

# The TEXAS JACK SCOUT

Volume XII, Number 1

Winter 1997

## Leadville Highway Marker Dedicated

by Harvey Willard, Rick Omohundro, and Edna Nees



*Dedication of Texas Jack highway marker. Residents of Leadville pose with some of Jack's relatives.*

On September 17, 1996 the first of three Texas Jack highway markers was dedicated at Leadville, Colorado. This marker, erected at the southern entrance to the town on State Route 24, was donated by the Texas Jack Association. A second marker, to be located at the northern entrance to Leadville, also on State Route 24, has been donated by Edna Nees in loving memory of her husband John Nees. This marker will be erected as soon as a proper pull-off area is designated. The third marker, to be located at the entrance to Evergreen Cemetery, has been donated by Astrid Omohundro in

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Dear Fellow TJA Members,

Another year has arrived and I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.

During the Nashville Roundup members of the TJA voiced an interest in having a wrought iron fence erected around the lot of Texas Jack's grave site. During our visit to Leadville this past September for Texas Jack's marker dedication, Harvey Willard, Edna Nees, and I entered into a contract on behalf of the TJA to have this work done. This project, when completed, will be a reminder to all who visit Texas Jack's grave site that he was someone both loved and respected. With the new Texas Jack markers in place (thanks to Astrid Omohundro, Edna Nees, and TJA members), more people are likely to visit Texas Jack's grave site and every effort should be made to make this site as aesthetically pleasing as possible. This project, although worthwhile, is fairly expensive and I would encourage each member to send in a special donation so that the financial burden doesn't fall upon a few.

I have decided that the next Roundup will be held in Cody, WY in late June or July of 1998. This site seems to have more to offer than Oklahoma City as it pertains to Texas Jack's history, the weather should be much more pleasant, and Cody was the overwhelming choice of those at the Nashville

business meeting. I will inform you of the details as they become available.

Richard W. Omohundro  
President, TJA

P.S. Please don't forget to send in your dues. Your support is essential if this organization is to continue issuing the "Scout" and remain active in doing other special projects.

*The Texas Jack Scout*  
Volume XII, number 1  
An Occasional Publication of  
The Texas Jack Association, Inc.  
A Non-Profit Corporation

Subscription is included in annual membership dues of \$15.00. Contact

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Fork Union, VA 23055

#### OFFICERS

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Author of *Buckskin and Satin*  
Mrs. Nellie Snyder Yost (deceased), North Platte, NE  
Historian and author of *Buffalo Bill*



Leadville welcomes the Texas Jack Association!

### Highway Marker Dedication

(continued from page 1)

loving memory of her husband Stuart Omohundro.

Leadville really gave the Texas Jack Association the royal treatment, starting with a welcome banner located near the Chamber of Commerce building! The marker dedication took place on a cold windy day. The marker was unveiled around 10 am with the Mayor *pro tem*/Councilman of Leadville, Max Duarte, making the following speech:

"As Mayor *pro tem*, I would like to welcome the members of the Texas Jack Association to Leadville. Today we honor the memory of Texas Jack and his important role in the history of our country. As a scout, cowboy, or actor, Texas Jack was known to be 'brave, courageous, modest and true, mindful of the rights of others and always ready to lend a helping hand to, or champion, the defenseless.' In the late 1860's during a terrible drought in Tennessee, people were starving because supplies were virtually impossible to get. Texas Jack rounded up a large herd of cattle and with a contingent of cowboys traveled to Tennessee. Along the way, several bands of hostile Indians were met and seven cowboys were

killed, but Texas Jack completed his trip and provided much needed food to the people in a small Tennessee town. This story exemplifies Texas Jack's courage, and care for others. Along with Buffalo Bill, Texas Jack brought life to the spirit and excitement of the Old West. As stars of the 'Scouts of the Prairie' Texas Jack and Wild (*sic*) Bill brought the reality of the Old West to people throughout the country.

"Today this beautiful historical marker, as well as the markers to be placed at the north entrance to the city and the Evergreen Cemetery, will enable many people to also share

in the excitement and history that Texas Jack created. The City of Leadville is proud to dedicate these historic markers in the memory of Texas Jack and his role in American history.

"Once again, thank you to the members of the Texas Jack Association and in particular Mrs. Edna Nees for making these markers and this special day possible.

"At this time I would like to introduce Mrs. Edna Nees."

Edna Nees then proceeded to introduce our president, Rick (Richard W.) Omohundro, who made the following remarks:

"Good morning. My name is Richard Omohundro and I am the current President of the Texas Jack Association. I was elected to that office approximately three months ago at our Roundup in Nashville, Tennessee. As most of you probably know, the Texas Jack Association is a nonprofit organization that has as its primary goal to promote and spread the name of Texas Jack so that he doesn't become the 'Forgotten Scout' and to make his name better known throughout the country.

"As you probably know, there are two other plaques similar to this one to be erected here in

Leadville. This one was donated by members of the Texas Jack Association. The second one is to be erected somewhere on the north end of town. That marker was donated by Edna Nees in memory of her husband John who was a grand-nephew of Texas Jack. The third marker is to be erected at the entrance to Evergreen Cemetery and that marker was donated by Astrid Omohundro in memory of her husband Stuart, also a grand-nephew of Texas Jack.

"I would at this time on behalf of the Texas Jack Association donate these markers to the City of Leadville in memory of Texas Jack. I would like to thank the following people for making this project possible:

- Cathy Patti from City Hall
- Gloria Cheshier and Mary Lou Dwyer from the Chamber of Commerce
- Bill and Debbie Bailey of Bailey's Funeral Home
- Michael Omohundro
- Julie Greene
- Astrid Omohundro
- Harvey Willard, our past president and his wife Isabella and
- Mrs. Edna Nees.

"I would also like to commend the people of Leadville for their hospitality and willingness to help in this project. Everyone we have met has been very friendly and willing to go the extra mile to help us in any way they could and we certainly do appreciate it.

"If any of you are not Texas Jack Association members, we would be very happy to accept you as members. We will have our Roundup here in the year 2000, so I hope to see all of you then if not sooner.

"Again I thank you. We appreciate all the help from each of you."

The inscription on the marker reads as follows:

**"JOHN B. "TEXAS JACK" OMOHUNDRO  
1846-1880**

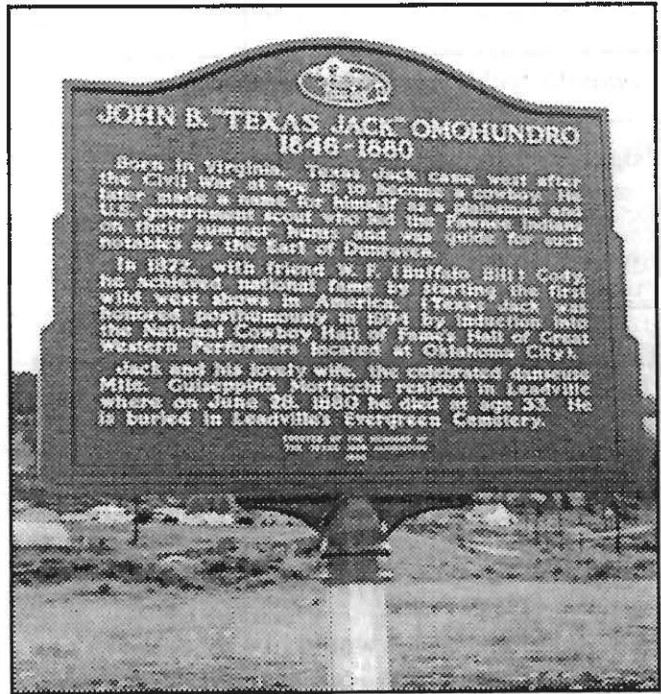
"Born in Virginia, Texas Jack came west after the Civil War at age 16 to become a cowboy. He later made a name for himself as a plainsman and U. S. government scout who led the Pawnee Indians on their summer hunts and was a guide for such notables as the Earl of

Dunraven.

"In 1872, with friend W. F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody he achieved national fame by starting the first Wild West shows in America. (Texas Jack was honored posthumously in 1994 by induction into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame's Hall of Great Western Performers located at Oklahoma City).

"Jack and his lovely wife, the celebrated danseuse Mlle. Guiseppina Morlacchi resided in Leadville where on June 28, 1880 he died at age 33. He is buried in Leadville's Evergreen Cemetery."

Erected by the members of  
The Texas Jack Association  
1996



Texas Jack's highway marker in Leadville, Colorado

Attending the dedication were Texas Jack Association members Edna Nees of Scottsville, VA, Richard W. (Rick) Omohundro of Salt Lick, KY, Michael J. Omohundro of Englewood, CO, and Harvey and Isabella Willard of Bradenton, FL. There were also about seven local dignitaries from Leadville attending. We all then adjourned to Evergreen Cemetery where the city had cleaned up the grave site, trimmed the evergreen trees, and decorated the Texas Jack plot with our United States and Confederate flags.

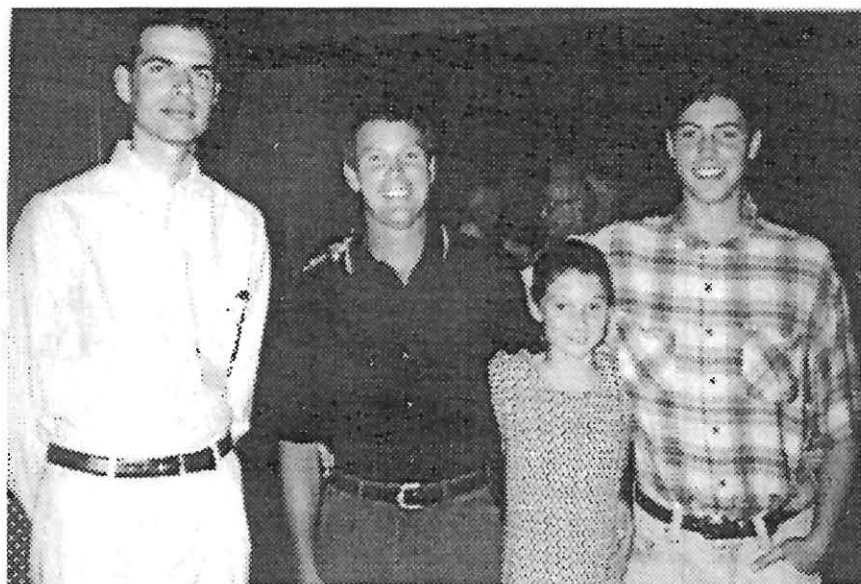
We were most fortunate to be in Leadville at the time the aspen golden fall colors were at their most brilliant and the 14,000-foot mountain peaks surrounding Leadville were covered with fresh snow. We even had an inch of snow

in Leadville on the day following the dedication. All in all this was an important event for the Texas Jack Association and helped cement relationships with many local residents. •



The dedication in Leadville (l-r): Harvey Willard, Isabella Willard, Edna Nees, Richard Omohundro. In back: Michael Omohundro.

## Way to Go, Holly!



This attractive young lady is TJA member Holly Wyche (whose great, Great, GREAT uncle is Texas Jack Omohundro). Holly's soccer team won the Eastern Athletic Conference Championships (10-12 year olds), and Holly kicked the only goal in the championship game! She is shown here with (l - r): second cousin Stephen Omohundro, her father, Malvern Wyche, Jr., and brother Brandon Wyche. The photo was taken at the TJA Nashville Roundup this summer.

## A Drive with Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack

### A Brief Account of Their Lives -- Prairie Life vs. The Stage

(Excerpted from the Monday, August 11, 1873 edition of the WEST CHESTER LOCAL NEWS, Westchester, Pennsylvania)

On Saturday afternoon last we had the pleasure of taking a drive with Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack behind two spanking steeds from Messrs. Mercer & James' livery stable. Texas Jack is the guest of Buffalo Bill, to whom he is endeared by a life of exposure, hardship, and daring on the plains and in whose company he for several years served as scout, hunter and guide in the employ of the Government and for private parties. These noted scouts served to add a zest to our everyday walks of life, proving as they do that the stories of frontier life are not magnified, but to the contrary, fall short in depicting the scenes and excitement incidental thereto.

In the course of our drive through the rural suburbs of our borough we were somewhat surprised at both Bill and Jack taking such an interest in the flowers and trees which bedecked our course. They noticed everything in the way of flowers, and Jack's conversation gave ample proof of his being of quite a botanical turn of mind.

Jack is of medium height, and 28 years of age. His complexion is what we might appropriately term a "rosy" one. His features are moderately fine, while his eyes denote a quickness in cunning and his whole physiognomy a man of coolness and deliberate forethought. He wears a slight moustache and imperial, while his hair, curly and very black, is rather long, but inclined to thinness. He is compactly built, with elastic step, and shows powers of great endurance.

He was born in Eastern Virginia, and commenced a Texas life when a mere boy. During the rebellion he was a scout in the rebel army under General Floyd, and was wounded in the left thigh by a musket ball. At the close of the war on the very day of the fall of Richmond, he turned his horse towards Texas, and in a few days afterwards was again back to his old haunts pursuing the cattle herds as peaceably as though nothing more than ordinary had occurred. In the course of his cattle trading movements, he met Buffalo Bill in Nebraska, in 1868, and who recognizing in him the requisites for a good scout, induced him to quit the cattle business and join him in the scouting duty in the service of the United States. At this time Bill was chief of scouts of the department of Platte, and consequently was happy in adding to his command so valuable an accession as his Texas friend, Jack, and with whom he has since associated in wild and civilized life both being endeared to one another.

In throwing the lasso Jack is an expert. If he has

any one particular weakness it is certainly for a rope, and no such article is left to lie still that meets his eye. He instinctively is led to

take it in hand, and forming it into a lasso takes prisoner anything that stands within reach of his unerring skill and the length of rope.

During the celebrated hunt of last fall, gotten up for the benefit of Earl of Dunraven, England, these scouts led the sport and the result was a grand success. So delighted was the Earl with the enjoyments afforded him that at the close of the hunt he made Jack a present of a breech-loading shot gun valued at \$650. •

January 31st, and February 1st.

**NED BUNTLINE'S**  
GREAT REALISTIC DRAMA, THE

**SCOUTS OF THE PRAIRIE**

INTRODUCING THE  
**Genuine Western Heroes**

**BUFFALO BILL**  
**TEXAS JACK,**  
**NED BUNTLINE,**  
**TEN INDIAN WARRIORS,**  
THE GREAT DANSEUSE  
**M'LE MORLACCHI,**  
AND FULL DRAMATIC COMPANY

NED BUNTLINE'S SENSATIONAL DRAMA OF  
**SCOUTS OF THE PRAIRIE,**

BUFFALO BILL, by the original Hero.....	Mr. W. F. GODY
TEXAS JACK, by original Hero.....	J. B. ONOHUNDRO
CALE LURE.....	NED BUNTLINE
Mormon Man.....	Mr. Westcott
Thelma O'Leary.....	Harry Gilbert

This poster advertises Bill and Jack's stage show, 1872.

# Preserving Texas Jack for History--

## Three Men Who Made It Happen

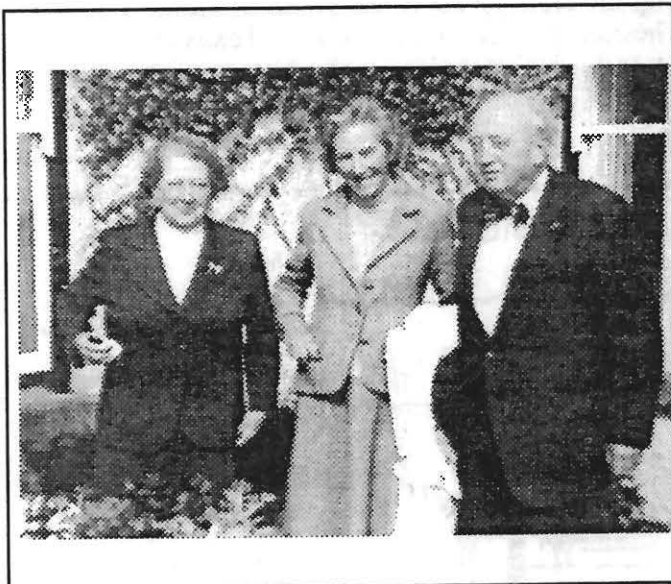
by Julie Greene

*The Texas Jack Association was officially 16 years old in July 1996. Since then, our small group continues to accomplish its objectives - and those accomplishments have been many! I think Texas Jack himself would be surprised and delighted by what has been done by us to achieve our dream of establishing his rightful place in American history.*

*Perhaps it might be apropos to remember some of those people who were instrumental in making it all happen. There have been many dedicated, unpaid, overworked volunteers through the years, and they deserve much credit. However, we will remember here three men whose love of Texas Jack was instrumental in starting it all.*

### FRANK SULLIVAN

Founder and First President of the Texas Jack Association



(l-r:) Mary Margaret Sullivan, Lady Dunraven (mother of the current Earl) and Frank Sullivan. Photo taken at Adare Abbey in Ireland.

In 1908 (the same year the citizens of Leadville, CO first gathered around Texas Jack's

grave site to hear the immensely popular Buffalo Bill Cody, surrounded by his entire wild west show company, eulogize his old friend Jack Omohundro, and dedicate a new gravestone to him), Frank Sullivan was born in Springfield, IL.

Frank grew up in that midwestern town - the capital of Illinois - and went on to graduate from Dartmouth College and Harvard Law school in 1932 and commence a successful law career in Springfield. He served as a navy lieutenant on the aircraft carrier Essex during World War II. In 1939, he married Mary Margaret Noonan and they had three children, Deborah, Martha and Dowd.

He was very involved in civic and patriotic activities, but as his great love was history, he was an active leader in several historical societies. Among them he served as president of the Illinois Sons of the American Revolution.

Frank was very interested in the history of Ireland, from which he traced his roots. In reading one day THE GREAT DIVIDE by the Earl of Dunraven, he was captivated by the Irish Earl's description of his capable and flamboyant hunting guide, Texas Jack Omohundro. The Earl had made several hunting trips to America's great northwest, and would have no other guide for those sojourns than Texas Jack. He later wrote of his adventures in two books in which he related his experiences hunting with Jack. Frank and Mary Margaret subsequently traveled to Ireland and became acquainted with Lord and Lady Dunraven (son of the Earl).

It was at a convention of the Sons of the American Revolution in Boston that Frank met M.H. Omohundro (later to become TJA Chairman). He noticed M.H.'s name tag and said:

"Are you, by chance, related to the great western scout Texas Jack Omohundro?"  
"He was my father's older brother." replied M.H.

Because of that chance meeting with M.H., Frank was able to learn some of the family stories about Jack, and the two of them became good friends and correspondents.

In 1980, 100 years after Texas Jack's death in Leadville, CO, Frank, with M.H.'s help, arranged for a memorial celebration in that town honoring

*continued on next page...*

the memory of Jack. He organized the Texas Jack Association and had it incorporated as a historical organization. Thus, due to the efforts of Frank Sullivan, the first Texas Jack Association "Round-up" took place with a few interested friends and Omohundro family members together with the town of Leadville attending.

Frank passed away in 1989 at age 79, but his legacy, the Texas Jack Association, lives on.

**HERSCHEL LOGAN**  
Biographer of Texas Jack

Raised on a Kansas farm in the early 1900's, Herschel spent many hours (when he was not in school or doing chores) carving miniature pistols out of pieces of wood with a pocket knife. Thus in those early years surfaced both his creative abilities and his great love of firearms.

After attending the Chicago Academy of Art, he began his career as a commercial artist for the Salina, Kansas JOURNAL and later went on to become an author and cartoonist. (For many years, to the delight of many Kansans, his whimsical portrayals of "THE COLONEL"

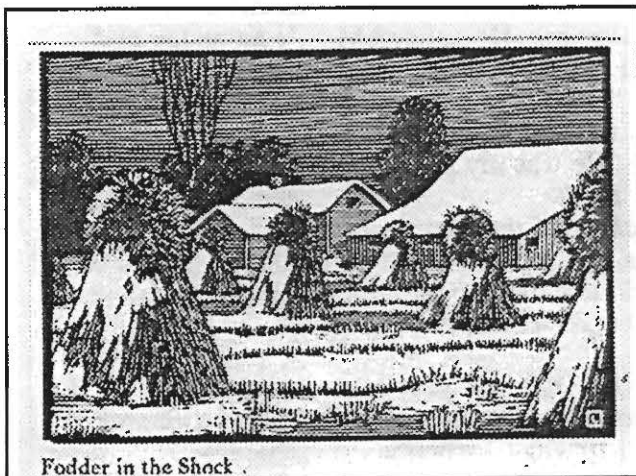


Herschel Logan producing one of his many wood cuts.

appeared in the JOURNAL). Meanwhile, his wood cuts and prints were exhibited nationally and won him a place in WHO'S WHO. A student of American history, Herschel served on the Board of Directors of the Kansas State Historical Society.

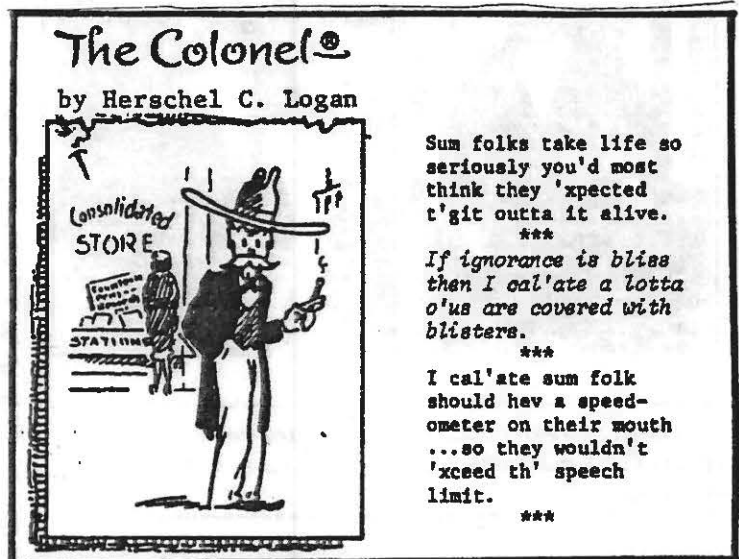
As he was an avid collector all his life, his primary interest being antique guns, it was only natural that Herschel was immensely intrigued when he came across a Smith and Wesson American .44, engraved "Texas Jack - Cottonwood Spring, 1872". He immediately bought the gun for \$35.00, and decided to do a little investigation into just who this "Texas Jack Omohundro" might be. That "little investigation" led to a major fascination with Jack and ultimately resulted in Herschel writing Jack's biography, BUCKSKIN AND SATIN.

When asked about it, Herschel said, "It is good that future events are veiled from us. For had I but known of the untold hours...the voluminous correspondence involved...or the miles to be traveled in the research on J.B. "Texas Jack" Omohundro it is doubted that I would ever have embarked on such a project." "I can only say that after such intensive research Texas Jack became as real to me as would have been the case if indeed I had had a brother. This pretty well sums up my feelings about the youthful scout. I do not hesitate to predict that ere long Texas Jack will take his rightful place in the history of the Old West."



Fodder in the Shock .

One of Herschel's prize-winning woodcuts.



"The Colonel" from Herschel's longstanding series, with some of the accompanying "truths" he espoused.

It is through Herschel that Dennis and I were able to learn many of the details of Jack's story when we took over the TJA in 1984. He allowed us to copy all the pictures and documents which he had obtained through his research - which are often printed in the SCOUT. Without his time-consuming and dedicated efforts to extract the all but forgotten story of Texas Jack from old files and forgotten documents, it is almost certain that precious little information about Jack would have surfaced, let alone been compiled into one volume.

It was only fitting then, that when the Texas Jack Association was formally organized, Herschel Logan was named one of its first honorary members.

Herschel Logan passed away in 1988, but his book BUCKSKIN AND SATIN remains an important source of authentic information about Jack and Josephine Omohundro.

**MALVERN HILL OMOHUNDRO, SR.**  
Author of the OMOHUNDRO GENEALOGICAL RECORD

Malvern was born December 17, 1866, just 1 1/2 years after the Civil War, in Palmyra, VA on the family plantation, "Pleasure Hill." His parents, John Burwell and his second wife Margaret Shores Omohundro, had been married barely a year at the time of Malvern's birth. However, he did not want for siblings, as he had 9 older step brothers and sisters (2 had died before his birth), most of whom he kept in close contact with throughout their lives, although their ages ranged from 5 to 24 years older than himself.

His older brother, John B., who was 20 years' Malvern's senior, had a profound influence on him. John left home to go west before Malvern's birth, but he listened as a young boy with rapt attention to the letters brother John wrote home to his parents. John had acquired national fame as the famous scout and showman "Texas Jack," and Malvern idolized and emulated his big brother.

Malvern was very proud of his heritage and

always knew he wanted to do an Omohundro genealogy, but it was many years before he could realize his dream.

He spent his first 23 years at "Pleasure Hill." He later wrote with fond memories of his childhood days on the farm, which before the war (when Texas Jack grew up there) had been a large plantation with many slaves, and now during the Reconstruction period was a farm, much smaller in scope.

As an adult, Malvern went to Radford, VA to start a real estate business. At the same time, he studied law by correspondence at Richmond College and hung out his shingle in 1901. In the meantime, when he was 25, he married 16 year old Daisy Van Lew, and they had 7 children. Malvern not only supported a family of three small children, he brought both his parents to Radford to live with them, all while putting himself through law school. He subsequently moved his family to Richmond where he opened a real estate office.

The ensuing years were spent buying and selling real estate while practicing law. He became very well respected in Richmond and at one time was approached to run for Governor of Virginia, an offer he declined, not savoring the rigors of politics.

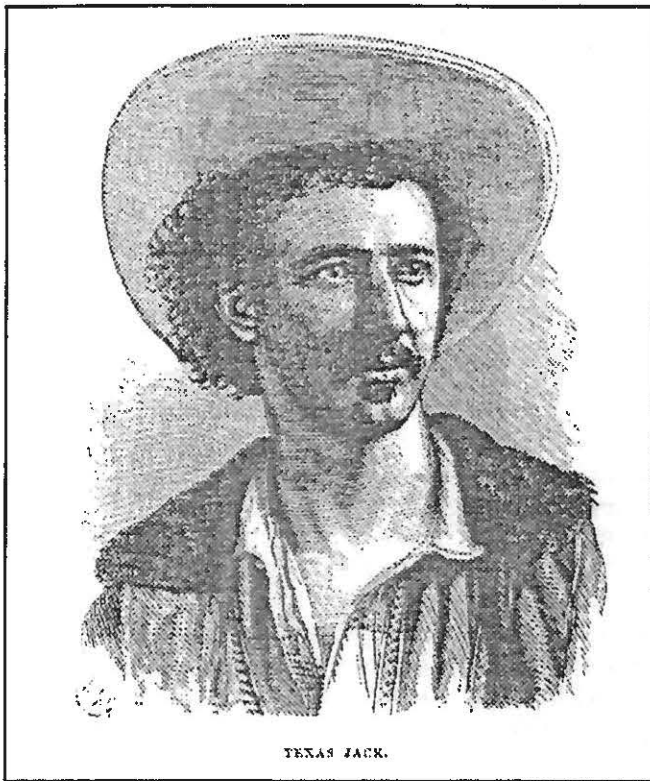
As he became more successful, he moved his family to a farm in Goochland, and as an avocation, spent 40 years of his life pursuing his dream of researching and writing the OMOHUNDRO GENEALOGICAL RECORD, tracing the Omohundros from their first recorded ancestor, Richard, in 1670. It was in the years 1946 - 1951 that, with the help of a full time secretary, he was able to complete that 1287 page "labor of love." For this, all who bear the name Omohundro, or have it in their background, owe him a great debt of gratitude.

In the RECORD, he devotes several pages to his big (half) brother, John B. Omohundro, better known as Texas Jack. He documents Jack's background and ancestry as well as boyhood experiences. For *that* the Texas Jack Association owes him a particular debt of gratitude.

Malvern Hill Omohundro died at age 93, on July 4, 1960, at his Goochland farm, named "Brightly." •



Malvern Hill Omohundro, Sr. Photo taken in 1892 at age 24.



Portrait of Texas Jack as depicted in *THE GREAT DIVIDE*.



The Earl of Dunraven, K.P., H.M.L.; photo taken in 1904.

## Lord Dunraven and Texas Jack in Yellowstone

*The following brief description of Lord Dunraven's life is taken from the introduction to Dunraven's book, THE GREAT DIVIDE, and was written by famous western author Marshall Sprague. (Excerpted by editor).*

Windham Thomas Wyndham-Quin, who produced this enchanting book about his adventures in the American West, was a great deal more than an aristocrat called the fourth Earl of Dunraven and Mountearl in the Peerage of Ireland, second Baron Kenry of the United Kingdom, Knight of the Order of St. Patrick and Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, and master of thirty thousand ancestral acres in Ireland and in Wales. Among other things, Dunraven was one of those talented writers from abroad who visited the United States and helped Americans to appraise their country at a time when they were too busy building a new world to think about it.

THE GREAT DIVIDE, which the Earl wrote at the age of thirty-four, was the most popular of his half-

dozen books about his travels. After its initial appearance in 1876, it ran through several English editions and an abridged American edition titled HUNTING IN THE YELLOWSTONE.

After Dunraven (who had married Florence Elizabeth Kerr, in 1869, and took her on a honeymoon to America) did the "rounds" with his bride - Delmonico's, Newport, Lake George, Washington- he had a yen to head westward. However, he had a sunstroke in Virginia and so returned to Ireland with Florence Elizabeth.

He did not return to the United States until the fall of 1871, at which time he brought with him, Dr. George Henry Kingsley (following the custom of British aristocrats, to take their own doctors on long trips).

After landing in New York, Dunraven hurried with Dr. Kingsley straight to Chicago, having a letter of introduction to General Philip H. Sheridan, the Civil War hero who headed the western department of the U.S. Army. The earl found the general to be "a great soldier and a delightful

man, with the one peculiarity of using the most astonishing swear words quite calmly and dispassionately in ordinary conversation.”

The next day, Sheridan wired Fort McPherson for hunting guides and sent Dunraven and Kingsley along by train from Chicago to North Platte, NE. Two guides met them at the North Platte station - Buffalo Bill Cody and Texas Jack Omohundro, extraordinarily charming and able frontiersmen whom Dunraven took to at once. He described them in his autobiography as “tall, well-built, active-looking men, with singularly handsome features.”

“Bill was dressed in a pair of corduroys tucked into his high boots, and a blue flannel shirt. He wore a broad-brimmed hat, or sombrero, and had a white handkerchief folded like a little shawl loosely fastened around his neck to keep off the fierce rays of the afternoon sun.”

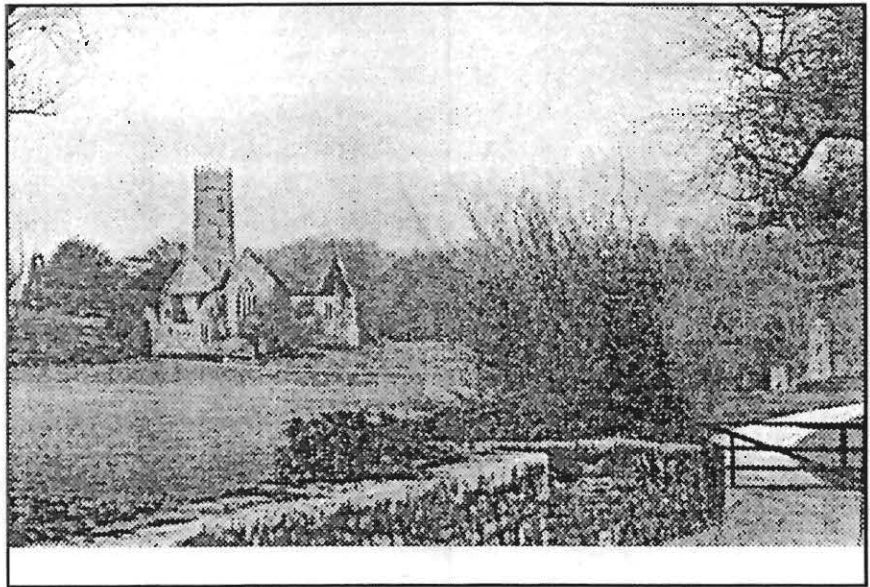
“Jack’s costume was similar, with the exception that he wore moccasins, and had his lower limbs encased in a pair of comfortable greasy deerskin trousers, ornamented with a fringe along the seams. Round his waist was a belt supporting a revolver, two butcher knives, and in his hand he carried a rifle. Jack, tall and lithe, with light brown close-cropped hair, clear laughing honest blue eyes, and a soft and winning smile, might have sat as a model for a typical, modern Anglo-Saxon - if ethnologists will excuse the term. Bill was dark, with quick searching eyes, aquiline nose, and delicately cut features, and he wore his hair falling in long ringlets over his shoulders, in true Western style.”

Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack were well known in 1871 among big-game hunters but their greater renown came later as members of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show. The earl was lucky to have such experts to introduce him to the West. Texas Jack was his guide again three years later when he set out from Denver’s Corkscrew Club for Yellowstone Park to have the marvelous adventures that one reads about in THE GREAT DIVIDE.

The American West saw no more of the Earl after the mid-1880’s, but he lived on and on honorably, usefully, fully and joyously. He served Queen Victoria as her Undersecretary for the Colonies from 1885 to 1887. At the turn of the century he joined the cavalry in the Boer War. Sailing was his greatest pleasure next to roaming the wilderness. He raced his yachts Valkyrie II and Valkyrie III for the America’s Cup off New York in 1893 and 1895, losing both races. He protested the second race on the

grounds that commercial spectator boats were permitted to run on the course, and he was struck off the membership of the New York Yacht Club. His protest nearly caused a break of diplomatic relations between Britain and the United States.

To the end he was a gay blade, tall, lean, handsome, trim and debonair. He loved horses, the sea, pipe smoking, smart clothes, euchre, whiskey and good food. He loved his London clubs and restaurants, intelligent conversation, and lovely women to look at. His friends included celebrities on both sides of the Atlantic - Oscar Wilde and Texas Jack Omohundro, Lord Kitchener and Jay Gould, General William T. Sherman and James McNeill Whistler.

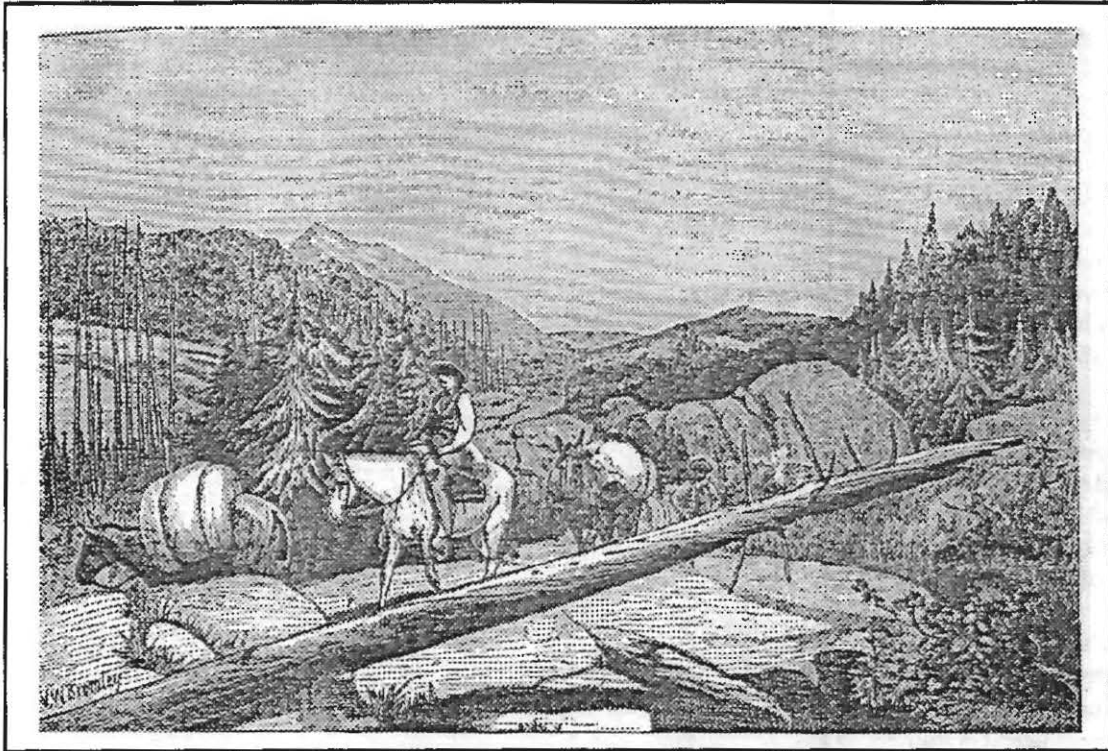


Adare Abbey, Co. Limerick, Lord Dunraven’s ancestral home in Ireland.

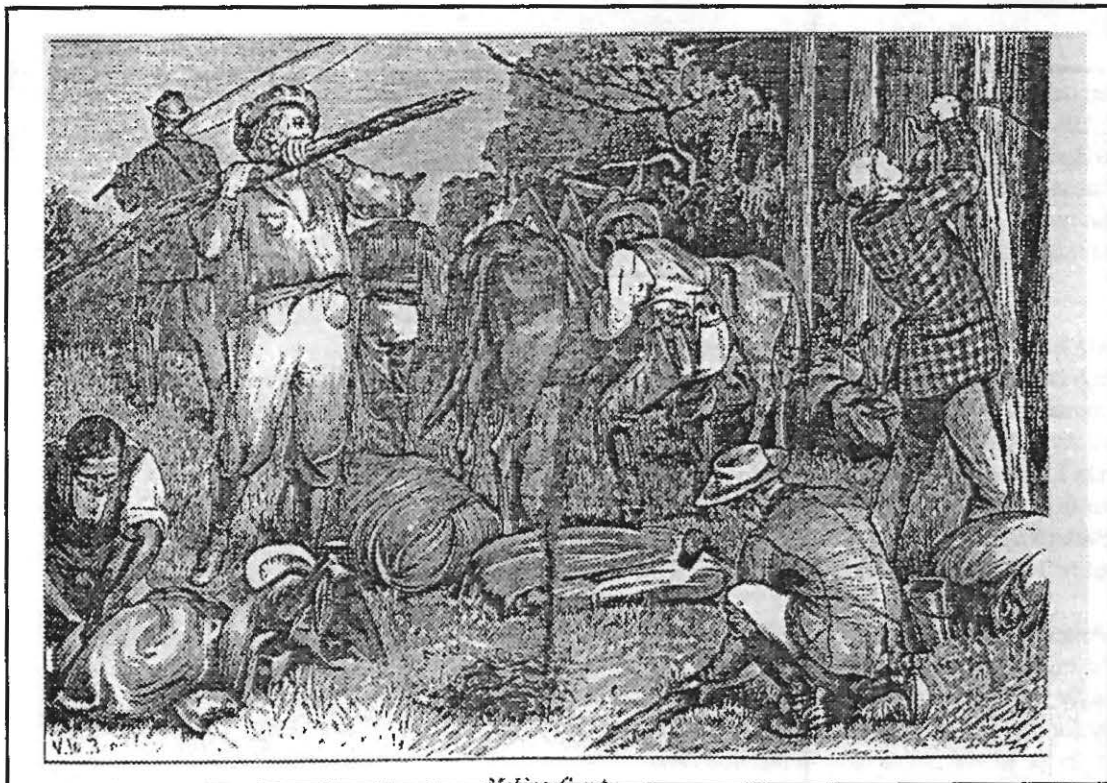
He died at eighty five in London on June 14, 1926. His finest memorial is this book, THE GREAT DIVIDE, bringing to us not only the pleasure of his company for a few hours but his own strong sense of what a privilege it is to be alive.

*Editor’s Note: THE GREAT DIVIDE is extremely important to students of the history of Texas Jack Omohundro, as he is splendidly portrayed from close personal experience, by the Earl of Dunraven. It is my understanding that it may still be available, from Bison Book Editions, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, NE. If you can get it, I highly recommend it. It’s a good read! •*

*Illustrations continued, next page...*



*"A Yellowstone Highway" from THE GREAT DIVIDE, by the Earl of Dunraven*



*"Making Camp" from THE GREAT DIVIDE, by the Earl of Dunraven*

...

## Wartime Diary

of Jack H. Omohundro,  
Fifth President of  
TJA (1990-1992)

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story...Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

--DESIDERATA

*Editor's Note: When I expressed an interest in relating some of the WWII experiences of our former TJA president Jack Omohundro from Crowley, LA, he was reluctant to talk about himself, saying "...there were many who did much more than I did." He sent me the "bit of philosophy" (excerpted above) which he uses as a guide to life. (Anyone who knows Jack can see that he successfully lives up to his philosophy). However, through his cousin Jim O. from Kentucky, I was made aware of a diary, which he maintained for his son, Jack, Jr. while he was stationed in England in 1943-44 flying his B-17, "The Belle of the Bayous" (or a substitute when "The Belle" was being repaired), on missions over Germany and occupied France, Norway and Holland. In all, he flew as captain on 24 missions and co-pilot on one. Jack has allowed me to share with TJA members some excerpts from that diary (and believe me, the most difficult part is "picking and choosing" which parts to leave in and which to leave out of this exciting narrative).*



Jack H. Omohundro  
Photo taken at the  
Cowboy Hall of Fame  
Awards Banquet, 1994

...This is a brief outline of my experiences during the time I was overseas in the Army Air Corps trying to do my small part in that great catastrophe which men call World War II.

We were assigned to the 351st Bomb Group, 509th Squadron reporting to Polebrook on May 5. The 351st, we were later to learn, was a brand new group which had just come over from the States and, consequently, was just as "green" as we were in regard to combat experience.

Mission #2 - Target: Kiel,  
Germany, May 19, 1943

This was a last minute mission for me. Operations woke me about 10 minutes before starting time....Mission started out nicely - took an easy climb out over the North Sea and reached altitude just before reaching the enemy coast. I flew a (good) formation, but the sweat still poured out. We made our bomb run, and just as ours let go, things began to happen. The flak guns opened up and fighters swarmed in. Something, either flak or a fighter, hit our #4 engine and destroyed the prop control governor. The prop "ran away" and threatened to tear the engine right out of the mount. I finally managed to get it feathered and we came home on 3 engines.

Mission #4 - Target: St. Nazaire,  
France, June 28, 1943

This time we went to "Flak City" to bomb the submarine pens. Everything went along routinely until we left the target. The flak was as accurate as ever and we had a few fighter attacks. After crossing the target, we got a shell case from one of our own bombers in a squadron ahead, right through the oil pump of #2 engine. We watched the oil pouring out and kept the engine running as

*continued on next page...*

long as we could. Finally, when the pressure dropped too low for operation, we feathered the engine. We made it back to the coast of England, landed at an RAF field, gassed up and took off on 3 engines for Polebrook. It became dark before we got home and we had to call "Darky" to help us find the field.

Mission #8 - Target: Hanover, Germany, July 17, 1943.

This mission started out at Hanover, but again the weather interfered and we never got there. We found a hole in the undercast and bombed "someplace" in Germany. I really wasn't too proud of that one. Everything going O.K. until we came out over Holland on the way home. Then "Jerry" really came at us. This was my first experience with determined head-on attacks, which the Luftwaffe was adopting. They really came in close before breaking off and we could see their guns firing right down our throats. We got shot up pretty badly but no one was hurt.

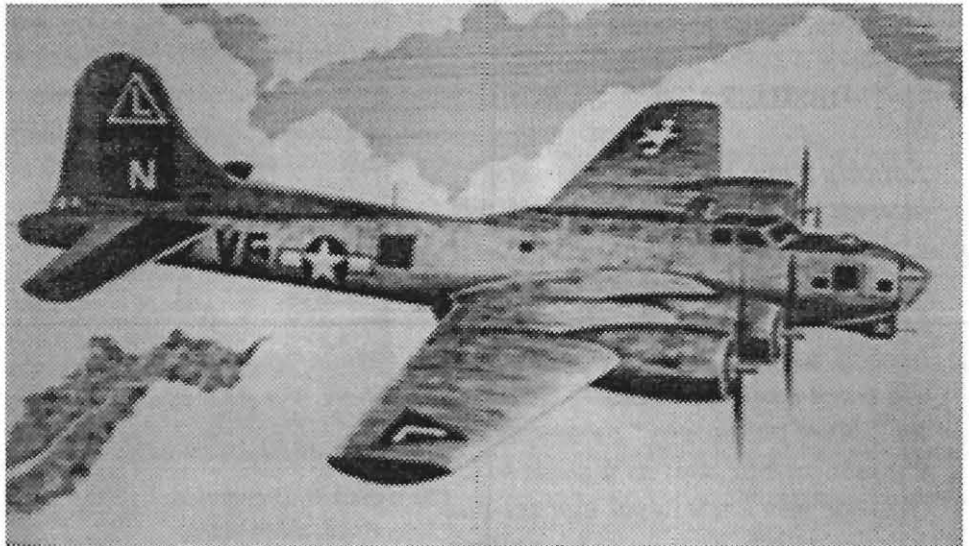
Mission #10 - Target: Hamburg, Germany, July 26, 1943

This was one of the last raids during the "blitzing" of Hamburg. We went in at about 28,000 feet, in the high squadron of the high group. We had started out with nine planes...but due to abortions, engine troubles, etc. we had only three planes in the squadron when we went in over the target. To add to our discomfort, it was bitter cold. The turbo super chargers on the inboard engines were not functioning properly due to the oil in the lines being congealed. The controls froze! Don't know what happened, but I could not move the control wheel! At this point, with fighters and flak all around us, Kit and I looked at each other and we both thought "this is it." Well, somehow, we managed to stay in formation and shortly thereafter, "things" returned to normal. We got

back to Polebrook and agreed that "Someone Else" did the flying.

Mission #12 - Target: Schweinfurt, Germany, August 17, 1943

You may still be hearing tales and reading books about this mission - the first raid on the ball-bearing factories at Schweinfurt! Well, it will live in my memory forever. The whole thing was SNAFU from the start. We, the short range B-17s. were to take off and bomb Schweinfurt. The 4th wing, long-range 17s, were to fly along the same path with us, then we were to turn and hit Schweinfurt and they were to go on to hit the plane factories at Weiner Neustadt, near Vienna and continue on to land at fields in North Africa.



*Jack Omohundro's airplane, "The Belle of the Bayous," from a painting by his cousin, TJA member Jim Omohundro, from Lexington, KY.*

We, of course, were to return to England. The mission was "top secret" and had been scheduled twice before, but scrubbed because of bad weather over the targets. Finally, the day came when the weather was clear over both targets, so the mission was on again! But the weather at our fields - in the midlands - was terrible. The 4th wing planes took off on schedule, since their fields along the coast were not too badly fogged in. We sat in our planes at Polebrook and waited. After about 4 hours, we could see our wing tips, so we all taxied out and took off. The 4th wing

was well ahead of us and really stirred up the Luftwaffe. We did have P-47 escort across the channel and a little way into France, but they had to turn back just when we really needed them. As they turned and left for England, we saw the Luftwaffe ahead. They knew the range of the escort perfectly and they came at us in swarms. Fortresses were falling like flies, and still we had to keep going in. My co-pilot that day was a young lad named Williams, and he was very scared - but we all were. I kept telling him to keep exercising those throttles so the turbo oil would stay warm. He kept his nerve and did a wonderful job. We were leading the low squadron of the low group which was a very uncomfortable position. I kept "The Belle" in as tight as I dared and we all prayed. We took a 20 mm through the nose section which shook up Buck and Matthews, our bombardier, and when the instrument panel blew up, Williams and I were "thrilled to say the least." All in all, we had about 2 hours in and 1 hour out - 3 hours plus or minus a few minutes of constant fighter attack. There was not very much flak so "Jerry" really pressed in on us. Again, thanks to Him, we returned to Polebrook O.K.

Mission #23 - Target: Wilhems-haven, Germany, November 3, 1943

On this mission, we suffered our most serious hit. It was one of the 8th's biggest raids; in fact, there were more planes in the air than we had ever put up. P-38s were supposed to pick us up over the target and give us escort back. They were there, but they got engaged in dog fights with the Luftwaffe and were not much help to us. The flak was very heavy and we bombed by radar through an undercast. A lucky, or rather unlucky, burst of flak hit our tail section, and then another knocked out #1 engine. Well, after we got squared away and realized that we could keep on flying, we surveyed our damage. Hank, our tail gunner, was the worst hit. His foot was almost blown off and his flak-suit was badly ripped. Had he not had that suit on, he would certainly have been killed. Both waist gunners had fragments of flak hit them. Smitty was hit in one arm, and France was hit in the neck. The elevator control cables were badly ripped, but we wound them together so that they held O.K. while we

eased our way back to Polebrook. Hank was finished and went to the hospital. (Strangely, I was on the same ship that Hank was on when I finally came home. The medics did wonders on Hank's foot).

*Editor's Note: All 25 missions are described in the diary - only a small part is related here. Jack was 23 at the time, which only reminds us again, that it is always the very young who fight our wars for us.*

*Jack later became a captain for Pan Am, flying jumbo jets overseas. Even "white-knuckled" flyers like I am could feel pretty safe on one of his flights!*

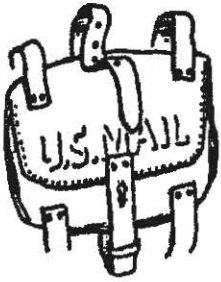
*We who attend the Round-ups know Jack and his wife Jane well, but few know of the "fairy book" story which brought them together:*

*Jack and Jane went to kindergarten, elementary and high school in Crowley together. They were school "sweethearts" at the high school "ball" in 1938. Then Jack went off to one college, and Jane went to another. The war came and Jack went into the Army Air Corps in 1940. In September 1942, he married, and in 1943 went overseas. Jane finished Duke U. in 1942 and married in 1944.*

*Gone their separate ways, Jack and Jane did not see each other again until 1963. Jack was in New York when Jane went there to enroll her oldest daughter in school, and they met. Says Jack, "We discovered that our lives had very similar problems and that we should have married each other long ago. Three years later, in October 1966, we did! Not many people get a second chance, do they?" Jack and Jane live in Crowley, LA.*

*Chief among his accomplishments as TJA president in 1991-92, Jack relentlessly "lobbied" the NATIONAL COWBOY HALL OF FAME to induct Texas Jack into their Hall of Great Western Performers, a goal which, due to his efforts, became a reality in 1994. •*

## From the Mail Pouch . . .



We heard from Bill Perkins,  
Charlotte, NC.:

When (I) received the last TJ Scout, I spotted a familiar name in the genealogical chart prepared by Edna Nees and Harvey Willard. VIRGINIA WOHLBRUCK is mentioned

there as a descendant of Texas Jack's sister Arabella.

"Virginia Wohlbruck" is also the name of a woman who works two floors down in my office building on the Central Piedmont Community College campus.

With that unusual name, I thought there might be a chance the Virginia I know is related to the Virginia in the Omohundro ancestry. I called her.

"Virginia, is Wohlbruck a married name or your maiden name?"

"A married name."

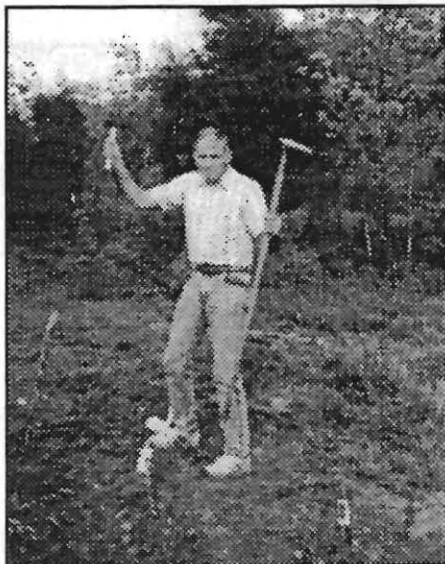
"Virginia, is your husband's name Theodore?"

"Yes," she said. It took another question or two for me to find out that the Ted Wohlbruck married to the woman two floors down is indeed a descendant of Arabella Omohundro, Texas Jack's sister. And to make the coincidence even more extraordinary, Ted's cousin is [ex-TJA president] Harvey Willard, the man who prepared the genealogical chart!

Well, it IS truly a SMALL WORLD!!!

\*\*\*\*\*

One of our members, Jim Omohundro, from Lexington, KY,



is one fine artist, and a very amusing - no, hilarious - storyteller to boot. It's always a treat to get a letter from him, which I did recently, and I'd like to share some of it with you:

Jim Omohundro writes...

"...I've been out pruning fruit trees this afternoon - the back yard was starting to look like a backdrop for a Tarzan movie. Being a fixed earth Taurean, I love to dig in the dirt and grow stuff. Born 30 April 1937 (two days after Saddam Hussein) I guess I was born to the peasant routine...was told the 30th of April was the holiest of the "Wicca Sabbats" but guess none of the supernatural ability (s) was passed along to this "O" since I'm unable to win the lottery, make furniture move by sheer willpower or summon up a demon or two to wash my car. Oh well, some of us are destined to be ordinary artists and others such as Saddam, Adolf Hitler and General Grant (also Taureans) were fortunate enough to have the relatively easy life of tyrants...burning, looting, pillaging and what not!"

"At any rate, as you may or may not know, my oldest son Jim is first mate on the yacht "Chanticleer" - which is owned by the great songstress Frances Langford. A real sweetheart, who at "39 plus" still lights up the room and can belt out a song like the pro she is. Her secretary is none other than Patty Thomas - the dancer who toured with her throughout W.W.II in both theaters. (My father was a combat infantryman who was wounded in North Africa and was in hospital in Casablanca when she toured there). Frances, Patty and #1 son spend much of their time fishing and cutting up - either in northern Lake Huron or the Bahamas - depending on the season. Great job, huh?"

"...Miz Frances is a member of the T.J. Association...(Jim and I signed her up). Also, since the death of her late husband, Ralph Evinrude, she remarried one Harold Stuart from Oklahoma...who is related to none other than General J.E.B. Stuart. He was a former under-secretary of the Air Force, and is funny as the devil."

Best regards,  
Kentucky Jim

"P.S. Did Edna tell ya that we are both descendants of Patrick Henry? Yupp, true story! Got the vicious temper and the bad mouth, but mercifully not the red hair and freckles as my mama did! (She was a beauty in spite of it, tho)."

---

"Stonewall" Omohundro (Jim) defends his plantation against the invasions of crows, blackbirds, and "wascally ol' wabbits."

Well, there was more, but space prohibits sharing it all.  
I've been thinking though - maybe we can entice Ol' Kentucky Jim to be an occasional columnist in the Scout when the mood strikes him. Future editors, take note!

\*\*\*\*

And...we get e-mail, too! Recently, I received an e-mail from Rand McKinney in San Jose, CA who sent me a copy of one from Stephen Omohundro in New Jersey who has a web page on the internet. Steve had recently heard (via e-mail) from a party in Cape Town, South Africa, and I thought that communication would be of interest to our readers, so I excerpt it here with thanks to Steve and Randy.

Dear Stephen:

I have recently discovered your address on the Internet, not due to your career interests, but due to your ancestral linkage with an individual named Texas Jack.

My business partner and I are located in Cape Town, South Africa...and are doing research on the surrogate son of your paternal link - TJ. This all started in 1990 when I was doing my Ph.D. research on Will Rogers and his early start in the entertainment industry. One part of the research uncovered the fact that Will got his start in show business by working for one Texas Jack's Wild West Show and Circus in South Africa. With the help of the Will Rogers Memorial Library in Oklahoma and with extensive work in the State Archives and national libraries here in South Africa, we have uncovered quite a lot about this surrogate son. We have even located the family of the surrogate son, TJ, here in South Africa....

Regards,  
Cathy Barret and Heather Vallance

Looks like the internet might be a good way to get the word out about Texas Jack!

\*\*\*\*

IN MEMORIAM

Texas Jack Association member Neblett Torrence Phillips, wife of the late Charles H. Phillips, Jr., (grand-nephew of Texas Jack Omohundro), died October 10, 1996, in Richmond, Virginia. She was well-known for her volunteer work in Richmond and was the recipient of many awards for outstanding community service. She is survived by her four children, Torrence McClure Harman, Katherine Phillips Henderson, Charles H. Phillips, III, and William Neblett Phillips, and by eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

A Summer Wedding...

... is slated for Texas Jack Association members Linda Stratz and Rick Cech. Those of us who were at the Nashville Round-up remember Rick and Linda, who became engaged on Christmas Eve.

Congratulations, guys!

# M. H. Omohundro's Gift Benefits Alma Mater

## TJA Chairman Endows Early American Institute

by Alison Freehling



Two William and Mary College legacies: Institute benefactor Malvern Omohundro (left) visits with oldest living alumnus, Ralph James., Class of 1916. Photo courtesy of RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

*Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from the NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS, October 26, 1996. This article is one of several which appeared in Richmond and other Virginia newspapers.*

A 91 year old Richmond native who attended the College of William and Mary in the 1920s has made a multi-million dollar gift to endow the college's Institute of Early American History and Culture.

.... "This magnificent gift will ensure the continued vitality of an institute that for more than five decades has helped define our understanding of what it means to be an American," said William and Mary President Timothy Sullivan.

"...history has been a lifelong passion to which (I am) happy to leave my fortune," said Omohundro. "I've always soaked it up. I love libraries. I just want to make sure that later generations have the chance to understand the past as I have."

Ronald Hoffman, director of the institute, said that

Omohundro has been a regular donor and patron. In 1993, in fact, the institute dedicated a book celebrating its 50th anniversary to him.

M.H. Omohundro was born in Richmond in 1905 and graduated from John Marshall High School. He spent the 1924-25 academic term at William and Mary, before quitting school to go into the real estate business in Florida. "I got bitten by the real estate bug," Omohundro said. "I still haven't really retired from investing. I just like making deals."

(He) worked in New York before returning to Richmond in 1934. He served in the Navy during World War II and later became president of Old Dominion Real Estate Co. in Richmond, a business no longer in existence. He and his wife (Libby) have been married for 40 years.

A love of history runs in the Omohundro family, whose forebears settled in Westmoreland County in the 1670's. His father was the author of the 1,110 page book, THE OMOHUNDRO GENEALOGICAL RECORD. One of Omohundro's favorite topics is his half-uncle, John B. "Texas Jack" Omohundro. Texas Jack was a Civil War courier who became nationally known after meeting Buffalo Bill, who recruited Texas Jack for his Wild West Show. "I could go on for days about him," Omohundro said.

Omohundro's ties with William and Mary history professors John Pollard, Ludwell Johnson and Thaddeus



Tate - all of whom he knew as a student or through his interest in history later in life - also were an important factor in his decision, he said. •

M. H. relaxes at his Barbados retreat.

## From the Editor's Desk

by Julie Greene

It's deja vu! I haven't been editor of the SCOUT for almost 10 years now. I'd forgotten all that goes into it... (or am I just getting older??). At any rate, at the last Round-up, the members decided to divide the work, and so for this 2 year period, we'll have 5 editors (one for each edition, except for Kitty Pelkan who is doing two - bless her!). Anyway, this is my turn.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our last editor, Rand McKinney (who published all the issues during the past two years). This he did in spite of a very serious illness, a demanding job at Netscape and a re-location from Santa Cruz to San Jose. Great job, Randy, I will try to live up to your example!

Also, although I am writing and gathering this issue's information, a great deal of the responsibility is being shouldered by John and Susan Omohundro, who will do the layout (make it all fit!), and by Edna Nees who will handle the mailing. So, you see, this is truly a group effort!

In this issue, we are remembering gentlemen who were instrumental in preserving the story of Texas Jack. Also, there is a brief narrative about the life of the Earl of Dunraven, and his close association with Texas Jack. It is excerpted from Marshall Sprague's forward to the Earl's book, THE GREAT DIVIDE in which is documented one of several hunting expeditions on which Texas Jack was guide. It contains one of the few personal glimpses of the captivating personality of Jack, giving us an insight into why he was so popular with his contemporaries.

Finally, as this is the first of the year, it falls to me to remind...no, encourage...let's face it: implore!! members to send in their dues as soon as possible. As you know, the association has many dedicated volunteers, but our goals cannot hope to be reached unless we also have the money to help make it all happen. Our only source of revenue is dues from the membership. So please...won't you send in your dues today? The Texas Jack Association thanks you, I thank you, and I know if T.J. himself were here, he'd thank you too.

'Til next time, *Julie*

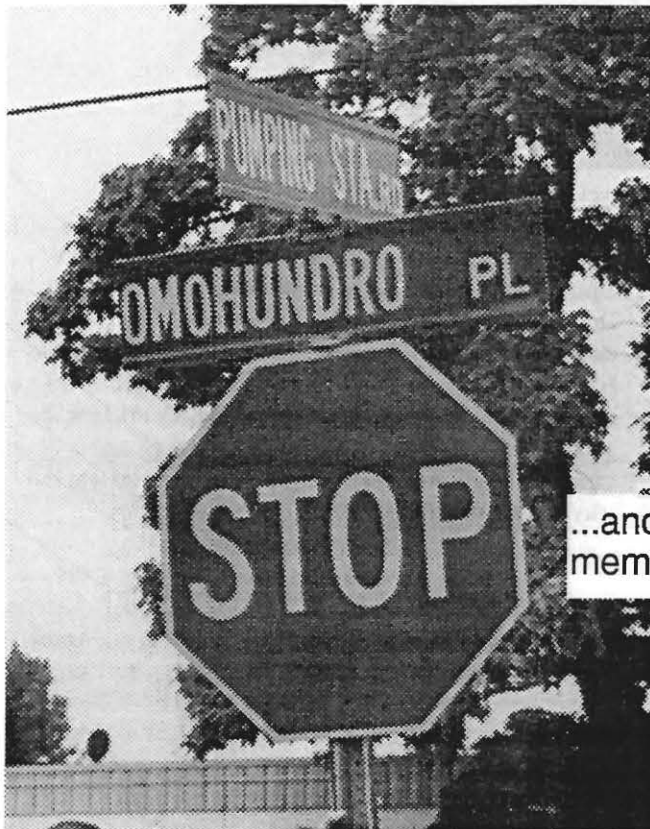
### IMPORTANT NOTICE!

The next edition of the SCOUT will have a new editor!

He is:

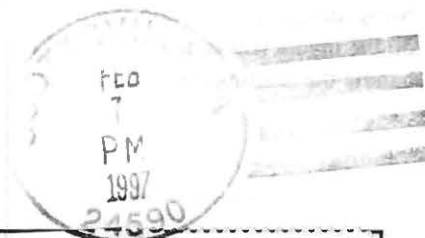
Harvey Willard  
875 Waterside Lane  
Bradenton, FL 34209  
e-mail: hbwillard@aol.com

**Submission Deadline: 15 Apr 1996**



Street sign near Omohundro Waterworks, Nashville, Tennessee

...and think: have you renewed your membership?



*Texas Jack Scout*  
Julie Greene, Editor  
P. O. Box 7587  
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