

HEI-25849

The Medina County Environmental Action Association, Inc.

166 PR 4664, Castroville, TX 78009
DR. ROBERT FITZGERALD, PRESIDENT
LESTER LANDRUM, VICE-PRESIDENT
ALYNE FITZGERALD, SECRETARY
MORRIS BAXTER, TREASURER

Phone 830-538-9745
DIRECTORS: MADELYN SCHOTT
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GREG NINEDORF

March 17, 2017

Diana Wood
Office of Environmental Analysis
United States Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

Subject: Comments on Draft Cultural Resources Report by HDR on Southwest Gulf Railroad
Right-of-Way, STB FD 34284

Dear Ms. Wood:

As president of the Medina County Environmental Action Association, Inc. (MCEAA) I wish to submit the following comments on behalf of this organization. This report verifies what numerous reliable investigators listed in HDR's Part 6 Reference Section – that Quihi, New Fountain, and Upper Quihi locations contain unique, fragile, irreplaceable, historical, cultural features. These features have been recognized as being eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, by at least 2 criteria, A and C according to D. Cassidy.

It is noted that HDR report states that at least four historic buildings are 'adversely affected' by the currently proximity of the rail line and its recent location. In addition, another structure, HDR-AR1, which is possibly eligible for NRHP, lies just outside of the historic district and is depicted as planned to be destroyed by the rail loop and quarry plant site. Loss of these structures would cause the loss or seriously affect Upper Quihi' eligibility.

Signatory parties of the Programmatic Agreement are reminded that SGR has had over 17 years to get its rail spur located. Largely through MCEAA's efforts, there have been 4 route relocations and now at this late date SGR persists in wanting to destroy and important part of Texas history by dividing Upper Quihi District in half; even though as early as year 2000 they were advised to 'Don't Mess With Quihi' by MCEAA. As proof of MCEAA's concern, MCEAA was

instrumental in uniting people of Quihi to protect our cultural history by several means, including the forming of a deed restriction covenant forbidding the construction on 9,622 acres of land around Quihi, Upper Quihi, and New Fountain. MCEAA members, with the assistance of a nationally known archeologist, Dr. Tom Hester, University of Texas at Austin Professor Emeritus, formed the Quihi and New Fountain Historical Society to further preserve this area's cultural history. MCEAA was also able in 2006 to have Quihi listed as one of Texas' most endangered sites, by the proposed quarry and rail line project. Importantly, three Environmental Impact Studies containing 91 mitigation measures, were largely the result of over 400 letters to the STB by MCEAA members. These efforts were made primarily because the people of Quihi were aware of Quihi's special history and wanted to preserve and protect it from certain destruction by a railroad. Settlements of Quihi and New Fountain, founded in the 1840's by Henri Castro and subsequently Upper Quihi which was settled soon after as more people came to this area of Medina County. It represents a part of Texas history and culture that is worthy of preservation to newcomers to the state of Texas. Today's children have a right to know what has transpired here. If the current route as proposed is allowed, an important part of Texas' history will be lost forever.

The destruction of Upper Quihi does not need to happen. Another realignment should be found for the SGR rail spur, or the proposed rail spur should be abandoned. However, if the SGR rail spur is to be built, Upper Quihi Historic District must be avoided by utilizing the so-called MCEAA Medina Dam with some minor deviations. This route was patterned after the Galveston, Harrisburg, & San Antonio RR was used to build Medina Lake dam in 1912. This MCEAA Medina Dam Route has already been noted to be preferable in SDEIS Vol II, by Preservation Central, Inc., pages 30 and 78: "To minimize or avoid adverse impacts to the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District the MCEAA Medina Dam Route Alternative would be preferable."

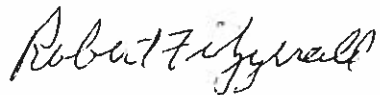
For example, this route beginning at the Union Pacific Rail line at Highway 90, proceeding north easterly crossing CR 4643 approximately one-fourth mile NE of Hwy 90, proceeding on level ground along the eastern border of the Castroville West Subdivision, crossing CR 4516 at its intersection with CR 461 ROW. This would go between the pivot irrigation systems in the Weiblen Farm. Then proceeding north crossing FM 2676 one-half mile east of CR 265, continuing north one-third mile, then turning west, crossing CR 265 proceeding west (north of CR 354) and entering the proposed quarry site from the east, above the northern boundary of Upper Quihi. This route would avoid cutting Upper Quihi in half and avoid destroying its cultural resources. This route has other advantages, to name a few. Construction would be on more flat land than the proposed route. It would cross all county roads and state roads at safer locations, and with greater visibility for traffic. Even though this route is somewhat longer than at present, it would cost less to construct because it has less cut and fill and would have less extensive drainage features to construct. If the current route is built it would result not only in destroying Quihi's unique cultural history, much to the dismay of people in Medina County, who have worked so hard to protect Upper Quihi. MCEAA predicts SGR will find that during the 50-year

life of the railroad, it was not only costlier to build as now planned but to also maintain due to its location.

In conclusion, when the STB granted an 'exemption' to build a rail spur it was done largely because SWGR stated "it was needed to supply crushed limestone to the Houston and Galveston area". Since that time, Martin Marietta, the largest aggregate producer in the state of Texas, purchased thousands of acres of land NE of D'Hanis, built a rail spur connected to this same Union Pacific rail line, developed a quarry and is now producing and shipping several hundred railroad cars weekly to supply this market – without STB's assistance or SGR condemnation of private land. Therefore, the question arises: Is SGR's rail spur really necessary at the expense of destruction of Upper Quihi' unique cultural history?

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this Section 106 process.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert Fitzgerald".

Dr. Robert Fitzgerald, President
Medina County Environmental Action Association, Inc

CC: Texas Historical Commission
Bill Martin SHPO
P O Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711

John M. Fowler
Executive Director ACHP
401 F Street NW Suite 308
Washington DC 20001

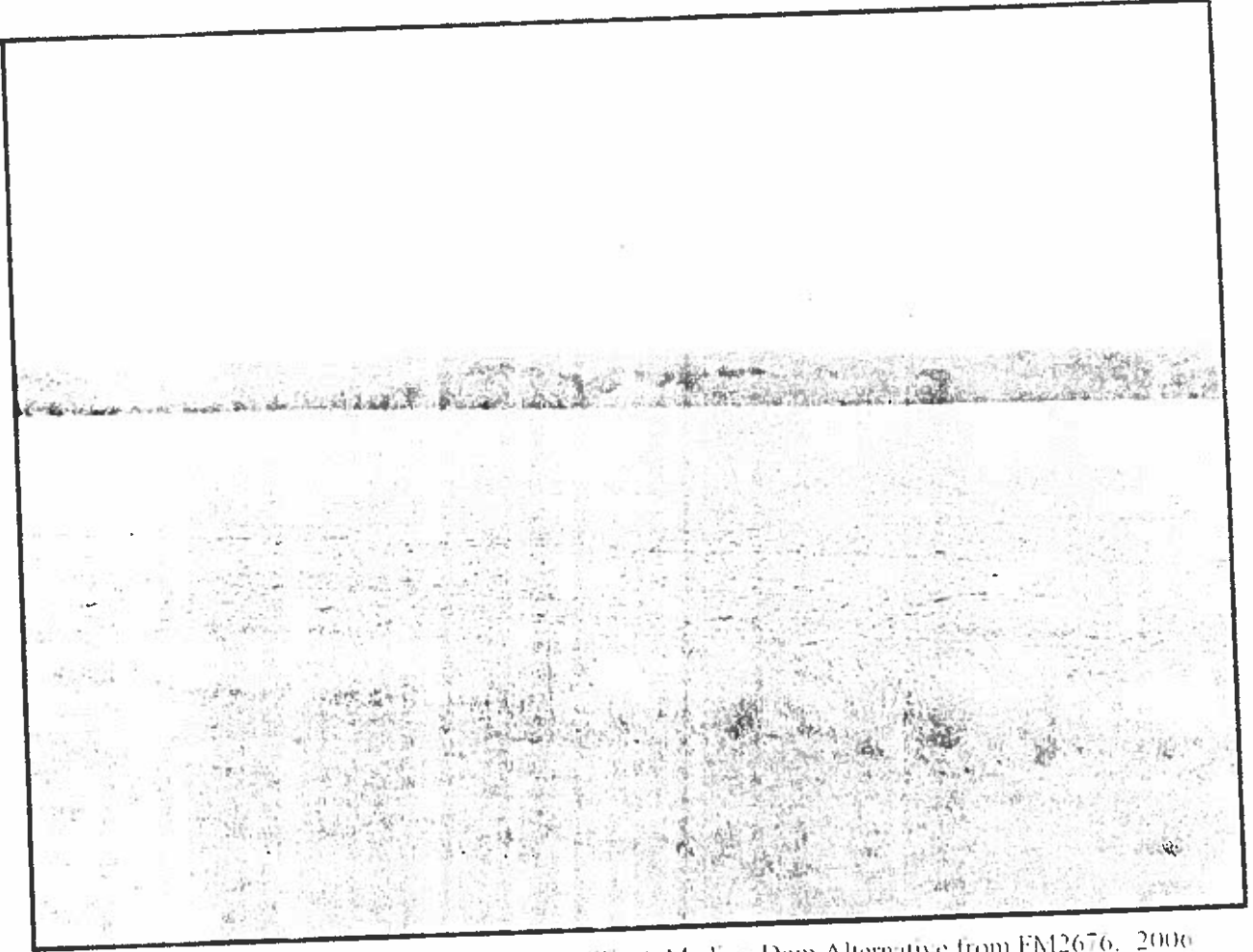


Figure 23 View looking northwest along the MCEAA Medina Dam Alternative from FM2676. 2006
Photo by CES.

In contrast, the Eastern Bypass Route would intersect an older portion of Upper Quihi Rural Historic District in relatively close proximity to two German-Alsatian farms and an historic road remnant. The combined analysis suggests that, of the three Eastern Alternatives, the Eastern Bypass Route would have greater combined cultural resource impacts than the MCEAA Medina Dam Alternative, and SGR's Modified Medina Dam Route. It is likely to have the most prehistoric and historic archaeological sites and also would likely have the most disruption of the setting of the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District.

Recommendations

Recommendations

Due to the statewide significance of the Quihi Rural Historic District and the rare and fragile nature of its resources, the rail alternatives that skirt or avoid the district are preferable in terms of their impacts on cultural resources. To minimize or avoid adverse impacts to the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District, the MCEAA Medina Dam Alternative, which would traverse that district further to the north and east than the other alignments, would be preferable.

Recommendation
#12000
Myndert
P. 100

Alyne Fitzgerald

166 PR 4664 Castroville, TX 78009

March 20, 2017

Ms. Diana Wood
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423

Re: Southwest Gulf Railroad FD 34284
HDR Draft dated February 2017

Dear Ms. Wood:

Thank you for your continued efforts to secure the place in Texas' history known as the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District, the Quihi Rural Historic District, and the New Fountain Rural Historic District, as deemed eligible for registration in the Keepers Register,

Other experts have seen the tremendous value of saving the historic Quihi area. In year 2006, Preservation Texas placed Quihi on its Most Endangered List of historic sites, and did so because of the threat of this proposed project. (Brochure enclosed.) I would guess that the areas evidencing early Texas history are rapidly being lost and that there aren't many other areas in Texas having the rich historic cultural and archeological landscape that have survived the progression of time as this area has.

The Upper Quihi Rural Historic District is part of an area covering over 36-square miles of groups of closely related families. In the 1840's their ancestors began settling in what was then the Texas frontier. Several archaeologists and historians said they were 'blown away' (as some of them have expressed it) when they first experience a visit to this historic Quihi area. Several say they cannot believe the abundance of evidence of the historic cultural landscape still in place that so well represents this important era in the history of the early settlement of Texas.

I am submitting information about a few aspects of the proposed project.

Quihi and Upper Quihi Family Histories

The Balzen family was one of the pioneer families coming to Quihi. Enclosed is a study conducted by Richard Balzen in the 1970's which he distributed to his family members at a family reunion. His map depicts the settlement and location of homes and other features of the area from New Fountain in the west to Rio Medina in the east. He also gave a history of the family origins which is enclosed. This is only one of the many family histories that have been and continue to be written by members of other area families. Copies of some of these written works have been donated to local libraries and can be found there. The families in the Quihi and New Fountain area continue to show an interest not only in their genealogy but the landscape of their settlement. What is defined in today's studies as the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District, the Quihi Rural Historic District, and the New Fountain Rural Historic District are as one in Mr. Balzen's study. What affects one part of the area affects all of the area. The families of those times are today still united in culture and customs. (Enclosed: Map and History)

General Woll's Road

In 1842, General Adrian Woll led his army through the Quihi area, including present day CR 4516. It was a rather large force, with cannons and other weaponry, supplies and entourage. He headed east for a successful surprise attack to retake San Antonio from the Texans, invading from the north side. After later being defeated by the Texas Rangers at Salado Creek he retreated the same way. Joined by many Mexican residents of San Antonio and prisoners including the noted Sam Maverick, Woll's army returned through the Quihi area 11 days later in a hasty retreat to Mexico, shedding various items as they fled. Logically speaking, some of these items are possibly in the referenced area. The HDR study made no mention of this event. Enclosed is a copy of the diary of that invasion. A Texas Historical Marker denoting this passage through Quihi is on FM 2676 at CR 4516.

The Rock Wall

There is no explanation for the existence or purpose of the mile-long 'rock wall' (41ME172). It is made of huge stacked boulders and it is said that its origins predate the early settlers. The collection of numerous boulders which stretches for about a mile, their size, where they came from and how they were placed there - and why - has never been studied. Little is known about this 'wall' and, just as important, whether it could be part of a larger cultural picture. This study only makes mere mention of this phenomenon (Page 13, page 17). The fact that this study finds it is not located in close proximity to the proposed rail spur could be immaterial to 41ME172's importance. Until more is known about this site, the effect of the rail line traversing this area cannot be ignored and deserves further archeological research before encroachment.

The Cherry Creek

The Cherry Creek winds its way back and forth, meandering through the hills east of the settlement of Quihi, and is in the southern portion of the proposed rail spur site. It provided water and abundant wildlife to the earliest of inhabitants. According to legend, the springs giving life to these creeks have never gone dry and their banks were occupied by prehistoric man. During the Spanish mission era of San Antonio, the San Jose Mission Indians were deeded lands in this area by the government of Spain for grazing their livestock. The area was known then as Rancho San Lucas. This part of the area history is not included in the HDR draft. Indeed, between pages 9 and 10 it skips an entire 300-year segment of area history, between the years 1500 and 1800.

Now, these creeks still supply water for livestock, and is part of the rural culture of the area. This area in particular has been visited and explored many times over the years by several prominent archeologists not involved in the process of this proposed project. Those we have talked to are amazed, to say the least, at the rich archeological landscape of this area, and its artifacts, cenotes and other land features. Noted is the Cherry Creek's origins in the hills located north of CR 4516 and CR 4643 (200 yards from the rail spur as shown in HDR maps for Parcel 7 and Parcel 8). In times of moderate to heavy rains, the level of the water in Cherry Creek is so high that it floods several portions of CR 4516 from CR 4643 to the east all the way to Quihi 2 miles away. The residents there consider this quite the norm and deal with it appropriately. The ranchers are glad to get their stock tanks full. The Cherry Creek and other unnamed creeks in the southern end of the proposed rail spur route are crossed at least 4 times. This project likely will not spare the integrity of these important creeks. Creek crossings are shown in Parcels 3,4,5,6,10, and 24.

The proposed Vulcan Materials Quarry/Southwest Gulf Railroad spur project has been languishing for over 17 years – since 1999, with not one spade of dirt turned for its construction, and there is good reason: This ill-conceived project was never studied before it was mapped out the first time! Only after it was made public, and the problems pointed out to VMC/SGRR by MCEAA and others, were SOME of these problems addressed. The route has been changed, relocated, altered and modified over 4 times, and looks nothing like the plan originally presented in year 2000. Some of the modifications made were not even studied before being accepted, such as the Weiblen Modification, which affects so many features already mentioned. (Shown in HDR map for Parcels 3,4,5,6,7,8.)

Perhaps the most damning evidence of all that should prevent SGR from dividing the UPRHD with their rail spur is the fact that they intend to industrialize the Quihi area. For years, beginning from the time Vulcan Materials first contacted the STB (see Nov 26, 2002 EI-10: VMC to STB. SGR not created yet) up to February 2016 when VMC/SGR began condemnation proceedings against the landowners for land for their rail spur in the 38th District Court, VMC/SGR has been advertising on radio, billboards, and newspapers, that they intend to bring in numerous businesses to locate along their rail spur to ‘promote economic growth’. SGR has been promising this industrial growth to local Chambers of Commerce, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Medina County government, school boards, etc., and many other organizations. No, SGR does not intend to go quietly through the area, and their plans are no secret. Please show on your maps at what places along the SGR spur these other businesses would locate, and determine the impacts they will have on the Cultural and Historic Landscape of the area.

If this rail spur would be allowed as outlined in HDR’s draft, and SGR’s plan, it would be the end of the UQRHD, and the effects of this damage would quickly extend to the Quihi and the New Fountain Rural Historic Districts as well. Ten years ago, March 26, 2007, at a Section 106 Consulting Party meeting in San Antonio, Lawrence Oaks of the Texas Historical Commission pointed out that restoration and upkeep of historic buildings are largely funded by donors, and voiced a valid concern that “donors will be less likely to invest in rehabilitation of cultural structures if a rail line is built”.

The proposed rail spur itself will cover a total of nearly 3000 acres and split the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District in half. It should be obvious that the effects of this proposed rail spur will destroy the UQRHD aesthetic value. With a mandate to avoid or to minimize or to mitigate, the only possible solution in this instance is to avoid the area. If SGR cannot avoid the Upper Quihi Rural Historic District and the other historic districts, the only answer is to abandon the project.

I hope these comments are helpful, and I thank you for the opportunity you have given to express them. They cover only a part of this draft. With only 25 days to read and digest this material, I could not find it possible to do much more. I have focused on some of the features of the landscape closest to the proposed project, and not on those features located in other parts of this historic area. It might be difficult to visualize this situation without an on-site visit. We cordially invite any and all representatives from THC, ACHP, and STB’s OEA who are making decisions on this to visit the area personally and see this project area on the ground in its historical context. There are many of us here who would be delighted to share this with you. This matter is too important to leave these issues not fully explored.

Respectfully,



Alyne Fitzgerald, Secretary and Past President of MCEAA,
Past President of Quihi and New Fountain Historical Society

Enclosed: Preservation Texas Brochure
 Balzen Family History and Area Map
 Diary of General Woll

CC: Texas Historical Commission
 Bill Martin SHPO
 P O Box 12276
 Austin, TX 78711

Joh M. Fowler Executive Director ACHP
401 F Street NW Suite 308
Washington, DC 20001

Note:

Enclosed is the English translation of the 1842 diary written by General Woll's quartermaster of the last major incursion of Mexico into Texas, after Texas won the war for Independence in 1836. The original Spanish document is in the archives in Mexico, and the English translation was part of a thesis written by a college student in 1952. This 19-day diary begins with the crossing of the Rio Grande River and ends with the capture of San Antonio on September 11, 1842. General Woll's army and its many components was so large it took the first 7 days to cross the Rio Grande River. Page 9 of the diary states that the Quihi (Cuije) area was crossed on the 9th day of September.

I would like to claim credit for collecting the items I am sending copies of, but I cannot. Beginning over 14 years ago, when hearing about the proposed quarry and rail spur, people started bringing things in to use from their own collections. Unsolicited, there came papers from files, public archives, old boxes, attic trunks - and even from a trash heap. Attorneys, teachers, surveyors, historians, archeologists and many different people came with their treasures, but they had one thing in common: they realized what was at stake. A few of these people were elderly and have passed on since, but it is in their honor and with gratitude to them and those donors still here, that I can include a few of their items. Families of Quihi and New Fountain deeply care, and continue to seek assistance to save their communities.

Dr. Dennis R. Skalka
3122 CR 265
Mico, TX.78056-5004

March 17, 2017

Ms. Diana Wood
OEA
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
Washington DC 20923

Dear Ms. Wood,

My wife Margaret and I have been charter members of the MCEAA since its inception in 2001. We have lived along County Road 265 since my retirement from the USAF in 1995. Since that time, we have seen a move by aggregate companies to destroy the edge of the hill country.

Not only do they threaten the habitat of an endangered species (Golden Cheeked warbler). Our property has professionally documented the residence of this rare species which exists ONLY in a small area of the hill country. There is also evidence of many historical Indian sites dating to when this area was first inhabited and which will be lost to future generations.

Also impacted by this encroachment are naturally occurring sink holes that replenish the ground water and impact the aquifer. Establishing an elevated rail line will create diversions of runoff in some areas.

Further realignment and avoiding the historic areas by the proposed SGR rail spur must be done, or even abandoning the project. This project by SGR must be abandoned to prevent the loss of the Quihi and New Fountain Historic Districts and archeological areas, and to preserve an irreplaceable part of Texas history.

Dr. Dennis R. Skalka
3122 CR 265
Mico, TX.78056-5004

March 17, 2017

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OEA
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street SW
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March 7, 2017

Diana Wood.
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Draft Cultural Resources Report on Southwest Gulf Railroad Right-Of-Way
STB Finance Docket No. 34284

Dear Ms. Wood:

As Past-President of the Quihi & New Fountain Historical Society, I feel it is imperative that I write about the Historical value of the Quihi area of Medina County and the Great State of Texas. All of upper Quihi and Lower Quihi was inhabited by indigenous people for several thousand years. They found this unique area a paradise due to the abundance of good water and game. Their presence is verified by the unbelievable abundance of artifacts that can be found everywhere.

More than three hundred years ago, this was a direct route of Spanish explorers who described the landscape and the names the indigenous people had given to the plants, streams and wildlife. Later Mexican armed forces invaded Texas. In 1842, the Northern Mexican Army under the command of General Adrian Woll, built a road that extended from the Presidio San Juan Baptiste to San Antonio passing through Quihi. The road was later used by settlers moving west, ox drawn freight wagons and the U.S. Army during the Mexican American War in 1846.

After the Texas Revolution, this area was settled by Europeans. Their struggles to survive are verified in their journals. Their old rock homes, many of which are still standing, also verify this.

The proposed Southwest Gulf Railroad will destroy a great portion of this history. Much of history will be shoved aside or completely covered forever. There are historically valuable areas all over Texas, but this is a prime example of one of the best. This is absolutely the worst spot that could have been picked for a railroad spur.

The Conclusion and Recommendations Summary does justice to all the research and surveys that were required. This is no doubt that there will be adverse effects from a railroad. We just cannot keep losing our history.-

Thank you for allowing me to express my opinion and feelings. You can rest assured that there are many other people in the Quihi area that feel the same as I, but will sit silent.

Sincerely,

Lyn Scott Conrad
6522 Thunderbird Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78240

Ms. Diana Wood
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

14 March 2017

Re: Surface Transportation Board, Southwest Gulf Railroad, FD 34284

We are honored by our opportunity to express our views in support and to back and preserve the heritage area of Quihi. It is our obligation and duty to write this letter to reply to HDR's draft of the SGR company construction of a proposed single-track railroad in Medina County to a large quarry in upper Quihi. We are members of MCEAA and consultants.

Currently we reside at CR 354, Hondo, TX, only some ½ mile south of the rail loading loop and the current rail alignment and direct effects ADE boundary. My home and property is within the upper Quihi Historic district. Our farm at the above location has been awarded a certificate by the state of Texas for continuous ownership and operation as a family since 1881. Joyce's brother has a similar award on his adjoining property. Joyce's family records confirmed ancestors arrived in Texas in 1852 and 1856 and then settled in Quihi area.

It is difficult for local area residents to understand and differentiate the many kinds of effects that this SGR can cause. We must acknowledge that this railroad proposal was started in 1999-2000. Local residents have made steps to avoid rail lines on their property by adding covenants in 2001 for protection.

Local residents do know that a railroad plus a Martin Marietta quarry was installed in this county and in operation in about five years with little or no major objection; while this SGR is still under study for eighteen years with alterations, changes, and unknowns.

There are several findings in the HDR study that the railroad would destroy much of the aesthetic value of upper Quihi area and resulting unacceptable for national historic site registration. The 18 years plus waiting period on the planning and construction has had adverse effects. Many structures were neglected and other plans and dreams were cancelled on this long wait. Sudden distress sales and lost value of property has prevailed. Some local residents felt rough and aggressive treatment during this wait.

Inherent joys such as upper Quihi area are often lost. Good stewardship to our cultural heritage is paramount. The only action to save this historical district is for the rail line to avoid it or abandon the project. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the HDR draft.

cc: Texas Historical Commission

Bill Martin SHPO

P. O. Box 12276

Austin, TX 78711

cc: John M. Fowler, Exec. Director, ACHP

1100 Pennsylvania Ave NW, suite 803

Washington, DC 20004


Lester R. and Joyce M. Landrum

776 CR 354

Hondo, TX 78861

Washington, DC 2004

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lester Patrick Landrum', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lester Patrick Landrum

P. O. Box 1059

Hondo, TX 78861

March 12, 2017

Diana Wood
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E. Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Cultural Resources Report on
Southwest Gulf Railroad Right-Of-Way
STB Finance Docket No. 34284

Dear Ms. Wood:

I recently attended a meeting of the MCEAA (Medina County Environmental Action Association) group, of which I am a member, to become more informed about the latest plan of the Southwest Gulf Railroad Right-of-Way. I was shocked that the plan would take the railroad right over the most cherished cultural and historical area in Quihi.

It has been shown that if the railroad loop were located in a farther ~~west~~ ^{EAST} area that the historical and cultural area now suggested would not be destroyed.

I do hope that this suggestion will be considered.

Sincerely,

Ruth M. Davis

Ruth M. Davis
5885 FM 2676
Hondo, TX 78861

cc: Texas Historical Commission,
Bill Martin SHPO,
PO Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711

cc: John M. Fowler,
Executive Director, ACHP
1100 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Suite 803
Washington, DC 20004

March 9, 2017

Respectfully Submitted To :

Ms. Diana Wood

Office of Environmental Analysis

Surface Transportation Board

395 E. Street SW room 1110

Washington D.C. 20423-0001

In 1976 a novel was written that inspired an historical, cultural sensation. The novel, *ROOTS*, touched our hearts and souls no matter which ship brought our courageous, pioneering ancestors to America.

It is not just sad, but tragic, that we have let some of our ancestors' history, stories, heritages, and pride, be tossed aside for the wealthy gains of a few.

Thank you Mr. Alex Haley for reminding us that OUR *ROOTS* have built OUR America. Also to preserve what few treasures we descendants have to pass on to

future generations .

You have the power and privilege of salvaging one of these historical places . Upper Quihi in Medina County , Texas is in the path of a proposed railroad which will haul rocks from a quarry .

THE HISTORY OF THOUSANDS DESTROYED FOR THE WEALTH OF A FEW and you can stop it .

To destroy any property, land, homes and artifacts would be like digging up the graves of all of those people and throwing their bones to the coyotes .

My own family homestead, built in 1845 , is still standing and I , as well as other family members, still live in the area . Please use your power to stop SGR and save Upper Quihi .

Frank Anton Fournier III

Ms. Diana Wood
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

14 March 2017

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cc: Texas Historical Commission
Bill Martin SHPO
P. O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711

cc: John M. Fowler, Exec. Director, ACHP
1100 Pennsylvania Ave NW, suite 803
Washington, DC 20004



Lester R. and Joyce M. Landrum
776 CR 354
Hondo, TX 78861

March 7, 2017

Diana Wood,
Office of Environmental Analysis
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Draft Cultural Resources Report on
Southwest Gulf Railroad Right-Of-Way
STB Finance Docket No. 34284

Dear Ms. Wood:

Recently, I had the opportunity to read and review the report on the intensive research and surveys that were required by the STB regarding the Southwest Gulf Railroad.

I feel that the research was done in a very thorough manner. It does point out there is an incredible amount of history in this area. I know there are many historical sites in the state of Texas, but feel this is probably one of the most unique areas.

I feel that the proposed railroad would destroy many thousands of years of history and artifacts. If the proposed route would have been moved a bit farther west, all this area could have been preserved. Martin Marietta's Rail Spur to the west is a prime example of a way of avoiding such a historically sensitive area.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Conrad
6522 Thunderbird Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78240

2006 Texas Most Endangered List



Join us in saving
Texas' most endangered places.
www.PreservationTexas.org

Our Mission

Preservation Texas, Inc. is a not-for-profit membership organization whose mission is to protect the historic resources of Texas.

Founded in 1985, named a Statewide

Partner of the National Trust for Historic

Preservation in 1998, Preservation Texas is a leader in advocacy for the preservation of Texas' historic places. With headquarters in Austin, more than 600 individual and more than 90 organizational members, Preservation Texas represents more than 16,000 Texans as their statewide voice for historic preservation.



Mueller Bridge

La Vernia, Wilson County

The Mueller Bridge is one of two multi-span Warren polygonal chord bridges in the state. The 252 foot metal truss bridge with wooden floor was completed in 1915 and is located in Wilson County, two miles east of La Vernia.

John McAlister bought several hundred acres of farmland in the early 1850s adjacent to Cibola Creek. The natural stream crossing, an old Indian trail, adjacent to his property became known as "McAlister Crossing". Henry Mueller, a blacksmith, purchased land on the east side in 1906, giving the future bridge its name. Serving residents for over 70 years, the bridge was closed to traffic in 1988. The abutment on the northeast end of the bridge is cracked and serious erosion problems have developed causing the northeast corner of the embankment to slough off leaving the corner dangling in mid-air. Several holes have developed in the flooring of the bridge.

Village of Quihi

Medina County

The village of Quihi lies thirty miles west of San Antonio. Ancient Indian tribes named the area for the Mexican eagle and camped around Quihi Lake because of the abundant game there. They left campsites with artifacts carbon-dated thousands of years old. In 1846 ten families came to Quihi Lake by oxcart from the Indianola seaport and established farms and homes. Many of the current 200 residents in this picturesque settlement are descendants of those original settlers. Quihi is threatened today by noise pollution and the deterioration to its sense of place because an aggregate company is planning a 50-year project to mine 200 million tons of crushed limestone near Quihi. Hundreds of 78,000 pound trucks and a 7-mile railroad with 400 railcars would travel through the Quihi area daily, posing serious risk to the structure and stability of the buildings.



Winfield Hangar

Fort Stockton, Pecos County

The adobe Winfield Hangar was constructed in 1936 by the Works Progress Administration and Pecos County. Winfield Airport was used as an auxiliary field to Gibbs Field during World War II, a primary training base. State Senator H. L. Winfield was a champion for the creation of Big Bend National Park. This airport was elite in its time, being the first in the area. It transported people and cargo from Texas to all parts of the country and was on the old Chihuahua Road. The now vacant adobe Winfield Hangar is threatened due to neglect and damage from the elements.



Herring Hotel

Amarillo, Potter County

The Herring Hotel was one of three oil-boom era hotels built in the 1920s, and is now the only one standing. It was home to the Old Tascosa Room where cattle and oil barons gathered to discuss business and unwind. It featured western frescoes painted by muralist H.D. Bugbee. Only one of the frescoes is intact after a water main flooded the basement. The hotel's 14 stories and 600 rooms made it the largest of the 1920s era hotels. Its builder, Cornelius Taylor Herring, was a pioneer cattleman, oilman and banker. He owned 98,000 acres of the LS Ranch north of Amarillo. The Hotel was converted into federal office space in the early 1970s, but was soon abandoned. The site is vulnerable to vandals and damage from the elements.

Texas Most Co.

El Paso and Southwestern Railroad and Freight Depot

El Paso, El Paso County



This 1903 Italianate terminal, designed by Daniel H. Burnham and built by the Phelps-Dodge Company, allowed merchants to load, unload or store freight shipped on the El Paso & Southwestern Railroad. Not only is this building listed as a local historic landmark for its historical significance, but its nationally known architect designed Washington DC's Union Station and the El Paso Union Depot. The windows are covered with plywood to discourage vandalism but the building is threatened by neglect and the misdirected preservation efforts of previous owners.

Historic Texas Cemeteries

All Texas Counties

Cemeteries are among the most valuable of historic resources. They are reminders of various settlement patterns and reveal information about historic events, religion, lifestyles and genealogy. Unfortunately, historic cemeteries do not necessarily remain permanent reminders of our heritage. They are subject to deterioration from weathering and erosion, uncontrolled vegetation, development pressures, vandalism, theft and neglect. The loss of gravestones, fencing and other funeral objects has occurred to some extent in almost every cemetery in the state, and in places even the loss of whole cemeteries has been tolerated, sanctioned or gone unnoticed. The need for a comprehensive approach to cemetery preservation presents an enormous challenge to our state and is underscored by the fact that over 90% of property in Texas is in private ownership.



Wilshire Village Apartments

Houston, Harris County

The Wilshire Village Apartment complex is the only remaining development of three original Federal Housing Administration-insured sites, the largest undertaking of its kind approved by the FHA in the South. Finished in 1940, the garden apartment complex had 144 apartments of varying sizes in two-story, fireproof buildings on nine acres - in the Montrose area. Architect Eugene Werlin created the "modern" look with brushed aluminum banisters, glass blocks and projecting window bays. After many years, maintenance became the responsibility of the individual tenants, not the owner. As a result, not all apartments are well maintained and the building exteriors appear derelict. The complex is located in the midst of several historic subdivisions. In 2005, the property sold to a developer who announced preliminary plans to erect two 16-18 story residential towers on the site. This plan threatens the character of the adjacent neighborhoods, and the mature oaks and magnolias that were planted on the site 65 years ago.



Eastern Star Home

Arlington,
Tarrant County

This grand facility, built in 1924 at a cost of \$212,000, was constructed to provide a home for aged and infirmed members of the Eastern Star in Texas. The charge to build included a provision to be near a public school "so children who might come to live in the home could be educated without undue expense."

Additions to the building in 1931, 1954 and 1966, provided a new kitchen, an enlarged dining room, a new east wing and a hospital unit. A local developer envisions a 300-room hotel and apartments at the former retirement center, and Arlington City officials plan to turn a

large portion of the 30 acres into a parking lot for the new Dallas Cowboys' football stadium.



Grota Homestead Neighborhood

Houston, Harris County



Grota Homestead, located near the late 19th century community known as Germantown just northwest of downtown Houston, was the beginning of Grota Homestead Neighborhood. Platted first for residential development in the 1890s, subsequent plats were added through 1920. Primarily a working and middle class neighborhood, Grota Homestead is an integral component of the early 20th century suburban development. After World War II suburban development sent the area into a slow economic decline

and construction of I-45/North Freeway in the 1960s resulted in the demolition of many homes, severing the area's connections to historic neighborhoods to the east. The neighborhood is National Register eligible as a locally significant historic district but is threatened by development pressures. The Texas Department of Transportation's proposed widening of I-45 on the east side of the neighborhood is the threat. The project would displace residents, hamper revitalization efforts and result in the demolition of many significant historic buildings.



John S. Harrison House

Selma, Bexar County

This National Register-eligible, one-story house was built in 1852 with a detailed full porch added in 1905. The house is located on a 12-acre site along Cibolo Creek. John Harrison and his wife lived in the house for two years while John served as the first postmaster for Selma. The house is one of only two remaining original structures in Selma. The house is owned by the City but is currently vacant and threatened by vandalism and further deterioration.



The Berry Brown House

Wichita Falls,
Wichita County

In 1892, this two-story Victorian-style redwood house was built. It is believed to have been ordered from the Montgomery Ward catalog. The house got its name from one of its owners, a well-respected City Alderman in the late 1940s. The house, a Wichita Falls Landmark, sits on a lot lined with the original iron picket fencing. The building is endangered due to neglect, vandalism and potential arson.

endangered



Neighborhood Protection: Historically and Architecturally Significant Neighborhoods of Texas Cities

Neighborhood residents have worked for decades to protect and nurture the slow, incremental revitalization of many historic and architecturally significant neighborhoods throughout Texas. Now some of these places are facing a new threat—a disturbing new pattern of demolition as newcomers

move in on their own terms. New owners and developers are demolishing existing homes in these neighborhoods to make way for the construction of dramatically larger new homes.

Typically measuring 3,000 to 10,000-square feet, these new structures overwhelm neighboring homes and threaten the very qualities that make historic neighborhoods attractive in the first place. Character and charm are replaced by boxy new mansions. Neighborhood livability is diminished as mature trees, landscaping and backyards are eliminated. Community and economic social diversity is reduced as affordable homes are destroyed. Immediate action is needed to protect the character of these historic and architecturally important neighborhoods.

Quanah, Acme & Pacific Railroad Depot

Roaring Springs, Motley County

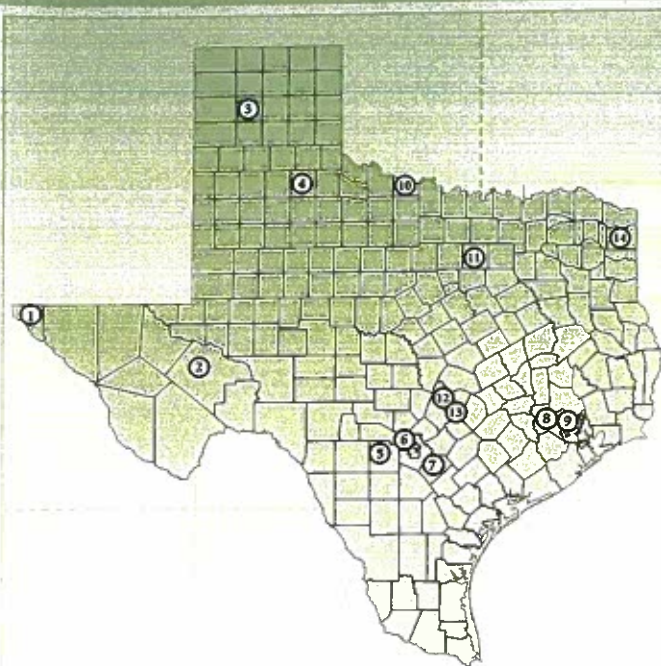
This charming depot, constructed in 1913, was, and still is the focal point of Roaring Springs. It is an example of many good historic buildings in Texas that suffer from a lack of funds for restoration. After the railroad abandoned the line, community groups used it as a meeting place and a depository for town and school memorabilia. The now vacant building needs repairs to keep out the weather that is causing damage to the interior. Supporters are in the process of raising funds and want to see their depot used again; this time to house the City Hall. They have chosen an architect and have obtained a grant for the project, but need to raise \$300,000 in matching funds to get the grant.



Atlanta Miller Grade School

Atlanta, Cass County

The Atlanta Miller Grade School was a Works Progress Administration project taking 120 days to complete. Hardy Brothers of Texarkana began construction of the one-story, six-room building of locally made brick in 1936. As the community grew, rooms were added over the years. Between 1975 and 1980, the Miller Grade School became the Atlanta Multi-Purpose Center and was put to good use until 1990. From 1990 to 2000, the school was used as a storehouse, receiving no maintenance. Water damage and neglect to regular maintenance threatens this school building. Many Atlanta Miller Grade School former students and supporters have incorporated into a 501 c 3 and launched the first phase of alumni fundraising in cities around Texas, and have made emergency repairs to prevent additional water infiltration and damage.



Legend for Most Endangered Places by County

1. **El Paso and Southwestern Railroad and Freight Depot**
El Paso County
2. **Winfield Hangar**
Pecos County
3. **Herring Hotel**
Potter County
4. **The Quanah, Acme & Pacific Railroad Depot**
Motley County
5. **Village of Quihi**
Medina County
6. **John S. Harrison House**
Bexar County
7. **Mueller Bridge**
Wilson County
8. **Grota Homestead Neighborhood**
Harris County
9. **Wilshire Village Apartments**
Harris County
10. **The Berry Brown House**
Wichita County
11. **Eastern Star Home**
Tarrant County
12. **Historic Texas Cemeteries**
All Texas Counties
13. **Neighborhood Protection**
All Texas Towns and Cities
14. **Atlanta Miller Grade School**
Cass County

Resources

Texas Association of Counties
www.county.org

Texas Historical Commission
www.thc.state.tx.us

Texas Historical Foundation
www.texashf.org

Texas Legislature Online
www.capitol.state.tx.us

Texas Society of Architects
www.texasarchitect.org

State Preservation Board
www.tspb.state.tx.us

Texas State Library and Archives
Commission
www.tsl.state.tx.us

Benefits

Statewide Press Conference
Media Releases for Endangered Sites
Resources for preservation planning
Exposure at statewide preservation events
Letters of support for fund raising

The Program

The purpose of this listing is to save historic structures by building public awareness, mobilizing community resources, and finding potential buyers or investors.

Preservation Texas needs your help in identifying eligible candidates in your community. A wide range of sites will be considered – commercial and residential structures, public buildings, religious structures, neighborhoods, bridges, monuments, ranches and parks. We will accept applications for the 2007 Most Endangered Places List until October 15, 2006, and the selected properties will be announced in February 2007. The project can play a vital role in preserving the rich character, identity and heritage of our communities – but we need your help!

Thank You

The board of directors and staff of Preservation Texas would like to extend their sincere appreciation to the individuals and organizations throughout Texas who nominated sites to the 2006 Most Endangered List. Thank you also to the dedicated volunteers who donated their time and talent to the selection process for this year's list. Our members and volunteers enable our organization to serve as a strong voice for preservation in Texas.

We also express our appreciation to our partners, the Texas Historical Commission and the National Trust for Historic Preservation for their guidance and financial support.

Preservation Texas' Most Endangered Places Program is underwritten by generous grants from the Dodge Jones Foundation and the Texas Historical Commission.

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ROUTE through Texas followed by the first column of the Army,
of the Mexican Republic, commanded by Brigadier General,
Adrian Woll, Commander of the 2nd Division, and made by
his quartermaster, Captain of sappers, Colonel Jose Maria
Carrasco.

Year 1842 August the 24th

EXPEDITION MADE IN TEXAS
BY PART OF THE 2nd DIVISION OF
THE ARMY CORPS OF THE NORTH
PRINTED BY FRANCISCO MOLINA
MONTERREY, 1842

BY ILMA M BENAVIDES, B.A.
THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AUGUST, 1957

Number 242 - Most Excellent Sir: I am remitting to Your Excellency a diary of the movements and sketches of the encampments which were made by the Division under my command since it left [Presidio de] Rio Grande until the 11th of the present [month] when it overpowered the enemy in this city. Both were made under my orders by Colonel Jose Maria Carrasco, who, as I have already made it known to Your Excellency, has fulfilled the duties of quartermaster to my greatest satisfaction.

God and liberty. San Antonio de Bejar, September 12, 1842. Adrian Woll - Most Excellent Sir, The Commander-in-chief.

ROUTE through Texas followed by the first column of the Army of the Mexican Republic, commanded by Brigadier General, Adrian Woll, Commander of the 2nd Division, and made by his quartermaster, Captain of sappers, Colonel José María Carrasco.

Year 1842
August the
24th

The Division departed from [Presidio de] Rio Grande towards the Nogal crossing. The ground over which it marched is level, with woods of mesquite, tiny dales, and a narrow road. The right bank of the river is higher than the left and is bordered with tiny hills suitable for batteries of four or five pieces.

To the rear at a distance of four hundred paces, there is a formation of hills parallel to the river much higher than the others. The steep bank at this crossing is almost perpendicular and consists of loose, sandy dirt. The bed of the river is made up of sand, clay, and thin loose layers of rough stones. The ford is variable, from nine to eleven feet for two-thirds of the way towards the left bank and three to nine feet towards the right bank. The course of the river forms an arch of very limited radius and the current flows sharply on the left side of the crossing. Its breadth is two hundred and fifty varas and during flood time measures three hundred.

The 25th
Day

Twenty six dragoons of the Presidial Regiment crossed in two small canoes which were found at the crossing.

The 26th
Day

The Defenders of Bejar and Rio Grande (dragoons and riflemen) numbering one hundred and twelve men, twelve carts with a portion of corn supply, a squadron consisting of forty-eight troopers of the Santa Anna Regiment, forty loads of food and fifty live steers [crossed today].

The 27th
Day

The ammunition for the artillery and engineers, the remainder of the corn supply, two pieces of ordnance, four pounders with their gun carriages and

foot and mounted complement, the second squadron of the Santa Anna Regiment, with the same number of men as the first one, its staff, the remount reserve and the artillery train with its men [crossed today].

The 28th
Day

The remainder of the food supply (110 boxes), two hundred and thirteen mule herd, forty-five dragoons of the Presidial Regiment and a company of the Santa Anna Battalion with one hundred veterans [crossed today].

The 29th
Day

Two companies of the said [Santa Anna] battalion with the same number of men and fifty presidial dragoons [crossed on this day].

The 30th
Day

The last company of the battalion, with its stand of colors, and its music, and the equipment of general headquarters were crossed, together with the various infantry and cavalry detachments. They took their position in the camp grounds that lay along a line with its back on the river. The right was flanked by the "defenders" and the left by the mouth of the Saus³ [Willow] creek, as seen

³Saus [Willow] Creek flows through Maverick County.

in the sketch.⁴ Today, in the afternoon, the

⁴ The sketches referred to in this diary were not reproduced. They are probably in the official files of the Oficina de Defensa Nacional, to which all the archives of the Secretaría de Guerra have been transferred in Mexico City.

commanders-in-chief of this Division crossed [the river], reconnoitred the camp and spent the night there.

The 31st
Day

At daybreak the Division was placed under arms and having formed in parade, his Excellency, the Commander-in-chief, accompanied by the General of the Division, passed before them and halting in the center of the line he read a proclamation and retired. The Division undertook the march at six in the morning in three columns, along an unmarked road towards the North. The center was the infantry column, two ordnance pieces, and the baggage trains; the right was formed by the regular cavalry; and the left by the presidial troops; the vanguard, the rearguard and the flanking scouts [consisted] of "presidial" and "defender" troops. The land is level, tranversed by creeks. Camp was made at twelve noon at the Cueva Creek,⁵ protected from

⁵ Cuevas [Caves] Creek is an intermittent stream which rises in southern Maverick County and flows southwest to join the Rio Grande near the town of Eagle Pass. Texas State Historical Association, The Handbook of Texas.

the rear by this stream. The right and left were covered by two of its smaller tributaries, and the sketch of Camp Number 2. Five leagues were covered in six hours.

Sept.
the 1st

The corn carts, escorted by the Defenders of Bejar, continued the march after leaving in camp two grain rations for the cavalry. The Division stayed behind to wait for a company of the Presidial Regiment which was to join them, whose horses stampeded on the night of the 30th. They joined [The Division] at six this afternoon.

The 2nd
Day

The Division renewed its march towards the north, northeast along level ground in the same order as the previous day and following the same direction. Camp was made on the Saladito Creek⁶

⁶ See Salado Creek which is an intermittent stream and rises in northern Maverick County flowing southeast twelve miles into Chacon Creek. Texas State Historical Association, The Handbook of Texas.

at one in the afternoon after having covered five leagues of level ground today. I was ordered by the Commanding General of the Division to advance in order to join Mr. Seguin and to supervise the opening of a road which had begun to present difficulties because of the woods and creeks that

cross the given direction. I took a mule loaded with engineering equipment and joined Mr. Seguin at 8:00 p. m.

The 3rd
Day

The Division renewed its march towards the northeast; the land was level, furrowed with deep, narrow creeks and dense forests. At the edge of the first creek, which is the Picoso,⁷ a bridge had

⁷ Picoso Creek rises in central Maverick County, and flows generally eastward about twenty-two miles into Elm Creek in southwestern Zavala County. Texas State Historical Association, The Handbook of Texas.

been built. In all the others the banks were leveled and the woods were cleared to make a cart road. The Division camped three leagues from its point of departure, on the other side of Chaparrosas Lakes,⁸

⁸ See Chaparrosa Creek, which is an intermittent stream, rising in the Anacacho Mountains in the southeastern part of Kinney County, and flowing southwestward, crossing the extreme northeastern corner of Maverick County, and continuing into western Zavala County where it flows into Turkey Creek. Texas State Historical Association, The Handbook of Texas.

150 varas from the shore, the right protected by a hill; the back, by a lake to the rear and the left by another. At six this afternoon I renewed the march in order to prepare the road for the following day.

The 4th
Day

The Division renewed its march at six towards the north, northeast after crossing a tiny creek, there follows a plain with minor hills (slopes) called the Colorados. The ground rises to a big hill called Divisadero (Lookout); next there are two bayous before Rancherías Creek, deep and rough, is reached. The slopes were leveled on either side. A dense forest, furrowed with tiny creeks, is [then] crossed. Here, the Division overtook the troops assigned to work on the road, but while they [the Division] drank water, the task was completed. Today, from four in the morning to three in the afternoon more than five leagues of [road] were cleared of woods and crossings made at four deep creeks. The Division, while on the march was exposed to a rainstorm for an hour and arrived at four-thirty in the afternoon at the Nueces River, after having covered two leagues towards the above-indicated direction, four towards the northeast, two towards the east and one towards the east northeast to the edge of the river which was crossed at the fords known as Amoladeras and Chicle. This new crossing was named General Woll. The river at this point is very different from what it is on the main highway [the standard road from Rio Grande to Bojary]. Its woods consist of ash, elm and poplar trees; its bed

is wide and of loose rock, and its banks are very high. It [The river] can water a lot of land to the right and to the left; the ground along the banks is very firm; the forest on the right bank is very dense. Camp was made on the left side, and the "defenders," who occupied a high hill, protected the right, the front was protected by a hill parallel to the river, and the left by the bank of a nearby tributary creek.

The 5th
Day

[The Division] rested.

The 6th
Day

The march was renewed towards the north, north-east through level land and the journey was continued in three columns as far as Leona Creek, a distance of three leagues. This creek on its right bank has about 20 or 30 yards of woods, and on its left [bank] the woods are from 400 to 500 yards deep and very dense, thick and towering. It differs very little from the crossing on the main road [Riogrande to Bejar]. The road was made practical for all kinds of transportation. Camp was made on the left bank in the same order as on the previous days.

The 7th
Day

The journey was renewed at six in the morning towards the northeast along level land. The Rio Prio was crossed after [Traveling] a distance of two

leagues; it is shallow, without trees, not remarkable, running through large grassy plains. Camp was made on the left bank of the creek called the Sabinal, at its mouth crossing. The camp occupied the arch formed by the creek delimited by a line running from north to south. This creek has no woodland on either of its banks. The flanks were protected by two huge ravines. It had no crossing to the rear other than the one made in the direction of the [arch] with a radius of 200 varas. The bed of this creek is 50 varas wide, planted with huge sables. It rises at the mouth of the Juan de Ugalde (Uvalde) Canyon, in the hills of San Sabas. *

The 8th
Day

The march was renewed at seven in the morning towards the east, northeast and after traversing seven leagues of level land, Hondo Creek was crossed. Camp was made after the banks had been leveled in order to cross it.

The 9th
Day

The march was continued through a forest of mesquite, leaving Cuije lake to the left and following a north, northeast direction. Cuije Plain was crossed and, turning to the east, Medina River was reached at 5:00 p. m. after having traveled seven leagues in the first direction, and two [leagues] towards the second. The river was crossed between its north ford and canyon crossing.

where a draw is formed. The Division crossed through the center of the draw and camped alongside the arch [of the river] along a line from north to south.

The 10th
Day

At six in the morning the march was renewed towards the northeast and after one and a half leagues, it was changed to the east, northeast. This direction was followed for a league. A change was made to the east and camp was made at Leon Creek at 2:00 p. m. At six the Division renewed its march along level land and followed single file along the left bank of San Pedro Creek. The infantry was lined up to the left of the road and the Santa Anna Regiment on the right, with the two field pieces placed as a battery on the road. This creek is [approximately] a cannon shot's distance from the Bejar Plaza. From this point, the Presidial Regiment and the Defenders of Bejar and Riogrande advanced to intercept all avenues [of escape] within the city and to establish positions at all vantage points around the plaza. At twelve midnight, all the troops were arranged in formation and rested under arms awaiting the signal of a cannon shot for the regular infantry and cavalry corps to penetrate the city and take their position at the plaza. The encircling troops were not to permit a single individual

to leave. At four-thirty in the morning the advance was made by columns of half companies; the General, with his staff, and the music of the Santa Anna Battalion playing at the head until the first houses on the edge [of the city] were reached. A heavy mist prevented either persons or horses from being seen. A stop was made until it cleared. But seeing that it was already five-thirty and the mist persisted, the General ordered the signal cannon be fired. The music started to play reveille and continued with the national hymn as the column renewed its march. What followed will be made known in the report regarding the action which this column sustained.

San Antonio de Bejar, September 11, 1842. -
Jose Maria Carrasco.

Number 243 - Most Excellent Sir: I am remitting to Your Excellency a copy of the proclamation which today I have addressed to the citizens of this city, hoping it will meet with your approval and you will see fit to have it published.

God and liberty. Bejar, September 12, 1842. - Adrian Woll. - Most Excellent Sir, The Commander-in-chief.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BALZEN FAMILY IN TEXAS

Part I

Chapter I

THE HARM HINRICH BALZEN FAMILY

Revised 1980

In June of 1978 I, Richard W. Balzen, and wife Martha C., nee Barre, visited for 8 days in East Friesland. We were in the company of, and the guests of, Dr. Hans-Wilhelm Balssen, and others of the present Family of Balzens. This was an outstanding visit, of which the full impact and realization did not come until after we returned to our home. These impressions were at first recorded in this history as revisions to the 1975 Revisions and shown as chapters XXVIII, XXIX, and XXX. These chapters are still valid, but to be thoroughly and clearly understood requires correlations with the narrative and chart chapters as previously written. Part I, Chapters I and II, are re-written under several sub-chapters, which will be shown as Chapters IA, IB, etc. and as Chapters IIA, IIB, etc. - as may be required to give a clearer account of what has been learned of the Balzen Family in East Friesland before they came to Texas, as well as an elaboration of how ~~the~~ immigrants lived in Texas.

Chapter IA

ORIGINS OF THE BALZEN FAMILY

The following accounts are a compilation of accounts gathered from various sources, mostly spoken words from Dr. Balssen and others.

The names Balzen, Baltzen, Baldsen, Balsen, Balssen, etc. all have their origin in this story. Hence, all names are related. In unrecorded distant past, the difference in spelling arose out of changes in the German language, perhaps dialects, perhaps differences in pronunciation, perhaps due to little or no education, etc.

Hundreds of years ago, 400 or more, people had only one name, but as population increased, it became desirable to have at least two names. It was then a custom to choose a Biblical name for a given name, to differentiate between the many who had the same name - examples: Schmidt - Peter Schmidt, John Schmidt, James Schmidt. Schumacher - Matthew Schumacher, Jacob Schumacher. Eisenhauer - Philip Eisenhauer, Andrew Eisenhauer, etc. It so happens that some one in East Friesland, perhaps in other parts of Germany also, chose the name of Balthazar, which tradition says was the name of one of the Wise Men of the East who visited Jesus after His birth and gave gifts. This name Balthazar devolved down to Bals, Balze, Balz, etc., so that some men had the given name of Balz.

At this point a peculiar patriarchal system of family names should be understood. Simply stated, a man's children received a new name or given name, and a surname which was composed of the father's given name to which certain endings were added, such as s, es, en, sen, etc. This patriarchal system resulted in no firm family name, which made tracing of families difficult to most

people. Thus it was that when Napoleon conquered East Friesland, the French decreed that every man must choose a permanent family name, to be used by that family and their descendants thereafter.

In, or about, 1813 the father of Harm Hinrich, who came to Texas, was faced with the problem of choosing the correct family surname. His father was Hinrich Harms, his grandfather was Harmen Janssen, and his great-grandfather was Johann Baltzen. Beginning with the great-grandfather, we have the following delineation of the patriarchal naming system:

Johann Baltzen, *whose*
 Youngest son was Harmen Janssen, *whose*
 Middle son was Hinrich Harms, *whose*
 Middle son was Harm Hinrichs
 Youngest son was Schweer Hinrichs

All of these were recorded in the records of the church at the village of Aurich-Oldendorf. The records do not go further back than Johann Baltzen because the records of most churches were destroyed during the Thirty Years War, which ended in 1648. Good records were not kept again until about 1700. How the father of Harm Hinrich reached the conclusion to use the family surname of Balzen is not recorded, but it is plain that he used the name of Johannes Baltzen, the oldest recorded person in his ancestry. Thus Harm Hinrich, who came to Texas with his sons, became Harm Hinrich Balzen.

An interesting insight is to be seen in the naming of Johann Baltzen's youngest son - Harmen Janssen. In true German tradition, Harmen Janssen should have been Harmen Johannes! But Janssen is the Danish form of Johannes. This is to be taken as a confirmation of the belief that the Balzen family is of Danish descent. It is believed that many of the people living along the North Sea Coast of Germany are of Norse descent. Further confirmation of the Danish forebears is said to be that in North Friesland, near the present border of Denmark and Germany, more Balzen families are now to be found than in East Friesland.

The records of the Aurich-Oldendorf Church show that Johannes Baltzen, Harmen Janssen, Hinrich Harms, and Harm Hinrich Balzen were all peat diggers by trade. They all lived in Aurich-Oldendorf at one time or another, but some also lived in Wiessmeer or Moorlage. Peat diggers were poor, hard-working people in East Friesland, as they are in Ireland and elsewhere.

There is an interesting story about peat digging in East Friesland, which, very briefly, is as follows:

The fuel for heating and cooking, until about 1600, was wood cut from the forests on the noors. As this wood became scarcer, the price began to rise. They had an energy crisis! In 1633 - 1634, the city of Emden, then the principal port of Germany, so to speak floated a bond issue, financing the digging of canals to the high moors, so that they could be drained. This made the digging of peat possible, thus solving their energy crisis. All was accomplished by hand labor except the dredging of the canals, which was done with horses and hand scrapers. The canals were used by boats to haul the peat to the market in the cities, often by pulling and pushing the boats along the canals, often with human labor. When the boats were empty of peat, they were taken at high tide to the bays, where they were anchored, and filled with rich bay mud at low tide. The boats, filled with rich mud, floated at high tide and were then pulled up to the peat digging area, where the mud was used to enrich the sand at the bottom of the peat banks. Hence, they created by hand labor rich fields. The peat beds are from 6 to 12 feet thick. The division of labor between digging peat and transporting of peat and mud is not known to me.

The village at Aurich-Oldendorf is mentioned in writings as early as the 8th or 9th century. The church was established by the Bishop of Muenster, the present brick church having been built about 1280. This was not long after the burning of clay bricks was begun in that area, the burning of shells (limestone for mortar) having been known before that. The church is about 28x14x8.5 meters in size, and has been modified several times during the centuries. Originally, it was a fortress against robbers as well as a church. In order to help realize what a long period of time 700 years is, consider these facts:

The United States is just 204 years old now, in 1980.

The Thirty Years' war ended about 130 years before the U.S. was established. Columbus discovered America about 156 years before the Thirty Years' War ended.

The church of Aurich-Oldendorf was built about 212 years before Columbus discovered America.

It is indeed an emotional event to realize that perhaps you have been the first descendant of the Balzen Family that moved to Texas in 1851-1852 to be in attendance at a church service in the same church where the immigrants also attended church services. And to realize that the Family History goes further back than that by hundreds of years. Harm Hinrich Balzen and sons emigrated to an unknown, unsettled, wild country somewhat as Abraham of the Old Testament emigrated to an unknown land. Pressures on them must have been enormous to cause them to leave their homeland, relatives, and friends, and only a faith in God could have given them strength to do it.

Chapter IB

THE NEAR RELATIVES OF HARM HINRICH BALZEN

At this point it is well to consider the family of Harm Hinrich Balzen, considering both that family in which he grew up, and his own family when he became an adult.

The father of Harm Hinrich Balzen, as before stated in chapter IA, was Hinrich Harms, born in Aurich-Oldendorf 21 April 1758, died before 1824. His mother was Trinke Schweers, born in Aurich-Oldendorf 1765 or 1766, died 6 February 1846 in Aurich-Oldendorf, married in A-0 18 June 1786. Hinrich Harms was a peat digger in Aurich-Oldendorf, and it is assumed that his children were born there. The children recorded are:

1. Anke, born 18 April 1787 in A-0; no other information available.
2. Marei Hinrichs, born 23 Jan. 1789, in A-0; married Gerd Focken Frerichs 23 Oct. 1806; eleven children; this family probably lived in the Balzen family home after her two brothers went to Texas.
3. Trinke, born 13 Jan. 1791, died 18 April 1798 in A-0.
4. Frauke, born 23 Aug. 1793, died 27 July 1798 in A-0.
5. Harm Balsen, born 6 Nov. 1795, died 15 July 1798, in A-0.
6. Marje, born 21 Nov. 1797, died 24 March 1834 in Firrel; married Thee Juergens Arkebauer of Firrel 18 March 1816 in A-0. Lived in Firrel, where she had 8 children, one of whom was Geesche, who married Hinrich Harm Balzen, son of Harm Hinrich, and came to Texas.

7. Reiner, born 7 Dec. 1799, died 3 Feb. 1800, in A-O.

8. Frauke) Twins, born 20 Feb. 1801. Frauke died 19 Jan. 1802

9. Harm Balsen) in A-O.

This is Harm Hinrich who came to Texas.

He married Gretje Saathoff (of the Patriarchal or other family names of Eden and Harms). She is the mother of the present Balzens in Texas (not the Schweers (Balzen) family). Gretje was born about 1804, died 13 Dec. 1832. Harm Hinrich Balzen later married Rickste Hinrichs, born 20 May 1801, died 6 April 1860 in Texas. No known children of this marriage.

10. Frauke, born 5 Sept. 1803, in A-O, married Harm Harms of Mendorf 1 June, 1824. No further information available.

11. Trinke Hinrichs, born 7 Feb. 1806 in A-O, married 1 May 1829 to Dirk Hinrichs of Wiesens. No further information available.

12. Schweer, born 8 Oct. 1808 in A-O. He emigrated to Texas with his family.

Some pertinent conclusions and information about the family of Hinrich Harms (born 1758, shown above) follow:

None of his sons reached maturity, married, and had families except Harm Hinrich Balzen and Schweer (Hinrich) Balzen. These two emigrated to Texas with their families. Thus the name Balzen, as derived from this family, came to an end in Aurich-Oldendorf.

The daughters who married and remained in the Aurich-Oldendorf area are:

. Marei, second child, married a Frerichs. It is said by Dr. Balssen that this family of Frerichs owned the home of her father after her brothers moved to Texas. It was finally owned by an Aden, and was torn down because of its deteriorated condition after World War I. The site in Aurich-Oldendorf was shown to us when we were there. Marei and her husband had a family of 11 children, and descendants can be traced in the Aurich-Oldendorf Church family records. These same family records also show that the Frerich family of Quihi, Texas, was not closely, if at all, related to the husband of Marei Hinrichs.

The other sisters of Harm Hinrich and Schweer Hinrich, who moved to Texas, who reached maturity and married, do not have families which can be traced to any extent in the church records. There are two exceptions: 1. Anke, the oldest child, has no information at all; she probably married into another community. 2. Marje married and became the mother of Geesche, the wife of Hinrich Harms Balzen, who moved with her husband and father-in-law, Harm Hinrich, to Texas. Thus, first cousins married.

Three children: #3, Trinke, #4, Frauke, and #5, Harm Balsen, all died within 3 months of each other at ages of 7 years, 5 years, and 3 years! Evidently they were taken by an epidemic of disease, perhaps children's disease. Examples of children's diseases is diphtheria, of general diseases is small-pox and tuberculosis. These diseases have been largely conquered in the 20th century. Of particular interest is tuberculosis, or consumption, as it was then known. During a visit to an outdoor museum of North German farm housing of the 17th and 18th centuries at Cloppenburg, it was observed that living conditions were favorable for respiratory diseases. The barns and homes had unvented fires burning indoors at all times, and the smoke was often dense indoors. The animals - cows, horses, and swine, lived under the same

heating in the winter for barn and living quarters. And people slept in sleeping alcoves, or wall beds, which could be closed off from the room or barn by small doors. These alcoves were no larger than a double bed! A single person sleeping in such a place could materially reduce the oxygen content within the closed alcove and raise the carbon dioxide level - most unhealthful! Consumption, or tuberculosis, was prevalent.

At the present time the Balzen people living in and around Aurich-Oldendorf, including other villages and areas, are said to be descendants of the Balzens who lived in Huellenerfehn. This has been demonstrated to a considerable extent by the research done by Mr. Albert Albers, an East Friesian from Huellenerfehn who now resides in the city of Hannover. His family is also distantly related to the Balzen family of Huellenerfehn. He researched the records of the church at Weene, in which parish the village of Huellenerfehn lies. It seems that Johann Baltzen of Aurich-Oldendorf, the oldest recorded Balzen there, is about one generation older than Balz Janssen and Harm Balsten of Huellenerfehn. Dr. Hans-Wilhelm Balssen has said, and Albert Albers has shown, that Harm Balsten is the oldest known progenitor of the Balzens now living in the area, ~~and that the Balzens of Texas have also probably descended from him. This does not seem to be probable because~~ There is no relationship shown between Johann Baltzen of Aurich-Oldendorf and Harm Balsten of Huellenerfehn. But all people knowledgeable about the Balzen genealogy say that the relationship existed in times before recorded history. The Balzens over there, all accept us in Texas, as relatives. *consider themselves*

A difference between the families also lies in the fact that the Aurich-Oldendorf Balzens were poor peat diggers, and the oldest recorded Balzens of Huellenerfehn were farmers, perhaps owning land. These last were economically better situated than the peat diggers.

Chapter 10

THE LIFE OF HARM HINRICH BALZEN IN TEXAS

Nothing of the life of Harm Hinrich Balzen and wife Rickste Balzen nee Hinrichs has been related to me through family channels. Only through the records of the Quihi Lutheran Church did it become known to me that they had immigrated to Texas. Hence the account which follows is mostly supposition based on records in the Quihi Lutheran Church, the Medina County Record of Deeds, and one or two items which have come from other sources.

The records of the landing of Harm Hinrich Balzen were probably lost in the great hurricane of 1900 in Galveston. But from other sources (see Chapter II) it is known that Harm Hinrich Balzen and wife Rickste nee Hinrichs landed in Galveston 15 November 1852. With him were his oldest son and wife, Hinrich Harm Balzen and Geesche nee Arkebauer. How they traveled from Galveston to Quihi is not recorded, but family tradition says they came from Indianola, Texas. In this event they took a coastal sailing ship from Galveston to Indianola. From that point to Quihi it is possible that they were able to find a freight wagon going to San Antonio, on which they could ride for a small fee. Otherwise they had to walk, because they had no horses! The route was more or less along the San Antonio River, near present day Culeto Creek, Goliad, Charco, Helena, Floresville, and along the Medina River to Castroville.

They did not arrive at Quind when it was a totally unsettled area, as others from East Friesland had done 6 years earlier. There were Mimke M. Saathoff and wife, with son Mimke H. and stepson John Heyen there to greet them, as well as others of the original settlers in 1846. The rock house of Mimke Saathoff was not built until 1856, and the type of dwelling first used by the Saathoff family is not known. But on the 2nd day of January 1853 Mimke M. Saathoff and Harm Hinrich Balzen recorded in the Medina County Courthouse their purchase of 320 acres for \$400.00, which they later divided equally, but in an unusual manner. This division is also recorded in the courthouse, the essence of which is given here. Please see the plot drawing at the end of this chapter. The square 7-acre portion of land on the southwest corner which was reserved for Harm Hinrich, and which was separated from the other main portion awarded to him, and which was completely surrounded by the portion for Mimke M. Saathoff, is unusual. The question arises: why was the division made in this way? The only plausible reason now coming to mind is that Harm Hinrich had taken residence in this area.

In support of this it is observed that the census of 1860 shows that the census taker, as he went from house (?) to house (?), went from Mimke M. Saathoff to Harm Hinrich Balzen to Hinrich Harm Balzen. Hinrich Harm Balzen was the son of Harm, and he apparently lived since the beginning on the site of the rock house which he built 1866-67. But there is no evidence now of any house having ever stood on this 7-acres of land - no foundation for a chimney. *- Only the foundations of the abandoned school - could be also the site of the lean-to residence*

The census of 1860 also shows that Rickste Balzen nee Hinrichs died in the spring of 1860 from the ravages of consumption. This is recorded in the church records as having occurred on 6 April 1860. Her burial place is not recorded or marked. But Mrs. Alice Pichot, great-granddaughter of Mimke M. Saathoff, says that as a child, playing near the home of M. M. Saathoff, she was admonished not to play under a certain oak tree because a Balzen woman was buried there. A check of the graves of all Balzen women indicates that this must be the grave of Rickste. The tree and grave are just on the other side of the property line between M. M. Saathoff and these 7 acres belonging to Harm H. Balzen, and on the Saathoff side. Why was she buried there rather than on the land of Harm H. Balzen? Why wasn't she buried on the church cemetery? The customs of these East Friesians which they brought with them are not known. In this connection it is noted that the first wife of Harm Balzen, younger son of Harm Hinrich, was also buried in a pasture of the Scherobiny lands (later Schmidt place). The wife of Harm Balzen was Anna Maria Meyer (Meier), who was the sister of Mrs. Scherobiny! The location of this grave in the pasture is unknown.

It is known that later in life, until 1890 when Harm Hinrich died, he lived in what was known as the "straw house," near the rock house built by Hinrich Harm. This "straw house" was so named because it had a thatched roof. It is presumed that this was the first home of Hinrich Harm and Geesche Balzen, and that after they built the rock house, the father, Harm Hinrich, then a widower, moved from his 7 acres to the "straw house." This was in keeping with the last will and testament of Rickste.

On 27 October 1859, before Rickste died, Harm Hinrich and Rickste Balzen caused to be recorded in the Medina County Courthouse a deed which, in abbreviated form, is as follows: They sold 140 acres of land, in three tracts, which came out of Survey # 8, (being the land originally purchased by Harm Hinrich and Mimke Saathoff and divided to Harm Hinrich) to their oldest son, Hinrich Harm Balzen. By another deed of same date they sold an additional 20 acres under fence and cultivation, plus an undivided half of a tract out of the original Survey # 8, to Hinrich Harm Balzen, and Hinrich Harm agreed to board Harm Hinrich and wife Rickste in an undisturbed and quiet possession of the lands conveyed during their life time, and furthermore to furnish them during their lifetime the necessities of life, to wit, food, lodging, and clothing. This agreement is indicative of how the people

of Germany bequeathed their lands to their children. There is no mention of the younger son of Harm Hinrich Balzen, being known as Harm H. Balzen, or simply Harm Balzen.

This omission of the younger son from the settlement is unusual in several ways. In many instances in Germany it was the custom to leave the homestead to the youngest son or child. Harm Balzen the younger came to Texas alone and before his father and older brother, who later came together. Also, the mother of Harm died about two weeks after the birth of Harm, which is indicative that there were complications at the time of his birth. Harm's father, Harm Hinrich, may have subconsciously held a resentment against Harm because of the loss of his wife. Harm, when he came to Quihi, was a hired hand at the Scherobiny place, and apparently did not live with his father after the father came to Quihi. There is no knowledge of dealings between Harm Hinrich and Harm Jr. known to me, though this is surely not conclusive that there were none. Thus it seems that there was some measure of coolness between the father and younger son.

If there was a settlement of any kind on Harm Balzen, it was not recorded anywhere. The fact that Harm Balzen, the younger son, came to Texas first and alone, and that the father came with his older son, Hinrich Harm Balzen, may be indicative of a partial estrangement of the father and younger son. This conjecture is merely that, a conjecture, and there may have been a normal relationship between the two, but knowledge of it is conspicuous by its absence.

From the records of the church at Aurich-Oldendorf, East Friesland, it is clearly shown that the first wife of Harm Hinrichs Balzen, and the mother of Hinrich Harm and Harm H. Balzen, was Gretje Saathoff (Eden Harms). She is indicated as being born 1804 (estimated), died 13 December 1832 in Aurich-Oldendorf. There were two other sons who died as baby and as a four-year-old. No other records of her are found, but it is thought that Gretje Saathoff came from Oster-sander, or possibly Holtrop. Clarification and additional information was requested of the East Friesian "Landschaft", and of other people, but no answers were forthcoming. Neither have a record of the marriage of Harm Hinrich Balzen to Rickste Hinrichs; or any children born to this union, been found to date.

No anecdotes or other information except for the above about the life of Harm Hinrich Balzen has been found. However, the following facts are given as being more than incidental:

1. Harm Hinrich Balzen and Mimke Mimken Saathoff bought land in partnership, and divided it equally, even if in an unusual manner.
2. The eldest grandson and the eldest great-grandson of Harm Hinrich Balzen were both named Mimke. Both were born and both died during the lifetime of Harm Hinrich. It is noted that no other Balzens were named Mimke. But Hinrich Harm, son of Harm Hinrich, and father of Herman Balzen, offered his daughter-in-law \$25 if she would name a ^(another) second son Mimke! This had to be before 1888, and could have been Paul or William. But his daughter-in-law, Anna Margaretha nee Oefinger, did not accept this offer, though it was a large sum of money in those days.
3. Harm Hinrich Balzen buried his second wife, Rickste nee Hinrichs, in an unmarked grave on the lands of Mimke Mimken Saathoff. This may have been in accordance with East Friesian custom. The grave was also probably very close to the residence of Harm Hinrich.
4. The Saathoff and Balzen families have been cordial neighbors to this day, dating from the time of their settlement in Quihi, Texas.

In view of the above four facts, it seems to be plausible that Mimke Mimken Saathoff and Gretje Saathoff were brother and sister, or otherwise closely related. The birthday of Mimke is not available, but he was married in 1836. This might indicate that he was younger than Gretje, who was probably married

before 1825. Her birthday is estimated to be 1804. Mimke Minken was the son of Mimke Harms Saathoff, a blacksmith of Ostersander, and Marje H. Saathoff. All of this indicates that the Harm Hinrich Balzen family is related to the Mimke Saathoff family. -- Note: there are two other unrelated Saathoff families in Medina County.

At the time that Harm Hinrich began his life in Quihi there were hostile Indians in the area. The people were generally afraid of Indian attacks, which did occur on a few occasions, and a few people lost their lives to Indians. There were many raids, however, when Indians stole scarce items and particularly horses. Almost every one experienced these losses. The land which Harm Hinrich bought was virgin, with large areas of knee high grass and oak trees. Fields had to be cleared - the live oak trees are very hard wood, difficult to chop with an ax. Living quarters had to be built. Many of the first shelters were lean-to types. The simplest form of these were two standards with a beam, or log, across the top. Sloping to the ground from this beam was a thatch roof, which comprised the main shelter, open to the south. Later, perhaps walls of thatch or logs could be added. Most all activities were outdoors. Cooking was probably done under the thatch roof only during periods of rain. Game was plentiful -- deer, turkeys, wild pigs or pecary, small wild birds, rabbits, etc., which was their source of meat. Crops were corn, cotton, wheat, vegetables. Cane sorghum was not introduced until later, which then became the source of sweets - molasses. Practically no buffalo in their area, but plenty of Longhorn cattle, wild. By 1860 there were milk cows and swine. It is known that the bubonic plague was rampant in San Antonio about the time of the Civil War, ~~perhaps not~~ in the Quihi area.¹³⁴⁸ Schools did not exist; the Quihi Lutheran Church was organized in 1852. Before the first church was built of logs and masonry in 1854, the people came in their wagons which they "parked" in a circle for protection against surprise Indian attacks. Oxen were used mostly for tilling the land and drawing wagons. Horses were scarce and expensive, the major means of travel. Young couples commonly lived together until they had the time and means, and a preacher, to be married. Prevailing wages were low - see OUR GERMAN ANCESTORS III, chapter XXII. Their voyage to America may have been as described in Chapter XXII. Though no specifics are known, the daily life of Harm Hinrich Balzen may be imagined from the generalizations of this paragraph. In addition to this, one must realize that the methods of farming, the kinds of crops, the climate were all different from what they knew in their old home in East Friesland. Yet, it must have been attractive to them, because in 1856 the younger brother of Harm Hinrich came to Quihi, Texas, with his entire family. His name was Schweer Hinrich Balzen, whose family chart is shown in part in Chapter X.

Harm Hinrich lived in accordance with the terms of agreement made with his son in 1859, whereby the son was to take care of him in exchange for his landholdings. He died on 11 May 1891, having lived 31 years after his second wife, Rickste Hinrichs, died. During this period little is known of his life. He also outlived his son, Hinrich Harm, by over two years, so that Geesche and her children were responsible for his burial.

His burial place is not known, but is probably in the old Bethlehem Lutheran Church cemetery of Quihi, or under the same oak tree where Rickste Hinrichs is buried. It was practice in some cases to mark new graves with a wooden tombstone having the appropriate data painted on it. Such a cypress plank may have been used for him, especially if he had little money to pay for his burial. However, such a plank has not been found for him, which is explainable by the fact that a grass fire has burned the cemetery at least once, when wooden markers would be destroyed.

The burial places of people recorded in the church records as having been buried by the pastors is not shown. My uncle, Walter Balzen, who lived in the Quihi area, showed me 6 Balzen graves about 2 years before he died, and further stated that there were no Balzen family members who were not buried in the cemeteries. One exception to this is the burial of Johannes Oefinger. See Chapter III. Obviously he did not know about Rickste Hinrichs or Anna Maria Meyer, and I believe that he did not know about his great-grandfather, Harm Hinrich Balzen, that he lived in Quihi. He never spoke of him even when he accompanied me to see the old church records with Pator Durkop, or when we spoke about our findings later.

Never-the-less, I am of the opinion that Harm Hinrich Balzen is buried in an unmarked grave in the old Quihi cemetery. I have attached to the iron fence around the grave of his son, Hinrich Harm Balzen, an aluminum sign, which reads:

It is believed that the parents of Hinrich Harm and Harm Balzen lie buried in unmarked graves of this cemetery. They are:

Harm Hinrich Balzen

20 Feb. 1801 - 11 May 1891

Rickste nee Hinrichs

20 May 1801 - 6 April 1860.

Although present knowledge indicates that this information is not factual regarding Rickste Hinrichs, I have left it there as shown. If Harm Hinrich Balzen were buried near the place where Johannes Oefinger is buried, Walter Balzen would have known about it and told me.

A large picture of Harm Hinrich Balzen and Rickste Hinrichs (about 15x20 in.) was given to the writer by Melvin Balzen, together with one of the same size of Mimke Balzen. These pictures have been framed in cypress wood from a trough given by Melvin Balzen, and are now in the Medina County Museum in Hondo, Texas.

As a result of the sign hanging on the fence around the grave of Hinrich Harm Balzen, Mrs. Alice Pichot nee Saathoff, saw it and told me this story. As a child she was admonished by her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Saathoff, not to play under a certain oak tree near their house because then she would be playing on the grave of a Balzen woman! She asked me if I knew who that woman could be, which at first I could not answer. But by a series of deductions and investigations I came to the conclusion that it could only be either Rickste or Anna Maria Meier. From what I was told by Melvin Balzen and Mrs Frieda Britsch, it was believed that Anna Maria was buried in an unmarked grave in a pasture near the Rudolph Scherobiny house, where Harm Balzen was a hired hand. Further, Mrs. Scherobiny was a sister of Anna Maria. That left Rickste Hinrichs as the one who was buried near the Jacob Saathoff home. The location of the tree in question is shown on the map of the 320 acres purchased and divided by Harm Hinrich Balzen and Mimke Mimken Saathoff.

It must be noted that I never knew any one who in fact knew Harm Hinrich and could say anything about him. Hence these many words about him are a result of thought and study about the known writings about him, and are conjecture only. Credit must be given to the availability of the records of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Quihi, Texas, and to the Sippenbuch of Aurich-Oldendorf Church of East Friesland.

Written June 1980

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BALZEN FAMILY IN TEXAS

Chapter IIA

The Family of Hinrich Harm Balzen

Hinrich Harm Balzen, my great-grandfather, was the eldest son of Harm Hinrich Balzen and Gretje Saathoff (Eden Harms), born 11 June 1825 in Aurich-Oldendorf of East Friesland. He was a peat digger in Moorlage, 3 Km. distant from Aurich-Oldendorf. His wife was Geeske Arkebauer of Firrel, born 21 February 1826, the 5th child of Theen Juergen Arkebauer and Marge Hinrichs Balzen, and first cousin of Hinrich Harms on his father's side of the family. Hinrich and Geeske were married in Aurich-Oldendorf on 9 December 1848, and one son, Harm Hinrichs, was born to this union on 21 June 1851. This son is not found again in the known history of the family; it is presumed that he died at sea on the voyage to Galveston in the fall of 1852. All other children were born to them in Texas.

Their voyage to Texas was made with his father, Harm Hinrich, and second wife, Rickste Hinrichs. Since the mother of Hinrich died when he was 6 years old, it is very likely that Rickste became his stepmother at an early age. They arrived in Galveston 15 November 1852, and probably took a coastal ship to Indianola, from which point they came overland to Quihi. Their route and mode of transportation is not known: there were freight wagons available at times upon which one could hitch a ride for a small fee; if not, they had to walk the distance, sleeping in the open at night. Sometimes they would scratch an arrow in the ground at night before going to sleep, to show the direction of their travels. Such a trip in December could have been a cold hardship. Where their food came from is not known, but probably they found some houses along the way where they could obtain food.

It is obvious that upon arrival in Quihi they met the Mimke M. Saathoff family, where there was a measure of comfort for them, such as it was in the wilderness. By the time that 3 January 1853 had come, the father of Hinrich, in partnership with Mimke M. Saathoff had bought 320 acres of land which they divided in accordance with a plat shown at the end of Chapter IC. Probably the first dwelling was a lean-to near the home of Mimke M. Saathoff in the 7-acre square plot at the southwest corner of their lands. But as soon as possible thereafter, a house was built on the newly purchased land, just north of the present rock house. This house was called the "straw house" because it had a straw, or thatch, roof. It consisted of two rooms, a fireplace on the north end, and a porch on the east side. The rooms each had a small window, the first glass windows used in the area, and the floor was of earth. The walls were made of cedar logs set upright and tied together, plastered smooth on the inside and outside. This house stood until 1903, about 50 years, and later was the home of Harm Hinrich after Rickste Hinrichs had died, and after the Rock house was built.

All of the children born to Hinrich and Geeske were born in this "straw house" with the possible exception of Margaretha.

Minke Harm	11/22/1853	11/25/1877
Theodore Heinrich	12/6/1855	7/17/1929
Herman Harm	9/23/1857	3/26/1931
Maria	11/19/1860	3/16/1938
Heinrich H.	8/29/1862	4/1/1937
Johann	8/6/1865	12/1/1939
Margaretha (Gretle)	3/19/1868	11/1/1943

All of these children lived their lives in the Quihi area except Maria, who lived in the Bandera area. Please see the family chart of Hinrich Harm Balzen for a complete list of descendants of each of these children. All of these children, except Minke Harm, married and raised large families, and have family histories of their own, to be written by each family. I have written that for Hermann Harm Balzen, my grandfather, which see in chapter IV and other addendum.

On the evening of 24 November 1877 the family was happy and jovial in their home because they had a pen of cows that had been rounded up for sale. Then the coyotes began to howl close by, and they kept it up for some time. One of the family said that this was a bad omen, something unpleasant and fateful would happen! Geeske, the mother, said that there was nothing to the omen, because the coyotes were just singing to the moon, or their dogs were bothering them. But the next day one of the wild cows, or steer, happened to catch Minke with his horns and gored him to his death. He was a handsome young man just 3 days past his 24th birthday, a fine bachelor. A picture of him, with this story, has been placed in the Medina County Museum of Hondo, Texas, by the writer.

The father, Hinrich Harm Balzen, went to Quihi with a wagon and team of horses on 6 December 1888. On the way home the team was shied and stampeded, and caused the wagon to collide with an oak tree alongside the road, where Hinrich was severely wounded. He was brought home, by means unknown to me, and survived until the next day, 7 December 1888, when he died. He is buried in the old Quihi cemetery, and his grave is marked with a fitting tombstone and an iron fence around the grave. The tree where the accident occurred is marked with a cross about 2 feet high and 1 foot wide blazed into the bark of the tree. This cross is still plainly visible on the East side of the tree. The road has been re-located about 50 to 60 yards towards the East. At that time the tree was on land belonging to George Heyen, being on the banks of the Quihi Creek.

Geeske Theen Arkebauer lived on as a widow until 20 October 1897, during which time it fell to her lot to bury her father-in-law. During these years she was known to like to visit people in the neighborhood, using a buggy, or surrey, drawn by one horse. There is a picture of her standing by this surrey with horse. I do not know if she lived alone or not, after the death of her father-in-law. But on the evening of 19 October 1897 she was bitten by a rattlesnake about 8 o'clock in the evening, she having gone out of the house in the darkness without a light and stepped on the snake. She died the next morning and was buried in the old Quihi cemetery. An iron fence was erected around her grave, and a tombstone with these words engraved in German. Liberally translated, the words say:

The love which on earth unites us
 Blooms forever in heaven
 Where no eye weeps because of parting,
 And unites purified souls.

During the 1970's three tombstones were repaired and/or straightened from their leaning positions. These tombstones were for the 3 persons whose untimely deaths are here recorded, being those of Mimke Harms Balzen, Hinrich Harm Balzen, and Geeske Theen Balzen nee Arkebauer.

Chapter II-B

THE LIFE OF THE HINRICH HARM BALZEN FAMILY

Upon the arrival of the Balzens, Harm Hinrich and Hinrich Harm, father and son, they were faced with the necessity of building a home, clearing land, cultivating the soil, and raising crops, obtaining food and clothing; everything had to be done at once in a strange and new land with a different climate. Certainly it took the efforts of father and son and their wives to accomplish as much as possible in as short a time as possible. It is not known how it was done, but certainly logic would dictate some actions for first.

Since they had purchased their land soon after arrival in early winter, two items appeared to be most urgent. These were shelter and clearing of land for cultivation. Most settlers started by living in a leanto - which is a sloping roof of straw for shelter from rain, open on three sides, with the fourth side being the sloping roof. Living was then almost entirely outdoors, including cooking. They probably each had a lean-to - one for Harm Hinrich near his friend Mimke M. Saathoff, and the other some distance away near the site of the present rock house.

But the need for better living quarters became apparent for Hinrich Harm when his first child, Mimke, was born in November of 1853. Perhaps by that time he had started the "straw house", which has been described in the chapters on Harm Hinrich. This house continued to be used as a dwelling at least until 1891, when Harm Hinrich died. After that it was used for some years as storage space for harvested crops, or for other dry storage such as implements.

Hermann reported to his children that when he was 9 or 10 years old, it became his duty to gather rocks and stone from the Mulberry Creek for use in building the rock house. Thus the rock house can be dated as built about 1866 or 1867. The walls of this house are of field stone, or rock, about 2 feet thick. The house was composed of 2 large rooms and two small rooms. One of the large rooms had a fireplace, or chimney, and was the living room. It had a door to the outside on the east and west sides, two windows on the east side, and a connecting interior door to one of the small rooms, the kitchen. The bedroom was made by a partition with door across the house, separating it from the living room. The bedroom had two windows and a steep stair to the attic over the house. The house walls were built on the sides to a height which allowed the attic to be about 3 feet high at the low part of the roof. The gable ends of the house had stone walls up to the roof, with two shutter type windows in each gable for ventilation and light. The roof rafters were unfinished, and some of the boards were painted with the name of Ed Steves Lumber Co., Victoria, and Indianola. It was said that the lumber was hauled in to the site from Indianola. The roof was of wood shingles, and the house was said to be the first in the area with a wood floor. Along the entire east side of the house there was an open porch. The walls were plastered inside and outside, except for the inside of the attic. The small room on the northwest side of the house was called the milk room, and was opposite the kitchen. The stone house was built due south of the original strawhouse. During my life time this house was locally known as the "Hermann

Balzen house" because it became his residence after 1898, and is now in the possession of his daughter, Mrs. Annie Schulte.

At one time when Indians were active in stealing horses in the Quihi area, Hinrich Harm took to sleeping in the ^{back} store room of the house, with a window looking towards the horse coral. He kept a loaded gun at hand so that he would be able to shoot an Indian caught stealing a horse during the night. Very early one morning, when there was very little light available, he heard a horse being led away. He arose, took aim with his gun, and fired away. Fortunately for him, he shot his horse instead of Geeske, who was leading the horse!

In 1974 Mrs. Elizabeth Loch, one of his great-granddaughters, found a roll call for the month of August 1862, for Capt. George Meyer Co. #2, Medina County, which recorded, among other names, the following: #5, Balzen, Henry - 2nd Sgt. - no remarks; #13, Balzen, Harm - Pvt. - not present. From this it is apparent that both brothers were called into the Confederate army. Apparently, Hinrich could go, because he had his father at home to stay with his family, but Harm apparently had no one to stay to take care of his family. No other information is known about their service in the Confederacy, but it is known that 3 young men of the Quihi Church lost their lives in this service.

In the deed records of Medina County, book 18, page 513 there is a deed which Hinrich Harm sold for \$1 to the Deutsch-English Schule, 1250 sq. varas of land for use as a school ground. This was matched by other grants by other neighbors, dated 28 August 1876. This small parcel of land was out of the 7-acre plot on the southwest corner of the lands bought together with Minke M. Saathoff and divided. My father and his brothers and sisters attended school on this property. The school was later moved to Sturm Hill, and when the 7 acres were sold in their entirety to John Schweers by Herman Balzen, all interest in the school property was passed to John Schweers.

There were relatives, probably of Geeske Arkebauer, who usually spent part of every winter with some of the children of Hinrich and Geeske. They were probably from Illinois near St. Louis, and their name was Eaglehoff. This continued for several years until Mr. Eaglehoff became ill with consumption (tuberculosis), after which he was no longer welcome. No other information is known to me about them or other relatives from more distant parts of the U.S.A.

As was the case with many settlers in the Quihi area, Hinrich bought lands in the Bader settlement on the old Casroville Road, and in Hondo. How he came into possession of these properties I do not know, but I saw the deeds of sales during my search in the Medina County Records. There may be other such records that I did not find.

I have in my possession an old flintlock rifle which came from the old rock house, and which my Grandmother gave to me at my request. I also have a sixshooter Stevens 38 caliber revolver and scabard, which my uncle Anton gave to me. I believe that this gun belonged to Hinrich Harm.

In accordance with laws applicable at the time, after 5 years of residence in the U.S.A. Hinrich Harm Balzen made application for citizenship in the United States. The original application was given to me, framed, by Mr. and Mrs. Bruno Schweers. A copy of it, showing the handwriting of Hinrich Harm, is attached to this account.

Hinrich Harm lived during the time of the cattle drives to Kansas and elsewhere, and undoubtedly was acquainted with the wild longhorns. Cattle raising became one of the principal sources of income, with the largest portion of the land being in pasture for cattle. However, some land was cleared and farmed for cash crops and feed crops. What was raised is not known to me, but

some of the following crops were bound to be raised at one time or another: cotton, corn, sorghum, wheat and rye, if only for their own use, vegetables. The principal cash crops were cotton and corn. Chickens, horses, and hogs were raised in numbers sufficient for their own needs. Farm implements and other equipment was made and repaired on the farm if at all possible. The coming of the railroad at Dunlay in 1882 did much to provide a market for the farm products, so that the economy of the family began to improve.

There were undoubtedly two problems with which Hinrich Harm had to cope. One of these was roving wild cattle. In the agreement of 1859 mention was made of 20 acres under cultivation and under fence. There may have been a few fences around the house, garden, and cattle pens, but other than that the land was unfenced until the coming of barbed wire. When that happened for them I do not know, but it was most likely after 1875. The second problem was water. It is said that the Quihi Creek flowed most of the time during those early years. But there were serious drouths, when the flow surely stopped. This made them more dependent on stored water or well water. Surface storage by building an earthen dam across a dry draw was not being practiced until later; I don't know when. A reliable well, never becoming dry in a drouth, has not been found to date on their acreage. I don't know when the well at the creek near the road was dug, but it goes dry also. Of course, the East Friesian people were accustomed to storing roof run-off in cisterns, and this was undoubtedly done as soon as they could afford a cypress cistern. Water could be hauled in by wagon in cases of dire necessity, but this was too cumbersome for cattle watering. They practiced neighborliness by fencing in lanes from dry pastures to waterholes along the Quihi Creek. During a drouth, and even at normal times, water has been a serious problem for them on their farm.

My father told the story of how his grandfather, Hinrich Harm, became discouraged at one time, and wished to return to East Friesland. But Geeske said that he was justified in being discouraged, for their life was indeed difficult. But it was also difficult at home in East Friesland, for she had to deliver milk every morning by dog sled, whether it was cold, wet, stormy or whatever, just to make ends meet. But there was one immense difference in Texas; there was the opportunity for improvement which did not exist in the old country. And this is the way it turned out to be, but not without long years of work and frugality.

After Geeske died, the other children of Hinrich and Geeske deeded the farm lands and house to my Grandfather, Hermann Harm Balzen, for the sum of \$1500.00. The land amounted to 213 and 4/5 acres.

Written June 1980.

OUR GERMAN ANCESTORS

Chapter III ~~XXII~~

Texas as They Found It to Be

If our ancestors in Germany found that life was a subsistence at the point of hunger in some years, with no expectation of improvement, one can easily imagine their reaction to the stories they heard about Texas. On page 14 of "The Anglo-American Texans" by the University of Texas at San Antonio - Institute of Texan Cultures, there appears a reprint of an advertisement which in part says: "Now is the time to ensure a fortune in Land: To all who remain in Texas during the War (of independence) will be allowed 1280 acres; to all who remain 6 months, 640 acres (one square mile); to all who remain 3 months, 320 acres; and as colonists, 4600 acres for a family and 1470 acres for a single man; posted in New Orleans April 23, 1836." But nothing is said about what land, where, what type living conditions, climate, etc., etc. The state then gave grants to developers with the provisos that they bring in settlers. These then made slightly more definite requirements and promises - within 3 years the settlers were to put 15 acres of land in cultivation, to sell no intoxicating liquors or firearms to Indians. Nothing said about housing, Indian tribes, food until they could raise crops, or how or where they would obtain help in learning the ways of the new land. They could speak neither English or Spanish, hence to none except their fellow immigrants. This chapter is to account for how things were, so that the reader 125 years later could begin to realize the hardships they endured. Sources for this information are extremely varied, coming from newspaper accounts, books, obituaries, family accounts, stories told by acquaintances, etc. These writings will be arranged under headings such as:

Encounters with Indians

Land Conditions, Weather, Crops, How they obtained Food

Housing and Materials

Social Aspects of their Life

When the first 10 families with names of Brucks, Rieden, Schneider, Saathoff, Brinkhoff, Boehle arrived in Quihi in 1846, they camped at the waterhole on the Quihi Creek, which creek then flowed as a clear stream. (See Granite historical marker at the waterhole). The first night it rained and all of their belongings were soaked. The years 1848-49 were drouth years when cholera broke out, and the Quihi colony was nearly wiped out, and temporarily abandoned. During the first years these families were attacked by Indians and Henry Brinkhoff and son were killed. This attack was abandoned by the Indians when the settlers rang a small church bell the Brucks family had brought along and hung from a tree. The settlers then built a brush fort for protection, but the Indians continued their attacks. The young wife of Rudolf Schorobiny (sister of Anna Maria Meier, wife of Harm Balzen and mother of H. B. Balzen, and mother of Anna Weiblen nee Balzen) was captured by a chief and forced to ride on the horse with him. In attempting to gain her freedom she fell from the horse and was lanced by the chief, who left her in the woods for dead. But she recovered and was able to return to her home. On another occasion Mr. H. Gerdes went on a search for strayed horses and was captured by the Indians. After driving him some three miles, he was killed. When his body was found, there were 18 lance wounds in it.

Another account of the above incidents, by Josie M. Rothe, indicates that the Indians who attacked the Brinkhoffs left five settlers to die, and carried a boy away captive. Thus the Brinkhoff family was wiped out of the settlement. This account also states that when Mrs. Schorobiny was carried away, her brother

was killed. Indian raids continued until 1874, mostly to obtain horses and firearms. No Balzen lives were lost to Indian warriors, but horses were stolen more than once. This was a serious matter because the horses afforded transportation and means of cultivating the land. In order to combat this stealing of horses, Heinrich Harm Balzen would sleep in the milk room (no longer existing) with a loaded gun at his side. This room had a small window facing the horse corral, and one morning at the crack of dawn he heard a horse walking. Looking out of the window, he saw some one leading a horse, so he raised his gun and shot. His wife Geesche was leading the horse, and fortunately the bullet killed the horse instead of her.

Two short anecdotes about H. B. Balzen and Indians are known. In one of them he and his stepmother Antje De Grodt were in the house when they saw an Indian outdoors. H. B. would have shot the Indian had he not been restrained by his stepmother, and thus saved from vengeance from other Indians. On another occasion H. B. and his dog were in the pastures when he saw an Indian at some distance. He crept under a bit of brush and hid, holding his dog's mouth shut so that he could not bark. Thus the Indian passed by.

The only good account of the Indians was found in the obituary of H. H. Balzen, Uncle Henry. He is reported to have said that the Indians were helpful to some people because they killed wild game for their food. This was in the early years when the settlers were dependent upon the plentiful deer, turkey, and quail. Most accounts say that Texas Rangers and soldiers killed game for the first settlers.

When the immigrants first came, and for years thereafter, the land around Quihi was covered by grasses which were knee high. Large live oak trees existed, with greater numbers along the Quihi Creek. This creek has an underground water flow through porous gravel beds, providing necessary water for the oak trees. Mesquite trees, Ceniza, and other brush did not then exist in the area, these growths creeping into the area as the grasses were either overgrazed or plowed under. Wild game, such as white-tailed deer, wild turkey, Javelina hogs, a few bears in the hills, were plentiful. Since the immigrants had few guns and little ammunition, these animals were often killed by the Texas Rangers and Soldiers to become a source of food, and thus in about 25 years these animals were rarely found in the Quihi area. By that time the land came under cultivation and meat was obtained from domesticated animals.

The whole area of Medina County is not far removed from the Chihuahuan Desert of northern Mexico, normally extending as far eastward as the Devils River near Del Rio. But at irregular periods of years, rainfall is deficient and the desert moves further eastward temporarily. The area is therefor said to be on the rim of the desert. Furthermore, rainfall, when it does come, is not always at the right time necessary for growing of crops. This is apparent when little rainfall occurs in February, March, and April; or when little rainfall occurs in September, October, November, as is necessary to grow range grass for winter forage for range cattle.

The immigrants came from a land where they received a reasonable amount of snow each winter, and rainfall during the other seasons of the year. The air was not as warm and dry back home, so that moisture did not evaporate as rapidly as in their new home. Neither did the sun shine as long, as often, and as intensely as in their new home. The growing season started earlier, and sometimes lasted longer in Texas. Hence, their old farming methods were not entirely the same, and they had to learn new methods. New crops, not known to them at their old home, had to be grown. Further, they did not have the implements needed for efficient farming.

Often they began farming with hand power only. They had to clear a small patch of land from the grasses and till it with hand hoes, and perhaps picks or grubbing hoes. It is said that the corn they raised the first year was eaten by deer before any ears set or matured. They had no fences to protect the growing crops from any animals. Some had oxen to plow greater areas, and these animals were loaned or rented by different people. There were no horses for plowing and cultivating. Gradually more land came under cultivation, and they learned about new crops, such as cotton, and about new vegetables, such as squash. Experiments in raising sorghum started in 1857. But the land was new and rich, which gave good crops with proper cultivation. During the Civil War many men drove wagons to haul materials from Mexico, a few fought in the Confederate Army, and many fled to Mexico to avoid military service. After the Civil War some men hired out to farmers in better areas, such as New Braunfels, and received wages in corn, which they brought home to feed the hungry people. And they also brought with them the methods used in the other areas, planting wheat, rye, and oats. All grains had a good market at the various army garrisons in Texas, but it had to be hauled by wagon. The nearest mill for grinding grain was said to be 50 miles away, perhaps at New Braunfels. C. H. Guenther (Pioneer Flour Mills) in 1859 said there was only a small mill in San Antonio, and built his own mill in that year. By 1859 Harm Heinrich Balzen had 20 acres under cultivation, as is recorded in his agreement with his son Heinrich Harm.

It is not known when the immigrants around Quihi first started cattle ranching. Perhaps there were some wild longhorns in the area, which could be branded and claimed. The first cattle drive from San Antonio was organized and started in 1854. But before then there was a hide market in San Antonio. Quoting from "German Seed in Texas Soil", page 146: "Near D'Hanis.....S. G. French noted herds of cattle in 1849, and five years later Olmstead commented that the wealth of the settlers there lay principally in cattle." Cattle were worth about \$5 per head, for their hides and tallow. The 1860 Census of Medina County gives some indication of the numbers of beeves at that time. A tabulation of 26 persons shows that they owned the following: 1110 acres improved land and 1673 acres of unimproved lands; 47 horses; 4 mules or asses; 512 milch cows; 133 work oxen; 1154 other cattle; no sheep, and 182 swine.

The first house of Harm Heinrich Balzen, which is presumed to be the home of Heinrich Harm also, was built in the method previously described of stakes set into the ground, plastered, and with dirt floor and thatched roof. The second house, built by Heinrich Harm, had stone walls about 2 feet thick, wood floor, wood shingle roof. The question arises of where the materials for these constructions were obtained. Stone was available in the locality, especially limestone several miles northward, and sandstone at a considerably greater distance to the south. Trees for the stake houses could be obtained from the hill country to the north, the canyons and valleys having tall straight cedar trees. Boards and other lumber could be obtained from the Medina River cypress trees, and indeed there must have been some saw mill in the area. Later, wood planks were obtained from San Antonio and Victoria, by oxcart. Grasses were knee-high and available in large quantity for thatched roofs, and the twine was made from the Spanish daggers, Yuccas, which the Indians used for making their baskets. These daggers could be roasted and split into strong cords. Cement, or lime, for mortar and plaster was locally burned in crude kilns. Simply stated, a vertical hole similar to a well was dug near the edge of a stream cliff. At the bottom of the cliff a horizontal tunnel was dug to the well, for access and air for the fire. The well was then stacked with wood and chosen limestone in the proper manner, and then partially sealed over at the top. The fire was then started and maintained for a period of some weeks, which converted the limestone into quicklime, perhaps of a lower quality than now available. This quicklime, when slaked with water, produces the cementitious lime used for mortar and plaster.

The Johannes Oefinger family, which came in 1869, first lived in a hut made of mud or caliche, perhaps similar to a hogan, or an igloo, or even some old adobe houses still standing. The latter required the use of planks for roofing, which may not have been available at first. A few had tents for shelter to begin with. Such shelter was indeed crude and cramped, and used only until better quarters could be built. Living with these crude homes was mostly outdoors except for sleeping and shelter from rain or winter's coldest days. Imagine living in a mud hut similar to an igloo, where one could not stand upright on the inside. It had only one entrance, no windows, a dirt floor. It must have been very warm on the interior during the summer, wet and humid during periods of rain.

None of these houses had any conveniences except for a fireplace to heat and cook with. -- Perhaps the first temporary shelters were lean-tos, that is a sloping roof from the ground, covered with branches or whatever was available, such as grasses. Such a lean-to is open on 3 sides.

In an attempt to visualize what life was like during the days of the pioneer immigrants, one can recount something of the social institutions such as churches, schools, work habits, life expectancies, travel, wages, clothing, etc.

Of course, when the immigrants first arrived in the Quihi area, there was nothing but a wilderness. But within 6 years there was a Lutheran Church organized by Rev. Christian Oefinger, who was the supply pastor from Castroville, 10 miles away. He organized the churches first at Castroville and then at Quihi in 1852. This is considered to be remarkable in view of the fact that there were no Lutheran churches in San Antonio until 1858. The population of San Antonio in 1851 was about 3500 persons, and in 1860 about 8000. The Catholic religion was established by the Spaniards, the missions being established about 1718 and later. A Methodist Church was started in 1851 in San Antonio. To get back to Quihi, the people built a permanent church building in 1854, which was used until 1914, when a new building was dedicated. The old building was composed of rock walls and a roof of cedar log beams and rafters, from which the bark had been stripped. It had three arched windows on each side, and a low bell tower with a peaked roof. The old building was razed when the present church building was dedicated in 1914.

It is interesting to note that at the 125th anniversary of the Quihi Church the afternoon services were held outdoors, as they were before 1854. The congregation in 1977 was arranged in a semi-circle under the old oak trees, as they were before 1854. The pulpit or lectern was placed in a wagon at the approximate center of the semi-circle, and it was stated that originally the congregation placed their wagons in a semi-circle, or a circle, as protection against surprise attacks possible from Indians. It is also interesting to note that even before 1852 some missionary served the people of Castroville and Quihi, whose names were Rev. Kaufmann and Rev. G. Kleis. The first confirmands were from the families of Stiegler, Mumme, Schumacher, Haien, Leinweber, Grossenbacher, Loesberg, and Taschler. The family names of others who were members in 1852 were Boehle, Goering, Haien, Gerdes, Remi, Saathoff.

Synodical conventions were held at Quihi in 1869, 1874, and 1894, and delegates were sent from Quihi to nearly every Lutheran church convention at other localities.

Not much information is available to me about the early schools of Quihi. I do not know how much schooling my grandfather Herman Balzen had. He was born in 1857, and at the age of about 10 he gathered rock in the Mulberry Creek for building of the Heinrich-Harm (his father) rock house. Evidently he did not go to school then. I presume he could write his name. I can't remember whether or not he ever read a newspaper.

On 28th August 1876 Heinrich Harm Balzen deeded 1200 Square varas - about 12,000 square feet - of land to be used for a school only. This grant was matched by land from M. Saathoff and from one of the Schweers family, at a point where all three owned adjoining land, this forming a single property for a school. It is located on the east bank of the Quihi Creek near the point where the present Quihi-Upper Quihi Road intersects the old Castroville Road, and to the south and west of the present oil pipeline pumping station. The school was named the Deutsche-Englische Schule. There my father, with his older brothers and sisters, went to school until they reached the 6th grade. This school may have been the first school in the Quihi community. This school building is long since not in existence, but the rock foundations are still visible under a large live oak tree. Later a new school, which is still standing but not used as a school, was built at "Sturm Hill" (Upper Quihi).

There is still standing a one-room school building across the road from the Quihi Lutheran Church. This was one of the early Quihi schools.

Another source of early learning, seldom mentioned, was at two places. First, in some homes the mother of the family may have taught a little reading, writing, and arithmetic. Second, the church pastor, during confirmation classes, may have taught some of the rudiments of learning besides religion. The first public school in San Antonio started in 1852.

The Centennial Edition of the HONDO ANVIL HEROLD, May 6, 1976, had an article about the 1860 census of Medina County. The following is extracted therefrom:

In 1860 there were 5 Community or Common schools in the county, one elementary school, and one Academy. There were 162 students taught by 7 teachers.

Wages in 1860 in Medina County were:

Farm hand - \$12.50 per month plus board

Day laborer - \$.50 per day plus board or \$1.00 per day without board

Carpenter - \$1.50 per day without board

Domestic - \$2.00 per week with board

Crops - average yield 30 bushels corn per acre

Note - A day's labor consisted of 10 to 12 hours work.

From the records of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Quihi, for the first 50 years, 1852 - 1902, I have tabulated the deaths which occurred. These tabulations are of actual funerals held by the pastors, and do not show the usual deaths per 1000 of population. The results are:

Number of baptisms: 940

<u>Age at death:</u>	<u>No. of deaths in years 1852-1902</u>	<u>% of total</u>
0 to 10 days	24	13.3
11 days to 1 year of age	35	19.5
1 year to 5 years inclusive	32	17.8
6 years to 10 years "	9	5.0
11 years to 20 years "	9	5.0
21 years to 30 years "	10	5.5
31 years to 40 years "	7	3.9
41 years to 50 years "	7	3.9
51 years to 60 years "	11	6.1
61 years to 70 years "	17	9.4
71 years to 80 years "	12	6.7
81 years up	<u>7</u>	<u>3.9</u>
	180	100.0

This tabulation shows again what has been reported by many before, that infant death rates were very high. It also shows how little help the mothers had in obtaining the knowledge and necessities for babies and very young children. The hard times experienced by the people were particularly harsh on the very young. Particular notice is taken of the 32.8% of the deceased who never reached an age of one year, and 50.6% who did not reach the age of 6 years. These 9% who did not reach the age of 6 years are 9.7% of those who were baptized. A very sad commentary upon the hard lives of the pioneers around Quihi.

The hard times which the pioneer immigrants endured lasted for many years. But gradually times got a little better. As the years passed, they learned to adjust to the new climate and soil, and began to grow crops which sustained them, and to raise cattle which brought in a little needed cash. The Indian depredations and thievery decreased, until about 1875 the danger no longer existed. And in 1882-1883 the Southern Pacific Railroad was built through Dunlay, about 6 miles from Quihi. The railroad gradually gave the pioneers more contact with the outside world, especially providing outlets for cash crops which they could raise.

In order that the general times might be better understood, I have quoted the following from a scrapbook of pictures and events in San Antonio during the last 100 years. It is titled "100th Anniversary PIONEER FLOUR MILLS 1851-1951," published by the Naylor Co. of San Antonio, Texas:

- Year of 1851: San Antonio had a population of about 3500 and was an important military headquarters. Its commission merchants were dealing in hides and wool. The plazas were campgrounds. The U.S. Garrison was quartered on Military Plaza (Plaza del Presidio).
- 1852: The first public school was started on the north side of Military Plaza. The San Antonio Schuetzen Verein (Rifle Club) was organized.
- 1853: Ursuline Academy became the first boarding school for girls, and was the second school for girls in Texas. -- It became an offense to allow hogs to run at large. - The temperature went down to 12 F. - A newspaper "Western Texan" was published in S.A.
- 1854: An agricultural fair was held at the San Pedro Springs. - The first cattle drive from San Antonio was made. Being successful, others were started.
- 1855: Streets were unlighted, and people carried sperm oil lanterns or candles. - Indian depredations were frequent and close to the city.
- 1856: In January streets were "half a leg" deep in mud. - The city population had grown to over 7000. Bexar County assessment lists showed that there were 1079 slaves. Attempts to escape were rare. Sunday horse races, cockfights, and fandangoes prevailed.
- 1857: The first stage coach started for San Diego. Mail from San Diego arrived here in 26½ days. Bill Hart, notorious desperado, and two companions were killed on Alamo Street by a Vigilance Committee. The first experiments in raising sorghum here were started. A voluntary Fire Department was founded.
- 1858: Four horse thieves were hanged near Mission San Jose. - The German-English School was started. Trade with Mexico was important to the economy of the city. San Antonio was becoming an immense hide market. - St. Marks Episcopal Church building was begun.

1859: -----

- 1860: San Antonio population was over 8000. Landowners complained for relief from herds of wild, unfenced cattle. Governor San Houston tried to "save the city for the Union." Indians were on the war-path, and citizens had to join together to drive them back west.
- 1861: U.S. troops marched out of San Antonio and joined the Union Forces.
- 1865: On 19th June the U.S. Army announced the freedom of slaves - "Juneteenth."
- 1870: The population of San Antonio was over 12,000. Indians killed a woman and children in Bandera County. A child was stolen in Llano. A wagonmaster was killed near Fort Mason.
- 1872: There was an Indian fight near Hondo, the Indians using breech loading rifles.
- 1877: 100 years ago at this writing. The first train of the G.H.&S.A. Railroad (now S.P.) arrived in San Antonio. In celebration, 8000 people marched through town in a torchlight parade, and celebrations lasted 2 days.

Survey Nr 8

Scale 1 in = 20 vara = 55.7 feet
1 vara = 33.5 inches in Texas

Tract No. 1 - 80 Acres
1853

Tract No. 4
Bought from
M.M. Saathoff
by Balzen
1857
20 Acres

M.M. Saathoff - 1853

Tract No. 2 - about 12+ Acres
1853

Tract No 5
33 1/3 Acres
Bought from
M.M. Saathoff
1872

M.M. Saathoff
1853

Harm Hinrichs House was probably located
on Tract No 3, exact location not known

Tract No 3
1853
7+ Acres

Approx location of
The Oak tree
where Rickste
Balzen is prob.
buried.

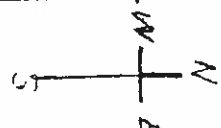
Saathoff
"Oettinger"
house

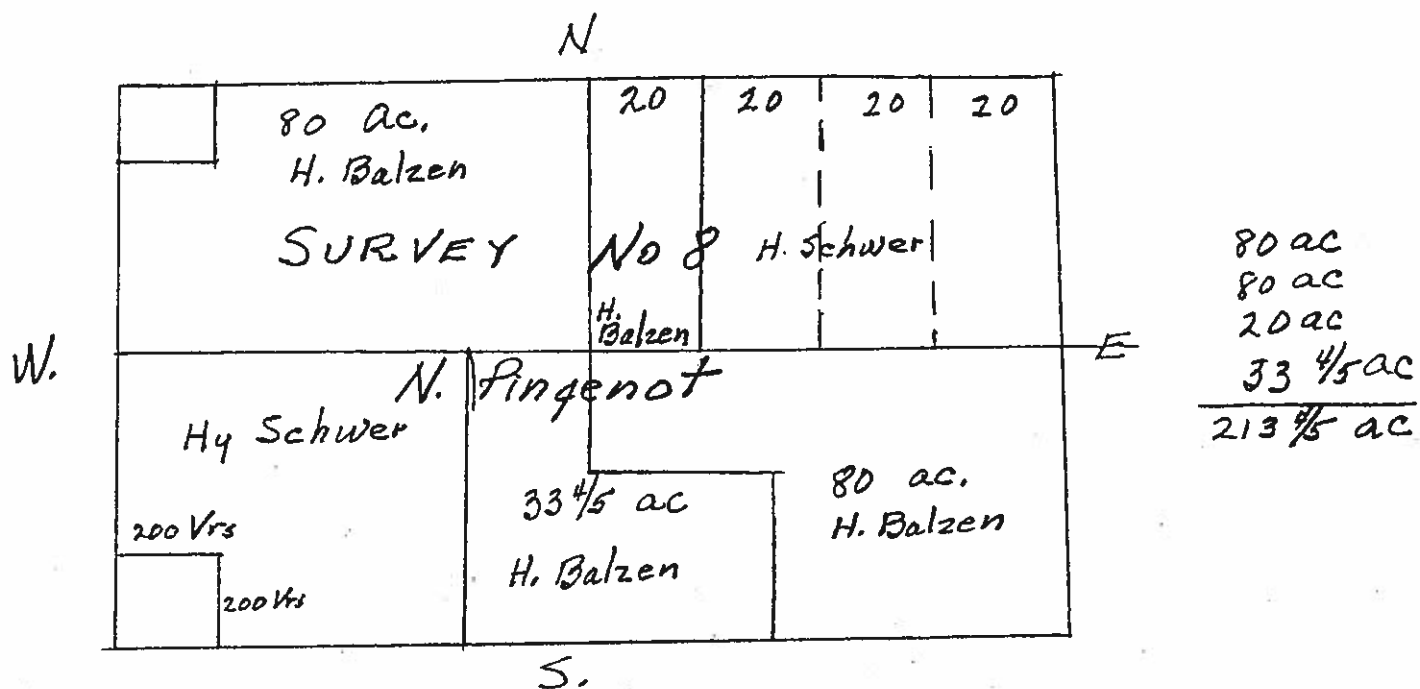
M.M. Saathoff
House

Old road to Castoville - No longer in use

Boundary of Survey Nr. 8 320 Acres
Nic. Pingenot, Medina County, Texas

Division of Survey Nr. 8 between M.M. Saathoff & Harm Hinrich Balzen
Tracts No 1, 2, & 3 for Harm Hinrich Balzen (shaded) - Balance (not
shaded) for M.M. Saathoff. Tract No 4, fenced and cultivated, and
Tract No 5 later bought from M.M. Saathoff by Balzen. Tract No 3
was probably the site of the home of Harm. Hinrich Balzen. Part of No 3
was later given for a school. Tract No 3 was sold in 1912 by Herman
Balzen to Johann Schweers.





Plat of Lands deeded to Herman. Balzen by the heir.
of Heinrich Harm Balzen

HISTORICAL MAP OF THE QUIHI AREA

Numerical Index

TLOM
FAYE WALKER page 1

PART III CHAP. IX

Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No	Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No
Bethlehem Luth. Church	1	1	Fritz Boehle Place	16	1
Parsonage, Parish Hall, Pavillion			Leo Boehle	16	1
Old (Original) Quihi Cemetery				18	1
One Room School (not in use)	2	1			
Old Ben Bruckes Place	3	1	Herbert Reitzer & Huldamee Balzen	19	1
Eilert v Trenie Neumann	4	1	Henry Lindeberg	20	1
Vernon (Vernette) place	5	1	Geo Bohmfalk - Joe Karm	21	1
Sieman Rolf - blacksmith shop gone	6	1	T.R. Triplett - (Lindeberg)	22	1
Cissy Aden Place - single woman later Nick Reitzer	7	1	Jon Breiten Place	23	1
			(grave)	23A	1
			Henry Loesberg Place	24	1
Henry Schulte, bachelor	8	1	Fritz Boehle & Emil Boehle	25	1
Old Bless - Old Frerichs store	9	1	Johann Nietenhofer	26	1
Old Grell store			Fritz Borchers	27	1
Fritz Boehle place	10	1	H. L. Pichot	28	1
Centennial Marker & Quihi Water Hole (perhaps Santa Anna W. Hole)	11	1	Ehrne Schmidt	29	1
Joe Horn blacksmith shop (gone)	12	1	Ernest Nietenhofer	30	1
Quihi Shooting Club	12A	1	New Quihi Luth. Cemetery	31	1
Old Ernest Balzen Store & Res.	13	1	Jack Walsh (daughter of Alma) Borchers	32	1
August Bohlen Place	14	1	John Henry Heyen	33	1
Ernest Balzen Res. & Res of widow Annie - on Edwin Boehle	15	1	Cross Tree (Heinrich Harm Balzen)	34	1
			Geo. H. Heyen.	35	1

HISTORICAL Map OF THE Quihi Area

Numerical Index

Part VI Chap XIX

page 2

Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No	Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No
Jeyo Schweers	36	1	Windmill	51	1
William Schweers & Schweers Cem.	37	1	Paulus Oefinger - Annie Dailey	52	1
Henry Schweers (Meat Market 1920)	38	1	Christian Fuos place		
Mimke Mimken Saathoff (burned)	39	1	Christian Oefinger	212	2
Jacob Saathoff	40	1	Andy Oefinger	212	2
	41	1	? Gerdes	54	1
Old Oefinger Place (Schweers Saathoff)	42	1	Fournier Place	55	1
Site of 1 st Quihi School (Deutsch-englische Schule) beside a big Oak tree - only stone foundations	43	1	Wayne Marty	56	1
			Melvin Balzen	57	1
Humble Oil Pipeline Pump Sta also site of Henry Aug Schühle & Heilighmann house - both gone	44	1	W. Schuehle - Rog Dailey	58	1
Heinrich Harm Balzen & Herman B	45	1	Herman Gerdes Saathoff Nora Winkler - Jacob Oefinger Walter Brucks Edwin Schulte Place	59 59A 59B 60	1
site of burial of remains of Johannes Oefinger - between Eastermast two of 3 Oaks in an E-W line	46	1	Fritz Hartman	Brucks 61	1
Henry Schühle	47	1	Johnny Hartman	Brucks 62	1
Fritz Fuos Place with Jacob Fuos place further in	48	1	Barn	63	1
			Brooks	64	1
site of Johannes Oefinger Boxing house near large Oak	49	1	Marvin Lee Niebor - Julius Brucks	65	1
Christian Oefinger Place (Rock) Emil Fuos place further in	50	1	Marion Brucks	Aug. Brucks 66	1
			Culpepper	Aug Brucks 67	1
			Hogan	67A	

HISTORICAL MAP OF THE Quihi Area

Numerical Index,

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Part IV Chap XIX

Present or Past Owner

Index No Map No

Present or Past Owner

Index No Map No

Helda Beard Jacob Schweers

68 1

Robt Rief - Dominic Reif

85 3

Jones

68 A

Jerome Decker Herbert Decker

69 1

Jim Cain

Douglas Riff

86 3

70 1

Elroy Gerdes

Louis Gerdes

87 3

71 1

J. E. Muennink

88 3

Walter Saathoff

Tampke

72 1

Robert Riff

89 3

Harold Hartman

Lubbe Boehle

72A 1

Culpepper

Mrs Albert Bryant

Harry Schweers

Aug Brucks

73 1

Billy ✓ in trailer }

90 3

Otto Lindeberg

74 1

New Fountain Meth. Ch

91 3

Douglas Bohmfolk

Dietrich Lindeburg

75 1

New Fountain Meth Parish Hall

92 3

76 1

Muennink Store & Res

93 3

77 1

Lilly & Nellie Muennink

94 3

78 1

New Fountain School - moved away

95 3

79 1

Alton Hale - Frank Muennink

96 3

80 1

Muennink Cotton Gin Ruins

96B 3

Ben Wiemers - Jack Sharp

E.S. Williams

96A 3

Jerry Williams - Teddy Wiemers

97 3

98 3

Wiemers Oak & Wiemars Place

98A 3

Ruins being Rebuilt

Wesley Wiemers - Geo Wiemers

99 3

Cletus Horley - Fritz Saathoff

99A 3

ana

HISTORICAL MAP OF THE QUINN AREA

page 4

Part VI Chap XIX

Present or Past Owner		Index No	Map No	Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No
Marion Muennink		100	3	Elgin Stiegler - Fritz Stiegler	118	3
Marrion Meyer	Henry Bohlen	100A	1	Rogers	Fritz Stiegler	119 3
Albert Reitzer		100B	1			
D Brown				Christian Nietenhofer	120	3
		101	3			
				Chas. Saathoff	121	3
Alfred Saathoff	Fritz Neumann	102	3			
Alfred Saathoff		103	3	Christian Nietenhofer	122	3
Jimmy Gray -	Henry Pochler	102A	3	Harvey Stein	Schlenz	123 3
Pongs	Spurlach	104	3	Arthur Schlenz		124 3
Flores	Willie Pochler	105	3	Robert Saathoff-Schneider	125	3
Mrs Nell Richter	Metzger Place	106	3			
				Ehme Saathoff - Henry Buss	126	3
Henry Muennink - Fritz Neumann		107	3	Barn		127 3
		108	3	Blank - non Existent		128 3
Fritz Hartman	Henry Hartman	109	3			
Clarence Bohlen		110	3	Rolf Saathoff - Ehme Saath	129	3
Jim Gebhart		111	3	Ehme Saathoff	130	3
Louie Arnold	Nietenhofer	112	3			
				Boehle & Phillips - Henry Buss	131	3
Milton Nietenhofer	Robt Nietenk	113	3	Erving Bohmfalk		132 3
C. J. Heyen	Dirk Lindeberg	114	3	Douglas Riff	Robert Riff	133 3
					Louis Bohmfalk	133A 3
Juan Corona	Willie Hartmann	115	3	Poerner	Henry & Saathoff	134 3
					Anita	
Foster	Fritz Bohlen	116	3	Louis Boehle	Mat Saathoff	135 :
	Henry Schulte Sr.					
		117	3	D. J. Steubing	Geo Karm	135A :
John Lindeberg						
						135B
Fletcher Davis	Ehme Saathoff	117A	3	Gustav. Muennink		136

Historical Map of the Quihi Area

Part VI

Chap XIX

page 5

Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No	Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No
Irvey Stein	137	3	Moos	160	6
John Heikmann	138	3	Blackie Tschirhart - Louis Saathoff	161	6
	139	3	Henry Nietenhoeter	162	6
	140	3	Ernest Mummie	163	6
	141	3	Allen Reed	164	6
Myrlin Mummie - Frank Saathoff	142	3	Horace Britch	165	6
Myrlin Mummie - Fritz Nietenhoeter	143	3	Elmer Nietenhoeter	166A	6
- Fritz Nietenhoeter	144	3	Alvin Britch	166	6
				167	
Clarence Saathoff - L. A. Saathoff	145	3	Prescott	168	6
Henry Muenning - Emil Werner	145A	3			
Albert Bryan - Louis Gendes	145B	3	Johnny Britch	169	6
Willie Boehle - Philip N Boehle	146	3	John Henry Britch	170	6
Saathoff Place	147	3	Elmer Nietenhoeter	170A	6
Geo. Boehle	148	3	Henry Winkler	171	6
Fritz Boehle Geo Boehle	149	3	Earnest Mummie - Auf Mummie	172	6
Albert Wiemers	150	3	Vandenberg School House W. W. Schmidt	173	6
Barn	151	3	Robert Decker	174	6
			? Decker	175	6
			Floyd Griffin Louie Decker	176	6
				177	6
			H. H. Decker	179	6
			Fohn	180	6

HISTORICAL Map of the Quihi Area

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rt VI Chap XIV Numerical Index		Index Map No No		Present or Past Owner		Index No	Map No
Present or Past Owner							
Andrew Eckhart - L. Heyen		181	6			201	2
		182	6			202	2
Roy Nietenhoefer	McClain	183	6	C.J. Tschirhart		203	2
Otto Wiemers		184	6	Clinton Martin		204	2
"		185	6	Andreas Martin		205	2
		186	6	Approx site where remains of Johannes Definger were found		205A	2
		187	6	Elmer Saathoff		206	2
		188	6	Geo Balzen		207	2
		189	6			208	2
Hunting House	Emil Wiemers	190	6	Walter Balzen Herman Balzen		209	2
Charlie Schweers	D. Wiemers	191	6	Walter Balzen Plbg & Tin Shop		210	2
				Site of Orig. Herman Balzen House		211	2
				Walter Balzen Hay Barn & shed		211A	2
				Christian Definger		212	2
				Andrew Definger		212	2
				Wayne Balze H.B. Balzen		213	2
				Sturm Hill School House		214	2
				Geo. Balzen Theo Balzen		215	2
				Edgar Balzen Harin Balzen		215A	2

HISTORICAL MAP OF THE QUIHI AREA Numerical Index

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Present or Past Owner		Index No	Map No	Present or Past Owner	Index No	Map No
Milton Balzen	Geo Balzen	216	2			
Harm Gerdes		216A	2			
	John Sturm	217	2			
	Harm DeGrodt	217A	2			
	Eckhart	218	2			
Louie Oefinger		218A	2			
Pennington	Ben DeJoirno	219	2			
Bennie DeJoirno		220	2			
Old Ben Balzen Place		221	2			
	Fritz Balzen	222	2			
Harry Herman Balzen		223	2			
Mat Saathoff	John Balzen	224	2			
Rutherford	Rose Gerdes	225	2			
	Henry H. Balzen	226	2			
Earl Balzen	Henry Schuchle	227	2			
Clarence Wurzbach		228	2			
Earl Balzen	Schuchle	229	2			
	Otto Neuman	230	2			
		230A	2			
	Charles Balzen	231	2			
Jallace Haby	Rudolph Haby	232	2			
		232A	2			
Storl Haby	Edwin Balzen	233	2			
Hubert C. Balzen						

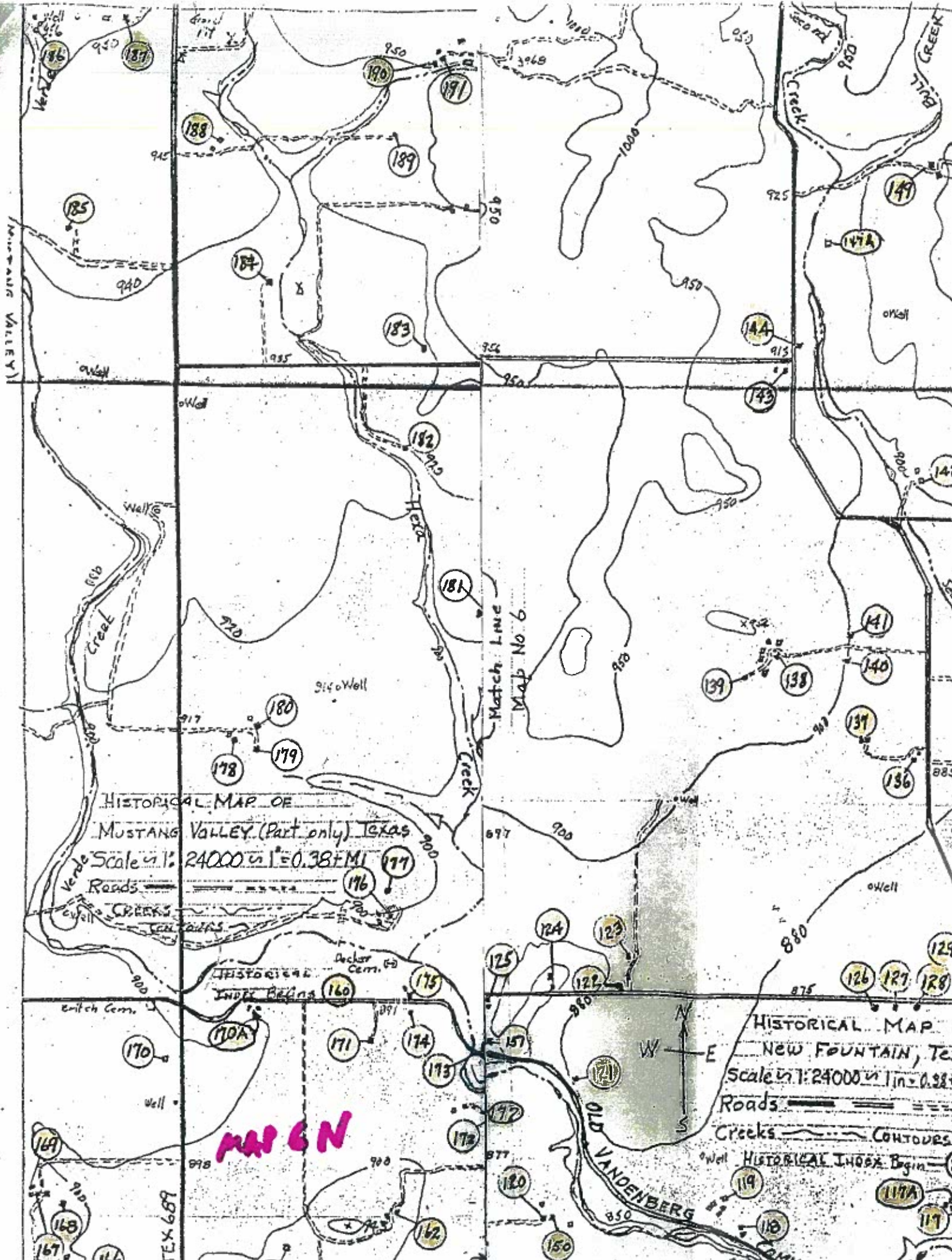
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Scale in 1:24000 or 1"=0.38 FMI
Roads
Creeks
Contours

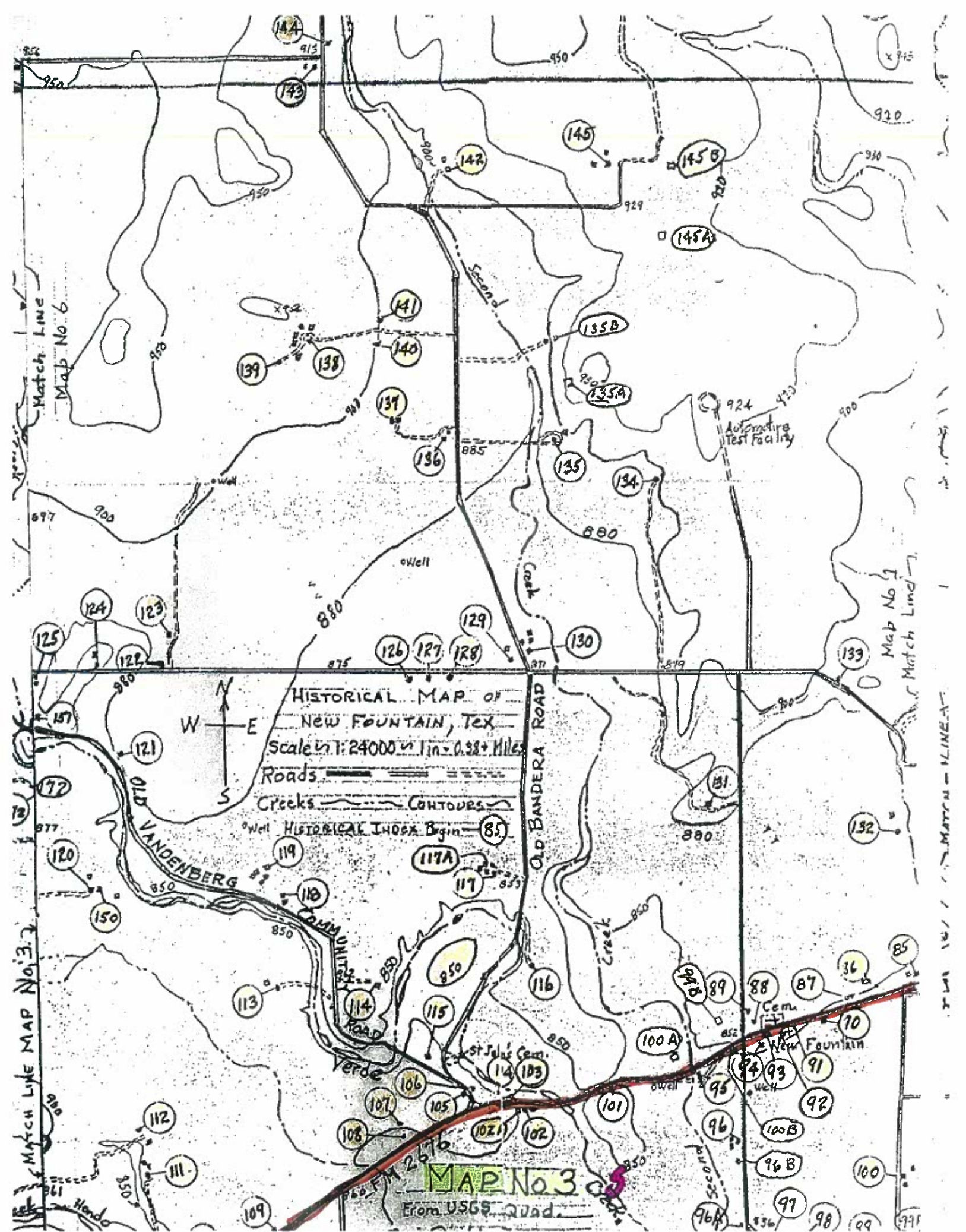
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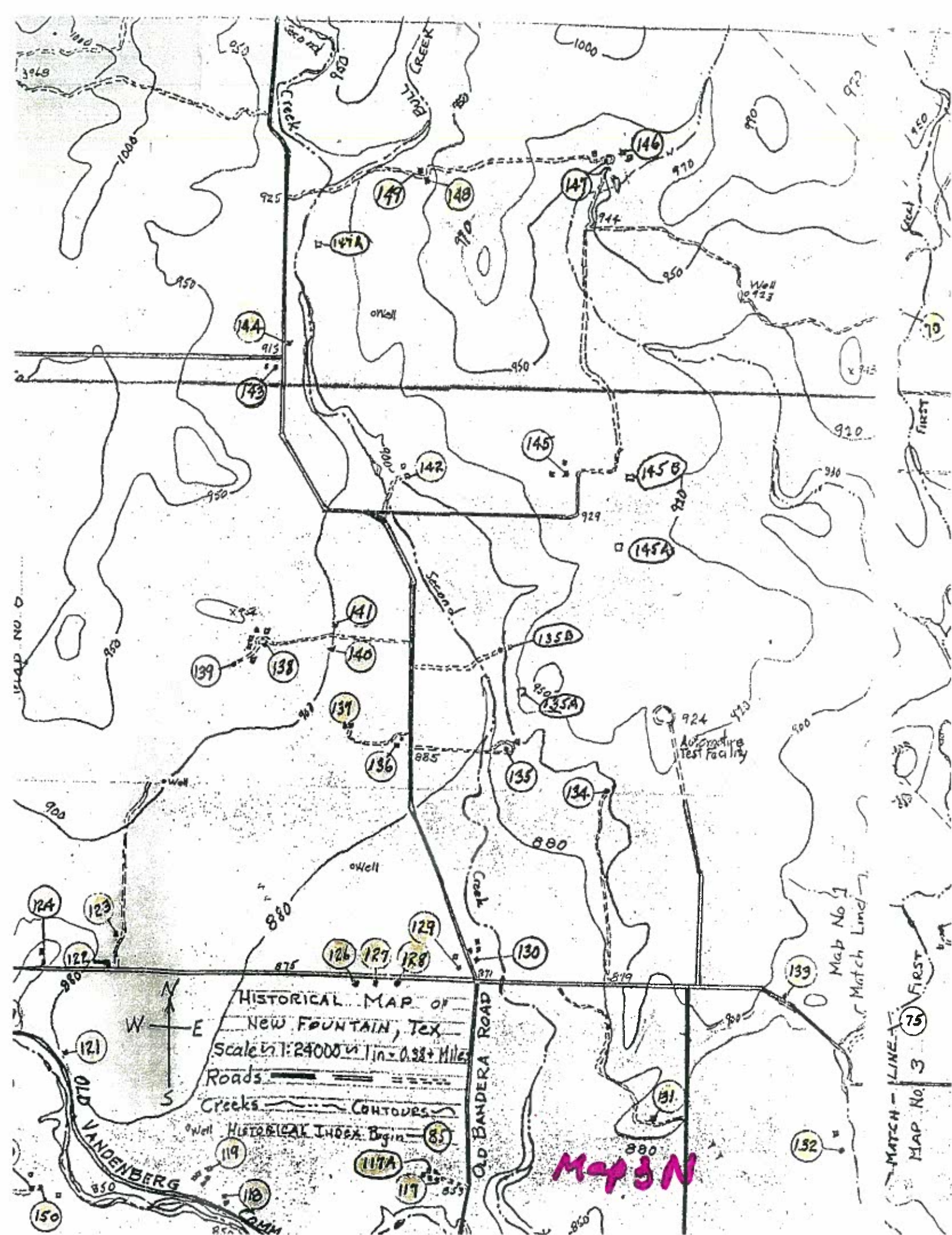
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Quilhi, Tex.

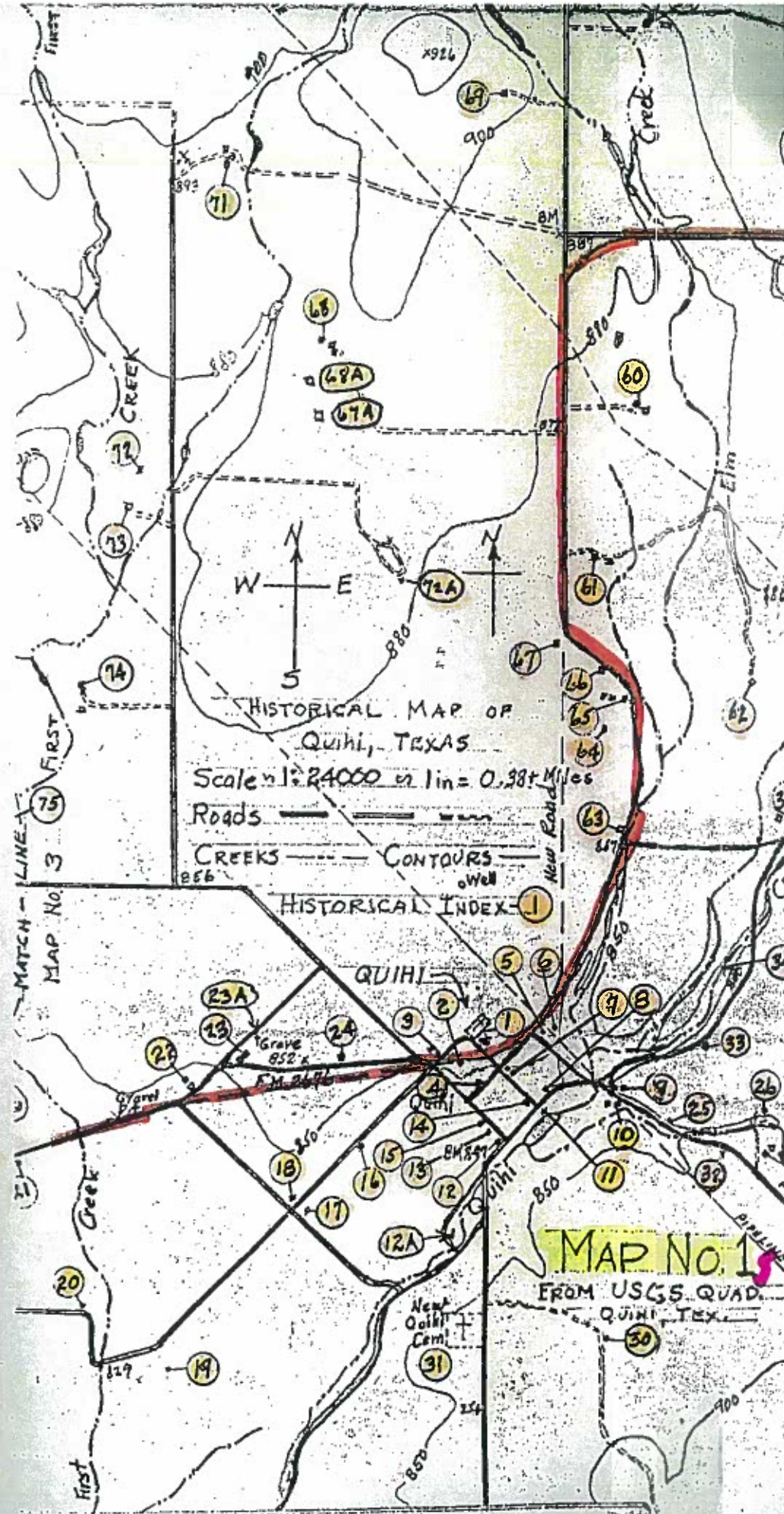
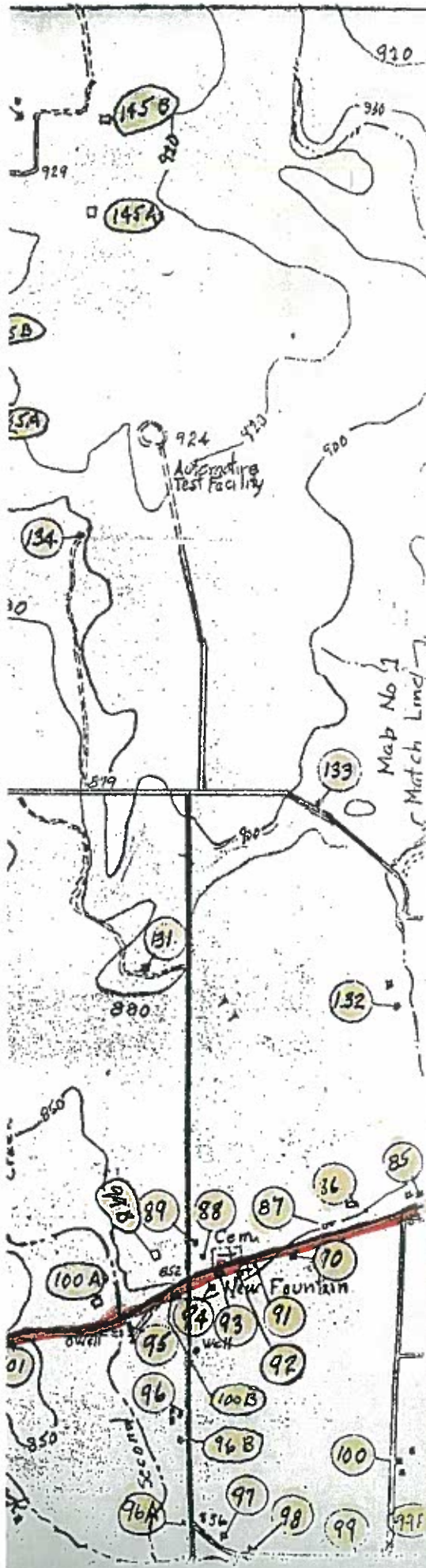
HISTORICAL MAP OF
NEW FOUNTAIN, TEX
Scale in 1:24000 or 1"=0.38 FMI
Roads
Creeks
Contours
HISTORICAL INDEX Begin

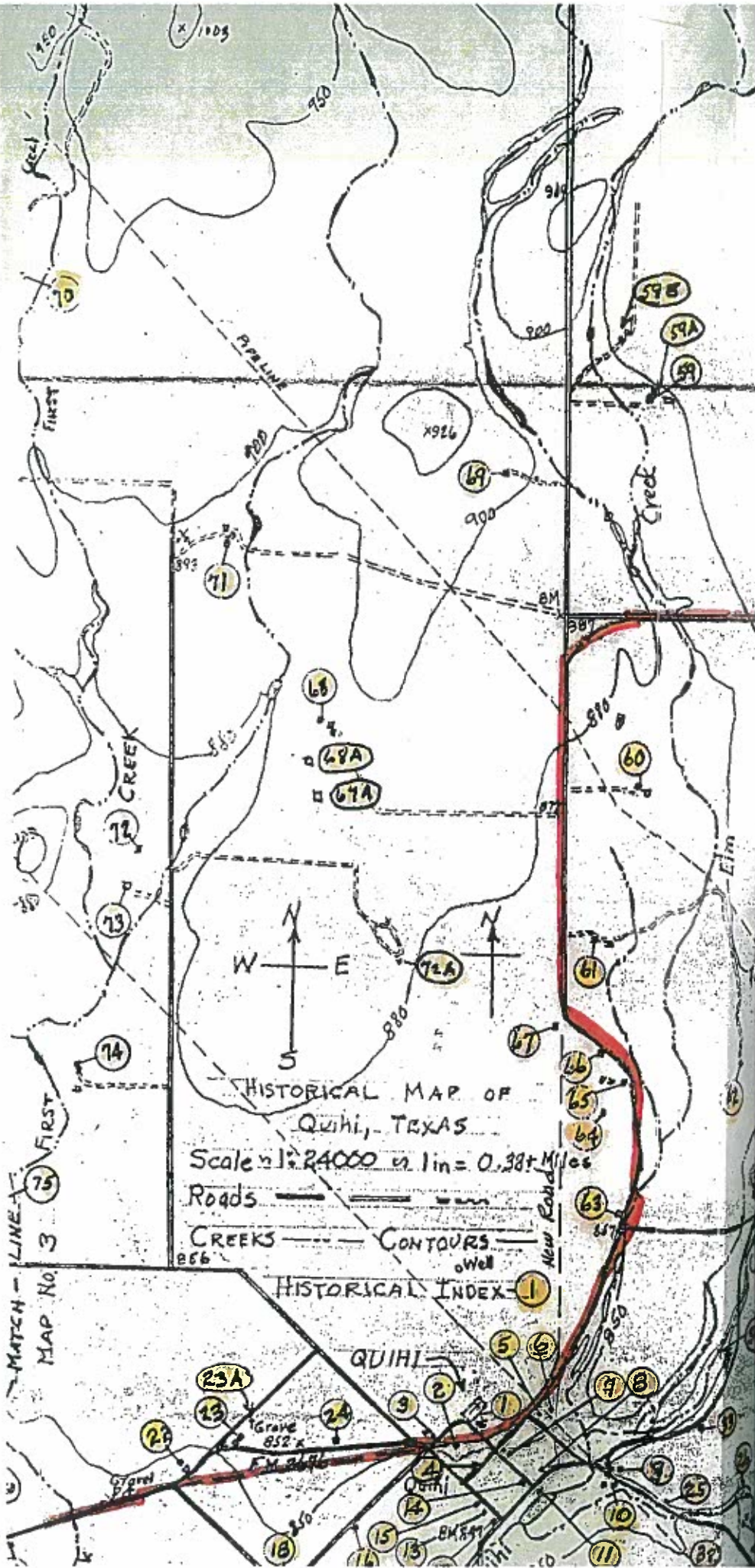
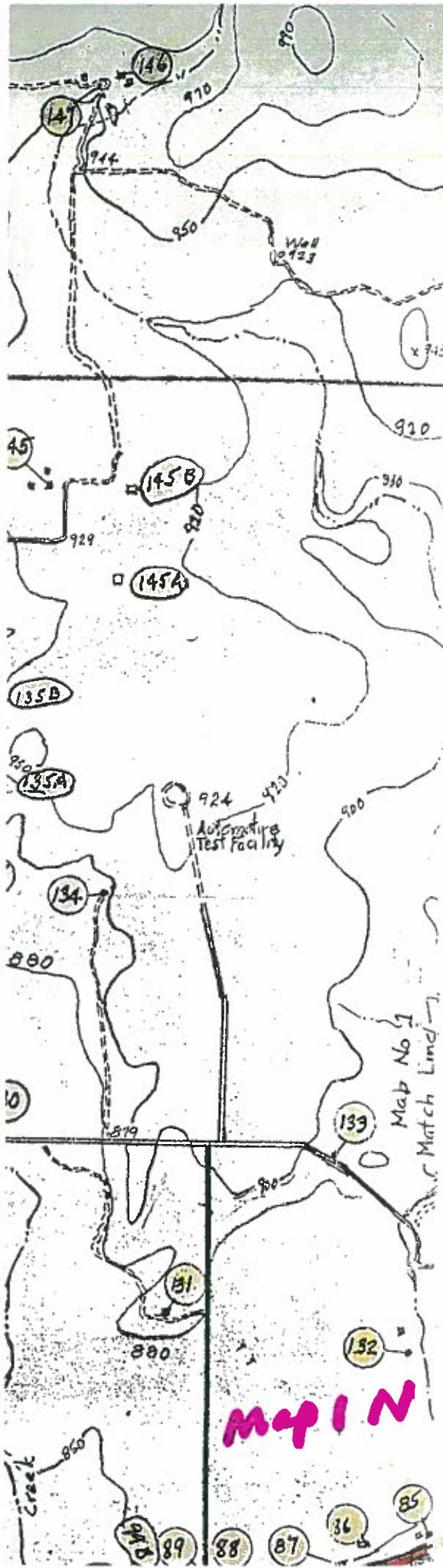
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From USGS
Quilhi, Tex.

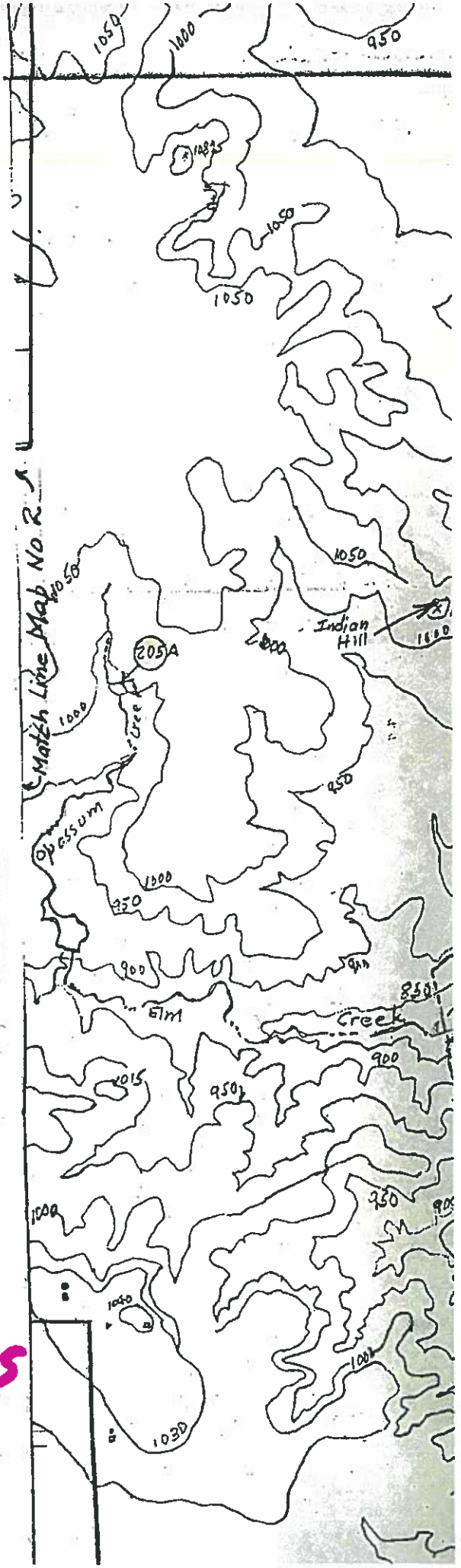
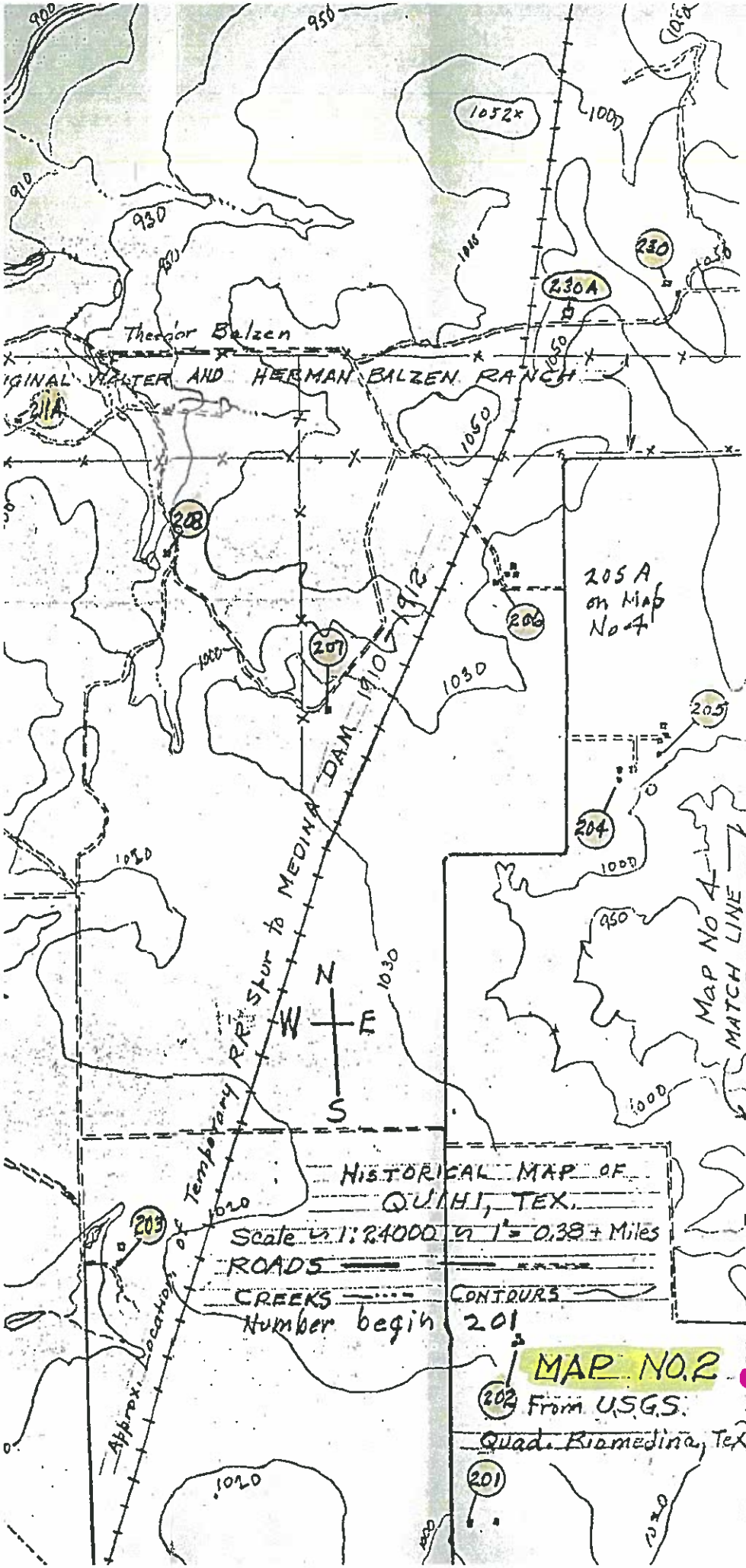


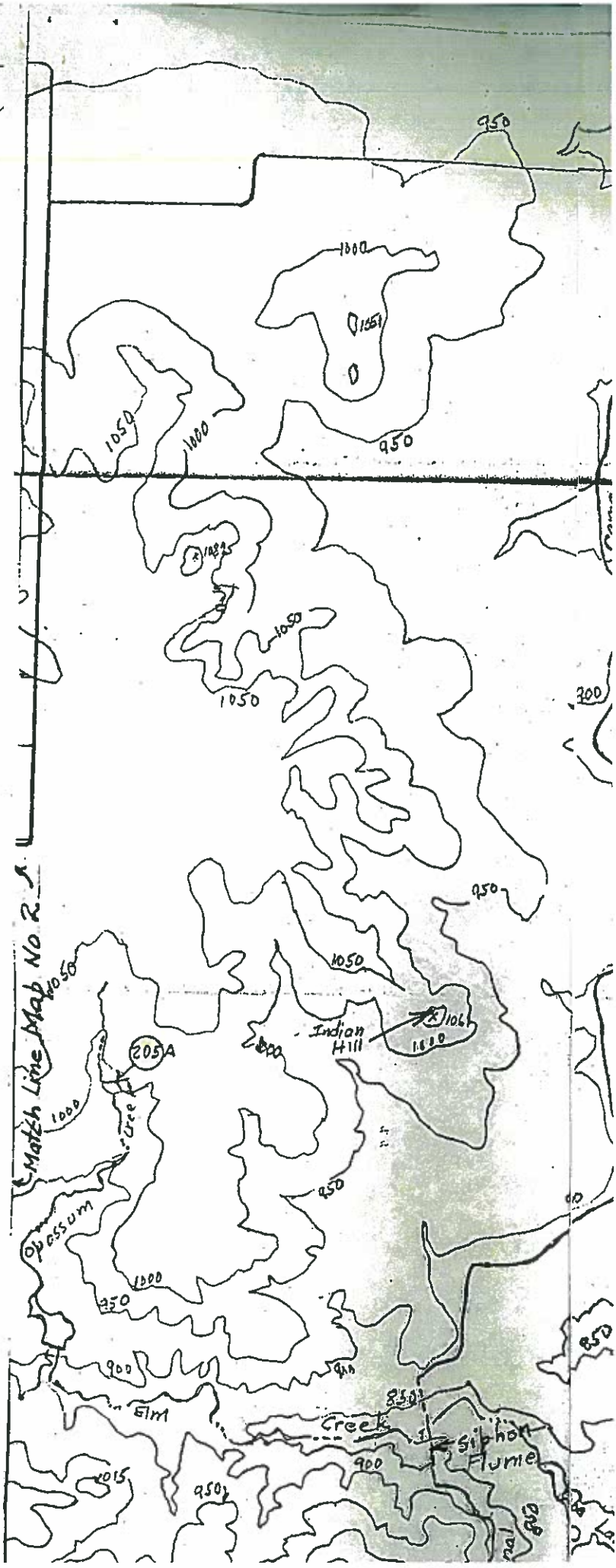
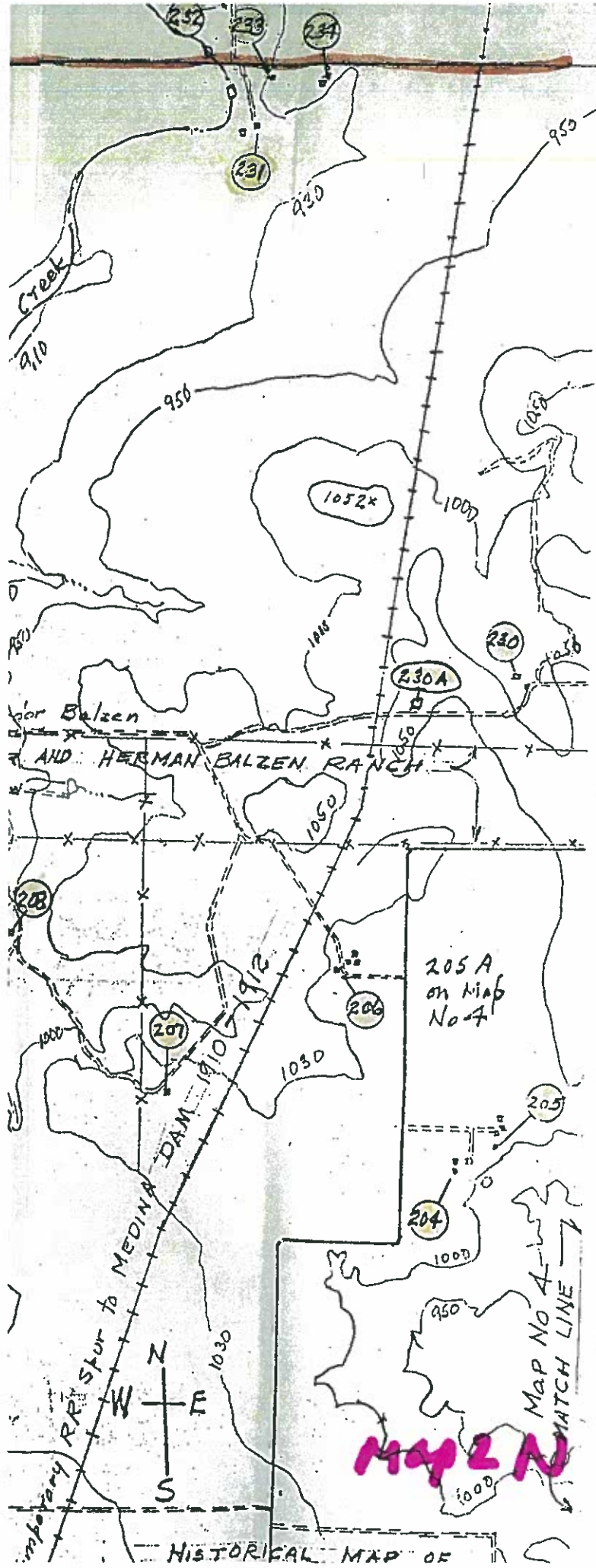


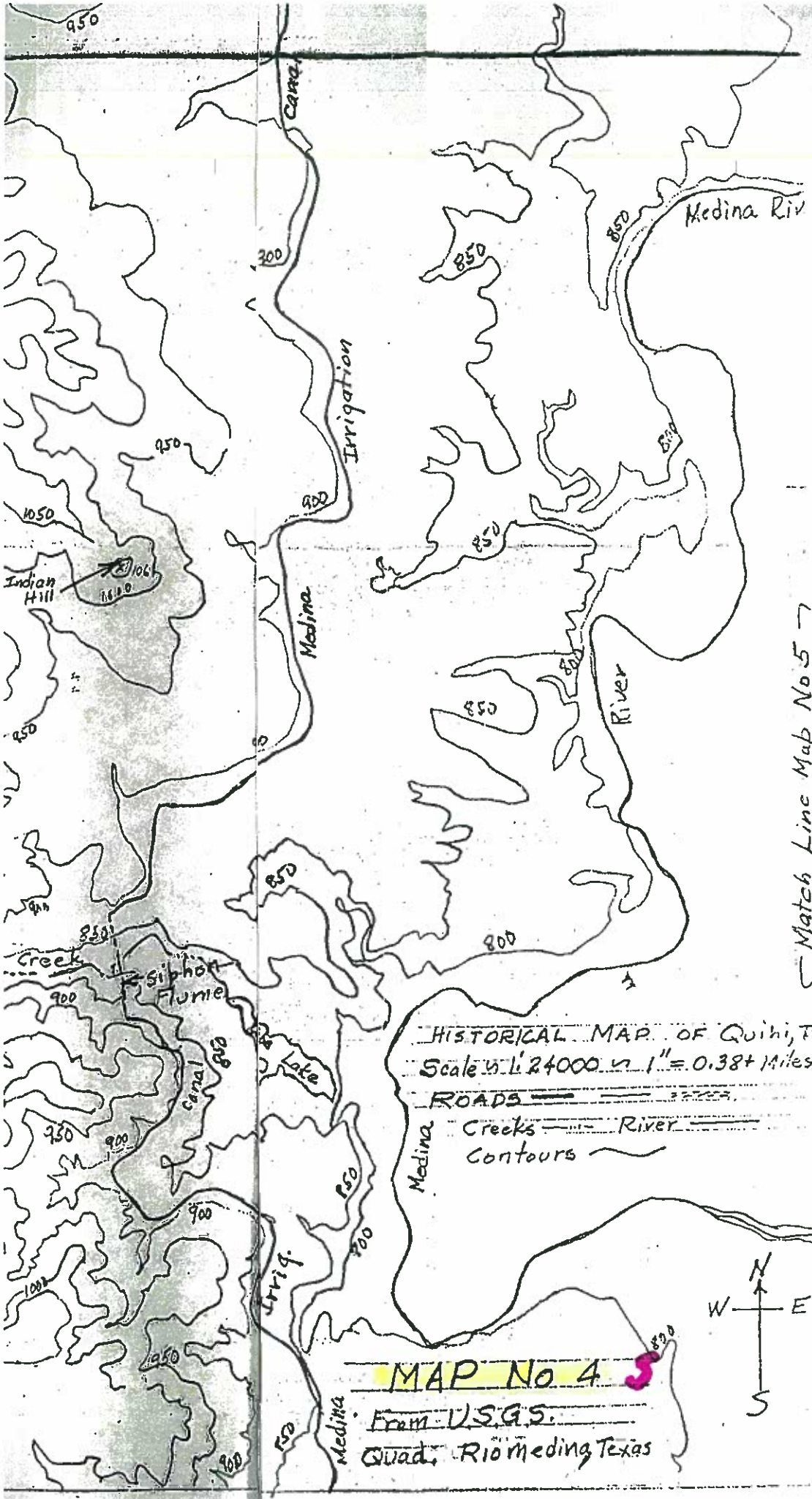












HISTORICAL MAP OF Quihi, T.
Scale 1" = 24000' or 1" = 0.38+ Miles

ROADS ———
Creeks ——— River ———
Contours ———

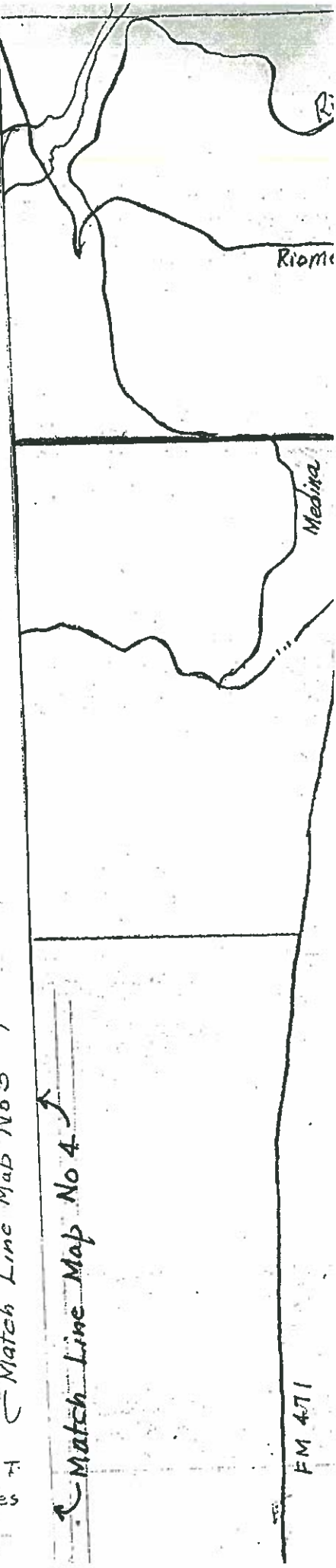
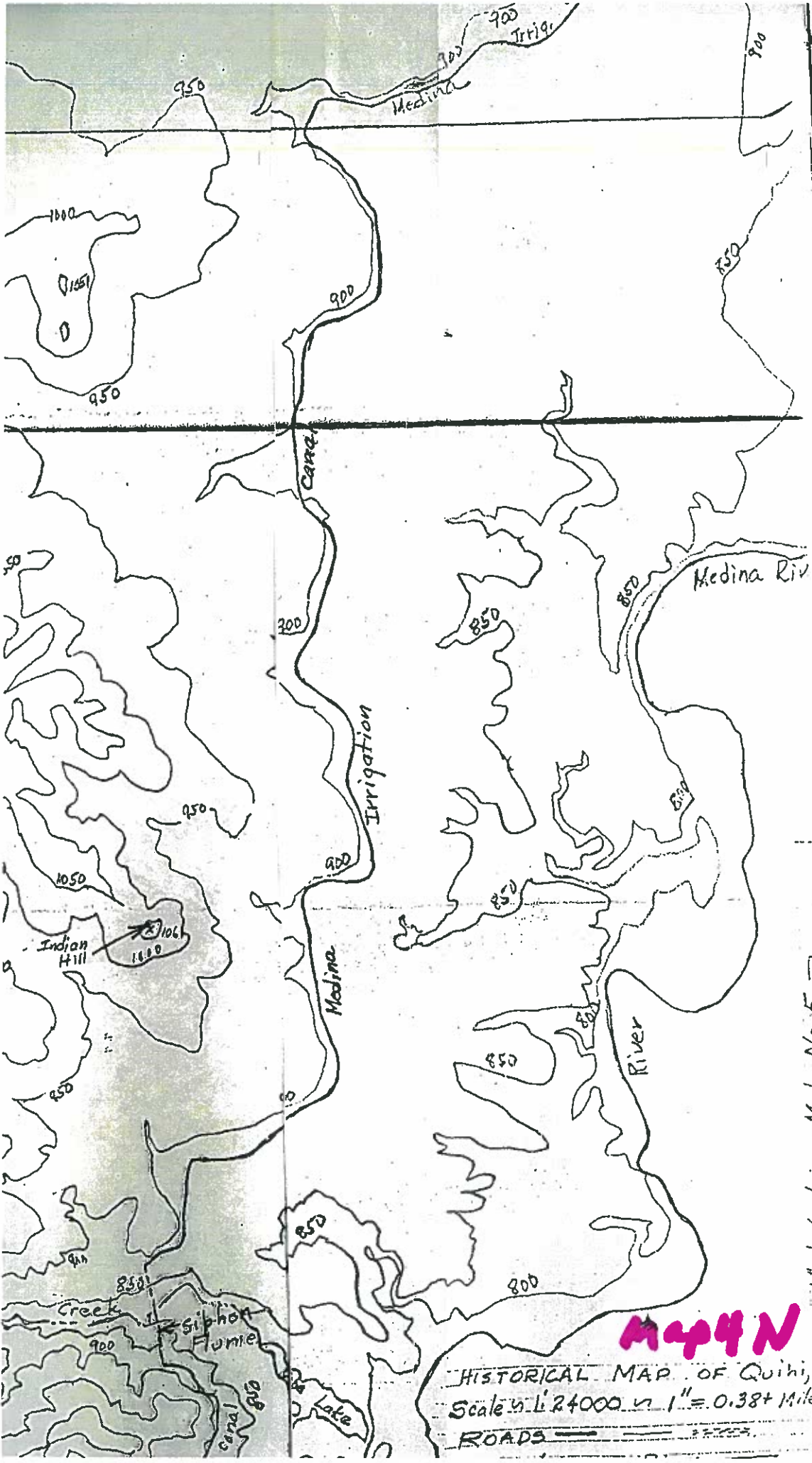
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Quad. Rio Meding Texas

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Match Line Map No 4

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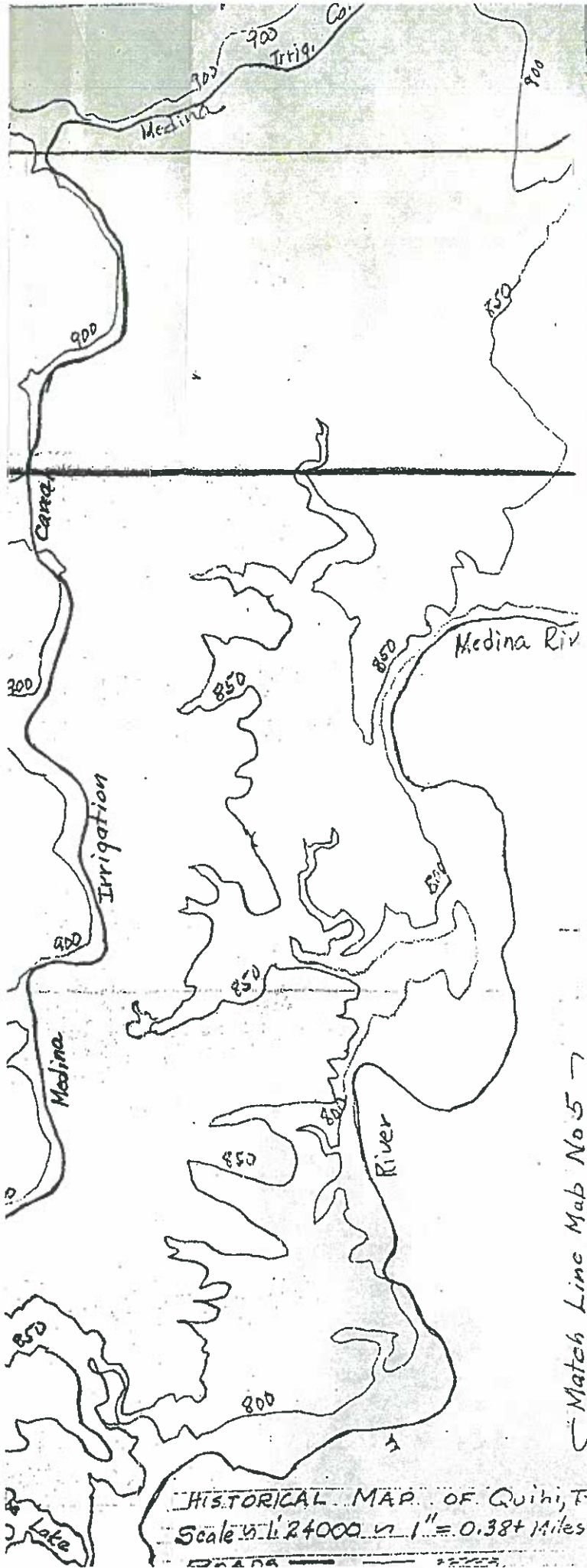
Map 4 N

HISTORICAL MAP OF Quihi, T.
Scale 1:24000 or 1" = 0.38+ Miles
ROADS

Match Line Map No 5

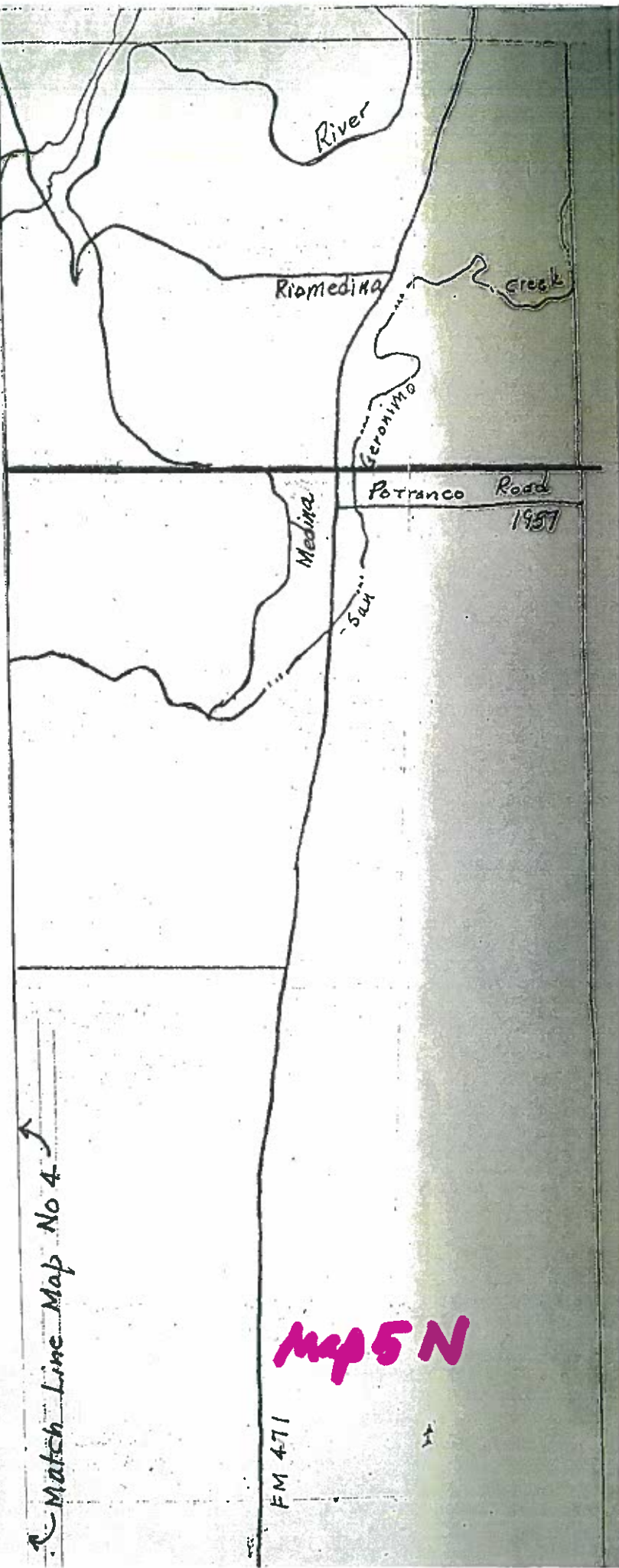
Match Line Map No 4

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HISTORICAL MAP OF Quihi, T.
 Scale 1:24000 or 1" = 0.38+ Miles
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Match Line Map No. 5



Match Line Map No. 4

Map 5 N

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