

**THOMAS MADDOX WEBB COLLECTION**  
Finding Aid

Compiled by  
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Museum of South Texas History  
Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives  
Edinburg, Texas

2016



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**SUMMARY**

<b>Size</b>	0.66 cubic feet
<b>Geographic Locations</b>	San Juan, Texas; Pharr, Texas; Hidalgo County, Texas; Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV)
<b>Inclusive Dates</b>	1924-1987
<b>Bulk Dates</b>	1950-1969
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Summary</b>	The Thomas Maddox Webb collection contains research materials relating the history of and describing San Juan, Pharr, and Hidalgo County, Texas.
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	The collection is open for research. If you wish to examine items in the manuscript group, please contact the Archivist at 956-383-6911 to make an appointment to visit the Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives (MHMA) reading room.
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<b>Related Collections</b>	
<b>Citation</b>	Thomas Maddox Webb collection. Margaret H. McAllen Memorial Archives, Museum of South Texas History, Edinburg, TX.
<b>Display Credit Line</b>	Courtesy of Museum of South Texas History.
<b>Stack Location(s)</b>	RGDOC 151, F:4; OSDOC 6, G:11

## **BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

Thomas Maddox Webb was born in San Antonio, Texas in 1907 to Thomas Maddox and Georgia Althea Saunders Webb. He grew up in Palestine, Texas but spent his boyhood summers working cattle with his grandfather, Texas trail driver George Washington Saunders. After receiving his education in Palestine, Webb attended the University of Texas. He married his wife Allie Maverick Welsh in 1940.

During World War II, Webb served as a medic in the Navy and was stationed in Guam. After the war he moved his family to San Juan, Texas where he lived for 51 years.

Most of his life Webb was a lumberman, but he became a high school history teacher in Donna, Texas when he was 60. He spent his summers supervising tours of Europe for young people.

Webb belonged to various civic groups including the San Juan Lions Club and the Pharr Rotary Club. He was a member of St. John's Episcopal Church in McAllen, Texas. When he retired from teaching, Webb became active in the Rio Grande Historical Society and the Hidalgo County Historical Museum (now known as the Museum of South Texas History).

Webb died on February 21, 2004 in San Antonio, Texas. He is buried in San Jose Cemetery in Mission, Texas.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The Thomas Maddox Webb collection contains research materials relating the history of and describing San Juan, Pharr, and Hidalgo County, Texas. Formats include letters, photocopies of documents, postcards, photographs, maps, speeches, typed and handwritten notes, research materials, news clippings, booklets, brochures, newsletters, and published materials.

An item of interest is the typed speech by Harold S. Nelson, Brevet Brigadier General (Retired), given on February 19, 1966 at the Dedication of the Memorial to the Minnesota National Guard near Camp Llano Grande, Texas. Nelson gives a first-hand account of National Guard duty on the 1916-1917 Mexican-American Border. He also names several of the National Guard officers and their commands.

The collection also contains a photocopy of the John Closner, Hammond and Fernandez, Kelly and Crim and Chapin Townsite Company Survey of Porcion 71 and 72; John Closner's deed to the San Juan Townsite Company; and an order made by W.H. Gossage, County Judge of Hidalgo County, Texas (all in Folder 1).

A number of maps are found in the collection. The Hidalgo County, Texas map of 1978 shows the following locations: La Reforma Ranch, A.A. McAllen Ranch, Santa Anita Ranch, Brewster School, El Rucio, Tres Corrales Ranch and Headquarters, La Noria Cardeneña, La Coma Ranch, Laguna Seca Ranch, Monte Cristo Ranch, Moore Air Base, El Cibolo Ranch, La Panchita Ranch, El Jardin de Flores, the ferry crossing, and old ranch cemeteries. Other maps are of Alamo, San Juan, Pharr, Rio Grande Valley, Brownsville, and Texas and Mexico.

## **LIST OF SUB-GROUPS, SERIES, AND SUBSERIES**

- I. San Juan, Texas**
- II. Pharr, Texas**
- III. Hidalgo County, Texas**
- IV. Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV)**
- V. Newspaper clippings**
- VI. Published materials**

## **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

### **I. San Juan, Texas**

The materials in this series consist of typewritten and handwritten notes, letters, photocopies of documents, booklets, maps, news clips, flyers, photographs, post cards, and brochures. The topics covered include San Juan, Texas; the Shrine of Our Lady of San Juan of the Valley; the Women's Club of San Juan; the San Juan Library; the First National Bank of San Juan; the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexican Railroad; the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo High School; the San Juan Hotel; The San Juan People's Church; the San Juan Chamber of Commerce; Tom Mayfield; the San Juan Fire Department; tourist attractions; the San Juan Townsite Company; 1965 city election information; the San Juan Tourist Club; Porciones 71 and 72; and the San Juan Lions Club.

### **II. Pharr, Texas**

Three items are found in this series – a map, a flyer, and a 75 year commemorative issue of *The Advance*. The map (circa 1950) shows the location of City Hall, the Missouri Pacific Railroad Depot, the Police Station, the Post Office, the Texan Hotel, churches, and schools. It contains pictures of the Cactus Drive-In Theatre, the Texan Hotel, a church, a school, and the Pharr business district. It includes information about the climate, population, agriculture, churches, schools, business, and utilities.

The flyer gives a 1963 profile of Pharr. The information included pertains to government services, the tax rate, general information, industry, population, geographical location, utilities, transportation, labor, recreational facilities, and cultural activities.

The 75 year commemorative issue of *The Advance* is dated April 28, 1984 and relates the history of Pharr. Subjects covered are the city founders, the 1910 land sale, the Pharr Fire Department, Tom Mayfield, early newspapers, the various troubles that happened in 1916, and Pharr Memorial Library. The issue contains a list of mayors from 1917-1984 and a list of past Chamber of Commerce presidents. Photographs in the issue show City Hall, the Railroad Depot, the Methodist Church, City Park, Shamrock Bar, Cactus Drive-In, Pharr Mercantile Company, and Ratcliff Block.

### **III. Hidalgo County, Texas**

This series contains news clips, a map, booklets, brochures, correspondence, and a speech.

The Hidalgo County, Texas map of 1978 (Folder 11) shows the following locations: La Reforma Ranch, A.A. McAllen Ranch, Santa Anita Ranch, Brewster School, El Rucio, Tres Corrales Ranch and Headquarters, La Noria Cardeneña, La Coma Ranch, Laguna Seca Ranch, Monte Cristo Ranch, Moore Air Base, El Cibolo Ranch, La Panchita Ranch, El Jardin de Flores, the ferry crossing, and old ranch cemeteries. The old ranch cemeteries found on the map include Los Ebanos, Havana, Peñitas, La Lomita, Granjeno, Capote, Jackson Church, Brewster, Juan Fernando Webber, Asadores, San Pedro, Toluca Ranch, Relampago, San José, Temple Emanuel, La Piedad, Stockholm, Santa Anita, El Rucio, Null, Laguna Seca, El Desierto, Immaculate Conception, Sam Lane Ranch, Santa Guadalupe Terrero, Bazan, Longoria, Santo Valdez, Valdez, Santa Monica, Garza, Santa Rita or Casas, Jesus Maria, Las Burras, San José Ranch Cemetery, Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge, and Rudyville Cemetery.

The typed speech was given by Harold S. Nelson, Brevet Brigadier General (Retired), on February 19, 1966 at the Dedication of the Memorial to the Minnesota National Guard near Camp Llano Grande, Texas (Folder 11). Nelson gives a first-hand account of National Guard duty on the 1916-1917 Mexican-American Border. He also names several of the National Guard officers and their commands.

### **IV. Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV)**

In addition to both typed and handwritten notes, this series contains maps, news clips, an advertisement, and flyers. The topics covered include the names of towns, the Magic Valley, Starr County, Hidalgo County, Cameron County, Willacy County, tours in the Magic Valley, San Juan, Pharr, Brownsville, Alamo, Harlingen, San Benito, Paso Real, Southmost, Boca Chica, Port Isabel, Padre Island, Rio Hondo, Laguna Atascosa Refuge, Raymondville, Sal del Rey, Delta Area, Old Military Highway, Falcon Dam and Reservoir, Rio Grande City, Los Ebanos Ferry, Mission, Sharyland, McAllen, Hidalgo

**T.M. Webb Collection**  
1924-1987

**Acc. # 1989.072**  
**MHMM Archives**

(town), Edinburg, Val Verde, Donna, Weslaco, Progreso, Mercedes, Sunrise Hill, and two cities in Mexico – Matamoros and Reynosa.

#### **V. Newspaper clippings**

The clippings are articles pertaining to the history of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Newspapers represented include *Valley Evening Monitor*, *The Monitor*, and *The Advance*.

#### **VI. Published materials**

The two items in this series includes *The Yearbook of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Northern Mexico* and a booklet published by the Texas Highway Department entitled *Texas*.

**INDEX TERMS**

Alamo Land & Sugar Company Subdivision

Ballí, José María, 1742-1790

Cabazos, José Narciso, 1741-1807

Cameron County (Tex.)—History.

Camp Llano Grande

Closner, John, 1853-1932

Hidalgo County (Tex.)—History.

Lemen, William L.

Mayfield, Thomas Shannon (Tom), 1880-1966

Mercedes (Tex.)—History.

Minnesota National Guard

Nelson, Harold S., 1890-1972

Norton, Robert E.

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo High School

Porcion 71, Hidalgo County, Texas.

Porcion 72, Hidalgo County, Texas.

Porcion 80, Starr County, Texas.

Ranches.

Ranches—Texas—Hidalgo County—Maps.

Ranches—Texas, South.

San Juan (Tex.)—History.

San Juan People's Church

San Juan Plantation (Texas).

Savage, R.L.

Shrine of Our Lady of San Juan of the Valley

Starr County (Tex.)—History.

Webb, Thomas Maddox, 1907-2004

Willacy County (Tex.)—History.



CONTAINER LIST

<u>Stack Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
<b>F:4</b>	<b>RGDOC 151</b>	<b>1</b>	San Juan, Texas: letter – William L. Lemen to Tom Webb (March 10, 1980)
		<b>2</b>	San Juan, Texas: notes and transcripts (1959, undated)
		<b>3</b>	San Juan, Texas: Research (1924, 1950-1952, 1959-1960, 1962-1963, 1965, 1969-1971, 1973-1974, 1987, undated)
		<b>4</b>	San Juan, Texas: San Juan Shrine news clippings (1964-1965, 1970-1980, undated)
		<b>5</b>	San Juan, Texas: San Juan Chamber of Commerce (1924, 1951-1952, 1963, undated)
		<b>6</b>	San Juan, Texas: Historical markers – Townsite (1983)
		<b>7</b>	San Juan, Texas: Historical markers – San Juan Hotel (undated)
		<b>8</b>	San Juan, Texas: San Juan <i>Sentinel</i> (1924, 1944, 1961, 1964)
		<b>9</b>	San Juan, Texas: Lions Club (1939, 1960, 1962, 1965, 1971, 1973, 1976, undated)
		<b>10</b>	Pharr, Texas (1963, 1984, undated)
		<b>11</b>	Hidalgo County, Texas (1951, 1964, 1966, 1978, 1984, undated) (speech by Harold S. Nelson)
		<b>12</b>	Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV): Valley-wide research (undated)
		<b>13</b>	Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV): Valley maps (1952, 1960, 1961, 1971, undated)
		<b>14</b>	Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV): Valley-wide notes (undated)
		<b>15</b>	Newspaper clippings
		<b>16</b>	Published materials: <i>The Yearbook of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Northern Mexico</i> , 2 copies (1973)
		<b>17</b>	Published materials: <i>Texas</i> (undated)
<b>G:11</b>	<b>OSDOC 6</b>		Oversized materials removed from RGD151