

# HERITAGE

A PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION | EST. 1954 | \$4/ISSUE | WINTER 2000



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FLAGS**  
OF  
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# HERITAGE

A PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

EST. 1954 WINTER 2000

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<p><b>A Grassroots Effort To Preserve the Past</b> 22 BY CYNTHIA HARRIMAN Faced with the loss of their collection of Texas artifacts, which lay in storage, the United Daughters of the Confederacy Texas Division rallied to save its historic flags and find a new home for the banners and other priceless relics.</p>	 <p>HERITAGE A PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION, INC. (ISSN 1045-0918)</p> <p>ON THE COVER Historic flags of Texas. Photos by Dan Hatzenbuehler; Sagamore Hill Historical Site; Texas State Library and Archives; and Texas Military Forces Museum, Camp Mabry. Design by Blake Trabulsi.</p>	
<p><b>A Flag's Story</b> 26 BY FONDA GHIARDI THOMSEN Flags are more than fabric. They tell the story of sacrifice and the struggles of the men who carried them. Fonda Thomsen, considered to be one of this country's premiere textile conservators, says that these banners deserve to be treated with respect and great care in order that the stories within their folds are not lost forever.</p>		

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pertaining to Texas heritage, culture, and preservation activities are given priority. Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, and photos or artwork accurately labeled. Submissions become the property of the Texas Historical Foundation unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope for return of documents, literature, and photographs or drawings from archival storage. Layout/design by Gene Krane; Feature article layout/design by Blake Trabulsi.

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#### CONTRIBUTORS

Austin Library-Austin History Center, Friends of the Texas Historical

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# THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY LEWIS A. JONES

This is a very special issue of HERITAGE magazine. It has a somewhat different look, and it is the first in many years to contain color. It is the subject of this issue that the board of directors felt warranted these special touches. You see, in this particular issue we look at Texas-related flags. In its simplest terms, a flag is a piece of bunting or other textile material of any shape and size displayed on a staff or pole. That is the body of a flag, but its soul is not so easily described. The soul of a flag is a reflection of thoughts and emotions, a pulsating time capsule.

Standards began as vexilloids, solid objects carried at the tops of staffs. They were made of skin, wood, bronze, or precious metal and depicted an attribute of a god or guardian spirit. Five centuries before Christ, Egyptian armies carried tablets inscribed with the pharaoh's name.

That flags can stir emotion is found in the Book of Psalms: "Terrible as an army with banners." Also, Moses called on the people of Israel to "encamp each by his own standard, with the ensigns of their father's houses."

The earliest known flags were used in China to indicate different army groups. In Europe, the Roman cavalry used a square vexillum (flag) to identify themselves. Soon, the flags in Western Europe began to be clothed in religious symbolism.

It seemed natural to state sovereigns to exhibit these repositories of extraordinary virtues symbolizing their divine choice to vanquish the heathen hordes. The blue mantle of St. Martin and the red banner of St. Denis inspired French troops for generations. At the Battle of Hastings, Harold's Dragon Banner was blessed by his English bishops; William had the benediction of the Pope for his standard.

In the Middle Ages, heraldry became important as a means of identifying kings and lords. The distinctive coats of arms that developed were used as pennons, and some still exist today.

The most significant development of flags was for use at sea as a means for identification and code signals. In fact, a seaborne black raven on a white field (the Viking's Sea Rover's Banner) was probably the first flag raised on the North American continent by Erik the Red or his son Leif, circa 1000 A.D. The "red ensign," a small white upper canton with the ancient symbol of England -- the Cross of St. George -- was planted in 1607 at Jamestown and in 1620 at Plymouth. Christopher Columbus hoisted two flags in the Indies: a



Photo by Ann McDonald

personal flag of Ferdinand and Isabella and the royal banner of Spain.

With the American and French Revolutions, political flags came to be the most important of all. The early rebels against British rule in America had already added provocative inscriptions to flags as early as 1774. The most famous of these was the serpent with the message, "Don't tread on me!" The revolution popularized the use of stars as a symbol of independence and liberty, and from 1800 onward, more flags included stars, previously a practically unknown emblem.

In 1839 Texas adopted the "Lone Star" flag to represent the Republic, and it subsequently became the state's banner. The Texas flag is one of the most recognizable, and it should be.

Flags have come to symbolize whole ideologies, as evidenced by the Nazi swastika.

Designed in 1920 by Hitler, it became the national flag of Germany from 1935-1945, representing the Republic's nationalistic and anti-semitic policy.

Unquestionably, the most misunderstood emblem is the Confederate Battle Flag. This was a flag conceived out of necessity. Designed with the distinctive St. Andrew's cross, Confederate troops could readily establish identity and allegiance in the haze and din of battle. The Battle Flag was never adopted by the Confederate government as a national representative. Indeed, it has been purloined by hate groups to advance an ideological cause foreign to its original purpose. The controversy and resultant cacophony has shrouded any legitimate dialogue on the proper placement of this flag in history. Unfortunately, those that swagger mendaciously from their smug high ground about its meaning do so from ignorance -- or worse, with a calculated distortion for a political purpose. Therefore, it is shameful that the history, patriotism, beauty, tragedy, nobility, and romance hidden in its folds, emblazoned in its design, and limned in the colors of the Confederate Battle Flag could be discarded from the storehouse of history.

Flags are a metaphor for people infused with a patriotic and grand purpose of life. These fabric icons continue today to inspire and motivate, as evidenced by the interviews in this magazine with several Texans who tell why they stepped forward to conserve the flags of this state so that their importance in our legacy could continue to be recognized.

God Bless Texas.

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The mission of the Texas Historical Foundation is to serve past, present, and future Texans by supporting research in and publication of Texas history, assisting in the preservation of historic and prehistoric artifacts and information, and raising and providing funds for these purposes in order to recognize and honor past generations and to enrich the awareness of and pride in Texas heritage for present and future generations.



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## TEXAS BATTLE FLAGS



**Flag of the Twentieth Texas Infantry, Galveston 1862** There was no one Confederate flag, but more than a dozen basic designs each with numerous variations. The flag pictured is an elaborate variant of the Confederate First National flag pattern, best known as the Stars and Bars.

One would think that Texans have always cherished their historic flags. After all, the state's most recognizable symbol is the Lone Star banner. Yet before the Civil War it rarely occurred to Texans to save their flags for posterity. Only one Lone Star flag from antebellum Texas still exists in the state, and it was obtained from Mexico. Three Mexican flags from San Jacinto were preserved, but the government of the Republic gave away the Texian battle flag from that memorable day.

After the Civil War, Texas became more firmly attached to the United States, and the flags of the era reflect this. The Federal government insisted on uniformity in its colors, which by the late 19th century played a lesser roll on the battlefield than in the 1860s. The United States Army suppressed the Indians on the state's western frontier, so here and there a significant unit or garrison flag has been preserved. Otherwise, individual flags are rarely associated with historical events of the era—the cattle drovers, frontier sheriffs, Texas Rangers, and oil barons had other symbols. In the 20th century only the Texas National Guard has had many flags of historical significance to preserve.

However, plenty of historic Texas flags do still exist; they are mostly Confederate flags from the Civil War. Relatively more Texans served in the Confederate army than in any other fighting force, and every one of the dozens of Rebel units had its own flag, and usually more than one. Even if Texans had not made a conscious effort to save their Confederate flags, the sheer weight of numbers assured that many would still be around today. But the veterans and their families were passionate about preserving the old flags as testaments to the sacrifices, bravery, and honor of Texas' Civil War generation.

Just as those Texans labored to preserve their past, people today are beginning to make concerted efforts to identify and preserve flags, which represent the roles all Texans

have played in the state's illustrious past. Many are still inspired by the dramatic history the Confederate flags of Texas represent and devote time and effort to their study and conservation. But other flags have captured the imaginations of Texans as well. One of the most popular exhibits at Fort Davis is the simple guidon of a company of Buffalo soldiers, and within the last year several significant flags associated with African-American troops who served on the Texas frontier have been identified, and efforts are underway to raise the money needed to preserve them. Locating and conserving Mexican flags associated

with Texan history is another venue that should eventually yield rich rewards in understanding the Hispanic experience.

Yet, no matter how diligent the effort to locate and preserve significant Texas flags, there will always be more from the Confederate era than from any other, but most of those saved are not mere testaments to the "Lost Cause." These colors were witness to some of the most dramatic events in American history. While we may not always understand their motives or beliefs, thousands of Texans were willing to die under those banners and for that simple reason they deserve to be preserved. —Robert Maberry Jr., Ph.D.

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# SAVING THE COLORS

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## FLAG PRESERVATION AND THE STATE OF

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# TEXAS

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## COLLECTION

BY: ROBERT MABERRY JR., Ph.D.



**I**n June 1999 scores of people and statewide news media braved Austin's early summer heat to attend an event that was a watershed for the preservation of Texas history. The occasion was the unveiling at the Center for American History on the University of Texas campus of nine newly-conserved battle flags from the collections of the Texas State Library. Few in the room depar-

ted that day without having experienced the awe of being in the presence of living history.

The state of Texas has been preserving significant flags since the Battle of San Jacinto, but in recent years the resulting collection, ravaged by time and by well-meaning but misguided preservation attempts, had been relegated to storage in the basement of the state archives building. In all some 23 flags had survived, and reflecting the priorities of previous generations of Texans, all but a



Richey's fanciful reconstruction of the San Jacinto battle flag.

handful date from the Civil War era. Had it not been for the dedication of concerned Texans, it is unlikely any of the flags would ever have been displayed again. But private individuals, refusing to let these treasures be lost, raised more than \$100,000 for the conservation of the nine most significant flags. Despite this success, preserving the historic flags of Texas has not proved an easy task.

Aside from the flag carried by Texian troops at San Jacinto the extant flags associated with the early history of Texas survived only because they were trophies of war. General Sam Houston listed three battalion standards as part of the "vast amount of property" he took from Santa Anna's Army at San Jacinto. These flags remained with Texas military forces, which unfurled them on patriotic occasions up until 1900 when they were turned over to the state library, too fragile and tattered for display. Texans of the time, however, thought little about preserving their own flags. In 1836 the gov-

## HISTORIC FLAGS OF TEXAS PROJECT

The flags were found everywhere. In one yellowed box lay the tattered remnants of a Texas state flag hand-sewn by professional seamstresses in Virginia. The historic flag, boxed for more than 50 years, had been presented to the First Texas Infantry Regiment of John Bell Hood's famous Texas Brigade just before the unit marched off to join Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. The flag flew during the battle at Antietam Creek, where the regiment suffered more than 80 percent casualties in less than an hour while fighting in the famous cornfield.

In another box lay two silk Mexican banners carried by Santa Anna's battalions as they stormed the Alamo. Amid shouts of "Remember the Alamo!" Sam Houston's troops captured those banners — The Matamoros and Guerrero — plus another one during the Battle of San Jacinto.

Found in still another box was the remains of a 28-star American flag first hoisted in 1845, the year Texas became the 28th state in the Union.

These treasures of the Texas past were among the 23 historic flags discovered within the halls of the Texas State Library Archives at the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building. During the time that they have been boxed and stored, only a handful of historians and researchers have viewed the historic relics.

But thanks to the efforts of the Friends of the Texas Historical Commission, state officials, various foundations, and hundreds of individuals who realized the true value of these icons, the flags are being restored, preserved, and will soon be on display for all to view and enjoy. Specifically, officials with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, (see profile on page 14) have offered to host a major exhibit of the restored flags. That exhibit is set for October 2001 and will present the history of this state from the Texas Revolution through World War II.

Without a doubt, this exciting project and culminating exhibit is a fitting way for today's Texans to honor and preserve the legacy of those who came before us.

ment of the Republic returned the San Jacinto battle flag to the family of Sidney Sherman, which donated the remnants back to the state 60 years later (see image, page 7).

Ironically, aside from the San Jacinto color, today all but one of the remaining Texas flags of this period are now property of the Mexican government. Santa Anna sent home the captured guidon of the New Orleans Grays to certify his victory at the Alamo, and it along with five Lone Star flags Mexican forces had captured during the sporadic warfare of the early 1840s, ended up in Mexico City museums. Today, all but one of these, the Lone Star flag displayed in the Star of Texas Museum at Washington-on-the-Brazos, remain in Mexico and unavailable to Texas historians.

Only during the Civil War did Texans begin to make conscious efforts to preserve their own historical flags. The first of these were several battle flags of Hood's Texas Brigade, which in late 1862 were sent back to Austin for display in the state Capitol in order to "strike terror in the hearts of the cowards skulking at home." As the war ended Texas soldiers went to great lengths to ensure their remaining flags did not fall into the hands of victorious Union troops. The men of Hood's Brigade, for instance, tore their last two battle flags to shreds rather than surrender them at Appomattox. Fortunately for posterity, other Texas

Confederates were more circumspect. When the Army of Tennessee surrendered, Mark Kelton, a captain in Granbury's Brigade, removed the battle flag of his regiment from its staff, and with it hidden beneath his clothes, trekked home. Everywhere in the Trans-Mississippi, individual Texas veterans brought their units' flags home with them for safekeeping. Flags on public display in Texas were taken down before the arrival of occupying forces. Yet, some of the most significant Texas Civil War flags survived because they had been captured during

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**By the 1990s the art of flag preservation had become more scientific and more history-conscious. As stated in the Hippocratic oath, the motto of the new breed of textile preservationist was "first do no harm."**

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the war and sent north for public display and as souvenirs for Yankee soldiers.

For more than a decade Confederate flags were not seen in Texas, but the end of Reconstruction brought a resurgence of pride in the colors. At veterans' reunions the battle flags began to reappear, and the presence of one of the old banners at a public gathering "evoked the



Amelia Fowler and her daughter, Katherine Richey



Detail of flag treated by Richey/Fowler method

wildest enthusiasm, which when coupled with the playing of 'Dixie,' set off waves of Rebel yells, extemporaneous oratory, mass foot stomping and not a few tears." Old soldiers began conducting elaborate national searches to locate flags lost during the war, and in the period of reconciliation during the last two decades of the 19th century, many flags were returned by obliging Northerners. To save those for posterity, veterans and their families often entrusted their flags either to the State of Texas or to the newly-formed

United Daughters of the Confederacy (see story on page 22). In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt, as a gesture of national good will, ordered the return of the captured Confederate flags still in possession of the Federal government. These added a number of flags from Texas units to the state's holdings. By the 1920s Texas possessed a significant collection of historic flags, but time had taken its toll — most were in such poor condition that they were too fragile or damaged to be displayed.

In 1931 state librarian Fannie M. Wilcox, who had charge of the collection, began searching for ways to restore the disintegrating flags so they could be exhibited again. She wrote flag dealers, manufacturers, and finally the United States Bureau of Standards, but no one seemed to know how to repair aging flags. Finally the associate director of the Smithsonian Institute referred Wilcox to

the one person in America willing to undertake the project. She was Katherine Richey, and after an exchange of letters, Wilcox began sending her the state's flags.

Richey's aim was to transform historic flags into visually attractive exhibit pieces, but it was her mother, Amelia Fowler, who had developed the technique that Richey employed. In 1912, the commander of the United States Naval



Toluca Battalion Flag



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Academy asked Fowler, who was famous for her needlecraft skills, to develop a method to repair that institution's time-worn flags. After traveling in Europe, she settled on a restoration technique similar to that used for the stabilization of medieval tapestries. It involved placing the flag to be treated on a sturdy linen backing and firmly sewing it in place using a special stitch



Fig. 1

that Fowler had invented and patented. When completed, one side of the flag was hidden and inaccessible, while the stitching made the other appear as if a net covered it. Using this method, Fowler treated more than 170 flags at Annapolis,



Fig. 2

including the original Star-Spangled Banner and the flag of the U.S.S. Constitution.

By the time of the Texas contract, Katherine Richey had taken over the business from her mother and transformed it into a lucrative commercial enterprise. During the '20s and '30s, Richey and her large staff, at an average cost of between \$30 and \$50 per unit, had "preserved" nearly every significant historic flag in America. In promotional material, she claimed the Richey-Fowler method would



Fig. 3

"make the flags endure for centuries, and beautify them for display in any way desired."

Unfortunately, far from making the flags "endure for centuries," the Richey-Fowler method actually caused severe damage. The large threads that comprised the dense netting were sewn directly into the flag's fabric causing the rupture of fragile fibers and accelerated deterioration. Even worse, Richey had no respect for the flags as historical objects. If a flag had become warped or misshapen with time, she would often cut slits in the fabric so it would lay flat or trim away whole sections to improve alignment and symmetry. Sometimes she added new, ahistorical embroidery to make the flags more pleasing to the eye. Flags received in pieces and tatters were reassembled and spliced according to Richey's whims with no regard for the historical record (see image, page 9).

Her treatment of the San Jacinto flag was typical. When Richey received the flag it was little more than a pile of cloth scraps in a box "with no suggestion of a pattern." She made no attempt to locate historical sources to determine how the flag looked but approached the project as if she was working a large jigsaw puzzle. "Often, I would stop, not knowing how to go on," she wrote of the restoration, "then in the house or on the golf course an idea would come to me, . . . I would dash back to the studio,



Fig. 4

place a bit or two, and then wait again for inspiration." Thanks to her inspiration, it will probably never be known for sure exactly what the original flag looked like. During the following decades state curators found it necessary to remove all the Richey treatments and mountings in order to save what was left of the flags.

Curators, however, did not abandon the search for an effective preservation technique. In 1965 state library officials sent the flag of the Toluca Battalion, carried in the assault on the Alamo and captured at San Jacinto, along with several others to a well-known textile expert in upstate New York for treatment. For a time Texans were pleased with the result. The flag, in a beautiful heavy wooden frame hanging high on the wall in the San Jacinto Museum of History, made a dramatic display.

Unfortunately, the New York restorer repeated many of Richey's mistakes. In 1999 when the museum staff closely examined the flag, they discovered the inscription on the middle stripe, "Batallon Activa De Toluca," which when viewed at a distance appeared to be composed of rich dark embroidery, had instead been drawn by the restorer in paint marker. This revelation also solved the mystery of how the word Activo had come to be misspelled on the flag (see image, page 9).

By the 1990s the art of flag preservation had become more scientific and more history-conscious. As stated in the Hippocratic oath, the motto of the new breed of textile preservationist was "first do no harm." Careful technicians applied new methods of stabilizing fabrics that did not damage antique fibers and scrupulously regarded flags as historical documents, not simply display pieces. This meant preserving a flag "as is," neither adding to nor remov-

ing from it and mounting in such a way that future scholars could easily dismantle protective frames and gain access to the surfaces of both sides. For the Texas collection the new era began in 1992 when Textile Preservation Associates of Sharpsburg, Maryland, conserved the San Jacinto battle flag according to the new standards (see article on page 26). State curators realized that if the remain-



Fig. 5

ing Texas flags were ever to be available to the public again they would require the same treatment. Unfortunately, modern conservation is very expensive, and the state legislature had little interest in allocating funds for further preservation.

The story, however, has a happy end-



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

ing. Individual Texans care deeply for their flags, and under the leadership of former United States Congressman Mike Andrews and John Nau, chairman of the

Texas Historical Commission, they resolved to rescue the flags in the state's collection. Working through the non-profit Friends of the Texas Historical

### Conserved Flags of the Texas State Library and Archives

By Robert Maberry Jr., Ph.D. (Flag images on pages 10-11.)

1 **Matamoros Battalion flag.** The Matamoros Battalion participated in the siege and assault on the Alamo and was annihilated at the Battle of San Jacinto where Texian forces captured its flag.

2 **Guerrero Battalion flag.** The Guerrero Battalion joined Santa Anna just after the fall of the Alamo and was part of the army destroyed at San Jacinto. Recent chemical analysis revealed that its captured flag is drenched in blood.

3 **Flag of the First Texas Infantry, Hood's Texas Brigade.** This flag sewn from dress silk and presented to the regiment by Lula Wigfall, daughter of its first commander, is one of the great treasures of Texas history. At the Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862, during the desperate fighting in Miller's cornfield the First Texas suffered more than 82 percent casualties — the highest endured by any unit North or South in the entire war. That day nine standard bearers fell carrying the flag. When the last man was killed the flag was captured and picked up from among the corpses by a Pennsylvania private.

4 **First Texas Infantry, Army of Northern Virginia pattern battle flag.** Confederate authorities meant this flag to be a replacement for the Lone Star flag of the First Texas. The regiment, however, refused to relinquish the Texas flag and carried both into battle at Antietam. This flag was also lost in Miller's cornfield.

5 **First Texas Infantry, Army of Northern Virginia late bunting issue battle flag.** The Richmond government issued this over-sized flag to the First Texas very late in the war. Union forces captured it just days before the surrender at Appomattox.

6 **Sixth Texas Infantry and Fifteenth Texas Cavalry (consolidated), Granbury's Texas Brigade, Hardee Pattern battle flag.** General Pat Cleburne's Division, which

included Granbury's Brigade, was the only command in the Confederate army authorized to fly the blue Hardee pattern flag. Texans carried this flag through the bloody carnage at the Battle of Franklin, the defeat at Nashville, and up until the Army of Tennessee's final surrender in May 1865. Captain Mark Kelton hid this flag under his clothes to prevent its capture.

7 **Seventeenth and Eighteenth Texas Cavalry (dismounted and consolidated) Granbury's Texas Brigade, Hardee pattern battle flag.** Union forces captured this flag in fierce hand-to-hand fighting at the battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864. Following the war, veterans of the regiment exerted considerable efforts to locate the lost flag, and in 1914 the widow of a Union officer returned it to Texas.

8 **Taylor pattern battle flag of unidentified regiment, Walker's Texas Division.** Taylor battle flags are unusual in that they reverse the normal colors of the Confederate battle flag. The inscriptions on this presentation flag commemorate the battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill where Confederate troops repulsed a large Union force in Louisiana near the Red River, saving East Texas from invasion. Walker's Division, which fought mostly in Louisiana and Arkansas, was the largest formation of Texas troops to serve during the war.

9 **Gould's Sixth Texas Cavalry Battalion, Confederate Stars and Bars variant.** This imaginative, homespun variant of the Confederate First National pattern flag is hand-sewn cotton pieced together like a quilt. Gould's Battalion was dismounted soon after its formation in 1862 and serving as infantry saw much action along the Red River. After the war, its commander Robert S. Gould, a noted jurist, became chief justice of the Texas Supreme Court and was one of the two original faculty members of the University of Texas law school.

Commission and in conjunction with Chris LaPlante of the Texas State Library, the group initiated the Historic Flags of Texas Project in 1997. The first phase of the project was to identify the most historically significant flags in the state collection and raise the funds required for their conservation. This effort culminated in the unveiling of the nine magnificently conserved flags. Fundraising is now underway for the treatment of the rest of

the collection (see sidebar on page 14).

The second phase of the project will be an unprecedented exhibition of 40 of the most significant surviving flags from all eras of Texas history to be presented at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, in the fall of 2001. Gleaned from collections throughout the country, the exhibit will include flags from San Jacinto and the Texas Republic, as well as the most important surviving flags of the state's Civil

War regiments, including all the existing colors of Hood's Texas Brigade. Flags associated with the Texas frontier, the

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**As the war ended Texas soldiers went to great lengths to ensure their remaining flags did not fall into the hands of victorious Union troops.**

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## PROFILE: MIKE ANDREWS A GREAT IDEA TAKES WING

"I've always enjoyed history, and historic preservation has been a real passion with me," says Mike Andrews, the man whom many credit as the creator of the Historic Flags of Texas Project.

It all began when Andrews, currently a partner at Vinson & Elkins in Washington, D.C., and a Houston Democrat, was a U.S. Congressman. "I was early for a scheduled meeting with Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby, so I stopped by the old General Land Office Building." At that time this building was home of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Daughters of the Republic of Texas museums. "I was really surprised to see the artifacts they had. Among them were the flags of Texas—very historical flags."

The sight of these historic icons led Andrews to invite John Nau, now chairman of the Texas Historical Commission, and Peter Marzio, director of the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, to the Texas State Library and the UDC Museum.

It was on this trip that the men forged the idea. "The three of us had a chance to see some spectacular history that had been boxed, some of it since the early 1900s. All of the flags were in very bad condition. And we decided that it would be worthwhile to try to raise funds to restore those... So we started the process."

To date a remarkable amount of money has been raised, with adopt-a-flag programs for most of the flags, including those in the possession of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the

Texas State Library, as well as those at museums all around the state. Though the purpose of the project at the beginning was to restore flags of the earliest Texans, which were most in need of repair, it was decided that the effort would also include flags through World War II, when the Armed Forces began to discourage geographically-raised divisions.

Why expand the scope of the project? As Andrews puts it, "We wanted to tell more of a story than the Texas Revolution and the Texas Confederacy. We realized that there were flags all around the state that were never fully interpreted," highlighting the heroism of Texans from those long-passed to those down-the-block—and emphasizing that all Texans are able to be heroes, fighting alongside their great-grandfathers whom they never met.

For this reason, flags are being recruited everywhere from Washington-on-the-Brazos to Washington, D.C. An example is Teddy Roosevelt's flag from San Juan Hill, which will be loaned by the National Park Service. "Teddy took it to San Antonio. This is the flag that he carried when he went to the Menger and recruited about half of the Rough Riders from the bar."

World War II will be represented by a flag from the T-Patch division, a group that included a large number of South Texans, as well as by another banner from a famous ship. "I got a call from the guy who runs the Battleship Texas, and I asked him if he had any flags by any

chance. And he said, 'Oh, yes. We've got a flag in storage that was shot down the day after D-Day. When the Battleship Texas flag was shot down, there were six or seven sailors who were wounded and in the hospital. The sailors who survived the attack signed their names on the flag and delivered it to their fellow sailors at the hospital.'"

Andrews says enthusiastically, "These flags are a window into the history of Texas and what it means to be a Texan." People from all over the state will have "a chance to study and learn from these flags representing Santa Anna's regiments, Texas soldiers who fought in the Civil War, those that landed in Italy and fought all the way to Berlin—and discover who they were, what they tried to accomplish, what their victories were, and their failures too."

Mike Andrews' idea was a good one. The flags that Texans have fought under are a powerful reminder of who we are as Texans. To put them together under one roof will be an experience never before provided to Texans—and an inspirational one.

For instance, the Toluca Battalion Flag, a Mexican Army flag included in the exhibit, "went over the wall at the Alamo...we found it, and it had a great big red stain on it, like someone poured red dye on it or used a marker pen. It turns out that it was blood. It was soaked in blood. And no one has ever really seen this flag. Until now." —Oliver Franklin





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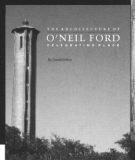
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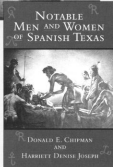
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## PROFILE: PETER MARZIO

# MORE THAN FLAG-WAVING

"I first heard about it from Mike Andrews about three years ago," says Peter Marzio, director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, about the Historic Flags of Texas Project. "You know Mike, he's got all that enthusiasm—it's hard to say 'no' to him!" Especially when faced with centuries of Texas legacy vanishing before history's eyes.

In the dusty boxes of decrepit old cloth languishing in collections around the state, Marzio found an opportunity to rescue vital bits of Texas history—artifacts that represented moments that defined a state as much as a state-of-mind.

"If the project did nothing else but help justify the conservation of the flags, particularly the ones that were made with weak or used materials, then that was well worth doing." To Marzio, once a curator at the Smithsonian Museum of American History, the relationship between material fabric and social fabric was clear. Texas, Marzio says, "probably has the most interesting flag history of any state in the United States. Texas is also surely one of

the most independent and individualistic societies that ever existed...So the banners are about much more than just flag waving. I think they have a lot to do with personality and history."

That personality is not limited to a specific time or type of person. Indeed, it encompasses Texans of all kinds and ages. "If ever there's a state that is diverse, it's Texas. And I think the flags convey that. The flags show this variety of ethnicities, histories, values, economic status, and everything else that goes into this state."

But a historic flag exhibit in an art museum? There is precedent—after all, who can forget the countless portrayals of flags in famous paintings of the last 150 years, from reverent battle portraits to post-modern parodies! The thinking behind the exhibit will borrow from both angles—flag as art and flag as icon. As Marzio puts it, "It seems to me that the flag is a piece of popular art, and I think it should be as comfortable in an art museum as it is in a history museum or historical society."

In addition, being in an art museum allows the exhibit designers perhaps a bit more play with their craft. Plans call for an unconventional, exciting exhibition. Though he won't reveal the display features, Marzio promises that both historians and art aficionados will be very pleased.

Ultimately, the goal of the exhibit is to bring people together. In fact, Marzio hopes that the exhibit, by showing flags that every kind of Texan—from Confederate generals to privates at Anzio—served under, will build a spirit of cohesion, of community, for every Texan. "Maybe part of what makes it worth doing is that it can take away some of the 'us-and-them' feeling that flag-waving can sometimes create."

It may be controversial, but Marzio believe it's worth the risk. What better way to show everyone that we are united as Texans than through our flags? After all, taking risks in the name of the Lone Star is a long-held Texas tradition. —Oliver Franklin

Spanish-American War, and Texas units that served in World Wars I and II will round out the exhibition.

Flag conservation in Texas is now off to a solid start. The spectacular effort by the membership of the United Daughters of the Confederacy to preserve their impressive collection and the success of the Historic Flags of Texas Project have awakened considerable interest in flag conservation throughout the state. But there are still many flags yet to be located, identified, and treated (see sidebar on this page), and only the continued partnership between the state, private organizations, and individual Texans can assure that these treasures will not be lost.

Robert Maberry Jr., Ph.D., is adjunct professor of history at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, historian for the Historic Flags of Texas Project, and guest curator for "Texas Flags 1836-1945" exhibit at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

## Unconserved State Archives Flags (in order of priority)

By Robert Maberry Jr., Ph.D.

- 1 Fifth Texas, Hood's Brigade, First National/Lone Star variant.** This is the second battle flag of the Fifth Texas Infantry. Texas State Archives M-29.
- 2 Third Texas Cavalry, Ross' Brigade.** This is a rare late-1863 Army of Northern Virginia variant battle flag with battle honors connoting the extensive service of Ross' Brigade in the Army of Tennessee. Texas State Archives M-84.
- 3 Galveston Garrison Flag.** This large Second National pattern Confederate flag flew over the Galveston defenses beginning in 1863.
- 4 Eighth Texas Infantry, Hobby's Regiment.** This First National Pattern "Stars and Bars" with seven stars was the garrison flag of Fort Esperanza. Hobby's Regiment, commanded by A. M. Hobby (great uncle of former Texas Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby), manned this Confederate maritime stronghold. The regiment was at least one-third Tejano. Fort Esperanza was a large sand and shell redoubt erected on Matagorda Island that defended Pass Cavallo. The fort and its flag were captured in November 1863 during a massive sea-borne Union invasion. Texas State Archives M-18.
- 5 16th Texas Regiment (infantry or cavalry?) Saint Andrew's Cross battle flag.** Both the Sixteenth Texas Infantry and Sixteenth Texas Cavalry were part of the forces that repelled Union General Banks in the Red River Campaign. This is a fine red battle flag with some interesting stitch work. Texas State Archives M-15.
- 6 Lone Star Flag.** This is a Texas flag that has been impossible to identify. Texas State Archives M-30.
- 7 Saint Andrew's Cross variant battle flag of unidentified unit.** This interesting flag is hand stitched from printed silk dressmaker's fabric. The yellow printed repeats are visible throughout the field. Texas State Archives M-23.
- 8 Saint Andrew's Cross battle flag with oversized stars.** Unidentified "home-made" flag. Texas State Archives M-25.

9 **Saint Andrew's Cross battle flag of unidentified unit.** This flag is unusual in that it displays a black cross superimposed and affixed across the center. Accompanying the flag is a small back bow that was apparently attached to the reverse. Texas State Archives M-10.

10 **Second National Pattern "Stainless Banner" of unknown unit.** Stenciled on the flag is "Battle of Mobile Bay, no. 206. Wm. Lonis Phil Museum Sale." These words give intriguing hints as to the history and origin of this flag, but beyond this nothing is known. Texas State Archives M-13.

11 **Large unique battling flag.** This unusual flag displays a circular disk in the center of the field with red six-point star within. Around the disk orbit six stars. Cryptically inscribed on the heading is "captured by Moonlight after a long chase." History and identity of this flag are unknown. Texas State Archives M-32.

12 **11th Louisiana Volunteer Infantry.** This is a First National pattern "Stars and Bars" Confederate flag. On the top bar of the field is the battle honor "Belmont," commemorating the regiment's last battle. On the lower bar is inscribed "November 7th 1861," the date of the Battle of Belmont.

On the white middle bar is the name "Major E. G. W. Butler," an officer who was killed leading the attack at Belmont. In subsequent battles the Eleventh Louisiana suffered such heavy losses that the regiment was disbanded in August 1862. Texas State Archives M-4.

13 **Blue battling flag with white crescent moon in center surrounded by eight white stars.** On the hoist edge is written "Captured near Saint Johns River." Nothing more is known about this flag. Texas State Archives M-28.

14 **First National Pattern (maritime) "Stars and Bars" long and narrow (80" by 26.5") variant with single star in the canton.** This flag was reported to have been seized from the British schooner William on October 21, 1863. Its origin is unknown, but it probably was sent to the Texas State Archives because it was assumed that the lone star signified that it was a Texas flag. Texas State Archives M-24.

15 **Stars and Stripes with 28 stars.** When Texas entered the Union in 1845, it became the 28th state. This flag was in use for only one year until the next state (and star) was added to the Union. Texas State Archives M-75.

16 **Masonic Flag.** This is a flag displaying some of the traditional Masonic symbols. In the center of the field is a right angle rule and a calipers, all surrounded by seven stars. No history of this flag is available. Texas State Archives M-8.

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**The state of Texas has been preserving significant flags since the Battle of San Jacinto, but in recent years the resulting collection, ravaged by time and by well-meaning but misguided preservation attempts, had been relegated to storage in the basement of the state archives building.**

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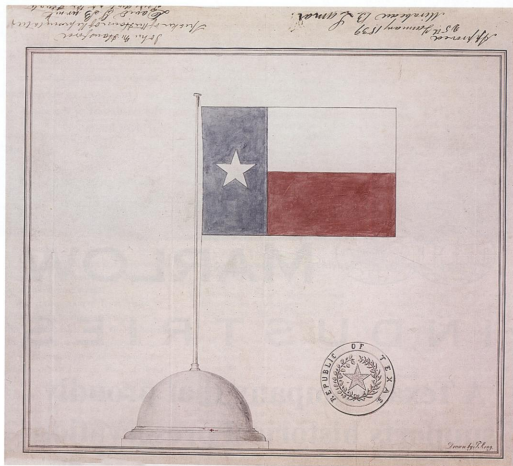
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# Who Designed the Lone Star Flag?



Even though the Texas state flag is recognized around the world, there is still great controversy and scholarly debate surrounding just who designed this famous icon.

BY CHARLES A. SPAIN JR. • IMAGE ABOVE COURTESY OF THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY & ARCHIVES COMMISSION

**T**he Lone Star Flag, adopted by the Republic of Texas in 1839, is the state's most revered symbol. Perhaps unique among United States state flags, it is recognized around the world. It is natural, then, to wonder who designed this great flag.

For the flag's 150th anniversary in 1989, the Legislature, by concurrent resolution of both the Senate and House of Representatives, said, "This beautiful symbol of our state was designed by Dr. Charles B. Stewart, the second signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, the design was first approved by a committee of prominent Texans including Lorenzo de Zavala, William B. Scates, Thomas Barnett, Sterling C. Robertson, Thomas J. Guley, and Richard Ellis, and . . . the Lone Star Flag was officially adopted by the Third Congress of the Republic of Texas in Houston on January 25, 1839." However, in 1992 the Legislature changed its mind and declared in another concurrent resolution that because "subsequent historical research has revealed that the actual designer of the Lone Star Flag is unknown," they would instead "recognize Senator William H. Wharton and Senator Oliver Jones for their efforts in adopting this abiding symbol of our state's unity." Finally, in 1997, the House of Representatives passed a simple resolution recognizing Dr. Stewart as the flag's designer and declaring Montgomery County as "the birthplace of the Lone Star Flag."

While there are certainly many unanswered questions about the flag's origins, there is a great deal of information that is known.

### The Dodson Flag

The first—and one of the best researched—histories of Texas flags was written by Adèle Looscan and published in the 1898 book "A Comprehensive History of Texas 1685 to 1897." In the section *The History and Evolution of the Texas Flag*, Looscan describes a flag made by Sarah Dodson at Hainsburg in September 1835.

**Texas Flag and Seal Design by Peter Krug**  
Original color design sketch by Peter Krug of flag and seal for the Republic of Texas, approved January 25, 1839; signed by Lamar, Hansford, and Barnett. From the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.



The flag consisted of three horizontal "squares" of the colors blue, white, and red, with a white lone star centered in the blue square (see top image). The flag's shape was similar to the Mexican green-white-red tricolor, and the white star allegedly symbolized that Texas was the only Mexican state in which the star of liberty was rising. Looscan believed that the stripes were truly square, although this certainly made for an oddly shaped flag. In any event, the Dodson flag and the Lone Star Flag are obviously very similar, with only the rearrangement of the white and red squares or stripes into a white stripe over a red stripe.

### The March 1836 Flag from the General Convention at Washington-on-the-Bricks

The first discussion of a national flag for Texas occurred at the March 1836 general convention at Washington-on-the-Bricks. The convention's journals, which are admittedly incomplete, show that a flag committee was appointed on March 3, 1836, to "devise & report to this Convention a suitable flag for the Republic of Texas". The committee members were Lorenzo de Zavala, William B. Scates, Thomas Barnett, Sterling C. Robertson, Thomas J. Guley, and Richard Ellis. But here is where the story starts to get complicated. The March 12, 1836, convention journal states, "On motion of Mr. Scates, the Rainbow and star of five points above the western horizon, and the star of six points sinking below, was added to the flag of Mr. Zavala accepted on Friday last". But what was Zavala's design? The answer is simply not known. The journals for Friday, March 4 and 11 are silent, and the convention hastily adjourned on March 17 after learning of the approaching Mexican army.

So there is an unknown flag design, to which was added a rainbow and two stars. Making matters worse, Charles Taylor in-



**Top image:** The Dodson Flag. Blue, white, and red squares; white star on blue square. Made by Sarah (Beadley) Dodson in September 1835 for use by her husband Archibald Blyman Dodson's company of soldiers. **Bottom:** 1836 National Standard/"David G. Barnett Flag". Gold star on blue field; national flag December 10, 1836, to January 25, 1839. © 1975 Whitney Smith. Used by permission.

roduced another resolution on March 12, 1836: "Resolved that the word 'Texas' be placed, one letter between each point of the star on the national flag." The journals do not say whether Taylor's resolution passed, and it is not even clear that the convention ever adopted a final flag design. Although it is known that the convention discussed the idea of a national flag, it is possible that the arrival of news of the March 6 fall of the Alamo foreclosed further debate on the flag issue.

### The National Standard of Texas

The first official national flag was the "National Standard of Texas" or "David G. Barnett flag." President ad interim Barnett proposed this design in an October 11, 1836, letter to Congress, and Senator William H. Wharton sponsored the bill to adopt it. The flag consisted of an azure (blue) ground with a large gold star in the center (see bottom image above); it served

## PROFILE: JOHN NAU

# LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Since his appointment as chairman of the Texas Historical Commission in January 1995, John L. Nau III, of Houston, has represented the state agency dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of our Texas heritage. He has taken special interest, however, in an effort that he feels especially proud of: the Historic Flags of Texas project.

According to Nau, "The idea for this undertaking was born out of boxes discovered lying within the files of the Texas State Library and Archives containing 23 historic flags. After careful examination and consideration, the Commission quickly realized that these flags, clearly telling the chronicles of Texas, should be displayed and made available for all Texans to see."

The nine flags recently unveiled in June 1999, were part of Phase I of the Preservation and Restoration Project (see sidebar of conserved flags on page 11). In the next phase of the project, the Commission will oversee the restoration of three more flags with significant value to Texas history. These flags include the Fifth Texas Hood's Brigade, a hybrid of the Texas Lone Star and Confederate flag present at Second Manassas, serving the regiment during the Maryland invasion and carried during the carnage of the Antietam holocaust; the Toluca Battalion Battle Flag, one of the hardest fighting commands in Santa Anna's army present during the final assault on the Alamo and later captured at San Jacinto; and the handmade Fifth Texas Infantry, present at the legendary "General Lee to the rear" episode at the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864. Handsewn by Maude J. Young of Houston and presented to the regiment in the winter of 1862-63 with defeat on the horizon, officers of the Fifth Texas returned the battle flag to Young for safekeeping.

As an avid historian, Nau is pleased to be a part of the effort being made to preserve essential reminders of the Texas past for the generations that are yet to come. "The challenge to raise

more than \$300,000 necessary to preserve and restore these nine flags in Phase I was a great challenge," he said. "Several companies, foundations, and individuals stepped up to the plate and offered financial assistance by adopting individual flags as a means of supporting this worthy endeavor. While the generosity of these patriotic groups and individuals has afforded us the opportunity to step back in time and relive milestones that reflect the history of our great state, additional funds are still needed" (see sidebar of unconserved flags on page 14).

Nau has not seen fit, though, to let others shoulder the great financial challenges of this flag conservation project. As president and chief executive officer of Silver Eagle Distributors, L.P., he, his wife Bobbie, and Silver Eagle Distributors have become the sponsors of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Texas Cavalry Consolidated, Granbury's Texas Brigade flag. During the Atlanta Campaign Granbury's Brigade, including the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Texas, participated in some of the hardest fighting of the war. After a brief hand-to-hand struggle at the Battle of Atlanta on July 24, 1864, the battle flag was taken by a soldier of the Fifteenth Michigan Infantry and turned over to Union General William T. Clark. After the war, veterans of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Texas made considerable efforts to locate the flag. After a long search, the flag was found and returned to Texas in 1914.

"This flag, not unlike the others, represents a significant part in the history of Texas as we know it today," said Nau. "It is the finest Hardee battle flag in existence, and it was important that we keep it preserved for future generations."

**JOHN NAU HAS NOT SEEN  
FIT, THOUGH, TO LET  
OTHERS SHOULDER THE  
GREAT FINANCIAL  
CHALLENGES OF THIS  
(HISTORIC FLAGS OF  
TEXAS) PROJECT.**

as the national flag from December 10, 1836, to the adoption of the Lone Star Flag on January 25, 1839. The Texas naval ensign was also adopted as a part of the same bill. The ensign was the same design as the United States flag, except it had only one star in the blue union (see image on page 20).

## The Lone Star Flag

The Lone Star Flag was adopted by the Texas Congress in 1839, replacing both the David G. Burnett flag and the naval ensign: "[T]he national flag of Texas shall consist of a blue perpendicular stripe of the width of one third of the whole length of the flag, with a white star of five points in the centre thereof, and two horizontal stripes of equal breadth, the upper stripe white, the lower red, of the length of two thirds of the whole length of the flag" (see image on page 16). Senator Wharton introduced a bill on December 28, 1838, containing the flag's design, and the bill was referred to a committee consisting of Senator Oliver Jones and two unnamed senators. This committee reported a substitute bill containing the same flag design introduced by Wharton. Congress passed the substitute bill on January 21, 1839, and President Mirabeau B. Lamar approved it on January 25, 1839. The bill also modified the Texas seal into its present form, a lone star encircled by olive and live oak branches. Official art for the Lone Star Flag and seal was drawn by Peter Krag, and this art was approved and signed (upside down) on January 25, 1839, by President Lamar; John M. Hansford, speaker of the House of Representatives; and David G. Burnett, president of the Senate. It is noteworthy that Krag's flag and seal art were approved and signed with the same legislative formality as the text of the bill.

## The Stewart Claim

So how does this relate to the claim that Charles B. Stewart designed the Lone Star Flag? Stewart came to Texas in 1830 and was actively involved in Texas politics. Among other things, he was a delegate to the 1836 convention, signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, practiced medicine in the town of Montgomery, and served three terms as a member of the House of Representatives after statehood. Stewart clearly was an influential man with friends in high office, but none of this links him to the Lone Star Flag.



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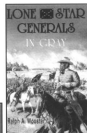
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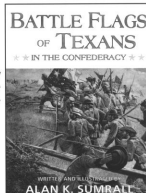
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1836 National Flag for the Naval Service. White star on blue union, alternating red and white stripes. April 9, 1836, to December 10, 1836 (adopted by president); December 10, 1836, to January 23, 1839 (adopted by Congress). © 1975 Whitney Smith. Used by permission.

In her 1988 article, Lossen is clearly skeptical that the 1836 convention adopted a flag, and she does not mention Stewart at all in connection with the Lone Star Flag. The Stewart claim appears to have originated in the 1920s, when one of Stewart's sons, Edmund B. Stewart, began publicly displaying what he claimed was his father's original drawing of the 1839 Lone Star Flag and the seal.

In a letter of July 7, 1921, Stewart's son claims his father and Lorenzo de Zavala were appointed by President Lamar to a committee of three to design the Texas flag. Zavala, however, died in November 1836, two years before Lamar became president. Furthermore, the committee of three is doubtless the 1836-1839 Senate committee of which Senator Oliver Jones was the chair. Lamar, as president, would have had no role in appointing a Senate committee, and it would have been highly unusual for Stewart to serve on the committee since he was not a senator or even a congressman.

The chief source of the Stewart claim is in Marnie Wynne Cox's 1936 book, "The Romantic Flags of Texas." Cox, relying on information from Stewart's granddaughters, Elizabeth Stewart Flagg, identifies the three members of the 1836-1839 Senate committee as Senator William H. Wharton, Senator Oliver Jones, and Stewart. Cox states that Stewart personally designed the flag and drew the original art for both the flag and seal on linen, which was signed by President Lamar on January 25, 1839, the day Lamar approved the flag bill.

Although Stewart's papers were available, Cox does not cite to any of Stewart's

letters or journals to support the claim that he designed the flag. The Stewart art for the 1839 flag and seal is reproduced as the frontispiece to Cox's book. This art shows the flag and seal in almost identical form to the Krag art. The approval of President Lamar is also almost identical to the Krag art, including the fact that Lamar's writing is upside down. One significant difference is that the signatures of Representative Hansford and Senator Burnett are absent from the Stewart art. In their place is the legend, "Original Flag—Republic of Texas."

In addition to promoting the Stewart claim, Cox also began the legend that the 1836 convention actually adopted a specific flag design. Cox illustrates this "Zavala flag" as a blue field with a five-pointed white star containing the letters "T-E-X-A-S" between each star point (see image below). This "Zavala flag" runs contrary to the convention journals, but instead appears to come from elements of a flag carried by Captain George H. Burroughs' company of cavalry that arrived from Ohio in September 1836.

The Stewart claim next appears in Charles E. Gilbert's 1964 book, "A Concise History of Early Texas 1519 to 1861." Gilbert relies largely on Cox for his research but adds the claim that Stewart's design for the Lone Star Flag was approved by a committee consisting of Lorenzo de Zavala, William B. Scates, Thomas Burnett, Sterling C. Robertson, Thomas J. Guzey, and Richard Ellis. This committee, of course, was the 1836 flag committee present at Washington-on-the-Brazos. Although Stewart was a member of the 1836 convention, Gilbert does not suggest that Stewart was an active participant in the flag debates. Gilbert's book was the



"Zavala Flag." White star and white letters on blue field design first appeared in 1916; neither design or claim that it was adopted as first national flag is supported by historical record. © Whitney Smith. Used by permission.

source of the historically inaccurate information contained in the Legislature's 1989 concurrent resolution. This book was republished in 1989 under the title "Flag of Texas," and it remains in print.

Due to the influence of Cox's and Gilbert's books, several other works have mentioned the Stewart claim. A recent reference to the claim is made in Stewart's bibliographic entry in the 1996 "New Handbook of Texas," written by Virginia Stewart Lindley Ford. Stewart's original entry in the 1952 "Handbook of Texas" did not refer to his designing the Lone Star Flag.

## Conclusion

Did Charles Stewart design the Lone Star Flag? Though it cannot be said that he did not, the evidence presented so far to support this claim is certainly not persuasive. It is hard to believe that the Texas Senate would appoint a nonmember to serve on a Senate committee. It is also hard to believe that the art pictured in Cox's book was actually signed by President Lamar on January 25, 1839. First, why was Peter Krag paid to draw art for the 1839 flag and seal if Stewart actually designed and drew the flag? Second, why would Lamar approve and sign two similar documents on the same day (and, curiously, both upside down)? Third, why would Lamar sign a document bearing the legend, "Original Flag—Republic of Texas," when that was obviously incorrect? The 1839 flag bill was expressly intended to amend the 1836 flag bill by replacing the original national flag of Texas—the Burnett flag and naval ensign—with the Lone Star Flag.

What is lacking in support of the Stewart claim is documentary evidence from Stewart himself or other sources. His personal papers are stored in the Montgomery County Heritage Museum in Conroe, but to date no one has found any reference in those papers to the Lone Star Flag. The same is also true for other key figures in the story of the flag: Zavala, Burnett, Wharton, and Jones. Until the historical research is done through the papers of these men and others, no one can provide a definitive answer. It is possible that the identity of the flag designer may remain a mystery—assuming it was just one person. But the Legislature had the right idea in 1992 by recognizing Senator Wharton and Senator Jones, two men we know were influential in getting the flag adopted.

We can still safely speculate about the



## PROFILE: SHELL OIL COMPANY FOUNDATION PIVOTAL PLAYERS

Texans have a lot for which to thank Shell Oil Company Foundation. For years, this Houston-based corporate foundation has been a quiet but important player in historic preservation and education projects. Time after time, the Foundation has given its support to significant projects, often at early stages. In doing so, they have provided necessary funds as well as the spark of endorsement often needed to make a project a reality.

Shell Oil Company Foundation once again played a pivotal role, signing on as one of the earliest supporters of the Historic Flags of Texas Project. According to former U.S. Representative Mike Andrews, a founding father of the project, Shell Oil Company Foundation was among the first organizations approached.

"When the idea was born to save these historic flags, the need was clear, but the resources were initially non-existent. Shell Foundation was one of the first we approached, and it has since become one of the biggest contributors," Andrews said.

Shell Oil Company Foundation's substantial financial investment not only ignited major funder interest in the project. It also helped finance the project's early stages—the initial research and documentation that launched the preservation effort. In addition, Shell Oil Company Foundation became an official flag adopter by providing the funds necessary to conserve an important Texas banner that will appear in the Historic Flags of Texas exhibit in Houston: the flag of the Sixth Texas Infantry and Fifteenth Texas Cavalry Consolidated—the famous Granbury's Brigade.

According to Frances Rabbe, grants officer for the Foundation's charitable activities, "Because of Shell's strong connection to Texas, we have always felt that it is a great honor to be a part of any project that preserved the state's history. We are delighted to have had the opportunity not only to fund the conservation of two very historic banners, but also to have been a part of the research that has unearthed so much new information for this state's historical records." —*Oliver Franklin/Gene Krane*

inspiration for the Lone Star Flag. It was probably based on Dodson's flag, which itself was based on the Mexican flag, a banner in turn based on the French revolutionary tricolor of blue, white, and red. The Dodson flag was created at a time when many people in Texas still wanted Texas to remain part of Mexico, but only as part of a federal state loyal to the 1824 Mexican constitution. Certainly by the fall of the Alamo on March 6, 1836, the possibility of Texas remaining part of Mexico was gone. The Lone Star Flag was nevertheless able to use the basic Dodson elements by rearranging them into a variant of the U.S. flag in its most basic form: one red stripe, one white stripe, and one white star on a blue field. The Lone Star Flag is not only beautiful in its simplicity but elegant in the way that it bridges the Mexican and American heritage of Texas.

The question of who designed the Lone Star Flag apparently was not a concern in the 19th century. It now seems like a simple question that must have a simple answer.

Hopefully this desire for certainty will constructively channel itself into further research about the history of Texas flags. With so many old newspapers and collections of personal papers unread by flag historians, the definitive story of Texas and her flags is far from complete.

Charles A. Spain Jr. is a Houston attorney whose hobby is vexillology, the study of flags. He is secretary-general of the International Federation of Vexillological Associations and past president of the North American Vexillological Association.

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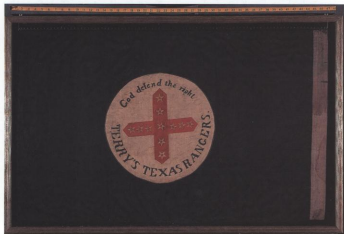
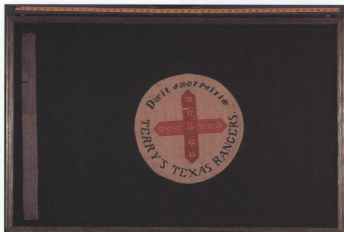
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# A Grassroots Effort to Preserve The Past



Terry's Texas Rangers Flag. Top image is the obverse side of the flag (front of the banner, where the staff is on the left), and the bottom image is the reverse of the flag.

BY CYNTHIA HARRIMAN

This story begins in 1888, when three former Confederate soldiers--Nimrod L. Norton, William H. Westfall, and George W. Lacy donated the granite from which the Texas State Capitol was built. In gratitude for this generous gift, the state gave these men an office in the Capitol. A few years later, these same soldiers gave that space to the United Daughters of the Confederacy to use for a museum. It became known as the Albert Sidney Johnston Museum and housed the artifacts that the Daughters had accumulated.

## PROFILE: TURNER FOWLER

# A FITTING MEMORIAL

Today's headlines often seem filled with horror tales of kids-gone-bad, but Turner Fowler could certainly be considered a public school system success story.

When Turner Fowler was a 17-year-old senior at Carter Riverside High School in Fort Worth, he became interested in Civil War history, and through his teacher, Tom Lemmons, became acquainted with the Civil War Round Table organization and the Sons of Confederate Veterans. It was his association with SCV Troop #239 that led Fowler to the town of Granbury for a Civil War re-enactment. There, Fowler met Jim Crews, one of the re-enactors, who took a personal interest in the young man and introduced him to the battle gear and war history.

A year after that meeting, Jim Crews died of liver cancer. The impact that Crews had on Fowler's life had been great, and the young man wanted to do something to honor his friend and mentor.

While attending a SCV meeting, Fowler learned of the flag conservation efforts underway by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (see story on page 22). He spoke with Cynthia Harriman, a director of that group, about sponsorship and asked questions about the program and the financial commitment that would be necessary in order to conserve one of the Civil War flags. He was told that he would need to come up with \$2,500. This might have been a problem for most high schoolers, but fortunately, because of the advice of another teacher, Fowler knew that he had the means of handling that financial responsibility.

Earlier, in a government and economic class, Fowler had listened carefully while his teacher told of a group of students who had pooled the money

from their pockets one day and invested the meager amount with a discount stock broker. A year later, they withdrew the funds and treated themselves to a hamburger dinner at a fast food restaurant. Fowler thought that investing might be something he could be interested in and reap great benefits from, but he decided that his long-term goals would encompass more than a fast food hamburger and french fries.

## SO WHEN THE IDEA OF SPONSORING THE CONSERVATION OF A FLAG IN MEMORY OF JIM CREWS CAME TO FOWLER, HE HAD THE MONEY FROM HIS INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO...

After taking the advice of his teacher, who suggested that the young man begin to read the business section of the newspaper and library books on investing, Fowler felt that he had learned enough to buy, with the help of a broker, several stocks, a mutual fund, and an IRA. Before long, these investments began to yield returns. So when the idea of sponsoring the conservation of a flag in memory of Jim Crews came to Fowler, he had the money from his investment portfolio to support the plan.

"I wanted to do something personal to honor Jim Crews because he had been so involved in my life, and I knew that sponsoring a flag was the perfect way to honor this man who meant so much to me. While I haven't yet seen the conserved flag, I am pleased knowing that Jim's name is associated with this collection." — Gene Krane

In 1917, though, the state experienced growing pains, and the UDC was asked to move to the Old Land Office next door. Governor Miriam Ferguson, who was a proud UDC member, proclaimed that the Old Land Office would be the home of the UDC's Texas Confederate Museum in perpetuity. Although this was reaffirmed in the 1960s by Governor John Connally, when the State Preservation Project came into being in 1988, the UDC was asked once again to gather its possessions and either leave the state property or donate the artifacts to the state. The UDC carefully contemplated this choice and decided that if the donors of the artifacts had wanted the state to have the items originally, they would have given them to the archives instead of to the Daughters. So with this in mind, the UDC lost its Austin home.

The group moved a bit further north, operating for a short while at the Taylor Museum of Waco History. No formal contact was realized however, and after a change of officers, the UDC was forced to move its collection into storage. With no money, no plan, and no home, the Daughters, as custodians for this public trust, were asked by the Attorney General's office to find a solution to the dilemma.

It is said those who triumph believe that they can, and this was certainly the attitude of Sherry Davis of Houston, who became the president of the Daughters in 1992. Under her leadership, President Davis brought the UDC from operating in the red to a much healthier financial situation. She unified the organization's members in a campaign to save the museum, working tirelessly on that effort. Davis appointed Cindy Harriman as museum director, and the pair worked hand-in-hand to spearhead the group's effort, even though one woman lived in Houston and the other in suburban Fort Worth. Monthly phone bills for each often exceeded \$500, but with eyes focused on preserving the UDC collection, the pair began, with the help of a small committee, to develop a plan to conserve the collection and find a suitable home for the items. Collectively the committee members visited 35 sites and traveled 50,000 miles all at personal expense. Since that time preservation of the UDC collection has come a long way.

One of the most valuable and historic parts of the UDC artifacts is its collection of historic flags. After examination of the textile collection by Fonda Thomsen of


Textile Preservation Association Inc. of Sharpsburg, Maryland, UDC members realized many emblems were in grave need of conservation and that quick action was imperative. This meant raising money

that would be used to conserve the collection.

The Daughters turned back to their own history and launched a campaign that employed some of the same approaches that

had helped them raise money in the early 20th century for a project that funded many of the Confederate monuments that still grace courthouse squares across Texas and the South. Fundraising efforts were successful then, and the 1990's program has proven just as productive. Since 1997, several UDC artifacts and 20 flags from the collection have been conserved; two more are funded and scheduled for conservation. To date, more than \$250,000 has been raised on behalf of the flag conservation effort, and if in-kind services were counted, this number would double. The amazing aspect of this effort is that it has been accomplished at a grassroots level.

UDC members rolled up their sleeves and conducted various fundraisers, including the very successful penny campaign with the slogan "Put Abe Lincoln To Work For The Confederacy," solicited individual adoptions of flags, and mass-produced product sales including a catalog that is in its third printing, and commemorative posters that have long been sold out. The UDC was also diligent in its pursuit of grants, memorial



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contributions, pledges, and honorariums.

In an effort to insure the proper handling, display, and exhibition of the flags, the UDC joined and became active in the Texas Association of Museums and the American Association of Museums, where they were able to gain information helpful in the development of a policy and procedures manual and standards of ethics policy. The Daughters also insured their collection, and working alongside another group that has an ensign flag collection, they developed a collection loan agreement. The conservation effort, one of the largest undertakings on such a large scale, has received national attention.

It is not only the physical collection that is impressive, but the wealth of information that those flags have added to our historical record that is also noteworthy. Many of the flags in the UDC collection came from organizations of veterans or from family members, and a majority of the banners arrived about 1905, as the United Confederate Veterans organization was transforming into the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Just as Theodore Roosevelt had authorized the return of battle flags held by the federal government, President Calvin Coolidge in the 1920s, requested that those held by the states also be returned. (This fulfilled a campaign promise he had made in order to gain the southern vote.) Also, Texas was sent several of the flags simply because they bore a single star. One such flag is the Union General Phil Sheridan's Headquarter guidon, which originally consisted of a set of four. Research identified that the Daughters have one of those flags and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., has the others. The most recent

This poster helped the United Daughters of the Confederacy raise money to help fund the conservation of 20 flags.

addition to the UDC collection was the flag of the Magnolia Rangers, which arrived in 1991 from a family whose ancestor had served in the unit. Family members revealed that the flag had been under the grandfather's bed for many years.

Another flag was hidden from the enemy by a little boy, and one was used as a Bible cover. Hood's Fourth Texas Brigade flag was buried along the banks of Burton Creek to protect it from a hostile Reconstruction government. Some of the flags represent victories, as seen by the battle honors, while others note defeat with their age-old blood stains. One even still smells of the ship's boiler, while others flew in Austin over the Confederate Men's Home and the Austin Linnatic Asylum. The flag of the Eighth Texas Cavalry, better known as Terry's Texas Rangers, was stolen in 1980 only to surface in 1996 at a Florida gun show when it was retrieved and returned by the Florida State Police (see images on page 22).

Today the UDC collection consists of 47 flags and/or fragments. Thirty-two of those are Confederate flags, with 23 from Texas units. There are four Union flags, four UDC banners, three poseur ceremonial flags, one World War I banner, and two World War II flags. The collection of Texas Confederate flags is the largest publicly held assembly of Texas flags of any kind that is known to exist within the state. While the sacrifice and stories that these flags represent are truly priceless, appraisers have valued the collection, as of 1998, at more than \$1.5 million.

Currently this outstanding collection is stored in a controlled museum storage facility. Once a flag room at Hill College has been completed to meet the museum standards required for this type of collection, the UDC will transfer the flags there to join the rest of the UDC/Texas Confederate Museum collection, a portion of which is currently on display. In the meantime, the Daughters continue to raise conservation funds as they wait for the Hill College facility to be completed.

While the process has been long, the conservation of these flags and the work that goes into this effort is justified, according to the UDC. These flags represent more than just history; they symbolize truth and

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**PROFILE: DAVID JACKSON, SUMMERLEE  
AND SUMMERFIELD ROBERTS FOUNDATIONS**

## **A STRONG FOUNDATION**

When Judge David Jackson, president of the Summerlee and trustee of the Summerfield Roberts Foundations in Dallas, said during a recent interview that "there was quite a connection between the Cartwright and Roberts families" that links these two preeminent foundations to Texas and Confederate history, he was being modest. Jackson was explaining the reason that the foundations elected to participate in the conservation of two flags—those of the First Texas Infantry, Hood's Brigade flag and the Third Texas Cavalry—*from the United Daughters of the Confederacy collection.*

It turns out that Summerfield Roberts, the man behind the foundation that bears his name, had several relatives in the Confederate army. His grandfather, Colonel John Summerfield Griffith commanded the Sixth Texas Cavalry regiment from 1862-1863. Other Roberts' family members such as Lieutenant Ben

Roberts served in the Third Texas Cavalry in Ross' Texas Brigade, and John Harrison Roberts fought in the Fifth Texas Infantry in Hood's Texas Brigade under the recently restored flag that was captured at the Battle of Shrapshurg in September 1862. (He was wounded and captured on July 2, 1863, at Gettysburg but did not survive the war.)

So it seemed natural and appropriate, according to Jackson, that the Summerfield Roberts Foundation play a role in the project to restore these icons of the Confederacy. "Summerfield Roberts was dedicated to the memory of his family and to Texas and Confederate history. I think that he would have been happy to be involved in a project that restored a flag that one of his ancestors had fought under."

Jackson continued, "Annie Lee Roberts, a longtime member of the Dallas Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, also had an interest in this state's history and of the Confederacy. Her grand-

father was a lieutenant in the Third Texas Cavalry, but she had other family members who were in the Fifth and First Texas Infantries. There was really no question that both Mr. and Mrs. Roberts would have wanted to be involved with this important flag restoration project that honored not only their own relatives but the memory of many other brave Texas soldiers."

Though the Roberts and Cartwright family connections in this case are strong, Jackson pointed out that the Historic Flags of Texas Project is one that all Texans can be proud of.

"The Houston Museum of Arts flag exhibit will be a colorful and historic event that recognizes our Texas past. It is most important that we conserve these icons, because so many men who served under the flags gave their lives and liberty for these banners. The flags are very prominent and beautiful physical objects certainly, but more importantly they served as an inspiration—a powerful icon that united the men and served as a rallying symbol of pride, respect, and honor. Hundreds of years later these flags hold the same inspiration for this generation and for future Texans."—Gene Krane

sacrifice, and are the most important legacy embodying the spirit of the soldier.

In 1861 the State of Texas was declared a free and independent state, and subsequently joined the Confederate States of America. The majority of Texans did not own slaves and did not enter the war to defend that practice. They did however, feel compelled to defend their homes, families, and their rights as Texans. It was these flags that tens of thousands of soldiers followed from the safety of their hometown into battle. These blood-stained remnants helped bond a regiment and brought the soldiers back to reunions; the flags were emblems of courage that personify the soldier's homeland and beliefs.

Many of the Confederate soldiers might have had nothing more to leave behind except a heritage that is embodied in these flags. This heritage is so rich in honor and glory that it far surpasses any material wealth. It is, after all, the very reminder of why the Texas soldier ranks among the greatest and bravest men any war has ever produced. Furthermore, during the period

of reconciliation, Texas Confederate veterans were instrumental in the continued development of state and local governments as well as institutions of high learning. The United Daughters of the Confederacy-Texas Division feel it is an honor to work on behalf of these brave warriors.

*Cynthia Harriman is on the board of directors of the Texas Historical Foundation and the Texas and Southwestern Collectors Association, an advisory board member of the Grady McWhiney Foundation, and trustee emeritus of the Texas Confederate Museum, United Daughters of the Confederacy.*



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# A FLAG'S STORY



Flag of the First Texas Infantry in frame. Courtesy of Textile Preservation Associates.

**B**attle flags hold within them the stories of the men who carried the banners, the places they have been, and the events they have experienced. In trying to preserve flags it is important that they are treated with great sensitivity or their stories will be lost. During battle, flags were a sign marking who was where — a rallying point for the men to follow — but more importantly, they were a focal point for the multitude of emotions present during the confusion of war. Past attempts to preserve flags have often been well meaning but many have “thrown the baby out with the bath water.” Extensive sewing, gluing, and repainting in an attempt to “restore” the original beauty of a flag has resulted in damaged objects that have lost any story they might have held within their folds.

*By Fonda Ghiardi Thoensen*

*One of the most important things a conservator can do to a flag is thorough documentation so that no matter what happens in the future, as much evidence as possible will be retained.*

In order to preserve a flag it must be conserved. Conservation is an all-encompassing approach that looks not only at the flag but the environment in which the banner is being stored and exhibited. It is this environment, in which light levels, temperature, humidity, air pollutants, methods of support, and handling determine the rate of deterioration of the fabric. Conservation treatments are helpful in stabilizing a damaged flag, but if it is returned to a damaging environment then the treatment is wasted.

The International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works was formed in England in 1950 to establish a profession in which scientific method would be used to treat significant artistic and historic objects. A code of ethics was instituted that excluded the use of materials that could not be distinguished from those of the original object. The code also incorporated the principle of reversibility. Since no treatment lasts forever, materials used in treatments must be able to be removed without damaging or changing the original object. Also, the material used in treatments often age differently than those of the original object. Over time, it is common for changes in color and in the composition of the treatment material to damage or disfigure the original object so that the treatment no longer performs the func-

tion for which it was intended. The previous treatments must be able to be removed, leaving the original object intact and available for subsequent treatments.

The American Institute for Conservation provides guidance and assists individuals and institutions in locating qualified conservation professionals\*. Conservators are often referred to as restorers, but this terminology was deliberately avoided by the AIC founders. Restoration implies a focus on recreating the original appearance of an object rather than addressing the causes of the deterioration. Attempts at restoration often destroy the original materials. This was the case of Texas' San Jacinto flag, where during restoration the background of the original painting was overpainted and the original scene lost. Today, there is still much speculation about what the San Jacinto flag actually looked like since no images of it have ever been found.

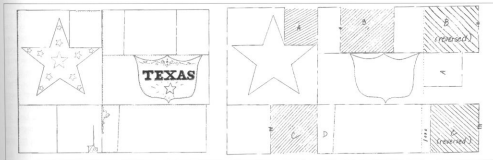
One of the most important things a conservator can do to a flag is thorough documentation so that no matter what happens in the future, as much evidence as possible will be retained. Flags are two-sided objects, and the sides often differ in pattern, so both sides must be documented. Documentation of the condition provides a benchmark for later reference to determine the rate of deterioration of the materials. Techniques of documentation include taking photo-

graphs, preparing scale drawings, and identifying and recording the materials used in the original construction versus later repairs, alterations, and additions. Changes to the original flag should be studied and dated so the story of the flag can unfold.

An unidentified Confederate first national flag in the collection of the Texas State Archives measured 57" x 77". The flag had been given an extensive previous treatment. When this treatment was removed and the flag documented, it was found the flag originally measured at least 57" x 97" (see below). During the flag's history, sections of the fly end were cut off and used to patch damaged areas of the fly and canton. One patch was added that came from an entirely different source. All of these patches were sewn with threads from the Civil War period, indicating the flag must have been severely damaged during an engagement, possibly by cannon shot. The flag was repaired in the field by using pieces of the fly end to fill in the missing areas.

According to historian Robert

Sketch of an unidentified Confederate first national flag. Upon conservation, it was discovered that the original flag had been almost 20 inches wider.





Interesting and sometimes unknown facts can be revealed during the flag conservation process, as shown in this example. From top to bottom: Image one, the red star flag, was originally believed to be the banner of the First Texas Infantry. The second image is of the flag as it was sent to the conservator. The third photograph depicts the banner during the conservation process. Image four is of the finished piece, revealing that the flag was actually that of the Nineteenth Texas Cavalry. Photographs by Dan Hatzembuehler for the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Mabery Jr., the flag of the First Texas Infantry was made by Lula Wigfall, daughter of the regiment's first colonel Louis T. Wigfall. Records indicate that the flag was sewn from some of Ms. Wigfall's dresses and presented to the regiment during an elaborate ceremony at Richmond in the summer of 1861. The flag was carried by Texans throughout the Peninsula Campaign. It was present at the Battle of Second Manassas in August 1862 and in Maryland during Lee's first invasion of the north. During the battle of Antietam, nine color bearers fell carrying this flag. When the ninth man fell, the flag was picked up from among the dead bodies by a Pennsylvania private. The flag was returned to Texas in 1905 by the federal government. During documentation for conservation, it was found that the flag was handsewn throughout by a very highly skilled seamstress. Techniques used in construction more closely resembled dressmaking than flag manufacture. The ribbed silk fabric used in the canton was a garment fabric, not one typically used for flag construction. While the blue material was a dress fabric, there was no evidence it was made from a dress. It may have been purchased dry goods. The damage was extensive with at least eight inches of the fly missing. Damage was from use and "souveniring," since it was a common practice for men to take a piece of their revered flag as a souvenir (see image on page 26).

Often flags will arrive in the conservation laboratory in unrecognizable condition. One such flag was a banner from the Texas Confederate Museum of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The small silk flag was listed as "one of the flags of the First Texas," described as a white field with a red star. When pieced together during conservation the flag proved to have an off-white fly with a white star and "TEX 19" painted in red across the fly. The flag's real identity was that of the Nineteenth Texas Cavalry. The dyes have faded so that the original color is not evident, but the blood stains remain as testimony to its use (see images at left on this page).

When documenting flags, sampling the particulate matter on the surface of the fabrics may be important in confirming and supporting the flag's reported history. Particle sampling can provide information on soils, pollens, combustion products, salt spray, and other particulates that the flag came in contact with during its lifetime. Once a flag is washed, all of this information is forever lost. Examination of the particulate matter played a key role in confirming the identity of two very significant flags, including the original flag that flew over Fort Sumter on April 1, 1861, and the national flag that the men of the Twentieth Maine fought under at Gettysburg.

Once a flag is documented and the plans for use are established, the conservator must design an appropriate treatment that will provide for the preservation of the flag with a minimum amount of intervention. Less is more. If a flag is intact and the intended use is storage, no further treatment may be carried out. If the flag is in numerous pieces and will be handled, a system of encapsulation between two layers of sheer fabric may be necessary to keep the flag intact. Flags should not be sewn to a solid-backing fabric, as the fabric on the back hides half of the flag. Flags have two sides: an obverse and a reverse, and both sides are equally important. There is no front or back. Treatments that cover one side hide half of the flag. No one would ever cover half of a painting, even though both sides of the face are similar, yet covering half of a flag is a common practice.

Aged fabrics should not be sewn, as the sewing thread is harder and stronger than the fabric and will eventually cut through. Adhesives change the entire texture and drape of a fabric. When a fabric is attached to a support with an adhesive, the adhesive eventually breaks all of the old fibers apart. Adhesives have a different coefficient of expansion, and therefore they respond differently to changes in the environment. Being the weaker of the two materials, the textile breaks when the adhesive expands. Therefore, placing the fragmented fabrics between two layers of sheer new fabric provides a "safe" system of stabilization. The fragments can be held in place by sewing around the perimeter of each fragment, thereby avoiding sewing through the old fabric.



PROFILE: FRANK YTURRIA

## AN AVID STUDENT AND SUPPORTER OF TEXAS

While Frank Yturria of Brownsville may be somewhat hazy on the details of just how he learned about the Historic Flags of Texas Project, that's about the only detail he doesn't remember.

Shortly after finding out about the flag conservation effort, Yturria signed on as a sponsor to conserve one of the state's flags. "When I learned that they had found all those old flags, I was very excited. But when I later discovered that one of the banners that had been located was the Matamoros Battalion flag that had been captured at the Battle of San Jacinto, I thought to myself 'Now this is getting close to home,' and I really got interested in the project."

Yturria, who has written a book on his great-great grandfather Colonel Manuel Maria Yturria, is an avid student of Texas history. His conversation is peppered with information and dates of im-

portant events in the Texas past. "I knew that Matamoros had raised a battalion, but I always thought that it was a volunteer unit. I found out, however, that though Santa Anna had requested a battalion of volunteers, the group never materialized. This was because the merchants of Matamoros, which at that time was the hub of commerce for Northern Mexico, were not interested in seeing relations with Texas destroyed. That commerce was very lucrative."

Yturria continued, "The Matamoros battalion then was made up of soldiers who were stationed there, not of volunteers. That's why the flag reads 'Battalion Matamoros Permanente,' which means 'permanent battalion,' indicating that the unit was composed of regular soldiers."

The Matamoros Battalion flag had special meaning for Yturria. "I was particularly interested in sponsoring this flag for sev-

eral reasons. Number one, the Battle of San Jacinto was a history-turning event, so preserving the flag was important to our state's past. Secondly, Brownsville and Matamoros have such an interesting history that is not well known or preserved. The Matamoros Battalion flag is part of that past. While the two cities maintain good relations, I thought it would be great for not only the towns, but for the countries of Mexico and the United States if this important piece of history could be conserved and brought back here." While Yturria was not able to arrange for the original, conserved flag to be returned, a replica of the banner was created, and the "Twin Cities of the Border" — Brownsville and Matamoros — have both displayed it in their historical museums.

Yturria concluded, "People from both sides of the border are delighted that this flag was conserved. I feel particularly happy that the school children of this area, and all across Texas for that matter, can see and point to a piece of their history that up until now they've only been able to read about." — Gene Krane

In any conservation treatment, it is important that the materials not only be reversible, but they should also be archival so that they do not add contaminants to the object that will hasten deterioration. It is also important that the materials last as long as possible so that the treatment will endure. Any treatment causes damage because of the handling that must take place. When treating flags, the use of a sheer polyester fabric for encapsulation rather than silk will reduce the frequency of repeated treatment.

If a flag is to be exhibited, a pressure mounting frame is a good choice for a totally non-interventive system of support. This is a system where the flag is placed between an archivaly padded panel and ultraviolet light filtering plexiglas. The unit is held together by a two-part framing system that has a rigid aluminum support on the back and a frame on the front. This



type of system provides uniform support over the entire surface of the flag without any intervention; when the frame is opened, the flag can be retrieved in its original state.

Flags are important historical documents and as their guardians, we must make sure they are treated with respect

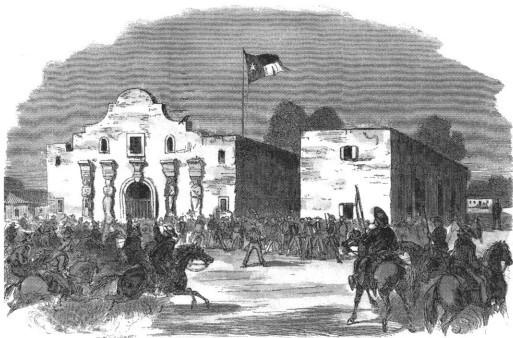
and honor. It is our responsibility to make sure that they are not mishandled with uneducated attempts at preservation that destroy the stories they hold in trust.

*AIC Fellow Fonda Ghiardi Thomsen, considered one of the country's foremost textile experts, is director of Textile Preservation Associates Inc., in Shoptonsburg, Maryland.*

\*Contact the American Institute for Conservation at 1717 K Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006; (202) 452-9594 or <http://aic.stanford.edu>

From left: Cynthia Harriman, of the Texas Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and Bob Maberry, historian for the Historic Flags of Texas Project, watch as Fonda Thomsen works on a flag from the UDC.

# TEXAS ARCHIVES



## *The Tilted Lone Star* A Different Look For The Texas Flag

BY ROBERT MABERRY JR.,  
PH.D.

Every Lone Star flag that is seen today looks pretty much the same. Laws prescribe its exact dimensions and proportions, and the prim lone star stands upright and in uniform proportion to the blue field it graces.

This, however, had not always been the case. For most of the state's history, Texans preferred their lone stars to have a rakish slant. Four of the six Lone Star flags that still exist from the days of the Republic have stars with upper point rotated away from the vertical. During the Civil War, Texans sometimes flew Lone

Star flags but more often unfurled Confederate battle flags that had large lone stars in the center representing Texas.

Of 25 flags from the Confederate era that display lone stars, 20 stars are slanted. Sometimes this led to confusion by those not well-acquainted with Texas flags. In Mexico slanted-star Texas flags are displayed upside down with the red stripe on top, because this position makes the star look upright. The Northern artist of a famous 1861 engraving of the Alamo (shown above) similarly depicts the Lone Star flag upside down so that the star is in an upright position.

Texas individualism in the placement

of the star finally became too much for some. In 1933, at the request of school teachers from all across Texas, the Legislature passed a bill, the sole purpose of which was "to clarify the description of the Texas flag, to standardize the star in the blue field." The new law prescribed in great detail, complete with complex geometric formulae, exactly what the proportions of the Lone Star flag would be. Henceforth the lone star would always have the top point positioned straight up. The major stated reason the lawmakers saw fit to strap the Texas flag into uniformity was "so pupils in the lower grades of elementary school will be able to draw or make the flag."



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# BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN PETERSON, BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

## Great Birds of Texas

John P. O'Neill, edited by Suzanne Winckler,  
University of Texas Press, 1999

Reviewed by John A. Peterson

My kids and I recently camped at a nearby state park. Cottonwoods along the river were blazing yellow, brilliant against the serene and subtle tones of grassland and desert. Above, the autumn silence was punctuated by the guttural rattle of sandhill cranes, heard from a mile away, then nearer as their great sweeping columns passed overhead. Their awkward name in English doesn't capture their beauty in flight or their greatness. In Spanish their name is more evocative, *las grullas*, more mystify-

ing, capturing their elegant greyness.

My fourth grade daughter Alexandria chose to write her weekly "probe", a school assignment, on the cranes. She searched through birding field guides and encyclopedias, found a wealth of prosaic description, but only stilted and sterile portraits to illustrate her project. She was disappointed. These weren't the cranes that had startled our vision. Then this book arrived in the mail, with its vivid portrayal of two cranes on the prairie, and an accompanying narrative by John Graves, who wrote:

*"They are a reassurance, cranes. The survival of large and visible natural force into a time when survivals of that kind have grown far less certain than they once were. I am no priest or anything like one, but I find myself invoking a blessing on*

*these great gray birds when they show up, every spring and fall. May they endure."*  
"Great Birds of Texas" celebrates those species of bird life in Texas that provoke such epiphanies. Neotropical ornithologist John P. O'Neill contributes eloquent portraits of nearly 50 birds that are native to Texas. The illustrations are not only scientifically accurate, but also, in the selection of detail and in the depiction of posture and sometimes action of the birds, are evocative of the contexts within which we personally encounter these birds.

Editor Winckler and O'Neill interpose the portraits with text from writers on the natural world. Some, like the excerpt from John Graves, are soliloquies; most are scientific or natural history narratives. Nearly all recount a personal encounter with the species that moved the writer.

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# GRANT UPDATE

## *Honoring Family*

### THF Joins Brothers in Saving Good-Douglas Flag

In June 1861 Colonel Elkanah Greer of Marshall, Texas, was commissioned by the Confederate government to raise a regiment of cavalry and a field artillery company.

J.J. Good of Dallas and J.P. Douglas of Tyler took on the task of raising the artillery company, which eventually became

the only Texas field artillery to see action east of the Mississippi River in the Army of Tennessee.

When the Good-Douglas Artillery, a group of about 50 men from in and around the Tyler area, marched from that city on June 10, 1861, a young woman stepped forward to present the soldiers with a flag.

She was poet Mollie E. Moore (later Mollie E. Moore Davis), a teenager at the time. More than 135 years later, members of her family would repeat her actions and once again step forward — this time to honor Mollie and the fighting men of the Good-Douglas Artillery by providing funds to restore the unit's battle flag.

The Texas Historical Foundation, through its Meadows-Seay Preservation Fund and J.P. Bryan Preservation Trust, provided funds that paid for half of the flag's conservation cost. The other half of the expense was borne by brothers John Buford Meadows, Henry E. Meadows Jr., Thomas O. Meadows, and Robert Read Meadows. Mollie Moore Davis was the sister of their great-grandfather, Thomas Oscar Moore. Davis was also the great aunt of Sarah Meadows Seay, who along with her husband Charles, provided the seed money for the Foundation's Preservation Fund that was used for the flag conservation project.

Mollie Moore Davis, who came with her family from Alabama, began writing poetry at an early age and by the time that she was 16 had already seen her work published in Texas newspapers. She became a popular Southern writer who produced not only poetry, but short stories, plays, and a novel set on the Brazos River in Texas.

According to Austinite John Meadows, "This flag was significant to our family, so when we learned that it was one of the flags from the United Daughters of the Confederacy collection that had not yet been conserved, there was no question that we had to do something. Along with the Seay family, my brothers and I are all very proud to know that through this action, we were able to honor the memory of not only one of our own ancestors, but of a very special group of brave, fighting Texans."

The Texas Historical Foundation administrators seven preservation funds. -- Gene Krane

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**Don't forget the THF number -- 5148!**

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## BY OLIVER FRANKLIN

On August 6, 1880, a major milestone was achieved in the settlement of West Texas and New Mexico. That was the day that Victorio, the renegade Apache chief, turned his back on the Texas Trans-Pecos, during the Battle of Rattlesnake Springs.

A year earlier, after being contained at a reservation in New Mexico, Victorio, with a band of men and a flurry of gunfire, escaped and headed for Mexico.

Reports indicated that Victorio and his men intended to reenter the United States. Where, no one knew. However, educated guesses anticipated the Apaches' return either to their old New Mexico home or into the rugged Guadalupe Mountains, where they knew they could hide.

Col. Benjamin Grierson, commander of U.S. forces in the Trans-Pecos, felt that the only way to defeat Victorio and his troops was to station men at every watering hole in the region. Victorio might be fast and mean, but no man could weather the Sierra Diablo for long without water.

After several brief engagements, five companies of cavalry and infantry engaged Victorio and his soldiers at Rattlesnake Springs. As the Indians approached the well-guarded springs, they were met with U.S. gunfire. When the smoke cleared, 30 braves lay dead. Only one U.S. soldier gave his life. Victorio and his disillusioned men disbanded, ending the Apache menace of the Trans-Pecos West.

All of the enlisted men in this small but critical event in Texas history were Buffalo soldiers, black Americans in the U.S. Army. Given their sobriquet by Native Americans for their hair's resemblance to that of their namesake, the Buffalo soldiers were segregated into the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiments and



Ninth and Tenth Cavalry Regiments. For more than 20 years, they served at Forts Griffin, Ringgold, Concho, and Davis—some of the harshest garrisons in the U.S. Little is known about the lives of the Buffalo soldiers, and few pictures exist.

But for the years between the late 1860s and early 1880s, the Buffalo soldier was a vital force in manning unmannable Texas. Brief periods of

rapid deployment and intense conflict were separated by endless loneliness, hard labor, and racial animosity. Towns that owed their earliest infrastructures, if not their very existence to Buffalo soldiers, enforced their exclusion from city limits.

Along with the roads, buildings, and tales of division and sacrifice that are the legacies of the Buffalo soldier, there is something else -- a tangible item--that remains: the regimental banner of the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment. Founded in 1869, the Twenty-fourth's first home was Fort McKavett.

Their flag, a large blue regimental banner with an Eagle surrounded by a circle, and their federal banner, the Stars and Stripes, featuring 38 stars, are sitting unconserved at the National Army Museum in Maryland.

Few images are more symbolic and patriotic than flags. The Historic Flags of Texas Project is underway, seeking to identify and conserve the state's historic banners. Adopting the Twenty-fourth Infantry Regiment flag would be easy and inexpensive. It should be done. For without the Buffalo soldier, much of what we think of today as Texan would not exist.

Franklin is executive director of the Texas Historical Foundation.

Image above is of Seminole Buffalo soldiers. Courtesy of Sul Ross State University.



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