveston between Galveston and Houston. A cricket club, organized in Houston on July 31, was the only club of its kind in the State.

Near the end of the century new organizations included a local branch of the Audubon Society, the Wheelmen of Houston, the Redfish Boating, Fishing and Hunting Club, the Houston Tennis Club, the Karlsruhe Bowling and Shooting Club, and the Ladies' Bicycle Club.

State bicycle championship matches were held in Houston on July 4, 1892, when 150 wheelmen participated. The first bicycle run between Houston and Galveston was made on October 29, the Houston cyclists leaving about five o'clock in the morning and arriving at three o'clock in the afternoon, so late and so tired that they returned by train.

The Houston Base Ball Association was chartered in December, 1895, with capital stock of \$3,000. Officers were John Henry Kirby, president; Si Packard, vice president, and Sam Taub, secretary and treasurer.

Another sport that became popular at this time was goat racing, inaugurated by the *Houston Daily Post*. That newspaper on July 22, 1896, described a Children's Day celebration at Forest Park, and added, "The goat race for 1896 was won by Emanuel Drinker's white goat 'Bullet.'" Later this newspaper announced that before 50,000 people in Pittsburgh, "Black Bill" of Houston won the world's championship goat race. "Black Bill's" record was 100 yards in ten seconds.

The Young Men's Christian Association "set the style for gymnasium and indoor swimming pools in the city," and introduced basketball. A crusade for city parks, begun late in the nineteenth century, bore fruit when Sam Brashear became mayor in 1898; he acquired lands for Sam Houston and Brashear Parks.

Houston's first football players, high school boys, had their mothers make their canvas uniforms with cotton padding. In 1902 a Houston school teacher had the players outfitted with uniforms donated by merchants whose advertisements were worn on the backs of the suits during games.

Amateur baseball teams now included the Houston Colts, Foley's Reds, Red Rocks, Wells-Fargo Expresses, and the Houston Posters. Not for another decade was the first league to be organized.

An abundance of quail "out at Houston Heights" had led to flagrant gaming law violations by Houston hunters. Most of them had discarded their muzzle loaders, but still loaded their shot-gun shells by hand. "Wadding," said a later *Houston Chronicle* sports review, "was a problem, but the cardboard lining of cracker barrels was available most of the time." These huntsmen found an abundance of game on the prairie a mile south of town, deer, turkey, prairie chickens, ducks, quail, jacksnipe, plover, cranes, and curlew.

The Rice and Lumber Baseball League, composed of teams in Beaumont, Houston, Lake Charles, and Crowley, was organized on April 19, 1902. But by November, 1902, Houston was in a new organization including Houston, Galveston, Beaumont, and San Antonio teams of the Texas Coast Baseball League.

Organized in April, 1903, the Harris County Bowling League was composed of teams from the Houston Turnverein, Houston Bowling Club, Magnolia Bowling Club, Brunner Gartenverein, Cawthorns, and Karlsruhes.

An announcement was made on August 15, 1903, that a Horse Racing Association with a membership of 100 had applied for a charter, and that the remodeling of the Harrisburg Road plant had begun. The initial meet under the auspices of the newly organized driving association was held on Labor Day.

First automobile races to be held in Houston were those of November, 1903, conducted at the Harrisburg track.

Houston's first golf club was organized in 1904. In March, businessmen acquired fifty-six acres at the end of San Felipe Road, and built a \$5,000 clubhouse. There were 110 charter members in this organization, the forerunner of the present Houston Country Club.

A high school track team was organized in 1909, and basketball on a competitive basis followed in 1910. During 1911 the Houston City League, first of the local amateur baseball organizations, was formed with six teams represented. Collegiate football was inaugurated in 1912 when Rice Institute played its games in West End Park, the players "furnishing their own shoes, socks, and uniforms, and doing their own laundry work," according to the *Houston Chronicle and Herald*. In 1913 the Rice team played the Trinity eleven in Waxahachie. The game was played in an oat field; George Journeay, an end, hid in the high oats and received the ball from Bob Cummings, which gave Rice a touchdown victory by a score of 7 to 0.

The Houston Baseball team took the Texas League pennant in 1913 for the fourth time.

Amateur baseball flourished in 1919 as troops returned from the first World War, and 2,000 players were organized in twenty leagues. One of the highlights of this year was John Berly's two no-hit, no-run pitching performances for the News-boys' Club.

The River Oaks Country Club and Hermann Park golf courses were built in 1923, and those of the Glenbrook and Golfcrest clubs a year later. In 1924 the City Recreation Department assumed active local supervision of amateur baseball, forming the Amateur Baseball Federation, which in 1941 constituted an important activity of the department.

Greyhound and jackrabbit races attracted throngs to the South Main Street arena in June, 1924.

Georgia Coleman, who became national diving champion, was the star in the City Recreation Department swimming tank tournaments in August, 1927.

One of Houston's greatest professional baseball clubs was that of 1928 when Frank Snyder, Wild Bill Hallahan, Carey Selph, Eddie Hock, Homer Peel, Watty Watkins, "Red" Worthington, Ken Penner, and Jim Lindsey won the Texas League championship.

Epsom Downs, a \$600,000 racing plant six miles from Houston on the Humble Road, was opened on Thanksgiving Day, 1933. The handicap was

witnessed by 27,000 people, the largest gathering at any Houston sports event. Pari-mutuel play for the winter meet totaled \$2,929,801.

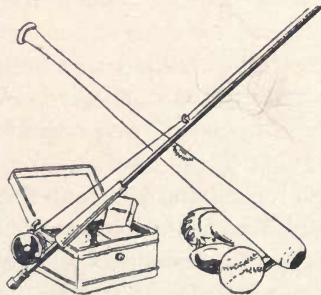
Charity Day at Epsom Downs in March, 1934, netted the Bayshore Orphans Home and the Crippled Children's Fund between \$6,000 and \$7,000. Twenty-one days of greyhound racing began on September 1, 1935, in Sam Houston Hall. A month later more than a thousand horses were stabled at Epsom Downs for the autumn race meet. The track was closed when the State legislature abolished pari-mutuel betting.

Rice won its first conference championship football game in 1934, with such stars as Bill Wallace, John McCauley, Harry Witt, and Percy Arthur, under Coach Jimmie Kitts.

The Rice Owls won another conference championship in 1937. Today football is Houston's most popular sport, and each season draws more than 80,000 fans to its high school games and the half dozen Rice Institute home games.

When the Houston Buffaloes, 1940 Texas League winners, play baseball in their half-million-dollar stadium, seats are well filled.

Among Houston's more popular sports is yachting. Hunting and fishing continue to lead local sports, as in the past; thousands of tourists annually visit the bays and bayous with pole and line, or rod and reel, and are amply rewarded; hunting, especially for ducks and other waterfowl, is excellent.



## CHAPTER XI

### STRANGERS WITHIN THE GATES

MIST rose from Buffalo Bayou, and raindrops from a cold, steady drizzle collected on pines and magnolias and fell into a sputtering campfire. Curled within a huge hogshhead that was pointed cannon-like toward the blaze lay a sleeper in what might be called the first hotel — or at least the first commercial lodging place — on the site of Houston. One Don Pedro, who himself would have occupied the hogshhead if there had been no guest, hunched his shoulders against the rain, replenished the fire, and was content because the weary traveler had agreed to pay him twenty-five cents an hour, United States money, to sleep warm and dry, with breakfast of fish and venison thrown in. Don Pedro has no place in history except that on this night in 1832 he served as host to David G. Burnet, who four years later became President ad interim of the Republic of Texas.

In the spring of 1837 accommodations were somewhat better. The new capital city of Houston was preparing for its first session of the Congress of the Republic, and the City Hotel had been built by Capt. Ben Fort Smith on the east side of Franklin Street, between Main and Travis Streets. Its walls were of half-hewn logs, and rough shingles had been used as clapboards. One big room contained the bar and gaming tables. Adjoining this was a long shed with a dirt floor, which was a dining room by day and a sleeping room at night. Beds consisted of blankets with moss beneath them. For these accommodations the charge was \$1.50 to \$2 a day.

From side-wheelers that had churned their way up Buffalo Bayou strangers disembarked to search for living quarters, and presently two boarding houses — Mann's and Canfield's — were established, but still there was a woeful shortage of lodging space. Dry spots beneath wagon beds were crowded.

Some newcomers forgot their discomforts in the thirty-foot-high Round Tent Saloon on Main Street, of which Henry Kesler, Silesian, was the proprietor. Brawls, some of them settled with firearms and bowie knives, were not infrequent. Discharged soldiers, who thronged the streets awaiting their service pay in scrip and bounty land, were welcomed at the Round Tent by Kesler. "He had the soldiers pawn their papers to him," wrote Gustav Dresel in *My Adventures in North America and Texas in the Years 1837 until 1841*, "for his brandy cocktails, gin toddies, claret punches, cherry brandy de la foret noire, etc., and thus became a rich man in a few years."

At the City Hotel bar gathered many of the Republic's representatives, senators, foreign ministers, and even the President and his cabinet members. Gambling was popular. Around dining tables in the hotel and boarding houses sat men with the titles of captain, major, colonel, general — in some cases self-assumed. They shouted arguments, cursed, and challenged one another to duels,

until the rooms at times sounded like the banquet halls of buccaneers. At one of these gatherings Gen. Felix Huston rose to make a speech. A man named Everett heckled him, whereupon the general broke a bottle of champagne over his head. Men scattered, but no pistol play ensued. That night, General Huston, glowing warmly within and possessed of a fraternal feeling toward all his fellow men, awoke Everett in his room and handed him a full bottle of champagne. Protesting the waste, Everett broke it on the general's pate. But General Huston turned so that the forty-dollar bottle of "New Jersey turnip juice" broke on his blind side.

While money was flowing thus freely, Mrs. Pamela Mann opened the Mansion House on the northeast corner of Congress and Milam Streets. This landlady could drive oxen, fork a broncho, and wield a bowie knife or a derringer. It was said that she fought everyone except the Indians. When her oxen had been requisitioned by Sam Houston during his retreat before the Mexican armies, Mrs. Mann galloped up, angrily unhitched the beasts, and drove them home. On several occasions, during her residence in Houston, she put the police to rout. Before her death from natural causes in 1840, she had been charged with counterfeiting, immorality, larceny, and assault to murder, and had once been convicted of forgery.

Living conditions improved but little during 1838. Rooming houses were still crowded. The City Hotel had an attic in which fourteen men slept side by side. Under such conditions trouble swelled among naturally quarrelsome men like the clouds of mosquitoes that brought illness. Bloodshed did not decrease.

Although uncompleted, the Houston House, at Main and Franklin Streets, held a New Year's Ball on the evening of January 2, 1839; the men appeared in frock coats, figured shirts, and waistcoats, and the women were gowned in cherished muslin prints and laces.

During the wet winter months, those who had arrived by the Washington stage or on river packets hugged the fireplaces of the Mansion House while northerners moaned about the eaves. Back in the stables, hostlers shivered and burrowed more deeply into the hay.

Service for City Hotel patrons — and other Houstonians — was increased in May, 1839, when a newcomer, T. C. LeCompte, announced that he was "a hair cutter from Paris" and sought room in the hotel for a shop. No space was available, and he did the next best thing by setting up business in the adjacent Anderson Building. The *Morning Star* of May 10 saw fit not to edit either the construction or spelling of his advertisement:

Being the first barber of Houston and of this Republic — I am sure the good people will not pass-by one of their fellorr citizens and a soldier. My price — is 25 cents for shaving — 75 for hair cutting and no scharge eff the person is not well please.

Hostelries and boarding houses had increased by the spring of 1840. Male guests gathered on the front gallery of the De Chene Hotel on Fannin Street at Buffalo Bayou. They tipped their chairs back against the wall, spat tobacco juice



over the railing, and watched the bayou boats heading for the Main Street landing. Women from the States and from England expressed themselves forcefully on the subject of these expectorators.

When the Houston House was formally opened that year, social laurels slipped from the near-by City Hotel. This new tavern had its bar, billiard parlor, and gambling rooms on Main Street. Men loafed on the shaded sidewalk near the folding doors, through which eddied the odors of brandies, liquors, and beer. Women usually passed on the opposite side of the street. In the cool interior of the spacious saloon, lighted by lard oil lamps and candles, rows of crystal bottles rested on a decorated bar.

The hotel strove for an air of gentility. In some rooms were fireplaces where, when guests wished to dine privately, tea was made in a kettle by Rosetta, a Negro woman noted for her many rings. Pork "dodgers," corn bread, and "chicken fixin's" were served by Jerry, a Negro porter whose principal virtue was an infectious smile.

Houston was still untamed in 1841. Drunken white men staggered and Indians raced and whooped along the dusty streets. Pistol battles were fought on crowded corners, and rooming houses were often boisterous. A "well-liquored" gentleman went peacefully to sleep one night in the privacy of his room. Two friends slipped in and carried him out, bed and all. At dawn he awoke to find himself in the middle of Market Square, in which the day's business was already beginning, and ran down the street with shirt-tail flapping, hysterically crying "Stop thief!"

Wagons made daily calls throughout the town, selling thirty gallons of water for seventy-five cents. Hotels generally furnished their guests with a pitcher, wash bowl, and slop jar, but bathing was too expensive a luxury to be indulged in often — and there still were many people both in Texas and the United States who questioned the healthiness of frequent complete ablutions. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* declared on October 20 that baths were useful in controlling disease, "but great injury often results from their being ill applied." Later, the newspaper suggested that two baths a week during warm weather and a change of clothing might be beneficial.

An 1844 arrival was Mrs. M. C. Houstoun, an Englishwoman, who soon afterward wrote *Texas and the Gulf of Mexico, or Yachting in the New World*. She and her husband, at the Houston House, underwent an experience which she thus described:

A piercing norther was blowing and whirling around the fragile house, and forcing its way through the cracks and crannies, and putting out both fire and candle. . . . We were disturbed too . . . by the importunities of an unfortunate man who could not find a bed, and who kept knocking on all our doors, saying he was cold and must come in. . . . Our ceiling was of canvass and in the night we were obliged to 'fix' an umbrella over the bed, while I watched the feet of a restless cat as she wandered over our heads; her paws finding

their way through the holes which time had worn in our sailcloth covering.

A forerunner of modern tourist courts and cabins was thus announced in the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* on December 16, 1847:

G. W. Cropper having completed a bridge at the old crossing on Spring Creek, (at his own expense) and also having renovated his old cabins, solicits the patronage of the travelling community.

In 1851, Col. Isaac Thayer was manager of the Houston House. A rival hostelry was the Old Capitol, then operated by Col. T. B. J. Hadley. They sought to outdo each other in the quality of their collations, banquets, and balls, each striving to make his house the social hub of the town. One provided music for dancing the mazurka quadrille and the Jenny Lind polka. The other promptly enticed the elite with "la cachuka, la cracovienne and the new polka mazurka." On Christmas Eve, 1852, the Houston House celebration triumphantly outdid its competitor by engaging a circus band to supply the dance rhythms.

With passing years, age clawed at the old taverns. The City Hotel collapsed in May, 1855, but workmen replaced the log walls and it remained in use for another half-decade. The Houston House, tired and worn, looked as though a stiff breeze would topple it. The Old Capitol seemed to retain the most vigor, as though pride as well as planks held it erect. All were soon to go, but they had survived to a day when the whistles of the trains contrasted sharply with the thundering hooves and bugle notes of the Western or Eastern stages that still clattered to a stop before the newer Hogan's Hotel, at Congress and Milam Streets.

Dick Dowling operated The Bank of Bacchus, a saloon and billiard parlor at Main Street and Congress Avenue; although the use of gas light had been demonstrated in 1847 at the Houston House, Dowling, in 1858, was the first Houstonian to replace lard oil lamps and candles with such illumination. Other establishments, including hotels, soon followed his lead.

Negro slaves now drove hotel omnibuses to the Main Street packet landing and the railroad station. They had no easy job. Exuberant passengers discharged pistols, causing at least one stampede in which horses died and carriages were splintered. The Capitol Hotel omnibus was drawn by a team of trotters. Dr. H. H. Smalley's seven-year-old son, playing in the street, fell under its wheels and was killed, as related in the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of June 30, 1858, with this addition:

As soon as it was known in town an excited crowd gathered and seized the Negro, and were about to hang him outright. They had the rope and the tree ready, but other counsels prevailed and he was taken to jail.

When dusk fell and tar-cans along the streets billowed the smoke and fumes that were supposed to avert or abate yellow fever epidemics, men gathered in the hotels to discuss the growing sentiment in the North against slavery. A

recently arrived New Englander was rumored to be an abolitionist agent. A determined committee went to his room and searched his baggage, finding only some of his home-town newspapers "of very black Republican complexion." It was solely his possession of these sheets, the committee reported in absolving him from guilt, that had given rise "to the suspicion that he was intentionally giving free circulation to such sentiments as were not to be tolerated in any Southern community," and they extended to him their apologies.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, the inns were again as crowded as in the early days. Men complained of being obliged to sleep "three in a bed." Ranking Confederate officers hurried in and out of their favorite hotel, the Fannin House, which had been built on Fannin Street, near Congress. The Old Capitol, enjoying a renaissance, glittered with gold braid and sabers. But the Houston House had become a ghost. Where it once stood now rose the brick walls of the Perkins Building.

As in the old days, arguments sometimes led to violence. Col. G. W. Baylor, commanding soldiers encamped at Hempstead, charged Maj. Gen. John A. Wharton with being a demagogue: "You, sir! You have always borne upon me!" They met again at the Fannin House, and after heated words General Wharton struck at the colonel. Baylor shot and killed the general.

Two famed inscriptions appeared on the printed bill of fare of the Fannin House when it came under the management of Colonel Hadley, who had directed the Old Capitol in its days of prominence. One was: "Children at the first table, full price. At the second table, half price." The other appeared in bold type at the bottom of the card: "For Entertaining a Drunken Man, per day, \$10."

At the end of the war new figures appeared in Houston's hotels. Some, unwilling to remain in the country in which their cause had become a lost one, were taking their families to Mexico and South America. Dust eddied around the Old Capitol as unsundering Confederate officers led weary men past it, their faces also set toward Mexico and service with the Emperor Maximilian. Others were not angry, but elated. At the Eldorado House in July, 1865, a brass band played at a banquet which honored A. J. Hamilton, the State's new provisional Governor.

In 1866 the Hutchins House began to rise at the corner of Travis and Franklin Streets, almost on the site of the old City Hotel. On June 14 a firemen's celebration was a social event. After a parade, in which "Dixie" was blared into the ears of watching Union soldiers, the Firemen's Ball was held in the lavishly decorated dining room of the uncompleted building. Flowers and evergreens formed a background for uniformed gallants and their fair ones.

Not until 1867 was the Hutchins House finished. It is a commentary upon its up-to-date elegance that wires from more than 100 rooms led to the main office and jangled bells, so that guests, with no more effort than pulling a cord, could summon servants. Jefferson Davis was entertained here on May 13, 1875, and received a flood of visitors until ten o'clock at night, when he attended

a concert at which he was reported to have been "pleased with the singing of Robin Adair."

When Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, returning with Mrs. Grant and others from his trip around the world, reached Houston early in 1880, citizens welcomed him and escorted him to the Hutchins House. A throng in the street shouted the general's name until he appeared upon a balcony. He was about to speak, but so many people had followed him out that the balcony cracked, and they and the ex-President were forced to withdraw.

The old and now shabby Fannin House was torn down in April, 1882. On December 13 of that year the barroom of the Capitol Hotel became the first place in Houston to be lighted by electricity. For days large numbers of men came to see the two arc light globes, and many basked beneath the rays which were said to possess therapeutic qualities. Use of electricity speedily spread when it was reported that whereas lighting the room by gas had cost the proprietors \$168 monthly, with the new lamps the bill was but \$45.

As the city's population and number of visitors increased with the century's turn, hotel building kept pace. In 1906 the Macatee was built. The Old Capitol had been razed in 1881, but on its site in 1909 President William Howard Taft delivered an address, and beamed genially when the colors of the Confederacy, presented by Miss Katie Daffan, were pinned upon his breast.

During the next five years the Rice, the Milby, the Bender, and the Stratford were built, and in 1914 the Houston Hotel Keepers Association was formed. The Sam Houston Hotel was opened in 1924. By 1927 the William Penn, the Auditorium, the Ben Milam, the Warwick, and the Lamar were in operation. After Houston secured the 1928 National Democratic Convention, other hotels went up. The Texas State was opened in 1929, and the new Brazos in 1931. Since 1936 several have been air-conditioned.

In 1941 the city had twenty-three first-class and ten second-class hotels, with rooms to accommodate more than 5,000 guests.

The many Houston restaurants are diverse in character, serving folk dishes of many lands, from Mexican *menudo* and *huevas rancheros* to Louisiana crawfish gumbo and Holland cheese. Rathskellers, comfortably dim during hot summer days, exude an aroma of beer, cheese, liverwurst, and other sausages. Seafood cafes specialize in Spanish mackerel, red snapper, pompano, oysters, shrimp, and crabs. One place is characterized by nautical fixtures; another has a Turkish motif, including the costumes of the waitresses. Thoroughly Mexican are some establishments, from decorated walls and ceilings to viands and waiters. Viennese, French, and Oriental eating houses are conducted in out-of-the-way places.

Many of the American restaurants are noted for their "sizzling steaks," served on the metal platters on which they have been cooked, or for their barbecued veal and lamb. Most of them provide chicken in some form; some specialize in a batter in which honey predominates; in others, fried chicken is served on paper plates and with no utensils, and advertised as chicken in the rough.

At great numbers of "drive-ins," where sandwiches, other food, beer,

and soft drinks are sold, automobilists are served by comely girls, many of them revealingly attired. They and their costumes — often of silk or satin, some including capes, others white boots and plumed hats — have been portrayed in national magazines and newsreels as a colorful Houston characteristic. At some of the larger establishments between fifty and a hundred of these “car-hops” are employed. Although most drive-ins demand that these waitresses be young and trim-figured, one employs only 200-pounders, who wear tiny skirts in summer and slacks in winter. More elaborate places have walls of transparent or translucent glass, fringed with neon lights, and are air-conditioned. From a high vantage point an attendant at a microphone directs the scores of waitresses below him to the cars that fill wide parking places. Some establishments are large night-spots, with dance floors.

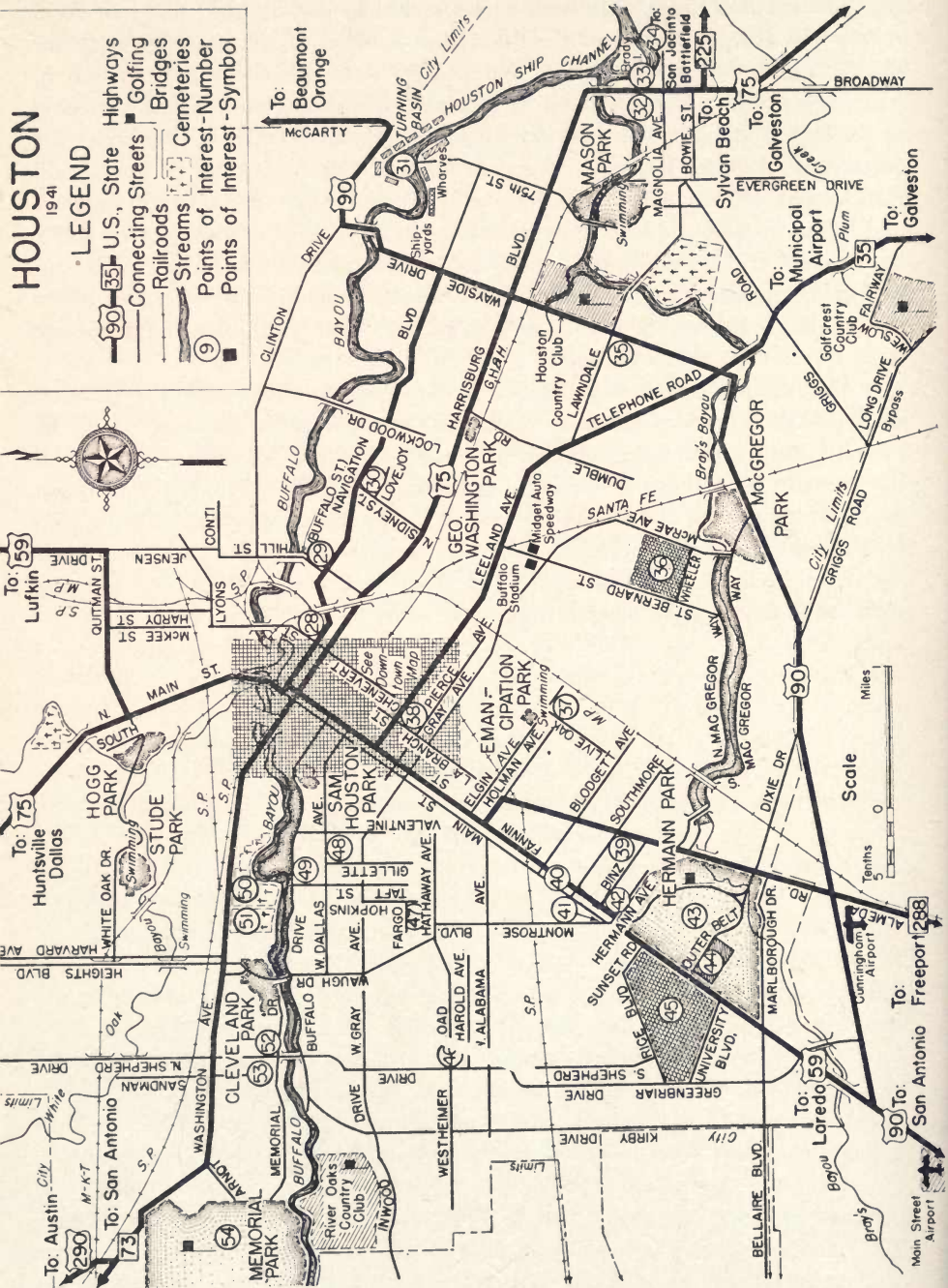
The first recognition of automobile camps came in 1921, when the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* noted that progress was being made in “the work of getting the city’s tourist camping grounds at Hermann Park finished in time to care for the visitors . . . during the fair and exposition.” In 1926 directories, two tourist camps were listed on Harrisburg Boulevard. Today there are many modern courts for automobile travelers, some with landscaped lawns. Beneath the pines and oaks in scattered sections are numerous trailer camps, usually supplied with facilities for lighting and water.

# HOUSTON

1941

## LEGEND

- U.S. State Highways
- Connecting Streets
- Railroads
- Streams
- Points of Interest-Number
- Points of Interest-Symbol
- Golfing
- Bridges
- Cemeteries



PART III

WHAT TO SEE  
AND WHERE TO SEE IT



## TOUR TO SAN JACINTO BATTLEFIELD

**H**OUSTON — San Jacinto State Park, 21.2 m.; State 225, State 134, and Vista Road. Paved with concrete for 20 miles, remainder asphalt.

This tour leads through an industrial area on the fringe of the city, along the Houston Ship Channel, past many refineries and tank farms, into a district of truck farms and grazing lands, in a region with rich historical background.

Southeast of the HARRIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 0 m., the route proceeds along Preston Ave. to Harrisburg Blvd.; out Harrisburg Blvd. to Broadway; R. on Broadway across Bray's Bayou bridge to State 225; L. on State 225 in almost a straight line across the Coastal Plain prairies toward Galveston Bay.

SIMS BAYOU, 8.4 m., is crossed on a double span locally called DEATH BRIDGE for the number of fatalities that have occurred here (*drive carefully*). Inside a tank farm (L), 9.5 m., is the point where Gen. Sam Houston's Texas army, after leaving its sick and exhausted in camp near Harrisburg, crossed Buffalo Bayou on April 19, 1836, ferrying its ammunition on a raft made from the floor of Isaac Batterson's house.

PASADENA, 10.2 m. (35 alt., 3,387 pop.), laid out about 1887 on part of the William Vince survey, is a residential district of neat houses of brick and frame construction occupied principally by employees of refineries, a paper and fiber mill, and other near-by industrial plants. This is also a shipping point for vegetables and fruit. A modern district school system has an assessed valuation of more than \$8,000,000. Here the highway crosses VINCE'S BAYOU. At a now almost inaccessible point about a mile downstream (L) stood the wooden Vince's Bridge destroyed by a small detachment commanded by Erastus (Deaf) Smith on April 21, 1836, thus preventing Santa Anna from receiving further reinforcements.

Left from Pasadena on Shaver St. to the CHAMPION PAPER AND FIBER COMPANY'S PLANT, 1.5 m. About 150 yards diagonally to the right of the gate is the SITE OF SANTA ANNA'S CAPTURE. Here, on the day after the Battle of San Jacinto, the Mexican President-dictator, dressed in the tattered, mud-stained clothing of a private soldier, was found hiding in weeds.



The DEEPWATER TRANSMISSION STATION (R), 13.5 m., serves Houston radio stations KPRC and KTRH, which broadcast simultaneously from an antenna on the 375-foot, three-legged steel tower here. Designed to withstand a 150-mile wind velocity, the tower is illuminated at night by a 1,000-watt air beacon.

At 18.2 m. is the junction with State 134; L. on State 134, which is bordered with live oaks, crape myrtles, and granite markers bearing inscriptions that tell of the Battle of San Jacinto.

At a junction, 20.4 m., the tour continues (R) on Vista Road to SAN JACINTO STATE PARK, 21.2 m.

Bronze markers on granite boulder bases, at 20 points in the park, identify descriptively the various camp sites, movements of the contending forces at the battle, and scenes of the principal events.

Here, on April 21, 1836, Gen. Sam Houston's inferior force of Texans engaged an army under the personal command of Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, President-dictator of Mexico, and swiftly and almost incredibly brought the Texas Revolution to a victorious close. For 40 days, after the tragedy of the Alamo and the defeat and massacre of Fannin's men at the Coleto and Goliad, Houston had conducted a Fabian retreat eastward across Texas until Santa Anna's armies had become separated, meantime drilling and disciplining his courageous but untrained volunteers. Santa Anna seized and burned Harrisburg, and moved on toward the coast in an unsuccessful attempt to capture the provisional government in flight toward Galveston. After a brief rest he proceeded toward Lynchburg, unaware that the pursued had now become the pursuer. General Houston had made a forced march southward, crossed Buffalo Bayou, and on the morning of April 20, 1836, reached its junction here with the San Jacinto River in the path of Santa Anna's army, the advance guard of which appeared a few hours later.

Upon discovering the Texas forces, the Mexicans brought up their only fieldpiece and opened fire, which was returned by two cannon contributed to the Texas cause by citizens of Cincinnati and named the "Twin Sisters." There had been no opportunity for practice with them, but at the first shot one of them, loaded with shrapnel, disabled the Mexican fieldpiece so that it could not be accurately aimed. Artillery fire continued with little damage to either side, and later in the day a Texas cavalry reconnaissance precipitated a skirmish in which three Texans were wounded, one fatally. The Mexicans fell back toward nightfall and made camp near a marsh bordering San Jacinto Bay, where they threw up a barricade of saddles and other equipment banked with brush; the Texans camped with their backs to Buffalo Bayou. The San Jacinto Memorial stands between the two camp sites.

At nine o'clock on the morning of April 21, Gen. Martin Perfecto de Cos joined Santa Anna with between 400 and 500 reinforcements. The Mexican forces now numbered at least 1,150 men; some historians place the figure at 1,400 or more. Houston, according to his official report, had a force of 783;

some historians believe that this figure should be increased to approximately 900.

Declining to state his intentions to his officers, some of whom had threatened mutiny during the retreat, Houston allowed most of the day to pass without any activity in his camp, although secretly he had sent "Deaf" Smith with a detail to destroy Vince's Bridge and thus prevent further reinforcement of the Mexicans, telling them to "return like eagles, or you will be too late for the day." Believing by afternoon that the Texans dared not attack and that he could choose his own time for battle, and Cos's reinforcements being exhausted by their forced march, Santa Anna and his officers took their usual *siesta*, and most of the Mexican troops, their muskets stacked, either slept or were detailed to watering the horses and other camp duties. About four o'clock Houston suddenly formed his forces and launched an attack.

Moving forward silently through tall grass, the Texans were well advanced before the enemy discovered them. For the most part, they withheld their fire until within 40 feet of the barricade, when Houston waved his hat and the "Twin Sisters," firing pointblank, blasted an opening in the breastworks. Houston and his men charged through, shouting the battle cry that he had given them two nights before, "Remember the Alamo!" and the one they themselves had then added, "Remember Goliad!" The battle was won in about 18 minutes, but the vengeful pursuit of fleeing Mexicans did not cease until twilight. Texas casualties, as reported by General Houston, were two killed and 23 wounded, of whom six died; historians have subsequently reported the number of wounded as high as 32. The Mexican losses, according to Houston's report, were 630 killed, 208 wounded, and 730 prisoners, including the wounded.

Santa Anna was captured the next day and brought before Houston, who had been dangerously wounded and was lying under an oak tree, where Houston dictated to him the terms of settlement by which all Mexican armies were to be immediately withdrawn below the Rio Grande.

Seventeen years passed before a proposal to mark the site of the battle was made at a meeting held on the battlefield on April 21, 1853. Twenty-eight years later the Brigham Memorial, for which funds had been contributed by citizens of Harris and Galveston Counties, was unveiled at Galveston on August 25, 1881; it was then taken to the battlefield and set up over Benjamin Rice Brigham's grave. After two years the Texas legislature appropriated \$1,500 for the purchase of the first ten acres of the present park. Additional land purchased by the State from time to time increased the area to 327 acres in 1909, when the site was officially designated as San Jacinto State Park. Meantime, funds for building a suitable monument, raised by the Texas Veterans Association, had been turned over to San Jacinto Chapter, Daughters of the Republic of Texas. The State park was formally dedicated on April 21, 1910.

Development continued, largely in the form of memorials, markers, and landscaping of that part of the park west of the Lynchburg Road, but not until the Texas centennial year (1936) approached was it possible to consider improvements on the scale that have since been carried out. As early as 1930

a plan to plant 800 trees along the Memorial Highway had been instituted, and the Daughters of the Republic of Texas began to collect contributions for that purpose. The desire to build the world's tallest monument, advocated by the Daughters of the Republic, received support from patriotic organizations, civic bodies, and prominent citizens throughout the State. Jesse H. Jones, then chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and in 1941 Administrator of the Federal Loan Agency and Secretary of Commerce, supported the plan both in his private capacity and as a Government official, and is credited with having sketched a design that the completed memorial closely follows. Others who contributed their support included State and local officials, heads of the Public Works Administration and the Work Projects Administration, the Houston Chamber of Commerce, and the San Jacinto Battleground Association.

From the park entrance the highway leads straight ahead to the base of the SAN JACINTO MEMORIAL (*open Apr.-Sept., 9 a.m.-7 p.m. daily; Oct.-Mar., 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Sat.-Sun.; elevator makes last trip 15 minutes before closing hour*). This imposing monument, designed by Alfred C. Finn of Houston, rises 570 feet, 4¼ inches from the center of a landscaped terrain which extends from the south bank of Buffalo Bayou (part of the Houston Ship Channel), into the marshes that border San Jacinto Bay. Its main entrance, left of the Vista Road approach, faces a sunken reflecting pool, 1,755 feet long and 200 feet wide. At the rear of the shaft is an amphitheater that will hold 5,000 people. Encircling the whole is a roadway from which stone steps and two broad concrete terraces lead to the base of the shaft.

The monument is built of concrete and faced with Texas variegated buff limestone, broken only by windows at the observation level near the summit. The tapering main shaft, 47 feet square at the base and 30 feet square at the top, is surmounted with a 35-foot star which shows five points from any angle of view.

The State legislature appropriated \$250,000 for the memorial, to which was added a \$225,000 grant from the Public Works Administration, \$385,000 from the Federal centennial appropriation, and \$25,000 from other sources. Additional appropriations were later made for the terraces, the reflection pool, and the amphitheater, which brought the total cost to \$1,500,000.

Using a plow more than a hundred years old, Jesse Jones and Andrew Jackson Houston, son of Sam Houston, broke ground for the shaft on March 27, 1936. Jones was the principal speaker at the laying of the cornerstone on April 21, 1937. The monument was completed late in 1938, and the museum, which is directed by the San Jacinto Museum of History Association, was dedicated on April 20 and 21, 1939, when the monument was first opened to the public.

In eight carved panels at the base, two on each side, the story of Texas from colonization to the date of the Battle of San Jacinto is told in 600 words. Just above, encircling the shaft, is a frieze of allegorical carvings, designed by William McVey of Houston, which depict the period from the coming of

Anglo-Americans to the beginning of the twentieth century. Double bronze doors at the main entrance carry in bold relief the six flags of Texas.

The base building, 124 feet square and 36 feet high, houses the exhibit halls of the SAN JACINTO MUSEUM OF HISTORY (*adm. free*). The museum collects and exhibits material relating to all phases of the history of Texas. In 1941 it had a REFERENCE LIBRARY (*open to students*), including a manuscript collection of more than 50,000 pages.

The entrance opens on the HALL OF HONOR, a vestibule room 44 feet by 45 feet. The interior walls of the base building are faced in Texas limestone, polished to give the effect of Travertine marble; floors are in terrazzo. In this room, on the right, are a visitors' register, souvenir counter, and an information desk.

Right of the entrance lobby is the SPANISH AND MEXICAN ROOM of the museum, containing exhibits which visualize the history of Texas from the coming of the first Europeans in 1519 to 1821. Left of the entrance lobby is the ANGLO-AMERICAN ROOM, which covers the period from the coming of Stephen F. Austin in 1821 to the opening of the Civil War. Both rooms contain exhibits, arranged in chronological order, consisting of documents, maps, photographs, paintings, books, costumes, and relics. Each of these rooms measures 101 feet by 36 feet. Within the library, a smaller room at the rear, are displayed many books, manuscripts, and maps.

On the second, third, and fourth floors of the shaft are the administrative offices of the monument and museum, also storage vaults, bookstacks, study rooms, and workrooms. The shaft and basement contain additional space for the future expansion of the museum.

Directly beyond the entrance lobby is a room, 39 feet by 25 feet, within the true base of the shaft, whence visitors are taken by elevator to the OBSERVATION LOBBY (*fee 25c, adults; 10c, children*), 489 feet high, from which Houston and Galveston are visible. Floodlights focus on the shaft at night.

Drives flanking the reflection pool cross the highway to the older sections of the park where the Texas army was encamped before the battle, and wind past markers and memorials throughout the area. Oldest of these is the BRIGHAM MEMORIAL, a plain marble shaft erected in 1881 on the grave of Benjamin Rice Brigham, inscribed with the names of other Texas soldiers killed or fatally wounded. It bears quotations from Sam Houston's speech to his men two nights before the battle and from Thomas J. Rusk's report after the engagement, and stanzas from "Will You Come to the Bower"—the popular air which signalled the advance. Another memorial to the Texas dead, erected by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, stands beside a drive along the bank of the ship channel, an armillary sundial of gunmetal bronze on a granite base, designed and sculptured by Julian Muench of Houston; it weighs 2,400 pounds and was cast in 1,500 parts.

Near the Brigham Memorial is the MASONIC MEMORIAL shaft, a 44-foot Ionic column of Texas pink granite bearing an eight-foot bronze statue of a Texas pioneer, which was erected in memory of members of that order "under

whose outstanding leadership was laid the cornerstone of the Republic of Texas."

Initial appropriations of \$499,000 from the Federal government's centennial fund and \$40,000 by the State, have been used under the direction of the Work Projects Administration for general park development, resetting monuments, rerouting old roads and building new ones, erecting shelter houses, flagpoles and retaining walls, rebuilding and repairing rest rooms and other structures, planting wild flowers, and constructing piers and bulkheads on the bayou. The total landscaping cost was \$1,100,500. Additional land was acquired in 1938, bringing the park area to 402 acres.

During the 12 months after the monument's completion the park was visited by 348,000 persons, of whom 156,000 ascended in the elevator to the observation floor. Of the visitors, 40 per cent were from Harris County, 45 per cent were residents of Texas outside the county, 12 per cent were from other States, and three per cent were from foreign countries. Every State, Canadian province, and country in the Western Hemisphere was represented, as were 25 other countries.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

(The number preceding each Point is that under which it is to be found on the maps.)

I. The HARRIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 311 Fannin St., is a five-story granite and brick building occupying the center of a landscaped block which was designated as Courthouse Square on the first map of Houston. Of modified classic design in the Corinthian order, the roughly rectangular structure is topped with a metal dome and cupola, 210 feet above the street level. It is the fifth building to stand upon the site.

Huge, rough, Ashlar granite stones form the base course, which rises from a basement, near street level, to the first floor ceiling. The upper walls are faced with buff bricks extending to the fifth floor where a limestone ledge protrudes. High above the roof line, the metal-sheathed dome is supported by a circular colonnade of Corinthian columns. An American eagle with outstretched wings rests on each shaft. Above the dome is a terra cotta cupola upheld by small columns.

Entrances form the chief architectural feature of each of the four façades. Wide granite steps with plain buttresses lead to a projecting pavilion which reaches to the top of the base course. Over each pavilion is a loggia, with stone Corinthian columns supporting a terra cotta entablature crowned by a pedimented parapet.

Most elaborate of the entrances is the one on Fannin Street. From the loggia the vestibule leads into a large lobby and rotunda where white marble trim covers the walls. In the center a well extends to the dome above the fifth floor. Huge columns, forming the supports of the central shaft, are faced with matched gray marble, making intricate designs at each floor level. Two flying staircases of white marble rise from the main floor and meet at the second floor.

The structure, completed in the autumn of 1910 at a cost of \$500,000, was designed by Lang and Witchell of Dallas. Offices of the Houston Port Commission, as well as county and district offices, are in the building. The criminal district courts, however, occupy the Criminal Courts Building.

In the HARRIS COUNTY LAW LIBRARY (*open 8-5 workdays except Sat., 8-1; adm. by permission*), on the fifth floor, are more than 13,000 volumes. Included are national, State, foreign and territorial legal reports; statutes of the United States and the individual States; digests, legal textbooks, and miscellaneous works covering innumerable legal subjects. The library is valued at \$35,000. Visiting attorneys and law students can secure permission to use it from the Lawyers Library Association.

The library was chartered on March 6, 1913, by James A. Baker, Lewis R. Bryan, James A. Breeding, John C. Williams, Charles E. Ashe, Thomas H. Ball, and R. W. Franklin. Quarters were provided in the courthouse by the county commissioners, who authorized alterations on the fifth floor. It opened

on October 1, 1915, and a year later the county government authorized an appropriation of \$100 monthly toward the upkeep of the library, in return for its use by court officers.

Harris County's first courthouse dates back almost to the founding of Houston. On December 22, 1836, the Republic of Texas passed an act establishing four district courts, with Harrisburg (now Harris) County in District 2. Benjamin C. Franklin became judge of the district. A. N. Tompkins was elected district attorney, and Andrew Briscoe was named chief justice of Harrisburg County.

Congress designated Houston as the county seat on January 11, 1837. DeWitt Clinton Harris was sworn in as clerk of the county court and filed his bond of office on February 27. Briscoe signed the record of this bond—probably his first official act.

When the first district court convened in Harrisburg County in March, the following were present: Benjamin C. Franklin, district judge; John W. Moore, sheriff; and James S. Holman, clerk. Members of the first grand jury were Benjamin Fort Smith, foreman; Edward Ray, Benjamin Stancel, Abraham Roberts, P. W. Rose, William Goodman, M. H. Bundie, William Burnette, John Goodman, Freeman Wilkerson, Gilbert Brooks, Thomas Hancock, Allen Vince, John Dunman, James Earls, Elijah Henny, Andrew H. Long, and Joseph House. Minutes of the court record that:

On Monday the 20th day of March 1837, There was commenced and holden a District Court, at the Court House in the town of Houston, pursuant to an 'Act of Congress' passed at the Town of Columbia on the 22nd day of December 1836. Organizing the Judiciary in and for the Republic of Texas.

According to Burke's *Texas Almanac* of 1879, this grand jury held its first session under the boughs of some large trees that had recently been felled. On the opening day of court an indictment for larceny was returned against James C. Irwin, George Island, and John Brockins. They were tried and found guilty the same day, and it was ordered by the court:

That the defendants restore to the owner of the Hog, the sum of fifty dollars the value thereof . . . and hereunto thirty nine lashes upon their bare backs and remain in custody of the Shff [sic] until the same be paid also all costs in this behalf expended.

The organization of the commissioners court was followed by regular meetings, at which charges for the public ferries were established, taxes assessed, various county offices set up, and their rates of pay fixed.

Trials, sentences to the whipping post, and routine affairs of finance were not the only matters to be disposed of in these pioneer sessions of county officials. Marriages were regulated under the Republic's laws of June 5, 1837, and a license was issued by County Clerk Harris on the following July 16. This first certificate to wed was obtained by Hugh McCrory and Mary Smith

They were married a week later by the Rev. H. Matthews, minister of the Methodist Church. However, an old record in the Harris County Courthouse, made by Chief Justice Andrew Briscoe on March 14, 1837, indicates an earlier ceremony was performed by the magistrate:

Being satisfied of the right of Josiah T. Harrell, and Eleanor W. Macomb to unite in matrimony, I did this day so unite them, in the presence of Andrew H. Long, David Hanna, Freeman Wilkinson and others.

Plans for a permanent courthouse were drafted soon after a meeting of the commissioners court on September 7, 1837:

It was resolved: that the President of the Board appoint a committee of three to draft a plan for a Court House and Jail for this County and that said committee report to this Board for their sanction — & be it further Resolved That the Chief Justice be authorized to give public notice by advertisement that said buildings will be let out to the lowest bidder on a certain day.

Accordingly, the committee drew plans for the two structures. The County advertised for bids on October 21, 1837:

The house shall be 36 feet in length by 24 feet in breadth, from outside to outside, two stories high, the lower story 12 feet in the clear, the upper story 11 feet between floor and joists; a frame building of good materials, weather-boarded with good dressed weather-boarding, the lower floor dressed with square joints, the upper floor dressed with tongue and grooved joints, and a flight of steps so constructed as to land in a six foot passage in the middle of the upper story; the lower part to be finished off with the judges seat, jury box, bar, clerks' box and table, with nine windows to the lower story, of 24 lights 8 by 10 inches each, and three doors 8 feet high by 4 wide with folding shutters to both doors and windows; in the upper story a passage six feet in width shall run crosswise the house so as to construct two rooms on each side the passage, with a door to each from the said passage, a window at each end of the passage and two windows in each of the rooms of the same size as those below with like shutters; the roof to be of good 18 inch shingles, to be painted after the same style of the capitol . . . delivered up on the first day of February next and in a plain workmanlike manner the house to stand one foot from the ground on good substantial blocks.

Construction of a jail was also contemplated, and the advertisement described the type of building desired. It was to be:

24 feet square, of logs hewed 12 inches square, a partition of like materials . . . making two rooms 12 feet square and one 12 by 24 feet all ten feet high; the floors above and below to be of timbers 12 inches square, the whole to be neatly dove-tailed, dowelled and pinned at the corners; both dungeons (12 feet square) to be floored and sealed above and around with three inch plank well spiked with large



head spikes, two small windows with iron grates to each dungeon and two iron grate windows to the debtor's room; an iron grated door to each dungeon to open in the debtor's room and a plank door of three inch plank doubled to open inside each dungeon, with a hole through each of those sufficiently large to admit food and water.

The two buildings were to be paid for from the direct tax fund. Maurice L. Birdsall was given the construction contract on his bid of \$3,800 for the courthouse and \$4,750 for the jail.

Meanwhile, officials were meting out justice according to the frontier code. On January 7, 1838, John Houston was indicted and found guilty of grand larceny. The charge was the theft of \$780, and the sentence ordered:

That the said John Houston . . . receive thirty nine lashes on his bare back, and be branded in his right hand with the letter T, and it is ordered that the Sheriff of said County execute this sentence of the Court.

Convictions for operating a gambling house and for gambling, with fines ranging up to \$1,000, were common, the usual fine being \$125.

About the time the jail was nearing completion, the City of Houston decided that it was a nuisance and undertook court action for its removal. In discussing the question with the commissioners court, Briscoe said, "If we lose . . . it will only cost us a jail." He argued that it would be better to "build both Court House and Jail in some place where the people are not so refined in their ideas." Some of the early families who had homes around the Courthouse Square included George H. Bringhurst, Cornelius Ennis, and William Fairfax Gray. Before the jail was completed, the district court ordered its removal, but through a writ of error the County secured a stay until the December term of court.

Completed in April, 1838, the jail and courthouse were constructed according to specifications, with the exception that a second floor had been added to the jail, and the stairs were on the outside of the courthouse, to permit more inside space.

A complaint about the division of fines was voiced by Briscoe in his report to the commissioners court on April 19, 1838:

There have been a large amount of fines and penalties collected in this County on the Penal Statutes — this goes to the Republic — The County has been at a great expense for public buildings, and is under the necessity of Keeping, trying and punishing one half of the rogues in Texas — I think the Congress on our application would donate to this County the fines and licenses, collected in this county for two years, to compensate us for the expense.

District and county officials, proud of their new quarters, were determined that more respect should be shown the court. District Judge A. B. Shelby assessed fines against many violators of the court's dignity. John R. Reid was fined for whittling on the courtroom furniture. Peter Gray and A. P. Waldron

were fined \$20 for sitting on the table; Gray was also fined \$20 for smoking in court; Benjamin C. Franklin, former district judge, was fined \$20 for sitting on the bar in the courtroom; Franklin and Thomas D. Beauchamp were fined \$500 each for contempt. According to the district court records, Judge Shelby assessed other fines against prominent people, including jurors who failed to answer summonses.

On December 21, 1840; Andrew Briscoe, first chief justice of the county, was indicted and fined \$500 for playing cards, "Against the peace and dignity of the Republic of Texas." Solomon Child, a justice of the peace, was indicted for not suppressing a duel. He was tried, found guilty, and deprived of his office.

By September 10, 1840, county officials had decided to keep the jail where it was, and a resolution passed by the commissioners on that date, declared:

Having no funds to build another . . . it is inexpedient and contrary to the best interests of the County to have the said jail removed.

Permission was also granted the City to use the county jail, "Providing they will pay the turnkey's fees & the Sheriff for feeding all such prisoners." Temporarily, at least, the question of the jail site was settled. Jail breaks, however, were becoming common. By October 1, 1840, the *Morning Star* reported an escape and declared that the jail was in bad repair.

Wings were constructed on each side of the courthouse late in 1841. They were 12 feet wide and extended the length of the building. The additions were planned to add more room so that the County "will not be dependent upon the whims or caprices of an individual for the use of a room from which its officers are at any time liable to be ejected."

Moral conditions in Houston were beginning to improve, according to a grand jury report on December 4, 1841:

In proving the moral conditions of this community, we have found that vices and crimes of almost all kinds have diminished, while the population has rapidly increased. Fewer street fights, no duels, fewer gaming houses and houses of ill fame, fewer grogshops, a less number of petty offenses . . . we found but one of a capital offense . . . the citizens of Houston are a moral community, compared to what they were four years ago.

While the block occupied by the courthouse was set aside for county use in the first survey of Houston, the deed had never been given to officials for filing. On January 21, 1842, the commissioners passed a resolution:

On motion of Mr. Hanks . . . that a committee of two be appointed to wait on the agent of the Houston Town Company and request him to convey to the County of Harris the Court House Square.

By 1844 the wooden building was no longer fit for use. Like so many of the hurriedly erected frame structures of the young town, its useful years were few, and the *Morning Star* of July 16, 1844, carried this announcement:

COURT HOUSE AT AUCTION—This building will be sold on Tuesday the 6th of August and payment received in audited claims against the County of Harris . . . the purchaser to remove every portion of the building within thirty days after the sale . . . John Fitzgerald, Sheriff H. C. Houston, 21, July 1844.

During the next few years there was no county building, and officials met in various hotels or privately owned structures, including T. B. J. Hadley's City Hotel. In 1846 they rented the third floor and four additional rooms there. In 1850 meetings were held in Schrimp's Hotel.

In the meantime a committee had been appointed to secure bids for the construction of a new courthouse and jail. By this time the county jail was beyond use, and prisoners were handled in the most expedient manner. Justice was administered swiftly where possible. The sentence of "Thirty-nine lashes on his bare back," while the prisoner was lashed to the whipping post, was a popular punishment; fines were heavy, and long prison sentences were uncommon. The city jail in Houston was used, and some Harris County prisoners were confined in the Galveston County jail.

Again the County was ordered by the court to remove what remained of the jail building. The order, issued December 31, 1847, was ignored by county officials. During the following year the board of health declared the structure unsanitary, and said:

The remnant of the old jail, on Court House Square, which was ordered to be removed by the District Court—the old decayed timbers still stand; and in addition to this will continue to be used by some of our citizens as a pigstye, if not abated.

On January 11, 1849, the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* declared:

It is lamentable . . . that Harris County is the most populous and wealthy county in the State it is yet destitute of a Court House and Jail. . . . The revenue of the county for the present year is estimated at \$3,000 . . . and it seems that we could relieve the county officials of embarrassment . . . by the construction of these needed structures that would be an ornament to our city.

But by autumn of that year a contract was entered into with William H. King, brick mason, and James A. Thompson, carpenter. County officials set the cost of the two buildings at \$3,500 each. The new courthouse, a two-story brick structure designed by F. J. Rothaas, was completed and accepted on October 15, 1851.

Still there was no county jail. Culprits were chiefly confined in the city

jail. The grand jury made a special report to the district court on December 21, 1852:

The cells . . . are few in number. . . . They are close and confined in their atmosphere and it is next to impossible that in them the health of prisoners can be preserved. . . . Its locality . . . joining the Market House . . . and surrounded . . . by dwellings render it . . . dangerous, to the public health. In addition . . . prisoners cannot be kept there, except by means which humanity prohibits. Accused persons, even before trial, with every legal presumption of their innocence, are compelled to be ironed down to the floor or walls.

Not until May 19, 1856, were plans for a new jail approved and the contract signed. It was erected on the northeast corner of Preston Avenue and Austin Street by George Henry. B. H. Carroll, in his *Standard History of Houston, Texas*, described the jail as follows:

Built of brick . . . two stories high though the stories were so low that the building had the appearance of being scarcely one story high. The small windows and doors were grated but in no other way was it a stronghold. For a while it did very well . . . but crimes in Houston outgrew [it] and it became something of an outrage on humanity and decency. It had only six cells each 10' x 12' and a ceiling 9½' high.

The *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* on September 9, 1857, reported:

We regret to notice evidence of instability in the walls of our Court House. Fears are entertained that the building may fall. The records . . . have been removed, and . . . citizens generally are busy calculating the chances, squinting at the cupola, and suggesting a remedy.

In 1860, N. DeChaumes was given a contract to build a courthouse to cost \$25,000. The new edifice was started just in front of the old building, which was left standing. It was to measure 117 feet by 85 feet, including portico and pillars, was to be two stories in height, and face Congress Avenue.

But the courthouse that was to have been of "great architectural beauty," a credit to the commissioners and the pride of Houston, was never finished. When Texas joined the Confederacy, work on the building ceased. Only the walls, roof, and floors were completed. The building was taken over by the Trans-Mississippi Department, and machinery installed on the second floor. It was converted into a cartridge factory in which more than 200 boys, girls, and women were employed. The lower floor was used as quarters for officers and the guard. Even iron chains that had been used for ornamental fencing around Courthouse Square were donated to the Confederacy, to be made into cannon balls.

By August, 1862, the County was on a scrip basis. Soon it was paying more than \$1,000 a month to destitute families of soldiers. The commissioners court recorded on September 15, 1862, that the county government was pressed for cash. On January 20, 1863, a resolution provided that "the Finance

Committee be empowered to negotiate for money," to buy food for distribution among the needy. In January, 1865, the County was furnishing "To each adult one fourth of one bushel of meal per week. For each child one-eighth of one bushel per week and when beef can be furnished, for each adult one pound per day and each child one-half pound per day."

With the end of the Civil War, when Harris County again took stock of its courthouse, it was found that much work was unfinished. Necessary repairs were made intermittently for the next 15 years.

A new jail was planned for Courthouse Square in 1877, but the old feud between city and county over its site again flared. This time the district court forever enjoined the county from building a jail on the block. The southeast corner of Preston Avenue and Caroline Street was purchased, and a new jail was built there.

During the 1870's and 1880's Courthouse Square was the only municipal park. Trees were planted, gas lights installed, an iron fence erected, and iron benches were placed conveniently in the shade. The *Houston Daily Post* of November 12, 1882, described it as "a popular resort for wives and children, as it is the only public square in the city . . . gates to remain open until 12 p. m."

Britton and Long were given the contract to erect a new courthouse on July 10, 1883. The Italian marble cornerstone was laid on October 18. On August 26, 1884, the *Evening Journal* reported:

The new Court House is finished. . . . Accordingly the Commissioner's Court met to receive it. . . . Altogether it may be said that Houston has a first class Court House, and few, if any, of the present generation will live to realize the necessity of replacing it. . . . The contract price, \$98,000.

This time Harris County did get a courthouse which stood for nearly a quarter of a century.

Ground was broken for a new jail on September 23, 1895. Completed in October, 1896, it was on Capitol Avenue between Bagby Street and Buffalo Bayou. Less than ten years passed before the growing county found its hall of justice so completely inadequate that a new one was again deemed necessary.

A petition for a new courthouse was presented to the commissioners court on March 15, 1905, by the Houston Bar Association. In grandiose terms, this body declared:

The time is at hand when . . . a Court House be Erected . . . in Keeping with the growth, importance, progress . . . of the Most Populous City and the undisputed Rail Road Centre and Commercial Metropolis of Texas.

An order was passed on March 13, 1907, calling an election for April 29, to authorize a bond issue of \$500,000. The bonds were voted, 1,292 to 576.

The *Houston Chronicle and Herald* of November 27, 1908, announced, "moving started promptly from the county court house to the Prince theatre

building. . . . The court house already looks deserted." And, "Two building permits . . . were issued . . . one permit was for \$500,000 . . . for the new court house."

Workmen started wrecking the old building; construction was soon under way. The *Houston Chronicle and Herald* of August 29, 1909, said:

When the dome of the new Harris county court house is in place its pinnacle will stand almost 100 feet above the highest point. . . . The plan calls for a tower 210 feet above the surface of the ground.

Completed late in 1910, it was officially opened on November 14. The *Houston Post* the next day declared:

Several thousand citizens and carnival visitors took advantage of the opportunity last night to inspect Harris county's half-million-dollar court house. . . . The building is one of the most beautiful . . . and most modern of its kind. . . . The opening last night was in the nature of a house-warming.

As late as 1914 the Harris County Humane Society was given permission to repair drinking troughs for horses, on the San Jacinto Street side of the courthouse. These were removed in April, 1941.

In June, 1938, county commissioners had plans drawn for a new eight-story courthouse, to cost about three million dollars. The building project was submitted to the voters in the form of a \$1,700,000 bond issue, that was defeated on September 6, 1938.

2. The SCANLAN BUILDING (*open at all times*), 403 Main St., stands on the site of the 1838 "White House" of the Republic of Texas. Designed in modified classic style of the Roman Doric order, the 11-story Scanlan Building was completed in 1909 at a cost of more than \$600,000. The first two stories are a series of stone Doric pilasters, with large window openings between and an entablature above. The main shaft is faced in light gray bricks with a continuous horizontal belt course at each window sill level. The top story forms a frieze, with an ornamental terra cotta panel between each window and a classic cornice projecting above. D. H. Burnham & Company of Chicago were the architects.

Francis R. Lubbock, soon after his arrival in the new town of Houston, purchased the property for \$250 on January 21, 1837. In his *Six Decades in Texas*, he wrote:

Immediately I made a contract with the agent of the Allens, J. S. Holman, to have put up for me a small clapboard house . . . paying . . . \$250. . . . This was built of three-foot pine boards and covered with three-foot boards, and contained all told one room about twelve foot square and a smaller shed room. There was one door leading into the main room and one door from that room into the shed room, both of three-foot boards, with all hinges and fastenings made of wood.

As with most other dwellings in the town at that time, there were no windows. The floor consisted of a few planks placed only where needed. The lumber for the structure was sawed by hand and cost \$150 for each 1,000 feet. He said:

The bedstead put up in the corner was made by driving forked sticks into the ground and laying poles across with clapboards for slats to support the moss mattress.

Lubbock also had a large wooden storehouse built which cost about \$6,000. It was close to his residence.

With the establishment of Houston as the capital of the new Republic, and with the influx of officeholders, space for both offices and living quarters was at a premium. For a time, even the President transacted his business where he could.

John J. Audubon, the naturalist, visited President Houston in the spring of 1837, in a small log house of two rooms. He wrote:

We found ourselves ushered into what in other countries would be called the ante-chamber; the ground floor, however, was muddy and filthy; a large fire was burning; a small table covered with paper and writing materials was in the centre; camp-beds, trunks, and different materials were strewn around the room.

The President was busy, and it was some time before Audubon and his party were received. The naturalist was impressed with the leader's garb, so in contrast with his strange surroundings:

He was dressed in a fancy velvet coat, and trousers trimmed with broad gold-lace; around his neck was tied a cravat somewhat in the style of seventy-six. . . . He at once removed us from the anteroom to his private chamber, which by the way was not much cleaner than the former.

When Lubbock was chief clerk of the House of Representatives, he described the President as occupying a "small rough cabin about twelve by sixteen feet, with probably a small shed attached. There was no fireplace — nothing but a small clay furnace in the room for him to get over and warm his fingers, Indian fashion."

When a committee was selected to secure an executive mansion, Lubbock suggested that they buy his store, "a large old-time one-story, and a half story above with dormer windows, if they would pay me for it out of the first currency issued." The sale was made in January, 1838. Later in the spring, Congress voted an additional \$3,000 for repairs. When Mirabeau B. Lamar became President, \$5,000 more was appropriated to repair and furnish the mansion.

Following the removal of the capital to Austin in 1839, the property passed into private hands and had many uses during the years that followed. On May 25, 1859, the editor of the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* protested:

The stench that rises from the yellow fever block of last year is already enough. . . . Cannot something be done to purify this and the Long Row block before the hot sun of July shall fill the city with their miasma? We had an epidemic here last year, and it broke out in the poison atmosphere by the old President's House.

The property was acquired by Thomas H. Scanlan on November 9, 1865, and the first of a series of brick buildings was erected. On November 18, 1894, fire destroyed a \$20,000 edifice completed 18 months before. Its successor stood until work on the present building was begun in 1907.

3. The SITE OF CONGRESS AND MARKET SQUARES, between Preston and Congress Aves., Travis and Milam Sts., was at first called Congress Square, and was designated as the site of the capitol of the Republic of Texas; but the structure to house the Congress was built elsewhere. As early as 1837, this block became Market Square. Here stood the market place where wild game from the forests, fish from the near-by streams and vegetables grown by pioneer farmers of Harris County were sold to frontier shoppers wearing buckskin or bustles; and here also stood the various city halls of Houston.

Soon after the capital of the Republic had been removed here, hucksters sold their wares from wagons or brush-covered stalls on this square. Private markets were conducted by the Rosseau brothers, dealers in wild game, and in an Indian trading post near Buffalo Bayou; but most of the trade came to this outdoor market. One reason for its popularity was that the municipal government was conducted in Kesler's Arcade, a saloon only a half block away on Travis Street.

In 1840 Thomas Stansbury and Sons were given a contract for the construction of Houston's first municipal market house, a long, one-story frame building facing Travis Street. Before it had been completed the town fathers had decided to add a two-story section as a city hall. They moved in during November, 1841. The bell installed here was used to give fire alarms, announce important gatherings and events, and tolled the curfew at nine each night. For 30 years the municipal market and the city hall occupied this building; the market overflowed the space within the structure and spilled out into the open, its stalls reaching to the streets.

The City Market—as the market house was called—had a dirt walk through the center, and on each side were stalls where even clothing, livestock, and farm implements were sold.

In those years Market Square was like a perennial county fair. Traders and venders hawked their goods, and shoppers in sunbonnets and homespun or wearing deerhide jeans bargained for choice venison roasts or fat wild turkeys, exchanging salutations and the news. This noisy, teeming place was so much the center of Houston that businessmen sought sites here for their stores. Henry Corri built his theater across the street, on Congress Avenue; next



door was the Mansion House, and Hogan's Hotel faced Market Square at the corner of Congress Avenue and Milam Street.

In 1860 a tower was built to house a clock and the alarm bell. Municipal records were destroyed while Federal officers occupied the building during the Civil War. During the Reconstruction era the market was leased for the first time to a single individual. The new administration removed the municipal offices to Gray's Building while plans were drawn for a new city hall. On February 1, 1872, the *Daily Telegraph* announced that prisoners were escaping from the city jail — then in the northeast section of the market house — simply by knocking planks loose with their fists.

A new city hall and market house was begun in the spring of 1872; but as construction got under way it was found that certain important details had been omitted from the plans. There was no stairway between the first and second story; many rooms had no floors, windows were lacking in others. A theater was added, and at last, including the needed "extras," the structure cost \$470,000. Reporting the opening of the new market in June, 1873, the *Houston Daily Telegraph* commented, "Schmidt's band was in attendance and woke up the citizens on Market Square shortly before the dawn of the Sabbath with stirring music." The new building was "magnificent," but it had a tower for the old bell and another for a faithful clock. The market was on the ground floor; above it was the imposing theater, with fluted columns and crystal chandeliers. While Houstonians were proud of the building, the predominately Southern community resented its erection by appointees of the Reconstruction regime of Texas, and believed its cost was too high for a town of Houston's size. Difficulties arose over the rental of the market space and the theater; the roof began to leak. Soon the building was dubbed "Our White Elephant." Fire ended the bitterness the structure had inspired when it burned to the ground in 1876. A city employee who tried to sound the alarm found the rope of the fire bell cut. Four days later when the supposedly fireproof vault was opened, only ashes were found inside.

A temporary frame shed again housed the municipal market. The 3,000-pound fire bell had been salvaged and hung in a makeshift tower on Market Square. In October, 1876, the construction of a combination market house and city hall was begun. The new structure was pleasing, and it seemed that controversies that had centered here were ended. In 1895 it was discovered that the City had no valid title to the block called Market Square. The deed given by the Allens had not been filed, and was lost. Mrs. Charlotte M. Allen now signed a new document deeding the property to Houston.

In 1901 the building burned, but this time the municipal records were hurriedly stuffed into the vault and saved. Many now believed the city hall and market house should be separated, but the removal of the market would have violated terms of the deed. Although city officials obtained a quitclaim deed, it was decided to rebuild another combination structure on this site. Gone was the old bell — it had been damaged beyond repair in the fire. But

another bell was installed in the south tower of the new building, which was completed early in 1904.

The grounds of Market Square had been neglected, but now a beautification program was launched. In 1905 a monument to Lt. Richard W. Dowling was unveiled in the square. Later a fountain was placed here, the market was screened, and a cenotaph was erected in front of the municipal building, commemorating Harris County men who died during the first World War.

By a straw vote in November, 1934, Houstonians expressed a desire for a new city hall. A bond issue had been authorized for this purpose in 1927, but nothing had been done during the depression years. With Federal aid a new building was erected in 1938-39. The past importance of Market Square was dimmed when most of the municipal offices were removed to the present City Hall on Bagby Street.

But remaining on Market Square is the OLD CITY HALL (*open at all times*), 314-20 Travis St., with its two fortress-like towers ending in spires high above the two-story main building, which was designed by George E. Dickey & Company of Houston. The first floor is faced with rough gray Ashlar stone, while the second story is constructed of buff bricks with ornamental stone trim. Numerous gables break the lines of the slate-covered, steep-pitched roof. In the left tower is a massive chime clock with four faces, and rising from its pinnacle is a vane and direction marker. The main façade, between these towers, terminates in a central pediment; an ornamental carved stone at its apex bears the date, 1903. The Bowen Bus Center occupies most of the ground floor; stores and small shops occupy the remainder of the first floor of the building.

The CITY HALL ANNEX (*open 7-9 workdays*), extending from Preston to Congress Aves., is a two-story-and-basement structure faced in Bedford limestone with terra cotta trim, and is of modern American design by Sanguinet, Staats & Gottlieb, and Maurice J. Sullivan of Houston. Houston's traffic court is on the first floor of this building.

4. The SITE OF THE FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THE EARLIEST M. E. CHURCH in Houston, N. side of Texas Ave., between Travis and Milam Sts., is occupied by business establishments. Land here was deeded by A. C. and J. K. Allen for Methodist Episcopal church purposes in 1837, but nearly six years passed before a religious edifice was erected, during which time the tract had other uses.

Charles Shearn, who has been called the "Father of Methodism in Houston," arrived early in 1837 and became a merchant. During the Revolution he had served in the army and escaped death at Goliad only because he was a British subject. A zealous Methodist, he soon had as his guest a minister from the United States, the Rev. Thomas O. Summers, who conducted frequent outdoor services in Market Square. Meantime, the ban against Protestant churches having been removed by the Texans' independence from Mexico, Dr. Martin

Ruter was made superintendent of the Texas mission field, with the Rev. Littleton Fowler as one of his assistants. The latter crossed the Red River near Clarksville, and held services as he worked his way south, arriving in Houston on Sunday morning, November 20, 1837. That afternoon he preached to a large congregation in the Capitol, and the next day was elected chaplain of the Senate.

Dr. Ruter arrived less than a month later, and preached in the Senate chamber on December 17. On the 20th he and the Reverend Mr. Fowler secured from the Allens a half block of land, described:

Being in the City of Houston and Republic of Texas. Known as church reserve lying North West of the Capital. Being one hundred and twenty five feet wide and two hundred and fifty feet long belonging to Block No. fifty eight.

The deed provided that "they shall erect . . . thereon a good house for a place to worship . . . to preach Gods Holy Word." But as their duties called them elsewhere and much time elapsed between the visits of other Methodist clergymen, Houstonians seem either to have forgotten that the land had been deeded, or decided to use it otherwise until the owners could build a church. The City of Houston and Lone Star Lodge No. 1, I. O. O. F., approached the Allens in 1838 with a plan to build a combination schoolhouse and lodge hall on the site and were authorized to use the corner at Travis Street and Texas Avenue. A two-story wooden structure was built during the winter of 1838-39, of which the lower floor was used as a public school and the upper floor by the Odd Fellows. This building stood for five years, and when Houston became the temporary capital of the Republic during the Mexican invasion of 1842 the Senate met in the lodge room.

Meantime, in 1841, Houston Methodists had organized a church, with the Rev. Thomas O. Summers as pastor; he preached on alternate Sundays here and at Galveston. Services were held in a room above a store on Capitol Avenue, between Milam and Louisiana Streets. By 1843 Houston was a station in the Texas Conference with the Reverend Mr. Summers as full-time pastor, and the church had a membership of 68, of whom 32 were Negroes. Charles Shearn was made chairman of a committee to erect a church building on the land to which the deed had been so long held, and the pastor went to the United States to solicit contributions. On February 23, 1843, the *Morning Star* announced that construction would soon begin on a brick building 60 by 36 feet, and the cornerstone was laid on March 2 by Holland Lodge of Masons, with the Odd Fellows and a military company participating in the ceremonies. Shearn was superintendent of construction.

Dedicated on May 12, 1844, the church building, said to be the first built of brick in Texas, was a plain rectangular structure with gabled roof and overhanging eaves, designed with frontier simplicity except for Gothic arches over the windows and one double-door entrance.

When Methodism split sectionally in 1844, the Houston congregation became

a unit of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Services for white members of the church were held on Sunday morning and evening, and services for the Negro members in the afternoon. In 1848 the church membership numbered 150 whites and 82 Negroes. In 1851 a separate building was erected on the Milam Street side of the property for the Negroes, who remained as members of the original church, with services conducted by the white pastor.

A minister with Northern sympathies became pastor in 1858, and the white membership of the church dwindled to 117. At the end of the Civil War the little church faced an uncertain future. A new frame building was occupied on April 14, 1867, and was named the Shearn M. E. Church, South, although usually referred to as the Shearn Chapel. Meantime, the Negro members had been given their church building, which they removed to the corner of Travis Street and Bell Avenue, where the Trinity Methodist Church now stands.

Another church edifice — the third and last to occupy the site — was completed in 1883 and named the Charles Shearn Memorial Church. English and Gothic in design, it faced Texas Avenue about midway between Travis and Milam Streets. From one corner rose a massive tower surmounted with a 130-foot spire. The interior, 64 feet square, was finished in pine and black walnut, with black walnut pews; the choir was on the raised chancel back of the pulpit. Windows were memorials to Charles Shearn, to Mr. and Mrs. McAshan, and to the House family. A little to the rear of this edifice was built a Sunday school assembly hall. The total cost of church and assembly hall was \$20,000.

In April, 1907, the encroachment of business made a quieter site desirable. The property was sold for \$115,000, a new site bought for \$40,000 at Main Street and Clay Avenue, and the present First Methodist Church completed there in 1910.

5. The RICE HOTEL, 917 Texas Ave., occupies the site of the building that was the Capitol of the Republic of Texas during 1837-39. The 17-story hotel, designed in an "E"-shape to provide courts between the projecting wings, has a covered arcade extending the full length of the structure on the two principal façades. The second story contains a series of Roman-arched openings, with a frieze and cornice above, containing Romanesque detail. The main shaft of this \$3,500,000 building, rising above a three-story base course, is of dark buff brick, with quoined terra cotta trim around the principal façade windows. The three top stories form the frieze and cornice of the building. Mauran, Russell and Crowell of St. Louis, Missouri, were the architects of the first unit; Alfred C. Finn and Kenneth Franzheim of Houston designed the later additions.

When the second session of the first Congress of the Republic of Texas met in Columbia, Maj. John K. Allen, sitting as a member from Nacogdoches, and his brother, Augustus C., were making plans for a new town at the head of navigation on Buffalo Bayou.

Office and housing facilities at Columbia were so inadequate that officials decided to look elsewhere for more ample accommodations. A joint committee was appointed to hold hearings on available sites. As advocates of one town after another were heard, the promoters of Houston were among the strongest contenders. The Allens' proposals, according to records of the transactions, were "replete with most cogent reasons for the selection of the Town of Houston."

There were no buildings in the proposed capital, but so attractive were the promises of the Allen brothers that when the final vote was cast, Houston was declared to have received the majority. Fifteen thousand dollars were appropriated for President Sam Houston to provide Congressional buildings. The legislative body adjourned on December 21, 1836 to convene in Houston on April 1, 1837.

As the Allens surveyed their town site, Congress Square was laid out on what later became Market Square. The Capitol itself was to be in the blocks now bounded by Fannin and Travis Streets, Texas and Rusk Avenues, while Capitol Avenue was to be a broad thoroughfare leading to this proposed building.

Everything was to be completed for the convening of Congress on April 1, but as most of the materials had to be shipped in, it soon became apparent that this would be impossible. A contract was made with Col. Thomas W. Ward to erect a temporary one-story building.

Francis R. Lubbock, in his *Six Decades in Texas*, wrote:

[They] erected on Main Street a one-story building covering the front of an entire block. At one corner . . . a large room was constructed for the Senate, and on the other corner a larger one for the House of Representatives, and the space between partitioned off into rooms for the department offices.

Members of Congress arrived late in March to find the temporary building far from complete.

John J. Audubon, in his diary on May 15, 1837, related how he and his party visited the Capitol and amused themselves by walking about it. He also remarked that it "was yet without a roof, and the floor, benches and tables of both houses of Congress were as well saturated with water as our clothes had been in the morning."

Work on the building continued until, on May 20, a resolution was presented asking that "Major Ward be required to discontinue such labor on this house as disturbs the deliberations of congress during the hours of its session." This was rejected.

The House Journal indicated further that seats were ordered for the lobby on September 30, 1837; chairs for the use of the members were ordered on October 25; plastering was declared unsafe and ordered removed on October 19. A stove was ordered on October 24. The structure, although crowded by government offices, was put to a multiplicity of uses. Sunday school and preaching

services were held there regularly; political, civic, and patriotic sessions soon made the edifice the center of civic activities.

Since the day the building ceased to serve as the Capitol of the Republic, on September 10, 1839, this corner has been used almost exclusively as a hotel site. Owners and lessees of the former Capitol building apparently lost money in their efforts to popularize it as a hostelry. Its early history is a continual record of broken leases, foreclosures, judgments for rents, deeds of trust to satisfy debts, and failures.

The following advertisement appeared in the *Morning Star* of November 5, 1839:

The Capitol for Rent — This large and commodious building can now be rented. There is no building in Texas so well or better arranged for a public house. It is well calculated for the accommodation of families, single gentlemen and the traveling public. It can be had on reasonable terms by applying to the office of the Houston Townsite Company.

But no landlord appeared to take advantage of the company's offer, although 200 German immigrants were given shelter there in December, 1839. Frequently, public functions enlivened the otherwise somber and bare edifice — such as the grand reception honoring General Houston in 1840. The General arrived on February 15, and was escorted by the Milam Guards to the Old Capitol, where he delivered a brief address. Five days later, a banquet was given there in his honor, with tickets at \$10.

Late in 1841 a tenant was found. N. Norwood announced that he would open the building on November 24 as a "house of entertainment"—a favorite name for hotels in those days. This hostelry, like others of its day, has since seen a rapid succession of managerial and physical changes.

Houston, the Capitol Hotel, and the mud of the 1840's are vividly described by Ferdinand Roemer in his book *Texas, With Particular Reference to German Immigration and the Physical Appearance of the Country*. On his first visit to Houston in January, 1846, Roemer wrote:

I turned my trunk over to one of the waiting negroes, and started on foot to the 'Capitol' which was the high sounding name of the reputedly best hotel in town. As soon as I had climbed the rather steep slippery incline, I found myself in a straight street. . . . I finally reached the hotel which was situated at the extreme end of the street. It was a rather pretentious two-story building, but like most of the houses which I had seen so far, showed unmistakable signs of neglect. The interior was worse, and many signs indicated that I had reached the borders of civilization.

Texas' recent admittance to the Union was the chief topic of conversation. Roemer was uncomfortable in the crowded room with rough frontiersmen, wearing coarse, brightly colored woolen blanket coats:

My host . . . noticed that I felt rather uncomfortable, in these crude surroundings, which were not improved by the circumstances that the

inmates were continually expectorating tobacco juice. He led me into a rather respectable parlor, on the floor of which was a carpet, a rocking chair, (the inevitable requisite of American comfort) and — what I considered most important, since it had turned cold, in the morning — a fireplace in which a cheerful fire was burning. Also the small number of guests were evidently more refined and outwardly more polished.

The German toured Texas for a year; returning to Houston the following spring, he noted:

After having gone here and there on the extreme outposts of civilization for over a year the city with its spacious hotel, the Houston House, its brightly illumined, decorated, bar-rooms, and various billiard halls, appeared very grand and magnificent to me.

Ownership of the corner passed from the Allens on June 27, 1857. Mrs. Charlotte M. Allen sold the land occupied by the old Capitol to R. S. Blount for \$12,000.

For 20 years the structure had been a theater upon whose stage comedy, tragedy, and farce had passed in review. Many had been the battles in which participants took refuge behind the building's large columns, leaving bullet-scarred pillars as mute testimony of tumultuous life.

Early in 1858 the suicide of Anson Jones, last President of the Republic, shocked the entire State. On the morning of January 11, while a guest of the hotel, he was found dead from self-inflicted wounds. He had remarked the day before to a friend that his life might close in the same house in which his public career had begun. The *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* remarked:

Thus has fallen another great man of Texas by his own hand. . . . Collingsworth, Birdsall, Grayson and Rusk, had gone that way, and Jones now has followed them.

Gas illumination was installed in the hotel in 1858, but during the turbulent Civil War period few notices of the old Capitol building are to be found. By the end of 1866, it was again one of Houston's "favorite hotels."

Peter Louiselle, caterer of the Barnes House — the old Capitol building as renamed in 1877 — was known throughout the State. Louiselle was a swash-buckling gentlemen of heroic dimensions; his puffed sleeves and immense cuffs were the envy of the local blades, and his table provided the best that the land could afford — venison, wild turkey, prairie chicken, squirrel, and on occasion, " 'possum and sweet 'taters."

The old hostelry was razed in May, 1881 to make way for a new and finer Capitol Hotel.

The *Houston Daily Post* of April 8, 1881, commented:

The New Capitol Hotel.— Col. A. Groesbeck contemplates the erection of a . . . four story brick hotel on his property, now occupied by the Barnes house, corner Main street and Texas avenue. . . . The ground floor . . . will be paved with marble. . . . There will be about eighty rooms . . . a passenger elevator . . . water works . . . electric bells, etc.

The new five-story building of bricks and stucco cost \$125,000, and to commemorate the first edifice on the site, Colonel Groesbeck named it the Capitol Hotel. The corner again had become a center of social and civic activities.

Six months before his death on January 23, 1886, Colonel Groesbeck lost title to the property, when it was sold for taxes. William Marsh Rice was the purchaser, and late in 1893 began building a five-story brick building at the rear of the hotel on grounds previously occupied by the stables. In 1895 the Capitol Hotel was reopened after being closed several months for remodeling and re-decoration. During following years strict rules were laid down as to dress informalities on the part of its patrons. On a hot August day in 1900, when young Jesse H. Jones sauntered into the dining room coatless and dressed in one of the new shirtwaist ensembles, the alert headwaiter asked him to leave, but after the management had been summoned into conference Jones was allowed to proceed with his meal.

When Rice died on September 24, 1900, much litigation involved his estate, including the hotel. Trustees of the William Marsh Rice Institute filed a deed which had been executed by Rice and his wife. This gave the hotel property and the adjoining Rice Building to the Institute. The deed also stipulated that any hotel on the site should be called the Rice Hotel.

Two stories were added to the annex at Travis Street and Texas Avenue in the autumn of 1901. During 1907 the hotel was remodeled at a cost of \$75,000 under the supervision of Cooke and Company. The European plan superseded the American plan on January 2, 1908.

When the rapid rise of the oil industry and the imminent completion of the Houston Ship Channel were reflected in the general prosperity and growth of the city, the Rice Hotel began the expansion that led to its present proportions. The *Houston Daily Post* published the following item on October 1, 1911:

The Rice Hotel Annex . . . will continue to run under the management of J. E. Daley, who has been associate manager of the Rice Hotel with Robert Moffatt. The Annex occupies the corner of Texas and Travis Streets. . . . The building . . . has been . . . modernized for hotel purposes. Yesterday the Rice closed its doors and a new building . . . will be erected on the site. . . . The Annex will . . . care for the trade of the hotel proper.

Jesse H. Jones obtained a permit for the construction of the new Rice Hotel on February 9, 1912. Completion of the 17-story building (with two wings, the third being added 14 years later) was the occasion of a celebration and banquet attended by many notables from other cities and States. When the hotel was opened on May 17, 1913, Jones' signature was the first to be placed on the register, below which appeared those of Mayor Ben Campbell and Governor Oscar B. Colquitt.

Wrecking of the old Rice Hotel Annex began June 2, 1925. In June, 1926, while work on the addition was in progress, the half block that Mrs. Allen had sold in 1857 for \$12,000 was appraised at \$2,500,000.



6. The BINZ BUILDING (*open 6-10 workdays, 7-7 Sun.*), 513-19 Main St., Houston's oldest office and store edifice, is a connecting link between the old town and the modern city. Occupying the site of the first Land Office of the Republic of Texas, the six-story-and-basement, buff-colored brick and concrete structure was designed in the late nineteenth century manner by Ollie Lorehn of Houston.

Great care and skill were used in planning Houston's first "skyscraper." Exterior walls are load bearing, supporting the floors and roof. Enclosing the central light shaft, brick walls are carried from the second floor level to the roof, serving only as curtains. The street walls are lined with buff-colored Roman press brick, while the base and outside steps are of gray granite from Burnet, Texas.

At the fourth floor level, and above it, are carved limestone pilasters. Windows on the fifth floor, except those at the corners, are arched and ornamented with carved limestone. A stone ledge at the top of the fifth floor adds to the beauty of the structure. Rimming the top of the building, a cornice two feet wide is reminiscent of European castles and presents a sharp contrast to adjacent, more modern structures.

The foundation can support a 20-story structure, but as plans for construction were announced by Jacob Binz, skeptics declared they would be impossible. When the "skyscraper" was finished, people came from miles around to ride on the elevators to the top floor, to gaze at the countryside.

The Land Office, established in 1839 directly across from the Capitol on the town's muddy, wagon-rutted main thoroughfare, was a frame story-and-a-half structure. This was moved back when Binz, who had come from Chicago in 1860, purchased it. A three-story brick building, the first of a series of such structures utilized for stores and offices, was constructed in 1868. In 1873, when he married Pauline Schweikart, Binz built his bride a home on this corner. All the structures on the site were torn down in 1894 to make room for the present one.

When actual work on the main part of the building got under way, Binz took advantage of a contract clause which permitted him to halt work whenever he wished. He held up the work each time concrete was poured, allowing it to set for 28 days so that it might reach its maximum strength. This delayed completion of the job by more than six months. The building was finished in September, 1895, at a cost of \$60,000.

A standpipe for fire protection was installed, with pipes running from the tank on the roof to hose valves in the hall on each floor. Water came from an artesian well drilled on the Texas Avenue side.

The Binz Building has weathered six fires without serious damage.

7. CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH (*open 8:30-5:30 workdays; 5:30-9 Sun.*), 1101-17 Texas Ave., is modified Gothic in design. In its setting of landscaped lawns, enclosed within a nineteenth century wrought-iron fence, the

rose-brick structures of the church form a "U"-shaped group about a courtyard. Ivy on the outer walls was brought from Westminster Abbey.

The entrance to the church building is through the base of a square corner tower, the arched outline of which is faced with cream-colored bricks. Stained glass windows, predominately in vivid blues, illuminate an interior almost severe in its simplicity. The auditorium is cruciform in shape, with a wide nave and an arched roof supported by massive Gothic wooden trusses resting on stone piers.

A beautifully carved wooden screen separates the sanctuary from the nave. In the center, against the back wall, is the great altar with a memorial window high above. This altar is dedicated to the memory of the Rt. Rev. Henry D. Aves, rector between 1892 and 1904. The altar rail memorializes the Rev. John J. Clemens, who served for approximately ten years, beginning in 1875.

Both the altar and the rail are hand-carved. They were installed in 1938 after a fire, originating in an adjacent store, had destroyed part of the church building.

Adjoining, to the right, is a long brick edifice of similar design, used for classrooms. Cloisters across the front connect the church structure with an office building on the opposite corner.

In 1838 the Rt. Rev. Leonidas Polk was consecrated Bishop of Arkansas Territory and the Republic of Texas. In that year the American Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church sent the Rev. S. S. Ives to Matagorda and the Rev. R. M. Chapman to Houston to establish churches. The latter arrived in Houston in November, 1838, and began organizing his congregation.

Thirty-nine Houston men met on March 16, 1839, and signed articles in which they agreed to "unite together as a Christian congregation in the city of Houston to observe the worship and the constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of North America." The first vestry of the newly formed congregation was selected at a meeting on Easter Monday, April 1, 1839.

The *Morning Star* of May 16, 1839, announced the arrival of Bishop Polk and the Rev. D. C. Page of Natchez, Mississippi, and added:

We understand that it is the purpose of these gentlemen to explore the republic with a view of supplying to our citizens ministrations of religion from the highly respectable and intelligent body of Christians with whom they are connected. We hail the coming of these gentlemen whose piety and talents are well known to many of our citizens as an augury of the rapid advancement of our country and the establishment of its institution upon the best and surest foundations.

But before the end of the year the editor of the *Morning Star* was lamenting the fact that the "orderly part of the community" found it a source of mortification "to see so little distinction made in our city between the Sabbath and other days of the week; bar-rooms are open, billiards are played, farobanks are in operation on a Sunday so much so that a stranger from the North . . . would suppose that he had really mistaken the day of the week."

Again on July 25, 1840, he wrote:

An Episcopal Church arrived the other day in Matagorda on board the brig Susan. The Gazette says it is a handsome and well-finished building with pulpit, pews, &c. complete. Wouldn't it be a good idea for our citizens to import pulpit, pew, &c. complete for the . . . church we have here . . . that . . . cannot be finished.

While the Episcopalians were holding their meetings in the new courthouse, in the Capitol, or in the schoolhouse, they were making plans for the erection of their own building. On May 28, 1842, the Allen estate sold property in the block bounded by Texas and Prairie Avenues and Fannin and San Jacinto Streets to the trustees of the church, the deed stipulating as consideration "the sum of one dollar . . . for the high regard and advancement of the Christian Religion and particularly the Protestant Episcopal Denomination." Included was the provision that the congregation "build or cause to be built a good and substantial church not less than forty by sixty feet on the said premises within two years." Soon a small wooden building was erected on the site. Although some litigation ensued, the church trustees have since held the property.

Many devices were utilized to raise funds. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* of May 29, 1844, announced:

The Ladies of Christ's Church, Houston will hold a FAIR, at the corner room opposite the Telegraph Office, on Wednesday night . . . the proceeds . . . to the erection of an Episcopal Church.

A few days later the paper reported that about \$300 had been raised in three hours. Episcopalian women of Philadelphia bought and shipped a silver service to the Houston church. When the box arrived at the customhouse in Galveston, the set had been stolen.

The cornerstone of the first permanent structure was laid in 1846, and the red brick building was completed the following year. The new edifice, facing Fannin Street, had 60 pews, with a seating capacity of 240 people. The Rt. Rev. George W. Freeman, missionary bishop of the Southwest, officiated at the dedicatory services.

This building served until 1859, while the previously erected wooden structure continued to be used for a Sunday school. Because of faulty construction, the trustees decided to rebuild, and the work of demolishing the structure began on June 1, 1859. Again the congregation met in the courthouse.

A new church edifice was completed in 1860, facing Texas Avenue near Fannin Street. A massive central tower dominated the façade, with its base forming the vestibule. A \$3,000 organ built in Boston was installed during the summer of 1875; and within three months a tropical storm damaged the roof, but the organ was unhurt. In May, 1877, the *Daily Telegram* reported that the building had been repaired and was ready for services.

Plans had been made to enlarge the structure by adding transepts and strengthening the walls, but when the roof was removed, the supports were

found to be in such a poor condition that reconstruction was necessary. Many of the parishioners wished to retain the familiar lines, the arched windows, and the old rose-colored bricks. J. A. Tempest, Houston architect, designed a building accordingly, but added the transepts and moved the tower to the Fannin Street corner. The old bricks were used and new ones to match were ordered. Parishioners transplanted the ivy. The cornerstone was laid on March 31, 1893, by the Rt. Rev. George H. Kinsolving, Bishop of Texas, and services were first held on Christmas Eve.

A two-story parish house of similar design was also erected, to replace the wooden structure. The educational building was constructed in 1903, along the lines of the older buildings.

In the early morning of March 22, 1938, fire destroyed the rear wall, the chancel, one transept, the small chapel, many of the furnishings and several of the stained glass windows. Services were resumed within five days, and were continued without interruption during the months of repair work.

The church building was reconstructed essentially along the old lines, as the nave was unhurt, but a larger and more spacious chancel, new sacristies and a new organ chamber were built on the Fannin Street side, thus outwardly altering the lines of the building, but retaining the cruciform shape within.

Opening from the cloister, a new chapel was built as a memorial to C. D. and D. S. Golding. This chapel, used for daily services and for small weddings and funerals, is noted for its architectural excellence and contains more beautiful stained glass, a memorial altar to Sterling Meyer, and a separate organ.

Following the fire, the church received many memorial gifts, including an organ of 60 speaking stops and 3,703 pipes, silver sacred vessels, two stained glass windows, sedilia for the clergy and bishop, and lighting fixtures.

8. The HOUSTON COTTON EXCHANGE BUILDING (*open at all times*), 1300 Prairie Ave., is a \$1,500,000, brick and stone 16-story edifice of modified classic design. The three-story base course is faced with gray Bedford limestone. From the fourth to the fourteenth story inclusive, the main shaft of the structure is faced with red tapestry bricks and has an Algonite white stone trim. Vertical piers and pilasters predominate. In the two corner panels of the shaft, ornamental white stone spandrels occur, with brick spandrels between. The highest two floors are faced with ornamental Algonite stone, forming the frieze around the top of the structure. Circle-headed openings terminate the highest part of the central tower. Entrance features extending two stories on the street façades are framed in ornamental stone.

Most of the building tenants are actively engaged in the cotton business or allied industries. Some of the largest cotton firms in the world occupy offices here. Anderson, Clayton & Company, with organizations in 11 States and many foreign countries, have their headquarters on the eleventh floor.

Offices of the Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade occupy the

sixteenth floor of the structure. The trading room has no pillars to obstruct the view of the boards. Walls are finished in white; furnishings are few except for chairs, tables, and three clocks which show Houston, New York, and Liverpool time.

Houston's Cotton Exchange Building is symbolic of the growth of an industry born locally during the 1820's. Jared Groce, who arrived in Texas in 1821 with 108 slaves, established a plantation near Hempstead. He was the first planter in Texas to grow cotton for sale. In 1829 he contracted to deliver to John R. Harris at Harrisburg "100 bails of cotton."

When conditions became quieter after the Texas Revolution, cotton production increased slowly. The Texas crop of 1837 amounted to 50,000 bales. In 1844 exports of the staple from Houston had a value of \$170,000. During 1845 the city council passed a resolution requiring the market master to render weekly reports of all cotton exports. In 1854 these totaled 38,928 bales, increasing to 47,008 in 1856, 63,453 in 1858, 96,726 in 1859, and 115,010 in 1860. They dropped to 70,851 bales in 1861 because of the war. During the Reconstruction period cotton culture took the lead in the State's agricultural industries.

As early as 1867 merchants of Houston had organized a Board of Trade. After the completion of the Missouri Pacific railroad system in 1873, a delegation from Houston obtained in St. Louis a mutually advantageous trade agreement which enabled the local organization to list St. Louis Board of Trade prices.

Although there were trading rules, reputable cotton traders of the 1870's realized the need for regulations that would protect both seller and buyer, and the creation of an organization that would compel their enforcement.

On May 15, 1874, the Board of Trade and Cotton Exchange was organized in the parlor of the historic old Hutchins House, which stood on the east corner of Travis Street and Franklin Avenue. Its first officers included Capt. C. S. Longcope, president; W. J. Hutchins, first vice president; B. A. Shepherd, second vice president; George W. Kidd, secretary; and B. A. Botts, T. W. House, Ed Milby, William D. Cleveland, A. J. Burke, H. S. Fox, Horace D. Taylor, S. K. McIlhenny, Fred A. Rice, and William Brady, directors. A lease was obtained from Mrs. Marella Perkins for the occupation of Perkins Theater.

The Houston Cotton Exchange and Board of Trade was chartered in 1877. Within a few years complaints arose about the inadequacy of its quarters. In January, 1884, the exchange was operating in a room in a small two-story red brick house owned by Judge E. P. Hill. On a small blackboard were the quotations of local, domestic, and foreign markets. A prosperous season had made money plentiful. One of the merchants proposed that the exchange erect a building to be owned by its 125 members. Unanimous support was given the idea, and the organization purchased a lot on the west corner of Travis Street and Franklin Avenue for \$5,200.

Architect Eugene Heiner was sent East to inspect similar structures and to select building materials. The construction contract was awarded to Max Kosse on March 15, 1884. The edifice, completed in November of that year,

had four stories and a basement. Red pressed brick, with white sandstone trim and a parapet wall above was used in the structure, which was designed in the popular office building style. White stone steps led to the first floor, under a metal and glass marquee.

The first exchange membership sold for \$5 and dues were \$12 a year, payable in installments. As the market grew, membership became increasingly valuable. In 1910 their price had risen to \$1,000, and by 1916 to \$4,000. During the lush years from 1924 to 1928 sales of seats were made at \$6,000. Their value had declined to \$1,500 in 1936; the bid price in 1940 was \$900.

Houston handled 3,411,149 bales of cotton in 1915. By July 1, 1921, the city had become fourth in cotton exports among United States ports. Two years later it attained third place. In 1939-40 Houston was the first cotton port in receipts and second in exports among United States ports.

Having outgrown their quarters at 402 Travis Street, the exchange directors arranged in 1922 to sell the property and erect a new building at Prairie Avenue and Caroline Street, on a site formerly occupied by the Houston Turnverein. The new building was completed on April 1, 1924.

9. The PETROLEUM BUILDING (*open at all times*), 1312-20 Texas Ave., a 22-story office building occupied chiefly by oil companies, is the only skyscraper in the downtown area in which the Mayan influence predominates. Alfred C. Bossom of New York City designed the structure in an unbalanced silhouette, using motifs reproduced from ruins found in Yucatan. Associate architects were Maurice J. Sullivan and Briscoe & Dixon, of Houston.

The structure, completed in March, 1927, at a cost exceeding \$1,000,000, has a frontage of 100 feet on Texas Avenue and on Austin Street, while the rear is built around a court.

The simple Mayan base course, composed of the first three floors, is of gray marble. On the Austin Street façade a series of arched windows, extending two stories, is covered with slender turned copper pillars that harmonize with the marquee of similar material that extends across four Texas Avenue entrances.

Above, the main body of the cream-colored brick building is constructed in three set-backs proportioned to form an unbalanced silhouette. An impressive slender tower rises at the rear, its tall shaft unbroken by windows. It is topped with a sloping, corrugated, green tile roof like that on the set-back below.

Terra cotta Indian figures in Mayan design are used in a double row around the upper heights. On the top floor is a penthouse occupied by the Tejas Club, social organization for oil men.

The rectangular entrances on the Texas Avenue side are faced with gray marble, and above each set of double doors are bronze filigree decorations. Access to the offices is through the entrance to the extreme right. The elevator lobby is simply finished in gray marble that harmonizes with the exterior. On the upper floors, the corridors are similarly finished.

**IO.** The UNION STATION (*open at all times*), 501 Crawford St., a five-story brick and stone Doric structure designed by Warren and Wetmore of New York, is used by the Missouri Pacific Lines, the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway, the Burlington-Rock Island Railroad, and the Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Company. Behind the main building are 13 tracks; to the north is a three-block-long freight depot, the terminal covering ten blocks between Texas and Prairie Avenues, Crawford and St. Emanuel Streets.

The first two floors of the main building are faced with concrete, and above with red brick extending to a simple gray stone cornice. A marquee supported by four square columns projects near the center of the main façade. Stone balustrades enclose the flat roof, which has three circle-headed windows topped with arched brick pediments. Interior finishings are in Italian marble.

Waiting rooms for whites and Negroes are on the first floor. The upper floors are occupied by offices of the railroads using the terminal. Approximately 30 passenger trains daily arrive and depart from the station.

The construction of the Union Station was the culmination of railway development started locally in the 1850's, when the seven-mile-long Houston Tap Railroad to Pierce Junction was built in an effort to divert trade then going to Harrisburg. The little line joined the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado Railroad; its first depot, erected on Commerce Avenue and Hutchins Street, was named Allen Station in honor of D. O. Allen, one-time superintendent of the Galveston, Houston and Henderson Railroad.

In 1905 the Santa Fe, Trinity and Brazos Valley, the Beaumont, Sour Lake & Western, and the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railways united and organized the Houston Belt & Terminal Railway. A site for a union station was purchased for \$1,000,000; on it stood the residences of a number of Houston's prominent people. Included was the property of Andrew Dow, 1717 Texas Avenue, that of Baldwin Rice, on Crawford Street and Preston Avenue, the Klienfelder home on Prairie Avenue, the old Garey place on Texas Avenue, and the new brick synagogue and frame buildings of the Adath Yeshurun Congregation.

Freight terminals were built along the five-block site between Prairie and Preston Avenues. The passenger station was a \$500,000 building a block long, and three stories in height. The station was but a small part of the terminal facilities, the total expenditure reaching \$5,000,000.

At the time the Union Station was completed, the International and Great Northern Railroad was advertising 28-hour service to St. Louis. Thirty years later that railroad offered the trip in 20 hours.

Trains began using the new terminal in August, 1910, and on March 2, 1911, the station was dedicated. It was soon found necessary to increase the size of the building; two stories were added. A fire in 1921 caused \$50,000 to \$100,000 damage.

As the years brought faster and safer equipment, lines using the Union Station were among the first to adopt it. On October 1, 1936, the Diesel-powered,

streamlined motor train of the Burlington-Rock Island was placed in service between Houston and Dallas, the first streamliner to serve Houston. It set a new mark in intercity travel, averaging a mile a minute over the 255-mile route.

**II.** The CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION (*open at all times*), 601 Crawford St., the oldest Roman Catholic church in Houston, occupies the second building erected by that denomination in the city.

The edifice, designed in Roman-Gothic style by Nicholas J. Clayton of Galveston, is built of limestone, bricks, and cement, with a trim of brown marble. The walls are pierced by deep-set windows, between which ornamented buttresses rise from massive foundations. Pointing skyward high above the roof, a slender, graceful spire supports a large golden Latin cross, while minor towers stand above the principal entrances on each side.

Entrances to the church are through massive oak doors and a vestibule adorned with religious figures. Within the nave a subdued light filters through exquisite stained glass windows, many of which are memorial gifts. White statues stand out in sharp contrast against the softer tones of the walls. Three carved white marble altars are within the sanctuary.

The church has no landscaped setting other than a narrow, hedge-bordered plot of grass between its foundations and the sidewalk facing Texas Avenue. For many years it was a landmark visible over a wide area, but business and apartment buildings have shut it in until now it is barely discernible unless approached from either Texas Avenue or Crawford Street. Then its lines and graceful spire present a striking and pleasing contrast to the near-by tall, modern buildings that dominate the vicinity.

The first Roman Catholic church building in Houston, the Church of St. Vincent de Paul, was erected during the summer of 1842 at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street, at the edge of a deep ravine.

The *Morning Star* of July 16, 1842, carried the announcement that the "Rev. Bishop from Bexar officiates at Catholic Chapel Sunday." The next day Bishop James M. Odin celebrated Mass for the first time in the new place of worship. A few days later the newspaper reported, "The pews of the Catholic Church will be sold Saturday the 23rd at public auction to raise money for finishing the interior." While it was pronounced too small (it was 50 by 25 feet), it had "20 pews, a communion table, a pulpit and a steeple," according to a report of Bishop Odin. Houston members subscribed about \$150; 11 pews were sold for \$143, and the bishop had to pay the balance of \$800.

In the steeple was a 218-pound bell cast for the church by Schmidt and Wilson of Houston early in 1843. It bore the inscription, "D. O. M. (To God, the best, the greatest) (cross) St. Vincenti, ora pro nobis, (pray for us) Houston, Texas, 1843." It was described by the *Morning Star* of February 18, 1843, as "the best piece of workmanship of the kind ever completed in the Republic."

Numerous priests served St. Vincent's and other parishes in the com-



munity until late in 1866 when the Rev. Joseph Querat became its first regular, full-time pastor.

Many German Catholics had come to Texas since the early 1840's, and these people, few of whom could speak English, comprised a large proportion of St. Vincent's membership. Father Querat, an accomplished French scholar, knew nothing of the German language and little of the customs of this large body of his parishioners.

Too small when it was first built, the church was by now inadequate to serve its congregation. Father Querat immediately assumed the task of securing a second temple of worship. Within a few months he had received sufficient response to assure success. The half block on Texas Avenue between Crawford and Jackson Streets was purchased in March, 1867. By the next year workmen were busy laying the foundation. "This is to be a magnificent building, 80 by 130 feet and high in proportion," declared the editor of the *Houston Daily Telegraph* on July 2, 1868.

The cornerstone of the church was laid on April 25, 1869, with all Houston in holiday attire to witness the ceremony. It was preceded by a colorful procession starting at St. Vincent's Church. The bright robes of the prelates and the brilliant regalia and gaily colored engines of the fire companies were in sharp contrast with the formal black worn by representatives of the Federal government, district and county courts, and city officials.

The *Houston Daily Telegraph* of November 18, 1870, described the edifice then under construction:

The building . . . was intended to have been completed by Christmas day, 1870 . . . but labor having been insufficient, it is not now expected that the church can be finished before February.

When completed, this building will be one of the finest in the city, and certainly the most impressive and elegant church edifice. Its length is 161 feet; breadth 61 feet; height to the top of the cross over building, 60 feet; to the top of the crosses on the two towers, 97 feet. The side walls are now completed, but the parapet walls are not finished. So far there have been used on the building about 700,000 brick. . . . Today it is expected that there will be more employees, and this, in addition to a new labor saving machine recently erected within the building, will probably hasten the completion.

An organ was installed in the autumn of 1871. The *Daily Telegraph* of September 1 of that year said, "Mr. Ferdinand Hesse, of this city, has been employed to build the grand organ for the new Catholic Church. Mr. Hesse is one of the most skillful workmen in America."

Dedication ceremonies were held on November 1, 1871, the occasion of a second imposing parade to the newly completed structure. Again members of Houston fire companies put on gala dress and joined hundreds of people in a procession from old St. Vincent's to the new church. In solemn dedicatory services the new structure was officially designated as the Church of the Annunciation. Father Querat, whose efforts had contributed much to the gathering

of the new parish and the erection of the church building, was appointed the first pastor.

Upon leaving his former charges, Father Querat directed a message to them through the *Daily Times*, saying in part:

Permit me . . . to express my sincere regret at parting with the German Catholics of Houston. For five years I have counted among them many friends, and I am sorry that my ignorance of their language prevented me from working for them as much as a pastor should. . . . I can at least say: Germans, you have now a church of your own, where you can hear the language and hymns of the fatherland; you have a pastor German by birth and education. It affords me the greatest pleasure to announce to you that Rev. J. Blum, the new pastor of St. Vincent is a gentleman.

St. Vincent's became known as the "German" church. When the building was sold a short time later, Annunciation was the only Roman Catholic church in the city for a number of years. The 200-pound bell, cast in Houston in 1843, was in 1941 installed in a new St. Vincent de Paul Church on Bellaire Boulevard, near Buffalo Speedway.

For seven years Father Querat labored in the parish. By 1877, broken in health and his eyesight failing, he retired. The Rev. Thomas Hennessy, a native of Tipperary, Ireland, who had been ordained in Austin, Texas, became pastor early in 1878.

An interesting insight into the service performed by Father Querat is contained in a document filed shortly after his retirement:

Whereas Rev. Joseph Querat has heretofore advanced the sum of One Thousand Dollars used in constructing . . . the Church of the Annunciation . . . and . . . has postponed the time of payment . . . indefinitely and only requires the interest thereon . . . during his natural life and at his death becomes the property of said Congregation. . . . I, Claude M. Dubuis, Bishop of Galveston, hereby grant Joseph Querat . . . Seventy dollars per year . . . less the sum of ten dollars per year to be applied to insure the building . . . and . . . make the said sum . . . a charge upon the income of said church.

The former pastor remained in the United States until 1888, when he returned to France. He was blind for several years before his death. Like his predecessor, Father Hennessy was a zealous worker.

When in 1900 storm damage was sustained, the building was repaired, and more substantial furnishings replaced those previously used. The old wooden altars were replaced with three of white marble; the dome was frescoed, and beautiful stained glass windows were added. A large cross on the steeple, which had been erected June 1, 1889, was remounted, and other crosses and turrets were repaired or replaced.

As Houston grew and business concerns were erected in residential sections, the church site became more and more valuable. When the Union Depot was built in 1910 at Crawford Street and Texas Avenue, real estate values of

the vicinity rose sharply. Liberal offers were made for the Annunciation Church property, and the pastor was urged to sell. He refused all offers. "This is an ideal location for a church; there are always people waiting between trains who like to come here for a prayer," he said. On the Texas Avenue wall was placed an invitation to enter the church and pray; thousands have found the door always open.

The celebration of the golden jubilee of the parish was held on December 17, 1922, with elaborate ceremonies climaxed by Pontifical High Mass.

**12.** The MEDICAL BUILDING OF HOUSTON (*open 8-5 daily*), 1215 Walker Ave., a 16-story structure of Gothic design, is constructed of reinforced concrete. Designed by Sanguinet, Staats, Hedrick and Gottlieb of Houston, and completed in 1926 at a cost of \$1,750,000, the building is faced with artificial gray limestone. Gothic molds and ornamental details accentuate its vertical lines. Above its parapet wall are Gothic finials topping vertical piers and pilasters.

Marble wainscoting and terrazzo floors are used in the lobby and throughout the corridors. Lighting, ventilation, arrangements of space, and special equipment of circuits for X-ray machines are suited to medical and dental office requirements. The Harris County Medical Association and the Houston Dental Association occupy an annex constructed in 1939 of steel, brick, and hollow tile and designed by Hedrick & Lindsley, Inc., of Houston.

The HOUSTON ACADEMY OF MEDICINE LIBRARY (*open by permission 9-12, 1-5 workdays except Sat., 9-1*), is on the second and third floors of the annex. The journal room and office is on the second floor, with the library stack room and reading room directly above on the third floor.

The library receives 164 medical and 30 dental periodicals. In 1940 its bound volumes totaled 10,700. Each issue of the *Lancet* since 1823, and of the *American Journal of Medical Science* since 1820, with the exception of two and one-half volumes, are included in the files. In the book collection is one of 430 copies of *Icones Anatomicae*, published in 1934 by the New York Academy of Medicine and the Library of the University of Munich, Germany. It contains copies of wood blocks and text from the works of Andreas Vesalius, published in 1543 and 1555.

In 1920 members of the medical profession were asked for donations to start the library. Within a year 974 books had been collected. By March, 1921, there were 1,154 volumes, and Dr. Inez R. Waters was appointed first librarian. An additional 300 volumes were added in March, 1936, when 30 members of the organization purchased part of a library brought from France. All of these books were published in the late 1700's or the early 1800's. This collection is in separate cases in the reading room.

Library rooms were secured first in the Kress Building, and later in the Keystone Building. In 1926 the library was removed to the sixteenth floor of the Medical Arts Building, and in June, 1939, to its present quarters.

**I 3.** The GULF BUILDING (*open at all times*), 712 Main St., rises 37 stories above the pavement to dominate the Houston skyline. The \$6,500,000 edifice was designed in modern style by Alfred C. Finn of Houston. Kenneth Franzheim of Houston and J. E. R. Carpenter of New York City were consulting architects. The building was begun in 1927 and completed in 1929.

Green-glazed, cast-iron ornamental windows feature the first two floors, while the entire lower six-floor, base course unit is faced with cast stone impregnated with iron. It is embellished with incised ornaments of iron and silverized bronze, which contrast with plain surfaces and pierced voids. It terminates in a modified ornamental stone cornice. Above, a square central tower of rough-textured, buff bricks, pyramids through set-backs to a central shaft. The verticality of the structure is emphasized by decorative brick pillars rising from base to top of each of its three set-backs.

A three-story recessed entrance on the Main Street façade is topped with an architrave of gentle curves and subdued classical scroll work in massive carved stone. The main entrance lobby, which also gives access to the National Bank of Commerce, is divided into four equal panels, each having free-standing, chamfered columns at the corners. The floor is in marble borders with panels of conglomerate, and the walls and columns are of sienna travertine marble.

Eight mural panels by Vincent Maragliatti of New York, depicting the history of Texas, executed in wet fresco, appear along the upper walls. Epochs and events shown are: "Aboriginal Indians, *circa* 1500;" "Landing of La Salle, Matagorda Bay, 1685;" "Spanish Domination, 1770;" "Mexican Ascendancy, 1821;" "Fall of the Alamo;" "Capture of Santa Anna, 1836;" "Houston, Capital of the Republic of Texas, 1837," and "Modern Houston." They are illuminated by indirect lighting.

The lobby ceiling also is divided into four panels, each forming a double-barreled, vaulted arch on all sides. It is designed in a modern ornamental style in low relief; the main motif of each panel is a central silver star from which radiates gold and silver fluted lines to the decorative borders. From the center of each star hangs an ornate glass lighting fixture with Benedict nickel frame.

All doors opening off the lobby, the ornamental panels above them, and the radiator grilles are splendid examples of metal craft art done in Benedict nickel. Suspended fixtures of the same metal and etched glass harmonize with the general decorative scheme.

Low-ceilinged corridors left of the main lobby give access to banks of elevators. Doors, overdoors, and frames of all lifts are richly ornamented with elaborate designs in etched and hand-chased metal work in harmony with the general interior trim. The cabs are of English hardwood panels, framed with nickel, and ornamented with grilles of the same metal.

Elevator lobbies with marble walls and rubber tile floors feature the upper stories. Corridors have similar floors, with marble bases. Doors and trim are of highly polished gumwood.

The OBSERVATION TOWER (*open 10-4 daily; adm. 25c*), is reached by

express elevators and a metal-and-marble staircase. Through a long-range telescope mounted on a platform, Galveston and other points within a 50-mile radius are visible on clear days.

Just above the observatory is the Jesse H. Jones aeronautical beacon, 450 feet from the street level, and the vertical radiator of Radio Station KXYZ, which has studios on the fifth floor. Two shafts of light are visible on clear nights for a distance of 50 miles. A 15,000 candlepower beam is projected vertically into the heavens, while another of 8,000 candlepower is thrown horizontally toward the Municipal Airport. Automatic switches change globes in case filaments burn out, so that light is constant between sunset and sunrise.

Exterior floodlights bathe the upper eight floors on all four sides in a clear white light, accentuating the carvings and ornamentation of the top section of the building. At Christmas colored lights are used, which, at a distance, seem to transform the towering shaft into an emerald-and-ruby obelisk. The whole plan provides for distribution of 12,600,000 candlepower.

The demands of two growing institutions combined to shape both the architectural plan and the size of the Gulf Building. Officials of the National Bank of Commerce decided in 1927 to build new and larger quarters. At the same time officials of the Gulf Oil Corporation were seeking larger space. As soon as requirements of these two organizations were determined, the plans were drawn. Ground was broken late in the summer of 1927, and steel beams began pointing skyward on February 16, 1928.

Rapidly the framework rose and on June 4, 1928, the first bricks were laid in the walls of the structure. On November 26, masonry was topped in and, with the exception of windows and ornamentation, outwardly the tower was complete. Tenants began moving into the ground floor spaces in the spring of 1929, and by autumn the job was finished.

In the structure there are 422,809 square feet of floor area; 1,000 offices; 2,137 windows; 25 miles of steam and water pipes; and 75 miles of conduits. In its construction, materials used amounted to 11,000,000 pounds of steel, 1,000,000 bricks, 450,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel, 110,000 sacks of cement and 4,000 miles of wire. The building has a daily population of approximately 2,500 people.

When first started and during the early months of construction, the edifice was generally called the Jones Building, for Jesse H. Jones, president of the National Bank of Commerce. Late in 1928 it was announced that the official name would be the Gulf Building, in honor of the oil company which was taking approximately half the office space.

The Gulf Building stands on the site of the home of Mrs. Charlotte M. Allen. It was here that Mrs. Allen dispensed a gracious and generous hospitality for nearly half a century. The date of the construction of her house is variously fixed from 1837 to 1845. Dr. O. F. Allen, in *The City of Houston from Wilderness to Wonder*, describing a reception Mrs. Allen gave for Gen. Sam Houston, wrote: "The reception was held at their home on Smith Street, near McKinney

Avenue, the home on Rusk and Main Streets not having been built until about 1845."

Immediately after the Civil War, General Lowery, in command of the Federal troops stationed in Houston during Reconstruction, made his headquarters here. Mrs. Allen lived in this house until her death in 1895.

On the occasion of her eighty-fifth birthday, the *Houston Daily Post* of July 15, 1890, said:

Mrs. Allen forms the connecting link between Houston's past and present history, and is the only surviving member of the original Town company. . . . Their house, corner of Main and Rusk streets, enjoys the reputation of being the first house built in Houston, except a small cottage. But for its history and the many tender memories that cluster around the old home, it would long ago have given place to a handsome modern edifice. Mrs. Allen feels much pride in the growth of Houston, of which her distinguished husband, A. C. Allen, was founder, and she takes a lively interest in every enterprise looking to its advancement. She delights to talk of the gallant and heroic General Houston, who was her warm personal friend, and for several years a member of her household.

The Allen house was demolished in 1911. Two brick buildings erected on the site were occupied by a variety shop and a music store until 1927, when they were wrecked to make way for the Gulf Building.

**I4.** The NIELS ESPERSON BUILDING (*open at all times*), 802-12 Travis St., Houston's second tallest skyscraper, is a 32-story office structure erected as a monument to Niels Esperson, prominent real estate and oil man, by his widow, Mellie Esperson. John Ebersson of New York City was the architect, and Harry Weaver of Houston the supervising architect of the building, which was completed in 1927 at a cost of \$4,000,000. Its total floor space is 214,000 square feet.

Designed in Italian Renaissance style, the structure rests upon 33 concrete piles sunk to a depth of 46 feet.

The main entrance is formed by a recessed loggia with two 42-foot Corinthian stone columns supporting an entablature with the name plate in the frieze. Above are two ornamental urn finials. The base course is of rusticated limestone. The main shaft is faced in rough-textured, buff-colored bricks in vertical piers. Between these occur the window openings and dark green terra cotta spandrels.

The general outline of the building gains in picturesque quality from the decorative effect of private roof gardens on the seventeenth, twenty-second, twenty-fifth, and twenty-ninth floors, and from the tower where 40-foot terra cotta Corinthian columns support a circular cupola ornamented with a gold leaf finial. An air beacon surmounts the pinnacle.

Immense terra cotta urns, visible at a great distance, line the tower balustrade, while immediately below on the Travis Street side are chimes, patterned

on those of Westminster Abbey, which melodiously mark the quarter hours and can be heard throughout much of the downtown section.

Terra cotta ornamentation in blue, rose, and tan is the predominating decorative scheme of both the exterior and interior.

Three bronze vestibules on the Travis Street side give access to the elevator lobby. These vestibules are highly scrolled and decorated with a Roman ox skull and the Esperson coat of arms, which appears also on all elevator doors and plates beneath the east windows.

The elevator lobby, two stories high, has a marble floor with ornamental terrazzo inserts and a verde antique marble base around the lobby. Above, the two-story facing is in Italian travertine marble. All of the elevator doors and architraves, as well as the free-standing building directory, are in ornamental bronze.

At each end of the lobby are murals by Eugene Gilboe, of Dallas, Norwegian-born artist. The mural above doors opening into the banking rooms of the Guardian Trust Company depicts a Viking standing on the foredeck of a *skuta*, while the one over the opposite opening portrays a shepherd at a well. In the foreground of both is an enormous horn of plenty spilling coins. The main ceiling of the lobby is in three parts with double-barreled, vaulted panels richly ornamented. These are divided into smaller panels with corner ribs, and are finished with antique gold molds and ornamented with dark blue and deep rose backgrounds.

Hanging from the center of each of these panels is an exquisite bronze lantern fixture, Italian Renaissance in design. Facing the bank of six elevators are two columns which support a balcony, also faced in travertine marble with a balustrade above. The ceiling is divided into small square panels richly ornamented in the gold leaf and color scheme of the main ceiling. Under the balcony the ceiling is in three panels with bronze lanterns hanging from each.

Typical of the building's modern conveniences is a pneumatic tube for the rapid transmittal of valuable documents to the Harris County Courthouse a half mile distant.

**15.** The MELLIE ESPERSON BUILDING (*open at all times*), 815 Walker Ave., is a \$2,700,000, 19-story structure adjoining the 32-story Niels Esperson Building. Facing 250 feet on Walker Avenue, 90 feet on Travis Street and 60 feet on Milam Street, the edifice has 254,000 square feet of floor space.

Rising from a seven-foot base course of Minnesota black granite, the modern lines sweep up to the sixteenth floor, with a facing of Bedford stone unbroken except for the moderately ornamental ledge that rims the second story. Walls terminate in a plain cornice. A central 50-foot tower is capped with a turret which protrudes from behind moderate set-backs. Its appearance of height is accentuated by means of a slight channel-like inset beginning just above the main entrance on Walker Avenue, continuing unbroken to the top.

Between rounded granite cheeks, the massive bronze-tipped Walker Avenue entrance opens into a spacious lobby with terrazzo floors and marble walls. On the lobby wall a map of Texas, 12 feet by 14 feet, portrays geographical and topographical features of the State, as well as day-by-day changes in oil developments. At the right a corridor leads to the Travis Street entrance. Corridors up to the sixteenth floor connect with those of the Niels Esperson Building.

Three floors of the 50-foot tower contain offices. At the top of the building, above the nineteenth floor, is the mechanism of an air-conditioning system. A basement and sub-basement contain elevator and refrigeration machinery, as well as fireproof storage vaults and rent space. John Eberson of New York was the architect. Construction was started early in January, 1940; the building was formally opened in February, 1941.

**16.** The COMMERCE BUILDING (*open at all times*), 914 Main St., is a 22-story office structure designed in modern style, with ornamentation in delicate relief between vertical shafts. Above the first three stories forming the base course, which is faced with limestone, the façades are of rough-textured buff bricks with simple piers between windows emphasizing the verticality of the building. Ornamental limestone spandrels occur at each story height.

The simple outline of the structure, unbroken by cornices, is somewhat modified by 62 pilasters, each surmounted with a 3,000-pound limestone cap; these form the upper terminals of the piers. Except for the spandrels and pilasters there is little ornamentation except at the entrance, which is between two massive columns that rise to the top of the second story. Above the entrance and between the columns is a large spandrel.

Although the lower nine floors form a rectangle fronting on Main Street and on Walker Avenue, the upper 13 stories, added in 1939, form an "L", providing a maximum of daylight.

The Main Street lobby is finished in matched Tennessee marble. Six elevators serve the building above the fifth floor, those below being occupied by a store. A passageway gives direct connection from the lobby to a four-story-and-basement garage building at the rear.

When in May, 1928, the Jesse H. Jones interests planned the erection of a building here, Architect Joseph Finger was commissioned to design a four-story edifice. Six months later the plans had been changed and the specifications called for a seven-story structure. Before the work was completed, it was found advisable to add two more floors.

On September 5, 1929, the first five stories were occupied by a retail dry goods establishment. In 1930 the offices of the Houston Chamber of Commerce were moved from former quarters at Texas Avenue and Milam Street to the eighth floor of the new edifice.

Specifications for the erection of 13 additional stories were completed on September 10, 1938. Alfred C. Finn of Houston designed the addition, which cost about \$1,350,000.



As far as available records show, the Houston Chamber of Commerce is the oldest such civic-commercial body west of the Mississippi River. In the United States, the Boston Chamber of Commerce alone exceeds it in age.

A petition to charter the organization was first presented to the Congress of the Republic of Texas on November 26, 1838, but not until January 28, 1840, was it granted.

The group held its first official meeting on April 4, 1840, at Carlos' City Exchange. At that time membership was mainly restricted to wholesale merchants of Houston and Harris County—those who paid licenses as such. Members were required to pay dues of \$20. Among those attending the first meeting were Francis R. Lubbock, DeWitt Clinton Harris, George Gazely, Jacob de Cordova, and Thomas M. League.

Records of the organization from 1840 to 1860 and throughout the Civil War period were apparently destroyed, as they have not been found by historians. Immediately after the Civil War a new constitution and bylaws were enacted by the Chamber of Commerce, and it functioned under that name until 1896, when, with a greatly enlarged membership, it became the Houston Business League.

In 1910, during the agitation for a greater ship channel, the organization's charter was again amended and it once more became the Houston Chamber of Commerce. In 1930 it was reorganized and a number of new departments added, and in 1941 it had 18 specialized departments and more than 40 employees.

**I7.** The HUMBLE BUILDING (*open 8-4:30 workdays*), 1216-22 Main and Travis Streets, Polk and Dallas Avenues. It is built in three units: a 17-story tower, and two sections of nine stories each, all fitted and harmonized into one huge structure. The three sections of the building are constructed around a court which provides a light shaft extending down to the first floor ceiling level. Entrances open from each street. Here are the headquarters of the Humble Oil and Refining Company and the Humble Pipe Line Company.

Rising from an imposing façade on Dallas Avenue, the tower unit is a modern adaptation of Italian Renaissance design. The main shaft is a 14-story structure, 80 feet wide at the first floor. Its massive appearance, accented by vertical lines and sharp silhouette, is tempered by the use of set-backs at corners above the second floor. Resting on granite blocks, a base course of plain Ashlar limestone rises two stories. Brown and buff tapestry bricks from the third floor upward make an interesting pattern, broken only by a plain limestone ledge crowning the twelfth floor. Above the fourteenth floor, a three-story unit rises behind moderate set-backs adorned with six-foot corbels cut in limestone. Its flat top and plain surfaces, broken only by ventilation windows extending through the two top floors, add to the appearance of height and strength.

Right of the tower is the Travis Street wing that extends upward nine stories. It has the same facing and architectural lines as the tower unit, except

for a set-back in the middle of the block on Travis Street. This is made more ornate to provide a natural transition from the modern adaptation of Italian Renaissance in the tower to the more decorative style used in the unit facing Polk Avenue.

The nine-story main section extends from Main Street to Travis Street, and covers a half block. Above a one-story base course of gray limestone resting on three-foot granite groundwork, the building is faced with brown and buff tapestry brick in the same attractive pattern as in the other units. Stone columns set in brick piers form a frieze girding the seventh and eighth floors. Iron grille work encircles each window of the seventh floor, and ornamental stone finials in low relief project from brick piers above. Carved limestone pilasters complete the architectural pattern at the top floor level. Rimming the sky line is a projecting copper cornice, supported by ornamental brackets and made to resemble old Italian wooden wall borders used on medieval palaces.

Guarded by a wrought-iron fence anchored to buff-colored brick posts, the Polk Avenue entrance is in a set-back at the middle of the block. Electric lights in frosted glass globes and mounted on bronze bases stand at each side of the gate. Bordering the cement walk leading to the entrance is a well-kept lawn upon which grow *Quercus Virginiana* live oaks planted by George Dickson, whose residence once occupied the site. The double-door entrance on the Main Street side is protected by an iron and glass canopy which juts out to the curb lines. Electric lights concealed behind small frosted glass panels encircle its outer edges.

The Dallas Avenue entrance has four polished bronze doors with large plate glass panes. Above is a transom in elaborate grille work, while a bronze light fixture is suspended by a chain of the same metal. From a small vestibule with gray marble walls a second set of doors opens into a low-ceilinged, block-long corridor. Beyond a group of four elevators, the corridor intersects a similar hallway reaching from Main to Travis Streets, and extends to the Polk Avenue entrance. Corridor walls are lined with polished marble, and semi-indirect lighting from modern overhead fixtures gives a sparkling mirror effect.

Halls in the upper floors meet to form a "T", and have matched marble wainscoting and terrazzo flooring. Indirect modern lighting is used throughout the building. Offices having noisy equipment are given acoustical treatment.

A dining room for the use of executives and department heads, on the fifteenth floor, has walls lined with photomurals which are sepia reproductions of aerial photographs of oil territory. Elevator machinery and a cooling tower for air-condition equipment are housed in the two upper floors of the tower.

The Humble Oil and Refining Company, one of the country's major oil concerns, is an outgrowth of the Humble Oil Company, organized primarily as a marketing concern in 1911 with a capital stock of \$150,000. Its headquarters, originally at Humble, were established in Houston in 1912, with offices in the Carter Building. In 1917 it occupied a suite of four rooms in the old Gulf (now the Rusk) Building, and in 1918, various valuable properties having

been merged and a controlling interest purchased by the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, the eighth, ninth, and tenth floors of the Goggan Building were occupied.

Late in 1919, ground was broken for the first unit of the present office building — the nine-story section erected on the half block extending from Main to Travis Streets and facing Polk Avenue. Completed in May, 1921, at an approximate cost of \$1,200,000, it was the largest office building in Houston, with 196,000 square feet of floor space. Clinton & Russell, New York City, were the architects.

Following a period of great expansion, during which the capital stock of the company was increased to \$175,000,000, the 17-story Humble Tower, designed by John F. Staub and Kenneth Franzheim of Houston, was completed at an estimated cost of \$1,000,000 in September, 1935. Further growth of the company made necessary the most recent unit of the building, the Travis Street wing, which was started in the summer of 1938 and occupied early in 1940. Its estimated cost was \$1,200,000.

In this year 2,000 people were employed in the Houston office of the company, with an annual payroll amounting to \$6,000,000.

**I 8.** The COLORED CARNEGIE BRANCH OF THE HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY (*open 12-8:30 p.m. Mon., 12-6 Tues.-Fri., 9-1 Sat.*), 1112 Frederick St., is a branch of the Houston Public Library and is supported from city taxes.

It is a substantial one-story-and-basement building of buff bricks with a green roof, completed in 1913. Walls are broken only by ample windows. A flight of steps at the entrance leads to a portico between two large Doric columns which support a triangular façade. A small foyer and hall give access to the librarian's desk which commands the entire floor. The interior is finished in a buff trim, and the ceiling and wall panels are of lightly stained pine.

To the left is the children's room; to the right, the general reading room. Straight ahead is the reference room, partitioned from the main section by a glass screen. Down a stairway at the extreme left is a lecture hall seating 250 people. The building was designed by W. Sidney Pittman, Negro architect, of Washington, D. C.

First efforts to establish a Negro public library were made late in 1903, and a unit under supervision of Negroes was opened on Christmas Day at 419 San Felipe Street. In 1907 the Negro Library and Lyceum Association was organized by Negro leaders, and a branch of the central institution was officially opened in the Negro High School on May 5, 1909.

Trustees of the Houston Carnegie Library Association contributed 600 books and \$200, while the Negro population subscribed \$100. The following March the City initiated an annual appropriation of \$500 for the Negro library. Later in 1910, trustees of the branch raised \$1,500 through their own efforts and purchased the site for a building. A gift of \$15,000 was secured from

Andrew Carnegie with which to erect the permanent structure. An appropriation of \$1,500 yearly was authorized by the City Council on March 20, 1911. Construction was started the following year, and the new library was dedicated on April 11, 1913.

A branch library for Negroes, maintained in the Recreation House at Emancipation Park, was opened on October 25, 1939. Bruce Station, on the campus of Bruce school, was established in 1935.

A total of 9,681 books were in the Colored Carnegie Branch in 1940, which were used by 4,930 registered readers.

**19.** The HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY (*open 9-9 workdays; periodical room only, 2-6 p.m. Sun.*), 500 McKinney Ave., is a half-million-dollar, "L"-shaped, three-story building occupying a block fringed with green lawns, flower beds, hedges, and spreading trees. The Spanish Renaissance design was executed by Architects Cram & Ferguson of Boston, with Watkin & Glover of Houston, associates. W. A. Dowdy was the city architect. The main building measures 190 feet by 62 feet and the wing is 78 feet by 38 feet. It was completed and opened on October 18, 1926.

Walls are faced with buff-colored bricks, trimmed with limestone. In the gray stone facing of the second floor is a lunette with the shields of Texas and the United States in relief. Similar emblems of France, Spain, Mexico, and the Confederacy appear over the other four second-story windows in the limestone shaft. On each side, balustraded loggias have red tile roofs that slope backward from the pavilion. Over the central section are vertical, slender stone finials with perforated, scrolled ornaments between, while other parapet walls have finials at regular intervals. To the right, a wing juts out to McKinney Avenue, forming an "L."

Smaller doorways open on both sides of the main entrance on McKinney Avenue. Over the left one is a bas-relief of Rene Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, first known French explorer of Texas. Above the other is a likeness of Fray Antonio Margil de Jesus who, in 1720, established Mission San Jose near San Antonio. Bow-shaped marble steps lead to the main entrance in a central, projecting, three-story limestone pavilion. The doorway is flanked by inset marble columns, as is a circle-headed window above.

Ponderous, bronze-reinforced doors of oak open into the lobby. A floor of red tile contrasts with pinkish-gray stippled walls that rise from baseboards of black marble. Overhead is a raftered, dark oak ceiling. Between the main entrance and the Lamar Avenue entrance, and to the right, is the receiving desk. Centered in the left wall is a memorial drinking fountain to the Rev. Abram J. Ryan, poet, priest and soldier of the Confederacy. The marble plaque and fountain were installed by the Robert E. Lee Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

A corridor to the right leads toward the wing, and contains three murals done in 1934 and 1935 under the Public Works Art Project by Angela Mc-

Donnell. The subjects are "La Rabida, the Cradle of the New World;" "Avila, the Excuses for Conquest, Its Brutal Forces Disguised with Banners and Trumpets;" and the "Art and Literature of Spain."

Below these paintings are display cases which contain rare books and manuscripts, some dating back to the twelfth century. Included in the collection are several examples of illuminated medieval works, some written on vellum. Among the 65 items is a Vulgate edition of the Bible, once owned by William of Orange; a first Aldine edition of *Caesar's Commentaries*, printed in Venice in 1513; an edition of Terence's *Comedies*, published in Strassbourg in 1499; a lavishly illuminated Flemish *Book of Hours*, and other early manuscripts. Miss Annette Finnigan gave the collection, which she had assembled during her travels in Europe and northern Africa.

Near the western end of the hall is the periodical room, occupying the wing's first floor. The story above contains an assembly room, while the top floor is used for storing the large collection of newspaper files.

The NORMA MELDRUM CHILDREN'S ROOM (*open 9-6 workdays*), at the end of a corridor opening left of the lobby, has low bookcases against walls of light brown under a beamed ceiling of oak. There are plaster casts of Della Robbia's "Singing and Dancing Boys," and other objects of interest to children. This room was endowed in 1900 by Mr. and Mrs. Norman S. Meldrum as a memorial to their daughter, Norma, who died on November 23, 1899. Upon Mr. Meldrum's death in 1936, he left an endowment of \$25,000.

Left of the library's main entrance is a red tiled stairway leading to the second and third floors of the main unit. On the wall at the first landing is a mural done in 1935 by Ruth Uhler under the Public Works Art Project, depicting an early library subscription drive.

General reading and reference rooms are on the second floor. Light-colored marble columns and decorations in Spanish blue contrast with the dark woodwork of walls and furniture. Cork tile is underfoot. Overhead is a light well, embellished with dark oak panelings, rising to a dome above the third story.

Four murals of famous buildings in floral background, done by Mrs. E. Richardson Cherry in 1934, two under the direction of the Public Works Art Project, and two donated by the artist, appear in the second floor lobby.

On the third floor a balustrade encircles the light well. To the right is a spacious cataloging room and workroom for the library staff. A collection of geological journals and Braille publications are available for use on this floor.

Several rare collections are in the HISTORICAL ROOM (*open 2-6 workdays*), at the end of a short hall to the left. Among them is a collection of Texiana, including volumes of old newspapers and other items pertaining to Texas history. The Circle M collection consists of unusual and rare books and curios from many sections of the world, gathered by Maj. John E. T. Milsaps, Salvation Army leader. The Genealogical Collection consists of approximately 1,200 volumes dealing principally with American, English, Scotch, and Irish nationalities, and Southern genealogy.

Nine branch and sub-branch units are maintained: Carnegie Branch, 1209 Henry Street; Heights Branch, 1302 Heights Boulevard; Park Place Branch, 8145 Park Place Boulevard; Colored Carnegie Branch, 1112 Frederick Street; Central Park Sub-Branch, 6901 Avenue I, Edison School; Eastwood Sub-Branch, 200 Telephone Road; Harrisburg Sub-Branch, 811 Broadway, Harris School; West End Branch, 5100 Washington Avenue; Ripley House Sub-Branch, 4400 Lovejoy Avenue. A traveling branch was added on October 3, 1938. A vehicle holding 2,000 books makes regular stops at 38 schools and community centers.

The library and its branches contained 225,502 volumes on January 1, 1941. It is supported by a two and one-half cent tax, voted in 1921.

As early as 1837 Houstonians were interested in an organization for literary advancement. The Philosophical Society of Texas, formed that year, was the result of an effort to awaken an interest in science and literature; Mirabeau B. Lamar was one of its founders. The manuscript bylaws of the society, bearing the names of 24 early citizens, was preserved by the Houston Public Library until 1939, when it was transferred to the San Jacinto Museum of History.

Houston had a library as early as 1839, as indicated in a notice in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* of June 19 of that year:

HOUSTON CIRCULATING LIBRARY. . . . The subscribers respectfully announce to the citizens of Houston, that they have this day opened their Circulating Library, and are now ready to receive subscribers. The library consists of about 1300 volumes.

A place where those athirst for literature — or otherwise — could be accommodated was announced in the *Morning Star* of January 14, 1840. The Star Coffee House and Reading Room had been opened, said the notice, its bar "stocked with the best of liquors that the market can afford, no pains having been spared in their selection." The announcement continued:

Attached to the Bar is a subscription Reading Room, where all the most important periodicals of this country as well as those of the United States, will be found; arrangements have [been] entered into for an early supply of all important publications . . . arrivals and departures from Galveston, lists of freight, consignees and passengers . . . nothing shall be spared to make the reading room interesting to all classes.

Presumably for the greater comfort of its library patrons, it was declared "that all disorder or riotous proceedings in the house will be discountenanced." The price was rather high. For use of the reading room the charge was "\$16 per year in all cases, payments quarterly in advance, without regard or respect to persons." Only members, or those invited by members, were admitted.

On May 20, 1843, the *Morning Star* announced the organization of a literary association, adding that the organizers "intend to connect a circulating Library with the Association. A meeting will be held this evening at Mr. Bagby's office."

The present Houston Public Library was the outgrowth of the Houston Lyceum, chartered on March 20, 1848, when its listed members included Abner

Cooke, Peter W. Gray, E. A. Palmer, James Walker, T. B. J. Hadley, William F. Weeks, William C. Gould, C. McAnnelly and Thomas M. Bagby, and it is of interest that the library building stands on the site of Bagby's residence.

After a few years the organization became inactive, and another society under the same name was formed on May 27, 1854. Officers elected were: Andrew Daly, president; C. R. Smith, vice president; W. I. Brockett, recording secretary; S. C. West, corresponding secretary; T. H. Conklin, treasurer; and Thomas Pearce, librarian.

So successful was the new group that the Young Men's Christian and Literary Association merged with it in November, 1854. Finally, on March 8, 1856, the old Lyceum group voted to receive the more recent Houston Lyceum into its organization, including the new officers.

Because of the Civil War, the Lyceum organization was suspended in 1860; reorganized in December, 1865, it again became inactive. Interest revived in 1877, and the society gained strength. The *Houston Daily Telegram* on November 19, 1878 stated:

The Lyceum offers this week a phonographic entertainment. Edison's great invention is here and will be on exhibition at Lyceum Hall. Music, orations and conversations will be ground out ad litem [sic]. The skeptical will have a chance of having their doubts set at rest.

In an effort to increase revenue, women were admitted as active members in 1887. Before, they had been eligible only as honorary members. This gave the society new impetus, and a librarian was employed at \$25 monthly. Directors met another period of depression by reducing initiation fees from \$1 to 50 cents; and the dues from \$6 to \$4 annually. Quarters were shifted to the banquet room of the City Hall from the Courthouse.

On January 12, 1897, the *Houston Daily Post* reported, quoting an annual report of the Lyceum Association:

Mrs. Foster, the librarian [says that] . . . 5060 persons visited the library and 1368 books were checked out. . . . The library now has 8,000 volumes.

Two years later the Lyceum was moved to the Mason Building. City officials became interested, and in 1899 they appropriated \$200 monthly for books and the maintenance of the organization as a public institution.

The Woman's Club appealed to Andrew Carnegie for aid. He promised \$50,000 for a building, if a suitable site were furnished by the City.

Necessary appropriations were voted by the City Council on June 18, 1900. The site, purchased from the First Presbyterian Church for \$7,880, was on the east corner of Travis Street and McKinney Avenue. The society's name became the Houston Lyceum and Carnegie Library Association. On March 3, 1904, the first public library in Houston was opened. At a meeting of the board of trustees on October 11, 1921, the name was changed to the Houston Public Library.

The growth of the institution made larger quarters advisable. A municipal

bond issue provided \$200,000 for a new building. The old property was repurchased by the First Presbyterian Church for \$100,000, and the proceeds used to construct two branch libraries. The present central library site was purchased by the City for \$92,000. Another bond issue of \$300,000 made possible the current building.

**20.** HERMANN SQUARE, bounded by Smith St., McKinney and Walker Aves., is arranged in a formal plaza style that accentuates the vertical lines of the adjacent City Hall.

A sunken reflecting pool, mirroring the building, dominates the plot. At the west end of the artificial lake a fountain cascades across ornamental stone steps into a concrete basin, the bright blue walls of which give depth to an otherwise shallow lagoon. A sloping lawn rims the water. Garden sections of the square contain Italian and cape jasmine, Barbados cherry, yaupon, Pfitzer's juniper, Russian olive and Japanese evergreen plum trees, Japanese nandina, feijoa, glossy privet, English ivy, big-leaf periwinkle, and flowers in season.

This park was willed to the City in 1910 by George H. Hermann, Houston philanthropist, son of Swiss immigrants, who was born in a cabin on the site on August 6, 1843. His father, a baker, came to Houston in 1838 with his wife, three children, and \$5. Young Hermann's formal education was limited to that offered in the town's early schools.

Soon after he reached manhood his parents died. He took an active part in the Civil War, and afterward returned to Houston to engage in the cattle business. Oil on his land holdings added to his fortune. At the time of his death on October 21, 1914, he was one of the wealthiest men in the State, having large real estate holdings.

Much of his fortune, estimated at \$2,500,000, was left to the administration of a board of trustees. His will stipulated that a hospital should be created, and that land in the southern part of the city and the site of his home should be made into public recreational areas. It read in part:

I will and bequeath to the City of Houston Block 146 . . . as a public park or breathing place and to be known as the 'Hermann Square.'

**21.** The CITY HALL (*open 8-5 workdays except Sat., 8-12 m.*), 901-21 Bagby St., a ten-story structure dominating the Civic Center, was designed by Joseph Finger of Houston. Neoclassic in style, it was completed in 1940 at a cost of \$1,750,000. Forming the base of the building are two one-story wings which spread out on each side. Above these are two three-story sections set back from each of the lower façades, while above these lower masses is the main shaft rising to a height of ten stories.

Above the tenth story another set-back forms a solid block in which there are no openings. In the center of this block, on each side, are huge neon-lighted clock faces, the minute hand of which is seven and one-half feet long, while the



hour hand is five and one-half feet long. Hour markers of glass are a foot wide. Above these clock faces are the sculptored heads of Texas wildcats.

All openings have steel sash, and the spandrels between stories are of ornamental metal. Fluted pilasters occur between the openings of the wings. Figure panels symbolical of agriculture serve as a frieze; at the top of the second set-back the frieze depicts the industries of Houston, while that on the third set-back pictures governmental functions. These designs were executed by Herring Coe of Beaumont, and Raoul Josset, French sculptor.

Low steps ascend to paved courtyards at the Bagby Street entrance and at the rear of the structure. Symbolical governmental figures appear in carved stone panels above the doors, which are of aluminum with cast ornamental grille panels. Above, fitted into the grille work, are cast medallions of famous lawgivers. The design of a magnolia blossom appears on the door knobs. In the basement, reached by elevators or by a staircase, is a modern restaurant.

Broad stairs of marble with aluminum handrails ascend from the vestibule to the upper floors. All lobbies and corridors are treated with marble base, walls, and wainscoting. Wood trim and doors are of figured gum.

A wealth of murals, marble, nickel, and bronze trimming have been used in the elevator and main lobbies. Ceiling murals represent industry, culture, law, and administration. In the middle of the ceiling, under hidden lights and on a blue background dotted with stars, is a plaster relief with the star of Houston at the center. A floor inset of nickel, silver, and bronze has three cast figures. Murals and decorations are by Daniel MacMorris of Kansas City.

**22.** The HOUSTON FIRE ALARM BUILDING (*open 8-5 daily*), 1012-16 Bagby St., part of the Civic Center group and adjacent to Sam Houston Park, houses the controls of the city's electrical apparatus, including a two-way radio system, police and fire alarm boxes, traffic, airport, and underpass lights, and a telephone switchboard that services all municipal departments.

Designed in modern American style by MacKie and Kamrath, of Houston, the \$90,000 two-story structure was completed in 1940. Exterior walls are of thin, specially cut, split-base Texas Cordova limestone, and of buff bricks, broken by modern, green-tinted plate glass windows. A broad cement walk leads through landscaped lawns to the recessed main entrance. There, a strikingly designed doorway of glass and bronze extends the height of the building.

A memorial hallway, finished in stripped green Filipino mahogany, dominates the main corridor. On each side of a broad center stairway and fronting the entrance, raised bronze letters spell the names of 22 members of the fire department who lost their lives in line of duty. Other interior wall surfaces are of plaster; flooring is of sheet rubber over concrete. The structure is fireproof and air-conditioned.

A drafting room left of the lobby contains blue prints and colored maps. At the head of the stairway is a door opening into the board panel room, where much of the signal equipment is set in long horizontal niches. The plaster

curtain walls of this room bear two massive photo-murals of the city, one dated 1883, and the other 1939.

Operators direct fire companies and handle the numerous calls of the police department. Automatically printed tape records the police and fire boxes pulled. Facilities for two-way radio communication with both police and firemen are maintained in this chamber. Amid a myriad of blinking, colored signal lights, the recurrent whirl of machinery transmitting signal impulses to every point in the city, and the low voices of technicians are the only sounds in the room.

On the north side of the second story is the battery room, with its floor of acid-proof quarry tile. Independent power for the city's electrical signal system is generated here.

**23** SAM HOUSTON PARK, at the foot of Dallas and Lamar Aves., the oldest of the city's 62 parks, contains within its 20 acres memorials to the veterans of four wars, and one of Houston's pioneer houses. Adjoining it is the old and neglected Episcopal-Masonic burial ground.

In a landscaped plot between the drives at the park entrance stands the CENOTAPH TO THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER, dedicated April 21, 1920, by the Houston War Mothers (in 1941, the Service Star Legion), to soldiers and sailors killed in the first World War. Placed in front of the old City Hall, this memorial was removed to its present location when that building was leased as a transportation center late in 1939. Blooms of pink and purple water lilies are visible from a rectangular fish pond near by.

Across the driveway is a granite monument erected to the memory of Alexander Hodge, American Revolutionary veteran, by the Lady Washington Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Left of the Lamar Avenue entrance are several objects of historical value, including a small concrete tower containing the BELL OF THE HARRIET LANE, Federal gunboat captured in the Battle of Galveston on January 1, 1863, by forces under Confederate Gen. J. Bankhead Magruder and Commodore Leon Smith. The bell was presented in 1903 by the Robert E. Lee Chapter, Daughters of the Confederacy.

Just how the bell was brought to Houston after the close of the Civil War is not clear, but for many months it was mounted at Fannin School and summoned students to their classes. When that institution was badly damaged by fire on December 3, 1900, the bell fell into the ruins.

The following September, the school board voted to present the relic to the Daughters of the Confederacy, with the stipulation that it should be placed in the new City Park. The contractor, who had asked \$5,000 as his price for clearing the fire debris, would not relinquish the bell, however, and much litigation resulted.

The *Houston Chronicle and Herald* of May 4, 1903, said:

The Harriet Lane Bell is now located in the City Park, duly installed in the tower. . . . The bell is used to mark the opening of the park gates

at 8 o'clock every morning, and the close at 7:30 o'clock every evening. . . . There were about 4,000 visitors yesterday.

The fate of the bell's ship is partly recounted by the *Houston Daily Post* of June 11, 1881, under a Galveston dateline:

The bark Elliott Ritchie, that entered yesterday, with a cargo of coal from Philadelphia, was once the famous revenue cutter, Harriet Lane. . . . After the Lane was repaired, she successfully ran the gauntlet of the federal blockading fleet . . . and carried a cargo of cotton to Havana for the Confederate government. The vessel remained in the Harbor of Havana until sometime after the close of the war, when she was taken to Boston, sold, and transferred into a merchantman, receiving the name she now bears.

Immediately back of the bell tower is an old cannon made in Galveston during the Civil War by boring a crude hole through a cylinder of iron. The piece never saw battle service, and for many years was used as a hitching post on Milam Street.

Near the cannon is a granite boulder commemorating Terry's Texas Rangers. It was placed here by the E. Bennett Bates Auxiliary of the Oran M. Roberts Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

To the rear of these memorials is the NOBLE MANSION (*open*), constructed shortly after the Battle of San Jacinto. In this two-story brick structure of Southern colonial design are quarters of the park caretaker, a storeroom, and public rest rooms. Old Louisiana French influence is indicated in its double verandas supported by narrow, square, brick pillars. The material for these was taken from a near-by clay bank, where Kellum's Brickyard was once operated.

At the time its construction was begun by Nathaniel K. Kellum, the house stood on a gently rolling slope of a small farm. Kellum did not complete the house, and it was not until the marriage of Mrs. Zerviah Kelly and A. W. Noble that the structure was finished. The Nobles moved into it, and for six generations members of the family occupied the mansion. In its earlier days the house had other uses, as indicated by this notice in the *Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register* of February 28, 1851:

Mrs. Z. M. Noble and Miss C. A. Kelly will open a School on Monday, Feb. 10th, at the large, airy and commodious house . . . universally known as the late residence of N. K. Kellum, for the instruction of Misses generally, and Masters under the age of twelve, in the various branches of an English education, with Drawing, Painting, Worsted Embroidery, and Music if required. Pupils wishing to board with the Teachers, can be accommodated.

At one time, according to old residents, the house was shaded by 15 live oak trees, but during the successive hurricanes that have struck the region, all the trees have been destroyed except one, which still stands near by. Its age is estimated by experts at about 300 years.

On June 21, 1899, the City purchased the first part of the park site, in-

cluding the house. On August 5, 1914, the final piece of property was obtained, the total cost being \$45,675. The Noble house was slightly remodeled, and for a time contained a historical museum. The first municipal zoo occupied a space in the rear of the building. After a few years the entire zoological collection, which had cost \$200 a month to feed, was disposed of.

West of the Noble Mansion is the DICK DOWLING MEMORIAL, in gray granite, sculptored by Frank Teich of Llano, Texas. A life-size statue of a Confederate officer surmounts it. An inscription gives the names of the members of the Davis Guards with whom Lt. Richard W. Dowling repulsed a superior Federal force at Fort Griffin, Sabine Pass, on September 8, 1863. Shamrock leaves appear at each corner. This monument formerly stood in front of the old City Hall.

Near the Walker Avenue side of the park stands THE SPIRIT OF THE CONFEDERACY, an allegorical figure in bronze by Louis Amateis, sculptor, of Washington, D. C. The memorial was unveiled by the United Daughters of the Confederacy on January 19, 1908, on the anniversary of the births of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. This winged figure, mounted on natural rocks, rests its arms on a down-turned sword, one hand clasping the palm of peace, the other holding laurels earned on the field of battle.

Just off the Lamar Avenue entrance is a children's playground. Adjoining it is the EPISCOPAL-MASONIC CEMETERY, dating from the early days of Houston. The two-acre plot, weed-grown and unkempt, was shared at first by the city with the Episcopal Church and the Masonic Order. In the cholera epidemics of 1846 and 1866 it was used indiscriminately. When scores were dying daily during those plagues, there was little ceremony attending interments. Rich and poor, Negro and white, all were buried in long, hastily dug trenches.

Although many of the headstones are broken and scattered, this ground is the resting place of some of Houston's oldest families. Some of the shafts have tumbled from their pedestals, and bushes sprout grotesquely from the broken walls of vaults. Among the old graves is that of Stephen Richardson, one of Austin's first 300 colonists, and those of his wife and her sister, both daughters of Alexander Hodge. The *Houston Chronicle* said of the cemetery, on March 1, 1938:

Among the original ones buried there were children of Mrs. Priscilla Hadley Key, grandchildren of Obedience Smith, who owned all of southwestern Houston, extending from Main west and south of Buffalo Bayou. These children also were descendants of Francis Scott Key, who wrote the Star-Spangled Banner.

Live oaks, sycamores, palmettos, and cottonwood trees provide shade for much of Sam Houston Park, but the western part of it is a wide expanse of sloping lawn.

A Sunday attendance of 4,000 was not uncommon when evening band concerts were a regular feature. Today many a motorist hurries to work through the park, almost unaware of its presence. Not so the Houstonians a-wheel in other days, as the comment of a writer in the *Houston Post* on March 28, 1937, shows:

On Sunday afternoons it was a favorite driving place of Houston's horse-and-buggy days. Visiting the park on those occasions, I have stood and witnessed in admiration the passing of shiny, new carriages of all types, American and European. One might note the English hack, the French barouche, the German landau, the low-aproned phaetons and carriages, or even the Irish dog-cart, the majority of them drawn by sleek-looking, high-prancing and thorough-bred horses.

**24.** SAM HOUSTON COLISEUM (*open 8-5 workdays, except Sat., 8-12*), 810-18 Bagby St., is the city's \$2,000,000 showhouse, convention and exhibition hall. The structure was designed by Alfred C. Finn of Houston in simple modern style. Around this edifice, which is part of the Civic Center, are landscaped grounds containing dwarf cedar, hedges, and flowering shrubs.

Approximately three stories in height, the Coliseum spreads in a trio of gigantic wings from a dominating central mass. The two in the rear, extending from street to street, form the great amphitheater seating 17,000 people. The front wing forms another small auditorium that can accommodate 2,700 spectators.

Exterior walls are faced with buff-colored bricks topped with ornamental limestone bands. Window openings are set in vertical panels. The main entrance is on Walker Avenue; another is adjacent to Bagby Street, while a third opens into the Music Hall.

The Walker Avenue lobby, reached through three sets of double doors, has walls of cream-colored tile on a darker base of the same material. In the ceiling are inverted rectangular wells from which depend three chromium and glass chandeliers. Two ticket booths of the same materials resemble oval columns, and stand near the center of the terrazzo floor. Dominating the Bagby Street lobby are walls of blue tile, rising from a black tile base to a mottled salmon ceiling.

In the great auditorium, two-tier overhanging balconies of steel and concrete slant sharply upward. Four wide concrete stairways lead to this section, where 5,500 people can be seated. In the center of the main floor is a removable oval of maple, built in 528 sections; it is adaptable for rodeos and stock shows, ice skating, dancing, or conventions. Surrounding it is a concrete floor where 12,000 chairs can be placed.

Emerging from the center of the long right wall is a stage apron from which a portable platform is projected when needed. A \$5,000 soundproof curtain separates the main assembly room from the Music Hall platform.

The MUSIC HALL (*open by permission*), in a third wing, is reached through triple-door entrances on Bagby Street. Polished marble walls rise from the terrazzo lobby floor to a gilded, paneled ceiling. Two false marble arches, imparting a massive appearance, frame the inner portals.

Beyond a low marble barrier in the rear of the theater, four square-cut pillars of reinforced concrete reach to the balcony. Walls are of deep pink stippled in silver; the ceiling is in a lighter shade. Seats are of wine-colored velour and gray

leather. Two windows on each side reach almost to the ceiling, and are covered by drapes of corresponding color.

The STOCK EXPOSITION BUILDING (*open 8-5 workdays, except Sat., 8-12*), adjoining the Coliseum on the west, is built of concrete with buff brick face and limestone trim. Ramps on both the Capitol and Walker Avenue sides serve as entrances and exits.

In June, 1928, the National Democratic Convention met in Sam Houston Hall, a pine edifice erected on the block where the Coliseum now stands. Gay banners waved over this structure; bands blared; partisans marched; the police strove for order. Finally, Franklin Delano Roosevelt nominated Alfred E. Smith for the office of President and dubbed him the "Happy Warrior."

As time passed, the edifice housed other large meetings; but finally it became a shabby shell and was torn down in 1936 to make way for a new hall. Jesse H. Jones, chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, was the central figure in the ground-breaking ceremonies on November 4, 1936. Construction was completed in time for the Houston Oil Exposition in October, 1937. Dedication services were held on November 26, during the fifty-ninth annual Texas State Teachers convention.

**25** • The HARRIS COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTS AND JAIL BUILDING (*open at all times*), 624-28 Bagby St., an eight-story, rectangular structure in Greek classic style, was designed by Wyatt C. Hedrick, Inc., of Fort Worth, and completed in the autumn of 1927 at a cost of \$750,000.

Indiana limestone walls rise from a two-story red granite course, with a Grecian fretwork belt, to a stone cornice. Above is a parapet wall with ornamental stone cresting.

On each side of the projecting main entrance are two Doric columns of polished granite supporting the entablature of the two-story, balustraded portico. On the rear façade a central, jutting pavilion extends the full height of the edifice.

Granite steps, near an immense spreading oak, lead to the main doorway. Beyond the threshold nine more steps rise to the granite floor of the lobby. From a black enameled baseboard, polished gray marble walls stretch upward and change to buff-colored plaster near the ceiling. A granite stairway at the back has a low stair enclosure of polished marble capped with stained wood.

Shell ramps at the rear of the building rise to the mezzanine floor, which serves as the entrance to the county jail. Connected with the warden's suite are temporary detention cells, a receiving room, and the elevator to the jail, which occupies the upper four stories.

Women and juvenile prisoners are held on the fourth, and the insane on the fifth floors; male prisoners are quartered on the remaining floors. On the eighth floor is a high-vaulted chapel seating 75 people, as well as an exercise room.

26. The FARMERS MARKET (*open 4 a.m.-8 p.m. workdays except Sat., 4 a.m.-10 p.m.*), 500-518 Preston Ave., on a six-acre tract between Smith St. and Buffalo Bayou, Preston and Texas Aves., was built in 1929 at a cost of \$1,250,000, to provide adequate quarters for the direct grower-to-consumer sale of Texas-grown produce.

The reinforced concrete building, with a floor area of 114,583 square feet, is a series of one-story sections built in modern industrial, open-air design. Eight roofed areas, 300 feet long, contain 318 stalls. Driveways separate the units. Rows of columns support an asphalt and gravel roof, which extends on each side to protect cars parked at the curbs of raised sidewalks. Double rows of glass skylights, set at an angle, admit a maximum of light.

The main vehicular entrance is on Preston Avenue, while an auxiliary entrance for cars and trucks is on Smith Street at the foot of Prairie Avenue. The floor of the huge mart, supported by reinforced piers, extends across the former bayou bed at an elevation slightly above street level. Underneath is space for parking and storage.

Rest rooms, offices, and a restaurant occupy the northeast side of the edifice, while certain parts of the remainder are reserved for Harris County growers. The rest is restricted to farmers, members of their families or employees, who have grown the products in Texas. Venders pay the market master 25 cents for morning or afternoon sales periods.

Long before dawn, farmers of many nationalities arrange their stalls and lay out food products for early buyers. Loading trucks and cars with fruit and vegetables, they must reach their destination at four o'clock in the morning to obtain the best stalls. All kinds of fruit and vegetables in season, as well as poultry, are offered for sale.

Housewives, maids, and buyers for hotels, restaurants, boarding houses, clubs and small shops, rub elbows as they shop. Much trading by the truck-load is done between growers and jobbers, while many wholesale houses from other States send agents to this market. Growers set their own prices, the market management exercising no control over charges.

The Farmers Market traces its story back to the first days of Houston, when Augustus C. and John K. Allen set aside the block then bounded by Travis and Milam Streets and Preston and Congress Avenues for a public market. Houston's first market house was a canvas-covered frame structure erected about 1839 by the Rosseau brothers on Preston Avenue, with a front on Market Square. These two Frenchmen dealt chiefly in game, vegetables, wild fruits, and berries. Within a short time a big shed under municipal control was erected on the square. This served as a public establishment for selling food products, and as a general gathering place. Thomas F. Gravis, the first market master, received a half of all fees he collected.

During four decades, quarters for the market were provided on the ground floor of the City Hall. Fruit and vegetable venders were also permitted

to use the sidewalks and curbs. This "Curb Market," established in 1870, was convenient; but sun, rain, and wind interfered with business.

As Houston grew, the center became inadequate. By 1924 the market was so badly congested that farmers and housewives were clamoring for more suitable accommodations. City officials studied the problem, and the present site was selected. The city engineering department designed this centrally located market for convenience, sanitation, and future expansion.

The work of clearing and straightening the bayou and grading its banks for bulkheads and retaining walls began in 1927. The mart was completed and officially opened to the public on March 21, 1929.

By 1930 the Farmers Market had proved its value both to the people of Houston and to growers of the territory. On September 20 of that year, 30,000 purchasers bought 603 truckloads of produce valued at approximately \$20,000. In 1931 more than \$500,000 worth of products were sold in the market. By 1941 a widespread increase in vegetable and fruit production in Harris County had resulted, establishing Houston as a produce center.

**27.** The GRAND CENTRAL STATION (*open 5:30 a.m.-12 midnight, daily*), 329 Franklin Ave., is the most modern of Houston's three railroad terminals. Wyatt C. Hedrick, Inc., of Houston and Fort Worth, designed this modernistic building, which was completed in 1934. Total cost of the land, building, trackage, train sheds, rearranging streets, work on the bayou, and paving was \$4,347,000, about equally divided between the Southern Pacific Lines and the City of Houston.

The exterior is of Texas Cordova cream-colored limestone on a base of Texas pink granite. The central unit, four stories high, forms the dominant feature, depending largely upon its mass formation for proportion. In the lower center five two-story circle-headed openings are flanked by the two main entrances. Around each of the latter is an architrave of black polished granite. On each side of the main central mass are pyramided, two- and three-story wings. Along the front is a sidewalk shaded by a concrete awning. All sections are distinguished by vertical pilasters and set-backs in the parapet walls, which give a graduated tier effect to the proportion of the building. Roofs are flat.

The main waiting room is a large two-story chamber. The station floors are of marble and terrazzo with marble wainscoting, above which is cream-colored marble with segmental arches in all the openings. Wood trimmings are of black walnut. The vaulted ceiling has two glass star-formation fixtures as the only ornaments. In large circle-headed panels at each end decorative murals depict two early Texas historic events. One represents Stephen F. Austin, Baron de Bastrop and a group of Texas colonists in 1823, with a vista of the present Texas Capitol in the background. The other depicts Gen. Sam Houston entering the new town of Houston in 1837, with a background of the present city and harbor. The paintings are by John McQuarrie of San Francisco.



The area covered by the Grand Central Station, its terminal tracks, switching yards, and the parkways that lie about it, includes the site of Henke's Wagon Yard, a campsite established during the 1870's as an adjunct to Henke's New Orleans Store, which was at 807 Congress Avenue. Henry Henke founded his emporium in 1872. As the business grew, he bought cotton. Soon he realized that facilities must be provided for out-of-town customers, and the wagon yard came into existence. Men were stationed on the main roads to direct farmers to this convenient camping place.

This section, where streamlined trains now glide, reverberated to the rumble of wagon wheels and the clatter of hoofs as the traders and their families came to barter. Persons isolated on farms and ranches stayed for days and indulged in the pleasures of snuff, chewing tobacco, and other luxuries, before returning home with great hogsheads of flour, bacon, molasses, and huge sides of salt meat.

As the town grew, the wagon yard was encroached upon by the tenement houses and shacks of notorious Vinegar Hill, of which Tin Can Alley was the main thoroughfare. The elevation was named for the hordes of vinegarroons that infested it. Here ruled dusky Caroline Riley, otherwise known as Queen Caroline, the one-eyed terror of the Hill. She governed with a rod of iron. Big Foot Jen, Charley Johnson, Lillie Rivers and Julia Baker were her lieutenants. This group put down frequent rebellions, sometimes with teeth and claws; when necessary with knives and six shooters.

One by one, the tough characters disappeared from the section, with the assistance of the queen or of an impartial justice of the peace. At length Queen Caroline died, and on April 5, 1881, the section was sold at public auction to make way for improvements contemplated by the Houston and Texas Central Railroad.

By the end of 1887, a new \$80,000 Central Depot was completed and was described by the *Houston Daily Post* as "the finest . . . in the South." The three-story brick edifice was remodeled twice, in 1906, and again in 1914.

First plans for the present building were formulated at a meeting held in May, 1929 by city and railroad officials. They necessitated rearrangement and widening of streets and the razing of an entire business block. Construction began in May, 1933.

The station opened on September 1, 1934, and was officially dedicated on September 15. Among the guests were five descendants of Gen. Sidney Sherman, pioneer builder of the railroad that later became part of the Southern Pacific Lines.

**28.** The LONGCOPE HOUSE (*private*), 109 Chenevert St., an interesting example of French colonial design, is a two-story, brick and stucco structure with elaborate wrought iron trims. Its crumbling dignity still reflects the pretentiousness that once made it one of Houston's finest houses. While suggesting the frontier influence, its veranda with iron railings is like many of the

finest New Orleans examples. A two-story frame annex adjoins the old brick house, at the rear.

Today the property is hemmed in by manufactories, warehouses, freight yards, small stores, and dilapidated dwellings. This vicinity was Houston's outskirts when the Longcope house was built; today it is a semi-industrial and jobbing center.

Since the site is near the southern boundary of old Germantown, Michael Floeck, native German and resident of Houston for 20 years, decided to build a house here for his son. The elder Floeck bought the property from W. R. Baker on February 17, 1859, built a brick house, and on the following November 22 deeded it to his son Peter, then 25 years of age. The place was his home until Charles S. Longcope, who had been captain of a Mississippi River boat, purchased it on January 3, 1865. Captain Longcope first came to Texas about 1840, and participated in the Santa Fe and Mier expeditions. In Houston he became a cotton factor and commission merchant.

He preserved the distinctive lines of the house, but added a veranda for which the iron railings were bought in New Orleans. In the early 1870's he built a two-story frame annex, with a huge dining room that occupied the entire first floor, and was noted for his hospitality. He owned a private library of 1,000 volumes. He and E. H. Cushing are credited with having brought the first dahlias and Japanese persimmons to Houston for cultivation.

When the conclusion of the Civil War freed the dozen Negroes who had long been a part of the household, the master called his former slaves about him, and as he stood at the front door read the proclamation that gave them their freedom. He gave each a building lot in the Fourth Ward. Silently, the Negroes listened. Still silent, they walked back to their quarters. There they discussed their new freedom, the younger ones enthusiastic, their elders doubtful. Three of the young Negroes packed their belongings and left. The others told the captain that they wanted to continue as his slaves. They stayed here until after their master's death, 16 years later.

Captain Longcope was a founder of the Houston Cotton Exchange and its first president, an organizer and a director of the Houston Direct Navigation Company, vice president of the Houston Exchange Bank, and a stockholder and director of early railroads. He died in 1881. The heirs sold the old homestead to W. Herral in 1888. Since then the property has changed hands a number of times.

**29.** ST. VINCENT'S CEMETERY, 307 N. Buffalo St., is Houston's oldest Roman Catholic burial ground. Less than an acre in area, it is best known as the last resting place of Lt. Richard W. Dowling, Confederate hero of the Battle of Sabine Pass.

The Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe and its rectory, respectively at 2405 and 2407 Navigation Boulevard, adjoin the cemetery to the west.

Only headstones and monuments, many of them in decay, are left to identify this spot as a burial place of the nineteenth century. Storms have displaced markers, broken fences enclosing family lots, and blown down trees.

The Church of St. Vincent de Paul, in which the Rev. J. M. Odin celebrated Mass for the first time in 1842, stood at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street. Early in the 1850's the congregation raised a fund and purchased a tract for burial purposes from the Kennedy estate. Each subscriber was given a lot for family use. The earliest year inscribed on any tombstone is 1853, the date carved over the gate.

When Texas entered the Confederacy the Davis Guards, most of them Roman Catholics of Irish ancestry, were organized in Houston. Among the officers was Lieutenant Dowling, who with approximately two score men successfully defeated superior Federal forces at Sabine Pass. He died in 1867 of yellow fever and was buried in St. Vincent's Cemetery with many other victims of the epidemic. Few graves were permanently marked and in addition, the hurricanes of 1900 and 1915 destroyed marks that would have preserved identities.

In May, 1871, the City of Houston condemned St. Vincent's Cemetery as a burial ground after protests had been made by owners of adjacent property. Roman Catholics then secured a section of the new Glenwood Cemetery for their use. Only those families who owned plots and who secured permission from the bishop were allowed to use the old burial ground.

Subsequently, little attention was paid to maintenance until 1920, when the Rev. George T. Walsh raised funds to restore and beautify the spot. In 1935, B. P. Panas of Houston gave a granite monument for the Dowling grave, and a base marker was given by the American Legion. On November 2, the monument was unveiled by Mrs. Annie Dowling Robertson, only surviving child of the Dowlings. The exact location of the grave is unknown.

**30.** The DANIEL AND EDITH RIPLEY FOUNDATION CENTER (*open 7 a.m.-10 p.m. workdays; Sun. by arrangement*), 4401 Lovejoy Ave., a modern two-story structure covering two acres of a seven-acre fenced playground, is constructed of concrete, tile, and steel, and is faced with shell stone. Houston's newest neighborhood center and the largest social welfare project of four such centers in the city, Ripley House, as it is called locally, was completed in March, 1940, at a cost of \$380,000. Birdsall P. Briscoe and Maurice J. Sullivan of Houston were the architects. The large center was formally opened on April 14, 1940. Conducted as a nonpolitical and nonsectarian institution, it serves as a focal point for community social and health activities.

From a cylindrical-like central section, two wings extend at a slightly forward angle to form the principal façade of the structure. Bands of windows extend almost completely across the wings at both floor levels, while on the walls of the central unit, vertical openings reach nearly to the roof line. Steps to the lobby entrances follow the same curved contour. The lobby is fashioned along modern lines, faced with cream-colored tile and trimmed in metal. The color scheme is

cream with a dash of red and blue. The registration desk is of glass bricks.

Opening from the lobby are clubrooms and a BRANCH LIBRARY (*open Mon. 2-8:30; Tues., Wed., Fri. 7-9:30; Thurs. 2-8:30*), which is normally supplied with about 2,000 books from the Houston Public Library. The books are rotated to give a wider selection to patrons. Ample space is provided for reading and study.

Provision is made by the foundation for recreational, educational, and health activities for children and adults. The building contains a playroom and sickroom for nursery school children, an auditorium with stage facilities, numbers of meeting rooms and game rooms, woodworking and pottery shops, a men's clubroom, a sewing room for mothers, and a gymnasium.

The gymnasium is equipped with basketball courts, including two for practice; volley ball, badminton, and table tennis courts, an indoor baseball diamond, and folding bleachers. Boys, girls, and adults have organized gymnasium activities.

The auditorium seats 350 people. Adjacent to the large stage are dressing rooms for the cast, and a workshop for making stage scenery. A fireproof room has a motion picture and sound machine.

Instruction is given in playing orchestral instruments and piano, and in chorus singing. Emphasis is placed upon children's bands, harmonica groups, and choruses. In dramatics, the writing and producing of simple plays are encouraged. Work in stagecraft, lighting, and costuming is offered. There are classes in folk, tap, and ballroom dancing.

Arts and crafts courses include pottery making, drawing, weaving, needlework, and leather work.

A large part of the program is devoted to the development of friendship groups in the neighborhood. Facilities are available for the meetings of local groups of national organizations and various civic bodies, as well as for strictly local units.

The men's clubroom has game tables, a piano, and a kitchenette containing an electric refrigerator. In a sewing room for mothers are sewing machines, cutting tables, and game tables.

Cooperation in social play and the development of proper habits in health and eating are taught the pre-school-age child in the nursery. Children are cared for from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on five days a week in the large and splendidly appointed nursery department. In connection with the nursery school, mothers clubs have been formed for the discussion of child training, home hygiene, cooking, and sewing.

Health activities of the Ripley House are headed by a capable physician who serves full time. House members have the privilege of regular physical examinations. The health program has for its purpose the discovery of defects or diseases in their early stages before they have become social or economic handicaps. The program offers advice only, and not treatment. This program enables patrons to select the type of recreation for which they are fitted.

Frequent informal talks are given on the subject of health. The Visiting

Nurse Association has an office in the Ripley House. Though the center operates in a general way in conjunction with neighborhood churches and schools, in its health program it functions in specific cooperation with Hermann Hospital, Jefferson Davis Hospital, the Anti-Tuberculosis League, and the city health department.

A well-equipped and extensive playground is divided into sections for the older and younger children. A fence protects children from street traffic.

The Ripley Foundation Center was made possible by a trust fund of approximately \$1,000,000, contributed by Daniel and Edith Ripley "for the betterment of the community." The center is operated by the Houston Settlement Association, a Community Chest agency, under the direction of a board of trustees.

Ripley, who died in 1921, was a prominent businessman of Houston and a generous contributor to charities. Mrs. Ripley, who died in 1934, was also active in community welfare work. Of the initial bequest, more than \$750,000 remained in 1941 for the maintenance of the center.

**31.** The HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL TURNING BASIN, foot of 75th St., is the teeming, salty port of land-locked Houston. Here prairies and pines meet sea birds and sailors. Here the oil and cotton, salt and grain of Texas' rich lands are loaded in ships that sail fifty miles down a man-made channel to the open Gulf.

New as the lusty city upstream, modern as the streamlined motorships berthed at its piers, the Turning Basin is yet as old as the sea. Port Houston could not have become one of America's greatest ports without acquiring the color and flavor of all the oceans. The wind is salt, pungent with the smell of oil and rope and smoke; the skyline beyond is fretted with masts and stacks; and the passers-by, the loiterers before the beer "joints," the workers in dungarees hurrying to the piers, speak many languages.

To the stranger, if he has approached it through residential sections, rather than along Navigation or Harrisburg Boulevards, the Turning Basin appears incongruous. He has been driving past ordered rows of workers' houses, across a lush prairie where tall pines stand. He has seen palms and bougainvillea growing in yards, and cows grazing in vacant lots.

But at 75th Street salt stings the air. Signs over the doors of business houses begin to take on a nautical flavor: The Canal Hotel . . . Seaport Cafe . . . Turning Basin Garage . . . Port Terminal Hotel . . . Seaman's Church Institute . . . New Harbor Hotel . . . Houston Boatmen's Association . . . Anchor Cafe . . . Neptune Store. The cafes, restaurants, and "joints" are redolent, noisy, and equipped for hard use. Each has its "juke box," blaring with the current melodies of the workingman's hit parade. Many shops and stores cater to seamen, offering sea boots, dungarees, oilskins, singlets, sea bags, cheap "shore clothes," and mosquito nets for foc's'le bunks. Cigarettes and tobacco are sold by the carton, for ocean voyages from Port Houston are long. At the Seamen's Home and the Union hiring halls groups of men "on the beach," both white and Negro, roll

cigarettes and boast of their water-front exploits while waiting to "sign on" another ship.

Nautical 75th Street ends abruptly at a pierhead, between the headquarters of the police harbor patrol and a cavernous warehouse. Fireboats, tugs, pilot boats, sightseeing launches, and Revenue Service cutters are often tied here; beyond lies the sweep of tidewater. White gulls dive and bank overhead. The basin is more than a fifth of a mile across, with a depth of 34 feet. On the opposite shore the white towers of the public grain elevator, with a capacity of 3,500,000 bushels, rise as high as some of Main Street's proudest office buildings.

At the west side of the Turning Basin, near a small boat yard, Buffalo Bayou continues into the heart of the city, a lesser waterway for barges and pleasure craft. Beyond the shallow-draft watercourse, across the trestle of the Public Belt Railroad that serves the entire basin area, are concrete piers and modern warehouses, railroad cars, electric cranes, and loading areas for motor trucks. Downstream, timbered and concrete piers border the channel, serving warehouses, refineries, and industrial plants that line the waterway for 25 miles.

Altogether, 15 publicly owned wharves line the basin, providing berths for 18 ships. A large proportion of Piers 1 to 15 often are turbulent with the peculiarly dramatic activities of loading or unloading ships. Cargoes are shifted rapidly nowadays, so the basin at times is almost empty of ships, or those with shore-lines still out may be filled, battened, and waiting for clearance. From the moment a ship's lines are made fast ashore, everything possible is done to expedite cargo handling and to avoid demurrage, especially on passenger-freight vessels. One "lay day" may cost an owner hundreds of dollars. If a ship is to take on cargo, its booms and tackle are already unslung before tying up. If she is a proud ship, her officers have on their port uniforms; and the seamen are overside on stages or standing in skiffs, chipping her sides or painting them with red lead — which is not red, but bright orange.

But the sailor's work in port is dwarfed by the tremendous labors of the longshoremen. These huskies, both white and Negro, must work fast, and must be strong of back and arm. The boss longshoreman, a barrel-chested person with a voice loud enough to be heard over the rattle of the ship's winches, the clatter of hand-trucks on the pier floor, and the singing and shouting of his dock-wallopers, drives his men like engines. Sweat soaks their dungarees and drips from their naked shoulders. The hardest work is in the hold, where cases, boxes, and bales are stowed in the smallest possible space under the watchful eye of a ship's officer. On shore, men fill the cargo sling from their trucks and hook the load on the "whip;" the "header" waves his hand, or a hoarse voice cries, "Take it away!" and the donkey engine screams. The winchman, the artist of the stevedores, pulls his newly greased levers and pawls, and lifts each load clear in a high arc, dropping it into the hatch with a sudden rattle of gears. As the hours pass, the ship settles inch by inch into the water.

If the outgoing cargo happens to be cotton, the display of skill and muscle is an unforgettable sight. For some reason, Negroes use their cotton hooks

on the compressed bales with a rhythm and beauty of movement that the white longshoreman cannot imitate. This skill they describe as a "slight." Dimmed by the cacophony but never silenced, the singing of the Negro workers goes on until the cargo is stowed:

Ah loves mah Houston baby,  
 Ah loves mah Houston baby,  
 She pats me on the head  
 And says, 'Baby, go to bed.'  
 Ah loves mah Houston baby. . . .

Other cargoes, such as grain and scrap iron, are handled differently. Wheat flows into ships' bottoms through conveyors with a minimum of human labor. Scrap iron loading is done with huge electro-magnetic cranes. Second to cotton, general cargoes seem most interesting to pierhead spectators. Foods, drugs, beer, tools, lumber, steel, chemicals, and hundreds of other commodities are carried on the rails of ship lines in the Turning Basin district; the exotic odors of such cargoes as molasses and fir shingles, mingling with the pungent smell of oil and bilge, are one of the basin's charms.

The ships tied at the slips and docks are as varied in character as the peoples of the world. There are rusty and dirty coastwise freighters, great clumsy Hog Island ships, sleek, fast cargo-passenger vessels, and less frequently nowadays, sail-rigged ships. They fly the flags of many nations. Names and ports of register painted on bow and foc's'le are words to inspire any landsman with wanderlust. This representative list of foreign ships normally at Port Houston appeared in the *Houston Post's* Marine Calendars:

Bruxelles . . . . .	Belgian
El Candado . . . . .	Spanish
Gerrassimos Vergotti . . . . .	Greek
Mongioia . . . . .	Italian
18 de Marzo . . . . .	Mexican
Baja California . . . . .	Honduran
Jumna . . . . .	British
Britamsea . . . . .	Norwegian

Foreign ships have brought many strange sights, such as British freighters bristling with anti-aircraft guns and Y-guns in 1941. Houstonians remember Japanese ships whose crews never set foot ashore, living aboard with their families; and they recall at least one Russian vessel with several "seawomen" among the crew.

For the hardier sightseer and the seeker after the bizarre, the Turning Basin has much to offer. Night-life along the water front is lively, and international in flavor.

Sailors are often masterly, if bombastic spinners of yarns, relating many such a salty anecdote as this:

The reason there ain't no drydock in Houston is they had one once, but the foist mate was deaf, sec. So the ship was going into drydock,

sec, and the old man was on the bridge with his megaphone, and he sung out: 'Let go the starb'rd anchor!' So he let her go. The anchor knocked a bloomin' big hole in the drydock, and she started sinking. The old man called the chief everything from a barnacle on down, but the chief was deaf, and he thought the old man said, 'Let go the port anchor.' So he let her go, and the drydock went down, and the crew had to go overside in their underwear and scrape the bottom and paint her under the drink.

Souvenirs of the Turning Basin are not as plentiful as the gewgaws the visitor finds at beach resorts. But if he lingers long enough among the haunts of the seamen he probably will be approached by a swarthy man wearing long mustaches and a fez. The peddler will be carrying, often under his coat, a small bundle of Oriental style rugs or tapestries, claimed to be genuine, which he will display with something of the subtlety of the East — offering them, of course, for sale. Some of the seamen's stores have *objets d'art* from the far corners of the earth.

Seamen's needs are peculiar, varied, and often picturesque. Most of them can be filled within the sound of the ship's whistle echoing from the basin. The landsman too can find many things of interest along Houston's water front. And if the call of the sea becomes too strong to resist, there are stores near the Turning Basin whose proprietors earn small commissions from freighters' masters who are willing to take on a supercargo passenger for Singapore, Paramaribo, or the Antipodes.

**32.** The MILBY HOUSE (*private*), 614 Broadway, is a typical plantation style structure surrounded by spreading oaks hung with Spanish moss. The yard is lined with neat flower beds and winding walks; a brick fence is topped with an iron railing.

Built in 1864 on the crest of a gentle slope, the first structure was a long, two-story wooden house, to which a brick mansion was added in 1885 by Charles H. Milby. The old part was remodeled and used for a kitchen. The bricks have since been covered with concrete blocks. Wide galleries on two sides terminate in a glassed conservatory. More than 100 shutters cover long French windows.

At the time of its erection the house was in the pioneer town of Harrisburg, then a busy village, now a Houston suburb. Its business and industrial district lay along Buffalo Bayou, beside the railroad shops and wharves. From the upper gallery of the Milby house stern-wheel and side-wheel boats could be seen as they plied industriously on the bayou to and from Houston and the coast, carrying passengers and cargo.

Diminutive locomotives with Mother Hubbard stacks hissed and puffed as they passed, pulling their trains of freight and travelers. Ox- and mule-drawn wagons and horse-drawn buggies plodded down the long dusty street.

Not far from the Milby house a narrow wooden bridge spanned Bray's Bayou on the road to Houston. The clatter of hoofs and of steel-rimmed wheels



resounded above the steady hum of near-by sawmills on the bayou banks; those little mills made lumber of pine logs that were floated down the stream.

Mrs. Milby's father, John Grant Tod, was a stockholder in Texas' first railroad company, the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado. For a while it seemed that this enterprise would make Harrisburg a bustling city. In 1870, when the line became a part of the Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio Railroad and its shops were removed to Houston, Harrisburg's population was sharply reduced almost overnight. Many of the railroad employees tore their houses down, carried the materials to Houston in wagons, and rebuilt them in the neighborhood of the Southern Pacific shops.

Broadway, in the neighborhood of the Milby house, was even then an unusually wide thoroughfare, and people walked along a footpath in its center. When the street was paved, an esplanade for pedestrians remained. Before this was removed, merchants with places of business along the route frequently protested against parking vehicles at the curb, claiming that pedestrians could not see the shop windows. Years later when the grass-covered esplanade was paved, it was used for parking.

Today the upper gallery of the Milby house affords a commanding view of the Houston Ship Channel, and the old dwelling stands in the center of an industrial section far in excess of the wildest dreams of those who were building Harrisburg 75 or 100 years ago. The old-time muddy or dusty road, with its central pedestrian lane, has become a wide paved thoroughfare over which passes an unceasing stream of motor traffic. The former wooden bridge has been replaced with a wide concrete and steel span.

In this changed scene the Milby house remains an imposing and dignified structure after more than three-quarters of a century.

**33.** The SITE OF THE HARRIS HOUSE, on a weed-covered lot on the W. side of Frio St. between Elm and Erath Aves., one block E. of Broadway, contains today only the curb of a brick cistern. Here, more than a century ago, stood the mansion of the busy little port town of Harrisburg. The first house on this site, built in 1833, was the headquarters of David Burnet's cabinet and thus the seat of government of the Republic of Texas from March 24 to April 13, 1836. When the Mexican army burned Harrisburg that year, the Harris house was destroyed; rebuilt after the Texas Revolution, it was a widely known center of hospitality for a half century.

When John Richardson Harris sailed from New Orleans in his own ship in 1823, he visited several sites before he selected this one at the junction of Bray's and Buffalo Bayous for a trading post. On the crest of a hill some 200 yards from the water he planned to build a large house, but died in New Orleans in 1829 before the house was started. His family in New York had expected to join him when living conditions in the village improved. On Harris' death his widow at length decided to see the town her husband had founded and with her son, DeWitt Clinton, arrived at the boat landing in 1833; her brothers-in-law and

Robert Wilson were managing the estate. She found the port of Harrisburg busy, and near by stood the sawmill.

Mrs. Harris decided to build a house on the site her husband had selected. Adele B. Looscan wrote, in *The Pioneer. Harris of Harris County*, "The site was all that could be desired. The front piazza afforded a fine view of the Bayou, whose bank on the opposite side was clothed to the water's edge with beautiful magnolia trees."

Less than three years later the house became the temporary capitol of the Republic; soon the residents of Harrisburg were forced to flee before the advancing Mexican army. Mrs. Harris went first to Lynchburg and then to Galveston, where she was joined by another son, Lewis Birdsall. Here they heard the news of the Texan victory at San Jacinto. Returning to Harrisburg on May 1, 1836, they found only one building standing, a place called the Farmer's House. It was far out on the prairie and was dilapidated; the Harrises lived in a tent under a magnolia tree on the banks of the bayou until it was repaired. Soon they were rebuilding on the site of the house the Mexicans had burned. Mexican prisoners, several of whom had aided in the destruction of Harrisburg, were forced to help roll logs into place for the new residence which Lewis Harris described as similar to his grandfather's old house in New York State. It stood on large oak blocks; both hand-hewn and sawed logs were used for flooring and boards. Timber was rafted to Lynchburg to the nearest sawmill. Lewis Harris wrote, in a diary published by the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*:

We . . . [made] 4 pens and a passage until we got it to the proper height for the first story when we cut out logs the full length 56 and 36 feet, determined to have one room the full size of the house. The roof consisted of peeled pine poles hewed on one side, with split laths on which we laid split boards 3 feet long.

The kitchen was about 18 by 20 feet, with a loft and a large fireplace with a mud-cat chimney. Here the family lived until the main part of the house was completed.

According to Mrs. Looscan, the logs were weatherboarded in later years and the interior was ceiled and papered. Soon a second story was added; around three sides of the house were great verandas, in Texas called galleries. Mrs. Looscan recorded:

While this enlargement was going on, DeWitt Clinton Harris in New York City purchased the doors and windows of the former home of Governor Tomkins, and shipped them to Harrisburg for use in the home. . . . The doors were heavy, handsomely panelled, and served admirably for the four large rooms and hall downstairs. The windows fitted the openings in the same rooms. . . . The doorknobs were of brass and corresponded with the brass and irons in the large parlor fireplace. A spacious garret completed the main building. It was provided with two large windows at each gable. . . . Its store of useful articles made it a boon to the family during the War Between the States.

After Andrew Briscoe's abortive attempt in 1840 to construct the Harrisburg & Brazos Railroad, it seemed that Harrisburg's trade was doomed, and the house was advertised in the *Morning Star* of January 7, 1841:

To Rent — Large and commodious house at Harrisburg, well adapted to a house of entertainment, having four large rooms and a hall on the ground floor, twelve good bedrooms on the second floor, and . . . suitable outhouses. . . . Apply to L. B. Harris or A. Briscoe on the premises.

Harrisburg had its heyday when the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado Railroad was completed in 1853. The town now had a steam mill, several stores, and three good hotels, one of which was the Harris House. The fine old residence had been converted into a hotel where railroad officials and other prominent men were entertained by a hospitable tavern keeper. Conveniently located but a few hundred feet from the new railroad station, machine shops, and railway yards, near the busy docks, and just off the dusty main road to Houston, the Harris House stood at the crossroads of rail, water, and overland traffic. Sailboats and steam packets docked close to the hostelry's front gallery; the new steam engines with their diminutive boilers and large wheels puffed along just south of the inn. "This point," said the *Galveston News*, ". . . presents an example of the fruits of industry, and well directed enterprise. . . . Travelers . . . cannot fail to enjoy the good cheer of Harrisburg."

During the Civil War soldiers were cared for in the Harris House, and tired troops straggling home were urged to stop and rest.

Mrs. Harris died in 1869, and for a few years some of her children lived in the house, which at length was rented. Fire caused by a defective flue destroyed the building on October 11, 1888, and the site has since been vacant.

**34.** GLENDALE CEMETERY, foot of Magnolia Ave., off Broadway, is the oldest burial ground in Houston, established some time after Harrisburg was laid out in 1826. This small plot of six acres lies along the banks of Buffalo Bayou, just opposite Brady Island. Huge live oaks, gray with Spanish moss, old magnolias, cedars, and pines cast deep shade in this spot that lingers between railroad tracks, petroleum storage tanks, and industrial plants along the ship channel.

Screened from the busy channel by the trees are headstones marking the graves of many Harris County pioneers. Among them are John Grant Tod, 1808-1877, one of the builders of the first railroad in Harris County; William Armstead Hume, 1846-1874, who served in Sibley's Brigade in the Confederate army, and John Birdsall, attorney general of Texas, who died in 1839. Here also is the burial plot of the Samuel L. Allen family.

Near the former main channel of Buffalo Bayou is the burial plot of the Harris family. Here a granite monument commemorates John Richardson Harris, founder of Harrisburg, who died in New Orleans of yellow fever in 1829. His

son, John R. Harris, is buried in the family lot, as are other members of the family.

Near the fence that borders the Houston Belt & Terminal Railway, stands a granite monument erected by the United States-Texas Centennial Commission in 1936 to indicate the site of Gen. Sidney Sherman's residence. The three-room house—long since destroyed—commanded a view of the bayou. Built in the early 1830's, it served as Sherman's military headquarters and a shelter for wounded soldiers in 1836, according to tradition.

Visible between a fringe of trees that border the bayou are the remains of the Port of Harrisburg, where once the Harris sloops and schooners arrived and departed.

**35.** VILLA DE MATEL, 6510 Lawndale Ave., is a training school for nuns and a mother house of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Its 74 acres of landscaped grounds have winding drives that lead to secluded garden spots. Maurice J. Sullivan of Houston designed the buildings.

The Villa is the mother house for mission convents in Houston, Galveston, Beaumont, Port Arthur, and Temple, in Texas, and for others in Louisiana, Arkansas, California, and Ireland. About 100 nuns and novices of the Order reside in Villa de Matel. An event of importance to local Roman Catholics, first held here in 1928, is the Feast of Christ the King.

In a setting of tall pines and oaks, the CONVENT (*open 2-5 Thurs. and Sun.*), occupies a three-story structure of Byzantine-Romanesque design. Wings project at right angles from each end of the broad front, and low towers rise at the crossing above the sloping purple and green slate roof. Semi-rough bricks varying in color from warm grays to glazed crockery browns are used in intricate patterns for facing; gray limestone trim and belt courses, marble modillions and brilliant spots of highly colored tile, form a pleasing contrast. Centered at the front of the building a single-story, open-arch portico above broad stone steps leads to a pair of wrought iron gates at the entrance. The vestibule, 20 feet square, paved with black and white marble, has walls of Caen stone. Woodwork is American walnut. The Most Rev. P. Fumasoni-Biondi laid the cornerstone of the building in 1925.

A two-story covered arcade leads to the CONVENTUAL CHAPEL (*open 9-4 daily*), directly south of the main building. Here occurs a free use of the Byzantine in elaborate brickwork with generous stone trim and arched openings, the semicircular outlines of the apse, a clerestory with set-back roof, and a 117-foot bell tower. Rising from a square base near the southeast corner, the shaft is crowned with an open-arched belfry adorned with eight small pilasters of stone and a gold cross. From the narthex, with marble floor and Caen stone walls, doors open into the main chapel, a long, vaulted room with side altars in marble and Venetian mosaic set in domed ceiling niches at the ends of cloistered aisles. Casement windows occur in bays along the passageways, with large ornamental stationary windows above. The floor is of marble. To the top of the

cornice, the walls are of a warm, rosy tint, with decorative symbols and pictures in concrete mosaic by the John J. Earley Studios of Washington, D. C. Twelve marble columns support the clerestory, and are of six kinds of marble. Rising 50 feet above the floor of the nave is a full-arched barrel ceiling with segmental arches over the side aisles. Acoustic tiles cover the vaulted surfaces. Marble steps lead to the semicircular sanctuary. The low main altar, of early Italian design, is constructed of rich colored marbles and Venetian mosaic. At the rear of the choir loft is a rose window. Sacristy rooms and private rooms for the chaplain are to the right and left of the sanctuary.

Other buildings of the Villa include a greenhouse, a utilities house west of the chapel, and a dairy barn.

**36.** The UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON (*open 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 8 a.m.-12 m. Sat.; all year*), 4901 St. Bernard St., is a municipal, co-educational Class A college operated under the direction of the Board of Education of the Houston Independent School District. The three buildings, of modified modern architecture, with red tile roofs, were designed by Lamar Q. Cato of Houston. Native trees and shrubs grow profusely on the 112-acre campus. These are the first units of a building program that in 1941 called for 20 similar structures, and for extensive recreational and cultural facilities.

East from St. Bernard Street, a red gravel road leads into the grounds to large parking courts, and joins other drives that encircle the property. In the middle of the central quadrangle is a reflection pool, walled with Texas shell limestone and bordered by walks. Grass, flowers, and shrubs adorn the court, and benches in novel designs are spaced conveniently in the area. At the north-east corner is a 60-foot flagpole.

South of the pool is the ROY GUSTAV CULLEN MEMORIAL BUILDING (*open 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 8 a.m.-12 m. Sat.*), occupied by the School of Liberal Arts and Culture. The first of the university buildings to be erected, it forms the southern boundary of the central quadrangle. Of reinforced concrete and hollow tile, faced with Texas limestone, the structure is 364 feet long and 54 feet wide. The two-story edifice, flanked by single floor wings at each end, has one- and two-story wings jutting from the main section. Insets for windows at regular intervals give a columnar illusion to the plain walls, which rise slightly above the roof line to end in a simple cornice. The main entrance is in the base of a three-story tower near the center of the building, and overlooks the pool. Other entrances are on the south side.

Within the building are 21 classrooms providing seats for 790 students, and two lecture rooms, each with a capacity of 250 persons. Construction began March 31, 1938, and was completed the following year. The cost was \$350,000. The building was erected by means of a \$335,000 gift of Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Cullen, as a memorial to their son.

Through the program of an organization called the Friends of the University

of Houston, it is planned to add approximately 1,500 volumes annually to the 12,000-volume library.

Directly opposite the reflection pool is the SCIENCE BUILDING (*open daylight hours, Mon.-Sat.*), forming the north boundary of the central quadrangle. Of modern architecture and faced with Texas limestone, the two-story structure is designed to harmonize with the earlier building. Wings and offsets break the monotony of long walls void of other ornamentation. The main entrance faces the pool. The Science Building contains 15 laboratories large enough to accommodate a total of 300 students, and has one lecture room, and five classrooms. The unit cost \$282,000, of which 45 per cent was a Public Works Administration grant. The hall was completed in the autumn of 1939.

Newest of the units is the INDUSTRIAL BUILDING (*open workdays*), northeast of the central quadrangle. The first of a six-structure center planned for industrial training in a proposed north quadrangle, the one-story building harmonizes in design with the other edifices and, like them, is finished in Texas limestone. Over-all dimensions are 310 feet by 150 feet.

Following the industrial style, windows almost completely encircle the building. Its central façade is marked by a low tower rising a few feet above the tile roof of the long wings that extend in unbroken simplicity to moderate offsets near each end. The main entrance is in the base of the tower. Approximately 75 per cent of the total 40,000 square feet of floor space is devoted to three large shops, and the remainder to laboratories and classrooms. The building will accommodate 350 students.

Several Houston industrial concerns and the university contributed \$127,385 to the construction of the building, and the Work Projects Administration supplied \$52,745. The primary purpose of this unit is to train students for technical work in plants of companies supplying the building funds. Courses are planned to give general shop training to new students, as well as advanced or specific training to employed workers seeking to increase their efficiency.

In 1941, a \$183,000 recreation project was started at the south end of the campus. Included were a student activities building, tennis courts, walks, landscaping, and lighting improvements.

The powerhouse is a small, one-story building east of the central quadrangle. It is built in harmony with the educational units. In it are machinery for heating and air-conditioning the college plant.

Most of the heavily wooded campus was made available through donations of the Settegast and Ben Taub estates, of 75 acres and 35 acres respectively. The school board purchased a small tract. On the grounds are 101 varieties of trees and shrubs. This campus in 1941 was being improved by a large-scale landscaping program designed by Hare and Hare of Kansas City, Missouri, in cooperation with the Work Projects Administration and the National Youth Administration. Landscaping and drainage, started in March, 1937, are designed to preserve the native beauty of the surroundings. The value of the land, buildings, and equipment is about \$1,350,000.

Educational departments of the university include the Junior College, which offers two full years of college work; the College of Arts and Sciences, offering advanced courses leading toward degrees, and the College of Community Service, which makes available subjects in many specialized fields. Day and night classes are held on schedules arranged to serve the convenience of the students, many of whom are employed.

According to plans, the whole tract will be utilized in a comprehensive building program which calls for the construction of educational buildings in three distinct quadrangles; these will extend along St. Bernard Street north and south of the central unit. A fourth group, a recreation center, will be developed on the east part of the "L"-shaped tract. Included in this development program are a library, buildings for dramatic arts, music, and physical education, and a stadium, bathhouse, recreation shelter, outdoor theater, and a student and faculty center. The project also calls for a swimming pool, sand beach, bowling green, tennis courts, and softball fields.

Founded on April 30, 1934, the University of Houston developed from the Houston Junior College, one of the pioneer junior schools of the State, which opened as a Class A institution in 1927, with an initial enrollment of 232 students. The demand for additional educational and training facilities made expansion of the college necessary. Its four-fold purpose was to provide practical education for employed adults and for those who are compelled to take employment after leaving high school; also, to provide general college training for those who are barred by technical prerequisites.

From 1934 until 1939 the school occupied temporary quarters, principally in the San Jacinto Senior High School building.

Seventy-five candidates received their degrees on May 30, 1935. During the first five years the enrollment increased from 1,110 students for the 1934-35 session to 3,084 in the spring of 1939. Registrations for 1940-41 reached 4,485 students.

Progress was also made in other lines during this period. The Red Mask Players, a company of student actors, was organized in 1935. A course in radio speech was offered in 1936. Authorized by the Civil Aeronautics Authority, a course in aviation — which leads to a private pilot's license — was added in 1939. Instruction is given at the Municipal Airport. Certificates were awarded to 22 of 31 students in the initial class on April 4, 1940. The Authority bears most of the expense of this course.

Industrial training classes are held in several manufactories of Houston, the plants furnishing the equipment and the university the instructors. The faculty for 1940-41 included 60 full-time professors, besides a number of part-time instructors and assistants. Employed students constitute the majority at the university. To aid these students, an employment bureau was established in 1940.

High school graduates are introduced into university life each spring at the May Fete, held in conjunction with the Frontier Fiesta. The Buckaroos, gaily

attired riding girls, were organized early in the 1939-40 term to serve as a parade, exhibition, and drill unit for the university.

Student publications include a weekly, the *Cougar*, and the *Houstonian*, annual year book published each spring.

Among gifts to the University of Houston are a research endowment for Latin-American study, made by M. M. Field; 11 volumes on economics and government, donated by Congressman Albert Thomas; a 20,000,000-year-old fossilized jawbone of a prehistoric animal, *Titanotheres*, given by David LaTouche, a former student; and numerous books and manuscripts dealing with Texas history.

**37** HOUSTON COLLEGE FOR NEGROES (*open 3 p.m.-10 p.m. Mon.-Fri.*), 2610-16 Elgin Ave., is a branch of the University of Houston. Day and night classes are held, with emphasis on courses of practical value. The institution is divided into four branches. A Junior College gives a diploma upon the completion of two years of work. The Senior College offers a bachelor's degree, and is accredited by the State Department of Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. A College of Community Service offers practical courses in major fields, and the College of Applied Sciences teaches such subjects as tailoring, cosmetology, laundry, cleaning and pressing, food chemistry, radio, and physics.

In 1885, Houston College was founded by the Baptist Missionary and Educational Association of Texas, and was supported in part by that body. By 1914 some high school courses were being taught. In that year the school had an attendance of 109 students, and had nine teachers.

In 1925, Wiley College of Marshall began conducting extension classes in Houston, using the facilities of the Jack Yates High School building. Later, Prairie View College participated in the work, and during the regular 1926-27 term the institution was called the Wiley-Prairie View Extension School.

When the Houston Junior College was organized in 1927, plans were launched for opening a similar institution for Negroes. Accordingly, a training school for Negro teachers in Houston was conducted through Wiley College of Marshall, at the Jack Yates High School building.

The local college received a first-class rating from the State Board of Education at the end of its second session.

When the University of Houston was launched in 1934, its charter created the Houston College for Negroes. Degrees were given its first graduates in the spring of 1936. Enrollment has shown a gradual increase each year, with registrations for the regular 1940-41 term totaling 375 students. Faculty members totaled 25.

The college has its own LIBRARY (*open 9 a.m.-9:30 p.m. school days*), in a large room which provides ample space for reading, study, and research. There are 6,540 volumes and 68 magazines and periodicals.



38. ST. JOSEPH'S INFIRMARY, between Calhoun and Pierce Aves., facing Crawford and La Branch Sts., a private institution operated by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, is Houston's oldest hospital and occupies four large buildings.

The infirmary had its beginning in March, 1887, when six nuns took over an old, dilapidated frame building at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street. Under the direction of Mother St. Louis Monteillier, they cleaned the house and grounds, and soon opened St. Joseph's Infirmary.

The Sisters had a zealous friend in the Rev. Thomas Hennessy, pastor of the Church of the Annunciation, who had invited them to establish the hospital. During the first year the infirmary had only 39 patients. But in 1888 the number so increased that old St. Vincent's Church, which stood across the street from the infirmary on Franklin Avenue, was renovated and opened as a hospital annex.

In 1889 St. Joseph's obtained a contract from Harris County to hospitalize indigent patients at 50 cents each, and that year a new frame building was erected at Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street. Another small two-story structure was erected in 1892, and during the next year old St. Vincent's was torn down. The four-story brick building that replaced it was opened in 1894; it soon burned, however, and in trying to save patients, two of the nuns lost their lives.

The present three-story brick building was erected in 1895. A frame structure then housed Negro patients; ten years later a three-story annex, with an adjoining chapel and convent, was added. In February, 1906, 15 students were enrolled in St. Joseph's training school for nurses. In 1919 a five-story hospital wing was completed, and in 1930 a five-story nurses home replaced a frame structure that had been destroyed by fire. In June, 1938, flames damaged the third-floor attic of the old south wing. By the spring of 1940 the present five-story convent was completed.

The GENERAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL BUILDING (*visiting hours 9:30-11:30; 2-4; 6:30-8:30 daily*), 1910 Crawford St., a three-story red brick structure with white stone trim, a slanting metal roof, and four- and five-story wings, was designed by Nicholas J. Clayton of Galveston.

The red brick wing to the right of the general hospital rises without elaborate ornamentation; it was designed by Edward Overbeck of Dallas and built in 1919. The left wing was completed late in 1940. Of concrete and steel faced with red brick and with a contrasting ornamental gray stone trim, it was designed by I. E. Loveless, Beverly Hills, California. Wide steps between white stone balustrades lead to a columned loggia-like entrance.

West of the general hospital is the MATERNITY AND CHILDREN'S BUILDING (*visiting hours, 9:30-11:30; 2-4; 6:30-8:30 daily*), 1910 La Branch St., a four- and five-story concrete monolithic structure with ornamental gray stone trim, built in 1938 and designed by Loveless. The walls are sparkling white, and white steps lead to three segmented arched openings above which four vertical piers rise gracefully to the roof line. A two-story penthouse occupies the flat roof

immediately above the entrance. Grilled doors open from the loggia upon a white marble entrance hall, at the end of which is a full-length painting of St. Anne. The lobby opens into the registration office, reception room, and administrative offices. Corridors lead to the children's section in the south part of the building. The hospital's iron lung is in a special ward for victims of infantile paralysis. Topping the children's unit is a sunny playroom opening upon a tiled roof garden. At the rear of the building is a laundry.

Across from the general hospital is the CONVENT AND CHAPEL (*private*), 1903 Crawford St., a four-story structure of modern design by Loveless. Its red brick walls, terminating in a plain cornice, are void of ornamentation except for double bands of gray stone at each floor level. In striking contrast is the gray stone entrance that leads under triple arches across a narrow loggia. The building houses 100 nuns. The Sisters have their own infirmary and a roof garden. An office for the Mother Superior has a marble fireplace of black and gold, with a birch mantel.

The chapel stands on the south side of the first floor; its hand-carved walnut pews and stalls rest on marble floors. Across the ceiling are seven arches, with art glass windows between each. Below the windows are sculptured stations of the cross. The sanctuary arch frames the altar platform, and a large window above has for its theme the Sacred Heart, with flanking stained glass windows depicting the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. The chapel seats 200 people.

ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL OF NURSING (*not open*), 1911 Crawford St., occupies a plain red brick building designed by Maurice J. Sullivan of Houston. It has accommodations for 150 student nurses. The school is accredited by the Board of Nurse Examiners of the State. Through an affiliation with the University of Houston, certain courses taught here are credited toward a bachelor's degree.

**39.** The HOUSTON TURNVEREIN (*open by permission*), 5202 Alameda Rd., occupies a two-story, white clubhouse of reinforced concrete, hollow tile, brick, and stucco. The building is bordered by landscaped lawns. Joseph Finger of Houston was the architect for the modernistic edifice, erected in 1929 at a cost of \$150,000.

Across the front of the building is a long porch with a wrought iron railing placed between fluted, square, white pillars that rise to support a balcony. Upper French windows each have wrought iron balconies. Above these openings, alternately, is a panel depicting a bowler.

Entrance doors open into a reception room. In the clubroom to the left is the men's trophy cabinet, which in 1941 contained 13 silver bowling souvenirs. Here also is a large ceremonial horn which initiates must empty of a drink, during annual rites. On the opposite side of the reception hall is the women's meeting place, often used as a dining room. Here also is a trophy cabinet containing, in 1941, 11 silver awards. Eight bowling alleys occupy a one-story wing in the rear. The kitchen and the locker room also are here.

On the second floor is the apartment for the club's host, a ladies lounge,

and a ballroom with a small stage at one end. The inlaid floor, the pastel shades of the walls and ceiling, and the long French windows create an atmosphere of regal simplicity. A door at the rear opens on a long promenade above the bowling quarters.

Founders of the Turnverein were among the German immigrants who came to Houston shortly after the town was established. During early years, the growing German colony was active. One Sunday in January, 1854, ten young men gathered about a table in the home of Peter Gabel on Preston Avenue, between San Jacinto and Caroline Streets. They organized a club called the Houston Turnverein, with athletics and intellectual pursuits as features.

Houston quickly felt the benefits of the new organization, first because of its volunteer fire-fighting corps. On May 20, 1854, when the Bracken House burned, they received the following note:

To the Houston Turners: I send you two dozen bottles of ale and porter, which you will please accept as a small token of my appreciation of your services at the fire, and to the city.

(Signed) N. Fuller, Mayor.

The Turners were responsible for the organization and development of a local chapter of the Howard Association, which served during the floods and pestilences that struck the town with dismal frequency during its early days.

In 1856, the Turnverein's first assembly hall was a frame building occupying two lots on Caroline Street between Prairie and Texas Avenues. Three years later their military company, called the Turner Rifles, was organized. It came into local prominence, not only because of bright uniforms and well-trained drill teams, but because the city officials frequently called upon it in settling disputes and in guarding jails against mobs.

Adjoining property was purchased in 1860, and upon it the first Turner Hall was dedicated on February 5, 1861. The tenseness of the national political situation was evident during the services; and the United States flag was draped in mourning.

When the Civil War began, the Turnverein sent the Confederate army a company of volunteers under Capt. E. B. H. Schneider. They were among the first to engage Federal troops from the old South Battery in Galveston. When the three companies of Waul's Texas Legion were formed in 1862, many of the remaining Turners joined. They were under fire at Sharpsburg on September 17, 1862, one of the unit being killed and several wounded. At the close of the war, one of the first acts of the Turners was to renovate their hall, which had been neglected. Within a year the society was again vigorous.

In 1866 the Turnverein founded a German-English school, which had two teachers. The following year yellow fever killed Professor Krittner; the other teacher hurriedly departed, and the school abruptly closed.

Under the auspices of the Turnverein, the first *Volkfest* in Texas was

celebrated in 1869. Many Texas towns participated in the Houston event, which became annual, until it became a State celebration in 1897.

Turner Hall burned on March 18, 1870, but the cornerstone of a new and better one was laid in March, 1871. A group of Turners resigned on February 24, 1875, and formed the Jahn Turnverein. Two years later the new club merged with the parent organization.

Turner Hall was remodeled in 1903 to accommodate increased membership. In 1913 a \$100,000 four-story brick building was erected on Austin Street and Prairie Avenue. This building was sold in 1928 to the Arabia Temple for \$240,000. On its seventy-fifth anniversary, in 1929, the Turnverein moved into its present quarters on Almeda Road.

**40.** The TEXAS DENTAL COLLEGE (*open 8-5 Mon.-Fri.; 8-12 Sat.*), 1018 Blodgett Ave., occupies a two-story-and-basement structure designed in the Spanish manner by Endress and Cato. Wide, circle-headed windows on the first floor and rectangular openings on the second floor form almost continuous belts; walls terminate in a plain cornice. A narrow, tile-covered, sloping awning projects at the front near the roof line. Wide steps lead to an arched entrance of gray stone in a slight projection on the main façade, which terminates in a scroll cornice slightly above the roof line.

On the first floor are waiting rooms, a clinic, radiographic and prosthetic departments, and administrative offices. On the second floor are histological research laboratories, lecture halls, science laboratories, the exodontia department, and a large amphitheater with seats arranged to permit demonstration of operations in oral surgery. Equipment for visual education is in the basement, where the MUSEUM AND LIBRARY (*open 8-5 Mon.-Fri.; 8-12 Sat.*), contain more than 1,200 volumes and bound periodicals on dental subjects, and scores of specimens. The anatomy building, occupying a two-story frame structure at the rear of the main unit, has laboratory and classroom equipment.

Organized in 1905, the Texas Dental College conducted its first regular session in a small suite on Congress Avenue, with an enrollment of less than 20 students. In 1925 it launched the first free dental clinic for Harris County school children. That year also saw the completion of the present building. The college was reorganized and a State charter issued in 1929. By 1940-41 the enrollment had reached 90 students.

**41.** The HOUSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS (*open 9-5 workdays except Wed., 9-10; 2-6 Sun. and holidays*), S. Main and Montrose Blvds., on a landscaped triangular plot facing Hermann Park, is framed by a leafy fretwork of towering oaks. The edifice of white Indiana limestone and stucco, with a green tile roof, was designed by William Ward Watkin of Houston, and will be four times its present proportions when completed.

Above a façade of classic Greek design adorned with tall Ionic columns

is an entablature bearing the words: "The Museum of Fine Arts, Built by the People for the Use of the People." Tablets to Phidias and Praxitiles flank this inscription.

Mounted on each side of the four granite steps, which give access to the building's recessed porch, are two bronze statues, "Rising Sun" and "Descending Night," by Adolph A. Weinman of New York City. Doors with leaded glass panels open into the main lobby, where a grouping of four green marble columns and the exquisite symmetry of design accentuate the depth of color and statuary outlined against the simple background of white plastered walls. The lobby floor is of gray polished marble, with marble wainscoting, while the ceiling is of paneled wood with stencil work in silver. Walls and floors in other parts of the building are of light-colored plaster and polished hardwood.

Rising from the center of the main lobby is a white marble stairway with a balustrade of iron grilles and wood handrail. Left of this staircase is a full-size copy of two figures of a group called "The Fates," from the east pediment of the Parthenon, while to the right is a reproduction of "Theseus" from the same place.

In three cases right of the entrance are seventeenth century Spanish, French, and Moroccan dueling pistols, ornately decorated; flasks, bottles, and cups, of Roman glass dating from the first century B. C. to the second century A. D., found in Syria and northern Egypt; and religious objects used in public and private rituals in southeastern Europe.

Greek jewelry from the fourth to the first century B. C.; oil-perfume jars employed in early Grecian funeral rites between 500 and 400 B. C.; pottery, plate, idols, and other objects of the fourteenth to the seventh century B. C., found in Crete and Attica, are in three cases left of the main floor. A marble memorial tablet to William Clifford Hogg, one of the museum's founders, is to the left of the doorway.

Statues, vases, and other art objects from the seventeenth century B. C. to the eighth century B. C. line the walls.

In the small gallery right of the lobby is a display of Spanish ecclesiastical furnishings, and other Spanish objects such as chests, tables, chairs, desks, pottery, brass trays, and candlesticks. In a similar small hall to the left are Egyptian, Asiatic, and Oriental objects, including a red granite Egyptian offering plate, an alabaster vase, a mummy mask from Thebes, amulets and scarabs, and a book page of papyrus; Japanese wood carvings and Buddhas; Chinese cloisonne vases and ivory carvings, two late seventeenth century Indo-Persian miniature paintings, and thirteenth century pottery and tableware from Syria and Persia.

The MUSEUM SCHOOL OF ART (*classes 9-12, 2-5, 7:30-10 workdays*), occupying two floors in the east wing, has a school year divided into two four-month terms. It is conducted and administered as a department of the museum. Professional artists compose the faculty. The school, opened in 1927, is equipped to teach the fundamentals of drawing and painting, including life and antique drawing, composition, still life, portraiture, and landscape drawing.

Tuition fees vary, but there are some free classes financed by subscriptions of the Houston Teachers' Association, and by gifts of Mr. and Mrs. William L. Clayton and George A. Hill, Jr., of Houston. Talented youngsters are given free instruction. Particular attention is paid to classes for children; their training is financed by the Florence Fall Memorial Fund, which was raised by the Houston Federation of Women's Clubs. Adult applicants must be over 16 years of age and furnish references as to character and educational qualifications.

The LIBRARY (*open 9-5 workdays; 2-6 holidays*), in an exhibit room on the first floor of the west wing, contains more than 2,000 volumes and a number of unbound books, pamphlets, exhibit catalogs, reports, magazines, and post cards. In the library hangs a pastel crayon portrait of Mrs. Henry B. Fall, a president of the Houston Art League and for ten years vice president of the Museum Association.

Donations of books and cash and an anonymous gift of \$500 created the nucleus of the library collection. During the 1939-1940 season gifts and purchases totaled 157 books, 592 unbound works, and 653 post cards.

Administration offices, on the first floor of the west wing, open at one end upon a lounge containing a bronze figure, "Joy of the Waters," by Harriet Frishmuth. On the landing of the stairway leading to the second floor is a full-size reproduction of the "Aphrodite of Melos," given by the W. and J. Sloane Company of New York, and installed by H. Roy Cullen of Houston.

French windows light the central corridor on the second floor. Its walls are utilized for temporary displays.

The central corridor gives entrance to Gallery A, a large rectangular room at the front of the building. It has plastered walls, polished hardwood floors, a large skylight, and French windows. Two marble columns, similar in color and design to those in the lobby below, stand at each end of the gallery. Among the outstanding sculpture in this room are models of the four elements by Paul C. Jennewein, "Air," and "Earth," standing at the east end of the room, and "Fire" and "Water" at the west end. Figures and heads in bronze are: "Katherine" by William M. McVey, "Cupid and Gazelle" by Paul C. Jennewein, "Dr. Stockton Axson" by Julien Muench, and "Phryne" by Aristide Maillol.

Paintings hanging in this gallery are: "The Mill Dam" by John F. Folinsbee; "American Motherhood" by Charles W. Hawthorne; "Still Life and Mirror" by Mary Gray; "Mrs. Mellie Esperson" by Julius Rolshoven; "The First Portrait" by William Chase; "The Image Vendor" by Murray P. Bewley; "The Exodus" by Robert Spencer; "Late Afternoon" by Edward W. Redfield; "Christine" by Jerry Farnsworth; "Passing By" by E. Martin Hennings; "At Rest" by Walter Ufer, and "The Emerald Lady" by William M. Chase.

Gallery B, in the west corridor, opening off the central corridor, is used for special exhibits.

Outstanding among the museum's treasures is a collection of laces donated by the late Miss Annette Finnigan. The collection, in Gallery C of the west wing, includes network, drawnwork, cut work, needle-point lace, and bobbin

or pillow lace. Among the 65 specimens are a bodice and sleeves made in the Philippine Islands, a French or Swiss handkerchief of the nineteenth century, an example of rose-point, needle-point Venetian lace of the seventeenth century, a seventeenth-century altar cloth border, an Italian embroidered net piece of about 1530, several French and Spanish scarfs and mantillas, a long lappet which is a Flemish Point d'Angleterre of the early eighteenth century, and a nineteenth-century French fan having a Brussels lace mount designed in floral sprays, and mother-of-pearl sticks embellished with delicate ivy wrought in gold and diamonds. Included also are laces from Belgium, Russia, Central Europe, and Ireland.

Art assets of the museum, which was the first of its kind in the State, are valued at more than \$300,000. In addition to the permanent collection, an annual program of loan exhibits is offered through the cooperation of other museums and through groups or individuals interested in art education. Included are exhibits by Houston artists, Texas artists, an exhibit of Southern art, national and international photograph exhibits, a showing of American ceramics and textiles, an exhibit of commercial art, and decorative and commercial arts from foreign nations. Exhibits of the works of old masters are usually shown in groups from several schools or periods. Of historical value is an annual showing of textiles, rugs, silver, and ceramics. Work by public school students of Houston is shown in May of each year. The Garden Club of Houston conducts an annual flower show in the museum.

Through its department of education the museum presents musicals, lectures, art shows, and gallery tours. In addition to its art classes, the institution through an extension department reaches some 70,000 students in the public schools. Extension work includes lectures and talks, exhibits and lantern slides.

Near the junction of South Main and Montrose Boulevards is a stone bench and balustrade erected through funds donated by the Houston Garden Club. The four carvings on the bench, representing painting, sculpture, music, and garden designs, are by William McVey of the faculty of the University of Texas. Midway between the bench and the museum building is a sundial of heroic proportions representing "Hercules Upholding the Heavens," the work of Paul Manship of New York City. It was made in 1918 for the gardens of Charles M. Schwab at Loretto, Pennsylvania. The bronze dial was the gift of Mrs. Mellie Esperson.

At the rear of the building is a courtyard containing an ornamental iron wellhead with a brick-covered top. The Garden Club superintends the planting of flowers and shrubs and maintains the grounds.

The museum is an outgrowth of the Houston Public School Art League, formed on March 17, 1900. It acquired its first oil paintings in 1911 — "Old Violinist" by Charles Curran and "Autumnal Morn" by Charles Warren Eaton. The league's first art museum was housed in the old Eckhardt residence at 1806 Main Street.

For several years collections of the old Art League were successively in the

offices of the mayor and city council, in the residences of various league members, in the Scanlan Building, and in the University Club.

The site of the present building was dedicated on August 12, 1917, but the World War delayed construction. A bequest of the valuable art collection of George M. Dickinson in February, 1919, stimulated the art movement; but not until 1921 were plans drawn for a \$140,000 structure. Even then insufficient funds prevented the construction of anything more than the central unit, on which work was begun on February 22, 1923. The completed building was opened to the public on April 12, 1924. The league was reincorporated as the Museum of Fine Arts of Houston in 1925.

Two wings were added during 1926. The museum set aside in 1933, as the nucleus of an endowment fund, the first major bequest—a gift of \$2,000 by Mrs. F. A. Foster. In various ways the endowment fund has since been increased. Private donations and annual appropriations from the City of Houston support the Museum of Fine Arts.

**42.** ST. PAUL'S METHODIST CHURCH (*open 8-5 daily*), 5501 S. Main St., is an imposing American Gothic edifice, designed by Alfred C. Finn of Houston. The chief features of the massive pile are the main façade and the 130-foot chimes tower. Three units incorporated into a single structure are the sanctuary, an "L"-shaped three-story educational building, and the square-columned memorial chimes tower reaching high above steep and gabled slate roofs. Extending from the left side of the church is a marquee over a curved porte cochère.

Stone steps lead from its landscaped grounds, bounded by South Main and Fannin Streets and Calumet and Binz Avenues, to a triple-arched entrance feature in the main façade, above which is a large stained glass window. An ambulatory leads into the sanctuary, which is cruciform in shape, and is without columns. The long nave has projecting cloisters and receding stone buttresses extending along the side aisles. Transcepts reach from each side of the altar.

Nine hundred people can be seated in the sanctuary. A small balcony will accommodate an additional 350 worshippers. Back of the altar is a chapel, with seats for 150; it is used for small weddings and gatherings. Also in this unit are choir rooms, clubrooms, schoolrooms, kitchens, and heating equipment.

The educational building is reached through a corridor from the church, or through separate entrances at the rear and in the tower base. On the main floor is a large auditorium with a stage; used principally for young people's meetings and banquets, it seats 600. Classrooms of varying sizes for different departments of the church school are on the first and second floors. Showers are on the fourth floor.

Within the slotted loft of the tower, the memorial chimes are hung 110 feet above the street—ten bells ranging in weight from 250 pounds to 3,000 pounds, cast from copper and tin. They are a gift of Mrs. M. T. Jones as a memorial to her husband.



Before the organization of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Methodists in the south part of Houston were largely members of the Shearn Methodist Episcopal Church, South (now First Methodist Church), on Texas Avenue. A new congregation was authorized by the Texas Conference at Pittsburg, Texas, in 1905. Bishop Joseph S. Key appointed the Rev. George S. Sexton to effect the organization. This was formally done at a business meeting on January 1, 1906, at the home of Mrs. J. O. Ross.

St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was the name given the new congregation at the first meeting on January 14, 1906. Its charter membership numbered 153. Services were held for two years in a small chapel near Milam Street and McGowen Avenue. During that period the church grew to 475 members.

A building site 100 feet square, at the corner of McGowen Avenue and Milam Street, was donated to the church in 1907 by Mrs. Ross. The cornerstone of the new edifice was laid with religious and Masonic services on June 24, 1907.

Plans for a new building were announced early in 1927. In the spring of 1928, the property was sold to the Second Baptist Church, for \$153,750. The chimes were not included in the sale.

The present site was purchased from the Hermann Hospital Estate for \$75,000 in 1928. While a new church building was being erected, the congregation met in Temple Beth Israel.

Bishop Sam R. Hay and the Rev. J. N. R. Score, pastor, laid the cornerstone on November 3, 1929. First services were held in the church on February 2, 1930. The completed edifice cost more than \$750,000.

St. Paul's name was changed in November, 1939, when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were combined under the name of the Methodist Church. Rolls of the church in 1940 showed 2,735 members and 1,750 students in the church school.

**43**• HERMANN PARK, bounded by S. Main Blvd., Hermann Ave., Alameda Rd. and Marlborough Drive, is the city's second largest recreational area. Within its 545 acres are scenic drives, tennis courts, an 18-hole golf course and a clubhouse, bridle paths, picnic areas and playgrounds, zoological gardens containing more than 1,000 specimens, and a museum of natural history. Along some of the winding roads are trees bearing bronze tablets memorializing Houston's World War dead.

Near the South Main Boulevard entrance, in a triangle formed by drives, is a heroic bronze equestrian statue of Gen. Sam Houston. The monument, unveiled on August 16, 1925, is by Enrico Filberto Cerracchio of Houston and New York. South of it is a slender shaft of pink Texas granite, erected in 1936 by the San Jacinto Centennial Association, dedicated to the city's pioneers. Between the statue and the 50-foot shaft is a long reflecting pool.

The MILLER OUTDOOR THEATER (*open*), near by, was designed by William

Ward Watkin of Houston and is used by patriotic, civic, social, and educational groups for plays, pageants and concerts, and for public meetings. Of Indiana limestone, the \$50,000 structure is classic in design, with a central stage and two long colonnades as wings. Dedication ceremonies were held on May 12, 1923.

Jesse Wright Miller, pioneer Houston cotton merchant, bequeathed a substantial sum for park purposes, part of which was used for the theater. When it was completed, the editor of the *Houston Press* remarked editorially that "the open-air theater, the first of its sort in Texas, will stimulate all stage arts in Houston."

The HOUSTON GARDEN CENTER AND BOTANICAL GARDENS (*open*), northeast of Miller Outdoor Theater, occupy a hedge-enclosed tract facing Hermann Drive, opposite the end of La Branch Street, and extending to the Outer Belt. Walks bordered by rose beds lead to a clubhouse for members of the Federation of Garden Clubs of Houston and its vicinity. The one-story frame structure, designed by William Ward Watkin in the Southern plantation manner, has a shingled hip roof and overhanging eaves. Low wings extend from each side of the taller central section. Of the four entrances, that on the Outer Belt has the principal façade. On the portico, four massive fluted columns rise before three main openings. An auditorium is used for meetings of garden clubs; rooms in the wings, each 15 feet by 37 feet, are for the storage of rare plants.

Hare and Hare, landscape architects of Kansas City, supervised beautification of the grounds. In 1941 the landscape program included plantings of native and rare flowers and shrubs, as well as a rose garden.

Designed to stimulate greater interest in the beautification of grounds in Houston and the vicinity, the center was conceived in 1939 by members of the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. Campaigns conducted by that organization in 1939 and 1940 netted \$9,100 of the total construction cost of \$26,052. Ground-breaking ceremonies were held on January 6, 1941, and the club building was completed in the autumn of 1941. The City of Houston owns the Center, which is maintained by the municipal park department.

The ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS (*open 9 a.m.-sundown, daily; free*), covering 30 acres near the center of the park, are shaded by evergreen, camphor, live oak, and Chinese tallow trees.

Facing the entrance is a huge aviary, said to be among the largest in the United States, in which bird life is presented in natural settings. Nooks and crannies for nesting abound in artificial post oak stumps, created in cement by D. Rodriguez, Mexico City artist. A fountain ripples over artificial rocks into a small pool.

From this point the zoo is bisected by a central panel, bordered with palms and camphor trees, which runs the width of the oval. Double avenues for pedestrians, bearing such picturesque names as Pelican Lane and Flamingo Walk, traverse the panel and give access to a system of radiating paths. Left around the oval are the owl and squirrel enclosures; a two-story frame exhibit building housing birds, boas from Mexico and South America, and a python from

Sumatra; a monkey house; pens of elk and deer; and cages that enclose the city's collection of lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars, wolves, hyenas, raccoons, and badgers. In this vicinity, also, are two rare specimens, a Sicilian donkey and a hinny — the zoo-bred offspring of a Shetland stallion and a donkey.

Beyond this pen are storks, white Chinese geese, black Rheeves pheasants and many smaller birds. Wandering peacocks strut along pathways, and occasionally a rabbit scurries across the walks.

Among many unusual specimens in the zoo is a nationally known albino collection. This includes an albino wildcat captured 200 miles southwest of Houston, a flying squirrel, an opossum, a buzzard, and a pair of raccoons. Formerly a coral snake was in the collection; it is now mounted and on display in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C.

Another inmate rare to this country is the aoudad, a North African female mountain sheep, born in the zoo March 19, 1940. Among the popular animals are the elephant, "Hans," and "Worry Wart," a chimpanzee; the former was purchased by popular subscription and through children's donations.

"Nolan Jesse," one of the only chimpanzees born in the United States and once a familiar figure at the zoo, is commemorated by a bronze memorial plate in concrete near the museum. Born June 5, 1939, he lived but six months.

The HOUSTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (*open 10 a.m.-sundown, daily*), is housed in a simple one-story building of white stucco with a red tile roof. In its one large room are displayed hundreds of specimens of the animal and mineral world.

Outstanding among the exhibits are coins and miscellaneous objects given the museum in 1930 by Maj. John E. T. Milsaps, world traveler, collector, and Salvation Army leader; a botanical group donated by George L. Fisher, who has one of the largest collections in America; a collection of minerals and miscellaneous objects given by Sigmud J. Westheimer; and a display of handicrafts from Ecuador, obtained with the assistance of Mr. and Mrs. A. V. Meigs. A violet ray machine, the gift of Miss Annette Finnigan of Houston, brings out vivid rainbow hues of the rock specimens.

Among the exhibits here are a mounted salamander from Arabia, a duck-billed platypus, a hornbill, a goat hide waterbag from Judea, fossils of ancient marine creatures, flint implements of early man, weapons of various ages, and groups of bird eggs and of insects. A taxidermist on the staff mounts dead zoo specimens for permanent groups.

The museum is sponsored by the Houston Museum and Scientific Society, a Texas corporation established in 1909. A temporary structure was erected during 1927 to house a collection of Prof. H. P. Attwater — the City had purchased it in 1915. The museum was immediately popular, and it became necessary to enlarge its quarters. On August 31, 1930, the present building was opened.

The Zoological Gardens originated in 1920, when the United States Government thinned out bison herds in national parks. One of the animals was given to

the city, placed in the zoo in Sam Houston Park and was promptly named "Earl." The City Council purchased a female bison from the Goodnight herd in west Texas, but this animal lived only a short time. "Earl's" next companion was a deer donated by the Camp Street Fishing Club.

The next year there was much activity in collecting other animals. Many strange pets were bought; a number were received as gifts; a lion and several other animals were purchased from a circus. On December 1, 1924, after a delay caused by a quarantine against a widespread epidemic of hoof and mouth disease, the zoo was officially opened.

That growth was steady is indicated by a story in the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* on January 11, 1925:

The zoo . . . has grown up enough to be named the Houston Zoological Gardens. . . . [It] has more than 800 specimens, about 400 animals, 300 birds and 100 reptiles. . . . The zoo has moved to the new 34-acre site in Hermann Park surrounded by an animal-tight ornamental wire fence.

Maintenance of the Zoological Gardens, which attract thousands annually, is one of the larger items of the city's budget. The animal food bill for the inmates, which ranges in variety from meat to dried flies, totals about \$10,000.

The MEMORIAL LOG HOUSE (*open by permission*), in the southern part of the park, is the meeting place of the San Jacinto Chapter, Daughters of the Republic of Texas. The building, erected by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas during 1936 as a monument to the pioneer men and women of Texas, contains an auditorium, a dining room, kitchen, and rest room. The furniture and light fixtures used in the house are early Texas, while the fireplace at the west of the auditorium is built of stones gathered from many of the historic sites of the State. Harry Weaver of Houston was the architect. In the yard is a large sugar kettle from the plantation once owned by Albert Sidney Johnston.

George H. Hermann deeded 278 acres of the present park to the City on May 30, 1914. Hermann, Houston philanthropist and financier, who died October 21, 1914, stipulated that the area should always be used for recreational purposes. The park was officially opened and dedicated on July 4, 1915.

**44.** HERMANN HOSPITAL (*visiting hours 3-4 daily; 7-8 Mon., Wed., Fri.*), on Outer Belt, a block east of S. Main Blvd., stands at the edge of Hermann Park. Tall pines form a background for this concrete and steel-fabricated structure of modified Spanish design. Berland & Swelth of Chicago were the architects, with Alfred C. Finn of Houston as associate. The hospital, costing \$1,000,000, was opened on July 1, 1925.

White stucco walls rise five floors to a red tile roof. From the central section extends an additional story. Wings of the building curve slightly toward the rear. Twin towers at each corner of the main façade have ornamental windows near their tops. Between the towers are circle-headed window openings

that afford light for the operating rooms. In front of the main entrance, a one-story building forms an outer wall around a courtyard which is entered through a central portal. Much tile is used in the floors; walls and ceilings are cream colored. The plan of the building affords sunshine and fresh air in the rooms and wards.

The hospital has five operating rooms, complete sterilizing and incubation rooms in units, a first-aid room, X-ray laboratory, and clinic. Both charity and pay patients are admitted.

Connected by a covered passageway, the NURSES HOME (*private*), stands about 150 feet south of the hospital, facing South Main Boulevard. The three-story-and-basement structure of stone, brick, tile, and stucco, designed by Kenneth Franzheim, conforms with the architecture of the hospital. Accommodations for 150 student nurses, facilities for a modern Class-A training school, and for recreation, are provided. The building was erected in 1941.

The Hermann Hospital Estate, which has holdings valued at more than \$7,500,000, owns and operates the institution. It is controlled by a self-perpetuating board of trustees. George Henry Hermann urged the establishment of a charity hospital in Houston as early as 1891, offering to donate the site. On February 18, 1898, the county court accepted a site bounded by Texas and Capitol Avenues, Hutchins Street and Broadway (now Dowling Street). But the hospital was never built, and the land reverted to Hermann, who died without heirs in 1914. His will decreed that the major part of his estate should be used for the erection and maintenance of a hospital. Because of legal delays, more than ten years elapsed before the proposed institution was opened on the present site.

**45**• The RICE INSTITUTE (*open 8:30-5 workdays*), 6000 S. Main Blvd., is a coeducational, privately endowed institution offering degrees in the arts, science, letters, and the several fields of engineering and architecture.

On its 300-acre campus, guarded by hedges, are long rows of live oaks and conifers shading green lawns, walks made of pink gravel, and colorful landscaped courts. Columned cloisters, red tile roofs, and towers mark the dozen buildings in which Byzantine, Moorish, Italian, and Spanish designs are combined with an almost indefinable touch of the Gothic. A warm gray tone has been achieved through the use of Texas granite, local pink bricks, and delicately tinted marble from the Ozarks, relieved by variations of tile, foreign marble, and Dalmatian brickwork.

Four drives lead through openings in the ivy-covered brick walls along South Main Boulevard, where wrought iron gates hinged to massive concrete-capped columns always stand open. The grounds are roughly diamond shaped, the longest point extending more than a mile west from the intersection of South Main and Sunset Boulevards. From the gateway at this point a broad, tree-bordered avenue continues some 500 yards to a forecourt, where the road branches to encircle an academic court.

The ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, of three stories, has a central tower rising one floor higher. Its 30-foot vaulted sally port frames a vista of the academic court. Balconies flank the tower at the second floor level, their protecting columns extending to the roof line. A cloister runs the full length of the building on the west side. This building contains offices for the executive staff, classrooms, and lecture halls.

In the north wing is the main LIBRARY. Here 151,000 volumes are available for student and faculty research, besides 600 current literary and scientific journals.

Other buildings are constructed around a court resembling an Italian garden. Hedge-formed panels transect the area, with row upon row of cape jasmines dominating the evergreens. In the center of the court is the bronze STATUE OF WILLIAM MARSH RICE. The figure of the founder of the Institute is seated on a pedestal of Texas pink granite, mounted on a terrace two steps above the grade level. Rice's ashes are interred beneath the memorial. Each spring graduates lay a wreath of flowers here.

Overlooking the court from the right is the brick and marble PHYSICS LABORATORIES BUILDING, connected with the Administration Building by a portico at the north end. The two-story-and-basement structure houses classrooms, lecture rooms, darkrooms, and four laboratories containing modern apparatus for work in each branch of physics. Equipment for advanced study includes a supply of radium, radiothorium and polonium for work in radioactivity. There are also automatic cloud chambers for viewing and photographing tracks made by cosmic rays or high speed particles, and a high tension laboratory containing a high pressure 2,000,000 volt d. c. source of power used in experiments on the disintegration of the atom.

In the west end of the Physics Building is the Department of Biology, with lecture rooms, research rooms, and laboratories for 150 students. Facilities for advanced research are available.

Textbooks, reference works, and a complete set of journals and periodicals are in the DEPARTMENT'S LIBRARY on the ground floor of the Physics Building. These sources pertain to physics, biology, zoology and allied subjects. A MUSEUM OF TEXAS FISHES, in the biology laboratory in the west part of the building, contains displays preserved in glass jars, including more than half of the 250 known kinds of Texas fishes. This collection was begun in the spring of 1940 with gifts from sportsmen, game wardens, and commercial fishermen, and has been augmented through fishing resorts, sporting goods stores, and officials and employees of the Texas Game, Fish and Oyster Commission. Occupying the room in which the museum is housed is a collection of specimens and large-scale models of parasites that infest animals and men. In the basement is a collection of reptiles and of other zoological specimens, useful to the public in identifying unusual varieties.

Opposite the building, across a court, is an amphitheater with a seating capacity of 400. A 28-foot lecture table is equipped for demonstration work, every

detail of which can be seen from each seat. Rooms for research, battery rooms, darkrooms, and a well-equipped workshop are included in this unit.

Of unusual interest is the CHEMISTRY LABORATORIES BUILDING, a towered, three-story-and-basement structure northwest of and just off the academic court. It is "E"-shaped, its open courts facing south and dominated by numerous cloisters, columns, and wings. Characters inset in the face brickwork at the second floor level are signs or symbols of chemical elements. A ventilation system removes fumes through a central draft tower. Within are completely equipped laboratories for research and instruction in the major and highly specialized branches of chemistry, with lecture rooms fitted for visual demonstration, and the most modern apparatus and materials available.

The psychological laboratory occupies six rooms on the first floor. The Department of Architecture is housed on the second floor, and includes a laboratory, drafting rooms, and a large studio for freehand drawing. The studio has plaster casts from examples of antique and historic ornament, as well as models of construction.

In the DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARIES on the second and third floors of the Chemistry Building, are copies of the more important journals, reference works, and standard textbooks on many branches of chemistry, engineering, and architecture.

Farther north is the ENGINEERING GROUP, with its lofty campanile dominating the campus. The mechanical laboratory has a two-story cloistered building designed in the general plan of the Institute. Laboratories equipped with the latest machines and instruments are devoted to civil engineering, materials testing, hydraulics, electrical engineering, communications, mechanical engineering, and internal combustion engines. A separate laboratory is equipped for testing fuels and oils, and another is for boiler tests. There are also several drafting rooms, lecture halls, and recitation rooms. The machine shop and powerhouse are in smaller buildings connected with the rear of the main structure. West of this group is a one-story white stucco building in three units, containing equipment for machine work and modeling, and a laboratory for mechanical drawing.

Across the academic court, on the south side of the campus, are the STUDENT RESIDENTIAL GROUPS of brick and limestone, with ornamental tile and marble. Each of the three-story buildings has cloisters, towers of five floors, and projecting wings. Although designed for residences, they harmonize with the general architectural setting. Accommodations for 375 resident male students are provided in four buildings. The senior commons is in the central structure facing the court, at the base of a tower. A dining hall is in a connecting wing that joins the two east buildings facing the court, and a long portico extends from the hall to the south structure. Two large rooms are used by literary and debating societies. Each building has a club and reading room.

The ROBERT AND AGNES COHEN HOUSE, south of the Administration Building, is a two-story faculty social center. Architecturally it blends with the general plan. The gift of George S. Cohen as a memorial to his parents, it was completed

in 1927 and dedicated at the annual homecoming of the Association of Rice Alumni on Thanksgiving Day of that year.

Near the southern extremity of the campus is the STADIUM, reached by a footpath across a small ravine to the east side of the bowl. Automobiles must drive south from the campus on South Main Boulevard to the corner of University Boulevard, near which are the five main entrances. Built of concrete, steel, and brick, the stadium seats 33,000. Numerous passageways permit rapid emptying of the stands. North of the stadium, on the Institute grounds, is a parking space for 3,000 automobiles. A two-story, white stucco and red brick field house stands east of the gridiron on South Main Boulevard.

In the summer of 1941, plans were announced for the creation of a Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps. Training started in the autumn.

The story of the Institute is linked with the Texas career of its founder. On an autumn morning in 1837, when a packet ship docked at Galveston, among its passengers was 21-year-old William Marsh Rice. For seven years he had been earning his own living. Weeks before he had packed the stock of his country store near Springfield, Massachusetts, and shipped it to Galveston. When he arrived in the Republic of Texas, Mexico threatened its independence from the outside, and Indians its safety from within. But the young man's mind was filled with dreams of the fortune he was to build within this new country.

Those dreams were soon shattered. When he reached the shipping office he found that his grocery stock had not arrived, and that it never would; the ship carrying it had been lost at sea. He found a job, and before many years the firm of Rice & Nichols, Exporters, Importers & Wholesale Grocers of Houston, was a symbol of wealth and respect.

As Rice prospered he made investments with such sagacity that his fortune grew. Soon he became associated with Paul Bremond, Texas railroad pioneer. When he left Houston to live in New York and New Jersey, business interests were retained in Houston.

When Rice reached the age of 75 years he made a significant statement:

Texas received me when I was penniless, without friends or even acquaintances, and now in the evening of my life I recognize my obligation to her and to her children. I wish now to leave to the boys and girls, struggling for a place in the sun, the fortune that I have been able to accumulate.

In 1891 he established an endowment fund of \$200,000 for an Institute that would bear his name, for the "Advancement of Literature, Science and Art." He instructed a board of trustees to take no action toward organization until after his death.

A legal tangle threatened to destroy Rice's plan for the Institute when Mrs. Rice died and left a will distributing half of her husband's estate among relatives and institutions. Under the Texas statutes this was permissible. To save the bulk of his fortune for the institution, Rice contested the will.



On September 24, 1900, the 85-year-old benefactor died in his Madison Avenue apartment in New York City. The sixth clause of his will read:

All the rest and residue of my estate, real, personal and mixed, and wheresoever situate, I give, devise and bequeath unto the 'William M. Rice Institute for the advancement of Literature, Science and Art,' a corporation domiciled in the City of Houston, Harris County, Texas.

This endowment was estimated by the *Houston Daily Post* of December 3, 1905, to be about \$5,000,000. After much litigation, all legal obstacles were cleared and the trustees proceeded with preparations for the new institution. Dr. Edgar Odell Lovett of Princeton University was elected president in 1908, and the campus was purchased the following year. Officials desired buildings that would be conspicuous for beauty and utility and that "should stand not only as a worthy monument to the founder's philanthropy, but also as a distinct contribution to the architecture of our country," and the general architectural plan was designed by Cram, Goodhue and Ferguson of Boston and New York, with William Ward Watkin as resident architect.

The first term opened on September 23, 1912, with 59 freshmen students. Only four of the buildings planned had been completed. An academic festival was held in observance of the formal opening, with prominent representatives from many States and from foreign countries.

At the close of the 1939-40 school year, the Institute awarded 210 bachelor degrees, nine degrees of master of arts, and five for doctor of philosophy. Its 1940-41 enrollment was 1,448 students, with 94 professors and fellows on the teaching staff.

The Institute accepts a limited number — usually about 400 — new students each year. They are selected from applications on a basis of high educational standards and special capacity for leadership. Candidates, once chosen, are received without further matriculation conditions. There is no tuition fee.

Extension lectures are given by the Institute on subjects of current interest, literature, history, science, art, philosophy, and politics. For these there is no matriculation fee or other charge.

Conservative estimates place the value of Rice Institute's endowment, exclusive of the school plant, in excess of \$15,500,000. The school property is valued at \$4,802,000.

**46.** The BIBLE CYCLORAMA, INC. (open 3:45-4 p.m. daily, except Mon.; free-will offering), 2637 S. Shepherd Drive, a circular, white, concrete and frame structure containing a huge oil painting of Biblical events, is one of the few of its kind in this country. Surmounting the large central part of the edifice is a two-story dome so constructed that a planetarium can be installed to interpret Bible prophecies by the positions of the stars.

In a circle around the auditorium are 12 small rooms, one of which is the office of the director. The others are classrooms where Bible instruction is given

at 10:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. Sundays. A nonsectarian Bible-study correspondence school also is maintained, with students in 40 States and 11 foreign countries.

Visitors are given 15 minutes in which to seat themselves in the assembly room, where there are 500 cushioned, revolving chairs. The lights go out promptly at four o'clock, and from a rostrum a lecturer slowly manipulates a spotlight around the 5,600 square feet of murals, describing each of the scenes. At the end of the lecture, the muted strains of an organ are heard; and as the spotlight dims, indirect illumination is turned on slowly, showing the paintings completely for the first time.

Other novel effects are achieved by strong lights placed behind mirrors which have religious scenes on their reverse sides. This intense radiance in an otherwise dark room brings the illustrations into bold relief.

Funds for the erection of the Bible Cyclorama at a cost of \$65,000, were obtained by popular subscription. It was founded first as a church under the sponsorship of the Hyde Park Baptist Church; the organization was later incorporated as the Bible Cyclorama. The paintings, designed and executed for the most part by E. A. Anderson, of California, were completed on September 25, 1938. Among those assisting were Mrs. Anderson, Chester Snowden, and Mrs. Lunn of Houston.

**47.** The CHERRY HOUSE (*private*), 608 Fargo Ave., was built almost a century ago, and is a splendid example of the Georgian style. It has been closely identified with the cultural and industrial development of Houston. Its present site, the third since it was built, is nearly two miles from its first, in the heart of the old town.

Eight massive Ionic columns and artistically hand-carved capitals support two front galleries. Thirty-eight shutters enclose long windows that reach from floor to ceiling. Unusually high and massive doors have hand-carved pilasters and rope molding trim. Ceilings are high and interior walls have longleaf pine panels with unusually fine graining. Banisters, newels, and brackets of the staircase are of carved rosewood. Windows with molded architraves swing on hand-made hinges.

Furnishings are in harmony with the age and design of the house, many pieces having been collected by the present owner. A sideboard once owned by Gen. Sam Houston's family is in the dining room. Several pieces of pewter, old before Houston was founded, and a silver fish set are in the house. One bedroom has solid rosewood furniture.

Baldwin Rice, who later became mayor of Houston, drew the plans for the structure in about 1850, when Houston was still characterized by side-wheel boats, stagecoaches, frontier problems, and mud. The first site of the house is uncertain, although various authorities have placed it at the corner of San Jacinto Street and Prairie Avenue, or on Quality Hill in the 100 block on Chenevert Street. Others believe that it occupied a site on Preston Avenue, facing the courthouse.

The first part of the house was built by Gen. E. B. Nichols, who was asso-

ciated with Col. Tom Pierce, operator of a fleet of 22 vessels that plied between New England and Texas. General Nichols intended to make Houston his permanent home, and he secured good lumber and timber to build a residence. The building materials were intended for the construction of a warship, according to legend, and were sold to him by mistake.

Huge heart-pine timbers 18 inches by 24 inches, running the length of the house, were used for sills. They were mortised at the joints, fastened together with wooden dowels, and reinforced with hand-made nails. The flooring was two inches thick. Uprights and sleepers were of longleaf yellow pine, heavy with pitch, hardened to make an excellent preservative. Rosewood and other fine woods graced the interior.

Before the edifice was completed General Nichols was transferred to Galveston and sold the house to his business associate, William Marsh Rice, who removed it to the corner of San Jacinto Street and Franklin Avenue. Rice completed the dwelling and added the luxurious trimmings planned by the previous owner. It was one of the most pretentious residences of Houston, having cost approximately \$8,000 — a large sum for those days.

For a time during the Civil War the mansion served as a boarding house. It was commandeered by Federal officers quartered in Houston and used as a hospital for troops, when the yellow fever scourge struck shortly after the conflict ended.

For a number of years it was a hotel. Capt. Charles Evershade, who had it in the 1870's, was one of the Morgan Line captains. He was sent to Houston as superintendent of the Texas Transportation Company, a small road running from Bonner's Point to Clinton, on Buffalo Bayou, a distance of about six miles. During the period he occupied the house it was called the Evershade Mansion.

John D. Finnigan, pioneer hide and leather merchant of Houston, purchased the property in 1886 when property values were low because of local bank failures. Finnigan paid only \$2,500 for the house and lot. In 1894 he advertised the house for sale, asking for sealed bids. Mrs. E. Richardson Cherry, then a young artist and a student of old architecture and furnishings, urged her husband to submit a bid. His offer of \$25 was the only one received, and the house with many of its fine old furnishings passed to him at this ridiculously low figure.

The Cherrys had it removed to a tract that they owned southwest of the town in the open country, the operation consuming 46 nights, and costing \$450. When the house was finally brought to rest on new foundations, not even a brick from the chimney had been disturbed. Here, for more than a third of a century, Mrs. Cherry conducted a studio and art school, and the old house is known to scores of artists.

**48.** FOUNDERS' MEMORIAL PARK (*open by permission*), SW. corner W. Dallas Ave. and Valentine St., one of the city's oldest cemeteries, contains the graves of many of the Republic's most prominent figures. Here are

monuments to Maj. John Kirby Allen, one of Houston's founders, and to his father and mother, Roland and Sally C. Allen.

A simple iron gate gives entrance through a low, red brick wall. Past rose beds and dwarf cedars, a red sandstone walk ends at Founders' Green, marked by a flagpole. Beyond is a landscaped, flagstoned court, in the center of which stands a sundial. On a brick wall back of the court is a white marble plaque dedicated to the Texas pioneers buried here.

Among the marked graves of veterans of the Battle of San Jacinto are those of James Collinworth, signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and first chief justice of the Republic, and John A. Wharton, adjutant general of the Republic's army. Scores of yellow fever and cholera victims lie buried here; deaths occurred so swiftly and in such great numbers that bodies were dumped into long trenches and covered without ceremony.

Around this old cemetery, which once lay in peaceful solitude outside the boisterous new town, today crowds one of Houston's Negro sections. Across West Dallas Avenue, between Gillette and Heiner Streets and Buffalo Drive, is San Felipe Courts, a 1,000-unit project of the Houston Housing Authority. The project is for white residents.

Near by West Dallas Avenue was the route of the San Felipe Road, which led from Harrisburg to Stephen F. Austin's colony on the Brazos River at San Felipe. Along it laboriously traveled European immigrants and American citizens from the United States on their way inland to make their homes. This route was listed by Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels, commissioner-general of the Association for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas, as "Number 6." He placed the distance between Houston and San Felipe at 49 miles, and remarked in his instructions to settlers that there was no drinking water between Houston and Piney Point, ten miles to the northwest.

Today small shops and cafes line the thoroughfare, which often is heavy with the scent of wood smoke, barbecue, fried fish, and beer. Negro apartment houses, small residences, and a Negro church which strives for stained-glass effects in its painted windows, crowd the quiet cemetery area.

Just when the site first became a city cemetery is not known, but Harris County deed records show that as early as 1840 there was a lone grave on the Obedience Smith Survey, which adjoined the John Austin League. In 1844, W. D. Baker deeded property to the City in a document which stated, "Part of the above has hitherto been used for a grave yard."

Epidemics of yellow fever spread over Houston almost annually in early years, each leaving fresh mounds in cemeteries. Here were brought heroes dead from battle wounds, while duels with bowie knives and pistols brought others.

As years passed, the burial plot became neglected. Although newspapers carried editorials about its condition, little was done to improve it, as the *Daily Telegraph* indicated on August 18, 1876:

We . . . visited the old City Cemetery at the terminus of the Dallas street railway and must confess to a considerable degree of surprise and

mortification at the dilapidated and neglected appearance the enclosure presented. To the left of the eastern entrance there stands a vault, made to contain about thirty coffins. Many of the apertures in this are open . . . coffins have been broken to pieces. . . . Fences are down, trees have fallen, weeds have taken possession of the walks and lots. . . . Houston's authorities are woefully derelict in this respect.

Efforts to improve the cemetery's appearance were spasmodic. At last, members of the Congregation Beth Israel — whose own well-kept cemetery adjoins it to the west — in 1928 purchased the old cemetery from the City and cleaned it. Two years later the Congregation deeded it back to the City with the stipulation that it must be maintained as a memorial park, or revert to the donors.

The *Houston Press* on March 7, 1936, reported that a cow had eaten flags placed on the grave of Major Allen, and that the place was generally neglected. Its iron fence was broken and rusted; shattered bottles, household debris, and tin cans were scattered about; monuments and headstones had been torn down—many of these were being used as stepping stones across undrained sections. Near one corner of the cemetery, a fruit vender hawked his wares.

This situation was brought to the attention of the San Jacinto Centennial Association, and as soon as funds could be raised by public subscription, the work of improving the burial ground was undertaken. On April 22, 1936, the site was rededicated with military and civil ceremonies, and rechristened Founders' Memorial Park.

**49.** The JEFFERSON DAVIS HOSPITAL (*visiting hours 6-7 p.m. daily for Negroes; 7-8 p.m. daily for whites*), 1801 Buffalo Drive, is a charity institution operated jointly by the City of Houston and the County of Harris. The three-unit building was designed in modern American style by Alfred C. Finn and Joseph Finger of Houston. Total construction costs were \$2,202,736, of which the municipality provided \$1,000,000, Harris County \$500,000, and the Public Works Administration the balance. A ten-acre tract comprising the grounds has many shrubs, flowers, and lawns; the sum of \$15,000 was spent on landscaping. To the north, just across Buffalo Drive, Buffalo Bayou winds between wooded and grassy slopes.

Built in the form of a cross, the central section has 11 stories, with wings of ten stories each. Texas limestone, used as a trim, lightens the buff brick face of the building.

From Buffalo Drive, a roadway swings south to form a wide-bottomed "U" before separate entrances for visitors, ward patients, and out-patients. On the first floor of the building are two waiting rooms, seven observation bedrooms for emergency cases, three operating rooms, the admission office, quarters of the social service division, dining rooms for the medical staff, nurses, and other employees, and a kitchen. Belt elevators carry food to various wards.

Clinics maintained by the Houston Anti-Tuberculosis League are in the basement.

Administration offices are on the second floor, as are clinics, laboratories, and rooms for surgery, conferences, X-rays, and records. Brownish gray tile faces all corridors to a height of seven feet.

Terrazzo floors and plastered walls characterize the segregated wards for whites and Negroes, from the third floor to the tenth. There are 500 beds. On the fifth floor are five cells where psychopathic patients, some of them charged with criminal offenses, are confined. Juvenile cases occupy the sixth floor. The tenth story contains separate wards for contagious diseases. Thirty-six internes are quartered on the eleventh floor.

In the rear of the hospital is the seven-story NURSES HOME which harmonizes architecturally with the main building. The sleeping quarters contain 151 beds. In other sections of the building are teaching rooms, demonstration and living rooms, laboratories, a library, and storage space. A tunnel six feet wide connects the Nurses Home with the hospital.

Near by is a one-story brick building occupied by a laundry and power plant. It was designed to harmonize with the other units.

Houston established a charity hospital shortly after the town was incorporated, and the present Jefferson Davis Hospital is an outgrowth of that early-day institution. By an act of the Texas Congress in October, 1837, \$1,000 was appropriated:

Out of any moneys in the treasury or in the hands of the officers of the custom houses, to be expended . . . to provide for the comfort of the sick soldiers, who are now or may be in the hospital at this place.

In those days the hospital often was closed for long periods of time, to reopen during periodic scourges of yellow fever, smallpox, Asiatic cholera, or other epidemics. The *Morning Star* of August 29, 1839, carried a report to the City Council by Dr. William M. Carper, hospital surgeon. After listing a number of patients, and the disposition of each, the report said:

It will be perceived that although the city has been visited with more than usual sickness this quarter, yet there has been but three deaths . . . caused principally by drinking while in hospital. . . . Your attention has been so frequently called to the dilapidated state of the hospital, that it is deemed unnecessary to say more about it.

After the capital had been removed to Austin, while local municipal revenue was impaired, sickness among transients was so common that on October 4, 1839, the council passed this resolution:

No person shall be admitted to the City Hospital unless the person so applying be a resident citizen, and residing within the corporate limits of this city.

In an editorial on November 26, 1839, the *Morning Star* commented on the cold weather of a few days before, and said:

Now is the time for . . . charitable people to look about and ascertain who are in want. There is a great deal more suffering and want in our

city than we are apt to suppose. . . . We trust that the city authorities too will do their duty, in this respect and see that the poor do not suffer.

Two days later, however, the newspaper printed a notice that applicants must have been residents six months before they would be admitted to the City Hospital. The following February, the City Council decided to dispense with the hospital and care for its patients in a private home. But in 1840 and 1841 Houston was still caring for its poor in a municipally maintained hospital. In June of 1841, a committee was appointed to arrange for the care of the indigent sick of Harris County in the City Hospital.

Intermittent reports during the ensuing years indicate that Houston maintained a charity hospital much of the time. In the *Weekly Telegraph* of July 30, 1856, a report by Henry Vanderlinden, chief clerk of the Charity Hospital, covered a period of nine years. It showed that during 1847-56 there were 136,985 admissions — of which 121,138 were foreigners — and 21,080 deaths. Income was \$66,000, of which \$42,000 was obtained from the "Passenger Tax," \$8,000 from benefits, and the remainder from donations or pay patients.

The site for a new municipal hospital was purchased in 1858. According to the *Weekly Telegraph* of September 22, "It has now good buildings on it, and attached to the premises are twelve or fifteen acres of ground. The price paid . . . was \$2,500." It stood near a spot called Croft's mill, in the west part of the town, probably between Buffalo and White Oak Bayous.

The establishment of an almshouse in connection with the City Hospital was suggested by the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of November 8, 1858:

The pauper accounts of this city, would be lessened fifteen hundred dollars a year. Let us suggest that in the absence of any action by the county, the city hospital with its fifteen acres of ground be used for this purpose.

A list of municipal expenses for the year 1858, published in the *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of February 11, 1859, carried an item of \$2,500 for a hospital.

In 1861 the Houston Medical College offered to maintain a charity hospital, with only moderate cost to the municipality, if the grounds were donated to the college. A contract was signed on February 21, 1861, authorizing the college to operate the institution. During the Civil War it was largely used by soldiers.

A new site was purchased from Christian F., and Mary S. Duer on August 30, 1867, for \$14,000. It occupied the block bounded by McKinney and Lamar Avenues and Caroline and Austin Streets. A hospital building here was a two-story, wooden structure with verandas. In 1869 it was decided to "farm out the City Hospital," which was leased to Doctors Connell and Owens, and later to Doctors Powell and Hudspeth.

The *Houston Daily Telegraph* of June 21, 1874, reported removal of the institution:

From its old location on McKinney street and the dilapidated building in which it was there domiciled, to the Brashear place north of town on the line of the Central road. They have purchased the old Brashear homestead.

This place was described two months later as "An honor to the city and a Godsend to the afflicted."

In 1919 a building at Camp Logan, used by the American Red Cross during the first World War, was converted into a hospital for charity purposes.

More suitable quarters were recommended by the Harris County Medical Association, and in 1924 a bond issue for hospital purposes was voted. The new building was erected at Elder and Girard Streets on a site donated to Houston many decades before by Augustus C., and John K. Allen. It was named Jefferson Davis Hospital and dedicated on December 2, 1924.

Within five years the rapid growth in population made larger free hospital facilities necessary. The cornerstone of a new building was laid on July 8, 1936, and the present hospital was completed on October 28, 1937. Control is vested in a board of managers consisting of 12 citizens, while direct supervision is by a general manager. During 1940, 14,305 patients were admitted; 44,259 were treated in the emergency room, and an additional 123,961 were given clinic service.

On February 4, 1939, city and county officials approved the purchase of a gram of radium, which provided the largest single supply in the Southwest. The lowest quoted price was \$26,554. Late that year, a cottage was built at the rear of the hospital, and cages constructed for 90 guinea pigs, 25 rabbits, 20 rats, and two sheep, to be used in scientific research.

The Jefferson Davis Hospital Auxiliary was organized during 1938, and has 150 members. These women assist employees on clinic days. They read to the blind, tell stories to children, and distribute books and magazines. In 1939 the Auxiliary inaugurated self-betterment classes in the Nurses Home among the 50 graduate and 165 student nurses.

**50.** GLENWOOD CEMETERY (*open daily, sunrise to sunset*), 2609 Washington Ave., spreads along the winding banks of Buffalo Bayou. Its 114 acres are shaded by huge moss-draped oaks. Grass, flowers, and evergreen shrubs cover the gentle slopes and deep ravines. Vine-covered brick columns mark the principal entrance on Washington Avenue. A short distance inside, narrow roadways lead to every part of the cemetery.

Entombed here are many of those who helped to shape the destiny of Houston and Texas before, during, and after the hectic days of the Republic. Among them are Anson Jones, last President of the Republic of Texas; Governor J. W. Henderson; Maj. John W. Bell; Mrs. Andrew Briscoe, wife of a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence; William Fairfax Gray; Thomas S. Lubbock; Harding G. Runnels; James T. D. Wilson; Robert Wilson; John Hermann and his son, George H. Hermann, Houston philanthropist, and other members of



the Hermann family; T. W. House; Samuel M. McAshan; Maj. F. Charles Hume; Judge A. C. Allen; Maj. Ingham S. Roberts; Andrew Dow; John W. Bray, last survivor of the famous old frigate, *U. S. S. Constitution* (Old Ironsides); Col. John D. Andrews; J. R. Morris; John Shearn; Judge Alexander McGowen; Col. T. J. M. Richardson; Mrs. Charlotte M. Allen; Maj. Michael Looscan; Mrs. A. H. Mohl, founder of the Texas Women's Press Association, and Capt. F. A. Rice. Such familiar names as Sternberg, Settegast, Cockrell, Sterling, Hobby, and Ward are also seen on family plots.

Before Glenwood Cemetery was opened in May, 1871, there were four burial parks in Houston, some of which dated back to the 1830's. In the early days, graveyards were established by special groups, with the City supplying a municipal plot for all classes. City Council records indicate, however, that in the gun-toting individualism of pioneer Houston, segregation was carried even to the grave. An ordinance of September 19, 1840, attempted to regulate the burying ground on White Oak Bayou so that sections would be reserved for the well-to-do, and that "criminals, persons of infamous character, such as commit suicide, and such as are killed or come to their death from a wound received in a duel," would not be laid beside other citizens.

The effort was not successful. During the frequently recurring scourges of cholera and yellow fever, deaths were so numerous that the victims were often interred indiscriminately. "The grave yard' at Houston contained five years after its opening 6,000 souls," according to a report discussed editorially by the *Morning Star* of August 5, 1841. The *Tri-Weekly Telegraph* of March 15, 1860, declared:

All graveyards are overcrowded. [There is] need for a permanent cemetery in which churches, fraternities and the city corporation might unite in one general cemetery.

Glenwood Cemetery was the first effort in Houston to supply this need. Not long after its establishment various churches and fraternal societies, including the Masons, Woodmen of the World, and Odd Fellows, were represented in the new burial park. Members of the Typographical Union purchased a plot for their members; a tract was secured by the fire-fighting organizations of the city. This latter deed recited:

The Houston Cemetery Company, in consideration of the sum of three hundred Dollars paid by Protection Hose Co. No. 1, Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1, Liberty Engine Co. No. 2, Stonewall Hose Co. No. 3, Mechanic's Hose Co. No. 6 and Curtin Hose Co. No. 9, all of which companies are incorporated bodies and in active service in the Fire Department.

Using a heading, "The New Cemetery," the *Houston Weekly Times* of June 17, 1871, announced that A. Whitaker and his associates had been granted a charter by the legislature, authorizing them to purchase land and develop it for cemetery purposes, and added:

That Houston stands in need of such a receptacle for her dead as Mr. Whitaker contemplates creating, is one of the facts that has been fully recognized by the alacrity with which stock was taken in the enterprise.

Through the same newspaper a week later Whitaker issued a call for a meeting of stockholders of the Houston Cemetery Company. Forty-two additional acres were purchased by the company on September 29, 1871. The name Glenwood was adopted in February, 1872. Lots were 20 feet square and sold for \$50 in cash or in monthly installments of \$10.

By 1873 there had been 30 burials in the cemetery and 100 lots had been sold. The *Houston City Directory* for 1873 said:

Admirable roads and walks have been constructed, four to five hundred lots have been laid out, and the workmen are now busy planting the surroundings with shade trees, evergreens and shrubbery. . . . The cuts on the hillside were also being transformed from their barren appearance into mounds of evergreen verdure. . . . With the other material progress of our city we shall have a pleasant resort for a Sunday afternoon walk.

Glenwood Cemetery contained 80 acres in 1888 and was capitalized at \$10,000, according to a report in the *Houston Post* of May 15. Additional land has been purchased.

**51.** WASHINGTON CEMETERY, 2911 Washington Ave., adjoining Glenwood Cemetery on the west, contains 40 acres landscaped in harmony with the larger park. Prominent German families have plots here, among many old moss-draped oaks.

A tract of more than 27 acres was purchased for a burial park by the German Society of Houston on February 8, 1887. It was developed as a non-profit, cooperative enterprise. Members were issued stock entitling each shareholder to two lots, one of which could be sold to pay for the one retained. All funds received by the cemetery association have been used to improve and maintain the property. The area is beautifully landscaped, with many of the old oaks remaining.

Mrs. Emma Seelye, only woman member of the Grand Army of the Republic, is buried in a grave indicated by a simple metal marker. In 1861, posing as a man, she joined Company F, Second Michigan Infantry, under the name of Frank Thompson. For two years she served in the Federal army, as a soldier, an orderly on the staff of General Poe, a scout, and a brigade postmaster. In 1863 she contracted malaria; denied a furlough and fearing detection, she deserted and discarded male attire. Later she served as a nurse.

After the war she wrote *The Nurse and Spy*, said to have been based upon personal experience. The book had a sale of 175,000 copies. Her publisher certified that she had instructed him to donate her profits, amounting to thousands of dollars, for use in hospital work.

Some 20 years later, while living in La Porte, Texas, she communicated with her former comrades of the Second Michigan Infantry, who sent her money to

attend the next reunion of the regiment. The *Houston Post* of June 2, 1901, described the meeting:

She attended the reunion in 1884, after twenty years absence, but what a change! Then they knew her as the affable and soldierly Frank Thompson, now as the mature mother and matron, Mrs. Seelye.

Through the influence of her fellow-soldiers, Congress passed an act removing her disabilities as a deserter and granting her a pension of \$12 a month. She was mustered into the George B. McClellan Post, G. A. R., in Houston in 1897. A year later she died and was buried near La Porte. On Memorial Day, 1901, her body was removed to Washington Cemetery, then German Cemetery, and reinterred in the G. A. R. burial lot.

**52.** ST. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL (*open 8:5:30 daily*), NE. corner of S. Shepherd and Memorial Drives, is a Roman Catholic boys school. Its two buildings and stadium stand on 32 acres of gently rolling campus, studded with tall pines and spreading oaks. This is an affiliated senior educational institution, conducted by priests of the Basilian Congregation. Maurice J. Sullivan of Houston was the architect.

Founded in 1900, the school first occupied an old two-story frame structure at Franklin Avenue and Caroline Street, which had been erected in 1861 by the Franciscan Fathers. Here a few students had been in classes just a week when a tropical hurricane of September 8, 1900, damaged the structure.

When the property on which the building stood was sold to a railroad company, the 40-year-old house was removed to the Sacred Heart Church on Pierce Avenue and used as the parochial residence for more than a decade. The boys school was established in the Mason Building at the corner of Capitol Avenue and Main Street. Permanency was assured in 1903 when a block of ground between Austin and La Branch Streets, Hadley and McIlhenny Avenues, was purchased and plans for a suitable building were formulated.

On August 3, 1903, the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* reported:

The contract for the erection . . . of the new Catholic College . . . has been awarded. . . . The name selected is St. Thomas College. Rev. Father Roche is its head. . . . Estimated cost of the building is \$25,000.

Work was soon under way, and the school occupied the structure for more than a third of a century. The 1939-40 enrollment was 438 pupils.

Anticipating future expansion and the establishment of an accredited college, its heads purchased the present 32-acre tract in 1929. In 1932 the school was granted a State charter. Ground-breaking ceremonies for the buildings were held on January 8, 1940. The cornerstone was laid March 24, and the completed structures were dedicated on September 1. Two weeks later, classes met for the first time in the new plant, with a total enrollment of 470 boys.

The HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, near the intersection of South Shepherd and

Memorial Drives, is constructed of reinforced steel and concrete faced with Cordova shell stone. The walls terminate in a plain cornice, their severe lines broken only by regularly spaced, guillotine windows. The front walls slant obliquely from the ends to form an apex at the rounded entrance pavilion, where four massive columns rise to support a semicircular parapet. A huge stone cross crowns this feature. Between the pillars are three doorways, above which windows extend to the roof levels.

Within the educational building are 17 classrooms, commercial and typing rooms, four science laboratories, a library, a cafeteria, three offices, a waiting room, teachers room, and a small chapel.

The MONASTERY, facing Memorial Drive, a short distance east of the school, is a two-story, "L"-shaped, fireproof structure built of reinforced steel and Cordova shell stone. The entrance, in a slight set-back, is flanked by plain wing walls that rise above the roof. Large columns extend from circular steps to the parapet, upon the face of which a cross is carved.

Accommodations for faculty members are provided in the 25 bedrooms, two chapels, two parlors, a community room, dining room, kitchen, and library. The edifices are connected by a 75-foot portico. Two temporary auxiliary buildings near the stadium house dressing rooms, showers, a band room, and a recreation hall.

ST. THOMAS STADIUM, a short distance east of the school, with its entrance on South Shepherd Drive, was built in the summer of 1937 to accommodate 2,000 people; its seating capacity was increased to 3,000 in 1939. In 1940 the field was lighted for night games.

53. The DE PELCHIN FAITH HOME AND CHILDREN'S BUREAU (*open at all times*), 100 Sandman St., is a nonsectarian, community-supported institution caring for dependent children of Harris County. It provides food, shelter, education, training, and protection to neglected, abandoned, and homeless children in Harris County, insofar as its funds will permit.

Nine modern buildings of hollow tile, stucco, and plaster compose the central units. Built on the cottage plan, structures of modified Spanish design spread fan-like from the entrance across 12 acres, their soft-toned stucco walls and red tile roofs offering a warm color scheme against a cool green background of trees and shrubbery. The firm of Stayton Nunn-Milton McGinty of Houston designed the buildings.

The ADMINISTRATION BUILDING houses offices of the administrative staff and social workers. A simple entrance through a recessed porch gives access to the reception room. To the left are business offices; in the rear are headquarters of the social workers; at the right are interviewing rooms for parents or guardians of children.

Adjacent to this edifice is the HOSPITAL AND CLINIC (*open by permission*), a one-story building of harmonizing design equipped to care for minor illnesses, accidents, or ailments common to children. A physician and a registered nurse are

in charge. Twenty-five beds, a clinical laboratory, stockroom, and a small terrace comprise this unit. In a rear wing are sleeping quarters for nurses and other resident workers.

The BROWN MEMORIAL, east of the Administration Building and connected with it by a portico, is a memorial to Elizabeth Latchford Brown, wife of the late Harry W. Brown, and to their three children. In this story-and-a-half structure are the dining rooms and kitchen. The main hall has a high beamed ceiling and a hardwood floor of inlaid blocks. Rows of windows at the upper and lower levels, together with high-speed fans, give adequate ventilation. Sturdy tables, each seating six children, are so arranged that 160 can be accommodated at one time. In an elevated alcove, opening from the hall, is a smaller dining room for the staff.

Doors open from the east side of the room onto a covered terrace on a wide central court. Around this are grouped six cottages, residences of the children. These buildings are constructed in a one-story, rambling style and are connected by porticos. Projecting "V"-shaped bays permit a maximum of light and air in the sleeping rooms. Each cottage has a living room, seven bedrooms — each of which will accommodate from two to six children — a room for the cottage mother, bath and lavatory, adequate closet space, and a small, completely equipped kitchen. Under the supervision of the cottage mother, youngsters are permitted to draw supplies from the main kitchen to make candy or cookies, or to cook a full meal, serving it in their own living room.

Three of the cottages are devoted exclusively to boys; two are for girls; another is the brother-and-sister cottage. In the latter, children of one family are kept together where conditions make it advisable.

Between the two cottages on the south side of the grounds, in a connecting wing, is the library, which contains 3,000 volumes.

One of the buildings, the Emmich-Blei Cottage, was constructed from a bequest of \$21,000 by Mrs. Mary Emmich Blei in memory of her husband and parents.

Ample playground space and equipment are available. A wooded ravine on the Memorial Drive side was drained and cleared, and barbecue pits and picnic facilities have been installed.

Grounds, improvements and equipment have a total value of \$300,000; the buildings alone represent an investment of \$227,000. The land cost \$39,285.

The organization which sponsors this institution was established in April, 1892, as "Faith Home" by Mrs. Kezia Payne de Pelchin, a local pioneer in social service. She believed that there should be a place where employed mothers might leave their children.

*The Houston Daily Post* said on April 30, 1892:

Mrs. DePelchin established such . . . on Center street, a block from Glenwood car line, just back of the Baptist Mission chapel. . . . The terms for each child are 10 cents for a day, or 75 cents per week. The place will be known as 'Faith Home.'

Mrs. De Pelchin was born of English parents on the Portuguese island of Funchal Madeira in 1828. They moved to Texas in 1837, residing first in Galveston. There several of the family died of yellow fever, and there, a few years later, financial reverses swept away the fortunes of the survivors.

A daughter, Kezia, and her stepmother moved to Houston in 1841, where they soon were teaching a private school; it included music in its curriculum. During her spare time the younger woman nursed the sick, or devoted her energy and such resources as she possessed to helping those in trouble. She cared for yellow fever patients in New Orleans, Memphis, and other Southern cities.

Kezia married Adolph de Pelchin, a Belgian musician, in 1862. They lived together but a short time. She returned to her nursing work, this time in the Civil War. At the close of hostilities, she again taught school.

When the free schools closed, this notice appeared in the *Houston Daily Telegraph* of January 30, 1875:

GERMAN-ENGLISH SCHOOL — The Free Schools having closed, the German-English School, corner Milam and McKinney streets will be opened again as a private school on MONDAY, THE FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY. . . . Teachers — W. J. R. THOENSSSEN, MRS. K. DEPELCHIN.

She was an instructor in that institution the following autumn; and when 14 free public schools were opened in the city in 1877, Mrs. De Pelchin taught in the Fourth Ward, having "under her efficient charge thirteen boys and eighteen girls, ranging from the fourth to the sixth grade."

With the removal of Bayland Orphans' Home from the shore of San Jacinto Bay to Houston in the spring of 1888, she became head matron at a salary of \$65 a month, from which sum she was to "hire such assistance as she needed." Soon after assuming her new duties, she conceived the idea which resulted in the establishment of Faith Home.

The day nursery supplied a need, and grew so rapidly that less than a month after its founding, larger quarters were necessary. The *Houston Post* of May 24, reported:

The home for children which Mrs. K. DePelchin established . . . has moved from Center street to Major Looscan's building on Washington street, between Wright's garden and Glenwood (cemetery).

While still matron at Bayland, Mrs. De Pelchin maintained the new place largely from her own earnings. Although no longer young, she walked the distance from Bayland to Faith Home rather than ride in the mule cars, in order to save a few pennies for some needy child. The strain of her active life probably had much to do with her death on January 13, 1893. The *Houston Post* of the following day had a tribute to her:

All Houston mourns today the death of Mrs. A. DePelchin, who died yesterday. . . . She established the 'Faith Home,' where children could be cared for in the absence of their mothers. . . . The name 'DePelchin Faith Home' would be the best monument its founder could have.

Two days later it was announced that her niece, Martha Payne, would continue the place under the name of De Pelchin Faith Home. Almost immediately, Houston citizens assumed the financial burden. The *Houston Post* of February 4 reported that "The ladies of Christ Church have . . . organized a building association for Faith Home." Another group decided to carry on the work, and organized a board of directors with Mrs. Ruth House as its first president. A State charter was secured, and arrangements were made for conducting the home as a nonsectarian institution. It soon developed into an orphanage for homeless children.

One of the novel methods used to raise money was through the Whiskers Club. That association was described in the *Houston Post* of April 2, 1893:

A number of men agreed that during . . . Lent, they would not shave, but would deposit each week the amount equal to that of the barber, to the benefit of Faith Home. . . . Business men offered prizes for the best and worst whiskers. . . . The amount realized for Faith Home . . . was \$102.

Four lots at Pierce Avenue and Chenevert Street were obtained in 1895, and the institution was moved to a frame structure on the property. Faith Home's first permanent building, designed especially for it, was completed in 1899 at a cost of \$11,000. It was made of local bricks, was two and one-half stories high, and had accommodations for 30 children.

The continued growth of the home soon necessitated new quarters. Five lots in the 2700 block of Albany Street were donated by Miss Harriet Levy on behalf of herself and her brothers, Abe M. and Haskell Levy, and here a new three-story-and-basement building was erected. It was occupied on April 5, 1913. With accommodations for 75 children, the new fireproof structure seemed adequate for every requirement. Faith Home remained in this structure for a quarter of a century.

By order of the commissioners court, Harris County began contributing to the support of Faith Home in 1914. Houston was growing, and its larger population placed new burdens upon the institution. The present 12-acre site was purchased in 1927.

The program of the institution was enlarged in 1928 to make it an agency for the general care of children. The name was changed to De Pelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau. The new policy permitted the home to extend its field of service beyond the number of beds, to include a foster home service, adoption, and the protective work now given.

A 50-acre farm near Spring, Texas, 25 miles northwest of Houston, was purchased in 1934. It is used as a summer camp for children of the institution, and for outings throughout the year. There are accommodations for 40 campers. The value of the farm and improvements is \$5,000.

Construction of the present nine main units began in 1937. The home had on hand \$103,000; the City of Houston voted a bond issue of \$30,000 for the

buildings, and the Work Projects Administration appropriated \$72,765. Ground breaking ceremonies were held on December 13, 1937.

Five cottages, the Administration Building, hospital and dining hall were ready for occupancy on September 15, 1938. A sixth cottage was added in 1939.

Underprivileged Negro children were included in the program in 1939. This new work was made possible by an additional \$10,000 pledged by the Community Chest. A separate unit operates through the Negro Child Center at 1605 West Dallas Avenue, under the direction of the Faith Home board.

As nearly as possible, boys and girls in the home live in the manner of normal families. There are no marching lines; and there is no particular institutional routine other than regular meals, sleeping hours and habits. The children attend motion picture shows, churches of their choice, public schools, entertainments and private parties. They are taught to conduct themselves properly without being under the watchful eyes of a matron; help choose their own clothing; are consulted about plans for their future; and help with routine work. Older children are permitted to earn spending money by performing simple institutional services.

Of the 1,087 children served by De Pelchin Faith Home and Children's Bureau in 1940, 785 were given complete care, 208 were returned to parents or relatives after having been under supervision of the institution, eight were discharged by adoption and 346 were given shelter within the orphanage. During the 48 years since it was founded, more than 12,000 children have been cared for in the home.

Faith Home is the largest beneficiary of the Houston Community Chest. In the 1941 budget, \$138,468 was earmarked for this institution. It also receives assistance from the City and County, \$43,000 having been allocated in 1941. Unsolicited donations and bequests are also made.

The institution is a member of the Child Welfare League of America and of the Houston Council of Social Agencies. It has been a Houston Community Chest agency since 1922.

**54.** MEMORIAL PARK, 6200 Washington Ave., embracing 1,503 acres of beautifully wooded land, is Houston's largest recreational area. Here are a municipal golf course, polo grounds, picnic grounds, baseball and softball diamonds, tennis courts, an amphitheater, and a sanctuary for birds and small game. It is on the site of Camp Logan, World War emergency training ground; its name memorializes the men who lived within its borders in 1917-18.

Numerous drives, bridle paths, trails, and walks wind through the park. Tall pines and stately oaks occupy much of the level land, while sylvan dells provide a rustic background of vines, shrubs, and trees.

Near the main entrance is an 18-hole municipal golf course and clubhouse. Tile roofs and overhanging awnings give the stuccoed, bungalow-style building a definite Spanish atmosphere.



Picnic grounds are along Buffalo Bayou. Signs indicate numerous cleared and improved areas. At one place a small cabin has been built deep in the woods. In many of the clearings the bayou is suitable for swimming or wading. In the western end of the park several small brooks and ravines have been dammed up and terraced, forming a lake.

Here also is a refuge for birds and small game; wild flowers grow profusely. A 40-acre tract is devoted to a nursery where thousands of plants are cultivated for transplanting to other parts of the park.

Memorial Park occupies the main acreage of former Camp Logan, where 25,000 men were trained for World War duty. On the evening of August 23, 1917, approximately 100 private and non-commissioned officers of a battalion of Negro troops mutinied and rioted. They had been stationed near the camp to guard construction while the training post was being prepared for its white occupants. Ironically, the outbreak occurred on the very evening the local Chamber of Commerce had prepared a watermelon feast and picnic for the Negro soldiers. Before the insurrection was quelled, 17 people had been killed and 22 others injured. Four Houston police officers were among the dead.

At the close of the war, when the camp was abandoned, part of the site was acquired by the Hogg brothers, who, in 1924, turned 1,000 acres over to the City at cost. Later, an additional 503 acres were obtained. Hare and Hare, Kansas City landscape architects, planned the improvement work which was carried out during the succeeding years, first as a local, then as a State relief project, and finally under the supervision of the Work Projects Administration.

**55.** The HOUSTON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT, E. side of Telephone Rd. (State 35) at its junction with the South Houston Rd., 10 m. SE. of Houston, occupies a 645-acre tract marked by four directional runways. Structures on the field include an administration building, a large hangar and several smaller ones, and buildings used in servicing airplanes and as classrooms. In the southwest corner, headquarters of the 36th Division of Aviation, Texas National Guard, occupy a leased section of 35 acres. Both primary and advanced training in aviation for students of the University of Houston is conducted here under the direction of the Civil Aeronautics Authority.

The three-story ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (*open at all times*), just off Telephone Road near the northwest corner of the field, faces the runways and is constructed of steel, frame, and masonry walls, with a stucco exterior. It was designed by Joseph Finger of Houston and completed in 1940. The main entrance faces the field from between massive piers. Interior panels and ornaments are of Texas stone; the lobby floor is of marble. A concrete ramp in front of the building is for loading or unloading planes.

On the first floor are a ticket office, post office substation, cafe, and commercial air line offices; the second floor contains offices of the airport, a lounge, ballroom, pilots room, and an observation deck. Quarters of the United States Weather Bureau, the Civil Aeronautics Authority, and an Aerological Station

are on the third floor. In the control tower all field lighting equipment is regulated and flying information dispatched. Observers record temperature, barometric pressure, wind velocity, direction readings, and any unusual information about weather conditions. This data is transmitted every hour to 300 airport stations over a teletype circuit. Weather data is broadcast three times an hour. The field's radio range beam aids incoming ships in bad weather.

The MUNICIPAL HANGAR (*open at all times*), south of the Administration Building, is constructed of reinforced concrete with metal siding, with doors of the latter material. It was designed by Joseph Finger and completed in 1940. Sprawled along the area between Telephone Road and the landing field are a number of smaller buildings, hangars, and shops. Aprons in front of the large hangar lead to four connecting runways extending north-south, east-west, southwest-northeast, and southeast-northwest. This makes for favorable landings or take-offs regardless of the direction of the wind.

In a hangar at the rear of the Administration Building is the Civil Aeronautics Administration Standardization School for inspectors who are periodically given refresher courses and instruction in new devices introduced to promote safety. The hangar was formerly occupied by the Texas National Guard Division of Aviation.

Beyond the municipal buildings, near the southwest corner of the field, is the 36TH DIVISION OF AVIATION, TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND HANGAR (*open 8 a.m.-4 p.m.*), a brick and steel structure with space for 20 planes. Within the administration unit, designed by Lamar Q. Cato of Houston, are offices, drill rooms, classrooms, clubrooms for officers and enlisted men, a library, quarters for officers, and laboratories for radio photographic and medical detachments. A lean-to machine shop is attached to one end of the building. Within the landscaped grounds are five cottages for caretakers, and a garage.

In the spring of 1941, bombers for Great Britain were concentrated at the Municipal Airport. The airboats, flown from manufacturing plants to the Houston airport, were there dismantled and loaded on British ships, to be convoyed to England.

A long-range improvement program launched in 1941 included the paving of runways and a taxi strip, fencing, drainage, and other preparations for the planned enlargement of the airport.

56. ELLINGTON FIELD (*adm. by permission*), 17 m. SE. of Houston, left of US 75 (State 6), occupies an 1,800-acre tract containing an aviation school and a defense unit of the United States Army. During the first World War Ellington Field was among the country's largest aviation training centers, but it was abandoned at the close of the conflict. In 1940 the field again was designated as a major army air base. A building program of between \$3,000,000 and \$5,000,000 was begun to provide accommodations and equipment for 240 officers and 4,020 enlisted men, and 250 dwelling units for civilian employees.

On the field stand 159 one- and two-story frame structures. There are 60 barracks, each accommodating 67 men, five mess halls, the two largest seating 1,000 men apiece, six officers' quarters, a large administration building and 12 smaller ones, six school buildings, five for operations, and a number of smaller structures for storage, supplies, and utilities.

Hangars are of concrete and steel. Concrete, brick, and steel were used in constructing 12 bomb storage buildings and five control towers, each 50 feet high and ten feet square at the base. Six million board feet of yellow pine lumber from east Texas and Louisiana were used in the initial stage of the building program.

Ellington Field, begun in September, 1917, was named in honor of Lt. Eric L. Ellington, one of the first pilots to enter the army air service. He was killed at North Island, San Diego, California, on November 24, 1913, when a dual control biplane crashed from a height of 80 feet. Lieutenant Ellington was attached to the First Aero Corps, a pioneer flying unit of the army. He had graduated from the Naval Academy in 1909, was transferred to the army on an executive order from President Taft—the first such order to be issued—and in 1912 was granted a transfer to the aviation corps. He was only 24 when he crashed while serving as a flying instructor.

Within two months after Ellington Field was established, temporary hangars, barracks, administration buildings, and shops lined company streets and runways. Lt. Col. John Curry took command of the field in November, 1917. One week later Houston experienced its first bombing—American Red Cross literature was dropped; instead of driving residents to shelter, this aerial demonstration brought thousands into the streets to see their first bombing formation. On March 28, 1918, the *Houston Chronicle and Herald* announced that the 120th Aero Squadron, the first from the camp to reach Europe, was safely across the Atlantic and in training in England.

Several American "firsts" claimed for Ellington Field are described in the *Ellington Yearbook* of 1918. They include claims to the first aerial ambulance and the first aviation field newspaper, named *Tail Spins*; the assertion that this was the first field to adopt night flying with calcium ground lights, that here originated long distance cross-country flights, that Ellington had the first students to simulate three-day bombing raids, and that the field was the first in the South to receive DeHaviland planes. At one time the military personnel consisted of over 5,000 men. There were 250 planes on the field.

**57.** BAYLAND ORPHAN HOME FOR BOYS (*open daylight hours*), 27 m. SE. on the Webster-Seabrook Rd., established for dependent and young delinquent boys, is maintained by Harris County. The large, white, central building occupies a wooded elevation, and in the background cluster a half score smaller buildings, also painted white; R. D. Steele was the architect. The grounds contain 70 acres along Clear Lake.

The central two-story-and-basement structure is of reinforced concrete and hollow tile, with stucco finish. On the first floor are offices, a library, reception

room, and three large classrooms that can be converted into an auditorium. Dormitories built like sleeping porches, and sitting rooms occupy the wings of the second floor. Teachers' bedrooms are in the center. Manual training, carpentry, and tailoring shops are in one wing of the basement; in the other is a large recreation room.

At the rear of the central building are a modern five-room bungalow for the superintendent, a service building, electrical generating plant, barn and chicken house.

Bayland Home has a merit system. The boys are paid for their work in merits that are legal tender here. While food, medical aid, and shelter are free, each youngster pays in merits for marbles, candy, clothes, and special outings or trips. Every chore, from making beds to looking after stock, carries compensation. School supplies, clothes, and other essentials are sold on credit. But a Bayland boy must be solvent before he can attend one of the home's periodic celebrations. A court conducted by the boys decides every case of misconduct, and if the violator is found guilty and fined, he pays in merits.

Bayland Home for Boys was chartered on September 24, 1866, as a refuge for children orphaned by the Civil War. Trustees then included Col. William P. Ballinger, Galveston; Dr. John L. Bryan, Bayland, Harris County; Col. M. S. Munson, Brazoria County; the Rev. H. F. Gillette, Bayland; Col. John T. Brady, Houston; Col. Ashbel Smith, Evergreen, Harris County; the Rev. C. C. Preston, Bayland, and Col. F. H. Merriman, Galveston. These men met first in Doctor Bryan's office in Houston and perfected the organization, naming Colonel Munson president.

The orphanage at first was on the west side of San Jacinto Bay, not far from Morgan's Point, on a tract owned by Doctor Bryan. Directors decided to buy the land and improvements for the institution, and Colonel Brady, a Judge Dean of Galveston, and the Reverend Mr. Gillette were appointed to raise funds for the purchase.

For several years the home was supported by both Houston and Galveston, and at one time it sheltered as many as 250 boys and girls. It was commonly called the Confederate Orphans' Home. In *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin* of November 8, 1866, appeared notice that the "soiree for the benefit of the Confederate Orphans' Home last night . . . yielded quite a benefit to the little ones." Galveston was active in its support of the institution.

The name Bayland first appeared in 1868, in the *Daily Houston Telegraph*:

At a meeting held in accordance with a notice given, the Board of Trustees of the Orphan's Home at Bayland, assembled at the office of the Houston TELEGRAPH. . . . The following statement was then received from the Superintendent and ordered to be published:

Houston, May 4, 1868

To the Board of Trustees of the Orphan's Home at Bayland—Gents: Your Superintendent would respectfully report the following in relation to the 'Orphans' Home,' now under his charge. . . . The number of

orphans at the House is sixty, and daily increasing. The health of the children is good; only two have died since its establishment. The school is progressing finely — and the prospects of the Home are brightening. H. F. Gillette, Superintendent.

Notwithstanding the optimistic report, the orphanage was experiencing hardships. While Gillette had been promised an annual salary of \$1,800, he drew little if any of it, as indicated by a plea published on June 27, 1868, in the *Daily Houston Telegraph*: "The question is now to be decided . . . whether this beautiful and important charity is to be successfully and properly maintained, or be abandoned. Mr. Gillette, and the lady assisting him, are fully competent . . . and they do their whole duty; but they cannot continue . . . and yet receive no compensation."

Superintendent Gillette traveled over the region to secure contributions. *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin* noted such a visit on September 8, 1868, reporting that there were then some 80 children being "educated, fed and clothed at the institution, at an average expense of five dollars each per month, additional to what can be raised upon the place." In 1868 the orphanage was opened to "all destitute white orphaned children." Early in 1869 the land and improvements were bought. On July 4 the orphans were entertained by Galveston people; the event was described in *Flake's Daily Galveston Bulletin* as being a "social intercourse for the benefit of the most important eleemosynary institution of the State."

After 1868 the home received more volunteer contributions. One of the larger donations was made by William and J. J. Hendley of Galveston, who gave a league of land in Coryell County. Barnett & Henkle, Galveston merchants, donated "one of their celebrated Charter Oak stoves;" Jekial Bead & Company, New York manufacturers, presented a hat to each orphan; pillows were given by Andrews & Juffreys of Hempstead. The Houston Bayland Donation Association reported that \$565 had been collected in 1869.

On July 8, 1870, an excursion to Houston was made by boat up Buffalo Bayou. Miss Laura Morris, acting for the welcoming Houstonians, presented a banner inscribed with the words, "And God said, I will be a Father to the Fatherless." Following the presentation the party went to the Magnolia Warehouse for a day of celebration.

Among the organizations helping to sponsor the home were the Texas Old Guards of Houston and the Galveston Military. Through the *Houston Daily Telegraph* of May 28, 1876, the Guards were notified to "appear at the armory on Tuesday morning 30th . . . for the purpose of proceeding to Galveston to take part in the Parade and Picnic, given by the Galveston Military for the benefit of Bayland Orphan Home."

The home in 1877 was granted its share of public State lands, consisting of 55,000 acres located largely in Callahan, Shackelford, and Stephens Counties.

Late in June, 1878, Houston held a Bayland Day, and the *Daily Telegram* reported, "Many dollars rolled into the hands of the ladies. . . . The orphans

will receive a handsome sum as the proceeds of the affair." A little later Houston people raised \$841 at a Fourth of July picnic, and Galveston, \$570. This friendly rivalry between the cities was so beneficial to the institution that Ashbel Smith, president, reported in September that the home was out of debt, owned the buildings, a valuable farm of 320 acres, and livestock, and had a moderate cash reserve.

J. J. Hendley of Galveston, a patron of the home, died in 1887 and left \$30,000 to the institution. Trustees decided to remove the orphanage to Houston, and obtained a 35-acre tract near modern Woodland Heights, at the western end of present Bayland Avenue. Here a frame building was enlarged to accommodate 40 children, and the name of the institution was changed to the Bayland Orphan Home of Houston. J. W. Fuqua was the first superintendent, and Mrs. Kezia Payne de Pelchin the first matron of the new home, occupied in the spring of 1888. Fire destroyed the building on the last day of 1914, and two houses on Pecore Avenue were rented as temporary quarters. Then Joseph F. Meyer donated a 69-acre tract on the old Richmond Road, ten miles from Houston, where a two-story frame building was erected. Soon the county government agreed to maintain the institution.

Bayland Orphan Home remained at its site on the Richmond Road until November, 1936, when the Harris County Training School for Boys was abolished and consolidated with the orphanage, which was removed to the Clear Lake site and renamed the Bayland Orphan Home for Boys.

58. The HOUSTON YACHT CLUB (*open by permission*), 30 m. SE. on State 146, overlooking Galveston Bay, occupies a three-story Spanish stucco structure designed by Hedrick and Gottlieb. Extending the full length of the main façade is a wide screened veranda commanding a sweeping view of the bay and of the improved shore line and anchorage. Structural and ornamental features of the building have a marine motif. The walls, decorated with rope picture moldings, are finished in stucco plaster.

Among the annual events sponsored by the club, one of the oldest and largest yachting organizations in the United States, are a 60-mile race between Galveston and Port Arthur, races on a six-mile triangular course in Galveston Bay, a good-fellowship cruise between Houston and Galveston, an autumn racing series between the Houston Club and the Seabrook Sailing Club, a summer series with the Fort Worth Boat Club, and numerous meets between clubs of the Gulf coast. The club has a large number of women members who are experts at sailing boats.

In the still waters of the anchorage behind a breakwater are usually berthed between 75 and 100 motorboats and sailing craft of many sizes. Pleasure boating has long been a popular local sport; Houston was still in its early twenties when the San Jacinto Yacht Club was organized. Its clubhouse was at the head of Galveston Bay, near Lynchburg. In the spring of 1860 that club conducted the first regatta to be held in Texas. Eight trim sailing vessels participated in a water

carnival witnessed by a crowd from Galveston, Houston, and more distant points. On the decks of spectator craft "fair onlookers" wore prim bonnets tied with dainty bows, or wide-brimmed, plumed hats; long, flowing dresses were bustled and wasp-waisted. The race was from Lynchburg around the lighthouse on Clopper's Bar and back again. The winner's time was four hours, forty-one and one-half minutes; prizes were three goblets and a cup.

Throughout the summer the club held sailing races. In the *Weekly Telegraph* of November 6, 1860, J. A. Hageman, secretary, announced the "last Regatta" for the year, a race to be sailed from Baytown. The notice concluded, "Speeches will be delivered at Lynchburg, and the prizes presented." Although the San Jacinto Yacht Club elected officers in January, 1861, no further mention of its activities appears in Houston newspapers, until after Reconstruction.

The Redfish Boating, Fishing and Hunting Club was organized in 1865; among its charter members were John H. Gray, W. H. Albertson, P. Briscoe, John G. Harris, and J. T. Clements of Harrisburg, and John D. Usener, G. H. Tips, Otto Erichson, H. B. Johnson, the Reverend Mr. Woodward, and Capt. Mike Quinn of Houston. By 1874 the Andax Rowing Club was active. The *Daily Telegraph* of April 24, 1874, had a notice that "the Andax Rowing Club . . . launched their new pair-oared boat upon the tranquil bosom of Buffalo Bayou yesterday afternoon." Next to appear was the O. O. Boat Club, organized in the spring of 1882 by the O. O. Club, a social organization. Early in 1890 a group of local sportsmen revived the Redfish Boating, Fishing and Hunting Club.

Before the turn of the century Houstonians had found more time for leisure, and the Houston Yacht Club was organized on February 2, 1898, in the office of Dr. W. B. Griffin. Dan E. Kennedy was the club's first commodore. In 1900 the Aquatics Club was founded by 25 prominent Houstonians; headquarters were in Baldwin Rice's oyster house. The *Crescent*, the organization's flagship, was the first vessel to put out for Galveston after the tropical hurricane in September, 1900. The Houston Yachting Club was organized at a meeting described by the *Houston Daily Post* on September 23, 1903: "Enthusiastic boatmen and lovers of water sports held a meeting on the Katy houseboat on the bayou at the foot of Travis Street . . ." Officers of the new club were Dr. E. L. Fox, president; T. L. Borden, first vice president; H. B. Barnes, second vice president; C. C. Womack, secretary, and Dr. R. R. Cutler, treasurer. Regular meetings were held at 211 Main Street.

The Houston Yacht and Power Boat Club, organized to encourage scientific navigation, was founded in June, 1905, with T. J. Anderson as commodore, Harvey T. D. Wilson as vice commodore, and W. E. Hamilton as secretary. In January, 1906, the group announced plans to clear and dredge Buffalo Bayou from the foot of Main Street to the Government channel at Long Reach, to make it navigable all the way. Cannon shells had been dumped here during the Civil War, and as these were brought up they were seized by souvenir hunters.

The Kirby Marine Band was organized by the Houston Yacht and Power Boat Club in May, 1906. That summer the club sponsored a number of boating

events on the bay. Its big regatta was held in September on Galveston Bay, opposite Seabrook, despite high winds and heavy seas. Powerboats entered for the race over a 15-mile course were the *Stella*, the *Ruth*, the *Buffalo*, and the *Inola*, all of Houston, and the *Gladys* of Galveston.

Another group, the Houston Launch Club, was organized with 17 members on December 7, 1906. On its merger with the Houston Yacht and Power Boat Club in 1907, the newer name was retained. The combined organization received its State charter on March 16, 1908, and by August had 94 active and four honorary members with George L. Glass as commodore. The club moorings were at Harrisburg; annual outings and regattas were held. Club members helped revive the celebration of San Jacinto Day in 1910, when a water parade was conducted by the club between Harrisburg and the battleground. That year a clubhouse was erected in Harrisburg. The Houston Launch Club was credited with contributing to the movement that resulted in the designation of Houston as a port of entry. In 1911 the club held its annual regatta just off Sylvan Beach in Trinity Bay, described as "the biggest event of its character on the Gulf of Mexico."

The Houston Canoe Club in 1912 leased a site in Magnolia Park for a club and boathouse. Members of the Houston Launch Club formed an organization for sailboat enthusiasts and established headquarters at Seabrook.

The incorporation of the San Jacinto Bay Corporation, a holding and operating organization to manage the new clubhouse of the Houston Launch Club at Shoreacres, was announced in January, 1927. Among the first events was a Fourth of July racing regatta under the auspices of the Mississippi Valley Power Boat Association. Later in 1927 the Houston Launch Club and the Houston Yacht Club combined under the name of the latter organization.

In the third annual race to Port Arthur in April, 1940, more than 50 racing craft and motor cruisers comprised the largest pleasure armada ever to move along the middle Gulf coast. A spectator fleet of coast guard units and power cruisers accompanied the racers on the 60-mile run. Another squadron of pleasure craft moved down the Intracoastal Canal to join the party in Port Arthur.

One of the colorful activities of the 1940 season was the United States Coast Guards' 150th anniversary celebration at the clubhouse of the Houston Yacht Club in August. Coast Guard boats from the Gulf coast participated.



## CHRONOLOGY

- 1529-34 Cabeza de Vaca, shipwrecked on the Texas coast and held prisoner by Indians, escapes inland and explores the vicinity of present-day Houston.
- 1745 Capt. Joaquín Orobio y Basterra, traveling south on the Bidai Trail, discovers the Aranzazu, believed to have been the San Jacinto River.
- 1750 Frenchmen and Spaniards have established the Camino Real Orcoquisac, first reported channel of commerce in the area of modern Houston, a trade route between the Rio Grande and the mouth of the Trinity River.
- 1755 The Presidio de San Agustín de Ahumada, on the Trinity, serves as a gathering point for the Orcoquisacs, a tribe closely identified with local history.
- 1756 The Mission Nuestra Señora de la Luz is authorized, at a site near the presidio.  
Autumn. Spanish authorities plan the removal of the mission and presidio to a site believed to have been near the junction of Mill and Spring Creeks, on the northern boundary of today's Harris County; an extensive colony is planned.
- 1757 Bernardo de Miranda explores the San Jacinto area to report on the site of the mission and colony, but Governor Barrios declares the region unfit for settlement, and the plan fails.
- 1764 The Presidio de San Agustín de Ahumada burns.
- 1774 Athanase de Mezieres reports French traders in the region.
- 1817 According to legend, Jean Lafitte repairs his ships near the mouth of the San Jacinto.
- 1818 Exiled Frenchmen, under Lieutenant General Rigaud found the colony of *Champ D'Asile* on the Trinity.
- 1819 Dr. James Long, filibusterer, leads expeditions into Texas, establishes a camp at Bolívar Point.
- 1820 Moses Austin enters Texas and secures a grant for the colonization of 300 Anglo-American families.
- 1821 Stephen F. Austin succeeds his father as *empresario*, and selects the region between the Colorado and Brazos Rivers for a colony.  
November. The schooner *Lively* lands settlers and provisions at the mouth of the Brazos.
- 1822 With Austin's grant invalidated by Mexican independence (1821), the colonizer seeks restoration of authority; but some of his colonists settle along the San Jacinto, ten miles above the site of Lynchburg.
- 1823 Austin's grant is reconfirmed.  
John Richardson Harris establishes a trading post at the junction of Bray's and Buffalo Bayous.

- 1824 July. Austin Colony land grants are issued to settlers, who gather near present Baytown to meet Austin and the Baron de Bastrop. November. The eastern boundary of the Austin Colony is extended to include San Jacinto settlements.
- 1826 Harris employs Francis W. Johnson to lay out the town site of Harrisburgh (later spelled Harrisburg). David G. Burnet and Joseph Vehlein obtain permission to settle 600 families northeast of the present limits of Houston.
- 1828 July 17. Austin is granted authority to incorporate coastal settlements into his colony.
- 1829 March. Lorenzo de Zavala contracts with the Mexican government to settle 500 families in the vicinity of modern Houston.
- 1830 Mexico enacts a colonization law forbidding immigration to Texas from the United States. Summer. Gen. Manuel de Mier y Terán leads a rabble army to man the garrisons and customhouses of Texas, thus inspiring friction between the settlers and the Mexicans. October 16. Burnet, Vehlein and De Zavala transfer their colonization grants to the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company.
- 1832 Augustus C. and John K. Allen, investors in land scrip of the Galveston Bay and Texas Land Company, arrive in Texas. William Barret Travis is imprisoned by the Mexicans at Anahuac; non-Latin settlers of the region secure his release in "The Boston Tea Party of Texas," and among the leaders are the Harrises and John Austin.
- 1834 Santa Anna becomes dictator of Mexico, launches a campaign of suppression against Texas colonists.
- 1835 May 4. Texans meet to protest stringent Mexican customs duties. June. Travis, leading the colonists, evicts a Mexican garrison in the Battle of Anahuac, after a customs row involving DeWitt Clinton Harris. November 12. Texans in convention at San Felipe form a provisional government and elect William P. Harris, of Harrisburg, to the General Council.
- 1836 March 2. De Zavala and Andrew Briscoe, Harrisburg delegates to a convention at Washington on the Brazos, assist in the adoption of the Texas Declaration of Independence, as Santa Anna's invading armies spread fear and destruction, threatening to wipe out Anglo-American settlement. March 18. The convention adjourns after adopting a constitution and electing David G. Burnet President ad interim, and De Zavala Vice President of the Republic of Texas. March 24. President Burnet and his cabinet, fleeing before the advancing Mexican army, establish headquarters in the Harris house at Harrisburg.

- April 15. The Republic's officers, with Santa Anna in the vicinity, leave Harrisburg, take refuge in Lynchburg; Harrisburg is burned, and Santa Anna, arriving too late to capture governmental heads, completes the destruction.
- April 21. Texans under Gen. Sam Houston defeat Santa Anna's army in the Battle of San Jacinto.
- August. The Allen brothers acquire land, lay out the town site of Houston, and offer lots for sale.
- November 30. Houston is chosen capital of the Republic of Texas.
- 1837 The first steamboats venture up Buffalo Bayou.
- March. The Rev. Z. N. Morrell conducts Houston's first Protestant religious service of record.
- May. The Texas Congress meets for the first time in Houston, convening in the unfinished Capitol.
- Summer. The town of Houston is incorporated, and the first election is held.
- 1838 John Carlos opens the first local theater.
- December 10. Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar is inaugurated President, and Burnet Vice President of the Republic.
- 1839 February 11. The town's first public school opens.
- The Capital of Texas is transferred to Austin.
- Improvement of the bayou channel starts.
- Harrisburg County becomes Harris County through an Act of Congress.
- 1840 Construction of the first local church building, interdenominational, is begun.
- 1841 An ordinance establishes the Port of Houston.
- 1842 Summer. After a Mexican army invades Texas, Congress, by order of President Houston, meets in special session at Houston, using the Presbyterian Church building.
- September 29. The capital is removed to Washington on the Brazos.
- 1845 Houstonians celebrate as Texas becomes the 28th State in the Union.
- 1846 Four regiments of volunteers from Harris, Galveston, and Jefferson Counties join United States forces in the Mexican War.
- 1853 August. The *General Sherman*, wood-burning locomotive, brings Houston's first train to Stafford's Point over the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos & Colorado Railroad.
- 1860 Buffalo Bayou's steamboat era reaches its zenith.
- Knights of the Golden Circle, Southern Rights Association, and other organizations stimulate local sentiment in favor of secession.
- 1861 January 1. Houstonians fire a 15-gun salute in celebration of South Carolina's secession.
- January 14. Residents vote overwhelmingly for the secession of Texas.

- 1862 October 9. Refugees fill Houston as Federal forces occupy Galveston Island.
- 1863 January 1. The "cottonclad" steamboats *Bayou City* and *Neptune*, sailing from Houston, defeat Federal men-of-war in the Battle of Galveston.
- February. Houston becomes military headquarters for the Confederate District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.
- September 8. Lt. Dick Dowling, Houston saloonkeeper, and his Davis Guards man the guns that repulse Federal gunboats in the Battle of Sabine Pass.
- 1865 June 20. Houston is occupied by Federal forces; Reconstruction begins locally.
- 1866 Harrisburg votes for incorporation.
- 1868 The first horse car is placed in operation on the Tap Railroad.
- 1869 Houston Ship Channel Company is organized, to dredge the Bayou to a minimum depth of nine feet.
- 1870 August. A new city charter establishes eight wards.
- 1874 January. Another city charter is received as Reconstruction ends.
- 1876 March. Free public schools open.
- Spring. A deep-water channel through Morgan's Point is completed; the first Morgan Line ship arrives.
- 1878 December. A contract is awarded for the construction of municipal waterworks.
- 1880 The first electric arc street light is installed on Main Street at Preston Avenue.
- 1891 June 12. Houston's first electric streetcar is placed in operation. William Marsh Rice makes an initial endowment for an institute.
- 1892 The development of Houston Heights is begun.
- 1895 The national convention of Confederate veterans is held in the city. Sidney Porter (O. Henry) goes to work for the *Houston Post*.
- 1897 Houston's first "horseless carriage" is demonstrated.
- 1898 May 4. The Light Guards and the Emmet Rifles leave for Austin for service in the Spanish-American War.
- 1900 September. Victims of the Galveston storm seek refuge in Houston.
- 1901 January 10. Discovery of the Spindletop field inaugurates the city's career as an oil center.
- 1903 A building boom inspired by oil development gives Houston a higher skyline.
- 1904 November 6. The "Moonshine" well, near Humble, is brought in, opening Harris County's first big oil field.
- 1906 April 1. Commission-form city government takes office.
- 1910 July. Ground is broken for the first building of Rice Institute.
- 1912 February 21. Forty blocks of North Side dwellings burn.
- September 23. Rice Institute opens.

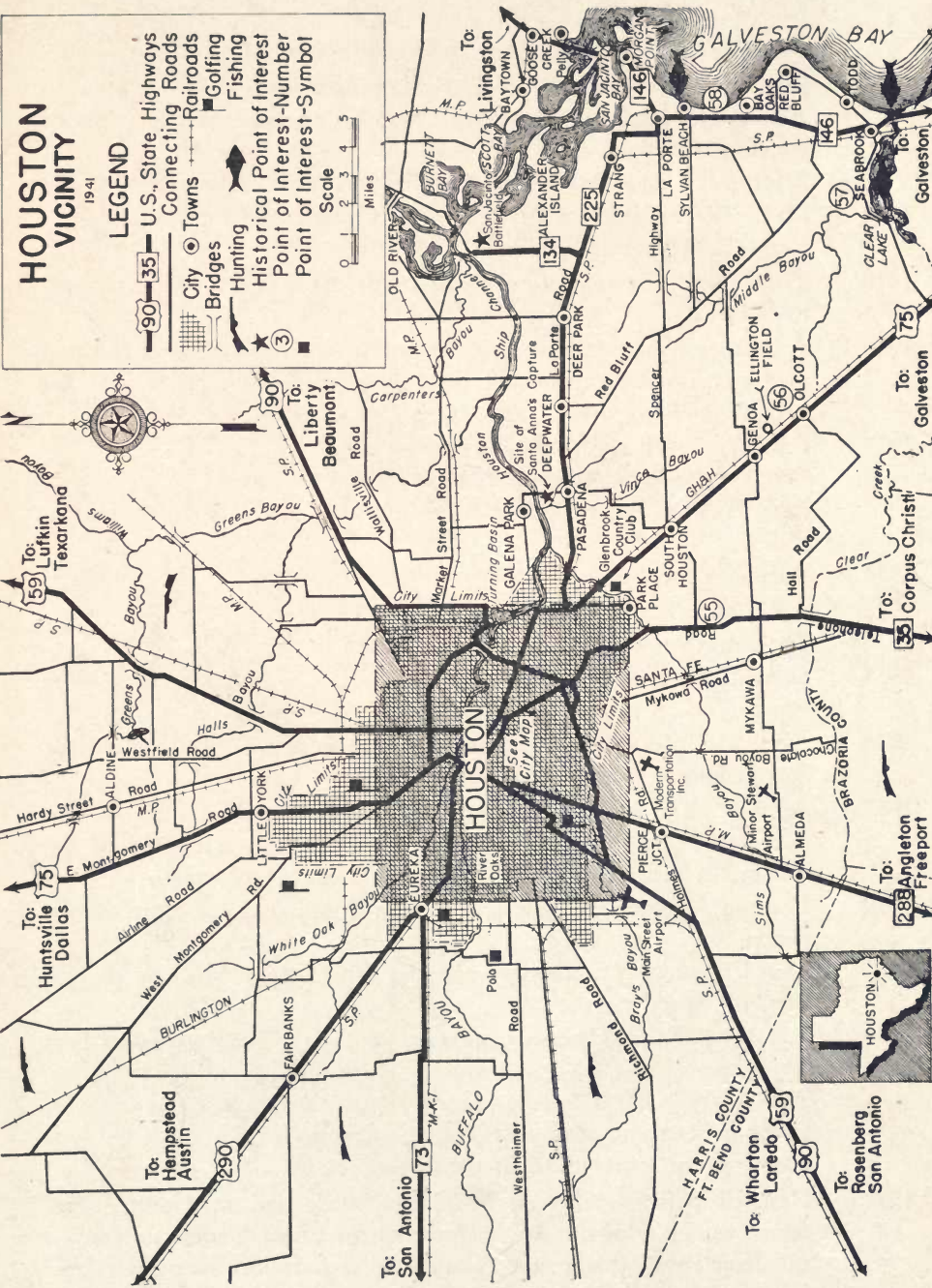
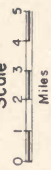
- 1914 May 30. George H. Hermann gives the municipality 278 acres of land for a park.  
November 10. Port Houston is officially opened.
- 1917 July 24. The construction of Camp Logan begins.  
August 23. Negro soldiers from Camp Logan riot; the city is placed under martial law.  
September. The construction of Ellington Field is started.
- 1918 May. The Thirty-third Division leaves Camp Logan for France.  
Ream Field is established.
- 1919 The Federal government earmarks funds to deepen the ship channel to 30 feet.
- 1920-30 A decade of unprecedented growth and prosperity establishes Houston as a city of skyscrapers and big industrial plants, and one of the nation's leading ports.
- 1928 February 6. Air mail service is inaugurated.  
March 2. The municipal airport is officially opened.  
June. The National Democratic Convention meets at Sam Houston Hall.
- 1933 Epsom Downs opens.
- 1934 April 30. The University of Houston is founded.  
The Intracoastal Canal is completed in the Houston area.
- 1935 December. Rains send Buffalo Bayou over its banks, causing "the worst flood in the city's history."
- 1936 April 21. In a statewide observance, the centennial of the Battle of San Jacinto is celebrated at the battlefield.
- 1937 April 21. The San Jacinto Memorial is dedicated.  
October. Buffalo Bayou's downtown "bottleneck" is cleared of debris in the first step of an extensive flood control program.
- 1939 Houston becomes the first port in the South and the third in the nation.  
The University of Houston occupies its first building on the St. Bernard Street campus.
- 1940 A \$32,000,000 flood control program for Harris County is given Federal approval.  
The Federal Census Bureau reports Houston's population as 384,514, giving it 21st rank among cities of the nation.  
Port Houston ranks third in the United States.
- 1941 National defense programs speed the production of Houston factories; among additions are the erection of tuluol plants at Baytown and Deer Park, a plant near Pasadena to manufacture synthetic rubber from petroleum gasses, a \$7,020,000 shipyard, a \$17,000,000 steel mill, and a U. S. Army Ordnance Depot and Ship Terminal costing several million dollars, near the San Jacinto Battlefield.

# HOUSTON VICINITY

1941

## LEGEND

- U.S. State Highways
- Connecting Roads
- Railroads
- City
- Towns
- Bridges
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Historical Point of Interest
- Point of Interest-Number
- Point of Interest-Symbol



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