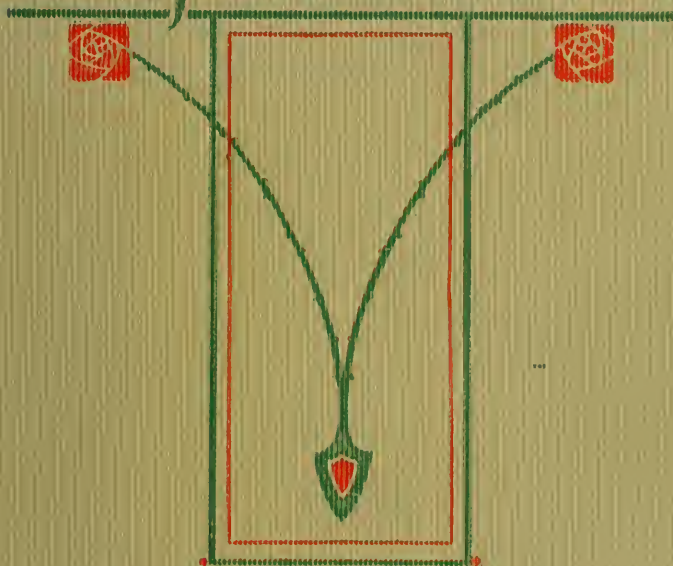


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*The Story*  
*of*  
Corpus Christi



MRS. MARY A. SUTHERLAND



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# The Story of Corpus Christi

*By*

MRS. MARY A. SUTHERLAND

*Edited by*

*Frank B. Harrison*

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PUBLISHED 1916

*By*

Corpus Christi Chapter

Daughters of the Confederacy

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MARY A. SUTHERLAND



## DEDICATION

Continued on next page

TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE CONFEDERACY, THEIR WIVES,  
DAUGHTERS AND SONS WHO EVER STRIVE TO KEEP  
ALIVE THE GALLANT, DEVOTED SPIRIT OF THE OLD,  
AND COURAGEOUS, OPTIMISTIC SPIRIT OF THE  
NEW SOUTH, THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTION-  
ATELY DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR  
AND CORPUS CHRISTI CHAPTER,  
DAUGHTERS OF THE  
CONFEDERACY.



## PREFACE

Published by the author

The Story of Corpus Christi, presented in this book form as the labor of Mrs. Mary A. Sutherland and with biographical sketches by Mrs. Sam Rankin, Eli T. Merri-man and others, does not undertake a general and comprehensive review of the many years' history of Corpus Christi and section, nor does it pretend to detail the many activities that have contributed into making Corpus Christi the beautiful gem city of the Texas Coast.

Rather the efforts of the author have been devoted to presenting in plain narrative form, a recountal of the days when Corpus Christi was young, of the trials and tribulations that fell to the lot of her residents in the war periods, and finally to emerge as a fast growing and progressive city of the Southland.

If an error has been made it has been of the head and not the heart. Honest effort has been made to present a book that will reflect great credit on Corpus Christi and her people and to be remembered with pride by Corpus Christians in the years to follow.

With the author the work has been a labor of love. For years it has been with her, a cherished ambition to give to the people of Corpus Christi a history of their city. Through the untiring energy of Corpus Christi Chapter, Daughters of the Confederacy, the volume has been published with the hope that it will meet with the approval of those men and women who know and love the Corpus Christi, of yesterday and today.



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# The Story of Corpus Christi

By MRS. MARY A. SUTHERLAND

## CHAPTER I.

Corpus Christi, quietly, queenly and beautiful, she lies on the warm white sands, like a mermaid taking a rest after her bath in the sparkling waters at her feet.

The first knowledge we have of our beautiful Bay of Corpus Christi, is derived from ancient French Chronicles. In 1687 the ill-fated La Salle, in his search for the mouth of the Mississippi, visited and claimed this coast for the Crown of France, and in his search undoubtedly visited our shore, but went no further inland.

The Bay was discovered on a Catholic festival day, Corpus Christi Day, and hence the name Corpus Christi.

Our first information of a settlement on the site of our present city, is of a little Mexican settlement which, about the beginning of the last century, was surprised by a band of Indians and the inhabitants killed or carried into captivity, and a small boy, after years of roaming with his captors, escaped and returned, living on and being a constant employee of the Santa Gertrudis Ranch until the time of his death, when he was a very old man.

The original Mexican village above mentioned was located about where the Kenedy Pasture Company Building now stands. There can be no doubt but that this was a favorite fishing ground for the wild tribes of Indians roving this section of the country, which teemed with food; fish to be had for the taking, and great oyster beds uncovered at low tide. The adjoining prairies were covered with deer and buffalo. The Indians held possession here for years after the destruction of this village, using the same as a hunting and fishing ground.

The village mentioned was undoubtedly established here during the occupancy of this place by a Spanish garrison, and

left to its fate upon the withdrawal of the troops. The troops at this point were commanded by Captain Enrique Villareal, who afterwards received a grant of land from the Spanish Government, extending from what is known as the "Oso," on the south, to Nueces Bay, a distance of about fourteen miles, on the north, and from Corpus Christi Bay on the east, to Barranca Blanca, about 28 miles, on the west, which grant was by his heirs sold to Captain H. L. Kinney.

While Captain Villareal was stationed here, he sent a report to his King, reporting the discovery of a rich silver mine in this section of the country, two days' ride from Corpus Christi, stating that he, Villareal, had opened this mine, and was working it with a detachment of soldiers to guard it, and that the Indians had surprised and killed the entire party, and that he needed a stronger force of men to reopen it.

There the report ended, and to this day no one knows the locality of this mine. Two days' journey at that time meant the distance that could be traveled by an ox team between dawn and sunset. About this distance from Corpus Christi stands the old deserted ruins of Casa Blanca (White House). Of this old ruin no one living knows one word of its story. White and silent it stands on the hillside, with great trees growing up through its chimneys, and vines climbing over its doorsills, the very picture of desolation, guarding its secrets well.

As the Spaniards hid all their mines, on the evacuation of the country after the War of Independence of Mexico in 1810, did they hide this mine so closely that it remains a secret to this day to the white man who pastures his flocks upon the site. Many men have sought in vain for this Eldorado. That there is documentary evidence of this lost city is borne out by a circumstance occurring years after the Spaniard, with his plumed hat and silver spurs, and the fierce Indian, with bloody tomahawk, had blazed his last trail and gone into the Great Beyond.

In 1868 a young ranchman bought land, built a home, and brought his young bride to live on this lonely ranch near the Silent City. They noticed and spoke of a peculiar mound of stones standing near their home, remarking that it seemed

to be built by hands, and not a natural heap of boulders, but were too busy to investigate. During the following winter, one wild night when a Texas Norther, of the wet variety, was whooping over the plains, and the inmates of the ranch home were snug behind closed doors, the dogs began to bark wildly, keeping it up for several hours. Their master supposed they were defending the sheepfold against some wild animal, knew they were to be trusted, and did not go out. What was his surprise next morning to see that the mound had been removed during the night and a gaping hole opened at its base. Who came, from where, for what, no one knows. But so many years had elapsed since the desertion of the place that we can only suppose that the discovery of some old record, perhaps in Mexico, or even in Spain, might have incited the hunt. The ranchero, though full of curiosity, was glad that his confidence in his dogs had kept him in, being sure that his visitors would not have scrupled to add another tragedy to the list, if interrupted in their hunt for buried treasure the stones had been placed to mark. What? Vale Casa Blanca and your Mystery. The Conquistadore has gone, his camp deserted, and the places that knew him are glad to know him no more.

Next we read of an effort to colonize our sister County of San Patricio, and a colony was placed at the town of that name. One was also formed for Mission Refugio, another at Copano. At each place there was a Spanish Mission and small garrison of Mexican troops.

Going back, in 1824, we have the very first news of a white man in Corpus Christi, the sole survivor of a vessel wrecked on Padre Island, pulled across the bay in a yawl, and who found a home with a few Mexicans then here. He afterwards removed to Refugio, where he lived to a great age. From him we learned much lore of early days, and of some things which had puzzled us. Particularly as to how the earliest inhabitant earned his living.

One word enlightened us—Smuggling. Our bay was an ideal spot for this industry, and though the life was hard and wild, good money was made at it. In "Lynn's Fifty Years in Texas," we read that the author came to Corpus Christi in 1829 with a cargo of goods purchased in New

Orleans for the Mexican trade; that a man named Wright was to meet him here with a pack train to carry the goods to Rio Grande.

Wright failed to appear, and Lynn went to Matamoros for a train, leaving his boat at Flour Bluff. On the journey he stopped at various Mexican ranches on the trail, and was well treated by rancheros, who reminded him of the Patriarchs of Bible days, living by their flocks and herds, all being pious, God-fearing Catholic people, holding morning and evening prayer, but not another word does he tell us of our little city.

Again we learn that prior to 1846, a Mr. Moore, with his wife and daughter lived here. Their house, a neat adobe, stood on the site of the Corpus Christi National Bank, and was torn away when the Bank was built, late in the years of eighteen hundred.

A Mr. Belden, who was married to a Spanish lady, also lived here, and he and the Moores were the only Americans here at that date. The old Belden house stands yet on Mesquite Street near the Arroyo. It is a certainty that the bold Buccaneers often visited our bay for fuel and water, as they kept guard on the nearby high seas for the rich galleons of Spain, loaded with the loot from the Aztec Temples.

For more than two centuries these freebooters sailed and robbed the robber, and not until 1820 did the last one sail away from these waters. Jean Lafitte in that year, acting upon a hint from our Government, set fire to his headquarters on Galveston Island, called in his scouts, and has the doubtful honor of being the last pirate ever on this coast.

From this time we have no record of events for the years between 1820 and 1846. That a trade was built up with the interior, and Mexico, is borne out by the fact, as the few Americans here in 1846 were engaged in some business netting a living. Occasional boats from New Orleans and Mobile visited the settlement. As to whether or not they paid duty on their cargoes, is not our affair.

Our bay, with its many tributaries, was an ideal spot for the contraband. The trade was with half civilized people, and if the earliest inhabitants risked life and prop-

erty in the venture, they were a brave, hardy race. The risk was theirs, and they were paving the way to give this near Earthly Paradise to the people who could make a white man's country of it.

From 1840 to 1846 there were various Colonies brought to nearby sites. The Irish Colony of San Patricio, the Mission Refugio, and what was then known as Sabardie, a mission near Goliad. These earliest emigrants suffered terrible privations. In 1834 two schooners were wrecked at the bar, on St. Joseph's Island. Cholera appeared among them, and it is estimated that four out of every six found a resting place 'neath the waters of the Gulf, as the survivors were not able to give them Christian burial, and they were cast over without ceremony. The survivors were finally carried to Copano on rafts, by Mexican soldiers, where they made rude shelters of poles and bedding. Eventually they traveled on to other villages where a few of their country people had preceded them, to get a foothold, only to be harried and their last belongings burned, and they driven from the State by the Revolution of 1836. Many of them came back, some of the best names, of the best citizens in the surrounding country, were borne by the families at that time. An incident of the landing of the unfortunates at Copano was told by an eye witness.

A party of Indians went out to help them land, as there was no dock and they had to wade ashore. The Indians were friendly, but as they approached the barge, holding out their arms to clasp the children, the poor mothers clasped them tight and went over the opposite side. Poor mothers and poor babies! We are forcibly reminded of the saying, "Between the Devil and the deep blue sea." The women of that time realized its meaning. One of the children off that boat, who remembered that trip, lived many years in Corpus Christi, dying only a few days ago.

On June 23, 1845, Texas became a State of the Union.

## CHAPTER II.

### *Landing of General Taylor.*

On May 11, 1846, the United States declared war against Mexico. During the autumn months of 1845, our eastern horizon went mad. Clouds of white canvas appeared, long lines of barges, towed by fussy little tugs, traveled across the water. General Taylor's army of occupation had arrived and camped upon the disputed territory.

Mexico claimed the Nueces River as the dividing line, while Texas claimed south to the Rio Grande. Texas had become a State of the Union, June 23, 1845, and Uncle Sam was backing her rights. Slowly the fleet crawled into this unknown bay, and putting in close to shore they anchored, and men and horses sprang into the water and waded ashore. Where the Epworth League was located, was the landing place, and soon long rows of white tents dotted the plain, and the American officer, in all his bravery of gold epaulets and nodding plume, exercised his blooded steed on the snowy shell beach. Long lines of infantry followed. Cannon was unloaded, parked camps surveyed, and guards placed.

General Taylor was at home in Texas, or Mexico as the case might seem! The troops were put to work to clear the ground, no small work at that time as the grass was as tall as a man's head, and like all the Texas coast, the ground literally swarmed with serpents, principally the rattler, though all the native varieties were present; the soldiers even claiming that the sea serpent landed nightly and gave battle to the land forces.

One still night the rattle of the numerous snakes created a panic in the camp of the Seventh U. S. Infantry, and they fled, to a man. Following the beach they came south to the Bayou, where they stopped with the artillery men until daylight, when they returned and killed one hundred and fourteen snakes in and around camp.

The soldiers, in addition to making camp, were put to work to build long embankments of sand as a windbreak and

protection from the Northerners. They may be plainly traced today, long mounds of earth lying east and west. Some years since, the writer was able to trace several redoubts, one very plainly at the foot of Hughes Street, near the bay. About the center of block fourteen, west side of Chaparral Street, was an enclosed space of about fifty feet square, with only one entrance. This, an ex-soldier told me, was undoubtedly the magazine, but in the march of progress those old landmarks have gone, and only the long rows of windbreaks remain, mute witnesses of the days when the brave men faced an unknown foe, and won for the white race one of the fairest spots in all Texas.

In that great army of occupation came many in the heyday of youth, whose names later were to become known throughout the world.

Here on our beach landed the Mississippi Yagers, so called because armed with the then new Yager rifle. This regiment was commanded by Col. Jefferson Davis, soon to win laurels in Mexico, and later to be the only President of the Southern Confederacy, a soldier, a student, a scientist, a gentleman. A bright man in each role, but reaching the grandeur of his life and manhood when old and poor, a manacled prisoner in Fortress Monroe, he defended, at imminent risk of his life, the people and the cause which he had served so faithfully, and during the remainder of his life, was an honor to the land which gave him birth.

U. S. Grant was a young officer in this command, and noted as a fearless horseman. The story goes that he purchased an untamed horse from a native. No one would go near the vicious brute, and the Captain took him in hand. With the help of his entire troop he mounted and away over the brush and briar, through thorn and chaparral, went this blue streak, occasionally approaching camp only to have the maddened animal bolt anew, much to the edification of his brother officers and the men, but a few hours later he rode into camp with a thoroughly subdued mount. Another story of the Captain was that he went one evening to call upon the only American lady of the village. Some of his brother officers, thinking he was monopolizing too much of her time, sent some one to trim up his horse, which was tied at the

gate (now the Corpus Christi National Bank). When the officer came out he found an apparent mule standing at the rack. He hunted the miscreant in vain, consigning the poor, disfigured and disgraced steed to the pack or wagon train. He purchased and mastered the mustang.

With this brave galaxy came the afterward noted Rebel, General Longstreet, and the equally to be distinguished, General Sherman, who won fame by marching through Georgia, and on that same march to the sea, the undying hate of the Georgian, which was plainly demonstrated a few years since, when his son, Father Sherman, started to follow the route his father had burned his way through some forty years before. No less a personage than our own Colonel Theodore Roosevelt called off the escort, and not wishing to see a new Civil War organized, the trip was abandoned.



## CHAPTER III.

*Mexicans Attack Americans.*

One night some of the enlisted men attended a Mexican baile or dance on the hill. The Mexicans attacked the Americans, killing one man and chasing the others into camp. Although war had not been declared against Mexico at this date, there was no love between the races.

Longstreet, Sherman and others not mentioned, headed a party and made an informal call upon the revelers, killing four men, burning every jacal (called hackel) on the bluff, and running every Mexican off the hill into the brush.

Some of the wives of the officers and men came out, as did the sutler and other camp followers, and Corpus Christi soon had a little American Colony.

General Taylor's headquarters were on Water Street, in block four, in a concrete or adobe house, lately torn down to make room for a warehouse built by John Jordt, pioneer furniture dealer. The only American young lady in the colony was wooed and won by a gallant Captain of the volunteers, Captain Berry, who returned at the close of the war and married her. She died after a short and happy married life, mourned by all who knew her. She left an infant son, now one of the sterling citizens of a sister city.

But the day and the order to advance came. There was wild riding to and from the various camps. Groups of orderlies and staff officers came and went again to headquarters, and if the mermaids were looking at that scene of brilliant array, which was gathered that April morning on the borders of their domain, they saw the American soldier at his best.

And if a mermaid is gifted with second sight, they must have shed tears, lots of tears, knowing that some of the hearts beating with enthusiastic patriotism were never to reach that boundary river in dispute, that others were to sleep their last sleep 'neath an alien sky, while others were

to suffer the tortures of a Mexican dungeon, and come back broken in health and return home to die.

The order was given and the advance was on. Long lines of cavalry led the way over the plain. The artillery bumped its slow pace over unmarked roads, followed by the infantry, and they in turn by miles of wagon train, great pack trains, each wagon drawn by six large mules, for the army of occupation must carry its subsistence with it.

The noisy little tugs and transports, with a part of the troops, were sent to Point Isabel, about one hundred miles south of Corpus Christi, at the mouth of the Rio Grande. The landing of these troops, and the advance of General Taylor's land forces deeply stirred Mexico. Taylor reached the river and founded Fort Brown (now Brownsville).

In moving down the river to form a junction with his forces at Point Isabel, he was met by a Mexican force, and the first battle of the war, Palo Alto (high tree), was fought on May 8, 1846. The next day the battle of Resaca de la Palma was won by American arms. These battles were fought on Texas soil, near Brownsville, on the 8th and 9th of May, 1846, though the war with Mexico was not declared until May 11 of that year. The Mexicans, smarting over the loss of Texas, were eager for the fray, and precipitated the war by which they were to lose more territory, but to this day they believe that Texas fought that war, and among the ignorant class, and there is legion of him, every American or citizen of the United States, is a Texan. They hate him only as an Indian can hate.

Taylor with his victorious army crossed the Rio Grande, and we travel back over his well marked trail with our story. But on the route back, a few miles north of Brownsville, we come upon a veritable horror. At the Arroyo Colorado, a party of Americans (civilian traders), following in the wake of the army, camp for the night. The next morning the sun beat upon a rifled camp, and sixteen stark bodies, but one of the bodies moves, crawls slowly to the shade of the brush, where later he is found, covered with knife wounds, by a Mexican farmer. He was but a young Americano, and he was carried to the Mexican women of the family. They hid him and nursed him back to health. Captain

Rogers lived many years in Corpus Christi, and his children and grandchildren are today of our best citizens.

Back to our starting point! How hard to realize that many years have flown. Today perhaps there are somewhere, a few old cannon in some home, a sword or epaulet, cherished as souvenirs of that splendid army. The ships, the wagons, the horses and the men are dust. A few long mounds of shell, a cemetery which was surveyed by Taylor's engineers, a few old traditions, is all that is left of that army.

That some of them died here we know, hence the necessity of a cemetery. They lie in long forgotten graves. A few years since a letter was received by the Woman's Cemetery Association, asking if the grave of one Colonel Hodgekiss could be traced. It could not, and only from that letter do we know that Colonel Hodgekiss served with Taylor, and died in camp here, and was buried on the hillside.

In later years, officers and men of other times and other wars were laid beside him, and for the last few years the ladies of the Cemetery Association cared for the God's Acre in this old Military Cemetery, now Bay View.

In a beautiful spot, overlooking two bays, lies the dust of heroes, men who served in the Texas Army, the Mexican War, Indian Wars, Civil War (both sides), and one poor fellow who died in camp here during the Spanish-American War.

'Neath a lonely mound, marked by a simple marble slab, lies all that is mortal of Captain Van Buren, of the Mounted Rifles, who was mortally wounded in an engagement with the Indians in 1854, the stone erected, according to the epitaph, by his only sister. On the face of the stone is the mark showing where it was struck by two grape shot during the bombardment of the city by the Union fleet during the Civil War. Beside it lies another stone, shattered by shots fired at the same time.

A busy city has grown up on all sides of the old cemetery, and at the foot of the hill stand the depots of the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad, and the San Antonio, Uvalde and Gulf Railroad; and ever busy life surges around the spot to which the early settler always carried his gun, ever on the lookout for the skulking savage.

But few of the soldiers' graves are marked, but we know that they lie there. Owing to the efforts of Post Commander E. J. Kilmer of the Grand Army of the Republic, the graves of the Union soldiers have been marked by a marble stone. A large stone bearing the simple words, "To the Memory of Confederate dead, who lie in this and adjacent cemeteries," was erected a few years since by a local historical association, whose names will appear later.

Sometime in the Forties, one Colonel Kinney purchased the Villareal tract of land, bordering on the bay shore, upon which the city now stands, and it became known as Kinney's Ranch.

The Colonel was a progressive man, and willing to divide the good land with others, he started a real estate boom that would be up-to-date even in this fast age. We read of his agents in far away Ireland, England, Scotland, and even the Northern Isle of Man was on the list. Supposedly also in Germany, as we got German Colonists of a superior class. In truth, all of the earliest arrivals were of a staunch, prosperous class.

We read in an unpublished history, which was written by a highly gifted lady, whose father emigrated at an early date, that each head of a family was required to bring farming tools, and provisions for a year, also clothing and general supplies. All of them brought some money, but alas, many of the tools were never to kiss the virgin soil. And provisions that would keep sweet in the climate from which they came, would soon be unfit for use in our warm zone. This lady's father was of the earliest colonists, who for some strange reason, in this and other parts of the State, passed the good lands and tried to found cities in impossible nooks. For proof, San Felipe, Washington, Velasco, Anahuac, San Patricio are recalled. I can call to mind but one of the early places which held its own, San Antonio, and she owes her prosperity to the God-given water, pure and plenty. This with the seemingly inborn instinct of her people to tear down anything standing in the way of their progress. A sister city is kin to San Antonio, only while she pays tribute to Alamo City.

San Antonio, like our city, has won out, and we will

visit and enjoy her streams and parks. If we have not the same, we have water, salt water with fish in it, and oysters and crabs and shrimp, sea food for the taking.

This was a golden age for the Bay Sailors who unloaded the heavy draught steamers at Aransas Pass, lightering the goods across the bay to the city. Years afterward an old Bay Captain told me that his banner trip netted him an even five hundred dollars, this on a cargo of flour. Never less than one hundred dollars a trip was cleared. When we say Aransas Pass, we mean Aransas Pass, the pass from the Gulf, between Mustang and St. Joseph's Islands, which has borne the name since it was charted. Situated on the North Bay Shore, between here and Rockport, a town sprang up, known as Aransas Harbor. In the boom in the eighties, later it appeared as Aransas Pass. We are surprised that no attention was paid to the change in name, as it is, to say the least of it, misleading. The Washington telegrams occasionally give the news of appropriations for Aransas Pass, and of work progressing at that point.

Naturally, to a person not on the ground, it would seem that the Government was doing a lot of work there, while in reality there has never been an appropriation of any kind for this little place. The citizens of the simon pure pass accommodately named their postoffice Tarpon (later changed to Port Aransas), but to the outside world, to the Government Engineers, and to all of this country, Aransas Pass is still at the same old spot as in the days of Lafitte, and of the early settlers, where in the near future a great seaport will be built; Government Dredges have dug a channel from thence up to the wharves at Corpus Christi.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Indian Depredations.*

During the years between the Mexican and Civil Wars our people led an easy care-free life, an occasional Indian scare, or the arrival of a bad man who shot up the town, were about all the excitements of the times. The Indians raided near, and occasionally shot an unwary hunter or traveler. One of the earliest depredations mentioned was the killing of a white man near the site of the Court House. He had gone out to bring the cows in for the evening milking. This was out of town at this time. Another man journeyed out and camped at the reef north of town, meaning to cross in the early morning while the water was calm. Later his poor, mutilated body was found by stock hunters, wagon burned and horses gone.

But the saddest story of all was that of young Dolan. Like all boys he wanted a gun. His mother sent to New Orleans by a friend and got the gun for his sixteenth birthday. A proud and overjoyed youth he was the day it arrived. Taking a Mexican boy with him, he crossed the reef to try it out. No doubt their progress across the two miles of open water was watched by hidden savages on the other side. Soon after arriving on firm ground, they were confronted by the warriors and a fight for life was on. The boy dropped the gun, and fatal error left it, as they kept at a distance as long as he held it. Then they seized it and the poor boy was slain with his own gun.

The Mexican boy, true to his training and the Indian blood in his veins, wormed his way through the chaparral and escaped. Late that night he returned, bringing to the waiting parents the heart-rending news that their only boy lay dead under the stars. An old chronicle says that this was the saddest funeral ever held in Corpus Christi, a party of armed men having gone over in the morning and brought the body home to the mother, who never forgave herself for buying the gun which was the cause of the tragedy. This

was the last Indian murder in the immediate vicinity of Corpus Christi. It occurred sometime in the fifties.

If memory serves aright, it was at the house of this Mrs. Dolan that Captain Van Buren, before mentioned, died on the ninth day after being wounded. As the story goes, he got up that morning and asked Mrs. Dolan to make him some soup, saying he felt hungry. She went to do his bidding. She had almost finished preparing the meal when his attendant, an enlisted man, called her to come quick. They barely got him to his bed when he breathed his last.

Poor boy, barely a fortnight before, he with his regiment, Maryland Mounted Rifles, went on a scout after a band of Indians, reported nearby. They found them near the mouth of the Nueces River, and had a fierce fight. Of this I can get no report of casualties, and only Van Buren's lonely tomb remains to tell the story of days which tried men's souls, and of the death of the young and gallant officer.

This year of 1854 was destined to be a sad one for brave little Corpus Christi. A foe more deadly than painted savages was on its way, a foe which in that day and time we could not fight, sailing across our bay in open daylight, met with open arms it came, and deadly was its visitation.

In the summer of that year a Mexican fruit vessel, peddling her cargo from port to port, touched at our wharf, and did a brisk business. What a boon, rich, ripe fruit to a people who grew nothing at home, great golden oranges, bunches of bananas turning from green to gold, which might be kept for days, lemons, limes, colossal pineapples, mangoes, the very air was laden with the rich odor of fruit.

The merchants came and bought for their stores, the householders bought for their families, nearby rancheros hearing of the unusual treat, came in to get a share, the Mexican citizens came from the hill to hear the news and palabro with their countrymen. First and last, almost every soul in the place visited the vessel in its week's stay, and everyone who visited the vessel had been exposed to that deadliest of Southern diseases, the vomito of Mexico, yellow fever of the American.

Within two weeks the town was a fever ward, and the Grim Reaper gathered toll in almost every home. Mothers

were left with a family of small children, thousands of miles from native land or kinsmen. Fathers had to leave the little ones neglected while they left them to toil for food, while in some cases both parents were taken. Scarce a family escaped, but the cold weather came, or the disease died out for the want of new victims. The Christmas of 1854 was a sad holiday. Corpus Christi, the stricken, mourned its dead.

Shortly after this a detachment of soldiers were stationed here. Of this command I know very little, except they were regulars commanded by Major Chapman; his old headquarters, a very pretentious house for that time, still stands and is in possession of his descendants, who rank as one of the oldest families. Some of his men, at expiration of enlistment, remained here. One of them, an old Sergeant, related to me stories of the good old times of his youth, all forgotten except one, of a grand ball given by the enlisted men for the benefit of the widow of a comrade recently dead.

Meetings were held, committees appointed, tickets procured and sold at two dollars each, all the officers and many citizens purchasing.

The next question was as to invitations. A flutter went down soapsuds row, and there was an overhauling of finery in the officers' kitchens, and the boys were told off as to who they were to escort to the dance. Working for one of the officers was a girl named Lucindy. Now Lucindy was no beauty, nor was she young. Although ladies were scarce, no one would agree to go with her. Up spoke my friend, the Sergeant, from the kindness of his Irish heart, "I'll take Lushindy, bedad, and the laddie that don't dance with her can meet me out byant the corral after roll call tomorry morning." Needless to tell that for once poor Lucindy was the belle of the ball, and had partners to spare. A goodly sum was raised for the widow, the officers attended, and the ball was a success.

About this time there was a little episode typical of the time and place. A couple of Mormon missionaries arrived and began to hold meetings in a warehouse on the waterside, for men only. Amusement was scarce and the men attended regularly. The meetings had been on nightly for some time, and the Saints felt that they were gaining ground rapidly.



This night the speaker was in the midst of an impassioned appeal for recruits. Suddenly he stopped as if stricken dumb. His jaw dropped and he stood as if petrified, but only for a moment. Then things began to liven up. Into the room marched the good wives of the congregation.

The leading lady carried a very dead cat by the tail, this she brought down across the open mouth of the speaker, while her cohorts hurled eggs and other missiles at the pair. Again and again the cat descended, wielded by a strong arm. The Saints sought the open air in undignified haste, not waiting for their hats, made a wild dash for the hill, over its brow they went, crashing through brush, racing like unto wild cattle. They were known to Corpus Christi no more. The ladies then proceeded to dismiss the meeting, in which ceremony they used the remainder of the ammunition. The narrator, who was one of the congregation, told the writer that he did not return to the bosom of his family for several days, not until a general amnesty was declared, and though his hair was as the driven snow, his eye lit up with the fire of youth at the memory of the Mormons' last meeting.

People of that day had a higher business morality than we of the present day, that is, they paid their debts more promptly, the merchants did a general credit business, and as far as recalled no one went "broke." Judge Fitzsimmons, then a young man, afterward an efficient County Officer, for years holding the office of County Judge, told the following story:

"A nearby ranchero traded at the store of W. N. Staples, where I was at the time bookkeeper. The old fellow came in about twice yearly, and settled up. One day, as usual, he came in for his account. I called the amount, he hesitated awhile before taking the bill. 'No, sor, that's not right,' he said, laying it back on the desk, and reaching down into his pocket he handed out a stick covered with notches. 'No, sor, you have charged me twinty cints too much; I'll not pay it.' Running his finger down the stick he counted, 'This is ten dollars; this is five; one-seventy, two forty-five, terbacce twinty-five, ax for John, seventy-five; one tin wash-pot for the old woman, two-thirty; one dollar, what the divil?

—Oh, yes, two gallons whiskey for Auld Jerry's wake,' and so on to the end of the stick. Meanwhile the clerks hunted and added wildly, the overcharge of twenty cents was actually found, and the old man, who did not have a speaking acquaintance with the alphabet, settled up and cut a new stick."

And now I come to the saddest story of all, the beginning of the Civil War. There was no telegraph in those days, and our mail by boat, via Indianola, was often overdue, but in due time the news of bombardment of Sumter came, and in a day the peace of not only the nation, but of our little town was gone. A great part of our population being of foreign birth, naturally supported the Government, which gave them liberty and protection, while others, born under a Southern sky, ardently espoused the cause of their people, and the sun which had shone so merrily as it peeped over the waves that morning, went sadly to bed, leaving in darkness a sadly divided city.

## CHAPTER V.

*Civil War—1861.*

The bugle sounded and the cavalry sprang into life. Drums beat the long roll and the infantry hep, hep, to the command of its officers. Captain Wm. Maltby, with his Lieutenants McDonough and Russell, and a force of men, sailed over and fortified Aransas Pass. The ladies of the city got together and fashioned a Confederate flag. This flag was presented from the old Court House steps, to the Company of Captain Neal. The flag was presented by Miss Mary Woessner, who stood on the steps surrounded by her schoolgirl friends, all dressed in white, and the hardy warriors stood ranked below, for only warriors dwelt on the frontier of this day. The banner was presented in a neat speech, which voiced the sentiment of her hearers. A new nation had been born; here was her emblem. W. B. Wrather received the flag on behalf of the Company, and promised to carry it to victory or death. The wildest enthusiasm prevailed, and again the town was a military camp.

The blockading fleet arrived at the two Passes, Corpus and Aransas, and promptly bottled Corpus Christi. Federals landed and established camp on the southern end of Mustang Island, at Corpus Pass, over which bar they brought light draught vessels, both armies at times visiting the Islands.

We quote from Confederate Military History, Texas Volume: "On May 3, 1863, the enemy attempted to land on St. Joseph's Island, were repelled by small force commanded by Captains E. E. Hobby and B. F. Neal. Colonel A. M. Hobby, Commander at Corpus Christi, reports that the men were exposed to heavy rain and without food. They numbered sixty-four, armed with forty guns. The enemy was many, the three boats coming in single file. The first launch was captured, with six new Sharp rifles and cartridge boxes and one ammunition chest. The other boats fleeing back to the fleet; the captured boat was dragged across the Island to Aransas Bay. Of more importance was the recapture of

ten bales of cotton, which had been confiscated at some point on the coast, by the enemy and placed there pending shipment North, for cotton sent to Mexican border meant shoes, clothes, food, medicines, ammunition. At that date cotton and gold were synonymous terms, with cotton slightly in the lead. To the Union Camp on Mustang went the citizens who refused to accept the Confederacy, where they were given shelter, and later transportation to New Orleans."

I am wrong in saying that all of our foreign born citizens stood by the old flag, there were notable exceptions. Of names I can call to mind are the good and old names of Von Blucher, of same family as he of Waterloo; Colonel Lovenskiold, a highly educated gentleman at one time a teacher here; John Uehlinger, for many years after the war a leading merchant; August Ricklefsen, who died many years since; Andrew Dove, a native of Bonny Scotland, and undoubtedly others whom the writer did not know. The names mentioned are all borne today in Corpus Christi by good people, representative people, hence knowledge of them.

To Corpus Pass, to run the bar for the United States Government, as Pilot, came one Captain Grant, and with him his family. After the war he remained on the Island and became a cattle raiser. His house became a landmark to all Bay folks, hunting parties and sight-seers, for its unbounded hospitality. The Captain and his good wife have gone to their reward, the children have founded homes nearer the haunts of men, and the old home, like the shallow Pass, is deserted.

The cry of the sea bird and the moan of the wave is the only sound to be heard today on the spot where half a century ago armed men and ships kept watch on a hostile coast. South of Mustang Island lies Isla del Padre, rich in legends of pirates and buried treasure, and in years agone, after a storm at sea, coins might be (and were) picked up on the Gulf shore, Spanish coins worn smooth by the waters. They probably came from some long forgotten wreck, as it was gradually torn apart by the raging waters, mute messengers from the past, of the days when Spain held sovereignty of the Southern seas. This is the only treasure ever reported.

This Father of Islands reaches southward to the Mexi-

can border, and to it came, in those days, traders willing to do business with either side, traders of various wares, but principally cattle dealers, not particular as to whose cattle, gathering herds on the mainland by the light of the moon, crossing them by fords across Laguna Madre, and selling them to the enemy for use of camp and fleet. The owners of the cattle objected to this traffic. An expedition was organized to capture the Mexican bandits engaged in it. They reached the vicinity of the camp and were carefully advancing when the freebooters, who had been warned by pickets, fired upon them from ambush, from the sandhills. Two men were killed by the first volley and the surprise threw the party into a panic. They gathered up their dead and began the march home. We never heard the name of one of the men killed. The other was Lawrence Dunn, and to his widow and little children came the terrible news. Mr. Dunn and wife, a few years earlier, had left all the comforts of civilization, and sought fortune in the Western wilds, and this was the parting of the young wife and husband, she alone to care for the young family.

Truly, we of this day cannot realize what the women of that day suffered, one long agony of suspense and fear. Later another scouting party went down and captured two young men, deserters, making their way to the enemy. They were brought back, tried by courtmartial, and hanged to a tree, near where Mesquite Street crosses the Texas-Mexican Railroad tracks. They were buried beneath the tree, which shortly died (as trees, according to tradition, do when a human being is hanged to their branches), and the exact spot where two young lives went out in dishonor was lost trace of. That some of the citizens did not sanction the findings of the Court was proven several years later, when the Honorable John Ireland was a candidate for Congress. Colonel Ireland had been in command of Corpus Christi at the time of the execution. During his canvass he spoke to a small audience here. The writer heard his denial of being responsible for this unfortunate happening. In his speech he said, "The man who says I had art or part in the death of these men is a liar. As Commander of this Post, I was ordered to see the sentence executed. As a soldier I obeyed

orders." He was a soldier and a patriot, and the fortune of war brought this most unfortunate episode into his hands.

All this time the small garrison at Aransas Pass was holding its own against the fleet. On the 16th day of November, 1863, Colonel Bradfute with Maltby's Company of Eighth Infantry and Garrett's Battalion, boarded the steamer Cora and attempted to rescue the garrison at that point, but were not able to reach them. On November 17, after a severe fight, the brave defenders surrendered and were carried prisoners of war to New Orleans, where they remained until the close of hostilities. The way being open, the vessels entered the bay, and Corpus Christi was at their mercy.

## CHAPTER VI.

*The Last Flag of Truce.*

Prior to this time we sent out the last flag of truce ever sent out by Confederates from here. The story was told me by one of the bearers of the flag, an old Bay Captain, member of the Hobby Regiment at that time. This is Captain Hawley's story: "I was ordered to get a boat and crew and go on a cruise with Captain Mann. I secured a little sail boat and a crew of two men and waited at Central Wharf for orders. The Captain came down, the white flag was raised, and we were off, envied by every man in sight. We felt jubilant, for we were to have a view of the enemy, and the old familiar Gulf. All went well, we reached the Pass, sailed boldly out and headed for the vessel on duty as Blockader. When within a hundred yards the order to halt came from her decks. We lowered sail. 'What boat is this?' came next. 'Flag of truce,' answered our Captain. 'Come aboard,' was the next order. We lowered our yawl, the Captain took his seat, and I and one of the crew took the oars. We rowed to the side of the vessel and he climbed aboard. A sentinel on deck looked over the side and called, 'Hey, you, come aboard,' as he pointed his gun in our direction, and looked fierce. We wonderingly obeyed, and when we stepped on deck the Captain was getting his. The crew was having fun at his expense. He was dressed as became a dashing cavalry officer of the South, grey uniform, soft hat with plume, gauntlets and silver spurs. Unchided by the marine officers, the sailors were making fun of the angry officer, his communication refused by the officer in command of the vessel, who threatened to hang the whole Rebel gang. About this time I saw a boat's crew going over our little vessel. They ran her in near shore, setting fire to her.

"Captain Mann pointed to our little flag of peace, and said things about usages of civilized warfare, but was ordered below. My comrade and myself were ordered into a small boat, where we found the remainder of our crew, one man.

We were carried to a nearby transport which landed us later in prison in New Orleans. I never saw Captain Mann after our hurried parting on ship, though he survived the war. Though he used lurid language, derogatory to the flag, the Yank and that particular crew, they did not carry out their threat of hanging him. After getting on the transport and having time to think, the ludicrous side of it struck one of my crew, as to the desire of Corpus Christi citizens to come with us. He commenced to laugh, then to roll, and we could only get from him, 'John Bell wanted to come, Sam wanted to come, Miss Brown told me to beg a little coffee from them for her.' His conduct attracted the notice of the crew. The wily fellow seeing this, kept it up, and actually got released and sent back to the Texas Coast as insane."

In speaking of different men as Captain, let me explain that at that date almost every man you met had this prefix. Captains were as common here as were Colonels in Kentucky, as the greater part of our men worked on the bay, and had boats of various sizes and descriptions, so Private Hawley of Hobby's Regiment was known as Captain Hawley in civil circles. He came here just prior to the war to work on a dredge boat belonging to his father, who had a contract of opening a channel from Aransas Pass up to the city. This dredge was new, and its owner had placed his moderate fortune of about twenty-seven thousand dollars in it. Some of its machinery was invented by himself. At the beginning of trouble, the elderly owner went North, the son remained to keep watch over the boat which was laid up at what is known as shell bank, in Corpus Christi Bay. Later the enemy, on its first trip into the bay, burned her to the water's edge. Although the son had joined in the war with the South, the father was a staunch Union man, but he never received a cent for his loss, or the work he had done previous to war. The work on the channel was stopped for half a century. In 1910, the Bowers Dredging Company arrived with two dredges to deepen our channel from Aransas Pass to Corpus Christi.

I find by consulting Confederate Military History, that the Federals bombarded the city on August 7, 1862. That they must have entered by Corpus Pass is obvious as the



defenses at Aransas Pass did not surrender until the following day. Non-combatants had been notified to leave, and had gone out to camp in a grove about three miles west of town. There was more noise than damage to life in the assault on the city. One man of the Confederate cavalry was killed by a round shot. He fell at about the intersection of Chaparral and Power Streets. Many houses were struck, but being of adobe, not much damage was done. Fortunately no fires were started. Many of the shots fired in that day are still to be seen. Notably, two unexploded shells on the lawn of E. T. Merriman, on Water Street.

Some ludicrous incidents occurred during the fight. One man nailed to his bed with rheumatism, in the upper story of a building (still standing), on the corner of Chaparral and Peoples Streets, refused to be moved, said he preferred death to the pain of being lifted to a stretcher. A round shot struck the house, passing a few feet above him. He arose with a bound, cleared the stairs in a couple of jumps, and led the party of belated stragglers up and over the hill, and got into the camp ahead of the field, and from that day until his death, years later, he never had a tinge of his old rheumatic enemy. This is true to the letter.

A warehouse in which hides were stored was struck by an exploding shell, and hides filled the air. A Johnny Rebel legging it nearby glanced over his shoulder and yelled, "My God, they are shooting goat skins at us." The Confederates returned the fire, but being poorly armed, did little harm. One battery was stationed at the foot of Belden Street. G. B. Williams and James McKenzie were of this command. Mr. Williams told me that on the night before the fight they were drilled, the commands being whispered, fearing to draw the enemy's fire, so near were they. One lady still with us, told me she remained under fire during the entire time. She was about a mile from town with her young sister who was very sick with fever. The physician said to move the patient meant death, and this brave woman and the doctor remained by the bedside. Shot and shell fell in the yard, but they were unharmed. To add to her trials, her husband was in the beleaguered port of Aransas, which was surrendered the next day, and long weeks must elapse

before she could get news of his fate. He returned at the close of the War, and as a leading jurist and District Judge, was one of our most respected townsmen. Judge J. C. Russell, pioneer and soldier, was known to all the Southwest.

The enemy finally landed near the reef and under cover of the guns of the fleet, marched down and occupied the town, the Rebs holding the brow of the hill. The fight was kept up all day. The enemy having taken possession of the light house, then standing exactly in front of where the Colored Congregational Church now stands, posted a signal man in the tower, and held all north of that point. In the old chronicle written by an eye-witness, a pathetic incident of the day is related. The Confederate cavalry, hastily summoned from their camp west of town, met a man and two boys going out to a nearby ranch. These they arrested to hold until the fight was over. This party had left their home near Salt Lake very early, knowing nothing of the imminent attack on the town. The cavalrymen told their prisoner that positively they were suffering with hunger. He knew many of them, and told them to send a man with his son to his house and get some bread, which was cooked. The soldier taking the little fellow on his horse and keeping to shelter of the brush, went to get the bread while his regiment moved up to the attack. He found a whole-souled woman at the house who gave him all the bread on hand, and told him she would have more baked in an hour, so throughout the day came the hourly messenger to carry hot bread to his comrades who held the line. This noble pair who gave food to the hungry soldiers was Mr. and Mrs. Priour. Their children and children's children are still with us, and the name stands for honesty and integrity even unto the third and fourth generations. Mrs. Priour was an accomplished woman, and taught the only school open during this bitter period. When we pause to think of the scarcity of food, particularly breadstuff, we realize the generosity of the act, an unselfishness truly grand. The poor, hungry cavalrymen who accepted her bounty might at any time have laid down their guns and stepped into a land of plenty, but they were men of the South and of a heroism unequaled in history, the first people of the earth to build monuments to

defeat, and at the same time build a new South on the ruins of the old, and hold as strongly to their customs and traditions in defeat as they would have done had victory blessed them.

Both parties drew off at nightfall of this day of much fighting, barren of results. From this time the little town was occupied by first one and then the other.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *A Trap for the Enemy.*

The Rebs noticed that the enemy invariably landed when they departed, so some Napoleon of the Art of War, laid a trap for the undoing of the party giving information to the enemy. Under cover of darkness a party of soldiers sailed across to Ingleside. Next morning the remaining part of the Garrison made a pretended departure. The party in the boat approached the city across the bay from the direction of the enemy's stronghold, beating up and down in front of the city, they watched for signals. The signals soon appeared. From the upstairs east window of the old Seaside Hotel (still standing) a white sheet was hung. The boat stood off and on until the crew was sure of their man, and sailing in they arrested him at the wharf where he had come to meet them, not learning his mistake until they landed.

The old man (I have forgotten his name) must have felt as did Benedict Arnold when he heard of Andre's capture, and the feeling was made more acute by the suggestion of the crowd as to a just punishment. Death was the general verdict, the only difference of opinion being as to how. Everything including plain hanging was canvassed. A short imprisonment and a long scare was what he received.

The enemy occasionally picked up a stray Johnny and carried him off to prison, and once the Johnnies retaliated by capturing one Captain Kitterege who made himself obnoxious by his too frequent visits. Later he fell into durance vile, while foraging for eggs and butter at Flour Bluff. I do not know anything more than his capture by one Captain Ware, who died a few years since in the Old Soldiers' Home at Austin.

To a man from Northern Virginia, or the Army of Tennessee, our share of the War looks like the antics of the Home Guard, but we had just as much enthusiasm as had the men who stormed the heights of Gettysburg. One great drawback was our poverty of arms. With these in

plenty, or sufficient to give each man a gun, the enemy would not have raided our coast.

I now relate a story as it was told to me. As an American, I am ashamed of it, but inclined to believe it a companion piece to the one of the man who signalled from the Seaside window.

A company of negroes had landed in town and gone on a scouting trip a short distance in the country. On their return four of them were missing. The night passed, and next day and night. The Commander raved that they had been caught and hung by the Rebs. Going to the prison he ordered the prisoners to draw lots, saying he would retaliate by shooting an equal number. The doomed men drew lots and were actually on their way to their execution when the four demoralized negroes appeared. They had been lost on the prairie. Whether the sentence would have been carried out, had they not returned, we cannot say. The officer was white, and we can hardly think that such extreme cruelty would have been resorted to, but, using the Mexican saying, "quien sabe." It was war times, and war is horrible, particularly civil war.

Our town being in an isolated part of the country, and new, we can understand that at times personal matters naturally crept in, and private feuds paraded as patriotism, but to the credit of our people, I am glad to say that with the exception of the two boys hanged for desertion, there were no executions during the entire War, and by all military law, they had forfeited their lives.

The little fleet of bay boats gradually disappeared, as the enemy burned each one as caught. Some incidents are told of this one-sided warfare. One Captain Sands (who later burned another boat on Corpus Beach), was chased down the lagoon. He had a cargo from Mexico, for Corpus Christi, and was attempting to steal up an inside route. Seeing capture was certain, he headed his boat for shore. Having a bag of gunpowder on board, he laid a fuse and jumped off, making his escape to cover, but the expected explosion did not come. Afterward he knew he had carefully laid his train to green coffee.

Another, of a man who attempted to pass danger line in

darkness. The wind was light and he sat and steered carefully all night. In the earliest dawn he noticed a familiar landmark as the last thing he saw when darkness fell. He had grounded on soft mud and had steered a standing boat throughout the night. Not relishing a chance at prison, he too waded to safety, leaving the boat to its sure fate.

Great activity was practiced by the enemy in preventing the Rebs from making or gathering salt. The whole South suffered from need of this item, and the writer remembers seeing the floors of old smokehouses dug up, and a very dirty looking article of salt extracted from the soil. This was used to cure meat. The very best we could get was a coarse grade, but of course our own people could get salt for home consumption from the bay, but any attempt to boil in quantity on bayside was promptly attended to, and little bloodless brushes with the Yanks kept us busy, they coming and getting a few prisoners occasionally, and the town changing hands continually. But the end was near. Our troops neither received nor expected pay. Confederate money had gone out of circulation. The trade on the border brought a little specie. This, with "swapping" articles, was our medium of exchange.

There were two lucky boys in the cavalry company near here. In the last days of the War the command halted at night and made camp in what is known as the sands. Two of them slept on one blanket, a little apart. What was their surprise in the morning to find that the wind, eddying against their bodies, had swept the sand away, and left a little pile of coin exposed near their bed. One of the men told me that the money was Mexican dollars or coins of early date. That they were in small piles, one on another, as if they had been placed in a box and buried, though no sign of the box remained. The bunkies divided the find, something over three hundred dollars, equally, and had the envy of comrades while it lasted.

But the War was over, though we did not know it until some six weeks later, and the last fight of the War, the last gun fired for the lost cause, was on our border. In February, 1865, General Lew Wallace, in command of Federals at Brazos Santiago, with Mr. Charles Worthington, a Texas

Unionist, met General Slaughter and Colonel Ford of the Rebel Army at Point Isabel and signed a local truce pact. General Wallace, to win fame in later life by writing "Ben Hur," proposed cessation of hostilities, saying that if every man of this army on both sides was killed it would not affect the result: "You, Colonel Ford, keep your men on your own territory and I will do the same."

The Texans sought a spot where wood and grass were plenty and went into camp, keeping out a few pickets for form's sake. Thus a couple of months passed. On May 12, 1865, Ford's scouts reported the enemy in their territory, at Palmetto Ranch, which they burned that night. Ford, never slow in a fight, ordered an advance, and on the 13th the forces met. The fight soon became a rout, as the Rebs had a field battery of three guns which did good service. The enemy lost some thirty, dead and wounded, and one hundred and thirteen prisoners. Getting near the Yanks' defenses, Colonel Ford ordered a halt, for which he was never forgiven by his men. They wanted to go on, but the wary old Indian fighter smelled a trap. His officers raved, even accusing him of white feather, but halt they did, and had not quit shouting till the news of Lee's surrender came. Why, or by whose order the truce was broken was never known. For particulars of this last fight, officers and commands engaged, see Confederate Military History, Texas Volume. History repeats, on this ground was fought the first battles of the Mexican War and last of the War of Secession.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *When the War Ended.*

The War was over. The enemy marched into town and went into camp. Two negro regiments, officered by white men, were the Federal forces. The citizens were generally well treated as compared with other parts of the South. Excepting raids by the negro soldiers on hen roosts and gardens, and considerable thieving from residences, there was no serious trouble, though in two cases there came near being tragedies. A negro going into a yard for water, peeped into the kitchen window and saw a lady kneading bread. He stuck his head in and demanded a loaf. "Why," said the frightened woman, "It is not baked, I am just making it." To the woman's horror, he threw up his pistol and fired, knocking a great piece of plaster from the wall, then disappearing before anyone came to her aid.

Another white woman went to a nearby cabin to carry food to an old negro in her employ who was sick. As she left the place and turned to shut the door, someone in the dark fired three shots into the door above her head. No harm was done save to the nerves of the poor near-victim.

The officers of our regiments seem to have been a very gentlemanly lot, and being Northern bred, of course saw nothing wrong in commanding negroes, believing they were doing missionary work in learning the ex-slaves to be good soldiers and citizens. That they would never be the first has been proven time and again. Never more forcibly than in shooting up the city of Brownsville, a few years since, for the sole reason that Brownsville was in Texas. As to his citizenship, half a century of freedom has not proved him a success.

Reconstruction was on! Our people, as stated, fared well. They were mostly foreign born, and few of them owned slaves. Colonel John Moore, in command of a battalion camped near by, rode in to surrender and make terms for his men. He found headquarters of the Yankee com-



mander established in his residence, still standing on North Water Beach. What bitter thoughts must have passed through the mind of the old Southerner, a scholar and a gentleman to his fingertips, to enter the door around which his children had played in happy childhood, where he had ever been met by the smile of a wife and greeting of kinsmen, a prisoner, willing to meet his fate, asking for himself nothing, for his men best terms which might be granted.

The Commander, I am glad to say, was a soldier. He refused the Colonel's sword, telling him it was the fortune of war, and to meet defeat as bravely as victory, and complimented the Southern Army. He told him the terms of surrender and invited him to consider this his home and he (the Yankee) as the guest. I am sorry I cannot give the name of this noble officer, whose words of sympathy to his vanquished foe were above jewels to the broken man. Yesterday a capitalist, today a stranger in his home, slaves freed and the ruins of a fine dredge boat nearby.

Colonel Moore came to Corpus Christi to finance and aid in a scheme to make a great seaport here, and if the War had not interfered the chances are that we, and not Galveston, would have been the earliest seaport, and the story of the great storm in Galveston, in which thousands lost their lives, would have remained untold. The Colonel brought his family back to the old home and he and his lovable wife spent the remaining years of their lives with us. The story of his surrender was told to the writer by his daughter, Mrs. Conklin, for years a teacher in our schools. She remembered vividly the early days of the War, and a certain red silk dress of hers which was used to give color to a Rebel flag which the patriotic ladies fashioned, perhaps the one presented by Miss Woessner, afterwards Mrs. W. B. Wrathier.

The white officers of the colored regiments formed a club and set up a mess hall in a house, yet standing on the lot adjoining and north of the Methodist Church, on Mesquite Street, and honestly curbed as far as possible the outlawry of their command. As the citizens did not hold the bitterness of other sections of the South, they soon became quite an acquisition to the society of the little town. Some

of the married men brought their families, and in the return of prosperity the War was almost forgotten. The negro at that time was an unknown quantity to the Northern people. The officers were soon disillusioned.

But good women came to West Texas, just as they go to Africa today, burning with zeal to do the work of the Master, and to help those poor people over which the abolitionist had howled for years. They came, they saw, they fled. Uncle Tom's Cabin on the stage and Uncle Rastus' Cabin on the Nueces was different. Besides, the negro had no respect for "No poor white trash what 'sociate with niggers," but they started fair. The Congregational Church, which stands near the site of the old light house, was built for both white and black worshipers. A very few whites attended for a while and then it was given over to the negro. The ground upon which it stands has grown to be very valuable, but the Northern Society who own it refuse to sell. The members of the present day are a very orderly, quiet people, not given to holding all-night sessions as are their more tuneful Methodist and Baptist brethren, who have been bought out and moved out of sounding distance. And may the old church stand for many years, mute monument of the days gone by, and failure of fanatics to force social equality on a stricken people.

But the War was over! The troops held on the border awaiting developments in Mexico were disbanded when news of Maximilian's death came. Good-byes were said to the enemies who had become friends, and Johnny went marching home. But two of the handsomest young officers were held prisoners of war, and watched their comrades go, held as firmly and securely as was President Davis in his prison cell in Fortress Monroe, and our grateful Government never demanded their release, nor did they ever once attempt to escape, for the bonds were silken and the captors two fair daughters of the South. They became of the South, veritable South Texans, living the remainder of their days in the South: Captain E. H. Wheeler and Captain Barnes Downing, both of whom have answered the last roll call, their deaths regretted keenly by all who knew them.

Right here I want to say that various reasons have been

given as to a better feeling existing between the North and South, the Spanish-American War being one reason assigned. That is not the cause of this feeling, nor is it the lapse of time, for the Southerner has a retentive memory. Acquaintance is the cause. The people of Northern birth who simply thought they were taking their lives in their own hands when they came South, found differently, made friends and intimacy begot respect. If we had been acquainted we might never have fought, but we did fight, and as Americans, I believe we are a little proud of the scrap. It was such a war as none but Americans could have waged, and ended as never a war before. We all went home and to work to make up for lost time.

True, the Ku Klux Klan gave a little trouble, but a great good was done by them in wresting the State from negro rule. Corpus Christi being out of the black zone, did not have a Klan, but there were thirty thousand in the State. The writer, at that time in Houston, began to hear strange stories from the negro cook. Even though common sense told us it was a trick, it gave us an uncanny feeling. Nightly sights were seen by colored church-goers, and more particularly by colored attendants of political meetings. The recital of them caused creepy feelings. A couple of old covered forts on Buffalo Bayou seemed favorite stamping grounds for spooks. Imagine a crowd of darkies coming home from a perfectly orderly meeting, held nightly, for the purpose of finding where to get forty acres of land and a mule, and getting no nearer an understanding than that in the event of election of certain Carpetbaggers, they would get both mule and land, and a pension, reported of various amounts.

Imagine the meeting closed after an almost all night session, and the crowd going home in a body. Out of the fort issued groans, unearthly cries; out pops a man all in white, without a head, another with both arms missing, another whose white clothes are covered with blood, while flames issue from the mouth and eyes of a black fellow.

Another, but nobody to see more of the sights; a Gilpin race is on, and no threat or entreaty will get a darkey out after nightfall.

Nobody wants a mule, meetings deserted, and the white man comes into his own, a bloodless victory!

The writer heard the fearsome stories in the kitchen, and repeated them to a grave-faced man who headed the table, also the house. He had followed Lee and limped as a result. He seemed to take great interest in the recitals, and long afterward the writer knew that the husband took a little time from his numerous lodge meetings to go to spook festivals in the old fort, in which there had never been a gun fired nor a man hurt; and in later years he told of the fun and of the "wailing cry of distress." Don't think it was ever published, this way of giving the signal, drawing up right arm and striking out as if dealing a blow, you called, "I'm Sampson, I'm Sampson." At the peril of your life, if you were a Sampson, you must rush to his rescue.

A strange item in the Houston Post caught my eye a year or so ago. Nothing less than a call to arms of the old Klan to clear the city of thugs and murderers. Poor old man who made this call! The men who rid the State of negro rule so many years ago, and who kept the secret to death, are gone, and their like will be seen no more.

Every effort was made by officers of the Government to catch the Ku Klux Klan, but every man on the police force was a member. One night the news got out that a sleuth, a Federal Captain, had scared all the secrets from a badly frightened member. He and a couple of detectives would visit the lodge and get evidence, the scared member planning to give the boys a little exercise. They came masked took three extra seats in the room, the only vacant ones by the way, that were not numbered; every member had a number and sat in the chair with the corresponding number. To their surprise they were bound, carried down the stairs and to the banks of the bayou, where the sentence pronounced before leaving the hall was to be executed. Weighted by the neck, they were to go into twenty feet of muddy water. How they pleaded. After much deliberation and wrangling they were spared, and if either or all of them are living to this day, I doubt if even yet they could see the joke, or know that not a man there would have had a hand in murder, and were all most prominent citizens. That

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crimes were committed by masked men and laid at the door of the Klan is true, but the members were a high-minded people and never a crime was committed by the sworn members. They took this method of saving the South from the crying disgrace of negro rule by working on their superstition.

Early memories recall the first bicycle ever brought to Corpus Christi, two of them in 1869, and every lady turned out to see them on a Sunday afternoon, and the merry riders were invited to stop at every beer joint and refresh. No Sunday law those days! Perhaps for that reason they had to climb on a fence to mount, and led a very wobbly way down Preston Street.

And the first ball game! The umpire carried a hand-book, and when a chap swatted the ball, grabbed him by the shoulder and trotted him to first. The girls came out and walked past, and watched from nearby galleries, never dreaming that in the years to come ladies would go to ball games, and one of them at least would give up good money for the privilege of watching a game, and feel a taste of heaven when her team won and a strong smell of the other place if they lost.

## CHAPTER IX.

*First Carpetbagger Governor.*

Corpus Christi bears the doubtful honor of having given up the only Carpetbagger Governor who ever misruled Texas. E. J. Davis left Corpus Christi to fill the Governor's chair, and notwithstanding his reputation throughout the State, he was liked at home. A polished gentleman as to manners, a diligent and willing nurse in the fever epidemic of '67, he visited the homes of the lowly, putting his hand to the work as it came. An old friend of mine remembers him with gratitude. He came to her assistance and with his own hands helped to lift a dying sister to a cot, and helped carry it a distance of three blocks that the sister might spend her last moments with her mother, who was also low with the fever.

But he went to Austin, the choice of the Carpetbagger, and Corpus Christi knew him no more. On the night before the departure of his family, a lovely moonlight night, Mrs. Davis walked with a friend on Broadway, in front of the Davis home, yet standing with its old-fashioned dormer windows.

That the moonlight begets strange fancies we all know, but the old moon was more fantastic than usual that night, and the proud woman, starting on a journey to public obloquy, dreamed dreams. She told her friend that this journey was only the first step to the White House, and to this moon craziness only can we ascribe future events.

Texas was under negro rule, who were led by unscrupulous white men. The law was a dead letter, and only that the former slaves had a fear of, and respect for former owners, did the white race escape untold horrors. As it was the situation was bad enough. Murders were committed and towns were placed under martial law and compelled to pay immense sums of money. When the right of franchise was granted to ex-Rebs, those officers and gentlemen were forced to register before negro officials.

Many of them, like Huck Finn's father, declared they would not vote, but better counsel prevailed, and vote they did, early and often, and not only this, but voted the negro with them; not with the negro's consent, but he had been told to vote the blue ticket, and he voted without knowing that the white man's ticket had been printed on their exact shade of blue paper. The story goes that when the result was heard in Austin, Governor Davis wildly telegraphed to General Grant to send troops to subdue the wild and woolly Texans, but that great and truly good man refused to interfere, and down from the wall came his picture, and the lady of the mansion put her foot through it. Exit E. J. Davis from the Texas horizon. Sound the loud timbrels from desert to sea! Texas had triumphed and her people were free after five years of sheol. What wonder that we got a reputation.

There were some scores which could be wiped out in blood only. Mrs. Davis was a daughter of the South, and I am told that her family were Southerners. One, a Captain Britton, a Confederate surgeon, died here in the epidemic of '67, and the family name is perpetuated by the Britton-Motts. They were of the earliest settlers, and I have heard that her father was a Colonel in the regular army. A family of high standing, and we will lay it all to moon madness and let it go at that.

No man or woman either knew at that day that in less than half a century these bleeding, conquered people would shine throughout the world as something new in history, who, by their industry and thrift would build a new South. Hands unused to toil grasped the plow and wrung wealth from the bosom of old mother earth. Trades, hitherto despised (no aristocratic Southerner thought of a trade for his sons, nor would he have allowed him to learn one), were fostered, and with the aid of the dollars of our Northern brother, who was willing to swap them for a part of the rich land, an era of prosperity came, and men and women look back to those days with pride, though they were tinged with horror.

But back to Corpus Christi again. In July of 1857, a man came to Corpus Christi on horseback from Indianola.

crossing the reef on the wagon road, and entering town put up at the largest hotel, the Ziegler House. Next day he was sick, and the kind-hearted people visited him, and as was the custom of that day, nursed him. Less than thirty-six hours later he was a corpse, and the dread yellow jack was feeling his way into every home. Within ten days he was holding the poor little helpless town in his relentless grasp, and the scenes of '54 were again being enacted. The daily, twice, thrice pilgrimages to the old cemetery, until one day in August there was a death rate of eighteen. In a white population of scarce four hundred, whole families died. In two cases in the new Catholic Cemetery, recently opened, husband and wife were found buried in the same grave. Of these couples, one left two little girls. A gentleman present at the time told me that the saddest sight of the time was these little ones getting up in the morning and hunting for their parents through the house and yard. Both had died during the night and had been removed to await burial. But thank God for the Christian faith of our people, the orphans were cared for and none were neglected!

One of our greatest losses in this epidemic was the death of our War-time Priest, Father Ganard. He had remained with his people during the bitter days of the War, aiding the women and children, keeping a little school, Mrs. Priour's, cheered and helped by his presence and advice. When the fever came he worked day and night, not only with his own people, but with any who needed help. He died as he had lived, literally in harness. Died, no! He went to his rest, mourned by every man, woman and child in Corpus Christi, of every faith, for Father Ganard was a Saint who loved mankind, and like many of his kind, went to his reward, with the noble character of his deeds known only to his narrow surroundings. But today the eye of the gray-haired man or woman who knew him will light with love when they hear his name, and everyone can tell of some simple childish pleasure which he had given. Anything of interest to them, was never too small to engage the learned Father's attention. One woman told me this story. Her hair was white, but she remembered her very first pair of shoes. Her mother got them for her. She took the lovely



things to show to Father Ganard, as the modern miss would exhibit a watch or a locket. He duly admired, then suggested fitting them, but the poor little feet must be washed, and three times were they scrubbed before Father agreed they would do. Then stockings must be had, and home again she went, leaving the precious shoes with the Father. Back again, and another wash to take off the recent travel stains, the good Father advising and helping. She was shod, a girl of ten, for the first time, and felt as if "I could never take a step," she said. I thought of this incident a short time since, seeing a mother purchase a pair of shoes for her daughter. The latter day mother paid four dollars for the shoes, and had the clerk mark the price at six, telling me the daughter would not wear the shoes if they cost less. But times change, and perhaps it is better to wear shoes at six per pair than no shoes at all. But I am old-fashioned, and think what was lacking in shoes in those days, was made up into man and woman, and human kindness. Father Ganard sleeps in the Catholic Cemetery here, and we love to think of him as a Southerner, but he was too good and great to belong to one section, and his memory is a heritage of all.

## CHAPTER X.

### *Some Early Day Merchants.*

Just after the close of hostilities the merchants came back, and with them new ones to establish business here. Pat Whelan, for nine terms Sheriff of Nueces County, and one of the most efficient officers in the State, gives me the following list of merchants in business here at the time he came in 1866: E. Morris, J. B. Mitchell, George Evans, P. Hoffman, W. N. Staples, Felix Noessel, John Woessner, P. Doddridge, banker, C. Kale, and then or shortly after there was William Headen, afterwards Headen & Mallory, and M. Lichtenstein, a dry goods merchant, whose sons today have the largest store in the city, or as for that matter, in this section, and which would be a credit to the largest city in the State. Money was plentiful in those days. Bags of silver and golden eagles were the medium of exchange. No paper money for the trader in that time.

Just about the close of the hostilities a party of horse traders visited the lower country, buying a great drove of animals. They paid in notes on defunct Confederacy. The news went out that paper money was no "bueno," and to this day no Mexican wants green backs, checks or anything but hard money. About this time the Western Union Telegraph Company erected a line to Brownsville via Corpus Christi. So eager were our people to get the news that the line came in as the crow flies, across lots. This gave our city trouble later when telephone and electric wires came, but all is satisfactorily arranged now, each company having its territory specified.

The next thing of importance to shake the city was the proposal to build the Texas-Mexican Railroad from here to the border, at Laredo. Meetings were held, and strange as it may seem now, the project was hotly opposed by some good citizens. What! Do away with our wagon trade! Never——. Even up to recent years the writer has heard some of the old-timers bewail the new times, and they never

realized that if we did not build the road, other towns would. Our wagon trade was doomed, and the long line of wagons, with their picturesque drivers, who had broken and kept the trail for nearly two centuries, were soon to make their last journey across boundless prairies where the bison, the elk and the deer roamed free. They, like the wagons, were doomed. The buffalo is extinct in his wild state, though forty years ago the writer purchased dried buffalo flesh from grocery stores in Corsicana, and saw wagons fitting out to go on hunt for his hide.

A promoter by the name of Uriah Lott planned our first railroad, and Captain Richard King of Rancho Santa Gertrudis financed the project for the first forty miles. Captain King was at this time one of the wealthiest men in this section. His herds grazed upon thousands of acres of free domain. He operated, and with his then partner, Captain Kenedy, owned one or more steamboats on the Rio Grande.

Captain King stood for progress, and his presence in this section was a public boon. In those days herds were driven overland to Kansas to market, and King and Kenedy were perhaps the largest shippers of the State. During the War the enemy made a special raid from Brazos Santiago to his ranch home to capture him. He was absent, but in the early morning light they saw a man on the gallery, and without warning shot the faithful servant to death, thus showing their fear of the man they sought. His life reads like a romance, and if told to the letter, would not be credited.

One story I will tell as it was printed in the Corpus Christi paper at the time. The Captain had been in Corpus Christi, and while here hired a newly landed German boy to drive his coach. The party left the city and drove out to the Petronilla Creek, stopping for lunch on the near side of the stream, contrary to usual custom of pulling up opposite bank before stopping. After an hour's rest they started on the last half of the journey, and as they breasted the opposite slope, were fired on from ambuscade. The poor Dutch boy ended his journey right there, being killed instantly. The spirited horses, scared by the shots, ran away, but fortunately kept to the road. Out of the brush rode four Mexi-

cans and gave wild chase, but the ranch was reached with no further loss. Next day when officers reached the spot of attack they found that the scheme had been well laid. The men had posted themselves in easy range and cut away all intervening twigs so as to command the usual shade where travelers stopped. Only the stopping short of the usual place saved the party from swift death. This was only one of his hairbreadth escapes, but he did escape his wily enemies, the Mexicans, who did not want white men in the grazing country, and were the direct opposite of Captain King. They were prepared to fight progress, are fighting it today in the Rio Grande Valley, but like the buffalo, their day is done, and go they must.

Captain King died some years since in San Antonio, surrounded by his family and loving friends, and was buried in that city. His former partner, Captain Kennedy, died a few years later in Corpus Christi. He sleeps in Brownsville, where the murmur of the Rio Grande sings solemn requiem to the memory of a man who made history on her bosom. The names of King and Kenedy will be remembered as long as English and Spanish are spoken on the border.

About this time there was much trouble in the adjacent country from raids of Mexican freebooters, the natural aftermath of civil war. On both sides of the Rio Grande robbery and murder were frequent, and men and boys going out to drive in the milch cows buckled on a six-shooter or carried a gun. One sad day four coffins were carried to the cemetery in wagons draped in black. These young men were found murdered at a ranch on Laguna Madre, two of them German boys who had only gone down there a few days earlier to do some carpenter work. Their tool boxes had never been opened, showing that the robbers must have arrived about the same time they reached the ranch, Penesgal by name, owned, we believe, by Captain Kenedy. The Sheriff's posse who went out to investigate, found that robbery was the motive. Among other booty a sugar barrel had been emptied. A broad trail led southward, along which every little way a little spot of brown sugar was seen, as if carried in a slightly leaky package. Southward into the Brownsville road the trail was lost, all except the sugar pats,

and these led on to Corpus Christi, and to a hut on the hill, where the remainder of the sugar and other booty was found. The sugar sack was found with a small hole in it. Needless to say, this gang was rounded up and Judge Lynch held a long session.

An old man living west of town made a poor living by drawing and selling water to passing teamsters. One night his neighbors on the Oso saw his house in flames. They hurriedly mounted and rode to his help. On getting in sight they saw a party of horsemen riding off. Next day the charred remains of the old man were found in his house, bound with trace chains, showing undoubtedly that he had been burned alive. This man's name was Murdock.

On the morning of Good Friday, 1875, a wild, incoherent messenger arrived in Corpus Christi. The Indians were right at his heels, he said, and had murdered every soul between here and the Nueces River and had burned every ranch. There was a wild scurry on every hand. The Indian raid was a certainty. The band was discovered some twenty miles from the city, all mounted. They took charge of everyone they met, taking their horses and compelling prisoners to march on foot. Coming to Nuecestown, then called the Motts, they attacked the only store, conducted by Mr. Noakes. The owner barricaded the door and fought them off until they set the place on fire. Then he and his family escaped by a secret passage made for just such an emergency. The store was burned to the ground, though the robbers secured some loot. This was proven later. Coming on toward town, they arrived at Juan Saens (pronounced Whan Size) Ranch, five miles west of the city. Here the Mexican family of that name met them. One of the boys of the ranch spoke to the robbers, and quick as a flash he was shot, falling dead in his tracks. It is supposed that the boy recognized the robber. Here the bandits held a consultation, they learned that a messenger had reached the city, so they turned back, still marching their prisoners in the middle of the road. Among them was Miss Allen, who with an old gentleman, Judge Gilpin, was driving in to attend Easter service in the Episcopal Church; Mrs. E. D. Sidbury, her daughter-in-law, Mrs. James Scott, with driver

and maid, and many others whose names I do not recall. After going some distance the robbers rode off and left the prisoners, after taking everything of value which they had, including their shoes. The ladies hid in a corn field, afraid for a long time to answer the calls of a rescuing party, thinking the bandits had returned. On Skidmore's Ranch the women, one with an infant six months old, now Mrs. Bibolette of Palestine, hid in an arroyo. When their men came to hunt them with shouts and shots, they trembled and kept still. One of the men had a bright idea, and they began singing hymns. One of the ladies told me that she had heard fine singing, but never anything to compare with the grand old "Nearer My God to Thee," as it came floating over the prairie in the gloaming. The cowboys were rewarded by calls, and the poor women ended a bitter experience.

In the meantime, what was happening in Corpus Christi? There was a military company here, the Star Rifles. It was said of them that they led the way to Central Wharf and aboard the Morgan Line Steamer, Josephine, which happened to be in that day, ready to defend women and children. The schooner Leona, belonging to N. Gussett, was also in, and various small boats. The whole population went to the boats ready to go at a moment's notice. A company of brave men mounted their steeds and away to meet the marauders. They found that they had retreated and followed. They came upon them and received their fire. One man named Swank was shot dead from his horse. Fearing an ambush the party halted and the enemy retreated unmolested. Mr. Swank was a young man, a carpenter, who had lived several years in Corpus Christi. His comrades brought his body back to the old cemetery, and a few years since a friend of his youth, Mrs. Helen Dority, had a neat tablet placed over his last resting place. Only this friend remembered the man who died in defense of the town in which he had neither kith nor kin. Later the trail was taken up again by a reinforced party, and strange to say, the trail led to nearby ranches. One young Mexican had a gunshot wound in his arm, wrapped in a towel, recognized as one taken from a looted store at the Motts. Truth compels me to say that Judge Lynch again held court, and

I am afraid that he this time worked on the theory that it is better that ninety and nine innocent ones suffer than one guilty man escape. They no doubt intended to loot Corpus Christi, but their hearts failed as they got near. They kept the prisoners to keep them from spreading the news. They learned at Juan Saens that a messenger had brought the news in, as he passed that point on a dead run, had discovered the raid near Motts, and they were afraid to risk a battle. This was the last raid in our vicinity, the raiders being discovered as our own Mexicans and not Indians from up the Rio Grande, as was first supposed.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *The Author Reaches Corpus Christi.*

The writer first saw Corpus Christi in May, 1876. In those days Corpus Christi was reached by a weekly steamer from New Orleans, a mailboat from Indianola or a stage from San Antonio. We came via Indianola, and missing the mailboat at that place, remained over one night. This was the year after the first great storm, and some feeble attempt had been made to straighten up the half destroyed houses. Naturally, the people who had spent their lives there tried to look at the bright side, saying this was the first and likely the last storm. Fortunately the city did not recuperate, fortunate because they were again and again visited by destructive storms, and just eleven years later the town was entirely obliterated, the flames aiding the wind and water in the fearful and fatal dance of death, and today the cry of the seabird and the lap of the tide are the only sounds to break the silence. A few scattered concrete cisterns, heaps of brick marking the site of chimneys, is all that remains of a once prosperous town, where lovers wooed, children played, and a bright future promised, a fine harbor, a new railroad and a rich country nearby.

An old town too it was, as towns rank in Texas, and many of the early settlers of interior towns bade farewell to the great waters there. To get near to this harbor the town was founded on sand, a very low point of land running out from the hills, seven miles distant, to meet the waters, and between the hills and the beach was a low marsh, always overflowed at high tide, a veritable death trap, as are too many of our coast towns today. But we will not mention names for fear of giving offense. People who found their houses on sand do not like to hear the subject discussed, more certainly if they are in the real estate business.

We boarded a small boat, "Star of the South," with Captain Sewell, and leaving Indianola in the morning arrived next morning in Corpus Christi. Sailing across the



bay and watching our future home across the sparkling water, I thought of a vision of Heaven. The beautiful wood-covered bluff with its two church spires, Congregational (colored) and Presbyterian (old), were the first visible objects. No smokestacks in those days, no steam whistles! A perfect picture in a perfect setting was the Corpus Christi of May, 1876. Near the beach I noticed a little garden. Everything looked so bright and green. The corn was in roasting ear, while in Central Texas from where we had come it was just peeping above the ground. We bade good-bye to Captain Sewell, who had lived all his life on the water, and who was destined later to find a grave 'neath the waters of the Gulf. He, with his boat, was lost while coasting up from Point Isabel to Rockport, and his body was never found, nor any trace of his boat, one of the long list of lost at sea.

Walking up Chaparral Street I saw that thoroughfare literally filled with ox carts and wagons. Some of the vehicles had as many as six yokes of oxen, and the patient animals were lying down in a seeming tangle, reaching from curb to curb, chewing the cud and waiting the crack of the whip, the signal to begin the long, hot journey across the prairies to and beyond the Mexican border, carrying in their wake a whiff of civilization. Clothes, shoes, hats, cook stoves, sewing machines, oil lamps, clocks, any and everything, bought with proceeds of sales of hides, tallow, dried meat, wool, etc. It seemed to me that everybody spoke Spanish, and that the only swift thing in evidence was their tongues. To every new-comer the language seemed to be a perfect rapid fire jangle of words, but right here I got my first lesson in Spanish Aztec. The only word I could distinguish seemed like "star wano." Everybody seemed to be saying it. After thirty years I think it is the proper word and should be our motto, typical of our people. Through sunshine and shadow, days of prosperity, days of depression, the cheery word was ever in evidence, and over our portals in letters of gold should be written *Esta Bueno*. The words fit our city, our country, and if not our people it is because the motto is hardly strong enough. We would

have to cull all the languages, getting the best from each, and then fall short of fully expressing our respect for our old citizens. Though we may differ in politics, religion and various items of public import, we are closely allied on all matters of civic and personal interest.

The Corpus Christi of that day and time was a town of considerable wealth, many stockmen making their homes here. Our little weekly paper, *The Free Press*, carried two of its four pages covered with hieroglyphics, illustrating cattle brands and notices to the general public that they would feel the strong arm of the law if cattle bearing these brands were killed. To those notices there was one notable exception. At the foot of one column of marks and brands stood the usual notice, but it read different. It was an invitation to any poor person, anyone in need, to kill and use for food any calf in above brand, the only proviso being that they save the hide and use the meat. Think of it in our day and time, when meat in our local markets is a little higher priced than in the Northern cities. The name signed to this invitation was one of which Texas may well be proud, John Timon of San Patricio, a pioneer who helped make this country; a man whose charity was as broad as the prairie over which he hunted his herds, and as beautiful as the flowers which blossomed thereon. He obeyed the Scriptural injunction and got his guests from the highways. His friends had cattle and to spare. The poor, improvident Mexican was the recipient of this grand largess.

The sheep industry was at its apex at this time and a great many rancheros were in that business. Strange to say there was no friction between the sheep and cowman such as have disgraced other sections of the Southwest, but the removal of the tariff off raw wool killed the sheep business and we went back to longhorns, grazing in common on the unfenced land. Naturally the herds got tangled and our District Court ran overtime settling ownership of cattle, a golden era for the lawyers of that day. But about this time Glidden invented barbed wire fencing. The country was soon covered with a network of it, and for years there has not been a case in court growing out of ownership

of cattle, and the animal known as the Maverick is as completely extinct as the buffalo.

The longhorn was superseded by blooded stock, the festive cowboy has doffed his jingling spurs and high-heeled boots, and his trusty six-shooter is covered with rust. The old days, the old boys, and general picturesque setting has gone, and the places that knew him, will know him no more.

## CHAPTER XII.

### *The Man With the Hoe.*

The man with the hoe next began to arrive and made a feeble attempt at farming, but the drought discouraged him. Next a couple of German farmers arrived, rented a piece of ground near town, and hauled water with which to set cabbage plants. No rain fell and no water ever touched the field except the one time, and this cabbage patch was the talk of not only the town but this section, and we learned that the finest of cabbage would thrive. That cabbage nurtured on the near coast dews was of superior quality. Then we all planted cabbage and became the largest cabbage mart in the world. Solid train loads of this vegetable went to hunt the corned beef of the East and North. The farmer jingled coin in his pocket. Then the winter of 1900 arrived, and with it the 13th of February, the coldest day ever recorded in Texas. Thousand of birds flying over Nueces Bay, north of town, were frozen, and falling into the bay, were swept to the southern shore by the fierce Norther raging, where they lay in a long windrow, in some places several feet deep. From the tiny robin to the great crane, all kinds were there. Fish were torpid and came to shore in schools, but this cold was unprecedented, and man as well as fish and fowl felt the Arctic weather and kept close to the fireside. On the morning of the 14th, the growing cabbage looked as if it had been prematurely boiled. A view of the landscape looked like ruin to the planter. In desperation he sought a later crop.

The only thing possible so late in the season was cotton. This was an experiment. Cotton was planted in between cabbage rows. The cabbage revived, made a fine crop, which brought a big price. Later the fields were white with the snowy staple, and the farmer jingled money in both pockets. Since that time we have learned that we can grow almost anything, and are certain that we are on the eve of great agricultural prosperity, and in a few years

will be shipping solid trains of citrus fruits to the Eastern markets. Where gins are now established, ginning at times the bale-to-the-acre cotton, a few years ago no man would have thought of putting a dollar in a gin in this cottonless country.

The Aransas Pass Railroad was the second to reach our town and put us in touch with the United States, as the Texas-Mexican had placed us in close communion with our sister Republic. When our railroad was first built into Mexico we had several large excursions in from there. As our hotel room was limited, the citizens received the excursionists in our homes, got up boat races, ball games, and gave at least two grand balls, all free, in their honor. But, but, BUT, while they were a good people, polite in the extreme, they were not our style, no more than were we theirs, so we give them welcome and let them hunt their own domiciles henceforth, which seemed to give satisfaction to all parties concerned.

At an early day we equipped a ball team, but having no one to play but Rockport the sport languished. As soon as the railroad put us in touch with San Diego and Alice we revived, and had some famous games on the diamond at the intersection of Chaparral and Fitzgerald Streets. The writer, along with the balance of the population, attended regularly. We remember one game between the Uniques of San Diego and our team which went merrily on the whole afternoon. Each side rolled up a score of twenty-four, and the game was declared a draw. Proudly the two teams marched into town, side by side. Nobody's feelings were hurt that day. Again we were playing, Corpus Christi at the bat, one man down, one on first and one at bat. The batter hit and ran for first, man on first ran for second, changed his mind and legged it back in time to meet batter at first. Both claimed base and proceeded to settle this dispute according to Marquis of Tipperary rules, much to the delight of the crowd. During the rather heated discussion both were touched out, retiring the side. Later we organized two teams, the Bluff City's and Corpus Christi Browns. What battles were fought on that diamond, and what feeling expressed by the partisans. The Bluffs regu-

larly held the victory. They had a famous pitcher, and no inducement could win him away from his team. Poor Frank Larkin, soon to go down to death under his engine in Mexico, one of nature's noblemen and one of the first and best ball players in Southwest Texas.

Of the old Browns I remember a few names: Johnny Mitchell, Lee and Henry Berry, Hiram and Alvin Ellis, Frank Trabue, Hugh Sutherland, Charley Williams, Jim Hill, Ralph Barnes, Walter Timon, and others. Of the victorious Bluffs, Frank Larkin, Edwin and Walter Dove, E. J. Shaw, B. Legge, F. Wissinger, and others. The old boys are scattered now. Some have crossed the Divide, and the few left in the old town are sedate gentlemen. There are silver threads among their locks, and they play their games over again from the grandstand, while watching a hired team cavort over the field.

And now, about 1891, we were to have an awakening, and old fashions and times go out together. One bright day Colonel Ropes reached town and started an up-to-date boom. His ideas were all right, but he came on about twenty years too soon, and did not fully understand his subject. He bought land and laid off a city in the southern suburbs, built a dredge to cut a canal across Mustang Island to deep water. This dredge started in all right, cut a channel about fifteen feet wide and ten feet deep for about a hundred yards into soft sand, of which the island is composed, broke down, and the sand drifted into the channel behind, shutting her in. Her bones lie there yet. He also built the magnificent Alta Vista Hotel, but was not able to finish it. He laid off a city around the hotel, graded the streets, built a beautiful home for himself, which he never occupied, and built other homes for sale, graded miles of streets, and a road from the city to his hotel, and started and graded miles of a new proposed railroad to Brownsville.

Any one of his schemes would have paid if undertaken singly, but he spent oceans of money and did not finish any one thing. The old settlers watched the progress of events, and marveled. Some few went in on the boom and got stung. A money panic came on, and everything stopped. Laborers and contractors failed to get their wages, and

people who had rushed in began to move on to the next boom town. It was sad to drive out to the hotel and see the beautiful building vacant except a caretaker. The new residences were never occupied. Later they were gradually deserted as they were too far from town for homes for people living in the city.

The Methodists of this section built a large tabernacle a mile south of the hotel, a college and other buildings. They were later removed, and later the same church came into the possession of a far better locality for their encampment grounds. Colonel Ropes went back from whence he came, and our bubble was burst. Our town had been invaded by speculators, horse racers, and a host of drifting population ready for a land boom in Texas, or a land rush in Indian Territory. They came in companies and platoons.

The place was so overcrowded that people lived in garrets, sheds, tents, any shelter. They traded in everything and anything, from a terrier to a ranch, provided it could be bought on time. This class was the first to go, they brought nothing with them and they carried nothing away. But many good people also came and were carried away by the excitement. Highly colored and overdrawn literature was sent out and prospective buyers came. This class invested in real estate, bought anything offered.

Two old gentlemen fought with canes for the privilege of paying nine hundred dollars for a lot near the Alta Vista Hotel. A big lot sale was held in the unfinished hotel, and lots were sold rapidly. Two years later lots in the same locality were offered for as low as ten dollars per lot, with no takers, and the greater part of this property was abandoned to original owners, or sold for taxes.

And now the better part of the story comes. The Brownsville Railroad is built, the town has grown southward in the last few years, and the schemes planned by Colonel Ropes have become realities, the lots have returned to their boom values and more, and fortunate the men who bought real estate and kept it. It was a long wait between the collapse of the boom and the healthy reaction which came gradually and surely, but the investment paid big in the long run.

Many bought options on land, and this also paid, but many of the investors were poor people and expected, as per circular, to make enough on the first crop to pay for the land and start a bank account. They lost and many of them deserted their holdings. To add to the distress, the Bank of Doddridge & Davis closed its doors. The news came like a thunderclap and the old town awoke with a bound. All sorts of stories were abroad, and as usual in such cases, the ones losing least howled loudest and longest. This event drove the last nail in the coffin of the boom, and things looked blue. The depositors were eventually paid sixty cents on the dollar. All sympathized with Mr. Doddridge, a good, honest man, self made, and whose greatest sin was his trust in his fellow-man. He never recovered from the shock of the destruction of his life work, dying a few years after the bank failure. The depositors took their per cent., and—"Esta Bueno," let it go at that. But the blow fell heavily on the new people who made part payment on homes. Many of them were old people, and they not being able to meet payments were forced to go. As if our troubles were not sufficient for the day thereof, we had a terrible drought that year. We were at a halt for a long time, had overbuilt, and houses in many cases were let to caretakers, rent free. The sound of the saw and hammer were strange for several years.

Our new hotel, the Miramar, built by a local stock company, on the beach where the Spohn Hospital now stands, burned to the ground, the guests barely escaping with their lives. Our cup of sorrow was running over, and for awhile we lost heart. But things began to pick up gradually.

The women, as ever, in time of trouble, were to the front. The Monday Club was organized. Among their first work was the founding of a library for the High School, reclaiming and beautifying Artesian Square, a little park in the heart of the city. Under the rule of woman it was changed from an unsightly weed-covered spot to a thing of beauty.

In this park is our famous mineral well. Some cures made by this water are but little short of miraculous. I would be afraid to tell them, as I scarce credit it if I had not



known the history of the cases, knew the patients before and after taking, so to speak. The water has never been exploited. It is free, and only those who test know its virtues.

Then the Women's Cemetery Association was formed. They opened new cemeteries and cared for the old one. Later, under the leadership of Mrs. G. R. Scott, a committee of ladies met at the market hall and voted to form a stock company and build a public meeting place. The latter was discussed from all points, one of the women declaring that there was not enough ready money in Corpus Christi to erect the hall. Mrs. Scott was elected president, a committee of four directors appointed, being Mrs. Jessie Griffin, Mrs. Joshua Smith, Mrs. E. A. Born and Mrs. Mary Sutherland. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Born later resigned, and Mrs. John Jordt and Mrs. P. Dunn were appointed in their places. Mrs. S. W. Rankin was secretary and Miss Mildred Seaton was treasurer, and the Ladies' Pavilion (now Olympic) was the result. The ladies hold the real honor of being the first stock company ever formed here who paid their stockholders in full, with legal interest for every day they used it. This building was a boon to the town, as we had outgrown the old City Hall. While the women were in charge there were several notable conventions held there: Texas Bankers, Texas Medical Association, Secretary of War Dickinson spoke there at the time President Taft visited the city, political meetings of both parties, Inland Waterway Convention at which the Governor of Texas spoke, Texas Press Association, and others.

But the most important of all the meetings, also in its bearing and future prosperity of the city, was the reception given the Committee of Texas Epworth League, who were seeking a place for their annual encampment. We met the ladies and gentlemen of that committee, talked matters over, showed them our bayside, on a beautiful shell beach, off which there is to be found the finest bathing grounds anywhere. Each August for eleven years the City of Tents stood near General Taylor's old camp ground.

Another army was here, bent on a far different and greater conquest than the American Army of occupation

ever dreamed of. Under their banner of white and gold they sought the conquest of the earth. To this annual meeting came the best and brightest soldiers of the Cross, eminent divines and scholars, missionaries. Under the leadership of Rev. Frank Onderdonk came yearly the missionaries from Mexico, making a fine showing of the work done there. China, Japan, Korea, Brazil were all represented, and where more than half a century ago armed men swarmed and the sentinel kept his post, were spread long rows of white tents. The sound of women's songs and children's laughter displaced the bluff challenge. Hundreds of electric lights were mirrored in the moonlit waves, and the sound of prayer and praise was heard on the old camp ground. During the years there has always been the most perfect good feeling, a camp guard is employed, but his office is a sinecure; the rough element of society are as scarce in its precincts as are serpents in the land of good St. Patrick, and though many live in tents and cottages, and as a rule well-to-do people, jewelry and other valuables carelessly left about are perfectly safe. No untoward event has ever happened on the grounds. True, an occasional youngster is reported missing, but invariably the sea gives up its very wet and happy boy or girl. The silver-haired grandpa and small boy played together in the clear waters, with odds in grandpa's favor. He can go into deeper water. Whole schools of girls romp, boys shoot the chutes, mamas gossip in circles, while the whole water line is covered with small tykes who may safely cavort on the warm sands.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*When Fitzsimmons Trained.*

In the summer of 1895 Robert Fitzsimmons and his family and followers came to our city. Bob was training for his great fight with Corbett. He rented a brick house in the northern suburbs, near the bay, and every day we would see the long, lanky chap running or walking our streets, occasionally trying to ride a bicycle, but at this he was no adept. His pet lion cub roamed the premises unrestrained, but when the news got out that he had disappeared from home, excitement ran high, and for three days women kept their children in and doors barred. Men riding in or out of town carried a gun, while a posse organized and enjoyed the novelty of a lion hunt in West Texas. On the fourth day the cub crawled out from under the house where he had been in hiding, and the scare was over. Fitzsimmons spent about a month here, when the news came that Texas absolutely refused to be disgraced by a prize fight within her borders, Governor Culberson having called a special session of the Legislature for the purpose of framing a law to fit the case. Fitzsimmons and his wife, his mother-in-law and brother-in-law, his followers and his cub departed. I must admit that we were glad he won from Corbett for he had trained in Corpus Christi.

Slowly at first, but gaining momentum as the years slipped past, our town forged ahead. The Brownsville Road opened up a rich country south of us and gradually prosperity came to stay. Houses became scarce. The summer and winter visitors became more numerous every year. We could scarcely find shelter for all. One from the North, F. E. Ring, originated the plan of building small, cheap cottages. Ring Villa sprang up almost in a day. On four leased lots he built twelve cottages. The idea caught the public fancy and soon there were whole colonies of them, and we could take care of all who came. Previous to this

time people had actually arrived and left on the next train, being unable to find accommodations.

During the Spanish-American War we had one company of Texas troops stationed here. They camped on the North Beach, and served their whole enlistment with us. This being the only fragment of the war that came our way, we made the most of it, and the boys held one long picnic. Only one bit of bloodshed in the command. One soldier dangerously wounded a comrade with a bayonet thrust. The wounded man was sent to the hospital tent, and the belligerent jailed. The officer in command sent to town for a conveyance in which he and the prisoner mounted, officer grasping his pistol, while two men walked on each side with guns. Each and everyone who met them coming in joined in the procession, so that they had a good crowd. Drays, buggies, bicycles, horseback and footmen in attendance. When they reached the County Jail the prisoner was turned over to the civil authorities, and a few days later, when they demanded him to carry him to military prison, the Civil Court refused to surrender him. The sequel was, the man got well, the war ended and the prisoner went free.

We had a great naval show on Nueces Bay right after the Spanish-American War, portraying the destruction of Cervera's Fleet. The first night the show was a failure. The Mexicans who were to work the boats in the shoal water, seeing the soldiers arrive with guns to man the fleet, got suspicious. The story got out that they were to be killed in the water. The news spread, and while trains from town were carrying out thousands to view the spectacle, the motive power of the Santa Maria and other vessels of the hostile fleet were legging it back to safety. Next night crews of white men were secured and the sham battle was grand, simply magnificent!

The hostile ships lay in Corpus Christi Bay while the Americans awaited them in Nueces Bay. The Spaniards came singly as in the real battle at Santiago, were attacked and set on fire, the soldiers representing the marines, and the red lights representing fire. Powerful rockets from stove-pipe cannon played havoc with the running Spaniard, a magnificent show of fireworks throughout. The town paid

a considerable sum to secure the spectacle and the crowds were so great that many had to keep to the trains and return, being unable to get accommodations. One car cleaner at the depot got into trouble when the passengers of the train which got in last began to come back and demand admission to the cars. He refused to let them in, locked the doors and ran to 'phone the Superintendent. When he got back they had climbed in at the windows, and again he ran to 'phone for instructions. This time he got back to find the passengers had retired for the night, on chairs, floor and every available spot. For several days sleeping quarters were at a premium. The town was crowded by enthusiastic Americans, eager to see the portrayal of our latest naval battle.

But this war was soon over, and our little command of Texans went home, and the loafer quit meeting the man from the Island who had heard heavy firing seaward. This story got quite stale during hostilities. Poor old Spain had not enough navy to guard her own shores, and none to hunt honors on the Gulf.

The electric light reached here about 1890 or 1892, and what a boon they were! The kerosene lamp was good in winter but very poor in summer, owing to the almost outdoor life we led, doors and windows wide open to catch the breeze. Also the first auto arrived and claimed its share of notice. I think the first car was the property of John G. Kennedy, a wealthy ranchman. The second car to arrive was brought on by one of our most popular physicians, the late Dr. A. G. Heaney. This car belonged here, and many of our people tasted the joy of automobiling for the first time in the car of the kindly doctor, particularly the school children, who were made happy for days by a lift of a few blocks in the wonderful auto. Today Corpus Christi is said to have more cars than any town twice its size in the State.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### *Visit of President Taft.*

Our next very great event was the visit, in October of 1909, of William Howard Taft, President of the United States. For months preparations to receive him were in order. The revenue cutter "Windom" came over from Galveston to hoist the President's flag and bring him across the bay from La Quinta, his brother's ranch, twelve miles away, on north shore, to our wharf. Meetings were held and committees appointed. In the excitement our Mayor, Dan Reid, was nearly forgotten. Finally committees were fixed. The question of dress for the reception committee was broached. Some man, or it might have been a woman, suggested a silk hat and tan shoes as proper. And this in Texas! But our never failing common sense prevailed, and a go-as-you-please party of representative men met President Taft on Central Wharf, where the party had to thread their way between cotton bales. It was a fair illustration of how badly we needed deep water. Mayor Reid and two City Commissioners rode with Mr. Taft in an automobile, followed by a long line of cars, and preceded by a platoon of mounted police.

Every eye was glued on the first auto, and there that good natured face looked out at us, from under a new silk hat—no, an old Panama which might have done duty on the farm as an egg basket. Later the President told us this story of the ancient headgear. He said that Governor Campbell met him on his entrance into the State, at El Paso, and there the two men made a compact. While in Texas Mr. Taft was to wear the battered Panama of the Governor, and the Governor was to wear the President's silk hat. They stuck to the bargain, but I imagine Mr. Governor was glad when Mr. President flitted over the border of Texas.

A pergola was erected at the foot of the bluff on Mesquite Street. Seats placed on terraces on the face of the bluff accommodated hundreds, while on the crest of the

hill were ranked the children of the public schools. A military band from Fort Sam Houston was with them, and as the President arrived they accompanied the children in the National anthem, "America." The leader of the band was cross, the children warm and excited. Two or three little girls fainted and were borne from the field, and it was a very ragged musical welcome accorded Mr. Taft. As he ascended the steps to the platform he noticed two parties of aged men on front seats. Learning that they were veterans of the Blue and the Grey, he had them invited to seats on the stand in the shade. Mayor Reid, in a few well chosen words, introduced Mr. Taft to the audience, and here for the first time many of our people saw the President of our country. He won his hearers from the start. Looked just as we expected this great American to look, and talked as one of our own, though he gently hinted that he was not President by Southern votes, but we loved him for what he was, and a more loyal audience than that Texas crowd never listened to a speaker than this one, who stood under the burning sun on this ever-to-be-remembered day.

A company of militia from Brownsville aided the peace officers in guarding the grounds, around which a fence had been placed, and everyone entering had to get in at the well-guarded gate. The writer noticed, as we suppose did everyone else, a kind of nervous dread which seemed to pervade the vast crowd, a fear of some untoward happening, a fear for comfort and safety of our illustrious visitor. A newspaper man standing outside of the low fence snapped a camera. The snap sounded like a salvo of gatlings to those nearby, and inside a minute a couple of bayonets were at his breast. He smilingly held up his camera and named his paper, and we breathed free again. After the President's talk he entered a waiting auto and visited the new Country Club House, and golf grounds, which he formally opened.

Returning he was entertained at the home of Mrs. Henrietta M. King. At 3 o'clock he again boarded the "Windom" and sailed back across the bay to the home of his brother, and the greatest day in the history of Corpus Christi was over. We had met the President of our great Nation, and were not disappointed in our American, that is

as to our white population. The colored citizens felt a little disappointed as they were not particularly or specially noticed, and they had given him their votes nearly to a man, while our numerous Aztec or Spanish-American citizens openly voiced their contempt for the whole show in unmeasured terms and good Mexican language. Anyone who has met a Mexican officer, or a military band in full regiments, will understand why. They expected purple and gold, tinsel and plumes, all the trappings so dear to the descendants of the Indian and Conquistador.

The writer remembers one particular military band visiting a neighboring city, time July 21, thermometer crowding the nineties. The bandmen wore heavy wool uniforms, with broad band of gold lace down each leg of pantaloons, gold epaulets on each shoulder, great heavy leather hats with heavy red braid and plumes, and they were only bandmen. How ceaselessly they played, how earnestly they played the sad peculiar music of their own land, so honestly and earnestly that it became monotonous to the American crowd who wanted to hear the decisions of the umpire, and when a ball struck the leader on the hat and nearly upset him, he bent to the blow but never missed a note.

But our great day, October 22, 1909, was over. We were pleased and proud of the honor. While Mr. Taft, God bless him, carried a broad smile and the blessing of the people away with him, our city, so crowded and gay, was soon to know a great sorrow. The gay flags to hang at half mast and the trappings of mourning to replace the welcoming decorations.



## CHAPTER XV.

*Administration of Dan Reid.*

Only a few days after Mr. Taft's visit our Mayor, Dan Reid, was stricken with a fatal illness, and on December 15 the whole city sadly followed to its last resting place in the old cemetery, the body of one of our most able sons. Mr. Reid, Dan as his friends called him, was ever a public-spirited citizen. In 1892 Corpus Christi installed a waterworks system. Mr. Reid purchased largely of the bonds, and was for years president of the waterworks company, the city purchasing the bonds just previous to his death. It is a paying business now, but in its infancy it required a world of coddling and good money to keep it going, and literally Mr. Reid nursed it to maturity, and turned the stock over to the city at 65 cents on the dollar. He, with a few other public-spirited citizens, kept the company alive, and the water flowing, through months of the greatest business depressions and through years, when if the ledger balanced, it did no more, turning it over the city, which would not risk the price of installing it, in splendid condition.

Dan Reid was three times defeated for Mayor of the city. In his fourth canvass he was elected. Not being satisfied with the Aldermanic form of government, he voluntarily resigned the office for which he had stood so often, and with other prominent citizens applied for a charter under commission form of government. This was granted, a new election held, and he was again elected, serving only a part of his term when the Grim Reaper came. But in this short time, order came out of chaos. The city was placed on a cash basis. City scrip, which had been as low as 25 cents on the dollar, was worth its face value. Better sanitary laws were made and enforced, employees paid promptly and required to earn their salary, while the Mayor's salary of one hundred dollars per month remained in the bank, to be expended as the citizens wished, for the benefit of the

city, either in the extension of the water mains or street improvement.

An election was held under the auspices of the Daily Caller, in which every citizen over eighteen years of age, including women, were allowed to vote. Good roads carried, but before the work could be mapped out the generous donor was gone, and even his most bitter political enemy, he had no other, felt that our town had suffered an almost irreparable loss.

Mr. Reid came to Corpus Christi with the family of his widowed mother in 1854. He was but two years of age at the time, and remembered nothing of the trip from far-off Glasgow, Scotland. He received a fair education in our day schools, learned the builders' trade under the guidance of the late E. D. Sidbury, which he quit and went into the sheep business for a few years. Returning to Corpus Christi he formed a partnership with H. R. Sutherland, and this firm of Reid & Sutherland, Architects and Builders, was well known for nearly twenty years, from the coast to the border.

And now, in the days of 1915, our old town is forging upward. On the evening air is borne the noise of a city, where a few years since the calm of a Sabbath stillness was over all, the lowing of kine or the shrill whistle of the small boy the only sound to break the silence, where now late into the night, encroaching on the new day, the sound of the clang of the car, puff of an auto, or chug of a motor boat rend the air, while the laugh and shout of the merry bathing crowds are abroad in the night, for the bathing is good the year 'round, only taking a recess when a Norther arrives. The calm of the old days of the Indian and the Spanish cavalier has departed forever.

The first ball we have notice of was given by officers under General Taylor. Undoubtedly some of the officers' wives must have come out, and still we expect ladies were scarce. We remember seeing an article some years ago in one of our papers on old times, and it described an invitation sent to Mrs. Belden, then a young matron, to attend this ball. We suppose other ladies must have arrived, as Mrs. and Miss Moore and Mrs. Belden are mentioned as the only ladies here at the time of landing. The next on list is

the ball by enlisted men, at which our Irish Sergeant played beau to Lucindy. Another invitation of which we saw a copy was dated in the 50's. After mentioning time and place the committee assured the ladies that perfect order would be kept as an officer would be present to suppress any undue hilarity.

Later many dances were given, and though most everyone carried pistols, there is no record or tradition of any unpleasantness. The inborn respect for women, of which all Americans have a large share, made this not only possible but sure. Many little dancing parties were given at private residences by the young people both in town and country, at which the old quadrille or cotillion and Virginia reel lasted from dark till day. The slow two-step or languorous waltz of the present was unknown, and dear to the memories of the old-timers was the sound of the violin and the whoop of the prompter. But times change. During the stay of the battalion here during the Spanish War, some of the boys arranged a little private dance, at which quadrilles were danced. Suddenly on the night air arose sounds of apparent strife. For blocks around, from dwellings poured men and women. The men, true to Corpus Christi spirit, ready to carry first aid, followed the sound to find that the noise emanated from a vociferous prompter who was onto his job. Revival of the old dances was a novelty at this date.

The most noted balls, however, were those given yearly to and by the Fire Department. For thirty-seven years this was the local social event of the season. In old days there was a parade by day and a ball at night. At first we had only a hook and ladder truck and a fire engine. These the ladies decorated with evergreen and oleanders for the parade. Later we got hose carts for the different wards, and then came the tug-of-war, each ward trying to win the prize, and the decorations could not have been surpassed in any city. Each and every flower of decorations was hand made, and every petal of the thousands of flowers was carefully examined before using in the work. Every woman in the ward was a willing helper, and days and long evenings were given over to the work, and the finished work was grand. At night old Market Hall was buried, as to walls, under a

cloud of green flowers, and to this ball came the firemen and their guests, little and big, rich and poor. Old and young met once a year at the Firemen's Ball. And what hosts those old boys were, every man of them a committee of one, to see that everybody enjoyed the occasion, that there were no wall flowers, that the ladies had the first and best seats at the table, and what a table.

The ladies of the different wards, under a chairman, arranged this, soliciting the supper and donating it. This supper became famous both as to quantity and quality, because cooked at home and sent in. Turkey or ham from one, cake from another, and down the list. Quantity as everybody wanted to give. A whole pig with a ruffled collar, and an apple in its mouth. A log cabin cake, enough for twenty hungry boys. Two beautiful white deer, in butter, feeding on a green parsley lawn. A gift from the Convent, an old English church, of cake, with steeple. But the greatest artistic display was in the salads. Whole bouquets of eatables, such spreads as have gone out of date forever. During the past few years the growth of Corpus Christi has been so great that the Volunteer Department, in a large measure, has been supplanted by a paid department, splendidly equipped. And with the passing of the volunteers passed the social features.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Some Early Entertainments.*

Then one day in the 80's the lightning rod man arrived with his great team of gray horses and long wagon loaded with rods. He proceeded to give open air concerts, fine music and singing by a really good quartette of more than ordinary ability, and between acts, a good talker, told us of our daily danger from the clouds. We turned out nightly to enjoy the show, and the thrills we felt when our danger was pointed out. Nobody had ever been killed by lightning in our town, and we arranged that no one should. We got rods, some of the most timorous even putting five or six rods on a small roof. This company made several visits to us and we enjoyed every one of them.

Next came the medicine shows. They also gave nightly concerts, which might have been enjoyed had they also not brought news of so many new ailments. The Wizard Oil Company was the first to arrive, and their oil is still a favorite cure-all with many of us. The Diamond King also held the public for a time, and a long list of companies and cures followed, even to the present day, but the charlatan of this day has no such audiences as his predecessors. The earliest companies were a break in the monotony of the times. Now amusement is more plentiful and we are more fastidious in our tastes, though we are an amusement loving people and our city classed as a good show town.

A most interesting public event of this kind to which we went to a man, also woman, was our first Street Carnival, the best of its kind. The tents were placed in the streets, which was a novelty in itself. Here we saw the Flying Woman and the first moving pictures, which were new at the time. And the shooting galleries, where great fat turkeys might be and often were won, our first hamburgers, hot waffles, and snowy popcorn came at this time. We think this was about 1900. We have had many Carnivals since, but never one equal to this pioneer.

Horse races were always in order, one of which is remembered by old-timers, in which two young ladies rode for a prize, a fine side saddle. This race was arranged by Colonel Kinney and attracted much attention. In the autumn of 1898 a large colony of horsemen brought their string of horses to winter here. They had sheds and a track in the Rincon, and we had races galore, while our streets were one continual horse show. The biggest event of this meet was a ten-mile race between a lady from Kansas and a lady of the Lone Star State. They changed mounts at the end of each mile. Of course Texas won. They remained a few months, then the beautiful horses were loaded on trains and shipped out, and with them went their gentlemen owners with their families, their drivers, jockeys, cleaners and all the riff-raff which follow and disgrace this noble sport.

Early in the 80's a couple of herdic coaches were put into commission on the streets, a stable built, and the first pavilion ever erected in Corpus Christi was opened on the beach near the bayou. A skating rink was opened and semi-weekly dances were held there. The coaches, or herdies, as we called them, ran daily north and south on Chaparral Street, and on dance or skating nights did a big business. The company owning them, of which our popular townsman, Major J. H. C. White, was president and manager, spent considerable money in the venture, but after a few months of honest effort abandoned the scheme of establishing cheap transportation. Many years were to pass, much money to be spent, a street railroad to be built and abandoned, the old century to die and the new to be a lusty youngster, aged ten, before a five-cent fare was pay on our streets. But the young people of that day cherish many happy recollections of those times.

The first city hack was brought on a few years after the War by the veteran stable owner, John Fogg, and immediately found favor. An election was approaching and one of the candidates scored a point by engaging the only hack in sight to carry his friends to the polls. Things were going fine with him, all his way, until he persuaded a gruff old gentleman to ride to the voting place. Arriving, the old fellow refused to quit without a longer ride. This was re-

peated over and over. Becoming angry, the candidate attempted force, only to be met by a rather ugly gun. The news got out and our angry politician was the butt of the crowd. Up one street and down another sailed the hack with its solemn passenger with the gun. The driver solved the problem by driving into the stable and unhitching the horses. Then, and only then, did our man condescend to alight, walk to the box and vote for the other fellow. Other vehicles followed, and even as a small town we supported two well equipped livery stables, and the handy hack held its own until the auto came to divide the honors. Previous to the advent of the cab, the livery stables kept a line of road wagons, vehicles suitable for travel across the country, as there was no other method of travel until the stage lines were established.

In 1852 Corpus Christi was incorporated, and on the first Tuesday in April of that year our good people met at the polls and elected B. F. Neal Mayor. Of this gentleman the writer is glad to be able to give a short sketch, furnished her by an intimate friend of the family, and one time inmate of Judge Neal's home. B. F. Neal was a Virginian by birth and educated to the law. We do not recall the year he came to Southwest Texas. That he was learned in his profession is proven by the fact of his many services; that he was fitted for almost any position in life was also proven. We find him serving as Mayor, District Judge, editor of one of the earliest newspapers, *The Nueces Valley*. As a soldier he commanded a company during the war between the States. Taking a great interest in the early schools, he was one of the most prominent and useful citizens of the Corpus Christi of his day. Judge Neal was twice married, his second wife being a Miss Zula Haynes of Philadelphia. Mrs. Neal was a Quakeress by birth, and a noble helpmate to her public-spirited, patriotic husband, a veritable leader in all works of mercy, accepting the rough life of the frontier with a meekness inherited from a long line of God-fearing ancestors. She aided the poor, nursed the sick, and by her works was she known. Should we ever have a Hall of Fame, the name of our first Mayor and Zula Haynes, his wife, should occupy a prominent niche therein.

In 1853 we find as Mayor of Corpus Christi one E. H. Winfield. Of this gentleman I can tell nothing more than his name. That his term must have been short we are sure, as in the same year we see that E. R. Hopson is also on the list as Mayor. Of this gentleman, as of his predecessor, we know nothing except the name.

In 1854 we greet H. W. Berry as his Honor, and this leads us to believe that the office was held for one year at that time. A sketch of Captain Berry is given elsewhere. He was at this time a comparatively young man, an ex-officer of the volunteers who had served under General Taylor. He returned to Corpus Christi at the close of the Mexican War, to lead a long and useful life with us.

1855. Our first Municipal Father, Judge Neal, is in office with us again.

1856. Henry A. Maltby, afterwards and for years a prominent citizen of Brownsville, is Mayor.

1857. H. W. Berry again, but apparently for a short time only, as we find from same records (copy furnished writer by City Secretary O. O. Wright, January 1, 1911), that for 1857, 1858 and 1859 Mr. Richard Holbein, for many years a prominent ranchero, held this office.

1860-62. Captain Berry, during this turbulent time, looked after the interest of the little war-ridden town as Mayor.

1863-65. Dr. George Robertson, a native of Scotland, held the reins of office, and at this time the position was one of peril, as the enemy were often in evidence. On one occasion a scouting party from the fleet espied three men on Chaparral Street and chased them into the home of Mrs. Swift, in the rear of the Robertson home (corner of Schatzel and Water Streets). Two of the men went under beds and were soon captured, but Mrs. Swift, with almost superhuman strength, pulled out a wardrobe and the Mayor slid behind it. She pushed it back into the corner, and he remained through the hunt, safely hidden, the woman and the captured men finally convincing the Yanks that they had been seeing treble, as only two men were there. One of the captured men was John Riggs. I do not remember the name of the other. These boys drew starvation rations in



a New Orleans prison until the close of the War, but the doctor escaped. Dr. Robertson died of yellow fever in '67. The house of good Mrs. Swift has made place for the elegant home of E. T. Merriman, while the Robertson home, which has for years been the home of his son and widowed daughter, Mrs. Jessie Clark, known to all the old residents for its kindly Scotch hospitality, was removed, and upon its site was erected Lichtenstein's Department Store, the first department store for Corpus Christi.

1866-67. W. N. Staples, who opened the first lumber yard in Corpus Christi. Mr. Staples afterward opened a large ranch, and for years he and his good wife were prominent in the social life of this section. Their ranch was ever a welcoming haven, and both of them happy when surrounded by happy children.

1868-69. Colonel Nelson Plato. Here we have an illustration of how soon we forget our political differences. Colonel Plato came to Corpus Christi in the Union Army, we believe in command of a colored regiment, and in the next year or so we find him filling our highest local office. We might suppose that the Colonel was elected by the Carpetbaggers, were it not that he comes again later, after our rights had been restored. The writer remembers him as a very pleasant gentleman.

1870-72. J. B. Mitchell, an early settler. Pioneer hardware merchant, at one time very wealthy. The name "J. B. Mitchell Co." stood for integrity in business throughout South Texas.

1873-74. P. Doddridge, pioneer banker. Notice elsewhere.

1875. Colonel Plato takes up the reins again and metes out justice to the breaker of the law.

1876. William Headen, one of the best loved men who ever made a home with us, son of wealthy parents. He was truly a sincere follower of the lowly Nazarene, and the large and prosperous Methodist community of our town owes much to his earnest loyalty to the early poor and struggling church. He was such a man as to be remembered kindly forever.

1877. J. C. Russell, eminent jurist, for many years

Judge of this District, finally resigning the office and refusing further honors at the hands of his admiring constituents. An ex-Confederate officer, a kindly man whose justice was ever tempered with mercy in quantity.

1877-79. Hon. J. M. Moore. Notice of this grand man, father-in-law of William Headen, elsewhere.

1880-83. John Baptist Murphy, lawyer. Also ex-Confederate officer. Of this Mayor the writer can hardly be trusted to give an unbiased notice, and this without fear or favor, as so far as known there is neither kith nor kin of the Judge in Texas, nor was he a personal friend, but his methods were so honest and unique that he is quoted to this day. He drained our streets by cutting ditches to the bay. The remains of the ditches are to be seen now, some of them doing good service today. He worked city prisoners on the streets, and if the prisoner worked he was given three good meals a day; if not he was idle on the traditional bread and water. One man was arrested for going barefooted. According to the charge of his Honor, a man who would go barefooted in public was a vagrant. This man worked out a good stiff fine, and either wore shoes or left town. During the time of his service as Mayor a company of Regulars was camped here for sometime, a light battery which came for practice with the new gatling gun. One day an ex-Confederate was met by one of our defenders who had been drinking. The soldier pulled the gentleman's pipe from his mouth, and a rough and tumble ensued. All parties were arrested promptly. The pipe owner, a stranger, had heard that the Mayor was a Yankee and expected to pay a nice fine. Asked his story, he said: "I served with Lee; don't like the uniform, and when the chap caught my pipe I hit him." "What," said the Mayor, "he attacked you in that manner; do these men in uniform think they can insult our citizens with impunity? You are discharged." "Bring on the prisoner," and it required the utmost persuasion of the company officers, and strong assurances of military punishment to save the soldier from a taste of Texas justice. When Judge Murphy died, which he did during his second term, our scrip was worth one hundred cents on the dollar. Not one cent of debt, and a cash balance on hand of

\$12,000, if I am not mistaken as to the exact sum. Anyway, balance or not, taxes were small and our streets clean. True, we were a small place and municipal expenses were small, but we worked no more prisoners, and within a few years scrip was cheap and taxes were not.

1884-85. George F. Evans. Mr. Evans served the unexpired term of Judge Murphy to the perfect satisfaction of our people, but I do not think he again sought the office. I have no recollection of his name figuring as a candidate, and in those days having so little to occupy our minds, we took an immense interest in local politics.

1886-87. Captain C. C. Heath, a local merchant, guided the destinies of those two years. During his term the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad was built into Corpus Christi, and we began to feel the first awakening, and to meet people on the street whom we did not know.

1888-91. Henry Keller drew two terms and made a good Mayor. During his time the great Ropes boom started and ended. Mr. Keller did much public work in which he was ably helped by his lovable wife. Mrs. Keller visited and welcomed the stranger, and in every way placed the good of the town above personal matters.

1892-1903. O. C. Lovenskiold, son of one of the oldest families, a born Corpus Christian, held the office at will, and through a trying time. At the collapse of the boom, when our city went through a depressing series of misfortunes, he held the reins steadily and guided us safely through the breakers. Being a gentleman of rare education and of wealth, he was able to give both time and talent to the work in hand during this time, the darkest, from a business view, we ever knew. Property steadily decreased in value. More than half our business houses were closed, and money with which to keep the city affairs moving must have been hard to find. Public debt was inevitable. The wonder was that we had a shred of credit left, but we lived through, and regret our Mayor did not live to see all the promise of our first boom more than fulfilled in the second.

1904-07. Dr. H. H. Segrest, a Mississippian by birth, served through the above years as Mayor, and later as Commissioner. Being an ardent advocate of the commission

form of government, he satisfactorily looked after the city's interest as Commissioner.

1908-09. Dan Reid. It was Mr. Reid's fortune to begin his public life with a new and untried charter, but during the few months of his incumbency he proved the feasibility of the plan. A more extended notice elsewhere. During his term of office the President of the United States visited Corpus Christi.

1910-11. Clark Pease, twenty-second man to hold the office in the fifty-nine years since our incorporation.

In concluding the list of Mayors of our city, the writer takes particular pleasure in comparing our first and last incumbents of this office. Mr. Roy Miller was chosen our standard bearer in 1913, re-elected by a large majority in 1915, and if our first Mayor might come back from the golden shore, his honest old heart would be gladdened to know that his mantle had fallen upon such worthy shoulders; that today, as in the early days of our town, its Mayor is the friend of every citizen. The bright glare of the electric lights upon streets, lighted in his day only by the moon and stars, would not blind his eyes to the fact that the people of now are as able to distinguish an honest, upright man as in the long ago. There is but one blot upon the record of our Mayor; he was not born in Corpus Christi. This he has remedied as far as possible by his marriage to a native girl, and seeing that his children's first memories should be of our Celestial City. Like our first Mayor, Mr. Miller is never too busy, never too tired to listen to the voice of his people, to aid and advise with them, to rejoice with the merry, to sympathize with those who sorrow. With the many blessings enjoyed by our city on the coast, we feel disposed to place our whole-hearted, loyal Roy Miller as not the least of these blessings.

In this list of men who have held the office of Mayor, you will see by a glance at the column that we have been particularly fortunate in our choice. Although almost on the border, and for a long time, an isolated community, there was never lacking, never a dearth of highly educated people in our midst. For this same reason I ascribe our love for schools. Whether they opened on the day General Tay-

lor landed (when history really begins with us), I doubt, but that they did shortly after I am sure. The country justice, as depicted on the stage, was never with us, but if our first Mayor should come back, he would need all the nerve he undoubtedly possessed to keep a calm demeanor. In his day he proceeded to office on a deserted street, and only when some festive cowboy or boy sailor had looked too long on the red wine, did he have a case on docket. An occasional bad man of the card sharper variety sometimes reached here and livened things up, but his principal business was advisor-in-chief to the little community. And how fit for this he was, this early Mayor! His principal work after this was to agitate, write and talk deep water. No entertaining Presidents or near Presidents' committees or conventions was in his day's work. Just plain work, and he did it well.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### *Corpus Christi Schools.*

Some time in the 50's Colonel Kinney, perhaps pining for recreation, sent to New Orleans and hired a circus. It came on a steamer, bag and baggage, men and horses, women, children, canvas tent and all, and for one glorious week the few residents and everything for miles around had a perfect round of joyous excitement. The band played, the riders performed their stunts, the concert woman sang, black-faced comedians told funny stories to the end men, and everybody was happy.

Then, as usual in old times, water became scarce. Teams were hired and a long procession of wagons made a daily trip to the Nueces River, fifteen miles away. For this water the wagoners received one dollar and fifty cents the barrel. They could afford to enjoy the show. But the steamer returned and the show departed, bemoaned by all, though every song, joke and stunt was memorized and served up for years afterward. In memoriam as it were!

In 1877 we again had a show. Again it came from New Orleans, but it was not so grand as Colonel Kinney's circus. This time we hired the costumes and represented the animals. A great elephant required the combined efforts of two large men. Then the dromedary, camel, lion and all the menagerie were there. The monkey family, represented by small boys, was out in full force. Rex and his court reached town on the Texas-Mexican train, at least they came from the then new depot, and the more than creditable procession, headed by a band, marched the length of our two streets. At night a grand ball was given at the Market Hall. The Queen of the Carnival was crowned and everybody being invited, attended and enjoyed the festival. This was the first and only Mardi Gras ever held in Corpus Christi. It was promoted by the Master Butchers and not repeated, we suppose, on account of the heavy expense. Socially it was a great success. Of those Master Butchers we

remember the names of August Ricklefsen, Henry Busch and H. L. Dreyer.

Such things look and sound trivial in this day, but all had a bearing on the future. The same spirit which prompted the circus and carnival prompted a try at the newly discovered icemaking plant. We had one of the earliest, the only one for a long time south of San Antonio. Then we read of wonderful electric lights and the telephone and secured both. Though small we were every ambitious, and this has made a small city of our once little village beside the sea. We have a peculiar style of our own in keeping up with the times. Something good is proposed and a list started. Some sign, knowing escape is impossible. Then comes the tug, a second list goes out and more names secured. Then the names of property holders is canvassed and you must dig, for the good of the town, and sooner or later you will put up. After a time you see the wisdom of giving and the futility of trying to escape. Corpus Christi expects every man to do his duty, and generally he comes up to the expectation. We have built churches, schools, parks, widened streets, and keep excellent public schools open for a session of nine months, for both white and colored pupils, one hospital, and various other minor enterprises, founded by our people, either by taxation or volunteer contribution.

The earliest school of which we can get authentic data was taught by one Mr. Whitely in a small house at the corner of Lawrence and Chaparral Streets, where now stands the St. James Hotel. Next, a school taught by Mrs. Dix. Another teacher of early days was Mrs. George Robertson, wife of our wartime Mayor. Those schools were in the late 40's or early 50's. In 1856 Colonel Lovenskiold opened a more pretentious school than had been known to our people in bygone years. Colonel Lovenskiold, then a young man, taught the higher classes, assisted by one Miss Garden, and Mr. Croft had charge of the smaller classes. Later Mr. Lovenskiold became a member of the Bar, and a Mr. Conrad was employed to aid Mr. Croft and Miss Garden in the school, though Mr. Lovenskiold still kept an interest in it as superintendent, and his memory is revered by the few of the

old pupils who are yet with us. One of them tells of a very exciting incident.

One cold morning two brothers, men in size, came to school armed with pistols, looking for trouble with the teacher for some fancied insult of the day previous. The Colonel came in, and seeing the situation at a glance, told the boys to put down their arms, which, after a moment's hesitation, they did. He then ordered them to sit down. He addressed them as if pleading a case before a jury. The girls wept, then the small boys, and lastly the would-be desperadoes broke down and sobbed their promises to lead better school lives. This was the one and only trouble with pupils. He lived to a good age, becoming later a brilliant man and successful lawyer, giving his best days and talents to the upbuilding of his adopted State, and particularly to his beloved Corpus Christi. He was an officer in the Confederate Army, at one time in command of this post.

Next we hear of Father Ganard teaching a boys' school, and later aiding Mrs. Priour in keeping a little school open during the darkest days of the War. Mrs. Priour was also assisted by Lawyer Carroll and Judge Neal. It seems that of those teachers, Mrs. Priour was the only one who could be depended upon to open school daily, as in her memoirs she tells of a school examination she was holding, at which several of the parents of the children, and the three gentlemen named, Ganard, Carroll and Neal, were present. The street door, which was closed, was suddenly battered in and some of the ladies sitting against it overturned. In the confusion the gentlemen departed by the back door, and the officer in command of the guard, seeing only women and children present, withdrew. This party of guards was on a raid, and had apparently been directed to the place in search of Mr. Carroll and Judge Neal.

These gentlemen seemed to have been a voluntary school board and only able to attend when the Rebels were in command of the city. Later Mrs. Price taught school here. The Hidalgo, a school for young men and boys, was founded by Professor Doherty, who was president of the school for many years, afterward selling out to Professor Campion,



who kept the school until the excellent public schools established by the State made its maintenance unnecessary. Professor Doherty was a gentleman of rare ability, and the new country and village were fortunate in having people of this class as citizens. The family name is prominent still in this and adjoining counties, and we believe that the lady superintendent of the public schools of Bee County is a member of this family, who gave much for the cause of education at an early date, and to whose teaching we believe we owe much of our prosperity. Though for many years a border town, we were never a lawless community, or ever disgraced by border feuds or mob rule.

Professor Meredith established a school for young ladies. Among other teachers of an early day were Professor Carpenter and wife, Professor McOmber and wife, Mrs. Richardson, a Mr. Easterly, Mr. Richardson, Miss Burke, and for a while, at a very early date, Prof. E. A. Atlee. Professors Hopson and Butcher taught at different times. As the town was clustered on the waterside, the earlier schoolhouses were on Water Street. Later came the public schools, and to get more room, the first public schoolhouses were built on the bluff, one for the white and one for the colored children. Later the colored school was moved to a new site, and their first building fitted up for a high school for white pupils. Now Corpus Christi has a magnificent High School building, which was erected at a cost of seventy thousand dollars, and three splendid fireproof ward schools, besides several other smaller buildings.

The children of today are reaping the harvest from seeds sown in early days by those hardy, conscientious teachers. Education was ever paramount with us. In addition to public schools, the good Sisters of the Convent of Incarnate Word have for years conducted academies for young ladies and boys, in which the student is carried from the alphabet to the languages, music and art. It is an excellent school.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*The Pastores.*

The Pastores are peculiarly Mexican, and are held only at the Yuletide season. To the Anglo-Saxon they sound almost sacrilegious, but these simple-minded people follow only the customs of their fathers. We presume they are the sole remaining link between the first of theatricals, fostered by the Church, and the modern drama. Anyway, at each Christmastide, actors are chosen and a place selected for performance. A great drawback is in selecting the site. An jacal, or hut, is cleared, and being so small, only a few spectators can view the show. Another serious objection is the total ignorance of the performers as to the value of time. A performance scheduled to come off on a certain date may open at 8 o'clock or at 11:30, just when everybody is ready. The first and leading character in the Pastores is Jesus Christ, who on the first night appears in a manner of tissue paper and tawdry finery. Comes the Wise Men, led by a star (very evident) to worship and bring gifts. Joseph and Mary in charge of the Babe. The Wise Men are shepherds and carry crooks. The devil, we believe, also appears at the beginning of the show. Songs and chants, perhaps several centuries old, are repeated, and the show closes in the wee small hours. Next night another chapter from the life of our Savior is illustrated. The Saints are introduced as the story progresses. Judas Iscariot comes on to aid the devil, who is ever present, and the good Saints are kept busy to thwart him. Each night has its chants and talks and actors. For twelve nights this passion play goes on. As the present actor learned it from his father, he transmits it to his children, and wherever there is a few of the Mexican race gathered together, there is given the Pastores, a cross between a Christmas festival and a religious duty.

Though San Antonio, with her usual modesty, claims to be the only city in Texas in which you may see the play,

you will find it anywhere on the Texas border, and throughout Mexico, the only difference being in a richer community, perhaps finer costumes and manger, but the play will be identical, and in a city of some size there will be several plays going on at the same time, and while the house is small, the yard will be packed with spectators who will stand for hours and take turns in looking in at the door or window, growing noisy or applauding only when St. Peter or some other good Saint has a tilt with the devil, in which his blackship always gets worsted, and the Church triumphs. For this peculiar, half civilized people, discovered by Cortez, stick to the customs and religion of their conquerors.

The niche in the social ground plan into which fits the negro of the Southern States, the half-breed of the Northwest, the Chink of the Pacific slope, is filled by the so-called peon Mexican in Southwest Texas. Mexican he was in the beginning, and Mexican to all intents he remains, though his father, grandfather or great grandfather probably was born in Texas. He is eligible to good schools, and is employed from youth to old age by white people. He never adapts himself to their customs, or speaks their language, nor does he require wealth or worry about the future. He is willing to work for a part of the time, but has not the least fear of losing his job. Of the women of this class only an occasional one of them will work. They are good and capable servants to a certain extent, but somebody must think for them. They keep the kitchen neat and clean, are good chambermaids, but I never knew one who could be entrusted with any but the plainest cooking, nor have they the least desire to learn. The men will work exceedingly well for the people who understand them, and size up and "soldier" on a stranger. Mexican servants are used almost exclusively on the ranches. They are perfectly content with just enough to keep hunger away, and a hut to live in. As a class, they are inveterate gamblers, and any extra money will go on the first game or chicken fight he finds.

They are the most hospitable people in the world, and will divide the last tortillas (thin corn cakes) with a friend. They have the same food one day as another, tortillas and frijoles (pink beans dried and boiled with a little pepper

and lard for seasoning). On festive occasions they make tamales (meat highly flavored with pepper, rolled in a corn dough, wrapped in a corn shuck and steamed). The finished product is about the size of a fat cigar, and very toothsome. On very extra occasions the filling is varied by adding currants and raisins, or using chicken in the place of beef. The foundation of all their dishes is plain corn. This they soak in lime water and then grind to a paste on a stone called a metate. Only a Mexican woman could manipulate one. Their grocery bills are very modest, and with their frugal ways they might become well to do, but seem to have no ambition along that line, and though they may attend school, which a few of them do, they scorn to speak any but the Spanish language, and any attempt to better their condition, either by Church or State, has failed signally. They are veritable children in some respects, whole families visiting the cheap shows and riding the hobby horses, or enjoying any childish amusement, with never a thought for tomorrow.

In their amusements the Spanish and Indian blood is apparent. Bull fights are, of course, prohibited under our flag, but cock fighting is popular. A few years since they had, and may have yet, a festival on St. John's Day, called "Running the Rooster," only it sounds better in Spanish. Mounted men rode at full speed and caught at the head of a well-greased rooster, who was suspended by the feet at right height to be grabbed by passing horsemen. If he succeeded in getting the head from the fowl, or pulling the fowl down, he won. This is cruel, and I expect now prohibited on most ranches. Naturally cruel to animals, he is kindly in home life, particularly to the aged, and clannish to a degree, whole families of several generations occupying one hut. The advent of the hurrying stranger has changed his habits somewhat. Where he used to work every day of the week for fifty cents the day, he now gets a dollar or a dollar fifty, and only works half the time, no better off than in the old days. He, like the Chink, learns his work, and under no circumstances varies unless possibly when shown something new. The women of all classes do exquisite drawn work, and beautiful sewing by hand. But their dress is the same, a skirt and shawl, called in Spanish, rebosa, summer

and winter, and they seem perfectly indifferent either to heat or cold.

This sketch, of course, refers to the class known as peons in Mexico, the class to which President Diaz handed the order to keep out of Mexico City during the Centennial of 1910, unless they wore pantaloons, shoes and hats; the class who prefer exposing their children to smallpox and being done with it, to having them vaccinated, and who hide their sick from the American doctors. A class far more picturesque than clean, giving ordinary care to any work on hand, and enjoying idleness as no other people can, but a very necessary element in this country where no other servants may be had, though perfectly useless to the stranger who does not understand his ways. He is apparently without reasoning power. If employed in midwinter and told to start morning fires, he will keep them going in July if not stopped. Or if irrigating the garden is one of his duties, he will start the water flowing at the usual hour, though a heavy rain be falling, and the garden under several inches of water. Consequently the employer must be on duty every hour of every day.

In a file of old papers, the Nueces Valley published in Corpus Christi, we find under the date of Saturday, August 27, 1870, the retiring address of the founder of the paper, B. F. Neal. He says: "This issue terminates our connection with the paper. When we commenced the publication of the Valley, our town was prosperous, and gave evidence of future greatness, but things now are not like they were. Another consideration, our health has gradually been giving way for the last twelve months. We do not feel able to attend to the duties of publishing a newspaper. We leave it to younger heads, men possessing more intellectual and physical ability than we do at this time."

He then states that all contracts for subscriptions and advertisements will be fulfilled by his successors. The value of the paper will be greater, as it will hereafter be the official organ of this District. In another article Judge Neal emphatically declines to serve on the County Radical Committee.

The old Southerner declines to profit by the misfor-

tunes of his people, or to join the forces of his enemy, and this child of his brain, solace of his old age, his beloved paper, passes out of his hands and is edited by one Drummond.

Under date of November 21, 1870, we find the following order from the State Capitol, verbatim: "Proprietor of Nueces Valley. You are hereby notified that I have this day appointed your paper, Nueces Valley, the official organ of 16th Judicial District. Signed E. J. Davis, Governor. James P. Newcomb, Secretary of State, in year of our Lord 1870, Independence of Texas Thirty-fifth year." This notification did not reach Corpus Christi until late in December. On December 24 the editor tells the public that his paper has been appointed official organ for the following counties: Nueces, Calhoun, San Patricio, Victoria and Duval, the latter unorganized. He also notified his readers that any legal notice published in any other paper, or any notice of sale, or any sale made, would be void, unless due notice of same was published in his paper.

For the next few years this editor had a clear monopoly, and little but legal notices appeared in its columns, but we gather a few local items. Copying from issue of August 24, 1870, we get: "To the recruiting officer at Corpus Christi: Go on with recruiting, no change in order No. 3. Signed by the Governor." The next issue calls attention: "Young men between ages 18 and 45 wishing to join Ninth Regiment, Mounted State Guards, Colonel T. C. Barden, call at City Hall at 8 p. m. Saturday evening when company will be organized and elect officers. Men and officers will be mounted and equipped immediately." Later we learn that they met and elected D. Sprague, Captain; M. W. Myers, First Lieutenant; William Ohler, Second Lieutenant.

Later Sheriff John McClare reports that he had enrolled three hundred and seventy militiamen. This was the famous State Guard with which Governor Davis attempted to rule Texas, and which to this day are remembered as licensed freebooters, and rendered their name of State Guard a term to be hated. But in our part of the State we needed this guard to defend our border from raiding Indians and Mexicans. Their work was legitimate, and the good people

of this section never realized what Carpetbag rule meant to other parts of the State, and many good men enrolled for the protection of their homes. But better times were fast coming. In October, 1871, the registered vote of our county was seven hundred. In November, same year, the county goes Democrat by five majority. Better still, the District hands in a Democratic lemon of fair size. Vale Carpetbagger forevermore. Texas has again won her independence, and we are glad to relate more pleasant events.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Early Newspaper Articles.*

On October 1, 1871, the first public school opened in Corpus Christi with one hundred and forty-six pupils, the late Judge Stanley Welch coming down from San Antonio to organize it. He succeeded and placed Professor Hanna in charge as superintendent, and the children of that day and time had several surprises coming their way. Professor Faupel opened a music school. Better still, Professor McDonald opened a dancing academy. The Convent of the Incarnate Word advertised for pupils. What a lot of work for our one hundred and forty-six shavers. But the older people were keeping pace, and things were picking up rapidly. The old light house on the bluff was torn away. It was never used, but it was picturesque and its removal was regretted. The first fire engine came about this time and our first fire company organized, with the kindly, genial Felix Nossel as president, and the equally popular James McKenzie as secretary.

From files of the old papers we see fine loin steaks advertised at five cents the steak. There were no barbed wire fences in those days. In December, 1871, Captain H. Hawley, of the schooner Bessie, brings in a fine lot of green turtles and distributes them among his friends. Fish are torpid from cold and many picked up in shoal water, particularly pompanos.

Other items of this holiday season of '71 and '72 were:

"Herman Meuly has an up-to-date book store." "There are at present twenty-eight pianos in town." City Marshal P. Whelan publishes a notice that dogs must be tagged, and hogs penned up. Our artesian water is found to contain sulphurate of hydrogen gas, carbonic acid gas, sulphate of soda, chloride of calcium, sodium, bicarbonate of iron. The well has stopped flowing and the citizens are wanting it started again. About this date a firm at Banquette sent in,



as payment for goods, to Colonel N. Gussett, a goods box and a corn sack full of silver coin.

Mr. D. Hirsch opened a dry goods and grocery store. This gentleman was a citizen of the old school, and Corpus Christi owes much to his memory. In addition to his large business interests, he was identified with every public movement for the good of our city. He was president of the first National Bank ever opened here. He gave much time and care to our public schools, and as president of the school board, did much to make our High School one of the finest in the State, and one of the first three schools to be affiliated with the University of Texas. Going back and still quoting the Valley paper, we find a report on an election for Justice of the Peace. In 1870 a Governor's proclamation published orders for the polls to open on Monday morning, and to stay open until the following Thursday at sundown. Think of it, four days to poll seven hundred votes!

On May 13, 1871, we find the first notice of a bonus asked of our people, when the freeholders of the city petition the Mayor, J. B. Mitchell, to order an election to decide by ballot if we will vote bonds to the amount of \$25,000 to pay the Texas Navigation Company to dig a channel up to our wharf. I give the names of the freeholders of that date: Charles Weidenmuller, J. W. Ward, H. L. Allen, James R. Barnard, J. S. McCampbell, Felix Nossel, C. Cahill, F. Stephenson, James McKenzie, L. Webber, Byrne & Buckley, T. Baldeschwiller, H. T. O'Brien, John Dunn, J. Pollan, J. Cody, F. Werner, R. Doherty, Ben Gravett, F. Overton, William Dyree, Susan Leonard, Joe Almond, W. B. Wrathier, Fred Busse, H. Taylor, Ed Windisch, Richard Power, R. Jordan, J. C. Russell, William Headen, Thomas C. Kearney, George F. Evans, H. W. Berry, George Hobbs, T. B. Mussett, F. Fabebe, P. Leonard, B. F. Neal, Thomas Allen, T. Parker, P. Benson, J. T. Atwood, Pat McCabe, L. D. Brewster, George Gold, J. R. Peterson, E. T. Joy, J. Fitzsimmons, T. Forsch, W. S. Rains, P. Whelan, Henry F. Barnard, William Headen, Sr., C. Lovenskiold, W. Staples, John Fogg, P. Hoffman, P. H. McManigle, P. Doddridge, J. B. Mitchell, Kletus Hoffman, A. Albertson, Kate McManigle, Alonza Montgomery.

The election is ordered for June 3, 1871. We quote returns. "Hurrah! The election is over! Never before have we been called on to vote on a matter of public importance. On the first call Corpus Christi comes out right side up. The entire registered vote of the city is one hundred and eighty-one. When the polls closed it was found that one hundred and fifty had been cast, every one of them for the channel and not one against it." And to this day, 1915, we vote aye to everything proposed for the good of the city.

On June 17 Governor Davis visited the city and sold his home to N. Gussett for four thousand dollars. The house yet stands, corner Broadway and Leopard Streets. P. Whelan was City Marshal. The Corpus Christi and Indianola U. S. Mail line advertised, "Fast schooners, Agnes, Henrietta and Emily. Captains Moore, Stephenson and Steinhardt."

"The Presbyterian ladies netted six hundred dollars on a fair for their church. Gen. S. G. Brown was Revenue Collector for this District, Thomas Kearney for this port. Twenty-three large carts of bonded goods were sent by S. D. Brewster to the City of Mexico." Again quoting, "June 1, fine grapes grown in Corpus Christi. Sweet potatoes sell at four dollars per bushel. Mr. J. W. Scott tells editor that best beeves sell for \$12 to \$15 per head. May 13, 1871, terrific hailstones fell west of Corpus Christi, wounding four men, and killing seventeen cattle for James Bryden, who is starting a herd to Kansas."

Our paper now gets a little spiteful. We quote the editor: "We thought that the War ended on the Rio Grande, but it seems that Judge Russell has renewed hostilities. He has dismissed the quarantine officer at Point Isabel for the sole reason that he is not a physician." Then a long article as to this lese majesty. "He not only dismissed the officer, but jailed one Captain Burke of the State Militia who attempted to reinstate him." Captain Burke refused to accept freedom and waited for Governor Davis to intervene, but the old State was gaining her freedom. Davis had pressing business at other points and Judge Russell lived to lead many a Democratic meeting to victory.

Dodderidge & Lott opened the first bank in Corpus

Christi. We copy a big ad of September 13, 1870: "One of the largest exhibitions of stock ever seen in West Texas will be sold without reservation on the above date at Rancho Palo Alto, twenty-one miles west of Corpus Christi. Fifteen hundred head of horses, mules and colts, sold in lots to suit purchaser. Also cattle, two thousand head. Sheep five thousand head, improved sheep. Also Laguna or Palo Alto Ranch, 500 acres with improvements. Good dwelling of five rooms, kitchen, outhouses and good stock pens. Terms cash or its equivalent in U. S. currency, on delivery of property. The Nueces County Jockey Club, recently organized, will have a committee on hand to judge stock and award premiums in accordance thereto, to be governed by the rules of the Club to be known at time. To give greater attraction to the occasion a grand barbecue will be given in a grove near the mansion house. For the sporting community arrangements will be made for all kinds of amusements, bull fights, horse racing, cock fights, target shooting. It is intended by its projectors to make this the most interesting meeting of stock and stockmen ever held in Western Texas. Signed, J. James and others." We suspect that one name represented the whole push, that one man constituted the Nueces Club, and that this same gentleman wanted to turn his holdings into money, or its equivalent in greenbacks, and get out. The old paper of long ago tells us nothing further of the meeting, and we copied the old ad to illustrate the difference in amusements combined with business of long ago and present day, and wonder what part fell to the suffragette.

## CHAPTER XX.

### *The First Churches.*

The first Methodist Sunday School was organized in Corpus Christi in 1858. We have not the names of the founders of this school, but of the early teachers we are able to record the names of William Headen, Ed Windisch, G. B. Williams and wife, Elder Headen and wife, Col. John Moore and wife and daughters. For a long time this church was the only Protestant church in this section, and all Protestants met for worship there. The old church stood on the back of a lot at the corner of Mesquite and Mann Streets, a small adobe house with seating capacity of not more than two hundred.

The Masonic Fraternity owned a large, rambling, two-story lodge room on the front of the lot. This building was also used as a schoolhouse, and around these two buildings was centered almost the entire social life of the town. Big meetings were held to which came the entire Protestant community. Dinner was brought and the day spent in prayer and praise, with perhaps a little gossip at intervals. Cotton quilts and tiny pillows were furnished by the sisters for the comfort of the small children, and the mother of a large family of youngsters did not consider the size of her family an excuse for staying away from church, and if she wanted to place them and herself in the social swim, she must begin in the church. The good women also organized a band of hope and temperance council, which met weekly in the Masonic Building. Little plays were gotten up, recitations learned, drills taught, and the public came to applaud.

The Methodist people recently completed a fine new church on the site of the old building, and we feel proud of our progress, but doubt if ever again we will do the good work as it was done in the old days. But times change, and we must keep up with the times. The Masons sold out to the Methodists and built a lodge room in the southern part

of the city, and in 1914 it was replaced by an up-to-date Temple.

Shortly after the Civil War the other Protestant denominations withdrew and built churches of their own. The Presbyterians have a fine brick church, the munificent gift of Mrs. H. M. King, a memorial to her husband, Capt. Richard King. The Baptists have a new brick church, a credit to the congregation and a pride to the city. The Christian Church people have a comfortable tabernacle. They also have several small places of worship in the city. The Episcopalians have a church on one of the most desirable sites in the city. The Catholics, who were first to organize a church here, have a church for the English-speaking people, a German and a Mexican church. Also a large convent where the good Sisters maintain a most excellent school for young ladies, many girls coming in from farms and ranches to take lessons with those lovable women.

On June 7, 1872, the village was terribly excited over the news of the murder of Mr. George Hatch, an old and respected citizen. He was shot to death in his buggy, on the north side of the reef, in full view of the town. Mr. Hatch was an early settler and owned a splendid vineyard at Ingleside. His habit of making a weekly trip to Corpus Christi for mail and supplies was undoubtedly known to his assassins, who laid an ambush and shot him. He fell forward across the dashboard in a kneeling position. His slayers cut out his pockets, took his horses from the buggy, and fled. A few hours later a passing traveler found the body and brought the news to town. His slayers were never caught. The citizens were terror stricken at the boldness of the crime, in open day and in view of the Court House. This old gentleman, 83 years old, was most foully slain, and obviously by parties who knew his habits, and who knew the locality. A mass meeting was called and a volunteer guard placed nightly over the sleeping hamlet. The people were thoroughly aroused over the crimes, including the attack on Captain King, the murder of Mr. Murdoc, and the poor men at Pensegal. But crime in the vicinity held its own until the famous raid of 1875. At this time the hunt for criminals was so earnest, that probably the gang which had

been operating in this county were exterminated for this latter crime.

Unless there is something in a name, and our name of Body of Christ was a protection, I cannot understand how our little settlement escaped annihilation. This little town, surrounded by a dense wilderness, in which lurked the savage on hunt for scalps and lawless Mexicans hunted out of their own land. True, our men adorned themselves with six-shooters and were fine shots, but except for a few days or nights after some startling crime, no guard was set, or precautions for safety taken. We bathed, boated and lived as careless as we do today, and the town might have been rushed and taken at any time. But our Mexican citizens claim that storms and other calamities are averted by the name and would not change it to commonplace Smithville or Jonesboro for a King's ransom.

We come now to a record of the old families of a later date. Men who came to our new country to begin all over and mend fortunes broken by the Civil War, men who gave a new start, men who gave a new impetus to the town, who lived the remainder of their days here, and whose children and grandchildren are of the old guard of this new, hustling, growing city of today.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*Some Early Settlers.*

William Biggio, of the Confederate Navy, and who was one of the crew of the steamer *Webb*, which attempted to pass New Orleans from Vicksburg, and its Yankee gunboats to the open sea. The *Webb* was captured, but Mr. Biggio lived to tell the story of the foolhardy attempt, and of his experience in a Northern prison. For twenty years he was proprietor of our one hotel, the St. James, and entertained everybody of note who visited our town. He was a man of unbounded charity, and while entertaining the noted visitors, had ever a guard of mendicants at his kitchen door, and William Biggio turned no man away hungry, whether he had the price or not. The good name is perpetuated by several sons and one daughter.

Captain James Hunter, an ex-Confederate officer, opened a livery stable and prospered.

Mark Downey, for years a dealer in stoves, genial, kindly, and a credit to his adopted land. He was at one time a member of the City Council, and also second post commander of our first camp of Confederate Veterans. He was an Irishman and proud of it, though born in London, a devout Catholic, one of his brothers being a Priest. He belonged to Hays' Louisiana Brigade, and came to Corpus Christi with his young wife directly after hostilities ceased, remaining in business until his death, a few years since. Mr. Downey is survived by several daughters and one son, Joseph. They are all Southerners, and proud of the fact.

Colonel Spann, a courtly gentleman of the old school; his sons and daughters are residents of different localities in the State.

George French, a merchant and for years a county official, was in the fight at Fort Esperanzo. He commanded a battery, and years afterwards a brother officer, now in the Confederate Home at Austin, told me that the Rebs got so excited that Captain French was in the act of storming the

other Confederate battery which he commanded; that he had to hold his fire and surrender to get the mistake rectified.

M. Lichtenstein, also a son of the South by choice, made a new start in life shortly after the close of hostilities, starting in a moderate way in dry goods and clothing, and gradually built the great business which two of his sons conduct today. The youngest son is an officer in the United States Navy, and will serve under the old flag as faithfully as did his honored father under the beloved Southern Cross. Maurice Lichtenstein was at one time a prisoner of war at Camp Chase, and though he had no strong ties in Texas, he resolutely refused to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, though by so doing he could have left the prison with all its horrors, and found ease and comfort with Northern relatives. He voluntarily returned, on being exchanged, to his command, Green's Texas Brigade, and served to the end of the War.

R. G. Blossman, for years the leading grocer of our city, was of a staunch Southern family, having lost two elder brothers in the army. Mr. Blossman also started in a small way and until 1914 conducted a large business built up by his energy and business methods.

Captain James Thompson, a Kentuckian by birth, was for many years in business with Mr. Blossman. He also was an ex-Confederate, and retired from business a few years since. His death occurred in 1915.

August Ricklefsen, though born and reared in Germany, became an American citizen in every sense of the word, having served with poorly equipped, poorly rationed, and altogether unpaid Rebel Cavalry which patrolled on the coast. A good soldier ever makes a good citizen. August Ricklefsen was both.

John Uehlinger was also a German who became a Southern soldier and stayed with his people, turning his cavalry saber not into a pruning hook but to a scoop, conducting a grocery and bakery for many years, aiding many of his countrymen to get a business start in the New World.

James McKenzie doffed the gray and opened the first store in Corpus Christi for the sale of paints and painters' supplies. Mr. McKenzie was killed by a street car many



years ago, being the only victim of the early dummy line built here during the Ropes boom. "Little Mac," as his friends called him, was a good man, ever ready to visit and assist the sick in the days when hired nurses were unknown.

Captain Thomas Beynon commanded a cavalry company in the coast section, and made a noted ride of twenty-one miles to get to the bombardment of the city, reaching here with but a corporal's guard of his company, owing to the poor condition of their mounts. The Captain went into the livery business, and operated stage lines to the Rio Grande until the railroads arrived. He was at one time Sheriff of our county, which office he resigned to take a position with the Laureles Pasture Company, afterward returning and resuming, with his sons, the livery business. His death occurred in 1914.

Captain Oliver crossed the Red River into Texas the day that war was declared against Mexico, served in that war, in the Indian Wars, and again in the Confederate Army. The Captain told the writer an interesting story of one of his Indian fights. He was in Ford's Regiment and they had found the foe in the swamp of the Nueces River. A hot fight ensued and the order was passed to get ready to retreat. In the regiment was a man named Lyons who had been captured when a child by these Indians, and spoke the language fluently. When the order reached him to retreat at the signal of a bugle call, he said: "Run back and tell the Colonel to hold on; I hear the Indians sending out the same order." Sure enough, in a few minutes the Indians were in full flight, and the whites scored a victory.

W. B. Wrather, a Kentuckian by birth, served in border warfare, and later in the Army of the Confederacy, aiding the cause with his modest fortune, accepting State warrants for gold, and to the shame of our great State, those warrants were never redeemed.

Of other Southern sympathizers, or soldiers, were the Dunns, the Mussetts, the Colon family, J. B. Murphy, M. Woessner, Alexander Dove, a native of old Scotia, who, like Wrather, advanced gold to his adopted State and received worthless paper in payment. The brothers, D. and

J. Murphy, made a new start in our town, both afterward moving to Laredo.

Captain P. R. Mitchell is at present an inmate of the Confederate Home at Austin. The Captain first learned the art of war in a mixup with the Kansas Jayhawkers. Losing out, he came to Texas. Two of his former brother officers also fled to Texas, but were assassinated shortly after reaching what was supposed to be safety. The Captain profited by events, and sought seclusion on Mustang Island. Later he joined the regiment of Colonel Hobby's Eighth Texas Infantry. At one time Mitchell was in command of a company stationed at Corpus Pass. One day two blockade runners were chased into the bay by the U. S. steamer *Iroquois*. The vessels anchored inside the bay, and the crew and wife of one of the Captains sought safety in the sand hills. The *Iroquois* sent out a landing party in launches. They were discouraged by a fusilade from the Captain's artillery, one old four-pounder with the Captain as gunner, and by a scattering fire from rifles and muskets in the hands of the poorly equipped infantrymen, and more soul-harrowing than all, the Rebel yell. The launches retreated and the ship opened fire on the camp. One shot passed through the sail of one of the blockade runners. The Captain's wife begged to go, and, despite advice of Captain Mitchell, who felt able to protect them, they boarded vessels and tried to escape down Laguna Madre. They ran aground a few miles down Padre Island. The *Iroquois* had kept pace down the island on the outside. Seeing the plight of the blockade runner they landed a force who rushed across the sands and set fire to the vessel.

Rebel Sergeant McRae had also crossed from Mustang to Padre to the rescue, but the shipload of precious cotton was burned and the enemy back on board before he arrived. Late that night the crews got back to camp, having escaped in small boats, but the Captain believes to this day that he could have saved the cargo if the vessels had stayed under his one gun. Mitchell returned to Corpus Christi later as a Captain of the Provost Guard. He had obeyed an order of his superior officer, and had spilled a lot of illicit whiskey. After the close of the War the owner

of same preferred charges against him. A detachment of five negroes were sent out to his home on Popelate to arrest him. A whitewashed Reb commanded the party. The officer riding ahead of his smelly escort met Mitchell face to face in the road. "I have a warrant for your arrest," said he, "which means the Military Prison for you. Not one of these nigs knows you. Just ride on and I will go out and search your premises." Mitchell rode on and did not return home until late at night, when he learned that the negro troops had searched every spot on the farm for him.

To the late Captain H. R. Sutherland, also a Confederate veteran; P. F. Dunn, our member of the Legislature; E. T. Merriman, J. F. Scott of Alice, Dan Reid and other leading Democrats of the country, we owe a debt of gratitude, these gentlemen having, by much hard work, carried our county for the best Congressman ever sent out from our section, Hon. John N. Garner, a Congressman who has kept his promise to his people. To the influence of these men we owe the opening of Turtle Cove and work on our harbor. At a banquet given Mr. Garner after his election, he asked his faithful adherents to name his first work. He wanted them to name the thing they wanted, the thing nearest their hearts. Mr. Sutherland arose and asked the appropriation for digging the channel. Mr. Garner promised. How faithfully he kept his word we all know. But so indifferent were the people generally about this great project that only one man, E. T. Merriman, went over to see the work started, and only one man raised a flag pole over his place of business when the work was completed.

Mr. Merriman, as manager of our best and largest paper, *The Caller*, has known but one love, his native city. He was the power behind the throne that made a success of the Woman's Cemetery Association. Again, he was one of three men who encouraged the ladies to build the much needed pavilion, Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Leary, manager of the E. D. Sidbury Lumber Yard, being the other two men who expressed their faith in the women.

When Mayor Lovenskiold felt that our city was not

able to keep up the street lights, Eli T. Merriman went out to the citizens and raised a subscription to keep, and did keep, the streets lighted for two years, when the city again assumed the expense. He tacked posters on our first car-loads of vegetables, thus advertising Corpus Christi throughout the State, doing the work with his own hands, assisted by his then little son.

Again he advertised Corpus Christi by sending a car-load of sea shells to Fort Worth to erect a shell tower, Mrs. Sidbury and a few other good women sharing the expense with him. He did the lion's share in raising the bonus to get the Brownsville road to enter the city, raising the last thousand dollars on the last few days of grace. In the years to come we may rear distinguished sons in the old town, but never one to give more, or as much, as did Eli T. Merriman, now a retired newspaper man. He gave so freely that the people forgot to show or even feel gratitude.

Of other firms of reconstruction days, we remember that of Gullet Dry Goods. John Bernard, a popular citizen of today, was a stepson of Mr. Gullet, and a clerk in this store.

Bloomenthal & Jordt Dry Goods Company, John Jordt afterward going into the furniture business and building up the business of which he is the senior member today, a business of such magnitude as to rank equal to anything of its kind in the State.

E. Morris also carried on a large dry goods business, with every prospect of becoming a leading house in this line. Unfortunately the ill health and later death of Mr. Morris closed his well known place.

John Woessner was also a merchant of this period, as were P. Hoffman, N. Gusset, Wm. Headen, afterward Headen & Mallory, and R. Simpson, those latter named gentlemen dealing in both dry goods and groceries, or groceries alone. The Dreyer brothers, Max and Otto, had an excellent show of toys, candies, tobacco and soft drinks, and ice cream occasionally, as this popular delicacy could not be served regularly unless we had our ice house at home, the weekly supply by steamer not being a certainty.

Captain Andrew Anderson had a mill on Water Street where fresh cornmeal was ground weekly. The Captain also put up a good grade of salt. A windmill furnished the power. Occasionally the steamer brought a few crates of cabbage, or barrels of apples, otherwise the stock of the early merchants was strictly staple.

Of other business men of more than a quarter of a century ago we remember the kindly and benevolent Julius Henry, a pioneer merchant, as was also C. Weidenmuiler and a Mr. Pollin.

Of the professional men, John H. McCampbell, afterward associated with the eminent jurist, Robert Stayton, and later with the firm of McCampbell & Welch. Mr. McCampbell was a Tennessean by birth, and a soldier in his youth, having served as a volunteer in the war with Mexico. Also associated with him in business were his two sons, whom he survived, being the last member of the old and prosperous firm to answer the final roll call. J. H. McCampbell was of the old school, and a citizen who left this city better by having been a dweller therein.

Of the early lawyers we also recall the names of J. S. Givens, P. A. Doherty and C. Lovenskiold. Spohn, Burke and Hamilton were leading physicians. Dr. Lawrence was also a beloved doctor in the old days as were Drs. Merri-man and Robertson.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *Other Pioneer Residents.*

Of other early people, we look back over the many years and recall the names of E. H. Wheeler, shoe dealer, also agent for the American Sewing Machine. Mr. Wheeler was one of the invading army who elected to remain with us. Others included W. H. Daimwood, gent's furnishings; A. Meuly, grocer and baker; H. Meuly, for a long time the only news dealer in the city, sometimes receiving his stock of daily papers in lots of a dozen or more; James Henderson, who founded the "Crony," and one of the brightest of newspaper writers. Mr. Henderson was drowned while bathing at Central Wharf, one of the few accidents of the kind which have occurred on our bay, another accident of this nature being the death of Mr. Alex Hoffman, near the reef. He fell from a boat, but being a noted swimmer, his comrades laughed at his fall, and did not think of danger until they saw him sink helpless beneath the water. The whole town mourned both of those promising young men.

Of other families of this time, we remember the names of some who are still leading names in our city. Mr. Charles Weil, whose sons are all in business, either with their father in the ranch business or in ventures of their own, the grocery business of Weil Brothers being an up-to-date establishment which would surprise the pioneer merchant if he could look in on the old town, both as to size and equipment. Mr. Gunst, who conducts a book and stationery store; Charles Hyman's family, the Littig family, Mrs. Holbein and sons, the Hobbs and Killmers, since removed to Alice. The noted dry goods house of Gugenheim & Cohn of today is a monument to the energy of these two former young men who sought employment in our little city a quarter of a century since, Mr. Gugenheim being a clerk with E. Morris. They opened a dry goods store of moderate size, and gradually built to present grand dimen-

sions. These gentlemen have done great work for their adopted city, builded better than they knew. In days following the Ropes boom, when real estate was almost a drug on the market, they purchased largely, thereby showing their confidence in the future, and bolstering up confidence of others in those gloomy days.

Of other noted families who settled near Corpus Christi and helped to build the city was that of Richard Gallagher, who opened a ranch on the Oso (Bear) Creek. Mr. Gallagher was from the Emerald Isle, and he and his good wife lived the life of pioneers proper. They are kindly remembered by all the old settlers.

Mr. N. Bluntzer, founder of the little town of that name, on the Nueces River, was of German birth, and true to the reputation of his countrymen, was a man who builded and improved, an experimenter who tried the virgin soil and demonstrated its wealth. He never lost faith in Corpus Christi and in his latter years proved his faith by investing in real estate. The Bluntzer family are of our solid citizenry of today.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*The Life of Colonel Kinney.*

Colonel Kinney was killed in Matamoros in 1865. The shot which ended the life of this great man was a stray ball. A skirmish was in progress between two factions of Mexicans. A friend of Colonel Kinney's, in a nearby house, called to him to come to his place as being safer than the place Kinney then occupied. He started across the yard and reached the door of his friend when he received the ball in the heart, dying instantly.

He had been practically under fire for years. A story is told of him and a few settlers going out to meet a band of marauding Indians, who had grown so bold that they visited the pond in the arroyo to water their horses. The Colonel and his friends found the red men out about where the standpipe now is. The party began to circle the whites, who hastily fired to a man, only to see the red men catch the load on their buffalo head shields, and, raising the war whoop, they charged the settlers who now had empty guns. A grand Gilpin race was organized right there without any preliminaries. Over the bluff came the white men, to the brow came the foe, but for some strange reason they did not follow up victory, but turned and fled back to cover.

Colonel Kinney had been on a filibustering trip to South America and from this grew much misery, as shortly after his death a claim, known as the Jones claim, was placed against his estate. To give justice to all parties, the people were offered a fair settlement, but having paid for their property, they refused the terms. Later a U. S. Marshal and detachment of troops dispossessed many of the people, and for years the trouble was on. As the writer understood the case, the claimant, Levi Jones, had advanced money for the expedition, taking a mortgage on Kinney's land. Kinney later sold out lots to settlers and they knew nothing of the mortgage until the claim was filed.

In the late seventies the writer saw some hard cases



of evictions, which must have reminded our Irish friends of the old sod, under British rule. One woman went to market one morning, and on her returning home found her children and belongings in the street. She was never again to enter the little home which she had mostly built with her own hands, even wading out into the bay to gather shell to make lime for its walls. But the worst sufferers were the orphans, of whom there were many, as the result of the last yellow fever epidemic, they having no one to fight their claims or find the money to pay them. But it is all settled now, and if you asked the business man of today about the Jones claim, he would likely ask who Jones was, or what about him, though many sore hearts studied the question in the old days.

But we began to chirk up, the agents began to visit our quarter of Texas, the parlor-organ man got in, we bought largely, we had the change in those days, and soon the silence of eventide was rent to tatters by its wailing. Next came the piano man, and again we invested. The price of many a good Texas steer, horns, hoofs and hide, went to cater to the musical taste of our populace. The next fad was a light phaeton or buggy. We enjoyed them immensely, as a gentle pony could be had for any price ranging from \$5.00 to \$20.00.

The Ropes boom brought the electric lights and street cars. True the cars were motored by various methods, from an engine which threw soot and water all over the passengers, to a perfectly harmless mule. Though whatever the power, the patrons usually walked back. It was never a success, and fifteen years elapsed before we had a street railway, the old one being torn up and moved on to some other boom town. We fell back on the original, and boated and picnicked. Who of the old guard does not remember the two Anderson boats, and the Anderson brothers, their Captains? What gay times we had on the old "Flour Bluff" or the "Two Brothers." True, they were sailboats, and slow compared with the motor boat of today, but the time passed so pleasantly that we were willing to travel at a leisurely gait.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Haverty vs. McClane.*

In looking over the files of old papers, we find a most remarkable case which we give as a sample of justice of reconstruction days, interesting from the number of people mentioned, ranging from the humblest officers of this (Nueces) County, to those of Judicial District 14, to Governor, landsmen, sailors, soldiers, U. S. officers, from Captain to Brigadier up the line to the apex, President U. S. Grant. While the proceedings cover pages and pages of foolscap, and the New Orleans Picayune, of May 30, 1869, gives four pages to correspondence on the case, and the Chicago Tribune and other papers of the day gave considerable space to various dates, we will give the proceedings of various courts as briefly as possible, and write, or rather copy, from the New Orleans papers as a curiosity.

First, we find that under date of August 19, 1865, at office of Post Quartermaster Corpus Christi, Texas, received of Lieutenant J. W. Barnett, A. A. Q. Master, U. S. Army, on board the U. S. schooner Lilly, following packages of sixty-one bales of wool, averaging 369 pounds to the bale, 420 averaging 79 pounds each, 40 pounds old copper, one barrel tobacco. This shipment is made by order of Brigadier General Rupell, with permission for owner or consignee to accompany same. G. W. Barrett, Lieutenant Fifteenth Regiment, U. S. C. Infantry. Post Quarter Master. Consigned to D. Haverty, New Orleans. I have affirmed this bill of lading. B. W. Gravitt, Master U. S. sloop Lilly.

Corpus Christi, Texas, October 28, 1865.

Received from W. B. Wrather eighty bales of wool belonging to John McClane, weighing in the aggregate 52,685 pounds. (Signed) Haverty & Hill.

Thus begins the famous suit. Haverty, who was a sutler in a negro regiment, can get transportation on a Government vessel which he does for Mr. McClane's four

years' clip of wool, which he purchases for 20 cents per pound, but fails to make returns. He, Haverty, goes to Chicago, where in the latter days of '67 he takes benefit of the bankrupt act.

McClane, a rigidly honest man, is appointed Sheriff of Nueces County. Getting requisition papers from Governor Pease of Texas, and acting under advice of his attorney, the afterward notorious E. J. Davis, he, with the Texas agent, A. McLaughlin, goes to Chicago in January, 1868. Getting a couple of Pinkerton detectives there to aid them, they arrest Haverty, rush him to the depot and entrain for Texas. McClane does not figure in the arrest, but meets them at the depot in Chicago, wearing, as Haverty afterward testified, a Bowie knife in his belt, and carrying a six-shooter in his hand.

They brought the prisoner back to Corpus Christi, and on January 20 placed him in Nueces County jail under commitment signed by John Dix, County Judge, and also bureau agent. He offers bond, not considered good by Judge Scott of the Fourteenth District, is held, according to his later testimony, in an iron cage nine feet square, and much is said of this terrible cage, though we believe that every jail in Texas is equipped with them today. Judge Scott was not a citizen of the Fourteenth District, and was finally removed, though General J. J. Reynolds, then commanding this military district, acting at instigation of Pease and E. J. Davis, endeavored to retain him.

The New Orleans Picayune, of May, 1868, speaks of E. J. Davis as that malevolent spirit who has been a stirrer of strife on the border for the past fifteen years. But the Carpetbagger Scott was removed. Lieutenant Colonel Wilson, U. S. A., was sent by General Hancock to Corpus Christi to look into the case. He reports that he had irons taken off the prisoner. He reports on the iron cage again. The case is getting to be celebrated by now, and General McCook, acting under orders of General Buchanan, and General Buchanan acting under orders of General Grant, removes Scott and appoints Judge Carpenter. Appointment by McCook affirmed by Buchanan, but General Hancock is ordered to Washington, and Reynolds, being in command,

sustains action of Governor Pease and Attorney Davis. Five months pass before Haverty finally gets a hearing. At this trial Pryor Lea, of Goliad, appears. The New Orleans paper says he (Lea) formerly of Mississippi, is a man whose personal and professional character lifts him far above the plane occupied by Davis.

In June, 1868, a military board convened in Corpus Christi, presided over by Brigadier General A. D. McCook. Mr. McClane asks, by letter sent to John Dix to General McCook, for certified copy of Haverty's testimony. An answer dated following day, at King's Ranch, curtly refuses request by order of General commanding signed G. H. Lincoln, First Lieutenant Twenty-Sixth Infantry, Acting Assistant Adjutant General. Next a military order declares the office of Sheriff of Nueces County vacant (July, '68), and an order to that effect is served from Judge J. B. Carpenter, by Captain Green, and the Sheriff is notified that any resistance to the order will be looked upon in military circles as contrary to military law, and get the Sheriff into trouble, for military law is paramount in those days in Texas. A military commission is ordered to convene in Brownsville on August 6, '68, and we suppose that as Mr. Haverty was a military man, sutler in a negro regiment, he was whitewashed. Anyway he got out of the little iron cage and returned to Chicago.

In September of '68, our ex-Sheriff, seeing the utter futility of engaging in a controversy with the United States Army on the Texas border, realizing that though he was a native of Pennsylvania, and a Union man, that he could expect no favors from the powers in command, went to Chicago to dispute the case of Haverty in bankruptcy. Now Haverty comes in for his inning. He files an affidavit against McClane for kidnaping him, and for eight months he is held in the Cook County jail, only securing his release by acting upon the advice of his lawyers and agreeing to drop all claims against Haverty. He came back to Corpus Christi, was elected, or appointed, Sheriff again, when he was defeated by Thomas Beynon, late of the Confederate States Army. Mr. McClane was a scrupulously honest man. A funny story is told of him by his friend,

Pat Whelan, Esq. It seems that during his occupancy of Sheriff's office, an order was issued creating the office of Assessor, formerly held by the Sheriff.

On examination by committee of the books, McClane was found to be short in accounts \$13,000. The shock of this disclosure sent McClane to bed sick. Mr. Whelan called to see him and offered his services. He was asked to carry a letter to Captain King, at Santa Gertrudis, who was on Sheriff's bond. He did so, and presenting his letter and news, Captain King laughed, saying: "Is he sick over it; he must have a poor opinion of his bondsmen. Tell him to go to work and I will come in and fix it up in a few days. I know he never misused a cent of the County's money." A few days later the Captain did come in, and, hiring an expert accountant, the late Charles Lege, had the books examined and found them correct to a penny. Mr. McClane lived to an old age, dying from a paralytic stroke in March, 1911.

Captain Beynon, after several terms, resigned as Sheriff and Pat Whelan, former City Marshal, filled the office for nine terms. The country was passing from the lawlessness of reconstruction days to modern methods during his first terms. Pat Whelan had many hard propositions to confront. Indian and Mexican raids, frequent visits of bad men traveling toward the border, avowed political enemies who made many threats, and a succession of elaborate bluffs. But he holds the unique record of having enforced the law to the letter, of having got his man when he went after him, landing him safe in jail, many times single-handed, and in that long and strenuous time he never killed or maimed his man. A wonderful record for the time and place. Mr. Whelan at the present time is Justice of the Peace of Precinct Number One, being City Precinct, an office of considerable importance, a courtly old gentleman of a class which is rapidly passing. He, with his brothers, prosperous farmers of the city, came to this County about 1866, and have been identified with its every progress since that date.

In closing this little effort at authorship, we come forcibly to the present day. With all our advantages of

free schools, telegraphic and telephone communication and twentieth century civilization, we have discounted our fathers and forefathers in politics, and reached a state of civic disorganization which would cause the Carpetbagger, Freedmen's Bureau, Ku Klux Klan, Union Leaguer, Scalawag, or any other old-fashioned politician to go to the extreme rear end of things and sit down hard.

Our first Mayor under commission form of government was Hon. Dan Reid, who died in December following. An election was ordered for unexpired term. H. R. Sutherland, a Commissioner and a native, offered as candidate, as did Clark Pease, the lately defeated candidate for office. Later Mr. Sutherland withdrew and Mr. Pease got the office. At the end of his term, April, 1911, Mr. Pease was opposed by Mr. Sutherland as leader of the People's Ticket. The election was an exciting affair, and Mr. Pease claimed and got the office, though contested by Mr. Sutherland. The case being decided against Mr. Sutherland in the District Court, was reversed by Court of Appeals, again tried in the District Court before Judge W. B. Hopkins, and Mr. Sutherland declared elected. Again appealed by Mr. Pease and the decision for Mr. Sutherland again affirmed. While there was much feeling in the matter, and the feeling is still with us we congratulate our people on the fact that no lawlessness grew out of the case. We are as ever a law abiding people and willing to await decision of court. Though our sister cities of San Diego and Brownsville have had serious trouble over city elections, in which six-shooter played deadly tunes, also San Antonio has had her troubles, but we have stuck to our time-honored custom of abiding by Texas law.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*Civil War Battles at Corpus Christi.*

From an old paper, told by eyewitness, there were two engagements between the North and South on Corpus Beach during the Civil War. On August 7, 1862, Captain Kitteridge sent a small party ashore to demand surrender of the city, giving sixteen hours in which to remove non-combatants. The famous Twin Sisters cannon, which had figured at San Jacinto in 1836, were mounted on the bluff, near the site occupied by the colored Congregational Church. Captain Billy Mann, in command of guns, took advantage of the sixteen hours to move and mask his guns at about the foot of Hughes Street. At the expiration of the time named, the fleet opened fire on the city, August 7, 1863. Captain Mann returned the fire from his Twin Sisters, sending a shot through the Commander's ship at the water line, forcing the enemy to withdraw to Mustang Island for repairs. After ten days' absence the enemy again approached the city, August 17. Kitteridge's flag ship was a steam gunboat. He also had three large schooners and a sloop loaded with a large force, well-armed and equipped for a determined attack. The Rebel force numbered one hundred and twenty men, but they stood them off until dark, though this small force was poorly armed and equipped, one small detachment of cavalry and small force of artillery, aided by a few infantrymen.

The Yankees landed near the old Moore House, yet standing, the Rebs resorting to rifles when the enemy got in range, but at dark retired to the ravine (now Arroyo) back of the bluff, where their devoted friends slipped through the darkness to carry food and water to them. Being August, water was only to be had from cisterns, or seep wells on the beach. This was risky for the Rebel sympathizers as there was estimated ten Unionists to one Reb in the city, and down to the darkness of the grave

many of the people of that time carried the hate born of that day. The Yankees held the beach part of the city from this time, came and went at will, but the Rebs held the camp in Ravine and adjacent country, coming to the brow of the bluff and "smoking 'em up" occasionally when ammunition was plentiful, finally capturing the doughty Kitteridge and exhibiting him on the streets of Corpus Christi. Yankees were off the streets that day. It is supposed he went to prison, as he disappears from this date. As the Yankee fleet approached the city for the second attack, Captain Jack Sands' boat, loaded with stores, also approached. A lively race ensued, but Jack beached his boat in front of Confederate position, fired her and fled. This was a serious loss, as the Confederates were in dire need. The Confederate forces at this date were under command of Colonel Hobby, infantry commanded by then Captain, afterwards Colonel John Ireland, later Governor of Texas; artillery Captain Neal; cavalry by Captain James Ware. He captured Kitteridge and did scout duty in vicinity during the entire War. Captain Ware died in the Soldiers' Home in Austin a few years since. Lieutenant Conklin, a gallant young officer, mentioned in Confederate Military History, was in Ware's company, and led a charge of cavalry against landing force, the fleet working in the beach and protecting landing force by its guns made the evacuation of Confederates necessary. He also made the beach part of the city safe to the enemy, while the force in the arroyo held in check their tastes for foraging on surrounding ranches.

Noted among the defenders of the wild borders of that day was Captain John Rabb, who commanded a company of cavalry, and lived in the field. Captain Rabb's home at that time was in Banquete, and his family were exposed to all the hardships of the frontier. In this company served Private John Fitch, who was with others of this command honorably discharged from the Confederate Army by company officers at the close of the War. Also living at Banquete at this time was Si Elliff and family. Those three men, Rabb, Fitch and Elliff, went into the cattle and sheep business and were for years prominent men



in this line, and did much to encourage the honest settler in getting a start in this new country, and in upholding the law and discouraging the presence of bad men in this law-abiding community.

In the latter days of 1910 a Confederate Camp was organized in Corpus Christi. The meeting was held in the office of Hugh R. Sutherland. The camp was named for the late Captain H. R. Sutherland, Company A, Ninth Regiment, Alabama Volunteers, Army of Northern Virginia.

G. W. Shannon, Commander.

Joseph Black, Lieutenant Commander.

H. R. Sutherland, Honorary Member, Adjutant. (Son of Captain.)

H. G. Webster, Chaplain.

G. H. Harvey, Treasurer.

J. W. Wilkie, Color Bearer.

Mrs. Shannon, Honorary Member.

Mary A. Sutherland, Widow of Captain Sutherland, Honorary Member and Historian.

#### CHARTER MEMBERS.

Lee Rogers, First Texas Cavalry; J. G. Price, Rattan's Company, Simms' Battalion; Charles Gollihar, Thirty-third Texas Cavalry; J. E. Welborn, Company H, Fourth Tennessee Cavalry; W. McGregor, First Texas Regiment; Clay Roberts, Fifty-fourth Alabama; R. G. Penn, Nineteenth Texas Cavalry; J. N. Caruther, Third Arkansas; J. H. Estes, Company C, Thirteenth Mississippi; A. Webster, McManus' Battalion, Louisiana; G. W. Shannon, Company C, Eleventh Mississippi; S. F. Ray, Company G, Twenty-seventh Infantry; J. R. Wilkie, Company H, Waddell's Battalion; J. A. Black, Company B, Thirty-fifth Mississippi; R. B. Casey, Company F, Lewis' Regiment, Mississippi Infantry; J. E. Stephens, Company F, Bushnell's Texas Regiment; G. H. Harvey, Company F, Ninth Alabama; H. Burgoon, First Texas; James Field, First Texas; Ed Atkinson, Thirty-third Texas Cavalry; P. Pulliam, First Battalion, Missouri Infantry; Jacob Miller, First Missouri Cavalry; J. M. Bailey, Company B, Sixteenth Arkansas In-

fantry; M. P. Craig, Ninth Kentucky Cavalry; W. A. Ficklin, Wells' Legion; A. D. Floyd, Company B, Gregg's Tennessee Regiment; A. J. O'Neal, Company C, Third Tennessee Infantry. Later the names of Captain Thomas Beynon and Captain J. B. Thompson were added, both gallant Texas Cavalrymen in their youth. The members of this camp are all representative citizens of this community, whose labor and integrity have built a new South, and made the name of Southerner a proud distinction at home and abroad.

In 1891 or 1892 a Confederate Camp was organized in Corpus Christi, with Captain H. R. Sutherland as first Post Commander. Captain Sutherland, appointed Lieutenant Colonel too late in the War to get commission, Company A, Ninth Regiment Alabama Volunteers, was succeeded by Mark Downey, of Hays' Louisiana Brigade. The Camp was named Joseph E. Johnston. Many members are now removed or passed over to rest under the shade of the trees. A committee of ladies erected a small monument in old Bayview Cemetery to the memory of Confederate dead, the first monument ever erected in Corpus Christi. It was placed in 1906, August 6. Committee, Mrs. Wm. Biggio, Mrs. H. R. Sutherland. Executive committee, Mrs. W. B. Wrather, Vice President; Mrs. T. B. Southgate, Corresponding Secretary. June, 1861.

After half a century, June, 1911, the family of Captain H. R. Sutherland applied for Cross of Honor, given by U. D. C. As it was necessary to find witness who knew Captain Sutherland in the Army, a letter was addressed to Captain A. L. Scott, formerly of the Ninth Alabama Regiment, later a citizen of San Antonio, and one time Post Commander of Confederate Veterans of that city. The following is testimony received in Captain Scott's own words:

"Captain Sutherland's standing as a gallant and devoted soldier and officer was recognized as being unsurpassed by that of anyone in the Regiment. Captain Sutherland was in command of the Regiment at Second Cold Harbor and Reams Station. In the thick of one of those battles (Second Cold Harbor and Reams Station) Captain Sutherland was giving some very emphatic orders on that

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part of the line. The incident is particularly impressed on my mind by the display of temper on his part at something that was not being done to suit him, and his conspicuous gallantry at a critical juncture of desperate battle."

Captain Sutherland's family remembers the story of Reams Station, how the Captain led his Regiment, how with every field officer dead or in prison the command came to him, how at his order to advance only his own Company A obeyed the order, the Regiment not knowing him as Commander, how under a galling fire he ran back and begged, implored, ordered, fought with the flat of his sword, and won. The old Ninth, a skeleton regiment, lived right up to its reputation, and under that fire and on that field Captain Sutherland won the undying respect of his command. This day, of all the days of a long life, was the proudest of Captain Sutherland's life. He possessed a powerful memory, and in old age often mentioned every man in his company by name, and where he died, for all but a corporal's guard died in battle. The Captain was desperately wounded at Salem Church, and again while defending the Crater, after the mine explosion at Petersburg. He died in Corpus Christi July 4, 1906.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*Stories of Early Days.*

After General Taylor left Corpus Christi on his way to Mexico, the few inhabitants had a long, lonely wait for company. An occasional hunter or little wagon train from the interior was the only break in the monotony. But hope springs eternal in the human breast, and the winter evenings around the mesquite fire, or the neighborly meetings on porches under the brilliant moon, were passed with stories of the prosperity soon to come; for Corpus Christi was ever loyal. A favorite tale was the conquest of South and Central America. A great depot of stores and base of supplies was to be established here, at this nearest point to the land of promise. Here the expedition would form and make a quick dash for this land of gold. Fabulous stories were told of the wealth to be garnered there, and at this date it seems strange that any converts could be found. But such was the case, and as shrewd a man as Captain Kinney undoubtedly was, he was lured by the tale, and the story goes that it was to get money to fit out an expedition to Honduras, that he made the mortgage to Levi Jones which worked such hardship on our people in later years.

Apparently the citizens of that day had not read the conquest of Mexico by Cortez, or Peru by Pizarro, or they would have known that there were no gleanings in the wake of the Spaniard. The few years intervening between Mexican and Civil War saw gradual growth by emigration. The first white child was born in Corpus Christi, Andrew Baldeschwiller, and then came the armed force again, not to conquer territory, but to defend home institutions. No great depot of supplies, or war equipment in evidence, a small force of determined men, armed with their own guns, and under a banner fashioned from women's silk dresses, the waters of the bay and the game on the prairies fur-

nishing the commissary, the fight for food being more strenuous than the skirmishes with the boys in blue.

Some time in the '50's, on the 17th of March, St. Patrick's Day, the bay froze over near the shore, and the whole population was treated to unlimited fish, the men going up the reef in carts, and picking up all that they cared to haul home, the fish being torpid from the unusual cold. This is the only record we have of a late spring, March being a spring month with us. Just how cold it was we are not able to say, as this was before establishment of Weather Bureau. This reef, dividing Corpus Christi Bay from the Bay of Nueces, cut quite a figure in the early days, being then about three miles north of the city, but now the town has gradually expanded until it has become a suburb.

The San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad has a bridge there now, three miles long. The old wagon road, with its many twists and turns, following the apex of the reef of oyster shells, making distance to be traveled more than twice that distance as used many years. This road at one time was our only outlet northward, and was carefully staked to mark the safe path, as the road was under water, and if the traveler deviated from it, he was sure to get into trouble and deep mud at one and the same time, with an excellent chance of drowning his team. To passengers on outgoing or incoming trains, these road stakes looked like a puzzle, but to the traveler of early times they were carefully studied, and learned to a turn. This same reef was a great fishing ground for big fish.

Here history began, with landing of General Taylor's Army, here the Indian must be looked out for as he laid in wait for the unwary traveler, here one night a dead sea cow floated up and created a little ripple of excitement as the first of its kind to be found in these waters, and here the deadly rattler made his last stand, disputing territory with the small boy of that day, who pastured his milch cows on the rich salt grass of its meadows. One boy of that day, a gray haired man now, told me of an adventure of his, in early days while following the cows home. He was barefoot, and to avoid the plentiful grass burrs, was leaping to bare spots of sand. Mistaking a coiled rattler

for a foothold, he landed fair. The snake struck and fastened his fangs in the boy's clothing, then ensued a race such as was never equaled on the nearby track of later years. The boy fled to the beach and on into the water, never halting until the walking got bad and swimming necessary, when he discovered that he had parted company with his enemy, nor did he ever again go to the pasture for cows on foot.

In an early day a man named Zeigler planted salt cedars on a spot near the reef, built a house and opened a beer garden—an institution dear to the heart of the German. But the venture was a failure and only the grove of those strange trees remain to mark the site of our first (and glad to say) and only beer garden. The body of land north of the bayou remained a pasture for butchers of the city for years, but our growing city demanded room and now the new Beach Hotel and many beautiful homes are built in the old pasture. A street car line runs through its heart, and the old gives place to the new. Other spots dear to the heart of the small boy of the old days was Salt Lake and Three Mile Point. Salt Lake, a mile west of the old town, was a great place to catch crabs, and hunt wood rats, while the young sportsman got his first chance at wild ducks and geese from its banks. Sometimes the fowls were of the tame variety, property of nearby farmers, but what difference if he could hit and get away with them?

Three Mile Point was the boundary of the small boys' world to south of the city. Here he could find the eggs of the sea bird, perhaps an armadillo, and often see a herd of deer, or a drove of javelinas which he did not care to meddle with. But alas, Salt Lake is dry, and the magnificent Alta Vista Hotel stands upon Three Mile Point, while the city steadily crowds up to and beyond them, and the small boy of today must go further afield for his sport. But like the Indian and the buffalo, the boy of his kind has gone forever. And perhaps as well. The world must progress and he of the present day must fit himself for the new order of things, a much easier life than that of his father, but if left to the vote of the same boy, we believe he would prefer the old life with its freedom and dash of danger, dear to

the heart of the American youth, more particularly to the youth of South Texas, to whom the change from the free life of the prairies, the round-up and the cattle drive, have come so rapidly that he can hardly realize that it has passed forever.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*Our Mexican Citizens.*

The following story comes to the writer from a Nueces County Ranch, and illustrates our Mexican servant as he is.

Two horses were missing from the corral and Pedro had orders to find them. He spent the day in search, and returned empty handed at nightfall. Another day was spent with like results (afterward learned that Pedro had spent the two days at a fiesta nearby, and had taken a prominent part in the festivities, chicken fights, running the rooster, and other sports dear to the heart of the Aztec). On his return to the ranch at the close of the second day he found the ranchman mad. Calling Pedro up he proceeded to give emphatic orders, Pedro should go out in the morning and get the horses, get them quick or not return. And poor Pedro retired to his cabin almost broken in spirit. Long after the lights were out in the ranch house the kind-hearted mistress of the house heard him repeating his prayers. Poor fellow, he was born on the place and knew no other home. Next morning at an early hour the ranch lady saw him preparing to start again on his search. He was intently working on something on the fence. Going near, she saw that he had dressed a forked twig up in gay colored rags and was tying it on the top rail. "What is this?" she asked. "Esta es Cristo," said he. Then he spoke to the figure in plain terms. If he did not find the horses he would rend it limb from limb, pour boiling oil over its head, place its feet in living coals, and then the lady fled. Two hours later a very proud Pedro turned the missing stock into the corral, and, going over to the fence, reverently taking off his hat, carefully removed the figure from the fence, taking off the rags, and returning the twig to the brush heap. And to this day he and his family know that the Cristo guided him to the missing horses on that day. Nor has it ever occurred to him that he might have got them on his first search if he had looked for them and eschewed the



fiesta. As a race, he is superstitious, so much so that his employer knows it is useless to try to combat his ignorance. He believes in the evil eye, and ghosts are common, old men and women sitting on the sunny side of the jacal and telling hair-raising stories all forenoon without a thought as to where the midday meal is to come from. One favorite story is of the belated wanderer who sees a great white cross rise up out of the ground in front of him, turning him back from sure death. Another is a story from some nearby town of a woman who is so bad that she seats herself on the ground and cannot arise. Her friends cannot raise her, even though they pull her arms off and she surely disappears before their eyes. In Corpus Christi this is a popular story from Brownsville, occasionally moving to Rio Grande City or San Antonio.

The common run of the Mexican population do not know who is President of our Country, or Governor of our State, the Justice of the precinct being the only officer which they have dealings with, believing him to correspond with their Alcalde, they bring all their troubles to him. It was truly told of one Justice of an early day that he set up a satisfactory divorce court. The parties appeared before him, and upon a payment of a fee of five dollars, he stood them up back to back, and at the word they set out in different directions, and were thereafter free. He distrusts the white man (perhaps for cause), but in all great matters of note he must come to him for advice, not hesitating a moment in feeing a lawyer, if he can find the price. To strangers he looks very much alike, and it is a little hard to distinguish Jesus from Pancho. A story comes from Brownsville of a famous trial in which the jury were partly Mexicans, as were the court officials. During the stir of getting reseated after a recess, the prisoner reached over and got his hat and coolly walked out of the door. Not until business was resumed did anybody notice his absence, at which time he was crawling out of the Rio Grande on the safe side.

Some years ago our town had a real sensation which set us all to talking. As near as I can remember the story, this woman shot a man at fiesta on the Mexican side of

the river, at Matamoros. She was placed in jail there, and, being an American, received no favors. One wild night, aided by friends, she escaped to this side. An old gentleman, Dr. Head I think was his name, got a mount for her, and guided her through the wild country over cow trails, fearing pursuit and recapture. The poor woman broke her ankle in escaping, and arrived in town lame to helplessness, and with but the clothes she escaped in. The doctor carried her to the county jail for safety. The news went abroad and the good women of the town rallied to her aid, furnishing every comfort. A few days later the Mexican Government demanded her extradition. Then it was the men's turn to rally, and they did not fail in their duty. It becoming apparent that only by force could she be removed, the case was dropped and she went free. I do not know the rights of the case, but I do know that the poor woman cast herself upon our mercy, and am proud to say that she came to the right place.

## STORY OF RAIDS BY MEXICAN BANDITS GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH, 1875

*By* MRS. SAM RANKIN

Good Friday in March, 1875, is still remembered with lively interest by many of the present citizens of Corpus Christi. It was on that day that the citizenship of the city was thrown into a state of wild consternation by a lawless band of about thirty armed and mounted Mexicans, supposed to be the followers of famous Mexican bandit, Cortinez. The murders, robberies and other lawless deeds and outrages of this noted outlaw and his gang made man's inalienable right to the enjoyment of life, liberty and property an unknown quantity on either side of the lower Rio Grande, in years embraced within the decade covering the '70's. On the day named this band of armed outlaws made their appearance at Frank's store on the river road, ten miles distant from Corpus Christi. Here they not only robbed the store, but also captured, robbed and held as prisoners, all citizens who chanced to be traveling on that road, and passing Frank's store during their unwelcome stay. A boy, unobserved by the Mexicans, saw what they were doing and carried the news to Corpus Christi. One old gentleman who lived in Nueces County at the time says that a number of the citizens, men, women and children, believing that Corpus Christi was hopelessly doomed to be captured by these bandits, became panic stricken and sought safety on a vessel that was anchored at the wharf, and that one of the men who regarded prudence as the better part of valor, with his "pepper box" drawn, cocked and finger on trigger, led the retreating column to the boat. Others, however, with more composure and better judgment, armed themselves, went to meet the enemy on land and combat his entrance into the city. They preferred a land fight rather than a naval retreat.

But touching the daring raid of these lawless Mexi-

cans, we will quote in substance from two old citizens, who are now and were then living in Corpus Christi. Here is what they respectively say :

R. R. Savage—"I was at my ranch, called Rancho Seco, twenty-five miles from Corpus Christi, on the day that the Mexicans made that raid into Nueces County, on Good Friday, in March, 1875. My wife and her mother, Mrs. E. D. Sidbury, were en route to my ranch. They were captured, robbed and held as prisoners as long as the bandits remained at Frank's store. When the robbers left Frank's store they released the women, but carried with them all the men, whom they held as prisoners. They carried away the driver and horses, and left Mrs. Sidbury and Mrs. Savage there afoot. They, with Miss Laura Allen, now Mrs. Benavides of Laredo, thinking they might possibly take a near cut through brush and beat the gang to Noakes store, only three miles distant, and give the news and arouse the country to action, took steps in that direction, but before reaching there they heard shots and saw smoke rising, and knew that Noakes store had been set afire. Naturally they became nervous, thinking that every noise they heard near them was a Mexican bandit. They lost their course and wandered around in the brush until Sunday morning without food or water. They reached the river, but the bluff was so precipitous they could not get to the water. Finally they found the house of an American family, where they were provided with food and shelter. It was Sunday morning before news of what had happened reached me.

"At Frank's store the bandits made the prisoners get in a ring, and guarded them. A Mexican among the prisoners remarked, 'Well, I know you,' and instantly he was shot to death by his captors. At this place they had about twenty-five or thirty prisoners, including men and women, but took the men and horses with them, marching them three miles to Tom Noakes' store, on the river, at Nueces-town. The men were made to walk, and the conduct of the Mexicans toward them was quite brutal. They would run their horses over and otherwise abuse the prisoners. Judge Gilpin, who was a prisoner and quite old and feeble, gave out, and they knocked him down a time or two, and

exacted of him a task which he did not have the physical strength to perform. They refused to release him, and two of his fellow prisoners let him get between them and lock arms with them, and in that way they helped him along.

“When they arrived at his store, Noakes saw that they were robbers and shot the first man that entered it, inflicting upon him a severe if not fatal wound. To avenge the wound of their comrade in crime, they set fire to and burned the store, but they failed to get Noakes, he having made his escape through a subterranean channel which led from the store to the river. The store stood upon the bluff a short distance from the river. He, knowing the lawlessness that pervaded the country in those years, had provided this means of escape in case the emergency for using it should ever arise. Before applying the torch they took from the store all the goods they needed or that they could take with them. When the Mexican was shot by Noakes, a man named Smith ran out of the store and he was shot and struck in the chest with five balls discharged from their Winchester rifles. He recovered from these wounds, notwithstanding that the doctors thought that there was no chance at all for him to live. When Mrs. Noakes saw that they were going to burn the store, she told them if money was what they were after she would give it to them if they would not burn the store. They told her then she had better get it quickly. She did so, giving them \$500. They took the money and made her and her children get out of the store and applied the torch, thus burning Mr. Noakes out of house and home, leaving him and his family without a change of clothing. His loss was estimated at \$20,000.

“All day Saturday and up to Sunday morning 100 or more men had diligently searched the country for Mrs. Sidbury, who is now dead, and Mrs. Savage and Miss Allen. They had about concluded that these ladies had been recaptured and carried away as prisoners when the news came that they had found their way to and were in the house of the American family as has been stated.

“While this search was going on for the women, Judge Sidney Gail Borden of San Patricio County, who lived just across the river from Nuecestown and who had been cap-

tured by this band of outlaws who stole from him a horse worth \$250.00, hastily got together a company of about thirty men and pursued them to the Rio Grande, reaching that border just six hours after the enemy had crossed it and passed into Mexico. The release or escape of Judge Borden and the other prisoners was effected when the small party of eight or ten brave and daring men went out from Corpus Christi and attacked the Mexican raiders."

On this point we will quote from Judge Whelan, who is now Justice of the Peace in Corpus Christi, and who was one of the attacking party. In substance he says: "I was one of the party that attacked the Mexican bandits. P. F. Dunn, who is now representing this district in the Legislature; Washington Mussett, John Dunn, James Dunn, George Dunn, Bass Burrass, George W. Swank and Clem Vettors, who was then a small boy, were the others. We overtook the Mexicans at 12 mile mott, that being the distance from Corpus Christi. Noakes' store was burning when we reached there, but the Mexicans had withdrawn to the brush, taking with them two wagons and the prisoners whom they had captured. We were told that they had taken Mrs. Sidbury, Mrs. Savage and Miss Allen with them as prisoners. As soon as we heard this we were determined that we would not wait for reinforcements, but would charge them in their stronghold. We had not proceeded more than a mile when from their protection under a cover of brush they received us with a volley from their Winchester. There were about three hundred shots exchanged. Swank fell on the first round. We pressed them back into thicker timber. We recaptured the prisoners and wagons, but by this time it had become too dark to continue the fight. We then fell back to Banquete for reinforcements, but before morning the Mexicans had scattered and we never came upon them any more. While one of our men, Mr. Swank, was killed, I am satisfied the Mexicans lost several. I saw one fall, and I afterward learned that three or four others who received mortal wounds died before they reached the Rio Grande. James and George Dunn and Bass Burrass, who were with us in this fight, have since died."

From Mr. Savage it was learned that the Mexican who

had been wounded by Mr. Noakes was caught the day after he had been shot by some of the men who were hunting for the lost women. He had been too badly hurt to bear the hard riding necessary to escape being captured before he could get back to the Mexicans, and his comrades had left him with some Mexicans who were asked to take care of him. They were taking him to town in a wagon when his captors discovered him and took charge of him. He was identified by some of those whom he had ill-treated when they were held prisoners by him and his band. He had proven himself to be the most brutal one of the band, and it is needless to say that his case was speedily disposed of without the intervention of judge or jury.

This raid was perhaps the most daring ever made as far into the interior of our country by an armed band of foreign bandits, it being over one hundred miles from Frank's store to the Mexican border. But whatever may be said or thought of this raid it should be remembered that at that time the sparsely settled country, coupled with other conditions favorable to raiding squads and bands of outlaws, explains in a great measure why these marauders were not overtaken, captured or annihilated before they could return to the south side of the Rio Grande. Large stretches of country in the Rio Grande Valley covered with dense thickets of cactus, chaparral and other growths made it almost impossible to overhaul them after they had gotten a start of six or twelve hours ahead of their pursuers.

Judge Gilpin believed himself to be the first American to visit our coast. He landed on the site of the present city in the winter of 1829, the only occupant of a small schooner that sailed from New Orleans. There was no evidence of human habitation and as the Judge did not know that the wrecked sailor, Whelan, had landed in 1824, he believed himself to be the first white man to view our bluff and two bays. He went from here to Mexico, returning in 1848. He became a pioneer merchant, as a garrison had been established and settlers had come during his absence. He sold goods in the Belden Building, at the corner of Chaparral and Williams streets; his partners were Mr. Belden, Jake Owens and William Mann. No doubt they did a good

business, as they had all the Rio Grande country and part of Mexico as customers.

After the Army had moved homeward, a small detachment of Rangers under Captain Sutton was stationed here. Later they were ordered to Austin. They were out but one day when trouble broke loose in Corpus village. Captain Kinney had enlisted a company of one hundred and thirty men with whose aid he intended to found a new republic on the Rio Grande. The expedition had failed, as the Captain could not finance accoutrements and supplies. The shipload from New Orleans, which arrived, being held for cash, and returned with load to the parties who had sent her. This disheartened the lawless men who were waiting to march and as soon as the troops were gone they organized a reign of terror. A courier was dispatched after the Rangers, who made a forced march back, and quelled the disturbance, and another dream of conquest south of the Rio Grande failed.

Judge Gilpin later became a leading light in the Southwest, having held office of Chief Justice for a number of years, and served three terms in the Legislature, he knew all the old people, and many thrilling stories of the frontier. The death of Captain Kinney, the wounding of Captain Berry and Captain Cook by Indian arrows. He was captured by Mexican raiders of 1875. Later he went into the ranching business, having purchased a place about forty miles west of Corpus Christi. Though he lived in stirring times and had many close calls he died peacefully in his bed at an advanced age, mourned by all who knew him. A Christian of Episcopal faith, a Mason of high standing, carrying with him to the rough frontier the rigid honesty of his youthful training. He was a native of Newport, Rhode Island. He sleeps in the old Military Cemetery. With the exception of a monument raised by relatives and friends, we have never heard that our people have honored his memory by naming even a street or an alley for him. I agree that he was our first American pioneer, as likely Mr. Whelan (no relative of the Judge of that name) was a son of Auld Erin.



## CORPUS CHRISTI POSTMASTERS

Office established May 30, 1846, William P. Aubry, postmaster; likely established for Taylor's troops.

September 21, 1847—H. D. Norton.

November 30, 1848—D. W. Brewster.

January 21, 1852—C. Cahill.

May 27, 1854—H. W. Berry.

December 5, 1855—William I. Moore.

November 22, 1856—Charles E. Bryant.

June 1, 1857—George Robertson.

August 24, 1865—Henry Taylor.

September 4, 1865—Jane L. Marsh.

September 2, 1867—Hannah Taylor.

December 22, 1869—John Dix.

April 24, 1870—John McClane.

April 6, 1875—I. W. Ward.

December 1, 1880—John M. Swisher.

May 1, 1884—J. H. C. White.

June 1, 1888—Thomas B. Southgate.

May 10, 1890—L. D. Camp.

May 9, 1894—James T. Rankin.

May 16, 1898—Julius Henry.

June 27, 1904—T. D. Ward.

March 24, 1911—E. G. Crabbe.

May 11, 1915—Mrs. Georgia Welch.

## BEGINNING AND ENDING OF THE CIVIL WAR

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This bit of history was told the writer by Mr. J. W. Golledge, an old-time printer of Corpus Christi. Mr. Golledge worked on our one newspaper, the Nueces Valley, in 1856, and was present at the taking of the Government Station at Point Isabel by the Texas troops. He says on the 18th day of February, 1861, we sailed from Galveston for the mouth of the Rio Grande, we were commanded by General McLeod, and had the following companies on board: Lone Star Rifles, Galveston Rifles, Galveston Artillery and Davis Guard. These four companies belonging to Galveston, Fort Bend Rifles, of Fort Bend County, and Gentry Guards of Houston. Arriving at our destination, we received surrender of station, hauling down the old flag and hoisting our flag in its place (supposedly flag of Texas, as we had not yet adopted Stars and Bars). We got a large amount of ammunition and stores. The commander of the fort surrendered without a fight and expressed sympathy in our cause. (Unfortunately Mr. Golledge did not remember the name of this officer.) Our command then returned to Galveston about the first of March, 1861. We were more than a month in advance of South Carolina in declaring our intentions to defend our State rights, but alas we were six weeks from a telegraph station and in the excitement of the times we never received credit for opening the War, and right here four years later our banner would wave over a victorious little army, and for the last time the Rebel yell would resound over a victorious field. Mr. Golledge was present at the fight, on the staff of Colonel Rip Ford. He says we captured about thirty prisoners, and a wagon train loaded with supplies. We chased them to the vicinity of their fort and fleet, and night ended the

rout. Next morning Colonel Ford was arranging to parole his prisoners when news arrived that peace was declared. The Yankee officer bearing the news was quite chummy, and he and his escort joined the Colonel and other Rebel officers in celebrating the event by drinking to each other of good whiskey, captured among hospital stores on the wagon train, even the privates were called up and given a treat. Ford said, "The war is over and my prisoners go free, but it was not over yesterday when I captured this wagon train, and I will keep it," and he did. Whether Uncle Sam ever got his train again I do not know, but I think from something I read in an old Chronicle that the horses and mules were taken as mounts by the soldiers, and the wagon and goods abandoned on the Brownsville road, south of this city.

## SOME EARLY SETTLERS

### J. H. KEEPERS

Mr. Keepers is a veteran and in the winter of life, but despite his years, he has kept youth in his heart and he and his good wife are true Southerners, of the class of which we are proud, in this summer of 1915. They are progressive citizens and in touch with all passing events, holding the memory of the old South sacred, and have aided in building the new.

Mr. Keepers says: "I belonged to an independent cavalry company, commanded by one of the best men I ever knew, Captain Dan Grady. Our company was raised in Bastrop County, and our first recognition as a company in the service was an order to march to the coast. This was in '62. We came by way of Beeville, then a small town, of which I have but little recollection. Leaving there we headed for Corpus Christi, crossing the Nueces River near its mouth, where we camped that night, near some few houses, supposedly the Motts, or Nuecestown, and the next morning we rode into Corpus Christi. My recollection of the place is vivid. To me it looked like a place of considerable importance; on the streets I saw many Mexican carts, with their Mexican teams and drivers; to me they were interesting, as they were the first I ever saw, and I began to feel as if the fortunes of war had carried us to a different country. There were several stores and saloons open, and business seemed good. Returning after many years, the place seemed turned around. The only spot I could place was the old St. James corner. I don't know if it is the same building, but I am sure of the corner, as it was the center of the business district at that time. We tarried in town a few hours, then left for the Rio Grande, via King's Ranch, where we camped that night. On reach-

ing the ranch our Captain inquired for Captain King, but for some reason the ranchero did not appear. We repeated our request several times, and he did not appear, and our boys were getting anxious, for upon a deal for beef depended our supper. Finally the Captain came out, being satisfied, I suppose, that our company were Rebels and friends. We got the beef and spent the night here. The place impressed me as did the owner, as an oasis in a savage wilderness, where a man must be assured of the intentions of his visitors before he would meet them. Two cannon mounted in the top of the house also impressed me and strengthened my feeling that I had got out from under our Lone Star flag. The next morning we rode away to Ringgold Barracks. Years after I returned to Corpus Christi, but as I stated, the place had turned and changed beyond recognition. The bluff was still here, also the bay and St. James corner, otherwise I was lost. But the worst is yet to come. I have been regularly visiting the city for the last several years, and find that Corpus keeps changing between trips, and that I have to keep locating former known spots. Picturesque ox carts and drivers are gone. The adobe houses and muddy streets have given way to reinforced concrete and Bitulithic, and if Captain Dan Brady and his brave band of youthful Texans should come back over the bluff today, upon the present city, they, like myself, would look in surprise on this modern city which we knew as a village when the world was young.

## WILLIAM ROGERS

*By* E. T. MERRIMAN

William Rogers, a native of Cowago County, Alabama, with his mother's family, came to Corpus Christi at the beginning of the Mexican War. Mr. Rogers was connected with the Second United States Dragoons, and with them was ordered to Matamoros, in April, 1846. He left Corpus Christi with a band of fifteen men and two women, but when about one hundred miles out of Corpus Christi, the party was captured by a band of Mexican guerillas, and

promptly murdered by having their throats cut, after being tied, and their bodies thrown into the waters of the Arroyo Colorado, the women meeting the same fate, but William Rogers was not to die with his family, his terrible wound was not fatal, and after four days of indescribable suffering, he reached Fort Brown, where he received first aid from military surgeons, who removed numbers of screw worms from his wound, the marks of which he carried to the grave, a clean scar from ear to ear. At the end of four months he was out again, and it is said that for the next few years he followed and dealt with Mexican guerillas. Old stories have it that one man of the forty that attacked that peaceful party on the Arroyo Colorado escaped his aim. We say peaceful, as we have been told that this was one of the sutler's wagons (most of the men being unarmed), belonging to the Second Dragoons, consequently a rich prize for the bandits, and illustrating our perfect ignorance of our dusky foe; no unarmed party would think of conveying goods to Rio Grande even now.

Mr. Rogers returned to Corpus Christi in 1854, having previously purchased the Palo Alto Ranch and bought fifty head of cattle from Elder Barden, and for a time traded in stock, though he repeatedly suffered depredations from Mexican cattle thieves. In 1868 his holdings consisted of thirteen hundred head of horse stock and twenty-eight hundred head of cattle. These he traded off for cash and bought the St. James Hotel, then in course of erection, paying thirteen thousand for this noted old corner, five thousand dollars more was spent in finishing and furnishing it, and it became Corpus Christi's one and only hotel, where many noted men have rested in their day. Mr. Rogers had faith in improved stock, and during our Civil War imported direct from Spain ten rams of the best breed, for which he paid thirty dollars each in gold. He believed these animals to be the best ever brought to Texas. Later we find him buying land north of San Diego. He owns the Maria Ranch of nineteen thousand acres, the Chusa Ranch in McMullen County, twenty-seven thousand acres, one thousand of which are under fence, and one hundred in cultivation. Three thousand goats and twenty thousand sheep, value

two to eight dollars per head, land valued at one dollar to one dollar and a half an acre. A residence in Corpus Christi of the value of five thousand dollars, two large warehouses and the St. James Hotel from which he derives a rental of twenty-four hundred dollars per year. Last spring his wool clip brought between six and seven thousand dollars. (This article published in a local paper sometime in the seventies, is to stimulate others to go into sheep and cattle raising, then considered the only crop for this section.) Under the head of "Another Good Man Gone," our local paper, Corpus Christi Free Press, under the date of December 17, 1877, chronicles the funeral of Hon. William Rogers, at that time a member of Legislature from this district. At the age of fifty-six he died, surrounded by family and friends, and mourned by good people throughout Southwest Texas. We copy verbatim the notice of procession which escorted the body to its last resting place:

"Star Rifles, escort. Fire Department. Music (provided by Masons). Hearse. Family. Citizens on horseback. Citizens in carriages."

This good man rests in the old Bay View (or properly, Military) Cemetery, among the friends of his strenuous youth, the beautiful resting place of our pioneer dead. This sacred spot belongs to our city and our people are to unite in beautifying this cemetery and caring for the ashes of men who made history in early days. Old landmarks are gone, only this old cemetery with its weather-stained tombstones remains, a link between then and now. (The paper from which this article was taken was loaned by Mr. E. T. Merriman, for years the editor of our own reliable paper, and always a true son of Corpus Christi.)

## BLOOD BROTHERS

Mark Downey was an Irishman and proud of it, although he was born in the city of London. He kept a stove and tin shop in Corpus Christi just after the War.

Hugh R. Sutherland was a Scotchman, born in Toronto, Canada, coming to Corpus Christi in seventy-six, he worked as a builder. Going into Downey's shop one day

shortly after his arrival, the talk turned to the late War. "I was in Northern Virginia," said Mark. "Hays' Louisiana Brigade." "You were," said Hugh; "I was in Wilcox Alabama Brigade." Questions and answers flew thick and fast. "Were you in railroad cut when the Louisianians fought and held the enemy at bay with rocks?" (Fact.) "My regiment, the Ninth Alabama, brought ammunition and helped rout the Yanks." By this time Mark was over the counter and they were in each other's arms, these men who had met for the first time in Southwest Texas to talk over the glorious deeds of their army, of the officers both had followed, and of the comrades who were left on the battlefield. From that meeting grew a friendship which ended only with life, what the Indians call "blood brothers," were those two men. They shared their troubles and pleasures, and were such earnest Southerners that their good wives were continually afraid that they would start a little war of their own. Kindly, honest men, with a word of cheer or a little help for every less fortunate comrade who came to them, often imposed upon but never discouraged. Their children were taught to love the South with its traditions, and their one son each, declared that their catechism gave us as the greatest man, Jeff Davis; general, Robert E. Lee; strategist, Stonewall Jackson; cavalry commander, Jeb Stuart. Then after a Sunday school lesson with their mothers they got all mixed up and were not able to separate Goliath, Lazarus and Ananias from their fathers' teachings. Those two boys inherited the same sunny, fun-loving dispositions of their fathers, and we are disposed to think that they sometimes imitated the last named Bible character.

This little story goes to prove that there was something lovable about our people of the old South. These men, born under a foreign flag, fought four years side by side, where glory was the only reward. No pay and scant rations, and at the end elected to come with our broken people and help build a new South on the ashes of the old, dying in the belief that they were right, peace to their ashes. May they rest with their old commander, under the shade of the trees, which he saw in his last moments. Our own Stonewall Jackson.



## DR. E. T. MERRIMAN

Dr. Eli T. Merriman was among the prominent citizens of Corpus Christi fifty years ago, moving here from Banquete, Nueces County, at the close of the Civil War. Born in Bristol, Connecticut, February 1, 1815, under the shadow of the Charter Oak, he graduated at Yale March 4, 1833, and subsequently obtained diplomas as an M. D. at the University of Pennsylvania and Bermont Academy of Medicine. In 1838 he moved to Texas, first settling at Bastrop. Removing thence to San Marcos, and afterwards to Edinburgh, Hidalgo County, thence to Banquete, in the early fifties, moving to Corpus Christi in 1865. He practiced his profession constantly for thirty-three years, serving the Lone Star Republic as a private soldier and as a surgeon. When she changed into a State he became a Representative in her Legislature. With a large majority of his friends and neighbors he embraced the Southern Confederacy, and as a surgeon gave the benefit of his skill and experience. In 1867 he fell a victim to yellow fever which visited the Texas coast during that year. As a citizen he was enterprising and liberal; as a practitioner he was efficient and obliging, full of kindness. A true friend and a kind husband and father. His death was regarded as a public calamity. His widow, Mrs. Elizabeth Merriman, opened a private boarding house, which she kept for thirty-three years, the Merriman House being one of the favorite boarding places of Southwest Texas, from 1867 to 1900, when Mrs. Merriman retired, making her home with her eldest son, E. T. Merriman, until her death in July, 1911.

Dr. Merriman kept a hospital open during the War, where Confederate soldiers were cared for; also a hospital for contagious cases out at Banquete, giving freely of his time and means to the cause he had adopted. His kindness and charity endeared him to the men under his care, and through this he did his greatest work. When the war was over and chaos reigned, his influence with all classes averted more than one lawless act, and saved his city from

a reign of terror. A better man, a better citizen, a better Southerner never came to West Texas than Dr. E. T. Merriman.

## DR. GEORGE ROBERTSON

Among Corpus Christi's early and most highly esteemed citizens and professional men was Dr. George Robertson, who immigrated with his wife and family to Corpus Christi in 1854 from Aberdeen, Scotland, establishing a drug business here which he conducted up to the time of his demise, August 10, 1867, when he was stricken with yellow fever, living only a few days after being attacked by that dreadful disease. Dr. Robertson held the position of Postmaster under the United States Government for six years, and remained in office during the Civil War, under the Confederate States. He also held many municipal positions, was Mayor of the city, and a general favorite in the community. He was highly respected by all who knew him, and his loss was keenly felt. He left a devoted wife and four children, as well as a host of friends to mourn the loss of a dear husband, father and friend.

## MRS. MARY A. SUTHERLAND

*By* E. T. MERRIMAN

There is no woman in Corpus Christi better and more favorably known than is Mrs. Mary A. Sutherland, mother of H. R. Sutherland, one of the city's prominent attorneys.

A Southerner by birth, a native of the State of Alabama, she has been and is today a champion of Southern rights, and though in sympathy with the "lost cause" and a lover of the Sons and Daughters of the Confederacy, she is patriotic and a staunch friend of the Red, White and Blue, and ever ready to raise her voice in defense of Old Glory, and the Land of Sweet Liberty.

Mrs. Sutherland came to Corpus Christi in 1876 with her husband, H. R. Sutherland, Sr., now passed to the

"Great Beyond," and their two children, H. R., Jr., and Gussie, afterwards Mrs. Cronkey, now deceased.

Her residence of nearly forty years entitles her to being classed as an old settler of the Bluff City, to which she is so much attached.

No woman has taken more interest in the city's progress and development than has Mrs. Sutherland, she having been among the leaders in numbers of things for the good of the town, such as assisting in the beautification of the bluff, cemetery work, pavilion work and other improvements. Being a woman of great executive ability, sound reasoning and perseverance, Mrs. Sutherland has accomplished much for the city's good in all her undertakings, as well as securing for herself and her children some valuable property. She, like others, has had her trials and burdens to bear, but with it all she is still engaged in good work, ready to assist her people in all the interests of the town.

A staunch member of the Methodist Church, a good Christian woman, ever willing to assist those in distress and need.

Mrs. Sutherland is a pleasing talker, and is always glad to greet her friends at her home on Starr Street, where she resides with her two accomplished granddaughters, Misses Annie and Hugh Cronkey.

## THE DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY

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*By* MRS. W. B. HOPKINS

Daughters of the Confederacy! What nobler title could a woman wear, what prouder heritage could be handed down than this name first bestowed upon the fair young girl, Winnie Davis, and now claimed by more than one hundred thousand women. Pledging themselves to keep alive the memory of those immortal heroes, whose deeds of valor for their beloved land stand out as the most brilliant in the pages of history; to teach their children and their children's children loyalty to the hallowed traditions of the Southland; to cherish its history and to love and honor its brave defenders, the women of the South, in 1894, banded themselves together in an organization known as the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

From its inception, the avowed purpose of this organization has been, not to foster sectional hate, but to bring about a better understanding of those sacred principles for which the men of the South gave their lives, to "set a watch lest the old traditions fail."

The women of Corpus Christi, not a few of whom were born in the stormy days of war, and rocked in the cradle of the Confederacy, formed in 1912 the Corpus Christi Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Present at the temporary organization, and lending much aid and inspiration, was Mrs. Mabel Mussey Bates, and to her the Chapter shall ever feel very grateful. At a later meeting a permanent organization was effected, and the following officers elected:

President, Mrs. H. H. Craig.  
First Vice President, Mrs. D. McNeil Turner.  
Second Vice President, Mrs. Bettie T. Robertson.  
Third Vice President, Mrs. Clay Roberts.

Fourth Vice President, Mrs. George French.  
Treasurer, Mrs. R. L. Garrett.  
Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Gordon Boone.  
Recording Secretary, Mrs. O. M. Suttle.  
Historian, Mrs. Mary Sutherland.  
Registrar, Miss Mary Woods.

The charter contained the names of twenty-two members: Mrs. Mary Sutherland, Mrs. George French, Mrs. H. H. Craig, Mrs. D. McNeil Turner, Mrs. A. C. Fowler, Miss Mary Woods, Miss Ella Thomas, Mrs. O. F. Martin, Miss Mary Carroll, Mrs. E. A. Born, Mrs. H. R. Sutherland, Mrs. W. B. Hopkins, Mrs. S. J. Sorrell, Mrs. W. A. Connor, Mrs. C. H. Steele, Miss Annie S. Cronkey, Miss Hugh S. Cronkey, Mrs. Mayfield Wilkinson, Mrs. Charles Carroll, Mrs. Clay Roberts, Mrs. Gordon Boone, Miss Mary Lee Thompson.

From the date of its organization, the Corpus Christi Chapter has never failed to hold the interest of its members. To keep alive the memories of the old South, the programs have featured songs and poems that brought back thoughts of days before the War. By observing, with open meetings, special days of historic import, by the rendition of splendid literary, musical and patriotic programs, a deep interest has been maintained.

But by no means have other than social features been neglected, for the beneficencies of the Chapter have been generous and widespread.

Deploring the fact that Southwest Texas had done so little in the way of erecting monuments to the heroes of the "lost cause," the women of the Corpus Christi Chapter determined that some day they would rear a fitting memorial to the noble Texans who gave their lives for the South. The consummation of this idea was the crowning feature of Mrs. H. H. Craig's tenure of office. With a membership of only fifty women, the undertaking seemed a stupendous one, but what was lacking in numbers, they made up in zeal and loyalty. That this memorial should take the form of a public drinking fountain was the unanimous decision of the Chapter and Pompeo Coppini, noted

sculptor of San Antonio, was called to consult with them. Inspired during his visit here by the natural beauties of Corpus Christi, the result was a conception radically different from the stereotyped memorial. Corpus Christi should be represented as a beautiful maiden, and on either side of her were Father Neptune and Mother Earth placing a crown upon her head, while at her feet were trophies of sea and land, and in the background figures symbolical of the riches and resources of our land. These figures, heroic in size, were to stand in high relief against a semi-circular background. On his return to San Antonio Mr. Coppini embodied his ideas in clay and a committee consisting of Mesdames D. McNeil Turner and E. A. Born was sent to San Antonio, there to be assisted by Mr. Atlee Ayers in passing judgment upon the design. They were delighted and accepted the model at once. Mr. Coppini's proposition was that he would make the Chapter a gift of his labor, charging only for the materials used and for the workmen who cast the model and for the expense of setting it up, and for this one thousand dollars must be paid.

Aided by a very forceful trio of women as finance committee, Mesdames H. D. McDonald, Sam Rankin and S. A. Early, the work of raising the necessary funds was accomplished in a very short time, despite the stringency in the money market, occasioned by the outbreak of the European War. Every means of turning an honest penny was employed, rummage sales yielded their quota, moving pictures were staged, waffle suppers enticed the dollars from unwilling pockets, and the women even acted as clerks on a special sales day of a furniture store in return for a percentage of the profits. The Corpus Christi Daily Caller generously placed at the disposal of the Chapter its entire outfit and working force in getting out a U. D. C. Special, and the results surpassed the most sanguine expectations. Generous contributions from members of the Chapter, the Rotary Club, the various banks and the citizens at large swelled the sum to still larger proportions, and what had loomed as a stupendous undertaking was soon an accomplished fact.

The courteous and progressive Mayor of Corpus

Christi, Hon. Roy Miller, in consulting with a committee from the Chapter regarding the placing of the fountain, found that by slightly altering the plans for bluff beautification, just about to be carried out, the fountain could be given a conspicuous place at the convergence of the two great granite steps on the side of the bluff back of the City Hall. The location serves to show to greater advantage the beauty of the sculptured figures and makes the Confederate memorial observed of all observers.

With the completion of the fountain, Mrs. Craig, whose health and personal bereavement had made the position of President an onerous one, resigned and the following corps of new officers were chosen, May, 1915:

President, Mrs. H. D. McDonald.  
First Vice President, Mrs. Sam Rankin.  
Second Vice President, Mrs. Charles Carroll.  
Third Vice President, Miss Mary Lee Thompson.  
Fourth Vice President, Mrs. Gordon Boone.  
Treasurer, Mrs. S. A. Early.  
Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. B. T. Robertson.  
Recording Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Hopkins.  
Registrar, Miss Mary Woods.  
Historian, Mrs. Mary Sutherland.

With characteristic energy, the newly elected President has launched an undertaking that promises to bring honors as well as financial gains to the Chapter. Mrs. Mary Sutherland, widow of a Confederate veteran, and herself an almost life-long resident of this city, a woman noted for her intense loyalty and devotion to the "lost cause," has for years been collecting data for a history of Corpus Christi, a collection of unique information from a mind well stored with facts that have long been forgotten by the majority of Corpus Christians. With no thought of self-aggrandizement, and desiring only that her beloved Chapter might be the beneficiary, Mrs. Sutherland has given this work in its entirety to the Corpus Christi Chapter. The President, recognizing in it a work of rare interest to all who have ever lived in this beautiful city, at once pushed forward the publication of the book, and the Corpus Christi

Chapter is proud to give it to the public, and proud of the grand woman whose life work it has been.

This brief history of the Corpus Christi Chapter would be incomplete without a passing mention of the two members claimed by death, and whose loss has been so keenly felt, Mrs. Mary Chatfield Watts and Mrs. Annie Pope Connor. In the death of Captain J. B. Thompson, Mr. H. H. Craig and Mr. M. T. Gaffney, the Chapter has sustained the loss of true and loyal friends.

Taken all in all, the Corpus Christi Chapter has every right to feel proud of its achievements, and using the past as an augury of the future, enters into a new year with serene and hopeful hearts.



## THE CORPUS CHRISTI OF TODAY



In closing *The Story of Corpus Christi*, the Corpus Christi of today, will be very briefly reviewed, the growth of the city during the past ten years going forward by such leaps and bounds until today, with the single exception of Galveston, it is the largest city on the Texas Coast and is growing more rapidly than any other in South Texas.

In proportion to population more improvements that make for successful city building have been secured within the past ten years than in any city in the Southland, and the increase in population and business and property values has kept pace with the improvements.

The present population is eighteen thousand, based on a most conservative estimate. The Federal census in 1910 was for less than ten thousand.

Ten miles of streets have been paved with bitulithic pavement during the past three years. A causeway spanning Nueces Bay, connecting the mainlands of Nueces and San Patricio County, has been completed at the expense of Nueces County, opening up for Corpus Christi a vast retail trade from San Patricio, Bee, Aransas and other nearby counties.

A beautiful five-story Court House, costing a quarter million dollars, has been erected. A portion of the bluff has been improved with every prospect that 1916 will witness a completion of the work.

A municipal wharf, costing fifty thousand dollars, has been constructed. Buildings erected in the city during 1915

cost one-half million dollars. The Government is now building, at a cost of one hundred and thirty thousand dollars, a magnificent three-story Federal Building at the corner of Lower North Broadway and Starr Streets.

Two beautiful and modern hotels have been erected within the past few years, The Nueces and The Corpus Beach, the first a six-story structure with two hundred and twenty guest rooms, and the latter a four-story building with one hundred and thirty guest rooms. Both are fireproof and are modern in every respect. In addition Corpus Christi has many other first-class hotels, including The State, a four-story building, and The Seaside and Horne, both having been established for many years and having an enviable record with the traveling public.

Corpus Christi recently has secured a modern city water supply, having voted three hundred thousand dollars in bonds, that was sufficient to so improve the municipal plant that it will provide sufficient water for a city twice as large as the Corpus Christi of today.

In many other ways the progress of the city has developed within the past few years, during 1914 and 1915 alone six hundred private dwellings being erected within the city limits and adjoining additions.

Men, women and children of the city have a most optimistic faith in the future of Corpus Christi and work untiringly for the progress of the city so that the day may not be far distant when Corpus Christi is not only the largest city in South Texas but also the best place in which to live throughout all the Southland.







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