

rkb 8-14-67 with suggested changes by DP

Location: 3-1/2 Miles West of Longview City Limits at
Intersection of IH 20 and FM 2087

18" x 28" Official Texas Historical Marker
Gregg County

1628

OLD FREDONIA TOWNSITE*

FOUNDED BY HADEN EDWARDS, A
LAND GRANTEE WHO CONTRACTED IN
1825 WITH MEXICAN GOVERNMENT
TO ESTABLISH 800 FAMILIES OF
SETTLERS IN EAST TEXAS. A LATER
MISUNDERSTANDING WITH MEXICO
CAUSED HIM TO ORGANIZE FAMOUS
FREDONIAN REBELLION, AND FLEE
TO THE U.S. IN 1827 IN FAILURE.

TOWN OF FREDONIA PROSPERED,
HOWEVER. IT WAS IMPORTANT FERRY
CROSSING AND RIVER PORT. HAD 40
OR 50 BUILDINGS, INCLUDING HOMES,
3 WAREHOUSES (MAINLY FOR COTTON),
AND A BRICK KILN. AFTER THE CIVIL
WAR, POST OFFICE WAS GIVEN UP.
BYPASSING BY RAILROAD CAUSED
ABANDONMENT OF TOWN ABOUT 1870.**

(1967)***

Incise on Base: ERECTED BY CHRISTIAN REINHARDT, SR., SOCIETY, CHILDREN
OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

- * 3/4" lettering
- ** 1/2" lettering
- *** 1/4" lettering

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TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

APPROVED
9-19-67
TL

Compiled by Dr. Newman Black
Mem. of Gregg Co. Hist. Soc. Comm.

FREDONIA TOWNSITE

1628

Among the many communities which predated the city of Longview and within the boundaries of present-day Gregg County was the town of Fredonia. Although, perhaps not as significant in contribution to the development of the towns of Longview, Kilgore, and Gladewater, it, nevertheless, was associated by name with a segment of the romantic aspect of the history of Texas and Longview. All of us are familiar with the name Fredonia: it has been in use in Texas since 1826. In the original plat of the town of Longview this name was given to one of the ⁵ North-South streets of the business area. Through the years it has been used in this county in the names of various business houses, roads, a river crossing, ferry, bridge, and a hill.

The word Fredonia certainly is not a new word to our language - coming from Old English with a Greek-Latin suffix - but it was introduced to Texas by Haden* Edwards. We are acquainted with this Texas Empresario and his ill-advised and ill-fated Republic of Fredonia and the Fredonian Rebellion of 1826. It would ~~be~~ ^{be} improper to discuss the development of the town of Fredonia without some background discussion of Haden Edwards. The Fredonia of Rusk (now Gregg) Co. is not to be confused with the former town of the same name in Mason County (1855).

Edwards was born in Stafford Co., Virginia, on August 12, 1779. He received a liberal education, married Susanna Beall, and began to accumulate considerable means. Omitting other biographic information; Haden Edwards acquired a contract from Mexico to establish 800 families in East Texas in the Nacogdoches area bordering on the Neutral Ground.¹ The story of his failure in this venture and the subsequent revoking of his contract and

* NOTE:
DR. RNR
prefers the
spelling Haden
I

(2)

his departure to the other side of the Sabine is well known to us. It was of considerable significance to the turn of events in all Texas. Although Edwards actually did not comply ^{with} the terms of the Mexican Contract, it must be said that his actions resulted more out of his lack of diplomacy and knowledge of the Mexican sensitivity as well as his lack of understanding of his own position and authority, rather than of his ideals and integrity. At any rate, he later returned to Texas (probably after the Texas Revolution) and was issued a patent on Feb. 10, 1843, for a league (4,428.4 acres) of land in Rusk County. This was about a month after the formation of Rusk Co. from Nacogdoches Co. Shortly after this the townsite of Fredonia was platted into lots and blocks adjoining the West bank of the Sabine and within this league of land.

This man who had had such an effect on the early Texas colonists died in Nacogdoches on August 14, 1849, at the age of seventy-eight years and was survived by six of his thirteen children. Apparently time and perhaps the constructive activities of one of his sons proved to Texans that his character and intentions were important good, for today his name is preserved in Texas in the naming of the Edwards Plateau and Edwards County. (The origin of the name of Edwardville, now known as Peatown, is from the ~~absent~~ previously mentioned son: Haden Harrison Edwards.)

Very little documentary evidence of the town and positive location is known. ((explanation of the writer's search; i.e., courthouses, documents, books, maps, and personal interviews; that someone has said he has seen or known of a copy of the Plat but that the writer has been unable to find it.)) However, there are other Deeds of Records which establish the fact of the existence of the Fredonia townsite (Book A, Deed Records of Rusk County). The Deed Record Books "B, C, D, and E" of Rusk County were destroyed in the devastating fire at Henderson in 1877.

Insert in
Paragraph
p. 3 4/11/16

(3)

Colonization of Texas began to increase following the Texan victory at San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, but was ~~markedly~~ not as rapid in this section of East Texas due to the trouble that had been growing between the Indians and the whites. The Indians had early obtained squatters rights to the land from the Spanish authorities. In May, 1839, a letter was found in the possession of Manuel Flores exposing plans by the Mexican government to enlist the Cherokees against the Texas settlers.⁵ (Flores was agent to General Vicente Filisola at Matamoros, was an active member of the "Cordova Rebellion of 1838".)⁶ The discovery of this letter along with several massacres brought about a determination to expel the Cherokees from Texas. The Battle of the Neches, fought on July 15-16, 1839, a few miles west of Tyler, in present-day Henderson County virtually ended the Indian troubles⁷ and settlement of this East Texas area began again.

Hazen Edwards, as recorded in Book A, p. 314, Deed Records of Park Co., was granted a license ~~for~~ to operate a ferry on July 7, 1843. He then ~~gave~~ assigned to David Wood on February 19, 1846 a lease (permit) by the Republic of Texas to operate a public ferry between the banks of the Sabine River near where John H. Cavery (sp?) now lives at a point known then as "Cotten's (sp?) Old Crossing", [This, subsequently was known as "Fredonia Crossing"] for a period of 10 years. Upon the expiration of the period of time for which the license was granted to H. Edwards, the Legislature of Texas, by an act approved April 13, 1871, Vol. 6, p. 1278, Cammel's Laws of Texas, granted the authority to J. H. Jones and Henry Miller to continue to operate the public ferry across the Sabine River, from or near the town of Fredonia, in the County of Rusk, and that they shall have the right to make their landing on any point on the opposite bank of said river in Upshur County. J. H. Jones and Henry Miller assigned the right to operate the ferry to William Moore, who operated

(4)

the ferry known as Moore's Ferry until the County of Gregg, in May 1884, Book B, p.193, Minutes of the Commissioners Court, contracted to build a public highway bridge across the Sabine river near the ferry and adjoining the boundary line of the townsite of Fredonia. The bridge was known as the Fredonia Bridge. This well-remembered bridge was used for about 70 years and until the completion of the present bridge on the old Longview - Kilgore Road.

In ~~the~~ the Deed Records Book F, Rusk County several items are recorded within the town of Fredonia:

August 25, 1851: * pp. 272-3 Sale of lots 3 and 5, block number 11,.....to 5th street to Isabela N Murchisen, by H.H. Edwards, administrator for the deceased Haden Edwards.

Feb. 4, 1852: p. 622 Sale ~~ka~~ of 3 fractional blocks in the Southwest corner in the town of Fredonia; fronting South on Border Street, Northeast on 11th Street, and Northwest on Jackson Street forming a triangle as seen on map by I. N. Wells. -sold to James N. Waide on July 3, 1851 by H.H. Edwards

In the 1857 Texas Almanac, the U.S. Post Off. Dept. reported 22 localities in Rusk Co. with Post Offices. One of these was Fredonia.

The effects of the civil war and reconstruction hurt Fredonia as it did all of the South. The U.S. P. O. Dept. did not list Fredonia as having a Post Office, although New Danville and 12 other localities in ~~Rusk County~~ Rusk County in 1870. (?)

By the time the R.R. reached Longview, Fredonia was almost abandoned and ceased to be a town.

Recent actions of the Texas Legislature concerning navigation of the Sabine may well make it possible one day to again stand on Fredonia Hill and watch barges slip quietly down the Sabine as they once did over a century ago.

(5)

Comments;

Sabine once navigable for over 300 miles; more water flows from it than any other Texas River. Early emigrants noted that although most Texas rivers, ^{and} rather narrow they were unusually deep.

Wallings Ferry ^{then named Camden} more used than Fredonia Ferry. It had, was on the first telegraph line (183 1854) in Texas: (Shreveport, Henderson, Rusk, Crockett, Houston, and Galveston.)³.

Wallings Ferry area was settled in the 1830's. One of the Wallings's, Jesse, fought in the battle of San Jacinto.⁴

Comments by W. R. (Bill) Moore: ⁵

about 3 w. warehouses (mostly cotton)
graveyard had about 50 graves
40 - 50 buildings, including houses
brick made there
some old roads still seen

Jesse James had crossed ferry more than once, tipping his father \$1:00.

Graybill Creek junction with River had fjord.⁷

Moore moved away when he was 8 or 9.
Ferry was where present bridge is located.

Condition today:

FOOTNOTES:

1. The Handbook of Texas Vol. I. p. 546
2. Levy, R. B. History of Greer County (manuscript)
3. ibid.
4. same as 1.
5. Winfrey A. History of Rusk County, Texas p. 14
6. same as 1. see Flores.
7. same as 5.
8. Winfrey A. History of Rusk County, Texas p. 14
9. ibid p. 32
10. Moore W. R. (Bill) personal communications in 56-57.

--History written by Dr. Norman Black
member Gregg County Historical
Survey Committee

*Does this refer to town of Fredonia
approx. 1/2 mi*

Longview Morning News

FULL NEWS SERVICE OF AP AND UPI LONGVIEW, TEXAS, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1968 c

Fredonia Hill To Be Marked

Old Fredonia Hill, and the Fredonia townsite which was just south of this high promontory on the Sabine River bank, are being commemorated with an official Texas historical marker with dedication ceremonies set for Saturday, Feb. 17, at 1:30 p.m.

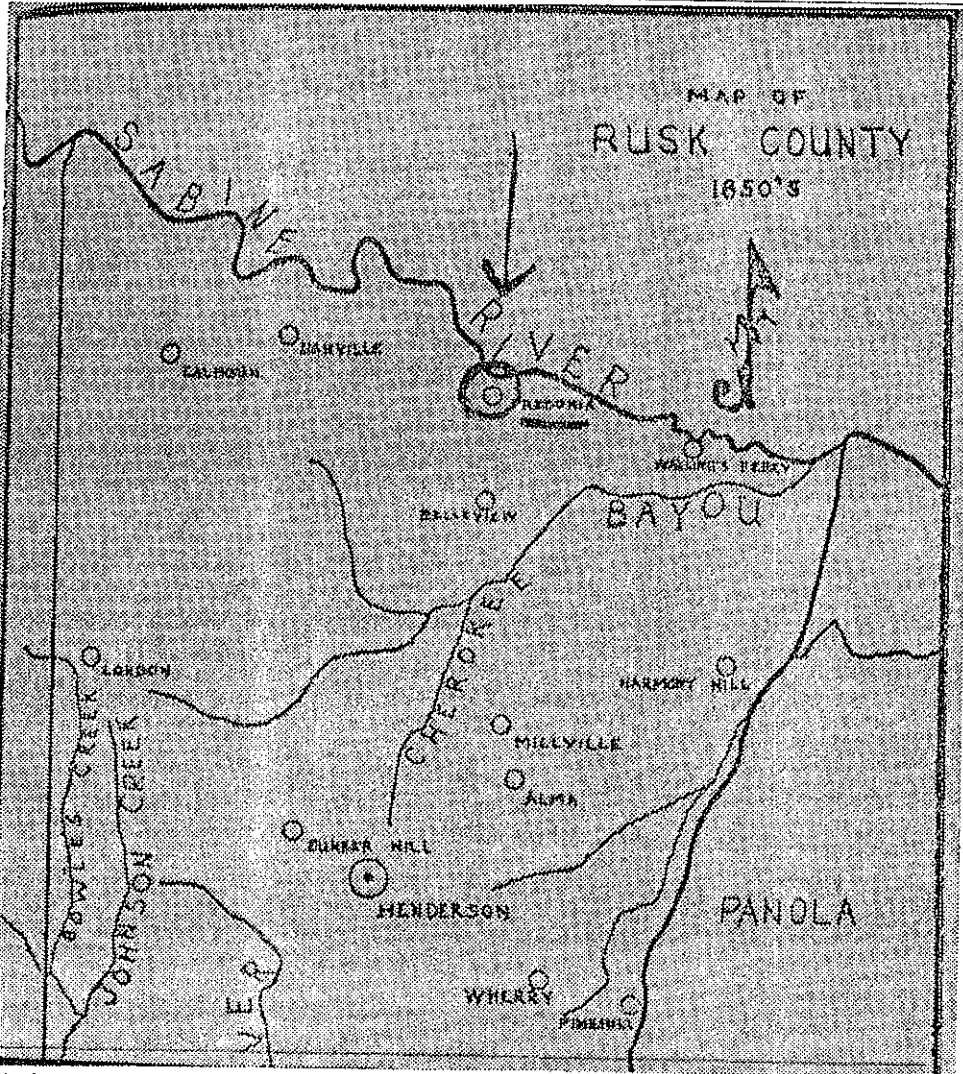
The marker is being presented by the Christian Reinhardt Sr. Society, Children of the American Revolution, in cooperation with the Gregg County Historical Survey Committee. Historical data required for official approval of the marker was secured through research done by Dr. Norman Black.

The site is on FM 2087, just off Interstate 20 where it crosses the Longview-Kilgore highway. This is one of the highest points in the county and from atop the historic old hill, famous for skirmishes between Indians and early settlers, there

is a panoramic view of many miles of countryside. This was an important river crossing with a public ferry operating under a grant made by the Texas Legislature in 1871. Commerce by land and water at this point resulted in the development of the Fredonia townsite.

"Fredonia" is a familiar name in Texas history. In the original plat of the town of Longview, this name was given to one of the north-south streets of the business area. The name was introduced to Texas by Haden Edwards whose ill-fated Republic of Fredonia and the Fredonian Rebellion of 1826 are well known parts of Texas history.

Fredonia townsite was located in what at that time was Rusk County, an area later to be included with a section of (See MARKER, Page 2-C)



MARKER SITE — Location of the Fredonia Townsite on the banks of the Sabine River is shown on the map of what was at that time a section of Rusk County and what was later made a part of Gregg County. This historic place is being commemorated with an official

marker, presented by the local society of the DAR, in cooperation with the Gregg County Historical Survey Committee. Formal dedication ceremonies for the marker will be held Feb. 17.

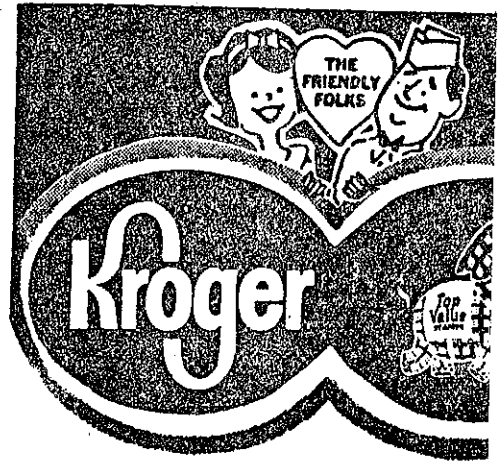
ANNUAL---

(Continued From Page 1)

Future Teachers will serve as guides for the speakers. All sessions are held in the regular classrooms.

The following persons will serve as speakers: William E. McReynolds, accounting; T. D. Delk and Jack Cawthon, aerospace; Luis R. Celerier, art and advertising; Dr. Myron McCarter, agriculture and veterinary

medicine; Eddi Walker and diesel engine Allen, architect; Air Force Sgt. 1st cl. Jamboys and girls; sky, banking and Michael S. careers. Mrs. Bonnie Hendrix, business; bert Moore, building; Marvin Edward, chemical engi



DOUBLE TOP VALUE STAMPS TUESDAY
WITH \$2.50 PURCHASE OR MORE
(EXCLUDING CIGARETTES)

ELLIOTT---

(Continued From Page 1)

Federal Bureau of Investigation in such assignment as riot suppression, insurrection, man-hunts or an area hit hard by hurricane, tornado, flood or other storms, to prevent looting.

Ranger Elliott "ranges" the five-county area of Gregg, Panola, Harrison, Marion and Cass, under Company B, headquartered in Dallas and commanded by Capt. R. A. Crowder.

But one thing Elliott particularly likes about his job is that he isn't limited to the boundaries of his five counties when he is investigating a crime.

"I can go anywhere that a 'lead' on solving a case takes me — even into areas outside the Texas border if necessary," he explained.

To be a good criminal investigator requires constant use of imagination — "fitting the information together" to the whole picture. Glenn Elliott says this is one of the enjoyable challenges in his work, a challenge that keeps him on his toes.

AN AVID and regular reader of crime news in the daily newspaper, Ranger Elliott explains his constancy in this respect is due, not to a relish of things morbid, but in a search for "leads" or evidence to use



JOHN LEER

BRANIFF---

(Continued From Page 1)

the Harvard Business School Advance Management Association in New York. He served with the U.S. Marines in World War II.

He and his wife, the former JoAnn Smoyer of Allentown, Pa., now make their home in Dallas. They are the parents of three children, Wendy, Jeri and Kerri.

make weekly written reports to Col. Homer Garrison in Austin, head of the

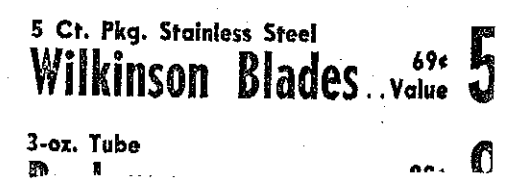
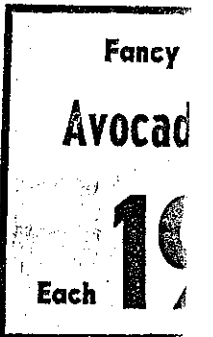
MARKER---

(Continued From Page 1)

Upshur County to form the present Gregg County boundaries.

Records show that the ferry served as the only means of river crossing until the county of Gregg, in 1884, contracted to build a bridge, adjoining the boundary line of the townsite of Fredonia. This well remembered bridge was known as the "Fredonia Bridge" and was used for about 70 years until the completion of the present structure on the old Longview-Kilgore road.

A cordial invitation has been extended the public to attend the dedication ceremonies on Feb. 17, by the local society of the DAR, which will be in charge of the colorful program. Lee Lawrence of Tyler, president of the Texas Historical Foundation, will be one of the speakers. Others participating will be representatives from the Texas State Highway Department; Boy Scout Troop 221 and its scoutmaster, W. L. Minor; Gregg County Historical Survey Committee; and members of the DAR. Mrs. S. A. Parker, member of the Capt. Wm. Young Chapter, DAR which sponsors the youth organization, is general chairman of the dedication ceremonies. Mrs. Ben Cook is DAR senior president.





FREDONIA HILL MARKER DEDICATED — An official Texas historical marker, donated by the Christian Reinhardt Sr. Society, Children of The American Revolution of Longview, was dedicated Saturday to commemorate Fredonia Hill and the pioneer Fredonia townsite at the present Sabine River crossing of Farm Road 287 south of Longview. The townsite predated Longview and Kilgore, being established in 1826 by Haden Edwards at

an important ferry crossing on the river. In the photo, left to right; Lura Cook, Longview, president of the CAR society; Mrs. Paul Belding, Gregg County Historical Survey Committee chairman; Lee Lawrence, Tyler, Texas Historical Foundation president and featured speaker at the dedication; and Mrs. S. A. Parker, in general charge of the dedication. (STAFF PHOTO).

SITE OF FREDONIA, GREGG COUNTY, TEXAS

Revision of 1957 Paper for

THE HANDBOOK OF TEXAS

September 6, 1990

Norman W. Black, D.D.S.
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
(214) 757-2261

SITE OF FREDONIA, GREGG COUNTY, TEXAS

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FREDONIA TOWNSITE

Fredonia was a town in north Rusk County on the south bank of the Sabine River. The location is now in central Gregg County on Farm Road 2087 at the Sabine River, four and one-half miles from the Gregg County Courthouse in Longview. Interstate Highway 20 traverses the site in an east-west direction.

Many communities in Gregg County predated the city of Longview but none contributed more to the early commercial and population growth than did Fredonia.* It was unique in this respect because of river traffic to and from the Gulf of Mexico, especially New Orleans. The town was formed by Haden Edwards but the date of the founding is unclear. Edwards printed a broadside dated November 14, 1839, advertising "2,000 lots for sale,"** although it was not until February 10, 1843 that Edwards was issued a patent for a league of land in Rusk County in which the town of Fredonia was located.¹ Five months later he was issued a license to operate a ferry across the Sabine.

As Haden Edwards chose the name Fredonia for his Republic it would seem only natural for him to use it for a town he founded. The name Fredonia has a romantic association in the Kilgore-Longview area of Gregg County. It was, and is, used to describe various business houses, a road, streets, river crossing, ferry, bridge, and a hill. The word Fredonia is not a new word in our language, coming from Old English with a Greek - Latin suffix, but it was introduced to Texas by Haden Edwards in 1826.²

* The Fredonia of Rusk (site now in Gregg) County is not to be confused with the former town of the same name in Mason County (1855).

** See a copy of this broadside in the appendix. An original is in the Steen Library, Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, Texas.

Travel to and from Fredonia was accomplished by roads north and south to Gilmer and Nacogdoches. The north road crossed the Shreveport-Tyler Road (Red Rock Road) near Pine Tree. It was a long time before a direct east-west route was established. One had to go either north or south before reaching a road going east and west.* Later the Longview-Fredonia road, beginning in Longview as Fredonia Street, was established, as was the Wallings Ferry Road.

Although located midway between the future towns of Kilgore and Longview, Fredonia cannot be considered the antecedent of either city because each one had other more directly related predecessors. Nevertheless, it can be presumed that residents of Fredonia moved to or near these two towns as developments doomed the existence of Fredonia.

The controversial former empresario's life should be briefly examined as history has neglected him after the ill-fated Fredonian Republic. Edwards was born in Stafford County, Virginia, August 12, 1771. He received a liberal education, married Susanna Beall, and began to accumulate considerable means. Omitting other biographical information, it is known that Haden Edwards acquired a contract from Mexico to establish eight hundred families in East Texas in the Nacogdoches area bordering on the Neutral Ground.³ The story of his failure in this venture and the subsequent revoking of his contract and his departure to the other side of the Sabine is well known. It was of considerable significance to the turn of events in all of Texas. Although Edwards actually did not comply with the terms of the Mexican contract, it must be said that his actions resulted more from his lack of diplomacy and knowledge of the Mexican

* See map in appendix.

sensitivity as well as from his lack of understanding of his own position and authority, rather than a lack of integrity.⁴ At any rate, he later returned to Texas and was issued a patent on February 10, 1843, for a league (4,428.4 ac.) of land in Rusk County.^{*1} This was about a month after the formation of Rusk County from Nacogdoches County. Shortly after this the townsite of Fredonia was platted into lots and blocks adjoining the west^{**} bank of the Sabine and within this league of land.¹

This man, who had such an effect on the early Texas colonists, died in Nacogdoches August 14, 1849, at the age of seventy-eight years. He was survived by six of his thirteen children.⁵ Apparently time and perhaps the constructive activities of one of his sons, Haden Harrison Edwards, proved to Texans that his character and intentions were good, for today his name is perpetuated in Texas in the names of Edwards Plateau and Edwards County. Originally the community in Gregg County called Pea-town was named Edwardsville.⁶

Very little documentary evidence of the town has been found. No plat of Fredonia can be found nor one showing the "2,000 lots" advertised in Edwards' 1839 broadside. Outlines of the town can be seen on early maps of the Edwards league.^{***} There are deeds of record which establish the existence of Fredonia and at least fifty-five documents from 1851 to 1883 in the Rusk County courthouse refer to the town of Fredonia.⁷ The Deed

* William Roark surveyed this league in 1838. Roark sold the land to Henry Hoover on June 1 or 7, 1839 who immediately sold it to Edward Teel on June 18, 1839. Teel sold the league to Haden Edwards on August 12, 1839.

** To a person unfamiliar with descriptions of the "banks" of the Sabine River often the "east bank" and the "north bank" are the same; likewise, the "west - north bank".

*** See map in appendix.

Record Books B, C, D, and E of Rusk County were destroyed in the devastating fire at Henderson in 1877.¹ It is, however, possible to reconstruct a very small portion of Fredonia by studying various maps and documents on file. Fredonia had the shape of a trapazoid, with present Farm Road 2087 (the Old Longview-Kilgore Road) forming the western boundary and was named Jackson Street. The south boundary was named Border Street. No road exists; however, Border Street intersected Jackson Street at a point directly across the road from the entrance to the old motorcycle club. For many years members of this club used the adjacent hill, traveling westward, as a test of their riders and machines: a local landmark. Present Farm Road 2011, although a very old road, because of its peculiar direction (northwest-southeast) is not likely to have been a named street in Fredonia. Also, this farm road was altered as it parted 2087 when the interstate highway was constructed in the 1960's. However, this road, Farm Road 2011, could very well be Eleventh Street, as deducted from Rusk County Deed Records: "...Sale of three fractional blocks in the Southwest corner in the town of Fredonia; fronting South on Border Street, Northeast on 11th Street, and Northwest on Jackson Street forming a triangle as seen on map by J. M. Wells".⁸ This tract was sold to James M. Waide on July 3, 1851 by H. H. Edwards.⁹ Another street is named on pages 272 and 273 of Book F: "...Sale of lots 3 and 5, block 11...to 5th street to Isabella N. Murchison, by H. H. Edwards, administrator for the deceased Haden Edwards", recorded August 25, 1851.¹⁰ The northern boundary, a street,¹ paralleled the general course of the Sabine River and the eastern boundary was parallel to the western boundary.

It is not known when river travel began but the first steamship to

reach Fredonia was the "Buffalo" in 1848.^{*11} At one time the Sabine was navigable for three hundred miles but travel was not regular nor necessarily year-round: it was said to have been "informal".¹² The steamboats had very shallow drafts, no more than eighteen inches, with the boilers on the decks which resulted in many fires and accidents. They often went aground in shallow water and on these occasions they would either have to turn around and go back downstream or wait until upstream rains raised the river level. The captains always kept themselves informed as to the river conditions, though communications were poor. The boats were equipped with "snag-cutting" booms, winches, and other means with which to extricate themselves from river bank and bottom troubles.¹³

An alternate route for river traffic was used when the Sabine was not completely navigable to Fredonia. Shipments could be sent up the Red River, through Caddo Lake to Port Caddo, the official port of entry to Texas in this area, then freighted by wagon to Fredonia.¹⁴ This, however, meant an overland trip of more than fifty miles.

An interesting method of identifying each shipment was used: a unique monogram of the customer's initials was fixed to the items to be shipped: L. A. identified Lemuel Adams, R G for J. R. Grace, and A D H for A. D. Hutchins.^{**}

By the 1850's Fredonia had developed into a thriving town. In 1956, I was introduced to Mr. W. R. "Bill" Moore, who was born in Fredonia.^{***}

* The "Old Buffalo" was owned by A. L. Vaeuter, J. P. Dickson, and Captain Bob Patton who also captained the ship.

** See list in appendix.

*** Mr. Bill Moore was born April 14, 1875 and died June 10, 1962 (87 years). His last days were spent in the Gregg County Home for the Aged. For years he shared a small house with his half-brother, Jeff Moore, within a few hundred yards of his birthplace in Fredonia. He was admitted to Laird Memorial Hospital in Kilgore four days prior to his death.

Several times in 1956 and 1957 Mr. Moore would guide me over the townsite of Fredonia where little remained to remind one a community once existed here. Mr. Moore was the son of the last operator of the Fredonia or Moore's Ferry.* Mr. Moore told me Fredonia had three warehouses, principally for cotton, forty to fifty buildings including houses, a post office, and a cemetery with about fifty graves.** Brick was made in Fredonia and a few could be seen in the area. There was a fjord at the mouth of Graybill Creek about three-fourths mile downstream in the Eleanor Bradley survey.¹⁵ Mr. Moore fondly pointed out the site of the house in which he was born, a large tree being nearby.

Fredonia had a post office on two occasions and the reason for the interruption is presently unknown. The first post office was opened February 24, 1849 and closed September 20, 1855. The last post office opened August 22, 1856 and closed forever March 17, 1859. The post masters in order of their service were: James H. Thompson, Isiah Sellers, James M. Waide, J. S. Wood, Sanders F. Walker, and Waide served again as the last.¹⁶

An apparently successful general merchandise store operated in Fredonia as evidenced by a large number of customers listed on ledger sheets of "Waide and Wilson". Most of their inventory came up the Sabine from New Orleans.*** A very wide variety of items was sold at this store, from such commodities as combs of many types to fine champagne.¹⁷ This firm, in

* Mr. William Moore, a confederate veteran, was later known in Longview as "Uncle Bill" Moore. He was born January 1830 and died March 13, 1913 (from Confederate Veteran, July 1913, p. 350). This information is from a letter to the author from Dolly Northcutt, December 4, 1965.

** Mr. Moore showed the cemetery to the author in 1956. All remains had long been removed to unknown, to Mr. Moore, cemeteries. At that time the excavations were about two feet deep and twelve in number. Thirty-four years later these graves were just regularly spaced shallow depressions.

*** Examples of the merchandise can be seen on a ledger sheet in appendix.

all probability, was the first retail establishment in present day Gregg County, having been founded by J. M. Waide. Later, in the early 1850's the partnership of Waide and Wilson was formed. For some reason the partnership had been dissolved by 1858, according to correspondence with a wholesaler in New Orleans.¹⁸

Some financial difficulties must have been developing in Fredonia, or at least at the James M. Waide store, because one of the New Orleans wholesale suppliers complained about the delays in Mr. Waide's remittances, which had not occurred in previous transactions.¹⁸ Whether the fact that this period was on the eve of the War Between the States had anything to do with this delay is just a matter of conjecture. More likely, competition probably was developing in nearby communities.

Fredonia's advantage was that of having good transportation by means of a river. The location already had a well-known river crossing and this was also an important factor. Haden Edwards, as recorded in Book A, p. 314, Deed Records of Rusk County, was granted a license to operate a ferry on July 7, 1843. He soon assigned to David Wood, on February 19, 1846, a lease (permit) by the Republic of Texas "...to operate a public ferry between the banks of the Sabine River near where John H. Cavery now lives at a point known as Cotton's (Cottin's or Cotten's) Old Crossing".¹ This subsequently became known as Fredonia Crossing. Upon the expiration of the period of time for which the license was granted to Edwards, the Legislature of Texas, in 1871, granted the authority to J. H. Jones and Henry Miller "...to continue to operate the public ferry across the Sabine River, from or near the town of Fredonia, in the County of Rusk, and that they shall have the right to make their landing on any point on the opposite bank of said river in Upshur County."* Jones and Miller assigned the right

to operate the ferry to William Moore until the Commissioners Court of Gregg County, in May 1884 contracted "...to build a public highway bridge across the Sabine River (one of the two "Old Iron Bridges" in Gregg County) near the ferry and adjoining the boundary line of the townsite of Fredonia".^{10*} The bridge was known as the Fredonia Bridge. This well-remembered bridge was used for seventy-one years.^{**} and until the completion of the present bridge in 1955 on the Old Longview-Kilgore Highway, Farm Road 2087.

The effects of the War Between the States and reconstruction hurt Fredonia as it did all of the South. The U. S. Post Office Department, although listing New Danville and twelve other localities in Rusk County, did not list Fredonia in 1870. By the time the railroad reached Longview (as early as 1872) Fredonia was almost abandoned and ceased to be a town.

* Bill Moore said the ferry, for a short time operated out of the mouth of Rabbit Creek, which is about three hundred yards upstream on the, then, Rusk County side of the Sabine.

** A contract had been let by the Commissioners Court of Gregg County to dismantle the old iron bridge but "it fell in the river" before this could be done.

Norman W. Black, D.D.S.
417 Mobberly Ave.
Longview, Texas 75602
September 5, 1990

END NOTES

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2. Gammel's Laws of Texas, Vol. 1, pp. 109-110, "Fredonia Declaration of Independence".
3. Handbook of Texas, Texas State Historical Association, 1952, Vol. 1, p. 546.
4. Wortham, Louis J., A History of Texas, Wortham - Molyneaux Co., Ft. Worth, Texas, 1924, Vol. 1. pp. 216-221.
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6. Levy, op. cit., p. 13.
7. List in author's possession.
8. Deed Records, Rusk County, Book F, Feb. 4, 1852, p. 622.
9. Deed Records, op. cit., July 3, 1851, p. 622.
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12. Dahmer, Fred, Uncertain, Texas, 1990, personal communication.
13. Dahmer, op. cit., 1986, personal communication.
14. Waide & Wilson, ledger sheets, 1851-1859, in possession of Mrs. Barton Griffin, Longview, Texas.
15. Moore, W. R. "Bill", Gregg County, Texas, 1956, personal communication.
16. Swiley, Mrs. T. W., Longview, Texas, Oct. 12, 1965, personal communication. Mrs. Swiley read this to the author from a letter from Mr. Grover C. Ramsey to Mrs. Swiley.
17. Waide & Wilson, op. cit., Nov. 24, 1853.
18. Waide & Wilson, op. cit., June 17, 1858.

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- Dahmer, Fred, Uncertain, Texas, 1986, 1990, personal communications.
- Gammel, "Gammel's Laws of Texas".
- Levy, Richard B., "History of the Creation of Gregg County", n.d., deduced to have been written in 1942, typescript in Longview Public Library.
- Moore, W. R. "Bill", Gregg County, 1956-1957, personal communications.
- Rusk County Deed Records, Rusk Co. Courthouse, Henderson, Texas.
- Swiley, Mr. T. W., Longview, Texas, Oct. 12, 1965, personal communications.
- Texas State Historical Association, "The Handbook of Texas", three vols., Austin, Texas, 1952.
- Waide & Wilson, ledger sheets, letters, Fredonia, Texas, 1851-1859. Originals in possession of Mrs. Barton Griffin, Longview, Texas.
- Weir, Captain Bob, "Early Navigation of the Sabine", Times Clarion, Longview, Texas, n.d., Dec. 16,
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TERMS OF SALE FOR THE TOWNS OF
FRIDDONIA & COTTON-PLANT,
LYING ON THE SABINE RIVER.

THE first on the South, the latter on the North side of said River, about forty miles apart by water, being the two upper sites on said River as depots for the most extensive and valuable section of all Texas, embracing that extensive and valuable country lately occupied by the Northern Indians, and a more extensive country of the same quality and description adjoining. The lands are inexhaustable as has been proven by forty years constant cultivation in corn without diminution of production. Its health is not equaled by any section of North America in the same latitude, and well watered with the purest water. Here the white-man can labor and retain his vigor and health, as in the more northern climes. Nothing can prevent those sites becoming the Cincinnati's of Texas, having a more extensive and richer country to support them.

I flatter myself from an intimate knowledge of the settlement of the whole western part of the United States, I have gained a thorough acquaintance with the necessary requisites in establishing populous Commercial Towns; accordingly selected the above sites at an early period, believing them to be the best in the country. The Sabine River if not already acknowledged by all,—soon will be,—to be the best navigable stream in Texas. Each town contains

TWO THOUSAND LOTS,

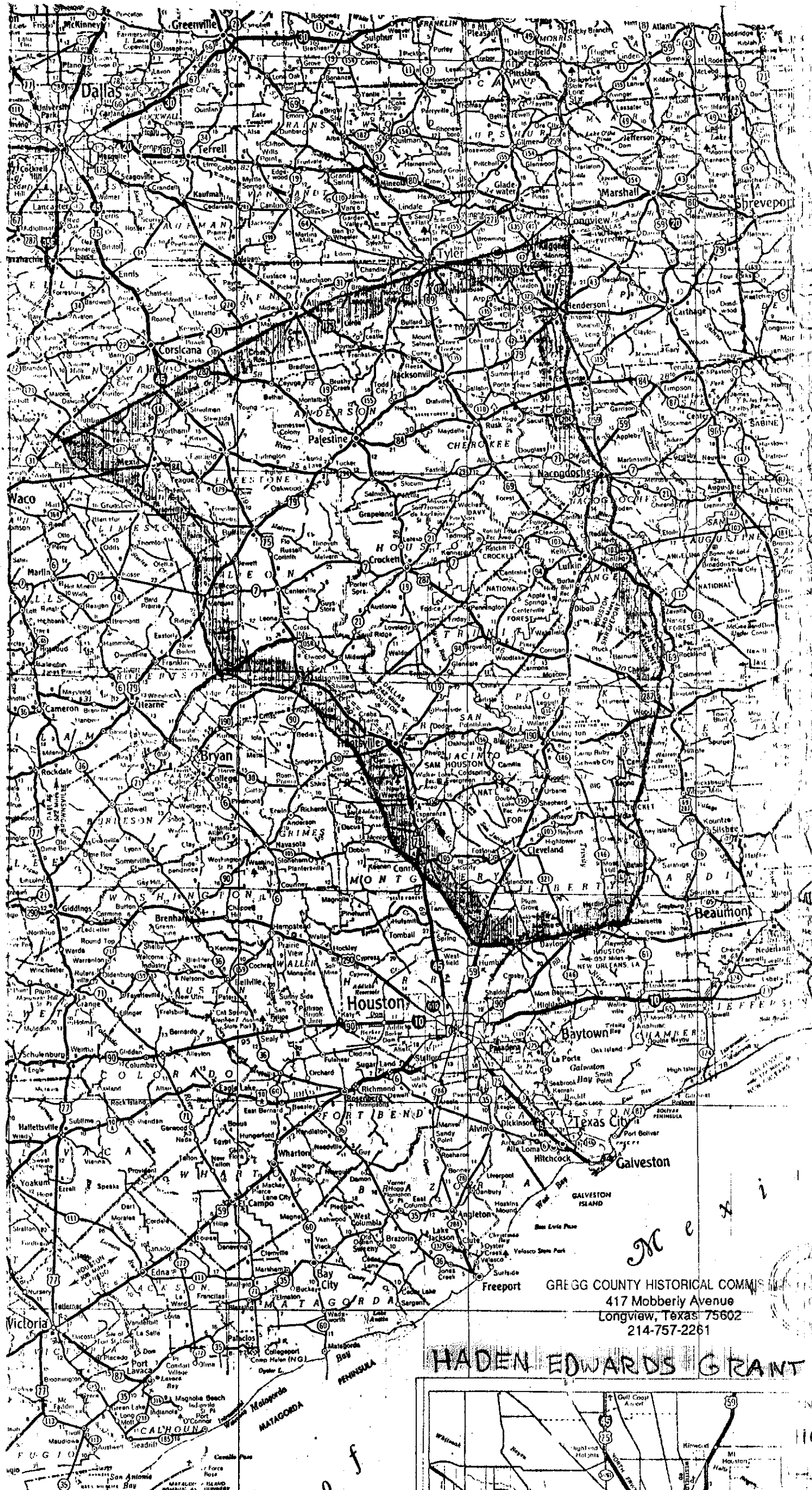
making FOUR HUNDRED SHARES IN EACH, of FIVE LOTS to the share. Price of shares **One Hundred Dollars** IN GOOD MONEY, one fourth in hand, the balance in one, two, and three years, with ten per cent interest from maturity until paid; or one hundred dollars in genuine Texas treasury notes paid in hand. Any one purchasing ten or more shares shall have a deduction of ten per cent. Thus for **THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS, GOOD MONEY**, at the present rate of exchange, a man may secure **FIFTY LOTS**, one of which in three years, will sell for more than the cost of all. The front and main streets in each town are one hundred feet wide—Lots sixty by one hundred and twenty. Four hundred choice lots will be selected in each town to be drawn by ballot for the four hundred shares; afterwards the balance of the lots in the same manner giving four to each share.

The drawing will take place in Nacogdoches on the 15th of June next, under the superintendance of Gen. Rusk, Gen. Douglass, Col. Frost Thorn, Judge Hart, Charles S. Taylor Esq. Col. Raguet, Adolphus Stern Esq. and John S. Roberts, or any two or more of them. A general Warrantee Deed will be given immediately after the drawing, to those who have paid the full amount, and to the balance upon full payment.

You will wonder, no doubt, why I offer this property so low. If I could be placed back forty years with a prospect of reaching my present age, not less than one hundred dollars would purchase a lot in either town; but as my race is nearly run, I only feel solicitous for the improvement of the country, and not self-interest.

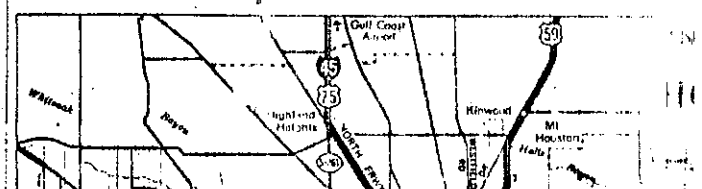
Nacogdoches November 14 1839.

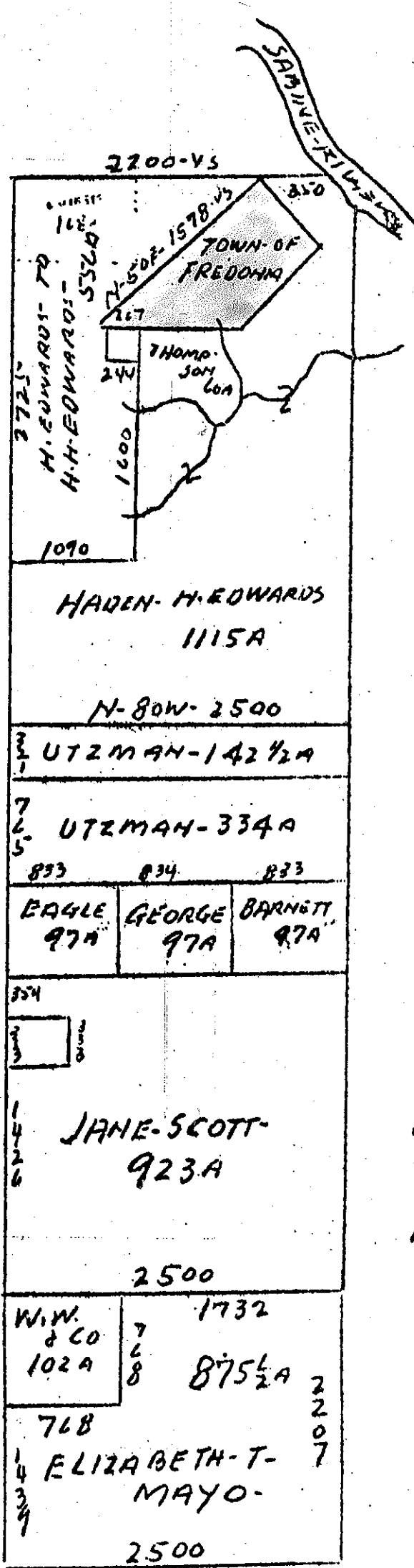
HADEN EDWARDS.



GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Moberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
214-757-2261

HADEN EDWARDS GRANT

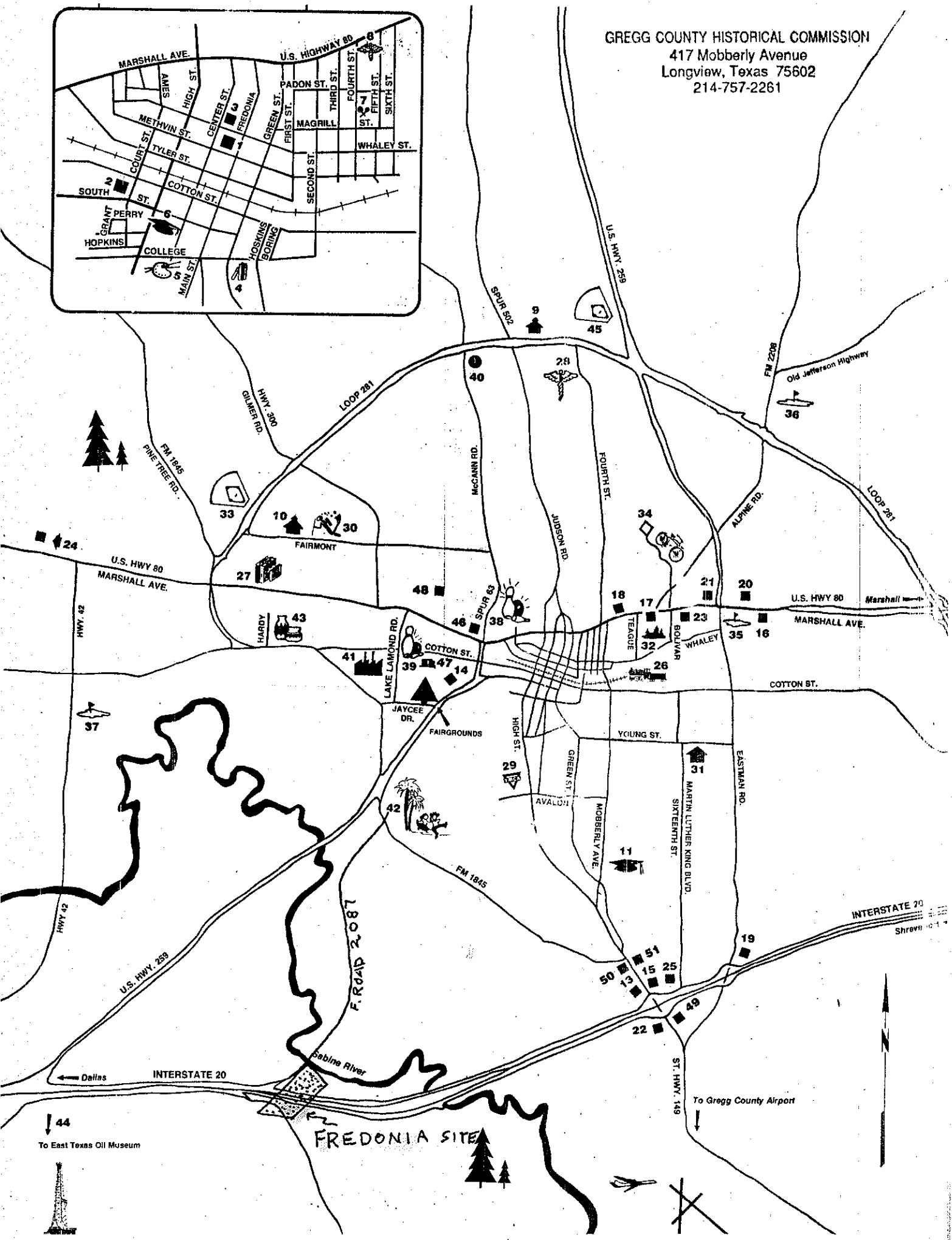
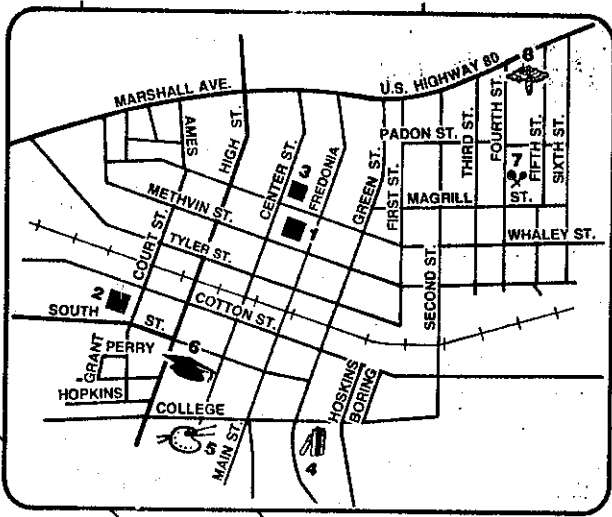




PLAT OF
 SALES AND
 SUBDIVISIONS OF
 HADEN EDWARDS
 LEAGUE. FILED
 WITH PARTITION
 OF HADEN EDWARDS
 ESTATE. RECORDED
 IN VOL. P. PP 584
 DEED RECORDS OF
 RUSK CO. TEXAS

LOWELL H. HEWITT
 FOLDER-244

GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Moberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
214-757-2261

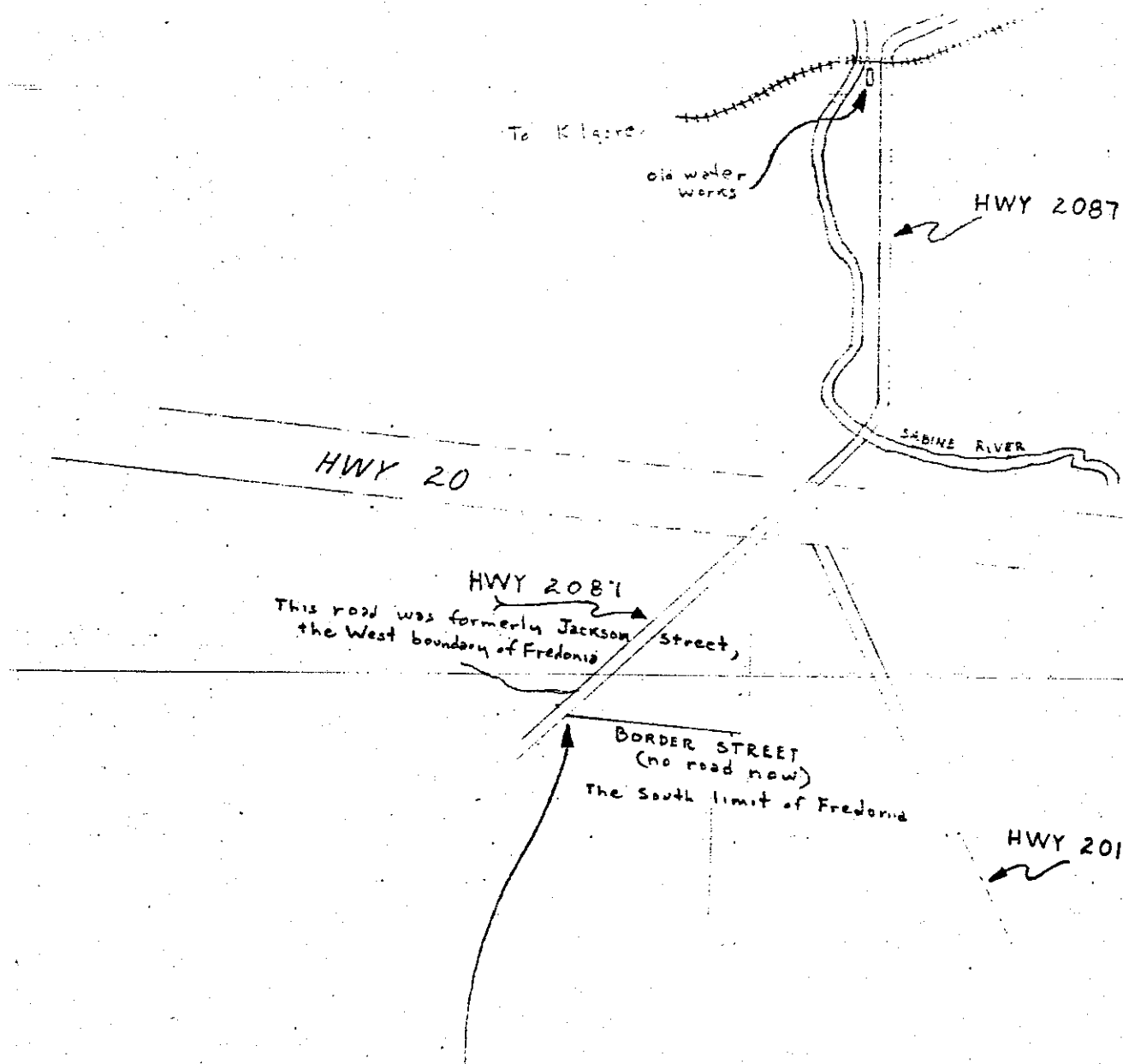


FREDONIA SITE

44
To East Texas Oil Museum

To Gregg County Airport





Norman Black

COPY of Map drawn by
C.E. HOLLOWAY and obtained
from Mrs. C.E. Holloway 8-17-19

The S.W. corner of the city of Fredonia in 1849
is 200 feet S.W. along road from the gate entering
motorcycle club and track.

GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
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NOTE: FOR DESCRIPTION OF S.W. COR. OF TOWN, SEE VOL. "F" PAGE 70

RESIDENTS OF FREDONIA AND VICINITY IN THE 1850S

Adams, L.A.	Greer, Joseph	Rosell, P.
Albritton, A.	Greer, M.D.	Rozelle, M.J.
Allford, Isaac	Hafon, J.W.	Screws, Allen
B & Ashton	Hamilton, A.R.	Seymore, Mart
Baines, William	Hamilton, J.P. (Mr.)	Seymore, J.H.
Baker I.S. (J.S.?)	Hamilton, J.T.	Smart, G.B.
Barnett, S.S.	Hammonds, G.	Smith & Bro.
Barnett, W.H.H.	Harris, Hamilton	Smith, John A.
Barnwell, T.H.	Harris, Thos.	Smith, W.W.
Batti?	Haynes, F.C.	Soch?, Marion
Beall, M.A.	Herndon, R.	Sorrell, John
Bean, Starr	Hollingsworth & Sons	Sparks
Box, I.G.	Hudson, Thomas	Stephens
Branden, C.	Hughey, W.W.	Stephens, J.S.
Bridges, G.A.	Hunt W.C.	Stone, Isaac
Bridges, L.A.	Hutchins, A.D.	Stubblefield, Wm
Brown, J.G.	Ian?	Taylor
Bynem, William	Jester, Burges	Taylor & Wilson
Carter, L.E.	Johnson, Jno.	Taylor, Robt.
Chisholm, T.G.	Jones	Thompson
Clerachin, Ann M.	Killen, Wm	Thompson, B.F. (Col.)
Collier, H.D.	Kline, See Fabin	Thompson, Hammond
Cunyus, A.D.	M & King	Thompson, J.C.
Cunyus, John F.	Martin	Thorn, J.T.
Davenport, Wm.	Martin, P.A.	Thorn, J.T. & Co.
Deal, H.?	Massie, J.W.	Thurman, J.W.
Dearborn, J.H.	Mayfield, C.W.	Trammell, J.H.
Dickinson, A.G.	McBride, W.D.	Trammell, Wilson
Donovan, A.D.	McCarty, W.	Wadden, Taylor
Doravan, A.L.	McCrakin, Nancy	Wade, J.M.
Duncan	McKinley, F.R.	Wadsworth, W. (Mr.)
Earp, James	Mcgraw, R.H.	Waide & Wilson
Ellis, T.O.	Mercer, Silas	Walker
Ellis, Thos. O.	Methvin, Lame O.	Walker, B.
Estell & Mysenger	Methvin, O.	Walker, G.W.
Fabin? & Kline	Miller	Walker, S.
Fairchild, E.H.	Moore, Jessie O.	Walker, S.F.
Fambro, David	Moore, John	Watson, I. (J?)
Fambrough, Anderson	Mooring, J.B.	Watson, John
Flanagan, W.?	Moseley, Augustus	Wester, D.G.
Forbis, James X.	Moss, Warden X.	Wiley
Ferguson, W.T.	Oliver, James R.	Willan, B.W.
George, Wm. W.	Oliver, James K.	Williams, James M.
Gilbreath, Hugh	Patton, Robert	Wilson & Trammell
Gillespie & Croach	Pegues, O.H.	Wilson, B.R.
Grace, J.K.	Posteur, Wm. R.	Wilson, Christ?
Grace, James R.	Powell, R.W.	Wilson, J.W.
Grace, S.M.	Reeder, Mr.	Wilson, J.W. & B.R.
Grant, R.G.	Richards, W.H.	Wilson, L.
		Womack, I. (J?)
		Womack, Jacob (Jake)

FREDONIA,
FREDONIA,

72

Mr S D Richardson

GENERAL AGENCY
For Receiving and Forwarding
Merchandise, Cotton, and Produce
And executing ORDERS in New-Orleans for
account of Planters, &c.

Bought of **WAIDE & WILSON,**
DEALERS in DRY GOODS & GROCERIES.

See's History Form, at Magazine St., N. O.

To amt of one dollar / Jan'y 1853. 730

*Mr Wm W. W. Do. S. D. Richardson
to balance acct for hauling of
Mr Witt will please pay ^{the above} to Mr Waide and
of age yours of S. D. Richardson*

GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, Texas 75602
214-757-2261

TAYLOR & CHURCHILL,

*Sellers and Wholesale Dealers in Hardware, Guns,
Iron, Hollow-Ware, Yankee Notions and Stationery.*

29 MAGAZINE, and 52 and 54 GRAVIER STREETS, Near the Arcade Hotel,

Office, No. 4 Gold Street,
NEW-YORK.

{ PETER G. TAYLOR, New-York.
PARDON L. TAYLOR, }
CHARLES H. CHURCHILL. } New-Orleans }

NEW-ORLEANS.

I M. Trade Co } *March*
Fredonia Texas } *14/59*

*You can
deposit the money with
~~the Post Office of~~
White Smith & Baldwin of
Shrewport or send by mail
enclosed. You register the letter and
take the Post Master receipt for
us + send by registered mail*

*Duplicate letter
sent by mail*

*Yours Obedtly
Taylor & Churchill*

Mr. J. H. Madu

Bought of TAYLOR & HARTY,
IMPORTERS AND GENERAL HARDWARE DEALERS,
39 MAGAZINE and 53 and 54 GRAVIER STREETS.

3 Reams	Wrap Paper E. 1/2	12 1/2	6 75
x 1/2 dz	6 Do Tea Kettles 4 qt	5 00	2 50
x 1/3 "	Coffee Roasters	13 50	4 50
x 1	coil Grass Rope 2 1/2"	16 "	4 60
x 1/2 dz	Ames Spades	12 "	6 "
x 1 "	Lev Axes		12
x 1 "	amb Hoes 2		6 00
x 6	Little Dragon Boxes 1 1/2"	8 "	7 32
x 12 pr	Hot Basse 2 1/2"	7 1/2 "	1 98
x 2 dz	Do Fine Saws	2 25	1 50
x 1 "	Coffee Bakers 3 qt		3 30
x 1 "	Wash Basins		2 50
x 1 "	Tin Buckets 2 qt		2
x 6 "	Pint Cups	6 "	3 60
x 3 "	Do	1 "	1 35
x 2	Sugar Scoops	3 "	75
x 3 dz	Blacking	3 "	1 13
x 13 1/2 dz	Wrapping Twine	3 00	3 94
x 1/2 dz	Do Tin Spoons	6 00	3
x 1/2 "	" " " "	18 00	4 50
x 1/2 "	" " " "	7 00	3 75
x 1/2 "	Old Solders	3 00	1 50
x 1 "	Wimblets Ea 4	8 1/2	1 50
x 1/2 "	Stamp &	1 00	2 25
x 1 "	Do		1
x 1/2 "	Do		3
x 1 "	" " " "	46 165	1 75
x 1 "	" " " "		5
x 1	Tobacco Cutter		1 50
x 1	Shor Punch + float		2 25
x 1	Tin Boxes 1 1/2"		1
x 6	Little Tin Ho of E 4 1/2"	1 1/2 1 00	3 9
x 1/2 dz	Keating Hammers 18 35	6 50	3 25
x 6 pr	Carvers 2 1/2"	6 "	6

GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION
417 Moberly Avenue
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Here is an entry in a November 24, 1853 Ledger of the
merchant firm of Waide and Wilson of Fredonia:
Miss Roach Ramey: 1 basket of champagne: \$16.00

Nov 24 1853
Miss Roach Ramey
1 basket of champagne
\$16.00

J. H. Almon
Nov 24 1853
Miss Roach Ramey
1 basket of champagne
\$16.00

EARLY NAVIGATION OF THE SABINE

Editor Times - Clarion -

I noticed an article in your paper of last week written by Mr. Persy May of Smith County, stating that the first steamboat that ever came up the Sabine River was the General Rusk in 1856, which is not correct. The first boat was the old Buffalo, commanded by Capt. Bob Patton in 1848, and owned by A. L. Vaeuter, J. P. Dickson and Capt. Bob Patton.

The second was the General Rusk, commanded by Capt. McGee and owned by McGee and B. F. McDonough. The third was the Kate, with Porter Van Captain. She sank with 800 bales of cotton on board at the White Oak Shoals below Logansport, and the next boat was the steamboat Liberty. She carried out about 1200 bales of cotton, but all her masts were broken down before she got back to Grandbluff. She was a double mast steamship and a beautiful vessel.

Now come Uncle Ben, she was in trade for several seasons before the war. The last I ever heard of her she was being used as a gungoat at Sabine Pass. Bob Patton was her captain and her pilot was old Ben.

This is a true history of the first navigation of the Sabine.

Capt. Bob Weir
an old River Pilot
Longview, Texas Dec. 16

LIST OF STEAM SHIPS COMING TO FREDONIA IN 1851 (from ledger sheets of

Waide & Wilson and J. M. Waide General Merchandise Company in Fredonia):

Liberty* 1853-1854 (cont'd)

Maria Burt Texas

Swan Caddo

Echo Kimball

Monterey Compromise

Mary Eddy Downs

Osceola St. Charles

Governor Brent G. Hays

Bellegates

The flat boat "Eliza"

1852

R. W. Toms (sp?)

St. Charles

H. M. Wright

Compromise

Caddo

Echo

↳ stracln ?

Caspian

S. W. Downs

Alabama

China

1853-1854

Choctaw

Runaway

D. Caslin (sp?)

W. A. Pope

* "By Steamer Liberty" to Col. R. W. Powell, New Orleans. (Gold, silver, paper money - \$1,291.33) from J. M. Waide.

Other steamboats at Fredonia

Uncle Ben

General Rusk

Buffalo 1848

Beaver

Kate

11-8-95



Norman Black, D.D.S.

Note from Meeting:

E. Tex. Oil Museum Docents

Thurs, Nov. 2, 1995

Mrs. Nonette Wickham 83x.O.

Kilgore native-born.

The large hill (south of the
Fredonia Hill on Highway 2087)
opposite the SW corner of
townsite of Fredonia (see plat)
is BIG HEAD HILL, important
to all Indians who lived
in area.

This is the hill where the
motorcycle riders climbed - had
a gate with sign "Motorcycle Club"
at 2087.

417 Mobberly Ave., Longview, TX 75602, (903) 757-2261

9-5-00
Telephoned Frances Rickard to report these errors. "Working in that file now & will do".

Fredonia

Marker
Number: 9959

Marker Title: Old Fredonia Townsite

Index Entry: Fredonia

Address:

City: Longview

County: Gregg

UTM Zone: 15

UTM Easting:

UTM

Northing:

Subject
Codes: GT

Year Marker
Erected: 1967

Designations: na

Marker

Location:

Marker Size: 18" x 28"

Repairs
Completed: ~~missing - taken down for road construction~~

Marker Text: Founded by Haden Edwards, a land grantee who contracted in 1825 with Mexican government to establish 800 families of settlers in East Texas. A later misunderstanding with Mexico caused him to organize famous Fredonian rebellion, and flee to the U.S. in 1827 in failure. Town of Fredonia prospered, however. It was important ferry crossing and river port. Had 40 or 50 buildings, including homes, 3 warehouses (mainly for cotton), and a brick kiln. After the Civil War, post office was given up. Bypassing by railroad caused abandonment of town about 1870.



TEXAS
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

RICK PERRY, GOVERNOR

JOHN L. NAU, III, CHAIRMAN

F. LAWRENCE OAKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 12, 2005

Dr. Norman Black, Chair
Gregg CHC
417 Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75602

RE: OLD FREDONIA TOWNSITE
18" x 28" subject marker w/ post; Job # 26-2004
Shipment to: Texas Department of Transportation

Dear Dr. Black:


We have ordered the above-referenced replacement marker for casting. A copy of the final inscription as it was sent to the foundry is enclosed for your files.

According to our records, the marker should be shipped to the address listed above. If these instructions have changed during the marker process, please let me know as soon as possible so that I may notify the foundry.

We will notify you and the parties listed below once the marker has been shipped from the foundry.

We appreciate the special efforts made to replace this marker, and thank you and the marker sponsors for your continued support of the History Programs Division.

Sincerely,


Egina G. Reyes
Program Specialist
History Programs Division

*P.S. We need payment from PO 500611.
Thanks!
Egina*

Texas Historical Commission staff (RKB), 8/14/67; replaced (LCH) 2/1/2005
18" x 28" Official Texas Historical Marker with post

Gregg County (Job #26-2004) Subject LD (Atlas 9959) UTM: 15 332102E 3590033N

Location: Longview, 3/5 mi W of city limits at intersection of IH-20 and FM 2087

OLD FREDONIA TOWNSITE

THE COMMUNITY OF FREDONIA WAS FOUNDED BY HADEN EDWARDS, A LAND GRANTEE WHO CONTRACTED IN 1825 WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH 800 FAMILIES OF SETTLERS IN EAST TEXAS. A LATER MISUNDERSTANDING WITH MEXICO CAUSED HIM TO ORGANIZE THE FAMOUS FREDONIAN REBELLION AND FLEE TO THE U.S. IN 1827 IN FAILURE. THE TOWN OF FREDONIA PROSPERED, THOUGH, AS AN IMPORTANT FERRY CROSSING AND RIVER PORT. THE NUMEROUS STRUCTURES BUILT BY RESIDENTS INCLUDED A BRICK KILN, HOMES AND WAREHOUSES, MAINLY FOR COTTON. AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, THE POPULATION DECLINED AND THE POST OFFICE CLOSED. RESIDENTS ABANDONED THE TOWN AFTER IT WAS BYPASSED BY THE RAILROAD CIRCA 1870.

(1967, 2005)