



THE CYCLONE



San Angelo Hosts 2002 Annual Meeting



Fort Concho National Historic Landmark in San Angelo
Western Motel, 3017 Loop 306 in San Angelo. Call (915) 223-1273 by March 29 for reservations. Mention WTHA for the conference rate of \$55 per night. Make plans now to join us in San Angelo on April 5-6 for another chapter in West Texas history.

Angelo State University in San Angelo will host the seventy-ninth annual meeting of the West Texas Historical Association on April 5-6, 2002. Sessions will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Friday in the new Houston Harte University Center. Program Chair Arnolde DeLeon and his committee have assembled a slate of ten panels. Book exhibitors and the silent auction will also be featured in the university center.

The Friday night banquet will be held at Fort Concho and will feature writer Mike Cox with a special presentation entitled "Scraping the Layers off the Battle of Paint Rock Story." Dr. Garry Nall of Canyon will preside at the business luncheon Saturday at the university center. Tours will be available of San Angelo's historic Concho Avenue on Friday morning and Fort Chadbourne on Saturday afternoon.

A block of rooms have been reserved for the conference at the Best Western Motel, 3017 Loop 306 in San Angelo. Call (915) 223-1273 by March 29 for reservations. Mention WTHA for the conference rate of \$55 per night. Make plans now to join us in San Angelo on April 5-6 for another chapter in West Texas history.

Fort Chadbourne

by Jim Matthews

Standing on the windswept hills above Oak Creek about eleven miles northeast of Bronte, Texas, are the sandstone walls of Fort Chadbourne, once a central outpost in the line of defense along the Texas frontier. Companies A and K of the Eighth U.S. Infantry established the post on October 28, 1852. Named for Lieutenant Theodore Lincoln Chadbourne, a casualty of the Mexican-American War, the isolated fort soon became a frequent way station for travelers. The Butterfield Overland Mail stopped there from 1858 to 1861. At the start of the Civil War, Fort Chadbourne surrendered to Captain Robert Halley's Confederate ranger company. Halley's lieutenant, Sidney Green Davidson, described the fort to his wife, "The country is very poor, but pretty and Chadbourne is as pretty [sic] a place as you will find."

After the war, the Fourth U.S. Cavalry manned Fort Chadbourne for a brief period in 1867. But due to a shortage of water and wood, they moved on to establish Fort Concho (in present day San Angelo). Garland Richards believes that "had the army built seven miles up on Fish Creek," Fort Chadbourne might have remained a



Stabilization photo courtesy of Lana Richards
vital frontier outpost. Richards and his wife Lana are current owners of the property where Fort Chadbourne stands. In 1999, they created the Fort Chadbourne Foundation to protect and preserve the historic site and structures of the old post.

One hundred and fifty years after the post was first established, Fort Chadbourne is once more under construction. The Richards currently are stabilizing the existing structures through grants from the Summerlee and Dodge-Jones Foundations. For the past two years, they have worked seven days a week on the fort. Garland Richards says that had he realized how intensive this project would be, he might never have started. That seems unlikely, since Fort Chadbourne is truly a part of his life. His family founded the OD Ranch with headquarters at the abandoned post in 1876.

As a child, Garland played among the ruins. "I thought that everybody had a frontier fort in their backyard," he commented. "Now I want to give the gift of Fort Chadbourne, which is part of my heritage, back to the Texas public."

So far the project has located parts of 30 to 35 buildings and stabilized all of the standing walls. This stabilization was accomplished using a method many experts did not believe would be successful. Instead of taking down each wall and rebuilding, Richards braced the walls and used pressure to manipulate them back into position. Then he mortared the cracks using a pressure pump and solidified each wall from the top down. The success of this project is most evident in the two barracks. Historical architect, Joe Freeman of Austin stated, "These 2 buildings (in my opinion) have risen to that level of timeless, transcendent architecture and are among the best in Texas..."

The next phase for Garland and Lana Richards is the creation of a visitors' center and museum. In the meantime, they continue to welcome and encourage visitors to experience the heritage of the old army and ranching culture on the Texas frontier.

From the Executive Director



Dear Fellow association members:

Last fall the nation and West Texas came to grips with an unconscionable terrorist act of monumental proportions. Reeling from the shock, Americans and West Texans quickly recovered and poured their hearts into acts of compassion for victims, and channeled their disbelief and anger into making the world safe once again for the resolute and true. Moreover, we have all seen a remarkable resurgence of patriotism. Both U.S. and Texas flags wave proudly reminding people that commitment to freedom and liberty are not just words, but a way of life in a state where its people can still remember and touch its storied past. History tells us that Texas was forged by fire, and the same is true for America. In the aftermath of 9-11, both are reminded that vigilance, sacrifice, and a steely resolve are the only guarantees for freedom.

Annual Meeting. As we speak the local arrangements committee is completing the final details for the April 5-6 annual meeting in San Angelo. Preston Lewis and Suzanne Campbell have been working diligently, and it is shaping up to be a great return to a city that has always been a most cordial host.

Angelo State University is hosting the meeting this year. The newly completed Houston Harte University Center will be home to ten sessions, book exhibitors, the silent auction, and meeting registration. Arnoldo DeLeon and his program committee have put together a fine slate of papers. Sessions will start at 1:00 p.m. Friday and end Saturday at 11:45 a.m. The Friday evening President's Reception and the Banquet will be held at Fort Concho and the Saturday Luncheon will take place in the university center.

Tours. Those traditional early birds who arrive the night before can take in the sights Friday morning with a guided tour of Concho Avenue in downtown San Angelo. Tanya Norris, who did her master's thesis on the street and the characters who visited it, will be our guide. Tanya will include in

the tour a visit to "Miss Hattie's," the famous bordello. The cost is \$5 per person. Information will be included in the meeting mail out. There will also be an opportunity to tour Fort Concho Friday evening before the start of the President's reception.

During the meeting, members are encouraged to visit the Dr. Ralph R. Chase West Texas Collection archives. With its expanded facilities and its vast holdings of historic documents, photographs and maps chronicling the legacy of West Texas, it is an essential stop. Please make plans to visit Suzanne Campbell and her fine staff.

Hotel. Various hotels are available in the city, but for your convenience a block of rooms have been set aside with a special rate of \$55 at the Best Western located at 3017 Loop 306. We ask that you make your arrangements by March 29. Call 915-223-1273 for reservations.

Fort Chadbourne. An additional tour is planned for historic Fort Chadbourne immediately after the Saturday luncheon. The site is located near Bronte, 45 minutes away from San Angelo, and it will be a nice stop on the way home for many association members. This tour will be a special treat since the site has been held privately since its days as a 19th century military installation. You can register for the tour when you receive the meeting packet. A \$5 donation for each person is requested.

Mike Cox. The Friday night banquet will feature Mike Cox who will regale us with his presentation, "Scraping the Layers off the Battle of Paint Rock Story," probing into the 1846 battle wherein legendary Ranger Captain Jack Hays supposedly defeated a superior force of Comanches. He will examine the story, its origins and ponder whether the battle actually ever happened. As many of you know, Mike is an association member and has written 11 non-fiction books, including *Texas Ranger Tales*, a collection of true stories about the Lone Star State's legendary peace officers. The book won the Writers League of Texas Violet Crown Award for best non-fiction in 1997. He is Director of Member Services for the Texas Press Association.

Vatican Exhibit. In addition to the annual meeting, the association will have the opportunity to attend a number of interesting events during the year. Members should watch for the Vatican Museums Exhibition (www.vaticanexhibit.org) coming to Lubbock on Friday August 9. The event package, put together exclusively for WTHA members, will include a ticket to the Vatican exhibit, bus transportation, hotel

accommodations and dinner for Friday night. Once we have prices we will mail registration material to all members and it will be available on a "first come—first served" basis. You will also be able to register at the annual meeting. The exhibit will highlight 31 medieval frescoes by master painters of the Roman School (1250-1340). The frescoes were originally from the churches of St. Nicola in Carcere and St. Agnese, both in Rome. Lubbock will be the only place in the U.S. to host the exhibit.

Tour of the Ft. Griffin Country. Bryan Edwards, a member from Lubbock, is arranging a historical tour of the Ft. Griffin country for an April weekend (Sat./Sun.) after the WTHA meeting in San Angelo. So far, the tour schedule for Saturday includes a visit to Ft. Griffin, the town of Ft. Griffin, Camp Cooper (Robert E. Lee was stationed there before the Civil War), and Fort Davis, the private fort downstream on the Brazos. The tour will stay overnight in Albany (special groups rates) and will be entertained by a historical presentation. The group will have dinner and possibly a tour of the Old Jail Art Center.

On Sunday the group will visit one of the underground Atlas ICBM sites near Abilene (See info at www.atlasmissile.com) where it will have lunch. In the afternoon the group will tour the Trent Mesa wind turbine site where several hundred wind generators have been installed recently. The tour will go inside the actual wind generator towers to see the turbines in action. For information contact Bryan by email at Bryan@prodistributors.com or by phone at office 806-794-3692 or home 806-799-5783. Space is limited to 25 people and price will be announced as soon as the date is confirmed.

Fall Tour. Bryan says there is a second trip possible in the early fall that would include a tour of other forts and a visit to Grant Hall's archeological digs at the Presidio and Mission in Menard. We will forward updates when available.

Please remember to encourage people to apply for the research and book awards. Student and member research grants are available with \$1,000 stipends for each. The Best book award winner for either West Texas history or fiction receives \$500. Check www.wtha.org or call 806/742-9076 for more information. The application due date is January 10. Send all inquiries to the WTHA offices or have them call.

Have a great spring and we will see everyone in San Angelo.

Tai Kreidler

Experiences of an Army Surgeon at Fort Chadbourne

by Colonel M. L. Crimmons

[Editor's Note: The following is a condensed version of an article appearing in the 1939 YEAR BOOK.]

This is the story of Dr. Ebenezer Swift, who served at Fort Chadbourne, from 1852-1856.

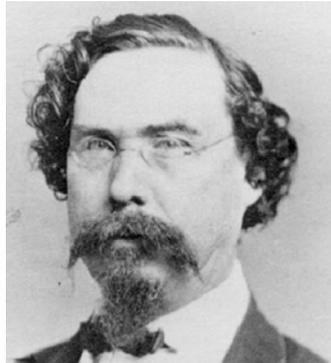
The records of the Swift family show that the first member to arrive in America from England was William Swyft of Sandwich, Massachusetts, during the great "Boston Immigration" of 1630-31.

For three centuries the Swifts have served our country in peace and in war. Outstanding among them was General John Swift, who enlisted as a soldier in our army during the Revolutionary War. He was wounded in the neck during a fight with the Indians and Pennamites, and after the Wyoming Massacre, he established a home in what is now Palmyra, New York, in 1789. He was commissioned Brigadier General of New York Volunteers in 1812. In 1814 he led a small force from Queenstown Heights down the Niagra to Ft. George where he captured a picket consisting of 60 men of the British Army. Before he took the precaution to disarm them, one of them asked, "Where is General Swift?" He replied, "I am General Swift," whereupon the prisoner shot him through the breast, from which wound he died July 13, 1814. The Legislature of New York sent a sword suitably engraved to his eldest son and directed that his portrait be painted and hung in the City Hall of New York.

The first member of the Swift family to come to Texas was Doctor Ebenezer Swift, Assistant Surgeon of the United States Army. He was born October 8, 1817, and he died December 24, 1885. At the age of fifteen, he ran away from home and went to sea. He sailed around Cape Horn in 1832. He studied medicine and entered the United States Army as an assistant surgeon from Ohio [on] October 30, 1847, and served during the War with Mexico.

He was first stationed in Texas at the military post of Brazos Santiago, about ten miles north of the mouth of the Rio Grande. In April 1849, the cholera epidemic swept the island and he wrote, "As flowers of the field, men faded away." He also had charge of old Fort Polk, nine miles distant on the mainland.

About the last of May a hurricane struck Brazos Santiago, when Dr. Swift was the only commissioned officer on the island. He was awakened about three a.m. by a brilliant light in his room. His first thought was that the building was on fire, and he got up and soon found that it was produced by lightning. He



Dr. Ebenezer Swift

(courtesy of the Fort Chadbourne Foundation)

stepped out on his piazza where a strong wind was blowing and the atmosphere seemed to be on fire. He wrote: "One tremendous blaze of electricity, constant and continuous, waving, glittering and dancing as if it were on the furious wind. The thunder was incessant, like the rapid and constant discharge of many pieces of heavy ordnance. It soon blew violently, and I hastened to secure my shutters and doors. Presently my house seemed to tremble and totter as though it resisted an immense power urged against it. Then shutters, doors and windows were torn away. I rushed outside for fear of being buried in ruins, and found that I could not stand against the force of the hurricane. I embraced a post that I had used for hitching my horse, and enjoyed a fine view of the sublime destruction, standing to my knees in water and deluged with rain. The sea had flooded the island; all the vessels in the harbor were forced from their moorings, and either sunk or driven ashore. Houses were blown down, and some with such force as to shiver them into small pieces. 'Tis useless for me to go into details and only necessary to say the hurricane lasted more than twenty minutes, and the ruin of the town was complete. The wind seemed to have a fearful strength, such as I have never known."

[Soon after, Swift's] brother John was sick in New Orleans, so he got permission to attend him [in June 1849. Swift was then put on the staff of] Brevet Brigadier General George M. Brooke, Colonel Fifth U.S. Infantry. Swift left New Orleans with General Brooke for the Eighth Military District at San Antonio, Texas.

In September 1849, the Indians were on a rampage, and he was soon ordered to Fort Martin Scott, two and a half miles south of Fredericksburg, Texas. Then he was ordered east, but was back again at Brazos Santiago on January 14, 1851. He arrived back at his old post, Fort Martin Scott, on March 24, 1851. He was evidently a very popular officer, for he

had a fine welcome and his friends rode out ten miles from the fort to receive him. After cordial embraces and welcome libations, they rode together to the fort.

On his way from Indianola, [Swift] met the girl he [had been] in love with in San Antonio, nine months before. He had heard that she was expected; so he waited for her steamer to arrive, and then they rode together in the same carriage, her father, friends and servants having discreetly proceeded in another. He wrote to his sister that he was too young and too poor to marry, and that he would wait till he was forty, and then he would be in his prime and have double his present pay. His base pay at that time was about twenty-five dollars, but with his allowances for food, a servant, with clothing for the same, and horse, it raised his total to about four times his base pay. The day before he arrived in San Antonio his good and true friend Brevet Major General G.M. Brooke died on March 9, 1851. [Swift] evidently expected to be put on General Brooke's staff again, and he was bitterly disappointed and wrote: "I never lost a truer friend. He was the best, purest and noblest man I ever knew . . . I do not think he could conceive an evil thought." Couriers had met him while he was enroute to San Antonio, telling him of General Brooke's illness, so he hurried to his aid, only to arrive too late.

He wrote his sister again from Fort Martin Scott on April 27, 1851, mostly about the girl he was in love with, stating that "I hear from her almost daily, and I should go mad if I didn't." He wrote he was poor, and she had always been "in the midst of affluence, surrounded by friends, gaiety, and fashion."

On May 12, 1851, he writes that "Dear Sarah" has been very sick in San Antonio and added: "It is only seventy miles to ride horseback in the hot sun, but that's nothing. I'd go through fire, for that distance, to see her now." He again wrote his sister on June 15, 1851. He tells his sister that Sarah had heard of some of his peccadilloes, so when he rode the seventy hot miles to San Antonio, he was hot and she was cold. He said he was broken hearted, "But due to a low diet, fish and greens, Congress water and lemonade, light reading and gay society I am quite recovered."

Swift wrote again on July 1, 1851, mostly about Sarah; and again on August 30, he wrote he had just returned from a three weeks' visit to San Antonio. Three parts of this long letter have been torn out, but it was nearly all about Sarah. She had visited Fredericksburg for two weeks and they were having a "lucy bow" party for her. She put a bow over the door and

he was the first one to pass under it, I suspect by connivance of his friends. So according to the rules of the game, he was to place the bow under his pillow at night and dream on it. He wrote a poem of nine stanzas about his dream; after an amorous start it ends as follows:

“For this I might be banished Heaven/ But yet it must be done,/ I made a spring, a sudden bounce,/ to catch her as she fled./ She screamed, I woke and found/ I’d tumbled out of bed.”

He wrote on October 24, 1851, that orders had been issued for concentrating troops on the Mexican border, that they were anticipating a long and tedious war with the Comanches, and that he was sorry to see the prospect of our country’s bounds being extended. This was about the time of agitation for the extension of the boundary of New Mexico southward, agitation that led to the Gadsden Purchase. The visits of Sarah to Fredericksburg were becoming more frequent, and on February 29, 1852, Swift wrote his sister from San Antonio that he had married Sarah Edwards Capers on February 18, and then on the expiration of his leave on March 10, he was ordered to proceed to join the regimental headquarters Eighth United States Infantry at a remote camp on the Indian frontier 200 miles away, and 150 miles beyond the last white settlement. They had no houses to live in and would have to depend on tents for the next nine months. This was Camp Johnston, situated on the south side of the north fork of the Concho, a branch of the Colorado River. The post was established March 15, 1852. He wrote that the post was considered the most important on the frontier, and he was complimented upon being sent there. He wrote from Camp Johnston on May 30, that due to a lack of transportation he had been delayed at San Antonio a month, and that he had two fine horses to his carriage, that he could easily travel forty miles a day, and that he had made the trip from Fort Martin Scott to Fort Mason, a distance of forty-five miles, in one day. He then went on 110 miles to his new station Camp Johnston and wrote: “Fort Mason is some distance in advance of the settlements, and we are of course in advance of it, in a wild country, inhabited by Indians, prairie dogs and rattle snakes.” They were in constant dread that the river would rise and drown them out; so the post was abandoned November 18, 1852, after they had been flooded out.

They then moved on thirty-five miles to Camp Chadbourne, with their headquarters staff and five companies of the Eighth United States Infantry. They evidently did not have the fine carriage they had started out in, for the iron axle broke when they were four or five miles from camp and their escort was as many miles in advance of them. Down they came, wife, dog, coffee pot, pet guinea cock, bottles,

great coats, blankets, pillows, and lunch all scattered on the road. They could not move without the carriage, as Mrs. Swift could not ride a horse bareback, as she in a “certain condition,” as nice innocent ladies were expected to be in the first year of their marriage at that time, 87 years ago. They had to walk all the way back to camp, and she was carefully assisted by her devoted husband. They then got a carriage and drove to Camp Chadbourne two days later. They lived in a tent 24x15 feet, divided by curtains into a parlor, dressing room, and sleeping apartment. They had the whole tent prettily furnished and nicely carpeted. They had very good servants and paid one fifteen dollars a month for cooking and washing. LeGrand Capers, Mrs. Swift’s brother, was living with them and being instructed in medicine by Dr. Swift. Swift had been promoted to the grade of captain, but his expenses seemed to bother him just as much as they do young officers at the present time. He had to pay twelve and a half cents a pound for potatoes, beets or other vegetables; and pumpkins were extremely rare. Very common and poor sugar sold at thirteen cents a pound, flour cost fifteen dollars a barrel, and every other article of food was expensive in proportion.



Officer’s quarters at Fort Chadbourne (photo courtesy of Lana Richards).

At this time Mrs. Swift was happy and sang to herself as she made baby clothes for her expected child. Dr. Swift’s son, Major General Eben Swift, wrote in his “Personal Memoirs,” that his mother gave birth to three children at Fort Chadbourne. The first child was a boy, who died soon after birth, the second child was Eben, born May 11, 1854, and the third was a boy, LeGrande Capers, born March 21, 1856. He wrote that the new post was evidently not ready for occupation when he was born, and that they were still living in tents. Eben quoted his uncle LeGrand as stating that he was asleep in his tent when Dr. Swift awakened him and introduced him to his new-born nephew. “My arrival gave quite a commotion among the Indian squaws,” wrote Eben, “who crowded into the post to see a white baby. They called me ‘Chiquito Medico,’ Spanish for Little Doctor.” He wrote the story of his last days at Fort Chadbourne in

his genealogical record—about the murder of the mail carrier, the battle in the post, the Indian killed in the house that they had vacated that morning, and the attack on the camp that same evening and night, as he could remember. Unfortunately, this genealogical record has been lost. I therefore made a search in other quarters for the incidents mentioned, and as I knew General David S. Stanley was stationed at Fort Chadbourne at that time, I searched through his *Personal Memoirs*, and on pages thirty-six and thirty-seven I found the following:

“The regular troops, about two hundred in number, and the three companies of Rangers, made a scout this winter of 1854 and ’55 far into the Pan-Handle country of Texas, but did not accomplish anything. Buffalo and all big game abounded then, and wild Texas was a paradise for hunters. The Indians, however, were hostile, and often cut off small parties. Soon after I left Fort Chadbourne to join my new command, the Comanches caught the two soldiers mail-carriers from the post, and burned them, tied to a tree. Shortly afterwards these same Indians came into the post, about forty in number, to talk to Major Seth Eastman, the commanding officer. Lieutenant C.W. Thomas, 1st Infantry, arranged that as the commanding officer talked with the Indians, he would drill his company and finally march around with loaded rifles close to the council. This he did successfully, and facing his company to the group of Indians, demanded their surrender. A fight immediately ensued, and several of the Indians were killed, and their chief ran into Major Eastman’s house and barred the door. He was armed with a rifle and revolver. He refused to surrender, and fired through the door at any noise that he could hear on the outside. Lieutenant Thomas, tired of trying to kill the chief by guesswork shooting, ordered his men to bring a rail and ram the door. As the door went down, Thomas leaped into the room. The chief was squatted behind a table and as he rose to fire, Thomas brought him down with a well aimed shot through the head. On the part of Lieutenant Thomas, this was an act of splendid bravery.

Lieutenant George B. Anderson and myself occupied one room in the unfinished hospital. One very beautiful, bright moonlight night in September, we were both awakened by some strange noise like some one groaning and calling, and going out we found a soldier who lived with his wife near the creek. Mattock had been over the creek to the hut of a Dutchman who sold liquor. Having filled up, he was on his way home, very happy no doubt, and at the crossing of the creek, which was in deep banks, five or six Comanche waylaid him, and as he passed commenced shooting at his back with bows and arrows. Mattock

shouted and ran until he met with the soldier who lived in the cabin and who brought him, moaning and crying, out of the hospital. Now comes the incredible part of this story. Mattock had fourteen arrows in him. He bristled with them like a porcupine. Three of these arrows had gone so far through him that the surgeon extracted them by cutting off the feathered part of the arrows and pulling them through the man's body. In two weeks' time, Mattock was walking around, and his only disability was finally from a superficial wound, which had lacerated a nerve. Assistant Surgeon Eben Swift, who treated this man said he feared a truthful relation of the case would result in his being put down a Munchausen. I relate this case to show that arrow wounds do not compare with those made by bullets in fatality."

The Swifts left Fort Chadbourne in 1856 and drove three hundred fifty miles to San Antonio, and then drove to Galveston about two hundred fifty miles, and took the steamer to New Orleans. They then changed to another and went up the Mississippi to Fort Snelling, Minnesota, where they remained until June 1857, and so ends my story of the Swift family in Texas.

[Dr. Swift's son] Major General Eben Swift wrote the following on his visit to his birthplace:

Sweetwater, Texas, August 18, 1917

VISIT TO FORT CHADBOURNE, TEXAS

I reached here at 10:15. . . . We started right away, followed section lines about due south, country infinitely superior to Fort Bliss, but dry and crops in bad condition. I did not see a good acre of cotton or anything else. Crops are a failure in Texas on account of lack of rain. . . .

A Mr. Adams has a ranch, very large, lives in one of the old buildings, officers quarters. Probably brother of the gent I met in San Francisco 2 years ago, who told me he had a ranch at Fort C.

The old fort is on a lot of flat high ground, above Oak Creek, surrounded by scrub white oak, rather attractive compared with the balance of the country, some pretty landscape rests the eye.

These large buildings of rough dressed stone are on one side, partly in ruins, probably barracks, etc. On opposite side officers quarters. The house occupied by Adam's family is rather large, the next small, I would say that it was the house we occupied. . . .

This was a bright day for me; I had wanted for many years to visit the scene of the early happiness of my parents.

Bibliography

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Printed matter: Major General David S. Stanley, *Personal Memoirs* (Cambridge, 1917); George H. Swift (Compiler and Ed.), *William Swyft of Sandwich and Some of His Descendants, 1527-1899* (Millbrook, New York, 1900); Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register United States Army* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1902), Vol. I.

Martin Lalor Crimmons

[Information taken from an obituary written by James T. Padgett, published in the 1955 Year Book.]

Colonel Martin L. Crimmons died in San Antonio, Texas on February 5, 1955, from a heart attack. "Colonel Crimmons, a Spanish American War veteran of nineteen battles and skirmishes, was retired as a colonel of infantry in the regular army because of a bad heart. He left the army with instructions that if he wanted to live he must lead a quiet life. That was on March 2, 1926. For the following twenty-nine full and complete years Colonel Crimmons led a life of vigor such as would be considered bad for anyone's blood pressure."

Crimmons dropped out of medical school at the University of Virginia two weeks before graduation in 1898 to join his friend Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders. Shortly after his enlistment, Roosevelt's Rough Riders were dismounted and sent to Cuba as infantry. Crimmons was left behind to care for the horses. He later served as a lieutenant of infantry in the regular army in the Phillipine campaign and was a member of General John J. Pershing's expedition into Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa in 1917, among many other military assignments.

On retirement from the army, Colonel Crimmons settled in San Antonio and took on new interests in history, science and medicine. Most notably, he was given the Walter Reed Award in April 1953 for his work in developing a serum to treat rattlesnake bite. The WTHA, though, remembers him best as the "Military Historian of Texas." His obituary states, "He has written the history of every military fort and installation in Texas and we will long remember him for his many notes and documents pertaining to the history of the regular army in Texas."

To learn more about Crimmons' colorful life, consult the 1955 Year Book.



Colonel Crimmons in 1954 with James T. Padgett on his left and Chris Emmett, Texas writer, on his right.

Did You Know? West Texas Facts and Trivia

COMPILED BY VICKY JONES

----Loving County is the smallest county in the Permian Basin. It also has the least population of any Texas county; as of 1990, the population was 107.

----Garza County's first cotton gin was built in 1909 by the Double U Company.

----Several West Texans have been the recipients of Pulitzer Prize Awards in Journalism, including:

Scott Shaw, *Odessa American*, the 1988 Spot News Photography Pulitzer for his photo of Jessica McClure's well rescue.

Oscar Griffin, Jr., *Pecos Independent and Enterprise*, the 1963 Special Investigative Pulitzer for his article on the Billie Sol Estes Scandal.

----The movie *Giant*, starring Rock Hudson, Elizabeth Taylor, and James Dean, was filmed in Marfa, Texas in 1955. Released in 1956, it was Dean's last movie; he died in an auto accident on September 30, 1955.

----According to a December 2000 TxDOT survey, the Lubbock District had

12,004 lane miles and 5240 centerline miles of road. This is the largest number of miles of any district surveyed; San Antonio was second with 10,387 and 4231 respectively.

----Texas is one of eleven states that are divided into two time zones. They are: Texas, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota (Central/Mountain); Florida, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee (Eastern/Central); Idaho, Oregon (Mountain/Pacific).

NEWS FROM AROUND WEST TEXAS

The National Ranching Heritage Center in Lubbock was featured on the cover of the December issue of *Texas Highways Magazine* and in a story inside the publication. The museum was also a feature segment on "Texas Country Reporter." The weekly TV show appears on NBC throughout Texas and area states.

Motley County Museum employee **Barbara Armstrong** and board member **Marisue Potts** visited with members of the Kiowa and Apache tribes in Carnegie and Anadarko, Oklahoma, in November to seek descendants of those featured in the A. E. Butterfield Collection of photographs taken on the reservations from 1872-1899. They shared copies of many photos with extended family members.

Bruce Burnett has been selected as the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum's Development Director. In that capacity, he will be responsible for coordinating a full range of planning and fund raising activities for the museum. **Mary Ann Ruelas** has been selected to fill the position of Education Director. She will be responsible for coordinating a wide range of educational programs for school and public audiences.

Ed Mason and **Nancy Ridenour** currently live in Bloomington, IL. Nancy is Dean of History at Illinois State University. Ed is Distance Director of Research and Sponsored Programs at Illinois State University.

Arnoldo De Leon, C. J. "Red" Davidson Professor of History at Angelo State University, had a second edition of his 1989 book *Ethnicity in the Sunbelt: Mexican Americans in Houston* come out. The current edition, with a new Preface and a new chapter that brings Houston's Mexican American history to the year 2000, was published by Texas A & M University Press, 2001.

Texas' Last Frontier: A History of Cochran County, Texas (New and Expanded Edition) By **Elvis E. Fleming, M.Ed., M.A.**, and **David J. Murrah, Ph.D.** is now on sale. The proceeds will benefit Texas' Last Frontier Historical Museum in Morton, Texas. Cost is \$35 +\$3.50(shipping & handling). To order, contact Bennie O'Brien, 944 FM 1169, Morton, TX 79346, (806)525-4277 or Karen Garrett, Morton City Hall, Morton, TX, 79346, (806)266-8850.

Jo Ella Exley's new book, *Frontier Blood: The Saga of the Parker Family* was released by Texas A&M University Press in 2001.

Christine Moor Sanders says sales of her book *Spindletop: The Untold Story* are going well. In November she also had an art exhibit at the Ocean Star Offshore Drilling Rig Museum in Galveston. She used historic photographs of Spindletop as well as actual artifacts of Spindletop Hill as her inspiration to open the door of the past with her vivid watercolors and pen and ink drawings, capturing the excitement of those early Spindletop days.

Lewis Toland was guest editor of the Spring 2002 *Southwestern American Literature*, an edition focusing on the works of **Elmer Kelton**. WTHA members who contributed articles include **Lou Rodenberger, Preston Lewis, Ken Davis, and Becky Matthews**.

Curtis Milbourn, who is teaching at Angelo State University part time, has just published an article in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* CV (October 2001). The article titled "'I Have Been Worse Treated Than any Officer': Confederate Colonel Thomas Green's Assessment of the New Mexico Campaign," is essentially an annotated letter that Mr. Milbourn found in Green's

Confederate service file in the National Archives. Although biased, the letter gives a personal perspective to the New Mexico Campaign from a high command level. Surprisingly, it had never before been published in its entirety.

During the past few months **Bruce A. Glasrud** published three articles: "Asians in Texas: An Overview" in the *East Texas Historical Journal*, "Black Texas Improvement Efforts, 1879-1929" in *The Journal of South Texas*, and, with Laurie Champion, "No Land of the Free: Chester Himes Confronts California (1940-1946)" in the *CLA Journal*. Glasrud soon will enter his seventh year as Dean of Arts and Sciences at Sul Ross State University and still enjoys it.

L. Patrick Hughes of Austin Community College has recently published two articles. "Beyond Denial: Glimpses of Depression-Era San Antonio" in *The Journal of South Texas* and "Praising Potted Pork Parts: Austin's Spamarama" in the Texas Folklore Society publication *2001: A Folklore Odyssey* edited by Francis E. Abernethy.

2001: A Folklore Odyssey published other articles by WTHA members, including "It's the Watkins Man!" by **Kenneth Davis** and "The Roswell Incident: Fiftieth Anniversary Sell-Abraction" by **Becky Matthews**.

Marleta Childs wrote an article "What If....? Philosophical Thoughts on War, History, and Genealogy" for the Oct/Nov issue of the Shelby County Historical Society Newsletter.

Mike Cox of Saddle Bag Books will be giving the annual Sam Houston's birthday speech at the gravesite in Huntsville on March 2. Governors and supreme court judges have made this appearance over the years, and he is quite honored.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 15-16, 2002. Mosaic of Texas Cultures, Abilene, Texas, Hardin-Simmons University. Sessions concern Texas folklore, history, music, art, geography, racial/ethnic concerns, environmental issues, women's issues, and more. Contact Dr. Donathan Taylor, Hardin-Simmons University for information: email <dtaylor@hsutx.edu> or call 915-670-1294.

February 22-23, 2002. East Texas Historical Association spring meeting, Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Texarkana, Texas. For more information contact Archie P. McDonald, phone (936) 468-2407, email <amcdonald@sfasu.edu>

March 7-9, 2002. Texas State Historical Association meeting, Omni Corpus Christi Hotel Bayfront. Program includes 35 sessions that cover the gamut of historical interest in Texas. Tours: The president's reception will be held onboard Captain Clark's flagship as it cruises Corpus Christi Bay on Thursday evening. There is also a Saturday afternoon tour of the King Ranch.

March 29-30, 2002 Texas Folklore Society meeting, Holiday Inn, 2705 E. Houston Highway, Victoria, Texas. Contact Henry or Linda Wolff for information at (361) 575-3689 or email <wolfhaus@txcr.net>

April 9-12, 2002. Texas Association of Museums annual meeting, Lubbock, Texas. Contact the Museum of Texas Tech University for more information.

April 26-27, 2002. Texas Old Missions and Forts Restoration Association meeting, Mason, Texas. Activities will include a visit to Fort McKavett State Park and the Spanish Mission and Presidio sites near Menard. For information contact the association at 7617 Woodthrush, Dallas, TX 75230 or call (214) 363-7761.



May 3, 2002 - Jan. 5, 2003- Ranching Heritage Center, Lubbock, Texas. **VAQUEROS: A VANISHING TRADITION**, the photography of Bill Wittliff with accompanying artifacts. Bill Wittliff (producer of the motion picture "Lonesome Dove") traveled to Mexico in 1970 to capture images of vaqueros living on a ranch in the northern part of the country. What developed was an actual archive of their very difficult lives. Some 65 photographs have been selected for the NRHC's premier exhibit.

May 3-4, 2002. Cynthia Ann Parker Days, Crowell, Texas.

May 26, 2002. Dedication of Texas State Historical medallion, Morton Memorial Cemetery, 2:00 P.M.

June 28-29, 2002. Texas' Last Frontier Rodeo and Trail Drive, Morton, Cochran County, Texas (Texas' last organized county). Friday afternoon parade and evening rodeo. Saturday afternoon Trail Drive (bus & car tour) of historic ranches and other points of historical interest in Cochran County, followed by a Barbecue Cook-Off and evening rodeo. For more information, contact: Dorothy Barker, Chair of Cochran County Historical Committee, (806) 266-5484, or Glynnna Merritt, Chair of Historical Museum Board, (806) 266-5977.

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

The Center for Big Bend Studies will hold its Ninth Annual Conference this fall on the Sul Ross campus in Alpine, Texas. Presentations focus on prehistoric, historic and modern cultures of the borderlands region of the United States and Mexico. Deadline for abstracts is August 31, 2002 and may be sent to Kelly Garcia, SRSU, Box C-71, Alpine, TX 79832 or e-mailed to kgarcia@sulross.edu.

In Memory . . .

Winifred Woods Vigness, 79, of Lubbock died Nov. 1, 2001. She was born Oct. 1, 1922, in Ranger and moved to Lubbock when she was 1 year old. She graduated from Lubbock High School and received her bachelor's and master's degrees in history from Texas Tech.

After serving in World War II as a naval officer and attending doctoral classes at the University of Texas, she married David M. Vigness in 1949 in Lubbock. She taught history at the University of Texas, Texas Tech, Schreiner Institute and South Plains College. She had been a contributing author to several publications.

She was bicentennial coordinator for the city of Lubbock, chairman of the Lubbock County Centennial Celebration and a trustee and later executive secretary of the West Texas Museum Association.

Her honors include being recognized as a Woman of the Year by the Altrusa Club, a Woman of Distinction by the Caprock Girl Scout Council, an outstanding graduate of the history department of Texas Tech, an outstanding alumna by the Texas Tech Ex-Students Association and the Arts and Sciences at Texas Tech. She received an Action Award from the West Texas Museum Association, an alumnae certificate of merit from Zeta Tau Alpha and the Women in Communications Mahon award.

The family suggests memorials to the Museum of Texas Tech University Association, Box 43191, Lubbock, TX 79409-3191; the David and Winifred Vigness Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 45025, Lubbock, TX 79409; or First Presbyterian Church, Box 69, Lubbock, TX 79408.