

The TEXAS JACK SCOUT

VOLUME II No. 3

JULY 1986



TEXAS JACK REMEMBERED ON MEMORIAL DAY

Texas Jack did not go unremembered on Memorial Day, 1986, thanks to the thoughtfulness of Leadville, Colorado resident Sherrill Warford.

Sherry wrote to the Texas Jack Association in April as follows: Each Memorial Day, I clean up and decorate several abandoned graves in Leadville's Evergreen Cemetery. I rake Texas Jack's plot but it seems sad to me that there is never a flag or flowers to brighten that spot.

If your Association would care to provide

flags or flowers, I would be pleased to tend to the decoration of Texas Jack's grave."

As distance was prohibitive in sending material to Sherry, we sent her a check for \$20 to do what she thought fit (within that budget) in the way of decoration.

Here is a picture which Sherry took and sent to us. In the accompanying letter, Sherry writes: "I am enclosing four photos...showing the headstone without decoration, the others with wreath of yellow roses ('as in 'The Yellow Rose of Texas') that is tied with a yellow ribbon ('Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Old Oak Tree', or 'She Wore a Yellow Ribbon'). I was surprised by the number of old songs that came to mind and prompted my choice of colors, etc. You will note that the blue streamers at the bottom of the wreath carry the message 'Gone But not Forgotten' and 'Texas Jack Association.' Also there are two U.S. flags. "Much to my dismay, I discovered that Confederate flags are not available in Colorado, so perhaps, if you wish to repeat this event next year someone can send the appropriate flags to me prior to Memorial Day."

"I hope," writes Sherry, "that what I was able to do this year is sufficient to your wishes. I personally, am pleased that Mr. Omohundro, a man of international fame, has finally been remembered on Memorial Day and I thank the Association for financing the remembrance."

The Association is most grateful to Sherry for her concern, and for the generosity of her time in decorating the grave.

We look forward to the day when John B. (Texas Jack) Omohundro will be well known to all patriotic Americans, and will take his rightful place among the great men who were true exponents of the values which made our country great.



The President's MESSAGE

One hundred and thirty-nine years ago this month, John Omohundro (later to be known as "Texas Jack") entered this world and left his mark. He squeezed a lot of activity into his short 33 years, playing his roles of Confederate soldier, teacher, cowboy, U.S. Government scout, journalist, actor, hunter and husband. He didn't stay still long, living in Virginia, Florida, Texas, Nebraska, Massachusetts and Colorado..and sundry points in between.

He lived life to the fullest, perhaps squeezing into it much more than the average person who lived twice as long. He did indeed leave his mark, and we will endeavor to keep the memory alive.

Happy 139th, Jack, wherever you are!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Philip Trutter (Springfield, IL)	Jul 2	Julie Omohundro (Durham, NC)	Aug 25
Elmer Omohundro, Jr. (Diamond Bar, CA)	Jul 9	Douglas Ellison (Lemon, SD)	Aug 25
Carole Greene (Huntington Beach, CA)	Jul 18	Virginia Van Lew (Fort Worth, TX)	Aug 28
Richard Omohundro (Goochland, VA)	Jul 20	Alice Marie Roggie (Indianapolis, IN)	Aug 30
Lorn M. Shields (Albuquerque, NM)	Jul 21	Luverne Omohundro (Westminster, CA)	Aug 9
James Farnsworth (Evanston, IL)	Jul 22	Malvern Wyche (Virginia Beach, VA)	Sep 2
Randy McKinney (Santa Barbara, CA)	Jul 27	LeRoy Wigenbach (Leadville, CO)	Sep 3
Tom Cooke (Goochland, VA)	Jul 31	Ben Wyche, Jr. (Arlington, VA)	Sep 5
John T. Omohundro (Hannawa Falls, NY)	Jul ?	Barbara Switzer (North Platte, NE)	Sep 6
Carol McLaughlin (Virginia Beach, VA)	Aug 2	Jack Omohundro (Panorama City, CA)	Sep 7
George Vance (Jersey City, NJ)	Aug 3	John Nees (Scottsville, VA)	Sep 11
Frank Sullivan (Springfield, IL)	Aug 6	Jim Omohundro (El Paso, TX)	Sep 11
Betty Wirtz (Springfield, IL)	Aug 9	William Thomas (Smiths Grove, KY)	Sep 11
Clay Hartley (Burbank, CA)	Aug 16	Dennis Greene (Palos Verdes, CA)	Sep 17
Tipton Omohundro (Littleton, CO)	Aug 16	Edward E. Woods (Springfield, IL)	Sep 22
Lydia Omohundro (El Paso, TX)	Aug 18	Julie Greene (Palos Verdes, CA)	Sep 25
James Biebinger (Asheville, NC)	Aug 19	M.H. Omohundro, Jr. (Richmond, VA)	Sep 26
Virginia O'Quinn (Lebanon, MO)	Aug 19	Elmer Omohundro III (Diamond Bar, CA)	Sep 27
Mark Stern (Springfield, IL)	Aug 20	Malvern Wyche, Jr. (Hatteras, NC)	Sep 27
Rick Coble (Indianapolis, IN)	Aug 23	Richard E. Omohundro (Littleton, CO)	Sep 29
Betty Johnson (Tampa, FL)	Aug 23	Kendel Cornwell (Redondo Beach, CA)	Sep 20
Lee Roy Maxey (St. Louis, MO)	Aug 24	Hubert Harrison (Mooresville, IN)	Sep 30

Gifts From Members

The TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION acknowledges with much appreciation our wonderful members who have sent monetary gifts. Needless to say, the money was greatly needed to help continue the functions of our organization.

A big THANK YOU to each of you!

M.H. Omohundro, Jr. (Richmond, VA)	\$ 250.00
Dennis Greene (Palos Verdes, CA)	200.00
Carole Greene (Huntington Beach, CA)	20.00
Fred Hayles (Westminster, CA)	25.00
Angela Wyche (Virginia Beach, VA)	70.00
Dick Omohundro (Goochland, VA)	50.00
Richard C. Omohundro, Jr. (Columbus, OH)	15.00
Frank Sullivan (Springfield, IL)	10.00
J. Weston Phillips (Richmond, VA)	40.00
Margot Kramer (Springfield, IL)	10.00
Alex Hendrie (Glendale, CA)	25.00
Edward E. Woods (Springfield, IL)	5.00

The pictures shown in this issue of Texas Jack's grandfather, mother and of his father, step-mother and step-brother (M.H. Omohundro), were provided by John and Edna Nees of Scottsville, VA. John's grandmother is Arabella Omohundro Nees, sister of Texas Jack. In upcoming issues, we will print some of the other photographs sent to us by John and Edna.

THE TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Texas Jack, Western Scout

This article appeared in the January 19, 1986 issue of EMPIRE MAGAZINE supplement to the DENVER POST. It was written by Mike Flanagan, whose delightful and interesting style first caught our attention with his article about Ned Buntline. Texas Jack, we are sure, would have enjoyed this rendition of his story as much as we have. Reprinted with permission of the author.

* * * * *

"Come, you red fiends, come!" he said bitterly. "Yell your loudest while you can, for more than one will yell his last ere Texas Jack goes under!"

Ned Buntline

Texas Jack, The White
King of the Pawnees

For a brief time, Texas Jack was one of the biggest celebrities from Out West. An 1873 playbill raves: "The Originals! Living Heroes! Representative Men! Buffalo Bill! Texas Jack! Wild Bill!" His status over the years has dropped to relative obscurity, making one of the first Western heroes one of the most forgotten.

John Burwell Omohundro, Jr., was the fourth child born to Virginia settlers J.B. and Catherine Baker Omohundro, in Fluvanna County on July 26, 1846. His mother was French and his father could trace his family tree back to Pocahontas's father, Chief Powhatan.

In his youth, Omohundro craved the outdoors, becoming a crack shot and an excellent horseman. At age 16, probably sensing he would never get anywhere with the sobriquet of "Virginia Jack," the young man set his sights for Texas.

Where Omohundro actually landed never has been documented. All that is known is that he worked on a Texas ranch, learning to rope and brand with the best. In 1863, the 17-year-old enlisted in the army of the Confederacy and served for the duration. After the war, he tried to get back to the West by boat, but was shipwrecked on the coast of Florida. Here he worked for a year teaching school, until he had enough funds to get to Texas by land.

Omohundro received his famous nickname after making a cattle drive to Tennessee. When the dusty trail boss arrived with beef on the hoof in a small town, a crowd gathered.

"Where you from, stranger?" called a voice.



Western hero Texas Jack was an Easterner at the start.

"Texas."

"What's your name?"

"Jack."

With a loud hurrah for "Texas Jack," a star was born.

That star was nurtured under the guidance of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, whom Omohundro met while working in a bar in North Platte, Nebraska. Cody persuaded Jack to join the royal hunt of Russia's Grand Duke Alexis in January 1872. Following that frolic, Omohundro worked as the white guide for the Pawnee Indian summer hunt. Next, Cody convinced Texas Jack that he could parlay his scouting career into theatrical stardom.

Texas Jack and Buffalo Bill arrived by train in Chicago on December 11, 1872, to appear in a hastily written play by dime-novel superstar Ned Buntline. *The Scouts of the Prairie* opened later that month. The actors remembered none of their lines, but the play was a smash. Texas Jack celebrated the fifth day of his acting career by falling head over heels in love, not with the stage, but with the actress playing the Indian maiden Dove Eye.

Wyatt Earp — Buffalo Hunter

WYATT EARP was an American frontiersman and law enforcement officer, born in Monmouth, IL, in 1848. In 1876, Earp, who had been a stagecoach driver, railroad construction worker, surveyor, buffalo hunter, and policeman, became chief deputy marshall of Dodge City, KS, a lawless frontier town. Within a year, having brought relative peace to Dodge City, he moved on to Deadwood in the Dakota Territory. He returned to Dodge City in 1878, and in 1879 he settled in Tombstone, Arizona Territory. There he furthered his reputation as a gunfighter, first as deputy sheriff of Pima Co. and later as deputy U.S. marshall for the entire Arizona Territory. Earp and three of his brothers participated in the famous O.K. Corral gunfight in 1881, during which they killed several suspected cattle rustlers. Earp left Tombstone in 1882, to live the rest of his life in various cities of the American West, looking after his extensive real estate and mining interests. Since his death in 1929, he has become a legendary figure, hero of numerous Western novels, television programs, and motion pictures.

This is the story of Wyatt Earp, the Buffalo Hunter, and how his unique ideas revolutionized the established hunting methods of the day.

We are indebted to Angela Wyche for sending us the article from which these excerpts have been taken. It appeared in the October 23rd, 1930 issue of the SATURDAY EVENING POST.

HUNTER'S PROBLEMS IN THE SEVENTIES

With each buffalo hunter who set out for the range in the fall of '71, and who held himself in any esteem, there were customarily four or five four-horse wagons, with the driver of one acting as stock tender, camp watchman and cook; the other drivers were skimmers. The hunter must provide animals and wagons, and supplies to last his outfit for several months; the pay of his helpers was to be determined by actual count of the kill. Money received for hides and meat usually was divided into two equal parts; one went to the hunter, and from his share he paid all expenses; the second was again split into as many shares as there were drivers and skimmers, and each of these shares was paid to a helper as his seasonal wage. Thus the titular head of the party paid through the nose for adherence to the convention of the camps which held that no really topnotch buffalo hunter would stoop to such a degrading task as skinning the animals he shot. Caste, not laziness, devoured the hunter's profits.

Wyatt Earp examined closely the accepted methods for hunting buffalo on a commercial scale, and weighed them against possibilities which he analyzed with equal care. Questions asked of the most successful hunters gave him information for the first phase of enquiry; through his long months in the Indian Nations he had acquired a working knowledge of the buffaloes themselves, their peculiarities of habit and disposition, second to none.

The first flaw which Wyatt Earp believed he saw in the accepted practices was that the hunter usually bought his outfit on the assumption that he would kill 100 buffaloes

a day and sell each animal's hide and meat for from two to five dollars, depending upon the size and quality. Though it was true that one good hunter and four skimmers could dispose of 100 buffaloes a day, few outfits did so at any time, and none of them consistently. The traits of the game and the methods of hunting combined to hold the average daily kill well below fifty. Though "overhead" was a term with which Wyatt was not familiar at the time, he could see that the buffalo hunters' profits were heavily discounted by their recklessness in outfitting, and he governed his own plans accordingly.

Before buying his outfit, Wyatt devised what he believed to be a more efficient manner of buffalo hunting than the one generally followed. His first calculation was the cost of a season's hunt, his final one the difference between that figure and the amount he might receive for the animals he estimated he could kill. As he had also developed certain theories concerning methods of the actual killing, he set his mind to a course of action to which he adhered rigidly as long as he pursued the buffalo herds.

Again and again in the folklore of the Old West, a similar attitude on Wyatt Earp's part toward problems of action where men were involved instead of buffaloes has been cited as proof of cold-bloodedness; most particularly during his Tombstone days. Actually, it was merely the application of his intelligence to any matter in hand. That this intelligence could function in the flash of a six-gun as effectively as with opportunity for deliberation, made it only more incomprehensible to his casual acquaintances.

In place of four or five wagons and twenty

WYATT EARP (from pg. 4.)

odd horses, Wyatt purchased one wagon, four sound animals for harness and one which he was to ride. He then engaged as driver an experienced skinner who was to work on a straight profit-sharing basis. Wyatt was to finance the hunt and do the shooting; his helper was to drive team and cook, and, greatly to the disgust of the old hands who made his acquaintance, Wyatt was to assist in skinning and butchering. At the end of the hunt, Wyatt was to keep the team and wagon; the expense for all other items was to be deducted from the gross payments and returned to him, and he and his helper were to share equally in any net profit.

Veteran hunters attempted to dissuade Wyatt from his proposed violation of the conventions by pointing out that the best he might hope for under his system would be a kill of twenty-five buffaloes a day; it would be physically beyond two men to handle a greater number and at the same time care for their camp. When these advisers learned that an average daily kill of twenty formed the basis of the young man's plans and that, furthermore, he intended to hunt at some distance from the established camps of large parties, they turned to warning him that neither he nor his skinner would live long enough to cash in on their hides, as they would certainly fall prey to Indians, who periodically raided the range after white men's scalps rather than buffalo hides.

EARP'S PLAN

When informed that in place of the cumbersome Sharps 50-120-550 rifle which was the buffalo hunter's stand-by, Wyatt intended to kill his buffalo with a shotgun, the old-timers abandoned all argument. One thing for which the veterans failed to give Wyatt Earp credit was that in his own mind he had a carefully considered reason for every move he made. There would be several thousand hunters on the plains, he knew; and the majority would operate from closely adjoining camps, in which they concentrated for companionship and protection. This would tend to keep the buffalo herds migrating steadily and so waste time for the hunters, who had to move camp in keeping pace with them. It would also interfere seriously with the individual hunter's opportunities to shoot from a stand, the one certain means to profitable skin hunting. He estimated, moreover, that a greater net profit was to be gained from skinning twenty to twenty-five buffaloes a day with the expenses of but two men to be deducted from sixty to seventy-

five dollars received for the work than there would be from an average kill of fifty animals which brought about \$150, but with expenses for five or six men and the initial outlay for horses and wagons to be met from the hunter's share of such takings.

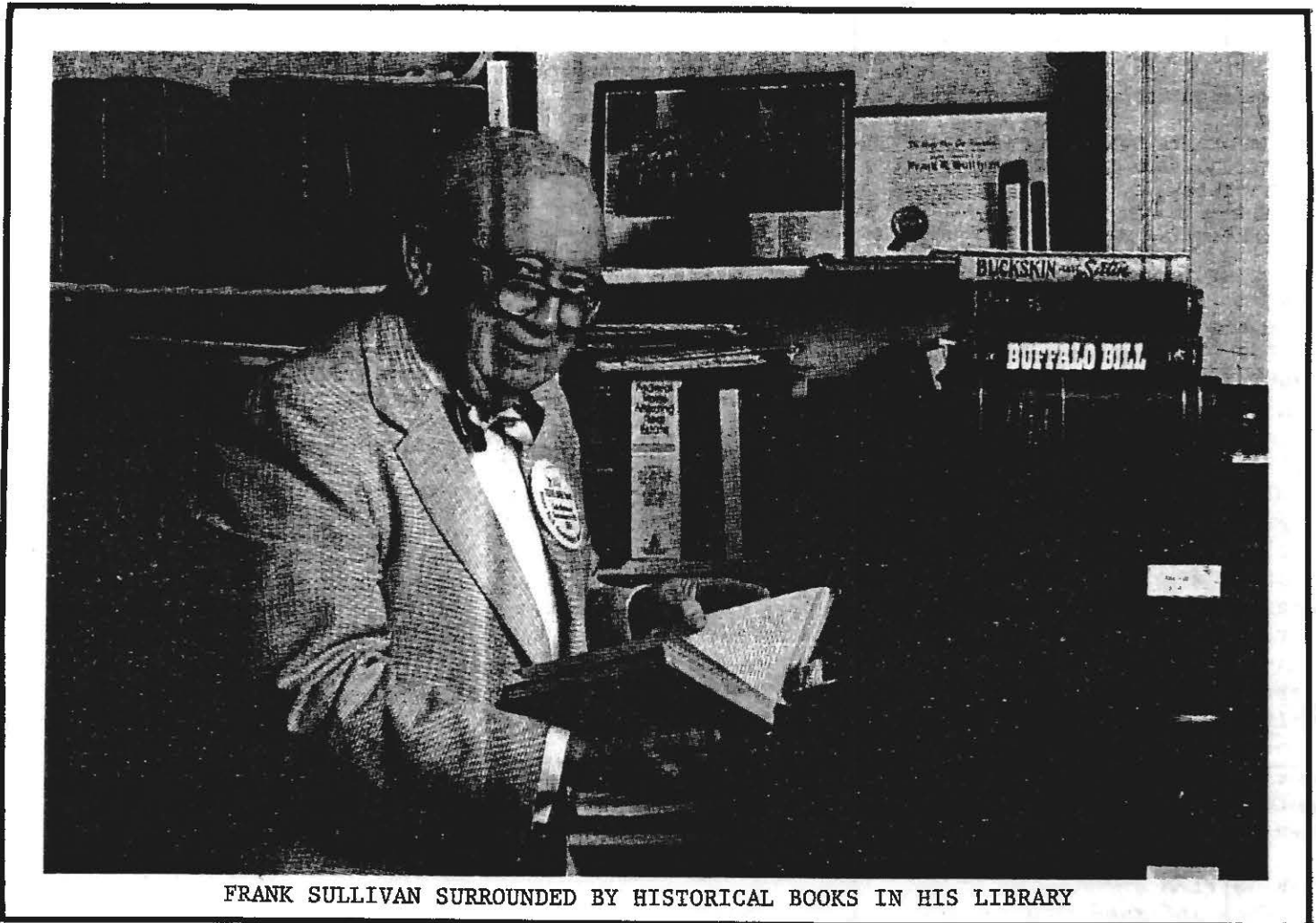
As for Indians, Wyatt was fully aware of the hazard they constituted for the lone hunter on the range, but to him they offered no greater deterrent than the possibility that he might be caught by the hoofs or horns of a stampeding buffalo herd. Face to face with either danger, he would follow his best judgment under the circumstances. Beyond that realization, he gave such matters no thought.

The problem of firearms he settled within his own experience. The heavy Sharps - the rifle weighed more than twenty pounds - which all right-minded buffalo hunters carried, fired a slug of lead two inches in length, a half inch in diameter, weighing eight to the pound. The complement to the piece was a shooting rest - two sticks tied together, X-fashion, which were set in the ground when the hunter got within range of a herd and which supported the barrel of the Sharps while the marksman aimed and fired. The Sharps was unquestionably the best weapon then obtainable for long-range buffalo shooting, but notable among its numerous drawbacks were the cost and difficulty of supplying proper ammunition and the established fact that the rifle's accuracy was seriously affected by continued rapid firing. It was an accepted rule that the user of a Sharps rifle under the conditions imposed by buffalo hunting with profit in view, must run a water-soaked rag through the barrel after every second or third shot and then let the barrel cool, to keep the weapon from overheating to the point of distortion.

In common with all who knew buffaloes from contact with the herds, Wyatt was well acquainted with their idiosyncrasy of stampeding at sight or scent of a man on horseback, but ignoring one on foot as long as he refrained from violent movement. He intended to make use of this characteristic in reaching shotgun range of herds which he sighted. He purchased a twelve-gauge, breech-loading gun, with apparatus for reloading shells, and this, with a supply of powder, lead and caps, was to constitute his hunting arsenal. He molded his shot to load a single one-and-one-half-ounce ball to the shell, and reverted to his earlier experiences for the conviction that at any range under 100 yards he could score as accurately with his shotgun as any rifleman.

The Man Who Rescued Texas Jack From Obscurity

This article about our founder, Frank M. Sullivan, appeared in the Springfield IL, STATE JOURNAL REGISTER on June 16, 1985. It was written by Dave Bakke.



FRANK SULLIVAN SURROUNDED BY HISTORICAL BOOKS IN HIS LIBRARY

The year is 1908. A crowd is gathered in the cemetery at Leadville, CO. The great frontiersman Buffalo Bill Cody is there. Cody, wearing his trademark buckskins and with his long, gray hair flowing in the wind, addresses the crowd:

"My friends," he begins, "perhaps many of you do not know this man whom we have gathered to honor. No doubt you would like to know something of him who was one of my dearest and most intimate friends. John B. Omohundro, better known as 'Texas Jack,' was a Virginian by birth..."

Frank Sullivan, 76, was born in the same year that Cody gave his eulogy for his dead compadre. Though Texas Jack had been dead for nearly 30 years before Sullivan was born, their names are linked forever.

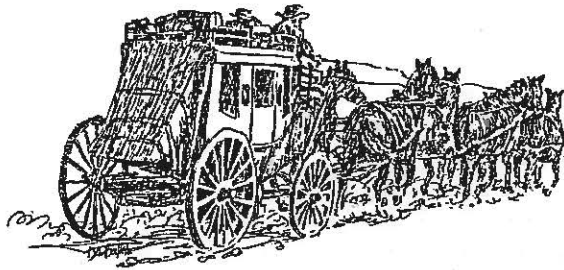
Sullivan, a Springfield attorney, first came across Jack's name in a book by the Ir-

ish Earl of Dunraven. Dunraven had traveled the Old West extensively - a pass in Yellowstone Park is named for him - and wrote several books about his experiences. Dunraven's account of meeting Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack stirred Sullivan's interest.

Sullivan learned that Jack was a hero in sensational dime novels that featured titles like "The Mustang King," and "The Lariat King" Western writer Ned Buntline, Cody and Texas Jack played to full houses across the country in a Wild West show written by Buntline. "The usual amount of shooting and whooping, scalping and dying etc., took place and filled the house with burnt powder and unbounded applause" said one reviewer.

Writers used terms like, "The White King of the Pawnee," "The Gallant Scout of the Prairies" or "The Renowned Indian Fighter and Buffalo Hunter" to describe Jack.

A VISIT TO ...



THE TABOR OPERA HOUSE, IN HISTORIC LEADVILLE, COLORADO.

H.A.W. Tabor built the Opera House in 1878. After the success of his mines Tabor put some of his fortunes back into Leadville. The Opera House was one of them. The Opera House opened its doors in November of 1879, bringing many fine performers to Leadville. In 1893 President Cleveland secured repeal of "The Sherman Silver purchase." This repeal forced Tabor to go broke. The bank which Tabor owned closed its door - the Opera House then became the Elks Opera House.

Today, the Tabor Opera House in Leadville is one of the top historical attractions in Colorado. It is rich in the culture of a fabulous age and one in which the visitor is transported back to the glamor of a time when men's lives were often ruined by ill fortune or they zoomed to the heights of a vast wealth. This was the case of the builder of the Opera House, Horace Tabor, who found both fortune and misfortune in the silver mines of Leadville.

In its hey day, many famous stars traveled to Leadville. They were paid handsome salaries and basked in the adulation given them by the entertainment-starved people who had silver to spend lavishly.

When visitors come to the Opera House they do not merely stand at a barred doorway. Literally speaking, they are invited to attend the "last show" in the famous building. From the moment the visitor enters the two wide doors leading into the Opera House and into the foyer with its wooden floor and wide stairs leading upwards, he senses a strange feeling. He passes the original cashier's cage, with its counter worn by the thousands of silver dollars laid upon it as admission. Large framed photographs, autographed by renowned actors and actresses of the legitimate stage, hang on the high walls. The pictures are in beautiful condition and are a treasure in themselves.

One steps into the aisle for a "look see" at the theatre itself. It is a never-to-be-forgotten feeling. The stage, with its footlights, large curtain and painted backdrop, is a sight to remember. The balcony still holds the ornate seats of "Andrews make" upholstered in Victorian plush. The visitor is guided down the aisle and to backstage for a view of the myriads of cables, ropes and flats. He may then walk to the center of the stage. Looking toward the empty seats he will realize that he is standing on the very boards where the great performed. The guide points out the "square" in the floor used by the great magician Houdini.

Then follows the eeriest experience of all. Guests are taken down dusty stairs to the dressing rooms which are furnished with antique furniture. The carpet is threadbare, worn by the feet of the troupes. Smaller cubicles were for lesser entertainers. Trunks and stage props are stored about. One learns that facilities for an artist's world during show time must have been very meager.

As one returns upstairs he feels he is far removed from the world of today. He cannot escape the feeling of having actually make a visit into the past.

Esther Norman
"NATIONAL PRESS WOMAN"

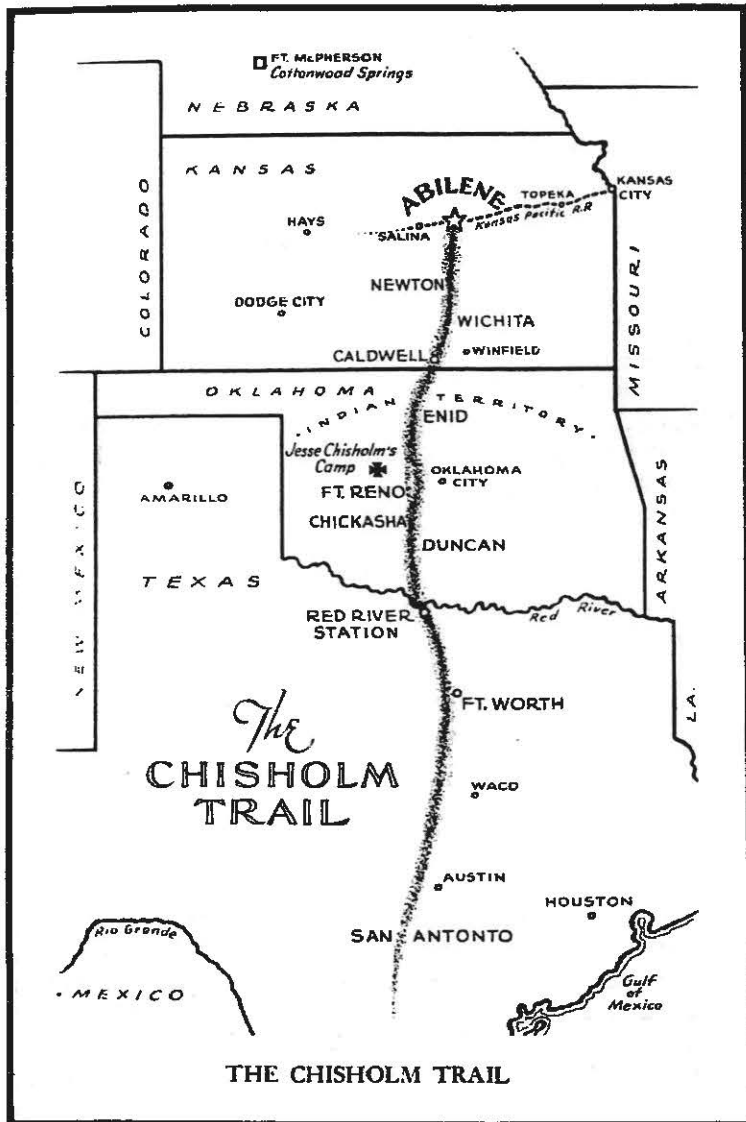
The "Silver Circuit" out of New York employed the very best available from the New York stage. Twenty passenger trains served this area. Those miners and patrons wishing to attend the finest of productions were brought to town by ore wagons, mule teams, burros, bob sleds, and by delivery boys with horse-drawn express wagons from Oro, Finntown, Adelaide, Evansville, Stumptown and Stringtown.

Because of wet paint on the seats, the irate Mr. Lou Docstader, scheduled to play the opening night, had to give preference to the
(continued on page 14)

TABOR
OPERA
HOUSE



Chisholm Descendant — Another Trail Blazer



Jesse Chisholm was born in 1806, or thereabouts (records were not too reliable in those early days of the American pioneer) in Tennessee. His father was Scottish and his mother was a Cherokee Indian.

In his youth, he accompanied one of the Cherokee migrations westward, and eventually settled at Camp Holmes in Oklahoma, on the Canadian River. He was fluent in several Indian languages, and he acted as an interpreter and mediator in many conferences between the Federal government and the Indian tribes of the Great Plains. He soon became active as a trader.

After a brief period as a representative of the Confederacy during the Civil War, Chisholm settled among Indian refugees in Kansas. Later he moved westward, settling near the mouth of the Arkansas River.

In 1865 he undertook a trading journey southward from this region to the upper Washita River, in what is now Oklahoma. The route that he traveled soon became famous as the Chisholm Trail, which figured prominently in the development of the cattle-raising industry of the western plains.

Acclaimed in story and song as the most famous cattle trail of the Old West, it extended from around San Antonio, Texas to Abilene, Kansas, a distance of over six-hundred miles.

How many cattle drives Texas Jack made to northern states over the Chisholm Trail during his nearly three years in Texas are not recorded. From his own writing it is logical to assume that he made several trips into Central Kansas when Abilene was

the end of the cattle trail and "king of the cow-towns."

TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION member, Phyllis Chisholm, whose husband is the great grandson of Jesse Chisholm, shared with us the following newspaper account written about their son Paul. It was published in the Pueblo Colorado Chieftan, on Friday, July 10, 1970:

CHISHOLM'S DESCENDANT

FRISCO BOY, 15, RIDES OLD TRAILS

By Lacy Humbeutel

One can see almost any type of conveyance in the woods on a weekend, but Paul Chisholm of Frisco and his red horse, Toby, were outstanding.

A year ago Paul promised his aunt and uncle in Socorro, NM, that he would visit them this summer.

At 15 years of age, he takes after his great-great-grandfather Chisholm, a Cherokee Indian who helped blaze the famous trail across Oklahoma and Kansas.

Paul was dressed in western clothes, an old slouch hat and a bright orange poncho. Toby, the horse, had all the trappings of an old prospector's burro, minus a cook-kit

which he had rolled on. Paul now cooks in a tin can.

As Toby munched on potato chips and lush green grass, Paul said he dined on beans, jerky, clam chowder, soup and orange juice. He appeared to be well fed.

He turned down a good steak dinner as he had to get on to Bonanza, 9 miles away. Scorning highways, he travels the old trails. The weekend found him on the Silver Creek road which turns off from Poncha Pass and up an old stage coach road to Bonanza.

"Any message, Paul?"

"Sure. Let my Mom know where I am."

* * * * *

Writes Phyllis: Paul ramrodded his trip from his own initiative, but it affected (positive- continued on pg. 14

The American buffalo is back!

By Robert A. Weaver, Jr.

No animal is more American than the native buffalo. When Christopher Columbus first sailed to North America, as many as 60 million of the bovine animals may have been grazing throughout the United States and Canada.

But to be correct, the American buffalo is neither a breed of cattle nor is it a buffalo. Technically speaking, the true buffalo is another species altogether made up of animals not native to this continent. The American buffalo is really a bison. And no one really knows how the bison came to be called a buffalo. But the name stuck, and it now conjures up the image of a huge, shaggy, horned creature being chased across the plains by wild Indians or by Buffalo Bill.

Stories of how once immense buffalo herds blackened the plains and sustained a good life for the Indians are well known. And most Americans also know how the greed of hunters and the westward movement of the railroads and settlers almost led to the bison's extinction.

But today, the vanishing breed is vanishing no longer. In fact, the American buffalo is making an impressive comeback. After reaching a low in the 1880's of about 540 animals in the United States and 250 wood buffalo in Canada, they now number approximately 75,000 in the U.S. alone. In addition, they are being raised in every province of Canada and in Germany, Japan and New Zealand.

A publication of the National Buffalo Association credits Michael Pablo of Montana, Colonel Charles Goodnight of Texas, C.J. Jones of Kansas and Fred Dupree of South Dakota with saving the American buffalo from extinction by nursing along their own herds. William Hornaday, Ph.D., president of the New York Zoological Society, and Martin Garretson, secretary of the American Bison Society, are given credit for publicizing the animals' plight. They succeeded in getting national and state parks interested in building up their own herds.

By the 1920s and 1930s, park herds had shown important increases in numbers. Places such as Custer State Park and Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota, Yellowstone Na-



Once nearly extinct, buffalo herds now are flourishing.

tional Park, the National Bison Range and a few Indian reservations then had enough surplus animals to provide to other interested parties. By the 1950s and 1960s small private herds could be found in many parts of the United States and interest began to develop in commercial uses for bison.

Buffalo meat was enjoyed by early settlers and is still considered by many to be delicious. It is more naturally tender than beef and is preferred in taste tests. Ounce for ounce, buffalo meat has fewer calories than beef and according to recent nutritional research, contains 25 percent more protein and is about 25 percent lower in cholesterol.

The National Buffalo Association says that although raising buffalo is not for everyone, it does have some advantages over raising cattle - once you get over the bison's unpredictability, that is!

The association says bison need little care. "They seem to be endowed with instincts for survival that cattle lack. They can survive storms that would kill most other large beasts. And they can have, and care for, their young in subzero temperatures and in blizzards."

Bison also gain more weight on less food and can use rougher pastures and terrain than cattle: they have fewer calving problems and produce at least twice as many in their breed-

WYATT EARP (from pg. 5)

Wyatt waited in Caldwell until the large parties of hunters were well on their way to intercept the herds then migrating southward across the prairies. When he did leave, he knew the locations of the principal camps and, by keeping south of the Arkansas River and west to the Medicine Lodge, was able to avoid the expeditions which, by their size and activity, kept the buffalo constantly on the move. The wisdom of his course was borne out by the fortune of his hunting.

WASTEFUL SKIN-HUNTING PRACTICES

"To understand why I outfitted as I did, and why I held away from the beaten track," Wyatt explained, "it is necessary to know something of buffalo peculiarities and of the exact methods employed in killing them for the hide merchants. The earlier white hunters had followed the Indian practice of shooting buffaloes from the back of a horse galloping full-tilt at the edge of a stampeding herd. In skin hunting on a wholesale basis this did not pay. Not so many animals could be killed on the run as by shooting from a stand, and the carcasses of those that were killed during a run would be strung out for miles over the prairie, this last making a lot of travel for the skimmers, with the added chance that some of the hides might be missed or spoil before they could be taken. Also, every buffalo left alive would be stampeded clear out of the country in a day's hunt, and the hunters would have to move camp or wait for another herd to come along. All of which meant wasted time.

MIGRATING HERDS AND HUNTERS

"Buffaloes did not graze in the closely packed herds numbering thousands of head; they scattered over the prairie in small bands, twenty to two hundred in a bunch, with ten, twenty or one hundred yards between bunches. Strictly speaking, all the animals within a range of fifteen or twenty miles might belong to the same herd. A hunter would drag his Sharps to a rise of ground giving a good view of the herd, select a bunch of grazing animals to work on, set his rest sticks in the ground, and start shooting. His aim was to hit one of the animals on the edge of the bunch - the leader, if possible - just back of the foreleg and about one-third of the way up the body. If the slug went true the animal would drop in his tracks, or, at most, walk a few steps and fall. Strangely enough, the buffaloes paid no attention to the report of the rifle and

very little, if any, to the one that had fallen.

"To be at all successful the hunter had to be a dead shot, to kill every time that he fired, and if he was that he could continue to drop his game until some buffalo still on his feet chanced to sniff closely at one that had been shot. Then it was up to the hunter to drop the sniffer before he could spread his excitement over the smell of blood. If he could do this the slaughter might continue, but eventually the blood scent became so strong that several buffaloes noticed it simultaneously. These frightened animals would start bellowing and pawing, their alarm would spread to the bunches nearby, and suddenly the whole herd would stampede. The hunter could kill no more until he found conditions suitable for another stand."

"Aside from the constant menace of Indians, the greatest danger in a buffalo hunter's life came when the herds start the stampede after a stand. No man could guess in what direction the animals would run, or what might stop them in their mad rush away from the blood smell that drove them fairly insane. As a rule, the hunter worked up on his game from downwind and had his saddle horse picketed just back of the rise from which he shot, out of sight and scent. When the buffaloes started to run, the hunter made for his horse. Once in the saddle, he was comparatively safe. Sometimes his horse would catch the excitement and break away before the hunter could reach him. Then, if the herd was headed in his direction, the man on foot was doomed unless he could call into play some ruse that would split the herd, change its direction, or get him out of its path."

"My system for hunting buffaloes was to work my way on foot nearer to the herds than the rifle users liked to locate. The shorter range of my shotgun made this necessary, of course, but, on the other hand, I could fire the weapon as rapidly as I wished without injury to it. I planned to get within fifty yards of the buffaloes before I started shooting, and at that range picking off selected animals would be easy. I would shoot until I had down all that the skinner and I could handle. I believe I could offset the danger of a stampede by finishing my killing before the animals smelled blood and by working the herd away quietly in the direction I wished it to go. I would stand up and wave my coat, and do so quietly if I got them started before they scented the blood which excited them. Then the skinner and I would get to work. In practice, my idea worked out exactly as I had calculated it would."

FRANK SULLIVAN (from page 6)

Old photographs show him standing tall with his hat tilted at a rakish angle.

One newspaperman said:

"Hundreds of incidents could be recited of Jack's skill as an Indian fighter, and his wonderful exploits would fill a volume. His appearance is decidedly prepossessing, his frank, laughing countenance, his wealth of dark, curly hair, and his merry, hazel eye make him a general favorite with the fair sex, and coupled with his fine physique and immense strength constitutes him a prince among men."

Texas Jack died of pneumonia in 1880 when he was only 34 years old. After a big funeral on the stage of the Tabor Opera House in Leadville, he was buried in the local cemetery.

"Some people think if Texas Jack hadn't died so young, his name would have been better known than Buffalo Bill's," Sullivan says.

Sullivan has always been interested in history, having served as president of the Sangmaon County Historical Society and as chairman of the Springfield Historical Monuments Commission.

The year 1980 marked the 100th anniversary of Jack's death. Sullivan decided it would be a good time to revive the name of Texas Jack. He contacted the Leadville Chamber of Commerce, but they weren't even sure who Texas Jack was, much less being aware that he was buried there. But Sullivan persuaded them that a "Texas Jack Day" would be a boon to the community as well as a tribute to a real Western hero.

"I thought there should be some kind of observance," Sullivan says. "He had been remembered by a very few people."

As part of the centennial observance, Sullivan founded and became the first president of the Texas Jack Association. By chance, he had met a descendant of Texas Jack's in Boston and together they helped plan the memorial observance.

On June 28, 1980, the Texas Jack Association had its day in Leadville. Members met at the Tabor Opera House for speeches by Sullivan and Nellie Snyder Yost, author of a biography of Buffalo Bill. Afterwards, they laid a wreath on Texas Jack's grave.

There was another meeting of the association last year in Cody, WY. Sullivan retired as president at that meeting. He keeps a scrapbook in his office with newspaper clippings of the memorial observance and correspondence from other association members.

The next meeting of the Texas Jack Assoc-

iation will be in North Platte, NB, the town where Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack met.

"Jack was an old friend of mine and a good one," Buffalo Bill said at the cemetery that day. "Instead of this board which now marks his grave, we will soon have erected a more substantial monument, one more worthy of a brave and good man. May he rest in peace."

True to his word, Buffalo Bill replaced his friend's wooden marker with a granite stone honoring Texas Jack.

* * * * *



RICHARD OMOHUNDRO, SR.
Grandfather of Texas Jack

The Colonel®

by Herschel C. Logan



Sum folks take life so seriously you'd most think they 'xpected t'git outta it alive.

If ignorance is bliss then I cal'ate a lotta o'us are covered with blisters.

I cal'ate sum folk should hev a speedometer on their mouth ...so they wouldn't 'xceed th' speech limit.

Professor Tame's Image of Old West

KITTY WYCHE sent us this newspaper article which she clipped out of the Feb. 14, 1986 issue of the VIRGINIA BEACH LEDGER STAR. It is an Associated Press release written by Lee Mitgang. The TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION has been in touch with Professor William Gillette, who was happy for us to re-print it here for our members.

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J.--Most cowboys were lousy shots. The streets of New York were meaner than the dusty paths of Dodge City. And "heroic" Wild Bill Hickok was fired for incompetence as marshal of Abilene.

Sorry, but Rutgers University history Professor William Gillette is aiming to shoot down time-honored, Hollywood-bred myths of the Wild West.

His class, "Cowboys and Indians," has grown into the most popular history course on campus since Gillette first offered it six years ago, despite its unenticing hour of 7-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays.

On a recent rainy evening, hardly a seat was empty in the 300-seat auditorium as Gillette strode to the lectern in a red checkered shirt, blue jeans with a thick leather belt and his trademark: a straw cowboy hat.

As an added touch of atmosphere, he hung up a 19th century ad for Levi's Saddleman Boots and Jeans and began his lecture on cattle towns and the decline of the open-range cattle industry during the 1880's.

Gillette, a graying 52-year-old Connecticut native and Civil War historian, says his love affair with the West dates back to the 1950s when he spent his summer breaks from graduate school picking peas in Washington.

His weekly lectures are deliberately witty and iconoclastic, followed always by a classic Western film. But Gillette insists that "Cowboys and Indians" is "serious, revisionist history."

He assigns his students Western novels with a ring of authenticity, like "The Ox-Bow Incident," "The Big Sky" and "Tsali."

"It must be said in all candor that the history of the West has had its problems," Gillette says. "It has been concerned more with stereotypes than with accuracy."

The Wild West, Gillette says, just wasn't that wild.

Other historians have tried to set students straight on Western myths and realities. But on eastern campuses especially,

such scholarship hasn't been taken seriously enough, Gillette argues.

"We have a conception of the West that Hollywood has inflicted on us," he says.

Movies and television paint the old cow towns that grew up after the Civil War as violent and lawless. In fact, Gillette says, "the West was quite peaceful."

"The extent of homicides was exaggerated," he said.

A recent lecture on cattle drives and cattle towns examined the role of saloons and brothels in the West.

Western saloons, whole names ranged from the ironic Little Church to the more accurate Road to Hell, were the "message centers" of the West, Gillette told his students. There, cattlemen drank themselves silly, got into lying contests or pie-eating contests, listened to politicians pander and preachers preach, and, above all, found willing women after lonely months on the range.

Yet for all the rough edges, Western towns were very much a part of the Victorian age, Gillette said.

"Cowpunchers were most respectful of 'ladies,'" he said. "If a woman kept her place, she was respected. But if she stepped off her pedestal, a cowboy lost his inhibitions in a hurry."

There were coy, Victorian names for the mostly black, Indian, Mexican or Chinese prostitutes who populated Western brothels. They were "shady ladies," "painted Jezebels," "strumpets," "calico queens," "soiled doves," "daughters of sin."

Cowtowns like Dodge City actually had very short-lived heydays. Most died out when poor weather, the coming of railroads and over-speculation virtually ended open-range cattle raising by the mid-1880s.

The cowtowns were ending, Gillette said, "but the legends were just beginning."

* * *

AMERICAN BUFFALO (from pg. 9)
ing lives. It's no wonder producers now market about 10,000 head a year.

With the recovery of the American buffalo assured and the commercial potential of the animal expanding, it seems only a matter of time until we can enjoy the buffalo steaks and roasts that the early pioneers valued. And who knows, perhaps buffalo burgers are not far behind.

TEXAS JACK (from pg. 3)

Guisseppina Morlacchi, a petite Italian knockout, was equally attracted to the rustic Texas Jack. Born in Milan in 1846, the professional dancer had come to America in 1867. Following her New York debut, one critic expounded, "She is...small, delicate, fiery, with a fine, little head and a luminous face, and she dances with all her soul as well as with all her body." Her legs were insured for \$100,000.

Texas Jack was not the first to try to win the charms of Morlacchi, but he was the most successful. (When one prospective suitor had slipped a \$5,000 diamond ring on her finger, she threw it back, saying, "Bah, I can earn that with one of my toes.") Throughout the "Scouts" tour, Jack and Guisseppina were inseparable. At the close of the season, Jack went hunting with Buffalo Bill. In August 1873 he journeyed to Rochester, New York, where he and Morlacchi were wed.

Texas Jack, by now a dime-novel star, toured in 1873 with Cody Bill in *The Scouts of the Plains*. It was similar to the original with one exception. The boys were dissatisfied with the way Buntline shared the profits and had replaced him with Wild Bill Hickok.

After the troupe dissolved, the Omohundros purchased a home in civilized Lowell, Massachusetts. Jack would depart from time to time, usually as a well-paid scout for the Earl of Dunraven. By 1877, the couple had their own stock company, appearing nationwide in plays such as *Texas Jack in the Black Hills!*

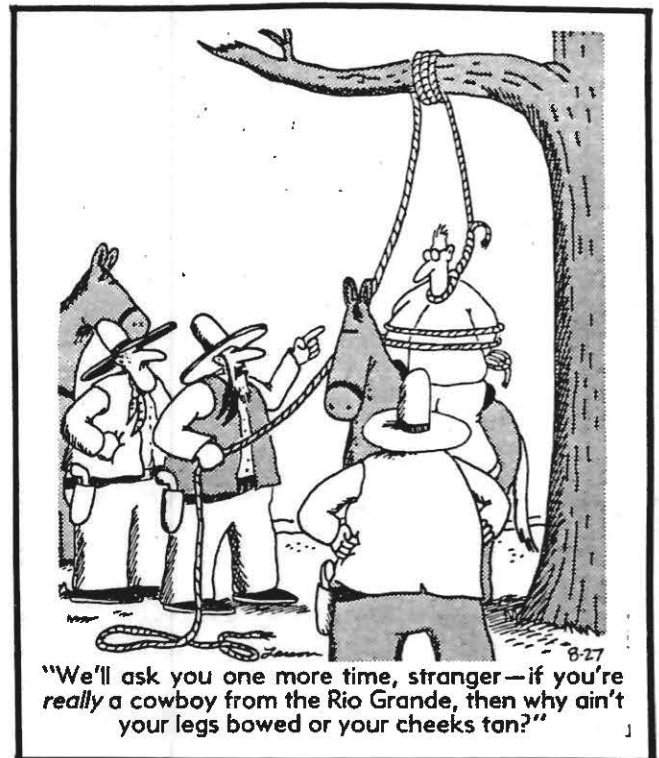
Omohundro also found time to write, usually for Eastern publications that devoured frontier features. Describing a stampede he once observed, "A thousand beef steers can rise like a flock of quail on the roof of an exploding powder mill and will scud away like a tumblewood before a high wind, with a noise like a receding earthquake."

The end of the trail came prematurely. At the height of their popularity, the Omohundros came to Leadville, Colorado, to entertain and cash in on the mining boom. They appeared at the Grand Central Theatre in the spring of 1880. It appeared they planned to stay - Guisseppina even opened a dance school. Jack's luck was about to run out, though. A chain smoker, he came down with a bad cold, which progressed into pneumonia. On June 28, 1880, Texas Jack was dead at 33.

At the Tabor Opera House funeral, the scout turned-actor was eulogized in grand tones. His fame began to diminish soon after, as other heroes rushed in to take his place.

Jack probably would have been philosophical about it all. He himself once wrote, "How many though, never finish, but mark the trail with their silent graves, no one can tell. But when Gabriel toots his horn, the 'Chisolm Trail' will swarm with cowboys. 'Howsomever, we'll all be thar', let's hope, for a happy trip, when we say to this planet, adios!"

* * * * *



NOTES...

...FROM THE WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE "ALUMNI GAZETTE, MAY, 1986:

There was a nice article in the *Richmond Times Dispatch* in Feb. 1985 about MALVERN OMOHUNDRO and his uncle, John Burwell Omohundro Jr. better known as Texas Jack - a contemporary and oft-times partner of Buffalo Bill Cody. Malvern is chairman of the board of directors of the Texas Jack Association, which is dedicated to establishing Texas Jack's "rightful place in the annals of history." According to the *Times Dispatch* and the Jan. 19 issue of the *Denver Post Magazine*, Texas Jack deserves to be remembered. Malvern's project seems to be an excellent one for his retirement years. Since he retired from developing subdivisions in Richmond, Malvern has taken many trips to Jamaica, Uganda, the Far East, Cody WY and Leadville, CO.

(continued from pg. 7 TAVOR OPERA HOUSE)
 Flora Dora Girls. Florenz Ziegfield's "Mam-
 selle Napoleon," starring Anna Held, was
 hailed as one of the greatest productions.
 The dazzling spectacle was unsurpassed in
 beauty of setting, glittering splendor (the
 real McCoy) and exquisite wardrobes.

Leading roles were sung and acted by those
 of the legitimate stage. Celebrated artists
 were Laurence Barrett (Shakespearian) sup-
 ported by Louis James...Helena Modjeska,
 Patte, Robert Mantell, Houdini, and Thurs-
 ton. No double was permitted to perform.

The acclaimed attractions were Sousa's
 Marine Band, the banks of Kreator and the
 Royal Canadians, Al Field's Minstrel, the
 Silver Slipper and Primrose Operettas, and
 The Bohemian Girl. The Columbia Opera dur-
 ing vacation months played for a week to
 packed houses for twenty-five to fifty cents
 admission.

Guided tours through this famous Tabor
 Opera House are conducted daily from May
 30th until October 1st, each year.

Although it was at Leadville's other
 popular theatre, THE GRAND CENTRAL THEATRE
 that Jack (Texas Jack) and his wife Jose-
 phine Morlacchi made their last stage ap-
 pearances, it was at the TAVOR OPERA HOUSE
 that Jack's funeral was held.

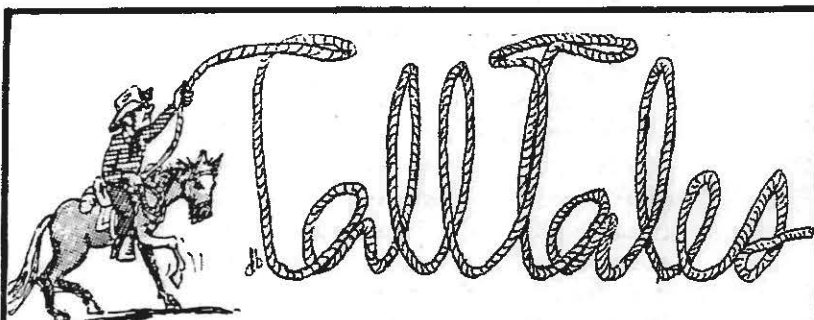
"Immediately upon learning of the death
 of Texas Jack, Edwin F. Knowles, manager of
 the new Tabor Opera House, extended his sym-
 pathy and offered the use of the beautiful
 auditorium for the funeral. The offer was
 accepted by the bereaved wife and friends,
 and there amidst the setting of the beauti-
 ful theatre, and in the West he loved, was
 conducted the final services for John B.
 "Texas Jack" Omohundro."



Texas Jack's Mother



Texas Jack's father, step-
 mother and step-brother,
 Malvern.



The speaker in the frontier town was long
 and tedious. When a cowboy in the audience
 drew his six-shooter and began polishing it
 on his pants leg and another cowboy followed
 suit, the speaker said, nervously:

"You aren't going to shoot me?"

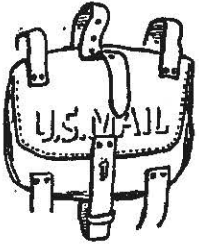
One of the cowboys replied:

"No, but if we can find the feller that
 sent you, we aim to shoot h-- outa him!"

... from page 8 (Chisholm)
 ly) the whole family. He still has the roving
 instinct - he is currently an officer in
 the Merchant Marine.

We are always eager to learn more, our-
 selves, about my husband's famous ancestor.
 My husband's father was raised on the Chero-
 kee reservation in Oklahoma - and one of our
 sons is named "Jesse Chisholm".

FROM THE MAIL POUCH . . .



I am writing to inform you that I managed to find a book at a used book store here in Asheville, NC entitled PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE WILD WEST by James D. Horan and Paul Sann,

printed in 1954 by Crown Publishers of New York City. It contains a very nice picture of Wild Bill Hickok, Texas Jack Omohundro and Buffalo Bill Cody on pg. 53. Also on page 54 is a short article where it tells about when Buffalo Bill brought in Texas Jack to star in SCOUTS OF THE PLAINS.

James L. Biebinger
Asheville, NC

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the fantastic job you are doing on the TJA Scout. It is always so interesting and I do enjoy the sketches (words as well as drawings!). I can only describe it as "absolutely smashing". The programme outlines for the meeting of the TJA at North Platte sound great. I am looking forward to it tremendously... (thinking of getting a pair of cowboy boots and a hat... I'll probably need a "seeing eye dog" as there would not be too much of a gap between the two!").

Audrey Kamm
Panorama City, CA

If Texas Jack had Indian blood, he must have picked it up on the trail!!

Dick Omohundro
Goochland, VA

I have a suggestion...perhaps I'm just an ignorant Englishman, but I know very little about the ways and customs of the Indian tribes with whom Texas Jack dealt. The (paper) makes references to the Kiowas, Shoshones, Cheyennes, Comanches, Arapahoes and the seven tribes of the Sioux, and not one of them means the slightest to me. Maybe for the next few issues it would print pieces about these groups for the unenlightened".

Alexander Masters
Totnes, England

I am a collector of (Antique firearms), Sam Colt signed letters, product literature for Colt and any related products. Also, origi-

nal autographs and photographs of outlaws and lawmen, pre-1900 Texas photographs, pre-1900 cowboy photographs and fine cowboy gear, Mexican war documents and daguerreotypes, Nineteenth century Texas maps, and advertising depicting cowboys, cowgirls and cattle industry. Got your name and address from Dr. Paul Fees (B.B. Hist. Center). I am interested in the Texas Jack Association. Please send info.

Dr. Johnny Spellman
Austin, TX

Does anyone know if it's possible to obtain a copy of the Omohundro Genealogical Record? I know it's out of print but I would like to get one.

Alice K. Omohundro
Roseland, FL

Ed. Note: We have received quite a few inquiries from members concerning the now out of print Omohundro Genealogical Record by Malvern H. Omohundro, and also for Buckskin and Satin by Herschel C. Logan. If anyone has any of the above books which they would like to sell, we will gladly put you in touch with those who wish to buy.

* * * * *

We have received an original copy of the now out of print "Lion" - 1970 Annual edition, which includes two TEXAS JACK episodes, from Malcolm Withers, Kent, England. Malcolm writes: "I came across this copy in a second hand market. The Lion comics are hard to get hold of. They went out of print 10 years ago. Perhaps this might be included in your museum when you start one."

We have also received a wonderful book from Edna Nees which she put together for us. It includes copies of original pictures which she has of Texas Jack, Jack's mother, father, grandfather and sister, as well as an autographed (to Texas Jack's sister) picture of Buffalo Bill. There are photocopies of the original Omohundro family bible in which all the family records were kept, and an update genealogy of Arabella Omohundro Nees' branch of the family.

THE TEXAS JACK ASSOCIATION IS MOST APPRECIATIVE OF THESE TWO GIFTS.

The Other Alamo, by Frank Lydic

Oh The Alamo of Texas!
How noted is its name!
There Crocket, Travis, Bowie,
Went from death to deathless fame.

All hail the one in Texas!
May its fame forever grow!
Though I relate the story
Of another Alamo.

It is a bar located
At the forking of the Platte,
Near where Famed McPherson,
On nearby hills once sat.

The little town of North Platte,
Had a bar named "Alamo."
There Texas Jack met Cody
Almost six score years ago.

Jack had trailed some longhorns
Up from Texas, so they say.
Fellow punchers rode back south.
Omohundro chose to stay.

Jack knew no regretting
As he watched his trail friends go.
For he soon found employment
At Lou Baker's Alamo.

There Cody was a patron.
Texas Jack was tending bar.
A friendship grew between them,
That only death could scar.

When they met in 'Sixty Nine,
No one ever guessed
That both of them would feature
In annals of the west.

Both won fame as horsemen;
As scouts and guides as well.
In the skills of frontier life,
They quickly did excel.

Soon, royalty from Europe,
And those of Noble Birth,

Praised both Jack and Cody,
As guides of peerless worth,

Also little time had passed
Before both those men,
Were named in gory stories
That flowed from Buntline's pen.

Then, on the eastern stages
The pair of them were seen.
They played to well filled houses.
There Jack met Josephine.

The two of them soon wedded.
Then Cody headed west,
To become a world famed showman
Of the frontier at its best.

He played through America,
And lands across the sea.
He played for homeless children
And he played for royalty.

Though Texas Jack stayed on the stage,
He often proved his worth
As guide for hunting parties,
For famed men of noble birth.

So Texas Jack and Cody
Went their separate ways.
Both gained fame that grew for them,
'Til the ending of their days.

This renown did not desert them,
When each drew his final breath.
Their stars keep shining brighter.
As each year has followed death.

Now we today, since lives of both
Have been long complete,
Cheer the bar that formed the place
For these two men to meet.

Then Praise the Texas Alamo;
But while praising, don't forget,
The one found in Nebraska,
Where Jack and Cody met.

WELCOME NEW TJA MEMBERS

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Richmond, VA 23226

ACTIVE: Jerry Alingh
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Littleton, CO 80123

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**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.

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Baby Buggy 1880s
USA74c



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