



The Cradle of Texas Crier
Cradle of Texas Chapter # 33
Sons of the American Revolution



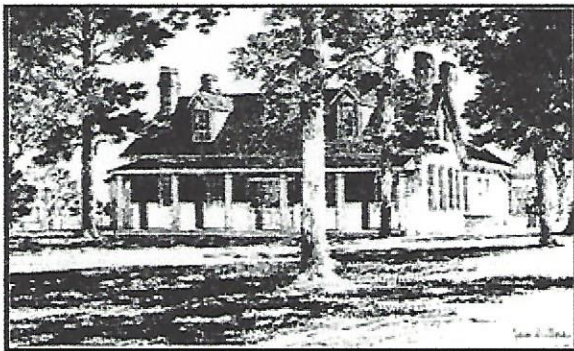
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October 2011

Michael J. Bailey, Editor

October

Next Meeting
October 8, 2011
Egypt Plantation- Egypt, TX.



EGYPT, TEXAS (Wharton County). Egypt, on Farm Road 102 eleven miles northwest of Wharton, is the oldest community in Wharton County. John C. Clark was there in 1822, and Egypt is located on his league. Robert Kuykendall's land was below Egypt, and Thomas Rabb's was above. These three men were among the first of the Austin colony settlers. The land along the Colorado River was the favorite hunting ground of the Karankawa Indians, and Clark, Kuykendall, and Rabb were noted Indian fighters. The area soon became safe enough for others to move into because of the efforts of these men. The original settlement was started in 1829, when Eli Mercer established a plantation and ferry on the Colorado River at the San Felipe-Texana crossing. The road from Matagorda to Columbus crossed the San Felipe-Texana road a mile or so from the river, and the community developed at this junction. The town was originally called Mercer's Crossing, but during a severe drought the area supplied corn to surrounding settlements, and people began to refer to it as Egypt.

In 1832 William J. E. Heard started Egypt Plantation on the 2,222 acres he purchased from John C. Clark and built his home in what is now the center of Egypt; in 1992 it was still occupied by his family. The Republic of Texas opened a post office in November 1835 with Eli Mercer as postmaster. By 1840 four different Texas mail routes were passing through Egypt. The fertile soil has made Egypt an agricultural center since its beginning; Mercer produced some of the first sugarcane in Texas, and Heard had a cotton gin in 1836.

In February of that year Capt. Thomas Rabb recruited a company of men in the Egypt area. They became Company F of the First Regiment of Texas Volunteers. They were at Gonzales when Gen. Sam Houston arrived, and they made the long retreat across Texas. Under Capt. W. J. E. Heard at San Jacinto, they formed the center of the Texas line and captured the Mexican cannons. During the Runaway Scrape many of the people from west of the Colorado gathered in Egypt, hoping that Houston and the Texas army, which was camped just above Egypt, would keep the Mexicans from crossing the river. During the republic days many prominent Texans lived in Egypt, including William Menefee, who signed the Texas Declaration of Independence; Dr. John Sutherland, Alamo courier; and Eli Mercer's son-in-law, editor and inventor Gail Borden, Jr. Gen. Thomas J. Rusk and the Texas army established temporary headquarters at Egypt in May 1836 as they followed the retreating Mexican army. The republic opened Post Colorado at Egypt in 1837.

In 1839 a stagecoach line, operated by Andrew Northington, served Egypt. By 1840 a general store was well established. Egypt had

originally been in Colorado County, but in 1846 it became part of newly established Wharton County. When the first election was held a general store was the polling place; in the 1990 primary election, the general store at Egypt was still the polling place.

In 1848 some enterprising people in Egypt built a railroad. The wooden rails were made of hard live oak, and the cars were pulled by horses. It operated between Egypt and Columbus. A school district was established in 1854 and operated until 1958, when it was consolidated with the Hungerford Independent School District. Just before the Civil War Captain Heard's son-in-law Mentor Northington built a new cotton gin, which the family operated for over 100 years.

In 1881 George H. Northington and Green C. Duncan built a large general mercantile company in Egypt. The store became the business and social center for a large area of the county. It stocked everything from seeds, farm implements, clothes, and groceries to caskets. The post office moved to the new store when it was built and remained there until 1981, when a new brick building was constructed a block down the street. During the 1930s and until the beginning of World War II a quarter horse racetrack was in operation in Egypt. On race days large crowds of people from all over South Texas attended the races. The Cane Belt Railroad was built through Egypt in 1901. The line was sold to the Santa Fe in 1902, and in 1991 service was discontinued and the tracks were removed. The estimated population of Egypt in 1990 was twenty-six. In 1992, 300 registered voters lived in the area served by the Egypt post office. The population remained at twenty-six in 2000.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Colorado County Historical Commission, *Colorado County Chronicles from the Beginning to 1923* (2 vols., Austin: Nortex, 1986). Roy Grimes, ed., *300 Years in Victoria County* (Victoria, Texas: Victoria Advocate, 1968; rpt., Austin: Nortex, 1985). Ira T. Taylor, *The Cavalcade of Jackson County* (San Antonio: Naylor, 1938). Annie Lee Williams, *A History of*

Wharton County (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1964).

Barbara L. Young, "EGYPT, TX (WHARTON COUNTY)," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hne08>), Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Presidents Corner

I hope everyone is enjoying this beautiful Fall weather. We still need rain, of course, but maybe that'll come along one of these days.

Don't know about you, but Sue and I have never been to Egypt, Texas, so we are looking forward to the meeting on Saturday. Hope to see you all there.

Russell



Meeting Minutes Cradle of Texas Chapter No. 33 September 10, 2011

President Dart called the meeting to order at 11:43am. Vice President Tim Hall led the Chapter in the Pledge to the American Flag, the pledge to the Texas Flag and the Pledge to the SAR. Compatriot George Easterling gave the Invocation.

A moment of silence was held to commemorate the memorials of Compatriots Don Pugh and Jim Salisbury. Compatriot Easterling reminded us that Compatriot Clell Sechrest was

still at Country Village Care in Suite 3. He would like to receive more visitors.

President Dart welcomed our special guests: Our speaker Bryan McAuley , Don Holt and Linda Holt our EMS awardee. Other guests were Pat Sanders, Janice Seidule, Coryne Choate, Sue Dart, Freda Daniel, Judy Bernard and Connie Avera. Members present were: Tin Hall, George Easterling, Bill Sanders, Arnold Seidule, Russell Dart, J.A. Rice, T.M. Daniel MD, Win Avera, Bill Greenwood and Charles Bernard.

While waiting for lunch, it was decided to present the Membership Service Certificates. The current policy for awarding these certificates is to make the awards at the first Chapter Meeting after the member's anniversary. The awardees today were: Don Mudd for five years, Kirk Daniel for five years (accepted by Tillman Daniel) and Gary Canion for five years (mailed to awardee).

Bill Sanders reported on his summer activities. He presented five Eagle Scout Certificates and two Flag Certificates to Louise Schools-the High School and the Junior High School.

Bill, our Genealogist stated that two member applications are pending at National and he is working on an additional three applications.

Linda Holt, a native of Brazoria County is the 2001 recipient for the EMT Award. She has been a Paramedic for 27 years. Compatriot Win Avera gave an inspiring review of Linda's service. President Russell Dart awarded the Medal and Certificate to Linda.

President Russell Dart stated that the Galveston Chapter is sponsoring the Fall BOM (October 28 thru 30) and they would like every Chapter to present a Fire Certificate at that Meeting. He appealed to the membership to present nominations.

Vice President Tim Hall introduced our speaker, Bryan McAuley, a Development Manager for the Texas Historical Commission. He is presently planning and developing two historic sites- the Levi Jordan Plantation and the San

Felipe de Austin Historic site. His presentation reviewed the present physical sites and the development plans. The grounds of the Levi Jordan Plantation are open to visitors on the first Saturday of each month. President Dart presented Bryan with a Certificate of Appreciation.

The next meeting will be on October 8, 2011, location to be announced.

President Dart led the Chapter in the SAR Closing.

THIS MONTH DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



Cornwallis Surrenders at Yorktown

On October 19, 1781, British General Charles Cornwallis surrendered his army of some 8,000 men to General George Washington at Yorktown, giving up any chance of winning the Revolutionary War. Cornwallis had marched his army into the Virginia port town earlier that summer expecting to meet British ships sent from New York. The ships never arrived.

In early October, approximately 17,000 American and French troops led by Generals George Washington and Jean-Baptiste Rochambeau, respectively, surrounded British-occupied Yorktown. Off the coast,

French Admiral François de Grasse strategically positioned his naval fleet to control access to the town via the Chesapeake Bay and the York River.

Today in History
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Egypt Plantation

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