



## RAMBLERS' RAMBLINGS

Volume XXI Number ONE SPRING 2012

### TEXAS STATE LIBRARY NEWS

REPRINTED FROM THE FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES & ARCHIVES  
OF TEXAS - FALL 2011

When you hear that the State Legislature has balanced the State budget, you should get that warm, fuzzy feeling, at least until you stop to wonder: what did they cut?



According to **Peggy D.Rudd**, director and librarian of the **Texas State Library and Archives Commission**, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature reduced the State libraries' budget 64

percent. Despite these setbacks the State Library is starting the 2012 year with a defensive plan by conducting a Return on Investment (ROI) study of public libraries. We know libraries are community assets that benefit the public in important ways. By assigning a dollar value to those benefits, the State Library can talk concretely with government officials and funders about the difference they make.

Despite so much grim news, a national library program is garnering great interest and support. The Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), an initiative of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, would make the entire cultural and scientific public domain content available to all at any time. This bodes well for this grand vision of equitable access for all.

## TEXAS TRIVIA

Who was Santiago Wuy? Here is a Hint!!!



## THE STORY OF THE STORY

BY BARBARA DONALSON ALTHUS

What started out in 2001 as a history of my three Hays County families, turned into *KYLE TOUGH, The Saga of Texas A&M's Rise to Power in Athletics & Agriculture*, a 452-page book, which covers Texas, the United States and some international.

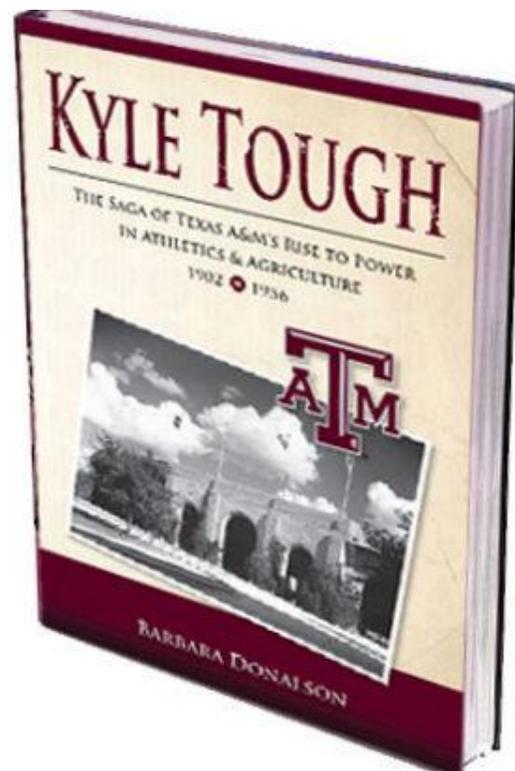
The hardest thing about starting this book was to stop researching. I missed the camaraderie of trips to the libraries and Research Ramblers meetings, hearing good speakers and having lunches where we talked about our "finds." Gradually, I had to give all that up as years went by. I shouldn't have worried about researching though because as I got into writing and found new subjects, I still needed to return to the libraries.

To relieve the tedium of re-writing and editing, I took on several summer projects. Eventually, I finished the story in June

2009. The time from then until December 2011, when it came off the presses, was spent in a new and wonderful critique group and in the publishing process.

But then, by a fluke, I discovered the index of the University of Wisconsin at Evans Library. It is a user friendly index, from the 1800s until present, of papers pertaining to Foreign Relations between the United States and other countries. That gold-mine added another 52 pages.

Around 2012, again by a fluke, it came to my attention that the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the School of Agriculture at A&M was 2011. That gave me an absolute deadline to have the book in the hands of the public. I dropped out of all groups and devoted full time to finishing the book.



That brings me to "dry-eye." I had bad trouble with my eyes. Thought at first I was getting allergic to make-up. Went to the eye doctor, got new glasses. Began to use eye drops methodically every day. Then shortly after I finished the book, I discovered that my eyes didn't need artificial tears anymore. So I quit using the drops. Moral to that story is to blink while you are at the computer.

Some of you will remember how I harped and harped on everyone to write their family history: To document everything and at least up-date the history every 50 years. If not, so much of the primary sources will disappear. That is more true today when everything is going digital. Even Kyle Field is threatened.

In the end, I wouldn't take anything for having written *Kyle Tough*. Because of it, the history of the School of Agriculture and of A&M athletics, previously unpublished, are now published.

Icing on the cake, when I mailed my first check into the Comptroller of Accounts for Sale Tax last week, I realized I had started a new business!

Website: [www.kyletough.com](http://www.kyletough.com)

## CLAYTON TOWN CRIER JANUARY 2012

CONTRIBUTED BY GEORGIANNE BIGHAM

Dear Doctor, A page has come completely out of my favorite John Grisham book. Can it be repaired easily?

Dear Ripped Apart, Yes, from time to time pages do come loose and need to be reattached. This is a simple process that you can do at home with little extra expense. All we need is our acid free glue, a toothpick, wax paper, scotch tape, a brown grocery sack and a pair of scissors to make the repair, a brick or other weighty item like a large Houston phone book.

1. First check the edge of the page that is torn. If it has jagged edges, take your scissors and trim as little as possible to make a clean edge.
2. Tear off two strips of wax paper about two inches long, fold it in half lengthwise.
3. Cut around your grocery sack about 6 inches from the top. Take the piece you have cut off and slit it so that it lays flat.
4. With your toothpick, dip into your acid free glue and run a very small bead of glue the length of the trimmed page.
5. Reinsert the loose page, being careful to get the page back in the correct order. Work the page back and forth until it is back securely in the gutter.
6. Take one of the pieces of wax paper and slip it between the glued page and

the page before it. Repeat this process with the glued pages and the page behind it. Make sure the wax paper is inserted FOLD DOWN.

7. Close the book and lay it across the middle of the brown paper. Wrap it tightly with the paper like you were rolling down the top of a lunch sack. This keeps the book in the correct position while the glue is drying.
8. Weight it down with a brick or some of those old Houston phones books that you have laying around the house.
9. Depending on the humidity, the glue will dry in 1 to 4 hours. Carefully remove the wax paper and the book is as good as new. When removing the wax paper, if a little tears off and is stuck to the book, don't fret about it. Just leave the tag of wax paper in place. Trying to remove it could cause the whole page to rip out again.

**Note:** If you are reinserting several pages, just repeat the necessary steps above. We so suggest that you glue no more than 5 pages at a time. Give your work time to dry before putting any undue stress on the newly glued pages.

## PERPETUAL CALENDAR

By JANE MAXWELL

Have you ever wondered on what day of the week your great, great grandfather was born? Or tried to figure out what day an event happened? Do you have an obituary that stated that your relative was buried on Friday, but only have the date of the death?

Then you might find a perpetual calendar url a valuable tool. Here are two sites that may help your research:

<http://calendarhome.com> or you may prefer this url:

<http://utopia.knoware.nl/users/eprebel/Calendar/Perpetual/>

## RAMBLER NEWSLETTER RESPONSE

BY HENRY HANSON

In the Summer 2009 issue of the Ramblers newsletter, Lyla Beth King wrote an article on her Murray relatives and their resemblances to John Wilkes Booth.

Earlier this year a relative of that same Murray family in California read the article through a search engine and contacted me wanting to get in touch with Lyla Beth. I responded to the lady in California and blind copied Lyla Beth, allowing her the choice to follow up.

Lyla Beth says this about her new found cousin: *My new found cousin, Ellen, and I have talked on the phone several times and we e-mail often. Thank you so much for getting us together. She lives in California. Her sister recently moved to McKinney, TX. Ellen hopes to visit her sister soon and when she does, I plan to drive to McKinney to meet her in person.*

*Ellen was adopted. Several years ago, she became interested in finding her birth family. It turns out that my Great Grandfather William Frank Murray is her great great grandfather.*

*She is much more actively researching our family than I am right now, so she sends me lots of information, almost weekly, that she is finding about William Frank Murray.*

*I am so enjoying learning more about my family through her. I have been able to share information with her that she didn't have.*

*Thanks again for helping us find each other.*

I hope more members of Ramblers will take advantage of this form of genealogy research by sharing stories about their family. This could be as simple as a Query, asking for information about a relative.

## REMEMBRANCES OF CYNTHIA ANN OWEN MAXWELL

BY JANE MAXWELL

My paternal great grandparents, Cynthia Ann Owen Maxwell and Alexander Carson Maxwell, MD., lived in Washington County, Southwest Virginia, about ten miles from the Tennessee border. Their farm was on the old Jonesboro Road, a main highway in the 1800s. They married in 1841 and had ten children - six boys and four girls. The family moved to Texas in 1871, settling in northeast Travis County near A.C.'s brother. My grandfather, Fielding Pope Maxwell, was a sergeant in Co. E, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Virginia Reserves when he was about 16 years old.



The following is an excerpt from Cynthia's remembrance of events in her life. She died in 1913 at the age of 88, so I never knew her. - Jane A. Maxwell

"I married Dr. Alexander Carson Maxwell, then a young doctor just starting the practice of medicine in Greeneville, Tennessee, about sixty-odd miles from Bristol, where I was living. After our wedding, we visited relatives in Washington County, Virginia, for a few days before starting to Greeneville and our home. This wedding trip was made on horseback, taking most of two days for the journey. A wedding party consisting of Greeneville young folks went with us; among them were Messrs. Joe Brown, John Lowery and John Lightner, young businessmen of Greeneville."



"We lived in Greeneville about five years, during which time we lived near neighbors to Andrew Johnson, a tailor, who afterwards was President of the United States. My husband was his family physician. Andrew Johnson was an uneducated man, though industrious and very systematic in all that he did. His wife was well educated and talented and taught him to read after they were married. He was a good tailor and made my

husband's wedding suit. He would work a certain number of hours each day and study and read a certain number. The first start of his public life was in a debating society conducted by the young people of Greenville. When we left Greenville in 1847, he was still living there and had four children, two girls and two boys."

"In 1847 we moved back to Virginia and settled on our 200-acre farm about four miles from Abingdon. The old home was a two-story log house with attic and had a large stack chimney in center, furnishing fireplaces for four rooms. The dining room and large kitchen was in the ell and had a large fireplace. The House later was weather-boarded on the outside to look more modern. There was a large two-room house with fireplaces out in the yard; this was the doctor's office and a bedroom for the oldest boys."

"There being few drug stores, my husband compounded most all of his drugs, thus establishing a first-class drug store. I was his assistant in many cases. He volunteered for service during the (Civil) war, but was stationed at home to look after the sick and aged - and many soldiers were sent to him. At times it looked like a hospital. "A house on the farm was vacated and turned over to a company of recruiting cavalry who ate at our dinner table for three weeks or more."

"One day during the war, just as we were sitting down to breakfast, a retreating company of Confederates from a skirmish came in almost starved. Everything cooked

was handed out to the starved soldiers and Cindy, the cook, and all hands went to work cooking more until flour and meal gave out, when a servant was sent to great speed with wheat and corn to the nearest mill. A twenty-two gallon brass kettle of apple butter was made and ready. The flour was soon made into flapjacks, the apple butter spread between, and not one soldier left hungry. After they had all gone, the happiest, tiredest soul on the place was dear old Cindy, the trusty cook."

### TRIVIA ANSWER:

REPRINTED FROM COPANO BAY PRESS JUNE 2011

*Jim Bowie*; Jose Juan Sanchez-Navarro, a participant in the siege and Battle of the Alamo, was also a skilled draftsman. He drew a plan of the mission-fortress from firsthand observation while in the field, and published it four years later as an inset to his map of Coahuila. He notes that a room next to the main gate is where "el fanfarron, Santiago Wuy" (the braggart, James Bowie) was killed.



JAMES "JIM" BOWIE

## ANOTHER "GOGGLE" SUCCESS

BY HENRY HANSON

I guess I'll never forget the day at Computer User Group that Patti Krueger talked about using "GOGGLE." Why you ask, will I never forget? Well that leads to another one of my success stories, and I know all the Ramblers think they have heard all my stories, but I assure you, you are not even close.



This story is about planning my trip to South Carolina in search for wills of my 5<sup>th</sup> great grandfather Joseph Carroll and his son Samuel Carroll, which I needed as proof for my application for the SAR. Where did I need to go?

I learned about this will from a application to the DAR by a cousin, Virginia Brewington, in Tennessee, who was a descendant of both Joseph and Samuel Carroll. But I didn't know where she got her copy, whether it was at the South Carolina State Archives or the York County Court House.

So, remembering what Patti said, I went to "Goggle" and typed in South Carolina Archives and of course got multiple hits, and the first listing was: "MAIN ARCHIVES LAUNCHING SCREEN FOR PATRONS TO SEARCH DATABASE." The URL was <http://www.archivesindex.sc.gov/>

I clicked on "Enter Online Record Index" and entered my grandfather's name and got several results, most of which were deed records, but to my surprise, he had two wills. The will in 1777 listed my 4<sup>th</sup> grandfather Samuel and charged him with the care of his mother for the remainder of his life. When Samuel died in 1783, Joseph wrote another will and listed his two grandsons, the male children of his son Samuel.

Now if you think I'm lucky you haven't heard anything yet.

The index indicated these wills were digitized and after a few clicks I not only printed a copy, but saved them to my *Carroll* document folder.

Now my story doesn't end here. I wasn't as lucky with my 4<sup>th</sup> great grandfather William Love. William Love had a will and it was digitized, but his request for payment for services rendered during the Revolution was not digitized; therefore, I had to print out a form, where I sited the document I was requesting and put my credit card number on the application and mailed it by snail mail to Columbia, SC. Warning on the site indicated it might be as long as 4 to 6 weeks before I received my document.

All of this success has altered my travel plans to Georgia instead of South Carolina.

## FRONTIER CHEMISTRY

REPRINTED FROM CAPANO BAY PRESS JANUARY 2012

You're going to need an oak tree. And some rusty nails.

I guess I should tell you what we're making. Ink, Iron gall ink to be precise.



It's the same ink used to write the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the Republic of Texas. In fact, years it was the primary writing ink of the western world for 1500 years. It was only superseded by newer formulations around 1900 because old, reliable iron gall ink fouled newfangled fountain pens.

Back to the recipe. Go to your oak tree and find some oak galls, AKA oak apples. They're those globular growths you see on oak twigs. The result of a wasp laying it's egg on the tree and the tree's immune system encapsulating the invader.

Find a good handful and crush them into a powder. If you don't have a mortar and pestle, a hammer will do. The galls are used because they contain a higher concentration of gallotannic acid than the regular oak bark. (This is also one of the tannins used to tan leather).

Put your pulverized oak galls in a jar and add your rusty nails. Four or five will do. The rustier, the better. Add enough water to cover everything and leave the jar in a sunny place for ten days. Give the jar a good shake whenever you pass by.

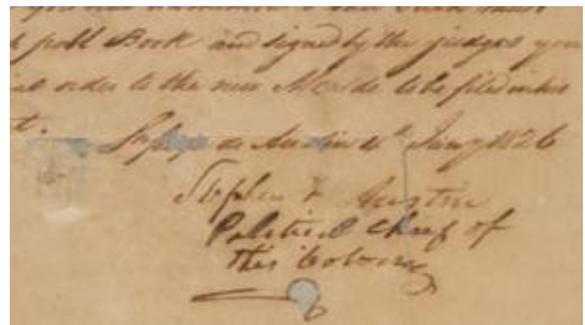
There are alternate recipes, some involving wine or vinegar. In fact, there were about as many recipes as there were households, but

this is among the simplest and produces decent results for the least effort. If it's too thin to use, you can boil it down to the right consistency.

Now go find a goose feather and cut the end into a nib with your pen knife (that's why it's called a pen knife). Dip your quill in your ink and begin to write.



Your ink will be light brown or sepia when first applied, but over the course of hours or days, it will turn black.



Wait a minute, you say. Why is the ink on my old family letters dark brown?

That's because of the iron in the iron gall ink. Over time, if exposed to air, the ink literally rusts. This ink rust can cut right through the page, leaving holes where the ink was most heavily applied. Still, you can't beat it's durability. Chemical analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls has shown the ink used was iron gall.

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!



We always need help filling our quarterly Rambler's newsletter...and that means we always need your help. So please send us stories on your family, on your research, on your historic findings along with old newspaper articles, your brick wall problems or how your tore your walls down, etc. We want to continue publishing an informative, interesting newsletter and we need your input, short, long...or just ideas for us to pursue. Plus pictures. PLEASE.

## NEWSLETTER STAFF

Mary Jane Millender - - Editor & Brickwalls

Joyce Louis - - Queries & Programs

Jane Maxwell - - Websties

Henry Hanson - - Photographs