

ON CHRONICLE

Seeks Location Of "Twin Sisters"

DR. R. H. GRAVES



BY MAMIE WYNNE COX.

Just now the location and unearthing of the "Twin Sisters" is receiving attention from the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the state division U. D. C., many prominent people all over the state as well as members of the legislature in their official capacity. That efforts will be made to locate the hiding place is assured, and in the search the co-operation of Dr. R. H. Graves will be most valuable. Mr. Cosgrove of the Confederate Home, Colonel W. A. Bowen of Arlington, Honorable Lon Smith, Dave Cummings of Houston, C. S. Mitchell of Spur, R. M. Franklin, attorney of Galveston, have been writing letters within the fortnight in regard to the matter. Doctor Graves states that original-

ly the cannons were used in the war between Texas and Mexico, and were given to Texas by the citizens of Cincinnati, being used by General Houston at the battle of San Jacinto. After the war they were in an iron foundry in Louisiana. At length they were bought by that state and given to Texas.

Mr. Mitchell says that before being sent to Texas from Cincinnati, the cannons were christened by two sisters, twins, popular young ladies of the Ohio city, who were thus sponsors for them and thereby comes the name they bore. The cannons were shipped as "hollow ware." They were originally smooth bore, but the Confederates has them refitted.

The men who buried the cannons were Jack Taylor, Ira Prewitt, Sol J. Thomas, John Barnett, Doctor Graves and his body servant, an old negro man. A few years ago the negro died and was buried in Corpus Christi.

It is a coincidence that just 50 years to the day the cannons were buried, Dave M. Cummings of Houston wrote Doctor Graves asking him to come to Houston and help locate the place.

During the reunion in Houston in 1895 Sol J. Thomas and John Barnett, who have since passed away, met Doctor Graves here. They took sheets of paper and drew the situation and identification trees and stones as each remembered it. When these papers were compared they were found identical. However the men were not successful in finding the graves of the treasure, although they found three of the original marked trees and two of the stones. The place was at that time owned by Mr. Milby, who was absent from home. Doctor Graves went from Houston to Georgetown and en route met Mr. Milby who gave his consent for the search which was afterwards made but without results.

In a recent letter from Mr. Cosgrove to Doctor Graves he says: "By using a delicate U. S. Dip Circle which Dr. W. T. Mather of the school of physics has at Austin we will find the "Twin Sisters." Doctor Mather states "If within an ace of ground, we could locate the spot easily. Then if necessary we would have bearing to the next acre and so on until we found the Twin Sisters."

Last week Mr. C. S. Mitchell of Spur, Texas, wrote Doctor Graves: "Those guns were described to me many times by Mrs. H. S. Stapp my grandmother, who was one of the

Twin Sisters of Cincinnati, Ohio. It seems they were of iron with a brass inscription plate on the breech end. They were not breech loaders—plain light muzzle loading field pieces—which bore "From the Ladies, (or it might have been from the citizens) of Cincinnati, to the Republic of Texas."

"I had a long letter from the late Hon. William P. Hamblen—then district judge in Houston. His description was practically the same as mine. These guns must have been in or near Houston in '36 and '60.

"I hope they will eventually be recovered, and be re-presented to the Lone Star state. Their recovery would be worth the trouble, for their historic and sentimental value, but they should keep watch and ward on the San Jacinto field instead of at Austin. Yours very truly, C. S. Mitchell."

But Doctor Graves opinion is that the Twin Sisters should be placed in Austin at the entrance of the capital grounds, as there they will attract more attention than any other point in the state and will be seen by thousands who yearly visit Austin.

Sol Thomas died August 5, 1898 at age 73

Barnett dies previous to 1900, date to be determined

Maps with trees and stones drawn identical

"The men" referenced appear to have been only John Barnett & Dr. Graves

Found three of original marked trees, and two of the stones

Place was at that time owned by Mr. Milby, who was not home

Graves found Milby, who gave consent, search was made, but without results

Notes

- 1) The U.C.V. re-union noted was held in May of 1895 in Houston
- 2) Graves had relocated to Dallas by 1916, and resided with his daughter Mrs. J. N. Bigbee
- 3) Mamie met and interviewed Graves in 1918, see 1936 "Gift Guns from Cincinnati"
- 4) This article was published during the UCV convention of 1920 in Houston. Graves was there at the invitation and expense of the Houston Chronicle, which provided a driver and touring car so that Dr. Graves had the means of touring Harrisburg to ascertain the location of the cannon. Mamie Wynne Cox and the Mayor of Harrisburg, James S. Deady, also rode in the car. Mamie would not publish the events which transpired until shortly after Dr. Graves death in 1921, some 8 months later.
- 5) C. S. (Charles Stockdale) Mitchell was grandson of Elizabeth Rice, one of the two 1836 namesake "Twin Sisters" nine year old daughters, Mitchell searched for the cannon from 1905 until his death in 1957.
- 6) A dip circle is a large compass type instrument which is used in the vertical plane, the needle points to magnetic fields which can be located some distance away

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