

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN MATERIAL REMAINS, HISTORICAL
DOCUMENTS, AND ORAL HISTORY: ALLENFARM AND ROGERS
PLANTATION, A CASE STUDY

A Dissertation

by

RANDAL SCOTT ALLISON

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 1996

Major Subject: Anthropology

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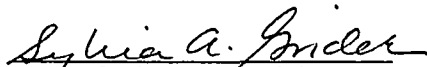
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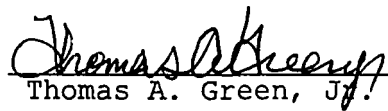
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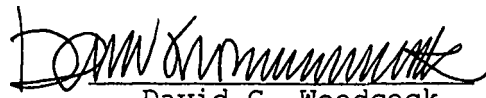
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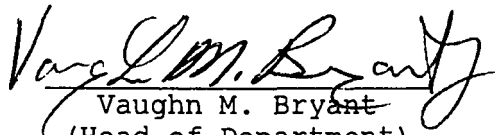
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ABSTRACT

A Dialogue Between Material Remains, Historical Documents, and Oral History: Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation, a Case Study. (May 1996)

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Often lost behind the mythic veneer of Texas history is the fact that the eastern one-third of the state was a true part of the antebellum South. As a result, research into slavery era Texas has been slow in developing. This is especially true in historical archaeological and material culture studies of slavery. With the exception of a few articles and historical archaeological studies, very little has been done in the way of material culture studies of Texas slavery. For Brazos County, there has only been one study, and much of its focus is on the postbellum period.

The aim of this dissertation is to interpret and present a material culture study of antebellum life on Allenfarm, Rogers Plantation, and the Millican region of

southwestern Brazos County with respect to those who settled the land, their lifeways, and their impact on the land. To accomplish this goal, the dissertation utilizes a variety of available materials and a cross-disciplinary approach to interpreting the materials. In doing so, a methodology for studying and inferring the meaning of the material culture in regions where there is scant physical evidence is developed. What emerges is a picture of a rich culture created by the interaction of slaves and their white owners and neighbors in a unique, frontier experience.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Terri, and our daughters, Kristen and Tegan. Thanks for putting up with me during this time.

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The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without the assistance and input of many people and assistance networks. A special note of thanks and acknowledgment goes to Dr. John Michael Vlach, Director of the African-American Studies Program at George Washington University, Washington DC, for his input and suggestions on pursuing this topic. Also, a special note of thanks to Dr. Alan Alter, Professor Emeritus, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Texas A&M University, for allowing a hapless undergraduate the opportunity to find the field in which he truly belongs.

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Finally, I wish to thank all of my family, especially my parents, Bryan and Jean Allison, for their support and encouragement in pursuing my education.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION--OPENING THE DIALOGUE

In 1822, the lands of Brazos County were changed forever by the arrival of the first wave of Anglo settlers on this virgin land. The abundant and cheap lands attracted these settlers, who found in the southwestern part of the county a band of rich, alluvial soils suitable for large-scale agriculture. Bordered by the Brazos River to the west and the Navasota River to the east, these alluvial plains offered the promise of high crop yields and profits for the new settlers. Early crops focussed on corn and grains which could provide food for the settlers and their livestock as they carved out a life for themselves on the frontier. As the land became more settled, cotton became a primary crop. By 1831, the terraced slopes with their accompanying rocky soils and post oak cover were beginning to be settled. Although these areas were less productive, they were suitable for grazing. Farther inland, the town of Millican grew, and would become a major city by the 1860s. Yet except for

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Historical Archaeology*.

Millican, this section of the county remained a rural, sparsely populated region. Given over to agriculture, the land's stewards focussed on raising crops and livestock. By the 1850s, the plains along the Brazos River, which we now call Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation, were devoted wholly to raising cotton.

In the neighboring counties--Burleson, Grimes, Milam, Robertson, and Washington--the pattern was much the same. With the exception of the Brazos Bluffs in Washington County, the lands along the rivers and major streams were similar to southwestern Brazos County. Lands along the Brazos and Navasota watershed were settled first, and soon became major farming centers. By the 1850s, these areas, like Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation, were devoted to growing cotton, and also remained rural, sparsely populated lands. In all of these counties, settlement, the development of the cotton industry, and the development of the landscape depended primarily on labor by the slaves brought into the area. Although Brazos County was not a traditional "black county," slaves in Brazos and her neighboring counties accounted for nearly one-fifth of the total slave population in Texas by 1860 (Bornhorst 1971; Campbell 1989).

In 1995, the lands in southwestern Brazos County,

especially around Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation, look much as they did in the mid-nineteenth century (Figure 1). With the exception of a few intrusions--a few contemporary houses and buildings, the Tom J. Moore cotton gin, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad, and the macadam surfaces of FM 159 and a few side roads--the land remains rural, sparsely populated, and isolated. From most vantage points, the buildings, roads, and railroad are not discernable, and one has a clear view of the land. During cotton season, one can almost hear the voices of the slaves who first cleared and planted the land. If one tries, in the mind's eye, slaves can be seen in the fields, and alongside them, their tools, their homes, the buildings of their owners, and their overseers, so true to its original settlement has the land remained. Herein lies the attraction and the problems of studying this land.

The aim of this dissertation is to interpret the antebellum life of the Allenfarm, Rogers Plantation, and Millican region of southwestern Brazos County with respect to those who settled the land, their lifeways, and their impact on the land. As a cultural region, this area was settled primarily by Anglo-Americans and their slaves, with most of the settlers coming from Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina and Tennessee (Bornhorst 1971:2; Newton and

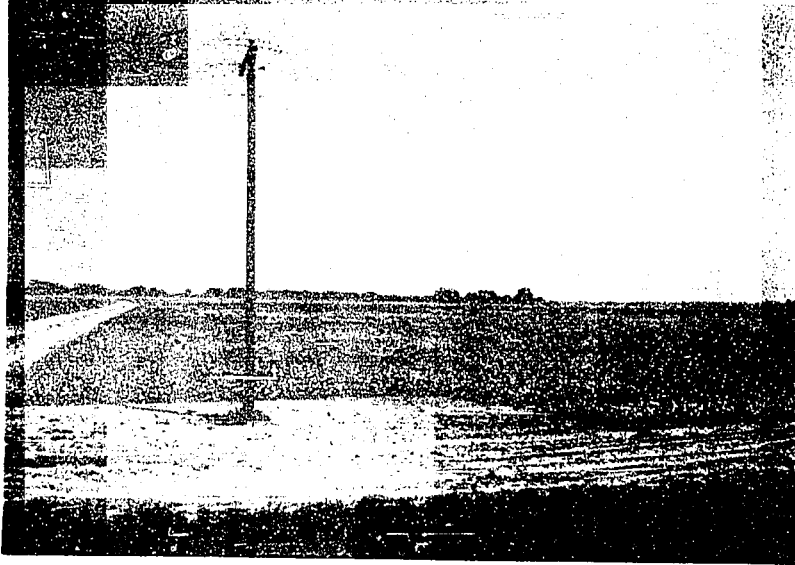


Figure 1: Allenfarm (top) and Rogers Plantation (bottom).

Gambrell 1948:112). Long familiar with the plantation system of the southeastern U.S., these settlers soon developed the lands agriculturally along the Brazos River and its tributaries throughout Austin's Colony and in Brazos County. By 1824, all of the lands along the Brazos River, and almost all along the Navasota River in Brazos County had been claimed and assigned titles. By 1832, the majority of the second-tier lands bordering these alluvial plains had been claimed and settled (Bugbee 1897; Texas General Land Office 1867). Yet the history and life stories of these settlers and their slaves, as well as investigations into their impact on the development of the region has as yet been largely ignored.

Methodology

The use of the term *dialogue* in this study is drawn from its use in folklife and folk-material studies. As exemplified in Simon Bronner's edited collection, *American Material Culture and Folklife: A Prologue and Dialogue* (1985), the meaning of dialogue is very specific. In this study and in Bronner's collection, for example, the meaning refers to what the interpretation of extant materials and the inferences we can draw from them "tells" us. That is, by using these sources and our interpretive

skills, we give voice to the item being studied, and allow it to tell us its story. We can treat these sources as artifacts for study and interpretation, for these sources, like artifacts, are "more personal to the maker and user, and more typical of the community in which they live" (Bronner 1985:ix). As artifacts, the narratives, records, and remains are the personal creations and community voice of those who shaped the region, and can be utilized to give voice to these creators.

An interpretation of the past life of those who settled and developed this region has three main problems. The first is the study of Brazos County history, or rather, the lack of it. There are a few histories of the county, most notably the edited collection *Brazos County History: Rich Past, Bright Future* (Brundidge, et al, 1986). There are also a few other studies, among them Willie Rae Henry's 1954 thesis, *Slavery and the Economy of Brazos County: 1821-1860*, and Elmer Grady Marshall's 1937 dissertation, *The History of Brazos County*. But both of these studies deal primarily with the economic impact of slavery on the county in a post-Civil War context. Other sources, such as a number of archaeological investigations by Shawn Carlson (1983, 1987, 1993), John Diem's 1981 thesis, *The Place Names of Brazos County: 1821-1880*, and

Sunny Nash's oral history of the Peterson family in the study of the Ned Peterson farmstead (41BZ115)¹, while interesting, do not focus on antebellum settlement of the county. As a result, we have before us the opportunity to construct the early history of this region of Brazos County by way of the sources available. Through sources such as the Works Progress Administration's (WPA) Slave Narratives; documentary evidence, such as wills, probate inventories, legal notices, and newspaper accounts; and the indirect history of neighboring counties, for example, the histories of Austin's Colony and Brazos County's closest neighbors, we can construct an ethnohistorical inference of the early history of the county.

The second problem is the archaeological record. As we will discuss in more detail in the next chapter, the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation lands are alluvial plains. As such, they are subject to occasional floods of major proportions. A failed lock-and-dam project from the turn of the century at Millican Falls is a reminder of the failed attempts to control the Brazos River. The dam at

¹ This format follows the Smithsonian Trinomial System identifying the state (41=Texas), the county (BZ=Brazos, WT=Washington), and the order in which the site was recorded at the Texas Archaeological Resources Lab (TARL) at the University of Texas. The Ned Peterson Farmstead was the 115th site recorded in Brazos County, thus it is 41BZ115.

Lake Somerville Reservoir on Yegua Creek, a main tributary to the Brazos River, is the most recent attempt to control flooding, and has been more successful. However, in December of 1991, the river flooded tens of thousands of acres of land from Burleson and Brazos Counties southeast to the Gulf of Mexico. Water cascaded over the top of the Somerville spillway for several weeks due to the prolonged rains that year. Silt deposits in some areas were reported at over two feet. The regular patterns of floods have added an undetermined amount of soil to the topography along the riverine plains.

Added to this problem is the use of modern, heavy agricultural equipment to farm the land, the moving of buildings to accommodate this style of farming, and the complete lack of antebellum structures remaining on the landscape. Because of the repeated flooding and the agricultural practices, the archaeological record would reveal little, even if we removed one to two meters of earth from the top of the land, something the current landowners would not allow anyway. In lieu of actual excavation, we can utilize the analytical tools of historical archaeology to develop a mental picture of the land as it would have looked during the antebellum period. We can utilize studies from three closely related, both

socially and spatially, sites for comparison: the antebellum Richard Carter (41BZ74) and Anson Jones (41WT5) sites, and the African-American Ned Peterson farmstead (41BZ115) settled soon after Emancipation. Additionally, inferences can be drawn from legal documents from the county, and descriptions and memories of the landscape to infer what the land looked like. As with the history, the WPA Slave Narratives can be utilized to help construct this conceptualization of what the land looked like 170 years ago.

Finally, there is a problem of analyzing the architectural record. As we will discuss in Chapter IV, the cultural landscape of the plantation "big house" was never a reality in Brazos County. The land, given almost entirely to farming, was never developed along stylized plantation lines. Instead, it was developed for large-scale farming, a trait it retains today with its current paucity of structures. Thus, those structures which were a part of the antebellum landscape are no longer extant. Similarly, the buildings which were in Millican during its boom years around the Civil War are gone. However, as is the case for the historical and archaeological record, there are materials which we can use to recreate the architectural picture of the land.

Through *ethnoarchitecture*--a conceptualization of the architectural fabric in the absence of architectural remains--a concept which will be developed later, we can construct a mental picture of the architectural landscape during the antebellum period. Fortunately, we have a number of resources, especially the primary ethnographic data of the slave narratives, and the published recollections of Fletcher Pool, a Millican native born in 1902, who remembered several of the antebellum structures in Millican before their destruction, and drew sketches of them. There are also records and descriptions of the buildings associated with the plantation system, descriptions from the closely related Carter, Jones and Peterson sites mentioned above, as well as extant examples of structures from neighboring counties from which we can infer what the 19th-century built landscape was like.

The methodology employed in this study--creating a dialogue which interprets the available data and draws inferences from that data--works in this study, and is transferable to other regions within a set of specific parameters. First, the area of study must represent a specific cultural-geographic region, or catchment. The inhabitants of this region were primarily Anglo-American settlers and their slaves from the lower south, and were

concerned with agricultural pursuits, namely cotton horticulture. Second, there must be a sufficient body of available data for analysis and from which to develop inferences. In this case, the data set includes historical documents, the WPA Slave Narratives, and archaeological studies from the region. If we were to remove any one of these sets of data, the methodology would not work. For example, we could not fully infer what the lifeways of the region were without the slave narratives. We certainly could not infer what the slaves' lifeways were like without them.

The methodology must also employ analytical and interpretive skills appropriate to this area of inquiry, such as ethnography, folklife and material culture studies, and historical archaeology. Finally, the presentation of the data, its interpretations and the inferences drawn, must be presented in a series of separate foci. In this dissertation, the areas of focus are "Settlement," "Lifeways," and "Structures." This order of presentation is by design as it allows us the opportunity to develop each aspect of the dialogue in a logical order. In this study, the section on settlement prepares us for an interpretation of lifeways, and the two combined prepare our interpretation of structures. If

applied in this manner, the methodology can work in other areas of study where the focus is on understanding and presenting a dialogue of the prior lifeways of a region.

Developing a dialogue on the history of Brazos County, its people, its ethnohistorical and historical-archaeological record, and its architectural heritage is a daunting task. Fortunately, there are sources available to reconstruct the past, ranging from legal and statistical records, histories of other regions and counties, legal documents, and narratives, to name a few. To construct this dialogue will require using these materials to infer what the past was like. To do this, we will combine the narratives with the extant documentation, and from this read the past and construct the dialogue about its meaning.

Histories of Slavery in Texas

Studies on the early history of Texas are abundant and too numerous to list here. The history of slavery in Texas, on the other hand, has been largely underdeveloped until the past twenty years. Exceptions to this are a few case studies of slavery, such as Abigail Curlee's "The History of a Texas Slave Plantation" (1923:79-127), an analysis of the records of the Peach Point plantation of

James and Emily Austin Perry, and Rosa Groce Berleth's study "Jared Ellison Groce" (1917:358-368) analyzing the plantation records of Jared Groce's plantation, *Bernardo*, in nearby Waller County. The previously discussed study by Willie Rae Henry (1954) represents one of a series of county-by-county economic histories of slavery conducted by graduate students in history at Prairie View A&M during the 1950s. These studies are unique not only because of their micro-focus on county economic histories, but also by virtue of their having been developed by descendants of slaves.

More recently, an emerging body of scholarship in Texas history has begun to develop the history of slaves in Texas. Of premier importance is Randolph Campbell's *An Empire for Slavery: The Peculiar Institution in Texas, 1821-1865* (1989), the foremost book-length study of slavery in Texas. Also important is the 1977 study *Wealth and Power in Antebellum Texas* by Campbell and Richard G. Lowe. Randolph Campbell has emerged as one of the prominent scholars on slave history in Texas, both on a general and case-study level. Alwyn Barr's *Black Texans: A History of Negroes in Texas, 1528-1971* (1973) is also an important part of the scholarship on Texas slavery. Ronnie

C. Tyler and Lawrence R. Murphy's edited collection *The Slave Narratives of Texas* (1974), and George Rawick's edited collection of WPA Slave narratives, specifically the Texas narratives (1979), are essential to the primary ethnographic data on slavery. Additionally, there are numerous articles on various aspects of Texas slavery, primarily in *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*.

Locally, Betty Plummer's thesis, *Historic Homes of Washington County: 1821-1860* (1969), provides a record of plantation "big houses" from neighboring Washington County, with some attention to their associated out-buildings. Elizabeth Silverthorn's book, *Plantation Life in Texas* (1986), provides a light analysis of plantation life along the Brazos River corridor. Michael Dwain Burford's privately published *Up From Cotton: A Pictorial History Book of Blacks in the Brazos Valley* (1976) provides an important collection of documentary photographs from the late nineteenth century to 1976. The recently conducted survey of the Ned Peterson farmstead (41BZ115) contains information on the lifeways of freedmen in the region (Nash 1995:63-102). Additionally, the edited collection *Brazos County History: Rich Past-Bright Future* (Brundidge, et al 1986) contains several essays on county

history apropos to this dissertation. In all, there is a substantial body of data available from which we can build our conceptualizations of the history, archaeology, and architecture of the southwestern section of Brazos County.

CHAPTER II

SETTLEMENT

The varied landscapes and productive soils of the Brazos River Valley attracted many early nineteenth-century settlers to the region. Moses and Stephen F. Austin saw in this region fertile lands ready for settlement and husbandry. In 1852, William Bluford DeWees, a member of Austin's original settlers, the "Old Three Hundred," wrote home to describe the land he and James Cook shared in nearby Colorado County (Bugbee 1897:111-12). He wrote that:

You, in Kentucky, cannot for a moment conceive of the beauty of one of our prairies in the spring. Imagine for yourself a vast plain extending as far as the eye can reach, with nothing but the deep blue sky to bound the prospect, excepting on the east side where runs a broad red stream, with lofty trees rearing themselves upon its banks, and you have our prairie. This is covered with a carpet of the richest verdure, from the midst of which spring up wild flowers of every hue and shade, rendering the scene one of almost fairy-like beauty. Indeed it is impossible to step without crushing these fairest of nature's works. . . Here and there may be seen beautiful clumps of trees, and anon, a little thicket comes in view. The flowers of the prairie are certainly the most beautiful which I have ever beheld. Our ladies in Kentucky would feel themselves amply repaid for all the labor which they bestow upon their beautiful flower gardens, could they afford one-half of the beauty of one of our prairies (DeWees 1859, in Carlson 1993:33).

Descriptions similar to DeWees' of a pristine,

bountiful land made their way eastward to friends and families who waited to hear about this new land called Texas. Often missing were descriptions of just how bleak and harsh the land could really be. In his description of the Texas landscape, T.R. Ferenbach writes that:

It is difficult for Easterners or Europeans who have not traversed Texas to grasp the brooding immensity of the land. The state of Texas encompasses 265,780 square miles, an area which is larger than the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida combined and which far exceeds the total area of France. South Texas alone is bigger than Wales and England in geographic extent. . .the land dominates, in an almost Russian sense.

It is a beautiful land, although as in Australia, the first generation of settlers could not appreciate its true beauty--for Texas is also a harsh and curiously fragile land, punishing man and beast with brazen sun and periodic storm, hail and heat, floods and raging blizzards. . .while warm, humid breezes blow up from the southeastern Gulf, Arctic winds also howl down from the roof of the world in Canada, roaring across plains that throw up nothing to deter them. The land in most areas is subject to extremes and violent climatic fluctuations, heat and cold, burning summers and ice storms, drouth and deluge (1986:32-33).

Yet the settlers from America came to the frontier of colonial Texas, spurred on by the Panic of 1819 and the promise of lands for little money in Stephen F. Austin's Colony. Land-poor farmers left in search of what they felt would be a better life. European settlers also came to the region for land and to escape the political and economic turmoil of their homelands, but the bulk of the early

settlers were from the lower South. They came to Texas, especially along the fertile riverine lands along the Brazos River from the Gulf of Mexico to Brazos County in Austin's Colony (Bornhorst 1971; Campbell 1989) and built substantial farms and plantations. They brought with them their slaves and their own southern way of life, and therein lies a problem.

Obscured behind contemporary images of Texas as a bastion of cowboys, oilmen, and outlaws is the fact that from the initial settlement of Austin's Colony beginning in 1821, to the end of the Civil War in 1865, a fair portion of Texas was solidly a part of the antebellum South. From the Colorado River east and north to the borders of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, and along the banks of the Brazos, Colorado, Red, Sabine, San Bernard, and Trinity rivers, Texas was a plantocracy. On the plantations of Texas along the rivers, along the coastal plains of the upper Texas Gulf Coast, in East Texas, and in the Grand and Blackland Prairie regions of North and Northeast Texas, slavery and the plantation South were the rule. If the grandiose architecture of the Old South was lacking in much of antebellum in Texas, the productivity of her plantations rivaled that of the Old South plantations. In 1860, the Blackland and Grand

Prairie regions, an area approximately three-quarters the size of South Carolina, produced as much cotton as did the state of South Carolina, with only six percent of the slave labor (Campbell 1989:65).

While the institution of slavery as introduced by Anglo-American settlers existed in Texas for only about fifty years, its impact is undeniable. This early development brought in later growth in such new areas as transportation, trade, industry, and other post-Civil War growth. In the eastern third of Texas, the region most affected by slavery, the legacy is one of phenomenal agricultural development. Brazos County falls squarely within this region. As a part of Austin's Colony, the county is situated near the borders with Austin's grant and those of Milam and Robertson, and along the banks of the Brazos River, one of the more highly concentrated areas of slave settlement in antebellum Texas (Campbell 1989:41). While slaves in Brazos County accounted for less than 25 percent of the total population until near the end of the Civil War, thus not qualifying the county as a "black county," their impact was nonetheless vital to the development of the county. To begin to see how this role developed, we need to first look at Brazos County itself, and the development of the plantation system in the

county.

Brazos County Statistics

Brazos County was incorporated in 1841, having been a part of Washington County from the arrival of the "Old Three Hundred," Austin's original colonists, with a brief stint in late 1840 as Navasota County. The county is approximately one hundred and twenty miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico on the Brazos River, which forms the western boundary of the county (Figures 2 and 3). To the east, the county boundary follows the course of the Navasota River, and the northern boundary follows along the approximate road-bed of the Old San Antonio Road (OSR). The county lies at the western edge of the Gulf Coastal Plain within a region of Red-Yellow Podzolic soils (USDA 1958:31). The county is bisected by the Nacogdoches Cuesta, an Eocene age formation. Evident to the northwest from the cuesta is the rocky soil of the Edwards Plateau, while to the south and east the soils tend towards more alluvium and coastal plains soils (Thoms 1993:7). This leading edge of the cuesta in Brazos County, running from southwest to northeast, is typical of the outer limit of the Gulf Coastal Plain, and allowed for a recognizable corridor through the region. The trailblazers of the Old

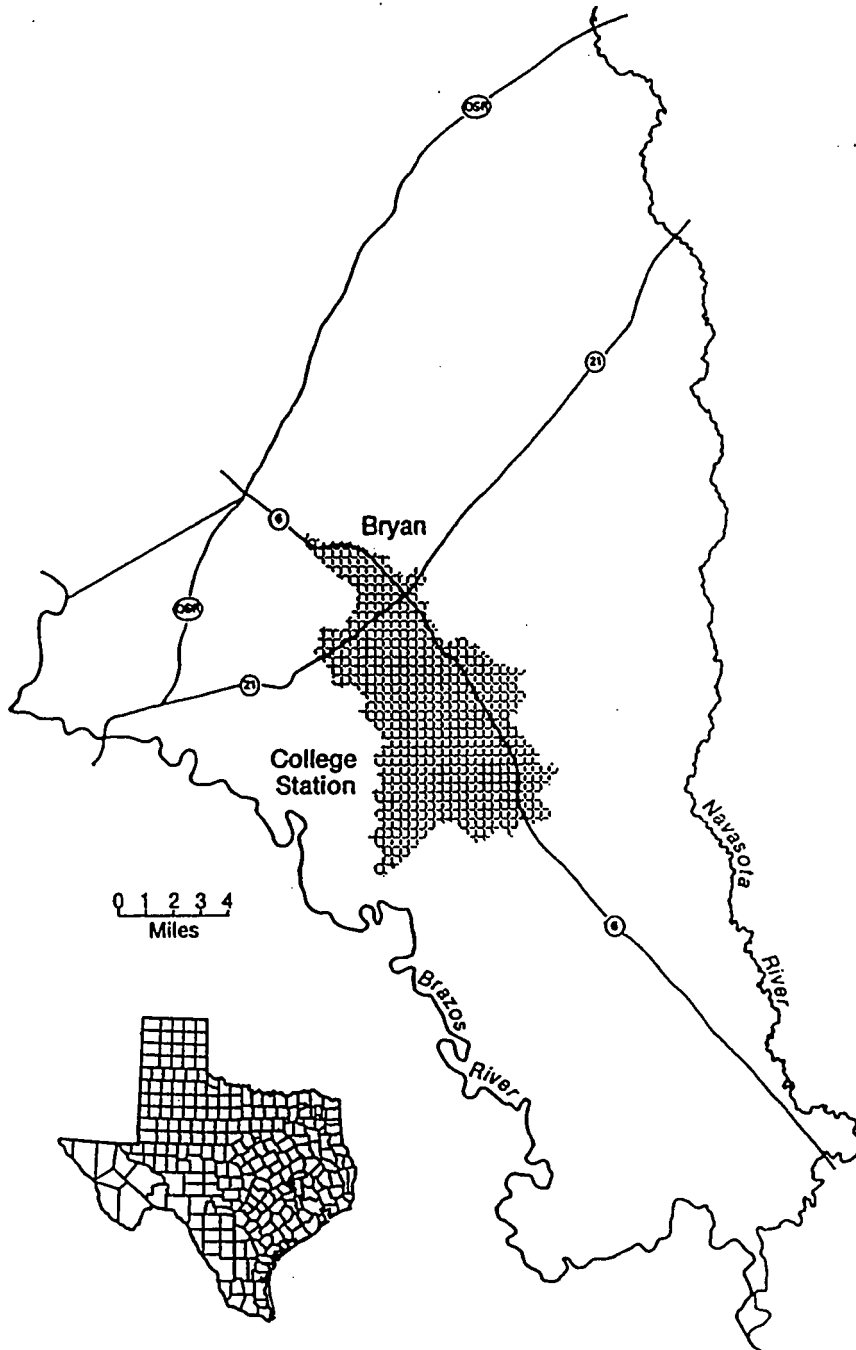


FIGURE 2: Map of Brazos County (after Carlson 1987:2).

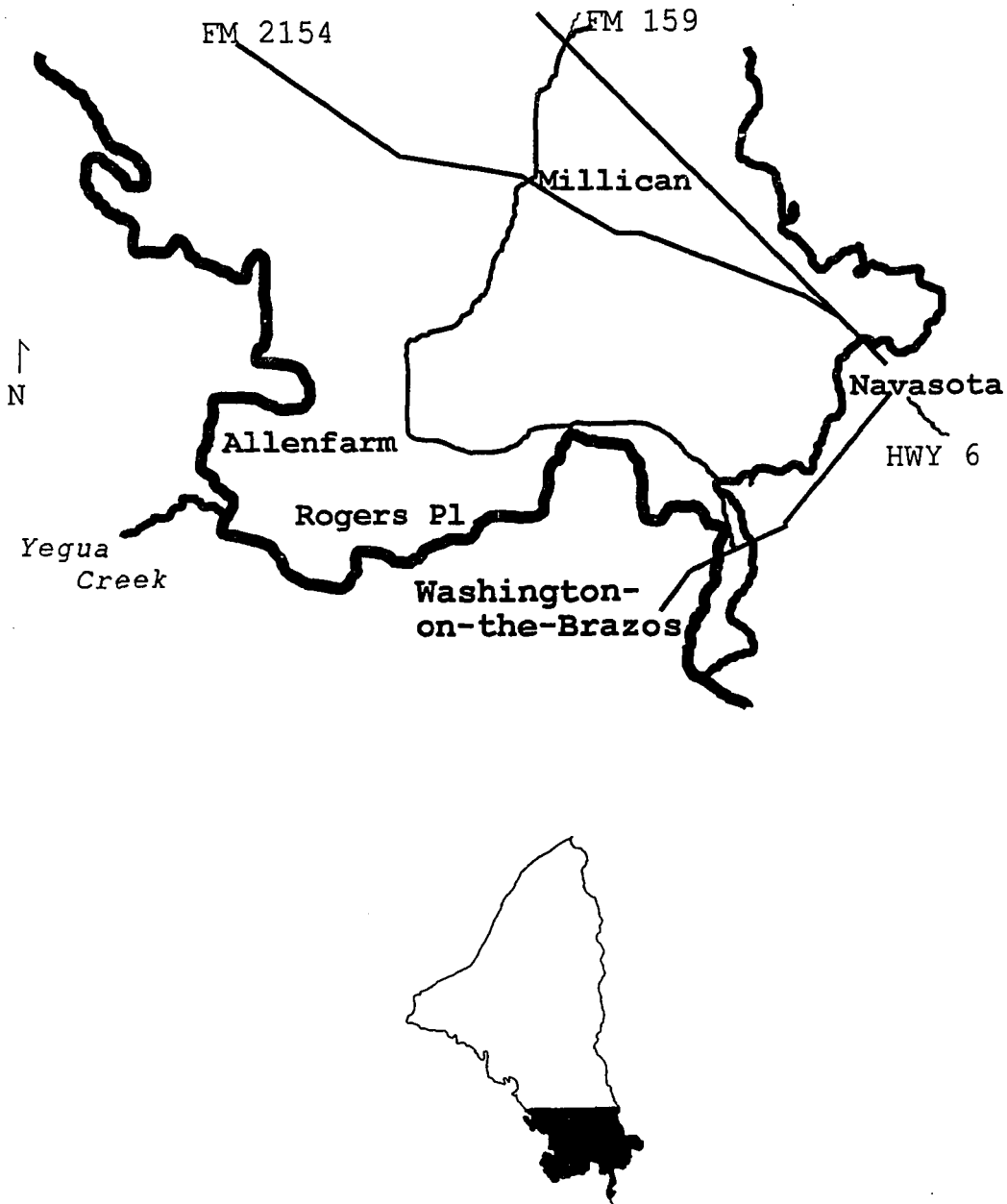


FIGURE 3: Detail Map of Southwestern Brazos County.

San Antonio Road followed this corridor created by the cuestras, as well as patches of open prairie and less dense post oak savannah (Thoms 1993:6-9).

For close to three-quarters of the county, the soil conditions are marginal and are ill suited to large scale crop development without heavy reliance on modern agricultural technology. Within the county there are three distinct landscape areas: alluvial plains, post oak savannahs, and prairies (USDA 1958:23-45). The area of Millican, Allenfarm, and Rogers Plantation terraces from post oak savannah around Millican, to rich alluvial plains around Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation. The Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation lands are in an alluvial band along the east bank of the Brazos River which varies from two to four miles in width. Throughout this band, the elevation generally varies from 195 to 200 feet above sea level, and the river normally runs at 188 feet (United States Geological Survey [USGS] 1947; 1959).

The fertile soils in the naturally terraced areas near Millican and leading to the Brazos River are sandy and gravelly fluvial sediments of Pleistocene age, and the flood plains are younger Pleistocene deposits of Quaternary age, with the youngest deposits along the flood plains themselves (Carlson 1987:5-6; Thoms 1993:7). The

fertility of these river soils attracted the attention of Frederick Law Olmsted on his famous journey through Texas in the early 1850s. He crossed the Brazos at what had been the Mexican garrison of Tenoxtitlan, and noted that soils constituted a band "six miles in width, with a soil of the greatest fertility" (1978:95). The fertility of these alluvial soils encouraged the farming of corn and cotton as major agricultural crops for the region since its earliest settlement.

Native trees, grasses, and animals were abundant, and were an enticement to early settlers. Stands of post oak (*Quercus stellata*) and blackjack oak (*Quercus marilandica*) provided easily obtainable building materials (USDA 1958:27). The prairies and post oak savannahs provided ample grasses for grazing livestock. Animals like opossums (*Didelphis virginiana*), cottontail and swamp rabbits (*Sylvilagus floridanus* and *Sylvilagus aquaticus*), native white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), and numerous birds and fishes were abundant and exploited by the early settlers (Carlson 1987:6-8; USDA 1958:27-45).

Early Settlement in Austin's Colony

Archaeological evidence indicates that exploitation

of the county's resources dates to early Native American utilizations. The Spanish explored the region but, as is the case with most of Spanish Texas, built no permanent settlements in the region. Forays in the area by other foreigners, especially from French Louisiana, and early intrusion by Americans looking for new lands prompted the Spanish government to encourage controlled settlement of Texas as a means of protecting Spanish interests. In 1820, lured by generous grants of land from the Spanish government, Moses Austin was granted permission by the government of New Spain to bring settlers to his apportioned grant in Texas. Moses Austin died on his way back east, and his son, Stephen Fuller Austin, came to Texas in 1821 to secure permission from the Mexican authorities to continue with his father's plans for settlement in Texas. By the time he arrived in San Antonio, Mexico had declared its independence from Spain, and Austin set about securing acknowledgment of his claim from the new government.

When the Panic of 1819 pushed land prices in the United States to more than \$1.25 per acre, the phenomenally low prices and vast amounts of land available in Texas were an attractive proposition for many. Originally, Moses Austin had secured from the Spanish

government land grants of 640 acres for each settler. Shortly after arriving in San Antonio, Stephen Austin negotiated with the newly formed Mexican government for an even more lucrative land deal than the original Spanish grants. The new contract, renegotiated in 1822, promised 640 acres for each family head, 320 for his wife, 160 acres for each child, and 80 for each slave. The land would sell for 12½ cents per acre: one-half upon receipt of land title and one-half one year after the sale (Austin 1836:19.1082 [reel.frame number]). Thus, a settler group of one man, his wife, two children and two slaves would be eligible for 1,440 acres of land for the sum of \$180.00, as compared to \$1,800.00 for the same amount of land in the United States. By 1823, Austin had further renegotiated the grant sizes with the Mexican junta government of Iturbide. The arrangement was ratified by the new republican government in 1824 after Iturbide's removal. While they varied somewhat, the basic size of the new grants was one *sitio*, about 4428 acres, or one labor of 177 acres, depending on the occupation of the head of the household as stockman or farmer (Bugbee 1897:108).

Of Austin's "Old Three Hundred," actually a less romantic and harder to pronounce 297 families, most came from the lower South. Over 800 families applied for

acceptance as members of Austin's Colony. Of these, three-quarters resided in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee (Bornhorst 1971:2; Newton and Gambrell 1948:112). These new pioneers brought with them their slaves and their goals of establishing productive, profitable farms. The bulk of Austin's colonists settled in the core region along the banks of the Brazos River, which includes modern-day Austin, Brazoria, Brazos, Burleson, Fort Bend, Grimes, Milam, Robertson, and Washington Counties. Brazos County, along the northeastern border of Austin's Colony, began to be settled first in the more productive south, and later in the interior post oak savannahs and prairie regions.

Large scale settlement of Austin's Colony and the lands along the Brazos River began as early as 1821, and nearly all of the "Old Three Hundred" were in Texas before 1824. Yet permission to settle was only provisional, and full recognition was not granted by the Mexican government until 1824. The initial approvals were begun by the commissioner of the region, Baron de Bastrop, and all were finalized by 1827 (Bugbee 1897:108). The alluvial bottoms of the Brazos, Colorado, and San Bernard were the first settled, with the east bank of the Brazos completely settled from the Gulf of Mexico to Brazos County (Bugbee

1897:109). The rules for settlement required that the lands received by each colonist must be improved within two years. Of the two hundred and ninety-seven families who received grants, only seven forfeited: none of the forfeitures occurred in Brazos County.

Mexico divided Texas into three departments: Bexar, Brazoria, and Nacogdoches. In each of these departments, two Mexican garrisons were to be established, one near the coast and one on the OSR to strengthen the Mexican presence and encourage Mexican colonists to settle in Texas. For the Department of Brazoria, of which Austin's grant was the major portion, the garrison settlements of Tenoxtitlan, near the Brazos and the OSR, and Velasco were established by 1834 (Meinig 1988:32). By the time that permission to settle was resumed in 1834, interest in the new lands of Texas was at an all-time high. New settlers scrambled to secure grants, even with the threat of losing their slaves and lands always looming in the background.

Slavery in the Colonial Period

Prior to 1821, slavery did exist in Texas, but with fewer than one hundred slaves its impact was minimal (Campbell 1989:9-11). The first known slave in Texas was Estabanico, the personal servant of Andrés Dorantes de

Carranza, a member of Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's expedition which arrived in November of 1528 (Campbell 1989:10; Favata and Fernández 1993:54; Weddle 1985:206). However, after being shipwrecked he and Cabeza de Vaca only passed through Texas while attempting to find their way to Mexico.

After Spanish settlement of Mexico and Texas began, limited slavery existed as it did elsewhere in New Spain. But unlike areas rich in silver, gold, or other commodities, settlement of the desert lands of Texas was relatively scarce. This relatively low population density in Texas accounts for relatively few slaves under Spanish control. By as late as 1809, only 33 bondsmen were reported in the census of Nacogdoches, while San Antonio and La Bahía recorded no persons of African origins in the ranks by 1819 (Bugbee 1898:389-90; Campbell 1989:11). The Spanish government had no rules against slavery in its colonial territories of New Spain, thus in 1820, Moses Austin was able to travel to San Antonio de Bexar with his son's slave, Richmond.

Upon his father's death in 1821, Stephen F. Austin traveled to San Antonio to claim his father's grant. Along the way, he took possession of Richmond, who had remained in Texas due to illness, and sold him. During this time,

Austin had few doubts that slavery was legal in his new colony. However, in August of 1821, the revolution by Mexico against Spain was successful, and the question of the continued existence of slavery in the new republic loomed large. By the tenets of the Mexican revolution, slavery was antithetical to the ideas of liberty for which the Mexicans had just fought. Anti-slavery idealism embraced the earlier writings of Father Miguel Hidalgo, who called for the immediate manumission of all slaves in 1810, and the 1813 *Sentimientos de la Nación* of José María Morelos proclaiming the total end of slavery (Campbell 1989:14).

The newly formed Mexican government led by Augustín de Iturbide was not initially favorable to the issue of slavery. The government in Monterrey refused officially to recognize Austin's grant, and warned that the colonists could only hold their lands provisionally. At stake were the new colonists' holdings, both small and large, lands such as Colonel Jared Groce's grand *Bernardo* plantation on the Brazos River near Hempstead in Waller County. Groce, who received 10 *sitios*, arrived in 1822 with his nearly 100 slaves and quickly set them to developing the league around *Bernardo* into a premier plantation (Bornhorst 1971:27-30; Bugbee 1897:113). There the slaves built

Groce's home, their quarters, and produced sufficient quantities of cotton to sell locally and in the interior of Mexico (Berleth 1917:358-59). Other settlers, like the Millicans and their neighbors, came to Texas with their slaves, and they fully expected to be allowed to keep them. Many contended that Texas must be a slave territory in order to grow.

Throughout the colonial period from 1821 to Texas' independence in 1836, the question of the legality of slavery remained a hotly debated issue at both the national and state levels. From 1822 to 1825, the debate was such that new colonization slowed. Fearful that his colony might not grow, Austin began endorsing David Burnet's plan to bring colonists from Ohio and Pennsylvania, non-slaveholding states, to come and develop the lands that awaited them in Texas. This plan earned support from both political supporters and detractors of Austin's in Saltillo, then capital of Coahuila and Texas (Barker 1926:1703-1704; Campbell 1989:20-22). During the same time period, debate and rules concerning slavery went back-and-forth, from immediate abolition to continuance of the institution, and all points in between.

One ingenious solution to the possibility of manumission was promoted as early as 1826 by settler Ellis

H. Bean. The solution rested in the Spanish tradition of debt peonage, a pernicious form of wage-debt slavery still embraced in many parts of Latin America. Under this system, a "borrower" can be required to offer services, under contract, to a "lender" until such time as the debt is paid off. Rare is the case where the debt is ever paid off in full. Under the developed plan approved by the government in Saltillo, the new colonists had to supply papers indicating that the bondsmen were willing to accompany them. While they were no longer slaves, *per se*, they owed their masters the costs of settling them in Texas, plus the money their master had invested in them, terms set out in a contract duly noted by any public official. The children were to serve under the same contract terms as their fathers once they reached age eighteen. Children born in Texas to the "peons" were to work *gratis* until age twenty-five, at which time they would be put under contracts with the same terms as their fathers' (Bugbee 1898:410-12; Campbell 1989:23-24). Since this technically was not slavery in the eyes of Mexican law, it was all perfectly legal.

Such elaborate plans attest to the determination of slave holders to retain their property and to build in Texas a version of plantation life which they had been

used to. Interest in Texas was at a peak when the government re-opened the channels of legal immigration in 1834. New settlement soared, especially with the promise of a legal loop-hole for slavery to exist. In 1836, Texas gained her independence, and slavery was guaranteed in the newly formed Republic of Texas. Upon admission into the Union in 1845, Texans retained their rights to own slaves, and the question of slavery seemed relatively settled until the eve of the Civil War.

Slavery: Post-Colonialism to the Civil War

Throughout the period of post-colonial growth, the population of both whites and slaves continued to grow in Texas. President Andrew Jackson charged envoy Henry Morfit with compiling information on the conditions in the new Republic of Texas in 1835. Morfit estimated that the population of the Republic in 1836 consisted of 30,000 Anglos, 14,500 Indians, 3,470 Mexicans, and 5,000 Negroes (Campbell 1989:54; Wooten 1898:759). Austin's Colony, already well established by 1836, continued to grow and by 1840, the counties of Brazoria and Matagorda on the coast, and the inland counties of Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, and Washington contained nearly one-third of the Republic's slave population. By 1845, these same counties

still claimed one-fourth of the state's slave population, for a total of 7,621 slaves (Campbell 1989:56-58). In the core counties along the Brazos River, like gains in population occurred.

In most of the core counties along the Brazos, the white population remained a majority, if only a slim one. But in the primarily sugar-growing counties of Brazoria and Fort Bend, whites were the clear minority. Both the white and slave populations grew steadily at this time as new settlers arrived and developed the land. From independence to the Civil War, the need for slaves was seen as great. With only a slight drop during the mid 1840s, the mean price of slaves in Texas increased from \$345 in 1843-47 to an all-time high of \$765 in 1858-62 (Campbell 1989:71-73). As indicated in Tables 1 and 2, the number of slaves in Brazos County alone increased from 148 in 1850 to 1,063 in 1860, and to 2,013 by 1864 (Brazos County Tax Rolls). By 1850, the core counties of the Brazos watershed had a combined slave population of 12,455, more than one-fourth of the state's slave population of 48,145. By 1860, that population had more than doubled to 33,426 slaves, one-fifth of the state's slave population of 160,467.

The population in the region continued to grow from

TABLE 1
1850 WHITE AND SLAVE POPULATIONS

County	White	%Pop.	Freedmen	Slaves	Tot.Pop.
Austin	2,286	60%	6	1,549	3,841
Brazoria	1,329	27%	5	3,507	4,841
Brazos	466	76%	-	148	614
Burleson	1,213	71%	-	500	1,713
Fort Bend	974	38%	5	1,554	2,533
Grimes	2,326	58%	2	1,680	4,008
Milam	2,469	85%	2	436	2,907
Robertson	670	72%	-	264	934
Washington	3,166	53%	-	2,817	5,983

(Bornhorst 1971:147; Kennedy 1872:282-85)

TABLE 2
 WHITE AND SLAVE POPULATIONS IN 1850 AND 1860

County	1850	1850	1860	1860
	White	Slave	White	Slave
Austin	2,286	1,549	6,225	3,914
Brazoria	1,329	3,507	2,027	5,110
Brazos	466	148	1,713	1,063
Burleson	1,213	500	3,680	2,003
Fort Bend	974	1,554	2,007	4,127
Grimes	2,326	1,680	4,838	5,468
Milam	2,469	436	3,632	1,542
Robertson	670	264	2,739	2,258
Washington	3,166	2,817	7,271	7,941

(Bornhorst 1971:147; Kennedy 1872:282-285)

1850 to 1860 as more and more land-hungry settlers arrived in Texas. During this ten-year stretch, some counties saw their populations quadruple, while others merely doubled. Brazos County's slave population, for example, more than quadrupled from 1850 to 1860. In addition, the railroads, such as the Houston and Texas Central (H&TC) which ran to Millican before 1860, opened up trade and travel to these regions. Stage lines, like the Houston stagecoach route, had opened in Brazos County by 1850, and steamboat traffic was guaranteed to Washington on the Brazos as well (Puryear and Winfield 1976:1-40; Walker 1986b:21).

The slave population in the region began growing rapidly after the start of the Civil War as tens of thousands of slaves were refuged from other states to Texas to avoid emancipation by federal troops. As indicated in Table 3, some of the counties, such as Brazos, Grimes, Milam, and Robertson saw their slave populations double, or come close to it as a result of the mass removal of slaves to Texas between 1860 and 1864. Some of these new laborers were soon put to work growing crops and raising livestock for the Confederate war effort, while others were put to work growing cotton to be smuggled into Mexico, or slipped past Union blockade lines in the Gulf of Mexico.

TABLE 3
 SLAVE POPULATIONS, REPUBLIC TO 1864

<u>County</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1840</u>	<u>1845</u>	<u>1850</u>	<u>1855</u>	<u>1860</u>	<u>1864</u>
Austin	n/a	447	1093	1549	2353	3914	4702
Brazoria	892	1665	2094	3507	4292	5110	5125
Brazos	n/a	n/a	152	148	427	1063	2013
Burleson	n/a	n/a	n/a	500	1047	2003	2905
Fort Bend	n/a	572	1172	1554	1746	4127	4253
Grimes	n/a	n/a	n/a	1680	3124	5468	7005
Milam	n/a	n/a	391	436	713	1542	2147
Robertson	n/a	292	587	264	1239	2258	4392
Washington	583	709	1323	2817	4399	7941	8663

(Bornhorst 1971:147; Bracht 1931:61; Campbell 1989:243-246, 264-67; Kennedy 1872:282-285).

On June 19, 1865, official orders freeing the slaves finally reached Texas. Since that time, June 19th, or **Juneteenth** in Texas parlance, has been a day of celebration and remembrance for Texas' African-American community (Wiggins 1993:28-31), as well as the focus of scholarly research (Dionisopoulos-Mass 1977; Pemberton 1983; Wiggins 1987, 1993:28-31). The end of the Civil War settled once and for all the question of slavery in Texas and the South: it would no longer exist. Economically, the emancipation of the slaves was a temporary economic blow to some planters. But the impact of the early development of the land by the owners and their bondsmen paved the way for new economic growth without the need for the peculiar institution. Cotton became king in the Brazos Valley, and with the resumption of construction of the H&TC Railroad in 1866, new cotton areas were developed. Bryan became the county seat of Brazos County as it grew with the railroad. As the railroad moved north to Hearne and Calvert, they too grew, with Calvert becoming one of the premier cotton centers in the region by the late 1890s. All of this growth would not have been possible without the early efforts by the slaves and their owners, especially in Brazos County.

Brazos County: Colonialism to the Republic

Throughout this early period, settlement along the Brazos River and its tributaries grew, albeit the region and colony in general grew at a somewhat slower pace than Stephen Austin had hoped for. The population and settlement in Brazos County grew, slowly, along the riverine floodplain and later in the interior of the county. Of the 297 original families in Austin's colony, fourteen settled in Brazos County. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) map of Brazos County (1867) notes that South Carolinians Robert Millican, Sr. and his sons James D. and William Millican, took possession of their grants of land on July 16, 1824. Robert Millican's grant of two and one-half *sitios* was on the Big Bend of the Brazos. After Robert's death in 1837, much of his grant and parts of adjoining grants were acquired by Colonel John D. Rogers, and the area became known as Rogers Plantation. James' grant of one *sitio* lay on the Brazos at Allentown, and constitutes the area known today as Allenfarm, although the name Allen does not appear on any deed or abstract for this land. Tradition holds that the name derives from Dr. Robert A. Allen, a Washington County landowner who was one of the first to clear lands in the Brazos bottoms. Dr. Allen was the father-in-law of Colonel John D. Rogers

(Woodcock 1986:357).

William Millican's grant of one *sitio* lay to the southeast of present day Millican, and adjoined the Whitesides' grant and the Navasota river. Neighbors Walter Sutherland and the Whitesides brothers, Henry and Boland, secured grants on August 10, 1824. Sutherland's grant of one *sitio* abutted James Millican's grant to the north, and Henry and Boland Whitesides' shared *sitio* lay at the confluence of the Brazos and Navasota rivers, straddling Brazos and Grimes counties (Grimes County would be formed in 1846 out of part of Brazos County and other lands). James Whitesides took possession of a nearby *sitio*, as well as one *sitio* in Waller County (Bugbee 1897:115-17; GLO 1922; Smith 1962:136, 194, 212). Neither the Whitesides nor Walter Sutherland appear in the 1842 tax rolls for Brazos County.

Two other land holders in the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation region who were not a part of Austin's "Old Three Hundred," but who later received grants from Austin were Elliot Millican and James Dever. Physician, statesman, and South Carolinian Dr. Elliot McNeal Millican, who was the first sheriff of Brazos County in 1843, served in the Ninth Congress of Republic of Texas, and as a representative in the first three State

Legislatures and a senator in the fifth, was issued a grant on March 26, 1831. Dr. Millican later parceled out part of this grant to create the town of Millican. William Dever received the final plot in the area on April 16, 1831 (GLO 1922; Smith 1962:55, 136). William Dever is not listed in the 1842 Brazos County Tax Rolls.

Throughout the 1820s, Brazos County remained mostly rural, unincorporated, and isolated. Towns, so to speak, did not exist, but local landmarks, such as ferry crossings along the Navasota and Brazos Rivers, did provide focal points for the early settlers. When Robert Millican first began to clear his grant, his closest neighbor was Andrew Robinson, who lived some ten miles away at the La Bahía Road crossing of the Brazos at Washington. Slowly, as more settlers came in, the distances between neighbors lessened, and the need grew for more than just farmland. Robert Millican eventually built a grist mill, and by the end of the 1820s, what would become known as the towns of Boonville and Millican began to emerge. Boonville would become the first county seat with the organization of Brazos County in 1841, and remain so until 1868 when the county seat was moved to the new town of Bryan. But it was Millican which would become the first major center of commerce in the county.

In 1831, Dr. Elliot McNeal Millican, elder son of Robert Millican, was granted a section of land by Stephen F. Austin and the Mexican government some ten miles north of Washington. There he built a house, which he promptly opened to travelers along the Boonville-to-Washington Road. By this time, the Mexicans had all but suspended immigration and settlement into Texas, with only a few grants offered in Austin's Colony, then the only legally recognized concern. On April 9, 1831, Alexander Thompson, who had tried to secure grants for himself and several families above the OSR in Robertson County, wrote to Stephen F. Austin from "Mr. Milligan's" settlement, where he and some of the families resided until they were allowed to join the others in Robertson's venture and move to their own grants (Thomson 1899:238-39; Walker 1986b:21). "Mr. Milligan's" settlement soon took on the name of Millican Crossroads. There, Dr. Millican's home, a two-story log cabin, operated in lieu of an inn, restaurant, and coach stop. The Boonville-to-Washington road crossed another early road there on its way to crossing the Brazos River at Millican Ferry in the 1830s. Prior to this, the nearest crossing was Robinson's Ferry, established in 1821 near the junction of the Navasota and Brazos rivers (Walker 1986a:54-55).

Throughout this early period, a combination of uncertainties over the legality of slavery, the closing of immigration, and the factual realities of the hardships of developing the land all took a toll on the early settlers. Except for Robert Sr., James D. and William Millican, the other eleven families of the "Old Three Hundred" who settled in Brazos County had moved on between 1821 and 1842, though records indicate that none of these families had forfeited their rights to their lands (Bugbee 1897:108-117). They, like some later grantees, found that the land demanded more labor than they were willing or able to invest before it would be productive, and opted to sell their property. Though rich and fertile, these riverine lands demanded massive clearing before they could be farmed or grazed. The west bank of the Brazos was not developed until the end of the nineteenth century. Today, many of those late developed regions have reverted and are covered by second growth woods.

But for those families who chose to remain, and the newer arrivals who worked to develop the land, the later pay-off would be worth it. With the reopening of immigration in 1834, and the question of the legality of slavery seemingly settled, new arrivals filled in the voids in the landscape and began working the land. In the

richer alluvial soils along the rivers and streams, corn and cotton began to be grown. Inland, away from these areas, suitable lands for grazing were developed, and cattle and working horses soon outnumbered settlers. Among the Millican clan alone were several hundred head of cattle and several dozen horses. Farmer, plantation owner, and county neighbor Richard Carter also raised more than one hundred cattle on his land in this early period (Carlson 1987:3).

On the eve of the Texas Revolution, the area around Millican saw increased traffic. Travelers heading west to Washington from the OSR came through the area on the Boonville-to-Washington road. Soldiers and settlers heading east in advance of the Mexican Army benefitted from the several established crossings. Millican Falls, also known as Hidalgo Falls, provided one of a number of relatively safe low-water crossings during the "Runaway Scrape" in 1836. Noah Smithwick, an adventurer and later settler who came to Texas in 1828, wrote of his experience during the runaway scrape fleeing the Mexican army from Bastrop to San Jacinto. He wrote in one section that:

When we reached Cole's Settlement [Independence] we found a notice which Major Williamson had stuck on a tree, reporting the surrender and subsequent massacre of Fannin's men. We then understood the precipitate flight of the inhabitants, and realized

the fate in store for us should we fall into the hands of the enemy. . .Two of us who had the best mounts, Felix W. Goff and myself, offered to go to Washington and see who was there; but, that not being considered advisable, we made for the Brazos bottom above Washington, where we lay concealed till night, when we sent out scouts to reconnoiter. There was a full moon rising, and by its rays the scouts discovered a large body of moving figures coming down the road to Washington (1935:129-130).

The moving figures turned out to be a herd of cattle rather than Gaona's division of the Mexican Army. However, Smithwick further related that they found Colonel Bain and Captain Childress and their Rangers at Tenoxtitlan, "convoying families from their district" in advance of the Mexican forces (1935:130). The group proceeded back towards Washington before crossing the Brazos River, perhaps at Robinson's Ferry directly above Washington but below the confluence of the Brazos and Navasota Rivers, Smithwick does not mention crossing the latter (1935:131; Walker 1986a:57).

Though no battles were fought in Brazos County during the Texas Revolution, the area did brace for war, especially since the OSR ran through the county, and the garrison at Tenoxtitlan, also an important crossing point for the fleeing citizens (Smithwick 1935:130-131) was in the northwest part of the county. The citizenry responded, and a few men from the region enlisted in the cause. Among

them were Andrew Millican, who served in Captain Thomas S. McFarland's Company, and Diadem Millican, who served in Captain Hill's Company of Rangers (Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT) 1986:209, 252). Appendix I includes a list of other men from the county who served during the Texas Revolution.

With the success of the Texans at San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, the new Republic of Texas was formed. This action greatly encouraged new immigration to Texas, especially since slavery would be ensured. But more than that, the new government wanted, much like their Spanish and Mexican predecessors, to build a large population within the borders of Texas to protect against foreign incursion. While problems with Mexico would continue well into the next decade, the citizenry in Austin's colony and points north and east felt relatively safe in their environs, and new immigrants joined those already established. In addition, the development and subsequent improvements on Whitney's cotton gin created a great demand for cotton, far in excess of what was being produced. Cheap, arable lands, the ability to exploit slave labor, and new ventures like steamboats and railroads worked together to hurl Texas into becoming an agricultural giant. Brazos County was also going to join

the ride.

Dr. Elliot McNeal Millican's participation as a delegate to the Ninth Congress of the Republic of Texas, and the location of Millican's Settlement and the surrounding region on the Boonville-to-Washington Road would seem to be enough fame for any region. But the area had a closer brush with fame, one that could have, if it had worked out, changed the face of Texas. According to the records of the First Congress of the Republic of Texas, Messrs. Martin, Clow, and others proposed to develop the bluffs at Hidalgo (Millican) Falls as the new capital for the Republic. No town existed there, and the men had not taken the time to draw up a plan for laying out the property. Rather, they promised to build a town around any government buildings which would be erected, and thus the town would grow around the new capital. The representatives showed little interest in the proposal, especially in light of so little planning, and the project was soon forgotten (Puryear and Winfield 1976:14).

Brazos County: Republic to the Civil War

In the period from the formation of the Republic to the incorporation of the county in 1841, the population in Brazos County grew at a rate comparable to the other

regions in Austin's former colony. The importation of slaves, new agricultural methods, and settlers with an eye towards both agriculture and commerce began to improve the county, even the interior lands. BY 1842, the first full year of the county's existence, there were 142 tax payers listed on the rolls, including those acting as administrators for estates. Among those paying taxes were Diadem Millican, who paid taxes on 5,245 acres of land valued at \$3,409; one Negro; 225 cattle; and eight work horses for a total tax bill of \$12.80, including his poll tax. Part of his assessment included 3,498 acres of land he held in Brazoria County, valued at \$1,749 (Brazos County Tax Records 1842).

John Millican, one of the original settlers, was taxed on 4,685 acres valued at one dollar per acre, seven Negroes under ten years of age, four Negroes over ten, 200 cattle, and thirty work horses, for a tax bill of \$18.43. This included his 1,107 acres in Robertson County. Dr. Elliot Millican was assessed taxes on 7,548 acres valued at \$7,548, one Negro, 100 cattle, twenty work horses, and his poll tax for a bill of \$14.42 and one-half cent (Brazos County Tax Rolls, 1842). In 1841, Dr. Millican was elected as the first sheriff of Brazos County, due in part, perhaps, to his prowess as an "Indian fighter." One

account holds that earlier, Millican and a group of friends were attacked while crossing the prairie. Millican was able to drop four Indians with four shots, his friends deferring to his abilities as a marksman. During the fray, he was wounded by an arrow (Hamilton 1986:268). Indian attacks were somewhat common in the vicinity. Noah Smithwick remembered an attack on Yegua Creek, which feeds into the Brazos above Millican Falls, in 1838 (1935:227).

Both the white and slave populations grew throughout this period as farmlands were developed and new commerce came into the region. By 1849, Millican had its first post office, with Arthur Edwards serving as first postmaster, and in 1850 the Houston stagecoach route was extended to Millican (Walker 1986b:21). Meanwhile, modern commerce was coming closer to home. In 1842, faced with the fear of an invading Mexican force, the capitol was temporarily returned to Washington-on-the-Brazos. Travel on the Boonville-to-Washington Road increased, but a more important event was to occur. In December of 1842, the sidewheeler *Mustang* made the first recorded trip up the Brazos River to the docks at Washington. Washington had previously been rejected as a suitable site for a capitol because of its lack of river commerce. The arrival of the *Mustang* ushered in a new era for the region. With river

traffic, goods from the region could more easily reach Houston and Galveston, and new products could come in. Later boats, like the *Mustang* and the *Brazos*, which provided regular service from Houston and Galveston, would strengthen Washington as a river-port city. Some traffic did venture farther north, but ideas of establishing regular service beyond Washington came to naught. In late 1852, the steamboat *William Penn* became stuck just north of Millican Falls. The boat had successfully traversed the falls due to a previous rain, but the river level soon dropped. The boat remained stuck until mid-January, 1853, and was able to resume its southward trek (Woodward 1972:166). Washington's spot as the farthest inland port was secured, and would lead the citizens to an unfortunate decision which would be pivotal to the demise of Washington (Puryear and Winfield 1976:12-14).

As the region grew, more means of transport were needed, at least as far as the promoters were concerned. In 1857, the Houston and Texas Central (H&TC) Railroad, then railheaded in Hempstead, Waller County, sought participation from the residents of Washington to fund construction of a bridge across the Brazos at Washington so that the port and railroad could be linked. The citizenry soundly rejected the notion, claiming that river

traffic was more than sufficient. The H&TC then took their line north, to Millican. The Washington County railroad did build a bridge downriver at Lancaster so that a spur from Brenham and Chappell Hill could run to Hempstead. With the H&TC in Millican, and a spur from Brenham below, the river traffic died quickly, as did the fortunes of Washington (Puryear and Winfield 1976:14; Walker 1986b:27).

With the advent of the stage, river boats, and finally the railroad, the region around Millican became a major center of commerce. The population continued to keep pace, growing at a steady rate from 1841 to the 1860s. By 1860, the population was still a stronghold of residents originally from the Lower South. Of the more than three hundred households in Brazos County in 1860, 58, or almost one-fifth of the total, were headed by settlers from Tennessee, with the next largest group at 35, 12 percent of the total, from Alabama. A total of 34 households were headed by settlers from South Carolina, 26 from Georgia, 24 by native Texans, and 22 from North Carolina. Several other states were also represented, but more interesting is the number of heads of households from foreign countries. As discussed previously, the Brazos River marks a cultural boundary with respect to settlement patterns in

Texas. Brazos County, situated on the western edge of this boundary and in close proximity to the then port at Washington drew foreign settlers as well. Of these, 12 households, nearly four percent of the total households, were headed by Irish immigrants, a number equal to all of the heads of households from Arkansas, Missouri, and Illinois combined. Seven of the heads of households hailed from Prussia, with most settling in and around the present-day community of Kurten; three from Baden (the community of New Baden lies 15 miles north of Brazos County near the town of Franklin); two from England; and one each from Bavaria, France, and Saxony (Brazos County Tax Rolls 1860). As with the distribution of heads of households, the population at large represented a diverse group. Many of the Irish settlers were relatively recent arrivals, most working on the H&TC. At this time, there were no residents listing either Mexico or Spain as their native country residing in the county (Brazos County Tax Rolls, 1860).

The slave population also grew, as noted in Table 4, from 76 slaves in 1841, the first year the county was organized, to 2013 slaves by 1864. The occasional drops were due to families moving out of the region, and the formation of Grimes and Robertson Counties in 1846. There

were no free blacks at any time in Brazos County until the end of the Civil War and Emancipation.

In the winter of 1859, Dr. Millican laid out and sold the first lots for the town of Millican, situated in its present location along the railroad right-of-way three miles north of Millican Settlement. Unfortunately, Dr. Millican would not live to see his new town grow, passing away in 1860. In 1861, the Houston and Texas Central Railroad halted construction in Millican for the duration of the Civil War, although the grade had been cleared as far north as Hearne and land in what would become Calvert had been purchased. As a terminus town, Millican was, by 1861, the largest town inland from Houston and Galveston. As such, it attracted overland stage lines and freight routes. The tax rolls list a number of teamsters who called Millican home, and many people were involved in the hotel business as well. New mercantile establishments also grew, with Millican boasting of having the first Sanger Brothers Store in the state, founded by Isaac and Lehman Sanger in 1865. Also, Padgett Brothers, a leather goods concern, opened its first store in Millican. The county's first bank opened in Millican, as well as numerous dry-goods dress, general, and hardware stores. Two

TABLE 4

SLAVE POPULATIONS IN BRAZOS COUNTY, 1841-1864

<u>Year</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Slaves</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Slaves</u>
1841	76	1842	110	1843	174
1844	142	1845	152	1846	100
1847	95	1848	113	1849	111
1850	148	1851	178	1852	297
1853	322	1854	427	1855	427
1856	487	1857	519	1858	603
1859	599	1860	1063	1861	1012
1862	1248	1863	1164	1864	2013

(Brazos County Tax Rolls 1864)

Baptist, two Methodist, one Catholic, and one Presbyterian church also were established. Millican incorporated in 1864, and by 1866, the town had grown to 3,000 inhabitants. (Walker 1986b:27-29). The Civil War also prompted growth in Millican since Camp Speight, a Confederate staging ground, was located there.

Previously, the voters of Brazos County, especially in the southwestern part of the county, had been a contentious lot, generally voting counter to the rest of the state. In the 1857 race for governor, for example, the voters cast 288 ballots for Sam Houston, who tended to oppose separatist moves by his fellow southern senators, and a mere 73 for Hardin Runnels. It was not until 1860, when faced with a choice of Abraham Lincoln, whom they saw as a "Black Republican," did the voters of the county support a sectional candidate, John C. Breckinridge. On February 23, 1861, voters approved by a vote of 215 to 55 to sever ties with the Union (Scott 1986:85).

This voting record is a telling part of the ideology of this region. As we will discuss in more detail later, the underlying conservative ideology of this region looms large in its history. Choosing to vote for candidates other than those generally supported in the state was their notification to the rest of the state that this

enclave chose to maintain the *status quo*. For much of this time, that meant staying with the Union. The departure from this pattern--voting against Lincoln in favor of Breckenridge--was not an aberration, but rather a continuance of their ideology which called for maintaining the way of life which they had established. For the antebellum period, that way of life demanded slaves. But within a few years after the Civil War, the voters would return to their normal pattern of voting opposite to the rest of the state.

On the eve of the Civil War, Brazos County and Millican had relatively little to offer the Confederacy. Cattle, horses, and swine were abundant throughout the state, and the number of eligible, able-bodied men in the county would only form six or seven companies if all of them enlisted at the same time. However, the county did have Millican, the only direct link by rail to Houston and Galveston, and a major hub for horse- and ox-drawn freight traffic from around the state. In October of 1861, Governor Edward Clark authorized the establishment of two Confederate training and reserve camps, with Millican being one of the camps. Its location on the railroad made supplying and moving troops a relatively less challenging procedure than other locations. In June of 1861, Joseph

Warren Speight's 15th Texas Infantry Regiment established camp near Millican, and Colonel James Reily's 4th Regiment of Texas Mounted Volunteers trained at the location in November of that year (Scott 1986:85). The railhead at Millican saw so many transient soldiers that the Confederate government established a "Soldier's Home" in the town for the benefit of the traveling soldiers.

In the Fall of 1861, a unit of men enlisted in the Confederate Army near Millican, marking the first group to organize in Brazos County. These men would form part of Company F of Nelson's 10th Texas Infantry. The unit under the command of Captain Brasher was stationed on the coast, but later served at Arkansas Post, Arkansas, where most were captured when the post fell on January 11, 1863. Some of the men were released during a prisoner exchange in April of 1863 and were then assigned to the 6th Texas Infantry and the 15th Texas Cavalry. The 10th would serve in Granbury's Brigade, which surrendered in 1865 at Greensboro, North Carolina (Scott 1986:86). Other groups from the area included Captain L.J. Wilson's Company I of the 21st Texas Cavalry Regiment, which included George Carter's command, the 1st Texas Lancers, so named from Carter's idea of having his troops practice with lances made at nearby Chappell Hill (Austerman 1985:24; Scott

1986:86). Captain G.W. Daniel's men formed part of Company E of the 25th Texas Cavalry. There were also men in various militia groups and "Minute Companies" which patrolled the local area for spies, draft dodgers, and any others who might pose a threat to the Confederacy. Some of the militia units were called to active service and formed into new companies. Among them, the men under the command of Gilbert Love at Camp Killough on Cedar Creek. His unit was reformed into Company A, 18th Brigade, Texas State Troops and Company C, 2nd Regiment, 18th Brigade State Troops in August of 1863. The units were soon sent to Louisiana, where they became Company B, 3rd Battalion, which included soldiers from other units from surrounding counties in Texas.

Brazos County: Reconstruction and Beyond

As was inevitable, the Confederacy fell, and with it fell many of the institutions which had built Millican, the surrounding area, and much of the state. On June 23, 1865, soldiers from the 114th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment arrived at Millican, thus beginning, at least in the minds of the local residents, Reconstruction for Millican and Brazos County. The occupation of Millican, as much as several other events, would forever change the

area and the people in it. The end of the Civil War reopened trade with the cotton-starved mills of the north and in Europe, and brought the resumption of construction on the railroad. These events would be both a salvation and curse for Millican, as the area would now change with the new times. Though this dissertation is primarily concerned with the role slavery played in the development of the region, and how the slaves lived during this time, the events that followed hard on the heels of Emancipation are noteworthy, for they too were shaped by the peculiar institution.

The railroad, which had made Millican one of the major focal points of inland Texas for the past several years, began new construction in 1866. The land for the expansion had been purchased as far north as Calvert, and graded as far as Hearne prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. The H&TC, like a few other concerns, emerged from the Civil War in relatively good financial condition, thus was not overly burdened and unable to continue construction. Throughout the war and after, daily rail service between Houston and Millican was guaranteed. Cotton, long absent from the mill towns of the north and abroad, was quickly in demand, and revenues for freight grew. With them came the need to expand service to the fertile lands north of

Brazos County. By 1867, the line had reached Bryan and was continuing north. Bryan replaced Boonville as the county seat the following year.

With the expansion of the line came a mini-exodus of merchants from Millican, although many chose to stay on for some time afterward. Even as late as the 1870s, several businesses still thrived in Millican, including H.E. Peary & Sons, Steele Brothers, and Boatwright's Meat Market (Walker 1986b:29). In 1867, a yellow fever epidemic hit Millican and the surrounding area. Death records and unofficial counts place the number of deaths due to fever at close to 300 persons during the epidemic. Though soon controlled, the loss of life and the fear of the fever spreading discouraged people from remaining in the area. By 1868, the population of Millican had dropped to 1,200 residents from its high of over 3,000 residents in 1864 (Brazos County Tax Rolls 1864, 1868).

More detrimental to Millican than the moving of the railhead and the yellow fever epidemic was its reputation as a lawless frontier town. In 1856, a small feud erupted between members of the Millican and Curd families stemming from an 1854 lawsuit. Strangely enough, the Millicans and Curds were related by both marriage or blood in several instances. The feud would resurface in 1890, with Polker

and Zeke Curd being charged with conspiracy in the murder of Constable M. R. Millican. They were found not guilty. A later story holds that Will Millican, who guarded convicts at Allenfarm, shot and killed Zeke Curd. Will Millican had been called to testify against Zeke Curd during the 1854 debacle, and Zeke Curd was alleged to have killed Pet Millican in the interim (Hamilton 1986:275).

As early as 1859 and the first construction in 1860, violence had accompanied the expansion of the new town of Millican. Complaints and reports about laborers in the railroad's work camps are abundant, including the murder of five employees by their agitated supervisor (Walker 1986b:27). Problems with AWOL military personnel and deserters were also common, as were barroom brawls and drunken fist fights. The occupation by federal troops in 1865 did little to help civilize the town. The new troops found the town to be a threatening place. Army surgeon John C. Gill, stationed in Millican with the 114th Ohio Volunteers, described it as "a miserable cut-throat hole. Every one carries a large Bowie knife and a revolver strapped to him" (Lupold 1974:485; Scott 1986:92). Though charged with maintaining order, taking former Confederate soldiers' oaths of allegiance, and acting for the government of the United States, these Yankees were seen

as an invading foreign force, one which was not welcome by the residents of Millican. Although it appears that most former Confederate soldiers took their oaths of allegiance and their parole with little or no trouble, a few of the former soldiers and some of the local citizens openly rejected the occupying troops and their authority. Rumors of guerilla attacks, planned raids on the post, and alleged attempts to capture and murder federal soldiers did not help to change the soldiers' views of the local citizenry (Lupold 1974:485-486). Likewise, the actions of a few Union troops did not help raise their esteem locally. More than one incident records bored or disgruntled Union soldiers, posted in what they viewed as a frontier, shooting at groups of freedmen for sport (Scott 1986:92-93).

As if the situation were not bad enough early on, the implementation of Congressional Reconstruction from 1867 to 1870 only made problems worse. Murder rates began to climb in Millican and Brazos County, with no clear consensus on which group was more guilty. County records, Freedmans Bureau records, as well as newspaper accounts paint a picture of equal guilt among white residents, freedmen, and occupying Union soldiers for the increased murder and crime rates. To further exacerbate the

situation, the citizens of Millican and the surrounding area had reverted to their contentious ways, and the area became the stronghold for the Republican party in Brazos County by the late 1860s.

In 1870, Deputy Sheriff William H. Millican entered a saloon owned by Republican Robert Myers. Millican's goal was to kill Myers over an investigation Myers had ordered of Millican's activities. When the shooting was over, Millican lay dead. Myers, his son David, and nephew G. W. Hardy were convicted of murder, but the verdict later was overturned (Scott 1986:98). The feud between Millican and Myers, feuding apparently being a common trait in the Millican clan, erupted out of the former Confederate's dislike of the Republicans and their party, of which Myers was a willing and active member. After his guilty verdict was overturned, Robert Myers returned to Millican and ran for Justice of the Peace in 1870. In May of 1871, John E. Millican, who succeeded his brother William as Deputy Sheriff, killed Robert Myers and went into hiding. He returned to Millican one year later, only to be murdered near his home by Allan Myers and Nannie Boldridge, both children of Robert Myers. Nannie was married to B.F. Boldridge, a close political ally of her father's, and a man who had a strong dislike for the Millican clan in

general. B. F. Boldridge was a member of the politically charged State Police, and was responsible for investigating, and creating, several charges against William and John Millican (Hamilton 1986:270; Scott 1986:98). Yet these events and the daily misbehaving on all sides were only part of the routine of life in the region. There would be one defining act of violence that would shake the area: the Millican Race Riots.

By the summer of 1868, tensions between the whites and freedmen in Millican had grown increasingly worse. Prior to the end of the Civil War, the taking of a black life was seen as a grave economic error among slaveholders and their supporters. The blacks were chattel, and were seen as more than just an investment, but also a source of liquid capital, as easily exchanged as money. But with emancipation, black freedmen were no longer an economic asset to the white planters and townsfolk, but seen as something of a threat. By 1868, a large number of freedmen had come to the Millican area in search of jobs with the railroad. The crime rate of white-on-black violence had grown, as had the rate of black-on-black and black-on-white violence. Among some of the blacks were rumors of poisonings and lynchings by whites. Former slave Annie Day, who lived as a slave in Boonville, recounted one

story. She said that:

I wuz told by some older niggers dat after de war and de slaves had dere freedom, de niggers was told to go to Millican. A lot of 'em went down dere. Dey wuz awful hungry, and de storekeepers dere give 'em barrels of apples to eat and de apples had been poisoned, and dey killed a lot of de colored people (Rawick 1979:4.3.1160 [vol.num.page]).

Even the occupying troops, many just young, raw recruits, were not immune from occasional participation in acts of violence. Twenty soldiers passing through Bryan on their way to the frontier in May of 1868 decided to vent their frustrations by firing at every freedman who came near them. They also attempted to assault the local black school, but outraged freedmen decided to fight back. Two freedmen were injured in the skirmish (Scott 1986:97).

On June 7, 1868, the Ku Klux Klan made its first officially reported appearance in Brazos County. In typical Klan fashion, the group of hooded men carried their obnoxious behavior past a black church in Millican. The churchgoers responded by opening fire at the Klansmen, who immediately left without responding (Cantrell 1990:351). Many of the freedmen, fearful of further violence in the wake of the appearance of the Klan, began to organize. Led by George Brooks, a black pastor and the Registrar of Voters, many of the freedmen organized into a militia unit. Brooks had already been reviled by whites in

the area for being a black man in a position of power, and claimed that Brooks said he'd been ordered by God to help kill the white population. Within a short period of time, Brook's unit had grown to over 100 men, and practiced each Saturday in the visible Freedman's area of Millican.

Complaints about the activities of Brooks and his militia were directed to Capt. N. H. Randlett, the Subassistant Commissioner for the 20th Subdistrict of the Freedmen's Bureau, of which Millican was a part. The mayor and many of the white citizens were alarmed and disturbed by the sight of armed Negroes practicing military maneuvers. Randlett responded that he would order the blacks to disband and cease their drills only when the Klan disbanded. The solution was accepted, and Randlett issued an order prohibiting the demonstration of any armed band not sanctioned by law. Randlett's order was soon ignored, as Randlett was called away from Millican. Events came to a head on July 15, 1868, and the riots began in earnest.

A rumor traveled to Millican that Miles Brown, a black man and a member of the Loyal League, had been hung on the farm of Andrew Holiday, a white man residing in the Brazos bottoms. It was said that Holiday had threatened Brown before, thus making him the most likely suspect.

Pastor Brooks charged Harry Thomas with gathering a force of freedmen to find Miles Brown's body. Later, some claimed that Brooks had also ordered the group to lynch Holiday if they found him. Approximately 30 freedmen gathered in Millican and headed towards Holiday's land. They were joined on the outskirts of town by another group of 20 freedmen, much to the dismay of the local white population. The group never found Brown's body, and he was later reported to be alive and well. Apparently, Brown had been reported murdered, lynched, or dead on a few previous occasions unrelated to this one.

Soon after the departure of the freedmen, word came to Millican that Holiday's house was surrounded, and that the freedmen meant to attack him. Rumor also had it that the freedmen were going to attack the local whites. Women and children from outside of Millican began arriving in town, seeking protection. A group of whites organized and headed towards the bottoms, the riverine plains along the Brazos River. Mayor Wheat and a deputy sheriff named Patillo gathered more men, overtook the first group of white men, and Wheat and Patillo took charge. This group soon encountered the returning freedmen. While Wheat was speaking to Harry Thomas, a shot was fired, followed by more shots. The freedmen scattered, and both groups

returned to their homes in Millican. Thomas and two other freedmen were left for dead.

Mayor Wheat went to speak with Parson Brooks in an attempt to stop any further violence. He failed in his attempt to get Brooks to agree to a meeting, and he returned to Millican early in the evening. Upon his return, he told the whites gathered that there would be a fight. The assembled group set up blockades, and killed two freedmen who tried to enter the town. Parson Brooks, in the interim, had changed his mind, and sent word to Wheat that he would meet with him. Both Wheat and Brooks met, and a compromise was struck. The black citizens would cease going about armed and the whites would stop their Klan demonstrations. Both sides seemed, at least on the surface, to be agreeable to this deal.

Prior to this compromise, word had been sent to Sheriff John H. Neill in Bryan requesting help. Neill gathered a posse of 100 or more men, most of whom savored the chance for a fight. Capt. Randlett joined Neill and the posse, and returned by train to Millican that night. When the group arrived, Wheat made his report to Neill and Randlett, and he informed the sheriff that help was no longer needed. Sheriff Neill, citing the need to investigate, chose to stay, and kept the posse there as

well. On the morning of July 16, some of the freedmen reported to Capt. Randlett, asking for protection. Sheriff Neill sent a deputy to meet with Parson Brooks, who then sent word that he would not agree to the deal he and Wheat had made the night before. Fearful of more violence, Mayor Wheat sent a request to Brooks that the two of them meet with Sheriff Neill and Capt. Randlett. Brooks did not attend the meeting. When Randlett went to Freedmans Town to investigate, he found it empty.

Word came to Millican that the freedmen were gathering for an attack on Millican. The white citizens wanted the morning train to be sent back to Bryan for reinforcements. Randlett refused to order that action, but did order a telegram asking for troops from Brenham be sent when the train reached Navasota. By late morning, the rumor that more than 1,000 blacks were poised for attack swept through Millican. Sheriff Neill demanded that Capt. Randlett send the southbound freight train back to Bryan for help. Randlett acquiesced, seeing no other alternative available. By early afternoon, 150 excited men arrived. Later, Lt. Green and 20 federal troops arrived from Brenham, and Lt. Green ordered the civilians to go home. Most did, but not without a few acts of vigilantism and vandalism on the way.

By the morning of July 17, calm had seemingly been restored. Unconfirmed accounts of groups of freedmen preparing to attack proved to be untrue, as did rumors of Pastor Brook's whereabouts. By the morning of July 18, rumors that Brooks had been hanged began arriving in Millican, and no groups of armed freedmen had been sighted since the 16th. A week later, the badly decomposed body of a black man was identified as Pastor Brooks by virtue of his clothing and missing digit from his right hand. He was buried at the Brooks Chapel A.M.E. Church near Millican. The church has long since disbanded, and Brooks' marker is in the unkept graveyard. Along with Brooks, four other freedmen were killed; Moses Hardy, King Holiday, Harry Thomas, and Dan Zephyr. Freedman Mac Moore was wounded, and freedmen Robert and Idle were known to be wounded and missing. No white citizens died during the riot Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (RF&AL) 1868; Hamilton 1986:269; Scott 1986:95-96; Wheat 1868:5). As a result of the riot, federal occupation troops were once again stationed in Brazos County. In October of 1868, Company K of the 15th Regiment was stationed in Bryan (Scott 1986:97).

It is important to view the riot and the violence against the freedmen in terms of their context. As the

slave narratives will reveal in the next chapter, this level of violence was not a part of the day-to-day reality of plantation life in Brazos and her neighboring counties. There is no evidence to indicate that the local slaves were physically mistreated. The Millican riot and the events which led up to it were borne out of a reaction to a very specific set of circumstances. As an event, the riot provides an interesting case study in the ways that rumor and allegation can affect mass behavior. As a part of the violence which emerged after Emancipation, the riot serves as a pinnacle moment. Later Freedmens Bureau records do record other singular instances of violence, but none compare to the Millican Race Riot, and the level of pre-riot violence of whites against blacks began to drop off. The riot was a singular case of violence which had its roots in the uncertainties caused by the military occupation of the town, the new rules imposed by Congressional Reconstruction, and the new status of both the former slaves and the white population which once enslaved them.

On the heels of the Millican Race Riot, the yellow fever epidemic, and the loss of the railhead, the town of Millican and the surrounding area slowly declined. Many businesses chose to follow the railroad, but a few

remained. By 1885, a large cotton gin was built near Millican and operated until World War I, and in 1890, W.D. Ward founded *The Millican News*, a successful weekly newspaper. The community of Allenfarm, south of Millican on the border of James and Robert Millican Sr.'s grant, was established as a depot by the International and Great Northern Railroad in 1902. The town of 100 in 1915 boasted of a three-story depot, two cotton gins, three saloons, a general store, and a post office. The I&GN also had a flagstop at nearby Cawthon to the east. The town had a grist mill, a cotton gin, a school, and a saloon. Between Allenfarm and Cawthon, the black settlement of Bethel Grove was established. The former Allenfarm, Millican, and Templeman Hill school for black children was located there. Today, the former school grounds are the location of the AMT Senior Citizens Center.

Since the first Anglo settlers and their slaves began clearing this land, very little has changed. With the exception of a few buildings and the macadam surface of FM 159 and a few side roads, the land has retained its rural, isolated appearance. The riverine lands of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation are still dedicated to farming. Today, maize has been added to cotton as a staple of the agricultural base. On the marginal terrace lands near

Millican, land once cleared for grazing is covered with second growth stands of post oak and scrub brush. What was once the town of Millican is now a collection of a few buildings and roads. Except for the historical marker at the junction of FM 159 and FM 2154 noting the location of Camp Speight, there is little to remind anyone of what was once here. The agricultural heritage of the land is omnipresent, but reminders of the people who shaped this heritage are virtually non-existent. Instead, the history of these people must be inferred, and it is to building this inference that our dialogue will turn to next.

CHAPTER III

LIFEWAYS

The early settlers in Brazos County saw in this region the potential for growth and security and the opportunity to pursue their agrarian lifestyle. The routes of roads like the OSR which linked parts of East Texas with Mexico in the Colonial Period, and with the early Capitol at Washington-on-the-Brazos during the Republic, the proximity to a river port in the early 1840s, and the base for the largest inland railhead in Texas by 1860 certainly added to the security and vision of these early settlers. But when we turn our attention to the development of the county's agriculture and growth, it is clearly the slaves who deserve most of the credit, and whose history we need to develop. Through their forced labor, the visions of their owners were transformed into realities.

There are any number of reasons that contribute to the slow development of in-depth studies of slave history in America, from Anglo-centric bias, scarcity of reliable, first-hand information, to lack of interest in the topic, and all points between. The lack of developed studies has also been true in the histories of slavery in Texas, which

for a time shared with Delaware the distinction of being one of the two Southern states without any book-length studies on the history of slavery and slaves in their borders. However, some more recent works, such as Randolph Campbell's 1989 study, *An Empire for Slavery*, do provide good general histories of slavery in Texas. In the introduction to *Singing the Master*, Roger Abrahams notes that:

It may seem surprising that any new ideas regarding the social and cultural life of the plantation in the American South might be put forward. Yet there remains a lack of understanding of how African American cultural forms emerged in the midst of a society that systematically repressed the slaves. The cultural production of slaves needs to be reconsidered if we are to begin to describe effectively the dynamic, expressive interrelations of the two cultures living side by side, which has never been adequately described (1992:xvii).

Since the early 1970s, many scholars have begun to develop serious studies on the social history of slavery at national, state, and regional levels. Traditionally led by historians, these studies tend to focus on the more tangible aspects of slavery: economics of the plantations, slave treatment, rebellions, and other aspects of slavery that are documented in the historical record. These areas are generally supported by extant documents, and are areas familiar to the skills of the historian.

One of the major hurdles to overcome in developing

any history or study of slavery is the lack of firsthand information or objective material written during the time of slavery by those who participated directly in the institution, namely the slaves themselves. Abolitionist tracts, popular throughout the history of slavery in America, are wholly and completely unobjective sources. Equally as biased are the writings of proponents of slavery--owners, overseers, and supporters in the community--who tended to view slavery as Biblically justifiable, and morally beneficial to the slaves. With a few exceptions, a happy medium between these two extreme points of view has been sorely lacking. Even when available, the material is often filtered through an Anglo-centric point of view. Kenneth Stampp argued that:

The letters written by slaves were usually written to white men; the slave autobiographies were often dictated to and written by white men; and the early collections of slave songs and folklore were put together by white men, who may well have missed the nuances of this often subtle material. In short, the ubiquitous white man, as master, editor, traveler, politician, and amanuensis, stands forever between slave and historian, telling the historian how the slave was treated, how he behaved, what he thought, and what sort of personality he had. However imaginative the historian may be, he will always have trouble breaking through this barrier, and he will always be handicapped by the paucity of firsthand testimony from the slaves themselves (1971:368-369).

Yet even without firsthand information from the period before 1865, the development of interpretations of

the institution of slavery in Texas is possible. Scholars have long recognized the value of multiple sources of information. Among these are probate records, wills, newspaper reports, diaries, government records, and legal proceedings. Even the much maligned abolitionist and slave owners' tracts are useful in providing insights into slavery. There are also other sources, such as collected narratives of former slaves, which provide the most reliable sources of first-hand information from which to understand the human side of slavery. Among these, the largest is the Federal Writers Project Slave Narratives collection.

Preliminary collections done in the South at institutions such as Fisk University and by local groups and agencies in the 1920s provided a starting point for the collection of the Federal Writer's Project--Slave Narratives (FWPSN). Begun in 1936 as Library of Congress Project No. 165-2-26-7, Work Project No. 540, the FWPSN represented the culmination of the varied projects conducted throughout the 1920s and 30s. Folklorist John Lomax, then National Advisor on Folklore and Folkways for the Federal Writers Project led the initial collections and developed the standardized questionnaire form for the fieldworkers in 1936, considered by many to be the most

critical period of the collection (Rawick 1972:xv-xvii). Fellow folklorist Benjamin A. Botkin assumed the duties of editor for the project in October of 1937, and was responsible for their collection at the Library (Rawick 1972:xv-xxi, 168-171). Louisiana was the only Southern state that did not participate directly in the FWPSN, but the later Louisiana Writers Project created the collection *Gumbo Ya-Ya* (Rawick 1972:xxi), similar to the FWPSN collections (Rawick 1972:xxi).

The collection of the WPA's narratives was accomplished mainly by volunteer writers who were familiar with the local community. Relying either on personal knowledge of informants, or on tips from members of the community, postal carriers, government and community agents, *et alia*, they set out to record the narratives of the former slaves (Rawick 1972:xvi, xviii). Thus, through pure happenstance or self selection, a body of narratives was collected. The interviewers were not wholly unprepared for the collection work they were to undertake. Following the guidelines for interviewing first developed by John Lomax, project director Henry G. Alsberg expanded the scope of the interviewers' questions and topic areas (Rawick 1972:172-178). The questions proposed by Lomax and Alsberg were to serve as general guidelines, with the

informant being the primary controller of the scope of topics covered. Interviewers were encouraged to allow their informants to cover a broad range of topics on slavery, from home life, insurrections, work, punishment, et cetera, to Emancipation and Reconstruction, folktales, songs, games, and customs (Rawick 1972:173-177). The guidelines even attempted to standardize transcription practices, for example, not using *gwainter* for "gwineter" (going to), *fiuh* or *fiah* for "fire," or writing *j'in* for "jine" (join) (Rawick 1972:178). While a good idea in theory, even a cursory reading of the narratives reveals a lack of standardization among the interviewers' transcriptions.

These primary collections of personal experience narratives are valuable to current ethnographic research for their ability to convey the slaves' point of view. Botkin noted the importance of the collections in a 1941 introduction to the project. Anticipating their value, Botkin surmised that:

Set beside the work of formal historians, social scientists, slave autobiographers, and contemporary records of abolitionists and planters, these life histories, taken down as far as possible in the narrators' words, constitute an invaluable body of unconscious evidence or indirect source material, which scholars and writers dealing with the South, especially, social psychologists and cultural anthropologists, cannot afford to reckon without. For

the first and last time, a large number of surviving slaves (many of whom have since died) have been permitted to tell their own story, in their own way. In spite of obvious limitations . . . this saga must remain the most authentic and colorful source of our knowledge of the lives and thoughts of thousands of slaves, of their attitudes toward one another, toward their masters, mistresses, and overseers, toward poor whites, North and South, the Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction, religion, education, and virtually every phase of Negro life in the South.

The narratives belong to folk history--history recovered from the memories and lips of participants or eye-witnesses, who mingle group with individual experience and both with observation, hearsay, and tradition. Whether the narrators relate what they actually saw and thought and felt, what they imagine, or what they have thought and felt about slavery since, now we know why they thought and felt as they did (Rawick 1972:171).

Recognizing the importance of these narratives as an analytical tool, this dissertation will use the slave narratives as one of its key sources of information.

The concept of giving voice to those who were directly involved in slavery, or searching for their personality, demands an evaluation built upon multiple sources, the most important being the WPA narratives. The slave narratives represent one of the few sources of first-person information available. The narratives can be verified by checking against extant documents, such as probate records, plantation records, government inquiries, and other sources. Despite concerns about the veracity of oral collections, the minds of those who lived through

slavery, like those who lived through any trying time, maintain a relatively high level of accuracy. The testimony of survivors of the Holocaust, for example, is accepted as evidence in court cases against former Nazis to this day, despite a lapse of fifty years since the end of World War II.

The patterns of consistency in the narratives also serves to help establish the veracity of the narratives. For example, narratives of capture in Africa almost always include a reference to red cloth being used to lure the Africans to the slavers' boats. For the Texas narratives, there is, in narratives recalling slave and Native American relations a consistent pattern of animosity between the two groups. Similarly, these patterns of consistency can be used to counteract arguments of racist, or white bias in the collections. Criticisms of white southerner John Lomax's motives in collecting African American materials are generally predicated on his alleged racist motives. By extension, these charges sometimes fall on the bulk of the WPA Slave Narratives collated by Benjamin Botkin, Lomax's contemporary and successor on the project, and on director Henry Alsberg as well. Thus, collections of materials either by Lomax, or on his models as is the case with the WPA Slave Narratives, are

sometimes viewed with suspicion by some researchers. Ostensibly, the narratives were to be collected by white-collar blacks, but realistically, that was not the case. Yet the patterns of consistency across the Texas narratives and the corroborating evidence reveal that the voice of the former slaves is most clearly represented in the narratives, not the voice or biases of white collectors.

Finally, we may further trust these narratives because of the memory culture among many of these freedmen who lived primarily in communities with other former slaves; many near the area where they had been enslaved. The "traditions of custom, belief, song, dance, narrative, and craft were passed to succeeding generations" (Vlach 1981:159), and were shared with the WPA field workers interested in documenting the lives of these people. Minor details, such as substituting the Ku Klux Klan for the "Paddyrollers," or referring to Washington-on-the-Brazos as the capitol of America are easily accounted for. The narratives, despite minor distractions, provide us with the best source of primary materials for understanding the lives of the slaves who built this area. Appendix II contains the full transcripts of selected slave narratives.

The narratives selected for use are from the edited collection, *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography, Supplement Series II* (Rawick 1979). George Rawick edited the collections of the FWPSN and organized them by the state where each narrative was collected rather than where the informant had been a slave. For Our purposes, the selection of the included narratives depended on a two-tier process. First, only the narratives for former slaves from Texas were reviewed. Second, narratives primarily from those slaves who could be connected by their stories to Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Milam, Robertson, and Washington Counties were selected for use.

Out of Africa

When Moses Austin first petitioned for permission to establish a colony in Texas, the direct importation of slaves had already been outlawed in America. The British had also outlawed the practice, and had naval vessels on routine patrol in the Caribbean to stop the slavers still coming in. Yet despite these efforts, the penalties exercised when caught and convicted, and the dangers involved in the Middle Passage, slaves were still brought illegally from Africa usually by way of the Caribbean well into the nineteenth century. Within the slave narratives,

there are many accounts of African capture, either of parents or the slaves themselves, and these accounts also surface in the narratives of slaves from this region.

As the first established colony in Texas to include slaves, Austin's colony is replete with stories of African slaves being brought into the region. Tradition holds that the last sale of African slaves in America occurred in 1840 at the mouth of the San Bernard River--the Bernard in local parlance--which empties into the Gulf of Mexico a few miles south of the Brazos River and the town of Velasco in Brazoria County (Foster 1984:62-63). Already well established as a smuggling point, many sales occurred here throughout the early years of the colony. Slavers brought their cargoes in by way of Cuba, and then across the Gulf to the Bernard (Foster 1984:62-63). According to Bertha Dobie, the local population of former slaves in this region told the tale of *The Death Bell of the Brazos*, which recounts the sinking of a cargo of slaves off the coast near Velasco. On certain evenings, the bell would toll-out the number of slaves who were drowned (1976:141-142). The banks of the Bernard provided river access to number of major plantations, including the Peach Point plantation, owned by Stephen Austin's sister and brother-in-law, Emily and James Perry; the Levi Jordon plantation;

and Sterling McNeel's plantation. In March of 1836, Sterling McNeel was implicated by William Fisher of Brazoria of having brought in a shipment of Africans (Campbell 1989:46).

Despite official bans, the trade in African slaves did occur in Texas throughout the early 1830s and 1840s. During the statehood conventions held at San Felipe de Austin in 1832 and 1833, the importation of African slaves was expressly condemned by the delegates, and was an official part of the proposed Texas state constitution presented to the government of Mexico (Campbell 1989:38). Despite that, well-known Texans, like Sterling McNeel, James Fannin trading under the alias J. F. Walker (Dobie 1976:141), and Ben Fort Smith engaged in the trade. Fannin continued his participation in the illegal trade in African slaves well into 1835, and the schooner *Shanandoah* was alleged to have brought 170 Africans in near Velasco at the mouth of the Bernard (Campbell 1989:38-39, 46). The importation of African slaves into Texas was officially outlawed by the constitution of the Republic of Texas in 1836, and by state law and United States law after statehood in 1845.

While no documentary evidence exists to support the existence of slaves imported directly from Africa in the

Brazos Valley, per se, there is some reason to believe that they were brought to the region. Much has been made of the history of the Gullah-speaking slaves at Chenango, a plantation in Brazoria County. As a group vastly different from the slaves at other plantations, these slaves and their descendants have remained something of a cultural isolate (Vlach 1993:244-245). In like fashion, some former slaves who settled in the area near what is now College Station and in Navasota, an area which includes southwestern Brazos County, are alleged in the WPA narratives to have been African slaves, or their first-generation descendants at the end of the Civil War. Circumstantial evidence to support this idea is the early lack of interaction of blacks from this area with blacks from other towns, which Wagley and Harris note was not uncommon (1958:121).

The bulk of American slaves came from the West Indies, and were already aculturated, or "seasoned" to a Anglo-European lifestyle. African slaves arriving in this country during the nineteenth century would find themselves in a milieu in which slaves already here were culturally distant from the more recent arrivals (Wagley and Harris 1958:121). Some of their traditions are also used to support this theory. The music of Texas bluesman

Mance Lipscomb, who hailed from Navasota and the Brazos Bottoms, for example, is notable for its unique, older style with some African retentions in its form (Evans 1977:109-110; McCormick 1960:2). Lipscomb, who was born and reared at Michelborough Farm eight miles east of Allenfarm from 1895-1925, spent much of his life working and playing near Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation at White Switch on the eastern border of Allenfarm from 1925-1932, and at Sommers Farm across the Brazos River from Rogers Plantation from 1945-1956 (Alyn 1994:9; 25; 45; 113-114; 298-299). There is also at least one reference to former slaves performing "African" funerals replete with traditional dress (Carlson and Moss 1995:232). Finally, the narratives of former slaves from the region which detail capture in Africa of either themselves or a parent, and the "healthy memory culture of Africa among Texas blacks, though most of them had never been there," and as evidenced by analysis of games, songs and crafts (Vlach 1981:159) point to the very real possibility of African-born slaves imported into Brazos County.

The location of a major inland port by the 1850s in nearby Washington-on-the-Brazos, main routes from the coast, especially the Houston and Galveston area, and the rapid growth of settlements, especially larger plantations

along the east bank of the Brazos River could have concealed the importation of African slaves into the region. This and the oral traditions suggest that the importation of African slaves could have occurred. The strongest support of this idea comes from the WPA slave narratives. Several make claims of parents being brought from Africa, while a few contend that the informants themselves were from Africa. While none describe the brutality of the Middle Passage, some do include details of capture.

The typical stories of capture include the use of enticements to lure the Africans to the slavers' boats. Lu Lee, who claimed her grandparents were captured in Africa, said they told her that the slavers lured them to the boat by waving pieces of red cloth (Rawick 1979:6.5.2291). The "Red Hankies" as some narratives called the slavers, represents a recurring motif in many capture stories. Former slave Jim Cape (see narrative in Index II) had papers which showed he was brought to America on a slave ship in 1820, and recalled fishing in Africa, which he maintained was a part of America (Rawick 1979:3.2.618-619). Charlie Cooper claimed that his father was from Africa, and said that:

They told me lots about my parent's and

grandparent's. They were so free and happy until the white man came to this country and captured and sold them into slavery. Father he was captured and sold them into slavery. They said he was a race of the most carefree and happiest people that ever was on the face of the Globe. Nothing to bother, no debts, always had plenty to eat which they gathered from the fields and woods. They said father had 30 wives and somewhere 90 children, and that he was direct descendant of a Prophet of the Bible. We never was taught or believed in that kind of Bible that we had today. We worshiped the sun, moon, and stars like the Indians when I was brought to this country and I still believes in that way lots today (Rawick 1979:3.2.920-921)².

Similarly, Rosie McGillery, who claimed her grandparents were from Africa, also said they worshiped the sun, moon, and stars (Rawick 1979:7.6.2499). This apparent retention of African religious forms is supported by the archaeological record in one instance in Austin's colony. Kenneth Brown's work on a mid-nineteenth-century settlement on the Texas coast (1989) occupied by illegally smuggled African slaves unearthed a room containing many objects similar to those associated with *minkisi*, the sacred medicines of the Bakongo peoples (Ferguson 1992:114).

Yach Stringfellow, from Brenham in Washington County, said his father, who "come from de ole Africa an wuz tall an straight as an arrow," while Taby Jones, who came to

² Quotations from the slave narratives are *verbatim*.

Texas from South Carolina, recalled that his father could not adjust well to life outside of Africa (Rawick 1979:9.8.3748, 6.5.2143). Nancy Antwine, who was twelve years old at the time of Emancipation, was a slave on the Heald plantation on the Bernard, Brazoria County. Her narrative relates how her mother came to America.

It seem like she and her sister, had took a basket of peanuts down to the river bank to wash and clean 'em, an' in the water was a boat an' on it was white folks.

They had lots of red cloth an' things, an' a boat come to land an' they say they wants to trade cloth for peanuts, an' gets mammy an' her sister to get in the little boat an' come out to the big boat. Then while they was lookin' round, the boat it starts goin' and they is put down in a big place an' sees lots more of black folks down there, an' that is how she come here.

But after she got here, she didn't know where they landed, an' she never did see her sister no more. She was bought by Marse Willie, and then she tell me, her an' my pappy got married (Rawick 1979:2.1.61).

Given Nancy's age, it is more than likely her mother was brought to Texas in the mid to late 1830s, which could support allegations of the late slave trade. In addition, the Heald plantation is not that far from Sterling McNeel's, and McNeel was implicated in the importation and trade of African slaves in 1836 (Campbell 1989:46).

Some slaves claimed they were of mixed descent, sometimes white and black, and others of Indian and black descent. While none of the narratives from this region

make the same claim, there are a few from Louisiana and extreme southeast Texas in which the former slaves of mixed race remember parents or other relatives who were free and who owned slaves. Some even recall earning their freedom and buying slaves, or recall voluntarily enslaving themselves. Sylvia King, described by the interviewer as "striking," claimed mixed heritage. She said she was born in Morocco, and lived in Bordeaux, France. While young, she was "stolen" from Bordeaux and brought to New Orleans, where she was sold on the block to a master named Jones of La Grange, Fayette County, Texas (Rawick 1979:6.5.2224). While not common, there were instances of Indians or their children from mixed unions being enslaved. Sue Lockridge, who had been a slave on the Alcorn Plantation in Washington County said, "my daddy was Isom Bilbo. He come from Injun Territory and he were free-bo'on. He could't talk us talk, he talk Cherokee" (Rawick 1979:6.5.2403). No matter how the slaves got here, either as African slaves, slaves born from white and black or Indian and black unions, or as slaves born in the United States, one reality remained; they were slaves. As such, their lives consisted of patterns of work directed by their masters, and patterns of life primarily controlled by their masters as well.

Patterns of Work

Like slaves throughout the rest of the South, the daily realities of slavery in this area of Brazos County consisted of alternating patterns of drudgery depending on the seasons, and the occupations of the individual slaves. The days ran from sunup to sundown, with only occasional periods of free time. Former slave Hattie Cole, who lived on the Hearne Plantation in Robertson County with 200 other slaves recalled that:

De wo'k am all 'ranged 'cordin' to rule. Ise use to lak to watch dem in de mo'nin' w'en deys gits ready fo' wo'k. Ise gwine tell yous 'bout it. De bell rings, den yous sees de cullud fo'ks pilin' out ob de cabins, an' gwine to de field, de shops, an' tudder places whar deys wo'k. De overseer an' de Marster am talkin' to dis one an' dat one, givin' de ordahs. Some goes to de shoeshop, some to de carpentershop, some to de weavin' room, an' so on. Den thar am big herd ob cows, an' de milkers goes to de milkin'. Yous heah dis one an' dat one shoutin' to somebody 'bout dis an' dat, an' ever'thing am in a hustle. Heah an' thar, yous heah some ob dem singin'. It makes me lonesome w'en Ise think 'bout it (Rawick 1979:3.2.777-778).

Charles Tait, a large planter in neighboring Colorado County, codified a list of rules for the successful operation of plantations (see Appendix III). For the labor periods, he required that "from October to April be ready to work at daylight with time allowed for the noon meal. From April 1 to October 1 go to work at sunrise, rest one to two and one-half hours according to circumstances

during the day" and to "always require the Negroes to eat breakfast meals before going to work" (Bornhorst 1971:201-203; Campbell 1989:119-120; Tait 1855). This call for work from sunrise to sunset was the general rule, as reflected in South Carolina planter B. McBride's 1830 dictum of "no before-day work, good day light will be quite time enough to commence the labour of the day," while a Virginia planter in 1821 stated that "my Negroes go forth at about sunrise in the morning . . . dine about 1 . . . and cease to labour at sunset" (Breedon 1980:62).

Former slave Rosa Pollard recalled that "Maser had 100 acres in his plantation, he never had but 7 grown slaves on it and 3 little slaves. He woke us up about 4 o'clock ever morning so'es we could help Mistress and the men could feed and tend to his stock. He worked us just as long every day as we could see" (Rawick 1979:8.7.3119). Likewise, Sue Lockridge, who lived on the Alcorn plantation in neighboring Washington County remembered that "De han's hafter be in de fiel' at daylight," and that when work was done, they were too tired to do more than eat and go to sleep (Rawick 1979:6.5.2405).

Charlie Cooper, refuged from Monroe, Louisiana to Madisonville recalled that:

the overse'er he would wake the slaves up every

morning 'bout 3:30 o'clock and make us tend to the stock so we could be in the field waiting for daylight to come. . . Maser worked us just as long as we could see then we come in and have to tend to all the stock. It would be near 10 o'clock every night before we could go to our quarters (Rawick 1979:3.2.922-923).

Just as varied as the times for work were the occupations of the slaves. We have developed a stereotype of slaves as field hands, all busy tending to the crops, especially cotton. Some have even generalized that "few acquired the skills of any particular craft" (Barr 1973:19), and that field work was all that most slaves ever learned. While Hollywood and countless sagas of the Old South have certainly reenforced that image, it is not a necessarily true picture of slavery. The picture further loses focus when viewed in the context of Brazos County and like environs where agriculture was but a part of the overall economy. The occupations of the slaves--textile crafts, carpentry, and pottery among them (Vlach 1981:149-161)--were as varied as their owners, and many narratives relate training in other fields besides picking cotton or tending to animal herds. Annie Day, who was a slave in Boonville, worked in her mistress' hotel, while Mary Mallet Edwards, a former slave from the Mallet Plantation on Mill Creek, Washington County, was hired out by her master as a nurse (Rawick 1979:4.3.1160, 1282). Elsie

Reece, who lived on the Mueldrew Plantation in Grimes County recalled that she worked as a dressmaker and her brother was a shoemaker on the Mueldrew plantation (Rawick 1979:8.7.3272). Other narratives recount training as carpenters, ox and mule drivers, butchers, ministers, and mechanics, to name a few skills. Aaron Nunn's father was trained as a blacksmith, and Aaron, born on the Nunn Plantation near Brenham, carried on this trade, as well as metalwork and "mechanicing" as a young slave and later as a freedman (Rawick 1979:8.7.2953-2958). While some masters preferred to train their slaves in various skills to maintain a level of self sufficiency on the plantation, this sentiment was not universal. The editors of the *Brenham Enquirer*, then the local newspaper, opined that training slaves as mechanics was counterproductive. The training, they argued, ruined perfectly good field hands, and confused the underdeveloped Negro mind. Further, Negro mechanics took away jobs from the pool of available white mechanics, and provided little incentive for young white males to pursue this as a career. In short, it was their belief that slave owners should abandon this practice forthwith, and return their slaves to the fields (July 16, 1858:2).

To further complicate or add to the workday burden of

many plantation slaves in Texas was the need to actually build the plantation. Several narratives recount long, tedious days of clearing land, constructing out buildings and dwellings, and establishing the first crops as soon after arrival as possible. Unlike the more settled regions of the South, the lands in Texas were raw expanses of unimproved acreage that could destroy the will of some settlers and their slaves. But others pressed on and built their plantations. Henry Baker recalled coming to Washington County from Richmond, Virginia, during the Civil War. His owner, Dr. Neal, put the slaves to work clearing his new land, and building a big house for himself and huts for them (Rawick 1979:2.1.144). Wash Wilson described the trek to Texas from Louisiana after being sold on the block to Bill Anderson. Although freed by Union forces on the road to Texas, Wash and many other freedmen stayed with Anderson, cleared the land, built houses, and established the farm (Rawick 1979:10.9.4237). Ironically, it was the slaves' abilities and skills as field hands, carpenters, and such, which allowed them to build their own prisons (Vlach 1981:157).

Dusk meant the end of the workday on the plantation, or at least the end of outdoor labor. The reality often was continued work for the slaves in their quarters or

elsewhere on the plantation, depending on the season. While many planters claimed to eschew the practice of night work, others like Charles Tait called for "the women (are) to spin thread, beginning in November, to make the plow lines. They are to spin at night" (Bornhorst 1971:201-203; Tait 1855). Others set their slaves to varied tasks such as cooking, if no full-time cook was employed; carding cotton in season; spinning thread and weaving cloth. Many clothing goods were manufactured on the plantations, and the narratives suggest that few planters were willing to let good nighttime hours go to waste. Wash Wilson remembered that his mother " 'ud wukk in de fiel' er in de kitchen an' den spin de thread for clothes by candle lamp" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4232), and Steve Robertson, born on the large Robertson Plantation in Washington County said:

Dere am one wo'k dat am mostest 'portant to me. Dat's de wo'k my mammy do aftah she wo'k all day in de field. When she come in she am given de certain 'mount of cotton or wool to spin into thread. Dey takes de thread an' weaves cloth an' den makes our clothes right dere on de place. W'en Ise wo'k fo my mammy, Ise runs de spinnin' wheel. Ise turn it fo' her, an dat way Ise 'lowed to stays up wid de old fo'ks an' hears dem talk 'bout dis an' dat. De clothes w'en dey am finished am called jeans. Dey am sorta like canvas (Rawick 1979:8.7.3333-3334)

When these chores were done, the slaves' day was ended. They could then rest until the plantation bell rang, or

the horn sounded around four in the morning.

Patterns of Life

Some masters allowed their slaves to have Saturday afternoons and Sundays off from their regular labors. During these times, the slaves were to clean their dwellings, their clothes, and themselves, and to prepare for inspection by either the overseer or master. Charles Tait called for "every Negro cabin is to be inspected on Sunday morning to be sure it is clean," and that "all hands in the field on Monday must be in clean clothes" (Bornhorst 1971:201-203; Tait 1855). One planter wrote in 1837 that:

Cleanliness (emphasis planter's) is a matter which can not be too closely attended to. . . I appoint a certain hour for attending to this matter on each Sabbath, say nine o'clock in the morning. Every Negro distinctly understands that at this hour he will be reviewed. An hour or so before the review, I make it the business of the driver to sound the horn for the Negroes to prepare themselves and their houses for inspection. When the hour for review has arrived, it is also his business to attend upon me and report the plantation ready for inspection. This being done, I repair to the Negro houses. At the door of each house, the occupants thereof are seen standing with their children, if they have any. My business here is to call their respective names, and to see that every one has his head well combed and cleaned, and their faces, hands, and feet well washed. The men are required, in addition to this, to have themselves shaved . . . I now see that their blankets, and all other body and bed clothing, have been hung out to air, if the weather be fine. Their

pots are also examined. I particularly see that they have been well cleansed, and nothing like "caked hominy" or potatoes is suffered to remain about them. I next enter their houses, and there see that every thing has been cleansed--and that their pails, dressers, tables, &c. have been washed down--that their chimneys have been swept and the ashes therefrom removed to one general heap in the yard, which serves as excellent manure for my lands (Breedon 1980:151-152).

Along with the inspections and cleaning, Saturdays, and sometimes Sundays, provided the opportunity for provisions to be doled out on the plantations where each slave family or group were responsible for their own meals. Nutritional requirements began to evolve as a major area of concern for slave owners, and the food stocks distributed were closely watched. Dr. M. W. Phillips, a physician and planter in Mississippi, called for a balance of vegetables, fruits, and water, and for the need to allow slaves time to eat each meal, while a fellow physician from Alabama called for reducing the amount of fat, especially pork fat, in the slaves' diet, and an increase in fiber (Breedon 1980:95-97). Charles Tait required that each slave's provisions for a week include "two and one-half to three pounds of bacon, milk and butter, molasses (when given molasses provide less meat, a quart of molasses equaling a pound of meat), five to six pounds of dried beef, one pack of meal, and potatoes." He

also required that "lying in women should receive one quart of coffee and two quarts of sugar, and be fed from the overseer's kitchen for the final two weeks." He also generously allowed his slaves "the use of sugar cane and potatoes from October 1 to April 1" (Bornhorst 1971:201-203; Tait 1855).

Supplementing the diet of the slaves was local fauna, including possum, fish, deer, rabbit, and wild fowl. Former slave Sally Neely, who came to Madisonville from Mississippi, remembered her diet on the plantation, and said that:

Son we always had plenty to eat during slavery, water cornbread, fresh from the field, nothing in it except salt and it was cooked on a big flat skillet on the open fire. Our meat was cooked the same way. Yes we had plenty pork and beef too all the time, it was cooked or fired on a big open skillet on the open fire place. Yes sir, we had some rabbit meat and possum too, once and awhile as they were not very many there on the plantation that cared for these kinds of meat, but fish we all loved that, and we had plenty of to eat nearly all the time. We cooked them on the open fire in a big flat skillet with plenty of grease - all the Negroes loved fish (Rawick 1979:7.6.2886-2887).

Rosa Pollard from Madisonville said "we always had plenty to eat, cornbread cooked in great big iron skillet place on the open fire-place . . . all kinds of meat and vegetables of all kinds we growed in the garden," although in her case, they had no private garden (Rawick

1979:8.7.3119). Many slaves recalled that they were allowed private gardens near their quarters, and some owners felt that allowing slaves to supplement their diet with foods they grew or caught themselves was of benefit to the slaves.

Yet not all owners agreed with allowing the slaves to cook their own foods. Some preferred to serve foods in a central location as a matter of economy, both in food stocks and in slave health. Many slave narratives recall meals on the plantation being served either at one place, or specified locations for each group. Bill Homer had been a slave near Caldwell, Burleson County, and said that "on my Marster's place, dere was a cookhouse an' all de cookin' was 'tended to by fouah cooks. Nex' to de cookhouse was de shed whar de food was served," and that he remembered always having plenty to eat (Rawick 1979:5.4.1784). Henry Baker of Washington County said that:

Now den, dey had one hut dat all de slaves ate in. Der waz one woman, dat waz Aunt Easter, she cooked for de whole push. I's don' 'member jus' how dey would git der breakfast, but I's know dat whin dey waz wokkin' next to de house dat she would blow a horn an' dey would cum in fur dinner. Whin dey waz wokkin' away from de house, she would fix der dinner up in buckets an' carry it to 'em. All de chillen ate together an' dey waz jus' lak pigs. Dey put de eats on de table an' dey sho went 'fter it. Der waz lots to eat such as it waz. Now in de spring of de yea'

we'ns had vegetables, pot-likker, co'n bread, milk an' coffee, very seldom de marster gave we'ns meat (Rawick 1979:2.1.145).

Saturday evenings served as one of the few times when slaves could get together, either with the other slaves on the plantation, or with slaves from other plantations. Although widely allowed, some owners felt "the Negroes should not be allowed to run about over the neighborhood" for fear that they might cause trouble (Breedon 1980:227). Most owners, however, saw the benefit to occasional diversions as "a very harmless amusement," and that their slaves "are much more cheerful and happy when indulged occasionally" (Breedon 1980:259). Some owners even actively encouraged dancing and parties on Saturday nights. One planter wrote in 1851 that he kept a slave, Charley, well supplied with catgut and other necessities, as Charley was an excellent fiddler. When Charley played, he was accompanied by Ihurod on the triangle, while Sam would "pat," or beat out a rhythm (Breedon 1980:278-279). Noah Smithwick wrote of his friend Judge R.M. Williamson, Washington district, who would use his wooden leg to "pat Juba for some nimble footed scapegrace to dance" (1935:20, 63, 71). Smithwick also recalls a wedding in the late 1820s where three slaves, one on the fiddle, one keeping the beat on a clevis--the metal, U-shaped bolt used for

attaching a drawbar to a plow--and the third scraping a cotton hoe with his case knife, provided the musical entertainment (1935:41). If the day-to-day world of the slaves was molded by their masters, it was these times of rest when the slave community formed its identity. Although still watched over by masters and overseers, the slaves could interact at a level unheard of during the workday.

The musical tradition of *Juba*, the use of the clevis, and the use of the cotton hoe are well documented occurrences in the South and the West Indies, and represent another African retention in the New World. *Juba* is often noted as a Yoruba day-word given as a name to some slave girls in the West Indies who were born on Mondays, with the name *Cudjoe* given to boys born on Mondays (Cassidy 1961:157). *Juba*, or *diuba*, is alternately noted as a Bantu word meaning "to pat, beat time, the sun, the hour" (Robinson 1990:215), and it is this definition which more closely fits the meaning of the word in the American South. Harold Courlander describes the *Juba* dance as a secular form of African dance performed at festival occasions and certain ritual occasions, such as the festivities after a funeral. The dance was widespread throughout the South and in the Francophonic West Indies.

"Patting Juba," as it was commonly called, was performed by clapping, stamping of feet, and patting of the arms, torso and thighs (Abrahams 1992:94; Epstein 1977:141-144, 154; Jones and Hawes 1972:37-40; Thorpe 1990:30-31).

Courlander includes a fragment of song collected by George Cable in the 1880s during a dance at Congo Square in New Orleans. The song:

"Juba jump, Juba sing,
 Juba cut that pigeon wing.
 Juba kick off this old shoe,
 Juba dance that Jubilo.
 Juba whirl them feet about,
 Juba blow the candle out.
 Juba swing, undo the latch,
 Juba do that long dog scratch."

indicates that the dance was a type of reel, with a leader calling the dance (1963:190-192). The song also mentions the "pigeon wing," and "the old shoe," (old soft shoe), staple moves of the tap dancer. Other popular dances among American slaves were: the Buck; the Pigeon Wing--also the Chicken Wing, in which the dancer would imitate the movement of a courting pigeon; the Jig; the Cake-Walk--a competitive dance for couples, and long a staple of plantation dances. A cake was generally offered as a prize for the best couple; Ring dances--similar to the Juba, except that it was a group-oriented dance; the Buzzard Lope--a complicated pantomime accompanied by descriptive

verse and imitations of a buzzard's movements; and Water Dances as evidenced by the narratives and other collections (Sharp 1989:149; Thorpe 1990:26, 28-30). The accompaniment of the Juba by doggerel verse in which Juba becomes anthropomorphised is noted throughout the South and West Indies (Thorpe 1990:31).

The Juba dance, also called the Jumba, as well as the Calinda and the Chica were brought to the South from plantations in the West Indies, and represent three of the most African of slave dances (Sharp 1989:149). Thorpe describes the Calenda and Chica as provocatively erotic "mating dances," where intimate contact was the norm (1990:16). The Juba, on the other hand, was one of the more important dances, and served primarily as a skill-dance which tested the abilities of the performers. He quotes from F. W. Wurdemann's account of slaves doing a Juba dance in Cuba in 1844:

Presently a woman advances and commencing a slow dance, made up of shuffling of the feet and various contortions of the body, thus challenges a rival from among the men. One of these, bolder than the rest, after a while steps out, and the two then strive which shall first tire the other; the woman performing many feats which the man attempts to rival, often excelling them, amid the shouts of the rest. A woman will sometimes drive two or three successive *beaux* from the ring, yielding her place at length to some impatient *belle*, who has been meanwhile looking on with envy at her success. Sometimes a sturdy fellow will keep the field for a

long time, and one after another of the other sex will advance to the contest only to be defeated; each one, as she retires, being greeted by the laughter of the spectators (in Thorpe 1990:16).

The shuffling of the feet, in this instance, probably reflects the establishment of the dance rhythm (Thorpe 1990:16).

Some of the popular dance and music forms found their way into an emerging entertainment form, the Minstrel Show, beginning in the 1840s. Performed primarily by whites, some black performers also gained popularity for their renditions of these slave dances. Among them was William Henry Lane, a free-born black performer who gained popularity in the 1840s. Going by the stage name "Master Juba," Lane combined the familiar slave dances with many popular Irish steps in his shows, learned from a youth spent in lower Manhattan in the Five Points District, home to free blacks and Irish immigrants alike. Master Juba's skills and hybrid steps were such that Lane was named "King of All Dancers" by the promoters of the Bowery and Chatham theaters in 1845 (Abrahams 1992:146-150; Sharp 1989:150; Thorpe 1990:42-43). Lane would go on to perform in the Vauxhall Gardens in 1850, and he died in London in 1852 (Thorpe 1990:43-44). Charles Dickens, writing under the pen name "Boz," described a performance by Lane in his

1842 version of *American Sketches* as:

Single shuffle, double shuffle, cut and cross-cut: snapping his fingers, rolling his eyes, turning in his knees, presenting the backs of his legs in front, spinning about on his toes and heels like nothing but the man's fingers on the tambourine; dancing with two left legs, two right legs, two wooden legs, two wire legs, two spring legs--all sorts of legs and no legs--what is this to him? And in what walk of life, or dance of life, does a man ever get such stimulating applause as thunders about him, when, having danced his partner off her feet, and himself too, he finishes by leaping gloriously on the bar counter, and calling for something to drink, with the chuckle of a million counterfeit Jim Crows, in one inimitable sound? (in Thorpe 1990:44).

As a form of dance in the minstrelsy, the Juba would become known by the more familiar name "breakdown," usually performed as a part of the finale by a solo dancer while the others patted to keep time (Thorpe 1990:46).

The use of the clevis as a percussion instrument is also documented as a substitute for the African bell, an integral part of the music of West African tradition, and imported with the slaves to the South, the Caribbean, and to Latin America. Along with the clevis, cotton hoes are also noted as instruments in the West Indies, as are harrow blades and frying pans, all of which imitate, to some extent, the sound of the African bell (Courlander 1963:209, 219). This adaptation of various implements for playing music as well as many of the dances described

above continue to this day, especially in areas of the West Indies. Jay Dobbin's research into the "Jombee Dance" of Montserrat in the Leeward Islands reveals a number of similarities between that event and many of the dances and musical forms described in the slave narratives, not the least of which is the name similarity between Jombee, Jumba, and Juba (1986:12-48).

The parties provided a social focal point for the slaves. The length of the parties varied according to the leniency of the master. John Mosely of Burleson County recalled that ". . . these here dances lasted all night long. Sometimes Maser would come out and watch us for awhile but he soon went home and went to bed. He nearly always had to make us break up our dance on Sunday morning" (Rawick 1979:7.6.2802). Soul Williams, who lived on the Leon Prairie near Milam County, said that "my master he give us a holiday every Saturday and Saturday night. We have tin pan banjo and harp and Negro dances until day light" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4133). Most of the owners who did allow their slaves to congregate at parties with other slaves, however, did impose a curfew. Slaves had to have a pass from their masters to avoid the wrath of the "patter rollers," or patrols, made up mostly of lower class, non-land owning whites. While allowed to go

to parties, Elsie Reece's master John Mueldrew, Grimes County, "gives weuns de pass, an' it says on that the time weuns am to be home. Twas de rule, 12 o'clock" (Rawick 1979:8.7.3274).

The parties also allowed for individual slaves to provide entertainment and display their musical abilities. The instruments included fiddles, banjos, drums, pipes, and a variety of other instruments. Roger Abrahams describes many of the same types of instruments in his discussion on corn-shucking parties elsewhere in the Antebellum South, arguing that the music and instruments became an intensely individual expression of African-American identity (1992:127-130). Many instruments were made by the slaves and reveal a strong African retention in their makeup. Both Courlander (1963:204-220), and Epstein (1977:144-160) describe commonly made instruments from the African tradition which occurred on the Southern plantations. Descriptions of these African derived instruments appear in the local slave narratives as well. Bill Homer, who was a slave near Caldwell in Burleson County, described the musical abilities of some slaves and their instruments.

Weuns was 'lowed de Music, de pahties, an' am given de pass fo' to go to pahties. De music was de fiddle an' de quill. W'at am de quill? I's splain,

dey am made f'om de willow stick w'en de sap am up. Yous takes de stick an' poun's on de bahk 'til it am loose, den slips de bahk off. Aftah dat, slit de wood in one end, an' down one side. Put holes in de bahk, an' put de bahk back on de stick. De quill am den ready to play lak de flute. Some ob de niggers larn to be good quill playahs (Rawick 1979:5.4.1788).

Wash Wilson, who was about 18 years old when he was sold on the block in Louisiana to Bill Anderson of Robertson County during the Civil War, gives perhaps the most detailed description of the instruments he remembered, all bearing an extremely strong African influence.

Dar wuzn't no money ter buy er muzic insterment. Us 'ud take pieces of er sheep's rib, er a cow's jaw, er a piece ob iron wid an old kettle er a piece ob wood, a hollow gourd an 'er few horse hairs an' make er drum an' things to make muzic wid. Some times dey 'ud get a piece ob de trunk ob a tree, hollowed out an' stretch er sheep er a goat's skin ober hit for a drum. Dese 'ud be from one to four feet high an' six to er leetle more dan er foot ercross. (About fourteen inches across from the description [fieldworker]). Dar wuz in general two togedder ter play wid dar fingers er two sticks on dis drum. Nebber seed many in Texas. Dey had 'em in Louisiana an' on our place in Texas. Dey 'ud take er buffalo horn an' scrape hit out an' make er flute. Dat 'ud shore be heard er long ways off. Den dey 'ud take er mule's jawbone an' rattle a stick ercross its teef'. Dey 'ud sometimes take er barrel an' stretch er ox's hide ercross one end an' er man 'ud sit astride de barrel an' beat upon de hide wid he hands, he feet, an' effen he git ter feelin' de muzic en he bones, he'd beat on de barrel wid he haid. Anodder man 'ud beat on de wooden side wid sticks. Yassum, us 'longed to de chech. Now, didn't you know dat dancin' ain' such er sinful effen de feets ain' crossed? Yassum, us danced at arbor-meetin's but us shore didn't hab us foots crossed (Rawick 1979:10.9.4242-4243).

The level of African retention in music style is

particularly strengthened by Wash's description of the construction and playing of the barrel drum. According to Courlander, during a *Danse Juba*, or *Danse Martinique*, the drummer plays on a specialized drum, the *tambour Juba*, constructed by stretching a hide over a hollowed-out log which is larger in the middle than at the ends. Unlike most Haitian drums, this one has a distinct, hollow sound, and is played by laying the drum on its side. It is straddled by the drummer, who uses his hands and feet to play the drum (Courlander 1939:160-161).

Individual performers were often remembered for their musical skills, either as players or callers. Mary Edwards recalled that Charlie Sapp and Grant Sutton, also slaves on the Mallet Plantation near Brenham, were excellent fiddle players, especially on songs like "Chicken Crow Befo' Day" (Rawick 1979:4.3.1283). Just as important, if not more so, were the song lyrics, dances, and games that accompanied the parties. One game, described by Mollie Kirkland, who lived south of Groesbeck, combined song and dance:

Yes'm I kin remember how de young folks had good times at dey parties, one of de games dat dey played wuz called "Oh, Sister Phoebe" dey did'nt call hit dancin', but dey would all be in a circle an' de one in the center would choose his partner an' den dey go thro de game jes like de Virginia Reel. Dey sing hit dis way,

Oh Sister Phoebe, how merry were we, when we sat
under de Juniper tree, de Juniper tree, heigh-o,
de Juniper tree, heigh-o.

Wen de one in de center makes his choice den dey
sing,

Oh rise up Johnny, an' choose you de one,
Choose you de fairest, or else choose none.
Den dey jes dances de old Virginia Reel an' dey dance
twill de sun cum up sometimes (Rawick 1979:6.5.2242).

Mary Edwards described the dances as reels, waltzes, and square dances "gallopy--we'd call it that 'cause we'd gallop 'round and 'round. The prompter would call out figures, and we'd do 'em" (Rawick 1979:4.3.1283). Mary lived on a plantation near Brenham, one of the early areas of German and Czech settlement in this region of Texas. We can assume that the "Gallopy" dance to which she refers is a type of *Schottische*, a particularly vigorous dance in two-four time common in the German and Czech communities. Although familiar to the modern audience in the square dance, the practice of "calling" dances, like reels and quadrilles, almost certainly has its origins on the plantation. According to Roger Abrahams, these calls were rhymed "raps," containing more than just mere directions and adding commentary on the dance and dancers (1992:127-129). Abrahams writes that:

Such calling emerged from the practice,
exhibited most clearly in ring play, of singing about
the movements while carrying them out, as if dancing
instruction was both coded into the song and used to
amplify the dances' effects. Szwed and Marks relate

this, in general, to the "Black square dance- and reel-calling" which, they argue, "are part of the Afro-American dance instruction tradition which extends from 'Ballin' the Jack to 'The Twist' and beyond [songs which tell dancers what to do next]. . . at least partly rooted in the older tradition in which African master drummers signal and direct dancers" (1992:127).

While Saturday night parties did provide entertainment for a number of slaves, and perhaps their masters as well, it was Sunday that was regarded as the more important day off, and the one more generally agreed upon by masters. Sunday was seen by most masters as a chance to teach slaves morality, and enhance the masters' social control (Breedon 1980:224). For many, but not all masters, religious instruction was seen as a duty, and was a reenforcement of the ideology of slavery as morally beneficial to their slaves. This instruction also reenforced the alleged biblical justifications of slavery, both in their own minds and in those of their slaves. N. G. North, editor of the agricultural journal *South-Western Farmer*, opined that intelligent, moral owners took care to instill in their slaves the proper virtues of good conduct and respect, and that religious instruction was a key tool in the slaves' learning (Breedon 1980:225). North's sentiment echoed that of many Southern planters who felt that by actions and deeds, they could instruct their

slaves. Further, by teaching them to do right, they strengthened their control of the slaves.

Religious instruction by means of the Sunday service was seen as the first line of defense in building the moral character of their slaves. As the century progressed, there was among some owners a more pronounced sense of urgency to promote religion among the slaves. Perhaps this sense grew out of a need to justify the continuance of slavery, as revealed in the sentiment that "an all-wise providence has seen proper in his justice and mercy to place them here in our midst for our social and practical benefit, and for their improvement in morals and religion" (Breedon 1980:232-233). In this justification is the understood belief, among slave proponents, that slavery was of moral benefit to the slave. Also, the power to help save or lose an immortal soul was a powerful idea, one that would not be lost on slaves who adopted Christianity. In this mindset, without the benevolence of master and his providing religious instruction, the very souls of the slaves would be forever condemned. That is social power and control!

Among the slaves, religion became an important social device. Here, in the religious service, was the chance for slaves to congregate with one another, and to develop a

unique aspect of plantation culture. Elsie Reece's recollection of Sunday church services is typical of the pattern of a shared preacher. "On Sunday afternoon, weuns goes to chu'ch [on the Mueldrew Plantation, Grimes County]. 'Twas old man Buffington dat preaches to weuns. He preached to de white fo'ks in de mo'nin, an' to de cullud fo'ks after dinner" (Rawick 1979:8.7.3273). Soul Williams from Madisonville claimed his favorite preacher was ". . . Bro. Cox. He always preached to us Negroes separate and then to the white folks" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4133). Others recalled attending the same churches as the whites in the area. Eli Davison, who worked as a slave near the Madison and Brazos County borders, described his church as divided so that he and the other slaves would be separate from the whites in the congregation. "Our maser made us go to church regular. Old Brother Cochran was our white preacher. I sho' did like to hear him. He could make cold chills run all over you and your hair stand on end when he got to talking about that bad place" (Rawick 1979:4.3.1100). The messages of the preachers generally preached obedience to the master. Louvinia Young Pleasant, who had been a slave on the Ball Plantation near Chappell Hill in Washington County, said that all the white preacher ever taught was "'Now, don't

yo' all steal yo' mawster's eggs. . .Now don't yo' all steal yo' mawster's sugar. . .Now, don't yo' all steal yo' mawster's chickens'" (Rawick 1979:8.7.3102).

Some plantations had their own churches, either with a white minister who came to preach, the master or mistress providing Bible lessons, or one of the slaves would lead the services. The latter of the three was a perfectly acceptable course of action on some plantations, as some believed that "the Negroes should not be allowed to run about over the neighborhood . . . Where there are pious Negroes on a plantation who are so disposed, they should be allowed and encouraged to hold prayer-meetings among themselves" (Breedon 1980:227). Hattie Cole's master, Ed Hearne of Robertson County, did not want his slaves to go off the plantation for any reason, including church. Instead, "de Marster have de chu'chhouse on de place, an' thar weuns worship on Sunday. Weuns have one ob de cullud fo'ks lead in service. Weuns pray an' sing" (Rawick 1979:3.2.778). On Yach Stringfellow's plantation, the Hubert Plantation near Brenham in Washington County, one or two of the women would read the Bible to them, while fellow slaves on Steve Jones' plantation would be gathered under a tree by the master and mistress, Frank and Sarah Ann Hubert, and the slaves would join them in

song. A slave named Amos would often lead the preaching (Rawick 1979:9.8.3754, 6.5.2139).

Worship services sometimes took the form of "camp meetings" rather than regular services. Rosa Pollard from Madisonville recalled that the slaves and the local whites had the same preacher, but that services were not regular. Of their preacher, Brother Jones, and the meetings, she said:

The slaves liked him as he was always carrying on with them, teaching them to tell the truth about everything too. We used to sing them good old songs, "It was good enough for our Father and it was good enough for me". Yes we had them good old camp meetings and everybody would shout. They generally had the meetings going on a month. They would go down to the creek and we would sing "On the Stormy banks of Jordan", and the preacher would baptize the white folks first and then the Negroes. When they finished there would always be 3 or 4 white couples who wanted to get married and the preacher would marry them. That night the white people would give them a big dance and supper and all the best Negro banjo players gave them music to dance by. When it was all over the youngsters went home to raise another big crop of food stuff as well as babies (Rawick 1979:8.7.3121).

Not all services, however, were officially sanctioned. Wesley Burrell, who had been a slave of John Sayle's at Grey Hill in Washington County claimed that he and his fellow slaves did not have a church. Their preaching had to be done in secret, and the messages generally followed the format "obey your missis and marster, an' don' steal der chickens" (Rawick

1979:3.2.535). However, the meetings probably were not that secret. This message, delivered by a black preacher, reflects the *status quo* of the white community. Wash Wilson from Robertson County said that "w'en you hear de sarbants singin' 'Steal Away ter Jesus' dat's de signification dat dars gwine to be a ligious meetin' somewhar dat night" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4243). Perhaps the strangest description of a secretive service, though, comes from Andy Williams, a former slave of Dr. Mitchell of Brazos County, who said:

No'm, dar wuzn't no church fer de slaves dat I knowed of, endurin' slavery times. I laks dat song "Nearer My God to Thee", de bes' ob eny songs. . . Us didn't hab no prayer meetin' durin' slavery. De w'ite folks said dat hit kep' 'em awake fer de slaves ter shout an' sing. So, us would turn de was pot ober deir heads w'en dey git ter shoutin', ter cotch de soun' w'en de slaves sing an' pray (Rawick 1979:10.9.4070).

Sundays also provided a brief time for families to reunite and slaves to visit friends. Separated by ownership, families and friends could, with permission, visit other plantations, and even with family separated on the plantation itself. Many plantations developed nurseries, or appointed one or more older women to look after the small children while their mothers worked. Former slave Steve Robertson from Washington County remembered that children were separated from their

mothers, and Sunday was one of the few times that they could be together.

W'en dis old nigger am de pickaninny Ise lives in de nursery all de week long. Weuns don't see our mammy 'cept on Sunday mo'nin'. Deys wok diffe'nt places on de plantation all day long an' w'en deys comes in aftah dahk weuns am all 'sleep. deys only 'lowed to tooks de sucklin' babes out wid dem. W'en de babes reaches de certain age de mammies don't see dem no mo' 'cept on Sundays. Dey comes an' gits all us, tooks weuns home wid dem an' cleans weuns up. Deys puts de clean clothes on us to goes vis'tin' wid dey neighbahs. Weuns could goes to de place next to weuns on Sunday an' visit. Marster Robertson's niggers laks to does dat 'cause tudder plantations niggers allus gits de news 'bout dis an dat fust (Rawick 1979:8.7.3332).

One of the few sanctioned diversions almost universally approved of by masters was Christmas. Whether the time off be one day, or for the whole week from Christmas to New Year's Day, this one festive time was generally accepted and practiced by a majority of masters. Because of Christmas' dual nature as secular and sacred festival, the holiday provided an important stage for masters to reenforce their social control over their slaves. As Sunday worship and religious instruction provided the masters with an opportunity to instruct their slaves on proper moral behavior, the rituals of Christmas further strengthened this role. As gift giver, the master was cast in a new light, not just someone to be obeyed, but as someone who had the power to give, or take away.

Several narratives recount the parties, gifts, and feasts laid out for the slaves on Christmas day. Charlie Cooper, who came to the area from Louisiana, said that his master would give all of his slaves presents, a big feast, and let them have time off to do as the pleased, as long as they were home by nine o'clock (Rawick 1979:3.2.925). John Mosely remembered that his master would give the slaves the week off. He would give each slave a small present, and provide a meal for all of the slaves. They could do as they pleased during the holiday, except Christmas night, when the master required them to provide the songs for the white peoples' party (Rawick 1979:7.6.2803).

Elsie Reece described Christmas on the Mueldrew plantation in Grimes County as one of the happiest times for all of the slaves. Her master and mistress would have a big tree decorated in their house, with presents for all of their slaves under it.

W'en Missie Mary holler, "Santa Clause 'bout due", weuns all gather at de dooah, an' purtty soon, Santa 'pears wid de red coat an' long white whiskers, in de room all lit wid de candles. Den he calls, "Sue, Jane, Elsie," an' so on. W'en our name am called, weuns step inside an' gits de present. Thar am sack of candy fo' ever' chil's, an' jus' sho as Christmas comes, weuns gits a pair of store shoes. Dem am fo' to wear to chu'ch an' parties (Rawick 1979:8.7.3274).

One of the more unusual memories comes from Steve

Robertson's account. His former master, Will Robertson of Washington County, and mistress, after the end of slavery:

. . . comes ovah an' ordahs weuns to took Christmas wid dem ever' yeah. Ever' Christmas all de old slaves gathad in de f'ont ya'd ob de Marster's home an' dere am long tables piled high wid good eats an' gifts fo' all dat comes. All de mens gits pocket knives, de womens de comb, de boys gits marbles, an' de gals rag dolls. De trouble 'bout de marbles am dat de old fo'ks tooks dem mostest ob de time fo' to play wid demse'ves. Sho some 'citement 'bout de marble games dat dey have sometimes. Goes vis'tin' an' de mens plays marbles all de time dey am togethah (Rawick 1979:8.7.3337-3338).

Aside from Saturday night parties, Sunday services and visitations, and Christmas, there was little in the way of routine, sanctioned diversion in the lives of the slaves. While there are instances of after work singing and congregating, these hardly constitute routine diversions. Some masters allowed their slaves time off on special occasions, such as the marriage of one of the master's relatives, a funeral, Fourth of July celebrations, and special occasions as deemed by the master. Some slaves, though, could find amusements on occasions outside normal festive times, particularly in hunts. Bettie Irby, a former slave of Moss White's near Chriesman in Burleson County described the raccoon and possum hunts:

Den dere was times when 'possums and 'coons was roasted. De men folks would go on 'possum hunts at

night. Dey'd take lanterns, an de light would spy out de animals' eyes. Dem 'possums and 'coons was cleaned lak little pigs. Den dey was hung up outside all night, so de animal scent would git out. De next day de 'possums and 'coons was put in de skilletts, and sliced bacon, red peppers, and peeled sweet potatoes was layed around 'em. Dis sure did taste good (Rawick 1979:5.4.1860).

Bettie also remembered how the men would go out and hunt deer and turkeys, and how many enjoyed night time hunting, which the master did not discourage (Rawick 1979:5.4.1860-1861). Lavinia Lewis, a slave of Dr. George Wyche of Anderson, the county seat of Grimes County, recalled that the occasional nighttime hunts were a great time for the younger slaves, both male and female:

For de young folks' good times, dey had de possum an' de coon hunts on de moonlight nights, an' all de boys an' girls aroun' would go. An' w'en de dogs trees de coon or de possum, den dey bark until de boys an' girls cum an' pokes him down. For de coon or possum won't come down long as de dogs are barkin'. . . 'an in de fall of de year, dey has de hickory nut hunts in de woods, an' sometimes dey ketch de coon or possum an' cook dem out in de woods (Rawick 1979:6.5.2352).

One event that combined work and play was corn-shucking. Though more common in other areas of the South, the events also occurred in Brazos County and the surrounding region. While cotton became a staple along the river plains, vast amounts of corn were grown elsewhere to supply feed for livestock and food for people. Seen primarily as a slave event, these occurrences happened

generally on the larger plantations, and provided an outlet for slaves and masters alike, and events which would be recalled long after they occurred (Abrahams 1992:3-4). Eli Davison, who came from Dunbar West Virginia to Madison County in 1858 said that the annual events became a party and a contest, with the one who shucked the most corn receiving a prize from the master (Rawick 1979:4.3.1101). While contests between the groups doing the shucking were common (Abrahams 1992:4), they were not always the rule. Wash Wilson, a former slave of Bill Anderson's in Robertson County provides a more detailed description of one of these events.

Den der wuz de co'n huskins er shuckin'. Dey wuz pile up 'bout er hund'ed er two er mebbby three hun'erd bushels ob corn outside under er shed. Den at night us 'ud git togedder an' hab er corn shuckin'. No'm dar wuzn't no contests, us jes' shuck an' hab er big time er talkin' an' laffin an' wukkin'. De feller what owned de corn he'd gib er big supper an' us 'ud hab all de whiskey us could drink. No'm warn't no trubble 'bout gittin' drunk case mos' eberboddy could carry dey likker purty well. Den atter de corn wuz shucked an' throwed inter de crib, us hab er ring play. Fer music us had some body ter scratch on skillet lids, beat bones an' der banjo. Dar wud be f'om thutty to fifty people dar. Dey wuz all cullud. De w'ite man he furnished de corn, de whiskey an' de supper, an' de black folks, de shuck de corn an' play. Some time, dey stay all night. Dey'd build up a big fire an' dance on de groun' out doors er in er big barn. "Wind de ball Suzy" wuz one ob de ring plays (Rawick 1979:10.9.4241-4242)

Except for drinking whiskey, which was not universally

supported by slave owners, Wash's description is typical of most corn-shucking events. Here, work and socializing were combined into one event. While the talking, eating, music, and dancing provided a diversion and allowed the slaves a chance to socialize, it also allowed for the white owners to get a tedious, but necessary chore done.

Marriages, such as they were, did provide the occasional diversion for the slaves. The goal of marriage, for most masters, was to keep his slaves happy, and to increase his slave holdings. On occasions, an older male slave would instruct the "art of courtship," which imitated, or satirized, the romantic and flowery language of white courtship (Banks 1894:147-148). The institution of marriage also allowed, when followed, the opportunity to reenforce the moral strictures that many masters professed to follow. Some owners, and sometimes even overseers, claimed that there were several benefits to promoting marriage, not the least of which was harmony on the plantation. Increasing the population of slaves was also a benefit, and large families were not that unusual. Several slaves recall having numerous brothers and sisters. China, a 49 year old slave of the John Millican estate in 1859, was listed as having a total of 14 children ages 28, 24, 22, 20, 18, 16, 14, 12, 10, eight,

seven, six, four, and an infant (Brazos County Probate Records:E; Campbell 1989:159). Many instances of large families appear in probate records, and even among white families. The average white family in Texas was 5.5 people in 1860 (Campbell 1989:159). Sometimes, though, marriage was not the preferred route. Steve Robertson said that while he and his brothers had the same last name, that of their master, they all had different fathers. According to Robertson, "de Marster [referring to his master, Will Robertson of Washington County] picks de buck fo' to sire de chilluns wid de women dey want an' it am usually de mostest p'olific" (Rawick 1979:8.7.3332).

Marriages of slaves were simple affairs, ranging from permission of the master or between masters, to more elaborate ceremonies. Most typical of these was "jumping the broom," the tradition of the slave couple literally jumping a broomstick to signify marriage. Soul Williams, who was a slave on the Leon Prairie near Madisonville, recalled that his master "would give big supper and dance, yes sir, and the bride she would have to jump the broom, so many times before the preacher could make them man and wife" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4132). More simple ceremonies were the most common. J. W. King, a former slave of Breen Bouldin of Chappell Hill, Washington County, recalled that

"if a man lived on one plantation and de girl he loved lived on another place he had to go and ask dat girl's mawster if he could marry her. If he could he would be allowed to come and see her about two or three times a week" (Rawick 1979:6.5.2215). Steve Jones, born in South Carolina and brought to Texas by his master Irving Jones in 1856, said that:

A wedding mongst the slaves would be this way-if a man or woman slave was in good health and big and stout, if Maser liked them, he puts this slave man and woman together and just say they is married. Them slaves that produced the most young slaves is what the Maser wanted cause more slaves they owned the richer he was (Rawick 1979:6.5.2140-2141).

Funerals, the opposite end of the spectrum from weddings, were also a source for a break from daily routines, although not a joyous one. For the masters, the loss of a slave represented an economic loss, to be sure, especially if the slave were young and productive, but even the death of an older slave could evoke some level of sentiment in a slave owner and his family. Death allowed the final opportunity for the master to exercise his power over the deceased, and reenforce it over the living. The landscape of death and the ceremony of mourning was controlled by the masters. While whites were often buried in family plots, the deceased slaves were buried separately. Family plots for slaves gave way to plots

controlled by the masters, and it was not unusual for ownership to determine the resting places of a husband and wife, or a mother and child. Marital and familial ties were subjugated to rights of property (Garman 1994:79-80). Time off for the funerals varied from one hour to an entire day, depending on the whims of the owners. Ceremonies varied as well depending on the slaves and the owners. Charlie Cooper of Madisonville described a slave funeral:

When slave died they let the Negroes have the day off to bury him. We generally dug grave out somewhere then we takes split poles and built pen, like hog pen, and lay that Negro in it. Then we would cover over the grave and all bow their heads and pray for that Negro slave who had gone on to that great reward. Then we leave him so the Great Spirit would come and take care of that Negro soul (Rawick 1979:3.2.925).

Tabby Jones, a former slave of Felix Jones' of South Carolina and late arrival in Texas described the funerals on his plantation:

When Negro die Mastor he would make box and put this Negro in and then he would let all the rest of the Negroes on that plantation go dig his grave, and help carry that Negro there and put him in his grave and cover it over. Then he wouldn't make us work no more on that day (Rawick 1979:6.5.2148).

John Mosely, a former slave in Burleson County, remembered that slaves participated in the funerals of the white people on the plantation, and the whites participated in

the slave funerals, too (Rawick 1979:7.6.2804). Soul Williams from Madisonville, who described his master as a religious man, said "master have a coffin made for the Negroes that die, and he say that dead Negro stink too bad, and he had them buried" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4134). Yet not all masters allowed burial, or even cared. Ben Simpson, a former slave from nearby Travis County whose narrative stands out as the singularly most brutal narrative in the entire Texas collection, said his master did not allow the slaves to be buried, just drug off somewhere out of the way like an animal (Rawick 1979:9.8.3552-3553). On a more ritual level, Carlson and Moss report one informant who remembered former slaves conducting day-long memorial services. These former slaves were reported to have worn traditional African dress and to have sung traditional songs (1995:232).

While most diversions and breaks were welcome, funerals were a disruption few masters and even fewer slaves wished for. Only the sale of one or more slaves from a plantation was more disruptive to the daily routines. While a sad occasion, a funeral was, at least for the departed slaves, a release from bondage. For the slaves who embraced Christianity, it could even be viewed as a reward for a life of misery and punishment. Slave

sales, on the other hand, destroyed the fabric of not only the real family, but also the extended family of the plantation. The loss was punctuated by the knowledge that the sold slave was not going to some Great Reward, but to more toil. Only slightly less distressing was the leasing of slaves, a common practice in Texas. While the slave family member was still absent, at least the lease held the promise of return.

Records from Brazos County indicate that leasing slaves was a common practice, as the five slaves leased out by John Millican at the time of his death indicate (Brazos County Probate Records: E). Some owners and proponents of slavery had begun endorsing the idea of keeping the families intact. By doing so, they increased the number of their slaves, but also promoted a general level of good will on the plantation. Further, the threat that a master could sell his slaves and divide families at will worked, like religious training, to reenforce the master's control over his slaves. Mary Edwards, a former slave on the Mallet plantation in Washington County said she was hired out as a girl, but she still had a relationship with her family, something that probably would not have happened had she been sold (Rawick 1979:4.3.1283). But sales did occur, and some narratives

discuss what happened during the sale.

Some slave narratives claim that slaves were sold on the block--probably on the steps of the county courthouse, where many leases were arranged, or the town square (Campbell 1989:122-24)--while others were sold by means of a Negro trader, who would gather Negroes to sell on the block. Soul Williams, a former slave on the Leon Prairie near Madisonville said he had seen slaves being driven by Negro traders, usually "in chains, four in breast, crossing the country" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4133). Ben Simpson, who worked for Sam Houston after emancipation, remembered his sister being sold to a trader when she was pregnant (Rawick 1979:9.8.3551). Taby Jones, a late arrival from South Carolina, described auctions on the block:

Yes, I've seen a few slaves sold to the highest bidder. They would make the slaves clean up good and clean and grease their hands and face so 'es they would look real fat, and then they would make them trot to and fro in front of the bidders, and the men would bid on them. Son, you seen horse auctioned off, that is the way they did the Negro (Rawick 1979:6.5.2146).

Sally Neely from Madisonville provided a similar description of a slave auction, with the greasing of the skin and the bidding, and added:

When all the buyers would get their slaves and start to leave, all the hollering and bawling you

never heard in your life. Just like someone was dead. Well son, have you ever heard a bunch of cattle low and bawl for 3 or 4 days after you have taken their calves away from them, that was just exactly the way the slaves were when they would trade off or sell one of their members because the slaves would never expect to see that slave any more (Rawick 1979:7.6.2889).

According to the WPA narratives, such were the patterns of work and life for slaves in Brazos County, the surrounding region, and the South in general. With Emancipation on June 19, 1865, slavery in Texas officially ended. Yet in many ways, the society which fostered slavery also spawned a relationship between master and slave, between whites and blacks that none fully understood, and which still perplexes us today.

The Slaves' Perspective: A Synthesis of Slavery in the Region

In her discussion on African American culture and folklife, Margaret Creel states that "insofar as people develop their own culture, they are not slaves" (1988:322). The slave narratives and materials presented so far allow us the chance to make some assumptions about the culture of slavery in Brazos County and in the neighboring areas. Primary among these assumptions is that slavery in this region was, insofar as it could be, a

benign institution (Allison 1995). Masters on the plantation and whites in general found ways to maintain control of the slaves. The control was certainly physical, but also mental, as with religion and the subtle arrangements of housing locations, job divisions, rewards, and the like. In relationships of social power, there are three basic forms of control: economic, militaristic, and ideological (Mann 1986:18-32). Masters obviously controlled the economics and, for the most part, the militaristic or physical aspects of control over their slaves. Yet they could not completely dominate the ideology of their slaves. For example, many slaves found ways to participate in religious services, even if their masters forbade it. Slaves also found ways to build localized entertainments, whether they be in the form of corn shuckings, dances, or Sunday visiting. Though sanctioned by the masters, it was the slaves who dictated the meaning and content of these events, just as they dictated the meanings of their day-to-day lives.

The daily work routines as recalled in the analyzed narratives are not all that different from those of slaves elsewhere. Primarily an agricultural region, fieldwork was the norm for most slaves from this region. Some, like Aaron Nunn from Washington County, did learn a specialized

skill, black smithing in his case. Others worked as carpenters or shoemakers, cooks or nurses, or as household slaves. Evidence of brutal treatment of the slaves in this area at the hands of their owners or overseers is sparse. While there are instances of punishment and mistreatment in some of the narratives, the bulk reveal a pattern of fair treatment of the slaves by their masters.

The absence of evidence of slave insurrection, of runaway slaves, and of recollections of runaways and insurrection from this set of narratives is an important aspect of the patterns of slave life in the region. Realistically, a runaway slave from Brazos and the surrounding counties had two very limited options in flight. To the north and east lay a phalanx of slave states and the very real possibility of capture. To the south and west toward Mexico lay the coastal plains and the desert. Even for the well prepared traveler, these regions were difficult to cross. For a runaway, they were nearly impossible, though escape to Mexico did occur.

Missing from county records and sources like the *Brenham Enquirer*, the major newspaper of the region from 1854 to 1867, are regular reports of runaways and insurrections. Information on slavery in the Brenham paper tends to fall along the lines of the aforementioned

editorial on not training slaves as mechanics. The July 16, 1858 edition did carry an advertisement for Claborne, a 35 year old blacksmith who was a runaway slave belonging to W. S. Day of Hempstead (*Brenham Enquirer*, 16 July, 1858:4), but this report was not the norm. Reports of small insurrections elsewhere in Texas and the nation do appear in the paper, yet there is curiously little in the way of local insurrections and reports of local runaways. The narratives, too, contain very little in the way of memories of runaway slaves or of overt insurrection. None of the narratives recall instances of the former slaves themselves trying to run away from their masters.

The typical pattern of life in Brazos and her neighboring counties was dictated by hard physical labor. But opportunities for the slaves to socialize and create a sense of community did exist. Though some individual narratives recall a master who forbade one or more types of entertainment or socialization, the bulk of the owners allowed, perhaps even encouraged these events. Recollections of masters who gave their slaves parties, presents, and time-off for the Christmas holidays, or who allowed Saturday night parties and Sunday visiting abound. We can infer from these narratives that the majority of owners in this region did not view their slaves simply as

chattel to be worked, fed, and penned, but instead recognized that these slaves were individual human beings.

An argument can be made that this type of treatment by the masters reflects economic considerations, that the economic investment precludes poor treatment. On this basis, a higher economic return could be derived from well-treated slaves. While intriguing, I do not think that this is the case. Former masters, such as Steve Robertson's, who provided Christmas presents and parties for their former slaves (Rawick 1979:8.7.3337-3338), for example, are not doing so out of economic concerns. Instead, there seems, based on these narratives, a sense of human connection between the masters and their slaves. No legal codes called for masters to allow their slaves to socialize and have parties, and there was certainly no requirement for former owners to provide Christmas dinners and presents for their former slaves. Yet according to the Texas collections of the WPA narratives, this did occur with regularity throughout the area. Simple economic concerns cannot explain this behavior, but a basic recognition of the humanity of the slaves and former slaves does.

In a similar fashion, we can infer a sense of connection between the former slaves and their former

masters. While some of the narratives do hold bitter memories, most recall their masters somewhat fondly. It is surprising that there is a general absence of malice toward the former masters in the narratives from this area. Much of the resentment is directed instead toward the failed promises of Reconstruction, and the abandonment of the promises that so many politicians made to the former slaves. Bitter memories of overseers and "Paddyrollers" are the norm not only in this set of Texas narratives. What emerges instead is a pattern of life in which the slaves interacted with their masters and the white population associated with the plantations. In these instances, the slaves exerted a great deal of influence over the interactions. Rather than becoming Europeanized, the slaves maintained their own form of culture. As such, it was more the slaves than the masters who shaped and defined the African American culture that emerged. While we can certainly see elements of Euro-American culture in the narratives, what is clearly present is a syncretization of these elements with the distinct patterns of African derived culture. Thus, while masters and white Americans may have held a high level of physical control over the slaves, and later freedmen, there are aspects of their lives which the slaves and their

descendants maintained control and defined their own culture.

In certain areas of their lives, such as the retention and pronouncement of beliefs of royal African descent, or African religions--worshiping the sun, moon, and stars, creating objects for *minkisi*, or practicing their own versions of Christian worship in defiance of the masters' wishes--the slaves reenforced their view of their worldview. Leland Ferguson writes that:

While masters could whip, torture, confine, or break up slave families, they had difficulty in forcing their rationalizations of slavery and other aspects of their worldview on African Americans. . . . While many slaves may not have overtly resisted their enslavement on a day-to-day basis, most did ignore European American culture in favor of their own, and in doing so they also ignored and resisted the European American ideology that rationalized their enslavement (1992:119-120).

The narratives support this assertion. For example, Soul Williams' exhaustive list of musical instruments reflects a choice of African over Euro-American derived instruments. Recollections of traditional marriages that included jumping the broom, ecstatic participation in religion, and reports of African style funerals also support the notion that the slaves had a great deal of control in defining the culture they developed.

CHAPTER IV

STRUCTURES

In his classic discussion of folk housing in Louisiana, cultural geographer Fred Kniffen wrote that:

Housing even considered alone is a basic fact of human geography. It reflects cultural heritage, current fashion, functional needs, and the positive and negative aspects of non-cultural environment. These relationships are more easily appreciated for a simpler era when plant and animal husbandry were dominant pursuits, but are no less true today (1986:4).

Beyond housing, we can argue that most buildings from the vernacular repertoire, especially those associated either directly or indirectly with agriculture, are a basic fact of human geography. In the construction of the agrarian landscape of Brazos County throughout the period of slavery and beyond, appropriate structures were built to accommodate various needs. While many of these structures are no longer extant, from the few that do survive and from evidence documented at the neighboring Richard Carter (41BZ74) and Anson Jones (41WT6) sites, we can infer what the built landscape of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation may have looked like during the antebellum period. We also have corollary evidence in the form of the slave narratives and other sources, such as maps, records, early

studies on the county's agricultural economy, and narratives from former residents that describe the content of the landscape and the buildings associated with this period. By using these varied resources, we can begin to recreate a picture of the landscape of the region as it would have been during slavery.

Building the Landscape

The uses of the land and how it is shaped to meet our needs is known as the cultural landscape. While this is a convenient phrase, it is redundant. Landscapes do not exist outside of cultural constructs shaped by the cultural and personal biases of the observer. Thus, where some may see a wasteland of overgrown prairie, post oak stands, and flood-prone bottom land, others see ready building materials, grazing land for cattle and horses, and fertile land for crops. The latter was the view of the settlers who came to this region of Brazos County with Austin's Colony and later settlement.

In "Folk Housing: Key to Diffusion" (1986), cultural geographer Fred Kniffen develops the concept of studying the built environment. Changes in building types occur in regular patterns across the built environment with uniform clusterings of building types in each locale. Kniffen

postulated that the consistent changes that he observed were due to consistent changes within the populations that occupied these different areas (1986:6). By comparing the buildings with corroborating historical data, Kniffen found that the types of buildings common to particular areas were shaped, architecturally, by the initial settlers in the area. Borrowing from his colleague W. G. McIntire, Kniffen defines "initial occupance zones" as those areas where the first pioneer settlements made a permanent imprint on the cultural landscape, even with the subsequent arrival of new settlers (Kniffen 1986:5-6). For example, the buildings from our target period in Brazos County and the surrounding region reflect the architecture of the lower South, home to the majority of the "Old Three Hundred," while later houses and other buildings to the northeast part of the county and other areas reflect the central European heritage of many of the later settlers. In both sections of the county, subsequent architecture reflects that of the first groups who settled these areas.

One of the problems associated with historical and historical-archaeological studies of folk housing in America is that many structures are "largely unchronicled" (Kniffen 1986:4). Indeed, one of the major problems involved with these studies is the number of structures

that have either gone unnoticed or have disappeared from the landscape. Traditional archaeology also shares in the blame, with much of the early work in Texas and the Southwest focussing on Native American sites, "where the abundance of prehistoric remains has traditionally made archaeology a moving force" (Murtagh 1990:147). The study of folk and vernacular architecture and the conceptualization of the historic landscape in Brazos and her neighboring counties has until recently been overlooked in favor of more traditional studies. The previously mentioned studies of the Richard Carter and Anson Jones sites, as well as the postbellum Ned Peterson Farmstead aid in this area of inquiry.

Historic Archaeology of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation

The fertile soils along the Brazos River, fluvial plains of Pleistocene deposits of Quaternary age (Carlson 1987:5-6; Thoms 1993:7), attracted settlers to this region of Brazos and her neighboring counties. The richness of the soil provided an opportunity to develop large-scale cash crops and allowed some areas, such as Rogers Plantation, to develop a monoculture of cotton production. Yet these very same soils present us with three main

problems with respect to accurate readings of the historical-archaeological record. The first, as we will discuss later in the chapter, is that these lands were given almost entirely to agriculture. The landscape of the "Big House" of southern plantation life was never a reality in Brazos County. The productivity of these lands made them too valuable to squander on the development of large plantation-home grounds.

Second, the soil is built from deposits of succeeding floods with no accurate records from earlier periods to indicate how much soil was deposited during these floods. County history recalls several floods, especially the winter flood of 1913, which resulted in the loss of human and animal life, as well as a setback for horticulture in the area (Walker 1986a:45). The Texas-blues song, *Ain't No More Cain On This Brazos*, contains a line which refers to the 1913 flood. Dorothy Scarborough's book, *In the Land of Cotton*, provides a classic description of the 1913 flood in the chapter, "Flood," based on a description written to her concerning the deluge (1923:172-195). Closer to Brazos County, Texas blues legend Mance Lipscomb, who was born on Michelborough Farm adjacent to Rogers Plantation and who worked in the area recalled several floods which hit the area. Lipscomb said that:

I used to paddle boats. Right through this country here. In the fawmland. Houses was afloatin in that high water, an people be settin up on the top a their houses, hollerin for help. . .Jest the water was so high! An what water wadn in the river was out in the fawm. You know where Allenfawm? Tween the Brazos and the Navasot, it aint nothin *but* bottoms. Shuh, man! It wadn nothin but water from Valley Junction, Waco: an come down through here an hit that current in the Brazos. An the Brazos on into the Navasot. Plumb on into the Gulf a Mexico when they come, them overflows (Alyn 1994:256-257).

Buildings in the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation area not lost to the flood subsequently were elevated on wood pilings or brick piers (Woodcock 1986:358) as seen in Figure 4. More recently, the winter floods of 1991 resulted in the inundation of tens of thousands of acres along this section of the Brazos River. A common concern among the farmers from the area was the potential loss of productivity as the soils they had developed with modern agrichemicals were covered by new deposits, which leads us to the third problem. Modern agricultural techniques utilizing heavy equipment and large-scale reconfiguration of the soils have destroyed virtually any archaeological context which may have existed in the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation area.

In order for us to develop a picture of the historical-archaeological record, we must rely on inference from fieldwork at two closely related sites: the



FIGURE 4: Elevated Building, Rogers Plantation

Richard Carter plantation (41BZ74) located in Brazos County, and the Anson Jones site (41WT6) across the Brazos River in Washington County. The Richard Carter site, established on land granted to Richard Carter in 1831, lies 10 miles northwest of Millican near the community of Boonville, the first county seat of Brazos County (Carlson 1987:9). The Anson Jones site (41WT6), established on lands purchased from Moses Austin Bryan in 1842 lies a few miles to the southeast near Washington-on-the-Brazos (Carlson 1995:1; Carlson and Moss 1995:49). The Millicans, Richard Carter, and Anson Jones were certainly social contemporaries, especially when we recall Elliot Millican's involvement in Texas government, which coincided with the period of Anson Jones' tenure as president of the Republic of Texas from 1844 to 1846. These settlers were focussed on the development of their agricultural holdings, and are representative of the utilitarian farmers who first settled this region.

Analysis of the debitage at the Carter and Jones sites reveals a pattern of utilitarian existence (Carlson 1987:57-74; Kloetzer 1995:285-322). Household items among these settlers tended towards those which were durable and served their intended purposes. Common to the remains are standard building materials, such as bricks, window glass

from 1.05 to 2.30 mm thickness, and iron cut nails of all sizes. Also present are large amounts of whiteware pottery, both flatware and hollowware, with an alkaline glaze. Simple, durable wares, most were plain, but some were decorated with shaped edges, painted decorations, or transfer printed decorations, and most of this pottery dates from the 1820s (Noel Hume 1970). Whiteware with a lead glaze and blue pooling dating from the same period is also in abundance. So too are routine household items such as dark glass bottles from 1815 to later, belt buckles, harness buckles, brass clothing hooks, and other utilitarian items. These remains correspond to like finds at small South Carolina plantations and others from the lower South (Ferguson 1992:125-146; Groover 1994:41-64).

Faunal remains, too, indicate a relatively common pattern. Common wildlife, such as deer, squirrel, and various fishes, as well as domesticated pigs, sheep and goats, and cattle, commonly occur in these sites. Taken with the artifact remains, these collections do not reveal an unusual pattern. Rather, they are notable for their being so mundane. From these remains, we can infer that the planters of this area, like their lower South counterparts, were a utilitarian group. Absent from the record are indications that lavish, frivolous items were a

part of the household. Instead, the settlers purchased utilitarian items which would serve their purpose and would prove durable. In these records, there is no noticeable differentiation between the remains near the master's or slaves' quarters. It was not uncommon for masters to hand-down used but still serviceable items such as plates, bowls, dishes, and other household items to their slaves, and both master and slave typically had the same diet (Hamilton 1994).

From this general body of data, we can infer that the people who settled the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation area were a fairly utilitarian group. Like their neighbors, items which could survive the trip to the Texas frontier and daily usage in this environment were prized. As planters, their concerns were with the establishment of their farms and the production of crops. Their energies and monies were put toward bettering these lands, not toward acquiring finery.

Conceptualizing the Architecture

From the historical-archaeological record, we can infer that the local planters, while not devoid of higher aesthetic senses, were primarily concerned with utility and value. The lands of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation

and similar areas were highly productive. As the slave population information from Chapter II suggests, it did not take a massive amount of slave labor to farm these lands, yet they produced high returns from the crops planted. The architecture, as we will discuss, was never heavily developed along the lines of traditional plantation landscapes. For Brazos County, utility won out over presentation, and the plantation architecture of the "Big House" never became a part of the landscape of the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation region. As the slave narratives and records reveal, the land retained its value as farm land, and reenforces the interpretation of the utilitarian nature of its owners.

There have been some studies of folk housing in Brazos and the surrounding counties. Primary among these are the studies by Carlson et al at the Richard Carter (41BZ74) and Anson Jones (41WT6) sites. More recently, a preliminary analysis of the Ned Peterson Farmstead (41BZ115), a postbellum African-American site has been completed, and provides a source for comparison to the continuity of descriptions of housing in the slave narratives. Other sources, such as Betty Plummer's 1969 thesis, *Historic Homes of Washington County, 1821-1860*, and former Millican native Fletcher Pool's 1990 book, *The*

Life and Times of F.L. Pool, provide corroborating source materials for the development of the architectural landscape of the area. Historical records from the Brazos, and earlier Washington County records, land deeds, titles, and transfers, as well as the edited collection *Brazos County: Rich Past--Bright Future* (Brundidge, et al 1986), provide further corroborating evidence. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Texas slave narratives contain first hand descriptions of the masters' houses, slave quarters, and outbuildings which were a part of the plantation landscape (Rawick 1979).

From these sources, we can construct an **ethnoarchitecture**--i.e. a conceptualization of the 19th century architecture of the landscape in the absence of architectural remains. Many areas of inquiry utilize primary ethnographic data to develop their interpretations. For example, the field of ethnohistory draws from personal experience narratives and diaries to interpret what the folk see as their history. Both the historic preservation movement and historical archaeology utilize verbal descriptions of the past, along with physical data, to help in their respective interpretations. For the concept of *ethnoarchitecture*, ethnographic data--what the folk have said was there--

provides a primary source of data for conceptualizing the past built environment. In our case, the slave narratives and Fletcher Pool's memories provide our starting point for inferring what the Brazos County architecture may have looked like. Added to this conceptualization are hard data such as county records and prior research at like sites. From the available data previously mentioned, we can infer what the built landscape of Allenfarm, Rogers plantation and the surrounding lands probably looked like.

The Big House

Hollywood and popular literature have created for us a stereotypical image of the typical plantation big house as something that resembles *Tara* in *Gone With the Wind*. There are examples of antebellum plantation big houses throughout the South which evoke images of opulence and grandeur, but there are many more which are less ostentatious and more utilitarian, with the latter representing the norm in Southern plantation society. In either case, the purpose of the so-called "big house," or owner's home was twofold. First, it served as the residence of the master and his family, or the overseer and his family if the master was an absentee landlord. Second, the implied structure of the big house was as much

a form of social control for the master as were religion, rewards, and punishment. Further, the meaning of this social control extended beyond the plantation, and onto the surrounding landscape and the meaning of the plantocracy itself.

In his study of plantation architecture, John Vlach noted that:

To mark their dominance over both nature and other men, planters acquired acreage, set out the boundaries of their holdings, had their fields cleared, selected building sites, and supervised construction of dwellings and other structures. The design of the plantation was an expression of the owner's tastes, values, and attitudes (1993:1).

Common to many owners were the attitudes of social control and social status. Control meant that your land, your family, and your slaves obeyed your commands and followed your will. To demonstrate this point, many planters required unnecessary work be carried out daily, with the failure to do so resulting in punishment for the slave. The instrument of control extended outward through the fields and out to the fence lines, straight, weed-free rows of crops, and fenced lands for grazing. This control became a form of social status, with each planter comparing himself to others in his search for status.

The expression of status in the form of the big house was an accepted part of the plantation landscape. The big

house was meant to impress as well as serve as a dwelling. Some planters in the more well established regions of the South built elaborate, English manor-style entrances and gardens around their houses, while others were careful to make sure that some of their slaves were always near the big house to impress any visitors who might arrive (Vlach 1993:20-22). These schemes were contrived to make the planter look prosperous, even when he wasn't. These gardens and entrances were not seen as a hindrance to admission, which many were, but rather as an affirmation of the values common to planters. This physical control of the environment and of visitors reflected the idea of the need for social control. The size and style of these houses and the gardens reflected status among the owners and those who formed this system. Even in the absence of grand houses, as was the case in most of the South, the reflection and meaning of status was omnipresent. Many narratives recount that the first buildings constructed on the plantations were the big houses.

In Brazos County, the opulent big house was never a reality. Situated as it is on marginal lands and in the middle of the frontier during the antebellum period, the focus for the majority of the settlers was to establish their farms and earn a living, not to impress their

neighbors. In neighboring Washington County, there were a few notable dwellings which approached today's ideal of a big house, but many of those were built later in the antebellum period. Many of the larger, "Plantation Style" homes in Brazos County, primarily in Bryan, were built well after the Civil War during the late 1880s and into the late 1910s as small fortunes were made on the railroad, mercantile pursuits and, more importantly, cotton. The towns of Hearne and Calvert, to the north, and Navasota to the south, which also grew on the line of the Houston and Texas Central Railroad, also have homes built on cotton fortunes. Yet in these cases, the homes are of a later period and are in an urban setting with no connection to the landscape of the plantation.

The big house in this area of Brazos County, and in many of her neighbors, was a collection of smaller, more utilitarian structures. Olmsted's observations of housing for both slaves and settlers in early Texas concluded that the masters' houses were little better than what their slaves lived in (1978:17-20). For the most part, the early settlers, both "white and black Texans built the same kinds of cabin with the same techniques and the same materials" (Vlach 1981:155). Many structures were of simple design, either a one room, or "single-pen" house

(Figure 5), or a more common "double-pen" log house typical of those detailed by Terry Jordan in his study of log structures in Texas (1978) (Figure 6). This double pen, or "dog-trot" design, so called in the folk vernacular because dogs could, if they wished, trot between the two pens in the shade that the common roof provided. This dog-trot, or double-pen, style of house was common in early Texas. Many of the settlers--over one-third in Brazos County--were from Tennessee, Georgia and North Carolina, and were familiar with the Cumberland House style. The Cumberland house was a double-pen structure that evolved from two single-pens being built side-by-side, each with its own entrance. The Cumberland had a large porch roof for shade, but in the hotter climates of the lower South and Texas, the form evolved into the dog-trot to improve ventilation (Smith 1993).

New settlers set out first to construct a place to live, usually a one room, single-pen structure built from available materials. Throughout the middle Atlantic and lower South, log structures forming a single pen were the norm (Kniffen 1986:12-13). As the settlers cleared and improved the land, they could then afford to build on more rooms to accommodate their growing family. Kniffen notes that one problem with log construction is the sheer weight

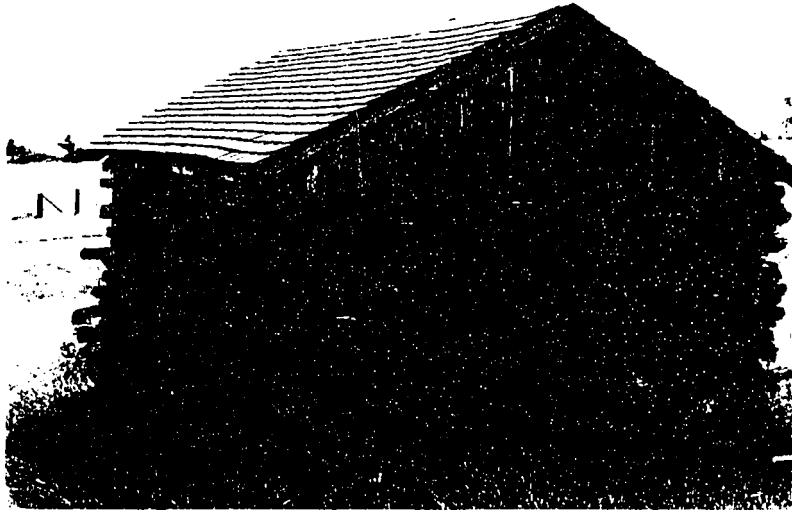


FIGURE 5: Single-Pen Structure, Washington County.

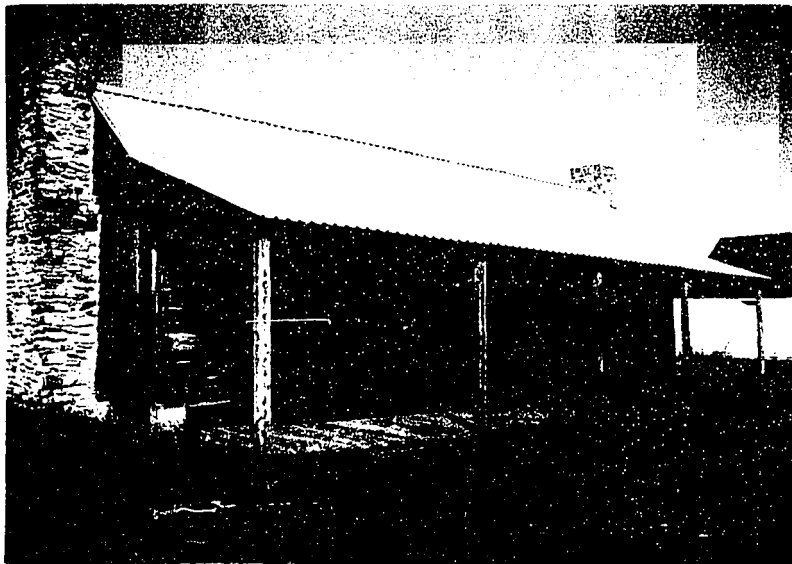


FIGURE 6: Double-Pen or Dog Trot House, Washington County.

of the building materials, which preclude many types of addition. Normally, logs were less than 30 feet in length, and even then would be unwieldy to handle. Abutting a new room or adding a second story to the existing pen was practiced, but not commonly in the lower South, where temperature and humidity ranges in the late Spring, Summer, and early Fall call for more ventilation. The solution was the dog-trot, a double pen structure with a common roof (Jordan 1978:138-39; Kniffen 1986:13; Smith 1993; Vlach 1993:45, 160). Throughout much of the South, the connection was by means of a common roof, with the doors of both pens, on the gable ends, facing each other across a common porch or "breezeway," which allowed for more ventilation. While uncommon north of Tennessee and North Carolina, the form made its way into Florida, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas (Kniffen 1986:16). Such is the case of the Gay family home in the nearby Peach Creek community in southeastern Brazos County. The home was built between 1828 and 1835, using slave labor and locally cut timbers (Woodcock 1986:357).

In Millican, Dr. E.M. Millican's hotel, the "Stagecoach Inn," was a form of modified double-pen house. In a drawing from Millican native Fletcher Pool's recollection, the inn, which was built during the late

1830s and burned down in 1912, was a two-story log structure, with the first floor being a double-pen structure (see Figure 7). However, we must note that Dr. Millican's inn served a specific purpose different from the local housing needs. Consistent with Terry Jordan's survey of Texas log structures (1978), most homes were simple one-room affairs with dimensions of approximately 16 by 18 feet. The home of neighbor Richard Carter (41BZ74), for example, was described by early Brazos County settler Harvey Mitchell as a one-room log cabin, a description that fits findings by Carlson (1987). The John P. Cole's house which has been moved to Independence in Washington County (Figure 8) reveals that the original structure, later added onto, was a log cabin with dimensions consistent with Jordan's descriptions.

Henry Baker came to Texas with his master, Dr. Neal, sometime in the early stages of the Civil War. He recalled that when they arrived in Washington County, his master set the slaves at work clearing the land and building the houses out of split logs, planed on one side for flooring (Rawick 1977:2.1.144-145). Sue Lockridge, a slave on the Alcorn plantation near Brenham, remembered her master's house as "a big log house, jis' a plain house," while Eli Davison said his master "built (a) one long room log house

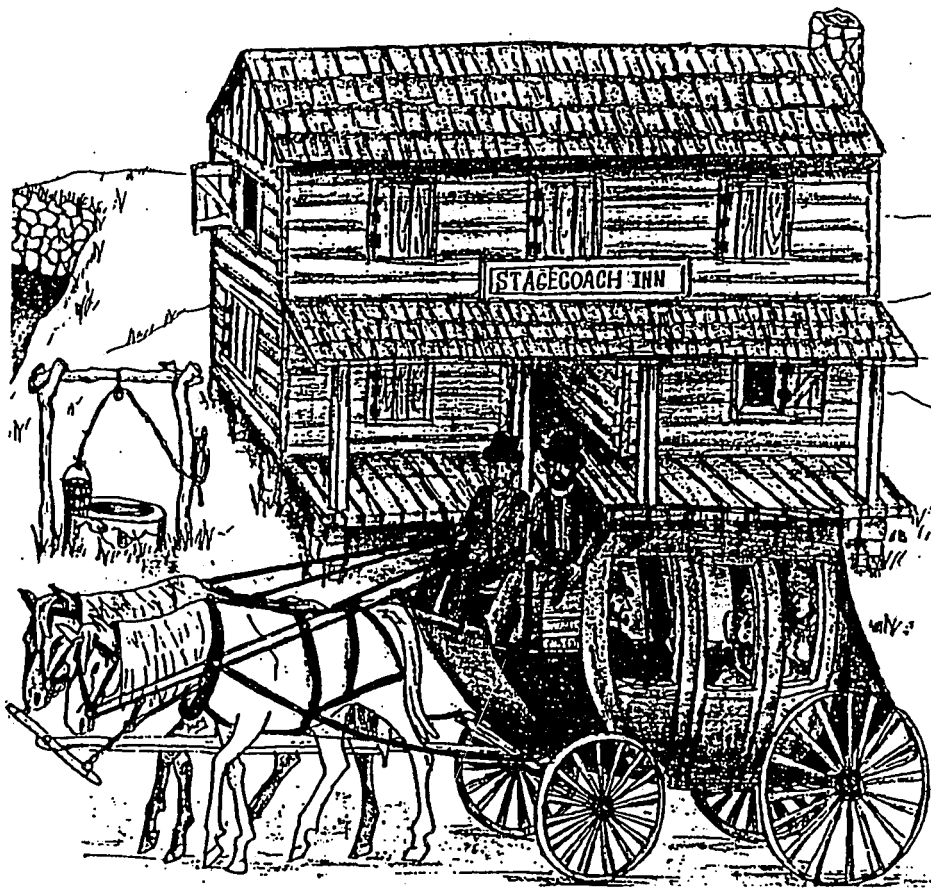


FIGURE 7: Stagecoach Inn (after Pool 1992:121)

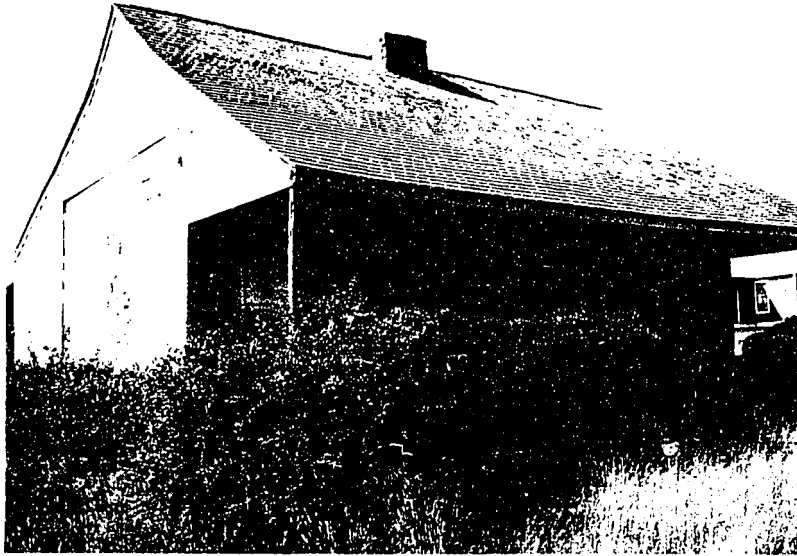


FIGURE 8a: John P. Cole's House, Washington County.



FIGURE 8b: Detail of Structure, ca 1824.

for he and the two boy's" when they settled in Madison and Leon Counties (Rawick 1977:6.5.2404; 4.3.1097). Jane Cotton, who was born and raised in Walker County, remembered her master as having a "great big house built out logs" (Rawick 1977:3.2.945).

Lavinia Lewis' master brought his family and slaves from Mississippi to Anderson, in Grimes County, in flight from the Civil War. Lavinia said her mistress was upset at having to leave the fine house she had in Mississippi to live in a "little old log cabin wid de cracks all chinked wid de clay, an de furniture dat dey brought from dey old home" (Rawick 1977:6.5.2350). By contrast, Taby Jones remembered that his master, Felix Jones, always had a fine house and good quarters for his slaves. He said his master "lived in a big house built out of rock. He had 4 rooms in that house," (Rawick 1979:6.5.2143-2146).

It is important to note that Texas was the frontier at this time, a place where "Americans had to battle for predominance with a different nation and culture (the Mexicans), face a far more dangerous type of warlike aborigine, and master a land whose geography was strange and alien" (Fehrenbach 1983:12). Unlike other areas of the South, long established plantations, trade centers, and ports were not a part of the plantation and frontier

landscape of Texas. Prior to the arrival of Austin's colonists beginning in 1821, the vast majority of Texas was uninhabited. The few settlements that the Spanish had established were mainly military outposts, *presidios*, or Catholic missions. Permanent settlement by farmers, ranchers, and merchants was virtually nonexistent north of San Antonio, and scarce even south of there. As a frontier, the demands of the land required the full attention of the settlers who first came in. Unlike Texas, the home areas from which the majority of the early settlers came from had been well established for many years.

In Brazos and neighboring Burleson, Grimes, and Washington Counties, the fertile soils adjacent to the Brazos and Navasota Rivers and the numerous creeks attracted many settlers. The first concern of the settlers was to establish crops in order to survive. Grand homes for the masters, and better homes for the slaves would come later, if at all. One notable exception among the early settlers in the Brazos Valley is Captain Jared Groce, who established his home, Bernardo, in nearby Waller County. The home was a "55-foot log house of cottonwood logs, hewed and counterhewed as smooth as glass. It was two stories, with many refinements"

(Holbrook 1973:365). However, Groce was an exception among the early settlers. He received ten *sitios* of land; five in Brazoria County, three in Grimes County, and two in Waller County (Bugbee 1897:113). As a man of wealth and means, he quickly was able to set his slaves to work clearing the land and building his estate (Berleth 1917:358-368). The majority of the early settlers, like the Millicans, Whitesides, Devers, Southerlands, and others, received one *sitio* each. These settlers came to establish themselves on the virtually free lands of Texas. It is to their credit that despite the hardships of clearing this virgin land, only seven of the original colonists forfeited their grants (Bugbee 1897:109).

The living conditions for both slaves and masters in early Texas was primitive at best. Thus, when we read criticisms by Frederick Law Olmsted, who visited Texas after having toured the rest of the South in the early 1850s, we recognize that he is comparing a landscape less than a few decade's age to that of an area settled for several decades to over a century. By the late 1840s and early 1850s, economic growth did spur the construction of larger homes, such as those catalogued by Plummer in Washington County (1969). But for the majority of Brazos, Burleson, and Grimes Counties, simpler, more utilitarian

structures which answered the immediate needs of the settlers, masters, and slaves were the norm. This is borne out by both the paucity of examples of opulent owners' houses in Brazos County, and, more importantly, by the narratives of the former slaves themselves. As primary ethnographic data, their recollections dating back to the 1850s, sometimes to the 1840s, is our primary source of valid, reliable evidence that the opulent big house was not a part of the plantation landscape in Brazos County.

Slave Quarters

If the idealized vision of the big house evokes a romanticized view of life in the plantation South, the remnants of the slave quarters recall, at least in part, the reality of life on the plantations for the slaves. Meager structures, the slaves' quarters were more often the reality of housing conditions for African Americans throughout the antebellum period, and even beyond that time for many. In antebellum Texas, especially during the first two decades of settlement, both white and black Texans lived in structures that were much the same. Olmsted commented that the desperate conditions he observed throughout his travels in the South had not fully prepared him for what he found in Texas. Already critical

of the living conditions of whites in Texas, Olmsted described slaves living in log cabins ten feet to a side, with no windows, and the cracks barely chinked (1857 in Campbell 1989:138). During an April, 1837 visit to a plantation on Oyster Creek, William Fairfax Gray noted that "the log huts of the poor Negroes are more open than the stables in Virginia . . . and some of them have no chimneys" (Campbell 1989:137).

Typically, the slave house was a one room, weather-tight structure, approximately 16 feet by 18 feet, with wood planking for the floor, and a place for a small fireplace or stove. The structure would, ideally, be elevated two to three feet from the ground, for ventilation and cleanliness, be located close to the other slave quarters, and have some tree, such as a chinaberry, for shade (Breedon 1980:114; Burford 1976:4; Campbell 1989:138; Holbrook 1973:361-362; Vlach 1981:156-157). The narratives from former slaves in this part of the Brazos Valley indicate that almost all of the slave houses were simple, one-room log buildings, with few exceptions. Taby Jones of Madisonville, whose master had a nice four-room rock house, said, "Our quarters was good. We had rock houses so'es the storm wouldn't blow us away" (Rawick 1979:6.5.2143). Elsie Reece, who was a slave on the

Mueldrew plantation near Navasota in Grimes County, recalled their house as a two-room log cabin, while Jane Cotton from Walker County described their quarters as "log houses with two rooms just one door to the room," which indicates either a dog-trot or Cumberland style house for the slave quarters (Rawick 1979:8.7.3272; 3.2.944). Finally, Sally Neely, a former slave from Madisonville said that:

Our home quarters was pretty good, about the best in the whole country. It was built out of boxing planks, you have seen these chicken houses, that is like our quarters looked, great long building with all the doors facing South, among lots of shade trees. It had no floor except old mother earth and we kept real warm and dry in it all the time (Rawick 1979:7.6.2885).

The more usual description of slave housing was one room log cabins, some with a fireplace, but many without. On the Anson Jones farmstead, records indicate two log structures built to serve as slave quarters, with a stone fireplace in one cabin built in 1847 (Carlson and Moss 1995:54). Also common was the arrangement of the slave quarters into rows, sometimes "called de quarters," according to Yach Stringfellow, a former slave on the Hubert plantation in Washington County (Rawick 1979:9.8.3748). Louvinia Pleasant remembered that "dere was a whole row ob dem log cabins, where de slaves lived"

on the Ball plantation near Chappell Hill in Washington County (Rawick 1979:8.7.3101). Soul Williams said that their quarters on the Leon Prairie "were long and in one corner we had one post that was a rail for our bed" (Rawick 1979:10.9.4131). Charlie Cooper of Madisonville said that his house was built out of pine logs and had a roof of split rails (Rawick 1979:3.2.92), while John Mosely, a former slave from Burleson County said that:

Our quarters were all right for that day. It was built out of logs cut from the woods and barked, and after they built the room Maser took clay and grass and mixed that together to do up the cracks. My father riveted out boards by hand to cover it over with, then we used cow-hide to put over the door to keep out the cold and rain (Rawick 1979:7.6.2796),

which is a close correlation to a description by Holbrook (1973:362-363). More unusual was Rosa Pollard's memory of her "house" near Madisonville being a "rail or pole room covered over the top with cowhides and grass, it looked like a wigwam from outside" (Rawick 1979:8.7.3118).

Also typical among the narratives were memories of one family to a cabin. Hattie Cole, a former slave of Ed Hearne of Robertson County, and J. W. King, a former slave of Breen Bouldin of Chappell Hill in Washington County, both recalled that a man with a family, or a woman with her children, were often assigned their own house to live

in (Rawick 1979:3.2.776; 6.5.2215). The internal arrangements tended to be described in like terms, especially regarding the construction of beds. While some of the slaves said they slept on the ground, many others, like John Mosely from Madisonville, recalled that their beds were constructed by placing a:

forked pole and drove it in the ground, then we took two straight poles, run one end of them in the fork and the other end between a crack in the quarters and after we done all that, we stretched a green cow-hide over the poles good and tight so when it got dry it would not give much. Then we went to the woods and gathered moss and boards so it would not keep growing, then got grass, shucks, and a few cotton seed and put on these hides, then when we went to bed at night we could crawl down among all that stuff and put a cowhide over us and we would sleep real warm in the coldest of weather (Rawick 1979:7.6.2796).

This type of bed construction, sometimes called a "Georgia Hoss" (Holbrook 1973:363), is typical of log-cabin construction, and was common among both whites and blacks living in similar structures. Beds and pallets of straw were also commonly mentioned throughout the narratives. The furnishing in the slave quarters was sparse, and the narratives indicate that this was often true for the masters and overseer's quarters as well. Beds, or at least a pallet, were the most common furnishings, followed by benches and sometimes tables and occasional chairs.

Slave quarters, and similar structures changed little during the latter years of the plantation system and after the Civil War. In his presentation on the "new" [postbellum] plantation, Vlach (1995) notes that one of the changes to former slave structures in the postbellum years was to enlarge the available living area to attract sharecroppers with families. The only other significant change was the decentralization of the quarters to allow the sharecroppers to live closer to their plots of land in modified housing (Figure 9). Several narratives recall that a large number of freedmen either remained on the lands where they had been slaves, or returned to that land at a later time. For example, Harry Baker lived with his mother and his step-father Simon Allen on land owned by Simon's former master in Brazos County after Emancipation, and Aaron Nunn remained Mr. Tom Nunn's farm in Washington County for many years after he was freed (Rawick 1977:2.1.147-148; 8.7.2955). Those who were fortunate enough to acquire land of their own were often as cash poor as their comrades who remained on the old plantation, and both groups made ready use of existing structures. As the need grew, they could add additional rooms to their houses. Such was the case with the Ned Peterson farmstead in nearby Wellborn, Brazos County, which was constructed

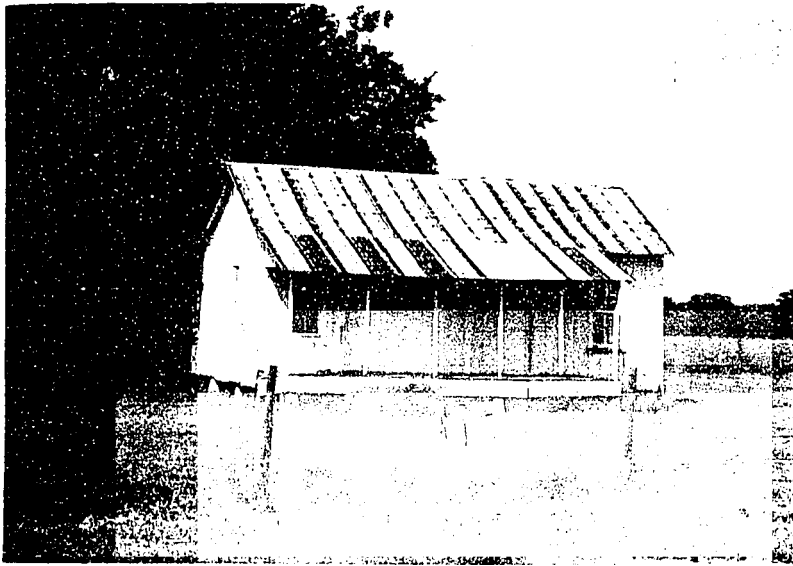


FIGURE 9: Typical Sharecropper House, Allenfarm.

in two stages (Nash 1995:66-68, 96-97).

Other Structures

Identifying out buildings such as barns, pens, and other structures is even more restrictive than finding examples of plantation housing in Brazos County. Barns and pens have a high rate of adaptive reuse. Some evolve into larger structures, while others are torn down and their materials used elsewhere. Likewise, the buildings associated with the boom days of Millican have largely vanished. The H&TC Railroad depot (Figure 10) and E.M. Millican's Stagecoach Inn exist only as drawn from Fletcher Pool's memory, while others exist only as narrative descriptions. Some of the slave narratives recall out buildings on the plantations. Most were described as log structures, similar in construction to the big houses and slave quarters. Yach Stringfellow said that the kitchen on the Hubert plantation in Washington County was a "long lean-to built on to de big house whar master and mistis libed" (Rawick 1979:9.8.3748). Wash Wilson remembered that there was blacksmith shop, a smoke house, and barns, and that these were arranged along with the quarters around his master Bill Anderson's house in Robertson County, while Bettie Irby said there was a

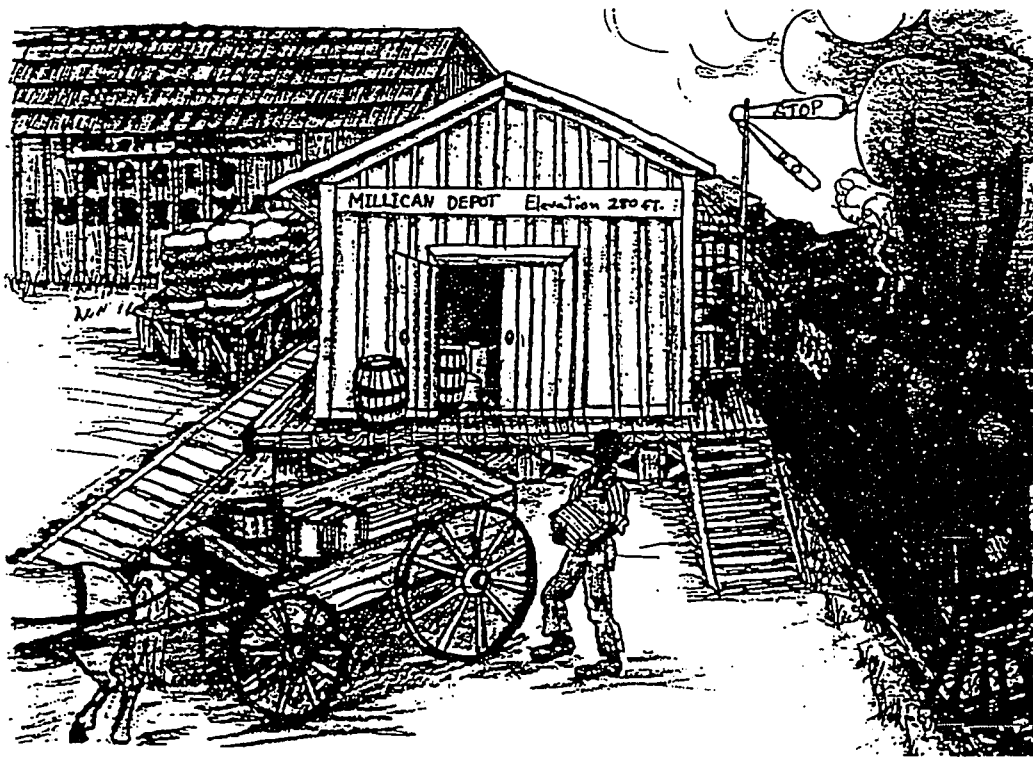


FIGURE 10: H&TC Terminal, Millican (after Pool 1992:276).

separate house for cooking on the Moss White plantation near Chriesman in Burleson County (Rawick 1979:10.9.4238; 5.4.1859). On the Anson Jones plantation (41WT6), two log cabins served as the kitchen and the smokehouse (Carlson and Moss 1995:53).

Housing for whites, even slave owning whites, was usually little more than a larger version of the slave quarters. The settlers and their slaves, primarily from the lower South, brought with them a "mental template," a set of understandings on what a house was, how it should be constructed, how it should look, and how it should be understood in terms of the landscape. Utilizing the available materials, most of the early settlers drew from this template to construct their buildings. "A house," according to Glassie, "functioned somehow within the structure that relates one person (the house's inhabitant) to the other members of the community (those who will see the house)" (1975:116). As such, the builder and the observers recognized within the structure and form of the buildings a set of culturally guided principles which relayed the aesthetics of the group for all to see.

In the initial years of settlement, utilitarian needs usually won out over grand designs, with a few exceptions, such as Jared Groce, Abner Jackson, or the Perrys, to name

a few. As exceptions to the rule, they arrived with available funds and resources not common among the majority of the early settlers, although Groce did use the available cottonwood trees for his home (Holbrook 1973:364). As the planters prospered, they could expand and improve their homes, and perhaps those of their slaves as well (Holbrook 1973:362-363). As evidence of this, we can return to Plummer's description (1969) of some of the homes in Washington County. Holbrook, too, notes the later construction of larger plantation homes, such as Monte Verdi in Rusk County built in 1846, and Elijah Clack Sterling Robertson's mansion in Salado built in 1852 (1973:364-365). Yet the narratives reveal that most of the owners in Texas did not have grand, opulent big houses. Most lived in smaller, more utilitarian structures. Likewise, the slaves' quarters as revealed in the narratives were generally small, single-family dwellings, even in the narratives of slaves from larger plantations.

Living on the frontier, the early settlers and the slaves they brought with them were concerned first with clearing the land and establishing crops; the large plantation house could come later. But even with continued settlement, improvements in the land, and continued prosperity, the Old South version of the plantation rarely

made it to Texas. In the Brazos Valley, we can point to Colonel Groce's plantation as one grand design, but the majority of houses and plantation designs were much more simple. From the evidence we have, we can infer that building a big house was not of much importance to the Brazos County's early settlers. If we refer back to the county tax and probate records discussed in Chapter II, we find that the Millicans alone were worth a few hundred thousand dollars, a substantial sum of money at that time. Other planters in Brazos County like Dr. Rogers, who would own the Rogers Plantation lands and much of the Allenfarm lands by the mid 1850s; Harvey Mitchell; or Richard Carter, were also men of means and social peers of the Millicans by the 1850s. Yet none of these men or their peers built large, opulent big houses, and this is an important point. "Economic status is relative within a given range" (Carlson 1987:11). The wealth of these families was primarily in land and slaves and the crops they had in the field. Barring floods or drought, both common occurrences, these farmers could realize a profit on their crops. Yet to sustain their livelihood, monies from these crops must first be invested in new seeds for the next crop, and in repairs and replacement of their farm equipment and storage facilities, maintenance of

their slaves, and in basic foods and goods necessary for daily living. The notion of spending needed funds on luxury items was not a part of the utilitarian mental construct of these settlers. Thus, the opulent big house and the luxurious appointments of the idealized plantation landscape were not a concern for these families.

Though the antebellum architecture of Allenfarm, Rogers Plantation, and the surrounding environs is not extant, we can still infer a great deal of meaning from its absence, and from the corroborating information in the slave narratives, records, and the known sites of like age and status. If we were to reconstruct the landscape, we would find that the area contained small enclaves of buildings associated with each owner's property. We would find the owners' homes, the quarters for their slaves, and the barns and sheds necessary for storing their goods, crops, livestock, and farm implements. Between these small areas of structures would be expanses of open, alluvial farmlands.

For this area, the utilitarian ethos of farming precluded the construction of the "big house" landscape. The *ethnoarchitecture* drawn from the slave narratives supports this interpretation, as does the lack of recorded structures and extant examples. In its stead was a series

of smaller, more utilitarian structures which fit the mental template the early settlers brought with them. For these settlers and later stewards of the land, the value of the land lay in the crops which could be grown on it, not in the manipulation of the land to create an idealized plantation landscape of large homes, tidy rows of quarters, and sweeping, scenic vistas. The archaeological record of nearby settlements also reinforces this idea. The daily wares of the family households were of simple, durable design. Although the wares were not without decoration, overall they were nevertheless goods which were more serviceable rather than ornamental. Finally, the narratives recall that the masters and the slaves in Brazos and her neighboring counties lived in ways much more similar than the idealized concept of the plantation would lead us to believe.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION--CLOSING THE DIALOGUE

The end of summer marks a change in the patterns of life for the inhabitants of the Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation lands. The cotton crop planted earlier is ready for harvest, and all are focussed on getting the crop harvested before the weather changes and ruins the crop. The small floods from the previous fall and winter did not affect the soil, and the rains from the past spring and summer have produced a large crop. Late season thunderstorms which can ruin the crop have not come, and the early season cool front has moderated the temperature enough to make the heat a little more bearable. This year, the analysts and brokers are projecting a good return on the cotton harvest, with prices perhaps higher than they have been for several years. For the owners and their workers, this has been a good year for cotton.

The year is 1995. Yet this same scenario has been replayed several times over the past 170 years that this land has been settled, a testament to the productivity of this land. The repetition of this scenario also reveals a continuity of the patterns of life on this land across time. Devoted then as now to agriculture, specifically

growing cotton, the lands of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation have continually proven their fertility. The people who have owned and worked these lands have continued to pursue agriculture, and have focussed their energies on continued production of a valuable crop, and returning the proceeds from each crop into production for the next year.

In the years since this area was first settled, little has changed. The most marked difference is the labor used to work the land. Where once hundreds of field hands--first slaves and then sharecroppers--were needed, reliance is now on modern agricultural equipment. The labor required to plant, maintain, harvest, and process the cotton crop has changed from hundreds of workers to only a few dozen today. But there are more similarities than differences. Buildings on the land are still scarce, and their placement utilizes a minimum of land. The idealized plantation big house that never materialized in the antebellum period is still not a part of this landscape. Housing for the owners is still remarkably simple, with only one owner's house evident on the land. Housing for the slaves is nonexistent, and that for later sharecroppers has dwindled to only a few units, with buildings for the tractors and equipment replacing the

removed housing. Except for the macadam and utility poles, the landscape looks much the same today as it probably did after it was first cleared in 1825 or any time between now and then: isolated, rural, sparsely settled, and then only by those who are intimately associated with the land. Absent are the enclaves of suburban housing, agricultural business research and test farms, or light-industrial development common to other areas in Brazos County that were once like Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation. The most remarkable aspect of the landscape is its lack of remarkable features, and it is this aspect of the landscape in which the nature of this area is revealed.

For Allenfarm, Rogers Plantation, and like areas of riverine plains along the Brazos and Navasota Rivers, material reminders of the past are largely absent. Their absence is by design, not by default. The ideology of the people who first developed this region and which they passed on to the later stewards of this land was of a conservative nature. For these people, production of crops, earning a living, and maintaining the *status quo* were the key goals. Expenditures on unnecessary, non-utilitarian structures and finery runs counter to this mindset. Wealth for these people is a relative concept based more on what can be produced and insuring future

productivity than on acquiring material goods. As such, the land has retained its originally developed cultural landscape of agricultural production, with only a few modern encroachments--power lines and macadam roads, for example.

The archaeological and architectural record, or rather the lack of it, reinforces the utilitarian nature of the people who developed this land. From both the Richard Carter (41BZ74) and Anson Jones (41WT6) sites, we can infer that life at Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation was comfortable, but simple. Common, durable whitewares were the order of the day in the domestic life of the plantations, as it was for the majority of the population at this time, while plain structures built of local materials provided the necessary housing in the region. The John P. Cole's house in Washington County evolved from its original log structure to a more stylish home, but still remained simple and durable. Similarly, Carlson, et alia's investigations at the Anson Jones site revealed a simple log and plank structure for Anson Jones and his family (Carlson and Moss 1995:43), and a plain, one-room log home housed the Carters at their property (Carlson 1987:3). Tax records reveal that while the families who owned and worked these lands were not destitute, their

wealth, such as it was, was in their slaves, their land, and the tools needed to farm these lands. As discussed earlier, some of the farmers who owned slaves also leased additional slaves as they were needed, a frugal move on their part considering the expense of purchasing additional slaves.

In this development of an interpretation of the material culture of the region comes one of the main aspects of this study. In the absence of material remains, the methodology described previously allowed for the creation of a material culture study. By inference and analysis, the data available for this study was such that actual material artifacts were not necessary. By comparing the information in the slave narratives to archaeological data collected at related sites, a mental picture of the material culture of this area has been created. We can, in the mind's eye, visualize the structures which were on the land and the household wares of the inhabitants of these houses. We can visualize what they ate, the crops they grew, the clothes they wore, their entertainments, and the general conditions of their lifeways. All of this in the absence of actual artifacts for study has been revealed through a specific methodology applied to a specific set of data.

From the narratives of the former slaves the inference of the lifeways of these plantations is more fully developed. From the narratives emerges the idea that slavery in Brazos and her neighboring counties--Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Milam, Robertson, and Washington--was a fairly benign institution. Absent from this local collection are references to mistreatment and insurrection, or signs of poor treatment of the slaves in general. In their stead are memories of hard work punctuated by periods of free time, with parties, religious services, and visiting family and friends allowed in this social cycle. Curiously absent are bitter memories of their masters on the part of the former slaves. While a few do reveal disdain for their former masters, many recall them almost fondly, and reserve their rancor for the memories of the overseers, or the failed promises of the federal government after Emancipation.

More intriguing is the inference that there were slaves brought from Africa to this region long after the importation of African slaves was banned. The totality of the data--British consular allegations, historical records, slave narrative accounts of African capture, Bertha Dobie's account of *The Death Bell of the Brazos* (1976), *minkisi* found in slave houses (Brown 1989), and

the analysis of African retentions, for example--indicates that African slaves were brought into Texas and into this area. This inference is important because no history of Brazos County, and few Texas history studies, have concluded that African slaves were brought here. Each item taken individually does not support this allegation. Yet when the data set is compared and analyzed as a whole, there is clearly a strong case for believing that illegally imported African slaves were brought into the region.

As a tool, the methodology employed has its limitations. Any single aspect of the methodology, such as the slave narratives, for example, is not a strong enough piece of evidence to stand on its own. Instead, there must be a reliance on all aspects of the available material--the slave narratives, historical documentation, studies from similar locations, and the like--with which to create an interpretation of the landscape of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation. Obviously, more material remains would help to strengthen this type of study, and future researchers may wish to focus on areas with a greater level of material remains for study. The methodology also has its limitations in terms of the size of the areas on which it may be applied. What is true for Allenfarm and Rogers

Plantation is not necessarily true for the Wellborn region of Brazos County, which is north of Allenfarm and Rogers Plantation in the post oak savannah. The type of settlement in this region was radically different from other locations in Brazos County. The geographic confines of this type of study demand limiting studies to a tight catchment zone, preferably a singular plantation or associated set of plantations.

Allenfarm, Rogers Plantation, and the surrounding region were created with agricultural pursuits as the primary goal. The conservative nature of the early settlers remained with their descendants, and became a part of the culture of their slaves and their descendants. Clear in the narratives is the recognition by the former slaves that they were responsible for the creation of this landscape. By their labor, the visions of the masters were realized. Yet this recognition is more matter-of-fact rather than boastful, an adaptation of the conservative mindset of the Anglo population. As a distinct group, the slaves created their own community based on their African heritage and the ideas they syncretized. By design or default, this sense of community grew in an atmosphere which encouraged its growth. Most masters in the area allowed and encouraged socializing among their slaves,

encouraged religion, and even treated their slaves more as human beings than as chattel. The isolation and hardships of the frontier created a system where a closer association between whites and blacks existed. This isolation would also allow for the further strengthening of this community after the Civil War.

What we know today as Brazos County is a result of the efforts of the early settlers and the slaves they brought into the county. These early settlers and their slaves developed the agricultural base of the county, and thus laid the groundwork for its subsequent growth. Now, as then, the bottoms along the Brazos and Navasota Rivers are fertile, productive lands, still among the most productive cotton lands in the state. The lands are also home to isolated groups of people intimately associated with the land, much as it was over 170 years ago. In the intervening years, little has changed here. The conservative ideologies that built the landscape work today to maintain its agricultural purpose. Isolated, sparsely populated, and heavily farmed, these lands have retained their identity across time, and so too have their stewards.

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APPENDIX I

BRAZOS COUNTY MEN IN THE TEXAS REVOLUTION

This list is compiled from various sources, especially *Muster Rolls of the Texas Revolution*, as compiled by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Divisions are made based on information contained within the Muster Rolls.

Deceased in Service

Pvt. Albert Martin, the Alamo March 6, 1836; James E. Ellis, Capt. Shackleford's Co. (the "Red Rovers"), Col. Fannin's Command, Goliad Massacre; Pvt. Abner C. Davis, Capt. William Wood's Co. A, Col. Edward Burleson's 1st Regt. Texan Volunteers, Battle of San Jacinto; Pvt. Hiram Lee, Capt. Kuykendall's Co. E, 1st Regt., Maj. McNutts' Command, died in service, Battle of San Jacinto.

Battle of San Jacinto

Pvt. Thomas Gay, Capt. Baker's Co. D., Col. Burleson's 1st Regt. Texan Volunteers, the Battle of San Jacinto; Isaac Jacques, Capt. Arnold's Co. of Volunteers,

returned from Lynchburg March 8, 1836 to serve under Capt. McIntire, Col. Sherman's Command, the Battle of San Jacinto; Joseph Floyd, Artillery Corps, Maj. Gen. Houston's Command, the Battle of San Jacinto; Pvt. Willis L. Ellis, 4th Co., 2nd Regt., Col. Sherman's Command, the Battle of San Jacinto; Pvt Hinton Curtis, 4th Co., 2nd Regt. T. Volunteers, Col. Sherman's Command, the Battle of San Jacinto; Pvts. Abraham Dillard, Irish immigrant Matthew Dunn, Mayberry B. Gray, James Gray, James Hill, Prosper Hope, and Richard Hope, Capt. Hill's Co. "H", Col. Burleson's Command, the Battle of San Jacinto; Pvt. Allen Jones, Capt. W.J.E. Heard's Co. "F", Col. Burleson's Command, the Battle of San Jacinto; Moses Baine served in Capt. Howth's Co. "C", 1st Regt. Infantry, Regular Army of Texas, the Battle of San Jacinto; and Pvts. D.W. Campbell, J.A.F. Gravis, and Capt. J.B. Chance, commander, Washington Co., assigned to guard the camp at Harrisburg.

Siege of Bexar

Capt. Amon B. King, who led a company under Col. Fannin's Command; Willie Brown, Co. "A", Lt. McFarland's Command, 1st Regt. Artillery, Texas Army; 2nd Lieut. Adolphus Hope, Hill's Co., Siege of Bexar; Pvts. William Barnett, James Bell, Thomas B. Bell, Capt. York's Co.

Volunteers, Siege of Bexar; Pvt. James L. Vaughan, Capt. John M. Bradley's Co., Siege of Bexar; and Hendrick Arnold, Abraham K. Clark, Hiram Davis, Samuel G. Evitts (later wounded at the Battle of San Jacinto), James A. Head (Chief Justice of the Brazos County Court, 1848), Ralph McGee, Saunders Walker and Dyrton Wickson are also on the roll at the Storming and Capture of Bexar.

In Service Elsewhere and in Militia Beats

George Evans, Mast. of Ord., Col. Fannin's Command, fought at both battles of San Antonio; Pvt. A.D. Lancaster, Capt Chessher's Jasper Volunteer Co.; Pvts. Elliot Allcorn, James Allcorn, John H. Allcorn, Thomas Blakeley, Francis Clampitt, David Houston, John H. Jones, and Nathan Mitchell, Capt. Hill's Company of Rangers; Pvt. Willaby Boatright, Capt. Ravill's Co., 1st Regt. Texas Volunteers; Capt James L. Holmes, Holmes' Co. of Kentucky Volunteers, Velasco (promoted to Major, October 9, 1836, at Camp La Baca); Capt. Thomas H. Barron, Pvts. John M. Barron, Charles Duncan, Green Duncan, A.J. Morgan, and G.W. Morgan, Capt. Thomas H. Barron's Co. "B", 1st Regt. of Texas Rangers; Pvt. Obediah Hudson, Capt. Lynch's Co., 1st Regt. Texas Volunteers; 2nd Lieut. Henry G. Hudson, Capt. Clay's Co.; Pvt. William Ewing, Capt. Shaw's Co.,

1st Regt. Volunteers Infantry; Pvts. Samuel Bowman, James A. Head and Silas M. Parker, Supt., Ranging Co. of Silas M. Parker under command of Capt. Eli Seals; Capt. Eli Chandler, William Brooks, William Burney, Grant Millican, Willis Millican, James A. Jones, Volunteers on the East Side of the Brazos River, June 1836; William M. Love, Samuel McGowan, Militia List #20, Northeast Beat; Pvts. Martin Pruett, Levi Pruett and James Mitchell, Capt. Arnold's Co. of Nacogdoches Volunteers; Pvt. William Fullerton, Capt. Eli Seals, Capt. Eli Seals' Rangers; Pvts. Samuel T. Allen, Nathan Campbell, Walter Campbell, Stephen Eaton, Henry Fullerton, James McMillan, and Thomas Webb, Capt. Sterling C. Robertson's Co. of Rangers under the command of Capt. Calvin Boales; Pvt. Lorenzo Clark, Col. Jesse Benton's Regt. of Rangers; and 3rd Sgt. Bela Collins, Capt Burroughs' Zanesville Volunteer Rifle Co. (Daughters of the Republic of Texas 1986:27, 30, 43, 44, 47, 50, 53-56, 58-59, 74, 77, 91, 128, 133-134, 164-165, 191, 196, 199, 209, 249, 254-257; Smith 1962:12-13, 19, 59, 62-63, 85, 93-94, 103-105, 111, 136-138, 146-147, 177, 200, 201-202, 206-207, 213).

APPENDIX II
SELECTED SLAVE NARRATIVES

In the previous pages, excerpts from different slave narratives have been included. In the following pages, selected narratives are presented in full. All of the narratives appear in George Rawick's edited collection, *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography, Supplement Series II*, in the volumes subtitled *The Texas Narratives*. Editorial comments in block brackets, [], indicate my annotations to the texts.

Colbert, Joe W.

Fort Worth

District #7

Henry Baker, 80 living at 301 E. Rosedale Street, Fort Worth, was born a slave to Dr. Neal, at Richmond, Va. His father belonged to John Thomas who owned a plantation next to Dr. Neal's. As John Thomas would not sell Henry's father to Dr. Neal, Henry and his brother and sister became the property of Dr. Neal. During the war Dr. Neal moved to a small farm in Washington County, Texas. After moving to Washington County, Henry's mother married Simon Allen. After freedom they moved to Brazos County and three years later his mother died there. His stepfather let a Mr. Patterson keep him. At the age of 16 or 17, he went to Austin and worked in three different hotels. He worked for the I&GN Railroad in Palestine, and traveled with a lightening rod salesman for a few months. He moved to Robertson County and farmed for 16 years. He married Lucy Foster while in Robertson County, and raised two children. He moved to Fort Worth in about 1902, and has lived there since that time.

"Well now, I's bo'n on de 29th day of June, I's don' know whut yea', but I's pushin 80 yea's now. I's bo'n on Marster Doc Neal's plantation, dat was jus' six miles below Richmond, Va. Now I's tell you how cum we'ns name to be Baker. My father waz brought over from Africa an' sold to de Baker family, an' dey named hem, Joe Baker. Dey sold hem to John Thomas, who owned de plantation next to Marster Neal. He cum over to Marster Neal's plantation to see my mother, her name was Agnes. Dey wanted to git marryed an' de marster says its all right, so dey gits marryed. Marster Neal, he tried to buy my father from John Thomas, but he wouldn't sell my father, cuze he was de best ditch digger on John Thomas plantation. So we'ns chillen becum Marster Neal's property, an' whin Marster Neal moved to Texas we'ns never seen him no mo'.

"Now I's don' 'member nothin 'bout moving to Texas becuze I's too young. My brother an' sister, dey told me 'bout it lots of times. Der names waz, James and Sallie, an' dey waz some whut ol'er dan me. Dey say dat during de war whin things got warm dere in Richmond dat Marster Neal loaded all his stuff in two wagons an' started fur Texas. Der waz 'bout eight slaves an' 'bout dat many chillen. All de slaves walked behind de wagons, but de chillen dat waz too young to walk, rode in de wagons. My brother told me

dat I's rode in a hammock under one of de wagons. De yankees got 'fter Marster Neal an' he ran off an' left Mr. Christen in charge. I don' know jus' how long we'ns wa gittin' yere, but I guess it waz a long time.

"Mr. Christen tuk we'ns to Washington County, an whin we'ns git dere Marster Neal waz waitin' fur we'ns. De marster bought a small farm an' put de slaves to wokke clearin' de land. Dey cut down trees an built de marster a big house an' dey built a bunch of little houses fur de slaves. De huts jus' had holes fur windows an' some of dem had plank floors. Dey had bunks built against de wall an' dey made de mattress out of hay an' grass. It waz some time 'fter de war before dey started making wooden beds wib rope cord bottoms.

"Now den, dey had one hut dat all de slaves ate in. Dere waz one woman, dat waz Aunt Easter, she cooked fur de whole push. I's don' 'member jus' how dey would git der breakfast, but I's know dat whin dey waz wokkin' next to de house dat she would blow a horn an' dey would cum in fur dinner. Whin dey waz wokkin' away from de house, she would fix der dinner up in buckets an' carry it to 'em. All de chillen ate together an' dey waz jus' lak pigs. Dey put de eats on de table an' dey sho' went 'fter it. Der waz lots to eat such as it waz. Now in de spring of de

yea' we'ns had vegetables, pot likker, co'n bread, milk an' coffee, very seldom de marster gave we'ns meat. In de fall of de yea' de marster kill hogs an' den we'ns had lots of meat. Now den, pot likker is de juice from de greens dats boil down.

"De slaves wokked from de time dey could see till dey couldn't see. De overse'er rang a bell 'bout four o'clock in de mornin' an' de slaves would git up an' eat an' go to de fiel'. Once in a while whin dey waz up on der wokke dey would git Sat'day 'fternoon off. Dey always got Sunday's off, an' de women wash de clothes an' clean up de huts. De men would go fishin' or jus' stay around an' help de women folks. Dere wazn't much runin' 'round de plantation. Dey sang some songs whin dey wokked 'round de house an' in de fiel', but I's don' 'member none of dem.

"When one of de slaves git sick Marster Neal sent fur a Doctor. De slaves waz good property an' de marster couldn't let 'em die, becuze he would have to buy anuther to tak his place. Der waz some of de ole women on de plantation dat waz jus' as good as de Doctors. Dey would git you well jus' as quick as de Doctor, sometime quicker.

"Ever'time de slaves went any whur dey had to have a pass or de padder-rollers would whip 'em wib a cowhide whip. I's don' 'member much 'bout de padder-rollers but

I's seen lots of de Kluk. Boy dey kept de life skeered out of we'ns chillen, we'ns would run under de house or de bunks or jus' anything dat we'ns could git under. I's don' 'member if dey whip anybody or not, but I's know dat dey cum 'round to de niggers house an' tell 'em whut dey had to do. If dat nigger saw 'em cumin' furs' dat nigger would tak to de woods.

"I's 'member de time my mother gits a whippin', dat waz becuze her an' a nigger dey called Uncle Dick, had a fight. de marster, he cum up while dey waz fightin' an' whipped my mother wib a cowhide whip. He whipped her till de blood jus' streamed from her. Dat lak to kill me, I's cried a long time, it jus' broke my heart. Uncle Dick, he run away while de marster waz whippin' my mother an' de marster had to run him down wib de hounds.

"We'ns waz in de fiel' one day an' looked up an' saw 'bout 200 or 300 soldiers cumin' down de road. We'ns run to de marster house. Some of we'ns waz under de house whin de soldiers gits der. One soldier man says dat we'ns free an' could whur we'en pleased. Der waz a lot of rejoicin' an' singin', we'ns so happy dat we'ns didn't know whut to do. Der waz a general breakin' up, de niggers didn't know whur dey waz goin', dey jus' went.

"My mother had marryed Simon Allen before we'ns free

an' he tuk we'ns to Brazos County an' gits a job wib de railroad [The Houston and Texas Central (H&TC) Railroad resumed construction from Millican to Bryan and the end of the Civil War, the first railroad in Texas to resume active construction]. We'ns lived der fur 'bout three yea's den my mother, she die. Den my stepfather jus' scatter we'ns chillen 'bout. My sister stayed wib my stepfather's mother an' his sister tuk my brother. He let Mr. Patterson tak me, an' I's stay wib Mr. Patterson till my stepfather marry again.

"My stepfather married a woman der in Washington an' dat waz de meanest woman I's ever seen. She waz jus' a regular she Devil. My stepfather cum an' got me an' tuk me home an' dat woman tuk all my clothes away from me. She whipped me ever'time I's turn 'round. In January whin it wa cold as ever'thing, I's run away an' goes bak to Mr. Patterson house. Mr. Patterson wouldn't let my stepfather git me, an' I stayed der till I's 16 or 17 yea's ole. Dey waz sho' good to me, dey waz always givin' me money an' I's never suffer fur anythin'. Dey sent me to school an' bought all my clothes. I's sho' had a good time while I's wib Mr. Patterson.

"I's wanted to run 'round so I left whin I's 'bout 16 or 17 yea's ole. I went to Hempstead an' got a job on de

farm. De man was named McDade, an' he sho' wazn't a man to pay fur his wokke. He jus' bluff 'em out of it. I stayed der fur two yea's an' I's never got a cent out of hem. I left dere an' went to Austin an' got a job at de City hotel washin' dishes. I's git 15 dollars a month fur dat an' I sho' hung on to dat. I guess I's dere fur almost two yea's. I know I had quite a wad of money whin I left.

"I went to work fur de Avenue hotel but I only stayed fur a few weeks. I got along fine but de manager waz to grumbly. So I gits a job wib de Ramond hotel an' wokked der fur two more yea's. Dey sold out to another man an' I wokked fur hem fur 'bout two yea's. I's never made mo' 15 dollars a month wib de hotels, but I's git my meals an' dat wazn't bad.

"I's gittin' tired of de hotels so I's go to Palestine an' gits on de extra gang wib de I&GN Railroad. I's gits a dollar an' 50 cents a day, but I's payin' 50 cents a day fur board so I's quit dat 'fter three months. I's jus' foolin' 'round Palestine whin a man cums along an' wants me to wokke fur hem on de lightening rod wagon. Dat wazn't hard wokke so I's tak hem up on dat. All I's do waz to tak care of de hoss's an' help hem wib de ladders. He payed me ten dollars a month an' I stayed wib hem till we'ns git to Texarkana.

"I's tired of runin' 'round so I's go to Robertson County an' rents me a farm. I's marry Lucy Foster while I's farmin' an' we'ns had two boys. I's wanted to keep my boys on de farm but I's doin' no good so I's move to Fort Worth. I guess I's on de farm fur 'bout 16 yea's.

"Whin we'ns git to Fort Worth, I's do all kinds of wokke. I bought me a wagon an a hoss an' peddled meat to de cullurd folks. Den I gits a job wib Armour an' Company, I's don' know how many yea's I's wokke dere but it waz a long time. Yere lately I's no good fur wokke so I jus' stays 'round my boys.

(2.1.143-149 [volume.number.pages])

Rheba Butler

July 16, 1937

Fort Worth, Texas

(No)

The following is a newspaper article about an ex-slave,
Jim Cape.

GUN-TOTING NEGRO CLAIMING TO BE 115, PROVED TO BE 117, HAS
FORT WORTH POLICE UP IN AIR.

FORT WORTH, Texas, July 16. (UP)--Jim Cape, negro who is
said to be 115 years old and has records proving he is at
least two years older, furnished a problem for police
today after his second arrest in as many days for carrying
a gun.

The aged negro was released Thursday when he promised
to take his pistol to his shanty and leave it. He carried
the gun, he said, to keep "bad negroes" from robbing him.

When he returned home, Old Jim related, he found that
somebody had taken his \$15 old age assistant check--so he
pocketed the rusty revolver again and went forth for a
search. Frightened neighbors called police.

Police said that Jim also proved he was with the
James gang in their lawless efforts "to help the poor
folks."

More amazing, however, was an ancient record book
which showed that Jim came to America from Africa on a

slave ship in 1820. How old he was at that time was not revealed, but that was 117 years ago.

"I was a naked little boy when de white folks caught me and put me on that ship," Jim said. He remembers fishing in Africa--which he refuses to believe is a separate continent.

"Africa is one of the best fishing places in America," he added.

Jim became the property of Dr. Carroll when he came to the United States. After emancipation, which Jim did not favor, he stayed with his master until the latter died.

The negro became ill a year ago, and hospital attendants gave him only a few hours to live. A few days later, Jim left his bed and walked home.

He believes he has several years more to live.

(Rawick's Note): Rheba Butler typed the following message at the bottom of this article: "This would make an unusual ex-slave story and would be quite an asset to our Texas Collection, only wish it was in our territory."

(2.2.618-619)

Wm. V. Ervin, P.W.

November 6, 1937

McLennan County, Texas

(No)

District 8

Annie Day

"I don't know when I wuz born or where I wuz born. I wuz raised by a white woman in Bryan, Texas. She said she got me when I wuz 'bout four years old. She never did tell me 'bout my parents. She had some other culled girls, too. Some folks said she must've stole us from our mammies.

"We first lived at Boonville. The woman what had me had a hotel, and a string of little houses 'bout four hundred feet long, and the hotel and the houses was all burned down. She went over to Bryan and got a bigger hotel. When Bryan was started old Boonville went down fast. Jus' 'bout all de folks moved to Bryan [Bryan replaced Boonville as the county seat in 1868].

"De woman what had me didn't treat me very well. She didn't hardly let me off the place. I never got tot go to school or even to church. She never did give me no money, but she did give me clothes and 'nough to eat. I never was on a farm.

"I don't remember nothin' about de Civil War. None of it was fought roun' where we wuz. Dey had jayhawkers dey

called 'em and Ku Klux, and dey wuz sure mean to niggers. Dey would hang a man at his own door right before his family, or dey would shoot him down. Dey would whip us niggers, too. I wuz told by some older niggers dat after de war and de slave had dere freedom, de niggers was told to go to Millican. A lot of 'em went down dere. Dey wuz awful hungry, an de storekeepers dere give 'em barrels of apples to eat and de apples had been poisoned, and dey killed a lot of de colored people [While there are no records of barrels of poisoned apples distributed from Millican, the town was the scene of the previously discussed Millican Race Riots. Relations between the white, ex-slave, and Union occupation forces were tense, at best. One official of the Freedmans Bureau described Millican as a lawless frontier].

"I wuz told, too, 'bout a family of slaves which wuz put up on de block to be sold. De family had never been fed no meat by dere master, and when he went to sell 'em he made 'em take meat skins and chew on 'em an' wipe 'em on dere mouths and faces so it would look like dey had meat to eat. When de buyer seen 'em he said, "You can't fool me. Dem niggers ain't had no meat to eat. Dey's too light lookin'. Dey ain't never had no meat. You has jus' made wipe meat skins on dere faces and chew on de meat

skins." De slaves waz glad to get even de meat skins 'cause dey wuz sure hungry for meat. Dey wuz made to work hard and wuzn't give 'nough to eat.

"When de slaves wuz give dere freedom I didn't know it, and I just stayed on with that woman. I wuz free and didn't have sense 'nough to know it.

"Dere wuz a man and his wife what run de stage from Bryan to Waco, and dey stayed at de hotel de woman run what had me. De man and his wife asked me if I didn't want to leave dis woman, and I said I did. Dey said, "You is free. You can leave her if you want to. You ain't a slave no longer." Dey told me dey would take me on de stage to Waco. I told 'em I sure would go. Dey told me to get my things together, and slip down de street and stan' by a flag pole, and when dey come along in de stage dey would pick me up. So I slipped off down to de flag pole, and dey picked me up in de stage and brought me to Waco. I didn't tell de old woman what had me that I wuz goin' or anything 'bout it.

"When we got to Waco dey took me to some friends of dere's and lef' me with dem, and dey wuz all good to me. De folks I wuz lef' with went down on de coast and took me with 'em. Dey sent me to school some, and I'm mighty thankful to dem dat I got some edgycation. I don't know

what de instincts is between de white folks and de colored folks, but some white folks is right good to de niggers, and i is mighty thankful for all de good dey has done me."

Reference: Consultant - Annie Day, ex-slave, 1401 South Fourth St., Waco, Tex.

(4.3.1160-1162)

Alfred E. Menn

September 8, 1937

Austin, Texas

(No)

Mary Edwards

My maiden name was Mary Mallett, and I will be 84 years old on July 4, 1937. I was bawn in Nawth Ca'olina-- don' know the name of the town I was brang to texas when I was two years old.

My mother's name was Phoebe Mallett. I never did see my father--and I don't know his name. We took the name of Mallett from our Mawster.

My mawster hired me out to do some nursin' fo' people who didn' own no slaves. No, I didn' have to do no field-work.

My mawster went to the war, and an overseer was lef' in his place, but de cullud folks didn' like him. Our mistress later let my grandfather sort of rule over us.

The mawster fed us putty good. He give us all of our food -- bacon, cawnbread, and milk. He was a good farmer.

My grandmother used to set by the fireplace and sing:

"I'm bound fo' the Promised Land,

I'm bound fo' the Promised Land,

Oh, I'm bound fo' the Promised Land,

Who'll go with me to the Promised Land?"

The Boys would play ball and mawbles. We-all would play ring-games. Both boys and girls would play the ring-games. We'd form a ring and somebody had to sit in the center. We'd ask:

"Why didn't yo'-all do this?"

The one in the ring would say:

"Jake grinned at me!"

We'd keep that up fo' a long time. At other times, the boys and girls would stand up, then hold their hands and start skippin'. We'd say:

"Hold up the gates, as high as the sky,
and let King George and his army pass by."

We sometimes had a big dance in the cabins. The folks danced reels, Waltzes, and gallopy--we'd call it that 'cause we'd gallop 'round and 'round. The prompter would call out the figures, and we'd do 'em.

Ole Charlie Sapp and Grant Sutton was very good fiddlers here. They was especially good when they played "Chicken Crow Befo' Day". I don' remember enny of the words.

About two good whoopin's was about all I ever seen on the plantation. I remember that one time my mother got a good whoopin'. She was tied to a tree one mornin' and given a good whoopin. Mother was very high-tempered, and

she had told our mawster that her chillun wasn't gittin' enough to eat. This made mawster mad, and he whooped her hisself.

Mawster Mallett had a plantation on Mill Creek, near Brenham, Washington County. I didn't have to do no field-work, but I remember how the slaves put large baskets between two rows, and picked cotton.

As I have said, I was hire out until I was about eleven years old. I was about thirty miles from home. One day my mother come after me, and she tol' me I was free. This was durin June--yes, June 19th. I can remember how glad I was. The people I worked fo' didn't have no slaves, and didn'y believe in it. They paid me fo' my work, and my mawster got the money.

The pusson I was workin' fo' tol' me, "Mary, you're free--and I always believed the cullud folks should've been free long ago."

"After the war, my uncle rented a farm and we worked fo' him. I was big enough now to do the field-work--sich as plant cotton, chip cotton, and pick cotton. We didn't have no planters, so we had to go right after a plowman, and throw the seeds into the rows.

I was goin' on seventeen, when I got married. I married Charlie Edwards. We had a big weddin', and a big

dance. We had chickens and turkeys to eat.

We had twelve chillun. There is only five livin', four her in Austin, and one in Oakland, California.

And I'm glad fo' one thing--that I git my pension check. I was gittin' too old to do much work, but I used to do a lot of washin'. I'm sho glad that I git my pension check.

Reference: Mrs. Mary Edwards, 83, 1501 New York Ave., Austin.

(4.3.1282-1284)

Alfred E. Menn
Travis County, Texas
District No. 9

November 2, 1937
(No)

J. W. King, 83, was born a slave on January 30, 1854, at Wardville, Missouri. He was brought to Texas when only six months old. his father was Egeton Bolton. Bolton was not allowed to come to texas with his family, when they were purchased by William Mabry, and brought to Travis County. The Mabry plantation was located at what is now the Deaf and Dumb School for negroes, Austin. His mother was known as Susan Mabry. When John was almost five years old, he with the other members of the family were sold to Breen Bouldin of Chappel Hill, Washington County. He was told that Bouldin paid \$500 for him. Later his mother married a slave by the name of Rugg Bouldin. Susan had six boys and six girls. John has been married three times. By his second wife he had twelve children, six boys and six girls. His wives were Millie Chappel, Mandy Medearis and Lucy Harrington, who finally became so religious, according to John, that she said the Lord told her to leave him. John lives with his daughter, Mattie Mae King, at 1508 E. 20th Street, Austin. He is blind and receives a

monthly pension of \$10.00 from the state of Texas.

"One ob my mawsters called me "Wallace" but my real name is J. W. King. I'se eighty-three years old and I was bawn on January 30, 1854, Wardville, Missouri.

"I couldn't tell yo' nothin' about dem days in Missouri 'cause I was too young. I was about six months old when we was brought to Texas.

"Fathaw, so I'se told, was Egeton Bolton but I couldn't tell yo' mo'e about him dan yo' kin. Fathaw wasn't brought by de Texas man, and he had to stay up in Missouri. We never did see him again.

"Susan Bolton Mabry was my mothaw. She was married two times and had twelb chillun, six boys and six girls. Her second husband was Rugg Bolton.

"William Mabry was de man dat brought us down to Texas. He had a cotton fahm right where de Deaf and Dumb fo' negroes is now. Mawster William also had a ranch above Georgetown in Williamson County.

"Mothaw's job was to do de cookin' on de place. She didn't do nothin' but cook, and she was a good one.

"When I was a young boy I was wut dey called a "Lackey boy". I had to run errands all over de community. I rode a sorrel mare, named Julianne.

"Befo' de Civil War we was sold to Mawster Green

Bouldin of Chappel Hill, Washington County. Dey tell me I was sold fo' \$500 before I was five years old. Dat was about \$100 fo' each year ob my life. My job was to tote water to de field hands, and den I done a little cotton pickin'. But I was never a good cotton picker. About de most dat I ever picked was about two hunnert pounds a day. De older folks would pick cotton and moan out a song:

"Oh, rock along, Susie, Oh, Oh, rock along,
 Oh, rock me, Susie, rock me,
 Oh, rock along, Susie, Oh, Oh, rock along."

"Durin' de civil war mawster Green Bouldin went off to de war. His cousin, Ed Bouldin, was now our overseer. Mawster Ed was very nice to us. Mawster Ed was up in years and was too old to go to de war. He didn't want to go to de war anyhow.

"I know dat when Mawster Bouldin went off to war everybody cried. Dey drove him in a hack to Chappel Hill, and from dere he went by hoss-back to de war. I rode dat hoss f'om de plantation to Chappel Hill. It was a fine lookin' black hoss but I kain't remembah his name. I never see dat hoss no mo'e. He never come back f'om de war. But Mawster Bouldin come back after de war. He had been shot in de leg, in de right leg, by a minnie ball. He died in 1874. I held many a minnie ball in my hand. Dey was shot

out ob single-barrel muskets.

"During de war an befo' Mawster Bouldin come back, some of de men on de plantation would slip up to a open winder at de big house at night and try to hear whut was goin' on. Some would be layin' outside de winder and lissen whut was read f'om a letter. Den de talk would be lak dis:

"'Sh-h-h, good news, good news!' one ob de boys would whisper.

"'Whut's in de letter?'

"'It says dat de yankees ain't against de niggers.'

"'I'll bet it says dat one southerner was enough fo' six yankees.'

"'No, dat one yankee was enough fo' a dozen southerners.'

"'I don't believe it.'

"'Sh-sh-sh.'

"De next day dat's whut de folks talk about in de fields. Some ob de pickers and workers would say, "I don't believe it."

"If we is to be freed it's a long time gettin' here."

"Mawster Bouldin nicknamed me Wallace. De last whoopin' dat he give me was fo' stickin' a choppin' ax into another boys head. His name was Henry Bouldin. We was

choppin' wood on de wood-pile and a fuss come up. We had a argument. De other boys didn't lak him, 'cause he was de biggest liar down dere. I never struck him too deep, but he sure bled. He got all right. Mawster Bouldin took me to a little stream where some putty persimmon trees growed, and he cut off a couple ob sprouts and whooped me. Den he said, "Wallace, now don't yo' ever do dat again."

"Mawster I won't do it no mo'e," I told him.

"'I been tellin' yo' so much about yo' fightin', now yo' could ob killed Henry."

"Den he talk to me some mo'e and dat was de last whoopin' I ever got f'om him.

"Every man dat had a wife and chillun got a log cabin to live in. If a man lived on one plantation and de girl he loved lived on another place he had to go and ask dat girl's mawster if he could marry her. If he could, he would be allowed to come and see her about two or three times a week. But he had to have a pass. If yo' was caught without a pass de patrol would git yo' and whup yo'.

"Sometimes when us boys got together one ob us would look back and shout, "Here comes a bunch ob men!"

"Dere wasn't no men comin' but we'd watch de boys run just fo' de fun.

"Den one mawnin', before de sun was too high Mawster

Bouldin call us all up to de big house. He was sittin' wid his chair leanin' against de shady side ob de house. A big rock was nearby in de shade. His slaves was settin' and layin' on and leanin' against dat rock when he read us de Emancipation paper.

"'Now folks, all ob yo' is free, free as I is. Yo' is free niggers. Yo' is goin' to be turned loose, barefooted and without jobs. Now in de mawnin' I want yo' all to go to Brenham, where dere is goin' to be a barbecue fo' yo' all. Dere is goin to be speeches. Yo' all kin go in de wagon and I'll ride my hoss. If some ob yo' want to come back, I'll let yo' all help me gather my crops."

"Mawster Bouldin rode hi big black hoss, Larkin, to Brenham. De chillun didn't get to go along wid de older folks. Mothaw didn't go and I stayed hom, and fo' some reason dat was one ob de loneliest days in my life.

"Mothaw, my step-fathaw, Rugg Bouldin, and us stayed on de place and helped gather de crops. About Christmas time Rugg left mothaw. He wanted to marry a white woman, but bless God, he was put in jail. Den he come back but mothaw wouldn't take him back. Den one time he come and saw us chillun, and told us goodbye. A cold, wet nawther was blowin', and him and his hoss fell into a puddle ob water and we had to pull 'em out. Rugg was drunk. Den he

left, and we never seen him no mo'e. When I heard ob him again, he was dead. Everybody, white and black, called him pap.

"When pap left, mothaw and us hired out to Elias Elliot. She done some cookin' and we worked in de fields. Dis was de time dat my sistah Caroline picked three hunert pounds ob cotton a day to de day ob her confinement wid a baby.

"Dere was some mean-dispositioned niggers here at dis time. Dere was Kye. He was a mean yellow nigger. Mawster Bouldin wouldn't allow him on de place. Kye was put in de penitentiary fo' attackin' a white woman. He served ten years and was let out. Den he done about de same thing and he was sent back to de pen. Kye's fathaw, old Sol, was mean too. So was his brothaws, Wylie and Wes. Dey was all killed fo' dere meanness. Dey sure was mean.

"Dere was times after de war when de Klu Klux Klan was on de war path. If yo' done any meanness, dey' come up to yo' house and take yo' out and whoop yo'. Dere was de time when de Klan come to a grown nigger's house and he was ready fo' 'em. When one ob 'em stepped into de door, he split his head open wid a ax. Den he run away to de Yankees.

"One time de niggers wouldn't vote de Democratic

ticket and three ob dem was hung. Jim Holt, a white feller dat was for de niggers said dat he would see dat de niggers voted de way dey wanted to vote. De last time dat I heard ob Jim Holt, was when he was shot dead.

"I kain't read or write. Dey didn't show us how to do our A B C's on Mawster Bouldin's plantation. I didn't git to go to school much after slavery. Yo' could go to school only to a certain age, sixteen years was de limit, I believe. Now folks go to school up to de time when dey is twenty-five years or more. Fo' a while I could ob sent, but I didn't lak school. I always rather drive a yoke ob oxen. I would sometimes drive five and six yokes ob oxen at one time. I hauled cotton and freight down in dat paht ob de country, more down in Austin County. Dat was always my life, out in de open. I always thought dat it was a waste ob time to go to school. I never could see no good in it. Now, I know better but de only thing I can write is to make a cross fo' my name.

"I never married until I was about twenty years old. On December 18, 1873, I married Millie Chappel. She was livin' in Chappel Hill. We rode hosses to de preachah's house and got married. Sias Campbell, a Methodist preachah, married us. We never had no chillun. Millie died in 1883. On November 15, 1883, I married Mandy Medearis.

She lived at Bluff Springs, Travis County. We didn't have nothin but twelb chillun, six boys and six girls. Dere is still ten ob 'em livin' and still half and half. Mandy died in 1913. Den three and a half years to a day, I was married to Lucy Harrington. We had no chillun. Lucy den got so much Holy Ghost, dat I couldn't suit her no mo'e. She is a Holy Roller. She said dat de Lawd told her to leave me. I told her dat if de Lawd told her to go, she had better go; but dat she could never come back to me. But I didn't rejoice when she left. She jis' left and I don't know where she is.

(6.5.2211-2218)

Dibble, Fred, P.W.

July 26, 1937

Grey, Bernice, V.W.

(No)

Beaumont, Jefferson, Dist. #3

Round faced, with a smooth, tannish skin and the prominent cheekbones of her Indian ancestry, Sue Lockridge, is a pleasant negress in her late seventies. Faded brown eyes, double chins and large, even teeth are facial characteristics. Although she maintains her former owners, the Alcorns of Brenham, Texas, were cruel, she tells of them without rancor. Sue's husband, George, also an ex-slave, died about three weeks ago, but she speaks of him matter of factly, and seems more interested in her chances for a pension than in her bereavement.

"My husban', George, he usterlive here but he die' bout t'ree weeks ago. He was 84 year' ol'. I bo'n in slav'ry myse'f, but I aint quite 80 yet. I don' 'member as much 'bout slav'ry times as George did."

"My daddy was Isom Bilbo. He come from Injun Territory and he were free-bo'n. He couldn' talk us talk, he talk Cherokee. I uster to know some of dem words but I can' 'member 'em no mo', I's too ol'. My mammy was a Alabama woman and she name' Emily. I nebber see my gran'

parents 'cause dey was sol' 'way from her on de block in Alabama. She nebber did tol' me nuttin' 'bout dem."

"I's bo'n in Brenham, Texas, on July 18. I's don' 'member de year, but it in my papers somers 'round yere. I's bo'n on a farmin' place w'at b'long to Jimmy Alcorn. Us lib 'way off dere in de prarie lan'--jis ol' bal' prarie lan'. Us could hear rain crows soundin' dey noise. Dey don' sound like real crows, dey mek long funny noise. W'en dey call in de eb'nin' it de sign it gwine to rain befo' day. Us uster see and hear lotser owls too, dem li'l brown owls. A ol' owl's bad luck. W'en you hear dem dat's a sign of deaf (death). Dey snake' dere too and long red lizard' w'at us run 'way from. Dey was lots of little horny frogs. Some of de chillen play wid 'em but I too scare' to tech 'em."

"My mammy would go to de fiel' to wuk wid a skillet of rations on her head. She spin de wheel too, for de other wimmen to weave. My daddy wuk in de fiel'. He was de one w'at blow de ho'n for to cal de niggers in to de fiel' and stop wuk and come to eat and sich."

"Ol' marse Alcorn was cruel to he slaves. Some of dem slave whip' so bad de blood run. Marster allus git mean overseers. He nebber hab any jail. He mek 'em carry a bar'l over dey head for punishment or he hab' 'em tie'

down and whip 'em. Iffen dey run off he bull-whip 'em atter he git de dogs to ketch 'em."

"Dey 'lowance de food eb'ry Sadday--jis' meat and co'n; bread was beaten bread w'at was bake in de oven. On Sadday night my daddy allus go huntin'. He ketch rabbit and 'coon and 'possum and dat de onlies other t'ings us hab to eat."

"Us uster wear homespun clo's but I don' 'member 'bout no shoes. De ol' farm was a good big ol' place wid plenty people on it--lots of 'em. De marsters house was a big log house, jis' a plain house, but de quarters houses was log and mud houses in rows. Dey hab li'l chinaberry tree in de yard to sit down under.

"My task in slav'ry time was to mind de sheep and keep de wolfs outer de sheep and de sheep outer de co'n. W'en I not doin' dat I he'p in de big house. De ol' mistus name' Nanny. She allus poppin' me on de head wid her han'. She whip' me wid a switch, too. I clean up de house and wash de dishes. Mistus she ain't had no chillen. Dey was a ol' man name' Alfred w'at wuk in de house. He keep de house straight. He mek de fires too."

"My sister Rhoda, she de onlies' one too little to wuk. De han's hafter to be in de fiel' at daylight. Dey was sure flyin' 'roun' dere. De little nigger babies

hafter stay in de house all by deyse'fs and cry 'til dey mammys come in from de fiel'. Dey didn' hab no furnicher in de house, jis' mek beds nail' on to de wall and no tables. Dey eat offen a ol' box and sit on de flo'. I guess it a good t'ing dey ain't got nuffin' like dat 'cause dey too tired to do nuffin' w'en dey come in cep'n rock de baby to sleep."

"Us didn' braid up us hair 'til Sunday. Dey warn't no chu'ch but us all hafter clean up on Sunday and didn' hafter wuk. Dey was no preachin' for de cullud. Dey warn't no preachin' for nobody."

"Us chillen all sit 'roun' in li'l huddles and play. Us hafter be quiet 'wen us play--dere was no runnin' or shoutin' 'lowed 'roun' dere. Us play wid li'l rag doll and sich."

"W'en de war come ol' marster hab a son name' Jimmy w'at go to de war. He volunteer to go, he jes' go. My daddy he didn' wanter go to de war. I don' 'member Jimmy eber comin' back. Us nebber seed no sojers 'roun' dere. Dey's a ol' man name' Titus w'at try to run off. Dey git atter him and shoot him right froo de mouf. Ol' Titus he got gran'chile right here in Beaumont now."

"W'en freedom cry out ol' marster tell my daddy, 'You's free as I is, but I'd rather you stay and wait for

de crop.' I was in de yard dere but chillen in dem day warn't 'lowed to talk. My ol' daddy he pick right up dat very mo'nin and lef'. He move over to Mr. Rudderford. He hab de name of bein' good to he niggers in slavery time. My daddy he tek he wife and all he chillen. Rudderford give him a wagon to move in. My daddy hab a time findin' my big sister, Mimi, 'cause de ol' marster done hire her out to wuk for somebody else."

"It were a time befo' I eber marry. I marry Isaac Wright, He uster be a slave and us was chillen t'gedder. My mammy teach me to go to de Baptis' Chu'ch. Us jes' hab a li'l sumpin'. Rev. Mose Johnson, he baptise' me and marry us. I hab five chillen altogedder. Me and him was togedder only a li'l w'ile den I marry George Lockridge. He die' jes' 'bout t'ree week' ago. I stay wid my daughter and gran'daughter, Ruth."

"Brenham, up near de captible of the United States, us went dere on us weddin' trip" [She is probably referring to nearby Washington on the Brazos].

(6.5.2403-2406)

Alfred E Menn

September 12, 1937

Travis County, Texas

(No)

District #9

Louvinia Young Pleasant, 86, was born March 10, 1851, on George Ball's cotton plantation near Chappel Hill, Washington County. Her mother was Liza Neill. Her father was David Young, a slave of Jack Robertson's cotton plantation in Alabama. Robertson came to Texas with his slaves, and he married Ellen Ball. Louvinia says her master and mistress were very unkind to her. In 1870, when she was nineteen, she married George Pleasant, who at twenty, was just beginning his career as a circuit-riding preacher. The Pleasants had twelve children, six boys and six girls: George, Lewis, Sam, David, Henry, and a boy who was dead at birth, Eliza, Hattie, Lillie, Parsena, Lula, and a girl who was dead at birth. Four girls and two boys are still living. Louvinia's husband died on September 8, 1933. She owns her own home at East 3rd. Street and Pleasant Valley Road, and gets a monthly pension of nine dollars from the state.

"Louvinia Young was my name when I was a girl. My married name is Louvinia Pleasant. Dey tell me dat I was

bawn on March 10, 1851, and dat I is 86 years old. I don't know why de good Lawd has kept me here so long, but I reckon He's got a reason. I was bawn on Mawster George Ball's cotton plantation near de town ob Chappel Hill, Washington County.

"My mammy was Liza Neill, and she done took de name ob her grandmammy Neill. My daddy was David Young. His mawster, Jack Robertson, brought him f'om Alabama to Texas. Daddy took de name ob Young f'om dat ob his daddy back in Alabama.

"When I was growin' up on Mawster Ball's plantation, I had to git out and do housework or field work. I had to do a little ob everything. At de time I could pick about one hunnert and forty pounds ob cotton a day. I had to pick dis much ebber day or I'd sure get a good scorchin'. We had to get up at de break of day, and git ready to go to de field. When dat hawn was blowed at de break ob day, yo' had better git up and git ready to go. I sure had to work hard, but dat's all right now, 'cause I'se done prayed and forgive ebberbody fo' whut dey done to me.

"De folks at dattime sure burned me up a lot ob times wid a hard whoopin'. My, my, my, dey sure did whoop us in dem days. When a pusson in dem days didn't unnerstand jes' whut to do, dat pusson couldn't go right out and do whut a

older pusson knowed how to do. Dey learned me how to do somethin', but I got a whoopin' in learnin' how to work. I wouldn't want to go back through wid all ob dat again.

"Mawster Ball had a overseer on his palce and, ooh-wee, he sure was rough. I'se tellin' yo' he was rough. One day my mammy got behind wid her cotton choppin' and de overseer rode up on his hoss and stahted cussin' her fo' no workin' harder. Mammy was pregnant and wasn't feelin' good, and she couldn't keep up wid de rest. De overseer took his bull-whoop and stahted in to whoopin' mammy. Daddy come runnin' up and told de overseer to stop beatin' his wife, 'cause she was sick. He said dat she couldn't keep up wid de rest ob de people, 'cause ob dat. Den daddy took his hoe and knocked de overseers hoss down.....knocked it to de groun'. My mawsters son-in-law, Jack Robertson, from Alabama, owned and liked my daddy, and he wouldn't allow mawster Ball's overseer to punish him. Mawster Robertson brought daddy wid him f'om Alabama. Yo' see, whenever Mawster Ball got in a tight and had too much work, he would ask Mawster Robertson to send some ob his slaves over and help out. Dat's why daddy was on Mawster Ball's plantation. Slaves got married in dem days, but de husband stayed on his place, and de wife stayed on her place, and dey could visit eachother at

certain times durin' de week. Mawster Jack Robertson married Ellen Ball. Dey lived on dere own plantation near de Ball's place.

"Mammy had to help milk de cows, about nine or ten ob 'em. I went along and helped tie up de calves. We'd feed de cows turnips, cottonseed and meal. Dere was de time in winter when mammy and me went out to milk, and we was barefooted and had no shoes to put on. We sure was cold out dere, wid no shoes on our feet.

"And early in de mawnin' I had to go up to de "big house" to make a fire in de fire place and den make hot water in a big, black kettle, so Mistress Alice could have her bath. And I had better be in a hurry, too, and git through so I could go out into de fields.

"Mistress Alice had two girls--Martha and Ellen. Martha married a Mr. Taylor, and I don't remebah his first name. Ellen was Mrs Jack Robertson. When Martha married and had her first chile, I had to help nuss it. Martha stayed in de big house wid her folks. I got along puddy good wid Martha, better den I did wid Ellen. De folks always called me Vin and not Louvinia. i did de best dat I could at dem times, but dere was many times dat I wished dat I was dead. I sure did have a hard time. But de good Lawd will take care ob all dat.

"We lived in a little log cabin near de big house. Dere was a whole row ob dem log cabins, where de slaves lived. On de cold winter nights, we nebber had no beds to sleep on, and no bed clothes ob any kind. De men folks would build a big fire in de fireplace, which would keep us wahn durin' de night. De good lawd has fixed it so dat we don't have to live lak dat no mo'e.

"We et bacon, cracklins, yams, irish potatoes, ash-cakes, and plenty ob pot-likker. We got tukkey once in a while. Many was time dat I baked dem ash-cakes. I'd make dem cakes and place dem on collard leaves, and den put 'em among de ashes to bake.

"On Sundays, we'd sit around and talk. About once a month, a white preachah would come aroun' and preach to us at one ob de chu'ches. About de only thing dat he would preach would be:

"'Now don't yo' all steal yo' mawster's eggs...Now don't yo' all steal yo' mawster's sugar...Now don't yo' all steal yo' mawster's chickens'.

"We never had no school on our place and I never did git to go to school durin' my entire life. I never went to school after freedom. But, I do remembah dat, dat when I was a chile, dat I'd see some letters and words on pieces ob ole paper. I'd go outside and trace dem letters in de

sand wid my finger. Dat is de way I tried to learn my A-B-C's. I can't writ much to dis day, but I can read a little. Mawster and Ellen and all ob de rest nebber did show me how to write. All dat dey did learn me was to work hard. And I had better not be caught learnin' my A-B-C's by tracin' 'em in de sand.

"One day Mistress Alice asked mammy, "Liza, do yo' think dat yo' will ever be free? "No, ma'm," Mammy said, "I don't think dat we'll ever be free." "But mammy dat she heard dat all slaves was to be free soon, but she didn't want Mistress Alice to know dat she heard dat news.

"Mawster Ball was a sort ob sickly man at dis time, so one day Mistress Alice read a paper to all ob de slaves. She had been cryin' all day long, and I wondered whut was wrong. She had made me clean up, once mo'e all de rooms in de big house. After I had cleaned up den bare cedar floors, Mistress Alice would run her hand along dat floor and if any dirt was found on dat hand, I sure would get a good scorchin'.

"After Mistress Alice read f'om dat paper, she said "Now yo' all is as free as I am. Now I want yo' to stay here and help us gather de crops. De cotton is made and is ready to pick. If yo' all will stay, I'll pay yo' all fo pickin'".

"Some of de folks stayed. We stayed and helped dem gather dere crops. We stayed on about six months. It was Christmas when we left.

"I was now fourteen years old. Five years later, when I was nineteen, I was married. My husband was twenty years old, George Pleasant, and he was jes' stahtin' out to be a circuit-ridin' preachah. We lived on a fahm fo' about three years near Brenham, Washington County. Den my husband stahted out to travellin'. I went along sometimes. When de chillun come along, I would git up and go along wid him. We had twelb chillun, six boys and six girls; George, Lewis, Sam, David, Henry and a baby boy dat was dead when he was bawn; Eliza, Hattie, Lillie, Parsena, Lula and a girl bawn dead. Four girls and two boys is still livin'.

"Sometimes we travelled in a buggy and sometimes in a wagon. We travelled aroun' fo' about twenty years. We even went as far as Oklahoma. George would preach anywhere--in chu'ches, in houses, and under de brush-arbors. People would come in ox wagons to de big camp meetin's. We sure had fine times. We'd come to a house, and de folks would invite us in to eat. On dem camp meetin' groun's de folks brought dere pots and pans and baked and cooked de food right on the groun'. Den we'd all spread a cloth on de

groun', and put de food on it. Folks sure believed in one another at dat time. More' dey do now.

"My husband preached until he got too old to travel. He was gittin' to be putty old when he died on September 3, 1933.

"I own my own home here in de Cockle Burr section, so about de main thing fo' me is to git somethin' to eat. I get a pension ob nine dollah a month, but Lawd, dat ain't much. I even have to have my water hauled here. It costs me a nickel a barrel and a nickel a barrel to have it hauled here. I had a good well, but its gone dry and I had to have it filled in."

(8.7.3098-3104)

Gauthier, Sheldon F.

9-12-37

Tarrant Co., Dist. #7

Elsie Reece, 90, 5236 Fletcher St., Ft. Worth, Tex., was born a slave to Mr. John Mueldrew, who owned Elsie's parents with three slave families and a small farm in Grimes Co., Tex. Elsie's father died when she was an infant. She was the youngest of seven children. Elsie's mother and her children remained a year and a half on the farm after Emancipation, then moved to Navasota, Tex. Elsie married John Love in 1867. Four children were born to them before his death in 1882. She married Dave Reece in 1890. Two children were born to them before his death in 1923. Elsie came to Ft. Worth in 1926 to reside with her only remaining child, Mrs. Luffin Baker. She receives a \$7.00 monthly pension from the State of Texas. Her story:

"Ise bo'n in Grimes County, 90 yeahs ago. Dat am long time, chil's. Yas sar, 90 yeahs, an' Ise see f'om slave-time 'til now. It am heap of change, an' Lawd, how diffe'nt. Heah dat airplane gwine in de air? Well, Co'se, w'en Ise bo'n, weuns don't have sich, an' don't dream of it. If weuns wants to go somewhar, 'tis wid de ox team,

an' de big fo'ks have de hosses. Ise 'membahs once Ise lookin' at de hawk flyin', an' says to mammy, "Mammy, Ise wish Ise could fly".

"Hush chil's, if de Lawd wants fo'ks to fly, He would give dem wings lak de birds. Don't wish fo' what de Lawd don't want yous to have", she tells me. Now look Ise sat right heah an' see de fo'ks flyin' in de air, an' right heah, Ise sat an' listen to de radio, an' heah fo'ks sing an' talk a thousand miles away an' it sounds lak 'tis in de next room. W'en Ise a younguns, de fartherest yous could heah a person am 'bout half mile, an' den deys have to holler lak a stuck hawg. Ise wish Ise could live 'nother 90 yeahs to see what's a-comin'.

"My Marster's name am John Muelldrew. He had a small plantation near Navasota. There war only three fam'lies on de place, an' 'twas 'bout 20 cullud fo'ks. 'Twarnt lak tudder plantations 'round thar. Weuns am lak one big fam'ly, an' mostest of de cullud fo'ks am related. Deys am uncles, aunts, brothers an' sis's. Thar whar seven chilluns in weuns fam'ly, an' Ise de baby. My pappy died w'en Ise 'bout a yeah old, so Ise don't 'membahs him. My mammy an' weuns had one cabin, 'twas a two room cabin built of logs.

"Ise learnt to weave cloth, sew an' make clothes. My

brother am de shoemaker. My mother's duty am 'tendin' to de cows, an' Uncle John am de carpenter. Now, all of dem wo'k in de field sides thar special duty 'cept me. De housewo'k am what Ise do all de time 'sides de weavin' an' spinnin' an' sich.

"De Lawd bless me wid de awful good Marster. Weuns had three diffe'nt Marsters. Marster John died 'way befo' de wah. Missie Mary mai'ied Marster Mike Hendricks afterwards, an' he died 'bout two yeahs after de weddin'. All dat happens befo' de wah. Den young Marster Jim Mueldrew took charge, an' him am jus' as kind as his pappy.

"Thar an tudder thing dat changed a heap. 'Tis de buyin' all weuns wear an' eat now. Gosh fo' mighty, w'en Ise a gal on de Marster's place, 'twas awful little dat am bought. What weuns eat an wears, am raised an' fixed by de cullud fo'ks, an' de eats am bettah den sich weuns buys now, an' weuns had all weuns wanted. 'Twas good home-raised an' cured meat, all de milk an' buttah weuns wanted, veg'tables, fruit, co'n meal, honey, 'lasses, brown sugar, eggs, tea once a day, an' coffee once a week.

"Now, Ise have to live on \$7.00 pension dat de State sends me once a month. Now, what palce am Ise best off? Sho, on de Marster's palce.

"De Marster don't overwork weuns, but demands jus' reasonable wo'k. Now, lak wid me w'en Ise spend de day weavin', Ise s'posed to weave fouah yards of cloth. Dat am not hard to do. If Ise hurry, Ise could weave five, or six yards.

"Weuns have Sundays off f'om wo'k, an' de wintah time, 'tis Saturday afternoon off too. On Sunday afternoon, weuns goes to chu'ch. 'Twas old man Buffington dat preaches to weuns. He preached to de white fo'ks in de mo'nin', an' de cullud fo'ks after dinner.

"Weuns always have some party on Saturday nights. 'Twas on weuns place, or on some tudder place in de neighborhood. De Marster give weuns a pass, an' it says on that the time weuns am to be home. 'Twas de rule, 12 O'clock. Weuns dance de quadrille an' sing an' sich. De music am fiddles. Gwan man, Ise not able to sing any of de songs. Sho, Ise give you some of de words. Now, let me see. Well, dis am one of de songs; "Oh Suzanna, don't cry fo' me", an' a tudder am "Rise, shine, give God de glory".

"Now de big time an' de happy time fo' allus cullud fo'ks am on Christmas, 'cause de white fo'ks have de tree in de house, an' 'round dat tree am something fo ever' cullud person. W'en Missie Mary holler, "Santa Claus 'bout due", weuns all gather at de dooah, an' den purtty soon,

Santa 'pears wid de red coat an' long white whiskers, in de room all lit wid candles. Den he calls, "Sue, Jane, Elsie", an' so on. W'en our name am called, weuns steps inside and gits de present. Thar am sack of candy fo' ever' chil's, an jus' sho as Christmas comes, weuns gits a pair of store shoes. Dem am fo' to wear to chu'ch, an' parties.

"De Marster never calls fo' wo'k f'om Christmas to New Years, 'cept de chores. De whole week am fo' celeb'ation. So yous see, 'twas a good Marster weuns have.

"Ise 'membahs de wah time good. Sho do, 'cause young Marster Jim, an' Marster Sam, jines de army. Ise he'p make de cloth an' de clothes dey wears to de army. Ise 14 yeahs old den. Missie Mary sho am pa'ticular 'bout how de suits am made. She helps me wid de wo'k, an' weuns all sho proud w'en de two young Marsters am dressed in de suits.

"Thar am lots of men in de neighborhood goes an' jines de army. Lots of dem never comes back, but Jima an' Sam comes home befo' de wah am over. Sam gits his right leg shot off, an' Sam gits sick an' comes home on furlough. "Twarnt long after he comes home 'til he dies.

"Ise 'membahs w'en Sam dies, 'twas awful moanin' 'mong de nigger fo'ks. Weuns all lak him jus' de same lak him weuns brother. He was awful kind, an' always happy

lak, an' he always tries to make tudder fo'ks happy. W'en de funeral took place, weuns all go to de graveyard, an' w'en dey lowers de coffin in de ground, ever'one bust out a mou'nin' an' weepin'. Ise feel sho Ise gwine to choke. It jus' seem dat it couldn't be dat him am dead.

"'Twarnt long after Sam dies 'til de surrendah comes to weuns. 'Twas on a Saturday, an' weuns am a-fixin' fo' a party dat night. Marster Jim calls weuns together, an he reads a long paper. W'en he gets through, he says, "Yous don't know what dat means, so Ise 'splain it to yous. 'Tis de ordah f'om de Gov'ment dat make it 'gainst de law fo' me to keep yous as slaves. So now, Ise can't keep yous on de palce".

"Well, yous should see dem cullud fo'ks. Deys jus' plum shocked. Thar faces am long as thar arm, an' so pestered deys don't know what to say or do.

"De Marster never says a further word, but walks away. De cullud fo'ks starts talkin' 'twix one an' de tudder 'bout what to does. Dey says, "Well, weuns can't stay heah, 'cause de Marster says 'tis 'gainst de ordah. Now, what weuns gwine to do? Whar weuns gwine to live?" Dey talks dat way an' frets all night. Thar am no dance that night. No sar! Deys sat 'round frettin' 'bout what de Marster says, an' Ise guess de grown fo'ks don' sleep dat

night, 'cause 'tis de fust thing Ise heahs de next mo'nin'. De Marster calls all weuns together after breakfas' on Sunday mo'nin' 'gain an' says, "Well, what yous niggers gwine to do?"

"Ise don't know, Ise don't know", come f'om ever'one after de tudder.

"Yous bettah know, 'cause Ise not gwine to break de ordah", he tells dem.

"My Uncle John speaks up an' says, "Marster, how long do weuns have to stay?"

"A tudder say. Dat am de mostest time Ise can give yous", he says. Den de Marster laugh hearty, an' 'splains how 'twas. He told dem deys could all stay if dey wants to, but 'rangement must be made fo' de wages, or dat deys can wo'k land an' git half of what dey makes. He told dem deys have to buy thar own rations, an' clothes an' sich.

"Well sar, thar whar a bunch of happy cullud fo'ks after deys learnt deys could stay fo' to wo'k, an' wo'k land an' git half. My fo'ks stayed fo' nearly two yeahs. Den weuns all moved to Navasota an' hired out. Mammy an' Ise gits jobs as cooks. Ise stayed cookin' 'til Ise 18 yeahs old, den Ise gits mai'ied to John Love. He am a carpenter, an' weuns right off, builds a house on land my husband bought f'om Doctor Terrell. He was my husband's

Marster.

"Ise had fouah chilluns by John Love. Deys all dead now. He died in 1881, away f'om home. He was on his way to Austin, an' draps dead f'om some heart misery. Deys brings him home, dead. Dat am big sorrow in my life. Thar Ise was, wid chillun to s'port. Ise goes to wo'k cookin' 'gain, an' Ise finish raisin' my chilluns. Weuns had some purtty close times, but Ise done it, an' sends dem to school. Yes sar, Ise sends dem to school. Ise don't want my chilluns to be lak deys mother, a non-knowledge person.

"'Twas eight yeahs after dat Ise mai'y Dave reece. Weuns have two chilluns. Marster Reece am a Baptist preacher, an' had a good chu'ch in Navasota 'til he died in 1923.

"'Twarnt long after my husband died 'til Ise gits a letter f'om Missie Mary, an' she writes dat she am awful sick. Yous see, weuns always writes an' visits f'om de time weuns leave de plantation. W'en Ise git dat letter, Ise drapped ever'thing, an goes to her. W'en Ise gits thar, she am awful glad to see me, an' says to me. "Ise sho feel bettah now since you come. Yous am true friend, an' don't fo'git me". She feels bettah next day, an' thar am hopes she am gwine to git well. My chilluns am home an' need me. Thar am nothin' Ise could do, so Ise goes to

Missie an' told her;

"Ise can't do nothin' heah. Yous have mo' help dan am needed, so Ise gwine home to my chilluns".

"Elsie, don't go", she pleads. "Ise feel queer, an' feel lak Ise want yous heah".

"If it makes yous feel bettah, Ise sho stay heah, an sat right 'side yous if yous want me to", Ise told her.

"Ise stayed an' de next day, jus' befo' dinnah, Ise a-talkin' to her, an' she told me, "Elsie, go git yous dinnah, an' den come back. Ise wants to tell yous something".

Ise goes to dinnah, an' while Ise eatin', she dies suddenly. "Twas some kind of heart misery she have. Ise often wonder what 'tis she wants to tell me.

"Ise wanted to do something fo' her, oh so bad, but 'twarnt nothin' Ise could do 'cept pray fo' her. Dat Ise do lots. "Twas de best friend Ise ever had, dat Ise lost an' Ise feel it.

"Ise come heah to Fort Worth in 1926 to live wid my daughter, Mrs. Luffin Baker. Ise gits paralyzed in de right side so Ise can't wo'k anymo', an' has to sat all de time an' wait fo' someone to wait on me. "Tis good dat Ise have a good daughter dat waits on me lak Ise her baby. If 'twarnt fo' her, Lawd only knows what or how dis cullud

person would live. Ise have a good life 'till Ise git paralyzed. Never any troubles dat 'mounts to anything befo' dat 'cept deaths.

"Klux troubles? No sar, not even sich troubles Ise have. Thar whar Klux in Navasota, but weuns am never bothered by dem. Weuns al wo'kin fo' white fo'ks. an' don't run 'round nights. "Twas de cullud fo'ks dat run 'round nights widout de pass f'om de one deys wo'k fo', dat gits in trouble wid de Ku Klux Klan.

"What Ise think 'bout votin' am not much, 'cause Ise don't pay any mind to sich. My husband voted. Ise know dat 'cause Ise heah de men fo'ks talk 'bout votin' de 'Publican ticket. De women can't vote den, so Ise pay it no mind. Ise gwine to leave it to de Lawd to tend to my part of it. "Tis as He wants, anyway.

(8.7.3271-3279)

Edna Kahlbau, PW

9- -37

Amarillo, Texas

District #16

Potter County

Fannie Robinson, 1602 N. Hughes Street, Amarillo, Texas, living with her grand daughter and family. Mrs. Robinson was born near Brenham, Texas, on a plantation belonging to a Hunt family in 1855. Her mind is quite bright, although she says she has forgotten nearly everything she ever knew in the past two years on account of having a stroke. She is a small, sweet-faced old woman, jolly and affectionate to her relatives and very gracious to visitors. Her memories are all of happy things, ,possum dinners, evenings of songs and music for "Ole Missus".

"I was ten-year-old when 'Mancipation come; I know dat. My father's name was Frank Blue, and my mother's name was Mary Blue. Hunts have a big place in Washington county, close to 'Burnham'. (Brenham)

"Hunts never sold no slaves. Somebody come through de country huntin' niggahs to buy, an' Massa he say, 'What he come here for? We ain't got no niggahs to sell.'

"My Missus young daughter, she try to teach cullud

chillun to read 'n write. I wouldn't let 'em teach me.

"We went to chu'ch wid de white folks. When dey was a camp meetin', we would go on Sat'day night an' Sunday. 'Paterols' (Patrols) would catch cullud folks an' whip 'em if dey left the plantations at night.

"My Massa an' Missus was good. Dey treat dey slaves good. People use' to call us 'Hunt's ole free niggahs' 'cause dey treat us so good. Missus, she was old an' feeble--couldn' walk 'less she push a chair along in front of her. When 'Mancipation come, old Missus push herself out on de front po'ch an' call all the slaves up an' tell 'em, 'You free, but aint nary one of you gonna leave me 'fo' I die. You gonna stay with old Missus till she die.' She use' to call de cullud folks in to sing an' play for her. She say some day when we git ole, we be ugly too.

"Christmas? Oh, yes! We have fine times Christmas! Thanksgivin'!

"Doctor Randall, white doctor from Independence, took care of the sick folks, slaves, too. Yes ma'am. Dey took good care of de slaves.

"I have three chillun. Grand chillun? Now you done ask me sump'n I don' kow--how many grand chillun I got.

"Yes Ma'am, we used to hunt 'possums. 'Possum sho is mighty good eatin' when he cooked right. You never et

'possum? Lawd, you et 'possum and didn't know it!

"I can't remember no songs. Yes Ma'am, I remembers 'Run, Niggah, Run'. I aint had no mem'ry since I had a stroke. It just been too long 'go!

"When I was little, I have lots of play time. I never did work till I got big then I work in de house and in de fiel' too. I've plowed lots o' times, sweepstock an' turnin' plow.

"I have a stroke two years ago, an' my grand daughter come get me and bring me from Rosebud, Texas, up here.

(8.7.3345-3347)

APPENDIX III

CHARLES TAIT'S RULES FOR PLANTATION OPERATION

1. Never punish a Negro when in a passion, you are then incapable of regulating the proper punishment to the offense.

2. Never require of a Negro what is unreasonable, but always be firm.

3. Always govern by reason first, resorting to force only when reason fails; then use no more force than is absolutely necessary.

4. Give orders in a mild tone so that the negroes feel what you say is the result of reflection.

5. In giving orders, be sure you are understood, letting the Negroes know they can always ask for an explanation if they do not understand.

6. When it is necessary to punish a negro let him know what the punishment is for.

7. Never behave so the Negro thinks you enjoy punishing him; indicate his punishment is painful to you as well.

8. Have a system or routine, this leads to control of the Negroes.

9. Do not become so involved in self interests that you are frequently careless or negligent; be patient, trying not to agitate yourself or the Negroes.

10. Remember life must be taken gradually; it is tedious, don't try to do too much thus overworking the hands.

Other, more specific rules for the operation of the plantation included:

1. Always require the Negroes to eat breakfast meals before going to work.

2. From October to April be ready to work at daylight with time allowed for the noon meal.

3. From April 1 to October 1 go to work at sunrise, rest one to two and a half hours according to circumstances during the day.

4. Never require field work of a woman until four weeks after confinement, then allow her home between breakfast and dinner, etc., during the day, till the child is seven months old. After that time allow her home once a day till the child is one year old.

5. Food allowances: two and one-half to three pounds of bacon a week, milk and butter, molasses (when given molasses provide less meat, a quart of molasses

equalling a pound of meat), five to six pounds of dried beef, one pack of meal, and potatoes. Lying in women should receive one quart of coffee and two quarts of sugar, and be fed from the overseer's kitchen for the final two weeks.

6. Negroes should be allowed the use of sugar cane and potatoes from October 1 to April 1.

7. Always cut and belt timber one foot from the ground in clearing land.

8. Rails ten feet long should be used. For rails cut only trees of less than one foot in diameter.

9. Specific rules for the building of fences must be followed.

10. The hogs are to be fed specific diets determined by the seasons.

11. In planting, mix pumpkin seeds with corn every fourth row.

12. House the potatoes the day they are dug.

13. The women are to spin thread, beginning in November, to make the plow lines. They are to spin at night.

14. Corn is to be gathered as soon as it is dry.

15. No profane or obscene language is to be allowed among the Negroes.

16. Every Negro cabin is to be inspected on Sunday morning to be sure it is clean. All hands in the field on Monday must be in clean clothes.

17. Negroes are never allowed to leave the premises without the written permission of the overseer.

18. No strange Negroes are allowed on the plantation unless they have written permission from the overseer and from the owner.

19. Each overseer is to take inventory when he comes, and also upon leaving.

(Bornhorst 1971:201-203; Campbell 1989:129-130, 135-136, 138, 199; Tait ms.)

VITA

Randal Scott Allison was born on 6 April, 1962, in Houston, Texas. He attended schools in the Houston and Spring Branch Independent School Districts, and graduated from high school in 1980. He first attended Kilgore Junior College, where he met his wife, Terri. After a brief hiatus from college, Randal returned, and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Texas A&M University in May, 1988. He continued his studies, and earned a Master of Arts degree in English in December of 1990. In 1991, Randal was invited to pursue a doctorate in anthropology at Texas A&M University under the guidance of his professors, mentors, and friends Dr. Sylvia Grider and Dr. Tom Green.

Randal is married to Terri Lynn Allison, and they have two daughters, Kristen Michelle and Tegan Brooke Allison. Their address is: 1115 Dexter Drive South, College Station, Texas, 77840.