

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NEGRO OF  
WALKER COUNTY, 1860-1942

A THESIS

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Committee

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Chairman, Graduate Council

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NEGRO OF  
WALKER COUNTY, 1860-1942

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of  
Sam Houston State Teachers College  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

S. H. S. T. C. LIBRARY

By

Bettie Hayman, B. S.

Huntsville, Texas

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"Judge" Hill, probably the oldest  
citizen of Walker County.

## PREFACE

In the following pages a brief sketch of the life of the Walker County Negro from the period of slavery to the present time is given. In a human problem such as this one there is no scarcity of material, but documentary evidence is difficult to find. Therefore much of the material in this study was obtained by personal interviews with elderly people, and with people of both races who hold responsible positions and who are able to speak more or less authoritatively on the problem under consideration.

The writer wishes to express sincere gratitude to Dr. J. L. Clark for his sympathetic understanding and wise counsel in directing the writing of this thesis.

She also acknowledges obligation to the other members of her committee, Dr. R. Earl McClendon and Dr. T. H. Etheridge, for their careful reading of the thesis and for helpful suggestions.

Acknowledgement is also made of the co-operation of H. K. Malone, Walker County Agricultural Agent for Negroes, through whose continued helpfulness much information on the present day life of the Negro in Walker County was secured.

Bettie Hayman



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## CHAPTER I

### THE NEGRO AS A SLAVE

#### The Coming of the Negro

Despite the disapproval of the institution of slavery by the Mexican authorities, there were slaves in Texas previous to the Texas Revolution and the establishment of the Republic. After the annexation of Texas to the United States, slavery in Texas, as in other southern states, was recognized by the Federal Constitution. It has been estimated that in the Republic of Texas there were approximately five thousand slaves.<sup>1</sup> Colonel Jared E. Groce owned as many as one hundred in 1830. His plantation embraced the present property of Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College, the State college for Negroes. By 1846, the number of slaves in Texas had increased to 38,753, and by 1850, to 58,161.<sup>2</sup>

Many immigrants to that part of the state now known as Walker County purchased slaves after their arrival. Others brought slaves with them. Those of small means had only one or two; others, more prosperous, brought along with their live stock the entire population of their plantations in the home

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1 E. C. Barker, editor, Readings in Texas History, p. 419.

2 Negro Yearbook, 1931-1932, p. 56.



state. An example of this type of immigration was the coming from Alabama of the Dixon H. Lewis retinue. According to John W. Thomason, in the early 1850's the Lewises, Hills, Thomasons, Woodalls, Hightowers, and Abercrombies made a "patriarchial migration" with hundreds of Negroes and their flocks and chattels in heavy wagon trains. As Thomason expresses it, these people were looking for cheap land, "now that slave economy was exhausting the old states."<sup>3</sup> Some of this group purchased homes in the southeastern part of Walker County and formed the community which they named Waverly.

According to J. H. Smith, a resident of Huntsville, his grandfather, George Hunter and family together with the George Stevens family, came from Tennessee shortly after the Battle of San Jacinto. These families brought slaves with them and settled on the Trinity River at the location which came to be known as Cincinnati. Other slave owners coming to Cincinnati, at an early date, were John and Hansford Smith, the John Rogers family and the Tucker family; Dr. J. H. Smith, a northern man who settled there also, came into possession of slaves through his marriage with a member of the Calhoun family of a nearby community. About halfway between Huntsville and Cincinnati, a distance of fourteen miles, Bob Hogue developed a plantation. He owned one hundred slaves or more. Colonel

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<sup>3</sup> John W. Thomason, "Huntsville," Southwest Review, vol. IX, April, 1934, p. 237.

S. C. Stewart and Colonel Rawls and four families of McMillans, namely, George, Tom, Jim, and Bill, settled on Harmon Creek between Huntsville and Riverside. Jack Stubblefield owned land on each side of the Trinity River, near the present town of Riverside. Colonel Adair Murrey's Plantation was located about three miles east of Huntsville. The J. C. and A. Hightower families located west of Huntsville. Their farm afterwards became known as the Lockett place. The J. H. Dunlaps, J. A. Stranahans, Adam Bowens, and Bill and John Calhoun settled on the Trinity River above Cincinnati. All of these operated plantations with slave labor.<sup>4</sup>

Other names that may be added to the list of extensive slave owners of Walker County are Sanford and Thomas Gibbs, G. W. Grant, Walter Murrey, B. W. Robinson, H. C. Spell, and J. W. Thomason. <sup>Joshua Allen</sup> Because of the war and the emancipation of the slaves the owners of many of these old plantations were dispersed. In many such instances the former slaves remained in their old homes for years, and shifted for themselves. Some of the descendants of those former slaves are still to be found in the communities where their parents lived. Examples of this fact are the McAdams and Hopewell Communities, where the inhabitants are largely the descendants of the slave population of the McAdam and Spell families.<sup>5</sup>

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4 Information given Bettie Hayman by J. H. Smith. <sup>James H. Smith</sup>

5 Information given Bettie Hayman by Mrs. Clara Roberts and Dr. L. H. Bush.

In the prosperous years before the War Between the States, the slaves made up a large portion of the population of Walker County. Just twelve years after the organization of the county in 1846, there were 2,737 slaves and only 4,354 white people in the county. In 1860, the number of slaves in the entire state was 180,682.<sup>6</sup> In 1865, there were freed in Texas no fewer than 21,700.<sup>7</sup> By 1900, the Negro population of Walker County had increased to 8,319, while the whites numbered only 7,492. In 1910, the Negroes numbered 8,362, and the whites only 7,699. In 1920, there were 9,742 Negroes and 8,418 white persons.<sup>8</sup> Thus it is seen that the figures of three consecutive census years show a majority of Negro population for Walker County. By 1930, however, the tables had turned and there were 8,531 Negroes and 9,564 white people.<sup>9</sup>

### Status of the Slave

Slaves were bought, sold, or given away, at the master's pleasure. On the tax rolls they were listed in the same manner as other property, each individual being valued at a specified amount, as were cattle, hogs, and other animals. Strong

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6 Texas Almanac, 1861, pp. 243-245.

7 United Census Reports, "Negroes in the United States," 1920-1932, p. 15; Texas Almanac, 1941-1942, p. 98.

8 Texas Almanac, 1914, p. 102; 1925, p. 50.

9 Texas Almanac, 1938, p. 102; The Negro population for 1940 has not been compiled.



young men were sometimes valued as high as two thousand dollars, while prices varied for older men and women according to age or physical condition. Slaves were sometimes traded for land or other property. A transaction of that kind is recorded by J. W. Thomason, who said that 181 acres of the southern edge of the P. Gray league in Walker County was sold to J. L. Hatch, the consideration being a Negro "wench" named Keziah, valued at six hundred dollars.<sup>10</sup>

In an appraisal of Sam Houston's property shortly after his death in 1863, the Houston slaves were listed and evaluated as follows:<sup>11</sup>

TABLE I  
HOUSTON'S SLAVE PROPERTY

Name	Age	Value
Joshua	35	\$ 2,000
Eliza	32	800
Pearl	25	1,200
Nash	22	1,200
Dolly	17	800
Solomon	6	800
Lottie	4	400
Lewis	55	400
Mariah	50	400

10 J. W. Thomason, "Huntsville," Southwest Review, vol. IX, p. 237. This property came later to be a part of the Sam Houston homestead.

11 Sam Houston Will, Archives, Sam Houston State Teachers College.

In the probate records of Walker County there are many such lists showing the value placed upon slave property. In the record of the May term of Court, 1863, the slave property of William A. Allen was appraised as follows:<sup>12</sup>

TABLE II  
SLAVE PROPERTY OF WILLIAM A. ALLEN

Name	Sex	Value
Jack	man	\$ 275.00*
Susie, his wife	woman	275.00*
Jane	woman	550.00
Mariah	girl	325.00
Andrew	boy	275.00
Israel	boy	300.00
Mill	girl	250.00
Judy, infant	girl	100.00
* Jack and Susie valued together at \$ 550.00		

The appraisement of property of Erasmus Wynne as given in the same source shows some variation from the Houston and Allen values, probably due to the age of each individual. The Wynne appraisement is as follows:<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Probate Minutes, Walker County, Book B, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> Probate Minutes, Walker County, Book D, p. 786.

TABLE III  
WYNNE SLAVE PROPERTY

Name	Sex	Value	Age
Annie	woman	\$ 50	65
Allen	man	50	70
Chaney, Allen's wife	woman	50	50
Charity	woman	400	48

According to figures given in the Texas Almanac, the average value of Negroes in Texas in 1858 was \$538.40. By 1859 this value had risen to \$625.64,<sup>14</sup> showing that the price of the Negro fluctuated from year to year according to the demand, as does the price of other commodities.

It was customary in Walker County for masters who were overstocked with slaves to lease them by the month or year. The accounts of such transactions are found in the probate records of the county where such statements as the following are common:<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Texas Almanac, 1860, p. 208.

<sup>15</sup> Probate Minutes, Walker County, Book A<sup>2</sup>, p. 179.

TABLE IV  
SCHEDULE FOR NEGROES BELONGING  
TO JAMES J. HARRISON FOR YEAR 1849

Name	To Whom Hired	Wages
Arthur	Steve White	\$ 150
Solomon	Gill Alexander	110
Noah, 3 yrs. old	Not Hired	***
Phillip, sick	Not Hired	***
Hannah and child, Jane	B. S. Wilson	85

Relation of Master and Slave

The relation of master and slave in Walker County varied according to the temperament or character of the master or his over-seer. The conditions in this respect were not greatly different from those in other states where slavery existed. It has been frequently stated that in Walker County most of the masters were kind to their slaves. Occasionally, however, one learns of one who was cruel. In speaking of his life as a slave one Negro man said:

I belonged to two masters while I was a slave. The first was kind. If I could have my first master again, I would rather be a slave than to be a free man. I would not have to provide for myself as I do now; but my master would provide for me. The other one, however, was the meanest man I ever saw. He was a drunkard and everything else that was bad. I tell you, hell is too good for such as he.<sup>16</sup>

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16 Statement made to Bettie Hayman by Memphis Allen.



Mrs. W. O. B. Gillaspie, a descendant of the Wynne family previously referred to as among the early settlers of Walker County, has this to say about slavery customs in her family:

During slavery some planters would overwork their slaves in order to raise big crops of cotton. However, cruel treatment among slave owners in Walker County was uncommon. Many Negroes were better clothed and better fed than many members of that race are today.

My father owned slaves but never overworked nor mistreated them. His orders to his overseers were never to mistreat nor strike one of his slaves. He considered it unfair to take advantage of a helpless slave.

On Sunday everybody rested. No work at all was done. Even the dishes were left unwashed. Early on Sunday mother would send one of the house servants to the "quarters" to tell all the Negroes that they might, if they so desired, come over to her house for Bible reading. These slaves had mother so closely associated with their religion that after her death our cook, "Black Mammy," we called her, always claimed that when one of the Negroes really got religion he or she was sure to see "Mistis". Black Mammy would ask each one who made a profession of religion, "Did you see Mistis?" If the answer was "no", Mammy would exclaim: "Niggah, yo' ain't got no religion. Yo' try again."

The children of our family, (continued Mrs. Gillaspie), played with the Negro children. Each one of us had a little Negro whom we claimed as our very own little servant. After the death of my father, my oldest brother, Magruder Wynne, had charge of the estate.

When Brother would start for town we would ask him to buy candy for us. When we forgot about the candy, one of the little Negroes would say, "Oh you forgot to tell Marse Gruder about the candy." As a matter of fact, the little Negroes always ate as much as we did of the candy. I dearly loved to go down to the "quarters" and eat with my black folks. Those were happy days! 17

Mrs. Gillaspie explained further that most of the slaves

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17 Information given Bettie Hayman by Mrs. W. O. B. Gillaspie.

who left the plantation after the war returned and settled down as hired laborers or tenants on the plantations where they had formerly been slaves. The feeling of sympathy and understanding between white and colored children clearly evidenced by Mrs. Gillaspie's recital of conditions on the Wynne plantation was also characteristic of other families in Walker County. White children and Negro children grew up to be quite fond of each other. Often the Negro children were named for the children of the owner. Mutual understanding and at times even a feeling of affection was cultivated between master and slave, which lasted throughout life, and in some instances extending to the descendants of master and slave. In the will of John Y. Keenan, a citizen of Walker County, drawn in 1850, a provision was made that his Negro man slave, Tally, should at the owner's death become the property of his wife, and at the wife's death, the slave might choose as his master either of the master's four children.<sup>18</sup>

On the plantations of Walker County, as well as in other parts of the South, there were certain slaves who were house servants and certain others who worked in the fields. The house servants did the cooking, spinning, weaving, and other household duties for the master, as well as caring for the white children. Their close association with the master's family gave the house servants a splendid opportunity to learn

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<sup>18</sup> Probate Minutes, Walker County, Book A<sup>2</sup>, p. 207.



and imitate the ways and the manner of living of the white people. As a result of this association they became more intelligent and refined, and came actually to feel themselves in social rank above the common field hand.

It was not a violation of the laws of Texas to teach slaves to read, as in some states, yet it was considered best by some slave owners not to do so. Many people in Walker County, however, taught their slaves to read. Dr. L. H. Bush, an early resident of Huntsville, said that he remembered hearing his older sisters speak of teaching the Negroes to read.

The conditions which prevailed, in the Wynne home as related by Mrs. Gillaspie, were true in other homes of Walker County. The mistress read the Bible to the Negroes and tried to aid them in understanding and following its teachings. There was preaching on the plantations, and sometimes much shouting among the slaves. The slaves were given the privilege of attending the regular church services and some of them belonged to the same congregations as the white people. When the Negroes attended the white services they were seated in a separate section reserved for them. At other times special services were provided in white churches for the colored "brethren."

The Negroes of Walker County relate with pride that during the War Between the States the Negroes remained peacefully at home caring for the farms and helping the women and children while the white men were serving in the army. The statement made by one writer about slaves in general applied with much

force to the slaves of Walker County: "The faith which the Negro slaves kept, with their masters absent in the war, caring for white families, guarding white women and children is proverbial."<sup>19</sup>

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19 H. J. Seligman, The Negro Faces America, p. 18.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NEGRO OF WALKER COUNTY FROM 1865-1890

#### Change In Relationship

As already stated, there was an intimate relationship between the white man of Walker County and his Negro slave. After emancipation, however, this intimacy was largely replaced by a feeling of less concern of each race for the other. The Negro for the first time had to do his own planning. In many cases he remained with his former master but of necessity in a different capacity. Even though he remained on the plantation where he had been a slave, he had the freedom of choice, and though he continued the same type of labor under the same supervision, the relationship was different from what it had been before emancipation. When it was definitely known that the Negroes were to be free the white people of Walker County realized that they were confronted with a race problem of a peculiar character.

#### Early Experiences of the Ex-Slave

Some of the Negroes of Walker County hailed the news of their freedom with great joy, while others wept because they feared they would have to leave their former masters to whom they were deeply devoted. Many of the former slave owners,

among them the Wynnes, the Skeltons, the Fishers, assembled the Negroes of the plantation and told them they were free, offering them the choice of either remaining on the plantation as tenants or day laborers, or of going out into the world to make their own way. Some of the Negroes were glad of the opportunity to remain with their former masters. Others were anxious to become independent, and went away hoping to find an easier life. One woman belonging to the Wynne family, upon hearing that she was free and could go where she wished and do as she pleased, began dancing and shouting, "Oh, I'se so glad I'se free; I ain't a servant no mo'!". When her husband, who was of a different opinion, heard her ejaculations, in disgust he deliberately knocked her down, saying, "Shut up you niggah, ain't you got no sense!"<sup>1</sup>

The slave woman, Judy, who had belonged to Swan H. Skelton, being much elated over her freedom, rushed away, taking her family, thinking to enjoy her newly acquired independence. But Judy found life less pleasant than she had expected. She did not know how to secure a livelihood and her family almost starved to death. Before many months had passed, she and all her dependents returned and appealed to her "white folks" to take them back. "Marse Skelton, here we are," said Judy to her former master. "If you will only take us back and care for us like you used to do, we will work for you the rest of

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1 An incident told to Bettie Hayman by G. A. Wynne.



our lives." This instance is typical of the experience of many freedmen of Walker County.

It is reported, however, that Steve, another Skelton slave, went to work for himself as soon as he was freed and became so prosperous that he was able to buy an up-to-date hotel in one of the large cities of Texas. Knowing that being a Negro would prevent his successful management of the business, he employed a white man and his wife as managers and he, the owner, worked in the kitchen.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that many ex-slaves of the county remained in their former homes indicated that a satisfactory relationship had existed on the plantation. The former masters became the employers of laborers who a short time before had been their personal property. From them the ex-slaves received the very first wages they had ever earned. G. A. Wynne said that as a small boy he remembered distinctly how the entire family of his father gathered to witness the reaction of the Negroes when they came in a group to receive their wages which, as he expressed it, "They accepted quite graciously."<sup>3</sup>

In their credulity, however, some of the ex-slaves thought it would be possible to secure a livelihood on the plantation without labor. One morning in the early hours, so related a Mr. Fisher, a former slave holder of Walker County, as he

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2 Incidents of the Swan H. Skelton family told to Bettie Hayman by Mrs. Reba Bock.

3 An incident told to Bettie Hayman by G. A. Wynne.



approached his barn he heard a familiar voice call, "Marse Fletch, Marse Fletch, Oh Marse Fletch! I come to see who was stealin' you kohn and a bar trap kotch me." Upon investigation Mr. Fisher found that one of his former slaves had been caught in a steel trap which had been set to apprehend the thief who had been stealing his corn.<sup>4</sup>

Not only that incident, but many others as well, shows that when in need some Negroes would steal even though good behavior in other respects was one of their chief characteristics. One ex-slave was on his way from Walker County to Brownsville. When he stopped for the night he stole bed clothes which he saw hanging on a line.<sup>5</sup>

During the Reconstruction Period the Negroes of Walker County were usually peaceful, but many of them made a reputation for laziness. They were accustomed to having some one plan their work and tell them what to do. When left alone they lacked initiative. The State Representative from Walker County in his report to the editors of the Texas Almanac, had this to say about the Negro, in 1866: "Under the slavery system one had cultivated twenty acres. Not more than sixteen now. Negroes seem to be quiet and unoffensive but do not compare in industry and efficiency with former habits."<sup>6</sup>

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4 An incident told to Bettie Hayman by Mrs. Gus Oliphint.

5 An incident told to Bettie Hayman by Miss Ella Hume.

6 Charles Hume, Texas Almanac, 1867, p. 169.

In 1866 the State Legislature passed the Contract Law to govern the employment of Negroes for wages. Under this law the laborers' rights were specified and provisions were made for punishing the employer who wilfully neglected to respect these rights. This contract type of labor was not satisfactory in Walker County, as shown by further comments made by Hume, as follows: "Farmers would prefer to make no more contracts with Negroes after the present year if other labor can be secured."<sup>7</sup>

At the same time that the Contract Law was passed the Vagrancy and Apprenticeship laws were also enacted. Under the Vagrancy Law any idle person was classed as a vagrant. Provision was made for the arrest and punishment of adult vagrants and for the apprenticeship of juvenile vagrants. The apprenticeship Law gave the County Judge authority to permit parents or guardians of minors to apprentice or bind them to suitable persons. The requirements were that the master should give bond to furnish food and clothing and humane treatment to minors so apprenticed. Under the Apprenticeship Laws orphan Negro children were sometimes bound to white men for a certain number of years. As an example of this practice there is to be found in the probate minutes of Walker County a record showing that on November 23, 1881, W. H. Foster was ordered by the County Court to take charge

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 169

and control of the persons of, "Amos James, 18 years old, William James, 16 years old, Rosana James, 13 years old, Nancy James, 6 years old."

Under the terms of the order Foster was given control of these minors until the boys should reach twenty-one years of age and the girls eighteen, unless the girls married before reaching that age. In case of such marriage the girls were freed from the provisions agreed upon.<sup>8</sup>

### Early Education of the Freedmen

As has been previously stated, some of the Negroes learned to read while they were slaves. After they were freed white teachers from the North came to Walker County and began teaching the Negroes. Some of these teachers were Miss Texanna Snow, Miss Lizzie Stone, a Mr. Brown, a Mr. Ausborn, and a Mr. James. Many of the residents of Walker County felt that because these teachers taught Negro children they therefore placed themselves on the same social plane as the Negroes. These Northerners were therefore greatly disliked.<sup>9</sup>

One Walker County woman of Cincinnati taught Negroes for a few years. Some of the white people censured her but being the widow of a Civil War veteran, and badly in need of work, she paid no attention to their criticism. Her example was not

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<sup>8</sup> Probate Minutes, Walker County, Book J, pp. 274-284.

<sup>9</sup> Information given to Bettie Hayman by Mrs. Katie Oliphint and David Williams.



generally followed, however.<sup>10</sup>

Freedmen in Walker County, according to C. W. Wilson, as a rule showed an eagerness to make progress as citizens. Many of them worked during the day and attended classes at night.<sup>11</sup> Colonel C. W. Grant not only sold a number of farms to former slaves at reduced prices, but also donated to them a two-story building with grounds for school purposes. The school was known as the Grant Colony School. For several years this school was supported by the Freedman's Bureau. Dr. E. Williams, a Quaker from Ohio, was employed to teach the school from 1874 to 1879. In 1879 Dr. Williams left and the school was without a teacher for four years. In 1883, David Williams was employed. He was a young Negro man with a third grade teacher's certificate which he had earned by taking the county examination.<sup>12</sup>

#### Bishop Ward Normal and Collegiate Institute

Another school of note was one on "Smith Hill" north-west of Huntsville on Federal Highway 75. The tract now includes the present Huntsville golf course, the home sites of A. T. Randolph, Ray Black, and other white citizens.

In 1883, S. M. Smith and wife sold fifty-four acres of

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10 Information given Bettie Hayman by J. H. Smith.

11 C. W. Wilson, "The Negro in Walker County," p. 6, an unpublished manuscript in Estill Library.

12 Information given Bettie Hayman by David Williams.

land to Bishop Ward Normal and Collegiate Institute, a private corporation, "by and through C. W. Porter, its President, and R. P. Dorsey, its Secretary." The consideration in this transaction was a cash payment of \$500 and deferred payments in the aggregate sum of \$5,000 to be made in yearly installments on January 1 of each year with a final payment on January 1, 1889.<sup>13</sup>

The elementary Negro public school of Huntsville was moved to the college and at one time the school had eight teachers and an enrollment of two hundred students. It was divided into primary, intermediate, and advanced departments. Misfortune befell the institution, however. After successful operation for two years, the President, C. W. Porter, absconded with all the funds he had collected and Bishop Ward Normal and Collegiate Institute ceased to operate.<sup>14</sup> Because of default in payments, on January 26, 1885, the property reverted to S. M. Smith.

The venture failed because of defalcation and lack of funds; but it is commendable of the Negro that he made such an attempt after having had his freedom for less than twenty years. Memphis Allen, before mentioned as a slave, exemplified his honesty and integrity as a trustee of the school. The failure of this institution left Allen obligated for several hundred dollars as his portion of the indebtedness, which he paid.

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13 Walker County, Deed Record, Book Z, p. 326.

14 Information given to Bettie Hayman by David Williams.

### The Negro in Politics

Consideration is now to be given to what was possibly the most unpleasant experience for both white people and Negroes in the entire history of their relationship in Walker County--the Negro in local politics. The Negroes' participation in civic affairs, when they were so poorly prepared for that experience, caused so much ill-will against them that many white people of the county even now cannot talk sanely about the matter.

The dilemma of the white man during those trying times is well expressed by John W. Thomason in relating the experiences of his grandfather who had to be his own plow hand while "his yellow body-servant, reported a good and faithful slave, went to the Legislature."<sup>15</sup>

During the Reconstruction period, according to a statement of W. H. Woodall, in an unpublished manuscript on his recollections of Huntsville, a number of Negroes in Walker County were elected to public office. In 1872, according to Mr. Woodall, E. Chambers, a white man, was mayor of the town, but the members of the Board of Aldermen and the Walker County Commissioners were Negroes. During the election of that year, the voters from the entire county cast their votes in Huntsville under guard of armed Negroes.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> John W. Thomason, Op. Cit., p. 237.

<sup>16</sup> W. H. Woodall, "A Few Recollections of Huntsville, 1853-1924."



*John Mason*

J. W. Brewer says that Negroes served as legislators in Texas from 1868 to 1895. In 1874 Thomas Beck, a Negro, was elected Representative from Walker, Madison, and Grimes

Counties. Beck was re-elected to this post in 1876 and again in 1878.<sup>17</sup>

*No. That is not accurate. See Brewer, pp. 126-127. Also, note in the 17th Leg.; Brewer cites Beck as Rep. from Grimes & Madison Co.'s only, suggesting he was not a resident of Walker Co.*

In 1886, Joshus Green, a Negro, was elected Constable in Huntsville. The County Judge, thinking that it would not be to the best interest of the County for him to serve, asked Green to make a heavier bond than the Judge had considered he was able to make, thereby hoping to eliminate him. But through the assistance of John Besser, a northern man who was State Representative at the time, the Negro made bond to the amount of twenty thousand dollars. At this point some of the Walker County residents intervened with Green and persuaded him not to qualify for the office to which he had been elected.<sup>18</sup>

Thus ended the career of the Negro as an office holder in Walker County. The white people felt that the uneducated Negro was not capable of holding office. He had been thought of as only a slave, and the white people could not find it possible to accept the idea of his suddenly taking charge of political affairs while at the same time most of the white men were disqualified. For this reason when the white people finally wrested control of the county's political affairs from the

*John Mason*  
17 J. W. Brewer, Negro Legislators of Texas, p. 127.

18 Information given to Bettie Hayman by J. H. Smith.



"Meddling Northerners," by force and intimidation, they have kept the Negro from participating in politics. Not until recent years has he been given as much as a summons for jury service.

## CHAPTER III

### EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO SINCE 1890

#### Early Negro Teachers and School Conditions

As previously stated in this paper, during the period immediately following the Civil War the Negroes were taught by white instructors. At that time there was no system of grading the schools. The progress of the pupil was designated by the grade of the reader in which he was being instructed. By the time the work of the white teachers of the Negroes was discontinued some of the Negroes had advanced to the fifth or even the sixth reader. For a few years after these teachers left practically nothing was done for the education of the Negro. Within a few years, however, some of the most advanced of the Negroes took county examinations and obtained third grade teachers certificates.

Within a comparatively short time therefore there were several Negro teachers in the county. Jeff Spivey is said to have been the first one. Other Negro teachers of the early period were J. T. Spivey, John Wilson, Silvie Wilson, Joe Lawler, David Williams, J. R. Mellantree, E. W. Hightower, Mattie E. Dickie, W. A. Robinson, Babe Herndon, Billie Kittrell, and S. W. Houston.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Information given Bettie Hayman By David Williams.

In the early part of this century there were several Negro schools located in Walker County. They were housed in inferior buildings with little or no furnishings beyond the crudest necessities. In fact most of the schools were taught in church buildings. Instead of desks there were only long benches. There were no blackboards and few books. The teachers were poorly qualified and had no supervision.

By 1905 there were thirty-five Negro teachers listed in Walker County. The names of David Williams, Sam Houston, and Charlie Nickle appear on the list. Of the thirty-five employed in the county, at that time, sixteen held certificates obtained by county examinations; seventeen held certificates obtained from Summer Normal examinations, and two held certificates from work done in Prairie View College.<sup>2</sup>

#### Sam Houston Industrial and Training School

Samuel W. Houston, son of Joshua Houston, who has played an important role in the Negro school life of Walker County, was first a pupil in the Negro public school of Huntsville. After his public school career, he attended Atlanta University, Atlanta, Georgia, and later was a student at Howard University, Washington, District of Columbia. Having completed his work at Howard, Houston accepted a clerical position in Washington. After having worked in that capacity for five years he visited

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<sup>2</sup> Records of Teacher's Certificates in County Superintendent's Office.

his former home at Huntsville. While on this visit his friends persuaded him to accept a position as teacher in a small country school. While teaching this school, Houston became deeply impressed with the great need of educational opportunities for his race. Being obsessed with the idea of bettering his people, he signed a contract to teach another year in the Galilee Community, seven miles West of Huntsville, on State Highway 45. In that community he felt that he could do some constructive work among his people.

The school house, where classes had been taught the previous year, was a mere "shack" made of scrap lumber carelessly put together and without furnishings or equipment. Rather than teach in such a building, Houston rented a church house, paying from his own salary of thirty-five dollars a month, four dollars and fifty cents a month, for its use.

Some disagreement arose among the church people as to who should collect the rent. Houston decided that other provisions would have to be made for a place in which to teach. So, with the help of the Negro school trustees, he purchased an acre of ground and erected a building on it. The attendance for the first year was more than eighty pupils. When the School Board offered to raise his salary to forty-five dollars for the second year, Houston advised them to employ an assistant teacher instead. Taking his advice, the Board secured an assistant for twenty-two dollars and fifty cents a month.



Seeing the great need of the teaching of home economics to the Negro children, at the beginning of the third year Houston applied for help from the Jeanes Fund. From that fund he obtained three hundred dollars with which amount he employed a graduate home economics teacher from Tuskegee Institute. Equipment necessary for the instruction of this new subject was purchased by the School Board.

Realizing that the increased attendance made necessary additional buildings, in 1906, Houston planned a campaign for assistance. Several white people made donations. This raised the amount to about six hundred dollars. He then obtained a loan of two hundred dollars. The patrons used their wagons to haul the lumber. The pupils did the work and soon there was erected three dormitories and two academic buildings.

Through the succeeding years aid was received from the Jeanes Fund, the State Fund, and the General Education Board. Private donations were made by W. S. Gibbs, H. C. Meachum, a former resident of Huntsville, Will Hogg of Houston, and others.

The title to the property was in the name of the Negro School Board of Trustees, but when aid was received from the General Education Board, the property was transferred to the County School Board, and the school was officially named Sam Houston Industrial and Training School.

Mrs. Sam Houston, a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, who was employed as home economics teacher in 1913, did much in developing the school. One of her regulations was that each

girl must make her own commencement dress at a maximum cost of not more than one dollar and twenty-five cents. After Mrs. Houston's active school life was over, and until her death, she assisted the Negroes in the county in an unofficial capacity as Home Demonstration Agent.

When Sam Houston Industrial Training School was at the height of its usefulness, it consisted of three dormitories and two academic buildings with a well trained faculty of nine members. The banner attendance was about four hundred students. In this group were boys and girls from Trinity, Madison, Montgomery and other nearby counties, as well as high school students from all parts of Walker County and the elementary pupils of the Galilee Community.

Due in part to lack of funds and in part to the increasing age of the Superintendent, who had been the moving spirit of the venture, in 1930, this school was incorporated into the Huntsville Independent School District. The high school pupils of the county are now transferred to town to attend the Huntsville High School of which Houston became, and still is, the principal. In one of the buildings formerly used by Sam Houston Industrial and Training School an elementary school is now conducted.<sup>3</sup>

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3 W. M. Etheridge, "Sam Houston Industrial and Training School," unpublished manuscript; Information given Bettie Hayman by Sam Houston and David Williams.

### Later Development of the Negro Schools

The Negro schools have improved slowly but surely since the early part of the century. In the Huntsville Independent District there is one accredited High School and four small elementary schools with a total teaching force of fifteen instructors. In the New Waverly Consolidated District there is one nine-grade school with a force of seven teachers. In the common school districts of the county there are twenty schools with a teaching force of thirty-eight teachers. Of the fifteen teachers in the Huntsville Independent District, two have the Master of Arts Degree and twelve have the Bachelor of Science Degree. In the New Waverly Consolidated District two of the teachers have the Bachelor of Science Degree. In the common schools of the county two of the teachers have the Bachelor of Science Degree. There is no Negro teacher in the county who has done less than two years of college work. During the Summer of 1942, twenty-eight Negro teachers and high school graduates of the county are attending college.

The salaries of the Negro teachers are low. Only four of the entire teaching force of the county get one hundred dollars or more. These are the principal, the homemaking teacher, and the vocational agriculture teacher of the Huntsville High School, and the principal of the New Waverly School. Many of the teachers receive only sixty-five dollars, and one teacher of an elementary school in the Huntsville District gets only fifty dollars a month.



The census reports of 1942 show that there are 864 Negro scholastics in the Hunstville Independent School District, 245 in the New Waverly Consolidated District, and 1,352 in the common school districts of the county, making a total for the county of 2,461. The total number of Negro scholastics enumerated for 1941 was 2,551, a decrease, in 1942, of ninety for the county.

As already stated, the Negro teacher of Walker County started teaching under the handicap of poor preparation and absence of supervision. One of the greatest factors if not the greatest, in the development of the Negro schools of Walker County for the past fifteen years has been the work of the Jeanes Supervisor, to whose work attention is now directed.

#### The Jeanes Supervisor and Her Work in Walker County

In 1907, Anna T. Jeanes, of Philadelphia, set aside a fund for Negro education. By the terms of the grant this fund can be used only as a supplement to local funds. In those counties where the school authorities are sufficiently interested in Negro education to secure a supervisor of the rural Negro schools a part of the salary of the supervisor will be paid from the Jeanes Fund. Such an employee is known as a Jeanes Supervisor.<sup>4</sup>

The duties of the Jeanes Supervisor are to visit the schools of the county, to help the teacher by introducing into

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4 William R. Davis, The Development and Present Status of Negro Education in East Texas, p. 79.



the schools small home industries, to give talks and lectures on sanitation, cleanliness, and better standards of living, to promote improvement of schoolhouses, the beautification of school grounds, and the organization of clubs for school and neighborhood betterment, to advise teachers to remain in their respective communities and to participate in the religious and social life of the people.

In 1927, Bettie Mitchell, County Superintendent of Walker County, recommended to the County School Board the employment of a Jeanes Supervisor. The members of the Board were not enthusiastic about the idea, but nevertheless they were willing to try the experiment and employed Lola Ann Brown as the first Jeanes Supervisor in Walker County.<sup>5</sup> At that time there were few such workers in Texas. According to William R. Davis there were only twenty Jeanes Supervisors in the entire state, in 1930.<sup>6</sup>

There were many consolidations of the Negro schools by 1929. Consequently the County School Board thought the services of the Jeanes Supervisor were no longer needed, and declined to re-elect her at that time.<sup>7</sup> Walker County was therefore without a Jeanes Supervisor from 1929 until 1934. At this time Grace Abernathy was employed to fill this position at a salary of ninety dollars per month. Sixty dollars

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5 Journal of Walker County School Board.

6 William R. Davis, The Development and Present Status of Negro Education in East Texas, p. 79.

7 Journal of Walker County School Board.



A group of Walker County children in the "hot lunch line".



These children "live at home", one block from the public square in Huntsville. Note the paved street and a home in the background.

David Williams on the lawn of his Huntsville residence. He is a pioneer teacher of Walker County.



of this salary was paid from the state public school funds and thirty dollars was paid from the Jeanes Fund. In 1935 the salary was raised to one hundred dollars per month, seventy-five being paid out of the regular school funds and twenty-five from the Jeanes Fund. These amounts from the same sources are still being paid the present Jeanes Supervisor, Estelle Jordan, who succeeded Miss Abernathy in 1936.<sup>8</sup> Miss Jordan holds the Bachelor of Science Degree from Wiley College.

By counsel and demonstration Miss Jordan tries to help the teachers of the common school districts to improve their instruction. She calls the teachers together two or three times each month. In these meetings the teachers discuss their professional problems, the supervisor counseling with them. She also organizes Parent-Teacher Clubs in the rural communities and tries in every way possible to bring the parents into closer touch with the schools. The present supervisor has succeeded in putting an industrial class in each school of the county, even though in some of these schools there is only one teacher. These industrial classes consist mostly of needlework for the girls and woodwork for the boys. The greatest difficulty in promoting this work, according to the Jeanes Supervisor's report, is the lack of funds. Though public school funds have been used for the

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<sup>8</sup> Journal of Work of County School Board, Walker County.



purpose of acquiring necessary equipment for maintaining these classes, the amounts have not been sufficient to carry on the work in such manner as to be of the greatest help to the schools. In spite of difficulties, Miss Jordan goes on with her work, doing the best she can with what she has. Partly through her influence, ninety per cent of all the Negro schools of Walker County now serve hot lunches.

As an example of her resourcefulness it is recounted that during the school year of 1941-1942, as a lesson in thrift, Miss Jordan sponsored a pig project. By the terms of this project, each school was encouraged to own a pig and feed it with the scraps left from the children's lunches. At the close of the school year each of the pigs was to be awarded to a pupil of the school for outstanding work accomplished or service rendered during the year. For some reason the pig project was not a great success. The interest manifested in it, however, shows that the Negro is striving to be more co-operative and that the Jeanes Supervisor is wide awake trying to use the means at her command to teach the children those qualities that are so essential in making a life. As a matter of fact Miss Jordan tries in every way she can to better the life of the Negroes in Walker County. Her motto is "Work and Keep on Working."

The supervisor who preceded Estelle Jordan laid the foundation for the work she so ably carries on, but she has enhanced and accelerated it. Even in the independent school



districts she is called on to assist in the United Service organization, the Red Cross and other defense activities. The County School Board has sufficient confidence in her ability to invite her to their meetings and to give reports of her work. When the time came for election of teachers in 1942, the Board members voted unanimously to retain her services.<sup>9</sup> So, when school begins in September Miss Jordan will be on the field again to carry out the plans she has already made for the school year of 1942-1943.

#### The Adult Education Program

The Federal Government through the Works Progress Administration has been furnishing funds in Walker County for the teaching of adults. As expected, the Negroes of the county have shown much interest in the opportunities offered, and have taken advantage of the night classes which were organized. This interest among the Negroes appears greater than among the white people. Some old Negroes who could not read one word have learned to read in these classes. It is inspiring to hear some of these old people read such sentences as "Our President is at the head of our government." "Mr. Roosevelt is our President." To see their faces light up with pleasure when they are able to recognize and call the words of each sentence is an unforgettable experience. The

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<sup>9</sup> Interview, Bettie Hayman with C. L. Phillips, County Superintendent, Walker County.

older members of these classes say that they did not have an opportunity to attend school when they were younger and that now they are happy that they can learn to read.

Some of the members of these classes are almost eighty years old, but the majority of the men and women are middle-aged people who attend classes at night after a day's work. It is commendable that they are willing to do this, especially when the classes meet in inconvenient and uncomfortable locations. They are held in schools or churches which are often unattractive, with little or no blackboard space, and in many cases are very poorly lighted.

When the work is in progress, one group may be solving arithmetic problems around one table lighted by a coal oil lamp, another group may be studying reading around another table with a separate lamp or sharing the light from another table. A third group may be busy about another project, but all of them are enthusiastically engaged in the effort to improve their condition. Clubs have been formed among some of these students which meet outside of school hours. A teacher meets with them and together they study gardening, homemaking, or other things in which they are interested.

According to Norman Craft, District Supervisor of Adult Education, some of these classes have been going on for six or seven years and are still well attended. At present among the eleven classes in adult education in Walker County, six are composed of Negroes. The entire enrollment for the county

is two hundred fifteen and of this number one hundred fifty-nine are Negroes, almost three times as many Negroes as white people.<sup>10</sup>

### The Household Employment Class in Huntsville

During the school year of 1938-1939, a Household Employment Class was organized among the Negro women in Huntsville. This class which was under the supervision of the Public School System, met in the evenings and was composed of employed cooks, maids, and laundresses, and prospective household servants. The State and Federal Government paid three-fourths of the teacher's salary and the members of the class paid the other one-fourth. Many of the white women paid the small charge for their cooks and maids. The teacher of the class was Mrs. Lenora Meachum, a former resident of Walker County, who holds the Bachelor of Science Degree from Prairie View College.

When the course began not a single member of the class had a health certificate. The teacher stressed the need of health education, and one of the white physicians of the town donated his services. Before the class closed, June 1, 1939, there were thirty-eight members who had undergone a physical examination and had secured health certificates.

Several white women of the town made favorable comments on the work these Negro women were doing. Some said that they

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10 Interview, Bettie Hayman with Norman Craft.



felt that the course gave more dignity to the work of the domestic servants and caused them to be more interested in their work. Several of these employers stated that they could see a marked improvement in the work of their maids, that they learned to be cleaner and more efficient in every way. One landlady said that she felt that the training these employees were getting made the Negro feel freer to talk matters over with her employer.

Although this class continued only one year the response of those who attended it shows that they were interested in improving their ability to do well the tasks which they were trying to perform.

### The Huntsville Nursery School

The Nursery School of Huntsville which is somewhat of a philanthropic enterprise for the purpose of caring for pre-school children whose mothers are employed, was organized and is still operated by Mrs. Jessica Justice, wife of the owner of one of the Negro funeral homes in Huntsville. The purpose of the school says the director, is to help to make the world a better place in which to live by giving boys and girls the proper training in their early years. Mrs. Justice feels that she adds something to the lives of these children by teaching them songs, stories and plays when they might otherwise be roaming the streets.

The class is held five days each week. For a time the



place of meeting was the Negro Recreational Center, but at the time of this writing it is held in the teacher's home. For this service each mother pays twenty-five cents per week. As the mothers have no way of taking their children to the school the teacher does not have as large a group as she might have. In spite of periods of small enrollment, however, this wide awake, persistent teacher has kept the work going for the past five years. Mrs. Justice, who is a former student of San Filipe School for Girls and of Prairie View College is also one of the substantial housewives of her community and a leader in her church.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE NEGRO SINCE 1900

#### The Negro as a Farmer

Before the period of Reconstruction Walker County, as well as other parts of East Texas, was a region of plantations. In this county the Negro has always been active in the work of the farm. As a slave he worked with his master. During the war he kept the field work going while the master served in the army. Since obtaining his freedom he has worked as a wage hand, tenant, or farm owner. As previously stated, in many cases the Negro remained with his former owner as a tenant or worked for wages. When he had acquired enough money to do so, he purchased a home. For a time the white people were unwilling to sell land to the Negro. Finally, however, Colonel G. W. Grant, a prominent citizen of Huntsville who owned a large tract of land four miles east of town, sold land at a reduced price to several Negroes. This land was sold to them in ten and twenty acre tracts. Not only did Colonel Grant sell land to the Negroes, but as has been previously stated, he donated land for a school and later gave them other land on which to build a church. This community which included land adjoining the present fish hatchery became known as Grant's Colony.

Subsequent to this generous act on the part of Colonel Grant more land was sold to Negroes throughout the country. At present many of the Negro farmers own their homes. It is more common among the Negroes to own their homesteads, even though they may be renting a farm, than it is among the white farmers. Not only has the Negro worked his own farm and rented from the white man, but when the white man's corn was in the grass and his cotton needed chopping, it was customary for the Negro with his entire family to come to the assistance of his white neighbor.

In 1940, 56.4 per cent of the farmers in Walker County were Negroes.<sup>1</sup> By a study of the table given below it is seen that the number of Negro farmers in 1910 was less than in 1920, but the number in 1920 was greater than in 1930. By 1942 a greater number was shown than in any of the previous years given. By 1920 the number had increased to thirty-two per cent. But by 1930, the percentage of farm owners had decreased to twenty-five per cent of the total number of farmers. In 1942, the number of farm owners had again increased to thirty-six per cent.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Report compiled by District Supervisor of San Jacinto Soil Conservation District, 1940, p. 42.

2 The first three figures in the four columns are from the 15th Census of the United States, 1930, vol. II, p. 1321. Remaining figures were furnished by H. K. Malone, Walker County Negro Agricultural Demonstration Agent.

TABLE V  
NEGRO FARMERS OF WALKER COUNTY

Year	Owners	Tenants	Total
1910	366	850	1215
1920	446	924	1370
1930	296	896	1192
1942	499	887	1386

The Negro Agricultural Agent of Walker County

For many years the Negro farmer of Walker County was without technical advice or assistance. In 1932 H. K. Malone, a graduate from Prairie View College, was employed as Agricultural Demonstration Agent.

For the purpose of carrying on a more efficient program, Malone has divided the county into eighteen different farm communities in each of which he conducts some sort of helpful agricultural demonstration throughout the year. Among these activities are horticultural work, terracing, meat curing, tanning, and harness making. Before a Home Demonstration Agent was employed in the county he also supervised canning among the Negroes.

In a cross section of Malone's report for 1941 he shows how he spent eighty-four days of his time. Of these days twelve were devoted to horticulture, twenty, to farm engineering, forty-two, to Four H Club work, seventeen days were given to meat curing and canning and five days were spent in carrying





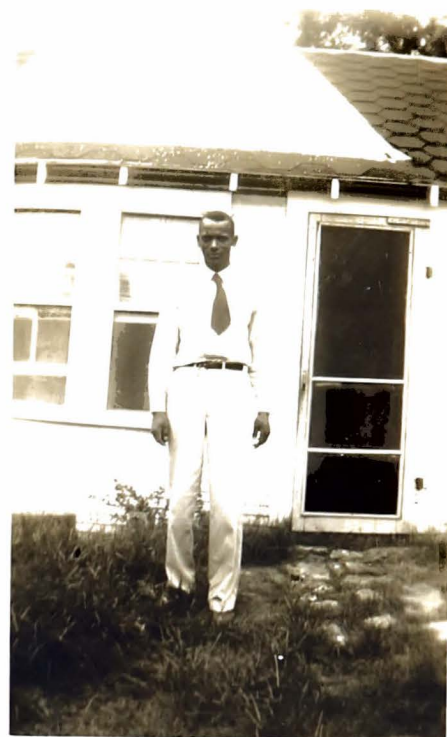
Terracing a Negro Farm  
in Walker County.



Above: H. K. Malone, Walker  
County Agricultural Demon-  
stration Agent, outside his  
office in Huntsville. A grad-  
uate of Prairie View College,  
he is an effective force for  
better farms.

Left: Negro Farmers of Walker  
County filling a Ground Silo.

Right: Negro Farmers  
of Walker County  
grinding cane pre-  
paratory to making  
their year's syrup  
supply. They also  
make it for market.



out forty demonstrations on rat extermination.

Five days each week are spent by Malone working in these different farm communities of the county. Saturday is spent in his office and the people over the county bring their problems to him there. Saturday is therefore a very busy day for him. His office is filled with people who want help in solving their farming difficulties.

In 1939, Malone attempted to survey the conditions of farm families as they actually existed at the time. the 524 questionnaires which were filled out showed the following interesting facts:

TABLE VI

SURVEY OF THE CONDITIONS OF 524 FARM FAMILIES

Tenants-----	311
Farm Owners-----	213
Buying all feedstuff-----	490
Got drinking water from wells-----	292
Got drinking water from spring or other unsanitary places-----	232
Had Gardens-----	286
Had houses screened-----	204
On direct relief-----	13
Had sufficient milk-----	32
Working on W. P. A. Projects-----	93
People working on N. Y. A.-----	14
Receive old age pension-----	62
Active pastors of churches-----	27
Churches of various denominations-----	32

These statistics show some of the outstanding needs of the rural people to be more wells for drinking water, more feedstuffs for



their stock, more vegetable gardens, and more milk. Many farm families do not have a cow.

With County Agent Malone, a group of white people recently visited several Negro farmers of the county. The following account is a brief description of conditions as they were found. Horace Smith, a tenant farmer in Crabbs Prairie Community has a family of eight members. He had on his farm chickens, cattle, corn, hogs, and other farm products that would assure his family a good living. Another farm visited was that of Eddie Wynne, who owns an eighty-five acre tract in the Crabbs Prairie Community. On this farm was a large peach orchard and a large garden. In their pantry the Wynnes had three hundred jars of jellies, fruits, and other canned goods.

The party then visited a two-hundred-fifty acre pasture owned by Gibbs Brothers and cared for by a Negro tenant. It had been cleared of stumps, under the direction of Malone, and was considered one of the best pastures in the community.

The report records that the most commendable progress made by any group of Negro farmers in Walker County is that made by the people of the Hopewell Community. The lands in this community, although considered the least productive in the county, are being worked by these Negroes in such a way as to produce a good living for them. Of the sixty farmers in the community all but five own their own homes. When asked for an explanation of their prosperity they answered that carefully planned farming conducted under expert supervision, to-



gether with hard work, was the salvation of the people in the Hopewell Community.<sup>3</sup> One of the most prosperous farmers in this community said facetiously that his formula to beat the depression was "to put his Ford in the shed, and his children in the field and his faith in God."<sup>4</sup>

In 1941-1942, Malone has given special emphasis to meat curing and hide tanning as community projects. He has also organized and supervised thirteen Four H Clubs among Negro boys and girls of the county. In these clubs the raising of hogs and poultry has been stressed. People who have purchased chickens from these boys have been high in the praise of their quality.

During 1940 and 1941 the Federal Government bought surplus cotton from the farmers and purchased cloth for ticking. Under specified conditions the people in the rural districts were allowed to use this material, making mattresses for their own use. Under Malone's supervision, the Negroes of Walker County made fifteen hundred mattresses.<sup>5</sup>

Malone has done much commendable work in getting the Negroes to see the possibilities in farm life. He is greatly interested in the general up-building of the race.

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3 Huntsville Item, August 3, 1939.

4 George McGown in a talk before the Huntsville Walker County Chamber of Commerce.

5 Information given by H. K. Malone.

### The Negro and the Farm Security Administration

The Negro farmer is taking advantage of the assistance now available to farmers through government agencies, one of which is the Farm Security Administration. The purpose of this agency is to make loans to farmers who need financial assistance and to help them to budget their time and money so that they may get the maximum benefit from both. The following quotation from a well-pleased Negro client is here given.

I started working under the supervision of the Farm Security Administration three years ago. At that time I was down and out. These folks started me off telling me what to do and how to do it. We began to prosper. There are eleven members of my family. We have sold this year ten dollar's worth of string beans and butter beans. We have canned greens, carrots, and beets. We sell twenty dollars' worth of eggs per month. People come to my house for the eggs. I never have to carry them to market. We have plenty of milk, butter, eggs, and bacon.

This man explained further that since his family had been working under supervision, theirs was a happier home, because, as he said, "Each member of the family understands from the budget where all their money comes from and where it goes." He said furthermore that his older children boarded in Huntsville and attended school during the winter of 1941-1942 and that their expenses were paid from funds secured from the sale of eggs. This Negro is quite convinced that he could never have done what he has without the aid of the Farm Security Administration.<sup>6</sup>

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6 Information given Bettie Hayman by Lee Gammel.

Ninety-two per cent of all the people being helped by the Farm Security Administration in Walker County are Negroes. Thirty-three per cent of these Negroes own their own farms. The workers on this program say that with proper encouragement and help most of the Negroes are doing their best to make a success on the farm.<sup>7</sup>

#### Some Leading Farmers

Among the leading Negro farmers of Walker County should be mentioned Kimball Watkins, Ed Dickie, Mal Johnson, Turner Sillett, Ed Skelton, Austin Spears, Alex Wiley, Mid Mills, Mace Fisher, Took Williams, Andrew Jackson, Henry Strayhorn, Jesse Baker, and George Hall. As is always the case with the man who follows the plow, these people are some of the most important history-makers in the county. Not only do they supply their own wants, but they supply the wants of other people as well.

#### The Home Demonstration Agent in Walker County

The purpose of the Home Demonstration Agent is to impart useful and practical information to the rural people, more especially to the women. The outstanding phases of the work are the stimulation of increased production of food, its preparation and preservation, the care of the home and better

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7 Told to Bettie Hayman by Mrs. T. P. White, Home Supervisor of Farm Security Administration.





Typical unimproved  
Negro Home in Hunts-  
ville. This type is  
passing.



Typical improved  
Negro Home in Hunts-  
ville. This type  
is increasing.

Miss Elizabeth  
Merrill, Walker  
County Home  
Demonstration  
Agent. She is  
building better  
homes among her  
people.



sanitation, also the making of clothing.

After the death of Mrs. Sam Houston, Eugenia A. Wood from Mississippi served a short term as the Home Demonstration Agent of Walker County. Succeeding her was Ethel Smith from Fort Worth, who also served only a short time. In January 1942, Elizabeth Merrill, who holds the Bachelor of Science Degree in Home Economics from Prairie View College, began her work as Home Demonstration Agent in Walker County.

Much of Miss Merrill's work has been the organizing of Four H Clubs for girls and Home Demonstration Clubs for women. In both of these types of clubs the members have been studying gardening, raising chickens, yard development, and home improvement. During the month of January, 1942, there was a total attendance in the women's clubs of two hundred sixty-one and a total attendance in the Four H Clubs of ninety-four girls. These clubs are still functioning and the supervisor continually visits the homes in order to make helpful suggestions to the housewives.

Likely the most important project with which Miss Merrill has labored since the beginning of her work was the chicken project with the Four H Club girls. This project was sponsored by the Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, and the First National Bank, all of Huntsville, and Keeland and Millikin Company of New Waverly. Under the regulations governing this project 2,600 chickens were ordered and placed in homes of Four H Club members. Twenty-six girls were chosen as demonstra-

tors and were given one hundred chickens each. In most cases the girls were selected from homes where there were no chickens. These chickens were fed and cared for under supervision. When they were disposed of by the girls the cost and profits were tabulated as follows:

TABLE VII  
CHICKEN PROJECT OF HOME DEMONSTRATION AGENT

Number of Chickens purchased-----	2,600
Number of Fryers raised-----	2,260
Number of Fryers sold-----	1,480
Number of pullets kept on yard for stock purposes-----	780
Total amount received for fryers-----	\$ 735.80
Total expenses-----	678.00
Net Cash Profit-----	\$ 57.80

In addition to the cash profit they have the 780 pullets which will be used for stock purposes. As Miss Merrill expressed it, the whole idea of the project was not dollars and cents, but to teach the club members how to raise and care for chickens and to be able to assist others in obtaining this knowledge.

During the entire time she has been in this work, Miss Merrill has been busy trying to get her complete program launched so that she may be of greatest service to all the Negroes who live in the rural communities of Walker County. No doubt within a few months there will be more visible results of her labor.



### The Negro as a Domestic Worker

Mention has already been made of the Negro domestic worker in the white man's home. Many white people depend largely on these helpers to do their sweeping, cooking, caring for their small children and other household services, as well as the mowing of their lawns and other work about their homes. Many Negroes have made themselves indispensable also as delivery and errand boys.

Some of the Walker County Negroes have established unusual records in their respective lines of service. For example, Tom Oliphint, the pastry cook at Belvin Hall, Sam Houston State Teachers College, has been working in this capacity for six years and has never been late to his work. Mrs. T. P. Mitchell, the manager, says that each member of the force of workers consisting of as many as five or more Negroes, shows an interest in the work and is faithful to duty. Bessie Pankey, a Negro cook in the T. E. Humphrey home, has been in her present position for twenty-three years. Ellen Rollin worked in the Tom Oliphint home for fifteen years. Caroline Jones worked eighteen years and Isabelle Jackson worked fifteen years in the Forrest home of Huntsville. Vivian Oliphant has been working in the L. A. Northington home for twelve years. According to Mrs. Northington, nothing too good can be said about the quality of her service.

Mrs. Willie Owens, who formerly did domestic service, studied Beauty Culture in Houston. She now has a lucrative

business as a beautician. She has paid for a home, has seen her two sons pass through high school and is planning to send them to college.

Before Huntsville had a steam laundry the white people depended on the Negro for laundry service. Even now many people employ the Negro to do this work. Sarah Carter, who was maid at the Social Center of Sam Houston State Teachers College for a number of years, could possibly do the most beautiful laundry work of any person in Huntsville. In the Mary Lyle Smith home, Lillie Boone does the laundry work, which position both her mother and her grandmother filled before her.

Robert Johnson had an outstanding service record of fifteen years as yard boy in the S. C. Wilson home, having first served in the home of Mr. Wilson's father. Menial though their tasks, they took pride in work well done and excelled in it.

#### The Negro as a Delivery Boy

Of the delivery boys there are many who have served long and well. Oliver Calhoun, who works for Smither Wholesale Company, began working for Smither Grocery Company twenty-five years ago. During the first world war he enlisted in the army, but after rendering service to his country, he returned, took up his former job, and still continues a faithful worker. Raymond Brooks has been serving the City Market as delivery boy for sixteen years. Due to his uniform courtesy, Raymond is well liked by all the customers of the Market.



Miss Cedelia Jones, Registered Nurse. She strives to make a healthier race.



One of the efficient delivery boys of Huntsville.



All of these places of personal service, lowly as they may seem, are none the less essential and are important to the extent that the white man would not have been able to carry on his business or his profession as successfully as he has without the faithful and efficient help of the Negro. Though these workers have not always received high wages, they have done their best.

### The Negro Barber in Walker County

To speak of the first Negro barber in Walker County is to speak of the first barber in Walker County. As a matter of fact, in the early days barbering was considered a Negro's occupation. So far as is known, Joe Mettawer established the first barber shop in Huntsville. After working in the shop alone for several years Mettawer trained Bob Crawford, another Negro, in the art. Within a few years Crawford established a shop of his own in which his son, Ed Crawford, also learned the trade. Long after white men began owning and operating barber shops in Huntsville, Ed Crawford worked in the white man's shop. Ed Crawford now owns and operates a shop exclusively for Negroes on Avenue M near Thirteenth Street in one of the Negro districts of Huntsville. This Negro has been in barber business for forty-one years. He says that he feels that it was an advantage to him to have worked in different shops. Having been in the business before the law was passed requiring barbers to attend a Barber College, he has acquired

all of his training by experience. He not only runs his barber shop; but having acquired a certificate for doing radio repair work, he does this as a side line.

There are in Walker County at present, six barber shops and four beauty parlors for Negroes.

### The Negro in Business and the Professions

Negro business enterprises are not highly developed in Walker County. There are probably two reasons for this. One is that the Negro has lacked capital to establish a business. The second is that his training has not been in the field of business. In spite of these difficulties, however, Negroes own and operate five combination filling stations and grocery stores in the county. There are also three Negro funeral homes located in Huntsville. There is in Walker County one Negro physician, Dr. W. A. Richardson, who received his medical training in Georgia but did his interne work at Prairie View College Hospital. There is one graduate nurse, Miss Cedellia Jones, who received her diploma from the Chicago School of Nursing. There is one Dentist, Dr. J. Arthur Johnson, who took his Bachelor of Science Degree from Bishop College, and received his professional training in Nashville, Tennessee.

### Some Negro Real Estate Owners

As before stated, thirty-six per cent of the Negro farmers of Walker County own their homes. There is also a large per

cent of Negroes, other than farmers, who own their homes. In the newly established Negro Districts in and about Huntsville many of the occupants of well-built, up-to-date houses own their homes. Among them are Negro citizens who also own other property. Scott Johnson, a teacher in the public schools of Huntsville, owns several rent houses in town. Floyd Johnson, one of the Negro undertakers, and H. K. Malone each owns several rent houses. Two of the largest farms owned by Negroes are the property of Jesse Baker and J. Kimball Watkins.

#### The Negro Chamber of Commerce of Walker County

Closely related to the problem of real estate ownership among the Negroes of Walker County is the work of the Negro Chamber of Commerce. This organization had its beginning in 1930, with Sam Houston as its first president. The officers for 1942 are Robert (Bob) Thomas, President; Floyd Johnson, Vice-President; and Dr. J. Arthur Johnson, Secretary. The Negro Chamber of Commerce has done much among the Negroes of Walker County to stimulate home ownership, up-keep, and beautification.



## CHAPTER V

### CULTURAL LIFE OF THE NEGRO

#### Negro Music

Shortly after the Negroes obtained their freedom, a Mr. Ross, a German, organized the first Negro Brass Band in Huntsville. Among the members of this musical organization were J. M. Mettawer, Sam Dillard, George Gray, Ephrean Howard, Joshua Houston, Bob Crawford, Tommy Whitehead, Clark Hales, Frank Jones, Tump Herndon, Tom Rollin, and Jack Boone. Other Negro bands organized in the county were the Silver Coronet Band, The Needmore Band, the Pine Prairie Brass Band, and the band of the Band and Park Association for the colored people of Huntsville.

During the life of the Sam Houston Industrial and Training School, that institution stressed music and always had a well-trained chorus. At present the Huntsville High School places special emphasis on music in the curriculum, and also has an organized junior choir and senior choir. F. E. James, Principal of Dodge Negro School, spends his summer vacations teaching community singing over the county. There are three groups who sing regularly over the local radio station each Sunday. They are the Golden Gate Quintet, composed of R. S. Archer, Leon Spivey, Herbert Spivey, Iris Archer and Henry

Isaac; the Spiritual Five, composed of Reed Love, Henry Harris, R. L. Evans, Jesse Thomas and O. B. Evans; and the James Jubilee Singers, composed of Isaiah Johnson, F. E. James and R. L. Morings. The programs rendered by these musicians are popular among the people of the county.

### The Social Life of the Negro

The social life of the Negroes of the rural communities of Walker County is greatly enhanced by the club meetings of the Agricultural and Home Demonstration Agents. The people also enjoy homecomings in the communities with singing and basket dinners. On regular preaching days at the different churches people meet together and discuss their various problems. At present both picture shows in Huntsville have a section for Negroes. The nineteenth of June has been a day of celebration for the Negroes of Walker County since 1865, but due to the war situation this celebration was discontinued in 1942.

### The Band and Park Association

On August 1, 1931, a group of seventeen Negro citizens of Huntsville purchased from Gibbs Brothers and Company nine and four one-hundredths acres of land. They organized themselves into the Band and Park Association, for the purpose of operating a park and sustaining a brass band for the colored people of Huntsville and vicinity. The management of the Association was assigned to a board of trustees, consisting

of five members "selected by the constituents of the organization."

In the beginning the stock of this organization consisted of 150 shares. Membership was evidenced by one or more shares of five dollars each. The number of shares might be increased or the value of each share decreased by the vote of two-thirds of the membership.

The amount paid for the land was \$678.00. The cash payment was \$150.00 and the remainder was secured by three promissory notes, one of them due on June 21, for three consecutive years. The last payment was to have been made on June 21, 1934, but by a donation of R. A. Josey of Houston the balance due on this park was paid off May 15, 1933.

Under the terms of agreement of the owners, this park is free for all Negroes on June nineteenth. On all other occasions a fee is charged for its use. The dues, profits, and assessments are distributed among the shareholders. At the discretion of the membership in the Band and Park Association, any surplus profits may be used to keep up the colored cemetery.

Negroes of Huntsville not belonging to this association think that since Mr. Josey's donation was supposed to be for the benefit of the entire Negro population of the county it is unfair that a fee is charged for the use of the park. On the other hand, the members feel that as they have invested their money in the enterprise, and have as their purpose the welfare of all the race, that charging a fee is only a fair



manner of securing money for the up-keep of the park. The park is not used extensively by the Negroes of the county.

### Negro Recreational Center

In 1939, with the aid of the National Government through The Works Progress Administration, the City of Huntsville, the Walker County white Chamber of Commerce, and the Walker County Agricultural Council, the Huntsville Community Center for the Negroes of Huntsville and Walker County was built. This building which is located only a short distance from Emancipation Park, is furnished with gas and electricity. It is known among the Negroes as "The Center" and is used for the Annual Negro Fair, for classes in National Youth Administration work, adult education, community dancing and other recreational activities.

### Negro Boy Scouts

In 1941, the Huntsville Kiwanis Club, being interested in promoting the development of boy life in Huntsville, sponsored the organization of Boy Scout work among the Negro boys of the community. As a result of these efforts there is now a troop of Negro Boy Scouts in Huntsville of which Ulysses Watkins, a teacher in the public high school of Huntsville, is scoutmaster, with Dr. W. A. Richardson as assistant. The Negro Committee sponsoring this work is composed of W. A. Richardson, Scott Johnson, assistant Principal in the public school, and H. K. Malone.

The Religious Life of the Negro

The Negro is very emotional with deep abiding faith in God. He is a prayerful being and is a strong believer in direct answer to prayer. In a rural community of Walker County an old Negro man, who was without employment or other means of support, was given work on the Works Progress Administration Project. When the case worker notified him that he had been certified for work on the project he said: "Oh, I knowed the Lawd would answer my prayer. I asked him to send me work and he has done it."<sup>1</sup>

The Negro feels that having a hard time on earth will make one think more of Heaven and strive harder to get there. One elderly Negro of Huntsville was asked how he liked the new electric stove recently purchased by the lady in whose home he stayed. His answer was, "I don't like it. You folks is gittin' too many conveniences and not thinkin' enough about the world to come."<sup>2</sup>

The Negro shows his childlike faith in God in many ways. When he is ill he has other members of his race assemble and pray for him. He prays about the tasks he undertakes. Such prayers as these Negroes utter on such occasions might well cause the religious skeptic to pause and think. One evening a Negro woman was asked if she were not afraid to walk home

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1 Incident related to Bettie Hayman by Mrs. Ella M. Mullinax.

2 Related to Bettie Hayman by Miss Harriet Smith.

in the dark. The answer of this faithful creature was, "No honey, I'se got de same Lawd on de road as I'se got at home."<sup>3</sup>

The Negro also has a tendency to see the bright side of everything. While on a visit to a white woman of Huntsville who had suffered a paralytic stroke, a Negro woman offered the consolation that it was very kind of the Lord to strike her down and give her time to get her ticket and be ready when the time came to go.

A brief discussion has already been given of the early churches of Walker County. There are at present fifty Negro churches of various denominations located in Walker County. There are thirty-five Baptist Churches, thirteen Methodist Churches, one Church of Christ and one Assembly of God. No doubt uneducated leadership is partly responsible for there being so many different churches. Negro ministers say that the spirit of co-operation does not exist in the churches, that the Negroes will co-operate fairly well in other things but in religious work each Negro wants a church to himself. For example in Phelps, a village of 200, there are three Baptist Churches with a membership scarcely large enough for one church.

The Baptist General Association of Texas, Colored, supports a combination of Old Peoples and Orphan's Home about five miles west of New Waverly. Belonging to this institution

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3 Related to Bettie Hayman by Mrs. Mattie Roberts.



are two fairly well-furnished dormitories and a tabernacle located on a fifty acre tract of land. On this land there are gardens and truck patches in which are grown the vegetables needed by the inmates of this home. Annually, during August, the General Association meets at this home and for several days church services are held in this tabernacle, many of the preachers and leaders remaining on the ground during the entire meeting.

This home is not a great success. The managers say that for some reason it is exceedingly difficult to keep the inmates satisfied. Neither the children nor the old people seem happy there.

The leaders of white religious groups are gradually waking up to the fact that they might be of service in training Negro leaders. One young ministerial student remarked that since he had taken a course in race relations in the seminary, that he could not pass a Negro church without saying to himself, "I wonder if I might help these people?" Some work has been done by the women of Huntsville in assisting the Negro women to put on programs in their churches. This proffer of assistance by the white women was graciously accepted by the Negro women.

In June, 1942, with the aid of religious workers from Wiley College, the First Methodist Church of Huntsville put on a Daily Vacation Bible School Program. This was the first program of its kind among the Negroes ever held in Huntsville.

There was an enrollment of ninety pupils during the two weeks which the school continued. The workers were enthusiastic about their accomplishments and are looking forward to coming back and repeating the experiment next year. In August, 1942, the Negro Baptist Church of Huntsville conducted a similar school.

### The Negro of the Present

Comparing the Negro of the present with the Negro of a decade or more ago, many changes are apparent. The sloppy, unkempt Negro woman has largely been replaced by a tidy well-groomed woman apparently just home from the beauty parlor. The dirty, ragged Negro man has exchanged his old clothes for new garments and now wears a tidy work suit. The run-down shoes and ragged hose are seen less frequently among Walker County Negroes than in former years. There are three reasons for these changes. The first is that there is more standardization in dress among the white people. The white people wear plainer clothes now than they formerly wore, and the Negro having a higher standard of living and more cultivated tastes than in the past wears more nearly the same type of clothing that the white person wears. The second reason for the change is that though the Negro has always been on a low-salaried plane, he is now getting more aid financially than he formerly got. If he lives in town he very probably works on a government project. If he lives on the farm, he is likely the recipient of a farm loan or a donation from the government.



Negro Business House,  
Huntsville, containing  
cafe, pressing shop,  
and barber shop. Ed  
Crawford, at right.



Negro laborers waiting  
for the W. P. A. trans-  
portation truck.

One of the three  
Negro Funeral  
Homes of Hunts-  
ville.





The third and possibly the most important reason for this improvement of the Negro is his development educationally. Several factors which furthered the education of the Negro in Walker County have been mentioned. Among these factors are the programs of the County Agricultural Agent, the Home Demonstration Agent, the Negro physician and Nurse, the Jeanes Supervisor, the program of the Farm Security Administration and last but possibly not least is the program of Adult Education in night schools.

The relationship between the white man and the Negro cannot be the same in the future as it has been in the past. The Negro as an individual and as a race is better educated now and is better able to meet the problems of life. In other words, he is not so dependent now as he formerly was. Relatively speaking, the Negro has probably been making as rapid progress through the years as the white man. There was a time when the white man often paid the Negro for his services with used clothing, discarded pieces of furniture, or other things which the white man no longer needed. The Negro was glad to get the white man's cast off garments because money was scarce and he was hesitant about entering the marts of trade to purchase clothes or household equipment.

In fact, clothing or furniture that was being discarded by the white man was a luxury to the Negro. Formerly also in any business transaction between members of the two races, the white man did the bookkeeping and the Negro accepted his computations without question. Now the Negro knows the

rudiments of accounting, he knows how to purchase his own clothing and he plans his own home. He prefers being paid a salary for the work he does and to have the privilege of conducting his own business transactions.

The cook who has had lessons in the preparation of food and who has mastered the technique of domestic service, wonders when the mistress of the house gets provoked and scolds, why she is not permitted to explain her position without some such retort as, "Shut up! you must not talk back to me." Because of the change in attitude, each toward the other, it is becoming more essential that the white man and the black man of Walker County re-establish more friendly relations. As one young Negress stated it, "The white people know and care very little about what we do or think."

It might be more profitable to the people of Texas to give more consideration to the American Negro than the American Indian or the Mexican in our midst, though that seems not so popular. If the white man is not interested in the Negro from a humanitarian or philanthropic viewpoint he might become interested in his conditions from a selfish consideration. It would be more profitable to the white man if he would cooperate in raising the living standards of his black neighbor. The Negro comes into the white man's home as cook, housemaid, laundress, yard boy or other helper. If these servants are disease carriers they endanger the lives of all whom they serve. The nurse of small children helps to shape the moral

and also influence the social outlook of the children under her care. In fact the life of the Negroes and that of the white people are so closely related that the welfare of the Negro is also the welfare of the white man. As race consciousness is developed among the Negroes they become more reticent and less inclined to talk frankly with white people. This leads to further estrangement of the races and accentuates the problems of racial adjustment. In this connection see Appendix B.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Walker County Negroes have been studied as slaves, their status as freedmen has been given attention, and their activities and progress before 1890 have been discussed. It has been found that since 1890 they have developed their aptitudes and abilities to the extent that they are no longer merely farmers and personal servants, but in increasing numbers they have become professional, having entered the ministry, medicine, teaching, and other occupations which demand technical training including those of barber, nurse, undertaker, dentist, physician, and others of similar importance in our modern life. In this brief historical study there has been neither sufficient time nor space to discuss the various aspects of Negro life in Walker County as fully as might have been done.

Problems worthy of further development include the following:

1. Negro agriculture in Walker County to which attention should be given:
  - a. Average size, value, and productivity of the Negro farms in the county.
  - b. Number of terraced and improved farms owned or operated by Negroes of the county.
  - c. Number, variety, and value of livestock owned by the Negroes of the county.

- d. Number of acres of grazing land in the county utilized by Negroes.
  - e. Number of dairy stock owned by Negroes in the county and the value of dairy products.
  - f. Value of poultry raised by Negroes in the county.
2. History and development of Negro education in Walker County.
- a. Buildings and equipment, qualifications of teachers and quality of instruction in early Negro schools of the county.
  - b. Type of buildings and equipment, qualifications, of the teachers and quality of instruction in the Negro schools of the present.
  - c. Library facilities and playground and recreational equipment of the Negro schools of the county.
  - d. Distribution of public school funds to the Negro and the utilization of same.
  - e. Enrollment in both Negro elementary and high-schools of the county.
3. Social and religious development of the Negroes of Walker County.
- a. Location and value of the Negro churches of the county.
  - b. Qualifications, training, and experience of Negro ministers.
  - c. Home life of Walker County Negroes, including labor saving devices and electrical fixtures in the homes.
  - d. Number of musical instruments, radios, victrolas, et cetera, in Negro homes of the county.
  - e. Social organizations for Negro adults and youth of the county.

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## Whites

Andrews, H. F.	Northington, Mrs. L. A.
Bock, Mrs. Reba	Oliphint, Elizabeth
Bush, Dr. L. H.	Oliphint, Mrs. Katie
Craft, Norman	Parrish, Mrs. M. L.
Estill, H. F.	Pritchett, Mr. J. L.
Gillaspie, Mrs. W. O. B.	Smith, Harriet
Hume, Ella	Smith, J. H. <i>James Mansford Smith</i>
Johnson, Mrs. Ola	Smith, Mary <i>Sister: Housemaster</i>
Leonard, Mrs. Loraine	Templeton, Henry <i>John Stephen Smith</i>
Lindley, E. R.	Thomason, Mrs. J. W.
McAdams, Edgar	Tindall, L. B.
Mitchell, C. L.	White, Mrs. T. P.
Mitchell, Mrs. T. P.	Wilson, J. R.
Mullinax, Mrs. Ella Mae	Woods, R. M.

Wynne, G. A.

## Negroes

Allen, Memphis	Jones, Cedella
Allen, Ulysses	Jordan, Estelle
Crawford, Ed	Justice, Mrs. Jessica
Harris, Rev. C. C.	Malone, H. K.
Houston, Sam	Merrill, Elizabeth
James, F. E.	Owens, Mrs. Willie
Johnson, J. Arthur	Pankey, Mrs. Bessie
Jones, Calvin	Williams, David

## APPENDIX A

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

#### Joshua Houston

Joshua Houston, one of General Houston's former slaves, was one of the most outstanding Negro characters in the county. In his actions is found a splendid example of the friendly helpful feeling between the Negro and his former master. After gaining his freedom Joshua lived in Huntsville as a blacksmith for a number of years. Upon receiving word that Mrs. Houston, who had moved to Independence, was in straitened financial condition, Joshua rode a mule from Huntsville to Independence to offer to her \$2,000 which he had saved from his earnings in the blacksmith shop. Mrs. Houston thanked this faithful servant but refused to take the money.

In 1900, H. F. Estill wrote that:

General Houston's body servant, Josh Houston is one of Huntsville's most intelligent and substantial colored citizens. He came into the General's possession in 1840 having previously belonged to Mrs. Houston's father, Colonel Lee of Alabama. He served his new master faithfully from 1840 to the old General's death in 1863, traveling with him over the State and often acting as bearer of important documents.

*Rea*

#### Jordina Bowden

Jordina was an ex-slave who was known for her care of



the sick and suffering, both white and black. No night was too dark or cold for Jordina to go on her mission of relief. The Negroes called her "mother" and the white folks called her "Aunt Jordina." It is reported that wherever she went she brought peace into whatever turmoil she might have found.

One white woman said, "Aunt Jordina had some of the sweetest, best ways of anyone I have ever known." When she passed away in the late nineties she was greatly mourned by both white and black ones.

#### Joe Mettawer

Joe Mettawer had a most unusual experience, having been born of free parents in Virginia and living free until he was grown. A white slave trader intrigued him into going with him to New Orleans, while there the slave trader sold him as a slave and he was brought thus into Walker County. It so happened, however, that white friends who had known him in Virginia proved that he was a free man and got him out of his difficulty.

Previous mention has been made of Mettawer's having been the first barber in the county, and also of his having been a member of the first Brass Band. In fact Mettawer was one of the best known and best liked of the Negro citizens of the 1890's.

#### David Williams

The oldest ex-teacher of Walker County is David Williams

who was born in Selma, Alabama, January 1, 1861, of slave parents. His father was cook and his mother housemaid for Larkin Cleveland, who becoming frightened by the invasion of Northern Armies into the South, came into Texas in 1862 landing at Cold Springs. There young Williams lived until he was seven years old when his parents moved into Huntsville.

As soon as David was large enough to do so, he began working in the fields for other people. He was among the Negroes who were taught by white teachers. He was also one of those who became a teacher at an early date. In this profession he served for almost forty years.

He has now reached the ripe old age of eighty-one years. His wife having died several years ago, the old man lives alone and is still able to do his house and yard work and go about his duties in town.

"Uncle Dave" as he is called by many people, white and Negroes, is respected by members of both groups.

#### Jane Ward

Jane Ward, an ex-slave who died about 1930, lived in Huntsville keeping a small hotel for Negro transients and as there was no hospital in the town at the time, she took many sick people into her home and cared for them until they had recovered. Some called her the "Good Samaritan."

"Aunt Jane" was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, taking a great interest in church affairs.

She did much to keep up the celebration of June 19. When it seemed that others thought and cared little about the celebration, "Aunt Jane" would gather the boys and girls and with flags flying they would march through the town.

The J. Kimball Watkins Family

The following history was written by Pauline Watkins, a daughter, October 13, 1939.

J. Kimball Watkins, the son of Jefferson and Rachel Watkins and Mattie Z. Dickey, the daughter of Samuel and Eugenia Dickey, were married January 27, 1886. Both were born and reared in Walker County, Texas. Kimball was born and reared in the Pine Prairie community which is located north of Huntsville. He chose farming as his occupation. He was, however, from early manhood until the present, a community leader--working in the Sunday School, Church and co-operating with programs of the school. Mattie Dickey Watkins was born and reared in the Mt. Zion community which is located west of Huntsville. Mattie attended school in the Mt. Zion community and also boarded in Huntsville and attended school there. She was awarded a teaching certificate upon the passing of a county examination and taught in the rural schools in Walker County until one year after she was married.

To the union there were ten children born. Five were boys and five were girls. All of the children attended public school in Walker County. After completing public school, Leon and Kimball, Jr. attended Conroe College, Conroe, Texas and Wiley College, Marshall, Texas. Six of the other children, Adice, Mattie, Ethel, Pauline, Eddie, and Ulysses, attended Prairie View State College, Prairie View, Texas. Pauline also attended the University of Southern California for a part of her undergraduate and also one year of graduate work. From that school she received the Master of Science Degree in Education. She also studied at Hampton Institute, Hampton Virginia, on a Jeanes Scholarship during the summer of 1938.



Three of the children have passed. These are Johnnie Watkins, the oldest daughter, who passed in 1931. Because of ill health, she was never able to attend college but made a contribution to the home by helping with the household duties. Mattie Watkins Johnson, the third daughter, passed in 1931 also. She left six young children, two of whom have recently attended college in Texas. Her oldest daughter, Helen, is now in Prairie View where she is making an excellent record in music and athletics. She went to Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama, last year with the women's track team from Prairie View and participated in the Southern Regional Track Meet.

Adice Watkins Reece, the second daughter who was a religious and educational worker in Walker County for a number of years, passed in 1935. At the time of her passing, she was a member of the faculty of the Mt. Zion School.

Ethel, the fourth daughter, who holds the Bachelor of Science Degree in Home Economics from Prairie View, is now County Home Demonstration Agent in Rusk County, Texas.

Pauline, the fifth daughter, is at present Jeanes Supervisor in Brazos County, Texas, and summer instructor at Prairie View State College where she has worked at intervals for the past ten years.

All of the sons are yet alive and are employed as follows:

Leon, the oldest, is a carpenter at Huntsville. Kimball, Jr., the second, is engaged in business in New York.

Todd, third son, is a cement contractor in Galveston, Texas.

Eddie, the fourth, holds the Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture from Prairie View State College and is principal and Vocational Agriculture teacher at Richland.

Ulysses, the fifth son, who holds an A. B. Degree in Education from Prairie View State College is coach and mathematics teacher at Bethlehem Training School in Cass County, Texas.

Both parents are yet living and are compara-

tively active. The father is actively engaged in farming at the old farm home nine miles west of Huntsville which was purchased more than thirty years ago for the main purpose of living near a high school where the children could attend.

Since the above family history was written, Ulysses Watkins has returned to Walker County where he is teaching in the Huntsville Negro High School and serving as Coach and Scout Master.

## APPENDIX B

### SUGGESTION FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE RACES

Members of both white and Negro races have contributed some suggestions to the author as to how the races may co-operate in the future. At their request the names are withheld. The first two statements are from a Negro. They are as follows:

1. We need a better understanding of the Negro by the white man.
2. There is a friendly attitude and a better understanding when the Negroes and whites live next door neighbors. There is a friendly relationship between the Negro and the white man in Huntsville because the Negroes do not live in segregated districts as they do in some places.

The next group of quotations is from a white minister of Walker County who is sympathetic with the race question. He says that:

1. The whites should make an unbiased study of the Negro as an individual, who is endowed with the same potentialities as any other individual.
2. White religious leaders should show greater sympathy toward the Negro.
3. The whites should recognize the latent and certainly the evident ability and ambition of the Negro in economic, religious, and educational fields; and then leadership should be in the religious field, followed by a more equitable distribution in the educational field which ultimately would carry over into the former.
4. Both whites and Negroes need to realize that



Providence has ordained the colors of both and thus set up an inviolable distinction, and that both, to progress permanently must work and stay within those distinctions if each will attain his maximum ability to render his greatest service.

5. Although the racial lines are set up by Divine Providence and racial intermixture is thus outlawed, for each to conquer disease and set up a sound economic structure and maintain the highest moral and religious standards each must realize he is his "brother's keeper" and come to a broader understanding and practice of true brotherhood.

Progress along these lines will inevitably be slow and all concerned must be patient, busily patient, for attitudes that grew up and ossified in two hundred fifty years cannot be changed over-night.

The third group of suggestions is from one of the Negroes of Walker County who holds a position of public service and is closely associated with members of his race. He says:

1. Both groups must learn to recognize all men as brothers that there is no such thing as one being a superior race and the other an inferior race, for with God all men rank the same.
2. Both groups must learn and realize that the pigmentation of the skin has nothing to do with the faculties of the mind nor the convolutions of the brain; for genius has no respect for persons and its wings may as readily touch one of the black race as one of the white race. And with equal training one may prove as efficient and as useful in service as the other.
3. The white group must learn that terms as "nigger" and "darky" when addressing one of the black race does not subordinate him as intended, but reflects the intelligence of the addressor and decreases the respect for him formerly held by the one addressed as "nigger" or "darky". The Negro is glad that he is a Negro and has much racial pride and integrity as the white race, and would not, even if possible, exchange places with him.

4. The white group must realize that it cannot rise alone without its black brother, for to keep him down the white man must stay down with him. There is no such thing as standing still and holding your own ground for you must either go forward or else you go backward.

The fourth list of statements or principles were given by a white man who was interested in all races and who had made a special study of the problems of the Negro race. He said that:

1. We must respect personality first regardless of the color of the skin under which it is found.
2. When different races of people can sit down together and discuss, free from prejudice, their differences out of these discussions come understanding and good will.
3. Christ said, "Of one blood have I made all people," and if all people can look upon race problems from the standpoint of Christianity all race antagonisms vanish.

The fifth group of comments is contributed by a Negro who probably knows the condition of the race better than any other person in the county. His suggestions are:

1. Co-operation between the two races can be brought about by better education for both Negroes and whites. The educational Negro understands when the white man is trying to help him.
2. The Negroes of the county need better schools and should receive assistance in getting them.

The sixth commentator is a Negro minister who is fairly well informed on the problems of his people. He says:

1. Both races need a right conception regarding the "Brotherhood of man," without this understanding neither race will know the problems of the other. The Negro must remember that he got his civilization from the white man and the white man should not for-

get the contribution of the Negro to American life.

A white woman who has gone with the Jeanes Supervisor in visiting some of the Parent-Teacher Associations, schools, and clubs over the county, says that she thinks the Negroes are making wonderful progress in their religious and social work. She also says that the white people can be of much help in lending them encouragement in their work. This lady made mention of the very commendable work which Estelle Jordan as Jeanes Supervisor is doing. She said furthermore that she thinks County Agent, H. K. Malone, is one of the greatest aids in improving their condition that the Walker County Negro has ever had.

These contributions from members of both races show that at least some of them can see the problems of the other race, and that others are able to think of their own problems in terms of the other race.

Some people of Walker County have forged ahead of people in other counties in awakening to the need of interracial understanding between Negroes and white people. The late R. M. Woods, who was much interested in the Negro, was referred to by one of his Negro friends as the "white man with the black heart," by which he meant to be highly complimentary. There have been and still are other members of the white race who are loved and trusted by the entire Negro population. On the other hand, there are Negroes who are well liked and trusted by all white people who know them.



About twenty-one years ago there was organized in Walker County a committee on Interracial Co-operation. This committee which was made up of a number of white people and Negroes functioned for several years. The members of this committee got together and discussed their problems. They adjusted many differences of opinion which might have caused friction. Since the discontinuance of the Interracial Committee, the Public Relations Committee of the White Chamber of Commerce has become the medium through which difficulties of an interracial nature might be considered. There are those of both races who are giving thought to race adjustments; but as before stated the average white person knows and cares too little about what the Negro is doing or thinking.