

BOSQUE

LETTER

November 2011

In Memoriam of Elizabeth Torrence

Elizabeth Tomasine Torrence began life at Highview , the home of her maternal grandparents, on December 7, 1918. She left this life in Clifton on Saturday, September 3. She was born to Luddie Toland (Dick) and Iva Sedberry Pool Torrence. She shared a happy life with her parents and grandparents Tom M and Mellie Cutbirth Pool. Elizabeth was a fourth generation Texan, her family going back to the Red River area around 1820. Her grandfather was John C Pool, who served in the Texas Rangers under George B Erath and was one of the earliest white men to explore and survey Bosque Territory. She was a proud member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

She graduated as Valedictorian of Clifton High School in 1937, and went on to receive her BA and MA at the University of Texas. During the war years she interrupted her college to return to Bosque County. During this time she worked as a clerk in the office of County Clerk OA Hardwick. She was a certified observer of Aircraft Warning Station Irwin 47 located at Highview.

After graduation she taught at Brownsville, and then worked for the Federal Airways Administration. Elizabeth began a twenty-nine year teaching career in the Dallas School District in 1951. After her retirement in 1980 she returned to Bosque County to care for her mother. Iva and Elizabeth traveled to Hawaii and the Caribbean and several US sites.

Elizabeth became active in many civic organizations, including Texas Retired Teachers Association and the Bosque County Retired Teachers Association where she served as President, and the Clifton Civic Improvement Society. In 1988 she was appointed by Governor Ann Richards to serve on the Texas Historical Records Advisory Board.

Bosque County history was a passion for Elizabeth. She became involved with the Bosque County Historical Commission in 1981. In 1982 she and Dula Bonds began searching for a home for all the historical material the Commission had gathered over the years. They both realized these valuable documents and photographs needed a safe storage place, so they petitioned County Judge Chock Word. He allotted a space on the third floor of the courthouse; there was no elevator, no heat or air, the paint was peeling, but they gladly accepted and the Bosque County Collection was born. In 1990 Elizabeth realized a dream of a more permanent home for the history collections, when with money from the sale of *Bosque County: Land and People* the Lumpkin Building was bought by the historical commission. Many people worked diligently to raise money for the renovation of the Lumpkin Building, but most would agree it was the driving energy and determination of Elizabeth that kept that

dream going until it became a reality in 2001. Elizabeth retired from the Bosque County Historical Commission and the Bosque County Collection in 2004.

Some of the awards she has received for her tireless volunteer work and her love of Bosque County include: The Texas Award, George Christian Outstanding Volunteer, Distinguished Service Award, from the Texas Historical Commission; The Yellow Rose of Texas Award given by Governor Mark White; The Election Oak Award; Twentieth Century Teacher Award; Outstanding Citizenship Award from the Sons of the American Revolution; and Historian Emeritus of the BCHC. In 2009 Elizabeth was awarded the Ruth Lester Lifetime Achievement Award, the highest honor awarded by the Texas Historical Commission. She contributed historical articles to the local papers for twenty five years.

She was preceded in death by her father, mother and a sister, Marilyn Lund. Her survivors are a brother-in-law, Kenneth Lund of Washington, a nephew Kris Lund and his wife Chris of Alaska and a niece Karen and her husband James Lee of Washington.

Hardships of Bosque County During the War Between the States

Government, Security and Financial

Page 122 of Vol A Commissioner's Court Minute Book:

*Whereas the Confederate States of America is now being invaded by a powerful enemy the United States, and the State of Texas being a member of the Confederacy, and our County is likely to be invaded by the enemy as well as by the Indians on our border and we the County Court of Bosque County deem it necessary to make every preparation for our safety and to be ready to meet and repel the enemy, do order and appoint BF Neely in precinct No 1 to inspect and examine all the firearms in said precinct fit for ready service and all the arms in his precinct not fit for service and number them in classes No 1,2,3, and it is ordered that M Maroney be and he is hereby appointed to inspect and examine the firearms in accordance with the above order in precinct No 3 and it is ordered that James H Mabray be appointed to examine and report all the firearms in accordance with the above order in precinct 4 and it is ordered that Henry Powell be and he is hereby appointed to examine and inspect all the firearms in precinct 2 and it is further ordered that the above named persons report the same to the county court so soon as practicable. Approved the 19th day of August
AD 1861*

Wm R Sedberry Chief Justice B Co

News didn't travel quickly during these times, so the county court was not sure what to expect when the war started. There had been talk that the Yankees might take Galveston and come up the Brazos all the way to Waco, which was feasible at certain times of the year. There was also the threat of Comanche raids. If the few men in the county were gone fighting in the war, the Comanche would take advantage of that fact. Bosque County Court realized these possibilities and began preparations for any event. Public safety and well being was foremost on their minds, which helped calm public

concerns. A Safety Committee was formed to oversee needs of soldiers and their families and ensure the security of the citizens.

Taken from Early History of Bosque County by Hugh and Calvin Cureton, page 16 & 17

These lines were taken from the original minutes of the safety committee by the Cureton Brothers, who had the document in their possession: "the greatest enthusiasm prevailed and every patriotic sentiment was eagerly applauded; the Honorable W.R. Sedberry was called to the chair, W.T. Kemp was appointed Secretary. The Rev. John Abney stated the object of the meeting, and John Abney, Sam Barnes, J.K. Helton, Jerry Odle, Jack Smith and James Lane were appointed a committee on resolutions, which committee submitted their report in the following language: Whereas the Southern Confederacy is having an unnatural curse and sanguinary war waged against it by Abraham Lincoln and his abolition hordes, whereby our lives, liberties and fortunes are being impoverished, and our soil is being desecrated by the vandal tread of our Yankee enemies making it imperative that a large share of our best citizens go to the seat of war to meet and drive back the invading foe and by their valor achieve our independence; and whereas there are we that believe in our midst persons hostile to our institutions, consequently enemies to our country, and its cause; besides characters who have no love of country, and who know not the meaning of patriotism, but who will take advantage of the absence of our good citizens to depredate upon their property, thereby showing themselves clerally as great enemies to our country and its cause as an abolitionist." "should any man now living in our midst, and who has been or who may hereafter be guilty of using language derogatory of the Southern Confederacy or its cause, or by any act giving evidence that he is unfriendly to the Confederate Government, that the committee test him by his being required to show his fidelity to our government and cause by enlisting in the army of the Southern Confederacy; and if he refuses, give him a free pass to leave for Lincoln Government; and if he refuses to do either, he shall be regarded and treated as an alien enemy and as a spy for which he shall be executed by the committee."

There were a few Unionists in Bosque County, but because of the strong warning from the Safety Committee, they must have kept quiet. On page Page 25, date June 17th 1861 of the Election record book the following is recorded:

For the election of the following named county officers to fill the vacancies occassioned by refusing to take the oath of support the southern confederacy in obedience to an order of the late state constitution

Justice of the Peace 1

Justice of the Peace 2

Constable Precinct 1

Justice of the Peace 4

Constable Precinct 4

Some of these men may have simply honored Sam Houston. Sam Houston refused to sign the oath, claiming it would break his heart to see Texas leave the Union. He did honor the election results that showed the majority of Texas men wished to join the Confederacy.

This was written by Jack Cureton, former County Judge:

In the early 1860's shortly after Texas had seceded from the Union and joined the Confederacy, three men were found hanging from a very large Live Oak tree just north of the town of Meridian. The exact location is in the Main Street Park addition between Main and Erath streets just east of the H.M. Jones, Jr. home. Of course that area is now part of the City of Meridian. The three victims were thought to be Yankee sympathizers. Apparently no one was ever charged with the act and probably

no investigation was made in view of the heated situation and readings of the time. My father H.D. Cureton, was not born until 1877 but had learned of the event, and shortly after he started practicing in Meridian in 1900, had occasion to discuss it with Mr. Neeley a pioneer of and a carpenter and builder here at the time. Mr. Neeley was employed by the county judge, to cut the three men down and bury them. He told my father that he did not go at once, to view the men but built their boxes as coffins and took them by wagon to the scene; after he cut them down he discovered that one of the men was well over six feet tall and too long for the box he had built. He solved the problem by knocking out the end of the end of the box and leaving the man with his feet sticking out. They were buried in the old part of the Meridian Cemetery in unmarked graves.

Commissioner Court Minutes Pg 149 March 1862

Ordered by the county court that the following named persons be appointed to visit each mans house in his beat and ascertain the number of arms pistols and other firearms out of repair and request the persons having such arms to bring them to the town of Meridian and deposit them with the county clerk as soon as practicable and also the number of men able to bare arms in defense of his country who are not now enlisted in the war also the number of fire arms in good condition, the amount of powder, led, shot and caps in the possession of each person. Ordered that H.A. Brown be appointed in beat 1 and J.C. Roberts in beat 2 and C.A. Spivey in beat 3 and J.P. Locker in beat 4. And it is ordered that said men make a report to this court in April the first thereof

Commissioners Court Minutes Pg 150

Ordered by the court that all persons in the court are required to bring guns or gun barrels out of repair be and they are hereby requested to bring them to Meridian and deliver them to J.H. Johnson and he is authorized to fix the price for the same and all persons having such guns or gun barrels will be paid for the same by the county, (and the guns were to be handed over to a committee for safe keeping and disposed of as they think best for defensive purposes).

Mr. Johnson was blacksmith in Meridian, and later drew a draft from commissioners for \$27.25 for repairs.

T.C. Alexander appointed agent to purchase 50 pounds powder , 2 bags buckshot and caps,(ammunition) for \$300.00 to be placed with the Safety Committee.

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Ordered by the County Court that one hundred dollars be and is hereby appropriated for the purposes of purchasing clothing, camp equipage etc for such soldiers as are now about to volunteer and engage in the service of the Confederate Army. And it is further ordered by the court that JD Alexander (District Clerk) be and he is hereby appointed Quarter Master for the purpose of purchasing and distributing the clothing and armory to the volunteers and he is hereby required by the court to procure a bill of goods which he purchases from merchants and forward the same to the clerk of the court as vouchers. Approved this 26th day of August 1861

Pg 145 Feb 1862 this was amended so each soldier who was deemed poor could get \$15 voucher, only after he volunteered and was sworn in. George Martin and Henry Fossett were appointed commissioners in charge of this, and then a vote was taken to raise taxes.

Pg 148 George Martin resigns as tax collector

Ordered by the County Court that Brigadier General J. S. Scofield be earnestly requested to furlough A.E. Everett now in the militia service of the state on account of the situation of his family, his wife being confined as we are informed by the physicians in the last stage of the consumption, having a large family of helpless children. The court therefore request the Brig. Gen to furlough A.E. Everett so that he may not be taken from his family in their present condition. And further requested of the Brigadier Gen that the following named persons who have petitioned to be exempted from militia duty be furloughed by the Brigadier Gen for the reasons set forth in their petitions-to wit, Sherod Townsend wagon maker at Meridian, Dr R.M. Barnes Physician at Kimball, Ancil Ascue on account of the helpless condition of his family- and Moses Isenhower a tanner-to give him time to take out his leather now in tan.
page 194 August 20th 1863 Ordered by the County Court that General J.W. Speight be and he is hereby earnestly requested to furlough M.F. Folowell a member of Capt J.R. Wallers Company, Col Hawpe's Regiment Texas Dismounted Calvary-the said Folowell being the only blacksmith in Bosque County working at his trade-and it being absolutely necessary to have a blacksmith-there being a great deal of public work to do as well as work for the farming community.

War taxes were added several times over the four year period of the war. Land was auctioned off by the county for unpaid taxes beginning in 1863. Fortunately most of this land was either unoccupied or unclaimed land grants from the Republic days. Mary Cole survey of 4248 acres was auctioned for \$18.00 and the Sarah Hensley survey of over 4800 acres was auctioned for \$24.00. As the war went on taxes were added per crop - cotton was taxed at .12 per pound, or per beef-four year old steer was taxed .03, and your business or trade was taxed. There was not much cash circulated and the county redeemed Confederate money for their own issued script. The beef market was just beginning to boom, which is the main reason Bosque County and Texas survived the horrible days after the war.

Indian Troubles

Raids in northern Bosque, Parker, Erath and Palo Pinto County were growing more frequent during the war. The Comanche knew that men were gone from home and tried to take advantage. The raids varied from stealing horses and other stock to killing settlers, burning homes and schools. It was widely reported that agents from the North encouraged the Indians to raid as much as possible. Texas Ranger units that had traditionally been patrolling and safe-guarding against Indian threats were forced to serve under the Confederate Army's command, as were local militias. In frontier counties such as Bosque this was a problem, since the Confederates could pull men from these units and use them in Louisiana or Galveston or anywhere, leaving their homes open for Indian attack.

Lowery Scrutchfield was a member of S.S. Totens Militia , and one of the best Indian scouts in the area. He and Captain Gullintine were sent by Major George B. Erath to track a particularly dangerous band of Comanche. It was November, 1864. They followed the Comanche south. When they returned with their report, Fossett's Frontier Battalion and S.S. Toten's Militia started on a trek southwest until they reached a spot just below Fort Phantom Hill. What followed is known as the Battle of Dove Creek. Henry Fossett was in charge of the Confederate Troops, S.S. Toten in charge of the Second Frontier District (which included Bosque County) and Jack Cureton of the First Frontier District. They caught up with the Indians in January, 1865 after mix ups about orders, record snow fall, some troops getting lost. There is much controversy over the events that led up to the horrible defeat.

By the time they found the Indians, the Comanche had taken shelter with a tribe of Kickapoo who were hunting buffalo. Their force was estimated at over six hundred, and the total combined forces of the Confederates and militia was about 380. The Kickapoo were nestled safely in and around the riverbed, with a high bank to their back. After fierce fighting in the foot deep snow for an entire day, at dark the forces remaining moved to safety. The dead were left on the battlefield. That evening as the men huddled around a small fire, it snowed another 12 inches. The pack train had not caught up yet, there was no food, no shelter, no blankets. They killed two horses to stave off hunger. Twenty two men were killed and nineteen were wounded. As Lt. Scrutchfield put it, "We got whapped" (L.H. Scrutchfield wrote a journal of the events from the first scouting trip through the time he arrived back to Meridian after the battle).

Bosque County dead: Captain Robert Samuel Barnes, James S. Mabray, A.E. Everett, N.H. Bible, S.M. Wray and J.D. Steene.

Wounded: Lt. J.C. Isaac, C. Warloupe, W.M. Snell, and W.E. Pearce

Texas surrendered at Galveston June 19, 1865. Judge J.K. Helton held the last Commissioner's Court under Confederate rule April 4, 1865 and the next Commissioner's Court was August 28, 1865. Court was now referred to as a police court, the previous elected judge and commissioners were replaced with probable Union sympathizers. IRS liens were slapped on people who were barely recovering from the last four years' war taxes and other loses of revenue. For almost two years until a new state constitution was ratified there was a breakdown of trust and public safety, and the police court ruled. Eventually, J.K. Helton was re-elected as county judge and confidence was restored. As families were reunited after the war they slowly worked their way back to stability and a more normal way of life. Texas had fared better than most of the south, and there was still an abundance of cheap land. WWWL (wood, water, wildlife and land) attracted settlers into Bosque County.

List of those who lost their life during the War Between the States:

Arkansas Campaign:

Allison Nelson William Rush Sedberry

Battle of Dove Creek:

Robert Samuel Barnes

James Mabray AE Everett

John B Steene SM Wray

NH Bible

David Helton - Louisiana

Wood Hanna - Gettysburg

During the war the Confederate Army lost almost as many men to measles, typhoid and pneumonia as to battle wounds.

Personal Hardships

Separation from loved ones was difficult, as proven by these letters.

MSS173 William Howell (transcribed)

North Virginia Camp near Winchester Oct 24 1862

Deare father, it is through the kind mercies of our great creator that I am spared up to the present

time and blessed with a reasonable portion of health. And I hope when these few lines comes to hand that you will be enjoying the same blessings. I received your kind letter which gave me great satisfaction to here that you was all well and doing well. I would like to be with you and eat some bacon and colards with you for I haven had any thing but beef and bread since I left Lynchburg. And you know that is pretty hard living. I would be glad to fair as well as my dog for I know that he gets plenty scraps of corn bread to eat.My regimen is very badly cut up but they are in good heart. They have bin in two fights here , one at Manassas. They fought brave by. And the Wilderness fight was the hardest fight that ever was fought...(he then goes on to list some of the young men who were wounded or died.)

MSS159 Sarah & John Wisdom (transcribed)

March 7, 1863 Choctaw Nation., Camp Kroniato

Dear Wife, It is with pleasure that I seat myself to write you a few lines in answer of yours bearing date January 29 the which give me great pleasure to here from you. I received two letters to day one bearing date February 11. I was glad to here you was all well and your letters found me well. I have nothing of much interest to write at this time. The health of our regiment is very good at this time. We had a hard time coming through from Fort Smith an half rashings and hevey days marches. It snowed on us and we lost a good meny animals. I never want to take another such march while I live. This war e is an awful ware. Soldiers has to suffer more than they are able to beare it looks to me so I think it has got be a war of speculation more than anything else. There is men trying to swindle us out of our rashings to make a few dollars. We get tolerable plenty of flower some sugar and molasses part of the time, no salt, a little bacon and some poor beef. They have past a law I think to swindel the soldiers. They stopped the clothing money they will furnish the clothing....at nine dollars a pare of pants and it has to come out of our wages.Your loveing and sincere husband untell death, John Wisdom

August 21, 1862 (transcribed)

My loving husband,

I once more take pen in hand to write you a few lines to let you know that me with our little children are all well at present. Hopen when these few lines comes to hand they will find you an the rest of the boys enjoying the same Gods blessen. I received your kind letter last mail...which gave me great sattisfaction to hear from you especily to hear that you was all well. I am in hopes that you will have better health now as it is turning a little cool.

I have nothing mutch of intrust to write to you for there is nothing interesting to me these days for their is no hopes of peace. Eli and Min Ledenham is gone back and Oahed is ready to go. He is going with Charley Smith in the Calvery Company. Men is getting verry scarce here. Their has fifty enlisted out of this heat and we could spare three or four more. George Stean has just arived from Mo. He says they are cut down since the Richmond fight. He says they are talking of drafting their and he thinks when they begin drafting their will be a heap of men come out on our side. Joseph will start for camps next weeke. His mother and one of his siters is out now to see him. There is another young colt. Father and George has started to day after them horses that's gone.

Our little babe has clam up and staing by my side and Frances and Jimmy says they wish you would come back home but oh my dear if a thousan wishes would have brought you back you would have been home long ago. Fathers family is all well and sends their best love and respects to you all. Now I want you to write to me evry chance you have for it affords me a great deal of pleasure to hear from you if I am deprived of see in you. Give my love and respects to my brother, cousin and all enquiring friends and reserve a good portion for your self. So nothing more at present but still

remain your loving wife till death.

Sarah E Wisdon

My pen is bad, my ink is pale, my love to you shall never fail.

May 4th, 1862 Camp Johnson

Dear Mother,

I improve this opportunity in writing to you to let you know that I am well and am pleased with the company. I have nothing of importance to write to you but I write to let you know that I have not forgotten you. We here the yanks have got New Orleans and it is rumored that they have got Memphis to.

We are herre in camps one mile east of Jefferson rite on the river where you can see boats plenty and I think it will be a very sickly place if we stay here any length of time but we do not know how long we will stay here. The company will organize on the thirteenth and we will soon know how long we will stay here.

I sent you thirty five dollars by Cpt McKight and I sent you some kneedles and pins in HR Swann's trunk and when you get this we want you to write whether you all got the things we sent or not.

We have plenty to eat here such as flower, bacon, molasses, sugar and we have coffe yet but that is not very plenty. We got here the tenth day after we started from home and we still have rain by the quantity. The tents are very good ones and keep us dry so we do very well now.

I sent you my likeness or ___type is the proper name of it I believe along with my letter and I want you to write to me as soon as you get this and let me know that you have got it. So I will close my letter.

Remaining your son until death,

E. Dansby

Family Histories-"Letters of James and Patience Black While Separated by the Civil War 1862-1865"

Galveston Jan 8th, 1863

Dear Wife:

I am once more seated to write you though I have nothing very special to write. I am very anxious to hear from you. I haven't received but one precious letter from you in three long weeks (dreadful long time). Our regiment has been moved to the city since I wrote you last. I expect we are permanently located here unless the Federals wipe us out which they are not likely to do. In a few days we will have this place well fortified. There are several hundred Negroes here at work building new fortifications and repairing those already built. Company "II" has charge of three pieces of light artillery. We have them in the second story of a large brick building near the wharf. Our position commands the whole harbor. Our boys are not well pleased with their position; they say they would rather fight an open field fight as to be cooped up in a house. As regards myself it matters not where they place me. I don't expect to do any big fighting anywhere. I could give you a full description of our fights but don't think it necessary as you will see it in the papers long before this reaches you; however I will tell you something of my part of it. A portion of our company, myself included, was detached to company "A" and stationed at Fort Point two and a half miles east of the city with one thirty-two pounder. We had nothing but a marsh to plant our guns on. After a few shots it buried in the mud until it was unmanageable. About that time two Federal gun boats opened fire on us. They shot shells entirely. When our commander found his gun was unmanageable he ordered a retreat to the city. Our captain told his men to scatter and take care of themselves as best they could. Myself and one more of our company stayed at the gun until all others had gone. We then retreated very

leisurely watching the flash of the enemy guns. When we would see the smoke of their cannons we would fall to the ground till the shell would pass over or explode. Many shells exploded within a few feet of us but none of us were struck. When we got to the city our forces there had captured four vessels with all cargo; also a portion of the forty second Massachusetts Regt. That were stationed on the wharf. I don't know exactly how many prisoners we took but suppose there to be between four and five hundred. We got twelve pieces of artillery, also a number of small arms. Our loss is estimated at thirty-five killed and seventy-five wounded. The Federal loss not known. The boys are all gone out to see a man shot as a spy. He deserted from our Regt. Last fall and came a few nights ago as a spy and was recognized and captured. He is to be shot today at twelve o'clock. Patie, my chances for coming home is gloomy at present. There are no furloughs or leave of absence granted to anyone, not even for one day. I wanted to go to Houston to get some things but I can't do so now. I do not know when I will have a chance to get those things for you. My loved one when shall I see you and that rowdy boy? I fear not before spring. If I should not come before that time wait my coming with patience and I will repay you with kisses when I come.

When you write again direct your letters to Galveston. We have a post office here now. I will have to close as I am cook today and it is near dinner time. () Jim Craine is well.

My health is excellent. My love to all the family and friends. Write often though I know you do.

My darling Patie take very special care of yourself and baby for my sake. I will write again soon. Good bye.

Jas. Black

Volume F page 349, Deed records (transcribed)

The State of Texas

County of Bosque

This indenture made an entered into on this the 25th day September AD 1865 by and between Joseph W Smith and Elizabeth Smith his wife both of the county of Bosque and State of Texas, Witnesseth that whereas Eli Bailey of Anderson County State of Texas in October AD 1862 gave to the said Elizabeth Smith, his daughter, six thousand dollars in cash and the same used by the said Joseph W Smith in his business in the payment of his debts, and whereas I the said J W was at the opening of the war between the Confederate States and the United States indebted to Northern merchants in the sum of some forty thousand dollars and I have paid off that amount to the Confederate States government about forty thousand dollars and whereas I have since the opening of the war laid out the amount of sixteen thousand dollars hundred and fifty dollars in Negroes and whereas also said Negroes so bought by me with other Negroes bought before the war have all been set free and whereas I believe it to be just and right that said six thousand dollars or its equivalent should be paid my said wife and whereas it has not been my fault that my property has been taken from me but it has all happened from the result of the terrible civil war through which we have past-Now in consideration of said six thousand dollars and the premises aforesaid I the said J W do by these presents sell and convey to said Elizabeth the following described property (viz) The homestead upon which we now live lying in Bosque County on Bosque River containing four hundred and sixty five acres together with all and singular the improvements and appurtenances there into belonging for the sum of twenty five hundred dollars. Also sixty two head of stock & work horses, (sixty stock and two work horses) at the sum of thirty three dollars per head making two thousand and forty six dollars. Also seven head of mules at sixty dollars a head making four hundred and twenty dollars. Also one hundred head of hogs at one dollar and fifty cents per head making one hundred and fifty dollars. Also two wagons one at one hundred and one at two hundred dollars making three hundred

dollars. Also eighty five head of stock cattle at four dollars a head making four hundred and twenty dollars. Also seven yoke of oxen at forty dollars per yoke making two hundred forty dollars, making in the aggregate the sum of five thousand nine hundred and ninety six dollars. And I the said JW do covenant with the said Elizabeth and her heirs to forever warrant and defend the title to said property free from all claims of all persons claiming or to claim either law or equity.

Given under my hand and scrawl for seal this day and the date above written

JW Smith

Freedmen

Former slaves found themselves in a quandary: what happened now? Some chose to stay with the same families. Others went in hope of a new beginning in the North. Some began searching for family members that had been separated. The Freedman's Bureau was formed by Abraham Lincoln to be an aid during the transition from slavery to freedom. It was passed on March 3, 1865 by Congress to aid former slaves through legal, food, and housing oversight; education, health care, and employment contracts with private landowners. The majority of local Bureau agents were hindered in carrying out their duties by the opposition of former Confederates, the lack of a military presence to enforce their authority, and an excessive amount of paperwork. Phillip Howard was the Freedman agent in Bosque County, and he stressed in his reports how important it was for him to remain anonymous for fear of 'getting hung', although his family reports that his Union sympathies during the war were well known.

Dr. Sadler moved to Bosque County after the war, buying land east of Valley Mills. As a slave, James B. Sadler had always attended church services with the Doctor. However, now there was a move for separation in the Presbyterian Church and Dr Sadler encouraged his ex-slave to form his own church. This was the beginning of what was known as "The Colony" located on Rock Springs. It was a haven for freedmen. Reverend Sadler oversaw the building of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in the colony, along with a Masonic Lodge, a school and a cemetery. An annual reunion is held at Rock Springs in honor of Reverend Sadler.

Leaders and Defenders

William Rush Sedberry served as the second county judge for Bosque County, elected in 1858 and served until 1862. As county judge he led the formation of the Bosque County Safety Committee, which acted as overseer for food and clothing furnished to volunteers and the welfare of their families, and was in charge of the county arsenal. He was elected to the State Legislature in 1862. He resigned from the Legislature a few months later and joined the 15th Regiment Infantry Texas, commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant, where he fought in several battles. He lost his life on the battlefield January 1, 1863 and is buried in Little Rock, Arkansas. Mr. Sedberry was not a Union sympathizer, as is implied in *Bosque Territory*, page 90 "opposed or lukewarm in their attitude toward secession in the spring of 1861. This small group provided the basis of Union sentiment in Bosque County."

Allison Nelson was the ninth mayor of Atlanta, Georgia. Captain Nelson served during the Mexican-American War in the Kennesaw Rangers. He left for Kansas during the border disputes, then moved to Meridian, where he was involved with Indian affairs, serving under Lawrence Ross and in 1860 was elected to the state legislature. He served as a brigadier general in the Confederate army until he took sick in September 1862 and died a month later. He was buried in Little Rock Arkansas. The Historical Marker in front of the courthouse was placed in honor of Mr Nelson.

Robert Samuel Barnes came to Texas just in time to enlist in the Republican Army, and fought in the Battle of Bexar, where his commander Ben Milam was killed. He then ranged under Capt Barron and for several years with George Erath and served as a carrier for him 1845-50. He also served under Sul Ross for two enlistments and then served as guide for US Dragoons at Fort Graham. He settled along the Brazos and Steele Creek, across from Fort Graham. His home was one of the first election precincts, and he served as commissioner and Justice of the Peace. At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted in the 10th Texas Regiment. He was wounded and sent home to recover. He was typical of the men of those days, always ready to fight for a cause. Sam Barnes is buried near the monument of the Battle of Dove Creek, where he died in the tragic Indian fight.

James H Mabray – not much is known about James, the brother of Jasper Newton Mabray. When he and Jasper first came to Texas they both tried to enlist in the Indian Wars, but they were both underage. However, they were used to move and hold horses during the campaigns. The Mabray family moved to Bosque Territory around 1850. The elder Mabrays are buried at Liberty Hill, which is somewhere near the Valley Mills Cemetery. James was seriously wounded, and the other men fashioned a pole gurney tied behind a horse; however James died on the harrowing trip back and is buried at Fort Concho.

A E Everett – Cousin to Pleasant Haney Everett, they both fought during the Battle of Dove Creek. When an Indian shot AE, Plez in turn shot the Indian. It is sad to note that A.E. Everett was one of the casualties. Earlier the Commissioner's had requested that he be furloughed because of the death of his wife. After he came home and settled his affairs and made sure his children were all seen to, he rejoined his militia unit. He died in The Battle of Dove Creek and is buried there.

John B Steen – Settled in the Steele Creek area, is buried at Dove Creek

Samuel Fossett - Captain State Troops, Bosque County, enlisted in Hood's Brigade, wounded at Gaines Mill, Gettysburg and the Wilderness; served as leader for Bosque County Ex-Confederate Soldiers

Henry Fossett- Interim County Judge in charge of Confederate Frontier Brigade, Battle of Dove Creek

J. K. Helton took over as county judge after the resignation of W.R. Sedberry and served until 1882, except for two years of Federal Police Rule. He served his county well, holding it together through some very difficult and uncertain days of war and Reconstruction. He was elected to State Legislature in 1877 and served one term.

He came to Bosque County with his in-laws, the Mabrays, around 1850.

J.K. Helton had two sons who served during the war. James E. served under Lt W. R. Sedberry in the 15th Regiment, and David died from wounds in a battle in Louisiana. His brother-in-law, James Mabray, died of wounds at Dove Creek.

Dr. Arthur R. Barry- Bosque County Judge turned down an offer of commission from the US Army, enlisted as a private in the Confederacy, later made rank and served as Chief Surgeon of Armistead's Brigade at Gettysburg.

Rufus Green Childress- Bosque County Judge fought with Texas Rangers under Capt Boggess Co B 3rd Texas Calvary, fought at Oak Hills, Elk Horn, Corinth, Thompson's Station, Yazoo City

Lowry H. Scrutchfield- First Bosque County Judge

Rangered with George B. Erath, studied the Lipan and Tonkawa tribes , became acquainted with the tracking and scouting skills and used widely by the Rangers and the Militia. He was one of the first to build a log cabin in Waco Village.

Fought at Battle of Dove Creek – Mr. Scrutchfield kept a detailed journal during the failed endeavor.

Captain J.J. Cureton and Col. James Buckner “Buck” Barry.

The Collection invites you to find out more by visiting and reading for yourself on the Civil War.

Special Thanks

The Bosque Collection and the Bosque County Historical Commission extends sincere thanks to the Bosque County Genealogical Society for their generous donation of \$300.00!

Donations: More papers of Judge Wilson Cowan; Bosque County Memories by J Mark Wallace; List of Confederate Veterans by Bosque County Museum; large steamer trunk that belonged to Elva Seidel, filled with Methodist Church records, old documents and photographs and other memorabilia; Memories of Lane’s Chapel Community by Joe Dale Reesing; a memorial donation in honor of Elizabeth Torrence by Allen and Betty Johannes

The Lumpkin Building has been the home to the Collection ten years, 2001 to 2011! Our mission is still ongoing and thanks to all our members for their continued support!

