

The TEXAS JACK SCOUT

VOLUME VIII NO.2

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REMEMBERING TEXAS JACK "THE FORGOTTEN SCOUT"

By Julie Greene



Greene Office - Carmel, CA

"Forgotten", you say "How so? We have an association organized explicitly to honor him. He's had a biography ("BUCKSKIN AND SATIN" by Herschel Logan) written about him. And, he's certainly well known to students and enthusiasts of the scouts of the old west. So..... he's far from 'forgotten'!

But wait! Is Texas Jack Omohundro a "household word", like, for instance, Buffalo Bill Cody, or Wild Bill Hickok or even California Joe? Not really. How many times have you gone to a western museum or seen a book on western history and have been disappointed to find

only token mention of him, if at all? And then, more times than not, it's only because he was a friend of those other famous scouts!

Correcting this injustice to the memory of Texas Jack (and more importantly, to recorded American history) became the main objective of the Texas Jack Association when it was reorganized into its present format. The hope was to help publicize his story...make his name, and the facts of his short but eventful life, familiar to the average person.

Toward that end, when twelve interested people gathered together in Cody, Wyoming in the summer of 1984, they made the decision to continue with the Association, and the commitment to go forward with a renewed focus. Among the priorities they discussed, was to try to get Texas Jack represented in a formidable fashion in an influential western history museum.

Thus he would become familiar to those who enjoy visiting such an institution, and his memory would be preserved in a substantial way for history.

Continued on pg. 3



The President's MESSAGE

The cover story in this issue of the SCOUT features photographs and writings from the extensive collection of Texas Jack memorabilia owned by Dennis and Julie Greene.

Both of the Greens are avid collectors. Julie looks for unusual pieces of jade; Dennis acquires autographs from World War II ace fighter pilots. After attending a dedication of the Texas Jack display at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming in 1984, they now also collect Texas Jack artifacts. They have traveled throughout the United States and abroad in search of original photographs, dime novels, playbills, and news articles. It is their wish to one day house their collection in a museum.

It was while in Cody that the Greens learned of the existence of the Texas Jack Association. Founded four years earlier by Illinois attorney Frank R. Sullivan, the Association was scheduled to have a gathering at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center later that year! Of course, the Greens attended. Julie, whose grandfather Malvern Hill Omohundro was Texas Jack's half brother, was elected the new president. Dennis was elected vice president. In the next two years they devoted an enormous amount of energy toward establishing a framework for and expanding the membership of the Association. A FEW of their accomplishments: printed a high quality brochure promoting Texas Jack, solicited paid memberships (one tactic was to search through telephone books at the local library for Omohundro addresses across the country), assembled a press kit, gave interviews and talks, hired an artist to design the Association logo and create the artwork for THE SCOUT, developed the idea of THE SCOUT and edited the first seven issues, obtained reproductions and/or professional quality negatives of original photographs and prints owned by museums and private collectors, and planned the 1986 convention held in North Platte, Nebraska.

In the Years since, the Greens have attended every

Association convention and generously contributed to the treasury. They continue to add to their collection and to actively pursue their dream of having a movie made about Texas Jack. Their daughter-in-law Peggy Greene and son-in-law Rick Brown are the current SCOUT editors.

The Texas Jack Association is fortunate to have many loyal members who work hard to keep it alive. Topping that list are Julie and Dennis Greene. On behalf of the membership, "Thanks, you two!"

Kitty

"THE TEXAS JACK SCOUT"
A NON-PROFIT, TAX DEDUCTIBLE CORPORATION

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*deceased

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NED BUNTLINE
TRIUMPHANT.
 STAR DRAMATIC COMPANY,
 100 N. 3rd St., St. Louis, Mo.
SCOUTS OF THE WEST
 "DARING CHARLIE"
 "ARIZONA FRANK"
 P. T. BARNUM'S
 Troupe of Wild Comanches
 and Texas Indians.
 ALL NIGHT AND SPANISH OPERA.
 "JUNE, 1874."
 "HOMES AND BEAUTIES"
 POPULAR PRICES ONLY.
WIDE WORLD.
 CHARLES McVILLIE

HON. WM. F. CODY,
BUFFALO BILL,
J. B. OMOHUNDRO,
TEXAS JACK,
WILD BILL,
MR. J. B. HICKOK,
 With the renowned WARRIOR TROUPE.
 "PULL CORPS OF INDIANS."
 CHARLES McVILLIE

This New York Clipper ad of August 16, 1873 advises theatre managers and others that the production "Scouts of the Plains" was available for booking. Of interest is the claim that Hickok's "duties on the plains" would permit him only one season with the troupe. Ned Buntline also advertises this dramatic company in this same issue. Note his comments on intemperate habits, his usual moral gospel against liquor, even though his own life was far from moral.

Such a plan, of course, would require obtaining adequate material concerning Texas Jack for display - a lofty goal indeed! At that time, certainly, none of those present had any idea of the difficulty entailed or even how to go about bringing this project to reality.

Dennis Greene was born twelve, and the president of the ciation. He well tance of pursuing this went on, it became that even if enough located to comprise tion of authentic Association could gether the resources The more he delved began to re-

THE REAL LIVING HEROES
BUFFALO BILL
TEXAS JACK
WILD BILL
A TROUPE OF WILD COMANCHE INDIANS.
THE SCOUTS OF THE PLAINS.
THE "WARRIOR" TROUPE, INCLUDING THE
WILD BUNTLINE COMPANY
THE SCOUTS OF THE PLAINS.
POPULAR PRICES ONLY.
CHARLES McVILLIE

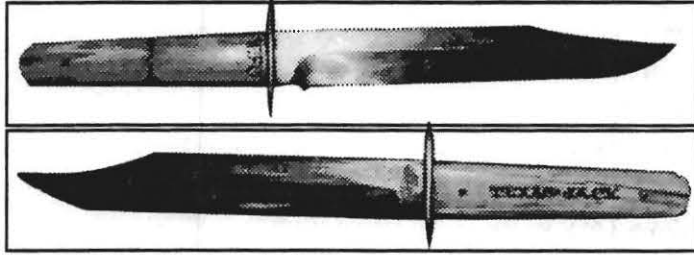
one of those origi- newly elected vice- Texas Jack Asso- knew the impor- project, but as time apparent to him material could be an adequate collec- memorabilia, the not possibly put to- to accumulate it. into it, the more he

if someone The Daily Record of the Times published did not make the at- 1873 playing up "The Three Real Living tempt as soon as pos- Heroes and Danseuse, M'lie Morlachi." sible, it would become a lost and forgotten cause. So he became interested in taking on the project himself.

Although it has been an enjoyable and rewarding effort, it has been far from easy, as Jack's life was so short... and through the years much of what did exist has been lost. However, never one to be deterred by a challenge, Dennis began to investigate how one might go about

finding authentic material concerning Texas Jack Omohundro. With ads running continuously in western antique newspapers and contact with as many dealers as possible, as well as putting the word out with museum curators, family members and anyone else who might provide a lead, slow progress began to be achieved.

Dennis looks forward to the day when the things that he has been able to accumulate, and those things he continues to find, will all be housed under one roof in a western history museum. In the meantime, on the walls of a small office in Carmel, California, is displayed a fascinating (and hopefully increasing) collection of remembrances of Texas Jack Omohundro. Most of the collection is framed in a western motif, and the paper items are under museum quality protective glass backed with acid free paper in order to preserve them from deterioration.



Texas Jack's knife. Texas Jack engraved on one side of the bone handle & WFC on the other

On November 20 & 21, 1982, a Western Frontier auction took place in Anaheim, California. The main portion of the collection auctioned came from Mr. Dean Alderdice, who is a 40 year collector in Orange County, CA. He has owned many historical firearms and gambling items. Years ago, Mr. Alderdice bought a collection belonging to the well known Captain Jack Crawford, who himself was a collector of famous frontier personality memorabilia, and the Crawford collection was sold at this auction on a commission basis for Mr. Alderdice.

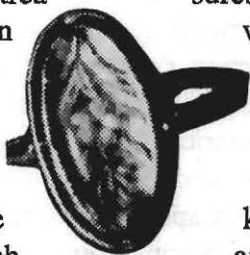
Item number 322 sold at the auction was a Bowie knife, marked "NON XLL, Joseph Allen, Sheffield". The ivory grips were engraved "Texas Jack" on one side, and "WFC" on the other. It is a matter of speculation as to what "WFC" stands for. Most probably it was William F. Cody (perhaps a gift from Cody to Jack), although it has also been suggested that it could stand for Wells Fargo Co. Although we'll never really know the answer to that one, the knife is proudly displayed in Dennis' office.



In the "OMOHUNDRO GENEALOGICAL RECORD", Malvern Hill Omohundro relates the story about when he was a small boy of 6 years in April of 1873, Texas Jack and Buffalo Bill came to Richmond, VA with their wild west show. They played the old Richmond Theater, which was on the corner of Seventh and Broad Streets. Jack invited his family to be there, and Malvern talks of the "vivid recollections of the three days and nights" they spent with his big brother, Texas Jack. "Jack gave my mother a ring made from a stone he had found on the Red River in Texas. My mother gave it to me when I was 21 and I am wearing it today. I have never seen nor heard of another like it. It is invaluable; money can't buy it. He gave me a gun for hunting, a velvet suit and a peculiar pocket knife which I still have".

The ring which Texas Jack gave to his mother, was passed on, when Malvern died, to his son, Tom. Tom gave it to his nephew, Randy McKinney (Texas Jack's grand nephew, and a member of the Texas Jack Association). Randy, realizing the importance of the project that Dennis had undertaken, agreed to sell the ring, and it is displayed along with the little pocket knife that Texas Jack gave to Malvern when he was 6 years old.

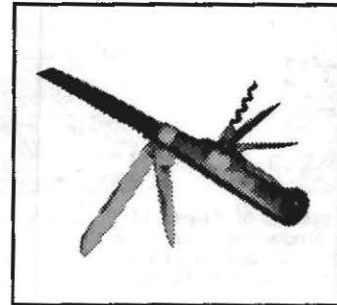
The pocket knife was given, many years ago, by Malvern to his niece, Imalena Omohundro, who counted it amongst her most valued treasures. However, in 1959, Malvern wanted to give something of significance to Herschel Logan, as a gesture of appreciation for his having written the biography of Texas Jack. Considering the knife to be a worthy token of such appreciation, he asked Imalena if she would part with it. In a letter dated February 26, 1959, Malvern wrote to Herschel Logan; "...I got a letter from my niece and am glad to say she is willing for you to have the knife with one condition which is if you die before she does, she wants you to will it to her, if not, then it goes to you in fee simple". As Imalena predeceased him, the little pocket knife was retained by Logan. Also given to Logan were two razors, referred to in Malvern Omohundro's February 26th Letter: "...I have an old straight back razor that might be of some interest to you. It has engraved on the handle as follows: 'Present from M.L. Tutwiler to R. Omohundro after death to J.B. Omohundro. January



Red River Ring

14th 1855'. This M.L. Tutwiler was an in-law of the Omohundros and the R. Omohundro is Richard Omohundro, my (and Texas Jack's) grandfather, and the J.B. Omohundro is J.B.O.Sr., father of J.B.O. Jr, Texas Jack. I also have another straight razor that I bought myself about forty years ago. I send it to you with my compliments also".

Herschel passed 1988, and in his Greene everything in pertaining Jack with tion of the was the in-



Pocket Knife

Logan away in 1989, Denmark acquired his estate to Texas the exception gun which spiration for

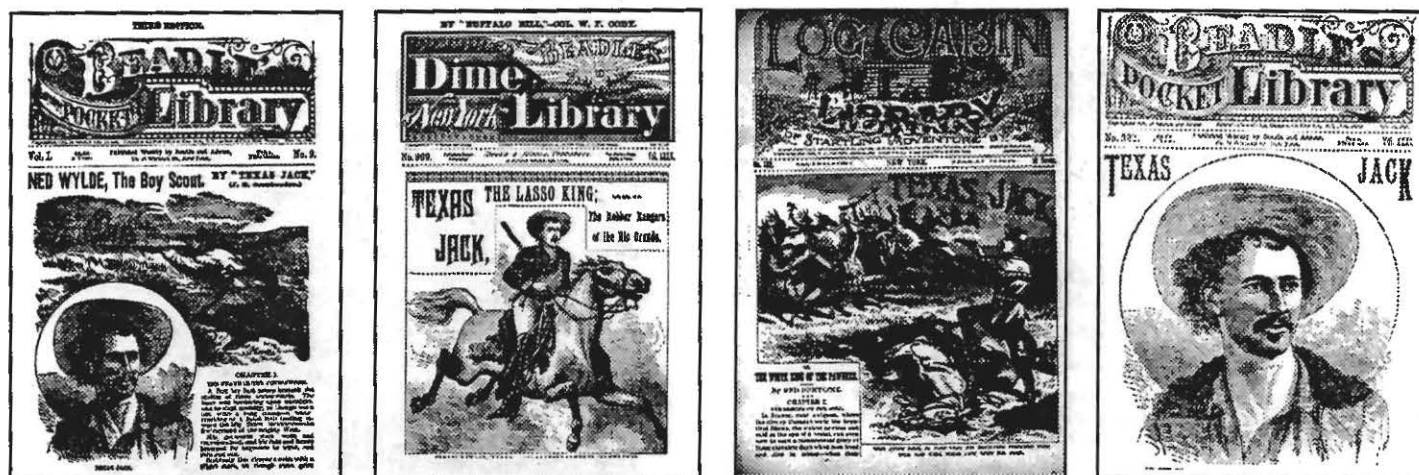
his book "BUCKSKIN AND SATIN". Included in the collection were the little pocket knife and the two razors. Together with the ring from the Red River stone, these things are on display in Carmel.



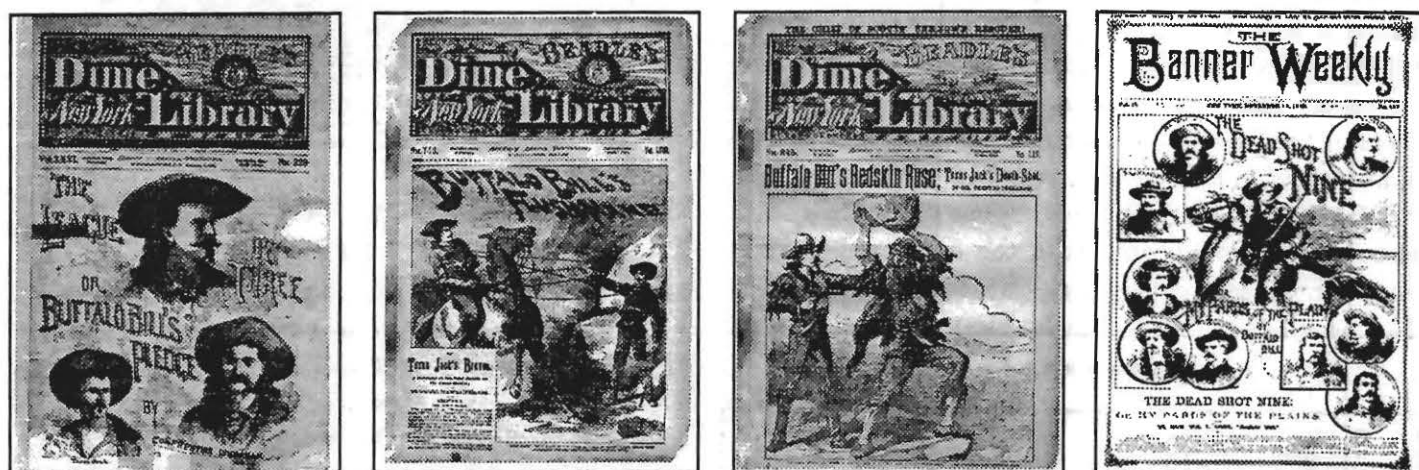
Another fascinating acquisition from the Logan collection was all the correspondence relating to the research for "BUCKSKIN AND SATIN". Of course, as the book was written some 40 years ago in the early 50's, most of his non-institutional sources were woefully outdated. However, an attempt to re-contact Logan's correspondents uncovered several interesting connections.

In the early 1900's, Europe became fascinated with America's "Wild West". Many countries (England, France, Denmark, Holland, Germany and others) produced their versions of the "dime novel", about the "heroes of the Wild West". Texas Jack was decidedly a favorite subject of many of these small pulp novels. Hundreds of stories were written about him. Found amongst Logan's papers was a brief correspondence with a renowned European historian/collector. A renewed contact, and ensuing friendship, with him resulted in the acquisition of a series of 179 Danish dime novels, written around the turn of the century, about Texas Jack. The only other complete series that exists is housed in the Danish Royal Museum. In addition to this important collection, are numerous other Texas Jack dime novels from other European countries, including some English "comic books" which extol the exploits of the "daring and brave" Texas Jack. It is evident that Jack's fame,

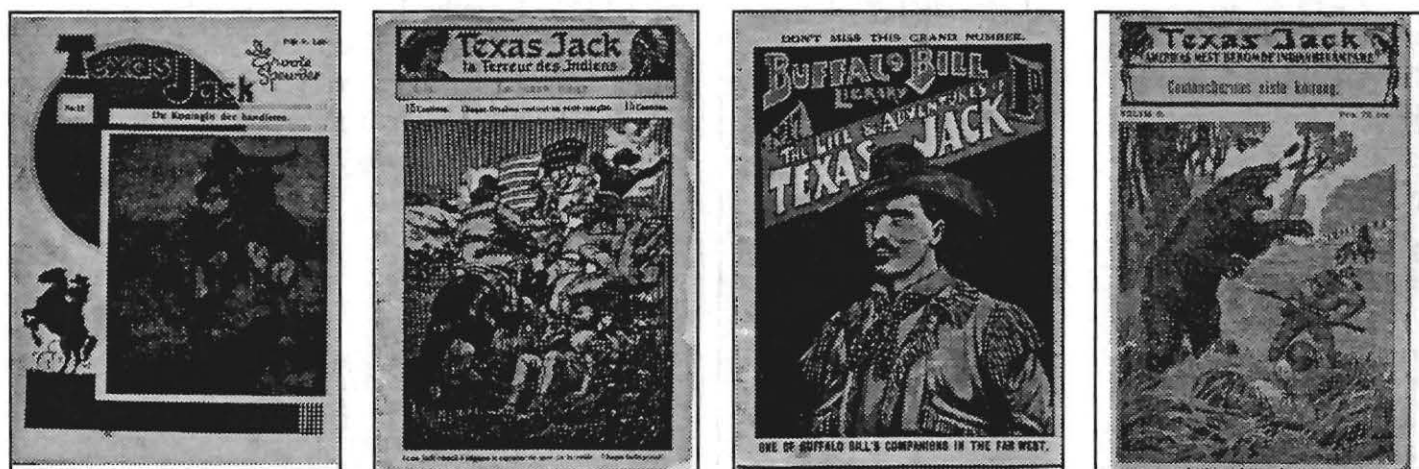
while fleeing in actual history, was well preserved in fictional form in Europe (and to a lesser extent in America) well into the 1900's.



Texas Jack Dime Novels published prior to 1900



Texas Jack was featured in many American Dime Novels which headlined Buffalo Bill.



German

French

English

Swedish

It was the early American Dime Novel that began to appear in the mid-1870's of course which, in fictionalizing the adventures of Texas Jack, Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill and others during their days on the plains guaranteed the instant success they enjoyed on the eastern stage. Many of them were written by that notorious rogue - Ned Buntline,

in whose books, fact freely gave way to sensationalism.



This rare Dime Novel, unlike most others is actually a paperback book. It was originally owned by Malvern Omohundro who gave it to Herschel Logan.

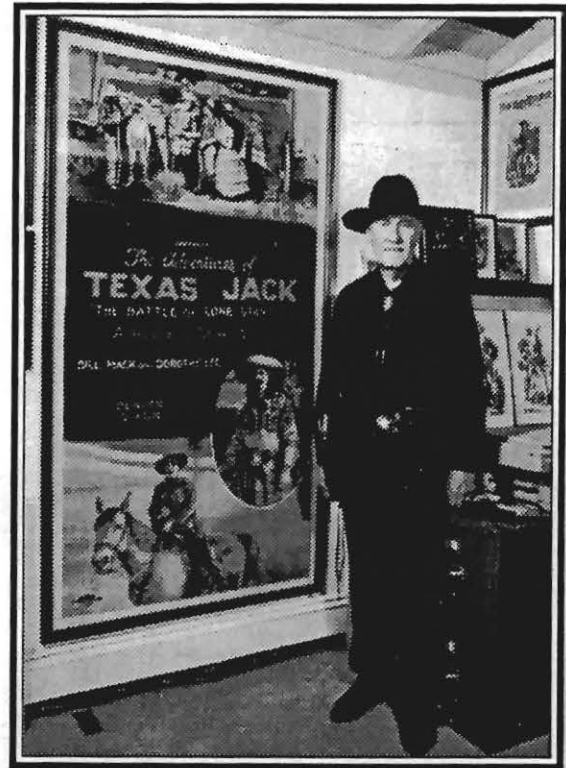
During the period that Cody, Omohundro and Hickok appeared together on the stage, a newspaper, "THE NEW YORK WEEKLY", serialized stories about the three "heroes". Numerous ads announcing the forthcoming series preceded the actual stories for many weeks, creating tremendous reader anticipation. Logan was somehow able to acquire a complete set of the "THE NEW YORK WEEKLY" for the year 1873. Two of the issues have announcements of the forthcoming series about Texas Jack, and his story ran in fourteen issues. All 14 are included in the set that was acquired from Logan.



<p>WHEN KIDNAP APPOINT ON!</p> <p>MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 9, and now another issue Sensation for the West City of the Frontier. Living Illustrated Edition.</p> <p>TEXAS JACK The Fearless MORLACCHI, MRS MAUDE OSWALD, DONALD McHAY.</p> <p>HAND OF DEAR WARM SPRING INDIANS.</p> <p>TRIPPER MARRIED</p> <p>TEXAS JACK In the Black Hills.</p> <p>GRAND FAMILY MATINEE, SATURDAY 11 P.M.</p>	<p>ALMOST READY.</p> <p>TEXAS JACK!</p> <p>WE WILL soon commence, in the New Weekly NED BUNTLINE'S LAST GREAT STORY, TEXAS JACK! THE Hero of a Thousand Fights! The Flood (Continued) The Best Shot! And the Greatest Lassie! WHIRLING ROPE! DARING DEEDS! His own Adventures.</p> <p>LOVE, REVENGE, HATE.</p> <p>Life on the Plains.</p> <p>Great Deeds!</p>
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A NEW YORK WEEKLY ad for the Texas Jack Combination for his April 9th, 1877 appearance.

The NEW YORK WEEKLY issue of February 24, 1873 advertises That "Ned Buntline will soon start his serialized story Texas Jack, the Hero of a Thousand Fights, claiming it to be Neds best work. The story was run weekly for many weeks.



Dennis Greene with Texas Jack Movie Poster

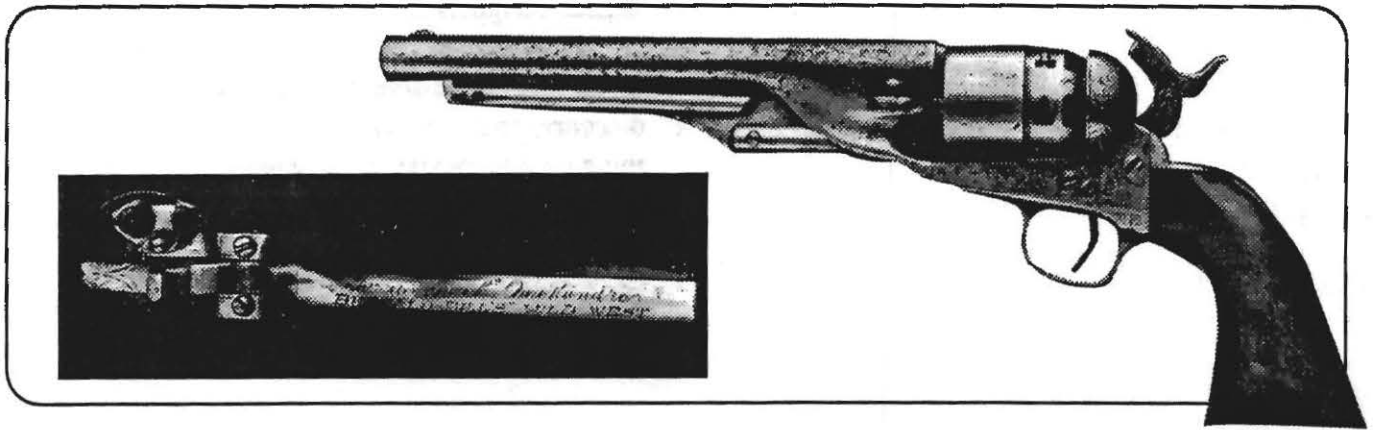
"THE ADVENTURES OF TEXAS JACK THE BATTLE OF LONE STAR"

blares the almost 4 ft. by 7 ft. colorful poster advertising this exciting silent film of the early twenties. Research has yet to uncover the actual film itself - indeed, it may well no longer exist. However, we do know something about the participants who produced and starred in it. Dennis Dixon, the producer and director (also known as Victor Adamson and Art Mix) was an actor from 1920 until 1940. Dorothy Lee, the female lead (who also went by the names Rio Rita and Marjorie Millsap) played in RKO pictures in the 1920's. Her married name was Dorothy Calderini. The least is known about the man who starred as Texas Jack - Bill Mack, although



H.O. Rawson's pen & ink drawing of Texas Jack as it appears in Horan's "THE GREAT AMERICAN WEST." Note similarity to the Poster!

research shows that he was a vaudeville actor in 1920. This poster was first discovered by Texas Jack Association member Ruth Murphey from Corpus Christi, TX.



TEXAS JACK'S 1860 Colt Army Pistol

Ruth and her husband Jerry head the "101 Ranch Association". Without her concern and much appreciated help, it would never have become a part of the collection - a further demonstration of how this project many times has relied on the kindness and cooperation of others.

A comparison shows that the depiction of Texas Jack on the poster was obviously taken from an etching by H.O. Rawson, famous sketch artist. Early in this century, Rawson set out to make sketches of every western personality of importance - outlaws, sheriffs, Indian chiefs, army officers, scouts and other men and women identified with the West. He worked mainly from authenticated photographs, but some of his drawings were made directly from life. He published these drawings as a series of cards which had a very large circulation



A sketch by H.O. Rawson

in the early 1900's. A comparison of his sketches with known photographs wherever possible, indicates his amazing accuracy, and it can be assumed that sketches of personalities whose photographs no longer exist were also accurate and true pictures.

The entire collection of sketches is displayed in "THE

GREAT AMERICAN WEST - a Pictorial History from Coronado to the Last Frontier", written by James D. Horan in 1959. The book is now out of print, and is much coveted by students of western history. It is a most fascinating volume, a copy of which can be found in the Greene library. Rawson also did many of the pen and ink drawings that illustrated the early dime novels. His original 8" X 10" sketch of Texas Jack for the series of cards, which were later displayed in the book (and from which the poster illustration was taken) is in the Greene Collection.



Perhaps one of the most prized acquisitions is an 1860 Colt Army pistol, engraved on the backstrap in an open grapevine factory motif, original to the period. The inscription reads: "Texas Jack Omohundro, Buffalo Bill Wild West". The gun shows a great deal of use and the grip profile has been altered as often was done by trick shooters. Also there are strange markings between cylinders, possibly to indicate where to rest the hammer during trick shooting or heavy usage. (In performing, it would be easier to see where the safety stops were by putting a large "X" on the cylinder). In addition, the interior of the barrel is heavily pitted indicating that it was blank bullets that were used in his stage shows.

Tracing the history of how a gun changed hands through the years is important in verifying its authenticity, and much relies on the validity of previous owners. John Gangle, well known antique firearms dealer, and auctioneer, who acquired the gun in 1985 writes as follows: "Johnny Bassett, a premiere Colt collector and personal friend of mine from the late 1960's until his death in 1985, owned this pistol for many years and several times has shown it to me and conversed with me about the interesting history of the gun. When he passed away, his

collection was handled by Mr. Robert Berryman, one of America's premiere firearms dealers, and I acquired the gun from him. At that time there was an old letter dated 1926 addressed to Mr. William M. Locke, * from his friend Charles Nordin, (the original is in the collection), telling about the history of Texas Jack's gun.

Charles Nordin ** is known among gun collectors as an early pioneer in gun collecting and it is evident upon reading the letter that Charles Nordin sold the gun to William Locke in 1926".

Accompanying the gun is belt (and gauntlets) also referred to in Mr. Nordin's letter. However, the original holster was replaced with one of the period, albeit not Texas Jack's personal property.

The entire collection, a small part of which is described herein, while still comparatively minimal, pretty well fills the walls of the small Carmel office. However, there is still a long way to go to reach the original goal of a "significant display" in a western history museum. Much has been accomplished - much is still needed to be done to fully bring this project to fruition. For Dennis Greene, it has become a passion, but its difficulty can't be mini-

mized. Acquisitions have become few and far between because of lack of availability, as well as the fact that this is not an inexpensive pursuit. However, occasionally discouragement gives way to excitement when something totally unexpected will happen such as when Dennis found Texas Jack's original signature, or when he came across one of his calling cards. Even finding a CDV (small picture distributed at the theatres where he performed) or a cabinet photograph, is viewed as an achievement. Small things, admittedly, but it all adds



Texas Jack's New Years greeting card



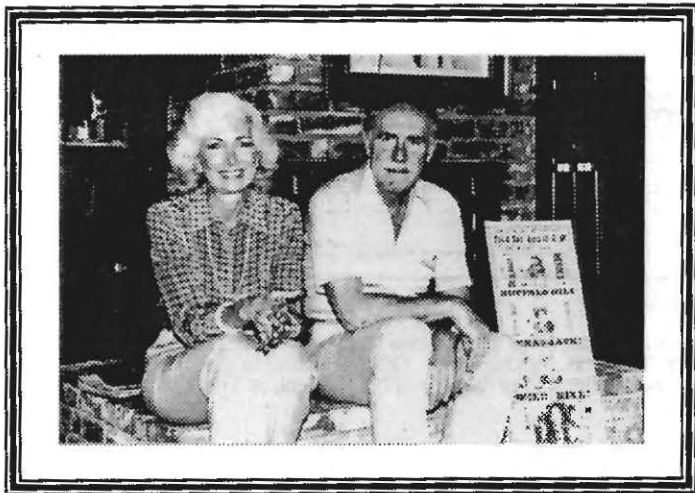
Buntline, Cody, Morlacchi, Omohundro
A Cabinet Photograph



JB Omohundro (Texas Jack)

- * William Locke's long gun collecting career is detailed in the book "The William M. Locke Collection - Finest Group of American Handguns Ever Assembled", published in 1973 by The Antique Armory Inc., East Point, GA. Robert Berryman was one of the gun authorities who contributed to this volume.
- ** Charles Nordin numbered amongst his personal friends, Buffalo Bill, Doc Carver, Capt. Jack Crawford and many other famous men of the west. He was particularly close to Cody and worked for him briefly in North Platte in the late 1880's. He was an avid collector of guns and all types of western memorabilia, and had "hundreds of personal letters" from most of the scouts and showmen. (Information obtained from correspondence between Nordin and Hershel Logan in Feb. 1952).

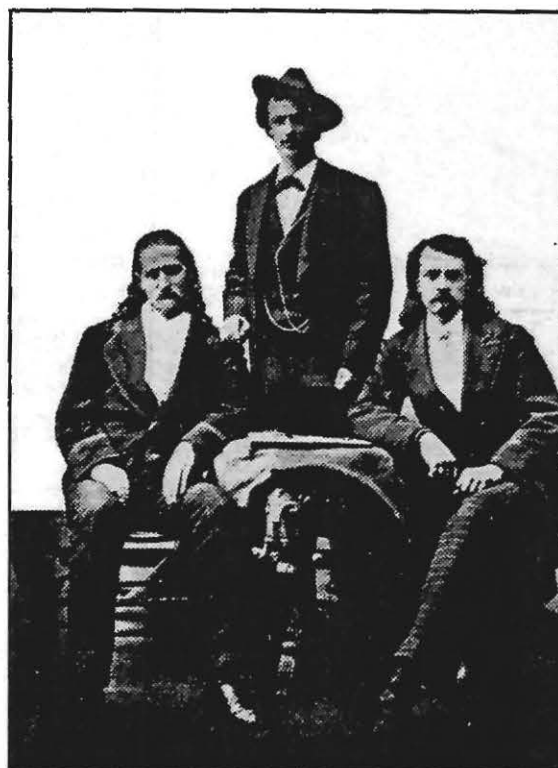
onto what hopefully one day will be the largest collection of original Texas Jack memorabilia under one roof. Who knows...maybe our children's children one day, will have the pleasure and pride of visiting "the Texas Jack Wing" in a western history museum! If Dennis Greene has anything to say about it, that dream will become a reality.



Dennis & Julie Greene

NOTE: All the items and pictures shown throughout this article are original, and are from the Greene collection.

Dennis Greene would welcome and appreciate any information concerning location of original Texas Jack memorabilia that might be available for sale. Contact: D.J. Greene, P.O. Box 7587, Carmel, CA 93921. (408) 626-3924



"Wild Bill" (Wm. Hickock). "Texas Jack" (John L. 'Omohundro).
"Buffalo Bill" (Hon. Wm. F. Cody).

A FAMOUS AND FEARLESS GROUP.
Three Remarkable American Scouts who Have Had a Daring Career in the Far West.



Texas Jack

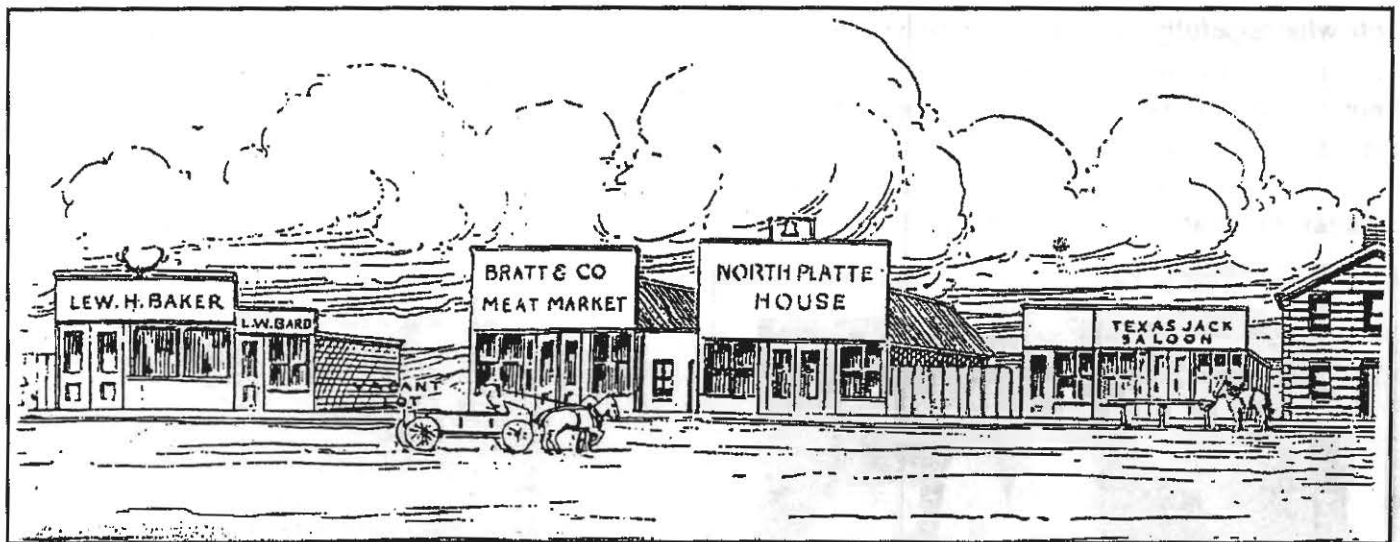
This remarkable group of scouts and hunters . . . could be produced nowhere by on our wide frontier. Hardy borders and daring pioneers, they bear the brunt of the danger and exposure that pave the way for the industrious settler.

"Wild Bill" (Wm. Hickock) was the most fearless and daring of the many scouts of the border. Powerful and determined, a most skillful rider, a marvelous shot with his revolver, his remarkable escapes, personal encounters with men as reckless as himself, would fill a volume. He was treacherously slain by one whom he had befriended, who crept behind him while he was engaged at a game of cards and shot him dead in cold blood.

"Texas Jack" (John L. 'Omohundro), another of the group whose tall form and cowboy attire was a familiar sight some few years ago on Park Row, in the city. Courteous of manner and pleasant of speech he was great favorite with his intimates. He married Bonfanti, the dancer, and died of consumption in Colorado.

Of "Buffalo Bill" (Wm. Cody), his services as scout and hunter, his well know duel with the Chief, "Yellow Hand," are too well know to need repetition. His Wild West Show has spread his name and fame all over the entire civilized world.

ED. NOTE: This copy accompanying a sketch of the above picture in an unknown newspaper was probably published sometime around the turn of the century. (Note that Texas Jack's name and that of Josephine Morlacchi are incorrectly recorded)



TEXAS JACK SALOON

This is one section of the somewhat fanciful panoramic drawing, nearly four feet long, purported to show two blocks on North Platte Front Street in the year 1870. You must imagine the viewer to be standing on or near the Union Pacific tracks, looking south. Off this picture to the left (or east) is Spruce Street, now Dewey. Also off the picture, to the right (or west), is Locust Street, now Jeffers. (See the map of North Platte in Yost's biography of Cody, page 107.)

A more accurate description of the drawing would have been: "Front Street in the 1870s." The 1870 census does list Louis Baker and Texas Jack as saloon-keepers; but "Doc" Carver, the famous marksman, and Bratt's Meat Market were later arrivals. Another late arrival was Cody's good friend George McDonald, who ran a store in Cottonwood Springs until 1872. (McDonald's house and store in North Platte appear in another portion of this drawing.)

However, one other building depicted in this part of the drawing was in fact on Front Street in the summer of 1870. The census taker listed as "Hotel Keeper" a 40-year-old Prussian immigrant named Landgraebler, whose place was not far from Texas Jack's saloon.

We are indebted to Mr. Vernon Yanney of North Platte for his kindness in making this drawing available to the "Scout."

THE TEXAS JACK SALOON: NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA, 1870

By Dr. Robert D. Pepper

When young John B. Omohundro came off the big Texas cattle drive, he settled down for a while on the Nebraska prairie, near the confluence of the north and south branches of the great Platte River, traditionally described as mile wide and an inch deep. "Here in Nebraska," says Herschel C. Logan, "Jack lived the carefree life of a plainsman, scout and hunter...." But, as we shall see, he was not quite so carefree as all that.

According to Logan, one reason — perhaps the main reason — Jack liked this region was that he had found a friend. Between 1869 and 1872 William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody was a scout and guide for army personnel at Fort McPherson: mostly the 5th calvary, who had their regimental headquarters at the fort from '69 to '71. Bill and Jack hit it off, even though they had fought on opposite sides during the Civil War, and though Cody had a wife and child, while Jack was still a bachelor. As Logan says, each man "saw in the other fine qualities to be admired."

During those years, the Codys lived in Cottonwood Springs, a small community adjacent to Fort McPherson; and Jack apparently lived there too — but not in 1870. That year, at least, he was in the slightly larger town of North Platte, some dozen or fifteen miles northwest as the crow flies, but more like twenty miles by the road. North Platte began as a division point on the Union Pacific tracks, which ran north of (and parallel to) the river. Cottonwood Springs and the fort were a few miles south of the river and to the east. Although North Platte is still there, all that survives of the other two communities is the Fort McPherson Military Cemetery, about five miles south of present-day Maxwell.

Nellie Snyder Yost, who knew that area well, says that after the cattle drive of 1869, Jack "stayed on in North Platte to tend bar for Lew Baker in one of the many saloons that ranged along Front Street." Then, "at the urging of Cody, [Jack] quit his bartender's job sometime in the winter of '69 and moved down to the fort, where he taught school for awhile."

Thanks to a coincidental pair of related discoveries, we now know that Jack stayed in North Platte beyond the winter of 1869-70, and that the following summer he had his own saloon there. One of these discoveries was made by Dennis Greene, while looking over his collection of Herschel Logan's papers. In 1952, an insurance man in North Platte (who was also a local historian) wrote to Logan, telling him that the historical museum there had a drawing of the Texas Jack Saloon, dated 1870. (See the illustration). But Logan either disbelieved that story or considered it injurious to Jack's reputation. In any case, he omitted it from his biography, *BUCKSKIN AND SATIN* (1954).

About the same time Dennis Greene was rummaging through Logan's papers, I was looking over the 1870 census records for Lincoln County, Nebraska. (These are available on microfilm in all Federal Archives and some genealogical libraries). Lincoln County, a large area stretching north and south of the Platte, included a number of frontier settlements on or near the Union Pacific tracks.

One of the census entries for North Platte shows John Omohundro, age 23 occupation saloon-keeper. Jack was apparently living in the saloon, along with an older fellow-Virginian, James Miller, who seems to have been his man-of-all-work. If Jack employed extra bartenders, they did not live on the premises.

Jack told the census-taker that although he had no real estate, he did have a personal estate worth \$350. That is probably why he promoted himself from bartender to proprietor. Jack knew his former boss, Lew Baker, was making money in the trade, and he wanted to do likewise. Baker, whose census entry is on the same page, reported

\$3,000 worth of real estate and personal estate worth \$800.

By contrast, down in Cottonwood Springs, Bill Cody reported neither real estate NOR personal estate. In fact, Bill and Lulu Cody were taking in boarders! — a fact not mentioned in any of the Cody family books or other biographies. Perhaps Jack eventually did teach school in Cottonwood Springs, though I'm inclined to be dubious. In August 1870, at least, the community already had a schoolmarm: the English-born Miss Emma Moon, age 28. However, with single women as scarce as they were on the frontier, Emma may have married, leaving an empty schoolroom until Texas Jack stepped in.

What kind of drinks were served in the Texas Jack Saloon? Hundreds of western movies have made us believe that real men drank only whiskey; but in fact gin and rum were as popular then as now. (Consider the old expressions "gin mill" and "the Demon Rum.")

Mixed drinks, too, were more common than is generally believed. "Cocktail," an American term, is nearly as old as our country. According to one volume in the Time-Life series "The Old West," Bill Cody's favorite drink was a Stone Fence: "a shot of rye and a twist of lemon in a glass of cider." (But in those days apple trees were scarce out on the prairie!)

Ironically, Ned Buntline, who later gave Bill and Jack their start in show business, spent part of his time as a temperance lecturer. He is said to have come to Cottonwood Springs for that purpose in the summer of 1869. Ned met Bill Cody there that summer, and he may have met Texas Jack then too. But one thing is certain: he didn't get either man to take the pledge!

STUART OMOHUNDRO SUBCUMBS

Stuart Wallace Omohundro, grand nephew of Texas Jack passed away at age 62, on October 12, 1993 in Encino, California after an almost two year battle with brain cancer.

He is survived by his wife Astrid, son Stephen Omohundro and daughter Heather Gilbert, his mother Luverne Omohundro, brother John B. Omohundro, Jr. and sister Julie Greene.

Stuart was one of the original Charter members of the Texas Jack Association, and was present at all of the Association round-ups since the first one in 1980, with the exception of 1992 in San Antonio which his illness prevented him from attending.

He will be sorely missed by all his family, friends and members of the Texas Jack Association.



(Left to right): Elisha Green (son-in-law of Eliphalet Remington - the gun manufacturer), Texas Jack, Scott (the hatter), Buffalo Bill, Eugene Overton (a restaurateur). Photo, courtesy Buffalo Bill Historical Center.

Many newspaper articles were written about Texas Jack and Buffalo Bill in the various cities that they visited while touring with their stage show. However, the following, which appeared in the Thursday, July 17, 1873 edition of the OMAHA DAILY BEE, caught them on their way out west for a hunting expedition with their friends.

Their first successful season had just ended in June, and the second season was to commence in August. It is interesting to note how lucrative this new "show business" proved to be for the two scouts. However, it is evident that what they enjoyed most was to be hunting out on the plains - which is where they were headed on their one month vacation from acting.

"THE SCOUTS OF THE PRAIRIE" Return of Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack

Yesterday William Cody, otherwise known as Buffalo Bill, and J. B. Omohundro, or Texas Jack, arrived in the city from the east, accompanied by E.B. Overton, of Brevoort Place, New York; E.P. Green of Amsterdam, N.Y., and Scott, the hatter, of Chicago.

Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack as is well known, have been treading the sensational stage for the last six months, and have in that short time made comfortable fortune, which they intend to increase to mammoth proportions during the fall and winter season. These two noted scouts and hunters left Omaha in November last for Chicago, and there met Ned Buntline, who has originated the idea of a sensational drama, in which these celebrated men of the plains should take the leading parts. Bill and Jack arrived in Chicago on Thursday; Buntline wrote the play, "THE

SCOUTS OF THE PRAIRIE," on Friday in four hours; on Saturday, the troupe consisting of twenty-six previously engaged persons, had a rehearsal; and on Monday evening the play was produced at Nixon's Amphitheater to a crowded house. After playing a week with immense success, the company went to St. Louis, and thence to all the principal Eastern cities, the final performance being given at Port Jarvis, New Pork (sic), two weeks ago. Everywhere they were greeted with immense audience, especially in Philadelphia, where Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack drew larger crowds than ever did Forest in his palmiest days.

Buffalo Bill, Texas Jack and Ned Buntline each cleared \$30,000 during the past eight months. Bill thinks this more remunerative than the honor of being a Nebraska

Legislator, while Texas Jack is of the opinion that financially it eclipses buffalo hunting and scouting. Bill has invested some of his money in a place at Westchester, twenty miles from Philadelphia, where his family now reside. Both men are looking exceedingly well, and sport considerable jewelry, especially Jack, whose immaculate shirt bosom is ornamented with a \$1,200 diamond pin, and diamond studs, and he wears a \$1,000 chain and a magnificent gold watch, while his little finger on his left hand is encircled by a valuable diamond ring. During Jack's trip in the East he was presented with a \$650 breech-loading gun, by the Earl of Dunraven. He also has a splendid rifle, given to him by Remington, the great manufacturer. Buffalo Bill also had one given him by the same gentleman. Jack has the most beautiful six-shooter that was ever manufactured in this country. It is of the Smith & Wesson pattern, and is over a foot in length. Jack, by the way, is the best shot with a six-shooter now living. Mr. M.H. Brown, of this city, in whose employ Jack was for two years engaged in driving cattle from Texas to the plains, testified that he has seen him shoot with a six-shooter the heads off of four quails out of five, while they were running in the grass. Jack will hunt the buffalo with the six-shooter in a match with any man for any sum from \$1,000 to \$5,000. He acknowledges that

Buffalo Bill is the best shot and hunter in the country with the rifle, but he claims to rank next, and to be the best shot with the six-shooter.

The whole party left on this morning's train for Ft. McPherson, from which place, on the 20th, they intend to go on a grand buffalo hunt. The buffalo hunters are all well armed, and will be absent on the hunt for two weeks.

Next fall Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack will appear in an equestrian drama entitled "ALEXIS IN AMERICA," the grand feature of which, we suppose, will be the Grand Duke's buffalo hunt when he was in Nebraska. It is quite possible that the Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack combination will play two nights in Omaha early in the fall.

"Texas Jack," before his departure for the West, presented the city editor of the BEE with a handsome and valuable rifle cane, manufactured by Remington. It will carry a ball thirty yards with great accuracy. It is loaded by unscrewing the handle and placing the cartridge in the tube; and it is cocked and fired by pulling back the handle, and touching a small spring. Besides being quite a novelty as a weapon is a very fine walking-stick. It will ever be retained by the recipient as a token of the friendship and generosity of the famous scout and hunter.



DASHING TEXAS JACK AND THE PEERLESS M' LLE. MORLACCHI ON STAGE WITH CODY AND HICKOK

By Sandy Sagala

This poster and the two ads incorporated in the accompanying article are from Omohundro and Cody's second season which commenced August, 1873. They had just split from Ned Buntline and Wild Bill Hickok joined them for this one season.



During the second season of Buffalo Bill Cody's theatrical tour, Texas Jack Omohundro and Mlle. Giuseppina Morlacchi again accompanied him on a tour of eastern cities. Wild Bill Hickok was asked to join them with the hope of increasing audiences and profits. It work.

The play offered from September 1873 through March 1874 was titled *Scouts of the Plains*. The plot, performed in four acts and filling 2 1/2 hours, and was basically this: The daughters of Henry Carter, a friend of the scouts, were kidnapped by the renegade Jim Daws. In tandem with savage Indians, Daws took the girls to the Indian camp. There, just as they were in danger of becoming squaws, the women were rescued through the brave deeds of our heroes. Scenes of bloody slaughter, near burning at the stake, and prolific gunplay emphasized the valor and true courage of Buffalo

Bill, Texas Jack and Wild Bill. Contemporary newspapers alternately praised and roasted the story line but none could dispute the drawing power of the western men.

Most evenings, the performance was opened with *Thrice Married*, a comedy starring Guiseppina Morlacchi, the new bride of Texas Jack. In every review that deigned to mention it, Morlacchi's talent was praised with uncontained enthusiasm. For her part, she assumed four different characters: Carlotta; Victorina La Page, with French song; Senora Norena Morana, with Spanish Dance; Guatavua Welling De Vere, with Hornpipe.

During the first week of September Hickok and Texas Jack joined Cody on stage in New York City. Jack gave exhibitions of lasso throwing. Several days later the trio was on the road west to the first stop in Columbus, OH. Conspicuous by the absence of her name in the ads preceding this show, Morlacchi did not rejoin the troupe until they reached Cincinnati. The *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* Noted on Sept 23 that although she had been scheduled to appear the previous evening and had not, she would definitely be there that night. On the 24th, the reviewer raved rhapsodically on her performance. "The versatility of this inimitable danseuse [sic] is beginning to astonish her admirers."

The next stop was Lexington, KY and the *Kentucky Gazette* of October 1, in remarking on the delight of the audience to the border life play, also advised that "Morlacchi is promised as one of the attractions, but she does not appear either on the stage or on the program." By the time the company reached Louisville two days later, however, she was credited with superb dancing and a fine performance by the *Louisville Courier Journal*.

The Indianapolis crowds, evidenced by the rave review in the *Journal* on October 14, found the evening's performance magnificent. "Mlle. Morlacchi began the performance...the lady delighted all by her artistic acting and singing and proved herself one of the best protean actresses. Her dancing was, of course, of the highest order of art. She ranks at the head of the ballet in America and her grace, beauty and talent are unequalled." Her handsome husband came in for his share of praise in the same review: "Texas Jack was greatly applauded. His quick, agile movements, earnestness of manner and rapid gestures could not but win favor. As the scout and lover, who dared all danger for the lady of his love, and like the Knights of old, won her who 'loved him for the danger he had passed,' he showed an aptitude and ability which all were not slow to acknowledge." The reviewer was also one of the first to notice that Cody and Omohundro had greatly improved in their new profession as thespians since the last time they had graced the city.

By contrast, the October 24 edition of the *Toledo (OH) Blade* criticized the troupe for being inferior to other companies which had appeared there. The reviewer thought the play only for the entertainment of those who delight in "blood and thunder literature." However, he made exception for Morlacchi whom he considered "independent of the 'Injin' business... for she is a pains taking and pleasing *artiste* at all times."

UNION HALL!
ONE NIGHT ONLY!
MONDAY NOV. 24, 1873.

THE ORIGINALS LIVING HEROES!
Links between Civilization and Savagery.
BUFFALO BILL!
 HON. W. F. CODY
 TEXAS JACK - J. B. Omohundro.
 WILD BILL - F. B. Hickok.
 A TRIBE OF WILD INDIANS.
 The "peerless" Dances and Actings, Mlle
MARILACCHI
 And a full Dramatic Company, in H. Robbins' thrilling play of
THE SCOUTS OF THE PLAINS.
 Admission, 25, 50, and 75 cents. Reserved seats at the hall at 12 o'clock on the day of the exhibition, with no extra charge.
 Nov. 23-24. J. H. RICKSBY, Agent

Four days later, the entire troupe was back in the good graces of the press for the *Cleveland Leader* found the entertainment "very pleasant.: Dashing Texas Jack, as he was beginning to be described in the news, was included with Buffalo Bill and Wild Bill in being described as "Extraordinary specimens of superior physical manhood, which, coupled with the romance of their deeds, their 'dangers by flood and field,' justly entitles them to the position they hold in the estimation of the masses."

Erie papers thought so too. The *Erie Morning Dispatch* of November 14 lauded the three gentlemen as "among the finest looking men on the Continent, each being above six feet in height and splendidly proportioned." This newspaper was the rare one which gave the plot of the play in detail. Morlacchi played a Comanche beauty who was discovered afterward to be one of the stolen girls whom the three scouts rescued.

Each newspaper of the period found a different aspect of the play or players interesting. The *Williamsport, PA Gazette and Bulletin* dated November 26 printed short biographies of the scouts for their readers' information. Texas Jack "is none the less to be praised for his prowess and daring. His has fought and traded with the Indians for years and years; lived months at a time in their villages, and rendered signal service in time of peace and war with the 'noble red men of the forest.' Volumes could be written of the scout's adventures, and none who really know him thoroughly attempt to rob him of one blushing honor. He belongs to a class of men justly termed 'the link between civilization and savagery,' men who held their lives 'but at a pin's fee,' endured hardships and danger to protect the borders from renegades and savages and now travel to contrast city life with prairie existence..."

The *Easton (PA Daily Express)* on December 16 credited indi-

vidual members of the cast. "Texas Jack and Hickok are both large, powerful, fine-looking men and exhibited considerable ability in their respective parts...Texas Jack threw a lasso with some skill, and indeed, in all the scenes of the play in which he was prominent, added interest to their success." But "to M'lle [sic] Morlacchi belongs the greatest triumph of the evening, theatrically speaking. We have never seen a more exquisitely graceful woman...her every movement is perfect ease and beauty. As a dancer, we consider that the lady has no superior. Some of the steps executed last evening...were of the most difficult character. Indeed we have never seen a waltz entirely executed on the toes attempted by any other dancer...M'lle. [sic] Morlacchi received very justly a large share of the applause of the evening, and to its enjoyment contributed a goodly amount."

On January 6th, in Connecticut, the *Bridgeport Daily Standard* continued the biographies. "Texas Jack was born in Virginia, and is a...descendant of the once-famed Powhatan tribe, of the historical Pocahontas, and whose blood ran through the veins of Virginia's noble son, Randolph. As for Morlacchi, "This lady is the acknowledged Queen of Terpsichore, and possesses rare versatility, and being quite a linguist, will signalize here first appearance in Bridgeport by appearing in the farce of 'Thrice Married,' in which she will speak English, French, Spanish and Italian, execute some dances and sing a cavatina from Ernani."

Sometimes the newspapers gave us a peek at the daily lives of the characters. The *Troy (NY) Times* of February 25, quoting a Springfield paper, wrote that "Buffalo Bill may yet recover his lost gift from the Duke Alexis, as a pocket book containing a valuable pin and a receipt for \$100, given to W. Cody by J. Omohundro, was picked up by a little girl at Worcester Sunday, and handed to the police." The same paper remarked the next day that the "living heroes'...each received \$500 as his share of the profits each week" and "some weeks the dividend has been \$800." According to the *New York Clipper*, while in Troy, Texas Jack "bought a fine thoroughbred colt; very fast and promising of J.A. Morrison."

The *Schenectady (NY) Evening Star* on February 26, 1874 remarked that "Texas Jack...first became known by his exploits in the rebel secret service, and has since had a good many adventures in our own government's employ." In Albany, New York, the *Evening News* of February 27 emphasized that "their strong points are their splendid physical development and the way in which they handle those magnificent repeating rifles." The reporter preferred the opening play to main one: "the farce with which the entertainment opens is an unusually good one, serving especially to show the somewhat remarkable talents of

M'lle.(sic)Morlacchi. This lady...floated to this country in the great inundation of ballet dancers...She appeared in New York but her great success was in prim, proper, puritanical, Boston. She took the modern Athenians by storm, and the writer remembers seeing on one occasion the packed audience of the Theatre Comique, standing on their feet and throwing their hats in the air in a passion of enthusiasm over the wonderful *pas* and poses of the beautiful *danseuse*. Then she retired from the stage, bought a farm in Bilerica, a town near Boston, and turned practical granger, and the story is told of New York manager coming to secure her for an engagement and finding the queen of the footlights in the field digging potatoes. Then we heard of her with Ned Buntline's party and later of her marriage to 'Texas Jack.' And now we find her developed in to a sparkling *commedienne*,[sic] singing, acting and talking English with a pleasing accent, which captivates a like the parquette and the gallery."

The *Utica Daily Observer* of March 5 reported that the troupe was invited to visit the State Lunatic Asylum. While there the handsome scouts attracted much attention. "Texas Jack recognized a female patient who had been amused at examining his mammoth gold neck-chain about a year ago while in route to the Asylum. The recognition was mutual." Other females laughed at the scouts for "wearing such long-haired wigs."

WERTING OPERA HOUSE.
Friday & Saturday, March 6th & 7th.
 The Original Living Heroes,
BUFFALO BILL,
 (Hon. W. F. Cody.)
TEXAS JACK,
 (J. B. Omohundro.)
WILD BILL,
 (J. B. Hickok.)
 And the PEARLESS
MORLACCHI,
 In the New Sensational Play entitled
Scouts of the Plains!
 The performance will commence with the Peerless Dansuese and Pantomime Actress, Mlle MORLACCHI, in a Comedietta of three beautiful dances and will sing Cavatina from the opera of Ernani.
 Reserved seats for sale at Leiter Bros.' music store, commencing on Monday, March 2d. Prices as usual.
 HARRY MENNER,
 Business Manager.

Despite the enthusiastic crowds, Hickok, bored with show-biz, left the cast in Rochester, NY early in March. Cody and Omohundro finished the tour. By the end of the second season late in the spring of 1874, Texas Jack had increased both his talents in the theatrical realm and his bank account. He had become popular with citizens of many major eastern cities. His future success as a performer and manager was no doubt based on the knowledge and experience gained from his having accepted Cody's invitation to join him in the escapade known as *Scouts of the Plains*.

TEXAS JACK

By S. Bloom

ED NOTE: This article which appeared in GREAT WEST MAGAZINE in September 1974 was written by S. Bloom, and was one of many portrayals of Texas Jack's life published in western history periodicals through the years.



NED BUNTLINE • BUFFALO BILL • TEXAS JACK

It was nearly three in the morning when the bugle pealed out loud and clear at Fort Hays, Kansas, in 1869. It was an emergency call, generally indicating that hostile Indians were in the area. Settlers nearby were being peppered by a handful of Cheyennes, who were frantically firing their muskets in every direction as a means of showing their discontent. Their looting was interrupted by howling watchdogs.

Far in advance of the others, scouts James B. Hickok and Texas Jack rode headlong into the hostile group, their repeaters showering them with deadly fire. In the murky shadows the Indians must have thought the whole army was on their trail, as it hastened their retreat.

Back at the fort, Hickok extended his hand to Jack.

"Ya know, fella," he said, laconically, "you've got guts."

"You're no slouch with a rifle, yourself," replied Jack, his broad, goodlooking features breaking into a wide grin.

A new arrival at the fort, this was Texas Jack's first meeting with "Wild Bill" Hickok. Alike in many ways, they became fast friends, a friendship that lasted until Texas Jack's early demise.

Born and raised in Virginia, Texas Jack went West while still in his teens, reaching Texas on that long, lonely trip from his home armed only with a rifle, revolver, knife, a few camp utensils, and his instincts to guide him! In his later writings, Jack makes no mention of his adventures on that journey. Indeed, there are only meager accounts of the part he played after joining the confederacy at the outbreak of the Civil War.

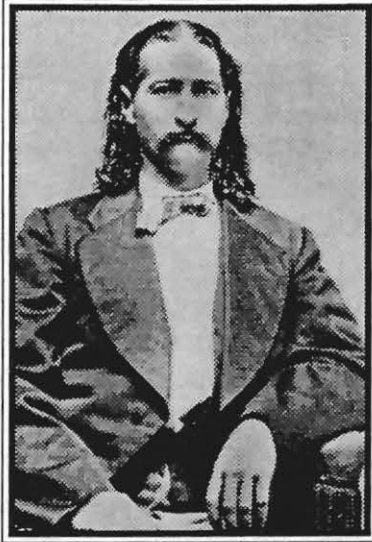
It is reliably reported, however, that Jack served as a scout for Major General J.E.B. Stuart, delivering a message only minutes before he was killed by an enemy bullet! Texas Jack had spied on General Sheridan's Cavalry as they were burning everything in sight on their march to Richmond. In attempting to intercept that march, General Stuart crept up to high ground for a better look at the situation. As he was about to leave, only minutes after handing the message handed him by Jack, he was shot down by a single blast fired by Private John A Huff, Company E, 5th Michigan Cavalry.

Scouting for the reeling confederate army at the close of the war, Jack went from one disaster to another. First at Dinwiddie Court House; then Five Forks; finally to the surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox.

Still young and headstrong, Jack headed back to Texas. And before long, was fighting Indians again! Raising

horses for herding and riding at one of the larger ranches (name unknown, one source indicating it was probably in the Panhandle), he constantly battled envious Indians who admired good horseflesh. With the Indians, horses were both a necessity and a status symbol. And if it could be achieved by stealing, so much the better!

Jack's instinct for following trails, coupled with his knowledge of firearms and how to use them, kept the looters at a safe distance.



On one sun-scorched afternoon in July, upon scattering a small band of rebels with a skillful display of deadly gunfire, he came upon a ransacked settler's home. Lying nearby were two prone bodies, that of a young man and woman, still gripping warm rifles. Racing inside, Jack caught sight of a small boy, no more than four or five, huddling down in a cut-out hole in the floor, trying desperately to hold back his sobs.

After lowering the two corpses into freshly-dug graves, Jack took the boy back with him to Fort Worth, making sure he was placed in good hands before riding on.

The terrified orphan had an interesting career, his brief history going almost totally unnoticed. Years later, in recounting his tale, this same young man assumed the name of his benefactor, Texas Jack, Jr. A decade after the death of the original Texas Jack, he became a famous showman, promoting his own circus.

It was in 1903, while producing "Texas Jack's Wild West Show and Circus," in Ladysmith, South Africa, a young man came by asking for work, claiming he knew a few fancy tricks with a rope. Hired on the spot, he was immediately billed as "The Cherokee Kid"- later known the world over as Will Rogers.

Writing from South Africa, Will said his association with Texas Jack, Jr., was the most important period of his life. In the Will Rogers memorial in Claremore, Oklahoma, a

review of the correspondence shows that this same Texas Jack was struck down by some unknown malady in Kroonstadt, South Africa, in 1905, buried a long way from his friends.

John B. Omohundro, the original Texas Jack, while in Texas, was rapidly becoming an expert cowboy. As he wrote later, it wasn't at all like riding the gravy train.

"Riding the Chisholm Trail," he wrote, "and then some, about two thousand miles, it took from three to six months to coax the cattle through wild, unsettled Indian Territory, through Kansas, Nebraska, Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, and some times as far away as California. A herd of about 3000 head needed a team of about 15 men to keep them in line, besides the driver and cook.

"After the cattle was broke in, we averaged from ten to fifteen miles a day. In clear weather! You have to sing them to sleep at night, and yell at the top of your lungs next day, for if they hear strange, outside noises, you sure as hell will have a stampede on your hands. One of the popular lullabies went like this:

Lay nicely now cattle, Don't heed any rattle,
But quietly rest until morn,
For if you skedaddle, we'll soon give you battle,
And head you as sure as you're born.

"Many fell on the trail, lying in silent graves. When a storm's comin' up, you know there's gonna be three thousand scared bovines on the warpath. In one flash of lightning, you'll see nothing but tails, come another flash, and there'll be nothing but horns coming straight for you! If you hadn't ever seen one, don't try, you'll sleep nights."

Jack made many trips over the Chisholm Trail, to Abilene, Kansas, first of the big cow-towns, and was getting bored with cowboy life.

He called it quits after driving a herd of cattle further north to Cottonwood Springs, Nebraska. This was more to his liking. There was frontier activity! The Union Pacific Railroad had only months before laying tracks westward across the state, Hunting guides were in demand. Indians were on the warpath, fighting the white man, or between themselves.

Mostly, the Sioux and the Cheyennes picked on the Pawnees, a peaceful people. They cultivated the land,



Texas Jack and his wife, Mlle. Morlacchi performed here for the last time in Leadville, Colorado in 1880

fished, hunted, and in general, rubbed shoulders with the white man. The army formed an Indian Battalion which included many Pawnee scouts. The bravery of these Pawnees between 1864-77 is too well documented to be related here. They were indeed an important adjunct in the winning of the west.

Texas Jack stayed at nearby Fort McPherson, where he ran into William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody for the first time. A firm bond formed between them that lasted through showmanship, hunting and scouting.

One of the oldest inhabitants, William H. McDonald, first white child to be born at Cottonwood Springs, and head of the McDonald Bank for many years, later recounted:

"Texas Jack and Buffalo Bill were alike as two peas in a pod. Both over six feet, about the same age, they had a great deal in common. They scouted and hunted together, always carrying on as if there were no tomorrow. Between them, they sure perked up Cottonwood Springs."

William's parents Charles and Orra McDonald, set up a

trading post consisting of general store, blacksmith shop, post office and hostelry, to provide a way station for weary settlers pushing westward. The Oregon Trail, Overland Trail, and the Pony Express wore out the same path going past the springs. To cool off from the scorching sun, these hardy pioneers would shade under the lonely Cottonwood Tree overlooking the springs. Too, Charles McDonald was able to influence the War Department to set up the McPherson military post, named after General James B. McPherson, killed at the battle of Atlanta.

Bill Cody was already widely known, having been blown out of all proportion by Ned Buntline in his dime novel stories. When the Kansas Pacific Railroad began to lay tracks through Central Kansas in 1876-68, they paid Buffalo Bill \$500 per month to hunt up

meat for the construction crews. One of the men made up the verse that caught on and made the name Buffalo Bill a standout in Western history.

Buffalo Bill, Buffalo Bill
 Never misses and never will
 Always aims and shoots to kill
 And the company pays his buffalo bill.

In 1872, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia arrived with a party of friends in Cottonwood Springs for a buffalo hunt. General Sheridan immediately appointed Cody as guide. Included in the Royal Hunt were such notables as Sheridan, Colonel George A Custer, Lt. Colonel James Forsyth, and Lt. E.M. Hays, Fifth Cavalry, among others.

Because of Cody's reputation, newspapers everywhere printed only his name as scout. But in Buffalo Bill's own words, "the Royal Party started south with Texas Jack acting as guide until such time as I could overtake them."

Records in the National Archives reveal that Texas Jack was hired as a scout at Fort McPherson at the rate of \$5.00 per day. This lasted only until Cody received a letter



November 1, 1993

Dear Friends:

A Great Big THANK YOU to all you wonderful folks who have supported, with your annual dues, the Texas Jack Association for the last decade. Without YOU there would be no SCOUT, no bi-annual conventions, no continuing efforts to help preserve the story of Texas Jack Omohundro for history. Without YOU - all these goals and achievements would long ago have been discontinued and forgotten.

As you know, even though there are dedicated individuals who give of their time to make ^{THE} business of the Association happen, there are tangible costs which we must all share...such as the production and mailing of the SCOUT.

Annual dues are due in January, and this appeal to you is to send in your check now. Before the rush of the holiday season crowds it out of your mind.

Did you know that MORE THAN 50% OF OUR ORIGINAL MEMBERSHIP ARE NOT PAYING THEIR DUES? This has put us into a precarious situation.

If you are one of those who has let this important matter slip by in past years, PLEASE join with us again in our efforts to keep the Association alive. The comparatively small contribution is of tremendous importance to the Texas Jack Association.

If you have never joined the Association, this is the time to do it! There are few causes more worthwhile.

Won't you mail your tax-deductible check today? Believe me, it is genuinely needed, and I assure you it is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kitty
Kitty Van Lew Pelkan
President

P.S. We regret that due to financial constraints, this can be the only "bill" sent to you. Also, future issues of the SCOUT can not be sent to non-members. So please use the coupon below and mail it with your check right away! THANK YOU.

NAME (S): _____ PHONE: () _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ . Payment for the following:

_____ 1994 Annual Dues (Adult: \$15.00 ea. Child: \$10.00 ea.)	\$ _____
_____ Past Dues: For year (s) _____ (OPTIONAL)	\$ _____
_____ Extra Gift: (Tax deductible)	\$ _____
	Total Enclosed \$ _____

MAIL TO: R.C. OMOHUNDRO, Treasurer. P.O. Box 5 Fork Union, Virginia 23055

from Colonel E.Z.C. Judson (better known as Ned Buntline), requesting him to come east to headline a show he had in mind. When Cody asked him to come along, Jack replied, "Why not?"

At this time, Buntline spread the name of Texas Jack across the pages of the dime novels. And he became an instant hero. It also brought out many who claimed to be the original Texas Jack. On researching all available sources, these claims proved to be fallacious.

Jack and Cody arrived in Chicago on December 11, 1872. Greeted by Buntline, they were hurriedly sped to the Amphitheater to be introduced to the manager, Jim Nixon, who was pleased to have two such prominent people on his show. But when he found out the next day that Buntline hadn't even written the script, much less looked for a cast, he blew his top! The show was to open Monday, and here it was Thursday!

"You double-crossed me, Ned," stormed Nixon. "This show could never get together on time. I'm cancelling it!" "Tell you what," said Ned blithely, "I'll rent it for the week. What do you want for it?" "It's worth more," said Nixon, "but I'll take \$300."

Immediately paying him off, Buntline went into seclusion, writing the whole play in four hours! And gave it the title of "SCOUTS OF THE PRAIRIE." He then ran off to round up a cast! He even succeeded getting the noted ballerina, Mlle. Morlacchi, to join him.

But when he handed the script to Jack and Cody, they stared at it blankly. In desperation, Ned took them in hand, coaching Cody, and had Mlle. Morlacchi do the same with Jack.

Yet, the play was an instant sensation! It didn't matter one iota that they couldn't act; the sell-out crowd came from everywhere just to see their fictionalized heroes in person!

A short while later, Buntline dropped out, and James B. "Wild Bill" Hickok joined the group. But he was eased out in a hurry when he took his acting too seriously, and almost shot up the place! Besides, he hankered to go out west again. Two years later he came to sudden end at Deadwood, South Dakota! He was shot in the back while playing cards, by one Jack McCall.

On August 31, 1871, Texas Jack married his leading lady, Mlle. Josephine Morlacchi. The Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser reported, "John B. (Texas Jack) Omohundro, famous scout, was married yesterday to the celebrated danseuse, Mlle. Morlacchi. They then immediately took off to Buffalo where the charming ballerina is appearing this week."

Mlle. Morlacchi was born in 1846, at Milan, Italy. A child prodigy at six, she later appeared at the Royal Theatres of Barcelona, Spain, and Her Majesty's Theatre. When she came to America she was the toast of the town!

Soon after their marriage, Jack and his wife, Mlle. Morlacchi, formed their own company. While playing at the Grand Central Theatre, in Leadville, Colorado, Jack contracted a heavy cold. This was to be their last performance together.

On Monday morning, June 28, 1880, Texas Jack died of pneumonia, and was laid to rest at the Evergreen Cemetery, in Leadville. He received a soldier's funeral, a martial salute was fired over his grave. Buffalo Bill paid this tribute to Texas Jack when he visited the latter's gravesite:

Texas Jack was one of my dearest and intimate friends. He was a Virginian by birth, but the blood of the Powhatan Indians coursed through his veins. Instead of this board that marks his grave, it will be replaced with a suitable monument, more fitting to the stature of this gallant fighter."

The marker gives his age as 39, but in reality Texas Jack was only 33. Mlle. Josephine Morlacchi died shortly after, of cancer, at the early age of 39.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

We would appreciate knowing how you feel about the newsletters that you have been receiving. Do they contain information that you find interesting? Or not? Do you have any suggestions or contributions? If so, we welcome them, and we need them!

Texas Jack Association, INC.

C/O Peggy Greene, 18329 Loxahatchee River Rd.
Jupiter, FL 33458

from the Editor's Desk...



I have been excited about this special double issue since Julie and Dennis Greene volunteered to share their collection of Texas Jack articles and artifacts in the Scout! Their knowledge of Texas Jack is extensive and their collection museum-worthy. The Association is lucky to have them both as active members.

Some of the articles published in the Scout are taken directly from 19th century publications and it must be remembered that attitudes and relations between the different races have changed dramatically since Texas Jack's time. As a U.S. government scout in the late 1800's, Texas Jack encountered many Indians in hostile situations. It was a time of increasing settlements by the white man upon land considered private hunting grounds by some Indians. Many stories glorified and exaggerated

the exploits of the "Indian Fighters" in dealing with these situations. Texas Jack, like other prairie men, faced daily threats from the rugged wilderness and wild animals as well as from the hostile Indians. These strong brave men played an instrumental role in opening up the western frontier to settlers and they are an important part of our history. We reprint relevant articles because of their historical value and not the sentiments expressed.

Remember, next summer is the Texas Jack Association convention in Lowell Massachusetts. A date is being set right now and Henry Kucharzyk and Peter Alexis are setting up a wonderful schedule of activities for us all! Look for more information on Lowell and the convention is the next issue of the Scout.

Until next time,

RICK BROWN
57 FAITH DRIVE
WATSONVILLE, CA 95076

Kitty Wyche Pelkan
6021 - 37th Ave. S.W.
Seattle, WA 98126

