

# The Flyleaf

Friends of Fondren Library Vol. 42, No. 3

Spring 1992



RICE UNIVERSITY  
MAR 13 1992  
LIBRARY

A family's heritage



## A LETTER TO THE FRIENDS

Dear Friends:

Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the recent Author Reception. We had a highly successful and interesting program, honoring nearly 50 Rice authors.

Because of the popularity of this event, which is drawing capacity audiences, next year's reception will be moved to the larger Grand Hall where authors will have tables at which to sign their books.

Thanks also to everyone associated with the annual Schubertiad recital, co-sponsored with the Shepherd School of Music. Presented in the music school's new Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall, it was an event to remember.

The prospects are very good for our annual fund-raising event, Fondren Saturday Night XII. We are receiving some wonderful donations for our auction, such as weekend accommodations at a beachhouse and at a condominium in a scenic Colorado area. Jewelry, home accessories, books, dinners and lectures are among the items which will be auctioned Saturday, April 4 to raise money for the Friends of Fondren Library Endowment Fund. The gala honors Mrs. Edward Kelley, in recog-

nition of the generous contributions of the Autry and Kelley families.

The evening also includes cocktails and dinner at the university's Cohen House. Underwriters of the event may reserve entire tables of ten for themselves and their guests.

If you haven't participated in one of the previous gala events, we hope you'll make a point to do so this year. It's a very special evening, and one that helps the library on its path to becoming an increasingly significant academic research institution.

If you would like to arrange tickets or underwriting, please contact Betty Charles, 285-5157. We'd like to thank the many people who are providing time, auction items and donations for this year's gala fund-raising event. Your contributions will affect the quality of education for generations of students at Rice. On their behalf, we thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Joanie Hurd	Susan Merriman
Gala co-chair	Gala co-chair

### RICE UNIVERSITY FONDREN LIBRARY

Founded under the charter of the university dated May 18, 1891, the library was established in 1913. Its present facility was dedicated November 4, 1949, and rededicated in 1969 after a substantial addition, both made possible by gifts of Ella F. Fondren, her children, and the Fondren Foundation and Trust as a tribute to Walter William Fondren. The library recorded its half-millionth volume in 1965; its one millionth volume was celebrated April 22, 1979.

### THE FRIENDS OF FONDREN LIBRARY

The Friends of Fondren Library was founded in 1950 as an association of library supporters interested in increasing and making better known the resources of Fondren Library at Rice University. The Friends, through members' contributions and sponsorship of a memorial and honor gift program, secure gifts and bequests and provide funds for the purchase of rare books, manuscripts, and other materials that could not otherwise be acquired by the library.

### THE FLYLEAF

Founded October 1950 and published quarterly by the Friends of Fondren Library, Rice University, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas 77251, as a record of Fondren Library's and Friends' activities, and of the generosity of the library's supporters.

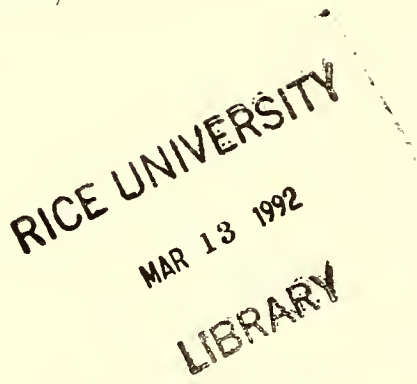


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Cover:

Judge James L. Autry moved to Texas, where he became a major figure in the burgeoning oil and gas industry. He also was active in support of Rice Institute, now Rice University.



Managing editor, Betty Charles. Editor, Judy Elswick. Computer consultant, Tim Freeland.

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# 'This is history. . . your own'

by Katherine Kelley Dittmar

**M**rs. Jenkins was a scrappy, no nonsense martinet of a teacher, and she terrified everyone in her class. Yet her students always left the seventh grade knowing how to make a first-class outline and understanding that Texas has its own special history. I remember the day she barked out instructions that we were to give a ten-minute report on an assigned topic in front of the entire class. My subject was the Texas Revolution. It was the first time any of us had been assigned a "research project," and we did not even know what "research" was.

Arriving home in tears, I sobbed out my news to Mom. A sly grin spread over her face.

"Just wait here," she said. "I have something to show you." She returned with a bundle of papers – copies of the letters my great-great-great grandfather, Micajah Autry, wrote to his family in 1835 while en route to the Alamo.

"This is history," she said, "and it is your own."

In the summer of 1959, Fondren Library received the papers of Judge James Lockhart Autry (1859-1920) from his daughter, Mrs. Edward Kelley. The papers represented the library's largest and most important collection at that time, consisting mainly of materials from Judge Autry's partnership with J.S. Cullinan in the early years of the Texas oil industry, his father's political career in Mississippi, and his grandfather Micajah Autry's correspondence from 1832 to 1836.

This manuscript collection nearly doubled in size in 1987 when Mrs. Kelley donated the rest of her family papers, together with the majority of her photographic archives.

The Autry collection dates from 1832 to 1946 and consists of over forty cubic feet of extensively-indexed business papers and

letters, family correspondence and financial records, publications, memorabilia, photographs and books. They reflect nearly every aspect of the lives of family members and document associations with figures including David Crockett, L.Q.C. Lamar, General Braxton Bragg, J.S. Cullinan, William C. Hogg, and John W. Gates.

The Autry family was originally part of the old French aristocracy which sailed from France and England to settle in Virginia and North Carolina as early as 1622. In fact, family members are mentioned as participants on some of the earliest discovery expeditions to the New World.<sup>1</sup> The Autrys became well-to-do planters in North Carolina and managed to educate their children despite the ruralism of the Carolina backcountry.

Micajah Autry was born in North Carolina around 1793 to Theophilus Autry (1770-1836) and his wife, Sophia. Micajah moved west to the Tennessee frontier about 1821, where he became a lawyer and married a wealthy widow, Martha Putney Wilkerson (1796-1866). Micajah prospered first in Nashville, then in Jackson, Tennessee before he went broke speculating in dry goods. The rebellion in Texas had started in October 1835, and the news was received as a clarion call in the United States by men like Micajah, who needed a fresh start.

Micajah's letters to his family in Tennessee reflect his growing excitement at helping to form a new Republic and settling in Texas.

"I go whole hog in the cause of Texas. I expect to help them gain their independence and also to form their civil government, for it is worth risking many lives for. From what I have seen and learned from others, there is not so fair a portion of the earth's surface warmed by the sun. Be of good cheer, Martha, I will provide for you a sweet home. I shall be entitled to 640 acres of land for my services in the army and 4444 acres upon condition of settling my family here... and such cotton country is not under the sun."<sup>2</sup>

This was the last word from Micajah until news of his death at the Alamo reached Tennessee late in the spring of 1836. Martha moved with her children to the town of Holly Springs in the Northern Mississippi Territory, where she had friends. Some 1,920 acres were granted to her by the Texas Republic for her

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The Friends of Fondren Library will host Fondren Saturday Night XII, the annual fund-raising gala, on Saturday, April 4 at Rice University's Cohen House. Proceeds from the dinner and auction benefit the group's library endowment fund. This year's event honors Mrs. Edward W. Kelley, representing the Autry and Kelley families whose members have been generous donors to Rice University.

This article is written by Katherine Kelley Dittmar, a Ph.D. candidate in history at Yale University, who is the granddaughter of Mrs. Kelley and the daughter of Joseph E. Dittmar and the late Allie Kelley Dittmar. It is based largely on her extensive research of the Autry collection, housed in Fondren Library's Woodson Research Center.





**LEFT:**

James Lackhart Autry served in the Mississippi legislature and Civil War

**RIGHT:**

Autry married Jeannie Valliant, who wrote of the devastation and reconstruction in Mississippi

**BELOW:**

From left, Judge James L. Autry, Allie Kinslae Autry, Allie Mae Autry (Mrs. Edward Kelley), James L. Autry III; circa 1907-08



husband's service; she developed this land into a cotton plantation.

Micajah's son, James Lockhart, followed his father into the legal profession. By 1854, he had entered into partnership with an old classmate, Christopher Mott, and the celebrated L.Q.C. Lamar. That same year, James was elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives and became actively involved in secessionist politics. In November 1858, with his new bride Jeannie Valliant looking on, he was sworn in as Speaker of the Mississippi House.

Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, Autry enlisted in the Ninth Mississippi Regiment of Volunteers. As military governor of Vicksburg during the summer of 1862, he and his troops repelled the Union forces' first attempted siege of the city. By October, General Braxton Bragg was retreating from the debacle of his

Kentucky campaign with Rosencrans in hot pursuit. Autry was reassigned to the command of the 27th Mississippi Regiment for the upcoming battle at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Meanwhile, northern Mississippi was overrun with Union forces and deserters from both armies. In his last letter to his wife, James's agony at leaving his family in such a dangerous situation is clearly evident:

"I can't believe that our army will pull back any further south. Holly Springs will therefore be the debateable point where both armies will have occasional skirmishes. I fear much confusion there on Christmas & oh it almost runs me crazy to think that you and Ma will be cut off from me and perhaps treated cruelly."

On December 31, 1862, while attempting to charge Sheridan's batteries, James L. Autry was killed during the battle of Stones' River.

His only child, James Lockhart, Jr., was four.

This James L. Autry came to Texas to live on the land earned by his grandfather's death. He also became a lawyer and, by 1883, was one of the youngest judges in Texas. Judge Autry quickly became one of the outstanding figures in northeast Texas and the leading force behind the tremendous growth of Corsicana in the "Roaring Eighties." In 1894, during expansion of the town's water supply, oil was discovered in Corsicana. News of the Texas fields drew a steady exodus of oil men from Pennsylvania, among whom was Joseph S. Cullinan. When Autry was named one of the directors and elected president of the Texas Petroleum Oil Association, Cullinan became a client of McKie and Autry and later persuaded Autry to become his business partner as well as his attorney.

When Spindletop blew in on January 10, 1901, Cullinan left for Beaumont and asked James Autry to go with him. Autry organized The Texas Company for Cullinan; its charter was filed in Austin on March 28, 1901. This

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### ***Rice was a major recipient of the new oil wealth***

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was the origin of the mighty Texaco.

From its inception to his resignation on November 25, 1913, James L. Autry served as secretary, director, and general attorney for The Texas Company and, in the process, became a pioneer in establishing oil and gas law. In 1908, he and Cullinan moved to Houston, where a new ship channel and active civic life offered enormous investment possibilities for the oil business and its profits.

A major recipient of the new oil wealth was Rice University. Judge Autry played a significant role in the birth and growth of the university, an interest that has continued to be shared by his family.

(The Autry House, adjoining Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, was given by Allie Kinsloe Autry in memory of her husband as a community center for Rice students. Both of Judge Autry's children graduated from Rice as did his grandson, Federal Reserve Board Governor Edward Kelley, who now serves on its Board of Trustees. Judge Autry's son, James L. III, was editor of *The Thresher* and a ROTC cadet. His daughter, Mrs. Edward Kelley, has continued to serve Rice in a number of ways. She gave the gymnasium's Autry Court in memory of her mother, Allie

Kinsloe Autry. The Kelley Lounge in the Ley Student Center was donated in honor of her daughter, Allie Kelley Dittmar. Much of her attention has been focused on the growth and expansion of the library, and she served as President of the Friends of Fondren Library from 1959 to 1966.)

In addition to the papers of the Autry men discussed here, a substantial amount of material documents the lives of other family members. Jeannie Valliant Autry's correspondence of 1858-1875 describes the devastation of war in Mississippi and the state's reconstruction. Most of her letters from the 1890s until her death in 1912 concern her role in founding the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Almost all of Allie Kinsloe Autry's papers survive; many detail her involvement with Rice until her death in 1935.

A small but interesting group of materials relates to Judge Autry's son, James Lockhart Autry III (1899-1921). In 1916, "Jimmie" became the first ham operator in Houston. Indeed, he was the first to learn of America's entry into World War I, which he announced to Houston with a pistol shot.

Records and plans for buildings financed by the Autrys – both private homes and public facilities – are included in the collection, offering an interesting addition to the architectural history of Houston.

The photographs span five generations of Autrys and contain such gems as the autographed photos of L.Q.C. Lamar (1825-1893), Bishop William Mercer Green (1798-1887) of Mississippi and Judge Leroy Valliant of the Missouri Supreme Court (1838-1913).

An especially nice but small array of books, primarily academic and Episcopal texts which date from Micajah Autry's arrival in Tennessee to 1946, conclude the Autry collection.

With its unique range of subject material – from political and social history to the development of industry in Texas – the Autry papers are valuable to a wide variety of scholars working in southern and frontier studies.

*Certainly Mrs. Jenkins was impressed by them, and I got an "A" on my report!*

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1. For example, a Captain Autry set sail under the command of Sir Richard Grenville in 1585 on Walter Raleigh's second and ill-fated effort to establish an English colony in America. See Ashe, Samuel A'Court, *The History of North Carolina*, Vol. I, Greensboro: Charles Van Noppen, 1908, p. 4.

2. Letter, Micajah Autry to Mortho Autry; Nocogdoches, Texas (Jan. 13, 1836); Autry Collection.

3. Letter, James L. Autry to Jeannie Autry; Jackson, Mississippi (Nov. 17, 1862); Autry papers.



## Events:

# Friends gather for books, Schubert



Rice-affiliated authors were honored at a reception in January.

A Rice poet and faculty member recently recalled the story of a former student, traveling by plane, who was asked about her fiancé's occupation. On learning he was a poet, the questioner expressed surprise: "Oh! I didn't realize there were any living poets!"

Such are some of the travails of living poets, who also face the reality of fewer publishers willing to produce volumes of poetry, traditionally published for prestige rather than profit, according to Susan Wood, Rice associate professor of English. Wood was one of the speakers at the annual Author Reception hosted in January by the Friends of Fondren Library.

The event honored nearly 50 members of the Rice community – faculty, staff, alumni or members of the Friends group – whose works were published in 1991.

The work of "a motley group of scientists representing various branches of science"

was described by Kathleen Gibson, professor of anatomical sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston Dental Branch, and adjunct associate professor of anthropology at Rice University. As co-editor of a book offering perspectives on brain maturation and cognitive development, she offered perspectives based on a broad range of disciplines.

Dorothy Knox Howe Houghton, co-author of a book on early Houston architecture, humorously decried the fact that Rice University Press editors cut the volume to roughly a third of its original length, which was 900 pages. "I threatened to read passages that were cut and let the audience decide," she told the assembled group.

In February, the Friends co-hosted the annual Schubertiad with the Shepherd School of Music. The annual recital featured performances by Rice music students.

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## Rice Authors – 1991

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Alpin, Elaine Marie. *The Ghost Cadet*. New York: Henry Holt.

Ambler, John S., editor. *The French Welfare State: Surviving Social and Ideological Change*. New York: New York University Press.

Anderson, David L. *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam, 1953-1961*. New York: Columbia University Press.

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*continued – next page*

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- Brosman, Catharine Savage. *Simone de Beauvoir Revisited*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.
- Brown, John Dennis. *101 Years on Wall Street, An Investor's Almanac*. New York: Prentice Hall.
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- Driskill, Linda, co-ed. *Business and Managerial Communication: New Perspectives*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. (co-edited with June Ferrill and Marda Steffey)
- Fischer, Michael M.J. *Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition*. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press. (Co-authored with Mehdi Abedi)
- Fultz, Lucie, co-ed. *Double Stitch: Black Women Write About Mothers and Daughters*. Boston: Beacon Press. (co-edited with Patricia Bell-Scott et al.)
- Ghanem, R. G. *Stochastic Finite Elements: A Spectral Approach*. New York: Springer-Verlag. (Co-authored with P. D. Spanos)
- Gibson, Dr. Kathleen R. *Brain Maturation and Cognitive Development: Comparative and Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. New York: Aldine deGruyter. (Co-edited with Ann C. Petersen)
- Houghton, Dorothy Knox Howe. *Houston's Forgotten Heritage: Landscapes, Houses, Interiors, 1824-1914*. Houston: Rice University Press. (co-authored with Sadie Gwin Blackburn, Margaret Henson, Katherine S. Howe, and Barrie M. Scardino)
- Johnston, Marguerite. *Houston: The Unknown City, 1836-1945*. College Station, Texas: Texas A & M. Press.
- Kolenda, Konstantin. *Cosmic Religion: An Autobiography of the Universe*. New York: Doubleday & Co.
- Lamb, Sydney M., co-editor. *Sprung from Some Common Source: Investigations into the Prehistory of Languages*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. (co-edited with E. Douglas Mitchell)
- Lowman, Rodney L. *The Clinical Practice of Career Assessment: Abilities, Interests, and Personality*. Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.
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- Smith, Richard J., ed. *Robert Hart and China's Early Modernization; His Journals, 1863-1866*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. (Co-authored and co-edited with John K. Fairbank and Katherine Bruner)
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- Spanos, P. D., ed. *Computational Stochastic Mechanics*. First International Conference on Computational Stochastic Mechanics, Corfu, Greece. (Co-edited with C. A. Brebbia)
- Stein, Robert. *Urban Alternatives*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
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- Wiggs, Susan. *The Lily and the Leopard*. New York: HarperCollins.
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- Wiggs, Susan. *The Raven and the Rose*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Wood, Susan. *Campo Santo*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University.

## Art preview

A student art exhibition preview will be held Thursday, April 16, 6-8:30 p.m. at Rice's Sewall Art Gallery. The event is co-sponsored by the Friends of Fondren Library and the Arts Committee of the Association of Alumni.



The Preview of Student Art Exhibition will be held Thursday, April 16 at Sewall Art Gallery.

## Rice announces new vice president

Rice University has announced the appointment of G. Anthony Gorry as vice president for research and information technology. Fondren Library will be among the university organizations under his direction when he begins his new duties in the spring.

The new Rice administrator currently

serves as vice president for information technology and professor of medical informatics at Baylor College of Medicine. He has taught courses in artificial intelligence and expert systems at Rice for the past six years. Gorry studied engineering at Yale and holds a Ph.D. in computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

# Major gift received from Hobby Foundation

Fondren Library has received a gift of \$100,000 from the Hobby Foundation to build collections in areas with new faculty.

The funds will be used to purchase retrospective materials for classical archeology, music, religion, philosophy, Latin American

history, and women's and ethnic studies.

A similar gift of \$47,000 in 1991 was used to purchase materials in Caribbean, African American and African history, classical philosophy, Judaic Studies and classical archeology.

## THE FRIENDS OF FONDREN LIBRARY



November 1, 1991 –  
January 31, 1992

We welcome the following new members.

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Mr. Mark Shenker  
Dr. Lihong Wang

Friends of Fondren – *continued*

In addition, the following have upgraded their membership in the Friends.

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The Friends of Fondren Library is most grateful to these new Friends for their interest and to the Friends of longer standing for their support and for renewing their commitments.

\*prior to January 1, 1992

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FONDREN LIBRARY**



November 1, 1991 –  
January 31, 1992

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Elaine Marie Alpin  
Don C. Benjamin  
Johannes Birringer  
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