

P R E F A C E

In the summer of 1958 Mrs. Luther Bain of Plainview, Texas, whose late father had been a long-time general manager of the company, donated a group of Texas Land and Development Company records to the Southwest Collection at Texas Tech University. Earlier, the late Mr. Peyton Beaumont Randolph of Plainview, who was the attorney for the Texas Land and Development Company from 1912 to 1954 when the company was dissolved, had donated two groups of records to this collection. A third group, not to be legally disposed of until 1960, was then in the possession of the late Mr. Hugh R. Partridge of New York City, who had been a trustee for one of the parent trusts of the Texas Land and Development Company, the Staked Plains Trust, Limited, from 1920 until the trust was liquidated in 1956. Although the Bain and Randolph collections, numbering over ten thousand pages, seemed quite voluminous, a definitive history of the Texas Land and Development Company appeared impossible, since Partridge's collection represented an unknown quantity. Research was further limited because many employees and officers of the company were deceased or had moved from Plainview.

On the other hand, there were indications that a scholarly and worthwhile history of the company was possible from the available sources. Mrs. Bain graciously offered her father's personal papers, newspaper files, a miscellaneous collection bearing on the history of the company, and space in her home for conducting research. Mr. Randolph extended the courtesy of permitting the use of his extensive legal file, which partially bridged the correspondence gap in the history. Mr. Partridge

kindly consented to make the records in his possession available on condition that they would be returned immediately on request. Finally there were many former employees of the Texas Land and Development Company still in the Plainview area, including Mr. Randolph, the company attorney; Mr. George T. Perdue, one of the early treasurers of the company; the late Mr. Fred Watson, the late Mr. David Dell Bowman, and Mr. Fred Lowe, all of whom had been farm superintendents for the company; and others who had served the company in such capacities as mechanics, carpenters, and painters.

An examination of available records encouraged me to locate former officials who were still living in 1960 or relatives of deceased officials. However, publicity about the project in numerous area newspapers, including the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, and an accompanying plea for information brought not one response. The silence was ominous, but a former colleague, Mrs. A. B. Cox, a long-time history teacher in the Plainview schools, was able to furnish names and addresses of former employees and others who might have knowledge of the early history of the area. One of these, Mrs. F. W. Clinkscales, possessed many valuable items, the most notable being the only copy found of a Texas Land and Development Company brochure compiled by the first general manager of the company, Milton Day Henderson. Interviews often provided not only a wealth of material and information but also the names and addresses of other former employees of the company. As a result the next two years brought 10 tape recordings, approximately 150 oral interviews, an estimated 100 telephone interviews, and approximately 100 letters. From the official records of the company obtained from Mrs. Bain, Mr. Randolph, and Mr. Partridge, from the information gleaned from the interviews and letters, from the files of Mr. Randolph and Mrs. Clinkscales, and from such other sources as contemporary newspapers and public records, the story of the Texas Land and Development Company slowly and painstakingly took form.

In preparing the history of the Texas Land and Development Company, I am especially indebted to many persons. It is not feasible to list all those who so generously aided, but the following exceeded the call of duty: Mrs. Luther R. Bain and the late Mr. Peyton B. Randolph for donating the records and for extending courtesies on numerous oc-

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