



Official State Historical Center of the Texas
Rangers law enforcement agency.

**The Following Article was Originally Published in the
*Texas Ranger Dispatch Magazine***

The *Texas Ranger Dispatch* was published by the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum from 2000 to 2011. It has been superseded by this online archive of Texas Ranger history.

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Funded in part by grants from
the Texas Ranger Association Foundation

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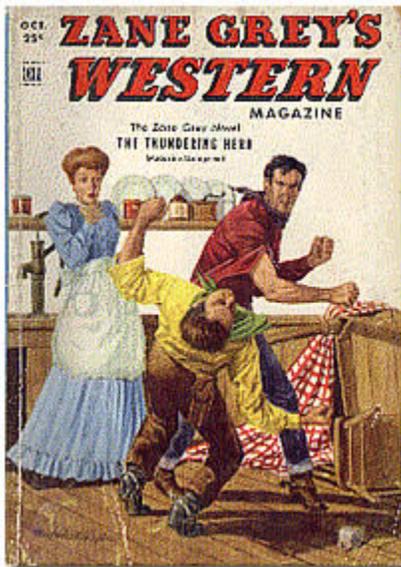


Women and the Rangers: Mothers, Wives, & Daughters

The words “Texas Ranger” do not usually call to mind the picture of a woman, yet women have played an important part in the history of the Rangers. They have been mothers and grandmothers, sisters and daughters, sweethearts and wives, aunts and nieces, friends and foes.

Women were also commissioned as Special Rangers in the 1920s – 1940s, with one even commissioned to serve as a Mansion Guard at the governor’s mansion, a task often performed by Regular Rangers at that time. Today, two women serve in the active Ranger force in Company “D” in San Antonio and and Company “F” in Waco.

It is to all of the women who have given their love and support to the Texas Rangers since 1823 that this exhibit is dedicated.



Shattering the Myth: Hollywood vs. Reality

Too often Hollywood has portrayed women on the frontier as weak and helpless, cowering in the background waiting for a man to save them. The reality was often just the opposite, especially for women associated with the Texas Rangers. The exhibit is presented chronologically, beginning in the 1840s and continuing up to the 1980s.

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"Chell Baker, a Ranger in the 1920s, managed to keep from getting shot while in the Rangers. Maybe it was the Rangers' charge-right-on-in attitude that kept Baker from getting blown away. That attitude still exists for Baker. He keeps a Colt .45 single action on a table in the living room of the small home he shares with his 80 year old sister Lena. "I told

Lena if anybody tries to break the door down, to pick her up and help 'em tear it down from the inside," he said."

—“Ridin’ with the Rangers: Chell Baker helped keep the peace along the border,” *Austin American Statesman*, Feb 6, 1977.

Lyna and John Hensley

Mrs. Lyna Wright Hensley married Ranger John Hensley in 1922 and moved with the Rangers to Brownsville and Donna.

“I’d stay in the camp with all those men, and I was their pet,” she recalled. “I didn’t cook; I didn’t wash dishes; I did help with the horses. Always I was treated like a big sister; they were so gentlemanly.”

“I guess I was born a liberated woman. I had my own way of doing things. I grew up on a ranch and did everything my four brothers did to keep the ranch going from branding to doctoring cattle to fixing a windmill. I was the best d - - d cowgirl around.”

“Feisty Widow Loyal to her Texas Lawman,” May 9, 1983.

Mrs. and Dan W. Roberts

I was now a regular member of Company "D", but entirely unarmed. I spoke to the Captain about how embarrassing it was not to have a gun and not to be able to protect myself in case of an attack. He immediately purchased a .22 caliber Remington rifle. I practiced target shooting with the Rangers until I was satisfied that I could shoot as well as any of them. . . .”

Gladys and Capt. Frank Hamer

Gladys Hamer ("Hay-mer"), the wife of legendary Texas Ranger Captain Frank Hamer, was not afraid to jump in and help out her husband in a fight.

On October 1, 1917 the Hamers drove into Sweetwater, Texas. Stopping to have a punctured tire repaired, Frank Hamer was attacked by Gee McMeans. As Frank was struggling to get McMeans’ weapon away from him, another man with a shotgun started across the street toward Hamer. Gladys Hamer, seeing this man, picked up a small automatic pistol from the front seat of the car and fired at the man. The man ducked behind a car. Every time he attempted to move, Gladys shot at him, keeping him from attacking her husband.

Ranger L. C. Bills and his daughter Pauline.
Gift of Bettie Wyatt / P.97.28. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of
Fame and Museum.



Catherine H. and Shapley P Ross

Catherine H. (Fulkerson) Ross married Shapley P. Ross in St. Charles County, Missouri on November 4, 1830. They were the parents of nine children.

While the ladies met for a quilting bee at the Shapley Ross place, the men congregated at a spring below the Ross home and procured some whiskey. In the rude play that followed, Captain Ross fell into the spring and his leather breeches got soaking wet. He went to sleep in the sun and when he awoke, his pants had dried stiff as boards. After companion ripped open the seams for him, Ross decided to go home and get a new pair of pants. Since walking in the stiff breeches was difficult he took them off and carried them over his shoulder.

Someone informed the ladies at the quilting bee that men had been drinking rather freely. Some of the ladies became anxious but Mrs. Ross continued her quilting, commenting "Well, I am not the least bit worried as Captain Ross never drinks to excess." About that time the Captain, clad only in hunting shirt with breeches thrown over his shoulder was seen approaching the house. The quilting was immediately adjourned and the Captain and his wife met alone, and no report of the meeting was ever published.

Story found in Susan Turnham McCown, "Early days in Milam County: Reminiscences of Susan Turnham McCown,"
Southwestern Historical Quarterly, L, 372.



Ranger A. E. Dobbs and wife, Mary Agnes Witt-Dobbs, ca. 1875. Gifts of Paul and Sandra Steinberg III / P.6.228 & P.6.226. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum

Mary Agnes and Adam Everett Dobbs

Ranger Adam Everett Dobbs was born in Somerset, Kentucky. Mary Agnes Witt, born in Gleason, Tennessee, was the daughter of the Rev. Elijah and Hannah Clark Witt. Dobbs moved to Texas in 1873, settling in Kerr County. The Witt family settled in Kerr County in 1874. Everett and Mary were married Dec, 31, 1879.

A Gathering of the Old Guard. Gift of Capt. and Mrs. Manuel T. Gonzauillas P.80.387. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

Seated on the left is Captain John C. Duval, who escaped from the Fannin massacre at Goliad, Texas in 1836. He served as a Ranger alongside Bigfoot Wallace and Jack Hays.

In the center is Grandma Winn, aged 95. Next to her is General Henry E. McCulloch who served in the Rangers in the 1840s and 1850s.

Standing left to right are J. C. Thompson, Mrs. D.A. T. Walton and Captain D. A. T. Walton, who served in James Callahan's Company of Rangers in 1855.



Ranger Albert Sydney Johnson Connell, Sr. and wife.
Gift of Jewel Lee Gage Wahl / P.97.38.©2003, Texas
Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

George W. Baylor (below)
Photograph courtesy of the Texas Collection
Baylor University, Waco, Texas

Sallie and George W. Baylor

Mrs. Sallie Baylor went with her husband, Capt. George W. Baylor, when his detachment of Rangers left San Antonio for El Paso in August 1879. One wagon was loaded with their household goods, including a large square piano. In addition to his wife, Baylor was accompanied by his two daughters and Miss Katie Sydnor, Mrs. Baylor's sister. They settled in Yselta and Sallie Baylor



opened up a small school.

In his *Six Years with the Texas Rangers*, James B. Gillett described Sallie Baylor in the following manner:

"I cannot close this description of Lt. Baylor without mentioning his excellent wife, who made the long, tedious journey from San Antonio to El Paso County with us. . . . Mrs. Baylor was a very refined woman, highly educated and a skillful performer on the piano. Her bright, sunny disposition and kind heart won her friends among the Rangers at once."

*Ranger and Mrs. Christian Charles Oestereich,
on the Llano River, 1936.
Gift of Kenneth Brandenberger / P.79.16
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum*

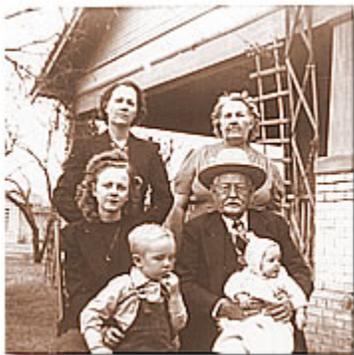


Christian Oestereich served in F. C. Stewart's Company "Q" Minute Men from 1872 to 1874.



*Ranger G. D. and Amanda Cross. Museum Collections /
P.6.53. ©2003, Texas RangerHall of Fame and Museum.*

George David Cross served as a Texas Ranger in late 1873-1874. Cross married Mary Amanda Erraminitie Shawver on November 16, 1881. They were the parents of thirteen children, three of whom died in infancy. Cross would entertain his family by playing the violin. His favorite "fiddling" music included *Leather Britches* and *Eighth of January*. His violin selections included *Evalena* and *The Orphan Child*. Following in his footsteps, his six sons, one daughter and one granddaughter all played violin.



*Ranger Noah Armstrong and family.
Museum Collections / P.80.786. ©2003, Texas
Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum*

Noah Armstrong joined the Texas Rangers in 1876, serving until 1878. After leaving the Rangers, he settled in Coleman, Texas. He married B. Alice Fullerton of Dawson in 1878. The Armstrongs were the parents of three sons and three daughters.

In a 1955 interview by Rangers Doyle Curington and Max Westerman, Armstrong recalled that after being discharged from the Rangers, he engaged in the saloon business. After marriage, his wife objected to the nature of his business. He sold the saloon and purchased a sheep and horse ranch.

Lt. W. H. Ledbetter and Family, San Saba County, 1898. Gift of A. J. Vahrenkamp / P.82.3. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum



William Henry Ledbetter (3rd from left) served in the San Saba County Minute Men during 1872 to 1874, and again in the Frontier Battalion, Company D, from May 1874 until December 1874.

The poem *Dreams* (below) was written by Texas Ranger T.C. “Pidge” Robinson, a member of Capt. L. H. McNelly’s Company. It was published in the *Austin Daily Democratic Statesman*, May 17, 1874.

DREAMS

*Dedicated to My Sister
(1874)*

*Tender and true, so darkly tried,
I joy me, when the night doth fall,
Which gives me visions sweet, of all
Our happier hours, by day denied.
I gladden when the dark descends;
Then fancy bears me home again,
Ceases the heavy toil and pain
The heartsick, weary exile ends.*

*I see thee at thy household cares
I hear thee cheer our aged sire:
O sister! Nobler, purer, higher,
Thy fate-defying love appears
Than if my madness had not been;
Self exiled I, far from thy sight,
I know thy love hath reached a height
Which earthly eye hath seldom seen.*

*I picture that sweet time to come;
 I take thy hand, I kiss thy cheek,
 I hear thy gentle voice speak
 Sweet words of "welcome brother home!"
 Our mother from the happier shore
 Smiles sweetly on us; from the skies
 She seems to say "their miseries
 Hath only made them love the more."*



Captain Leander McNelly's Company of Rangers, 1877. Photograph courtesy of the Texas Confederate Museum, Austin, Texas.

Carey Cheek Matson McNelly

George Durham, a member of Leander McNelly's Company, recorded his memory of Mrs. Carey McNelly.

On one occasion in 1875 when the company thought they might see some action, some of the newer recruits who had never shot at another person, or had another person shoot at them, realized they might be among the casualties. Durham writes that Mrs. McNelly was in camp with the company, a

"little ninety-pound girl that before the war had known only plantation and college life. . . she was hardly more than twenty: but she was a woman; and she was the Captain's wife, and until now I hadn't got in speaking distance of her. But this morning I wanted to talk to a woman." Durham asked Mrs. McNelly to contact his mother with the news if he should be killed and gave her a note listing who should receive his few belongings.

Leander H. McNelly and Carey Cheek Matson were married October 17, 1865 at the Matson home on Mill Creek in Washington County, Texas. The McNelly's engaged in farming until McNelly accepted a position with the State Police in 1870. He stayed in the State Police until they were disbanded in 1873. In 1874 he accepted a commission to form a Special Force of Texas Rangers. Carey traveled with the Ranger Company whenever possible to help nurse the Captain and prepare special meals for him.

Caroline and George Durham

George Durham, a member of Leander McNelly's Ranger Company, described meeting the girl who would become his wife at the King Ranch in Taming the Nueces Strip:

We ate in the grub shanty. Only it wasn't a shanty – it was a hall filled with four tables seating maybe a hundred. We filed by and filled our mess kits and got a cup of coffee. A woman and young girl gave us refills whenever we needed them. I soon found out that by emptying my coffee cup this girl would come up, reach across my shoulder, and say "Could I pour you some more?" I would have drunk cup after cup of coyote poison if she'd have refilled for me. Three times I said, "If you don't mind, ma'm," and three times I said, "Thank you, ma'm."

Whenever she walked up it seemed like somebody had dumped over the lilac water. I reckon I'd have sat there and drunk coffee till it ran out of my ears, but she seemed to catch on after awhile and didn't come back to me.

That was a wife for a Ranger. . . •

In her memoirs Mrs. D. W. Roberts tells the following story about Mrs. C. Rufus Perry:

"Captain Rufe Perry commanded Company D during the first six months after it was organized. I must tell you what a brave wife he had. She visited him while he was encamped right on the trail where the Indians crossed the river. One beautiful, moonlit night ten Indians passed right by this camp. She stayed there alone while Captain Perry reported the presence of the Indians to the main camp. That was a wife for a Ranger!"



Camp San Saba, Texas Rangers Company D, 1878. Gift of Capt. and Mrs. Manuel T. Gonzauillas / P.80.388 ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

The headquarters consisted of a log kitchen and two tents. The first tent served as living quarters for Captain and Mrs. D. W. Roberts. The second tent was furnished as a guest chamber complete with an army cot, washstand, table and a mirror on the tent pole. These three structures were surrounded by a brush fence with a whitewashed picket gate.

Mrs. Dan W. Roberts

Columbus (Tex) Times –

A Ranger's Bride – Married September 13, 1875, Captain D. W. Roberts and Miss Lou Conway, the Rev. Dr. Archer officiating. The gallant groom and his accomplished bride departed on the train immediately after the ceremony. The best wishes of all attend them.

Mrs. Roberts wrote: "My friends thought I was courageous; in fact, quite neryy to leave civilization and go into an Indian country. But it did not require either; I was much in love with my gallant captain and willing to share my fate wherever and whatever it might be."

Having been left in Mason while Capt. Roberts went to Menard to check on his company, Mrs. Roberts came face to face with the violence of the "Mason County War." She determined to leave with Capt. Roberts upon his return to Mason and live in camp with the Rangers rather than stay and face death in town. "The next morning we left Mason for Menard. We were going into a country where Indians raided, but I was leaving a country where white men raided."

In his memoirs Capt. Roberts recalls, "I prepared quarters for us about one and one-half miles from town, . . . Here we spent our honey-moon, with sweet old King Nature. . . . Our only music was the gobble of wild turkeys and the splash of beavers' "

Her Weapon of Choice



*Captain Sam McMurry's Ranger Company "B", Thurber, Texas, 1888.
Gift of Capt. and Mrs. Manuel T. Gonzauillas / P.80.397.
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.*

Left to right: Uncle Jess, Arthur Terrell, Phil Best, Tom Mahan, Ed S. Brittain, John Bracken, Sam M. Platt, Mrs. Sam M. Platt, Tom Hickman, Rad Platt, W. H. John L. Sullivan, Sterling Prince, Lon Lewis, "Haggard."

The following verses are from a poem titled, *The Battle of San Bennidito*, written by S. J. Adams, a member of Captain L. H. McNelly's Ranger Company. The poem describes a fight between the Rangers and a woman with a broom in September 1876.

*When all of a sudden, Our Dutchman so bold,
Slipt around to the rear, and he seemed to be cold,
His teeth knocked together, His hair stood upright,
As he said, "There's the place where you'll all have to fight".*

*"Right there in that Mexican Jacal," said he,
"Is a woman as fierce as a woman can be,
And let me advise you, before you begin,
To load up your guns, and take all of your men."*

*"I'll tell you she's armed to the teeth, I expect,
And will fight like a tigress, her young to protect."
"Draw your pistols," cried Orrell, "Right front into line,
We'll teach her a lesson, Dress up there Devine."*

*The orders obeyed, and with pistol in hand,
Our bold hardy Rangers fell in to a man.
Of course, they were pale, but the bravest of men are,
When about to encounter the perrills of war.*

*"Charge," and the boys dashed on with a yell,
Detirmined like heroes to fight though they fell.
The house was surrounded as quick as a thought,
The Tigress was hemmed, but, hardly yet caught.*

*For a Mexican woman, quite forty years old,
With the air of a soldier, defiant and bold,
Prepaired for a struggle, stood up in the room,
In her hand was her weapon, a long handled broom.*

*"Surrender," cried Orrell, as he sprang through the door,
When a sweep of the broom laid him out on the floor.
The boys rushed in to their officer's aid,
But were quickly repulsed by the sweeps that she made.*

*Old Deggs, and Devine, were upset in the strife,
And I fear that our Watson's a cripple for life,
Linton Wright had a terrible bump on his head,*

And they say she knocked Durham clear under her bed.

*Though the boys were quickly whipped out of the room,
They had something to boast of, They'd captured the broom.*



*T. H. Robinson served in the Frontier Battalion Company "E" in the early 1890s. Museum Collections / P.79.75.
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.*

Imogen and Ira Aten,
Museum Collections, P97.57.
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.



Imogen and Ira Aten

Before agreeing to marry Texas Ranger Ira Aten, Imogen made him promise not to hold public office or to accept an appointment as a law enforcement officer. She stated “I’m not going to trail a gun for the rest of my life – nor try to make a home behind a gun.” Aten agreed to her terms, resigning from the Texas Rangers to follow his heart.

Ira Aten and Imogen Boyce were married February 3, 1892 at the Central Christian Church in Austin. Following the ceremony they moved to the Panhandle and set up housekeeping in Ira’s bachelor dugout.

In 1893 Ira accepted the position of sheriff of Castro County. After intervention of both the Aten and Boyce families, Imogen agreed not to leave Ira over this breach of promise. It is reported that after Imogen returned home, this “daughter of a cultured family buckled on two six-shooters around her waist to begin serving as county jailer.”

The Atens had three sons and two daughters.

Ira Aten took great joy in domestic life. His memoirs recall that kitchen smoke trailing from his chimney meant more to him than all the gunsmoke spouted from Ranger carbines. And “one hug

from my good woman,” he wrote wistfully, “[means] more than all the citations ever handed me by Ranger captains.”

Austin Aten, A Methodist minister, was called in to pray with outlaw Sam Bass as he lay dying following the shoot-out at Round Rock, Texas in 1878. Hi son, Ira, witnessed the scene through a window and decided at that moment he would someday be a Texas Ranger.



*Katherine and Austin Aten. Gift of Tim Dickson / P.97.54.
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.*

Katherine and Austin were the parents of Texas Rangers Cal, Ed, and Ira Aten.

*The Austin Aten family,
1886, P97.56.
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall
of Fame and Museum.*



Left to right front row: Calvin Grant, Austin, Katherine and Eddie Aten. Left to right back row: Ira, Clara, Tommie, Angie and Frank Aten. Three of the Aten boys, Cal, Ed and Ira, served in the Frontier Battalion.



W. J. L. Sullivan

*Texas Ranger Sergeant W. J. L. Sullivan. Museum
Collections / P.6.237. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame
and Museum*

John L. Sullivan first joined the Rangers in 1888, serving in Company B until he left the Rangers in 1900.

In the back of his book, *Twelve Years in the Saddle*, Sgt. Sullivan includes a selection of poetry. One poem/song

found there is "The Dying Ranger". Below are a few stanzas from the poem:

The Dying Ranger

*Way back in Northwest Texas,
That good old Lone Star state,
There is one that for my coming
With a weary heart will wait.*

*A fair young girl, my sister,
My only joy, my pride,
She was my friend from boyhood,
I had no one left beside.*

*I have loved her as a brother,
And with a father's care
I have strove from grief and sorrow
Her gentle heart to spare.*

*My mother, she lies sleeping
Beneath the church-yard sod,
And many a day has passed away
Since her spirit flew to God.
My father, he lies sleeping
Beneath the deep blue sea,
I have no other kindred,
There are none but Nell and me.
But our country was invaded
And they called for volunteers;
She threw her arms around me,
Then burst into tears,
Saying, 'Go, my darling brother,
Drive those traitors from our shore,
My heart may need your presence,
But our country needs you more.'*

*Comrades, gather closer
And listen to my dying prayer.
Who will be to her as a brother,
And shield her with a brother's care?
Up spake the noble rangers,
They answered one and all,
"We will be to her as brothers
Till the last one does fall."*



b

Ira and Ida Crocker family, 1910. Gift of Charles D. Pickens, Jr. /P.97.1.2.©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

This photo-postcard was sent to Ranger W. J. L. Sullivan. The message on the back reads: "Buffalo Gap / 2-13-1910

/ Dear Uncle Will / We send you some cards / will write you a letter soon / were glad to hear from you / but sorry your health is still bad."

**Letter from H. G. Dubose, 1st Lt. Texas Rangers
Company "A", to Miss Ella Gillespie,
December 5, 1900.**

My darling Girl:

I will leave this morning and will not get back to the Railroad before the 14th. Mrs F. never had anything to say to me this time – only thanked me for the letters. Hall came back to Del Rio yesterday, suppose he will stay there permanently now.

Horace and Miss Rosie have had a "big row" Horace has not been out there for several days and declares he never will go to see her again, but is very anxious to take her to Uvalde with him, but is afraid she will not go with him.

I intended writing your mother this morning, but did not know her initials so when you write – tell me what they are. Excuse this letter – am in a hurry. Take good care of yourself. Good – bye.

Yours, H. G. Dubose.



Captain Rogers' Company of Rangers, ca. 1888. Gift of James Manford / P.97.69.©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

*Back row: left to right: A. Y. Old, C. L. Rogers, T. Kingsbury, F. Townsley.
Middle row: left to right: T. Bruwster, Capt. J. H. Rogers, T. Harris, M. Beldoeshuiler.
Front row: left to right: J. M. McMurry, H. G. Dubose, F. McMahan.*

C. L. “Kid” Rogers

C. L. “Kid” Rogers served in the Texas Rangers from 1886 to 1898, and from 1899 - 1901.

He married Bettie DeHand Chessher on May 1, 1894. They were the parents of two daughters and a son. Following is a poem Rogers sent to his wife Bettie:

*The gay and hardy Ranger,
His blanket on the ground,
Lies by the blazing camp fire,
While songs and tales go round.
If one, for once, is silent
And fails to hear the jest,
They know his thoughts are absent
With her who loves him best.*



*C. L. “Kid” and J. H. Rogers, ca. 1880.
Gift of James Manford / P.97.81*

©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.



Capt. J. H. Rogers

Obtaining a leave of absence from his Ranger service, John Harris Rogers married Harriet Randolph Burwell on October 10, 1892 in Cotulla, Texas. Their children were Lucille, Pleasant and Lapsley. J. H. Rogers first joined the Rangers in 1882 and continued to serve, rising to the rank

*Capt. J. H. Rogers and family, ca. 1902. Gift of
Brig. Gen. (Ret.) P. B. Rogers / P.79.7. ©2003,
Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.*

Future Texas Ranger Lee C. Bills

Lee C. Bills joined the Texas Rangers in 1915 in Harlingen, Texas, serving in both Company C and Company D. He left the Rangers in 1919.

Adolescent Lee C. Bills with his mother and sister. Gift of Bettie A. Wyatt / P.97.26. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.



Rhoda and Bill McDonald

“Bill Jess if you leave here on account of a thing like that, I’ll leave you.”

In 1896 Company "B" spent time in San Saba trying to disband the Buzzard's Water Hole Gang.

The men, including Captain Bill McDonald received many threatening letters. Mrs. McDonald was spending the winter in camp with the Company when the Captain received a letter telling him to leave the area or be killed. The Captain informed his wife that he must leave camp and let her read the letter through.

She replied: “Bill Jess if you leave here on account of a thing like that, I’ll leave you.”

“Well,” said Captain Bill, sorrowfully, “I seem to be in a mighty bad fix. If I stay, I’ll be filled with bullets, and if I go, I’ll lose my wife. I s’pose I’ll have to stay.”

Story taken from Albert Bigelow Paine, Captain Bill McDonald Texas Ranger.



*Texas Rangers Company "B", San Saba, Texas, 1896
Gift of Capt. and Mrs. Manual T. Gonzauillas / P.80.409; P.80.410
©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum*

These two photographs show the Company "B" camp at San Saba during the Buzzard's Water Hole mob trouble. The men, along with Rhoda McDonald, were camped here for several months. The men shown include Tom Johnson, Allen Maddox, Edgar Neal, Dudley Barker, and John L. Sullivan

Deathbed Letter of Rhoda McDonald 1906

Rhoda McDonald wrote this touching letter to her husband while he was in the field:

"My Dear husband:

When your eyes look on these lines I will have crossed the Great Divide, and these wishes of mine I am sure you will fulfil. . . I want you to keep my Bible and read it, because you will derive more comfort from it than all else besides.

My prayers for you have always been mingled with those for myself, and I hope they have not been in vain. Please see that my grave has plenty of trees so that the birds may build their nests in them. . .

I am sorry for every cross word or look that I ever gave you, but feel sure you will not hold them against me. With lots of love

– Good-by. Rhoda"

Story taken from Albert Bigelow Paine, Captain Bill McDonald Texas Ranger.



John R. Hughes

Following a month-long scout, Rangers John R. Hughes and Ira Aten found rest and more at an isolated ranch house south of Realitos. Introduced to three young sisters who were visiting from Corpus Christi, Hughes soon found himself smitten with the middle sister, a spirited brunette of twenty. In the following weeks, he managed several trips to the ranch to continue a courtship that would lead to a proposal of marriage.

Hughes planned to leave the Ranger service prior to his wedding but before he could resign he was called to investigate a multiple murder that would take him away from his bride-to-be for several weeks. He returned to Realitos as soon as he was able, only to be given the tragic news that his beloved had taken ill and died during his absence. The family tried but was unable to get word to him. Disregarding the expiration of his leave of absence, Hughes made his way to the coast to visit the secluded graveyard and the grave of his intended bride. It was a pilgrimage he would make many times during the remainder of his life.

Captain Hughes never married. He claimed that a man living the dangerous and uncertain life of a Ranger had no right to marry. His close friend, Ira Aten, claimed the reason was the death of Hughes' love. In later years Hughes, with a smile on his face, liked to blame women for the troubles of world – but he had a sharp eye for the charms of pretty girls, and thoroughly enjoyed their company.

*Captain John R. Hughes and friend, Yselta, Texas.
Gift of Capt. and Mrs. Manuel T. Gonzauillas /
P.80.337. ©2003,
Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.*

Ranger Captain Manuel T. Gonzauillas identified this woman as a Miss Weurtschmidt, but there has been some question as to whether this identification is correct.

John R. Hughes joined the Texas Rangers in August 1887. He had risen to the rank of sergeant in Company D Frontier Battalion by 1893. When their captain, Frank Jones, was killed in June 1893, Hughes was promoted to captain of Company D. For most of his career, Hughes served along the border of southwest Texas. In 1901, when the Frontier Battalion was abolished and the State Rangers created, John Hughes was selected as one of the four captains of the new companies. He served until retirement in 1915.





Lee Trimble

Special Ranger Hoyt and Ranger Lee Trimble with two friends, Smithville, Texas, 1922. Gift of Ranger and Mrs. Lee Trimble / P.85.44. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum

The two women are unidentified but obviously are close enough friends to be trusted with the Ranger's guns and badges.

Rangers Jeff Vaughn, Lee Trimble and Charlie Miller with 9 unidentified people, Big Bend area, ca. 1920. Gift of Ranger and Mrs. Lee Trimble / P.85.16. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum



Vaughn and Trimble are the first two men on the front row, left. Charlie Miller is wearing the bowtie.



Visiting Company B Headquarters, Dallas Fair Park, 1936. Museum Collections / MS34 Dub Naylor Photograph Album. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

During the Texas Centennial celebration many people visited the Rangers headquarters building



and exhibit. Among the visitors were friends and family always ready to have a photograph taken with a Texas Ranger or two.



Ranger Doney E. Covington and daughter Fay, Presidio, Texas, 1923. Gift of Brenda Stroud / P.97.65. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

On the back of this photograph is written: "The house you see in this picture is one of our nearest neighbors about 30 yds from us. This house is made of cotton wood sticks and mud. The Lone Wolf and his baby girl Fay taken while in the Ranger service at Presidio, Texas."

D. E. Covington served several enlistments in the Rangers in the 1920s and 1930s. On the back of this photograph is written: "*The Ranger you see here has the name of being the meanest man on the force (his Capt. Has told many people he had killed 45 men and would as soon kill that many more as not). That he was half Indian and the other half German and was not afraid of the D___ [Devil].*" These two photographs show he was also an attentive father to his young daughter, Fay.



Viola & Johnny Klevenhagen

Captain Johnny and Viola Klevenhagen, 1957. Gift of Ed Gooding / P.33.50, MS33 Ed Gooding Collection. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

Johnny and Viola met in 1933. he was working with the District Attorney's office and was taking a coffee break at the refreshment stand in the Bexar County Courthouse. She was a telephone operator and also on coffee break. They struck up a conversation and soon a romance developed. The two were married in may 7, 1935.

Twenty-three years later, Viola was at her husband's side when he died on November 26, 1958. She said, "He knew he was going. He kept telling me goodbye."



Captain and Mrs. Frank J. Probst

Captain and Mrs. Frank J. Probst. Museum Collections / P.80775 . ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

Capt. Frank Probst began law enforcement service as a deputy sheriff in Live Oak County, Texas. He joined the Texas Highway Patrol in 1941 and was commissioned a Texas Ranger in 1945. He was made Captain of Company "E" in 1958 and Captain of Company "C" in 1967.

Frank J. Probst and Glaydes B. Bryan were married June 26, 1948, in Amarillo, Texas. They were the parents of two daughters.

Rangers and wives, ca. 1960. Gift of Max Westermann / P.38.16. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

It has been a long standing tradition in the Rangers to gather together for good food and good company. This photograph was taken at one such gathering.



Left to right: Zeno Russell Preiss, Ranger and Mrs. J. H. Preiss, Ranger and Mrs. W. A. Russell, Ranger and Mrs. Jack Van Cleve, Captain and Mrs. A. Y. Allee, Ranger and Mrs. Levi Duncan, Ranger and Mrs. Q. J. Lowman, Colonel and Mrs. Homer Garrison, and Ms. Barbara Atkin.



Ranger George Roach retirement party, September 1973. Gift of George Roach / P.6.124. ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

Left to right: Michael Watkins, Ruth Roach, George Roach. George Roach served in the Texas Rangers from June 1948 until Spetember 1973.

George Roach and Ruth Layfield, his high school sweetheart, eloped to Marietta, Oklahoma in January 1932 while she was teaching school.

Company "D" Captains' Wives, 1982. Gift of Jack Dean / P.28.24 . ©2003, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum.

Three "generations" of Company "D" Captains' wives:
Pearl Allee, wife of A. Y. Allee; Jewel Wood, wife of John Wood; and, Janie Dean, wife of Jack Dean.



[END]