

J. M. Odell. He came to Texas with his father and his family February 11th, 1848. He was a soldier in the Confederate army. He married Miss Sallie Arledge, by whom he had one child, a daughter, Hally, who married George W. Crook, and died recently in Crockett. He afterwards married Miss Gertrude Lipscomb, by whom he had three children, Birdie, who married Weldon Odell, Snyder, who is a prominent business man in Crockett, and Albert, who died young.

He was a member of Lothrop Lodge, Masonic Fraternity, and at his death resolutions were passed by the lodge and published in the Crockett Patron. These extol his virtues in the highest terms.

He was an influential and useful member of the Crockett Baptist Church and had much to do in the erection of a new church building.

Probably no merchant who ever lived in Crockett displayed greater business ability than he.

COL. D. A. NUNN

The following biography of Col. Nunn appeared in the National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, and is so complete and so splendidly expressed that it is adopted for this history of his home county:

"David Alexander Nunn, lawyer, was born at Summerville, Noxubee County, Miss., October 1st, 1836, son of John and Jane (Tubb) Nunn. His father was a pioneer Mississippi planter, and served as a soldier under Andrew Jackson (q.v.) in the war with the Choctaw Indians.

"David A. Nunn received his education in the private college and at the University at Murfreesboro, Law School at Lebanon, Tenn. and later studied law at New Orleans; was admitted to the bar in 1857, and in that year began the practice of his profession in his native county. In his father's home he had known and admired such great Southerners as Jefferson Davis (q.v.) Albert G. Brown (q.v.), William Barksdale (q.v.) and others; from them he imbibed his old school conception of politics and civic and social relations. These ideals and ideas remained his characteristics throughout his political life.

"In 1858 he settled at Crockett, Texas. In this new community he soon acquired a place of distinction, and was voted into the office of Mayor (Crockett's first mayor) which carried no salary, and was then a post of onerous responsibility. The entire country about Crockett was infested by a dangerous and

lawless element, and it required all the courage and firmness of his character to maintain peace and order in the community. Occasionally, with the assistance of the town marshal, and with revolver or shotgun, he personally coped with lawlessness, and he soon became celebrated as a force for the preservation of peace and the regnancy of the law.

"With the beginning of the Civil War he raised a company and went to the front, continuing an actual soldier of the Confederacy until the end of the war. He was in the early campaigns of the Texas Troops in Arizona and New Mexico, subsequently was transferred to Arkansas and Louisiana, and saw hardships and fighting in many of the campaigns of the Southwest. In the Confederate war records (series I, part II, vol XXXIX, p. 627) in the report of Gen. William Steel, who commanded in the Red River country, is the following:

"'Captain Nunn, of Morgan's battalion, succeeded in getting a good position with his squadron and delivered an effective fire at close range.'

"In these records (series I, vol. IX, p. 515) Lt.-Col. William Scurry of the 4th Texas Cavalry mentions him with others as conducting the last brilliant successful charge 'which decided the fortunes of the day' in an engagement in New Mexico, near Fort Craig.

"After the war he resumed his law practice and soon rose to rank among the foremost lawyers of Texas. The firm strength and ability which he had displayed as a soldier he again exhibited during the dark days of reconstruction. He was sent as a delegate to the Convention of 1875 which drafted the new Constitution for the State after its re-admission to the Union, and in that Convention was an acknowledged leader.

"He included in his friendship nearly all the great men of Texas of his day. Col. Nunn was especially beloved by his old comrades in Co. I, 4th Texas Cavalry.

"He married at Macon, Miss., June 8th, 1858, Helen, daughter of Bryan T. Williams, a planter of Noxubee County, Miss.; she survived him, with two children: David A., a lawyer of Crockett, and Corinne, widow of R. E. Corry, and one grandchild, Robert R. Nunn, son of Robert W. Nunn. Mrs. Helen W. Nunn died at Crockett, Texas, Oct. 9, 1917.

"David Alexander Nunn died at Crockett, Texas, August 13, 1911."

MRS. HELEN WILLIAMS NUNN

The following is taken from memorial resolutions adopted by the D. A. Nunn Chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy,

on November 7th, 1917, the anniversary of the birth of Mrs. Helen Williams Nunn:

"We meet today with bowed heads and sorrow stricken hearts to speak of one most tenderly loved by each one present—Mrs. Nunn.

"Mrs. Nunn was born in Macon, Mississippi, in 1836. She is described as having been a most beautiful, joyous and happy girl, giving evidence in her youth of that wonderful ability that has in her mature years crowned her efforts with marked success.

"She married, early in life, the Hon. D. A. Nunn, for whom this chapter is named. They lived a life of unusual happiness for over fifty years. As a wife and mother she was most devoted, finding her greatest pleasure in the happiness and comfort of her loved ones. Her relation to her brother, sister and grandson, was ideal.

"In the work of the D. A. Nunn Chapter she was leader and guide, impressing the fact that this work was not carried on through any feeling of animosity toward the North, but rather, that this work might cause our Northern brethren to see and know the feeling and principle that inspired the South, and to create kindly feeling between the sections of the country. She lived to see this hope largely realized, and was most happy in feeling that we were at last a United Nation, and that this union was in a large measure due to the efforts of the Daughters of the Confederacy. She was largely instrumental in securing the Woman's Confederate Home in Austin, where many happy, contented women have found a refuge for their old age, and will cherish and revere her memory.

"She was ever the friend of the Confederate Veteran, sincere and true. Through her efforts most of Houston County's veterans have their 'Crosses of Honor,' and on the 3rd of June she was always untiring in her efforts to provide suitable entertainment for them.

"She worked long and faithfully to secure the law making Jefferson Davis' birthday a legal holiday in Texas, and her joy was unbounded when the law was finally passed. It has been well said of her: 'She was a great woman.'

"The Texas Division of the Daughters of the Confederacy, delighting to honor her, created for her the office of First and Only Past President of the Texas Division daughters of the Confederacy, and later when the convention met, soon after she had passed her 70th birthday, she was presented with a most beautiful loving cup, as a token of their appreciation of what she had accomplished for the cause so dear to her. She was indeed a noble woman, tender and true, a most faithful friend, thoughtful for all.

"The graves in Glenwood cemetery bear silent witness to this fact, all cared for, and with but few exceptions, mainly through her untiring efforts. Many of these graves are the last resting places of those who long since gone, had almost passed from the remembrance of man. But she remembering, had them most tenderly cared for. Her last charity and love seemed to embrace the entire town. The citizens of Crockett were indeed 'her people,' and as such she loved and honored them.

She had passed over eighty years—a long life; a life full of sunshine as well as shade. A life in which smiles and tears were blended. A life devoted to duty, kindly acts and charitable deeds, striving ever for what was right, loving and beloved."

HON. WILLIAM B. PAGE

This distinguished citizen, of Houston County, was born in Virginia, where he received a thorough education in the best institutions of that renowned State, and came to Crockett, in 1873, well equipped to take charge of the Crockett Academy, as a successor to Major John Spence, who as Superintendent, had raised the institution to the highest rank among private schools. His educational qualifications would have well fitted him for a place in the best universities of the country. He left his impress on the youth of Crockett and Houston County, which has survived until this day. Many of our most successful men, in every walk of life, owe their success to the excellent instruction received from him.

After having taught for twelve years or more in this Academy, he entered politics and distinguished himself as a Statesman of high rank.

But his best work was done as journalist and proprietor and founder of the Crockett Courier. He established this well known paper in January 1890, and at once placed it in the forefront of weekly newspapers of Texas.

Late in life he married Miss Annie Saunders, who survived him, and whom he had known in his boyhood days. They are both buried in their beloved Virginia soil.

HON. NAT PATTON

It is a long stretch of years between the days of the Republic of Texas and the date of the Seventy-Fourth Congress of the United States of America, and yet that was the interval between the dates when Houston County had one of its citizens in Con-

gress. Isaac Parker, the famous pioneer citizen of Houston County, represented his district in several sessions of the Congress of the Republic from 1837 to 1845, and the next time that Houston County had one of its citizens so honored was when Nat Patton was elected to the 74th Congress in 1934, succeeding Hon. Clay Stone Briggs.

According to his own statement, prepared for the Congressional Record, Nat Patton was born in a log cabin at Tadmor, in Houston County, on February 26th, 1884, the son of Frank M. Patton and Bessie Bland Patton. He received his early education in the common schools of Houston County and in 1901, the author of this history, while a member of the 27th Legislature of Texas, gave him an appointment to Sam Houston Normal, at Huntsville. Later he was a member of the Texas House of Representatives and attended the law school of the University of Texas. He was admitted to the Bar in 1918, and practiced law at the Crockett Bar. He served two terms as County Judge of Houston County, and was a member of the Texas State Senate during the Forty-first, Forty-second and Forty-third Legislatures. He was tendered the appointment as comptroller, but declined. He was elected to the Seventy-fourth Congress in 1934, and has been reelected to each succeeding Congress. He is known both nationally and internationally as "Cousin Nat." An incident in his career is quite characteristic. When the King and Queen of England made their historic visit to Washington, he met them at a reception and greeted them as "Cousin George" and "Cousin Elizabeth." He was married to Miss Mattie Taylor, his childhood sweetheart in 1907, and they have four children: Bessie Louise, the wife of Joe Gus LeGory; Weldon, who has just been admitted to the bar; Nat, Jr., a practicing lawyer of the Crockett Bar; and Bonnie, the baby of the family, who still lives with her doting father and mother.

MRS. MAUD SIMS PENCE

Among the educators of Crockett, one who deserves to take a high rank is Mrs. Maud Sims Pence. She was born in Mississippi on November 8th, 1874, and on the death of her father, came to Crockett about 1886 and lived with her Aunt and Uncle, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. R. French. In 1887, she returned to her mothers home in Illinois, and was married there. In 1902, she came to Crockett and soon thereafter was selected as a teacher in the Crockett City School. She was noted for her efficiency as a teacher and also for her scholarship and brilliant intellect. She

later taught school in Boise, Idaho, and in Huntington, West Virginia, but later returned to Crockett and again taught for several years here. She was active in church and Sunday School work and after her death a church museum, which she was instrumental in establishing, was named the MAUD PENCE MEMORIAL, and a suitable bronze marker is placed in the room to her memory.

She was a niece of Rev. Samuel Fisher Tenney, who was pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Crockett for fifty-four years.

She was fatally injured by a motor car and died at Crockett, Texas on August 3rd, 1937, leaving surviving her an only son, Edward Pence, who now lives in Wheeling, West Virginia. She also has many other relatives in Crockett and elsewhere. She is buried in Glenwood Cemetery, Crockett, Texas.

CYRUS HALBERT RANDOLPH

C. H. Randolph was a son of Jesse Nathaniel Randolph of Rowan County, North Carolina, but was born at St. Claire, Ill. as the family was moving westward, on December 9th, 1817. C. H. Randolph lived in Missouri in 1820, later in Tennessee, and in 1828 moved to Alabama. He came to Houston County in 1838, the year following the county's organization. An attorney, but practicing very little, he was Chief Justice (County Judge) in 1844-45 and Sheriff in 1847-48. He served three terms in the Legislature and was State Treasurer from 1858-65. Later public service included recorder for the Supreme Court and employment in the land office and the State Treasurer's office. Judge Randolph did not return to Houston County after going to Austin. He had married Susan Nowlin, daughter of Peyton Wade Nowlin of Hyde Park, Austin, about 1853, probably while in the Legislature.

Old Randolph, in Eastern Houston County, was once one of the most important towns of Houston County, rivaling Crockett, which had been made the county seat in 1837 when A. E. Gossett donated the land for the town and county seat. It is often heard that Randolph, which doubtless got its name from C. H. Randolph, tried to get the county seat in 1837, which probably is a confusion of county history. The information by the grandson is that Cyrus Randolph did not come to Houston County from Alabama until 1837. The town grew up and became Randolph after the county was organized, probably reaching its peak shortly before the Civil War, according to Judge Aldrich. Crockett and Randolph became natural rivals and the latter wanted the

county seat, which Crockett had. Probably an election was held to move the county seat, but lacked the necessary two-thirds vote to move it. Crockett had the county seat and kept it. Randolph flourished a-while and began to dwindle. The winds now blow through the tall trees where once stood a flourishing town.

Having entered politics at the age of 23, papers found in Judge Randolph's box, certifying his election to various offices were signed by President David G. Burnet, President Sam Houston, Governor Albert C. Horton, Governor P. H. Bell, Governor T. Wood and Governor Richard Coke.

The oldest document found was dated February 13, 1841, which certified his appointment to an office to which he had been elected Dec. 21, 1840. Another document was signed by Anson Jones, then Secretary of State, which certified his election to the "office of Chief Justice, in and for the County of Houston, in said Republic," and the closing paragraph reads: "Given under my hand, at Washington, the Fourth day of December, A. D., 1843, and of the Independence of the Republic, the eighth."

Judge Randolph was granted a license to practice law by the District Court of Houston County, and the document was signed by "O. M. Roberts, District Judge," who later became governor.

JUDGE ROBERT N. READ

His full name was Robert Newton Read. He was one of seven sons. We do not have the date of his birth, but he came to Texas in 1843 and settled a few miles south of Crockett, on the Huntsville Road. He cleared and put into cultivation a large plantation, which, even today, is known as Read's Opening. His children were: Ben F. Read, who was associated with him in business and who moved with him to Mineola when he left Crockett. His daughter, Lizzie, married H. A. Long. A daughter, Julia, married Nelson Garner; a daughter, Emma, married Dr. Wortham. A daughter, Corinne, married P. F. Comba; a daughter, Louella, married R. N. Stafford, who served many years in the Texas senate; a daughter, Louise, married R. P. Jiles; his other sons were John Read, Bob Read and Sam Read. John Read was born October 16, 1844, and died August 2, 1899. Sam Read was born December 25, 1847 and died September 19, 1919.

In 1870, Judge Read purchased a stock of merchandise from

John H. Burnett, which was situated in a store building then located where the Crockett State Bank now stands. Mr. T. W. Thompson was present when this deal was consummated in the back room of the store building, and said that it was the largest sum of gold and silver that he had ever seen. I think the consideration was \$5000 cash.

A number of the descendants of Judge Read are still living in Houston County, among them Dr. Sam P. Beeson, of Weldon, who is a successful physician and farmer, and seems to have inherited some of the business ability of his grandfather. As stated in another article, his two grandfathers were Judge R. N. Read and H. W. Beeson, both of whom were seventh sons. I am told that the widow of Ben F. Read still lives in Mineola. Judge Read was one of the most prominent citizens who ever lived in Houston County and I take great pleasure in perpetuating his memory for the benefit of Houston County people who honor and esteem its history.

THE RICE FAMILY

Joseph Rice, Senior, was born May 24th, 1805. He married Willie Masters, a daughter of Jacob Masters, Senior. As a colonist he was entitled to a league and labor of land, under the Mexican colonization laws. He had a part of this located on the Old San Antonio Road, about five miles northeast of Crockett, and there made his home. He kept a Stagecoach Inn at his log house home and this site is now marked by a granite marker placed there by the Centennial Board of Control. Here he managed a large plantation which was worked by slave labor until the close of the Civil War. His wife was born August 17th, 1809. He died August 11th, 1866 and he and his wife are buried in the Old Rice Cemetery, on his home place.

He and his wife were noted for their hospitality.

He was survived by his wife and the following children: Joseph Jr. who established his home on the Old San Antonio Road, just beyond the home of his father and there raised a large family, many of whom are still living, one, John Rice occupying the old home of his grandfather, known as the Stagecoach Inn. Another known as Shink is living in the Concord neighborhood. A daughter, Willie, married Jim Saxon and resides outside the county; another daughter married Jim Brown and also resides out of the county.

Another son of Joseph Rice, Senior, George, established his home also on the Old San Antonio Road and raised an interest-

ing family, one of his daughters, known as Banie, married Ike Lansford, and died several years ago; another daughter, Willie, married Dr. Ben Elliott and still resides in Crockett. Another daughter, Clara, married Chester Kennedy and they reside at Grapeland, Houston County.

Henry Rice, a son of Joseph Rice, Sr. established his home on the Rusk Road, about five miles northeast of Crockett and his son, Lonnie Rice, still lives near there. Jessie, a daughter of Henry Rice, married Judge John Spence, and still resides with her family in Crockett.

Elizabeth (Betty), a daughter of Joseph Rice, Sr., married Thomas J. Monk, and died many years ago, leaving several children, among them, John Monk, Jim Monk, Frank Monk, Dick Monk, Willie, a daughter, who married Jim Lacy, Beulah, who married Cal Beeson. All the children of Betty Monk are now dead.

Joseph and Willie Rice, Sr. had another daughter, Willie, who married Jeff Dawson, and her children are with us today, including Mrs. Nora Dean, wife of John L. Dean, and Lena, wife of Carlos Robbins, and mother of our County Clerk, J. Dawson Robbins.

Joseph and Willie Rice had a son, John, who died in the Civil War.

The Old Rice Cemetery, located just in front of the Old Stagecoach Inn, is still preserved and holds the dust of many members of the Rice family.

CAPTAIN JOHN T. SMITH

New York may justly be proud of her contribution to Houston County's honor roll of pioneers. On March 5th, 1815 Captain John T. Smith was born in the State of New York and later moved to Georgia, where he served in the Legislature of the State before coming to Texas in 1849 to begin a memorable career as a citizen of the Lone Star State. He served in the Texas Legislature during three sessions in 1866, 1873 and 1874. He died in Austin on February 16th, 1874, while serving in the Legislature and a delegation of Representatives escorted his remains to Crockett for burial. Dr. Frank Rainey, one of his best friends, also served with him in 1874, and at the memorial services held in the Legislative Hall, paid him a high and glowing tribute and accompanied his remains to Crockett. Among other things, Dr. Rainey said: "During the Civil War, he served

in the Confederate Army, and his services proved him to be worthy. He was the head of a family who almost idolized him for his many virtues. One of Texas noblest sons had died. His character was irreproachable.

Captain Smith also served several terms as Chief Justice of Houston County. At one time he operated the steamboat "Ida Reese" on the Trinity River. His family was hardly less distinguished than himself. His oldest daughter, Augusta Louise, first married Isaac Adair, who died while serving in the Confederate Army. She later married J. M. Porter, one of the outstanding citizens of Houston County, who gave his name to the town of Porter Springs. His next oldest daughter, Georgiana, married Captain B. B. Arrington, and they have a number of descendants still living in Crockett. His third daughter, Elizabeth, married B. F. Chamberlain, the father of our fellow-townsmen, B. F. Chamberlain. His fourth daughter, Grace, married Dr. S. T. Beasley, and was the mother of Mrs. W. H. Denny and Stephen T. Beasley. His fifth daughter, Mollie, married I. W. Murchison and she was the mother of Smith and Gaines Murchison. The one son of Captain Smith was Dr. John B. Smith, an eminent physician, who also served as Representative in the Texas Legislature.

ZACHARIAH STIDHAM

Zachariah Stidham was not only a farmer, but he was in the habit of hauling freight from Houston for Crockett Merchants. He was also a soldier in the Confederate Army. I have in my possession a letter from Mr. J. C. Ingram of Groveton, Texas, in which he stated: "I have my grandfather's furlough, issued to him in October, 1863, by Captain White, but signed by Z. Stidham, acting commander of the company at Tarkington Prairie. I find this same Zachariah Stidham serving as a private soldier in a Georgia Company in the Indian wars in 1836."

I also have in my possession a letter from Miss Harriet Smither, archivist in the State Library at Austin, as follows:

October 1, 1835.

"Z. Steadham, private, enlisted July 1861, in Captain J. R. Barbee's Reserve Company, Beat No. 11, Houston County, 11th Brigade, Texas Militia."

Then I find from old records in my possession that he married a daughter of George Hallmark, Adeline Hallmark, and she