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OCCUPATIONAL INFLUENCES ON THE
FOLKLORE OF GRAFORD, TEXAS

THESIS

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By

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This study was basically concerned with the effect of occupation on the folklore of the people of Graford, Texas. The people interviewed in that area of North Central Texas were divided into three major occupational groups: ranchers, farmers, and farmer-laborers.

At least two members from each of the occupational groups were interviewed; and these interviews revealed that their folklore included folktales, superstitions-remedies, songs, and customs. The customs included household, recreation, school, and church customs.

Each informant's folklore was recorded directly as it was related. Then the information was placed in the appropriate categories of folklore. Finally, an analysis of the folklore from the standpoint of the informant's occupation was completed. The findings indicated that the various occupations did influence each informant's folklore.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	Page iv
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Purpose	
The Groups Interviewed	
Method of Collecting Data	
Organization of Data	
II. PRESENTATION OF FOLKLORE RECORDED IN INTERVIEWS	11
Folktales	
Superstitions-Remedies	
Songs	
Customs	
Household	
Recreation	
School	
Church	
III. ANALYSIS OF FOLKLORE IN RELATION TO OCCUPATIONS	88
APPENDIX	119
BIBLIOGRAPHY	130

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Chart of Informants	5
II. Folktale Chart	11
III. "Teaching Geography" Folk Motifs	13
IV. "Indian Summer" Folk Motifs	14
V. "Aunt Matt's First Car" Folk Motifs	15
VI. "The First Remembrance" Folk Motifs	16
VII. "Buried Alive" Folk Motifs	17
VIII. "The Gate" Folk Motifs	18
IX. "Buried Treasure" Folk Motifs	19
X. "The Holness and the Camelite" Folk Motifs	21
XI. "The Chase" Folk Motifs	22
XII. "The Mules" Folk Motifs	24
XIII. "The Orangutan" Folk Motifs	25
XIV. "The Panther" Folk Motifs	26
XV. "The Cyclone" Folk Motifs	27
XIV. "Peckerwood Point" Folk Motifs	29
XVII. "The McCumber Story" Folk Motifs	30

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Purpose

Studying the folklore of the people of Graford, Texas, reveals that the tales, superstitions, songs, and customs in general of the people directly related to their manner of living. Each segment of the population centered its folklore on that group's occupation. Generally, the population of that area can be divided into three major groups: ranchers, farmers, and farmer-laborers. The ranchers owned their land and their cattle, which provided their source of livelihood, and they were thus more independent than the other two groups. The farmers were known as sharecroppers. They owned no land but worked for a portion of the crop. The third group, designated as farmer-laborers, worked as sharecroppers but in addition performed any kind of day labor available in the community and in other areas. When other types of labor such as trucking and pipeline work presented new opportunities, the farmer-laborers frequently stopped farming to pursue the occupation of general laborer. The lore of all three groups related basically to a rural environment and shared certain similarities, but there were also some basic differences in their folklore.

The Groups Interviewed

Therefore, one of the first and most vital steps in the process of analysis of this area's folklore was to divide the informants into their respective groups. The ranchers interviewed included the Henry Sikes family and the Joe Mills family. Also falling into this category were the notes, recipes, and written remedies left by the late Lenora McClure, whose husband was a prominent rancher in the area.

Being landowners, they had some advantages in their way of life. They owned the cattle that grazed their land and received money when the cattle were sold on the market. In addition, they had fresh beef any time they needed it. They also received a portion of the crop which was cultivated by the sharecroppers on their land. If a crop failed one year, they obviously suffered from a depleted food supply. However, they had not purchased the seed for the planting, so this was to their advantage. Naturally, the landowners did have the responsibility of paying taxes on the land they owned, an expense generally unknown to the farmers and farmer-laborers. However, their advantages in owning land, owning cattle, and receiving a portion of the crop each year were sizable.¹

The second group, the farmers, included the John Eubank family and the Jodie Moore family. Also included were two

¹Statement by Henry Sikes, banker and rancher, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

widows whose husbands were farmers, Estel Kelley and Marie Eidson. These families were farmers for the majority of their lives.

The farmers, who were sharecroppers, generally worked for thirds or fourths. When renting land and perhaps a place to live from the landowners, the farmers agreed to furnish everything necessary to produce the crop. This included seed, a team for plowing, and all tools for planting and harvesting. In return, they received either two-thirds or three-fourths of the crop, depending on their agreement with the landowner. The landowner, who was generally a rancher, received either one-third or one-fourth of the crop in return for furnishing the land.²

This difference in occupation from rancher to farmer created a difference in folklore as well. The farmers' folklore reflects a strong emphasis on the land and an elemental approach to life, while the ranchers' folklore reflects more emphasis on education and recreation.

The third group, the farmer-laborers, included the Mike Clendennen family, the Jasper May family, and the Rufus Spurlock family. This group was the most diverse in occupation of the three groups studied. At various times, these families took on many of the characteristics of farmers. Mike Clendennen

²Statement by Bill Clendennen, laborer and son of farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, November 27, 1974.

worked as a sharecropper for several years. He then turned to raising hogs and working on the pipeline as time progressed.³ Jasper May also worked as a sharecropper early in his life, but later turned to the occupation of trucker, as time and the need for employment changed.⁴ Rufus Spurlock, on the other hand, worked for daily wages of one dollar for various sharecroppers. He did not own a team for plowing as the sharecroppers did. Therefore, he merely worked the team.⁵ Consequently, this group cannot be labeled merely farmers or laborers. Their occupation encompassed both areas of endeavor. This same diversity is apparent in their folklore, for they were interested in telling stories, calling square dances, and exhibiting a wide variety of superstitions.

In the personal interviews and research conducted in Graford, Texas, in 1974, many members of the 1880-1905 generation which comprised the three major occupational groups were still living. Table I illustrates the occupational groups and generations, as well as relationships within the farmer-laborer group.

³Statement by Mike Clendennen, farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 7, 1974.

⁴Statement by Nita Clendennen, daughter and niece of farmer-laborers, Graford, Texas, November 27, 1974.

⁵Ibid., June 6, 1974.

of these people. The folk belief may have originated with a prior generation; but in each case, the actual informant is given credit for the entry, not the father or mother who may have implanted the belief.

Method of Collecting Data

Actually the collection of material began long before 1974. Anyone who lives or has lived in a town as small as Graford for the majority of his life by necessity has become a receptacle of that area's folklore. However, visits to each of the families interviewed for the specific purpose of recording that family's folklore did take place in 1974.

A cassette recorder without a microphone was used with the informants. Since the presence of the recorder itself caused some aggravation at times, a microphone for some of the people would have been unbearable. A recorder was chosen which had manual controls in order that all informants could be heard on the tapes. Some of the people interviewed were quite elderly, and the faintness of their voices would have prevented their being recorded if these manual controls had not been utilized.

The recorder was simply started when the conversation turned to the purpose of the visit. The purpose was to avoid interrupting the informants while they were speaking. Visits usually lasted from one hour to two hours, depending on the health of the informants and their willingness to discuss

their customs. Fortunately, everyone was most cooperative and seemed pleased that the heritage of the Graford area was being recorded for posterity.

Out of courtesy to the informants, telephone calls generally preceded each visit; and a convenient time was chosen for each informant. A favorite time for interviews was after lunch. At this point in the day, it is traditional to rest before beginning the afternoon's work. Therefore, the interviews did not interrupt any chores.

Another favorite time for visits was late in the afternoon, near dusk. Several interviews took place on front porches as the sun set and the informants reminisced about days gone by and customs almost forgotten in some cases.

The only variation from this method of collection occurred in relation to Lenora McClure, who had been deceased several years. However, Ma, as everyone in Graford called her, left several boxes of handwritten remedies, funeral announcements, newspaper clippings; in short, anything she could collect pertaining to the people of Graford. Her great-granddaughter, Roxie Moore of Graford, patiently sifted through Ma's effects and helped gather enough information to give an accurate picture of Ma's folklore.

Any discussion of method in collecting folklore seems incomplete without describing the circumstances under which the interviews were conducted. There were two circumstances which were rather unusual and interesting, as well as

indicative of the life styles of the people in the Graford area. For example, one June day was so windy and a nearby cowbell was clanging so loudly that it was somewhat difficult to record one informant's calling of square dances. Since sitting in his front yard was his favorite pastime, the recorder quite obviously was carried to the front yard for the visit.

At several homes, it was discovered that the luxury of air conditioning had not yet impressed many people of the Graford area. The recorder worked beautifully without the roar of any air conditioning unit in the background; but on a few tapes there are distinct coughs, resulting from the heat.

Therefore, under all circumstances, the method of collecting the folklore with the cassette tapes seemed to function well during the informal visits with various families. The fact that the visit was in the informant's own home immediately placed him at ease and allowed him to discuss his customs and folk beliefs in his own surroundings. Allowing each informant to choose the times for the visit guaranteed that no important work was being interrupted; and, as a result, the visits were leisurely, and each informant was allowed to relate at his own pace any stories or songs or beliefs that came to his mind. This particular method of research worked very well for the purpose at hand.

Organization of Data

Before beginning the presentation of the material collected in Graford, an explanation of the thesis sections follows. The four major areas in the body of the thesis are as follows: Folktales, Superstitions-Remedies, Songs, and Customs. The final section, Customs, contains four subsections: Household, Recreation, School, and Church.

The first section, Folktales, contains fifteen tales, transcribed as nearly as the informant presented the tale as possible. Each tale has a title, and a listing of Stith Thompson's motifs for the tale is included in a table after each tale. Each occupation has at least two tales to represent that group's folk belief.

The second section, Superstitions-Remedies, contains approximately 250 different superstitions and remedies of the area which have been categorized and numbered. Also in this section each superstition or remedy is transcribed as closely as possible to the actual phrasing of the informant. The additional numbers indicate the collation with Frank Brown's North Carolina Folklore. Again in this section is a sampling of superstitions and remedies from all three occupational groups.

The third section, Songs, contains ten songs of the area, again transcribed as closely as possible to the manner in which they were sung. These songs include ballads, cowboy songs, and square dances, as well as one unusual humorous

song. An overwhelming number of these songs came from one informant, and this fact is discussed in the analysis section in Chapter III.

The final section, Customs, presents four different discussions of various customs of the Graford area. These customs include general information concerning household items, such as preserving beef, making soap, and cooking on a fireplace. Thoughts provided by each of the three occupational groups are included here. In the other three sub-sections concerning recreation, school, and church, various customs from each occupational group are again provided. In this area, perhaps more than the others, the importance of occupation in shaping the life styles of the people in Graford is evident.

In the final chapter is an analysis of the material presented in Chapter II. Each area of folklore is strictly analyzed in relation to the informant's occupational group, and conclusions are drawn regarding the influence of his occupation on his folklore.

Chapter II deals with the presentation of the folklore recorded in interviews with the people of Graford, Texas. Then, in Chapter III, analysis of the folklore in view of each informant's occupational group is presented. Finally, a relationship between the three occupational groups and their folklore should become apparent.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION OF FOLKLORE RECORDED IN INTERVIEWS

Folktales

In the following folktales, each occupational group of the Graford area is represented. Two stories told by Henry Sikes represent the occupation of rancher. Five stories represent the farmer group, and eleven stories represent the farmer-laborer group. Three of the stories told by the farmers were also related by the farmer-laborers as the table below indicates.

TABLE II
FOLKTALE CHART

Ranchers	Farmers	Farmer-Laborers
Teaching Geography	Aunt Matt's First Car*	The Holness and the Camelite
Indian Summer	The First Remembrance	The Chase
	Buried Alive	The Gate*
	The Gate*	Buried Treasure*
	Buried Treasure*	Aunt Matt's First Car*
		The Mules
		The Orangutan
		The Panther
		The Cyclone
		Peckerwood Point
		The McCumber Story

*Indication that the story appears on another list because it was told by members of more than one group.

Each of the folktales has been quoted from the informant's original version. Since each selection is a quotation, it approximates the flavor of the dialect of each informant. Therefore, grammatical errors may result; but in each case, the error appears to be an integral part of the local dialect. Particularly common are errors in tense and in subject and verb agreement. Another common element in the Graford dialect is the absence of "ing" on many words and the joining of two or more words such as "gonna" for "going to." The folktales presented are transcribed as closely as possible to the Graford dialect.

Teaching Geography

Did I tell you about my aunt spanking the little boy with the geography? One year when school started, a bunch of people had moved in, and they had too many students for just one teacher. My aunt was living here, so they decided to get her. She said she didn't have any certificate, but they decided to just take up a subscription, and she could go down and teach. So she did.

Myself, my older sister, and my aunt went in a buggy to school. They paid her fifteen dollars a month to teach school back then.

She was hearing a class one time. They divided the room, so she had the smaller ones, twelve or fourteen years old; the other teacher had the others. So she was hearing geography class one day, and this geography book was really big. She had her back to the room hearing this geography class.

She heard some disturbance behind her and turned around, and some little boy was misbehaving; I don't know just what he was doin', but he was misbehaving. She just jerked him up right quick and turned him down and paddled him with that geography book.

So Mr. Bud Moore, who was on the school board, come to our house takin' the scholastic census, and he was a very dignified old man but an awful good

ol' man. He said, "Miss El, what's this I hear about you spanking that boy with that book?"
 My aunt's heart flew up in her throat. She said, "Yes, Mr. Moore, he misbehaved, and I punished him."
 Then he said, "Don't you think that was just a little too much to give him a whole geography at one lesson?"¹

TABLE III
 "TEACHING GEOGRAPHY" FOLK MOTIFS

X350	Jokes on teachers
J18; Italy	Wisdom acquired from beating

The above table indicates the motifs of this story taken from Stith Thompson's Motif-Index. Each of the following folktales will have similar tables indicating their varying motifs. Also appearing in the tables will be the countries and cultures where such motifs appear in folk literature, if that information is available in the Motif-Index. The footnote on this page gives full recognition to the Thompson work and will not appear again in this section.²

Indian Summer

The early part of fall is always called Indian summer around here. The reason they call it Indian summer is that in the early days when there was just Indians in the country, the Indians would set the grass afire and burn all the trees, so it would be prairie, and they could see so much further.

¹Statement by Henry Sikes, banker and rancher, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

²Stith Thompson, Motif-Index of Folk Literature, 6 vols. (Bloomington, Indiana, 1955), passim.

They thought they needed to be able to see for a long way, and the trees hindered their view. Now this is hearsay; I wouldn't vouch for this.

Anyway, maybe the fire would burn for days, and the fire would be fifty miles across. Well, that smoke in the air in the summertime or late summer would settle in there, in the air. The air would be foggy and kinda hazy. And that was called Indian summer. The Indians always burned the trees at the same time of year.

Still today, when it is late summer or early fall and it is kinda hazy outside, people say it is Indian summer. Well, that's where the name comes from, I've always heard.³

TABLE IV

"INDIAN SUMMER" FOLK MOTIFS

J2277.1; India	Clouds come from smoke
All50; Greek, India	Determination of seasons
F790	Extraordinary sky and weather phenomena

This particular story is interesting because of the motif concerning determination of seasons. It is the only such explanation of weather or seasons found in this research in the folk beliefs in Graford.

Aunt Matt's First Car

We was down at Pickwick at a picnic, one of them big picnics like they used to have, you know. Everybody we knew was at it. We was all havin' a good time when Jack Jackson came up in a car. Well, we all knew what a car was; we had heard of 'em, but we'd never seen one.

Well, he blowed his horn, and Aunt Matt looked up. When she saw that car, she tore out huntin' her kids, just as hard as she could go. She just took to the bushes, huntin' for her kids. She tore out a screamin' loud as she could. She just knew that car was gonna run over 'em and kill 'em every one. She just knew it would.

³Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

And you know, Aunt Matt just outrun that car, she was so scared about her kids. She really did outrun that car.⁴

TABLE V

"AUNT MATT'S FIRST CAR" FOLK MOTIFS

D1111; France	. . . . .	Magic carriage
D1520.14; France	. . . . .	Transportation in magic carriage
F861; Icelandic	. . . . .	Extraordinary wagon (cart, carriage, etc.)
D1737.1; Irish, Icelandic	. . . . .	Magic power from mother
R153.4	. . . . .	Mother rescues son

The motifs, as the above table indicates, basically fall into two categories for this folktale. One group deals with an extraordinary or magic carriage, in this case, the car which could easily be seen as magic for those who had not previously seen a car. The other motifs deal with the mother's concern for her children and the power this concern gives her, as in outrunning the car.

This folktale was presented by members of two occupational groups. Elvie Moore, who is in the farmer category, related the story about her mother, Aunt Matt. Girtie May, who is in the farmer-laborer category, related the same story in almost the same words about her mother's sister, Aunt Matt.

The First Remembrance

Well, now I'm gonna tell you about my first remembrance. I was just a small boy, and my daddy used to

⁴Statements by Elvie Moore and Girtie May, members of the farmer and farmer-laborer groups, Graford, Texas, June 3, 1974.

freight. And we worked two yokel [sic yoke of] oxen to an ox wagon, and we'd load here at Mineral Wells with cedar posts and take 'em to Weatherford. We'd sell 'em and load the lumber and come back to Mineral Wells and unload the lumber.

I saw my first train on one of those trips. We went down on a sandbed. Used to, you know, these hard-topped roads weren't here; they had sandbeds. It was hard to pull through one of these sandbeds, but we went across one. There was a smooth place there in the middle of the sandbed which was very unusual. I had seen the railroad track and train earlier. So that's when I said, "Daddy, here's where it went." I just knew that train I'd seen had disappeared in that sandbed.⁵

TABLE VI

"THE FIRST REMEMBRANCE" FOLK MOTIFS

E535.4; United States . . . . .	. Phantom train
J50	Wisdom (knowledge) acquired from observation
J1749	Absurd ignorance--miscellaneous
J1960	Other absurd disregard of facts

Probably, the first motif dealing with the phantom train best describes this folktale. However, John Eubank was so amused by his lack of knowledge as a boy that the other motifs did need to be mentioned.

Buried Alive

My daddy used to tell a tale, and he said it was so. Now I don't know. I wouldn't vouch for that. When he was just a young fellow, before he ever married or anything, one of their neighbors got sick, and they thought she was dead. The doctor pronounced her dead. They fixed her and laid her out like they did then. They said she had on a diamond ring, and they couldn't get it off her finger.

⁵Statement by John Eubank, farmer, Graford, Texas, June 4, 1974.

So they buried her with that diamond ring on there, and the ol' man that dug the grave, he noticed that diamond ring on her finger. He wanted it and he went back that night, dug up the coffin, opened it up, and taken out his knife. He was gonna cut her finger off, so he could get the ring.

But she wasn't dead. She opened her eyes and commenced to talkin' to him. Well, it near scared that ol' man to death. He ran back to town and told it, and they went back and there she was, and she was alive.

She made 'em send for that old fellow, and she give him that diamond ring. She said he saved her life.

Daddy said that was true; he said that woman lived for several years after that.⁶

TABLE VII

"BURIED ALIVE" FOLK MOTIFS

K362.2; France	Ring to put on corpse's finger
R231.1; Icelandic	Cutting off hand to get ring
H1319.4; German	Quest for most beautiful ring
R212.1.1; Italy	Man buried alive escapes tomb when it is robbed

As the chart indicates, the idea of robbing a tomb in order to acquire riches is common in the folk literature of Italy. Further, cutting off a hand or finger to secure a ring of great value is also common in Icelandic folk literature. To Annie Eubank, however, this was a most absurd story; and she was even a little hesitant about telling it.

The Gate

Well, to start it off, one night I had the colic. I'd eat too many apples, and they always would give me the colic. So I was up walkin' the floor with my belly,

⁶Statement by Annie Eubank, farmer's wife, Graford, Texas, June 4, 1974.

and I heard the gate slam. It was the gate that went into our mother's flower garden. There was a chain on the gate, and the gate itself was real heavy. The chain would pull the gate back to when you walked through it. There wasn't no way it could come open by itself, without someone opened it. And I heard this gate slam, and I thought, who's that come in.

Well, that gate would slam again and again, and the first thing you knowed, why, everyone of us was up watchin' that gate slam, brothers and sisters and all. Daddy was gone, and Mamma had died, not long before that in fact. You couldn't see this gate come open; you could just hear it slam. It was as still that night as it could be. No dog or cat could open it; it was too heavy. Mamma wanted it that way, so that the animals wouldn't ruin her flowers. It liked to scared us to death.

After that, when we'd be out playin' and that gate would slam, we'd run to that house just as hard as we could go, but through the other gate. We was as scared of that gate as a bear. None of us ever got used to that slammin' gate.

But after we moved from there, Buddy and Josie moved there, and me and Estel stayed all night with them one night, and they was a fussin' and that gate commenced slammin' right then. We never did know what caused it.⁷

TABLE VIII

"THE GATE" FOLK MOTIFS

F776	Extraordinary gate
E300; Irish	Friendly return from dead
E320	Dead relative's friendly return
E323; Lithuanian, Jewish	Dead Mother's friendly return

The mother's return, which is obviously what Girtie May and Estel Kelley considered the slamming of the gate, has been considered friendly since no action was ever taken against the children by the spirit, although the children

⁷Statements by Girtie May and Estel Kelley, members of farmer-laborer and farmer groups, Graford, Texas, June 2, 1974.

were frightened by the unexplained incident. Also, it appears that the mother was watching over the children since the father was gone during the first incident, and there was a family argument during the second incident. Therefore, even though the children were frightened, the mother's spirit seems to have been caring for them.

Buried Treasure

Somebody around here said one time, I don't remember who it was right now, that they had a gate. One day they started to dig under that gate. Somebody had said that there was gold under that gate. Anyway, they started to dig under the gate, and all of a sudden they got to feelin' bad. I mean they really were feelin' awful.

The further they dug, the worse they felt. In fact, they got to feelin' worse and worse and worse. So after a little while they decided that they were not supposed to go diggin' under that gate. And they covered the hole back up and never did dig under it again. I don't even remember where that gate was now.

After hearin' that, we never did dig under our gate.⁸

TABLE IX

"BURIED TREASURE" FOLK MOTIFS

N511;	Irish, Icelandic, United States,	
	Chinese	Buried treasure
H1181	. . . . .	Raising a buried treasure
N550;	Irish	Unearthing a buried treasure
N556;	North Carolina, India,	Treasure finders
	Lithuanian	always frightened away
N564;	Danish	Magic illusion prevents men
		from raising treasure
N529;	Irish	Where treasure is found-- miscellaneous
F776	. . . . .	Extraordinary gate

⁸Girtie May, June 2, 1974.

As indicated in the above table, several folktales involving buried treasure exist, even to the point that the tale is Type 613. The idea of becoming ill while digging is also appropriate, since treasure seekers are often depicted as being frightened away while digging. The major difference in the story is the presence of the gate. No mentions are found among the buried treasure stories of any gate as designating the place for the treasure. In this respect, the story is unique.

The Holness and the Camelite

There was this Holness⁹ and this Camelite¹⁰, see, and they was tryin' to work an ol' mule, drive him through some mud. The Holness was a tryin' to get the mule to carry the plow by prayin' for help. One of the men standin' there lookin' on said, "That Holness can pray and talk all he wants, but the mule ain't gonna pay no attention to him. You wait, after he gets so fur along, that Camelite'll take it. When the Camelite takes it, he'll give him a good cussin', and the hair and smoke will fly."

So I was just waitin' and after a while that ol' mule got to where he wouldn't go down to the mud, much less through it; he just turned and walked off of it. Jim, the Holness, just kept talkin', and so finally Lee, the Camelite, said, "Let me have him, Jim." He said, "I'll make him move," and he called him a good name and said, "I'll make him do it."

And ol' Lee could use that line, and he jerked up on that line, and he started a cussin'. Every time

⁹Correctly termed Holiness, this refers to any member of an evangelistic church.

¹⁰Correctly termed Campbellite, this refers to any member of the Disciples of Christ. The term Campbellite is held in disdain with members of that faith in Graford, Texas.

he hit that mule, he'd get the blood. He got the blood every time he hit him. You know that mule, he drove him through that mud easy. Lee said, "That mule, he don't care nothin' about talkin' and prayin'." And you know, that Camelite got the mule off.¹¹

TABLE X

"THE HOLNESS AND THE CAMELITE" FOLK MOTIFS

J1483.2; Italy, Chinese	Going wherever mule wants to
J1217	Worldly man puts religious man out of countenance
H502.1; Irish, Jewish, India	Test of religious learning
H1573; Irish, Jewish	Religious tests
X1242; Canada, United States	Lies about mules

This rather humorous story involves two typical folk motifs of the Graford area, mules and religion. The motifs concerning religious tests were included because Rufus Spurlock saw the story as a kind of test of religious faith and lesson for those who listen to him. The lesson: praying does not always get the job done. Mules are also frequent subjects of folktales in the Graford area, and another tale about a mule is included in this section.

The Chase

I was comin' from the old Holt tank fishin'. I had a trail goin' through the back patch there behind the barn. And I noticed before I got to the barn about a hundred yards away, why, there was a prairie racer snake standin' in the trail with a real big head. Why, his head was as big as the back of my hand now.

¹¹Statement by Rufus Spurlock, farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 1, 1974.

I threwed at him a time or two. He'd dodge them sticks. Of course, I seen that he wasn't gonna move, so I had to get out of the trail and go around him, but I wouldn't let well enough alone. I was about twelve years old. So when I got around him and got between him and the barn; well, I got me a stick, and I was gonna whip that snake outa that trail. You know how twelve-year-old kids are; at least I was that way.

Dad always said not to kill 'em cause they killed rattlesnakes. So I made a pass at that snake and hit him once; and boy, he made a razoo at me, and I started runnin' barefooted. Boy, I could knock the fire outa a rock. I was runnin' and looked around and stopped and looked around, and he was right at me with his head just about knee level.

God, I threwed that stick down, and I started a runnin'. I'd look back, and he was right here at my knee, runnin' right along with me. Directly, I threwed that stick down, and I headed to that barn. I went over that plank gate, head first. I don't know where that snake ever went.¹²

TABLE XI

"THE CHASE" FOLK MOTIFS

B123 . . . . .	.Wise reptile
B123.1; Hebrew, Jewish, Arabian, India . . . . .	.Wise serpent
B176.1; Irish, India	Magic serpent
A2441.4	Cause of movement of reptile

Respect for snakes is present in all of the Graford folklore, and this particular story exhibits the wisdom of the snake very aptly. Also, the almost magical quality of the snake to race the boy and then disappear supports the motif of the magic serpent. Various folktales relate

¹²Statement by Bill Clendennen, laborer and son of farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 3, 1974.

varying reasons for a snake to begin moving as the motif indicates, but the boy with a stick is an interesting variation on the motif.

The Mules

My brother, John Clendennen, had a way with mules. We used those animals to plow with in those days, and a good team of mules was worth a good bit of money. John bought a team that was called a "killin' team." Whenever a chicken or a dog or any creature went into that lot, one or all of those mules would kill it, stomp and bite it to death. They didn't appear too choosy about what they jumped on. The hands at John's place weren't too interested in tryin' to go into that lot.

But when ol' John walked into that lot, those mules would begin to tremble like they were a bunch of scared babies. I still don't know exactly what it was that made John their master, but he sure was.

Well, he decided that they were kinda dangerous, and a man outa Mineral Wells wanted to buy them. So John sold 'em. But that wasn't the end of John and the mules. This man, Tom Curry, came to pick up his mules with his wagon. The mules were to be put in the wagon and carted to Mineral Wells. Curry couldn't even get in the pen much less touch one of those critters. He worked around that lot for a while, with John's red hair just a shinin' at him.

Finally, Curry had to ask John how much money he wanted to get those mules to Mineral Wells, twenty miles away. John looked at him square in the eye, and then he said, "Ten dollars." That was a lot of money, but Curry had no choice. He had bought the mules. So he paid it.

John had to tie each of the mule's feet to get them in the wagon. Then he started the long haul to Mineral Wells. He didn't look unhappy about the trip. Instead, he had a funny little smile on his face all the way to Curry's place. That killin' team had made him money even after they weren't his any more.¹³

¹³Statement by Mike Clendennen, farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

TABLE XII

"THE MULES" FOLK MOTIFS

X1242; Canada, United States	Lies about mules
B766.4; Jewish	Mule's bite causes death
K134.3; French	Selling old mule back to owner

This is the second folktale in this section which exhibits the lies-about-mules motif, and it is indicative of the attitude of many Graford people toward the mule. The mule is valuable if he can be made to work, and only a select few can inspire the mule to work. The motif concerning the mule's bite is the closest motif to the idea of a "killin' team." And the final motif of selling the old mule back to the owner parallels the idea of the team making money for a man, even after the team has been sold.

The Orangutan

Around Salt Creek in Jack County, there were quite a few families. In fact, one of the girls in the Shuck family would be my wife, Kitty, a few years later. Well, anyway, these families started hearin' an un-earthly holler in the dead of night. Exactly what it was nobody knew. It didn't sound like a panther or a Mexican cougar or any other animal that was familiar to the people. It was like nothin' anybody had ever heard before.

Then one night Sam Nichols was ridin' along, and he sensed that there was somethin' on the back of his buggy. He was too scared to really turn around, and he just kinda froze. Sam always did scare easy. Then he felt somethin' move on the buggy, and pretty soon he could feel somethin' blowin' on his neck. Now this was just too much. He jerked around just in time to see the body of what looked like an ape--an orangutan--runnin' into the woods.

From then on, everybody in Salt Creek talked about the orangutan. They couldn't explain such a beast in Texas, much less in Jack County. No circus had ever

been to that part of the country, and no wild beasts or apes had ever been seen before. People got so scared they almost left Salt Creek. Nobody was injured by the orangutan, but that ungodly scream at night really upset the people. The men hunted him, but they never found anything.

Finally, the orangutan musta moved on because he just quit screamin'. It's kinda funny that Sam Nichols is the only man who ever saw him, but plenty of people heard him at night.¹⁴

TABLE XIII

"THE ORANGUTAN" FOLK MOTIFS

B871.2 Giant wild beast

This story is difficult to analyze in terms of motifs because it is rather unusual. Obviously, wild beasts are included in many folktales; but a beast which does not kill any people or any animals is unique. Therefore, the giant wild beast is not unusual as a folk motif; but a beast which only screams at night and never bothers anyone is extraordinary.

The Panther

I remember my first year in school when I was seven years old. It was quite a few miles to school, and Daddy had blazed the trees for my sister and me to have a path to follow over Bear Mountain. Mamma fixed our dinner every day, and we weren't allowed to leave without Snook, our old yeller dog. We were walkin' along one morning when all of a sudden Snook got around behind me and started actin' funny. He was just pacin' around like he was nervous. About

¹⁴Mike Clendennen, June 5, 1974. This story was originally told by his wife, Kitty Clendennen, now deceased.

that time, we heard a panther holler. It sounded kinda like a woman hollerin', like he had put his paw over his mouth, and it scared us plenty good.

Snook started pushin' us, but he didn't have to push very hard. My sis and me were already runnin', making for the briar of the mountain. We must have run a mile, because my new boots with the red toes started hurtin', and my tongue was hangin' out farther than Snook's. I decided neither my sis nor Snook was gonna make me run anymore, so I stopped in the middle of the path.

Well, about this time that panther hollered again, and it sounded like it was right behind me. I knew then I had just got started runnin', so I started up again. We finally made it around the briar of the mountain to the field where Daddy was plowin'.

He couldn't tell what was wrong by lookin' at my sis and me, but when Snook came up, he knowed somethin' was wrong. We described the panther's holler to him, and he got us to climb up on a rock with him where we hid. Then Daddy did somethin' scarry. He hollered just like that panther, and that panther answered him. Pretty soon we could see that panther, and he just kept comin' closer and answerin' Daddy's holler. He came right up to the rock where we were hid. I bet he wasn't fifteen feet away, and he was the biggest thing I had ever seen. Then he turned and went off around the briar of the mountain, and we never saw him again.

One more thing, I didn't go to school no more after that day until I was eleven years old. That big panther was kinda lucky for me.¹⁵

TABLE XIV

"THE PANTHER" FOLK MOTIFS

B421;	Irish, English, Scotch, Spanish, Jewish, India, Japanese, Africa	Helpful dog
B134.3;	Icelandic, India	Dog as animal of warning
B521.3.4;	Irish, Malalasekera	Dog warns of pursuit
B524.1.4;	Irish	Dog defends master's child
B535.0.4;	India	Dog as child's nurse
B563;	India, Africa, Nassau	Animals direct man on journey
B871.2.3;	French	Giant panther

¹⁵Mike Clendennen, June 5, 1974.

The motifs for the folktale correspond more closely perhaps than any of the others presented. The dog as keeper and protector of the children is a common motif and is illustrated quite well in this narrative. The gaint panther motif corresponds with the young boy's description of the animal, which to him must have been gigantic.

The Cyclone

I know of only one cyclone that ever went through Jack County, but it was enough. It first set down in Ol' Man Bramwaw's field where it plowed through the patch until it came to an old cottonwood tree four feet across. It plucked that tree outa the ground, roots, and all. Those roots were twenty-four feet long I heard tell. It took him four years to burn that tree up, because cottonwoods are hard to burn, you know.

Well, that cyclone kept right on goin' till it came to Henry Plaster's place where it took every log out of the crib but didn't hurt the crib at all. Nobody ever knew what went with those logs. I thought I saw 'em eight miles away several years later, but I don't know for sure.

That cyclone took the shingles off one house and carried them over the mountain and put them on the roof of another house. Then at our house, it picked up a cottonwood eight to ten inches across right beside the boxin' plank on our front porch but didn't hurt our house at all.

Yep, that was some cyclone.¹⁶

TABLE XV

"THE CYCLONE" FOLK MOTIFS

F963	Extraordinary behavior of wind
X1610	Lies about wind and storms
X1611.1; Canada, United States	Lies about big wind (cyclone, tornado)

¹⁶Mike Clendennen, June 5, 1974.

Since the Graford area is plagued with "storm warnings" in the spring and summer, a folktale concerning a cyclone is appropriate. As the table indicates, the motifs concerning cyclones and behavior of the wind are clearly depicted in the story. This is one of three narratives in this section which deals with some form of natural weather phenomena.

Peckerwood Point

There was a lot of fever in those days around here; people died like flies. They even died of things people wouldn't die of nowadays, like measles. I remember one Christmas Day dance that had forty-two boys at it. Out of those, thirty-two died with the measles. I was one of the lucky ones who didn't. They also died from funny things like typhoid pneumonia; I don't know exactly what that was, but I do know about the fever.

There was one family at Peckerwood Point I remember in particular. Everybody in the family took down with the fever. It seemed pretty clear that old and young both were gonna die. The father passed away first, and all the rest were just waiting for death.

Finally, in the dead of night, one of the men woke up and heard chains bein' dragged across the top of the house. He barely had enough strength to say it, but somehow he raised up off the bed and said, "That's a sign we're all gonna die." He had heard that old story about chains all his life. He didn't say anything else, and sure 'nuff all the people died except the wife of the first man who died.

I knew the woman and listened to her story many times. I don't care about any chains bein' dragged across the top of my house, although I don't really believe in things like that. My wife, Kitty, always believed in those things more than I did, but I still don't want to hear any chains.¹⁷

¹⁷Mike Clendennen, June 5, 1974.

TABLE XVI

"PECKERWOOD POINT" FOLK MOTIFS

F960.2; Irish	Extraordinary phenomena at death
F1099.1; Irish	Entire household dies same night
E402.1.4; England, Irish United States	Chains ghost sounds

No exact motifs for this folktale appeared. The idea that the sound of chains being drawn across a house is an indicator of death is common in the Graford area. Presumably, the sound of chains simply indicates death; and there is no suggestion in the tale that a ghost is dragging the chains over the house. As a result, the general motif of extraordinary phenomena at death is the closest general motif to this particular incident.

The McCumber Story

I knew of an Ol' Man McCumber who owned a good piece of land that farmed real good. But he never married and seemed to be a wicked old man; in fact, he said no woman would have him which is probably the truth. He leased out a piece of his land to George Farmer to raise corn on, but they had some difficulty, and McCumber ordered Farmer off his land and told him never to come back.

Farmer ignored the threat and came right back to the land where McCumber promptly shot him dead and tossed him into the hog pen to be eaten. He also either killed one of the mules on Farmer's wagon or scared it off because a neighbor found the team later on and dragged Farmer out of the hog pen.

After doing this, McCumber went into his house, went up to the second floor, and shot himself through the head. The bullet went out his skull and through the roof so that a neat, little hole was left in the roof.

According to his wishes, he was buried in the grave with his old dog that had been killed the previous spring because he had rabies. The men who

buried McCumber dug down to the dog's bones and laid him there.

But this isn't the end of the McCumber story. That hole in the roof I mentioned was a strange little hole. Whenever it rained, no matter how hard or how long, no water would come in that hole. I know because I stayed in this house several years later while I was farmin' the land with my friend. It was comin' up a storm, and I refused to sleep in the bed under that hole because I'd get wet. But not one drop of water came in that hole, not one. I tried to figure it out, because I don't hold with things that can't be explained, but I can't explain that myself.

And that ain't all there is either to the story. Word had been around for some time that the old McCumber place had haints. When I started farmin' the land, men started askin' me if I had seen Ol' Man McCumber's ghost. One day one guy asked me this that I didn't particularly like, so I said, "Yes, I've seen McCumber's ghost."

I remembered my daddy talkin' about his long beard so I added, "He looked kinda mean and had a long white beard. He just rose outa my horse's rear and tapped me on the shoulder. When I turned around, he said, 'You're gonna find some money I hid on this land, and your family's gonna get on real good.' Then he just floated straight up and disappeared."

I could tell that I had really got to this man because he looked kinda funny and just turned around and went home. I found out later that he went home and stayed in bed three days, and he talked about Ol' Man McCumber's haint the whole time. I got a laugh outa that, but I still can't explain that hole in the roof. But I never saw his haint.18

TABLE XVII

"THE MCCUMBER STORY" FOLK MOTIFS

F962; Irish	. . . . .	Extraordinary rain
F771; Irish, Icelandic, India	. . . . .	Extraordinary house
D1841.4.1; Irish, Welsh, Africa	. . . . .	Man proof against wet from rain
E545.12; India	. . . . .	Ghost points out treasure
D902; Irish, Chinese	. . . . .	Magic rain
B161.4; Irish	. . . . .	Devastating swine

¹⁸Mike Clendennen, June 5, 1974.

Several varying motifs are obvious in this tale. As the table indicates, the motifs vary from swine eating a human being to extraordinary rain which will not enter a hole in the ceiling of an unusual house to a ghost telling the future and pointing the way to buried treasure. The McCumber ghost was added as a joke, but this does not cancel the motif in the tale itself. As a whole, this tale probably encompasses the most diverse motifs found in this folktale section.

The fifteen folktales presented, along with their motifs, are representative of the folktale in Graford. The subjects range from natural phenomena as seen in "Indian Summer," "The Cyclone," and "The McCumber Story" to ghosts as seen in "The Gate." There are extraordinary occurrences as in "Buried Alive" and "Peckerwood Point," and there are simple remembrances as in "Aunt Matt's First Car" and "The First Remembrance."

No matter what the subject or motif, each story is indicative of that person's culture and occupation, as will be discussed in Chapter III. These selected folktales seem to capture the occupational influence on the individual's folklore. For that reason, each informant's occupational group is listed in the footnotes following the stories. Therefore, these folktales are the most representative of the Graford area and of the occupational groups.

Superstitions-Remedies

In the Graford area, superstitions play an integral part in the lives of people, no matter what their occupational group may be. In the recorded interviews, superstitions often crept into conversation, without the informant even being aware that he was supplying that information. When asked about superstitions, the informant usually paused and then remembered an abundance of beliefs, some abandoned and some still held. The same situation was evident with folk remedies; however, the people generally do not view the remedies, many of which they still practice, in the same category as superstitions.

In North Carolina Folklore, Frank Brown combined superstitions with remedies; and for this reason, the same method is employed in this study. The superstitions and remedies are numbered according to the categories of the beliefs; but where applicable, numbers from Frank Brown's collection are also recorded. Full recognition of the Brown collection is given in the footnote on this page and will not appear again in the section.¹⁹

Each superstition and remedy is recorded in the exact words of the informant. The informant's name appears at the

¹⁹Wayland D. Hand, editor, Popular Beliefs and Superstitions from North Carolina, Vols. VI and VII of The Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore, 7 vols. (Durham, North Carolina, 1964), passim.

end of each superstition and remedy. In some cases, the entry may be credited to more than one person. If the wording is different from informant to informant, separate entries are recorded.

Superstitions

Twenty-one categories appear in this section. They vary from superstitions concerning animals to superstitions concerning weather, dreams, death; in short, any area of concern in the minds of the people of Graford is represented by their superstitions. The final category, miscellaneous, is a composite of superstitions which do not easily fall into the previous categories. The occupational significance of these superstitions will be discussed in Chapter III.

A few of the superstitions may appear in more than one category; and in that case, notations are made concerning the other appropriate categories. In general, however, only superstitions particularly affecting a category are included in that specific category.

Superstitions concerning animals.

- 1 A cat can charm a snake. Elvie Moore
- 2 Cats are attracted to dead people. Grace Mann
(see 133)
- 3 If a cat is left in a room with a sleeping baby, it will suck the baby's breath. 4888,
267 Estel Kelley (see 120)
- 4 For a black cat to cross your path is a sign of bad luck. You must turn around and go

- another way or you'll have bad luck.
3821, 3824, 5185 Eck Clendennen (see 146)
- 5 When a dog barks, he senses something you don't know about. You better look and see what it is he's up to. 7402 Nita Clendennen
 - 6 If the roof of a dog's mouth is black, he's a good dog. 7402 Nita Clendennen
 - 7 Cut off a dog's tail and put it under the doorstep to keep the dog at home. 7412 Nita Clendennen
 - 8 A rabbit's foot brings good luck. 5789 Bill Clendennen (see 159)
 - 9 If a mule can roll over while he's wallowin', he's worth one hundred dollars. 7669 Mike Clendennen
 - 10 If you kill a horned toad, your cow will go dry. Bill Clendennen
 - 11 If you kill a ladybug, your cow will go dry. B.W. Clendennen (see 40)
 - 12 Don't kill a cricket or the cow will go dry. Grace Mann (see 42)
 - 13 Cows lying down in the pasture means a storm is comin'. 6666 Bill Clendennen (see 64)
 - 14 If a cow loses her cud, she'll most likely die. Mike Clendennen
 - 15 If your cow eats ragweed, the milk will taste like the weed. Mike Clendennen
 - 16 Bushy tails on horses means a bad winter. Mike Clendennen (see 75)
 - 17 Each baby pig in a litter will have its own teat. 7685 Mike Clendennen
 - 18 Add salt to hog's water to make them drink more. Mike Clendennen
 - 19 Work on or cut any animal when the signs are in the groins goin' down. 7392 Bill Clendennen

- 20 Never do anything to an animal when the signs are in the heart. Bill Clendennen
- 21 When you dream about a snake, something bad is gonna happen. Girtie May (see 104)
- 22 If you dream of a snake and the snake bites you, you have an enemy. The enemy has the best of you when the snake bites you. 3614 Girtie May (see 103)
- 23 If a turtle bites you, he won't let go till it thunders. 7013, 7015 Nita Clendennen
- 24 The age of a rattlesnake is told by the number of rattlers it has. It adds one every year. 7312 Bill Clendennen
- 25 When it rains, sometimes it rains toad frogs or tadpoles from the sky. 7340 Bill Clendennen
- 26 If you handle a toad frog and he pees on you, you'll have warts. 2414 Bill Clendennen
- 27 Even touching a horned toad gives you warts. Nita Clendennen

Superstitions concerning birds, fowl.

- 28 A whistling girl or a crowing hen Always come to some bad end. 8495 Grace Mann
- 29 A whistling woman and a crowing hen Always come to some bad end. 8495 Eck Clendennen
- 30 If a hen crows, it's bad luck. You must kill the hen or there'll be a death in the family. 7193, 5248-5250 Eck Clendennen (see 134)
- 31 If a rooster crows in your front door, you must run it off because it means you'll have company. Eck Clendennen (see 115)
- 32 A bird in the house means someone will die. 5280 Eck Clendennen (see 135)
- 33 A hootowl singing means death. 5305-5317 Eck Clendennen (see 136)

- 34 Put a settin' hen in a coop for three days with water only, and she'll quit settin'. Bill Clendennen
- 35 Let a settin' hen out of the coop when she stops cluckin' cause then she's quit talkin' to her babies. Bill Clendennen
- 36 Thunder will kill the baby chickens inside eggs. 7443-7444 Nita Clendennen
- 37 If you can put two fingers between the thighs of a hen, they can lay. If only one finger fits, they can't lay eggs and should be killed. This is called cullin' hens. Bill Clendennen
- 38 Feedin' chickens eggshells or oyster shells makes good, thick shells on eggs. Bill Clendennen
- 39 Epsom salts in water makes chickens lay. 7459 Eck Clendennen

Superstitions concerning insects.

- 40 If you kill a ladybug, your cow will go dry. 7374 B.W. Clendennen (see 11)
- 41 Flies being unusually bothersome means a change in the weather, usually a norther. 6786 Bill Clendennen (see 65)
- 42 Don't kill a cricket or the cow will go dry. Grace Mann (see 12)

Superstitions concerning trees.

- 43 Lots of mesquite beans on the trees means it'll be a bad winter. Mike Clendennen (see 74)
- 44 The mesquite is always the last tree to put out in the spring. It knows better than to have its leaves get bit by frost. Bill Clendennen
- 45 If you plant a cedar tree in your yard, when it gets big enough to cover your grave, you'll pass on. Eck Clendennen (see 137)

- 46 Weepin' willow trees bring bad luck. 7959
Eck Clendennen (see 147)
- 47 A water witch can find water with a divining
rod which is a peach tree limb. 5871 Mike
Clendennen (see 169)

Superstitions concerning planting by the weather
and seasonal signs.

- 48 If you plant tomatoes and other vegetables
when the sign is in the heart, you'll be lucky
to get 'em to live. Rufus Spurlock
- 49 If you plant your seeds on a fruitful month
and a fruitful day, they'll bear and bear.
Bill Clendennen
- 50 Plant all crops that bear above ground in the
light of the moon. 7969, 7970 Bill Clendennen
- 51 Plant all crops that bear below the ground in
the dark of the moon. 7969, 6970 Bill Clendennen
- 52 Don't plant on Sunday; that's a barren sign.
Bill Clendennen
- 53 Pull your plants on Sunday, every Sunday in the
year, according to the almanac. Bill Clendennen
- 54 Always plant your garden on Good Friday, the
Friday before Easter. Plant everything that
day-- beans, peas, radishes, corn-- everything.
8010 Annie Eubank
- 55 Onions should be planted in February. 8194
Bill Clendennen
- 56 Always plant potatoes on February 14 with the
eyes up. 8221 Nita Clendennen
- 57 Plant tomatoes outside after Easter. Then the
danger of frost is over. Anita Conlee

Superstitions concerning weather.

- 58 If the sun goes down behind a bank on Sunday
night, it'll rain before Wednesday night. If
it clears off during the night, it'll cloud
up again. It's just temporary. Henry Sikes

- 59 When there's a halo around the moon, it's goin' to rain and the time from that night will be determined by how many stars there are in that halo. If there are no stars in that halo, it will rain before tomorrow night. If there are three stars, it'll rain in three days. 6151, 6152, 6549 Henry Sikes
- 60 If the sun shines while it's rainin', it's a sign that there will be rain the same time the next day. 6466 Mike Clendennen
- 61 Corns ache just before damp weather. 6414 Eck Clendennen
- 62 If the sun comes up and goes under a cloud, it'll rain before the sun goes down. Mike Clendennen
- 63 If it's cloudy when the sun sets and it clears off in the night, it'll rain in three days. 6485 Bill Clendennen
- 64 Expect a storm if you see cows lying around in a pasture, if they're on familiar ground. 6666 Mike Clendennen (see 13)
- 65 Flies being unusually bothersome means rain. 6786 Eck Clendennen (see 41)
- 66 A rainbow is a sign that the rain is over. 6870 Bill Clendennen
- 67 If there are white and dark streaks under a rain cloud, there is either hail or rain in the storm. Bill Clendennen (see 72)
- 68 Rain clouds are dark until it really starts rainin'; then they turn white. Bill Clendennen
- 69 Smoke settlin' on the ground means either rain is comin' or a norther. Mike Clendennen
- 70 When it thunders, it means the tater wagon is rollin'. Nita Clendennen
- 71 Lightning never strikes twice in the same place. 7024 Mike Clendennen
- 72 Hail is comin' if there are white streaks in a cloud. Mike Clendennen (see 67)

- 73 White clouds mean snow if they are feathery.
7032 Bill Clendennen
- 74 Lots of mesquite beans on the trees means
it'll be a bad winter. Mike Clendennen (see 43)
- 75 Bushy tails on horses means a bad winter. Mike
Clendennen (see 16)
- 76 The real Ground Hog's Day is February 14.
Mike Clendennen
- 77 If the ground hog sees his shadow, there will
be six weeks more bad weather. 6176 Mike
Clendennen
- 78 March winds and April showers
Bring forth May flowers. 6119 Eck Clendennen
- 79 There is usually bad weather at Easter. The
Easter snap means the end of winter and the
beginning of spring. 6143 Bill Clendennen
- 80 If the sun goes down behind a bank, there
will be a change in the weather in three days.
6485 Bill Clendennen

Superstitions concerning clothing.

- 81 Don't walk with one shoe on and one off.
Walk backwards to counteract this. 3208
Grace Mann
- 82 It's bad luck to put on your clothing wrong
side out and change them before the day is
out. 3185 Eck Clendennen, Grace Mann (see 148)
- 83 If your hem is turned up, hold it and make
a wish and then turn it down and your wish
will come true. Anita Conlee (see 168)

Superstitions concerning household items and chores.

- 84 Don't sweep after dark. You'll die before
the broom wears out. 5110 Grace Mann (see 138)
- 85 It's bad luck to sweep after sundown or before
sunup. 2920 Girtie May (see 149)

- 86 Aluminum pans are poison; cook only in granite or iron. Eck Clendennen
- 87 It's bad luck to carry a rake through the house. 2986 Nita Clendennen (see 150)
- 88 Don't carry a hoe through the house. Grace Mann (see 151)
- 89 Don't raise an umbrella in the house. 3062 Grace Mann (see 152)
- 90 Put soda in milk to make the butter come. It gets it together so you can get it out easy. Eck Clendennen
- 91 If you come back into the house after you leave and close the door, sit down to ward off bad luck. 3767 Grace Mann (see 153)
- 92 If you break a mirror, you'll have seven years bad luck. 3060 Eck Clendennen (see 154)
- 93 If a house is destroyed by fire, it's bad luck to build in the same spot. 3036 Mike Clendennen (see 155)

Superstitions concerning eating.

- 94 When your stomach growls, it's a sign you're hungry. Anita Conlee
- 95 Fish and milk shouldn't be eaten at the same time. It'll poison you. Bill Clendennen
- 96 It's bad luck to sing at the table while eating. 2842 Nita Clendennen (see 156)
- 97 If you spill salt, throw a pinch over your shoulder to counteract bad luck. 2881 Nita Clendennen (see 157)

Superstitions concerning sleeping.

- 98 If you play in the fire, you'll pee in the bed. 278 Nita Clendennen
- 99 If you sing in bed, you'll wake up crying. 3085-3088 Nita Clendennen

- 100 Don't sleep with your head to the west unless absolutely necessary. 3079 Eck Clendennen

Superstitions concerning dreams.

- 101 If you dream of a death, you'll hear of a wedding. 4389 Girtie May (see 139)
- 102 If you dream of a wedding, you'll hear of a death. 4979, 4981 Girtie May (see 140)
- 103 If you dream of a snake and the snake bites you, you have an enemy, and the enemy has the best of you when the snake bites you. 3614 Girtie May (see 22)
- 104 When you dream about a snake, something bad is gonna happen. Girtie May (see 21)
- 105 Don't tell your dream before breakfast. If you do, it'll come true. 3132 Anita Conlee

Superstitions concerning lies.

- 106 In order to prove you are telling the truth, cross your heart with your finger and say, "Cross my heart and hope to die." 3663, 3664 Anita Conlee
- 107 When you get blisters on your tongue, you've been telling lies. 3669, 887 Nita Clendennen
- 108 If you start to tell something and forget what you're saying in the middle of it, you must have been lying. 3674 Anita Conlee
- 109 When you cross your fingers, you don't really mean what you're saying. 5843 Anita Conlee

Superstitions concerning holidays and other special days of the year.

- 110 On Mayday morning, get up before the sun rises, wash your face in the dew. You'll be beautiful. Grace Mann

- 111 The first man in your house on New Year's Day will be your chicken raiser. This means he'll determine the extent of your prosperity for that year. 681 Grace Mann
- 112 Always eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day to insure prosperity for the coming year. 2827 Clendennens, Mays

Superstitions concerning company -- visitors.

- 113 If your nose itches, somebody's comin' to see you. 3912-3915 Nita Clendennen
- 114 If your nose itches, somebody's coming with a hole in his britches. Anita Conlee
- 115 If a rooster crows in your front door, you must run it off because it means you're goin' to have company. Eck Clendennen (see 31)
- 116 Company will come if you drop the dishrag and don't shake 'em off. You've got to shake the dishrag when you pick it up. 4015 Eck Clendennen
- 117 If you have two lights on in a room at night, it's a sure sign that you'll have company. Eck Clendennen

Superstitions concerning children.

- 118 If a woman carries a baby high, it's supposed to be a boy. Marie Eidson
- 119 If a woman looks on something horrible or someone disfigured while she's pregnant, she will mark the baby. The baby will be born with the same disfigurement. 112 Nita Clendennen
- 120 If a cat is left in the room with a sleeping baby, it will suck the baby's breath. 267 Estel Kelley (see 3)
- 121 Babies are brought by the stork. Anita Conlee

- 122 Each child a woman has costs her a tooth.
13 Nita Clendennen
- 123 A child born with a veil over his face will
be able to get in touch with the spirit
world. 245, 5552 Eck Clendennen
- 124 If you pull a tooth and put it under your
pillow, the fairies will leave you money
for it. 387, 3388 Anita Conlee
- 125 Don't let a baby look in the mirror; it will
make his teeth hard to come in. Grace Mann

Superstitions concerning burial customs.

- 126 It's just a superstition around here that
you're not supposed to dig a grave and let
it stand over night. 5485 Henry Sikes
- 127 We don't dig graves the day before the
funeral. It might rain that night, or
there might be an accident. 5483 Grace
Mann
- 128 If you dig a grave and leave it open until
the next day, someone else in the family will
die. Eck Clendennen
- 129 People used to sit up with bodies at night
to keep wild animals from coming after the
body. Grace Mann

Superstitions concerning death.

- 130 Deaths do not come singly. 4903 Girtie May
- 131 If shingles go all around a person, he will
die. 4987 Girtie May
- 132 The sound of chains being dragged over the
roof of a house means death is coming to
that house. Eck Clendennen
- 133 Cats are attracted to dead people. Grace Mann
(see 2)

- 134 If a hen crows, it's bad luck. You must kill the hen or there'll be a death in the family. 7193, 5248-5250 Eck Clendennen
- 135 A bird in the house means someone will die. 5280 Eck Clendennen (see 32)
- 136 A hootowl singing means death. 5305-5317 Eck Clendennen (see 33)
- 137 If you plant a cedar tree in your yard, when it gets big enough to cover your grave, you'll pass on. Eck Clendennen (see 45)
- 138 Don't sweep after dark. You'll die before the broom wears out. 5110 Grace Mann (see 84)
- 139 If you dream of a death, you'll hear of a wedding. 4389 Girtie May (see 101)
- 140 If you dream of a wedding, you'll hear of a death. 4979, 4981 Girtie May (see 102)

Superstitions concerning general bad luck.

- 141 Don't start anything on Friday, sewing or anything. If you do, you won't finish it. 3269, 5127 Marie Eidson
- 142 Walking under a ladder is bad luck. 3064 Eck Clendennen
- 143 Never give a gift of knives or any tin unless the person pays you, even if it's just a penny. It's bad luck. Eck Clendennen
- 144 It's bad luck to open your knife and let someone close it. 2874 Bill Clendennen
- 145 If you see money on the ground, always pick it up, even if it's a penny. Otherwise, you'll have bad luck. Bill Clendennen
- 146 For a black cat to cross your path is a sign of bad luck. You must turn around and go another way or you'll have bad luck. 3821, 3824, 5185 Eck Clendennen (see 4)

- 147 Weepin' willow trees bring bad luck. 7959
Eck Clendennen (see 46)
- 148 It's bad luck to put on your clothing wrong
side out and change them before the day is
out. 3185 Eck Clendennen, Grace Mann (see 82)
- 149 It's bad luck to sweep after sundown or before
sunup. 2920 Girtie May (see 85)
- 150 It's bad luck to carry a rake through the
house. 2986 Nita Clendennen (see 87)
- 151 Don't carry a hoe through the house. Grace
Mann (see 88)
- 152 Don't raise an umbrella in the house. 3062
Grace Mann (see 89)
- 153 If you come back into the house after you
leave and close the door, sit down to ward
off bad luck. 3767 Grace Mann (see 91)
- 154 If you break a mirror, you'll have seven years
bad luck. 3060 Eck Clendennen (see 92)
- 155 If a house is destroyed by fire, it's bad luck
to build in the same spot. 3036 Mike Clendennen
(see 93)
- 156 It's bad luck to sing at the table while eating.
2842 Nita Clendennen (see 96)
- 157 If you spill salt, throw a pinch over your
shoulder to counteract bad luck. 2881 Nita
Clendennen (see 97)

Superstitions concerning good luck -- to insure good luck.

- 158 Find a horseshoe, make a wish, spit on it,
throw it over your shoulder and then don't
look back to have good luck. Grace Mann
- 159 A rabbit's foot brings good luck. 5789
Bill Clendennen (see 8)
- 160 Knocking on wood will insure good luck and ward
off bad luck. 5840 Bill Clendennen

- 161 You can find a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. 5901 Anita Conlee
- 162 A horseshoe is a sign of good luck. 7115 Bill Clendennen

Superstitions concerning wishes.

- 163 When you see a falling star, make a wish. 5962 Anita Conlee
- 164 Pick a bright star, make a wish and say:
 "Star light, star bright
 First star I see tonight;
 I wish I may, I wish I might
 Have this wish I wish tonight."
 Don't look at another star while you say this
 and don't tell your wish. 5956 Eck Clendennen
- 165 When you see the first star in the heavens at night, make a wish and say:
 "Star light, star bright
 First star I see tonight;
 I wish I may, I wish I might
 Have this wish I wish tonight."
 Don't look at any other star while you make the wish and don't tell anyone your wish or it won't come true. 5956 Anita Conlee
- 166 When you blow out the candles on a birthday cake, make a wish. For it to come true, you must blow out all the candles with the first breath and you mustn't tell the wish. Anita Conlee
- 167 If two people hold a pulleybone under the table and pull it apart while both make a wish, the one getting the longest piece will have his wish come true. 7198 Bill Clendennen
- 168 If your hem is turned up, hold it and make a wish, and then turn it down, and your wish will come true. Anita Conlee (see 83)

Superstitions concerning miscellaneous items.

- 169 A water witch can find water with a divining rod which is a peach tree limb. 5871 Mike Clendennen (see 47)

- 170 Walking in dew is poisonous if you have a sore on your foot. Bill Clendennen
- 171 Red hair is a sign of a fiery temper. 481 Nita Clendennen
- 172 Cold hands, warm heart. 569 Anita Conlee
- 173 Smoke drifts toward beauty. 675 Anita Conlee
- 174 Night air is injurious to sick people. 733 Eck Clendennen
- 175 If your ears burn, someone is talking about you. 3506 Anita Conlee
- 176 If someone sweeps under your feet, you'll never get married. Anita Conlee

Human Remedies

In the area of folk remedies, human remedies have been separated from animal remedies. In the first section of human remedies, the diseases are alphabetized; and there are thirty-seven different ailments and diseases for which remedies are offered. The final section concerns methods of disease prevention.

Again, each informant's actual phrasing is utilized. In some cases, as with Lenora McClure who is deceased, written records provide the information, as well as remembrances from their children. If the dosage or amount of ingredients is unclear, the reason is that the informant presented the remedy in the way he actually remembered it.

Arthritis and rheumatism.

- 177 Drink honey and vinegar for arthritis. Bill Clendennen

- 178 Make alfalfa tea for arthritis. Combine two quarts water with twelve teaspoons alfalfa seeds. Boil twenty minutes. Makes a quart and a pint of tea. Strain. Boil one cup and drink three times a day. Bill Clendennen
- 179 An Irish potato carried in the pocket both prevents and cures rheumatism. The potato eventually goes away. 2017 Bill Clendennen
- 180 Wear copper bracelets for arthritis. 2052, 2053 Bill Clendennen
- 181 A bee sting is supposed to be good for arthritis. 1969 Bill Clendennen
- 182 Wear copper in your shoes for arthritis. 2604 Bill Clendennen
- 183 Mix gin and raisins and let set for three or four days. Take doses of the juice for arthritis. Bill Clendennen
- 184 Lemon juice added to milk until it curds and the curds bound upon parts swollen from rheumatism will bring relief. Lenora McClure

Asthma.

- 185 If you have asthma, a chihuahua dog will help your breathin'. Estel Kelley
- 186 For asthma, combine one pint of sunflower seed crushed in one quart whiskey or alcohol. Take one tablespoon three times a day. Lenora McClure

Athlete's foot.

- 187 Put starch on athlete's foot. Bill Clendennen

Blood poisoning.

- 188 Use bran, cornmeal, hot water, and carbolic acid for blood poisoning. Apply warm. Grace Man
- 189 To prevent blood poisoning when you step on a nail, soak the foot in coal oil. Nita Clendennen

Burns.

- 190 Butter should be used for burns. 975 Nita Clendennen

Chapped lips.

- 191 Rub some of the oil from behind your ears on chapped lips. Nita Clendennen

Chest congestion.

- 192 Make a poultice of turpentine, only a drop or two, and lard and sulfur. The lard prevents blistering. 1130 Nita Clendennen
- 193 Combine kerosene and tallow for chest colds. Rub on the chest. Lorene Sikes
- 194 Combine turpentine and coal oil for chest congestion. Put children to bed with this on their chests. Girtie May
- 195 Hot lemonade before going to bed will cure a cold on the lungs. Lenora McClure
- 196 Make a poultice from onions for the chest when you have a cold. Get as hot a onions as you can find. Fry in a little dab of grease and make real strong. Mix coal oil, turpentine, anything you have, and put on a cloth and put on the chest. I still do it. Estel Kelley
- 197 Make a poultice of just meal. Cook it until it looks like mush and put that on the chest and it makes a good poultice. 1934 Annie Eubank

Constipation--laxative.

- 198 Drink black draught tea. Boil and strain like regular iced tea. Bill Clendennen
- 199 Wrap a square of caluma (calomel) in tissue paper and swallow it, paper and all. If you get too much caluma, you may need to take some flour and water. Mike Clendennen

Cough.

- 200 Give coal oil and sugar for a cough. 1121
Lorene Sikes
- 201 Give one teaspoon of sugar with a drop or two
of turpentine on it for a cough. Girtie May
- 202 Boil mullein weed and take the juice and strain
it. Add sugar to make cough syrup. 1110
Annie Eubank
- 203 Boil the hoehound [sic horehound] weed, and the
juice combined with sugar is a good cough syrup.
783, 1109, 1208 Girtie May, Marie Eidson
- 204 Lemon juice with sugar makes a good cough
syrup. Lenora McClure

Croup.

- 205 Use the same remedy as for a bad cough. Put
a drop or two of turpentine on one teaspoon
of sugar. Girtie May

Cuts.

- 206 Apply kerosene to cuts. Grace Mann
- 207 A cloth saturated with lemon juice and bound
about a cut will stop its bleeding. Lenora
McClure

Diarrhea.

- 208 Mix two tablespoons of flour in water and drink.
This is the same remedy as for vomiting. Mike
Clendennen

Dropsy.

- 209 Put two heaping tablespoons of cream of tartar
in a bowl, pour in a pint of boiling water.
Stir and set aside to settle and cool. Drink
off the water on going to bed. Let the dregs
remain in the bowl until the next evening when
another pint of boiling water should be poured

over them and drunk as before. Take a dose of jalap next morning after drinking the water at night. This will carry off the water from the body. Lenora McClure

Earache.

- 210 Blow smoke into a child's ear for earache. Grace Mann

Eye infection.

- 211 For the infected eyes of an infant, rub lightly with the diaper after the baby urinates. Grace Mann

Fever.

- 212 Make a poultice from horehound leaves, bran, hot water, and a small bit of turpentine for fever. Apply to the stomach. Grace Mann
- 213 Give cream of tartar for fever. Nita Clendennen

Frostbite.

- 214 Rub castor oil on the affected parts of the body for frostbite. Marie Eidson

Hair restorative.

- 215 One ounce each of glycerin, bay rum and castor oil and one drachm each of lac sulfur, sugar of lead, and powdered sugar is an excellent hair restorative. Rub it on. Lenora McClure

Headache.

- 216 Take Epsom salts for a headache. Estel Kelley
- 217 Juice of half a lemon in a cup of black coffee will cure a sick headache. Lenora McClure

Hiccoughs.

- 218 Sudden fright will cure the hiccoughs. 1673
Anita Conlee
- 219 Hold your breath while drinking ten sips of
water to cure the hiccoughs. 1643, 1650
Anita Conlee

Indigestion.

- 220 Cure indigestion by taking a pinch of soda
in a glass of water. 1725 Bill Clendennen

Ingrown toenails.

- 221 Cut a V in the center of the toenail and keep
the nail scraped thin to cure ingrown toenails.
2335 Eck Clendennen

Insect bites.

- 222 Apply bluing to wasp stings. Mike Clendennen
- 223 Pound copperas until fine and apply to the
bite. Lenora McClure
- 224 Put snuff on any insect bite. Apply it after
it has been dipped. Estel Kelley
- 225 Use kerosene for insect bites. Grace Mann
- 226 Apply ammonia to insect bites, including red
ant and blister bug bites. 206 Nita Clendennen
- 227 Use ear wax for red ant stings. Nita Clendennen

Itch.

- 228 Cure nettle rash by bathing in warm soda
water. Annie Eubank
- 229 Stop the itch by covering the affected parts
of the body with flour. Mike Clendennen (see
235)

- 230 For the itch of poison ivy, apply Faultless starch dry. Girtie May
- 231 Put bluestone water on poison ivy. Bill Clendennen
- 232 You can put either sulfur or kerosene on the itch. Estel Kelley
- 233 Mix sulfur and grease to make a salve for the seven year itch. Elvie Moore

Measles.

- 234 To bring out the measles on a person, drink a hot toddy of sugar, water, and whiskey at bedtime. The measles will appear the next day. Mike Clendennen
- 235 For the itch of measles, rub the affected parts of the body with flour. Mike Clendennen (see 229)

Mumps.

- 236 Ring out clothes in warm vinegar water and apply to the jaws. Grace Mann

Risins.

- 237 Eat raisins to prevent risins. You get risins because the blood isn't good and raisins are good for the blood. Nita Clendennen

Smallpox and scarlet fever.

- 238 Take one grain sulfate of zinc, one grain foxglove or digitalis and one-half teaspoonful of sugar. Mix thoroughly with two tablespoonfuls of water, then add four ounces water and take a teaspoonful of the mixture every hour. For a child, give a smaller dose, according to age. Either disease will disappear in twelve hours. Lenora McClure

Snake bites.

- 239 Put coal oil on the hand or foot, usually hand if bitten by a snake. 2169 Henry Sikes
- 240 Put coal oil on any snake bite. It'll turn the coal oil green when the poison is sucked out. 2169 Elvie Moore
- 241 Put whiskey on snake bites. Elvie Moore
- 242 Pound copperas until fine and apply to the bite. Lenora McClure
- 243 Use kerosene for snake bites. 2169 Grace Mann

Skin abrasions.

- 244 Mix lard with turpentine to make a salve for any ailment. Elvie Moore

Sprains.

- 245 For a sprained ankle or wrist, wrap in vinegar and brown paper. 2228 Bill Clendennen
- 246 For swelling from a sprain, make a poultice from peach tree leaves, bran and hot water. Grace Mann
- 247 For a sprain, heat cornmeal on the stove and then place in a sack. Apply turpentine to the sprain; then put the sack of cornmeal on the sprain. It should be hot about two hours. Mike Clendennen

Sty.

- 248 To remove a sty, take your gold wedding band and rub it with your hand until the gold is hot and put it on the sty. The sty will disappear. 2285 Eck Clendennen

- 249 To cure a sty, go to a crossroads and repeat three times:
 "Sty, sty, leave my eye;
 Get on the next one passing by." 2295-2302
 Grace Mann, Eck Clendennen

Tonic.

- 250 Take one cup of mackinrow each night before going to bed as a tonic. It was made from Indian herb tonic. What the herbs were, we didn't know. It was just bought by the gallon jug. Estel Kelley, Girtie May, Elvie Moore

Sore throat.

- 251 Gargle a bad sore throat with a solution of lemon juice and water. Lenora McClure
- 252 Saturate a teaspoon of sugar with coal oil for a sore throat. Lorene Sikes

Stickers -- imbedded.

- 253 Wrap fat meat around the foot overnight to draw out a sticker. 913 Bill Clendennen

Vomiting.

- 254 Put a little cornmeal in a glass and pour some water on it and let it set awhile. Then drink the water off for an upset stomach. Annie Eubank
- 255 Mix about two tablespoons of flour in water and drink for vomiting. Mike Clendennen

Warts.

- 256 To take off a wart, find a bone, make sure no one is looking, rub the wart with the bone, place it back as you picked it up. The wart goes away. Grace Mann

- 257 When you have a wart, go to a man who can rub it away. After he rubs it, forget it and don't look at it for a few days. It'll go away. Bill Clendennen
- 258 First, steal one of your mother's best cuptowels and rub it on the wart or warts. Then, bury it under the back doorstep, and never tell anyone what you have done. Susie May
- 259 Get a piece of meat rind, rub it on the wart, throw it over your right shoulder and never look back. Susie May

Disease prevention.

- 260 Wear asafetida around the neck when any disease breaks out in the country. 373, 1099 Girtie May
- 261 Put the asafetida in the mouth occasionally to prevent catchin' any disease that was goin' around. It was bought at the drugstore. Estel Kelley

Animal Remedies

The following section contains remedies for cows, horses, and dogs. It should be noted that animal cures and remedies are not nearly so numerous as human remedies. The fact that generally domestic animals recovered from snake bites and other injuries through their own devices but could not recover from poison and distemper is simply an accepted fact in the Graford area. The entire attitude toward the sick animal was that if it was meant to recover, it would, with help from its owner. That help usually meant keeping the animal out of the weather and feeding it well, and very importantly, allowing it to rest. If it was meant to die, then another animal

would have to be found to take its place. However, the following remedies did appear in conversation.

Congestion of the udder in cows.

- 262 To cure congestion of the udder, keep the cow away from exposure to cold weather and cold drafts and off cold, wet floors until congestion leaves. There is no remedy for severe cases.
Lenora McClure

Hollow tail in cows.

- 263 Put salt in a hollow tail on a cow and tie it up. It'll cure it. 7598 Mike Clendennen

Pink eye in cows.

- 264 Put salt in a cow's eyes and the pink eye will leave soon. Mike Clendennen

Worms in cows.

- 265 Give a calf gunpowder by the mouth to get rid of most any kind of worm. Mike Clendennen

Distemper in horses.

- 266 Put a rag smoked with camphor around a horse's neck in his bit and let him wear it. It may not work, but it's the only thing I know of to do for distemper. Probably the horse will die. Rufus Spurlock

Worms in dogs.

- 267 Put a lot of garlic in hamburger meat for worms in dogs. Girtie May

Poisoning of dogs.

268 If you catch a dog in time after he's been poisoned, pour grease down his throat. If you're in time, you'll save him with grease. But most likely, he'll die. Girtie May

The large volume of superstitions and remedies, certainly not all included here, indicates that in the folklore of Graford, superstition is indeed important. It is interesting to note that the superstitions extend into all areas of life from personal habits such as eating and sleeping to external factors such as weather conditions. No area of a man's life is untouched by his superstitions. In Chapter III, the significance of his superstitions in relation to his occupational group will be discussed.

In the area of remedies, primary importance seems to be given to chest congestion and colds. A doctor was called less frequently; and consequently, the people had to work at their own remedies for coughs and colds. One or two ailments such as the itch are less frequently noticed today, and warts generally are not treated by some magical ritual. However, many of the remedies such as poultices and turpentine are still employed.

In conclusion, the superstitions and remedies of the people in the Graford area are indicative of their culture and folklore. An abundance of such information is available for each of the three occupational groups defined, since

each individual is a receptacle for his own particular superstitions and remedies.

Songs

Of all the areas of folklore in Graford, the song seems to have been neglected the most. Few people remember the songs their mothers sang to them, although they do remember their mothers singing. One interesting exception is Joe Mills, rancher. Eight of the ten songs included in this section were sung by him. He remembers his mother singing to him as a child; and he has passed the tradition on to his daughter, Nancy. The result is several interesting cowboy songs and several more ballads of unhappy romance.

One delightful, entertaining song which effectively employs alliteration is entitled "Monkeytown" and was sung by Grace Mann, whose father was a farmer-laborer in Graford. She remembers her mother singing the catchy tune to her as a child and has even used it in the elementary classes she has taught. As far as she has traced, the song has not appeared in print in recent years.

The square dance was a popular entertainment among many of the people in Graford, and Mike Clendennen was one of the foremost callers of square dances. Although eighty-four years of age today, the farmer-laborer still remembers

"Sure as there's a God above, I will save the girl
 I love,
 By my love for Little Bessie, I will see that
 something's done."
 Not a moment he delayed when his brave resolve was
 made
 While men, his comrades, told him when they heard
 of his darin' plan,
 "You are riding straight to death,"
 But he answered, "Save your breath; I may never
 reach the cow ridge,
 But Bessie Lee shall know I tried."

With his quirt's unceasing whirl and the jingle of
 his spurs,
 Little Brown Chappel and the cowboy rode the far away
 from here;
 Lower and lower sank the sun; he drew rein at Rocky
 Run;
 "Here those men met death, Chappel," and he stroked the
 glossy mane;
 "So with those we go to war near the coming of the
 dawn;
 If we fail, God help you, Bessie," and he started on
 again;
 Sharp and clear a rifle shot woke the echoes of the
 spot.

"I am wounded," cried Venero, as he swayed from side
 to side;
 "While there's life, there's always hope, slowly
 onward I will lope;
 If I fail to reach the cow ridge, Bessie Lee shall
 know I tried;
 I will save her yet," he cried, "Bessie Lee shall
 know I tried;
 And for her sake;" then he halted in the shadow of a
 hill;
 From a buckskin shirt he took with weak hands a little
 book,
 Tore a blank leaf from its staying, "This shall be my
 will."

From a limb a pen he broke, then he dipped his pen
 of oak
 In the warm blood a-flowing from a wound above his
 heart;
 Roused he wrote before too late, "Apache warriors lie
 in wait;
 Good-bye, Bess, God bless you, darling," and he felt
 the cold tear start.

Then he made his message fast, love's first message
 and its last;
 To the saddle horn he tied it, and his lips are
 white with pain,
 "Chap, oh, take this, if not me, straight to Little
 Bessie Lee."

Then he leaned down in the saddle and gave his horse
 the rein,
 Just at dusk a horse of brown, lathed in sweat came
 running
 Down the little lane to the cow ridge, stopped at
 Bessie's door,
 But the rider was asleep and his slumber was so deep
 Little Bess could never wake him though she tried
 forevermore.

You have heard the story told by the young and by the
 old
 Way down yonder at the cow ridge; the night the Apaches
 came,
 Of that sharp and bloody fight, how the Chief fell
 in the flight;
 Of the panic-stricken warriors when they heard
 Venero's name;
 Many years have passed away; Little Bessie's old and
 gray,
 But she still plants flowers on Bill Venero's Grave.²³

Utah Carroll

You have asked many times, little friend,
 Why I'm so silent, sad, and still,
 Why my brow is always darkened like the clouds upon
 the hill;
 Draw in your ponies closer, and I'll tell to you
 The tale of Utah Carroll, my partner, and his last
 ride on the trail.

We were rounding up one morning when our work was
 almost done;
 On the right of the cattle started in a wild and a
 maddened run.

²³Statement by Joe Mills, rancher, Graford, Texas
 June 10, 1974.

Now the boss' little daughter was a-holding on that
 side
 Started to turn the cattle; it was there my partner
 died.

Then Lenore rushed in with a pony to turn the cattle
 to the right,
 A red blanket slipped from under her, and it caught
 in her stirrup tight;
 When the cattle saw the blanket almost trailing on
 the ground,
 They were maddened in an instant, and they charged
 it with a bound.
 Now Lenore seeing the danger quickly turned her
 pony's face
 And while leaning from her saddle tried the blanket
 to displace;
 While leaning lost her balance, fell in front of
 that wild herd,
 Lied there still and o'er oncoming were the words my
 partner cried.

Many times from out his saddle he had caught the
 trailing rope,
 But to raise Lenore in full speed was my partner's
 only hope;
 Lo, he swept us fast and faster; he had caught her
 in his arms,
 And we thought he was successful and safe from future
 harm.

But such weight upon the cinches had ne'er been felt
 before;
 There a hind cinch snapped asunder, and he fell beside
 Lenore;
 Then he picked up the blanket and he waved it o'er
 his head,
 And as he started across the prairie yelled again.

"Lie still," he said, as he started across the prairie;
 Every cowboy held his breath for they knew that the run
 He was making either meant life or death.
 When the cattle closed in round him, my young partner
 had to fall;
 Nevermore to cinch a bronco nor to give the cattle a
 call.

He must die upon the ranges though his fate was surely
 hard;
 I could not make the distance in time to save my pard;

I went in and knelt beside him though I knew his life
 And I heard him faintly murmur, "Lie still; I'm coming,
 was o'er,
 Lenore."

These were my partner's last words; he has gone the
 endless trail
 At what was the call of duty with the nerve that would
 not fail;
 And sometime in the bright future I heard the preacher
 say,
 "I know we'll all meet Utah at that roundup far away."²⁴

A Fair Lady

There was a fair lady who lived on the plains;
 She helped me, her dad, all through cold, steady rain;
 She helped me, her dad, all through the roundup;
 She'd taken drinks with me from the cold, bitter cup;
 She drinks the red liquor that affects a man so.

She's fair as a lily and whiter than snow;
 I taught her the lesson of a Ranger's command
 To hold a six-shooter in each of her hands,
 To hold a six-shooter and never to run
 As long as there's a bullet in each of her guns.

We came to the canyons in the fall of the year,
 Intending to stop there with a herd of fat steers;
 While Indians broke on us in the dead hours of night;
 We arose from our warm bed our battle to fight;
 One keen clap of thunder and down came the rain.

And in came a bullet and dashed out her brains;
 I got in my saddle with a gun in each hand;
 "Come all you brave cowboys, let's win this fair land."
 We whooped, and we yelled, and we fought all around
 And a many a redskin lay dead on the ground.²⁵

A Cowboy's Tale

Come listen a moment, I'll sing you a song
 Of trials and troubles when first they begun;
 Twas leaving my kindred, my friends, and my home
 To cross the dark deserts and prairies alone.

²⁴Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

²⁵Ibid., June 10, 1974.

We crossed ol' Missouri, a jolly large stream,
 While hunting and fishing, we done much means;
 While hunting and fishing and searching for gold,
 To shoot a few antelope and wild buffalo.

We traveled six weeks till we came to the flat
 Corraled all of our wagons on a green grassy ground,
 While our mules and our horses were grazing around;
 Oh, all of a sudden, we heard a low wail.

Twas a band of Sioux Indians came out on our trail;
 We sprang to our rifles with a flash in each eye;
 Our leader says, "Boys, we'll fight till we die."
 With our very long rifles we fed them hot lead.

Till around us a many a Sioux Indian lay dead;
 At the crack of our rifles six of them fell;
 They made a bold dash and come near our trains;
 The arrows fell around us like hail and like rain.

We killed a bold chief at the head of the band;
 He died like a warrior with a gun in his hand;
 When they saw their bold chief lying dead in his score,
 They whooped, and they yelled, and we saw them no more.

We hitched up our horses and started our trains,
 Had three more fights that trip on the plains;
 In our very last battle three brave men fell;
 We laid them to rest in the green, grassy dell.²⁶

A Cowboy's Lament

It was so early in the year
 When J.A. Dobson hired me;
 He says, "Young man, you're the lad
 I want to deliver these cattle to New Mexico."

It was a long and a wearisome go
 For a lad like me to have to go;
 To leave a darling girl behind
 That had often told me that her heart was mine.

But when I reached New Mexico,
 I wanted to see her, but I could not go;
 I wrote a letter to my dear,
 But not a word from her could I hear.

²⁶ Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

But when I reached my once-loved home
 Inquiring for the darling of my soul,
 They told me she married much richer in life;
 "Therefore, young man, seek another wife."

Oh, it's, "Come, dearest brother,
 Come stay at home,
 And don't forever be on the roam."

Oh, it's, "I'll go back to my cowboy band,
 And I'll cut my way where the bullets fly,
 And I'll live on trail till the day I die."²⁷

Joe Hardy

"You know that I once was your lover,
 But that such a thing has an end;
 For love and its transports are rovers,
 But you know you can still be my friend.

This fond heart is another's;
 I sigh whenever he's gone;
 I love you indeed as a brother,
 But my heart is Joe Hardy's alone.

I confess when at the bungo²⁸ we parted,
 I vowed that I worshipped you then;
 That I was a maid broken-hearted,
 And you the most charming of men.

I confess when I read your first letter,
 I blotted your name with a tear;
 I was young then, but now I know better,
 And I know I will meet Hardy here.

When the stars begin to twinkle
 And the shadows of evening do fall,
 I have a secret to tell you,
 I learned at the masquerade ball.

I'll soon be a school girl no longer.
 It was arranged as we rode from the hall,

²⁷ Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

²⁸ A colloquial term meaning a place where a party is held.

As the roses of spring spread their petals;
I am to be married, that's all."

"Oh, you said that I once was your lover,
But redeem all charges as this;
Though I think I have been quite clever,
For I made you believe it, dear miss.

Our parting at the bungo was funny;
I laugh when I think of the scene;
You cried so and called me your honey,
For a moment I felt rather mean.

You said you blotted my first letter
With a tear from your eye brighter than a star,
But I used you for something far better,
For an instant to light my cigar.

Now don't think for a moment I'm grieving,
For this world is a gay one you know,
And if women are fond of deceiving,
They surely shall reap as they sow.

If I should die an old bachelor broken-hearted,
There's just one request of you, May;
Write on my tombstone departed,
Joe Hardy has carried the day."²⁹

William and Mary

As William and Mary stood by the seashore,
Their last farewells to take, returning no more,
Little Mary, she said, "Oh, surely, my heart, it
will break."

"Oh, don't be dismayed, Little Mary." he said,
As he drew the dear girl to his side;
"In my absence, don't mourn,
For when I return, I'll make Little Mary my bride."

Three years passed by without any news;
One day she stood by the seashore,
A beggar passed by with a patch upon his eye;
Quite lame and did pity implore.

²⁹Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

"Have compassion on me; your friend I will be,
 Your fortune I'll tell you besides;
 The lad that you mourn will never return
 To make Little Mary his bride."

She startled and trembled and then she did say,
 "Oh, fortune, my all, would I give if what I ask you
 You'd tell unto me; oh, say, does dear Willy still live?"

"He lives it is true, but he's poverty poor;
 He's shipwrecked and suffered besides."
 "No tongue can tell the joy that I feel,
 Although his misfortune I mourn,

I love him so dear, so true and sincere;
 No other would I have by my side;
 He's welcome to me in poverty be."

His jacket all tattered and torn,
 The beggar then tore the patch from his eye;
 His crutches he lay by his side;
 Coat jacket and trousers, cheek red as a rose.

Young Willy stood by Mary's side;
 "Excuse me, dear maid, I'm too very sad;
 It's on your love that I've tried."

Then he hastened away at the close of the day
 To make Little Mary his bride.³⁰

Floyd Collins

Come, all ye young people and listen
 While I tell the fate of Floyd Collins,
 A lad you all knew well;
 His face was fair and handsome,
 His heart both true and brave;
 His body now lies sleeping
 In a lonely sandstone cave.

Now, Father, don't you worry,
 Dear, Mother, don't be sad,
 I'll tell you of my troubles
 And an awful dream I had.
 I dreamed I was a prisoner,
 My life I could not save;

³⁰Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

I cried, "Oh, must I perish
Within this sandstone cave?"

The rescue parties labored;
They worked both night and day
To remove the mighty barrier
That stood within their way
To rescue Floyd Collins,
This was their battle cry,
"Oh, we'll never, no, we'll never
Let Floyd Collins die."

But on that fateful morning,
The sun rose in the sky,
The workers, they were busy,
"We'll save him by and by."
But, oh, how sad the ending,
His life they could not save;
His body now lies sleeping
In a lonely sandstone cave.

Young people now take warning
At Floyd Collins' fate,
And get right with your Maker
Before it is too late;
It may not be a sand cave
In which we find our tomb,
But at the bar of judgment,³¹
We too must meet our doom.³¹

In conclusion, songs of romance, cowboy life, and square dances comprise the majority of the folksongs in the Graford area. Typical cowboy songs depicting the bravery and exploits of the cowboy are seen in "Bill Venero," "Utah Carroll," and "A Cowboy's Tale." Tales of tragedy in the cowboy's life are evident in "A Fair Lady." Unhappy romance is recalled in "Joe Hardy" and "A Cowboy's Lament." Interestingly enough, romance with a happy ending is evident in "William and Mary."

³¹Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

Therefore, in the songs of the rancher, Joe Mills, various topics concerning a rancher's life are included.

The farmer-laborer group is represented by a square dance and a novelty song. Songs concerning cowboys are noticeably absent in this group, possibly because of the difference in occupation.

At any rate, the folksong is a definite part of the folklore in the Graford area. In no other area of study was there such a delight in presentation of folk material. And in no other area is there so much information concerning the occupation of rancher.

Customs

The folklore of Graford encompasses much more than just tales, superstitions-remedies, and songs. Many of the customs observed by the people of the area may not be unique, but they are indicative of the large volume of folk belief and knowledge of Graford. The customs are divided into four areas predominant in the interviews conducted in Graford. These include customs surrounding the household, recreation, school, and church. In each of the areas, information from persons in the three occupational groups is presented.

Household

Many of the folk customs in Graford center on the operation of the household. These customs include items involving chores, cooking, preservation of meat, canning, and

other miscellaneous items. Members of each of the three occupational groups discussed these customs; and in some cases, variances from one group to another were evident.

One of the major customs which indicated differences among the occupational groups was the preservation of beef. In the Jodie Moore family, beef was preserved for use the year round. The meat was butchered and treated with salt. Then the meat was placed in boxes with lime rocks and buried in the ground. The lime rock would prevent water from standing on the meat and ruining it; and the rock also acted as insulation and helped keep the meat cold, no matter what the season. Some of the meat was smoked in the smokehouse. A fire, built under the carcass of raw beef in the smokehouse, was stoked for two or three days. After this process, the beef was preserved. Therefore, beef was preserved in smoked and unsmoked form.³²

In the John Eubank family, a different method of preservation was used. The calf, slaughtered and cut in strips, was then hung over the clothesline. The beef was left in the sun until it dried. Slaughtering, generally done in the summertime, meant that flies were attracted to the raw meat. Often, the carcass would have to be scraped and cleaned and turned over on the clothesline several times. When the meat was

³²Statement by Jodie Moore, farmer, Graford, Texas, June 3, 1974.

finally totally dry, it was removed from the clothesline and taken to wherever beef was stored. This dried beef would last for several months. The section of beef surrounding the bones was ground and made into hash. This unpreserved beef was eaten first.³³

In the Henry Sikes family, beef was not preserved. Henry Sikes indicated that beef could not be adequately preserved. Therefore, a beef wagon was common among these families. A rancher would kill a beef he wanted to sell late in the evening and quarter it. The following morning he would take his wagon out on the road and sell the beef.³⁴

Another custom among the ranchers was the beef club. Usually, eight families were members of the club. Each member raised a calf to be slaughtered. Every eighth week the rancher would slaughter a small beef, about fifteen to twenty pounds in a half a quarter. Each family would receive one-half of a quarter of beef, and each would receive a different cut of beef each week. At the end of the eight-week period, each family had received an entire beef. If a rancher did not kill a good beef, the next year he would not be invited to join the club. Consequently, beef preservation was not needed among the ranchers of Graford.³⁵

³³John Eubank, June 4, 1974.

³⁴Henry Sikes, June 5, 1975.

³⁵Ibid., June 5, 1974.

All the informants discussed the preservation of pork. Hogs were slaughtered in the fall, when cold weather arrived. Generally, soap was made from the grease of the hog. In a process called rendering, the hog rind and fat were cooked and made into "cracklins." The remainder of the carcass was hung in a tree for a few days. From the tree, the carcass was taken to the smokehouse where it was thoroughly salted and smoked. This process cured the meat, and all the informants agreed that pork cured in this manner would not ruin for a year.³⁶

Preservation of meat was not the only type of home preservation of food that was practiced. All the informants discussed canning vegetables and fruits. Before pressure cookers became available, the vegetables were simply cooked on top of the stove and placed in jars while hot. Then they were stored in the cellar, where it was cool; and only a few jars ruined, according to Annie Eubank.³⁷ The Henry Sikes family preserved fruit by canning, but not vegetables.³⁸ The Jodie Moore family preserved vegetables by placing them in holes in the ground resembling cellars. Cabbages and collards were stored together, but sweet potatoes were placed in another hole. Doors, placed on top

³⁶Henry Sikes and Jodie Moore, June, 1974.

³⁷Annie Eubank, June 4, 1974.

³⁸Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

of these holes, facilitated entry to the small cellars; and vegetables remained fresh in these cellars all winter.³⁹

Several food items, which are simply purchased in supermarkets today, were prepared at home by many families in Graford; and some items, which are not eaten today, were eaten by many families in Graford. Hominy was prepared from dried corn placed in a washpot in combination with lye or ashes. The ashes were placed in a sack and suspended in the pot, but the lye was added directly to the contents of the pot. The lye or ashes separated the corn from the husk. If lye was used, the corn had to be washed several times to rid the corn of the lye, so it could be eaten. The hominy was then stored in a crock until eaten.⁴⁰

Sauerkraut, prepared from cabbage, was stored in a crock with salt on top of it. A weight placed on top of the jar would not allow the top to come off; and the cabbage in time formed its own juice and became sauerkraut, which was simply left in the jar until served.⁴¹

In the preparation of yeast, an Irish potato was boiled, mashed, and then cornmeal was added to the potato. Cakes, made from this mixture, were dried and used whenever needed.

³⁹Jodie Moore, June 3, 1974.

⁴⁰Girtie May, June 3, 1974.

⁴¹Ibid., June 3, 1974.

After the yeast was prepared initially, a small pinch of bread dough which was saved would rise and serve as yeast.⁴²

Common wild meats eaten by many people in Graford were armadillo and opossum. Possum and sweet potatoes were a real delicacy. The possum was simply skinned and baked with sweet potatoes around it.⁴³ Armadillo generally was baked, but sometimes it was fried. The meat tasted of both pork and chicken.⁴⁴ Most informants did say that they ate such meat primarily out of necessity. If beef had been available to them, they would not have chosen possum and armadillo.

Other household items such as brooms and soap were homemade. Weeds called broomweeds, which were quite common in the Graford area, were tied together in bundles for brooms. These brooms were used for sweeping yards, which had no grass, as well as houses.⁴⁵ Soap was generally made from a syrup bucket of grease, a can of lye, and a syrup bucket of water. This soap, known as cold soap, was cooked in a huge pot and used for both clothing and personal hygiene.⁴⁶ Liquid soap was made from ashes and some type of bush. Water, run through the ashes and over strips from the bush,

⁴²Annie Eubank, June 4, 1974.

⁴³Girtie May and Annie Eubank, June, 1974.

⁴⁴Statement by Marie Eidson, wife of farmer, Graford, Texas, June 3, 1974.

⁴⁵Girtie May, June 3, 1974.

⁴⁶Ibid., June 3, 1974.

would become a liquid soap, very close to lye soap. This liquid soap was used for both dishes and clothing.⁴⁷

Annie Eubank even remembered her father making boards called palings for fences and covering barns. The palings resembled the picket fences of today. Generally, red oak was the wood used to make these palings; and the boards were fashioned with a long, slender knife. All work was completed by hand.⁴⁸

The Eubanks also recalled cooking on fireplaces and building log houses. Potatoes rolled in a wet cloth and covered with ashes were baked in a fireplace, if the ashes were not too hot. In order to cook pies, cakes, and breads, one had to suspend a Dutch oven over the fire. Again, the fire could not be too hot; or the food would burn.⁴⁹ Log houses were built from any type of wood and were notched so the corners would fit. The cracks were filled with packing made from mud, sand, and lime. The chinking, as the packing was termed, had to be replaced occasionally. The floor was either dirt, logs, or palings.⁵⁰ Cooking on a fireplace and building log houses are customs which are still remembered, even though not practiced today.

⁴⁷Annie Eubank, June 4, 1974.

⁴⁸Ibid., June 4, 1974.

⁴⁹Ibid., June 4, 1974.

⁵⁰Ibid., June 4, 1974.

Customs of two families in the Graford area are rather unique. Jodie Moore's father created a custom in the Moore family. When any of his children married, he would give the young couple money to set up housekeeping. He would also give them one-half of that year's crop. The only stipulation was that they care for their half of the crop that year. After the wheat, oat, or cotton crop was gathered, the newly married couple would move to their own house.⁵¹

Another custom among the ranchers in the Graford area was borrowing. Many of these families lived four miles from town and could not always travel to town for needed supplies. Sugar, salt, pepper, flour, and meal were generally purchased once a year. However, when a family would run out of some article, a trip to a neighbor's house with a cup would provide the needed article. There was no animosity here, because each neighbor borrowed from his neighbors. Henry Sikes related that before matches, neighbors even borrowed coals of fire to start their fires.⁵² This custom seems to have been practiced primarily by ranchers.

These are only a few of the household customs practiced by the people of Graford. Customs centering around the household are an important factor in the area's folklore. These customs, however, do represent each of the three occupational

⁵¹Jodie Moore, June 3, 1974.

⁵²Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974

groups and do illustrate a difference in household customs from group to group.

Recreation

The informants in Graford discussed several forms of recreation. All the forms of recreation involved groups of people, whether they were ice cream suppers or baseball games or simply playing as children. The forms of recreation varied slightly among the occupational groups, but all involved groups of people having fun together in simple endeavors.

Probably, the most common form of recreation discussed by the informants was the ice cream supper. Jodie and Elvie Moore met at an ice cream supper. It was held at the home of a mutual friend and was a regular occurrence.⁵³ Henry Sikes stated that one family would bring the milk and eggs, one would bring the sugar, and still another would bring the ice. In that manner, each family invited furnished some ingredient for the ice cream.⁵⁴ At the ice cream suppers attended by Estel Kelley and Girtie May, lemonade and other drinks were served, along with the ice cream. When ice cream suppers were held in their home, each family would bring its ice cream freezer; and one person would bring a three-hundred pound block of ice by wagon from Graford.

⁵³Elvie Moore, June 3, 1974.

⁵⁴Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

Then the various families would turn the freezers until the ice cream was prepared. As Girtie May said, "We'd have a barrel of fun makin' a ice cream supper."⁵⁵

Another favorite amusement was the tentshow, and the medicine show was also enjoyed. The best and most famous tentshow was the Toby Haverstock show. There were bleachers inside the tent, and admission was a dime. It was rather expensive, since most children did not have a dime; but the boys received free passes for helping put up the tent. However, the show was worth the dime, since the company of actors, usually eight to ten people, presented plays and sang and danced and even had costumes. The medicine shows were not as entertaining as the tentshows, since the medicine shows were merely on platforms on the back of wagons. There was a little show, but mainly the members of the medicine show tried to sell liniment and tonic.⁵⁶

One very simple but entertaining pastime in the Clendennen family was storytelling. When Kitty Clendennen would get her six children ready for bed, she would sit on the bed with them and tell hair-raising stories of ghosts and monsters. If the children went to sleep, she was not upset, since that was one of the reasons for telling the stories. But for the children, the sessions were pure entertainment. As Eck

⁵⁵Girtie May and Estel Kelley, June 3, 1974.

⁵⁶Eck Clendennen, June 7, 1974.

Clendennen, her daughter, reminisced, "Kitty would tell her kids stories for hours on end at night."⁵⁷

The children in Graford played games, just as all children do. They played drop-the-handkerchief, wolf over the river, and snap. In wolf over the river, two points about 150 feet apart were designated. The object of the game was to cross the area between the two points without being tagged. All the children, except two, gathered at one point. The two remaining stayed in the area between the two points and attempted to tag one of the children on the back as he was running across the area from one point to the other. If he succeeded, the child who was tagged became the person to remain in the area between the two points. In snap, a boy and girl holding hands would be chased by another child who would get his turn to hold hands with the girl, if he caught the first couple. The children also built playhouses. Eck Clendennen related a story of a playhouse made of fenders off old cars. The fenders were hauled into trees in the woods, and the children pretended they lived in the playhouses.⁵⁸

Other types of recreation included fishfries in the summer. A creek would be seined for fish by several families,

⁵⁷Eck Clendennen, June 7, 1974.

⁵⁸Ibid., June 7, 1974.

and they would cook the fish they caught.⁵⁹ When photographers first came through the country, pictures were taken at picnics and family reunions; and this was very entertaining to people who had never had their pictures made.⁶⁰ Baseball games between the towns of Pickwick and Lucille were quite common; and according to Elvie Moore, who was a cheerleader for Lucille, Lucille always won.⁶¹ In later years, a favorite entertainment was listening to the radio. Favorite programs included "Young Widow Brown," "Ma Perkins," and "Bell and Lorenzo Jones." According to Nita Clendennen, "I burned the beans a many a time listening to the radio."⁶²

Although simple forms of recreation, these were all that were available to the people of the Graford area. Each of the occupational groups participated in one or more of these recreational activities. The emphasis on visiting with friends and neighbors provided most of the entertainment, no matter what the occupational group.

School

An entire group of customs sprang up surrounding school in the Graford area. In the early 1900's, there were no

⁵⁹Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

⁶⁰Ibid., June 5, 1974.

⁶¹Elvie Moore, June 3, 1974.

⁶²Statement by Nita Clendennen, daughter and niece of farmer-laborers, Graford, Texas, June 7, 1974.

grades, just readers. When a student completed one reader, even if it was in the middle of the year, he advanced to the next reader. It was possible to complete four readers or four grades in one year. If there were too many students and a teacher could not hear all their lessons in one day, he would have one of the older students hear the younger students' lessons. The younger students studied reading, writing, and arithmetic. The older students also studied geography.⁶³

One of the interesting customs in these early days of school in Graford was the closing-out program or exercises at the end of the school year. The older students usually presented a play. The younger students presented dialogues, marches, and drills.⁶⁴

Other special programs included the Christmas program, which was usually the community Christmas tree. The first day of May, considered the beginning of spring, was also a day of celebration. The children would march around the Maypole, winding and unwinding crepe paper streamers around the pole. Costumes were made of crepe paper; and when it rained, there were a few problems.⁶⁵

⁶³Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

⁶⁴Statement by Lorene Sikes, wife of rancher, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

⁶⁵Ibid., June 5, 1974.

By the 1930's, there were separate grades in separate rooms at the school. However, the curriculum had not changed a great deal. One of the biggest events of the year occurred when the cattle train came to town. School was turned out, and all the children went to the pens at the train station. Not only the children went, but according to Eck Clendennen, "Everybody in Graford went."⁶⁶

In this period of time, a few men in Graford would hitch up wagons and take all the children from various parts of town to school. At noon, the children would be taken home by this same man. They would eat lunch, and then he would return the children to school. When the children finally returned home in the afternoon, it was customary to grab a cold biscuit or piece of cornbread from the kitchen and an onion from the garden for a snack.⁶⁷

These were the customs that accompanied going to school in Graford. They included a few special events and several everyday activities which, when repeated often enough, became customs, customs which were implanted in the minds of the people of the area.

Church

The custom of attending church was one of the most common customs in the Graford area. As Elvie Moore said, "Sunday

⁶⁶Eck Clendennen, June 7, 1974.

⁶⁷Ibid., June 7, 1974.

school and church was all we knew."⁶⁸ Generally, there were no denominations, so everyone went to the same church. The result was revivals which the entire community and those living in outlying areas attended.⁶⁹

The camp meetings, as these revivals were termed, would often last from one to two weeks. Many families camped at the meeting site for the entire week or weeks. John Eubank recalled driving up a calf and killing it for meat during the week and also baking sourdough bread in holes in the ground.⁷⁰ Lorene Sikes remembered that it was customary to have dinner the last night of the two-week revival.⁷¹ Elvie Moore remembered camping at a revival for eight to ten days. Occasional trips would be made back home to care for the stock, but generally the family would stay the entire ten days at the revival.⁷²

There were humorous moments in the customs surrounding the church. According to Elvie Moore, half the men slept, and half the men snored during the Sunday service.⁷³ At

⁶⁸Elvie Moore, June 3, 1974.

⁶⁹Elvie Moore, Henry Sikes, and Girtie May, June, 1974.

⁷⁰John Eubank, June 4, 1974.

⁷¹Lorene Sikes, June 5, 1974.

⁷²Elvie Moore, June 3, 1974.

⁷³Ibid., June 3, 1974.

another service when Elvie Moore, Girtie May, and Estel Kelley saw a woman preacher dressed in white for the first time, the preacher asked Elvie if she was saved. Elvie was so alarmed and frightened she said, "Yes, I've been saved, but she hasn't." Then she pointed at Girtie. Elvie still laughs when she thinks of the dismayed look on Girtie's face, since Girtie had no desire to be converted by a woman preacher.⁷⁴

In all the customs observed, there are fewer differences among the occupational groups in the area of church than in any other. In this important area of life, there was simply a greater cohesiveness among all groups than in any other area. Camp meetings and revivals were the predominant form of religious worship, no matter what the denomination or occupational group.

In conclusion, the customs of the Graford area encompassed all areas of life. Most of the customs involved the household, but this was only natural since providing for the family was the major function in people's lives. The suggestion is apparent that there was not much money, but the families still found forms of recreation which provided entertainment. School and church were also important activities in the lives of the people; therefore, customs developed concerning these two important events. No matter what the occupational group, customs were a vital element in the folklore of Graford.

⁷⁴Elvie Moore, June 3, 1974.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF FOLKLORE IN RELATION TO OCCUPATIONS

The importance of an individual's occupation in forming his life style and his folklore, consequently, cannot be over-emphasized. As Donald Super suggests, "Occupation is not merely a means of earning a livelihood, but also a way of life, a social role."¹ Obviously, the occupation of an individual absorbs more of his time than any other type of activity. According to Super, nine or ten hours of a wage earner's twenty-four are taken up by work and work-related activities.² Edward Gross states it another way in saying that the average man spends one-third of his life as a worker; the housewife spends even more time as a worker.³ It is only natural, then, that a person's occupation must influence every aspect of his life--where he lives, what he eats, who his friends are, even his attitudes toward life and death. If all these aspects of a person's life are affected by his occupation, then his

¹Donald E. Super, Psychology of Careers (New York, 1957), p. 35.

²Ibid., p. 17.

³Edward Gross, Work and Society (New York, 1958), pp. 4-5.

folklore must also be affected by his occupation. After all, Levette J. Davidson has included in folklore the ". . . legends, tales, songs, beliefs, homely wisdom, common ways of speaking, jests, games, festivals, music, dances, customs, crafts, folk arts, etc."⁴ Certainly a person's beliefs, wisdom, and crafts comprise his way of life and affect his social role.

Tristram Coffin and Hennig Cohen suggest that most folklore collectors have gone into the field looking for regional or ethnic lore, rather than occupational lore.⁵ This study, however, attempts to clarify the importance of the individual's occupation in developing folklore in a small region of North Central Texas. As Coffin and Cohen suggest, ". . . a man's occupation is paramount, setting his life style, affecting his outlook on the world, permeating every aspect of his own and his family's existence."⁶ There are differences in folklore from informant to informant, and occupation appears to be one explanation for these differences. The study of occupation in relation to folklore offers an

⁴Levette J. Davidson, A Guide to American Folklore (Denver, 1951), p. 1.

⁵Tristram Coffin and Hennig Cohen, editors, "Introduction," Folklore from the Working Folk of America (New York, 1974), p. xlii.

⁶Ibid., p. xxxv.

explanation for differences in folklore, as well as a basis for viewing an individual's total life style and attitudes.

The sociologist may be interested in the manner in which the occupation represents itself to the outside world.⁷ But the province of the folklorist would appear to be the influence which the occupation has on the individual's customs, superstitions, folktales, and songs. These are, of course, only a few elements of folklore; but these are the elements explored in this study. Therefore, the occupation is important not only for the manner in which it appears to the outside world, but also for the manner in which it affects an individual's personal attitudes and customs.

In the Graford area, occupational influence is obvious in the folktales related by the informants. Each of the three occupational groups enjoyed relating folktales, and each of the group's occupations seemed to determine directly the type of tale the informant remembered. In the rancher group, first it is important to establish the relative wealth of the ranchers when compared to the financial status of the other two groups. According to Gross, in the farm-structure hierarchy, the owners of the land were at the top.⁸ Since the ranchers did own land and grazed cattle on that land, they were definitely at the top of the hierarchy in the Graford

⁷Gross, p. 12.

⁸Ibid., p. 338.

area. Also, since the ranchers were not working for wages or shares, they tended to profit more from their land than did the farmers and farmer-laborers.

The ranchers, as a result, tended to tell more tales concerning school and cattle. Henry Sikes told various tales of attending school as a small boy, as well as his aunt teaching school when he was a boy. The fact that his father was a landowner, and consequently, wealthier than the average sharecropper and laborer provided the opportunity for the Sikes children to attend school. While in the farmer group the family was the work unit that grew its own labor force,⁹ in the rancher group the cowboy who was the hired hand provided the labor force. The children were not needed as workers and could attend school. A direct influence of occupation on the life style and folklore of the rancher family is thus evident.

The ranchers also told tales of cattle (included in the Appendix). Henry Sikes naturally told of cattle drives and rustling and branding, since it was his occupation and the occupation of his father and brothers. Neither of the other two occupational groups told tales of cattle because they generally did not own more than one or two cows and calves at the most. These facts illustrate that the individual's occupation directly colored his folklore.

⁹Gross, p. 280.

Henry Sikes also related a story which was an explanation of Indian summer in the fall. The rancher noticed and appreciated the weather around him while he was working his cattle on the range. Also, it was important whether the weather would be good or bad. If a terrible storm came and cattle were lost, that would result in a loss of income for the rancher. If a norther blew in, again the cattle needed tending in order to assure their survival. It was important in the folklore of the rancher that an explanation of a weather phenomenon in the fall be presented. Again, the occupation of rancher influenced the individual's folklore.

Among farmers, there was much less emphasis placed on schooling, possibly because few farmers were permitted to attend school very often. They were needed to perform chores at home, as Elvie Moore explained:

When I was growin' up, I had to carry wood, water from the well, put milk and butter and everything down in the cellar. That's all I ever did in the kitchen. That's the reason I was shorter than any of the rest of them. I carried five-gallon cans on each side, so I wouldn't have to go to the tank so much.¹⁰

Even if the farmers' children had not been needed to help with the farm chores, they probably would not have gone to school as often as the ranchers' children. They were much poorer than the ranchers' children; and as a result, they could not afford the clothing or supplies necessary for

¹⁰Statement by Elvie Moore, wife of farmer, Graford, Texas, June 3, 1974.

attending school. Since the large farm family was economically useful¹¹ and the tenants who only lived on the land were far below the owners of the land on the farm-structure hierarchy,¹² the folktales of the farmers turned toward subjects other than school.

One of the major areas of the folktale for farmers pertained to first events in their lives. John Eubank's tale of seeing his first train was typical of the kind of stories told by the farmers. In all, he and his wife, Annie, told five stories of seeing new machines for the first time. This may not appear as important in relation to their occupation of farming, but one must consider the impact that the train was to have on the farmer's life. The lumber that John Eubank and his father were carrying to Mineral Wells by wagon in the tale would soon be transported there by train from Graford, a marked improvement for the Eubank family. The family could spend more time working in the fields to improve its prosperity. Husband and wife both told of seeing a grain binder for the first time, a device which revolutionized the occupation of farming. Grain was no longer thrashed and bundled by hand, but by a machine. The use of the machine left a great deal of time for other endeavors. The new machines of the farm changed

¹¹Gross, p. 280.

¹²Ibid., p. 338.

the lives of the Eubanks and other farmers a great deal; thus, their recollections in the form of folktales included mention of these machines. In the Graford area, occupation apparently influenced the folktales related by informants.

A basic similarity is present in the farmer and farmer-laborer groups in the tales of the supernatural. Although all the plots dealt with ghosts or supposed ghosts, a difference in the farmer and farmer-laborer stories is evident in the attitude of the informants while telling their stories. Annie Eubank was almost reluctant to tell the story told to her by her father about the woman buried alive. She laughed and denied that she believed it all through the tale. Having been a farmer's wife and having worked the land and watched the logic of nature unfold before her, she was naturally skeptical of the unusual story about a woman being buried alive. As Gross states, in farming, the emphasis is on the land; and a distinctive culture arises from this emphasis.¹³ With the emphasis on the land and the logic which results from observing nature at work, the occurrence in "Buried Alive" simply does not follow the natural sequence of events in the natural world, a world with which the farmer is intimately in touch.

The attitude of the farmer-laborer toward the tales of the supernatural was somewhat different. Kitty Clendennen

¹³Gross, p. 281.

truly believed the supernatural tales she related to her children and grandchild. She could literally scare them to sleep at night with her tales of chains being dragged over the house of a dying family, of an orangutan frightening people, of the woman born with the veil over her face being able to communicate with the dead. It is difficult to explain this difference in attitude toward the tales of the supernatural. However, the fact that the Clendennen, May, and Spurlock families used storytelling as a form of entertainment might be one answer. That may not directly link their occupation to the telling of supernatural tales, but one must remember that the farmer-laborers were quite poor and did not have the availability of books for entertainment. Paul Douglas suggests that in 1920, at the peak of farm wages, wages earned by the farmer-laborer in the Graford area were \$15.59 per month in that year compared to \$33.81 per month for factory workers that same year.¹⁴ The farmer-laborers were also at the bottom of the farm-structure hierarchy, according to Gross.¹⁵ With that meager an income, the farmer-laborers had little possibility of gaining much education or paying for any form of entertainment. Therefore, storytelling had to be an important and vital form of entertainment for the farmer-laborers. Since tales of the

¹⁴Paul H. Douglas, Real Wages in the United States 1890-1926 (New York, 1930), p. 189.

¹⁵Gross, p. 338.

supernatural are imaginative and totally unreal, they would tend to be very entertaining for adults, as well as children. A sense of conviction in the truth of the tale enhanced the entertaining element of the supernatural tales. People were naturally more interested in a ghost story if the informant himself appeared to believe what he was saying. Again it is evident that occupation influenced the type of folktale related and perhaps even the attitude toward the folktale.

Another prominent area of the folktale for the farmer-laborers surrounded animals, both domestic and wild. Since the farmer-laborers relied on their own possessions to make a living, the importance of domestic animals was tremendous. Being basically unskilled laborers, they performed work which called for little or no training on the part of the laborer. This work was generally routine or manual in character.¹⁶ The major domestic animal used in the Graford area in the performance of these manual tasks was the mule, and the farmer-laborers often discussed this animal in their folktales. The mule might be helpful as in "The Mules," or it might be cantankerous as in "The Holness and the Camelite." No matter what the role of the mule, it was the central point in the stories told which pertain to domestic animals.

Wild animals also figured prominently in the tales related by the farmer-laborers. Stories of snakes and panthers

¹⁶ Harold Clark, Life Earnings in Selected Occupations in the United States (New York, 1937), p. 122.

were not uncommon. Generally, the farmer-laborers viewed the snake and panther, as well as other wild animals, as creatures eliciting wonder and amazement. Being farmers and laborers as well, they encountered many such animals in their work. Often, they labored in uninhabited areas, especially when they were doing such work as laying pipelines. The tales they told of these animals reflect this attitude toward creatures of the wild. Their occupation definitely placed them in proximity to wild animals, and as a result, provided the source for many of the stories they told.

Several of the farmer-laborers also told stories concerning first events, just as the farmers did. However, there is a difference between the kinds of events collected by the farmers and farmer-laborers. The farmer-laborers were much more interested in the first automobiles they viewed than were the farmers. Again, occupation would seem to foster this interest. The automobile was to become a means of transportation for the farmer-laborers, transportation which would be much faster and more convenient than horses or mules. The automobile would also increase the total area in which the farmer-laborers could work. As a result, their total life style would be changed, transforming the farmer-laborers into more general laborers. Consequently, it is obvious that the memory of the first automobile would stand out in the minds

of the farmer-laborers. This memory would also influence the type of folktales they would later relate.

In conclusion, the folktales of the ranchers, farmers, and farmer-laborers were directly influenced by their various occupations. Certainly, there may have been other influences; but one very important factor in the folktales remembered and related had to be occupation.

Turning to the area of superstitions, one notices that the ranchers possessed a definite body of superstitions surrounding weather signs. Although usually unwilling to define these signs as superstitions, the ranchers still watched for various signs to determine the weather. This is logical since the weather is of great importance in raising stock. Tanks and creeks served as water sources for their stock; if it did not rain, these water sources could dry up, and the cattle could die of thirst. Any sign that indicated rain was of interest to the rancher, and it was in this area that the majority of their superstitions appeared.

The ranchers, generally, did not place much faith in superstitions. Several reasons seem to explain this. First of all, the ranchers usually were more educated than the farmer-laborers. Education tends to dispel belief in superstitions as a whole. Also, the ranchers owned land and were fairly sure of their lives and futures. Unlike the farmers and farmer-laborers, who could lose their jobs and their

homes at any time, the ranchers were secure in the knowledge that what they possessed was truly theirs. They did not feel the need to look for signs of good and bad luck; they could usually control their lives. The obvious exception to this certainty was the weather. Consequently, the ranchers tended to believe in superstitions concerning weather signs; but they generally rejected superstitions concerning good and bad luck.

The majority of farmer superstitions concerned the planting of crops. What could be more logical, since the farmers prospered only if their crops were productive. The emphasis was even greater on the crops because the farmers, being sharecroppers, were compelled to share their crops with the people who owned the land they worked. Since the emphasis of the farmers' lives was on the land and since their families generally comprised the work unit, they must have felt the need for assistance from superstition in the production of their crops.

Several wives of farmers related superstitions concerning children. These superstitions ranged from pregnancy to the health of the child after it was born. The fact that these informants were women rather than the fact that they were farmers seems to be the best explanation for the observance of these superstitions.

In the farmer group just as in the rancher group, there was an obvious absence of a great many superstitions concerning

good and bad luck. Gross has suggested that a remarkable uniformity of attitudes and needs and a consequent fitting together of life elements into an integrated whole¹⁷ existed in the farming family. This integration of the life elements, as well as the emphasis on the land, suggests that the farmers found solace in nature, rather than needing to turn to superstitions. The farmers would naturally follow superstitions concerning planting, and the women would believe superstitions concerning children; but in general, their occupation provided answers for a great many questions, answers found in superstitions by the farmer-laborers.

The large majority of superstitions in the farmer-laborer group dealt with good and bad luck. The farmer-laborers were not as tied to the land as the farmers, and they were not as well-educated as the ranchers. Therefore, the farmer-laborers' lives were a bit more uncertain than either the lives of the farmers or those of the ranchers. It seems natural that the farmer-laborers would then turn their attention to the more abstract aspects of life, such as good and bad luck in life, resulting in prosperity or perhaps even death. They looked for signs of both good and bad luck in all areas of their lives, from eating to sleeping to the wearing of clothing. Obviously, their occupation influenced the adoption of a great many superstitions.

¹⁷Gross, p. 281.

Many of the farmer-laborers' superstitions dealt with animals, both domestic and wild. Most farmer-laborers had a few chickens, perhaps a few hogs, at least one cow to milk, and an abundance of dogs. Since superstition was ingrained in the lives of the farmer-laborers, they would naturally seek and retain superstitions which concerned their domestic animals. Also, they would extend these superstitions to the wild animals they encountered.

The fact that the farmer-laborers traveled more than the farmers and ranchers can be one explanation for their large volume of superstitions. Undoubtedly, while working in other areas, the farmer-laborers would hear new superstitions which would make an impression on them; and so they would bring these superstitions back home with them. Perhaps unintentionally, they would add these newly acquired superstitions to their families' already-growing number of superstitions; and they would eventually pass these superstitions on to some other farmer-laborer, thereby spreading the superstition. The occupation would directly influence the acquisition of superstitions, resulting in a large volume of superstitions.

In the one area of burial customs, it is interesting to note the difference in approach to superstitions between two occupational groups. It was in this common area of concern that the basic difference in attitude toward superstitions arose. Henry Sikes, rancher, indicated that it was merely

a superstition not to dig a grave and leave it open overnight in Graford. In labeling the belief verbally as a superstition, Sikes indicated that he did not accept the belief. He did say that the old superstition had given rise to the custom in Graford. Grace Mann, daughter of a farmer-laborer, did not label the custom as superstition. She simply said that a grave was not dug and left open overnight; she did say that the practice was considered bad luck. Another daughter of a farmer-laborer, Eck Clendennen, did not label the belief superstition either; she even stated that if a grave was dug and left open overnight, someone else in the family would die. Therefore, the rancher labeled the belief superstition and discarded it; the farmer-laborers, on the other hand, would not label the belief as a superstition. Labeling the belief as a superstition would have destroyed its authenticity; and in omitting the label, the farmer-laborers indicated that they held the superstition to be true. This is the best example available in observing the differences between the ranchers and the farmer-laborers in terms of superstition. Certainly, the difference in occupation appears to be one reason for this difference in folk belief.

In the similar area of folk remedies, the ranchers again did not place much faith in the application of folk remedies. Lorene Sikes, wife of a rancher, stated that when she or her family was ill, she simply sent for the doctor. The comparative

wealth of the rancher would allow and encourage such an action. She also said that women such as Girtie May, wife of a farmer-laborer, knew more folk remedies and utilized them more than she or her family did.¹⁸ Wealth was not the only factor in the absence of folk remedies among the ranchers. They were more educated, as has already been discussed; and education naturally tended to dispel the belief in many folk remedies. The belief that a chihuahua dog could help an asthma patient would be a bit illogical for an educated person to accept. Again, the occupation of rancher tended to accentuate scientific and medical remedies while the occupation of farmer-laborer tended to stress folk remedies.

Obviously, the farmers and farmer-laborers did not always have the option of calling the doctor when someone became ill. Unless the disease was very serious, they had to rely on the easily acquired folk medicines such as turpentine, coal oil, and horehound. Coal oil was a necessity for light, horehound could be found growing wild, and turpentine was cheap enough that it was an available medicine. The farmers and farmer-laborers used the medicines available to them because of economic necessity. There simply was not enough money to pay a doctor most of the time.

¹⁸Statement by Lorene Sikes, wife of rancher, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

Various families stressed the use of different folk medicines. In the Eubank family, a basic folk medicine was cornmeal. Meal was used as a poultice, in a mixture with water for nausea, in any of a number of various remedies. This can be explained by the fact that the farmer family usually produced a generous crop of corn from which cornmeal could be made. In the May family, coal oil was the basic medicine. It was used in poultices, combined with sugar for cough syrup, and applied to snake and insect bites. Obviously, coal oil was readily available to this farmer-laborer family. As a result, the type of folk medicine employed was dictated by the family's occupation. Occupation directly influenced folk remedies in both the farmer and farmer-laborer groups.

An interesting difference between the ranchers and farmers in attitude toward folk remedies can be seen in reference to snake bites. Elvie Moore, farmer's daughter and wife, told of placing her foot in coal oil when bitten by a snake. The coal oil turned green as the poison was drawn out, and she was sure that coal oil was an infallible cure for snake bite.¹⁹ Henry Sikes, rancher, on the other hand, stated that his brother was bitten by a snake on the knee. Coal oil was applied to the bite, and the knee was covered. Sikes stated that his brother was sicker from the burn he received from covering the knee after applying the

¹⁹Elvie Moore, June 3, 1974.

coal oil than from the snake bite.²⁰ Accordingly, the rancher family did not rely heavily on home remedies, while the farmer family placed total faith in the folk remedies. The fact that the rancher, because of his occupation, had the money available for a doctor's treatment of an injury and the knowledge that coal oil might not cure every injury colored his belief in and remembrances of snake bite folk remedies.

Farmer-laborers related the large majority of superstitions and remedies. For varying reasons, both the ranchers and farmers relied more on science and faith in nature, respectively, than did the farmer-laborers. Many factors were responsible for this difference in attitude, but one basic factor explaining the difference had to be their varying occupations.

In the area of songs, the majority of the entries came from one rancher, Joe Mills. Mills has lived all his life in the Graford area and grew up in a ranching family. Basically, he remembers his mother's singing to him as a form of entertainment. Just as another family might tell stories for entertainment, this family chose to sing folksongs. The fact that their occupation was ranching is apparent in the topics of the songs. Most of Mills' songs dealt with cowboys and their daring exploits and unhappy romances. Since the rancher

²⁰Statement by Henry Sikes, banker and rancher, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

family was in close contact with cowboys, they remembered songs about the deeds of cowboys.

Four folksongs related by Mills dealt with the exciting life of the cowboy. Adventure was the key element in all four songs, "A Cowboy's Tale," "Utah Carroll," "A Fair Lady," and "Bill Venero." In "A Cowboy's Tale," the content of the song was basically that of a diary of life on the trail. Adventure, bravery, and excitement were all suggested by the account of the events. In "Utah Carroll," adventure was again a key element; but of primary importance seemed to be the bravery and chivalrous nature of the main character, Utah. Also, a tragic ending was a key element of this song. In "A Fair Lady," the very harshness of the cowboy's life as well as the adventure of his life was stressed. Mention of Indians was also an important element in this song. "Bill Venero," which was much like "Utah Carroll," again stressed the bravery of the main character, along with the adventure of Indian fighting as a secondary element. This same adventure and excitement were also apparent in the rancher's attitude toward the cowboy in the cattle stories that Henry Sikes related.

Three of the songs related by Joe Mills dealt with romance, both happy and unhappy. However, in the majority of the songs, the ending was usually unhappy. "Joe Hardy" was a rather humorous account of a man who had lost his love and was trying to live with the incident. In answering

May's letter, the main character attempted to laugh off the loss of her love by telling her that he used her love letters to light his cigar. In "A Cowboy's Lament," the attitude toward lost love was definitely not humorous.

The cowboy turned from society and other possibilities for happiness to the lonesome life of the cowboy on the range, thus suggesting that the cowboy's life had very harsh aspects to it. Instead of humor, he countered the loss of love with bitterness. "William and Mary" had the one happy ending in the collection. After testing Mary's faithfulness and love, William threw off a disguise to end the song on a positive note. There was no mention of William being a cowboy in this song, so possibly the cowboy songs generally dealt with unhappy love.

In examining the folksongs that Joe Mills sings, one finds that the life of the 1800's cowboys left an indelible stamp on this rancher's music. Many of the characteristics attributed to the cowboy by other rancher stories are also attributed to the cowboy in these folksongs. Therefore, the occupation of rancher seems to have definitely influenced the type of folksongs the rancher heard.

Mike Clendennen, farmer-laborer, remembers many square dances he has called in his lifetime; and the one included in this study is one of the best. When asked about the cowboy songs, he stated that he never really was much of a

rancher and did not remember the few songs of cowboys he had heard as a boy.²¹ Instead, he lived in communities all around the Graford area and mingled with the people in those communities while he was working for various people, performing various tasks. He may have been working as a farmer, living as a day laborer, or doing any of a number of other tasks involving manual labor. His occupation of laborer definitely led him into relationships with the people with whom he worked. Gross has suggested that work provides one of the major bonds a person has with his fellows,²² and Clendennen formed bonds which led to friendships. The natural consequence was meeting these fellow workers and friends at dances. Clendennen recalls Christmas Day dances, Fourth of July dances, dances at all times of the year. His occupation carried him to various locales at various times of the year, and his pastime as a square dance caller began.

Grace Mann, daughter of a farmer-laborer, supplied the one novel song in the section. The fact that her parents were not ranchers explains the absence of cowboy songs in her memory. The purpose of singing was obviously for entertainment; and this nonsense song, "Monkeytown," provided ample entertainment for children and adults. There were no

²¹Statement by Mike Clendennen, farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 7, 1974.

²²Gross, p. 4.

brave exploits or brave men, just monkeys having fun. This same emphasis on light-hearted fun is seen in the farmer-laborers who enjoyed attending square dances.

In conclusion, the folksong was a form of entertainment enjoyed by both the rancher and farmer-laborer groups. The topics of the songs were different, in that the rancher sang of cowboy exploits, and the farmer-laborers employed music and singing as a pastime and as an accompaniment for square dancing. In this difference one can detect the influence of occupation on the type of folksong and music enjoyed.

In the general area of folk customs, there appeared numerous examples that support the premise that an individual's occupation influences his folklore. Perhaps this was most apparent in the area of household customs. In both the farmer and farmer-laborer groups, preserving meat was an accepted custom. Either a smokehouse was used or the meat was hung up to dry after being slaughtered. In one farmer family, meat was even buried in lime rock for preservation in the summer. All of the farmers and farmer-laborers interviewed stated that they did preserve meat. Otherwise, they would not have had meat the year round, as they were not wealthy enough simply to buy beef when they needed it. Also, most of the families in these two groups did not have enough cattle so that one could be slaughtered any time meat was needed.

In the rancher group, however, Henry Sikes definitely stated that meat could not be preserved the year round, with

the possible exception of pork. When the rancher family needed meat, it slaughtered a calf, or bought meat from the beef wagon, or joined the beef club. This was possible because the rancher, unlike the farmer and farmer-laborer, owned many cattle and could profit from them in the form of money on the market or beef on the table.

Consequently, the occupation determined whether the family attempted to preserve beef. This indicates definite influence of occupation on custom. None of the farmers and farmer-laborers indicated that they knew anything of a beef club, just as Henry Sikes said that beef could not be preserved. A striking difference in custom because of occupation is apparent.

Because of the scarcity of money, as has been discussed previously, the farmers and farmer-laborers also preserved all the fruits and vegetables that were available. The farmers even talked of burying vegetables under the ground in miniature cellars for protection. In direct opposition to this custom, the ranchers did not preserve vegetables. Fruit was preserved on occasion, but generally vegetables were bought from the market in Graford or obtained from sharecroppers when needed. Because the rancher was interested in raising cattle and not vegetables, his occupation influenced his custom. On the other hand, because the farmers were sharecroppers, they grew vegetable gardens

from necessity, in order to share a portion of the crop with the owner of the land on which they lived and provide their own families with food.

Another difference in custom which was a direct result of occupational differences pertained to the eating of wild meat. None of the ranchers interviewed mentioned eating armadillo or opossum. However, both farmers and farmer-laborers told of preparing and eating this meat. It was obvious that this was not always by choice, but at times it was a necessity. Unlike the ranchers who usually had beef available, the farmers and farmer-laborers sometimes had no meat available, other than from the wild animals they could kill.

One custom in the Moore family which was indicative of the farmers' folklore was the sharing of the crop with newly married couples. As Gross indicates, this is a good example of the thinking of the farmer. Gross states that many of the same families remain in an area, preserving the force of the past.²³ Certainly, this sharing of the crop with newlyweds indicated a desire for the couple to stay in the area with the family. Again, the occupation of farmer influenced the customs of a family.

Many of the household customs which formed an important section of the folklore of the people of Graford were

²³Gross, p. 348.

influenced by the people's occupations. While a few customs were followed by all three groups in the Graford area, several obvious differences are visible between the ranchers and the farmers and farmer-laborers. These differences in customs can be easily traced to the difference in occupation.

The customs concerning recreation in the Graford area were quite similar in all three occupational groups. All three groups spoke of ice cream suppers. Possibly, this activity was shared by all three groups because all families had access to eggs, milk, and sugar. Even farmer-laborers generally owned a cow for milk and chickens for eggs, since these were basic foods in the diets of all three occupational groups. The very fact that all the families had the ingredients for ice cream suggests that their occupations influenced this custom. A factory worker in the city might not have had milk and eggs; but the ranchers, farmers, and farmer-laborers all had these items because cattle and other farm animals were needed in each of the three occupations.

The practice of storytelling in the farmer-laborers interviewed suggested that their occupation might have influenced this custom. Since many of the men traveled to other areas to work, they probably gathered stories about the people and places where they worked which they repeated to their families. Also, since the farmer-laborers were poor and could not afford books and other types of entertainment, it follows that they told stories to their children

for entertainment. Unlike their rancher counterparts, who could afford books, the farmer-laborers had to rely on their imaginations and memories to entertain their families. Consequently, their occupation influenced this form of recreation.

One of the forms of recreation mentioned by the ranchers was the practice of having pictures taken at family reunions and picnics. Photography was new to the Graford area in the early 1900's, and it was undoubtedly a rather expensive process. None of the farmers and farmer-laborers remembered having pictures taken until at least 1920. The fact that the ranchers were wealthier than the other two groups suggests that their occupation probably enabled them to enjoy this form of recreation earlier than the farmers and farmer-laborers.

In the customs pertaining to recreation, not as many differences occurred as in the household customs. However, all three occupations did influence the forms of recreation in the Graford area. All three groups enjoyed simple forms of recreation, utilizing the resources available to them.

In the area of school customs, it was apparent that the occupation of the individual affected his remembrances of his school days. In the oldest generation interviewed, it was the rancher group which provided most of the remembrances concerning school. Henry Sikes and his wife told of attending schools and the special celebrations practiced in the early

1900's. A large number of the anecdotes which Sikes told centered around going to school. He told of the teacher who was asked if he taught that the earth was round or flat while applying for a job. The teacher's answer was that he could teach either way.²⁴ This brand of humor follows throughout Sikes' remembrances of school. To him attending school was an interesting experience, one about which he could be light-hearted. The fact that Sikes' father was a rancher provides a reason for this attitude toward school. Being at the top of the farm-structure hierarchy, the rancher could afford for his children to attend school. He did not have to view his entire family as a work force for his land, since he could and did hire cowboys to work his cattle. As a result, school was an important event in the lives of the Sikes children.

In the farmer-laborer group, only one informant discussed school; and this discussion was brief. Mike Clendennen told of attempting to attend school in the tale, "The Panther." The positive factor in being almost killed by a panther was that after that experience, Clendennen no longer had to attend school. He was allowed to stay at home and work for his father for a number of years until the family moved to town. Many farmer-laborers were restricted in their attendance to school because they often lived

²⁴Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

several miles from the school, and it was dangerous to make the journey. The father or mother could not leave the chores which they had to do to take the children to school; so many times the children were allowed to stay home simply because they wanted to and because it was economically feasible.

The majority of information gained about attending school from the farmer-laborer group came in the second generation. In that generation, many of the people remembered attending school. By that time, the laborers had moved to town; and as a result, they were closer to school. As Douglas suggests, hired workers whose families did not own much land found better opportunities in the city.²⁵ Graford was not a city, of course; but it did offer more opportunities for the farmer-laborers. The emphasis seemed to shift from farmer to laborer at this time.

It is interesting to note the difference in the type of remembrances from the rancher to farmer-laborer groups. The ranchers remembered celebrations and special events from their school days, as well as the everyday routine. The farmer-laborers, on the other hand, tended to remember the everyday activities which became custom more frequently than the special events. Offering an explanation for this difference is difficult. Again, perhaps the low income of the farmer-laborers prohibited their children from being

²⁵Douglas, p. 190.

as involved in the special events of the school. Also, perhaps the passing of a generation changed the stress of school activities in the minds of the informants. No matter what the reason, this difference did occur between the two groups.

In summary, the farmers rarely mentioned school, possibly because their occupation necessitated their being at home a great deal of time to help with the planting and harvesting. The farmer-laborers only began a discussion of school with the second generation interviewed. Again, the need for the children to be at home to help with the work and the fact that many of the early generation farmer-laborers lived far from town offer a reason for this lack of information about school from this group. Only in the rancher group, which was wealthier, was school an important subject in conversation. Certainly, in the customs pertaining to school, occupational influence was tremendous.

The custom of the Graford area which was least affected by the varying occupations of the inhabitants was the custom of attending church. All occupational groups told of camp meetings and revivals held under the old brush arbor.²⁶ Gross suggests that in the farming community, one of the major characteristics was this closeness to religion.²⁷ No

²⁶Statement by John Eubank, farmer, Graford, Texas, June 4, 1974.

²⁷Gross, p. 271.

matter if the family was rancher, farmer, or farmer-laborer, when a revival was held, the family stopped its work and attended the services. The closeness of the various occupational groups in faith is thus apparent. It can be said that living in or near a farming community as all these groups did would perhaps reinforce this religious belief; but even if this hypothesis is not accepted, the fact remains that all families experienced this closeness to religion. Since there were no separate denominations to divide the families, all attended and enjoyed the same type of religious service.

Humor was an element which appeared in the information provided by several farmers and farmer-laborers. Their occupations may not have directly injected humor into their attitudes toward religion; but it should be remembered that a revival was a kind of entertainment for many of these families, who knew very little entertainment. Injecting humor into their stories of attending church does follow when attending church is evident as a form of entertainment. The fact that their occupations of farmer and farmer-laborer restricted the availability of entertainment could influence the group's attitudes toward church.

In conclusion, it is obvious that in this custom there is very little direct influence seen from the various occupations. However, their closeness to religion and intensity

of belief is easy to accept when one views the simplicity of their lives, as evidenced by their customs and folklore in general.

Each of the occupational groups in the Graford area revealed a definite correlation between type of work and folklore. The ranchers were interested in preserving cowboy traditions and tales, and in general their affluence was obvious in their tales of school and the absence of a great many superstitions. That farmers were bound to the land is evident in their interest in tales concerning farm machinery and their emphasis on superstitions concerning planting. They were also well-versed in folk remedies involving the items produced on the farm. The farmer-laborers, unlike the previous two groups, were enmeshed in the folklore of superstitions and exhibited a wealth of folktales, tales which provided a basic form of entertainment for the group on the lowest rung of the farm-structure hierarchy.

All three groups stressed various areas of folklore; and without realizing it, all three groups categorized themselves in occupational groups because of their folklore. Occupation influenced and directed the type of folklore remembered by each family, and occupation is thus an important factor in analyzing the folklore of Graford, Texas.

APPENDIX

Folktales

The First Grain Binder

I was just a little ol' kid; I wasn't over six or seven years old, and there was a thrasher come into our community. I had never seen or heard of one. Before they got them, the only grain cuttin' I knew anything about, they cut it with what they called a cradle. It had a long blade on it, and it had little ol' wooden teeth fixed, and you had to stoop over, and you cut it by hand. And when you'd cut it, why this grain would roll back on them fingers, and you would take it off with your hand until you got enough to make a bundle. Then you'd tie the bundle with some of the grain.

Well, this thrasher comes to town. I guess it was around six feet long and something like four feet in depth. And you had a little ol' table where you fed into that separator. You'd throw your grain up there and feed it in with your hand. When it come out, it come out of the box, and it held two half bushels. Instead of having a register on the machine, it was down there in the box. When it would fill with a half bushel, it would click. They got the power for it off of two big horses, and the steps they clumb had logs, so the horses' feet wouldn't slip. When they throwed that lever, why, them horses would walk.

That was the prettiest stuff I ever saw in my life.¹

Cattle Brands

This doesn't apply to this country exactly, but you've heard of the XIT Ranch. That was the ranch that the state gave those people in the North to build a state capitol. They gave 'em three million acres of land out on the Panhandle, and they went into the cattle business and wanted to have a brand. And the most prevalent custom was runnin' over the brands. If I had a brand on cattle, they would run

¹Statement by John Eubank, farmer, Graford, Texas, June 4, 1974.

over that brand and make it another brand. That way they could just brand my cattle again and make them theirs.

So they was tryin' to devise a brand that would be difficult to run. Well, somebody come up with the brand XIT; finally they decided that it just couldn't be run over.

They arrested a man for stealin' cattle from the XIT. His brand was the lone five-pointed star. They got him up in court, and his lawyer got witnesses to prove that it couldn't be done. And they acquitted him. When they had acquitted him, he turned around and showed 'em how he was doin' it.²

The Cattle Drive

My father made two cattle drives from here to Kansas, and I guess he never did pick up any cattle because he never did get rich at it. When Nick, my brother, was just a boy--I guess he was just about twelve or fourteen years old--he wanted to go with 'em. He wanted to go with the herd.

Harvey Sikes was the trail boss. Someone told me later that he had the honor of being the youngest trail boss that ever took a herd of cattle. I don't know whether that was true or not.

Anyway, Nick wanted to go with 'em. But Papa said, "No, you've got to stay here and watch these herds and keep 'em from drivin' the rest of our cattle off."

"Well," Nick said, "You're takin' all of the saddle horses."

Papa had a lot of horses. He said, "All you've got to do all summer is break your horses." A twelve or fourteen-year-old boy gettin' out here and breakin' those horses. He left him one or two little ol' ponies that wasn't very good.

Some time later, why, a herd came through, and Nick went to it, and sure nuff, it had some of our cows in it. Well, he went in there to cut those cows out; the pony balked with him. And he never got so disgusted. Right there when he wanted to make an impression on these cowboys with this herd, the pony wouldn't do anything.

²Statement by Henry Sikes, banker and rancher, Graford, Texas, June 5, 1974.

Of course, the cowboys wouldn't help him, and I guess they got some of our cows.³

Cattle Rustlers and Fence Cutters

I heard my mother tell about one evenin' when some of the older Sikes boys was saddling the best horses. It looked like they was goin' somewhere, but it was late in the evening. She was concerned about what they were goin' to do.

She said, "What's George doin'; where are they goin' this time of the day?"

One of the boys answered her, "They're fixin' to catch a cow thief over here." They heard tell that they was goin' to drive some cattle to this pass over here. They were gonna catch 'em that night.

I never did understand just what happened, but anyway this is what my mother told me. As for most of the instances of cattle theft I could tell you about, I just can't. Some of the parties are still livin', and I can't go talkin' about them stealin' cattle.

I can tell you somethin' about fence cutters. Did you ever hear anything about fence cutters? Well, it's a violation of a state statute to carry a pair of pliers today. I'm not sure whether it was a felony or a misdemeanor, probably just a misdemeanor. When fences were built, why, a lot of people didn't like it. People would come in, buy some land, get title to it, and put a fence around it.

Maybe there would be a waterhole on the land or some other reason why other people wanted to cross the land. Well, they would slip in there every night and cut these fences. As soon as the rancher mended the fence, they would just come back and cut it again.

That was more prevalent around here than cattle rustlin', I suppose.⁴

The Hound Pup

When I was ten years old, my daddy talked to Eli Vance who owned Hossel Ranch about five miles from us, and Mr. Vance promised me a registered hound pup when

³Henry Sikes, June 5, 1974.

⁴Ibid., June 5, 1974.

the old mamma had them. Well, I was so excited I could hardly wait until those pups were found. Winter was comin' on, and I knew I probably wouldn't get that pup till spring if the mamma didn't find them soon.

Well, I waited for about four cold winter months, and we didn't hear a word from Eli Vance. Finally, one day I got a post card sayin' I was to come and get my pup. It was spring, so it was all right for me to ride over to the ranch for him. I was to ride to the ranch, spend the night, and get my pup.

When I got to the ranch, I found out that the mamma had mothered the pups in a plum thicket. That was a problem. An old mamma dog is mean as the devil when it comes to her pups, and I knew that to get to the pup I had to crawl in the thicket. I waited until the mamma left the thicket to get somethin' to eat, and then I started crawlin' in the thicket. I had crawled about ten feet before I came to the dogs. The pups were as big as jackrabbits, and they had never seen a human bein' before. Talk about sharp teeth! I had to look at about three before I found a dog pup, and then the only way I could get him out was to crawl backwards holdin' his hind legs. He was bitin' at my hands, and I knew the old mamma would be back soon.

When I finally got out, I was scratched all over, and the old mamma dog was right behind me. She followed me on my horse three miles before she finally gave up. Now that I look back on it, I really wanted that pup to go through all that to get it.

I spent the night, and the next morning Lead, the pup, and I went home. He grew into the prettiest hound pup I had ever seen, and I wasn't the only one who thought so. When he was about three months old, a man came to our place and offered me twenty-five dollars for Lead. That was the very first time I knew that you could sell a dog. But I didn't sell Lead; he meant too much to me to do that, especially after what I had went through to get him.⁵

The Funeral

We went to a funeral at Oran one time; you know that's a little town near Graford. Well, the funeral was for Evie Bevers' little girl. And she just had one little girl that died. I'll never forget it as long as I live.

⁵Statement by Mike Clendennen, farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 7, 1974.

They had the funeral services preached under a great big ol' shade tree. This has been long years ago, when they used to have funerals outside.

This bird flew up; I don't know what kind of bird it was. But it flew up; then it just sang and sang right up over our heads. Evie said, "Oh, you reckon it understands."

I can still hear that bird and hear her say that. That bird sat up in that tree and sang all the time we was there.⁶

Songs

As I Stood on the Bridge

As I stood on the bridge in the evening
Under the moonbeam fair;
I saw the youth and the pride of a manhood,
A maiden of beauty so rare.

"Oh, sir, I was only flirting,
Only playing a part;
I never thought of a broken heart;
I never knew you loved me,
Never thought you really did care."

As his graceful head bent slowly
Beneath his clustered brown hair;
"I'm to be married next Sunday."

Then offering her hand,
And gathering her robes about her,
She left him alone in the sand.⁷

A Band of Cowboys

Come, all you melancholy folks, a story I will tell;
About a band of cowboys in Mexico does dwell;
Their homes are in the saddle, I'll have you all to know;
There's fun in herding cattle on the plains of Mexico.

⁶Statement by Girtle May, wife of farmer-laborer, Graford, Texas, June 3, 1974.

⁷Statement by Joe Mills, rancher, Graford, Texas, June 10, 1974.

This world is long and wide enough,
 One won't, another will;
 So take this for your answer and for yourself provide,
 I've found another sweetheart,
 And you were laid aside."¹⁰

Barbry Allen

It was so early in the year;
 When the Mayberry buds were swelling;
 Sweet William Spring from an offgum tree
 Fell in love with Barbry Allen.

Sweet William took sick and very sick
 For the love of Barbry Allen;
 He sent his servants down through the town
 To the place where she was dwelling.

"Our master's sick and he sends for thee
 If thy name be Barbry Allen."
 Softly she rose up and softly she went to him
 And the very first words that she did say were,

"Young man, I think you're dyin,"
 "Oh, yes, I'm sick, and I'm very sick,
 And I'm on my deathbed lying,
 And never any better will I be unless I get Barbry Allen."

"Then you're sick," she said, "and you're very sick,
 And you're on your deathbed lying and never any better
 will you be,
 For you'll never get Barbry Allen;
 Sir, don't you remember the other day while drinking at
 the tavern,

You drank to the health of the ladies round,
 But slighted Barbry Allen."
 "Oh, yes, I remember the other day while drinking at
 the tavern,
 I drank to the health of the ladies round;

But my heart was Barbry Allen's."
 He turned his cold face to the wall and his back on
 Barbry Allen,
 "Adieu, adieu, to good friends all;
 Farewell to Barbry Allen."

¹⁰ Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

Slowly, slowly, she rose up and slowly she went from him,
 And she had not gone but a mile or two
 When she heard the death bells tolling;
 They tolled so loud, and they tolled so long

Till she burst into crying;
 "Go bring him here and lie him down,
 So that I might look upon him."
 Sweet William died on Saturday night;

Barbry Allen died on Sunday;
 The old lady died for love and grief of both;
 She died on Easter's Monday;
 Sweet William was buried in a Highland church;

Barbry Allen buried beside him,
 A love sprig from Sweet William's breast
 And a brier from Barbry Allen;
 They grew, and they grew past the church steeple high;

Till they could not grow any higher;
 Then they laughed, and they tied in a true lover's knot,
 And the rose ran round the brier.¹¹

Lilly Lee

Down by the sounding shore of the sea
 At the humble home of Lilly Lee,
 Across the deep and far away;
 There sailed her true love, Nathan Gray;

Just one kiss with a parting thrill,
 Chained his heart to an iron grill;
 He entered in at an open door,
 And he sailed away from the sounding shore;

She stood on the banks with quivering lips;
 She watched, and he sighed at the sailing ship;
 She watched, and she mourned as it faded away
 Unto a bleak and a desolate gray;

He stood on the deck with a twinkling eye;
 Nothing could he see but the water and the sky;
 And his thoughts went back to the time that had passed,
 And he laid his hand on the bending mast;

¹¹Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

Too late, too late, with his diamonds and gold;
Her body's in ashes, and her heart is cold;
His diamonds and gold are all no need;
Too late, too late, he had sown the seed;

His poor heart was a-melting down;
The last resting place of his love he'd found;
The last resting place you all may see,¹²
"Go, bury me by the side of Lilly Lee."¹²

¹²Joe Mills, June 10, 1974.

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