

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to give a general outline of the role played by Montgomery County in the history of Texas. The importance of the county's contribution has long been overlooked by historians of this state. Additional research is needed to fill in the spaces which still remain in the story of the county's past. Although the author of this study could not find any definite proof in the short time he searched, it is the generally understood belief of many of the old timers of the county that Doctor C. B. Stewart, not George C. Childress, was the author of the Declaration of Independence and writer of the first Constitution of Texas. He was certainly one of the most learned men at the convention and had served as secretary to practically every important meeting prior to the declaration convention. Further study on this matter by some interested person will no doubt give an interesting new outlook on this phase of Texas history.

A reason why the history of Montgomery County has been overlooked lies in the fact that practically all of the early history is concentrated around the town of old Montgomery, a place which due to close ties and relationship of its citizens, resent

and shun outsiders.

In preparing this study the author has spent several years doing research. He knows that many interesting and important details were overlooked, but he did his best with the information he had gathered to give as complete a history as possible. The largeness of the original county compelled the author to try eliminate material facts concerning the counties which were later disjoined, and in doing this some material concerning Montgomery County was unintentionally omitted.

For the early phase of the county's history the author used extensively H. E. Bolton's and Carlos E. Castaneda's books concerning the translated documents of the early Spaniards. In these books information was obtained concerning the explorers, missions, and Indians of the county.

The chapter on the early settlement of the county which included the Mexican rule and the empresarios and their colonists, the Spanish archives of the General Land Office and the books by Eugene C. Barker, Louis J. Wortham, H. Yoakum, and Homer S. Thrall proved helpful. In this chapter an effort was made to give to the lay reader who is not familiar with the early methods of settlement and empresario system a general panorama of how the settlement was carried out. The names of the empresarios

and their colonists were given. Although the San Jacinto River was used as the dividing line in the county to divide Austin's colony and Vehlein's colony, the reader must realize that the early settlers, in many instances, disregarded boundary lines; therefore; some of Austin's colonists settled in Vehlein's territory and some of Vehlein's colonists settled in Austin's territory.

Montgomery County was the third county created by the Republic of Texas in the First Congress. Its organization was by an act passed by the First Congress of the Republic. The material used by the author for writing this topic was obtained in the Texas State Archives which contained the original petition and bills passed by the First Congress. This congress had convened at Houston.

How the county got its name is still a matter of controversy. Although the author made this as one of his main objectives to establish, it is with regrets that a definite conclusion could not be reached and only a hypothesis formed. In order to find a definite answer more time was spent on this one particular phase than any other of the entire study.

Gammel's Laws afforded much information on provisions for the division of the other counties from Montgomery. The original petitions of the citizens from the county in the State

Archives also provide a greap help for this topic, and while writing about the establishment of the county seat and courthouse, records in the Montgomery Coun ty Courthouse were used extensively.

An attempt was made in the chapter on the cities and communities to give a variety of the places which represent the county in municipal life, e. g., oldest town, one of unusual circumstances, a ghost town, sawmill town, and the ones most leading. The history of each town included the naming, organization, and the most important events that have occurred in them. The communities that were included were done so because they so richly contributed to the interest element of the study, besides being a part of the history of the county. Much material for this chapter was obtained from the private collection of Hart Addison of Conroe, Texas, and from interviews with the local citizens of each community by the author.

The next chapter concerned the important events, issues, and people of the county. Although these three categories occur in other chapters of this study, this chapter was written separately to bring out the major importance of certain particular events, issues and people. Montgomery County's participatance in the early conventions, battle of San Jacinto,

Woll escapade, Civil War, Reconstruction, and Willis versus Montgomery affair, and a biographical sketch of some of Montgomery County's most illustrious men were included in this chapter. Because of the length of the phases of the Civil War and Reconstruction period these two heading were written into a separate chapter. The Civil War era included slavery, secession, and participation in the war, while the Reconstruction era included a general panorama of some of the atrocities of that period.

In the chapter concerning institutions and industries, the churches, schools, newspapers, and a line of industries were described in some detail. The early history of the Baptist and Methodist Churches were the only two religious institutions included for the reason that they were two of the earliest in the county and most of the population today belong to these two denominations. The schools included the earliest scholastic institutions of the oldest and youngest towns, which made up the systems of Montgomery and Conroe. The town of Willis at one time had an important school, historically speaking, by the name of Willis Male and Female Academy. This school was not included in this particular chapter because it had been described in the chapter on the cities and communities.

The industries included in the last chapter were the

earliest industries, farming, ranching, lumbering, oil and some of the newer ones which have been recently established in the county. The earliest and the oil industry were stressed.

In the way of conclusion the author wishes to say that the purposes of this study have been fulfilled in that a chronological history of the important events of the county have been compiled which may serve as a medium for people of Montgomery County who are interested in their county's history, and the purpose also has been fulfilled in that this history will preserve some of the important facts concerning the county.