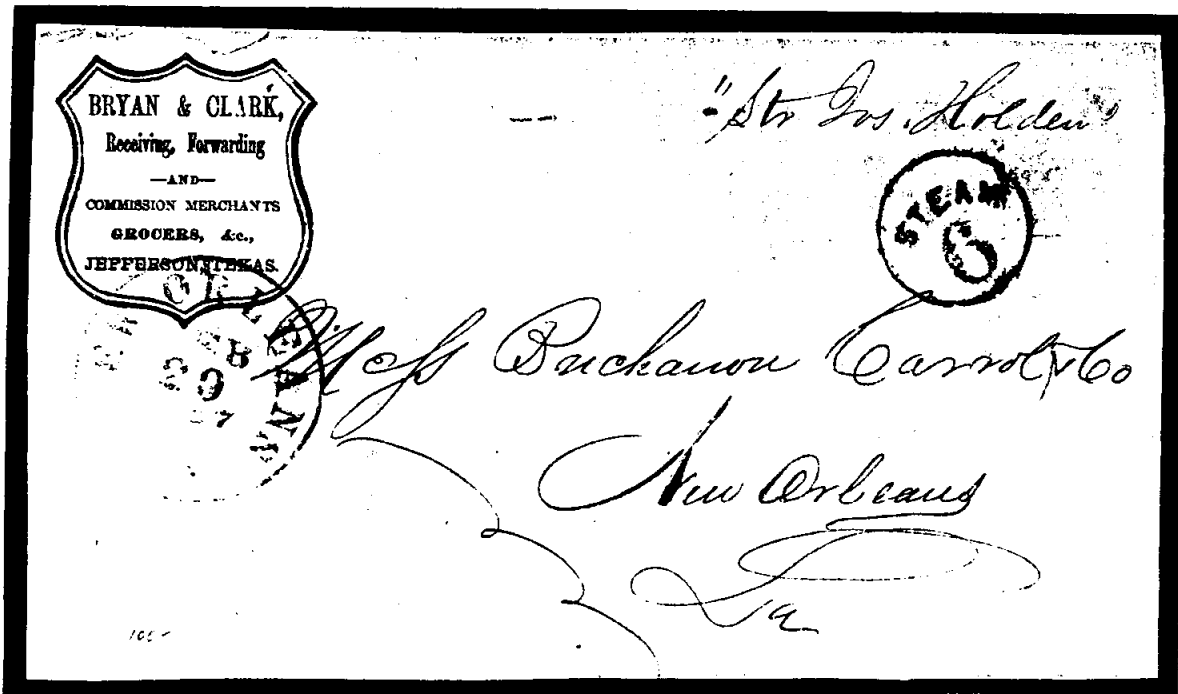


THE TEXAS POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY JOURNAL



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The cover shown on the front of this issue is a scarce and unusual Texas stampless envelope. Use was from Jefferson, Texas to New Orleans, Louisiana aboard a non-contract steamer the "James Holden" in 1857. The combination of a Texas inland-waterway cover, together with an early, pre-civil war advertising corner card, ship name, and date makes this a postal history gem.

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Having just returned from a month long vacation to upper New York State and New England, I find myself slightly out of touch with the local activities and events that have taken place during my absence. The trip did allow me to gain new perspective as to the relative activity of postal historians in other areas. I can report to our T.P.H.S. members, that in my opinion TEXAS is a literal "hot-bed" of postal history, both in its collection and in the research area.

Dealers who I approached with the request for 19th century Texas covers simply shook their heads and responded that they could not keep 19th century Texas materials in stock. It appeared to me that collectors of Texas materials had literally dried up the supply of these covers irregardless of price. Almost without exception, these dealers would offer other postal history materials from nearly all other states in abundance. After more than three weeks on the road and numerous visits to stamp shops throughout the East, I returned home without a single Texas cover to add to my collection. It would appear that one of the main objectives of the Texas Postal History Society, "To develop interest in the collection of Texas postal history" has succeeded to a point beyond our wildest dream.

It is gratifying also, to see a second objective of our organization, "The exhibition of Texas postal history", showing increased activity. Mr. John Barwis, Awards Chairman for this years HOUPEX show writes that there were three Confederate Texas postal history exhibits entered in the Houston show held on August 19-21 at the Stouffer Hotel. Mr. J.R. Keeling of Corpus Christi was presented the T.P.H.S. award for an exhibit titled, "Texas Usage of the General Issues of the C.S.A."

ELECTIONS:

It was reported in the last issue of this journal tha the T.P.H.S. nominating committee had selected, and obtained consent statements from, the following slate of candidates,

Mrs. Nonie Green- President
Mr. Norman Cohen- Vice President
Mr. James Alexander- Secretary -Treasurer

According to Article 6 of our constitution "Any member may place in nomination one candidate for any office by petitioning in writing the Secretary-Treasurer prior to October 1st of odd-numbered years. All candidates must agree to their nomination before their names may be listed on the ballot.

D.P.O.'S OF BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

by William K. McDaniel

Brazoria County, site of the first capitol of the Republic of Texas, is also rich in postal history. Several of the early postal routes had way stations or established offices within the area.

Many of these offices have been discontinued over the years, with mail being redirected to other nearby offices.

Several years ago, a publication entitled, "A Narrative History of Brazoria County, Texas", was released under the auspices of the Brazoria Historical Commission. One chapter of this volume dealt with "Ghost Towns" of the county, and included information regarding which of these old communities had been served by regular post offices.

This article will illustrate covers from six of these discontinued post offices, together with pertinent information about each, where available. Following the last illustration, the reader will find a complete listing of these discontinued offices, as given in the publication mentioned above.

Figure #1 shows a cover sent from the town of Bonney, which was located about twelve miles north of the present county seat of Angleton. This office was established in 1889, and discontinued in 1920, with all mail thereafter being directed to Angleton.

Figure #2 illustrates a letter sent from Gulf Prarie to Clinton, Louisiana. The Gulf Prarie area was settled in the 1830's, the post office being officially opened in 1848. This office was discontinued in November of 1866, while Thomas M. Cosley was postmaster. This cover was mailed in November, 1858.

The cover shown in Figure #3 originated in Oyster Creek, on March 16, 1891. The community of Oyster Creek referred to here is nowhere near the present town of that name, which is located just north of Freeport. The original Oyster Creek community was settled sometime in the 1840's, near the Chenango area, which is north of Angleton. This office was established in 1852, with Albert Finney as postmaster. It was discontinued in 1854, and reopened in 1871. In 1894, the name was changed to Oystercreek, and remained so until the office was permanently closed in 1899.

In Figure #4, we see a cover from Phair, a community which was located about half way between Angleton and Freeport, near the present Stratton Ridge area. The post office was established in March of 1886, with Wm. D. Hoskins serving as the first postmaster. In all probability, he was related to J. H. Hoskins, whose corner card is shown in the upper left corner of the cover. On October 15, 1900, the office was closed, mail being directed to Velasco after that time.

Figure #5 illustrates a manuscript town marking from the town of Quintana. This office was open from 1853 until 1857, at which time mail was directed to Velasco. The Quintana office was again opened in 1891, and closed permanently in 1915.

The last illustration, Figure #6, is of a cover from the original town of Velasco. Located across the Brazos River from Quintana, this office was opened in 1846, with the name being changed to Quintana in 1891 (see above). The present site of Velasco was incorporated

into the town of Freeport some years ago.

Below is list of all known discontinued post offices in Brazoria County. It must be assumed that the possibility of others coming to light exists. However, as of this time, the list is believed to be complete.

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. ADAMSTON | 15. ENGLISH | 29. PARKER'S POINT |
| 2. AMSTERDAM | * 16. FREEPORT | 30. PERRY'S LANDING |
| 3. ANCHOR | 17. GULF PRAIRIE | 31. RHODES |
| 4. BALLOWE | ** 18. HASIMA | ** 32. ROEVILLE |
| 5. BENNET'S FERRY | 19. HIND'S | ** 33. ROWAN (VILLE) |
| 6. BETHELDA | 20. HINKLE'S FERRY | 34. SANDY POINT |
| * 7. BOLIVAR | 21. JORDAN | 35. SAN LUIS |
| 8. BROWN'S | ** 22. KIBER | ** 36. SNIPE |
| 9. CEDAR GROVE | 23. LAKE SIDE | 37. SOLITUDE |
| 10. CEDAR LAKE | 24. LAYTONIA | 38. STRATTON |
| 11. CHICAGO | 25. LIVEOAK | 39. SUPERIOR |
| ** 12. CHOCOLATE BAYOU | 26. MARKBELT | 40. TULSY |
| 13. DURA | 27. OROZIMBO | 41. VELASCO |
| 14. DUROC | * 28. OYSTER CREEK | |

* Office not located near present town of the same name.

** These offices were established in 1900 or later.

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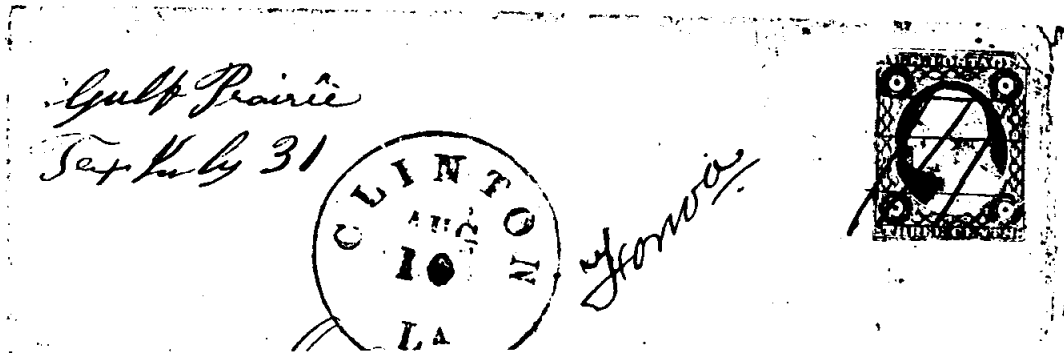


FIGURE 1

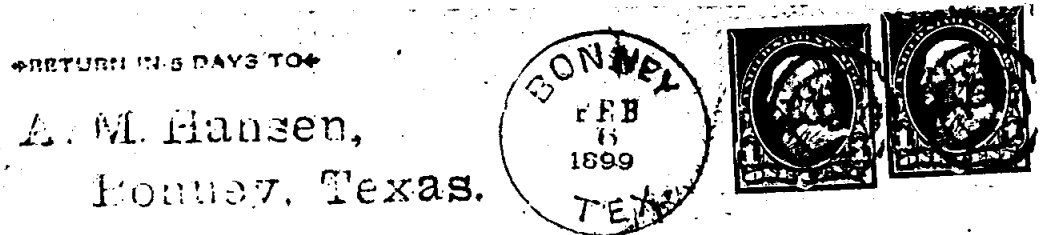


FIGURE 2

*J. A. Lubuar Mfg. Co.,
Northville,
Mich.*

FIGURE 3

Thin 10 days, to be returned to

W. L. ...



FIGURE 4

RETURN IN 10 DAYS TO
J. M. HOSKINS,
Stock Raiser,
PHAIR, TEXAS.



FIGURE 5

Arizona . 5
Dec 21
Mrs J. A. ...
Columbia

FIGURE 6



Guy M. Bryan Esq
Salveston

DISCOVERING COLORADO COUNTY'S
MONTEZUMA-BEASON'S CROSSING-COLUMBUS

by Norma Watz

When the Spanish began preparing maps of the area now known as Texas, they noted a large Indian settlement on the high west bank of the Colorado River about 8 miles above the Atascosita Crossing. They marked the spot and named it "Montezuma." Around Christmas 1821, three settlers of the Austin Colony, Robert Kuykendall, Joseph Kuykendall, and Daniel Gilleland, arrived and laid claim to the land, in the vicinity of the old Indian campsite.

In August of 1823, Stephen Fuller Austin, the Baron de Bastrop, one surveyor and several Negro slaves surveyed 170 acres around Montezuma where Austin planned to establish his capital, but the frequency of Indian raids and the fact that most of the other colonists had already settled on the Brazos River influenced Austin to move the site for the capital to the Brazos location. A village remained on this site and became known as "Beason's Crossing" and is listed as "Beason's" on the first postal routes of 1835.

The village grew and was later named "Columbus." General Sam Houston's Army camped on the east side of the River following the fall of the Alamo. They had been pursued by the Mexican Army under command of General Santa Anna, who set up camp across from the Texians on the River's west bank. When an additional Mexican Army under General Felisola joined forces with Santa Anna, General Sam Houston and forces retreated eastward, burning the town of Columbus to the ground, to deny the use of its facilities, food and supplies to the Mexicans.

Settlers returned to their homes after the Battle of San Jacinto and shortly after the organization of the Republic of Texas in January 1837, the first District Court Session in Texas was held under a century-old oak tree, with Judge R.M. "Three-Legged-Willie" Williamson presiding.

Rafts and barges floated downstream from Bastrop to Columbus carrying pine lumber and other supplies, while paddle wheelers such as Moccasin Belle, the Flying Jenny, and the Kate Ward carried cotton from Columbus down the Colorado River to the port of Matagorda, for shipment by sea. The Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railroad was completed from Harrisburg to Alleyton in 1860. During the Civil War, Alleyton, located about three miles east of Columbus, was the terminus of the railroad, and from there around 48,000 bales of cotton were hauled by oxen and mule teams to Mexico for shipment to England.

Columbus prospered greatly during the last half of the 19th Century. An Opera House, built in 1886, became the center of cultural and social activities. The present-day Courthouse was completed in 1890. Columbus is a town of great charm, well-known for its very delightful atmosphere of an historic small town which has successfully preserved many of its older structures. It is located on I-10 about 70 miles west of Houston, 125 miles east of San Antonio and 90 miles south of Austin. The Columbus Historical Trail includes 48 official State markers whose text effectively tell the story of Montezuma, Beason's Crossing, and Columbus.

REFERENCES

"Columbus Sesquicentennial - 1823-1973"
Colorado County Archives Office, Columbus
Personal Interviews

A North Texas Puzzle

by Charles Deaton

One of the joys of postal history is the occasional item that just doesn't fit in with all the recorded information available on the subject. These covers can provide one with pleasant hours of research as a plausible answer is sought for the various questions presented to the student. Such a cover is illustrated herewith in Fig. 1. It bears a 3¢ green Bank Note stamp and is postmarked "Jacksonborough, Tex. Aug.7." The pencil date at the left of the cover is Aug. 6, 1873, so the cover is apparently an 1873 usage. The printed corner card gives the return address as Young County, but has a blank space where the name of the post office would normally be shown.

This cover poses a couple of interesting questions. First, how can the Jacksonborough postmark be explained? According to post office records, as shown in the Wheat study of Texas Post Offices and Postmasters, there has never been a post office in Texas by that name. There is, of course, a "Jacksboro" post office, which was established in 1858 as Jacksborough in Jack County. This county is immediately east of Young County, and at the time this letter was mailed, could have been the closest operating post office to the site of Graham Salt Works. Could this be a simple misspelling of the name Jacksborough? If so, it is hard to imagine the mistake being made by local post office officials, for Jack County was not named for a Jackson, but rather for early Texas patriots William H. and Pat C. Jack. It is entirely possible that an order for a postmark device might have been misread by an order clerk somewhere far removed from Texas. But even if this occurred, it seems likely the local post office folks would have noticed the error and used an older postmarking device until another could be obtained. (It is also possible, one must admit, that the local folks either did not notice the error for a while, or just decided to use it anyway until a replacement was obtained.)

The second question concerns the blank for the town name on the printed corner card. According to the Handbook of Texas, the Graham Salt Works was a business venture of Edwin S. Graham and his brother Gustavius Graham. They moved to Young County in 1871, and became active in the formation of Young County and its early commercial activities. They founded the town of Graham in 1872, and it became the county seat of Young County in 1874. The Wheat study shows that the Graham, Texas post office was officially established on Sept. 30, 1873. Thus, it seems entirely reasonable that Graham needed some envelopes for his correspondence printed before there was a Graham, Texas post office, and just decided to have the envelopes printed with a blank space for the name of the soon-to-be-opened post office named for himself. And it could be that all of his correspondence before Graham became a post office had to be mailed at Jacksborough. (This cover, you will note, is addressed to Ed S. Graham in Kentucky; the Handbook of Texas notes that Graham came to Texas from Kentucky, so this cover was apparently sent to him while he was on a trip back to that area.)

The apparent misspelling of Jacksborough remains a mystery, however. If any TPHS member has a similar cover, or any suggestions as to how this might have happened, I would appreciate hearing from you. Please write to me at 7273 Brompton Rd., Houston, Texas 77025. If we can solve this mystery, the solution will be recorded in a future issue of this Journal.

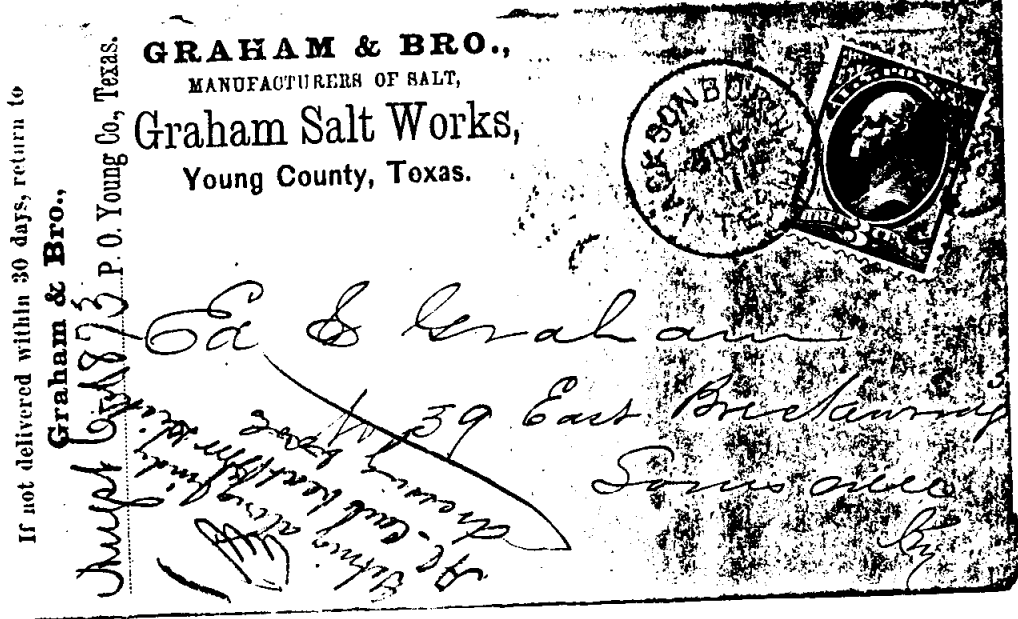


FIGURE 1

AN EARLY TEXAS RECONSTRUCTION COVER
GOLIAD TO ST. MARY'S - 1866

by William H.P. Emery

During the Civil War, Texas, more than any other Confederate state, remained relatively prosperous. Its towns, cities, croplands, commerce, and slaves remained well outside the main area of conflict. Union forces concentrated their efforts on splitting the Confederacy via the capture of New Orleans and Vicksburg. Once the Mississippi River was effectively under control, the Union forces began an offensive designed to reduce the Eastern portion of the Confederate States of America while isolating the Western portion, which included Texas.

The success of Union forces and the efficient way in which they carried out their orders gradually left the Eastern half of the Confederacy totally ravaged and drained of will to continue the struggle.

Meanwhile, in the isolated Trans-Mississippi Department of the Confederate States of America the average citizen, businessman, clergyman, politician and news reporter had little idea of how badly the war had been progressing. They were aware that their brave armies had achieved a series of brilliant victories in the early fighting and were baffled when reports of Union successes arrived. To lessen the effect that the Confederate Army setbacks might have on the morale of the people, Texans were told that foreign intervention was promised and that this help would sustain the Confederacy in their effort to secede from the Union.

When news of General Lee's surrender to General Grant at Appomatox on April 9, 1865 first arrived in Texas several of the states newspapers labelled the report, "another of those Yankee rumors". People were filled with anxiety, but their hope for a Confederate victory, the politicians promises of foreign intervention, and the early success of their armies served to keep them from believing the report. Within weeks the report of General Lee's surrender was confirmed and with this confirmation came further bad news. Some had held out hope that the bulk of the Confederate Army did not surrender but were moving to join General Johnston. In early May the news came that General Johnston surrendered on April 26, and that General Taylor had followed on May 6, 1865. This meant that the entire Eastern portion of the Confederate States of America had ceased their fight and were controlled by Union Forces.

Almost as quickly as Texas had been rallied to patriotism and support for the Confederate cause in 1861; in 1865 it experienced an equally swift slump into depression and despair. Citizens, military leaders, and politicians began to suffer anxiety at the thought of eventual defeat and the probable military occupation of Texas. Chaos and uncertainty reigned throughout the state. Many, including Governor Murrah and a number of highranking state officials, made contingency plans to flee to sanctuaries in Mexico and various Caribbean Islands.

On June 2, 1865, General Edmund Kirby Smith came to Galveston where he formally signed the Canby-Buckner Convention ending the last Confederate military authority. The Union was restored; the south had lost.

While Texas had escaped in large measure the physical destruction of the Civil War; during the reconstruction, it suffered the penalty of defeat and the humiliation of disfranchisement. The economy was in shambles. Its own government was dissolved. The Western frontier was attacked by hostile Indians. Its Southern portions were plundered by large groups of

Mexican outlaws. Cities and towns were overrun by organized groups known as "Loyal Legions" composed of negros, carpetbaggers, scalawags, camp followers, and army deserters. During the summer of 1865, and continuing through the summer of 1866 Texas was essentially paralyzed. The Provisional Government, headed by Governor A. J. Hamilton, was severely handicapped both by the military occupation and by the high level of animosity that remained with the civilian population. As rapidly as possible, officers of district, county and justice courts, sherrifs, tax assessors and collectors, and county commissioners were appointed, and the machinery of the law set in motion.

Unfortunately resumption of the mail service was not under the Governors control and the appointment of new postmasters, and the signing of new contracts for delivery of the mail required approval from Washington and the United States Post Office Department. A few mail contracts were awarded as early as January 1866, but the bulk of these contracts were not approved and signed until June, 1866. Complete U. S. Mail service in all parts of Texas was not resumed until late in the summer of 1866, more than a year after all Confederate mail service had ended.

The cover shown in Figure 1 is a reasonably early example of "Reconstruction Mail" carried during the period of Constitutional Government (August, 1866-March, 1867). It was franked by a Scott #65, 3¢ stamp. Postmaster George W. Capen (December 28, 1865- March 23, 1868) pen cancelled the stamp and wrote across the top of the envelope, "Goliad, Oct. 21st".

Huson (1956) reports that as late as 1869 there were no passenger stage lines between St. Mary's and Refugio, but that once weekly the mail was sent out by mail hack or horseback depending on the road conditions. He also notes, that C.F. Leisering held the mail contract for transport of mail between St. Mary's and Goliad, a distance of 43 miles. (See map Figure 2).

From the memoirs of Phillip Power, edited and published by Huson (1956) come many interesting details relating to Confederate mail service. Power states, "During the war the Confederate States mails were carried from Lamar to St. Mary's by way of Copano. I do not remember who carried the mails at first, but finally the manpower was reduced to Judge Lambert and myself. He was the postmaster of Copano and asked me to undertake the job, there being no one else. I was thrilled with the idea of carrying the mails and the large salary incident to the position. The honorarium was eight dollars per month in Mexican silver, not Confederate currency. I carried the mails for the Confederacy from that time to the end of the war."

"The mails came in to Copano by ship from the seaward side; and overland from Refugio. My route was Lamar to St. Mary's. I carried the mail sacks on my shoulders from Copano to the pass of Mission Bay. There I kept a skiff in which I rowed across passes, then walked down the beach to St. Mary's. Returning I walked up the beach back to my skiff, rowed across the passes, and walked on back to Copano. From Copano to Lamar and return I rode horseback along the beach."

One can imagine, from Mr. Power's description of the mail transport, that inclement weather, rough water in the passes, or other accidents along the beach, might partially account for the rough, sometimes stained appearance of many covers from this era of Texas mail service.

Another interesting aspect of Mr. Power's tale is that the three Copano Bay communities he provided mail service to during the Confederacy have since become "ghost-towns". The decline and disappearance of St. Mary's has been attributed to killer Gulf Storms which hit that section of the coastline in 1886 and again in 1887. They destroyed the wharfs and warehouses and literally blew away nearly every home in the community.

The decline of Copano has been attributed to its unsuccessful contest with Rockport to become the county seat of Refugio County. By 1872, the townsite had declined and was occupied by only one family.

Lamar, the third community serviced by Mr. Power's Confederate mail route survived into the 20th century. The post office was closed in 1918. The settlement had been founded in 1838 by James Power and James Hewitson. Capt. James W. Byrne surveyed the streets and lot sites of this settlement naming it in honor of Mirabeau B. Lamar.

Figure #3 is a copy of a tax receipt enclosed in the reconstruction cover. It would appear from the receipt that Richard T. Byrne is paying his state and county taxes for 1862 and 1863 on 320 acres of land, 5 horses and 125 cattle. However, the records show that Francis M. Swift, the assessor/collector of taxes for Refugio County, was non-functional after June 19, 1865 when General Gordon Granger proclaimed the authority of the United States over Texas. The new assessor-collector of taxes for Refugio County, appointed by Gov. A. J. Hamilton, September 1865, was Edward St. John. Thus, if the receipt was issued on January 1, 1866, Mr. St. John's signature should have appeared. Perhaps the reconstruction mail was so slow that the news of his removal never reached Mr. Swift, or perhaps Mr. St. John had second thoughts about accepting his new appointment as assessor-collector of taxes for Refugio County. We will probably never know the full story. What can be positively stated from our investigations and readings relative to the reconstruction era is that it was a difficult time in our past and that mail from this period is both rare and interesting.

REFERENCE:

Huson, Hobart / Refugio, A Comprehensive History of Refugio County
From Aboriginal Times to 1955. 1956.

Galien Oct 27 1864

T. W. Byrnes Esq

St Marys Texas

Figure 1

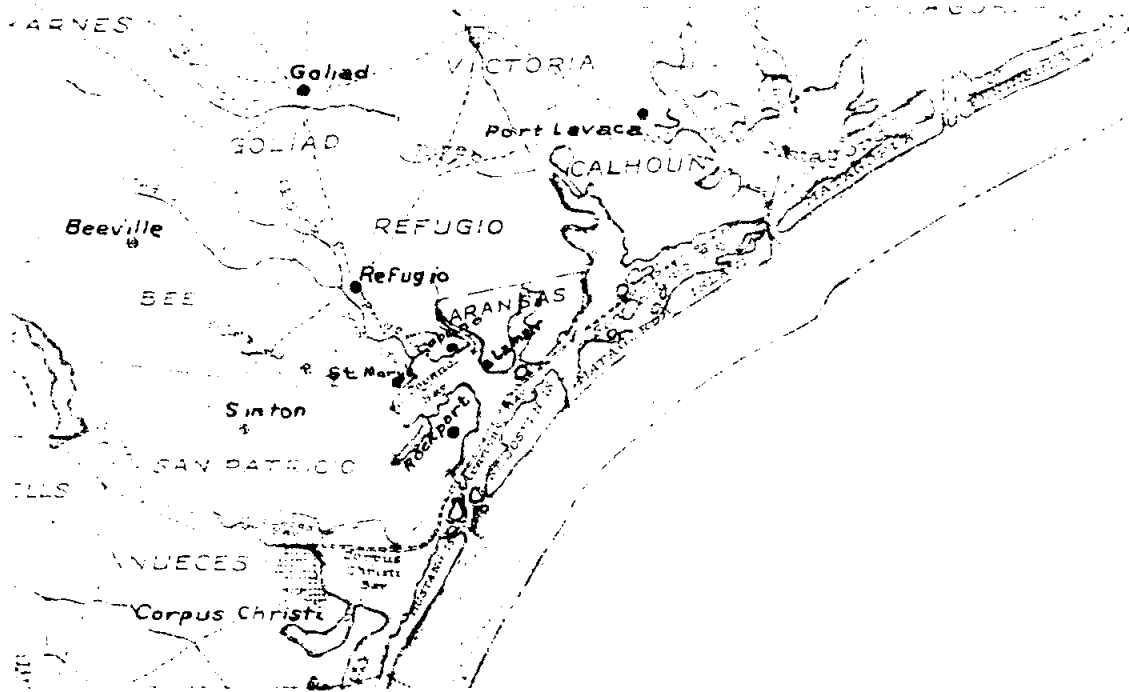


Figure 2

Refugio County Texas Jan 1st 1864

Received of R. J. Byrnes eighteen dollars and sixty eight cents in full for his State and County Tax for the year 1863 on 300 A land 5 horses 125 Cattle Chick-fert Poll Tax \$13.68/100 (to war tax 1862 \$1.50/100) F. M. Sargent A. G. C.

Figure 3

