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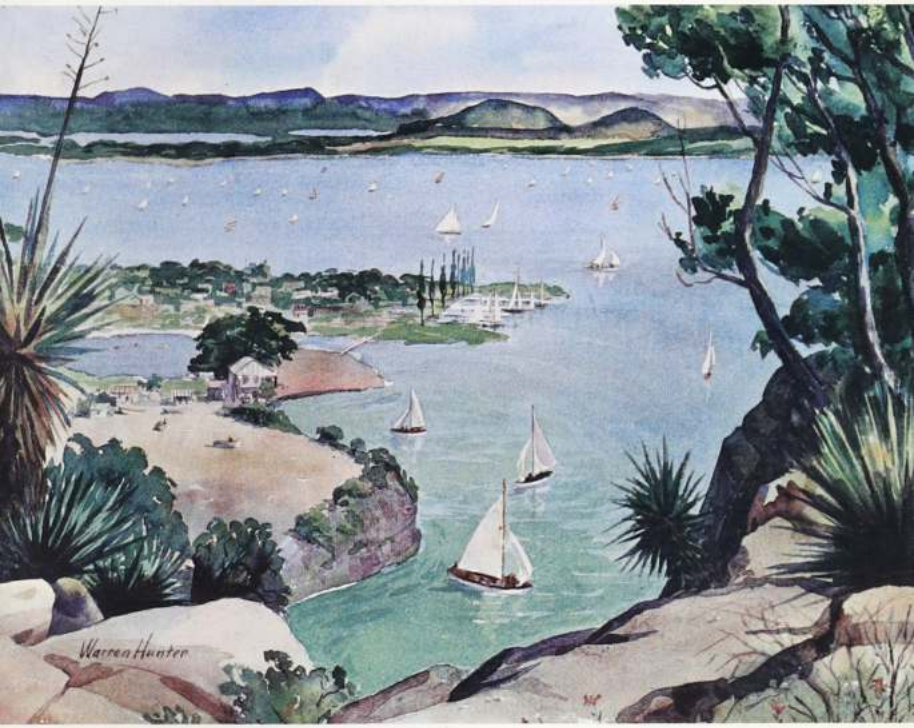

Special Texas Vacation Issue:

"Texas from Your Car Window" by Margaret Cousins
"Cattlemen of Old Texas" by J. Frank Dobie
"The Bright New Waters" by John Graves

photograph by Edgar H. Carlson

THE BLUEBONNET—official State Flower of Texas—has a delightful and most appropriate habit of reaching its full glory on or about April 21. This is San Jacinto Day, the date when Texas in 1836 won its independence from Mexico at the Battle of San Jacinto. This delicate flower—named bluebonnet by the white man because of its resemblance to the sunbonnets worn by pioneer women—is planted and maintained along Texas roads by the Texas State Highway Department. The bluebonnet also provides a suitable entry into this Texas issue of FORD TIMES, whose purpose is to acquaint travelers with the varied topography and places of interest in the state of Texas—mountains, lakes, rivers, islands, amusement centers, parks, museums, missions, cities and restaurants. Many Texas writers and artists are included among the contributors (see page 64), and special thanks is directed to the Texas State Highway Department for its help in preparing this Texas coverage. ■

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Front Cover—Texas as a paradise for the water sportsman is typified in this hill country scene by Warren Hunter

Welcome to Texas

By John Connally, Governor of the State of Texas

Texas, it has been said, is a state of mind. There is certainly some truth in this, but it should not detract from the very tangible existence of a physical Texas—a land of such dimensions, distances and diversities that it often defies adequate description.

Variety may indeed be Texas' foremost attraction for the visitor, especially if he travels by automobile over some of the finest highways in the world. Texans often go overboard in their pride in their state; I have always tried to avoid this pitfall, but there is no denying that nature has been bountiful in its gifts to Texas and we are proud of our assets.

We are also aware that these assets, until recently, were comparatively unknown to many people. Last year, however, a record 11,700,000 visitors did travel in the state, most of them by car. They were offered far more than the stereotyped image of desert, cowboys and oil millionaires.

While the size of Texas is well known, many travelers are still surprised when it becomes a matter of personal experience. The surprise becomes even greater when it is discovered that size has enabled Texas to offer extremely varied attractions to suit every taste.

If it were an average-size state, for instance, its 4,500 square miles of inland water would immediately suggest a "water wonderland" or a "land of lakes" as advertised by some of our sister states. Only Alaska, of all the 50 states, has a greater volume of

inland water. Or, our 600-mile coastline would fix a firm image of a seacoast state of sparkling beaches and deep-sea fishing.

Put our 35 million acres of woodland in a smaller state and Texas would be described as a heavily-forested region, highly rewarding to those who enjoy endless miles of fragrant pine woods. These forests would cover virtually all of New England.

An average-size state with the mountains of Texas would be regarded as an alpine area. The southern reaches of the Rocky Mountains extend into the vast area west of the Pecos River, and they include 90 peaks over a mile high. The Guadalupe, Davis and Chisos ranges offer spectacular scenery of wooded mountains and deep canyons, including rugged Big Bend National Park.

Fix our subtropical Rio Grande Valley in a state of average proportions and the visitor would think of the land as one of the most unusual of all the states—rich in citrus groves, palm-lined avenues and palmetto thickets. Again, the immense Texas plains country is a state unto itself, a land of big ranches and some of the most fertile cotton and wheat farms in the world.

Finally, place our 22 metropolitan areas in a smaller state and people would talk of "urban Texas." Of the nation's 15 largest cities, three are in Texas—Houston, Dallas and San Antonio. Each is unique in its own right, but they share a cosmopolitan atmosphere common to growing, energetic, progressive American cities.

The Old West still lives in famous cattle trails and skeletons of early mining towns. Many of the great ranches of the nineteenth century are intact today, furnishing top-grade beef to the tables of America. The cattleman's heritage is also preserved in the guest ranches, especially in the hill country west of San Antonio and Austin, which offer a taste of life in the cowboy tradition.

In the important matter of food, diversity is again the Texas keynote. An unfamiliar visitor would expect beefsteak and barbecue, and they're available in quality and quantity. He ought to try *cabrito* (barbecued goat) and sample the outstanding restaurants in many cities which feature the Mexican cuisine. He might be surprised, too, to find some of the nation's finest seafood restaurants in Texas, and not all of them in coastal cities.

In summary, a varied Texas vacation is the equivalent of a coast-to-coast trip through many states with different recreational opportunities. All things considered, including the almost legendary friendliness of our people, we believe we have one of the world's best vacation treats. We look forward to seeing you in Texas soon. ■

TEXAS

from Your Car Window

To get the feel of this vast,
everchanging land, do as the Texans do—
get in your car and hit the road

by Margaret Cousins . . . paintings by Michael Frary

ANY TEXAN WILL tell you that the only way to see Texas is by car. Unless you have the stamina to travel some 700 miles from the Sabine River to El Paso or approximately 800 miles from Brownsville to Amarillo, you simply cannot be a connoisseur of the place. Even then you can obtain only a glancing impression of the 267,339 square miles which occupy one-twelfth of the continental area of the United States, nor would you come in contact with more than a miniscule portion of the 200,000 miles of public roads over which the state says grace. But then, you could always come back some other time!

Texans are born with an affinity for riding in cars. It may occur to you that this is not entirely from choice, but of course it is. It is axiomatic that they will drive 150 miles for lunch and this must be because they enjoy driving, for you can eat lunch anywhere. In addition to motor travel with destination, Texans are addicted to "going riding," a common garden variety of sport, participated in by all age groups, which consists of loading the car full of people and bucketing around the country looking at the scenery.

Typical Texas scenery may not look like much to the uninitiated, for it is apt to be either undulating forest land, level plains or rolling prairies, except for the special effects in the Trans-Pecos and far northwest. But no Texan will consider that any portion of Texas scenery is typical. It is all unique, if you know how and where to look.

Nor does Texas scenery have any peer to the committed. I

Above right: Camp Verde army post building has walls thirty inches thick
Below right: Ship in narrow channel appears to be sitting high and dry

remember a man just returned from an extended sojourn in the Swiss Alps and Italian lake country who compared these hallowed scenic regions unfavorably with the local product. He declared that the only scenery really worth looking at was a graveled Texas road, stretching straight as a string to the horizon, bounded by barbed-wire fences with a glossy, green cotton field on one side and a herd of white-faced cattle on the other. I do not quite understand myself how coming on the ruins of old Salado (U.S. Highway 81) moldering among its dusty pin oaks could touch my heart as deeply as the first sight of the Parthenon, but there it is.

Other Texans set store by the roadsides of the far south, lined with scrubby palms and tangled in red Turk's Cap, or the loblolly pines of east Texas, where the sluggish streams and bayous are so thickly carpeted with purple water hyacinths that you can almost walk on them. Still others are enthralled by the high colors of the canyon regions and the dramatic Cap Rock Escarpment, or the hills and trees and rocks and spring-fed rivers from the Edwards Plateau. Some prefer the rushy, sedge-grown regions of the Gulf Coastal Plain where occasionally a narrow ship channel cuts inland many miles to a turning basin, and it is possible to glimpse ocean-going vessels, moving majestically along these ditches and appearing from a distance to be sitting high and dry on the prairie.

Texas scenery depends on where you are, and there is no question that there is a good deal of it. Any suggestion that there is more of it than you might care to look at will constitute fighting words. Nobody has ever forgiven the hobo who scrawled on the wall of the box car:

"The sun is riz;
The sun is set;
And still we is
In Texas yet."

To the native, scenes emerge from nostalgic recollections of "going riding" which *do* seem typical. Along many highways in many regions you will come upon a cattle guard, warding a meandering road which leads across a hummocked pasture to a low-lying ranch house, surrounded by its corral and out-buildings, with a windmill turning its fins in a stiff breeze from the west. In many parts of Texas you will glimpse a frieze of oil derricks, skeletal against the blue sky. If you get close enough you may find a farm house or a small-town dwelling imprisoned among their feet, reminding you of the old story of the housewife who com-

plained when the gusher spattered her Buff Orpington hens.

Texas scenery depends on which way you turn. The new networks of superhighways usually leave the towns, long the heart and soul of Texas, to the side. You may take some exit that appeals to you (so many of the towns have such pretty names: Blossom, Hillsboro, Rising Star) and wind up in a square around a formidable old courthouse of Victorian inspiration and built of mellowed limestone. While time has virtually wiped out the native costumes, and teen-agers are more likely to be wearing beehive hairdos and Hawaiian shirts, there will always be a few old white hats and dusty boots among the loafers in front of the drugstore.

Texas scenery is affected by the time of year. If you drive through the woodlands of the east in spring, you are certain to sight some old pillared mansion, foaming with azaleas, and glimpse the white petals of the dogwood falling through the dark trees like accidental stars. You can round a bend in the violet-colored hills near Austin and come upon a field of bluebonnets that makes you feel as if a piece of the sky had fallen there. In midsummer

Presidio La Bahia, established in 1722, was moved to present site at Goliad

the western wheat becomes a sea of sunburnt gold and uncounted rows of old boxcars line up on spurs by the grain elevators. In the fall the wild pecans drop on the leaf-strewn earth and persimmons turn orange. And on some benighted day in March, you can run across a sandstorm which renders the world opaque and gets rid of all scenery!

Perhaps nothing influences Texas scenery more meaningfully than the time of day. Riders in the dawn see the sun come up, an orb of gold, over the edge of the limitless horizon. All that was dry and dusty yesterday is now dew-pearled. In the blazing light of a summer noon (Texans as well as mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun) mirages form on the road ahead—lakes and rivers and seas, with peripheral boundaries, and trees where trees never grew. There is no describing the sunset. It seems as if heaven, to make up for the monotony of miles, outdoes itself. There is apt to be a splendor of ragged cloudlets, trailing purple, fuschia and gold, and the light exploding into rays, like a Renaissance painting. In the long twilight hours of the evening the effulgence lingers on until the hot white stars come out, somewhat closer to the earth than in most places.

There is still scenery in the dead of night. From the dark road you may behold a fantasia of colored lights, intricate pipes, rosy steam and abstract shapes, that turns out to be a refinery going about its petroleum business. Or you might observe in the distance the jagged skyline of a great city, rising from the flat, surrounding plain with an air of incredulity. You may see the mystic shapes of the great cacti, standing sentinel, or the wavering shadow of a pirogue in the bayou. Your headlights could pick out a chaparral bird sprinting along in front of the car—for it never occurs to a chaparral bird that he can't outrun anything—or a jackrabbit, loping down the gulley with his ears flying back, or just a tumbleweed, tumbling. Across the dark reach of the land you may descry one lonely light, which denotes a house, set back from the road somewhat, for many old-fashioned Texans believe that it ought to be three miles from the front gate to the front door.

Then does the eerie recognition of the great open space come to bear. With a memory older than the century, one samples the mood of the frontier, in its wild breadth and loneliness. All is silence and solitude and starstruck dark and one wavering light. The only thing to do then is to pull in at the next diner and get a cup of coffee and fill up and look at the roadmap. Texas will get you if you don't watch out. ■

Some Texas scenery is industrial, like this Corpus Christi refinery

The Bright New Waters

Modern ways of hoarding rain water have given Texas more lakes, more rivers, and more water fun than ever before

by John Graves
paintings by Warren Hunter

IN A DUSTY NEGLECTED west Texas graveyard, a lichened stone over the remains of a child who died in pioneer days of the nineteenth century bears a verse which ends:

"Do not grieve, for I am going
To a land where streams are
always flowing."

Since streams *do* flow through this world of ours, an alien visitor to that graveyard might well puzzle over the stone's emphasis on the idea that they flow *always* only in Paradise. But if he thinks about it, he realizes what the stone's inscription is saying, and he feels the poignance behind its meaning.

For in much of Texas many streams did not and still don't always flow, and upon the people who came there early—usually from moister, greener regions to the east and north—this fact wrought much hardship and disillusionment. The average rainfall in the state shrinks steadily from east to west. Near the pineshaded Louisiana border it is around fifty annual inches—enough even for nostalgic Easterners—but in certain far western stretches it is only ten, and drouth or semidrouth conditions are chronic. The western reaches of some Texas rivers are dry troughs except when rare flash floods rage down them, and many Texans not yet gray remember a childhood when it was necessary in bad years to haul housewater in barrels from some alkaline pond that had managed not to go dry.

By then, Texans of those regions knew better than to worry about streams that didn't flow. They were an adaptable breed who could bear

Above right: Picnicking and catfishing—popular pastimes on east Texas lakes
Below right: Bass fishing is good on Granite Shoals Lake bordering LBJ Ranch

and even joke about a world where, as a rancher once put it, you took off your hat with respect when you walked up to a windmill.

Nowadays this way of existence is being much altered by human effort. Streams in the dry parts of Texas do not flow any more strongly than they ever did. But much of the rain that does fall is saved now, rather than being allowed to roar Gulfward in destructive floods.

It is saved by dams. These range in size from simple dirt barriers bulldozed into place across draws and branches to furnish stock water in ranch pastures, to magnificent Egyptian-like concrete structures erected, mostly in the past three decades, by the Corps of Engineers or by various local bodies up and down the major watercourses of the state. Texas now has several hundred good-sized reservoirs behind such dams, of which seventy or so have better than 500 acres of surface area each. They dot the map most thickly in the central, medium-rainfall belt, but west Texas has a share of them, and east Texas, which used to be content with its lazy creeks and rivers full of fish and with Caddo Lake on the Louisiana line, has lately been getting lake-minded and building some notable dams, too. More are on the drawing boards for all areas, and some of the master schemes—like one for pooling the water of all Texas rivers for use anywhere along the coastal plain—are enormous and complex.

More plentiful water has brought a new form of recreation to a land where most recreation has historically been of a sort that had to take place on firm, dry land. Coastal Texans, of course, have always had access to sport on the wide shallow "bays" that lie within the string of skinny islands paralleling the Gulf shore. Sailboats and outboard motors and the mysterious ways of fish are not new subjects to them—nor to the surprising numbers of their fellow Texans who have been willing to make annual pilgrimages to that coast, simply to see and enjoy a lot of water all in one chunk.

Boom in water sports

Such pilgrimages are no longer necessary. In the booming years since the Second World War, water sports have become big business. Boat factories blossom in pastures where once the hardy longhorns bawled from thirst; marinas and air-conditioned fishing barges and slickly modern motels have mushroomed where only cacti and dryland grasses and the creatures adapted to them could once survive. And the lean man built for the storm deck of a rodeo bronc now skitters on two shaped planks across ten thousand acres of blue, rippling, impounded water.

The lakes vary in type as hugely as Texas varies. In the east they nestle cozily amongst the pines and the tall hardwoods. Far out on the plains you can fish on a lake whose only shoreline shade comes from sparse, scraggly mesquites, and whose surface is humped with arti-

Possum Kingdom Lake is wonderful for skiing and other aquatic sports

ficial islands on which oilwell pumps nod their bird-like heads.

Just how great a change all this is from the past can be deduced from the thousands of out-of-state people who now come each year to enjoy the water in Texas, of all places. For example, Lake Texoma on the Texas-Oklahoma state line is one of the biggest single tourist attractions among Federal facilities in the United States. Nearly seven million persons went there in 1963. In the same year, 18½ million made use of eleven Federal lakes in the central Texas zone.

Hence any planning for new impoundments includes planning for their recreational use—for launching-ramps and picnic parks and fast-boat areas and angling areas and such matters. And municipalities sponsor regattas and ski contests and beauty competitions and bass rodeos to stimulate the happy revolution still more.

Even for surly traditionalists who are not strong on waterskiing and human togetherness, and prefer their water "live," Texas can furnish a good many streams that flow, and flow nicely, and in an age of automobiles and roads it is not much trouble to reach most of them.

Water—yes, it is there. In the beginning it falls from the same skies that it used to fall from in the old dry days, and in about the same quantities. But more of it is usable now, and it is being used. ■

You can choose your language, your customs, or intermingle them with past and present in the subtropical

Valley of the Rio Grande

by Mary Lasswell
photographs by Marguerite Johnson

THE MAIN ROADSTEM into the Rio Grande Valley is from the north, at Kingsville, where a warning is posted that the next filling station is fifty-five miles away. There is another warning that, in fairness, perhaps should be posted: "Watch out for mañana!" For in this alluring semitropical region, with Mexico just across the river, many an unwary visitor has gone on enjoying the best of two cultures—until it was too late to go home.

Actually, this is not a valley at all, but an alluvial plain of rich river silt, spread out over several hundred miles of flat land. Its twenty-six interrelated, interdependent towns are strung along the river, or near it, culminating in bustling Brownsville, with old-world Matamoros, Mexico, only a bridge's length away. Here you may live life in English or Spanish. Your customs can be American or Mexican. The present and the past are combined for your pleasure. A branch of Union Carbide and a *curandera,* or herb doctor, operate within a few blocks of each other.

In a favorable season the road down from Kingsville (U.S. 77—a straight shoot for about a hundred miles) is spectacular with wild flowers. The King Ranch Saddle Shop, in Kingsville, is worth anyone's time. Seventy percent of the work done here is repair to the King Ranch gear, but the rest of the leatherwork is for sale. The smell of the shop will give Western fans something to remember as they watch TV cowboys at home.

At Harlingen, U.S. 83 leads off westward about a hundred miles to Roma, while U.S. 77 goes on to Brownsville. Both of these sentimental cities are old and appealing. Between Brownsville and Mission, tall palms cast black shadows against sunsets that rival old-fashioned calendar art. Incredible

Subtropical scenes like this are common to the lush Rio Grande Valley

An attractive and colorful sight is the busy shrimp basin at Port Brownsville

Mexican crafts are on display in the markets of Matamoros, Mexico, across the river from Brownsville

dawns like dagger-thrusts break against these same frondy trees. Their shape and colors are reflected, rosy-silver, on the slow greenish waters of the *resacas*, which are grass-banked former meanderings of the river.

Part of the magic of the valley is its tropical fragrance. The evergreen ebony tree, with fluffy catkins the color of white wine, blooms several times a year and fills the air with incense. Orange blossoms, and jasmine and papaya blooms float their scent to the passerby in an undermining, narcotic way. Even the strong-minded forget their resolves and eat a little lotus along with their ruby-red grapefruit.

The first friendly invasion of this fertile country began in 1846 when Old Rough and Ready, General Zachary Taylor, brought his Federal troops to a point opposite Matamoros, where he founded Fort Brown. The next wave of newcomers were Union troops who fought the last battle of the Civil War near Brownsville. Many of them stayed to marry native girls and to go into navigation, banking, and other profitable pursuits. New England names still abound in the region. Since 1906, sun-seekers have been coming down from the north in droves.

There are activities here for everyone. The Confederate Air Force, which is a group of sportsmen-pilots who own World War II fighting planes, gives frequent air shows. The Brownsville Art League has painting classes for both tourists and winter visitors. Flower shows and an orchid society lead to permanent hobbies for many. There are special "house party" radio programs, with refreshments, which visitors attend and at which they sometimes even perform. Hunting, golf, swimming, boating and fishing are major sports.

Sidetrips to Mexico

But it is the strange mixture of old and new in nearby Mexican towns that is most fascinating. For example, in an ultramodern curio and liquor shop, it is not unusual to see a handsome young Mexican girl operating an electric cash register while wearing a religious habit, perhaps a long white robe with a sky-blue cape-collar and a white cord around her waist. She has made a vow to the Virgin of San Juan to wear this garb for a given number of days in repayment for miraculous aid received.

The bridge on the Mexican side, at Matamoros Customs house, boasts large arches surmounted by a sculptured eagle. Mexicans, with their irrepressible and realistic sense of humor, have nicknamed the group, "Aguila con Velices" (Eagle with Valises) like the title of a modern painting. But to Mexicans "Aguila!" also means something else: "Watch out!" They look at the statue and sav, "Aguila con los Velices! Keep an eagle-eye on your suitcases!"

Double meaning? Certainly. And typical of the two ways of life available in the Rio Grande Valley. ■

Discover the New Texas Panhandle

Now that the dust has settled on the Panhandle, it's a much pleasanter place for tourists than it was for the first settlers

by Lorna Novak
paintings by Clarence Kincaid

THE PANHANDLE OF TEXAS is that rectangle of high flat plain which lies to the north of the rest of Texas. It is a rich and thriving land, grown thus in less than a hundred years from an unpromising frontier.

To love it, a man must accept the sky as scenery.

The first men to see the Panhandle found a land so flat and empty it had to be navigated as if it wer an ocean, by watching the sun and stars. The Palo Duro Canyon slashed the center of the treeless plain, a deep thirty-mile gash cut by a small stream, fantastic with cones and mesas of red and yellow and purple rising from its floor, sheltering cedar and hackberry trees. To the north was the Canadian River, a wide dry bed most of the year, running deep with thick red water after a rain. The canyon and the river could be used as landmarks only after explorers came upon them; they dropped from the tableland sheer.

Over this wide land blew a harrowing wind, rolling great clouds of dust during drouth and turning winter snow to blizzard. On the flats there were no trees, no hills; nothing broke the wind, nothing caught the eye. It was dry, the sun shone, the big sky dominated the world. Twenty-five thousand square miles of nothing disconcerts, and as late as the end of the Civil War, no one lived permanently in the Panhandle, not even Indians.

In the 1870s hunters began to come from the north, following the buffalo, as had the Comanches, Cheyennes and Kiowas for generations. They depleted the herds with their Sharps rifles, the

Spectacular Palo Duro Canyon is viewed near entrance to the state park

Indians reacted, and there followed years of massacre and battle.

The first ranch in the Panhandle, the JA, was started by Colonel Goodnight, who put it down in the canyon, out of the wind. Those who came after him and settled in the open prairie made dugouts, half the house underground, out of the wind, and even today, the best private clubs have card rooms and bars in the basement, where a man can get underground and pretend the wind has died.

Some of the well-managed larger ranches were successful, but farmers were usually defeated by drouth. Even a man who had gotten a foothold, built a sod house, started his herd and planted a garden, learned to haul cow chips for fuel and gather bleached buffalo bones to sell for so much a thousand pounds, could not survive a drouth which lasted year after year. It remained the harsh land, where there were few women and fewer children, where ranches were islands in the grass—until the railroads came.

Of the three early Panhandle towns, Tascosa, Mobeetie and Clarendon, only Clarendon survived the coming of the railroads. The other two are now ghost towns. Some say this was because Tascosa and Mobeetie were wild and woolly, while Clarendon was a pious town, full of churches and bone dry. Others say it was because the railroads missed Tascosa and Mobeetie, while Clarendon was on the Ft. Worth and Denver City main line.

The Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad bisected the Santa Fe at Amarillo in 1887, on the central flats between the canyon and the river. There was no town before the railroad came; within a few years, Amarillo shipped more cattle than any other city in the world. The railroad took away the fear of being lost on the unmarked prairie; it tamed the land.

In 1926 two oil wells blew in near Borger, northeast of Amarillo. Borger became a legendary boom town, and the Panhandle started to build. Underlying the area was discovered the largest natural gas field in the world. All through the depression, new people came. They sat by their windows in the springtime, and watched Texas blow itself back and forth horizontally, with Oklahoma and Kansas coming by now and then for variety, but they prospered.

Since World War II the Panhandle has been a land discovered. The space which disconcerted the pioneer gives a sense of freedom to the man crowded by modern populations.

The weather remains. The average rainfall is twenty inches a

Cattle and oil, both plentiful in Texas, are indigenous to this ranch

Wheat storage elevators loom against a wide expanse of blue sky

year, one third of it falling in a two-hour period the afternoon of the garden party. But newcomers profess to like it. The wind blows the cities clean. The sun shines all the time. To the man in the house with an air conditioner, the land which fifty years ago seemed too tough now seems only high, dry, clean and sunny.

For besides the oil and gas and helium, the wheat and cattle, there is water, and everything it brings. At intervals beneath the whole plateau are water-bearing sands as much as three hundred feet thick. Wells must be drilled as deep as 1,000 feet in the north plains to reach water, but it is commercially practical when pumped by natural gas. The Panhandle has become the second largest irrigated area in the United States. The dust has settled.

Tourists who take the time to make the trip south from Amarillo to the Palo Duro Canyon are enchanted. Twenty miles of the same flat land which has become familiar, then suddenly, the fantastic shapes cut by wind and water, yellow and red in the sun, purple and mauve at dusk. This is a canyon you can drive into in your car. There are camp sites and semimodern cabins on the canyon floor, from which to explore the hundreds of caves, the Indian campgrounds, the dugouts of the early settlers. Modern cabins dot the rim, and there are horses and horseback trails. Prairie wildlife is protected and abundant, quail, turkey, deer, are unafraid, at nightfall the coyote howls. Aoudad sheep roam the upper slopes, and may be hunted in December by special license.

From the Palo Duro to the city of Canyon is twelve miles. Here, adjacent to West Texas State University, is the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum, full of authentic western exhibits.

Amarillo now has a population of 160,000. Eight thousand people a year move to Amarillo, and in each six months, whole new suburbs spring up, complete with shopping centers, schools, and long rows of $35,000 houses on hundred-foot lots. This squashed-together prosperity seems rather mad in the center of what is still one of the world's wide open spaces, but the prairie still stretches wide and empty all around. Out on the highway, it is easy to imagine what it must have meant to come into this country ninety years ago, and it seems a shame some of those old boys who managed to keep alive with money made gathering buffalo bones couldn't have stayed around long enough to see that even though it's dry on top, it's wet underneath. ■

Eager crowds witness a boys' ranch rodeo held near Tascosa Courthouse

Meeting on the long trail north as painted by the famed artist, Frederic Remington

Cattlemen of Old Texas

You won't see them today, but the breed of men
who drove the Longhorns north
left an indelible stamp on the land

by J. Frank Dobie

ONE CAN HARDLY think of Texas without thinking of the old-time cattleman—the trail boss who guided a herd of some 3,000 wild steers from the Rio Grande to the plains of Alberta, north of the Canadian line. The rugged cowman was a man of knowledge—he knew cattle, their nature and habits, their breeding, and their responses to certain grasses and other feeds. He knew that in running, cattle ran off tallow and flesh—and that it was tallow and flesh that made money.

The trail boss knew how to water cattle thoroughly at streams,

how to bed them so they rested all night, how to ease them off the bedgrounds, grazing always north. He delivered them in better condition than when he started them on the trail months before.

Such a trail boss was Ab Blocker. He never owned or wanted to own cattle. He simply wanted to handle them right for John R. Blocker—"Brother Johnnie"—who in one year partly owned 82,000 head of cattle. Ab Blocker was modest, no boaster, but with pride he used to say, "I have looked down the backs of more cows and drunk more water out of more cow tracks than any other man who ever pointed a herd toward the North Star."

His face and voice were sorrowful, and he loved to celebrate in a quiet way. I recall one celebration in the Gunter Hotel in San Antonio during a gathering of the Old-Time Trail Drivers of Texas. Prohibition was in force, but John Doak had procured a pint of good bourbon. He invited his compadre Bob Lauderdale, Ab Blocker and me up to his room. Uncorking the bottle while we stood, he handed it to Ab first. Ab looked at it and said, "I want to give a toast." So far as I'm aware, it was the only toast he knew and he never failed on a proper occasion to give it.

Now he held up the brown bottle in his massive, weathered hand and, with added strength to his deep voice, pronounced the toast slowly, earnestly, as if wishing to impress on both God and men his belief in its philosophy:

> "We come into this world all naked and bare;
> We go out of this world we know not where.
> But if we have been good fellows here,
> We need not fear what will be there."

Ab Blocker could not come to town without getting sore-footed from walking on pavement. For sixty years he wore the same kind of hat and the same style of boots, most of them made by the same bootmaker. As a young man, he quit trailing cattle in order to farm, and nearly broke his back picking a bale of cotton, which sold for four cents a pound. After it was ginned, to quote his words, "I got down on my knees and promised God A'mighty that if I ever planted another cotton seed, I would boil it first for three days so as to make sure it would never come up."

He married once but he never accommodated himself to domestic life. He belonged only to cattle, grass, trails, cow camps. One day while he was in Cotulla shipping, Mr. Maltsberger, after the train of steers had pulled out, invited him to the house for dinner. Mrs. Maltsberger asked, "Mister Ab, how's your wife?" This was about a year after he had married. "Oh," he said, "she's just as

Western artist, Charles Russell, depicts a critical moment as the herd moves north

poorly as she can be. She's had everything from hollerhorn to a baby." (Nearly anything wrong with a cow was ascribed to hollowhorn.) Ab did not remain married.

When he died in 1943 at the age of eighty-seven, he had never put his hands on the steering wheel of a car. He ignored all machinery. The first airplane he ever saw stampeded a herd of cattle he was driving through the brush. He always swore that at the time he thought it was a flying pearburner. (This contrivance for singeing thorns off prickly pear so that cattle can eat it throws a flame and roars a little like an airplane engine.)

He wanted to be buried with his boots on. He was, the spurs strapped to them. The old brass collarbutton was in his shirt and a fresh, white handkerchief was around his neck.

Charles Goodnight was the nearest approach to greatness in any cowman I have ever met or read about. During the Civil War he helped guard the northwestern frontiers of Texas against the Comanches. In 1866 he, with Oliver Loving, drove 2,000 mixed cattle from central Texas to Fort Sumner, New Mexico, where beef was high. This Goodnight-Loving Trail crossed 96 miles of waterless Pecos desert. Trailing their herds west, Goodnight and his men fought both Comanches and Apaches.

In 1876 he drove about 15,000 buffaloes out of the wide Palo Duro Canyon, a great gash through the level plains, put cattle in the natural enclosure and thus established the first ranch in the Panhandle of Texas. When the Comanches came to it, he fed them beef and made a treaty with their chief, Quanah Parker. The Comanches, he believed, had a more just claim on the country than white men had. He was a cherished friend of some Pueblo Indians of New Mexico. He blazed a cattle trail from Palo Duro to Dodge City, Kansas.

Backed with British capital, he came to own in part and to control around 1,300,000 acres of land. He made the JA cattle on the Palo Duro the best bred herd in Texas at the time.

He stood always for law and order. He forbade drinking and gambling among men in his pay. At the end of his life he claimed that not one of them had shot to kill a man or had been accused of stealing cattle. He was deeply moved by their loyalty.

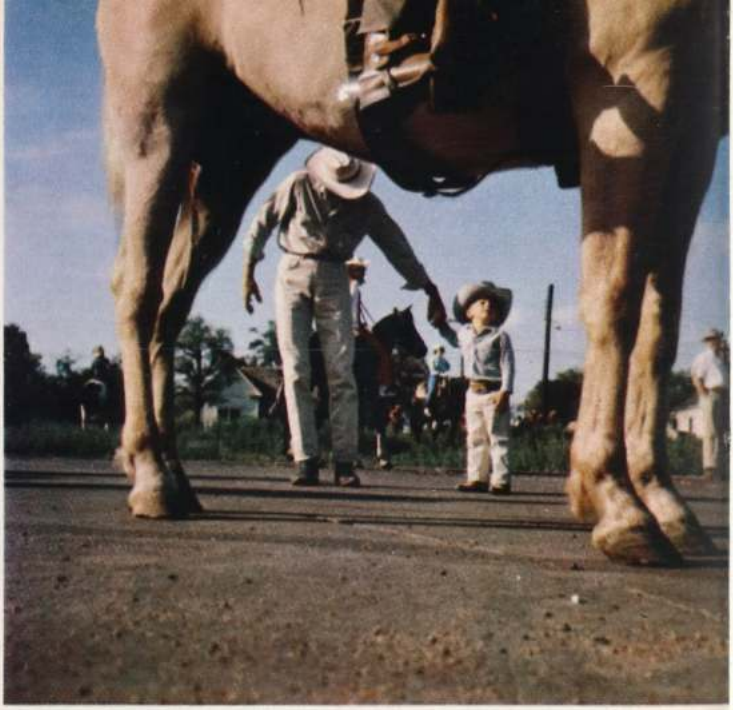
While population was still far-scattered in the Panhandle and schools were few, he established the Goodnight Academy—hardly a high school in rank—at Goodnight, Texas, almost edging the Palo Duro. There is a Palo Duro State Park now.

COURTESY OF AMON CARTER MUSEUM, FORT WORTH

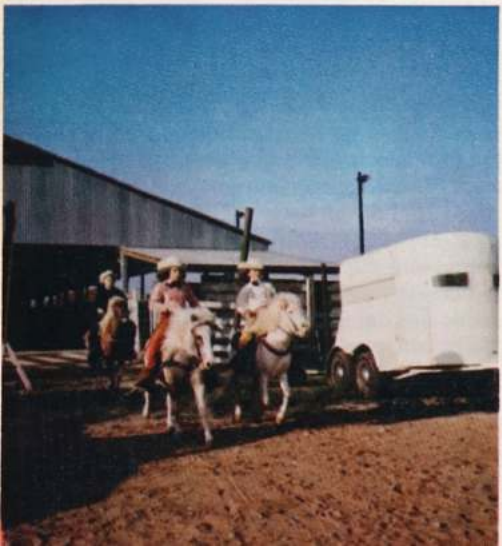
When I went as a four-day guest on his ranch to interview him for two magazine articles, he was ninety years old. This was in 1926. He still had a herd of buffaloes descended from calves captured near the end of the great slaughter. He was a conservationist long before conservation became a part of government and then a popular policy. Intensely honest, he belonged to no church. Extraordinarily observant, he belonged to the earth of grasses, wildlife and cattle. He had a compass inside his thick body, needed no wind, star or sun to guide him in the direction he wanted to go. He told me that if he felt dispirited and rode down into the buffalo pasture and looked at his buffaloes and the canyons, he always came back heartened and refreshed. His love of nature never failed him.

One of his favorite characters was Old Bose Ikard, who had been born a slave in Mississippi and who for years rode with Goodnight on the long cattle trails and on ranges where Indians and white murderers and thieves made life dangerous. At Ikard's death he put a marker over his grave attesting to his "splendid behavior."

His own marker is the best biography yet published of a cowman: *Charles Goodnight, Cowman and Plainsman*, by J. Evetts Haley. ■



Horse shows are for everyone—and the kids love it



Waco Club members proudly ride ponies

Young boy saddles up for the show

Welcome to Horse Lovers' Heaven

In Texas a horse is a family affair. If you have one, you're eligible to participate in this new form of recreation—the family horse show

by Clark Bolt
photographs by Marguerite Johnson

PICK ANY BROILING hot weekend in Texas and you'll see a man rush home from work in the afternoon and exchange his clothes for a bright-colored outfit. His wife and children (if any) have been ready for hours. A trailer is hooked onto the family car; a sleek horse, saddled and bridled, stamps in the trailer, legs braced for the lurch of the car. And away they go on a ten- to fifty-mile drive!

Destination reached, one of the group leads the horse out, leaps into the saddle and gallops off in a cloud of dust just in time for the grand entry in one of the gala social occasions of the evening—a horse show.

This scene is repeated many hundreds of times each weekend in Texas by folks who in all other respects appear quite normal. They simply live and breathe their hobby —horses.

The horse enthusiast might be a lawyer, plumber, carpenter, bank teller, engineer, teacher, farmer or what have you. No one is immune. This is particularly true in a certain area within a fifty-mile radius of Waco, where there are more horse clubs than in any other equal area in the world. In Robinson, a small town near Waco, there are actually more horses than people.

There exists today the Central Texas Horse Show Association which is composed of some twenty-five horse clubs. This group meets annually to discuss mutual problems and to set up a schedule of non-conflicting show dates. They have also agreed to a common point system so that the top horses can be honored each season as well as the top man, woman or child riders.

Usually there are two types of competition. The performance classes include ribbon roping, calf roping, keyhole races, rescue races and the like which are won by the most skilled performers. The halter

Barrel racing event takes skill, speed and daring

Calf roping requires complete coordination between horse and roper

"Cutting" is an attempt to control calf separated from the herd

Owner parades his horse before judges

class places emphasis on the horse rather than the rider.

At these events a friendliness and camaraderie develops that is seldom seen elsewhere. Somehow the smell of sweating horses, the sounds of creaking saddle leather, the choking dust, the saturating heat all seem to create a kind of togetherness that infects everyone.

"Where else can you find a more enjoyable and economical way to spend an evening with your family and kindred souls?" is the way one enthusiastic matron, the mother of three small children, puts it. "We load up Brownie and the children, and attend as many shows as we can . . . almost every weekend."

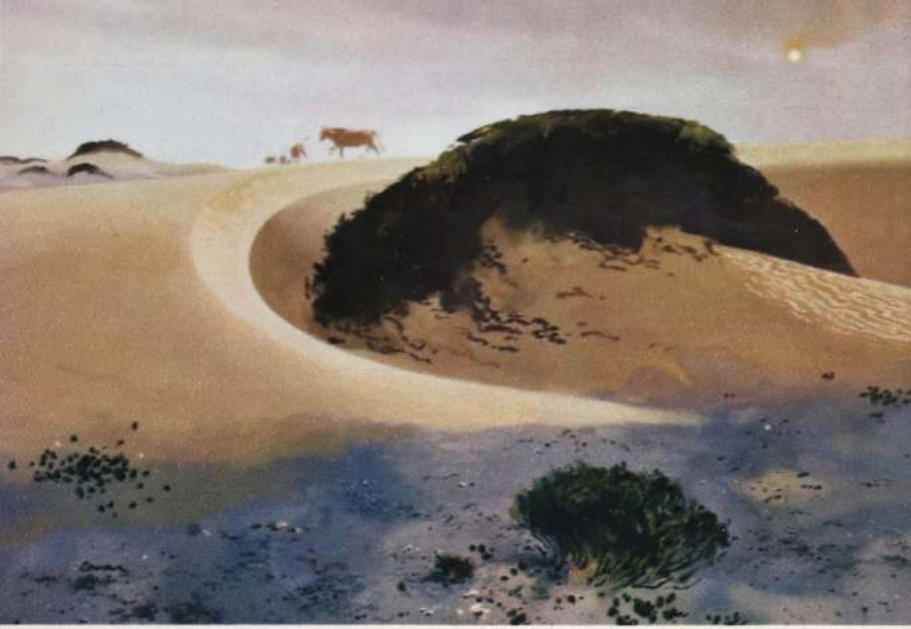
Another young woman, secretary to a lawyer in Waco, is a "barrel racing" fan. She competed in a number of such events last year, won three trophies and fifteen ribbons.

In addition to the pleasure the natives of that region get from these events, the growing interest in horses is helping the central Texas economy. "I can remember twenty years ago," one farmer said, "when we had trouble giving away better horses than those selling today for $100 or more."

Now horse trading is so popular thereabouts that a special auction barn near Waco does a booming business. On an average, about twenty-five auction sales are held each year with about seventy horses being sold at each sale. Prices have ranged from as little as $3 to (in one case) a top price of $4,700 for a registered Appaloosa stud.

Nags, Shetland ponies, registered quarter horses, Appaloosas and cross-breeds of these strains are offered. The average person seeks a good grade horse—gentle, nice appearing, not too young nor too old. The average horse price is somewhere around $100, and a good saddle can be bought for around $50. Shetland ponies usually bring about $50, whereas a good registered quarter horse sells anywhere from $500 up.

The average horse lover in those parts can't tell you how much it costs him to indulge his hobby, and it appears that he doesn't actually care. But if you include everything that goes with a horse, such as a saddle, bridle, feed, veterinarian services, special attire for participants, club dues, etc., the cost would be much more than these enthusiasts even imagine. If you're one of the same ilk, you, too, would say, "So what?" ■



The Wild Charm of Padre Island

It's wild and woolly and has special delights—
a hard-sand beach, cool surf, fishing,
bird-watching, and now resort hotels

by Frank X. Tolbert
paintings by Jack Cowan

ROLLING ALONG on a Padre Island beach, sometimes with the surf washing the big tires of the four-wheel-drive Ford pickup truck, I had many of the sensations of a boat trip in tolerably rough sea water. For a spanking breeze poured through the cab, and the tidemarks on the beach, which is pink in some slants of the sun, gave the truck a slight but not unpleasant choppy motion, and salty spray bleared the windshield when the wipers weren't busy. The tossing blue-green and white waves of the Gulf of Mexico, being very near, gave the illusion of being even higher than the sand dunes inboard from the truck, and yet this wasn't so, for the great dunes, such as those in the Sugar Mountains, rise as much as 45 feet.

There was the privacy and isolation a lone boatman gets far out at sea. During the middle reaches of this journey down the scimitar-shaped island I was sometimes 50 miles from the nearest settlement on Padre. For 90 miles I saw no living creatures except for some coyotes scavenging in the surf, grabbing at fish with sharp snaps of their jaws, and some large and sleek red cattle, standing among the sea oats and other salty salads which grow in the dunes. These animals are locally owned and graze this part of the island under lease from the landowners, though just across shallow Laguna Madre (or Mother Lake), which separates Padre from the mainland, are more than a million acres of unbroken cattle range, the huge Kenedy and King ranches.

Padre, off the southern coast of Texas and reaching into the same latitudes as the Keys of Florida, is the nation's most unspoiled semi-tropical island. In an effort to keep it in this happy state, about 80 miles of the island (it is never more than three miles in width) have been

Above left: Cows roam among the beautifully sculptured dunes of Padre Island
Below left: Wrecked shrimp boat forms a background for these surf fishermen

Campsites among the dunes of Padre Island are becoming increasingly popular

Glass fish net floats are prized by beachcombers

made into a national seashore. When a highway is built up the middle of the island, the Padre Island National Seashore may become one of the nation's favorite campgrounds.

Now there are resort settlements for a few miles at each end of this narrow barrier island on a solid clay base. There is even a "Little Miami Beach," with 15 handsome resort hotels, at the southern terminal, near Brownsville and Port Isabel. In between the settlements there are about 100 miles of lovely "desert island," a wilderness which must look much the same as it did 160 years ago when Padre Nicolas Balli, confessor to a Spanish King, made the first white settlement on the island.

The island enjoys a year-around average temperature of 73 degrees. Sun bathers say that they get a distinctive, coppery tan on Padre. That sun can get very, very warm on a summer day, and yet this is a "desert island" and not much bothered by humidity. And on a summer night the breezes and the sea combine to air-condition the island.

Padre claims the coolest and clearest surf on the Gulf of Mexico, where, usually, the waters are rather tepid.

There is much commercial fishing and shrimping from ports near both terminals of the island. Shrimping means more than oil production to this part of Texas. But it isn't unusual to see a noncommercial fisherman on a jetty or pier with a sizable tarpon on his line, or a jewfish which may weigh

up to 425 pounds. The fish you are most apt to catch—on shore, in the placid lagoon or out in the blue water—include blue marlin up to 350 pounds; tarpon which often run around 120 pounds; red snapper, flounder, sheepshead, redfish, blackfin and yellowfin tuna, pompano and spotted sea trout. Easy-to-catch blue crabs sometimes yield seven ounces of meat.

Dolphin, or "dorados," as they're styled locally, appear in merry numbers, their specialty being escort duty for the processions of shrimp boats which come by the hundreds from the Port of Brownsville and Port Isabel.

Resort center

South Padre (it's a post office) is the biggest development for tourists. There are resort hotels which can accommodate 1,300 persons, and most of these are new and extremely attractive and are on high dunes very near the sea. On South Padre there are piers and jetties, parks, a museum of the sea, and a convention hall of futuristic architecture right on the beach. You can rent cabañas or overnight shelters at very reasonable rates. There is a modern trailer camp, also very near to the Gulf, and a jetty favored by land fishermen.

Bird watchers love Padre, especially on the lagoon side. On the shores and on the islets of Laguna Madre are noisy poultry yards of pelicans, terns, roseate spoonbills, oyster catchers, and numerous other sea and shore birds, depending on the season. Between October and March the sandhill crane commonly winters on the island, coming down on a six-foot spread of wings. It is often mistaken for the slightly bigger whooping crane, largest and among the most rare of North American birds, which has its winter quarters at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, north of Corpus Christi.

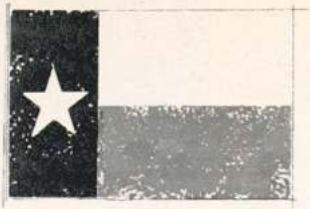
There's no better place for beachcombing than this island. At times, the treacherous currents of the Gulf have made the beaches "graveyards of ships," including Spanish galleons carrying gold and silver.

No one has yet reported finding a fortune in the dunes, yet old coins, such as Spanish doubloons of the early nineteenth century, often turn up in modest clutches. I myself have dug up shell-encrusted firearms of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as broken sabers and ancient bottles.

Still, if you hunt at the water's edge, the surf will throw up a fascinating variety of sea shells, such as sand dollars, fragile disks with star designs in their centers. Powerful currents fetch in interesting debris. You will find woven mats and coconuts, logs of mahogany, cypress, teakwood, and bamboo.

If you want privacy, you can find it camping on Padre's balmy beaches, although a four-wheel-drive vehicle is a necessity when you go into the undeveloped reaches.

Sun and sand, campsites and resorts, fishing, treasure hunting, bird watching, and just plain relaxing—Padre Island has it all. ■



Notes around the Lone Star State

Range of the Rangers—The Texas Rangers are one of the few law-enforcement agencies that can go anywhere to get their man. Not only are Rangers charged with keeping the peace over the more than 250,000 square miles and 10 million people of Texas, but the half hundred members of the force can, and do, roam the world. When they find a Texas lawbreaker, however, they must have him arrested by local authorities.

Free Ride Underground—Texas' only public subway is "out where the West begins"—in Fort Worth. It's free.

A downtown department store built the mile-long line at a cost of $2 million. It runs from a 5,000-car parking lot on the banks of the Trinity River to the store. The ride takes three minutes.

All the Old-Time Conveniences—A plush Dallas motel advertises that it has stables available for the horses of guests!

Rare Beasts—Goliad County, near the scene of the famous battle in the Texas War of Independence, is home of one of the largest herds of all-white burros in America. It's located near Fannin.

Traveling Texas—There are two long stretches of major Texas highways where there isn't a single gasoline station. No gasoline is available on the 57-mile stretch of U. S. Highway 77 that crosses the King Ranch between Riviera and Raymondville. And for 63 miles on U.S. 59, between Freer and Laredo, there is plenty of wide-open space but nary a rest room nor a gasoline pump.

Shortest Highway—The Texas Highway system includes 65,000 miles, but the shortest designated state highway is only 972 feet long. It is highway 219 in east Texas at Huntsville, and it stretches from downtown to a monument that decorates the grave of the great Texas hero, Sam Houston.

Pick Any Name—There's Dime Box and Muleshoe, Circle Back and Baby Head, Fair Play and Necessity, Pancake and Paradise. All are towns in Texas. So are Earth, Venus, Mars, Mercury and Saturn. In another category are China, Egypt, Erin, Holland, India, Ireland, Italy, Macedonia, Scotland and Turkey. There are many more intriguing names in Texas, as you might well expect from a state which has both Uncertain and Utopia within its borders!

Big Entertainment at "Six Flags"

A water flume ride, a Wild West show, an exciting river trip are all part of this Texas-sized amusement park

by Nick Nicholson
photographs by Edgar H. Carlson

THE SMALL BOY stared wide-eyed. Scarcely ten feet from where he stood in front of the weathered old courthouse, a lean-jawed Texas sheriff had dropped an outlaw in a lightning-fast shootout. The bright-eyed youngster had spotted the outlaw sneaking up on the roof of the blacksmith shop to draw a bead on the sheriff. Then he saw the sheriff whirl, heard the blast of the gun, and saw the outlaw's body flung backward by the impact of the bullet. Now, the smell of gunpowder tingling his nostrils, the small boy raced forward with a joyous whoop. A deputy was leading a sorry looking critter off to the Jersey Lily where, without doubt, Judge Roy Bean would deal out fast and simple justice.

It's not often that a twentieth-century youngster—even in Texas—can prowl the streets of an old frontier town and come upon such high drama. But it happens several times a day at Six Flags Over Texas, the $13 million historical amusement center midway on the turnpike between Dallas and Fort Worth.

The glorious part of it was that the boy unwittingly stumbled into the action. The Six Flags Over Texas Live Show Department plans much of its drama that way. And this is one of the great charms of the park: its ever-present sense of discovery, of surprise, of the unexpected.

When you ride the Butterfield Overland Stage you're never quite sure whether this time the coach will be stopped by masked gunmen. Strolling clowns, marching bands, and other entertainers appear from nowhere to stage impromptu shows.

Much Six Flags entertainment, of course, is scheduled and you can drop in at the Crazy Horse Saloon to catch the high-kicking cancan dancers. You can visit the 1,200-seat open-air amphitheater (cooled

Sheriff and deputies show starry-eyed youngsters how to handle weapons

Butterfield Overland Stage is often "held up" by masked outlaws

Swiss-made Astrolift ride gives visitors bird's-eye view of Six Flags park

Sky Hook carries visitors 155 feet above the park

by 60 tons of air conditioning) for the spirited Campus Revue, put on by talented youngsters selected at auditions held on college campuses throughout the Southwest.

The compelling thing about Six Flags is that you are always a participant, rarely just a spectator. And truly your $3.50 ticket ($2.50 for children under twelve) buys a Texas-sized portion of hospitality. You have unlimited access to all rides. You are entertained by attractions as spectacular as the 155-foot Sky Hook ride or as intimate as an authentic Punch and Judy show.

You're part of the show

Everything at Six Flags builds toward a sense of participation and guests seem to become completely caught up by it.

The Six Flags zoo, for instance, is a "petting" zoo. Children buy packets of special food, and milk in baby bottles, which they feed to the animals. They wander freely among baby llamas, tiny deer, goats, lambs, and other animals who nuzzle and romp with a fearlessness that matches the children's.

Before the park opened in 1961, it was a rare Texan who could name for you the flags that had flown over his state. Six Flags Over Texas, however, has changed all that. Some 4,500,000 park visitors, whether they wanted to or not, have learned a bit of basic Texas history.

Six Flags Over Texas has handily divided its 35 acres into six major entertainment areas, each a happy blend of exciting rides, shows, specialty acts, colorful costumes and settings appropriate to the area.

In the Spanish section, the $300,000 Asseradero is easily the park's most popular ride. A giant water flume, it twists, winds, and climbs over a 1,200-foot course fed by a half-million-gallon water reservoir. Passengers ride hollowed-out log boats propelled by water velocity in a hair-raising ride through white water rapids and hairpin turns to finally hurtle down a water course slanted at a precipitous 45-degree angle and crash amid cascading water in a pool at its base.

Second most popular ride is France's picturesque river trip. The nobleman-adventurer La Salle safely guides you through Spanish cannonfire and rifle crossfire, all the while cautioning with delighted gusto against the assorted Indians and wild animals – animated life-sized figures–that constantly menace you from the riverbank.

The park is open from mid-April until early December. During the vacation months of June, July and August it operates seven days a week; it is open weekends only the rest of the season.

By night, Six Flags sheds its sunny fiesta temperament and takes on quite a different personality. Some $300,000 of special outdoor illumination turns it into a fantasy of lights and colors. The park has a large and avid following of night-folk who swear visitors never see Six Flags at its best unless they see it at night–the time of magic. ■

Six Flag's petting zoo delights children

Shooting the rapids in unique water flume ride is one of big adventures

Mariachi band plays in Mexican section

Re-creation of Mexico's floating gardens of Xochimilco attracts many sight-seers

Jungle Country–Texas Style

The Big Thicket is a mecca
for lovers of bird, animal and plant life

by Archer Fullingim
paintings by Joseph Donaldson

A DOZEN YEARS AGO, the ivory-billed woodpecker was pronounced extinct in the United States by a leading ornithologist—"except possibly," he said, "in the Big Thicket of southeast Texas."

Three years later, an illiterate hunter brought a dead bird he had just shot into the printing shop of the weekly *News* at Kountze, Texas, in the middle of the Big Thicket. "Is this the kind of woodpecker you said in the paper was extinct? Looks to me exactly like the picture you published," the hunter said. "I knew you wouldn't believe me unless I brought one in."

It was an ivory-billed woodpecker, all right. The editor sadly viewed the dead bird.

"Oh, now, you don't have to feel bad–there's a lot more of these if you know where to find them," the hunter said reassuringly. "But you have to get 'way back in the Tight-Eye Thicket."

He was referring to that part of the Big Thicket that is so dense the hunter travels through "eyes" that have been made in the brush and brambles by animals. The original Big Thicket comprised about 3,350,-000 acres in seven counties in southeast Texas, but in the minds of most natives, the *real* Big Thicket is the "Tight-Eye" Thicket in Hardin County and parts of Liberty, Polk and Tyler counties. The "Tight-Eye" Thicket still remains as it did before the white man came.

The Spanish padres, in visiting the missions in the Nacogdoches country, recorded that between the missions and the sea there existed a forest so thick that it was impossible to traverse, even afoot. Within the vastness of this primeval forest, 100 miles long and 50 miles wide, the Indians found a safe refuge. Here, too, the bear could live unmolested. It was to the Big Thicket that the Texas revolutionists had planned to

Pet deer occupy remote "farm" near Honey Island in the Big Thicket

flee if Sam Houston had not routed Santa Anna at San Jacinto eighty miles to the east.

The Big Thicket is famous for its variety of plant and wild life including some of the most beautiful and interesting low trees and shrubs in the world. Within this region is found the last home of several birds that are nearing extinction, and more species of plants, birds and mammals than can be found in any other area of the South.

In the Kountze, Saratoga, Honey Island and Silsbee areas, the Big Thicket is a bird watcher's paradise. There are seventy-five species of resident birds who keep the Thicket a musical place the year 'round, plus forty kinds of summer resident birds and fifty of winter resident birds. And the Big Thicket is the greatest gathering place on the Gulf Coast for migratory birds.

Until the last few years, the Big Thicket was primarily the mecca of botanists, zoologists, geologists, meteorologists and the like, but with the building of new roads, tourists have discovered the area and more and more are coming in all seasons. The interior of the Big Thicket itself is no place for an amateur unless he is wearing hip boots and is supplied with mosquito repellent and has a compass—even the natives do not enter the Thicket without a compass, and every year search parties

are organized to hunt both tourists and natives who "got turned around" in the vastness.

However, the building of the highways resulted in a surprising benefit to the tourist. For in seeking light, the flowering shrubs and plants crowd to the edge of the highways, as if to show off their beauty. Thus one of the best ways to see the Big Thicket is merely to travel the highways bordering it. Slight excursions into it, but not too far unless you are an experienced jungle veteran, will arouse more birds than you can identify. Wild orchids grow abundantly, even on the outskirts of the Big Thicket.

Honey Island, population 100, a clearing in the Thicket that got its name from the many bee trees and the slightly higher ground that sets it off, has two giant swimming pools fed by warm artesian water from a well that has been flowing seventy-five years. The pools are surrounded by picnic grounds and camping facilities for trailers.

Wealth of game

The game capacity of the Thicket is as remarkable as its timber productiveness on which the wildlife is dependent. The heavy forest cover assures a food supply for such animals as armadillos, racoons, deer, foxes, moles, opossums, bats, civet, cats, squirrels, gophers, beavers, rabbits, sloths and anteaters, to name a few. Within an acre you will find oak, magnolia, beech, maple, gum, tupelo, holly, dogwood, linden, hawthorn, hickory, pecan, persimmon, chinquapin, huckleberry, viburnum, buckthorn, red bay, palm, French mulberry, grape, Virginia creeper, papaw, smilax and supple jack; also sweetleaf, water oak, long moss, wax myrtle, youpon, and pine, and browse such as switch cane, dwarf palmetto, long moss, and May haw.

If you start out to see this country from Kountze, which claims to be "The Big Light in the Big Thicket," don't feel hurt if some of the people you see or talk to suddenly burst into laughter. The town's slogan is "The Town with a Sense of Humor," and residents boast they will do anything to make you or themselves laugh—from serving you coffee with a five-foot handle gourd dipper to warning you not to feed the bear in the Thicket. In fact, one huge sign warns you not to feed the bears—not explaining that the Louisiana bear, once numerous, has been extinct for thirty years.

At Kountze you are fifty miles from the white sandy beaches of the Gulf of Mexico—beaches that are never crowded. A new freeway, which you can pick up on the outskirts of Beaumont, twenty-five miles south of the deepest recesses of the Thicket, heads that way. In the morning you can hook a bass in Village Creek in the Thicket (the creek has boat docks), in the afternoon you can surf-fish and catch reds and croakers in the Gulf, and at night go crabbing around the jetties at Bolivar, six miles across the bay from Galveston. ■

Village Creek (above) is a popular spot for bass fishermen to try their luck. At right is the artist's composite impression of the "Faces of the Big Thicket"

painting by Ralph White

New Braunfels Smokehouse, New Braunfels

Years ago this was a neighborhood smokehouse where local ranchers brought their meat to be cured in the long slow German way. Its fame grew and finally in response to public demand the Dunbar family opened a dining room serving its products, a store, a large mail order business and, of course, a greatly enlarged smokehouse where the centuries-old method is still used. On U. S. Highway 81, a block west of Interstate 35, the dining room and store are open every day 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (For free catalog of meat products write: Box 1159, New Braunfels, Texas)

Smoked Ham—"Finesse"

Boil 8 ounces egg noodles. Drain. Grind or chop 2 cups left-over New Braunfels smoked ham (or your own favorite brand). Grease 9-inch baking dish. Arrange boiled noodles and ham in three alternate layers. Combine 2 well beaten eggs with 1½ cups milk and season with salt and pepper. Pour over noodles and ham and dot top with butter. Bake in 350° oven for 45 minutes. Makes 6 portions.

Smokehouse Special Bacon Sandwich

Toast 2 slices bread on one side. Turn and spread with mayonnaise. Place in layers: 3 slices cooked bacon, 2 thin slices onion and 2 slices tomato. Top with slice of Cheddar cheese and bits of jalapeno (a hot pepper).

FAVORITE Recipes OF FAMOUS RESTAURANTS

The Sirloin, Lubbock

As the name suggests, this restaurant in Lubbock is noted for its fine beef. All broiling is done over hickory charcoal to create a penetrating heat which seals in juices and creates a subtle seasoning. The pies served here are baked fresh daily in the Sirloin kitchen and share the spotlight with the prime beef. John D. Smith Jr. is the owner and manager of this restaurant at 1003 Amarillo Road at the junction of U.S. 87 and North Avenue Q.

Texas Pecan Pie

2 eggs
½ cup sugar
1 cup white Karo
1 tablespoon butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1½ cups broken pecans
10-inch unbaked pie shell

Beat eggs then blend in remaining ingredients. Pour mixture into pie shell. Bake 15 minutes in 450° oven, then bake 45 minutes more at 375°.

painting by Clarence E. Kincaid

Gaidos' Restaurant and Motor Hotel, Galveston

Located on Galveston's Beach Boulevard at 39th street overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, this famous seafood spot has been owned and operated by the Gaido family since 1911. Open every day, except Monday, for lunch and dinner. Gaidos' own motor hotel next door is open year around; reservations suggested.

Shrimp Creole

2 pounds fresh shrimp
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons Worcestershire
2 teaspoons salt
3 tablespoons margarine
1 medium-size onion, chopped
½ green pepper, chopped
½ cup celery, chopped
1 clove garlic minced
2 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ teaspoon pepper
2 dashes Tabasco
2¼ cups canned or fresh tomatoes
8 ounces tomato sauce

Shell raw shrimp, devein, sprinkle shrimp with lemon, Worcestershire and 1 teaspoon salt. Melt butter in large frying pan, add onion, green pepper, celery and garlic and sauté over low heat about 5 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Blend flour, 1 teaspoon salt, sugar, pepper and Tabasco into combined tomatoes and tomato sauce. Cook covered over low heat 15-20 minutes or until flavors are well blended Add seasoned raw shrimp; cover and cook over low heat 3 to 5 minutes, or until shrimp are firm. Serve over 2 cups hot buttered rice. Makes about 8 portions.

Casa Rio Mexican Foods, San Antonio

Colorful decorations from Mexico form the backdrop for excellent south-of-the-border fare at this delightful restaurant located at 100 W. Commerce street in downtown San Antonio, two blocks south of U. S. Highway 90. The outdoor patio is on the banks of the San Antonio River and guests may watch the passing river traffic as they enjoy tacos, tamales, enchiladas and other favorites. Open for lunch and dinner every weekday; closed on Sunday. A. F. Beyer and Johnson Smith are the owners.

Green Enchiladas

Simmer a frying chicken in water seasoned with onion, celery, pepper and salt, to taste. Reserve broth. When done, dice chicken and salt to taste. Grate 1½ pounds Monterey Jack cheese in another container.

Make a sauce by combining the following: 5 pounds tomato fresadilla (a tiny green tomato with dry husk found in Mexican specialty stores); 2 bell peppers, chopped; 3 onions, chopped; 3 chicken bouillon cubes and 1 pint broth from chicken. Simmer one hour and strain. Take 32 tortillas (a Mexican corn pancake) and dip in hot oil. Then put a small portion of chicken and cheese on each tortilla before rolling up. Immediately before serving heat until sauce thickens. Pour sauce over enchiladas and top dish with 1 pint of sour cream. Heat for 20 minutes in 400° oven. Serve immediately. Makes 8 portions.


GAIDOS
Caught in Galveston Bay
SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

Spanish Missions to Modern Shrines

You can trace the history of the Lone Star State through its buildings— from the old missions to the LBJ Ranch

by R. Henderson Shuffler

TEXAS' HISTORIC buildings come in sizes, shapes, ages and conditions as assorted as its landscape and climate. The most ancient are Spanish; the newest is typically American—the LBJ Ranch.

Some of the oldest Spanish structures are the missions. Mission del Carmen, just east of El Paso, is a typical old Mexican church with white plastered walls and a domed bell tower. It dominates the sun-baked village of Ysleta, founded in 1682, oldest permanent settlement in Texas.

Nearly 700 airline miles due east, hidden among the towering pines of Mission State Forest, a small log chapel marks the site of San Francisco de los Tejas. Here the Franciscan fathers made their first attempt at Christianizing the Tejas Indians in 1690.

But to see the Spanish missions in their original beauty, or as near to it as careful reconstruction can

provide, you must drive down to San Antonio. There, along the winding San Antonio River, are the Missions San Jose y San Miguel de Aguayo (1720), San Juan Capistrano, San Francisco de la Espada, and Nuestra Senora de la Purisima Concepcion de Acuna (all 1731).

In the heart of the city stands a bullet-scarred old church, brooding over a past which has become a symbol of the ultimate price men will pay for freedom. The chapel of Mission San Antonio de Valero is generally called "The Alamo." Here, for thirteen sleepless days and nights, some 187 Texans held off an invading army of more than 5,000 until the fortress was overrun and its occupants slaughtered on March 6, 1836. An imposing cenotaph in the plaza before the church bears the names of Travis, Bowie, Crockett and the rest who died that day.

There are other historic buildings scattered over the face of Texas that you will want to see. Looming above the sleepy little town of Goliad is the gloomy mission-fort of La Bahia (1749), which is still used regularly for church services. There is the Old Stone Fort, at Nacogdoches, now a historical museum. Near Navasota is a replica of Texas' Independence Hall on a high bluff above the Brazos where independence from Mexico was declared in 1836.

Visitors are always intrigued by the massive State Capitol of red native granite, topped by a copper dome, which graces the hill at the head of Congress Avenue, in Austin. It is true that this statehouse is a few feet taller than the Capitol at Washington and that Texas sold off three million acres of public lands to finance the building in 1882. The Old Land Office on the Capitol grounds, a copy of a German castle in the homeland of its builder, houses two excellent museums. The Governor's Mansion, across the street southwest of the Capitol, is a classic 1855 example of American Empire architecture.

Birthplace of presidents

But not all is old. Modern historic shrines are still being created in Texas. The birthplaces of two of the three most recent Presidents of the United States have been restored. The many-gabled white frame house of 1890 vintage at Denison in which Dwight David Eisenhower was born has become a well-known tourist mecca. Less well-known is the birthplace of Lyndon Baines Johnson, which has just been restored on the LBJ Ranch in the hill country southwest of Austin.

At almost any hour of any day you will find dozens of cars from as many states parked beside the hard-topped Ranch Road 1, a loop off U.S. 290 near Johnson City, while their occupants peer or point their cameras across the Pedernales River at the Summer White House on the opposite bank. Secret Service restrictions prevent public admission to the ranch, but an excellent view of the house is available from the road. ■

Fra Angelico's "Scene from the Life of St. Anthony"

Little Journeys to Fine Art—

Tour of the Top Three

A trip to the major art museums in Houston, Fort Worth and San Antonio is an extra dividend on a visit to Texas

by Katharine Kuh

IN THAT VAST terrain called Texas, art is a late comer, but there is evidence that the state's prodigious wealth isn't all in oil wells and cattle. Promising art activity is especially evident in Houston, Fort Worth and San Antonio, three cities that are musts for any cultural junket through Texas.

Topping the list is Houston, where the Museum of Fine Arts is presently revitalizing its collections and displaying them to the best possible advantage in a celebrated modern addition called Cullinan Hall. Designed by Mies van der Rohe and opened in 1958, this new wing provides a breathtaking architectural

background for an impressive collection of sculpture recently acquired by the director, James Johnson Sweeney.

Appreciating the bold scale of Cullinan Hall with its thirty-foot walls and sweeping column-free interior, Mr. Sweeney has wisely stressed works of commanding magnitude, concentrating particularly on outstanding primitive and modern sculpture. Nowhere in the world can one find Calder more brilliantly represented. His electrifying orange "Crab" and his sensational twenty-foot "International Mobile" are dazzling proof of this artist's inventive range. Mr. Sweeney does not buy good examples; he goes after definitive masterpieces. Characteristic is a monumental sculpture by Eduardo Chillida, a thrusting wood structure that is easily this modern Spaniard's best work to date.

Several large primitive carvings, despite their sometimes savage content, seem curiously at home in the purity of Cullinan Hall. Heroic sculpture from Africa, the South Pacific and Pre-Columbian Latin America is impeccably installed with an eye to proportion and perspective. Everywhere one comes on clean vistas and strong focuses; everywhere one encounters provocative oppositions. A rare and earthy Mayan "Female Figure" carved from volcanic rock by a Guetar Indian is the antithesis of a bronze sculpture representing Ephebus and epitomizing Greek humanism at its most sophisticated.

The museum also is noted for several fine old master paintings, a group that contrasts forcibly with the daring aboriginal and modern sculpture. Mr. and Mrs. Percy Straus, though long-time residents of New York, left these early works to the Houston museum twenty years ago.

Among the early Italian paintings which are commonly considered the chief glory of the Straus collection, a small panel by Giovanni di Paolo called "A Miracle of St. Clara" is well named, the composition itself being a "miracle." Though its poignant story is plainly told, narrative is deliberately subordinated to design. Carefully controlled color areas and a tightly conceived relationship of figures to landscape produce a big idea in an amazingly small space. The picture measures 7½ by 11 inches. No larger, but equally moving, is Fra Angelico's

"Henri Gasquet" by Paul Cézanne
McNay Art Institute, San Antonio

"Wild West Riders" as depicted by Frederic Remington

Still life study by George Braque
McNay Art Institute, San Antonio

"The Bronc Buster," a bronze by Charles Russell
Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth

tender "Scene from the Life of St. Anthony," another "miracle" of religious humility. In the same collection is a head of an old woman by the Flemish painter, Hans Memling, an example of stark realism tempered by compassion.

Beautifully situated on the crest of a hill overlooking the city of Fort Worth, the new Amon Carter Museum of Western Art is a handsome compact building designed by the modern architect, Philip Johnson. Specifically concerned with "the study and documentation of the American West," to quote its director, Mitchell Wilder, the museum was established in 1961 as a memorial to Amon Carter, an important Fort Worth citizen who ardently admired the work of two famous western artists, Frederic Remington and Charles Russell. It is his private collection of paintings and sculpture by these men that represents the initial holdings of the new institution, but both staff and trustees intend to widen the scope with emphasis on appropriate twentieth-century art. Already an important canvas by Marsden Hartley has been added, a composition of 1936 called "Sombrero and Gloves." Nothing could be more western in feeling.

Several hundred paintings and bronzes by Remington and Russell, comprising the museum's main collection, reveal how totally engaged these two men were with the romance of the West. Careening stage coaches, Indians, cowboys and stampeding animals were their stock subjects, sometimes handled as little more than illustrations, sometimes, chiefly in the case of Remington, as authentic works of art.

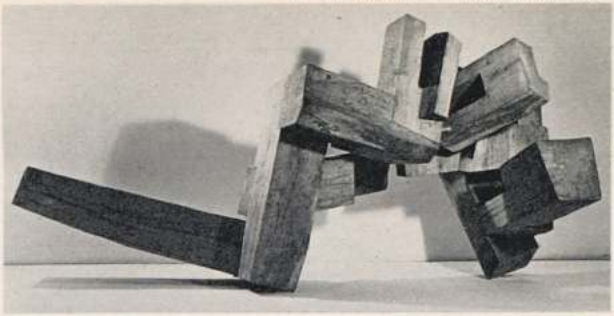
One should not leave Texas without a visit to the ingratiating old city of San Antonio where the McNay Art Institute is a prime attraction. This charming, refined museum still retains an aura of privacy inherited from its founder, Marion Koogler McNay, a discriminating collector who left her handsome residence and carefully chosen works of art to San Antonio. At every step the house and gardens suggest the intimacy of a well-tended home.

Best known for its postimpressionist paintings, the collection includes the work of both Europeans and Americans. Outstanding are two canvases by Cézanne, both relatively late compositions emphasizing how free the great French master became as he grew older. Like many important artists, Cézanne loosened up in his maturity, only then giving full rein to

"Fence Riders" by Frederic Remington
AMON CARTER MUSEUM, FORT WORTH

AMON CARTER MUSEUM, FORT WORTH

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON



This unusual wood sculpture is the work of Eduardo Chillida

frank emotional expression. Gauguin, also is well represented with three pictures, the most distinctive a revealing self-portrait that looks out of the canvas with skeptical eyes. Though the primitive idol included in the comparison recalls Tahiti, the picture was painted in Paris during a bitterly impoverished period in Gauguin's life. After two years in the South Seas he had returned to France, hoping to raise money. This self-image, a paradox of romance and ruthless honesty, is only one of many modern portraits in the McNay collection. A bold "Head of a Woman" by Toulouse-Lautrec paces an even bolder "Girl with Plumed Hat" by Picasso who was frankly influenced here by the earlier artist. There are other evocative images of women, a tender Italianate Modigliani and a delicate profile by Odilon Redon, a pastel steeped in poetry.

At the McNay, modest dimensions rarely imply modest quality. The percentage of superior works is high, works often small in scale but not in content. For example, a gouache painting of a "Lawyer" by Rouault, a favorite subject with this artist, packs a strong wallop in a few square inches. Why so many painters have viewed the legal profession with jaundiced eyes is a moot question. One thinks immediately of Daumier, Hogarth, and Forain.

Though French postimpressionist canvases form the museum's outstanding group, American art has not been neglected. The McNay's largest single concentration focuses on the work of Jules Pascin, a Bulgarian-born American who is represented by over 200 drawings, watercolors and oils. It would take considerable looking to find a more comprehensive survey of this perverse and pungent artist. There are other Americans—Marin, Demuth and, unexpectedly, John Sloan in a probing "Self-Portrait." Somehow, the entire spirit of the museum seems sympathetically geared to San Antonio, an urbane city that for me has always cast a gentle spell. ■

Take Your Choice of Cities

Texas' vast expanse is dotted with metropolitan areas and every one wears a different brand

by Richard Pierce

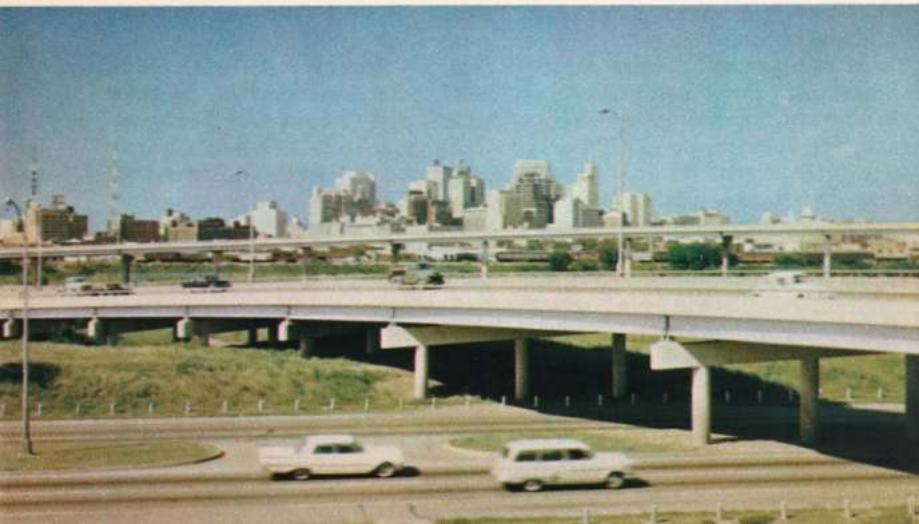
FOR A STATE that likes to brag about its wide open spaces, Texas encloses a lot of real estate within the corporate limits of its cities. As a matter of fact, it has a greater number of major metropolitan areas than any other state—an even dozen of them numbering more than 100,000 population each. As for ranch-oriented, elbow-room-loving Texans themselves, 75 percent of them are urban residents!

The saving grace in these rather upsetting statistics is that no two Texas cities are alike. Just as any stereotyped picture of the state is shattered by the actual variety of its far-flung regions, so generalities about its cities are belied by startling differences among them in appearance, origin, and temperament. Woe to the visitor who sees one or two, then proceeds to speak with authority about the rest! A statement considered flattering in Amarillo could arouse fiery wrath in El Paso, and vice versa.

There are plains cities in Texas where a two-story department store is higher than any terrain within fifty miles, and where the real skyscrapers are visible from almost that distance. Others are backdropped by dramatic mountain ranges. There are Texas cities nestling in broad, lush valleys, and others thrusting their new towers high above crescents of golden sand and sparkling surf.

Amarillo is the high-country city of Texas, standing modern and clean on the Cap Rock of the Panhandle. Compared with many Texas cities it is young, having got its start as "Ragtown" as recently as 1887, with the arrival of the Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad. Cattle gave it its first wealth; agriculture on its fertile land followed; and much later, the Panhandle oil boom brought spectacular growth. Since 1930 its population has more than tripled.

Austin has the broad boulevards and stately buildings of a planned city. In 1839 it was laid out to be the capital of the Republic of Texas, though it was so far from the coast that the round trip required a



month, and so far out on the frontier that an eight-foot stockade protected it from Indians until 1845, when the Republic was annexed to the United States. Now bounded on all sides by the city is the tightly-knit campus of the University of Texas which first opened its doors in 1883. State capital plus state university add up to a rich political and cultural atmosphere in present-day Austin.

In the deep southeast corner of the state stands **Beaumont,** an industrial giant, a major port, and an agricultural king. There is a distinct flavor of the traditional south here. The first fortunes were based mostly on rice; oil and industrial barons came later, and they, too, built their homes in the elegant, multipillared southern colonial style. Spindletop, one of the world's most famous gushers, blew in at Beaumont sixty-three years ago.

In **Corpus Christi,** on the blue Gulf of Mexico, climate, geography and local attitudes happily conspire to produce a playground atmosphere the year around. There is industry, to be sure, notably the huge chemical and petroleum complexes; jet planes flash over the bay from the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station; and the port is crowded with ships from every nation. Yet the prevailing atmosphere is one of relaxed, informal fun.

The city where business really gets down to business is **Dallas.** By its own promotion it is "Big D," counting almost a million residents and looking for more. It is the banking center of Texas and the Southwest, and a national leader in fashion apparel. Its metropolitan flavor is both polished and insistent.

Biggest on the border

You can stand on a mountain called Ranger Peak and look down on the skyscrapers of the largest city on the Mexican border, **El Paso.** The air is clean, clear and dry, and even from that distance there is something about El Paso—perhaps the texture of the brilliant sunlight—that reminds you of faraway places. On the streets of the city there is no doubt about it: this is an international city, the meeting place of two modern cultures. Spanish and English are heard everywhere, the flamboyant art and architecture of modern Mexico blends with American treatments of steel and glass, and a fiesta is never far away!

Despite its soaring towers and complex freeways, **Fort Worth** is proud to be known as a "cow town." It has huge livestock shipping centers and meat processing industries. And though it is only minutes away from Ivy League-conscious Dallas, the casual uniform of the cowman—boots, Stetson hat and adobe-colored trousers and jacket—is commonplace on Fort Worth streets.

Sprawling, growing **Houston** is

Dallas—known as Big D—is the business center of Texas

Superhighway skirts the capital city of Austin, shown in the distance

the state's largest city, the sixth largest in the nation, and America's No. 2 deep-water port. Everything in Houston is on a massive scale. The huge Texas Medical Center, with its $100 million ultramodern facilities, is one of the world's largest. A new sports stadium is big enough to play baseball or football *inside*. American astronauts, heading for the moon, work and train at NASA headquarters here.

Lubbock, a city of the high plains of north Texas, impresses visitors with its sparkling cleanliness. Hardly more than fifty years old, it has in that period increased its population more than 7,000 percent! People in Lubbock speak of cotton, for the city is at the center of the nation's largest cotton-producing area, and they speak of oil and gas, because the largest known reserves in the country lie near Lubbock.

Despite the skyscrapers that sprout on the ever-expanding outskirts of **San Antonio,** the city's pace is leisurely. There is time to view centuries-old missions, absorb the delicate beauty of the city's famous Sunken Gardens, and stroll along the river walk, the intriguing Paseo del Rio. Restaurants and shops of far lands line the river, and soft San Antonio evenings are threaded with the liquid notes of Spanish guitars.

Waco is a central Texas city famous now for the relaxing charm of its many spacious parks, but back in the 1870s it was a roaring frontier town for a curious reason: it was the site of the only bridge across the Brazos River, and all the east-west traffic in that region had to funnel through the town. Quietly industrious, Waco now has an agriculture-based economy that is finding increasing room for modern industry. Baylor University, one of the oldest in the state, lends the city an intellectual flavor.

The five-foot waterfall on the Wichita River that once gave **Wichita Falls** its name has long since gone, but what it has lost in falls, the city has gained in population and wealth. It has become one of the most important trading centers in the Southwest, and it is a favorite convention center. The scenic campus of Midwestern University presents a hushed, studious air, while thundering military jets flash in and out of Sheppard Air Force Base.

And the variety is infinite

These cities are Texas' top twelve in population, but they are only a few among many others equally historic, equally different, equally fascinating, linked by a superb and ever-growing superhighway system. Step into living history one moment, into the era of outer space the next. Turn one corner and find yourself a Bavarian hamlet; turn another and stare in wonder at a rubber plantation or a full-scale replica of Shakespeare's Globe Theater. This is the infinite variety of Texas cities. ■

Despite its skyscrapers, San Antonio sets a leisurely pace

Why I Go Back to Big Bend

The grandeur of the desert, mountains, rivers and canyons keeps luring this writer back

by Fred Gipson
paintings by Ralph White

EVER SO OFTEN, I go back into that remote section of west Texas known as the Big Bend Country, 1,100 square miles of which have been set aside as Big Bend National Park.

It's the land Tom Lea wrote about in his magnificent novel, "The Wonderful Country." The Chisos Mountain section I'm talking about is a part of Tom's great Chihauhuan Desert. And it keeps calling me back, almost like a voice.

It's a long haul into the park—300 miles southeast from El Paso; better than 400 from San Antonio. The main entrances are through Marathon on U.S. 385, 69 miles north of park headquarters; or through Alpine, to the west, following State 118 south to the same destination.

Personally, I like to take it slow on the way in. I want time to get the feel of the desert, to smell the clean wildness of it, to take note of the miles-upon-miles of strange desert growth stretching out toward the "Great Spirit Mountains," purple in the distance.

Also, I like to watch for "dust devil" whirlwinds that sometimes drop out of nowhere. I like to watch as the dust is sucked up into a tight whirling column that goes weaving off across the landscape, spouting trash from its funnel top.

Nearly all the desert plants have magnificent blooms, the pret-

Above left: Sunrise over the Chisos Mountains lights an unspoiled world
Below left: The jagged spires of Pulliam Ridge, as viewed from the Basin

Rugged Santa Elena Canyon of Rio Grande emphasizes the smallness of man. Below, magnificent vistas meet the eye at every turn in Big Bend National Park

tiest for me being the giant dagger plant, the century plant and the pitaya cactus. Around the last of April is generally the best season for seeing most flowers, but June is the time to get there if you like the pitaya fruit, which to my notion is better than a bait of strawberries and cream.

Panther Junction, at the foot of the Chisos Mountains, is headquarters for park officials. That's where you stop to learn about food and lodging, where to go and how to get there.

If I were camping out, I'd probably choose The Basin. It's pretty much the center of park activities. You can buy curios and books and pictures there. Or join a pack outfit riding up through the ponderosa pines to the South Rim, where you can see clear into Mexico. Or listen at night to a park naturalist's campfire lecture.

There's a good camping place there, with plenty of ramadas to keep off the sun and rain and even parking areas for trailer houses. But The Basin is better than a mile above sea level and sort of cool for sleeping out of a night. Also, if I were pulling one of those superduper trailer houses, I'd consider awhile before tackling those steep grades leading up into The Basin.

A better place for big trailers—and a lot of campers—is the Rio Grande Village Campground, just a little way upriver from Boquillas Canyon. It's some twenty miles south of Panther Junction, at an elevation of about 1,800 feet, which makes for warmer sleeping-out in winter, although the summer daytime heat will sometimes come close to frying your brains.

I like this part of the river best, though, especially the Hot Springs picnic grounds, a few miles upstream. There I can leave the car among the ruins of a little ghost village and follow a trail downstream that leads under a crumbling cliff wall to where the hot mineral waters gush out into a natural rock pool, surrounded by tall river cane. A man can take himself a sweat-bath here, if he can stand 105-degree water. The early-day Indians did.

It was these Indians, I guess, who left so many grinding holes in the rock ledges a few hundred yards beyond. I like to go see those holes and speculate on what life must have been for those people—living there beside a river cutting through the desert, with the men hunting for deer and antelope and javelina, and maybe catching a few catfish, while the women gathered the fruit of the screwbean mesquite, the pitaya, and the prickly pear and pounded it into a pulp inside the grinding holes to make it more edible.

Another thing I like to do is get perched on some high point in the park, say on the South Rim, along about sunset, where I can

watch the play of late evening light on the ramparts of the Sierra del Carmen across the river in Mexico. You can't believe the coloring or constant change of coloring you'll see there. Even after you've seen it, you won't believe it.

Also, there are river canyons to look at. The Rio Grande has been whittling away for some million years at making the Santa Elena, the Mariscal, and the Boquillas canyons, and the results are enough to stop your breath.

More fun than just standing and looking at those canyon walls would be to drift down between them in a boat. I've never done it, but some people have, and someday I mean to. Another thing I want to do is catch me some of those big Rio Grande catfish.

There's a whole raft of other things I want to see in that country —like the fossilized bones of prehistoric animals that used to bog around in the mud some 50 million years ago, when that country was all swamp.

I've never yet seen the wild burros that range the west side of the park. Or the little bush-tailed kangaroo rats. Or a green rattlesnake. They're all there. It's just that I've missed them so far. So I have to keep going back to Big Bend country.

If you want to go, you can check with The National Park Concessions, Inc., Big Bend National Park, Texas. They'll fix you up with information, or reservations if you need them, which makes going easier. And I'll make you a bet: If you go there one time, you'll want to go again. ■

About Our Authors—**Margaret Cousins,** Managing Editor of *Good Housekeeping* until 1958 and of *McCall's* until 1961, now Senior Editor at Doubleday & Co., has known and loved Texas since childhood. **John Graves,** author of "Goodbye to a River," contributes regularly to the major national magazines while teaching in Fort Worth. **Mary Lasswell** is best known for her top-sellers, "Suds in Your Eye" and six sequels, also writes a *Houston Chronicle* column, "I'll Take Texas." **Lorna Novak** of Amarillo is a housewife and novelist, author of "Does It Make into a Bed?" **J. Frank Dobie,** dean of Texas story tellers, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom at the White House in September; his latest book, just published, is "Cow People." **Frank X. Tolbert** is a novelist, newspaperman and amateur archeologist, writes a daily column for the *Dallas News* called "Tolbert's Texas." **Katharine Kuh,** lecturer and author of "The Artist's Voice" and other books, is art editor of *Saturday Review*. **Fred Gipson,** screen writer, lecturer, author of ten books, and winner of several literary awards, is probably most widely known for "Old Yeller."

painting by Warren Hunter

CANTON, TEXAS, sixty miles east of Dallas, is perhaps the only town of 1,500 in the nation which requires three dog catchers —especially following "First Monday." In rural Texas, the first Monday in each month is the traditional swap day. Farmers and ranchers come to the nearest town and devote the day to barter. Although First Monday has disappeared in many towns, in Canton it is still a healthy attraction luring from 3,000 to 5,000 visitors.

Today the emphasis is on the trading of hunting dogs, and the day is sometimes called "Dog Monday" in Canton. The area where the swapping goes on is called "The Jockey Grounds." Preachers harangue the crowds, tin pan repair men and patent medicine salesmen compete for attention with the traders. But the biggest volume deals are in hound dogs.—FRANK X. TOLBERT ■

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