

# The Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record



*Vox audita perdit, littera scripta manet.*

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and  
Biographical Record*

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE  
HISTORY OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS  
AND THE GULF COAST

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

In this issue of the *Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record*, John Storey examines how the congregation and spiritual leaders of Central Baptist, Port Arthur, Texas, overcame moments of internal discord and endured the adversity of the Great Depression and World War II. Cassandre Durso explains how economic and political leaders of Texas and Louisiana turned to Italians to solve a labor shortage in the aftermath of Reconstruction. She contrasts the under-studied Southern agricultural immigrant experience with the more familiar histories of Italians in the urban-industrial North. William Grace contributes to the "Primary Sources" section with an overview of the recent efforts of the Tyrrell Historical Library of Beaumont, Texas, to increase the online accessibility of its valuable research materials. This number of the *Record* also debuts a new section, "Museum Corner," that will feature the unique exhibits and holdings of museums in the region of the Gulf and Southeast Texas. Shannon Harris of the Museum of the Gulf Coast describes how the convergence of cultures in Port Arthur led to the rise of Zydeco music and the development of the frottoir as a musical instrument. Margaret Parker and Ann Creswell continue their vital work with the memorials and proceedings of the Society. I extend my gratitude to all those who helped bring together this volume of the *Record*. Thanks to Ron Avery of R & A Supply Co., Beaumont, Texas, for his expertise and patience while working with a first-time editor, and to Stephanie Soule, archivist at the Tyrrell Historical Library, for her generous assistance. In the History Department at Lamar University, Cassandre Durso, Patty Renfro, Mary Scheer, and John Storey provided crucial support. I owe a special debt to Casey Diaz for her invaluable production design and to Robert Robertson for his dedication to, and enthusiasm for, the history of Southeast Texas.

Jimmy L. Bryan Jr., Editor  
*Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record*  
Lamar University History Department

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# BORN OF DISCORD

*The Origins and Early Years of Central  
Baptist Church of Port Arthur*

JOHN W. STOREY\*

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By 1912, when Central Baptist Church was founded, Arthur Stilwell's dream of Port Arthur as a tropical paradise nestled beside the clear waters of Sabine Lake had long since faded, forever altered by the Spindletop gusher just south of Beaumont on January 10, 1901. Spindletop revolutionized the petroleum industry. Major oil companies quickly emerged, pipelines soon tied Port Arthur to the giant gusher and by 1901 Gulf and by 1902 Texaco had bustling refineries in the city. From a sleepy community of about 900 in 1900, Port Arthur was a thriving port of 7,663 by 1910 and 50,902 by 1930, its future secured by an expanding petroleum industry. Of course, a surging population composed in part of tough roughnecks and roustabouts and slick promoters looking to make a quick buck presented a mighty challenge to the godly, who saw in the proliferation of local saloons and brothels proof of Satan's power. The need for spiritual nurture was obvious, and the faithful of numerous denominations responded. Sizeable numbers of Catholics, Baptists, and Methodists, both blacks and whites, and smaller groups of Mormons,

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\* John W. Storey retired from the History Department at Lamar University in 2011 after forty three years, nineteen of which he served as chair. He is a distinguished scholar of American religious history having written or edited numerous, award-winning books, including *Texas Baptist Leadership and Social Christianity, 1900-1980* (1986), *Southern Baptists of Southeast Texas, 1888-1988* (Co-author, 1988), *The Religious Right* (Co-author, 1995), *Religion and Politics* (Co-author, 2001), and *Twentieth-Century Texas: A Social and Cultural History* (Co-editor, 2008). The East Texas Historical Association named Storey Educator of the Year for 2007, and he has received the Regents Merit Award and has been named Regents Professor and Distinguished Faculty Lecturer. He is also the immediate past editor of the *Record*.

Jews, and Lutherans resided in Southeast Texas by 1900. Established in 1897, the first worship facility in Port Arthur was non-denominational and welcomed all comers. On September 21, 1902, First Baptist Church was officially constituted, and from that body Central Baptist emerged a decade later, the result of internal discord.<sup>1</sup>

Congregational autonomy has been a hallmark of the Baptist faith for centuries. Unlike Catholic, or Episcopal, or Presbyterian bodies, Baptists have no hierarchical centralized authority. Every local congregation is an independent and democratically self-governing entity, selecting its own officers and calling its own pastor. Democracy can be messy, of course, and often is in Baptist fellowships. Differences of opinion over such matters as authority (who runs the church?), leadership style, declining attendance, theology, and even “poor” sermons (definitely a subjective judgment) can get a preacher fired, or precipitate a disruptive split in the congregation itself. Facilitating this latter prospect is the ease of establishing a new Baptist church, as exemplified by the formation and early years of Central Baptist Church. Born of discord, Central Baptist also endured discord, a pattern common in Baptist life.

While splits in Baptist congregations are routine, breakups led by the pastor himself are somewhat more exceptional. Such was Central’s origins. Joseph Warren Bates became the pastor of Port Arthur’s First Baptist congregation just before Christmas 1911. Ten months later, October 1912, he and fourteen other malcontents bolted from the fold, moved two blocks to Procter Street, and established Central Baptist Church. In the words of one of Central’s future pastors, “there was no justification for” doing this, certainly no justification for planting a new church so close to an existing one. So why did they do it? Central Baptist records offer no explanation, but minutes of the local Southeast Texas Baptist Association (SETBA) disclose that a controversy of some sort definitely existed. Unfortunately, associational records shed no light on the nature of the conflict, leaving one to speculate, to draw tentative conclusions from suggestive clues.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the problem was nothing more than personality. In the four years immediately prior to coming to Port Arthur, Bates had pastored three other congregations for relatively brief periods, a hint perhaps of a man difficult to get along with. It seems unlikely the association would have addressed a personality dispute in a local church, however, and brief tenures were rather com-

mon in an age when many Baptist congregations still extended “annual calls,” the practice of hiring a preacher for one year, then on the anniversary date each year thereafter deciding whether to extend the call or find a more suitable preacher. It was a practice that not only enhanced congregational control over the preacher, but also made for brief pastorates. Without entirely dismissing personality, theology most probably was the cause of the rift at First Baptist. A New Yorker schooled at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, the well-educated Bates was no doubt familiar with John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) and Cyrus I. Scofield (1843-1921), two erstwhile lawyers who had left the bar for the cloth. Both men popularized dispensational premillennialism, a gloomy, apocalyptic scenario in which history was divided into a series of epochs, or dispensations, leading to such end-time matters as the Second Coming and the Battle of Armageddon.<sup>3</sup>

In post-Civil War America, the Age of Charles Darwin, Darby found a receptive audience, particularly among Presbyterians and Baptists of a fundamentalists bent who took refuge in his literalism and certitude. From 1882 to 1895 and again from 1902 to 1907 Scofield pastored First Congregational Church of Dallas, and in 1909 he published *The Scofield Reference Bible*, which became one of the most influential sources of dispensational premillennialism in the twentieth century. J. Frank Norris, the controversial pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, whose views on the subject evolved in the early twentieth century, was probably the best known proponent of dispensational premillennialism in Texas.<sup>4</sup>

Although no evidence links Bates to either Darby or Scofield, or, for that matter, Norris, it is nonetheless a plausible assumption that he was familiar with them, for he was fascinated with biblical prophecy and eschatology, or things pertaining to the end of time. Involving conflicting interpretations of the Book of Revelation, as well as sharp disagreements over the Rapture and the exact number of dispensations, dispensational premillennialism could be divisive. In January 1916, for instance, a letter to the SETBA accused Bates and Central Baptist of not being “in accord with Baptist teachings” and of promoting practices “contrary to the New Testament.” Since the letter offered no specifics, the association refused to investigate, which suggests it placed no stock in the charges. Even so, at least some fellow Baptists apparently took ex-





The Rev. Joseph Warren Bates. Some of his contemporaries thought he bore a slight resemblance to former President Thodore Roosevelt. *Photo courtesy of Central Baptist Church Archives, Port Arthur, Texas.*



ception to Bates's teachings, and in all likelihood such was the case in October 1912 when he and his small band abandoned First Baptist.<sup>5</sup>

Regardless of the precise cause of the split, the new congregation got off to a good start. Harmony prevailed, at least for the moment. They agreed on immediate organizational needs as well as long-term religious objectives, notably a commitment to advance the Good News. The church acquired property on Procter Street and constructed a simple, 30'x40' wooden structure. The membership quickly grew to forty. A fellowship born of discord, however, was soon overtaken by discord. The controversy centered around the pastor and the church clerk Russell H. Dunn, a charter member from whom the group had purchased the Procter Street property. In October 1913, to help pay Bates's annual salary of \$600.00, Central appealed to the SETBA for financial help, a common practice for fledgling congregations. The association responded favorably, but for some reason, Dunn objected, and in January 1914, he forwarded a message to the association's executive board asserting "that in his opinion our church needed a new pastor more than financial aid."<sup>6</sup>

A stunned congregation demanded an explanation. Why did Dunn oppose financial help from the association? Why would he make such a remark about Bates? Dunn's only answer was hardly satisfactory. It was in the best interest of the church, declared he, not to seek financial aid. Events swiftly spiraled downward. On Sunday morning, February 15, 1914, after touting the progress made by the group under his leadership, Bates resigned, declaring that recent developments had made it "unwise" for him "to continue as pastor." In April 1914 Dunn and his wife withdrew from Central, along with several others, including a number of charter members. The association attempted to calm the waters at Central, but its effort failed.<sup>7</sup>

With its survival in question by mid-1914, the struggling congregation turned once again to Bates, who had retained the confidence of a majority of the faithful. Thus, in February 1915 he resumed his pastorate at Central, and a number of charter members returned. In March the congregation relocated to a more promising residential neighborhood near the center of the city. By 1919 the membership numbered about sixty and was steadily growing. Now fully staffed, including a pianist, the church boasted solid Sunday School, Training Union, and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) programs.<sup>8</sup>

By the usual material standard, Bates's second stint as Central's pastor was a success. Bates certainly thought it had been. In July 1919, with obvious pride, he recounted his achievements: Central's total membership had quadrupled; it occupied "a corner lot in a most desirable location"; it had paid the mortgage on its main structure; and its financial condition was good. Yet, for all that, Bates was never far, it seems, from a certain amount of discord. In July 1919 one of his deacons informed him "that members of another Baptist church of this city" wanted to unite with Central "upon a change in the pastorate, satisfactory to them." In light of that, Bates decided "it best to tender" his "resignation as pastor of the Central Baptist Church of this city." Whether salary had anything to do with this second resignation is unclear, but it must have grated on Bates somewhat, for another achievement to which he wryly alluded in July 1919 was that the membership was now "able to support a pastor." That remark obviously was intended to chide a congregation that had often failed to pay Bates's salary on time, or even to pay the full amount he had coming. At the time of his resignation Bates was owed \$749.00 in back pay, roughly a year's salary. With customary nonchalance, the congregation voted to pay toward that amount "any sum" it "had to spare." In other words, certain financial obligations had to be met, such as utility bills and mortgage payments, but the preacher's salary could wait. Within weeks of leaving Central the 42-year-old Bates received a unanimous call to a Baptist congregation in Beeville, near Corpus Christi.<sup>9</sup>

To be near two daughters teaching in the local high school, the elderly Daniel I. Smyth moved from Grandview, Texas, to Port Arthur in October 1919. Almost 79 years old, he was a distinguished educator-preacher who counted among his friends such notable Texas Baptists as Dr. James B. Gambrell, who had held several positions of responsibility in the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), Dr. J. B. Tidwell, head of the Bible Department at Baylor University, and Dr. George W. Truett, the renown pastor of First Baptist, Dallas. Baylor University had acknowledged Smyth's long service to Baptist life in Texas by awarding him an honorary doctorate in July 1916. Arriving in Port Arthur not long after Bates's departure, Smyth appeared to be heaven sent. In any event, the opportunity was too good to let slip away, and in December 1919 Central called the elderly preacher as its interim pastor. Six months later he accepted the position fulltime. Although illness forced his res-

ignation in December 1921, he had restored calm and purpose to the troubled fellowship. Membership had grown, totaling almost ninety by May 1920 and requiring an enlargement to the congregation's building. Smyth's successor, Cornelius Bowles, dubbed "the boy preacher" in the local newspaper, was in his early twenties. Lasting only from May 1922 to October 1922, his brief stay was significant primarily for initiating a fundraising drive for a new building.<sup>10</sup>

In January 1923 the Rev. Travis Edwin "T. E." Cannedy, the longest serving of all Central's pastors, took the helm and navigated the congregation through some of the more tumultuous times in American life—the boom-and-bust '20s, the Great Depression, and World War II. Of Scotch-Irish ancestry and the oldest of thirteen children, Cannedy was born on March 4, 1872, in rural Hunt County in northeast Texas. Quite young when his mother died, he was raised by "the best of stepmothers." Unlike the Apostle Paul, his conversion was anything but a Damascus-road experience. He could "never . . . tell exactly when and where," but nonetheless was "persuaded" in his "mind" of his change of heart. Accordingly, he joined the Elm Creek Missionary Baptist Church on Wednesday night, September 11, 1889, was baptized a month later, enrolled in Baylor University in 1891, preached his first sermon at a Waco jail, and was licensed to preach on January 1, 1892. Perhaps because of the undramatic nature of his conversion, Cannedy was soon engulfed by profound doubt. Was his salvation real? Had he been saved? Unable to answer such questions unequivocally, he refused to be ordained, surrendered his license, set aside the Bible, dropped out of Baylor, turned to skepticism, and even contemplated suicide. But the storm lifted. Further reading of the Scriptures satisfied him that not everyone had to have a Paul-like experience. For some, the change came gradually, but was no less genuine than Paul's. Moreover, Cannedy concluded that to doubt one's conversion was actually evidence of conversion, for if one had not been converted there would be nothing to doubt.<sup>11</sup>

Assurance regained, Cannedy returned to the fold, and ordination followed on Sunday, June 3, 1894. For six years he pastored small rural congregations and taught school, then headed to Louisville, Kentucky, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In September 1905 armed now with bachelors and masters degrees in theology, he returned to Texas and for the next twelve years pastored congregations in Dallas, Graham, Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, and Seymour, and one in Oklahoma City. In November 1917 he was called to

Magnolia Avenue Baptist Church in Beaumont, a discouraged congregation that had been pastorless for quite awhile. He rejuvenated that body, gave it a renewed sense of mission, and in so doing established himself as a leader in the SETBA. It was no surprise, therefore, when the association selected him as its missionary in November 1920, a position that enabled him to preach in every church in the association and to thoroughly familiarize himself with Southeast Texas. At almost 49 years of age, Cannedy was a man in his full maturity, and he was bringing that experience to Central Baptist Church. It was he who put the church on solid ground and made it one of the leading fellowships in southeast Texas.<sup>12</sup>

In Cannedy, Central got a pastor of definite and strong opinions. Remembered more as a teacher than a preacher, not particularly dynamic but informative, Cannedy regarded “the pulpit” as the “preacher’s throne” and the worship service as a “sacred hour.” His messages were not intended to make people feel good, or to assure them that prosperity awaited the righteous, *a la* many contemporary ministers such as Joel Osteen who attract throngs with a prosperity gospel. In Cannedy’s opinion, preachers who sought to entertain by telling “dog stories” and “sweet little essays of flowery bouquets” reduced their congregations to little more than “Admiration Societies.” That did not happen at Central. Cannedy’s sermons focused on the “fundamentals of God’s Holy Work,” matters of repentance, grace, regeneration, and justification. Among his sermons were “Jesus, The World’s Teacher,” dealing with a practical application of the Sermon on the Mount in a modern world; “Loving and Forgiving,” focusing on the benefits of forgiveness; and “Gratitude and Courage,” calling attention to “the comforts and enjoyments His church has afforded us.” This no nonsense demeanor in the pulpit did not mean Cannedy lacked a sense of humor. On the contrary, his weekly columns in the church newsletter disclosed a playful wit. In early 1941, for example, he diagnosed an “illness” afflicting all church goers at one time or another, *Morbus Sabbaticus*. It came on suddenly just before church time, never lasted more than twenty-four hours, usually going away quickly once the worship services ended.<sup>13</sup>

In the structure of a Baptist church the deaconry has considerable responsibility. As Cannedy put it, “the pastor and the deacons” were “related as mutual helpers,” and the “right kind of deacon” was “often the pastor’s best friend, as well as an honor to his church.” But what was the “right kind of deacon”? On



The Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Travis Edwin (T. E.) Cannedy and daughter Kathryn. *Photo courtesy of Central Baptist Church Archives, Port Arthur, Texas.*

that Cannedy had strong feelings, for he was convinced many church problems resulted from deacons overstepping their authority. With the election of a slate of deacons scheduled for the spring 1929, Cannedy offered advice to the congregation. "These men should be sound in Baptist doctrine," said the preacher, and to ensure that outcome, he pointed the members to Acts 6 and I Timothy 3. Culture as much as scripture shaped Cannedy's view, however, for he elaborated that men who had "the habitual habit of swearing ('cussing'), drinking whiskey, beer or home brew, card playing, dancing, attending Sunday picture shows, hunting and fishing on Sundays, or otherwise unnecessarily desecrating the Lord's day" should not be ordained. And do not overlook "the suitability of their wives," he added.<sup>14</sup>

In May 1929 the Central Baptist leadership adopted a lengthy resolution outlining what they expected of deacons. Cannedy's influence is unmistakable. Acknowledging that only the pastor and deacons could serve as "Scriptural officers of a New Testament Church," it declared that the deaconry should "reinforce the pastor, . . . relieving him of much service," that deacons, as officers and servants, were deserving of respect but should not "arrogate to themselves more authority than . . . justified by the Scriptures," and that any deacon who became "so out of harmony with the pastor or the Church as to obstruct the Church's work," thus becoming "a vexation and hindrance rather than help," should resign.<sup>15</sup>

Absent from this policy statement was any suggestion that the deaconry was open to either women or divorced men. Though not surprising, this is revealing. Enormous social changes regarding women, sexual attitudes, and divorce were occurring in the 1920s, changes for the most part that Cannedy and his congregation found unappealing. In the later twentieth century many Baptist congregations would open the deaconry to both women and divorced men, but in the age of flappers and soaring divorce rates, Cannedy and Centralites stood adamant against such changes in tradition. Cannedy and most members of the fellowship were religious fundamentalists, Christians at odds with much of the intellectual and social ferment of that era. But fundamentalists were not all the same. Years ago historian Richard Hofstadter drew a useful distinction between "militant" and "serene" fundamentalists. Whereas the former endeavored to root out dissent and impose upon all a narrow, rigid orthodoxy, the latter were comfortable in their beliefs and had no quarrel with

people of opposing views. Cannedy and most Centralites were serene fundamentalists, or, to use a term with less pejorative baggage, they were evangelical conservatives. Cannedy said as much in a 1936 radio sermon. Central Baptist was an “old-fashioned” church, he declared, and there was “no modernism in her pulpit.” Neither women nor divorced men would be allowed to become deacons at Central Baptist, but the congregation was on no crusade to make that the standard for all churches.<sup>16</sup>

Music was another subject on which Cannedy minced no words. “The pastor in his pulpit is responsible for the direction of the entire service, including the singing,” he asserted, adding: “This part of the service should never be surrendered to irresponsible choirs.” Even “the choice of the hymns should rest with the pastor” so as to ensure that “the service of song” harmonized “with all other parts of the service.” Too many worship services, Cannedy insisted, had been marred by “improper . . . introductory hymns” and “inappropriate invitation” selections. In short, music should enhance the sermon, which Cannedy considered the focal point of worship. Central always had someone to lead congregational singing, play the instruments, and conduct choir rehearsal, but during Cannedy’s tenure the congregation never had a music program as such headed by a professional whose sole responsibility was music. The closest the congregation came to that was with the arrival of S. W. Cowles in January 1928, but even he was a combination education/music leader. By every indication, Cannedy and Cowles got along fine, although the latter stayed only ten months. The CBC Minutes of October 1928 recorded that Cowles’s “services with us” had been “quite satisfactory and harmonious,” noting that he had “organized and built up a most splendid and efficient choir.” One can only wonder if that laudatory declaration told the whole story.<sup>17</sup>

While local congregational autonomy was always paramount with Cannedy, he was also a man of broad denominational vision, one who always looked outward from the congregation to the world at large. This became apparent as soon as he arrived in Port Arthur. “The policy of this church and pastor,” he announced, was “to have a part in every single thing the denomination stands for.” Accordingly, he not only attended local associational meetings, statewide gatherings of the BGCT, and national conclaves of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), he constantly encouraged members to do the same. And he often boasted that Central had been better represented at this or that gathering



than any other congregation in the association. Commenting on an area-wide meeting of the WMU, for instance, he proudly noted that Central's "report compared [*sic*] favorably with that of other *progressive* churches." Cannedy's observation was justified, for abundant evidence confirms that Central certainly was a *progressive* church in terms of contributions to missions, evidenced by support of the new Cooperative Program.<sup>18</sup>

Begun in 1925, the Cooperative Program was an arrangement whereby the state conventions cooperated with the SBC in funding all denominational causes, those of the states as well as the national body. Central generously supported the program, and according to the pastor "usually" led "in denominational gifts, in proportion to its numerical and financial ability." Typical was the church's 1928 budget. Aside from salaries of the pastor (\$2,400.00) and the educational director (\$1,800.00), the greatest amount—\$800.00—went to the Cooperative Program. On top of this, Central routinely gave additional amounts for local and state causes, enabling Cannedy to remark in early 1943 that his congregation "led most of the churches of the association in their Home mission offerings." To be sure, the wealthier flocks at First Baptist, Port Arthur, and First Baptist, Beaumont, gave more in total dollar amounts, but none was more generous than Central in proportion to its financial resources.<sup>19</sup>

Central Baptist, however, was the undisputed leader in the Vacation Bible School (VBS) movement. The roots of this summer program for children ages three to sixteen extend to the late nineteenth century, but not until 1910 or so did it gain much momentum. Seeing the schools as an arm of missions, Presbyterians and Northern Baptists led the way. The SBC embraced the movement in September 1924, and in 1925 some 300 Baptist churches across the South held VBS. While the primary purpose was Bible study and worship, VBS also allowed time for recreation, handcrafts, and refreshments in order to draw the youngsters in and hold their attention. Central was the only church in the SETBA, and one of only three statewide, to hold a school in 1925. Mrs. Annie Gee Cannedy, the preacher's wife, was instrumental in getting it started, to the delight of her husband, who was convinced kids learned more about the Bible in a two-week VBS than in the rest of the Sunday School year. Attendance waxed and waned, but an average of about 200 youngsters usually enrolled. With understandable pride, Cannedy boasted in 1942 that Central was "the only church in Texas" which had "sponsored eighteen successive vacation



Built in 1924 on the corner of 9th Street and DeQueen Boulevard, this was home to Central Baptist Church during the Cannedy era. *Photo courtesy of Central Baptist Church Archives, Port Arthur, Texas.*

schools, according to the denominational Sunday School Board's Plan."<sup>20</sup> He was correct.

Of all groups during the Cannedy era, the WMU was the most vigorous and the most involved in every aspect of church life. From supporting missionaries and assisting the poor to ministering to children and promoting stewardship, the ladies were not just involved they were often in the lead. Organized support of missionary endeavors by Baptist women dates from the early 1800s, as local groups in South Carolina and other states raised money for missions and other worthy causes. By the mid-1880s Texas Baptist women were similarly engaged, and in 1888 the SBC established the WMU as an auxiliary. Quite a few men at the time had serious qualms about these women's groups, fearing they would embolden the sisters to encroach upon the brothers' prerogatives. But many other men, pastors and laity, welcomed the ladies. Cannedy, whose wife was a prominent statewide leader in the Texas WMU, was among this latter group. Lamenting the poor attendance "of the brethren" at a prayer and

missions service in 1940, he observed: "How the Lord's work would suffer, but for the good women." How right he was!<sup>21</sup>

While their fundraising efforts are well known, the ladies did far more than that. Motivated by the belief that Christian *involvement* flowed from Christian *understanding*, the WMU devoted considerable attention to education, an endeavor Cannedy heartily supported. Over the years the women offered hundreds of study courses for the congregation on such topics as "Winning to Christ," "Teaching Methods in the New Graded Literature," "You Can Learn to Teach," "What Baptists Believe," "The Churches of the New Testament," and "Old Testament Studies." The Home Mission Board, or the Sunday School Board of the SBC, usually provided the literature, and members of Central who had already completed a certain number of courses, local pastors, missionaries on furlough, and leaders from the state office in Dallas generally did the teaching. Central Baptist definitely had one of the stronger WMU educational programs in the SETBA, and it bothered the pastor that more members did not take advantage of the opportunities afforded them. The pastor's own personal quest for education had led him to obtain a doctorate from Pike's Peak Bible Seminary in Colorado in 1942. Toward the end of his ministry at Central, it worried Cannedy that too many Centralites knew little about the Old Testament and the Prophets and even less about "our peculiarities as Baptists." Israel had perished for lack of knowledge, Cannedy asserted, and "so it is . . . today that so many of our people . . . are perishing (drying up) religiously and denominationally for lack of knowledge, or vision." If true, it certainly was no fault of the WMU.<sup>22</sup>

His many accomplishments notwithstanding, even Cannedy encountered discord. In 1928-1929 Central Baptist endured an unhappy split. Some members had come to believe that the pastor, then in his mid-50s, was too old. A younger man was needed. There was "talk" behind the pastor's back. Aware of this, a weeping Cannedy called out his detractors in an emotional Sunday morning worship service on December 9, 1928. He asked for a vote of confidence, whereupon the entire choir and a good many in the congregation—seventy-four in all—walked out of the building. But the vast majority stood with the pastor. According to the CBC Minutes, "a large . . . and representative" cross section of the membership "was called in special conference, and a motion carried, with none voting to the contrary, expressing the church's

satisfaction with the pastor's leadership and desiring a continuation of his services as pastor." In early 1929 an additional thirty or so members withdrew and joined the previous group in the newly established Fourth Avenue Baptist.<sup>23</sup>

Considering that the choir figured prominently in this matter, and that former music director Cowles later became pastor of Fourth Avenue, one has to wonder if something more than the pastor's age was behind this division. The episode obviously bothered Cannedy for a long time thereafter. On the occasion of his tenth anniversary at Central in January 1933, he reflected that the decade had brought "trials and discouragements," adding: "The enemy hath sown tares among us," but "we" have been "triumphant" through "our Lord Jesus Christ." One of those tares no doubt was the split of 1928 and 1929. And as late as 1942 Cannedy wrote that "the large majority" of the "white Baptist churches" in Port Arthur had been "constituted in a wrong spirit." Was he thinking of Fourth Avenue Baptist?<sup>24</sup>

Popular mythology notwithstanding, the Great Depression took its toll in Southeast Texas. Many old-timers whose memories have grown fainter insist the region escaped the harshness of the depression because of the petro-chemical industry. Facts tell a different story. Across the area prices and wages slumped, unemployment rose, working hours decreased, businesses went under, farmers' profits evaporated, and relief agencies proved inadequate to the needs of the destitute. The closing of Kirby Lumber Company in late 1930 created a desperate economic situation in the northern reaches of the SETBA, and in Port Arthur, the Texaco and Gulf refineries, which employed many of Central's men, managed to save jobs only by reducing workers' hours and wages. Declining property values and tax delinquencies forced local municipalities to slash budgets and cut expenditures, and even with that Port Arthur could not meet its payroll in April 1932.<sup>25</sup>

Religious institutions nationwide felt the pain. Congregations chopped budgets, curtailed programs, released preachers, and struggled to stay alive. The SETBA mirrored the national condition, as did Central Baptist. Effects of the depression on the church abounded. In 1931 it cut its contribution to the Cooperative Program by \$500.00 and to associational missions by \$75.00. By 1932 many members had left the area "seeking employment," and that same year "financial matters were so close" that publication of Cannedy's weekly newsletter had to be temporarily suspended and probably would not be print-

ed regularly “until conditions are better.” In March 1933 the pastor cancelled \$300.00 of the amount owed him and reduced his salary by 12.5 percent, “with the understanding it be advanced again in the future.” In November 1936 and once more in December 1938, Cannedy again wrote off a portion of the amount owed in salary. In July 1936 Church Treasurer and Deacon W. A. Lea made a fervent appeal to the membership. He reported that the church was falling behind financially. “It is rather embarrassing [*sic*] for me to say,” Lea announced, “BUT we are not receiving enough cash each month to pay our monthly bills in full.” He pleaded with the faithful to “take stock and see, if we can’t have for our Slogan, ‘KEEP OLD CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH’ at the front, and we will not let her lag behind.”<sup>26</sup>

Cannedy had always believed in tithing, which he insisted was sanctioned in the Old Testament and “definitely approved” by Jesus in the New Testament. In the face of the economic downturn, he steadily turned up the pressure on his congregation to tithing. He exhorted, implored, shamed his flock. In early 1932 he acknowledged that the depression was “working a hardship on many and hindering the Lord’s work,” but nonetheless asserted that if the godly would “only give their tithes . . . and make free-will offerings” the work of the Lord would “gloriously go on.” More than once the preacher reminded the fellowship that “our gifts” were “a measure of our love for Christ” and that “a blessing” awaited the tithers. Central launched a Tithing Campaign in October 1935, and the pastor promised to print the names of tithers for all to see in his weekly newsletter. “Of course,” Cannedy added hastily, humble Christians should not “use a megaphone to announce to all around” that they were tithers, but they “should seek to enlist others in tithing, both by precept and example.” The irony here is inescapable. There was no need for “humble Christians” to use a megaphone; the preacher would use it for them. Central’s wage earners were paid once, perhaps twice, a month, and Cannedy repeatedly reminded them that their pay day was the Lord’s pay day, as in: pay day was last week, “Don’t forget the Lord’s part of your check”; or it was pay day, “Did you remember the Lord’s tithe?”; or “You have had another ‘payday’ this week. Don’t fail to remember the Lord with His part.” Low attendance was another worry for Cannedy, for it adversely affected the offering plate. So anyone who was going to be out, perhaps on vacation, was asked to leave a check. In the midst of such persistent pleas for money one cannot help but notice that in

May 1936 the men of the church raised enough cash to give the pastor a new 1936 Chevrolet Sedan.<sup>27</sup>

As with so many religious leaders and church goers of all faiths nationwide, Cannedy had little or no comprehension of the underlying causes of the Great Depression, the basic structural problems within the economy that had been developing since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He understood the depression as essentially a spiritual crisis. People had turned away from God, and God had “withdrawn his favor,” leaving them “to discover their own inability to cope with the commonest and simplest problems of life.” The solution—return to Him “humbly and penitently.” Tragically, the cure for the Great Depression turned out to be another global calamity, World War II. It was preparation for warfare that put Americans back to work and revived a languishing economy.<sup>28</sup>

Embarrassed and sobered by the blatant militarism of so many of the churches in World War I, Texas Baptists and religionists elsewhere urged caution as events in Europe and the Far East edged toward war in the late 1930s. Texas Baptist ethicist T. B. Maston, a longtime professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, gave expression to such sentiment a year prior to Pearl Harbor. Maston believed it had been a “tragic mistake” to use the pulpit during World War I “to whip up patriotism . . . and to encourage young men to enlist in the army.” Thus, in October 1940 Maston urged Baptist preachers “to keep cool” lest they again become ensnared by war hysteria and “the spirit of intolerance” currently “so rampant in the world.” Although the martial spirit took hold after the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, the churches did not succumb to the kind of unrestrained fervor in which they indulged during World War I.<sup>29</sup>

At Central Baptist, Cannedy said nothing about international developments before Pearl Harbor. Afterwards, in early 1942, he told his flock that everyone would “be called on” to make sacrifices, and he frequently called attention to the service in distant lands of “our soldier boys” and girls. He exhorted those on the home front to do their part by buying “a bond, or at least stamps,” adding: “Cut out a pleasure ride, a picture show or cold drink. ‘Remember Pearl Harbor.’” In addition to rationing, fuel and tire shortages, and occasional blackouts, the war also brought some economic improvement. The signs were evident at Central by the early 1940s, reflected in raises in the

salaries of the pastor and the housekeeper and increased contributions to home missions, the Cooperative Program, and other worthy causes. Of course, the war also brought death. Some of Central's young men died in combat. It did not happen often, but when it did the grief was shared by the church family. Sgt. C. J. Reed Jr., the only son of the C. J. Reed family, was killed over Belgium on December 12, 1944. "Mrs. Reed has been confined to her bed from the shock for the past week." Sgt. John E. Dodson was killed on Iwo Jima on March 21, 1945. He had been baptized at Central in August 1938 and had married Lula Mae Baynard on April 1, 1940. In addition to his wife, he left behind a "son and a daughter, who are yet too young to understand the meaning of this awful tragedy."<sup>30</sup>

By mid-1945 Cannedy's health had begun to fail. He had wanted to remain in the pulpit until January 1946, the twenty-third anniversary of his arrival. On doctor's orders, however, he retired in September 1945, quoting verse from *The Preacher's Farewell*:

How swiftly the years of our pilgrimage fly,  
As weeks, months and seasons roll silently by.  
Our days are soon numbered and death sounds our knell,  
We scarce know our friends tell we bid them farewell.

Cannedy died a few months later, in February 1946, one month shy of his 74th birthday.<sup>31</sup>

The Cannedy years had been good years for Central Baptist Church. There had been steady growth and advancement. In 1923 it had been the weakest of Port Arthur's three white Baptist churches. Its 185 members assembled in a "poorly equipped makeshift of a building" on a small corner lot at 6th Street and St. Augustine. By 1945 the congregation numbered a healthy 700 and averaged about 250 weekly in Sunday School, soaring on one occasion to 572, and it worshipped in a thriving residential section on the corner of 9th Street and DeQueen Boulevard. Of the city's seven white Baptist churches in 1945, Central was surpassed in membership only by First Baptist, with over 2,000 members, and Memorial Baptist, slightly over 1,500. Its VBS set the standard for the state, its WMU was second to none, and its Men's Brotherhood was one of the stronger ones in the SETBA.<sup>32</sup>



Looking back, one is impressed by the wealth of activities offered by the church for members of all ages. A typical week in the mid-1930s, or 1940s, left little time to do anything outside the church: Sunday, morning and evening services, plus Sunday School; Tuesday, an all-day meeting of the WMU, starting at 9:45am; Wednesday, evening prayer meeting starting at 7pm and a meeting of the Workers' Council; Thursday, choir rehearsal; Friday, a meeting of the Men's Brotherhood at 7:30pm. And there were always social functions of some sort for the young people, or the WMU, or the Brotherhood in a member's home or at a nearby park, in addition to two revivals annually, which in those days lasted two to three weeks, and two weeks of VBS in the summer. While the primary objective of all this activity obviously was to grow in understanding of the Word and to share the message of Good News, there was another dimension. Central Baptist was not only the religious but also the social hub for its members. Cannedy understood that, recalling that in earlier times "the greatest social attraction" for a community had been the protracted revival meeting, an occasion for friends to congregate, share news, perhaps gossip, and enjoy one another's company. That is what Central was for its membership. It nourished not only the soul, but also satisfied the basic need for companionship. Cannedy left Central Baptist on solid ground and free of discord.<sup>33</sup>

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 ENDNOTES
 

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- <sup>1</sup> John W. Storey, "Port Arthur, Texas," in Ron Tyler, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), 5: 271-272; Judith Walker Linsley, Ellen Walker Rienstra, and Jo Ann Stiles, *Giant Under the Hill: A History of the Spindletop Oil Discovery at Beaumont, Texas in 1901* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2002), 104; Sallye Sheppard, "Southeast Texas Heritage," in Sheppard, ed., *Texas in the Twenty-First Century: The Cultural and Historical Background of Southeast Texas* ([Beaumont:] Texas Committee for the Humanities, 1988), 36-43; W. T. Block, "The Progress of the Roman Catholic Church in the Golden Triangle to 1988," in *ibid.*, 118-20; Block, "Progress and the Present state of Jews and Judaism in the Golden Triangle of Texas, 1876-1988" in *ibid.*, 131-35; Port Arthur's First Baptist Church, 97th Anniversary (pamphlet), 6-7, Port Arthur First Baptist Church Archives, Port Arthur, TX.
- <sup>2</sup> Travis Edwin Cannedy, "Fifty Years in the Ministry" (THD diss., Pikes Peak Bible Seminary, 1942), 61; Central Baptist Church *Minutes*, Oct. 14 and Dec. 11, 1912, Central Baptist Church Archives, Port Arthur, TX, (Central Baptist Church *Minutes* hereinafter cited as CBCM; Archives hereinafter cited CBCA); John W. Storey and Ronald C. Ellison, *Southern Baptists of Southeast Texas: A Centennial History, 1888-1988* (Beaumont: Golden Triangle Baptist Association, 1988), 79.
- <sup>3</sup> Glenn H. Utter and John W. Storey, *The Religious Right: A Reference Handbook* (Third Ed., Millerton, NY: Grey House Publishing, Inc., 2007), 37, 86, 131-132.
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- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 15, Apr. 8, 18, May 6 and 24, 1914; Storey and Ellison, *Southern Baptists*, 81-83.
- <sup>8</sup> CBCM, Feb. 7, Mar 10 and 17, 1915, Jan. 9, 1918, Mar. 5, 9, 17, Apr. 2, 20 and July 30, 1919.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, July 30, Aug. 6, 10, 27, Sept. 3 and 17, 1919.

- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., Sept. 10, Oct. 29, Nov. 19 and Dec. 10, 1919, May 5 and 30, 1920, Feb. 5, 9 and Mar. 12, 1921, Jan. 2, Mar. 17, Apr. 12, May 5, July 12 and Sept. 22, 1922; *Port Arthur Daily News*, Apr. 26, Jun. 2 and Oct. 20, 1922; *The Port Arthur News*, Feb. 10, 1931.
- <sup>11</sup> CBCM, Jan. 10 and 14, 1923; Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 1-9; Cannedy, *Experiences of a Young Minister* (pamphlet, Caddo Mills, TX: [n.p.], 1901), CBCA.
- <sup>12</sup> Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 37-35, 38-39, 46-54.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., 17. See also, Cannedy Radio Sermon, CBCA; *Tidings from Central Baptist Church* (newsletter), Feb. 2, 1941, CBCA; Oscar Travis and Frances Travis interview, Aug. 8, 2011.
- <sup>14</sup> Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 19; *Tidings*, Apr. 21, 1929.
- <sup>15</sup> Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 19; *Tidings*, Apr. 28, 1929; CBCM, May 1929.
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- <sup>17</sup> Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 44; CBCM, Mar. 18, May 2, Aug. 1, Sept. 23 and Oct. 28, 1928.
- <sup>18</sup> Italics not original to quote. Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 62-63; *Tidings*, Mar. 23, 1924, Oct. 16, 1932, Sept. 24, 1933, Apr. 18, 1943.
- <sup>19</sup> Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 62-63; *Tidings*, Nov. (no. 49), 1927, Apr. 18, 1943.
- <sup>20</sup> "Vacation Bible School," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, 2: 1440; Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 62; Mrs. Cannedy typescript, Sept. 13, 1955, CBCA; *Tidings*, June 29, 1930, June 21, 1931, June 9, 1934, June 7 and 21, 1942, June 17, 1945; Ronald C. Ellison, *Texas and Baptist Sunday Schools, 1829-1996* (Dallas: BGCT, 1997), 67.
- <sup>21</sup> Juliette Mather, "Woman's Missionary Union," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, 2: 1509; Leon McBeth, *Texas Baptists: A Sesquicentennial History* (Dallas: Baptistway Press, 1998), 81, 86, 127; *Tidings*, Mar. 3, 1940.
- <sup>22</sup> *Tidings*, Feb. 6 and Nov. 6, 1927, Feb. 22 and Mar. 22, 1931, Feb. 14, 1932, Mar. 4, 1934, Apr. 21, 1940; Mather, "Woman's Missionary Union," 1515-1516.
- <sup>23</sup> Oscar Travis and Frances Travis interview; R. E. Steward to Rev. T. E. Cannedy, Dec. 14, 1928, Apr. 18, 1929, CBCA; CBCM, Dec. 9 and 16, 1928.
- <sup>24</sup> *Tidings*, 10th Anniv. Ed., Jan. 1933, Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 63.
- <sup>25</sup> Paul Isaac, "Beaumont, Texas, and the Great Depression, 1929-1933," *The Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record*, 14 (Nov. 1978): 15-17, 28-29.
- <sup>26</sup> Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 919-22; John W. Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership and Social Christianity, 1900-1980* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1986), 70-71; Storey and Ellison, *Southern Baptists*, 119-122; CBCM, Aug. 5, 1931, Mar. 1933, Nov. 1936, Dec. 1938; *Tidings*, June 19, 1932, July 26, 1936.

<sup>27</sup> *Tidings*, Dec. 5, 1926, Nov. and Dec. 11, 1927, Apr. 21, 1929, Feb. 14, June 19 and Oct. 16, 1932, Apr. 9, 1933, June 23 and Oct. 20, 1935, Feb. 9, 16 and May 24, 1936; 15th Anniversary Ed., 1938, Jan. 26, 1941; CBCM, Aug. 5, 1931, Mar. 1933, Nov. 1936, Dec. 1938.

<sup>28</sup> Ahlstrom, *A Religious History*, 919-922; Cannedy, radio sermon, June 19, 1932, CBCA.

<sup>29</sup> Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership*, 86-88; Ahlstrom, *A Religious History*, 930-931.

<sup>30</sup> CBCM, Oct. and Dec. 1942, Apr. 1945; Proposed budget plan, 1946, CBCA; *Tidings*, May 3, June 7 and 21, 1942, Jan. 14, Apr. 29, and May 13, 1945.

<sup>31</sup> *Tidings*, Sep. 9, 1945.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 15, 1928, Jan. 6, 1929, Apr. 9, 1933. See also, CBCM, Nov. 7, 1938; Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 62-65; Storey and Ellison, *Southern Baptists*, 233-235.

<sup>33</sup> Cannedy, "Fifty Years," 3; *Tidings*, Sept. 9, 1945.

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# TWO STATES WITH ONE GOAL

*Texas and Louisiana Recruit Italians*

CASSANDRE DURSO\*

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Scholars of Italian immigration highlight the urban, industrial experience in the northern United States. They detail the horrors of the tenements, abject poverty, the deplorable factory conditions, and other misfortunes that befell the immigrants who journeyed to the United States for a better life. However, these were not the only experiences of Italians in America. During the years of 1880-1925, when Italian immigration peaked, the southern states directly recruited Italian immigrants as farm laborers on plantations. After the abolition of slavery, a labor shortage developed as former slaves left the South for higher wages available elsewhere. Southern Italy provided a beneficial workforce who possessed knowledge and experience in agriculture as well as a strict work ethic. The peasant stock who answered the South's call for laborers co-existed well alongside the African-American workers due to their lack of familiarity with Jim Crow ideology. However, this placed them in the lowest socio-economic class of the South.<sup>1</sup>

Of the southern states, Louisiana and Texas boasted the highest number of Italian immigrants during this period. These two agricultural states faced similar problems after the abolition of slavery. African Americans possessed their freedom, and with it came a certain power over the large landowners. Because a noticeable portion of freed slaves left the South in search of higher wages, a labor shortage on plantations developed. Therefore, the remaining

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workers had the ability to make demands for things such as better conditions or higher wages. Furthermore, if one employer refused to meet the demands, some black workers traveled to other plantations that promised to accommodate them. This problem prompted landowners to investigate new avenues for laborers. The processes utilized by each state to induce immigration varied, as did the outcome. Texas and Louisiana attempted to employ different types of immigrant labor for agricultural purposes unique to the South, and both would eventually target southern Italy and Sicily, which boasted a numerous and destitute peasantry in need of farm jobs.<sup>2</sup>

The processes each state used to recruit this peasantry warrant individual discussion. Planters formed organizations for recruiting as well as lobbying state legislatures to create immigration bureaus capable of encouraging immigrant labor to the South. Individual planters offered incentives in the form of housing, garden plots or tenant farming, however, these efforts varied by location and state. This article will explore these recruiting measures within each state individually considering the similarities and disparities between them.

Louisiana opened its port to Italians in the late 1800s. New Orleans was the second-largest port in the United States in the early nineteenth century, and had established trade with Palermo, Sicily, for the importation of citrus. This connection led to the original colony of Italians in the city. Once the state began growing its own citrus fruits, the imports were no longer necessary, but the ships still sailed between the ports, carrying people instead of produce. Italian immigrants filled various positions when they arrived in southern Louisiana. Most became farm laborers on sugar plantations, while others worked in sawmills. The latter position generally followed the railroad lines and consequently the settlement patterns of Italians who bought land followed this route as well.<sup>3</sup>

Prior to 1861, Louisiana boasted 1,200 sugar plantations, but the disruption of the Civil War nearly destroyed the industry. By 1864, only 175, or 15%, of the pre-war plantations remained operational. Reconstruction exacerbated these dire conditions because only planters who pledged allegiance to the United States could continue operations, and with the emancipation of their slaves, labor became scarce. These difficult circumstances forced many plantation owners to sell their lands. The September 12, 1874, edition of the *Lafayette Advertiser* printed multiple advertisements about land and plantations for

sale, which had once run on slave labor. Some of the advertisements stated the owner sold for financial reasons, presumably to reassure potential buyers that the quality of the land was not the cause. Many former Louisiana slaves left the state in order to exercise their new freedoms, and those who remained chose to test the new order by demanding higher wages and better conditions. Furthermore, if their demands remained unanswered, they would strike or leave the plantation altogether. Because of this, plantation owners labeled them as shifty, greedy, and lazy.<sup>4</sup>

In response to these strikes, some plantation owners agreed to a universal wage for jobs. They hoped that this practice would prevent black laborers from leaving one farm for another. Black laborers also struck for a more frequent pay period, because some planters paid their workers on a monthly or even seasonal basis making it hard to meet expenses. All of these problems stemmed from the shortage of labor and proved disastrous financially for southern planters. However, other laborers left for places like Kansas for the higher wages offered in the sugar beet industry. Therefore, planters began to doubt the practicality of the continued use of only black labor for harvesting crops. The *Lafayette Advertiser* expressed this point, when it stated, “For years negro labor in the South has been growing more worthless and unreliable. With plenty of work to do at good wages the negroes will not accept employment, but on the contrary the tendency among them is to leave the country and seek the cities where they eke out a miserable existence.”<sup>5</sup>

To address this issue, the Sugar Planters Association, a cooperative of producers throughout the state, urged the legislature to create the Louisiana Bureau of Immigration. Formed on March 17, 1866, the bureau investigated the use of immigrant labor on plantations, hoping to bolster the number of white laborers in Louisiana. The chief officer of the bureau, James C. Kaufman, oversaw the publication of pamphlets in English, French, and German initially, for circulation both in the United States for quick response, and in Europe for fresh laborers. These pamphlets, according to Kaufman, contained information on the fertility of the soil, the climate, and the various industries that needed laborers. He could also appoint as many as five agents abroad to encourage immigration, “by giving counsel and information; in making contracts for public means of transportation; to bring to the port of New Orleans, at the lowest rates of passage possible, such immigrants as may elect to come to



said port.” This section of legislation also established that the landowners, and not the state bureau, retained the responsibility of payment for passage of the immigrants.<sup>6</sup>

Kaufman sent out letters requesting information from planters and county officials on lands for sale, positions available for immigrants, and whether these positions provided food and lodging for the workers. He stated that Louisiana lacked a system defining the availability of land for sale or lease, and that many other states implemented these systems to attract immigrants wishing to settle there. He felt that collection and distribution of this data would raise interest in Louisiana. Further, he stated that the only path to improvement for the agriculture industry lay in cooperation between the landowners and the bureau. He further encouraged the formation of local associations of planters to inform and update their status to the bureau.

In a letter that appeared in *DeBow's Review* in 1867, Kaufman detailed information from the pamphlets that the agents distributed. He listed the various types of soil and the location of each within the state, emphasizing the alluvial lands, which supported the sugar and cotton industries. He described the soils as immensely rich and able to support the same crop year after year without blight, and allowed repeated harvests of cash crops, providing greater profits each year. Lands for sale, he said, also appeared in the pamphlet, as well as the holdings of the United States, which composed three million acres, listed as selling from \$.50 to \$2.50 per acre, and the over nineteen million acres held by individual owners listed at a higher rate of \$1.00 to \$50.00 per acre were obviously the more fertile and valuable lands. However, Kaufman wrote that the pamphlet did not detail the location of these lands within the state, and he hoped inclusion of this information would encourage immigrant labor to the state.<sup>7</sup>

Although Louisiana planters and the Bureau may have welcomed different immigrant groups, Kaufman cited a passage from the pamphlet which targeted Sicilians. For instance, when the pamphlet discussed the climate of the state, it specifically compared it to Sicily. For these peasant immigrants, owning land lent a certain amount of respect to a family, but property availability was scarce. Kaufman, as well as the pamphlet writers, may not have been aware of this fact, but conditions in Sicily created an immigrant pool well-suited to agricultural work in Louisiana. Wealthy absentee proprietors owned large es-

tates, and the best that the peasantry could hope for was the ability to buy into the corrupt tenant system, which would leave them further indebted to both the *gabellotto*, or overseer, and the proprietor whom the peasant farmer might never see. Advertising the low prices of land in Louisiana provided impetus for the landless Sicilians to immigrate. Kaufman's reference to the ability to grow nearly all vegetable types in the soil would appeal to Sicilians as well, as they usually grew their own crops for subsistence, rather than purchasing them, to minimize their cost of living.<sup>8</sup>

Louisiana planters discussed direct immigration from Sicily at a conference held in 1867 to address the continued labor problem. They decided to appeal to the state government for funding to establish a direct steamship line between Europe and Louisiana for the sole purpose of drawing laborers to the state. In response, the following year, the Louisiana legislature created the Department of Agriculture and Immigration, and appointed a Commissioner of Immigration of the State, as well as other agents outside the state to spread the word of the need for labor with pamphlets. This organization aimed at recruiting immigrants to replace the African-American plantation laborers. The association also hoped to bring more white laborers, immigrant or native born, into the industrial, railroad, and construction industries because they felt the continued use of African-American workers was ineffective. An article in the *Lafayette Advertiser* on immigration stated, "the general rule will hold good that free Negro labor is not sufficiently practicable and reliable for the full development of Southern resources and industry." Another organization that shared this sentiment formed in October of 1876. The Teche Planters' Club consisted of 24 sugar plantation owners, who wanted to maximize production and minimize labor problems. Both of the associations turned to the use of immigrant labor as a solution.<sup>9</sup>

Louisiana recruiters first targeted the Chinese, but this group soon fell out of favor with employers who felt that they often broke contracts or simply left the plantations without warning. This behavior was similar to that of the former slaves, and precisely what planters hoped to replace. Walter L. Fleming, an American historian at West Virginia University, outlined their concerns in an article published in the *Political Science Quarterly* in 1905. He surveyed the progression of immigrant labor in the southern states, and stated that the southern planters opposed the use of Chinese labor because "it is certain, how-

ever, that the South will not tolerate the introduction of large numbers of Chinese or Japanese for fear of possible race complications." Fleming did not specify whether the complications referred to interaction with African American workers or with the white elite. He did say that Italians became the preferred immigrant group of choice because "they have come in larger numbers than other foreigners, and, much to the surprise of all, they have proved successful as laborers on cotton and sugar plantations."<sup>10</sup>

The Sugar Planters' Association called a meeting on January 13, 1881, to discuss the idea of obtaining immigrant labor from Europe. John Dymond, president of the association, relayed his success with Italian immigrants on his plantation, and suggested the association look specifically to Italy for farm labor, instead of all across Europe. He may have been the first plantation owner to employ Sicilian laborers in Louisiana's sugar parishes on his Belair Plantation. His drive toward employing immigrants stemmed from his disdain for the free black laborers. Like many other planters, he felt that this group was an untrustworthy source of workers, and looked to the Italians.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, the Sugar Planters' Association appointed a committee to address the issue of using Italian labor. The committee decided to implement the existing steamship lines between southern Italy and New Orleans for immigration. Despite the creation of a state bureau, the Association continued its own efforts for securing laborers. It is possible that the landowners remained dissatisfied with the state agency's work, and Kaufman referenced that problem in 1867. He stated that without cooperative measures, such as providing information on land availability and numbers of workers needed, the bureau remained powerless to fulfill the terms of its creation. Nevertheless, the Association's efforts succeeded, and on September 15, 1881, three steamships a month began running between New Orleans and southern Italy and Sicily at a rate of forty dollars per person. At the next meeting of the Association, the committee advised the creation of an office, which like the Bureau of Immigration, would publish and disperse pamphlets detailing the availability of jobs on the plantations, the nature of those jobs, wages offered, as well as instructing them which steamship lines existed to deliver them to Louisiana. The committee also specifically suggested targeting Sicily and southern Italy due to the character of the immigrants on Dymond's plantation and the similarities in climate with Louisiana. Other planters soon shared the success of Dymond

by employing Italian laborers on their plantations, and employment of Italian immigrants continued through 1910.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout this time period, some established Italians chose positions as labor agents to help their compatriots find opportunities on plantations. Often these men would contract laborers directly from Sicily through family members still there. Despite a federal law passed in 1907 that forbade any establishment of contracts with foreign laborers, this practice continued. The operatives working with the Italian labor agent no doubt informed the potential immigrant not to divulge the fact he already had employment. Vincent Lamantia was one of these agents for the Louisiana Immigration League, which formed in July of 1905 to work out a program for sending Italians to Louisiana who entered at Ellis Island. John Dymond served as the first president of the League, elected in December. The League also elected Charles Godchux as the representative to New York, and for their Italian representative, they chose Lamantia, a New Orleans resident. They agreed to pay him two dollars for every immigrant he sent to Louisiana. Lamantia had experience with Italian immigrants. In fact, he was the U.S. Consul in Catania, Italy, for a time. Commissioner Charles Schuler suggested that the League dispense foreign language brochures highlighting the positive aspects of work in Louisiana, and he traveled to Europe in 1907 with 5,000 brochures printed in both Italian and German, which described the opportunities awaiting immigrants in Louisiana.<sup>13</sup>

Other privately owned companies provided similar resources as the Immigration League. One example of these was the L'Italo Americano Labor Bureau. This organization had an office on Poydras Street in New Orleans and advertised its services in newspapers and posters. The group's posters proclaimed, "The Italian immigrant [was] a valuable acquisition because of his willingness and his peculiar adaptability to hard work." Therefore, the Bureau sought to provide Italian immigrant labor to plantations, railroad companies, and any other business in need of unskilled labor. Further, the company claimed their connections spanned the entire nation for bringing laborers to the city.<sup>14</sup>

The campaign to recruit Sicilian laborers succeeded. According to the federal census, the number of foreign-born Italians in Louisiana rose from 2,214 in 1880 to 20,533 in 1910, a difference of over 18,000. However, the number of Italians on census records is not entirely accurate, because harvesting seasons

drew in non-resident, temporary workers in numbers as high as 80,000. For example, during cultivating season, an 800-acre plantation required 75 field hands. Likewise, the same size plantation in the harvest season, employed 175-200 workers in the field and mill. By multiplying these figures by the 543 plantations of comparable acreage, the total number of laborers increases to 40,725 for cultivation and 101,541 for harvest. Some plantations retained laborers throughout the year in housing. Assuming the 75 hands from the cultivating seasons remained annually, which is a high estimate since the permanent labor force constituted a mix of black and Italian workers, the count for the harvest season still stood between 54,300 and 67,875.<sup>15</sup>

Passenger record numbers are also inaccurate due to the seasonal migrants from Sicily who journeyed to Louisiana only for the harvest seasons. Planters knew of the latter group, and therefore when Congress proposed a bill to require a literacy test for incoming immigrants, they rallied to block it. Due to the high levels of illiteracy among Sicilians, the bill would have depleted a large portion of the plantation workforce. This action illustrated the importance that Italian immigrant labor played in the Louisiana economy.<sup>16</sup>

Similar circumstances existed in the neighboring state of Texas, prompting them to introduce Italians into their agriculture industry as well. As in Louisiana, the abolition of slavery created a precarious labor problem, but Texas also suffered the problem of an insufficient railroad system, which confined the agriculture near the coast. However, state officials organized an immigration bureau with the hopes of securing white immigrants to supplant the African American labor force within the state. Gov. Oran M. Roberts published a pamphlet in 1881, which was similar to those in Louisiana. In it he emphasized this point stating, "It is likely to continue as it is here, because hundreds of thousands of white people, from the other states and from Europe, are pouring into Texas, by which the importance of the blacks, as a class, either for labor or otherwise, is diminishing day by day." However, based on census data, these numbers did not yet include large numbers of Italians. Therefore, continued efforts to recruit immigrants for work in agriculture and railroad industries appeared to provide the answer to the black labor shortage. Governor Roberts also stated the reason for the prior slow rate of immigration into Texas stemmed from, "no good port of entry on the Gulf Coast."<sup>17</sup>



The Mazzagatti family came to Southeast Texas in search of agricultural opportunity and would later establish a thriving grocery business. By 1910, about when this photo was taken, almost 500 native-born Italians resided in Jefferson County, Texas. *Photo courtesy of the Tyrrell Historical Library, Beaumont, Texas.*

Beginning in the 1880s, however, the expansion of railroads throughout the state facilitated the movement of immigrant labor. As is common, when one industry expands, it creates and expands others, and the same case applies to Texas and railroads. With miles of rail appearing, timber became a demand for the tracks. Lumber mills met these demands and grew in their need for labor; mining towns grew up around coal mines which supplied the fuel for the trains. Moreover, the faster and cheaper transportation of goods on the railroad allowed planters to move further inland and cultivate larger cash crop estates. One industry which boomed around the turn of the century in Texas was the oil industry. With the discovery of the Lucas Gusher in Beaumont, a refinery culture developed in Southeast Texas. This discovery brought Giuseppe Mazzu to Beaumont. According to the history of the Mazzu/Mazzagatti family, land availability stood out as the main interest for him and his siblings to settle in Texas. “Giuseppe Mazzu was intrigued by the fact that in this wonderful country there was land available; he started saving money so he could be a landowner. There was a real future here.” All of these expansions required workers, and the Italians represented a pool from which many proprietors chose.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the fact that the population of Italians in Texas never rivaled that of northern states like New York, the state still contained the second highest

number of foreign-born Italians in the southern states, Louisiana being the first. Some similarities existed between the experience of Italians in Texas and Louisiana, and indeed the experience of the immigrant in the South in general. These were the agricultural and rural lives that Italians led south of the Mason-Dixon line. However, there were also elements unique to Texas for Italians immigrating during the new immigration period of 1880-1925.<sup>19</sup>

Italians appear in census records for Texas in 1880, though not in significant numbers. According to this data, only 510 foreign-born Italians resided in the state by that year. The high point for Italian immigration into the state was between 1900 and 1910 when the population of Italian residents climbed from 4,031 to 7,297 respectively. However, this increase took place 20 years after the Italians began coming to the United States, and even to the neighboring state of Louisiana. Therefore, the question must be asked, why was Texas so far behind in attracting the Italian immigrants to their state? Were the legislators, bureaus, or landowners taking any measures to increase prospective immigrant laborers? The answer to the latter is yes. The Texas Constitution of 1869 created the Texas Bureau of Immigration, and in May of 1871 the legislation for it passed. Gov. Richard Coke appointed Gen. Jerome Robertson as superintendent of the Bureau in 1874, but this appointment was short lived. The Constitution of 1876 disbanded the Bureau because it denied the use of state funds, "for any purpose of bringing immigrants to the State," which transferred the task for funding immigration to the railroad companies and landowners.<sup>20</sup>

Landowners received advice from an article in the *Galveston News* on January 4, 1874, which stated if landowners offered immigrants cheap prices on land or low interest rates on loans to purchase land, they would be more likely to go to Texas. Throughout 1874, other articles appeared advising land and business owners on ways to attract more immigrants to the state both from Europe and those already in the country. Agents abroad also submitted letters for publication in newspapers that provided updates on the immigration issue. In one such letter W. G. Kingsbury, an independent agent for Texas in St. Louis, recommended the establishing of local immigration societies to lure workers from other states. These societies would pay the rail fare. This process guaranteed the exact type of laborers needed for specific jobs. Kingsbury said, "Now if any arrangement, by local societies or individuals, can be made to pay the passage of these individuals, I can forward any number . . . Their great



desire is to get to the mild climate of Texas and get a situation before the cold weather sets in.” He also suggested that the importation of immigrant labor would supplant the former slaves, a conclusion planters in Louisiana had also expressed.<sup>21</sup>

However, before the development of a direct steamship line to Galveston, New Orleans was the closest port of entry for immigrants and a logical place for agents in Texas to recruit. As early as 1874, the superintendent of the Immigration Bureau of Texas, General Robertson sought to streamline this process by offering reduced fares for those wishing to travel from New Orleans to Galveston. According to the *Galveston Daily News* in July 1874, Robertson made an agreement with Charles Morgan, owner of the Morgan steamship line, for this discounted transport. Prospective immigrants paid a three-dollar fare for transport on the deck of the ship. He hoped this would bring in a larger proportion of immigrants through New Orleans. Robertson also stated that four hundred Italians planned a visit to Texas from southern states hoping to find suitable locations for the migration of their families, though it did not state if they would travel by land or through the port.<sup>22</sup>

Texas also offered extra incentives to encourage the immigrants to become permanent settlers. In 1877, for example, an article in the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* detailed the availability of free homesteads in Texas to single men or heads of families. The condition stated the person must select the land and remain on it for three years, as well as pay the fees on it. For families, 160 acres of land were offered and for single men the amount was 80 acres. News of free land provided an enticing offer for Italians because it eliminated the need to work on the plantations for an extended time. Plus, with such a large tract of land available, immigrants could employ their friends and family to help cultivate and harvest these lands.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, Italians cultivating lands was what Texans wanted. The *Galveston Daily News* described a meeting of a large group of landowners, land agents, and members of various immigration societies from around the state for the purpose of securing Italians to cultivate lands. One of the main points of the meeting was “that Italians . . . are especially desired for the settlement of Texas lands and to supply the demand for labor.” Those present at the meeting also discussed the North German Lloyd steamship line, which made regular trips to Galveston from its European ports. These ships had a capacity of 1,700 pas-

sengers, so those in attendance proposed ways to bring more Italians to Texas. They considered using agents to disperse fliers abroad, but decided against it because of the contract labor law regarding immigrants. One participant suggested printing material about employment and lands for sale, specifically in Italian, to disperse to the immigrants already in the state. By doing this, they could send word home to their friends and family. Another member, J. S. Daugherty explained, "It is my judgment that the necessities, education, training, and climatic conditions under which he is born and reared make of the Italian the most available source from which we can draw this labor." Daugherty stated earlier in his speech that Texas needed immigrants educated and trained in the ways of agriculture, and was not referring to formal education or training.<sup>24</sup>

The Texas press also acknowledged the importance of allowing immigrants to become landowners. The *Galveston Daily News* discussed the mistakes Texas landowners made by expecting immigrant laborers to fill the place of the former slaves as tenant farmers. To illustrate that point the article referenced the *St Louis Republican*, which stated, "The European immigrant comes to America to secure a *home* for himself and his posterity. If he is expected to be merely a tenant, he will remain on the estates of the European aristocrat, rather than become a tenant on the lands of America." To this end, the article expanded, and strongly advised large landowners in Texas to divide portions of their property into parcels for sale to incoming immigrants, a measure that indicated the state's commitment to recruiting immigrants.<sup>25</sup>

Initially, no single immigrant group appeared any more desirable than another. However, beginning in the 1880s articles began praising the efforts of Italian laborers, just as they had in Louisiana. The *Galveston Daily News* ran several such articles, including one that argued against the claim that Chinese made better agricultural workers than Italians, stating, "An exchange expresses the idea that Chinese immigrants are preferable to Italians, saying that the former work, while the latter never do anything but travel with hand-organs or sell fruits. This idea is not unusual; and many otherwise intelligent people know little or nothing of the agricultural laborers of Italy." The author claimed that the Italians possessed greater ability with farming due to a long history of agriculture in their native country, and added that the population of laborers in Italy outnumbered the need for their skills. Discussion also appeared about

the Italian's ability to obtain high yields from lands, as well as their knowledge of crop rotation for improving the soil.<sup>26</sup>

This information prompted planters, as well as state agencies, to recruit Italians. Brazos County landowners, for example, advertised in newspapers in Texas as well as Europe. One planter, Overton Young, submitted an editorial to the *Galveston News*, which boasted the cheap and fertile lands of Brazos County. Young also attempted to dispel the rumors of the county being unsafe on the grounds of disease. The climate, he stated, was pleasant, and after a period of acclimation, inhabitants there were as healthy as in any other county. Furthermore, the author provided advice for success in farming, ways to avoid sickness, as well as assistance in locating a place for families that decided to immigrate to the county.<sup>27</sup>

Despite efforts like these, Texas did not boast numbers of Italians as high as Louisiana. One potential reason for this could be that direct steamship lines between Europe and Galveston did not exist before 1896, when the high time for Italian immigration was already underway. In August of 1896, the press began discussing the establishment of these lines and also hiring independent immigrant agents abroad for recruiting. According to one article, Emil Kohn, an immigrant agent abroad, felt that advertisement of the state resources combined with the equitable rates of passage to Galveston and New York from Italy would encourage immigrants to choose the southern route. The agent had also toured the lands between High Island and Winnie and stated that these areas would be good for the cultivation of grapes and vegetables, crops which southern Italians were quite familiar with. Therefore, the establishment of a direct steamship line would prove most advantageous for Texas in his opinion. Railroad investors and immigration agents like Kohn made an agreement with the Hamburg-American and the German Lloyd steamship lines to provide direct transportation for prospective immigrants directly to Galveston. The direct line succeeded, and between 1900 and 1910, the foreign-born Italian population of Texas nearly doubled. Furthermore, as in Louisiana, a majority of the Italians who entered the state through Galveston were of southern Italian and Sicilian peasant stock.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, once again the agriculture industry provided a continuum of their native lifestyle in the new country. However, unlike in Louisiana where the agriculture industry employed the majority of Italians, in Texas other in-

dustries recruited the newcomers as well. For one, the railroad industry expanded substantially in the 1880s. During this decade, companies laid 6,046 miles of track in Texas, expanding to 9,702 miles total within the state by the end of the century. Railroad companies received land grants from the state for construction of their lines. The Texas and Pacific railroad received 5,167,360 acres of land alone. In an effort to ensure success of their lines, the companies encouraged settlement on their lands. Since investors believed Italians increased the value of land, they saw them as a valuable asset. The more enterprising companies established immigrant depots where prospective settlers chose their lands along the routes. Another tactic for enticing immigrants was the offer for cheaper fares to those expressing intent on settling or working in Texas.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, the construction of new railways connected the gulf coast regions to the north and central areas, thereby creating a boom in economic opportunities for others. Agriculture expanded with the cheaper freight costs. Increase in production of agricultural products expanded the market for processing them, such as flour and cotton especially. Railroads required lumber for construction, so the increase in track miles, increased this industry in Texas as well. This expansion caused an increase in other industries as well. In 1890, factories and sawmills increased by 120%, from 2,399 in 1870, to 5,268. With all the expansion happening, immigrant labor became more important in the economy of Texas.<sup>30</sup>

As the Italians grew in number and importance to both states, the question as to why they were so willing to leave their native land necessitates explanation. Italy in the latter part of the nineteenth century was a nation of disjuncture and turmoil. Unification failed to unite the various regions into a cohesive whole. The northern regions flourished with industrialization and modernization, while the southern regions faced destitution, starvation, persecution, crisis, and hopelessness. Unjust levels of taxation in the south, forced conscription, lack of education, natural disasters and agricultural crises left many residents with no path of recourse within their own country. Rebellions broke out in 1860, 1866, and 1892-1894 because of the conscription laws, food shortage, as well as the heavy tax burden. Politicians and popular opinion in northern Italy was that southern Italians and Sicilians were ignorant, backward people incapable of functioning in society, much less governing them-

selves. An article in the *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science* in 1909 referenced this opinion of northern Italians for southern Italians, stating that “if you mention Sicily and Calabria the people shudder and say, ‘those pestholes; those breeders of vice and crime,’” which illustrates the contempt that led this southern peasant stock to leave their native country. The inability of the national government to reconcile these problems and the lack of national identity in the South led to a mass diaspora of southern Italians in search of better opportunity for themselves and their families.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to the natural disasters, some Sicilians also faced political exile. The *fasci dei lavoratori*, or union of workers, was a large network of local societies that wanted reform in Sicily. They wanted the right to strike, land and tax reforms, removal of levies from food, freedom of assembly, speech, religion, and true elections, rights and freedoms that were available in the United States. In December of 1893, in a village called Giardinello, soldiers fired on *fasci* protestors to disperse them. The shots killed 11 and wounded more. What followed was a large scale riot that spread to surrounding towns. The *fasci* never aimed to cause violence; many of their demonstrations were peaceful strikes. However, in response to the riot, Francesco Crispi, the Prime Minister, declared martial law in Sicily, and demanded the immediate dissolution of the *fasci* organizations. For Sicilians who remained steadfast, political exile became their future, and they journeyed to the nation that granted the rights they had fought for.<sup>32</sup>

Whether political or economic, thousands of Italians and Sicilians answered the call that employers in Louisiana and Texas made for immigrant labor. Both states succeeded in attracting more Italians than any other state in the South. The planters targeted them for their determined work ethic, and their training in agriculture, but also because they perceived them as white immigrants. The expansion in the industries of Texas necessitated labor needs outside of agriculture. Nevertheless, state and local officials recruited Italians from within and without the United States. Earlier efforts in Louisiana, combined with a busier port and established steamship lines brought higher numbers into the state than Texas. The port at Galveston, while delayed, began steamship lines from Italy as well, benefitting the state. All of these factors combined to lay the foundation of the southern, agricultural immigrant experience.

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 ENDNOTES
 

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, John W. Briggs, *An Italian Passage: Immigrants to Three American Cities, 1890-1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978); Virginia Yans-McLaughlin, *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo, 1880-1930* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1982); Thomas A. Guglielmo, *White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Several scholars have studied the history of Italians in Louisiana. A. V. Margavio and Jerome Salamone provide an excellent survey of the Italian experience in the state, arguing that Italians in Louisiana experienced adversity but ultimately triumphed. Margavio and Salamone, *Bread and Respect: The Italians of Louisiana* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 2002). Part of the adversity Italians faced was discrimination. Jean Ann Scarpaci, for example, studies the Italians who worked in the sugar parishes in the southern region of the state, and the ways native whites deprived Italians of their white status. She highlights the racial inequities Italians faced because of their willingness to fulfill positions classified as “negro labor.” Scarpaci, *Italian Immigrants in Louisiana’s Sugar Parishes: Recruitment, Labor Conditions and Community Relations, 1880-1910* (New York: Arno Press, 1980); Scarpaci, “A Tale of Selective Accommodation: Sicilians and Native Whites in Louisiana,” *The Journal of Ethnic Studies*, 5 (1977): 37-50; Scarpaci, “Immigrants in the New South: Italians in Louisiana’s Sugar Parishes, 1880-1910,” *Labor History*, 16 (Spring 1975): 165-183. Lynching represented a manifestation of this discrimination that was unique to the southern experience. Richard Gambino examines the 1891 mass lynching of Italians in New Orleans and contends that Italians provided a ready scapegoat for the crimes committed in the city. Gambino, *Vendetta: A True Story of the Worst Lynching in America, the Mass Murder of Italian-Americans in New Orleans in 1891, the Vicious Motivations Behind it, and the Tragic Repercussions that Linger to this Day* (New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1977). Valentine Belfiglio’s excellent survey provides a history of Texas through the lens of Italian explorers in the 1500s and brings the story into the modern era with examples of individuals who contributed to major events. Belfiglio, *The Italian Experience in Texas* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1995). Sam Parigi and Clara Jo Liberto examine the role of Italian immigrants to Southeast Texas, the industries they entered, the economies they created, and the problems they faced. Parigi and Liberto, “The Italians Americans of Southeast Texas,” *The Texas Gulf Historical and Biographical Record*, 16 (Nov. 1980): 14-22.

<sup>3</sup> *Lafayette Advertiser* (Lafayette, LA), June 1, 1889; Margavio and Salamone, *Bread and Respect*, 32.

<sup>4</sup> *Lafayette Advertiser*, Sept. 12, 1874; Scarpaci, *Italian Immigrants*, 2-3; Margavio and Salamone, *Bread and Respect*, 35. Scarpaci’s research provided the number of operational

plantations, and the page from the *Advertiser* expands on that information to show that plantation owners continued to sell even once immigration from Italy began in Louisiana.

<sup>5</sup> “Unsatisfactory Negro Labor,” *Lafayette Advertiser*, Sept. 28, 1904.

<sup>6</sup> James C. Kaufman, “Department of Immigration and Labor I. The Louisiana Bureau,” *De Bow’s Review, Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial Progress and Resources*, 4 (Nov. 1867): 469-476. The name of the pamphlet was not listed in the letter from Kaufman, and as a result, research for it returned no results. All allusions to the pamphlet are based on Kaufman’s letter.

<sup>7</sup> Kaufman, “Immigration and Labor,” 473.

<sup>8</sup> “Italian Laborers,” *Galveston Daily News*, May 11, 1882; Kaufman, “Immigration and Labor,” 474; Jerre Mangione and Ben Morreale, *La Storia: Five Centuries of the Italian American Experience* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1992), 51. Mangione and Morreale provide an insightful look at the corrupt tenant system in Sicily.

<sup>9</sup> “Immigration,” *Lafayette Advertiser*, July 10, 1869; Scarpaci, *Italian Immigrants*, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Walter L. Fleming, “Immigration to the Southern States,” *Political Science Quarterly* 20 (June 1905): 291.

<sup>11</sup> “The Convention,” *Lafayette Advertiser*, Mar. 25, 1893; Scarpaci, *Italian Immigrants*, 18, 22.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*; Kaufman, “Immigration and Labor,” 471; Scarpaci, *Italian Immigrants*, 18, 22.

<sup>13</sup> “Reaching out for Settlers,” *Galveston Daily News*, Dec. 6, 1905; Margavio and Salamone, *Bread and Respect*, 70; *Titusville Morning Herald*, (LA) June 14, 1887.

<sup>14</sup> Poster for L’Italo Americano, Joseph Maselli and Dominic Candeloro, *The Italians of New Orleans* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), 16.

<sup>15</sup> Tenth Census of the United States, 1880: Population (Washington: U.S. National Archives); Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Population (Washington: U.S. National Archives); Scarpaci, “Immigrants in the New South,” 166. Scarpaci described the migratory patterns of the Italians in the state and says that the census reports could be in error of 30,000 to 80,000 because of the “seasonal influx” during harvest season. The basis for the enumeration for an 800-acre plantation is found in Scarpaci’s *Italian Immigrants*, 111.

<sup>16</sup> Mangione and Morreale, *La Storia*, 185.

<sup>17</sup> Oran Milo Roberts, *A Description of Texas, Its Advantages and Resources, with Some Account of Their Development* (St Louis: Gilbert Book Company, 1881), 8.

<sup>18</sup> Randolph B. Campbell, *Gone to Texas: A History of the Lone Star State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 309; Concetta Mazzagatti Cloninger, *From Calabria, Italy, to Beaumont, Texas, U.S.A.* (Houston: D. Armstrong Co., Inc., 1998), 75.



- <sup>19</sup> Eliot Lord, John J. D. Trenor, and Samuel J. Barrows, *The Italian in America* (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1905), 5-6.
- <sup>20</sup> Tenth Census of the United States, 1880; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900: Population (Washington: U.S. National Archives); Barbara J. Rozek, "Texas Bureau of Immigration," in Ron Tyler, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), 6:296.
- <sup>21</sup> "Immigration or Emigration," *Galveston News*, Jan. 4, 1874; "Immigration Matters," *Galveston Daily News*, July 30, 1874; "Information for Immigrants," *Galveston Daily News*, May 16, 1874; W. G. Kingsbury, "Texas and Immigration," *Galveston News*, Aug. 14, 1874.
- <sup>22</sup> "Immigration Matters," *Galveston Daily News*, July 30, 1874.
- <sup>23</sup> "Free Homesteads in Texas," *Southwestern Christian Advocate*, Sept. 13, 1877.
- <sup>24</sup> "Foreign Immigration Move-Meeting of Land Owners and Land Agents at Houston to Settle South Texas Lands With Good Tenants," *Galveston Daily News*, Feb. 1, 1905.
- <sup>25</sup> "Landowners and Immigrants," *Galveston Daily News*, date unreadable.
- <sup>26</sup> "Italian Laborers," *Galveston Daily News*, May 11, 1882.
- <sup>27</sup> "Information for Immigrants," *Galveston News*, May 16, 1874.
- <sup>28</sup> "Immigrant Business," *Galveston Daily News*, Aug. 11, 1896; Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900; Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910.
- <sup>29</sup> Earle B. Young, *Tracks to the Sea: Galveston and Railroad Development, 1866-1900* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 3-4; "Immigrant Business," *Galveston Daily News*, Aug. 11, 1896.
- <sup>30</sup> Campbell, *Gone to Texas*, 309.
- <sup>31</sup> Donna Rae Gabaccia, *Militants and Migrants: Rural Sicilians Become American Workers* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 29; William S. Bennet, "Immigrants and Crime," *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science*, 34 (Jul. 1909): 119. This issue was a special edition regarding races in the United States.
- <sup>32</sup> Sandra Benjamin, *Sicily: Three Thousand Years of Human History* (Hanover, NH: Steerforth Press, 2006), 346-347.



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## PRIMARY SOURCES

### *The Tyrrell Library Embraces Digital Archiving and Online Access*

WILLIAM GRACE\*

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The Tyrrell Historical Library, Beaumont, Texas, continues to grow and expand its presence both in online and traditional resources to better serve its vast audience of researchers. In the past two years this has been particularly the case. The library has sought out new channels to better reach this ever growing audience, and with the purchase and utilization of new technologies the library has made significant strides forward, especially within its archival section.

The Tyrrell started this process some three plus years ago with the modest steps of digitizing the more important photographs in its holdings. In 1991, William “Bill” Faucett and five other Rotary Club members spent approximately four months attempting to identify the vast photographic imagery contained in what became known as the General Photographic Archives. Additional photographs in other collections were later processed and added to this ever expanding collection. The library recognized the need to bring intellectual control over this increasingly unwieldy resource. In 2008, the Tyrrell began the process of selecting the more unique historical images, scanning them with accompanying descriptive captions, and storing them on CD-ROMs. What had started out as a modest undertaking had quickly grown into a major effort that required considerable time, resources, and planning to create a practical system.

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In 1929, librarians Pearl Burr and Lucy Fuller distribute books to Averill Elementary School students from the Tyrrell Public Library bookmobile. This photo is one of several thousand accessible electronically via the Tyrrell Historical Library website. *Photo courtesy of the Tyrrell Historical Library, Beaumont, Texas.*

To address this concern, Bill Faucett proposed the creation of the *Photo Browsing Books*. The Tyrrell Historical Library Association and the Library Board supported the idea and approved the expenditures. For two years between 2008 and 2010, the library scanned 5,665 photographic images and saved them to CD-ROM discs. The endeavor resulted in a comprehensive listing of important images contained on a single page that included descriptive information and the full call number to locate the item. When completed, the browsing books totaled 50 volumes, including a general alphabetical index to locate specific pages for a given topic. Another volume samples noteworthy themes related to specific collections, and the remaining 48 volumes contain page-by-page depictions of the scanned photographs.

This excellent resource tool is now available to researchers in the main reading room of the library. It allows them easy access to locate visual material related to their topics of historic interest. Copying from the books is both easy and inexpensive, while the original photographs remain safely stored for preservation purposes in the archives holding area. The creation of this book series has proven highly useful to patrons wanting to know more about the photographic images contained in many of the archival collections of the library.

Since the creation of the *Photo Browsing Books*, the Tyrrell Library has initiated three other programs to make its archival collections more accessible to online researchers. In early 2010, the Library Association purchased the OCLC CONTENTdm software. In order to quickly provide content onto the digital portal site, the staff chose to upload Bill Faucett's browse books as the pilot project, because these images were already digitized and easily uploaded to the CONTENTdm website. Almost immediately, however, the staff discovered that the Dublin Core fields of the new portal site required more descriptive information. Fortunately, the Tyrrell Historical Library had an extensive Beaumont history book collection as well as microfilmed Beaumont newspaper collection that allowed for the further compilation of the information required to complete the multiple fields of the item records before final upload to the web server.

In a period of eleven short months the new digital portal site, which is now commonly known as the "Tyrrell Historical Library Digital Collections," has grown from 1 collection of 28 items to a total of 12 collections of 3,048 items. Eleven of these collections have been successfully synchronized to the online national bibliographic library catalog system named OCLC WorldCat. This allows for academic libraries worldwide to search this catalog and locate the Tyrrell digital collections by using key word, author, and title search strategies, adding to the online profile of the Tyrrell web site beyond the traditional search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc. Researchers can access the Tyrrell Historical Library Digital Collections site directly as well by typing in one of two web addresses on the internet, as follows:

<http://tyrellhistoricallibrary.contentdm.oclc.org>

Or the less direct route:

<http://beaumontlibrary.org>

Patrons should click on the Tyrrell Historical Library link and then on the library tower icon to access the Tyrrell site. Either web address will allow researchers full access to these digitized collections on their personal computers at home or work.

The 12 collections found on the "Tyrrell Historical Library Digital Collections" site comprise a wide variety of history related topics. These include the Beaumont Fire Department, the early oil industry in Beaumont, cross-country



The Tyrrell Library building after a snowstorm in 1973. This photo is one of several thousand accessible electronically via the Tyrrell Historical Library website. *Photo courtesy of the Tyrrell Historical Library, Beaumont, Texas.*

road travel in the United States during the early 20th century, commerce and development in Beaumont, and well-known landmarks in Jefferson County and the surrounding region. The website also provides access to a wealth of information about the greater Golden Triangle region.

In August 2010 the Tyrrell Library initiated another project to in support of the archival digitization program by providing researchers with a synopsis of information about the archival collections. In six weeks time, the library produced an alphabetical title list and linked each collection to a single page. This information was then uploaded to the Tyrrell Historical Library section of the Beaumont Public Library System web site. Interested patrons can access these collection descriptions by clicking on the “Master Index to the Archives Collections” or by typing in the following web address on the Internet:

[http://beaumontlibrary.org/archives\\_coll.htm](http://beaumontlibrary.org/archives_coll.htm).

This alphabetical list allows the online researcher the same information that was once found only in the printed *Guide to Archival Collections* at the library. Now researchers do not have to visit the library in person to examine the paper guide or contact the library to have select pages from the guide copied and mailed to them. Now they may, at a glance, determine which of the many important collections held by the Tyrrell Historical Library serve their needs.

Currently, the Tyrrell Library seeks to improve upon its online access by creating full-fledged electronic finding aids to replace the old, one-page descriptions. From this point on, all archival collections will have an electronic finding aid created for that specific collection. The new finding aids will follow the established Encoded Archival Description format and be placed on the universally used Archon Archive Software system. This system is a free archival descriptive information software system that pre-formats finding aids to professional archival standards and the files in turn can be saved to a local web server. The electronic finding aids will also be compliant with the *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* as approved by the Society of American Archivists. These electronic finding aids will eventually be placed on the Tyrrell section of the library system web site.

The program to produce electronic finding aids will be a lengthy process. To date, the library holds a total of 570 archival collections. Of which half, approximately 285 have the one-page description. The balance remains un-acquisitioned and lacks any real description. The newly hired archivist Ms. Stephanie Soule, formerly from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor with a graduate degree in library science, has extensive knowledge and skill working with Encoded Archival Description and XML computer code. She will create finding aids for these collections over the next two to three years, and upload them for online access.

Aside from the Beaumont Public Library web site, the Tyrrell Library also envisions placing its electronic finding aids on two outside digital portal consortium sites—the *Texas Archival Resources* site and the *Portal of Texas History* site. Cooperating with these two portal sites will increase the exposure and interest in the Tyrrell Historical Library's archival collections.

Likewise, any collection accessed via the "Tyrrell Historical Library Digital Collections" CONTENTdm site will also contain a full finding aid, which

will appear as a link located at the collection level page of this site. As such, all that an online researcher will need to do is just click on the link to learn more about the full content of the collection as well as any material that may have been excluded in the digitization project. In this way, the researcher will have a greater understanding of the scope and content of the collection that is housed in the archives.

As the Tyrrell Historical Library continues to expand and now automate the way in which researchers access the archival collections, it also endeavors to grow the number of archival collections that are housed in the library. In the past two years, the library has acquired important historic records, including such prize collections as the Dollinger Steel Company records, Evelyn Lord scrapbooks, R.C. Miller photo albums, Golden Triangle Literacy Guild records, Westminster Presbyterian Church records, and Gulf States Utilities Company records. All of these collections document important social, cultural, political, and economic aspects related to Beaumont and Southeast Texas.

Safeguarding its historical materials remains one of the primary concerns of the library. During the past month the Tyrrell Historical Library Association approved the purchase of security cameras for the library that will deter theft as well as provide the staff of the library a useful tool by which to monitor adequately all activities within the library. Particularly in areas that lack any physical staff member presence. The security cameras are yet another means to protect and preserve the integrity of the collections from unwarranted tampering.

In the past two years the Tyrrell Historical Library has embarked upon a new road in the way that it is delivering information electronically. Easy access to information via the internet is one key component of this change, and adhering to good archival practices ensures the uniformity and accuracy of the information on its various web sites. Similarly, new technology provides the staff with the means and ability to more readily safeguard the historical collections that they are entrusted to protect. In addition, the library is experiencing steady growth in the number and quality of the new archival collections that it is receiving from private hands. All of these elements are promising signs that the library will continue to be an important gateway to information for future generations of researchers interested in Beaumont history and the surrounding community that it documents.



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## MUSEUM CORNER

*Cultural Crossroads:  
The Port Arthur Origins of the  
Frottoir and Zydeco Music*

SHANNON L. HARRIS\*

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When asked about the musical style of Zydeco or the origin of the metal rubboards that are a fixture in its performances, most would assume that they are both purely products of the state of Louisiana. Although each has quite definite roots in that state's French culture, the metal rubboard or frottoir as well as the Zydeco genre itself are actually innovations that came to fruition amidst the unique cultural mix of the Southeast Texas. The metal frottoir and the modern amalgamation of Zydeco music came into existence through a series of timely events and fortuitous encounters that occurred over the course of nearly 200 years, including French settlement in Louisiana, the discovery of oil at Spindletop, the founding of Port Arthur and its burgeoning petrochemical industry, Cajun and Creole immigration to southeast Texas, and the chance meeting of select individuals. Currently located in Lafayette, Louisiana, Key of Z Rubboards has deep roots in Port Arthur, Texas. The family business traces its origins back to the post-war era when Willie Landry engineered the first metal rubboard for Zydeco musicians Clifton and Cleveland Chenier. The story of how these men met and forged an artistic collaboration is a fascinating story that is iconic of Southeast Texas history and an example of the way in which the region serves as a cultural crossroads, combining Louisiana and Texas influences.

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\* For the past twelve years, Shannon L. Harris has served as the director for the Museum of the Gulf Coast, Port Arthur, Texas. She received a B.A. from Texas State University and an M.A. in History from Missouri State University. She is also a graduate of the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation and the Winedale Museum Seminar.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the petrochemical refineries of Southeast Texas drew workers of all walks of life and backgrounds to the region. This unique melting pot brought Creole musicians Clifton and Cleveland Chenier together with Cajun metal craftsman Willie Landry. All three men migrated to Port Arthur from Louisiana to work at the Gulf refinery in the 1940s, and it is there that their paths crossed, leaving an indelible mark on the history of American music.

The Chenier brothers were born in Opelousas and grew up in Depression-era Louisiana. Clifton and his older brother Cleveland inherited their musical tradition and talent from their father Joseph who encouraged his sons to play and join him in performances at an early age. Clifton would follow his father's example playing the accordion and Cleveland played on his mother's washboard. In a 1982 interview Clifton said, "I love to follow my daddy's footsteps, what he like, I like, you know, my daddy used to play accordion man, and the little money he make he play accordion to feed us . . . . Times was hard when we was comin' up." The Chenier boys grew up poor working in the fields and as day laborers. An unapologetic Clifton Chenier said of his rural roots, "I come from out a hole, man, I mean out the mud, they had to dig me out the mud to bring me up in town."<sup>1</sup>

In 1946 the Cheniers left their meager origins and joined hundreds of workers at the Gulf refinery in Port Arthur. There they met Willie Landry, a native of Leroy, Louisiana. The work was hard and the days were long, but not enough to take the Louisiana French out of Clifton Chenier who performed for his co-workers during lunch breaks, receiving both tips and encouragement. During this time, he honed his accordion skills, bringing the instrument back into the French la-la music he had grown up with. The style originated in the rural black communities of southwest Louisiana. It was a combination of French and Afro-Caribbean influences characterized by a fast tempo dominated by the button or piano accordion and the rubboard. Clifton Chenier recalled, "My daddy used to play accordion, and they quit playin' accordion, but I kept it goin' . . . . [L]ot of them fellas playin' the accordion now used to laugh at me, you know. They didn't want to play accordion . . . . Now—everybody tryin' to grab accordion." Chenier's brother Cleveland was by his side mastering his own instrument, the rubboard. According to Key of Z Rubboards founder, Tee Don Landry, Cleveland Chenier was the "first Zydeco musician to use





The Gulf Refinery, Port Arthur, Texas, in 1944. The refinery not only served as an economic engine, but as a cultural crossroads. Here in 1946, the Chenier brothers met Willie Landry, and together they developed the frottoir. *Photo courtesy of the Museum of the Gulf Coast, Port Arthur, Texas.*

more than one bottle opener on his hand. He loaded his fingers with rubboard picks, giving his sound that weird, echo-y effect.”<sup>2</sup>

Per the Chenier brothers’ request, Willie Landry handcrafted the first metal rubboard to be used specifically as a musical instrument—a design which incorporated built-in shoulder straps. According to Landry’s son Don Landry, the metal craftsman “followed Chenier’s music closely and was glad to offer his services.”<sup>3</sup> The rest, as they say, is Zydeco history. As the younger Landry relates:

In those early days, brother Cleveland rhythmically strummed his old time, hand held, washboard with “bottle openers.” Cleveland played the rubboard to support Clifton’s unique brand of emerging Zydeco music. The wood frame washboard was supported on Cleveland’s neck by a rope. One day Clifton approached Mr. Willie with a design for a musical rubboard,

the “Frottoir” as it is known in our Cajun language. Mr. Clifton sketched the new design in the dirt, and asked “can you make one like that?” Mr. Willie replied, “I can make anything you want!”<sup>4</sup>

Soon after the timely encounter between the Chenier brothers and Landry, Clifton Chenier found he could make more money playing music than working in the refinery and thus began his illustrious career in music. “I worked in the fields, worked at the Gulf refinery. I was everywhere. When I started playin’ music then I stopped that.”<sup>5</sup> The multi-instrumentalist quit his day job—an act that probably garnered a few raised brows. The lyrics to his autobiographical song “Ca m’appelle Fou” may have been inspired by such doubt and scrutiny:

Everybody calls me crazy but my name is Clifton Chenier,  
 Everybody calls me crazy but my name is Clifton Chenier,  
 A little guy from the country  
 But me I know what it is I’m doing.

They call me crazy crazy crazy,  
     But I know what it is I’m doing,  
     They call me crazy crazy crazy,  
 And I know what I’m doing  
 Me, I stayed in the country,  
 Look out for that farm boy.<sup>6</sup>

Although Chenier is recognized today as the undisputed “King of Zydeco,” with national hit recordings including, “Bopping the Rock” and “Eh Petite Fille” (Hey Little Girl), his journey, pioneering and popularizing the Zydeco genre, was not easy or swift. “It took a long time for me to get the people to listen to my music . . . ’55, that’s when I recorded, well, now that did it.” Many credit Chenier’s recording of the song “Les Haricots Est Pas Sales” (The Beans Are Not Salty) as the seminal moment in which French la-la music became popularly known as Zydeco. The spelling of the word “haricots” changed to “Zydeco,” a word with similar pronunciation.<sup>7</sup>

However, the development of Zydeco involved much more than a name change. In the years after leaving the Gulf refinery, the Chenier brothers relo-



Arhoolie Records released *Classic Clifton* in 1980. Clifton Chenier, standing left, played the accordion, and his brother Cleveland, standing right, played the frottoir. *Photo courtesy of Tee Don Landry, Sunset, Louisiana.*

cated to Houston, Texas, and incorporated different instruments such as the electric guitar and drums as well as various musical styles including Blues and R&B which they encountered while performing alongside other musicians in the post-war city.<sup>8</sup>

In the early 20th century, Houston's Fifth Ward neighborhood swelled with African-American immigrants from various parts of the nation including black Creoles from Louisiana. In fact, the latter formed a settlement known as Frenchtown. As a result of segregation, the area was relatively isolated and just as it happened in rural Louisiana this insular climate was ripe for cultural expression and the preservation of ethnic identity. While the Creoles of Frenchtown brought their love of French music, other residents of the Fifth Ward brought with them influences of the Blues, R&B, and Jazz.<sup>9</sup>

Clifton Chenier had affection for all music and this was crucial to the development of modern Zydeco. The infusion of other styles into the music of his youth embodied the Zydeco that he personified, popularized, and brought to the world stage. Chenier said "zydeco is rock and French mixed together, you know, like French music and rock with a beat." He added, "I love Ray Charles' music. Ray Charles and Fats Domino, I love their music, well I love music, period." When asked by interviewer Ben Sandmel what Chenier thought of country music, he replied, "I love it, too." The incorporation of various musical styles into Zydeco is evidenced by the fact that Chenier was so well received around the world in a wide variety of venues including R&B, Jazz, and Rock.<sup>10</sup>

In Houston in the 1960s, California-based Arhoolie Records producer Chris Strachwitz first learned about Zydeco music, eventually recording Chenier who became the label's all-time selling artist. Houston's Frenchtown also hosted two of the most important venues in the history of Zydeco music: Continental Lounge and Zydeco Ballroom and Alfred's Place. Chenier performed his last concert at the Continental in 1987, and Alfred's Place was a standing gig for Chenier for more than five years.<sup>11</sup> As music historian and writer Roger Wood relates:

That distinctive, highly danceable style of black Creole music—for many years restricted to obscure nightspots on the circuit between Houston and New Orleans—emerged into

mainstream popular culture in the 1980s, where it has generally been misconstrued as a musical genre totally unique to Louisiana. But . . . modern electric zydeco is arguably the product of a syncretism that was first triggered in Texas.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1970s, the Chenier brothers moved back to their Louisiana roots. They settled in Lafayette. Ironically, Willie Landry and his family had moved to Lafayette just a few years after his chance encounter with the Cheniers when Don Landry was only three years old. In Lafayette, Landry continued to work as a metal fabricator and master welder. He stayed in contact with the Chenier brothers through the years and Don Landry remembers that the Cheniers used to play at a club called the Bon Ton Rouler Club which just so happened to be right across the street from the Landry residence. “We could hear them play there on Saturday nights.”<sup>13</sup>

All three men would spend the rest of their days in Lafayette. Willie Landry died in 1977. Clifton Chenier passed away a decade later in 1987, shortly after being recognized with a Grammy in 1983 for his album *I’m Here*. Cleveland Chenier followed just a few years later in 1991.

Luckily, the legacies of Clifton Chenier and Willie Landry continue today through the success of their sons. Don Landry founded Key of Z Rubboards in 1995. Today he produces hand-crafted stainless steel rubboards or frottoirs for musicians of various genres worldwide such as Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, Rihanna, Cyril Neville of the Neville Brothers, and Clifton Chenier’s own son, C.J. Chenier. His website, [keyofzrubboards.com](http://keyofzrubboards.com), describes Landry as “a local musician who has performed around the world, deeply rooted in both Zydeco and Cajun music. His heritage and strong commitment to preserving a very unique musical instrument results in the high quality production of Rubboards.”<sup>14</sup>

Key of Z frottoirs are modern derivations that serve as symbols of a unique musical style and the artistry and craftsmanship of men like Clifton and Cleveland Chenier and Willie Landry. As Don Landry conveyed to the *Port Arthur News*, “The very first frottoir no longer exists . . . because the original instruments were made of corrugated tin and the players would literally wear them out.”<sup>15</sup>

The Chenier family tradition is pressing forward as well. A proud Clifton Chenier would say, “I got my boy, he’s moving on pretty good following my footstep. I’m teachin’ him how to play accordion.” With a sizeable following of his own, C.J. Chenier is continuing the Zydeco legacy. Based in Houston, he leads the Red Hot Louisiana Band and serves as the current international ambassador of Zydeco.<sup>16</sup>

In 2011 C.J. Chenier was nominated for a Grammy Award for his Zydeco album *Can’t Sit Down* in the category of Regional Roots Music. The newly formulated category incorporates several of thirty-one categories of awards that were recently eliminated by the Recording Academy, including Zydeco and other genres such as Latin jazz, contemporary jazz, Native American, Cajun, Classical, and Polka. While musicians and fans are speaking out in protest, the extent to which the Grammys will continue to recognize diverse, authentic music traditions produced by lesser known artists and independent labels is uncertain. In an age of mega-commercialization and the saturation of popular music, the Chenier and Landry family businesses are not only creative expressions but vital acts of cultural preservation—preservation of ethnic identity, preservation of musical interpretation, and preservation of a history in which the neighboring states of Texas and Louisiana share a unique legacy.

A hand-crafted stainless steel Key of Z rubboard is currently on display in the Clifton Chenier exhibit in the Music Hall of Fame at the Museum of the Gulf Coast. The Port Arthur Historical Society charges the museum with the mission to collect, preserve, display, and interpret the history of the coastal region between Houston and New Orleans. The Museum achieves this through the continuous operation of a 39,000-square-foot facility which houses a permanent collection of more than 100,000 objects, artifacts, photographs and documents, two floors of permanent exhibits, and a temporary exhibition gallery. The Museum tells the history of the upper Gulf Coast region with exhibits that explore natural history from pre-historic fossils to the incredibly diverse flora and fauna of today, as well as traces of human history from the age of the Paleo-Indians to the urban growth of the Progressive Era. Popular culture exhibits include a Notable People Gallery featuring entertainers, politicians, scientists and more; the Gulf Coast Music Hall of Fame featuring over 60 performers like Clifton Chenier, Janis Joplin and George Jones; and the Sports Legends Gallery with more than 60 athletes such as Babe Zaharias and Jimmy

Johnson. Other highlights include the original Fresnel lens from the Sabine Bank Lighthouse, the Robert Rauschenberg Gallery and the largest indoor mural in the southwest.

The Museum also serves the public by providing archival resources to local, national, and international academic and commercial researchers as well as offering a variety of educational programs for adults, children, families and schools.

The Museum of the Gulf Coast is owned and operated by the Port Arthur Historical Society in partnership with Lamar State College—Port Arthur and the City of Port Arthur. It is located at 700 Procter Street in downtown Port Arthur, Texas, and is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information or to schedule a tour please call 409-982-7000 or visit the Museum's website at: [www.museumofthegulfcoast.org](http://www.museumofthegulfcoast.org).

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Rebecca Blanchard, ed., *The Achievers: Famous Southeast Texans* (Beaumont: The Beaumont Enterprise, 2005), 80; "Interview with Clifton Chenier," in Ann Allen Savoy, ed., *Cajun Music: A Reflection of a People Vol I*, (Bluebird Press, 1982), 377, 379.
- <sup>2</sup> "Interview," in Savoy, ed., *Cajun Music*, 375; Tee Don Landry, Key of Z Rubboards website (keyofzrubboards.com).
- <sup>3</sup> Brandon Janes, "Legends Collide at the Museum," *The Port Arthur News*, Mar. 9, 2012.
- <sup>4</sup> Landry, Key of Z Rubboards website.
- <sup>5</sup> "Interview," in Savoy, ed., *Cajun Music*, 379.
- <sup>6</sup> Clifton Chenier, "Ca m'appelle Fou," (Tradition Music, BMI).
- <sup>7</sup> "Interview," in Savoy, ed., *Cajun Music*, 375-376; Johnnie Allan, *Memories: A Pictorial History of South Louisiana Music 1910s-1990s*, (Lafayette, LA: JADFEL Publishing, 1995), 99.
- <sup>8</sup> Gary Hartman, *The History of Texas Music* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 122.
- <sup>9</sup> Roger Wood, *Down in Houston: Bayou City Blues* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 138.
- <sup>10</sup> "Interview," in Savoy, ed., *Cajun Music*, 377, 379; Larry Willoughby, *Texas Rhythm Texas Rhyme: A Pictorial History of Texas Music* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1990), 77.
- <sup>11</sup> Wood, *Down in Houston*, 47, 138-140.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., 138
- <sup>13</sup> Tee Don Landry, e-mail to author, Sept. 1, 2012.
- <sup>14</sup> Landry, Key of Z Rubboards website.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.; Janes, "Legends Collide."
- <sup>16</sup> "Interview," in Savoy, ed., *Cajun Music*, 381; Hartman, *History of Texas Music*, 125.



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# IN MEMORIAM

EDITED BY MARGARET PARKER

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Dr. Lulu L. Smith Washburn  
1926 - 2011

**D**r. Lulu L. Smith Washburn, community and civic leader, died peacefully at her home on March 1, 2011, in her 84th year.

Broussard's Mortuary held service on March 4 with internment at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Pallbearers were Harrison Holditch, Steven Locke, Thomas Locke, Doug Mattingly, George Hoffman and Jack Lee.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made in her memory to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 5144, Beaumont, Texas 77726, or the Alzheimer's Association, 700 North Street, Suite M, Beaumont, Texas 77701.

Born near Leesville, Louisiana, on November 7, 1926, Lulu was the daughter of Nancy and J.L. Smith and the youngest of six children. During her high school years, the family moved to Beaumont where she graduated from Beaumont High School in 1942. She earned her B.A. from the University of Texas, her M.D. from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, and completed her residency in Montreal, Canada, in 1960. She returned to Beaumont to open a private, family practice and to be closer to her family.

Throughout her life, Lulu was devoted to family, the arts and community. She held very high standards and expectations of herself and others. Bowa,

as her family called her, was always concerned with an individual reaching their “full potential.” She was extremely generous with her love and time and matriarch to a family that loved her very much.

While in private practice, she was elected as the first woman to serve as President of the Beaumont Academy of Medicine and was Chief of Staff for three years at Baptist Hospital, Acting Director of the City of Beaumont Health Department, and Consultant Physician of BISS. After closing her practice in 1984, she lent her expertise to such institutions as Lamar University as Physician and Director of the Health Center and HMO Blue-Golden Triangle as Medical Director.

Among her many accomplishments, she was elected to the Beaumont City Council in 1987 and served Ward 1 constituents for 20 years. During her tenure, she was instrumental in the development and renewal of many of Beaumont’s finest treasures, including preserving the Jefferson Theatre and Hotel Beaumont, strengthening the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, gaining the historical designation for the Old Town District and the revitalization of Downtown Beaumont. As a member of Texas Municipal League and the National League of Cities, she was a proponent of Beaumont’s priorities, needs and concerns in both Austin and Washington, D.C. Lulu was active in the Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, The Beaumont Family Services Association and Rotary Club. Among her many awards, she was honored by the American Heart Association, chosen as a recipient of a Ben Rogers and Francis Morris Racial Justice Award, the Amset Board of Trustees Ambassador to the Arts, the Julie Rogers “Gift of Life” as a community volunteer, the Doris and Harry Starr Award for Excellence and the Chamber of Commerce Athena Award.

Preceded in death by her husband of 46 years, Dr. Wesley W. Washburn, she is survived by her nephew, Kenny Locke and wife, Toni of Beaumont; nieces Karen Atfield and husband, Clay of Arlington; Debbe McNeil of Cypress; Cindy Holditch and husband, Jerry of Tomball; great nieces, Hollan Gibson, Lauren Locke and Kendall Holditch; great nephews Morgan McNeil, Steven Locke, Harrison Holditch and Thomas Locke; step-daughter, Liz Ford and husband, Troy; and nephew, Gordon Washburn and wife, Sonya of Houston; numerous other relatives and friends and her beloved dog, Max.

The family gives special thanks to Bowa's trusted and loyal friend, Billie Lee. Also, the family truly appreciates the care and companionship provided by Cindy, Maria, and Genie Marie, along with Brenda and Norma and the other caregivers of HomeInstead.

Courtesy Broussard's Mortuary  
Appeared in the *Beaumont Enterprise*, March 3, 2011



Lettie Jane Plumley  
1923 - 2011

**L**ettie Jane Plumley, 88, of Beaumont, died February 4, 2011, at Calder Woods in Beaumont. She was born January 13, 1923, in Beaumont to the late George Allen and Lettie (McElyea) Plumley.

A lifelong resident of Beaumont, she retired from Mobil Oil (Magnolia Refinery) as an executive secretary after 40 years service. She was a member of First United Methodist and past president of the Desk and Derrick Club.

She is survived by five cousins and their families, Marshall and Rise Preslar and their children, Hank Preslar (her Godson) and Erin Preslar; Paul and Jan Preslar and their children, Luke, Mark, and Ruth; Christine Young and her children, Lynn Evans, Richie Young and Randy Young; Janell and Craig Tilley; Jan Murphy; and numerous friends.

Funeral services occurred on February 7, 2011, at the Chapel of the First United Methodist Church, Beaumont, followed by interment at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. Those who wish may direct memorial contributions to the charity of their choice.

Courtesy Claybar Kelley-Watkins Funeral Home  
Appeared in the *Beaumont Enterprise*, February 6, 2011



Virginia "Jill" Woodward Radford  
1940 - 2011

Virginia Radford, 71, died Monday, September 19, 2011, in Beaumont. She was born in New York City, on March 10, 1940, to Isobel Carrington Woodward and John Franklin Woodward.

Virginia was a 1962 graduate from the University of Texas, receiving her bachelor's degree in Education. She married Wendell Radford shortly after graduation and they enjoyed forty-seven fantastic years together, until Wendell passed away in 2010 (see *Record*, 46: 64-65). A lifelong member of St. Mark's Episcopal Church and choir, she was also active in the Beaumont Junior League and the Magnolia Garden Club. Jill was devoted to Wendell and enjoyed traveling extensively with him. She was deeply devoted to her family and friends.

Survivors include her son, Wendell "Chip" Radford, Jr. and his wife, Cathy of Beaumont; daughter, Pamela Woodward Radford of Houston; granddaughters, Catherine Radford and Ellen Radford, both of Beaumont; brother-in-law, Donald Swartz; niece, Virginia Swartz Rutter; and lifelong friend, Delores Pollard.

Jill's family is thankful for the love and support from her close friends, the St. Mark's Choir and especially Ruth Aubey for her kindness. Her memorial service was held on September 22, 2011, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church with an enrichment in St. Mark's Columbarium. Cremation arrangements were under the direction of Broussard's. A reception followed her service in the Cloister at the church.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Music Fund, 680 Calder Avenue, Beaumont, Texas 77701.

Courtesy Broussard's Mortuary

Appeared in the *Beaumont Enterprise*, September 21, 2011



Jean Claye Bryant  
1937 - 2012

Jean Claye Bryant, 75, died quietly and peacefully Tuesday, January 24, 2012, at Baptist Hospitals of Southeast Texas, Beaumont.

Jean was a caring, tender and extremely generous person. She was funny, outgoing, loved to laugh and had an infectious personality. Jean was hospitable, loved entertaining people and never met a stranger. She was a loyal and faithful friend and an inspiration to all who knew her. Jean had many interests. She loved to learn and never stopped learning. She was an avid reader and was drawn to anything historical. When Jean found something that piqued her curiosity, she researched and read as much as possible to learn as much as she could. She had a strong sense of faith and was always true to her beliefs. In addition to her love of history, she also loved learning about her religion and the Catholic Church.

She was on the board of the Tyrrell Historical Library Association, a member of the Texas Gulf Historical Society, and a long time docent at the McFaddin-Ward House. She was on the board of the Beaumont Heritage Society, a member of the Jefferson Theater Preservation Society and belonged to the Mary Howell Garden Club. She was a member of the Own-A-Book Club and what she fondly referred to as the "Bunco Bunch." She loved meeting the ladies for Bunco, although all suspected the evening involved more conversation and wine than actual Bunco.

Jean began working in the 1950s and did many different things. She worked as a secretary at the Texas Company, an accounting clerk at Pennwalt Corporation, director of volunteers and youth services for the Beaumont Chapter of the American Red Cross and a legal assistant with a number of attorneys, including Weller, Wheelus & Green and Southeast Texas Legal Aid. Jean loved interacting with people and working in areas where she felt she was helping make a difference. Her favorite job was working with Roxie Lawson

selling Doncaster. Although it was a tremendous undertaking for both of them, she loved clothes and was right in her element.

Jean's greatest joy was her husband and family. She was a loving wife and mother. Jean and Marvin were married for forty-one wonderful years and were completely dedicated to one another. Jean's children were the true light and pride of her life. She was thoroughly devoted to her children and they brought her a great deal of happiness, joy and comfort. She was an amazing, wonderful and strong person and was the most remarkable mother her children could ever have. She is with them every day and will live in their hearts forever.

Survivors include her husband, Marvin Bryant of Beaumont; sons, Ronald Alex Amuny Jr. of Beaumont and Clay Andrus Amuny of Brady; daughters, Christy Amuny of Beaumont and Bonnie Lynn Cone and her husband, Ron of Austin; grandchildren, Lynnsey Locklear and her husband, Tim of Deer Park and Todd Siau and his wife, Tish of Port Neches; and great-grandchildren, Blayke Siau and Garrett Siau. She is also survived by her step-son, Butch Bryant and his wife, Gail of Deer Park.

Broussard's held a Christian Vigil on January 26, 2012, and the next day, St. Anne Catholic Church, Beaumont, celebrated with a Funeral Mass, followed by cremation.

Memorial contributions may be made to Tyrrell Historical Library Association, 395 North Pearl Street, Beaumont, Texas 77701; Humane Society of Southeast Texas, P.O. Box 1629, Beaumont, Texas 77704; or Julie Rogers "Gift of Life" Program, PMB #46, 148 South Dowlen Road, Beaumont, Texas 77707.

Courtesy Broussard's Mortuary  
Appeared in the *Beaumont Enterprise*, January 26, 2012





Joe Broussard II  
1919 - 2012

Joe Broussard II, age 92, was born here in Beaumont, Texas, on November 2, 1919, to Clyde Eloi and Verena Broussard. Joe attended St. Anthony Elementary School, St. Anthony High School, and the University of Notre Dame where he graduated *cum laude* in 1941.

Joe was happily married to Jeanne Aicher Broussard (see *Record*, 34: 92) for fifty-five years until her death in 1998. They had six children. In 2002, Joe married Winna Wilson and spent two and a half wonderful years with her prior to her death in 2004.

Joe is also predeceased by his son, Joe Clyde and his sister, Annette Steinman (see *Record*, 43: 73-74).

He is survived by his children, daughters Mary Lou Bartley and her husband, Michael of Peoria, Illinois, Regina Winegar of Beaumont, Texas, Jeanne Broussard of Austin, Texas, and Estelle Huston and her husband, Kevin, of Indianapolis, Indiana, and his son, Martin Broussard and his wife, Chris. Joe is also survived by his sisters, Katherine Belle Doyle of New Braunfels, Texas, Mary Elizabeth Donovan of Houston, Texas, and Estelle Schleuter of Pasadena, California.

“Big Joe” was also blessed with and survived by fourteen grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Joe spent his entire business career working for the family at Beaumont Rice Mills where he served as President and Chairman of the Board focusing primarily on oil and gas development. He was active in the Beaumont business community serving on numerous bank, savings and loan, and civic boards throughout his career.

Joe will be remembered for his love for and dedication to his family, his integrity and high moral character, his quiet generosity, but most of all for his

unwavering faith in God and life everlasting. He was a regular at daily 6:25 Mass at St. Anne for decades.

Broussard's held a gathering of his family and friends with a Christian wake service on March 18, 2012. St. Anne Catholic Church conducted the Mass of the Resurrection on the 19th.

Joe's family would like to extend their special thanks to Drs. George Thomas, Tim Colgan, Ray Dederian and John Henderson for the incredible medical care and attention Joe received. Beaumont is fortunate to have such a fine medical community.

Finally, we cannot thank Fred Cathedral enough for the loving care, attention, and friendship he gave Joe over the past three years.

Joe was truly blessed. Those wishing to send memorial gifts are asked to consider Catholic Charities of Southeast Texas, 2780 Eastex Freeway, Beaumont, TX 77703.

Courtesy Broussard's Mortuary

Appeared in the *Beaumont Enterprise*, March 18, 2012



Mildred Yount Manion  
1941 - 2012

Mildred Yount Manion, 71, was born on February 26, 1941, in Beaumont, Texas, the daughter of Mildred Frank Yount of Beaumont and Edward Daniel Manion of Tulsa, Oklahoma. She was the granddaughter of Miles Frank Yount and his wife Pansy and J. R. Manion and his wife Sara Kathryn.

Mildred was a gentle soul, loved and appreciated by family and friends. Her love for cats and dogs brought her joy, and she was a supporter of the Galveston Island Humane Society. She was also a loyal supporter of free breast cancer screening by the “Gift of Life” Program.

Mildred is survived by her sister, Kathryn Manion Haider; Kathryn’s two children, Karyn Haider Goodrich and her husband Paul, and Edward Manion Haider; and by Kathryn’s grandchildren, Melanie Anne Goodrich, Haley Hotton Goodrich and Grace Manion Goodrich. She is also survived by her brother, Edward Daniel Manion Jr. Edward’s two daughters are Kristin Cherry Acuna and her husband Augie and their children, Gus Acuna and Ava Acuna; and Courtney Yount Curtis and her daughter, Cammy Curtis.

Broussard’s held a gathering of her family and friends on April 20, 2012. St. Anne Catholic Church celebrated a Mass of Christian Burial on the 21st, followed by interment in Magnolia Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Mildred’s memory may be made to Galveston Island Humane Society, 6814 Broadway, Galveston, Texas 77554, or to Julie Rogers “Gift of Life” Program, PMB #46 148 S. Dowlen Road, Beaumont, Texas 77707.

Courtesy Broussard’s Mortuary  
Appeared in the *Beaumont Enterprise*, April 19, 2012

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# PROCEEDINGS

## *Texas Gulf Historical Society Minutes*

ANN CRESWELL

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Fall Meeting  
October 11, 2011

The Texas Gulf Historical Society met in the McFaddin-Ward Visitor's Center Auditorium. President J. Earl Brickhouse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Gilbert Adams Jr. offered an opening prayer.

Recording Secretary Ann Creswell read the minutes of the Annual Meeting, May 17, 2011. Anne Nelson moved that the minutes be approved and Gilbert Adams Jr. seconded. The motion carried.

Treasurer Anne Nelson presented the Treasurer's Financial Report. Capitol One accounts on October 10, 2011, are Checking Account \$7,014.20 and Savings Account \$5,084.10. Expenses include \$4,344.89 for printing the *Index* and \$800 for the reprint; mailing letters \$59.00; copies \$11.69; a new post office box \$40.00 and 3 boxes of envelopes with the new P.O. Box \$96.00; for a total of \$5,311.58. Anne announced that after checking on those not paid for 3 consecutive years, 25 members and institutions that had not paid were sent letters notifying them that in order to remain a member they would need to get caught up immediately, or they would be deleted as members. Two members and one institution paid which meant that 21 members and 1 institution were deleted from membership.

Membership Chair Linda Cummings announced new member Dr. Mary Scheer.

Several announcements were made:

The *Index* will be for sale at the end of the meeting for \$15 and then at the Tyrrell Library for \$20.

A reminder to pay dues of \$20 for individual, \$35 for couple and \$25 for an institution.

Officers need to inform Earl of your wishes concerning remaining in office so that a slate can be prepared at an upcoming Board meeting.

An invitation was extended to attend a 1940s style show presented by the McFaddin-Ward House volunteers. "Fashions for your Delight" will be held at the McFaddin-Ward House Visitor Center on October 20, 2011.

The Lamar History Department and the College of Arts and Sciences issued an invitation to an Open House and Reception in recognition of the joint publication of the *Record* with the Texas Gulf Historical Society on November 10 from 5 to 7 pm at the Lamar University, Archer Building, Ste. 200.

Dr. John Storey announced that the *Record* will be out the end of October or early November and will include articles about banking in Texas including Beaumont, an abridged version of the Bolivar area presentation made at our Fall meeting, the Tidelands controversy and Price Daniels, and one on the desegregation of Orange ISD.

President Brickhouse then recognized Robert Robertson to introduce the speaker. Dr. Mary Scheer is an expert in Texas history, a scholar who has written several books and is the new Chairman of the History Department at Lamar University. Dr. Scheer noted that many students do not recognize the bust in the center of the quadrangle and this led her to question why students at his namesake university do not know more about Mirabeau B. Lamar. She stated that it is in part because Lamar has failed to attract the devotion of other nineteenth-century Texas figures such as Houston, Austin or Crockett. She also noted that there is no recent biography of him. Dr. Scheer described Mirabeau B. Lamar as a cultured visionary more idealistic and Southern than

Western. A published poet who joined the Revolution after Goliad and the Alamo, Lamar served as Vice-President then President of the Republic of Texas and is considered the Father of Texas Education. Through some of his poems, Dr. Scheer gave us another glimpse into this man who served after Houston and lived in his shadow.

Dr. John Storey commented that an essay contest was held in 1932 to choose the new name for the former South Park Junior College and that Otho Plummer won this contest with his essay about Mirabeau B. Lamar.

President Brickhouse thanked Dr. Scheer and those in attendance then reminded them of the Spring meeting to be held at Lamar on February 7, 2012. He encouraged all to attend and bring guests. He invited all to purchase a copy of the *Index* and/or pay their dues and enjoy the refreshments before leaving.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Winter Meeting  
February 7, 2012

The Texas Gulf Historical Society met in the Spindletop-Gladys City Museum Center Auditorium. President Gilbert Adams Jr. welcomed members and visitors and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Chaplain Marilyn Adams offered an opening prayer.

Membership Chair Linda Cummings announced new members Dr. Jimmy Bryan, Ron Eugene Schroeder, James Westgate and The Jefferson County Historical Commission.

Recording Secretary Ann Creswell read the minutes of the Fall Meeting, Tuesday, October 11, 2011, and the Board Meeting, January 30, 2012. Joe Fisher Jr. moved that both sets of the minutes be approved and Anne Nelson seconded. The motion carried. President Adams recognized and expressed appreciation to Past President J. Earl Brickhouse and also thanked the officers for their continued commitment to the organization.

President Adams gave a special recognition to Dr. Jimmy Bryan, editor of the *Record*. He stated that Dr. Bryan is a specialist in 19th century cultural history and that we are grateful for his effort and leadership.

Treasurer Joe Fisher Jr. stated that we were solvent but remarked that dues still need to be paid. Anne Nelson pointed out that membership forms may be obtained from the organization website [texasgulphistorysociety.org](http://texasgulphistorysociety.org). Joe Fisher expressed a special thanks to Gilbert Adams for his commitment to the organization and pointed out that Gilbert was president in 1984 and once again is serving in that capacity.

President Adams then recognized Robert Robertson to introduce the speaker Tom Lamb Jr. In addition to his association with Lamb Printing, he is well known as a long time civic leader and past President of Rotary. His research into family history has provided us with an interesting look at the printing business and early Beaumont history. Thomas A. Lamb and his family were encouraged to come to Beaumont by Hannah Leonard Lamb's brother, Beaumont lawyer Jon Leonard. Although unsuccessful in an attempt to grow Indigo here, the family became very involved in the early history of Beaumont. T. A. Lamb and Sons was started in 1895 and the Lamb family became a major part of the development of Beaumont as well as played a historic role



in Beaumont's printing business. The Lamb family witnessed the evolution of printing processes including press and Linotype. Tom J. Lamb was one of three printers on "printers' row" who survived the Great Depression by working together to alternate jobs with consistent prices. His guidance was evident by the fact that he was chosen by the printers to determine the prices. Lamb Printing continued to be an influential force in this area. When the business was closed, the equipment was kept and it is intended to be part of the Lamb Printing Building at the Gladys City Museum that is under development and should open soon. This museum will be an important historical link in the heritage of Southeast Texas.

President Adams thanked Mr. Lamb for his presentation and his family's dedication to the community. He invited those in attendance to enjoy the refreshments provided by the Social Committee before leaving, thanked them for coming and reminded them of the Annual meeting to be held at McFaddin-Ward Visitor's Center Auditorium in May 2012.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Annual Meeting  
May 8, 2012

The Texas Gulf Historical Society Annual Meeting was held at the home of Marilyn and Gilbert Adams Jr. Members and guests socialized while enjoying refreshments provided by Marilyn Adams and Anne Nelson.

Past-President J. Earl Brickhouse called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. Marilyn Adams offered an opening prayer.

Dr. Mary Scheer introduced Robert Robertson who spoke to us about the new edition of the *Record*, which he reported, is moving ahead nicely. We can look forward to an article about World War II historical sites in East Texas from two historians with the Texas Historical Commission and an article from the Director of the Museum of the Gulf Coast, Shannon Harris, about the history of the musical instrument invented in Port Arthur commonly referred to as a “washboard.” This issue will also include Notes & Documents about recent developments at the Tyrrell Historical Library archives regarding computerized index with abstracts.

President Adams welcomed us to the Annual Meeting and thanked Mr. Robertson for filling in for Editor, Dr. Jimmy Bryan, who was called out of town.

Anne Nelson reminded us that membership dues could be given to her and she will get them to Treasurer Joe Fisher Jr.

The minutes of the Spring Meeting, February 7, 2012, were read by Recording Secretary Ann Creswell. Earl Brickhouse moved and David Montgomery seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion carried.

Dr. Scheer announced that on October 16, 2012, the History Department and the College of Arts and Sciences will welcome Bill Barker of Colonial Williamsburg who will present an “Evening with Thomas Jefferson.” Dr. Scheer encouraged all to attend and then introduced new member, Dr. Yasuko Sato, who for two years has been an Asian History specialist at Lamar.

President Adams remarked that this is the 48th Annual Meeting and that as the organization moves toward its 50th year there are things that we need to accomplish. His suggestions included developing goals; developing a fiscal plan—including creating a yearly budget and a 5-year plan; and to be sure we comply with all rules for non-profits. We should develop guidelines for how

to deal with historical documents and we especially need to look for ways to highlight the unique history of this area and increase public awareness of these.

Robert Robertson reminded us of the expertise available through Dr. Scheer and her affiliations as we work on these projects. He then thanked Marilyn and Gilbert Adams for hosting the Annual Meeting and for their gracious hospitality.

President Adams thanked all for coming and adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

## MEMBERS

\*Gilbert T. Adams Jr.  
 Marilyn Thornton Adams  
 Kent Morrison Adams  
 Molly S. Adams  
 \*Patricia Adams  
 \*Dr Charles L. Allen  
 Hez Aubey  
 Rexine A. Aubey  
 Dr. Barbara D. Batty  
 Louis Henry Beard  
 Carrie Marie Beard  
 Larry Beaulieu  
 Caliste Boykin Benckenstein  
 Don J Benton  
 Francis Blair Bethea  
 Vida B Blair  
 Dr. Robert R. Birdwell  
 Susanne Brown Birdwell  
 Karla Schwartz Blum  
 Lawrence H. Blum  
 Faye Byer Blum  
 C. Kathleen Boudreaux  
 James Earl Brickhouse  
 The Hon Jack Bascomb Brooks  
 Charlotte Collins Brooks  
 James Blue Broussard  
 Paula Ann Comeaux Broussard  
 Joseph Eloi Broussard II  
 William Alex Broussard  
 Marie Martin Broussard  
 Jimmy L. Bryan Jr.  
 Elizabeth Ann Bryant  
 Barbara Ellen Buchanan  
 Marvin R. Bullard  
 Linda Birdwell Bullard  
 Marjorie Rembert Carroll  
 Dr. Lamar John Ryan Cecil Jr.  
 Kathryn R. Cherry  
 Stewart M. Chisum  
 Bessie F. Chisum

Penny Lousia Clark  
 Eugenia Coffin  
 Edwin Gerald Cordts Jr.  
 Grace Naquin Cordts  
 Regina Babin Cox  
 Mary Ann Snowden Crabbe  
 \*Will Block Crenshaw  
 \*Joy Hopkins Crenshaw  
 Elizabeth Ann Creswell  
 Kevin Bryan Cronin  
 Susannah McNeill Cronin  
 C. Cohron Crutchfield Jr.  
 Rosalie Woodhead Crutchfield  
 James Glenn Cummings  
 Linda Parmer Cummings  
 George Austin Dishman III  
 Phoebe Hambright Dishman  
 George Dishman  
 Judy Gay Dishman  
 Melanie Dishman  
 \*James Dale Dowell  
 Dianne Duperior  
 Frank Allan Eastman  
 Kaye Eastman  
 Harold Eisen  
 James A. Elkins, III  
 Ronald D. Ellington  
 Ronald Coleman Ellison  
 Joseph Jefferson Fisher Jr.  
 Gerald R. Flatten  
 Carol K. Flatten  
 Charlotte P. Fontenot  
 Joanne Stedman Fulbright  
 Richard Michael Gachot  
 Jonathon Kirk Gerland  
 Patricia Gilbert  
 Mary Anna Glasgow  
 Charles D. Glass  
 Guy Neil Goodson  
 Kimberly White Goodson

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## MEMBERS

Carroll Berley Gorham  
\*Madelon Douglas Graham  
Edward H. Green  
Margaret Phelan Green  
Joseph Martin Green  
Margaret Woodin Green  
Hon Carl R. Griffith  
Elizabeth Marion Logan Gwin  
Dr. Howell Holmes Gwin Jr.  
Kathryn Manion Haider  
John T. Halbert  
Wilma D. Strickland Halbert  
Mildred Powell Hall  
Robert J. Hambright  
Kathleen W. Hambright  
Robert L. Hansen  
Coleen C. Hansen  
Joseph Denton Harris IV  
Donna Walters Harris  
William B. Hataway  
Joan Mayfield Hataway  
David W. Hearn Jr.  
The Honorable Thad Heartfield  
Cornelia Bozada Heartfield  
J. Thad Heartfield  
Melanie L. McAllen Heartfield  
Theresa L. Storey Hefner-Babb  
David Eric Heinz  
Carolyn Benford Henderson  
Lewis Hoffer  
Marsha Hoffer  
Charlotte A. Holliman  
Marion Ware Holt  
Charles Allen Howell Jr.  
Elizabeth Perkins Wells Howell  
Alan E. Hubner  
Benny Hughes  
Allison Hughes  
Tanner Truett Hunt Jr.  
Mary Ellen Phelan Hunt  
Romona G. Hutchinson  
Ethelyn Ann George Jenkins  
Helen Dunshie Johnsen  
Andrew Jay Johnson  
Betty Holmes Johnson  
Maxine Johnston  
Christine Sanders Juckett  
Dr. Mavis P. Kelsey Sr.  
Paul A. Kessler  
Martha Kate King  
Jeanne Cranmiller Lamb  
Thomas K Lamb Jr.  
Elizabeth Morgan Lamb  
Wanda Cruise Landrey  
Kathleen Lamont Leaf  
Curtis W. Leister  
Laurie Hall Leister  
Judith Walker Linsley  
Charles B. Locke  
Gloria Searts Locke  
Dean Lovejoy  
James R. Makin  
Lynda Kay Makin  
\*Mildred Yount Manion  
Dr. Paul W McCormick  
Karen Campbell McCormick  
Alan McNeill  
Barbara Gordon McNeill  
The Hon. James D. McNicholas  
John Gregg Middleton  
David E. Montgomery  
Leslie Millard Moor Jr.  
Yvonne Lyle Osborne Moor  
Theodorick Edwin Moor Jr.  
Barbara Strong Moor  
Jerry J. Nathan  
Marilyn A. James Neathery  
Nancy Brooks Neild  
\*Dr. John Lockwood Nelson  
\*Anne Shepherd Nelson

## MEMBERS

Dr. Edward Alexander Neusel  
 Sharon Ruddy Neusel  
 \*Lipscomb Norvell Jr.  
 \*Cynthia Tate Norvell  
 James Rowland Old Jr.  
 Ann Clary Fancher Old  
 Dr. Sam Frank Parigi  
 Margaret Davis Parker  
 Lou Birdwell Parris  
 T. Michael Parrish  
 Carroll Douglas Phillips  
 Roy Marvin Philp  
 Susan Phillips Philp  
 Gwili E Posey  
 Wiley Ken Poston II  
 Brenda Chance Poston  
 James Cornelius Potter Jr.  
 Lula Langham Potter  
 Ida McFaddin Pyle  
 William Reed Quilliam Jr.  
 Betty H. Rienstra  
 Joyce Fergusson Richardson  
 Ellen Walker Rienstra  
 Stephen Christopher Roane  
 Rachael Ann Low Roane  
 Robert J. Robertson  
 June Peckham Robertson  
 Regina J. Rogers  
 Kenneth E. Ruddy  
 Billie Sain Russell  
 Christine Moor Sanders  
 Yasuko Sato  
 \*Robert L. Schaadt  
 Dr. Mary L. Scheer  
 Ron E. Schroeder  
 Lucinda Lewis Smith Seale  
 William Seale Jr.  
 \*William Smythe Shepherd Sr.  
 Katherine Quick Sibley  
 Dr. John Terry Smith

Lulu L. Washburn Smith  
 Joedna Mills Smyth  
 Mathew M. Sooudi  
 John P. Stafford  
 Suzanne K. Stafford  
 Dr. Jeremiah Milton Stark  
 Jo Ann Pankratz Stiles  
 Dr. John W. Storey  
 Yvonne Aaron Sutherlin  
 Vallie Fletcher Taylor  
 Helen Hebert Travis  
 Marjorie Shepherd Turner  
 Cecilia Gutierrez Venable  
 Jules R. Viterbo  
 \*Dr. Charles R. Walker  
 Patricia Brandow Walker  
 Charles H. Weinbaum  
 Betty Perkins Wells  
 Margaret Collier Wheelus  
 Melanie S. Wiggins  
 Elta Smith Williams  
 Mary Clare Wilsford  
 Rosine McFaddin Wilson  
 Callie Mae Coe Wilson  
 Anne Fisher Winslow  
 Ben S. Woodhead Jr.  
 Sharon Compton Woodhead  
 Naaman Johnson Woodland Jr.  
 Mary Baldwin Woodland  
 Dr. Ralph Ancil Wooster

Life Members shown with \*

Institutional Members are listed at the end of the *Record*.

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## PAST PRESIDENTS

Lipscomb Norvell	1964-1968
Chilton O'Brien	1968-1970
Dr. Charles Walker	1970-1972
Gilbert T. Adams	1972-1974
Judge Joseph J. Fisher	1974-1976
W. Smythe Shepherd	1976-1978
Jack B. Osborne	1978-1980
Peter B. Wells	1980-1982
Fred Lock Benckenstin	1982-1984
Gilbert T. Adams Jr.	1984-1986
Judge Wendell Conn Radford	1986-1988
Dale Dowell	1988-1990
Don Kelly	1990-1992
Robert J. Robertson	1992-1994
Naaman J. Woodland Jr.	1994-1996
Joan Mayfield Hataway	1996-1998
Yvonne Osborne Moor	1998-1999
William B. Hataway	1999-2001
Alex Broussard	2002-2003
Penny Lousia Clark	2004-2006
Curtis Leister	2006-2008
James Earl Brickhouse	2009-2011

## PAST EDITORS

Alyce J. McWilliams	1966
Joseph F. Combs	1966-1967
Beatrice Burnaby	1968-1969
Alexine Crawford Howell	1970
J. Roger Omohundro	1971-1972
Charlsie Berly	1973, 1976, 1978-1985
Charlsie Berly, as managing editor	1965-1966
W. T. Block	1974-1975, 1977
Ellen Rienstra and Judith Linsley	1986-1989
Marion Holt	1990-1995
Jonathon K. Gerland	1996-1999
Judith W. Linsley	1999-2002
Penny Lousia Clark	2004-2006
Robert Schott	2007-2008
Dr. Ralph Wooster	2009-2010
Dr. John Storey	2011



## INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Allen County Public Library	Fort Wayne, IN
American Antiquarian Society	Worcester, MA
Baylor University Libraries	Waco, TX
Beaumont Heritage Society	Beaumont, TX
CB#3938 Davis Library	Chappel Hill,NC
Detroit Public Library	Detroit, MI
Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library	San Antonio, TX
EBSCO Publishing	Ipswich, MA
Ed Rachal Memorial Library	Falfurrias,TX
EP Ipswich	Ipswich, MA
Fire Museum	Beaumont, TX
Galveston Texas History Center	Galveston, TX
Gates Memorial Library	Port Arthur, TX
Harvard College Library	Cambridge, MA
Houston Public Library	Houston, TX
Jefferson County Historical Commission	Beaumont, TX
Lamar University Library	Beaumont, TX
Lamar University Orange Library	Orange, TX
Lewisville Public Library	Lewisville, TX
Magnolia Cemetery	Beaumont, TX
McFaddin Ward House	Beaumont, TX
New Orleans Public Library	New Orleans, LA
New York Historical Society Library	New York, NY
Orange Public Library	Orange, TX
Port Arthur Public Library	Port Arthur, TX
Sam Houston Regional Library	Liberty, TX
Southwest Collection	Lubbock, TX
Stephen F. Austin State University	Nacogdoches, TX
Sterling Municipal Library	Baytown, TX
Texas Christian University, Burnett Library	Fort Worth, TX
Texas A & M University, Evans Library	College Station, TX
Texas Entergy Museum	Beaumont, TX
Texas Tech University Library	Lubbock, TX
History Center	Diboll, TX
Newberry Library	Chicago, IL
University of North Texas Library	Denton, TX
University of Texas at Arlington	Arlington, TX