

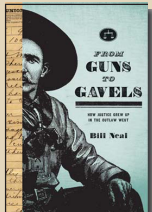


Issue 27, Fall 2008

The Texas Ranger Dispatch™

Magazine of the official Museum, Hall of Fame, and Repository of the Texas Rangers Law Enforcement Agency

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Thanks to Texas-Gal's Clipart for graphic on p.25



Galveston's Balinese Room

Born: 1942 – Died 2008



The Balinese Room was built on a pier stretching 600 feet into the Gulf of Mexico.

Robert Nieman ©

All photos courtesy of Robert Nieman unless otherwise noted.

For fifteen years, Galveston's Balinese Room was one of the most renowned and visited gambling casinos in the world. Opened in 1942 by the Maceo brothers, it flourished until 1957, when the Texas Rangers shut it down permanently as a gambling establishment.

In the times that followed, the building served as a restaurant, night club, and curiosity place for wide-eyed visitors. Mainly, though, it sat closed with its door locked—yes, it had only one door. For sixty-six years, it survived storms, neglect, and mismanagement but it could not survive Hurricane Ike. On September 19, 2008, the once mighty Balinese Room became only a memory.

It is a safe bet that gambling is as old as the history of man. Clearly, it would not be a stretch to say that ever since man has walked Galveston Island, someone has wagered on something.

As early as 1901, a Galveston grand jury investigated gambling on the island, with no results. The assistance of the Texas Rangers was requested, and legendary Captain John Hughes sent two of his men to work undercover and develop a case against the gamblers. Unfortunately, as would happen all too often in the future, the grand jury's investigation leaked, and the Rangers' work netted scant results.¹

¹ Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Texas Rangers and the Mexican Revolution: The Bloodiest Decade, 1910-1920* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 35-26.



During the ensuing decades, grand juries continued to sit, all with varying degrees of success—or lack thereof. It is important to understand two paramount motives that dominated all investigating bodies: politics and economics. Not surprisingly, these underlying forces still dominate today.

Although investigation into the history of Galveston is not the purpose of this paper. A brief look back is important, before we can truly understand the situation as it was in the 1950s, the era in which this study is focused.

Since shipwrecked Spanish sailor Cabeza de Vaca first stumbled his way across Galveston Island in 1528, that spot has earned several designations, each accurate in its own way. Inundated with rattlesnakes and water moccasins in its early days, the sandbar was called the Island of Snakes. Through the centuries, other equally appropriate names were applied: the Ellis Island of the Gulf, the Wall Street of the Southwest, and the Pearl of the Gulf, to name a few. But to the people of the first half of the twentieth century, two nicknames described Galveston best: Island Paradise or Sin City. It depended on one's point of view as to which was more suitable.

A killer hurricane of Biblical proportions wrecked the city in 1900 and left six to eight thousand dead. This, however, was not what destroyed the economy of Galveston. The dredging of Buffalo Bayou from the Gulf of Mexico to Houston spelled the island city's economic doom. As the ships disappeared from sight, so did the jobs, and the people left for Houston.

No one could have possibly realized that 1910 would be a turning point in Galveston's history. The catalyst was not a great event like the horrendous hurricane ten years earlier. Instead, it was the quiet arrival to the island of Rosario and Salvatore Maceo, two young men from Palermo, Sicily, via Leesville, Louisiana. There was no particular reason to notice the brothers; after all, they were simple barbers.

It would not be long, however, before all of Galveston would know the names of Papa Rose and Mr. Sam. The brothers first found work at a business named Capadona's. Shortly thereafter, Sam went to work at the newly opened Galvez Hotel while Rose started cutting hair at Murdock's Pier. As fate would have it, Murdock's was one of Ollie Quinn's favorite hangouts, and Rose quickly came under his influence.

Rose could not have picked a better mentor for his new career, even if he had selected one by hand. Two gangs controlled Galveston Island: Quinn, along with Dutch Voight, led the Beach Gang; one-armed George Mosey and the "Beau Brummel of Galveston," Johnny Jack Nounes, ruled the rival Downtown Gang.²

O. E. "Dutch" Voight became the father of modern-era gambling in Galveston when he started running organized poker games in 1910. He was only twenty-two years old when he went into partnership with the leader of the Beach Gang, Ollie Quinn. Soon Voight and Quinn were running games in clubs that the Beach Gang controlled all over the island. When the Volstead Act (prohibition) went into effect, Voight turned to bootlegging, and he found willing aides with Rose and Sam Maceo. So impressed was he with the brothers that he went into partnership with them around 1923.³ The Maceos were on their way, and they never looked back.

2 Frank Chalfant, "Galveston: Island of Chance" in *Treasures of Nostalgia* (Houston, Texas; 1997), 24-25.

3 Alan Waldman, "Isle of Illicit Pleasure: The Casinos" in *In Between*, August 1979, part III.



Balinese Ballroom

The ballroom and restaurant at the end of Ranger Run. When the Rangers entered the ballroom, the band would normally strike up, "The Eyes of Texas Are Upon You." The gambling room entrance was just to the right of the bright lights in the left center of the photo. It was also in this room where Captain Klevenhagen ordered his Rangers to sit down and watch the entertainment from opening to closing time.

Mr. Sam and Papa Rose were as different as daylight and dark. When depicting brothers or lifelong friends, movies and books have a set pattern that is seldom deviated from. One is always suave, sophisticated, outgoing, and polished. He loves the spotlight and the high profile and is always the brains and ambition of the operation. The other brother is the muscle. When dirty work is called for, this brother never hesitates to take action. These profiles would pretty well describe Sam and Rose, except for the brains and ambition part. Good-looking Sam was the perfect front man, while Rose provided the muscle, ambition, and the brains.

It did not take the Maceos long to move from minor members of the Beach Gang to a position of leadership. By the time prohibition started in the 1920s, the Maceos

were set to reap the profits, and by the Great Depression in the 1930s, their rule over the island was complete. They not only ruled the Beach Gang, but also ran the Downtown Gang off the island.

Rose and Sam started buying clubs from one end of the island to the other, either together or with partners. One of the first establishments was the Chop Suey Club, located at Seawall Boulevard and 21st Street. In 1926, they changed its name to Maceo's Grotto. It was a fine club, with gambling in the rear. Things were going along nicely until 1928, when it was closed for a short time for gambling violations. A storm severely damaged the club in 1932, and after remodeling, the Grotto was reopened and named the Sui Jen (pronounced *Swee Wren*). In 1942, it was remodeled yet again and christened by the name that would always be associated with Galveston—the Balinese Room.



Balinese Stage

Many great stars performed on this stage.

In 1926, the Maceos bought the Hollywood Dinner Club from Jackie Friedman, who had bought it from Ollie Quinn. This establishment was *the* place to go for first-class food, entertainment, and gambling. It was the pride and joy of Sam Maceo, and he spared no expense. Only the finest

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Some of the many stars who performed at the Balinese Room

Top row: The Marx Brothers, Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, the Three Stooges, Tony Bennett.
 Row 2: George Burns & Gracie Allen, Duke Ellington, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Guy Lombardo,
 Row 3: Gene Autry, Art Linkletter, Dorothy Lamour, Mel Tormé, Jayne Mansfield.

furniture and décor was good enough, and it was the first air-conditioned club known in the area. Sam was not about to degrade his establishment with anything less than the very best in big-name entertainment, either. He booked the finest acts in both the Hollywood and the Balinese Room. Jack Benny, Phil Harris and Alice Faye, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Jimmy Dorsey, Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians, Ted Mack, the Three Stooges, the Marx Brothers, Arthur Murray, Gene Autry, Fred Astaire, and Frank Sinatra were common sights at a Maceo club.

The Balinese Room and Hollywood Dinner Club were only a small part of the Maceo Empire. In time, the brothers would own outright or be partners in over sixty establishments in the Galveston vicinity. Their holdings in legitimate businesses and real estate were so great that the Galveston-Dickinson County line was often referred to as the “Maceo-Dickinson County line.” The island itself became known to many as the “Free State of Galveston.”

The Maceos were involved in practically every business imaginable, including gambling and illegal alcohol, but there was one enterprise that they stayed away from—prostitution. There were fifty whorehouses confined mainly to an area along Post Office Street, between 25th and 29th

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Maceo Family and Friends at the Balinese Room

The man seated at the head of the table at bottom left is Little Sammy Maceo (in profile), cousin to Rose and Sam Maceo. To his left, with their backs to the wall, are Frances Maceo (Rose's wife), Pearl Maceo, Joe Maceo, Katy Giliota Maceo, Katy Giliota Maceo, Unknown female (white hat), Deady Fertitta (wide, dark-brimmed hat), Olivia Gertrude Fertitta, Angela Maceo, and Kay Maceo (Angie Maceo's daughter). The man seated at the far end of the table with most of his face obscured is unknown. Standing in the back of the room are Santo Dispensa (left) and Joe Glorioso (right). To the right of Little Sammy Maceo, are Rose Maceo, Mr. Dispensa (Frances Maceo's father), Vic C. Maceo, Loranzy "Lorenzo" Grilliette, Unknown male, Frank Fertitta, Angie Maceo (Vincent Maceo's widow), and Vic A. Maceo (*aka* Gigilo). The bald man seated at the table in the right front of the photo is Christie Mitchell. *Photo courtesy of Assistant Chief, Captain Jim Miller, retired.*

Streets (known locally as the District). To say the world's oldest profession was a huge industry on the island would be an understatement. With over 1,000 working hookers,⁴ Galveston's ratio of 1 prostitute for every 62 citizens was one of the smallest in the country. In comparison, wild and woolly Chicago could only boast a fraction of that number: 430 to 1. Foreign countries could not even compete. In China, Shanghai's meager 130 to 1 ratio pales in comparison, while Paris, France, could only muster a measly 481 to 1.⁵ Galveston whole-heartedly subscribed to what early

4 The term *hooker* originated with the prostitutes who followed Union General John Hooker's army during the War Between the States.

5 Brady Mahaney, "Discovering Our History; The Maceo Empire" in *Bay Watcher*, July 28, 1994.



twentieth-century mayor of New Orleans Martin Behrman said about prostitution in the Crescent City: "You can make prostitution illegal in Louisiana, but you can't make it unpopular."⁶

When looked at closely, these seemingly stunning numbers should come as no surprise. As they did with gambling and bootleg whiskey, the city fathers wrapped prostitution in their protective arms. Most did not even bother being discrete; Police Commissioner Walter Johnston bragged that he was on the payroll of forty-six whorehouses.⁷ Even though the profits were huge, the Maceos never involved themselves in this enterprise. On the other hand, they made it abundantly clear to the whorehouse owners to stay out of gambling.

For four decades, the Maceos and their partners ruled Galveston and, in the process, reaped a king's ransom in profits. In that time, few people ever made any serious attempts to shut them down. Why would they? People, then as now, get whatever law enforcement they want, and the people of Galveston had no problems with gamblers, bootleggers, or prostitutes. There was a worldwide depression everywhere but in Galveston, where money flowed as freely as the ocean that lapped its shores.

Profits were so huge that northern mobsters were soon attracted. From New York, Albert Anastasia, the lord high executioner of Murder, Inc., delivered inquiries to the brothers. From Chicago, Al Capone sent Frank "the Enforcer" Nitti to query about becoming "partners" with the Maceos. Rose told both politely, but with no room for misunderstanding, "Thanks, but no thanks."⁸

At one time, twenty-five hundred islanders worked for the Maceo brothers. The two men ran clean games, and crime was virtually unheard of. In Galveston, it was said that no citizens bothered to lock their homes, and it was safe to walk any part of the city at any hour. Papa Rose had his Night Riders patrolling the county to insure it remained safe. It was said that the Maceo's bookkeeper Sam "Books" Serio often walked without the protection of a bodyguard from the Maceo's downtown headquarters at the Turf Club⁹ to the bank. He could be carrying a million dollars in cash in his briefcase, and no one ever dared to bother him.¹⁰

Prostitutes had their own part of the city on Post Office Street, and they were strictly forbidden in any Maceo establishment, as were loud drunks. To make sure these policies were strictly enforced, there were always plenty of beefy, tough-looking men conspicuously standing around, though they were seldom needed.¹¹

The brothers realized that no matter how clean their games or how safe the streets, they could only survive as long as the citizens wanted them to. They were also aware that one of the quickest ways to turn the citizens against them was for the people to start losing their hard-earned money. Therefore, the Maceos were inflexible when it came to not allowing locals to lose much in any of their establishments—except, of course, for the wealthiest of Galvestonians.

Sam knew every string to pull to make his brother and himself look their best. It was said that whenever he loaned money to anyone down and out on their luck, it was not unusual for him to

6 T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 131.

7 Mahaney, 3.

8 Waldman, part V.

9 Bank of America is now located at the site of the Turf Club.

10 Waldman, part IV.

11 Waldman, part IV.



Gambling Room #1 & #2

The Balinese Room, located 600 feet over the Gulf of Mexico, where millions of dollars passed around the gaming tables in this room.

pass along this advise when it came time for repayment: "Someday, when you run across somebody who is really in need or is sick, take the money (owed Maceo) and give him a helping hand." He made it a habit to escort big winners at his clubs to their hotels so they did not have to be worried about muggers.

Always the perfect public relations man, Sam was also known to send orphans to college. In the tradition (myth would be a better word) of Jesse James, he also prevented helpless widows from being evicted from their homes on more than one occasion. Once a year, he even paid the expenses of Monsignor O'Connell, the rector of St. Mary's, to visit his mother in Ireland.

Knowing that the locals would also like to hear some of the big-named entertainers but could not afford to attend his clubs, Sam often had stars like Frankie Laine and Phil Harris perform free concerts on the seawall. In 1947, after the terrible Texas City disaster in which the ship *Grand Camp* suddenly exploded and killed hundreds, he arranged an outdoor benefit for the beleaguered city with such names as Gene Autry, Frank Sinatra, Jack Benny, and Victor Borge performing.¹²

But make no mistake about it: if an iron fist was required, Papa Rose was always ready, willing, and able to provide it. When he found out that his wife had a boyfriend, the wife and boyfriend ended up flowing face down in Galveston Bay.

There was virtually none of the gangland shooting in Galveston that was prevalent in Chicago and New York. The Maceos allowed competition among small-time operators as long as they did not try to muscle in on the brothers. The only one who ever dared was one-armed George Musey, leader of the Downtown Gang. In 1935, that threat came to a sudden end when Musey stepped onto 24th Street and met a hail of gunfire. Never again did anyone defy the brothers' empire, and that included the law.

12 Mahaney, 3.

From time to time, local and state officials made token raids on the Galveston clubs and shut them down long enough for the newspapers to meet their late editions. Nothing ever transpired that was serious enough to interfere with business for more than a few hours. In twenty years, there was never an indictment handed down by any grand jury.

Many political observers believe the attorney general's office is a stepping stone to the governor's office. In 1951, Attorney General Price Daniel had the governor's seat in mind, and he needed some publicity. What better issue to garner attention than cleaning up Galveston? He became chair of the so-called "little Kefauver hearings."

One humorous incident occurred during these proceedings. Galveston County Sheriff Frank Biaggne was in the witness box. He was known as a frequent visitor of the clubs, including the Balinese Room. When asked why he never raided that establishment, he replied with a straight face that the Balinese Room was a private club, he was not a member, and they would not let him in!¹³

Possibly because of Daniel's investigation, a grand jury handed down twenty-three indictments against the Maceos and many of their associates this time. But indictments are not convictions. More than a year and five continuances later, nothing had happened, and that's basically the way it ended. Ten of the indictments were dismissed outright, and Judge Charles Dibrell threw out the remainder. (Coincidentally, Judge Dibrell's son Louis was a longtime Maceo attorney.) Daniel did manage to close five Maceo clubs, though, but only for the few days that the Rangers were sent in.¹⁴

In 1957, the bug for the governor's seat hit another attorney general, Will Wilson. Looking around for an issue that would bring positive statewide attention, he too targeted the nationally known casinos and gambling dens in Galveston. Good choice. Even with his meager success, Price Daniel had ridden his investigations into the governor's office.

Things had changed a lot in the six years since Daniel's investigation, and none of it was good for the gamblers. Figuratively and literally, the once mighty Maceo Empire was a house of cards. For starters, Mr. Sam and Papa Rose were both dead. Sam had succumbed to cancer in 1951, and Rose passed away of heart failure in 1954. If they had been alive, would it have made any difference? Probably not. The doom of the island paradise had been sealed a few years earlier in the Nevada desert when a New York gangster named Ben "Bugsy" Siegel built the Flamingo Casino and Hotel on an out-of-the-way desert strip of land called Las Vegas. Everything that was illegal in Galveston—gambling, drinking, and prostitution—was legal there.



Frank Biaggne
"I went up to the door,
but they wouldn't let me
in because I was not a
member."

13 Gary Cartwright, "One Last Shot" in *Texas Monthly*, June 1993, 182.

14 Waldman, part VI.



Without Sam to keep the road smooth and Rose's iron fist to keep everyone in line, the Maceo kingdom was falling apart. Business was drying up, and even the dealers were fleeing to the desert. By all accounts, the Maceo houses ran honest games until the end, but that was not true for most of the other clubs. To stay in business, they started skimming and running rigged games.

In the past, the police, judges, and others in power never had to shake down the club owners for protection because Sam and Rose had made sure that those in control were always taken care of. Not now. Sheriff Biaggne went around to the clubs and demanded money if the owners wanted to stay in business. Desperately trying to stem the tide running against them, the owners went to their business friends who had been profiting for decades because of them, and asked for their help. The businessmen dutifully went to Attorney General Will Wilson and asked him to rein in Sheriff Biaggne.¹⁵

Instead of helping, however, Wilson saw the opportunity he had been waiting for. He secured injunctions to shut many of the gambling joints down. His plan was to close them in a grandiose way: he would hit all the major players in one grand sweep.

Texas Ranger Captain Johnny Klevenhagen was the commander of Company A in Houston, and Galveston was under his jurisdiction. In the first part of June 1957, he called a company meeting, and it did not take him long to get to the point: the Rangers were going to raid the Galveston gambling dens.

The Rangers knew the real motive behind Wilson's move, but it was not their job to pass moral judgments on gambling. Their assignment was to enforce the law and obey the orders of their superiors, even if their motives were sometimes questionable.¹⁶

About three weeks before the scheduled raid, Wilson put an undercover team in Galveston, commanded by George Reed, the chief of intelligence in the Houston area. In the ensuing weeks, Reed's team compiled a list of sixty-five gambling halls they wanted to raid. Once their list was completed, they set up temporary headquarters on Bissonet Drive in Houston and brought in the Rangers and several carloads of assistant attorney generals.

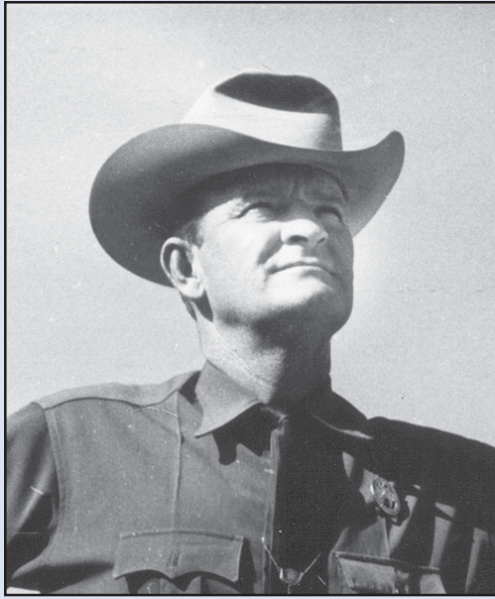
The plan was simple and effective. After search warrants had been secured, three lawyers would team up with two Rangers, and each team would go to the targeted gambling halls. There, they would serve their search warrants and seize all the illegal gambling equipment they could find. Rangers Ed Gooding and Pete Rogers were dispatched to Galveston to secure the warrants.

The club owners still had lots of money at their disposal, and they had been spreading it around for years, buying protection from the local police and judges. Crooked judges were a major problem for the Rangers. Gooding said that one certain justice of the peace would issue a search warrant at the drop of a hat. The only problem was, as soon as the Rangers walked out of his office, he would call whomever he had issued the search warrant against and say, "Storm raising," and hang up. That was all the gamblers needed. By the time the Rangers arrived, everything was as clean as freshly blown snow.

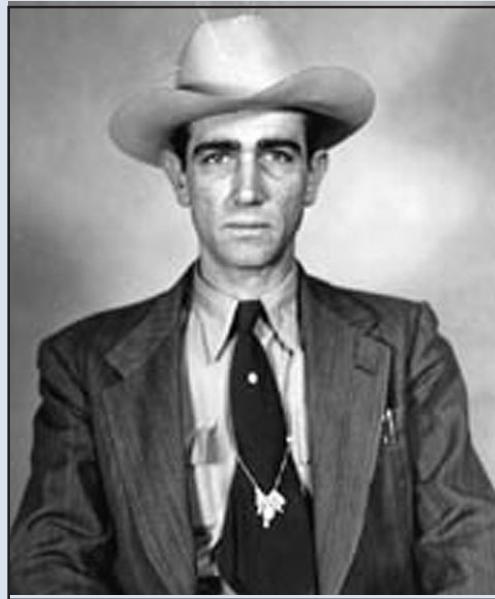
When the Rangers went to this judge's office one day, he was not there. That turned out to be no problem, however. To save himself time, the judge had signed a stack of warrants already filled

15 Waldman, part VI.

16 Ed Gooding and Robert Nieman, *Ed Gooding: Soldier-Texas Ranger* (Longview, Texas: Ranger Publishing, 2001), 108-120.



Ranger Ed Gooding



Ranger Johnny Klevenhagan

out except for the location. When the Rangers asked for a warrant, the judge's wife unwittingly picked one up from the pile, filled in the location, and handed it over. When the judge arrived home and found out what his wife had done, he rushed to the phone and called the club. When a voice came over the other end of line, he urgently cried, "Storm rising!"

"Storm raising, hell! The storm has already passed through," replied satisfied Ranger Gooding.

Fortunately, not all the judges were on the payroll. Donald Markle, a district judge in Galveston County, was one the Rangers knew they could trust and count on to do the right thing. Gooding and Pete Rogers drove to Judge Markle's house, showed him why they had probable cause for the search warrants, and explained their plan to him. The judge signed the warrants.

Gooding and Rogers returned to the Bissonet Drive headquarters, and just as they walked through the door, they heard Attorney General Wilson say that the raid was off because information had been leaked by one of the Rangers. That was a big—no, huge—mistake by Wilson.

Captain Klevenhagen operated on a short fuse anyway, and when he heard that ridiculous statement, he blew what little fuse he had. It did not matter one iota that Will Wilson was the attorney general of the state of Texas; the captain was not going to let anyone or anybody accuse his Rangers of something he knew to be untrue. He unloaded on Wilson with both barrels. Gooding said that he had seldom heard anyone talk to someone the way Captain Klevenhagen did, let alone to the Texas attorney general. He said that *ye//* would be a better word for it. The captain roared at Wilson "like he was an illegitimate stepchild."¹⁷

Klevenhagen unleashed, "Don't you dare accuse my men of leaking information! You better clean up your own backyard before you start accusing my Rangers of anything."

¹⁷ Gooding, 108.

Obviously not used to being talked to in such a tone, Wilson feebly tried to defend himself and muttered, "What do you mean by that?"

"How many women did you have typing these affidavits in Austin?"

"Fifteen or twenty. So what?"

Not backing up an inch, Captain Klevenhagen asked the attorney general if he knew that women talked over their back fences.

"What?" asked Wilson, with a look of total mystery on his face.

"My Ranger in St. Augustine, Tully Seay, lives beside the lieutenant governor [Ben Ramsey]. About a month ago, their wives were visiting in their backyards, and Mrs. Ramsey told Mrs. Seay to watch for something big that was going to happen in Galveston around the first of June. Now, if the lieutenant governor's wife was telling her neighbor about the raid all the way over in St. Augustine, then anyone with ears could have heard about it." Klevenhagen said all this in a tone that implied, "I can't believe I have to explain anything this basic to you."¹⁸

Attorney General Wilson did not like it one bit, but he had a little crow for dinner. Gooding wrote in his book, *Ed Gooding: Soldier, Texas Ranger*, that he could understand and certainly appreciate a boss standing up for his people, but the attorney general was wrong to accuse the Rangers of such a betrayal. As bad as Wilson hated to admit

it, he knew it too. He and the intelligence people had put a lot of time and effort into this venture just to see it go down the drain, but that is what happened. The raid was cancelled. As Ranger Gooding said, "Regretfully, countless man-hours with no positive results are common in police work."¹⁹

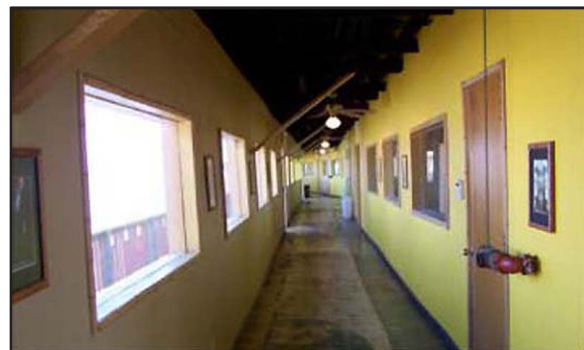
The raid had not come off, but Captain Johnny Klevenhagen was not the type of man to let something like this just quietly slip into the past, not by a long shot. The day following the busted raid, he and Ranger Gooding went to Galveston and talked to Sheriff Frank Biaggne. After explaining the situation, the captain told the sheriff that he had two choices: "Help us close the gambling dens, or stay out of our way while we close them down." Either way, the Galveston gambling houses were going to be busted.

Sheriff Biaggne listened and said he could not help because the gambling interests were just



Alarm Bell

One of the original alarm bells that would ring when Rangers charged down Ranger Run.



Ranger Run

By the time Rangers charged down this walkway and got to the gambling room, the guests would be playing bingo, hearts, or some other perfectly legal game that could be found at any church social.

18 Gooding, 109.

19 Gooding, 109.

too strong. If he cooperated with the Rangers, he might as well resign right then because he would never be reelected. Captain Klevenhagen said, “Fine. Just stay out of our way!”²⁰

Klevenhagen and Gooding left Galveston and went directly to Beaumont. Though it never had



Buccaneer Hotel

The tall building in the center left is the Buccaneer Hotel. No Ranger could have imagined that when he checked into the Buccaneer Hotel, it would be three and a half years before he checked out.

gotten the publicity, Jefferson County was just about as bad as Galveston County as far as gambling was concerned. The captain made the same speech to Charlie Meyer, the sheriff of Jefferson County, as he had to the Sheriff Biagge. Meyer had more backbone, at least on the surface. He told Captain Klevenhagen not to worry about it; his department would take care of their area, and there would be no more gambling in Jefferson County. When the Rangers got into their car, Klevenhagen asked Gooding if he had ever heard such a load of crap in his life. He was right: Jefferson County continued to be a major headache for the Rangers.

Galveston was more than enough work without having to worry about Jefferson County. At that time, Company A consisted of only eight men. Mart Jones

was stationed in Huntsville, Pete Rogers in Lufkin, Harvey Philips in Woodville, Tully Seay in St. Augustine, and Hollis Sillavan in Burton. Captain Klevenhagen and Sergeant Eddie Oliver were headquartered in Houston, while Ed Gooding was the only Ranger private there. (In those days, officers still worked cases, so Gooding did not have to work all of Houston and Galveston by himself.)

A few days after the failed bust, Captain Klevenhagen called another company meeting and explained the situation in Galveston as he saw it. He did not want to request any Rangers from outside companies unless he absolutely had to, and his men would therefore be putting in more hours in than ever, when sixty- to eighty-hour weeks were already the norm.

Captain Klevenhagen explained his plan to defeat the casinos, and it was a devilishly simple one. They were going after the big names first, especially the Balinese Room. With all the gambling places' high-placed connections, it was clear that search warrants did no good. However, there was nothing to stop the Rangers from going into the Balinese Room, the Turf Club, and the other big gambling establishments and just sitting around like any other private citizens.

The Balinese Room was far and away the biggest, fanciest, and best known of all the gambling halls in Galveston. That is where the captain set his sights for his Rangers to start—right at the top. Anyone who knew Captain Johnny Klevenhagen would have been shocked if he had wanted to begin anywhere else. Captain Jim Ray described Klevenhagen as having “a fire burning in him like

20 Gooding, 110.

21 Private conversation between the author and Captain Jim Ray.

no man I have ever known.”²¹

Klevenhagen explained that, from that day forward, two Rangers were going to be at the Balinese Room every evening at eight o'clock when it opened, and they were going to stay there until it closed, usually at two o'clock in the morning. The Rangers were to go in, find themselves a good table, put their boots under that table, and make themselves at home. They were to conspicuously leave their hats and gun belts on for everyone to see.²²

Officially, the Balinese Room was a private supper club, and it was one of the best ever. Its claim to fame, however, was being *the* premier gambling casino on Galveston Island (the Hollywood Dinner Club had been closed years earlier by court order). It was built on a pier hanging several hundred feet into the Gulf of Mexico. Not only did this make it unique among the clubs, but it also allowed approach from only one direction: down the pier that became famous as the “Ranger Run.”

The way the Balinese Room was situated made it impossible for the Rangers to surprise the gamblers. Entrance was through doors fitted with electric locks at the sea wall. A lady was stationed in a booth at the entrance, and she would be smiling very sweetly. All the while, she was standing on a buzzer, warning the occupants that the Rangers were on their way. There were actually drills, just like school fire drills, where the employees practiced putting the gambling equipment away. They could hide the machines and apparatus almost as fast as you could blink an eye. The indentations in the carpet where the tables had stood would be visible, but by the time the Rangers reached the end of “Ranger Run,” the room would be clean. Everyone would be sitting around playing dominoes, pool, bridge, or checkers, acting as innocent as newborn babies.²³

The Rangers rented a room in the Buccaneer Hotel, overlooking the entrance to the Balinese Room. None of them could have dreamed that it would be three and a half years before they would check out of that space. Rangers Hollis Sillavan and Tully Seay drew the first assignment to Galveston. Each team of two Rangers worked two weeks on and four weeks off. The four weeks off were not meant to be used for relaxation, however. During that time, the Rangers had to go back to their regular duties and do six weeks of work in four!²⁴ In addition, some Rangers would go to Beaumont at least once a week to make sure that the gambling clubs in Jefferson County were staying in compliance the way the sheriff had promised they would be. Needless to say, after a couple of months of this killer pace, everyone in Company A was worn to a frazzle.²⁵

As good as his men were, Captain Klevenhagen realized they could not keep up with this tremendous workload. He contacted Colonel Homer Garrison, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, and asked for help. Rangers from the era of Homer Garrison swear to this day that he was the best friend the Rangers have ever had in the director's chair in Austin. Anything he could do to help the Rangers, he did. In this case, he personally saw to it that Captain Klevenhagen got the help he needed. From that point

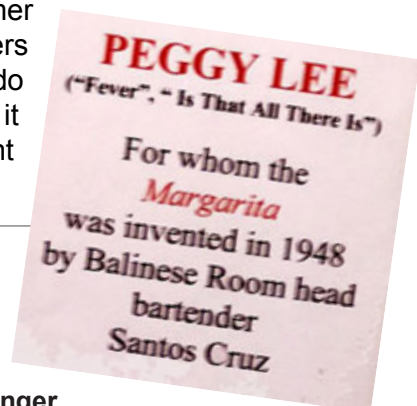
22 Gooding, 108-120.

23 Gooding, 108-120..

24 Gooding, 108-120..

25 Gooding, 108-120..

26 Gooding, 108-120..



Sign under singer
Peggy Lee's photo in the Balinese Room.

on, one man from Company A worked with a man from one of the other five companies throughout the state. In this manner, each Company A Ranger worked one week with a Ranger from some other company, and then the next week he caught a Ranger from another company.²⁶

xxxAt first, the clubs did not take the Rangers seriously, and they tried to kill the Rangers with kindness. The Balinese Room had a five-piece house band and a small dance floor. Whenever the Rangers walked in, the Balinese band would play "The Eyes of Texas." All of the clubs tried to treat the Rangers like kings by offering steaks, shrimp, and all sorts of food and drinks. But the Rangers were not buying. In the words of one Ranger:

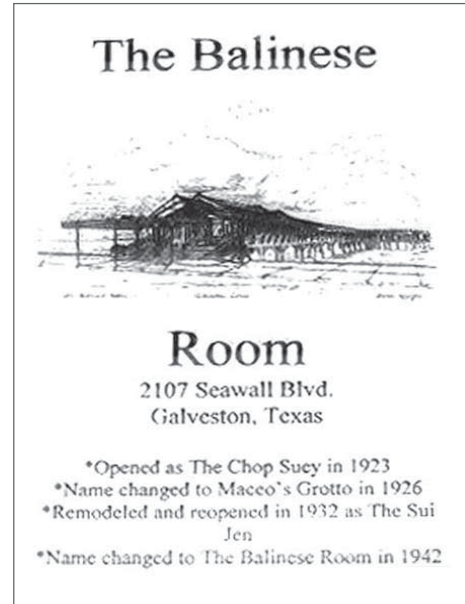
The clubs were trying to have us bought and paid for, but we didn't take anything. Whatever we ate or drank, we paid for. I can't imagine how many gallons of coffee we drank. Clearly, they thought they could simply wait us out. They were wrong. We were prepared to stay in Galveston however long it took to break them. And we did.²⁷

When the club patrons walked in, the first things they saw were the Rangers' boots, hats, gun belts, and badges. The customers' reactions seldom varied. They would sit nervously for a while, have a drink, talk in hushed voices, and then leave. After about two weeks, the management of the Balinese Room started calling Captain Klevenhagen, complaining that the Rangers were ruining business. "Couldn't some kind of deal be made?"

No, it could not. The Rangers kept the pressure on.²⁸

Then on Wednesday night, June 19, 1957, the Rangers broke the clubs' backs. During that week, they started ripping the guts out. By now, the casinos had stashed their gambling paraphernalia away, obviously meaning to simply wait the Rangers out. The only problem was that the Rangers were not going to leave. To the club owners' horror, the Rangers started finding the hidden equipment. In the few days immediately proceeding June 19, they found and destroyed \$800,000.00 in gambling equipment hidden in an old bunker at Fort Crockett. As great as this was, they still had not hit the mother lode. The Rangers knew hundreds of slot machines and gambling tables were still hidden away, but they had never been able to find the stash because the gamblers had concealed it really well. But not well enough.²⁹

Sam Maceo's pride and joy, the Hollywood Supper Club, had been closed for years. Even in its dilapidated state, though, it was clear that it once could have put anything currently in Galveston, including the Balinese Room, to shame. Ranger Gooding said that he had never seen it when it was open, but he could tell that, in its heyday, it had really been something to behold. When Hollis



This poster gives a thumbnail history of the Balinese Room.

²⁷ Gooding, 108-120..

²⁸ Gooding, 108-120..

²⁹ Gooding, 108-120.



Sillavan and a couple of the attorney general's people happened to check on the Hollywood Supper Club, they were stunned. Inside were slot machines, pinball machines, roulette tables, and blackjack tables stacked to the ceiling.³⁰

Pete Rogers and Ed Gooding were working together when two attorney general agents ran up to them exclaiming, "Man, we've found their stash!" Rogers and Gooding took one look themselves and called Captain Klevenhagen in Houston. After listening to what had been found, the captain highballed it to Galveston. As soon as he got there, he and Gooding headed straight for the old Hollywood Supper Club, where they met Ranger Rogers and several men from the attorney general's office.³¹

The agents had literally hit the jackpot: 1.2 million dollars—that is 1957 dollars—in gambling equipment. There were fifteen hundred slot machines and numerous roulette wheels, blackjack tables, and dice tables. Box after box of chips and dice were also found. Many of the chips were of \$100 dominations, with Balinese Room inscribed on them.

The discovery in the Hollywood Supper Club seemed to open Pandora's box. Within a week, the Rangers confiscated more than \$2,000,000 in gambling equipment.³² As Ranger Gooding described in his book, "I remember it all as though it were yesterday. As we stood there looking at the mountain of slot machines, I heard Captain Klevenhagen mutter to himself, 'Man, I don't know what in the world I'll ever do with all this stuff. I wish I had a boat big enough to haul it out in the Gulf, and just dump it'."

Cecil Rotsch, first assistant to the attorney general, overheard the captain and said, "That sounds like a wonderful idea to me."³³

Until then, whenever the Rangers confiscated equipment, they took it to the city dump and burned it, and the fire department was present to make sure the flames did not get out of control. The Rangers would have had to notify the fire department beforehand and arrange the burning to meet its schedule, which was clumsy and very time-consuming. But that was when they were only grabbing a few machines; now they had a mountain of gambling equipment to dispose of. The more Rotsch thought about dumping the equipment in the ocean, the better he liked the idea. He looked over at the captain and said, "I think the attorney general will like this idea, too. Let me check with him."³⁴

Captain Klevenhagen had not been serious when he made the remark, and he did not like the plan now. He told Rotsch that he had only been mumbling to himself. Rotsch was convinced it was a good idea, however, and the captain had no luck changing his mind. Finally, Klevenhagen said to Rotsch, "Well, that's fine, but until the A.G. tells me different, I'm going to start burning this stuff."³⁵

The Rangers hired a moving company to come in and load all the gambling paraphernalia onto trucks, and then they headed for the city dump. It was not long before they had a roaring fire going, and they started feeding it with the slot machines. Soon a voice came over the captain's

30 Gooding, 108-120.

31 The assistant attorney generals were Cecil Rotsch, J. L. Smith, B. H. Timmins, Ed Horner, and Richard Stone.

32 Gooding, 114.

33 Gooding, 114.

34 Gooding, 115.

35 Gooding, 115.



radio: "Eighty-eight to unit six." ("Eighty-eight" was an airplane from Austin.)

Captain Klevenhagen grabbed the microphone and said, "This is six. Go ahead."

"This is Joe Fletcher. Could you meet me at the airport?"

Rotsch had obviously hit the right chord with Attorney General Wilson because Joe Fletcher was Colonel Homer Garrison's right-hand man. The Rangers knew that if Colonel Fletcher was there, that meant something big was going to happen. Rotsch had been right: the attorney general had liked the idea of dumping the whole mess in the Gulf because that would get him lots of free, front-page coverage.

When Fletcher joined up with the Rangers, he told them that, on the trip from Austin, he had thought about the ferry at nearby Port Bolivar. It had a capacity to carry about sixty cars and would have plenty of room to hold what had not been burned. It was also big enough to sail a short distance into the gulf, where the water would be deep enough to bury the gambling equipment forever.

Captain Klevenhagen told Gooding to make the necessary arrangements for the ferry but, until then, he was going to keep burning. Gooding arrived at the dock just as the ferry was pulling in. He went aboard, climbed up to the pilothouse, and told the captain what they wanted to do.

The ferry captain said, "I'm sorry, Ranger, I would really like to help you, but I can't. I'm not licensed to go outside the bars. I can only sail inland waters. If I went into open water, the Coast Guard would pull my license."

Gooding went back and reported this to Captain Klevenhagen. By then, however, the idea had taken on a life of its own because the attorney general had come to Galveston himself. Between Colonel Fletcher, the attorney general, and a reluctant Captain Klevenhagen, they came up with what they considered a workable plan. The attorney general's office rented a tugboat to haul some of the slots into the gulf.

Tugboats are nothing but floating engines designed for one thing only: to supply power to move huge ships. A tugboat only has about a foot of walkway on each side of the pilothouse, so the Rangers could not put many slots on board. Nevertheless, they managed to stack about fifty machines all over the boat. Slot machines were hanging over the sides, on the pilothouse, everywhere you can imagine. Although they did not have much room for slot machines, somehow there was plenty of space for the newspaper reporters and cameramen!

The Rangers sailed about five miles into the gulf, close to Pelican Island and near a sunken concrete ship, and they pushed the machines into the water. Except for the Rangers, it had all been marvelous fun for everyone. News reporters had recorded it all and, just as Wilson hoped, the event had made all the papers. Yes sir, it was great.

Great, that is, until the next day. It seems the Army Corps of Engineers considered the ship channel their private domain, and they did not want so much as a napkin thrown in their water, let alone a boatload of gambling equipment. Most of the machines had sunk to the bottom, but some were made of plastic and wood, and those had popped back up and were floating all over the channel.

Cecil Rotsch was frantic the next day when he called Captain Klevenhagen. "Captain, what are we going to do? The Corps of Engineers is having a cow. They're threatening to file charges on us for fouling the waterways!"

Keeping a straight face, Captain Klevenhagen said, "I don't know what you're talking about. I burned all the slot machines I was responsible for."

Company "A" Texas Rangers Balinese Room - Galveston Island



Back: Sergeants Bobby Smith, Grover Huff, Pete Muskunas, Tom Davis, David Maxwell, Crayton McGee, Joe Haralson, Brian Taylor, Danny Young, Kevin Pullen.

Front: Sergeants Bryant Wells, Jeff Cook, Ron Duff, Lieutenant L.C. Wilson, Captain Tony Leal, Sergeants David Rainwater, Freeman Martin, Otto Hanak, Adolphus Pressley

The battle with the Balinese Room and the other clubs would continue for several more months, but the haul from the Hollywood Supper Club had destroyed the gambling clubs in Galveston. They had had enough, and the world-renowned Balinese Room closed its doors. Most of the big gambling establishments saw the handwriting on the wall and followed it into history.

The war was won, but for another three years, many battles would be fought with small clubs trying desperately to hang on. The sand in their hourglasses was running out quickly, however. In 1960, after three and a half years, the Texas Rangers checked out of the Buccaneer Hotel and went home. The Rangers had reined in Galveston.



Excerpt

From Guns to Gavels: How Justice Grew Up in the Outlaw West

Texas Tech University Press November 2008. For more information, visit ttup.ttu.edu.

Duels of the Lawmen

*The Volatile Motley County War
and the Outlaw Sheriff*

Bill Neal



Ranger William Jesse McDonald

It seemed as if you could almost see forever across those gently rolling, virtually treeless and windswept plains that sprawled south of the Red River and on north into the Oklahoma Territory. For certain there wasn't much that was manmade to get in the way—just one set of railroad tracks evidencing the creep of frontier settlement. But on this day, excited townsfolk watched intently as a small, sooty cloud of engine smoke appeared some six or eight miles down those railroad tracks. They watched as it billowed larger and larger. Finally, amidst much huffing and puffing and the tooting of whistles and the clanging of bells, the train labored into the station and screeched to a halt.

Despite the bone-chilling winter weather, a sizeable crowd had gathered at the Quanah, Texas, railroad depot that Saturday to witness the arrival of the Fort Worth & Denver City train. Gathering there each evening at six o'clock was a community ritual for the settlers of this fledgling northwest Texas village. After all, the town—named for the famous Comanche Chief Quanah Parker—was just nine years old, and it had been only five years since the railroad tracks had linked it to the outside world. So the daily arrival of the train was still something of a novelty. In fact, the spectacle of the mighty iron monster in those horse-and-buggy days when nobody had even seen an

automobile (much less a radio or a television set) was a great source of entertainment. And it freighted not only mundane supplies but also hints of exotic and faraway places that common folks of that time could never hope to visit; plus there was always the chance of glimpsing the face of some important traveler through a curtain briefly parted.

However, this evening, December 9, 1893, the townsfolk were about to witness a lot more drama than they ever could have imagined . . . or wanted.

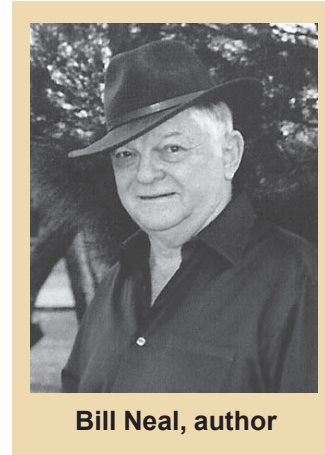
The Players

Lots of folks had been milling about downtown Quanah that Saturday, and the local saloons had done a brisk business. Few frontiersmen of the time frowned on a man having a sociable snort or two. Or three. Even if the snorter happened to be a lawman. In fact, the local sheriff, Hardeman County Sheriff Dick Coffey, and a neighboring sheriff, Childress County Sheriff John Pearce Matthews, had spent a good part of that day socializing in watering holes along Main Street.

The county seat of Childress County is the town of Childress, some thirty miles to the west of Quanah. Sheriff Matthews and a couple of his cronies had caught the eastbound FW&DC passenger train early that morning in Childress and had detrained in Quanah, where they hooked up with Sheriff Coffey.

Another lawman happened to be in town that fateful day. He was Capt. William Jess “Bill” McDonald, age forty-one, commander of Company B of the Frontier Battalion of the Texas Rangers—a lawman legend in the making. And he looked the part: long, lean, and wiry, he stood about six feet tall, had steel blue-gray eyes, a Roman nose, and a weather-beaten face.¹

Ranger McDonald and Sheriff Matthews, however, were not close friends.



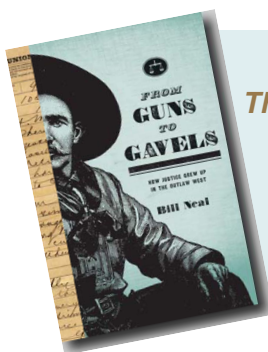
1. Sources relied on for the background and career of Capt. William Jess McDonald are as follows:
Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Texas Rangers and the Mexican Revolution: The Bloodiest Decade, 1910–1920* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).
Robert M. Utley, *Lone Star Justice: The First Century of the Texas Rangers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).
Robert M. Utley, *Lone Star Justice: The Second Century of the Texas Rangers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007);
Walter Prescott Webb, *The Story of the Texas Rangers* (Austin: Encino, 1971).
Virgil E. Baugh, *A Pair of Texas Rangers: Bill McDonald and John Hughes* (Washington: Potomac Corral, the Westerners, 1970).
William Warren Sterling, *Trails and Trials of the Texas Ranger* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1959).
Paine, Captain Bill McDonald; Madeline Mason-Manheim, *Riding for Texas: The True Adventures of Captain Bill McDonald of the Texas Rangers*, as told by Colonel Edward M. House to Tyler Mason (New York: Rynal & Hitchcock, 1936).
Harold J. Weiss, Jr., “‘Yours to Command’: Captain William J. ‘Bill’ McDonald and the Panhandle Rangers of Texas” (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1980).
See also, Ron Tyler, ed., *The New Handbook of Texas*, Vol. 4 (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996), 392–93.

It was common knowledge that there was bad blood between McDonald and Matthews, and therefore, when Matthews and his associates got off the train at Quanah the morning of December 9, 1893, word quickly spread that there might be big trouble before sundown.

The trouble between Matthews and the ranger force, in general, first started about 1890 when Matthews was still foreman of the Laurel Leaf Ranch in the Texas Panhandle. He and his men took a herd of cattle to Amarillo for shipment and, while in town, they (predictably) went on a spree that ended in a gambling dispute. Two Texas Rangers intervened and forcibly subdued Matthews and one of his men.² From that point on, Matthews held a grudge against any ranger. After Matthews was elected Childress County sheriff, he aggravated the animosity by provoking an incident at the 1892 annual Texas Sheriffs' Convention in Houston. Gov. James Hogg was a guest of the sheriffs and was preparing to speak when Matthews (who, for reasons unexplained, also bore a grudge against the governor) jumped to his feet and exclaimed: "Let Governor Hogg come forward and explain his treatment of the sheriffs." Hogg attempted to assuage Matthews, but Matthews, unappeased, again attempted to force the issue. McDonald, Hogg's longtime friend and champion, intervened. He stepped to the speaker's platform and shouted, "Stand your ground, Governor, these men are your friends!" Again the governor tried to smooth ruffled feathers by inviting Matthews to come to Austin later to discuss his concerns. Thinking he had quelled the storm, Governor Hogg left. But after the governor departed, Matthews accosted McDonald, and but for the intervention of other sheriffs, a showdown would likely have occurred. The convention ended without further confrontations, but the bad seed had been sown, and the ill will between the two took root and sprouted.³

2 Sergeant J. W. Britton to W. H. Mabry report dated December 11, 1893, AGCF, Box 401, Folder 430-15, TSA.

3 *The Fort Worth Daily Gazette*, December 11, 1893; *The Quanah Chief*, December 14, 1893.



Duels of the Lawmen
The Volatile Motley County War and the Outlaw Sheriff
is an excerpt from the book

Guns to Gavels
How Justice Grew Up in the Outlaw West
by Bill Neal



Navigatin' with Nancy (& Eddie, too!)



Davis Mountains at the start of a scenic loop drive.

After a long, hot summer, Eddie and I finally left the heat and humidity of East Texas for our annual trip out west – to the Davis Mountains or bust! We thought we were in for a “bust” on our very first night.

Luckily, we had just registered at the campground office when the transmission went into inhibit mode, and our motor home wouldn’t budge, not even an inch. Eddie sat there thinking about the situation, and he is a *thinker*. Then he had an idea. He would stay in the motor home, and I would get into the tow vehicle that we pull behind it. He said, “Push me, and I will steer into the campsite.”

I gave him one of those “are you crazy” looks; then I got out and followed directions. Picture this: a little silver Jeep Liberty pushing a 35-foot motor home. I enjoyed the humor of the situation, but Eddie wasn’t laughing, not even a little.

Now, let’s get back to the trip. This year was different because we had two purposes. One was to enjoy the area, as we always do, and the other was to interview retired Texas Rangers.

First, let’s talk about the interviews. Eddie and I are working on an oral history project for the Texas Ranger Foundation in Waco. The purpose of this undertaking is to capture information about the lives and careers of former Texas Rangers. Think about it. To most of us, a Texas Ranger is just bigger than life. Most people are curious about these people who dedicated their lives to this noble and historic organization.

As we started on the trip, I happily called the Rangers from my list, thinking they would be glad to hear from me. That is not the way it happened. The fact was that no one knew me, and when they got my call from out of the blue, most of them were a little skeptical. Once we got past those initial conversations, though, Eddie and I had a great time meeting the Rangers and, when possible, their wives too.

On this trip, we were fortunate enough to interview nine retired Rangers: Robert Favor, Jesse Priest, Al Mitchell, Joe Sanders, Joaquin Jackson, Joe Hunt, George Frasier, Bobby Grubbs, and Jack Morton. We tried to talk with others, but some schedules conflicted.



This project is giving us a unique opportunity to meet people we would normally not get a chance to encounter. During these interviews, we try to learn a little about their lives before they became Rangers. We also gather information about their families, educations, accomplishments, careers, cases, and more. Of course, these interviews can only capture a small portion of their lives but, oh, the stories they have to share! Thanks to each of the Rangers for giving us their time and sharing their memories.

Thanks go to Bobby Nieman, Vern Foreman, and the Texas Ranger Foundation Association for allowing us to work on this project. Eddie and I are learning about these retired Rangers, and we are enjoying our visits. As we travel around Texas, we will try to schedule interviews wherever we are. Most, if the Ranger agrees, include a video, an audio, and then a typed document for the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum website in Waco, texasranger.org. All of the information we obtain becomes property of the museum to continue efforts in preserving the history of the Texas Rangers.

So, if you are a retired Ranger, you might get a call from me. If I introduce myself and then tell you I am working on an oral history project for the Texas Ranger Foundation, don't be surprised. We will try to set up an interview that fits your schedule. Eddie and I look forward to meeting and interviewing many Rangers in the near future.

Now, back to the trip and the location. Eddie and I normally visit the Davis Mountains each year in September or early October. We like the dry climate, the beautiful scenery, the diverse wildlife, the West Texas plants . . . I guess we just like the area. It is rich in the history of Texas and in the Rangers.



Nancy and Eddie

The land was uncivilized in the late 1800s, when outlaws were causing problems and making the area unsafe. The Texas Rangers were called to help resolve the problem, and a Ranger camp was established to help protect the people. (The location between Fort Davis and Alpine is now recognized with a historical marker.)

In April 1997, more than 100 years after the camp was established, another problem near Fort Davis required help from the Texas Rangers, and Company E responded. The situation arose when a couple at the Davis Mountains Resort was taken hostage by a group called the Republic of Texas, which didn't believe Texas was properly annexed. Instead, the members thought that Texas was still a republic of its own instead of a part of the United States. Under the leadership of the Texas Rangers, the situation was resolved, the hostages were released safely, and the Republic members finally surrendered.

Maintaining law and order in the wide-open area of West Texas is an ongoing effort. The Mexican border is nearby (in "West Texas miles"), and this raises logistics problems with illegal border crossings and the capture of criminals.

Included in this rough and wild area is Big Bend National Park. The Rio Grande flows through Big Bend, and is a popular place for rafting trips. In November 1988, a seemingly routine excursion down the river turned deadly. Four young Mexicans walked along the high bluffs overlooking the river, took aim at the rafters, and began firing. One man was killed; his wife and their guide were wounded. If you are ever in Big Bend, look up at those tall cliffs and imagine the chilling horror you would feel if you were riding in the raft while being fired on from above. Once again, the Texas Rangers were called to solve a violent crime in a secluded part of our state, and they responded.

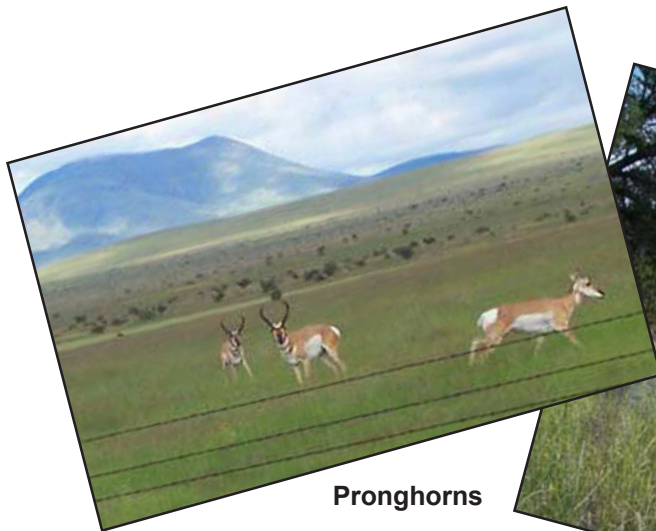
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There are many other examples of how the Rangers worked to tame the Davis Mountains and all of West Texas. Their efforts continue today, and they contribute to the safety of the region and make it a good place for people to visit. Without the ongoing efforts of the Texas Rangers, we could not safely enjoy the panoramic views and the beauty of the area.

To learn more about the Davis Mountain area and the cases involving the Texas Rangers, check the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum website, texasranger.org, where interviews with the retired Rangers can be found as they become available. These dialogs include discussions about some of their cases and how they were solved. Most of the Rangers are very humble and don't want to draw attention to themselves, but through these interviews, we can preserve their history as well as their impact on Texas.

Most people don't understand the fascination that Eddie and I have with this part of West Texas. They usually look at us strangely and question why we even want to go at all. But when we ask if they have ever been there, the answer is usually no. If you haven't been to the Davis Mountains and the Big Bend country, you are missing an interesting part of our great state. Check it out and have a good trip!



Pronghorns



View of a creek

Check websites below for information about things to do in the area:

places
of
Interest

Fort Davis, TX: fortdavis.com

Alpine, TX: visitorcenter.alpinetexas.com

Marfa, TX: marfatx.com

Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute: cdri.org

Big Bend National Park: nps.gov/bibe

McDonald Observatory: mcdonaldobservatory.org



Smith & Wesson New Model No. 3



Smith & Wesson New Model No. 3, opened

H. E.'s Smith & Wesson New Model No. 3

David Stroud

Large-frame, black-powder, single-action revolvers are historically associated with Texas Rangers.¹ The Smith & Wesson large-frame, single-action, top-break, New Model No. 3 Russian-caliber that was manufactured and cataloged from 1878 to 1908 is no exception.

The S&W No. 3 featured in this article was discovered and purchased in a San Antonio pawn shop by a part-time gun dealer about 1998. It has a four-digit serial number and non-factory, cut-barrel, ivory grips with carved "H.E." initials and is outfitted with a suspender shoulder holster stamped "Heiser HHH Make / Denver/125."² The identity of H.E. is not known.

- 1 Museums, history books, contemporary photographs, collections, and historical documentation. Note: Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum's Smith and Wesson collection isn't on display at this time (October 2008).
- 2 Jinks, Roy G., *History of Smith & Wesson*, 10th edition (North Hollywood, CA,: Beinfeld Publishing Inc., 1977), 59; Supica, Jim & Nahas, Richard, *Standard Catalog of Smith & Wesson*, 2nd edition (Iola, WI: Krause Publications), 61.



In 1870, Smith and Wesson began producing four “families” of large-frame, single-action, top-break revolvers to enable quicker loading and unloading. They seem “to be the most sought-after group of antique S&Ws,” for a number of reasons:^{3, 4}

First and foremost, the No. 3 was produced only during the time when the west was still considered wild.

Second, and not far behind, collectors like “first,” and the New Model No. 3 was the first metallic cartridge revolver with an “indisputably effect defensive round.”

Third, it was an Old West as well as international favorite.

Fourth, the New Model No. 3 provides S&W collectors multiple configurations.

Fifth, collectors like reading about the time period their prizes were used. There are numerous Smith & Wesson books and articles, as well as volumes of Old West histories for them to read.

Sixth, Smith & Wesson historical letters detailing factory shipment records of most Smith and Wesson revolvers are obtainable.⁵

The factory originally designated the New Model No. 3 as the .44 Single Action. However, the public called it the New Model No. 3, so that became the name for this last revolver in the series.

The New Model No. 3 was outfitted with Smith & Wesson monogrammed, black, hard-rubber grips until 1907, when walnut grips were introduced and S&W inlaid monograms became standard. The basic caliber was 44. The S&W Russian had a six-shot, fluted cylinder with either blue or nickel finish, a two-lined Smith & Wesson address on top of the 6 ½-inch barrel, and serial numbers from 1-1008.^{6, 7} Soon after introduction, shorter barrels were available in lengths of 3 ½ to 8 inches.⁸ Standard grips were available in black or red hard rubber or smooth walnut.

The gun featured in this article is a New Model Number 3, .44 Single Action, “Rack and Gear Extractor Variation, caliber .44 S&W Russian.” It was shipped from the factory on March 28, 1879, to M.W. Robinson in New York City, who was Smith and Wesson’s “largest distributor.” The gun is labeled a “standard New Model No. 3,” with a 6½-inch barrel, blued finish, and monogrammed, black, hard-rubber grips.⁹ Therefore, the original grips of H.E.’s New Model No. 3 were not ivory

3 Jinks, 92.

4 Supica and Nahas, 72. American: 1870-1874, Russian: 1871-1878, Schofield: 1875-1877, New Model, No. 3: 1878-1912. Those shipped after 1898 are still “antiques,” as all the frames were made before 1898.

5 Supica & Nahas, 72. Smith & Wesson historical letters are obtained for an nominal fee by writing Roy G. Jinks, C/O Office of Smith & Wesson, Springfield, Massachusetts, and providing the type of Smith, serial number 3, and as much information as possible. It is most helpful to provide a photograph of the weapon with the letter.

6 Supica & Nahas, 72; Jinks, Roy G., 92. Jinks reports the standard New Model No. 3 was available with black or red hard-rubber grips.

7 Flayderman, Norm, *Flayderman’s Guide to Antique American Firearms...and their values*, 8th edition (Iola, WI: Krause Publications), 20.

8 Jinks, 92.

9 Supica & Nahas, 72 & 80. Early two-line address is “Smith & Wesson Springfield Mass U.S.A. Pat’d Jan 17 & 24, 65. July 11 65” above “Aug. 24, 69. Apr. 20.75. Feb.20. & Dec. 18. 1877 REISSUE July 25. 1871.” H.E.’s No. 3’s barrel is shortened so the front sight’s back is atop “Jan 1.” Later address: “SMITH & WESSON SPRINGFIELD MASS USA.”

and had no “special” marking on the barrel’s side to indicate a shorter barrel. Also, Smith and Wesson did not manufacture a New Model No. 3 with a barrel length of 3 6/8 inches, so H.E.’s New Model No. 3 barrel was shortened by a non-factory craftsman, most likely a blacksmith.¹⁰ H.E.’s No. 3 shows no sign of ever having a nickel finish.

But why would someone—probably H.E.—want to shorten the barrel of his New Model No. 3? An excellent clue is the Heiser shoulder-holster #125 in which the gun was resting and fit “like a glove” when purchased years ago in that aforementioned San Antonio Pawn shop.



Heiser holster

Hermann H. Heiser, a native of Alternburg, Saxony, was considered “the indisputable leader” among “superior gunleather elements as a specialty line.”¹¹ Heiser had been making saddles and holster in Denver since the 1850s and was so famous by 1878 he “felt compelled to register his “Triple H” trademark with the state.¹¹ The stamped “125” indicates the holster’s style, in which the suspenders are secured, crossed in the back by oval leather marked, “E. VOMHOFE.”¹²

Why might someone, maybe H.E., want a shoulder holster? Even when the west was wild, some towns, even in Texas, passed laws forbidding guns. Therefore, if someone wished to “pack,” he had to carry concealed. A shoulder holster certainly hinders a hurried draw, especially if the revolver is long-barreled in a full-sized holster. But a short barrel? In a smaller, split holster? Tilted with the butt forward? If the barrel is rotated forward and downward quickly, all of the casing will be extracted. A slow rotation will allow the shooter to stop just as the casing begins to elevate and, then, only the empty casings can be removed and replaced.

10 Jinks, Roy G., *Smith and Wesson factory records*, March 27, 2007; Supica & Nahas, 19.

The special-ordered barrel mark is on the barrel’s side due to lack of space at its usual place, & Smith & Wesson historical letter 25 October 2997. Also, the majority of handgun collectors agree Blacksmiths’ most often shortened barrels, and those appearing factory short had to have been shortened by craftsmen.

11 Rattenbury, Richard, C., *Packing Iron: Gunleather of the Frontier West* (Millwood, NY: Zon International Publishing Company, 1993), 181.

12 *Holster 125* appears to have originally been a belt holster, altered for the E. VOMHOFE suspenders with “MAKER” above the dealer’s address, which is too worn to be read.



How would a New Model No. 3, delivered to M.W. Robinson in New York City, find its way to San Antonio? We'll never know for sure, but a historical hint is that weapon dealers shipped their guns to fellow dealers in other states. German immigrant Charles Hummel, gun maker and dealer at 275 (now 270) Commerce Street in San Antonio, was "one of the largest gun dealers" in Texas.¹³

As previously stated, there are two reasons the four families of the New Model No. 3 have attracted collectors: the historical time period and the men and women who used the guns. A few of the more famous were:

Virgil Earp, lawman

Buffalo Bill Cody, Wild West Show star and Medal of Honor winner (recanted)¹⁴

Annie Oakley, performer with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show

Dallas Stoudenmire, Texas Ranger before El Paso

Frank and Jessie James, bank robbers and gunmen

Bob Ford, killer of Mr. Howard

Pat Garrett, killer of Billy the Kid

Bob and Cole Younger, James Gang Bank Robbers

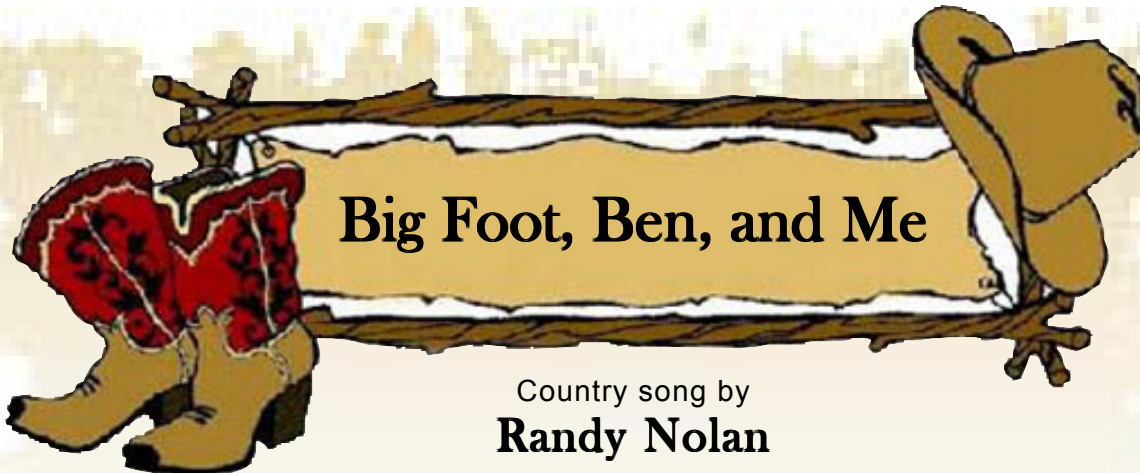
John Wesley Hardin, most infamous Texas gunman.¹⁵

So, who was H.E.? Lawman, outlaw, gambler, banker . . . or maybe, like Dallas Stoudenmire, a Texas Ranger? Since there is no master list of Texas Rangers, we may never know.

13 Hirsch, Chris, *The Texas Gun Trade: A Guide to the Guns Made or Sold in the Lone Star State, 1780-1899* (Woonsocket, RI.: Andrew Mowbray Inc, 2008), 83-88.

14 Buffalo Bill's Medal of Honor was revoked and his name removed from the roll on June, 16, 1916, because the Medal of Honor was a military award, and he was a civilian scout serving with soldiers when he performed heroically during an Indian battle.¹⁵ Special Collector's Edition, Smith & Wesson Handguns, 2000; Taffin, John, Smith & Wesson's Magnificent Model 3, 32; Wilson, Jim, *Famous Shooters and Their Smith & Wessons*, 64-65.

15 R.L. Wilson with Greg Martin, *Buffalo Bill's Wild West: An American Legend* (Chartwell Books, Inc. 1998), 21; Rattenbury, *The Regiment the Stars Fell On*, 151, 15-154.



Country song by
Randy Nolan

We came mounted and well armed
And we wore no uniforms,
'Cept the star upon our chest
And a pair of Sam Colt's best
Big Foot, Ben, and Me
We were Rangers

Chorus:

We wore the Cinco Peso
And we helped to set you free
From the Llano Estacado
Down to the Colorado
Big Foot, Ben, and me.
We were Rangers

At night we rode by North Star
Paid no mind to just how far
Lawless men thought that they could flee
We tracked 'em down with ease
Out across the Balcones
Big Foot, Ben, and me
We were Rangers

Repeat Chorus

We never shot a man
"less he failed to heed our plea
And we always asked real nice
But we never asked 'em twice
We were law men in a lawless land
Big Foot, Ben, and me.
We were Rangers


Repeat Chorus

My name is Hays
And from those days
We've left a legacy
For none did more
With a forty-four
Than Big Foot, Ben, and me
We were Rangers

Repeat Chorus

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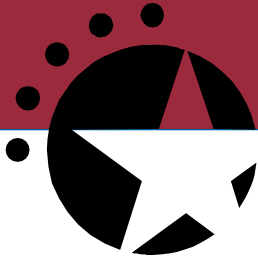
Randy Nolan

 RandyNolan@tx.rr.com

Randy Nolan



Texas Ranger Retirements 2008



Richard Shing , Barry Caver



Co. B Lt. Jerry Byrne presents Richard Shing a Texas Ranger retirement badge. Photo courtesy of Robert Nieman.



Ranger Richard Shing receives a hug from his son Eric, a police officer. Photo courtesy of Robert Nieman.

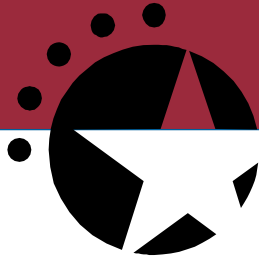


Captain Barry Caver with two of his former Highway Patrol partners when stationed in Lufkin, Rocky Thigpen (left) and Tom Selman (right). Photo courtesy of Captain Barry Caver, retired.



Assistant Chief, Captain Jim Miller presenting award to retiring Co. E Captain Barry Caver. Photo courtesy of Captain Barry Caver, retired.

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Texas Ranger Retirements 2008

*Morgan Miller, Marrie Aldrich,
Dick Johnson, and Richard Sweaney*



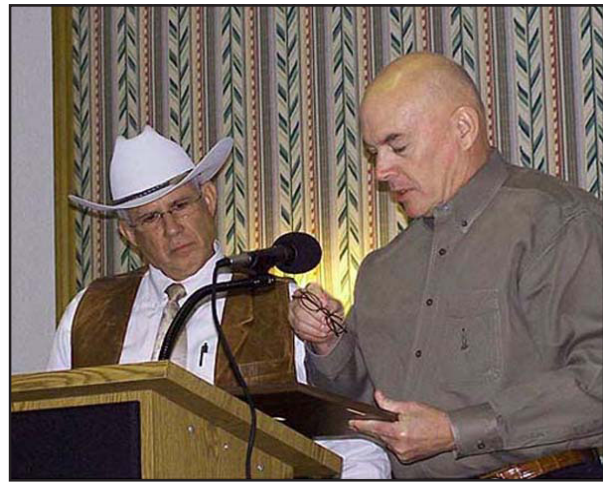
Co. D Ranger Morgan Miller, senior Texas Ranger in time of service. Captain Gary De Los Santos and Lt. Hank Whitman present Ranger Miller with a plaque and an award. *Photo courtesy of Captain Gary De Los Santos.*



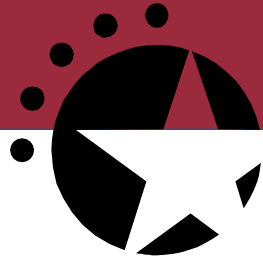
Retiring Co. D Ranger Marrie Aldrich is flanked by Lt. Hank Whitman, Sr. Ranger Captain; Chief Ray Coffman; and retired Senior Captain C.J. Havrda, former captain of Co. D. *Photo courtesy of Captain Gary De Los Santos.*



Co. C Captain Randy Prince presenting award to retiring Ranger Dick Johnson. *Photo courtesy of Captain Randy Prince.*



Retiring Ranger Captain Richard Sweaney and Col. Stan Clark, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety.



Texas Ranger Retirements 2008

Co. F Retirements

*Tommy Ratliff, Matt Andrew,
Mark Reinhardt, and Joey Gordon*

Photos courtesy of Captain Kirby Dendy



**Retiring Rangers
Tommy Ratliff and Matt Andrew**



**Retiring Rangers
Mark Reinhardt and Tommy Ratliff**



**Captain Kirby Dendy
presenting retirement plaque to Joey Gordon.**



**Ranger Matt Cawthon
presenting award to Mark Reinhardt.**

Reel Rangers

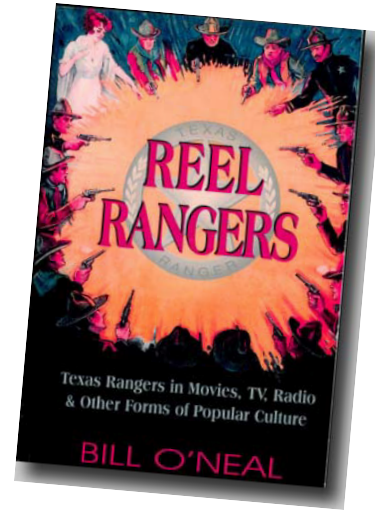
Texas Rangers in Movies, TV, Radio, & Other Forms of Popular Culture

Bill O'Neal

Waco, Texas: Eakin Press, 2008

Paperback, 206 pages. ISBN 978 1 57168 840 8

Review by Nancy Ray



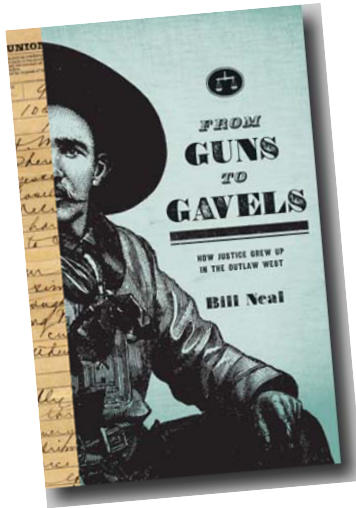
Reel Rangers is an engaging record of Texas Rangers portrayed in movies, radio programs, and television shows. As author Bill O'Neal describes his non-fiction work, "Decade by decade, movie by movie, *Reel Rangers* explores in detail the rich popular culture that has dramatized the heroic mystique of the Texas Rangers."

Reel Rangers documents a wealth of details about the portrayal of the Rangers in the media. The book is presented in a timeline, beginning with the first chapter, "1910s - 1920s: Rangers of the Silent Screen," and ending with "Into the Twenty-First Century." Each section covers a specific time period and includes facts and photographs about movies, stories, and actors. A summary listing pertinent information and a paragraph entitled "Ranger Events" are found at the end of each chapter, such as this paragraph at the end of the 1940s segment:

Ranger force is expanded to six companies, each with a captain and a sergeant, and a total of 45 men (1941). Six companies expanded to a total of 51 men (1947). During World War II, Rangers sought out enemy aliens, while instructing local police and civilians in the latest techniques of protecting factories, dams, and generating plants from sabotage.

Also included are various facts, such as the history of Ranger badges and some of the tricks for making movies. For instance, "to emphasize his imposing stature onscreen, John Wayne often handled a scaled-down rifle and ducked beneath low doorways." Also noted is that Glen Campbell would ride a small horse while John Wayne rode a tall one to emphasize the contrast. I remember how big the Duke looked—do you?

Reel Rangers is very interesting and contains an abundance of information. At the end of the book is a list of stars, their roles, and the years of performance. For instance, you can easily learn that Fred MacMurray was in *The Texas Rangers* (1936) and *Rangers of Fortune* (1940). The author includes an extensive bibliography and index for quick reference. If you want to know the details about who portrayed Texas Rangers in the media, or if you just want to reminisce a little, I recommend Bill O'Neal's *Reel Rangers*.



From Guns to Gavels

How Justice Grew Up in the Outlaw West

Bill Neal

Texas Tech University Press, 2903 4th Street,
Box 41037. Lubbock, Texas 79409-1037.
Chronology, endnotes, bibliography, index,
58 B&W photographs, 3 maps. xx + 348 pages. \$29.95 cloth.

Review by Chuck Parsons

The portions of the Old West that are receiving more and more consideration are the Panhandles of Texas and Oklahoma. Why this area has been seemingly neglected until recently remains speculative.

Bill Neal's first book, *Getting Away with Murder on the Texas Frontier*, sparked interest in his tale-telling abilities. *From Guns to Gavels: How Justice Grew Up in the Outlaw West* follows and is of equal value and interest, delving into the recent pasts of the Panhandles and proving that there are many worthy characters for study and many events that provoked a great deal of violence. In this work, Neal not only gives a recitation of the facts involving violent acts between hard men but also discusses how the transformation of a violent frontier into a law-abiding land took place. The lynch-law mentality gradually gave way to the superiority of the legal system, but it was not an easy transition.

Stereotypes must be set aside to really enjoy this work. At times, it can be confusing as to which characters are lawful (white hats) and which are the lawless (black hats).

The opening chapter deals with Texas Ranger W. J. "Bill" McDonald. Along with Sergeant W.J.L. Sullivan and other Rangers, he was ordered to El Paso to prevent the Maher-Fitzsimmons prize fight. At the time, fighting was illegal in the US and Mexico, so the event was held on a sand bar in the Rio Grande River. Meanwhile, in Wichita Falls,



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Texas, Elmer “Kid” Lewis and Foster Crawford bungled the robbery of a Wichita Falls bank, killing cashier Frank Dorsey in the process. Because Ranger McDonald was dealing with the prize fight, he was unable to prevent the robbery or the subsequent lynching of the two killers, who had been caught and strung up to telephone poles. Mob justice was certainly swift and final there in Wichita Falls.

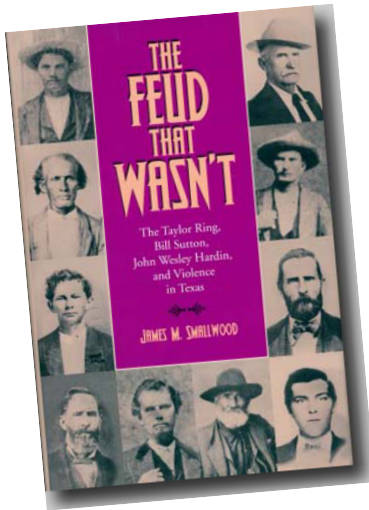
Ranger McDonald became involved in a conflict with Childress County Sheriff John Pearce Matthews. Their animosities toward each other brought about the inevitable gunplay, which also included the brash, young sheriff of newly organized Motley County, Joe Beckham. After several shootouts, McDonald and Matthews ended their feud: Matthews was dead, and McDonald was wounded, but he survived.

Part of the fascination with Neal’s account of the lives of these relatively unknown characters (with the exception of McDonald) is the duality of their natures. Joe Beckham could have worn his sheriff’s badge proudly and honorably with the potential of a long and respected career as a lawman. However, only a few years after the McDonald-Matthews feud, Beckham became an associate of the notorious “Red Buck” Weightman, a man of so little respect that outlaw Bill Doolin had rejected him from his gang. Weightman was a “long rider” and had his own gang of thieves and killers, which Beckham joined. After robberies in Texas and Oklahoma Territory, Beckham was killed on December 27, 1895, fighting a posse in Oklahoma commanded by Texas Ranger Sergeant W. J. L. Sullivan.

Bill Neal’s first work, *Getting Away with Murder on the Texas Frontier*, was named Book of the Year by the National Association for Outlaw and Lawman History (NOLA). It was also a finalist for the Spur Award by the Western Writers of America.

In *From Guns to Gavels*, Neal delivers a solid and factual history/biography, but the style mirrors a fast-paced work of historical fiction. In addition to depicting the violence, which was widespread, Neal traces how the legal system gradually assumed control so that mob law became less and less common. The book is fully annotated with primary source material.





The Feud That Wasn't

*The Taylor Ring, Bill Sutton,
John Wesley Hardin, and Violence in Texas*

James M. Smallwood

College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008. Maps, illus., appendixes, notes, biblio., index, 256 pages. \$29.95 hardcover. ISBN 978-1-60344-017-2.

Review by Bill O'Neal

Carthage, Texas, Billonealbooks@yahoo.com

Texas was the site of more frontier blood feuds than any other state or territory. The first of these disputes, the Regulator-Moderator War of the 1840s, produced thirty-one fatalities, half a dozen more than Arizona's Pleasant Valley War. Even deadlier, by far, than these bloody conflicts was the so-called Sutton-Taylor feud in post-Civil War Texas. It piled up scores of victims, including several under the guns of the notorious John Wesley Hardin.

In *The Feud That Wasn't*, however, James M. Smallwood argues that there was no feud, according to the generally accepted definition of the word as a conflict between aggrieved and vengeance-seeking families or factions. The author proves that the doomed William Sutton, a deputy sheriff attempting to enforce the law against the Taylor crime ring, was the sole member of his family to become involved. Insisting that the violence represents far greater significance than a mere feud, Smallwood contends that the vast Taylor criminal operation was an important arm of ex-Confederate resistance to federally imposed Reconstruction.

The Taylors, a pioneer clan, took advantage of the lawlessness in Texas during the Civil War and Reconstruction Era to steal cattle and horses. Although they never served

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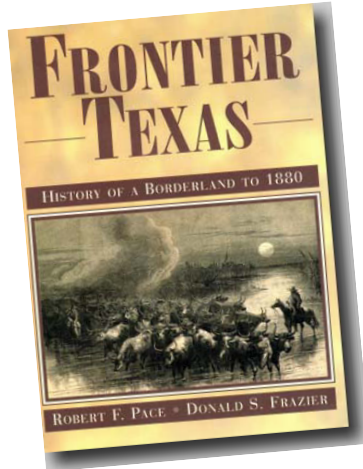
the Confederacy as soldiers, “they wrapped themselves in the Confederate flag” during Reconstruction, posturing as “heroic defenders of old Dixie” and of the “Lost Cause.” (p. xix)

Smallwood compiles a list of 197 men, including Wes Hardin, who were part of the “Taylor Criminal Conspiracy,” a crime ring that committed depredations across 45 Texas counties. In addition to wholesale livestock thefts, they murdered scores of people who opposed them: former slaves, white Unionists, occupation soldiers, and lawmen such as William Sutton. The turmoil spread by the Taylor ring “led to the collapse of the Reconstruction process in the Lone Star State.” (pp. 181-182)

Increasing pressure for law and order eventually resulted in the deaths or incarcerations of many of the Taylors and their accomplices. For more than two decades, though, they were instrumental in Texan resistance to Reconstruction, a widespread pattern that allowed the South to prevail in the continuation of the Civil War. *The Feud That Wasn't* provides a lively account of Western violence, along with the latest evolution of the author's conclusions about Reconstruction.

James Smallwood is a professor *emeritus* of Oklahoma State University and an award-winning authority on Reconstruction. Long familiar with archival records of the period, he has amassed overwhelming evidence to describe and verify his revisionist ideas. The book depicts a vast number of shootouts and lynchings, including many that have never before been described in print. Smallwood uses this buffet of frontier violence to illustrate a larger thesis.





Frontier Texas

History of a Borderland to 1880

Robert F. Pace and Donald S. Frazier

State House Press. McMurry University, Box 637, Abilene, Texas 79697-0637. Bibliography, index, 27 photographs and illustrations, 8 maps.

ISBN 1-880510-83-9. \$19.95, hardcover only.

Review by Chuck Parsons

Frontier Texas offers a glimpse into the history of the borderland of Texas—not the Rio Grande borderland, but the area thought of as the Panhandle and adjacent areas.

There are seven chapters providing a history of the North Texas borderland:

1. Comanches, Spaniards, and the Land, 1700-1821
2. Settlement, Forts, and Soldiers, 1821-1861
3. Ranching and the Cattle Frontier to 1861
4. Civil War and the Texas Frontier, 1861-1865
5. The Military Returns to the Frontier, 1865-1880
6. Destruction of the Buffalo and the Rise of the Cattle Frontier, 1865-1880
7. The Frontier Transformed

Naturally, there is some overlap in this arrangement. Even though the average Texan may feel this is a mere overview of the state's history, each chapter contains new information. More importantly, the readers are made witnesses to the events described.

In discussing the era from pre-Spanish times to 1880, authors Pace and Frazier grab attention with the description of the 1864 capture of Alice Todd by a Comanche war party. She was never recovered, but what is fascinating is that her captors illustrated their accomplishment in pictographs still visible near Paint Rock, Texas.

From this event, discussed in the introduction, the authors move back in time to the days when the earliest historically identifiable group, the Jumanos, were kings of the hill.



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They were eventually pushed aside by the Apaches through either slaughter or intermarriage. The Apaches were then conquered by the Comanches, who were later overthrown by US troops under Ranald S. Mackenzie. The land where the buffalo once roamed by the millions became the home of grazing cattle. It is a tale of conquest followed by conquest.


It would be impossible to cover this area and these centuries without some consideration of the Texas Rangers. Pace and Frazier give attention to this famous organization from its origin, when Stephen F. Austin hired ten experienced frontiersmen to “range.” The group, by then numbering fifty-six men, was formalized at the 1835 revolutionary convention. To become a Ranger all that was needed was a “good and sufficient horse [and] one hundred rounds of powder and ball.” Unlisted was the understanding of a distinct possibility of losing one’s scalp! These men soon proved themselves as a “tough, efficient fighting unit.”

There are two other memorable events relating to the Texas Rangers. One is the efficiency of Delaware Indians, who assisted the Rangers in their scouts. The second is the rescue of Cynthia Ann Parker and her daughter Topsannah by a Ranger squad under L. S. Ross in 1860.

The Texas Rangers developed and grew in number. Under Governor Coke in 1874, the Frontier Battalion was created, lead by Major John B. Jones. A new era was born.

Jones and his efficient companies of young men soon ended the “Indian problem,” and the white outlaw became their focus. As time passed, more changes occurred: buffalo herds were destroyed and cattle took their place, the vast land was reduced by technology as trucks or helicopters replaced the herder on horseback, and telegraphs and telephones replaced couriers on horseback between settlements. In spite of all the advantages of the “modern age,” there are still problems. For instance, the dry land can still be inhospitable, as the presence of water remains an essential for any standard of quality of life.

There may be places in Texas with longer recorded histories, and there are possibly areas whose influence was greater in the state’s development. However, Pace and Frazier make the history of borderland Texas fascinating, interesting, and unforgettable. The book has no endnote numbers to break the line of type, but there is an extensive bibliography for those who wish to read more.

It should be further noted that, although the book *Frontier Texas* was intended to stand alone, it makes a great companion piece to the exhibit “Frontier Texas!” in downtown Abilene. In fact, readers are encouraged to visit. Many of the events described in this book are displayed, and it is a must for anyone who is capable of appreciating history and seeing how technology can make the past come alive. The exhibit is open seven days a week and is well worth the time spent. For more information, contact “Frontier Texas!” at 325.437.2800 or visit  www.frontiertexas.com.

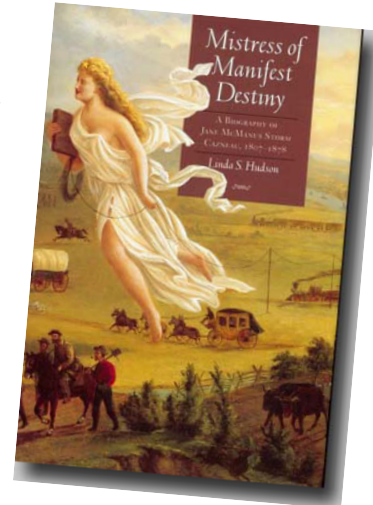
Mistress of Manifest Destiny

A Biography of

Jane McManus Storm Cazneau, 1807–1878

Linda S. Hudson

Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2001.
Bibliographical references, index. \$29.95, hardback.
ISBN 0-87611-179-7.



Review by Nancy Ray

In *Mistress of Manifest Destiny*, author Linda Hudson provides an in-depth biographical study of Jane McManus Storm Cazneau, “a complex person who died at sea the way she lived—at the center of a storm of controversy.” This book thoroughly explains the many roles Mrs. Cazneau played in Texas and American history. She was an industrious person and had a variety of interests that were not typical for a woman of the 1800s. She was an accomplished journalist and commonly used a pen name to disguise her gender. She was a land speculator, a publicist, and an advisor to politicians. She was also active in issues such as the Mexican War, slavery, women’s rights, foreign policy, business, investments, revolutionary activities in Latin America, and other actions promoting manifest destiny. (Manifest Destiny, n: an ostensibly benevolent or necessary policy of imperialistic expansion)

In the conclusion of the book, the author describes Mrs. Cazneau as “dedicated to the expansion of liberty and republican government. She had a special place in her heart for the abandoned and neglected, and she had a deep and abiding love for her country and faith in its people and in its future.” In addition, Mrs. Cazneau preferred frontier women to city women where “the set of hat and the length of a skirt were gossip.” She was not only ahead of her time but also interested in things much grander than “the set of hat and the length of a skirt.”

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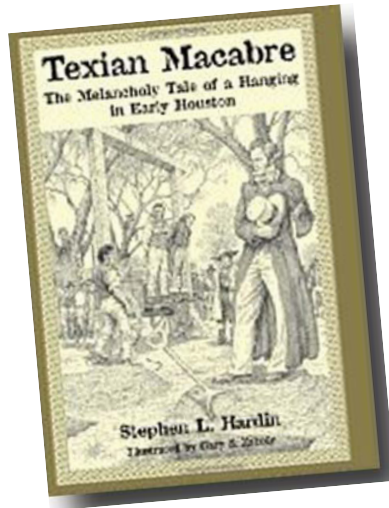
Mrs. Cazneau faced criticism from her adversaries, but their disapproval did not deter her efforts to achieve her goals. The importance of her hard work and the full impact of her achievements were not recognized for decades. In all her activities, Mrs. Cazneau was a visionary and was probably one hundred years or more ahead of her time.

This book is a painstakingly thorough account of the life of Jane Cazneau. The author meticulously documents her research in the last one hundred pages of the book through detailed appendices, a bibliography, and notes. If you are looking for light reading, this book is not the one for you because the text is somewhat tedious due to the numerous quotations, dates, names, and details. However, if you want to learn about a lady who made a significant historical impact on our country, you can do that by reading *Mistress of Manifest Destiny*.

This book was an educational experience for me because I learned about a person who, through her efforts in the 1800s, helped make my life better. She promoted equal rights, she supported expansion of our country, and she encouraged women to become educated. One characteristic I especially liked was that she worked hard to achieve her goals instead of expecting someone else to do things for her. She never gave up, and that makes her a good role model for everyone.

Mistress of Manifest Destiny by Linda Hudson is an excellent reference about the life of Jane McManus Storm Cazneau.





Texian Macabre

The Melancholy Tale of a Hanging in Early Houston

Stephen L. Hardin

State House Press. McMurry Station. Box 637. Abilene, Texas 79697-0637. ISBN 978-1-933337-20-3. 31 maps, photographs, drawings, pp. xix + 325, endnotes, chronology, bibliography, index. cloth, \$24.95.

www.mcwhiney.org/press.

Review by Chuck Parsons

The term *Texian* generally denotes a person or event of Texas history prior to annexation in 1845. *Macabre* describes something horribly gruesome. Dr. Stephen L. Hardin, professor of history at The Victoria College in Victoria, Texas, uses the terms to relate the tale of two unrelated murders and the events leading to the double execution of killers David James Jones and John Christopher Columbus Quick, who were legally hanged in Houston on March 28, 1836. It is not only a melancholy tale, but tragic, written in a style which will figuratively grab the reader and hold attention to the end.

Why does this tale of murder capture our interest? First, Hardin writes in a non-judgmental style while describing the events leading to the killings, the conduction of the trials, and the executions themselves. Secondly, for those who wish to know the source of the mountain of facts culled from primary sources, the endnotes provide sufficient source material. There can be no doubt that Dr. Hardin not only knows where to find exciting material but also how to present it in an entertaining and informative manner.

In addition to learning about the killings, the reader is also given a great understanding of what early Houston was like. No matter how the modern Texan may avoid the overcrowded conditions and traffic nightmares of Houston in 2008, the Houston of the 1830s was worse. Nacogdoches Representative Kelsey H. Douglas described it as the "most miserable place in the world." Imagine the problems caused by rats, garbage thrown

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into the streets, dead animals left to rot due to inadequate ordinances for their removal, horses and carriages allowed to mount the sidewalks, disease easily contracted due to fleas and rats and who knows what else, and the howling of the wolves at night. The topic is admittedly an unpleasant one, but it is a part of the word picture created by Dr. Hardin.

The killing of Manfred Wood by David James Jones was certainly tragic, but the irony which adds pathos is that Jones was one of the fortunate survivors of the Goliad massacre. He was one of the few who escaped the barbarous order of Santa Anna to slaughter prisoners. He then joined Houston's army and experienced combat at the Battle of San Jacinto.

Thanks to Dr. Hardin's ability to unearth the "stranger than truth" aspects of the story, John Christopher Columbus Quick, the man who died on the gallows alongside Jones, was also a veteran of the Revolution. Moses W. Brigham, the man he stabbed, also had fought in the war. Quick and Brigham were in the Houston House, described as "a notorious taproom and gambling den," when their friendly game turned deadly, and Quick stabbed Brigham to death.

Men killing others over trifling matters has been told many times by many different authors and historians. What is unique in *Texian Macabre* is that, besides the cold facts of the killings, readers are given added bonuses from the results of Dr. Hardin's impeccable research. We can almost smell the city, and we can cringe at the description of the streets and buildings. We can also sympathize with the victims as their execution was more the result of hard times, bad whiskey, and bad associates rather than justice being carried out by objective verdicts. Another great addition to the book is the work of noted artist Gary S. Zaboly, who contributed eight pen and ink drawings.

Stephen L. Hardin's previous works include the award-winning *Texian Iliad: A Military History of the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836* (University of Texas Press, 1994); *The Alamo 1836: Santa Anna's Texas Campaign* (Osprey Campaign Series, 2001), and *The Texas Rangers* (Osprey Elite Series, 1991).

