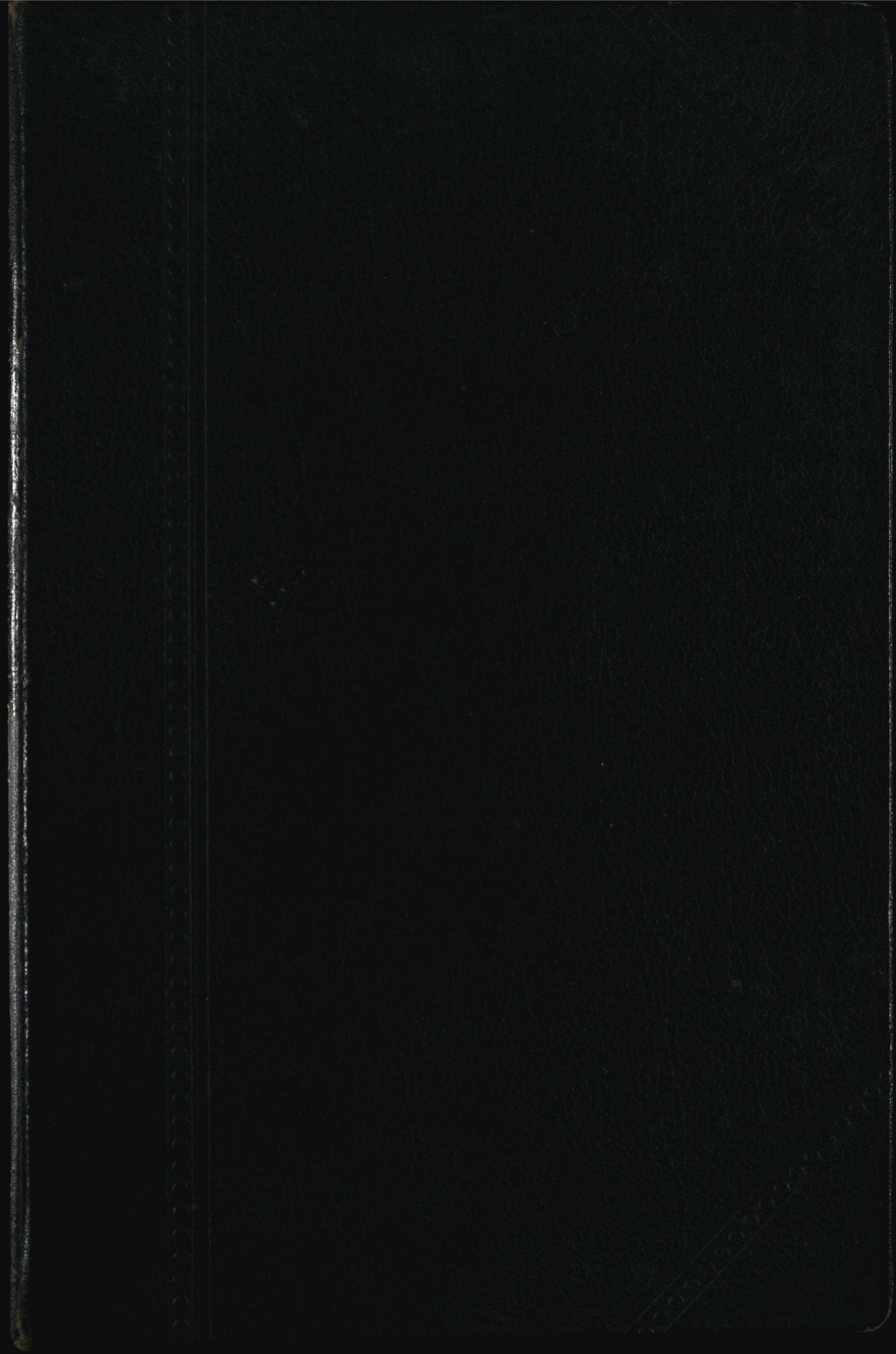
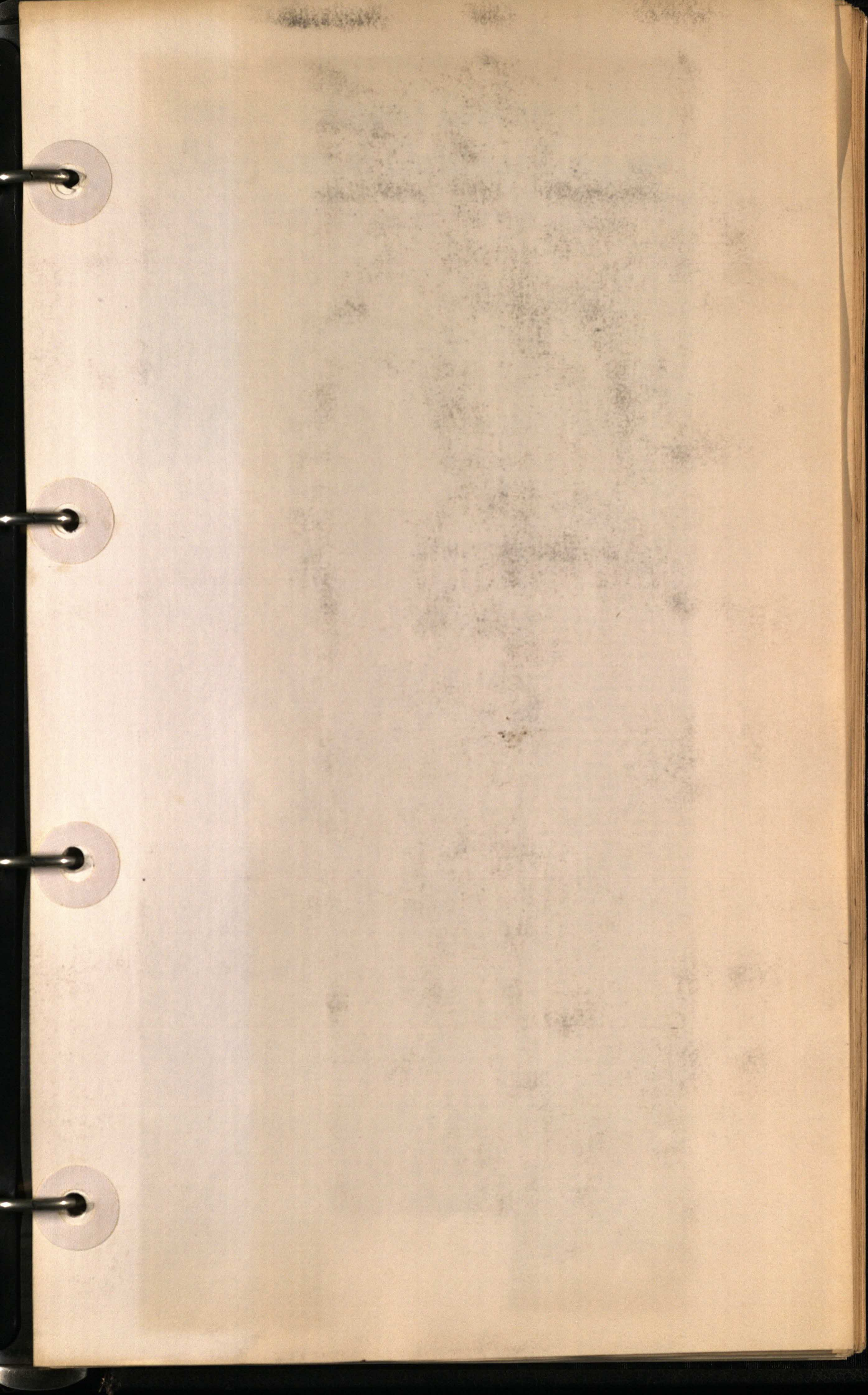




Chuckline Rider Plays 'Santa' S.T. 10-9-49

Bear Sign Dispels Cowcamp Blues, Brings Lots of Christmas Company

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Last Sunday I talked about Andy Adams and his novel of a trail drive, "The Log of a Cowboy." Nothing in this narrative is truer to life or pleasanter to read than the yarns the cowboys tell at night. "The camp fire," Andy Adams wrote, "is to all outdoors life what the evening fireside is to domestic life." As a sample, here is the story of "bear sign" that one of the Circle Dot cowboys told one quiet night on the trail from Texas to Montana.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"This letting yourself get gloomy," said Officer, "reminds me of a time we once had at the JH camp in the Cherokee strip. It was near Christmas, and the work was all done up. The boys had blowed in their summer's wages and were feeling glum all over. This gloomy feeling kept spreading until they actually wouldn't speak to each other. One of them would go out and sit on the wood pile for hours, all by himself, and make a new set of good resolutions. Another would go out and sit on the ground, on the sunny side of the corrals, and dig holes in the frozen earth with his knife. They wouldn't come to meals when the cook called them.

"Miller, the foreman, didn't have any sympathy for them. He hadn't any use for a man who wasn't dead tough under any condition. I've known him to camp his outfit on alkali water, so the men would get out in the morning.

CHUCKLINE RIDER.

"Well, three days before Christmas, just when things were looking gloomiest, there drifted up from the Cheyenne country one of the oldtimers. He was riding the chuckline all right, but Miller gave him a welcome, as he was the real thing. He had been working out in the Panhandle country, New Mexico, and the devil knows where, since he had left that range. He was meaty with news and scary stories. The boys would sit around and listen to him yarn, and now and then a smile would come on their faces. Miller was delighted with his guest. He had shown no signs of letting up at eleven o'clock the first night, when he happened to mention where he was the Christmas before.

"There was a little woman at the ranch," he said, "wife of the owner, and I was helping her get up dinner, as we had quite a number of folks at the ranch. She asked me to make the bear sign—doughnuts, she called them—and I did, though she had to show me how some little. Well, fellows, you ought to have seen them—just sweet enough, browned to a turn, and enough to last a week. All the folks at dinner that day praised them. Since then, I've had a chance to try my own hand several times, and you may not tumble to the diversity of all my accomplishments, but I'm an artist on the bear sign."

THAT'S STRAIGHT.

"That's straight. Making bear sign is my long suit."

"Mouse," said Miller to one of the boys, "go out and bring in his saddle from the stable and put it under my bed. Throw his horse in the big pasture in the morning. He stays here until spring; and the first spear of green grass I see, his name goes on the pay roll. This outfit is shy on men who can make bear sign. Now, I was thinking that you could spread down your blankets on the hearth, but you can sleep with me tonight. You go to work on this specialty of your right after breakfast in the morning."

"The next morning after breakfast, he got the need articles together and went to work. But there was a surprise in store for him. There was nearly a dozen men lying around, all able eaters. By 10 o'clock he began to turn them out as he said he could. When the regular cook had to have the stove to get dinner, the taste which we had had made us ravenous for more. Dinner over, he went at them again in earnest. A boy riding toward the railroad with an important letter dropped in, and he claimed he could only stop for a moment, we stood aside until he had a taste, though he filled himself like a poisoned pup. After eating a solid hour, he filled his pockets and rode away. One of our regular men called after him, 'Don't tell anybody what we got.'

"We didn't get any supper that night. Not a man could have eaten a bite. Miller made him knock off along in the shank of the evening, as he had done enough for one day. The next morning after breakfast he fell to at the bear sign once more. Miller rolled a barrel of flour into the kitchen from the storehouse, and told him to fly at them. 'About how many do you think you'll want?' asked our bear sign man.

MAKE A TUB FULL.

"That big tub full won't be any too many,' answered Miller, 'Some of these fellows haven't had any of this kind of truck since they were little boys. If this gets out, I look for men from other camps.'

"The fellow fell to his work like a thoroughbred, which he surely was. About 10 o'clock two men rode up from a camp to the north, which the boy had passed the day before with the letter. They never went near the dugout, but straight to the kitchen. That movement showed that they were on to the racket. An hour later old Tom Cave rode in, his horse all in lather, all the way from Garretson's camp, 25 miles to the east. The old sinner said that he had been on the frontier same little time, and that there were the best bear sign he had tasted in 40 years. He refused to take a stool and sit down like civilized folks, but stood up by the tub and picked out the one which were a pale brown.

"After dinner our man threw off his overshirt, unbuttoned his red undershirt and turned it in until you could see the hair on his breast. Rolling up his sleeves, he flew at his job once more. He was getting his work reduced to a science by this time. He rolled his dough, cut his dough and turned out the fine brown bear sign to the satisfaction of all.

MORE RIDERS SHOW UP.

"His capacity, however, was limited. About 2 o'clock Doc Langford and two of his peelers were seen riding up. When he came into the kitchen, Doc swore by all that was good and holy that he hadn't heard that our artist had come back to that country. But any one that was noticing could see him edge around to the tub. It was easy to see that he was lying. This luck of ours was circulating faster than a secret amongst women. Our man, though, stood at his post like the boy on the burning deck. When night came on, he hadn't covered the bottom of the tub. When he knocked off, Doc Langford and his men gobbled up what was left. We gave them a mean look as they rode off, but they came back the next day, five strong. Our regular men around camp didn't like it, the way things were going. They tried to act polite to company that way, but we hadn't got a smell the second day. Our man showed no signs of fatigue, and told several good stories that night. He was tough. The next day was Christmas, but he had no respect for a holiday, and made up a large batch of dough before breakfast. It was a good thing he did, for early that morning 'Original' John Smith and four of his peelers rode in from the west, their horses all covered with frost. They must have started at daybreak—it was a good 20 mile ride. They wanted us to believe that they had simply come over to spend Christmas with us. Company that way, you can't say anything. But the easy manners in which they gravitated around that tub—not even waiting to be invited—told a different tale. They were not nearly satisfied by noon.

"Then who should come drifting in as we were sitting down to dinner, but Billy Dunlap and Jim Hale from Quinlin's camp, 30 miles south on the Cimarron. Dunlap always holed up like a bear in the winter, and several of the boys spilled their coffee at sight of him. He put up a thin excuse just like the rest. Any one could see through it. But there is was again—he was company. Lots of us had eaten at his camp and complained of his chuck; therefore, we were nice to him. Miller called our man out behind the kitchen and told him to knock off if he wanted to. But he wouldn't do it. He was clean strain— I'm not talking. Dunlap ate hardly any dinner, we noticed, and the very first batch of bear sign turned out, he loads up a tin plate and goes out and sits behind the storehouse in the sun, all alone in his glory. He satisfied himself out of the tub after that.

"Well, the next day our man filled his tub. He was simply an artist on bear sign."

J. Frank Dobie

Austin American MAY 31 1957

Many times in these spring weeks of 1957 while I have been riding and looking at the spreads of wild flowers, or have sat and rested my eyes upon certain glades of them, the words "jocund company" have danced into my consciousness and made the flowers and me both more gladsome. The wild flowers, thanks be to nature, are there whether a human being receives them or not. William Wordsworth, thanks be to nature also, has made many a human being more receptive. In a way Wordsworth is an addative to the flowers themselves. One day, all at once, he came upon "a crowd,

> A host, of golden daffodils,
> Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
> Fluttering and dancing in the breeze. . . .
> Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
> Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.
>
> The waves beside them danced; but they
> Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
> A poet could not but be gay
> In such a jocund company."

The way to feast is to get ravenously hungry. After all the years of drought, dying trees, barren ground and parched air, the ground itself would seem to have become ravenous for green and color. Rains and more rains came and over vast areas of Texas there has been a prodigality of wild flowers, both in plants and colors, and a luxuriance of leafage that memory can hardly match — because memory fades like the flowers themselves.

"The leafy month of June" is a description from New England. Over most of Texas spring has mostly gone by June, but this year leafing goes on. Foreground, background and ground beneath are all so green that one scarcely notices the brown stark trees that stood out last year as markers of famine.

The earlier weeds covering wornout fields and much bare pasture land have given way to later weed crops more luxuriant than the first. People who have been hoping and waiting for years for rains to cover their land with grass now find weeds on it so dense that the grass can't come up. Some are mowing the weeds; some are waiting for the weeds to die naturally. A chemical condition in the soil is even more essential to good grasses than abundant rain. Nobody seems to know how many generations of weeds are required to make barren ground hospitable to grass.

All wild flowers, I suppose, are classed as weeds. This year I have noticed as never before their colonial nature. Here this species and there that species seems to usurp a patch of earth against all contenders. Contenders who bloom in the territory are so scattered and isolated that they have little voice in the mass say-so, but the most massive and extensive colonies come to boundaries set by soil, other flowers and perhaps more subtle conditions.

The most widespread flats of pink-to-purple verbena may be contained on one side by dull but stubborn broomweed and on the other give way to the white splendor of wild poppies starring the earth. Now comes a sweep of evening-primroses—yellow on one kind of soil, pink on another kind. There are basins of daisies and slopes of coneflowers. More golden than gold and infinitely various in design of petal and combination of hues are the families of gaillardia (firewheel, Indian blanket) and coreopsis (black-eyed Susans), the individuals of each clan banding together, though sometimes a person may in a few steps pass from one claim to another.

Travelers over Texas while the land was still pristine and was mostly covered with primary grasses noted again and again the extraordinary abundance, variety, and beauty of wild flowers. This would seem to mean that many "weeds" and the better grasses are not hostile to each other but are complementary. You don't see the finest wild flowers—weeds—on soils deficient in nitrogen, potash, phosphorous and lime any more than you see the finest grasses there. This spring I have seen veritable lakes of wild verbena on soil that for five years I had supposed too poor to hatch lizard eggs.

Plant life is so astoundingly prodigal of seeds that some seeds seem to be always—always, no matter for how long a time—waiting for the right conditions to germinate and grow. Other kinds of life from man on down hunger for space and wait in the same way to occupy it. I write this from a plot of ground in the hills of Burnet County that we call Cherry Springs, though last year the springs finally dried up and many of the wild cherry trees died. I see sprouts coming up from some of the roots, just as some of the tens of thousands of dead Spanish Oaks over the country are sending up sprouts from the roots.

One bird that I grew up with and have spent many happy hours watching on the wing is the bullbat, more properly called night hawk. Since 1952 I have not seen a bullbat within 15 miles of Cherry Springs. The other evening I saw five bullbats hunting and catching insects right over our front yard and heard that joyful zooming noise they make when they dive for prey.

If five acres of soilless rocks had suddenly been covered with rich sideoats grama, big blue stem and other fine grasses, I could not have felt so happy. Like cowmen locating on fresh range back in the pristine days of free grass, these bullbats are evidently spreading out. Lots of moisture and greenery make lots of insects. The bullbats I saw here could have migrated from the Sixth Street area in Austin, where the lights of evening, drought or no drought, perenially attract insects and these beautiful insect hunters.

Three years ago I knew two bee trees at Cherry Springs. Last year or the year before the bees quit coming to the flowers of irigated honeysuckle. I am sure that the bees in those trees starved to death, though my good neighbor Morris Middleton still has a bee tree. If seasonable weather lasts long enough swarms of bees escaping from man-made hives will probably discover the hollow oaks again.

Despite the dearth of bees, William Butler Yeats's "bee-loud glade" ofted comes into my mind on account of the unaccustomed plentitude of dickcissels and their unending six-sic-sic-ing. Called also "blackthroated bunting," they customarily migrate through Central Texas in the spring to nesting grounds farther north. I became acquainted with them and their notes in Oklahoma. But if the weed crops and accompanying crops of insect life are good, the dickcissels occasionally stop in this part of the country to nest and raise their young. Instead of a "bee-loud glade," this year I have a dickcissel-loud glade.

The change from great dearth to great plenty in rainfall has affected the spirits of people living on and dependent upon the soil as much as it has affected plant life. The economic lift is only a part of the lift that comes from being a part of burgeoning life. The sedge was withered from the lake and no birds sang.

Now the lake—just a dirt tank dry for three years—is full of water surrounded by upspringing sedge; the brilliant-hued dragon flies dart over the water in amorous play as gaily as any fiddler ever fiddled "Coming Through the Rye," and birds are singing all the time, by night as well as by day. Oh, I know that "youth's a stuff will not endure," that all green browns and all blossoms wither, but the rains came and life's here NOW.

Prosperity, Population Rising

Growth of South Plains In Generation Amazing

S-T 9-25-49

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

"Out on the Plains," the Staked Plains, the Llano Estecado, the Great Plains—what a sense of far-awayness, of vastness in space, of remoteness from all human population those varying names used to carry! Cities upon them, oil fields, thousands of farms, millions of acres of cultivated land, highways from east to west and from north to south have all made the plains country a familiar part of America. Yet this country still retains something of the character that filled Coronado and his men with wonder when, more than 400 years ago, they, first of all Europeans, saw it while they rode over the seas of grass without making a track in its density.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have crossed sections of the Great Plains a good many times. This past summer on a trip to Denver, Mrs. Dobie and I decided to take a new and longer route. We drove north along the eastern edge of the Texas Panhandle, through Childress, Shamrock, Perryton, across the Oklahoma Panhandle, which used to be called No Man's Land, into Kansas as far as Garden City, and then westward.

People who have not been there imagine that Denver is in the Rocky Mountains. It is on the highest of the high plains, right under summer snow on tall mountains. I never had been to Garden City. It was familiar to me through the fact that Buffalo Jones lived there while he was roping a few calves out of remnant buffaloes to domesticate. It wasn't a "city" then. Now the country around it is an irrigated garden.

Going west, one climbs constantly and gradually. No view of the Plains is more panoramic than from Lookout Mountain and other elevations around Denver as one gazes eastward. West from Garden City, irrigation soon ceases, and any traveler who knows history—especially the history of erosion—must feel depressed at the sight of so much arid upland recently plowed up for get-rich-quick wheat. After traveling for miles through this too-dry-for-farming land now under cultivation, I turned off into an unfenced plot of pasture, halted, and got out and walked on the turf of short buffalo grass, mixed with grama. That natural grass was as refreshing as a park of trees and meadow surrounded by city houses and traffic.

SOUTH PLAINS GROWING.

But the finest experience of the primitive plains was in western New Mexico. We left Springer on the road to Clayton, then at a filling station called Abbott took a country road running south to Clovis. There are fields along this road, but for 75 miles or more it traverses a ranch country. You see mountains "a look and a half away" to the west. You come to the Canadian breaks, go down 1,000 feet into mesquites, travel through old Spanish grants, then climb up again—out of mesquites—onto the caprock. From it the road slopes gradually down until you are on the South Plains, in the Lubbock country.

Texans to the east do not realize the extent and intensity of development in the South Plains country. Only the Rio Grande Valley equals it in agricultural development. One can travel for hours without being out of sight of a farm house. Except for sandy islands of land, still in sage brush, all the ground is in crops, very rich crops. You feel that prosperity and population are alike booming. The comparatively new city of Lubbock is already as far away from the Plains of buffaloes and seas of pristine grass as London is from the Roman walls that once inclosed its origins. The swiftness of change within a short generation almost stuns the imagination.

I no longer resent change as I once resented it, though I would prefer to live in a country that remained sparsely settled and did not develop. Without being a prophet, I can see the day when by virtue of sheer population, of developed resources, and of its representation of a vast territory, the Texas Technological College at Lubbock will be to the University of Texas what the Los Angeles branch of the University of California is to the original University of California at Berkeley (San Francisco).

RICH AND POPULOUS.

Texas is simply growing too populous and rich to have but one university. Of course, it takes a great deal more than a name and mere numbers to make a real university. It takes more than laboratories, buildings and a pay roll. It mainly takes an outlook that transcends the provincial, and the commercial. This outlook comes slowly, but it comes with developing civilization.

From Lubbock it is 41 miles southeast to Post, where the plains drop off the caprock to a dry, broken sub-plains country growing up in mesquite. From here on for a long way most of the plowed land should have been left in grass.

I'll never forget one night taking a plane in Dallas for Washington and finding on it my dear friend Tom Lea of El Paso. Riding downgrade from Abilene to Coleman I experienced a similar feeling of recognition for a dear friend upon sighting a clump of live oak trees. A few hundred yards on down the road we passed an unpainted house set under live oaks. There were no flowers in the yard, but there were chairs in the shade. The house seemed to belong there. It and the trees invited human beings to linger. It was a very ordinary habitation.

There are many other houses, unpainted, shacklike in structure, under live oak trees between Coleman and the Sabine River to the east and between it and the Gulf of Mexico to the south. They all have a kind of repose, the quality of graciousness.

On the plains in Kansas I saw big, prosperous-looking farm houses painted red, a red that enhanced the heat and glaring light. I did not see one that fitted into the earth around it. Amid endless cultivated fields on the South Plains of Texas one may see many farm houses beside new automobiles that seem to be there in order to relieve the people from staying in the houses. Live oak trees don't grow on the plains but other trees will grow there. The trees and lawns of Lubbock have in recent years extended the range of several species of birds that now make their summer homes there. In mass, however, the Great Plains are still beyond the charm, the homeiness and the graciousness that a live oak tree can give to a poor unpainted shack.

Throughout Life

Pleasant Memories Refresh, Enrich Life

STAR TELEGRAM 9-23-1956

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

We constantly refer to certain experiences, encounters, individuals, etc. as "memorable." If they really are memorable, then they belong to the present and future as well as to the past. They represent little spots of time saved from the oblivion belonging to most of the past. For instance, we all lived through last June. How little out of the 30 days and nights of June, 1956, remains definite in the minds of most of us! If life is cherished, then every distinct memory of something good out of past life is an item in the total of assets. Leigh Hunt distilled the idea into eight famous lines:

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in:
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kissed me.

Memories are not an escape from the dead present for obsolete people. When I feel dull and bored I can't remember anything stirring. When I and my mind are most active is when I remember the most actively. Then the past comes up adding itself to the present and life is at its apex. Truly wonderful it is that a person can refresh and enrich himself throughout a lifetime by calling up the bright spots from the receding roadway of experience. The other day I had a letter from Mr. Paul Gafford of Jacksboro, written to share with me an experience he had been refreshed by, in memory, many times.

COYOTES ARE CURIOUS.

About 50 years ago while coyotes were very plentiful in the country and he as a youth of 19 was very familiar with them and knew that they never harm people, he was riding a bicycle alone across the country one fall night, going home from church. The bicycle had no headlight and he didn't need it to see the road—just a wagon road—for the moon was up. However, when he got to a creek bottom with tall heavy timber on both sides of the road, all view of the ground was cut off. He got off the bicycle to push it and feel his way with his feet. He had crossed the creek and was walking with one hand in the saddle, pushing, and the other on the handlebar, the bicycle a little forward of him, when he came to where the timber was less high and thick and he could again see a good deal of the road.

Then, to quote his words, "I met two coyotes coming my way. I know they were coyotes and not dogs. I had seen coyotes all my life. When I was about six feet away from these two, they stopped and so did I. I wasn't afraid in the least and they didn't seem afraid either. They just seemed curious. A small tool bag hanging from the frame of my bicycle held some small wrenches, a pair of pinchers (called pliers now) and several other metal items. These things made a tinkling noise as I pushed the bicycle over the rough road, and I judge that form of music aroused the curiosity of the coyotes. They looked and acted like a couple of youngsters.

"After I had stood there a few minutes in silence looking at them and they in silence looking at me, I picked up a light stick and threw it at them. They just jumped to one side a little and then got back in the road. Now I took a firmer grip on the saddle of the bike and rolled it up near enough to give a shove that sent the front wheel against the nearest coyote.

They both jumped out to the side of the road, not over 10 feet away, and stopped. I rolled my bike on up the road a hundred yards or so, the tool kit tinkling, while the two coyotes walked or trotted along even with me, keeping off the 10-foot distance. By now the timber had thinned away so that moonlight made the road plain. I got on the bike and pedaled hard for about a hundred yards and then stopped to look back. The coyotes were not in sight. I guess their inquisitiveness had been satisfied."

NEW EXPERIENCE SHARED.

As a brother to the coyote I find this instance of coyote curiosity and of feeling of kinship to man diverting, but that is not the main point of the memory. The memory brings back a set of circumstances at a particular place at a particular time more intimately associated with the rememberer than with the coyotes. I remember riding on a train from London to Dover, to take a boat for Calais, several months after World War II ended. My senses were all quick. I was leaving a land and some people I love. I got to noticing how starlings walked on the grass, sometimes in shade and sometimes in sunshine. I looked out the window watching them all the way to Dover. Now when I see a starling here in Texas on the grass, while the bird is with us for the winter, the sight of starlings on that ride to Dover and the day and night before the ride and much else connected with them come back to me, and the past is now.

Willard Williams, now in the Veterans Hospital at Houston, has sent me this memory. "Late one Sunday afternoon I was riding through mesquite brush alongside the dry, sandy bed of a creek. At a curve I heard sounds of groaning and grunting and reined my horse into the sand to muffle the sound of his hoofs. Moving on slowly, I discovered the groaners and grunters. They were two bug armadillos in battle. They stood on their hind legs circling each other. Now and then one would make a dash at the other, and then each would try to lash his opponent with his tail. This lashing made a popping sound. After several minutes one hit the other across the head with his tail and turned him a complete flip. The downed armadillo lay there as if dead, while the winner stalked around him sniffing the air. Then he walked off into the brush. Soon the loser got up and walked off in the opposite direction."

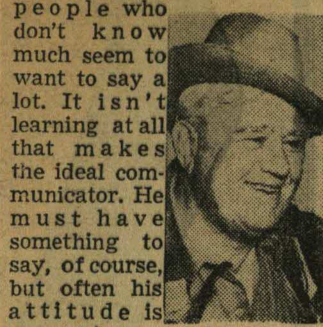
This is the first account of an armadillo fight that I have heard. I am thinking of riding down that creek and hearing a noise and then coming upon something that gives the ride, the creek and the brush a memorable significance.

J. Frank Dobie San Antonio

Some Samples of 'Communications'

Light 5-11-58

Some people know and don't want to say; some people who don't know much seem to want to say a lot. It isn't learning at all that makes the ideal communicator. He must have something to say, of course, but often his attitude is more important than either idea or fact. For instance, in a note dated April 21, 1958, Fred Turner of Brownfield, Texas, says: "Planting time is here on the south plains, and we are waiting for daylight to start work. To me, it is wonderful to see the beginning of a new day." Just those two sentences made me experience drinking coffee in a ranch kitchen before daylight, waiting for dawn to light the way for riding in a wonderful new world.



DOBIE

Some communicators etch pictures that stay bright in the memories of darkness. I have a letter from Isaac Rosenbaum of Detroit, occasioned by his reading a book entitled "The Voice af the Coyote." Here is the picture he makes—a picture he's been living with for more than 40 years and that I expect to live with a little myself.

"In the summer of 1916 I was stationed in Arizona on the Mexican border with the First U. S. Cavalry at a place called Naco, across the line from Naco, Sonora. I was a corporal in charge of company patrol. There was a trail running from Naco to Ft. Huachuca that I used to cover in two days. On the first day I used to camp on the north side of the San Pedro river in the vicinity of Monument No. 98. I remember a little knoll this side of the tracks of the El Paso and Southwestern rr., the tracks running parallel with the trail. Every night at about 9 p. m. when the Golden State Limited arrived at the junctions of track and trail, a lone coyote would seat himself on the knoll and watch the train go by. I covered this trail dozens of times between 1916 and 1917, coming and going, and never failed to see Mr. Coyote in his accustomed spot at train time. Like him, I enjoyed the sight of the lit-up monster crawling along the dusty desert on a purple night."

Human Conduct

Some communicators are more concerned with human conduct than with pictures. Their gorge rises in righteous indignation against pious pretenders and other frauds. Here is a sample from a friend living in the direction of the Gulf of Mexico: "I live and study in a small town where conformity is the rule. I am a nonconformist. The town is 50 per cent religious fanaticism and 50 per cent religiosity. Long ago I read myself out of such ignorant, superstitious beliefs; I hate hyprocrisy and I express my opinion freely."

Mr. Will Clayton of Houston, one-time undersecretary of state and assistant secretary of commerce, is a most articulate communicator. When he recently advised his fellow Texans to stop trying to promote the "special interest of certain oil producers against the national interest," he illustrated a form of critical communication that's become rarer and rarer since the end of World War II. Anybody in Texas nowdays who communicates an idea on economics not supported by local oil producers lays himself liable to the charge of being "subversive." I have not heard the founder of the mighty Anderson-Clayton co. accused of being subversive. In some realistic remarks on oil and oil producers quoted in Time magazine for March 31, 1958, he was merely illustrating a form of reasoning almost lost to press and politicians.

Ralph Velich, a taxidermist, of Omaha, Neb., writes as follows: "I am busy polishing Texas longhorns that came from Africa. I was in North Africa during the war. I saw the native longhorns, and they ship the horns to this country. The west is flooded with them. It is a laugh to see 'Texas longhorns' proudly displayed in taverns, etc."

From Africa

The purported longhorns that I see hung up in barber shops and other public places in Texas are more from Africa, I believe, than from Texas or Mexico. I notice that nearly all these horns go straight out so that the spread from tip to tip is much wider than it would be if the horns retained their natural curves. I understand that a horn can be steamed and straightened. One way to see that nature's horns are not falsified is to have them on the skull.

Here's Albert Field of Lampasas, Texas, an articulate friend to all wildlife. Not long ago I gave you his story on two pet crows. He writes me approvingly of an article on the roadrunner that the May issue of "Arizona Highways" has. He goes on to lament that any person who calls himself a sportsman would kill one of these birds, even if a Roadrunner does now and then destroy a quail egg. He concludes: "Along back in January, a lieutenant from Ft. Hood kept badgering me to take him to some of the Indian camp sites around here. I finally agreed to take him along, and one Sunday we walked from the road to the mouth of Lynch's creek, where there was an old site. While we were climbing around on top of the bluff this lieutenant spied a small gray lizard sunning himself on a rock. He immediately grabbed a rock and he was going to kill him, but when I yelled to let the lizard alone, he dropped the rock like a hot potato. I proceeded to lecture the lieutenant on the useless destruction of such a harmless creature, and he finally admitted I was right in protecting the lizard. He just hadn't looked at the matter in the right manner, he said. Maybe that's the way a lot of people are towards their fellow creatures."

New Mexico

Ned Armstrong is with a public relations firm in New York. He likes to remember New Mexico especially—and he likes to communicate to a sympathetic person. He makes me want to pass on what he communicates to me. Thus he writes:

"New Mexico is an awful place for memories. People remember things there—with all those eroded mountains and mesas and timelessness—things they never saw or felt anywhere else.

"I often remember what Bill Shuster told me once—how he came home from World War I, got demobilized, took a train to Philadelphia and was approaching Independence Square—he had his Saturday Evening Post art job waiting for him—and suddenly said: 'I don't want this. I want to go to Santa Fe, N. M., and live the rest of my life there.' He had $57, and he and his wife went to Santa Fe and they're still there, living the good life. He is a fine artist, and makes Zozobra for the folks for fiesta every Labor day weekend. (Zozobra is gloom, and the burning of gloom is the symbol of the fiesta. I suspect Bill puts a lot of strong personal feeling into ordering those fireworks for Zozobra every year and listens to them explode and rocket off with mounting inner satisfaction)."

'Ridiculously Sentimental'

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

'Honest Gambler' Just Another Fiction Engendered in Old West

MAY 31 1959

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Nobody but ignoramuses and zealots not looking for truth will ascribe the beginning of any human belief or attitude to any particular time. I don't know when society began Robin-hooding gamblers. I do know that after Bret Harte's "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" was published in 1869, the gambler of the West entered into the same process of being whitewashed that Billy the Kid and his kind have enjoyed.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The hero of Bret Harte's ridiculously sentimental and absurdly false-to-life story is named Oakhurst. He always wore "neat boots, which he dusted with a freshly laundered handkerchief." He wore mustaches as immaculately polished as his boots. He did not drink, for drinking "interfered with a profession which required coolness, impassiveness, and presence of mind." He was a very light sleeper. Indeed, sometimes he didn't sleep for a week at a time, all the while maintaining a poker face.

* * *

'CONFESSIONS' OF GAMBLER.

Some of the virtuous citizens who had lost money to him at poker were in favor of the hanging they had given two other "improper persons." Other virtuous citizens, however, had won money from him, and they voted for exile. Accordingly, he, an old drunkard, and two soiled ladies were cast out. While camped in the mountains, they were joined by an innocent pair of lovers. Then a snowstorm came. The drunkard stole away with their horses and mules. They had only a limited amount of provisions. The bolder of the soiled ladies starved herself to death in order to save food for the more innocent. Oakhurst went off under a tree, shot himself with a pistol and thus did not consume any more of the precious provisions. He wrote an interesting epitaph for himself. He is the hero of the story.

A long time ago E. L. Shettles of Austin, who had been a gambler in big games in New Orleans, Houston, Little Rock, Memphis and other places, who had got converted, became a preacher and then presiding elder in the Methodist Church and then a most knowledgeable book dealer, told me that there never had been an honest gambler. He considered romancing on honest gamblers as moonshiny as romancing on the democracy of big slave owners.

Now, a book entitled "Long John Dunn of Taos," by Max Evans, published by the Western Lore Press of Los Angeles, contains the reminiscences of a gambler who gives the lowdown on gambler ethics. The book might have been entitled "The Confessions of a Gambler Who Never Claimed to Be Honest." John Dunn was born in Victoria in 1857. According to his narrative, he was cowboy, trail driver, bronc buster, and prize-winning rodeo roper, but his specific reminiscences are mostly on gambling. This is something fresh in Western writing. In some ways John Dunn reminds me of Chaucer's Pardouner, who went over the country more than 500 years ago selling pigs' bones as holy relics of the saints and revealing to the other Canterbury pilgrims his cunning akalawagry.

"In a big poker game that night," John Dunn recollects, "I had cards in my sleeves, my hat, coat, and anywhere else I could stash them. So did everybody else that knew how. When the game broke up next morning me and my pardner bought the very saloon the poker game was held in."

* * *

DEAL WITH BARTENDER.

Another time he made a trade to cut the bartender in on winnings if the bartender would get his opponent under the influence of liquor. The bartender succeeded. He joined a gambling troupe traveling over the country with roulette wheels and other professional equipment. He was supposed to be in partnership with them, but he secretly "jimmied a roulette wheel so that it would fall on certain numbers." Then he began betting with his partners and fleeced them out of $7,000 on this fixed roulette wheel.

He found Goldfield, Nev., wild, wild over any kind of gold. To quote him, "One of the wild women by the name of Dora called me aside one night, and put a proposition to me. She said she was sleeping with a mine owner who had made a big strike. She wanted to act as a shill, to steer him into a game at my table. She, of course, was asking a price, and the price was a 50-50 split. I cut her down to a third, and the deal was on.

"She started out like I've seen it done a thousand times, by getting her man drunk. It didn't take long, even though we were serving watered-down whisky. He lost rapidly. Dora, with the mine owner's money, played and, of course, lost heavily.

"Later, after she had put him to bed in a passed out condition, she came back for her cut. I gave it to her, and thought to myself that the mine owner had paid a hell of a high price for a bed partner."

John Dunn was as cold as organized charity—or as organized lobbyists—in explaining why he always kept sober. "Gambling gets into a man's blood so he won't work at anything else. Many a gambler has been shot from under the table trying to be crooked with fingers that just weren't fast enough. The hours are long and man-killing. I've seen men play for days and nights with nothing to eat, and nothing to drink but whisky. Whisky has pushed more gambling money across the table to sober men than all the dumb players on earth."

When John Dunn died, Doughbelly Price wrote in the Taos, N. M., weekly newspaper called El Crepesculo as follows: "John Dunn was at his best, I think, behind a roulette wheel or a monte table, where you never got more than was coming you and if you didn't watch it was less. In later years when most men of his age would be complaining and resting at home, I have seen John Dunn stand for 10 hours at a roulette wheel and never look up, never asleep on the job, and never over-looking a chance to slip you a short stack of chips. If caught, he didn't argue. 'Shore, shore,' he would say, 'you can't blame a man for trying.' "

Well, I think I've made a kind of footnote to that "American classic" entitled "The Outcasts of Poker Flat."

J. Frank Dobie San Antonio Light 5-4-1938

'Constructive' Memory Dug of Cyclone

Now which is worse: Not being able to remember at all, or being able to remember all that never was? For cheerio purposes give me the "constructive memory." As John Henry Faulk was saying, his friend Bill of South Austin needs a little doubting before he can take off the ground and soar.

From here on John Henry Faulk is letting Bill of constructive memory soar.

"Well, I remember when I'se working out at Manchaca with a crew on the Katy railroad. A boy got killed. A load of cross ties fell on him and crushed him; so we buried him out there about 50 foot off the Manchaca road; nobody knowed who his folks was er anything. About a week later I'se going by the grave late one afternoon. I remember the hame chain broke on the mules and I pulled the team up and stopped to fasten it, and I heard somebody calling—calling from that grave. I went over there and listened and I heard this feller—I recognized his voice—sayin', 'Let me out, let me out.'

"Well I drove on down the road to Tom Beckett's place and pulled up where he was chopping stovewood and said, 'I think that feller's still alive up there in the grave. Don't you reckon we ought to dig it up?' He said, 'Aw, he wouldn't be.' And I said, 'Well, if you got a shovel, I'm willin' to dig if you are.'

Still Heard

"He went back up there with me; we stopped the mules and got out, and went over there and could still hear him. 'Let me out. Let me out,' he kept saying. And you could see the grave just kinda risin' and fallin', just kinda risin' and fallin'. Tom Beckett said, 'Well, I reckon to dig'. And so we dug, got that feller out and he was just as live as I am now. In fact he shook my hand for 30 minutes and said 'Thank you so much, I don't know what I'd 'a done if you hadn't let me out.'"

"Bill," I said, "I don't believe a man could live six foot under earth in a coffin for a week. I just don't believe that's possible."

"That feller thanked me every time he seen me after that for years. That's all I know."

One of the memorable events during Bill's life was the cyclone that struck Austin about 35 years ago. According to Bill the cyclone divided north of Austin, one prong of it hitting the Colorado river near Deep Eddy. It sucked the Colorado river dry for a half mile each direction—so dry that a person could walk around on the bed of the river till the waters ran back together. The other prong of the cyclone hit a bluff and bounced over Travis Heights or it would have wiped all of South Austin off the map. When a cyclone hits a bluff it'll bounce for a mile and a half up in the air and then come right back down as soon as it gets a chance.

Question

"Bill, what causes cyclones?" I asked.

"Well, Johnny, hit's just like air in a pipe." (He's never at a loss, scientific or otherwise, for an explanation.) "It's like air in a pipe. You can pump air into a pipe, stop up one end of it and pump air into the other. That pipe's gonna give way and blow up. Well, there are pockets in the air that way, and sometimes them things'll get so tight, jest swell and swell, till finally one of 'em gives loose and it throws air in a circle and it'll start circling and there's your cyclone for you. And you better stay out of its way if it's comin' in your direction.

"Well, when the cyclone come along that hit Travis Heights, I'se out at the Woodward Body works. I seen it coming past St. Edward's college. A red-headed feller working with me yelled, 'Cyclone coming!' and he broke and run plum the other side of Barton Springs. And then he seen that prong of the cyclone sucking the Colorado river dry at Deep Eddy, and broke and run back. All this 3-or-4-mile run in the time it took the cyclone to move maybe 300 yards from St. Edward's college over to Woodward Body works, where I was working.

"It was dippin' down and around," Bill said, "and you'd say it looked like trash. But it was really houses and trees way up in the air. The way it skipped some places was curious. There was a stack of sawdust right next to a water trough. The cyclone picked up that trough, didn't spill a drop of water out of it, twirled it way up in the air and didn't even stir that sawdust setting right next to it. That's what a cyclone 'll do.

Baby's Plight

"My nephew, Paul Johnson, was standing out in the back yard and his mama said, 'You'd better come in the house. There's a cyclone coming.' Paul's holding his little baby brother—not more'n 6 months old—never did learn to walk till she's 3. Paul was a-holdin him in his arms in the back yard watching that cyclone come. The thing whipped down and sucked that baby's diaper off and never touched the baby nor Paul. Baby was jest as naked as the day he was born when that cyclone took off again, before Paul knowed what was happening. And his mama said, 'I told you not to stand out there when a cyclone was coming.'

"Well, they had an old dominecker rooster that made a run for the hen-house when he seen the cyclone—animals know when cyclones is coming. While this old dominecker was stretched out flat a-running, the cyclone caught him and took every feather he owned—picked him jest as clean as the palm of your hand—wasn't but one feather left and that was a tailfeather—one tailfeather. And that old rooster died of embarrassment. He wouldn't go round the other chickens after that.

Twirled 'Em

"The cyclone reached into a harness shed where my sister had a banty hen setting on 12 eggs in a little ole shackly box. It sucked that box and that banty hen and her eggs all out together and just twirled 'em. Paul said he seen 'em go and said it looked like an airplane propeller jest a whirling yonder and he said, 'Well, that's goodbye banty hen and eggs.' That cyclone jest set 'em down as easy as a tabby cat carrying a kitten near Onion creek under a big mattress that it blowed outa somebody's house. It was sorter humped up over the box to leave way for air and for walking out. It kept that banty hen warm and kept that hail—you know it hailed awful hard during that cyclone—from hitting her, I reckon, because she brought off 11 chickens outa' them eggs jest two days later. Their feathers was kinda twirley around on 'em—the fuzz was twirled around where they twirled around inside them eggs.

"Another funny thing about that cyclone was the way it hit old man Hardkoff's dairy. He was milking—it hit late in the afternoon, about 4 or 5 o'clock. He had all his cows' heads—24 Holstein cows—in the stanchions. It jerked them cows' bodies off the heads—the heads jest flopped down—24 heads—and he never did find what went with them cows, never did find a single piece of ary a carcass. Heads just laying there in the stanchions.

"And it took a watch out of old man Adcock's—he was working there at Woodward body works—it took a watch out of his overhall pocket and slipped it into another feller's pocket. This feller jest run his hand in his coat pocket, said, 'Well, I declare, here's your watch and chain.' They thought it'd killed old man Adcock, but after he come to he looked for his watch, started beating around on the front of 'im and found it where the feller had put it.

"None of what I'm telling you got into the papers. They didn't put the best part of that cyclone into the papers."

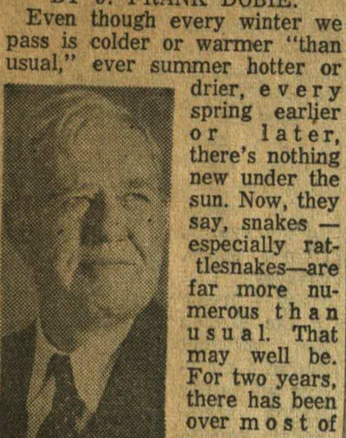
Latin Poet-Historian Tells 'em

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM JUN 7 1959

Lucan's Snake Tales Put Texans in the Shade

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Even though every winter we pass is colder or warmer "than usual," ever summer hotter or drier, every spring earlier or later, there's nothing new under the sun. Now, they say, snakes — especially rattlesnakes—are far more numerous than usual. That may well be. For two years, there has been over most of Texas a great abunance of foods for all kinds of wildlife. But snakes never have been as numerous in this part of the world as they were in Libya during the time of Julius Caesar.



J. FRANK DOBIE.

"It would," wrote the Latin poet-historian Lucan, who lived in 65 A. D., "be churlish to challenge the authority of legend and expect poets to be truthful." Lucan's "Pharsalia: Dramatic Episodes of the Civil Wars" is now translated into excellent English by Robert Graves and published, along with many other classics, in paper-back form by Penguin Books, Inc. The civil wars were those in which Julius Caesar triumphed and then was stabbed to death.

In vivid narrative Lucan has Cato march 10,000 soldiers for two months in the Sahara Desert, whereas in fact, comments Robert Graves, Cato's bold expedition was over in six days. But it took the long, waterless march to meet all the snakes authorized by legend, and Lucan was as possessed by the snake idea as any preacher on Eve has ever been. He has Cato make an oration to his army on the edge of the desert, saying: "I will lead this march across the shifting sands, careless though the sun strike my head or serpents block my path."

* * *

SNAKES GALORE.

Cato had a propheitc soul. To quote Lucan, "In the very middle of the desert they discovered a spring, solitary and abundant, but beset by so numerous an army of serpents that they practically hid the ground; thirsty asps crowded around the lip of the pool, and dipsads wriggled about on the bottom. Cato was aware that his men would die if they shrank from drinking, so he reassured them at once. 'Men,' he cried, 'do not be deceived! The pool may look deadly, but have no hesitation in filling your cups! Snakes are poisonous only when they sink their fangs into a man and thus infect his blood with their venom; this water is quite harmless.' He took a gulp of the supposed poison; and it was the sole occasion when he asked to drink before anyone else."

Among numerous species of snakes named by Lucan, the asp, the seps, the basilisk, the prester, the dipsas and the haemorrhois were spectacularly deadly. Here are some effects from poison out of these Libyan serpents.

"One Aulus, a young Tuscan standard-bearer, trod on a dipsas, which turned its head and bit him in the foot. The bite was not painful and the wound seemed harmless enough, but the hidden venom began to boil and a devouring flame spread through the marrow of his bones, drying up the moisture which surrounded his vital organs, and the saliva which kept this tongue wet, and the sweat in his pores, and the very tears in his eyes. Aulus was on fire and neither legionary pride nor Cato's urgent orders could restrain him from rushing madly about in quest of the water for which his poisoned heart craved. Had the poor fellow plunged into the Don, the Rhome, or the Po, or drank the Nile in flood, their streams would never have quenched the flame. Yet the dipsas did not deserve the entire credit for this hideous feat; the Libyan climate assisted it consierably. Aulus scrabbled at the sand, digging deeper and deeper in search for moisture, then fled to the Gulf and gulped the salt water, which relieved but did not satisfy his insane thirst. Still unaware that he had been poisoned, he opened his swollen veins with a sword and drank the blood that poured out.

* * *

FLESH MELTS AWAY.

"Not long after this, a soldier named Sabellus felt the barbed fangs of a tiny seps fixed in his leg. He pulled it off and pinned it to the ground with the point of his javelin. This seps is the most destructive of all snakes, despite its smallness. The skin next to the bite began to break and the flesh to melt away until the white thigh-bone showed; then, as the wound widened farther, the body swam in corruption and slowly disappeared, starting with the calves, knees and thighs. Black matter dripped from the thighs; the muscles which held the belly in place snapped and the guts slid out. Sabellus, in fact, slowly trickled into the ground, and there was unexpectedly little of him left, because the seps' venom reduces the limbs by a chemical process to a small pool of filth. His anatomy was for a while revealed with painful clearness: ligaments, sinews, the structure of the lungs, the bones of the chest, and all the inner organs. Gradually the strong shoulders and arms and were snow when the warm south wind blows, or wax exposed to the sun. It is not much to record that the flesh was eaten away—that happens whenever corpses are cremated — but no pyre reduces bones to nothing as this venom did. They vanished as completely as the intestines. So we must award the palm to the seps as the most destructive snake in Africa: The others all kill, but the seps alone disposes of the corpse.

"Nasidius, once a Marsian farmer, died in a very different manner: By expansion, not liquefaction. When a fiery prester struck at him, his face turned red as a glowing coal and began to swell until the features could not be recognized. Then the virus spread and puffed him out to the gigantic proportions of a ship's canvas in a storm. The man himself was buried deep inside this bloated mass, and the brestplate flew off like the lid of a fiercely steaming cauldron. Soon Nasidius became a great mountain of flesh in which limbs were indistinguishable from trunk; no vultures or wild beasts could have ventured to feast on him, and even his comrades dared not consign him to a pyre. They fled in horror and, as they glanced back, the body was still swelling in every direction.

* * *

HEART NUMBED.

"But stranger sights than these awaited them. Tullus, a brave soldier with an intense admiration for Cato, was bitten by a savage haemorrhois. The poisoned red blood spouted from all his limbs at once; he resembled one of those metal statues with pipes inside them which, when the saffron-water is turned on to perfume the theater, spray it out from numerous tiny holes in their bodies. Tullus' tears were blood, and blood gushed from mouth, nostrils, and all the other natural apertures; he even sweated streams of blood, so that his body seemed one great wound.

"Then an asp bit one Laevus, and numbed his heart. Laevus felt no pain, but at once lapsed into unconsciousness; and his ghost went down like a sleepwalker to join those of his dead comrades. The wizards of Sais in the Delta, who harvest a deadly plant resembling sticks of Arabian incense and doctor wine-cups with it, can not kill so swiftly as that.

"Next, a javelin-snake, coiled on a withered tree some distance away, launched itself at the head of a soldier named Paulus. Though not poisonous, it killed him instantly by passing straight through his temples; those present sowre that the flight of the Balearic sling bolt or the Scythian arrow was slow by comparison.

"One Murrus, used his spear to split a basilisk, but the poison ran up the shaft into his right hand; the unfortunate man, however, at once drew his sword with the left and lopped off the whole forearm at a stroke, thereby saving his life. He stood watching the disintegration of his own flesh as it lay at his feet."

All modern yarn-tellers on rattlesnakes can now take a back seat and rest for a while.

STAR-TELEGRAM JUN 1 1958

Mayhaw Jelly Is Mighty Fine, But Agrito Makes the Best in the World

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

In the first place, I'll have to say that I've never seen a mayhaw that I know of. All I know about mayhaws is through Archer Fullingim, of the Kountze News, at Kountze, Texas, which is in the Big Thicket country. Not long ago Fullingim sent me three glasses of mayhaw jelly as beautiful to look at as any wine in the world and as savory as any homemade jelly from wild fruit can be. The best jelly in the world, of course, is homemade and the best of the best is from wild fruit.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have never met the editor of the Kountze News, but I guess what he looks like from a cartoon heading his weekly editorial output, which is entitled "The Printer Fires Both Barrels." The editor and publisher of this newspaper always refers to himself as "the Printer." At the top of the first page of the newspaper is a drawing of an armadillo on one side and of a catfish on the other side. I can't claim to be a reader of newspaper editorials. I very seldom read the editorials in the New York Times, which comes to our house every day, but I read the editorials of the Kountze News every week, and I doubt if there's another editorial writer in Texas who puts as much juice and vinegar, common sense, fire and laughter into his editorials as Archer Fullingim. Here's a sample:

* * *

FRUIT SCARCE.

"We have received a mimeographed statement entitled 'From the Desk of Governor Price Daniel.' If you have never received one, I assure you that it gives you a funny feeling to get a letter from a mere desk. How in the heck does he make that desk turn out letters? I would like to go down some time and see how he does it. But what would be more interesting would be to hear the governor justify the use of such English. Next thing you know, he will be taking up Ike's new pet word, 'finalize.' "

But back to mayhaws. According to an article that "the Printer" wrote for the Kountze News on May 8, 1958, he puts up about 150 pints of mayhaw jelly a year, most of it to give away. In past years mayhaws have sold around $1 a gallon, but this year on account of the enormous crop and on account of many people's being out of jobs, the gathering has been so big that the price went down to 35 cents a gallon. It doesn't make any difference who owns land growing mayhaws in East Texas, the crop belongs to anybody who gets in and gathers.

When I was a boy on our ranch in Live Oak County, we had almost no store-bought fruit—only oranges and apples at Christmas. We had two or three pomegranate bushes, and when the fruit was ripe ate it and made pomegranateade. We thought the berries off mulberry trees a great treat. The chief native fruits were, and still are, mustang grapes and agrito berries. (Some people persist in calling agrito "agarita.") There were a few sandhill plums also, but I think the drouth killed them all out. The mustang grapes covered trees and bushes in different places along Ramirenia Creek, and as soon as the grapes were a little bigger than buckshot, we boys would start gathering them for mama to make pies and cobblers. While they were still green, she made quantities of green grape catsup. Store-bought tomato catsup has always seemed to have a pallid, lily-livered taste compared with the pungent mustang grape catsup.

* * *

BLISTERING JUICE.

When the grapes got ripe, my mother made gallons of preserves and also jam out of them. I remember one year my brother Elrich and I rode horseback to Ramirenia Creek to gather ripe mustang grapes. We gathered two or three bushels and tied them to our saddles to ride home. The juice ran out on the way and one of my legs was blistered by that juice. The only way to eat a ripe mustang grape is to peel it into the mouth and not let the juice get on the lips. It's this acid, acrid, sharp juice that distinguishes all products of the mustang grape, no matter how much sugar is put in. I like the juice of the mustang grape better than any domestic grape, and the wine is out of this world. We never made any, but my father's mother always had a jug or two around for medicinal purposes. Fifteen or 20 years ago a student of mine from Blanco County brought me a jug of mustang grape juice, and I've been drinking to her health ever since, though not in mustang grape juice.

No feature of the landscape is more beautiful than the mustang grape vine draped over a tree. Of course, it will kill a tree eventually. It puts up a stronger growth than the possum, or winter, grape growing wild. This possum or winter grape doesn't thrive in the brush country where the mustang grape thrives if it has a little extra dampness.

About the first, if not the very first, blooming shrub in the area where it grows is the agrito, with thorned leaves designed to defend both fruit and bush. I've seen it bloom at Christmas time in South Texas. We called the fruit, which is rich red when ripe, wild currant. I remember while I was at Southwestern University at Georgetown, the agrito was ripening at commencement time, but when I got down home, the fruit was all gone. We children considered a bowl of agrito berries with sugar and cream superior to what some people consider strawberries.

* * *

HARD PICKING.

It always seemed to me that rattlesnakes liked to be around agrito bushes when the fruit was in season. Weevils and other bugs got into the fruit and caused it to fall. There's always somebody to eat everybody else, and maybe the rattlesnakes go to the agrito bushes to eat the eaters of the insect-infested berries. Picking the berries is a slow, prickly job. The orthodox method is to spread a sheet or some other cover under a bush and to thrash the bush with a stick—a broomstick is good. As part of the thrashing, all of the worm-eaten berries and a great many leaves fall onto the sheet with the good berries. By jiggling the sheet, the leaves will be on top and can be lifted off—preferably with gloved hands. It takes wind to make winnowing effective, but the best way to get rid of the light worm-and-weevil-eaten berries is to pour the whole gathering into a bucand then to let the fruit pour out into another bucket or maybe a tub, the wind blowing the light stuff away, the good fruit falling. A great deal of hand picking will follow this. It's a job to get a gallon of good agrito berries.

I wouldn't undertake to say what is the best jelly in the world any more than I would undertake to say what's the best poem in the world. I know what's the best jelly for me, and that's agrito jelly. For several years there hasn't been much of a crop, but there's a fine crop this year, and I expect to be eating agrito jelly on hot biscuits within a week.

Indian Trouble Thrown In

JUL 1 9 1959

Warfare on Wolves in Early Days Good Basis for Storytelling Art

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I don't think for a minute that storytellers are a vanished class of people, although the more there is of television, radio, and other machined ways of conveying manufactured amusement to the populace, the less demand there is for individual storytellers. Their voices tend to be drowned out. The big pay sponsors don't want them; they want something slick and machined. Anyhow, individual tellers about Longhorns, traildriving, the great wolves, and other features of a vanished frontier have also vanished.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

One of them that I used to listen to with delight was Bob Castlebury of Vernon. I came to know him, I suppose, along in the 1920's. He was born in Lamar County, in 1861, his father a freighter, and went west while he was quite young. He cowboyed up in Indian Territory before it became a part of the state of Oklahoma. This is one of the narratives that I took down maybe an hour or two after he related it to me in 1941.

In 1888 Bob Castlebury went up on the Canadian River in Indian Territory with one of three herds of Laureles steers totaling 10,000. His was the first herd to be delivered, and B. Hopkins, manager, ordered him and another cowboy to take wagon and horses, with supplies, to the Antelope Hills and there make camp, to await a strong force of men who would be sent down soon to war on lobos. The wolves were very numerous and were depredating heavily on cattle. Every night somewhere on the range they would round up a bunch of cattle, cut hamstrings of one or more of the fattest, and feast. They never bothered any such tripe as a broken-legged yearling.

* * *

INVITATION REFUSED.

Just as Castlebury and his companion reached Antelope Hills, a range rider they met informed them that about two weeks back Indians had in that vicinity killed a cowboy who had stolen some Indian horses. The fellow with Castlebury quit, said he simply was not going to lay out alone in the hills inviting Indians to murder him. Bob decided to stick it out.

He made camp not far from water, but every night he would go out some distance from the wagon and spread his pallet in the tall grass to sleep. The grass was waist high. One morning he awoke just as it was getting light enough to see, raised up to pull his boots on, and saw six big lobos sitting on their haunches in a kind of half-circle, gazing at him. They were not 100 feet away. Bob said he did not take time to pull on his boots. He took out for the wagon barefooted and did not waste any time looking back until he was up in the wagon. When he did look back, he could not see a single lobo. They were all invisible in the high grass and he did not know whether they had followed him or not. After this, he decided to risk Indians rather than the big wolves, and so slept in the wagon.

Within a few days 30 men and 300 horses arrived to make the campaign against lobos. The Laureles Company was paying a bounty of $10 for each scalp. The outfit rode and shot for two weeks, running down and roping more than they shot. Even while they were running the wolves, almost every night they would hear cattle bawling and the next morning find the remains of some fat animal that had been pulled down in the darkness. More than once, riding alone, Castlebury came upon a pack of wolves, maybe four, five, or more, standing facing him and would have to ride around them.

* * *

HORSE STAYED NEAR.

Steve Castlebury, a kinsman to Bob, had this experience. About 1893 he was in the Cheyenne Indian territory, now part of Oklahoma. He'd ridden all day and hadn't found any water. About sundown he unsaddled his horse and staked him on good grass. Before long he heard a lobo howl not far away. He looked and saw the howling one on a hill, reared up on his hind legs, barking. Other lobos answered from different directions. Meanwhile, the horse was walking at the end of his stake rope snorting, pulling at the rope.

Steve sat up until after midnight with a Winchester across his lap, lobos howling off and on all the time. Finally he went to sleep. He woke up before daylight. His horse was standing over him in a protective position. When he moved, the horse cut his eyes down, stepped carefully to one side and went to grazing.

A horse was in much more danger of being molested by lobos than a man was ever in. Some years ago, Vilhjalmur Steffansson, explorer of the Arctic, scholar, and investigator of primitive life of the Far North, wrote that he had been unable to find a single authenticated case of wolf attack on man, though many such cases exist in folklore.

In his interesting book, long out of print but sometimes procurable, entitled "Nine Years With The Indians," Hermann Lehmann tells how, alone on the plains where he was living the life of a hermit, an outcast from the Apaches and no longer a white man, lobos came right up to him. He had, while nearly starving, roped a buffalo calf and dragged it to death.

"I ate all I could," he narrates, "smoked, moved camp, ate, smoked and moved camp again. At night I put my meat under my head and soon fell asleep. I did not tie my horse, for he would not leave me. In the night I heard him snort and run up near me. I grabbed up my meat and other equipments, and jumped on him and rode away.

"These night moves were nothing unusual for me. I was soon sure nobody was after me; so I dismounted and fell asleep, but again I was aroused, and this time I saw what the trouble was. A big lobo was smelling under my head for the meat. Of course I thought of Indians dressed in the skins of wolves to get close to me; I bounded up and let drive an arrow which ended that wolf's career, then turned around and shot another and another, until I had killed five, and several ran away."

These wolves had no idea of attacking Hermann Lehmann. They smelled his buffalo meat. They were after it. Furthermore, animal curiosity is not ferocity. A lot of people want to think they are in danger when they are safer out in the woods than they'd be in a house. Some years ago an ignoramus working for the City of Austin in a park near us reported with pride to a newspaper that he'd killed a mud turtle in Waller Creek and thus had lessened "danger to the public."

Oldtimers Never Boasted

JUN 15 1958

Texans Are Expected to Brag, Publisher Finds

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Joe Small, who publishes True West and Frontier Times in Austin, is just back from Europe, where he conferred with the publisher of an Italian edition of True West. He met various people in England, Holland and elsewhere who, after finding out he was from Texas, expected something extra from him in certain ways.

FRANK DOBIE.

On the way back on the Queen Mary the purser invited him to a cocktail party at which there were seven other guests, all Britishers but Joe Small. When he was introduced as being from Texas, they all seemed to understand that Texas was in the United States. One, a musician, kind of smart alecky, had traveled extensively over the United States, giving concerts. He averred that while he was a dinner guest of the late Hugh Cullen, giver of multiplied millions to the University of Houston and to hospitals, the noted oil man short-changed a waiter at the Shamrock on a tip and that he (the British musician) left $3 extra for the waiter. Probably this was all a lie; anyhow, the company looked to Joe Small of Texas for a response and kept egging him on for a real Texas story. He delivered as follows.

* * *

PUMPED FOR BRAGS.

One time a modest young Texan went to New York, where a golden, glamorous, gold-digging dame spotted him. "Oh, you're from Texas," she gushed.

"Yes, ma'am, I'm from Texas," he admitted.

"It's wonderful to meet a millionaire so young," she exclaimed.

"No, ma'am, I'm not a millionaire," he said.

"Oh, come now," she gurgled, "I can tell by looking at you that you're rich. I bet you own a whole lot of oil wells."

"No, ma'am," he said. "I don't own but 17 oil wells and only 14 of them are producing. The others are all dry."

"Ah," she exclaimed, "I knew something like that. I can just tell it by looking at you. I suppose you own a whole fleet of cars."

"No, ma'am," he said, "I don't own a whole fleet of cars at all. Don't get me confused with those playboy millionaires."

"Come, come, come," she said. "You own oil wells; so you must own automobiles."

"Oh, well, I do own an automobile or two, ma'am."

"Just two?" she asked.

"Oh, ma'am, I own three."

"What are they?'

"Oh, ma'am, they are Cadillacs. One's blue, one's yellow, and one's pink."

"O-o-o-o," the dame cooed. "And how about land? I guess you've got a big ranch?"

"No, ma'am, I don't have any ranch at all."

"What, Cadillacs, oil wells, and no ranch?"

"No, ma'am, I'm sorry to say I don't own a ranch."

"Well, you've got some land of some sort, havent you?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, I own a few acres.'

"How many?"

"Why, ma'am, I don't own but 37 acres."

"Oh, the ridiculous idea of a Texan not owning more than 37 acres. Come, come, where are those 37 acres, anyhow?"

"Why, ma'am, they're in downtown Dallas."

* * *

CIGARET TOO HUMBLE.

This expectation from Texans reminds me of an experience I had while I was Visiting Professor of American History at Cambridge University in 1943 and 1944. Not many American civilians were in the British Isles at that time, although millions of military men were. In a way I was a kind of marked man. Two or three reporters came from the London dailies to interview me. One was from the Daily Telegraph.

He began by asking me if I brought over my boots. I told him no, I didn't bring any boots.

"Why," he said, "I suppose you own boots, don't you?

"Yes," I said, "but I wasn't allowed but 40 pounds of luggage and had to bring a portable typewriter and three books and there wasn't any poundage left for boots."

"Well," he said, "how about a sixshooter?"

"No," I said, "I never did carry a sixshooter, and if I'd had a thousand pounds of luggage allowance I wouldn't have brought one."

While we were talking, I offered him a cigaret. I've been a pipe smoker from my youth up, but sometimes keep cigarets around for other people. The next morning I bought a copy of the Daily Telegraph to see what the interviewer had said about me. He reported accurately that I didn't have either boots or sixshooter but he had me say: "Won't you have a cigar?"

* * *

NO EARLY DAY BRAGS.

Americans are supposed to indicate, even assert, their affluence by smoking cigars, which I never, never smoke, and this kind-hearted reporter wasn't going to let me down by having me offer a guest a puny little cigaret. He had me offer him a Churchillian cigar.

I won't say that Texans are responsible for the far-away conceptions that we all wear sixshooters and own oil wells and ranches. Hollywood and Western romances are certainly responsible. In the bedrock days when Texans were Texians there wasn't any wealth of any kind to brag about, and if there were any braggers they did not leave their mark on the record.

Noah Smithwick, a colonist before 1836, does not in his "Evolution of a State," as I recall, even suggest that bragging was a Texian quality. As a boy of seven, John H. Jenkins came to Texas in 1828 with his family, who settled in the Bastrop country. Going on 60 years later he wrote down his recollections of those far-off early days. Now his great - great - grandson, John Holmes Jenkins III has edited them and they have just been issued in book form by the University of Texas Press under title of "Recollections of Early Texas."

In this faithful-to-life account there is not a single brag and there is no evidence of pride in property. Most of the people were as poor as Job's turkey. They had something better than property to be proud of but didn't seem to brag about it. I recommend this book for good reading as well as for revealing pictures and narratives.

'Poorer Than Job's Turkey'

AUG 16 1959

Stories of Treasures of Early Spanish Missions Are Mythical

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Ever since I received a doctor of philosophy degree for a study of the mineral contents of the San Saba River, the Guadalupe Mountains, and other settings for lost mines, along with a study of the effect of soil on buried metals, these studies having been written with all the care to be dull that any scholar is capable of, I've been trying to live down not only the reputation but the fact of having authored two books containing little but tales of lost mines and buried treasures.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

As a result of the sin of storytelling I receive almost weekly a letter similar to the following, literally quoted:

"By chance, I have come in contact with a man who believes he has uncovered a portion of the silver that was moved from the old missions around Cuero prior to Texas-Mexico Revolution.

"Do you have any information or advice that you would care to release concerning the treasures and activities about these old missions during that particular age?

"With the uncovery of the crude-molded silver bars, linked with the history of early days, a pretty good story might be in the making.

* * *

MISSIONS WERE POOR.

My reply to this seeker for "information" was as follows:

"I didn't know before your letter arrived that there was even a rumor that there had been a Spanish mission near Cuero. I have no reliable information concerning any mission treasure anywhere. As a matter of history, these missions were as poor as church mice — poorer than Job's turkey."

A justification of my assertion on the poverty of not only missionary Spaniards but all other Spaniards who ever operated in Texas is available to anybody who wants the facts through the the scholarship of Virginia H. Taylor of Austin.

In 1957 the Texas State Library published a book of hers entitled "The Letters of Antonio Martinez, Last Spanish Governor of Texas, 1817-1822, Translated and Edited from Original Copy in the Texas State Archives." At that time Mrs. Taylor was state archivist. She is no longer connected with the Texas State Library, and that fact involves another bit of realism.

The librarian of the Texas State Library is appointed on the same principle that the poet laureate of Texas is selected — by peanut politics. The poet laureate of Texas is not selected by poets or by people who read poetry. He or she is maneuvered into the nominal position by a vote of the Legislature. For some time now, the librarian of the Texas State Library has been appointed by the governor on account of some political debt or favor. One of these political appointees fired Virginia Taylor.

It was too late, however, to fire the facts of poverty in Spanish life brought out by letters quoted in her book.

Most of Governor Martinez's letters to the viceroy plead for aid to the isolated settlement at San Antonio and more isolated outposts over Texas. In 1818 Governor Martinez received 3,000 pesos (dollars) for sustaining his garrisons. The year before this he wrote that the troops were "living entirely on field roots for several days." Now, he reports, that despite the money, "no one here can sell me a single grain of corn or anything else."

There wasn't any to sell. Also "the troops are completely barefooted. Most of their horses not stolen by the Indians have been stampeded to join the mustangs." Men who had horses did not have "any saddles or saddletrees to use." One hundred guns received from Mexico City would not shoot, and Governor Martinez reported softly to the viceroy that "some fraud must have been committed either in the execution of your order or at the places through which the guns passed."

In September 1818 the governor reported: "This town is without paper. Neither the stores nor the companies have any. At present I am confronted with the necessity of suspending official correspondence because I have nothing on which to write nor is there anything at La Bahia (San Antonio) on which an official communication can be written." The fortnightly mail was always late, the mail carriers explaining their delay by the fact that "they had to walk and lead the horse to keep it from perishing."

* * *

SHORTAGE OF HORSES.

One would suppose that in this land of mustangs, horses would be plentiful. The only reason the Indians allowed the settlers to stay on was to raise and gentle a few horses for them to take. What horses the soldiers and settlers around San Antonio had were almost starved to death because of the fear of going out of sight of town for grass.

In 1820 Governor Martinez reported: "The few horses I have in the heard of this garrison, as well as those of the campaign, can not be saddled. They are dying in misery since the total lack of pasturage does not permit them to recover after having been ruined." Another report goes: "Of the few horses left, the greater part are sick and covered with sores and perhaps useless because the work and the pasturage is such that they can not recover."

There was no surgeon to serve the soldiers and citizens of San Antonio. There wasn't a soldier in the governor's company who could serve as clerk.

"I have become enslaved by this government because I have no one to help me with the writing, and I receive so much special mail that I find it particularly difficult not to delay the answers since my age does not permit me to work at night. Therefore, I ask you to have the kindness to assign to this company a corporal or a soldier who can write so that he can assist me. I had a sergeant who could write, but he was ordered to Monclova."

The people were poverty stricken. Their chief possession seems to have been debts. No wonder that soldiers constantly deserted to get back on the other side of the Rio Grande. There are 354 pages of this book, exclusive of an excellent index. I could cite six dozen more details of poverty among the Spaniards of Texas—the Spaniards who according to legend buried jackloads of gold and silver all over Texas and had missions bursting with wealth.

STAR-TELEGRAM

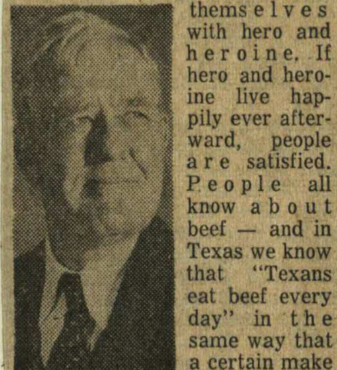
Coastal Shipping Recalled

JUN 30 1957

Original 'Cowpokes' Tough on Texas Cattle

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

What happened next to hero and heroine? People want to know because people identify themselves with hero and heroine. If hero and heroine live happily ever afterward, people are satisfied. People all know about beef — and in Texas we know that "Texans eat beef every day" in the same way that a certain make of car from Michigan is "made in Texas by Texans" — but in the many, many books and pictures of cowboys and cows it seems to be taken for granted that the cows exist to make cowboys interesting and that after the drive or stampede or some other show is over the cows go on grazing happily ever afterwards.


J. FRANK DOBIE.

When about 1880, meat packer Gustavus Franklin Swift got his cooling plants and refrigerator cars working well enough to send dressed beef from Chicago to Boston, Texas trail drivers were in their glory and New Englanders were rebelling at the idea that any meat not butchered in the neighborhood could be fit for human consumption. British preference for domestically slaughtered beef was even stronger, and for years after refrigerated meat could be shipped as successfully as canned sardines, ships carried beef on the hoof from the United States to Great Britain.

WELSH-ENGLISH WRITER.

The original cowpuncher was a man with a prodpole who did his best to punch up cattle that got down in a car. Taking care of cattle on slow freighters to England was a special aftermath of cowboying and then cowpunching. Little was written about this phase of cow work.

W. H. Davis, the Welsh-English poet who tramped for years in America and shipped with cattle, tells in "The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp" more about the work and the men who did it than anybody else has told. Another Britisher, Samuel Plimsoll, took up the cause of the cattle and of sailors on cattle ships. He was outraged by cruelty and inhumanity. His book "Cattle Ships" was published with telling effect in 1890, but I have just read it as news and now pass along selections from it as news to whoever is interested in the whole story of cows.

"The sights that were witnessed on that first Sunday at sea, and the sounds of the moaning of the poor beasts, were so shocking as to sicken the majority of the passengers. All Sunday the cattlemen were busy keeping the cattle awake, and guarding them against any lying down or going to sleep. Those that showed any indication of weakness or exhaustion were cruelly goaded with sharp-pointed bludgeons.

BEATEN BRUTALLY.

They were beaten on the sides and heads, cold water was dashed in their faces; this failing, they were mercilessly thumped on the head with heavy, iron-bound buckets. The cords by which they were made fast to the stalls were drawn tighter, so that it was impossible for them to kneel, as cattle do when in the act of lying down, without inflicting upon themselves such excruciating torture that they were forced to keep on their feet. To further compel them to remain awake, the cattle-men kept moving along their stalls, striking the wooden sides with clubs, and continually shouting, and beating on the head those that showed no signs of awakening.

"All night long the cattle-men were up, going from stall to stall, on deck as in the hold, with flashing dark lanterns. One poor ox, as the ship gave a sudden lurch to starboard, was knocked senseless in its pen; both forelegs were broken at the knees, one horn was torn from its socket, and it received other injuries. To save those nearest to it, the cattle-men dragged it out, and left it helpless and suffering on deck. For thirty hours it lay there, until it died from exhaustion."

Meanwhile other cattle on board, struck with a disease called "red water," were in a dying condition. Upon reaching the harbor, hot parafin oil was poured into their ears to make them rise and walk ashore. According to insurance rules no animal on ship could be killed to end its misery; it must die a "natural death" before insurance could be collected on it.

Many ships were over-loaded, in order to "meet competition." No space was allowed for an animal to lie down. In storms at sea the hatches, providing circulation of air, had to be battened down to prevent the ship from filling with water. Then cattle below the main deck sometimes smothered to death in great numbers. One storm-battered ship that left New York with 360 cattle arrived with only fourteen alive.

A witness told Plimsoll of being on a ship that after a gale had over 200 dead cattle to draw up on deck by pulleys and heave overboard. The heat and stench below were so intense for the men who went down after the carcasses that they could stay only 15 minutes at a time. The terrible lurchings of the ship had caused bodies of animals both dead and alive to batter down the stall timbers and now dead, dying and surviving were intermixed.

Cattle ships were not as romantic as cattle drives over an unfenced world of free grass. They remain a chapter in the reality of the whole story of beef. There is no evidence that power of thought has increased in the human species within historic times, but humaneness has.

Kidnaped Baby Fox Led Dogs on Merry Chases

MAY 7 1961 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Putting my name to this column today is a cheat. All of it was furnished me by Mrs. Claretta Dedear of Round Rock, whom I met once in Austin while she was attending The University of Texas.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"As an only child," she writes, "I turned to animals for companionship. My father, Clarence Cox, owns a ranch on Lake Travis, and since my early childhood this place has furnished me with a varied supply of wild animals to pet: deer, 'possums, field mice, 'coons (I had six at one time), squirrels, rabbits, foxes, and birds. Right now I have a two-year-old skunk that plays with me like a kitten. In addition to taking care of my five-month-old son, I keep peacocks, ducks, fuzzy banty and game chickens, rabbits, parakeets, tropical fish, and two young Spanish goats I fed on bottles."

And now, without quotation marks, Claretta Cox Dedear shall tell her own stories.

One day as my dad and I were driving along a road through our pasture, I noticed a fox run out of a brush pile on the brink of a canyon. This was nothing unusual, so we didn't think much about it until we came back by the brush pile half an hour later and saw the same fox run out again. I persuaded Daddy to stop and let me have a look. All I could see was a hole running back under the brush pile, but I could hear a faint, squeaky chattering coming from the depths of the den.

* * *

"We began carefully removing the brush, piece by piece, to prevent any cave-in on the little ones. Finally, we had the top off, exposing a soft nest of shredded bark from cedars, and two tiny, black, pot-bellied baby foxes, covered with fleas. They couldn't have been more than two or three days old. I started to take only one for a pet, but I decided they'd be happier together, and, besides, I doubted if I could ever put the brush pile back together so Mama Fox would enter her den again.

I took them home, de-flead them, and made them a soft bed in a cardboard box. They took up residence in the kitchen, with a light bulb in their box at night for warmth. It was no time before they were sucking doll bottles. Their eyes opened after a few days, and they started looking more like pups and less like rats. They soon learned to eat raw ground meat and table-scraps. Before long they were out of their box, romping all over the house. It was unbelievable how they could sail around a room like a squirrel, quick as lightning, over the furniture. I have had them leap upon me from a sofa or chair, run up my side and sit on my shoulder, or sometimes even on my head. They could do this so quickly that I hardly knew what was happening.

* * *

HEAD INJURY.

All day long they played, rolling each other over and over and growling like fighting dogs, but they were not vicious. In fact, as long as I had them I never had one to bite me, except in play. I have always enjoyed sketching my pets, but I almost had to give up on the foxes. Several times I tried to sketch Roughhouse as he was resting, but he invariably noticed what I was doing, bounded into my lap, and tried to chew my pencil in two. Sadsac had suffered a head injury when my mother accidentally dropped him, and he didn't develop normally as Roughhouse did. Roughhouse was full of mischief. I would let him out in the back yard every day for a little while and he would torment our six cats. Then he started seeking bigger thrills. We lived on Travis Heights Boulevard, and there were many dogs in the neighborhood. Roughhouse's greatest sport, next to chasing cats, was going way up the street and picking up dogs behind him, one by one, until he had maybe five or six after him. He'd come down the street with those dogs behind him in a dead run, all barking frantically. He'd tease them like this until he tired of the play—play on his part, at least; then he would easily elude them. In a little while he'd come to our back door, panting vigorously, and beg to be let in.

He got to enjoy his outings more and more and cared less about the house and my companionship. He would stay outside longer every day, until finally he quit wanting in the house at all, and I couldn't even coax him to come in. Then one day he disappeared, and I never saw him again. I know he stayed around the vicinity for a while, for he would eat the food I left out for him at night and lead his little string of barking dogs down the street, cutting off from them in front of the house, but we never laid eyes on him again. Eventually we stopped hearing the dogs, and only cat tracks came to be printed on the porch by the plate of food I set out every night. Roughhouse, we hoped, had gone back to the woods, where he belonged. In the meantime, little Sadsac had died of his head injury, and my experience with pet foxes was over, except for the memories.

* * *

NEVER BORN.

My pet jackrabbit was never born. Daddy had killed a jackrabbit to feed our cats, and I was watching him dress it. We discovered that it had babies inside, and I persuaded Daddy to cut one of the sacs open so I could see the baby rabbit. He did, and much to our surprise, the baby was still alive, but gasping for breath. I gently picked up the slippery little fellow and wrapped him in a soft cloth. He was still gasping, and we thought sure he'd die in a little while. I dried him off as best I could and put him and his cloth on the bed in my room. When I went back to check on him, he had crawled all the way across the bed. I started feeding him milk, and in a few days he was getting along well. His tiny ears stood up like a full-grown jackrabbit's. It seemed strange to me that his eyes were open from the very beginning, when all the pet cottontails I had had were born with their eyes closed.

Bunny readily accepted me for his mother and was constantly under foot. I had to watch my step to keep from mashing him. He stayed under my bed at night, and when I hit the floor in the morning, he was right behind me. All I had to say was "Bunny!" and he would come running so fast that he skidded all over the linoleum floor trying to get to where I was. He soon learned to drink his milk from a dish, and I decided he was old enough to eat some green stuff. I started taking him outside every day. He wouldn't even try to run off. I guess he must have eaten something that disagreed with him, for one evening I noticed he was bloated. He got worse and I sat up with him all night, but he died before sunrise.

STAR-TELEGRAM JUL 21 1958 Section Two.

Confederate Impressions Related

Fourth of July Talk in Kansas Pretty Much of Chore for Texan

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I've been what is popularly called "lecturing" at the Kansas State Teachers College, in Emporia, for going on two weeks. Anybody who spends two weeks anywhere on earth — in bed or about, alone in a desert or scrouged up in a metropolis, silently or vocably, comfortably or uncomfortably — just anywhere, under any circumstances, should be able to make some kind of report interesting to other people. Bright women gifted with power to make "divine chitchat" usually make the most entertaining reports, sometimes penetrating. All I am is a kind of professional reporter.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Emporia is celebrating its hundredth anniversary and part of the college's contribution to the celebration was to furnish a Fourth of July speaker to an audience of both town and college people. I was called upon for the first Fourth of July speech of my life. I know very well that the tried and proven formula for this occasion is to eulogize the past, flatter the present—that is, the hearers—and prophesy a glorious future. I'm utterly without prophetic vision, am always bored by eulogy, and am averse to flattering except when I want something, and on this occasion I did not want anything but to get out of it. This is where the politicians who usually make the Fourth of July speeches come in; they always want something—votes. A Kansas congressman was on the platform with me. I was cheating him out of a fine chance to eulogize and flatter his fellow-patriots: yet he was so cordial that I thought he'd wring my hand off before he released his clasp. I think he forgot that I couldn't vote in his district. Habit makes lots of baldheaded men comb their hair.

HARD SPEECH TO MAKE.

Now, you try to make a Fourth of July speech without eulogy, flattery or prophecy and see what you can say. I can tell you that my sleep was very uneasy the night before the Glorious Fourth. I called to mind the first cowboy autobiography to get published, 'A Texas Cowboy," by Charlie Siringo, written while he was wintering cattle out from Caldwell, Kan., in 1884-1885. In the preface to his rollicky narrative he tells what a devil of a time he had finding a subject to write on until he hit on the idea of "a history of my own short but rugged life." Kansas people, I learned a good while ago, are not particularly different from Texas people except in such things as having laws that prevent a hot traveler from buying a beer on Sunday—the very day on which one should have that peace of mind conducive to especial enjoyment of cold beer. I had no idea of standing up in Kansas like Charlie Siringo and entering into a history of my own neither short nor rugged life, but I decided to start off with the conception of Kansas that I got as a boy from listening to Grandpa Dubose, Mr. Jasper Miller and other Confederate soldiers who had gone up the trail to Kansas.

The Civil War began in Kansas several years before it began elsewhere when John Brown made the raid on Harper's Ferry for the purpose of freeing slaves. After the Civil War had ended elsewhere it went on being fought in Kansas owing to the invasion of "cow crowds" of Confederate veterans—then young and in the prime of vinegary disposition—with herds of longhorned cattle and Spanish horses from Texas. Grandpa Dubose and Jasper Miller and others would say: "Yes, Kansas is the Sunflower State all right. It's got more sunflowers, more sunshine and more S. O. B.s than any other state in the Union."

SMILE AND GET BY.

The only way I could get by with this piece of flattering eulogy, up there on a Kansas platform, was to smile and demonstrate evolution in the mind of at least one Texan. I remembered how John Wesley Hardin—one of the Texas heroes who drove up the trail to Kansas—once shot a Negro sitting on a cornfield fence in southern Texas while whistling "John Brown's Body (or Soul) Goes Marching On." John Wesley Hardin had ordered the Negro to stop whistling that tune, but he didn't stop soon enough. I didn't grow up with any sort of veneration for Julia Ward Howe's "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," modeled on "John Brown's Body," in which his soul goes "marching on." Without knowing details about John Brown, I shared the Southern view that he was a horrible madman from Kansas devoid of one redeeming virtue. If I had heard that Emerson called him "that new saint led by love of men to make the gallows glorious like the cross," I should have regarded Emerson as no better than John Brown.

How does a person's mind graduate, anyhow? It was not until I came to teach American history in Cambridge University while the Nazi bombers were devastating parts of London that I read Stephen Vincent Benet's "John Brown's Body"—characterized by Henry Steele Commager as "the best short history of the Civil War and the best long poem in American literature."

CAN CHANGE MIND.

Well, I guess America still means a place in which a person can change his own mind and have his own thoughts, though a remarkable lot of printing presses don't care to publish a remarkable lot of thoughts. After talking along in the way I have been talking here—except that I always think of the best things to say after I have sat down—I opened Benet's "John Brown's Body," there on a Kansas platform on a Fourth of July, and read the passages about John Brown's raid, trial, and hanging, ending with the song his bones keep making.

"Ask the tide why it rises with the moon,
My bones and I have risen like that tide,
And an immortal anguish plucks us up
And will not hide us until our song is done."

And I tried to drive home the idea that the song and the struggle for freedom are not yet "done."

Many Texans have made many noises in Kansas, but I will bet that while I was making my first Fourth of July speech I was first also among Texans in Kansas to burst forth on John Brown in a hymnal sort of way.

Pleasing Country Sounds, Too

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

MAY 14 1961

Milking Range Cows Had Number of Variations

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Every time I read about wild ways on the range I realize what a tame life we led on our ranch, and it wasn't anything else but a ranch. A recent county historian whom I read says that it used to take two men to milk a wild cow. One would rope her, presumably outside the pen, by the neck. The other would rope her hind legs. Between them they'd stretch her out on the ground, and then while she was stretched out, somebody would milk her. Sometimes, he said, when he didn't have help, he would alone down a cow, tie all four of her legs together, and then milk her. If anybody wants to try extracting milk from a cow, madder than six nests of hornets, tied flat on the ground, he needn't take any receptacle larger than a teacup.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

We had only range cows to milk. Every one had to be gentled to start with. The usual procedure was to rope her by the horns, tie her to the fence so that she couldn't swish around a whole circle, hobble her hind legs, and then pull her teats, often at the same time holding her tail to prevent its muddying the milk pail. After a few such tieings and milkings, she would gentle down so that when the calf was pulled off from her she would stand still and allow the milker to milk. If she proved too stubborn to learn and was something of a fighter, we turned her out with her calf and tried out another cow. Papa always picked the cows to milk. He judged them partly by their gentleness and partly by the looks of their bags. Sometimes in the summer we'd have as many as a dozen milk cows. Maybe we wouldn't get more than three or four gallons of milk twice a day. If we needed more milk, we could always bring in another cow from "the Big Pasture." Milkers had to leave enough to support the calves. No rancher wanted his calf "knocked in the head with a churn dasher." That is, nobody wanted a calf "dogied" starved.

* * *

PLEASING SOUND.

The earliest feed for cows that I recollect was cottonseed. It was very cheap. This was before the seeds began to be processed into cottonseed cake, cottonseed meal, etc. Two or three cows fed plenty of cottonseed in the winter probably gave more milk than 10 cows on grass during the summer.

One of the pleasing country sounds is that of a stream of milk hitting the bottom of an empty bucket, and then becoming softer and softer as the bucket fills. I never could milk with two hands, but I've seen and heard a man who could milk with both hands. The two streams playing into a bucket made a kind of tune. I've drunk lots of milk straight out of a cow's teat. I never sucked a teat but would squirt the milk into my own open mouth or I might get a Mexican milker to squirt a stream into my mouth. This was part of the fun of having milk cows. When the bucket was full it had an inch or two of foam on top of it. Some people called it "calf slobber." A boy could drink it without touching the milk under it and could achieve a milky complexion all around his mouth and over his nose left by the foam.

The milker I remember best was Feliciano Garcia. He and his family lived in a jacal several hundred yards away from our house. He had the use of whatever ground he wanted for raising watermelons, cantaloupes, frijoles, calavazas (kershaws), etc. He could get roasting ears out of a big field. One year he raised an especially fine crop of calabazas. I remember the evening that his wife sent a baked calabaza to the cowpen while Feliciano was milking. It was in halves, and the seed had already been scooped out. One of us ran to the house and got two or three tablespoons. Then Feliciano milked each half nearly full of milk. The calabaza meat was nearly as sweet as a pumpkin pie. It was still warm, and the milk was warm. I always did like milk with pie, but I never ate any pie better than that hot calabaza with the fresh, warm milk.

* * *

SEVERAL DOGIES.

One milk cow we had was a red brindle named Hookey. She never wanted anybody around her calf. Old Joe (named after "Beautiful Joe") was scared to get near the pen. One evening while Papa was milking, my sister Fannie (maybe 4 years old at the time) came into the pen with us. I was a spectator also. Hookey didn't seem to mind me, but she looked upon Fannie in a dress as something alien. She lowered her head and took after her, got a horn in one leg and her drawers and raised her from the ground. She didn't hurt Fannie.

Every year we raised several dogies—calves whose mothers had died. The way we raised one was to tie a cow by the head to the fence and then let the orphan suck from one side of her while her own calf sucked from the other side. The calves were always of about the same age. Sometimes it took a good while for the cow to claim the orphan. The process could be helped along by squirting milk on the orphan so that it would have the cow's own smell on it. We had one milk cow that never did mind adopting a calf and never was milked by people. Her name was Muley; she had never had any horns. She was a meek, mild critter—never fat and never poor, rather smaller than the average cow, and was a red roan. As the eldest of the family of six children, I usually had a claim on dogies. Papa didn't give all of them to me, but he gave more to me than to the other children. Of course, I was there first to get anything.

* * *

STRAINED INTO PANS.

One of my first dogies was a mottled black. We named her Pet. She was a pet from the beginning. After she grew up and had calves, she was one of the most dependable milk cows. Her first calf was a red roan bull. Papa at the time was using Durham bulls. My brother Elrich and I rode a good many calves, but Sabino (Red Roan), as he was named, was the best riding calf I ever had. I could put a bosal (half-hitch) on his nose and guide him all over the calf pasture bringing in the other calves in the evening, although they would come without being brought in. I even saddled Sabino, but a saddle designed for a horse can not fit a cow brute. Pet had heifer calves also, and one of them was a prolific producer.

After the buckets of milk were taken to the kitchen, they were strained into pans. After a night, or several hours of the day, the cream was skimmed and churned into butter. I never did care to churn. We had so much milk that plenty of it clabbered, and clabber is the best form of milk there is for making bread, also for chickens. After an accumulation of clabber, the whey was poured off, and then the clabber was poured into a cotton sock that was hung up to drip. The result was curd, now sold under the name of cottage cheese. I like all kinds of cheeses, including the most exotic with the most fungi in it. Cottage cheese (from a factory) made out of homogenized, expurgated, bowdlerized milk can't touch natural curd with a 10-foot pole.

Mental Catalog Maintained

MAY 1 9 1957

Dealer in Out-of-Print Books Had Career as Varied as Any Texan

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Everybody who has read and reflected knows that far-away lands have pretty much the same kind of people, infinite in variety, to be found at home. Yet a very large proportion of modern writing, especially in fiction, bearing on Texas might lead to the conclusion that only a few types of men stand with their heads up—ranch people (of course), oil millionaires (of course), some politicians, some fanatics on race. I realize that all sorts of Texans get into print circulated outside of Texas, but I am thinking of the types that make an imprint on popular imagination. I am thinking of the little boy who looked at my white hair and said, "Well, if you used to live on a ranch, why didn't the Indians scalp you?"

J. FRANK DOBIE.

A dealer in out-of-print books whom I used to know in Austin had had as varied a career and was as valid a Texan as any character in any of the Texas, Western and Southern books he sold to collectors and libraries all over the nation.

REFRESHING EXPERIENCE.

In 1923, while I was writing and editing "Legends of Texas" for the Texas Folklore Society, I went to the Oklahoma A&M College at Stillwater as head of the English department at a salary somewhat beyond the barest subsistence level. This was a refreshing experience in academic life for my wife and myself. The next year I began writing for pay from magazines and had a little book money. At first I bought quite a few Texas books but before long was collecting books on the West, especially anything pertaining to range life and animals, also on Mexico. I can't remember when I did not enjoy the possession of some books, but up to this time most of them were in the field of literature, primarily English literature. I am glad of that. I and my books are not, however, the subject of this story about a Texan who was a book-dealer.

In traveling from Texas to Stillwater, we always splurged at the Harvey House at Purcell, Okla., and had a wonderful dinner for a dollar. Then after a while we got off the Santa Fe train at Guthrie to change to a branch line running over to Stillwater. Changing trains usually involved plenty of waiting. On one wait I walked into a kind of racket store — as a store of odds and ends used to be called. This one did not have much in it, but I noticed two books on a half-empty shelf. They were duplicate copies of Robert M. Wright's "Dodge City, Cowboy Capital" (Wichita, Kan., 1913) in mint condition — a term I had just acquired. The books were marked $2.75, but the storekeeper said the price was $1.50, adding that if I would take both copies I could have them for $2.50. I took both. They had no doubt been on his shelf since the year of publication. The title was new to me, but instinct plus knowledge of something else told me I had made a find.

DANE WAS RARE FIND.

The next year we went back to Austin for keeps, and I began spending an afternoon hour every week or two in Gammell's Book Store. With all of its oil wealth and schools dominated by Education spelled with a capital E, Texas does not have today as good a store of out-of-print books as H. P. M. Gammell had in Austin a third of a century ago. That ancient Dane was as rare as and a lot thicker than any of his quartos; he knew the prices of nearly all the scarce items but was not strong on the contents of many. If somebody told him his price was too high, he either moved the decimal point a figure to the right or put the book in what he called his "private library" to wait for time to justify what he asked. One day in Gammell's store I met one of his best customers, "Brother" Shettles —E. L. Shettles. He invited me to come to see him.

Shettles had somehow learned that I had a duplicate copy of Wright's "Dodge City, Cowboy Capital," and did not try to disguise his eagerness for it. I think it was selling for up to $25 or better at the time, and I am sure that he had an order for it from some unquibbling customer. Contrary to my practice in the stock market when prices are going down, I was not in a hurry to sell now, but finally Shettles got it for about $40 in trade. He was always generous with me and wanted me to learn and acquire books. Two books he traded me were G. D. Freeman's "Midnight and Noon" and Harry Young's "Hard Knocks," both illuminating on Kansas cow towns and Wild West wildness.

Shettles did business, mostly by mail, in his cottage home out in a not "restricted" part of town. He might have had 3,000,-maybe more, books, not counting duplicates, mainly Americana, with emphasis on Texas, the West, and the South. He was expert at acquiring remainders of privately printed historical material and then controlling the market on it. He was a great pamphlet man.

He had been trained — as a professional gambler on cards — to remember concretely, precisely. He knew the bibliographical facts about almost every title stored in his capacious memory, and knew an extraordinary amount of the contents of thousands of books and pamphlets. He could gut one very quickly. He located tens of thousands of dollars worth of old newspapers, magazines, pamphlets and other material purchased through the Littlefield Fund for the University of Texas library.

Many times I would visit Shettles without buying anything, but never without learning something important to me. Almost anything that I took down from a shelf could lead to a revealing remark about its author, its relationship to another book, its pertinence to a patch — if not to a field — of knowledge. I can't recall whether it was Frank Glenn or H. M. Sender, both dealers in Kansas City, whom I took to see Shettles towards the end of his life. The dealer mentioned some rare pamphlet that he had recently acquired. He had forgotten its date. Shettles supplied it, narrated how, when and where he had acquired his own first copy of it, at what price, to whom he sold it, at what price. He dipped into the subject matter of the pamphlet, named a printed item or two that had preceded it and named a still rarer pamphlet issued in reply to it.

Naturalist and Writer Cite Examples

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Horses Often Surpass Man in Curiosity, Alertness

APR 10 1960 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

No horse is as smart as a man, but men are smart in the same way that horses are smart. The way for a human being to understand other animals is to get rid of the highly irreverent idea that he is a god, created in the image of the God, and to remember that he also is an earthy animal — somewhat, but only somewhat, advanced in the processes of evolution. It happens that the evolutionary stages of the horse from before and after old "Three Toes" are more plainly recognizable in well-preserved skeleton remains than are the evolutionary stages of homo sapiens. The hoofs of early man have not kept so well through geological ages as the hoofs of Little Eohippus.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Now, horses differ from each other as one star differeth from another, as "there are wimmen and wimmen." I'll cite two reports of horse curiosity, of alertness in observing. The first is from the great naturalist and writer on pampas life, W. H. Hudson.

"A certain gaucho always tied his horse Cristiano to the horse-rack with a long lariat, to give him plenty of space to move his head and body about freely. A more restless horse I have never seen. His head was always raised as high as he could raise it — like an ostrich, the gauchos would say — his gaze fixed excitedly on some far object; then presently he would wheel round and stare in another direction, pointing his ears forward to listen intently to some faint, far sound which had touched his sense. The sounds that excited him most were as a rule the alarm cries of lapwings, and the objects he gazed fixedly at with a great show of apprehension would usually turn out to be a horseman on the horizon; but the sounds and sights would for some time be inaudible and invisible to us on account of their distance. Occasionally, when the bird's alarm cries grew loud and the distant rider was found to be approaching, his excitement would increase until it would discharge itself in a resounding snort — the alarm note of the wild horse.

"One day I remarked to my gaucho friend that his blue-eyed Cristiano amused me more than any other horse I knew. He was just like a child, and when tired of the monotony of standing tethered to the horse rack he would start playing sentinel. He would imagine it was war-time or that an invasion of Indians was expected, and every cry of a lapwing or other alarm-giving bird, or the sight of a horseman in the distance would cause him to give warning. But the other horses would not join in the game; they let him keep watch and wheel about this way and that, spying or pretending to spy something, and blowing his loud trumpet, without taking any notice. They simply dozed with heads down, occasionally switching off the flies with their tails or stamping a hoof to get them off their legs, or rubbing their tongues over the bits to make a rattling sound with the little iron rollers on the bridle-bar.

* * *

WILD LIFE NEVER FORGOTTEN.

"He laughed and said I was mistaken, that Cristiano was not amusing himself with a game he had invented. He was born wild and belonged to a district not many leagues away where an extensive marshy area made hunting on horseback impracticable. Here a band of wild horses, a small remnant of an immense troop that had formerly existed in that part, had been able to keep their freedom down to recent years. As they were frequently hunted in dry seasons when the ground was not so bad, they had become exceedingly alert and cunning, and the sight of men on horseback would send them flying to the most inaccessible places in the marshes, where it was impossible to follow them. Eventually plans were laid and the troop driven from their stronghold out into the open country, where the ground was firm, and most of them were captured. Cristiano was one of them, a colt about four or five months old."

A horse named Fleet, as reported by Will C. Minor in "Footprints in the Trail," seems in spots a little more fanciful.

"I never knew a horse more alert than Fleet to the things that happened about him — little things to which most horses paid no attention. An unusual noise, such as a raven croaking somewhere off in the distance, would attract his attention and hold his interest for minutes at a time. More than once I have seen him stop to watch a magpie perched on a fence post, or to gaze at a flock of ducks passing overhead. Let a rabbit leap across the trail, or a coyote try to slink unnoticed through the sage, and Fleet would be sure to spy them. His sharp little ears would instantly snap to attention, and he would watch the rabbit or coyote intently and for as long as it remained in sight. I once saw him leave his hay at feeding time, walk over to the fence, and gaze with absorbed interest at something outside the corral. I quietly moved over and stood beside him to see what had attracted his attention. There just outside the fence a dozen big monarch butterflies were flitting about a clump of milkweed.

* * *

FLEET ENJOYED THE SCENERY.

"I believe that Fleet actually enjoyed looking at the scenery and seeing strange places. In this respect he was not a very good trail horse. More often than not he would be admiring the scenery or looking at something off in the distance instead of watching where he was going. When we stopped to rest on some difficult trail the other horses would start looking for choice bites of grass, or slump into relaxed attitudes of rest. But Fleet would be alertly considering an over-hanging cliff or gazing off into the depths of the canyon.

"It had been one of those windy spring days. The wind stopped an hour or so before sunset, but the atmosphere was filled with fine dust which glowed fiery red in the rays of the setting sun. I climbed up to where I could watch the sunset from the rim of a low cliff. Directly below me the horses were standing at the feed rack munching their evening hay.

"The red dust haze glowed with a strange and eerie light. Great cloud formations loomed up in the fiery sky, some huge, dark, almost black in the center but with edges glistening with vivid rainbow colors. Some small, fleecy clouds, which a few minutes before had been pure white, now glowed with varied colors. Some were scarlet, some pink, some orange, some rainbow-hued with red, yellow, purple, and green. Through it all a huge, glowing, dull-red sun dropped slowly, majestically, to slide at last behind the western mountains.

"When the display of color was at its best, a few minutes before the sun set, I heard a rattle of rocks and, glancing to one side, saw Fleet clambering up a mesa perhaps a hundred feet high. The sides were steep and covered with loose rock. Having reached the top, Fleet seemed to have no interest in the sparse grass growing there. He merely stood and gazed into the setting sun, head high, ears forward, as an occasional puff of wind whipped his long mane and tail out from him, his coal-black figure against the blood-red sky made a wild and beautiful picture. When the changing colors in the sky faded into dusk, Fleet turned and slowly picked his way down the side of the mesa, then back to the feed rack, where he kicked one of his pals aside and helped himself to the hay."

About Texans and Texas

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM
AUG 24 1958

Wonderful Reprint of Book on Ranch Life Makes Good Reading

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

At times during the great depression one could see scores of men on a freight train. They were not professional tramps. They were men out of work, going north and east and west and south, looking for jobs. The railroads were powerless to keep them off the freight trains. For a while the wanderers had to live on the country. The majority of them were youngish. My mother's home was in Beeville, and the path to it from the railroad tracks seemed to have been marked.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

For a long while the men asking for a handout of food at my mother's door averaged more than three a day. Whoever came was fed abundantly and in kindness. My mother always said that every one of these men was some mother's boy.

When I regard Western films, TV shootings and fiction I often think that the authors have no idea that the cowboys and other characters they depict are all sons of mothers. Humanity is lacking. I know there were places and years during the development of the frontiers when women were very scarce and family life was far behind; yet every range man I have ever known remained the son of some mother, belonged to some sort of family. Every book of authenticity about ranch people reflects this trite but basic fact.

* * *

TITLE EXPLAINED.

I've just reread a book on ranch life that reminds me of Nietzsche's definition of a philosopher. Nietzsche said that the first qualification of a philosopher is that he be a man. The first qualification of any book about ranch life is that it be about life. Sallie Reynolds Matthews, the author of "Interwoven," lived on ranches during frontier times and understood not only the ways of cows and horses and cow people but understood life. She had a compassion for Indians.

The title of the book is based on the fact that so many members of the Matthews and Reynolds families married each other. Both families were ranching out on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River about the time of the War Between the States. The families are still bedrock names in ranching. "Interwoven," more than any other ranch chronicle that I know, reveals the family life of old-time ranchers.

Sallie Reynolds Matthews had the perspective that comes only from realizing that other wheres than the where one is writing about exist. At her birth on the frontier in 1861, the family library consisted of the Bible and Foxe's "Book of Martyrs." She had little schooling, but she was grounded in the superb English and in the superb literature of the King James translation of the Bible. At 10 she read "Pickwick Papers," her first novel. She married before she was 16, and upon setting up a household, subscribed for the New York weekly "Sun" and the "Demorest Magazine" (good on fashions as well as being an all-round household magazine). Ten years later she belonged to the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle in Albany, Texas. There the interwoven families took the lead in supporting an academy as well as a church, also The Shakespeare Dramatic Club. Don't expect to find in "Interwoven" the kind of illiteracy supposed by the Hollywood and Madison Avenue schools to be proper to all range folks.

* * *

PROUD OF SCALPS.

"Writing," says Laurence Sterne in "Tristram Shandy," "when properly managed is but a different name for conversation." The best things in "Interwoven" are things that were told before they were written—little incidents, character anecdotes, observations on the land's life. There is no essay on preachers or anything else, but reading considerable matter on frontier preachers and other subjects.

When the Reynolds family got out to Palo Pinto County in 1859, Capt. John R. Baylor and his men were coming in from a scout after Indians. They were proud of several scalps they brought in. Sallie's mother wrote: "When Captain Baylor got up to make a speech he said that he and his men were all Hard-shell Baptists and that 'God Almighty went with their sort.'" Later on, a man from farther west wanted to get married and rode 100 miles to Weatherford to bring back a preacher. The only one he could find was a Primitive (Hard-shell) Baptist. He not only performed the ceremony but preached to the neglected people, and then for several months came back once a month to hold services. He always walked the whole distance back and forth "because he felt that there was less danger on foot than with a horse to tempt the Indians."

NEVER TOO CROWDED.

Then there was the Primitive on the Clear Fork who had the habit of going out in the morning to some secluded spot for what he called "secret prayer." It wasn't very secret, for he seemed to think that he had to talk in the loudest tone he could reach in order to make the Lord hear him. One time the hounds at the Matthews ranch heard him down in the corn field and set up such a howl that the family thought Indians must be near.

Hospitality on most ranches was taken for granted. There was no way of warning a hostess to expect guests for a meal. No house was ever too crowded to spread down more pallets and bed more people. The Tecumseh Ranch, where John and Sallie Matthews lived for a time, was on a road leading from Albany to Throckmorton. To quote from the book, "As there was a lot of passing, we had a great deal of company; some we enjoyed, some we knew only made a convenience of us. Judge Fleming, district judge at the time, was a friend we enjoyed. He and his retinue of lawyers would spend the night with us on the way from Albany to Throckmorton to hold court. We were only 12 miles from Throckmorton, and they could drive there in time to hold court in the morning. Everyone knew the Judge's habit of staying at our home, and sometimes the neighbors who had to go to court would drop in for breakfast knowing they would not be late because they would be going with the Judge. One morning, I remember, Uncle William Spears came early and woke us up; he, of course, was privileged and we thought that a rather smart trick. There were two others who came later that morning, one after we had finished breakfast."

* * *

WISER WOMEN.

"Interwoven" was first printed in 1936. Now the descendants of Mrs. Matthews have had the book reprinted by the most artistic printer between the Atlantic and the Pacific, Carl Hertzog of El Paso. It's also illustrated with drawings by E. M. (Buck) Schiwetz. The book in format is something very handsome, pleasing and distinguished indeed. Only 1,500 copies were printed, and half of them are being given away. Carl Hertzog will soon have all the others sold at $10 a copy. Then this gracious and wise book will no doubt be reprinted again.

We are always hearing about wise men. I can learn more from wise women than I can from wise men. I'm not trying to be funny in making an analogy between women who have raised big families and the mother females of other species.

I have noticed among horses and cattle that after full maturity the female is generally wiser than the male. An old cow that has raised several calves is wiser than the most be-prized bull, though some steers are plenty wise. An old mare that has raised several colts is the wisest of her kind. A side-look out of her eyes epitomizes Socrates. The rule does not apply to some wild animals—white-tailed deer, for instance, among which old bucks lead in astuteness except at the fatal running season. The rule does not apply to all domestic animals, not to dogs because both sexes show at times remarkable understanding, and not to cats, for all cats are moochers and no cat ever goes beyond instinct.

Australian 'Wild West' As Woolly as in States

MAY 28 1961
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Students of literature, folklore and religion know that there's no plot of story or drama, no superstitious belief, no miracle without precedent and parallel in other stories and plays, in the folklore of virtually all races, and in the religions of mankind running back as far as the records go.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

This is not to discredit good plots of any era, any interesting folklore, or any good religion. It seems wholesome to me to remind the addicts of Wild West ways that virtually everything found in the annals of stagecoach robbing, of trail driving, of ranching, brand burning, cattle stealing, bronco busting, etc. are also to be found in the annals of open range days of the pampas, Australia and elsewhere. In Australia a cattle thief is a cattle "duffer," a herd is a "mob," a ranch is a "station," a horse is a "cob," and the milling of cattle is called "ringing." Aside from these differences, this extract from a chapter entitled "Among the Cattle Duffers," in H. L. Haydon's book "The Trooper Police of Australia," published in London in 1911, will illustrate how unoriginal we writers of trail-driving days in America have been.

* * *

AUSSIE BADMAN.

"In the northwest of Australia, in the Kimberleys, some years ago there was a notorious character, a 'king of cattle duffers,' whom we will call Jack Burrell. He was an expert stockman of the first grade. When a large mob of cattle had to be taken across rivers in flood time there was no one more in request than he. Station owners would hire him on such occasions and pay heavily for his services rather than risk their beasts to less skillful management. They were well aware, at the same time, that Burrell would take toll from the mob. That had to be put up with. The usual thing that happened was a stampede at night. In the morning the cattle would be rounded up again, but one or two were sure to be missing. Burrell's friends knew of their whereabouts.

"A stampede can be effected in several ways. Cattle are not difficult to frighten. With Burrell the trick was as follows. He owned a famous trotting cob named Tom Tit, which he had trained perfectly. Upon the cattle's coming to a halting place, such as the Black Swamp, near Deniliquin, N. S. W., on the road to Sydney, he would wait till night and then cover himself and Tom Tit with a long white sheet. To guide the cob with his feet was a simple matter, and as the two plunged into the mass of cattle the panic was set in motion. The next day he was again busy on Tom Tit, earning a reward for recapturing the scared animals.

* * *

TRICK COW, CALF.

"This horse of Burrell's was almost as clever as its master. In flood time it worked alone in the water on one side of the surging cattle as they swam across a river, while Burrell attended to the other side. The cob obeyed orders by word of mouth or the motion of a hand in a truly wonderful manner. In addition to this valuable helper the stockman owned a cow and a calf, each of which he had trained carefully. They were taught to lead the mobs over the rivers and prevent them from 'ringing,' that is, circling in the water, instead of going right ahead. Cattlemen in the west cherish a vivid memory of Burrell's 'trick cow and calf.'

"The end of Tom Tit was a sad one. When he saw camels for the first time he took fright, reared and fell so badly that he broke his legs. There was no hope of saving his life; a police trooper mercifully shot him. Burrell sorrowed greatly over the loss of his faithful servant, and duly took his revenge. He shot 15 camels before he went away.

"Although it does not bear on the subject of cattle duffing, a story about Jack Burrell may be worth recalling. It points the saying that to be a good rogue you must be a clever rogue. A robbery had occurred between Whitecliffes and Wilcania, a parcel of opals having been snatched from the stagecoach that passed over the route. The actual thief was a youth who had succumbed to a sudden temptation, but Burrell was popularly credited with the deed.

* * *

ROBBERY DENIED.

"'You must have made a good haul that time, Jack,' said a friend.

"Jack swore that he wasn't the culprit, as at the time of the robbery he was a hundred miles away. 'But,' he added significantly, 'the next time it happens you can bet I shall be in it!'

"Not many weeks later the stagecoach was again robbed, despite the fact that a police guard sat on the box-seat by the driver. The basket containing the opals had been placed in the rear of the vehicle, but no one saw it disappear. Burrell's boast being recalled to mind, he was taxed with the theft. He denied it vehemently, and what was more to the point, was able to bring conclusive evidence that he was at a certain township a good many miles distant on the evening of the occurrence, both before the time of the robbery and after. His evidence was not only irrefutable, it was true. By means of a relay of swift horses he had ridden from the township to the scene of the robbery and back, covering the distance in an incredibly short time. No one brought out the facts until long afterward."

Legends of Origin Multiply

ST Sun O 21 51 IV:7

Old Jim Bowie's Knife Cuts Wide Swath in Contemporary Fiction

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Revivals of religion, foods, furniture, writers, and other things are always going on. Now we are in the midst of a revival of Jim Bowie.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Unqualified superlatives are to be distrusted, but if I had to name what I consider the best historical novel of Texas, I believe I would name first "The Log of a Cowboy" by Andy Adams, and next to that "The Iron Mistress" by Paul I. Wellman. The first, a story of a trail drive, was published nearly 50 years ago and is still in print. The second has just been issued. It is the fictionized life of Jim Bowie; the "iron mistress" is his knife. It opens with Bowie in association with Audubon the naturalist in Louisiana, dramatizes numerous episodes of Bowie's knife prowess, and ends with its final thrust in the Alamo. It is skilfully and graphically written.

At the same time, "Gentlemen, Swords and Pistols" by Harnett T. Kane has just appeared with a long chapter on Bowie's encounters with his knife. A few years ago the University of New Mexico Press issued a biography of Bowie and about the same time Monte Barrett, who died at his home in San Antonio in 1949, brought out "Tempered Blade," another historical novel embodying Jim Bowie.

PICTURESQUE CHARACTER.

The world will never grow too haggard (Churchill's adjective for the present) to appreciate the picturesque. As the present generation recedes from attempting to think and falls back on primitive killing as a way to settle matters, killers stand for heroes. We have to have heroes. Jim Bowie was one of the most picturesque figures and effective killers that the Southwest, particularly Texas, has had. Although he died 115 years ago, he is contemporary.

The origin of Bowie's knife became a legend almost as soon as Bowie began using it. It was as popular as the sixshooter which supplanted it became. Knives were common hundreds of years before Bowie flourished. Who designed and who forged the genuine Bowie knife is in dispute. I am partial to the story about a blacksmith named James Black of Washington, Ark. In Arkansas, where it was known as the "Arkansas toothpick," the Bowie knife was even more popular than among the settlers of East Texas.

James Black was a master at tempering steel. It was his rule, according to an account written in the early part of this century by Gov. Dan W. Jones, of Arkansas, to cut on a hickory ax-handle with one of his knives for half an hour before polishing it. If after this trial the knife was not sharp enough to shave the hair from his arm, he would throw it away.

BOWIE ORDERS KNIFE.

One day in 1831 James Bowie came to Black's shop with a pattern and commissioned him to make a knife. Black made it and at the same time made one according to his own pattern. When Bowie returned, he offered him the choice between the two knives. Bowie took the one designed by Black, kept it, used it, and had it with him in the Alamo.

Other smiths were making knives and many attempts were made, secretly as well as openly, to get James Black's secret for tempering steel. Large offers were made for it, but he turned them all down. He said that nobody had taught him the process, that he had worked it out himself, and he proposed to keep it.

Two years after Jim Bowie was killed, Black was overcome by a fever. While he was in bed his father-in-law beat him over the head and inflammation of his eyes threatened his sight. He went to a quack doctor and the doctor made him stone blind. Now he became an object of charity, and the father of Governor Jones took him into his home.

SECRET PROMISED.

Time and again he told the Jones boy that some day he would repay the family kindness by passing on to him the secret of tempering steel. On his 70th birthday he said to Jones: "I do not expect to live much longer. You are now fully matured, 30 years old with a wife and growing family. You can utilize the secret properly. Bring pen, ink, and paper and write down what I tell you."

Dan Jones brought the writing material and told the old blind blacksmith that he was ready.

"In the first place," the holder of the secret began. Then he stopped and began rubbing his brow with the fingers of his right hand. After he had rubbed thus for several minutes, he said, "Go away and come back in an hour."

Dan Jones went out of the room, but stood where he could watch. Black kept rubbing his forehead. At the end of the hour Jones re-entered the room.

"Go out again and come back in another hour," the old master of tempering steel said.

The young man went out for another hour and watched the old hand rubbing the forehead above sightless eyes.

FORMULA FORGOT.

At the end of the second hour when James Black heard a footstep, he said, "Please go out again and wait another hour."

At the expiration of the third hour he burst into tears and said: "My God, it has all gone from me. I have accepted kindness in the belief that I could repay it with a secret of great price. Now I can not. There were 10 or 12 processes through which I put the knives. I can not remember one of them. When I asked for pen, ink, and paper, they were all fresh in my mind, but they have left me. I have put the telling off too long."

The secret never came back to him.

A writer of historical fiction who does not invent is dull and he betrays truth by copying facts. One of the big scenes in Paul Wellman's "Iron Mistress" is between Bowie and the Arkansas blacksmith. In this scene the blacksmith has a fragment of a meteor that he had picked up as a boy and preserved like a jewel in a locked box. He had learned through a scientist that the alloys combined in meteorites make "transcendent steel." Now, after refining some wrought iron to its highest state, he casts his most prized possession, "the jewel of the sky, the piece of a star," into the crucible with it. This was the stuff from which Jim Bowie's personal knife was made. There were other knives—tens of thousands of them—in the Bowie design, but Bowie's own knife had no duplicate.

Quotations From 1868 Publication

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM JAN 10 1960

Special Christmas Volume Deals With Almost-Vanished Mustangs

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The custom among a few printing concerns of issuing special books at Christmas for good will gifts, not to be sold, is highly civilized and highly commendable — especially by the recipients. The Steck Company of Austin thus reissues in superb format a worthy Texas book each year. The Lakeside Press of Chicago began the practice in 1903. I have 49 of the 57 "Lakeside Classics" reprints. The latest, "Among the Indians: Eight Years in the Far West, 1858-1866," by Henry A. Boller, has so much of interest on the now almost-vanished Spanish, or mustang, breed of horses that I must share some of it. The quotations need no explanations. The book was published in 1868.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

THE SAGE BRUSH COLT.

"The California half-breed horses are invaluable in all services where fleet and hardy animals are needed. Tough and wiry, combining the endurance of the mustang with the size and strength of the American horse, and moreover easily kept, they form the only stage-teams in many parts of California, and will run over a 10 to 15-mile route where the same speed would completely use up larger and heavier stock. They have tempers of their own, however, and usually start off kicking, plunging and bucking. But once off, they keep up their speed without flagging.

"In the spring of 1866 I was bringing a band of mustang half-breeds from California. The Malade River was very high and the usual ford impassable. After considerable difficulty we got the horses over and were delayed a couple of hours longer building a raft and crossing the saddles and baggage. While thus employed, a cold rain set in, and when ready to start I found that one of the mares had dropped a foal. We drove on about 10 miles farther before encamping for the night, crossing several creeks breast-high for the horses, but which the little colt was obliged to swim. The next day he was as well as ever, and traveled on with sublime indifference to anything save the gratification of his keen little appetite.

"When we started I thought it would be impossible for him to keep up, and drew out my revolver to shoot him. Twice did I raise it, but the little fellow trotted on so cheerily that my heart failed me and I returned it to the holster. From that time I resolved to take him through, thinking it would never do to destroy an animal of so much pluck. Little Sage-brush, as I named him, swam every stream, flinched from nothing, and arrived in good order in Montana, a distance of 300 miles, having traveled every day, from the time he was half an hour old!"

BUFFALO HORSES.

"The Indian horses are so well trained that they not only watch the buffaloes to escape a collision, but also keep a sharp lookout for holes and bad places on the prairie, avoiding them with surprising skill. When the rider has picked out his cow the horse follows it up with loosened rein or lariat trailing behind him on the ground. He runs boldly up on the right side within a few feet, and the instant the arrow is shot swerves off to avoid the charge which is almost sure to follow. As soon as the cow resumes her course he comes up again, after giving the rider time to fit another shaft, and no matter how fiercely the maddened animal turns upon him, skilfully wheels around as if on a pivot and allows the buffalo to pursue him, as it always does for a short distance.

"I often rode an old, well-trained horse which we called Mac after Owen McKenzie, who was one of the very best buffalo-hunters, white or red, on the prairies. The old horse knew by long experience exactly how far to avoid a lunge, and was no more afraid of closing up with a wounded cow than of joining his comrades on the plain. Nevertheless, in spite of all the skill of both horse and rider, the former is sometimes severely if not fatally injured.

"The Poor Wolf lost his splendid black steed in this way. He had wounded a cow and closing up had given her another arrow, when at the moment of the charge the horse plunged up to his shoulders in a snowdrift and was utterly powerless to escape. The Poor Wolf was thrown and the buffalo's horn made a terrible gash in the horse's flank. With a convulsive bound he sprang up and dashed wildly over the prairie, treading on and tearing out his entrails, and after running a short distance fell dead.

"A similar accident happened at the very next hunt. A horse belonging to He-who-strikes-the-women was ridden by a young man who was considered an excellent hunter, but the buffalo crowded on him so closely that he had no room to maneuver and the sharp horn of a cow ripped the horse's belly, causing the entrails to protrude. The horse was instantly stopped, and assistance coming up, he was thrown, the entrails replaced, and the rent sewed up with a sinew, after which he was able to be led back to the camp several miles distant, fed as usual, and eventually recovered. I saw him frequently afterwards. A scarcely perceptible scar was the only remaining trace of the accident, and this would not be noticed, even by a careful observer, unless especially pointed out. The horse ran as well and seemed to be in every respect as valuable as before."

Tranquilizing of Cows Upsets Him

NOV 22 1959

A Butcher Speaks Up for Richness And the Taste of Strength in Meat

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

After John Rainey of LaMarque, which is in the coast country, began writing me a few years ago I learned that he is an ex-soldier of experience, a butcher by trade, a poet in taste, a scholar in learning, with a sense of values that must challenge some of the professors who have had him in their classes. He likes to talk about meat. I do, too, as well as eat it. A recent column of mine on that subject has evoked the following from him:

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"When in Stanley Walker's 'Home to Texas' I read his remarks on the Texans' way of making ground beef from old bulls and his condemnation of it, I said to myself, 'Here is an authority with a sense of taste ignorant of true values.'

"I have a part of a bull, diced into cubes, brewing into a fine pot of chili con carne at this minute. I know meat, I know the richness of flavor, strength, and sinews that bull meat releases into my system when I eat it.

SALES BOOSTED.

"I travel 40 miles twice each day to attend classes at the University of Houston, where I carry a full load. After my classes each day I stop at a little town not far off my route. Here I work at my trade as butcher almost 40 hours a week. When I went to work there the ground beef was suffering from a lack of strengthening meat. I introduced bull meat into the shop and into the ground beef especially. The sales of that item have tripled. When I bone the bulls I save the tenderloins out for a friend who likes tasty broiling steaks.

"I haven't been able to eat a chicken for many years now; we both know the reason why. Often times I get treated to a dozen eggs from a farm that is not an egg ranch with cooped-up hens laying infertile eggs. If you think that the produce from denatured chickens is disagreeable, don't ever get within smelling range of a chicken rancher.

"I keep telling myself that one of these days I'm going to get to Austin again, and when I do I'll take my friend Dobie a slab of my special stock of bacon. It is cured dry, then smoked fully and not in an air-conditioned smoke house. Nothing sold to eat is more degraded than the bacon packed in bright colored packages. One packing company spent over $100,000 a few years ago in determining what colors most appeal to buyers of packaged products. It's not what's inside that counts with the millions. Recently I gave a customer a sample of the kind of bacon that I eat for breakfast. She didn't like it, it was too full of richness and the taste of strength to suit her.

FOR NATURAL FAT.

Frank Hastings claimed to have started off the baby beef idea. Perhaps he did, someone starts almost everything. The originality of the idea would have sprouted in some other head if he hadn't come forth with it.

"Doctors are sending heart cases to butcher counters daily with instructions to buy nothing but broiling cuts of lean meat. These patients require high protein diets. I suspect that many people get their heart problems and weight problems from stuffing themselves with flabby beef. The market isn't producing butcher cattle without fat, and there is little chance that it will begin to do so. College experiment stations are trying to produce a drug that will turn all the food consumed by cows, steers, and even hogs, into nothing but tender lean meat. First, they tranquilize the animals into an eating stupor, and then they have to change the results with another drug. Of course the drug companies find this a very profitable arrangement. Tranquilizers eliminate hooking at the feed stalls and exercising fat off. Pigs and steers are being fed drugs to prevent their losing weight as they bounce around the country on stock cars and trucks.

"Of course I'm not against fat on beef cattle, but I believe in putting it there in a natural way. When cattle have been placed on feed for an extensive length of time the fat begins to penetrate into the flesh in the form of little feathers; this is called marbling. If the fattening process is continued, this marble will harden and eventually become thick gristle. This type of gristle is never found in the flesh of range bulls. For this reason the flesh of the bull is often tenderer than that of prime beef. Of course it can't take much dry heat cooking or fast dry cooking, but for my part, I couldn't care less.

"I'm a little fellow physically and don't eat much. The food I do eat must be the most flavorsome and nourishing. As I said, I know my meat. When Dr. Walter P. Webb tells the class at the University of Houston that 'We're all to 'damn civilized,' I know what he means."

* * *

FOR MORE BUTCHERS.

It seems to me that the literature of gusto and vitality, of which English writers have made more than the writers of all other nations combined, does not have enough butchers in it. I've been remembering for 30 years the sketch of a butcher that the English painter, Benjamin Haydon, wrote in a letter in 1826.

"I could not make out," he says, "before I dealt with this man, his excessive desire that I should be his customer; his sly hints as I passed his shop that he had 'a bit of South Down (lamb), very fine; a sweetbread, perfection; and a calf's foot that was all jelly without bone!' The other day he called and I had him sent up into the painting-room. I found him in great admiration of 'Alexander.' 'Quite alive, sir!' 'I am glad you think so,' said I. 'Yes, sir; but as I have said often to my sister, you could not have painted that picture, sir, if you had not eat my meat, sir!' 'Very true, Mr. Sowerby.' 'Ah, sir, I have a fancy for genius, sir! Mrs. Siddons has eat my meat; never was such a woman for chops, sir!'—and he drew up his beefy, shiny face, clean-shaved, with a clean blue cravat under his chin, a clean jacket, a clean apron, and a pair of hands that would pin an ox to the earth if he was obsteperous. 'Ah! sir, when she was going to act Lady Macbeth, I used to get up with the butler behind her carriage. Then when at the theater I saw her looking quite wild and all the people quite frightned, 'Ah, ha! my lady,' says I, 'if it wasn't for my meat you wouldn't be able to do that!' "

Wood Fire 'Talks' to Him

JAN 31 1960

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Fireplace Beats Gas or Coal as Aid To a Writer--in One Man's Opinion

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Sinclair Lewis prescribed for a writer "four bare walls, one bare table, a chair and plenty of blank paper." I can see that this prescription might satisfy the author of "Main Street." A delightful setting may become so distracting to a would-be writer that he does not write. If he has no strong call from within, a fine outlook may pull him away from what little he has.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

On the other hand, Richard Wagner's demand for a room hung with satins and furnished with other sybaritic luxuries as an aid for composing his operas is understandable—even logical.

"Let there be a cottage, standing in a valley, 18 miles from any town," begins one of the pictures in Thomas DeQuincy's "Confessions of an Opium Eater." The cottage is to have 5,000 books in it, "a lovely young woman" to make and share the tea, which the Opium Eater says he "usually" drank from 8 p. m. to 4 a. m. The time must be winter "with as much snow, hail, frost, storm as the skies can possibly afford."

The center of this ideal reading and writing cottage is a blazing fireplace. John Joseph Mathews, an American writer far removed from DeQuincey, holds that the proper procedure in domestic architecture is to build a fireplace first and then accommodate to it whatever walls, ceilings, floors, etc., are necessary.

FREE OF THINGS.

I have had such happy times writing intensely by certain fires that it is a pleasure for me to recall them. The only way a writer can possibly get the best out of himself is to associate himself apart from other people. Hay fever in its most raging form caused by cedar pollen from the hills around Austin used to drive me every winter to some isolated spot where I could be free not only of hay fever but of people and things, things, things.

While I was writing "Tongues of the Monte," a book on Mexico, I spent a month or more at the Caballo Ranch in Coahuila owned by the Hogg brothers and Raymond Dickson of Houston. Raymond Dickson was my good friend and had invited me down several times. He was there for a brief while during my writing sojourn, but whether he was there or not my work was uninterrupted. The Mexican cook, a fat, oily woman, had breakfast before daylight, and not long after that I was ready for writing.

My room was large—maybe 16 by 25 feet. It had a big bed. On the floor was an enormous rug from the hide of an enormous Brahma steer. I always want plenty of tables, and there were plenty. Then there was the great fireplace in which a young Mexican made a fire every morning and for which he kept mesquite wood stacked high just outside the door on the front gallery.

There were no newspapers and no mail oftener than once a week to disturb thinking and writing and talking. Many of my meals were eaten alone. I don't get bored with myself. After lunch I would have a fine horseback ride out over the big ranch. After the ride it was time for a drink and then supper. That was the sociable time of day.

The house didn't have electricity, but every room had a good aladdin lamp, which makes the softest light to read by that I've ever experienced. I would read until it was time to go to bed and then after looking at the dying coals in the fireplace a while, I would sleep that sleep called "nature's balm" that comes to a person with a healthy body who is accomplishing something congenial to his nature. I couldn't have worked so happily without that fire. Some nights, association with it gave me "authentic tidings of invisible things."

READ, WRITE BY EAR.

I read by ear when I am interested, and I write by ear when I am aroused. The blazing of mesquite chunks and the dimming of ash-covered coals there in the fireplace at the Caballo Ranch communicated, harmonized with, and accentuated some of the rhythms of Mexico that I was trying to transfer from myself into my book.

For a part of another winter I had a big room with a big fireplace in it out in the yard at the Prude Ranch up Limpia Canyon from Fort Davis. All the people were gone from the big house, but a one-armed Mexican man kept the fireplace provided with wood and kept the table provided at the proper time with frijoles and hot cornbread, also honey and milk. I guess we had some vegetables occasionally and maybe some fruit; I don't remember. They are not necessary to a working man. I had a horse for afternoon riding.

My diversion at night from books or typewriter and the constant fire was to go outside and skylight some wild turkeys that had been planted in the vicinity by the game department. They kept their wild alertness but roosted in oaks right at the house, where they occasionally got a little feed.

Another winter while I was writing on another book, "The Longhorns," I went to the Tom O'Conner ranch out from Refugio. The O'Conners lived in Victoria. They had a big house on the ranch, but the place Mr. Tom liked to come to when alone was the bunkhouse, and that's where I had my bunk—and a fireplace in a congenial room. Nobody else stayed in this house, although a Mexican man cook provided meals in it.

Connections had been made with a gas pipeline running near ranch headquarters and a gas heater fitted inside the fireplace. The cook helped me take this heater out and cap the gas off. Loads and loads of mesquite wood had been hauled up and piled just outside. After I had been there a few days, O'Conner came down to see how I was getting along and to see about other things. He was surprised to find me using wood instead of gas. He considered gas more convenient. I guess it is. He didn't realize that it never has and never can talk to me as a wood fire talks; furthermore, it's damnable on my sinuses.

During World War II I worked by a coal fire in Emmanuel College at Cambridge University in England, sometimes until 2 o'clock in the morning, and I was finely suited, but because of lifetime experiences with wood fires, burning coals do not talk to me so beautifully as burning wood talks.

I've done more writing by a wood stove, both tin and cast-iron, than by any other form of fire. Maybe for a worker a stove is better than a fireplace. It doesn't divert one so constantly and delightfully. If a person yearns to write and is not out to be diverted, any kind of fire—or no fire at all—will do him.

FRIENDLY TOUCH

Dobie Works At Autograph Party Here

BY GEORGE DOLAN.

J. Frank Dobie sucked at a blackened, curve-stemmed pipe and courted writer's cramp here Thursday.

He sat at a small table in Cox's book department, behind stacks of Dobie books, and autographed them for Dobie fans.

"This isn't much work if you only sign your name," said Dobie, puffing unsuccessfully on a pipe that had gone cold.

"But I like people. I like to put something in."

The people liked what he put in, too.

Miss Vivian Thompson of Alvarado was one of dozens who went away smiling.

She asked Dobie to autograph "The Mustangs" for her brother, S. T. Thompson of Alvarado.

"He said he'd rather read your books than anything," she said.

Special Messages.

So Dobie wrote: "I'm pleased to learn that you like my writing."

He scrawled special, personal messages to friends, former students, friends of friends and strangers.

It went on like that for hours. He signed more than 150 books.

The western folklore specialist came here to autograph "The Mustangs," his newest book.

But he wound up inscribing messages on many of his other books, too.

Dobie, who has yet to be caught with his anecdotes down, recalled an autograph session in El Paso after his "Apache Gold and Yaqui Silver" was published.

One of the book's main characters was Captain Cooney, a New Mexico prospector.

Dobie spent a lot of time in New Mexico on the trail of the story.

Camps Alone.

He went to Silver City to find Cooney's son, missed him and stayed over for a few days in the hopes of finding him.

He went alone on a camping trip where Cooney used to hunt.

When he returned to Silver City, said Dobie:

"I'd seen Captain Cooney in the mountains and in the sky."

The hotel clerk told him Cooney's son was in town and he could find him.

Dobie replied: "Thank you, but I don't want to find him."

"I'd found out who Captain Cooney was," he explained. "And I didn't want any facts to disillusion me."

Scene Shows Cooney.

Tom Lea, who illustrated the book, had a scene showing Cooney and his burro.

And at that El Paso autographing session, where Lea and Dobie each was doing pen work, a woman appeared with a photograph of Cooney.

"Derned if he didn't look just like Tom made him," drawled Dobie.

"And Tom made him just like I'd seen him. I'm still glad I didn't see Cooney's son."

The genial, white-haired author, who wore a light cord suit, blue shirt and blue tie, doesn't like to single out any favorite among his many books.

"You don't expect a mother to tell you which is her favorite child," he chided.

Besides, he added: "I don't read any of them."

But Dobie said he liked "Apache Gold and Yaqui Silver" for its pictures ("I read the pictures.")

He got a "special kind of satisfaction" out of "A Texan in England" ("I was trying to make one people understand another.")

He had "a lot of fun" writing "The Longhorns" ("They're my people.")

But he wrote this note in "Tongues of the Monte" to Miss Kate Waddell, 1636 W. Moreland Pl., a cousin:

"Sometimes I think this is the most nearly original book I have written—I know it is the strongest."

The author, who writes a Sunday column for the Star-Telegram, works as hard now as he did decades ago "trying to get sentences and paragraphs right."

"I thought," he mused, "that by the time I wrote 1,000,000 words I could just open a spigot and it would flow.

"I find it won't."

Dobie first became fascinated by phrases when he was riding on a ranch as a youth.

He had no thought of writing then—he just liked to make up phrases.

Then, in college, he began doing "considerable writing."

The author sold his first piece "for anything like money" while he was on the faculty at Oklahoma A&M College. It was an article about cowboy songs, even though "cowboys didn't sing when I grew up."

But Dobie believes it takes more than talent to succeed (and he modestly won't admit he's a success) in the literary field.

"If I ever write my autobiography," he said with a smile, "—and I might—I'm going to have a chapter on chance."

—Star-Telegram Photo by Joe McAulay.

J. FRANK DOBIE.
. . . he likes people, anecdotes.

J. FRANK DOBIE

APR 2 7 1958

Cheerful Liar

American Statesman

Is Best Kind

Some people think that the Bible says "God loves a cheerful liar." I have not been able to find that text in the Bible. I'm pretty sure that God does not love uncheerful, malicious liars. I'm pretty sure also that John Henry Faulk is the most cheerful cheering and skilful depicter of human character that I have ever listened to.

Johnny was born and reared in South Austin—the part of Austin lying south of the Colorado River—his family being a part of the tradition of the city. He has been in New York for years in the radio-television field as entertainer. He has a gift for satirizing pretenders. Not long ago while he was on a visit to Austin, I got him to talk into a recording machine about a noted creator of facts named Bill. Now imagine you are hearing John Henry Faulk a-telling.

Bill was born in Bastrop, Texas, in 1892, as he puts it, right after the last great Indian battle on the North American continent, which took place in Travis Heights, just south of the Colorado River running through Austin. This last great Indian battle was, according to Bill, fought by Stephen F. Austin, and Austin, Texas, was at that time called Waterloo and wasn't the capital. Bill forgets that he has also said his daddy built the capitol, laid the cornerstone, before he was born. "Daddy was a rock mason and the only man they could get to lay a cornerstone. Folks was ignorant in that day and didn't know how to lay cornerstones."

So Bill's dad laid the cornerstone of the State Capitol back sometime before 1892, the year Bill was born, and Stephen F. Austin fought the last great Indian battle on the North American continent. The people wanted to change the name of the town from Waterloo to Austin, but Austin said, "No, all I want is the Stephen F. Austin Hotel named after me."

Should you interrupt Bill at this point and say, "Well, I don't think it was built until after Austin was already the capital of Texas." Bill won't answer in words but will just look at you with mingled pity and indignation that you are not aware of the facts of life, that you are utterly ignorant of what happened.

Bill lived when Stephen F. Austin (who died in 1836) had the Austin Hotel (built in 1924) named after him. The city council met and forced Austin to let them name the city after him. They said to him, "After you whipped them Indians in Travis Heights they quit fighting and you deserve to have Austin named after you."

Bill says that he remembers when he was just a little boy his mama and daddy used to bring him from Bastrop on a steamship up to Austin, Texas.

"Bill," I would ask, "where did the steamship come from?"

"All the way from the ocean, come all the way up the Colorado River."

"Over sand bars and all?"

"Wasn't no sand bars in the river then. Wasn't no sand in it to make bars. It was deep. A man could swim a horse any place in it then except at the fords."

"Well, how did they bring the steamship over the fords?"

"I don't know," Bill would admit. Then he'd look at you as if you were interrupting him in a very discourteous manner.

I would apologize by saying, "Would the steamboat go on up past Austin?"

"No, there was a dam there. That steamboat would have gone all the way to Marble Falls, I reckon, if it hadn't been for the dam up above Austin."

Bills likes to talk about historic people. He can't read or write, but he knowed O. Henry, who left Austin for the last time—for a federal prison—in 1898. As Bill explains, "Most folks are balled up on O. Henry. His named was Old Henry, John Old Henry."

"Oh, you knew him, then?" I asked.

"Knowed him well. Papa hauled wood to him, but he got to where he wouldn't let nobody haul his wood but me and he'd give me up to two bits extra to go get me some candy; I was just a boy, then. That was when they had circuses on the Capitol Grounds."

I said, "I didn't know that they ever rented state property to hold circuses on.

"Yes, Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey would come there and hold their circuses on the Capitol Grounds. I was settin' there one time, about ten years old, when they had a great big elephant I'll never forget. I don't remember the lady's name, but she's standin' no further away from me than from here to that cot; it wasn't over ten foot. That elephant retched over with his trunk, took that six-week-old baby out of her arms and stuffed it in his mouth. Didn't chew, just swallered. We thought maybe if we could get to him fast enough maybe the baby wouldn't be dead. Elephants ain't got chewin' teeth; they jest swaller.

"And so they got a 30-30 rifle and a machine gun. Shot that elephant seventeen times right between the eyes with a 30-30 and the elephant just kept swingin' his trunk and looked at 'em. Didn't even dent his head. So they had to take a blow torch and cut him half in two. And they found the baby—whole, swallered it whole, but it was dead."

I don't know exactly how—I'm not artist enough to reconstruct what Bill had built. Honestly, everybody listening to him thought he was going to say the baby was alive, but the baby was dead. "Course it naturally would have been."

"Why, Bill," I said, "you can't put your fist down an elephant's throat. Its gullet's too small." You have to prompt him like that, you have to kind of play against him with expressions of disbelief to cause him to sail off the ground. In order to sail, to really get up into the atmosphere, Bill's like a plane that has to take off against the wind. If you just swallow everything he says he finally gets bored and shuts up, but if you'll just play along, saying, "Oh, Bill, I can't believe this happened" —he'll rise. He rises on each gust of wind; each gust of disbelief raises him a little higher.

Dallas News

Sunday, November 6, 1955

READING AND WRITING:

Dobie's Texas Tales Harvest Choice Crop

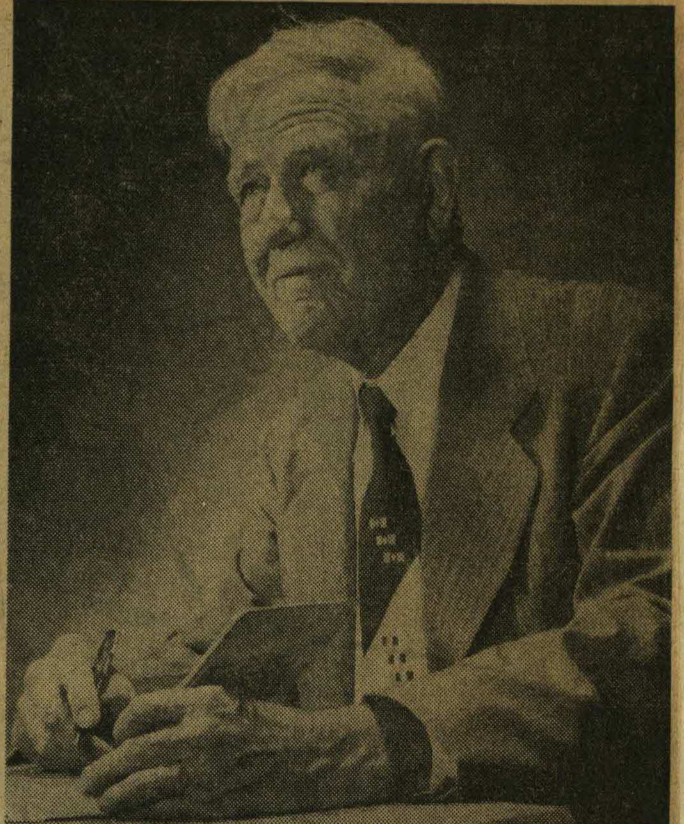
By LON TINKLE

For many, J. Frank Dobie is "Mr. Texas." This is not because he looks every day more and more like the far-seeing, generous-minded and rangy typical Texan that John Knott through The News has made symbolic of the state. With Dobie it is not just a matter of surface appearance, not just the irresistible grin, the animal awareness of nature, the subtle mind that low-rates subtleness.

In Dobie's case, the epithet is reinforced by plucky individualism, independent character, straightforwardness rather than ceremony, directness rather than deviousness. Chiefly, however, it is Dobie's books that have made him this reputation.

In them Dobie celebrates that vivid sense of existence that comes to all people who do not borrow their selfhood from others. Dobie is a creative artist. He asserts the unique value of the creative spirit as compared with the conforming community.

His new book of old tales is about men and women—and animals—who shine with that special authenticity. This is the genuine article, the real McCoy.



—Dallas News Staff Photo by Joe Laird.

J. FRANK DOBIE autographed, as here, many a first edition of his latest volume, "Tales of Old-Time Texas," when he came to Dallas this past Wednesday for the national publication date observance in Dallas book stores. A quick wit as well as a master story teller, Dobie enlivened and revivified that publishing phenomenon known as the "autographing party."

And although Dobie has written significant books on foreign cultures as diverse as those of England and Mexico, many readers still think of him as our major spokesman for regionalism.

This is true. Look at the content, the subject matter, of this new volume. But it is true in a special and significant way. As a regionalist, Dobie is deliberately and astringently devoid of parochialism, of bragging, of any narrow and limited complacency.

Really a man of international breadth of view, Dobie remains a spokesman for the southwestern region by virtue of two things: his affection for the region and his sense of identity with it.

★

IT IS THE LATTER that counts. His book on England, for example, uses England as a lamp to illuminate Texas, but it also uses the Southwest to cast light upon English experience.

Affection for place—and the sense of belonging to it—is one of the oldest themes of literature and nowhere stated more yearningly and touchingly than in Homer's "Odyssey."

In a real way, Dobie is the minstrel of the Southwest, extracting from our legends and our history a mythic pattern not to justify our experience but to govern it.

This is the province of the artist, who is attached to place, and not of the scholar, whose work can be carried on equally well anywhere and who must detach rather than attach himself to locale.

So, appropriately, Dobie's new collection of tales is largely a book about heroes. Like Homer, he celebrates the two great and central virtues of courage and resourcefulness.

Both, for example, are in the famous story, here dramatized in words with the same matchless skill that Dobie has for oral narrative, of Bigfoot Wallace and the hickory nuts.

★

TALES OF OLD-TIME TEXAS. *By J. Frank Dobie. Boston: Little, Brown. $5.*

WHEN BIGFOOT, most intriguing of the Texas Rangers perhaps, lost some mighty good horses to some thieving Indians, he set out to retrieve his property on the double. Smoke signs soon revealed thieves and prey. There were, as Bigfoot saw on closing in, forty-two Comanches he'd have to whip single-handed.

As crafty as Ulysses, Bigfoot stuffed his buckskin clothes and his ten-gallon hat with hickory nuts. Swollen to look even more like a giant than he normally did anyway, Bigfoot routed the enemy through fear and through the impervious armor of nut shells.

Left in triumph with his recovered horses, Bigfoot had another victory. Merely had to take off his buckskin to have ten quarts of hickory nuts all perfectly shelled by the impact of hundreds of Indian arrows. And not a scratch on his hide. You see why Texans salute not just courage but also brains?

It is not just the Bigfoot Wallaces, the Jim Bowies (wonderful stuff here on the Bowie knife) or the pioneering heroes and heroines, however, who typify these traits in this hugely satisfying volume.

★

DOBIE IS A MAN who suffers from, say, a drouth in almost the way a tree or a plant or an animal suffers. He identifies with the thirsty live oak, as in a larger way he feels a sense of identity with the southwestern region. So, there are excellent stories here of bees storing up treasured walls of honey never to be seized by man, or smart bears good at harvesting.

There are tales about Sam Houston's corn plus a survey of the truthfulness of that fetching legend, there are tales of ghosts and spirits, tales about flowers (a deft legend about the bluebonnet whose carefully sifted details almost yield up the bluebonnet's special fragrance), tales of northers, of rattlesnakes, of moles, of the daily signs and symbols of the Southwest.

There are tales, too, with meanings that explode in the mind, such as the great drama in miniature of "The Planter Who Gambled Away His Bride," or the sad greed of "Colonel Abercrombie's Mole."

★

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD some of these before, but they all blend here into as varied and nourishing and satisfying an experience as a genuine son-of-a-gun stew.

More than that, Dobie proves again that he belongs—and here is a legitimate 'Texas brag'—to that supreme and uniquely American kind of artist, right alongside Mark Twain, the born story teller.

Painter Was Reporter

JUL 9 1961 STAR TELEGRAM

Artist Asked Epitaph, 'He Knew the Horse'

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Frederic Remington could toil terribly, habitually rising at six, breakfasting at seven (half a dozen chops "and other knick knacks" as Mr. Pickwick would say), then working in the studio until mid-afternoon, often returning in the evening.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

For a long time he struggled to keep his weight down. At 16 he described himself as five feet eight inches high, weighing 180 pounds. He was mighty proud of the way he rode up with General Nelson Miles and other seasoned soldiers during their chasing around after Sioux in the year 1890. At that time Remington weighed 215 pounds. In 1894, age 33, he recorded: "Without a drink in three weeks. Did 15 miles a day on foot and am down to 210 pounds."

In 1897, age 36, he wrote a friend: "Have been catching trout, killing deer — feel bully — absolutely on the water wagon, but it don't agree with me. I am at 240 pounds and nothing can stop me but an incurable disease." He had only 11 years left before the incurable disease would stop him. Long before the end he had grown too fleshy to mount a horse or do much walking but not to keep on drawing and painting and writing.

* * *

SUPERB REPORTER.

In May 1909 the Remingtons moved to an expensive house and studio on a plot of ground they had bought near Ridgefield, Conn. Remington had burned many pictures with which he was dissatisfied. Although he could not ride horseback in the West any more, he was settling down to put on canvas things stirring to come out of himself. He had said more than once that he wanted his epitaph to be: "He Knew The Horse." On Christmas Day of that year (1909) he was very ill. The next day he died, 48 years, 2 months and 26 days old.

One can not be absolute on numbers, but according to one statement, Remington had completed more than 2,700 paintings and drawings, had illustrated 142 books, and had furnished illustrations for 41 different magazines. He is not being judged now by quantity and will not be judged by quantity. He knew the horse, all right, and he knew the West—but more as a reporter than as a part of it. At times he was a superb reporter. I would say that in "The Sioux Outbreak in South Dakota," a chapter in "Pony Tracks," he is an excellent reporter on cavalrymen.

He knew cavalry horses and cavalrymen better than he knew cows, cow horses and cowboys. On board a battleship off the Cuban coast during the Spanish-American War, he wrote in an article for Harper's Weekly: "I want to hear a shavetail bawl; I want to get some dust in my throat, kick dewey grass, see a sentry in the moonlight, and talk the language of my tribe."

* * *

EVALUATIONS.

As well as he pictured and wrote about "my tribe," if what he said in combined mediums be compared with Captain John G. Bourke's "On the Border With Crook," Remington diminishes in amplitude, in richness of knowledge, in ease and familiarity with land, frontiersmen, soldiers, Indians, and in nobility of outlook.

In the 14th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica Rembrandt has six pages and Remington has one-sixth of one page. I guess the proportions are about right. Evaluations of Remington will not be right unless the evaluers keep perspective and proportion. Now and then a writer's best, an artist's best—for some imaginers at least—is something untypical, though not unrepresentative—something that is near to him but would hardly be wanted by his rut-following editors, publishers, and public. "The Fight for the Waterhole" is near the climax of Remington's paintings of violence. Placed next to it in a little-known album of reproductions is a picture entitled "A Prayer to the Gray Wolf." It shows an Indian standing with one foot on the head of a dead buffalo partly consumed by wolves while a second Indian stands out on the bleak prairie, maybe ten steps away, his shortened shadow on the ground, arms and hands spread downward, his whole body in an attitue of supplication. He is brother to a wolf trotting around rather near, while two of his mates stand away out yonder beyond rifle range. The quietness of everything, the at-oneness between man and beast (both the quick and the dead) and the earth (including sparse clumps of grass)—this is not the Remington many times iterating "man - just-shot-down-the-street."

* * *

NAKED ACTION.

It is not necessary to run down good Bourbon in order to enjoy good Scotch, and I trust I am not doing that when I say that Remington toiled too furiously trying to satisfy the demand for naked action to linger and let things soak into him. He knew more than he understood. In this respect he is not the equal of Charles M. Russell, although he may have had some advantage in craftsmanship. I can not say. As a reporter through eye and ear, through drawing, painting and writing, Remington habitually got and gave the right words, but less frequently the right tune. Even his soldiers sometimes seem but clever imitations of Kipling's.

Where ripeness is all, the right tempo is always present. In his prose writing Charlie Russell had the rhythm of the earth to which he belonged. This rhythm was infinitely superior to that in his sentimental judges. Remington's prose has no rhythm beyond the Richard Harding Davis type. He could be smart, clever with words. Russell in this resembled George Borrow, he of "Lavengro" and "The Bible in Spain," who lived with the gypsies and knew how to charm horses. From the hedges where Mr. Petulengro told him, "Life is sweet," he went up to London, full of ambition to write. In a tavern he spent hours reading a variety of journals. Then in despair he said, "I can never be as clever as that."

* * *

MADE COYOTE HOWL.

I think of two drawings by Charlie Russell. "The Trail Boss" is sidling over the saddle, resting his knees, while his horse rests on three feet. The two repose on a slight elevation of ground, the herd moseying by, and you may be sure the boss is not looking at the steers in general but in particular. He knows every one in that long strung-out herd, the drag so far behind that only the dust it raises can be seen. No honest trail boss ever wanted any stampede, but if one should occur in the middle of the night, this boss and the bony cow horse would leap into action—in order to restore quiet.

Serenity passes into me when I recall a black-and-white vignette of Russell's, one among 40 illustrations he did for "The Virginian." A cowboy on herd, the fat steers lazily grazing, is prone on his belly, asleep, his spurred heels free, his head in the shade of his horse, the only shade there is. The horse is not used to a man stretched out on the ground under him and is not contented. Russell made "dead man's prices" painting action for calendars and for rich purchasers of Western culture. He also was a sculptor. No bronze he made is more permeated with the beautiful, the spiritual, and with understanding of Indian nature than one called "Secrets of the Night." It is of a medicine man, cunning and mysterious, with an owl, wings spread, beak at the listener's ear.

Well, Frederic Remington reported aright much that nobody can ever again see or hear. If his illustrations for Longfellow's Hiawatha are made on somewhat the same principle that an interior decorator chooses pictures, it is to be remembered that he made the coyote howl, fixed the panther in his crouch before leaping, caught the medicine man's gesture. If few secrets of the invisible passed into him, he translated the visible into an astounding variety of pictures that do not fade in interest or power.

J. Frank Dobie, American.

J. FRANK DOBIE, born in Texas, historian, writer of books and associate professor of English at the University of Texas, is convincingly illustrating the fact that being an American is the goal alike of culture, craftsmanship and the rest of the groups inhabiting the 48 political subdivisions comprising the United States of America His argumentative trend plainly exhibits the pride of a Texan in the fact that his State has taken a long lead in all the contributions to the war, of manpower and individual valor over the other 47 States. In that connection he has something to say of the "promoters of internal strife" of whatever postoffice address. He accents the Texans in the list because he likes the United States first and Texas next so consistently as to be able to say the two in one breath.

He admits no place in the United Nations for a so-called American who is not directly in the war program pulling his weight for the defeat of Hitler and the Japs. He states with blunt finality, that those who are stirring up dissension, applauding complaining and grumbling individuals and groups are Hitler-Jap helpers as though they were on the Axis payroll. He mentions names of individuals, corporations, industries and unions as being guilty of treasonable activities costing the lives of American young men.

The war clouds are thickening over the world. We are not half way in the war. We still belong with the "too little, too late" classification, although we have a prideful record of achievement in spite of the obstruction remarked by Mr. Dobie. He wants the chips to fall where they belong and mentions his own Texas as a deserved landing place for many—and that in spite of the spirit of the Alamo, which rides the airplanes, the tanks, the destroyers and the submarines which Texans have manned. He leaves the

2/24/43

Sweet, Shy Texas—Retiring, Gentle—So It Says Here

By DOC QUIGG
United Press Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK, Jan. 29 — Texas! There she stands. The longest suffering, most maligned of states. She's not a braggart. She's a sweet, shy thing, retiring by nature, gentle of spirit.

The authentic Texan, the true breed, is given to soft speech and understatement (it says here today in medium-size print.)

The swashbuckler, the hot-air merchant who has painted a swollen picture of the state on the national map, is a "professional Texan." The authentic Texans far outnumber the professianals within the state, according to J. Frank Dobie.

Dobie, a writer long known as an authority on the flavor of the flatlands and the peccadilloes of the Pecos, was born on a ranch in Texas brush country 68 years ago. He's a blue-eyed, salty-spok-

'Genu-wine' Texan

en gent with silky white hair and wiry, upswept white eyebrows. He believes the word genuine carries more weight if it's pronounced "genu-wine."

DOBIE CAME here to advise the NBC "Wide, Wide World" people, who in a forthcoming program will undertake to crowd the state of Texas onto a TV screen. He'll take part in the program.

"When we get out of the state, the time sometimes comes when a Texan is supposed to brag—and we always try to oblige and do what we're supposed to," he says. "But the authentic Texans are more given to understatement than overstatement."

And in the open spaces, language is sparse. Perpend the Texas anecdote: Two old cowboys, riding the line, camped together each night

Sweet and shy

after riding apart by day. They would come in at eve, smoke a while, go to sleep.

One night, smoking, they heard an animal bawl. One said: "Bull!" The other said: "sounds like a steer to me." They went to sleep, awoke, had breakfast, and then the one who had spoken first rolled his bedroll and got on his horse.

"Ridin'" asked the other. "Yep," said the first, "too damn much argument."

ANOTHER FACET of Texas character shines clean in a conversation Dobie swears he heard in the hills over black coffee. A young sprout asked a lean old gaffer: "Grandpa, how come you and grandma been married 64 years and never quarreled?" The old man answered:

"Tell yuh, sonny, it's like this. One day 64 years ago when I was pretty young and juicy, I said I was going to town and get me a drink and a woman. Well, I had three drinks and I saw a good looking girl and I asked if she'd marry me and she said she would.

"We went to a preacher and got married. Then we got on old Molly, my saddle mare, me in the saddle and your grandma behind me, and started off on the 20 miles to home. After a mile or so, Molly stumbled, and I jerked her up by the bit and said: 'That's one time.'

"A mile later, Molly stumbled again. I jerked her up and I said: 'That's two times.' A little farther, in a hollow, she stumbled again. I pulled a six-shooter and I said: 'That's three times.' And I shot her in the head.

"Your grandma said: 'Whatta you mean, doing that?' And I looked at her and I said: 'Ma, that's one time.'"

J. FRANK DOBIE

AUG 4 1957

American Statesman

The rise in speed in human transportation made in this century does not affect my inner life—the reality of my existence—so much as does the rise of ugly noises, the silencing of silence, the murder of natural harmonies. I was born before the Horse Age died and, indeed, learned to ride a horse while I was learning to walk; yet I can now come across a continent or an ocean in an airplane with as much feeling of being at ease as I can sit on the grass in the evening and watch the last racing chimney swifts fade into the darkened sky. I am not a resenter of changes in themselves, but thousands of times my nerves have been shredded and my serenity ruined by the intrusion of machine-made noises, ranging from the rude slam of an automobile door to the amplified whine of some moron's voice in calf-slobber self pity coming out of a neighborhood radio.

Considering the meaning that harmony has on life, I should think that the wholesale displacement of silence by machine-caused disharmonies would have a profound influence on a people's moral and aesthetic values.

These thoughts have come to me in realizing that certain sounds that stirred generations and generations of human beings could not stir at all except out of a background of silence. In late evenings all through my childhood and boyhood I listened to the bullbats (more properly called night hawks) zooming through the air in pursuit of insects. The wonderful, sometimes wild, the beautiful sounds they made became more a part of me—and as good a part of me, I must believe—than the now-I-lay-me-down-to-sleep prayer learned in infancy. The other night about a block away from Sixth Street in downtown Austin, I stopped my car and got out with a visitor from New York to hear the bullbats. They are always feeding there on summer nights, attracted by insects that are attracted by lights. I can easily pick their sounds out above the traffic, unless the traffic is too near. The New York man could not hear the bullbats at all. Silences have never entered into him.

Knowing my prediliction for panther screams— out of silence —Mrs. John T. Anderson of College Station, Texas, where her husband teaches English and where both of them pursue folklore, has sent me the following reminiscences from a friend in Mississippi:

"When I was a child, my father told me two bloodcurdling episodes involving a panther which for a time lingered in his part of the country, the area of Southwestern Arkansas in Little River County.

The first knowledge that the community had of the panther was through the terrible, human-like screams of the beast, heard late at night by several people. One night a Negro man was returning home after dark with a hind quarter of a freshly killed beef strapped back of his saddle. As he passed through a dark wooded area, the big cat suddenly sprang from an over-hanging branch onto the haunches of the horse. Before the Negro knew what was happening, the horse wheeled and reared, throwing the beast and the quarter of beef free. As the horse bolted, the man managed to hang on. The next day the cleaned bones of the hindquarter were found near the scene of the attack.

"A few nights later my father, a young man of nineteen, returning by the same route from a late call on a girl friend, became uncomfortably aware that he was being followed. With the story of the panther fresh on his mind, he could imagine he heard over the soft clop of the horse's hoofs the pad of another animal. Reasoning that a panther would make a silent step, he tried to brush the feeling away, but he felt that he was being followed and watched. When he spurred his horse up, the thing ran with him; when he slowed to a walk, the thing slowed a few feet behind him. Fonally, coming out into an opening in the thick woods where a piece of the old moon gave a little light, he caught an unmistakable glimpse of the shadow of a huge cat melting into the darkness of a tree a few feet away.

"Unarmed, he gave his jittery horse its head; but as they raced away, he knew the panther was racing with him. They ran for over a mile. When they came out at last into the clearing near my grandfather's home, my father pulled up his horse and looked back. The panther had paused at the edge of the clearing as though uncertain of his next move. Then it screamed— a painful, agonizing scream, like that of a woman in great suffering. For a little while it seemed to be feeling in silence the earthrobs made by its own terrifying voice. Then it wheeled back into the shadows and disappeared, screaming again. My father sat listening until the cries faded away into the darkness. He was very cold."

J. Frank Dobie On the Go

S-T 3/12/50

Travel and Fellow Travelers Draw Pithy Comments From Texas Author

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

This was my first train ride in a roomette, though I had ridden in something of the kind in Germany and France. I didn't know that so many new Pullman cars of the roomette design are in use. The agent of the Missouri Pacific Railroad at Austin said that some people don't like roomettes because they are too private. That prepared me to like them. I agree with Stanley Vestal, author of "Kit Carson," "The Missouri River" and other books, that about the best things of civilization are privacy, comfort and liberty—"and England generated all of them."

J. FRANK DOBIE.

For one thing, in a roomette you are not smothered by excessive heat as one often is in a Pullman berth, either upper or lower. The operators of American sleeping cars seem to regard warmth as a luxury and to be determined to give their patrons a redundance of it. The roomette allows a passenger to regulate the temperature to suit himself. I have done a lot of flying, but for civilized privacy, comfort and liberty I'm a roomette man henceforth. The big airplanes have about as much privacy as a barn during a barn dance.

SILENCE RARE BLESSING.

After I settled in St. Louis I rode in several street cars and buses and had to listen to tawdry radio noises all the time. On the way home, I boarded a handsome-looking day coach on the Santa Fe Railroad at Oklahoma City and found myself in the midst of a blare, a veritable furnace, of radio noises that instead of being music blatantly murdered silence. When the conductor came around, before giving him my ticket I asked if a passenger had to submit to such an outrage in order to be transported. He said he would have the porter cut the noise down. I was getting off within a few minutes at Norman, where I had an engagement to talk at the University of Oklahoma, and where Stanley Vestal gave his pronouncement on the chief blessings of civilization.

Silence is becoming the rarest blessing in what is called modern civilization. It is an ingredient of privacy. There can be no mediation without it, and without mediation there can be no thought, no seeing into the meaning of things. It is seldom nowadays that one can eat a meal in peace in a public place, excepting the more expensive dining rooms, on account of juke-box blarings. Many a time while being tortured by them I have thought how I would pay double the price for a cold biscuit and three or four slices of bacon cooked on a stick at a brush fire amid silence. With the advance of television, people who eat in public and travel by public conveyance will, I suppose, soon have to look at cheapness as well listen to it.

TALK NO DISTURBER.

Privacy does not preclude conversation and one of the adventures of traveling is accidental conversation. The roomette opposite mine on the train to Missouri was occupied by a dark and comely young lady who not long after I arrived asked for a match. After I had smoked and read an hour or two, I offered her some of my magazines to read. I had several back issues of The Saturday Review of Literature and The Nation, two of the most civilized and informative weeklies of America. For intelligent information devoid of propaganda on world affairs, The Nation is the best weekly I know.

These magazines evidently interested the dark and comely young lady, which told me that she was civilized. She was from Mexico City and was on her way to study, through a scholarship in Oxford University in England. She was specializing in psychology. I don't remember much that she said. I only remember that she added to the pleasantness of the traveling.

Only one other person through the incidence of proximity made a strong impression on me during a rather long trip. That was at breakfast in a big hotel at Oklahoma City. I was seated alone enjoying the silence, the white linen, the low lights and the aroma of coffee when two men seated themselves at the table next to mine. One was negative and evidently an admiring dependent of the other. The second man was wearing a flashy necktie and a flashier stickpin, but his jowls outflashed everything else. His loud tone of voice seemed designed to make people look at him, and I heard him say something about "pipe line." The waitress was a blond who looked to be as untouchable as her elaborate hair-do. On her immaculate vestment she wore a card that said "Mickie."

HE WAS DIVERTING.

When she went to the other table, the man with flashy jowls said something that caused her to retort, without a smile, "If you don't look out you won't get any breakfast." About that time another waitress dashed up and said, "Now don't spoil Mike." Mike glowed all over, raised his voice a few notches, and everybody knew that his tip would be bounteous. He would be a bore to listen to; having to sit a long time while in his company in a parlor car would be maddening, but he was diverting.

I like to recollect the experiences of any trip, and writing a kind of public letter for newspaper publication every Sunday strengthens the habit. Two public developments that I observed in Missouri and Oklahoma impressed me especially.

The first is at Stephens College, Columbia, Mo. There President Homer Price Rainey has built a small theater and engaged six experienced actors from New York to act with and help train for the stage young women of the college who specialize in the drama. The students rotate in acting, but they and the professional actors keep plays going constantly throughout the school year. The theater seats only about 350 people, and is generally full. Students pay 50 cents admission and the general public 75 cents. The receipts clear all expenses for maintaining the theater. Town people, students of Missouri University, which is also in Columbia, and many people from St. Louis and Kansas City attend the performances, which are said to be often as good as New York performances. Millions of people in the United States like to see good plays in all cities, especially in college and university centers.

For years the reading public has been appreciating the work of the University of Oklahoma Press. With emphasis on the backgrounds of the Southwest, it publishes books that are as well designed and printed as any firm in the nation puts out and has on its list first class reading. It takes far more than a plant and money to make a publishing house. The University of Oklahoma Press has everything that it takes. Everything includes intelligence and freedom, especially what is called academic freedom in the institution behind it. This fine press is having a distinct part in developing civilization in the Southwest.

Short-Lived Happiness Gained

STAR TELEGRAM MAR 20 1960

Herb-Curer Cheats Death Once but Loses in End

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

By the time Favian was 18 years old his godmother—Godmother Death—had taught him the curative powers of all the herbs of the countryside.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"No other herb-curer of the land knows so much," she told him. "Now I am going to make you a gift. Look This herb is called la Yerba de la Vida — the Herb of Life. Only I know where it grows. All the other herbs you can gather for yourself, but only from me can you procure this. If you are obedient and use it according to my instructions, you will be happy. With it you will be able to cure all kinds of sickness in all kinds of people. It will not fail. Yet you must reserve it for extreme cases and often withhold it for the sake of charity.

Also this one thing you must always remember. When you see me at the foot of the bed, do not offer la Yerba de la Vida, for when I stand thus, I have come to claim my own. Only your bright eyes and the dimming eyes of the one I have come to take will see me, but to you both I will be plain. Now my care as a madrina is ended. Go your way."

It was destiny that a strong and comely young man so sage as Favian should soon be in great repute. He went by day and by night into hovels; he answered calls from big houses far distant. When he could not go, patients were brought to him. Always he used the Herb of Life with discretion. He was not mercenary and he was happy in doing good. To the people he was Favian de los Remedios.

* * *

PRINCESS PROMISED.

Then one day a runner came saying that the Great Cacique of the land lay a-dying, that none of the court doctors could benefit him, and that Favian was called. The messenger added that the desire of the Great Cacique for life was so intense that he had promised the hand of the princess to whoever should heal him.

Favian went at once. In the outer court of the palace he saw only anxiety and grief. The Great Cacique was a good ruler and just. He was sinking fast. Favian was the last hope.

As he was rushing on through the long corridor leading to the dying king's chamber, he met the princess. He did not have to be told who she was; she did not have to be told who he was. She was beautiful like the sky, like flowers after a rain; her skin was as smooth as the grass under sunshine when seen far away, the curves of her body blended softness into firmness like the swell of waters drawn by an even tide. He was strong and straight, both kindness and power in his features, the lush vigor of youth in every motion of his body.

"Oh, save him for me," she said, the tones of life-giving and of life-hungering in her voice.

"I will save him for myself," Favian said, and he strode on feeling that he could tread down legions.

It was a case for no common herb. As Favian neared the bed, he drew from his wallet the bottle containing the elixir of the Herb of Life.

"A cup," he said to an attendant.

* * *

DEATH CHEATED.

At that instant his eye fell upon the shrouded figure he knew so well standing at the foot of the bed, invisible to others but in silent eloquence looming before him as vivid as the flaming torch of an Indian running in dark night. Only for an instand did Favia pause.

"The air, the air!" he cried. "The Great Cacique is suffocating! Ventilation! Turn the bed around so that the royal one's head will be at the window!"

As quick as the command, the bed was turned—and La Muerte no longer stood at its foot. Death was cheated. The Herb of Life brought recovery.

That evening Godmother Death appeared to Favian, just for a minute. "You have disobeyed me," she said. "The next time the bed will not turn from me. Remember." Then she was gone.

Immediately the Great Cacique prepared to keep his word, and the palace was gay with preparations for the wedding of the princess to the savior of her father.

Now Favian no longer went like a benediction with his remedios into the hovels of suffering. The court in which he moved was for the time free from pain and sickness. The actual realm in which he was burgeoning rapt him beyond all things, all thoughts mundane. He had touched the hand of the princess and grown faint, and once when the softness of her breast brushed his arm he was dissolved into ecstasy. He had scented the aroma of her hair, the perfume of her breath. In what must have been but a dream his own lips on her ripe lips tasted the nectar of life that makes youth burst to pour out life itself; then from sheer lightsomeness he darted up among the stars and raced along the edge of the moon. He was the charioteer of Dawn poised upon a peak overlooking the whole earth and ready to set it aglow.

One starlit night the two stole away beside the lake; there she danced alone around him, a being translated out of the flesh, and with dew in his eyes he worshiped her and was afraid to touch her.

In the way of lovers they gave each other special names. Out of his knowledge and experience he made one for her — Flower of Life, for the plant exists for the flower and the flower is the quintessence of the herb. And because, as she said, he had made her radiant and because he was the restorer, she called him simply Life.

* * *

FELT IMMORTAL.

He needed no sleep. For him all food was dross. He was more exuberant than the white-winged zenzontie that in the dawning darts straight up from the highest twig of the highest tree and then pitches straight down, singing, singing, singing. When he walked, his feet hungered to press against the juices of spring grasses and wild red begonias. He gathered petals of roses to strew for her to step upon, and the lightest print of her foot in the sand was too lovely for the elements ever to obliterate. He owned the whole world, but all the roses and jewels and beautiful things in it were not enough for one small gift to her who was above heaven and earth. With a prodigality as easy as an actor's gesture he would have flung away his own life for her; without a qualm he would have crucified all mankind in order to remain alive to love her. Death might beleaguer the world — a world as unreal and as far away as prenatal existence — but without thinking of the matter at all he was conscious of being immortal.

And so for Favian, no longer of the Remedios, the days approaching the bridal morning were flying by. And then without warning, without reason, the sun stood still, the earth ceased to revolve, the air that all human beings must breathe withdrew. The princess was sick, sick unto death.

Not even a horse ever forgets what he has learned. Favian the lover remembered Favian of the Remedies, remembered Godmother Death and her gift.

As he came into the sick room, the face on the pillow lighted. He knelt and took her hand. It was cold.

"Flower of my Life," he said, his voice low under mist, "I will make you well and you will yet be mine."

"Oh, Life," she faltered, her smile still gallant, "but your hand is warm."

* * *

LA MUERTE APPEARS.

There may have been other people in the room, but neither saw them. Then, the mist over his eyes, Favian arose and drew the bottle containing the elixir of the Herb of Life. It had never failed, and there was the promise of the Power of Powers that it would never fail.

At this instant Favian heard a gasp. The imploring eyes of the princess were fixed on him, but one finger of her right hand pointed toward the foot of the bed.

La Muerte stood immobile. Only as if to enjoin silence, and at the same time to enforce a finality against all appeal, whether of man or the combined forces of eternity, she slowly raised her hand with the palm held open in front.

But Favian would not be silent. "La Yerba de la Vida!" he cried. "Oh, Flower of Life, drink quick!"

Quicker than his cry he had jerked the stopper from the bottle and was thrusting it forward. Then as if wrenched by some unseen force, it slid from his grasp and dashed to a thousand pieces on the tiled floor. When he looked up, the shrouded figure had vanished, and with her all the flowers that had ever blossomed in the world for Favian.

Dobie Recalls Big Bend Yarn

Panther Killed Colt, Then Took Bell Along to Call for Next Breakfast

S-T 10/30/49

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

One year when I was down in the Big Bend, the ranchers were losing nearly all their colts to panthers. One had tried putting bells on his colts to scare the panthers away. He said that the night after he belled the colts, a panther killed one, ate on it, took the bell and was sitting up in a tree ringing it, when he located the beast next morning, trying to toll up the old mare. Panthers are very fond of colt meat.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Several of the Big Bend ranchers said that they understood, from hearsay, that a panther sometimes lures a colt up to within leaping distance by waving its tail. A panther certainly can wave its tail, and if curiosity killed a cat it may also have killed a colt. I have talked with two men who claimed to have seen this tail-waving operation. Neither was what you would call scientific minded. One was a Mexican named Jaime Vela of the Fronteriza Ranch, just across the Rio Grande from the Chisos Mountains; he was not circumstantial enough to suit me. Juan, on the other hand, had all the details. Juan was gardener on the ancient and extensive hacienda of Los Cedros, where there used to be a very large guayule factory, down in the state of Zacatecas, Mexico.

Juan, as well as other gente around Los Cedros, had been telling me how coyotes draw wild dates down from the big native "royal palms" by means of looking at them intently and waving their tails. This, logically, led to the potency of the panther's tail.

MEXICAN'S STORY.

Back in th. days when Juan was a "leathered one," a riding vaquero, a certain panther got to catching colts faster than the mares could drop them. This lion could not be poisoned or trapped. One day, having located a fresh kill, the manager took his dogs and all hands to try to hunt the slaughterer down. Men were stationed at various points, some with nothing but ropes, others with guns, to keep watch against the roused marauder. Juan and a fellow vaquero were stationed at the mouth of a canyon coming out of a mountain into a wide plain.

This plain afforded tall grass, and as the two vaqueros took their outlook they noticed a small caballada grazing contentedly not far off. Soon they saw a 2-year-old filly moving uneasily down the wind from the other horses. The other horse stock seemed to pay no attention to her. The filly was moving forward in a zig-zag manner, showing a nervous curiosity about something, now and then retreating toward the caballeda but gradually drawing near an unusually thick patch of tall grass.

The grass was waving in the wind and sunlight. And now amid the waving spikes Juan saw something, moving also, that he was sure was not grass. It was redder than the grass; it was thicker. Back and forth, back and forth, not at all fast, it waved.

"Look! That is the tail of a panther," Juan said to his companion.

KILLER IS SLAIN.

But the other man could not be sure. Now the filly was galloping zig-zag, her excitement increased. Neither the tail-waver nor the filly saw the men. Presently the second man distinguished the tail from the grass. He had a 30-30 rifle.

"Shoot," whispered Juan.

"But we came out with orders to shoot the animal scared up by the dogs," remonstrated the other. "We have no orders to shoot an uncertain animal in the grass. It may be a dog."

"But," answered Juan, "this animal is a killer of horses. Look! The poor filly is being drawn to it as a rabbit is drawn into the jaws of a snake."

"But I can not see the body," the other man said. "If I should shoot at so uncertain a mark and miss, perhaps the manager would charge me for the cartridge. No, I will not shoot."

By this time the filly was within 20 feet of the waving tail. Juan knew that the head of the hidden beast was pointed toward the filly. The tail still waved, but more slowly. Juan took all responsibility, seized the rifle, aimed at where the bony of the tailed one should be, and shot. The filly and the other horse fled. The two men went to the spot. A big fat lion—the killer—was in death agonies.

BEAR HAS TRICKS.

Before branding this as mere folklore, one may well remember that in days before deer and antelope became so sophisticated, hunters on the plains used to get down in the grass and wave a gun barrel, a rag, their own legs, anything conspicuous but not startling to draw the game nearer. James Capen Adams, generally conceded by naturalists to be the most important observer of bears among all the Rocky Mountain hunters who have written of their exploits, told his biographer that on one occasion he saw a grizzly bear in tall grass "rolling on his back, throwing his legs into the air, jumping up, turning half somersets, chasing his tail and cutting up all kinds of antics, eivdently for no other purpose than to attract the attention of some cattle." The animals crowded around the bear. A heifer, more curious and bold than the other animals, rushed toward the bear. He seized her, killed her, and, in plain sight of Adams, sucked her blood.

J. Frank Dobie

MAY 12 1957

American Statesman

I have been sketching something of life recently experienced along one of the old pack mule routes across the Sierra Madre. Most memorable to me of any experience on this trip is the guide and master of affairs who conducted it. Sixty-three years old, he spent a while during the Great Depression in California, but has lived most of his life in the mountains of Durango. I do not think of him as a hired mozo, an alien to me in status, nationality or in any other way, but as a fellowman much more congenial as a companion than many university professors, governors, financially successful business men, etc., whom I have known. He was working for $1.60 a day, plus found. On the second day of our riding he began opening his "word-horde" and his inner self to me and we became muy amigos.

"Look," he said, "I have never been in Austin, Texas, where you live, or in the Pennsylvania from which Don Juan comes, or in Houston, where Don Leonardo has his domicile, but in my house I have a Book of Knowledge with maps and I know all these places. I know where England is and Spain and China and Germany and Portugal and Russia and many other lands.

Why Orientals

"We call the Chinese Orientals, but why? To get to China we keep going west. If some famous Chinese captain had kept sailing east and discovered America before Columbus sailed west, he would have called America the Orient and now we'd be Orientals. This Book of Knowledge does not advance superstition like the 'clericos.' Superstition is the worst evil people have, and the clericos give them more of it than anybody else."

I noticed that when we rode past a shrine at a little cluster of cabins in a certain valley, Don Miguel appeared not to notice it, whereas Julian, who wore sandals, took off his hat. It happened to be drizzling that day and Don Miguel wore a long sleeveless cape that was once waterproof — the Mexican form of slicker. Sitting tall and erect in the saddle, his shrouded shoulders giving with the gait of the not large mule he rode, he suggested to me pictures of Don Quixote. I told him so and he was not unpleased. When I asked him if he had read "Don Quixote de la Mancha," he replied, "Only some chapters." He looked more like a sheik of some nomadic Arabian tribe than like Don Quixote, I guess.

He has had certain sheikish experiences with women, for he has been married four times, his present wife being quite young and the preceding three all being alive. "Matrimony," he observed, quoting one of the proverbs with which Spanish speech is bountifully sprinkled, "is a corral of the blind. The ones inside are trying to get out, and the ones outside are trying to get in." He told of a man in the sierras who married at the age of 114 and died two years later. "How much longer would he have lived if he had not married?" I asked. "Perhaps four more years."

Women

"One time there was a man," he went on, "who asked another man: 'In what month of the year do women talk less?'

'I hear them talking all the time,' the second man responded, 'but I don't know in what month they talk less. Tell me.'

" 'In February. It has only 28 days.' "

Now Don Miguel himself is the very antipodes of silence. I often marvelled at how he and another Mexican riding for hours along together seemed unable to endure even a small stretch of silence. I have often noticed this garrulity, invariably cheerful, among Mexican men. They can chatter unbrokenly for hours without saying anything at all that goes into the inner ear. When I told Don Miguel that in my observation some men out-talk the most talkative of women, he assented with a tolerant smile.

He told little folk tales that were old a thousand years ago. One time a king said to a subject: "I will give you three days to tell me how much I am worth. If at the end of that time you do not give a just answer, you must die. Now take your time and think. You have three days."

In about fifteen minutes the man said, "My king, I need no more time. I have the answer."

"All right," the king said, "how much am I worth?"

"Twenty-nine reales" (bits at 12½ cents each), the man said.

"What," the king exclaimed, "I your king and you rate me so low. Explain."

"I cannot rate you above or even equal to Jesus Christ," the man said. "His value was set at thirty reales and he was sold for that. I put your value next to his —29 reales."

The king had to let his subject go free.

After Don Miguel told this ancient tale beside a roaring fire on the freezing night during which none of us slept soundly, Don Juan Stiteler of Pennsylvania, contributed a story of a king also—another ancient folk tale of world-wide circulation. It might have been told by Don Miguel himself.

One time a king ordered a certain man killed. The official headsman happened to have received a great favor from the man he was to kill and now he did his best to repay it.

Choose Ye

"Look," he said to the victim, "it is in my power to offer you your choice of the ways to die. You can have your head cut off. You can be hanged. You can be shot. You can be drowned. You can be stabbed to death. Choose any way you want to die and your choice will be granted."

"I choose to die of old age," the victim replied.

"That may give you more suffering than any other way," the king spoke up. "Go and die of old age."

The only way to tell the next story is orally, with appropriate gestures. It is one of a thousand "chistes" (jests) in the picaresque, or trickster, tradition that have come down by word of mouth from ancient Spain. I heard Don Miguel tell this story at least four times to the same audience, and it was at each telling increasingly delightful with his pantomime and the rimes. I can't possibly show the gestures in print and my translation of the rimes misses the delicious absurdity of the original. Anyway, here is the story.

One time an old woman boiling a pot of soup over a fire—a fire out in the campo this was—saw a rascally beggerman coming. She knew that his purpose was to get something to eat and never to pay anything in any way for what he received. As he came up, she punched a fresh stick under the pot and said to it:

Boil, boil, little boiling pot,
But all this day you'll hardly
get hot.

The rascally beggarman saw which way the wind was blowing and picked up another stick and put it into the fire and said:

Boil, boil, little boiling pot,
Today I'll surely not leave
this spot.

He stayed and he stayed and of course he got the soup. The next day he went on. Away up in the mountains a woman who had just made a fine lot of tamales and cooked them and was ready to take them away from the fire for her people to eat saw him coming and recognized him as a rascal always getting and never giving. She was accustomed to cook at this fire. Now it was burned out so that only a great heap of ashes marked the place. She turned her back to the approaching beggarman and, spraddling her legs, bent over so that he long black skirt hid what she was doing while she placed the tamales under the ashes.

Greetings

The beggar rascal came up and greeted her and she greeted him. He looked all around and, seeming to see nothing to eat, asked, "Is it far to the next little ranch?"

"No, no," she said. "It is a very little short way."

"What is the direction?" he asked.

"Oh," she said, "you follow up that little bit of canyon until you come to where the trail forks to the right. Take that and then when you are on the crest, you will see a trail forking off to the left to go down into the next canyon. Just follow your direction down there and no more."

"I think I understand," the beggerman said, "but let me be certain." He picked up a stick and pointed it toward the ash pile. "I follow up that little bit of canyon to where the trail forks to the right," and here he made a deep thrust into the ash pile and gave an upward jerk so that several shuck-ends of tamales were exposed. "I got up that fork to the crest and then I turn left on another fork." He rammed the stick into the ash pile again and plowed up the main nest of tamales.

In the end the woman had to let him eat what he had discovered.

Embroidering the Facts

4-8-56 By J. FRANK DOBIE San A. Light

I confess that during many years of writing I have been more ardent in the pursuit of good stories than in the pursuit of facts, though they have continually bothered me. Gathering facts to help out a story generally takes more labor than anything else connected with it.

Sometimes I have thought that the whole round of truth about an incident or a man may be contrary to fact. I mean that sometimes—not at all times, by any means—it seems that popular imagination weaving away its fictions on a subject may come closer to truth than the available facts come.

Any person in the public eye knows by experience that the public manufactures its facts about him or her. A person will often get credit for knowing more than he knows, for doing more than he has ever done, and for being better and larger than he actually is, just as, also, he will get credit for being meaner and smaller than he actually is. Maybe the total sometimes approaches truth. I don't know. Here is an illustration with a little story attached.

I have a letter from an individual in Colorado saying that she has read my book on the Santa Fe trail. (I have never written any such book.) She says that in this book she found the name of her great-grandfather spelled Patterson instead of Patteson, but that my putting him into a book as an early adventurer-trader into New Mexico before the Santa Fe trail was opened has corroborated family history and made her credited by a Princeton university historian.

I have looked into "The Santa Fe Trail" by R. L. Duffus—an excellent book long out of print—and read that James Patterson and three other men set out for Santa Fe from Missouri in 1809, were captured by New Mexicans, taken to Mexico and held prisoners for two years before being released.

The story about her great-grandfather Patterson as told by the individual in Colorado is good enough for a novel. She says:

"He was in the Mexican prison for five years, seeing no one but officers and soldiers connected with the prison. He was a Mason and attempted through Masonic symbols to get help from officer after officer. At the end of five years a young Mexican captain recognized him as a Mason and said these words, without adding another syllable: 'The prison door will be unlocked tonight. That is all I can do for you.'

Got Home

"Patterson made his escape with absolutely nothing but the clothes he wore. After walking until he was exhausted he found a sheep herder, and this man fed and cared for him until he was able to travel on. He was heading for New Orleans to try to get a boat going up the Mississippi river into Missouri. After months of solitary walking, living off the country, he reached home. Here his troubles really began.

"Women in those days, it seems, were very faithful to their departed. The wife of James Patterson had given him up for dead and for five years had dressed in widow's weeds. Also, she had divided his plantation among his children. He had enough stamina left to get his property back, but his wife so enjoyed wearing the black expressive of her mourning that he had an awful time getting her to change.

"He lived to be a very old man with one unbreakable rule enforced over his entire plantation. No one was allowed ever to plant, have, eat, or cook with an onion. He said that every piece of food fed to him in Mexican jails, even the bread, had onions chopped up in it, and that he was through with onions forever."

Well, did you ever eat a Mexican tortilla? Tortillas in Mexico have been made of the same unsalted and otherwise unseasoned corn, soaked and mashed, since long before Cortez conquered the Aztecs. But I am enormously thankful for this story about James Patterson. It is probably true to character, even if not true in all facts.

The other day in Dallas I had conversation and something else with my cherished friend, Bill (W. H.) Kittrell, one of the best story-tellers encountered during almost a lifetime of appreciation of story-tellers. Bill Kittrell told a story about Lon C. Hill that is certainly true to character, even if some fact in it is fabricated.

Lon C. Hill

Lon C. Hill used to be a lawyer at Beeville. Then, with the advent of the first railroad into Brownsville he became a land promoter in the lower Rio Grande valley. He helped make the valley "magic." He knew juries, Mexicans and land-hungerers and a lot besides. He was part Choctaw Indian, and wore his hair long enough to hang down over his shoulders; his shaggy eyebrows were harmoniously long. He was a character.

Well, one day back in prohition times, Lon C. Hill got on the train at Brownsville to ride east. He carried, according to his habit, an oblong black satchel containing his usual traveling equipment: A clean shirt, a nightshirt, a bottle of whisky and a 6-shooter.

Soon after the train started, he picked up his black satchel and went back into the Pullman smoker. He sat down, putting the satchel at his feet. Two other men were in the smoker. Then a very brisk young man entered and without taking time to become acquainted addressed himself to Lon C. Hill.

Liquor Agent

"I am a prohibition enforcement officer," he said. "Here are my credentials." He displayed a medallion worn on the underside of his coat lapel. "A lot of liquor is being crossed from Mexico and carried into the United States," he went on briskly. "I'll just take a look inside that satchel of yours."

"I don't believe I'd like for you to," Lon C. Hill said.

"I ask you to open the satchel," the agent persisted.

"I'm not a-going to do it," Lon C. Hill said.

"Then I'll open it," the young man announced.

"Oh, if you persist," Lon C. Hill said quietly.

He was bending over opening the satchel and reaching into it. In a flash he raised his six-shooter. Pointing it at the young man, who made the opposite of a forward movement, he said:

"Young man, this is either the last satchel I'm a-going to tote or the last one you are a-going to open."

The moral of all this is: Tell me a good story and don't put too much reliance in any story you hear about anybody.

Diaz Turned Down Debt Payment

AUG 28 1960

Mexican Mine Owner Lived Gaudily

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

So much money came to Pedro Alvarado from his mine, El Palmillo, in Chihuahua, that he offered to pay off the national debt of Mexico — though he had little conception of what that debt might be. If he actually made the offer, why did not Don Porfirio Diaz, who was president of Mexico at the time, take what he could get out of Pedro? Pedro had no trouble in finding eager takers. He sent, it was claimed, rich gifts to all the kings and potentates of the earth that he could learn about. One Christmas, one account goes, he distributed a carload—a railroad freight car—of freshly minted silver pesos through the streets of Parral. When the Guggenheim interests offered to buy him out, it used to be told, he replied that he would buy them out. He valued the Palmillo at 60,000,000 pesos—at the time when a peso was worth half a dollar and better. He boasted that he kept 1,000 pack mules and burros carrying gold and silver ore out of El Palmillo. When his daughter married, the story went, he paved her path from palace to church with silver bars out of his own mine.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

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HIRED UNFORTUNATES.

The maimed, the halt and the blind who applied to him were all put on the payroll of the mine. He built the palace that remains the show place of Parral. Then he furnished it — not with gold door knobs to bathrooms, about which he had little concern, but with 15 pianos, including one for the kitchen. As he bought pianos, Pedro bought everything else—coaches, tamed bears, candlesticks, silks, fighting cocks, cut glass, 60 Chinese vases, French chandeliers, aluminum coffee pots — whatever was made to glitter before his eyes. The walls were splattered with gold dust; the floors were covered with gaudy oriental rugs that would bog a saddle-blanket.

Sometimes while sitting there beside a peacock that roosted on a weathered piano out in the patio, nothing of original grandeur left in the palace but the Red Room—the damask curtains of which had not, when I saw them, been dusted for 25 years, because no hand in Parral was worthy to touch them — Pedro Alvarado went into a kind of coma dreaming that the American Smelting and Refining Company had robbed him of his mine, whereas, in fact, this powerful corporation got it because he drank too much champagne, supported too many women, bought everything offered him and also because the rich mining fers of from 10,000 to 20,000 sensible woman, had steadied him, but after she died he began going to Mexico City, where agents of his kept standing offers of from 10,000 to 20,000 pesos apiece — an outrageously high price—for virgins. If he liked one, he would give her whatever she asked. He affected to be a poet and saluted ladies with "versos" — wordy jingles—of his own composition. It was claimed that he had a statue of his wife made of marble and placed recumbent in the bed she had once occupied. At other times Pedro imagined that he had been the dupe of a foreign conspiracy. But always he knew, though he would never tell, where a vein of almost solid silver lay hidden in the out-worked Palmillo, which had become the property of another. Some manana he would come back into bonanza.

* * *

MINE WENT 'CADUCO.'

After one trip to Mexico City on which he'd been away for many months, Pedro reappeared in Parral dead broke. He said he had been hypnotized. By now the American Smelting and Refining Company owned most of the Palmillo, although Pedro kept some shares in it. The mine went caduco—played out.

When I saw him in his palace on Jan. 2, 1932, the goats were playing marbles on the rich rugs and some of the pianos had been moved out into the patio. He let me see the famous Red Room, with its hand-wrought vases and carved furniture, its heavy curtains and frescoed ceiling. I walked in the arcades and examined the the frescoes on the walls. I disturbed the pigeons, hundreds of them, alit on their own dung inches deep along the arcaded gallery adjoining the dining room, where hogs came and a peacock was roosting on a once richly-carved sideboard. I looked out to the west near sunset and saw the flushed hills, women washing clothes in the Parral River beneath, and sopilotes by the score waiting in the cottonwood trees on the opposite bank.

Old Pedro by this time was as crazy as a bedbug. His incoherent talk about millionaires and of eight nationalities who had robbed him of El Palmillo and of silver veins eight inches thick and nine varas wide hidden in the mine now closed down was more pathetic than fantastic. He'd struck the bonanza in 1900 — thirty-two years before. He'd paid 500,000 pesos for the palace. Despite the efforts of tinhorn amusement vendors to have the clock strike twelve at every hour of the day, genuine drama reaches its climax only in the fall of finality. I witnessed the climax of the drama of Pedro Alvarado.

On Sidewalks of New York

ST 5-13-56

Little, Homey Incidents Belie Charge That Big City Is Inhuman

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have been as tired in New York as a sore-footed, wobbly-legged calf that has just taken its last step until it lies down a while and then sucks. I have been so tired of the machinery, the clangor, the crowds and the air of New York that I would have paid double to change my hotel room for a sweaty saddle blanket spread on mesquite grass away out in the brush somewhere. I lived in New York as a university student more than 40 years ago, have returned to it numerous times and now am here again, but it never seems inhuman to me. O. Henry translated into his stories more humanity out of New York's "four million" (eight million or something like that now) than he translated out of the sheep ranch he lived on and the cattle ranches he saw in Texas. O. Henry was older when he got to New York. For olding me, this city becomes more pregnant with humanity every time I visit it.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Somebody wrote a play entitled "Life Begins at 8:40." That is the hour when nightly the curtains go up in the theaters off Broadway and thousands of people surrender themselves to the mockery, the illumination, the idealization, the satirization, the plummeting of life, in comedy and tragedy, and in the infinity of blendings of both that is life itself. I had rather be lost to the outside world in a theater of New York or London than stand on top of the Indies. The curtains that go up at 8:40 lower for the final applause at 11:00. Then the crowds surge out.

A PART OF THE CROWD.

The other night when I came out of a theater on West 48th St., the crowds flowed off the sidewalks into the street and so filled it that car traffic had to halt. Like a drink, a play is best shared with a congenial companion, but I was alone. Yet I did not feel solitary. I had the feeling that every unit in that flowing tide of people was an individual like myself, as real in his compound of human attributes as the character on the stage that had held us captivated a few minutes back. I thought again of Charles Lamb standing amid the stream of moving people on Fleet St. in London and "weeping out of sheer sympathy" for humankind, life surging in him because he was part of the mass.

Long ago I used to go to the box office early and buy a cheap balcony seat. When I go to New York now, I don't have time or energy to get balcony seats. I go to an agency in the hotel where I stay and buy a seat. The only seats sold by the agency are orchestra seats. They cost $5.75 at the box office; the agency adds a dollar—for "service." I was having trouble getting a ticket on short notice for Saturday night. Finally a middle-aged woman with blondined hair at the agency booth got a ticket by telephone for a new play, "Waiting for Godot," that I wanted to see.

"If I had a friend like that in every box office," she said, "I'd get lots of tips."

I already knew that a tip, in addition to the extra dollar, was expected by the agency clerk. "What is the biggest tip you ever got?" I asked.

"One hundred dollars," she replied. "It was while 'South Pacific' was playing. A man stood right where you are standing now and said that two tickets to 'South Pacific' would be worth $100 to him. I got them by phone and he paid for them. Then he planked down a hundred dollar bill. 'I can't change it,' I said. I had looked him over and did think he might tip $10. 'I don't want no change,' he said; 'I told you the tickets would be worth $100 to me.' He was a Texas oil man." I didn't think it necessary to inform her that I wasn't, while I shoved back four bits of the change.

SNEEZE DRAWS REMARK.

I was riding down the elevator with nobody in it but me, the operator and a bellhop. The operator sneezed. The bellhop said, "God bless you." The operator said, "Thank you." When we got out I told the bellhop that when a person sneezes in Mexico another will often say "Jesus," an abbreviated form of prayer, to which the sneezer responds, "Thanks."

I don't know from what part of the world this bellhop and the sneezing operator of the elevator hail; perhaps Ireland. I notice more and more gray-haired men operating elevators and serving as bellhops. My room maid has a beautiful voice. "How long have you been over from Ireland?" I asked her. "How did you know I'm from Ireland?" "By your voice." "I came 30 years ago."

Eating a late breakfast at the counter of the hotel drug store, I noticed how tired the slender bald-headed man who waited on me looked. There was no rush and as he half-leaned on an elbow in his narrow runway, I remarked that he should have a stool to rest on. "There's no place for it," he said dispiritedly. "You could have a folding stool." I said. "Yes, that might work."

A young man eating eggs and bacon by my side said that his people run a dairy in Vermont and that milkers used to have stools that could be attached to themselves. The idea of a drugstore waiter jumping around with a stool attached to his rear end made us all laugh. I discovered from further talk that this young man was a regular breakfaster with the waiter. He had not eaten more than 75 cents worth of breakfast, but he left a quarter on the counter for a tip. The waiter kept his tips in a drinking glass visible to everybody who sat at his end of the counter. Adding to the contents of the glass seemed to kind of refresh his weary body.

GOSSIP APLENTY.

A great majority of the people who eat in New York restaurants—other than those of hotels—are regulars. A stranger can overhear plenty of neighborhood talk in little restaurants on side streets.

Street bus drivers don't usually look so tired as waiters. They sit. The other day I was the last passenger off at the Central Park terminus of a Sixth Ave. bus. As I stepped past the driver, he held up a nickel-colored copper cent taken from the till. "Some feller put that in for a nickel," he said, "and got away with it." "Will you have to pay the difference?" I asked. "No, no," and he gave a kind of serene snort.

I could sit for hours on one of the benches along Central Park and watch those one-horse carriages that carry old ladies, young lovers, families of four, couples of gay Lotharios and all sorts of other specimens of humanity on short drives through the park. They are all individuals. A driver feeding his horse from a nosebag during a brief rest on a traffic-mad street seems to me as much of an individual as a lone cowboy putting the feedbag over his horse's ears at a waterhole in a Wyoming canyon.

Just think, everybody in China, everybody in Russia, everybody in Africa, everybody in the United States, and everybody in New York is a human being, an individual.

Voluble Vaquero

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM
SEP 18 1960

Timing Saved the Tale Of Juan Oso, Bear-Man

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

In the fall of 1932 I was with pack mules and mozo twisting around, through and across the mountains of northern Mexico to the west—always to the west—just looking, listening, and living the most independent form of life I have known. Except for a few fences and ranchos, the country was all open and unrestricted by man—a country immense, immense. It seemed to belong to me as much as to anybody else. In the high Sierra Madre itself there were no fences at all excepting poles around little corn patches, no ranches, only rancherias (settlements) of poor—but always generous—squatters. Some of them instead of fencing corn patches guarded them in season against bears.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

One morning I saw a small bear running up the side of a mountain. I was not ready for the chance to shoot, despite the fact that I always carried my .30-30 in a scabbard attached to my saddle. My saddle mule was bent on going the opposite direction. That afternoon we came to a perfect place to camp: wood, water, grass, scenery, all outdoors to hunt in if one wanted to hunt. I had a strong impulse to linger, but had set out to reach the Colorado Ranch that night. I was making for high country and left next morning for the Piedra Blanca Ranch at the foot of the Del Carmen Mountains. This was in Coahuila. It was the fall of the year with cold nights and hot days.

I rode ahead across a plain of greasewood, breathing the dust raised by my mule. Late in the day I came to the first watering—well, windmill, troughs—at a place called Los Huerfanos (The Orphans) on account of two sharply defined hills, the Del Carmen range looming over them. The shack at Los Huerfanos was deserted. Three or four horses with scarred backs were near the troughs. My mule was absolutely played out. I drove the horses into the pen, roped the freshest looking, saddled him and led my mule on for the Piedra Blanca. I knew I was in the Piedra Blanca range. After mozo and pack mules arrived two hours later, we made camp but ate with the Piedra Blanca vaqueros.

* * *

LONG STORY.

A superannuated American who had been with Frederic Remington in Mexico was very hospitable, locating me in a room with two beds. The house was small. After supper he disappeared, and I went out to the kitchen, with thatched roof and walls of tightly-wattled poles, apart from the house. A good fire was burning on a platform of clay and rocks in the center of the kitchen (or roofed corral) and against the walls pine logs that had been dragged down from the mountain served as benches. Four or five vaqueros sat on them.

The cook, a powerful vaquero named Ismael, was washing dishes. He was puro indio, pure quill, as black as Othello. I guessed that instead of shaving he just pulled now and then a few stray hairs out of his face. Tonight he had a fresh audience, and from something I had said or from the way I looked he knew he had an eager listener. Almost at once he launched into a long story, a true epic, of Juan Oso (John Bear), the son of a he-bear and a woman. The story split off into and incorporated several fairy tales and parts of other hero tales. I later put the Juan Oso part into Tongues of the Monte. It was midnight when we went to bed.

I had hardly more than gone to sleep when a voice very far from gentle roused me. The owner of the Piedra Blanca ranch, from Del Rio, was standing over me. He had brought a beef-buyer from Kansas; both had their wives and had to sleep in the house. I got up, got out with all my personal belongings, unrolled my bedroll in my own camp and was perfectly contented. When you become at home with pack mule and camp you find yourself gloriously liberated from things—things—things.

* * *

A THOUSAND TIMES.

The next morning when I got up, the beef men were gone, but the wives were there. They seemed to expect me to entertain them and when I told them the story of the halfbreed bear-man, thus fixing it better in my memory and learning how it could be improved in spots, they were manifestly shocked.

A thousand times I have reflected on swart Ismael there in the corral kitchen at Piedra Blanca as about the most picturesque, abounding, plenteous story-teller I have encountered, a kind of Alexandre Dumas in energy of creation, anything but "mute," however illiterate, and glorying in his own output. Many times also I have reflected:

What if I had stayed at that fine camping place a day and a half back and had arrived at the Piedra Blanca after the beef men and their respectable wives were already established there? I should have eaten with them, been obliged to share their domestic dullness, never should have heard Ismael at all, never learned about Juan Oso. Of course, after I heard this bear-man story, I went to hearing kindred variants, just as after acquiring a new word one begins noticing its use in all sorts of places.

Mexican and Negro Yarns

Pot of Gold and Finder Disappear Together by Light of Midnight Moon

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Stories of Santa Anna's gold belong to spots of the good earth scattered all the way from the Rio Grande to San Jacinto Bayou. The gold is usually supposed to be in a chest for paying the Mexican soldiers. There may have been a chest of money with Santa Anna's army. I don't know. If there was, the soldiers would have received precious little of it. There were too many officers between them and the chest.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

After the Battle of San Jacinto, the Texans captured a few valuables, the most outstanding of which was a highly ornamented chamber pot. Sam Houston is supposed to have taken possession of it.

Here is a story on the gold new to me. It comes from Ike Kibbe of Brownsville, who has seen as well as heard a lot. As for seeing, one time he shot into a flock of ducks and winged one. "Before it had fallen more than a foot or two, a duck on each side grabbed the tip of each wing and carried it along with them." But to the story.

In 1892 one Jesus Gonzales was farming on shares for a man named Clayborn near the San Antonio River below Goliad. A drouth was on, times were hard, and there was little prospect for a crop of corn and beans. Jesus Gonzales went on working, however. One night after a day of plowing in the hard, parched soil, he dreamed of finding a pot of money. He told his family and some friends about the dream. A few nights later he had the same dream, and again he told.

GOLD, MEXICAN GONE.

The next afternoon while he was following his old mule down a corn row, the point of his double shovel struck something hard and glanced off. There were no rocks in the field, and he wondered what the hard object could be. He went to his house, got a pick and a pole and proceeded to investigate. He soon uncovered the lid of a copper pot about three feet in diameter. He could not pry the pot out, however, it was so heavy. He broke his pole trying. S-7 8/19/51

His next step was to go to a neighbor's to borrow a wagon and team. One of his children was very sick, he explained, and he had to set out with it that night for a doctor. He drove the wagon to the place where the copper pot was buried and dug some more. Still he could not remove it, but he knocked loose the hasp on the lid and opened it. There in the moonlight he saw the pot heaped full of gold coins. He took them out in handfuls and loaded them into his wagon.

The next day nobody was living in the Jesus Gonzales shack. He was never seen or heard of in that country again. I don't know how other people came to learn exactly what he had done unless by circumstantial evidence. Before long the owner of the land rode through the field and saw the open, empty pot in the ground. He saw also a few coins that had been dropped between it and wagon tracks. He dug the pot up and sent it to a relative in Tennessee.

ONE-EYED MAN SEES MORE.

That is a Castle-in-Spain kind of story. It will appeal more to treasure seekers than to anybody else. They don't require much beyond a dream. It lacks the homely wisdom that many folk tales bring out, especially Negro folk tales. My friend Harold Graves, who lives on the San Bernard west of the Brazos and inspects brands for the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, is full of lore from old-time Negros.

As he tells, one of them named Morris Mack was as good a cow hand as ever rode. He was three feet wide across the shoulders and he would seize the worst horse that ever acted up, kick him in the belly, get on him and calmly smoke a cheroot. He would outdare a vicious bull in a pen, grab him barehanded and twist him down. He was such a giant that he could not understand physical weakness. He was "as rough as the Gulf and twice as salty."

He told Harold Graves not to feel sorry for a one-eyed man.

"Why?"

"A one-eyed man can see more than a man with two eyes."

"How?"

"Well, when you look at him you see just one eye. When he looks at you he sees two eyes."

ABOUT TEXAS AND TEXANS

FEB 5 1961
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Hat First When Grandpa Dressed

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

As a writer I had just as well get on the Civil War bandwagon—although I'll be hanged before I fly a Confederate flag on my car or elsewhere — indicating my desire to go backwards like a crab.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

As a boy I became fascinated with Grandpa Dubose. He had ranched during the days of free grass and had driven up the trail to Kansas. In the morning, not having undressed much to go to bed, he'd put on his hat as soon as his feet touched the floor and then light his pipe. He had worn his shirt over an undershirt—summer and winter—to sleep in, but now he would put on his vest, without which he was never dressed, wind his watch, weighing maybe two pounds, in a hunting case, put it in a vest pocket and fix the other end of a heavy chain in a buttonhole of the vest, a Masonic watch chain dangling in full view. Finally, he'd pull on his britches and after that get on his socks and shoes, all the time smoking the pipe.

* * *

ONE EXPERIENCE.

During the time that I came to know his dressing habits I was sliding through high school in the village of Alice now a city so far as population goes. I knew how the Civil War battles ended, but as I read the history of the Civil War I hoped, irrespective of cold facts, that Lee would turn the tide at Appomattox. Grandpa Dubose was responsible to a considerable extent for my preferences in battle endings. An experience he had after one battle sank into me deep. The day, which started long before dawn, had just about worn him and his fellow soldiers out with marching and shooting and dodging in order to keep from being shot. Finally, the firing died down after dark.

The Confederate forces were spread out through a wooded country. Grandpa Dubose and his mates made enough fire to boil corn grits—a low fire, hidden from view. They had some cold biscuits and maybe they had a little salt bacon to broil on the fire. They were thirsty before they ate anything, and they filled heir canteens and cups from a pool of water near where they had the fire and where they slept. It was daylight before they awoke, and when Grandpa went to the pool to drink and wash his face, he saw a dead Yankee half sunk in the water at the very spot where they had dipped up in the dark. He never expressed any feeling of dejection over the fact that the Yankee was dead.

* * *

PLEASANT WORK.

As a matter of fact, he would have agreed with the Civil War sexton named Pannell who had charge of burying Union soldiers stationed in Houston in 1867 to enforce reconstruction. Yellow fever broke out and the soldiers died like sheep. Pannell and his crew were so overworked they could not dig graves fast enough to keep up with the dead. Word reached the commandant of the Yankees that bodies of his men were being held over for burial while citizens received priority.

He hunted up the sexton and said, "Mr. Pannell, they tell me you dislike to bury my soldiers."

"General," the sexton replied with enthusiasm, "that is a damned lie. It is the pleasantest work I have had in all my life. I can't bury enough of them. I hope to God I'll have the chance to bury every one of you."

Every part of the South has some variation on this story, the nub—the idea—remaining constant. For example, several years after the Civil War ended, Gen. Jubal Early of the Confederacy was in Washington during a reunion of the G.A.R. A veteran in blue, with both arms and both legs gone, struck his attention. After looking at him some time, he stepped up to the wheel chair and put a $10 bill into the occupant's pocket. A reporter who happened to be on the spot said to him, "General Early, that is the finest example of brotherly love I have ever seen."

"Brotherly love, hell." General Early rebutted. "That's the only example I ever saw of a Yankee carved up enough to suit me."

* * *

TEXAS' OWN WAR.

Until after World War I, all allusions in Texas, as throughout the South, to "the War" referred unequivocally to the Civil War, or, as many of the Confederate persuasion preferred to call it, "the war between the States." I was an artilleryman in World War I, and I was in England during World War II, but it seems to me that for the masses of people the Civil War had, and still has, a personal quality that other wars in which Americans have participated lack.

Texas had a war of its own, but the reminiscences of it, sifted by time, usually fasten themselves on certain characters—Sam Houston and Jim Bowie in particular. The anecdotes in homes, in camps, and at other places concerning "the War" have been—and remain—not only about leaders but about privates, about particular circumstances, and about ways of life interrupted or brought out by the war. The Civil War still pervades Southern traditions far more deeply than either of the World Wars or the Korean War. To quote John W. Thomason's introduction to that beautiful and moving story of Civil War characters, "Lone Star Preacher," "they believed in something."

When I came to Austin as a very young man to teach in the University of Texas, I did lots of walking. Often I walked up Congress Avenue through the Capitol grounds. At the foot of the Capitol grounds is a monument to the Confederate soldiers. The main caption on it reads: "Died for States' Rights." Invariably I used to lift my hat in passing that monument with that sentiment.

When I remember how I used to tremble and come almost to tears because I hadn't been born early enough to fight the Yankees with Grandpa Dubose, I can laugh at myself. I'm glad now and have been glad for a long time that the South lost. It was fighting against the verdict of history, just as now Georgia, Louisiana and certain other Southern States are keeping themselves ignorant while fighting against a verdict already written by history.

The enormous amount of energy the South has spent during the last 100 years in trying to keep the Confederate flag flying instead of accepting the facts of life and building positively is tragic beyond words.

J. FRANK DOBIE

Hot Tortillas And Hot Milk

American Statesman 10-13-57

After a cold, cold swim in Barton Springs, we sat down about dusk to double hotness in a Mexican restaurant. That is one of the few uses of the word Mexican remaining active. Mexican restaurants in Texas are no longer run by Mexicans but by Latin Americans. With Bedichek and me was our youthful friend Wilson Hudson. He had regaled us with a concatenation of limericks too "curiosa" for any editor and now he seemed to surrender the talk to us.

"The tortillas never stay hot enough," Bedichek said to the waiter—Latin American.

"Yes, sir, they are hot," the waiter replied, putting the napkin back over them.

"Bedi," I said, "you might or might not like the proper way of keeping tortillas hot."

Time To Meander

We had plenty of time to meander, which is a requisite for all good conversation except in short stories. This isn't a short story. Lem Newberry's father was a merchant at Lagarto in Live Oak County, down in the brush country, when a railroad went somewhere else and killed the town. That was before I was born. Later I knew the Newberry merchants at Alice, at the end of the railroad, where they bought mountains of cattle bones, sepulchre white, gathered in by Mexicans from drouth-made dieups over an enormous country. Lem Newberry grew up knowing cows and horses and drouths and Mexicans, also the Bible. He went to Mexico to give his life as a Protestant missionary. The Madero revolution interrupted that career, and he was a cheerful merchant in Chihuahua City when he told me about the hot tortillas.

"He'd been riding all day,' he said, down in Chihuahua, when he came to a rancho beside some cottonwood trees, which meant water. Of course he was welcomed. There was fodder for his horse, and there was a bench for him under the shady ramada—the shed to the house—while the senora prepared supper. After a while she put on a white cloth over a rickety pine table and not without pride told him to seat himself by it. He'd had nothing to speak of since sunup, and the food could not have been better. There was chicken soup, which he took with three or four tortillas. There were eggs cooked ranchero style and they made the tortillas even better. Then, of course, there was a great plenty of frijoles.

While he was eating the beans he ran out of tortillas. The hostess was near at hand but momentarily intent on some other matter than waiting upon him. He asked her if he might have another tortilla. Her face lit up like the dawn. "Si, senor," she sang out, "with much pleasure, and it's calientita."

"Dobie," Bedi said, "you are always palming off some experience of yours as somebody else's.

"On the contrary," I said, "for purposes of narration I often appropriate as my own experiences of others. That does away with explanations and makes for directness."

Nature's Way

"Nature's way of keeping tortillas hot," Bedi went on, "makes me think of what a feller named Cole told me once. We've all been in cow country where there wasn't any milk except out of a tin. This feller Cole said he and another man stayed one night at a settler's house in East Texas, up towards Arkansas. The man there seemed awful inactive, but the woman was as energetic as a domenecker hen scratching for a double brood in a fresh horse pile. She was built kinder on the domenecker pattern. When she called breakfast her boarders had to use a coal-oil lamp to make out the platters of hot biscuits, fried eggs and side bacon on the long oilcloth-covered table.

"'We ain's got no milk cow,' he said, 'but anybody 'at wants milk in his coffee kin have it.' Cole sat next to him and she sorter motioned down towards his cup, but he sai dhe always took his straight."

At meal time, eating and drinking easily affords connectives for talk, especially the anecdotal kind, though talk on food and drink themselves generally gets as banal as any book on how to live positively. Sitting there in the Mexican restaurant, we were brought back to the connectives through, first, opinion of a certain Texas demogogue, and then a drouth story attributed to him by Wilson Hudson.

Perhaps one should not call the country around Sanderson, Texas, drouthy. Drouth is an interruption of seasonable weather; Sanderson is in a desert and any rain there is merely an interruption of constant drouth. Anyway, as Hudson told the story, one day a traveler on the highway outside Sanderson got held up by a cloudburst and upon driving into town stopped at a filling station where the cowboy-booted attendant was sloshing around in several inches of water. "How much did it rain here?" the traveler asked. "I don't know, but whatever it was, it wasn't enough," came back the answer.

That made me recollect Noah's ark. When it landed on a mountain after the flood, among the pairs of animals that walked out was a pair of cowmen. One of them said, "Looks like they had a fairly good rain here." "Yes," the other added, "if we can get some showers a little later on, grass ought to be purty good."

TV Hero Exposed

STAR TELEGRAM JUL 17 1960

Book Reveals Truth About Tinhorn Earp

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

"You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." In one way the proverb won't stand up under certain facts. One of the pig-track commonest sow's ear kind of man has been transmuted into a silk-purse hero by the television industry.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

My idea of a hero is a man who arouses admiration. Commonly he is a man of derring-do, of valiant exploits, like Horatius at the bridge, like the boy who stuck his finger into a dike to keep water from running through and flooding the lowland of the Netherlands, thus saving his country. The hero-worshipping age lingers longer in some individuals than in others. Boys and girls generally like to admire heroes. In my own boyhood G. A. Henty provided a prodigality of heroes. The greatest of them who came into my world was Robert E. Lee in a narrative entitled "With Lee in Virginia;" then there was "With Wolfe in Canada." I am told that the most popular hero on American television now is perhaps Wyatt Earp. J. R. Williams used to run a series of cartoons under the heading, "Heroes are Born, Not Made." If Wyatt Earp is a hero, he is a made one.

* * *

FIRST EARP BOOK.

The making began in 1931 with the publication of "Wyatt Earp, Frontier Marshal," by Stuart N. Lake—a book still in print. It is well written. Lake, already a seasoned newspaperman when the book was published, has made a career out of its subject. This is especially true since TV took over Wyatt Earp. For a while Stuart Lake had everybody else who wanted to get a finger in the Wyatt Earp pie buffaloed off. For instance, two years or so ago some journalist in London called me up to ask my opinion of a serialized biography of Wyatt Earp that his newspaper wanted to run in opposition to the Lake biography being serialized by another newspaper. Lake's lawyer was over in England trying to stop opposition. Now, I know Stuart Lake as man as well as writer and like him, but I've come to be educated on his "frontier marshal."

The main course in this education is a new book, "The Earp Brothers of Tombstone," by Frank Waters (Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., New York). A man of marked integrity, Frank Waters has been living with this subject a long while. In a big manila envelope of clippings I find him quoted in 1948 by William McLeod Raine as follows: "Wyatt Earp was little more than a tinhorn outlaw operating under the protection of a tin badge. He is portrayed by Stuart N. Lake as the model frontiersman. The book is the most assiduously concocted blood-and-thunder piece of fiction ever written about the West and a disgraceful indictment of true Arizona pioneers."

Now Frank Waters gives chapter and verse of his unmasking of the hero. He got a good deal of his evidence from Wyatt Earp's sister-in-law, Allie, who married Virgil Earp; he got more of it from court records, newspapers of the times, and diaries kept by a particularly interested man in Tombstone. There are people who will pay more for a scarce pamphlet on Wyatt Earp or Billy the Kid than for a first folio of Shakespeare; an active-minded and, I judge, also moneyed individual in California has for years been amassing facts on the Earps from far corners; these he turned over to Frank Waters.

* * *

MUCH INFORMATION GATHERED.

Instead of being a city marshal at Ellsworth, Wichita, and Dodge City, all Kansas cow towns, Wyatt Earp was carried on the city payrolls as an ordinary policeman. On April 5, 1876, he was fined $30 for violation of the peace and fired from his job as Wichita policeman. On May 22 of the same year the police committee of Wichita recommended that the vagrancy act be enforced against Wyatt Earp and his brother Morgan. After that he served two hitches as policeman in Dodge City. Finally he worked up to the job of assistant marshal at $75 a month. Most of his pay was in a percentage of license fees he collected from prostitutes. In Dodge City he was a gambler and a cardsharp, a gun-toting exhibitionist, and also a church deacon. He was no lone wolf. In Dodge City he went a long way toward building up a gang that followed him to Tombstone. In Tombstone his wife helped to support him by sewing. He abandoned her and she died as a desolate, worn-out prostitute. At the O K Corral fight in Tombstone, which is now repeated annually for the edification of tourists, Earp was a cold-blooded murderer.

* * *

BECOMES CONFIDENCE MAN.

Without any regrets on the part of respectable citizens, the Earp gang left Tombstone for California. The San Francisco Chronicle of Dec. 9, 1896, said, after describing petty law suits against Wyatt Earp: "He enjoys hugely the curiosity of the people whenever he appears in a public place and gratifies himself by parading in localities where the biggest crowds congregate." At Los Angeles he became a professional confidence man and with two other men was "charged with conspiracy to fleece J. Y. Patterson out of $25,000 on an alleged bunco game." At the same time a Los Angeles court held a charge of vagrancy against Wyatt Earp. I quote a summary towards the end of this honest book by Frank Waters:

"The truth about Wyatt Earp lies, not in his fictional exploits on a legendary frontier, but in his lifelong exhibitionism and his strange relationships with Doc Holliday and his three wives. It will not add to his posthumous fame and the almost psychopathic interest in him manifested by the general public. But it will be a healthy sign if we can now face up to how this pathetic figure — an itinerant saloonkeeper, cardsharp, gunman, bigamist, church deacon, policeman, bunco artist, and supreme confidence man—has conned us into believing him America's most famous exponent of frontier law and justice."

Nobody who wants to be fooled should read "The Earp Brothers of Tombstone." Yet even in fiction Wyatt Earp, no matter what the facts about him, is a tinhorn hero. No genuine hero can be made without a just sense of values. I guess the old proverb still holds: "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

On this theme of a just sense of values I quote from a letter by Walter Muir Whitehill, director of the Library of the Boston Antheneum and also director of a widely-sponsored study of independent historical societies:

"In recent travels I have been delighted by the people who love the essential qualities of their regions, but have been repelled by those who exhibit model-T Fords in glass cases and devote themselves to creating stereotypes of the country store, the pioneer kitchen, the little red school house. It is distressing to see how much effort and how many dollars of public and private funds are annually squandered on pandering to what is trivial in the past; by encouraging people to gape at objects rather than to stretch their wits and exercise their imagination by reading."

AR-TELEGRAM

Fabulous Texan

SEP 22 1957

Shanghai Could Halt Train With His Shout

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I never intended to write much about Shanghai Pierce, but he was a character of characters among the early day cowmen of southern Texas. I used to note down anecdotes about him. Nobody knew him better than his lawyer, Judge Fred C. Proctor, who moved to Houston from Victoria and who in representing the O'Connors, Jim Chittim, Ben Q. Ward and other big cowmen, knew the breed well. In 1932 I saw Judge Proctor in Houston, got him to talk about Shanghai Pierce and immediately wrote out the notes that now follow.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Ben Q. Ward had a ranch on Carankawa Bay. He and Shanghai Pierce had been neighbors for many years and at one time were partners. He went to speculating in Houston real estate at the wrong time and became so deeply involved that his whole estate was in jeopardy. About 1900 he applied to Shanghai Pierce for a loan. Shanghai instructed his counsel, Fred C. Proctor, to look into Ward's affairs and see if a loan were warranted.

* * *

DOLLARS FOR FLAPJACKS.

Proctor looked and told Ward that his collateral would not warrant a loan of more than $70,000.

"But I need $90,000," declared Ward. "Seventy thousand dollars won't save me. It won't do me any good."

"Well," said Proctor, "I have followed Mr. Pierce's instructions. I am his adviser, you will understand. And, involved as your property is, $70,000 is all it seems worth as collateral."

"Do you mind if I see Shanghai myself?" asked Ward. He seemed to have an idea that Proctor was acting as watch dog oover Pierce.

"Why, of course not. I have nothing to do with Mr. Pierce's decisions. He makes them himself. I act only under his instructions."

Ward left. A day or two later he was back in Proctor's office. "I saw Shanghai himself," he gloated. "He's going to let me have the $90,000. Said he would wire you."

The next day the telegram arrived. It read: "Let Uncle Ben have the $90,000. His mother used to give me flapjacks."

* * *

RHODE ISLAND TOO SMALL.

Proctor made out the papers and Ben Q. Ward got the $90,000. The next time Proctor saw Shanghai, he said to him, "I understand all right what you meant by saying 'Let Uncle Ben have the $90,000,' but what on earth did you mean by adding, 'His mother used to give me flapjacks'?"

Shanghai laughed loud and hard. Then he told something of the story of his life. "I was born in Rhode Island, you know," he said. "It got too little for me. When I lay down my head would like as not be in the lap of some woman in Massachusetts and my feet bothering another woman's legs in Connecticut. I just got too big for the state." (He was well over 6 feet, 4 inches tall and a powerful man all over.) "I thought Texas would be big enough for me, and I came here. That was 1853.

"The first thing I did was hire to W. B. Grimes at 50 cents a day. Directly I was breaking horses at that price. It happened this way. One morning a prize buck nigger was riding a wild horse out in the pen close to the house. The horse was a terror. He was a-squalling and the nigger was a-hollering and other niggers joining in. Well, Mrs. Grimes came out, saw what was happening, and she gave old Bing (W. B. Grimes) a going over. 'Don't you know,' she says, 'that that horse is liable to kill that nigger? He's worth a good $1,800. What you mean by letting him ride pitching horses when you've got a Yankee here working for fourbits a day that could take the risk just as well?'

* * *

ANXIOUS BE REMEMBERED.

"Grimes saw the point, and from then on I took the risks. I was too poor to buy decent clothes, and the Grimes family didn't allow me to come into the polite part of the house. I ate in the kitchen and slept out in a shed. The Wards lived over on the Carankawa, where Uncle Ben still has the ranch. Once in a while while riding the range I'd get over there. When I did, they'd treat me like sure enough white folks. Old Lady Ward knew I could eat more than a whole livery stable, and she'd just pile the flapjacks up and re-pile them. My, they tasted good. I can taste them yet. I'll never forget them and the good, kind woman who made them. Now you know why I let Uncle Ben have the $90,000 against your advice."

Yet Shanghai was a business man. When he came to write his will he asked Proctor how much he was going to charge. Twenty-five hundred dollars, Proctor finally said. Old Shanghai charged and fumed, went outside, kicked a dog, and yelled at a boy. Then he came back.

"All right. Agreed, is it?"

"Yes."

"Do you know how much I expected you to charge?"

"No."

"I expected you to charge $5,000."

Then he dictated the peculiar will by which his estate was to be kept intact, to be known as the A. H. Pierce Estate, until his youngest grandchild was 35 years old. "Nobody has any sense until he is 35 years old," he said, "and damned few after that." Though he did not admit the fact, he was anxious to be remembered. He seemed to think that keeping the estate intact would preserve his memory. After he had erected a monument to himself, Proctor asked him why. "If I didn't have it put up, nobody would," Shanghai said.

* * *

WHY WALK?

Once he and Proctor went together to Galveston on business. Upon getting off the train, Proctor got into a cab. Pierce struck out on foot. Proctor called to him and asked why he would walk. "Waste of money," he said, "to ride such a little distance. Why are you riding?"

"Because," answered Proctor, "I am rich, rich as hell."

"Yes, and you will charge it to me," roared Pierce.

"Certainly I will. You walk and when you die not long hence your son-in-law will ride. You may be assured of that."

"I hadn't thought of the thing that way," agreed Pierce. "I'll ride with you, and from now on I'm a-going to ride every time I feel like it."

Shanghai Pierce was the loudest man in the country. He would sit in a day coach at one end and in normal voice hold conversation with some man in the other end of the coach, who of course had to yell, while the train was clanking along. He knew everybody, yelled at everybody he saw. "Being in the most conspicuous part of a Barnum and Bailey circus parade would be no more conspicuous than in company with Shanghai Pierce," Judge Proctor, himself a very modest man, said.

Once while Proctor was on a train going through Houston, Shanghai, at the station outside, saw him. The train was moving out, but Shanghai yelled to the conductor to hold it. He went inside, had a long talk with Proctor and wrote him out a check for what he owed, having grumbled at the bill when it was presented.

Halletts of Hallettsville

Virginia-Born Girl Helped To Make History in Texas

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

It is easy for a lot of people to talk about reviving old-time Christmases, old-time wages (for the other fellow), old-time simplicity and so on. Human institutions take their character from the times in which they flourish. Instead of telling about an old-time Texas Christmas, I am going to tell about a remarkable woman who was Christmasing in Texas before Stephen F. Austin's first colonists pulled through the winter on wild-horse meat. Her great-grandson, Jim Ballard of Beeville, one of the brightest rememberers and talkers I know and one of my cherished friends, gave me this account.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

On Christmas Day, 1787, Margaret Letherbury was born in Stafford County, Va. Her Scotch-Irish parents had property and pride. They discovered early that she had a head of her own. At 18 she and John Hallett met, loved each other, and were swiftly engaged. He was considerably older than she.

The youngest son of an English nobleman in Worcestershire, he had joined the British navy while still a lad. One day an officer threatened to have him bound and lashed. His ship was in a British harbor. That night he climbed overboard and swam to an American vessel anchored near by. The captain liked him, brought him to the United States and adopted him. He continued following the sea and became captain of a trading vessel.

SHE COULDN'T—SHE DID.

When Margaret informed her parents that she intended to marry John Hallett, they were incensed. "If you have no ambition, we have," they said. "You shall never marry this adopted son of an unknown merchant seaman." At the time Hallett was sailing from the ports of Baltimore and New York. He went on sailing while Margaret stayed at home. They managed to correspond, though letters had to be far between. Meantime her parents did their best to match her with some young man who would be "a credit to the family."

"The only man I will ever marry is John Hallett," she persisted. "I had rather marry him and be the beginning of a new family than remain single and become the tail end of an old family." She was not big and she was not little. She was just about the right size, and she was as spirited as a Thoroughbred filly.

In 1808 she wrote John to meet her in Baltimore. She was waiting, and on a June day they married. Until she died she had no further contact with her prideful Virginia family.

In time the couple settled in Matamoros, Mexico, and then moved to Goliad, Texas, where Hallett ran a store until it was confiscated by the Mexican government. Dates here are lacking, but the Halletts were in Texas before Austin's colonists began settling. They kept establishments at both Matamoros and Goliad. The first two children, John and William Henry, were born at Matamoros in 1813 and 1815 respectively. Benjamin and Mary Jane were born at Goliad, 1818 and 1822. Benjamin died at the age of 6; William Henry, according to family tradition, met death in Mexico in 1836. In that year young John, 23 years old, fought at San Jacinto and then disappeared on the Nueces River, never to be heard of again. In 1840 Mary Jane married Colatinus Ballard at Hallettsville.

BURIED AT GOLIAD.

In 1833 the first John Hallett, as a member of Austin's colony, took up a league of land on the Lavaca River, in what became Lavaca County. He drove an ox wagon from Goliad loaded with Mexican laborers, and another loaded with 16 young bois-d'arc trees, to the site he had selected, built a small log cabin, dug a well, dug a trench three feet deep and five feet wide around the premises, and then along this moat planted the bois-d'arc trees. They grew into a fence and years later furnished wood for the outer rims of wagon and cart wheels. Shortly after building the cabin, John Hallett died in Goliad and was there buried.

Three years later, not long after the battle of San Jacinto, Margaret Hallett moved from Goliad to the league of land on the Lavaca. She was 49, a widow, with only Mary Jane left of her four children. She spoke Spanish like a native, soon learned Tonkawa sufficiently to get along with the main tribe of the region, and, as always, read books. The country was settling up, and she stocked her cabin with a small supply of merchandise.

"There were no money" in the country. People even paid their taxes with pelts and cow hides. After Mrs. Hallett had taken in sufficient cow hides and wild animal skins, she sent them by ox carts to Gonzales to trade for corn. One of her trades was for a buffalo hide, which she used for a door. Some wag named her cabin store Hideville. She had a plot of land ditch-fenced and planted in corn. She had a few head of horse stock and began raising horses. Her brand was 33, the figures facing each other, on the right shoulder.

LO, THE POOR INDIAN.

While she was getting herself established, a man named Barney Brown settled across the Lavaca River from her. Below her the Zumwalts took up land, and before long the Zumwalt settlement came to be called Petersburg.

One day a smart Tonk came into the store and began to help himself. Margaret Hallett picked up a hatchet and raised what she called a "knowledge knot" on his head. When the chief of the Tonkawas, Lolo, learned of the incident he paid a call. He was so pleased with Margaret Hallett's account and conduct toward the smart alec tribesman that he made her an honorary member of the tribe. She gave him a string of red beads. The Indians named her Brave Squaw. They were vigilant against the Comanches, whose trail to fishing grounds on Lavaca Bay passed by the Hallett cabin. More than once the Tonkawas alerted her. She and other women of the settlement, with their children, made several "runs" from hostile Indians but she was never attacked. She had more to fear from renegade white men. Her Indian friends protected her from them also.

She was what was called "fixey." She never wore black, but dressed in colors. She habitually carried a chatelaine bag. She was quick at repartee. Once a friend commented that her ears were dirty. "You should see my feet," she retorted.

RECORDS KEPT IN HOME.

Along in the 40s she had a townsite laid out about a mile below her cabin and named it Hallettsville. She donated it to the public and became a one-man chamber of commerce. On a block of land shaded by magnificent oaks she built a new home. In 1846 Lavaca County was organized. Without waiting for an election, the citizens of Petersburg built a courthouse, appropriating for themselves the county seat.

Margaret Hallett put on her brightest dress, saddled up her best horse, mounted with her chatelaine bag, and rode to count the noses in Lavaca County. She felt convinced that an election would give Hallettsville the courthouse. She persuaded the commissioners to call an election. When Hallettsville was declared winner, Petersburg got hold of the election returns and burned them. A second election was called and again Hallettsville won. But the Petersburg forces refused to give up the records in their courthouse. Heading a group of Hallettsville proponents, Margaret Hallett rode to Petersburg, loaded the records into an ox cart and deposited them in her home. There, despite a counter-attack from Petersburg, they stayed and there court was held until a courthouse was built.

One day a fellow named Lot Hinch asked Barney Brown what Mrs. Hallett had in her chatelaine bag. "I never have had a look inside it," Barney Brown replied, "but I'm dead certain it ain't filled with powder puffs." The general idea was that it held several puffs of powder.

Lavaca County was Margaret Hallett's world, and Hallettsville was that world's capital. To her "within that limit was relief enough." She died at her home in this capital in 1863. She had certainly done her part in "redeeming Texas from the wilderness."

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J. FRANK DOBIE

Nat's Worst Grizzly

It's 20 years ago this month since I found Nat Straw on the Gila River in New Mexico. He was 82 years old and had spent over 50 of them in the mountains, mostly alone. While he was a small boy in Minnesota the Sioux Indians captured him and kept him a year.

After he got out into New Mexico and Arizona he took up with the Navajoes for a while, hoping to worm the secret of the Lost Adams Diggings out of them. I had trailed him down to get something on that epic story. He wanted to talk about bears. He had lived with them, which made him a very differently flavored man and hunter from some airplaned, factory-furnished person who flies out for a few days of guide-directed shooting.

In his own language but without quotation marks, this is one of the stories that Nat Straw told me.

My narrowest escape, I guess, was rfom an enormous grizzly I had trapped by the right front foot. You don't chain those gigantic steel-traps to a tree, but to a clog, or piece of log, that drags. If the trap is fixed, the animal caught in it is likely to gnaw or pull his foot oll. With a drag, he will move slow, leaving a plain trail.

Well, I found my trap gone, and signs along the trail told me the grizzly was a giant. I followed slow and cautious, for a trapped bear is always in a great rage and is apt to show up and charge a man at any minute. The trail went down into a narrow zigzag canyon cut through solid sandstone, with many sharp and sudden corners. Turning any one of them, I might step into the jaws of the bear. Common sense told me I had better not follow, but I was like a hunting dog hot on the trail. I would not turn back. In the sandstone walls of the canyon were many cuts and crevices, some just about wide enough for a coon to squeeze into, some high enough to admit a man, and some wide and deep. I was walking soft, and I was halting at every bend and taking a good look ahead before I went on.

At a very sharp corner I halted and stuck my head around to look. I almost stuck it into the grizzly's face. Perhaps he had smelled me. Anyway, he seemed to be expecting somebody. Before I could move, he lunged at me on all-fours, steel-trap and pain forgotten. That's the way a bear always charges. He can move faster and with more force on four legs than on two. He does not stand up until he is right at the enemy. I can't swear that the mouth of this bear was open, but I think it was. His head and fore-parts were covered with blood and red foam. He had broken out all his teeth biting the trap, and the steel had cut deep into his gums.

When he charged, I darted into the first of those cuts in the canyon wall at hand. I don't know if I had seen it before. It was right at me. It was just wide enough to admit my body, and it was not more than three feet deep into the sandstone. By the time I was flattened against the back wall, the bear, standing now on his hind legs, was pawing into the opening. The trap was on his right foot, leaving his south paw free. His mouth was open and his bloody jaws, under beady, blood-shot eyes, were so close to me that when he tossed and breathed, the red foam covered my own face. His great paw raked within four or five inches of my face and breast, but the opening was too small for his breast to squeeze through and thus lengthen his reach. I kept my long rifle held perpendicular against my body, and I sucked in my stomcah until it was against my backbone. There was no room for me to raise the muzzle of the rifle to shoot; if any part of the gun came within grasp of the bear's paw, he would, I knew, tear it from me and probably break it.

I have never heard a bear growl, although I have read many times about their growl. A bear will champ his jaws. He will kind of whine and hum at the same time, and when you hear that sound you had better get your shooting irons. He will roar. It is impossible to describe the rage of a great grizzly tortured by pain and mad for vengeance. There he stands weighing half a ton, as powerful for his size as an ant is for his, and his power doubled and trebled by a rage inconceivable to man.

This grizzly flung the big steel trap biting into his right forearm against the stone facing of the crevice into which I was backed. He seemed forgetful of the pain. With his free paw he tried to break off chunks of the stone. He bit at the stone with the jaws he had already torn on steel. He tried to squeeze gradually into the opening. He lunged into it, and it seemed to me that the claws of his hand, as big as a ham, reached an inch or two nearer my body. People who have not had opportunity to observe cannot realize what power is in the hand, or paw, of a great bear. I have seen a grizzly slap lightly the head of a bull and knock him to the ground with broken neck.

I do not know how long I stayed in that rock crevice, facing the grizzly. It seemed hours, but it might not have been more than 15 minutes. He did not relent for a second so as to give me time to raise the gun and shoot. It looked to me as if the rocks would melt under his white hot rage. I thought of the way I'd heard of Apaches spread-eagling a man down on his back, face up, tying beside him a big rattlesnake by a rawhide thong just short of striking distance, and then, while they enraged the snake, dropping water drop by drop on the rawhide until it at last expanded enough for the fangs to enter the face of the men. I thought of this and other slow ways of death. When I was a boy I read Poe's story of "The Pit and the Pendulum."

Finally the bear stood off a second, seemingly to consider some new way of attack. Until I went to raise the gun I did not realize how weak I had become. As I raised it, the grizzly came again, but he was too late to miss a shot in his belly and not quick enough to grasp the barrel. A bear that's merely shot through the belly can live a long, long time. If possible this one now became more furious than ever, but I soon saw that he was weakening. Before long he kind of hunkered down. I put a bullet through his head. When I shot that last time, his eyes were closed. Now they opened, like a bear's always open when he's dead. I had to sit down a long time before I had strength to stick him and start skinning.

Danger Overrated

JUL 31 1960
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Look for Rattlesnakes; Miss Seeing the Stars

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Nobody brought up with rattlesnakes looks for them to the exclusion of everything else. A good observer doesn't see just one thing that he might be looking for. He sees things he's not looking for. I've seen city people out in the country become so concerned over rattlesnakes that they couldn't see the North Star on account of looking for them.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

I saw an advertisement just the other day by some concern offering leggings made of metal to be worn as insurance gainst rattlesnake bits.

In "The Adventures of Bigfoot Wallace," by John C. Duval, the Little Author who was riding along with Bigfoot one day saw a rattlesnake. Bigfoot got down and killed it. "Captain," the Little Author asked, "how in the world have you managed to live so long and camp out so much at night in this wilderness without ever having been bitten by a rattlesnake?"

"Why, you see," Bigfoot answered, "if you don't lose your presence of mind, there's very little danger of a rattlesnake's biting you, even when he crawls to bed with you at night. When you discover one crawling under your blankets, all you've go to do is to lie still and let him fix himself to his notion (and they always pick out the warmest places), and as soon as he is fast asleep, you can jump up without the least danger of being bitten; but if you should move a peg before he has settled himself, he'll 'nip you' to a certainty."

* * *

REGARD FOR SNAKES.

This casual way of regarding rattlesnakes is very refreshing in contrast to the radio and journalese screams that go up in attempts to bring the blood of auditors and readers to the boiling point. I have a letter from my friend Arthur Woodward, of Altadena, Cal., that illustrates this casualness. In the fall of 1946 he went to the old A. B. Fall Ranch near Three Rivers, south and east of Albuquerque to examine certain petroglyphs chiseled in boulders. Now I quote his words:

"It was late afternoon when I reached the spot and as it began to grow dark I fumbled my way down the hill to the dirt road where I had left my car. Just before reaching it I heard a shot. I was in a strange country so I moved onward with more caution. When the car came in sight I saw a man with a rifle standing beside it. He was a short, slender New Mexican.

"As I came up, he gave me 'buenas tardes' and introduced himself as Tomas Salazar, 'a sus ordenes' (at your orders). Then in English he said, 'I was hunting and saw your car standing here. When I got near I saw a snake coiled up right in front of it and I just killed it. You might have not seen it in the dark.'

"I thanked him and then asked him how far to the next town. I had my sleeping bag but was low on food. He said it was too far for me to go. Why not spend the night in his house? That sounded good; so we drove down to his wooden shack — a kitchen and one bedroom. He was a bachelor. When I got out he said: 'Entrase mi casa con toda confianza.' (Enter my with entire confidence.)

* * *

SNAKES GET CHICKENS.

"Again I said muchas gracias and went in. He offered me the bed, but I told him my sleeping bag was comfortable and with his permission I would bunk down on the kitchen floor. He demurred but finally said yes, although he assured me the bed was more comfortable. He also said it might be just as well to sleep inside the house because now and then big viboras de cascabeles crawled up on the porch during the night. I asked him if he had many snakes on his ranchito. 'Si, senor! Hay muchas.'

"Then he told me of his attempts at raising 'cheekens' but the snakes caught and ate the little ones.

"'Wan day,' he related, 'I went out to see if some of my leetle chickens were still alive. Thees old gallina (hen) she had five or six pollitos which the hawks and the snakes had not caught. I hoped maybee I could keep them alive.

"'There was one leetle cheeken what had no feathers. He was my leetle plat'o (plado, hairless, featherless). I tame heem and he follow me every place. Then wan by wan all the leetle cheekens they disappear. I thought maybee a gavilan (hawk) which light sometimes on that beeg cottonwood had been catching the pollitos. So when all but my leetle pela'o had gone, he was lonesome and he follow right at my heels all the time. Si, senor, just like a leetle puppy.

"'I like my leetle pela'o and I say no gavilan gonna get you, mi pela'o. I carry my shotgun with me all the time. But never did I see that gavilan.

"'Wan morning I went out to water mi caballo, and leetle pela'o was right at my heels. But when I got to the corral and looked around I didn't see my pela'o. So I started back calling, 'Here, pela'o, here, pela'o,' but he didn't come. I look all around, but I didn't see any gavilan. Then I began poking under the bushes thinking maybee mi pela'o got scared and was hiding.

"'Then, when I look under a big bush, there was wan damn beeg rattlesnake. I look closer and see a lump in his middle. So, I say, 'Eet was you, you beeg damn thief. You been catching my leetle cheekens, not that gavilan.' So, I blow hees head off and then I cut him open and there was my leetle pela'o.

"'That is why, senor, I do not like these viboras de cascabeles. Mi pobrecito pela'o.'"

TAR-TELEGRAM

Concoctions in Glazed Boxes

SEP 8 1957

Writer Prefers Plain Raw Milk From a Foaming Bucket to Today's

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I began life on earth with a natural gusto for natural milk, and, gracias a Dios, have never lost it. Have you, considerate reader, ever considered that blessing to man whereby he can keep on acquiring tastes that add delight to life without losing pleasure in old ones? During the course of time I have acquired positive likings for several liquids not provided by clouds or female mamals, but water has lost nothing of it pristine satisfaction to thirst, and cold milk seems to me now even more delicious than warm milk was that morning so long ago when I had my first experience in swallowing. Life is the prolonged act of swallowing.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The warm milk was natural, and to be supremely good, cold milk must be natural also. In going from warm milk to cold milk my taste has evolved, but the evolution has been simple and minor, indeed, compared with the evolution of commercialized milk. I have read that in Italy there are still places where a herd of milk goats is driven daily through the streets, stopping at the houses of patrons, the driver shooing one or more nannies up stairs to milk into a vessel provided by the purchaser in front of the purchaser's eyes, an absolute guarantee of fresh, unwatered milk.

* * *

DRANK THE FOAM.

When I was growing up on a ranch we used to milk a good many cows, sometimes a dozen or so, for they were all range cows, without any strain of the milk breeds in them, though some gave more milk than others. Mexicans did most of the milking, and I doubt whether they performed any special act of lavation before milking. A fast milker caused a great deal of foam to rise in a gallon or two-gallon bucket, and it was often my privilege to drink the foam off before the buckets were taken to the house, where the milk was strained into pans. Many times I have milked a cow's teat directly into my mouth, and that warm milk was another special treat. Sometimes in season a Mexican would bring the halves of freshly baked calabazas (pumpkins or kershaws) to the pen, where milk was milked directly into them. The warm, sweet vegetable mixed with warm, sweet milk and eaten with a spoon was infinitely better tasting that most of the pumpkin pie—the pumpkin out of cans and the crust made with glue—that one gets in restaurants.

After I went off to college, the milk I got was from a herd of milk cows owned by the hall in which I resided. It was still natural but was skimmed before being put in big pewter pitchers that sat on the tables at which we ate. Later on in cities, all the milk I saw was out of bottles—and it was still natural.

* * *

GLAZED BOXES.

I don't know when dairies started pasteurizing milk, but until very recently, in Austin at least, a person who bought milk at certain stores could if he chose, still buy quart bottles of raw milk. Now it is no longer available. The individual dairyman who provided it has been absorbed by the system of mass production and mass conformity. Meanwhile most milk has come to be not only pasteurized but homogenized. In bottles of pasteurized milk a few spoonfuls of cream rise to the top—not half the amount that rises on Grade A raw milk. In the homogenized bottles there is no visible cream at all. Anybody who wants cream has to buy it separately, though the milk without cream costs as much as the milk with cream used to cost.

In the process of cooking, pasteurizing, homogenizing and otherwise transmuting natural milk into the liquid offered under the name, the dairy people also add, so they advertise, various vitamins. Also, bottles are vanishing and a glazed pasteboard box that adds a glazed taste to the milk has been substituted as a container. This pasteboard box saves both producer and consumer the trouble of washing bottles. It furthers the canned cuisine for which America is famous. If all these processes were not to the financial advantage of the highly organized and lobbyized milk producers, they would not employ them. A lot of people have been bamboozled into the idea that natural milk is full of germs and that unnatural milk throbs with vitamins.

With my strong, natural taste for natural milk, I had as soon eat canned milk or water with powdered milk dissolved in it as the pasteurized, homogenized, vitaminized, boiled and pasteboarded milk now alone procurable in many stores. I know that raising my voice will be futile, but an inner urge—plus a yearning for a quart of cold natural (raw) milk—impels me to raise it.

* * *

HONEY SEIZED.

I know about the laws of sanitation. I know also about other laws passed at the instigation of special interests in the name of public good. Some years ago on a drive to California, I bought a jar of deliciously flavored honey in the Tularosa Valley of New Mexico. When we got to the California border, the Colorado River, state officials insisted on unloading the car to see that we were not transporting any fruits, vegetables or other plants to imperil California vegetation with disease. Upon seeing that jar of honey, the California officials confiscated it. They said that foreign bees carried something harmful to California bees. I asked if bees east of the Colorado ever flew across the river. They said they did not know and did not care; they were carrying out the law of the land.

There is always an argument for tariffs designed to protect special interests. I shall not be enlightened by having some public relations functionary of the dairy trust inform me how much better pasteurized, homogenized, vitaminized, dechemicalized and chemicalized, boiled and bowdlerized milk is for the public health than natural milk. No matter what the propaganda, I'll go on knowing that a clean dairy of healthy cows is just as sanitary as a pasteboard factory, a vitamin factory, a pasteur factory and a homogenius factory all combined. This machined milk reminds me of the machined language in "Time" and "Life" and slick advertisements in a lot of other slick magazines. I seem to be against it

Horses Are Individuals

APR 2 3 1961

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

In "Wyoming Cowboy Days," published in 1936, Charles A. Guernsey gives this account: "Boots, a well bred bay, not cattle wise but excellent under the saddle, would go without hesitation any place I guided, into a raging stream, up or down a steep cliff. When on him, if I stopped to talk on the road, he seemed to sense when enough had been said. Turning his head, he would take my right foot in his mouth and give it a good pinch, as much as to say: 'Nuff said, let's go.' "

It's quite likely that Charles Guernsey had not read Robert Frost's little poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," but his Boots paralleled Frost's "little horse" almost exactly. It's a refreshing pleasure to quote Frost's lines.

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

One winter years ago after a lecture, or "saying" of his poems, as Frost puts it, at the University of Texas, he and a number of other people repaired to the old Faculty Club for something. Some people wanted to get him to say some more of his poems and to say something themselves. He wasn't hard to start, and before long he said in his tonic tones "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

After he finished the lines, Dr. R. H. Griffith, a scholar who knew more about Pope than about Nature, said ,"Isn't it a pathetic fallacy to have a horse ask a question?" ("Pathetic fallacy" means ascribing human behavior or attributes to inanimate forms of nature.) I couldn't restrain myself and retorted, "Some horses can ask more intelligent questions than some people." Twenty years later or more at a Robert Frost birthday dinner in New York, he said "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," and then related the Ph.D.'s question in Austin and my retort.

Now I quote from a letter that Roy Bedichek wrote me from Dallas on Sept. 6, 1937:

"A. C. Preston, Capulan, N. M., has a cow pony that he uses in connection with a ton Ford truck on his ranch. The Ford truck will go almost everywhere, but not quite. The pony goes with him in back of truck hanging his neck over the cab and thus bracing himself as the truck careens around the rough mountain roads. When they get to a place where there is riding to be done, Preston lets down the end-gate of the truck, the pony dismounts and Preston mounts him and away they go. When work is done they return to the truck, the pony climbs in with no prompting whatever, and off they go to another place, and so on.

"My firend (and yours) E. E. Davis of Arlington was with him this summer and they drove up in this truck to a bunch of apparently wild ponies out on the range. Preston got out, let down the end-gate, whistled, and the pony left the herd, came galloping up and jumped in the truck. Davis was with him for several days on his rounds and actually saw this pony perform numbers of times. And this ain't no folklore."

There are horses who like water as much as others like riding around. I take the following instance from the manuscript reminiscences of an Indiana man named Frank Hancock:

"When it rained hard upstream, the Finley River would get so high that the only way to cross would be on a horse. The Jones brothers had a large gray mare, very gentle, weighing 1,800 pounds, who had a passion for swimming. During very high water she stayed most of each day down at the river, on one side or the other. She would eat grass until someone came who wanted to cross the river. If she happened to be on the opposite side of the river, she would come across for her passenger if he called to her. At times she would carry as many as four at a time if they were small persons."

There's no end to the proclivities of individual horses. I take the following instance of a buggy horse that liked to play birddog from "A Sportsman's Second Scrapbook," by John C. Phillips (Boston, 1933):

"Seeing those pa'tridges (New England grouse) along the road this morning," said George, "reminds me of the times when we used to hunt with a team. Those times we used to see lots more birds along the roads than we do now. Motor cars, I guess, keeps 'em scared back. Well, you wouldn't hardly believe it, but when I was hunting with Lem Small, he had an old hoss named Smokey that we drove in a buggy all the time, and that old Smokey he got so he'd point pa'tridge just as well as any dog I ever see. Whether he smelled 'em or whether he seed 'em we never could make out, but we'd be driving along some back road and all of sudden old Smokey would stop dead. He'd stop so darned quick we'd be thrown up against the dashboard sometimes and have to shove a hand out to keep from pitching over.

"Well, sir, that old hoss would face right toward where the bird was and we'd look into the brush and most always there'd be a bird right there. If he was on the right side of the road, I'd take him, and Lem would take those on the other side. Quick as we got ready to shoot you could see old Smokey kind of shrink his neck around in a curve so's there'd be more room to shoot out by him. He stood just as solid as anything you ever saw, and you wouldn't believe the birds we killed over that old hoss."

'AR-TELEGRAM DEC 22 1957

About Texas and Texans

Dining Happily and Bountifully Is An Essential Part of Christmas!

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Wake up, Jacob,
Day's a-breaking,
Peas in the pot
And hoe-cake a-baking.

* * *

Living as we did in the frijole country, we never had peas for breakfast or for any other meal; the peas in my father's morning call had probably been brought to Texas from Virginia or South Carolina by one of his parents. I can near him chanting the call out now before daylight. He had a strong, cheerful voice. The youngest of six children might still be asleep when Papa made the call especially early in especially cheerio tones on Christmas morning; certainly the older children had been awake a long time, eager to bounce out, explore and partly devour their Santa Claus-filled stockings.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

It is the spirited cheerfulness of the occasion that comes to me now. The three chief characteristics of traditional Christmas for English-speaking peoples seem to be cheerfulness, kindheartedness and a great bounty of food (with sometimes, also, of drink). The cheerfulness expresses itself especially in morning greetings. When my mother called out "Merry Christmas," she was as merry as Old King Cole — that "merry old soul" calling for his pipe, for his bowl, and for his "fiddlers three," all at one time. There is something tonic in a true Christmas greeting, especially in the morning, as in the spring call of the bobwhite and the fieldlark.

* * *

WAKE-UP SONG.

Cheerfulness of all sorts seems to belong to Christmas. Percy V. Pennybacker of Austin was out celebrating Christmas with a survey crew in 1920 when their Arkansas cook made the woods ring with his morning call. Scratching on the main tent of the surveying party, he would sing out:

Rise up! Rise up!
I knows you're tired and sleepy too;
I hates to call you but I got it to do.
RISE UP! RISE UP!

The Arkansas cook's voice rose with his repeated call to rise. Sure that everybody had heard him, he would turn toward the mess tent, where he had a Gargantuan breakfast ready to serve, still a-calling.

I didn't call one.
I didn't call two.
I called the Cap'n and the whole damned crew
To RISE UP!
RISE UP!

What a dawn song for Christmas that would be, to go with the great bounty of hearty fellings and of foods for hearty appetites!

The Christmas dinner in Dickens' "Christmas Carol" is something very special for poor folks, but that does not keep it from being bounteous. People who have great bounty every day can't appreciate Christmas bounty in food. When I was a boy we never had oranges, nuts and coconut except at Christmas. The oranges and coconut made "ambrosia" for Christmas dinner.

* * *

QUAILS AND HOGS.

My friend Joseph J. Good of both Texas and California has an account of Christmas bounty in the way of food that sums up the old-time ranch generosity. In 1901, Mr. Good was working on the Cross C Ranch, about 40 miles northwest of Big Spring. It was managed by Capt. Dick Ware, formerly of the Texas Rangers, who was at Round Rock when Sam Bass met his fate and who was credited by all West Texans with having sent the fatal bullet into Bass.

No matter who killed Cock Robin, shortly before Christmas of 1901, Captain Ware made preparations for giving each of two brothers a whole hog or more as a present. One brother lived in Fort Worth and one in Amarillo. Captain Ware had ranch hands kill and dress four hogs, two of them large, weighing between 250 and 300 pounds each, and two of them weighing about 150 pounds each. Meanwhile he and young Good were netting blue (scaled) quail, which were plucked and gutted.

Now a little hog was put inside a big hog and the little hog was absolutely stuffed with quail. Then each hog-quail combination was wrapped up and sent by buckboard to Big Spring to be expressed to Fort Worth and Amarillo respectively. The weather was cold enough to keep the meat fresh. Captain Dick Ware weighed up around 300 pounds himself. He believed in good eating and plenty of eating, at Christmas especially.

Here's wishing hearty Christmas stomachs to us all!

Chance Brought Philosopher

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM
NOV 17 1957

Things Not of the Earth Taught Best by Sheep Herder

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

In the fall of 1919 I went back to the University of Texas as instructor of English after about two years in the Army — field artillery. I'd been overseas and learned a lot. Life at the university seemed pretty tame, but that wasn't the worst. My wife and I were doing worse than starving to death on a government claim. My salary was meager, as all university salaries were at the time, but I was at the bottom of the ladder with very little prospect of getting higher up until I got a Ph. D. degree, and I didn't expect to get one.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Uncle Jim (J. M.) Dobie had been after me several times to go back into the cow business. He wanted to back me. One day along in the spring of 1920 he came to Austin on business and asked me once more why I didn't go to work for him. He had a big ranch in addition to a lot of leased land in LaSalle, McMullen, Duval and Webb Counties. He had a big ranch down in Mexico. He had business interests in San Antonio and elsewhere. He said he wanted a kind of segundo to go around and look after affairs for him. I agreed to go with him.

CRAVED CONVERSATION.

When spring came I resigned my job at the University of Texas and we moved to San Antonio. By this time the cattle market began to go down and before long, instead of trapezing over the country looking after varied affairs, I was managing the Olmos Ranch in LaSalle County. It straddles the Nueces River. Lots of times I didn't talk to any English-speaking person for several days. We had a cow outfit and then another outfit to build tanks and repair fences.

One of the Mexicans at the ranch was named Santos Cortez. He had killed a man 'on the other side' during the revolution and got to this side — the Rio Grande dividing the sides, of course. He was a good pastor (goat-herder), an indifferent vaquero, lazy on foot, a skilled hunter, often assigned to furnish camp with venison and javelina meat, and a lover of talk. Sometimes at night he would come up to my room in the ranch house to converse. He wearied, he told me, of conversation confined to the sore back of a certain horse, the low water in a certain tank, the distance a certain vaquero had run in the black chaparral out in the San Casimiro pasture before he got a glimpse of the outlaw steer he was trailing, the burning of sacahuiste grass below the Tigre, the dry weather that had been and seemed likely to continue, and other such everyday matters. He craved conversation on higher things. Santos was a kind of free-thinker and not at all orthodox in religion. 'El Padretiene huevos como yo,' was one of his heresies.

ON HIGHER SUBJECTS.

One night after we had branched off on higher subjects, he told me of two remarkable experiences he could vouch for on a neighboring ranch. One was his own, the other a friend's. This friend was riding by the site of a long-abandoned Mexican jacal one night when all of a sudden he felt the arms of a skeleton around him and realized that a ghost had dropped down from a tree under which he passed and was mounted behind him. His horse screamed in fright and broke into a run that the rider did nothing to hinder. It was about three miles to the ranch, and that skeleton clung to him all the way and then at the gate released his hold and disappeared.

"This did not pass with me," Santos said, "but I know it is true. I am going to tell you something that did pass with me. I have never told another. You are next to God with me, and will not laugh." When Santos became earnest this way, there were always tears in his voice and in his eyes, too.

"Bueno. That was a lonesome camp where I kept the goats. Maybe two times, maybe one time, every 15 days did I see another man. He would bring a little flour and coffee and sugar, frijoles, salt, no more. At night only the coyotes talked, and they did not talk to me. The pastor dog slept with the goats and I did not have even him for company.

"One night after I had been sound asleep for a while, I awoke drawing my breath in quick pants, like this. There was un bulto (a bulk) on my chest so heavy that it was smothering me. I always kept my rifle at my side. I started to reach for it but could not move a finger. It was as if I were tied down with a wet rawhide rope. Tight, man, tight! I could not raise my body to pitch the bulto off. I tried to yell. I had no breath to make a sound with, and my mouth it was dry like lime. Look, my tongue would not moisten my lips. I was pinned back flat so that I could not bend my neck to see the bulto there in the dark. Pues, what could I do?

"Then I remembered how it is said that thoughts of good will drive away the evil. I began to think of the good God and of the Holy Virgin. I thought hard, and in a little bit of while there was no bulto weighing down on me. I did not hear it run off. I did not see it. It vanished, and I was free. When daylight came and I looked for tracks, I could not find any. It is a thing I can not explain, nor you either, Meester Frankie, though you are well instructed and have been a master in a big school. These things are not of the earth.

"They are not of the earth even when you see them. One night I was with two other men crossing the Arroyo San Casimiro at the Paso de la Gallina. And there right above the palo verde tree in which the lone gallina (chicken) used to roost, we saw a light so bright that it made my eyes go blind. Maybe it was 12 feet high, like a ball. It stayed there a little bit and then slowly, slowly it floated on down the creek. One, thinking it would lead to gold, wanted to follow it, but it had not said "Santos" to me. We stood still. It got a little dimmer, and then it just vanished, like a match that ceases to burn."

GREAT EPIC UNFOLDS.

In the course of time Santos told me many other things. He taught me a lot more than several professors under whom I have taken courses taught me. He's dead now, but I would rather be associated with him than with several governors I have known.

During the years I spent on Los Olmos Ranch while Santos talked, while Uncle Jim Dobie and other cow men talked or stayed silent, while the coyotes sang their songs, and the sandhill cranes honked their lonely music I seemed to be seeing a great painting of something I'd known all my life. I seemed to be listening to a great epic of something that had been commonplace in my youth but now took on meanings. I was familiar with John A. Lomax's "Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads." Indeed, I knew John Lomax himself very well. One day it came to me that I would collect and tell the legendary tales of Texas as Lomax had collected the old-time songs and ballads of Texas and the frontier.

If it hadn't been for Uncle Jim and Los Olmos, if it hadn't been for Santos Cortez, the tale teller, I don't know what direction I might have gone. I'm saying again that life is often determined by chance and that luck is being ready for the chance. It was certainly lucky for me that I left the university in 1920 and learned something. In 1923 I brought out "Legends of Texas" for the Texas Folklore Society. It's long been out of print. It was several years before I wrote my first trade book. My mind has changed on various things since those long-ago days. According to my idea, when a man's mind petrifies beyond change he had just as well stop traveling.

CHANCE PLAYS A ROLE.

Until petrification sets in, chance will always play a part in a person's life. When the time comes that it doesn't make any difference which road one takes, the traveler had as well quit riding. This brings to mind that, to me, most beautiful and powerful of all stories written about the Civil War—the last chapter in John W. Thomason's "Lone Star Preacher." Praxiteles Swan and Howdy Martin have ridden horseback to Richmond to protest to President Jefferson Davis. I can never read the last paragraphs of the story without my heart's filling with tears. Before quoting them I want it understood that I am too much of a realist to imagine that 1957 can be turned back to 1860. John W. Thomason did not try to fool himself either.

"The two, in the sleety night, found nothing to say to each other. They thought they might as well go on back to the command. They got their horses from the livery stable. The sleet had changed to a wet snow, driven on a bitter wind. The widely spaced street lights were blanketed, and made luminous yellow spheres of radiance, that gave no light at all. The horses' hooves were muffled on the road. They seemed, to themselves, riding with their heads bent against the wind, the last lonely souls in a world of cold and sleep.

"They came to a crossroads where all directions looked the same. 'Which road, Elder, which road?' asked Major Martin impatiently. 'I'm kind of turned around.'

"Praxiteles lifted his beard from his chest and answered, out of a dark dream. 'Either road will take us where we're going. It don't matter now — Same distance and no choice—'

"Off to the west and south the rain was falling through the naked boughs of tall trees that stood gaunt around a place called Appomattox."

Among the Comanches

Nov 24 1957 Disp.

Adventure Tales of 125 Years Ago Come to Life in Re-Printed Book

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

If I were setting out to be a writer of books for boys—with a lot of girls and grownups reading them—I don't think I could hit on a better title than "Three Years Among the Comanches." Following it could come "Three Years With the Kit Carson Trappers," "Three Years on the Chisholm Trail," "Three Years Among the Pirates," "Three Years With the Texas Rangers," etc.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"Three Years Among the Comanches" by Nelson Lee was first published in 1859, nearly a century ago. I read it maybe 30 years ago, considered it a bully narrative and wished for a copy, but the book had become as scarce as hen's teeth. Now anybody can have a copy for $2. The University of Oklahoma Press has just republished it, with a delightful introduction by Walter Prescott Webb. As Webb says, "Cabeza de Vaca, Huckleberry Finn and the Ancient Mariner all had this in common: each made a hard journey and returned home to tell about it."

Nobody who tried to write now of experiences on the frontiers 125 years ago can be so immediate, so personal, so realistic in little things as an intelligent and observant actor upon the frontiers at that time could be in telling "what happened unto me."

Nelson Lee was 33 years old when he left his home in New York for Texas. For 15 years he rangered with Capt. Ewen Cameron (one of the original Texas "cowboys"), Capt. Jack Hays and other leaders, fought the Mexicans, chased the Comanches away from the ranches, drove herds of both horses and cattle into Louisiana, was in the Mier Expedition, owned a wonderful horse named Black Prince and otherwise rode free of both thought and man tyranny. Then he went back North to see his people only to become restless for frontier action and freedom.

ESCAPES FROM CHIEF.

He came back to Texas, went in partnership with six other men to buy about 400 horses and drive them to California. They hired 16 American drovers and three Mexican horsebreakers. In April of 1855, somewhere in the region of El Paso, Comanches attacked in the night, killing or capturing all the men and horses. They kept Nelson Lee a captive, mostly in the Plains country, for three years, meanwhile torturing and killing his companions. He attributed the salvation of his life to a new-fangled alarm clock he had bought for the drive to California.

Finally he escaped a chief to whom he had been traded, after many days fell in with some traders who took him to the Rio Grande below Eagle Pass, whence he got back to "the United States," where certain listeners to his "oral relation" of experiences saw that somebody who could write took it down.

Actually, the story of captivity among the Comanches takes up hardly half of the book, which is brief. More interesting to me are some of Nelson Lee's adventures and observations while living on the frontiers. Take his experiences with rattlesnake and alligator. I quote:

"A day or two subsequent to the battle of Walker's Creek, while on our way back toward San Antonio, we reined up, as usual, to prepare our evening repast near the bank of a small stream. It happened that I dismounted by a cluster of mesquite bushes, and as I struck the ground an enormous rattlesnake bit me on the ankle. I had before frequently witnessed the deadly effects resulting from the bite of these venomous reptiles and, I confess, my nerves, which had not failed me in the hour of battle and in the face of death, were now completely unstrung.

A sickening, dreadful sensation came over me, terrible beyond all force of language to convey—a sense of sorrow that I had not fallen in the recent battle and escaped the horror of going to my long account in such an abominable way.

SIMILAR ADVENTURE.

"There was a Spaniard among our number who witnessed the incident. He immediately thrust his knife through the serpent's neck, pinning it to the ground, and instantly began cutting portions of flesh from the still living and wriggling monster, and applying it to the wound. I could feel it draw, and in a few minutes the white poultice thus applied would change to a perfect green. These applications were continued until nearly the entire body of the snake was used. The remedy proved effectual, inasmuch as I suffered nothing from it afterward save a slight soreness, though from that time forward, I always experienced an instinctive dread on approaching a mesquite thicket, far more disagreeable than when charging an enemy.

"I once met with a somewhat similar adventure on the Aransas, near the Gulf. Stopping a few days at the ranche of an old acquaintance, to while away an idle hour, I started out on a deer hunt with one of his Mexican herdsmen. It happened that my first shot broke both the hind legs of a novie stag, when he plunged into the stream, at this point some 50 yards in width, swimming to the opposite shore, but unable to ascend the bank. Anxious to secure him I swam across, having only a belt around me, which held a hunting knife. As I approached, he made for the other shore, when he was again wounded by the Mexican. Several times both of us crossed the stream. On my last passage, when perhaps two-thirds over, I discovered at no great distance, a huge alligator making directly toward me. He was at least 14 feet in length, and had been undoubtedly attracted by the blood which tainted the water.

"My first impulse was to draw my knife and turn upon him, but a second thought determined me to exercise that discretion which is the better part of valor, and accordingly, I venture the assertion that in all aquatic feats of which we have any account, there never has been known a specimen of "taller swimming" than I then and there performed. Fortunately, I reached the shore and succeeded in scrambling to the top of the bank just as the monster came like a great battering ram against it. It was a luxury to plant a rifle ball in that alligator's eye, and as he rolled over, a lifeless heap, to indulge the satisfaction of knowing that he would frighten the wits out of a poor devil no more forever."

PRINCE LOST, REGAINED.

The horse that Nelson Lee rode as a Jack Hays ranger was no ordinary mustang. "He was a gallant black, clean-limbed, fleet as the wind and recognized the name of Prince. He was a native of New York, and had been sent to Galveston when a 2-year-old as a present to Colonel Walton, the mayor of the city. He had more than once almost taken the life of the colonel's son, and was of such a savage and vicious temper that he determined to get rid of him. He happened to fall into my possession, and for years we lived together, mutually sharing in numerous adventures, in the hunt and on the trail, in peace and war, the most intimate of companions. In the course of his experience he came to regard a Mexican or Indian with intense hatred, and in the confusion and shock of battle, with his teeth and heels often rendered as effectual service as the armed rider on his back."

One time Nelson Lee left Black Prince to rest in Seguin while he rode a mule to Gonzales and back. Arriving home early in the morning, he found the town in a high state of excitement. During the night robbers led by a noted Mexican bandit had stolen nearly every horse in the community—Black Prince included. To quote Nelson Lee;

"I had made Black Prince my pet and companion, and though savage and dangerous to others, towards me he was gentle as the lamb. Many a night had we passed together out on the silent prairie. I had clung to him in the midst of enemies whose loud shrieks filled the heavens with the noise of war—long and bravely, over mountains and across the plans, he had borne me safely on his back—and who can wonder I came to think of him with genuine affection, regarding him more as an intelligent being than a poor dumb beast?

"The day wore on until noon, the excitement still undiminished, when an object was discovered on the prairie as far distant as the eye could reach. It approached nearer and nearer, its outlines growing more and more distinct, until it assumed the shape of a horse coming at his utmost stretch of speed. Eagerly all eyes were turned towards him, and presently the crowd sent up the cry that it was Black Prince. It was indeed him, and loud and hearty was the salutation he received as he dashed in among us, stopping by my side, panting for breath and covered with foam.

He had evidently broken away from his captors, and ran from them as if conscious of the probability and danger of pursuit. For myself, on seeing him restored, I felt as one who, having lost his purse containing all he has, runs back and unexpectedly finds it in the path."

J. FRANK DOBIE

JAN 5 1958

About Wade Hampton, The Knifer of Bears

American Statesman

Wade Hampton, the third of that name in South Carolina, (1818-1902), may have been more widely known as a bear-knifer than any other Southerner because he was even better known for other reasons. Under his leadership, the Hampton family owned more slaves than any other plantation family—around 3,000 big and little, on vast holdings in Louisiana and Mississippi as well as in South Carolina. He was against secession but fought through the Civil War as colonel, brigadier general, major general. Then he came out for allowing citizenship to the Negroes, according to law. He served his state as governor and then as US senator. At the very end of his long career his words were: "God bless all my people, black and white."

It was before the Civil War broke him physically as well as financially that he was the great hunter. He hunted bear chiefly on and out from the great Wild Woods plantation in Mississippi. His ablest biographer gives this picture of him:

"At first sight, this man was almost too big to be reassuring. His height was an even six feet, and he was broadly built even for such stature. Physically he was more powerful than his biggest field hand, with great muscles of arm and leg, the sort of body that is the despair of fashionable tailors. Perhaps that is why he never seemed to be dressed elegantly or even very carefully. He had wide, square shoulders and large head carried high on a sinewy neck, and features of a rather leonine handsomeness. His nose was straight and long, his jaw and brow wide, and his steady eyes were brilliant and gray-blue. His wavy dark hair, beginning to grow thin at the temples, bushed out above the ears, and he flanked his jowls with long side whiskers, into which merged a thick, curly moustache.

When a guest arrived at Millwood, the chief South Carolina plantation, the biographer continues, "he was met by Henry, the consequential Negro butler who ranked at the head of the squads of house servants and the battalions of field hands. This dignified brown man assigned a body servant to attend particularly upon such a guest for the duration of his stay. If the guest desired, a saddle horse was chosen at the stable, also to be his for the entire visit. The house and grounds were open to him with no demands or restrictions. If he wished to roam the groves, gardens and brooksides, he was free to do so. If he liked to read, there was the Hampton library—not one roomful of books but two. Ten thousand volumes were there, many of them works on American history, some bearing the autograph of George III of England. For men and women of social turn there were the drawing rooms, hung with family portraits. On the wall gleamed the big carved sword of Wade Hampton's grandfather, hero of two wars. In the evenings there was brilliant, mannered conversation, and music and dancing."

Considering Wade Hampton's great fame as a killer of bears in hand to hand conflict—a fame approaching that of Jim Bowie as knife wielder—comparatively little on the subject is available in print. The best account is from Manly Wade Wellman, the biographer already quoted. He writes:

"From childhood almost to his grave, he loved and used horses, guns and fishing tackle supremely well. An English guest, who had ridden to hounds with the best men of his native island, swore almost frantically that Wade Hampton could back a horse better than anyone in the whole world. It took a strongly made beast to carry properly that stalwart mass of bone and muscle, but Hampton had a light touch on the reins and never overtaxed his mounts unless they chose to rebel. Then, says one who later followed him to the wars, Hampton's brawny legs would clamp like iron tongs, foiling every effort to unseat him. He may have been thrown on occasion— the best of constant riders are, now and then—but there exists no record of it. He was proud, almost vain, of his horsemanship. Few men who ever lived and rode had better reason to be.

"His best loved sport was strange and perilous. The wooded portions of his Wild Woods property were roamed by black bears, killers of game and some times robbers of sty and henroost. Hampton habitually wintered at Wild Woods, in his huge house that was built on the order of a big hunting lodge, and gathered there friends who loved the chase. Again and again he would pursue bears with a pack of hounds.

"The leaping, bulging pack was well trained in scenting and chasing this particularly perilous quarry. The hunter followed it at a gallop to where, its back against a truck or thicket, the bear reared on its hind legs and lashed out with its front paws, boxer fashion, at the clamoring ring of hounds just out of reach.

Then Wade Hampton swung out of his saddle. With one hand he drew from its sheath a long, keen and heavy knife, almost a sword in size and design. Commanding the dogs to get out of the way, he charged in.

"It was always over in a moment—a darting swing of the talon-armed paw, a quick dodge by Hampton to avoid it, a deadly counterstroke with the steel. Bewhiskered, indomitable, sure of foot and blade, Hampton must have looked like the Assyrian kings, pictured in ancient bas-reliefs as they slew lions in hand-to-hand grapple. Not only once did he thus kill a bear at close quarters, but fully 80 times, twice the number that Jules Verne imaginatively credited to Michael Strogoff. Sometimes he failed to dodge quite clear of the raking claws, and bore the scars on his body throughout his life; but no bear ever escaped him once he and his dogs caught up with it. And on one occasion at least he displayed the derrick-like strength of his arms, legs and back, by stooping, lifting unaided a big furry carcass that weighed full 400 pounds and with a sudden surging effort throwing it across the saddle of a horse."

J. Frank Dobie

SA 9-23-56

Spots of Time Saved From Oblivion

By J. FRANK DOBIE

We constantly refer to certain experiences, encounters, individuals, etc., as "memorable." If they really are memorable, then they belong to the present and future as well as to the past. They represent little spots of time saved from the oblivion belonging to most of the past. For instance, we all lived through last June. How little out of the 30 days and nights of June, 1956, remains definite in the minds of most of us! If life is cherished, then every distinct memory of something good out of past life is an item in the total of assets. Leigh Hunt distilled the idea into eight famous lines:

Jenny kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she set in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in:
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kissed me.

Memories are not an escape from the dead present for obsolete people. When I feel dull and bored I can't remember anything stirring. When I and my mind are most active is when I remember most actively. Then the past comes up adding itself to the present and life is at its apex. Truly wonderful it is that a person can refresh and enrich himself throughout a lifetime by calling up the bright spots from the receding roadway of experience. The other day I had a letter from Mr. Paul Gafford of Jacksboro, written to share with me an experience he had been refreshed by, in memory, many times.

Moon Shining

About 50 years ago, while coyotes were very plentiful in the country, he as a youth of 19 was very familiar with them and knew that they never harm people. He was riding a bicycle alone across the country one fall night, going home from church. The bicycle had no headlight and he didn't need it to see the road—just a wagon road—for the moon was up. However, when he got to a creek bottom with tall heavy timber on both sides of the road, all view of the ground was cut off. He got off the bicycle to push it and feel his way with his feet. He had crossed the creek and was walking with one hand in the saddle, pushing, and the other on the handlebar, when he came to where the timber was less high and thick and he again could see a good deal of the road.

Then, to quote his words, "I met two coyotes coming my way. I know they were coyotes and not dogs. I had seen coyotes all my life. When I was about six feet away from these two, they stopped and so did I. I wasn't afraid in the least and they didn't seem afraid either. They just seemed curious.

"A small tool bag hanging from the frame of my bicycle held some small wrenches, a pair of pinches (called pliers now) and several other metal items. These things made a tingling noise as I pushed the bicycle over the rough road, and I judge that form of music aroused the curiosity of the coyotes. They looked and acted like a couple of youngsters.

Look at Each Other

"After I had stood there a few minutes in silence looking at them and they in silence looking at me, I picked up a light stick and threw it at them. They just jumped to one side a little and then got back in the road. Now I took a firmer grip on the saddle of the bike and rolled it up near enough to give a shove that sent the front wheel against the nearest coyote. They both jumped out to the side of the road, not over 10 feet away, and stopped.

I rolled my bike on up the road 100 yards or so, the tool kit tinkling, while the two coyotes walked or trotted along even with me, keeping off the 10-foot distance. By now the timber had thinned away so that moonlight made the road plain. I got on the bike and pedaled hard for about 100 yards and then stopped to look back. The coyotes were not in sight. I guess their inquisitiveness had been satisfied."

As a brother to the coyote I find this instance of coyote curiosity and of feeling of kinship to man diverting, but that is not the main point of the memory. The memory brings back a set of circumstances at a particular place at a particular time more intimately associated with the rememberer than with the coyotes.

I remember riding on a train from London to Dover, to take a boat for Calais, several months after World War II ended. My senses were all quick. I was leaving a land and some people I love. I got to noticing how starlings walked on the grass, sometimes in shade and sometimes in sunshine. I looked out the window watching them all the way to Dover. Now when I see a starling here in Texas on the grass, while the bird is with us for the winter, the sight of starlings on that ride to Dover and the day and night before the ride and much else connected with them come back to me, and the past is now.

Armadillos Fight

Willard Williams, now in the Veterans hospital at Houston, has sent me this memory:

"Late one Sunday afternoon I was riding through mesquite brush alongside the dry, sandy bed of a creek. At a curve I heard sounds of groaning and grunting and reined my horse into the sand to muffle the sound of his hoofs. Moving on slowly, I discovered the groaners and grunters. They were two big armadillos in battle. They stood on their hind legs circling each other. Now and then one would make a dash at the other, and then each would try to lash his opponent with his tail. This lashing made a popping sound.

"After several minutes one hit the other across the head with his tail and turned him a complete flip. The downed armadillo lay there as if dead, while the winner stalked around him sniffing the air. Then he walked off into the brush. Soon the loser got up and walked off in the opposite direction."

This is the first account of an armadillo fight that I have heard. I am thinking of riding down that creek and hearing a noise and then coming upon something that gives the ride, the creek and the brush a memorable significance.

The Sale's the Thing

JAN 29 1961 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

TV Pitch Reminiscent of Old Medicine Show

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The recording room for Dave Garroway's Today show of the National Broadcasting Company in New York resembles a big empty barn, furnished with lights, tables, movable shooting apparatus and alert operators. On the afternoon of Dec. 12, I arrived at this room about three-quarters of an hour ahead of time to be recorded for a telecast the next morning.

J FRANK DOBIE.

Just outside the barn I sat in a cubicle provided with a television screen on which one could watch the Today show as it was recorded—without rehearsal. Some of the time, instead of looking at the screen or the people around me, I stood watching operations inside the barn. The show lasts two hours, Garroway conducting the whole while. On this day he advertised a kind of spangle, demonstrating by the use of hands as well as voice, its tensile strength, its lightness for tossing on a Christmas tree, its brightness under lights. He advertised a golf ball held in a container so warmed by a battery that when a golfer took it out it would warm his hand and also would, when struck, go more agilely than a cold golf ball. A woman assistant in advertising who smiled and smiled and smiled held up a nightgown for sale. Garroway didn't see how anybody could tell it from an evening gown, it was so beautifully tailored.

* * *

LIKE MEDICINE SHOW.

Slickness over the air—especially slickness under the guise of innocent credulity—bores me into the ground. My mind ran back to medicine shows of the earlier years of this century. The master of a medicine show never pretended to be anything else. He got up on a wagon or a barrel or some other elevation and barked up a crowd. He cried out rattlesnake oil for rheumatism at a dollar a bottle, oil from India or just plain North American Indian oil good for man or beast, for human interiors as well as exteriors. Often a clown, a fiddler, or some other music-maker added to the show.

But how did I come to be with Garroway's show? I'll have to be personal in explanation. In October my publishers, Little, Brown & Company of Boston, brought out an anthology of my narratives entitled "I'll Tell You a Tale." In November, Domino Records, a small company enterprised by some gallant young women in Austin, issued a record of my tellings—"The Ghost Bull of the Mavericks and Other Tales." On Dec. 7 I learned that a representative of this company had written to Garroway suggesting an invitation to appear on his show. In response, Bud Lewis, representing the Today show, telephoned that he would like to talk to me. On Dec. 8 we talked. He said that the show never paid any person interviewed but that it would pay traveling and hotel expenses. My compensation would be a "plug" for the record brought out by Domino Records and also the "I'll Tell You a Tale" book. A hotel room would be reserved for me and a script writer would get in touch with me.

* * *

TICKET RESERVED.

The Domino Records people began at once to publicize the coming event. The script writer, Sandy Sheldon, talked with me at length. The next day, Dec. 9, another functionary of the show, Lucille Casey, telephoned Domino Records that since Today was "picking up the tab" there would be no plug for Dobie's Ghost Bull of the Mavericks and Other Tales." When informed of this turn of the screw, I said, "Oh, I'll go on. You've already got the notice in the newspapers here, and I want to go on to New York anyhow. I don't think there'll be any trouble about the plug for the record." A plane ticket already was reserved.

I telegraphed Ned Bradford editor-in-chief of Little, Brown & Company, of my plans. A few hours after I flew into New York he telephoned, breaking the news that Lewis had informed Little, Brown & Company that since the Today show was advertising—through me — a Little, Brown book, they were not paying my expenses to New York. Without haggling, the publishers agreed to assume all expenses. (They have paid them.)

On Monday morning, Dec. 12, Lewis telephoned me at my hotel in New York saying that since the payola and the Van Doren scandals got aired, advertising on Today show was limited. I reminded him that in his one other talk to me he had said straight out that my expenses would be paid by his company and that the new record and the new book would be plugged. I should have told the outfit where to go, but that would involve a lot of tedious explanations. I was under no illusion that it would make any difference to Garroway whether I showed up or not.

* * *

OUT OF ELEMENT.

After I got to the studio there was more talk on whether the record would be mentioned by Garroway. Sheldon said: "If you talk about it nobody can stop you." I knew, of course, that censorship (softly called "editing") of tape could easily cut out anything I said. I was surprised when somebody told me next day that my mention of Domino Records had been retained in the script.

I never felt more dispirited or more out of my element than sitting there on a nail keg and being interviewed by the master of this ultra modern medicine show in a tired and vacant way. He was manifestly more at ease with heated golf balls, spangles for Christmas trees, and nightgowns looking like evening gowns than with this writing man. I got to feeling just as mechanical as he appeared to be.

I did not know at the time that the producer of Today is Robert J. Northshield, with whom I had some agreeable dealings on a National Broadcasting Company program several years ago. On Dec. 23, 1960, a letter came from him, reading in part:

"I thought you were great (on the Dave Garroway show) and want you to know that if I had been able to find my car and my driveway, I would have been in the studio to tell you so. It took two days and four boys to dig both out of the snow.

"The spot was a very good one and I am most grateful for your help." . . .

* * *

'SHODDY BUSINESS.'

It was a courteous letter, expressive of a courteous man. My reply, in part, reads: "It's good to meet you again through your letter, but I know I was not 'great.' I was very much dispirited . . . It was a matter of honor to me that Domino Records (who initiated my appearance and had offered to pay part of the expenses) should be plugged.

"After the clear-as-daylight understanding with Bud Lewis, not one word had been said to me directly by anybody connected with Today respecting the money angle. I felt as if I were being treated as a two-bit pawn. I can't respect a business that says one thing to a man and then twists around behind his back. It seemed small to me for a big outfit to be haggling over who was going to pay my traveling expenses to New York. It seemed to me a two-bit payola kind of business. I'm no publicity hound, and I wished to God I had never got mixed up in the business — a shoddy advertising business, it appears to me."

Monte Barretts Found Out in Scotland ST 6-24-56

It Takes a Heap of Livin' to Make a Happy Traveler, Anywhere You Go

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Now is the season for travel. Two qualifications—and there are others—requisite to a good traveler are power of observation and sympathy for ways of life and people different from those that the traveler is used to at home. These qualifications can be cultivated.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Every traveler is a kind of reporter to himself and others, whether he writes out his report, talks it or merely ruminates it. If he does not see anything beyond what he pays for, he can't report beyond the level of a tourist camp circular.

Any good traveler realizes that what many people call "best" is what they are used to. Unless a traveler can be tolerant of change and find it interesting, he had as well not travel beyond the perimeter of his stake rope. Unless a traveler is warmed by humanity at home, he is not likely to be warmed by humanity abroad. Some people may travel profitably to themselves without much interest in human beings, but they are not the best travelers.

Eleven years ago I received, from the late Monte Barrett of San Antonio, a letter so illustrative of good traveling that I have all this time wanted to share it with my readers. Monte Barrett was a newspaperman and a first-class reporter before he turned to writing novels. "The Tempered Blade" (on Bowie and the Alamo) is one of his most widely read. I know he would not have minded this use of his letter, here necessarily abbreviated. I wish he were still traveling and telling stories. Mrs. Barrett was his companion on the trip to Scotland, as on many other trips.

MONTE BARRETT'S TRIP.

Fall is not the season for traveling in Scotland, London friends advised. So we went. Inverness, the old capital of the Highlands, is drowsy with charm, and the absence of tourists made it more drowsy and more charming. Travel on the Caledonian canal was closed, but we found we could make a bus trip to Fort Augustus—not a tour, just the regular service.

The morning we boarded the bus it was about two-thirds filled with people evidently at ease with themselves and each other. About 300 yards from the station a man in plain, stout clothes stood in the road, hand raised. We came to a stop.

"A nice day," the man said, accenting "nice" in his Scot way.

"It is that," the driver responded, accenting the middle word also.

"It's Jack McPherson I'm looking for," the man said. "Is he along with you?"

Jack McPherson gave a hearty greeting. He was going to Fort Augustus and this friend wanted to send a message to some kin folks there. The two stood in the middle aisle unabashed and chatted. None of the passengers seemed acquainted with either, but nobody suggested that they hurry, least of all the driver, who waited, door open, until the chat was ended. Everybody had the leisure to feel kindly, as was evidenced by smiles.

About two miles farther on we stopped again. The driver explained that "Mrs. Anderson wanted me to bring her some goods." He walked briskly toward a cottage 200 yards or so up a hill. We could hear his cheery hail as he approached it and then the mutter of conversation. No one showed impatience. Neighborliness seemed more important to the passengers than a schedule.

COUNTRY SQUIRE.

"American people used to be like this, I said to my wife, "before people traded off art of living for gadgets and locomotion without travel."

About two miles farther on we a country squire who would have delighted Dickens waved us to a halt. He wore knee-length gaiters and carried a knotty stick. His face was ruddy from highland mist. Two dogs escorted him, one a solemn setter, aware of his dignity, and the other a romping terrier.

"A nice day," the squire began, accenting the middle word.

"It is that," the driver responded with the same emphasis.

He had some letters to be posted at the next village. I noticed that no tip passed with the letters.

Not long after this, the driver stopped to consult with us as to whether or not the sun-top of the bus should be rolled back. The sun was bright but the autumn wind was raw. Everybody took part in the discussion. We decided in favor of the sun and bundled up against the breeze.

We were all interested in two little old ladies sitting across the aisle from Mrs. Barrett and me. They had been gone a long way off for a long time from the village of their girlhood to which miles they had been greeting familiar landmarks audibly and with fondness.

As the bus came to the head of the loch, the driver stopped it and said to the old ladies, "You can see the village from here. Would you like to get down and have a look?"

DECIDED TO WALK.

They would and did, and all of us shared their pleasure of homecoming. Finally they decided to walk the rest of the way in, down the grassy bank. The driver, bless him, offered to wait a little farther along and pick them up but this they declined. They did trust him with their luggage, though, and I knew as well as they that it was safe as if in the Bank of England.

There was just a huddle of houses in the village. We stopped here for refreshments in the common room of an old inn. It was a combination of pub and tea room, actually. Some had ale and others tea, and we all chatted comfortably, for by now we were friends, although there had been no introductions and most of our names still were unknown.

When we left the inn I noticed someone had procured a newspaper there. I hadn't read one in several days. I exclaimed to my wife that I wished I had known papers were available. I didn't say it loud—was surprised the driver heard.

There was a screech of brakes. We came to an abrupt stop. "What paper would you like sir?"

"It doesn't matter. I only wished for a glance at world news."

"I'll get it for you."

"Never mind, I can run back myself."

He didn't stop for me. He ran back to the inn for a paper before I could reach the door. For a moment I was embarrassed but, let me remind you, this was no lacky, running obsequious errands. This was an obliging friend, doing me a favor.

OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN.

We were two Americans adrift in a sea of friendliness. I think I shouldn't end without telling you about our friend McDonald, whom we stumbled upon at Fort Augustus. He lives in a stone cottage, and back of his house is what looks like a modest stone barn—his workshop, where he, like the generations before him, weaves the plaids for the kilts which Scots still wear on holidays and ceremonious occasions.

There's an old-fashioned garden about the place, and you walk around the house in a variety of colors he could borrow for his plaids. My wife met him first—I was visiting with a fellow I'd met along the bank. She stopped to admire the garden and he came to the door to ask her in. I followed, of course, and we sat there, visiting, while he was busy at his loom. He showed us the plaids of the various families who'd ordered their goods from the McDonalds here for generations. He had great names among his customers—there was a newly finished bolt in the Duke of Argyle's hunting plaid and we saw the Douglas tartan. It was like a roll call of the Highland clans. When he was assured of our interest, he dropped his shuttle, and thumbed through drawers of patterns for us, so that we might see the tartans that had fluttered across the pages of Scotland's history. We left behind a friend who warms our memories.

Learned to Tree 'Em

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM MAR 9 1961

Old Rover Got Even for Rattlesnake Bite

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

For the following first-hand observations on rattlesnakes and experiences with them, we are all indebted to John C. Myers of Eagle Pass, temporarily running the risk of having his mind dulled in certain education classes at the University of Texas. The "I" and the "we" in the narrative belong to John C. Myers, here quoted without quotation marks.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Old Rover was hot on the trail of the coyote dragging a steel trap. My brother Clyde and I were right behind him. At first the trail was rather hard to follow, but soon went up a dry arroyo where we began to gain on the coyote. After a half mile or so, he left the arroyo for an open grassy country, and Rover had to slow down somewhat. Finally he lost the trail altogether, in sandy loam country where "polecat" flowers (wild lantana) flourished, near a live oak motte.

Rover seemed to have trouble separating the scent of the coyote from that of the shrubby "polecat" flowers. He was sniffing and snuffing among the lantana bushes. We were about 10 feet away from him and were looking straight at him when he thrust his head into a clump of wild lantana.

* * *

SHAKE TO PIECES.

Suddenly he backed up, and a large rattler that had struck him on the bony part of his muzzle, about half way between nose and eyes, thrust itself into full view. Rover stood there momentarily in utter surprise, eyeing the rattler, which had assumed a striking position out in the open. Then Rover threw out the strangest roar I ever heard a dog give. He was in a fury over having been struck and charged straight at the rattlesnake, grabbing it viciously and shaking it with such ferocity that pieces of snake flew in all directions.

This happening was in Wilson County. I can not say what part of the snake's body Rover grabbed. Many years have passed since then, but as I write now I see Rover in the center of fantastically fast action, his ears flapping, growls coming from his chest, his head blur of motion, making of snake coils another blur. I do not think that Rover bit the snake in two. Reptiles are put together rather loosely, and it takes no great effort to literally shake one to pieces. A Mexican man working for us was very good at popping snakes' heads off. He would grab a chicken snake or coachwhip (prairie runner) and with a quick motion pop its head off. Another pop and about four inches more of snake would fly off, and so on until the whole snake was popped off.

* * *

GOT THE COYOTE.

Before long Rover held only a short piece of rattlesnake in his mouth. He dropped that and began to paw his nose and rub it vigorously in a clump of polecat flowers. He wallowed in dirt, shook himself vigorously and began hunting again. About a hundred yards out, we cut the trail and from there on it was easy to follow. About a mile further on, we caught up with the coyote, which had snagged the trap in a hog-wire fence it had attempted to climb over. I was carrying a brand new, single shot, rim-fire, long-rifled, octagon-barreled, Stevens Special .25 caliber rifle. Mr. Coyote was soon placed where he could catch no more of Mama's turkeys, which was the reason we were trapping for him.

We were about three miles from home, and now struck out for it at a trot, Rover leading the way. He stayed in the lead all the way, not once hunting out or paying any attention to anything else but the bee line he was following. I shot a cottontail rabbit and tried to give it to Rover, but he would have none of it, which was most unusual behavior. He trotted past the peanut-stack lot, where he loved to lay and eat peanuts. He headed straight for his box, under the workbench in a shed, just behind the smokehouse.

Later on, we tried to feed him some table scraps, but he would not eat. Nor would he eat the next day or the next. He never left his box during this time, as far as we knew. His muzzle swelled some, but not excessively. However, the swelling around his eyes almost blinded him. A day or so later, I placed a pan of separated milk before him, and he eagerly lapped this up. He went back to his box, but later in the day he came out and lay in the sunshine. From that day on, his recovery was rapid and complete.

* * *

HE DIDN'T FORGET.

As long as he lived, Rover became an implacable and deadly hunter of rattlesnakes. Day and night, he "treed" rattlesnakes. We could always tell when he had located a snake, for on such an encounter he gave out a most weird, uncanny and unearthly howl. When we heard this, we grabbed hoe, pitchfork or rifle and went to his aid, for Rover would stay with his rattlesnake until someone came. As far as we knew, he never attacked or killed another rattlesnake after the one had bitten him, although a small one he was baying struck him on the tip of his nose.

I never saw a house cat attack a rattlesnake, but cats do most of their hunting and prowling at night, out of sight. However, one day we noticed that our chicken-house cat, so-called because she always slept on the roost with the hens, did not come out of the chicken house. Someone gathering the eggs that evening found the cat in a hen nest. She appeared to be very sick, and her head was badly swollen.

The next afternoon she was still on the nest, her head horribly swollen. The eyes were mere slits, she was completely blind, and she appeared to be in considerable pain. She never left the nest, as far as we knew, for a week. Finally she threw off the venom and recovered. But she was permanently marked; a scar ran diagonally from one ear to the tip of her nose. The skin had burst on this line due to the pressure of pus.

Anecdotes From Ohio

By J. FRANK DOBIE

I came to Cleveland by air a week ago to talk at an educational conference held by Cleveland college (a part of Western Reserve university) and at Antioch college.

When I am away from home I never want to see a home paper; I want to see the papers of the places I visit. One day's experience taught me that the best newspaper in Cleveland is the New York Times, available here the morning it is published. The only Texas news I look for is in the weather reports. Has it rained yet? The dampness up here is worth the trip.

From India

At the Cleveland college conference I met and heard Sautha Rama Rau of India, educated in England and the United States and author of three books, explaining India. I had been making the point that literacy and printing often contribute nothing to civilized values. She stressed the fact that in India, where only 10 per cent of the millions are literate, an ancient civilization is transmitted orally from generation to generation. Now people are asking me if I have read the report on Texas civilization in the May issue of Harper's magazine.

If the popular interest abroad in Texas used to be on cowboys and sixshooters, it is now on oil millionaires and politics.

Yellow Springs, O., is a village significant for Antioch college and John Bryan. The Antioch students have to work outside of college, not merely to make expenses but to add to college studies. Their college paper is civilized and uncensored. The air of freedom and enlightenment about the campus is tonic.

John Bryan

The town is named for springs that flow over oxidized rocks and make the Little Miami river. Antioch college and the village of Yellow Springs look out on a thousand acres of woodland, springs, glen, river and farm land called the John Bryan state park. John Bryan has been dead a third of a century or so, but he still lives in Yellow Springs, in the park, and in the talk of the people of college and village.

He made a fortune out of inventions and the manufacture of soap. He was an atheist, a philosopher and a philanthropist. In 1895 he published a book entitled "Fables and Essays" and "dedicated to liberty and justice." He gave the book away.

He found a deposit of lime on his land, spread it over clay soil, and raised alfalfa where none had grown. He built the biggest barn in Ohio to hold it. He built cabins out from his country home for the benefit of artists and writers; they could eat at his house. He had $50,000 worth of timber on 500 acres of land but would not allow a single tree to be cut down. He drove spikes into trees and advertised the fact in order to frighten away men with saws who might come later. He would allow nothing alive on his land to be shot.

Proviso

When he died he left a will giving his land to the state as a park with the proviso that it should never be used for "any religious public worship." He had given the land for a public school in Yellow Springs with the proviso that children of any color or nationality could attend it and no religion be taught in it.

A governor of Ohio vetoed a legislative bill accepting the Bryan land for a state park. The legislature overrode the veto, for they were afraid that if the land were not accepted it would be sold and the proceeds be used to spread John Bryan's heretical philosophy.

The John Bryan state park became the first of Ohio's state parks. I found the wild violets, Dutchman's breeches, and other early flowers of spring blooming in it and heard the cries of flickers, robins and crows enlivening the woods and giving people a glad feeling.

The birds seemed to me to be taking life in a more equable way than a certain man from an Ohio state fish hatchery once took it. He came with a load of fish to release in the little Miami river, but some zealot on the road filled him with horror against John Bryan's form of individualism. He refused to turn the innocent fish loose in "atheistic territory."

Bigfoot

Bigfoot Wallace used to say that if he knew where all the people spreading over Texas land were coming from he'd go there. He didn't like being crowded. Who does?

Industries and houses for industrial workers are taking over vast areas of Ohio land, but substantial farm houses, big barns, neat fences and thrifty-looking cattle, sheep and hogs will continue to harmonize with lots of landscape in this country. That harmonization is the difference between farming on good land where it rains and trying to farm on any kind of land without water.

None Were Poisonous

OCT 23 1960
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Cat Furnished Snakes As Dinner for Kittens

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

In 1946 I published an account of a cat that specialized in killing rattlesnakes. All these years I have kept a letter on the subject written by Mrs. J. R. Thompson of Lancaster. One night in Alabama when she was a little girl, 65 years before she wrote me, the family cat, Katie by name, brought in a live blacksnake for her kittens. The snake was numb but could wriggle. Katie seems to have been a good provider.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"I do not recall," Mrs. Thompson's letter reads, "her ever bringing in a poisonous snake, but mice, scorpions, scaly lizards, sun-runners, more blacksnakes, garter snakes and even butterflies and large grasshoppers she put on her table—a shelf outside our window—for the kittens.

"Katie disappeared for six months or longer once when she was about two years old. We children were desolated, and then one morning Katie was back. Sometime after this she became ill. She had no appetite or she could not swallow. We tried tempting her with everything we could think of. She only grew weaker. Then as a last resort one of us caught a cricket and put it before her. She ate it.

* * *

SAVED BY CRICKET DIET.

"For days afterwards we roamed the grounds around our house hunting crickets. She would follow us and whenever we clapped down a hat or a bonnet over a cricket, she was right there to catch it. She recovered, and we children vowed we'd never again kill a cricket unless it was for Katie. We've kept our vow.

"We had an English coach dog named Kino who seemed to take particular pleasure in killing rattlesnakes. I saw him kill a large one once. He would circle it, making short grabs, and barking furiously. After dodging strike after strike, he finally grabbed the snake by the back of the neck and, biting down hard, shook it to death.

I've never seen a cat or a dog kill any kind of snake, but I've heard other testimony to the effect that the dog catches the snake just back of the head. This is not precisely the technique described by William Hallen Maddox in an interesting book entitled "Historical Carvings in Leather," published by the Naylor Company of San Antonio. According to Maddox, their family dog named Shep would circle around and around the rattlesnake, barking furiously while the snake rattled, getting closer and closer in his circles and inducing the snake to strike at him but always dodging the strike. After the snake had struck as far as he could, Shep would spring forward and "grab him about the middle of the body; then he would shake him for all he was worth. When he laid the snake down, there was usually one piece in his mouth and two other pieces out on the ground in opposite directions."

* * *

EXPERIENCE IS TEACHER.

According to Maddox, a dog usually has to be bitten at least once to become cautious enough to be expert at snake-killing. One young dog he owned had learned to kill snakes with old dogs and had not been bitten until he got his lesson. He would dodge a rattler's strike just as any dog will dodge a blow. "One day while I was taking a drink of water to my father plowing in a field, this dog and I encountered a large rattlesnake. The young dog soon make short work of him. The head came off with three or four inches of snake, and rolled within about six feet of me. The dog seemed to be proud of his achievement and went around smelling of the pieces. I was examining the snake's rattles and never noticed the dog until it was too late. The mouth of the snake was wide open and when this foolish young dog stuck his nose into the jaws, they contracted. He ran backwards pawing at his nose with both forefeet. He finally raked his head free of the fangs. Before we could get to the house it was swollen badly. My mother gave him all the fat meat he could eat. He was sick for several days, his head swelled out of proportion. After he got well, he had it in for all snakes, and never seemed so happy as when killing them. He was not bitten a second time."

In 1938 an old-time cowman named W. H. Hamilton had an autobiography published in "South Dakota Historical Collections." Herein he tells of a greyhound, one of a pack, that seemed unable to learn how to fight rattlesnakes. "The first time he was bitten," recorded Hamilton, "I was sure he would die. His head swelled so badly he could not chew or swallow for several days, and he spent all this time lying in the mud down at the creek. He was the only dog we had which would grab a snake while it was coiled. We had others that would kill snakes, but they would always wait until the snake started to crawl, and then grab it and shake it to pieces. I think this dog got immune to snake venom, for he got so it affected him very little when bitten."

* * *

CAT'S TECHNIQUE.

Not long ago my friend Arthur Woodward of California, while on a visit to me here in Austin, dictated the following account of a cat's technique in fighting rattlesnakes.

"In the summer of 1908 when I was about 10 years old, my family moved from Iowa to California and were living in the little town of Ramona, about 38 miles northeast of San Diego. Our house was frame, painted green, up on a rock foundation high enough for one to crawl under it. I had never seen a rattlesnake—never heard one. Sitting by the window one day, roses outside and bees in the roses, I kept hearing an insistent buzz above the bee-loudness. I'd hear a cat's meow and then a buzz. I told my dad, 'I think a rattlesnake's out there.'

"No, that's bees — no rattlesnake," he said.

"I said, 'I hear something that's not bees.' I went out and looked under the house. Our old cat had her three kittens lined up in a row, though they were lying down, while she fought a little rattler about a foot long. It was rattling, and the kittens were fidgety. Every time one of them made a move forward, the old cat would reach back and knock it galley-west, clear away from that snake. She would wait until the snake struck, and then she would hit right behind the head and knock it. She kept knocking it out farther in the open and finally knocked it clear out from under the house. We killed it, but she could have killed it by herself, no doubt. Every time it struck at her, she would hit it just behind the head."

Patience Is Proverbial

S-T 2/26/50

Stealth, Power of Panther Attested By Texas, Rocky Mountain Accounts

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Hunters pretty well agree that the panther springs with his head pointing in the direction of his victim's head, the natural victim being another quadruped — an animal with an elongated, horizontal frame. While digging into the victim's back with his hind claws, the panther fastens foreclaws into its neck, sometimes breaking it, ripping the jugular vein with its teeth. Often the panther seems to get a throat hold from the ground, without clawing into the prey.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Joe Evans of El Paso, whose experiences go back a long way over wide ranges, saw by means of plain tracks and carcass this encounter between a panther and a burro in Madera Canyon of the Davis Mountains. The panther was on a bench overlooking a trail. The burro came down the trail on the way to water. The panther leaped upon him, clawed and fanged into his neck, cut his throat and then either got off voluntarily or was thrown off. The burro went on down the trail, the panther paralleling him 12 or 15 feet to one side. Near the water the burro staggered over and died; the panther gutted him and covered him with grass, weeds, sticks.

Sometimes the panther aims incorrectly or misses his aim. An old story I have heard again and again tells of a panther that took his place on a heavy crossbeam over a gate to a pen in which range horses entered to water. Some observer saw him up there, saw a horse come beneath, saw the panther leap and miss, whereupon the horse wheeled and ran away. Then the panther, in a very bad humor with himself, crawled up on the crossbeam again and practiced leaping. He seemed to be trying to perfect his technique.

MULE LEARNED LESSON.

Long years ago a ranchman named Pat Burke of San Patricio County owned a sorrel mule that had the habit of standing under a certain tree after he had drunk from a lake on the margin of which the tree grew. One day while he was standing under the tree, a panther leaped upon him facing backwards. A passing rider saw the mule pitch the panther off from this position. The mule was lacerated from one end to the other. After this experience, he would never stand in the shade of a tree, not even on the hottest August day, and nobody could lead him under a tree to tie him. The scars of the long claw marks on his body were outlined by gray hairs.

The panther's patience in waiting is proverbial, but he stalks also, and leaps from the ground probably oftener than from an elevated position. Dub Evans of New Mexico saw by tracks in snow where a lion had followed a bunch of deer for miles, had finally sprung at one of them from tall grass not entirely covered by snow, missed, and then made several other leaps before the deer left him behind. The panther can jump about 20 feet, and for 100 yards or so can run very fast, but his running power, like an old woman's dance, soon plays out.

For many years, as he tells in "My Life as an Indian" and elsewhere, James Willard Schultz lived with the Indians of the Northwest. He married one. A remarkable account of a panther's approach to a bighorn sheep that Schultz incorporates into one of his fictional chronicles was almost certainly taken from some Crow Indian who saw the action described.

BIGHORN IS VICTIM.

"A wide-backed bighorn stood on a shelf of the cliff below us. My father was slowly pushing his gun out when I saw something move on a narrow ledge between us and the bighorn. I touched his arm and pointed. At that he drew back the gun and looked. We watched a very big mountain lion crawling toward a point right over the bighorn. Watching, we became so interested in the other meet-hunter that we had no thought of our guns.

"It kept its belly right down against the rock, its ears set forward, its long tail straight out, the tip constantly trembling. Almost it had the snake power to move without legs. It crawled slowly, its eyes unceasingly upon the bighorn. And the bighorn, he chewed and chewed his grasses and kept raising his head, looking in all directions for signs of danger, but he could not see the crawling enemy above him. Every little while the lion would stop crawling and move its head out, little by little, so very slowly, that we could barely see it move. In the same way it would draw back its head and then crawl on.

"Once, as it was looking down, a piece of loosened rock fell from the cliff and struck the ledge near the bighorn. He turned his head and looked up so quickly that the lion had not time to draw its head back out of sight. The head remained as motionless as the cliff itself. The bighorn gazed a long time, but he was looking for something that moved. At last the lion was over the bighorn, in position from which to spring. It sprang with the swiftness of an arrow, sank its claws into flesh of the bighorn, closed its jaws on the neck and cracked it. The final act took no more time than it takes me to snap my fingers."

J. Frank Dobie

All About Jelly — Mayhaw and Agrito

JUN 1 1958

By J. FRANK DOBIE

In the first place, I'll have to say that I've never seen a mayhaw that I know of. All I know about mayhaws is through Archer Fullingim, of the "Kountze News," at Kountze, Texas, which is in the Big Thicket country. Not long ago Mr. Fullingim sent me three glasses of mayhaw jelly as beautiful to look at as any wine in the world and as savory as any homemade jelly from wild fruit can be. The best jelly in the world, of course, is homemade and the best of the best is from wild fruit.

DOBIE

I have never met the editor of the "Kountze News," but I guess what he looks like from a cartoon heading his weekly editorial output, which is entitled "The Printer Fires Both Barrels." The editor and publisher of this newspaper always refers to himself as "the printer." At the top of the first page of the newspaper is a drawing of an armadillo on one side and of a catfish on the other side. I can't claim to be a reader of newspaper editorials. I very seldom read the editorials in the New York "Times," which comes to our house every day, but I read the editorials of the Kountze "News" every week, and I doubt if there's another editorial writer in Texas who puts as much juice and vinegar, common sense, fire and laughter into his editorials as Archer Fullingim. Here's a sample:

"We have received a mimeographed statement entitled 'From the Desk of Gov. Price Daniel.' If you have never received one, I assure you that it gives you a funny feeling to get a letter from a mere desk. How in the heck does he make that desk turn out letters? I would like to go down some time and see how he does it. But what would be more interesting would be to hear the governor justify the use of such English. Next thing you know, he will be taking up Ike's new pet word, 'finalize.'"

Mayhaw Jelly

But back to mayhaws. According to an article that "the Printer" wrote for the Kountze "News" on May 8, 1958, he puts up about 150 pints of mayhaw jelly a year, most of it to give away. In past years mayhaws have sold

San Antonio Light

around $1 a gallon, but this year on account of the enormous crop and on account of many people's being out of jobs, the gathering has been so big that the price went down to 35 cents a gallon. It doesn't make any difference who owns land growing mayhaws in east Texas, the crop belongs to anybody who gets in and gathers.

When I was a boy on our ranch in Live Oak county, we had almost no store-bought fruit—only oranges and apples at Christmas. We had two or three pomegranate bushes, and when the fruit was ripe ate it and made pomegranateade. We thought the berries off mulberry trees a great treat. The chief native fruits were, and still are, mustang grapes and agrito berries. (Some people persist in calling agrito "agarita.") There were a few sandhill plums also, but I think the drouth killed them all out. The mustang grapes covered trees and bushes in different places along Ramirenia creek, and as soon as the grapes were a little bigger than buckshot, we boys would start gathering them for mama to make pies and cobblers. While they were still green, she made quantities of green grape catsup. Store-bought tomato catsup has always seemed to have a palid, lily-livered taste compared with the pungent mustang grape catsup.

Preserves, Jam

When the grapes got ripe, my mother made gallons of preserves and also jam out of them. I remember one year my brother, Elrich, and I rode horseback to Ramirenia creek to gather ripe mustang grapes. We gathered two or three bushels and tied them to our saddles to ride home. The juice ran out on the way and one of my legs was blistered by that juice. The only way to eat a ripe mustang grape is to peel it into the mouth and not let the juice get on the lips. It's this acid, acrid, sharp juice that distinguishes all products of the mustang grape, no matter how much sugar is put in. I like the juice of the mustang grape better than any domestic grape, and the wine is out of this world. We never made any, but my father's mother always had a jug or two around for medicinal purposes. Fifteen or 20 years ago a student of mine from Blanco county brought me a jug of mustang grape juice, and I've been drinking to her health ever since, though not in mustang grape juice.

No feature of the landscape is more beautiful than the mustang grape vine draped over a tree. Of course, it will kill a tree eventually. It puts up a stronger growth than the possum, or winter, grape growing wild. This possum or winter grape doesn't thrive in the brush country where the mustang grape thrives if it has a little extra dampness.

About the first, if not the very first, blooming shrub in the area where it grows is the agrito, with thorned leaves designed to defend both fruit and bush. I've seen it bloom at Christmas time in south Texas. We called the fruit, which is rich red when ripe, wild currant. I remember while I was at Southwestern university at Georgetown, the agrito was ripening at commencement time, but when I got down home, the fruit was all gone. We children considered a bowl of agrito berries with sugar and cream superior to what some people consider strawberries.

Snakes, Too

It always seemed to me that rattlesnakes liked to be around agrito bushes when the fruit was in season. Weevils and other bugs got into the fruit and caused it to fall. There's always somebody to eat everybody else, and maybe the rattlesnakes come to the agrito bushes to eat the eaters of the insect-infested berries. Picking the berries is a slow, prickly job. The orthodox method is to spread a sheet or some other cover under a bush and to thrash the bush with a stick—a broomstick is good. As part of the thrashing, all of the worm-eaten berries and a great many leaves fall onto the sheet with the good berries. By jiggling the sheet, the leaves will be on top and can be lifted off—preferably with gloved hands. It takes wind to make winnowing effective, but the best way to get rid of the light worm-and-weevil-eaten berries is to pour the whole gathering into a bucket and then to let the fruit pour out into another bucket or maybe a tub, the wind blowing the light stuff away, the good fruit falling. A great deal of hand picking will follow this. It's a job to get a gallon of good agrito berries.

I wouldn't undertake to say what is the best jelly in the world any more than I would undertake to say what's the best poem in the world. I know what's the best jelly for me, and that's agrito jelly. For several years there hasn't been much of a crop, but there's a fine crop this year, and I expect to be eating agrito jelly on hot biscuits within a week.

'Does This Make Us Even?' S-T. 9-29-49

The 'Jedge' Bought Six Chickens and Then Fined Farmer $1 for Contempt

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

One morning during the days of the Texas Republic, Jonas Phelps, justice of the peace, sat smoking his pipe in front of the hotel in Shelbyville. Presently a farmer set down a basket in front of him.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"Want to buy some chickens, jedge?" he asked, sitting down in a vacant chair and lighting his own corncob. "How much?" the "jedge" breathed.

"Two bits apiece, but you kin have all six for a dollar," the farmer said in a relaxed tone.

"Well, take 'em up to my house," Jonas Phelps said, "and I'll pay you when you get back," He made a gesture toward a dilapidated log cabin up the road.

The farmer finished smoking his pipe, picked up the basket and moved up the road. After some meditation, the justice of peace moved down the road a few rods toward what he called his office—an unpainted frame room, 10 feet by 12 in size, furnished with a single chair behind a shackly pine table. A plank resting on chunks of wood afforded a sitting place for the gentlemen of the jury—though Jonas Phelps did not often try his cases before a jury.

The case this morning was between a man demanding damages for corn eaten out of his field by a mule that had broken into it the night before. The owner of the mule was explaining that the rails of the fence were both rotten and fallen down.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.

During the deliberations of the court, the farmer who had sold the deliberator the chickens came in, waited a while, with growing impatience, then blurted out, "Jedge, them chickens" . . .

But he got no further. With a look of severe dignity, the justice of peace announced, "I fine you one dollar for contempt of court."

"Me! Fine me?" the farmer exclaimed.

"Yes, fine you," the justice of peace repeated. "The peace and dignity of this court must remain inviolate."

The farmer moved toward the door, then paused and asked, "Does this make us even, jedge?"

"Yes, we are even now."

"Well, all I'll say is this," the farmer added. "Them's the last chickens you'll get from me."

This anecdote is one of many that add savor to Wayne Gard's "Frontier Justice," just published. It is about feuds, bandits, rangers, grass and fence wars, Western vigilantes and white scalpers as well as about a variety of the Roy Bean kind of justices of the peace.

HYMNS TO QUIET CATTLE.

I used to tell John A Lomax, collector of cowboy songs, that the old-time camp meeting hymns, with their slow and mournful tunes, were better quieters to cattle than any other music almost. I have just been reading in a brief biography of a frontier preacher and Indian missionary named Butterfield, published by Ben Moore at O'Donnell. It supplies a good instance of a cow song's serving as hymn to call mourners to the bench.

In 1889 Butterfield was holding services out in the backwoods of Fannin County. There were no song books, and Butterfield had exhausted himself on "Amazing Grace." Sinners were ready to come forward and confess their sins, but, as everybody knows, it takes singing to bring them forward. Suddenly the interruption of silence was ended by a son of the open range. "Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie," he began in a strong and mournful voice. After several sinners had come to the mourners' bench and confessed their sins and the meeting was over, the singer said, "It's the spirit of the song that counts, not the words." The spirit is what any listener to a song gets, and it's what the night-herded longhorn steers used to get.

RELIGION IN COW COUNTRY.

The subject of religion in the cow country makes me think of two stories the Scott (W. S.) Broomes of Denver like to tell. One time two cowboys rode up about dark to a strange ranch. At the supper table the head of the house—maybe it was the hostess—explained to them instead of one person's asking the blessing, everybody at the table was supposed to quote a verse out of the Bible. When the turn came to the first of the two cowboys, he promptly and solemnly said, "Jesus wept." The second cowboy came next. Not so promptly, but if possible, more solemnly, he said, "He shore did."

One time in this same part of the range, the people all got together at a school house to pray for rain. During a preliminary discussion over the power of prayer on the weather, one ranchman said, "I don't mind praying, but I can tell you right now it won't do a damn bit of good so long as this wind stays in the west."

There's no form of literature I really enjoy more than the catalog sent out by dealers of second-hand books. A catalog received from Boston advertises a two-page letter from John Greenleaf Whittier to the governor of Massachusetts, 1867, declining an appointment to the State Board of Education. I hope to live long enough to read that a governor of Texas has appointed a poet or a scholar to one of the various state boards in charge of our system of education.

J. Frank Dobie *San Antonio Light*

Thomas Bewick – Wildlife Artist

April 24, 1960

Looking through a slight collection of wood engravings by Thomas Bewick I find written on the flyleaf in my hand these words: "What charm Bewick has! He makes me happy." Some high art brings pain to the beholder, but any true art that makes anybody happy is good. Bewick illustrated "Aesop's Fables" and wrote his memoirs, which he did not illustrate, but he's never been well known among the non-book-reading public. I'm inclined to dwell upon him.

DOBIE

The son of a Northumberland farmer, he was born in 1753 not far from the Scottish border. He liked the Scotch and disliked cities in general, though he was fond of Edinburgh; he remained country-minded all his life, which ended in 1828. His working home was in Newcastle, where he achieved eminence as an artist in woodcuts. His fame rests considerably on two natural history works: "A General History of Quadrupeds" (1790) and "History of British Birds" (1797-1804). Yet Bewick was not a distinguished naturalist. An associate named Beilby wrote sketches for most of the quadrupeds and for many birds of the first volume of that work; Bewick made all the illustrations and authored the descriptions for the second volume of birds.

It is not his drawings of birds and quadrupeds, however, that make me happy, and "piping songs of pleasant glee," come as fresh as a rain-cooled breeze out of a summer cloud: it is his tailpieces or vignettes—little drawings of earthy creatures, rocks, brooks, trees, episodes, scenes remembered out of experience—mostly in the country. Words can hardly even suggest them: A bumblebee, Emerson's "yellow-breeched philosopher"; four boys playing cavalryman as they ride the tumbling-down gravestones of a country churchyard; a fierce bull meeting a humble woman at a fence stile; a man drinking water out of his hat; a child pulling at the tail of a horse who with ears laid back is looking around; a dog retreating from a duck protecting her ducklings; a roadmender (not a bulldozing machine.) Many times I have reflected with pleasure that one of the most delightful forms of animation in the whole world is named Thomas Bewick—Bewick's Wren, common over a large part of the U. S., the Texas variety being provincially called Texas Wren. It was Audubon who gave the great artist's name to the lively wren.

Good Observer

It has been said that Bewick could "draw a pig, but not a Venus." His schooling in art was limited but he was a close observer and he disciplined his own mind and craftsmanship. "The sole stimulant with me," he wrote, "was the pleasure I derived from imitating natural objects." As a small boy he killed a bullfinch with a stone but picked it up before it died and saw the "piteous" look it gave him. That was the last bird he killed. It has to be added that he did not balk at specimens killed for him by others so that he could draw them accurately. He was so healthy and natural that some of his drawings were emasculated by the Victorians under the name of purity. He grew roses in his garden, liked good beer, was greedy for eels. When he began writing his memoirs at the age of 70 his hair was still thick and black. He enjoyed chewing tobacco, singing Scotch songs, and exchanging anecdotes with cronies in the pub.

He took a pride in his hardihood, which lasted until late in life. Take this account of walking; "On setting out upon my weekly pedestrian 'flights' up the Tyne, I never looked out to see whether it was a good day or a bad one; the worst that ever fell from the skies never deterred me from undertaking my journey. On setting out, I always waded through the first pool I met with, and had sometimes the river to wade at the far end. I never changed my clothes, however they might be soaked with wet, or stiffened by the frost, on my returning home at night, till I went to bed. I had inured myself to this hardship, by always sleeping with my windows open, by which a thorough air, as well as the snow, blew through my room. In this way, I lay down, rolled in a blanket, upon a mattress as hard as I could make it. Notwithstanding this mode of treating myself, I never had any ailment, even in the shape of a cold, while I continued to live in this way; nor did I experience any difference until, when I married, I was obliged to alter my plans, and to live and behave like other folks."

Against War

He was for the American Revolution and considered that a great majority of the people in Britain sided with him against the war. His common sense shows in this remark—ironic in our age of loyalty oaths: "An honest man's word is as good as his oath—and so is a rogue's, too." Another proverb of his is: "If there be a plurality of devils, ignorance must be their king." Living long before the age of objective or nonobjective art—whichever it is—he advised artists each to keep a garden for exercise and amusement and to visit the city or smoky town only occasionally (for the purpose of meeting with brother artists). "Had I been a painter," he wrote, "I never would have copied the works of old masters. I would have gone to nature for all my patterns; for she exhibits an endless variety not possible to be surpassed and scarcely ever to be truly imitated." As might be expected of a man of such good sense, he adds that he would have studied the techniques of the great artists.

Bewick's memoirs are concerned more with opinions than with anecdotes, but I imagine that the following was characteristic of his talk: "The character for sagacity of the Shepherd's dog was well known to me, but this instance of it was exemplified before my own eyes. Mr. Smith, a breeder of Cheviot sheep, wished to have a particular ram brought out from amongst the flock, for the purpose of my seeing it. Before we set out, he observed to the shepherd that he thought the old dog (he was gray-headed and almost blind) would do well enough for what he wanted with him. Before we reached the down, where the flock was feeding, I observed that Mr. Smith was talking to the dog before he ordered him off on his errand. While we were conversing on some indifferent subject, the dog brought a ram before us. Mr. Smith found a deal of fault with the dog, saying, 'Did I not order you so and so?' and scolded him for bringing a wrong sheep. Then, after fresh directions, he set him off again to bring the one he wished me to see. We then returned home, and shortly after our arrival there, the bog brought the very ram wanted, along with a few other sheep, into the fold, where I took a drawing of him."

APR 18 1957 FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

J. FRANK DOBIE.

J. Frank Dobie to Speak At Bluebonnet Luncheon

J. Frank Dobie, Southwestern folklorist and historian, will speak on "The Flavor of Texas" at the 32nd annual Bluebonnet luncheon of the Business and Professional Women's Club of Fort Worth.

The luncheon will be at noon Monday in the Crystal Ballroom of Hotel Texas. More than 400 members and guests are expected to attend.

Mrs. Gaither Miller will preside and will present Mrs. Lester Benge, chairman of the day. Miss Linnie Blewitt will play the organ and will accompany Miss Avis Gunter, soprano, who will sing a group of Southwest folk songs.

The invocation will be given by Miss Elizabeth Tandy, secretary for the Texas Federation of B&PW. Dr. Minnie L. Maffett of Dallas, past president of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs and honorary president of the Texas federation, will be an honor guest.

John Ellis, editor of the Star-Telegram, will introduce Professor Dobie.

The program will be closed by the group's singing "Texas Our Texas," the official state song, with the composer, William J. Marsh, at the piano and Miss Mary Jane Higgins leading the singing.

Tickets for the luncheon may be obtained from either Mrs. R. C. Blackburn or Mrs. Lester Benge.

DOBIE DENIES CONNECTION WITH COMMUNIST GROUP

4/6/57

TUCSON, April 5 (AP). — J. Frank Dobie, noted storyteller and Texas historian, Wednesday night denied he had ever been connected with an organization branded Communist.

The House un-American activities committee in Washington Wednesday had listed Dobie as one of the sponsors of the Mid-Century Conference for Peace, held in Chicago last May.

The committee named the conferences as an organization participating in a Communist "peace offensive" in the United States.

Dobie said:

"I have never been a member of the organization or affiliated with it in any manner. I signed some appeal for peace because I thought it was a good idea. I didn't know exactly what it was but I knew it was some sort of appeal for peace.

"I don't know anything about it as a Communist organization and never belonged to it."

Dobie, here to participate in a festival of arts celebration, expressed irritation over the situation.

"I don't like the idea of living in a place where a man can't believe in an ideal merely because some Communist happens to believe the same thing. It is not American and does not allow freedom of thought."

Most of the 400-plus sponsors of the Mid-Century Conference were pastors, church people or teachers.

STAR-TELEGRAM 1955

At Dinner in Austin

Texas Folklore Society Salutes J. Frank Dobie

AUSTIN, April 23 (AP).—J. Frank Dobie, author, scholar and outspoken ambassador for Texas and the Southwest, received the praise Saturday night of the Texas Folklore Society.

A dinner honoring Dobie highlighted the closing session of the society's annual convention here.

Dobie was editor of the society's publication for 20 years after helping reorganize the group in 1922. The 25th volume of the society, "Texas Folk and Folklore," is dedicated to him.

Dr. Mody C. Boatwright, University of Texas English professor who replaced Dobie as editor of the society's publications, served as toastmaster at the dinner.

John Q. Anderson of Texas A&M was elected president of the society in an afternoon session Saturday.

Other officers include: Vice president, Hermes Nye of Dallas; councilors, Elton Miles of Sul Ross State Teachers College, George D. Hendricks of North Texas State College and Americo Paredes of the University of Texas; treasurer, Allen Maxwell of Southern Methodist University; secretary, Boatright, and editors, Boatright, Maxwell and Wilson Hudson of the University of Texas.

J. Frank Dobie

San Antonio Lig[ht] May 29, 1960

In the Shadow of James Bowie

By J. FRANK DOBIE

DOBIE

When a person is writing a story he leaves out what does not contribute to it. Thirty years ago this year I turned over to a publisher the manuscript for a book entitled "Coronado's Children" — tales of lost mines and buried treasures of the southwest. It is still in print and every year I receive letters from the hunters of lost mines and treasures asking for "a little more information" on this and that fortune. I'm not like Augustus Baldwin Longstreet (1790-1870), who after he became politician, preacher, and professional college president, regretted that he had written what is now his only passport to being remembered. That is the rollicky book, "Georgia Scenes."

I'm glad I wrote "Coronado's Children," but here is an irony; whereas its stories are stories of illusion, I have come to be strong on disillusion. I doubt if I ever did believe in ghosts, but I believe in ghost stories. I never would have bet a dollar on the legendary silver bars or the legendary silver mine on the San Saba river, but I wrote the best story I could of the Lost San Saba mine. Jim Bowie believed in it, hunted for it, and found an Indian fight. After he died in the Alamo a lot of men came to believe he had found silver and to this day the illusion is called the Lost Bowie mine.

Is there anything to the tale?

Oh. yes, there's lots to it, all based on human imagination and human hope. Robert Louis Stevenson said it is better to travel hopeful than to arrive. Humanity has to have hope whether justified by reality or not. The majority of hope hunters will accept any kind of evidence on anything from a buried pot to the immortality of the soul. Where there's much smoke, there must be some fire, they claim. By this logic, the assertion by millions of orthodox Christians over hundreds of years that the earth is flat would have made it flat.

Known Facts

The following facts are well known to history. In 1757 the Spaniards established a mission on the San Saba river near the present town of Menard and at the same time, as usual on the frontier, a fort (or presidio). The fort and the mission were three miles apart, for the missionaries did not approve of the morals of the soldiers. The purpose of the mission was to "reduce" (convert) Apaches. The Apaches had no ambition to be reduced (converted). Comanches didn't like either Spaniards or Apaches. In March of 1758 they utterly destroyed the mission, and it was never rebuilt. The fort held on uselessly and wastefully until 1769 and then it was abandoned forever.

What about the minerals, the mines, the legendary workings on the San Saba and on the Llano by the Spaniards? If you can't prove that a good man is a Communist, then start rumors that he is. Hitler's philosophy was that if the big lie is repeated often enough it will succeed. A remarkable book, beautifully printed, entitled "The San Saba Papers," has been published by the noted bookseller John Howell, 434 Post st., San Francisco., Calif. "The San Saba Papers" is composed of official statements made by soldiers and others shortly after destruction of the San Saba Mission.

One of the deponents was a shepherd, presumably a goatherder. A lieutenant testified that after the massacre several plow oxen were found slain and a few escaped rams and ewes were brought back to the presidio alive. There was, as testimony brings out, a livestock ranch 5 leagues (12 to 15 miles) west of the presidio. People lived at this ranch and it had a substantial horse corral. Col. Parrilla spoke of horses as being "the first requirement for the proper conduct of every presidio." Seven hundred and fifty horses had been stolen when the mission was destroyed. The ranch was probably more of a horse ranch than a cattle ranch. In all this testimony not a word is spoken of miners or of mining activities.

Recent Book

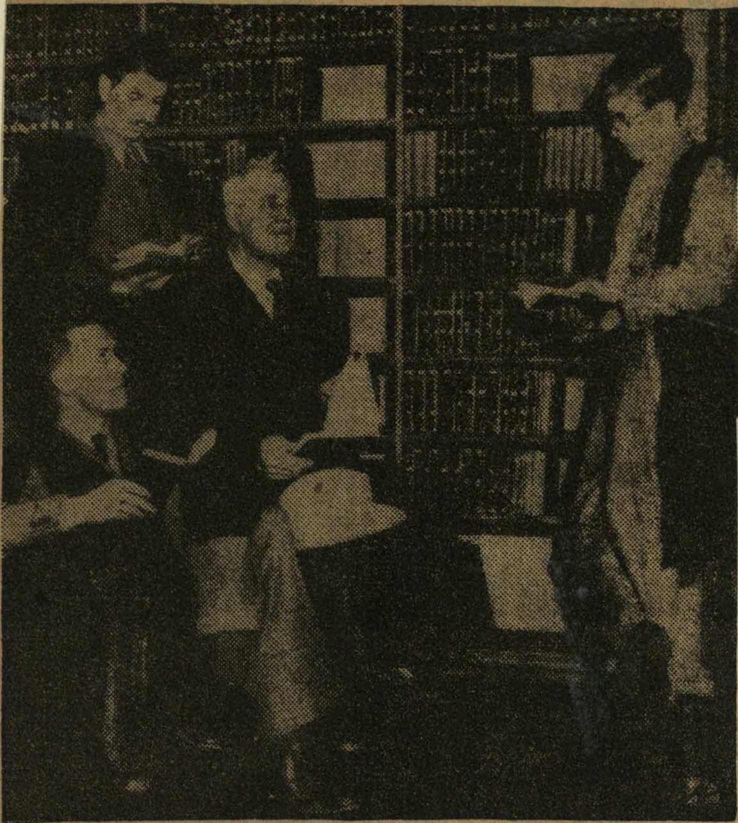
Another recent book published by the Quivara society, Berkeley, Calif., is entitled "The Frontiers of New Spain." It is made up of a report of what Nicolas de LaFora saw on an inspection trip with the Marquez de Rubi in 1766-1768. They got to Texas in 1767, nine years after the San Saba mission had been destroyed and two years before the San Saba presidio was abandoned.

The report comments on the industries, stock raising, featherbedding and other occupations of the Spanish outposts. Without one word concerning silver, or mining, or miners, Nicolas de LaFora said of the presidio of San Saba, where he found the occupants living in constant fear of the Comanches:

"The garrison consists of a cavalry company of 100 men, including 5 officers and a chaplain. It is an annual expense of 40,360 pesos to his majesty and is of no advantage whatsoever." Indeed, the report goes on, this presidio was as useless as some of the missions being maintained at great expense.

If evidence of fabulous stores of silver taken from the San Saba and Llano mines turns up, I'll revert to this subject again.

THE HOUSTON POST: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1943



J. FRANK DOBIE (center, sitting on arm of chair), professor of English at the University of Texas who will occupy the chair of American history this term at Emanuel college, Cambridge, England, meets students in the library of the college and peruses one of the volumes. —A. P. Photo.

No Shooting Out West--to Speak Of, Frank Dobie Tells English

CAMBRIDGE, England, Nov. 2.—(AP)—J. Frank Dobie has assured students at sedate Cambridge university that "there's been no shooting out West for 50 years — to speak of."

The University of Texas professor, who has no qualms about ending a sentence with a preposition, has opened his lecture assignment here with some debunking.

"We are deeply religious people," he told his students. "Not the roughnecks some folk over here might think from the films."

Dobie explained that few Texans still wear six-shooters.

Nor do they go in for academic or formal attire, he added.

"They told me I wouldn't have to wear one of those black gowns or a dress suit for dinner, which was something I was worrying about."

The 55-year-old former ranchman, sometimes called the cowboy professor in Texas, said he liked England "but naturally I miss the sunshine and open spaces of Texas."

Dobie, here to help promote understanding between the United States and Britain, has become a familiar figure on the campus with his cattleman's hat and his curved-stem pipe.

Romantic Is a Way SEP 17 1956

Rhodes' Life Thrilling As Fiction Characters

STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Some people will remember having read stories by Eugene Manlove Rhodes in the Saturday Evening Post and elsewhere. His novels and novelettes have had a rather limited circulation in book form. Now, under title of "A Bar Cross Man," the University of Oklahoma Press has brought out a biography of him by W. H. Hutchinson. In it he lives as a more interesting and complex character than any cowboy character of his fiction.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

In a way he was romantic, in another way realistic. Perhaps no writing man can be called romantic. He has to settle down to hard work, if he writes well. It takes unsettledness to be romantic. As boy and youth, Rhodes worked for big cow outfits in New Mexico and unsuccessfully ranched for himself. He knew Pat Garrett and, while not always on the sheriff's side, he characterized Garrett as "one of Plutarch's men." Nearly all of his fiction is about the men he ranged with and the open range he rode over. He would have put Billy the Kid down among the "Minus People"; he liked "Plus People." "I took real men for my models," he said. "I like a good horse better than a balky horse or a runaway horse or a man-killing horse—or a horse with the botts or blind staggers. And I like a man who works and jokes and lends better than I do one who cheats at cards. The best men I know are the most interesting to me—the men who pay their debts—and they are the ones I write about." Yet he found that whereas his stories were considered "uncompromisingly realistic" in New Mexico, elsewhere they were taken as "wildly romantic."

He specified that his publisher should not advertise his books as "Westerns" for "'Western' has come to mean worthless, trashy, blood-and-thunder stuff." He called upon this publisher to note that in "The Trusty Knaves" (a novel about to be published) "no man is killed. I lived like that for 25 years—among folks who would shoot if forced to, but who would rather laugh."

'EACH MAN COUNTED.'

His respect for common people—ranch people, farm people, factory people, all sorts of people—was enormous and abiding. He put them into his stories and took pride in the "no star" system on the range, where "each man counted." He could not write of "one demi-god functioning amid a crowd of ciphers." He lambasted right and left at fictional betrayal in writing not only of range men but of ordinary American people with ordinary virtues all over the land. He held that frontiers have been conquered by individuals who conquered themselves and that "while other animals follow their instincts without question, it is the mark of a man that he may master his."

Yet Rhodes was fiercely individualistic. "I pay for what I break," was his motto. "I am of no religion," he asserted—"never believed one word of it, and deplore bigotry. I think pleasure desirable and needful, hate prudery." Some of his ideas after the end of World War I sound as if they had come after the end of World War II. For example, in 1921, Rhodes cried out that he was not going to be taken in by "a systematic glorification of Big Business" and judge the world according to "the bidding of Property."

His riches consisted of the potentialities he was born with and their development. The main development came, perhaps, through reading. Books were scarce, but anybody anywhere who really hungers for good reading finds it. Rhodes and other New Mexico cowboys used to send off coupons found in sacks of Bull Durham tobacco for the classics. I never heard of Texas cowboys sending for a book of any kind. A favorite posture for reading was in the saddle. Sometimes after his horse came to a stop at a house, a watering, a gap, any stopping place, he had to wait a long while for his rider to quit that other world in the pages of the book he had been reading and get down. Gene Rhodes would ride any horse the boss gave him and say nothing, but he read and pondered and dreamed and, so, was an indifferent cowboy.

CATTLE TRAIN TO ROMANCE.

When he was 30 years old, the year being 1899, he left his homestead in the San Andres Mountains, rode a cattle train to Kansas City and then another that would transfer its freight to a ship in New York harbor, and thus got within reach of a village and farm community named Apalachin on up state. He and a comely, intelligent young widow named May Davison Purple, with two sons, had been writing each other. Gene's present to her was an ivory-handled sixshooter and a volume of Rudyard Kipling's poetry. They were married within three weeks—and stayed married until he died in 1934.

They tried ranching in New Mexico, but it was no go. Writing interfered with riding and riding interfered with writing. They went back to the farm in upper New York and there for 20 years Eugene Manlove Rhodes wrote and did other things. "If I wasn't out of money, would I be writing a story?" he advised an editor. Sometimes he seemed to live on advances from publishers and loans from friends, but he always furnished the copy he had promised and returned the money, with interest, he had borrowed. "I pay for what I break."

He was never engrossed by his own lack of health or funds. The two things he seemed to want most of all were justice to society and mastery of the art of writing. "When our hearts were young and gay" just about covered his lifetime.

Tuesday Morning, April 23, 1957 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Cowboys Weren't Much for Action

Texas' Folk Tale Teller Recalls Republic's Younger, Slower Days

J. Frank Dobie, the state's most famous teller of folk tales, recalled Monday the days when the Republic of Texas was young and not "in such a hurry."

With his familiar stories of both man and animal, Dobie brought back the flavor of those early times during the 32nd annual Bluebonnet Luncheon of the Business and Professional Women's Club at Hotel Texas.

The men of "old time Texas believed that there was ample time," Dobie said, "so they were never in a hurry. The men of the range and field in those days weren't much for action, either, in spite of how they are pictured in Zane Grey books.

"They would rather sit around the fire until they had to act. But, when the time came for action, they could handle the situation," the white - haired Dobie said.

"One has to run nowadays," he added, "to keep those behind from running over you. There was no danger of that long ago because nobody was running."

Dobie compared the slow tempo of olden Texas with that of Mexico. He illustrated each of his points with a humorous story that only the witty Dobie can tell.

The author also commented on how he happened to start writing newspaper articles. His column now is carried each Sunday in the Star-Telegram.

In 1936, a Fort Worth editor, ("not from the Star-Telegram") called and asked that he do a series of articles for a column called "Flavor of Texas," the speaker said.

Those columns later were compiled in a book which "nobody bought," Dobie smiled.

Today, pointed out John Ellis, Star-Telegram editor, who introduced Dobie, the humorist has become the author of 20 books, holds three university degrees including one from Cambridge in England, and is the state's most distinguished writer and one of its most outstanding teachers.

Mrs. Gaither Miller, president of the B&PW, presided at the luncheon and introduced guests. Mrs. Lester Benge was chairman of the day.

—Star-Telegram Photo.

J. FRANK DOBIE AND MRS. GAITHER MILLER. . . . heading the luncheon program.

J. FRANK DOBIE

She Recorded Life's Just Values

Austin American AUG 2[illegible] 195[illegible]

I'm not making "A Bride Goes West," by Nannie T. Alderson and Helena Huntington Smith, the subject of my column today in order to promote a new book. This one, published in 1942, has been out of print several years. I've just discovered it and that makes it new to me, as I discovered Herodotus only a few years ago and found him one of the newest writers in the world although he wrote thousands of years ago.

"A Bride Goes West" is new and fresh because it is impregnated with a just sense of values about life. When Nannie Tiffany of West Virginia married Walt Alderson, who'd already been on the cattle trail for years, in 1882, they went to Montana to start a little ranch. There's plenty about ranching in this book, but what is most valuable is about life, about people in this ranch country.

While Nannie Alderson, as she tells, was in Miles City with her first baby, "One morning the chambermaid told me that a cowboy was dying in a room downstairs. He had come up the trail from Texas, and had been shot, in a barroom quarrel, by the colored cook of an outfit both worked for. Knowing how scarce women were in Miles City, and thinking that the presence of one might be some comfort to the dying boy, I asked the maid to stay with the baby, and went down to him. The room was full of men standing around his bed. I took his hand and said: 'I'm so sorry'—which was all I could say. He had a striking face, with dark blue eyes which never left mine until the doctor closed them. He did not seem to be in great pain. They said he had been shot in the stomach, and his breath just kept coming a little shorter and quicker until he died. It was hard to free my hand from his, which had closed over mine so tightly that the wedding ring cut in.

"I never heard much more about this tragic affair, but I do not believe the cowboy was blameless. They said he had been harsh in his treatment of the Negro. I know that no move was ever made to bring the latter to justice. Those young men who traveled north with the herds were far from home and all gentling influences, and they were prone to commit rash and violent acts. It was a pity, and in the case of a young man like this one a great waste as well. For there was great good in these wild and homeless boys, as no one knew better than I."

Nannie Alderson was a man's woman, above all her own husband's. She understood the code of the West, defining some of it as follows: "The West was very tolerant toward the lesser faults of human conduct. It was even willing to overlook the greater if they were not repeated. A man's past was not questioned, nor a woman's either; the present was what counted. A man could even be known as wanted by the law elsewhere, yet this was not held against him here so long as he showed a willingness to walk the straight path. Half the charm of the country for me was its broadmindedness. I loved it from the first."

An incident that illustrates the democracy inherent in the code and also further illustrates Nannie Alderson's sense of values runs as follows: "Four men rode in one evening across the frozen hills. They were a sheriff of Custer County, his deputy, the biggest stockman in our part of Montana—and a prisoner. I knew the last—a harmless fellow we had always thought him, who lived among the Indians, with no real job. They called him Cheyenne Charlie. He was some kind of a foreigner. I don't know what, but I know he was troubled by his poor English, for he had told me that he had sisters and that he was the only member of his family who 'talked broken.' He had been to our house before, and I had given him an old homemade fur-trimmed cap to keep his ears warm. I think he was accused of butchering the big cattleman's beef.

"Perhaps because of our previous acquaintance, the poor fellow was so embarrassed at the removal of handcuffs while he ate, that I could hardly keep the tears from falling into his coffee while I poured it. One of the men said later that no one could have told from the treatment they received which was the cattle king and which man was under arrest. I thought this one of the nicest complaints I had ever had."

This woman's wisdom about life moves me deeply in some places. Two of her neighbors out in the Cheyenne Indian country were Little Wolf and Mrs. Rowland. Little Wolf and Dull Knife had led the Cheyennes in their memorable march back from the Indian Territory to their old Montana homeland in the winter of 1878. For a time Little Wolf was chief of the Cheyenne Indian Police. Then he killed an Indian he was trying to arrest, and his tribe cut him off. After that he was a deposed king. One of his squaws washed for the Aldersons. His poverty never diminished his dignity or his honesty.

Mrs. Roland's eldest son had married a Cheyenne woman, and he had became an official interpreter. This son had brought his old mother out from the East and located her on his little ranch. She reminded Nannie Alderson of a great tree uprooted after it was old and planted elsewhere. She had to be moved from bed to chair, and the only movement she knew in the chair was when her younger son dragged it from one room to another in their neat shack. She never read; she never complained. Just before Christmas one year the cowboys at the Alderson ranch saw a picture of a wheel chair in a Montgomery Ward catalouge. They chipped in and bought it for Old Lady Roland.

Nannie Alderson was fortunate in finding the right person to take down her words and put them into a book, that person being Helena Huntington Smith, who took down Teddie Blue Abbott's words and put them into that brave book entitled "We Pointed Them North." Toward the end of her glad and tragic life Nannie Alderson dictated these words:

"When I reflect upon all the frontier folk that I have been associated with, I think the ones that made the most lasting impression on me were old Mrs. Roland, mother of the Agency interpreter, and Little Wolf, the war chief of the Cheyennes. They had one impressive trait in common; a quiet resignation to 'the inevitableness of things.' They had other like traits of character, too, despite their widely separated backgrounds — both were kind, both had courage, and both had a childlike interest in simple things—in the sunlight and the beauty out of doors. Each of them appeared happy under conditions that most people would regard as impossible, and it always seemed to me that theirs was the happiness which can only come from integrity and inner peace. Their example more than any other helped me to 'keep my chin up' when things were hard. I don't want to be misunderstood; I wouldn't have exchanged my lot for that of any other woman on earth. But, perhaps just because the rewards were great, the going at times was proportionately rough."

Trans-Pecos Area Excepted

Texan Just 'Foreigner' At S. W. Art Session

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM APR 8 1956

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have just been to what is called a "conference" on literature and art of the Southwest and of Mexico, sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, at Occidental College in Los Angeles. The discussions started out with the old question: What is the Southwest? Naturally, the farther West you go, the farther West Westerners place the eastern edge of the Southwest. One time while I was driving alone in New Mexico, my car got stuck in a sandy creek bed not too far from a ranch house.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

When I went there to get help, a man asked me where I was from. I said from Austin, Texas. "That's back where the frogs holler," he said. Being from where there is enough water for frogs made me, as I understood, a foreigner. The frogs used to holler in Central Texas, but it has been years now since they hollered out loud and clear.

All the participants in the Los Angeles conference but me were from New Mexico and California, and they seemed to incline toward not admitting any part of Texas into the Southwest except the trans-Pecos country. The three qualifications for admittance into the Southwest seem to be Spanish-Mexican influence, Indian influence (especially Pueblo Indian centering in New Mexico), and desert. Drouthy land east of the deserts seems to be on the fringe. Sometimes a fringe can be as wide as the thing it fringes.

LITTLE RAIN.

When it came to consideration of Southwestern literature itself, nearly everybody focused on writings about what Mary Austin called "The Land of Little Rain"—the title of one of her best books. The population of Los Angeles and its satellites (Hollywood, Pasadena, etc.) now exceeds that of maybe eight Western States, but representation of these millions and millions of people in the literature of the Southwest was not on the program. I insisted that John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath," which is about people, is one of the three or four best novels that the Southwest can claim. Franklin Walker of Mills College at Oakland, Cal., who is a wit, suggested that Los Angeles is having more effect on the desert than the desert is having on it. Considering that Los Angeles will soon be piping water from the North Pole down to its valleys, Walker looks to be on the right track.

An idea is dawning in me that I want to develop. No matter how the Southwest be defined, the population of the region has become dominantly urban. Do books—especially popular books—concerning the Southwest treat increasingly of the cities and city-dwellers? They do not. Look at the cities between San Antonio and Los Angeles and look at recent books they can claim. El Paso, Albuquerque, Tucson, Phoenix are thriving cities, increasing in population many times more rapidly than their supplies of water can possibly increase. Tom Lea was born in El Paso and he belongs so essentially that he would not have his view of barren mountains cut off by shade trees. His latest novel is centered in old El Paso, by another name. It has people, one of them named Martin Brady being unforgettable, but they are not of population; they are of desert and semi-desert spaces.

FROM HARVARD.

Northeast of El Paso at population-swelling Clovis lives Ross Calvin. He came to New Mexico from Harvard University. His excellent book "Sky Determines" has nothing to do with population. It is about the adaptation of plant and animal life to desert conditions, man being one of the animals.

Take Albuquerque. Its best known writers are Harvey Ferguson and his sister Erna Ferguson. His "Rio Grande" interprets Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, mountain men, range men. The central idea of the book is summed up in one sentence: "The character of a country determines the destiny of its people." And here the country is desert, with a few irrigated ribbons. Erna Ferguson's "Our Southwest" has chapters on cities, but Fort Worth is "where cattle begin"; San Antonio is "Spain in Texas"; Tucson is "Desert and Dudes"; Phoenix is "Desert Reclaimed."

Go on to Tucson. Its chief literary expositor is Joseph Wood Krutch, a very urbane man who has written books on Dr. Samuel Johnson, Edgar Allen Poe, "Modernism in Modern Drama," and the like. A few years ago he retreated from New York to take up his abode in the desert out from Tucson. Two resulting books, perceptive and readable, "The Desert Year" and "The Voice of the Desert," are as far from population as a writer can get.

SHEER HUMANITY.

If some writer fascinated by sheer humanity in the Dickens tradition should emerge from the Southwest, he might make people in Los Angeles factories, Tucson hotels, and Fort Worth packing plants as fascinating a tonic as mountain air. Meanwhile people of crowded cities both in the Southwest and far away seem to want to read about spaces where human beings are scarce and only silence is dense.

It may be that the deserts and semi-deserts of the Southwest are coming to be to American populations what Wordsworth's Lake Region is to the English. About 15 per cent or less of the English population is urban, but a very high per cent of the city dwellers have country-going minds. They are conscious inheritors of the greatest body of poetry and other literature about nature that the world has produced. Nature there is gracious and lovely. The desert is not gracious, but it is beautiful. It is a retreat from machines and life dominated by things.

Broaden 'Space Between the Ears'

Library Founders and Builders Due Eternal Gratitude of Public

MAR 16 1958 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

In the March issue of The Atlantic Monthly there is an article entitled "My Friends, The Librarians," by Catherine Drinker Bowen, author of those vivid and dramatic biographies of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Adams, and more lately of Sir Edward Coke, who was the lion under the throne of Queen Elizabeth I. All manner of writers and talkers are presently saying something about libraries: this is National Library Week.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Of late, some people seem to consider that the chief reason for advocating libraries and the reading of books is to enable America to catch up with the Russians on Sputniks. I consider such reasoning puny and lopsided. Books, and therefore libraries, contain the inherited wit, wisdom, humor, life, cream of all the jests of all the centuries during which man has left a record of what he's thought and done.

The "immortal residue" of the human race lies in books. The great reason for reading books and for valuing libraries is to have life more abundantly, to think more justly, to be in love more delightfully, and to use the Sputniks more wisely when we get them.

Dr. Harry H. Ransom, provost and vice president of the University of Texas, inaugurator of the new Texas Quarterly and builder-up of the wonderful University of Texas Library says: "In a time preoccupied with outer space . . . for a magazine the most important area is still that which lies between the human ears." That area lying between the human ears is the most important also for all libraries.

* * *

LIBRARY NEVER OLD.

I never enter or pass a library without a certain gratitude not only to librarians but to people who have made libraries possible. Benjamin Franklin was one of the first institutors of public libraries in America. He knew what it meant to feel one-self grow through partaking of the greatness of great books. An Indian fighter who ranged with Bigfoot Wallace and lived beyond the settlements left his small holdings to start a public library in San Antonio. His name was Ed Westfall. After many years in library work, Miss Edwin Sure Goree retired to Burnet County and built up one of the significant county libraries in Texas. I salute her.

The first library I ever entered was a small one at Southwestern University at Georgetown. The shelves were all open to any student who wanted to read; to explore among unknown books seemed wonderful to me. I met books written by men and women whose names I'd only heard of. I came upon islands and continents of reading I'd never heard of at all. Since that time I've been in various college and university libraries, but they never get old to me.

The public libraries never get old. While I was a reporter on a San Antonio newspaper the summer after I graduated from college, I used to go to the public library but can't remember any book I read there. I remember the characters that haunted the place. Two or three of them were utter derelicts so far as success in life goes, but they read good books and must have had good thoughts. Remembering them, I do not feel sorry for them.

* * *

GALVESTON LIBRARY.

A few years later, after doing graduate work at Columbia University, I settled for a summer in Galveston as a newspaper reporter. The public library there is named the Rosenberg Library in honor of a civilized man who did much for it. In front of the library is a bronze figure of Mr. Rosenberg. Sometimes pigeons lit on his head and children climbed up into his arms. The library grounds were an inviting place, and the library itself was inviting.

In the Metropolitan Museum in New York I had become almost infatuated with a picture by Jules Lefebvre of "The Girl of Capri." She sits bare-legged, bare-headed on a bluff, the fishing net she has been weaving or mending dropped now by her side. She is looking out to sea, and you don't know whether she's looking for somebody who may come back or somebody she's never met or somebody she's met and loved who will never come back. Not long after I got to Galveston my dear friend John Reagan, another newspaper reporter, who made a specialty of collecing books on Napoleon, told me that Lamartine's novel entitled "Graziella" is about this same Girl of Capri. I found it in the Rosenberg Library — though I read the French more slowly than I read English. The novel increased for me the meanings and connotations of the picture. I read other books in that delightful Rosenberg Library, but I pick one out as a sample of uses and enrichings that a library gives to people.

I used to know a cowman who more or less judged railroad stops by the shipping pens for cattle at these places. I have an inclination to size up towns and cities to a certain extent by their book stores and libraries. Some people will take a stand or seat in a bus station or railroad station in order to study humanity. You can't beat a library reading room for contemplation of human countenances and for guesses as to what lies behind those countenances. For sheer humanity I will take the great reading room in the New York Public Library any day in preference to the Grand Central Railroad Station, though the latter is intensely interesting.

Numerous very small libraries in Texas are struggling to keep alive. They have a few books and they stay open a few hours a day by virtue of the dedication of a few civilized human beings — more women than men, I think. Sometimes they persuade county commissioners to grant them a few hundred dollars per year. I salute the big libraries with fine collections, and I salute these little struggling libraries. No cause is more deserving of support, though charities and churches get most of it.

Texan Talks About Writers 3-16-50

Regionalism on Same Intellectual Level as Juke Box Music, Dobie Says

BY WILLIAM C. BARNARD.
Associated Press Staff.

A big white hat—which few Texans wear—and big talk do not make a Texan, says J. Frank Dobie.

Nor is regional writing worth much unless it has universal appeal.

These and other thoughts are set down by Dobie in the spring issue of the Southwest Review just published. They were first spoken informally to the annual gathering of the Texas Institute of Letters, which honored the dean of Texas yarn spinners and tale tellers.

Here are some Dobieisms on regionalism:

A writer—a regional writer, if that term means anything—will whenever he matures exercise the critical faculty.

Mere glorification of a region is on the same intellectual level as juke box music.

Unless a writer feels free, things will not come to him; he can not burgeon on any subject whatsoever.

I do not believe it possible that a great book will henceforth come from a mind that does not in outlook transcend the region on which it is focused.

Among the qualities that any good regional writer has in common with other good writers of all places and times is intellectual integrity.

Nothing is too provincial for the regional writer, but he can not be provincial-minded toward it.

I have never tried to define regionalism. It's blanket has been put over a great deal of worthless writing.

I would not trade Roy Bedichek's chapters on the mockingbird for all the essays and orations that the Fourth of July has occasioned during the past 175 years.

Happiness is a state of being in harmony with one's environment. We spend our prime energies building cities and then spend what's left trying to escape the progress we have made.

Many a time while paying $4 or $5 for a noisy hotel room I have wished that by doubling the price I could be transported to a blanket on mesquite grass somewhere where the crickets chirp.

The writer of a region can never know enough about it.

He has to know how far "a fur piece" is, and how long "after while" may be.

He has to know so much that as he writes he will be constantly obliged to exercise that most difficult of arts—the art of omission.

Dr. J. Frank Dobie Assists In Formation of UNESCO

S.T.

BY SARAH McCLENDON. '46

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6.—The United States delegates to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization at Paris next November will be guided by instructions drawn up here recently by a national commission on which Dr. J. Frank Dobie, professor of English at the University of Texas, represented Texas.

It is suggested that the conference include classroom teachers from all educational levels, school administrators, writers, publishers and other experts in the production and use of instructional materials.

Also suggested is an international exchange of teachers, students, scholars, artists, artisans, scientists, government officials and others, active in the various fields through which UNESCO hopes to bring about greater international knowledge and therefore peace.

U. S. delegates are instructed to work for removal of obstacles to free flow of information, and it is emphasized that the organization should concern itself with means of removing hindrances rather than the qaulity of information sent around the world. By all means, UNESCO should avoid any suggestion of censorship. Copyrights, unfair rates or legislative practices which now interfere with free flow of information should be abolished, the national commission says.

Another proposal of the commission is that a world-wide radio be set up with a signal strong enough to be heard in all major parts of the world. Other projects suggested are:

Rehabilitation of libraries, museums, scientific laboratories; creation of more favorable conditions for creative and investigative work by artists and scientists; research on an international basis on international health, epidemic diseases, meteorology and other subjects; an inter-library exchange.

The 90-member commission includes representatives picked by 50 organizations at the invitation of the State Department, 10 members representing the federal government, 10 chosen at large, and 25 representing state and local governments.

FEW COMPARED TO COWBOY TALES

STAR TELEGRAM
MAR 2 7 1960

Western Sheep Stories Mark of Civilized Era

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

When popular interest in the West becomes even half civilized, there will be more observation and appreciation of the wildlife of the land and less catering to raw action — generally very raw and very dull.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

When this civilized era arrives, sheep books that say something valid about Western grazing grounds will be as much read as cattle books. There haven't been more than a dozen books written by sheepmen and sheepwomen and they are nearly all good, whereas hundreds of books written by purported cowboys and sidewalk cowmen are worthless.

Of course, there are numerous excellent books pertaining to cows, cowboys, cowmen and also cowwomen. Somebody in the audience may want to read a good sheep book sometime. I'll name three: "The Flock," by Mary Austin, which is out of print; "Texas Sheepman," by Winifred Kupper, published by the University of Texas Press; "Sheep," by Archer B. Gilfillan, published by the University of Minnesota Press.

* * *

'FOOTPRINTS IN THE TRAIL.'

I have just discovered another book by a sheepherder, "Footprints in the Trail," by Will C. Minor, published by Sage Books, 2679 South York St., Denver 10, Colo. I'm not sure whether Will Minor owned his sheep or not, but for years he camped with them and herded them on Colorado ranges, high up in the summer and down in the winter.

His unpretentious book is composed of narratives and observations on sheep, horses, ravens, deer, and other creatures—mostly wild creatures—belonging to the Colorado ranges. What he says about sheep is more interesting to me than any Wild West shooting my limited observation has come to in television. Here are some samples:

"Most people who have observed sheep at all would agree that there are two traits in common to all sheep. First, that they will all blindly follow a leader; and second, that they are all afraid of dogs. But I have known many sheep who refused to follow a leader, the rest of the herd, or anything else except their own fancies. And some sheep, not many to be sure, but some, take a keen delight in slipping up to some unsuspecting, strange dog and slamming him against a rock or some other convenient whipping post.

"Ewes are good mothers, but even in the strong trait of mother love individual ewes will differ greatly. One black-faced ewe in the herd was constantly losing her lamb. She would leave him asleep under a bush and go off to graze. She remembered where she left him well enough, but little Woolly refused to stay put. He would wake up while mama was out of sight, go hunt a bunch of other lambs to play with, and forget to come back. When mama came looking for him he would be off with the other lambs, or perhaps in the herd.

"It never occurred to old Black-face to go look for him in the herd. She knew where she had left him and refused to leave that immediate vicinity. She would rush around looking under every bush and rock, baaing mournfully all the while. The first few times this happened I would go hunt up her lamb and bring him back to her. She soon came to depend on my doing this. And whenever her lamb disappeared, instead of looking for him herself, she would hunt me up and start baaing, telling me plainly that little Woolly was lost again and that I should go find him.

* * *

DEER FOLLOWS BELL.

"Cow Bell Slim was so named because she wore a big bell intended for a cow to carry, and Slim because slim she wasn't. Cow Bell Slim was very fond of mushrooms. Most sheep will find them. But mushrooms were Cow Bell's favorite food. Often she would slip away from the herd and go off by herself on a mushroom hunt. More than once I have heard her bell somewhere off in the distance and found her a mile or more from the herd contentedly picking mushrooms all alone and not at all interested in where the other sheep were or what they were doing.

"One day I heard her bell down over a heavily timbered mountainside fully a half - mile from where the sheep were feeding. I started to go after her. Suddenly she began to baa in a protesting manner and to jingle her bell vigorously. Then, after a few minutes quiet, she would repeat the performance. As she sounded closer each time, I stopped and waited. Presently Cow Bell Slim came into sight with a big mule deer doe following closely behind. Whenever Cow Bell would stop to pick a mushroom, the deer would move up and curiously sniff at the sheep's back. Whereupon, Cow Bell would baa indignantly and move a little nearer the herd. At last she marched into the herd still baaing resentfully at being driven back by a deer.

"The deer was not at all frightened by the sheep or by the bells. I stood as quietly as I could, and the doe came within 20 feet of me before she discovered me. Then she stopped and stared at me with curiosity until my dog came trotting around the herd from the opposite side. One look at the dog was enough. With a tremendous bound she leaped into the underbrush and quickly disappeared."

* * *

COW THREATENS HORSE.

The next sample is from a chapter entitled "Horse Tales."

"Father once owned a belligerant old red cow whose chief delight in life was to slip up to an unsuspecting horse and suddenly deal him a terrific blow in the ribs with her head. Fortunately she had no horns, or she would have been a decided menace to the other animals on the ranch. One day a horse named Fleet was coming up the narrow lane from the horse pasture to the barn and found his way barred by the cow. She lowered her head in a threatening manner, grumbled angrily to herself, and refused to let him pass. Fleet was an acknowledged leader among the horses and quite willing to fight with any of them who challenged him. But he was not accustomed to warlike cows. He stopped and considered the matter several minutes. He appeared puzzled rather than frightened by the cow's strange behavior. At last he turned, went back to the pasture, and rounded up one of his pals who was a trained cow horse. Soon he came back up the lane driving his pal ahead of him. With bared teeth the cow pony rushed at the old cow, who sullenly retreated to the barnyard. With the way cleared, Fleet walked calmly past and on to the barn as though nothing unusual had happened."

Mary Ann Did His Talking

Man Named Johnson Was Real Character

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM
DEC 13 1959

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

"He (or she) was a character." How often have I heard that expression, a favorite with my mother, followed by anecdote. The vast majority of people are more interested in human characters than in anything else.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Let those who prefer what is called modern art have it. Good art that reveals human nature, in techniques understandable by plain people, will never be outmoded, will always be modern. George Caleb Bingham (1811-79) is not a household name, but his pictures of life on Western rivers go alongside Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi" and "Huckleberry Finn." As I write this I am absorbed in the gallery of nearly 200 portraits and sketches of human nature illustrating a $15 book, "George Caleb Bingham, River Portraitist," by John Francis McDermott, just published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

"He was a character." Zenos R. Bliss, a lieutenant fresh out of West Point, reported in 1854 for duty at Fort Duncan, located at Eagle Pass on the Rio Grande. For the next 30 years, excepting during the Civil War, he served mostly on the Texas frontier. Among many sketches of human beings in his unpublished reminiscences is the following.

* * *

SHE ELOPED.

"Riding one time from Fort Hudson on Devil's River to Fort Clark I camped at San Felipe springs (later Del Rio), and was surprised to find a house — a mere Mexican jacal—there occupied by a man named Johnson, his wife and two children. He was 36 miles from Fort Clark, the nearest house to the east, and there was nothing between him, except two or three military posts, for 400 miles west to El Paso.

"In the evening Johnson came down to my camp with his boy, eight or ten years old, and his daughter, about twelve. Sitting by the fire with her robosa or Mexican shawl twisted around her head, she made me a cigarito of corn husk and tobacco, lighted it, took one or two pulls at it to be sure that it was all right, and handed it to me with as much politeness and grace as I have ever seen. I became quite interested in the children and told the girl that when I came back from Fort Clark I would bring her some candy, and asked her brother if he would not rather have some fish hooks. I was at Clark only two or three days, but when I returned to San Felipe I learned that the girl had eloped with a Mexican and that her father was out gunning for the party.

* * *

A BAD MAN.

"That first night by the camp fire Johnson told me a good deal of his life. I knew that he had killed a man a short time before at Fort McKavett and when I asked about the matter he seemed glad to give details. He was taking the shingles off an old barn that had blown down, he said, when a man came up claiming them. An older daughter who was with him said to the man, 'You had better be careful how you talk to my father, as he is a bad man, if he gets started.' The man in retort called her a name that made Johnson feel as if someone had him by the hair of the head and was pulling as hard as he could. 'I just reached for old Mary Ann (his shot gun),' he said, 'and let him have one barrel. He fell. I walked right up to him, and if he had kicked I would have given him the other barrel.'

"After this killing Johnson left the post and went to San Antonio, where he was tried and acquitted. Then he went back to Fort McKavett for his family and plunder and headed for a more congenial climate. He said as he was afoot driving his ox wagon, loaded with his family and all his worldly possessions, through a stretch of timber, he heard horses galloping. He looked back and saw the son of the man he had killed and two nephews galloping up. 'I just dropped back towards the wagon slowly,' he said, 'throwing the whip over the oxen as they walked by me, till I got to the front end of the wagon, where old Mary Ann was lying. Then I made a spring and got her and cocked both barrels and said, 'Boys, if you want to see 'Lively Bob' dance, just strike the first note.' They probably did not care to see a dance of that kind; at any rate, they left him, and he made a settlement somewhere, stayed a year, and then moved out where I found him.

* * *

BITTER ABOUT SAM.

"His talk of old times in Texas, especially of the Texas Revolution, was very interesting. He was bitter against Sam Houston, who he said had taken a drove of horses from him in the name of the State and had never paid him for them. His claim amounted at the time he told me of it to nearly $30,000, and I have no doubt he ought to have been paid.

"After sitting over my camp fire for some time, Johnson asked me to go to his house and see his wife. I went and was introduced. She was the strangest-looking woman I had ever seen. Between 50 and 60 years of age, very tall and angular, she had one arm not larger than the arm of a child three or four years old. She said it had been injured in some way when she was a small child and had never grown. Sitting there by the fire smoking a cob pipe, she was not a beauty by any means. The two had been married but a few months.

"It happened that the conversation turned on Johnson's wives, of which he said he had had five. 'The first one was a lady, fit to be the wife of the President of the United States.' She died, and he married again. This one was also a beautiful woman and a splendid wife, but she died. He then married another. She was very good, but not as good as either of the others. The fourth wife—'Well, Lieutenant, I won't say anything about that one, but with the blessing of God she died in about six months.'

"The old woman sat there pulling away at her pipe, and listening to his stories of the beauty of his former wives, until I suppose her sensitive nature was wounded. When he paused in talking, she said in a sort of beseeching voice, 'Before we were married, you used to tell me that I was pretty good looking.' Johnson cast his eye toward me and winked, but made no reply. As they had been married less than a year, I could easily see that the old fellow had used base flattery in his efforts to win her."

Oil Men Switch 'Targets'

DEC 27 1959

1932 Search for Gold in East Texas Started When Nugget Found in Root

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

"With all my seeking into desert places there are three things that of my knowledge I have not seen—a man who has rediscovered a lost mine, the heirs of one who died from the bite of a sidewinder, and a shepherd who is insane.—Mary Austin.

* * *

On the sixth of last November my old friend Victor Lieb of Houston, miner, geologist, familiar of Mexico's Sierra Madre and its people, fecund story-teller, great laugher, unflagging hoper for the strike he never made, departed into what Rabelais called The Great Perhaps. Some time before that he sent me an account of gold on the Louisiana-Texas border. It was new to me. I pass it on in his words — as hammered by a professional writing man.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

* * *

VICTOR LIEB'S STORY.

One Sunday in August of 1932 I had just sat down to Sunday dinner when the telephone rang. J. S. Cullinan, then head of the American Republics Corporation, for which I was chief geologist for nearly 14 years, wanted me at the office at once. I found him in serious conference with a young scout and lease man for Standard Oil of Louisiana. This scout was on to something not connected with his job or his company's interests.

Quoting loosely, his story ran thus: "I went to Many, La., on business with a lumber company. While waiting in the log yard for the manager, I walked about looking at logs recently received by train from the Sabine River bottoms. These were very old virgin stand pine; some had evidently been taken from a steep hillside, as the saw cuts were among the upper protruding roots on one side of the trees. Some of the roots had been sheared off roughly. With my pocket knife I went to picking at some gravel pinched in between the bases of these roots. I found this."

The "this" was a clean nugget of gold about the size of a small pecan. The oil scout went on to tell that he easily found out where the logs had come from in the Sabine bottoms. He had walked out a considerable area of the vicinity, locating several old shafts and tunnels that he did not attempt to explore. Knowing nothing about gold or mining, he had turned to Mr. Cullinan, an old family friend, for advice.

It happened that at this very time Cullinan's company was studying the East Texas iron deposits; an engineer from a firm of iron specialists was working the whole iron area. He, of course, was not panning creek beds and had probably not been near the old shafts or tunnels. Mr. Cullinan sent me immediately to Many, La., with orders to bring in the facts. Our young friend joined me there and stayed with me for as long as he could get away from his job.

* * *

MANY SHAFTS FOUND.

The pine log with the gold nugget in its roots had come from the east side of the Sabine River just where the higher hill country breaks off into the bottoms, from 15 to 20 miles east of San Augustine, in the vicinity of where Texas State Highway 21 crosses into Louisiana. A little gold had been found in several small streams in the region and attempts made to mine it. A competent young engineer friend of mine had recovered some placer gold that cost him $1.65 per gram and sold for $1.00 per gram. The operation did not last.

The area that I investigated in detail covered roughly 1,800 acres, some in worn-out fields and some in the original stand of timber. I located numerous shafts and tunnels, all of them exploratory. Around them I found exactly what the old miners found — a few colors but nothing in mineable quantities. Their pay dirt came from an area of about 600 acres through which a creek bed had been thoroughly worked out. The gold deposit here originated somewhere in Arkansas, or possibly Oklahoma, where the ancient rocks outcrop. Deposition was where a small stream flowed into the bay — the head of the ancient East Texas Embayment, and occurred at a time when this was a beach. Any gold coming down the streams here would come to rest at the edge of the marsh or tidewater and in time be covered by beach sands and mud. This was exactly what we found. Upstream was a more or less gradual tapering off of gold deposit; at the beach, a more sudden cessation. The richest mine had been just above the mouth of the stream, and it had been thoroughly cleaned out. A large open cut had been used to carry water to sluices.

* * *

MADE BY SPANIARDS.

In my opinion, all of the excavations found were made by Spaniards. Their shafts are almost invariably round, or nearly so. Their tunnels are always arched in the roof. We also found the remains of a small furnace in which metal had been melted and cast into bars.

I was curious as to what time this operation took place. There is nothing in history about it. Growing in the open cut were several old oaks. Since these must have started after the operation was abandoned, but not necessarily very long thereafter, the tree rings would afford some clue. The ring count indicated that this mining had been done shortly before 1720.

Since this had been Caddo Indian country, I thought perhaps some Caddo might know something of the matter. I hunted around until I found some young Caddos of modern education. They led me to their elders, who said that the ancient Caddos had found some gold and had made ornaments of it. When the Spaniards came along, they followed their usual course — took the Indian ornaments from them and put the Indians to digging. According to all accounts, exhausting the gold deposits did not take over two years.

Tolerant of Lesser Faults

Woman Understood Code of the Old West

JUL 27 1958
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I'm not making "A Bride Goes West," by Nannie T. Alderson and Helena Huntington Smith, the subject of my column today in order to promote a new book. This one, published in 1942, has been out of print several years. I've just discovered it and that makes it new to me, as I discovered Herodotus only a few years ago and found him one of the newest writers in the world although he wrote thousands of years ago. "A Bride Goes West" is new and fresh because it is impregnated with a just sense of values about life. When Nannie Tiffany of West Virginia married Walt Alderson, who'd already been on the cattle trail for years, in 1882, they went to Montana to start a little ranch. There's plenty about ranching in this book but what is most valuable is about life, about people in this ranch country.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Among hundreds of books written by and about range men, there are hardly a dozen valid ones concerning women. I pick "A Bride Goes West" and Agnes Morley Cleaveland's "No Life For a Lady" as the two best books pertaining to ranch life by women with a woman's point of view dominating. The great majority of range books, no matter when published, are of the same old dance to the same old tune—the dance of riding and shooting to the tune of sixshooters.

Anybody of any country who has seen his or her young countrymen turned loose as soldiers in a foreign land knows that they act very differently from the way they act at home under the eyes of their families and family friends. Young men on the ranches of the West before the advent of family life shot wilder and lived wilder than young ranchmen who lived with their families.

* * *

DYING COWBOY COMFORTED.

While Nannie Alderson, as she tells, was in Miles City with her first baby, "One morning the chambermaid told me that a cowboy was dying in a room downstairs. He had come up the trail from Texas, and had been shot, in a barroom quarrel, by the colored cook of an outfit both worked for. Knowing how scarce women were in Miles City, and thinking that the presence of one might be some comfort to the dying boy, I asked the maid to stay with the baby, and went down to him. The room was full of men standing around his bed. I took his hand and said: 'I'm so sorry' — which was all I could say. He had a striking face, with dark blue eyes which never left mine until the doctor closed them. He did not seem to be in great pain. They said he had been shot in the stomach, and his breath just kept coming a little shorter and quicker until he died.

"I never heard much more about this tragic affair, but I do not believe the cowboy was blameless. They said he had been harsh in his treatment of the Negro. I know that no move was ever made to bring the latter to justice. Those young men who traveled north with the herds were far from home and all gentling influences, and they were prone to commit rash and violent acts. It was a pity, and in the case of a young man like this one a great waste as well. For there was great good in these wild and homeless boys, and no one knew better than I."

* * *

CODE OF THE WEST.

Nannie Alderson was a man's woman, above all her own husband's. She understood the code of the West, defining some of it as follows: "The West was very tolerant toward the lesser faults of human conduct. It was even willing to overlook the greater if they were not repeated. A man's past was not questioned, nor a woman's either; the present was what counted. A man could even be known as wanted by the law elsewhere, yet this was not held against him here so long as he showed a willingness to walk the straight path. Half the charm of the country for me was its broad-mindedness. I loved it from the first."

An incident that illustrates the democracy inherent in the code and also further illustrates Nannie Alderson's sense of values runs as follows: "Four men rode in one evening across the frozen hills. They were the sheriff of Custer County, his deputy, the biggest stockman in our part of Montana — and a prisoner. I knew the last — a harmless fellow we had always thought him, who lived among the Indians, with no real job. They called him Cheyenne Charlie. He was some kind of a foreigner, I don't know what, but I know he was troubled by his poor English, for he had told me that he had sisters and that he was the only member of his family who 'talked broken.' He had been to our house before, and I had given him an old homemade fur-trimmed cap to keep his ears warm. I think he was accused of butchering the big cattleman's beef.

"Perhaps because of our previous acquaintance, the poor fellow was so embarrased at the removal of handcuffs while he ate, that I could hardly keep the tears from falling into his coffee while I poured it. One of the men said later that no one could have told from the treatment they received which was the cattle king and which the man under arrest. I thought this one of the nicest compliments I had ever had."

This woman's wisdom about life moves me deeply in some places. Two of her neighbors out in the Cheyenne Indian country were Little Wolf and Mrs. Roland. Little Wolf and Dull Knife had led the Cheyennes in their memorable march back from the Indian Territory to their old Montana homeland in the winter of 1878. For a time Little Wolf was chief of the Cheyenne Indian Police. Then he killed an Indian he was trying to arrest, and his tribe cut him off. After that he was a deposed king. One of his squaws washed for the Aldersons.

* * *

ROUGH BUT REWARDING.

Mrs. Roland's eldest son had married a Cheyenne woman, and he had become an official interpreter. This son had brought his old mother out from the East and located her on his little ranch. She reminded Nannie Alderson of a great tree uprooted after it was old and planted elsewhere. She had to be moved from bed to chair, and the only movement she knew in the chair was when her younger son dragged it from one room to another in their neat shack. She never read; she never complained. Just before Christmas one year the cowboys at the Alderson ranch saw a picture of a wheel chair in a Montgomery Ward catalog. They chipped in and bought it for Old Lady Roland.

Nannie Alderson was fortunate in finding the right person to take down her words and put them into a book, that person being Helena Huntington Smith, who took down Teddie Blue Abbott's words and put them into that brave book entitled "We Pointed Them North." Toward the end of her glad and tragic life Nannie Alderson dictated these words:

"When I reflect upon all the frontier folk that I have been associated with, I think the ones that made the most lasting impression on me were old Mrs. Roland, mother of the Agency interpreter, and Little Wolf, the war chief of the Cheyennes. They had one impressive trait in common; a quiet resignation to 'the inevitableness of things.' They had other like traits of character, too, despite their widely separated backgrounds — both were kind, both had courage, and both had a childlike interest in simple things — in the sunlight and the beauty out of doors. Each of them appeared happy under conditions that most people would regard as impossible, and it always seemed to me that theirs was the happiness which can only come from integrity and inner peace. Their example more than any other helped me to 'keep my chin up' when things were hard. I don't want to be misunderstood; I wouldn't have exchanged my lot for that of any other woman on earth. But, perhaps just because the rewards were great, the going at times was proportionately rough."

Interpenetration

DEC 20 1959

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

To Ivan, His Old Friend Was Real Fellow-Being

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

It's the time for stories. And now, my friends and, if I have any, also my foes, I wish you Christmas cheer.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

In "The Children of the Sea" Joseph Conrad wrote of the "interpenetration" between sea and seamen of British sailing ships. Certain bear tales from the Crows, the Blackfeet, and other Indians of the Northwest illustrate the interpenetration between bear and native man, but no tale in the English (or American-English) language illustrates it.

To many of the Russian people, before their great revolution ushered in for them the Age of Machinery and then the Age of Science, the bear was a fellow-being. Many old tales illustrate this. Here is one from a Russian collection.

* * *

BEARS GATHER.

The hapless gypsies in four counties had come together with all their goods and chattels, and with them bears. There were more than a hundred wild creatures with their crooked paws, from small bear-cubs to huge old bears with their fur growing grey and falling off, and they were collected together on the town common. The gypsies were waiting with horror for the appointed day. Many of them, who had been the first to come, had been waiting on the town common a whole week.

The government was waiting the arrival of all those gypsies who were on the list for a certain date, in order to carry out at one moment a great execution. The gypsies had been given five years' grace since the issue of the enactment which was to put an end to the business in tame bears. And now the day of grace was over. The gypsies had to present themselves at certain places appointed for collecting the bears together, and there they themselves had to put their nurslings to death. But for a moment, in the camp where the gypsies were collected together, all was quiet. One by one they had put out the useless lights; the bears fumbled about, rattled with their chains and, from time to time, they would give a low growl from under the carts to which they were tied. The gypsies lay down to sleep.

The day dawned, murky and cold in September. A few drops of thin rain had fallen, but in spite of this many spectators, both men and women, young and old, had come to the meadow to look on. In the camp there was but little noise; the women, with the little children, were hiding in the tents that they might not see the execution, and only now and again from one or another would there break out a wail of despair. The men were feverishly finishing the final preparations. They wheeled the carts to the edge of the camp and fastened the wild beasts to them. The bears were not feeling quite at ease. The unwonted halt, the strange preparations, the huge crowd, and the fact that they themselves were all herded up together in one place — all tris made them feel uncomfortable and excited. From time to time they would shake their chains and gnaw at them and give low growls.

* * *

IVAN SPEAKS.

Old Ivan was standing by the side of his huge one-eyed bear. His son, an elderly gypsy with a few silver-grey hairs among his black locks, and the grandson, all deadly pale and with burning eyes, were tying up the bear.

"Come, old man," said the inspector, "tell your young men to set to!" There was a movement among the onlookers, a murmur of voices, cries, but soon all was quiet again, and out of the death-like stillness was heard a voice, not loud but solemn. It was the old man, Ivan, speaking:

"Good master, let me say my say. I ask you, my brother, let me be the first to make an end. I am the oldest of you all. Another year and I shall be 90. From the time I was a little one I have been leading bears. And in the whole camp there is no bear who is older than mine." The curly grey head sank on his breast; he shook it bitterly and wiped his eyes with his fist. Then he drew himself up, lifted his head and went on, louder and more firm than before.

"This is why I want to be the first to make an end. I thought I should not live to see such sorrow. I thought my beloved bear would not live either—for this is not fate. I must kill him with my own hand, him who has brought me food and been my benefactor. Untie him, let him go free. He will not go away—he and I, old ones both, we shall not run away from death. Untie him, Bacya. I will not kill him tied up like a brute beast. Don't be frightened," said he to the crowd which began murmuring, "he won't touch anyone."

* * *

PATHETIC LOOK.

The young man untied the huge creature and led him a little away from the cart. The bear sat down on his hind paws and dropped his front paw and moved his head from side to side, breathing heavily and hoarsely. It was clear enough that he was very old; his teeth were yellow—his fur was rusty and coming off. With his one small eye he looked at his old master with a friendly, pathetic look. All round there was silence like death.

"Give me the gun," said the old man firmly.

His son gave him the rifle. He took it and, pressing it against his breast, began to speak again, turning to the bear.

"In a moment I shall kill you, old Tramper. God grant that my old hand may not tremble and that the bullet may go straight to your heart. I would not give you pain; you haven't deserved that, my old bear, my good comrade. I took you when you were a small bear-cub; your eye had been put out and your nose was sore with the ring; you were ill and like to die. I pitied you and looked after you like a son, and you grew up a big strong bear—there's not another like you in all the camps together. And you grew up and never forgot my kindness—among men I had no friend like you. You were good and gentle and understanding, and you learnt everything, and I never saw a better creature nor a more understanding one. What should I have been without you? All my family lived on your earnings. You got me two pairs of these horses; you provided me with a hut for winter. And you did more than that; you saved my son from serving as a soldier. I had a big family, and you fed them all from the old man to the little baby, fed them and cherished them. I loved you dearly and I never beat you to hurt, but if I did you any wrong, forgive me on my knees before you."

* * *

THE CROWD WEEPS.

He fell down on his knees before the bear. The creature moaned softly and piteously. The old man sobbed and his whole body shook.

"Kill him, father," said the son, "and don't go on breaking our hearts."

Ivan got up. The tears were no longer running from his eyes; he cocked his gun and leveled it at the bear, aiming at his breast, below his left paw.

And the bear understood. From his open jaws came a piteous despairing roar. He got up on his hind paws, lifted his front paws and seemed to be shading his eyes with them, that he might not see the dreadful gun.

A wail rose up from the gypsies. Many of the crowd were weeping. The old man, with a sob, threw the gun down on the ground and fell helplessly over it. His son rushed to raise him, but the grandson caught hold of the gun. "Enough!" he cried, in a fierce stifled voice, his eyes blazing. "Enough! Kill him, brothers, and have an end to it."

And running close up to the bear he laid the muzzle against his ear and fired.

Shots resounded through the whole camp, deadened by the despairing wail of the women and children.

Coronado Didn't Name Anything in Texas

This 'Time of the Sell' Can Produce Some Mighty Unjust Senses of Value

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM NOV 29 1959

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

William James said: "The end of a college education is to help you to size up a man." William James was a pragmatist. If the majority of the public could size up a man, we'd have Utopia so far as an elected government goes.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

How do you size up a man justly? There's no prescription. The cultivation of a just sense of values begins in childhood. Some people who have never been to school of any kind have it. A majority of college graduates, especially the specializers in professional subjects, don't have it. A list I have in hand from a New York dealer in second-hand books advertises "The Journey of the Flame" in capitals—as "California Bandit." In no sense is this the narrative of a bandit, but in this age of violence the American bandit outranks Shakespeare in prices for scarce items, and so "The Journey of the Flame" is labeled as a bandit book — in order to sell it to the ignorant.

I'm looking at an illustrated folder put out "for your pleasure" by the Texas State Parks Board. On the cover is a picture of "two lovelies," as they are labelled, who can't hold a candle to Brigitte Bardot, but they are supposed to help sell something to somebody. Inside the folder, adjacent to an assertion that the park recreation places are "rich in history," is a picture of "The Lighthouse," a formation in Palo Duro Canyon State Park, with the assertion that it was "named by Coronado." This is a bald-faced lie. There's no evidence whatsoever that Coronado named anything within the confines of Texas. What profit or point there could be in trying to sell the Texas State Parks to anybody is beyond me. This attempt to sell something that does not need selling expresses the sheeplike quality of our time — the time of the sell.

* * *

THE REAL THING.

We turn to a paper-bound book of 24 pages titled "Tambalear, the Tumble Weed and other Southwestern Stories," by Fred Cornelius. The stories, designed for children, are mostly about the animals. They are illustrated by pictures of the tortoise, the coyote, a burro, Brother Paisano, and other genuine people. I don't know what this delightful book costs — not too much, I'm sure. It's printed by Carl Hertzog, 500 Wellesley Rd., El Paso. Carl Hertzog is the most artistic printer between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans in his latitude. I'll go farther and say he's the most artistic printer between the Atlantic Ocean and Hawaii; since I don't know of any good printer in Hawaii I might as well go on and say between the Atlantic Ocean and Japan, where there are some fine printers. I don't know Fred Cornelius, the story-teller, but according to Carl Hertzog he's a casualty of World War I, and after 40 years of hurting, writes cheerful stories. I know that he does not pretend; I know that he is sincere about the Southwestern world, and that he, his illustrations, and Carl Hertzog have produced something beautiful.

Just recently Young Bell, who runs the Bell Motel in Pecos has come into my vision through a 91-page, paper-bound booklet titled "Sixty-Four Years in the Cow Business in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona." I can not give a prescription whereby anybody will be able to distinguish between the real and the spurious, though I can generally tell the difference by one look at a person, a paragraph of writing, or a picture. "Sixty-four Years in the Cow Business" is the real thing, even if it is not literature. Young Bell's story of a steer he bought down in Chihuahua during the Mexican Revolution, shipped to the Pecos country, and trained to be a lead steer will illustrate this genuineness. We never get anything like this out of a Hollywood Western.

* * *

CARED FOR 'SPOT.'

"Sometimes the herd would break in two and I or Calvin Baker would swim across and tell Spot, this lead steer, to go back and get the rest of the herd.

"Spot was 20 years old when he died, and I think the reason he lived such a long life was that we fed him and took good care of him. Not only I used him myself for crossing cattle, but all of my neighbors on the east and west would use him — the W Ranch, the Diamond Half Ranch, Sid Kyle, and many others. His head was a light cream color, and half his body was the same color and the rest was snow white. Everybody who knew him loved Spot. His head is mounted and hanging on the wall in the office of the Bell Motel in Pecos. His picture will be in this book.

"I would say that this steer crossed as many as 20,000 cattle a year. I turned Spot's mate into the 40 section pasture. He was three years old when I turned him loose. A young whiteface steer about a year old took up with him, and stayed with him until I shipped the two to Fort Worth. When I shipped them, the Mexican steer was six years old, and the whiteface steer was four years old. The whiteface weighed 1,050 pounds, and the Mexican steer weighed 1,000 pounds. This is the reason the cattlemen bred their cattle up, so as to make big bone, which would carry more meat. We think the whiteface cattle are the best for West Texas."

Resistance to Change

King Canute Has a Lot of Followers, But Things Aren't Getting Worse

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM JAN 3 1960

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have belonged to a good many King Canute clubs in my lifetime, none organized and the majority of them containing only one member. King Canute resented change and was ignorant of the processes of evolution. He tried to keep the tide from coming in by having it lashed with whips. Long after the safety razor had become popular, I continued using an old-time strop and razor blade. Sometimes while stropping my razor and scraping the hair off my face in the dressing room of a Pullman car, I noticed users of electric safety razors regarding me as a curiosity. I was too strong against changing razors to care. Likewise, I was fiercely opposed to the replacement of oilcloth curtains on automobiles by hard tops and glass windows. If you ask why, my answer is sheer ignorance and mule-headedness. I was used to one way and didn't want another way intruding.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

At a later time, I still considered it unmanly to drink tea. Why? Because I grew up with men who drank coffee and did not drink tea. It took me a long time to change to tea on occasion. My opposition was based on sheer ignorance and prejudice. All prejudices are forms of ignorance. I remember being disgusted with a man guest who sipped a glass of whisky and water terribly slowly. Now I won't drink whisky any way but slowly, but I was for the old-time way of downing a drink in one slug. What a barbarity!

Recently my bank in Austin, a most excellent bank and most agreeable to me, printed my name on checks and gave me a number. I'm up in the neighborhood of 36 million. I know there aren't that many accounts in the bank, but I supposed they didn't want to start with anything under 36 million. I told my banker friend that I didn't like this change a bit, that I preferred old Ben Lilly's way of writing a check on a piece of brown paper, or a shingle, or on the bark from an aspen. He said if I wanted to write a check on a shingle, the bank would cash it. Now I find that signing a check with my name already printed on it and with a number under the signature does not subtract any more from my balance than signing a shingle would subtract. Perhaps resentment of change in this instance was resentment against the increasing mechanization of life.

ORIGINAL IDEAS SIMPLE.

I knew a woman who, after moving from Bee County to Uvalde County, wouldn't have her shoes shined in the town she moved to. She would mail them back to a shoe-shiner in Beeville to get the only kind of shine that would do her. She was against change. I heard of an Englishman of about 1900 who took a dying stand against his wife and daughter over the installation of a bathtub in the house. He was against change. He was used to taking a bath in a washtub, servants bringing in water to fill it. It was placed in his own room. He swore he couldn't bear the idea of taking a bath in a tub used by other people. His washtub was reserved for his private use. A change in cleansing habits was for him a matter of life and death.

Meantime the great clock ticks on at an increasingly accelerated rate. Until steam supplanted sail, there had for centuries been little change in ocean transportation. The farmer who plowed in A. D. 1500 was using the same plow that the farmer of 1200 A. D. used. There have been more changes in farming since invention of the tractor than there were in centuries preceding. Such changes betoken other changes and cause still more changes. A single man with machinery can now cultivate maybe 20 times as much land as a single man could cultivate in 1860. In the last issue of "The New Republic," that excellent weekly of thought and fact, an article entitled "Who Are Those Farmers?" contains the following idea:

"In the fatness of today, the city dweller's prayer is less likely to be for his daily bread than for strength to stick to his diet."

Original ideas are always simple; so simple that one wonders why they are so rare. Millions of people in America and in some other countries go on calling aloud upon God every Sunday to "give us this day our daily bread." Comparatively few of them are as much concerned with the next meal as with the next installment due on an automobile, a television set, or some other machine. I venture that more people in the United States are concerned with reducing than with getting something to eat. Concern over daily bread used to be common. Now for the vast majority of English-speaking people the daily bread is taken for granted along with water, air, though people work for it. Prayer is what people wish for, not what they say. The "daily bread" item in public prayer is obsolete, but the prayer won't be amended.

Change, change, change. The fact that tens of millions of well-fed people have ceased to cry to God for bread means that the farmer is receding as a power in economics and government. Laws in an attempt to keep him dominant will prove as futile as were laws passed earlier in this century to prevent automobiles from frightening horses off the road.

WORD AS GOOD AS BOND.

I hear people all the time talking about how the morals of the country are going to the bow-wows. The son of an old-time cowman invited me by letter the other day to a meeting at which we good people would drink whiskey, get logged on barbecued meat, roll up our eyes and lament the passing of those times when "a man's word was as good as his bond."

There are, I am confident, just as many men whose words are as good as their bonds as there ever were. I know several of them. Numerous young people of both sexes around me are a tonic to life and a golden promise for the future. Anybody familiar with human records must know that from the times when writing began until now, lamenters moaned over the worsening of society. Of course, things are terrible, but I doubt very much if they are more terrible than they were when knighthood was in flower and most citizens were serfs or than they were when the church was so strong that heretics were burned for not being orthodox, or than they were when people were put in prison for debt, or when women scrubbed floors on their hands and knees, or when preachers all over the South proved by the Bible that slavery was ordained by God.

There is a sickening amount of religiosity with us now, but I doubt if hypocrites comprise a larger per cent of the population than they comprised in the last century or the century before the last.

It's the changes inside of people that count. Here's hoping that a finer and juster sense of values is evolving in us earthy mortals, even in 1960!

Along With Dances   FEB 1 1959

Sandhill Crane's Cry Still Lilts in His Heart

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The long, lone, fluting cry of the sandhill crane became a part of me about the time that the galloping wind in the tops of live oak trees around our ranch house in Live Oak County became a part of me. As a boy I imagined that I heard the music of the spheres at night, but that was not so musical as the melody of a long flock of sandhill cranes flying low in the dying day, perhaps circling toward a prairie.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Many a time standing beside our house in Austin I've listened to cranes flying north in the spring, flying south in the fall. No space ship will ever take a human being father and father away from mundane life than the cries of the sandhill cranes have taken me many and many a time.

I have a little book about this species of bird, but the facts in it tell me almost nothing in comparison with the effect of the long, lone, fluting cries. On the prairies in Chihuahua and Durango in wintertime, I have sat on a horse and also in a car for hours watching great flocks of sandhill cranes feed and sometimes perform their magic dances with each other. The most I've seen feeding in Texas have been down in Maverick County, where they gormandize on wild onions if it's a seasonable year.

There's no way for me to convey in print the magic of the cries of the sandhill cranes, but I consider myself fortunate in having found a narrative about a pet sandhill crane. It was not written by a naturalist. Such narratives generally come from laymen rather than from professional naturalists. This is out of "Recollections, 1837-1910" by Charles W. Marsh, who was a manufacturer of farm machinery and lived on an estate near DeKalb, Ill. Here he had fenced in a small park. Now follows his account of a sandhill crane named Tim.

* * *

FEARLESS, KNOWING.

"The first wild bird that I placed in the park was a sandhill crane. Years before, when he was captured, his wing had been crippled so that he could not fly; in consequence, apparently, he was abnormally active on his legs. We called him Tim. He was big, strong, fearless and knowing; he made himself boss of the grounds at once and held that position for several years —until I killed him. He would attack deer, buffalo or horse, if one of them got in his way, but never a person. Despite his belligerent disposition, he wanted companionship, like all other animals and birds I have known. His first mate was a cross buck, one that had been brough up by hand. We had named him Billy. Their friendship began with mutual forbearance on the feeding ground; it seemed that one respected the horns and the other the big sharp bill. They soon began to stroll off together and in course of a month or two were inseparable companions — where one was there the other was.

"One day a visitor was standing by the gate when the buck came up and thrust his horns through. The man grabbed them and held on. Just then the crane came walking along the fence-path, across which stood the deer. Tim hesitated a moment as if to give Billy time to get out of the way; but as Billy didn't, Tim gave him a sharp dig with his bill. The buck jerked loose from the man and turned on the crane. As he charged, his lowered horns went under the crane and threw the long-legged bird to the rear and astride his back, where it clung, yelling its notes of rage and defiance. This was too much for Billy and he broke for the tall timber, dismounting his rider in a couple of jumps. For several days after they cautiously approached the feeding ground from opposite sides and, avoiding each other while feeding, they departed separately. But soon they were together as before. Billy was killed by lightning not long after.

* * *

HATED INTRUDERS.

"Tim fully acknowledged subjection to me, and he was generally civil to the other bird occupants of the park, the wild turkeys and geese which I put in later. Between him and wild geese there were never any conflicts, owing probably to the close association of these birds when at large. But he hated animal intruders and attacked the buffalo, the colt and even horses when first turned in. Sometimes he continued his assaults so long that I had to interfere. Usually after I had clubbed and chased him off he desisted. Several times in the night, hearing his war cry and an animal running, I have gone out and beaten him off. And occasionally he would have fits of ungovernable rage and, like an oriental running amuck, he would attack everything in his way. If I was home and heard his savage croacks, when thus on the warpath, I would drive him into the 'catching' corner and there grab and give him a thorough drubbing, after which he would sneak off and behave himself.

"He had been in the park about 15 years — never having grown older, apparently — when one of these fits cost him his life. It was along in May when the turkey mothers were leading their young that, on returning from the office, I heard a big rumpus in the park and Tim's croak above the noise. I ran in and found him at work on the turkeys, chasing and killing the young ones and fighting their mothers. I went for him with a club and his neck was soon broken. Twenty-three turkeys were dead and missing.

* * *

GENTLE, AFFECTIONATE.

"A year or two after Billy's death, and long before the slaughter of the turkeys, I obtained from Minnesota a couple of young whooping cranes — the tallest of American birds and almost the largest. Tim welcomed them into the park. They were gentle and tractable, and were becoming used to their new surroundings when the turkeys, during a severe storm, attacked the younger of the two and pounded it so that it died within a few days. I killed the sauciest of the gobblers and looked after the remaining whooper carefully. It did well, and grew to be an unusually large and handsome bird of its kind, much larger than the sandhill, and able, if it chose, to be master of the menagerie; but it was extremely gentle, affectionate and inoffensive. I never saw it manifest anger at anything. It was my pet. When I went into the park it would run to meet me and often would stick its head and neck under my arm and walk along with me chuckling with satisfaction.

"Tim mated with it socially. To a piece of high ground, bare of trees, near the road, they often resorted for their dance, their preferred time for it being the still spell that usually precedes a storm. It was an extraordinary performance, always interesting to the family and astonishing to the passers-by. This crane was so tame and contended that I had been quite careless about clipping its wings about the time of Tim's death. It was evidently unsettled by the loss of its mate, for the very next day it flopped over the fence and was shot by 'the boy behind the gun,' to whom mainly the country owes the present scarcity of wild birds."

Concert by Coyotes Recalled

JAN 24 1960

Campfires Stir Visions of Things To Be, Memories of Times Gone By

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Now is the time of northers and of damps, in some places of snow and ice, of severe weather outside and of cozy warmth within. It is the time for fires, and fires make the time of going back in mind. The commonest form of atavism — of going back to ancestral characteristics — for people preparing to depart this world seems to be religious. That, I know, will never be the form of atavism that my weakening system takes. I shall be going back to brush thickets, to grass-covered hillsides and valleys and to open fires, both within and without.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

I am remembering an ancient vaquero of my tierra, my pais, my land, ponderous of step and ponderous of voice, white-headed, weary-eyed. I can remember his saying, in Spanish, of course, "The brush is my mother. The brush has been my school. The brush has been my college." This ancient vaquero is associated in my mind with another that as a boy I called don—Don Julian Verthen. Don Julian had been up the trail to Kansas, helping drive herds of horses with my father and my uncles. Once in the Indian Territory the Comanches nearly scared the liver out of him, and he never tired of telling of the episode. He was very stiff jointed when I knew him as a boy, and it took him forever to get on a gentle horse; it took him even longer to dismount. He wore home-made rawhide leggings — chaparros — and a leather chin-strap to his sombrero. He worked on several ranches when cattle were being gathered, or when we were running cattle, as the phrase went. His job was always as remudero —in charge of the saddle horses.

* * *

DON JULIAN'S DISTRESS.

When I remember fires, I do not remember fires in general; I remember fires in particular, as I remember individual human beings and individual horses and certain individual rises in a dry creek after rains following drouth. One of the first fires I recall is associated with Don Julian Verthen. As the oldest of the family, my father frequently favored me by letting me go along with him on cattle-driving expeditions. When I was 8 or 9, we went from our ranch in the lower part of Live Oak County to Uncle Neville Dobie's ranch in the upper part of the same county to get a herd of mixed cattle my father had bought from Uncle Neville. I think he bought out the NEV brand at that time. It was late winter or in March when we started out. We struck a wet norther and rode for hours facing the rain and the cutting wind. We made camp in the late afternoon in a thicket protected from the wind. The rain had quit. There was a roaring fire of mesquite and everybody was drying out by it. Don Julian's leggings were not the only home-made pair in the crowd. At that time the vaqueros thatched jacales with bear grass, made soda for their wives to cook with out of ashes, plaited their own quirts, plaited their own reatas and made their own leggings out of rawhide. Don Julian was terribly stiff, and some young vaquero helped him take off his leggings, unlatching the rawhide knots from the rawhide eyeholes or buttonholes. Of course the wet rawhide was as limber as a dishrag and as heavy as a tub of water.

* * *

LEGGINGS LEND DRAMA.

The young vaquero helping Don Julian fastened each leg of the leggins around a stick about equal in diameter to Don Julian's legs. He set them back from the fire to dry, but somehow in the course of the evening the leggings got too dry. They got as stiff as stovepipes, and after supper this young vaquero stood the pair of empty leggins up in front of him and had a dialog with them as if they were a character in a play, the character being Don Julian. The young vaquero said something to the character and then he had the character say something back to him. This colloquy went on for several minutes, while the whole outfit laughed and added speeches for each of the speakers. I have no recollection at all of what the stage talk consisted. All I remember is that wonderfully cheerful fire in the black night, the warmth and drying-out it gave us, the hot supper of skillet bread, fried beef, and sizzling grease mixed with black molasses, and the laughter and stage-acting there.

I can recall camp fires of solitude as well as of company, sitting alone listening to the flapping of a little flame and to the grazing of a staked horse nearby. Maybe he stops to clear his nostrils. That is an event. He will not stop to pay any attention to the barking of coyotes unless one comes near, especially within smelling distance. Then he may cease his grass-cutting for a half minute to identify the visitor.

* * *

CAMPFIRE TO REMEMBER.

At one of my best-remembered campfires I had no horse and no wood to make the flames flap. I was going west into New Mexico on the trail of that fantastical character Ben Lilly, about whom I wrote a book. I left Clayton west of the New Mexico line late but before dark found a place to turn off the highway into a pasture. I had a jug of water as well as bedroll and camp outfit. All the country was high plains, prairie. I stopped in a kind of dished place that seemed to have been a favorite bedding ground for cattle. By the time I got a fire going of cow chips and had a good stock of them gathered for replinishing and for before dawn coffee, it was dark. I really didn't have to cook supper and the weather wasn't cold, but I wanted the fire for company. When a man of the outdoors sits down alone by a fire he seems to become all ears. He listens without trying to listen even while his mind is not on some idea or recollection. My campfire couldn't have been seen by anybody anywhere; in the vast spaces around it was as insignificant and as silent as the light from a lightening bug.

I was going west, and there by this dim campfire I got to remembering the forever-vanished campfires that marked the ways of people along all the great trails of Westering history —the cattle trails out of Texas to the north, the Santa Fe Trail and all the others. I wasn't sad; I wasn't elated. I was interested. I was making pictures that I am powerless to put on canvas yet as full of details as Charles M. Russell's painting called "Laugh Kills Lonesome," in which the horse wrangler (Russell himself) comes in to camp after supper to light his cigaret at the campfire and talk a while with the boys who are lolling on their saddles and bedrolls. Perhaps I called up then, as I have called up many times, a night scene in blue by Frank Tenney Johnson, the darkness relieved only by a campfire while a man leans on one front wheel of his wagon.

While I was deep in making pictures, a faraway yap to the north startled me into the present. It was immediately followed by a howl that went up as long and lonesome as the fluting of sandhill cranes disappearing into the evening sky. Then followed a concert participated in by two or three coyotes. By this time the concerts had set up in two or three other directions.

A campifire like this in the open is something nobody can buy. Not long ago I saw a cheap, slick imitation of one in that slick magazine called Life. It was a cheat. The straw fire was made only for the cameraman, not for any human being to warm by, to cook by, to reflect by, and to dissolve himself by into the illimitable sky and landscape.

Portraits Painted

Artist's Independence Was Aided by Knowledge of Law

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Not everybody who paints, makes music, writes, sculptures or otherwise practices in the realm of fine arts is an artist. Many practitioners have little knowledge of their craft and little skill. Some practitioners seem to be congenital bootlickers and apes and are satisfied with rewards that have nothing to do with excellence in craftsmanship. I doubt, however, if any first-class mind striving toward skill regards anything at all of higher value than independence in pursuit of his art.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

My friend, Lynwood Giacomini, who represents Harper & Brothers, the publishers in New York, who has more than 2,000 books in his home on Long Island, and has not only a wonderfully retentive memory of what he reads but also a very active mind, was to see me the other day. He started off with an anecdote on the subject of artist independence. It and what else follows are pretty much a transcription of our conversation.

* * *

SUPERB PORTRAIT.

Living in Seattle was a meat packer named Fry, an old-time robber baron type that J. P. Morgan, the elder, would have loved. Back in the early 1930s, at the depth of the depression, he commissioned a New York artist to come out and paint his portrait. According to a handshake agreement, the price was $10,000. The artist brought out all his paraphernalia and did a superb portrait — up to the standard he was noted for. When it was finished he did not deliver it, but invited Fry to come to his studio and pass on it. Fry seemed to consider it satisfactory, though it may have had more truth in it than he wanted. Anyway, without saying much, he wrote out a check for $5,000 and handed it to the portrait painter.

"Why, Mr. Fry," the artist said, "our agreement was for $10,000."

"Do you have anything to that effect in writing?" Fry retorted.

The painter said, "Why, certainly not. You and I shook hands. Gentlemen don't commit themselves to paper on matters like this."

Fry said brusquely, "There's $5,000. Take it or leave it."

It was hard times, and the painter said, "Well, I've got to take it. The portrait will be delivered in about 10 days."

It was duly delivered. When unveiled in the Fry mansion, the portrait was unchanged but the background had been edited with a paintbrush. Hanging from hooks all back and around the meat packer's figure were hogs bleeding at the throat, sausages, sides of beef; everything raw and bloody out of Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" was there. Fry, of course, was furious and did exactly what the artist anticipated he would do and wanted him to do, which was to call in a local hack painter and have him blot out the butcher background and block in something conventionally respectable.

* * *

'REACTIONARY.'

According to law, you can not change a work of art without the explicit consent of the creator. The case was taken to court and this artist got not only the $10,000 due him but compensation for damages done to his work of art.

After hearing this classic case history, I told Lynwood Giacomini a Texas art story. During the war, Tom Lea worked for "Life." He went all over the world painting for "Life" and painted some powerful things. One was the sinking of the "Hornet." He had been on the "Hornet" just before it was blown up, and he did a good deal of painting in China. Some of his very best pictures are Chinese scenes. Superb examples hang in his home in El Paso.

Now, Henry Luce, of Time-Life-Fortune publications, always has been a Chiang Kai-shek reactionary. Anybody who reads anything besides the "Podunk County Bugle" and the Luce publications knows that the slick writing in the latter is habitually slanted. I know a superior photographer who quit "Life" because he would not take orders to slant pictures. "Time" and "Life" have done their best to make people believe that Formosa is China—as if Padre Island were the U. S. A.

* * *

KREISLER STORY.

Anyhow, Tom Lea got to China with instructions from the editors of "Life" to paint Chiang Kai-shek and Madame Chiang Kai-shek. I have seen these portraits. They are overwhelming in their power. They have never been reproduced in "Life" or elsewhere. Tom said that Madame Chiang Kai-shek had had some public relations flunky brief her on him, and that she was very glib in her flattery of him and insincere; he painted her as she revealed herself. Then Tom saw Chiang Kai-shek and knew him to be a thug. He said that Chiang Kai-shek had already carved his own character in his features. Somebody said to Abraham Lincoln, "Why do you talk about that man's looks? No man can help his looks."

Abraham Lincoln replied, "After 40, he can."

Tom painted Chiang Kai-shek as he saw and read him through his self-carved features. He painted him as a thug, belonging more in the school of Stalin and Hitler than in the school of a decent democracy. "Life" never would print anything on Chiang as truthful as Tom's portrait. He was not asked to change it. He would not have changed it anyhow.

Lynwood capped this story on Tom Lea with one on Fritz Kreisler, the violinist. He was commissioned by one of the Mrs. Vanderbilts in New York to perform at one of her fabulous soirees. When she asked him his fee he said $5,000. She cringed a bit, but agreed. After he had played the last encore, she said "Oh, Mr. Kreisler, you'll not be expected to mingle with the guests."

The wonderful old gentleman said, "Well, I'm glad you told me that, Mrs. Vanderbilt. I didn't understand. In that case my fee is only $1,500."

That story reminded me of one on Will Rogers.

He was invited to one of the upper billionaire palaces in New York, and when he got there, as he understood all along from the invitation, he was called upon to entertain. He did. The next day he presented his bill: $2,500. His hostess replied in great indignation, "I invited you, I didn't hire you to come."

Will Rogers said, "If you'd been inviting me in a social way, you would have invited my wife."

He got his fee.

Now this final instance from delightful and fecund Lynwood Giacomini. "My good friend Tom Cleland, who is one of the fine graphic artists, pupil of Bruce Rogers, superb lay-out man as well as artist, a wonderful creator, designed Fortune Magazine among other of his enterprises. Once he was called upon by the U. S. government to do a couple of commemorative stamps. Being pretty much of a patriot, he made an abusurdly low fee, something like $500, a mere fraction of what he could get on this kind of work elsewhere. He wanted to give his best to the stamps. The government people were overwhelmed with Cleland's offer for a token payment. He further mentioned that whatever fee he got would be given to some worthy charity in New York.

The government spokesman said, 'Well, that's splendid. It's a wonderful attitude, Mr. Cleland. We'll be delighted. We know it will be a wonderful stamp that you'll produce. By the way, Mr. Cleland, you will be working with our committee, you know.'

"Cleland turned and said, 'Now one moment. I did not understand that I would be working with a committee. In that case my fee will be $10,000, and I don't know whether I'll take the damned commission.'

"I believe,' Lynwood concluded, 'it was Stuart Chase who said the giraffe looked like an animal that had been put together by a committee.' "

AUG 18 1957 FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

Dobie Families Are Among First To Headright Claimants in Texas

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

From November 1835 until January 1838 when the General Land Office began to function, no titles to land were issued in Texas. Thousands of individuals in the republic, some recent arrivals, some who had become citizens years back under Mexican law, clamored for their headrights — legal authorization to locate and acquire title to specified amounts of land out of the public domain. Land fever raged and fraudulent claims polluted the air like smog over modern Los Angeles.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

A board of land commissioners in Harrisburg (now Harris) County, and other such boards in other counties, all newly "created" by the Republic of Texas, exercised for a while the main functions of the General Land Office.

The procedure for a claimant was to appear before the board of land commissioners and prove by witnesses or otherwise the date of his arrival in Texas and the fact of his continuing citizenship.

If satisfied by the testimony, the board issued to the claimant a certificate for the land due him. A single man who had arrived in Texas prior to the Declaration of Independence, March 2, 1836, was entitled to a third of a league of land (1,476 acres); one who came between March 2, 1836, and Oct. 1, 1837, was entitled to 640 acres; one who came after that date got only 320 acres. The Board of Land Commissioners of Harrisburg County, presided over until he died by Nathaniel J. Dobie, was the most active of all the county boards. Their records were in time transferred to the General Land Office in Austin.

NATHANIEL EULOGIZED.

On April 21, 1838, the Telegraph and Texas Register printed the following obituary:

"Died in this city on the morning of the 17th instant, Mr. Nathaniel James Dobie, of the commercial house of Dobie and McCaskill, aged 25 years. The deceased has been a resident of this county four years; among the thousands who have had dealings with him, there is none to say but that he was a just man. All knew him, many loved him, all respected him, none censured him."

Daniel McCaskill now asked Nathaniel's brother Sterling, who had been closely associated with the firm, to close out the business. He did. He also became administrator of Nathaniel's estate —and took 18 years in making the final settlement with McCaskill.

Sterling Neblett Dobie, born in 1816, landed at Velasco, Texas, fresh from Virginia, in December of 1834. According to one witness who in 1838 supported his claim to a headright of 1-3 league of land, he was at San Antonio with the Texas Army late in 1835. According to another witness, he was there as a citizen. If he was with the Army, his failure to get the land bonus granted to veterans of the war against Mexico can not be explained. Where he was during April 1836 I know not but guess he was working eastward along with most of the other settlers.

STERLING ADMINISTRATOR.

In June of 1835 William Dobie left Texas for Virginia to bring some of his children back but died soon after rejoining them. Two of his sons were already in Texas. In 1838 a third son, Robert Neville Dobie, born Sept. 18, 1818, my grandfather, arrived. On Sept. 6 of that year the Dobie heirs remaining in Virginia signed a document making Sterling Dobie administrator of the estates of his father William and his brother Nathaniel.

As administrator of his father's estate, Sterling N. Dobie appeared with witnesses before the Board of Land Commissioners of Liberty County, on March 23, 1838. The facts, as established by witnesses, of William Dobie's paternity, emigration, and demise, entitled his heirs to the league and labor of land due the head of a household. They received Headright Certificate No. 274 for ¾ths of a league and one labor of land, a ¼th league having already been granted. Certificates permitted location of land out of the public domain anywhere in the republic, later anywhere in the state. In August, field notes on 1909 surveyed acres lying along East San Jacinto River were filed in Montgomery County. The field notes were officially approved the next year, thus assuring title and liability to taxes. Patent to the land was not signed, however, until 1844, by the President of the Republic of Texas, Sam Houston. (Some Texas surveys never have been patented.)

SCRIPT BOUGHT, SOLD.

As buyers of lottery tickets often pick out scattered numbers, many owners of Texas landscript scattered their surveys. The administrator of the William Dobie estate believed in scattering, also in not being in a hurry.

More land was still due the heirs of the William Dobie Headright Certificate No. 274. In 1852 the administrator had the residue, 1,589 acres, surveyed in a part of Liberty County that later became San Jacinto County and got a patent on it. He had made some efforts to liquidate the estate, but land and land certificates were begging for buyers.

Moreover, higher ground to the west and north of the early settlements was being taken up by many settlers. They preferred drouth to the unremitting chills and fever, doctored with quinine and calomel, of timbered bottoms, salt grass prairies, and swamps along the coast. The relation between mosquitoes and malaria was yet unknown, but getting out of mosquito country was a blessing.

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM APR. 12, 1959 Section Seven.

About Texas and Texans

Panther Scares More Common in Old Days

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The first scary story I can remember was of a panther. That was a long time ago when I was a child. I guess I'll never get too old to enjoy panther stories. As there aren't many panthers any more, children don't grow up as scared of them as children of wilderness days were. Not that I ever belonged to the wilderness. It wasn't always necessary for a panther to be around in order to have a scary panther story.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

W. S. Willis of 2311 Ave. E in Fort Worth has just published a book of reminiscences entitled "The Big Texas Ranches," in which he tells the following:

While he was ranching in Dawson County, a report got out that a big "Mexican lion" was killing calves and colts in the country. One dark night while Willis and a cowboy named Holloway were riding home through the Willis horse pasture, Holloway trailing behind Willis, he let out a yell. "The Mexican lion is after us!" His horse was good on the takeoff and he whipped him and spurred him past Willis and went clattering down the trail. Willis was trying to get his horse to move a little faster when he looked back and saw something galloping right close to him. It was a white horse with black mane and tail loose in the horse pasture. He must have wanted company. When Willis got to the ranch a little later Holloway had his Winchester and was ready to shoot the "Mexican lion."

* * *

FROM WISCONSIN.

A real panther story has come to me from H. K. Johnson of San Antonio. He heard it from his mother and her brother.

His grandfather, Charles Rublee, came to Texas from Racine, Wis. because of sympathies with the South. After he married Edna Frederick of Fort Worth he lost everything he had trying to raise wheat in Dallas County. Then he and his family, consisting of a wife and three children, moved to a cotton farm in Kaufman County. The house they lived in was only partly finished. It had no ceiling. One could look up and see the rafters and shingles. A big fireplace in the big front room was used not only for warming the house but for cooking. The kitchen flue had been started but not completed. There was a hole in the roof for the flue to go through but the bricks had not stopped it up. There was no door between the kitchen and the front room—only a doorway. In cold weather a blanket stopped this up so that some of the heat would stay in the front room. This front room was a bedroom and living room as well as kitchen. When it rained, water came down through the flue hole in the kitchen, but a tarp had been tacked up so as to catch the water and drain it into a bucket on a chair.

* * *

POPPING CORN.

After the family made a good crop of cotton and price was fair, Charles Rublee went to Dallas to buy lumber and other materials for finishing the house. While he was gone the weather turned cold and drizzly. The rest of the story is in the words of Harry J. Johnson. This happened about 1898:

"Early in the night, Grandmother and the children were popping corn and singing at the fireplace when they heard a caterwauling outside. She knew of a local character who liked to scare people with ghost stories and practical jokes; so she went to the door and shouted for him to go away or she would start shooting with her six-shooter. People knew she was a good shot. The noise stopped and Grandmother soothed the children and they resumed their diversion. After a while a noise in the unfinished kitchen indicated that the bucket on the chair had been knocked over.

"Two or three freshly killed hogs were hanging in the kitchen, as there was no smoke house on the place. Grandmother figured that some kind of varmint had got into the house. She told Grace (my mother-to-be) to hold the lamp while Clarence pulled back the blanket curtain so that she could get a clear shot at whatever was in the kitchen. When the light from the lamp fell into the kitchen, they saw the trouble. It was a big panther. He had come through the hole in the roof and was about to go out with part of one of the freshly killed hogs in his jaws.

"Clarence was only 9 or 10 and in his fright he let go of the blanket, which fell and knocked the lamp from Grace's hand. In the darkness Grandmother snapped a shot or two in the direction of the panther and told the kids to run to the fire. My mother tells that after a quick search and nose counting Grandmother found her hidden between the mattress and the bed springs. She was only six or seven at the time. From the way the varmint set up a terrible screaming and clawing and scratching on the roof, Grandmother figured he had been hit. She shot through the roof at the sound many times, reloading the pistol several times. Grandfather later teased her about making the roof leak like a sieve.

* * *

CAT FOUND DEAD.

"There was no sleep in the house that night. The noise finally stopped, and Grandmother kept up a vigil until Grandfather returned just before daybreak. She shouted a warning when she heard the wagon approaching. Grandfather readied his Winchester and steadied the nervous horses. They were pretty jumpy with the panther scent heavy all around.

"The cat was found dead after daylight, about 70 yards from the house. He had been shot several times. Mother says that to her he looked as big as a horse with a tail as long as a wagon tongue, but of course all things, especially terrifying things, look awfully big to a child."

J. Frank Dobie

S.A. Light 8-18-57
AUG 18 1957
SAN ANTONIA LIGHT

Settlers Clamor for Land

By J. FRANK DOBIE

From November, 1835, until January, 1838, when the general land office began to function, no titles to land were issued in Texas. Thousands of individuals in the republic, some recent arrivals, some who had become citizens years back under Mexican law, clamored for their headrights—legal authorization to locate and acquire title to specified amounts of land out of the public domain. Land fever raged and fraudulent claims polluted the air like smog over modern Los Angeles. A board of land commissioners in Harrisburg (now Harris) county, and other such boards in other counties, all newly "created" by the Republic of Texas, exercised for a while the main functions of the general land office.

DOBIE

The procedure for a claimant was to appear before the board of land commissioners and prove by witnesses or otherwise the date of his arrival in Texas and the fact of his continuing citizenship. If satisfied by the testimony, the board issued to the claimant a certificate for the land due him. A single man who had arrived in Texas prior to the declaration of independence, March 2, 1936, was entitled to a third of a league of land (1475 acres); one who came between March 2, 1836, and Oct. 1, 1837, was entitled to 640 acres; one who came after that date got only 320 acres. The board of land commissioners of Harrisburg county, presided over until he died by Nathaniel J. Dobie, was the most active of all the county boards. Their records were in time transferred to the general land office in Austin.

Dobie Death

On April 21, 1838, the Telegraph and Texas Register printed the following obituary:

"Died in this city on the morning of the 17th instant, Mr. Nathaniel James Dobie, of the commercial house of Dobie and McCaskill, aged 25 years. The deceased has been a resident of this county four years; among the thousands who have had dealings with him, there is none to say but that he was a just man. All knew him, many loved him, all respected him, none censured him."

Daniel McCaskill now asked Nathaniel's brother, Sterling, who had been closely associated with the firm, to close out the business. He did. He also became administrator of Nathaniel's estate—and took 18 years in making the final settlement with McCaskill.

Sterling Neblett Dobie, born in 1816, landed at Velasco, Texas, fresh from Virginia, in December of 1834. According to one witness who in 1838 supported his claim to a headright of one-third league of land, he was at San Antonio with the Texas army late in 1835. According to another witness, he was there as a citizen. If he was with the army, his failure to get the land bonus granted to veterans of the war against Mexico cannot be explained. Where he was during April, 1836, I know not but guess he was working eastward along with most of the other settlers.

Left Texas

In June of 1835 William Dobie left Texas for Virginia to bring some of his children back but died soon after rejoining them. Two of his sons were already in Texas. In 1838 a third son, Robert Neville Dobie, born Sept. 18, 1818, my grandfather, arrived. On Sept. 6 of that year the Dobie heirs remaining in Virginia signed a document making Sterling Dobie administrator of the estates of his father, William and his brother, Nathaniel.

As administrator of his father's estate, Sterling N. Dobie appeared with witnesses before the board of land commissioners of Liberty county, On March 23, 1838. The facts, as established by witnesses, of William Dobie's paternity, emigration, and demise, entitled his heirs to the league and labor of land due the head of a household. They received Headright Certificate No. 274 for three-fourths of a league and one labor of land, a one-fourth league having already been granted. Certificates permitted location of land out of the public domain anywhere in the republic, later anywhere in the state. In August, field notes on 1909 surveyed acres lying along East San Jacinto river were filed in Montgomery county. The field notes were officially approved the next year, thus assuring title and liability to taxes. Patent to the land was not signed, however, until 1844, by the president of the Republic of Texas, Sam Houston. (Some Texas surveys never have been patented.)

Scattered

As buyers of lottery tickets often pick out scattered numbers, many owners of Texas landscript scattered their surveys. The administrator of the William Dobie estate believed in scattering, also in not being in a hurry. Land was so cheap that a third of a survey often went to the surveyor, provided he pay the slight costs of getting a title; but surveyors wanted money, not land. Money was the scarcest form of property in Texas until the 1880s and land the cheapest. Reversion of land to public ownership by default on taxes was common. Land script was not taxable; it was bought and sold like shares in a corporation; many holders of script delayed locating the land called for in order to avoid expenses and taxes. The longer the delay, the less choise there was in locations.

More land was still due the heirs of the William Dobie Headright Certificate No. 274. In 1852 the administrator had the resid e, 1589 acres, surveyed in a part of Liberty county that later became San Jacinto county and got a patent on it. He had made some efforts to liquidate the estate, but land and land certificates were begging for buyers.

Moreover, higher ground to the west and north of the early settlements was being taken up by many settlers. They preferred drouth to the unremittingg chills and fever, doctored with quinine and calomel, of timbered bottoms, salt grass prairies, and swamps along the coast. The relation between mosquitoes and malaria wa yet unknown, but getting out of mosquito country was a blessing.

APR. 19, 1959

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM BOOKS AND B

Contracting Power Magic

Real Meaning of Rawhide Revealed In True Stories of Old Southwest

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Every week is book week with me, but I like the emphasis on one book week out of the year. My text for this book week is "Arizona Nights," by Stewart Edward White. Several of Stewart Edward White's books are in print, but "Arizona Nights" isn't. It was published in 1907. I'm sure it will be in print again. To my mind the long tale entitled "The Rawhide" in this volume makes the most skillful use of an indigenous theme to be found in the whole gamut of short stories pertaining to the Southwest. The use of rawhide has certainly diminished since the days when a set of harness could almost be made out of it and kept patched up with baling wire. Talk about rawhide has diminished, but its expanding power when wet and contracting power when dry remain, and the hot sun remains.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

According to Walter Noble Burns, in his romanticized biography of Joaquin Murietta, a Mexican by the name of Vicente Gomez "had a way of sewing his Spanish prisoners in fresh oxhides and leaving them on the desert to die in agony as the hides slowly contracted under the heat of a blazing sun." A more lurid account of this form of revenge is depicted by Rev. J. H. Murray in "Travels in Uruguay" (1871). "A soldier of the enemy had been taken," Rev. Mr. Murray writes, "and was put to the most frightful death by being sewn up tightly in a raw cowhide and then placed in the sun. The hide rapidly shrinking slowly squeezed him to death, the blood oozing out of his extremities."

* * *

RUSTLER TREATMENT.

A noted Texas cowman of the trail driving days named Print Olive, after riding up on a rustler burning out the brand on one of his cows, made the thief prisoner, shot the cow, had him skin her, and then wrapped him up in the hide and left him tied there in the sun. In the Chicago "Westerner's Brand Book" of 1958 a writer takes heated exception to Mari Sandoz' version of this story in her sensationalized "The Cattlemen."

According to a recent writer in the Kountze News, that bright and vivid weekly newspaper of Hardin County, during the Civil War and Reconstruction days a band of men called The Night Riders found a thief driving off a cow. They killed her, ripped her open from stern to brisket and sewed this thief up in the cavity, leaving only his head sticking out at the one aperture big enough to hold his neck.

But to get to Stewart Edward White's "The Rawhide." Buck Johnson owned a big ranch in Arizona. He loved the land—when it rained. He belonged to it whether it rained or not. He was getting to be rawhidey himself when he saw an advertisement in a Kansas City newspaper expressing the desire of "an intelligent and refined lady of pleasing appearance" to correspond with "a gentleman of means, object matrimony." He corresponded. A doll-like female named Estrella got off the passenger train one day and was lawfully made wife to Senor Johnson.

The desert country scared her, and she was also bored. She learned about the shrinking power of rawhide when she saw a strip of it being wrapped around the felloe of a wagon wheel.

"One thing alone besides the desert, on which she never seemed tired of looking, fascinated her. Whenever a beef was killed for the uses of the ranch, she commanded strips of the green skin. Then, like a child, she bound them and sewed them and nailed them to substances particularly susceptible to their constricting power. She choked the necks of green gourds; she indented the tender bark of cottonwood shoots; she expended an apparently exhaustless ingenuity on the fabrication of mechanical devices whose principle answered to the pulling of the drying rawhide. And always along the adobe fence could be seen a long row of potatoes bound in skin, some of them fresh and smooth and round, some sweating in the agony of squeezing, some wrinkled and dry and little, the last drops of life tortured out of them. Senor Johnson laughed good humoredly at these toys, puzzled to explain their fascination for his wife."

* * *

A HUSBAND'S REVENGE.

Skipping much, one day after he had had time to become pretty well domesticated, Buck Johnson rode in to the ranch to find that Estrella had eloped with a cowboy named Palmer. He strapped a sixshooter on and took out on their trail. He caught up with them and roped the cowboy just as the cowboy was pulling his sixshooter. Then he tied the cowboy tight, binding his arms down his sides. Estrella didn't have to be roped; she gave up easily.

Not far off was a bunch of steers. Johnson shot one of them dead and skinned it. He dragged the hide up to the eloping lovers and spread it out smooth. Then he "bound the pair together like a bale of goods" and laid them on its cool surface. He threw across them the edges and then deliberately began to wind around and around the huge and unweildy rawhide package a strip he'd cut from the edge of the pelt. After he had finished the tying up he spoke for the first time.

"There, damn you," he said, "I guess you'll be close enough together now."

Then he turned away to look for his horse.

First Dobies in Texas Took Active Interest in and Possession of Land

AUG 11 1957 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have never gone in for ancestor-worship and have observed that people who do generally fail to comprehend the meaning of change. However, through family papers, searching in the records of Harris County, the State Land Office and elsewhere, aided considerably by two friends, I have come to know a good deal about the Dobie men who came to Texas before and during the period of the Republic. Their relationship to Texas land—a relationship representative of the times—may make them interesting to other historical-minded people.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

William Dobie, my great-grandfather, came from Sussex County, Va., in 1830. His wife had recently died. Seven of their nine children were living. He came alone. The head of a family settling in Texas under Mexican law was entitled to a league and a labor of land (4,428.4 acres, plus 177.1 acres, making a total of 4,605.5 acres). Up until 1834, when the allowance was increased to 1-3 league, a single man was entitled to ¼th league. On Aug. 8, 1832, Stephen F. Austin, empowered as colonizer by the Mexican government, signed a certificate granting William Dobie, "soltero" (a man without a wife) ¼th league of land on Middle Bayou in what is now Harris County. The ¼th league was surveyed and passed into his possession later in the year. Whether he lived on it, I do not know. I do not know how he made a living at any time during the four years he was in Texas.

PARTNERSHIP.

In 1934, his son, Nathaniel James Dobie, arrived in Texas prepared to enter the mercantile business. He had just gone into partnership with Daniel McCaskill of Louisiana, a merchant. McCaskill had agreed to put up $5,000 worth of goods, Nathaniel Dobie to put up $1,000. McCaskill was to do the buying in New Orleans and dispose of any fat cattle sent east by his Texas partner.

Harrisburg on Buffalo Bayou, now enveloped by Houston, was the main town between the Brazos and the Trinity rivers. Here, "Mr. Dobie brought dry goods and groceries", and established a store. There is no record that he took cattle in exchange for goods or sent any to Louisiana, but he did trade in cotton. When Santa Anna's army destroyed Harrisburg by fire, in 1836, whatever in the store that was not looted was burned up.

According to legendary anecdote, while Sam Houston was practicing law in Huntsville, any veteran of the Texas-Mexican War who "got into trouble" engaged him for defense. Invariably Sam Houston would put the defendant on the witness stand and, after asking him his name, place of residence, year of arrival in Texas, etc., would conclude, "Where were you on April 21, 1836?" The answer would be, "At the battle of San Jacinto." Then Houston would announce, "Your Honor, the defense rests its case." No matter what evidence the prosecution presented, the jury would bring in a verdict of "not guilty."

DIED YOUNG.

It is natural for history to ask of any able-bodied man who was in Texas at the time, "Where were you on April 21, 1836?" Probably not ten per cent of the English-speaking Texans were in the army. Nathaniel James Dobie was sickly, and he died when only 25. As president of the Harrisburg (Harris) County Board of Land Commissioners in 1838, he was, as the minutes show, recurringly prevented by illness from attending the frequent sessions. But in the early spring of 1836 he was not too sick to tramp around in rain and mud on the prospect of land profits.

For something over three weeks, beginning on March 23, while the Texas army was gaining strength by retreating in front of Santa Anna's advance eastward, Nathaniel was casually associated with two promoters named William Fairfax Gray and Robert Triplett. The first kept an often-cited diary and the second published an autobiography. They were negotiating loans to the new Texas government, to be secured by rights to public lands at 50 cents an acre, and were looking over unpreempted areas around Galveston Bay.

At the same time, having concluded that the future city of Texas would grow up beside Galveston harbor, Dr. R. C. Neblett, from Neblett's Bluff on the Sabine River, was on Galveston Island and adjacent mainland staking off sections of land. His young relative Nathaniel Dobie was along, in all probability with an interest beyond that of guide and helper. William Fairfax Gray wanted in on the Galveston project.

RUNAWAY SCRAPE.

Neblett took the lead in trying to get President Burnett of the Texas government, which was very busy eluding the Mexican army, to sign certain land papers. On April 18, three days before "Remember the Alamo" was yelled out on the San Jacinto prairie, Gray, Triplett, Neblett and Dobie took out for the east bank of the Sabine River, toward which the vast majority of Texas settlers, men as well as women and children, were struggling in a mob madness called the Runaway Scrape.

In June, back in Harrisburg, Nathaniel dispatched L. B. Harris on horseback to Calcasieu, La., for "valuable papers which he had sent there to be out of reach of the Mexicans." As soon as possible, he re-established the store — necessarily in makeshift quarters — while the town of Houston was being laid out a few miles up Buffalo Bayou to supplant Harrisburg. On May 13, 1837, he and his partner signed a supplementary contract in which it was agreed that the two should share equally in profits and losses and that henceforth the firm should be Dobie and McCaskill. By the end of the year the store had been moved to Houston. But a financial panic was on in the United States and the near worthlessness of the substitutes for money printed in the form of bank notes by the Republic of Texas augmented the panic here. Dobie and McCaskill pleaded for payments on goods sold on credit and joined other merchants in refusing to accept "Tickets and Change Tickets" for money.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Writers Close to Subjects

County Histories Reveal Texas Character

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I've been looking through my shelf of county histories lately and am struck again with how revealing of old-time life some of them are. The best ones were written either late in the last century or early in this one. The writers were closer to the real thing and in writing had their eye on the real thing and not on the medal. One summer while I was a graduate student in Columbia University in New York I spent two weeks near Lake George, staying at a farmhouse where I was the only boarder. The only book this farmhouse had besides the Bible and an almanac was a county history. I read up the two or three books I had taken along. After fishing and swimming, I would lie in a hammock under an apple tree and enjoy the anecdotes in that county history. There isn't anything better in any history than good character anecdotes.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Following are a few samples from Texas county histories. In 1904 the Old Settlers' Association of Bell County held their fifth annual reunion at Belton. Some written papers were delivered and later published. From one of these the following anecdote will illustrate something.

* * *

ENCOURAGES.

"A cow crowd of eight or ten men were hunting cattle on Bee House Creek. A stranger fell in with them; he did not give out his name, but one of the cowboys called him 'Draggle Tail,' and the name stuck. He stayed in camp that night, and next morning a gun was missing. Everybody knew that Draggle Tail was the thief. When accused, he explained that he had hid the gun in the dark with the intention of taking it with him. He located it under a clump of tall grass. The men thought he ought to be punished, but did not want to injure him seriously. They also thought he ought to be encouraged to leave Coryell County.

"After considerable consultation, the boys concluded to give him a taste of the cowwhip, which consisted of a stock about eighteen inches long, with the heavy plaited rawhide whip and lash about fifteen feet long attached. An expert could split the hide of a cow at one lick. Mr. Draggle Tail, who rode a good pony, was allowed to select a man out of the crowd to do the whipping and was to have a start of fifteen feet and a chance to go free if he could outrun the cowboy; otherwise he was to take the lash for half a mile every time the cowboy could reach him with the whip.

"He selected Thomas Deaton to do the whipping, a very unfortunate choice, for Deaton was the most expert man in the crowd with a whip and had a fast horse. Deaton gave him twenty feet the start and told him to 'go'. Off they went and about the third jump Deaton's whip split the clothing on his back, a few more licks reached the hide, and when Deaton left him the blood was streaming from his back. Mr. Draggle Tail was never seen nor heard of in that county any more."

* * *

PICTURE ACCOUNTS.

I could fill several columns with quotable material from "History and Reminiscences of Denton County," by Ed F. Bates, 1918. This is one of the outstanding county histories of Texas. It contains an anecdote that I've met in other writing and have heard more than once. Does that mean that more than one man who could not write kept store accounts with pictures and failed to perfect his pictures? I call this a traveling anecdote — "Cheese or Grindstone?"

"At a store kept in Old Alton about 1849, Sam Sprinkles was a general roustabout. He could not read or write. He would sell articles once in a while and make characters on the slate to represent the goods. One man who came in to pay his account found himself charged with cheese. He said, 'We make our cheese at home; I never bought a cheese in my life.' Sam Sprinkles was called in and said, 'I never sold this man a cheese; it was a grindstone, and when I put it down on the slate I failed to make the hole in the center.' "

E. B. Fleming, in his "Early History of Hopkins County, Texas," 1902, used more space to apologize for whiskey drinkers than he used in telling how they carried whiskey. This is a delightful county history. I quote only one paragraph:

"There was one whiskey house in the village of Tarrant, owned and run by Tom Louden. Tin cups were used for glasses, and gourds for dippers. When court adjourned each juryman bought a Spanish gourd of whiskey, hung the gourd by means of a rawhide string tied around its middle to the horn of the saddle, and hied himself to his home."

* * *

POWERFUL PRAYER.

You can't call Captain J. C. Terrell's "Reminiscences of the Early Days of Fort Worth," published in 1906, a county history, though most of the incidents recounted occurred in Tarrant County. Captain Terrell had something that no Department of Education has ever had — a sense of humor. He tells of attending with other lawyers a session of court held in Wise County at Decatur, the county seat, in 1866. Arriving in Decatur the Saturday before court was to open the following Monday, the lawyers found a camp meeting four miles out attracting the town people like a magnet. The lawyers drove out. This is Captain Terrell's sketch of one of the pillars of the camp meeting.

"Old Brother D., a wealthy cattle owner, was possessed of the spasmodic and intermittent religion then prevailing; he would rejoin the church and pray in public in summer, then fall out and get cold in winter. He was small of stature and was perhaps the only cattleman in Texas who wore a plug hat. He possessed an unusually loud, deep, musical voice, in volume equal to that of Mohamet's crier. He was not for prophecy or exhortation. He was powerful in prayer. Indeed, public prayer was his specialty. He was noted for using mellifluous and sometimes unmeaning words; just so they had bigness and sound, they suited him. Petroleum was at this time being advertised in the papers, though many people had not yet burned it. It had been developed during the war. During the height of the emotional excitement of the night services, Brother D. was called upon to pray. On the way back to Decatur we tried to recall his exact words. I remember the beginning and conclusion only. They ran something like this:

" 'O, thou all-sufficient, inefficient, self-sufficient being, O, thou almighty, all-powerful, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, petroleum, insignificant, Lord Jesus H. Christ — eh — Jehova God — eh — when thou art tired and done serving thyself with us on earth — eh — wilt thou take us into that upper and better kingdom, prepared — eh — from the foundation of the earth, for the devil and his angels!'

"Several cried, 'God grant it!' but a presiding elder exclaimed, 'God Almighty, forbid!' "

About Texas and Texans

Wealth in Memories Surpasses All Other

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM MAY 24 1959

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

"I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows."

What, friendly reader, does that line from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" signify to you? Comparatively few people on this side of the Atlantic have seen wild thyme growing on its native English soil. It is a kind of mint, not prepossessing to look at, and the name is pronounced about half-way tween time and tim; perhaps also some newspaper readers do not know that "blows" means blooms.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The only kind of reading that means anything to anyone, in the end, is the kind that enters into one—and so the banalities of the morning paper not only means nothing in the long run but subtract from potentiality to absorb something of lasting meaning. I must have been in college before "A Midsummer Night's Dream" became a part of my being.

* * *

ANCIENT, COMMODIOUS.

While I was at Cambridge University during World War II, I met two nieces of the late Cecil Rhodes, whose expansion of the British Empire in Africa is already being forgotten while his establishment of the Rhodes Scholarships at Oxford will keep his memory green for centuries to come.

These nieces lived in an ancient and commodious house on a piece of farm land out several miles from the town of Cambridge. I went out there on invitation two or three times. One time in the merry month of May, or maybe it was in the leafy month of June, we walked from the house to the top of a ridge along which runs—or walks—an ancient road used only by walkers and bicyclers. On this ridge one of the Rhodes ladies called my attention to wild thyme. I can't even remember how it looked, but I remember how glad it made me through association with the line in "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Like thousands of other lines of true poetry, its meaning has been extended many times far beyond itself. I have been rereading the reminiscences of an old-time Texan named Roland Gouger as published in the Cotulla "Record" of LaSalle County, nearly 30 years ago. Here is a passage from his recollections:

"A little cowman named Fayette Avent, who didn't own many cattle, who rode a mule always instead of a horse, and who was an expert at roping mavericks, lived on Raices Creek. He and his wife and two small children lived in a one-room house with a brush arbor—a ramada—in front of it. In those days—along in the early 80s—everybody in that part of the country who owned anything in the way of a ranch house had a brush arbor. It made the place cooler. If it was near water and the woman of the house was active or if she had some active Mexican help, the ground under the arbor was kept sprinkled with water. Hanging from a rafter of the arbor was a clay olla wrapped with burlap sacking. This sacking was kept wet so that the evaporation made the clay and the water within it cooler. The arbor's shade and the dampened ground made a mighty pleasant place in which to sit to drink coffee and linger long and perhaps have pleasant talk."

* * *

IN THE BIG BEND.

When I read this pleasant recollection, "a bank whereon the wild thyme blows" came to my mind, and then crowding each other a whole string of places that have called out, "O linger here." These pleasant places are not generalized at all in my memory. Each is particular at a particular time, under particular circumstances. Perhaps the one nearest in physical qualities to Fayette Avent's arbor is, or was Chata's at Terlingua on the Rio Grande in the Big Bend.

One year my gay, bright-spirited friend Frederick Simpich, now dead, who was on the staff of the National Geographic, came by Austin insisting that I go with him to the Big Bend while he absorbed something and a photographer took pictures of many things for an article on the Rio Grande that Fred was doing.

I had plenty of fish of my own to fry, but I couldn't resist the temptation to go along for the company and the outing. Fred's photographer was a Lothario sort of fellow. A Texan from a Big Bend country town with a Chamber of Commerce purposefulness met us at Del Rio. He supplied some useful information and made Fred and me enjoy each other's company even more.

* * *

PANTHER MEAT.

By the time we got to Chata's we were ready to be refreshed. She was even more a refreshing personality than the Mexican beer and cabrito she served on a table covered with a white tablecloth out under the ramada. I'll die remembering the air she created. We did not want to leave Chata and her arbor at all but had planned to cross the Rio Grande horseback to get into a truck. Long after dark it delivered us to a ranch where we ate panther meat.

Jim Wooten, with whom I went to college, who used to be county superintendent of schools in Colorada County, lives in Columbus, owning a ranch a few miles out. I've been through Columbus on the Colorado River many times, never without enjoying the Spanish moss hanging from the great oak trees in and around the town.

One time I went there to see Jim Wooten. I can't recall whether it was his house or a house near his that spoke so delightfully to me. It makes no difference. There was an old-time low-palinged fence around the yard and a walk under big trees that led to a wide, wide front gallery of an oldtime Southern-style house. Trees and the shade on the grass and the ample gallery with rocking chairs and the Spanish moss swinging down from the trees all called out, "O linger here."

That is another "bank whereon the wild thyme blows." I could go on. I wouldn't trade the riches of such memories for any other kind of riches.

MAR 22 1955

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Tale of Knife Fight in Locked Room At Midnight Told by Scarred Man

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I can't recall now when or where I first came upon the story of Jim Bowie's fighting a duel with a Spaniard in the locked room of a rock house at midnight. The story fascinated me by its very grisliness, and it still fascinates me. I've often wondered if such a duel really took place. The story is but one canto in an epic of Bowie Knife stories fastened on Jim Bowie. Whether factual or not, it's true to life.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Now I have found a kind of satire or burlesque on the story, but the burlesquing gets so realistic that you forget it's not real. We all want to shiver, and directly I'm going to start you shivering with a story taken from Palmer Cox's collection of narratives entitled "Frontier Humor," first published in 1895 and now never heard of.

According to Palmer Cox, he met somewhere in the South a fellow by the name of Jim Dudley bearing a scar on his forehead. Jim Dudley saw the stranger's interest in the scar—and then he couldn't be stopped. He was riding across Texas, he said, when his horse played out. He had to walk, carrying his saddle, several miles until he came to a village and put up at a kind of hotel.

Dominating and bullying everybody who came into the bar-room at this hotel was an individual named Glass-eyed Bill. His glass eye was constantly falling out, and if anybody made fun of him while he was going after it rolling around on the floor, he'd skewer him with a Bowie knife. A kind-hearted citizen warned Jim Dudley about Glass-eyed Bill in these words:

"He likes best to fight in a dark room, 'cause thar's no chance of gettin' on the blind side of him thar, and the landlord not long ago fixed up one on purpose to accommodate him, he had so much fightin' to do."

There was a duel in the dark room that night, though Jim Dudley didn't hear about it until the next morning. The landlord said that the blood left by Glass-eyed Bill's victim made the floor slippery. That morning Jim Dudley bought a mule to continue his journey on. Glass-eyed Bill said he was going to take the mule. He didn't expect any opposition He got it, though, on the principle that "it ain't allers the longest-horned cow that does the most hookin'." There wasn't anything to do but go to the dark room.

"The landlord held the door open until we were in opposite corners with our knives out; then he shut and locked it and left us to work out our own salvation, as the missionary did the South Sea Islanders when he overheard 'em talkin' about the best way of cookin' him the next mornin'.

"Wasn't it dark in thar though? And still? You could have heered a lizard a-breathin' in thar, it was so quiet.

* * *

BREATHING FAST.

"I allowed Glass-eyed Bill was expectin' that I would go a-shufflin' and a-huntin' around for him, but I had no sich foolish notion. I cal'lated if thar was any findin' to be done he'd have to do it, for I was determined to stand right thar till I'd drop in my tracks before I'd go a-s'archin' around for him.

"I commenced breathin' about twice a minute, and not makin' any more noise at it than a wall-bug, nuther. But for all that I heered him a-movin' over towards me. Maybe he could smell me. Anyhow, he somehow or another got right over thar whar I was standin'. Purty soon I felt somethin' a-stingin' along my forehead thar, and I suspected at once that it was the knife that was feelin' around for me; so I reckoned it wouldn't be long until he was a-proddin' of it somewhere else, and like the boy with the candy bag, I cal'l'ted the fust poke was everythin'; so I made one sudden and determined plunge and a sort of upward rip, at the same time, cal'latin' to do all the damage I could right at once while I was about it.

"He heered me start, and thought to squat down before I got the knife into him I reckon. Though his intentions were good, he only spread the disaster, like the gal who tried to put the fire out with the corn broom, for as he was gwine down, the knife was rizin', and the result was truly astonishin'. I'll be smashed if he didn't fly open from eend to eend like a ripe pea pod. It was done so alfired quick, too, that he didn't realize how bad he was hurt, I think. Ses he, 'We'll try that over ag'in, stranger.' As he spoke, he started to git up, but fell away seemin'ly in two different directions.

" 'Not on this side, we won't,' I ses, as I went huntin' around for the door.

* * *

QUICK WORK.

"I was surprised as much as him the way things had turned out, for when I stepped into that room I looked on it as steppin' into another world. When the door was found I commenced knockin' and purty soon the landlord came and opened it. He couldn't see me at fust, but allowed it was the bully that was thar, of course, and ses he: —

" 'You made purty quick work of it this time; that feller won't want to buy any more mules arter this, I take it.'

" 'No,' ses I, steppin' out, 'nor claim a critter that doesn't belong to him nuther.'

" 'What!' he cried, jumpin' back with a look upon his face that tole me at once he was mi'ty displeased at the way things war developin', 'is it you? Whar's Glass-eyed Bill?' he contin'ed, shadin' his eyes with his hand and peerin' into the darkness.

" 'He's lyin' around in thar somewhar,' I answered careless like, jest that way. 'The head-half of him is nigh the door here, paralyzed, I reckon; the leg part is somewhere over in the corner thar whar ye hear the kickin'; you mout as well be gettin' yer bucket and dust-pan ready, for you'll have qutie a job gettin' all the pieces together ag'in, I'm thinkin'. I contin'ed in this indifferent way, while walkin' out toward the bar-room.

"You never did see a feller so set back in your life. He looked at me as though I had as many heads onto me as the beast we read about in the Scripters. I'll allers believe that he was in cahoot with old Glass-eye, and jist kept him thar to pick quarrels with strangers so they could have the pickin' over of thar effects.

" 'Arter washin' my hands and platerin' up the cut on my forehead a little, I went out and saddled the mule, and the crowd all came out to see me gwine off. I reckon if I had stopped in the village I could have had things about my own way for some time. Before I rode off I turned round to 'em and ses:

" 'When you git so frightened of a bully ag'in that you daren't sneeze within 40 feet of him, jest send for me, and I'll open him up ready for saltin' while you'd be wipin' your mouth.' "

J. FRANK DOBIE

American

Statesman

The Civil War began in Kansas several years before it began elsewhere when John Brown made the raid on Harper's Ferry for the purpose of freeing slaves. After the Civil War had ended elsewhere it went on being fought in Kansas owing to the invasion of "cow crowds" of Confederate veterans — then young and in the prime of vinegary disposition — with herds of longhorned cattle and Spanish horses from Texas. Grandpa Dubose and Mr. Jasper Miller and others would say: "Yes, Kansas is the Sunflower State all right. It's got more sunflowers, more sunshine and more sonsofbitches than any other state in the Union."

The only way I could get by with this piece of flattering eulogy, up there on a Kansas platform, was to smile and demonstrate evolution in the mind of at least one Texan. I remembered how John Wesley Hardin—one of the Texas heroes who drove up the trail to Kansas—once shot a Negro sitting on a cornfield fence in southern Texas while whistling "John Brown's Body (or Soul) Goes Marching On." John Wesley Hardin had ordered the Negro to stop whistling that tune, but he didn't stop soon enough. I didn't grow up with any sort of veneration for Julia Ward Howe's "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," modeled on "John Brown's Body," in which his soul goes "marching on." Without knowing details about John Brown, I shared the Southern view that he was a horrible madman from Kansas devoid of one redeeming virtue. If I had heard that Emerson called him "that new saint led by love of men to make the gallows glorious like the cross," I should have regarded Emerson as no better than John Brown.

How does a person's mind graduate, anyhow? It was not until I came to teach American history in Cambridge University while the Nazi bombers were devastating parts of London that I read Stephen Vincent Benet's "John Brown's Body" — characterized by Henry Steele Commager as "the best short history of the Civil War and the best long poem in American literature."

Well, I guess America still means a place in which a person can change his own mind and have his own thoughts, though a remarkable lot of printing presses don't care to publish a remarkable lot of thoughts. After talking along in the way I have been talking here —except that I always think of the best things to say after I have sat down — I opened Benet's "John Brown's Body," there on a Kansas platform, on a Fourth of July, and read the passages about John Brown's raid, trial, and hanging, ending with the song his bones keep making.

"Ask the tide why it rises with the moon,
My bones and I have risen like that tide,
And an immortal anguish plucks us up
And will not hide us until our song is done."

And I tried to drive home the idea that the song and the struggle for freedom are not yet "done."

Many Texans have made many noises in Kansas, but I will bet that while I was making my first Fourth of July speech I was first also among Texans in Kansas to burst forth on John Brown in a hymnal sort of way.

I've been what is popularly called "lecturing" at the Kansas State Teachers College, in Emporia, for going on two weeks. Anybody who spend two weeks anywhere on earth—in bed or about, alone in a desert or scrouged up in a metropolis, silently or vocably, comfortably or uncomfortably—just anywhere, under any circumstances, should be able to make some kind of report interesting to other people. Bright women gifted with power to make "divine chitchat" usually make the most entertaining reports, sometimes penetrating. All I am is a kind of professional reporter. JUL 21 1957

Emporia is celebrating its hundreth anniversary and part of the college's contribution to the celebration was to furnish a Fourth of July speaker to an audience of both town and college people. I was called upon for the first Fourth of July speech of my life. I know very well that the tried and proven formula for this occasion is to eulogize the past, flatter the present—that is, the hearers—and prophesy a glorious future. I'm utterly without prophetic vision, am always bored by elogy, and am averse to flattering except when I want something, and on this occasion I did not want anything but to get out of it. This is where the politicians who usually make the Fourth of July speeches come in; they always want something—votes. A Kansas congressman was on the platform with me. I was cheating him out of a fine chance to eulogize and flatter his fellow-patriots. Yet he was so cordial that I thought he'd wring my hand off before he released his clasp. I think he forgot that I couldn't vote in his district. Habit makes lots of baldheaded men comb their hair.

Now, you try to make a Fourth of July speech without eulogy, flattery or prophesy and see what you can say. I can tell you that my sleep was very uneasy the night before the Glorious Fourth. I called to mind the first cowboy autobiography to get published, "A Texas Cowboy," by Charlie Siringo, written while he was wintering cattle out from Caldwell, Kansas, in 1884-1885. In the preface to his rollicky narrative he tells what a devil of a time he had finding a subject to write on until he hit on the idea of "a history of my own short but rugged life." Kansas people, I learned a good while ago, are not particularly different from Texas people except in such things as having laws that prevent a hot traveler from buying a beer on Sunday—the very day on which one should have that peace of mind conducive to especial enjoyment of cold beer. I had no idea of standing up in Kansas like Charlie Siringo and entering into a history of my own neither short nor rugged life, but I decided to start off with the conception of Kansas that I got as a boy from listening to Grandpa Dubose, Mr. Jasper Miller and other Confederate soldiers who had come up the trail to Kansas.

Antidote to Ignorance

Herodotus Wrote Particularly and Realistically of All Types Horses

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

It's the time of year when writers talk about books they have read—sometimes only by title—and advise the public on what books to give for Christmas. I have no advice, but want to talk about Herodotus. He wrote his immortal history about the Persian attempts to conquer Greece which reached their climax under Xerxes 480 years before Christ, while Herodotus was living. I meant to read him long ago; now it seems all right that I waited, for surely at no other time of life could I have enjoyed him more. He tells about people and is full of anecdotes and not until toward the end of the book does he get to the battle at the pass of Thermopylae, with which the noblest sentence pertaining to Texas will always link the Alamo.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Aside from being wonderfully interesting, Herodotus is an antidote to ignorance that discounts everything prior to the present. Anybody, for instance, who reads Herodotus will discover that cowboys did not invent horses and riding. Here is Herodotus' description of the pony express more than 23 centuries before Buffalo Bill rode west of the Mississippi.

PERSIAN MESSENGERS.

"Nothing mortal travels so fast as these Persian messengers. The entire plan is a Persian invention, and this is the method of it. Along the whole line of road there are men (they say) stationed with horses, in number equal to the number of days which the journey takes, allowing one man and one horse to each day. These men will not be hindered from accomplishing at their best speed the distance which they have to go, either by snow, or rain, or heat, or the darkness of night. The first rider delivers his dispatch to the second, and the second passes it on to the third; and so it is borne from hand to hand along the whole line, like the light in the torch-race which the Greeks celebrate to Hephaestus."

Sometimes it freezes the mind to consider how "winged words" flame across the ages. Inscribed, very appropriately, above the entrance to the main postoffice building in New York City is a version of a sentence from Herodotus just quoted: "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat nor gloom stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

Books have been written about the importation of camels to Texas from the Near East by the U. S. War Department under Jefferson Davis, shortly before the War Between the States. They were to transport freight across the deserts to California. They served very well, but that was the Horse Age; they stampeded horses and antipathy for them by horsemen seems to have been the main reason why they were not used beyond initial experiments. If Jefferson Davis had read Herodotus he might have been warned.

CROESUS LOST OUT.

In a battle against Lydians, Cyrus the Great, king of the Persians, "collected together all the camels that had come in the train of his army to carry the provisions and the baggage, and taking off their loads, he mounted riders upon them accoutred as horsemen. These he commanded to advance in front of his other troops against the Lydian cavalry. As he knew, the horse has a natural dread of the camel, and can not abide either the sight or smell of that animal. True to strategy, the Lydian war-horses upon seeing and smelling the camels "turned round and galloped off," thus giving Cyrus complete victory.

The defeated general was Croesus, embalmed permanently in a folk phrase, "as rich as Croesus." A short time later before this battle, Croesus, at his capital, the now extinct city of Sardis, heard that the suburbs were swarming with snakes and that his horses had quit grazing on grass to eat them. This sounds like folklore; Herodotus frequently repeats folk tales as a part of the record, warning the reader that they are not facts. However this may be, I have a few authentic records of the eating of flesh by horses. Certainly it is known that the Icelanders feed their hardy ponies on fish. Herodotus tells that the Paeonians, a people of Asia Minor, fed their horses on fish drawn up in baskets from a lake wherein the fish simply swarmed.

One of the keys to understanding horses, as well as other animals, lies in the sense of smell. Herodotus has an episode connected with smell and horses that is parelleled by one in the story of the conquest of Mexico by Cortes. There is no space for the Cortes story; the other is sufficient for the principle.

IMPOSTER TOOK OVER.

Cyrus the Great was succeeded by the fantastic Cambyses, who in madness killed himself. Then an imposter took over the rule of Persia—most of the then known world. Darius and six other noble Persians banded together to kill him and after succeeding agreed that the one among them to rule should be chosen in the following manner:

"They would ride out together the next morning into the suburbs of the city, and he whose steed first neighed after the sun was up should have the kingdom.

"Now Darius had a sharp-witted groom named Oebares. After the meeting broke up, Darius sent for him and said, 'Oebares, early tomorrow morning we are to mount our horses, and the man whose horse first neighs after the sun is up is to be king. If you have any cleverness, contrive a plan to make me win the kingdom.' 'Fear not, my master,' the groom replied. 'I have a charm that will not fail.'

"When night came, this Oebares took the mare that was the favorite of the stallion ridden by Darius and tethered her in the suburb to which the riders on the morrow were to ride. Next he brought his master's stallion to the place and led him round and round the mare several times, nearer and nearer at each circuit," the stallion all the while increasing in eagerness to be with the mare. He then brought the stallion back to the stable to await the morning.

OTHERS BOWED DOWN.

At daybreak the Persians, according to agreement, rode forth. When they neared the spot where the mare had been tethered, the horse ridden by Darius "sprang forward and neighed. Then the other nobles with one accord leaped from their steeds and bowed down before him for their king."

This is one version of the business gathered from Persians by Herodotus. Others told him that in the morning just before Darius was to ride out, the groom rubbed his hand against the mare and then held it in his pocket until the right time, when he "drew it forth and put it to the nostrils of his master's horse, which immediately snorted and neighed."

Anyway, Darius became king. Of war horses, race mares, range horses ridden by Amazons, Sythians (like some Plains Indians) riding with scalps of enemies hanging from bridle reins, and in other horse lore Herodotus is particular and realistic.

On Getting Rich Through Rumor

American Statesman
OCT 20 1957

"One time out at Sanderson," Roy Bedichek said, "I went into a restaurant for supper and right away an Easterner-looking feller sat down at the table across from me. There wasn't any other place for him to sit. The room was crowded and one woman was doing all the waiting. Her face was peach red from so much exercise and she kept wiping the sweat out of her eyes.

"When the feller next to me gave his order, he started to ask the waitress something but she was off before he could say scat. When she came with his place after a while, he popped out. 'Say,' he said, 'what are the little animals with chin whiskers I saw over the fence out here on the road into Sanderson?'

" 'Goats,' she replied and was somewhere else.

"In a minute she was back with his coffee. 'People raise goats out here?' he asked.

" 'Yes,' and she was off again.

"Before long she had to come to the table next to ours, and I could see she was trying to avoid his eyes, but she couldn't avoid his voice, raised now to make up for distance. 'What they raise them for?' he asked.

" 'The hair.'

"She was moving off, but he had time for one more word. 'Hair?' he called out.

" 'Yes, mohair.'

"It was a good while before she got within voice reach again. The feller was as good at eating as he was at asking questions. He got up to go. It was hard to tell whether his final sentence was question or assertion. 'You mean they take the pelts off the goats and sell them?'

"As he stepped out the door, the waitress addressed the room: 'He thinks people skin goats to get their hair'."

"Sanderson always makes me think of the Lost Nigger Mine," I said. "I was around that country a lot while I was writing the story—in Coronado's Children. Sanderson is where the Reagan brothers got supplies, and where the Seminole who was working for them down on the Rio Grande came after he found the gold. He gave a chunk of the ore for assaying to Lock Campbell, and the prospector Lock Campbell spent the rest of his life grubstaking all who took off from that place. Lost mine hunters think I ought to know something not in the book, and they come to see me for a little more information before they head for Sanderson and the rocks and the chin-whiskered goats on beyond.

"Not many forms of rumor grow faster than rumor about gold. I can't remember the name of the man who told me this absurdity a few years back. I'll just call him San Antonio, for that's where he lives. He said he'd been out west and on the way back stopped at a filling station in Sanderson to have his car greased and the oil changed. During the wait he saw a man sitting down on the sidewalk in the shade and looking as if he wanted to talk. Just to pass the time, San Antonio says to him, 'Do people still come through here looking for the Lost Nigger Mine?'

" 'They keep looking all right,' the Sanderson man replied, 'but there's just one person in the world knows where it is and he won't tell.'

" 'Who's that?'

" 'Frank Dobie.'

" 'Frank Dobie?' San Antonio half exploded. "He wrote the story of the Lost Nigger gold all right, but he never claimed to know where it is.'

" 'Oh, no, he's too slick for that,' the Sanderson man nodded, looking as wise as a tree full of owls. 'Look! I guess you know how he got fired from the University of Texas and now has no visible means of support. What I'm telling you is he's got an invisible means of support. Plenty of people have seen him come through here, but nobody has even been able to trail him to the gold. He gets to it, loads his old car full and then leaves in the night. He'll be gone for months at a stretch, but every time he gets hard up he comes down, slips back with a load of the loot and sells it to a bank in San Antonio—or maybe it's in Austin'."

Bedichek can philosophize on anything. "The real riches in this world," he announced, "are in the mind."

"Is that Plato?"

"Not by itself. The philosophy of Plato can't be pinched down to matchhead size.

"One time out in Amarillo they were having a prohibition election. The pros imported a high-powered speaker to convert the heathen and packed the biggest gathering place in town with an audience. This speaker quoted poetry and displayed all sorts of diagrams showing the effects of alcohol on the human organs. Then he unrolled a long linen chart and hung it up on the wall to demonstrate the waste of money on alcohol. The figures and letters on this chart were boxcar-size so that they could be read half a block away.

"But the speaker was adding emphasis by reading them out in a loud voice. Up at the top were so many millions and billions spent each year in America for food, so many for clothes, so many on churches, so many on education, and on through the catalogue. The figures were soaring and the speaker's voice soared to a climax as he read out the billions and millions spent on whiskey."

" 'And it's worth it,' a mighty voice rang out. It was the voice of Buttermilk Jones. The announcement of his sense of values came in a way that absolutely killed the speaker's facts and figures."

"Why," Wilson Hudson now asked, "did they call him Buttermilk Jones?"

"Because he never drank buttermilk, I guess," Bedi answered.

"This putting a high value on whiskey makes me think of an incident during prohibition days," I said. "Not long after the end of World War I, an Englishman and a Texan were partners trading in oil leases and royalties out in the Burk Burnett field. Some bootleggers were making more than owners of oil wells. One day a big well came in on land controlled by the partners; within fifteen minutes they cleared a hundred thousand dollars by selling just a fraction of what they owned, and they decided right there to celebrate the occasion.

"The Englishman rustled around and found a fifth of bonded Canadian Club whiskey for sale at $50. He bought it and took it to their room. He opened it and poured the contents over ice. Raising his glass, he said, 'Here's to whiskey!—the only time in my life I ever paid what it's worth'."

Trapper Missed Death By a Fork of the Road

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

According to very old-fashioned historians, only wars made history. That idea has long been obsolete as respects nations, but it still operates with respect to various wild animals. Very few people who look at this column will have heard of William H. Wright's "The Grizzly Bear." It is a classic among books on wild life, but in it the ferocity of the animal is but a modified characteristic in the whole sweep of the grizzly's life history. I am rather reverting to the primitive in giving an unrelieved story of grizzly ferocity. It was told me 20 years ago by that old hunter and trapper of New Mexico, Nat Straw, as one of his personal experiences. From here on the "I" in the story is none of me.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

A man in a grizzly country can't always know how close he misses his call. One spring I went prospecting up Tapio Canyon in the Jemez Mountains, looking for a copper ledge that a Mexican sheepherder claimed to have located. He reminded me of some of his fellow countrymen I saw on the Rio Puerco. While bears were destroying, absolutely destroying, their corn crops, they would go into their jacals, bar the doors and pray. They were too afraid to go out and kill venison. This sheepherder was not so much afraid of bears as of the copper. He'd taken a notion that there was a curse on it. One man he led to it leaned over or jerked around in such a way that his pistol went off, killing him instantly. Now all I could get out of the sheepherder was general directions. I made camp and planned to prospect the country in a systematic way.

ANOTHER CAMP.

Everybody has heard of the prospector who spent 40 years in the mountains, 35 of the 40 hunting up his burros and the other five after minerals. The second morning after I camped, before I had learned anything much about the country, my burros came up missing. I left my gun in camp while I explored around a little, and when I decided to strike up the canyon I didn't go back for the gun.

Before long I came upon another camp. I could see that it was, like mine, just a one-man camp and that it had been there some time. While I was running my eye over it, I saw the camper about to top out on the ridge above. I yelled, but he didn't hear me, and I followed him.

The ridge was a long hogback, and right up there I came upon the camper sinking a shaft in a calico lead—soft blue and red rock, given to tin. The shaft was down about six feet and was about that long and not so wide.

"What you think of this?" the prospector asked.

"Not worth sticking a pick into," I answered.

"I'm going on down a little farther anyway," he said.

I left him and went on to hunt my burros. I aimed to drop back into the canyon below where I had climbed up. I struck an old trail following down the hogback. It had been so little used that in dusty places I could see grasshopper tracks in it. Pretty soon I came to a rough butte sticking up in front of the way the trail was leading, and here it forked, one prong leading to the left and one to the right. I stood there a minute or so trying to make out from the lay of the land which prong to take. I decided they came together on the back side of the butte, and I took the left prong. I didn't follow it far until I discovered it pitched off into a side canyon. I back-tracked to the forking place to try the right-hand prong.

When I got to the junction—and I had not been gone 15 minutes—I saw a girzzly's tracks on top of the tracks I had left, pointing towards the miner's shaft. As I said, I was without a gun and was hunting burros. The right-hand trail took me down to where I wanted to go. I found my burros and drove them back to camp.

I hadn't been there but a little while when three cowpunchers from the Sandoval Cattle Company outfit rode up. I was in their range.

"You know that miner up there?" one of them asked.

"Yes. I've met him once."

"Well, he's dead."

"You must be mistaken," I said. "It hasn't been more than two hours since I saw him working and talked with him."

"He won't never talk no more."

"What did he die of?"

"From the signs, he died of a grizzly bear."

We all went back up on the ridge. There the miner was right outside his shaft, his clothes and body torn all to pieces and his head smashed into a jelly. Sign showed plain enough that a grizzly had killed him. Beside him was a pick, his only defense, with blood coating one point of it. He'd evidently gotten a good dig into the bear with the pick, but the bear's trail didn't show much blood-dropping. We rolled the miner up in a blanket and buried him right there in the hole he'd dug in the calico dirt. It was all the hole was good for, and it made a better grave than any we would have put down.

MARK OF THE PICK.

The range manager came to me the next day and offered me $50 to kill the grizzly that had killed the man. He was satisfied the bear was killing cattle.

I asked him how we could be sure which bear had killed the miner.

"The mark of that pick will be on him," he said.

He agreed to give me a bounty on other bears. I quit looking for that copper ledge and went to hunting bears. I did not have any dog. I have never had any dog to hunt bears with. I don't want a dog around camp and wouldn't have a bear dog. A dog ruins the sport for a man who knows how to hunt and trap bears. Anyway, I can get along better without one. Within three weeks I had killed 14 bears.

One morning as I walked around a bend in a canyon, I saw a bear sitting on his rump and gazing in the opposite direction. He looked like some monster form of a bull. He never sensed me at all. I hit him in the back of his head with a 45 Winchester bullet. He tottered and fell over dead. When I got up to him I found his foreparts in an awful condition. His snout and chest had been all clawed up and he had maggots in stinking wounds. There was a deep wound too that no claw or tooth had made. It was the gouge he had received from the miner's pick. When the range manager saw it, he paid the $50.

This is the way I figgered out the signs. That bear had been in a fierce fight with another bear the morning I struck his tracks. Whether he had been whipped or not, he was in a rage, eager to annihilate any living thing he saw. He followed the trail to where he saw the miner, who was evidently up out of his shaft. The rest you know. Had I taken that right-hand prong of the trail instead of the left-hand, the grizzly and I would have come upon each other face to face. I had no gun. There were only scrub oak trees on the mountain hogback—nothing big enough to climb to safety into. Just by chance I missed the miner's fate.

J. Frank Dobie

Mealtimes Are Fine Story-Telling Times

By J. FRANK DOBIE

After a cold, cold swim in Barton Springs, we sat down about dusk to double hotness in a Mexican restaurant. That is one of the few uses of the word "Mexican" remaining active. Mexican restaurants in Texas are no longer run by Mexicans but by Latin-Americans. With Bedichek and me was our youthful friend, Wilson Hudson. He had regaled us with a concatenation of limericks too "curiosa" for any editor and now he seemed to surrender the talk to us.

Dobie

"The tortillas never stay hot enough," Bedichek said to the waiter—Latin American.

"Yes, sir, they are hot," the waiter replied, putting the napkin back over them.

"Bedi," I said, "you might or might not like the proper way of keeping tortillas hot."

"How's that?"

We had plenty of time to meander, which is a requisite for all good conversation in short stories. This isn't a short story. Lem Newberry's father was a merchant at Lagarto in Live Oak county, down in the brush country, when a railroad went somewhere else and killed the town. That was before I was born. Later I knew the Newberry merchants at Alice, at the end of the railroad, where they bought mountains of cattle bones, sepulchre white, gathered in by Mexicans from drouth-made dieups over an enormous country. Lem Newberry grew up knowing cows and horses and drouths and Mexicans, also the Bible. He went to Mexico to give his life as a Protestant missionary. The Madero revolution interrupted that career, and he was a cheerful merchant in Chihuahua City when he told me about the hot tortillas.

Came to Rancho

He'd been riding all day, he said, down in Chihuahua, when he came to a rancho beside some cottonwood trees, which meant water. Of course he was welcomed. There was fodder for his horse, and there was a bench for him under the shady ramada—the shed of the house—while the senora prepared supper. After a while she put a white cloth over a rickety pine table and not without pride told him to seat himself by it. He'd had nothing to speak of since sunup, and the food couldn't have been better. There was chicken soup, which he took with three or four tortillas. There were eggs cooked ranchero style and they made the tortillas even better. Then, of course, there was a great plenty of frijoles.

While he was eating the beans he ran out of tortillas. The hostess was near at hand but momentarily intent on some other matter than waiting upon him. He asked her if she might have another tortilla. Her face lit up like the dawn. "Si, senor," she sang out, "with much pleasure, and it's calientita." She reached down in her bosom and pulled out a tortilla, which she placed on the white tablecloth beside his plate. He said it was "little hotty" all right.

"Dobie," Bedi said, "you are always palming off some experience of yours as somebody else's.

"On the contrary," I said, "for purposes of narration I often appropriate as my own the experiences of others. That does away with explanations and makes for directness."

Drouth Story

At meal time, eating and drinking easily afford connectives for talk, especially the anecdotal kind, though talk on foods and drink themselves generally gets as banal as any book on how to live positively. Sitting there in the Mexican restaurant, we were brought back to the connectives through, first, opinion on a certain Texas demagogue and then a drouth story attributed to him by Wilson Hudson.

Perhaps one should not call the country around Sanderson, Texas, drouthy. Drouth is an interruption of seasonable weather; Sanderson is in a desert and any rain there is merely an interruption of constant drouth. Anyway, as Hudson told the story, one day a traveler on the highway outside Sanderson got held up by a cloudburst and upon driving into town stopped at a filling station where the cowboy-booted attendant was sloshing around in several inches of water. "How much did it rain here?" the traveler asked. "I don't know, but whatever it was, it wasn't enough," came back the answer.

That made me recollect Noah's ark. When it landed on a mountain after the flood, among the pairs of animals that walked out was a pair of cowmen. One of them said, "Looks like they had a fairly good rain here." "Yes," the other added, "if we can get some showers a little later on, grass ought to be purty good."

'The Lizards Are Drying Up'

Ranchers Want Rain More Than Ike Wants 'Change,' Oldtimers Agree

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

"Dry."

"The lizards are drying up."

"I never saw it worse."

"You're apt to yet."

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"Well, come on in," the first cowman said.

While taking chairs on the wide front porch, facing south, they asked about each other's families. Both were reported as being "all right." For a minute they sat in silence, looking far away with that expression that belongs to far-lookers in intense light. A spasmodic flurry of wind made the windmill turn over three times, and then it was motionless.

"Whirlwind," the first cowman commented, without bothering to gesture, for he knew the other one saw it.

"Seems to me I never heard dry weather locusts making so much noise this late in the fall," the second cowman commented.

"Some people say fall don't begin till the equinox," the first remarked.

"September is a fall month," the other said, not argumentatively. "It ought to rain in September."

"I guess we all ought to do things we don't do," was the only rejoinder.

"Reckon it would make any difference on the weather if we did do them?"

LOOKING FOR A SIGN.

"Not a bit. There's not a truer saying in the Bible than the Lord sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. A lot of places where it rains most there ain't no just or unjust either, out in the ocean where people don't live at all."

"Yes, I guess you're right. If it don't rain this fall and we don't get any winter rain like last year, there won't be as many people in this country as there have been."

"Joe," the first cowman spoke, "I'm looking for a sign."

"Well, Tom, you seen any?"

"No, but Bill Noble was by here yesterday and said a Mexican working for him said a rooster had been crowing earlier than usual for three morning and that was sign of change in the weather."

"It couldn't change to any drier. I believe I want a change worse'n Eisenhower does. Talking may get it for Ike, but it won't for us."

SORTA SPUR HOPES.

"I'll tell you, Joe," the cowman named Tom went on, "I don't put no more stock in these signs than I put in planting potatoes according to the moon, but signs are a kind of comfort sometimes. They're like the promises of politicians. They don't fool you, but just the same they spur up your hope. I been wishing the government trappers hadn't killed off so many coyotes. What harm did they ever do us out here in the cow country? None a tall, and when it's dry, dry, and you hear one howling after sunup you take notice. That's the oldest sign of rain I know. I wouldn't bet a rusty fence staple on a coyote's knowing any more about when it's going to rain that a U. S. weather bureau expert, but it's cheering to get his prediction and then to hope he kind of accidentally hit it. I'll say this for coyotes. They talk about what people are interested in. They're interested themselves."

"Now, Tom," his friend Joe speculated, "if you didn't own any cattle and didn't have any ranch interests of any kind and had all your money in oil stocks or something like that, you reckon you'd be concerned about the weather?"

"Yes, I would. A man belongs to the earth whether he knows it or not. When the earth withers, he withers too. Yesterday I was noticing a pair of quail panting over there in the corner of the field. They didn't raise any young ones this year. They looked too frazzled out to take a dust bath. They gave me the same sort of feeling I have when I see a bill for more feed for cattle."

"Mentioning that field, Tom, makes me think. If this was a rainy country it would all be in fields and there wouldn't be any ranches. Which would you rather have, rainy fields or drouthy ranches?"

RAINMAKING NO SIN.

"I'd rather have rainy ranches. When I was a boy, the old settlers had a theory that farming increases the rainfall. They didn't have any more scientific data on the subject than a raincrow has, but that was a theory, as you know."

"Yes."

"Well, now, look. All over the southeastern states they're turning farm land into grazing land and they are having a drouth there. But that country was generally wet when it was discovered and this country was generally dry when it was discovered. Nothing man can do to the ground can change the climate."

"What about what he can do to the skies? What about these rainmakers?"

"I don't believe in 'em. If I did, I'd make a contract tomorrow to have 'em seed the next cloud that floats by."

"I heard some church folks talking the other day and they agreed it's sinful for man to try to interfere with God's plans for rain."

"You just as well say it's interfering with God's plans to wear an overcoat in winter or dig a well for water a hundred miles away from a flowing river or irrigate land with water impounded by a dam on the Rio Grande three hundred miles upstream. I guess these people think it's wicked to try to talk the salt out of ocean water or give cows mineral on grass that lacks minerals. The trouble with these rainmakers ain't sin; it's science."

SORT OF COMFORTING.

The two cowmen sat on the gallery and in silence looked far away.

"Joe," Tom said, "you see that little cloud with its head up over that hill yonder."

"Yeah, and all it is is a lost gulf cloud. You watch it. It ain't got no bottom to it. All it's got is a fluffy top."

Presently a breeze sprang up and the windmill went to pumping. "Wa-ter, wa-ter, wa-ter," the strokes seemed to be saying.

"It's a sort of comforting sound, ain't it," said Tom.

J. Frank Dobie

San Antonio Light

Here's What Happened to Some Cows

MAY 30 1957

By J. FRANK DOBIE

What happened next to hero and heroine? People want to know because people identify themselves with hero and heroine. If hero and heroine live happily ever afterwards, people are satisfied. People all know about beef—and in Texas we know that "Texans eat beef every day" in the same way that a certain make of car from Michigan is "made in Texas by Texans"—but in the many, many books and pictures of cowboys and cows it seems to be taken for granted that the cows exist to make cowboys interesting and that after the drive or stampede or some other show is over the cows go on grazing happily ever afterwards.

DOBIE

When, about 1880, Meat Packer Gustavus Franklin Swift got his cooling plants and refrigerator cars working well enough to send dressed beef from Chicago to Boston, Texas trail drivers were in their glory and New Englanders were rebelling at the idea that any meat not butchered in the neighborhood could not be fit for human consumption. British preference for domestically slaughtered beef was even stronger, and for years after refrigerated meat could be shipped as successfully as canned sardines, ships carried beef on the hoof from the U. S. to Great Britain.

The original cowpuncher was a man with a prodpole who did his best to punch up cattle that got down in a car. Taking care of cattle on slow freighters to England was a special aftermath of cowboying and then cowpunching. Little has been written about this phase of cow work. W. H. Davies, the Welsh-English poet who tramped for years in America and shipped with cattle, tells in "The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp" more about the work and the men who did it than anybody else has told. Another Britisher, Samuel Plimsoll, took up the cause of the cattle and of sailors on cattle ships. He was outraged by cruelty and inhumanity. His book "Cattle Ships" was published with telling effect in 1890, but I have just read it as news and now pass along selections from it as news to whoever is interested in the whole story of cows.

Sights and Sounds

"The sights that were witnessed on the first Sunday at sea, and the sounds of the moaning of the poor beasts, were so shocking as to sicken the majority of the passengers. All Sunday the cattlemen were busy keeping the cattle awake, and guarding them against any lying down or going to sleep. Those that showed any indication of weakness or exhaustion were cruelly goaded with sharp-pointed bludgeons. They were beaten on the sides and heads, cold water was dashed in their faces; this failing, they were mercilessly thumped on the head with heavy, iron-bound buckets.

"The cords by which they were made fast to the stalls were drawn tighter, so that it was impossible for them to kneel, as cattle do when in the act of lying down, without inflicting upon themselves such excruciating torture that they were forced to keep on their feet. To further compel them to remain awake, the cattlemen kept moving along their stalls, striking the wooden sides with clubs, and continually shouting, and beating on the head those that showed no signs of awakening.

'Red Water'

"All night long the cattlemen were up, going from stall to stall, on deck as in the hold, with flashing dark lanterns. One poor ox, as the ship gave a sudden lurch to starboard was knocked senseless in its pen; both forelegs were broken at the knees, one horn was torn from its socket, and it received other injuries. To save those nearest to it, the cattlemen dragged it out, and left it helpless and suffering on the deck. For 30 hours it lay there, until it died from exhaustion."

Meanwhile other cattle on board struck with a disease called "red water" were in a dying condition. Upon reaching the harbor, hot parafin oil was poured into their ears to make them rise and walk ashore. According to insurance rules no animal on ship could be killed to end its misery; it must die a "natural death" before insurance could be collected on it.

Only 14 of 360

Many ships were overloaded, in order to "meet competition." No space was allowed for an animal to lie down. In storms at sea the hatches, providing circulation of air, had to be battened down to prevent the ship from filling with water. Then cattle below the main deck sometimes smothered to death in great numbers. One storm-battered ship that left New York with 360 cattle arrived with only 14 alive.

A witness told Plimsoll of being on a ship that after a gale had over 200 dead cattle to draw up on deck by pulleys and heave overboard. The heat and stench below were so intense for the men who went down after the carcasses that they could stay only 15 minutes at a time. The terrible lurchings of the ship had caused bodies of animals both dead and alive to batter down the stall timbers and now dead, dying and surviving were intermixed.

Cattle ships were not as romantic as cattle drives over an unfenced world of free grass. They remain a chapter in the reality of the whole story of beef. There is no evidence that power of thought has increased in the human species within historic times, but humaneness has.

Frank Dobie.

J. Frank Dobie

6-29-1958

On Blowing the Horn for Dinner

I admire the skill with which a craftsman with words, whether spoken or written, can take a small episode and make it into a story of charm and suspense. Such is Miss Ruth Dodson, of Corpus Christi, Texas, whose story on blowing the horn for dinner I've borrowed for this Sunday's column. It's a winterish tale really, and the time for a winter story is in mid-summer heat. I heard of a woman who before the days of air conditioning kept a thermometer down in a cool cellar. If she felt hot and curious about the temperature, she'd go down there and look at the thermometer and then would come back cooled off both in body and mind.

* * *

One very cold day in the winter of 1898-1899 while I was visiting on their ranch in Duval county, my brother-law and my sister went to visit a sick neighbor 10 miles away. They left soon after breakfast, well wrapped in blankets, and driving a good team of horses hitched to a buggy. The road was unusually rough, and they, of necessity, would have to travel slowly. I knew they would be gone most of the short winter day. This left me alone in the house with their three small children and a Mexican nurse girl about 12 years old. A Mexican family lived a short distance away, and what was called the cook-house, where an old Mexican man cooked for the hands, was within calling distance—in good weather.

The children and I were comfortable around the fireplace, with plenty of wood at hand to keep the fire going. Our lunch was prepared and kept warm in the oven of the wood range in the kitchen. It would be brought in and eaten before the fire, which the children would consider a treat. When it was 12 o'clock and time to bring in the lunch, I happened to remember that at dinner time every day the horn had to be blown.

Pair of Blasts

Just before the dinner would be placed on the family table, my sister would take down the horn that hung on the wall in the kitchen. She would go out on the back porch, put the horn to her lips, and blow two or three loud blasts. This was a signal to the men, including her husband if he happened not to be at the house, that it was dinner time. Now, I knew, was the time to blow the horn for the benefit of several men burning prickly pear for poor cows. They were hidden by brush somewhere down the hill from the house.

I wasn't sure that I could blow a hunting horn. I was sure that I must have tried at some time, but with not enough success to have a clear recollection of it. I was quite familiar with the sight and sounds of a cat or coyote hunt. To my mind few sounds are more thrilling than the call of the horn and the response of long-eared hounds. And I had seen the horns scraped and otherwise prepared for blowing.

The thing for me to do now was to blow a horn for the benefit of hungry men. This was before the pear-burner (a true flame-thrower) had come into common use. Since early morning the hungry men had been cutting off sprays of prickly pear, holding them over fires with pitchforks to burn the thorns off, and throwing them to poor cows.

I asked Guillerma, the Mexican girl, if she could blow a horn; she said she didn't think she could, that she had never tried to blow one. So, I told her to stay with the children while I went and tried to blow it. But by the time I had gone through the kitchen, got the horn and was on the porch, all the children, including Guillerma, were at my heels. I made an attempt to blow the horn and was not surprised when the attempt was entirely unsuccessful. I invited Guillerma to try; she failed. I knew the little 7-year-old girl would not be able to do it, but I was not so sure about the 5-year-old, who was clamoring to be allowed to try. He often surprised me with his knowledge of things that pertained to the ranch. But he hadn't yet learned to blow a horn. By this time, too cold to try further, we hurried back to the fire. I couldn't well go to the men to call them. The children would insist on following, and the weather was too cold for them.

Try Again

I decided to try the horn again. I ordered the children to stay by the fire, but they had become too much interested to pay any attention to my orders. We all tried, and again had to rush back out of the cold without producing the slightest blast from the horn.

I thought of going to the Mexican's house, but the woman was partly paraylzed, and her children were too small to be sent out in the cold to tell the men that it was dinner time. The man of the family was among the prickly pear burners. The old man cook I could picture only as sitting in the chimney corner nodding while waiting through the rest of the day for the men to come and eat the savory stew of goat meat he had prepared for them.

There was nothing to do but to try again to blow the horn. It was out of the question to expect the children not to be in on the adventure; for it had attained somewhat the nature of a contest with them by this time. We each tried again, and again each of us failed. Then, as a final gesture and with a feeling of determination, I took the horn, adjusted it to my lips with equal determination, took a deep breath and blew! Just as long as I had a partcle of breath, I blew. The blast that came out of the horn might have done credit to one of Joshua's trumpeters. It tore down the hill, penetrated the thick mesquite brush and prickly pear, crossed the creek and echoed from the rocky hills beyond. The children stared at me as if I had accomplished something supernatural. I surely had surprised myself. I then thought to give an encore, but not another sound could I get out of the horn.

We went back to the fire. I watched out the window, and in a few minutes I saw a man come out of the brush and walk toward the cook-house. I knew that my signal had been received and rightly interpreted.

The anticlimax came when I told my sister our experience. She said that the men knew they had gone away, and that when they decided it was time for them to eat their dinner they would have gone to the cook-house without the horn's being blown. Well, why didn't she tell me before she left?

Tales of the Road-Runner

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM SEP 13 1959

Paisano Has Friends in Readers of 'Tracks'

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Trailers, readers of tracks and other "sign," look for tracks not only on the ground but in the sky. Some of the Indians called buzzards and ravens "tracks in the sky." In the old days these tracks in the camps of meat eaters particularly wasteful white men; today they tell a ranchman where a dead cow or sheep or goat may be. Looking for tracks in the sky means regarding the relationships between one form of life and another.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

My friend, Angus Cameron, whose home is in the country in the state of New York, is one of the best track readers I've met. He was hounded during the McCarthy period by that most un-American of all American institutions, the Un-American Activities Committee of the House of Representatives, but he beat their ears down. Now he is an editor with that great publisher, Alfred A. Knopf. Anyhow, this is from a recent letter:

"A week ago I watched a red fox hunt mice under the belly and between the legs of a horse in the upper pasture back of the house. Of course, the fox may have been after grasshoppers, but in either case he was clearly letting the horse run some kind of interference for him. He was a big dog fox with enormous brush and in particularly heavy pelage for summer."

* * *

STALKER KILLED.

I heard the other day of a man who claimed he'd watched a paisano, or roadrunner, gobble up a whole nestful of little quail as they were hatching out and scrambling about on the ground. I know he was lying. In the first place, no predator would get sight of more than one or two of the little quail if he went after them; in the second place, the mother quail would bluff him down. The following quotation from Paul Curtis of San Antonio shows that he reads tracks in the sky as well as on the ground.

"In August I ran out of gas three miles north of Alice, and had to walk most of the way into town. I saw one dead paisano and two or three live ones. Lots of milo-maize (I guess it is) lay in trickles and rivulets along the shoulders of the highway, apparently spilled from passing trucks. Chances are the mice and whatnot eat it, as it is easy pickings. Comes a paisano stalking the mouse, and a passing car. Paisano gets clipped."

Over the years that I've been supplying a Sunday column for a few Texas newspapers, I've written more than once about the roadrunner, and every time I write I receive letters from people telling me something new about the bird or expressing their friendship for him. He's not found much in the eastern part of the state, but wherever he's found he stands out among birds as Winston Churchill stands out among orators. John Young used to say that on the cattle trails to Kansas the prairie dogs made delightful company to the trail drivers. Mrs. Bob Placke of Lee County writes that in his rounds as a rural mail carrier her husband sees roadrunners every day and enjoys them.

* * *

HEAD FIRST.

Mrs. Claude Doyle from Prairie Lea, in Caldwell County, writes of experiences with two paisanos that her husband took off a nest about the first of July. "We raised them in a pen by feeding them ground meat," she says. "However, one never seemed very strong and evidently had a bone deficiency because he broke both legs while in the pen, quit eating, and died after living about a month. We call the other one 'Stupid' and he has run loose since he has learned to fly, but still follows us around and eats out of our hands, although he now prefers snails, crickets, and mice to ground meat. He roosts in one of our trees at night and is a delightful pet, but is beginning to roam the neighborhood." This letter was written Aug. 12.

On Aug. 14, Sam Millican of Loving wrote that a pair of roadrunners had built their second nest for the year in his yard and brought off two young ones from this clutch of eggs, although he has seen as many as six or seven young ones in one nest. "They are feeding mostly on grasshoppers now, but I have seen them feed on horned toads and lizards so large I wondered how they could swallow them. They start swallowing the head first and you can go back after a while and the tail will be sticking out of their mouths. Roadrunners won't go to their nest with feed if they see a person around.

"I saw one whip a hawk one time. The hawk was flying around a small bush. It lighted on the ground close to the bush. When I got close enough to see what was going on, the roadrunner came at him and the hawk decided it was a bad job and flew away."

One of the most knowledgeable men in the country on paisanos, rattlesnakes, and other creatures of the brush in semi-arid regions is John C. Myers of Eagle Pass. I'm quoting from two letters from him on Friend Paisano.

* * *

BRAVE GUINEA HENS.

"We, as boys, always had a different feeling towards the paisano than for other kinds of wildlife. With niggershooters or .22 rifles we hunted doves, quail, rabbits, snakes, squirrels, and varmints of every description, but we never once shot at paisanos. I can't say positively why, but I guess they were so friendly, inquisitive and comical at times that they made us feel kin to them. On starting out in the morning, the first one in the group who spied a paison would sing out:

Paisano, roadrunner, chaparall bird, how are you, neighbor, this mor-r-r-ning?

"I never can forget the time Mama ordered me to get the shotgun and shoot a paisano. She had been trying to get a start of guineas, and had at least succeeded in having a guinea hen produce a clutch. There were about 15 chicks, and they were about the cutest things I ever saw, resembling somewhat both in action and appearance a covey of newly-hatched quail. Well, Mama went out one morning to feed the brood, which she was keeping in one corner of the garden, when she saw a paisano on the outside of the fence with a dead little guinea in its beak. The paisano must die, and I was elected to be the executioner. Putting up an argument, I objected strenuously, but to no avail. About that time Papa came in and wanted to know what all the racket was about. Finally, he admitted having stepped unknowingly on the chick guinea hiding in the grass when he went into the garden. I was thus spared shooting a paisano. I knew that it could never steal a chick away from the guinea hen, one of the most watchful and aggressive of birds in guarding its young. I have seen guinea hens with chicks fearlessly attack and rout housecats, dogs, people, pigs, ducks, geese, hawks, snakes and cattle, when they thought their young were in danger. Only the owl can successfully cope with the guinea hen and her brood."

"Basically, the paisano is a friendly bird, possessed of no pugnacity at all, and to think it would voluntarily battle a dangerous rattler is to me ridiculous. So unobtrusive is the paisano that I have seen him meekly bunted away by the topknot blue quail, when he approached too closely to the quail's young. The paisano is a very inquisitive bird, and it is curious about big rattlesnakes.

"On a visit to me at Eagle Pass my brother was accompanied by his cairn terrier, one of the most ridiculous and absurd members of the canine tribe. We were walking down a road through the brush, the dog trotting ahead. I saw that a paisano was closely watching the dog from its perch in a mesquite. As we moved along, the bird kept pace, hopping from tree to tree. Finally, its curiosity got the best of it, and it dropped down beside the dog for a better look. Ruffling its feathers and dropping its wings, the bird proceeded to give the dog a close inspection, cocking its head from side to side and circling it with runny jumps. Neither dog nor bird had ever seen the likes of the other before. They gazed silently at each other, neither one making a move to charge the other. Finally the paisano, his curiosity satisifed, rose and glided out of sight into the brush. If one sees a paisano circling a rattler, it does not mean that they are fighting. The paisano may be just satisfying his natural curiosity."

American-Statesman 7-6-1958

J. FRANK DOBIE

Some Items From Here And There

Texas now has two first-class literary magazines: the "Southwest Review" and the "Texas Quarterly." The "Southwest Review" is published by Southern Methodist University, in Dallas, and the "Texas Quarterly" is published by the University of Texas, in Austin. It has had only two issues, whereas the "Southwest Review" is more than 40 years old. Both are good, and there's plenty of room for both. The few people in Texas who are really interested in thought and civilization should support such publications.

The current issue of the "Southwest Review" has a delightful essay on travel by Lawrence Clark Powell. He's librarian at the University of California, Los Angeles Branch, and is an authority on the literature of the Southwest. In the essay he says that while he was in Denmark he thought of Bishop Grundtvig, "Who revolutionized Danish education by insisting on the personality of the teacher as being more important than a pedantic curriculum — a revolution needed in the United States, where theory, method and certification are bulldozing the life out of education."

SUPPOSE ONE, even the ablest one, of the multitudes of professors of Education being supported by the state of Texas in many institutions of so-called learning were to offer a course of how to be witty. It would probably promote as many wits as a course by me on how to make a million dollars between sunup and sundown would promote millionaires. I do claim to know something about the craft of writing and something about literature in the English language, and I taught English for many years, but I couldn't possibly get a job teaching in any high school in the United States now. Why? Why because I haven't had enough courses in Education.

I doubt if the medicine men of the most ignorant tribe on five continents have through superstition more power over their tribesmen than the Education Departments of this country have by law — and also superstition — over the processes of learning in American public schools. After people are stupified beyond a certain point, they lose ambition to awaken out of their stupor. The Education forces have just about got the public school population into that stupor. If anybody wants to proceed further into this subject let him read "Quackery in the Public Schools," by Albert Lynd, put out in a paper edition by Grosset's Universal Library.

The only Indian-fighting general of the United States Army that I would take my hat off to was General George Crook. I consider Captain John G. Bourke's "On the Border with Crook" one of the very few noble books dealing with the West. I don't use the word NOBLE loosely. General Crook wasn't out to advance his own rank. He considered Indians as human beings. His indignation boiled at the human leeches preying on Indians and being mainly responsible for their uprisings.

GENERAL CROOK was a professional soldier. After his career in the Civil War and then in the West was coming to an end, he met General Jubal Early of Confederate fame in Lynchburg, Virginia. This is an entry he made in his Journal:

"Jubal Early, the ex-Confederate general, is much stooped and enfeebled, but as bitter and virulent as an adder. He has no use for the government or the northern people, boasts of his being unreconstructed, and that he won't accept a pardon for his rebellious offenses. He has survived his usefulness, and is living entirely in the past. He has fought his battles over so many times that he has worked himself into the belief that many of the exaggerated, and some ridiculous stories he tells are true. We sat up with him until after midnight, taking a hot scotch with him the last thing."

Somehow this view of Jubal Early reminds me of Confederate flags stuck on automobiles. The sticking of Confederate flags on automobiles in the year 1958 has a significance that is eloquently explained by an article written by Walter Prescott Webb in the latest issue of the "Texas, Quarterly."

I can scarcely remember when I did not have a distrust of what Robert Burns calls "the unco guid," or the rigidly righteous, the priggishly pure, the self-anoited in the name of holiness. Now don't think I'm going to preach a sermon on characters in Washington. I will say that the longer I observe the "unco guid" in public life and in business, the profounder my distrust of them is.

Mr. Lewis B. Walker, engineer of Gonzales, Texas, has sent me a contract drawn up by a lightening rod company in 1906, guaranteeing that an individual who had paid $38 for installing lightning rods on his house would be paid for damages by lightning up to $1000 by this company. Lightning rods seem to have sold better in the country than in cities. I remember when peddlers went into the most sparsely settled ranch areas and put up their lightning rods. Their arguments must have been unanswerable. Lewis B. Walker draws this picture of one of the old-time lightning rod salesmen named Moss.

"HE WAS A TALL, well-built man with a fund of stories and a line of conversation that made him very popular. He interrupted the monotony and brightened the company at every farm and ranch house where he stopped. After entertaining the folks for a while he would launch into a sales talk, designed to get the proper signature on the dotted line. If he was put off until a more opportune time, Colonel Moss would, before saying farewell, ask the family to kneel with him in prayer. Then on his knees he would plead most fervently with the Almighty that this family be spared from the terrible destruction by lightning until he came and put up lightning rods on their house. Only the most moneyless, the most stiffnecked, and the most realistically-brained country people could resist Colonel Moss's prayer."

I've often thought how right Mark Twain was when he said that the emblem of the human race should be an ax — to grind. No politician who parades his piety can hide his ax from good eyesight. Still, an awful lot of the people can be fooled an awful lot of the time, and an awful lot of the be-fooled are religious.

Not long ago Miss Beulah Smith, who lives on Rio Grande Street in Austin, gave me a copy of a letter written by her great-grandfather Seth Smith in 1819 from Virginia to a Quaker friend in Philadelphia. Seth Smith was himself a Quaker. He was out to combat the unctuous claims by plantation-paid preachers that slavery was ordained by God and was a benediction to slaves. Anybody who reads Southern history beyond Old Black Joe songs and Sir Walter Scott chivalry must know about such preachings. In his mild manner Seth Smith wrote: "My situation in respect to kindred minds is rather solitary."

 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM AUG 23 1959

'Natural' and 'Effortless' Intrigue Writer Who Hates Pretensions

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Nothing has a personal meaning to me until it kindles my imagination. I have ridden maybe 100,000 times farther in machines than I have on horses, but machines still have no meaning to me beyond being instruments determining human history and beyond utilitarian values. If some morning I got up and found all the machines gone, my only feelings would be those of peace from intruders and an increased delight in naturalness.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The other day — one of those rare August days starting off hot and close and ending fresh and delightful — I was on the wide front gallery of a country house watching a slow rain come down. There aren't many things on earth I'd rather watch than rain, especially in the country and especially on a plot of ground in the country that belongs to me. As I watched this rain come down I seemed to be a part of it and a part of the ground whose thirst it was quenching. Before long I took off my clothes and got out in it and soaked myself and took a fine shampoo. I know a lady from New York who used to sell gold doorknobs for bathrooms to Texas oil millionaires; a few other people bought the gold doorknobs also, I understand. I wouldn't have traded all the gold doorknobed bathrooms in the world for that bathroom I had standing on buffalo grass in rain out of the benedictive sky.

* * *

EFFORTLESS.

As I felt the rain and then got back on the front gallery and dried off as naturally as I had got wet, I thought of how effortless the rain was. I have made this observation to myself many times; yet sometimes when the skies cloud up and the thunder rolls and the lightning flashes and no rain comes down, effortlessness does not seem a characteristic of the weather. Generally, however, everything in nature is effortless. It takes no more effort for the glaring sky over a dry country to be dry than it takes for the clouds over a wet country to be moisture-laden. Grass greens without effort and grass withers without effort. The wind bloweth where it listeth. No effort whatsoever accompanies the listing, whether the wind be a hurricane or the scarcely perceptible breath of air in the dog days of August.

Emerson said, "It is as easy for the strong man to be strong as for the weak man to be weak." Despite this elemental fact, being natural, effortless, seems often to be difficult for the strong and the weak alike. Among the few United States senators I know, one's sole ambition in life seems to be to become president. When I'm in his company, when I read his words, when I read about him, everything he says and does seems to be calculated to contribute to the one end he has in mind. He never appears effortless; he never appears natural in the way a cow licking her calf or a Mexican laborer smoking a shuck cigaret is natural. He always seems to have his eye on the medal, his whole course of life determined by prospects for votes.

* * *

MALE REDBIRD.

I've known plenty of weak men and weak women, some of them weak-minded, who always seem to be straining themselves to impress somebody. A male redbird's function in life in the spring may be to impress female redbirds, but he does this effortlessly and naturally. The way young males and females of the human species go out to attract each other is just about as natural and effortless as a redbird's showing off. It's after the juices recede from specimens of the human species that many of them put forth increased efforts to impress others. It would seem that any fool might see through the pretenses of another fool, but such is not the case. Pretenders often get a majority of the votes. I guess that's because pretense and hyprocrisy are so inherent in the human race.

* * *

SUBJECT FOR RIDICULE.

Effortlessness is often a subject for ridicule. On a recent visit my long-time friend Stanley Walker told this little folk tale. A man living in a house back from the road was noted for his lack of energy. One day while he was sitting in a chair on the front gallery leaned back against a post, chewing tobacco and spitting on the floor, his wife came to the door and, looking out, said: "That's a peculiar kind of funeral procession going along there."

The man—without moving, of course—said, "I wish I could see it."

This anecdotal comment on taking life naturally has its mate in a little folk tale told by my mother and father also, as I recall, when I was a child. According to this account, a man was so trifling that people wondered that he ever got up enough energy to beget children, but he had a lot of children and neighbors were always donating to his poor family.

Finally a delegation called on the trifling man and told him if he didn't get to work he'd have to leave the country. He didn't say anything. The delegation left. Before long neighbors were being called on again to give corn for cornbread to the family.

The delegation got together and decided there wasn't any use to talk to the trifling man. The best thing for his family and for society in general, they decided, would be to hang him. So one morning several of them drove an old-fashioned, long-bedded cart to the shack in which he lived and, without any resistance on his part, put him in it.

As they started off they let him know his destination. He was lying down in the cart bed. He didn't say a mumbling word. After a while one of the drivers of the cart got to feeling sorry for him. He said he didn't want to hang him and would donate a load of corn to the family.

* * *

'DRIVE ON'.

At this, the prisoner, who wasn't even tied, kind of raised up and asked: "Is it shucked?"

"No."

"Well, then, drive on your cart."

It's so troublesome not to be natural that I wonder why so many people go to the effort of pretending. The real thing is not scared of being taken for something else. The real thing can pass for what it is as effortlessly as the soft rain comes down.

J. Frank Dobie

Western Code: Tend Your Own Biz

San Antonio Light - 8-3-58

At a gathering of the old-time trail drivers of Texas in San Antonio in 1926, I heard one of them from Colorado county named Folts tell this incident. While he was working for the Continental Cattle co. on the plains, along the Texas-New Mexico line one fall in the 80's, gathering beef cattle, they ran out of a cook. The cook had run off or somebody had killed him or something else had happened to him. Anyway, the outfit didn't have a cook. First one cowboy and then another was cooking, each one cooking the worst he could in hope of being relieved, but nobody complaining, for whoever complained would have to do the cooking.

One day while the outfit was camped on the prairie near a lake, a stranger rode up at dinner time. Somebody told him to get down. He wanted to speak to the boss. "There he is over there," one of the men pointed.

He walked up to the boss and said, "I'm looking for a job."

"Can you cook?" the boss asked.

"Yes. My middle name is Cook."

"Well, you're hired," the boss said. "What'll we call you?"

Evidently appreciating the nicety implied in the question, the stranger said, "You can call me Bill."

His worldly goods were in a flour sack tied behind his saddle. He untied it, unsaddled his horse, and turned him loose with the remuda, which was out not far from the camp. Then he tied a fairly fresh flour sack around his waist for an apron and flew into his new job.

Good Food

The men all left. When they got in for supper they found well-cooked meat, well-cooked sourdough bread, beans just right, some dried apples for dessert, and all the plates, cups, knives and forks in order. Of course, nobody bragged on the cook; that would have been unethical.

The next day at noon while most of the men were eating, only two or three holding the beef herd, the new cook, called Bill, said out loud to the boss: "Who's in charge of this chuck wagon?"

"Why, you are, of course," the boss replied.

"I'm glad to hear it," said the cook. "I thought I was but wanted to be sure. And now," he went on, turning to the cowboys, "you fellows have heard. When I came here nobody was in charge of this wagon, and everything in it was a mess. The horseshoes were mixed up with the rice, the axle grease with the lard, and the Epsom salts with the salt. I'm getting things in order and propose to keep them in order. If anybody from now on wants anything out of this chuck wagon, let him ask me and I'll get it, but I don't want anybody at all going into the chuck wagon for anything at any time."

The cook didn't talk grouchily; he just laid down the law cold and plain. Nobody said anything, at least right then. All the men roped out fresh mounts and left, most of them to hunt steers, leaving three or four men to hold the herd. The steers were loggy with plenty of grass and water and sunshine, and so the men on herd, as the saying goes, went to riding one horse. That is, they all got together on one side for a little sociable talk.

Young and Green

One of them was very young and green. He hadn't been out in the cowboy country long. He was dressed up according to Sears, Roebuck & co. catalog specifications. He said to the others, "I don't much like that bullying talk from the new cook."

One of the others said to him, "Aw, that's not bullying talk. All good cooks are cranky and, after all, a cook's got a right to run his own chuck wagon."

"No," the young squirt said, "I'm not going to let him run any rannicky business over me. I'm going down there and call his hand."

One of the older men advised, "You could get into trouble, you know, butting into his business."

But the young squirt socked the spurs into his horse and galloped away right up to the chuck wagon, raising a dust that wasn't calculated to make him welcome. He threw the bridle reins to the ground, jumped up on a rear wagon wheel, and reached over into the wagon as if to pull out his duffle bag. He hadn't more than reached till the cook reached too. He reached for a six-shooter, shot it, and when he did, this young cowboy fell back on the ground in a permanent position —that is, it would have been permanent unless somebody had moved his body. He was past moving himself any more.

That's That

The horse wrangler wasn't very far off with the remuda. The cook took off his hat and waved to him. The horse wrangler had heard the shot. When the cook waved, he began driving the remuda nearer. The cook roped out the horse he'd ridden up on just the day before. He saddled him, tied his flour sack of possibles behind the saddle, and rode off into the west.

Folts stopped the story at this point. I asked him, "What did you all do?"

"Why," he said, "we didn't do nothing. We figured that young fellow had made a mistake in not tending to his own business and needed a lesson."

"He got it a little late to make use of it," I said.

"Somebody else could make use of it," Folts said, "and maybe so still could."

In 1925, Joe Burdette, who was then nightwatchman for Oklahoma A. & M. college at Stillwater, where I was head of the English department, told me something that adds to the lesson. He said that along in the middle 70s while he was driving up the trail for the Wiley brothers from north Texas, one of their hands quit and the boss hired a Mexican vaquero in his place. The other hands didn't like this vaquero but he was needed with the herd, and no special trouble came up until the herd got into the Wichita country. From here on is Joe Burdette's own relation:

"We made camp on Cow creek, 6 or 7 miles to the south, and there we had to hold our cattle for quite a spell. One day when we rode in for dinner, we found the Mexican already eating. He'd left his horse loose and the horse had grazed off a little way. When the Mexican got done, he walked up to the horse that belonged to one of the boys who was eating and said, 'I believe I'll just ride out and get my horse.'

Opposition

"'You stay off my horse,' the boy told him.

"The Mexican says, 'Oh, I guess I'll ride him,' and went on. He pulled up on one side but fell off on the other. We moved camp 300 or 400 yards away, and the cattle grazed all about him for a month there * * * Hell, no, we didn't put him under ground. We didn't have time for any such thing as that.

"In those days, if a man tended strictly to his own business, he was bully Ike. Sometimes he had just one chance to tend to a piece of business and failed to take it."

It was possible to tend strictly to one's own business and still be a long way from tolerant, as Joe Burdette unconsciously illustrated.

Literally a Town of History

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM JUL 26 1959

'El Pajaro Que Canta' Still Describes New Mexico's Capital of Santa Fe

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Well along in the summer of 1831 Josiah Gregg, who was to make his name immortal by authoring "Commerce of the Prairies," entered the town of Santa Fe with a caravan of wagons freighted with goods to sell not only in the capital of New Mexico but in Chihuahua, Durango and other cities of northern Mexico. The caravan had traveled 800 miles east from Independence on the Missouri River. After spending nine years as a trader, Gregg described the descent of his first wagon train from the mountains to the Santa Fe plain as follows:

J. FRANK DOBIE.

"Even the animals seemed to participate in the humor of their riders, who grew more and more merry and obstreperous as they descended toward the city. I doubt whether the first sight of the walls of Jerusalem were beheld by the crusaders with much more tumultuous and soul-enrapturing joy.

"The arrival produced a great deal of bustle and excitement among the natives. 'Los Americanos!'—'Los carros!'—'La entrada de la caravana!' were to be heard in every direction; and crowds of women and boys flocked around to see the newcomers; while crowds of leperos hung about as usual to see what they could pilfer. The wagoners were by no means free from excitement on this occasion. Informed of the 'ordeal' they had to pass, they had spent the previous morning in 'rubbing up;' and now they were prepared, with clean faces, sleek combed hair, and their choicest Sunday suit, to meet the 'fair eyes' of glistening black sure to stare at them as they passed. There was yet another preparation to be made in order to 'show off' to advantage. Each wagoner must tie a brand new 'cracker' to the lash of his whip; for, on driving through the streets and the plaza publica, every one strives to outvie his comrades in the dexterity with which he flourishes this favorite badge of authority."

* * *

'KEEP 'EM IGNORANT.'

People still go by the thousands to Santa Fe to see. Many going there for the first time experience an elation comparable to that of the freighters of a Santa Fe wagon train. Yet the population of Santa Fe today hardly exceeds 30,000 people. In Josiah Gregg's time and on up to the time when New Mexico became a part of the United States, the population of the town seems to have been under 5,000. It had six churches, and not a single public school, no library, no press. During his career as trader, Gregg brought in more than 1,000 books and a printing press, the first in New Mexico. "Keep them ignorant" was the policy of both church and state at the time.

Despite its small population and despite the meagerness of its figures in the realm of trade—less during 100 years than more than one corporation can show for a single year's operations—more interesting books have been written about Santa Fe than about Pittsburgh. Santa Fe has made more appeal to human imagination than many cities containing numerous big banks and factories and numerous millions of people have made. Why?

Years ago while the University of Texas was starting its building program and the first of a series of men's dormitories had been planned, a student, romantically inclined, and I, perhaps also romantically inclined, went to President H. Y. Benedict, that humanistic gentleman of wit, humor, kindness and wisdom, to suggest a ranch motif in the architecture of the proposed dormitory. "Why," he said, "don't you know that the oil industry of Texas has a bigger income in one year than cattle brought during 25 years?" I told him we knew that but also that Santa Fe, with a population of 5,000 people, had inspired more good literature than Dallas and Houston combined. There's a vast difference, of course, between literature and newspaper printing.

* * *

FIRST NEWSPAPER.

Josiah Gregg's "Commerce of the Prairies" was published in two volumes, first in 1844. One hundred ten years later the University of Oklahoma Press brought out the latest edition of the work, in a single volume, ably edited by Max L. Moorhead. It is a classic not only on Santa Fe, the Santa Fe trail and the Santa Fe trade but on the prairies stretching west from the Missouri River, on the Mexicans, the Indians, the mules, the prairie dogs, the grasses and other inhabitants of New Mexico. Now I've been rereading this book and wishing I were going again to Santa Fe.

Its first newspaper, The New Mexican, was issued Nov. 28, 1849. The University of Oklahoma Press, an institution that's long been enriching the whole Southwest, has just published a book entitled "Santa Fe: The Autobiography of a Southwestern Town," compiled by Oliver LaFarge. It is made up of extracts from 'The New Mexican.

The golden age of literature for Santa Fe was earlier in this century while Mary Austin, Frank Applegate and other writers and artists whose names are still remembered were living. More than 30 years ago that organization of self-worshippers and futile objectors to the processes of social evolution named Daughters of the American Revolution attempted to place a "Madonna of the Trail" statue in Santa Fe. Some of the articulate citizens of the town had a meeting and objected. The following is taken from this autobiography of Santa Fe as extracted from its newspaper for Oct. 12, 1927.

"Mr. Applegate said that he had canvassed all the artists and writers in Santa Fe, that none of them wanted the monument here, that it was not artistic, and that Santa Fe did not want something unloaded on it that it didn't want.

"Mrs. Austin remarked that the so-called Pioneer Woman monument did not represent the real pioneers of this region at all, that the real pioneers were Spanish people and that they had not been consulted and were not represented at all.

"Mrs. Moss (member of the D.A.R. committee) was infuriated with the tenor of Mr. Applegate's remarks and asked him to leave the room or make an apology. He left the room.

"The actual members of the deciding committee then went into executive session and the vote was taken, resulting in a vote of five to two, in favor of Albuquerque."

* * *

TOWN OF HISTORY.

Of course, tourists will find Santa Fe more turista than it was before the roads got so good. They'll find more of a daughters-of-this-and-that kind of stuff in Albuquerque, but Santa Fe is still the town of history, is still the place where imagination runs and people who are congenial with high altitude and the pageant of the past like to linger.

I entered Santa Fe the first time in late August or early Sept. 1924, 25 years ago. It was at the time of an annual historical fiesta. The plaza was thick with Pueblo Indians selling their wares or merely looking at the show. I bought a pot from a Pueblo Indian woman for one dollar. To me it is beautiful. It had a bird on it. I said to her, "What bird is this?" She looked with laughing eyes at a man I took to be her husband, and she looked at me and she said with a smile, "Es un pajaro que canta." (It is a bird that sings.) That is Santa Fe.

STAR-TELEGRAM

Becoming Scarcer

AUG 10 1958

Civil War Characters Make Good Anecdotes

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Only among the consciously historical-minded will you hear an anecdote now about any character of the American Revolution. It is receding into "1066 and all that." Despite the stream of books, fiction and non-fiction, on the Civil War, popular anecdotes about characters of the Civil War are becoming scarcer and scarcer. I belong to the vanishing generation that occasionally remembers and tells a Civil War anecdote, out of the ever-emptying and ever-filling reservoir of folk anecdotes.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

My cherished friend, Dr. Pat Ireland Nixon of San Antonio, is a great anecdote teller. His books, concerned with medical history of Texas and with the "Nixons in Texas," are replete with character anecdotes. I am a kind of connoisseur of anecdotes, and I place character at the top of all subjects for anecdotes.

* * *

SINGLE QUESTION.

Here is Pat Nixon's Confederate anecdote as contained in a recent letter:

"I guess you knew our friend Umphrey Lee, who was president of Southern Methodist University and who authored several books, died a few weeks ago. I heard him preach what was perhaps his last sermon. He closed by telling about a Confederate preacher-soldier who lost a leg in the war. His peg-leg always announced his coming and wherever he came his interest in souls was intense. He could have inspired the saying: 'The backwoodsman has gone into the forest, and the panther is scarcely more keen scented for his blood than the Methodist preacher is for his soul.'

"In time the old fellow made a visit to his son in Washington, a United States senator. Always, when he met his son's friends, his first question was, 'What about your soul?' One night, his son gave a reception for the French ambassador. The old fellow's peg-leg resounded on the stairway. When he was presented to the ambassador, he asked his imperative question, 'How about your soul?'

"A few weeks passed and the old soldier-preacher died. The most beautiful floral piece came from the French ambassador and attached was a card which read: 'In memory of the only man who ever asked me about my soul.'"

* * *

HAD COURAGE.

The youngest man I know who tells Confederate anecdotes is Wardlaw, director of the University of Texas Press. He is from South Carolina, where the Civil War remains much more immediate than it is to Texans, where the public still takes from and adds to the great reservoir of anecdotes about Confederate figures. Frank Wardlaw came to see me the day I received the letter from Pat Nixon. I showed it to him. Right away he told two Confederate anecdotes, the first one of a preacher.

During the Civil War this preacher held services for soldiers and was praying aloud for them. He prayed, "Oh, Lord, give our men courage!" A modest soldier spoke up in the middle of the prayer and said, 'Preacher, you are wasting your breath."

"How's that?" the preacher asked, not very well pleased at being interrupted.

"Why," the soldier said, "we don't need courage; we've got plenty of courage. What we need is more food and more ammunition. Pray the Lord for food and for ammunition."

The other Confederate story Frank Wardlaw told is this: Yankees tunnelled under a concentration of Confederate forces and set dynamite sticks and blew a big crater in the earth. It also blew a lot of Confederate soldiers into the air, but not to hell. The captain of the exploded company preceded properly his men into the air and as he was coming down he saw some of his men going up. He yelled to them, "Rally, boys, as soon as you hit the ground."

* * *

BROTHERLY LOVE.

A few years ago, in mockery of the assininities of McCarthyism, the Texas Folklore Society entitled one of its volumes "Folk Travelers." In this volume is an essay on "On the Traveling Anecdote." Among the anecdotes quoted is another by Frank Wardlaw on Confederate feelings.

"Some years after the Civil War ended, General Jubal Early of the Confederacy was in Washington during a reunion of the G.A.R. A soldier in blue with both arms and both legs gone struck his attention. After looking at him some time, he stepped up to the wheel chair and put a $10 bill into the veteran's pocket. A reporter who happened to be on the spot said to him, 'General Early, that is the finest example of brotherly love I have ever seen.'

"'Brotherly love, hell,' General Early retorted, 'that's the only example I ever saw of a Yankee carved up enough to suit me.'"

"Texas in 1837, An Anonymous Contemporary Narrative," edited with an introduction by Andrew Forest Muir, and published by the University of Texas Press, does not have many anecdotes, though it has one that is the very juice of Sam Houston. His name now unknown, the author of this book came to Texas in March 1837, stayed a few months, went back North and had his writings published in a Columbus, Ohio, magazine named "Hesperian."

A part of the book chronicles the author's horseback trip from Houston to San Antonio, but the major part analyzes, or attempts to analyze, the land policy, the government, the navy and other institutions of the Republic of Texas. Apparently this is the first critical work on the Republic of Texas to be issued.

I shall not summarize, but want to express my admiration for the editorial work of Andrew Forest Muir. In addition to being a ripe scholar, he is a stylist. Style is often inherent in a sense of irony. Muir's irony is beautifully polished. Here is a sample: 'The land policy of the Republic of Texas in the spring of 1837 was largely unformed, its administrative agencies were undefined, and its economy had not yet reached the maturity of predatoriness."

Utterly Ruthless, Life Was Cheap

Pancho Villa Ruled Greatly by Fear In Dashing Days of Guerrilla Battles

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM AUG 30 19[illegible]

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I think it would be impossible for anybody to write a full and at the same time a strictly documentable biography of Pancho Villa. Hundreds of narratives about him depend not only on memories bound up with passions and superstitions. Yet the truth about an individual who has made a strong impact on popular imagination may lie in imaginings, in folk talk, as much as in documented fact. I've let lots of Pancho Villa stories heard during the last 35 years or so go by, but I'm surprised at how many I put down.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

My friend Jack Reynolds, dealer in rare books, of Van Nuys, Cal., tells this one as told to him by Grace Brown, a Christmas card designer in California. While she was a girl in Brownsville, her father did business along the Rio Grande with Mexicans in their own language.

Sitting one day in a barber's chair, he heard a Mexican in an adjacent chair talking to a compadre about a need for rifles and ammunition. The talker was not secretive at all; his features resembled those of Pancho Villa frequently seen in pictures. As a few words with him revealed, he was Pancho Villa.

• • •

STANDING ORDERS.

Brown offered to finance rifles and ammunition on condition that he be allowed to go along with Villa's army and get the hides from cattle killed by Villa's men to be delivered at the border. Villa agreed; Brown went with him.

Villa's standing orders, as Brown learned, were that after the capture of any town there should be no looting; indeed, there was to be no looting at any time—except from certain individuals and classes designated by Villa. Sometimes he was prodigal in designations. One day after the Villistas captured a certain town, Brown was with the big jefe, sitting on a rock fence along the outskirts talking, when a dorado—a golden one, as Villa's choice soldiers were called — came up carrying a pack of goods on his shoulders.

"What have you there?" Villa demanded.

The dorado was reluctant to answer. Villa investigated. His golden one was carrying off loot.

"You know my orders," Pancho Villa thundered. With that, he pulled out his six-shooter and killed the dorado. His orders were generally respected.

This story tones in with several others I've heard—one by J. R. Woodul in Mexico City along in 1933.

One morning Villa was sitting in the comedor of the Sternea Hotel in Torreon, eating huevos rancheros (eggs ranch style), when he saw a pelado soldier coming up the street with a bundle under his arm. Rushing out and at the same time pulling his six-shooter, Villa shot the soldier dead, then returned with a good appetite to the huevos rancheros. "If there is to be any stealing in this town," he remarked, "I'll do it. I gave orders when we got here."

• • •

RULE BY FEAR.

Villa sometimes ruled by fear as much as by loyalty, for it must never be forgotten that some of his men and many of the gente—the people—were intensely loyal to him. If he robbed the rich, he gave to the poor. The incident that follows was told to me a long time ago by Oliver Bluth, of Dublan, Chihuahua, as he heard it from a former general under Pancho Villa.

One time while needing recruits, Villa saw a young man in a town he had just entered.

"Will you go with me?" he asked.

"I can not go, my general. I have a compromiso," the youth replied.

Villa, without another word, ordered him strung up. The order was obeyed at once. At once also all the able-bodied men in the town were willing to join him.

About the toughest story on Pancho Villa I know came to me from a man — in Chihuahua or Durango, I forget which — who claimed to know it for a fact.

Villa had a faithful follower, a hard fighter who had advanced to captain. In one battle Villa's forces were badly scattered, and this captain did not rejoin. Three or four years went by. One day when Villa rode up to a ranchito deep in the wilderness, a man came out and saluted. He was the captain.

"I have been wondering what became of you," Villa said, still on his horse. "Come, I need you."

"But, my general, I can not go."

"Why?"

The man had an infant in his arms. "I have a wife and three little children. They detain me."

"A wife and children detain you?"

"Yes, senor."

"Let me see them all."

The man went within his hut and, still holding the little one in an arm, came out with a worn woman and two children.

"And it is these who detain you?" Villa repeated.

"Yes, senor."

• • •

CAPTAIN REJOINS.

Villa pulled a six-shooter and as quick as four flashes of lightning killed the wife and three children. "They will detain you no longer, will they?"

"No, senor."

The captain rejoined his general.

One time Villa came to a ranch where only a woman and her baby were visible. No man showed up. Villa asked for food. The woman went about preparing it. One of his officers told him to have care, that this woman was going to poison him. Villa in anger replied that he needed no warning, that he was always watching for traitors. After a while the woman said supper was ready.

"Which place is mine?" asked Villa.

"The head place," replied the woman, indicating a plate.

"Eat that food," Villa ordered.

"Certainly, my general, but you need have no fear of me."

She ate.

"Now eat food out of the plate next to it."

She ate, saying, "But I have no desire to poison anybody."

Villa was glaring in anger. He made her eat from every plate. Although his suspicion may have been allayed, his anger was not. When the woman had tasted all the food, he seized her baby and dashed its head against the wall, killing it, and then pulled his pistol and shot the woman.

When her man came in before long, Villa said: "You have hid out. Now are you ready to go with me?"

The man had seen. "Yes."

He went with Villa.

Sincerity Demands Respect

OCT 16 1949

Authentic Writers About Old West Speak Language That Smacks of Soil

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

From letters that he used to write me, I knew that Joe Chisholm had a generous nature and was genuine. He was a journalist living in the Beverley Hills country, against Hollywood. He died in 1937, and now his wife and her present husband, Harry Newitt, have had a book that Joe Chisholm left in manuscript published by the Naylor Company in San Antonio. The title of it is "Brewery Gulch," and it gives a better idea of what was going on in Tombstone, Ariz., during its roaring days than several other books on the subject that I have read.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Joe tells how as a kid with his father he saw five men "officially" hanged and heard his father's companion remark that they had been "jerked to Jesus."

Nobody who knows the language of the Western soil need read beyond this quotation to realize that the writer is authentic. In any authentic writer the right words are coupled with the right tune and the right details. This writer may not have the power to produce literature, but he has a knowledge and a sincerity that make readers respect him. You don't have to read far in any book to tell whether it is genuine or a mere exercise in trying to be clever or a miserable success in being dull.

VICTORIAN AGE.

The other day I received from Frank S. Gray of Copperas Cove a copy of his "Pioneering in Southwest Texas," just published by the Steck Company of Austin. First thing I turned to a chapter on a dance in Edwards County in 1880. At that time Edwards County was all unfenced; it was frontier; the Grays had just located a herd of cattle on free grass. This dance is the kind of thing that Wild West writers and Hollywood revel in. Here is Frank Gray's description:

"The young men wore their best clothes at these pioneer dances, never appeared in the ballroom without their coats, and never danced with their hats on or their pants in their boots. They showed great respect for the girls and at no time used profane language in their presence. They never asked a strange girl to dance with them without being introduced. Some of the shy cowboys from isolated cow camps on the Divide were too timid to introduce their boy friends to their girl acquaintances." In other words, the cow country frontier was as much a part of the Victorian Age as Queen Victoria was.

At this dance in Edwards County some of the girl-shy cowboys built up a fire "outside the yard fence away from view of the dancers and played poker. Frank Gray describes how they listened to the bugle voice of the caller, and he gives some calls new to me:

"Here's to the duck that swam the river,
"Swing that girl that'll forsake you never.
"Rope the cow and brand the calf,
"And swing your honey an hour and a half.
"Swing on the corners, then swing your beau,
"We'll not go home till the roosters crow."

COYOTES JOIN MUSIC.

While the cards were being dealt on a saddle blanket spread out by the fire, one of the boys standing up, not playing, said, "Now, just listen at them coyotes startin' up."

"Yes, and don't you hear another pack farther off up Cade Hollow?" a second cowboy asked.

"And there's another bunch turned loose up the creek toward the Devil's Sinkhole," a cowboy lighting his cigaret on a stick out of the fire said.

"Now ain't that fine music?" another observed. Far off packs could be heard above the happy voices and joyous laughter of the dancers inside the house.

The cowboy who had lighted his cigaret had his hatted head thrown back and went on talking. "Them fiddlers ain't in it when it comes to variations. I guess all the coyotes in Edwards County heard of the dance and have come to give us a friendly serenade. Now just listen to that old lobo on top of the hill with his coarse voice carrying bass."

Frank Gray was there. He learned the right words from the coyotes as well as from the dance caller and after all these years he remembers the right tune. Describing the serenade, he says: "Sometimes just a few in a slow, dreary, low and mournful chord could be heard, followed by a quick active sound, and then still others would join in the choir and pitch their voices still higher. Sometimes their voices were harmonious and again they were conflicting."

DASHING, RESERVED.

These were young men. They could and did ride hard but they were distinguished by a sense of reserve. They danced before my time, but the other morning before breakfast down in Beeville I had a conversation with an aging Mexican shoe-shiner, who opens up his open-air booth about sunup, that suggests the tempo.

Juan was telling me how 50 years ago he picked cotton for 35 cents a hundred pounds, in contrast to the present price of 10 times that amount. "The pickers didn't travel in those days," he said, "not far anyhow."

I gave him my recollections of the traveling cotton pickers. The road from the Rio Grande through San Diego and on east ran through our ranch in Live Oak County. There was a lone windmill a few hundred yards off this road that they called Papalote Solo. It was a half day's travel either way to another watering, and on summer days I have seen as many as 50 horses and burros staked and hobbled out from the Lone Windmill. Most of them were poor; some had hideous sores on their backs; some were ridden and some driven to old wagons. If asked where they were going, the travelers would always say, "Into the interior." For them the "interior" was about Cuero or Runge. In the fall they would string back west. They traveled much slower than the dashing cowboy, but somehow their rhythms were in harmony with the rhythms of the range, and the tempos of cowboy on the plains and of "piscador" from below the Rio Grande were not alien to each other. It was the tempo of the earth, away from all machinery.

Next week we'll sample the tempo of one of the best of all cowboy writers.

J. Frank Dobie

MAY 22 1960 San Antonio Light

Independent Soul — A Sketch

By J. FRANK DOBIE

I don't know when the last blood-letting as a cure for a human being was performed by a licensed physician in the English-speaking world. The law of gradualism permits the obsolete to linger on after it has been displaced. The original surgeon was a barber. He had a sharp razor. At the beginning of this century I saw horses bled just above the hoof and in the gums, but I've never known an ailing human being who was bled for his health. Blood transfusions are on the opposite theory. Wordsworth, who died in 1850, wrote a powerful poem entitled "Resolution and Independence." He tells in this poem of meeting on the solitary moors an old man—"the oldest man he seemed that ever wore gray hairs"—who was going from pond to pond, stirring up the mud, to catch leeches and sell them. Leeches were applied to human flesh to draw out the blood. They were handier than vampire bats. At first Wordsworth was inclined to pity this old man, but after he had heard him talk and saw what a firm mind he had and saw what independence he lived by, he could have "laughed to scorn" the idea of patronizing him.

DOBIE

I never knew H. O. Kelly, perhaps the only true primitive artist that the southwest can claim. He lived the last years of his life on a little patch of ground he did not own near Blanket, in Brown county, Texas. All of his life he was a poor man. I guess he was a poor manager in farming and stock raising, but he liked the earth and was part of it. After success came to him through his paintings he was still poor, but he was one of the most independent souls that I've ever read about—and I'm a lifelong admirer of independent souls.

I feel now that I've known H. O. Kelly pretty well, for I've just read the biography entitled "Kelly Blue," written by my friend Bill (William Weber) Johnson, who has not allowed years of writing for Time magazine to debauch his mind.

Don Quixote

One of Kelly's life-long admirations was Don Quixote. "At the mention of the name of that divine mad man," exclaimed Cyrano de Bergerac, "I always salute." Cyrano de Bergerac was poor, too, but when he was dying he boasted that his plume had never been soiled. The years bowed him, as they bow all human frames, but he never asked for anybody's vote or licked a boot for anybody's help. Until the very end his soul remained erect. Kelly's favorite book, however, seems to have been "The Pickwick Papers" by Dickens. He read it many times silently and alone, and he read it aloud to friends "sick or blue." He read Pickwick and Don Quixote by a coal oil lamp in his late years when he couldn't sleep. He made pictures to illustrate the Pickwickian scenes. Somehow, there's something stirring in the fidelity of a man to a great work of art and in contemplation of the power of a book—one book.

Any man who talks honestly surprises friends and foes alike. Some of Kelly's honesty is beyond the pale of respectability. His people lived in New Jersey. Of his youth in that part of the world he told Bill Johnson:

"After the theater we always went to a Chinese restaurant and ate chop suey. Then sometimes we'd go to a house of entertainment run by a Cuban woman. I had a girl there, a German girl and very lovely. It's funny, isn't it, that those girls are frequently damned pretty? It always seemed kind of sad to me—their being so bright and pleasant. But then they were getting a little something out of life, and a lot of poor, decent working girls were not."

Eyes Open

Kelly tried cowboying. He had his eyes open, as instanced by this observation: "All men wore vests, the gamblers very fancy ones. They were handy for the pockets, and no one wore a coat. A cowman, when he came to town, always rolled up his coat and tied it on the back of his saddle. When he got to town he'd put it on as a mark of respect to civilization and ladies. Then if he went to gambling he'd sit in his vest."

Bill Johnson is a good observer, too. Take this picture of the primitive artist. Kelly hade made pictures a good part of his life but never sold one until near the end of it.

"After a time Kelly's eyes would tire. He would reach in a drawer, pull out a harmonica, tap it gently on the table to rid it of dust. He would lower the towel from his face and, eyes closed, knees propped against the table edge, would play old country dance tunes so softly that the music could barely be heard above the complaining wind."

Towards the end of his book, Bill Johnson quotes a good deal from Kelly's letters. Here is a passage expressing the ultimate in independence.

"On rare occasions he would paint a picture to order, but in his own way. When a Dallas lawyer whom Kelly liked asked if he would paint a picture of an oil rig with which he was hopefully drilling a wildcat well, Kelly agreed. He visited the well site, studied it and, in time, produced a painting that was completely Kelly and completely pastoral: A rocky hillside, grazing goats, a man on horseback. The oil rig was as natural and unobtrusive a part of the landscape as the mesquite trees.

"He balked, however, at frequent requests from wealthy Texans to paint ranch scenes with Hereford cattle. The Herefords were a noble breed, he would concede, but a herd of Herefords had become a status symbol for lately arrived cattlemen, who, for the most part, Kelly could not abide.

Onion-Eyed

"I am tired of pictures of Hereford bulls and cows that look like bathing beauties. I would like to see some old onion-eyed Longhorns. I lost a sale last week to a rancher's wife because I said I was weary of looking at overstuffed Hereford bulls and heifers and preferred to paint Brahmas and mossy old Longhorns and Mexican stock. To hell with them."

Kelly liked to smell mule sweat and see the plow slipping through good soil. He liked to hear Negroes sing, and he liked to ride out on grass as green as a billiard table. He said that Old Babe, the mare he rode, improved like wine with age. He said that the preachers he heard over the radio "squalled like tom cats to save my soul and keep me from hearing the lovely German and Czech band music that I like." He liked sheep and he liked goats, but he thought the goats had more sense of humor. When his eyes grew dim one day he "saddled up and rode over west to a pasture and sat around under a live oak with the rest of the stock." He knew that he was kin to other animals.

Kelly had been a reader of and listener to the Bible in his younger years. Not long before his time came he wrote of the death of an 82-year-old man who wasn't afraid of anything and who had been a great horseman. His life made Kelly think of a verse from Job that might well be his own epitaph: "At the destruction and famine, thou shalt laugh: neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth. For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee * * * Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season."

J. Frank Dobie

Austin American
MAY 17 1957

"Sheep," subtitled "Life on the South Dakota Range," by Archer B. Gilfillan, is a good book for anybody to read whether he cares anything about sheep or not. It is a personal narrative by a university man who read and observed and reflected on life while for eighteen years he herded sheep and then—nearly thirty years ago—published a book. It went out of print and now is being republished by the University of Minnesota Press at Minneapolis. I was asked to write an introduction for this new edition. I guess I have a right to steal from it, more or less as follows.

If, in the Niagara of "Westerns" highlighting cowboys, both good and bad, of sixshooters and saddles, a single novel has been devoted to a sheep herder or a sheep owner, it has not come to my attention. What producer would think of making a movie with no more action than a herd of grazing sheep suggests? All he really wants of cattle is a stampede; all he really wants of horses is a running fight between their riders. The idea of a screen drama embodying the spirit of a shepherd beside "still waters" would be as odd as a debate in the United States Senate over the intellectual fitness of a cabinet appointee.

In non-fiction books, sheep and sheep people have done better. Even so, hardly a dozen American books on the subject can be listed. On the other hand, a collector with some knowledge, money, and persistence can amass a thousand titles treating of cows, cow horses, trail drivers, cowboys, cowmen, and the vast cow country. Yet only one book that I know of treats of cow nature as intimately and extensively as Archer B. Gilfillan treats of sheep nature.

Among cow country books are all kinds, some wise in perspective, some rich in knowledge, some delightful in style, also more than a few revelatory of presuming ignorance and egotism, as if a little cowboying could alone make a good book. Of the comparatively few books dealing with sheep and sheep people, not one expresses striving ignorance.

The percentage achieving high standard is remarkable. Foremost among them stands "The Flock," by Mary Austin (Boston, 1906), a classic in insight, sympathies, and style. More personal and gossipy is Hughie Call's "Golden Fleece" (Boston, 1942); it integrates family life on a Montana ranch with the sheep industry. Two excellent books sum up the history of sheep, which includes related animal life, the land, and men. They are "The Golden Hoof," by Winifred Kupper (New York, 1945), a truly delightful book, and "Shepherd's Empire," by Charles Wayland Towne and Edward Norris Wentworth (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1946), more extensive but not so much fun. All but the last named are out of print. All four together have not sold as many copies as the first printing of one of Zane Grey's novels woven around some range rider with a tense grim tone who if he is not shooting with two sixshooters at flocks across the unfenced ranges of California, New Mexico, and Wyoming. He became both owner and herder of sheep. Like Archer Gilfillan, he lived a bachelor, speculated about women and read books. Long after he retired from the sheep business he wrote his memoirs. The one personal narrative in the field worthy of a place beside Archer B. Gilfillan's "Sheep" is "Texas Sheepman: The Reminiscences of Robert Maudslay," edited by Winifred Kupper—a niece with a sense of humor and with sheep in her education—(University of Texas Press, Austin, 1951).

Maudslay's favorite reading seems to have been all of Scott, all of Shakespeare and a life-time subscription to the "Illustrated London News." "What could a man who read Shakespeare and the 'Illustrated London News' contribute to

Comey ti yi yoopeeya,
Ti yi ya?"

An indefatigable singer of cowboy songs who claimed to have been a cowboy asserted to me once, in answer to a question: "No, the sheepmen never had any songs. They are not smart enough, I guess, to make them up." No orthodox cowboy, cowman, cowman's wife or daughter ever did consider any sheep herder or sheep owner smart enough to get in out of the rain. "Crazy as a sheep herder," is a traditional range expression, along with "crazy as a bedbug." "Do you know what makes sheep herders go crazy?" One answer is, "Trying to figger out the long way from the short way of a boughten quilt." The other, and more common, is that they associate with nobody but sheep or, what is worse, themselves. This kind of folklore may have had something to do with public indifference in the United States to literature concerned with sheep and sheep people. If wide open spaces and a lone man on the lone prairie are desiderata for readers of literature about the West, they are as inherent in sheep books as in cow books.

Henry David Thoreau's short-lived retreat to Walden Pond afforded a kind of philosophical precedent for Archer Gilfillan's long retreat into the short grass country of South Dakota. He was not bent like Thoreau on "driving life into a corner" and analyzing it to the core, but he was just as set on being independent in all ways. The "all-pervading calm" of the land on which he lived alone in his sheep wagon brought to him "an interior peace."

Things Not the Same

FEB 1 2 1961 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

'Old Mr. Flood' Had Very Strong Feelings

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I don't want to suggest "Old Mr. Flood," by Joseph Mitchell as a major opus or even a minor classic. My friend John Edward Rainey of Greater Houston and Lesser LaMarque, insatiable reader and sociable liver, sent me the little book for Christmas. It's designed to read in bed. When any book but the dictionary and others in that class get too ponderous to read in bed, they should be printed in smaller volumes. Lying in bed and reading about Flood, I decided that he was a worthy man because he has so many ideas that I approve of. He was stronger on seafood as compared with red meat than I am, but he might be right. The book starts out with this quotation from a 17th Century poet:

"We'll sport and be free with
Moll, Betty, and Dolly,
Have oysters and lobsters to
cure melancholy:
Fish-dinners will make a lass
spring like a flea,
Dame Venus, love's lady,
Was born of the sea . . ."

J. FRANK DOBIE.

* * *

CONSIDER THE EGG.

"Fish," he said, "is the only grub left that the scientists haven't been able to get their hands on and improve. The flounder you eat today hasn't got any more vitamins in it than the flounder your great-great-granddaddy ate, and it tastes the same. Everything else has been improved and improved and improved to such an extent it ain't fit to eat.

"Consider the egg. When I was a boy on Staten Island, hens ate grit and grasshoppers and scraps from the table and whatever they could scratch out of the ground, and a platter of scrambled eggs was a delight. Then the scientists developed a special egg-laying mash made of old corncobs and sterilized buttermilk, and nowadays you order scrambled eggs and you get a platter of yellow glue, Grade A. Consider the apple. Years ago you could enjoy an apple. Then the scientists took hold and invented chemical fertilizers especially for apple trees, and apples got big and red and shiny and beautiful and absolutely tasteless."

Flood believed in raw oysters as one of the elixirs of life and believed in drinking the water out of the shells, from which the oysters should be taken instead of out of a pasteboard box. He has his ideas about bread.

* * *

AND ALSO BREAD.

"Years back, bread was the staff of life. It looked good, it smelled good, it tasted good, and it had all the vitamins in it a man could stand. Then the bakers fiddled and fooled and improved their methods and got things down to such a fine point that a loaf of bread didn't have any more nourishment in it than a brickbat. Now they're putting the vitamins back in by scientific means — Nature's way don't suit them; it ain't complicated enough — and they've got the brass to get on the radio and brag about it."

Food and drink were not the only subjects Flood philosophized on. "Old age hasn't taught me a whole lot," he said, "but it sure taught me the true value of a dollar, a kind word, and a drink of whisky." A story he told—a kind of folk story—has a deep moral, but I can't determine what it is. I'll quote the story, and you supply the moral, but you needn't bother to supply it to me.

"There was an old farmer lived beside a little branch-line railroad in south Jersey, and ever so often he'd get on the train and go over to Trenton and buy himself a crock of applejack. He'd buy it right at the distillery door, the old Bossert & Stockton Apple Brandy Distillery, and save himself a penny or two. One morning he went to Trenton and bought his crock, and that afternoon he got on the train for the trip home. Just as the train pulled out, he took his watch from his vest pocket, a fine gold watch in a fancy hunting case, and he looked at it, and then he snapped it shut and put it back in his pocket.

* * *

ALL FIGURED OUT.

"There was a drummer sitting across the aisle, and this drummer leaned over and said, 'Friend, what time is it?' The farmer took a look at him and said, 'Won't tell you.' The drummer thought he was hard of hearing and spoke louder. 'Friend,' he shouted out, 'what time is it?' 'Won't tell you,' said the farmer. The drummer thought a moment and then he said, 'Friend, all I asked was the time of day. It don't cost anything to tell the time of day.' 'Won't tell you,' said the farmer. 'Well, look here, for the Lord's sake,' said the drummer, 'why won't you tell me the time of day?'

" 'If I was to tell you the time of day,' the farmer said, 'we'd get into a conversation, and I got a crock of spirits down on the floor between my feet, and in a minute I'm going to take a drink, and if we were having a conversation I'd ask you to take a drink with me, and you would, and presently I'd take another, and I'd ask you to do the same, and you would, and we'd get to drinking, and by and by the train'd pull up to the stop where I get off, and I'd ask you why don't you get off and spend the afternoon with me, and you would, and we'd walk up to my house and sit on the front porch and drink and sing, and along about dark my old lady would come out and ask you to take supper with us, and you would, and after supper I'd ask if you'd care to drink some more, and you would, and it'd get to be real late and I'd ask you to spend the night in the spare room, and you would, and along about two o'clock in the morning I'd get up to go to the pump, and I'd pass my daughter's room, and there you'd be, in there with my daughter, and I'd have to turn the bureau upside down and get out my pistol, and my old lady would have to get dressed and hitch up the horse and go down the road and get the preacher, and I don't want no son-in-law who don't own a watch.' "

TAR-TELEGRAM NOV 3 1953

Captured Dobie's Heart

More Behind Newsboy Than Desire to Sell

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The first newspaper boy I heard cry, "Pai-per! Pai-per!" captured my heart and fired my imagination. That was in San Antonio in front of the long-ago-demolished Maverick Hotel; as a collegian I was stopping overnight on my way home for Christmas. In those days, except perhaps in very large hotels in the largest cities, newspapers were not for sale at hotel desks or cigar counters in the early morning.

J. FRANK. DOBIE.

I was an early riser, and as I stepped out of the Maverick Hotel onto Houston St.—the main street of the city—two bright-voiced and, as I soon saw, bright-eyed newsboys spotted me simultaneously from two directions at equi-distant spots. Here they came a-tearing and a-yelling, arriving at the target exactly at the same instant. Now, at this time, 1906 or 1907, a nickel was an appreciable amount of money to me, as it was to a majority of people over the nation. I had not asked for a morning paper but decided right there that I needed two nickels' worth of the "San Antonio Express." I made up for the extravagance by not having bacon with eggs for breakfast.

* * *

CHRISTMAS FEAST.

From that day to this I have not bought a newspaper inside a hotel where it was possible to buy one from a newsboy outside. Nowadays the outside vendor is likely to be an oldish man who merely stands near the entrance without running and crying his wares. Around many big hotels in cities there is no newsboy at all.

Not long after I became acquainted with newsboys I read Charles Lamb's essay on "Chimney Sweepers." In it he describes a great-hearted feast that a man named Jem White used to give the chimney sweepers of London every Christmas. That feast is as warming to human spirits as Bob Cratchitt's Christmas dinner in "A Christmas Carol." Since reading Charles Lamb on the chimney sweepers of London I have associated newsboys everywhere with them. As I seem to recollect, some fine gentleman used to give the newsboys of a Texas city—maybe it's Houston but I can't be sure—a Christmas feast.

I doubt if any city anywhere has a higher percentage of characters among the newspaper vendors on its streets than Austin. Some of them left boyhood decades ago; one is a woman; one went to England to see Queen Elizabeth crowned. Some that I have known by sight and voice for years I don't know by name but often wish I knew the history of.

Until something over a month ago I knew Charlie only by sight as now and then I encountered him selling the noon edition of the afternoon newspaper. Then he became a part of my life.

* * *

His full name is Carlos Gonzales. He is 42, he and his wife have two boys and one girl, all in school, two of them to be graduated soon. He was born in Austin. He is low-set and slightly crippled. His whole countenance exudes benevolence, good will, gladness for life; his greeting is beams of sunshine going from a good heart into whomsoever he greets. He is one of those people who bless the world by merely walking around on its surface among Adam's descendants. And a long time ago I got the ineradicable impression that Adam was terribly dreary company, always droop-mouthed over Eve's sins and never glad at all over what a jolly, juggling time he had had with Eve before the apples turned rotten.

Charlie's main business is supplying the patients of the three main hospitals in Austin—Brackenridge, Seton and St. David's—with newspapers, morning and afternoon. He seems to have a kind of monopoly on this business, most benevolent of all monopolists, knocking at every door on all the floors (a part of Brackenridge excepted) offering in a not-at-all money-grabbing manner the chief literary pablum of thousands of worthy citizens. He has a car to carry the papers to the hospitals.

It was while I was still in an oxygen tent in this delightful retreat from worldly cares called St. David's Hospital that Charlie became a part of my life. I kind of wanted the morning paper to see what kind of stupidity Dulles was announcing, or what new example of ignorance of reality the President was exhibiting, or how fast the stock market was going to hell, etc.; but what I really wanted was a little visit with Charlie. I named my morning nurse Morning-Bringer and Charlie Las Mananitas which can not be translated literally but which means the dawnings or the dawn-songs.

* * *

ALWAYS SMILING.

Almost from the first the greetings between me and Charlie were in Spanish. They carried me back to the horses and ridings and vaqueros of my youth. "How did you dawn" I would ask, which is perfectly idiomatic Spanish, used more among us country people than among the country-clubbers. "With health, thanks to God, and how did you dawn" Charlie would respond. "Getting health, gracias a Dios."

Charlie would be smiling. He might touch my foot or leg with a hand. He would pass on and my heart and lungs would be a lot lighter.

One Sunday morning he came by with a very heavy load of Sunday papers so freighted with advertisements. He looked almost exhausted. I thought of his poor feet. I told him that when I got out I was going to find a gentle pack burro for him to lead up and down the halls carrying his load on a pack saddle. He said that might not be allowed. I wanted him to take home one of my beautiful roses. He said no, that it would wilt, but that with him it was the same as though he had taken the gift.

On Monday I requested an interview with the hospital manager, Mr. Lloyd. He came and I asked if it would be all right if Charlie used one of the rolling tables on days of heavy newspapers. "Surely," he said. "We all know and appreciate Charlie."

On Tuesday I told Charlie what was going to happen. Something like tears were in his eyes. Wednesday morning he said that he had dreamed about me the night before. Thursday Mr. Lloyd came by and said he had notified Charlie how and where to get a table with rollers every Sunday.

* * *

KNELT AND PRAYED.

On Sunday morning there was a knock at the door and Charlie pushed in his roller-coasting table loaded with a few hundred pounds of papers. His face was like the rising sun. "Here is my little burro," he gleamed, petting the machine.

One time, one blessed nurse told me, a man in agony (who soon thereafter died) told Charlie when he appeared at the door with newspapers that he needed prayers worse than he needed any newspaper. "I pray for you," Charlie said, whereupon he put his papers down on the floor, knelt at the foot of the man's bed, and offered up a prayer out of his sympathy and faith.

Some people believe as simply as they feel. Charlie is one of them. Some keep on feeling simply after they have become intellectually liberated from all religious creeds. Both have their rights and their uses. I suppose I'm one of the non-believers. But it seems to me that in the world we are all children wandering on a darkling plain. I'm very thankful that Charlie exists, that he took my hand for a while, and that I could take his.

Tales About Horses

Boyhood Classics No Longer Hold Appeal

STAR TELEGRAM

July 10, 1960.

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Two classics of my boyhood were "Beautiful Joe," for whom we named a black dog, and "Black Beauty." We didn't have a horse named Black Beauty but when Old Baldy, a black, died, we children carried on over him as if he'd been Black Beauty. About two years ago I bought a copy of "Black Beauty," thinking I'd like to reread it. As soon as I read a few paragraphs I closed the book. It was meant for soft and sentimental youth, not for realistic age. I haven't changed my attitude, however, on the horses I knew as a boy. I used to think that when I got to be a writing man I'd write a long story about a cow horse that after growing too old to run in the brush was sold to a trader to take East and dispose of as a plow horse. That was the end of many ranch horses — cow horses. Maybe a majority of ranchmen kept a favorite horse and let him run out until he died, but the mass of wornout horses were sold to end up in harness—as old horses now go for dog feed.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The kind of story I wanted to write was published in 1912 by John Galsworthy in his book, "Quality Street." What he wrote isn't a story; it's a sketch (entitled "Evolution") of a fading-out London cabman and the cabman's horse as they are being displaced by taxicabs. The cabman here talks of his horse.

* * *

FATHER HAD ANSWER.

I would protest to Papa against selling off any horse. I had no idea that the grass eaten by a turned-out horse would in a steer or cow contribute to the rearing and educating of six children. The tragedy of ceasing to be a cow horse running free and becoming a clodhopper was in my mind. Sometimes it depressed my spirits. My father had an answer summed up in these words: "Never marry a horse."

The man who broke our horses —only two or three a year—was named Jose and he was from Valena. He was thick-set, heavy, swart in complection, pock-marked. He would lead a 3-or-4-year-old potro off and be gone a month maybe and ride him back leading his own horse. The standard pay for breaking a horse was $2.50. A beautiful young bay of mine that Jose took to break got killed in the procedure. A spirited horse loses his head in struggles for liberty and easily cripples himself or even kills himself. The instinct for self preservation seems stronger in mules.

We had a pair branded TOL on the left hip and thigh, bought at $50 a piece from Tol McNeill, whose ranch joined ours on the west. One of the mules was a mare named Maggie, and the other was named Tol. I've ridden many airplanes, but the fastest ride I ever made was in an empty wagon with which Maggie and Tol ran away. They didn't run into a wire fence; they didn't run into a tree; they didn't seem excited when the run was over, but an empty wagon bouncing at full mule-speed over trails, bushes, gullies, and prickly pear will give an exciting sense of motion.

* * *

WILD HORSES SEEN.

We farmed a field in Long Hollow Valley down in front of the house, raising corn, kershaws, watermelons, canteloupes. I was always wanting to plow. As a very small boy I and the blackbirds followed a turning plow together, but all they were after was earthworms and grubs.—My ambition was realized one time when Papa was gone. I hitched up a bay horse with a white one—a salt-and-pepper-colored horse—to a turning plow—a walking plow, of course, which was already in the field. After I had made two or three rounds I noticed a wild mare and some other horses in mesquite brush over the fence on the back side of the field. After turning my team toward the house I left the plow point in the ground, wrapped the reins around the handle and then went back to the fence to enjoy looking at the horses outside.

When the wild mare saw me she plunged away, the other horses with her, making a loud sound. The plow horses had blind bridles on and when they heard the other horses pounding the ground, they started running the way they were headed. The plow point would jerk out of the earth and go up as high as the traces would let it go and come down either flat or pitched into the ground and then jerk up again. The farther the horses went, the faster they got until they hit the barbed wire fence. That didn't stop them. They tore part of it down and cut their breasts severely. Barbed wire will saw into the flesh of an animal as effectively as a saw itself. The runaways didn't stop until they were in the pen, trembling and as gory as a stuck pig. There wasn't a man on the place. Mama told me to get on Dandy and ride for Cousin Dick Dobie, whose ranch was something over a mile away. He came and sewed up the wounds in the horses. The cuts healed without blow flies bothering the horses.

* * *

LONG PACK TRIP.

If Maggie and Tol had been hitched to that plow and had tried running away, they would have stopped when they got to the wire fence. One time on a long pack trip in the western Sierra Madre of Mexico, a mule that Bertha Dobie was riding refused to jump a deep narrow cut in the ground that my mule had jumped, although I wasn't on her at the moment. After Bertha had used all her whipping power, which isn't very severe, her mule still wouldn't try to jump the break. Bertha got down and I tried to lead the mule over. The mule got parallel with the ditch and then fell down into it. She knew all the time that she couldn't jump it. She fell upright. She put her nose around to the saddlegirth as if to say, "Take this off and leave me free." When the saddle was removed she collected her nerve and her wits and then gave one magnificent jump and scrambled out. The gully was almost up to her back. The average horse in that predicament would have gone half crazy if not wholly crazy and would have lunged and plunged, maybe hurting himself, all the while hindering anybody from helping him.

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM DEC 14 1958

Section Two

About Texas and Texans

Printer Learns How Good Snake Meat Is

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

One of the three largest rattlesnakes I have encountered—it was six feet long—and, I believe, the fierest, was on a warm December afternoon while I was riding horseback through the salt grass—called sacahuista—on the Nueces River in LaSalle County about 30 miles below Cotulla. I was headed due east, and I and my horse both at about the same time heard this rattlesnake fully 50 yards away to the northeast. We were not approaching him. Of course he heard the horse's hoofs or felt the vibration of earth made by the hoofs. He was reared up high in the grass, rattling like a madman shaking a club. I rode over near him, pulled a 30-30 out of scabbard and put an end to him.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

At times I have regretted killing that particular rattlesnake, for rattlesnakes add to the interest of the brush country as almost no other animal. I gave this one a poor reward for the vivid memory he gave me. There are plenty of hunters who won't hunt afoot in the brush country on warm days, and sometimes the days in December down toward the Rio Grande are hot. Rattlesnakes are "notionous," like mares and lots of people. Their behavior can not be invariably predicted. My friend Bill Lucas, typesetter on the Austin American, relates some incidents that illustrate this "notionous" behavior. I quote him without quotation marks.

* * *

COYOTES HOWLED.

One December day Pedro and I made camp close to a road being constructed through the Ortiz ranch north of Laredo. It was closed to traffic. We set up our camp cots, gathered a big pile of mesquite wood for the fire, fixed a lean-to onto the side of the car so as to extend over our cots, and then after smells of fried bacon and eggs had set the coyotes to howling, went to sleep. Maybe coyotes like the aroma of mesquite smoke also.

Pedro woke me several times putting wood on the fire. I asked him what the idea was, and he said, "It's hot; rattlesnakes crawling." I just shrugged and went back to sleep only to be awakened again by sparks from the fire he was making blaze. Finally daylight came and I got up and started to prepare breakfast. I looked out upon the newly graded road and saw two rattlesnakes coming. They were crawling across the road very slowly. I called Pedro, and he got up and got a stick. The oncoming snakes showed no fright or flight. They just crawled toward camp. They were rather small, maybe three feet long. Pedro sat down on his cot, stick in hand, and waited. After the snakes crawled into the camp area, they lay still in the early morning sun, as if they were on a visit. They just lay there. Finally Pedro stuck out the stick in his hand and rubbed one of the snakes on the head. It seemed to enjoy the petting. No strike, no show of anger.

* * *

CATTLE SLEEPING.

Both snakes were killed with a stick and thrown into the brush. The next day the weather changed to a cold mist. We got up early to shoot a deer. Signs told us there were plenty of them about. I was walking down an old road that had been used by an oil well drilling outfit years before, but was now almost grown up in brush. I came to the corner of a fence where there was no brush or grass. The ground was bare, except for cow chips. Cattle had been sleeping there. Here I decided to linger for a while. I figured that a buck would step into view before long. I walked up to a post and put my arm on top of it to relax better.

In a minute or so I was attracted by a movement right close to my feet. I stood rigid and didn't move even my head. I let my eyes down and there, coiled around a cow chip with his head in the air lay a medium-sized rattlesnake. He had evidently coiled up around the chip for warmth overnight. I knew if I moved he would strike, because his action told me he was angry at being disturbed. Rattlesnakes are not usually out in even chilly weather. I just stood in silence.

After about 10 minutes of waiting, the snake lowered his head onto the ground and crawled into a pear bush. I went back down the old road hoping to at least see a "camp size" deer to shoot for meat. A bunch of javelinas crossed the breach through the brush in front of me. I killed three pigs — better eating than venison any time. While I was still gutting them a vaquero rode up. He agreed to carry the pigs behind his saddle to camp for a dollar.

* * *

GOOD EATING.

He got loaded, headed for camp, and then in plain view, hardly a 100 yards off, his horse began to pitch like a bay steer. The pigs went to the ground first and then the vaquero. The horse took to the brush and about this time Pedro, drawn by my shots, appeared.

He listened a minute, turning his head from side to side, then he pointed into the brush beside the trail. There, head high in the air, was the largest rattlesnake I ever saw in my many years in the brush country. It was angrily rattling. The horse had been able to hear it when the rider couldn't.

I shot the snake's head off with one shot from my 30-30. I dragged the snake to camp, and since it was so big and fat and I wanted its skin for my bedroom wall, I skinned it. I was 6 feet, 1 inch long. Pedro commented that the meat on its back would make a fine supper. The meat did look tempting and clean. Pedro got out his knife and cut off a long strip of the white meat along the snake's back and sliced it into cooking pieces. After frying it, I got up the nerve to try a bite. It was the finest tasting meat I had ever eaten. Since then I have eaten many rattlesnake steaks.

About Texas and Texans

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM MAY 3 1959

Goodnight 'One of Few' Worthy of Term 'Great'

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Now that corporations are coming to own the country and an independently-owned grocery store with enough stock to more than load a four - mule wagon has become a rarity, public relations men are as familiar to the public as FBI men. Public relations is a booming field for professionals. Ours is as much an age for insincere windbags as for hydrogen bombs. All corporations and big-time politicians have their public relations agents. Like most lawyers, most public relations "counselors" are for hire to the highest bidders. During elections, some thrive as hatchet men, some by selling a sow's ear for a silk purse. The rich and the powerful have always had intermediaries between them and the public, including such professionals as that charming mistress (DuBarry) to Louis XV, who made him "forget that soon I will be 60."

J. FRANK DOBIE.

I don't suspect at all that the world is going to hell any faster now than it was going in Plutarch's time, but when I consider the independence of Charlie Goodnight and other men of his time and kidney, I know the world has changed. He could never have been a public relations man, or have employed one.

While Lester Shaffey, a most modest and also most sincere professor of history, was representing the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society, with headquarters at Canyon, he called on Col. Charles Goodnight at his ranch near the wide place in the road named Goodnight. The colonel was repairing a pen gate and didn't stop his business while Shaffey announced his name.

"I don't give a damn what your name is," Goodnight retorted. "What in the hell do you want?" That abrupt beginning ended in friendship.

* * *

PEPPER SAUCE BOTTLE.

In 1926, during a period while I was writing a good many articles for the Country Gentleman, I advised the editors that the noted old plainsman and cowman Charles Goodnight would make a good story and that I wanted to write it. They agreed to print it if I wrote it right. I wrote Goodnight and he replied that he would "be pleased to entertain" me any time I came. He did not seem elated at all at my arrival, though he was courteous enough. At supper an hour or two later I noticed on the table the biggest pepper sauce bottle I have ever seen—about half a gallon in size, I judged. Goodnight regarded a mixture of whisky and extract of buffalo meat as an excellent tonic, perhaps partly responsible for his vigor at 90. I did not see any of this mixture about. He ate in a hurry, pushed his chair back, said, "I never was a hand to dally around the table; excuse me," and left.

He had told me right off that he did not care a damn about any publicity, and I knew he meant what he said. At the same time, he gave me many facts. Some of them I had to prod out of him. At mention of "my old pardner Oliver Loving," his voice became warm and tender. I stayed with him two or three days and nights, our chemistries mixing pretty well.

On the second day he told me about Old Blue. Old Blue was his lead steer on the great JA Ranch that he established—the first ranch in all the Panhandle of Texas. Old Blue led beef herds from the Palo Duro Canyon to Dodge City and came back with the cowboys and the remuda. Many an outlaw steer roped in the breaks was necked to him to be led straight to the ranch corrals. Buffalo calves that Goodnight saved to start a buffalo herd with were necked to Old Blue for bringing in.

* * *

TEARS IN EYES.

When I evidenced interest in Old Blue, Goodnight's spirits picked up. He told me more than once that while he would not give half of a damn for anything that anybody might write about Charlie Goodnight, he would like to have Old Blue given his dues. He'd actually written a biographical sketch of Old Blue in doggerel verse and he gave that to me. Back in Austin, I wrote the story of Old Blue as best I could and sold it to a magazine published in New York. After I sent Goodnight a copy of the printed story, he responded, "my eyes filled with tears when I read what you have written of my faithful old friend."

He would rather have associated with Old Blue than with any pretender to position that ever directed his career toward the White House. He told me that if he felt dispirited and rode down into the buffalo pasture and looked at his buffaloes and the canyons, he always came back heartened and refreshed.

Another one of his favorite characters was Old Bose—Bose Ikard, who had been born a slave in Mississippi and who for years rode with Goodnight on the long cattle trails and on ranges where Indians and white murderers and thieves made life dangerous. My friend H. B. (Tex) Willis of Dallas has given me an account of a trip he made, in 1919, with Charlie Goodnight in a car from Dallas to Waco and then on to Weatherford, where Bose was living.

Tex said that as they approached Waco about 4 o'clock in the afternoon he asked Goodnight if he'd like to go by Sul Ross' place. Sul Ross had helped capture Cynthia Ann Parker, been governor of Texas, and been high in other public places. Goodnight replied, "what in the hell would I want to see anything connected with that old lying four-flusher for?" Goodnight may not have been correct in his estimate of Sul Ross, but he just naturally didn't like people who were always eyeing the gallery and conducting their lives so as to win "suffrages." He was not, probably never had been, afflicted with the itch for being noticed—that pimply outbreak on many individuals who can't abide with equanimity their own smallness. Tex said he showed more pleasure at meeting Old Bose than at meeting anybody else on the whole trip. He gave him a $100 bill.

* * *

COLD RECEPTION.

It was close to 6 o'clock before they got breakfast in Weatherford—mighty late for Goodnight. Word had got around town that the noted frontiersman was back on his old stamping grounds. Before they left the restaurant, some important-appearing individual walked up to him boldly and said, "Mr. Charles Goodnight, I believe." Goodnight never moved a muscle. The enthusiastic greeter kept coming, holding out his hand. "My father used to be an Indian fighter," he brightened. With that, Old Charlie Goodnight rared back like a buffalo bull and, glaring right into the gladhander's eyes, growled: "Damn poor recommendation, considering one Comanche warrior could drive all the sorry white people out of five counties."

Goodnight had fought the Comanches himself. Also he had made a treaty with them on the Palo Duro. He respected their rights and respected them as human beings. He was a great friend to some of the Pueblo Indians. He rated natural men and nature above anything else. To him nature was honest, never pretending.

At 91, early in 1927, he married for the second time, his first wife having died the year preceding. I sent him a pair of bronze bookends depicting an Indian on horseback, "At the End of the Trail." These were trivial things. I did not select them in a spirit of irony but because I thought the Indian subject would appeal to Goodnight. He wrote back: "If you had studied for 100 years, you could not have found anything that would have pleased me more. If Providence permits, I hope to have sometime some little Goodnights to hand them down to." He was not yet at the end of his trail.

* * *

NOT "COLONEL".

The last time I saw him was at a meeting of the Trail Drivers in San Antonio in 1928. He and his wife had stopped at our home in Austin on the way south. He told me she'd had a miscarriage.

The Trail Drivers always met in the Gunter Hotel. Goodnight was wide and thick, and he sat on a long lounge in the lobby. Two or three times while I was talking with him there, a stranger came up to say, "this is Colonel Goodnight, I take it."

His invariable reply was, "this is Charlie Goodnight." He didn't mind calling the names of known cow thieves who had prospered. On this last visit with him he said, "no more night work for me. I've done my share of it—and it wasn't after other people's cattle."

Somebody said he'd been a man of vision. "Yes," he retorted, "a hell of a vision." "My life," he said to me, "has been mostly a failure." That didn't keep him from feeling superior in a you-be-damned sort of way to all pretenders, hypocrites, liars and bootlickers, even if it was his own boots they tried to lick.

I have met a lot of good men, several fine gentlemen, hordes of cunning climbers, plenty of loud-braying asses and plenty of dumb oxen, but I haven't lived long enough or traveled far enough to meet more than two or three men I'd call great. That is a word I will not bandy around. To me Charles Goodnight was great-natured.

The biography that J. Evetts Haley wrote of him is the richest, meatiest and amplest life of any cowman yet published.

J. Frank Dobie San. A. Light 11-17-57

Santos Cortez—Teller of Stories

In the fall of 1919 I came back to the University of Texas as Instructor of English after about two years in the army — field artillery. I'd been overseas and learned a lot. Life at the university seemed pretty tame, but that wasn't the worst. My wife and I were doing worse than starving to death on a government claim. My salary was meager, as all university salaries were at the time, but I was at the bottom of the ladder with very little prospect of getting higher up until I got a Ph. D. degree, and I didn't expect to get one.

Dobie

Uncle Jim (J. M.) Dobie had been after me several times to go back into the cow business. He wanted to back me. One day along in the spring of 1920 he came to Austin on business and asked me once more why I didn't go to work for him. He had a big ranch in addition to a lot of leased land in LaSalle, McMullen, Duval and Webb counties. He had a big ranch down in Mexico. He had business interests in San Antonio and elsewhere. He said he wanted a kind of segundo to go around and look after affairs for him. I agreed to go with him.

When spring came I resigned my job at the University of Texas and we moved to San Antonio. By this time the cattle market began to go down and before long, instead of trapezing over the country looking after varied affairs, I was managing the Olmos ranch in LaSalle county. It straddles the Nueces river. Lots of times I didn't talk to any English-speaking person for several days. We had a cow outfit and then another outfit to build tanks and repair fences.

Santos Cortez

One of the Mexicans at the ranch was named Santos Cortez. He had killed a man "on the other side" during the revolution and got this side—the Rio Grande dividing the sides, of course. He was a good pastor (goat-herder), an indifferent vaquero, lazy on foot, a skilled hunter, often assigned to furnish camp with venison and javelina meat, and a lover of talk. Sometimes at night he would come up to my room in the ranch house to converse. He wearied, he told me, of conversation confined to the sore back of a certain horse, the low water in a certain tank, the distance a certain vaquero had run in the black chaparral out in the San Casimiro pasture before he got a glimpse of the outlaw steer he was trailing, the burning of sacahuiste grass below the Tigre, the dry weather that had been and seemed likely to continue, and other such everyday matters. He craved conversation on higher things.

One night after we had branched off on higher subjects, he told me of two remarkable experiences he could vouch for on a neighboring ranch. One was his own, the other a friend's. This friend was riding by the site of a long-abandoned Mexican jacal one night when all of a sudden he felt the arms of a skeleton around him and realized that a ghost had dropped down from a tree under which he passed and was mounted behind him. His horse screamed in fright and broke into a run that the rider did nothing to hinder. It was about three miles to the ranch, and that skeleton clung to him all the way and then at the gate released his hold and disappeared.

Known True

"This did not pass with me," Santos said, "but I know it is true. I am going to tell you something that did pass with me. I have never told another. You are next to God with me, and will not laugh." When Santos became earnest this way, there were always tears in his voice and in his eyes, too.

"Bueno. That was a lonesome camp where I kept the goats. Maybe two times, maybe one time, every 15 days did I see another man. He would bring a little flour and coffee and sugar, frijoles, salt, no more. At night only the coyotes talked, and they did not talk to me. The pastor dog slept with the goats, and I did not have even him for company.

Drive Off Evil

"One night after I had been sound asleep for a while, I awoke drawing my breath in quick pants, like this. There was un bulto—a bulk—on my chest so heavy that it was smothering me. I always kept my rifle at my side. I started to reach for it but could not move a finger. It was as if I were tied down with a wet rawhide rope. Tight, man, tight! I could not raise my body to pitch the bulto off. I tried to yell. I had no breath to make a sound with, and my mouth it was dry like lime. Look, my tongue would not moisten my lips. I was pinned back flat so that I could not bend my neck to see the bulto there in the dark. Pues, what could I do?

"Then I remembered how it is said that thoughts of good will drive away the evil. I began to think of the good God and of the Holy Virgin. I thought hard, and in a little bit of while there was no bulto weighing down on me. I did not hear it run off. I did not see it. It vanished, and I was free. When daylight came and I looked for tracks, I could not find any. It is a thing I cannot explain, nor you either, Meester Frankie, though you are well instructed and have been a master in a big school. These things are not of the earth.

"They are not of the earth even when you see them. One night I was with two other men crossing the Arroyo San Casimiro at the Paso de la Gallina. And there right above the palo verde tree in which the lone gallina (chicken) used to roost, we saw a light so bright that it made my eyes go blind. Maybe it was 12 feet high, like a ball. It stayed there a little bit and then slowly, slowly it floated on down the creek. One, thinking it would lead to gold, wanted to follow it, but it had not said "Santos" to me. We stood still. It got a little dimmer, and then it just vanished, like a match that ceases to burn."

View of Painting

In the course of time Santos told me many other things. He taught me a lot more than several professors under whom I have taken courses taught me. He's dead now, but I would rather have associated with him than with several governors I have known.

During the years I spent on Los Olmos ranch while Santos talked, while Uncle Jim Dobie and other cow men talked or stayed silent, while the coyotes sang their songs, and the sandhill cranes honked their lonely music I seemed to be seeing a great painting of something I'd known all my life. I seemed to be listening to a great epic of something that had been commonplace in my youth but now took on meanings. I was familiar with John A. Lomax's Cowboys Songs and other Frontier Ballads. Indeed, I knew John Lomax himself very well. One day it came to me that I would collect and tell the legendary tales of Texas as Lomax had collected the old-time songs and ballads of Texas and the frontier.

Chance Plays Part

If it hadn't been for Uncle Jim and Los Olmos, if it hadn't been for Santos Cortez, the tale teller, I don't know what direction I might have gone. I'm saying again that life is often determined by chance and that luck is being ready for the chance. It was certainly lucky for me that I left the university in 1920 and learned something. In 1923 I brought out Legends of Texas for the Texas Folklore society. It's long been out of print. It was several years before I wrote my first trade book. My mind has changed on various things since those long-ago days. According to my idea, when a man's mind petrifies beyond change he had just as well stop traveling.

Until petrification sets in, chance will always play a part in a person's life. When the time comes that it doesn't make any difference which road one takes, the traveller had as well quiet riding.

J. Frank Dobie

Gleanings From the Morning Mail

If there's anything more romantic to a writing man than the daily mail I don't know what it is. He may hope for a check every day and receive one once a month. In addition to letters from friends, he is likely to receive letters from people who are friendly to him but whom he has never met and who write because of something of his they have read. Often they tell stories or sketch characters. Many people write to get something; many to give something. With a constant potentiality of the unknown the postman helps keep the world from growing flat and stale.

DOBIE

Some months ago I wrote a Sunday column on natural milk in contrast to the stuff we now get after it's been boiled, pasteurized, homogenized, vitaminized and otherwise transmuted from its natural state. This article was picked up by a magazine called Natural Foods. It brought me more than one invitation to come to a farm and drink natural milk. I quote a paragraph from a New York woman's letter:

"Could you please tell me if the raw milk I get has Strontium 90 in it—I mean is apt to have it? I am assured by the Walker-Gordon people it has no DDT in it—that they guard their herd against that."

Open Question

Naturally, I don't know whether raw milk has Strontium 90 in it or not. If the fall-outs keep on, raw tomatoes and everything else we eat will be tinctured with Strontium 90. But, like the fellow who won a bet that he would not outlive his next Christmas drunk, we are winning in what is called the defense race.

I shall not quote all of a fan letter from Ed S. Curry of Rose Hill, Kan., a man of whom I had not heard until this letter arrived. Some of it is so human and generous that I can quote it as if it didn't pertain to me at all.

"My grandsons," he says, "borrow your 'Vaquero of the Brush Country' from me to read. I hate to have them think old-timers in this country were all like TV shows them. I was raised in Ellsworth, Kan., a real cowtown. My father was a druggist, but when I was young I drove cattle for old Capt. Larkin. I hope you get this and I wish you well.

"I've had the flu and am shaky, but I still keep a few cows and a pony, and if you ever come to Wichita, Kan., find out where Rose Hill is. Anybody there can tell you where I live. I've always got a little beef and a pint of Old Crow in the cyclone cave for company, and I'd be proud to have you come and see me."

Profound

I call the following a profound human document:

"As I grow older living in a city I think more often of happier days on the farm. One thing in particular that I enjoyed in plowing season was the opportunity to sing to my team—usually mules. In those long hours moving slowly up and down the rows of black-land cotton in Hunt county, I could sing ballads as much as I liked.

"My brothers told me my voice was poor, but the mules never complained. In those hours of work and being alone, I felt much better when I sang. Perhaps it was the singing that made me feel happier.

"Today, I have no place to sing by myself. I work in a private office, but it is so close to other workers that my singing would interrupt their work. Furthermore, the work of an accountant keeps me from being able to sing as I work. At home my wife and daughter do not appreciate my choice of ballads or my voice either. Therefore, I sing only in group singing at church, where the voices of others drown out my efforts.

"Am I different from other people or is there an inner urge to sing and to be happy by doing so?"

Inner Man

Machinery, gadgets, urbanization have all added to the conveniences of life, but who can say they have added to the freedom and happiness of the inner man? Among the changes I've seen from the horse and buggy days to the days of the sputniks no change has come closer to humanity than the change from privacy to crowded conditions wherein a man can't sing to himself aloud as he once sang to his mules. People go to hear Elvis Presley, and I suppose make some sort of tune inside themselves, but they act as a mob, not as individuals.

My father was one of the most cheerful men I've ever known. He was a great singer. He sang to the cattle as he drove them along. He sang to the horses pulling his buggy. He sang to himself. I knew contemporaries of his who made music in the same way. One was a vaquero who used to always whistle as he rode along.

It's been my observation that the singers and whistlers do better and are happier while in motion. I remember a long time ago I was at the home of a musician in Marshall, Texas. At that time I was rather interested in collecting folk songs for the Texas Folklore society. My host and I were sitting on the front gallery when I noticed a negro man limping down the street singing. As he came opposite us I asked the host if he would call him in so that I could get the song. He knew the man and called to him. As he approached us he quit singing. When I asked him if he would give me the words to the song he said yes, but he couldn't give them without singing and he couldn't sing without walking. He was being truthful. Who would want to sing to an automobile, even a 1958 model? But who doesn't feel like singing to a team of horses, especially in motion with them?

Perhaps some reader knows "The Solitary Reaper," by William Wordsworth. I quote the first and last stanzas of it:

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

* * *

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

About Texas and Texans

DEC 21 1958
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Christmas Brings Back Memories Of Earlier Days, Earlier Customs

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Along about this time of year one can read in many magazines and newspapers about how Christmas is celebrated in Patagonia, in Lithuania, in Monte Carlo and in other places scattered between the poles. One can read about old ways of celebrating Christmas. No matter what customs, what ceremonies in what language or costume be used, the essence of Christmas is inside people and not outside. Since Christmas celebrations began, their essence has been an extra feeling of generosity and good will and merriment and kindness and love for mankind in the hearts of the celebrators.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The first description of Christmas customs I read is in Washington Irving's "Sketches of Bracebridge Hall" wherein the bounty of old-time English Christmas cheer wells up. The spirit here is the same as that of Dickens' "Christmas Carol." I haven't seen much written about it, but people who used to not drink anything at all stronger than water drank a little whisky at Christmas time or had eggnog.

* * *

GIFT OF PEPPERS.

The brightest, gayest, cheeriest piece of Christmas cheer I've seen this season is a quart-size whisky bottle full of red and green peppers, preserved in something that isn't whisky, sent me by my long-time friend, Stanley Walker of Lampasas. The brightness of the red Mexican chilis is made brilliant by the green. "Grown and Bottled in Lampasas County," is the inscription on the bottle. This bottle is so bright and so cheerful and so warm — the warmth inside heightened by a personal label on the outside — that if it could be shown in those places where people buy caviar and such, I'm sure it would bring more money than the whisky that originally filled the bottle. It "Home to Texas" now to be equated with Mary Lasswell's "I'll Take Texas."

My mother, who was very much against drink and drinking, used to tell with gusto about some character — maybe she gave his name—who'd say about Christmas time, "Now, I've got to get on my annual Christmas drunk, and how I hate it!"

Many a health belongs to Christmas. The next-to-the-last Christmas card that Charles M. Russell painted shows two range men met on the trail in the snow, one leading a pack horse. The other gets out a bottle. It has a ruddy look as he holds it. Underneath the picture are these words:

Here's hoping your trail is a long one,
Plain and easy to ride.
May your dry camps be few,
And Health ride with you
To the pass on the Big Divide.

* * *

WILL IS QUOTED.

I'm sure that when I was a child I did not think about the past, but I can hardly remember when Christmas was not associated with memories—good memories. There is a patented water softener that takes the lime and other hard ingredients out of water; memory is like that, especially at Christmastime. No matter what the subject of memories at Christmastime, it seems to get mellow. Norman C. Heslep of Houston wrote me a little while back about some well-fixed ranchwoman in Live Oak County —my home county — who left a will stipulating that only $1 be left for a son of hers and that it be used to buy a rope to hang him with. Now isn't that a cheerful subject out of the past for Christmastime! Heslep was feeling cheerful when he wrote that letter. I'll quote the first paragraph, as it's kin to Stanley Walker's bright peppers:

"Besides a couple of shots out of a pint bottle beforehand, my supper tonight consisted of pinto beans seasoned with salt pork, onions, and peppers — and fried cornbread. The only thing that kept it from being perfect was that I didn't have the right kind of peppers. They were store-bought peppers, no variety of which can flavor beans like the little wild peppers that grow on the Nueces. A few years ago I had two bushes of them; for some reason they died, but as they bore well for a couple of years I had plenty of peppers whenever I was lucky enough to beat the mockingbirds to them. At that time I made a bottle of pepper sauce, and I still have that bottle with the same peppers in it that I got off the bushes five years ago, and as far as I can tell they have as much fire in them as they had when I put them up fresh."

* * *

COUNTY NAMES USED.

The old ways and the old sayings of a long time ago must have a softening effect on all cynics — at Christmastime. Miss Geline Guynes, who teaches in Abilene, writes of her grandfather, H. C. Randolph, who was a "quarantine rider" and a rancher in Floyd County. "He and his older friends never spoke of a town without identifying it by the county in which it was located, as though you wouldn't know where the place was if you didn't know the county." I have envelopes addressed to my father, thus: "R. J. Dobie, Lagarto, Live Oak County, Texas." Many of our grandfathers used to identify their domiciles by county. While Harry Benge Crozier, one of the real newspapermen of Texas, was in college, when asked where he was from, would say, "From Paint Rock, Concho County, Texas." We dubbed him "Concho," and some people still call him by that name. Some people used to be as prejudiced toward a county as they are now toward the color of a skin.

On last Sept. 29, a friend I've never met, an old cowboy named Fred S. Curry, living out from Rose Hill, Kan., wrote me in part as follows: "I trapped Old Topsy yesterday and rode out through the pasture before the sun came up looking for screwworms. I hope I have them whipped. The dew was on the grass and the spiderwebs on every weed, and I saw a pair of scissortails — the bird of Oklahoma. They have spent the summer here for several years. When the cows woke up, Old Topsy snorted and pranced like a colt. We both felt good. I know she's 20, and she is the first mare I ever owned. Ranch people used to ride nothing but horses. Somebody taught her to be a cow horse. If I walk out with a bridle, she is long gone. I have to trap her. I'm so stiff I can't get on some horses. I have to have a gentle one. You never see a horse with a saddle sore now. They load them in a truck and take them to the work, and it's all done in a little while."

Before sending his letter, Fred Curry added the following, written the next day: "It came up a cold rain in the night. I lit the gas stove and looked out the window and saw my little herd coming in with Old Topsy following along and nudging the calves with her nose. I looked at what's left of the bottle of Old Grandad and put it under the sink. I wish you could have breakfast here with me."

Talking about old times and conversing with my friends — friends sometimes that I haven't met — I feel Christmasy. Now a cheerful Christmas to all my friends and all my foes, and to everybody everywhere! Let's expand!

J. Frank Dobie

Ancestor-Worshippers Blind to Change

AUG 11 1951 SAN ANTONIO LIGHT

By J. FRANK DOBIE

I have never gone in for ancestor-worship and have observed that people who do generally fail to comprehend the meaning of change. However, through family papers, searching in the records of Harris county, Texas, the state land office and elsewhere, aided considerably by two friends, I have come to know a good deal about the Dobie men who came to Texas before and during the period of the Republic. Their relationship to Texas land—a relationship representative of the times—may make them interesting to other historical-minded people.

DOBIE

William Dobie, my great-grandfather, came from Sussex county, Va., in 1830. His wife had recently died. Seven of their nine children were living. He came alone. The head of a family settling in Texas under Mexican law was entitled to a league and a labor of land (4428.4 acres, plus 177.1 acres, making a total of 4605.5 acres). Up until 1834, when the allowance was increased to 1/3 league, a single man was entitled to ¼ league. On Aug. 8, 1832, Stephen F. Austin, empowered as colonizer by the Mexican government, signed a certificate granting William Dobie, "soltero" (a man without a wife) ¼ league of land on Middle Bayou in what is now Harris county. The ¼ league was surveyed and passed into his possession later in the year. Whether he lived on it, I do not know. I do not know how he made a living at any time during the four years he was in Texas.

Son Arrives

In 1834 his son, Nathaniel James Dobie, arrived in Texas prepared to enter the mercantile business. He had just gone into partnership with Daniel McCaskill of Louisiana, a merchant. McCaskill had agreed to put up $5000 worth of goods, Nathaniel Dobie to put up $1000. McCaskill was to do the buying in New Orleans and dispose of any fat cattle sent east by his Texas partner.

Harrisburg on Buffalo Bayou, now enveloped by Houston, was the main town between the Brazos and the Trinity rivers. Here, "Mr. Dobie brought dry goods and groceries" and established a store. There is no record that he took cattle in exchange for goods or sent any to Louisiana, but he did trade in cotton. When Santa Anna's army destroyed Harrisburg by fire, in 1836, whatever in the store that was not looted was burned up.

Sam Houston

According to legendary anecdote, while Sam Houston was practicing law in Huntsville, any veteran of the Texas-Mexican war who "got into trouble" engaged him for defense. Invariably Sam Houston would put the defendant on the witness stand and, after asking him his name, place of residence, year of arrival in Texas, etc., would conclude, "Where were you on April 21, 1836?" The answer would be, "At the battle of San Jacinto." Then Houston would announce, "Your Honor, the defense rests its case." No matter what evidence the prosecution presented, the jury would bring in a verdict of "not guilty."

It is natural for history to ask of any able-bodied man who was in Texas at the time, "Where were you on April 21, 1836? Probably not 10 per cent of the English-speaking Texans were in the army. Nathaniel James Dobie was sickly, and he died when only 25 years old. As president of the Harrisburg (Harris) county board of land commissioners in 1838, he was, as the minutes show, recurringly prevented by illness from attending the frequent sessions. But in the early spring of 1836 he was not too sick to tramp around in rain and mud on the prospect of land profits.

Promoters

For something over three weeks, beginning on March 23, while the Texas army was gaining strength by retreating in front of Santa Anna's advance eastward, Nathaniel was casually associated with two promoters named William Fairfax Gray and Robert Triplett. The first kept an often-cited diary and the second published an autobiography. They were negotiating loans to the new Texas government, to be secured by rights to public lands at 50 cents an acre, and were looking over unpreempted areas around Galveston bay.

At the same time, having concluded that the future city of Texas would grow up beside Galveston harbor, Dr. R. C. Neblett, from Neblett's Bluff on the Sabine river, was on Galveston island and adjacent mainland staking off sections of land. His young relative Nathaniel Dobie was along, in all probability with an interest beyond that of guide and helper. William Fairfax Gray wanted in on the Galveston project. Neblett took the lead in trying to get President Burnet of the Texas government, which was very busy eluding the Mexican army, to sign certain land papers. On April 18, three days before "Remember the Alamo" was yelled out on the San Jacinto prairie, Gray, Triplett, Neblett and Dobie took out for the east bank of the Sabine river, towards which the vast majority of Texas settlers, men as well as women and children, were struggling in a mob madness called the Runaway Scrape.

New Store

In June, back in Harrisburg, Nathaniel dispatched L. B. Harris on horseback to Calcasieu, La., for "valuable papers which he had sent there to be out of reach of the Mexicans." As soon as possible, he reestablished the store —necessarily in makeshift quarters—while the town of Houston was being laid out a few miles up Buffalo Bayou to supplant Harrisburg.

On May 13, 1837, he and his partner signed a supplementary contract in which it was agreed that the two should share equally in profits and losses and that henceforth the firm name should be Dobie and McCaskill. By the end of the year the store had been moved to Houston. But a financial panic was on in the U. S. and the near worthlessness of the substitutes for money printed in the form of bank notes by the Republic of Texas augmented the panic here. Dobie and McCaskill pled for payments on goods sold on credit and joined other merchants in refusing to accept "Tickets and Change Tickets" for money.

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

DEC 28 1958

True Example Recalled

Good Horse Navigates in Pinch Much Better Than His Master

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The Mexican vaquero term for being lost is "northed." On a waterless desert, you may know where you are, but if you don't know where water is you can be out of luck. In temperate climates, no matter how badly "northed" you are or how big the country, you'll ride into a safe harbor eventually. In a bitter blizzard, away up north, the time for reaching a harbor is short, and unless either rider or horse knows which way to head and keeps heading in that direction, the harbor may never be reached.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The sense of direction is better developed in horses than in human beings—with rare exceptions. This sense of direction has nothing to do with thinking, with reasoning powers, with intellect. It is instinctive. A pigeon has more of it than a whole school of philosophers or a club full of millionaire executives. The most admirable examples of it seem to come from domestic animals who have lost their primitiveness; they are better known than the wild animals. But imagine a cliff swallow heading north from the Argentine pampas for a nesting spot on a bluff no bigger than a wagon sheet in lower Alaska 7,000 miles away and hitting it center!

* * *

POPULATION DECLINE.

According to statistics—I don't know where they come from—the horse and mule population of the United States declined from 27,000,000 in 1918 to considerably less than 4,000,000 in 1958, but when a man gets a horse he likes he never thinks of changing him for a more finny model. This story of a horse in a Wyoming blizzard about 1907 partly explains why. It is found as follows in a privately printed autobiography entitled "The Long Trail," by George C. Watts, a sheepman.

"I usually left Salt Lake City on the 6 o'clock passenger train in the evening, which put me in Rock Springs (better known as Point of Rocks) Wyo., in the early morning. I kept a saddle horse at the store corral here. He was hay and grain-fed and always seemed eager to get me back to camp. One morning when I landed there around 4 o'clock a bad blizzard was blowing in from the northeast. The saloon was full of sheep men, some gambling and some getting drunk while waiting for the storm to quit. The beds were all taken above the store, which afforded the only sleeping quarters, and as I did not drink whisky or gamble, I made up my mind to head into the storm, bad as it was.

"I watered Dock and fed him all the oats he would eat before daybreak. As soon as I could get my breakfast, I saddled up and hit the trail. There was a road to follow to Black Rock Divide the first 20 miles; so I had no trouble at the beginning. My direction was square into the northeaster, and Dock headed as straight as an arrow into it. About an hour after we left the road we passed Black Rock, and I knew we were still going okay.

* * *

$600 BEAVER COAT.

"I had on a long beaver coat which I wore for the first time going to the camps. It was valued at $600—pretty fancy to be wearing in a blizzard—but I was sure thankful that I had it on. As I wore chaps, boots and overshoes, I kept pretty warm. I got off at Black Rock. It is a big black table mountain standing several hundred feet high, but the storm was so thick I could only see it a few hundred feet away. I turned Dock around and broke the icicles from off his nose made from his warm breath as we traveled. He rubbed his face against my warm coat and I wiped his eyes clean and then we were off again. I sure wished we had some more land marks to go by, but it was all flat country now and still more than 30 miles to where I expected to find one of the camps.

"We soon crossed the sands, a three-mile strip that told me we were still going right. It was almost as dark as night all day, but I could tell when the sun went down. I gave Dock his head and he never wavered. He would trot a while, then take a slow lope, then walk a while, but always making good time.

"It seemed hours after dark but it was not late, maybe 8 o'clock, when he quickened his gait. I hoped some instinct had told him where a camp was, but the best I could hope for was for him to take me back where a camp had been 10 days ago when we left. I knew the herder and his helper had been moved from there for several days.

* * *

CABIN IS LOCATED.

"All at once Dock gave a low whinney and before I could pull my face out of the high coat collar he stopped. We were at a cabin door. I had forgotten we had stopped at the John Hay cabin on our way in to the railroad. Here I had fed Dock a good feed of grain. It had been a storage place for Hay's camp movers early in the fall before his outfit moved east, not to return until spring grass came again. The first thing I did was to get out a sack of oats, open the top for Dock, and set it against the cabin out of the wind. I unsaddled him and put his warm blanket on. He could tell, I think, how grateful I was to him and to my God that I was safe once more. As warm as I was dressed, I could not have stood the cold but a few more hours.

"I found wood in the cabin to build a fire in the stove, some flour and coffee for a meal, and a few blankets for a bed. After I ate and got warm, I slept like a log until morning. Before I went to bed though, I melted snow in a little tub on the stove and gave Dock all the warm water he wanted. We both fared pretty well for the night after all the chances we had taken. A dozen men at Point of Rocks never expected to see me alive again, for that storm was a bad one. It blew itself out in the night and the sun came up in a clear sky next morning. I had a camera in my saddle pocket and took Dock's picture at the cabin door."

JUN 11 1961 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Book by Texan Tells Delightful Animal Tales

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

An owl was—to the best of my recollection—the first animal introduced to me in a story. From that childhood hour to this, the owl has moved higher and higher up the totem pole of my tutelary figures. My liking for animal stories is catholic, but in general I prefer gentle animals in them rather than the ferocious jackrabbits and possums that, according to American outdoor magazines, constantly place the lives of hunters in peril. Ralph Jackson's "Home on the Double Bayou" (just published by The University of Texas Press at Austin) is laid in Chambers County, where the Gulf winds sometimes do not hold back the northers and where coastal grasses wave and bayous run up from the salt waters. The book is replete with recollections of human and other animal characters, and since I think they may delight others as they have delighted me, I present samples in Ralph Jackson's own words.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

* * *

FEROCIOUS RABBIT.

"Grandpa Briggs tried to raise Belgian hares on his farm in Chambers County, but they all died except one old buck rabbit named Buster who seemed to be indestructible. He enjoyed a good fight and kept all the family dogs at a respectful distance outside the yard fence. Occasionally a strange dog would accompany a visitor to the Briggs home. Upon seeing Buster apparently asleep in the sun in the middle of the yard with his eyes closed and his ears resting on his back, the dog would immediately exercise the age-old prerogative of chasing rabbits by rushing at Buster at full speed, anticipating a meal of fresh rabbit meat. Buster would give no indication that he saw the dog coming, but just as the eager jaws opened to seize him, Buster would leap straight up into the air and land on the dog's back and rake him from shoulder to tail with the claws of his powerful hind legs. If the dog was persistent and attacked again, Buster would again leap into the air and slash the dog across the eyes. A mean dog might last as long as one minute with Buster, but most would give up after the initial encounter. Buster never lost a fight . . .

"One summer on a visit to Uvalde County we caught two baby squirrels, and decided to take them back to Chambers County when we returned home. On the way we stayed overnight at the Majestic Hotel in Galveston. On the front door of the hotel a large sign read, 'No Pets Allowed.' We carried the squirrel cage around through the alley and up to the room by the back stairway. The squirrels were so excited and raised so much fuss and chatter that we were forced to cover the cage with a large hotel quilt. The next morning, we discovered that the squirrels had busied themselves all night gnawing holes in the quilt and extracting the stuffing in order to make two comfortable beds in the bottom of the cage. While Daddy went to purchase needle and thread, we worked the stuffing back into the quilt. Mother neatly patched the holes in the quilt, and we departed, as we had arrived—the squirrels down the back stairway and the rest of the family through the front door.

* * *

SQUIRRELS ESCAPE.

"In the front yard we built a large walk-in cage, wherein the squirrels lived for many months, until someone left the cage door open and they escaped to the large oak trees shading the front yard. While confined to the cage the squirrels would sit on the children's shoulders and dig into their pockets for bits of food. However, having once escaped, they thwarted all schemes to recapture them. We filled their feeding dishes inside the cage with choice pecans and tied to the open door of the cage a long string with which to slam it shut, if they should succumb to the temptation of the food within. The food certainly tempted them, for they would scamper all over the outside of the cage barking and fussing with frustration. They would even sit just outside the open door and peer inside, but not once did they venture across the threshold. For years they lived in the oak trees and maintained a friendly but distant relationship with their former captors."

Maybe some people wouldn't regard mosquitoes as animals, but they belong to the animal kingdom and no doubt a pair was in Noah's Ark. Ralph Jackson's description of how thick and eager they were in his boyhood seems to me to come under the heading of true animal stories.

Now follow experiences of Ralph Jackson and two brothers while spending the night in an abandoned barn on their ranch.

"As we approached the barn late in the afternoon, we noticed a dead cow lying on a knoll a short distance away. Nearing the carcass, we discovered a large timber wolf feeding on it. The wolf's head and shoulders were completely out of sight in the body cavity of the carcass. We shot the wolf, and as we were dragging it away we noticed that the cow was still breathing; so we immediately put a shot in her brain. We hung the wolf carcass from the rafters in the passageway of the barn and removed the hide. Before dark we spread our bedrolls on some loose hay in one end of the barn loft. The hay stacked in the other end had been undisturbed for years and was honeycombed with small animal burrows.

"Shortly after dark the coons and opossums started scurrying out of their burrows, across the floor, and down to the ground. When we would light our kerosene lantern all activity would cease. As soon as we would turn the lantern out, our nocturnal circus would start again; back and forth across the floor we could hear the scurrying feet accompanied by various grunts and squeaks. As the night wore on, our little friends became bolder and soon were running all around us.

"About midnight we were jerked upright on our pallets by the unearthly wail of a timber wolf coming from not more than ten yards outside the barn; this cry was immediately answered by another on the opposite side of the barn. Then came another from another direction. The barn was evidently encircled by wolves. After the first howls had died away complete silence lasted for about ten minutes. Then from below us in the passageway of the barn came the sound of swiftly running feet, a snap, as if a large steel trap had been suddenly sprung, a thud, and then again silence. We glued our eyes to the cracks in the loft floor in time to see a large shadowy shape run into one end of the barn, leap high in the air at the wolf carcass hanging in the passageway, hit the ground with a thud and run out the opposite end of the barn. It appeared that the wolves were taking turns trying to pull the carcass down. They ran through the barn, one after another, leaping and snapping. The carcass was hanging high enough to keep them from pulling it down, but occasionally one would leap high enough to sink his teeth in, without gaining a hold, however, since the weight of his body would tear his grip away. After watching this eerie performance for awhile we shot at one wolf through a hole in the loft floor. After that no more came into the barn, but they continued to circle the building, serenading us until almost daylight."

* * *

HUNTING STEER.

Now one last picture of wildlife.

"One winter a man from Katy brought to our ranch his goose-hunting steer — a large, gentle animal trained to stop and go at pressure applied through a short rope attached to a ring in his nose. The hunter would unload the steer close to a bunch of geese feeding on the open prairie, take his gun in one hand and the lead rope in the other, and gradually work the animal in a circle, closer and closer to the geese. The hunter always stayed hidden behind the shoulder of the steer and in this manner it was possible to approach within a few yards of the flock of feeding geese. Of course, the resulting slaughter of birds was tremendous.

"In the early days, and before the enactment of game laws, ducks and geese were a basic winter food supply. Since the geese roosted at night on the open lakes, it was easy to slaughter them wholesale through the use of a small rowboat and a kerosene flare. Several hunters would get into a boat with the flare in the bow and row quietly out on the lake and into a raft of roosting geese. One volley at pointblank range would usually fill the boat with geese.

"On several occasions, after a freezing rain had fallen during the night, we would find geese on the prairie with their wing tips frozen together across their backs, and thus unable to fly. Since geese are not very fast on their feet, it was relatively easy to run them down and capture them without firing a shot."

Variety of Sounds

JAN 18 1959
FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Bawl of Cattle More Musical Than Infant's

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Not all bawling of cattle is, I presume, musical, but I've never heard any that wasn't more musical than the bawling of infants of the human species. After my mother moved to town from the ranch, a long time ago now, she used to say, "Thank goodness I don't have to listen to thirsty cattle bawling any more."

J. FRANK DOBIE.

She never regarded ranching as romantic, and certainly the bawling of cattle suffering from thirst is about as far from the romantic as reality gets. Few sounds are more distressful. They were not uncommon in the land of little rain before the gasoline engine began pumping water when there was no wind to turn windmills. No cattle ever perished of thirst on our ranch, but I saw them die on a ranch adjoining us and on two Mexican ranches in the country. Cattle bawling from a thirst that's not alleviated lose their voices and the bawling becomes a kind of moan.

Other bawling sounds made by cattle cover a wide variety—the bawling of a cow for her calf, the bleating of a calf for its mother, the bawling of big steers and dry cows separated from their accustomed companions, the challenges of bulls, the lonesome talking-to-himself of a bull who doesn't seem to be aware that anybody else in the whole lonesome world exists.

* * *

CANADIAN'S CHRONICLE.

In the 1870s Canadian - born Sarah Ann Millner Smith moved to Colorado, and there lived among ranch people, the most of them Texans who could not read. In ripeness, she dictated her reminiscences to her son, Eugene Smith, who published them under the title of "Pioneer Epic." A paragraph in this honest and unpretentious chronicle follows.

"Once when one of the Texas women was very sick in round-up time a large herd was being held near her home ready for a drive to market. The cattle kept up such an incessant bawling that I asked the sick woman whether I should suggest to the herders to move them farther off, as I was sure they were disturbing her rest. 'Oh, my, no!' the woman replied, 'big herds bawling is the sweetest music I ever hear.'"

I have told how the original Tom O'Connor of the Victoria country, when he came to die, had his foreman take the hands out early one morning and make a big drag, bringing in all the cattle they could gather to the herd grounds in front of Tom's house.

A big herd, running into the thousands, brought in fron a range on which they've been leading a contented life, bawl and bawl and bellow and bellow. The medley of sounds they make seems to go up to the stars. It might run some people distracted, but most cow people would understand Tom O'Connor. "Well, Mr. Tom," his boss reported, "you can hear 'em out there. What you want us to do with 'em now?"

"All I want you to do," Tom O'Cnnor replied, "is to hold 'em there. I'm a-dying and I want to go out with their music in my ears."

* * *

THE BLOOD CALL.

There's no other sound made by cattle like that when they smell blood. I don't know that American cow people have any precise term for that kind of bawling. I used to hear it when I was a boy, and I can hear it still. In my book, "The Longhorns," I call it "the blood call."

An Englishman named H. C. G. Hopegood, who came to western Canada to be a cowboy and then went to Australia and worked on big stations (ranches) and wrote, among other things, an autobiography entitled "Peter Lecky, by Himself," gives a name and a description to this blood call. The name is peculiar to Australia.

"I learnt a lot about cattle at that well," Pecter Lecky wrote. "There were about two hundred and seventy watering there, and each had an individuality of its own. The mob (herd) had its Lotharios, Falstaffs, Slenders, clowns and gladiators, and right valiant scraps the latter got up, too. You learn more about cattle from the ground than from a saddle. They don't stop to be observed when mounted men are about, and when you have them quieted down and trooping sedately before you, they're still constrained. At a well, they forget you and behave naturally.

* * *

'CARROBOREEING.'

"They 'carroborce,' as the stockmen say, and it is a very weird sight. My beasts would stand or lie around and chew the cud after drinking. They would also chew the dry and scattered bones of their forebears lying around the well. The lack of lime and phosphorous in the soil makes them perform this act of unconscious cannibalism. But the smell of blood agitates them strangely. Steers had been slaughtered at this camp from time to time, and beneath the tree which had been used as gallows the soil must have retained the smell of blood, for here they would gather to corroboree. Often some restless beast wandering idly around would drift on to this spot and sniff the ground in an intent manner as if trying to recall something.

"Then suddenly it would raise its head and emit that low troubled call, again and again. The effect on the others never varied. One after another they would drift up, snuffing with uncurled nostrils and echoing the lament. Even those comfortably couched would rise and stretch with tails curled over their backs, and then saunter easily across. Suddenly one of the beasts would start to frisk and prod its neighbor. Others would catch the excitement, and soon a sketchy sort of melee, accompanied by much bellowing and lowing, would be in progress around and upon that mysterious spot.

"After a while they would tire and drift away, some crashing off through the bush at a gallop, others sauntering phlegmatically back to the bare and trampled flat around the well to lie down again. This is what the stockmen call carroboreeing, and it happened almost every day at that well. Even Frank Dalby Davison, the Australian, whose book 'Manshy' is a prose poem and a record of wonderfully accurate and sympathetic observation has missed this matter."

Bond-Jumper Is Brought Back to U. S.

FEB 14 1960

Smuggling a Man Out of Mexico Can Be Complicated, Costly Affair

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

H. K. Johnson of San Antonio has been a flight instructor since the end of World War II. Early on the morning of Sept. 15, 1959, while he was drinking coffee in the airport at Stinson Field, San Antonio, a representative of the Ragsdale Flying Service came in and asked if he would make a charter flight to Monterrey, Mexico. He agreed with alacrity. He was to pick up two passengers at the International Airport as soon as he could get a tourist card and the passengers had made arrangements with United States and Mexican customs for a non-stop flight to Monterrey.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The flight was in a Cessna 172, a small four-place plane. Both passengers were from Chicago. Al Roman was a commercial bondsman with a deputy sheriff's commission. He weighed about 200 pounds. Herb Johns of the Chicago police department weighed about 270 pounds. H. K. Johnson himself weighs about 200 pounds. The plane had a full cargo. The flight lasted about three hours, and before it was over the pilot had been pretty well briefed on the details of the business to which he had become a party. The rest of this story is in his words.

BOND IS MADE.

"We were going to Mexico to pick up a fugitive named Sam Aguilar, who was well known to Al Roman, having worked for his father. This Aguilar had been in jail in Chicago awaiting arraignment on three civil and two federal offenses. His bond had been set at $22,000. Ordinarily he would have been held without bond, as he had already served several terms in the Joliet, Ill., penitentiary, but out of what he called friendship, Al Roman had arranged for the $22,000 bond. As soon as released, Aguilar had fled to Mexico. There Roman had pursued him for several weeks, enlisting the aid (for a fee) of a Captain Fulano of the Mexican Secret Service. This captain, with an assistant named Perral, had apprehended Aguilar in the Sierra Madre of western Mexico and was now holding him in a motel in Monterrey.

"Extradition of an American fugitive from Mexico usually takes several months, and if the fugitive is of Mexican extraction, it becomes difficult to prove that he is an American citizen. Therefore, it is a time-saving device to pay some official to turn over the prisoner more or less under cover. This seems to be a rather common practice between law enforcement agencies of the two countries.

TARGET PRACTICE.

"We arrived in Monterrey about noon and were met by a Captain Gomez of the Mexican Air Force who was in charge of the airport and had been cut in on the money deal. He, Captain Fulano, and Fulano's assistant got us through customs quickly. Then the three American confederates and the three Mexican confederates started for town in Fulano's car. He spoke English and I spoke Spanish; the others were mono-lingual. Perral asked his jefe for permission to target practice from the moving car. He proceeded to shoot doves from the fence posts while the car was making 45 miles per hour. We stopped at the motel and the Chicago men peeked through the window at Aguilar to be certain that they had the right man. Fulano would not let us have him at once or allow Aguilar to know that he was being held for extradition. He promised to explain after we had settled in a hotel and lunched.

Parral, it turned out, was newly married, and wanted to get back to Mexico City to celebrate the 16th of September, Mexico's main national holiday, with his bride. The 16th was tomorrow. He asked his jefe why the gringos wanted to go to so much trouble. He would be delighted to end all the ado with a bullet; then the gringos could take the body away and he could fly to his new wife. When I interpreted to the Chicago men, they asked Fulano if prisoners could be treated that way in his country. 'Oh, yes,' he replied. 'Parral is a very competent policeman. Last month he killed six fugitives.'

"Settled in the best hotel in Monterrey, Fulano explained that Aguilar was not an American citizen and was, therefore, not subject to extradition even under cover. He would have to be kidnaped, and kidnaping was a more costly procedure than the paid-off type of extradition. He was violating his honor and being traitorous to his country by selling out a fellow Mexican, he said. If he hadn't already given his word he would not be disloyal at all. He and Al Roman haggled over price for about an hour, until finally Fulano's honor was satisfied with an offer of $4,500.

AIRPORT DESERTED.

"After a night made absolutely sleepless to all of us by pre-16th of September celebrators just outside our room, which opened onto the plaza, the commandant of the airport set out at 4 a. m. with us three Americans in his car, while Fulano and his assistant went after the prisoner. The airport was completely deserted —as had ben arranged. The commandant had told all the people there that they could go home and celebrate the holiday and that he would see us off to San Luis Potosi, as we were his personal friends. We had arranged by telephone to fly non-stop to San Antonio, where the FBI and the customs men would meet us. We had carefully failed to notify Mexcian customs.

"Aguilar still did not know that he was being sold out. He had been told that he was being sent to Mexico City with an American pilot who was Fulano's friend. The Chicago men hid while Aguilar was introduced to the pilot. I had him sit in a rear seat and while he was following my directions to fasten his safety belt, the Chicago men came up on opposite sides of the plane. Policeman Johns put his pistol under Aguilar's nose and told him to make no sound or he would get a .38 slug in the face. He climbed in beside him and handcuffed him. Sam Aguilar said not one word until after we had crossed the Rio Grande. The plane, although air-worthy, was heavily overloaded, and I had to circle twice to get enough altitude to fly over the mountains.

LAND AT LAREDO.

"After bucking a head-wind all the way, we crossed the Rio Grande. About Cotulla on the way north, we heard over the radio that the weather was not clearing up at San Antonio as had been predicted. We turned back. I radioed Laredo that I was landing there and wanted the customs men and the FBI to meet us at the airport. Laredo radio replied that customs would meet us at 8:30 a. m. It was 7 a. m. We resigned ourselves to sitting in the airplane for an hour or so after landing, as the Health Service requires spraying for bugs before a plane from Mexico discharges its passengers. However, the local FBI agent persuaded the customs and health officials to start work early that day, and so we had to wait not over 10 minutes before putting feet on the ground and turning Sam Aguilar over to the FBI. The $4,500 fee, plus expenses, came to a good deal less than a $22,000 bond forfeiture would have come to."

JAN 11 1959 FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Section Two

Gaucho Lets Blood

Quick Knife Fight Proved Pride Can Be a Real Killer of Man

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

As a habitual teller of tales of the Southwest and West, I have let as much blood as the law allows. I enjoy the play of imagination more than the play of six-shooters. My favorite cow-horse (in a picture) sleeps on three legs instead of pitching the the lights out of his rider. The Bowie knife was plenty bloody, and I'm something of a Bowie knife fan. Knife violence is always gorier — has more of blood and thunder — than bullet violence. Right now I'm in the mood to spill out a few extra buckets of blood.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The tale that follows is from that novel classic in its field, Don Segundo Sombra: Shadows on the Pampas, by Ricardo Buiraldes, as translated by Harriet de Onis. The whole narrative in Don Segundo Sombra is told by a gaucho (a cowboy of the Argentine). Now for the knives, quotation marks omitted.

* * *

POINTED REFERENCE.

Antenor invited us to have a drink and we strolled to the bar. A strange man came up, shook hands all around, and began talking as if he wanted the whole crowd to hear him. He must have been about fifty, dressed like a gaucho, and he carried a long knife with a silver handle in a silver sheath. His brown poncho was thrown across a shoulder, and to judge by his muddied, sweaty boots, by his horse, by the look of him and the way he walked, he had come a long way.

He invited the whole crowd up to the bar, and pretty soon with that and his jokes he had become what he seemed to want to be: the center of all ears and eyes. Now, he began to talk especially to Antenor, making pointed reference to his strength and skill as a knifeman. Yet so oblique and roundabout was his praise that it was a long time before we saw what he was driving at. Then, suddenly, he bared himself as a man looking for trouble.

"I wonder," he said, "just the same, if the lad's blood wouldn't curdle if he saw a knife."

As if we all were asking the same question, we turned as a man to Antenor. He was pale and kept his eyes down. He seemed scared.

"I, too," the man went on, "was a fighter when I was young. Even now, I believe I could put my mark on this lad whenever I liked."

Antenor raised his head, and we had the painful feeling that he was afraid. "Sir, I'm a peaceable person," he said, "and though I use a knife for fun. I'm not looking to trouble anyone and I want no one to trouble me."

"Listen to him! Tender as a squab!" And at that the man turned to the crowd, "I wasn't going to spoil his looks; just draw a little blood so the two of us could test our eyesight. But I'm afraid his eye is a bit cloudy, all of a sudden."

"May I say a word?" my godfather suddenly broke in.

"Why not?" says the stranger.

Don Segundo turned to Antenor. "See here, boy, for quite a while now this gentleman has been inviting you, as polite as could be, and you're missing the chance to have a little fun."

* * *

GRUDGE BENEATH.

What was the quarrelsome stranger going to say to that? For a moment he was silent. Then, more serious, as he understood that someone else might take up his challenge, he gave us a clue.

"I'm not looking for fun. That would be showing off like a gamecock, when a fellow thinks he can do what he likes."

Now it was clear: there was a grudge beneath the fire-eating words of the gaucho. And what of Antenor?

He straightened up and looked the other in the eye: and we understood one thing more. He knew what — and whom — it was all about.

"I was nothing but a kid," he said grimly. "And she was a woman who went with any man that snapped his fingers."

The stranger made a furious rush at him. The nearest men held him. Antenor still pale but perhaps with anger, said, "There's more room outside," and walked out.

"We followed. Alongside the door, the stranger took off his spurs, rolled his poncho round his left arm as a shield, and drew his leisurely knife. It was as if he had forgotten his instant of rage. He smiled disdainfully.

"Now, you're all going to see how a snotnose calf gets his muzzle cut."

There was a wagon in the yard. Antenor stood with his back to its big wheel, and waited. The stranger came forward, and as if he were playing with a child, flicked the fringe of his poncho in the other's face. Antenor veered slightly, and the poncho did not touch him. The pass was perfect in precision: not an inch more nor less than was needed. We must all have had one thought, when we saw it: poor old gaucho! He'll pay for his big talk. The man closed in. Antenor, steady, with only a work knife against a poignard and no poncho to shield him, foiled every rush by a slight move of his body. Suddenly he thrust his armed hand foward and leapt the distance between them: the gaucho's face was slashed from nostril to ear. Antenor backed away, to show that the fight was over. Men moved between them.

"Keep aside," said the stranger. "Only one of us is coming out of this!"

Antenor left the shelter of the cart, where he had fought with mere shifts of his body. Light and tense he moved in, to clean up the quarrel he had not sought.

* * *

ADVANCE OF DEATH.

It did not take long. They came together, and we saw the man rise in the air as high as Antenor and then fall back like a rag. That was the end. We picked him up and sat him on the ground against the wall of the saloon. The blood gushed from his breast. We formed a circle around him, and in futile agony watched the advance of death. He turned the color of clay, then managed to murmur:

"The police'll be coming for this lad. You all . . . are witnesses I started it."

Antenor was already on his horse and fleeing.

His abdomen and legs drenched red, the man stiffened. One of us cried out in a kind of frenzy:

"We pretend we're Christians and we're dogs — dogs!"

Another, calmer and more thoughtful, said:

"Pride is what kills us. When a man insults us, the best thing we could do would be to turn away. But no! We're proud. We've got to talk louder than anyone else, and one word leads to another and at last all that's left is the knife."

"Well, it's fate," another said. "The man was looking for it."

He lay there, dead, to prove it, his eyes wide open and his body freed of all cares. They threw a blanket over him to keep away the flies.

Hero of One Legend Danced With Tree

Tall Tales, Told Among the Peoples Of Chile and Finland, Recalled

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM FEB 7 1960

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I'll never forget the sculptor Urbico Soler. It's been 22 years since he passed through Austin. He died several years ago in El Paso, where he left some fine marks — nothing to equal the bust of Tom Lea. While he was here he gave me the photograph of a bust he'd made of Caupolican, legendary hero of Chile.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

After he received his commission to model this hero, he searched far and long before he found a model to suit him. He found him in jail —in Santiago, or somewhere else in Chile—a model magnificent in manhood and in primitive virtues. He bailed him out, and while modeling him by day gave him enough money to run around at night. While Soler modeled he admired his head and the neck muscles. When the model got drunk he lost his character but the next day was again the model man.

I never heard—and saw—Soler dramatize the story of Caupolican, but Carl Hertzog, the El Paso artist in printing, did see and hear him. I'm sure if Soler were alive and could see and hear Carl Hertzog, he would admire the vitality and the art in which his story lives. Caupolican was an Aurcanian Indian. He was chieftain of a hardy tribe living in the mountains of Chile. If the chief of this tribe had no son, then the elders of the tribe chose his successor by competition. The final act in the competition ritual was for each candidate to pick up a heavy tree and dance with it. He who danced longest, won.

* * *

BEEG TREE.

Here is an attempt to convey by spelling and accent Soler's beautiful speech in Carl Hertzog's rendition of the narrative.

"In thees tribe the chieftain, he die, but he have no sons. So the commit-tee call for the can-de-dates. Each must dawnce with a beeg tree. He must peek it up and carry it, not drag it, while he dawnces.

"The first can-de-date he take up de tree, so beeg he put hees arms around but cannot touch hees fingers. He dawnces wid de tree, around and round, one hour, two hour, maybe tree hour, and fall down. He faint.

"Theen the next man take up de tree. He dawnce two hour, he dawnce in the night, back and forth, back and forth, thees way, that way. Then he fall down—dead.

"Theen thees man, the man I make live in bronze, he take up de tree. He stare at the judges and begeen to dawnce. He dawnce all day, around and round. He dawnce all night, back and forth, back and forth—wid de beeg tree. Theen he stop, look at the commit-tee, smile. The muscles in his neck stand out and trow de tree across the place.

"He glare at the spec-tay-tors and say to the commit-tee, 'I am da chieftain.'"

* * *

TWO LUMBERJACKS.

The next hero story is from Finland. It came to me through Stephen B. Tanner, from a friend of his boyhood, who is with the State Department in Washington. Two or three years ago he was stationed in Finland and there learned about the Paul Bunyan lumberjecks of that hardy land.

"Working alone together, away up in the North woods of Finland, two Finnish lumberjacks did not have much to do one Saturday night. One took a bottle of moonshine out of his knapsnack and then the two took turns drinking her down straight. Liquored up a little, they started arguing as to who was the best man with the ax. The bigger lost his temper and, just to prove his point, cleaved the other's head with his ax. The little lumberjack dropped like a stuck pig and did not rouse for about a half hour.

"'What happened?' he asked.

"'Don't move,' the big man replied, 'you've got an ax in your head.'

"'Well, get me to a doctor!'

"So the two walked for two hours until they came to the doctor's house.

"The doctor took one look, whistled through his lips and declared he had never seen anything like that before. 'You'll have to take your friend down to the County Seat,' he said. 'This is something I can't handle.'

"The two got into a hired cab with the window rolled down so the ax handle could stick out, and rode to the County Seat.

"The county doctor said he had never seen a man walk around witn an ax in his head in all his born days! 'Removing this ax requires such a delicate operation,' he said, 'that I would dare not do it. I am afraid you will have to go to the surgical ward down at Oulu. You ought to be there in about five hours if you catch the next train.'

"Right there and then, the little lumberjack with the ax in his skull began to lose his temper! 'If you're any sort of a doctor at all,' he burst out, 'the least you could do is cut the handle off so I can put my cap on!'

His cap was on when he got to Oulu."

JAN 25 1958 Section Two FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

About Texas and Texans

Nobody Knows What's Inside a Human Being

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

There is a refrain in a kind of ballad by John Masefield that runs

"And I was finely suited if I had only known."

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The percentage of people on this planet who do daily what they want to do is not large. It may not be any larger in the land of the most corporations and the most automobiles than it is in some land of pushcarts and burros. I don't know. Being "finely suited" is for the majority only temporary. Perhaps more people do what they want to do than live in an ideal environment.

I've heard people express surprise that our own front yard is not littered up with prickly pear, the idea being that because I've written about prickly pear and catclaw I want to live amid thorns. The land of little rain, which is the land of prickly pear, has interested me, but it has never been my ideal habitat. I can't remember when I didn't want to live by plenty of water and grass and trees, all harmoniously arranged.

Tom Lea said that he wouldn't like to live without looking out on Mount Franklin. He does not miss trees. There is his home and studio in El Paso, he is finely suited.

Fred Turner, better known as Plum Tree Joe, is a farmer on the South Plains, living at Brownfield. The South Plains don't have any more water or trees than Mount Franklin has. You never know what's inside of a human being. Not many cotton-picking, cotton-baling, cotton-selling, cotton buying, and cotton-wearing people who know Fred Turner know what kind of a place he yearns toward as a habitat. His letter dated last Jan. 10 will tell you not only of a place but of a play of mind.

* * *

LAND NEEDS CHANGE.

"Before the sun went down yesterday my last bale of cotton was finished and hauled to the gin, and I do not intend to plant any more. Nor maize, nor corn either. The land needs a change. The very first thing I'm going to plant on it will be a river with deep holes of water where the catfish can laze around under the rocks and sunken logs. In places it will run noisy and shallow so that the minnows and perch can dart about in sight. I'll have to plant trees up and down the banks and overhanging the river, with butterflies and snake doctors flitting about. I'll plant an old kingfisher a-raising hell up and down that river and all the other birds whistling and singing.

"Wild rye I'll sow along the banks with mollie rabbits nibbling at it, and I'll raise the plows a little and plant some squirrels and possoums in the hollow trees. Back a little ways I'll need me some hills with a few big rocks with strange markings on them to arouse wonder. Mesquite and catclaw with bees a-buzzing in them will be planted all over these hills. The hills will be just high enough so I can see the sun rising every morning and setting at evening. Down below the hills will be bottom land with good grass and cows grazing there and a chinaberry grove close by where they can lie and swat at the flies with their tails.

* * *

DESPITE KICKINGS.

"When I get a good stand of all this I figure to trade for a horse and saddle and ride about letting the wind sorta cure out my face and the limbs scratch it up some. I'll ride down to the plum thicket that's in full bloom, as pretty and white as a funeral and as sweet and tangy as a whisky still. I'll plant me a few rattlesnakes just so they can rare up in front of my horse and wake him up, also some roadrunners to battle with the rattlers while I'm not looking. The neighbors will be bringing me seed of things I forgot and when it is all finished I hope it rains on the whole layout."

Despite the kickings they get, some people in the entertainment field know what's in the hearts of the masses. A long time ago now, an instructor in English in the University of Texas was writing cowboy stories for the pulps. He gave me one to criticize. I told him he didn't know straight up about cow people and that the language he had put in their mouths was never spoken anywhere.

He replied, "I'm not writing for you; I'm writing for drugstore clerks in Pittsburgh who want to get out."

I don't quote from the letter that follows as a compliment; I quote it as an illustration of "I was finely suited if I had only known." It's from a woman in Devonshire, away down in the southern part of England. She says:

* * *

LETTER FROM WALKER.

"After reading 'The Longhorns' 10 times I feel I know you." (I don't think she does.) "Always I have wanted to go to the Golden West but got only as far as Canada. When I look at cattle here in England they don't interest me. Only the Highland cattle in my own country, Scotland, have horns like the Longhorns in Texas. I'm Scotch and find England tame and domestic to one who has roamed o'er the mountains afar."

Years ago I wrote a piece in a magazine about that eccentric hunter of bears and lived to himself out in the wilds named Ben Lilly. Later this piece was worked into a book about him.

I had almost forgotten about it until a letter came the other day from Stanley Walker, who retired from his newspaper career in New York to Lampasas and wrote that excellent book "Home to Texas." In this letter he says that while he was city editor of the New York Herald-Tribune he was summoned to the office of "an elderly, prim, tight-lipped New England spinster known as a purist on the English language and as an expert in poetry. Rather forbidding but very intelligent, she had never taken anything stronger than elderberry wine or had a date (if that's the word) and had never betrayed the slightest interest in such matters as bear-hunting, trail-driving and sleeping on the ground. Waving the piece on Ben Lilly at me she said, 'So you know Mr. Dobie down in Texas?'

"After talking to her a while about the traditional Southwest, I told her that when we had time and could affort it, you and I would organize a pack outfit with guns, sleeping and cooking equipment, the proper mozos, and ride from the headwaters of the Rio Grande in Colorado away down into the Sierra Madre of Sonora and below that even. We would take a year, I told her, if need be, sleeping on rocks and listening to coyotes recite their poetry.

"'You're joking,' the old girl said sadly, 'but I'd rather do that than anything else in the world.'"

And so we moths on this planet called the earth fly along our ways, generally carrying in our hearts a desire for the ideal living place, something afar, that we've approached only in dreams, both by day and by night.

'Wild Scenes in South America'

JAN 17 1960

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Stories of Llaneros of Venezuela Are Vitally Told in Rare Book

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

Whenever some ignorant, generalizing, greedy, unctuously self-seeking politician, without taste but with a stomach that never turns at licking either the boots of the powerful or the sores of the mob finally dies, other politicians join the "free" press in eulogizing his "lifetime devotion to the highest form of patriotism." Actually, the lowest form of patriotism is the form adaptable to drum-beating and voice-lifting.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The narrow ignorance and provincial falsehood characteristic of this form of patriotism is illustrated by one of the published speeches of the late governor of Texas and president of Baylor University, Pat Neff. "The Texas cowboy," he silver-tongued in this speech, "is not the product of evolution. He had no ancestry. He was self-made. He sprang into being overnight," etc.

Although evolved to a remarkable degree from the Mexican vaquero of California and Texas, the cowboy had two other Spanish-speaking precedents: The gaucho of the Argentine pampas, and the llanero of the llanos—those "grassy oceans" called also prairies, plains, pampas—of Venezuela—a country now outdoing Texas on oil. Not nearly so much in either Spanish or English has been written on the llaneros as on the gauchos.

The chief "liberator" of Venezuela was a llanero named Jose Antonio Paez, whose life by R. B. Cunningham Graham has a deal of llanero lore in it. In "Wild Scenes in South America (1862), Don Jose Antonio's son, Ramon Paez, wrote the richest book (long out of print) on llanero life yet published. Well educated in England, he wrote in English, but not of something foreign.

He belonged to the vast "hatos" (herd lands) of the llanos and he belonged with the fiercely independent riders, the wild horses, the savage cattle and other animals inhabiting them.

STORY OF BULL.

A single instance taken from Ramon Paez's description of a rodeo of from 8,000 to 10,000 cattle on one of his father's ranches will illustrate the character of the book. A black bull after charging more than one rider, stepped in an armadillo hole and then took his stand in near-by brush, several horsemen attempting to dislodge him.

"It was indeed a splendid sight to behold that proud monarch of the horned tribe bidding defiance to all about him, his huge and shaggy head, surmounted by a pair of pointed, powerful horns, high in air, and with an expression of countenance that was almost diabolical.

Occasionally with his fore feet he ploughed up the earth, which, falling in showers upon him, he swept from his sides with his tail, uttering all the while a sort of suppressed roar resembling distant thunder. Then came the furious charge, when everyone was compelled to run for his life, as nothing could arrest his headlong course. Blinded with rage, he spared not even those of his own species, killing two heifers instantly, and wounding a bull so severely that he died shortly afterward.

FEATS OF AGILITY.

"Each time the men whirled the lazo to throw it over his head, he dashed forward with such rapidity as to disconcert their aim, until, finally, a bold and agile sambo, Sarmiento by name, who acted as caporal, dismounting from his horse and seizing the red blanket from his saddle, prepared to face the bull without the encumbrance of the lazo. His intention was to bewilder or torear him by a succession of such feats of agility as are usually practiced by matadors in bull fights; and so successful was he, that in one of the animal's furious charges, he succeeded in grasping and holding his tail.

In spite of the efforts the bull made to strike him with his horns, Sarmiento followed his movements so closely that by a dexterous twist of the tail he succeeded in overthrowing the brute upon his side; he then drew the tail between the hind legs, and as this completely deprives the animal of all power of rising, he was enabled to hold him until others came to his assistance. Then, to prevent further mischief, the men proceeded to saw off the tops of his horns and to perform upon him other usual operations. These precautions, however, proved quite unnecessary, as the bull, exhausted by rage and loss of blood, shortly afterward dropped upon the ground and expired.

"In spite of the vigilance and constant efforts of the men to keep the animals within the rodeo, several other bulls managed to break through the ranks. The only method of bringing them back was by using the all-potent lazo, and two men, one of them thus equipped, were dispatched after the fugitive, which on being noosed, was by the second man speedily thrown upon his side by means of that dangerous appendage, the tail, in the management of which the llaneros of Venezuela are so famous.

This accomplished, they pierced the thick cartilage which divides the nostrils with the point of a dagger; one end of the thong was then passed through the wound, while the other remained fastened to the horse's tail; the llanero, then mounting his steed, jerked the end attached to the bull, which brought the prostrate beast at once to his feet, when he was marched off to his destination without further trouble, literally led by the nose."

Little Learning, Many Memories S.T. 2-19-56

Squeak of Windmill, Cry of Water Vendor, Linked With School Days

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

When I went to Alice 50 years ago, the village had neither a water nor a sewage system. Householders not provided with wells and windmills bought water from a Mexican, who drove a burro to a cart loaded with a horizontal barrel from which water was transferred through spigot and hose into an upright barrel at the back door or yard gate of the purchaser. This aguador would wail out "agua, agua fresca" (water, fresh water) while his burro pulled the cart and barrel over town at a shadow-moving gait. Grandma had a well and mill besides a cistern to catch rainwater for drinking. When the windmill went to squeaking she would remind Grandpa to oil it. Sometimes the wind blew ceaselessly, covering the town with dust and sifting it into the houses; then one could hear the squeaking of windmills that nobody seemed to grease.

DOBIE. J. FRANK

Perhaps memory ignores many particles of experience more influential on a person's life than other particles vividly recollected. I went to Alice for the sole purpose of going to school, and I can recall almost nothing that I learned in school and comparatively little from school life in general. I can recall many faces of pupils — one of a girl with whom I fell tremblingly in love but who, fortunately for us both, had no feeling for me. Her influence on my subsequent emotional life was as negative as that of the windmill in the yard.

MEN TO RESPECT.

Among the teachers was a German scholar. I did not at the time realize the nature and meaning of a true scholar. This German was ascetic in looks, shy and solitary. He organized a class in Latin, a subject not required, for volunteers. I volunteered but stupidly did not study. I was more interested in "The Last Days of Pompeii." Any pupil who had an incentive to study had it from an inner source, not from the school.

During two years at Alice I was in the room presided over by the superintendent, "Professor" Nat Benton — a man to respect. Not long before we graduated he told members of the class to write a theme on one of several subjects that he named. This was the only written assignment I had in school before going to college. Several members of the class, which totaled less than a dozen, did not write anything. I chose war as my subject, and to be striking I began my theme with Sherman's million-times quoted sentence. Professor Benton, after taking up the themes, began reading mine aloud to the class. At hearing the word "hell," the class giggled and made other noises. There was nothing funny to me about hell. I suffered humiliation and embarrassment beyond adult conception.

I always have to consult a dictionary to make sure of the ranking distinction between salutatorian and valedictorian. I don't remember which I was but think I was next to the top in grades. Anyway, I had to stand up at the graduating exercises — held in the, vast to me, Knights of Pythias auditorium — and make a speech.

ADJECTIVES TO SPARE.

In preparing it I floundered about — for I could not think of anything to say — until Professor Benton virtually wrote it for me. In working it over he gave me the first lesson in composition that I can recall. He advised me to use "three adjectives in ascending order to describe a noun." For instance, if I wanted to speak of a heroic man, I might say he was "strong, brave, and noble." If I were to say anything about pain I should adjective it with "sharp, excruciating, agonizing." I had a dim idea that Professor Benton might be wrong about adjectives. A letter that I came upon three years later from Robert Louis Stevenson to Henry James damning "the accursed adjective" had an electric effect upon me.

My adjectived oration was delivering it out in the cowshed. I knew I should be afraid when the time came to stand on the stage before all the people and say it aloud. My legs were shaking like cottonwood leaves in a breeze when I got to my position on the stand, and my mouth was dry. I started but after a sentence or two I faltered. I could not summon the memorized words. I had no idea at all to put into other words. Professor Benton was ready for me. He held the manufscript of my oration in his hand. He coached me by reading in a low voice the sentence I had stalled on, I repeated half of it and forgot the rest. It was no use to try to go on. If war was hell, this was worse than 10 wars. I sat down in a misery and despondency for which there were not and are not any adjectives.

HOT, SWEET BREAD.

The theme on war, the graduating oration and the failure to study Latin are the sole recollections I have out of two years of schooling at Alice. I read books during the time and must have learned a little arithmetic if nothing else. I can not recall a single study or textbook we had, but the life and the people of the town come back to me clearly etched.

There were two or three Mexican bakeries across the railroad tracks, and every afternoon a man with a face radiating good nature walked up and down the streets carrying on his head a large flat basket covered with a white cloth and containing loaves of freshly baked, still warm light bread buns. He wore a coiled up red Mexican sash around his head to make the basket balance and in walking did not touch it with his hands. Walking slowly he would sing-song in long drawn-out and faraway sounding syllables the words pan cal-i-ente, pan dul-ce (hot lightbread, sweet bread). The cry, running far up the musical scale, was a joy to him, and it was a joy to hear. It was a privilege to take a nickel from Grandma and run out with it to buy a loaf from him, which he would place on a half sheet of discarded newspaper and hand to me with the invariable pilon (lagniappe) — a soft, warm bun, devoured at once with the melody of his voice and the aroma of his basket as he walked on.

The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

Colorful Anecdotes

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

Virginian Writes of Journey to California

SEP 25 1960

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

When I want a fact, the Ph.D. historians are gratefully turned to. When I want to live—through books—I choose history through narrative and anecdotes — from Herodotus on down. The latest of these anecdote tellers is, or was, Benjamin Butler Harris, who was born in Virginia in 1824, read law in Tennessee, and came to Texas about 1847. He practiced law for a while in Panola County when he wasn't burning up and wilting down with what he called "Brazos fever"—chills and fever.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

In September of 1849 he took out for California gold with about 50 other men from Texas and elsewhere. Years later he wrote reminiscences of the overland journey and of life in the mines of California.

Only now are these reminiscenses being published by the University of Oklahoma Press under title of "The Gila Trail." I have read numerous volumes in this American Exploration and Travel Series, published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

* * *

SAMPLE NAMED BARRY.

For Texans to imagine that Roy Bean as justice of peace West of the Pecos was unique in his office is to be provincial, which a great many Texans are. Bean represented a class of JPs operating over the frontiers from David Crockett's Tennessee to the Pacific. Here is a sample named Barry out of Benjamin Butler Harris' book.

"In the summer of 1851, Barry reported: 'Inquest upon body of William Clark, July 16, 1851, was found dead in his bed, about a mile north of this office in a tent, under suspitious surcomstances, but was found on examination to of died suddenly a natural death by disease of the heart and lungs; no property but an old tent and a few little cooking and keeping fixtures—appropriated them to burying the body."

There were churchly people among the Argonauts, to be sure, but not many of them were what you'd call reverent. Mark Twain's "Roughing It" illustrates that point. Here is a Harris instance:

"Parson Clampitt, a good Methodist minister, would become much annoyed and upset did anyone leave church during the preaching. I have seen him suddenly arrest his discourse, pull his hair, frown, 'lose his thread,' etc., at such interruptions. Once during his preaching, a young Californian leisurely rose and proceeded toward the door when Clampitt, with thunder-clouded brow, addressed him. 'Young man, if you'd rather go to hell than hear me preach, just go on, go on . . .' The unabashed youth answered, 'Well, I believe I'd rather go to hell,' and continued out. The crowd roared and Clampitt lost the remainder of his sermon."

* * *

TELL GRANDMAMMY.

The "retort apt" is apt to be a kind of folk retort. While, as I heard told, the noted evangelist Sam Jones was preaching to a throng of people in a big hall, a young man sitting next to the aisle near the front got up and started walking back toward the door. Sam Jones paused in his sermon to remark, "There goes a young man to hell."

"What shall I tell your grandmammy when I get there?" the young man, turning, asked.

"Oh, just growl and tell her I've sent her a puppy," Sam Jones replied, then resumed his sermon.

According to all historians of all degrees, life on the Western frontiers was cheap. That of Indians was the cheapest of all; next to Indians came Mexicans; but many times the lives of Anglo-Americans were just as cheap. I've been collecting instances of the use of human hide, and might write an essay on that subject sometime. The following adds to the collection:

"At the Colorado crossing, 13 trappers bound for California came up. After all their traps, luggage and horses had got across, without invoking Indian aid as the other whites had done, one of the trappers noticed that an Indian, wrapped in a blanket, who had squatted above his ammunition, carried it away secreted under the blanket. The trapper waited until the Indian got about 70 yards away, then cooly aiming his rifle, killed him, and deliberately walking up, recovered the stolen ammunition, with his knife removed the Indian's scalp, and from the still-bleeding corpse's back cut a strip of skin 20 inches long by three inches wide for a razor strap. To a comrade's query as to what he was doing, he replied 'I am administering on this Indian's estate.'"

A vigilante (mob) trial described by Harris was of three or four Yaqui miners accused of murder. Armed men surrounding the court kept yelling, "Hang 'em! Hang em!" Any juryman who did not vote for hanging was threatened.

"The case was submitted, the jury retired for making a verdict to a room over the courtroom. While yelling went on, Dr. William M. Shepherd, ex-secretary of the Texas Republic, a large, brawny, stalwart and handsome man, having for several days imbibed Bacchus excessively, mounted the judge's rostrum and kicked a table over the judge's head. The judge, withdrawing through a side door, went to the front entrance, instructed the district attorney, Booker, to pacify the crowd with a speech, and retired to his hotel. Dr. Shepherd, Bowie knife in hand, eyes glaring, face and hair awry, faced the crazy mob, making the following remarks, 'I want to fight! I want to fight! I won't disgrace myself by fighting one man or a dozen—I will fight 50—yes, a 100! Bring them. Mighty little difference it makes on God's books whether my name was there a 1,000 years ago or now.' At this stage, a rifle held in a man's hand, resting on a bench, slipped and exploded, sending the ball through the ceiling and grazing a juryman. Instantly, a 100 mouths yelled, 'A Mexican has shot an American!' The hundreds outside repeated the cry. Mexicans, who formed two-thirds of the population, ran to cover. Many, retreating out of town over the hills, were targets of long, irregular volleys from the insane multitude."

Anybody who wants to know what the final verdict of the jury was will have to read the book. I make an end with this description of one of numerous characters.

"'Old Doty,' the deadbeat of the plains, reached California in 1849. His story was that he set out afoot from home and family in Maine with only $1.50 in his pocket. Wherever he stopped for food and shelter, always divulging the state of his finances and his objective point, landlords and wayside dwellers generously forebore to charge him for fare until, he said, after a night's lodging at a place in Ohio. After telling his story there, 'the tarnal, miserly — — — — charged me 50 cents, leaving me only $1 to get to California on'"

5-T

Sunday, January 29, 1950

Owls, Woodpecker His Neighbors

Dobie Living at Devil's River Dam, Waiting for Hay Fever Season to End

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

They call it Devil's Lake, but a more accurate name would be Devil's River Lake, and that is what I call it. It is formed by a power dam on Devil's River, 23 miles northwest of Del Rio. I am living with myself, cooking—and not cooking—for myself, and writing on something with the expectation that it will be for somebody else as well as myself. My abode is a well-furnished and electrified cottage owned by the power company.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Unlike Thoreau's reason for retiring in solitude to Walden Pond, mine for coming out here was not to "drive life into a corner and try to see of what it is made." I came to get away from the hay fever-producing cedar pollen out of the "violet hills" crowning Austin that always drives me wild at this time of year. Yes, I've tried all the nostrums, including the latest touted up by the non-advertising and self-adulating Reader's Digest. Of course I came also to work, and when I can work well that is the best part of life.

Twice a week I drive to Del Rio to get mail and milk—not that I am on a milk diet. A pot of beans and bacon lasts me nearly a week, and then a pot of dried venison cooked with potatoes and onions lasts me close to another week. There's nothing better than good cold raw milk, just as there's nothing worse for milk than homogenizing it, and milk goes a long and pleasant way toward balancing a diet of beans and jerked meat. I've taken to buying buttermilk to mix in cornbread, made of "yaller" meal, and am getting as fancy as a French cook at baking cornbread. There's nothing better to balance off good cornbread and butter than honey and cold milk. Of course I have fruits, along with a kind of fruit juice that is better before supper than before breakfast. You seldom see a man who cooks for himself carrying too much weight. One reason is that he frequently does not cook. I don't think I am gaining any weight.

Main Excitement.

Going to town is a real event. In the first place, it causes me to shave and put on a fresh shirt and thus feel brighter. The scenery along the way consists of scrub brushes, rocks, sheep and more grass than I thought this sheeped-over country would ever again produce. Last year the rainfall was more than 30 per cent above normal. But getting to town and seeing people, a few of whom I know, and getting the mail is the main excitement. I can get nearly any Texas newspaper I want and some I don't want and learn about the prospects of a sales tax—which I am dead against—and maybe learn whether it has rained in Live Oak County and elsewhere. Then I can get the Sunday issue of the New York Times and with it spend a good part of the evening learning the news of the world.

It never takes me long to get over missing a newspaper regularly before breakfast. Wherever and whenever I go anywhere, I always carry plenty of books. I brought several boxes out here, some to consult, some to skim through in order to see if they contain anything I want to read, and some to read line by line. My main pieces of resistance out here are Lady Wentworth's "The Authentic Arabian Horse" and Charles M. Doughty's two-volumed "Arabia Deserts." Doughty's work was first published in 1888. Nearly all the great travel books of the world have been written by Englishmen, and this is among the greatest. If subsidizing the British would enable them to keep on writing travel books, I'd be for the subsidy. On long spells of withdrawal from home like this I carry two dictionaries, one Spanish and one English, an anthology of poetry, the Bible and the "Oxford Dictionary of Quotations." I can pick up any one of the last named three to look up something in particular and keep going fascianted for an hour.

Fishing is Dull.

I have tried fishing a little, but such fish as there are in the lake seem contented with staying there. I can indulge in hope in an easier way than sitting on a rock watching a cork.

The chief thing I miss out here is a knowledge of birds. There are numerous species about that I can not identify. I believe that a knowledge of the common flowers and birds of the country gives the possessors of such more pleasure and enriches their lives more than any other form of knowledge. I'd give my favorite Charles M. Russell picture and my Casas Grandes pot a thousand years old with a coyote head sculptured on one side of it and a badger head sculptured on the other side of it, and other beautiful things beside to know as much about birds as Roy Bedichek or Edgar Kincaid Jr.

My nearest neighbor is a big woodpecker. He lives in the loft of a small vacant house down the hill from me. Not content with boring through the wall on one side of the house, he has bored in from two other sides, but he always comes out the front entrance. I think he spends a good part of his time waiting for me to come along so that he can scurry out, showing the lovely saffron-pink of his underwings as he undulates away. We never speak to each other, though he often makes his brave chatter.

No Coyote Songs.

As this is a sheep country, there are no coyotes to make the air of evening and morning beautiful. The sheep have eaten them all up. Water running over the dam makes a constant roaring sound. It's soothing in a way, but often I get tired of it and wish for silence. Sometimes idotic voices, neither beautiful nor ugly, get to coming out of the roar. The other night I heard a voice mingled with the roar that did not sound as if it came from the waters. I had been reading in bed and was trying to go to sleep. I got up and went first to one window and then another until I located the voice as that of a hoot owl on top of the house. Anothe owl down the hill was responding. They were carrying on a duet, the winter call, soft and serene, which is very different from the animating "I cook for myself. Who cooks for you-all" that the same owl rolls out later.

I miss conversation and the humanity that goes with it. Life does not have much that's richer, but owl talk goes a long way to compensate for the lack. Every evening about dusk I can hear those owls in trees across the creek that runs into Devil's River just below my cottage. Yesterday I spent about 40 minutes watching three ducks in this creek. There was hardly a minute of that time that one of them was not alert while the other two rested or grabbled about for something to eat below the surface of the water. The duck on the alert was not always the same one, but most of the time it was. There's always one horse in a bunch of range horses that has its nostrils, eyes and ears more awake than the others. It's the same with people.

J. Frank Dobie

FEB 24 1957

Some People Worth Recalling

San Antonio Light

By J. FRANK DOBIE

One Benjamin M. Cole of North Andover, Mass., otherwise unknown to me, has written me a letter in part as follows: "As a water locator of many years, I have been reading about the terrible drouth conditions in Texas. By remote control I have successfully located water in both South and North Carolina and in Ireland. If I could procure some rough sketches of ranch lands short of water, I'd like to try my ability on locating underground supplies. I do not ask a fee. I want to find out for my own satisfaction if there is or is not water in the earth."

"My reply was that we need operators on the clouds worse than we need locators "by remote control" of underground water.

According to my limited observation, people of Indian blood do not forsake nature and take pleasure in destroying what Charlie Russell sentimentally called "Nature's Children" as do a great many Anglo-Americans. W. W. Hampton, who came from the Choctaw Nation to San Antonio, writes: "I saw a coyote on the highway last week. It gave me more of a thrill than anything I saw in any town on a 600-mile trip.

Other Views

It would be a safe bet, I think, that more men and boys in those towns would derive more of a sensation from shooting at a coyote and putting an end to its life than from looking at it and enjoying its freedom and perhaps remembering its voice. On the tradition of guns and violence, Howard Finley of Delray Beach, Fla., writes:

"Sixty years or so ago I met Capt. Bill McDonald of the Texas rangers. After Oklahoma became a state he was employed to police the Osage hills, where the Starrs and other outlaws had established themselves. As a traveling salesman I 'worked' Dewey, Okla., about every four months, and here I came to have a passing acquaintance with Capt. McDonald, who made the town his headquarters. Once he stopped me long enough to advise that I get rid of a pistol carried conspicuously in a hip pocket. I thought he had a right to an opinion on guns. About two weeks after receiving the advice I pulled the pistol out of my pocket while I was on a passenger train crossing the Cimarron river and tossed it out the window into the swollen waters below. Then I had to explain this act to the town marshal of Perry, Okla."

Pecan Trees

My friend D. D. Heinen of San Antonio began planting pecans of improved variety in 1913. More than a quarter of a century ago he set trees out along a creek that remain "easy to look at and give me much pleasure." He has been an observer of pecan growth over much territory and estimates that fully 70 per cent of the native pecans along the Nueces river between Cotulla and Uvalde have died of drouth. "I hope I am mistaken," he says, "but my observations over the last 40 years warrant my thinking that the desert areas of Arizona, New Mexico and western Texas are slowly reaching eastward."

It used to be that observations on change were confined mostly to oldish people. Now all sorts of changes are racing so rapidly that young people, even under 20, notice them. Urban and suburban developments and industrialization make changes in living conditions for millions of people more immediately realized than cycles in climate. I know of no contemplator of change more serene than Hobart Huson in his home named Dawgwood, at Refugio, Texas.

Lawyer

He is a lawyer and a competent one. Last year he published Volume II of his scholarly history of Refugio county, composed with a perspective seldom found in county histories. For above 30 years he has been laboring "with love" on the life and philosophy of the great Greek philosopher Pythagoras. Ten years ago he gathered into a handy volume all identifiable sayings and teachings of "the Sage of Samos," as Pythagoras is called, who died about 500 years before Christ was born. His researchers have taken Hobart Huson to Greece and to learning both ancient and modern in various languages. He is a leader in the World Congress of Pythagorean Organizations. Being a lawyer in a world of oil and oil corporations has not blurred his power to "look at life steadily and see it whole." To reflect upon a good man pursuing a great subject the better part of a lifetime elevates my mind. I wish to salute him.

We are still talking about change. Last Christmas Hobart Huson sent out a card quoting Pythagoras:

"That which ceases to move
ceases to live * * *

"All things are in a state
of flux . . .
And everything is brought
into being with a changing nature.
The heavens and whatever
is beneath the heavens
Change their forms, the earth
and all that is within it."

Dynamic, Humble, Honest ST Sun 6-15-52

Dobie Writes of Father, Live Oak Area Rancher

II 9:7-8

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I have wanted to write this sketch for a long time, not primarily to pay filial respect but to put down as clearly and concisely as I can a human reality. I have read all the books there are about ranch people and their occupation, but nothing in print about cowmen pictures the kind of man my father was. This is not to say that he was an individual beyond the much-stressed individualism of range men. The writings (and I include my own) seem simply not to get inside human lives so far as those lives belong to ranching.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Richard Jonathan Dobie was born in Harris County, Texas, in January, 1858. He disliked his first name, was called Richard, and signed his name R. J. His grandfather had come to Texas from Virginia in 1830, followed within a few years by three sons. Two of them were ranching as partners in Harris County by the early 1840's, the other having died. My grandfather was drowned in a stream on his ranch five months before my father was born. A year later the remaining brother moved west to Live Oak County and bought a small ranch, on which he and his wife raised a family of ranchers. Along in the seventies my widowed grandmother moved also to Live Oak County with her four sons and settled on a small ranch.

The country was still unfenced and a man could graze stock without owning a foot of land. Ramirenia and Lagarto Creeks, in the southern part of the county, the Dobie country, ran clear water the year around. For 50 years they have been bone dry except for rises after big rains.

GRANDMA HAD PRAYERS.

Grandma was more concerned over the moral influences of the country on her boys than over grass and water. An old trail driver and sheriff from Cuero who stayed all night at her ranch not long after she moved to Live Oak County told me many years later how surprised he was to be asked to join in family prayers following supper and then to hear blessing at the breakfast table. He said that Grandma did not like horse-racing instead of church for Sunday and that she seemed to think horse thieves were more plentiful around her than Christians.

Three of her four sons became ranchmen who knew no other occupation; all four were upright, honest, sober-living, never given to wildness. Before my father married he was called "Dancing Dick of Sore Toe." He loved to dance and play the fiddle and I understand that he smoked cigarets. About the time he married he became rigidly religious, quit dancing, disposed of his fiddle, never to play one again, and ceased smoking. I never heard anybody call him Dick. His first cousin, Dick Dobie, ranched adjoining us. The only Dobie of the generation who took a drink now and then was Uncle Jim, and he probably did not take a jigger a year. He was the big cowman of the tribe.

He and my father and Uncle Neville began ranching by raising and trading in horses. They drove horses to Kansas and sold them. When horses became unprofitable they turned to cattle. The only one of the three who really loved horses and loved to "fool" with them was Uncle Neville. I don't think that my father or Uncle Jim ever rode a pitching horse if he could avoid it. My father advised against "marrying" a horse—becoming too attached to a horse to trade him off to advantage. Yet he was kind to his horses.

SIXSHOOTERS TABOO.

I never heard of any Dobie carrying a sixshooter. My Uncle Frank Byler, my mother's brother, wore one up the trail to Kansas one year. He and two or three other young men were watering their horses at a waterhole along the route one day when they saw a moccasin (or some other snake) swimming. Somebody called on Uncle Frank to shoot it. He pulled his sixshooter but it was too rusted to cock. He never practiced with it anyhow; he was tired of it and right there threw it at the snake in the water and rode off leaving it in the mud. Over big parts of the ranching West many men wore sixshooters, but in the region I grew up in a lot of range men who belonged to the Sixshooter Age—the generation preceding mine—did not have sixshooters. My father bought a light revolver for my mother to have when he was away from home. He had an old brass-bellied .44 Winchester with which he occasionally killed a varmint or hawk after the chickens, but he almost never hunted, though there were plenty of deer on the ranch. Many other ranchmen were like that; some still are. One time he brought a wild turkey home that he had run down horseback.

He always wanted to handle cattle easy, which was not my idea, and had fairly gentle cattle. He raised some but regularly bought steer yearlings and sold them when they were 2 or 3 years old. I was ambitious to give a Mexican name to our ranch. He said it was not big enough to have a name or to be a real ranch. He called it a "place." It contained approximately 7,000 acres, and he usually had additional land leased and pastured some cattle on another ranch.

SUNDAY OBSERVED.

He would not work on Sunday and did not want us boys riding calves and disporting ourselves in similar ways on Sunday. He helped build two churches, one at Dinero seven miles east of us and one at Ramirenia, somewhat farther to the west of us. Each of these places consisted of a single little store with postoffice in a corner of it. We attended church regularly only at Ramirenia, once a month, when the preacher would come down from Oakville, the county seat (which had, I suppose, between 100 and 200 inhabitants). The preacher's headquarters were at our house. Every summer there was a camp meeting, which lasted for nine or 10 days, on our ranch. People came to it from long distances. A dozen or so families camped in tents. Nearly every one of them had a Mexican man to cook or help cook, haul water in barrels, bring up wood, water and stake the horses, and do other chores.

Just before the camp meeting was to begin the men of the community would gather at the site to repair a big brush arbor and strew hay on the ground—the floor. The site was among live oak trees. One day while the neighbors were working on the brush arbor my father would not eat dinner. He said it was his fast day. He observed, I believe, all the fast days officially recognized by the Methodist Church South.

Sometimes it took only a day to drive the yearlings he had bought to our ranch. Most of the ranches in the country were small and he would buy a dozen here and 20 there, receiving them at some centrally located pen. The standard price for years was around $10 a head, and they were good cattle. Sometimes he bought yearlings so far away that it took two or three days to drive them home. Going with him and his hands to drive a herd of cattle was a signal experience for me. Often, however, I had to stay in school. I did not go one time when a big rain fell, putting Ramirenia Creek on a boom.

PRAYED AT CROSSING.

It was up swift, wide and deep, bringing down driftwood, when my father and his men reached it. Nobody was anxious to ride into it. They had no chuck wagon; they carried some grub, a coffee pot and tin cups in morrals (fiber bags). My father could not wait until the creek ran down and get to the ranch where he was to receive cattle on time. He was no hand to wait anyhow. He advised the men to take off their shoes and boots. He seldom wore boots himself and never wore spurs. Before they rode into the current he got down on his knees and prayed God for a safe crossing.

Now, this was not an orthodox procedure for a cowman. I was at one of the fool ages when I heard about this praying. (There are several fool ages for some men; in fact, for some, including myself, the fool ages are concomitant with existence on earth.) I was humiliated at such humility on the part of my father. Another time—this was the year I went off to college and the family moved to town, to Beeville—I was humiliated because he did not wear a necktie to church. He was always very neat but plain in his dress. He wore a white shirt, with white starched collar, and coat but sometimes did not wear a necktie.

About Texas and Texans

SEP 1 1 1960

'Silent Components' Revive Panther Tale

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

The first tale-teller I recall was a man who got down off a tired canelo horse at our ranch in Live Oak County about sundown one fall evening. He was from up, away up, the Nueces River. In the darkness out on the front gallery after supper he got strung out on panthers. One about which he wove a tale would have eaten up a turkey - hunter if the man had not had enough turkeys to feed the screaming, hungry brute, dropping them one by one at intervals on the ground while hastening through the brush to his horse tied at a "bob-wire" fence. This panther man, whose name I never did learn, shivered my timbers in a way from which I have never recovered or wished to recover. Many nights out on the front gallery with papa—mama inside with the endless work—we listened to an owl in the live oaks saying, "I cook for myself. Who cooks for you-all?" We listened to the crickets and to the coyotes and to the wind from the Gulf galloping in the tree tops and to other components of silence; but on this night only the panther man spoke—to my ears at least.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

The next story-teller to enter my life came about 25 years later, after World War I. I was bossing Los Olmos Ranch on the Nueces River, in LaSalle County, for my uncle Jim Dobie. Most of the nights—the only time I kept under a roof—I stayed by myself in a cottage near the big house, which was seldom occupied. One of the ranch hands named Santos Cortez had killed a man in Mexico and didn't want to cross back to the other side (al otro lado, of the river—the Rio Grande). He was a pastor, a goat-herder, and also a hunter. Great numbers of deer existed in that country at that time and still exist; more than once in a half-day's ride out in a big pasture I counted over 100. It was customary among larger ranches of the region to detail one man in an outfit to keep it in meat, especially during the cooler seasons. Santos Cortez kept the fencing and tank-building crew well provided with venison and javelina meat.

* * *

NOT RELIGIOUS.

Once in a while after supper, when the crew had come into headquarters, he would appear in my room, where a bed, some books, a kerosene light on a table, three or four rawhide-bottomed chairs and a fine fireplace furnished comfort. Santos would explain that he was bored with talk about cow tracks, bogged-down cows, some vaquero's horse that had got a thorn in his knee, and things like that. He wanted conversation; conversation generally consisted of his encounters with deer, men and ghosts. I have said something about him in an introduction to my book, Tongues of the Monte. Santos was a kind of liberated mind; he was not religious. But he believed in ghosts. That's where the intellect of a sophisticate comes in. I accept without reservation the ghost in Hamlet but reject the Holy Ghost as a metaphysical superstition.

One night after Santos had told what was to me a gripping story about his experience with a bulto, a ghostly bulk that held him flat on his back at a goat camp, I thought of how John A. Lomax had collected cowboy songs and ballads, and decided that I would collect traditional tales of Texas. Texas soon got too small for me, and other coherences came to supersede man-made geographical lines, and life inherent in tales extended itself. I have been listening for and to tales ever since, though I learned to have little truck with the literalists designated as scientific folklorists. The first collection of the tales for which I was responsible was published by the Texas Folklore Society in 1924, under title of Legends of Texas. Bertha McKee Dobie helped edit and write it.

It was in 1923 that I left Beeville with a small rancher for Duval County on the trail of a legend pertaining to San Caja Mountain—just a long hill. At that time Archie Parr, in the Texas Senate, was known as "The Duke of Duval." His son George has been notorious for years as the inheritor of the Duke's ways. The little rancher I went with was not a good story-teller at all. He was too much of a literalist. Not far from his squat we passed a one-teacher frame schoolhouse inside about a half acre of black brush and catclaw enclosed by three strands of barbed wire. "You might be surprised to know that that fence cost the county $1,000," the little rancher said. I wasn't surprised. That's all he said on the subject.

* * *

'ANIMALITOS.'

I remember this helper in my search for stories mainly on account of his bed furnishings. There were not any sheets in the house, and the quilt I slept on had more animalitos in it than any other quilt I ever encountered. Really, though, it was not as bad as a bed I slept on in Karnes County while I was on the trail of a story about ghost riders, a story well told by Henry Yelvington in his Ghost Lore. This Karnes County bed didn't have any more sheets than the Duval County bed, but it had the seven-year's itch — "just waiting," like the boll-weevil, "for a home."

You're not going to get tales that linger in the imagination except from people who have time to linger, time to stare at cows or anything else that comes along. In my experience, the best tale-tellers did not spend hours a day in a bathroom scrubbing themselves. The first time that Bertha Dobie and I were in Saltillo at the old Saenz Hotel there were no tourists in the town, and the cook served frijoles fritos for breakfast, plain frijoles for dinner, and nacionales for supper. Our waiter had time to tell a story about a coyote and a cricket — a story that years later I put into my coyote book. Imagine a waiter in a wholesale eating place having enough time to tell you a long cuento and to pass the time of day besides that! The diners were so sparse in this hotel of repose that two of them, entire strangers, upon finishing their meal and passing out near our table murmured politely, "Buen provecho!" (May it, the food, benefit you!) Tales belong with such courtesy and leisure.

STAR-TELEGRAM OCT 27 1957

Cherry Springs Jaunt Ends With Happy Dreams Under Oxygen Tent

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I think that philosopher of nature, Roy Bedichek, must take some of the blame. He does not believe in medicines. Oh, no. "A man ought to have as much sense as a cow," he's always saying. "If a cow gets sick she quits eating and goes off and lies down." I've told him that I've skinned quite a few cows that never got up after lying down. That makes no difference on Bedichek's theories — and until the other day I always thought he was right.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

Sometime after midnight on the morning of Sept. 22, a Sunday, a fine rain fell over widespread areas of Central Texas, continuing through the forenoon. The fact that I had been tired for a week and was not worth shooting did not prevent me from wanting to see how it had rained at Cherry Springs. That's our plot of earth in the hills 35 miles west of Austin. The chief fun of having land is watching the grass grow on it, the wild flowers in the spring, the acorn crops in the fall, the tanks after a rain, the smells after a rain—everything after a rain. As this rainy Sunday wore along, I felt draggier and draggier. About four o'clock I told my wife, Bertha, that I was going to Cherry Springs and would be back in two or three days if I had the energy to drive.

OXYGEN-TENTING.

When I got up there I found the 5-inch rain gauge full. I emptied it, lit a fire in my bedroom, ate some tasteless supper, put on heavy pajamas and went to bed. I woke up three or four times in the night to the sound of drizzling rain and walked bare-footed out on the gallery. I did not want any breakfast—only to drowse and rest like Bedichek's sick cow, the same at noon and all afternoon. Sometimes breathing was not easy. Not long before sundown my head went to swimming and I telephoned the man, a friend, who looks after the place when I am gone.

"I'm going to drive you to Austin," he said. "Pneumonia," the doctor in Austin said. I'd had it for two days. It could not have been worse. If it had not been for an oxygen tent, I would not be here now.

While I was way down there so deep in the well everything in the world that passed into my consciousness seemed sharply etched, very fragile, and as sensitive as I was. I felt like crying at almost every word from a friend—and many, many friends, some unknown to me, sent words in varying forms. I thought of Fred Gipson, not as the author of "Old Yeller" and other books, but as a very young collegian in my class at the University of Texas, where his face and voice always did me good; now I felt very tender toward him. The image of Tom Lea came before me—not as artist or writer, but as a friend whom I had left for a few minutes with his wife Sarah at the monument of the Seven Mustangs in front of the Texas Memorial Museum in Austin. That monument is no doubt the most noble and beautiful example of bronze in Texas. An interpretation of the mustangs written by me is chiseled into the granite pedestal. When I got back to pick up Tom and Sarah, his face was wet with tears and he said, "It is so beautiful, Frank."

ALL WAS BEAUTY.

Down there in the deep well I saw hardly anything, heard hardly anything, remembered hardly anything that was not beautiful. Medals of Honor are given to soldiers for action "beyond the call of duty." There are thousands of nurses who do skilful and kind things beyond the call of duty and beyond the call of their wages every day. No patient was ever more fortunate than I in nurses.

From my window (here in St. David's Hospital) I look on a block of vacant land. A hundred times I have wished that I had the money to buy it and put up on it a commodious club house as headquarters for the nurses of Texas — or something else they'd like.

Whoever lives near that vacant block of land keeps chickens. I have heard roosters crowing at all hours of the morning. I like to hear them. They take me back to a simple and kindly world of a long time ago. Two or three people have offered me the use of radios and televisions. I'd much rather listen to the roosters—and read.

I want to tell about some people but shall have to wait now until another Sunday.

Cuddleworth's Career

Preparing for Future Became Costly Habit

AUG 7 1960

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

J. FRANK DOBIE.

I owe the idea and the climax of this sketch to Walter Prescott Webb, the profoundest thinker that the Southwest has produced, and that includes both the South and the West. Thinkers are a kind of crop that neither universities nor agricultural experiment stations seem to know how to produce. I told Webb he should write a story in order to come to a proper climax with his character. He said he didn't want to. I don't know whether I've stolen or have merely appropriated the situation from him.

Anyhow, this Horace Cuddleworth was born as devoid of a silver spoon in his mouth as it was of teeth. At an age when most boys are developing recklessness, he was developing caution. His parents had no trouble persuading him to put nickels and dimes in a savings box. Their trouble came to be to get some conception into his mind as to what he was going to do with the savings. He just said the future would take care of that. By his 15th birthday he was saving his time in order to prepare for college. Upon graduating from college, he still hadn't kissed a girl or given his heart to a career that would enlist his energies. The one thing he was fixed on doing was, as he often put it, "preparing for the future."

* * *

STUDIES CONTINUED.

His parents wanted to send him to law school, but no, he said he'd rather read law. He read it with avidity and with intelligence, too, but he never did get to the point where he wanted to take a bar examination and get a license ot practice law. The practice of law remained in the future. He took to studying on futures in the cotton market. Some people thought that when he came into a good inheritance he would become a trader on the stock exchange.

The inheritance merely made him more cautious and more saving. He didn't talk much about his business, but whenever the subject of finances came up he didn't mind saying that he thought it was necessary to save everything a person could in order to prepare for the future. He never took a trip, he never took a drink, he never went fishing, he never took joy in comradeship.

Women were out of his life except for an old crone who came once a week and was better at leaning on a broom than sweeping with it. He lived alone and spent considerable time growing vegetables in the back yard. Although bankers are not supposed to talk, it was common knowledge that he kept plenty of money in a savings account and that he had plenty of bonds and stocks in a safety deposit box.

The years went on, and the tightness of Horace Cuddleworth in purse and spirit became reflected in his skin. It didn't look like human skin. It was a covering for a certain amount of flesh on angular bones. This covering looked never to have been fresh. Then Horace Cuddleworth's joints got too stiff for him to raise his own vegetables, and it seemed to depress him to have to buy a potato. He was very fond of lamb chops, but he didn't buy them oftener than twice a year. A man preparing for the future couldn't afford them.

At one time he had taken the Atlantic Monthly and some other good magazines, but they were an extravagance, too. At one time he had borrowed books from the public library to which he wouldn't even contribute a dollar a year, but he became too lacking in energy to go for books, and long before that people had ceased to bring him things.

* * *

NO FUTURE IN BLADES.

Then one summer morning Horace Cuddleworth inched out of bed and, as was his custom, paused before an ancient mirror above an ancient bureau. He usually looked at himself in this mirror to see if he could go another day without shaving. The only modern gadget he had was a safety razor, but wearing out the blades bothered him. As he regarded them, they contributed little to the future. On this particular summer morning something compelled him to pause a little longer in front of the old looking glass. As he looked into it a kind of flush came into his sallow skin. He began making a kind of inventory of himself.

His eyes were watery. His nose was drippy. He'd lost all but three teeth, yellow snags. He had been too saving to have a set of teeth made to fit his mouth. Cuddleworth had a way of every once in a while recalling a snatch of poetry. He looked at his shapeless mouth in the glass and mumbled with conscious irony: "Take, O Take those lips away."

He was far from fat, but the doubles under his chin and around his neck hung like the dewlap of an old cast-off Brahman bull. His arms had no muscles, only shrunken flabbiness. His finger nails were long and yellow. The hairs growing out of his ears were longer and thicker than any on his head. He noticed the machine-like quaver in his voice when he quoted that line of poetry.

Looking there at his features—actually looking at them now for perhaps the first time in his life — Horace Cuddleworth shrank back. The only strong thing about him was his breath. His hands were as trembly as his knees. His head went to bobbing in a kind of palsy. His jaws trembled as if he were trying to utter something overpowering to his mind. He did utter it, and these were his words as he steadied his bobbing head with his palsied hands:

"I have spent my whole life preparing for the future — and now, my God, this is the future."

* * *

AMBITION TOOK ALL.

Ambition can be one of the meanest things in life. Carl Hertzog was telling me the other day of a certain rich man who after becoming too weak to do any business retired, as he called it. He came to Carl for advice on getting two books rebound: One by Senator Ingalls of Kansas, who wrote that flowery piece on grass; the other by another public man—maybe Elbert Hubbard. Carl helped him to get the books reconditioned. Then he brought three or four copies more of each. He said he'd read these books when he was young, liked them and later had put in orders for all the copies a second-hand dealer could find.

One day he took Carl Hertzog to his storehouse for books. It was a big L-shaped dungeon or basement under his house, well-stocked with sets of Victor Hugo, Dickens, Longfellow, etc.

The rich man with books and even with a library said, "I always loved reading but never had time to read. Business and money-making took it all. I counted on reading when I got old, and now blank! blank! I have time to read and am going blind." He hired somebody to read to him, but he was growing deaf and soon couldn't hear.

San Anton[io] Light 12-15-57

J. Frank Dobie

Coyote Talk by a Cheery Winter Fire

By J. FRANK DOBIE

The other day I had a letter, soon to be quoted, from A. T. Walther, who lives out from Liberty Hill, which is in Williamson co., Texas. He is a reader friend whom I have not met face to face. I wrote and asked if I could publish his letter, adding that I wanted to send him a book about coyotes.

DOBIE

"With a cold, wet norther howling and rattling the windows as it is today, with a book like yours to read in front of the fire and an occasional sip of bourbon to add to the other tastes," Mr. Walther responded, "a man can travel a long way back into time." As I read his letter over again, it seems to me that we have sat by the fire and had natural talk. From here on my friend A. T. Walther is doing all the talking.

I am not a writer, as you can tell, nor do I have much in the way of an education, but I do remember a few stories about coyotes that happened over 40 years ago when I was small boy in the hills of Kendall co. Maybe you'd like to hear some.

Foggy Morning

I remember one foggy morning just about daylight, mama was up fixing breakfast when all hell broke loose down at a big liveoak tree where the chickens all roosted. They would fly down and grope around in the early morning half light before they could see good, and of course, the coyotes knew this. Mama looked out and called papa. She said the coyotes were catching the hens and tossing them in the air, and it looked for the world like they were tossing them to each other and back! Papa jumped out of bed, grabbed the old shotgun and rushed out. Of course, the coyotes heard the commotion at the house and disappeared in the fog. Papa fired a shot at them anyway and they all cut loose and howled back to let him know they were not hurt. We picked up seven or eight mangled chickens and I never saw the like of feathers on the ground. As far as we could tell, they hadn't eaten a bite of chicken. After that, papa kept a lantern burning under the tree at night to keep them away.

Another time, a neighbor of ours had a watermelon patch, and next to it on our side of the fence we also had watermelons, cantaloupes, and some things called kashaws or thereabouts — a gourd-like member of the pumpkin family, with a very hard, thick shell.

Ate Ripe Melons

The coyotes watched the patches very closely, and as soon as a melon got ripe they ate it, or as much of it as they wanted. And all the trap-setting and shotgun-watching papa and the neighbor did availed them nothing but ruin except on the kashaws! I'll bet there was some tall cussin' by coyotes about those things! They would drag them out to the full length of the vine and scar them all up with tooth marks but not one could they ever break through!

They were all we had to eat in the way of melons that year, and I often wished the coyotes had eaten them too. To me they were tasteless.

This same neighbor had a son a few years older than I who had been raised up among coyotes and was not afraid of them, but one evening about dusk he was coming home from the field and noticed a coyote following him. He thought nothing of it, but some time later he looked back and the coyote was still about the same distance away. He stopped and the coyote sat down and watched him! He was not exactly afraid, but dark was coming on and so he began to hurry some. The coyote trotted behind him all the way home. He ran into the house and came back out with a gun but hasn't seen that coyote since.

Fox Terrier

We had a little fox terrier named Bobbie that used to go with mama in the evening to get the cows, before I was old enough to take over that chore. He would bristle up and try to take after them when the coyotes would howl in the evening. Mama would have to make him stay back.

One evening it was darker than usual and the coyotes were a lot closer than usual, and little Bobbie could not take that insult. He simply would not stay back; he lit out and mama said she never heard such a blood curdling cry. A few seconds after she took out to help Bobbie, he met her. A coyote had grabbed him across the back of the loins and slashed a 2-inch gash on each side. After that Bobbie still went along but he never again had to be told to stay back.

A few years later a sheep man moved into the neighborhood, much to the delight of the coyote family. They really had some fun with that bunch of sheep! The owners shot a few coyotes and trapped some, but the sheep died in bunches.

Finally somebody sent off, away off, and got a hound dog. Paid $50 for him! A lot of money at that time. This hound dog was supposed to catch, kill, or chase out of the country any or all coyotes!

Hot After 'Em

They took him out and immediately he went bellowing over the hills. They could tell by the tracks that he was hot after coyotes. Very soon he was out of hearing, and he did not return. Two days later the man who had paid out the $50 and one of his men were talking at breakfast about the dog, wondering just how far he chased all the coyotes; maybe he would keep them bayed in a cave till he starved if they didn't find him in time.

One of the kids listening in said, "Do you mean the new dog, papa?"

"Yes, the new dog is lost after the coyotes."

"Oh, but papa, he is not lost; he is under my bed; he has been there for two days now!"

With a shuffling of chairs and boots the men rushed to the bed, and sure enough the $50 hound was under it. He was promptly dragged out and up behind the corral and shot.

Then came more sheep men, more fun for the coyotes. Then came the government trappers. Most of us had a good laugh at the idea that they could ever kill out all the coyotes in the hills of Kendall co. But kill them out they did.

At my father's funeral I talked to the young neighbor boy who had the coyote follow him home, both of us now gray-headed men. Neither of us could remember the last time we heard a coyote howl!

J. Frank Dobie

Interview That Might,

San Antonio Light
DEC 2 9 1957

But Wasn't Quite

In "Alarms and Diversions," by James Thurber, he has an imaginary interview between a newspaper reporter and a novelist. The novelist is so honest intentionally and his wife so revealing unintentionally that the reporter realizes he can get nothing he has found out past his editor. Not many editors are seeking realties. After driving a few hundred yards the reporter throws his copy paper, on which very little has been written, out the window, then his pencil. I suppose he got some more paper and pencils the next morning.

Dobie

I can't write the interview I'd like to write about some of the headliner people of 1957; the stuff would not pass. I'll hold myself down and be as deferential as possible to official conformity.

Reporter: Mr. Dobie, looking back over the year 1957, have you at any time felt outraged by a lack of honesty and common sense decency over the turn of events?

Dobie: I feel outraged almost as often as I go through a newspaper.

Reporter: Specify.

Dobie: No use specifying too much, but I'll give you an illustration. The other day I read that two or three gypsies had been arrested for telling fortunes without a license, or something like that, in east Austin. East Austin is metaphorically across the railroad tracks from anointed respectability.

Interesting Folk

Now gypsies are to me far more interesting people than most presidents of American chambers of commerce. One of my favorite writers, though he has never been a best seller, is George Borrow. He lived with the gypsies in England and was at home with them in Spain. His "Lavengro" and "Romany Rye" are classics. Of course, fortune-telling is pretty much bunk, but on Sundays if you fish around on a radio you can hear all sorts of montebank ignormuses prophesying about the human soul, about God, etc. Nobody ever arrests them. The cloth covers them. Why discriminate against some poor, but picturesque, palm-reading gipsy?

Reporter: Mr. Dobie, if you will allow me to say so, you are on a very minor subject.

Dobie: I know it. I'm minor myself. If you want somebody to talk as if he were the last elevation in importance, go to Washington and interview Mr. Dullness.

Reporter: We're here now, and history-laden 1957 is our subject.

Dobie: Gov. Price Daniel and his special session of the legislature nearly over-loaded poor old history-laden 1957, didn't they?

Reporter: Mr. Dobie, since you take so much pride in being outspoken, I hope you won't mind my remarking that sneers are also cheap. Here we are half way through our interview and we don't seem to have touched anything essential yet.

Essential Trio

Dobie: If you are bound to have essentials, it's hard to beat good meat, good drink, and love.

Reporter: You used to teach in the University of Texas.

Dobie: I can't get over the habit of teaching. It is often a form of pontificating.

Reporter: Suppose you pontificate on the effect that recent advances in science by Russia may have on education in this country.

Dobie: About everything worth saying on the subject has already been said. For a long generation now the professional educators in America have been holding school without much respect for "cultivated mind." All the public school superintendents and a great many college presidents hold degrees in education spelled with a capital E. They are johnny-on-the spot with Rotary club optimism, football teamwork, Dedication-to-America week, and such as that, but many of them don't know A from Adam's off ox when it comes to a real teacher of English, history, geology or any other branch of knowledge. Despite their degrees and positions, they are puerile-minded. Nearly all of them are stuffed with religiosity —which is not religion.

Reporter: Somebody told me you are against education spelled with a capital E.

Improvement Plan

Dobie: If the universities and colleges that are always crying for more money, cut out 85 per cent of their education courses and 98 per cent of their journalism courses, they would save an enormous amount of money and at the same time advance knowledge. Of course howls going up would make the mountain tops rock. The superfluous always howl when their milk is cut off.

For the academic year of 1957-1958 the education department of the University of Texas lists 351—three hundred and fifty-one—courses. They are all to make teachers more banal-minded. God pity our pupils! Don't blame them for not being educated.

Reporter: It is generally supposed that education and journalism are branches of knowledge.

Dobie: They are the chief practitioners in the unctuous elaboration of the obvious. Some high schools now allow pupils to choose between English and journalism. They choose journalism in order to avoid the mental work that all genuine education entails. Imagine being a writer in the English language without knowing basic English.

What a journalist needs is intelligence, an educated mind, and mastery of the craft of writing. He can't get any of these from courses in journalism. What a teacher needs, aside from having sense and character, is basic knowledge in history, science, languages, literature, the fundamentals! All a would-be teacher gets out of education is palaver—not basic knowledge.

Book Shortage

It is no wonder that a pupil can't get a book in a high school library, though he can ride to a circus in a big school bus that costs more than all the books put together in the school library.

A lot of the books adopted by the state for school readers can't be read by people with civilized tastes. They are adopted because their publishers know how to get around among the official adopters of texts. Most of these official adopters are no more concerned with cultivated minds, stimulated imaginations and civilized tastes than the average governor's appointee to some board dealing with education is.

Reporter: Mr. Dobie, if you were dictator of Texas for a 2-year term, what would you do?

Dobie: I'd start in appointing men and women with disciplined and cultivated minds to positions of responsibility so far as education is concerned.

I'd do what I could to restore democracy—especially through an enlightened press.

Reporter: Of course you know you'll never be dictator.

Dobie: Nor have influence otherwise. Anyhow, we can drink to free minds—and the only minds that are free are those that know. Here's to life!

J. Frank Dobie

Sunday S. Antonio Light 10-20-57

Goat 'Pelts' Disturbing to Easterner

By J. FRANK DOBIE

"One time out at Sanderson," Roy Bedichek said, "I went into a restaurant for supper and right away an easterner-looking feller sat down at the table across from me. There wasn't any other place for him to sit. The room was crowded and one woman was doing all the waiting. Her face was peach red from so much exercise and she kept wiping the sweat out of her eyes.

Dobie

"When the feller next to me gave his order, he started to ask the waitress something but she was off before he could say scat. When she came with his plate after a while, he popped out. 'Say,' he said, 'what are the little animals with chin whiskers I saw over the fence out here on the road into Sanderson?'

" 'Goats,' she replied and was somewhere else.

"In a minute she was back with his coffee. 'People raise goats out here?' he asked.

" 'Yes,' and she was off again.

"Before long she had to come to the table next to ours, and I could see she was trying to avoid his eye, but she couldn't avoid his voice, raised now to make up for distance. 'What they raise them for?' he asked.

" 'The hair.'

"She was moving off, but he had time for one more word. 'Hair?' he called out.

" 'Yes, mohair.'

Final Question

"It was a good while before she got within voice reach again. The feller was as good at eating as he was at asking questions. He got up to go. It was hard to tell whether his final sentence was question or assertion. 'You mean they take the pelts off the goats and sell them?'

"As he stepped out the door, the waitress addressed the room: 'He thinks people skin goats to get their hair.' "

"Sanderson always makes me think of the Lost Nigger Mine," I said. "I was around that country a lot while I was writing the story—in 'Coronado's Children.' Sanderson is where the Reagan brothers got supplies, and where the Seminole who was working for them down on the Rio Grande came after he found the gold. He gave a chunk of the ore for assaying to Lock Campbell, and the prospectors Lock Campbell spent the rest of his life grubstaking all took off from that place. Lost mine hunters think I ought to know something not in the book, and they come to see me for a little more information before they head for Sanderson and the rocks and the chin-whiskered goats on beyond.

"Not many forms of rumor grow faster than rumor about gold. I can't remember the name of the man who told me this absurdity a few years back. I'll just call him San Antonio, for that's where he lives. He said he'd been out west and on the way back stopped at a filling station in Sanderson to have his car greased and the oil changed. During the wait he saw a man sitting down on the sidewalk in the shade and looking as if he wanted to talk. Just to pass the time, San Antonio says to him, 'Do people still come through here looking for the Lost Nigger Mine?'

Keep Looking

" 'They keep looking all right,' the Sanderson man replied, 'but there's just one person in the world knows where it is and he won't tell.'

" 'Who's that?'

" 'Frank Dobie.'

" 'Frank Dobie?' San Antonio half exploded. 'He wrote the story of the Lost Nigger gold all right, but he never claimed to know where it is.'

" 'Oh, no, he's too slick for that,' the Sanderson man nodded, looking as wise as a tree full of owls. 'Look! I guess you know how he got fired from the University of Texas and now he has no visible means of support. What I'm telling you is he's got an invisible means of support. Plenty of people have seen him come through here, but nobody has ever been able to trail him to the gold. He gets to it, loads his old car full and then leaves in the night. He'll be gone for months at a stretch, but every time he gets hard up he comes down, slips back with a load of the loot and sells it to a bank in San Antonio—or maybe it's in Austin.' "

Bedichek can philosophize on anything. "The real riches in this world," he announced, "are in the mind."

"Is that Plato?"

"Not by itself. The philosophy of Plato can't be pinched down to matchhead size.

Election Tale

"One time out in Amarillo they were having a prohibition election. The pros imported a high-powered speaker to convert the heathen and packed the biggest gathering place in town with an audience. This speaker quoted poetry and displayed all sorts of diagrams showing the effects of alcohol on the human organs. Then he unrolled a long linen chart and hung it up on the wall to demonstrate the waste of money on alcohol. The figgers and letters on this chart were boxcar-size so that they could be read half a block away.

"But the speaker was adding emphasis by reading them out in a loud voice. Up at the top were so many millions and billions spent each year in America for food, so many for clothes, so many on churches, so many on education, and on through the catalogue. The figures were soaring and the speaker's voice soared to a climax as he read out the billions and millions spent on whisky.

" 'And, by God, it's worth it,' a mighty voice rang out. It was the voice of Buttermilk Jones. The announcement of his sense of values came in a way that absolutely killed the speaker's facts and figures."

"Why," Wilson Hudson now asked, "did they call him Buttermilk Jones?"

"Because he never drank buttermilk, I guess," Bedi answered.

"This putting a high value on whisky makes me think of an incident during prohibition days," I said. "Not long after the end of World War I, an Englishman and a Texan were partners trading in oil lease and royalties out in the Burkburnett field. Some bootleggers were making more than owners of oil wells. One day a big well came in on land controlled by the partners; within 15 minutes they cleared $100,000 by selling just a fraction of what they owned, and they decided right there to celebrate the occasion.

"The Englishman rustled around and found a fifth of bonded Canadian Club whisky for sale at $50. He bought it and took it to their room. He opened it and poured the contents over ice. Raising his glass, he said, 'Here's to whisky!—the only time in my life I ever paid what it's worth.' "

STAR TELEGRAM JUN 26 1960

Tired of Pretense

'Student Researchers' Don't Study or Search

BY J. FRANK DOBIE.

I am so old-fashioned that I still call a memorial park a graveyard and had just as soon deal with a real estate agent as with a realtor. According to all accepted definitions, a student (the word being derived from Latin "studere," to study) is one who studies. Until recently attendants of public schools were called pupils. Now they call them selves students, which is about like calling canned corn home cooking.

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I used to answer all requests from these so-called students. That was partly out of appreciation for what I took to be interest, partly out of generosity and partly out of ignorance. Not long ago I got fed up on pretense and a certain demanding attitude. Now, except for an occasional letter that shows intelligence and sincerity, I pay no attention to these high school demands. This is a fair sample of the theme-writing demander: "I am a student doing research work on one of your books." Notice that pretense word "research." Notice, also, how advanced the research is. "I myself am reading the book at the present. I would like to know what you want the reader to obtain from it. I would like to know what was your reason for writing the book and any other information you would like to volunteer. I would like to know what you intended to contribute to the individual who read the book." These last sentences were manifestly inspired by some teacher with an overdose of education. (It wouldn't take more than one semester hour in education to give an overdose.)

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CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS.

Here's another illustration — from a town in Illinois. "My teacher called for volunteers to write to one of the authors who has a selection in our textbook and ask that person for a small snapshot of himself. It will help my grade and so please send it."

Here is a sample from Maryland. "I am required to do a research paper for this semester and have decided to write it on different cattle brands of the Old West. Would it be possible for you to send me the sources from which you obtained your information for your essay on that subject? It would be helpful if I could have this information as quick as I can as I must begin my theme soon." I rather like the honesty of this pupil advancing from "research paper" to simple "theme."

Hardly one letter out of scores of such requests contains a stamp or self-addressed envelope for reply. Why devote energy to morons instead of giving it to thinkers? Example of moronic request: "I am writing on you for my research paper and I would like some information on your life and your plans for the future. P. S. I would like a picture to go with my research paper."

It seems to me that more high school attendants ask what my hobbies are than any other question. Hobby has come to mean, as I understand it, anything you are interested in. A pupil from El Campo wants material on "the governors' wives of Texas." Of course, all governors and lesser and upper "servants of the people," as they call themselves, would answer such a letter. All flunkies of television fame would answer such a letter. I'm not out after votes.

Next to "research papers" come "projects," as illustrated in this: "I'm doing a term project in Texas history on some of the interesting early ranches in Texas. I want to find some material about them and anything you have to send would be very much appreciated." A writer is supposed to have a free supply of chamber of commerce handouts. Too many American writers are competing with corporation departments of public relations.

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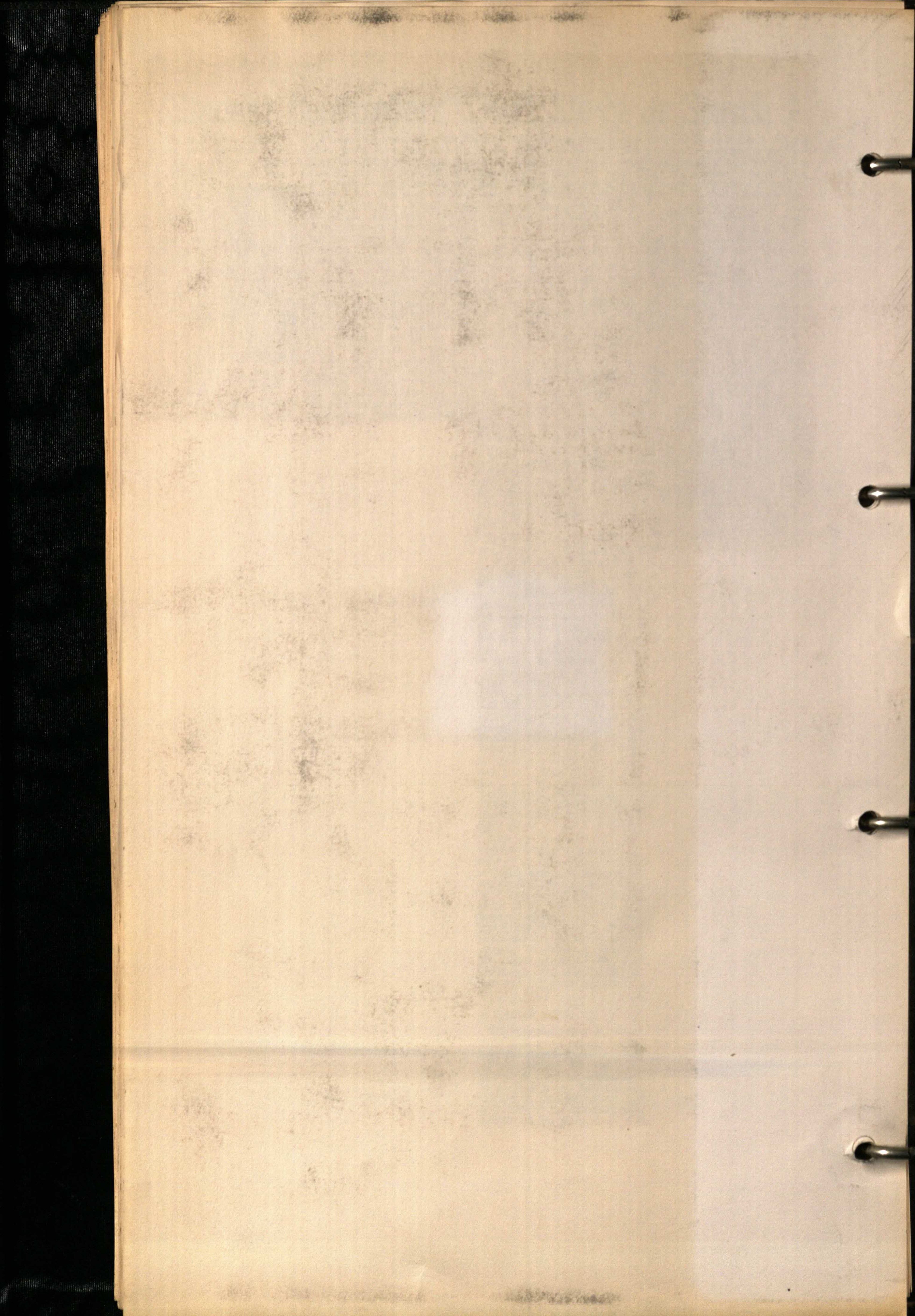
PEDOGGIE IDEA.

The queerest batch of letters from high school pupils I've received is made up of 19 handwritten missives received from Milwaukee, Ore., all postmarked March 2, 5 p. m., 1960, and all dated Feb. 19, 1960, except one dated Feb. 18 and one dated Feb. 20 and two not dated at all. All the writers said their teacher had read them parts of my book "Tongues Of The Monte" and all told me the book would be improved if I simplified it for sixth graders—another peedoggie idea.

I don't know how many times I've told pupils that if any writer has any significance that significance lies in what he has written, and that the best and only honest preparation for a theme on him lies in reading his books. One woman became highly incensed because I gave that answer to her daughter. She intimated that I am a brute for not helping daughters write themes even on such a poor subject as myself.

Of course, I get lots of letters that make me feel good clear down to the bottom of my toes, but to the devil with these people who want somebody else to do their work, and have no interest in school work beyond grades. Also, to the devil with teachers who sic their pupils on writers. If Shakespeare were living now, he'd be snowed under with requests from authors of eighth grade "research papers" demanding to know how many children he had and what his idea was in writing "Romeo and Juliet."



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