



MEMOIRS  
of  
MOLLIE McDOWALL

(Mary Ann Nicholson)

1843-1931

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1843 - 1931

Edited by

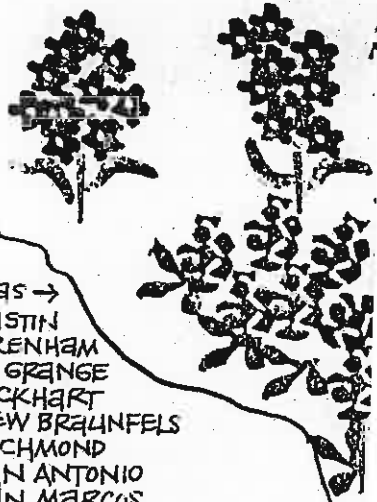
Ethel Mary Franklin Smith

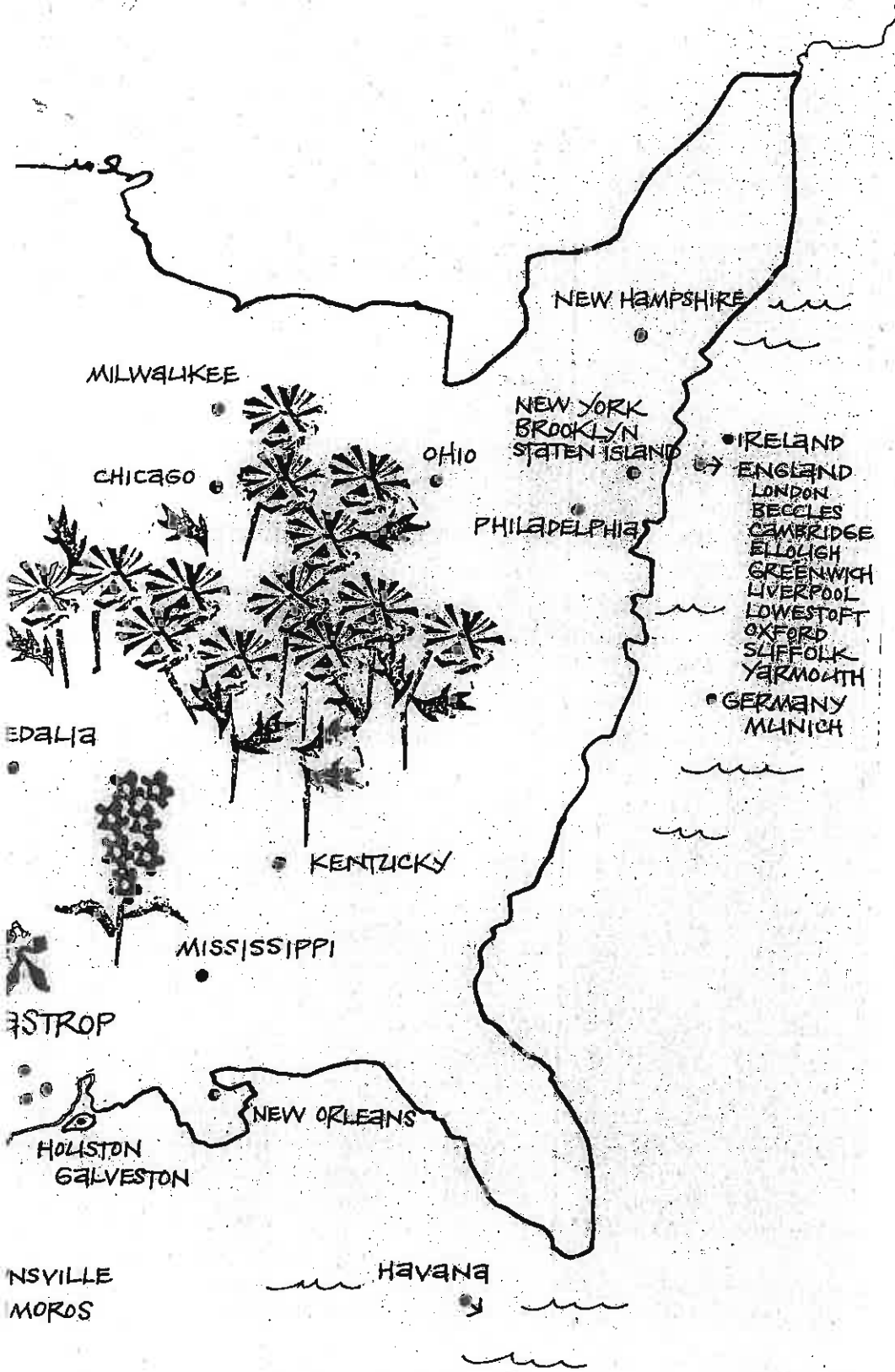
The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America  
in the State of Texas

*Mollie's Travels*  
*\* far and wide \**

•  
PACIFIC COAST

• TEXAS →  
AUSTIN  
BRENHAM  
LA GRANGE  
LOCKHART  
NEW BRAUNFELS  
RICHMOND  
SAN ANTONIO  
SAN MARCOS





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SLIFFOLK

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GERMANY

MUNICH

KENTZICKY

MISSISSIPPI

ESTROP

NEW ORLEANS

HOLLISTON

GALVESTON

HAVANA

NSVILLE

MOROS

MEMOIRS of MOLLIE McDOWALL

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## FOREWORD

In the early nineteen twenties T. W. House III encouraged his Aunt Mollie McDowall to write her reminiscences. With the aid of journals, letters, mementos and numerous scrapbooks she was able to recall minor as well as major events of the preceding eighty-odd years. When she had completed the writing, Mr. House employed Mrs. Grace E. Williams to edit and type the manuscript. Copies of this were given to family and friends.

Edward M. House II, now of Rogers, Arkansas, presented one copy to the Texas Collection of the Houston Public Library. He and his wife, née Jerome Cartwright, also gave helpful information in regard to sources of pictures.

Ethel Mary Franklin Smith, as a labor of love, edited for publication Parts I and II in a sensitive and creative manner. She researched and prepared the footnotes assisted by her husband, Earlton Smith. Faye Norton Bock of the Austin Public Library and Ann Graves, Director of the Public Services Division of the Texas State Library also made valuable and constructive suggestions to her.

Part III, covering the later years of Mollie's life, was condensed by the undersigned as Chairman of Special Publications.

Publication was considerably expedited by Julie Graham Harman who indexed the text, which she typed in its entirety. She was assisted in this extensive undertaking by her husband, James W. Harman.

Mrs. Roy Neeham, née Mary Louise Howze, furnished the pictures of Mollie used in this book. Miss Mary Kennedy of Houston had these photographs reproduced in a form suitable for publication. Mrs. Earl Denman of Bastrop arranged for Reed Sharp to photograph the Crocheron-McDowall house illustrated herein as it was in 1977.

Mrs. Spencer Brown, from the time she first heard a resumé of the manuscript, never wavered in her confidence that it should and would be published. Her encouragement and faith resulted in this book.

Mrs. Denman and Miss Mattie Claiborne, Archivist of the Bastrop Museum, supplied valuable background information from their records.

The task of assembling and coordinating the various parts and pieces necessary to the production of this book was made pleasant for the Chairman by the designer, Kate Bergquist. Her search for the original handwritten copy was without success but did lead her to the Barker Library of the University of Texas where she found an additional typed copy of the manuscript, as well as mementos and letters belonging to Mollie. Mrs. Bergquist chose the color of the paper because the "boys in grey" were so dear to Mollie's heart. Sensitive to the spirit of the text, she also chose phlox blossoms for the design of the cover and the silhouettes of native flowers for the endpaper maps.

Allene Orgain Bachman  
(Mrs. Cleve)  
*Chairman Special Publications*

*May, 1978*  
*Beaumont, Texas*



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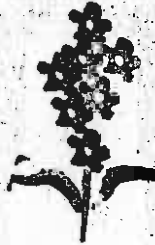
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TO "OLD FAITHFUL," T. W. HOUSE, III,  
this "Little Journey through Memory's Halls"  
is lovingly dedicated.



## PART I



### EARLY LIFE IN BASTROP

I think it was in the year 1838 the eyes of the States were turned towards Texas, the giant State or country to the Southwest. A headright—640 acres (a league and a labor) was offered to the head of each family (320 acres to the wife, 100 acres for each child and 80 acres for each slave) who would go to Texas and choose the acres and make a home. It is true the Indians and Mexicans were a great menace, but brave hearts knew no fear.

General Denyse, a man of means, had caught the "Texas fever" and planned to go to Texas and invest in lands. A young Englishman, James Nicholson,<sup>1</sup> then living in New York (on Staten Island), decided to join the party and make a home in the Southwest. The party took passage on a schooner—the only way to travel at that time. Six or seven weeks was the shortest time from New York to Galveston—a barren island.

While Nicholson was faring forth to a new and untried country to found a home and win a fortune from the broad lands of Texas, back on Staten Island, New York, a little son was born to him and his wife, Ruth.<sup>2</sup> The child was called William after his English grandfather, and the date was September 13, 1839. One month later, the baby, with his mother (Ruth Tipple Nicholson), her mother (Mrs. George Tipple), and her older sister (Mary Ann Tipple) set sail from New York Harbor in a schooner with the intention of joining the child's father in Texas.

Six long weeks were spent at sea, and then a landing on the island of Galveston. A few small houses were there, the beginning of the "Island City." I do not know how the trip was made from

Galveston to Houston, but, of course, it must have been by boat up Buffalo Bayou. There was no other way. In Houston, the party was met by the husband and father, James Nicholson. He had located his headright in Bastrop, one hundred and fifty miles from Houston—and thither, after a rest of days, perhaps weeks the party set out again.

No public conveyance of any kind was in use. A one-horse buggy and some saddle horses were secured. Ox wagons were used for transporting goods, etc., so in this way these people from England set out to make for themselves a home in a new country.

The young mother, who was only nineteen, and the grandmother, with the baby boy, had the honor of riding in the buggy. The others, James Nicholson, Mary Ann Tipple and the rest of the party, were on horseback. James Nicholson, reared in the North of England, had never been on horseback until after he came to Texas. Mary Ann Tipple, on the other hand, was a superb horsewoman. I have heard her say that she could not remember learning to ride.

At least five days, perhaps more, of travel, stopping nights with "settlers" who were more than glad to entertain strangers, and, perchance, hear news. The Texas wild flowers were in bloom, and the prairies were covered with blue bonnets, phlox, and many other varieties. There were no fences then, and few cattle, and Nature adorned herself in a most artistic manner.

The travelers, tired, but full of hope, drew towards their journey's end. As they came near the hills East of Bastrop, a horseback party appeared. They came with welcome greetings—some fine-looking men, mounted on handsome horses. One gentleman, Henry Crocheron,<sup>3</sup> formerly of Staten Island, New York, rode a splendid animal. Mary Ann Tipple felt rather ashamed of her scrub of a Texas pony, as the fine-looking Henry Crocheron drew rein beside her, but she brought him tidings of his family whom he had not seen in several years.

Together they all rode over the hills and into the pretty little town of Bastrop, and were soon at home. There were but few houses—but one, in the southern part of town, was home for the wearied travelers. Perhaps it was logs with clapboards—I am not

sure, but this I know—the house was moved to a plot of ground near the river (where stood Nicholson House, so well-known in later years) and the kitchen, and dining room as well, were made of logs.

To the three English women the life in a new country was fascinating. They had good and well-made clothes, which were greatly admired, and sometimes borrowed by their less-fortunate sisters (a primitive way). The mother, Elizabeth Tipple, ever longed for her native land, and was never quite reconciled to the life in a new and underdeveloped country. After a few years, at the age of fifty, she died and was buried on the hill (Fairview), the first of this family to rest there.

To James and Ruth was born another son, called James Charles, but the little life went out after a few hours, and he was laid beside his grandmother on the hill.

On February 19, 1843, a real Texas Norther was blowing. As the wind howled around the Nicholson house a baby girl was born and given the name of her mother's sister, Mary Ann. When the friend, Mrs. Millett, took the little babe in her arms, she remarked: "She is not worth dressing. She is so small." The dressing process went on, however, and I, Mary Ann, lived to prove how often the wisest may be mistaken. The wind blew on, and strange to say, I have all my life liked the feel of a strong wind in my face—it exhilarates!

Perhaps a picture of the little town of Bastrop would come in well here. A few houses, mostly built of logs and clapboards, nestled in the little valley. On the East, a range of hills was cedar and pine covered. One hill was early set aside as the "City of the Dead," and now bears the name "Fairview." North of the cemetery are two knolls, one bearing the name "Bald Knob." From its summit on a clear day the City of Austin might be seen, thirty miles away.

To the North of the town a pretty winding, twisting creek ran singing to the river. On the South, the Colorado River stretched its protecting arm and held the town in close embrace. The river bottom was wide and densely filled with trees and shrubs. During the rainy seasons much stagnant water stood in low places, and, as a consequence, chills and fever prevailed, and doctors with saddle

bags well-stocked with calomel and quinine were kept busy. Drug stores did not exist right at first. I have a recollection of a store in the southern part of town, with a crescent-shaped transom over the door, and inside on a table or counter some large curiously-shaped bottles filled with colored water, also some jars containing various kinds of snakes and other creeping things. A pestle and mortar was a necessary part of primitive drug stores.

At the time of my birth, and for some years after, the Nicholson house was like many houses of that period: two front rooms with a wide hallway between, entirely open in the front and back; two shed rooms, one at the back of each front room, and back of these a kind of gallery. Back of that was the large log kitchen with shed rooms beyond for the servants (these were built later). Of the two front rooms, the North was the parlor and the South a bedroom, as were the rooms at the back. All were ceiled and painted white, a chimney at each end, North and South, with wide fireplaces and high wood mantels painted black. On these were always candlesticks and snuffers, and a china ornament or two.

The Nicholson home had been moved from the southern part of town to the place where it stood so long, it having been burned down a few years ago. The garden and field extended back to the back of the river bottom. The home lot consisted of twelve acres.

Among the houses, one of the most stylish was the Johnson home (still standing in 1919). Its crowning piece of furniture was a piano, the first ever brought to Bastrop.

The Johnsons were well-to-do people from New York state. In the early days it was quite the proper thing when a visitor came to bring her sewing. Then all the female members of the family, even the children, would come into the parlor and take sewing, tatting, knitting from the table drawers and keep busily employed. The Johnson ladies were expert with needle and shuttle. Mrs. Johnson would always say, "Get to work, girls."

In those days of life in Texas, it was much the custom to spend the day—and that meant *all* day; to go for tea and spend the whole evening, or to be invited to spend the night. The country was full of Indians—some hostile, some friendly. It was not safe to go out after sundown. A stout stockade was a necessity. One



was situated in the part of town where now stands the courthouse, and there, when an Indian alarm was given, the women, children and old men were rushed, while the able-bodied men and boys scoured the country or met the Indians in their hiding places. In this stockade I have spent more than one night, but of this I have no recollection.

I must not neglect to mention the two-story building in the southern part of town on the bank of the Colorado bottom. This building consisted of two rooms only, one below and one above, and here court was held. Here the hardy Methodist circuit rider came, and laying aside his gun and powder horn, took from his well-worn saddle bags a Bible and hymn book, and preached, sang and prayed, while the women of the congregation picked cotton lint from the seeds held in their stout checked aprons. (This, mainly on weekdays).

Dances were given here lasting from sundown to broad daylight, as the tallow dips in their tin holders on the wall flickered and flared to a finish. In the dance hall wooden benches ran all around the walls. Mothers brought their babies and, wrapping the little sleepers in shawls, tenderly laid them underneath the benches, while they, themselves, "tripped the light fantastic toe." (Further on I will tell more about this building.)

There were two or three small stores on the main street. Money was scarce, and bartering was the means of exchange. Imagine giving a peck of onions for a bottle of snuff, or a half bushel of corn for a plug of tobacco!

But to return to the people who lived in the houses—Henry Crocheron, the young Staten Islander who had come to Texas before the Nicholsons, brought with him from Alabama twelve grown Negroes, male and female, each worth between \$1,000 and \$1,200. These he sold, and after locating his headright in Bastrop, bought land in various parts of Texas at twenty-five to fifty cents an acre. He took as a partner L. C. Cunningham, and for nearly a lifetime they continued in business. At one time they bought out every store in town.

Henry wooed and won Mary Ann Tipple. They were married early one morning, and he, with saddle bags, and she, with a



carpet bag on horn of saddle, rode to Austin, and there attended a ball given in their honor by Mrs. Haynie, who, I think, was before her marriage a Miss Trask. After a few days' honeymoon, the happy couple returned to Bastrop and to the Nicholson home.

When Mary Ann Nicholson was two years of age, the Crocherons moved to Houston and were living there when Texas was annexed (1845). Letters from my aunt to my mother, Ruth, in Bastrop, told of the news.

The Crocherons returned to Bastrop, and soon bought the twelve-acre lot just north of the Nicholson lot. A log house, consisting of two rooms with a wide hall between, was on the lot, but my aunt was an inventive and capable woman, and the house was soon turned into what I remember as a fairy palace, though I fear I cannot picture it as it was.

About this time there was born to James and Ruth Nicholson a baby boy, to whom was given the name Henry, for the uncle, Henry Crocheron. My father was then postmaster, and held several other offices under President Lamar.<sup>4</sup> Our home was comfortable, though I have few recollections of it except for the spacious log kitchen that served also as a dining room. My father had slaves, though my gentle English mother never became accustomed to them and could not bear to be alone in the room with one. She had one slave of a deeply religious nature who, whenever she began to churn, began to shout. This was so alarming to her mistress that she would often take the three little children out of doors until the shouting was over.

The three little children, William, Mary Ann, and Henry, were somewhat like their mother in appearance, having brown curly hair and blue or grey eyes. Those who lived grew up tall. James Nicholson, on the other hand, had red curly hair, was rather short, but very athletic, possessing great strength. He was from a family who possessed strong constitutions.

The gentle English mother, Ruth, lived to be 28 years old. Even now, I recall her passing. December 23, 1847, was a cold day, when my blue-eyed baby sister, Ruth, was born. We children were at Aunt's. In the night we were awakened and told we were going to tell our mother goodbye. How little we understand! Auntie took

Henry in her arms, and Uncle carried me in his arms and Billy was on his back. Little as I was, this procession impressed me. This was the beginning of sorrows. We were led up to the bedside and lifted one by one to receive a mother's dying kiss. I looked into the beautiful blue eyes—all wondering—why should I say good-bye. She fondly kissed me, saying: "Meet me in heaven." A few days after, my father took me to my mother's grave on the hill, but I did not understand. Surely she would come again. Then came a period of quiet and peace, but I recall nothing at this time.

My father must have been lonely. By nature, he was social and affectionate. He visited in San Antonio, and soon brought home a wife, Mrs. Ross, pleasing in appearance, I recall. She had one daughter about my age, Rubelle Ruth Rugenia Ross. The least said of her the better. She was bad-tempered and a tale bearer. My father had all of us children at home, and at first it seemed nice to have a mother—but alas! a baby boy came in a year, and then we had only a "stepmother." Her unkindness knew no bounds. The father at his business never knew. We were cowed and made to do menial work. I remember standing on a chair to wash dishes—and there were slaves to do this work. I was sometimes put to wash my clothes. Another baby came, and I was nursemaid.

Rubelle Ruth Rugenia was sent to visit her uncle at Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and took yellow fever and died. One incident stands out. As I said, I was nursemaid. One day stepmother said, "Mary Ann, would you rather nurse the baby or sweep the yard?" There was a chance to get away from the heavy cross baby, so I said: "Sweep the yard." She replied, "Here, take the baby." There was always a baby to nurse.

I know my father was not happy and stayed from home a good deal. I did not know then, but I know now, that he was drinking. Where baby Ruth was at this time I do not know, but I suppose in the trundle bed with the new babies. I do know that she was neglected and wandered about falling asleep when tired of play. Mrs. C. K. Hall, who with her husband and baby Kate were boarding with my father (for the house was now a kind of hotel) one day found Ruth asleep in an ash bin. I have seen stepmother punish her by putting her under a barrel, as one used to put setting hens.

We got many beatings. It seems incredible that anyone should mistreat a little child, and particularly one as beautiful as my little sister, Ruth.

When she was about four years of age, stepmother called me and said: "Dress Ruth and take her to your aunt. I do not want her." I did as I was told. I learned afterwards that I had put a woolen dress on the child, and the time was mid-summer. At Aunt's, Ruth was tenderly cared for, and everyone raved about her beauty. Chubby, rosy-cheeked, blue eyes, brown curls—her lines had fallen in pleasant places.

I loved to read. I remember reading any book that I found about the house. Stepmother did not approve of me reading and called me a "bookworm." I knew it must be something horrid. I remember slipping off, book in hand, in winter and standing in the angle of the chimney and house back of the servants' rooms, warmed by the sun. My school days had stopped for a time. I spent spare moments with the servants. They were kind. I somehow got hold of *Pilgrim's Progress*, and this I read aloud to Aunt Rose. She was very religious, and as I read she had all the experiences of Christian—met the lions, went through the Slough of Despond, etc. As small as I was, I feared heaven was not for me if I had to go through all those things. Aunt Rose was a kind of head servant. Betsey was the cook. I remember old Betsey—such thick lips I have never since seen. The lower lip turned down over her chin. Raspberry was man-of-all work. They were all good to me.

I think my brother, Billy, was sent to live with Grandpa Nicholson on the hill North of town. Grandpa had many cows, and there was employment for a boy when not in school.

Grandfather William Nicholson came to Bastrop, Texas, about 1846. He was born and lived before that in Newcastle-on-Tyne. He had several children by his first marriage: my father, James, was the youngest of these. Grandfather was tall and straight and always wore a Scotch plaid in cold weather. He was a man of fine education—a teacher. His was the first school in Bastrop. At first, he taught in a log building North of the Nicholson house, just across the ravine. Later, he bought a home on a small hill North of town.

Well do I remember that school, and well do I remember the writing hour. Quill pens were used, and my grandfather was an expert pen maker. We made pothooks, strokes, curves, O's—almost everything—before we were allowed to write a word.

On Saturdays it was such a joy to go to the house on the hill—a lot of us youngsters—and after the greeting, hie away to Piney Creek, just below the hill, and wade in the clear, sparkling water, gather wild flowers on the bank, catch minnows, and make friends with the birds. Hunger and an overhead sun sent us to the house, and there the grandmother had loaves of the brownest bread (flour and cornmeal—half and half), golden butter and delicious milk. My brother lived with Grandfather for a year or two.

After a while I was sent to live with my grandfather and, of course, I was in school again. How well I remember the writing lessons—a whole room full of boys and girls leaning over crude desks, quill pens in hands, and the funny things we made. There was an hour of this every day, and it was no idle game, I can tell you.

My brother and I were kindly treated. There was work to do after school hours—churning, feeding chickens, gathering eggs, etc., but there was always playtime and good wholesome food. My grandmother (father's stepmother) was a good cook. I remember my grandfather wrapping his Scotch plaid about him and mounting his horse, with buckets of butter and baskets of eggs before him or hanging on the horn of his saddle, and going to town to sell and buy. I think we, brother Billy and I, must have remained on the hill only during a school session; then we went back to my father's house.

Miss Keziah Paine and her mother came to Bastrop and taught school in a log house at the foot of the eastern hills a mile or more from town. To this school we trudged every day, tin buckets in hand containing our dinner, for we must stay all day, from 8 A.M. to 4 or 5 P.M. Our lunch usually consisted of corn bread, a bottle of milk, a bottle of molasses, and sometimes a piece of meat. It was relished as we sat under the trees. One day at noon recess the bellowing of a bull was heard and Miss Kizzie called us to come in. We obeyed. Cattle ran free in those days.

I was a timid, cowed girl, having had so many beatings, so many cross words, taunts and taunting at home. One day at recess the boys killed a snake. The girls said, "Hang it up on the limb of a tree and our folks will send horses for us." I knew no horse would be sent for me, and when the bell rang I lingered behind and hurriedly knocked the snake off the limb. So much for my early school days.

The Methodist Church had become strong in Texas, and there was much wealth. Most of the rich planters (cotton) were of this faith. The two-story house on the bank of the Colorado River had been for some time the only meeting house. The following is quoted from Mrs. Campbell Taylor's story: "In 1835 religious services were held in the store building which Mr. Holderman was putting up; it was not finished. They turned a flour barrel down for a pulpit and piled lumber up for seats. The Mexicans burned this building down next year, and the next church was after missionaries were sent out in 1842 to convert the heathen Texans." I remember a long narrow building on the East side of Main Street. My first going to Sunday School was there, and I believe the Methodist Church had been organized then and a conference held.

About 1850 or '51, the Methodists decided to build in Bastrop a church and a school.<sup>5</sup> All citizens of the town came forward with open hands and hearts. The church, a plain, substantial and spacious building, was erected on the ground where it now stands (1927), but with door opening to the North. A gallery was built in the north, the entrance end. This was for negroes. Often the gallery was well filled, and sometimes these emotional people would warm up to a religious shout or chant. They were quietly removed. Many planters came to church regularly every Sunday, bringing the carriage drivers, and usually one of the housemaids as well. No gentleman planter drove the family carriage. He usually came on horseback. In those days there were no churches for negroes. Sometimes, perhaps, a sermon was preached to them on Sunday afternoons. I have been present at such meetings.

Aunt Celia Craft, colored, was a charter member of the First Methodist Church. She was a bright mulatto, quite stout, and

with her little dog, Trip, was nearly always found in the houses of births. She was respected by everyone and allowed many privileges, one of which was to sit in the "Amen Corner" of the church. The pews on either side of the pulpit were known as "Amen Corners." I do not know why, but I do know that from these corners frequently there was heard a fervent "Amen."

The pulpit was a long one, white, cushion on top in the center to hold the large Bible which was used by the preacher for texts, and was sometimes pounded upon by the speaker's fists to enforce some truth. To my childish mind this pounding seemed sacrilege. On either end of the pulpit was a raised place for candlesticks, as there were no lamps as yet. Handsome sperm oil lamps came later, then kerosene lamps, and then electricity.

The pulpit was on a raised platform, where members in good standing knelt for the sacrament on quarterly meeting occasions when the Presiding Elder was present. The pulpit was opposite the entrance, a large South window on either side.

Over the Southwest window, on a black scroll was printed in gold letters "Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth." Over the Southeast window: "We shall all stand before the judgement seat of Christ," and on the wall back of the pulpit, "Thou God seest me." O wonder, how many times I read over these texts! My childish mind would not take in the lengthy and ponderous sermons, some lasting an hour, and on two occasions, three hours—one by Father Rennick, a Presbyterian, and one by Father Haynie, a Methodist. I remember the latter removed his coat. The term "Father" as applied to these men was one of respect for their age and great piety. I confess I did not quite understand the mottoes over the windows, but the middle text, "Thou God seest me," fascinated me. There was a big eye after the syllable "Thou God," and it became a real seeing eye. I felt its force upon me. Always on the pulpit was a pitcher of water and a glass, and they were in frequent use.

The pews were in the center of the church—double pews, if I may so call them. Two aisles led from two doors of the vestibule, and the wall pews were for men only, while the center ones were for women and children. This segregation, as I may call it, held

good for years. Finally, a few venturesome men dared to break this rule and sit with their wives.

I am ashamed to say that it was the custom of quite a few men to chew tobacco during service and—horrors! to make filthy the floors and walls. I have seen. Hymn books were not very plentiful, and hymns were *lined out*—the preacher reading two lines, the congregation singing led by a brother in the Amen Corner. Mr. Beavers was leader at one time, and Mr. Rice, grandfather of our Judge Robert Batts,<sup>o</sup> at other times. My ear for music was pretty good, but children in those days were “seen and not heard.” I listened, though, and even now I hear those old hymns, with their slurs and glides. People went to church in those days—whole families.

Children went to Sunday School and had to go to church, too; and moreover, had to sit still. As I look back, Sunday School was a rather tedious affair. There was a catechism lesson—the same read over and over—such simple and sometimes strange questions. We learned Bible verses at home and recited them to our teachers. I learned verses by the hundred, and won a prize. Judge Lyt Moore taught my class for a time. Judge Cunningham was Superintendent for years. He was dry and lengthy. His opening prayer seemed unending. Everyone knelt for prayers, and it is sad to say, we whispered or read and heeded not that prayer. My class was a jolly lot, and I the jolliest.

Judge Cunningham, the Superintendent of the Sunday School, was with General Sam Houston at the Battle of San Jacinto. I had heard that the battle song or music of that day was “Will you come to the bower?” I wanted to be sure and asked the Judge. He answered, “I don’t know. I was too busy fighting to listen to music.” He wouldn’t have known anyway, for he was tone deaf.

Judge Cunningham and my uncle, Mr. Henry Crocheron, were mercantile partners for years. As heretofore stated, at one time in those early Texas days they bought out all the town merchants and ran the only store in Bastrop. Judge Cunningham was straight-laced. Sunday in his home was a dreaded day. The children must sit around and read goody-goody Sunday School books; they might not even take a walk. The children when grown up



strayed far from home teaching and never returned to it.

Our home (Henry Crocheron's) was not so strict. Of course the piano could not be opened, and we were supposed to read some, but Sunday afternoons the carriage was brought out and we had delightful drives out across Piney Creek into the cedar brakes or over the hills into the pine woods. We played among the cedars and rolled over and over on the pine spills. Those were happy days! I remember that many good people thought it almost wicked to write a letter on Sunday or to read a work of fiction. Godey's Magazine and Peterson's came to our house monthly. The Saturday Evening Post also came and Emma D. E. N. Southworth's serials were eagerly looked for. I was allowed to read them. "The Hidden Hand," etc., were exciting and unhealthy. Meanwhile, however, I was reading Scott and Dickens and histories.

My Uncle and Aunt Crocheron built a new house when I was about ten. I had not been long with them. My going to them was in this way. I was attending the Hancock School. A bone felon appeared on the forefinger of my right hand. I did not know what was the matter, but day by day the pain increased. I was still going to school. I do not now remember about any one caring for the finger. One day the pain was so great I was sent by teacher to Aunt's nearby. Auntie cared for the finger, but home remedies were of no avail, and on Sunday morning, after two nights of great suffering, when both Uncle and Aunt were kept up (I remember Uncle took me in his arms and walked the floor, and Aunt would hold me in her arms and rock me), they sent for Dr. Anderson and preparations were made to lance the finger. The doctor called for a board; someone brought a new shingle. My aunt, who ever fainted at sight of blood, took Sister Ruth and walked down in the field. Mrs. Robb (Aunt Hannah) was visiting with us; she was a fine nurse. Uncle sat beside me on the sofa (this was in the old house). The doctor put some chloroform on a handkerchief and held it to my nose. I snatched the handkerchief and threw it across the room. Uncle caught me in his arms and held me fast. My hand was laid on the shingle. The doctor's knife—yes, knife, and pocket knife at that—slashed the finger open to the bone. Aunt Hannah took me in hand and dressed the finger.



I fell asleep during the dressing. Aunt said afterwards that when she saw the finger it had turned black like a bursted boiled potato. Aunt Hannah had to go away; and aunt took care of the finger. It healed, but was misshapen; the nail curved.

After this time I remained with Uncle and Aunt, and soon after brother Billy came. We had a happy home and were well taken care of, but the cruel treatment of my early years had made me shy, not daring to express an opinion. We were allowed to have other children to play with—and how we did play! My uncle was a prosperous merchant and was a good provider. As I remember, there was never a lack of anything. Aunt made us beautiful clothes. No one dressed better than Ruth and I. One dress I shall never forget; it was of raw silk, the pattern Scotch plaid. Our dresses were alike.

Ruth certainly was a most beautiful child. Visitors always asked to have her brought in, and were loud in their praise of her beauty. I was not bad looking, I am sure; but the cowed look and manner of my early life clung to me, so I was not admired—never was. Aunt determined that I should have a good education, and was in the habit of saying, "Mary Ann, you must study and learn all you can, for you have no beauty to depend on." I heard this so often that I became shy; and upon entering a room where there were visitors, I felt "all hands and feet." I believe I should have studied as well without this heroic treatment, for both Billy and myself were fond of books, and quite ambitious.

Ruth, the pretty little sister, did not like her books and just hated to study. I have seen her throw her books on the floor and say, "I wish the man who made books was dead," Aunt urging her to get her lessons and saying, "You ought to feel ashamed of being at the foot of your classes," and Ruth replying, "I would rather be at the foot, then I can't get down any lower." She was, however, a great favorite with her teacher, no doubt because of her beauty and her lovely disposition—always happy, always in a good humor, of course excepting study time. She had absolute faith. We had some pigs. "Suckey" was quite a pet. One day, Suckey died, and Ruth went about saying, "Poor Suckey's dead and gone to heaven." She was fond of dolls; they were real children to her. One day she was

soundly whipping a favorite doll. Asked why, she said "Save the rod and spoil the child." She always believed in the saving power of the rod. Her sweet nature and her beauty went with her through life. She was jolly and ever ready for a good game. I was her only music teacher. It was no easy task, as she was not fond of study and I was inexperienced; but, with Aunt's help, we got on and she learned to play well. We played duets later and sang together. I was five years her senior, but when we were young ladies we enjoyed the same pleasures.

At the time the church was built, The Academy was erected (1851), North of and facing the church. It belonged to the Methodist Conference, and was for long the best school in the State. The building was two-story, strongly built, and had a two-story gallery the whole length of the front on the South, and it had a cupola which housed the bell belonging to the church, and which was bought by money procured, or given, by citizens. (My aunt, Mrs. Crocheron, rode over town on her buggy mare, old Jenny, collecting money. My aunt was never a Methodist. She was Church of England born, and abided ever an Episcopalian. My uncle was never a church member, being born of Dutch reform parents.)

The Academy had two large auditoriums, one downstairs, and one upstairs. There were heavy pine desks and seats combined. The boys were downstairs, and the girls upstairs. At the West end of the auditorium a platform—stage, we called it—reached quite across. A half dozen blackboards, in frames so we could work on each side, were arranged to swing. In the center of the stage sat a teacher at a pine table.

At the West end of the building downstairs was a long room which we called the Chemistry room and which, as it seems to me, was well fitted up for those times. Dr. Naphegy, a Pole, was instrumental in its fitting up, and there he taught for a little time, but he fell into disrepute and was heard of no more.

At the West end upstairs was a music room and library. In this music room I had lessons from Prof. Stadler. He was brought out from Germany. There were good books in the library, which opened on to the gallery.

At the East end of the building was a recitation room and a stairway leading down towards the North, and up to the belfry and the attic. The roof of the attic was high pitched, and alas! must I say it?—many girls addicted to the snuff-dipping habit found this attic a good hiding place at recess.

I often wondered why the grown up girls would not let the small girls up there. I found out later, but I am glad to say that although many girls my age did, I never learned or even tried to learn the snuff-dipping habit.

Prof. W. J. Hancock was brought from Aberdeen, Mississippi, to take charge of The Academy. He had many slaves. I am sorry to say he was a cruel master. Negroes when cruelly beaten would sometimes run away and other negroes would feed them. It was a common saying, "Some one of Hancock's niggers always in the woods." There were very few such cases, as most masters were kind. The Hancock family occupied the South front room and the first room of the ell of a boarding house that was built for residents of The Academy.

To this boarding house came many planters' sons and daughters—the Caldwells, Washingtons, Hills and others, for Prof. Hancock was a well educated man and had the best teachers under him. One was John T. Stanley from Maine, a highly cultivated man, but easy going and no disciplinarian. Neither was Prof. Hancock, who would get angry with the older pupils and take it out on the little ones. Once, he kept me so late in the big dark building that Aunt had to come after me. Prof. Hancock often had a glass of something on a desk table beside him, from which he sipped. He said it was for "my misery." Later, I learned what it was. The Hancock family left after a few years, and moved to Houston and several members died of yellow fever. I think most of the slaves died too.

They were followed at The Academy by the Carners, the Rev. Henry Carner and his wife. The Methodist Conference sent to Maine for them. They were well educated and put in good teachers. The Academy flourished under them.

I must mention the fact that The Academy was never painted inside. The unadorned pine grew gloomy with age. I recall that

each pupil paid a fee of \$1.00 on entering each year—"Incidental," it was called, supposed to pay for a janitor—but no, pupils had to sweep and dust in turn, and what a dust we raised! Our lungs were surely made of iron. We were a healthy lot. Why parents did not object to this sweeping, I cannot understand. It seemed to be part of our education.

All classes of society attended this school, paying of course, Free schools had not come yet. A strict social line was drawn in those ante bellum days. As children, we were together in school; we played the same games; we were friendly, but we, who were recognized as the "upper strata," never entered the homes of those considered in the "lower strata" of society. This state of affairs existed all over the South, and nothing was thought of it.

We lived near the school and I was never allowed to go to school until the bell rang. The school was in session from 8 A.M. until 12 noon, and from 1 P.M. until 4 P.M. with a half hour recess both morning and afternoon. I was pretty much a tomboy, and I played hard. I was never kept home from school, whether it was pouring rain or cold. I remember one day the water stood all over the ground. I put on my brother's boots and, with my shoes in hand, went to school. I was mortified when the mischievous boys called me "Boots."

I was an ambitious child, and liked to be at the head of my class—"going above" was in vogue. The spelling class stood on the step of the platform and it was so big it reached from one end of the platform to the other. One misspelled word and you took a step down. The fortunate speller went up. I had one rival for the top, John Claiborne. When he was above me, I despaired, but the rule was when anyone got to the head of the class, he or she went to the foot and worked up again. I was glad to see John go down—then my chance!

We used the Blue Back Speller and later the Dictionary. Boys and girls always had recitations together, but the boys' study hall was upstairs, and the girls' downstairs. Recesses were at different periods, too.

I had a boy sweetheart, J. D. S., who, when class was called, invariably wanted a drink of water, and the pail and tin dipper

stood on the stage near the head of the class. As he passed me, he quietly placed on the end of the bench beside me fruit—apricots, or peaches or plums—but this did not go on very long. I must have been a bit flirtatious, for we attended the same dancing school—Prof. Clark's—and there I offended the youthful lover. The next day, I found beside me not fruit, but a poem (not original): "Thou hast wounded the spirit that loved thee."

Piano practice took up much of my time at that period in my life. Three hours consisted of a period in the morning before school, a period at noon, and one after school. Many times I heard my girl friends calling at the gate for me to walk with them, and my aunt's voice (for in summer she sat by the window in the hall which ran across the front of the house) saying very sweetly, but positively, "when she finishes her practice."

In those days we had an early supper, and when that meal was over my brother and myself went to the dining room with our tallow candle and studied until 9 o'clock, then I was called to the sitting room and practiced until 10—my aunt quietly reading, my uncle asleep in his big chair.

My music teacher was a Miss Holmes of North Carolina. Her pupils were all grown ups. I was the only child. Miss Holmes used the six octave piano of my father's which had once belonged to T. W. House of Houston. This piano was a pretty piece of furniture; it was made of mahogany and had six carved legs and two drawers for music. Miss Holmes was a good musician, my aunt said, but what teaching! She was impatient and made me cry. In the end I learned nothing. I had to play a little piece, "Come, Haste to the Wedding," when I should have had finger exercises.

After that, I had lessons with Dr. Ploeger, a splendid musician, who had come from Germany, and brought a piano with him which my aunt bought. This piano was six octaves, plain case, and had two pedals underneath the keyboard which were pressed up by the knees. I think I pressed the pedals more than I practiced. I did not know how to practice and really knew nothing until Prof. Stadler came, and then I *had* to learn. I shall never forget some of the lessons I had from Prof. Stadler. One piece, the "Giraffe Waltz", was full of octaves and my hands were too small, but I *had*

to play,—the Professor's pencil often coming down on my knuckles, and my tears sometimes falling on the keys, but I mastered the waltz. Variations were fashionable, particularly Grobe, and I learned many. One unlucky day a piece was put before me called "LaMelancholia" (and I was melancholy every time I saw the piece), twenty or more pages long, and way beyond my childish mind and my fingers; but day by day I struggled, never getting anywhere. The piece was a nightmare. In those days we had three hour-long lessons per week for \$5.00 per month, calendar month too. As I have said, my aunt supervised my practice, and when the Professor said for me to practice three hours a day, I knew it had to be done, and it *was* accomplished.

By this time I had become rather a good pianist for a small girl, and we now had a Pleyel piano that came direct from Paris, France. It was the first upright piano brought to town. It had seven octaves and a rosewood case.

My first concert was held in the upper auditorium of The Academy. All of the music pupils set demurely on the platform (stage, we called it). My two pieces were variations—"O, Boys, Carry Me Along," and "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground." Being the only small girl in the class, I received much applause. The hall was lighted by candles in tin holders hung all around the wall and a sperm oil lamp on the piano. I suppose I was a little frightened. My Professor came to the piano apparently to turn up the lamp, but in reality to say in a low tone, "Play a little faster."

My dress, with sash around my waist, was a pretty one, as my aunt could make. It was not a knee length, either. My pantalettes, down to my shoe tops, were as pretty as could be made. My hair, which was very thick, brown with a glint of light, was in curls, natural ringlets. My aunt said she made forty curls. At this concert was sung for the first time in our little town, "Way Down Upon the Swanee River." Ellen Blue was the singer.

At this time spiritualism was abroad in the land. Orthodox church members had meetings and table rappings. At the residence of C. K. Hall, the Carmers and Grants met and they said the parlor table moved around the room, with Mr. Grant or Mr. Hall on it. I was too young to be admitted to these seances; and,



# VOGAL AND INSTRUMENTAL CONCERT.

For the benefit of the HOWARD ASSOCIATION, to be given on Friday Evening, November 15th, 1867, by a number of Ladies and Gentlemen of Bastrop, assisted by Mr. JULIUS A. BRAUN, of Galveston, under the direction of J. SCHUTZE, Esq.

## PROGRAMME: PART FIRST:

OVERTURE—Piano Duett.....Mrs. Ballard and J. Shutze.  
 "O Praise the Lord.".....Chorus.  
 TABLEAUX.  
 Borders of the Mississippi—Piano Solo.....Miss. M. Wilbarger.  
 "O, Why Do I Love Thee,"—Solo.....Miss. Thomason.  
 Norma—Piano Duett.....Misses Mary Ann and Ruth Nicholson.  
 TABLEAUX.  
 Murmuring Sea.—Vocal Quartett.  
 The Dream.—Violin Solo.....Mr. J. A. Braun.  
 Gipsy Countess.—Vocal Duett.....Mrs. M. Litton and Mr. Thomason.  
 TABLEAUX.  
 Let Us Sing—Vocal Quartette.....Bastrop Singing Association.  
 Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still.—Piano and Violin.....  
 Miss Mary Ann Nicholson and Mr. Julius A. Braun.

## PART SECOND:

Overture from Zampa—Piano and Violin.. Mecs. J. Shutze and J. A. Braun.  
 TABLEAUX.  
 At Eve.—Vocal Solo.....Mrs. M. Litton.  
 What Are The Wild Waves Saying—Vocal Quartette.  
 Variations Brilliante—Piano Solo.....Miss. Ruth Nicholson.  
 TABLEAUX.  
 DECLAMATION.....COL. B. TRIGG.  
 Jockey Hat and Feather.—Comic Song.....Miss. Alice Thomason.  
 Pilgrim Song—Quartette.....Bastrop Singing Association.  
 Violin Solo.....Mr. J. A. Braun.  
 ANTHEM—Chorus.

Commencement, 7 o'clock. Admission, \$1 00.

J. D. SAYERS, C. L. MORGAN, W. J. CAIN,  
 Committee of Arrangements and Finances.

although I have several times during my life heard of "table moving" and "rapping", I never have seen for myself.

How I remember my first *big* trip! We frequently went to Austin, San Antonio, Lockhart and other towns with my uncle, going in our own carriage. All delightful trips. This time, my father was going to Houston and Galveston, and Uncle and Aunt gave me the trip with him, which was made by stage coach to Hempstead, traveling day and night. These Concord coaches carried nine inside and nine out on top, with the driver on an elevated seat. I, with my father, rode with the driver for a while. He drove four fine horses, always trotting, or now and then breaking into a lope. The "boot" at the back of the coach held trunks, and many of them. We changed horses every ten or twelve miles. The horses were very fine and well trained. When a stop was made at a stage stand, fresh horses were in the harness and waiting. Quickly those which had just come in were unharnessed and the fresh ones rushed out to the coach and backed to their places.

At one stand there was a fine horse, Claybank, and the moment he was loosened from the coach, or was let out of the stable, he began to run. Passengers who were new to the line became excited and cried out, "Your horse is running away." But Claybank finished his run and then pranced back to his place. At Hempstead I, for the first time, rode in a steam car. Not a deluxe car, I assure you, but it was a treat to me.

We reached Houston and were guests of T. W. House,<sup>7</sup> my father's friend. He was a jolly man and his wife a lovely woman, gentle, refined and kind. We were made very welcome. Their house was one of the finest in town. The family was large, consisting of Mary (the eldest, about eighteen, and just home from boarding school), T. W., Jr., John, Charles, Jimmie, George, and a baby, Edward M. Mrs. House took me upstairs to see him. He was sleeping in a very handsome canopied crib.

My visit was delightful. I had one disappointment, though. I had read Shakespeare, and had known there were theatres, and one right here in Houston! Well, of course, I would see a play, but no. Mr. House said, "You are too nice a girl to go to such theatres as they have here."



After a few days we went to Galveston by boat, stopping over at San Jacinto to visit my father's relatives. They were well educated people and very refined—the Thompsons. Here I first caught crabs. I could not be persuaded to eat them. (A few years later I visited the Thompsons again and we had so much fun going boating, fishing and crabbing.) Father and I went on to Galveston in Cousin William Thompson's schooner, and in that city we stopped at a hotel. Here I saw for the first time cockroaches. I was dreadfully frightened of them, being almost afraid to go to bed.

I was then a tall, slender girl, not entirely out of the tomboy stage. At that time dresses were worn very long, touching the ground. I had two lovely dresses, made by my aunt's deft fingers—one, a green and white silk tissue and the other a white and pink of some dainty material. I remember these dresses so well. They were so pretty, and I, poor girl, stepped on them as I walked and tore them. Mrs. Branard had the only millinery and dressmaking establishment in Texas. Thither I went and made one purchase, a broad brimmed, floppy brown straw hat with wide pink and black ribbon around the crown and hanging down the back. In front a narrow pink and black ribbon was fastened to the ribbon at the crown outside the hat. This was called a bridle, and as I walked along, I held the end of the ribbon. I was *all dressed up*.

A friend took us to the Revenue Cutter out in the Gulf and we had lunch there. The Gulf was a wonder to me, and I loved the dashing waves. Then we went back to Houston, and, after a few more days, on home. I was a *much traveled lady*, and my friends were eager to know if I caught any beaux. Alas no! I do not remember even thinking of beaux, for everything was so new and interesting. Mere men were not in my mind!

There lived in Bastrop at this time some remarkable people, and some curious ones. George Washington Jones<sup>8</sup> was the most outstanding figure not only in Bastrop County but in the state. He was a lawyer of great ability and a forceful speaker. When Wash Jones was trying a case in court, school would not keep. Every boy went to the courthouse. I remember on one occasion the Girls School did not keep either. It was the trial of the murderer of Charles Kirk.

Colonel Jones was an old friend of our family, and I have sat and listened to many of his and uncle's conversations. Unfortunately he was addicted to drink—the spree kind. Colonel Jones was Lieutenant Governor of the State in the Sixties. He ran for Governor on the Greenback Ticket but was defeated.

Another citizen well worth mentioning was Josiah Wilbarger. He came to Texas from Missouri in 1827. He first settled in Matagorda, but decided to go to Bastrop County and locate his headright, leaving his young wife and babe in Matagorda. As soon as he had erected a log house and placed around it a stockade as a protection against hostile Indians, he wrote for his wife to come. She has often told me of the trip from Matagorda to Bastrop.

Wilbarger sent to meet her a famous Indian fighter, one who knew well the treacherous red men. They made the journey on horseback, she with the baby in her lap, and a feather-bed tied on the back of the saddle, carpet bag on saddle horn. I do not know if they had a pack horse, but I think not. Everything was brought from the coast to the interior by ox wagon. There was scarcely a house in that part of Texas. They traveled by day following a trail as there were no roads, mostly prairie. The guide rode well ahead and seldom spoke when near. The young woman felt that she was not being well treated and was angry. Many times the guide was out of sight. The trip lasted several days as they were obliged to ride slowly. On one occasion the guide who had been riding ahead rode back and said to the lady, "Dismount and go into that thicket and *do not let the baby cry.*" She could only obey. On asking why, he said "Bears about." He led her horse into the bushes and made him fast, then rode away. An hour or so later he returned and told her he had seen signs of hostile Indians. He had followed the trail until he knew they were safe. Now they could go on.

Finally they reached her new home, several miles north of the town of Bastrop. Her husband was not at home and there was no food. Later he came in with a body of hunters, and the hungry men asked her to prepare food. A fire was soon blazing in the huge fireplace, and this practical pioneer woman hung the iron pot on the hook over the coals and, cutting up the venison and bear meat, soon had it boiling, sending out savory odors. No bread was served,

only meat. They called the lean part of the bear meat "bread."

This is a good place to relate the story of Josiah Wilbarger's tragedy. In August 1833, Mr. Wilbarger went up to Reuben Hornsby's house, nine miles below the city of Austin, and spent the night. Next day, in the company of Christian, Strother, Standifer and Haynie he rode out in a Northwest direction to look at the country. On Walnut Creek, five or six miles below Austin, they saw an Indian who ran away. They gave chase, but later abandoned it. The men thought this a good place and time for lunch, and dismounting, let the horses graze. Wilbarger urged the men to keep the horses beside them, and really opposed lunching at that place. His advice was not heeded. While eating their lunch provided by the hospitable Mrs. Hornsby, they were fired upon by Indians. Strother was mortally wounded. Christian's thigh was broken. Wilbarger went to his assistance and received an arrow in his leg, another in his hip and then was wounded in the other leg. Three of the party ran to the horses which were grazing nearby, and fled for their lives. Wilbarger stumbled after them begging to be taken up behind one of them. He received a wound in the neck by a ball and fell as if dead. The three men escaped.

The Indians appeared and began their bloody work, stripping and scalping their victims. Wilbarger, more dead than alive, was stripped and the scalp torn from his head. The Indians left Wilbarger for dead, but cut the throats of Strother and Christian. Late in the evening Wilbarger dragged himself to a pool of water and lay in it for hours, numb with cold. He crawled to dry ground and fell asleep.<sup>9</sup> Green flies had blown his skull while he slept. He made several efforts to crawl to the Hornsby's, but after a few yards he became exhausted and gave up, suffering intensely from the cold. He was found next day by friends.

It came about in this way. When Haynie and Standifer had escaped and reached the Hornsby's, they reported Wilbarger as dead, but Mrs. Hornsby had a dream, so vivid that she aroused her husband telling him that she saw Wilbarger alive. Her husband thought it was only a dream, but she fell into troubled sleep and had the same dream. She woke her husband and insisted that he go to rescue Wilbarger. She was so persistent that her husband

finally yielded, and woke the household. Preparations were hastily made and the men started on horseback to the scene of yesterday's disaster. Mrs. Wilbarger gave them sheets to cover the dead, and a blanket for Wilbarger, also a bottle of milk and some spirits.

The relief party consisting of Joseph Rogers, Reuben Hornsby, a lad of about fourteen, a man by the name of Miller, John Walters and others on arriving at the spot saw leaning against a tree what they supposed to be an Indian. Rogers cried out, "Here they are, boys," and leveled his gun. Wilbarger cried, "Don't shoot, it is Wilbarger." His poor nude body, blood covered, his bleeding scalp, gave him the appearance of the red man. Tenderly his friends wrapped him in the blanket, after giving him nourishment, and placed him on young Hornsby's horse, the youth holding him on.

Arriving at Hornsby's home, he was taken care of by the kind woman whose dream had saved his life. When able to travel he was taken to his home. He lived more than eleven years after that. The skull never healed. His wife told me that she cut up a black silk dress for the purpose of making skull caps for her husband. He made one trip to New Orleans and his head was trepanned, but to no avail. Finally the brain became exposed and death in mercy relieved him. He left a wife and five children.

At this early date in Texas History, there were no ministers of the gospel and no officer who might legally perform a marriage ceremony. The Catholic priests in the Missions in San Antonio were busy converting the Indians, and seldom left their Mission homes. Young men had come to Texas. Young women also had come. Love is the same everywhere, and wooing was done as ardently under the starlit skies of Texas as in the towns and cities of the East and South. A fine code of honour pervaded this embryo State, and so it came about that marriage by contract was legalized. This I have from a pioneer, Mrs. Campbell Taylor: "Marriage contracts were drawn up in writing, signed by the contracting parties and two witnesses, and were as binding as though it were a license. Sometimes, it would be two or three years before a priest could be secured to perform the marriage ceremony." This pioneer woman, Mrs. Campbell Taylor, was but a child when contract marriages were in vogue. She was married July 4th, 1837.

and hers was the second marriage license issued in Bastrop County. The first was that of her step-sister, Candice Thompson, to David Halderman, a merchant, whose brother she married the following July. Later she became a widow and married Campbell Taylor. They lived to a great age.

Mrs. Wilbarger also told me an interesting story of contract marriages. One wedding feast was held in a house on the bank of the Colorado in the Southern part of town. This house, a two story frame with a room below and above, was meeting house, court house and dance hall. On one occasion, a few years after Mrs. Wilbarger had her strange journey from the coast, told of previously, a priest came over from one of the Missions. Word had been sent out to all surrounding country of his coming, and as night came on people on foot, in ox wagons, and on horseback came wending their way to the frame house on the Colorado's banks. The upper room was lit by tallow candles in tin holders hung on the walls. A rough wooden bench nailed to the walls extended around the room. Twenty-five couples presented themselves for marriage. Quite a number were those who had been united by contract. Children born in contract marriage were legitimate, and their children were with them. The good priest solemnly read the religious service of his church. After the twenty-five couples had made and renewed vows, the company "made a night of it"—the good padre as jolly as any one. Indians prowled the night, and it was not safe to return home until sunup.

Bastrop owned two small cannons that were only fired when danger was near. In the Southern part of town was a stout stockade consisting of heavy logs implanted in the ground with loop holes through which guns might be pointed. This was the place of refuge when an Indian alarm was given.

One afternoon late a man rode hastily into town fording the river on the West. He proclaimed loudly, "The river bottom West of the Colorado is full of Indians." The cannons were fired. Women and children were hurried to the stockade with a few old men left to protect them. All the men of the town armed with rifles and pistols went to the river, crossed over and found only stumps of trees which the man had taken for Indians. In about the fifties,

one of the cannons exploded when it was being fired for a Fourth of July celebration. What became of the other I never knew.

The Bastrop Military Institute opened favorably, and the Girls' School which was upstairs had the benefit of the teaching of the Bastrop Military Institute professors, which was fine.<sup>10</sup> Col. R. T. P. Allen was in charge. He was a West Pointer, rather small, very quick and alert. The cadets loved and honored him, but were in the habit of calling him "Raring Tearing Pitching Allen" behind his back. He was a Methodist minister, very devout. His wife, known as Aunt Jule, called her husband "old man."

Major Robert Allen, their son, was very unpopular. He had a way of finding out all the mischief and pranks, and the boys disliked him, but he was a wonderful teacher and mathematics became a delight under his leadership.

We were a gay, happy lot of young folks and no one heeded the cloud rising and approaching. In our set there were Laura Sims, Lizzie Turner, Mary Esters, Lou Caldwell from near Webberville, and myself. There were beaux aplenty for the girls. The cadets were not permitted to visit except on Friday nights, Saturday and Sunday. What a fine lot of young men there were; Bill Ryan, Rob John, Charles Caldwell, Walter Caldwell, Charles Morgan, Joe Sayers, Billy Sayers, Allen Killingsworth, Tom Hill, Cap Hill, Bob Hill and others. We had many parties and candy pullings. We usually entertained our beaux at home. Conversation was not an art by any means but we talked. Some of us were pretty good pianists and could sing as nature taught us.

We young folks were regular church goers; in fact, most people went to church. The Methodist church was the largest. Good preachers were rotated in those days, but we had Josiah Whipple, a pioneer, and Father Haynie. Quarterly meetings were events, for then the Presiding Elder came and the sacrament was administered. Crowds came. Aunt belonged to the Church of England and held her faith steadfast, but attended and supported the Methodist church. Uncle was reared Dutch Reform, but rather leaned to Universalism. He was moral and upright, and truly a good man. Father was reared a Presbyterian, but did not unite with any denomination until late in life, when, through the in-

fluence of friends, he was received into the Episcopal church. He was a good man; no one ever knew of his many acts of kindness. "Uncle Jimmy" was greatly beloved throughout the State.

I was fourteen or fifteen years of age when there was an Episcopal service in Bastrop. Few knew anything of the service, and at the first meetings, which were held in the Methodist church, it was amusing—to say the least—to watch the efforts of some of the young people trying to follow the service. They knelt too long or arose from their knees too soon, and dropped quickly back. I was later organist for both the Methodist church and the Episcopal church. The former held three Sunday services per month, and the latter held one service, both churches using the Methodist building. Later, a very pretty Episcopal church was built. There were but few Presbyterians. They had a frame two-story building, the first floor of which was used as a church and the second floor as Masonic rooms. Father Renick came once or twice a month to preach. During a severe thunder storm this building was struck by lightning and burned. Baptists were few, but later became strong and built a church. There were a few Catholics and Lutherans in Bastrop. The Catholics built later, but the Lutherans grew less and less and became absorbed in the Methodist church. Christian Scientists never took root there.

After a year of combination school, the Carmers left The Academy, and went to Chapel Hill to take charge of the Chapel Hill Female College. I think it was about 1856 or 1857. Bastrop Military Institute had increased its numbers. Young men from other States came, and soon more than one hundred young men were cadets—the finest young men in the country.

Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Orgain, who had been teaching in Hemphill's Prairie, came to town and opened a mixed school. My sister Ruth went to this school, and to no other. Mrs. Orgain taught for years and died at the age of ninety-three.

My school days ended with the going of the Carmers—and I was only fourteen, but Aunt saw to it that I was not idle. I had private lessons, history and astronomy, from Col. Allen. Major Robert Allen was engaged to give myself and my friend, Laura Sims, private lessons in mathematics. Laura was our town belle.



She led the military boys a pretty dance, young as she was. Laura and I were ever the best of friends, although not alike. Laura always had beaux. She was engaged to Tom A. Hill and later to Billie Ryan, and I do not know how many others, while I wasn't even asked at all.

The mathematics lessons turned out to be a courtship affair, and the Major soon won the heart of my friend, Laura. We girls were sweet sixteen, the Major fifteen years older.

June commencement days were over and there was a wedding. I was Laura's first bridesmaid. I remember that we all, including the bride, wore white organdy, full double skirt, very wide hem, white sash, white satin shoes and wreaths on our heads. The bridal couple went to Galveston the next day, and the bridesmaids and groomsmen went with them for some twenty miles. We went in carriages and had lunch under the trees by a rippling stream, then bid them farewell and returned home.

The Bastrop Military Institute flourished and oh! what a good time we girls had Friday nights, Saturdays and Sundays. At no other time were the cadets allowed out. We had special beaux. Perhaps I was fickle; no one was "special" for long. When I was seventeen my aunt gave me a "coming out" party. I had already been out.

During the time of The Bastrop Military Institute, Sam Houston was elected Governor.<sup>11</sup> My brother, Billy, Mr. Renick, Mary Millett and myself went to Austin to the inauguration, driving up in our carriage one day, attending the ceremonies the next day and the ball at night in the old Capitol building which afterward burned. We danced until 4:00 A.M., went to the house of a friend and slept an hour or so, then drove home, none the worse for the dissipation.

Mary Millett wore a white tarleton dress, a skirt all puffs caught down in places with white bugle beads, low neck and short sleeves. Her long black hair was braided across the front in a broad braid of twelve or more strands and caught back over her ears with a knot in back. My dress was blue tarleton, double skirt, white silk lace bertha, low neck and short sleeves.

Sam Houston was a courtly gentleman. The cadets loved and



respected him. In speaking of him they called him "Governor." His sons were educated at The Bastrop Military Institute. Once a month the Governor visited The Bastrop Military Institute. He usually stayed at my father's house.

Bastrop County was noted for its fine farms and plantations, and it was ever a delight to visit our friends in the country. To the East above twelve miles were the Hills. South of town five or ten miles across the river lived the Hubbards, Moores, Wiley Hills, Prices and Triggs, all fine houses with good "quarters." Across the river South of town was always called "Hills' Prairie," and the name has been handed down. West of town across the river was "Hemphill Prairie." Four Hemphill brothers had farms there. Also West of town, fifteen miles, were the Caldwells, Popes and Washingtons. Across Piney Creek to the North lived the Olivers, Chambers, and Coulsons.

The Middleton House was an old fashioned one, with huge fireplace, and in the winter great log fires were kept going. The doors were never closed, and one could be burning up on one side and freezing on the other. It seemed a custom in plantation houses to never close the outside doors.

The T. B. J. Hill plantation boasted a real mansion. When we visited this place, we no sooner greeted the folks in the house than we were off to the "quarters" to visit our colored friends—old mammies and babies. The "quarters" on the Hill place were most comfortable and well kept. On moonlight nights the little darkies trooped up to the yard of the big house and danced for us. What a happy lot they were, not burdened with clothes! One little shirt or apron sufficed.

Many plantation homes had kitchens quite a distance from the house, and I remember big open fireplaces, skillets, spiders, pots and pothooks—hospitable homes all. What fun we girls had riding all over the plantations with the boys, riding anything. If there were not enough horses to go around, mules would do.

I made many visits to most of these plantation homes. I was full of fun, played the piano well, and sang a hundred or more songs. There was great joy in the "quarters" when word went out "Miss Mollie has come." At night I played and sang—played dance

tunes and jigs, as well as the classics. I sang love songs. Also such songs as "Old Woman all Skin and Bones," "Fine Old Irish Gentleman," and the like. Darkies crowded the doors and windows. There were so many maids to wait on us, we never thought of going to the water bucket on the gallery shelf. A "darkie" was always at hand to bring the dipper.

If there were sick negroes in the "quarters" they got every attention. I have gotten up in the middle of the night with my friend, Lou Caldwell, visited sick darkies and dosed them.

It seemed quite natural for darkies to "take" things. On the Wiley Hill plantation the burying ground was very near the house in a grove of live oak trees. At hog killing time, the slaughtered hogs were hung up over night in the graveyard. A darkie did not dare enter that ghostly spot, no matter how he longed for a pork chop or a side of bacon. Bless the old slaves, I say!

Greatly have I disgressed—and now back to The Bastrop Military Institute and that period of time. It was most interesting to see the boys at drill, and we girls had no end of fun watching the awkward squads. It was fun, too, to go to Aunt Jule's for a candy pulling. She was Colonel Allen's wife and loved to get us young people together for some form of entertainment.

And at Commencement—my, what fun! Parents came from far and near and every family in town played host. Commencement exercises were held in the Methodist church. The Governor of the State was always present. How joyous and glad we were, and yet drawing nearer and nearer was a threatening cloud. The last Commencement, as the threatening cloud broke upon us, and breaking broke up the school, was for those days a brilliant affair. For one week the little town was in gala attire. Exercises were held in The Academy which had been converted into The Military Institute. Oral examinations were conducted daily. Addresses were in order. For the most part, addresses were read from a beribboned paper—think of it!! One cadet, Bob John of Galveston, after reading his address walked down from the platform and gave me his paper—daintily was it tied with blue ribbon.

After the exercises, the Commencement proper was held in the Methodist Church, as I have said before. The cadets in uniform,

blue and much brass buttoned, filed into the church taking the front pews. A body-guard escorted the Governor to a large arm-chair at the front. Graduates were seated on the right of the chancel, a choir of girls on the left, I as leader. On this occasion, as I arose to take my place at the piano, my handkerchief fell to the floor. The Governor arose quickly, picked up the bit of lace and with a courtly bow, presented it to me. Needless to say, I kept that bit of lace as a souvenir.

The Governor addressed the graduates, presented diplomas, greeted his friends and later dined with the Colonel. In the afternoon there was an exhibition drill—cadets in full military uniform, high military hats with drooping white plumes. Governor Houston was pleased as these young men—the flowers of Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana—passed in review, a very different band to that of the sturdy men of San Jacinto.

After the Carners left, there was no music teacher in Bastrop. I had had the best music instruction to be had at the time. Some of the mothers asked me to teach their daughters. I was delighted. All my life I had desired to teach, and here was the opportunity. I eagerly assented, and gave three hour-lessons per week at \$5.00 per month. I was on my way to a fortune, and I liked the work. Southern women, and particularly girls, were not supposed to earn money. My uncle was a proud man and, although born in the North of Dutch parents, he had lived in the South most of his life, and was an aristocrat of the deepest dye. He said little, but one noted his displeasure; it was more a hurt, that a girl under his care should earn money. One day he called me to him and said, "What are you going to do with your money?" I was a bit puzzled—hadn't thought of that part; it was just the fun of teaching. After a long hesitation, I said, "Buy me a nigger and a watch." He smiled, and for quite a long time said no more. He was a good provider. His store was open to us. We got what we wanted; he denied us very little. He took us on many fine trips in our carriage. One day he came home with a very beautiful watch and chain and a pin—the latter, the one with the blue enamel which I sometimes wear now, and presented them to me. Not long after he came home with a little six year old nigger boy, Ike, and gave him to me, saying

"You have your nigger and your watch; you must not teach any more." I did not.<sup>12</sup>

In September of the following year The Institute opened well. Barracks were crowded and the boarding home was overflowing. But the thunder of war and the lightning thereof was heard and seen. Secession of the Southern states came as a flash of lightning. In the latter part of 1859 Governor Houston and Major Cave, Secretary of State, refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy, and they were deposed. Lieutenant Governor Clark became Governor. One month after Clark became Governor war broke out.

The cadets of Bastrop Military Institute were in demand as drill masters throughout the State. The Institute itself was now but a handfull—only the younger boys were left at their desks. Volunteer military companies were organizing everywhere. Men and boys were enlisting for the Southern cause.

Colonel Wash Jones of Bastrop raised a volunteer company of Bastrop boys. All was excitement and enthusiasm. War did not appear the hideous monster we knew later. Uncle Crocheron was a Union man and could not believe the Union would be disrupted, but when secession became a certainty, he threw his influence on the side of the South and gave liberally of his means. My brother, William, just of age and having cast his first vote, believed in the Union, but he, too, a true Southerner, gave to the South—himself. He was among the first volunteers.

On a never to be forgotten day the Bastrop volunteers, under the command of Colonel Wash Jones, were drawn up in formation on the campus of The Military Institute. On the gallery of The Institute was a group of citizens—men, women, and children with fire and enthusiasm on every face. I, Mary Ann Nicholson, stepped to the front bearing a beautiful Confederate flag, and made a speech of which I now recall only the words, "Liberty or death." I presented the flag to Colonel Jones in the name of the ladies of Bastrop. Colonel Jones received the flag in the name of the volunteers. His speech was such as only Wash Jones could make. Mrs. Jones told me afterwards that the Colonel shed tears when I presented that flag. He knew what war meant. I did not. Colonel

Jones had known me from babyhood. He was ever my friend.

The following is a copy of a newspaper article written at this time by Colonel Allen. It is pasted in my red scrap book:

"Progress of the Rousement"

The 15th of June was a Gala day in Bastrop. The beauty and chivalry of the country was assembled in the College Campus on the occasion of the presentation by the ladies of a beautiful Confederate flag to the Company commanded by Captain C. W. Jones. The presentation address was made by Miss Mary Ann Nicholson. It was chaste, eloquent and soul-stirring. The flag was received by Captain Jones in behalf of the Company, in one of his happiest efforts, as with flashing eye and glowing countenance he recited the story of our wrongs and told of the high resolve and stern purpose to do or die in defense of our sacred rights. Tears were shed, tears of patriotic devotion, and many there again placed their all on the altar of their country's weal.

Looking around that day on the galaxy of beauty filling the College porches and the gallant Company below in order of battle, with glowing countenance and bounding hearts, the cavalry of Captain Gillespie drawn up in the rear; when I saw this sea of upturned faces, all exhibiting the same patriotic purpose, even to die in the defense of liberty, I could not but feel proud of Bastrop, fully confident that that gallant Company would bear that proud banner, under their brave Captain's lead in the very forefront of the conflict on the field of battle, nor ever suffer a single stain on its bright folds. Was not this, Mr. Editor, one among a thousand fitting responses to the tyrant's command to disperse?

(Col.) R. T. P. Allen

A call was made for men to cross the Mississippi. More than one hundred young men of Bastrop and Travis County volunteered and were ordered to meet in Houston for organization. Preparations were rushed for the war might end ere these brave men, the flower of Bastrop and Travis Counties, could reach the seat of fighting. The final day came. These boys of ours were drawn up in line on Main Street and mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts filed down the line, grasping the hands that were soon to know only the bridle rein, the musket and sixshooter. Now the fires of

enthusiasm were extinguished by tears. Now, indeed, a first realization of what war meant expressed itself in sobs. Night came on. The stage was due at midnight.

In our home the evening meal was eaten in almost death-like silence. Was the Dark Angel even then hovering over that simple household?

This is the picture of the last evening. By the East window of the long wide hall sat my aunt in her Boston rocker, Uncle, now sitting outside on the gallery with his pipe, now inside in his great rocker. We girls, Ruth and I, trying to be cheerful but failing utterly. On the lounge lay brother William in traveling clothes. His valise, packed to bursting, stood waiting by the front door. The lamp on the table seemed unsteady, wavering. Tears in my eyes, perhaps? Conversation started, then broke off. Aunt's hands were busy with her needlework, then lying idle in her lap. The clock ticked louder and louder nearing the hour of eleven, twelve. Impulsively, I picked up the scissors from Aunt's work basket, and going to the lounge where my brother lay I clipped off a lock of his hair. Quickly he turned and sadly smiled.

Now is heard the sound of the stage horn as the lumbering coach and four climbs the bank of the river and enters the town. Hearts beat fast, a choking sensation constricts the throat. Words and kisses of goodbye. The stage is at the gate, a last look into his eyes and the soldier brother is gone. Many of the boys went by private conveyances for the coach only held nine inside and nine out. My father, though too old for service, had volunteered. He joined my brother later in Houston.

In that city gathered boys from other towns, and soon John A. Wharton organized and became a member of the noble Eighth Texas Cavalry—better known as "Terry's Texas Rangers," eleven hundred strong. On the death of Colonel B. F. Terry, Wharton was elected Colonel of the regiment. Finally he became Major General with command of all cavalry West of the Mississippi.

On foot this regiment marched through the swamps of Louisiana and Mississippi, eager and uncomplaining, fearing the war would end before they reached Virginia. Finally, crossing the Mississippi, they were furnished horses, and instead of Virginia,

they were ordered to Tennessee. Most of the Texas boys were fine horsemen.

When they reached Murfreesboro, the Rangers went into camp. An epidemic of measles broke out and many died. Travis County and Bastrop men were in Company D under the command of Captain Ferg Kyle. My father had become quite lame and was judged unfit for military service. He was nurse and comforter in Company D. When the regiment was ready for active service, he was paroled and came home.

The history of Terry's Texas Rangers had been written. These men were noted for their bravery and daring. One of the Confederate Generals remarked, "I rest easy when the Rangers are between me and the enemy."

Colonel Green raised a Brigade of Texans at the time the Rangers were organized. With this Brigade went Joe Sayers of Bastrop. He rose to the position of Major, distinguished himself at Albuquerque, captured a battery at Val Verde, was wounded and returned home at the close of the war, bringing with him the guns.

Captain Petty of Bastrop took a Company down into Louisiana. This Company carried the flag that I had presented to the first volunteers. When the war was over, the flag was returned to me, faded, torn, a rag, and with it a poem. Captain Petty was killed in Louisiana, and the poem was lost.

Brother Billy was in constant service through the four years. He received one slight wound and had three horses killed under him. The last year of the war he drew a furlough. He had a much loved friend, a married man, and that this friend might be with his wife and children, Billy gave him the furlough, feeling that he, himself, would be up for furlough the next time.

The Southern army was retreating, the Rangers covering the retreat. Near Rome, Georgia, while fighting and retreating, a shot from the enemy pierced Billy's left side. He handed his pistols to one of the boys, saying, "I am shot, boys," and rode off into the woods. This was October 14th, 1864. At night a riderless horse came into camp. When morning dawned, friends went forth in search of the rider, and found him sitting against a tree. Death



had come quickly and there had been no struggle.

They wrapped him in his blanket and buried him there in the field of a Mr. Wragg, and the Rangers went on, leaving the lonely grave of the comrade they loved. He gave his life for his friend. The men who returned when the cruel war was over were accustomed to say at all reunions, "Billy Nicholson, brave as a lion, gentle as a woman."

In June, 1861, Southern ports were blockaded. The United States took Galveston, but the port remained blockaded. Frank Lubbock was elected Governor of Texas.<sup>13</sup> All males between eighteen and forty-five years of age entered the service. The Governor suggested the age be sixteen years and upward. Property of Union men was confiscated. In July, 1863, General Sam Houston died. In this year, Lincoln was shot. At the close of the war, President Johnson appointed A. J. Hamilton<sup>14</sup> Provisional Governor of Texas.

## PART II



### COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

During the Civil War, while the young men were all gone, the women induced their husbands to attend parties and play games. Merry times we had! Hope was strong. The war would soon be over. We women gave concerts, and arranged tableaux to raise money for our Southern boys so illy clad. One tableaux is worth mentioning. It was given next to the last year of the war in the upper auditorium of The Academy. The Academy was never painted inside—just age darkened pine. We wished to use the whole of the long platform. I had a good supply of household linen from my English home. Sheets I tacked on the wall back of the stage; it was a task. In John Johnson's old store we found a bolt of black net; this we put in front of the stage. The tableaux were good. At the close of the performance, a little girl stepped to the front of the stage and a call was made for money for soldiers. Well, people almost fell over each other in order to drop in contributions. The basket overflowed several times—but, alas! it was Confederate money, and almost worthless. The next night we repeated the entertainment—our audience at this time, negroes; and a packed house. This night, too, the basket was overflowing, and there was much weeping as the black mammies thought of their "white chilluns" so far away. Black mammies, you were true! Carpets were taken up and shaped into blankets. We made bandages. We scraped lint. We were glad to pay \$1.00 per yard for calico, and my! the pains we took to make our dresses up. Uncle traded with England through Mexico via San Antonio and Matamoras, so we always had coffee, sugar, etc.

Our concerts meant much work. I was the leader in music, having a good voice and being a good pianist. I was also leader of the Church music, for they had no instrument at that time. My friend, Kate Hall, who visited me often, also played well and helped with the music whenever she was with me, as did her friend, Tibbie Dimon, who later married a Jew, Gabe Friedberger, and moved to Matamoras, Mexico.

Kate was an only child, three years my junior, who had often visited me at aunt's when we were children. (Her father was of the Sawyer, Risher and Hall Stage Coach Company of Texas.) We three—Kate, sister Ruth and I—played at almost everything—walking picket fences, housekeeping in the stable loft among the fodder.

The second year of the War Kate's health that was not good began to grow rapidly worse. The white plague had set its seal upon her. Ignorance, what a curse thou art! It was thought that consumption was only hereditary, that it was impossible to contract it. When Kate grew worse she begged me to stay with her at night, saying she slept better if I was with her. I spent many nights with her in my arms in a close room. In October 1863, she died.

I had always been very strong—my uncle said, "like a boy." In 1864, my health had failed so that I could hardly speak. My singing voice was gone. "Take her to Havana, away from Texas Northers," the doctor said. At once my uncle began to prepare for this trip. Uncle bought much cotton for the English market (heretofore he had been selling to New Braunfels merchants), so the trip could be for business as well. (I recall that one day he brought home a good sized box of gold doubloons, hexagon in shape. He emptied the shining heap on the floor and we girls tossed the glittering bits over and over.) Now back to my story. Summer waned, and I grew worse instead of better. As I look back now, I see that Fate, or some power was leading me to the greatest happiness of my life, and also to the most crushing sorrow.

The following is taken from my diary: "November 7, 1864. Leaving for Mexico—an early start. Four persons, carriage and our own horses, Zephyr and Wabun. A great ambulance, four

strong mules, driver Captain Irving. Made fifteen miles. Spent night with friends at Cedar Creek. Nov. 8 Made 20 miles and camped beside a stream. (Twenty ox wagons loaded with cotton by my uncle had four days' start.) Sister and self slept in ambulance, uncle and aunt underneath in carriage. Coyotes howling, owls hooting. Many cotton wagons on road. We manage to camp each night near wagon camp. Therein safety lies. Rivers are forded. All one day in chapperell, so thick, so thorny a rabbit would find difficulty in getting through. A day among prickly pears, eight and ten feet tall in full bloom. Camped near stream or water hole. Cooking simple affair. Bacon hung before fire, biscuits baked in covered spiders or skillets, coffee or tea boiled over coals. One night no running water anywhere. Glad to find water hole, muddy though it was."

Had the germs and bugs of today been around we would have died of typhoid fever. Imagine whole days under a November sky out on the open plains. One day we saw a wonderful mirage—water, trees, houses; a sun dog in the sky. Nights, and myriads of stars, a great moon coming up from the East, horses grazing and distant voices in wagon camps, reading and writing by moonlight, and the howling of coyotes over and anon. No sooner had camp broken in the morning than these creatures swooped down and fought each other for stray scraps. Two weeks we followed the trail through chapperell and cacti over endless plains. One night there were not sticks enough to make a fire, so bunches of dry grass were used, but it was a sorry fire for cooking.

Brownsville, a mere village with pretty irrigated gardens, was a welcome sight. As we crossed the Rio Grande to Matamoras on a flat boat we saw how drinking water was provided for both Brownsville and Matamoras. A Mexican with a rope around his body, the rope attached to a large barrel, waded into the river, the barrel was filled, bung hole securely closed, and the Mexican waded out and trudged along the road crying "aqua, aqua." Each house in Matamoras had a large barrel open at one end. This was filled and stood in a corner of the kitchen. That was the drinking water. Think of it! An ice man was a rare thing. We drank water which was obtained and delivered as above described, and strange

to say we did not die. Matamoras City is one mile from the river.

We were greeted by our old girlhood friend, Tibbie, and her husband, Gabe Friedberger, and in the old Camina home got two rooms for a few days. The house was stone and very old, and the outer walls had many bullet marks on them. For many years there had been revolutions. Most houses were built right on the street with a balcony on the second story. Mrs. Camina was a widow with two daughters, Ynoz and Panchita who were very pretty, especially Ynoz. All day the ladies lounged about in negligee, doing a bit of drawn work, no books, no reading. In the afternoon they dressed exquisitely and sat on the balcony to be looked at, and many were the passersby to look. Soldiers from Brownsville passed and repassed, and there were flirtations a plenty. At night, with their ever watchful duenna, the young ladies walked on the plaza.

The day after our arrival sister and I bought in a French shop some very beautiful hats. Oh, how the Camina girls admired those hats putting them on and parading before the mirror, and how they despised their mantillas.

The first mail coming in from Texas brought letters telling of the death of our loved brother. He was killed October 14th, and we did not know of it until November, so slow were the mails. The shock was too much for me, and I was very ill. A physician was called in and our Cuban trip was abandoned. Uncle rented a house and also a store and opened up a business in Matamoras.

An old Mexican town, Matamoras was now transformed into a teeming city. The Civil War in the United States was raging, and all Southern ports blockaded, and this was now the only outlet. "Roca de Rio" a mile down the Rio Grande was the only port of entry available. People from every part of the globe were found in Matamoras, buying, selling, cheating and robbing. Natives moved out of their homes into "jacals," renting them at exorbitant prices.

From a Spaniard, Jose Solernou, uncle rented part of his house, two rooms and a kitchenette, with brick floors and iron barred windows. The kitchenette had a high stone fireplace. For these quarters we paid \$90.00 good money per month. Our laundry cost us \$3.00 per dozen.

We met some agreeable Mexican families. A schoolmate had married a Mexican, Mariano Treveno, and we were welcome in their home. The Garcias came to see us, and the Garcia sons. The Frances family entertained us. Our landlady was kind. One night, she sent us a dish of tamales. We had never before seen this favorite Mexican dish, and looked askance at the shuck-covered things. Later, we walked out and quietly dropped them in the street. However, we learned to like both tamales and tortillas. It was interesting to see the Mexican women preparing the corn for the latter.

Senora Solernou, our landlady, was not Mexican but pure Spanish. One day when we were visiting her, aunt admired a beautiful silken scarf. It was the custom of these people to say, "para su service" (at your service) when one admired anything. Aunt was greatly embarrassed and felt she could not accept the scarf, and by shaking her head and saying "no, no," tried to tell Senora Solernou that she could not accept it. We later found that it was not intended that she accept.

Ysidero Solernou, the young nephew, had recently arrived from Andalusia, Spain, and wished to learn English. We girls wanted to learn Spanish. It was easily arranged. We taught Ysidero; he taught us. He had perfect manners, and we learned to like him as a brother. I studied guitar with a Mexican girl.

Maximillian was Emperor and Carlotta a beautiful Empress, beloved by the better class. In January, General Mejia and the Imperial troops were outside the city of Matamoras.<sup>15</sup> Cortina and his bands were here, there and everywhere. When Mejia, a small Mexican and Indian mixture, entered the city, Brownsville fired a salute of twenty-one guns.

The Catholic Cathedral was quite near us, as was the Plaza. No Protestant services were allowed in Mexico. We sometimes went to church with Senora Solernou—Dona Manuelita, we called her. She was very devout, but we found out later she had a bad temper and a jealous nature. We enjoyed long drives, but were warned never to go far on the Boca road. A Mexican would kill for the possession of a horse. We drove often to the ferry landing opposite Brownsville, and sat in the carriage while uncle went over on the

boat to get the mail. The rainy season set in and the mud was terrible. We could not get the carriage out for a month. The street in front of our house was a loblolly of mud. One day a little old lady, Madame Butler, attempted to cross the street, and got stuck in the mud and had to be rescued by Ysidero.

The Plaza was beautiful. Orange trees were in bloom and a magnificent band played at night. In fine weather crowds assembled. Senoritas were there with their watchful mothers or duennas. Never with young men. Often little fan flirtations would go on. We American girls with our young men escorts were the envy of our Mexican girl friends.

With the wonderful music, wonderful flowers and moonlit nights it was not strange that a bit of romance came into my life. "moonlight, music, love and flowers," ran the old song I used to sing. Now it was a reality. A young Englishman, Mr. William McDowall, from London was buying cotton and my uncle from Texas was selling cotton—so it all began on the Plaza in the moonlight, and other evenings at home reading Spanish and playing chess. A few years passed and there was a wedding, and a Texas country girl was transplanted to a London home.

In April there was great excitement. General Mejia and his troops were camped on the Plaza. There was some shooting between the Imperial soldiers and Cortina's men and some killing. It was time to go home. A revolution was pending. We often went over near the church to see the soldiers at Mass. Mejia and a priest stood on the church steps and the soldiers knelt in the Plaza. Officers began pressing horses into service, and alas! ours were taken. Zephyr cut up in a terrible way. He never did like Mexicans, so he was returned to the stable and uncle at once brought him into our back yard. Wabun was more docile and quietly submitted to the Mexican soldiers. We were preparing to go home. April had passed and May 1st arrived. Mr. McDowall, a linguist of note and perfectly acquainted with Mexican customs, offered to go with uncle to headquarters and make an effort to get our horses. He succeeded, and Wabun was also stabled in our back yard.

Packing up hastily was done. Uncle had already shipped to the



American side of the Rio Grande a lot of goods. Our packing done, we put the horses to our carriage. A new ambulance, with four mules and a driver had been secured some days before, and these went with us to Brownsville. We were not there too soon, for fighting had begun in Matamoras. We heard the guns plainly. We stopped with our friends, the Comptons, of Brenham, Texas, a day or so. There we heard of the downfall of the Confederacy and the close of the war.

On May 5th we turned our faces homeward. The dear horses knew they were on the road home, and pulled with a will. We made good time. The third night out we camped at King's ranch.<sup>16</sup> There we left the ambulance to come on slowly while we pushed on. We felt that danger lurked. Soldiers from the North and the South were pouring into West Texas for the purpose of plundering. We made the trip in one week. The ambulance arrived a few days later, and the wagons with goods arrived safely, but none too soon. The Comptons and others started home only a few days after our leaving. They were plundered by roving bands of deserters and ex-soldiers. The Comptons arrived in Brenham with absolutely nothing but the clothes on their backs. Their goods and merchandise of all kinds were taken, carried off and destroyed. These were terrible times on the plains of Texas.

Our home was in perfect order. It had been taken care of by our black servants, Violet, Harry and Ike. We took up life again, but there was now a "vacant chair." Billy slept in a soldier's grave.

Fate, or some power had sent me on the way to the greatest happiness. The six months' stay in Matamoras and the companionship of the young Englishman, William McDowall, a man of fine education and a well bred gentleman, had made an impression on a maiden's heart which was to lead to perfect happiness. There was no voice to warn of the "Dark-robed One" waiting to crush that happiness and change a whole life.

Before this happiness was to be accomplished however, other interests intervened. In 1866, the year following our stay in Matamoras, my uncle, Henry Crocheron, left for New York taking with him my sister Ruth and me. The trip began on July 8th, and was a wonderful experience for two Texas girls.

We left Bastrop at midnight by stage coach. There were five other passengers, one of whom was Governor Pease.<sup>17</sup> We breakfasted in La Grange, and spent the night with friends in Alleyton, leaving early next morning by steam cars for Galveston. At noon we reached Richmond and the conductor reported we would remain there an hour, crossing the river by flatboat as a bridge was out. We would meet the train on the other side. But before we reached the river, the train on the other side had gone, carrying our trunks with it. We went across and begged for a handcar to help us catch up with the train, but with no success, so we spent the rest of that day and the night with our friends, the Neely's. Next morning, Sunday, we left very early for Houston, twenty-six miles away. Our team was an old horse and a mule. By noon we were on the bare prairie under the broiling sun, not a tree in sight. At one o'clock we drove into Houston to the old Capitol Hotel. We found that the train we had missed had run off the tracks! Houston interested us. We saw an ice wagon, and for the first time gas lights. We left Houston at three o'clock for the Island City (Galveston) and reached there at 6:30 P.M.

At 10 o'clock the next day we left Galveston by Morgan steamer. This was July 10th. All the ladies and half of the gentlemen were seasick on account of a storm and rough sea. Ruth and I didn't escape the 'mal de mer.' On the same boat were sixteen hundred head of cattle. At the mouth of the Mississippi, we took the pilot and went up the river. We saw the Charles Morgan Steamship burnt by the Federals during the war. We reached New Orleans at 2 P.M. on the 12th and stopped at the St. James Hotel which was six stories high. Here we saw street cars for the first time, and, wonder of wonders, gas lighted streets!

At 7 o'clock, on the morning of the 13th, we boarded our train, the Jackson and Mississippi Central, and rode through swamps and swamps. When we reached Mississippi, we saw everywhere traces of the late war. Car wheels lay beside the tracks, vestiges of fires, lone chimneys and engines standing where coaches had been burnt. We had to get off the train for our meals, and poor meals they were. The sleeping coach looked fine to me.

At Jackson, Tennessee, at 1 P.M., we got off the train for sup-

per. We waited in the station until three the next morning. The station was stuffy and the benches, hard. The detention of the train was due to a sleeping coach having been overturned. Several ladies were injured.

At Columbus, we took the steamboat, "General Anderson," and were in Cairo for breakfast. Had a fine sleep after. At 12, noon, we boarded the train which was crowded, and had dinner at Centralia. We took seats in the night coach which had arm-chairs, for which we paid fifty cents extra. The sleeping coach in the rear had berths at \$1.00 each.

On July 16th, we arrived in Cincinnati and went to a hotel, where we had breakfast and several hours sleep, after which we got a carriage and drove over the city. The next morning, after an early breakfast, we took a bus, crossed the river and took a train at Covington. We arrived at Lexington at 11:30 A.M. where we had to wait until 2 o'clock for a train to Frankfort where we arrived at 5 P.M. on July 17th. Here, we saw the Kentucky Military Institute, located six miles from the city and were glad to meet our old friends, the Allens, formerly of Bastrop Military Institute.

We left Frankfort on the morning of the 18th and reached Lexington near noon, spending an hour in the cemetery. We saw the nearby Clay monument, and were off in an hour to Cincinnati, where we had tea in the Burnett House.

We took the train for New York and checked our baggage through. There were no vacant berths. We had breakfast in Cleveland. On Saturday, July 21st, we were at the Erie Hotel, Dunkirk, and had dinner at the hotel, where I ate my first raspberries. We left there at four o'clock. A lady had her pockets picked on the train.

July 22nd, we had breakfast at 10 A.M., took the boat from the train and were in New York at 12 noon, when we went to the Metropolitan Hotel. (Traveling in 1866 was quite different from traveling now.)

Uncle's relatives lived on Staten Island.<sup>18</sup> They were very proud and aristocratic folks. They liked the Texas girls and we girls had the time of our lives. We were welcome in every home. We

attended a few theatres, our first. A shot was fired on the stage in the play and Ruth screamed. She shed tears at another. I must have been hardened.

While we remained in New York, we stopped at the Fifth Avenue Hotel—the hotel. At supper we ordered oysters. Ruth, thinking to be in style, ordered raw oysters. I had oyster stew, and uncle, fried oysters. The raw bivalves were enormous. Ruth took one look, and said to uncle, "I can't swallow those things." They exchanged plates. How full of fun that girl was. She was afraid of neither bug, beetle nor worm. It was her delight to get a great hairy worm or a big bug and frighten the Northern girls.

Cousin Metcalfe Simonson was an importer of ribbons, and he gave us a lovely assortment. Mr. Bianchi imported French flowers (artificial) and he gave us a box full. After our visit with these delightful people, uncle's relatives, we went over to Philadelphia for a day or two to visit other relatives. While there, we visited the mint and other places of interest and saw the Liberty Bell.

Homeward bound, we traveled by rail, water, and stage coach. When we reached the top of the hill East of Bastrop, Ruth turned her back to town and said she did not want to go home. However, life in the little town was taken up again, but oh! how different.

Our servants remained with us. Many young friends were missing. Plantation life was completely changed. Free labor was an "unknown quantity" in the South. I will say this much. The old slaves were there in most cases, loyal and faithful, but Planters who had owned hundreds of slaves and hundreds of acres were now poor men.

The negro population at the close of the war was 400,000. The reconstruction period (1866) lasted five years. Throckmorton was elected Governor, and George 'Wash Jones' of Bastrop, Lieutenant Governor. Military rule existed throughout Texas. There were times when troops of the United States marched through town, and we dared not be seen on the streets. In fact, we remained close at home.

Of the negroes during the war and during the reconstruction period, I am proud to say their behavior was almost entirely

irreproachable. Carpet-baggers were busy throughout the South, striving to incite the negroes by putting false notions into their heads.

I must record one carpet-bagger incident. Arcola Plantation, near Houston, had been purchased by T. W. House. The negroes remained on the place, as a rule. One negro, Merrick by name, an almost full blooded African, was a trusted slave, a trusted freeman. One day a carpetbagger came along with his wares. He displayed a compound which he declared would make a negro's wool as straight as a white man's hair. Merrick purchased the compound and used it as directed. For the rest of his life Merrick's head was as free from wool or hair as was the palm of his hand. He delighted in telling his story to all visitors to the plantation.

The Ku Klux Klan came into existence. The best men of the South belonged to the Klan. I have often wondered what would have happened to the women and children had not these "white hooded spectres" been watchful. I recall no outrages. When the Klan was no longer needed, they, like the Arab "folded their tents and silently stole away."<sup>19</sup>

Letters came to me every now and then from my London friend—beautiful letters. There was little of love in them, but steadfastness was there. London was far away, and others came wooing. But with me, there was ever the thought of the lover across the seas. G. Bacon Burke of New Orleans, a Terry Ranger and a friend of my brother, was most attentive. I liked him—liked him well, but there came whisperings of an irregular life, and one fatal night he came—he had been taking a glass too much. He came no more. I learned later that he had taken the liquor, advised by a doctor, to break up a cold. He was never a drinking man, and lived a good and useful life. Did I tell of the old widower, my father's age, who came a wooing during the war?

In 1867, Elisha Pease again became Governor of Texas. That was a year long to be remembered. Yellow fever, that terrible scourge, now beaten down, crept from Galveston to Houston and on into the inland towns. People in the cities, where the disease

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had struck before were immunized, and these good people gave themselves as nurses. Good nursing was the best remedy. The fever was terrible in the small towns of Texas.

My old teacher, Mrs. Carmer, nursed going from house to house day and night until she fell victim, but she later recovered. La Grange was desperately in the grip of the "yellow Monster," and Death stalked bold-faced through the town. Bastrop, only thirty miles away, felt the brushing of the monster's wing. In every home was sickness, but none fatal.

I was very sick. I remember little or nothing of one week. Aunt nursed me day and night, giving me hot mustard foot baths and bathing me with salt and ammonia. She says I would not eat. The fever left me and I was moved into another room while my room was thoroughly cleansed and everything sunned (that was our way of disinfecting). The fever took my sister, Ruth, and she was nursed also by my aunt, day and night. When the fever left her, the doctor, old Dr. Starke, told my uncle to take us to West Texas.

In our carriage, drawn by Zephyr and Wabun, we were soon on our way to Austin. We reached that city pretty well tired out and stopped at the Avenue Hotel. Late next day we started for San Marcos, then a very small place. Arriving about sundown, we drove to the one boarding house. There was no hotel in the place. We were cordially welcomed by the landlady who thought she could put us up for the night. Miss Lizzie Scott with the Sayers children was there and Colonel Charlie James.

While resting in the parlor, we soon noticed a confusion throughout the house. Doors were opening and closing, people vanishing. We seemed at last to be the only guests. The landlady looking disturbed came over to us and said, "My boarders have all gone. They heard that Mary Ann and Ruth Nicholson were just recovering from the yellow fever." Colonel James remained and offered to help us locate another place, for we were told we must go. The landlady, however, offered to give us a good supper, which we accepted and very much enjoyed, hot biscuits and fried chicken were served.

Uncle and Colonel James then went out and walked the town



over. News of the *suspects* being in town had spread like wild-fire. No one would have us in. Colonel James suggested to the bewildered landlady that we take his bed on the gallery and he would find shelter in a store, but "no" it was and "No" it continued to be.

Uncle bade "adieu" to the landlady, after paying a good sized bill, went to the stable and putting the horses to the carriage drove it into the middle of the street away from the houses of the frightened inmates. There we sat all night. At dawn we drove on to Stringtowne and to a house noted for its hospitality and its good table. Uncle called out "Mine Host" and explained the situation, and the joyful greeting came, "Come right in. We're not afraid." Man and beast refreshed, we drove to New Braunfels and there found a resting place in the hotel, our German host expressing no fear. Ruth had a chill, followed by a relapse, and there we remained for a week or so. T. W. House was there, a refugee from Houston, so he and Ruth, sweethearts before, were in a seventh heaven. San Antonio was our next stop, and there we remained until all were strong and well and the fever in Bastrop had run its course. Then home once more, and the regular routine.

Letters came from London, and investigations by my uncle were set on foot as to the character of William McDowall. He was of a fine moral character and quite able to support a wife. Distance diminished, and my word was given in 1868, and—well, as usual, two people were happy. The month of May was selected for our wedding and preparations were begun, which preparations were necessarily very modest. The Civil War had left the South in a deplorable condition. A very simple wardrobe was soon completed.

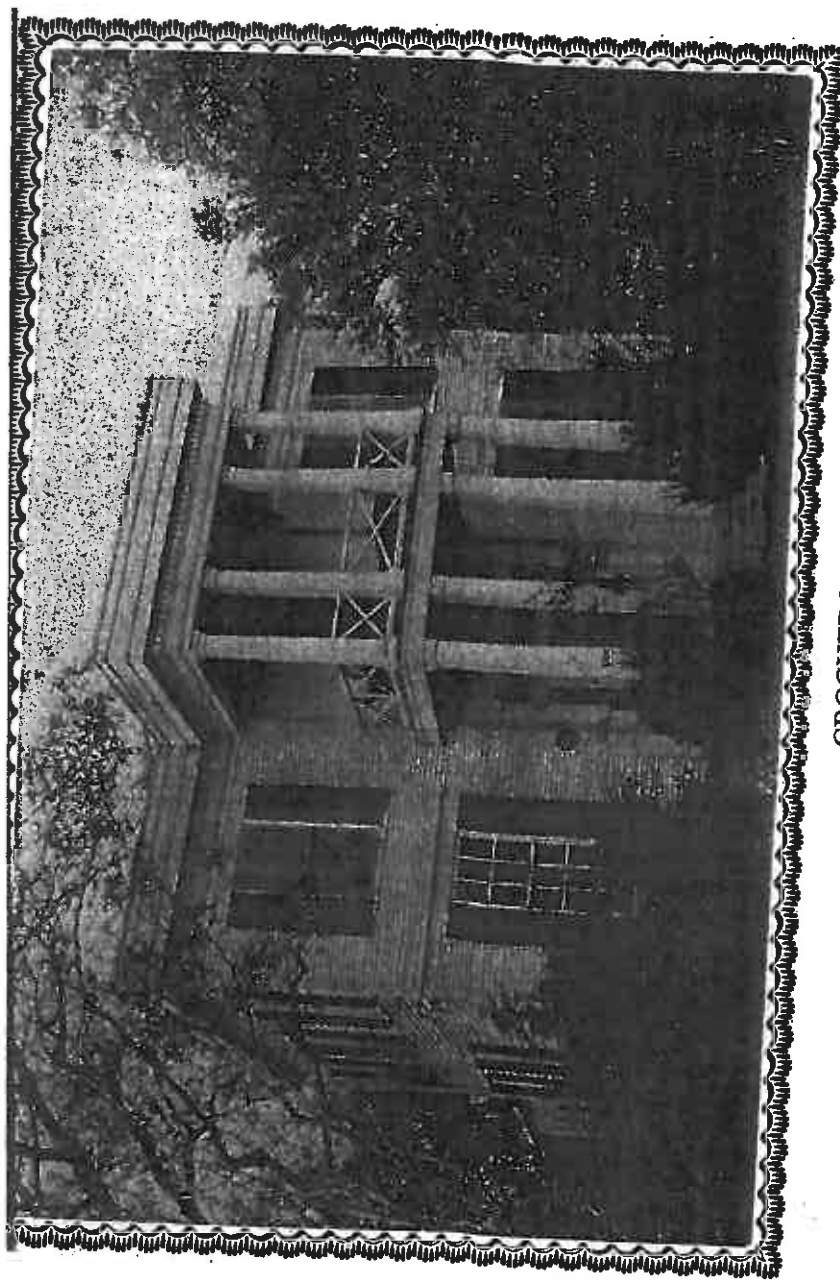
It had been the custom of the Southern women to have ever on hand a good and abundant supply of underwear—handmade, no machines then, and hand embroidered. I had been taught by my aunt the use of the needle and my underthings were abundant and pretty. It was not an easy matter to get dress material. Uncle still kept a store, but "necessities of life" were his main stock. However, I got a black and white check mohair for traveling. I

made my hat, a little saucer-like affair (it wasn't bad) deftly manufactured from an old fashioned white straw poke. We were not given to coats in those days; shawls were worn. I had a purple and black plaid one, all wool, and very warm.

The wedding dress was a sheer organdy (\$4.80 per yard), and I made it all myself. It was short waisted, with full gored skirt and silk lace trimming, and I wore with it a white belt and white ribbon sash. I got from the store a pair of white satin shoes, no heels (where these shoes came from, I do not know; perhaps in a stock bought in by uncle from somewhere), and short white kid gloves, with lace at wrists. Some coronet orange wreaths were in the store. I had one with long tulle veil. I remember a jaconet underskirt, tucked to the waist, was worn under the dress.

The date was set for May 14th, 1868. Mr. McDowall wrote from New York and later from Havana. He stopped off in Houston, and Willie House came up with him to Bastrop. They arrived about the 10th of May. Well, there were two happy couples, for Willie and Ruth were also lovers. Moonlight nights, flowers in bloom, strolls about the grounds! Uncle Crocheron kept good walks and paths through the orchard and yard. An arbor, honeysuckle and rose covered—the porch of the old house—rustic seats, where sometimes a stroll ended, and the oft-told, but ever new, story was repeated. A little embarrassment when I heard “una besita,” and then again “otra besita.” Well, one learns. How proud I was of my beautiful ring.

The 14th arrived, with a little misty rain in the morning. At 8:00 P.M. adown the stairway I came, and Mr. McDowall, with Willie and sister, met me at the foot of the stair. We walked into the South parlor and stood just inside the folding doors. Guests were in the large parlor and the hall. Rev. Mr. Church read the Methodist service. He said he had never used that service before, and yet it was in the Book of Discipline of the Methodist church. Mr. McDowall was Church of England; I, a Methodist. The ceremony is much like that of the Episcopal church—a ring ceremony. The ring which I used was combined with my grandmother's and my mother's rings and was used by my daughter Ruth; and I am now wearing this ring.



CROCHERON-McDOWALL HOUSE, Bastrop, Texas

Uncle and Aunt were not willing that I should go away at once, so we waited until Saturday, the 17th. Once again the midnight stage coach stopped at our gate and we were off—I, for a new life in my father's and mother's country. Tears were shed as good-byes were said. The coach went on its way and morning found us in La Grange, where we ate breakfast—then off again, all day dashing along. The stage horses, four of them to each coach, were fine and well trained, and every ten or twelve miles a stage stand where horses were changed. Night found us in Brenham, where we stopped until next day; then a stage coach ride to Hempstead, where a railroad train awaited. A very plain and uncomfortable train it was, with soot, cinders and dust flying in at the unscreened windows; children crying; mothers scolding; fathers smoking (there were no smoking apartments). Houston was the next stop, where we received a welcome from the House family in their handsome house, located at Smith and Capitol.

We stayed in Houston a day or two, and then at 6:00 P.M. one day we took a boat at the foot of Main Street for Galveston. Captain Sterrett, I believe, commanded the boat. As soon as the boat was well off, dinner was announced, and a grand dinner it was. These Buffalo Bayou boats had a wide reputation; those dinners were spoken favorably of, even in New York. A large dining room and a spacious salon ran adown the center of the boat; while berths were on the outside, opening on a deck. After dinner we strolled on deck, watching and almost touching the great magnolia trees along the bank. There were many windings and curves in the bayou in those days, and it was not unusual to run aground and stay sometimes for a day or more; however, our boat went through all right.

After the stroll on deck we went into the salon, where there was a fine upright piano. I was asked to play, and remembering my "bringing up," I at once went to the piano and played and sang. "Her Bright Smile Haunts Me Still" was one of the latest songs; it suited my voice, and I sang it. Looking up into the large mirror over the piano, I saw that the salon was crowded; all the passengers had come in. I don't think I was the *least* embarrassed. My aunt's training was not forgotten. A most beautiful

morning dawned. We were in Galveston, and over there the Gulf was tossing mighty wave arms in welcome. We had a short stay at Island City House, where we had breakfast and dinner, and then went down to the boat, which was to sail at 3:00 P.M. I wasn't homesick, not a bit, but I wrote to the home folks.

Of that trip from Galveston to New Orleans, there is not much to tell. "Mal de mer" was my companion most of the way. We stopped a day in New Orleans, and then! Railroad travel was not a thing to be enjoyed. There were no fine Pullmans; no luxurious drawing rooms. Coaches were fitted with leather covered seats; and windows were wide open. But happy hearts thought little of discomforts. Trains stopped for meals, hastily served. How we watched the conductor! Trains waited at stations for other trains. One changed from train to train, baggage and all. I remember we waited half a day in Sedalia, Missouri, for the next train. This was impressed upon my mind, for as we walked about the town I saw for the first time English lilacs, white and purple, in full bloom. On one train there were a few boxlike berths, crude affairs.

I left my Texas home May 17th, and May 27th I was in New York, at Fifth Avenue Hotel—the hotel at that time. Oh! the joy of a real bath, and the delight of good, well served meals. The Simonsons came over from Brooklyn, and took us to their beautiful home on Carlton Avenue. There was a boat trip to Staten Island to see the Carsons, Lakes, Garretsons and Brownlees—uncle's kinspeople. It was all so jolly, and happiness seemed everywhere.

Then came the day of sailing. My husband had crossed the ocean numbers of times. He was a linguist and, as confidential man of the large firm of Jimenez & Company of London, Havana and Guatemala, he attended to all foreign business. His knowledge of languages took him away on his last journey—but of this later. He was very partial to the Cunard line of ocean liners, but we were ready to sail and no Cunard boat would go out for a week. The Inman line was equally good, and "The City of London" was sailing on Saturday, May 30th. It will be interesting to note the rates of passage. New York to London, stopping at Queenstown,

\$105.00 in gold, leaving from pier 45 North River. We were to sail at 1:00 P.M. Saturday, May 30th. My kind uncle Simonson and his son, Jim, saw us off, and their handkerchiefs were waving a "bon voyage" as long as we could see.

My old enemy, "mal de mer," was frequently with me, but somehow I never missed a meal, though some of them were brought to my berth by my kind husband. There were lovely walks on deck, and I was greatly interested in watching the sailors and listening to their "chanties" as they set or reefed the sail. Although "The City of London" was a steamer, she was a full rigged sailing ship as well. I saw her in full sail.

I met a lady, whose name I have forgotten, who was in deep mourning. She had a dear little babe about three months old. I often took the babe from her as we sat and talked. Her husband's body was on board. He had been Consul in some place in South America. On reaching London she was met by her father-in-law, a very distinguished looking gentleman.

One morning early we were hailed by "The City of Boston." She signalled she had been all night among icebergs. That meant danger, as two-thirds of an iceberg is under water, one-third above. Two years later "The City of Boston" left port with full passenger list and was never more heard from. It was thought she had been struck by or had run into an iceberg. Our Captain seemed very much concerned and went up on the bridge, never coming down until we had left icebergs far behind. All were on deck as the bergs appeared—cold—awfully cold, but what a gorgeous sight! The sun was bright not a cloud to be seen, and those terrible bergs were out there, a dozen or more of them, glistening and sparkling as if covered with millions and millions of diamonds. We were several hours among them. I did not know how terrible those beautiful masses of ice could be. My husband knew, but did not tell me.

One beautiful day we passed near a school of whales. Off to our right twenty or more huge monsters lay, spouting water. This, too, was an interesting sight. Dolphins played and sported gaily. Portuguese man-of-war often appeared. Sharks sometimes followed in the wake of the ship, ready to catch the leftovers from



the tables. It was the custom on board these ocean liners to throw into the sea all leftovers from first-class table. I never could understand why it would not be given to the steerage, but on shipboard there are strict rules. I have seen whole chickens and other kinds of meat thrown over.

At our table were several nationalities—a German, a Frenchman, and a pretty Senorita from Havana. I was a very proud wife. My husband conversed with each in his own language; and then and there I determined to learn languages, but circumstances over which I had no control hindered, for I have only a limited knowledge of Spanish and French.

It was a relief when our good ship stopped at Cork Harbor, a few miles from Queenstown, Ireland—truly an Emerald Isle. We had been out ten or eleven days. Quite a number of passengers, tired of the water, went ashore and took train for London. We proceeded on our way to Liverpool. About 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock the next morning my husband aroused me, that I might see the dock lights of Liverpool. It was a wonderful sight. Now I began to realize that I was far from home. After a while a lighter came and took off the passengers. A foggy morning, a slight mist, and Liverpool looked so dingy and smoky to the eyes of a poor miserable girl from the sunny land of Texas.

When I stepped ashore a great wave of homesickness, which had been rolling toward me, swept over my soul; and oh, if that good ship would just turn around and take me back to Texas. Poor man, how grieved he was to see my distress. As soon as Customs were passed and tickets for London secured, I was taken from one point of interest to another, seeing some of Liverpool's notable sights—but what cared I? I wanted to go home. However, I bravely overcame this, and when aboard the train for London once more I found happiness. There were meadows green, hop fields with busy hoppickers, orchards and pretty villages. After a time, twenty miles from London the famous London smoke, of which I had heard, appeared. I was becoming interested. And then London—Euston Station, so big, so full of life. Nearby was Euston Hotel, and we were soon in a comfortable room.

After the evening meal, my husband got in touch with my



uncle, Dr. William Nicholson, and he and his little six year old son came and spent the evening with me, while Mr. McDowall went to see his mother and family. Next day we visited the family, and received a hearty greeting. The little children, to whom my husband had been father as well as elder brother, were pretty and bright. I was taken to various places of interest. We spent a few hours at Richmond, the fashionable suburb of London, and we talked of and hoped to live there some day. Alas, for hopes!

We walked a good deal, and I remember that I was often thirsty and drank tea or ginger ale at tea houses—sometimes sure enough ale—but I wanted good cold water, and the poor husband said, "I declare, Mollie, I do not know where to get water." However, his mother had a charcoal filter, and I found water at last.

After a few days we went to a select boarding house on Milner Square in Islington; there were only two or three boarders. My room was very nice, with windows looking out on the pretty park or square. The occupants of the houses around the square had keys to the enclosed grounds. No one else could enter. There was a large parlor and a good library in the house. This I had use of. The people were kind to me, but I could not care for them. I wanted my home friends. Mr. McDowall's best friend, Mr. Williams, had married about the time we were married. They were cultured and refined and lived in Islington. I liked them. The McDowalls lived in Dalston, N.W., about an hour's walk away.

When my husband had me comfortably settled, he had to get back to business; and as he had been away so long, much work had accumulated. There were no typewriters, and there were many letters to be written every day.

As my husband left the house at 9:00 o'clock every morning and did not return until 9:00 o'clock in the evening, it left me a long, weary day—and the days in June *were* long, long days, daylight scarcely out of the sky at all. My promise was given every morning to walk in the park; but when the goodbye was said, this homesick girl rushed upstairs and, throwing herself on the bed, gave way to a fit of weeping; however, my promise must be kept, so out into the little private park I went, book in hand. I couldn't read, I was so lonely. There were children with their nurses and

ladies, young and old, sitting on benches under the trees, reading or doing a bit of fancy work. I was too lonely and too shy to make acquaintances. Back into the house I would go, with nothing to do but just wander about—and the long day *would* not end. After 6:00 o'clock tea, I would sit at the window and watch. About 9:00 o'clock I would see a familiar figure on the sidewalk and would rush down to the front door.

For three weeks this went on, then a house at 52 Malvern Road, Dalston, was rented and into it we moved, not waiting to entirely furnish it. How happy we were! and instead of 9:00 o'clock P.M., the homecoming was 6 P.M. Tea was ready, and after that a long walk, there still being good daylight. We visited many pretty localities. A good North country girl was maid of all work, and the work was well done.

Shall I describe the house? I thought it lovely. It consisted of a half basement, with two stories above. It was a semi-detached house, and the house on the corner was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Northcote (of them later). In the half basement was a cozy room—a combination dining and living room, a large kitchen and a scullery, a small room with portable bath, and a hallway. The next floor had two parlors, front and back, and a large closet in the hall which I used as a linen closet. The hallway ran from the front door to the garden door. On the third floor were two large bed-rooms and two small ones. In all the rooms, except the two small bedrooms, there were coal grates. The kitchen grate was large. In winter it was kept going night and day, and the heat was felt throughout the house.

At last the house was furnished. Pretty china and silver were bought. The crowning piece of furniture was a piano. There was no more homesickness—I *was* at home.

The McDowalls came frequently. We made a few good friends. One morning I was walking in my bit of a garden at the rear of the house, when our neighbor, Mr. Northcote, came to the low fence, said "good morning," and handed me a little basket of string beans, grown in his garden. Mrs. Northcote called, and a warm friendship ripened. Such splendid people: Mr. Northcote was a silk merchant. Both had lived in Australia. Mr. Northcote was a

relative of the celebrated Sir Stafford Northcote, and got his education in "The Blue Coat School," which is still in existence. The students going to this school are known by their long blue coats and no hats. There came a time when those people meant so much to me.

October came, and my husband had his vacation. He said, "Let us go into Suffolk and visit your mother's home towns." By boat, which we took at 9:00 A.M. from London Bridge, we rode down the Thames, passing Greenwich and Woolwich. At 6:00 P.M. we were in Ipswich and, of course, put up at the "White Horse Inn," the very place of Pickwick's misfortune, where he lost his way in numerous passages and finally got into the lady's room—and into her curtailed bed. (See Pickwick Papers.) Elevated above the door of the Inn was the stone statue, as Dickens says, "of some rapacious animal, with flowing mane and tail, distantly resembling an insane cart-horse." Our bedroom was on the first floor front, everything speaking of the past. The bedstead, a massive one, was very high. Beside it were steps up which one must climb.

We visited Beccles, the market town, arriving at 3:00 P.M. on a Saturday. The first object I saw was the old tower, with its wonderful chimes. Of course we went to "The King's Head" Inn. There, creaking in the wind, hung the old sign board—a crowned head—faded with age. After dinner the next day we took a "fly," and a five mile drive brought us to Ellough, my mother's old home. Among the tombstones of the old church we rambled, finding many tombs of relatives long since dead, with very curious epitaphs and very queer names. I met Mr. Arnold, the Rector, a relative of Arnold of Rugby, a hale and hearty old man of eighty-four. As we entered the church a man was ringing the three bells, a rope in each hand and one foot in rope loop—primitive.

From Ellough we went to North Cove and to Lowestoft near the sea. From there we went to Yarmouth, where we were to take the boat for London. There was a rough and stormy sea, and the great boat could not come in. We had to go out to her in a small row boat and climb up a rope ladder while the waves were dashing around us. A rugged sailor helped me up the ladder. The big boat was not pretty like the Buffalo Bayou boats, and I was home-

sick and complained. My husband said, "Your pretty boats could not live an hour in these North Sea waters." About 6:00 P.M. we were in London, and home.

Housekeeping interested me. I was amused to see the roast or the fowl before the open fire, turning round and round on the spit. My country maid kept the house beautifully clean. Once a week the white stone steps and the stone coping of the fence were scrubbed with bath brick.

My husband's brother, Andrew, came for a visit, and with him I had many pleasant excursions. We visited Greenwich and saw where the world gets its time. Kew Gardens were a wonder. The palms amazed me. My husband took me to Crystal Palace, and I heard the great organ. Sundays we attended the church near us, but for evening services we visited other churches. Hackney old church was not far, and the music was grand. At St. Paul's I heard for the first time a boy choir. We went up to the Whispering Gallery. We also visited the scene of "Gray's Elegy." We frequently met Dickens in haunts where memory held him fast forever.

I learned to go down on the train and meet my husband for shopping excursions. He usually waited at the Nelson (I think I am right) Monument. Our most delightful walks were out into the country. Oh, the poppies and corn flowers in the wheat fields—a rare picture!

That kind man of mine chose for me a summer hat, all trimmed in golden wheat ears, poppies and corn flowers. He gave me a real Paisley shawl.

Our days were happy days. The young folks came in. We often had some one for tea. Dickens was often with us in spirit, as parts of Pickwick were read. I played the piano quite a good deal. After tea, often the husband would light his "Havana" and walk up and down in the little garden while I played, the large window being left open.

In November I saw and felt a London fog. At 1:00 P.M. I was sitting at my sewing in the living room and in a moment I was in total darkness. I rang the bell, and the maid came and lighted the gas.

The Jimenez House in Havana was in trouble, and Mr. Mc-

Dowall was urged to go and straighten up the business. He refused, saying now that he was married he would take no more such trips. Mr. Jimenez said, "Take your wife to Texas." That pleased us, and at once we began to make plans. It was November, the stormy time of the year. A friend suggested that it would be a very hard trip on me. A doctor said I must not go. Financially, the trip meant much for my husband. He had been at considerable expense furnishing our home and he was to become a member of the firm on his return. We were sensible: we talked it over, and he was to go alone. Every comfort was provided for me.

One morning early, in the latter part of November, goodbyes were spoken and he went out from our home. He was to sail from Liverpool on the Cunard Liner "China," the best boat afloat. Terrible storms lashed the Atlantic with fury, and for fifteen days the brave ship battled with wind and wave. Passengers were lashed to their berths. The good ship reached New York safely.

My husband sailed for Havana, and soon got the business settled. Then came news of things going bad in Guatemala, and Mr. Jimenez cabled Mr. McDowall to go down there. Much of the travel was by mule, with an Indian guide; camping in lone wastes of an unknown country, sleeping until the moon rose, and then pushing on. In due time, he arrived in Guatemala and found the business in bad shape, owing to the unsettled condition of the country. Finally, the business was arranged, and he turned his face homeward. Another wearisome journey followed.

Arriving at Panama, he found the place a real pesthouse of fever. The Royal Mail Steamship "Atrato" was sailing; and on March 23rd he wrote me "a great deal of fever here and people dying in numbers." He said he was not very well, and was going on board ship at once, adding "I am always so well at sea." He intended stopping off at St. Thomas to get the business papers left there, then in a couple of days take the steamer direct to England. The ship left Chagras on March 24th and St. Thomas on the 30th.

My husband was stricken with the fever and was not able to go ashore at St. Thomas, and thus it happened that the letter written at Panama on March 23rd came with him. There were two sur-

geons on board, and he had every attention. The Captain had a partition removed, throwing two cabins into one. Mariano Felipe pas Soldan, Director General of the Public Works in Peru, was constantly with the fever stricken friend. My husband knew he would not get well, and Soldan said he wrote me a letter during those last days. This letter I never received.

Strange to say, years after in Chicago, a trance medium told me of a letter written on thin foreign paper which I had never received. At noon, April 7th, 1869, my husband passed away. The boat stopped, and his grave was the mighty Atlantic Ocean: his requiem, the symphony of the waves. The boat sailed on, and four days later arrived at Southampton. At noon, March 23rd, a little blue eyed daughter came to the home at 52 Malvern Road, Dalston, London.

The "Atrato" brought the letter written at Panama on March 23rd. The postman delivered it early on the morning of April 11th; it came up with my breakfast. The letter was read; the breakfast was untouched—I was too happy to eat. "Just two days more," I was saying.

My brother-in-law went down to his breakfast and, on picking up the morning paper, these words met his eyes: "R.M.S. Atrato arrived at Southampton—one case of yellow fever on board. Mr. McDowall, representative of Messrs. Jimenez, Fenchurch Street, London, died at noon April 7th in the 31st year of his age, and was buried at sea." No one told me. I never suspected, even when my neighbor came in and wept over the baby; even when the nurse wiped away her tears with her apron; even when the maid came and, with tear filled eyes, said "I want to look at the babby (baby)." Only one living thought was in my mind—"two more days and I'll be at the window watching." Down into the parlor I went with my bundle of letters, just to read over once more—baby Ruth in her little bassinet beside me. People came and went, but I heeded not; just so they came not into the parlor where mother and babe and great happiness were.

At noon the blow came. My brother-in-law opened the door, saying "Mary, I"—but he had no need to say more. Like a flash of lightning out of a clear sky, I knew. Unconsciousness came. Then



the awful awakening. A life had been changed in a moment. Shattered hopes—broken dreams—widowed. Far from home—the future a barren, lonely waste. Grief sometimes blinds the mind. Days passed. Only one thing held me—I must take care of my baby—that saved me. All were kind, but I could make but little response. Andrew McDowall came at once from Manchester, where he was tutoring a nobleman's son. He had visited us when our home was new. He wrote to my Bastrop home. He was in a way my greatest comfort; and through a long life, he was the kindest of brothers.

When the sad news reached Bastrop, my father, James Nicholson, left at once for England, stopping a day in Houston. Mr. T. W. House, Sr., kindly sent me a cable. In due time my father arrived. The wrecking of a home went on—to me nothing mattered. I was with the Northcotes for a week or two—and how good they were! Early every morning that dear lady came to my bedside with a cup of chocolate, good and warm. I went to Mother McDowall's and was well taken care of—my father always tender and watchful, and I trying to get ready for a long journey. I was so weak, so tired, and there was one thought only—to take my baby to Aunt and then die. I knew I could not live. How little one knows what the heart can bear. Hearts do not break, but they may ache for a life time. Bride—mother—widow in one short year! Blessed motherhood! The little life was my salvation, and through years to come, my ever faithful, loving helper.

Andrew McDowall was much with me as my days in England were growing fewer and fewer. He was my child's guardian and faithfully fulfilled the trust. Her little "dot" was carefully guarded.

My English life was closed in June, just one year from the time I took it up. Early in June, with my father and baby, I left London, where so much happiness and so much sorrow had come to me. We spent a few hours in Liverpool. My father insisted on having me see Madame Tussaud's wax figures. They were very wonderful, and I shall never forget the shock I got when my father took hold of a policeman standing in the passage, saying in a gruff voice, "what are you doing here?" Of course, the policeman was wax, but I thought him real. In the afternoon we went aboard



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"The City of Paris," Inman Line. I was well prepared for the long journey. Ruth had been vaccinated when six weeks old. She had been christened in the City Church where her father had been christened, and where, years before, Milton received the rites of baptism. It was a queer old church. A minister, a pew opener, a beadle and one or two city loafers composed the congregation. The sermon was read hastily. The minister as hastily performed the rite of baptism—he was in a hurry to go to a dinner. A few years later the church services were discontinued, and still later the church was torn down. My father, my brother-in-law and Mrs. Northcote were my child's sponsors. On the way to that church I saw the Lord Mayor's and Alderman's gaily colored coaches going to some church. The coaches went, but the Lord Mayor and Alderman were not in them.

Before my great sorrow came, I went to Hyde Park one day with my friend, Mrs. Wilkins. The Royalties, with the exception of Queen Victoria, were on parade that day. She was at Balmoral, widowed, and came to the city only once during the year I was there. Mrs. Wilkins and myself stood beside the gate leading from Rotten Row and saw England's Prince of Wales and his wife, Alexandria, Mary of Teck, and others pass out. I said, "Why they look just like the rest of us."

Going on board "The City of Paris" about 3:00 P.M. I was at once seated in my stateroom, while my father looked after things. Two over-dressed ladies came to the door and one said, "Some one has our stateroom," and they looked with disdain at the forlorn person in her widow's weeds, holding a baby in her arms. I opened my purse and procured my ticket and stateroom number. They were silent for a moment, but, surveying the stateroom, which was a large one with three berths, one lady said, "Does your baby cry much at night?" I said she did *not* cry at night. Whereupon, they decided to occupy the two vacant berths. I was dismayed, but knew when my father came all would be right. They tried to make me believe that they had paid for that stateroom.

About this time the stewardess, a tall young Irishwoman, came along, she looked surprised and asked for our tickets. Mine was all right, but the two ladies were invited out. Maybe they were

not angry. They flirted out, following the stewardess. The latter returned in a little while and said, "Their stateroom is a small one at the end of the ship." I saw those women no more until we were in the New York Custom House. My trunks were barely opened and closed—not one thing removed. The women's two trunks were literally turned wrong side out, and they were marched off to the searching room. They were smugglers.

There was nothing much of importance on the voyage home. I never met my old enemy "mal de mer" at all, but I was weak and broken. I remember nothing of the passengers. The stewardess was kind and attentive, and wished to keep baby Ruth for me at meal times, but the baby rebelled as only a three monther can rebel.

We arrived in New York in due time. The Custom House was passed easily. We went to a small hotel nearby and, strange to say, I found myself in a rocking chair. I never saw one in England. There were plenty of comfortable chairs, but never a rocker. Uncle Simonson came over and took us to his lovely Brooklyn home. It was the Fourth of July, and there was noise such as New York could make. The Simonsons grew very fond of the baby. Whenever any one came in, Uncle Simonson took the baby and, holding her towards the visitor, would say, "Isn't she a fine child?" and it would never have done to disagree with him.

We expected to return to Texas by rail, but father thought a sea trip would be less tiresome; so he engaged passage on the "Rapidan," an old boat and a small one. Again we fared forth. Of course, there were no electric lights in those days. In each cabin was an oil lamp behind glass. There was no access to lamp from cabin; it could only be opened from the outside, and by a steward. All lights were to be out by 12:00 midnight. There were few passengers. The steerage was at one end of the boat, roped off. I noticed among the steerage passengers a colored woman—a black mammy, I knew. She had a little grandchild with her. I proposed taking baby Ruth to see the mammy, feeling sure she would be frightened of a black face. Mammy put out her hands and began her baby talk, and Ruth went to her at once. Mammy said she did not like to stay with that "poor white trash" in the steerage, and

begged father to ask the Captain to let her come and be baby's nurse. It was arranged, and both mammy and baby were happy. The little pickaninny helped to amuse the baby.

It became very warm, and the Captain had a bed prepared for me in the salon, where I was most comfortable. One day the vessel stopped and for two or three hours repairs were going on. We arrived safely at the mouth of the Mississippi River, where we took a pilot. We had a batch of Texas papers, and we were startled to read, "Greatest floods ever known—Colorado and Brazos rivers overflowing—No lives lost in Bastrop."

On reaching New Orleans, where we stopped at the St. Charles Hotel, father wired Houston and received a telegram from Mr. House, which relieved our minds. We took the first boat for Texas. I remember it was a side wheel steamer, and with the stewardess, I often climbed up on the wheel and sat in the moonlight.

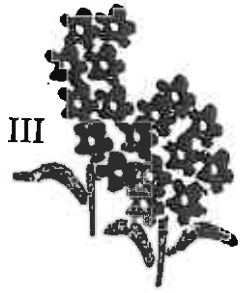
Arriving in Galveston we took a Buffalo Bayou boat. I think this time it was Captain Pat Christian's boat; at any rate, he was Captain and was very kind and attentive. He was an ex-Terry Ranger.

I finally reached Houston—and my sister. She and Willie House were married on the 17th day of March, 1869.<sup>20</sup> They were living in a house near the House home. I was distressed to find my good friend, Mrs. House, Sr., a victim of the white plague. She was fond of me always, and she was a good mother to my sister. Both houses were kept by my sister. All seemed fond of her. She was so merry, so jolly and loving. Every day I rode out in the carriage with Mrs. House.

We stayed only a few days in Houston, and then took the old railroad train to Hempstead—and from there, the stage coach. The roads were in such a terrible condition from the floods. Our coach was what was called a mud wagon—a Concord Coach on wheels, with no springs. It was terrible. The Brazos bottom, always noted for its rough and muddy roads, was worse than ever. Our coach getting stuck in the mud made it necessary for the men to get out and, with rails or poles, pry up the wheels. There was a corduroy road—that is, logs laid across the road close together—through the worst part. There were no bridges; we had to cross rivers on flat boats. The banks of the rivers were in woeful condi-

tion. It seemed often as if we would be pitched out of the coach. I wonder how I did keep my baby in my lap. She was good and perfectly content with me. My father could not help, as he was on the middle seat and that had only a strap back and the door was there. There were long, weary hours, night and day. I was so weak, so worn and tired. I almost fancied the woods full of phantoms; nothing seemed real. On the second night, at the midnight hour, the mud wagon came over Bastrop's eastern hills and into town, and to my girlhood home.

### PART III



## RETURN TO TEXAS

A year—and what a change! Leaving, a joyous, happy bride; returning, a sorrowing widow, with a little fatherless child. Uncle and Aunt were waiting for us, and met us at the gate. Into my own room I went, and to bed.

A year before this time there seemed to be means a plenty, as there always had been. After the Civil War, Uncle never seemed to be able to keep up his business under new conditions and, too, he had looked forward to my brother's homecoming and going into the business. Uncle had become bankrupt. There were no servants except Ike, my nigger boy. He was faithful. Work is not a curse by any means. It has been my salvation. Aunt was her own cook. I did my share of the work. We did all the work about the house. Uncle, with his two good horses and a wagon, hauled goods from McDade, and did what he could, but life seemed too hard, and he was an old man. My little child was a great comfort to him.

In the Autumn, when schools were opening, there came to me one day a little girl, saying "Papa wants me to take music lessons; he thinks I have talent." The little girl was Emma Garwood, nine years of age. She was talented. This was the beginning of my long teaching life. Another little girl came and wanted to know if I would teach her, too. This was Sallie Powell. Others came, and I was soon busy. First and last, all the Garwood children studied with me, and lasting friendships were formed. I taught at home for a year or two.

Answering a call from my sister, I left home for Houston, De-

ember 17th, 1869, Sunday, the 19th, about 9:00 p.m. a tiny daughter came to my sister's home and was called Mary for her grandmother. I spent a month in my sister's home, having almost entire care of the baby. During this time Mrs. House, Sr., died. She was so loved and honored by everyone.

On my return to Bastrop my good uncle Crocheron sickened. I had been home from England just five years when uncle died.

I resumed teaching music and I would be away all day, I had bad headaches and one day I cut my hair short. My poor little nigger, Ike, cried and cried.

I was foolish enough to think that a widow should wear deepest mourning; and my dresses, some crape covered and long trains, were terrible. I have been positively sick when out in the sun. I was long getting the proper outlook, but *I did*, and I realized that grief for the dead needs not the outer show. Oh! how circumpect a widow must be in those days. One day a lady said to me, "Why don't you get married?" I was shocked into tears.

Changes seemed to come thick and fast. My summers were usually spent in Houston with sister; sometimes in Austin with my lifelong friend, Lou Caldwell Hill. My studies were kept up. I took the Chatauqua Literary Course, four years' work; and looking over my papers recently, I found my marks 95 and 98—100 being the highest mark.

Naturally, there came men a wooing—good men, persistent men—but there never seemed a time when I could lay down the burdens I had taken up. Perhaps—I don't know—had I listened to these offers, life would not have been so full of sacrifice, so full of hardship. My short married life had become a dream. My aunt always took fright when a mere man looked upon me. Well—that passed.

When my daughter was sixteen she entered the University of Texas. This separation was almost unbearable. While she was there my father died. He had been ill for two years; father had been a great help to me after the death of my uncle. During his illness, the Masons were kind to father (he was a Mason). There was never a Sunday morning that Mr. A. J. Batts did not visit with him between Sunday school and church. The Erhards were



kind. He had helped many people, and yet he died poor. Here the Masons came to the aid of his family. The funeral arrangements were left all to me. I want to acknowledge at this time of need \$50.00 sent by my sister and her husband. The day after the funeral I had to be back at my teaching.

My stepmother and half-sister Rubelle kept the Nicholson House going for a while. Rubelle had a fall from a horse, the result of which was a tumor. When it became serious, her mother's brother came and took her to San Antonio; her mother went with her. She had an operation, and death resulted. Her uncle paid the expenses, and then took stepmother with him to Victoria. He was a terrible man, wealthy, but with a horrible reputation. Before he left Bastrop, he packed up much of the household goods and sent them off in the night. He got the silver and my father's watch, etc. The house was my mother's and I had a share in it. There was another piece of property. He tried to get everything, and but for my good friend, Robert Batts, I should have had nothing. Robert *made* him come to terms. In the Gulf storm of 1900 this man lost his life. He was not good to his poor sister. Three times he sent her to me to care for. She had softening of the brain, but in the latter part of her life was gentle and kind to me. Was there ever a spot in her mind that reminded her of her treatment of her stepchildren? She wandered about at night with a candle, and while she was with *me* I never slept soundly. Poor creature! alone—bereft of all her own. After her third visit, I took her back to her brother. She was content for a few months with me, then wanted to leave. She died in Victoria, Texas.

There were a few changes in Bastrop. Public schools came in. An Episcopal church was built, in which my sister placed a memorial window for her mother. Her husband gave a bell at the suggestion of Mr. and Mrs. Higgins, who were instrumental in getting the church. Several other churches were built. The Academy was torn down and Dr. Lockett erected a beautiful house. Captain Orgain had built a large and comfortable home in the same block.

Aunt's health was failing. She did not complain and went about her work as usual. Her means, so limited, were gradually growing

less. My class was good, but tuition was low—much work and little pay. I had my Ruth at the State University and, while her uncle, Andrew McDowall, sent her the interest on her invested money, it was not sufficient. He wrote asking me to send her to him, saying he would give her the best education to be had in England. I felt that we should not be separated. Aunt grew alarmingly worse. Dr. Sayers treated her, but some disease was preying on her. Dr. Sayers died. Aunt asked me one day to go to Dr. Alonzo Garwood and state her case, but she did not want him to come. I did as she bade. Alonzo said he could do nothing without seeing her. She consented. He was a young doctor, one of my old piano pupils. He was recently home from Medical School. He came to see aunt and found a cancer, far advanced. She wanted to know all, and was told. This was the beginning of a long and frightful illness and great suffering. I nursed her entirely. Old "Aunt Ella", my cook, was a treasure. Ruth tried to keep up a small class during the summer, for my expenses were heavy. Dr. Garwood was more than a doctor; he was a son, and most thoughtful, coming at all times, not waiting to be sent for. Many times during the long night watches he came to my side. Aunt seemed to know him—he was so gentle with her. Sister came up several times during that trying summer. At last the end came—peacefully; her last word was "Mollie". I had lost the power to sleep—all day, all night, wide open eyes. Aunt was buried from the church she loved—Episcopal. I went to Austin to my friend, Lou Hill, for a few days, and the change brought me rest and sleep. Ruth's Sunday school teacher, Fenora Chambers, and Robert Batts stayed at my house with Ruth. After my return, I had to settle up things and prepare for Fall teaching. Aunt had put aside enough money for her burial, but there was nothing more. Dr. Garwood said to me, "Do you have to pay my bill?" I said, "Yes." He said he would send me one, and I have that bill now—\$6.00—think of it! I remonstrated, but in the end paid that bill and got a receipt. Was ever friend like that?

My Ruth became of age and received her little fortune—a few thousand dollars. I said, "shall we go to England to see your father's people?" She said she would go next year. First, she wished

to spend a summer at a Conservatory. She was studious, using her gifts to best advantage. One gift she greatly desired to improve—expression. We decided to go to Chicago—Ruth's friend, Delia Reynolds, going with us. We entered the Chicago Musical College and studied piano with Dr. Ziegfeld. Ruth had expression. My! but that was a busy summer. At this time the Doctor's young son was about the college—Floy he was called. He was his father's pride. The girls called him "Sissy." And this Floy is now the master of the "Ziegfeld Follies." We had a boat trip to Milwaukee, we had for the first time a ride on an electric car. In Chicago, all were cable cars.

Returning to Bastrop, we took up our work in earnest and had splendid success. Ruth studied and taught. We brought to town a few lecturers, pianists and readers, and usually we entertained them.

Ruth had prepared herself for a public life as reader and exponent of the then popular Delsarte system. In 1895 the Confederate Reunion was held in Houston. She was asked to give a reading. The reading was enthusiastically received; and the closing lines, accompanied by a band playing "Dixie," won great applause.

Those were happy days in my old home in Bastrop—true, there was much work. Teaching must go on. My aunt's will gave me the home, and some Jefferson land in litigation. Ruth kept house, with old "Aunt Ella" as cook. I looked after outside affairs. Old "Uncle Andrew" was man of all work.

There came a time when I realized I must give my daughter into another's keeping. The young man was all one could wish—true and upright—and yet this poor mother's heart asked, is it well? I was father and mother. One night I had a most vivid dream. I seemed to be in the living room. My husband opened the door and came towards me; he was unchanged—a young man. Flashing through my mind came the thought: he is young, I have grown old. He spoke as of old—very kindly, very tenderly, "Mollie, you have done the very best for our child; all will be well." He was gone, but the dream remained; and no more anxiety did I feel.

The wedding day came. Ruth and Richard Sanders were mar-

ried in October at the Methodist church, my sister's husband giving the bride away. He had been very generous, sending her a check for \$200.00 for her trousseau. My sister's family was present. It was a lovely wedding. They took a short wedding trip, then came back to their duties.

That winter there was an epidemic of la grippe, and very serious. I became ill and Ruth nursed me with tenderest care. One day she said, "Mother, Blanche (Garwood) will take care of you—I am not well." Dear child, she had not been well all the time; she was most unselfish. She became seriously ill. For two months she made a strong fight for health and life. I was well enough to nurse her. Richard was most considerate, and the lovelight came into her eyes when he came home. Dick she called him. My sister came several times, for two or three days—and what a comfort she was! At last my child was no longer able to do battle, and on the 26th day of March she went out from our love and our arms. My sister was with me with her treasure of sympathy. How could I live—how could I? Richard, crushed as he was, gave to me a son's love; and he has ever been a tender, loving son. Now my house was left unto me desolate. Again, a home was wrecked. My sister and her husband took me to their home and gave me love and kindness. Oh, the desolate days—the nights of weeping. Finally, I awoke to the fact that my grief was making me selfish, and that I was making those about me unhappy.

An idle life was wearing me, and once again I took up the life of teaching. It had saved me in many times of trial; it was to save me once more. My heart opened to friendship—and all this life in Houston has been one great blessing—friends.

The land which was in litigation was sold and I had a very nice sum of \$10,000.00, which, for one who had struggled with poverty and many cares, was goodly fortune. I was enabled to take a trip to the Pacific Coast and to National Park, having with me five delightful girls. This trip meant much to me, but how I wished that my girl could have been with me.

In the Autumn of 1900 a day of great wind and rain came. The storm raged all night; there was no sleep for us. Two of our chimneys fell. Two great oaks and one large pecan tree were twisted

from their roots. Plate glass windows crashed in. It was a night never to be forgotten. Galveston's dead were estimated at ten thousand, and the sea took many houses. When morning came, Houston was a city of fallen trees and chimneyless houses, but not very serious damage.

I found myself one of a party of eight going to tour Europe. Once again I set foot on the English shore, but this time it was not homesickness which greeted me, but Memory took me by the hand and led me through the scenes of yesterday. Andrew McDowall gave me a brother's greeting. I visited the daughter, Kitty, at Oxford, and the son, Stewart, at Cambridge. It would fill a book should I attempt to write of this tour. One thing stands out,—the the Wagner Festival at Munich. The hunger of my life seemed appeased.

One summer, a delightful party, of which I was one, sailed from New Orleans for Cuba. How fascinating was Havana! How grim old Moro! How delightful the Malecon! And how sad the wreck of the Maine!

In Houston were several Literary Clubs, one quite an infant,—The Current Literature Club. I cast in my lot with this band of women, and up to this time, the "Currents" have been to me more than a joy—a family, a consolation, a life saver. I was President two years.

The surprise of my life came when a small body of women met and planned a Young Women's Christian Association, making me President. This was the first "Y" in Texas. I knew nothing of Association work, and all the literature I could get hold of was a little handbook. Fortunately, my co-workers were splendid, loyal women. Among them were Mrs. Chas. Stewart, Mrs. Carter Walker, Mrs. Frank Reichardt, Mrs. S. F. Carter, Edith House, and others. We were rather proud when we moved into the old Sweeney building—two upper floors, even if rat infested and there were creaking floors and rickety stairs. My sister gave us the first hot table for a cafeteria, and liberally gave of her means. Her chief work was Faith Home. Mrs. Depelchin's mantle had fallen upon her shoulders. In spite of our wretched housing, the work prospered; and today two very beautiful buildings are the pride of Houston. Their



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foundations were laid in faith and prayer. My life was full. With Y. W. work pressing hard, my large infant class at Shearn church, and a good music class, there was little time for looking backward. Things were going well with me. Health was returning, after the wreckage of a broken life. My future was provided for. I felt welcome in my sister's home. Her husband gave me kindness and respect. Friends were worth while.

There came a whisper one day—"Your monied interests are shaky." A trust was betrayed—and my little fortune was gone. This was a severe blow. I was ageing and could never hope to replace it, and never have. As the years go on, poverty stares me in the face. To be dependent was my fear and now it is my sad fate. I had to learn to forget the blow that had fallen upon me.

Into my life came one friend who has given to me lovely Summer vacations in her Birchmonte Home, New Hampshire. Mrs. Jesse Jones was my sister's friend—and for years has been mine.<sup>21</sup>

When J. D. Sayers, my almost life-long friend, became Governor of the State, I made frequent visits to the mansion in Austin. Mrs. Sayers was a former pupil of mine. The House girls asked me if Mrs. Sayers was very religious. I said, "Oh, I taught her music, I taught her embroidery, and I taught her religion, and she is no good at any." Mrs. Sayers enjoyed this joke and tells it often. I went with my sister to a number of social functions at the mansion, and never saw a more beautiful woman.

A great misfortune came to the House family—a bank failure, followed by strictest economy. My poor sister was sadly stricken. She was so charitable; it was her delight to help—and how many rose up to call her blessed. My class was good, and for a while I was able to give her a little help—just a very little, but she always smiled so sweetly and said, "You should not do this." My brother-in-law was appointed postmaster, and things were better. For years the maid, Tillie Cramer, was almost like one of the family—so well born and bred was she. When she married, my sister gave her the wedding. Tillie is a most faithful friend. James grew old in service; he was gardener and handy man—faithful ever.

A fatal illness was snapping the strength of my beautiful sister, which she bravely strove to overcome. At this time a great war



cloud was hovering over the world. She grieved over it, and hoped it might be turned aside. When Sister Ruth died her husband asked me to stay on neath his roof.

A few years, and then into the old home at 1010 Louisiana Street came once again the Dark Robed One, and the father found rest and peace. The once beautiful home was broken up. Three times in my life I went out from a broken home—almost the same periods of time between. When I was twenty-six years of age, my English home was dismantled. About twenty-six years later my Bastrop home was broken up. And about the same time the house, which had been like a home to me, was given up and later passed into alien hands. Niece Ellen Howze and her husband Walter kindly offered me the shelter of their roof.

My "Little Journey through Memory's Halls" is nearing the end. One thing I hold very precious today. Of the old Methodist church in Bastrop, I have made mention. Recently it was torn down. An up-to-date modern church had been built. A few of my Houston friends, the M. T. and Jesse H. Jones, H. M. Garwood and S. F. Carters, placed in the new church a very lovely art glass window for me. It was a surprise, and touched me deeply. The new church had no bell tower, and there was that old bell of 1851 without a home. For many years it called in sweetest tones to the people of the old town. My sister-friend, Mrs. B. D. Orgain, asked for contributions from those whose loved ones had gone before, and who in life had followed the bell. The result—a very beautiful tower, which was dedicated on February 19th, 1928, my eighty-fifth birthday.

And now, good nephew of mine, I have done your bidding. The "Little Journey" is ended. As I journeyed, I opened caskets which long ago I had closed and sealed. In one, fair dreams had been placed; they had vanished—only an empty bowl remained. Bright hopes were placed in another casket; I found them crushed and broken. Joys, in their casket, shimmered and glowed. In one more beautiful than the rest I had placed music. On opening, it seemed like voices of spirits whispering me home. Tears had turned to crystals, so long ago were they shed, but I read: "He shall wipe away all tears." The burdens which seemed too heavy for me I had



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placed in an ironbound casket; they had shrunk away, and I read: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee." The sorrows of years were hidden away in the depths of an oaken box; they were gone, and I read: "Sorrow is turned into joy." The lone heart was placed in a casket, all velvet covered and black. In letters of gold I found these words: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The frail porcelain casket had weakness and weariness: those bits of my life were gone out, and "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" stood out in letters of gold. From the pictures on the walls I drew aside the curtains and looked into eyes and upon forms long since but a handful of dust, 'neath daisies hid. All around and about me were living words: "Death is swallowed up in Victory." "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—the dead shall be raised incorruptible." "This mortal shall put on immortality."<sup>23</sup>

## NOTES

1. James Nicholson of New Castle and Sunderland, England, had come to New York about this time (1837, 1838) and was shipwrecked off Fire Island. He landed in a strange country penniless, and obtained work with a Jew, Mr. Goodman, on Staten Island. Mr. Goodman was what his name indicated—a good man. He had a kind of pawn shop and tavern, where various drinks were mixed and sold. The young English boy became an expert “mixer.”

While in New York he met and fell in love with Ruth Tipple. He returned to England, but only for a short time, coming back to America and to Mr. Goodman. He then renewed his acquaintance with the young English girl, Ruth Tipple, and on December 12, 1838, they were married. She was eighteen and he, twenty.

2. Ruth Tipple Nicholson was the youngest of two daughters born to Elizabeth Weaver and her husband, George Tipple, a contractor, a native of Suffolk, England. The father died when the girls were quite young. The widow had a hard struggle, but she brought her daughters up well. They received the best education of the day, and the elder, Mary Ann, became a fine needlewoman.

When Mary Ann was about twenty, her health failed and the physician advised a long sea voyage. The widow and her two girls decided to come to America, intending to stay a couple of years and return to England. They went to London and took passage on a schooner. Mary Ann (my aunt) told me they were very comfortable.

The fare was good; the boat carried coops of chickens, a cow and dried meat, but there were no canned goods then.

At the end of six weeks, the good boat came into New York harbor, and the passengers were charmed with Staten Island—so green, so peaceful. On this island the widow and her daughters made a home. Mary Ann, who was a very expert seamstress, found quite a bit of dressmaking to do, and this added to their

little store. Mary Ann was tall, slender and pale. Her hair was fine, straight and black. She had a strong will and dominated her mother and sister. She was passionately fond of reading, and read with understanding. In old age, she possessed a well stored mind. Ruth, two years younger, was beautiful, tall and plump—at eighteen weighing 150 pounds. She had a red and white English complexion, blue eyes and curly hair. Whenever she went out on the streets of New York, she was so much “stared at” that she took to wearing a thick veil.

3. On Staten Island lived a Dutch family, the Crocherons, who came over at the same time with Commodore Vanderbilt and his wife, and lived on a farm adjoining the Vanderbilt farm on Staten Island. There were a number of girls in the Crocheron family, but only two boys, Henry and Israel. Henry went to Alabama to seek his fortune, and, I think, located in Montgomery. He had a store there and was very prosperous. From there he went to Texas, locating in Bastrop.

4. *The Handbook of Texas*, vol. 2, p. 13. “Lamar, Mirabeau Buonaparte. Vice president in Texas’ first National election, Sept. 1836. Inaugurated president, Dec. 10, 1838, following Sam Houston, who could serve only one term at a time.”

5. *Ibid.*, p. 120. “Bastrop Academy, under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, opened its first session at Bastrop in 1851 and was chartered on February 7, 1853. The enrollment of 132 students for the first session increased to 194 by 1857. William Hancock, the first principal, was succeeded by John Carmer. On May 25, 1872, the properties of the academy became a part of the Bastrop public school system.”

6. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 123. “Batts, Robert Lynn. Practiced law in Bastrop (where he was born) until 1891, when he became Attorney-General under Charles A Culberson. In March 1917, President Woodrow Wilson appointed him U.S. judge of the Circuit Court of Appeals of the fifteenth circuit. He was later Professor at The University of Texas and appointed to the Board of Regents of that institution in 1927.”

7. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 843. “House, Thomas William. b. Eng-

land 1814, died Houston, Texas, 1880. It is difficult to estimate T. W. House's share in the building of Houston. He was active in organizing the first street railway, the Board of Trade and the Cotton Exchange, and the Houston and Texas Central and other railroads. . . . One daughter and four sons (he had seven children) survived him of whom Edward Mandell House, adviser to President Woodrow Wilson, was to become the most widely known."

8. DeWitt C. Baker, *A Brief History of Texas*, pp. 128, 129, 130. "Jones, George Washington. Became Lieut. Governor under Governor James W. Throckmorton, 1866-67. In August 1867, Throckmorton was removed by military order, and E. M. Pease declared Provisional Governor."

9. Wilbarger also had a dream or vision during that terrible night. His sister (who had died the day before in Missouri) seemed to appear and say 'Help will come tomorrow—be brave, have courage.' He was comforted and *did* take on new courage. Then the sister seemed to go from him in the direction of the Hornsbys'. He begged her to stay. Wilbarger did not know of his sister's death until a month later. News traveled slow in those days" (from Mollie's original journal, p. 38).

10. *The Handbook of Texas*, vol. 121. "Bastrop Military Institute, founded at Bastrop by Colonel R. T. P. Allen, was incorporated on January 19, 1859. The board of trustees was elected by the Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church. In the Institute the military corps was under the command of a superintendent who was commissioned colonel by the governor of Texas. The school had two divisions, preparatory and collegiate, the collegiate course consisting of four years work. Sam Houston, Jr., was a student at the Institute during the session of 1850-1860. Closed during the Civil War, the school reopened in September, 1867, under the superintendency of Major J. G. James. In September, 1868, the name was changed to Texas Military Institute. Because of lack of patronage the school was moved to Austin on June 10, 1870."

11. *The Handbook of Texas*, vol. 1, pp. 845-847. "Houston, Gov. Sam 1793-1863. B. Va. came to Texas 1832. Elected

Commander-in-Chief of the Texas Army, March 2, 1836. Led the Texas Army to victory against the Mexican Army under Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto, April 21, 1836. First President of the Republic of Texas. Elected Sept. 5, 1836, and again Sept. 6, 1841. Inaugurated Gov. of Texas Dec. 21, 1859. Was against Secession, and was deposed 1861."

12. "I must here pay tribute to my faithful negro, Isaac Tanner. He was given to me by my uncle, who bought him from the block. I have a bill of sale in my red scrapbook, of which the following is a copy:

Received of H. Crocheron the sum of four hundred dollars in consideration of a negro boy named Isaac, sold him on first Tuesday in Jan. 1861 as the property of the Estate of Joseph H. Tanner deed.

H. McClester, Admr.  
de bonis non of said Estate.'

Isaac was an orphan six years of age. We educated him at home, as there were no negro schools. My aunt trained him well. My uncle was a good advisor. When the war ended and Ike, as we called him, was free, he did not wish to leave.

After several years, and he had grown to manhood, my uncle advised him to go out as a free man. He did so, and afterwards became a barber. He had always been true to his early training, and ever kept in touch with his 'white folks,' giving credit to them for what he was, an honest, upright man.

Now, 1926, he is in La Jolla, California, an old man growing feeble, but true to the only one of his 'white folks' now alive—his dear Miss Mollie (me). He wrote once, 'You and I, Miss Mollie, are the only ones left of that old aristocratic family.' His one thought is to make money so he can take care of his Miss Mollie. I could write of many more faithful blacks." (Mollie's original manuscript).

13. *Handbook of Texas*, vol. 2, p. 89. "Lubbock, Francis Richard. Elected Lieut. Governor 1857. Helped organize Democratic Party in Texas. Elected Governor 1861 by a plurality of 124 votes."



14. Baker, D. W. C., pp. 126-127. "Hamilton, A. J. was appointed Provisional Governor of Texas, and reached Galveston on the 25th day of July 1865, where he proclaimed his authority. In the fall following, he ordered an election for a Reconstruction Convention."

15. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13th ed., vols. 17-18, p. 875. "General Tomas Mejía: Matamoras was occupied by the Mexican Imperialists under Mejía in 1864."

Joan Haslip, *The Crown of Mexico (Maximilian and His Empress Carlota)*, p. 368. "Tomas Mejia was beleaguered in the Gulf port of Matamoras . . . and was sending frantic telegrams for money with which to pay his troops."

*Ibid.*, p. 498. "Though a native Indian, Mejia espoused the Imperialist cause of Emperor Maximilian against the Nationalist Juarez, also a native Indian, and was shot with the Emperor at Queretaro, Mexico, June 19, 1867."

16. *The Handbook of Texas*, vol. 1, p. 961. "Kings Ranch. A quarter million acre ranch in Nueces, Kenedy, Kleberg and Wil-lacy counties—begun in 1852 when Richard King purchased a Spanish land grant of almost 75,000 acres in Nueces county on Santa Gertrudis Creek."

17. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 351-352. "Pease, Elisha Marshall. B. 1812 Enfield, Conn. Came to Texas and settled at Bastrop (then Mina). Studied Law. Elected Secretary of the Committee of Safety at Mina 1835. In Nov. 1835, was elected Secretary of the General Convention which he attended in 1836. In 1837 was admitted to the bar. Law partner in the firm of John A. Wharton and John W. Harris. Elected Governor of Texas 1853 and again in 1855. Was provisional Governor in 1867, but resigned."

18. "The Garretsons (Ann), the Carsons (Lenah), Mrs. Lake (Kate), and Dr. Brownlee (whose wife Henrietta was dead) and daughter lived on Staten Island; the Simonsons (Jane) and Mr. and Mrs. Bianchi (Libbie) lived in Brooklyn. Nieces and nephews of uncles were married and living in various places—Mrs. Freeman (Louise) on Fifth Avenue, Mary Simonson Merritt at Nyack on the Hudson" (Mollie's original manuscript).

19. Mrs. Benj. D. Orgain, *From Dawn to Eventide*, p. 37. "When law and order were restored, General Forrest, who was Commander-in-Chief of the "Klan," ordered its discontinuance, and the real Ku Klux Klan was dissolved. Many reckless and cruel acts were perpetrated afterwards in the name of the Klan, for which it was in no manner responsible."

20. Children of T. W. House, Jr., and his wife, Ruth Nicholson House: Mary, Edith Ruth, Cora, Ellen, T. W. (Will) and J. H. B. (Mollie's original manuscript).

21. Jesse Jones—well known oil man, financier and philanthropist of Houston, Texas, in the early part of the twentieth century.

22. Mrs. B. D. Orgain: "On my return from England, after my great and overwhelming sorrow, there came into my life a choice spirit—Dru Johnson of Tennessee. She was married to Captain B. D. Orgain, my friend. Her life, like mine, has been a long one. We were born the same year. Our lives touched, and I am sure no more perfect friendship ever existed. We are sisters in the spirit. To her have come several children. To me they have ever been dear" (Mollie's original manuscript).

23. Mollie died December 4, 1931, and was buried in Fairview Cemetery in Bastrop, a valued and much loved member of that community.

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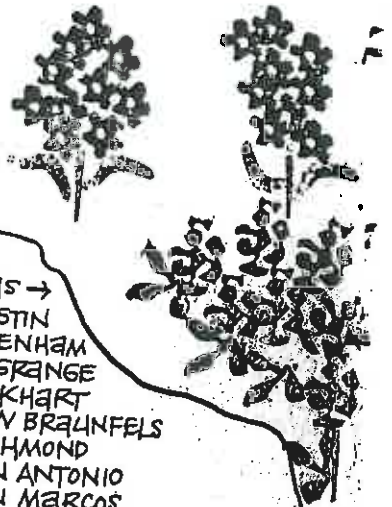
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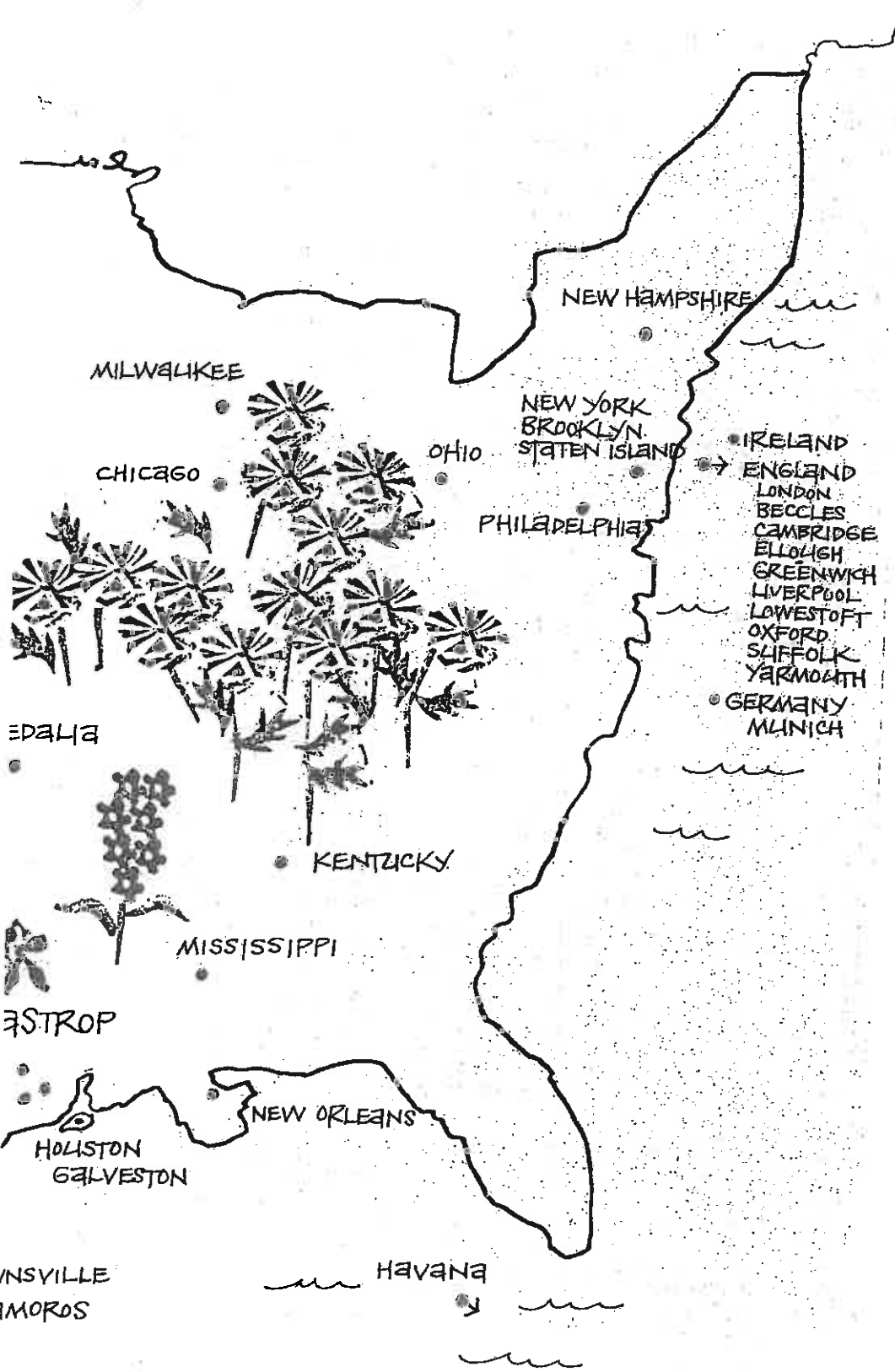
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