

Among “The Old Three Hundred”

William and Levicy Bloodgood

By Kevin Ladd

William Bloodgood, one of Austin’s original group of settlers, was born about 1800 in either New York or New Jersey. Although the first two decades of his life are something of a mystery, the young man was probably in Louisiana during the early 1820s. There he made the acquaintance of one Enoch Brinson, his wife Delilah Ballew, and other members of the Ballew family. Included in this family were Delilah’s younger sister, Levicy, and their father Page Ballew. Sometime in early 1824, Bloodgood joined in with the Brinson-Ballew clan as they set out for Texas in search of cheap land and the freedom that seemed to forever beckon from the western frontier. At some point along the way, either before or after the journey, William and Levicy became husband and wife. On August 10, 1824, Bloodgood received title to a tract of land on Cedar Bayou, a tract that now lies partly in Harris and partly in Chambers counties. The young couple appears on the 1826 census of the Atascosito District, which shows William as a house carpenter, farmer and stockraiser by occupation. Levicy was only sixteen years old at that time. Her father, listed as “Page Ballou,” was living in the same household. Bloodgood and Brinson appeared to have a parting of the ways in 1827 over the boundary line that separated their two surveys of land. He served in the Army of the Republic of Texas from May to August 1836. He served on a Harris County grand jury in 1838 and was still alive when the 1850 census of Harris County was enumerated. The date of his death is not known.

The Mud-Splattered Visitor

The most persistent and colorful story within the Bloodgood family concerns the days immediately after the battle of San Jacinto. Laura (Bloodgood) Herman, a daughter of the couple, told this story: “Some knocked at the back kitchen door the day of the bloody battle of San Jacinto [April 21, 1836]. When mother opened the door to see who it might be there stood before here a man covered from head to food in mud. Her eyes did not betray the fright that surged within her and she calmly asked what he wanted. He begged for something to eat. He answered her the best he could, in his own language. Mother opened the door and let him in and prepared a wholesome breakfast for him. He drank a whole pitcher of water, ate the food heartily, thanked her most graciously and peacefully went on his way.

“I was all wide-eyed and quietly looked on and was very frightened. How very brave was my mother. She could not let her emotions betray her inner

feelings, neither could she turn this unfortunate starving man away from her door. I later learned he was Santa Anna.”

Levicy Ballew Bloodgood outlived her husband by many years. She applied for a quarterly pension on July 1, 1887, at which time she would have been 77 years old. One record indicates she died that same year. The couple had seven children: Minerva, Thomas, Page, William, Enoch, Priscilla, Montreville and Laura.

Two other land grants in Chambers County, both situated on the line between Chambers and Harris counties, also date back to Stephen F. Austin’s legendary “Old Three Hundred.” These are the surveys of John Ijams and Christian Smith. Humphrey Jackson, the progenitor of the well-known Jackson family of Chambers County, was also part of the Old Three Hundred, but settled in what is now Crosby in Harris County.