

THE QUARTERLY

OF THE

TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

Vol. III.

OCTOBER, 1899.

No. 2.

The publication committee and the editor disclaim responsibility for views expressed by contributors to the Quarterly.

ADVENTURES OF THE "LIVELY" IMMIGRANTS. II.

W. S. LEWIS.

[It is apparent from Mr. Lewis's own statement in this number that the journal was not put into the form from which Colonel Bryan's copy was made until something more than fifty years after the events narrated; but it is said by Colonel Bryan to be quite faithful to the geography of the section of the Brazos country with which it deals, and to the names left there. It must, therefore, have been written from notes made earlier. What Lewis says relative to the daughters of Mr. Morton would indicate as much. Colonel Bryan has added some notes, to which are appended his initials.

Mr. L. G. Bugbee's estimate of the value of the journal is given in note 2 to his article, "What Became of the Lively," printed in this number.

Mr. Lewis's initials have at last been obtained.—EDITOR QUARTERLY.]

The boat almost passed before those on board saw me, but when they did they appeared to feel equal satisfaction with myself. I was taken aboard and first inquired as to the success of the trip. Then what a change of feeling came over me! They did say I shed tears, and it was perhaps so. I answered their inquiries in monosyllables, but eventually I found utterance sufficient to say that the camp was only a mile or two away; that all were pretty well; that we had had a sore bad time of it; that the vessel never came back any more; that we stayed four or five days and then moved up by stations,

bringing only the bedding, a kettle, and a frying pan; and that there were no provisions to bring but a peck of rice. They asked how we had all lived, and I answered that we had killed some game. They asked who killed it, and I said first one and then another. Then I added that Mr. Beard and Nelson would tell them all about it, and that we were almost there.

When we arrived I remarked that this was my camp, and that the other belonged to Beard and the balance. I told the Governor that in anticipation of their arrival I had a fine roasted turkey for them. Just then I got out of the boat at my landing, whereupon they all got out and fell to eating; for they had been on short allowance themselves and had a taste of what hunger is.

They reported that they had gone up for six days and could hear nothing of the land settlers. Little remarked that they heard the report of a rifle the day they started back. I said I should have known from whom it came, but I saw at a glance from the old Governor that this remark was not pleasing to him. He replied that they suspected they were Indians, and that it determined them to return as quick as possible. This was all gammon and soft soap. I had reason a short time after to believe that they had met with the settlers above, and that they could hear nothing of Colonel Austin. This intelligence would tend to dissatisfaction and discontent in the camp, and if it was known that a settlement was above us it might produce a stampede—particularly as the vessel had left us so unexpectedly, and that in a starving condition.

My mind was greatly exercised as to coming events with us. I, however, came to one conclusion, which was that my chance was better than most, and equally fair with the best. If I could keep my powder dry and my gun in order, I felt I could make the settlement at Nacogdoches if I could keep clear of the Indians.

Little and the old Governor gave our "steward and cook" a pretty sound lecture as to the prodigal use of the provisions, particularly the sugar, tea, and coffee, as these were intended for the sick; but it was now too late to cry.

In an hour or two it was decided to send the boat to the mouth of the river to see if the vessel had been back; as it had been agreed that either party was to leave some token if it returned and did not find the other. And it was determined that we should go to work and build boats (pirogues) and continue our route up the river. I was to go down with Little, the Governor, and three others of the

men. I told the Governor that it was not right to work a free horse to death; that I thought I had done more than my share the last seven or eight days; that if it was necessary for me to be at the mouth of the river I would walk both ways; and that I was unwilling to be made a hand on the boat. A consultation was had, and they substituted our tall man, the New York engineer. They did not say whether I should go or not. I, however, put out, intending to capture a deer if possible, knowing they would be short of meat.

The river being very serpentine, I had no difficulty in keeping ahead of the boat, and occasionally sallied out to find a deer. I had nearly got to our hawk camp, when a turkey hen flew from the opposite side and dropped close to where I stood. I saw her start and prepared myself as she alighted. I fired and broke her thigh. She could not rise again for the high grass, but she gave me some trouble with her one foot and wings. She eluded me until I tired her out, she being very fat. The men in the boat, hearing the report of my rifle, stopped rowing and got out on the bank, where I was, not one hundred yards from them.

We soon got to the mouth of the river, but found no evidence of the "Lively," so we put in a load to return.

I had seen among the drift the bow and some six feet of what appeared to be a small canoe of black walnut. This I saw on our first leaving the vessel, and I had some little trouble to locate the place, but eventually found it. I was unable to learn much more about it, except that it had a crack or split in the bottom. How much more it was damaged I did not know, for the rest of it was under drift wood and sand. I, however, resolved to keep my own counsel, as I did not know what my individual necessities might become.

Hearing a pistol shot that I supposed was intended to warn me, I started back. I only crossed to the east side. The current was strong, as the tide was ebbing, and they determined to await the return tide, for the boat was pretty well loaded. So we built a big fire in our old camp and remained until about two o'clock. Then with a strong tide current we made good headway and reached the camp by twelve o'clock. But this was only a beginning in boating up. The next trip was for axes, saws, augers, and in fact all that we might need.

It now became necessary to send some of the party in search of timber suitable to build boats. We were about ten or twelve miles from the mouth of the river, and the largest growth of cotton-wood

appeared to be on the opposite, or west, side. The men we sent out reported finding what would answer some three miles higher up; so those who did not go back with the boat went to carrying what was here up to the opposite side, where we were to establish a boat building yard.

I soon saw my place. It was in the occupation of hunter with Stephen Holston, Jacky Lovelace, and Beddinger. Mr. Harrison, who, though he had a fine gun, had no experience in the woods, was supernumerary. At first, for four or six days, we had no difficulty in keeping meat ahead, always drying when we had a surplus. The negro boy, William, the servant of Harrison, did nothing but jerk and take care of the excess. This was generally of venison, but occasionally there were three or four turkeys, which were usually barbecued. In this condition they would not spoil.

About this time the men had finished boating up all they had to bring, even tools for farming, grub and weeding hoes, cane knives, etc. I turned loose about my drift canoe, and desired the use of the boat and two hands to go and examine it. Little was not in favor of this, but the old Governor approved it; and I took Mattigan and the other Irishman—Gibson, I think, was his name—and invited Mr. Jacky to go also, for I rather suspected that Little was afraid to trust me and the men with the boat, fearing that we might turn runaways.

Well, we started them down, and we took the land to try to kill something on the way, which Mr. Jacky did a short way below our camp on the bayou. As the boat had passed down, we carried the deer between us to the next bend below, where we intercepted the party, got in, and went on, leaving Mattigan and Gibson to skin and hang up the venison and to build a good fire.

We had a grub hoe, hand saw, axe, and spade. We took the spade and grub hoe and went a half mile, rather on the outside of the drift, when we reached the canoe. We soon cleared away one side and the inside and found the boat sound, but there was a large split from one edge running five or six feet rather towards the other end and from the top to nearly the bottom. Mr. Jacky said that was easily doctored if nothing was worse. We now tried to examine the bottom and the other end, but it was covered with a drift of large logs. We went for water and something to eat and returned with the others and the tools, i. e., the axe and saw. We commenced getting away the drift and sand and expected to find the boat rotten, for it

looked as though it might have been there half a century. We found it a little tender where the sand had covered it, but Mr. Jacky said it would soon harden when exposed to the air and sun. The bottom was open for ten feet. It looked like a sun crack. Mr. Jacky said the boat was a great prize, worth to us now its weight in gold. We continued our unearthing till near night. We were a little dubious about trying to move the boat, and concluded it was better to leave it to dry and harden a little as we had plenty of time. Mr. Jacky said he expected that we should be building boats two or more weeks. He said we must clear away all the sand from the canoe that we could, but that we could do this in the morning while Mattigan cooked us a little meat.

Before starting back we found in the morning that the boat had dried very much, and we went to work to relieve it of the rest of the sand in and around it. When we had finished Mr. Jacky took his knife and went to where the most decayed part appeared to be and cut out a chip from the side and found the wood quite sound under one-fourth of an inch of the decayed outside. Then he pronounced it all right.

We started back, and he and I got out near and opposite the old bayou camp, as I told him that we, not being able to cross, had not disturbed anything on this, the west, side of the river. Now we were about three miles from the boat yard. We diverged a little from the river and came to a lagoon, which ran in a parallel line with it. We followed the margin of the upper end of the lagoon. All at once Mr. Jacky stopped short. I was twenty or more yards behind him. He placed his finger on his lips. I knew the import—silence. I looked around expecting to see him prepare to shoot, and trying to find the object. He perceived my perplexity and beckoned me to him, admonishing me by signs to make no noise. He only pointed to the soft mud and water which showed recent tracks of buffalo. Though they were the first I had ever seen, I knew at a glance what it meant. He told me in a whisper to note whether I could hear or see anything. After a half minute I shook my head. He signaled me to be still where I was and started, as I saw, to ascertain the probable number, and to see whether they were feeding or on the tramp. I was a little curious to see what he intended to do. He turned direct to the river and said, as if to himself, we have the wind of them. Then I hurried to camp, and soon I saw the Governor, Holston, and Mr. Harrison in full preparation. The men at work were on the

point of falling a large cotton-wood, when they were stopped, to make as little noise as practicable. I did not know if I was to be one of the party or not at the time. I was very anxious to see a buffalo, not to speak of seeing one killed.

We arrived at the place and immediately started on trail of the buffaloes, though it was evident that they were at feed. I heard the old Governor whisper to Mr. Jacky that in all probability they were lying down. He, Mr. Jacky, and Holston went some thirty yards ahead of us, but very noiselessly. They had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile, when as well as we could see they both squatted down to prime afresh. Very soon Mr. Jacky raised up his rifle and fired. We remained still until beckoned up. The old Governor said in his usual tone, "He has one." * * *¹

I think we were the best part of three days in packing and jerking the meat of the buffalo for after use. It gave considerable relief to the hunters, though we occasionally killed a deer or turkey, as they were very plenty and not very wild; but we perceived after a week or two that they were getting scarce for a mile or so near the camp.

It was now a good time to get help to bring my canoe up. I mentioned it to Mr. Jacky, and we went down again, taking Thompson, the carpenter, and my long engineer, Nelson, and Beddinger. We found the boat quite dry and got it out on the beach. Thompson and Nelson went in search of something to splice the bottom with. They found the blade of an old flat boat steering oar, but it took as much work and trouble to get it out as the canoe. Mr. Jacky called us to him some distance out from the drift. He had found what he said looked like burnt tar or pitch. The mass was two and a half feet in diameter and three or four inches thick. As it lay in the cold it was quite hard, but a little flexible. Mr. Jacky got off a small particle and took it to the fire. "By Jo," he exclaimed, "it is very like good pitch, except the smell." It was what we afterwards learned to be coal bitumen. The discovery was most opportune, for we were in want of the very article. Our whale boat or yawl was getting to leak badly, and our new found old canoe could not well be made available without a good coat of pitch.

We now made preparations to start up to camp. Our first attempt was to put our canoe athwart the middle of the yawl, but we found

¹ Here follows a lengthy description of the behavior of the buffaloes and of the method of caring for the meat and cooking the marrow of the one killed.

this would not do. The canoe was twenty or twenty-five feet long, and one end or the other would get in the water. We then made it fast to the stern and towed it up—a slow, slow, tedious operation.

We brought the oar blade, cutting it in lengths to go into the yawl. Mr. Thompson and Beddinger went to work on the canoe and in two days had put in a splice some six or seven inches wide in the bottom, and with the aid of part of an old tin bucket that had been mashed they got means to do up the fracture in the side to above the water mark. After the application of our bitumen it turned out to be a snug, very light boat. In consequence of the help afforded by the bitumen, one other of the new pirogues was widened in like manner to a canoe. Finding that the red elm, which grew quite large, would split like an acorn, we got out a slab and inserted it, making room for a greater quantity of freight. The yawl was also repaired, and things began to look like a move.

I think we were boat building near three weeks. This brought us into about the first week of February. We commenced one morning to load and found something was to be gone after which had been left. So Mr. Little and four men went down and returned late in the evening, having picked up some recruits at the mouth of the river. They brought back with them a party consisting of an old man named Fitzgerald, his son, a man named Frazer, a negro woman, and an old but active negro man. They were from the Calcasieu, and were in one of the largest and finest pirogues we had ever seen. It was all of forty feet long, and wide enough to roll a large barrel from one end to the other. It also had a middle piece put in the whole length. Fitzgerald and his party were rejoiced to see our boat come down, for he had made up his mind to await some further information or an additional escort for fear of the Indians. I mention the particulars relative to this boat, as it was destined to be a help thereafter. It had very little freight aboard, and it helped us out, as our four boats and the canoe and yawl were likely to be too heavily loaded for comfort and good speed.

The old Governor had had a comfortable seat put in the canoe, and he decided to take me and Beddinger in to work it. We had nothing in it except the cooking utensils and water buckets and any meats left over from the last breakfast. Our boat was always to be the advance, chosen perhaps on account of my accuracy in shooting, as I was put in the bow. The work was a light one to keep ahead of the fleet. Of a morning we frequently would get two or three miles

ahead in order to get out of the reach of the noise in the camp for the night, so that by slipping easily along we would be able frequently to catch some game on the bank, for it soon got so that if we killed nothing we would have no breakfast next morning.

Our progress was very slow, hardly twenty miles a day, and we had quite a week's rain soon after starting. So far we had been fortunate in killing something to live on each day; but we missed part of two days and had to call a halt to hunt. My partner, Beddinger, had missed killing a fine deer, right in the sight of us all, shooting not thirty yards. This put old Fitzgerald in a pucker, and when we again started, lo and behold, to our surprise, he put out under full headway before us. We had killed several deer on our hunt, but at night old Fitz stopped a quarter above us. His boat was light, and he could run around our boat three or four times in the mile. Well, next morning he was out and gone, so we again went out to hunt and did not get off until later. We again started, and not half a mile off saw some one waiting for us. Our boat came up, and we found none but Frazier; so we went on until night, when Fitzgerald came up. The men swore he should not pass, and a compromise resulted. He was to take one day, or until he had killed, and then to give us the run.

We were very lucky on our day, Holston having killed two, and Beddinger and Harrison killing two turkeys; so we gave him the balance of the day; but the next he was not to be seen, and also the next. We were again compelled to stop a half day, and at night no news of old Fitz. Next morning we were under way, and about nine o'clock we passed around a point, when here came the big pirogue with "a bone in the mouth;" and as he passed us he said "Indians! Indians!! boys," and never stopped till he fell in at the bottom of the fleet, now three hundred yards long. The old Governor ran up to the bar, and we all got together. On inquiry, Fitzgerald said they were in the bend on the other side. We started, keeping well together. We went, I suppose, a mile, and sure enough we saw two wigwams, but there was not an Indian to be seen. After a little consultation it was determined to go over. We got out and went into the huts. In the largest one we found two bows and a sack of headed arrows; in the other there was nothing. It seemed to be deserted. We left a carrot of tobacco and a tin cup and went on our way.

We were never afterwards troubled by Fitzgerald about a division

of the hunting days. Our days became a monotony, a sameness, one day with another, except perhaps in two instances.

In one of these instances I was lost for a day and night. We had stopped to hunt about three in the evening. It was quite cloudy. I started down the margin of the river. A large cane brake was on the other side of me to my left. I had proceeded for a mile or so looking for an outlet into the bottom. I at length found an opening and had left the river perhaps half a mile, when I saw a small yearling doe and shot it. It ran fifty or sixty yards and fell. There was a great sameness in the woods. I went to work and prepared my little deer for carrying back to camp, but I was seized with a little touch of vertigo, or a swimming of the head, brought on by my continued stooping. I started off as I supposed towards the river, keeping the heavy cane to the right. I saw from the distance I had gone that I was not right. I wandered about for an hour. It had set in raining and appeared to be getting towards night. I began to make up my mind that I would have to spend the night in the woods.

I had now reached the prairie and struck a deer path, and soon to my consternation I came upon a very recent camp made by Indians. I found in one place where the ground was a little soft a spot where I could detect in some measure the number and kind. I found the tracks of two or three children, several half grown girls or women, and two or three warriors. So I was a little relieved, as they were on the tramp to other localities, perhaps leaving the upper region where were our land immigrants.

I went along looking for a suitable tree to make my bed on for the night. I found a live oak which promised a good seat, and it was not hard to get into its branches, for many of its limbs were half as large as the main trunk. The set of limbs was ten or twelve feet from the ground, but a small red elm answered for a ladder. My next trouble was to start a fire. But the things were damp! I succeeded and made a big fire by the side of a fallen hackberry and took off one of the ribs of my deer and put it to roast. Well, my appetite was very keen. I did not wait to do the cooking thoroughly. While, however, my meat was being cooked I went up the tree with my gun and selected my roosting place. I took the balance of the little deer, and, making a fork on one of the saplings, hung it up by its hamstring as high as I could reach; for I knew the wolves would scent out the fresh blood. Then I took my rib and went to roost. The

wolves or a tiger were all that I feared. The smell of fresh blood would attract them.

It soon became dark, and very dark. The rain had ceased a little. I was pretty well located, having a large limb for my seat, which grew, as most of the lower limbs of the live oak grow, nearly at right angles from the body or stem; and on top of the elm I had a resting place for my feet, as also a convenient limb behind me to rest my back when I wished to change my position. Tying my gun to one of the limbs for fear I might let it fall and get broken, and putting my Scotch cap over the lock to keep it dry, I soon found myself feeling a disposition to nod.

But in an hour or so I was aroused from this state, as I heard at no great distance a whimper and then a hideous howl of a wolf, and then another and another until the dark woods appeared a howling wilderness. This did not alarm me in the least, for I knew them of old, having had a full lesson of the like in my native barrens of Kentucky. It was not long until I heard them growling and snapping at each other near my hung up balance of the little deer. They after a while became partially silent. I supposed the master of the crowd succeeded in getting part of it down, as I heard a scrambling, snapping, and pulling, as if three or more might have a hold on it, for they had scuffled off from the place where it was hung up. Soon I presumed that they had finished this piece, for a renewal took place for the balance, being perhaps the hind quarters, which put it nearly out of their reach, as many a jump was unsuccessful. About this time I think they had an accession to their party in the shape of a tiger. His keen olfactory nerves brought him into the ring. It took but a little while for him to get down sufficient to satisfy him, and, cat-like, he then coiled himself down to sleep. I thought he had left, as I could see or hear nothing; but when daylight appeared there he was in a sound sleep. I was a little at a loss what was best to be done. I anticipated his making off if he should hear my voice and get a scent of me. I was a little dubious as to the propriety of shooting him, on account of the report of my gun, should Indians be in hearing; but my first idea was amply sufficient, as the wind had shifted and was blowing towards him. My loud cough and halloo started him to his feet, and immediately off he went to the cane.

I was not long getting out of my bed, as the wind had appeared to be coming from the north. I thought it in my favor. I wished to go west, but this cane brake was in the way, and it was a wet job to go

through after the rain. I put out in a long stride after examining my gun, priming it afresh. After going a mile or two, I come all at once to a place that I recognized as one I had passed the evening before. I now kept my course from the wind. I had struck a prairie, and, still keeping my course, I eventually came upon a flag pond with but little water. Here I was bothered a little. I detected a flat which looked as though it might be a drain in a wet season to carry off the surplus water, which must empty into a larger stream, or the river. But there were more than one. This one ran a hundred or so yards and emptied itself into the swamp. Seeing a row of water flags off to my right, I went and found a dry looking lagoon. I went on and followed it, and thought it might empty itself into the pond; but as it appeared to favor my idea and course I determined to see the end. My idea now was to try to find which way it emptied itself. I saw one place where I thought the drift indicated that I was going down it, and soon I thought it deepened; and by and by I found that it was a bayou. But was it to empty into the river? In half a mile further I saw the appearance of timber, and a little further on I detected now and then some stunted bunches of cane, and soon a stiff cane brake on both sides, and then I found what I needed very much, some water in a hole.

On the next turn of the bayou, just around the point, I discerned three deer after water. There was now a necessity for me to shoot one, as I had none of my little deer left. They were in the shade, and one had lain down. I killed one, and to my great joy and surprise the report of my gun was answered below me a half mile or so. I went two hundred yards and saw the river. I built a good fire and then went and took the entrails from my deer. Then I returned to the river, as they had arrived and were hallooing for me. They commenced with a good many questions, which I interrupted by asking if they had any cold meat. They had killed nothing, the rain having driven the deer into the prairie. I was asked what I shot at, and I told them if two of them would go two hundred yards to a hole of water they would find a fine large buck. . . . The deer was brought, and a good part cooked and eaten. The old Governor said the Indian sign was made by those of the wigwam we passed.

We now made another start, Mr. Holston occupying my seat in the little boat. It had been given to Beddinger, but he had missed killing two deer and a turkey, and Mr. Holston was in charge. I told the old Governor that he had better retain Mr. Holston as per-

haps a better and older hunter than I. Mr. Jacky said it was best that I take the old seat, as I was quicker than anyone he ever saw, and that he believed I had not missed but once or twice on the route. Nothing of interest occurred, except now and then a deer or turkey was taken. . . .²

Two days and a half brought us to our stopping place. Now I have never since visited that part of Texas, and do not know what name was given to it. Let me describe it, and locate landmarks that must still exist, though it has now been just about fifty-two years since I was there. Our landing was made on the west side of the river, where the prairie came right up to the bank, forming a bluff, and being the only high land that had reached the river on either side. There was a vacancy of timber of perhaps a mile or more on the river bank. The alluvial low land sloped off on the lower end or south gradually from the prairie to the timber and heavy cane brakes. At or near the upper termination of the prairie, and perhaps a little way into the woods or timber, a singular phenomena (if it might be called so) was a deep cañon, bayou, or ditch. A half mile from the mouth it was forty or more feet wide. The sides were quite perpendicular, and it was nearly or quite twenty feet deep. It extended two or three miles at right angles to the river to the west, the river here being north and south. The prairie was quite level for miles around. . . .³

There was but one crossing on the cañon for two or more miles. It connected with the river through a point or strip of timber. Now a little above this was the lower end of the only "falls" of the river that we noticed. At the head of the "falls" and a little above, the river made a considerable detour to the west, and then a half mile, and it turned back perhaps twenty-five degrees north. The "falls" were not passable in low water with a yawl or skiff without the help of a line. It seems to me there must have been a fall of four feet in the hundred yards. The opposite land, or east side, was heavy cane brake, in which a Mr. Morton made a clearing in the spring of '22.⁴

Mr. Little commenced putting up a log cabin, say twenty or twenty-five feet square, the men carrying the logs from the land be-

² Here follow several pages of details relative to the killing of a bear.

³ The matter omitted here consists of a theory as to the origin of the cañon.

⁴ Mr. Lewis is describing the present site of Richmond.—G. M. B.

low us. This occupied all the force, but as soon as all the heavy timber had been brought up and the house was built, which occupied some ten or twelve days, part of the hands were selected to return to the mouth of the river, in expectation of meeting the *Lively*, or at least finding supplies, as originally stipulated. It was now late in March. We took the yawl and Fitzgerald's big pirogue. Our company consisted of the two Lovelaces, Mr. Holston, Mr. Harrison, his boy William, the engineer Nelson, — Williams, Mr. Wilson, and myself—fourteen in all, some of whom I don't now recollect.

The only thing occurring on the way down happened the third day out, when we supposed we had made three-fourths of the trip. About nine or ten o'clock we came upon a lot of Indians of all sorts and sizes, with as many dogs apparently as Indians. They were in the bend on the east side, and so soon as we rounded the point they were all on the bank awaiting us. There were some nine or ten warriors. The balance to the number of perhaps twenty-five or thirty were boys, women, and children. One old man, who looked to be sixty or seventy, advanced to the water's edge, hallooing at the top of his voice, with demonstrations with hands and arms, "Here, here, white man. Here, white man." We, however, got out on the sand bar on the opposite side and all went to loading and examining our guns, when the Governor, Jacky, and Harrison, after placing us in along so as to cover them if hostile demonstrations were shown.⁵ The old chief spoke Mexican, and our Mr. Harrison had a smattering of the Spanish, so we got some information from the Indian, for we did not yet know the name of the river. He said it was "Brazos de Dios," and mentioned the Colorado, pointing to the west and clapping his hands open four times, which we put down as meaning a four days' journey, or forty miles. They were traveling in that direction.

We reached the mouth of the river the next evening, but no vessel, no news of any kind. Nothing had been disturbed since we left. Here was a poor disheartened set of men. We had prepared ourselves a little better with hooks and lines, as Mr. Harrison and Mr. Lovelace had them in their satchels when they went up the river the first time, and we could catch all the fish we wanted, both the red at night, and blue cat in the morning. We determined to remain several days, hoping to intercept some sail or other, or hear some news.

⁵ Here some omission in the MS. makes the meaning doubtful.

The third day early in the morning a yawl arrived, having on board a Mr. Morton, his son, a boy seventeen years old, and a negro boy of about the same age. Mr. Morton informed us that he started from Mobile in a schooner of his own with his family, consisting of his wife, a step-daughter, Miss Jane Edwards, a son called Tilly, and three daughters of perhaps thirteen, eleven, and seven or eight years old, whose names I do not recollect. He stated that he made the island in a storm, and attempted to land after missing the entrance to Galveston Bay. The wind blowing a heavy gale from the southeast, he went ashore just above the pass of the west end. All were saved. The two sailors took the other boat and went to the east end, now Galveston. He saved all he could from the wreck. He said he had come in search of help and had left his wife and four daughters alone on the island.

We immediately volunteered to give him help. So three went on our yawl in company of Mr. Morton. Five of us were to go in the big pirogue as soon as they got back with it, some of the men having gone up the river in it to hunt. They returned late in the evening; so Wilson, Mr. Williams, Thompson, Nelson, and myself fixed up to go early in the morning. I expected to go in the stern, but was overruled, and they put Nelson in to manage the boat. It was a godsend that the tide was on the swell, i. e., coming in as we shoved off. It was observed that the wind from the south had freshened up in going a hundred yards or so. I remonstrated that the surf was rising, but Nelson paid no attention to what was said until the boat began to catch water in her bow. I ordered the oars on the starboard to cease and tried to get her around, but too late. The next two or three swells filled her, then every one for himself. Poor Mr. Thompson sank as she turned upside down, and I think he immediately drowned. Williams, poor fellow, being a good swimmer, left the boat and nearly reached the shore, but went under. The other two kept by accident on the lee side of the boat, for it was going sidewise before the wind, and with a strong incoming tide. I had slipped back, being on the same side, and losing my position on the boat had dropped astern a little, when I observed the stern line. I made for it and succeeded in getting it. It was of sufficient length to pass it under my arms and take a round turn, and I so held it always after a wave had passed over me, as to haul myself up as close as I could to the boat, only holding on to the slack with one hand, as the surge of the boat was getting too much for me. In this way we

three reached a point where we could touch bottom, but were too weak to get out alone, and though not twenty feet from the dry beach would have drowned, but the wind shifted to the left and lulled until the sea was as smooth as a piece of glass.

A second call for volunteers was made, and soon four offered themselves. I was appealed to, and I replied that I would again try it if Nelson would keep out of the stern and the pirogue would keep close to the shore. If this had been done in the morning those poor fellows would have been still living. Mr. Jacky agreed to go in the stern. So about 12 o'clock at night we reached the west end. Not seeing any one, we kindled a fire and lay down to rest. When I awoke I found the old lady and her four children and some eatables for us, and it was very acceptable, for it was the first bread and salt we had tasted for three months.

As the boats were to return for the balance of what we could take up the river, and the family were to go, I remained with one or two others, as it gave more room in the boat. Mr. Morton said that he had observed on going around the island the previous day a fresh horse track . . . , and proposed that we should see if we could find it. We started, taking each a little different direction, and agreeing to meet at a certain point and report. I reached the designated place ready to report seeing plenty of fresh sign; but, as I thought, only of one and the same animal. Not seeing or hearing anything of Mr. Morton, I made my way to the wreck and found him there. He stated that he had seen the horse, a small clay-bank, and said that he was not by any means wild, for he let him go within twenty feet of him, but had no disposition to be taken. He proposed to crease him by shooting him through the leaders and muscle of the neck, which he said might be done without much injury. . . . *Mr. Morton said he did not think he was accurate enough to try it himself. He had a fine little rifle, carrying a ball of small buckshot size. We started to find the horse again, and he suffered us to get within fifteen or twenty feet. Morton told me to try it, and gave me his gun. I got the horse's side to me, and I succeeded, but shot him a little too far back, cutting the edge of the shoulder. I made him fast with a piece of cord. He soon recovered and got up, but limped. We were fearful that he was materially injured, but it

* Here Mr. Lewis tells how he had once creased a deer.

did not prove to be so. He recovered entirely in a week or so, leaving only the scar of the bullet.

I now told Mr. Morton that he must assume the capture and ownership of the horse. He stoutly demurred. I explained to him how I stood in the company as an immigrant. I was not bound, as the balance were, by signing a compact or obligation. From some cause Colonel Austin had never presented it or spoken to me about it, and neither did either of the Messrs. Lovelace or Mr. Jennings sign it. Mr. Little and Beard on one or two occasions rather intimated that my services belonged to the company, and that I was as much subject to Little's orders as any of the others. It occurred in this way: at our first locating we, i. e., the hunters, had no difficulty in finding and killing plenty of meat, but by the time we had been three or four weeks there game got scarce for two or three miles from our location. The killing was an easy job, as deer and turkeys were very plenty, but the carrying in was a heavy, onerous job. Once or twice I had to leave some in the woods or prairie, because the burden was more than I thought my share. Well, it ended in some short words and replies. Beard knew how I had obtained my gun, and proposed to take it by force. Now to Mr. Morton I said I did not know how far they might go, and they might claim the horse on the same grounds. This was my reason for his entire ownership of the horse.

The animal was very tractable and gentle, and I swam him by the side of one of the boats across the mouth of the outlet at the west end of the island. He swam some hundred yards or so and then gave up. He went the balance of the way on his side, I now think near a quarter of a mile.

The boats were packed and loaded with the old lady and the youngest little girl on board. The balance except the boatmen, three for each boat, all took the beach; for it was a beautiful level, hard road, except that here and there a lagoon was to cross. I had our pony prize in charge. We made the trip down to the mouth of the river in good time without an accident. As I had to make my way by land I prepared a species of pad for a saddle. I found the pony needed no tying up, for so long as he had a halter or rope on he would not leave.

The crowd got ready in a day or two, Mr. Morton catching and hiding what he could not then carry up, and the balance of the boys catching and cooking fish for the start. I got on pretty well except

crossing the bayous and lagoons, many of which I had to ascend a mile or two before being able to cross, as most of them were boggy with perpendicular banks. I was struck and pleased with one trait in our horse. I left him standing on the bank and went some distance up to look for a crossing, and found one. To my surprise he was on the bank above me. I crossed on some drift, and had not got over when he came down a bank five or six feet high and over through mud and water belly deep, as much as to say that he was not to be left. I generally killed something every day. Mr. Morton had a tin horn, and we could always meet at night. When I killed a deer or turkey I took it ahead of them to some open place on the bank and hung it up. Game, except turkeys, began to leave the swamp and hunt for the young prairie grass. The only thing of note from now up was the finding of a bee tree but a short distance from the river. It was in a small, dead elm, only about a foot or fifteen inches through, but it had a good deal of honey, the tree being hollow for six or eight feet. We got all the honey. We camped one hundred yards above the tree, it being late in the evening before the honey could all be taken.

In a day or two afterwards we arrived at our destination. I had anticipated, of course, hearing from, or learning the whereabouts of, Colonel Austin and his friends; but not a word. My disappointment and chagrin bore heavy on me. I let down so much that every one noticed it.

On our last trip down we had met a boat some ten miles from camp containing four men coming to join our immigrant party. It consisted of an elderly man by the name of Styner, his two sons, and one other whose name I never knew. They were from Newtown on the Teche. They had located in a canebrake a mile or so below us or below where we had put up the cabin, where Little had planted his patch of corn in the edge of the prairie, and where he had made little or nothing, at it was too late and the drought set in. Mr. Morton located at the other extreme of the prairie in the edge of the timber on the river and below the cañon or gulch heretofore alluded to. He, however, went into a canebrake on the opposite side of the river to open a patch.

7.

⁷ Here Mr. Lewis gives a detailed account of a lesson in deer hunting which he had from Mr. Styner.

I, however, was daily more discontented at my situation and condition. As Mr. Morton's camp, which was mine when I came in from a hunt, was some distance from Little's, or the main camp, which I never visited, I of course knew very little of what was going on there. I, however, found out that the Messrs. Lovelace, Holston, Harrison, and Mr. Jennings had disappeared. This induced me to believe that they had heard or knew more than they had said anything about. I found that they had taken one of the boats and the little canoe and left for the settlements above. It was now late in June, and upon this information I determined to seek an opportunity to return to the States. I had been appealed to by Mattigan and his Irish friend to go through by land, they offering to carry all I had if I would go. This I peremptorily refused, at the same time withholding from them or anyone else my intention of going.

My almost perpetual absence in the prairies kept me ignorant as to the passing up and down of immigrants. On the present occasion I had gone up the river and had been out a day or two, camping at night on the bank. Early one morning a boat, a fine, large, new skiff, came up the river and halted at my little camp; and when they came up the bank who should I meet but a man named Addison Harrison, whom I knew from boyhood in Kentucky. They spent part of the morning with me, as I had part of a fresh deer on hand. Here was my chance to get back. Harrison was very much pleased with the Brazos, and said he had determined to go back and move direct. He had with him a school-mate of mine, a Mr. Grandison Alsbury, a man by the name of Tadlock, and a doctor whose name I have lost, with a mulatto boy. On informing him of my intention and desire to return to the States he was greatly pleased, as I had had some little experience on salt water. They had come to the island and gone over the bay to the San Jacinto and Buffalo Bayou. They there learned that it was practicable to coast it back to the United States, and into the Vermilion or Berwick Bay. He said he did not intend to advance much further up the river, and would return in three or four days, or at furthest a week, and would stop for me. This arrangement suited me, as I had but little preparation to make. I told him I had a small trunk, two feet square, with but little in it. Of what clothing I had had, there was but little left me, the trunk having been long before broken open and pillaged of its contents.

Some time about the 20th or 25th of August, Mr. Harrison and party stopped early one morning. I took my trappings to the boat and advanced to Mr. Morton's tent and informed him of my intention to return to the United States. He of course was a little surprised, but said he thought it best for me; that my prospect was a gloomy one here as things had turned out.

I will here remark that Mr. Morton was a brickmaker and mason. I mention this, as it may lead to some information or identification, as the three girls of his family are not yet old, and they can possibly be traced out and identified. The son, "Tilly," I think perhaps died that fall.^{7a}

We immediately put away for the mouth of the river. The next day we discerned a bunch of some eight or more deer on the beach. They were easy of approach, as they, I presume, had not apprehended any danger from the river. Mr. Harrison took his rifle and picked his choice, killing a fine five-prong buck. His adroitness and activity in getting it a hundred yards into the boat was amusing. I supposed he was bringing it whole to the boat to skin and dress it; but, to my surprise, he and the men that went after it put it into the boat. He said he had not come to Texas to be scalped by Indians.

We reached the mouth in a day of two, for we went all night, and with the river a little on the swell we made railroad time. Our wish was to barbecue what we could of the deer as the best guarantee to save it. We reached the west end; and, as Mr. Harrison had promised to return by the San Jacinto and report to some of his friends and immigrants the success of his trip, as the schooner⁸ had to make some repairs before proceeding on her voyage to the mouth of the Rio Grande, and as the captain was down with fever, we saw we should not leave for three weeks.

We started early in the morning and steered a northeast course, which Mr. Harrison assumed to be the direction of the mouth or confluence of the bay and the San Jacinto. We worked all day, having some trouble with reefs and oyster banks. In the morning we could see nothing but a waste of water, having had a light north wind all night. I had never been on or across the bay, and began

^{7a} See introductory note.

⁸ Which had brought Mr. Harrison's party to Texas, and was then lying at the mouth of the San Jacinto.

to be a little skeptical as to our success; but about twelve o'clock I observed a change in the color of the water, and on testing it I found it less salt than it had been. This encouraged us, and our oars bent more readily to the new impulse, the water increasing in freshness, and the color becoming more turbid. Soon, at a distance of some four or more miles, we sighted the long looked for top of the mast of the schooner.

Many of Mr. Harrison's friends and others who were anxious for his return had gone on an excursion to the settlement on the Trinity, so he concluded to go and meet them. He asked me to go also. I told him I would rather go up the bayou—afterwards called Buffalo Bayou—to try and kill some meat, as we were getting short, and the captain of the schooner asked us a dollar a pound for anything he could spare—bacon, sea or pilot bread, sugar, coffee, or rice. In the morning we fixed up to prospect the bayou. Tadlock, Alsbury, and two of the men from the other camp offered to go also. One of the men said he had been up some ten miles, and that the whole bottom was subject to overflow, and was then so muddy and boggy from recent rains that he and his companions could go nowhere. They saw nothing, nor the sign of anything. We, however, went up. Having no current to contend with, we made good headway, and when I supposed we had advanced some twelve miles we concluded to prospect; for it appeared to me that the land was higher out from the bayou, and we could occasionally see signs of deer, as though they came for water.⁹

Mr. Harrison had now been gone five days, and we were anxious for his return. He came the following day, and his surprise was considerable to see the improvement in our outfit. I rehearsed our adventure up the bayou. I told him that I found it as wide twelve or fifteen miles up as here at the mouth; that its direction was nearly west, and its course not very serpentine; and that my impression was that its extreme source could not be very far from the Brazos, and I thought the time would come when the navigation of the Brazos would be through this bayou by the aid of a canal

⁹ Here Mr. Lewis gives a detailed and lengthy account of how he killed a buffalo and traded part of the meat to the captains of the schooner lying in the bay and of another that had just come from New Orleans for some supplies, and a balance in money; and how he secured some timber and the services of a ship's carpenter belonging to one of the vessels, to fit up Mr. Harrison's skiff for the coasting voyage back to Louisiana.

Adventures of the "Lively" Immigrants. 101

into and through the bay, via Galveston into the Gulf. But railroads have knocked this idea into pi. . . .

Mr. Harrison and his party got in about ten in the morning. I supposed he would be for making a start immediately. When I went to talk to him he was making up a little lost sleep. We, however, went to work, and were packing away things in the boat, which would have to be done. The captain of the first schooner came to our boat, and we told him we were preparing to leave. He told us that he would be off the next day or the day following. When Mr. Harrison came down I told him about the schooner's determination to leave, and said as we did not know enough of the route it would be well for us to wait and go out at the same time. So things remained in statu quo.

The second morning we filled two demijohns, which we had procured, with San Jacinto water, and followed the schooner, which had already entered the bay and struck for the island. We had a fair west breeze coming on our starboard side. Our new sail did very well. It was too large for the skiff in an ordinary stiff breeze, but we had the advantage of being able to lessen its size by reefing it to the mast.

The next day we took our departure from the island eastward up the gulf beach. We encountered no serious difficulty, except being compelled on two occasions to beach our boat on account of heavy north and north-west winds, to prevent its being carried out into the gulf.

We reached the opening of the Vermilion Bay, through which we intended crossing. We did so, but not with our consent as to the manner and speed with which we were compelled to travel. It was near or after sunset that we entered. We had been hurrying all we could to make the entrance of the bay, as we saw a heavy south-east cloud gathering. We passed the west end or point of the bay without observing anything like a shelter or harbor for us, and as far as we could see east a like disappointment met our eager expectation. But the storm rapidly approached. I at once realized our peril, and made up my mind to an early watery grave. All hands realized our perilous condition. How very incompetent I am to give anything like a description of our situation and feelings at the time. I sprang to the mast, and was just in time to take off the sprit from the sail as the storm of rain and wind struck us. I requested all the others except Mr. Harrison to lie flat down

in the bottom of the boat, and told him to keep her bow right across the swelling waves. By this time the sail was blowing in every and any direction. It fortunately, in its flapping about, doubled itself around the mast in such a manner as to make a little sail of three or four feet in width at the bottom, running to a point at the top. I was at the foot of the mast, and, getting hold of a strap around one of the bundles, secured the sail to it as well as I could. The wind was terrible, and the full bent of the storm was upon us, and our little cock shell of a life preserver was doing well, only now and then taking in a half bushel of water, while those in the bottom with buckets and pans were bailing it out. I told Mr. Harrison I thought we would make the shore, but my worst fear was our foundering. If the beach was flat, it would be all right, but a bluff bank or any solid impediment would be our ruin. I counselled all to be ready at the very first sign of bottom for all hands to spring out and, keeping the bow to the shore, urge the boat at every swell or wave forward and keep it bottom down. The howling of the tempest kept us from being aware of our approach to the shore, but I thought I heard an additional confused noise, and the next second I bawled out, "The shore! All hands be ready." We struck on a pile of drift logs, brush, and sea-weed, and the next swell carried us high and dry on a sandy grass plat. Still urging the boat out a length further, we congratulated ourselves on our safe landing and prepared to start a fire, which was attended with trouble and difficulty. Everything was wet, and the rain, though light, was still coming down. We gathered every available thing that would likely burn, dried ourselves and clothing, and slept soundly the balance of the night.

The next morning we relaunched our boat, but had to haul it near one hundred yards to the water. We put in our trumpery, and started to the east in search of the Vermilion Bay¹⁰ or River. It was several miles before we came to it. It was a narrow bit of a bayou, twenty or thirty feet wide. Its small size made us a little skeptical as to whether we had found the proper stream. After going up two or three miles we saw sure signs of civilization in some hogs, and next we heard a large bell like a cow-bell, and further on the noise of the bark of a dog, and soon the crowing of a cock. We advanced until we came to a large road, when we landed. Mr.

¹⁰ By "Vermilion Bay" Mr. Lewis seems here to mean the estuary of Vermilion River.

Harrison, Alsbury, and Mr. Tadlock went in search of information as to where we were, etc. The over-anxiety and labor of the night before were in such contrast with our present prospects and condition, that the sudden change of our situation completely relaxed and unhinged me. I took to a shade and grass plat, and was soon lost in a big sleep. In an hour or so I was awakened by the return of our party with the addition of a creole and his little boy some eight years old. He was one of the very worst specimens of that class, who at that time made up the great majority of the inhabitants of the settlement on the upper Teche, then called Newtown. In addition, this man could not speak one word of English. The others, being Kentuckians, could not speak one word of Creole French, and they brought him to see if the Doctor or myself could help out. The Doctor could give no assistance. In my intercourse with the creoles in and about New Orleans I had picked up a few words of their language. I pointed to the boat, which we wished to go to Newtown. He said it was three miles, or one league. I asked him what he would charge to take it, and he said three or four dollars. We told him to get his cattle and cart, and in the evening we were safe on the banks of the Teche, where we remained two days, I having finished my undertaking.

We here had to employ a pilot to show us the route out to the Mississippi through the continuous lakes to Plaquemine, which we reached about the first of October, 1822. Mr. Harrison was astonished and apparently disappointed when I told him that we would separate at this point. He remonstrated, and urged as an inducement for me to return to Kentucky that I would gladden the hearts of my two sisters, both married and well to do, who lived in three or four miles of him. I told him that in my present destitute condition I could not think of it; that all I had to depend on was my knowledge of figures and my pen; and that the chance here in New Orleans or in Louisiana was much better than up the country. He asked if I was not going back to Texas. He said that he would go right back with at least ten or fifteen families, and that he was much in hopes of my going back with them. I told him I thought I had enough of Texas; that I had lost one year and all I had in the world; and that he had a good idea of what I had suffered. But I added that, if in a year or two Colonel Austin should be alive and his grant should be secured, I would hunt Mr. Harrison out when I went back.

I took a boat—I think the “Car of Commerce”—, and the following day I went to the city, working my passage down.

¹¹.

Now I will give my judgment as to why the immigrants of the Lively missed the connection with Colonel Austin. I enter on this subject with hesitancy, with doubt as to the propriety of such a step at this late day, more particularly as my statement is at variance in some measure with what has been handed down in print as the history of this period. What I know I learned orally from others in conversations had on the vessel and at our dock and boat yard not to or intended for me, but for a few on the trip, viz., Mr. Jennings, Mr. Harrison, H. S. Holston, the two old bachelor brothers, the Messrs. Lovelace, and Wm. Little, the most of whom were from Sicily Island in Louisiana, not from Natchez. I had my berth in a rather secluded part of the cabin, and could hear most of what was said; and, as I never appeared to notice or reply or question on this or any other subject, my presence was totally disregarded. But I doubt if there was a single adventurer except the Lovelaces that was more alive to the success of the enterprise. Any and every thing spoken in reference to it had a place in my mind, was put up for future analysis, and was of all absorbing interest to me. It was those conversations that gave me an insight into affairs; it was through this medium that I made up my judgment that the Messrs. Lovelace were personally and pecuniarily interested in the success of the enterprise. The question put itself forward why these old men should take such an interest in the success of such an expedition. The reason could be no other than a pecuniary one.

The old man, Edward (Governor, as we called him) Lovelace, seemed to be the center or guiding spirit of the conclave. This showed itself more prominently when we were landed at first on the island, and more particularly on our unfortunate disembarkation at the mouth of the Brazos—unfortunate, because of our not landing also a portion of provisions. My mind was peculiarly exercised on the subject. On the following morning as the prospecting party was making preparations to get off in search of the land immigrants, I remarked, rather to Mr. Jacky Lovelace, that they had better let the yawl make one more trip to the vessel for a larger sup-

¹¹ Here follows an account of Mr. Lewis's adventure with a Mexican tiger which he killed on the Brazos.

ply of provisions, as it would be the last chance they would ever have at the Lively. Then this yawl-mouthed Beard, who was cook and steward, said in a loud voice that that young fool did not know what he was talking about. Captain Jennings was taken up with what I said, and followed me a short distance and asked what I meant. I told him that I had good reasons for saying what I did, that the day or night after the yawl started up the river with the prospecting party the Lively would be missing; which proved a fact, and she has never been heard of since.

I learned nearly at the outset that these two old hunters and trappers and perhaps Mr. Holston, then some twenty-five or twenty-eight years old, had been to the head waters of the Arkansas, the White, the Ouachita, and the Red and its tributaries. I was also satisfied that they had in their hunting peregrinations up some one or more of these streams, come in contact with Moses Austin, as they averred that he was a trader to Mexico and to Santa Fe.¹² I inferred that his last trip to these places was not the first; that he had once or twice before come through from Bexar by the same route by their home. I learned from young Phelps and Stephen Holston, who were nephews of the Messrs. Lovelace, that they were considered wealthy. They had been cultivating jointly a plantation, making two hundred or two hundred and fifty bales of cotton annually. Now when Moses Austin came through the last time, returning from his trip in May, then sick with fever, he recuperated a little and was furnished with means and a horse to make his way home. These men, the Lovelaces, knew of his probable success in his Texas enterprise, and had promised to give him additional aid, and also to return with him to meet his commissioner at Bexar.¹³

Now when the elder Austin reached his home his disease terminated in pneumonia; and, when information reached him of the success of his application to locate a colony, and his health and condition rendered him unable to accomplish the return trip to San Antonio, he immediately empowered his son to fulfill his contract. Circumstances go to show that his son Stephen F. must have left his father previous to his demise, though it is stated by Yoakum that he left after the father's death, only allowing the colonel twenty-eight days to reach Natchitoches, even if he left the day of

¹² These surmises as to Moses Austin are all incorrect.—G. M. B.

¹³ This is a mistake.—G. M. B.

his father's demise; and in addition he could not come direct from Missouri to Natchitoches, as he had to, and did, come via Natchez, and thence by Sicily Island, having to make a detour around Arkansas and North Louisiana to avoid the Indians of those regions. Besides this, Colonel Austin had picked up Messrs. Little and Beard at Terre Haute, where he remained a few days. He reached Sicily Island some time in June, when the Lovelaces and others joined him. They then proceeded to the rendezvous at San Antonio, where they received the confirmation of his claim. They immediately went to designate the outline of his grant, after which they returned to the Lovelace plantation; and coming from there the three, i. e., Colonel Austin, Mr. Hawkins,¹⁴ and Little, met me on the Natchez. Here Colonel Austin had his proposition advertised in the Natchez papers, and the same recopied in one or two New Orleans papers.

I had made up my mind that upon the return of the yawl the Governor and party did not represent fully what they saw and heard while up the river. They said the party at the Bahia crossing could give no information as to the whereabouts of Colonel Austin, therefore it was best to deny seeing any one, as a demoralized spirit was already apparent, and the information they had would heighten this feeling, if known.

I now put down my opinion as to why we could not meet or hear of Colonel Austin up to July 22nd. It was believed that his presence was again necessary at the seat of government on his return from New Orleans in December or January, 1822, and on his return he was detained in company of commissioners selecting and locating the boundaries of his grant; for about this time other grants had been projected for a similar purpose, and they might interfere some and create difficulty in his location.¹⁵

Now we of the Lively did not reach the mouth of the Brazos, our place of disembarkation, until the 2nd of January, 1822. The scouts sent to find the vessel, in lieu of going on horseback, should have taken the Brazos. They went direct to the San Jacinto. Now, when Colonel Austin arrived on the Brazos about the 1st of January, 1822, he was informed that a change of dynasty had occurred,

¹⁴ A mistake as to Hawkins.—G. M. B.

¹⁵ Austin was in the City of Mexico from April 28, 1822, to April 28, 1823.—G. M. B.

and that his presence was necessary to have his claim confirmed by the existing dictator, Santa Anna. Hence he was absent the whole of the spring until June, 1822. We in the meantime heard any and all sorts of reports about his absence. Political feeling at the capital, Mexico, ran very high; and when Colonel Austin presented his documents, which were made out and signed by the officers of the late emperor Iturbide, he was incarcerated. But through influential parties and the catholic priests—principally the latter, as they were then the power, and also that Austin was and had been raised a catholic¹⁶—he was not only released, but his claim confirmed. I have every reason to believe that he did not return from the city of Mexico until after July 1st; and this is mere conjecture, for I have never learned when he did return. Up to this time immigration had most evidently increased, and still they came.

¹⁶ This is a mistake.—G. M. B.