

Eagle Lake Headlight.

BRUCE W. McCARTY, Editor and Proprietor.

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Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris.

We have received some numbers of The Quarterly, published by the Texas State Historical Society in 1901, in which appears a series of articles entitled "The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris." These relate to the Harris came to the state in 1833 when 8 years old and has been a Texan ever since. They are all the more interesting from the fact that Mrs. Harris is now one of our own citizens, her home being with her daughter, Mrs. Ziegler. She is the oldest pioneer woman living and the only one remaining who experienced the horrors of "The Runaway Scrape" of 1836. We expect to give these reminiscences from week to week in The HEADLIGHT, confident that our readers will greatly enjoy them.

1833, APRIL 28.

This was the anniversary of my birthday. I was eight years old, and on shipboard at the time with my father, Dr. P. W. Rose, my mother, brother, and sister. We embarked at New Orleans the 15th of the month for Matagorda, Texas, and were two days on the Gulf of Mexico. The name of the captain of the ship was Denmore. The pilot was James Spillman. I don't remember the name of the vessel, but she was a small schooner. We were becalmed for two weeks, then a storm arose, and we ran on the bar at Galveston Island. We were two days and nights trying to get off; then we anchored near the island. The storm had been raging fearfully for twelve hours, but it ceased late in the evening. The moon rose full. It was a splendid sight. The passengers wanted to land, but Captain Denmore would not let them. He said if the wind rose he would go to Harrisburg, a small town on Buffalo Bayou.

Galveston Island was a sandbar, on which not a house was to be seen. The captain said there had been a custom house on the island, but it had been moved to Anahuac, and that Mexico had closed Galveston as a port of entry.

Captain Spillman, the pilot, said his home was on Spillman Island, and that he had a grown son living there. He said he would take the schooner to Harrisburg in a few hours, if the wind and tide were favorable. The passengers had all been seasick, and were willing to go anywhere to get on land. The wind did not rise that night, but the next morning a terrible storm came up. The vessel dragged her anchor, and Captain Denmore sent the passengers down in the hold, and then she shipped water till the sailors closed the hatch-way. It was so dark we could not see. In the evening the schooner ran on the beach at Clopper's Point, near Virginia Point. She grounded and turned on her side. The sailors

saved the women and children. The men carried father out. He was very sick, and had been all the time.

The storm subsided, the water went down, and the schooner remained on shore. There was a cant and had a fireplace, but no floor. The people took possession. Men and sailors carried the freight out of the schooner. We were nearly starved, for we had not had anything to eat all day. There were three negroes with us, one man and two women. They began cooking. The men put a plank across the house. They set the ends between the logs for a table, and there we dined the first time in Texas. We slept that night in wet clothes. Captain Spillman's son came during the night with a small keel-boat and men to our assistance. Father decided to go to Harrisburg.

GLOPPER'S POINT, TEXAS, APRIL 29, 1833.

Mother and Mrs. Johnson were the only white women in our party. Mrs. Johnson had no children. Mr. Johnson decided to wait for the return of the pilot to take them to Matagorda. The captain said father's family should go first. Mother spent the next morning drying our clothes. The freight was not badly injured. By noon we were aboard, bound for Harrisburg. My mother's brother, James Wells, went with us. The trip up Buffalo Bayou was very pleasant. We stopped at Lynch's Ferry, passed a steamboat sunk at the junction of San Jacinto and Buffalo Bayou, and arrived at Harrisburg in the night. No one expected a boat at that time, for in those days there were no telegraph lines or railroads.

HARRISBURG, APRIL 30, 1833.

In the morning, we were received with open arms by the good people of Harrisburg. Father was very sick, and had to be carried. A Mrs. Brewster had him taken to her house. She was a widow.

Uncle James Wells went out to rent a house, but there was none vacant. There was not a dray nor a wagon in the place. A Mr. Andrew Robinson came to see father, and said he had a house half a mile from town, which he could have. He said his old woman wanted to visit her son, Andrew, living at San Felipe. Mr. Lytle had a cart and one yoke of oxen, and he moved us. He wouldn't take pay for his work; said that was not the way in Texas. In the evening the men came with the cart for father and mother. My sister and brother and I had been on the go all day. When we got to the house, the wind ladies had sent meal, butter, eggs, milk and honey, and had the house in order and supper ready.

Captain Spillman returned to Clopper's Point, and carried Mr. Johnson's family to Brazoria. I remember the names of but a

few of the passengers. My mother's brother, James Wells, came with us from St. Louis, Missouri, and a Mr. Bennet from Kentucky. He had a sister in Texas, Mrs. W. J. Russell. She lived near Columbia on the Brazos river. Mr. Bennet brought two slaves, a man and a woman. Mr. Johnson and wife were young married people, and had one negro woman. He had been in Texas before he married. I never met them again. Mother saw them in Houston in the

active part in separating Texas from Mexico. I never met Captain Denmore again, but I met Captain Spillman several times. He ran his boat from Harrisburg to Anahuac.

We were delighted with our new home. It was a new frame house. Most of the houses of Harrisburg were built of logs. Mother said she would be willing to live in a camp the rest of her life rather than cross the Gulf of Mexico again.

MAY 1, 1833.—HARRISBURG AND ITS INHABITANTS. THE FOUR HARRIS BROTHERS.

Harrisburg had been settled several years. It was settled by four brothers. John Harris, the oldest, had died several years before. His family were living in New York. The other brothers were Dave Harris, who had a wife and two children, daughter named Sarah, and William

living there were Robert, Wilson, wife, and two sons; Albert Gallatin and son; Mr. Hiram, wife, and two daughters, Sophronia and Susan; Mr. Lytle, wife, and daughter; Mrs. Brewster and one son; Mr. Evans and wife; Mr. Farmer and family; Mr. Mansfield and five negroes; one negro man, Joe, servant of W. B. Travis; and John W. Moore, the Mexican alcalde. The young men were Messrs. Richardson, Dodson, Wilcox, Hoffman, and Lucian Hopson. The boys were James Brewster, and John, George, and Isaac Hams, stepsons of Dave Harris. There was also a Mr. Ray.

There was a steam saw mill at the mouth of Bray's Bayou. It belonged to Robert Wilson and W. P. Harris. Mr. Hoffman was engineer.

MAY, 1833.

Everything in Harrisburg was different from what we had been accustomed to. No church, nor preacher, school house nor court house. They had no use for a jail; everybody was honest. We had been there but a few days when a man died. My sister asked mother how they could bury the man without a hearse and carriages. In the evening the funeral came. Mr. Lytle with his cart and oxen conveyed the corpse, men, women and children walking. Brother and I went with them. I don't remember the man's name. He came to Texas from New York with the four Harris brothers. A Mr. Choate conducted the burial. The man was a stranger in a strange land, but was nursed and buried by the good people and mourned by all.

The next time I met Mr. Choate was the Fourth of July. He

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played the violin for the young people to dance. He lived below the town on Vince's Bayou. He had five daughters. He was the most popular man in Texas.

Thomas Earle lived below the

town on Buffalo Bayou. He had a wife, two sons, and four daughters, all grown. The Vince brothers, Allen, William, Robert.

[Continued on last page.]