



## RAMBLERS' RAMBLINGS

Volume XXII Number TWO SUMMER 2012

### MEMORIAL OF 3000 BACHELORS

**"The Nacogdoches Chronicle," Feb., 1838 reprinted from The Portal to Texas History**

To the most beautiful—the most lovely—the most accomplished, and fairest of the fair; alias the 3000 Young Ladies of Boston, who signed a petition to the Congress of the United States, against the annexation of Texas to the Union of the North. *Young Ladies—We*, Your petitioners, bachelors, residing in the Republic of Texas, deeply aware of the important control which your sex have over our destinies, have witnessed with humiliation and regret, your recent memorial to the Congress of the United States against your happy Union.

We are the more mortified from the consideration, that in thus frankly expressing your disappointment of a *national union*, you show a disposition to oppose a union of a more domestic nature, by which our happiness would be more immediately connected. We will not, however, shut out all comfort and consolation from our bosoms, by supposing that you cannot be persuaded

to change your opinion; but still hope that a proper representation will induce you to change your position that you have assumed, and adopt as a rule of action, a course calculated to promote your own and our fertility.

We are here, dear objects of our affection, without wives: we have not *one* woman to an hundred men; and it is this reflection which more sensibly embitters the course you have adapted towards us. We are aware that the refinement of the age will not allow us to adopt the precedent set by the youth of Rome, in seizing upon the fair daughters of their Sabian neighbors; that *now* females have attained their proper sphere in society; they are no longer looked upon as slave of the sterner sex, but as companions, equal in mind and capacity and *superior* in all the milder virtues which ennoble the human heart. It is this reflection which renders your course painful in the extreme: but we will approach you with due reverence, humbly throwing ourselves upon your mercy, hoping to find your cosmos glowing with a different sentiment, than one expressed in your

memorial to the Congress of the United States.

We would further add that ours is perhaps the only country on the face of the globe where a proper estimate is placed upon ladies. Even before the declaration of our independence, *one* woman was considered equal in value to *three* men; for a single man received from the government, as a settlement right, but one-fourth of a league of land; whereas if he had a wife, he obtained four times that amount. And such is the anxiety of our government officers to promote an emigration of the fair from other countries, with a probability of securing to themselves happiness in domestic life; (being nearly all bachelors) they have granted to each lady two-thirds of a league of land, as a dowager to her husband, who she shall marry within the next twelve months. These considerations should present you from forming a hasty opinion against us.

In conclusion, if you will emigrate to our fair land, we will bind ourselves individually and collectively, to furnish you with good husbands, within between eight and ten months after your arrival upon our coast; and thus furnish you with a better employment than meddling with political questions which should interest your much less than your own domestic felicity.

All of which is respectfully submitted.  
Houston (Texas) January 18, 1838 (signed by 3000 bachelors, whose names are omitted

for want of room.) Editor of "The Telegraph"

## A GREAT IDEA: HOW TO SAVE ON OATS IN 1838

Reprinted from the Nacogdoches "Texas Chronicle," Feb. 28, 1838

An Iron Horse----A mechanic named David Ritter, of New Haven, has invented an iron horse that is propelled by springs by turning of a crank, which the rider does with the greatest of ease; the horse is a fact simile of a live one, and will go at the rate of twenty miles an hour. He thinks there will be no use for railroads, as it will be much cheaper, as the horse will not eat one bushel of oats in fifty years.

## TEXAS TRIVIA

REPRINTED FROM COPANO BAY PRESS

Is El Paso closer to Houston or to San Diego, California ?

(Answer on last page.)

## THE GOLIAD WHITEWASH

REPRINTED FROM COPANO BAY PRESS

Hell knows no fury like a little Texan woman scorned. And if you get that from the tone of this missive...good.

If you don't agree with me, don't be afraid to say so. I'll stand my ground and hear your side because it's in my blood to do that. Bring your facts. Or send me some more kindling for my fire.

Let's say you were within the hallowed walls of the Alamo chapel and the man standing next to you turned and said, "Those damn rebels sure got what was coming to them." What would you say to that man?

It would be improper for me to enumerate here what I might say and do, but I can assure you that the gentleman wouldn't be walking the same the next day.

Think such jackasses don't exist? I can promise you that they do, and they've been allowed to hijack a part of our heritage in the name of semantics and political correctness.

The beauty of Texas history is that it's all about regular people doing monumental things, and regular ol' human beings do make mistakes. So anytime someone questions history as we think we know it, I sit up and take notice. I eschew my passion for the Texian cause and look at the facts. It's possible we were wrong.

When the debate about whether the men at Goliad on March 27, 1836 were "massacred" or "lawfully executed" reared its ugly head in a very insulting way, I again revisited the facts.

Last Sunday, I attended the re-enactment of the underhanded murder that took place at Goliad. It was a beautiful spring day, full of sunshine, wildflowers and open road...the kind of day that makes you thank the Lord that you were born here (or had the sense to make it here.)

After trekking with the other spectators from the Presidio to the field where the mock assassinations were to take place, one

of the faux Mexican officers addressed the crowd.



COL. JAMES FANNIN

The following is as close to verbatim as I can get:

"In 1836, when these events took place, the land we're standing on was part of Mexico. When the Texas Revolution started, the Mexican government wanted to stop people from the United States coming in to help the Texans. So they passed a law that said that any foreigner found armed on Mexican soil would be considered a pirate and treated as such. So what you're about to witness was a lawful act." Say what?

There's a reason that announcement had to be made from behind a barbed wire fence.

Even if the statement were remotely true, the timing and location of such an announcement were dubious at best. But it seems a compromise was struck between the Presidio folks and the "it wasn't a massacre" contingent. The event is still called the *Goliad Massacre Weekend*, yet this little politically correct speech was thrown at us, quite literally, out of left field.

Here are the facts as I see them:

To those of us who see democracy as the only legitimate form of government, legal powers are derived from the consent of the people in the form of a constitution. If there is no rule of law, there is only the whim of the despot in charge.

When Santa Anna ascended to the throne he created, he tossed out the Constitution of 1824 to make room for his Seven Laws, on December 15, 1835. There was no constitution and no will of the people.

Texas was his target, so he made a decree via his Secretary of War, Tornel, fifteen days later, that foreigners found "armed, with the intention of attacking our country, will be deemed pirates and dealt with as such..." The Tornel Decree was Santa Anna's justification to the world for the Alamo, for Goliad, for most of his bloody acts against Texas.

Never mind that many of the men at Goliad were Texans and Mexican citizens, not American "invaders" and therefore not subject to the Tornel Decree.

Never mind that the two commanding officers, Urrea and Fannin, had written and signed terms of surrender that did not happen to include everyone being marched out and shot without warning. Put all of that moral stuff aside for now.

Supposing you're capable of recognizing the decrees and whims of Santa Anna as valid laws from a recognized government, there's still nothing in that decree that states that men violating it were to be executed.

Implied? Perhaps. But that doesn't cut it. It's not enough to explain away Santa

Anna's crimes and cupidity. Ask the Zacatecans. There was no "legal" decree in place when they were sacked and murdered by the noble dictator.

And it's damn sure not explicit enough to justify telling a bunch of patriotic Texans in 2012 that the Goliad Massacre was a legal execution. It wasn't.

Doesn't sound quite the same to think of the men at San Jacinto yelling, "Remember the Legally Prosecuted Executions of the Pirates at the Alamo! Remember the Lawful Executions of Goliad!" Does it?

A very important part of our Texian heritage is slowly being slid out from beneath us. We ought to not let that continue.

TSHA's Handbook of Texas denotes Santa Anna's order to exterminate Fannin's men as legal. Do we want our 7th graders learning about the upstanding version of Santa Anna, cloaked in the garb of the righteous, while the men who were fighting to defend the rule of law and the constitution are vilified as pirates? I don't. What do you think?



GOLIAD MEMORIAL

Interesting fact from these points of view are that 28 men escaped the massacre,

by either being wounded or completely missed by the close quarter gun fire. Look at the pedigree chart on Thomas Kemp, one survivor with Brazos County descendants in the "Scrapbook Section" of this newsletter.

## FORT TENOXITLÁN

1830

REPRINTED FROM THE NEW HANDBOOKS OF TEXAS

Fort Tenoxtitlán, constructed in 1830 in what is now northeastern Burleson County, was part of a chain of military garrisons designed to Mexicanize Texas and stanch immigration from the United States pursuant to the Law of April 6, 1830.<sup>qv</sup> On June 25, 1830, Lt. Col. José Francisco Ruiz<sup>qv</sup> was dispatched from Bexar in command of 100 cavalrymen of the presidial company of Álamo de Parras (*see* SECOND FLYING COMPANY OF SAN CARLOS DE PARRAS), with orders from Gen. Manuel de Mier y Terán<sup>qv</sup> to establish a fort at the strategic point halfway down the Old San Antonio Road,<sup>qv</sup> where the thoroughfare crossed the Brazos River en route to Nacogdoches. Ruiz reached the Brazos on July 13 and established temporary headquarters on the east bank about a half mile below the Old San Antonio Road. On October 17, 1830, the garrison moved to a permanent site on a high bluff on the west bank of the Brazos twelve miles above the San Antonio crossing, opposite the spot where the present Brazos-Robertson county line strikes the river. The small spring-fed creek nearby was subsequently known as Dam Creek, probably because its water was diverted into the settlement. Although Mier y Terán, who envisioned Tenoxtitlán as a future capital of Texas, issued elaborate instructions from

Matamoros for the design of the fort, most were eventually disregarded; the fortifications themselves were likely of conventional log construction.

One of the garrison's most important duties was to assist in the transportation of military funds from Bexar to Nacogdoches. Despite the ban on American settlement, the nearby farming community included an undetermined number of American immigrants; as early as July 1831, for example, Francis Smith operated a thriving general merchandise store at the fort, trading manufactured goods to the Indians for beaver pelts and buffalo robes. On December 31, 1830, the ayuntamiento of San Felipe de Austin, acknowledging the importance of the garrison, established a commission to construct a road from San Felipe to Tenoxtitlán.

In late October 1830 Maj. Sterling C. Robertson<sup>qv</sup> of the Texas (or Nashville) Association, appeared at Tenoxtitlán requesting permission to select a settlement site for fifty American families accompanying him, provided by the colonization contract that his group had made with the province of Coahuila and Texas.<sup>qv</sup> Three months later official announcement of the provincial government's invalidation of this contract reached the fort. However, Colonel Ruiz, Texas-born himself and sympathetic to the American settlers, evaded orders to apprehend the colonists and turn them over to the authorities in Nacogdoches, thus permitting them to scatter into various parts of Texas.

On July 13, 1832, despondent over the failure of his grand scheme to settle

Mexicans in the Texas wilderness, Mier y Terán committed suicide. Thereupon the demoralized Colonel Ruiz decided to abandon Tenoxtitlán. He began evacuation of the garrison and entire Mexican settlement to Bexar on August 22, 1832. By December only a handful of Americans remained in occupation of the site. A trading post and settlement continued in the vicinity for many years, but disappeared after 1860.

In 1936 a granite commemorative marker was erected by the Texas Centennial Commission near the site of the fort, 14 miles northeast of Caldwell off Farm Road 1362. Another was erected in 1970 five miles east of Caldwell on State Highway 21. Tenoxtitlán, or "Prickly Pear Place" was the Aztec name for what became known as Mexico City.

## SERENDIPITY, SUCCESS AND FRUSTRATION

BY LIZ CROMPTON

### *A Search for My German Roots*

A couple of summers ago as my husband and I were walking through the picturesque Yorkshire Dales of England with our English friends, the conversation turned to genealogy. I was delighted to learn that one couple was *really into genealogy*. We listened to their tales about their past trips to Germany as part of their Sister City program, along with their German genealogy trials and tribulations. Of course, I was excited and asked where in Germany they

were headed that summer. "Stuttgart," was their reply and my genealogical antennae were alerted.

Twenty years ago, I had acquired a *German Declaration of Intent*, dated 23 December, 1839, with the name of Johannes Bickel on it. At that point, I declared Johannes related to my grandmother, Lillian Bell Bickel of Lycoming County, PA. Now to prove it! Too bad that I was unable to read the name of the town that Johannes Bickel was from, although I knew that it was in the Stuttgart area. Does that sound familiar? The name had 11 letters in it! After pouring through the *Meyers Orts Gazetteer*, printed in old German Gothic, and several other sources in libraries and online, I was no closer to breaking down the **Bicket Brick Wall #1**



Now as the conversation progressed on that cloudless summer afternoon in Dales, I was encouraged to send our friends a copy of my document and they would take it to Germany on their next trip to see if they could find out anything. A month later, I sent a copy of the Declaration and two months later, I heard back from them. A German woman

they had spoken to was also interested in genealogy and she explained that the name of that small village, even if it could be read, had changed over the years from Schwaigheim to Schwaikheim.

**Serendipity!!**



**SCHWAIKHEIM GERMANY**

With this new information, I consulted the LDS Library catalog and was delighted to learn there actually was a village called Schwaikheim....and their church records had been photocopied. After sending for the appropriate microfilms and a lot of searching through these old German records, I found my man, *Johannes Bickel*, his ten-year-old son by his first marriage, his second wife, Elizabeth Veronica Schneider Bickel, and Elizabeth's illegitimate son, and their new family. Wonderful, I thought! I also found and recorded the records for a Johannes (Johann, etc.)

Schneider and his family from the same village, who also seemed to be immigrating at the same time, 1828. I believed this to be the brother of my Johannes' second wife.

**Success!**

Of course, for years I had been searching German migration records and pouring over the *Passenger Arrivals at the Port of New York, 1820-1829* by Elizabeth Bentley, but this time the idea of "cluster genealogy" kicked in and instead of checking for my Bickels, I checked for a Johannes Schneider family that arrived in New York in 1828. Sure enough, listed under Johann Schneider and his family was a *Johannes Rickel*, age 57 years, his wife, Elizabeth Veronica (recorded as E. V. Schneider) and their children listed as *Rielet and Rickett*.

**Success!**

Albeit, a bit mangled. I was ecstatic that my **Bickel Brick Wall #2** had crumbled. But wouldn't you know, I am related to that illegitimate son of Elizabeth Schneider Bickel, who seemed to have only assumed his step-dad's last name! The German birth record did give me his biological father's name so there is another line to pursue! Nevertheless, I was happy to bridge the Atlantic and connect my Bickels with their German homeland.

Long ago I found in the 1880 PA census for Lycoming County an entry for my

grandmother, Lillian Bell Bickel, living with John Bickel and his family; she was listed as a two-year child with the other Bickel children: Leah, age 22; Rachel, age 22; George, age 20; and John, age 17. Looks as though Lillian was John Bickel's granddaughter. My grandparent's marriage license application, found in Corning, NY (not in PA where I had expected to find it), stated that Lillian's mother's name was Mary Bickel and her father was Louis Stephen. Family lore suggested that grandma's father was a "shiftless man" and her mother died at an early age, maybe in childbirth after Lillian was born. Figuring out who was grandma's mother is my **Bicket Brick Wall #3**.

The Mary Bickel in the John Bickel family in the 1870 census married a Kessler and her life continued. Maybe my grandmother was Mary's illegitimate child and never recognized as such. An 1860 census revealed another Bickel daughter at that time, aged 6 years, in the same household; maybe she was Lillian's mother, not Mary. Too bad I can't read her name or find anything about her.

Oh, the joys and frustrations of genealogy—and the search goes on. **Happy Sleuthing!**

## LOCAL RESIDENT SCRAPBOOK

Thomas Kemp was born in 1819 in Jackson Parish, Louisiana. He came to Texas with his

uncle in Dec 1835 (per Harrisburg Co Grant #346 dated Feb 1838), then fought at the siege of Bexar, the battle at Coletto (Goliad), escaped and was assigned to guard the baggage at Harrisburg during the San Jacinto battle. After the war, the Goliad Kemp married Eliza Scott, who was the divorced wife of Richard Brownfield Darst, on September 18, 1851 in Harris County, and had two children - a son Clarence Delanus Kemp (b. August 9, 1852), who later became Sheriff of Wharton County, TX and a daughter Telitha b. ??, who married one John McMahon before dying as a young, middle-aged adult. Thomas himself died in Richmond, TX in either 1854 or July 1856 (depending on source). Either way, he was deceased before 1860.



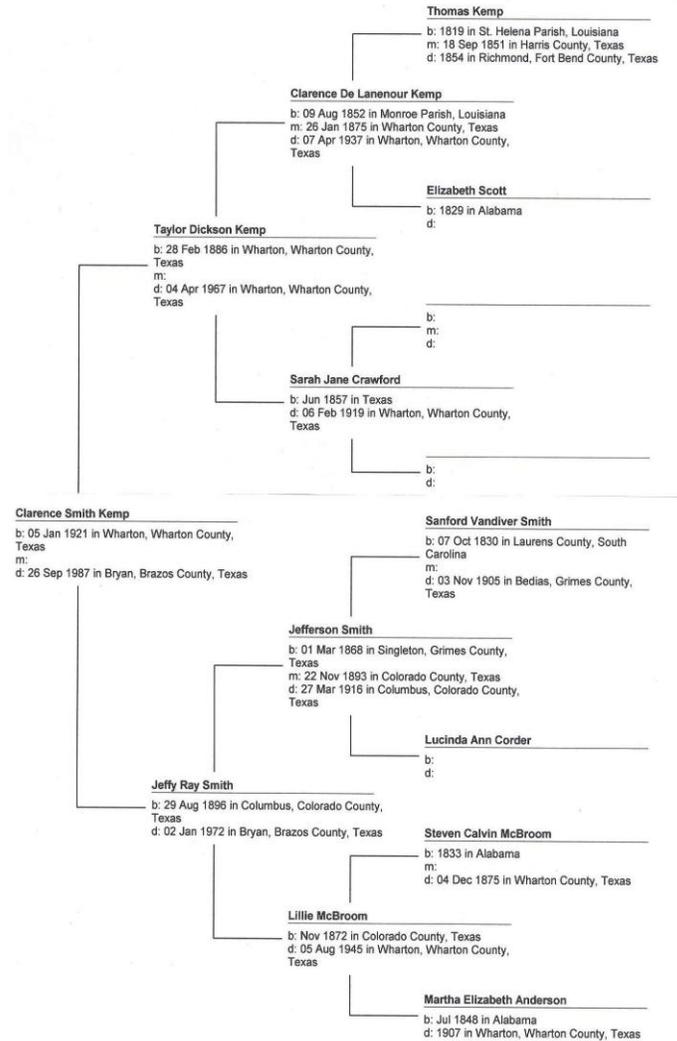
**PRESIDIO LA BAHIA AT GOLLAID**

**COPIED FROM THE BOOK: NEW ORLEANS AND THE TEXAS REVOLUTION, EDWARD L. MILLER, TEXAS A&M PRESS**

Some of what Herman Ehrenberg wrote in his diary said; "Only a short distance from the fort, additional supplies, provisions and personal possessions were thrown into the

San Antonio River because the few poor oxen and horses that had been commissioned to move Fannin's army were overloaded. Both Ehrenberg and Thomas Kemp had joined Captain Albert C. Horton's mounted scouts and were the first to encounter the advance cavalry of the Mexican Army coming up from behind the column approximately eight miles east of Fort Defiance.

Mexican officers spared some of the prisoners from the mass executions for utilitarian reasons. Members of the San Antonio Grey's - - John Voss, Joseph Spohn, Peter Friffin - were spared along with approximately 12 others to carry out various jobs for the Mexican Army. Herman Ehrenberg, William L. Hunter, John Rees, William Brenan, David Jones and Thomas Kemp all escaped".



**Thomas Kemp's great grandson Clarence Smith Kemp was an ophthalmologist in Bryan, Brazos County for many years before his death.**

## TRIVIA ANSWER

El Paso is closer to Houston. But only by 22 miles.



The City of College Station, Parks & Recreation has scheduled a Beginners Genealogy Class, this fall for seniors beginning September 11, 2012, Tuesday at 9:00 am to 11:30 am at the Southwood Community Center on Rock Prairie Road. The genealogy class will consist of seven sessions meeting on consecutive Tuesdays through October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

If you know someone who might be interested in learning the techniques of genealogy research asked them to call the City Parks & Recreation Department.



## HELP WANTED

The Rambler Newsletter Staff needs your family stories whether they might be Success Stories, Brick Walls, Queries or local news relating to History & Genealogy.

You may send these stories by email to any of the staff members anytime.

Or do you have an idea for a new quarterly column? Or suggestions for future articles? Please let us know.

## The Bulletin Board

Writers Group next sessions are August 22<sup>th</sup> and October 24<sup>th</sup>. The August 22<sup>th</sup> topic will present "Ideas of How to Deal with Family Secrets."

### NEWSLETTER STAFF

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