

THE PLACE-NAMES OF BRAZOS COUNTY, TEXAS:  
1821 to 1880

A Thesis  
by  
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## ABSTRACT

The Place-Names of Brazos County, Texas:

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Brazos County, Texas was settled primarily as a result of the westward flow of migrants from the American South. When the first of these settlers arrived in the county area in 1821 they found a land which bore few marks of human occupation; however, a rapid transformation occurred during the sixty year period between 1821 and 1880, the period of initial settlement.

Place-names, which are an important part of any cultural landscape, provide a valuable means of studying the nature of the county's settlers and of the land they settled. Specific and generic place-names have been collected and placed in a dictionary to provide individual and collective glimpses of the county's past. The dictionary also provides the source for an analysis of naming trends and processes, which is included in this study, as well as for future studies which might extract information for a regional or state-wide study.

A strong relationship was found to exist between the characteristics of the population and the way they used place-names as tools of description and organization. In addition, the study also found place-names to be a good source of information on other themes of the settlement

process, including the building of a transportation network, settlement patterns, and agricultural trends. These discoveries further enhanced the role of the place-name as a preserver of past landscapes.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Few things in life are the product of just one person's efforts and this study is certainly no exception to that rule. Many people have contributed, directly or indirectly, to the completion of this study and to them I offer my sincerest gratitude.

The patience of my committee chairman, Dr. Campbell W. Pennington, rivaled that of Job and his guidance and understanding will always be appreciated. My thanks also go to my committee members, Dr. Peter J. Hugill and Dr. Victor H. Treat, whose doors were always open and who were willing to sit and listen to ideas which were sometimes less than completely formulated. Gratitude is extended to Drs. Bednarz, Kimber, and White of the Geography Department who were all good sounding boards for my plans and schemes. The gang in the bull pen--you know who you are --are thanked, and consoled, for all the time they spent listening to me rant and rave about the place-names of Brazos County; many of the best parts of this thesis were hammered out over cups of coffee or during dart games.

This study was aided greatly by the support, both financial and moral, of my parents, Mr. and Mrs. William C. Diem, my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Eckel, and, above all, my wife Lynn. They too have exhibited great patience over the last two and a half years of struggling, fretting, research, and writing.

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CHAPTER 1  
INTRODUCTION

The place-name is "an essential part of the symbolic organization of the land" (Meinig, 1968, 181). It is unfortunate that more place-name studies do not reflect this idea; many have utilized place-names as sources of information about the history and geography of an area but few have made inquiries into how and why these names were given. Historical geographers have often concentrated on other processes which man imposes order upon the physical landscape (the development of transportation and communication networks, the establishment of commercial and agricultural systems, and the patterns of migration and settlement) but the role of naming in the creation of a cultural landscape is often given little or no attention in their studies. Herein the creation of the place-name landscape in Brazos County, between 1821 and 1880, illustrates the role of place-naming as organization in the county's historical geography.

Originally, I considered a study which involved an explanation of the origins of names found on current maps of Brazos County (ca. 1980); shortcomings of such a study quickly developed. Many names were found during research which did not show up on any of the contemporary maps but which revealed much information about those who settled in the county and how they perceived the physical landscape. Secondly, a study of just place-name origins did not fully explain the process of naming and its role in the organization of the landscape. In order to alleviate these

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References are in the style of the Proceedings of the Association of American Geographers.

problems, a time period was selected to represent a specific phase in the history of the county. The selection of this time period allowed the collection of rather precise information about the study area and the people who inhabited it which could then be presented as an integral part of the thesis. The establishment of a time period also facilitated a more diligent collection of the place-names used during that period, as well as their analysis in the light of the information collected about the physical and cultural landscape.

The study of Brazos County place-names was facilitated by the location of Texas A&M University within the county, particularly since it permitted easy access to county records. Brazos County's topography, a mixture of river bottoms and rolling uplands, presented a diversity of features to be named. The study period of 1821 to 1880 was selected because it best represents the initial phase of the county's settlement. 1821 was the year in which settlement as a result of the Austin grant was begun in the area which included what is now Brazos County. The year 1880 was selected as the year which best represents the end of the initial settlement phase for several reasons. 1880 marked the end of a rather dynamic period of growth, one in which the county's population increased by over 3000 percent between 1848 and 1880 (Bracht, 1931, 61; U. S. Census Office, 1883). Other factors which entered into the choice of this particular year include the end of Reconstruction and the establishment of the A&M College in 1876 as well as the slowing down of in-migration in the decade afterwards. The choice of 1880 also made it possible, with the aid of the U. S. Census of 1880, to make an accurate statement about the county's demographics at the close of the study period.

Place-names used during the study period are presented in the format of a dictionary. The dictionary includes both specific names, those given to designate one particular place or landscape feature, and generic names, which tell what type of place is being described. Each class of place-name has a unique potential for explaining the physical and cultural characteristics of mid-nineteenth-century Brazos County.

#### Problem Statement and Objectives

The central theme of this thesis is the examination of the place-name landscape of Brazos County, Texas as it was created during the initial phase of Anglo-American settlement from 1821-1880. Principal findings of the study concern the correlation between social characteristics and naming processes, perception of the physical landscape, and organization of the physical and cultural landscape. The accomplishment of this study has been guided by four objectives:

1. The compilation of a dictionary of specific and generic place-names used in the county between 1821 and 1880.
2. an analysis of the specific place-names based upon their origin, location, and use
3. an analysis of the generic place-names used for cultural and natural features based upon their origin and use
4. an examination of the naming process, particularly as reflected in a correlation of place-name patterns and characteristics of the physical and cultural landscape.

Collection of items in the place-name dictionary has consumed a major part of the time devoted to this research, although the compilation is inadequate in itself for the purpose of explaining the naming processes involved. Much effort has therefore been devoted providing an understanding of the people who came to Brazos County and of the area they settled and eventually named; this emphasis is illustrated in objectives

two, three, and four. My pursuit of these research objectives, as elaborated upon in the following study, is intended to provide a valuable insight into the naming process.

#### Review of the Literature

American place-name studies have generated an immense body of literature during the last two centuries. These studies have ranged from whimsical studies concerning the origins of "cute" names (Podunk, Timbuktu, etc.) to scholarly investigations which have consumed years in their research and writing. One needs only to consider the bibliography compiled by Sealock and Seely (1967), the review of the contributions of the American Name Society by Bryant (1976), or the pages of the journals Names and American Speech to fully appreciate the volume and diversity of an American toponymic research.

Numerous works have influenced the development of the research objectives and methodologies involved in the study of Brazos County place-names. The literature which was surveyed generally belonged to one of four categories:

1. literature which deals with the development of place-names as a result of cultural processes
2. inventories of place-names within a defined area
3. studies which are concerned with the distribution of terms and the definitions of regions
4. works dealing with methodologies and classificatory systems for the collection and analysis of place-names.

As is the case of most attempts at categorization, the above guidelines are not sacrosanct and many of the works reviewed were able to fit the descriptions of two or more of the categories. Each study examined in this section is placed in the category which best describes its usage

in the creation of the thesis problem.

### Process Studies

Works included within this section are those which deal with the creation of the place-name landscape as a function of cultural (historical, sociological, linguistic, etc.) processes. The most famous of the process studies, Stewart's Names on the Land (1967), has achieved the rare distinction of being well received by both the academic world and the general public. Stewart portrays the creation of America's place-name landscape as the result of a history and geography which has allowed the blending of many cultures and traditions. Stewart echoes H. L. Mencken's classic work, The American Language (1919), which concerns the creation and evolution of "American English" and its reflections of cultural processes. Stewart's discussion of place-names and place-naming reflects Mencken's emphasis on the need to understand the history of American population and culture before attempting to understand the place-names of America.

The examination of place-naming processes has also been conducted within areas smaller than the United States. Miller's study of the Arkansas Ozarks (1969) emphasized that the study of place-names is of great value to the cultural geographer. She wrote that many of the names represented "selective oral material disseminated regionally by ingrained, persistent speech habits" and belonged "to the the folk because they are a part of a shared experience and are a reaction to a real, immediate, and practical situation" (1969, 250). A pioneering study by which Whitbeck (1911) examined the place-naming processes of five distinct regions within the United States and led him to suggest that place-names can give

an insight into the history and nature of an area and its early inhabitants. H. F. Raup (1945) further illustrated this idea in his study of the place-names given to three California counties during the Gold Rush.

The relationship of toponyms and sequent occupance has been examined by Meyer (1944) and Detro (1970). Meyer (1944, 159) proposes that many of the place-names which he found in his study of the Calumet Region of Indiana-Illinois are "philological fossils" which are "instrumental in reconstructing the historical-geographic reality of a region." An examination of the generic terms used in Louisiana demonstrated the value of place-name generics as diagnostic tools for the "Theoretical reconstruction of culture areas" (Detro, 1970, xiv). Detro's study, which makes excellent use of cartographic illustration, relates the changing place-name landscape to the cultural landscape. Other studies which have involved reconstruction include the determination of the original vegetation of Cuba by Waibel (1943), of past and present culture areas in Belize by Everitt (1980), and of the northern extent of Spanish-Mexican influence in California by Raup and Pounds (1953).

#### Place-name Inventories

Numerous toponymic investigations have involved the collection of the specific and/or generic place-names which have been used within a defined geographic area. These works often contain much information on the origins of the names and some have even included various methods of analysis which shed light upon the cultural processes of the area. The common feature of all is the creation of a place-name dictionary or gazetteer.

The collection of specific names for an entire state is a task which requires a sizeable investment of both time and energy. Of the few exhaustive studies which have been made, some of the best are those for Oregon (McArthur, 1952), Florida (Bloodworth and Morris, 1978), California (Gudde, 1969), and Arizona (Barnes, 1935). Kramer's examination of Idaho place-names (1950) utilized only town names; however, his analysis of the names is useful as a means of understanding the state's history and geography.

The great volume and diversity of Texas place-names has delayed the completion of a thorough dictionary. Gannett's gazetteer of the state (1902) is interesting but it contains numerous mistakes and is sparse in terms of the information provided. Fulmore's study of the origin of county names (1935) is of value as an introduction to the state's land and history. Another work of rather limited scope is Martin's pamphlet (1947) concerning the origins of some of the state's Indian and Spanish place-names. The role of place-names in the study of the state's folklore is examined by Dobie in a chapter of Straight Texas (1966), the primary emphasis being their contribution as story tellers. The most extensive examination of the state's place-names has been conducted by Fred Tarpley, who is currently the head of the state's place-name survey. Tarpley's research has included a book on the place-names of northeast Texas (1969) which was based on his dissertation research. His 1001 Texas Place-Names (1980), although tending to the "cute", contains the most interesting of the names he has collected in an effort which has thus far consumed twenty years.

Studies of the place-names of smaller geographic entities are more

numerous than state-wide studies. Many of these have just been dictionaries (Douglass, 1932; Berry, 1935) or have involved only a minimal amount of analysis based on the classification of specific name origins (Ramsay, 1952; Ramsay, 1954). The most thorough of studies done on the names of one county is that which was conducted by Cassidy on Dane County, Wisconsin (1947; 1968). Cassidy contributes a very usable methodology for the analysis of place-name patterns and the correlation of specific and generic names found in the county. Other studies which have adopted the methods illustrated by Cassidy (Clover, 1952; Foscoe, 1978) highlight the quality of his work as a model for others.

The collection of generic terms within a defined area has been undertaken in two noteworthy studies, one of topographic terms used in Virginia (McJimsey, 1940) and the other of topographic terms used in the Ohio Valley between 1748 and 1800 (Finnie, 1970). The study by Detro of Louisiana generic terms (1970) is of such value that it should also be mentioned here. All three provide excellent models for the extension of this sort of study into other parts of the country.

#### Distribution and Regionality

The distribution of particular place-name elements has often been used to show the boundaries of a region. The preference of various regions or peoples for certain place-name generics has led to the creation of a sizable body of research. A second element of the distribution and regionality studies has been concerned with the distribution of only one or two place-names or types of place-names.

Examinations of linguistic geography and regional vocabularies have contributed much to the definition of regional boundaries. Kurath



(1949) used place-name generics in his study of the eastern United States to aid in the delineation of speech areas. Three core areas of American speech were drawn by Kurath--North, Midland, and South (1949, 91). This study was followed in form by Atwood's The Regional Vocabulary of Texas (1962) and others (Folk, 1961; LeCompte, 1962) whose mapping of regional vocabularies included generic place-names to illustrate dialect regions. The distribution of generic terms within a region has also been examined by Zelinsky (1962) and Bastian (1977) as a tool for defining boundaries; these studies are noteworthy in that they used only generic place-names and not the more general vocabularies of Kurath and the others mentioned above.

Distribution of a particular place-name (specific or generic) or of a particular type of name (biblical, foreign, etc.) has also interested many scholars. The generic terms bayou (West, 1954), prairie (McMullen, 1957), motte and island (Jordan, 1972) have been studied to various degrees. West's study is the most complete of the three as it provides the best mix concerning both the origin of the word and its usages. The spread of a specific settlement name was examined by Kramer (1953) who traced the westward movement of the name Andover as an example of the cultural heritage which was carried by people. Zelinsky (1967) detailed the distribution of an entire class of specific names in his study of classical place-names in America. He states that his study is a historical geography of a unique American idea and that the names bear witness to a period of time when the United States endured a "crisis of identity and quest for an elusive perfection" (1967, 495). All of the above studies are, in their own ways, the tracings of distinctively American ideas.

### Methodology and Classification

The final section of the literature review is a collection of rather diverse place-name studies. Material cited herein concerns some aspect of collecting and analyzing a group of place-names and is therefore grouped together. Two of the works surveyed call for a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of toponyms (McDavid, 1958; Nicholaisen, 1979). McDavid points out that the place-name scholar should draw upon the works of the historian, linguist, and sociologist (1958, 65). Nicholaisen, head of the U. S. survey of place-names, proposes a five stage methodology for the study of place-names which is borrowed from the fieldwork methodologies of many disciplines. Both men set forth the idea that a toponymist should be able to recognize and record the local variations of place-name grammar such as those discussed by Stewart (1950; 1956) and McMillan (1949; 1952).

The perfect system for the classification of the origins of specific place-names has been sought by many and found by none. The best systems appear to be those of Cassidy's (1947; 1968) which are devised only after the names have been collected and studied. Two methods, one proposed by Stewart (1954) and the other by Mencken (1963, 643), evolved after years of study, application, and modification and are good models for more individualized applications. One of the simplest classification systems was proposed by Mallery (1947, 91). His method, which contains only five categories, is often too broad to provide much in the way of a detailed regional analysis. The unique blend of American place-names will most likely prevent the creation of any one system which is equally useful in all parts of the nation.

## CHAPTER 2

## THE SHAPING OF MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRAZOS COUNTY

The place-name landscape which was created between 1821 and 1880 in Brazos County is a product of the people who came to the county during that time, the nature of the land they settled, and the interaction of those people with their environment. In order to appreciate the creation of the place-name landscape it is necessary to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of the above elements; it is this chapter's purpose to provide that knowledge. Contained herein is a backdrop against which the formation of the place-name landscape may be viewed.

The Land

Brazos County is a small county (586 square miles) located in east-central Texas (Fig. 1). Roughly triangular in shape, its boundaries are formed by the Brazos and Navasota Rivers, on the west and east, and by the Old San Antonio Road (OSR) on the north. Only a small part of the county lies outside of these boundaries; it was described in 1841 as being above the OSR from a point on that road which was "due south of the late residence of Leander Harl, deceased, thence on a direct line to the crossing of the Brazos River at or near Tenoxticlan" (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 550).

The surface of the county is cut by many tributaries of the two rivers which form its boundaries and is in a state of topographic youth (Veatch and Waldrop, 1916, 5). Pike, in his journey along the OSR in 1807, described the entire area between the Brazos and Little Brazos

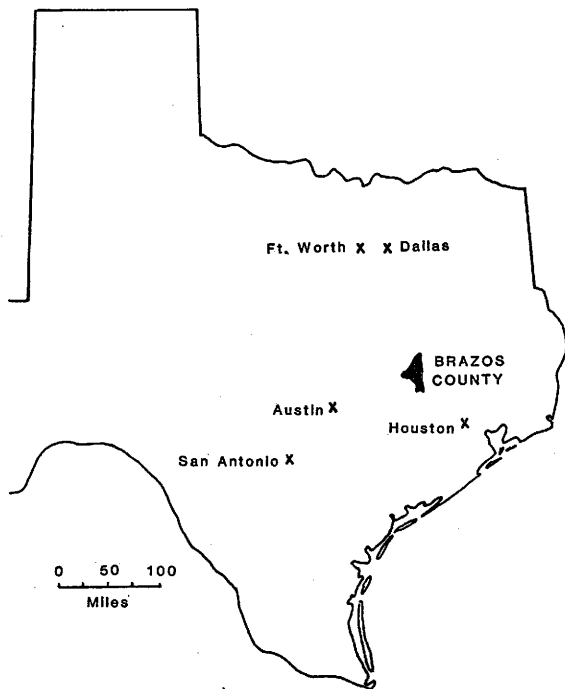


FIG. 1. RELATIVE LOCATION OF BRAZOS COUNTY, TEXAS

Rivers as a swamp (Jackson, 1966, 443). Perhaps the most significant register of the ruggedness of the area and the difficulty which the early settlers had in traversing it is the number of names which were found for the many ways of crossing water bodies. The presence of a great variety of streams also made their mapping quite difficult, as is witnessed by the different courses of the major creeks and branches which were shown in the county abstract maps of 1841 (Catlette) and 1867 (Stremme)

Productivity of the soil, or its potential for productivity, was of great interest to the agriculturists who settled the area. Two general groups of soils are found in Brazos County: 1) upland soils and, 2) soils of the bottom-lands and terraces. Upland soils were described in 1880 as being a brownish loam which was more or less sandy in the prairies and sandy and gravelly in the timbered areas (U.S. Census Office, 1884, 746). Soils of the bottom-lands and terraces, which comprise about 25 percent of the county, were particularly attractive to the early colonists; one of the best measures of this is the fact that thirteen of the fourteen members of Austin's "Old Three Hundred" whose grants were located wholly or partially in Brazos County were along the Brazos and Navasota Rivers (Bugbee, 1898, 112-117). The Texas Almanac for 1867 enthusiastically stated that "the soil in the bottoms, which compose a large portion of the lands, is red loam, and for productiveness is unsurpassed by any in the south" (1866, 83). The 1880 Census claimed a yield of 40 or 50 bushels of corn and 2000 pounds of seed-cotton per acre for the bottom-lands; it also projected about 800 pounds of seed-cotton being produced in the uplands in a fair season (U. S. Census Office, 1884, 746).

Climatic conditions of the county were of interest to the early inhabitants for two important reasons, health and productivity. Fear of malaria and other diseases in the bottom-lands was common to those who had settled in other similar areas of the American South. In the 1858 Texas Almanac the health was described as being "only tolerably good, except in the uplands, where the air is purer" (1857, 57). These health concerns, in combination with frequent flooding, helped maintain the density of settlement at a low level in the bottoms.

Seasons were described as being generally regular (Texas Almanac, 1867, 1866, 83); however, anyone who has lived in the area knows that annual extremes are often highly variable. Precipitation totals in more recent times have ranged from a high of 61 inches in one year to less than 17 inches in another. The average annual total is 37.43 inches per year. Mean temperatures, which also tend to be extremely variable, are 49.1°F in January and 84.4°F in July (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1971).

Two of the state's major vegetational areas extend into the county: the Blackland Prairies in the northern half and in the southern tip and the Post Oak Savannah in between. Vegetation native to the Blackland Prairies includes many species of oaks (blackjack, water, and willow), cedar and winged elms, hackberry, pecan and hickory in the bottoms, and post oaks in the uplands. Post and blackjack oaks and red cedars were among the native timber of the Post Oak Savannah; grasses included Indian grass, purpletop, and switch grass (SWAAG, 1972, 10-11). The Texas Almanac for 1858 reported that more than one-half of Brazos County was covered by oak trees of various species (1857, 57).

Grasslands of the county received very favorable notice in the nineteenth century. A visitor in 1822 described the prairies as "natural flower gardens" and as "a vast plain extending as far as the eye can reach, with nothing but the deep blue sky to bound the prospect" (Deweese, 1852, 28). This same author also described with great eloquence the wild rye which flourished in the bottom. Other early observers noted the mixture of woodland and prairie in the county, a trait which seems to have been perceived as beneficial by most.

The Brazos County area was also the home of an abundance of wildlife and it apparently has had a reputation as a hunting ground since the days of the Indians. Dewees (1852, 25) reported that the area was "literally alive with all kinds of game" in 1822. Turkeys and other fowl were so common that the region was referred to as a "poultry yard" for neighboring Washington County (Marshall, 1937, 13). These animals provided a major part of the diet for many years.

Potential rewards for settlement in Brazos County were almost boundless. The soils were rich, water was abundant, and the forests and prairies teemed with wildlife.

#### The Cultural Landscape

Although many cultural groups came in contact with the land which was to become Brazos County before 1821 their effect was minimal. When the first American colonists arrived in 1821 they found an area which was largely unknown and unnamed. A brief examination of how this area remained so largely unnamed after two centuries of European contact and countless centuries of contact with the American Indian is indicated below as an introduction to a description of settlement after 1821. Particular

attention is paid to social characteristics of the Anglo-American population and the manifestations of the group upon the landscape.

Prehistory: Dominion without Settlement

Of all the groups who visited or lived in Brazos County before 1821 the most dominant was the American Indian. The record of both pre-historic and historic Indian occupation is rather dim, although archeological evidence indicates that the county was a hunting ground for nomadic tribes as early as 10,000 B.C. and a home for rather simple farmers by about 500 A.D. (Sorrow and Cox, 1973, 32-33; SWAAG, 1972, 13-14). Historic Indians, those who inhabited the county after 1700, were never present in great numbers and the area seems to have been one of "relatively impoverished culture" (SWAAG, 1972, 13). Bolton (1915, 146-148) reports that bands of both the Tonkawa (the Mayeyes) and the Attacapan (the Deadose) families inhabited the lands along the San Antonio Road. Both groups had diminished in influence by the early nineteenth century and most of the problems after 1821 were with Indians from the interior of Texas.

French and Spanish contacts with what is today Brazos County were quite limited. Sauer (1980, 176), using records of the LaSalle expedition, found that the French explorer's path took him across the Brazos River just above the mouth of the Navasota in 1687 and he speculates that it was within the current boundaries of Brazos County that LaSalle was assassinated. No French place-names were found.

Spanish influence over the area was greater than that of the French, as Spain exercised political dominion over the land from 1519 to 1821. The only major landmark left by the Spanish was the San Antonio-



Nacogdoches Road which forms the county's northern boundary. The date this road was blazed has been the subject of much conjecture and evidence has appeared which casts doubt upon the date of 1691 assigned it by popular wisdom. Williams (1979, 173), in a well-documented argument, states that the road blazed in 1691 actually ran 15 or 20 miles to the north of the present road and that the road which now forms the county's northern boundary was cut in 1795 as a mail route. The late date of this road indicates that the actual presence of Spanish within the county's boundaries was probably of short duration. Pike recorded the presence of a Spanish stockade at the San Antonio Road crossing of the Brazos River in 1807, but it was quite small and on the west bank of the river (Jackson, 1966, 443). As with the French, the lack of permanence prevented the creation of a significant body of place-names as well as the recording of any place-names bestowed by the earlier Indian inhabitants.

1821 marked the start of fifteen years of Mexican political dominion. Any actual Mexican influence upon the cultural landscape was largely negated by the Mexican grant given to Stephen F. Austin for the purpose of colonizing the area with settlers from America. The only major presence of Mexicans in the county area was during the summer of 1830 when a garrison from the Alamo Presidial Company was encamped on the William Mathis League. This garrison was sent to establish Fort Tenoxitlan, which was eventually located on the west bank of the Brazos River a few miles above the crossing of the San Antonio Road (McLean, 1979, vol. 5, 275). The lack of permanent occupance and the presence of another ethnic group, the Anglo-Americans, severely limited the Mexican influence on the place-name landscape.

First Settlement: Arrival of the Anglo-Americans, 1821-1880

In 1821 Stephen F. Austin led a group of American settlers to the land granted to his father by the government of Mexico; the grant, which lay south of the San Antonio Road between the LaVaca and San Jacinto Rivers included what is now Brazos County (Barker, 1969, 125). The Millicans were the first of Austin's colonists to settle in Brazos County in late 1821, and were followed by a few other members of Austin's original colony, "The Old Three Hundred," during the next few years. Dewees (1852, 23) reports that a few families were settled at the crossing of the San Antonio Road on the Brazos River in 1822. These were the only families to arrive until around 1830, when some of Sterling C. Robertson's colonists began settling below the San Antonio Road (Efron, 1878, 238). Migration to the county was particularly heavy after the Republic of Texas was formed in 1836.

Washington County was formed in 1837 and included most of what is now Brazos County. This was never a satisfactory arrangement as the often flooded Brazos River prevented the conduct of essential business in the rest of the county. As a result of dissatisfaction with the above situation, Navasota County was created in 1841; the boundaries of the new county included that part of Washington County between the Brazos and Navasota Rivers south of the San Antonio Road and about 15,000 acres above that road which were taken from Robertson County (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 550). The name of the county was changed to Brazos the next year (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 745).

Creation of the county did not guarantee its success. A petition to the state legislature dated 30 January 1850 asked that Brazos and Robertson Counties be united as a single county because the sparsity of

population made it extremely difficult to fill the posts of county government; another petition, dated 1 January 1850, denied these problems and the counties remained separate. The influx of settlers during the 1850's seems to have quelled all talk of union with Robertson County. When Civil War broke out, and construction stopped, Millican was left as the railhead of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad line from Houston. For a few years after 1861 Millican was the center of trade for areas as far away as Dallas. Brazos County continued to grow and prosper and by 1880 it was no longer a part of the frontier. A firm economic footing had been assured by the cultivation of a major portion of the county and the potential for sale of the county's products (Marshall, 1937, 105). More specific aspects of migration, population characteristics, and manifestations of the settlement of the county are discussed below.

#### Migration

A study of migration to the county is one way in which origins of the population may be determined. The study of migration to East Texas by Lathrop (1949) provides an excellent model for analysis of movement into frontier areas. Lathrop utilized the manuscript census to detect child-ladders in a family. Child-ladders are simply the presence of a child born out of state followed by a sibling born in Texas. Ages of the two children are then averaged and the average is subtracted from the census year to provide a rough estimate of when the family migrated to Texas from the birthplace of the older child. A four year maximum interval between the ages of the children was used in this study, rather than the less accurate five year maximum used in Lathrop's (1949, 80). Migration tables for Brazos County were computed using the 1850 and 1860 census manuscripts and then added to figures extracted from Kerr's dissertation

on migration to Texas (1953), the result being a rather good coverage of migration to the county from 1831 to 1880 (Table 1).

Birthplaces for this study have been grouped under the usual headings of Lower South (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina), Upper South (Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia), Foreign-Born, Texas, and Non-Southern U. S. A third grouping of southerners was created, Border Upper South, since the migration flow from the Upper South included Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania (Jordan, 1967, 668; Jordan, 1969, 95; Lynch, 1943, 303). Supporting evidence for this decision, such as the birthplaces of spouse and children, indicated that those citizens of the county who were born in the Border Upper South were part of the westward flow of southern migration.

It was not surprising that the three southern groupings comprised almost ninety percent of the sources of migration. The figures for Louisiana and Arkansas should be discounted somewhat, since they are situated next to Texas and are astride major paths of migration to the state. It is also quite probable that if census information had been collected in 1830 and 1840 Tennessee would have represented a much larger percentage of the migration sources. The Lower South, over the entire period, had the most influential role as just three of the Lower Southern states (Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi) accounted for nearly 50 percent of the total migration.

Lathrop's methodology also permits an estimate of important migration periods. Table 2 contains adjusted migration totals based on Lathrop's techniques of adding 6 percent for each year after the fourth back from the census year (1949, 81). For example, 6 percent would be added to the total migrations determined for 1856-1857, 12 percent to

TABLE 1: MIGRATION TO BRAZOS COUNTY, 1831-1880

<u>Source Area</u>	<u>Period</u>										<u>Total</u>
	1831-35	1835-40	1840-45	1845-50	1850-55	1855-60	1860-65	1865-70	1870-75	1875-80	
Lower South	2	9	1	2	7	15	14	26	37	48	161
Upper South	0	1	1	3	5	11	6	9	9	6	51
Border Upper South	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	6
Non-Southern	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	3
Foreign	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	5	9	9	27
All Sources	3	10	2	5	16	29	21	41	57	64	248

## Source:

1831-50: U. S. Census Office, 1850

1850-60: U. S. Census Office, 1860

1860-80: Kerr, 1953

TABLE 2. ADJUSTED MIGRATION TOTALS, 1831-1880

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Period	Number of Arriving Families
1831-35	6
1835-40	15
1840-45	2
1845-50	5
1850-55	20
1855-60	29
1860-65	41
1865-70	76
1870-75	71
1875-80	<u>65</u>
	330

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## Source:

1831-1850: U. S. Census Office, 1850

1850-1860: U. S. Census Office, 1860

1860-1880: Kerr, 1953

those for 1855-1856, and so on until the earliest migration detected in the 1860 census was found (census years run from June to June). The adjusted figures support Efron's remarks about the County experiencing a substantial upswing in population from 1836 to 1841, a general exodus after 1845, and considerable immigration after 1853 (1878, 239-245).

#### Characteristics of the population

Birthplace and occupation are important measures of the social characteristics of an area's inhabitants, as are age, sex, and race. Herein I have examined various characteristics of the population as a whole and of the heads of households. Much emphasis has been placed on information extracted from the 1850 and 1860 census manuscripts, there being supplementary information derived from the printed summaries of the 1870 and 1880 Censuses. Analysis of the heads of households is based on methodologies suggested by Lowe and Campbell (1980). A 100 percent sample of heads of households in 1850 and a 10 percent sample of heads of households in 1880 were utilized to examine this part of the population which had the greatest role in fashioning the place-name landscape.

Birthplace. An overwhelming majority of the citizens in Brazos County between 1821 and 1880 were born in the American South. There are, however, some interesting contrasts between the birthplaces of the general population (Table 3) and those of the heads of households (Table 4). Two of the more noteworthy comparisons are between the totals of those born in the Upper South and in Texas.

Upper South birthplaces never exceeded the totals of the Lower South in the general population and they declined considerably after 1860. Heads of households born in the Upper South accounted for almost 50%

TABLE 3: POPULATION ORIGINS, 1850 - 1880

Birthplaces	Population (Region's percentage of census year aggregate in parentheses)			
	1850 <sup>a</sup>	1860 <sup>a</sup>	1870	1870
<b>Lower South</b>				
Alabama	55	191	839	1279
Florida	2	1	*	*
Georgia	26	90	437	574
Louisiana	7	63	680	561
Mississippi	23	108	739	750
South Carolina	18	66	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>131 (27.99%)</b>	<b>519 (30.30%)</b>	<b>2695 (29.28%)</b>	<b>3164 (23.31%)</b>
<b>Upper South</b>				
Arkansas	9	42	*	195
Delaware	0	2	*	*
Kentucky	9	19	*	133
Maryland	0	3	*	*
Missouri	2	34	*	66
North Carolina	14	45	*	*
Tennessee	55	163	450	372
Virginia	11	36	*	364
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 (21.37%)</b>	<b>344(20.08%)</b>	<b>450(4.89%)</b>	<b>1130 (8.32%)</b>
<b>Border Upper South</b>				
Illinois	1	27	*	*
Indiana	1	12	*	*
Ohio	3	5	*	*
Pennsylvania	5	15	*	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>10(2.14%)</b>	<b>59(3.44%)</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>*</b>
<b>Texas</b>	<b>188(40.17%)</b>	<b>690(40.28%)</b>	<b>4040(44.0%)</b>	<b>7909(58.3%)</b>



Table 3 (continued)

Birthplace	Population			
	1850 <sup>a</sup>	1860 <sup>a</sup>	1870	1880
Non-Southern U.S.				
Connecticut	0	5	*	*
Iowa	0	2	*	*
Maine	0	1	*	*
Massachusetts	0	1	*	*
New Hampshire	0	2	*	*
New York	0	12	*	*
Wisconsin	0	1	*	*
Total	0	24(1.40%)	*	*
Scattering, Native-Born	0	0	1716(18.64%)	738(5.44%)
Foreign-Born				
Austrian Empire	0	0	0	141
British America	0	1	12	25
England and Wales	13	5	27	71
France	0	1	12	8
German Empire	8	37	84	162
Ireland	11	31	82	69
Mexico	0	0	8	37
Scotland	0	1	13	15
Sweden & Norway	0	0	4	1
Scattering	0	0	51	106
Total	32(6.84%)	76(4.44%)	294(3.19%)	636(4.68%)
Unknown	7(1.50%)	1(.06%)	*	*
Total	468	1713	9205	13576

Notes: <sup>a</sup>: White population only

\*: Figures not recorded in summary volume

Source: 1850: U. S. Census Office, 1850  
 1860: U. S. Census Office, 1860  
 1870: U. S. Census Office, 1872  
 1880: U. S. Census Office, 1883

TABLE 4: BIRTHPLACE, HEADS OF HOUSEHOLS, 1850 and 1880

Birthplace	Population (Percentage of sample population in parentheses)	
	1850	1880
<b>Lower South</b>		
Alabama	4	40
Florida	0	2
Georgia	11	26
Louisiana	1	23
Mississippi	0	38
South Carolina	10	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>26 (32.10%)</b>	<b>146 (49.66%)</b>
<b>Upper South</b>		
Arkansas	1	9
Kentucky	6	5
Maryland	0	1
Missouri	1	3
North Carolina	5	9
Tennessee	19	21
Virginia	7	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>39 (48.15%)</b>	<b>60 (20.41%)</b>
<b>Border Upper South</b>		
Illinois	0	2
Indiana	1	1
Ohio	2	0
Pennsylvania	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 (3.70%)</b>	<b>5 (1.70%)</b>
Texas	0	57 (19.39%)
<b>Non-Southern U. S.</b>		
Indian Territory	0	1
New Hampshire	0	1
New York	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3 (1.02%)</b>

Table 4. (continued)

	1850	1880
Foreign Born		
Africa	0	1
Austrian Empire	0	1
England	0	2
France	0	1
Germany	3	1
Ireland	7	4
Italy	0	2
Mexico	0	2
Moravia	0	3
Prussia	0	2
Scotland	0	1
Switzerland	0	1
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	11 (13.58%)	23 (7.82%)
Unknown	2(2.47%)	0
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	81	294

Source: 1850: U. S. Census Office, 1850  
 1880: U. S. Census Office, 1880

of that population in 1850; however, their position of dominance had been assumed by Lower South birthplaces in 1880. The percentage of the general population born in Texas indicates that the migration from out of state was equalling births in the state until around 1870, with a major upward shift in Texas-born being registered in 1880. Texas's increasing importance as a birthplace is also indicated in the statistics for heads of households, which showed no Texas-born in 1850 and almost twenty percent in 1880. Birthplaces of the former slaves are also included for the first time in the 1870 Census and examination of the 1870 census manuscripts reveals that their greatest effect was to increase the totals for the Lower South and Texas. A significant number of Brazos County's inhabitants were born outside of the United States, the most influential being those born in Germany, Ireland, and what is now Czechoslovakia.

Demographic Changes. Major changes occurred in the county's demography between 1850 and 1880. These changes included an increase in the size of the total population and a shift in the composition of that population. Many of these changes, which have already been alluded to, are quantified below.

Table 5 illustrates many of the demographic shifts. Population totals for 1850 and 1860 place the county within the range of population density (2-6 persons per square mile) which the Census Bureau considered as frontier (Billington, 1950, 3); the population density for 1850 was 1.05 and 4.74 in 1860. Population densities had increased to 15.71 in 1870 and 23.17 in 1880, highlighting the rapid growth of the county after 1860. The population total of 13,576 for 1880 marks an increase of over 2000 percent above the 1850 total of 614 and a 389 percent increase over the 1860 total of 2,776.

TABLE 5: POPULATION BY RACE AND SEX, 1850 - 1880

CENSUS YEAR		WHITE			NEGRO			AGGREGATE		
		MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1850	#	255	213	478	71	75	146	326	288	614
	%	41.53	34.69	76.22	11.56	12.21	23.78	53.09	46.9	
1860	#	939	774	1713	527	536	1063	1466	1310	2776
	%	33.83	27.88	61.71	18.98	19.31	38.29	52.81	47.19	
1870	#	*	*	5446	*	*	3759	4726	4479	9205
	%	*	*	59.16	*	*	40.84	51.34	48.66	
1880	#	*	*	7325	*	*	6250	7132	6444	13576
	%	*	*	52.96	*	*	46.04	52.53	47.47	

Note: % = percent of aggregate total of census year  
 \* = information not included in summary volumes for census year

Source: 1850: U. S. Census Office, 1850  
 1860: U. S. Census Office, 1860  
 1870: U. S. Census Office, 1872  
 1880: U. S. Census Office, 1883

The Black population of Brazos County comprised a major part of the population, first as slaves and then as freedmen after 1865. Blacks increased in percentage of the total population between all four censuses examined, the most noteworthy increase being a change of 628.1 percent between 1850 and 1860. Most of this increase was related to those agricultural changes discussed in greater detail below.

Distribution by sex of the white population in 1850 and 1860 re-confirms the frontier nature of the county; the male portion of that population exceeded by almost 10 percent the female portion in both 1850 and 1860 (Table 5). Age/sex pyramids which were compiled for the 1850 and 1860 populations pointed out a dominance of males in almost every category over the age of 20. These factors indicated that much of the in-migration had been by single, adult, white males, traditionally the most mobile of any population. A more normal distribution of the sexes at the bottom of the 1860 pyramid indicated a stabilization of the county's population; it is quite feasible that families had replaced single males as the primary unit of migration. The slave population, which was more evenly distributed by sex, showed a predominance of young adults in the age/sex pyramids constructed for that group. This is not at all surprising in an environment which stressed the ability to work in an agricultural setting.

Occupations. An analysis of occupations provided further insight into the characteristics of the inhabitants of mid-nineteenth century Brazos County. Six categories of occupations were found; they are:

1. Agricultural (farmer, herdsman, stock raiser)
2. Merchants (Dry goods salesman, liquor dealer)
3. Professions (lawyer, doctor, teacher)

4. Skilled tradesmen (brickmason, carpenter, blacksmith)
5. Service (laborer, servant, clerk in store)
6. Others (no occupation, unemployed)

Occupations of the heads of households in 1850 and 1880, which are listed by place of birth (Tables 6 and 7) demonstrate the agricultural nature of the county. Many of those included under the category "Service" in 1880 were listed as laborers and there is no doubt that most should have been listed as farm laborers, which would have increased the total percentage of agricultural occupations if they had been listed as such. A diversification of the occupations of the population is demonstrated in the 1880 figures, but most of the non-agricultural occupations were found only in the county's urban concentrations--Bryan and Millican. An examination of the occupations listed for the entire population in 1850 and 1860 underlined the dominance of agriculture as an occupation.

#### Transformation of the Landscape

Settlement during the sixty year period between 1821 and 1880 brought many changes in the landscape of Brazos County. It would be far beyond the role of this brief introduction to study all of the manifestations of that settlement; therefore, three broad areas which had the greatest effect on the fashioning of the place-name landscape will be examined. Agriculture, although not usually a direct factor in the giving of names, did provide an incentive for settling and learning the lay of the land, both necessitating the giving of names. The development of a transportation network increased the knowledge of the landscape and provided a means of access to the outer world; many of the place-names were either found in reports of road routes or were names of transportation

TABLE 6: OCCUPATIONS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS BY PLACE OF BIRTH, 1850

Birthplaces	Occupations (Figures are percentages of sample population)						Total
	Agric.	Mchnts.	Prfns.	Skld. Trdsmn.	Service	Others	
Lower South	28.6	0.0	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	32.0
Upper South	40.7	0.0	2.5	2.5	0.0	2.5	48.2
Border Upper South	2.5	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7
Texas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Non-South	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Foreign	13.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.6
Unknown	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5
TOTAL	88.9	0.0	4.9	3.7	0.0	2.5	100.0

Source: U. S. Census Office, 1850



TABLE 7: OCCUPATIONS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS BY PLACE OF BIRTH, 1880

Birthplaces	Occupations (Figures are percentages of sample population)						Total
	Agric.	Mchnts.	Prfns.	Skld. Trdsmn.	Service	Others	
Lower South	34.7	1.0	1.4	1.7	9.9	1.0	49.7
Upper South	11.6	1.0	0.7	0.7	5.4	1.0	20.4
Border Upper South	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.7	0.0	1.6
Texas	11.9	0.3	0.0	0.7	5.8	0.3	19.0
Non-South	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.9
Foreign	4.8	1.0	0.3	1.0	0.7	0.0	7.8
Unknown	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL	63.6	3.9	2.4	4.7	22.5	2.3	

Source: U. S. Census Office, 1880

features (ferries, bridges, landings). Community development indicated a progression in the level of the county's settlement and also caused a new body of features which had to be named. All three areas are examined below with particular attention paid to changes during the study period.

Agriculture. Brazos County's history is indelibly linked with the production of agricultural goods. Its earliest settlers were agriculturists and the foremost occupation during the study period was agriculture and the industries which supported it. The history of agriculture in the county between 1821 and 1880 may be divided into two periods with 1850 serving as the dividing line. As a measure of the changes which took place in the agricultural landscape during the study period, a table was prepared using selected agricultural statistics analyzed on a per capita basis for the census years of 1850-1880 (Table 8).

Stockraising was the primary interest before 1850 and the land was evidently well suited for this pursuit, as indicated in the following report of the 1867 Texas Almanac (1866, 83):

Stock of every description get fat during the spring and do not decline much until the winter months set in, at which time they go to the Brazos and Navasota bottoms and remain until spring. They then return again to the uplands, having fared well during the winter, the wild rye which is abundant in the bottoms having kept them from declining much. Hogs are raised at a very small cost, the hills and the bottoms affording a fine range of sweet and bitter mast and any quantity of pecans.

Efron (1878, 245) cites the superiority of the range and the absence of cattle and hog thieves as enabling the county to export more beef and pork than any other county in Texas; she also notes that the terms "hog county" and "cow county" were often applied to Brazos County in the lower counties of the state.

TABLE 8: PER CAPITA ANALYSIS OF SELECTED AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS,1850-1880

Crop	Units raised per person			
	1850	1860	1870	1880
Indian corn, bushels	25.95	30.36	22.36	12.16
Cotton, #400 lb. bales	.23	.82	.75	.72
Hogs (Swine), head	11.19	.42	1.57	1.30
Milch cows, head	3.41	.11	.31	.28
Working oxen, head	.46	.28	.10	.06
Other cattle, head	6.40	.48	1.44	.89
All cattle, head	10.30	.89	1.85	1.23

Source: 1850: U. S. Census Office, 1853  
 1860: U. S. Census Office, 1864  
 1870: U. S. Census Office, 1872  
 1880: U. S. Census Office, 1883

As indicated in Table 8 the raising of cattle and hogs decreased sharply after 1850 while the production of cotton increased dramatically. It is likely that the production of stock continued at a level to meet local needs with some left for export, but never at the earlier level; corn, the other major staple, was produced at a fairly constant level until sometime in the 1870's and supports the above conclusion.

Cotton production's increasing importance brought many changes in the landscape of Brazos County, one of the most significant being the large amount of land which was converted into improved farm land after 1850. Slavery also increased in importance after 1850 as a result of the need for more hands to work the cotton fields. Table 9 shows the increase in all categories of slaveholding between 1850 and 1860. The increase in the number of plantation class slaveholders (15 or more slaves) should be particularly noted.

The 1860 Texas Almanac (1859, 219) reported that Brazos County was a cotton county (over 1000 acres in cotton) by 1858. Cotton production remained at a high level during the rest of the study period. The agricultural census of 1880 (U. S. Census Office, 1884, 746) recorded 61,803 acres planted in cotton with a production of 9,743 525 pound bales; it also reported 28,044 acres in corn and 16,542 acres in oats.

Transportation. The establishment of a transportation network in Brazos County focused on two main areas—overland transportation and transportation over the two rivers which form the county's boundaries. Minutes of the Commissioner's Court are an excellent source of information on the immense efforts which were expended to improve travel both within the county and to places outside the county. One of the primary motives for the establishment of a good system of transportation was the need

TABLE 9. SLAVEHOLDING IN BRAZOS COUNTY, 1850 AND 1860

Number of Slaves Owned	Number of Slave Owners in Category	
	1850	1860
1	7	27
2	2	22
3	3	14
4	3	8
5	2	6
6	2	3
7	1	3
8	1	4
9	0	2
10-14	3	8
Plantation Category:		
15-19	1	5
20-29	2	6
30-39	0	0
40-49	0	2
50-69	0	3
70-99	0	1
100-109	0	1
Total	27	115

Percent of Adult Free Population Owning Slaves:

1850: 11.02%

1860: 12.55%

Source: U. S. Census Office, 1850; U. S. Census Office, 1860

to get the agricultural goods produced in the county to markets in Houston, Galveston, and New Orleans, much of it for shipment to the growing cities and factories of Europe.

Overland transportation was limited to the county's road network until the coming of the railroad in 1859. Until that time, and even afterwards, much of the agricultural produce was transported by wagon or ox-cart. County commissioners were charged with the upkeep and expansion of the county's roads and the records of their meetings are full of references to changes in roads and the precincts responsible for their maintenance. Increased attention was paid to the development of first class roads which would connect the county with the important towns of the surrounding counties after the mid-1860's. These roads were intended to increase trade at the businesses in Bryan. A stage route also crossed Brazos County after 1850 and Boonville was one of the stops on the route from Hempstead to Waco.

Ferries were the first means of negotiating the Brazos and Navasota Rivers at places other than natural crossings or fords. As a measure of the importance of these ferries, they were strictly regulated by the county and many records of the county commissioner's meetings contain announcements similar to this application for a ferry in 1845:

Alexander McGahey makes application for the privilege to establish a ferry across the Navasota River within 400 yards of Holly Annalas old ferry and the said McGahey, having given bond to establish and keep said ferry according to law, it is therefore ordered by the court that the pray of the petitioner be granted, and that the following sales of ferriage be established when the stream is within its banks (to wit): Waggon and Team \$1.50, Buggies and so on \$1.00, man and horse 25¢, foot men or loose horses or cattle by the head 12½¢, and when the stream is out of its banks according to contract (Brazos County Commissioner's Court Minutes, 1845, A513).

Ferries remained the most important method of crossing the two rivers until 1867 when local citizens, often the ferry operators, embarked on a period of bridge-building. Some steamboats visited Brazos County and the presence of a few landings was noted; however, travel above Hidalgo Falls could never be anything but irregular because of the high level of water needed for boats to get over the falls and the shoals and rapids above.

The most significant change in the transportation network was the arrival of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad in 1859; with its coming the county finally had a dependable and much quicker way of getting goods to market. Construction was halted in Millican at the outbreak of the Civil War but was resumed in 1867. Towns built along the rail line soon became the foci of road building efforts in the county.

Establishment of Communities. One of the most important features of the evolving cultural landscape was the establishment of a wide variety of communities. The nature of many of these communities is discussed in the place-name dictionary and the following discussion is merely a brief examination of the factors which led to their formation.

Most communities in Brazos County were small and rural in orientation. Schultz's social history of northern Brazos County (1973) illustrates the significant role that the establishment of a church or school had as the focus for rural communities. Many early communities derived their identity from proximity to the home of a prominent settler and were called that person's Neighborhood. Stores, as in most of the rural South, were important centers of community activities during the latter part of the study period.

Those who settled Brazos County were not town-builders and the only real town before 1860 was Boonville, the county seat. Millican, Wellborn, Bryan, and Benchley came about as the result of being located on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad but only Millican and Bryan survived as important towns. College Station was founded on the railroad in the mid-1870's as a result of the building of the State Agricultural and Mechanical College but was nothing more than a whistle stop at the end of the study period. Town tracts were laid out and lots were sold in Minter Springs and Murphysboro, but neither ever developed beyond small farming communities.

It is important, therefore, to note that the communities of Brazos County were not, for the most part, towns but were actually communities in the broader sense of the word. Some of the communities had a store, school, or church as a focus and provided the farmer and his family with a few hours of respite from their daily labors. Other communities particularly those which were called someone's Neighborhood or Settlement, reflected the need of the people to organize the landscape into units which were more readily identifiable and which provided a framework of location.



## CHAPTER 3

## DICTIONARY OF BRAZOS COUNTY PLACE-NAMES, 1821-1880

The place-name dictionary is intended to be as complete a representation as possible of the place-names which were used in the county between 1821 and 1880. There is no good way to determine the completeness of this dictionary; names which had a very localized usage or were changed early in the settlement of the county may not have been recorded during that period or handed down to be recorded later. The dictionary does contain what is believed to be a highly representative sample of both the type and the number of names given during the study period.

Collection of the Place-Names

This place-name dictionary is different from most in that it considers specific and generic names for artificial (manmade) and natural features on an equal basis. Different forms and characteristics of these two forms of place-names caused not a few problems in the initial phases of collecting names and led to the creation of a few simple rules concerning the acceptability of place-names and their sources. These guidelines and examples of some of their applications below provide an insight into the various research processes involved in the creation of the dictionary.

Specific names were included if they had achieved usage on the public level. Most of the names for population agglomerations (towns, settlements, additions, etc.) had obviously achieved public status during the study period, as had the foci of many rural communities (churches, schools, stores, etc.). Names of these rural foci were in-

cluded only if there was a record of their being a center of community activities (elections, precinct courts) and not just the center for the more exclusive activities of their congregation, student body, or clientele.

Specific names for other features of the cultural and physical landscape were included if they had become general points of reference (ferries, bridges, crossings). Road names were not included unless their name was of particular historic or descriptive value; most county roads were named for local destinations and offered little new information about the organization of the landscape.

Generic place-names were included in the dictionary if they were used to describe a recognizable feature of the physical or cultural landscape; most of the decisions about including these were straightforward. Some specific place-names, such as Lick Branch, were originally used as a generic term and became a specific name later because of their uniqueness. In cases such as this the name is included in both parts of the dictionary. Generic terms included as part of a specific place-name were also included, as they improve the descriptive ability of the analysis of terms in Chapter 4.

Collection of the place-names was guided by the general requirement that the source of the name be a document from the study period. Some exceptions were made when a well-documented reference to a name was found in an article or book published after 1880. Much caution had to be exercised in the use of such sources as they were often found to be erroneous in their recitation of history.

Sources used in the study may be divided into those which dealt specifically with Brazos County and those which did not. One of the most important sources directly concerning the county was the minutes of the County Commissioner's Court for the years 1845 to 1880. These minutes, found in the office of the County Clerk in Bryan, provided a framework of place-names for the study. Reports of road routes and precinct boundaries contained in the minutes were like short travel journals which included specific and generic place-names for settlements, topographic features, and transportation features.

County tax rolls also proved to be a valuable source of information about place-names of the study period. Tax listings in the late 1840's and 1850's included both the name of the water body closest to the taxed property and the name of the original grantee of the land. These listings provided new names for the dictionary and allowed a fairly accurate location of those names not found on current maps. Town lots were also listed in the tax rolls, enabling the location of some long-vanished settlements to be established. County deed records for the first years of organization were examined and they too were useful both as a source of names and a locational and explanative tool. Three abstract maps of the county (Catlette, 1841; Stremme, 1867; Walsh, 1879) were used in the study as were English field notes of the grants made in the county when the area was under the rule of Mexico.

A few later sources on Brazos County were particularly helpful. Two theses, one a history of the county (Marshall, 1937) and the other a social history of selected rural communities in the county (Schultz, 1973), and a privately published history of the northeastern part of the county (Stribling, 1978) were often called on as both a source of names

and of background information. Two historical editions of local newspapers, one of the Bryan News (1940) and the other of the Bryan Eagle (1962), were further sources of information about the county's past.

Sources not directly concerned with the county but which were of considerable value include state maps, traveller's accounts, almanacs, post office guides, and local newspapers. The old map collection of the General Land Office in Austin contains most of the important state maps drawn before 1880 and was of much use to this study, as were the vast resources of the Texas State Library and the Barker Texas History Center, also in Austin.

#### Method of Presentation

The place-name dictionary is divided into two sections, one for specific place-names and the other for place-name generics. Characteristics of the two types of place-names necessitated two different forms of entry, as described below. Some general rules did apply to both parts of the dictionary. No arbitrary limit was placed on the length of entries, as much information existed on some names while some had had no history preserved. Abbreviations and symbols are used to keep entries at a reasonable length while still allowing the reader to learn the source and date of the place-name reference (Table 10). Spelling variations recorded in references to the place-name were maintained as an important part of the information sought for each place-name.

#### Specific place-names

Entries in the section for specific place-names are modelled upon Cassidy's study on Dane County, Wisconsin (1968). The information pre-

TABLE 10. ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS USED IN THE PLACE-NAME DICTIONARY

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(\*)-- has a separate entry of particular importance in the dictionary.

There will be many cross-references in the dictionary and this symbol will be used only when the term's entry in the dictionary has added information about the entry in which it is used.

BCCCM--Brazos County Commissioner's Court, Minutes

BCDR--Brazos County, Deed Records

BCTR--Brazos County, Tax Rolls

DA--Dictionary of Americanisms (Matthews, 1951)

DAE--Dictionary of American English (Craigie, 1938)

EFN--English Field Notes of Spanish and Mexican Land Grants

GCTR--Grimes County, Tax Rolls

OED--Oxford English Dictionary (Murray and others, 1961)

SLR--U. S. Post Office Department, Site Location Report

sented for each name, when possible, is:

Identification. The place-name is listed in its proper alphabetical position using the most common spelling of the study period. Additions or deletions of a generic term are treated as different names; for example Bryan and Bryan City are separate entries. If the type of feature named is not obvious, or if there is more than one feature with the same name, added information about the location or type of feature named will be placed in parentheses after the name.

Dates. The exact date a name was given to a feature is often unknown and in these situations the earliest date found will be given. If a name was changed or became obsolete during the study period the approximate date will be given if known.

Origin. Some of the names have had the story of their origin well preserved, but many have not. If the exact origin of a name could not be found, historical evidence which could explain its naming is provided.

Nature of the place. Historical information about the place is provided when available. Information for a settlement might include when and why it was established and the role it had in the county's history. The location of the place is included when possible and reference is made to original land grants as a system providing locational constants.

Name changes. It was not uncommon for a place to have had more than one name between 1821 and 1880 and these names are listed as a cross reference. Spelling variations are also included with their source but are usually not included as a separate entry.

### Place-name Generics

Place-names found in this section are generic terms used for natural and man-made features of the landscape during the study period. The style of presentation of these generic place-names follows that used in Finnie's study of the topographic terms of the Ohio Valley (1970). Entries include, when available, the following information:

Identification. The place-name generic is listed in its proper alphabetical position. Any significant spelling variations are included here in parentheses.

Definition and usage. Definitions of the generic terms are taken from one of the three dictionaries which have become standards in American place-name research: A Dictionary of Americanisms (Matthews, 1951), The Dictionary of American English (Craigie, 1938), and the Oxford English Dictionary (Murray and others, 1961). The Dictionary of Americanisms was the preferred source of definitions as its definition of Americanisms was the most stringent and provides the best guide to what terms were truly indigenous to the United States. Usage of the term is defined as its geographic distribution and degree of use on national, regional, and local levels. Not all terms will have had this sort of information collected on them, but when available and relevant to the study it is provided.

Illustrative quotations. Quotations which reflect the local usage of a place-name are provided if available. Variations in the usage of the term are also illustrated, as are examples of the term's earliest use in the county.

Specific Place-Names

A&M College. An abbreviation for the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas (\*). Mentioned as the proposed terminus of a road from Bryan in July, 1876 (BCCCM, B168).

Agricultural and Mechanical College (of Texas). County commissioners agreed in 1871 to raise tax moneys for the purpose of securing the state's agricultural and mechanical college (BCCCM, A316). Original plans called for the school to be erected in the Morgan Rector League (BCCCM, 1871, A234); however, it was eventually located about four miles south of Bryan in the Joseph Scott grant. The college, which officially opened its doors on October 4, 1876, was listed as an election site for precinct 10 in February of 1876 (BCCCM, B149). Land listings for tracts available near the college were shown as early as 1874 in the Weekly Bryan Appeal. A variety of synonyms for the school were used, including A&M College, Agricultural College, and State Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas.

Agricultural College. The Weekly Bryan Appeal of June 12, 1874 included several listings of property for sale near the Agricultural College, which was also known as the Agricultural and Mechanical College (\*).

Aldridge's Ferry. L. B. Aldridge was issued a permit to operate a ferry across the Brazos River at a point commonly known as the Millican Ferry (\*) on May 19, 1851 (BCCCM, A545). The ferry probably was operated as late as 1876, but many have been relocated a few miles to the north (BCCCM, 1876, B190). Other spellings of the ferry were Aldrige's (BCCCM, 1868, A208) and Aldrich's (BCCCM, 1873, A376).



Alexander. A community in the George Singleton League which acquired its name from the Alexander Methodist Episcopal Church. The church was established in 1854 by Robert Alexander, a preacher on the Boonville and Galveston circuit (Schultz, 1973, 15; Henry, 1974, 1).

Allcorn's Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this creek flowing into the Navasota River southeast of Sandy Creek; one of the grants it is shown flowing across is the J. W. Stewart headright. The creek received its name when J. D. Allcorn married Stewart's widow and applied for the grant in his stepchildren's name (Stribling, 1978, 35).

Annalas Ferry. Holly Annalas operated a ferry across the Navasota River sometime before 1845. When the initial application was made for McGahey's Ferry (\*) its location was given as within 400 yards of Holly Annalas' old ferry (BCCCM, 1845, A513).

Batts Ferry. The terminus of a proposed road from Bryan in 1872 (BCCCM, B209) which was operated by Jesse Batts on the Brazos River in the Samuel Davidson grant.

Bear Creek. A small tributary of the Navasota shown flowing across the William J. Lewis, Thomas James, and A. D. Lancaster grants (Catlette, 1841). Dewees (1852, 25) reported in 1822 that "bears are very plenty" in the area which is now Brazos County.

Bee Branch (northwest). A survey for Mordecai Boon in the Thomas H. Barron grant mentioned this creek in 1841 (BCDR, B103); it was usually called Bee Creek. A visitor to the county in 1822 noted that the area near the creek had a "vast quantity of bee trees" (Dewees, 1852, 25).

Bee Branch (southeast). The road from Boonville to Fuqua's Ferry crossed this tributary of Carter's Creek in 1846 (BCCCM, A521); it is interchangeable with Bee Creek in later records. Its name re-emphasizes an observation made in 1822 that "one might almost give the country the same description as was anciently given of Canaan, 'a land of milk and honey', but we are rather short off for the milk just now" (Deweese, 1852, 25).

Bee Creek (northwest). A synonym for Bee Branch which was used as early as 1846 (BCDR, B217). It is a tributary of Big Cedar Creek.

Bee Creek (southeast). A synonym of the southern Bee Branch which was referenced in a report of the Bryan and Fuqua's Ferry Road (BCCCM, 1848, 521).

Benchley. This community, which is now considered to be in Robertson County, was included in Brazos County in several post office records. It was established in 1874 on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad and was named for William Benchley, the conductor of the first train to go through the town (Parker, 1955, 102). Earlier names for the community include Red Top, Stagger's Point, and Irishtown.

Benchley Station. Land for sale here was advertised in the Weekly Bryan Appeal of January 9, 1874. The generic term was soon dropped and the community was simply called Benchley (\*).

Bethel. An election site in 1874 for the area which later was known as the Harvey (\*) community (BCCCM, B71). A synonym for New Bethel (\*) and Bethel Church (\*) which was probably also applied to the area around the church.

Bethel Church. Land in the Maria Kegan League was given to the Bethel Church on 30 October 1869 by M. A. Williams (BCDR, K237). The church was named as an election site in 1876 (BCCCM, B149). Its name is Biblical, but was probably intended to be inspirational.

Big Brazos River. The adjective big was included to distinguish the Brazos River from its tributary the Little Brazos River in a description of the boundaries of precinct four (BCCCM, A561), Dewees (1852, 25) used the adjective for the same purpose in 1822.

Big Cedar Creek. As with the Big Brazos River, big was added to distinguish one water body from another. Catlette (1841) showed this tributary of the Navasota River flowing southwest of Little Cedar Creek.

Big Creek. An accurate reference to both the length and width of this creek which meanders across much of the southern part of the county (BCCCM, 1876, B190).

Birch Branch. A branch of Wickson's Creek which derives its name from local vegetation. It was first mentioned in a description of the Willis L. Ellis San Jacinto grant (BCDR, 1859, E643).

Boiling Spring. The spring was shown on the northern boundary of the Robert Matthews grant in 1831 (EFN, 1/63). Kennedy (1841, 115) described the spring as affording "a large stream of water highly impregnated with sulphur", which gave it the appearance of boiling. It was also known as Sulphur Spring.

Boiling Spring Branch. Robert Matthew's grant was described as being "on a branch of the Navasota known by name of the Boiling Spring branch" (EFN, 1831, 1/63). It is named for its proximity to Boiling Spring (\*).

Boon's Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this creek as a branch of Cedar Creek which headed in the A. Lee, Sr., grant; it is probably what was later known as Ferril Branch (\*). James M. and Mordecai Boon owned land in the Thomas H. Barron grant along the course of the creek (BCDR, 1841, B101).

Boonvil Crossing. The McKee's Bridge road crossed Wickson Creek here in 1869 (BCCGM, 1869, A241). Its name is derived from its proximity to the old road which ran southwestward to Boonville.

Boonville. John Millican, John H. Jones, Mordecai Boon, Sr., J. Ferguson, and E. Seales were appointed commissioners on 30 January 1841 for the purpose of selecting a county seat for the newly created Navasota County. It was further ordered that the county seat, "when located, shall be known and called by the name of Boonville" (Gammel, 1898, v. 2, 550). Most county histories report that the town was named for Mordecai Boon, Sr., a distant relative of the famed adventurer Daniel Boone; however, many people wanted to name things after Boone during the first decades of the 19th Century and the name may have been intended to commemorate Daniel, not Mordecai, Boon(e) (Ramsay, 1952, 8). Hunt and Randel (1845, 52) described Boonville as a postal village which was "recently settled and has had a rapid growth." The town was often spelled Booneville in sources not directly attributed to natives of the county (Pressler, 1858; 1867; Stremme, 1867).

Boren's Ferry. Michael and Maryann Boren operated a ferry across the Brazos River until 12 October 1846 when they sold it and 400 acres of land in the William Mathis League "on the east side of the Brazos River opposite to and including the ferry across the Brazos River

at the crossing of Old St. Antonio Road heretofore known as Borins Ferry" to Daniel Moseley (BCDR, B300). The ferry, which was later called Moseley's Ferry (\*), was mentioned as late as 1847, when it was named as a terminus of a road from Boonville (BCCCM, A514).

Bowie's Ferry. This ferry across the Brazos River, which was probably located near the Sutherland grant, was named as the terminus of a road running from Wellborn via Minter's and Carter's Springs in 1879 (BCCCM, C92). Origin of the name is unknown, but most likely for its operator.

Bowman's Creek. A branch of the Navasota River named for Thomas H. Bowman whose grant was along the waters of the creek (Catlette, 1841).

Bravo. A small settlement on the Brazos River which was the home of John P. Coles, the alcalde of the District of Bravo; the district, which included what is now Brazos County, was named in 1825 for General Nicolas Bravo, the vice-president of Mexico (Barker, 1924-1928, 1009). Coles reported to Stephen F. Austin in January of 1826 that he would be moving to Bravo and a letter written in August from Austin to the Cherokee Indians described the place as being 10 miles below the San Antonio Road on the east side of the Brazos River (Barker, 1924-1928, 1246; 1309); this would place the settlement on or near the James Hope grant. As the center of government for the district, it is most likely that the town of Bravo was named for the District of Bravo. It is doubtful that the town ever got beyond a state of infancy, although Efron (1878, 238) reports that there had been a Spanish garrison there.

Brazos Bottoms. A reference to the lowlands along the Brazos River. The road to Washington-on-the-Brazos was described as being "in the Brazos Bottoms" (BCCCM, 1853, A562).

Brazos County. Navasota County was renamed Brazos County in 1842 (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 745) for the larger of the two rivers which form the county's boundaries. Spelling and form variations include Brassos County and County of Brassos (BCDR, 1844, B78; B119) and County of Brazos (BCCCM, 1846, A516).

Brazos River. Numerous legends surround the origin of this Spanish name, a shortened form of the original Rio de los Brazos de Dios (River of the Arms of God). Most stories relate the saving of a band of Spaniards from hostile Indians or thirst as the reason for its providential name. Many of the earliest spellings of the name by Anglo inhabitants used a single or double s while others adopted the Spanish form of placing the generic term before the specific term, as in River Brazos (Cheffins, ca. 1840).

Brushy Creek (east). References to this tributary of Wickson's Creek, which records conditions of local vegetation, were found as early as 1842 (BCDR, B18). Many maps (Pressler, 1858; Stremme, 1867; Walsh, 1879) show the creek as the southernmost extension of Wickson's Creek.

Brushy Creek (west). A tributary of the Brazos River which Catlette (1841) showed in the western part of the county. Its name records local vegetation conditions.

Bryan. The approach of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad led to the establishment of this town in 1859 when William J. Bryan sold 640 acres of land in the Stephen F. Austin league number ten to the

railroad (Marshall, 1937, 68). There was probably some building activity in the town before 1866, but the town began growing in earnest when the railroad arrived in that year; the rapid growth of the town prompted the move of the county seat from Boonville to Bryan during that same year (BCCCM, 1866, A163). Bryan, which was often called Bryan City or Bryan Station in early references, grew to become the center of commercial activities for Brazos and surrounding counties.

Bryan Bridge Company Bridge. A petition to build this bridge across the Navasota River about 20 miles northeast of Bryan was filed on August 16, 1869 (BCCCM, A255). The company was formed to promote the building of a bridge which would bring more trade to Bryan from the Madison County area (Marshall, 1937, 101).

Bryan City. A more formal reference to the town of Bryan (\*) which was used most frequently in official documents (SLR, 1868; BCCCM, 1866, A163; BCTR, 1862). When the town applied for a post office it was noted that the post office's name would be Bryan but the local name for the town was Bryan City (SLR, 1868). The use of city was probably an optimistic evaluation of the town's rapid expansion and future prospects.

Bryan Prairie. The Bryan to Batts Ferry Road crossed this prairie northwest of Turkey Creek in 1872 (BCCCM, B222). It is named for its proximity to the town of Bryan.

Bryan Station. An early reference to the town of Bryan (\*) called it Bryan Station as a result of its location on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad (BCCCM, 1867, A183).

Burton Creek. This branch of Carter's Creek was crossed by the Boonville to Aldridge's Ferry Road in 1851 (BCCCM, A542). Samuel Burton bought land along the creek from Richard Carter in 1842 (BCTR, B38).

Camp Speight. A staging area for Confederate troops who left for the war from the railroad terminus at Millican (Austin Statesman, 1964). Col. Joseph W. Speight of Waco commanded one of the first units of troops to leave from this terminus (Webb, 1952, vol. 3, 913).

Cane Creek. Austin's 1829 Map of Texas (Barker, 1926) showed this creek in the northwestern corner of what was to become Brazos County. The creek, which was named for local vegetation, was usually called Caney Creek (\*).

Caney Creek. Austin's Map of Texas (1830) shows this branch of the Navasota in the northeastern corner of the county, as do Young (1835) and Cheffins (ca. 1840). It is shown on the east side of the Navasota by DeCordova (1849), as it is in most maps of today. These locational changes illustrate the difficulty that early cartographers had in mapping the country as well as a lack of knowledge of the area.

Carter Branch. Petitioners asked that a change in the Cedar Creek and Long Bridge Road intersect the old road at Carter Branch, which was most likely a tributary of Little Cedar Creek (BCCCM, 1873, A379). Origin of the name is unknown, but probably for a local settler.

Carter Crossing. The Jones Ferry to Mitchell Ferry Road crossed Carter's Creek here in 1879 (BCCCM, C105). It was located near the north edge of Richard Carter's old pasture.



Carter's Creek. Catlette (1841) first showed this branch of the Navasota which flows across Richard Carter's grant. An earlier name for the creek was Saline Creek, although both names were used long after 1841.

Carter's Spring. A road from Wellborn to Bowie's Ferry ran by this spring in 1879 (BCCCM, C92). It was probably on land bought by George Carter in the northwest corner of the Sutherland grant (BCDR, 1858, E594).

Cedar Creek. Bartlett Sims reported to Stephen F. Austin in 1824 (Barker, 1924-1928, 926) that a Mr. Johnson wished to have "a tract of land surveyed on Seader Creek which Creek emptys in to the Navisote near the St. Antone Road." A survey of the Mary Lawrence grant mentioned its proximity to "Sedar Creek" in 1832 (EFN, 7/32). The more common spelling of Cedar Creek, which was often called Big Cedar Creek (\*), was in use by 1848 (BCCCM, A520). Its name refers to the trees found in the northeastern part of the county.

Cedar Creek (community). This early community took its name from the nearby creek of the same name (Stribling, 1978, 2). Only one reference to the community, which was also known as Seale's Neighborhood (\*) and Tryon (\*), was found in county records (BCCCM, 1852, A192).

Chew's Ferry. F. J. Chew's ferry on the Brazos River was allowed a special ferry route in 1868 (BCCCM, A210), but no further information on the ferry's location was given. There is reason to believe that it crossed the Brazos west of Wellborn.

Clark's Ferry. J. H. Clark was one of the members of a jury of review for a road to be built here from Boonville in 1849 (BCCCM, A529) and

it is highly probable that this was his ferry across the Brazos River at a point south of Hope's Creek.

Clayton's Landing. Charles Clayton's landing on the Brazos River, near the mouth of the Little Brazos River, was to have a road built to it in 1852 (BCCCM, A550). The landing probably served as a concentration point for local produce when a steamboat made a rare visit.

Clifty Creek. Land in the William Devers grant was described as being on this branch of Big Creek in 1852 (BCTR). Its name was probably derived from its rather steep, clifflike banks, as clift was a variant of cliff used during the study period (DAE, 528).

Cole Crossing. Two crossings of the Little Brazos River with this name were mentioned in a description of a road which ran northeast from Bryan to Robertson County (BCCCM, 1876, B193). John P. Cole lived in the area as early as 1842 (BCDR, B308) and the names are probably derived from roads that would have led to his property.

Cole's Landing. Pressler (1858) showed this landing on the Brazos River almost due west of the Millican Post Office. Puryear and Winfield (1976, 15) described it as one of the important points for concentrating the cotton bales produced by the small farmers of the area when a steamboat made an occasional run above Washington-on-the-Brazos. The landing is on or near land originally owned by John P. Coles, a prominent early settler.

College. A synonym for the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas and College Station which was used as early as 1873 in a description of the road from Bryan to Wellborn (BCCCM, A395). In September of 1876 it was named as an election site (BCCCM, B195).

College Station. The name proposed for the post office at the State

Agricultural and Mechanical College was College Station (SLR, 1877) since it was at the railroad station which served the college. The community which grew up around the school soon borrowed the name.

Concord School House. The site of precinct 6 justice court in 1879 (BCCCM, C91), this school on Payne's Prairie (\*) was named in honor of the Revolutionary War battle site and the patriotic qualities it embodied.

Corpus Christi Creek. Austin showed this branch of the Navasota in the same locations as Big Cedar Creek in his Mapa Original de Texas (1821) and as the Little Brazos in his map of 1822 (Barker, 1926); it is not unlikely that when Austin travelled along the San Antonio Road he noticed a large stream but did not know if it flowed to the Brazos or Navasota River. In 1807, Zebulon Pike described it as being 20 miles east of the Brazos and 10 miles west of the Navasota, or the location of Cedar Creek (Jackson, 1966, 245). The name is Spanish and means body of Christ; it was probably given by the Ramon party in 1716 (Williams, 1979, 152).

Cottonwood. A small church-centered community in the Thomas H. Barron grant which received its name from a large clump of cottonwood trees. The Cottonwood Baptist Church was built near these trees around 1860 and served a community composed of many nationalities (Schultz, 1973, 20).

Cotton Wood Prairie. The jury of review for the road from Bryan Station to the St. Antonio Road Crossing of the Navasota River reported crossing this prairie between the Prendergrast Crossing of Bee Creek and the northwest corner or Peter Keifer's pasture in the Colbert Baker Survey (BCCCM, 1868, A198). This would place the location of

the prairie, named for the cottonwood trees found in the area, in the Thomas H. Barron and Colbert Baker grants just south of the San Antonio Road.

Cow County. A nickname applied to Brazos County in the lower counties of Texas before 1850 because it produced more beef than any other county in the state (Efron, 1878, 245).

Crook and Wilkerson Store. The election site for precinct 5 in 1874 (BCCCM, B71). It was also called Wilkerson and Crook Store (\*), both forms recording the names of its proprietors.

Curd's Prairie. A grassland in northeastern Brazos County which was named for Isaiah Curd, upon whose grant from the Mexican government the prairie was located (Stribling, 1978, 28).

Curd's Prairie Post Office. The name confirmed for the post office at Lawless's Store (\*) in 1874 (SLR). The post office, which takes its name from its location in Curd's Prairie, was discontinued in 1876 but still appeared in Pressler and Langermann's map of Texas (1879).

Davis Bridge. A crossing of the Navasota River at or near the site of Davis Ferry (\*). The bridge, which was named for the same Davis as the ferry, was the terminus of a road from Bryan in 1874 (BCCCM, B61); the road, and presumably the bridge, was discontinued in 1877 (BCCCM, B278).

Davis Ferry. This ferry was named as the terminus of a road in January of 1874 (BCCCM, B58); it was probably near McRee's Bridge (\*). J.R. Davis owned land near the ferry in Grimes County and it is most likely that both Davis Ferry and Davis Bridge were named for him (GCTR, 1877).

Doctor's Creek. Road precinct seven's boundary included this branch of the Navasota River in 1851 (BCCCM, A541). The creek was named for Doctor E. M. Millican who owned the land along the stream.

Duffie's Crossing. The Bryan and Howard's Crossing Road crossed Wickson's Creek here in 1877 (BCCCM, B209). It may have been named for a Margaret Duffy who had owned land near the crossing in the Richardson Ferry League (BCDR, 1870, M56).

Duncan's Branch. A branch of the northern Bee Creek which flows southward in the William C. Sparks grant (BCDR, 1846, B217); Mahala Duncan lived near the stream which bears his name.

Eium Creek. This branch of Thompson's Creek was recorded in descriptions of property in the Henry Fullerton and Wilson Reed grants in 1855 and 1856 (BCTR); its name records an obsolete spelling of the elm trees which were common in the area. The u was omitted in some references (BCTR, 1857).

Evan's Ferry. Hammett Hardy applied for a new road to be built to this ferry across the Brazos River in 1868 (BCCCM, A197). Its name was changed to Pitt's Ferry (\*) around 1870 and was referred to as Evan's old ferry when a bridge was built there in 1875 (BCCCM, B123). Charles J. Evans and T. C. Evans owned land in the James Curtis League, where the ferry is located, and one or both probably operated the ferry (BCDR, 1868, I479).

Evitt's Ferry. James H. Evitts was appointed as the overseer of the road which ran from Boonville to his ferry across the Brazos River in 1851 (BCCCM, A542). The ferry was located at the foot of the Falls of the Brazos (\*) in the H. & B. Whitesides League (BCCCM, 1851, A545).

Falls of the Brazos. Road precinct one's overseer was ordered to lay out a road which led "to the foot of the Falls of the Brazos next above Washington" in 1849 (BCCCM, A529). These falls on the Brazos River were also known as Hidalgo Falls and Millican Falls.

Ferguson Ford. The road from Bryan to Mitchell's Bridge was changed so that it ran on the most practical route to Ferguson Ford on the Navasota (BCCCM, 1880, C163). Origin of the name is the same as Ferguson's Crossing.

Ferguson's Crossing. A crossing of the Navasota River just below the mouth of Wickson's Creek which was named for local settlers Joseph and Robert Ferguson (BCCCM, 1848, A522). Later references to the crossing called it Ferguson Ford (\*).

Ferguson's Settlement. Land given to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the A. Williams League was described as being "in the neighborhood known as Ferguson's settlement" (BCDR, 1843, B91). The settlement was named for its two most prominent residents, Robert M. and Joseph Ferguson.

Ferguson Springs. Navasota County's first court was held here in 1841 (Marshall, 1937, 40). The springs were on Joseph Ferguson's land close to the mouth of Wickson's Creek.

Ferrel's Creek. The Bryan to Long Bridge Road ran just south of this creek in 1879 (BCCCM, C73). It was known earlier as Ferril Branch (\*).

Ferril Branch. This branch of Cedar Creek was named as the southern boundary of road precinct one in 1852 (BCCCM, A550). The most probable explanation of the name is that it is a corruption of the surname of Massillon Farley, a landowner near the creek (BCDR, 1840,

B89). The creek's name was also spelled Ferral (BCCCM, 1868, A220).

Ferril Branch Bottom. The low lying areas along Ferril Branch (BCCCM, 1852, A550).

Fisher Creek. Road precinct eight's boundary commenced at the mouth of this creek in 1852 (BCCCM, A552). It was named for James Fisher who had settled in the Walter Sutherland grant as early as 1825 (BCDR, 1860, F247).

Frank's Creek. County tax rolls listed lands in the Diadem and Willis Millican (1857) and Willis L. Ellis (1859) grants as being on this branch of Big Creek (\*). The exact origin of the name is unknown, but it may well refer to the first name of a local settler.

Freedman Town. The neighborhood in Bryan which was home to the newly freed men of color after the Civil War (BCTR, 1869); it was located between what are now 15th and 18th Streets (Buford, n.d., "Our Community" section). Spelling variations include Freedmantown (BCTR, 1869), Freedman (BCTR, 1874), and Freedmanstown (BCCCM, 1874, B58).

Fuller's Ferry. J. D. Fuller operated a ferry across the Brazos River at a point known as Riden's Ferry (\*) in 1860 (BCCCM, A49).

Fulsom's Bridge. Israel Fulsom built a bridge across the Navasota just below the mouth of Cedar Creek about 1870 (BCCCM, 1867, A195; 1870, A268). It was named as the terminus of roads from Bryan and Wheelock in 1875 (BCCCM, B123).

Fuqua's Ferry Toll Bridge. Ephraim Fuqua of Grimes County reported the building of a bridge across the Navasota River in 1867 (BCCCM, A195). Its location was very near Fuqua's Ferry (\*).

Fuqua's Ferry. A road was built from Boonville to Ephraim Fuqua's Ferry on the Navasota in 1848 (BCCCM A521); its operation was reported as late as 1871 when it was named as the terminus of a road from Bryan (BCCCM, B228). Pressler (1858) showed the ferry on the road to Anderson in Grimes County at a point just below the mouth of Peach Creek.

Graveyard Hill. A prominent point in northeastern Brazos County near the property of James A. Head in the Prewett grant (BCCCM, 1849, A530) which was used as a reference point by many road surveys and precinct boundaries. Its name is derived from a nearby cemetery.

Grasshopper Prairie. The halfway point of the Millican and Wellborn Road in 1878 (BCCCM, C7.). These insects were certainly common in the grasslands of the county, although the name may have been given in a year in which there was a particularly large occurrence of the creatures.

Hadley's Crossing. The proposed site for a bridge across the Navasota in 1877 (BCCCM, B262). There are three Hadley grants on the east bank of the river between the mouths of Cedar Creek and Bowman's Creek on the west bank. The most likely location of the crossing was near the mouth of Sandy Creek.

Hall's Addition. H. R. Hall sold land in this early extension of the original Bryan city limits as early as 1867 (BCDR, 181). The addition is located along the original northeast boundary of the city.

Hall's Town. A synonym for Hall's Addition (\*). (BCDR, 1874,P348).

Ham Prairie. The Bryan to Mitchell's Bridge Road crossed this prairie in 1880 (BCCCM, C165). It is located on the northeastern edge of the Augustus Williams League which adjoins land bought by James M. Hamm



in the Dyrum Wickson grant (BCDR, 1842, B22).

Harris Crossing. A crossing of the Navasota River in 1851 (BCCM, A539) near land bought by Arah Harris in the A.D.Lancaster grant in 1839 (BCDR, B364).

Harvey. A small community about two and a half miles southeast of Bryan which was named in 1879 to honor Colonel Harvey Mitchell, one of the county's most influential early citizens (Schultz, 1973, 39). The community had earlier been known as Bethel (\*).

Haxey's Rock. Smith's Ferry on the Brazos River was described as being near this rock in 1876 (BCCCM, B190), probably at a point just above Hidalgo Falls (\*). The name of the rock, which was also spelled Haxis (BCCCM, 1876, B190), was probably a corruption of the spelling of the surname of Asa Hoxey, one of the founders of Washington-on-the-Brazos.

Head's Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this branch of the Navasota flowing across the northeastern corner of the county. James A. Head was a prominent early settler in the area.

Head Crossing. The road from Boonville to the Wickson Crossing on the Navasota River crossed Carter's Creek northeast of Boonville near this crossing in 1857 (BCCCM, A1). James A. Head would have had to cross the creek here to reach his residence in northeast Brazos County and the crossing is named for this use.

Head's Crossing. A road which ran towards the James A. Head residence from Boonville crossed Wickson's Creek here in 1853 (BCCCM, A566).

Henry Grange. Elections were held at this farmer's meeting site in northern Brazos County in 1876 (BCCCM, B149). It was probably located on or near the land owned by H. R. Henry in the Marcus L. Fulton grant

(BCTR, 1859).

Henry's School House. Robert Henry presided at elections held here in 1874 (BCCCM, B71). The school house, which had been used for the same purpose in 1873 (BCCCM, A390), was near Thompson's Creek at a point about two miles northeast of Bryan.

Hidalgo Falls. A group of sandstone rapids and rocks in the Brazos River which extend northward from a point approximately 6 miles above Washington-on-the-Brazos. These rapids severely hindered travel by steambot above Washington and were described in 1850 as being much worse than any below (Puryear and Winfield, 1976,14). No records of its naming were found. They may have been named for Miguel Hidalgo, a leader in Mexico's fight for independence from Spain. The falls are shown on Pressler's maps of 1858 and 1867 and the Pressler and Langermann map of 1879. Local references to the falls usually called them the Falls of the Brazos or Millican's Falls.

Higg's Prairie. The new road from Bryan towards Mumford Prairie in Robertson County crossed Ben Higg's farm on Higgs Prairie in 1876 (BCCCM, B189). Higg's land was located in the Moses Baine grant northeast of Bryan (BCTR, 1877).

Hog County. A nickname applied to Brazos County in the lower counties before 1850 as a result of its producing more pork than any other county in the state (Efron, 1878, 245).

Hog Creek. Pressler (1858) showed this creek flowing southward into Big Cedar Creek. A letter from William B. Dewees (1852,25) dated 16 July 1822 noted the presence of many wild hogs in the county area. Hogs were also raised in the area and the name may refer to the more domesticated kin of the javelina reported by Dewees.

Hope's Creek. A diagram of the James Hope grant showed this branch of the Brazos River flowing through the middle of the grant in 1824. (EFN, 1/64).

Howard's Crossing. The terminus of a road to the Navasota River from Bryan in 1877 (BCCCM, 1877, B209). W. G. Howard owned land in Grimes County near the crossing which most likely was named for him (GCTR, 1877).

Hudson Creek. This branch of Carter's Creek was crossed by the Bryan to Mitchell's Bridge Road in 1876 (BCCCM, B168). It was named for E. Hudson who owned land near the creek in the Maria Kegans and T.J. Allcorn grants (BCTR, 1875).

Ireland. On his way to duty in the Civil War, Henry Orr reported in a journal entry dated October 22, 1861 that his unit had camped about six miles south of Wheelock near a neighborhood which was called Ireland (Anderson, 1967, 7). Orr's unit was near the community which was also called Stagger's Point and Irishtown. The first church in the area was called the "Old Ireland Church" (Parker, 1955, 12) and it evidently lent its name to the community.

Irish Settlement (east). A community near Ferguson's Crossing on the Navasota which served as the terminus of road that marked the northern boundary of road precinct two (BCCCM, 1848, A521). The settlement, which was also known as Ferguson's Settlement, was named for the ethnic heritage of many of its inhabitants.

Irish Settlement (north). Many settlers of Irish descent came to the area which became the Benchley community in the early 1830's. A Presbyterian church was established there as early as 1837 (Efron, 1878, 238-240).

Irishtown. Harvey Mitchell operated a post office here in 1856 and 1857 (U. S. Post Office Department). The community had many names which noted the ethnicity of many of its early inhabitants, including Ireland and Irish Settlement. It was named as the terminus of a road from Bryan in 1858 (BCCCM, A25).

Iron Bridge. An application was made to build a road from Bryan to this bridge across the Navasota in 1878 (BCCCM, C34). The bridge was named for its building materials and was probably located near New Bridge (\*).

J.A. Seale's School House. Elections in precinct three were held at this school house on J. A. Seale's land along Sandy Creek in 1861 and 1863 (BCCCM, A78; A114).

Johnson's Ferry. A license tax was assessed on this ferry across the Navasota in 1853 (BCCCM, A568) and 1861 (BCCCM, A74). In 1854 a road proposal referred to Mitchell's Ferry (\*) as being the former Johnson's Ferry (BCCCM, A582). The 1861 report may have been a reference to the previously established name or the ferry may have been reestablished. E. R. Johnson, who lived in the Dyrum Wickson grant, was probably the operator of the ferry (BCDR, 1856, E166).

Jones Bluff. Pressler (1867) showed this prominent point along the Brazos River on the land which was originally granted to John H. and Stephen Jones.

Jones Creek. Stremme's 1867 abstract map of the county showed this small stream flowing into the Navasota almost due east of Millican. There were many people named Jones who lived near the creek but it was impossible to tell which one lent their name. The source may be William Jones who lived in the area before 1861 (BCDR, F356).

Jones Crossing. Named as the terminus of a road from Boonville to the Navasota River in 1848 (BCCCM, A519), this crossing may have been near William Jones' land in the I. R. Mitchell grant in southeastern Brazos County (BCDR, 1861, F356).

Jones Ferry. Wesley W. Jones applied for a ferry at his place on the Brazos River in 1867 (BCCCM, A174). The ferry crossed the river at the boundary of the Stephen and John H. Jones Leagues.

Joseph Lyon's Crossing. A crossing on the Navasota River near Ferguson's Crossing (\*) which was named for a nearby landowner (BCCCM, 1852, A549). It was also referred to as Lyon's Crossing (BCCCM, 1852, A551).

Joshua Seale's Creek. The road from Prewett's Bluff to Wheelock crossed this branch of Sandy Creek in 1846 (BCCCM, A516). Joseph Seale lived on land along the creek.

Koontz's Neighborhood. The men in Koontz's Neighborhood, many of which were Germans, were ordered to maintain the Boonville-Wheelock Road (BCCCM, 1858, A167). Henry Koontze, for whom the neighborhood is named, lived in the Colbert Baker grant (BCTR, 1858).

Lawless Store. H. D. Lawless's store was an election site for the Curd's Prairie (\*) area in 1873, 1874, and 1876 (BCCCM, A387; B149; B195). It was also the site of Curd's Prairie Post Office (\*).

Lick Branch. A diagram of Robert Matthew's grant shows this creek running southeast to the Navasota River through a salt flat (EFN, 1831, 1/63). Its name is derived from the use of the salt flat as a lick, or salt source, for animals.

Lick Creek. A later name for Lick Branch (\*) which was shown on Stremme (1867).

Little Brazos River. One of the major tributaries of the Brazos River which the Spanish named the Rio Brazitos, or Little Brazos River, for its size in comparison with the larger Brazos River. The Little Brazos was called such by the time Anglo settlement had begun, as Moses Austin's itinerary mentioned the stream in 1820 (Barker, 1924-1928, 368) and Dewees (1852, 23) reported that he camped two miles above its mouth in 1822. Spelling and form variations include Little Brassos (Barker, 1924-1928, 368), Little Brasos (Austin, 1829) and Little River Brazos (Young, 1835; Cheffins, ca. 1840).

Little Brazos Shoals. A survey of the Brazos River in 1875 by an officer of the Corps of Engineers noted the presence of these shoals at the mouth of the Little Brazos River. He recorded their length as 450 feet with a fall of three inches; they were also the site of Moseley's Ferry (\*) and were probably also called Moseley's Shoals (\*) (Velasco, 1894, 11).

Little Cedar Creek. This name was first found in an erroneous reference to Bee Creek in a description of William C. Sparks grant in 1832 (EFN, 7/67). Catlette (1841) showed the stream in its current location in the northeastern corner of the county. Its name refers to its size in relation to the larger Big Cedar Creek.

Little Georgia. A community in eastern Brazos County which was later known as Reliance (\*). It was named for the home state of its early settlers (Marshall, 1937, 20).

Locust Grove Post Office. H. D. Lawless originally chose this name for the Curd's Prairie Post Office (\*), but it was refused because there was already a Locust Grove Post Office in Rusk County (SLR, 1874). Stribling (1978,40) reports that locust trees were common in the area.

Long Bridge. A petition to build a toll bridge across the Navasota River a half mile below McLean's Bridge, the approximate location of this bridge, appeared in 1869 (BCCCM, A250). It is first mentioned in a review of the road from Cedar Creek in 1871 (BCCCM, A311) and was described as being the terminus of "one of the principal building ways of the county" (BCCCM, 1875, B117). The bridge was apparently named for its length.

Lyon's Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this small branch of the Navasota River heading in the M. Kegans land and flowing through Joseph Lyon's land in the A. Williams League (BCDR, 1844, B80).

Lyon's and Middleton's Settlement. Road precinct four's boundaries included this settlement in 1852 (BCCCM, A551). It was on land bought by Joseph Lyons and Washington Middleton in the Augustus Williams grant in 1848 (BCDR, B399).

Macy. A small farming community in northeast Brazos County which received a post office in 1874 (U.S. Post Office Department). It was the site of Justice Court for the newly created precinct 6 in 1878 (BCCCM, C15). The community was named for William Macy of Indiana who had visited the northeastern part of the county before the Civil War and came back in 1869 to buy land in the James grant (Schultz, 1973, 30-33).

Main Brazos River. The adjective main was added to distinguish the Brazos River from its tributary the Little Brazos River in a description of land sold about two miles below the mouth of the Little Brazos (BCDR, 1846, B223).

Mathis Branch. Road crews used this branch of Wickson's Creek to denote the midpoint of the Bryan and Pruett's Bluff Road (BCCCM, 1867, A177).

J. M. Mathis lived near the stream in the J. A. Rhodes and D. B. Posey grants (Stribling, 1978, 69). Earliest spellings of the branch were Matthew's Branch (BCCCM, 1867, A177; 1868, A222) but it was eventually standardized as Mathis (BCCCM, 1868, A221; SLR, 1874). The spelling of Mathis as Matthews, and vice-versa, was found in many other references from this study period.

Matthew Dunn's School House. Precinct four elections were held at "a school house known as Matthew Dunn's" in 1861 (BCCCM, A78). Dunn owned land in the John Williams and T. J. Wooton lands along Turkey Creek in northwest Brazos County (BCTR, 1862).

McGahey's Ferry. Alexander McGahey made application to establish a ferry across the Navasota River in 1845 (BCCCM, A513) on land he had bought from Daniel Arnold in 1842 (BCDR, B49). The ferry was the terminus of several county roads and was mentioned in the 1858 Texas Almanac (1857, 188), as the proposed crossing of the Navasota for the Houston and Texas Central Railroad.

McKee's Bridge. County records mentioned that this bridge was on the Navasota River near the Wickson Crossing (BCCCM, 1868, A230). No mention of its operator was found, but it may have been Alexander McKee who was named in several land transactions in the area (BCDR).

McKinney Falls. A deed of land from Charles Furnash (or Fallenash) to J. Echols filed in the Clerk's office of Washington County in January 1839, describes the falls on the Brazos River as being on the upper corner of the Furnash grant, about seven miles below the San Antonio Road. This would place the fall's location at the lower corner of Thomas F. McKinney's grant in Brazos County.

McKinney's Bluff. An advertisement in De Cordova (1858, 113) for land in



the Samuel Davidson League on the Brazos River described the tract as "having a very great front on that river, and including that noted point called McKinney's Bluff". The name probably refers to Thomas F. McKinney whose grant from the Mexican government was north of Davidson's but on the same side of the river.

McRee's Bridge. J. H. McRee notified the public in an advertisement in The Weekly Newsletter (1869, No. 35, 2) that his bridge "across the Navasota, on the direct road from Bryan to Madisonville, Huntsville, and Crockett, is now completed, and the bottom placed in superior travelling condition". The site location report for the Curd's Prairie Post Office (1874) showed the bridge at a point about six miles north of the mouth of Wickson's Creek. Spelling variations include McRey's, McRee's and McRea's Bridge (BCCCM, 1870, A263; 1872, A358; 1876, B173).

Mickleborough Ferry. A tax of 2000 dollars was assessed to McChelbraugh Ferry in 1870 (BCCCM, A278). Public roads were opened to the ferry from Bryan in 1875 (BCCCM, B123) and Millican in 1876 (BCCCM, B191). Two Mickleboroughs, Peter and John, lived in the southern part of the county in the Kelly and Arnold grants (U. S. Census Office, 1860; BCTR, 1857) and were probably the operators of the ferry.

Millican. The town of Millican came into being when Dr. Elliott McNiel Millican gave land in the northern part of his grant to the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, which arrived there in 1859 (Marshall, 1937, 68). Millican was an important center of commerce for an area which extended as far north as Dallas from 1860-1866 when the Civil War halted construction of the railroad at the town. Town lots were first sold in 1860 (BCTR).

Millican Community. The southern part of the county was known as the Millican Community long before the town of Millican was founded. Robert Millican and his family were the first to settle in the area in 1821 (Marshall, 1937, 68).

Millican Crossroads. The area which later became known as the town of Millican was known as Millican Crossroads as early as 1845 (Marshall, 1937, 68). The community was on the stage route which ran through central Brazos County via Boonville at the intersection of two of the county's earliest roads (Catlette, 1841).

Millican Falls. These rapids on the Brazos River were named as the northern point of road precinct seven in 1852 (BCCCM, A552). The falls, which were named for one of the first families to settle in the area, were also known as Hidalgo Falls and the Falls of the Brazos.

Millican Ferry. L. B. Aldridge petitioned to keep a ferry across the Brazos at a point commonly known as Millican Ferry in 1851 (BCCCM, A546). Puryear and Winfield (1976, 15) report that the ferry accommodated travellers on the Washington-Boonville Road in the 1830's. They do not record which of the many Millicans who settled in the area operated the ferry.

Millican Settlement. The settlement which arose around the home of Robert Millican, about three miles south of the town of Millican (\*), was a place in the early history of Brazos County. When Alexander Thompson was unable to secure grants for his settlers above the San Antonio Road in 1831 he was ordered to move them south of the road to the settlement of Mr. Millican until he received further instructions (McLean, 1979, vol. 6, 170-171). An earlier incident,

an Indian uprising in 1826, prompted James Hope to move to Millican's until conditions were safe again (Barker, 1924-1928, 1373). The settlement was in existence as late as the 1840's, as a description of land bought by S. W. Henry noted that it was near the Millican Settlement, about ten miles from Washington-on-the-Brazos (BCDR, 1842, B95).

Millican's Post Office. Road precinct one's boundaries included this post office in 1853 (BCCCM, A562); Pressler (1858) shows the post office near what was later known as the town of Millican (\*). The post office was first opened, probably at Millican's Crossroads (\*), in May 1849, with Arthur Edwards as its first postmaster (U. S. Post Office Department).

Minter Spring(s). The Minter Springs Baptist Church was included as part of the Union Baptist Association in late 1857 (Bryan Eagle, 24 June 1962, "Centennial Section", 18). A sketch map of the area around the Wellborn Station post office (SLR, 1868a) shows the spring one and a half miles south of Wellborn in the Samuel Davidson League. Origin of the name is unknown.

Minter Spring (community). Town lots were sold in this community located near Minter Spring in 1870 (BCDR, L217). The area may have taken on the appearance of a community as early as 1857 when a Baptist Church was built there in 1857 (Bryan Eagle, 24 June 1962, "Centennial Section", 18). Only a few town lots were ever recorded in the tax rolls of 1872 through 1876.

Mitchell Addition. An extension to the southeast of the original Bryan city limits which was named for its developer, J. P. Mitchell, who sold land in the area as early as 1868 (BCDR, I217). The tract was

apparently known earlier as Mitchell's Settlement.

Mitchell's Bridge. Harvey Mitchell opened a bridge across the Navasota at the site of his ferry in 1867 (BCCCM, A184). The bridge is shown at the mouth of Wickson's Creek on Pressler and Langermann's map (1879).

Mitchell's Ferry. A ferry operated across the Navasota by Harvey Mitchell at what was the earlier location of Johnson's Ferry in 1854 (BCCCM, A582). Mitchell later built a bridge at the same location.

Mitchell's Settlement. The Bryan to Mitchell's Bridge Road passed through J. P. Mitchell's land southeast of the original Bryan town tract on a line which left "said Mitchell's Settlement and improvement on the south of the road about 600 yards" (BCCCM, 1867, A184).

Mitchell's Town. J. P. Mitchell sold land in Mitchelltown in November 1863 (BCDR, G162); later sales of land by Mitchell recorded the neighborhood's name as Mitchell's Town (BCDR, 1868, I296). The area was also known as Mitchell's Settlement (\*) and the Mitchell Addition (\*).

Mitchellsville. One of the synonyms for land sold in the Mitchell Addition(\*) by J. P. Mitchell (BCDR, 1868, H656).

Moseley's Ferry. Daniel Moseley bought land from Michael Boren in the William Mathis League in 1846 (BCDR, B300) which included Boren's Ferry (\*). Moseley evidently assumed operation of the ferry immediately as a road had been built from Boonville by February of 1848 (BCCCM, A520). The ferry, which was later operated by Wade C. Moseley (BCCCM, 1860, A49), crossed the Brazos River at the San Antonio Road.

Moseley's Landing. Another of the landings along the Brazos River which serves as concentration point for the produce of small farms when a steamboat made an occasional visit. An official of the Brazos Steam Association visited there in April of 1850 and reported that 141 bales of cotton were taken on (Purveyar and Winfield, 1976, 57). The landing was on Dan Moseley's land near Moseley's Ferry (\*).

Moseley's Shoals. An article in the Texas State Gazette in July 1854, reported that the citizens of Burleson County were planning to remove Moseley's Shoals, a major impediment to river travel above Washington-on-the-Brazos (Brockman, 1968, 74). Apparently these shoals were also called Little Brazos Shoals (\*) and were the site of Dan Moseley's Ferry and Landing (\*).

Mottley's Store. R. S. Mottley's Store in the Brazos Bottoms near Mudville (\*) was named as the election site for precinct eight in 1873 and 1876 (BCCCM, A393; BCCCM, B195).

Mudville. This community in the Francisco Ruiz grant in the northwest corner of the county was named as the location of Steele's Store post office (SLR, 1877a). It was on the proposed route of a new road from the Robertson County line to the Moseley's Ferry Road in February 1878 (BCCCM, C11). Tarpley (1980, 141) reports that the community's name was derived from the impassable muddy streets left by a particularly heavy rain; however, the name would also be a good description of the Brazos Bottoms after any rain or flood of the Brazos River.

Munson's Landing. A landing at Munson's Shoals (\*) which served as a concentration point for local produce (Purveyar and Winfield, 1976, 15). The landing is shown in Pressler (1858) south of the mouth of

Thompson's Creek. Henry J. Munson, an early settler in the area, probably lent his name to both the shoals and the landing (Webb, 1952, vol. 2, 249).

Munson's Rapids. A synonym for Munson's Shoals (\*) which were mentioned in a survey of the Brazos River performed in 1875 (Velasco, 1894, 11).

Munson's Shoals. A letter from an official of the Brazos Steam Association written in April 1850, noted that these shoals were worse than any below Hidalgo Falls (Purveyer and Winfield, 1976, 67). Pressler (1858) showed the shoals about five miles south of Thompson's Creek's mouth. The shoals were also the site of a steambot landing.

Murphysboro. The road from Cedar Creek to Long Bridge went through this community in 1873 (BCCCM, A370). An advertisement in the Weekly Bryan Appeal (1874, 2) announced the availability of 300 acres which joined the Murphysboro town tract; 1874 is also the first year in which county records note the ownership of town lots here (BCDR, P18; BCTR). A. L. and W. W. Murphy bought land in the Thomas James grant in 1867 and the town is presumably named for them; however, some references to the town spelled it as Murfreesboro (BCCCM, A390; Efron, 1878, 247) suggesting a link to the town in Tennessee of the same name. Other spelling variants include Murphysborough (BCCCM, 1876, B149) and Murpheyboro (BCDR, 1874, B18). Macy (\*) and Murphysboro were probably used interchangeably as names for the same community until the late 1870's, when Macy became the more common name.

Navasota Bottoms. Road commissioners were assigned to review two roads through the Navasota Bottoms in 1845 (BCCCM, A513). The name refers to the low lying areas along the Navasota River.

Navasota County. An act of the Congress of the Republic of Texas created this county from parts of Washington and Robertson Counties on January 30, 1841 (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 550); it was named for the river which formed its eastern boundary. Spelling variations of the county name, as with the river, were numerous and many official documents, including the act which created the county, used an o ending. The county was renamed Brazos County (\*) in 1842.

Navasota Creek. Early references to the Navasota River classified it as a creek; when compared to the Brazos River, it really is more of a creek than a river. Two land descriptions referred to Navasotto Creek in the 1840's (BCDR, 1844, B129; 1848, B322) and a site location report for the post office at Bryan noted in 1868 that the nearest creek was the Navasota.

Navasota River. Brazos County's eastern boundary probably took its name from the Indian word "Nabatsoto". Other names for the stream included San Cypriano and San Buenaventura, but it had been called the Navasota since 1727 when it was named by the Pedro de Rivero expedition (Webb, 1952, vol. 2, 264). More spelling variations of this name were found than for any other in the county; they include Navassott in 1820 (Barker, 1924-1928, 368), Navisota (Austin, 1822), Nevisota (Catlette, 1841) and Navosoto in 1849 (Roemer, 1935). There was, and still is, a tendency by those who live in the county to drop the last vowel and call the stream the Navasot.

New Bethel. This church near what is now the Harvey community (\*) was named an election site for precinct two in 1873 (BCCCM, A390). The adjective new was dropped by 1874 (BCCCM, B71) in this biblical name.

New Bridge. Henry Kurten petitioned for a new road from Bryan to New

Bridge in 1875 (BCCCM, B132). The bridge crossed the Navasota River at the mouth of Sandy Creek and was on the Bryan to Madisonville Road (Pressler and Langermann, 1879); its name is derived from its newness.

Old Cotton Road. A road which ran through the Brazos Bottoms to Moseley's Ferry, possibly the Bryan and Moseley's Ferry Road or one of its branches, which was evidently named for the cotton transported over it (BCCCM, 1877, B222). The area along the Brazos River had become the center of Brazos County's cotton production by the 1870's.

Old Houston Road. One of the first important roads in the county was the stage route which ran from Houston through the interior uplands of Brazos County to Waco. The road was named as a boundary of road precinct two in 1849 (BCCCM, A527).

Old San Antonio Road. References to San Antonio Road (\*) after the early 1840's added the adjective old as a reference to the longevity of the road (BCDR, 1846, B261); it was also called the Old St. Antonio Road (BCDR, 1846, B300).

Payne's Mills. Alvah Payne was the presiding officer at this precinct three election site in 1854 (BCCCM, A574). Payne lived in the Mary Lawrence grant in northeast Brazos County (BCTR, 1854).

Payne's Prairie. The road from Bryan to McLean's Bridge passed through this prairie a half mile southwest of Little Cedar Creek and three and a half miles northeast of Big Cedar Creek in 1868 (BCCCM, A221). Alvah Payne had settled on the prairie as early as 1825.

Payne's Prairie (community). A rural community in the northeast corner of the county named for the grassland it was located in (Bryan News, March 27, 1940, "Historical Edition", 1).



Peach Creek (north). Land in the James D. Allcorn grant along the San Antonio Road was reported as being on this creek in 1849 (BCTR). Roemer (1935, 189) found a farmer in the area in 1849 "who had such an abundance of peaches that he gave bushels of them to his neighbors who came with pack horses to carry them off".

Peach Creek (south). Land in the A. Miller grant was described as being along this branch of the Navasota in 1840 (BCDR, B57). Catlette (1841) showed the creek heading near what later became the community of Wellborn and running eastward. Efron (1878, 248) noted the abundance of peaches raised in the area when she reported that "there is no finer peach country in the world".

Phillips Addition. A southeastward extension of the original city limits of Bryan named for its location in the Zeno Phillips League. The name first appears in the Brazos County tax rolls of 1872.

Pin Oak Branch. The Bryan and Rocky Ford Road crossed at the head of this branch of Thompson's Creek west of Bryan in 1877 (BCCCM, B261). Its name refers to local vegetation.

Pitt's Bridge. A new road was built to this bridge across the Brazos River from the Bryan and Moseley's Ferry Road in 1876 (BCCCM, B168). A diagram of the area around the Steele's Store Post Office shows the bridge on the road from Bryan to Caldwell (SLR, 1877a) at the earlier location of Pitt's Ferry (\*).

Pitt's Ferry. In 1872 the road from Bryan, which was formerly the Evan's Ferry Road, was listed as the Bryan and Evans (or Pitts) Ferry Road (BCCCM, A352); a Mr. Pitts had been listed as the Evan's Ferry Road overseer in 1869 (BCCCM, A254). The ferry was between three and four miles below the mouth of the Little Brazos River on land bought by

W. C. Pitts in the James Curtis League in 1871 (BCDR, M139).

Prendergrast Crossing. The Bryan and McLean's Bridge Road crossed the Big Cedar Creek here in 1868 (BCCCM, A198); a bridge for this crossing was proposed in 1873 (BCCCM, A398). William D. Prendergrast lived in the area as early as 1847 (Smith, 1962, 161).

Prewett Bluff Crossing. The road from Bryan Station to McLean's Bridge on the Navasota crossed Bee Creek here in 1868 (BCCCM, A198). Its name is derived from former use as a crossing on the road from Wheelock to Prewitt's Bluff.

Prewitt's Bluff. A prominent point along the Navasota River north of Cedar Creek's mouth which was named as the terminus of roads from Boonville and Wheelock in 1846 (BCCCM, A515; A516); it is very near land originally granted to James Prewitt. An anonymous article in The Weekly Newsletter (1869,2) discussed the necessity of fixing the bottom at Pruettt's Bluff where the road to Madisonville crossed the Navasota at the mouth of Cedar Creek. Numerous spelling variations included Pruittt's Bluff (BCCCM, 1849, A530) and Prewett's Bluff (BCCCM, 1867, A195).

Providence Community. Land around the Providence Baptist Church in west central Brazos County was known as the Providence, or Old Providence, Community (Bryan News, 27 March 1940, "Historical Edition",3). The church was formed in February of 1858, and named so that it might evoke the blessings of heaven (Bryan Eagle, 24 June 1962,"Centennial Section", 18).

Rector's Chapel. The election site in precinct two in 1873 (BCCCM, A387). Morgan Rector received the land the church was located on as part of a grant from the Mexican government.

Red Top. A road from Boonville to Red Top Store was established in 1859 (BCCCM, A37). Application was made for a road to be built from Bryan to Red Top in 1868 (BCCCM, A194). The community, which was named for the wild grasses in the area (Stribling, 1978, 1), was another of the names given to the communities near Benchley (\*).

Red Top Prairie. A proposed road from Bryan to Hearne was to run to the Robertson County line in the Red Top Prairie (BCCCM, 1876, B168). The prairie was named for the grasses of the area which turned red in the fall (Stribling, 1978, 1).

Reliance. This community in eastern Brazos County was first called Little Georgia but was changed to Reliance when the Reliance Baptist Church was founded by David S. Lloyd of Mississippi in 1873 (Schultz, 1973, 39). The name was given because it depicted confidence, dependence, and a ground of trust (Bryan Eagle, 4 October 1957, 3).

Riden's Ferry. A road to Riden's Ferry on the Brazos River was established in 1858 (BCCCM, A18). B. G. Riden(s) operated the ferry at a point about two miles north of the mouth of Hope's Creek. J. D. Fuller petitioned to keep a ferry across the point known as Riden's Ferry in 1860 (BCCCM, A49) but a diagram of the area around Wellborn's Station (SLR, 1868a) showed Riden's Ferry in its above position, indicating that the name had achieved a degree of permanence even if the ferry was not still operated by Riden's.

Rock Ferry. An application was made for a first class road to be built from this ferry across the Brazos River to Wellborn's Station in 1867 (BCCCM, A185). The ferry was probably at or very near to Rocky Ford (\*) and the name refers to the physical conditions of the river crossing.

Rocky Creek. Land in the Willis L. Ellis grant was described in 1856 as being on Rocky Creek (BCTR), a branch of the Brazos River which may be what is now known as High Prairie Creek. Its name is a description of the creek's course.

Rocky Ford (on the Brazos). A diagram of the Wellborn Station area showed this crossing of the Brazos River at a point just below the mouth of Hope's Creek on the Burleson and Grimes County Road (SLR, 1868a). The name is descriptive of the river bed at the ford.

Rocky Ford (on the Little Brazos). Road precinct eight's boundary ran to Rocky Ford on the Little Brazos in 1854 (BCCCM, A576). Roemer (1935, 187) found the Little Brazos to be "a rather broad creek with a rocky bed" in 1849.

Rye. Most accounts of this small community in the Robert Henry grant along the Little Brazos River credit a rye crop planted by Henry in 1829 as the source of its name (Bryan Eagle, 10 July 1937, 3); however, it is quite possible that the abundance of wild rye in the area, described by Dewees (1852, 27) in 1822 as surpassing "the common rye field in beauty, much larger and thicker", may also have served as an inspiration for the name.

Saline Creek. Richard Carter's grant was described as barring this branch of the Navasota in 1831 (EFN, 8/246). A diagram of the Robert Matthews grant (EFN, 1831, 1/63) shows the creek flowing near a salt flat, also known as a saline, thus giving the stream its name. Saline Creek, which was also called Carter's Creek (\*) and Saline-or Carter's Creek (\*), was used in land descriptions as late as 1858 (BCTR).

Saline-or Carter's Creek. Two county abstract maps (Stremme, 1867; Walsh, 1879) and two state maps (Pressler, 1867; Pressler and Langermann, 1879) show this combination of the two names which were used simultaneously for the same stream. Carter's Creek probably became the dominant name for the creek by 1860 in local usage but the use of Saline Creek in many county land records necessitated the use of this name combination.

San Antonio Crossing. The crossing of the San Antonio Road on the Navasota River was mentioned in a report of the jury of review for the road from Bryan Station to the Navasota River "at or near the old San Antonio crossing" (BCCCM, 1868, A198). Local usage of the name was almost certainly much earlier than 1868 as the San Antonio Road (\*) was a well known feature. The crossing was also spelled as the "St. Antonio Crossing" (BCCCM, 1868, A198).

San Antonio Road. This old Spanish road, which serves as much of Brazos County's northern boundary, was probably opened in 1795 to facilitate the movement of troops and mail from San Antonio to Nacogdoches as a deterrent to westward expansion by American settlers (Williams, 1979, 144). Dewees (1852, 23) reported in 1822 that he had camped "at the crossing of the old San Antonio road". Many of the original land grants were oriented to the road in the same fashion as those oriented to the Brazos and Navasota Rivers; some land descriptions in the tax rolls, when asked what stream they were on, actually listed the San Antonio Road. Forms of the name include St. Antone Road (EFN, 1829, 9/29; BCCCM, 1846, A516), St. Antonio Road (BCDR, 1842, B95), and Sanantonio Road (BCDR, 1844, B142).

Sandy Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this tributary of the Navasota heading in the J. E. Phelps grant and flowing eastward to its mouth in the J. K. Davis grant; its name refers to the sandiness of the area. The y was dropped in one reference to the creek before 1880 (BCDR, 1844, B142) although Sand Creek is the more usual form of the name today.

Seale's Neighborhood. An early name for the community between Sandy Creek and Cedar Creek which was also known as Cedar Creek community and Tryon (\*) (Bryan Eagle, 24 June 1962, "Centennial Section", 18). Eli and Joshua Seale were two of the earliest settlers in the area (Stribling, 1978, 2).

Settlement Crossing. The reviewer's report of the Boonville to Wickson's Crossing Road noted that it crossed Wickson's Creek at a point below the Settlement crossing (BCCCM, 1851, A1). An unidentified settlement in the area, or the use of the crossing by a road to that settlement, probably caused the naming of this crossing which was on or near the Archibald McLaughlin grant.

Short Crossing. A petition for a new road from Bryan to the Navasota River noted that it would cross Wickson's Creek at the Short Crossing northeast of Bryan (BCCCM, 1877, B243). R. T. Short sold land in the Francis Henderson grant in 1874 (BCDR, P199) and the crossing was most likely named for him.

Skull Prairie. A road from Bryan to this prairie along the northwest line of the T. J. Wooten (Wooten) League was built in 1879 (BCCCM, C90). Its name possibly refers to a skull, human or animal, which was found in the grasslands.

Smith's Ferry. This ferry near Haxey's Rock (\*) was named as the terminus of a road from Millican in 1876 (BCCCM, B190). The exact identity of its operator was not found but was quite possibly P. R. Smith who was recorded as having made many land transactions in the area.

Spring Branch. Elliot Millican gave land in his grant to the Methodist Episcopal Church which was described as beginning at "a hickory tree on the north side of Spring Branch" (BCDR, 1842, B45). The stream was most likely a branch of Big Creek and its name refers to its source.

Spring Creek. A branch of Lick Creek which was named as the northern boundary of justice precinct one in 1846 (BCCCM, A516). The creek may have had its source at a spring but it is most likely that the name refers to Boiling Spring which is very near the stream's mouth. A diagram of the Wellborn's Station area shows the creek in the same location as the southern Peach Creek (SLR, 1868a).

Spring Peach Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this creek in eastern Brazos County as a branch of Carter's Creek which entered it very near its mouth. The stream is shown in the same approximate location as Lick Creek and its tributary Spring Creek; however, the two are not branches of Carter's Creek and the fact that they are shown as such indicates the great difficulty the early settlers had in mapping the county area and its many streams. Peach Creek, which flows south of Spring Creek, was probably confused with this creek and the two were shown as one stream. Peach Creek was shown as Spring Creek in a diagram of the Wellborn's Station area (SLR, 1868a) indicating that confusion of the two streams was not uncommon.

Stacy's Ferry. A new road was built to this ferry on the Navasota River in 1877 (BCCCM, B211). Its operator was probably William W. Stacy who bought land in the B. and H. Whitesides League in 1874 (BCDR, P258).

Stagger's Point. The earliest name of the community straddling the Brazos-Robertson County line which eventually became Benchley (\*). Its name means Striver's Point in the Irish dialect of its settlers and was probably given as a measure of the hardships that they had to endure to reach and settle their new home (Galloway, 1973, 3).

State Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas. A more official form of the A. & M. College (\*) which was the site of the College Station (\*) post office (SLR, 1877).

Steele's Store (community). Henry B. Steele secured a post office for his store in Mudville (\*) which was described as serving a population of 200, three-fourths of which were colored (SLR, 1877a). Pressler and Langermann (1879) showed Steele's Store P. O. on their map of the state and the name seems to have been used as a synonym for the Mudville Community.

Steep Hollow (community). A community in the Richardson Perry League which derived its name from the creek of the same name. It was mentioned as the site of a grange hall in a record of the Jones Ferry-Mitchell's Ferry Road (BCCCM, 1879, C105).

Steep Hollow Creek. This branch of Wickson's Creek was named for the hollow with steep banks it ran through; the name was probably first applied in early 1870's (Bryan Eagle, 10 September 1957, 3).



String Prairie. The Bryan and McLean's Bridge road crossed this prairie northeast of Wickson Creek in the vicinity of the Francis Henderson and E. Seale grants in 1868 (BCCCM, A221). This was probably a reference to the larger String Prairie which stretched from Bastrop County to Madison County (Webb, 1952, vol. 2, 679). Its name was most likely derived from the prairie being long and narrow.

Sulphur Springs. A synonym for Boiling Springs (\*) on the Navasota River which was the proposed terminus of a road from Millican in 1874 (BCCCM, B79). Kennedy (1841, 59) described the spring as being highly charged with sulphuretted hydrogen.

Sutherland Creek. Land in the Walter Sutherland grant was described as being on Sutherland Creek in 1845 (BCDR, B133). The Willis Millican grant was listed as being on this creek in 1854 (BCTR) but was described as being on Frank's Creek in 1857 (BCTR) and it is quite possible that both names were used for the same stream.

Sweat Settlement. Road precinct nine's boundaries were drawn to include this settlement in 1854 (BCCCM, A576). Levi Sweat owned land northeast of Boonville in the Eli Seale grant (BCTR, 1854).

Tenoxtitlan. A detachment of the Alamo Presidial Company was ordered on 24 April 1830 to march under the command of Colonel Francisco Ruiz to the crossing of the San Antonio Road on the Brazos River and establish a fortification which would strengthen the position of the Mexican government in the area and act as a deterrent to Anglo-American colonization (McLean, 1976, vol. 3, 511). Ruiz arrived at the crossing in mid-July 1830 and located his camp below the San

Antonio Road on the east bank of the Brazos River in the William Mathis grant (McLean, 1977, vol. 4, 275). The encampment was named Tenoxtitlan for the old Aztec capital of Mexico, now Mexico City, on July 16, 1830 under orders from the principal commandant of Texas, Antonio Elosua (McLean, 1977, vol. 4, 270). Ruiz's men remained at the post until October of 1830 when they moved to the permanent site of *Fort Tenoxtitlan* on the west bank of the Brazos River (McLean, 1979, vol. 5, 125).

Thompson Creek. Catlette (1841) showed this branch of the Brazos River in the northwest corner of the county; it was named for Alexander Thompson who had arrived in the area as part of the Tennessee (Robertson's) Colony in the early 1830's (Efron, 1878, 238). Spelling and form variations include the addition of the possessive 's (Catlette, 1841) and Thomson Creek (BCTR, 1849).

Thompson Creek (community). James Henry gave land along Thompson Creek for the establishment of Thompson Creek Baptist church, school, and cemetery around 1875 and the community took its name from these institutions (Schultz, 1973, 12-14).

Thompson Creek Bottom. Road precinct ten was charged with the upkeep of the road from Clayton's Landing to the low lying land along Thompson Creek (BCCCM, 1852, A553).

Timmins Crossing. Another name for the crossing of the San Antonio Road on the Navasota River which was to be the terminus of a road from Graveyard Hill in 1849 (BCCCM, A530). The crossing's name is a misspelling of the surname of Jeremiah Tinnan, who owned land on the west bank of the Navasota River along the northside of the San Antonio Road.

Tryon. Families in the area which had earlier been known as Seale's Neighborhood (\*) established a Baptist Church on August 1, 1857, and named it in honor of William M. Tryon, an early Baptist circuit rider and veteran of the Texas Revolution, who had died in 1847 (Schultz, 1973, 38). The community around the church assumed the name of the church.

Tryon School House. Justice court in precinct three was held at this school house in the Tryon community in 1877 (BCCCM, B279).

Turkey Creek. A diagram of the John H. Jones grant showed this tributary of the Brazos River flowing along its northwestern boundary (EFN, 1832, 1/91). Turkeys were once abundant in the county area (Ragsdale, 1976, 5).

Walker Neighborhood. Petitioners requested in 1859 that a new road from Boonville to Wheelock be built through the Walker Neighborhood. The jury of review's report stated that the road was laid out "commencing at the Masonic Hall in Boonville, thence in a direct line to H. R. Henry's residence, thence in a direct line to Wheelock, stopping at the San Antonio Road" (BCCCM, 1859, A31). John and James Walker, who were on the road's jury of review, owned land in the George W. Singleton and Abner Lee, Jr., grants and H. R. Henry owned land in the Marcus L. Fulton grant (BCTR, 1859). Walker Neighborhood may have been used as synonym for the Alexander community.

Walker Settlement. A list of public roads in the county included a road from Bryan to the Robertson County line by way of Walker's Settlement (BCCCM, 1875, B123). It is possible that Walker's Neighborhood (\*) and Walker's Settlement were the same community; however, Ragsdale (1976, 22) reports that blacks could not be buried in the

Alexander Cemetery for many years so they were buried in the Walker Settlement Cemetery making it quite feasible that Walker's Settlement was a black neighborhood and Walker's Neighborhood was a white community. The generic term settlement often denoted areas in the South which were "reserved" for the use of Negroes (DA, 1500).

Weddington Post Office. Robert L. Weddington operated a post office, probably in his home in the Maria Kegan grant, from March 5 to May 21, 1878 (U. S. Post Office Department). Pressler and Langermann (1879) showed the post office on the road to Iola, Grimes County, about two miles east of Boonville.

Wellborn. Stremme (1867) showed this community in the southeast corner of the A. McMahon grant along the tracks of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad. Two stories have emerged to explain the name's origin, the first citing a well at a railroad construction camp (Historical Assessment for the Brazos Valley, 1977, 31) and the second a man named E. W. Wellborn (Webb, 1952, vol. 2, 877). The most probable origin of the name is the second, as a W. W. Wilburn owned land in the nearby Crawford Burnett grant (BCTR, 1867) and an earlier name for the community was Wellborn's Station (\*), indicating a sense of possession. Spelling variations included Welburn (Stremme, 1867; Walsh, 1879) and Wellbourn (BCCCM, 1874, B90).

Wellborn's Station. The Wellborn community (\*) was often called Wellborn's Station, a reference to its location on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad; the first use of the name was found in a report on the location of its post office (SLR, 1868a). Many subsequent references dropped the possessive, while others spelled the specific element Wilborne (BCCCM, 1873, A390), Wellborne (BCCCM, 1873, A393),

and Wilburn (Weekly Bryan Appeal, 9 January 1874, 2).

Wesson. A small farming community about six miles northeast of Bryan which received its name from a church organized by J. M. Wesson, a Methodist circuit preacher, in 1869 (Schultz, 1973, 27).

Wheelock Prairie. The Bryan and Wheelock Road was changed near the edge of Wheelock Prairie so that it would follow the Allcorn League line to the old San Antonio Road (BCCCM, C137, 1880). Wheelock community, for which the prairie was named, is in Robertston County about two miles north of the Brazos County line.

White's Creek. A diagram of the Stephen Jones grant showed this tributary of the Brazos flowing through Jones land from the James White Survey (EFN, 1831, 1/102). White apparently never patented the land surveyed for him, as Catlette (1841) shows the creek but not the grant. The naming of the creek points to the urgency of naming and organizing the landscape.

Wickson Crossing. This crossing of the Navasota River was named as the terminus of a road from Boonville in 1857 (BCCCM, A1). It was located on the Eli Wickson grant along the Navasota River.

Wickson's Creek. Catlette showed this tributary of the Navasota River flowing through the Dyrum Wickson grant in his 1841 abstract map. Some maps showed the lower extremity of this creek as Brushy Creek (Stremme, 1867; Walsh, 1879), which is actually a tributary of Wickson's Creek. Spelling variations of the longest creek in the county include the deletion of the possessive, Wixson Creek (BCCCM, 1846, A514) and Wixon Creek (BCCCM, 1876, B168).

Wiley Reed's Hollow. A report of the road from Bryan to Long Bridge noted that it would cross at "the head of Wiley Reed's hollow" in 1872

(BCCCM, A332). Reed's land was just north of the town of Bryan.

Wilkerson and Crook Store. James Wilkerson (Wilkinson) and J. R. Crook operated a store in the William Mathis League which was named as the election site for precinct five in 1873 and described as being in the Brazos Bottom (BCCCM, A387). The store was also called the Crook and Wilkerson Store.

Willow Branch. Precinct one of the Bryan and Long Bridge Road included the area between Willow Branch and Bee Creek in 1880 (BCCCM, C121). The stream is probably a branch of Little Cedar Creek and was named for vegetation common to the area.

Wixon. Settlers along Wickson's Creek five miles northeast of Bryan established Wixon as a farming community and gave it a spelling which would distinguish it from the name of the Creek. The community probably had its beginnings before 1873, when Reverend J. H. Mitchell donated 12 acres of land for the Wixon School and Wixon Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Schultz, 1973, 25).

Wixon Bridge. The Bryan and New Bridge Road crossed Wickson Creek at this bridge in 1876 (BCCCM, B168). Its name may be a misspelling of the creek but it is more likely that it was named for its proximity of the Wixon community (\*).

Wolf Pen Branch. William C. Boyles was granted the authority to change the Boonville to Fuqua's Ferry Road from north of Carter's Blacksmith Shop to the Wolf Pen Branch (BCCCM, 1851, A542). It is a branch of Carter's Creek with its head just southeast of College Station. The branch was probably used to trap wolves or was the site of such a trap.

Woodville. A change in the road from Bryan to Woodville, about three miles north of Bryan, was proposed in 1872 (BCCCM, A334); the first mention of the community was found in 1871 (BCDR, M178). T. L. Wood bought land in the northeastern corner of the Stephen F. Austin League in 1867 (BCDR, H280) and began selling land later that year in what became known as Woodville (BCDR, H595).

Zimmerman's Schoolhouse. Justice court was moved to Tryon Schoolhouse from Zimmerman's Schoolhouse in 1877 (BCCCM, B279). The schoolhouse was the first in the Tryon area and was on Reverend J. M. Zimmerman's place (Bryan News, 27 March 1940, 2). Zimmerman owned land in the J. W. Stewart and J. Seale grants (BCTR, 1871).

Generic Terms

Addition. "An area near a city, town, or village, more recently laid out into lots, streets, etc., as an extension of the residential section" (DA, 7). Mencken (1963, 135) reports that the use of the term in the sense of a suburb dates from the days of the American Revolution. Hall's (\*), Phillip's (\*), and Mitchell's (\*) Additions were extensions of the original Bryan city limits which came into being during the town's initial boom after the arrival of the railroad in 1866.

Alligator hole. "The nest or hibernating place of alligators" (DA, 21); Phelan (1976, 183) notes that alligators once ranged as far north as Waco, or over 70 miles north of Brazos County. A report of the Bryan to McKee's Bridge Road noted that it crossed Carter's Creek "some two or three hundred yards above the Alligator hole" (BCCCM, 1869, A240).

Bank(s). "The shelving or sloping margin of a river or stream; the ground bordering upon a river" (OED, vol. 1, 653). A survey of the John H. Jones League noted that it began at the "upper corner of a league surveyed for James White on the East bank of the Brazos" (EFN, 1832, 1/102). Francisco Ruiz's survey ran "down the bank of the Brazos" (EFN, 1833, X/9). Bank(s) was also used to denote a point of high water; for example, two sets for rates were allowed for McGahey's Ferry, one for "when the stream is within its banks" and the other for "when the stream is out of its banks" (BCCCM, 1845, A513).

Beat. "A chiefly southern term for an election precinct" (DA, 95); use of the term in the county predates the DA's earliest example by a



year. In November of 1841 petitioners requested that three post offices be established in the county, including "one in the upper, and one in the lower Beat of said [Navasota] County" (Memorials and Petitions, 2-9/127). Beats were redrawn in Brazos County in 1846 for the purpose of electing Justices of the Peace in 1846; for example, records noted a "Second Beat commencing at the mouth of Spring Creek and running up the Navasota to Allcorn's Creek thence up said creek to the head to intersect the St. Antone Road and down the St. Antone Road to the Brazos River, this shall comprise the second beat" (BCCCM, 1846, A516).

Bed. "The channel of a river or stream" (DA, 750). Arriving at the crossing of the San Antonio Road at the Brazos River in 1849, Roemer (1935, 187) found the Brazos River to be "confined to a narrow bed by high banks" and the Little Brazos "a shallow but rather broad creek with a rocky bed". Field notes of a survey in the Thomas Bowman grant noted that a "stake set in the bed of the creek" had been used (BCDR, 1842, B47).

Bluff. "A steep river bank or shore, or the top of such a bank" (DA, 147). The DA notes that the term is generally Southern and the earliest examples it gives are from South Carolina and Georgia. Mencken (1963, 139) reports that the term was borrowed from a Dutch adjective to describe ships' bows which were blunt and nearly vertical and was made a noun in the Savannah Valley in the 17th Century; the term had begun its spread west by the 19th Century. The generic was included as part of the specific names Prewitt's Bluff (BCCCM, 1846, A515) and Jones Bluff (BCCCM, 1849, A534). A description of land for sale in the Davidson grant noted that it included "that noted point called

McKinney's Bluff" (DeCordova, 1858, 113).

Bottom(s). "Level land, usually fertile and cultivable, on the margin of rivers and creeks" (DA, 169). Bottoms is a very common term in the South and South Midland for the low-lying land along watercourses (Kurath, 1949, 61). Dewees (1852, 27) reported in 1822 that "the bottom of the Brazos is very wide and level". Bonne11 (1840, 42) described the Navasota as having "very extensive timbered bottoms upon the river". The Bottoms was often used as a synonym for Brazos Bottoms (BCCCM, 1847, A517). There seems to have been no difference made between the use of the plural bottoms and the singular bottom, as in "the Navasota Bottoms" (BCCCM, 1845, A513) but "the Ferril branch bottom" (BCCCM, 1852, A550).

Bottom Land. "Level, low-lying land along a stream" (DA, 169). Kurath (1949, 61) noted that bottom land was most common in the North Midland, or the area described in this study as the Border Upper South. Efron (1878, 246) described the lower part of Brazos County, "that which lies at the junction of the Brazos and Navasota Rivers... as a large area of bottom land of the first quality". She described the entire county as containing "one-fifth creek and river bottom lands" (1878, 246). An 1880 report on the state of the cotton industry in Brazos County found that "the bottom lands of the rivers, and especially of the Brazos, are broad, and well timbered with a growth of ash, pecan, elm, cottonwood, pin oak, hackberry, etc." (U. S. Census Office, 1884, 746).

Bottom prairie. "A low lying prairie, not much elevated above neighboring streams" (DA, 169). The boundary survey for the Richardson Perry

grant noted that it "entered a small bottom prairie after turning southeast for 4010 varas" (EFN, 1835 8/284); the bottom prairie was probably along Wickson's Creek.

Branch. "A small stream, a brook or run" (DA, 179). Branch is a general Southern word (Atwood, 1962, 39) which Kurath (1949, 40) describes as being the usual designation for the tributary of a creek or river as far north as the Kanawha Valley in West Virginia. The Robert Matthews grant was located "on a branch of the Navasota known by the name of Boiling Spring branch" (EFN, 1831, 1/63) and the Thomas Caruthers survey began "on the waters of Saline Creek, a branch of the Navasota" (EFN, 1831, 8/38). Branch and creek were at times interchangeable, as in the case of Bee Branch and Bee Creek being used to describe the same body of water (BCCCM, 1848, A519; A521). Branch was also used as a general reference to a small body of water, as in "to a branch half a mile below Bee Branch" (BCCCM, 1848, A519).

Bridge. "A structure of stone, wood, or metal, serving as a means of crossing a stream, river, ravine, or similar obstruction to the passage of persons or vehicles (DAE, 315). The period immediately after the Civil War was one in which many bridges were built over the various streams of the county, most of the early bridges being toll bridges (\*). Ephraim Fuqua reported "the building of a bridge, approved by the Police Court of Grimes County, over the Navasota River near Fuqua's Ferry (BCCCM, 1867, A195).

Brook. "A small stream, a branch" (DAE, 393). Brook is a Northern word, with little frequency in Texas (Atwood, 1962, 81). Roemer (1935,188) found in 1849 that "a small brook had cut into the diluvian gravel

and sand" about two miles north of Boonville. Its use here is explained by the fact that Roemer was German and the translation of his notes was probably by one not native to the area.

Camp. "A group of buildings or temporary structures erected as living quarters" (DA, 250). The term was contained in the name of Camp Speight (\*), a staging area for troops bound for service in the Confederate Army.

Capital. "The city or town chosen as the official seat of government of the country, a state, county, etc." (DAE, 418); the DAE's first example of capital as a synonym for county seat was 20 years after the example below. Hunt and Randel's (1845, 52) list of the major towns of Texas included "Boonville, p.v. [postal village] and capital Brazos County".

Causeway. "A somewhat elevated road through a marsh, swamp, etc." (DAE, I. 459). P. M. Brown was ordered "to build a causeway across Thompson Creek Bottom" on the road from Bryan to Moseley's Ferry in 1871 (BCCCM, A328) which, when completed, was 665½ yards long (BCCCM, 1872, A349).

Channel. "The bed in which a river runs; the deep part of a stream, estuary, or other stretch of water; a (natural or artificial) water-course or waterway" (DAE, 468). A survey of land in the Thomas Bowman grant went "down the mid-channel" of a creek (BCDR, 1842, B48) and a later survey was described as going down the creek with its channel, (BCDR, 1845, B171). Moseley's Ferry Road commenced "at Boonville, ending at the Middle of the channel in Thompson's Creek" (BCCCM, 1858, A17).

Chapel. "A place of worship, usually of small size, and belonging to a particular religious denomination" (DAE, 469). Chapels were often the focus of small rural settlements in Brazos County; Rector's Chapel (BCCCM, 1873, A387) was the focus of one such community.

Church. "A building in which religious services are regularly held" (DA, I, 325). Churches were often important centers of activity in the county's rural communities. Bethel Church, for example, was named as an election site in 1876 (BCCCM, B149).

City. "A grandiose or anticipatory designation for a mere hamlet or village" (DA, 332); the DA also points out that the use of the generic city was common in 18th and 19th Century America. An election was held in 1866 "for the purpose of removing the seat of justice of said County from the town of Boonville to Bryan City" (BCCCM, A163); prisoners were removed from Millican to Bryan City in 1867 (BCCCM, A190). Further use of the term was found only rarely in references to Bryan and none were found after 1870.

Community. "A body of men living in the same locality" (OED, vol.2, 702). Community was used as a synonym for neighborhood (\*) in references to the imprecisely defined areas known as Millican Community (\*) and Providence Community (\*).

Country. "A state, region, or district" (DAE, 646). The term was used in the county as a general reference to a loosely defined area. Dewees (1852, 25) claimed the area would "prove a good stock country, for the prairies are teeming with wild horses and cattle"; another reference to the plentiful honey of the area by Dewees noted that "one might almost give this country the same description as was anciently given of Canaan, 'a land of milk and honey'."

County. "The largest division of a colony or state for purposes of local government" (DA, 413). County was used both in the legal names of the study area, Navasota County (\*) and Brazos County (\*), and in two nicknames for the area, Cow County (\*) and Hog County (\*).

County Road. A term "designating roads maintained by a county" (DA, 414). One of the earliest functions of the county commissioners was the designation of roads which would be maintained at county expense. In July, 1845, it was reported that "the upper road as opened by A. McGahey is the best and most practicable.... and said upper road established as the county road" (BCCCM, A515).

County seat. "A town in which the administrative offices and buildings of a county are located " (DA, 415). Brazos County has had two county seats, Boonville from 1841 to 1866 and Bryan 1866 to present. Earliest use of the term in the county was found in a petition to the congress of the Republic of Texas which requested that post offices be established in Navasota County, including "one at the county seat" (Memorials and Petitions, Nov. 25, 1841, 2-9/127).

County site. A synonym for county seat (\*) first used in 1828 (DA, 415). The act which created Navasota County ordered that "the county site of said county of Navasota, when located, shall be known and called by the name of Boonville" (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 552).

Creek. "A stream larger than a brook but smaller than a river, originally a tributary to a large stream or body of water" (DA, 432). Atwood (1962, 39) notes that the term is quite commonly used in Texas to designate something larger than a branch but smaller than a river. Creek is the common term for a small stream south of, and including, Pennsylvania and West Virginia (Kurath, 1949, 61). Its earliest

usage in the county was as part of specific names, such as Hope's Creek (\*) and Cedar Creek (\*) in 1824, although later references did use the generic separately.

Crossing. "A place where a river or other body of water is crossed" (DA, 440). Dewees (1852, 23) wrote in 1822 that he was "encamped at the crossing of the old San Antonio road" on the Brazos River. Most references to crossings were as part of a specifically named location, as in Ferguson's Crossing and Joseph Lyon's Crossing on the Navasota (BCCCM, 1852, A549).

Crossroads. "The place where two roads cross" (DAE, 686). Crossroads was included as part of the specific name Millican Crossroads, a stage stop at the intersection of two major roads, as early as 1845 (Marshall, 1937, 68).

Culvert. "An anchored or covered waterway passing under a road, railroad, etc." (DAE, 696). The Bryan to Woodville Road was to cross the Houston and Texas Central Railroad "near the culvert at Wicken's Shop (BCCCM, 1872, A334).

Drain. "A small stream or branch" (DA, 517). The boundary of a grant of land from Elliott Millican to the Methodist Episcopal Church was described as running "eighty six and a half rods to a stake in small drain" (BCDR, 1842, B46).

Dry Creek. "The bed of a stream which runs only after a rain; an arroyo" (DAE, 836); many of the waterways in Brazos County only contain water after precipitation or after a particularly wet season. A boundary description of land in the Walter Sutherland grant noted that it ran to "Gideon Walker's line thence with said line South to a dry creek" (BCDR, 1844, B78).

Enclosure. "A space or area enclosed or fenced in" (DAE, 885). A change in the Prewitt's Bluff road was "to go around Hiram Hanover's enclosure" (BCCCM, 1867, A171) and the Bryan and Mitchell's Bridge Road was to go around the "most southerly corner of Mrs. T. J. Allcorn's present enclosure" (BCCCM, 1880, C165). The term was probably used without consideration for the size of the agricultural area so fenced.

Falls. "A sudden or steep descent in the course of a stream" or "a series or succession of such descents, or one broken up into several parts, a cascade, a rapid, usually plural" (DAE, 922). James H. Evitts was issued a license for the operation of a ferry across the Brazos River "at the foot of the falls of said river" (BCCCM, 1851, A545). Most of the examples found of usages of this generic term were as part of a specific name (Hidalgo Falls, Falls of the Brazos, McKinney Falls), all of which were actually series of descents rather than sudden drops.

Farm. "A tract of land under cultivation or suitable for clearing and cultivating; a homestead of some extent" (DAE, 933). The earliest example found was in a description of the Bryan and McRea's Bridge Road, which ran "on a line leaving S. B. Buchanan farm to the right" (BCCCM, 1873, A367); it is highly probable that the term was used in the county much earlier than 1873.

Farming land. "Land suitable for or used as a farm or farms" (DAE, 936). As the primary pursuit of the majority of Brazos County's early inhabitants was agriculture, and the assessment of land with the potential for the production of agricultural goods was of great concern, it is not surprising that land in the Thomas H. Barron grant



would be described as containing "four labors of farming land and 21 labors of pasture land" (BCDR, 1842, B40).

Ferry. "A place where, and the equipment by which, travelers, vehicles, etc., are transported across a river or other body of water" (DAE, 958). Ferry locations in the county were often important points in the county and it was not unusual for a ferry to be cited as a location after it had gone out of operation; for example, Alexander McGahey applied "to establish a ferry across the Navasota River within 400 yards of Holly Annals old ferry" in 1845 (BCCCM, A513). Later ferry applications often cited their location as being at a point commonly known as someone's ferry.

Field. "A cleared area, usually enclosed for cultivation or pasturage" (DAE, 963). Atwood (1962, 42) found that field was often used in Texas to describe larger areas of cotton cultivation. The route of the Boonville to Wickson's Crossing Road took it on "a direct line to the South corner of Pearson's field (BCCCM, 1857, A1).

Fishpond. "A pond in which fish either accumulate or are kept" (DAE, 996). Pond (and presumably fishpond) had been used as early as 1622 for natural lakes in the eastern United States (Mencken, 1963, 77) but the term was rarely used in Texas except for the easternmost part of the state (Atwood, 1962, 42). A description of the Joseph E. Scott League's boundaries noted that when the boundary "turns northeast it crosses a fishpond at 1410 varas" (EFN, 1831, 8/248). This same fishpond was shown on maps by Pressler (1858), Stremme (1867), and Walsh (1879) as a pool on a branch of Turkey Creek.

Foot. "The bottom, or the lowest place in" (DA, 641). Usage in the county included "thence up the Brazos to the foot of the falls in said river" (BCCCM, 1851, A541) and "thence to the left of the old road to the foot of the hill" (BCCCM, 1868, A202).

Ford. "A place in a river where a man or animal may cross by wading" (DAE, 1036). This term was evidently used interchangeably with crossing in the county. Examples including "thence to the Rocky ford on the Little Brazos" (BCCCM, 1854, A576) and thence " in a straight line to the ford on Thompson's Creek" (BCCCM, 1868, A202).

Fork. "The point of juncture of two or more streams; either or any of of the streams that come together; a tributary of a main stream" (DA, 646); the term had also been applied to the place a road branched by 1789 (Mencken, 1963, 21). Usages of the term for features having to do with water include the description of a boundary which ran "to a stake on the south fork of Carter's Creek" (BCDR, 1842, B33) and land in the John Austin League described as "situated in the fork of the Brazos and Navasota Rivers" (BCDR, 1846, B233). Use of the term for the place a road divides was found in a description of the second precinct of the Washington Road which commenced "in the Middle of Spring Creek" and ended "at the Fork in the Brazos Bottom" (BCCCM, 1858, A14).

Grange. "A cooperative association of farmers known as 'Patrons of Husbandry', organized primarily to bring producers and consumers into direct and friendly relations; a local unit or lodge of this association" (DA, 730); the term was used in Brazos County to designate the building which housed the organization. Henry's Grange was named as an election site in 1876 (BCCCM, B149).

Grange Hall. A synonym for the definition assigned locally to Grange (\*); the DAE (1163) notes that grange is often used attributively with hall. Steep Hollow Grange Hall was near the road from Jones Ferry to Mitchell's Ferry (BCCCM, 1879, C105).

Ground(s). "The surface of the earth, or a part of it; a piece or parcel of land" (OED, vol. 4, 451). A review of a change in the road to Moseley's Ferry noted that it was "on good dry ground" (BCCCM, 1870, A268). The road from Millican to Fuqua's Ferry was "about five miles long upon high ground" (BCCCM, 1872, A350). Use of grounds for a defined piece of land was found in description of the Bryan to Agricultural College Road which ran "to the main entrance to the College grounds" (BCCCM, 1877, B255).

Grove. "A small wood; a group of trees affording shade or forming avenues or walks, occurring naturally or planted for a special purpose" (OED, vol. 4, 461). Atwood (1962, 42) found that the generic was most often used in Texas for a small group of trees which were surrounded by open country. In 1849 Roemer (1935, 187) described the area immediately to the east of the Little Brazos River as "an open prairie alternating with oak groves", a description which would be appropriate for a large part of the county. The Bryan and Evans (or Pitts) Ferry Road ran "to a point or grove of timber" in 1872 (BCCCM, A352) and the name originally suggested for Curd's Prairie Post Office in 1874 was Locust Grove (\*).

Gully (Gulley). "A ravine or small gorge worn by the action of water" (DAE, 1195); the term was commonly used in Texas to describe a stream bed which had been deeply eroded (Atwood, 1962, 40). A survey of land

in the Thomas Bowman grant followed the meanders of a creek to a stake set "immediately below the mouth of a large gully" (BCDR, 1842, B48). The absence of gullies was seen as a desirable trait for land to have; a favorable description of a road noted that it was "on good dry ground with no ravines or gully" (BCCCM,1870,A268). Many of the jury of review reports on road routes made after 1870 mentioned the presence of numerous gullies in the county.

Head. "Being at or helping to form the head or source of a stream; the extreme limit or furthestmost part: (DAE, 1228); the term was applied to three different land forms in the county. First precinct ran "to the mouth of Spring Creek, running up said creek to the head" (BCCCM, 1846, A516); a new road from Boonville to Wickson Crossing ran "to the head of the hollow beyond Pearson's house" (BCCCM, 1857, A1); the Bryan to Wellborn Station Road ran by "the head of a large gully" (BCCCM, 1870, B90).

Headwaters. "Being at or helping to form the head or source of a stream" (DAE, 1228). Property of an early inhabitant was "on the headwaters of Bowman's and Alcorn's Creeks" (BCDR, 1845, B209).

Highway. "A main road for public use" (DAE, 1247). The Bryan to Prewett's Bluff Road was laid out and "designated as a public highway of the first class" in 1867 (BCCCM, A176); it was one of the most important roads in the county.

Hill. "A natural elevation of the earth's surface rising more or less steeply above the surrounding country" (DAE, 1248). First used as part of the specific name Graveyard Hill in 1849 (BCCCM, A529), later uses of this generic term include "hogs are raised at a very small cost, the hills and bottoms affording a fine range " (Texas

Almanac, 1867, 1866, 58) and a description of the Bryan to Pruett's Bluff Road which ran along a creek bank "until it reaches the hill" (BCCCM, 1870, A268).

Hollow. "A valley, ravine, or gap; a round sloping depression in the earth's surface" (DAE, 1262); use of this term from the Upper South was common in the county. The Boonville and Wickson Crossing Road ran by "the head of the hollow beyond Pearson's house" (BCCCM, 1857, A1) and the road from Millican followed the corner of a grant "to where the same crosses the hollow" (BCCCM, 1860, A156). The generic was also included as part of the specific names Steep Hollow (\*) and Wiley Reed's Hollow (\*).

Improvement. "Buildings, fences, clearings, etc., made or put upon land" (DA, 864). A survey line was described as running "east of an improvement known as the Beller improvement" in 1849 (BCDR, 1844, B119) and the Bryan and Mitchell's Bridge Road ran through J. P. Mitchell's land, leaving "said Mitchell's Settlement and improvement on the south of the road" (BCCCM, 1867, A184).

Junction. "The place at which two or more streams join" (DAE, 1356). Junction was most commonly used in Brazos County to describe the meeting point of the county's major water bodies. Land sold by John Williams was "two miles below the junction of the Little and Main Brazos Rivers" (BCDR, 1849, B223) and Justice Precinct One commenced "at the junction of the Navasota and Brazos River" (BCCCM, 1846, A516).

Lake. "An inland body of water" (DAE, 1389). A survey of the Eli Wickson grant mentioned the presence of a tree mark "fronting the lake"

(BCDR, 1845, B76); the lake is probably that which is now called Wickson's Lake.

Land. "Designating a particular state or regions" (DA, 952); also "ground or territory viewed as property, either private or public" (DAE, 1392). Dewees (1852, 24) wrote in 1822 that "the land is very rich and fertile". The Washington road crossed "the west line of Henson Hardy's land" and ran "with the north line of Hardy's land" (BCCCM, 1860, A155). Land was also used in combinations such as farming land (\*) and pasture land (\*).

Landing. "A place for discharging passengers or goods from a boat" (DAE, 1395); use of the term in the county also reflected the loading of said boats. Several landings were referenced after 1850 when steam navigation above Hidalgo Falls became practicable. A new road was "to be laid off and established a county Road from Charles Clayton's Landing on the Brazos River" in 1852 (BCCCM, A550). Other landings along the Brazos included Cole's, Moseley's, and Munson's.

Lane. "A narrow road or street" (DAE, 1398). A petition was made to change the Bryan and Davis Ferry Road "from the mouth of the lane between Haneman's and C. F. Moore's" in 1874 (BCCCM, B58). The generic was used primarily in the areas of the county which were more densely settled.

Lick Branch. No definition of this exact term was found, although the DA defines lick as a synonym for salt lick (971) and branch as a small stream (179). A survey of the Robert Matthew grant reported that its boundary "crosses a lick branch" (EFN, 1831, 1/63). The uniqueness of this landform eventually led to its being used as specific name.

Margin(s). "The space immediately adjacent to a well, a river, or a piece of water" (OED, vol. 6,160); the most usual use of this generic in the county was as a synonym for the bank(s) of a stream. Bonnell (1840, 41) reported that "on the east side of the Little Brazos the prairie and timbered uplands approach to the margin of the stream". Land bought by E. M. Millican was "on the west margins of the Navasota about 1½ miles below the Old San Antonio Road" (BCDR, 1846, B261).

Meander(s). "Sinuous windings of river; turnings to and fro (in its course)" (OED, vol.6,274). Applications of the generic were usually to a river's course, although some exceptions were found in the county. The surveyor of the James Hope grant noted that its boundary went "up the river with the meanders thereof" (EFN, 1824,1/64). Horatio Chriesman mentioned both the meanders of the Brazos River and the meanders of the prairie on its east side in a letter to Stephen F. Austin in 1824 (Barker, 1924-1928, 911). A not uncommon use of the term was to describe the winding path of a road, as in a description of the Thomas W. Blakey grant's northern boundary which "follows meanders of the [San Antonio] road" (EFN, 1832, 7/4).

Mill(s). "A machine or apparatus for grinding grain into meal or flour; a building equipped with such apparatus; places, areas, tracts, etc., situated at or near mills" (DAE, 1520). Mill(s) was included as part of two specific names, both of which were undoubtedly important places in the rural, agricultural, communities around them. Head's Mill was the terminus of a road from Boonville in 1848 (BCCCM,A520) and Payne's Mills was selected as the precinct three election site in 1854 (BCCCM, A574).

Montes. A Spanish term for "wood, forest, a woody place" (Velazquez, 1973, 447). Austin borrowed the term from the Spanish to describe the southern part of what was to become Brazos County in his "Mapa Original de Texas" (1821). The term is an accurate description of the area which is still thickly wooded, particularly in low lying areas along water courses.

Mouth. "The outfall of a river; the entrance to a haven or valley" (OED, VI, 723). Walter Sutherland's survey began "at a post oak just below the mouth of a slu" (EFN, 1823, 1/62). Dewees (1852, 23) reported in 1822 that he had camped "above the mouth of the Little Brazos River". Further applications of the term include the mouth of a gully (BCCCM, 1871, A314) and the mouth of a lane (BCCCM, 1874, B58).

Neighborhood. "A community; a certain number of people who live close together" (OED, vol. 7, 85). In 1843 land was given to the Methodist Episcopal Church "in the neighborhood known as Furguson's Settlement" (BCDR, B91). The generic was also used as part of the specific names Koontz's Neighborhood (\*), Seale's Neighborhood (\*), and Walker Neighborhood (\*). Most applications of the term were to rural communities which had little formal definition.

Neighborhood road. "A road, maintained locally, which passes through or serves a rural neighborhood or community: (DA, 1121). The jury of review for the Bryan and Rocky Ford Road reported that the road was to run "by our old neighborhood road" (BCCCM, 1877, B261). Davis Bridge Road was discontinued in 1877 from "the Navasota River to where the Neighborhood road leading from Bethel Church to Len Hudson's crosses said road" (BCCCM, B278).



Pasture. "A grass covered piece of land used or suitable for grazing; grassland" (DAE, 1692). Matthew Dunn complained that the road from Bryan to Moseley's Ferry ran through a prairie that he had "intended to include in his pasture" (BCCCM, 1867, A191). Another road from Bryan went "to the northwest corner of Robert Hudspeth's pasture in the prairie" (BCCCM, 1868, A198).

Pasture land. "Designating areas used as pasture" (DAE, 1692). Stock-raising was an important livelihood in Brazos County, particularly during its early years, and it is certain that the description of land in the Thomas H. Barron grant which noted it contained "21 labors of pasture land" (BCDR, 1842, B40) was seen as quite favorable.

Patch. "A plot of farm land; a small cultivated field" (DAE, 1692). Atwood (1962,42) reports that in Texas a cotton patch was acreage on a family farm which was used to grow cotton and was smaller than a cotton field. It was fairly common for patches in the county to receive names, often for those who cultivated them (Stribling, 1978, 41). A new road from Bryan to Wickson Crossing passed "on an air-line south of William King's Field to the Martin patch".

Peach brake land. No definition was found for this term; however, the DA defines brake as a synonym for canebrake, "a region overgrown with canes; a thicket of canes" (259) and peach land as "land upon which peach is a native growth" (1213). Peach and cane land was used in Texas as early as 1831 to describe land which was of the best quality (DA, 1213). The Bryan to Pruett's Bluff Road was to be changed so that it ran "on the highest land up the peach brake land along the bank of Sandy Creek" (BCCCM, 1870, A268).

Peach Orchard. "An orchard of peach trees: (DA, 1213). The cultivation of peaches was the most important source of fruit for the inhabitants of the county and it is somewhat surprising that the only mention of a peach orchard was a description of the Long Bridge Road which ran by "the corner of Wiley Reed's peach orchard" (BCCCM, 1872, A357).

Place. "Home or residence, including the land belonging to it. Often preceded by an owner's name" (DAE, 1756). Road precinct 10's boundary ran down Cedar Creek to "the Hardesty place including said Hardesty place" in 1853 (BCCCM, A565). The road from Bryan to Prewett's Bluff ran "by the Sweat Place" in 1867 (BCCCM, A176).

Plantation. "A homestead, farm, or estate" (DA, 1259). An advertisement of land for sale in the Samuel Davidson headright reported that the land would "be divided into tracts suitable for plantations if desired" (DeCordova, 1858, 113). The road crew for road precinct 13, which was charged with the maintenance of the road to Red Top, included the "hands on the Batt's plantation" (BCCCM, 1869, A255). Use of the term probably was based primarily upon the size of the agricultural area referred to.

Point. "The tapering end of a forest or woodland that reaches down into a prairie or surrounding treeless country" (DA, 1270). The Bryan and Evan's Ferry Road ran "to a point or grove of timber" (BCCCM, 1872, A352) and the Bryan and Batt's Ferry Road ran from Turkey Creek "to a point of timber [at the] lower end of Bryan Prairie" (BCCCM, 1877, B222). Point was also used in the opposite sense of the above

definition, i.e., a prairie extending into a woodland. The survey of Elliott Millican's grant reported that its boundary line "entered a point of prairie" in 1832 (EFN, 10/209).

Postal village. A synonym for post village, which was defined as "a village with an independent post office" (DA, 1291). Hunt and Randel (1845, 52) described Boonville as a "postal village and... a place recently settled."

Post Office. "A place or town with a post office" (DA, 1293). These were important locations within the county because they served as the most effective link to the rest of the world. Most examples of the term's use were found as elements of specific names; for example, Road precinct one was ordered to maintain the road leading "from Fuqua's Ferry to Aldridge's Ferry by way of Millican's Post Office" (BCCCM, 1853, A562). Names originally intended to just designate a post office, such as College Station (\*) and Steele's Corner Store (\*), were often applied to the community around the post office.

Prairie. "A level or rolling area of land, destitute of trees, and usually covered with grass" (DA, 1209). This French term for meadowland, which continues to have a wide currency in Texas (Atwood, 1962, 40), was used for the western grasslands of America before the Revolution (Mencken, 1963, 190). Prairie was one of the most frequently used topographic terms in the county and was almost the only term employed for the numerous grasslands found there. Dewees (1852, 25) reported in 1822 that the "prairies are teeming with wild horses and cattle". Many boundary descriptions noted the presence of prairies, such as those of William Millican's, which began "at a post oak in a small

prairie" (EFN, 1824, 1/76), and James C. Whiteside's, whose boundary "ran through the prairie" (EFN, 1824, 1/95).

Boundaries of the prairies were often used as precise locations, as in the descriptions of the roads from Prewitt's Bluff to Wheelock, which ran "to the north edge of the prairie" (BCCCM, 1848, A522), and from Boonville to Wickson Crossing, which ran "in a direct line to the lone trees in the prairie, thence to the road in the far edge of the prairie" (BCCCM, 1857, A1).

Precinct. "An election district" (DA, 1305). County officials were ordered to meet in Boonville "for the purpose of laying off the County of Brazos into convenient precincts for the purpose of electing Justices of the Peace" (BCCCM, 1846, A516). Precinct was also used as a shortened form of public road precinct(\*) and road precinct (\*).

Prong. "A branch or fork of a stream, swamp, road, etc." (DA, 1318). "The west prong of White's Creek runs south" (BCDR, 1846, B243); the Bryan to Centerville Road crossed Wickson's Creek "just below where the two main prongs or branches of said Wickson's Creek unite" (BCCCM, 1868, A198); a road from Bryan to Robertson County ran by "the west prong of Thompson's Creek (BCCCM, 1876, B189).

Public Road Precinct. The more formal form of references to the road precincts (\*) of the county. It was ordered that "the county be laid off into Public Road Precincts" in 1848 (BCCCM, A521).

Railroad. "A track consisting of lines of iron or steel rails for the conveyance of cars drawn by a locomotive" (DAE, 1885). Most references to the Houston and Texas Central called it a railroad

rather than a railway (\*); the first use of the term in connection with the county was a notation that McGahey's Ferry would be the site of the railroad's crossing (Texas Almanac, 1858, 1857, 188). It was common for the generic to be written as two words, Rail Road (BCCCM, 1867, A185).

Railway. A synonym for railroad which was used interchangeably in the United States (DAE, 1888). Pressler and Langermann (1879) showed the Houston and Texas Central Railway running through Brazos County on their map of Texas.

Ranch. "An extensive establishment for grazing cattle, sheep, etc.; often with a prefixed term"(DA, 1355). A road was to be constructed from Rocky Ford to the Old Sheep Ranch of Wesley Jones in 1877 (BCCCM, B243).

Range. "An area of uncultivated ground or wild country over which domestic or wild animals range for food" (DA, 1356). Most of the references to ranges in Brazos County noted their excellence for stockraising. Bonnell (1840, 41) reported that "the bottoms afford...an unbounded range for cattle and hogs, which can be raised with so much ease, and in so great an abundance, that they scarcely cause the farmer a moment's trouble". A description of the county in the 1867 Texas Almanac (1866, 58) announced the raising of hogs "at a very small cost, the hills and the bottoms affording a fine range".

Rapids. "A place in a river where the water descends rapidly but without waterfalls or cascades" (DA, 1358); this was another of the topographic terms which American's borrowed from the French as they moved westward (Mencken, 1963, 665). Strenme (1867) and Walsh (1879) show the point known as Hidalgo Falls (\*) as rapids on their abstract

maps of the county.

Ravine. "A long, hollow, depression, gorge, etc., worn by a stream or torrents" (DAE, 1901). Ravine has been used in Texas for both a stream which is dry and a stream bed which is deeply eroded (Atwood, 1962, 40). A survey along the south line of William C. Sparks grant ran "two hundred and fifty yards to a ravine. Thence down the ravine to Cedar Creek" (BCDR, 1845, B171). Reviewers of a change in the route of the road to Moseley's Ferry found it to be "on good dry ground with no ravines" (BCCCM, 1870, A268).

Ridge. "A long narrow stretch of elevated ground" (DAE, 1946). The report of the jury of review for the road to McLean's Bridge noted that the road's course was on a high ridge all the way from Payne's Prairie to the bridge (BCCCM, 1868, A221). A change in the Pruett's Bluff Road was to run "along the bank of Sandy Creek until it reaches the hill and thence on the ridge" (BCCCM, 1870, A268).

River. "A large stream of water" (DAE, 1954). Only three bodies of water in the county were ever called a river-- the Brazos, the Little Brazos, and the Navasota; occasional references to the Little Brazos and the Navasota, which are much smaller than the Brazos, called them creeks. Dewees (1852, 23) reported in 1822 that he had arrived at the Brazos and was camped "two miles above the mouth of the Little Brazos River". James Hope's boundary went "up the river with the meanders thereof" (EFN, 1824, 1/64).

River bank. "The bank or ground adjacent to a river"(OED, vol.9,721). Road precinct 14, which supervised the maintenance of the Moseley's Ferry Road, was described as "commencing at the Middle of Thompson's Creek and ending at the River Bank at Moseley Ferry" (BCCCM,1858,A17).

Road precinct. "A district in which the maintenance and construction of roads are locally controlled" (DA, 1404). One of the most important aspects of developing a transportation network in Brazos County was the division of the county into districts which were assigned to an overseer and the eligible hands of the area for the purpose of maintaining public roads. The county court ordered "that C. C. Collins be appointed Road overseer in Road precinct No. 6 in the place of William G. Bayne, deceased, and have control of all the hands liable to work on the Road living in said Road precinct" (BCCCM, 1848, A523). Later references to these road districts often shortened the generic to precinct.

Rock. "A large detached mass of stone; a boulder of some size" (DAE, 1960). A new road ran from Millican to "Smith's Ferry near Hoxey's rock" in 1876 (BCCCM, B190). The rock was probably a particularly large part of the sandstone outcrop known as Hidalgo Falls (\*).

Rolling prairie. "Prairie land having an undulating surface" (DA, 1414). Bryan and Davis Ferry Road was described as leaving an older road "at or near rolling prairie" (BCCCM, 1874, A58). Although this was the only example found of this particular generic term, it is an accurate description of much of Brazos County's surface.

Salt Flat. "Areas of a salt or alkaline nature" (DA, 1448). A diagram of the Robert Matthews grant showed a salt flat on either side of a lick branch (EFN, 1831, 1/63). Stremme (1867) showed a salt flat at the head of Lick Creek. Many of the place names given in the immediate area of the salt flat reflect the salinity of the area.

School District. "An area established as the unit for the local administration of schools" (DA, 1741). The commissioner's court ordered in 1867 that the county school districts were to be same as election precincts (BCCCM, A176); this was the first reference found to public control over education in the county.

Schoolhouse (School House). "A building for the use of a school" (DAE, 2036). The schoolhouse was often an important center of community activities in the rural areas of the county. Three schoolhouses--Henry's (\*), Matthew Dunn's (\*), and J. A. Seale's (\*)--were listed as election sites in the county records.

Schoolhouse road. Although no formal definition was found for this place-name generic it was obvious that the inhabitants of the county had distinguished roads which ran to or by a schoolhouse. Road precinct 21 commenced "near William Farquhar's where the schoolhouse road crosses" (BCCCM, 1858, A18).

Seat of Justice. An obsolete term for a county seat (\*) used in the early 19th century (DA, 1484). Five commissioners were appointed on January 30, 1841, "to select a suitable site for the location of the seat of justice of said county [Navasota].... which selection shall be within five miles of the centre of said county as can be ascertained, and upon which the seat of justice shall be located" (Gammel, 1898, vol. 2, 551).

Settlement. "Inhabited or settled areas, or communities, etc." (DA, 1500). Many references to settlements were made in county records and descriptions; the term seems to have been the most commonly used name for a loosely defined concentration of people. The term was used both as a general reference, "the settlement now consists of seven



families; there is no other settlement within fifty miles" (Deweese, 1852, 24), and as part of many specific names--Ferguson's Settlement (\*), Irish Settlement (\*), Lyon's Settlement (\*), etc.

Shoals. "A place, often in a river, where the water is shallow; a sand bar" (DAE, 2101). When travel by steamboat above Hidalgo Falls was begun in earnest in 1850 it was necessary that knowledge of the conditions of the Brazos River be disseminated; therefore, the presence of shoals and rapids was often noted during the next two decades. Shoals was used as part of the specific name Munson's Shoals in 1850 (Purveyer and Winfield, 1976, 67); other shoals identified in the county include Little Brazos Shoals and Moseley's Shoals.

Slu. A spelling variant of slough, "a comparatively narrow stretch of backwater; a sluggish channel or inlet" (DA, 1569). Walter Sutherland's grant on the Brazos River began "at a post oak just below the mouth of a slu" (EFN, 1823, 1/62). Many sloughs are shown on current maps the county, but this was the only reference found to this particular land form during the study period.

Source. "The fountainhead or origin of a river or stream" (OED, vol. 10, 476). Road precinct one boundaries included Spring Creek and ran "up said creek to its source" (BCCCM, 1848, A521).

Spring(s). "A source of water" (DA, 1620). Many references to springs were made in county records and histories because of their importance as a source of water for settlements and, in some cases, because of their medicinal qualities attributed to them. The presence of springs in the county was recorded in a diagram of the Robert Matthews grant (EFN, 1831, 1/63) which showed a spring described by Kennedy (1841,

115) as affording "a large stream of water highly impregnated with sulphur"; the spring was known by the names Sulphur Springs and Boiling Springs. Other springs which were specifically named included Ferguson's Springs and Minter Spring.

Stage Road. "A road over which stages travel" (DA, 1632). Boonville was on an important early stage route which ran on the upland prairies between the Brazos and Navasota Rivers. Road precinct 14 commenced "at the place where the stage road crosses Spring Creek" in 1854 (BCCCM, A576).

Station. "A stopping place" (DA,1643). Station was used in Brazos County for both the exact place trains stopped and the communities which had such places. The generic was included as part of the specific names Bryan Station and Wellborn's Station in 1867 (BCCCM, A183; A185).

Store. "A shop or other place of business where goods are kept for sale" (DA, 1656). Although store generally indicated a large establishment to the Englishman (Mencken, 1963, 344), small shops were often called stores in America, where they were important centers of activities in rural areas of the South. In Brazos County stores such as Steele's Store (\*) and Lawless's Store (\*) were such centers and often served as election sites and post offices for the surrounding communities.

Stream. "A course of water flowing continuously along a bed on the earth, forming a river, rivulet, or brook" (OED, vol. 10, 1097). Most uses of the generic in Brazos County followed the above definition, although there were some deviations. Dewees (1852, 24) described the Brazos River in 1822 as having "the appearance of being a large

navigable stream, Bonnell (1840,42) noted that the Navasota "is a stream which enters the Brazos from the West", and an act setting the rates for McGahey's Ferry on the Navasota noted that "when the stream is out of its banks, rates according to contract" (BCCCM, 1845,513); however, the 1858 Texas Almanac (1857) applied the term to much smaller water bodies when it reported that "the Navasota River flows along its [Brazos County's] eastern boundary swollen by the tribute of many small streams from the county".

Toll Bridge . "A bridge at which a toll is charged for crossing" (DAE, 2331). The earliest bridge building efforts in the county appear to have been inspired by the prospect of financial gain. James M. Floyd and J. B. McLane (McLean) petitioned "to build a toll bridge over the Navasota River about 1½ miles below the Old San Antonio Crossing and for petitioners to own and enjoy the same for a term of 10 years"; the further grant of 300 dollars by the county emphasizes the need felt for such bridges (BCCCM, 1867, A193). A. L. Powers and Israel Filsom (Fulsom) were also granted the right to build a toll bridge at or near Prewett's Bluff (BCCCM, 1867, A195); in both cases, bonds similar to those requested for ferry operators were levied.

Town. "A group of houses and buildings constituting a recognized community" (DAE, 2340). Formal references, such as those found in legal documents, often included the generic term town; for example, road precinct five was to "commence at the town of Boonville" in 1851 (BCCCM, 1851, A539). Town was also included as part of the specific names Freedman Town (\*), Irishtown (\*), and Mitchell's Town (\*).

Town branch. No precise definition for this form of waterway was found, although it is obvious that the term was used to describe a branch which ran through or near a town and was quite possibly used as the community's source of water. The Boonville and Jones Bluff Road ran from Jones Bluff "via William C. Hardy's and John Baker's to the town branch, thence to Boonville" (BCCCM, 1857, A6).

Trace. "A path, trail or road made by the passage of men or animals" (DA, 1755). Road precinct three commenced at Graveyard Hill and ran with the Harris trace to the Navasota" (BCCCM, 1851, A540); the Harris trace was probably one of the earliest paths of travel in the county area.

Uplands. "High ground; an area or piece of high ground" (DAE, 2398); Mencken (1963,5) describes the term as a mid-18th century Americanism which probably would have shocked English purists. Bonne11 (1840, 41) noted that "on the east side of the Little Brazos the prairie and timbered uplands approach to the margin of the stream". The 1867 Texas Almanac (1866, 83) stated that hogs sent to the bottoms in the winter would "return again to the uplands in the spring".

Village. "Generally used to denote a settlement with a minimum population of 300, occupying not more than two square miles" (DA, 1813). Early references to Bryan occasionally called it a village; for example, a letter written in 1866 reported "if we had churches, schools, and good society, Bryan would be a very pleasant little village" (First Baptist Church, 1967, n.p.). The citizens of Bryan filed for the "incorporation of said village to be included within the bounds of and including the town tract proper...and upon satisfactory evidence that said village contains 300 white inhabitants it is thereupon

ordered that an election be held within the said village....for the purpose of submitting the question of 'corporation' or 'no corporation' of the village" (BCCCM, 1867, A173).

Waters. "The banks of a river" (OED, vol. 12, 156). Land given to the Methodist Episcopal Church was "on the waters of the Navisota" (BCDR, 1843, B91) and land in the John Austin grant was "on the waters at Carter's Creek (BCDR, 1846, B233).

Wild rye bottoms. No precise definitions was found for this term in the DA, DAE, or OED, but it is obvious that the generic was used to denote the low lying areas where one found "the wild rye, which is abundant in the bottoms" (Texas Almanac, 1867, 1866, 83). Dewees (1852, 27) noted in 1822 that "there is not in these wild rye bottoms any undergrowth to the timber" and the fields of rye along the Brazos surpassed "the common rye fields in beauty, being much larger and thicker".

Woods. "Wooded areas or tracts" (DA, 1886). The generic term was used as a synonym for the more commonly used timber in an 1822 description of the county area which noted that Dewees (1852, 25) and his party had "been obliged to subsist entirely upon the game which we take in the woods and prairie".

## CHAPTER IV

## ANALYSIS OF THE PLACE-NAMES

Even a cursory examination of the names and terms contained in the place-name directory reveals the presence of certain patterns and trends. The analysis of these patterns and trends is divided, as in the place-name dictionary, into a section for specific place-names and a section for generic terms. Particular attention is paid in the first section to the classification of place-name origins and a comparison of those origins with the types of features named; the second half of the chapter is concerned with the categorization of generic terms used for natural and artificial features. Maps included in this section are useful as an indicator of the location of selected specific names and of the distribution of generic terms.

Specific Place-namesPlace-name Origins

Variations in the physical and cultural characteristics of study areas have prevented the creation of a universally acceptable system for the classification of place-name origins; therefore, a system tailored to the names found in this study was devised. Most of the categories were borrowed from or patterned after those used in earlier studies by Stewart (1954, 1-13), Mencken (1963, 643), and Cassidy (1968, 216-217). Thirteen categories of name origins were found in Brazos County; they are:

1. For an important non-local person
2. For a local person
3. For a distant place
4. For a nearby place or establishment
5. Objective, descriptive, and locational
6. Biblical, inspirational, and symbolic

7. Suggested by local flora
8. Suggested by local fauna
9. Suggested by local geology
10. Spanish
11. Indian
12. Blended names
13. Uncertain and unknown.

Names were included under the category which best described the motive responsible for their naming; a complete list of the names included in both categories appears in Table 11. An explanation of each of the categories follows.

For an important non-local person. Names included here are those which honored a non-resident of the county. The honoree may, or may not, have visited the area.

For a local person. Most of the names here commemorated a local landowner or entrepreneur. Many are what Stewart (1954, 4) would have classified as a possessive name because someone actually owned the place or the belief existed that someone did.

For a distant place. Names which directly commemorate a distant place are included here. The only name of this type found in the study commemorated the former home of its settlers.

For a nearby place or establishment. Many names were created when the specific name of one place, or a generic term used for the feature, was transferred to another nearby place. An illustration of the variety of places involved in the local spreading of specific names is provided (Table 12).

TABLE 11  
 NAMES BY CATEGORY OF ORIGIN

1. For an Important Non-Local Person

Artificial Features

Benchley  
 Benchley Station  
 Bryan  
 Bryan City  
 Bryan Station  
 Camp Speight

Natural Features

2. For a Local Person

Artificial Features

Aldridge's Ferry  
 Annalas Ferry  
 Batts Ferry  
 Boonville  
 Boren's Ferry  
 Chew's Ferry  
 Clark's Ferry  
 Clayton's Landing  
 Cole's Landing  
 Crook and Wilkerson Store  
 Davis Bridge  
 Davis Ferry  
 Evan's Ferry  
 Evitt's Ferry  
 Ferguson's Settlement  
 Fuller's Ferry  
 Fulson's Bridge  
 Fuqua's Ferry  
 Hall's Addition  
 Hall's Town  
 Harvey  
 Henry Grange  
 Henry's School House  
 J. A. Seale's School House  
 Johnson's Ferry  
 Jones Ferry  
 Koontz's Neighborhood  
 Lawless Store  
 Lyon's and Middleton's Settlement

Natural Features

Allcorn's Creek  
 Boon's Creek  
 Bowman's Creek  
 Burton's Creek  
 Carter Crossing  
 Carter's Creek  
 Carter's Spring  
 Cole Crossing  
 Curd's Prairie  
 Doctor's Creek  
 Duffie's Crossing  
 Duncan's Branch  
 Ferguson Ford  
 Ferguson's Crossing  
 Ferguson Springs  
 Ferrels Creek  
 Ferril Branch  
 Fisher Creek  
 Hadley's Crossing  
 Ham Prairie  
 Harris Crossing  
 Haxey's Rock  
 Head's Creek  
 Head Crossing  
 Head's Crossing  
 Higg's Prairie  
 Hope's Creek  
 Howard's Crossing  
 Hudson Creek



Table 11 (continued).

Macy	Jones Bluff
Matthew Dunn's School House	Jones Creek
McGahey's Ferry	Jones Crossing
McKee's Bridge	Joseph Lyon's Crossing
McRee's Bridge	Joshua Seale's Creek
Mickleborough Ferry	Lyon's Creek
Millican	Mathis Branch
Millican Community	McKinney Falls
Millican Crossroads	McKinney's Bluff
Millican Ferry	Millican Falls
Millican Settlement	Moseley's Shoals
Millican's Post Office	Munson's Rapids
Mitchell Addition	Munson's Shoals
Mitchell's Bridge	Payne's Prairie
Mitchell's Ferry	Prendergrast Crossing
Mitchell's Settlement	Prewitt's Bluff
Mitchell's Town	Short Crossing
Mitchellsville	Sutherland Creek
Moseley's Ferry	Thompson Creek
Moseley's Landing	Timmins Crossing
Mottley's Store	White's Creek
Munson's Landing	Wickson Crossing
Murphysboro	Wickson's Creek
Payne's Mills	Wiley Reed's Hollow
Pitt's Bridge	
Pitt's Ferry	
Rector's Chapel	
Riden's Ferry	
Seale's Neighborhood	
Smith's Ferry	
Stacy's Ferry	
Sweat Settlement	
Walker Neighborhood	
Walker Settlement	
Weddington Post Office	
Wellborn	
Wellborn's Station	
Wilkerson and Crook Store	
Woodville	
Zimmerman's Schoolhouse	

### 3. For a Distant Place

#### Artificial Features

Little Georgia

#### Natural Features

Table 11 (continued)

4. For a Nearby Place or Establishment

<u>Artificial Features</u>	<u>Natural Features</u>
Alexander	Boiling Spring Branch
Bethel	Boonvii Crossing
Bravo	Brazos Bottoms
Brazos County	Bryan Prairie
Cedar Creek (community)	Ferril Branch Bottom
College	Graveyard Hill
College Station	Little Brazos Shoals
Curd's Prairie Post Office	Little Cedar Creek
Fuqua's Ferry Toll Bridge	Navasota Bottoms
Ireland	Prewett Bluff Crossing
Minter Spring (community)	San Antonio Crossing
Navasota County	Settlement Crossing
Payne's Prairie (community)	Thompson Creek Bottom
Reliance	Wheelock Prairie
Steele's Store (community)	
Steep Hollow (community)	
Thompson Creek (community)	
Tryon	
Tryon School House	
Wesson	
Wixon	
Wixon Bridge	

5. Objective, Descriptive, and Locational

<u>Artificial Features</u>	<u>Natural Features</u>
A & M College	Big Brazos River
Agricultural and Mechanical College (of Texas)	Big Cedar Creek
Agricultural College	Big Creek
Bryan Bridge Company Bridge	Boiling Spring
Freedman Town	Falls of the Brazos
Irish Settlement (east)	Main Brazos River
Irish Settlement (north)	String Prairie
Irishtown	Sulphur Springs
Iron Bridge	
Long Bridge	
New Bridge	
Old Houston Road	
Old San Antonio Road	
Phillips Addition	
San Antonio Road	
State Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas	

Table 11 (continued)

6. Biblical, Inspirational, and SymbolicArtificial Features

Bethel Church  
 Concord School House  
 New Bethel  
 Providence Community  
 Stagger's Point

Natural Features7. Names Suggested by Local FloraArtificial Features

Cottonwood  
 Locust Grove Post Office  
 Old Cotton Road  
 Red Top  
 Rye

Natural Features

Birch Branch  
 Brushy Creek (east)  
 Brushy Creek (west)  
 Cane Creek  
 Caney Creek  
 Cedar Creek  
 Cotton Wood Prairie  
 Elum Creek  
 Peach Creek (north)  
 Peach Creek (south)  
 Pin Oak Branch  
 Red Top Prairie  
 Willow Branch

8. Names Suggested by Local FaunaArtificial Features

Cow County  
 Hog County

Natural Features

Bear Creek  
 Bee Branch (northwest)  
 Bee Branch (southeast)  
 Bee Creek (northwest)  
 Bee Creek (southeast)  
 Grasshopper Prairie  
 Hog Creek  
 Turkey Creek  
 Wolf Pen Branch

9. Names Suggested by Local GeologyArtificial Features

Mudville  
 Rock Ferry

Natural Features

Clifty Branch  
 Lick Branch  
 Lick Creek  
 Rocky Ford (on the Brazos)

Table 11 (continued)

		Rocky Ford (on the Little Brazos)
		Saline Creek
		Sandy Creek
		Spring Branch
		Spring Creek
		Steep Hollow Creek
	<u>10. Spanish</u>	
<u>Artificial Features</u>		<u>Natural Features</u>
Tenoxtitlan		Brazos River
		Corpus Christi Creek
		Hidalgo Falls
		Little Brazos River
	<u>11. Indian</u>	
<u>Artificial Features</u>		<u>Natural Features</u>
		Navasota Creek
		Navasota River
	<u>12. Blended Names</u>	
<u>Artificial Features</u>		<u>Natural Features</u>
		Saline-or Carter's Creek
		Spring Peach Creek
	<u>13. Uncertain and Unknown</u>	
<u>Artificial Features</u>		<u>Natural Features</u>
Bowie's Ferry		Carter Branch
		Frank's Creek
		Minter Spring(s)
		Skull Prairie

TABLE 12. LOCAL SPREADING OF NAMES

Below is a list of those artificial (man-made) and natural features from which the specific name was transferred from one type of feature to another. Names on the left are the features first named and those on the right are those to which the name was transferred. In parentheses is the number of times the particular form of transfer occurred.

Artificial Feature to Artificial Feature (11)

Church - Community (6)  
 Church - Community - School House (1)  
 Store - Community (1)  
 Community - Bridge (1)  
 Ferry - Toll Bridge (1)  
 District - Settlement (1)

Artificial Feature to Natural Feature (4)

Town - Prairie (2)  
 Town - Crossing (1)  
 Road - Crossing (1)

Natural Feature to Natural Feature (8)

River - Bottoms (2)  
 River - Shoals (1)  
 Creek - Bottoms (1)  
 Creek - Smaller Creek, with modifier (1)  
 Branch - Bottoms (1)  
 Spring - Branch (1)  
 Bluff - Crossing (1)

Natural Feature to Artificial Feature (9)

River - County (2)  
 Prairie - Post Office (1)  
 Prairie - Community (1)  
 Creek - Community (4)  
 Spring - Community (1)

Objective, descriptive and locational. Names of this category are derived from an actual characteristic of the place or its inhabitants. Also included here are names which had adjectives such as old or big added to them; most of these names were an objective description of the place in terms of its history or in reference to another feature incorporating the same specific name.

Biblical, inspirational, and symbolic. Most of the names here referred to some ideal characteristic which the namer wished to have associated with the place or its inhabitants. Biblical names, although often for an actual place which was mentioned in the Bible, are included here because they were generally given to commemorate or promote certain religious values.

Names suggested by local flora. These names were directly attributable to vegetation on or near the feature; names of this sort are often excellent sources of information on the native vegetation of an area.

Names suggested by local fauna. Most of these names recorded animals which were common to the area; however, some may have commemorated an incident when the namer encountered a certain species.

Names suggested by local geology. These names may have been descriptive of the feature but are included here if evidence existed that they more appropriately described the physical features of the area around the feature.

Spanish. All names given as a result of contact with the area by Spanish-speaking peoples are included here.

Indian. Names inherited from the earlier Indian inhabitants of the area are included here.

Blended names. Names here are those which have combined two earlier specific names, either by mistake or on purpose.

Features Named

One of the more interesting aspects of this study has been the examination of the types of names given to artificial and natural features of the landscape (Tables 13 and 14). Names were tabulated under the heading of the generic term included in their name, unless the name contained a generic term transferred from another feature or included no generic term, and then they were placed under the heading which most properly described the feature. Settlements which did not include a generic term were the most common type of name which had to be assigned a category; to prevent an overly subjective decision these names were included under the heading "town".

Names which were given for local persons were by far the most common during the study period. Almost half of the 247 specific names included in this study were named for local persons (the actual number was 121 or 48.99%). If the patterns exhibited for other features are at all predictable, four of the five "unsure or unknown" names are also named for local persons, making the above percentage even higher. The second most common origin of names for both artificial and natural features was nearby places or establishments, which accounted for 14.57 percent of the names given.

When the totals for name categories that were based on a description of the feature or were suggested by local characteristics (flora, fauna, or geology) are added together, the role of the place-name as a preserver of past environments becomes readily apparent. Over one-fourth (25.91%)

TABLE 13. ARTIFICIAL FEATURES BY CATEGORY OF NAME ORIGIN

FEATURE	CATEGORY NUMBER*												TOTAL	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
County				2				2						4
Town	2	10	1	16	2	1	3		1					36
Station	2	1												3
City	1													1
Community		1				1								2
Addition		2			1									3
Settlement		6			2									8
Neighborhood		3												3
(Military) Camp	1									1				2
College					4									4
Ferry		22							1			1		24
Landing		4												4
Bridge		6		1	3									10
Toll Bridge				1										1
Road					3		1							4
Crossroads		1												1
Grange		1												1
Post Office		2		1			1							4
Mills		1												1
Church						2								2
Chapel		1												1
School House		4		1		1								6
Store		4												4
TOTAL	6	69	1	22	15	5	5	2	2	1	0	1		130

\*See Page 137 for Key



KEY TO TABLE 13

Category Number

- 1 For an important non-local person
- 2 For a local person
- 3 For a distant place
- 4 For a nearby place or establishment
- 5 Objectively descriptive and locational
- 6 Biblical, inspirational, and symbolic
- 7 Names suggested by local flora
- 8 Names suggested by local fauna
- 9 Names suggested by local geology
- 10 Spanish
- 11 Indian
- 12 Uncertain and Unknown

TABLE 14. NATURAL FEATURES BY CATEGORY OF NAME ORIGIN

FEATURE	Category Number*										TOTAL	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
River			2				2	1				5
Creek	18	1	2	8	5	5	1	1	1	2		44
Branch	3	1		3	3	3				1		14
Spring(s)	2		2						1			5
Bluff	3											3
Hollow	1											1
Bottom(s)		4										4
Falls	2		1				1					4
Rapids	1											1
Shoals	2	1										3
Prairie	4	2	1	2	1				1			11
Rock	1											1
Hill		1										1
Ford	1					2						3
Crossing	15	4										19
TOTAL	53	14	8	13	9	10	4	2	4	2		119

\*Key to Category Numbers

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 - For a local person                     | 6 - Name suggested by local geology |
| 2 - For a nearby place or establishment    | 7 - Spanish names                   |
| 3 - Objectively descriptive and locational | 8 - Indian names                    |
| 4 - Names suggested by local flora         | 9 - Blended names                   |
| 5 - Names suggested by local fauna         | 10 - Uncertain and unknown          |

of all specific names had their origin in one of these four categories. Natural features were particularly good as preservers of information about the physical landscape encountered by the county's settlers.

Creeks, crossings, and prairies were the most commonly named natural features. Towns, ferries, and settlements accounted for over half (52.34%) of the artificial features named. A large proportion of the other features which received specific names were either associated with watercourses or with the transportation network. Selected features which received specific names are shown in figures two, three, and four.

#### Generic Terms

Analysis of the generic terms used during the study period involves the classification of terms by the type of artificial or natural feature described. For example, names for artificial features are categorized by use for transportation features, settled areas, features of the agricultural landscape, etcetera, while generic terms for natural features are categorized under the broad headings of land forms and water forms. A brief discussion of the application and use of the generic terms is included in each subheading.

#### Terms for Artificial Features

Settled Areas. Terms used for the more densely settled areas include city, postal village, and village; the most common term was town. Only one town, Bryan, had such an expansion of population that it was necessary to have additions to the residential areas. Place, community, settlement, and neighborhood were used to identify rural areas which often had no other means of identification than being close to the home of a prominent settler. Settlements which housed the offices of county govern-

KEY TO FIGURE 2

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Little Cedar Creek  | 18. Spring Creek        |
| 2. Big Cedar Creek     | 19. Peach Creek         |
| 3. Bee Creek           | 20. Doctor's Creek      |
| 4. Ferril Branch       | 21. Jone's Creek        |
| 5. Hog Creek           | 22. Big Creek           |
| 6. Sandy Creek         | 23. Franks Creek        |
| 7. Allcorn Creek       | 24. Clifty Creek        |
| 8. Bowman Creek        | 25. Sutherland Creek    |
| 9. Wickson's Creek     | 26. Hope's Creek        |
| 10. Mathis Branch      | 27. White's Creek       |
| 11. Steep Hollow Creek | 28. Brushy Creek        |
| 12. Brushy Creek       | 29. Turkey Creek        |
| 13. Carter's Creek     | 30. Thompson Creek      |
| 14. Hudson Creek       | 31. Little Brazos River |
| 15. Burton Creek       | 32. Elum Creek          |
| 16. Bee Creek          | 33. Peach Creek         |
| 17. Lick Creek         |                         |



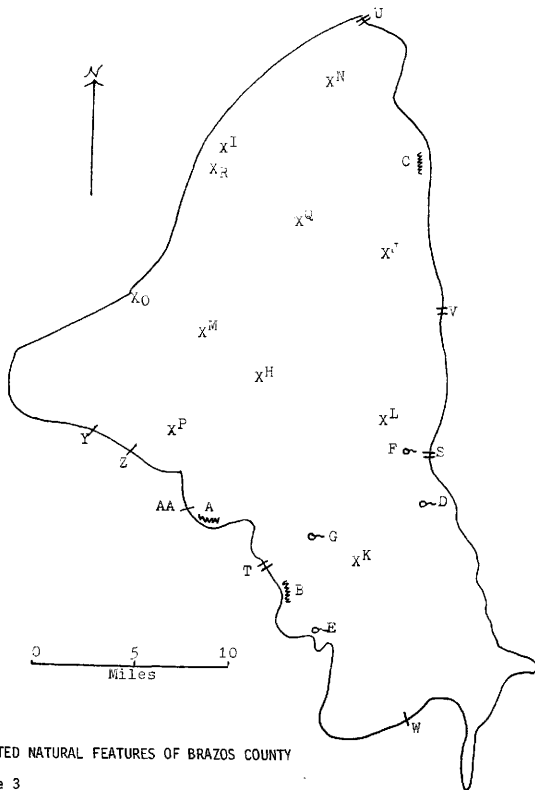
WATER COURSES OF BRAZOS COUNTY

Figure 2

KEY TO FIGURE 3

SELECTED NATURAL FEATURES

<u>FEATURE</u>	<u>LETTER</u>	<u>FEATURE</u>	<u>LETTER</u>
<u>Bluffs</u> ( ^^^ )		<u>Fords and Crossings</u> ( = )	
Jones' Bluff	A	Ferguson Ford	S
McKinney's Bluff	B	Ferguson's Crossing	S
Prewitt's Bluff	C	Rocky Ford (on the Brazos)	T
<u>Springs</u> ( σ )		San Antonio Crossing	U
Boiling Spring	D	Wickson Crossing	V
Carter Spring	E	<u>Falls, Rapids, Shoals</u> ( - )	
Ferguson Spring	F	Falls of the Brazos	W
Minter Spring(s)	G	Hidalgo Falls	W
Sulphur Spring	D	McKinney Falls	Z
<u>Prairies</u> ( x )		Millican Falls	W
Bryan Prairie	H	Moseley's Shoals	Y
Cotton Wood Prairie	I	Munson's Rapids	AA
Curd's Prairie	J	Munson's Shoals	AA
Grasshopper Prairie	K		
Ham Prairie	L		
Higg's Prairie	M		
Payne's Prairie	N		
Red Top Prairie	O		
Skull Prairie	P		
String Prairie	Q		
Wheelock Prairie	R		



SELECTED NATURAL FEATURES OF BRAZOS COUNTY

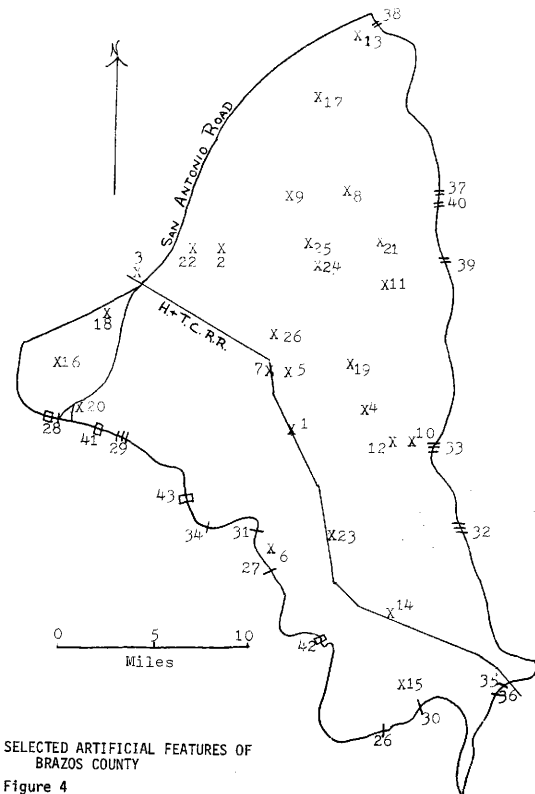
Figure 3

## KEY TO FIGURE 4

SELECTED ARTIFICIAL FEATURES

<u>FEATURE</u>	<u>CODE</u>	<u>FEATURE</u>	<u>CODE</u>
<u>Towns, Settlements, and Communities</u>	(X)	<u>Ferries</u>	(-)
A & M College	1	Aldridge's Ferry	26
Alexander	2	Batt's Ferry	27
Benchley (Station)	3	Boren's Ferry	28
Bethel	4	Evan's Ferry	29
Boonville	5	Evitt's Ferry	30
Bravo	6	Fuller's Ferry	31
Bryan (City/Station)	7	Fuqua's Ferry	32
Cedar Creek	8	Johnson's Ferry	33
College Station	1	Jone's Ferry	34
Cottonwood	9	McGahey's Ferry	35
Ferguson's Settlement	10	Mickleborough Ferry	36
Harvey	4	Millican Ferry	26
Ireland	3	Mitchell's Ferry	33
Irish Settlement (east)	10	Moseley's Ferry	28
Irish Settlement (north)	3	Pitt's Ferry	29
Irishtown	3	Riden's Ferry	31
Little Georgia	11		
Lyon's & Middleton's Settlement	12	<u>Bridges</u>	(=)
Macy	13	Fuison's Bridge	37
Millican	14	Fuqua's Ferry Toll Bridge	32
Millican Community	15	Long Bridge	38
Millican Crossroads	14	McRee's Bridge	39
Millican Settlement	15	Mitchell's Bridge	33
Mudville	16	New Bridge	40
Murphysboro	13	Pitt's Bridge	29
Payne's Prairie	17		
Reliance	11	<u>Landings</u>	(◇)
Rye	18	Clayton's Landing	41
Seale's Neighborhood	8	Cole's Landing	42
Stagger's Point	3	Moseley's Landing	28
Steele's Store	16	Munson's Landing	43
Steep Hollow	19		
Tenoxtitlan	20		
Tryon	21		
Walker Neighborhood	22		
Walker Settlement	22		
Wellborn (Station)	23		
Wesson	24		
Wixon	25		
Woodville	26		





SELECTED ARTIFICIAL FEATURES OF  
BRAZOS COUNTY

Figure 4

ment were called a capital, county seat, county site, or seat of justice. Camp was used to designate an area temporarily settled for military purposes.

Foci of small settlements. Many of the rural communities in Brazos County had a church, chapel, or school house as the center of their activities. The meeting place of a farmer's organization, called a grange or grange hall, also served as a community meeting place. A store or post office, the latter often being housed in the former, provided rural communities with a place to trade, vote, and receive information and news. The mill was an important place to those who grew corn or other grains and the building which housed it was another site of community meetings.

Transportation features. A hierarchy of terms for roadways was used in the county. Trace and lane indicated small paths or roads, neighborhood roads were generally larger but maintained privately in contrast to a county road or highway which was of better quality and maintained by the public. Stage road and schoolhouse road were applied to routes with special functions. Railway and railroad were used interchangeably in the county for the path of a train and the company which operated those trains, although railroad was by far the most common of the two terms; a station was both the place the train stopped and the town in which it stopped. A culvert was the improved crossing of a water body which had been built by the rail line. A ferry was the first man-made way that county citizens had to cross the Brazos and Navasota Rivers and these were numerous until the building of bridges and toll bridges began. The causeway was a necessary improvement on the route of the road running through the marshy area between the Brazos and Little Brazos Rivers.

brought great hope that steamboat travel along the Brazos would become a reality and with that dream came the establishment of several landings along the river.

Governed areas. The study area was by law a major division of the state, a county. Precinct and beat were used to describe divisions of the county which were presided over by a Justice of the Peace; precinct was also applied to election areas and the areas charged with the maintenance of the road running through that particular part of the county. The more formal term for these road maintenance areas was road precinct or public road precinct. School districts were established to increase public control over education.

Features of the agricultural landscape. Areas engaged in some form of cropping activity were called a plantation, farm, field, or patch depending on their size. Stock raising areas of the county were referred to as pastures and a place devoted to their raising was a ranch. Enclosure and improvement were terms designating places which had in some way been modified or altered for agricultural use. Peach orchard was found in only one reference but were undoubtedly common features of the landscape.

#### Terms for Natural Features (Water Forms)

Water courses. Brazos County's surface is cut by many streams and it is not surprising that the county's settlers had a variety of terms with which to identify them; the following terms were found: branch, brook, channel, creek, drain, dry creek, fork, gully, lick branch, prong, ravine, river, stream, and town branch. The most commonly used terms for describing the descending order of streams from larger to smaller was the hierarchy of river, creek, and branch. Bed and channel were also used for the

actual part of the earth over which the streams flowed. Parts of a water course were grouped under the following headings:

1. sources of a stream: head, headwaters, source, spring
2. changes in the course of a stream: meander(s)
3. The point at which two streams meet: fork, junction, mouth
4. Irregularity in the bed of a stream: alligator hole, falls, rapids, rock, shoals.

Head and spring were the most common terms for a stream's source.

Meander(s) had such wide usage for the bends of a river and carried such descriptive power that it was even applied the bends of a road in county records. Mouth was the most frequently used term for the meeting point of two streams, but fork and junction were certainly not rarities. Fork was also extended to the land between the junction of two streams. Alligator hole and rock each had only one example and were evidently seldom used. Falls, rapids, and shoals were often found in the descriptions of the Brazos River's course along the western margins of the county. Falls was often applied to the small sandstone ledges over which the river flowed in the same grandiose way that city was applied to a mere village. Relatively still bodies of water. The presence of this form of water body seems to have held little interest for the settlers of the county as references to them are rare. Fishpond was the only term of this category commonly found and even then it was only applied to the same pool in the course of Thompson Creek. Lake, swamp, and slu (slough) were used in early descriptions of the county but were seldom seen in later references, although current maps of the county note many lakes and sloughs.

#### Terms for Natural Features (Land Forms)

General and indefinite terms. Country, ground(s), and land were used in

general references to the surface of the county which did not need any further qualification or quantification. Land was also used in combinations with other generic or descriptive terms (bottom-, peach brake, farming, etc.) to denote areas with a particular characteristic or potential.

Land features involving water. Land which bordered on a body of water was known as bank(s), margin(s), riverbank, and waters. Bank(s) was the only term used for this feature with any degree of regularity in general references, margin(s) and waters being more common in official documents.

Land forms involving a consideration of height. Low lying areas along the course of a stream were called bottom(s) or bottom land. Foot was used to denote the lowest part of a physical feature, be it a hill or a waterfall. An elevated point at the edge of the river bottoms was a bluff. Hill and ridge were used for elevated points in the interior of the county an area of these elevated points was an uplands; uplands was generally used as a contrast to bottoms in references to the topography of the county. Hollow was a not uncommon term for an area surrounded by elevated areas; it is doubtful that there were any real hollows in the county, just big gullies and ravines, and the term is evidently more a register of settlement from the Upper South than an accurate description of past landscapes. The low level area along Lick Branch was called a salt flat.

Land forms involving a consideration of vegetation. Prairie was almost the only term applied to the many grasslands of the county; rolling prairie and bottom prairie were extensions of the term to particular types of landforms. Wild rye bottoms was used as a synonym for the bottom prairies along the Brazos River which were densely covered with

wild rye grass. Forested areas of the county were known as a grove, montes, woods, or timber. Grove was used most often for a smaller wooded tract in the middle of a prairie while a point signified the extension of trees into the grassland, or of prairie into woodland. Uncultivated areas of the county which were appraised to have a high potential for some form of agriculture were designated farming land, pasture land, peach brake land, and range.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSIONS

The history and geography of Brazos County's settlement period is accurately reflected in the place-names given and used during that era. Each toponym encapsulated a small part of the physical and/or cultural landscape and, when all were fitted together, they provided a recreation of what the settler saw and how he attempted to organize his environment through naming. Names given also reflected characteristics of the namer's cultural heritage and his daily existence. Many conclusions about the process of naming are readily apparent after the examination of the preceding chapters; therefore, the following paragraphs attempt only to highlight the major themes, implications, and conclusions of this study.

One of the most obvious findings of this examination was the faithfulness with which the place-names in the dictionary preserved the characteristics of the physical landscape discussed in Chapter Two. As illustrated in Chapter Four, a majority of the natural features given specific names were either waterforms or landforms associated with water. The number of generic terms for waterforms and man-made or natural features associated with water further emphasized the diversity of these features and provides the reader with an idea of just how many problems they posed as the settlers attempted to transform and organize the landscape.

Several specific names preserved elements of local flora, fauna, and geology, as did many generic terms (alligator hole, wild rye bottoms, etcetera). Features which were specifically named also preserved the physical landscape; for example, the number of prairies receiving specific names accounted for almost ten percent of the natural features named and provides the reader with an idea of the extent of the county's grasslands in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. The above sources were also important in that they had the ability to preserve features both common to the area and unique to a certain location. The dictionary would probably not provide a sufficient base for the recreation of the county's past landscape, such as that done by Waibel (1943), but it does go a long way towards accomplishing that goal.

The place-name dictionary also preserved characteristics of the population and cultural landscape. Chapter Two indicated that most of the county's early settlers were agrarians from the American South who, while having little formal education, were close to the land and knew it well. In accordance with this knowledge, most of the names they placed on the land were not pretentious or made up but were given for a local person or for some feature of the local environment rather than for an ancient city of Rome or Greece. This process of naming was not entirely unexpected as J. Frank Dobie, one of the premier folklorists of Texas, had noted that those

who live next to the soil and for whom the soil has a deep meaning name the features of it as naturally as they name their children. They belong to the earth and the earth belongs to them. For them the soil holds memories, and names are not merely for designation, like the numbers worn by convicts or 222nd Street (1966, 8).



Most exceptions to the above process of naming were names which were biblical or inspirational, as religion was an important part of many settler's lives, or for an important non-local person who had some tie with the area.

Many of the names also served to preserve the relative "virginity" of the Brazos County landscape when settlement was begun in the 1820's. Very few features in the county had been named prior to 1821 and the settlers apparently attributed a great sense of urgency to the process of naming. A good example of this urgency is the naming of White's Creek, which runs through land in the western part of the county originally granted to James White. There is no evidence that White ever settled on the land but the recording of his survey in official state records was apparently sufficient reason for the naming of the creek. Many of the other features of the county, particularly creeks and branches, were named for the first person to settle on or near that feature. This method of naming provided a quick and easy way to add another element of organization to the landscape.

Generic terms used during the study period were very consistent with the cultural heritage of the population. Many generic terms, used separately and as parts of specific names, indicated that settled areas of the county were still rural in nature and were centered around the activities of one or two foci, usually a church, school, or store. The elevation of the above terms from a building to a designator for a specific place, as in the use of Steele's Store for a community name, was common throughout the rural south. Terms applied to water bodies were most usually the typically Southern hierarchy of river-creek-branch. Some generics, such as

the Upper South's hollow, were even able to designate the presence of a specific group of Southerners. Very few terms were found which were not common either in Texas or in the South, reinforcing earlier conclusions that place-name generics are excellent indicators of cultural patterns.

There should be little doubt by this point that the above study has met its objectives. The first objective of the study, to provide an informative place-name dictionary, has been accomplished in a manner which provided me with much insight into the process of naming, specifically, and the process of landscape organization by the pioneer, in general. The other three objectives, which were concerned with the analysis of place-name patterns and the correlation of those patterns to characteristics of the physical and cultural landscape, have also been met in a way which I believe illustrates the importance of toponyms as sources of information for the geographer, historian, sociologist, or linguist, as well as for those whose primary discipline is an abiding curiosity about the past and why places were named as they were.

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## VITA

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