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A STUDY OF ADOPTION PROCEDURES IN TARRANT COUNTY,  
TEXAS, SEPTEMBER 1947-SEPTEMBER 1951

THESIS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Importance of the Problem

Adoption of children has been increasingly in the public mind in recent years. Not only has the total number of adoptions increased, but adoptions by relatives of children have markedly increased. This increase indicates that society is becoming more aware of the need of legalizing relationships.

In the words of the preliminary draft of "Essentials of Adoption Law and Procedure", prepared by the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor in 1945:

Adoption is the method provided by law of assuring to children who for some reason cannot be cared for by their natural parents the security of a home in which they may be brought up under the same mutual rights and obligations as those existing between children and their natural parents. Adoption establishes the legal relationship of parent and child between persons who are not so related.<sup>1</sup>

Adoption is not a situation or condition created by law. It may be said to have always existed as a social institution. However, legalization of adoption is more recent. The law merely confirms the adoption.

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<sup>1</sup>Emma Octavia Lundberg, Unto the Least of These, p. 358, citing "Essentials of Adoption Law and Procedure", prepared by the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor.

Adoption is commonly thought of as applying only to infants and young children, although adoption of adults does exist legally in the State of Texas.<sup>2</sup> However, this study is primarily concerned with adoption of children.

There are four types of adoption: (1) independent adoptions, (2) step-parent adoptions, (3) agency adoptions, and (4) the adoption of the illegitimate child by its father.<sup>3</sup>

Independent adoptions are those in which the natural parent or parents place their child in a home for adoption, or relinquish their child to a person who will place it.

In the step-parent adoptions, one parent retains his custody of the child, and the step-parent petitions to adopt the child. One purpose of this type of adoption is to give the stepchild the legal rights and privileges of a natural child. Also, the step-parent is assured that no one else will have a claim on the child in the event of the death of the natural parent.

In an agency adoption, the parents relinquish their child to a licensed child placing agency.

The adoption statutes of the State of Texas state no provisions for the adoption of an illegitimate child by its natural father. In a number of states, it is possible for the natural father to adopt the child by publicly announcing

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<sup>2</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46b-1, Section 1.

<sup>3</sup>Hazel Fredericksen, The Child and His Welfare, p. 205.

it as his own, receiving it in his home, and treating it as his own.<sup>4</sup>

A Texas child is not "illegitimate," even though born out of wedlock, if the parents later marry and the father recognizes the child.<sup>5</sup>

The number of children adopted each year in the United States is not known because many states, not including Texas, have no provisions for the collecting and retaining of such statistics. In order to engage in social planning in this field, it is necessary to have statistics on which to base predictions for future trends. Therefore, the Children's Bureau recently requested the state departments of welfare that can collect the desired information to submit annually a report on adoption petitions filed each year. From the reports received from twenty-four states, the Children's Bureau estimates that petitions for 75,000 children were filed in the country as a whole in the year of 1948.<sup>6</sup> This estimate shows an increase of 50 per cent over the estimated number of petitions in 1944.<sup>7</sup>

According to the Texas Department of Public Welfare,

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Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>5</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 2581.

<sup>6</sup>American Association of Social Workers, Social Work Year Book, 1951, edited by Margaret B. Hodge, p. 25.

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Ibid.



Austin, there were 3,904 children in adoption petitions filed in Texas during the fiscal year ended August 31, 1950. Leading counties were Dallas, 439; Harris, 419; Tarrant, 412; Bexar, 389; and El Paso with 126 adoptions.<sup>8</sup>

Possibly the greatest importance of adequate adoption procedures is protection of the parties involved. The parties to adoption are, naturally, (1) the adopting parents, (2) the child, and (3) the natural parents or the person or agency having custody of the child.<sup>9</sup> Any action involving such a large number of persons is necessarily of importance and concern to society due to the effect on society as a whole. The importance of adequate adoption procedures for the entire nation and the importance of adequate adoption procedures for Tarrant County are synonymous.

The importance of the problem may be summed up as follows:

Adoption establishes the whole course of a child's life--establishes it when obviously he himself is too young to make the momentous choice of a new mother and father....They [the adopting parents] are faced with the responsibility of giving a human being his start in life.<sup>10</sup>

A study of adoption procedures in Tarrant County should provide evidence with which the program in Tarrant County may

<sup>8</sup>Texas Almanac and State Industrial Guide, 1952-1953, p. 343.

<sup>9</sup>Fredericksen, op. cit., p. 205.

<sup>10</sup>Katharine F. Lenroot, "When Children Need New Parents", National Parent-Teacher, XLIV (May, 1950), 7-9.

be evaluated. In addition, the study should provide a general idea of the adequacy or inadequacy of the adoption statutes of Texas

#### Statement of Purpose

The purposes of A Study of Adoption Procedures in Tarrant County, Texas, 1947-51 are: (1) to study the procedures in Tarrant County in relation to Texas' adoption statutes in order to determine how closely Tarrant County follows the statutes; (2) to become familiar with adoption procedures and general information concerning adoption in other sections of Texas and other states and to show how these are related and how they compare with those in Tarrant County; (3) to determine trends and changes of procedure in Tarrant County as shown by the years 1947-1951; (4) to become familiar with placement agencies in Tarrant County and their procedures; (5) to become acquainted with the statutes related to adoption and to show how these compare with standards set up by various committees, and to show or suggest how the statutes could be improved; and (6) to determine present day attitudes toward adoption.

#### Source of Data

The study is limited to the four-year period September 1947-September 1951, which has been divided into single years in order that a comparison might be made between the four years.

The basis of the information concerning Tarrant County was obtained from a study of the court minutes for the cases filed in Tarrant County during the four-year period. The adoption laws of Texas close the social records to everyone except the parties to the action; however the legal record, at any rate the decree, is open to inspection.<sup>11</sup>

The Division of Research and Statistics of the State Department of Public Welfare in Austin provided the case numbers by which the minutes for the cases were located in the office of the District Clerk of Tarrant County. In addition, the Division of Research and Statistics provided the following information: court in which petition was filed, county of residence of petitioner, date of birth of child, and date petition was filed.

A photostatic copy of the "Certificate of Adoption" and a typewritten copy of the original printed form of the "Final Adoption Decree", which may be found in the appendix, were secured from the District Clerk's office in Tarrant County.

The outline entitled "Adoption Investigation", also found in the appendix, was provided by the Juvenile Department in Tarrant County. Additional information was provided by an employee of the Department through a personal interview.

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<sup>11</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 10.

General information, concerning Texas as well as other states, was gained through books and magazine articles.

The State adoption statutes were found in Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, civil code; while the amendments during the four-year period were found in the General and Specific Laws of the State of Texas, passed by the regular session of the fifty-second legislature, convened in the city of Austin January 9, 1951, and adjourned June 8, 1951.

The information concerning the Edna Gladney Home was taken from data obtained directly from that Home.

#### Treatment of Data

To provide a background for the study, the general field of literature on adoption was examined for material directly or indirectly related to the process of adoption in Tarrant County. The examination covered books, magazine articles, general and statistical reports, and Texas' statutes relating to adoption.

Data pertaining to adoption cases filed in Tarrant County for the years September 1947-1951 were obtained through an investigation of the court minutes for the cases filed. Data relating to these cases were then arranged, according to single years, into several tables for the purpose of determining the differences between years, and also to point out significant trends in Tarrant County.

Data pertaining to the social investigation and obtained from the Juvenile Department of Tarrant County pertain only

to the procedure followed by that department and are not directly related to procedures followed by other individuals or agencies which are appointed by the court as investigators. The data on investigations, furnished by the Juvenile Department, are considered as being of importance because of the large number of investigations made by employees of the department.

Chapter I is basically an introduction to the study relating to adoption procedures in Tarrant County as well as to the problem of adoption as a whole.

In Chapter II an attempt is made to mention and evaluate the more outstanding studies and publication relation to the problem.

Chapter III is a presentation of information related to general adoption procedures with emphasis on the State of Texas. Information relating to the adoption statutes of Texas is also included in Chapter III.

Chapter IV is the report of the information and facts gained through the study of adoption cases in Tarrant County.

Conclusions, comparisons, and recommendations, based upon the analysis and interpretation of the data, are presented in Chapter V.

Although the study is basically concerned with adoption procedures in Tarrant County, it was found to be necessary to include information relating to adoption in Texas as a whole, as well as information relating to adoption practices in other states.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATED MATERIALS

#### Books and Year Books

Of the many materials and publications related to adoption, books offer a wider view of the problem. One of the most recent of these, The Adopted Family, by Florance Rondell and Ruth Michaels, is especially recommended for adoptive parents or for persons contemplating adoption. The book covers the process of adoption from preparation for adoptive parenthood to answering the adolescent's questions about his adoption. However, the book contains little information concerning the legal process involved in adoption. A list of recommended readings is also included.

Adopting a Child, by Frances Lockridge, is also one of the more outstanding books in the field of adoption. The book contains an excellent discussion on practically all the steps in adoption, including legal requirements in the various states. Included in the appendix of the book is a list of the names and addresses of public and private adoption agencies in the United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Dominion of Canada.

New agreement with modern theories is also found here. The majority of books related to adoption place practically

all emphasis on the child to be adopted. However, Norman Himes, in the chapter on adoption in his book Your Marriage, realizes the unsoundness of placing any one interest first; and he attempts to discuss the problem of adoption by placing equal emphasis on the child, the adoptive parents, and society.

Another excellent chapter on adoption is included in the book, The Child and His Welfare by Hazel Fredericksen. The discussion is in a very compact form; yet, the chapter contains more actual information than do the majority of the average length books. Particularly outstanding in the discussion are the topics of adoption legislation and procedures in the United States and the essentials of good adoption procedures.

In Quest of Foster Parents, by Dorothy Hutchinson, is a discussion of the psychology of homefinding as it affects both the worker and the foster parent. Homefinding refers to the selection and evaluation of the foster parents who apply to social agencies or to social workers for children.

The author of An Adopted Child Looks at Adoption, Carol S. Prentice, was an adopted child and is also an adoptive parent. Most of the book concerns the author's personal experience and observation.

Percy Maddux, in his book, The Case for Adoption, attempts to explain what adoption is according to his views, and to set

forth what appears to him to be in practice inconsistent with those views, and to suggest a remedy. The book is somewhat peculiar in its content; yet, it contains several very outstanding and original thoughts.

Probably the most outstanding and informative book in the field of adoption is Adventuring in Adoption, by Lee M. and Evelyn C. Brooks. Part of the content of the book is based on the authors' personal experience as adoptive parents, and part on their investigation of the problems of adoption from the point of view both of families and institutions. The pages of the book are free of footnotes; however, an annotated bibliography is included for those who wish to read further. The first seven chapters of the book are basically for adoptive families and others interested in a nontechnical discussion of adoption. The latter part of the book is primarily for those who wish to explore or investigate the broader field of adoption.

The Family That Grew, by Florence Rondell and Ruth Michaels, is a book which the adopted child may read about his adoption. The book places emphasis on the fact that the child was chosen and was wanted very much. The large print and the illustrations make this an ideal book for the child.

The Social Work Year Book, published bi-annually, is an excellent source of information relating to recent or current trends and practices in the field of adoption. The Year Book also contains an up-to-date bibliography.



### Magazine Articles

The numerous magazine articles concerning adoption in the last few years indicate the growing interest in the subject. The avidity with which these articles are read and discussed is evidence that the community wants to be informed about the processes of adoption. However, the popular magazines tend to discuss the subject with sensationalism and dramatic distortions of the facts. They are taking advantage of the fact that a new source of human interest which may be exploited has been uncovered. Most of these articles emphasize how fashionable it has become to adopt, and the majority are accompanied by enchanting pictures of adopted babies.

The articles most highly recommended are those reporting actual facts or those based on studies made by recognized committees or agencies.

However, all magazine articles are not of the undesirable type. A person acquainted with adoption practices can usually very easily eliminate those presenting distorted information; those remaining may be regarded as excellent sources since they are one of the few up-to-date sources of information concerning current practices and trends.

Especially recommended are the articles relating to adoption and appearing at frequent intervals in the magazine, The Child.

### Statutes

The basis of any study of adoption is necessarily the adoption statutes of the state concerned. The Texas adoption statutes may be found in Vernon's Texas Statutes, Volume I, Civil Code. The latest publication of the Volume was 1948; however, amendments, if any, are published at the close of each legislative session.

### Pamphlets, Reports, and Thesis

Of particular interest, importance, and value are the pamphlets published by the government. Often, each pamphlet is concerned with only one phase of adoption and devotes the entire publication to that phase. Few of these pamphlets are available in the majority of libraries and, therefore, must be ordered by the individual. A particularly good source for obtaining a list of such publications is the bibliography of the Social Work Year Book, published bi-annually.

The pamphlet, A Study of the Administration of Adoptions Under Texas Laws, 1936, by J. Dunnock Woolford and published by the Texas Division of Child Welfare, presents a summary of the history and administration of Adoption under Texas laws up to the year 1946. Although the tables and statistics are somewhat out of date, it is interesting to compare them with present-day statistics.

The Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, Texas' Children, contains varied information concerning adoption.

Like the above mentioned pamphlet, the statistics and tables contained in this report are out-of-date since the report was made in the year 1938. Explanations and discussions concerning the Texas adoption statutes which were in effect in 1938 are particularly valuable provided they are studied in relation to the statutes existing today, since several changes have been made since the year 1938. One of the outstanding features of the Report is the numerous footnotes and references which are included.

The North Texas State College Library contains only one thesis concerning adoption, Some Factors Involved in the Adoption of Children by Mae Wadley Boyd. The study presents a general, over-all view of adoption from a nontechnical standpoint, and is recommended as an introduction to the study of the problem of adoption.

The pamphlet, The Role of the Baby in the Placement Process, published by the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work, is a discussion of the placement situation and the essentials of a placement process for the baby presented from the agency's point of view. This publication is somewhat technical and is therefore not recommended to the casual reader.

## CHAPTER III

### FACTORS INFLUENCING GENERAL ADOPTION PROCEDURES WITH EMPHASIS ON THE STATE OF TEXAS

Although adoption of adults does exist in Texas,<sup>1</sup> this study is mainly concerned with adoption of children. Attention, therefore, is directed to this phase of adoption.

#### Source of Children for Adoption

Children for adoption come mainly from two sources: (1) the break-up of homes with the illness or death of one or more parents or their divorce, desertion or separation, and (2) illegitimate births.

While most of the children in the first group, namely those born in wedlock, are taken by relatives, sometimes this adoption is impossible for economic or other reasons. The majority of young children available for adoption are the children of the unmarried mothers who decide that they wish their children adopted. About 75,000 children are placed by adoption each year in the United States, half of them born of unmarried parents.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46b-1, Section 1.

<sup>2</sup>Lenroot, op. cit., p. 7.

The ratio of illegitimate to legitimate births in Texas is less than that for the United States as a whole, but there is a possibility that this represents variations in reporting accuracy rather than in conditions.<sup>3</sup>

The children classed as "illegitimate" are not actually illegal, since the law recognizes their existence; therefore the trend is toward replacing the term "illegitimate" with the phrase "children born out of wedlock". However, the harsh term "bastard" still remains upon the statute books of Texas.<sup>4</sup>

As was stated in the introduction, a Texas child is not illegitimate even though born out of wedlock, if the parents later marry and the father recognizes the child.<sup>5</sup> However, in Texas there is a lack of any provision by which the child's new status may be recognized when, following his birth, his natural parents marry. Only if the child is adopted, the record is swept clean of reference to his illegitimacy. Upon application by the adopting parents, the new certificate may replace the old, which is sealed and kept from public knowledge.<sup>6</sup> A Texas child is not illegitimate merely because

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<sup>3</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, Texas' Children, University of Texas Publication No. 3837, p. 137.

<sup>4</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, II (Index), p. 823.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., Article 2581.

<sup>6</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 410, citing Vernon's Texas Annotated Statutes, 1925, Article 2892.

the marriage of his parents was, in law, null; nor, is the legitimacy of a child affected by divorce of the parents.<sup>7</sup> Examples of null marriages are those which are bigamous, those occurring within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, and those vitiated by lack of mental capacity on the part of one party.<sup>8</sup>

A startling fact is the much greater incidence of illegitimacy among Negroes. Yet, the concept of illegitimacy in the Negro culture as transferred from the whites has no particular stigma, and the social, economic, and physical handicaps may not differ much for the Negro child born out of wedlock from one whose parents are legally married.

Today, almost no one abandons children for economic reasons alone. Furthermore, courts are reluctant to take children away from their parents if there is anything good in the family relationship at all. Actually, the statute books list abandonment of a child as a criminal offense and in such cases the police may be called in to investigate.<sup>9</sup> If the parties are found and can prove that they abandoned the baby under extreme emotional stress and because they had no way of caring for it, they probably will not be prosecuted.

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<sup>7</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, 1, Article 2581.

<sup>8</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>9</sup>Frances Lockridge, Adopting a Child, p. 57.

Usually, if it is established that the parent or parents cannot be found and have no intention of returning to claim the child, it becomes available for adoption.

The term "foundlings" is used to refer to children about whom there is no specific information, no date of birth or name. Years ago, when there were fewer provisions for unwanted children, the number of foundlings in big cities ran into the hundreds. Now the number is greatly reduced. In many institutions, 50 per cent of the foundlings, Negroes and Orientals included, whose parents' religion cannot be ascertained are baptized Catholic and the other 50 per cent Protestant.<sup>10</sup>

A statement issued by the Child Welfare League sums up the definition of adoptability as follows: "Any child can be considered adoptable who needs a family, who can develop in a family setting and for whom a family can be found that can accept the child as he is."<sup>11</sup>

#### Adoption of Foreign-Born Children

An additional source of adoptable children is foreign-born children. Adoption of children in foreign countries by American citizens and bringing in foreign-born children to

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<sup>10</sup>Katharine T. Kinkead, "Our Son", The New Yorker, XXIV (March 4, 1950), 46.

<sup>11</sup>American Association of Social Workers, op. cit., p. 29

this country for adoption have increased greatly in recent years. Quota limitations, immigration requirements, procedures for obtaining a visa, state laws relating to placement of children in the state from outside the state, and legal restrictions relating to a child's leaving the country of his birth complicate the problems of adopting these children.

Military Government Law No. 10, issued by the United States Military Government for Germany and effective December 1, 1947, provided for the adoption of children in German courts by a person in service with or accompanying the armed forces of one of the United Nations, or a United Nations national connected with military government, or a dependent of either of such persons.<sup>12</sup> The prospective adoptive parents must meet the adoption requirements of the county or state of their permanent residence.

Many American citizens have wished to adopt children born in England of fathers who served with our armed forces. However, the Adoption of Children's Regulation Act, passed in England in 1943, prohibits the adoption of a British child by anyone other than a British subject or a legal relative, except by order of the High Court in England. Plans worked out for sending children to relatives in this country did not go into operation until January 1, 1948. The Family Welfare Association of England is the agency authorized to handle

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 25.



all applications from Americans who wish to adopt children related to them but born to English mothers.

An alien child adopted by an American citizen does not acquire citizenship by reason of such adoption. After the child is eighteen years old he can apply for citizenship papers for himself, or his adoptive parents can make the application for him prior to that time if certain conditions are met.<sup>13</sup>

#### Adoption in Texas of Children Born in Other States

Our present law specifically states that it shall be unlawful for any person, for himself, or as an agent or representative of another, to bring or send into this State any child under sixteen years of age for the purpose of placing him out or procuring his adoption, without first having obtained the consent of the State Board of Control (through the Division of Child Welfare) and filing with the Board a bond payable to the State in the penal sum of \$1,000.<sup>14</sup>

By adopting in the state of residence, the petitioner can be more nearly certain that all legal requirements have been met.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>J. Dunnock Woolford, The Administration of Adoption Under Texas Laws, 1938, p. 19.

### Child-Placing Agencies and Maternity Homes

Unmarried mothers, even when the father of the baby can be located, are reluctant to bring court action to force support and often even wish the father to remain ignorant of the fact that there is a child. Some fathers voluntarily give financial help in this situation, but the majority do not. Many fathers fear to come to the adoption agencies for an interview although the agency makes clear that its purpose in wanting to talk with the father is to find out what he is like as a person and his attitude toward the mother of the baby.

It is often said to be the practice of many maternity homes to refuse admission to any unmarried pregnant woman who will not first sign the official consent blank to the adoption of her unborn baby. Under Texas law this blank, under whatever conditions procured, short of fraud, is sufficient to enable a court, uninformed of these conditions, to give her baby forever to persons unknown to her.<sup>15</sup> It would appear that in a situation so serious, the statute should require that the signature be given only in the presence of the court, though not at the adoption hearing.

Indirect activities by which state governments attempt to control the abuses of adoption are as follows: One

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<sup>15</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 116.

prohibits advertising by the maternity home of its ability to dispose of babies; a second requires that every maternity home be licensed, thus establishing a minimum control by the licensing agency; a third is the specific prohibition of child-placing by maternity homes; a fourth is a requirement that all child-placement agencies be licensed; a fifth requires a license as a child-placement agency in the case of every institution actually placing children in foster homes, including all institutions accepting from juvenile (dependency) courts the right to consent to adoption; a sixth requires such a license for every individual who places a child; a seventh provision forbids all persons, agencies, and institutions not so licensed to do any child-placement work; an eighth penalizes those who disregard this prohibition; a ninth forbids the acceptance of the custody of any child for placement by any person or agency or institution not licensed to place children, and provides penalties for such acceptance; and the tenth provision has to do with children born out of wedlock and forbids removal of the child from his mother at any time within the first six months of life.<sup>16</sup> Number ten is a controversial problem and the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection of 1930 suggested that unmarried mothers under sixteen should not keep their children, and likewise, "no feeble-minded, epileptic, insane,

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 126-127.

or incompetent mother should be expected to keep her child, and probably also no mother who has not developed affection for her infant in the first six months of his life."<sup>17</sup>

Texas has six of the ten provisions listed above.<sup>18</sup> Of the devices listed above the State does not have numbers one, three, nine, and ten. The value of those which Texas does possess is small due to the incongruities and gaps in the laws, and because necessary funds to make the services fruitful have been greatly insufficient.

The Texas laws providing for licensing maternity institutions are included in both the civil and penal codes.<sup>19</sup>

In Texas, a maternity home is any "individual, firm, association, or corporation, owning, keeping, conducting, or managing an institution or home for the boarding or sheltering of infant children, or so-called 'Baby Farm', or any lying-in hospital, hospital ward, maternity home or other place for the reception, care and treatment of pregnant women, changing a fee or receiving or expecting compensation in the way of room rent or board..."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 127, cited by Mildred D. Mudgett, Social Work Yearbook, 1935, pp. 70-71.

<sup>18</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 4442 and Article 4442a.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., Article 4442, and Vol. II, Article 701.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., I, Article 4442.

In Texas the State Board of Health, except in the instances where the maternity homes perform the work of child-placement, performs the duty of licensing authority. <sup>21</sup>

The Texas statute offers little information as to conditions for the grant of a license. A sureties bond is required, and after the license has been issued, the local health officer must be notified and "shall keep informed of the nature and reputation of every such institution in his jurisdiction", and shall "visit and inspect it".<sup>22</sup>

The license for maternity homes usually includes the following: (1) the name and address of the person applying; (2) the specific location of the maternity home to be operated by licensee; (3) the bed capacity, or number of women who can be cared for at one time; (4) that no more than the number specified as capacity shall be treated at any one time; (5) that no other place not specified in the license shall be used to confine patients and (6) that the license shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises.<sup>23</sup> Texas has all except the last of these provisions.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 402.

<sup>22</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 4442.

<sup>23</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 404.

<sup>24</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 442, Section 1.

Texas requires the licensing authority to keep a record of all licenses issued. Also, notification of the local health authorities is required in Texas.<sup>25</sup> Renewal is annual in this State.<sup>26</sup>

Inspection may be made "from time to time", and the inspection officer, who is the local health officer, shall have "free and unrestricted access" at all reasonable hours for this purpose.<sup>27</sup>

Maternity homes are required to report to the local health officer all births, admissions, and releases of children.<sup>28</sup>

Homes licensed as child-placement agencies must report to the Division of Child Welfare the names of the child placed and of the foster parents. The reports must be quarterly and may be more often if the Division requests.<sup>29</sup> The licensing authority is also empowered to revoke the license.<sup>30</sup> The conditions of revocation are of two kinds: (1) The licensee has been convicted of operating a disorderly house; and (2) the licensee has refused to report or to

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., Section 2.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., Section 1.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., Section 2.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., Section 3.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., Article 4442a, Section 4.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., Article 4442, Section 4.

allow inspection; or he has undergone suspension of his license for six months, and he now, refuses anew.<sup>31</sup>

Should a Texas maternity home attempt to operate without a license, the Attorney General, any district or county attorney, or any citizen, whether or not personally injured, may sue. Penalties include imprisonment varying from ten days to two years, or fines of \$10 to \$1,000, or both.<sup>32</sup> An injunction may be issued where the institution is being maintained for some purpose not mentioned in the license; or when the licensee has attempted to blackmail or extort money from another for any purpose.<sup>33</sup> The same statute subjects the institution to an injunction for maintaining on its premises persons who are tuberculous, or of unsound mind, or suffering from any contagious or infectious disease except a venereal disease. Patients suffering from a venereal disease must be kept segregated.<sup>34</sup>

#### Reasons for Adopting a Child

Reasons for adoption of a child cover a wide range. Some parents want to make their home lives more complete.

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<sup>31</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 407.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 4442a, Section 62.

<sup>34</sup>Report of the Texas Child Welfare Survey, op. cit., p. 407, citing Vernon's Texas Annotated Civil Statutes, 1925, Article 4442a.

Perhaps they have lost by death their only child. They may look for a child that resembles it in personality and be disappointed or, if they find one, they may make unfortunate comparisons between the two. Other parents want companionship for a child or children already in the family. Still others are unwise enough to look upon adoption as a panacea for holding a mate of wandering impulses. Yet, other couples want a child to mold after their own "distinguished image". Many women want to adopt children because ill health, not necessarily sterility, has made it difficult or dangerous for them to have children of their own. Among the enlightened there may be a strong eugenic motive for adoption. Some couples may feel that they should not have children of their own because of some hereditary taint in the family. In such cases, the couples may prefer to take a chance on adopted children rather than have children of their own.

#### Who May Adopt

In relation to who may petition for adoption, the Texas statutes state:

Any adult person may petition the District Court in any of the following counties: (1) the county of his residence, (2) the county of the residence of the child to be adopted, or (3) if such child were placed for adoption by a child-placing institution of this State in the county of the residence of the petitioner, or in the county of the residence of the child, or in the county where such child-placing institution is situated, for leave to adopt a minor child; such petition shall set forth the facts relative to petitioner and child, and be verified by the affidavit of the



petitioner. But no such petition made by a married person shall be granted unless the husband and wife shall join therein, excepting when such petitioner shall be married to the natural father or mother, then such joinder by such father or mother shall be unnecessary.<sup>35</sup>

The Texas statute does not prohibit adoption by a single person; yet, many agencies will refuse entirely to place a child in such a home; in fact some go so far as to refuse to consider any but the orthodox two-parent family. In general, adoption of a child by a single person is inadvisable, as a child is entitled to the guidance of both a mother and a father. Rarely is a single person in a position to offer a child full opportunities for guidance and growth.

There is a possibility of legal complications if a child is secured outside of the state of residence of the adoptive parents. Some states prohibit it. Texas recognizes the importance of safeguarding the child adopted in another state and then brought to Texas by declaring such adoptions "valid and binding as if the adoption had occurred in the State of Texas."<sup>36</sup>

#### Legal Aspects

It is always advisable for a family to employ a lawyer to handle the legal aspects of adoption. The lawyer ascertains

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<sup>35</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 1.

<sup>36</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 9.

in advance the special procedures and protections of the state in which the adoption petition is made. He may obtain all necessary information from the Children's Bureau of the Federal Security Agency, Washington, D. C., the State Welfare Board in the state where the adoption is to take place, or the social agency that placed the child for adoption. If there is a choice about the state in which adoption proceedings may be begun, the lawyer can help select the one which affords maximum protection to the family and to the child. Since new and better legislation may be introduced even long after legal adoption, the family should arrange to keep in touch with the lawyer. He can then advise them how to take advantage of any additional legal protection.

#### Consent to Adopt

The natural parents' rights and responsibilities should have been legally terminated before a petition for adoption can be acted upon by the responsible court. The Texas statute states:

...no adoption shall be permitted except with the written consent of the living parents of the child; provided, however, that if a living parent or parents shall voluntarily abandon and desert a child sought to be adopted, for a period of two (2) years, and shall have left such child to the care, custody, control and management of other persons, or if such parent or parents shall have not contributed substantially to the support of such child during such period of two (2) years commensurate with his financial ability, then, in either event, it shall not be necessary to obtain the written consent of the living parent or parents in such default, and in such cases adoption shall be permitted on the written consent of the Judge

of the Juvenile Court of the county of such child's residence; or if there be no Juvenile Court, then on the written consent of the Judge of the County Court of the county of such child's residence.

In the case of a child fourteen (14) years of age or over, the consent of such child also shall be required and must be given in writing in the presence of the court.

Consent shall not be required of parents whose parental rights have been terminated by order of the Juvenile Court or other Court of competent jurisdiction.

In the case of a child not born in lawful wedlock the consent of the father shall not be necessary, and the consent of the natural mother, regardless of her age shall suffice.

In the case of a child-placing agency or institution licensed by the State Department of Public Welfare to place children for adoption, it shall be sufficient for the living parents to consent in writing that such agency or institution place such child for adoption, and no further consent shall be required of such living parent.

In the case of any consent by the natural parents as herein required to the adoption of a minor child, regardless of whether or not said child was born in lawful wedlock, after the birth of said child and duly acknowledge, giving the name, date and place of birth of said child, and shall agree to permanently surrender the care, custody, and parental authority of and over said child, and consent to its adoption upon judgement of any Court of competent jurisdiction without the necessity of reciting therein the names of the parents by adoption.<sup>37</sup>

Unmarried mothers and their children are the chief victims of a system which permits signing away rights even before the child is born. Unwarranted hardship also involved for foster parents whose legal claim to custody of a child remains in doubt because of poor provisions of the law or lax enforcement of such a vital feature of adoption as the consent clause.

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<sup>37</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 6, as amended in General and Special Laws of Texas, passed by the Fifty-Second Legislature, regular session, 1951.

In many cases termination of parental rights by a court having jurisdiction over children's cases is necessary because of neglect or mistreatment by parents, and the court may remove the child from the custody and control of his parents and place him in the care of some person or agency. In such cases the court order should define clearly the authority of the guardian or agency over the person.

The following suggestions for an adequate consent provision is summarized from the Children's Bureau "Preliminary Draft of Essentials of Adoption Laws and Procedures, 1945":

Written consent to adoption, sworn to by the person consenting should be required from the child if twelve years of age or over, and also both parents if they are both living; or one parent if the other parent is dead; or the mother, only of a child born out of wedlock (except that the consent of the father of a child born out of wedlock should also be required if the child has been legitimized as provided by law); the legal guardianship of the person of the child if parental rights with authority to consent to adoption has been transferred to such guardian by court action; or the executive head of a public or private child-caring agency or institution which through court action or voluntary relinquishment has acquired the legal right to consent to adoption of the child; or the executive head of the state welfare department in any condition of fact not otherwise provided for.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Lundberg, op. cit., p. 362.

A comparison of the above suggestions with the provisions included in the Texas statutes shows that the statutes include all the suggestions with the exception of the first and the last. Texas requires the consent of the child if fourteen years of age or over rather than twelve years of age or over as suggested.

Because of the complications which may result if the natural mother knows the identity and whereabouts of the foster parents, it is not the policy to require consent to a specific adoption.

Professional adoption procedure is not standardized. It varies from agency to agency, and from worker to worker. It is not a stereotyped technique, but is rather a procedure so flexible that it can be modified to meet the particular circumstances each new case presents.

#### Placement of the Child

Various child-placing agencies have different standards which applicants must meet before a child may be placed in their home. Generally, these requirements include normal health, satisfactory references, good moral character, and ability to offer financial security to the child. Most agencies have no specific requirements as to income. Certainly, they would hesitate to place a child with a family so near the bare subsistence level that one additional person would produce complete insolvency. Yet, a home of great

wealth is not usually considered desirable, because the child is less likely to have the understanding and close companionship of his elders.

It is best to place a child in a home where his mental capacities, temperament, and personality are similar to those of his adoptive parents, or standards may be set too high for his level of attainment; or if his abilities surpass those of his adoptive family, he likely will not develop his fullest capacities.

The following list of government specifications is meant to be used for all foster homes both temporary and adoptive:

**Adequate Shelter:** a clean, light, well-ventilated, orderly home; properly heated in winter; with sanitary toilet facilities. The child should have a separate bed and a place in which to keep private possessions and to entertain friends.

**Nutritious Food:** there should be enough of it; it should be simple, well-prepared, and adapted to the age of the child; it should be served at regular hours amid attractive surroundings, and eaten at leisure in a cheerful atmosphere.

**Comfortable Clothing:** clean, whole attractive garments that fit and that are individually owned; sufficient changes for cleanliness; adequate protection against inclement weather.

**Health Habits:** individual toilet articles; frequent baths; proper care of teeth; regular bedtime and plenty of sleep; abundance of fresh air and pure drinking water; several hours of outdoor play each day; definite teaching of health rules and of wholesome, happy, courageous attitudes; sensible instruction in sex matters.

**Recreation:** a safe, clean, roomy place for outdoor and indoor play; suitable play materials and tools; sympathetic supervision.

**Education:** attendance at a community school of good standards as long as the law requires, and as much longer as the child's capacities warrant.

Vocation: development of each child's fullest capacities through high school, commercial, or trade school training in line with special abilities.

Family Life: a change to live in a normal family group of differing ages without being crushed by numbers; to develop mutual attachments and a sense of responsibility for others and for the work of running a household.

Community Life: have a part in community group activities and festivities, an opportunity to make friends in natural ways through entertaining and being entertained; normal neighborhood contacts and wholesome association with persons of the opposite sex.

Morals and Religion: positive teaching of standards of right and wrong aside from measures of discipline; daily contact with adults of sound character and inspiring personality; attendance at religious services of the type preferred for each individual case.<sup>39</sup>

Standards set up for determining a good home should not be followed rigidly by the person selecting an adoptive home for a child, but should be regarded only as a guide in evaluating and selecting the home. It is possible for a home to meet all requirements of a standard list and yet lack so many other desirable features that it should be classified as unsatisfactory.

The average couple who adopt a child are healthy, about thirty years of age and have a comfortable home.<sup>40</sup> Records indicate that adoptive parents average ten or more years older than biological fathers and mothers.<sup>41</sup> However, mental and social age, emotional maturity and balance are far more important than calendar age.

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<sup>39</sup>L. M. and E. C. Brooks, Adventures in Adoption, p. 28, citing The United States Children's Bureau, The A-B-C of Foster Family Care of Children, No. 216.

<sup>40</sup>Lockridge, op. cit., p. 124. <sup>41</sup>Brooks, op. cit., p. 31.

It has been said that "every placement is a special problem", because each child has some special need or hereditary factor, which requires a specially chosen and adopted home.<sup>42</sup>

Ideally, constitutional types, racial antecedents, appearance and temperaments should be identical.

The Texas statute provides, "No white person can be adopted by a Negro person, nor can a Negro person be adopted by a white person".<sup>43</sup>

The extent of Negro blood necessary to constitute one a Negro for the purpose of this statute is not fixed. However, regarding unlawful marriages the Texas statutes define "Negro" and "white" persons as follows: "The term 'Negro' includes also a person of mixed blood descended from Negro ancestry from the third generation inclusive, though one ancestor of each generation may have been a white person."<sup>44</sup> Any person not included in the foregoing definition is deemed a white person within the meaning of this law.

There is a difference in opinion as to the best age at which a child should be placed for adoption. Some believe that early placement provides better chances for an

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<sup>42</sup>Fredericksen, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>43</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46b-1, Section 4.

<sup>44</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, II, Article 493.



emotionally healthy child. Because of the importance of early years, infancy is in many ways the best time for adoption. After social conditioning has begun, the child cannot be made over. Others believe it to be wiser to wait until the child is from a year to eighteen months old, since at this age it is possible to determine more nearly the child's physical and mental development.

It is generally agreed that the most successful placements are made before the child reaches the age of five years. In establishing a relationship with an older child the adopting parents must go more slowly, because they are not the first parents the child has known nor the first for whom he has formed an emotional attachment. However, there is a greater risk involved in adopting a young child, especially if his antecedents are unknown or unfavorable. Yet, thanks to the work of the educator, Gesell, at Yale University, and others, the infant's development month by month can now be compared with that of enough other children to establish some pattern on which to make fairly accurate predictions.

There are two vital reasons why adoption agencies would like to speed the process of placement; first, to get the child settled early in his permanent home; second, to provide space for more children and thus to combat the black market in babies.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Harriet Gates Oman, "Giving Up a Baby," The Survey, LXXXVIII (January, 1952), 14-17.

### Fee Charging

Because of popular disfavor toward any appearance of "selling" babies, social work has been hesitant in putting a monetary value on its services offered adoptive parents. Fee charging, the charge made to adoptive applicants for a service which they receive when an agency serves those children who need to be adopted, has been a slow and cautious movement, but a widespread one. Some agencies estimate the average expense per year per child and charge either the entire cost or a specific portion of the entire cost. Other agencies charge the adoptive parents according to expenses incurred in caring for the specific child adopted. Exceptions to the regular charge may be made in the case of applicants who are unable to pay the full amount, but who have a desirable home for placement of a child. The majority of applicants recognize the agency's right and even its responsibility to make the charge. Society is beginning to recognize the fact that people who use a social service have the same responsibility of sharing in the expense of that service as they would if they were using any other professional service.

### Adoption by Relatives

Adoption of children by relatives has markedly increased in recent years.<sup>46</sup> This is undoubtedly due to the fact that people are more aware of the need, in modern life, to formalize and legalize relationships.

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<sup>46</sup>Lockridge, op. cit., p. 5.

### Independent Adoptions and Black Market

Adopters and natural parents often become impatient and resort to advertising and other hazardous short cuts to adoption, an indication that the general public has not yet reached the place where it puts the rights of children above its own selfish wishes.<sup>47</sup>

Some of the reasons for independent adoptions are: (1) the long waiting period necessary in securing a child through the licensed adoption agencies; (2) general unawareness of, or unconcern about, the dangers involved by those participating in such adoptions; (3) rigidity of the licensed agencies' criteria of adoptability; (4) in the desire for secrecy, frequently a mother wishes to place her own child; (5) financial inducements; (6) agencies may not be equipped to handle adoptions quickly because of shortage of personnel; (7) and general lack of knowledge on the part of the lay public concerning sound adoption practices as evidenced by the apathy when protective legislation is proposed.<sup>48</sup>

There are existing in many areas of the country, undesirable maternity homes, some operated by well-meaning but uninformed women and others strictly commercial enterprises practically black market in nature. Supposedly intelligent people will pay \$1,000 for a baby bootlegged to them without

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<sup>47</sup>Brooks, op. cit., p. 120.

<sup>48</sup>Fredericksen, op. cit., p. 214.

any information about its background, rather than wait one or two years for a baby from an approved child-placement bureau which goes into all the details of each case.

Commercial adoption nurseries and maternity homes are the supply-demand forces of the baby market. Each feeds the other; and both would cease to exist if public opinion and uniform laws demanded case histories on all children adopted. Even in the states where legislation is adequate, it is difficult to obtain evidence that will close a questionable maternity home and stop commercial child-placement. Doctors will not tell on themselves, and girls will not talk when the very thing they need most is secrecy. Usually these girls know nothing about the civic maternity hospitals in their own area, or about the many shelters offered all over the country by the Salvation Army and the Florence Crittenden League. They seldom know that the Child Welfare League of America has two-hundred and ninety-six branches and affiliates where a mother can go before her baby is born and arrange without paying to have her child adopted by good, reliable foster parents.<sup>49</sup>

One of the most serious results of informal or non-agency placement is that legalization of the intended status is often neglected; and the child consequently does not acquire inheritance rights with respect to his foster family.

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<sup>49</sup>Mona Gardiner, "Traffic in Babies", Collier's, CIV (September 16, 1939), 43.

Adequate provisions by law will accomplish little for the protection of the children and others concerned unless funds are provided for employing skilled staffs. One essential in such protection is adequate financing of public and private agencies providing services for unmarried mothers and their children.

At present, there is an increasing tendency toward relying upon authorized agencies for adoption placements and the necessary supervision of the proposed adoption home; but until some way is found whereby direct or independent placement can be controlled, it is probable that a large proportion of adoption placements will not have the protection of agencies equipped to give this service.

#### Filing of the Petition to Adopt

The adoptive family usually employs a lawyer of their selection who draws up a petition to the court for adoption. The petition is filed in the district court located in the county or district (1) where the petitioner has legal residence, (2) where the child resides, or (3) where the institution having custody of the child is located.<sup>50</sup> The Texas Constitution fixes the minimum number of district court terms as two a year at each county seat in the district,

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<sup>50</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 1.

and district judges may call special terms whenever they deem it advisable.<sup>51</sup>

A measure passed by the Texas Legislature requires the courts to submit copies of adoption petitions to the State Department of Public Welfare prior to the hearing on the petition.<sup>52</sup> The law also requires the Department to prepare a biennial report on all adoption cases for the Governor.

#### Investigation

Upon the filing of the petition the court issues a temporary order of custody and then appoints the time and place of the hearing. The court or judge is also required to appoint a "suitable person" to make an investigation of the former environment and antecedents of the child for the purpose of determining whether he is a proper subject for adoption, and of the home of the petitioner to determine the suitability of it, provided that the State Department of Public Welfare may investigate all adoption cases except those handled by a legally licensed child-placing agency.<sup>53</sup> A written report of the investigation is submitted at or prior to the hearing. This report is filed with the records of the proceedings. The types of investigations made and

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<sup>51</sup>Texas Constitution, Article 5, Section 7.

<sup>52</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 1.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., Section 2.

reports furnished vary greatly according to the understanding and experience of the individual investigators.

In adoption cases, the judge is not bound by the report of the investigator; he may come to his own conclusions after hearing the testimony. Needless to say, this fact shows in favor of making the State Welfare Department responsible for the investigations. Other points in favor of making the Department responsible are: (1) it insures state-wide uniformity of adoption practices; (2) it may be more effective before the courts; (3) it is more likely to be impartial; and (4) it provides a centralized and guarded repository for records.<sup>54</sup>

#### Probationary Period

Although Texas' adoption law requires a probationary period of six months before a child may be adopted, the statute is so worded as to weaken its purpose. It requires only that before the final decree is issued the child shall have lived with the adoptive parents for six months; and it does not require that six months elapse between the temporary order of custody and the final decree of adoption.<sup>55</sup> The purpose of the probationary period is to make sure the child has been a member of the family long enough for a satisfactory and permanent relationship to be assured. The trial residence

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<sup>54</sup>Brooks, op. cit., p. 123.

<sup>55</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 3.

also safeguards against impulsive decisions by the prospective adopters.

Although not usually practiced, it is desirable that tests be made not only before placement but also after placement, during the probationary period. Tests made during the probationary period may be interpreted not only as showing the child's developmental history but also the effect of the new family situation upon him. If the results are favorable and other conditions are favorable, it may be assumed that the home is providing a desirable environment.

One of the greatest deficiencies in the adoption statutes is the fact that the adoption law of Texas, at present, permits the court to waive the waiting period altogether "upon good cause shown in the discretion of the Court."<sup>56</sup>

#### Court Action Upon the Petition

The next legal step after the filing of the petition is the action of the court upon it. The adoptive parents, but not the child unless fourteen years of age or over, are required to attend the hearing in person. A child under fourteen may be required to attend if the Court so orders.<sup>57</sup>

With the information on the adoptive home, supplied by a competent social investigator, the judge does not usually need to question the petitioners at great length. The hearing may be as brief and informal as an interview in an office

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., Section 8.



with only the judge and the petitioners present, or it may be in the courtroom. However, in either case the hearing usually takes only a few minutes. Not until the final decree is granted is the adoption complete. The final decree usually sets forth the facts of adoption, including the change of name of the child if the name is to be changed to that of the adopter. The decree may be a standard form giving pertinent information, similar to that in the petition, or it may be a confirmation by the judge of the agreement of the petitioner to the effect that he will bring up the child as his own, giving him proper care and education, or it may be some other designated style of document.

Some courts give the adopters a copy of the decree, while others consider their records sufficient evidence. After the final decree the adoptive parents are within their rights to request to see the records to make sure they are correct.

The court may, if satisfied that the child should not be adopted into the home of the petitioner, dismiss the petition. The order of dismissal terminates the court's power over the child. The court may also issue a temporary order of adoption. This order gives custody to the adoptive parents. It retains guardianship in the court, which can continue to give the child its protection.

The adoption process actually begins long before legal procedure is invoked. Court action legalizes what has happened and safeguards it for the future.

After the final decree has been granted the child belongs to the adopters as irrevocably as if he had been born to them. He cannot be taken away from them so long as they provide for him and treat him as their child if statutory requirements have been met.

#### The Birth Certificate

Texas provides for a tie-up between the record of the adoption decree and the original birth record of the child. This is essential particularly when the child is not adopted by relatives and when his original name is to be changed to that of the adopter's name. Unless this is done the child has no way of obtaining evidence in regard to his date of birth, now required for an increasing number of purposes. Upon entry of the final decree of adoption, the court forwards a report on the adoption to the bureau of vital statistics of the state health department so that the necessary facts from birth records can be filed under the adoptive name. The child's birth registration is altered or rewritten, the original record filed and sealed, and a copy of the new certificate in the changed name of the child, is issued, for a fee of fifty cents, upon request of the adopters or of the child when he reaches his majority. The new birth certificate does not indicate that the child is adopted or whether or not he was legitimate. This provision has not worked as intended in some cases. The effect of changing the birth record of the

child born in lawful wedlock and adopted by a single woman would indicate, through omission of the father's name, that the child had been born out of lawful wedlock.

Much debate has recently occurred as to the advantage or disadvantage of removing the statement of illegitimacy from the birth record. The Children's Bureau desires that the item remain on the record if the information is properly safeguarded. The value of this practice would be in having available as accurate a picture as possible of the social status of every child and in having statistical data on birth out of wedlock that would assist in social planning for unmarried mothers and their children.<sup>58</sup> However, the Council on Vital Records and Vital Statistics, made up of the representatives of vital statistics bureaus of state health departments working in co-operation with the vital statistics division of the United States Bureau of the Census, advocates a birth card for all children as a means of protecting illegitimate children. This proposed card would contain the name, sex, date of birth, place of birth, and the number of the original certificate.<sup>59</sup> This information would supply the data required for entry into school, employment, and similar purposes. If there arises a need for further information in regard to parentage, it could be obtained by governmental agencies.

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<sup>58</sup>Fredericksen, op. cit., p. 239.

<sup>59</sup>Lundberg, op. cit., p. 369.

In the case of foundlings, a birth certificate is made out for the infant listing as its birthplace the locality in which it was abandoned and a birth date estimated by a doctor.<sup>60</sup>

Many adoptions take place in a state other than the one in which the child was born; therefore, co-operation among state agencies is especially important in relation to birth records.

#### Inheritance

One of the motives in adoption is often the desire of the adopter to make the adopted child his heir. If there are other children in the family, the adopted child shares equally with them in the distribution of the parents' estate, providing there is no will fixing the share which each child shall receive.<sup>61</sup> All adopted children shall inherit from the adopted as well as the natural parents; and, in like manner, the adopted parents inherit from the adopted child.<sup>62</sup> A child born out of wedlock and later adopted may inherit from its natural mother; but there is no way in which the child may inherit from its natural father unless the father and the mother shall marry.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Kinkead, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>61</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 9.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., Article 2581, Section 7.

Inheritance is greatly complicated by moving to another state from that in which the adoption took place because of differences in state laws concerning property. Complications also arise over property owned in another state.

#### Abrogation

The Texas statute does not provide for annulment of adoptions. However, Texas' adoption act states:

Nothing in this Act shall prevent a Court of Competent Jurisdiction from taking away from such parent the custody of the adopted child and awarding the same to its natural parents, or either of them or to any other person, upon proof of the bad moral character of such adoptive parent, or upon proof of abuse, neglect, or ill treatment of such adopted child by the adoptive parent.<sup>64</sup>

This statement possibly refers to the work of the juvenile or other guardianship courts which would not, in removing the child, annul the adoption itself. The original act stands.

Sometimes an adopted child, after a year or more, may develop definite signs of a condition such as mental deficiency. It is often argued that natural parents also run this risk, and that adoptive parents should not be relieved by annulment. Yet, it must be remembered that the situation involving natural parents is less likely to lead to a resentment of the child. For the child's sake the situation may call for annulment.

Sometimes abrogations are granted when the child has proved hopelessly delinquent or so feeble-minded as to require

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., Article 46a, Section 7.

more expensive care than the adoptive parents can give; when the adoptive parents dissolve their marriage and do not want to provide for the child; when a child can return to a surviving natural parent if his adoptive step-parent no longer wishes to provide for the child; or when a judge desires to restore to the natural parents children surrendered under duress.<sup>65</sup> Most of the states provide, by law, for abrogation of adoption, but the granting of it is at the discretion of the court.

Amendments to the Texas Adoption  
Statutes 1947-1951

The fact that many adoption petitions being filed did not disclose sufficient information to enable the State Department of Public Welfare to perform efficiently the responsibility placed on it by laws; the fact that the adoption laws did not expressly permit parents to place children for adoption with a licensed child-placing agency or institution and confer on such institution the power to consent to the adoptive parents; and the fact that the validation law (Article 46b, Revised Civil Statutes of Texas) failed to validate those adoptions after January 1, 1923, until August 21, 1931, the effective date of the present system of adoption in District Courts, all lead to the amendments to the adoption

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<sup>65</sup>Lockridge, op. cit., p. 158.

statutes by the regular session of the Fifty-Second Legislature of Texas, Regular Session of 1951.

The following amendments were added to Article 46a:

Every petitioner for leave to adopt a minor child shall set forth among the facts relative to petitioner and child the following information: (1) the name, race, and age of each petitioner; (2) the residence and present address of petitioner; (3) the name to be given the child through the adoption; (4) the sex, race, birth date, and birthplace of the child sought to be adopted; (5) the date on or about which the minor child was placed in the home of petitioners; (6) what written consent papers have been obtained from the natural parent or parents and if none obtained, then specify which exception to the necessity for such consent if applicable; (7) of relationship between the petitioner and the child; (8) whether waiver of six (6) months residence in the home of the petitioner is requested, and if so, the reasons for requesting the waiver of the six-month period....After the filing and docketing of the petition, and in order to aid in completing the investigator's report required by law, there shall be furnished upon the request of the Judge of the Court in which said application is pending, or the investigator appointed by the Court, or the Executive Director of the State Department of Public Welfare, the following information; (1) the name of the child as it appears on the birth certificate; (2) the names, residences and/or street addresses of the natural parents; or if the name and addresses of the natural parents and the name of said child are unknown to the petitioner, such fact or facts should be so stated to either the Judge, investigator, or the Executive Director of the State Department of Public Welfare requesting such information, in which event there shall be furnished in response to such request, the name and address of any person, agency or institution having such information. The request for such information may be directed either to petitioners or to the attorney of record for petitioners, and shall be made not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the date on which the application is scheduled for hearing....

Formerly, it was not necessary to obtain the written consent of the natural parent or parents in the case of abandonment or desertion if they had failed to contribute to the

support of the child for two years. However, an amendment of 1951 provided that in such cases the parents must contribute substantially to the support of the child during such period of two years commensurate with their financial ability before consent is required. This eliminates cases in which a parent may contribute a very small sum during the two years, and therefore maintain that he has contributed to the support of the child.

An additional amendment provides that, in case of a child born out of lawful wedlock, the consent of the natural mother, regardless of her age, shall suffice.

Another amendment permits parents to place children for adoption with a licensed child-placing agency or institution and confer on such institution the power to consent to the adoption without disclosing to the natural parents the names of the adoptive parents. In this case, consent of the natural parents shall be sufficient if given in writing after the birth of the child and duly acknowledge, stating the name, date and place of birth of the child. In addition, the natural parents shall agree to surrender permanently their custody and authority of and over the child, and consent to adoption of the child upon judgment of any court of competent jurisdiction.

A further amendment provided for descendants of the adopted child to inherit through and from the parents by adoption and their kin.



The amendments of 1951 also provide that if a husband and wife are joint petitioners and either is a member of the Armed Services of the United States and is stationed beyond the territorial confines of the United States of America, the personal appearance of such spouse at the hearing shall not be required if the other spouse attends the hearing.

Article 46b is amended to provide for validation of adoptions after January 1, 1923, until August 21, 1931, the effective date of the present system of adoptions in Districts Courts.

## CHAPTER IV

### REPORT OF THE STUDY OF 1,447 ADOPTION CASES AND THE STUDY OF FACTORS RELATED TO ADOPTION PROCEDURES IN TARRANT COUNTY

#### Basis of the Study

The basis of this study was the court minutes of adoption cases filed in Tarrant County during the four-year period of September, 1947, to September, 1951. Henceforth, the term "year", when used in relation to such records, shall mean the year beginning with September and ending with August.

The number of cases filed each year, and the number of children involved each year are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF PETITIONS FILED AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN  
INVOLVED IN PETITIONS FILED IN TARRANT  
COUNTY, TEXAS 1947-1951

Year	Number of Cases	Number of Children
1947-48	300	315
1948-49	348	364
1949-50	391	412
1950-51	408	428
Total	1,447	1,519*

\*Although 1,519 children were included in petitions to adopt, the petitions approved included only 1,447 children.

According to the data in Table 1, the number of children involved in adoption procedures increased from 315 in 1947-48 to 428 in 1950-51. This increase is in line with information previously reported in this study.

#### Adoption of Illegitimate Children in Tarrant County

The court minutes for the adoption cases filed in Tarrant County for the four-year period show only fifty-seven children as being illegitimate. From a total of 1,519 children involved in adoption petitions for that period, it is evident that a total of fifty-seven illegitimate children is too low.<sup>1</sup> The children in this group ranged in age from two months to seventeen years. Four of the fifty-seven children listed as illegitimate were Negroes, while the race-nationality was not listed for twelve children included in the group. Of the fifty-seven children, twenty-two were involved in petitions for the year 1947-48, eighteen in 1948-49, ten in 1949-50, and seven in 1950-51. Therefore, the trend is toward eliminating the term "illegitimate" in court minutes or records which are open to public inspection. Another reason for this small number is possibly due to the fact that earlier court minutes in Tarrant County were typed and followed no specific form; however, beginning with January, 1949,

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<sup>1</sup>This statement is based on statistics showing the number of illegitimate children born at the Edna Gladney Home, licensed child placing agency in Tarrant County, Texas. These statistics may be found in the Appendix.

the use of a printed form was begun and has since been used in the majority of cases. The printed form provides blank spaces for the case number, judicial district, name of petitioners, date of hearing, sex of child, date of birth of child, place of birth of child, name of child after adoption, and signature of the district judge. A typewritten copy of the printed form, entitled "Final Adoption Decree", may be found in the appendix.<sup>2</sup>

The reports of Jacque Nicholson, social worker, to the Board of the Edna Gladney Home, which is one of the two licensed child-placing agencies in Tarrant County, as well as a maternity home, may be found in the appendix.<sup>3</sup> One report covers the period from June 15, 1949, to March 15, 1950, while the second covers the period from March 16, 1950, to March 15, 1951. The former report shows that during the period of June 15, 1949, to March 15, 1950, eighty-one mothers were sheltered in the Home; seventy-eight babies were placed for adoption; two were placed with state welfare units, and one mother kept her baby. During the period of June 16, 1950, to March 15, 1951, one-hundred and nine mothers were sheltered in the Home; one-hundred and twelve babies were born; one-hundred and five babies were placed in

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<sup>2</sup>Appendix of Study, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 110.

homes; one baby was declared a ward of the Juvenile Court; three babies were returned to the mothers; and three babies died. Although all the children placed by the Edna Gladney Home are not illegitimate, the majority are illegitimate. During the period from June 16, 1950, to March 15, 1951, the Agency placed five older children in homes and one older child in Boys Ranch. During the former period, fifty-four of the eighty-one mothers sheltered were single; while the latter report shows that sixty-eight of the one-hundred and twelve mothers sheltered were single. However, not all children born at the Home are placed in Tarrant County, since the Agency is licensed to place all over the State of Texas, as well as out of the State. Both the reports contain the following information concerning both the fathers and the mothers of children born in the Home: age, marital status, state of legal residence, church affiliation, education, and occupation. Included in the appendix is a copy of the worksheet of the Home, which gives an additional idea of the information desired on the mothers and fathers of babies born at the Home.

#### Place of Birth of Children Involved in Adoption Petitions in Tarrant County

In Tarrant County there were seven children born in foreign countries or territories adopted during the period covered by this study. One was born in Sweden; two in Germany;

two in Alaska; one in Colombia, South America; and one in Casablanca, French North Africa. This group constituted .5 per cent of the total number of children involved during the four-year period.

Table 2 shows the number and percentage of children born in Tarrant County, in other counties in Texas, in other states, in other countries or territories, and the number for which the place of birth is not stated.

TABLE 2  
PLACE OF BIRTH OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN ADOPTION  
PETITIONS FILED IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS,  
1947-1951

Date of Filing Petition	Tarrant County	Other Counties in Texas	Other States	Other Countries or Territories	Place of Birth Not Stated	Total
1947-48	6	5	7	2	295	315
1948-49	124	16	15	...	209	364
1949-50	252	31	30	...	99	412
1950-51	281	39	28	5	75	428
Total	663	91	80	7	678	1519
Percentage	43.6	6.0	5.3	0.5	44.6	100.0

The number of children for which the place of birth is unknown exceeds the number born in Tarrant County by fifteen or by 1.0 per cent. Table 2 indicates that the place of birth

is recently being stated more frequently than in earlier cases. For the year 1947-1948, the place of birth was not stated for 295 children; however, in the year 1950-1951, the number was reduced to seventy-five. This trend is probably due to the use of the printed form. This form, used in the majority of cases since January, 1949, includes a blank for writing in the place of birth of the child. Therefore, it is unlikely that this factor would be eliminated in the printed form unless the place of birth actually is unknown.

The number of children included in petitions and born in other counties in Texas and the number born in other states show only a small difference. Since petitioners may adopt in either the place of birth of the child or the place of their own residence, it is possible that Tarrant County residents, securing children for adoption from another state which may be more strict in requirements and procedure, have brought the children to Tarrant County for adoption.

#### Child-Placing Agencies and Maternity Homes in Tarrant County

There are two licensed child-placing agencies in Tarrant County, the Edna Gladney Home and the Volunteers of America, both located in Fort Worth.

No information concerning the policies of the Volunteers of America was available for presentation in this study.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>A letter, requesting information concerning the Agency, was written to the Agency, but no reply was received.

According to a leaflet distributed by the Edna Gladney Home, the Home absorbed the Texas Children's Home and Aid Society in 1950. The Home operates three divisions: (1) a maternity hospital, known as the West Texas Maternity Hospital, where prenatal care, board and room are furnished to the expectant mother and where babies are delivered; (2) a baby home where the babies are cared for while undergoing tests and examinations and until placed for adoption; and (3) an office where the public is received, applications processed, placement interviews conducted, and records are kept. All of these divisions are located in Fort Worth. The baby home employs a staff doctor and three nurses. The hospital employs a superintendent, a staff doctor, and two nurses. The Home is a charitable child-placing agency for homeless children from infancy to fourteen years of age. Since its organization in 1892, the Home has found permanent homes for more than 10,000 children. This Home is a private agency, supported solely by voluntary contributions; "this non-denominational organization is supported by all denominations and by all lovers of children, regardless of church membership." While most of the children placed by the organization are of Protestant parentage, the service is offered to all. Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant children are all placed in the proper homes.



In a letter received from the Edna Gladney Home, Jacque Nicholuson, the Agency's social worker, states:

...we try to find out whether or not the mother is making the best plan for her child in placing it for adoption. We explore all resources available for the baby and help the mother make plans for the baby in the baby's best interest. We try to use a home which we feel has the most to offer a child and where the child will make the best emotional adjustment, as well as all other factors involved in child care. As you know, the mother usually has her mind fairly well made up as to placing her baby for adoption when she enters our hospital. However, that does not interfere with her changing her plans and keeping the child if she feels she has the most to offer the child. Technically, the mothers are supposed to pay their expenses in our hospital the same as they would have to in any other hospital, provided they keep their child. However, special arrangements are made in each individual instance. The payment of the hospital bill is dependent upon their financial ability to handle the matter.<sup>5</sup>

The application blank entitled "Texas Children's Home and Aid Society," found in the appendix,<sup>6</sup> is the application blank used by the Gladney Home until 1952. Instruction for filling out the blank for the year 1951 may also be found in the appendix. All applications for the adoption of a child from the Home are given careful consideration. Preference is given applicants between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five years of age for the placement of babies and from thirty-five to forty-five years of age for the placement of an older child. In addition, preference is given to applicants who own their own home and who have assets sufficient to furnish

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<sup>5</sup> Letter from Jacques Nicholuson, Social Worker, Edna Gladney Home, April 16, 1952.

<sup>6</sup> Appendix of Study, p.90.

financial security to a child. Prior to 1951, an income of \$3600 a year was the minimum requirement; this figure was increased to \$6000 a year in 1951. Applicants must be of good moral character and temperate habits. Church affiliation is preferred so that religious education becomes a part of a child's training. The Home reserves the right to reject an application without giving the reason for doing so. The health histories and medical examinations are studied thoroughly. Adoptive parents must be in normal health, and a Wasserman test is required of each parent before final approval of the application will be given. The agency asks the applicant to list as references a doctor, a minister, a banker, and an attorney, along with three other references. The Agency follows the State Department's suggestions and regulations concerning the pre-placement home study with reference to applicants, with the exception that the Agency has at least two contacts with the family in regard to the study. When the worker is in a certain community, she sees the applicants in their home for a short period of time; then the applicants come to the office for the formal pre-placement study which is mainly a discussion of their experiences and attitudes, which will somewhat anticipate their reactions in situations along the lines of the suggested adoptive study.

The Agency places babies rather early, anywhere from ten days to two weeks of age, recognizing with the applicants that

the placement may be damaging them provided anything happens which would necessitate the return of the child. However, the percentage of returns to the Agency is less than 1 per cent.<sup>7</sup> Any child placed by the Agency may be returned within the six-month probationary period without giving any reason for so doing. Also, the Agency may remove a child from a home any time within the six-month probationary period if any circumstances in the home change so that the home is no longer considered normal. The Edna Gladney Home prefers that knowledge of the fact of adoption be imparted to the child in early years. The Home also prefers that all adoptions be completed in Fort Worth, county seat of Tarrant County.

The Agency charges no fee for making the investigation. However, the Home does ask for reimbursement of the legitimate expenses in the care of the mother and delivery and care of the baby until placement.

The Agency does not have a breakdown of the number of children placed in Tarrant County each year.

The Agency's only social worker does the pre-placement studies, the supervisory visits, the court reports, and works with the mothers in the hospital. The worker began with the Agency on June 15, 1949 and made the first report to the Board on March 15, 1950, covering all her activities during that period of time. This report plus the worker's report

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<sup>7</sup>Letter from Jacque Nicholson, op. cit.

for March 16, 1950, to March 15, 1951, may be found in the appendix.<sup>8</sup> The reports give a breakdown of the traveling, studies, supervisory visits, and other contacts made by the social worker, as well as statistics on the parents of children born in the Home.

#### Place of Residence of Petitioners

Table 3 shows the number of residents outside Tarrant County, as well as the number residing in Tarrant County, which filed adoption petitions in the Tarrant County court for the four-year period.

TABLE 3

#### PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF PETITIONERS FILING PETITIONS TO ADOPT IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-51

Year	Tarrant County	Other Counties in Texas	Other Counties	Other States	Not Stated	Total
1947-48	165	123	1	20	6	315
1948-49	207	125	1	21	10	364
1949-50	251	129	...	11	21	412
1950-51	240	162	2	12	12	428
Total	863	539	4	64	49	1519
Percentage	56.8	35.5	0.3	4.2	3.2	100.0

<sup>8</sup>Appendix of Study, p. 95.

Data in Table 3 show a total of 658 petitioners resided outside Tarrant County, while a total of 863 were residents of Tarrant County. While the counties of residence are too numerous to list, the states included and the number from each were: California, sixteen; Louisiana, eight, Oklahoma, seven; New York, five; Arkansas and New Mexico, four each; Missouri, three; Connecticut, New Jersey, Kansas, Georgia, and Virginia, two each; Alabama, Ohio, Utah, and Rhode Island, one each; and name of state not given, three. Alaska, Panama Canal Zone, Peru, and Venezuela were the countries included, and each had one.

The number of petitioners from other counties has slightly increased during the four-year period; while the number from other states decreased during the last two years of the study.

#### Withdrawal of Consent to Adopt

It was noted in the study of case minutes in Tarrant County that one petition, a petition to adopt twin children, had already been filed with the court when the natural mother withdrew her consent.

#### Race-Nationality of Children Involved in Adoption Petitions

Table 4 shows the percentage and number of both Negroes and Latin-Americans as compared to the large number of "whites" adopted in Tarrant County during the four-year period.

TABLE 4

RACE-NATIONALITY OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN PETITIONS TO  
ADOPT FILED IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-1951

Date of Filing Petition	White	Negro	Latin-American	Not Stated	Total
1947-48	213	9	3	90	315
1948-49	319	6	2	37	364
1949-50	356	12	4	40	412
1950-51	393	6	5	24	428
Total	1281	33	14	191	1519
Per-centage	84.3	2.2	0.9	12.6	100.0

Data in Table 4 show that of the total number adopted, 84.3 per cent were "whites"; 2.2 per cent were Negroes; 0.9 per cent were Latin-Americans; and the race-nationality for 12.6 per cent was not stated. The small percentage of Negroes and Latin-Americans residing in Tarrant County possibly accounts for the small number adopted by the two minority groups in comparison with the number of white children adopted. According to the 1940 census, there were approximately seven times as many "whites" residing in Tarrant County. Latin-Americans are not listed as a separate group in population statistics. Table 4 shows a trend toward including, in the court minutes, a statement of race-nationality more frequently toward the latter part of the period.

## Age of Children Adopted

Table 5 indicates the age of children adopted in Tarrant County for the period covered by this study.

TABLE 5

AGE OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN ADOPTION PETITIONS  
APPROVED IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-1951

Date of Ap- proval of Petition	Unknown or not Stated	Under 6 Mos	6 Mos 1 Yr	1-3 Yrs	3-5 Yrs	5-14 Yrs	14 Yrs and Over	Total
1947-48	5	17	160	27	15	21	9	254
1948-49	3	11	204	28	26	69	8	349
1949-50	7	13	199	39	21	71	20	370
1950-to Oct 51	4	19	266	36	27	101	18	471
Total	19	60	829	130	89	262	55	1444*
Percent- age	1.3	4.2	57.4	9.0	6.2	18.1	3.8	100.0

\*Although there were 1,519 children involved in petitions, only 1,444 children were actually adopted.

It is significant to note, as shown in the data in Table 5, that over one-half of the total number of the children adopted were between the ages of six months and one year. Possibly, this was due to the fact that the child must reside in the home of the petitioner for a period of at least six months before approval of the petition.<sup>9</sup> It is interesting to note, also, that the ages of only nineteen of the 1,444 children adopted were unknown or not stated. Fifty-five of the total number were fourteen years of age or

<sup>9</sup>Vernon's Texas Statutes, 1948, I, Article 46a, Section 3.

over and, therefore, were required to give their consent before the Court.<sup>10</sup>

### Sex of Children Adopted

Differences between sex of the children adopted are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6

#### SEX OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN PETITIONS TO ADOPT IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-1951

Date	Male	Female	Not Stated	Total
1947-48	120	127	7	254
1948-49	180	167	2	349
1949-50	190	177	3	370
1950-51	256	212	3	471
Pending	5	9	33	47
Dismissed	5	3	19	27
Trans- ferred to Dallas County	0	0	1	1
Total	756	695	68	1,519
Percent- age	49.8	45.7	4.5	100.0

Table 6 shows no significant difference between the number of male and the number of female children included in petitions in Tarrant County for the four-year period. There was a relatively small number of cases in which the sex of the child was not stated, the majority being those which were either dismissed or pending.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Section 6.



### Adoptions by Relatives

During the four-year period covered by this study, there were one hundred petitions, involving 112 children, filed by stepmothers of the children to be adopted; there were six petitions, involving six children, filed by stepfathers of the children to be adopted; and there were three cases, involving three children, filed by grandparents of the children to be adopted.

### Filing of the Petition

Upon filing the petition to adopt in Tarrant County, the petitioner is required to fill out a standard form, containing information relative to the child's personal data, natural parents, and adoptive parents. A copy of this form entitled "Certificate of Adoption" may be found in the Appendix.<sup>11</sup> On the back side of the form is a space in which the petitioner signifies his wish as to whether a new birth certificate is to be issued or whether the original certificate of birth is to stand.

### Investigations in Tarrant County

It was noted in the study of court minutes in Tarrant County that the order appointing an investigator placed a thirty-day limit for the investigation. In a small number of cases the period had been extended for some good reason such as

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<sup>11</sup>Appendix of Study, p. 90.

"investigator's having been out of town" during the thirty-day period.

Information is presented in Table 7 regarding investigations relative to adoption.

TABLE 7  
INVESTIGATORS FOR ADOPTION CASES IN TARRANT  
COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-1951

Year	Doctors	Ministers and Priests	Juvenile and Child Welfare Departments	Edna Gladney Home	Military Personnel Including Chaplains	Others	Not Stated	Total
1947-48	20	26	1	61	6	122	64	300
1948-49	15	29	14	1	4	86	199	348
1949-50	7	10	102	..	2	60	210	391
1950-51	4	13	80	..	6	64	241	408
Total	46	78	197	62	18	332	714	1447*
Percentage	3.2	5.4	13.6	4.3	1.3	22.9	49.3	100.0

\*Each of the 1447 cases had one investigator, therefore some of the investigations included more than one child.

Data in Table 7 show a growing tendency to rely on the Juvenile Department in Tarrant County for investigations. The Gladney Home was not listed as investigator in any of the cases in 1949-1951, but it is probable that large numbers of those cases were investigated by the Home, since it is one of the

two licensed child-placing agencies in Tarrant County. Another factor in this assumption is the fact that as the number stating the Edna Gladney Home as an investigator declined, the number not stating the name of the investigator increased. It is possible that elimination of the investigator's name is done as a measure of protection to the child, since the majority of babies born in the Home are illegitimate. A case investigated by the Home would imply that the child had come from that home.

It is also presumed that the investigations made by the Volunteers of America, the second licensed child-placing agency in Tarrant County, are also included in the group not stating the name of the investigator. In the majority of cases where the agency has placed the child in the home, a representative of the agency makes the investigation.

Although the report of the investigator is sealed with other adoption papers and is supposedly closed to public inspection, copies of two investigator's reports appeared in the case minutes of the cases studied. The following report was made by a medical doctor who did the investigating in the case which appeared in the early part of 1948:

I take pleasure in rendering a report as investigator in the adoption proceedings of the case of J. P. \_\_\_\_\_ et ux. First let me state that I am the family physician of Mr. and Mrs. J. P. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Texas. I have been in their home many times in the past few years. Some years ago, they expressed a desire to have a child. Since they have been married for a number of years, and both approaching middle age, I encouraged them to adopt a child. This they were finally able to do. The child was obtained soon after birth and is now two years old. It is a normal girl

baby; its mentality is normal, also growth and development has been normal.

The home life of this family is perfect. The baby is loved by her foster parents as if she was their own.

The petitioners are very intelligent people, are in good health both mentally and physically, have good morals and are regarded by all as good citizens of this community. Their annual income is approximately \$4,200 a year. They own their own home which is clean and attractive.

I think Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ are making, and will continue to make, ideal parents for this little girl.

Signed

\_\_\_\_\_, M. D.

The second investigator's report to be included appeared late in 1948 and was made by a minister. The findings as a result of such investigation are stated as follows:

I--That the parents of the minor child are separated, and the child has not been provided with a home as the mother has been working and has been compelled to have someone else to look after the child. For the last forty (40) days she has been in the custody of \_\_\_\_\_ and his wife, \_\_\_\_\_ in Fort Worth. The father lives in Arkansas and the mother in Texas. As far as I have been able to ascertain they are in good health and there are no known diseases which the child might have acquired or be likely to acquire from either parent and no facts which have been disclosed to me which would indicate that the former environment of the minor, not its antecedents are such as to affect the welfare of the child in its proposed adopted home.

II--Concerning the home of such petitioners, they are both educated and refined persons of excellent reputation and character. \_\_\_\_\_ is a teacher in the \_\_\_\_\_ Seminary at \_\_\_\_\_, and he and his wife will provide a Christian home and are financially able to provide the minor with every necessity and comfort. The child has been in the home as above stated around forty (40) days and they have become very much attached to her and I believe they will provide an ideal home for the child.

This investigator herewith files this as his report with the records of the proceedings in such matter.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>The names of petitioners and the names of towns were eliminated in the two reports for the purpose of presentation of the reports in this study.

These reports of investigation can hardly be considered adequate. Investigations made by the Juvenile Department of Tarrant County may be considered more nearly adequate. An outline of the form used by the Department entitled "Adoption Investigation" may be found in the appendix.<sup>13</sup> The form includes detailed information on the child, placement, the natural parents, the natural maternal and paternal grandparents and other relatives, adopting parents, the family, the home, economic status, three references, and evaluation. The outline contains this note to the worker; "Let them know that we do not charge for investigation". It was noted in the court minutes that a fee of ten dollars is frequently paid by the petitioner for the services of some investigators. According to the Juvenile Department of Tarrant County, the maximum fee which may be charged for an investigation in Texas is twenty-five dollars. Although Lynn Ross, Chief Probation Officer of Tarrant County, is appointed as the investigator in the cases investigated by the Juvenile Department, some other competent and experienced employee of the Department usually does the actual investigating. If the potential adoptive family fails to meet certain standards, in cases investigated by the Department, they are usually given a specified length of time in which the deficiency may be corrected.

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<sup>13</sup>Appendix of Study, p. 91.

## Probationary Period Waived

Table 8 shows the number of cases in which the six-month probationary period was waived in Tarrant County for the four-year period.

TABLE 8

SIX-MONTH PROBATIONARY PERIOD WAIVED IN CASES FILED  
IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-1951

Date of Filing	Number Waived
1947-48 . . . . .	5
1948-49 . . . . .	7
1949-50 . . . . .	1
1950-51 . . . . .	4
Total . . . . .	<u>17 cases*</u>

\*The 17 cases involved a total of 21 children.

The table shows a decline in the number waived during the last two years of the study. In the majority of those waived, it was merely stated that good cause existed for dispensing with the requirement. Another reason given was the fact that the child was less than four months old and had no other home. A third reason, which involved a child from Germany, stated that because of the economic crisis and social upheaval in Germany at that time, the child was not receiving the proper nourishment and clothing for his physical needs and mental development. A fourth reason for dispensing with the period was the fact that the petitioners lived in Alaska, and because of the distance between Fort Worth and Alaska, it

would be impractical for the petitioners to take the child to Alaska, keep it in their care for the required time and then return to Fort Worth for the hearing. An additional reason given was that the petitioner was in military service and subject to immediate transfer to foreign duty. The last reason given for dispensing with the period was so that the children could secure birth certificates and enter school under their adoptive names.

Of the reasons listed, numbers two and three certainly appear to be inadequate reasons for dispensing with the probationary period. The children in these cases could have been as well provided for in the home of the petitioner during a six-month waiting period as they could have been after the period was waived and the final adoption decree granted.

#### Final Decree

Tarrant County uses two forms for the final decree. One is typed and follows a general but not specific form; and a second entitled "Final Adoption Decree" is a printed form containing blanks to be filled in. A typewritten copy of the latter form may be found in the appendix.<sup>14</sup> This latter form has been used in the majority of cases since January, 1949. In addition to either of the above forms, Part III of the "Certificate of Adoption", also found in the Appendix,<sup>15</sup> must

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<sup>14</sup>Appendix of Study, p. 88. <sup>15</sup>Ibid. p. 100.

be completed upon final adoption. This section of the Certificate is the certification, by the District Clerk, of the adoption.

#### Cases Dismissed and Pending

Table 9 indicates the number of petitions dismissed in Tarrant County for each year of the four-year period.

TABLE 9

#### ADOPTION CASES FILED AND LATER DISMISSED IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, 1947-1951

Date of Dismissal	Number Dismissed
1947-48 . . . . .	3
1948-49 . . . . .	3
1949-50 . . . . .	4
1950-51 . . . . .	.14
Total . . . . .	.24*

\*These 24 cases included a total of 27 children

The data in Table 9 show the length of time from the filing of a case to its dismissal ranged from three years and four months to one month. Five cases were dismissed upon application by the plaintiff's attorney. Six were dismissed on the motion of the petitioners or at the request of the petitioners. One was dismissed for want of jurisdiction; the natural mother withdrew her consent. Another was dismissed because the petitioners withdrew their petition to adopt. Eleven were dismissed for want of prosecution; the cases were reached and called for trial, and the plaintiffs' failed to



appear in person or by attorney and prosecute their cause for action.

Table 10 shows the number of cases pending in Tarrant County at the time the study was made.

TABLE 10

ADOPTION CASES PENDING WHICH WERE FILED IN TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS, DURING THE PERIOD 1947-1951

Year of Filing	Number Pending
1947-48 . . . . .	6
1948-49 . . . . .	8
1949-50 . . . . .	15
1950-51 . . . . .	15
Total . . . . .	44 cases*

\*The 44 cases include a total of 47 children

As shown in the data the case having been pending the longest length of time was filed in May, 1948, while the case pending the shortest length of time was filed in August, 1951.

Effect of Amendments on Adoption Procedures in Tarrant County

The amendments to the adoption statutes of Texas during the period covered by this study have been discussed previously at the conclusion of Chapter III. It is doubtful that these amendments had any outstanding effect on the procedures in Tarrant County; it is probable that the amendments merely validate procedures already commonly practiced.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Effectiveness of Adoption Laws

Laws on books do not necessarily mean their wise application.<sup>1</sup> The effectiveness of an adoption law depends largely on the proper integration of social and legal protections. Good administration of a law requires public support. If public interest and support is lacking, the particular law loses most of its effectiveness. Most of the undesirable and unethical cases in child placement today exist because of inadequate laws. In addition to adequate law there is needed an enlightened public, aware of its responsibility in relation to adoption. This enlightenment can come only through an educative method, utilizing the normal channels of disseminating information, namely articles in the press and magazines, radio talks, addresses before clubs and organizations.<sup>2</sup>

#### Essentials of Adoption Law

There are some basic essentials of any type of law. If Texas is to have adequate adoption laws and procedures, it is

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<sup>1</sup>Brooks, op. cit., p. 139.

<sup>2</sup>Fredericksen, op. cit., p. 215.

necessary that some uniformity as to standards exist among the states. Adequate laws of one state may be circumvented by a neighboring state having inferior laws and administration.

Use of a model adoption law would be impracticable, because child welfare legislation is in many different stages of development in the various states. Instead of a model law, the Children's Bureau of the Federal Security Agency submits several broad principles of adoption which, it believes, will help the states to improve their legislation. The Bureau states that an adoption law should have three aims: (1) to protect the child, both from unnecessary separation from parents who might give him a good home and living care if they had help and guidance, and from an undesirable adoption; (2) to protect the natural parents from hurried, ill-considered decisions to give up their child; and (3) to protect the adopting parents from becoming responsible for children whose heredity or capacity for development they knew nothing about.<sup>3</sup>

Such protection cannot be fully assured by the adoption law alone. It depends for its accomplishments on many other legal provisions and many administrative practices. Basic principles of adoption that the Children's bureau believes

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<sup>3</sup>Lenroot, op. cit., p. 8.

should be observed in planning or revising adoption laws and procedures are as follows:

1. Jurisdiction over adoption of minors should be given to a single Court, preferably the juvenile court or other court having jurisdiction in children's cases.

2. The age to which the provisions of the adoption law relating to minors apply should be stated clearly and the meaning of minor and adult should be defined so that there may be no danger of omitting from this protective legislation any persons under twenty-one years of age.

3. Except in the case of proposed adoption by a step-parent, the petition of a married person should not be accepted unless the husband or wife joins in the petition.

4. The state welfare department should preferably be made a party to every action for the adoption of a minor; but even if the department is not made a party to the adoption, it should be notified of all adoption petitions coming before the courts, and should make or cause to be made an investigation and should have the right to appear at hearings.

5. The adoption law should provide that the petition should be accompanied by properly attested written consents to the adoption by the person or persons legally responsible for the custody of the child.

6. The adoption law should provide for social investigation by the state welfare department of the circumstances surrounding change of custody and of conditions in the prospective adoption home, and a full statement in writing of the facts found in the social investigation should be submitted for the consideration of the court, together with a written recommendation as to the desirability of the proposed adoption. This report should not be open to inspection except on order of the court.

7. Hearings in adoption cases should not be open to the public. If it is found at the initial hearing on the adoption petition that further investigation is needed or if additional evidence is required, the court should adjourn the hearing and set a date for another hearing.

8. If the court is satisfied, after hearing the report of the state welfare department and evidence submitted at the hearing that the petitioner is financially

able and morally fit to maintain and care for the child, that the child is suitable for adoption, and that the best interests of the child will be promoted by the adoption, an interlocutory order should be entered and custody of the child granted to the petitioner or petitioners. The interlocutory order should preferably be made for the period of one year, but the court should be authorized to shorten the period or to revoke the order for cause.

9. The law should provide that if the petition is denied or the interlocutory order revoked because of conditions in the proposed adoption home or for any other reasons, and the child is in the home of the petitioners, the necessary steps should be taken to remove the child from the home and assure his proper care and protection.

10. For the protection of the child and the adopting parents the law should require that the child shall have resided in the home of the petitioner for a specified period (preferably one year) before the adoption is granted, but the court should be given the authority to waive or to reduce the residence period under certain circumstances. The main purpose of the residence requirements and the interlocutory order is to permit the court to determine whether the adoption will be in the best interests of the child.

During this period the state welfare department should keep in touch with the situation directly or through the agency designated by it to maintain supervision and should inform the court of conditions which may require attention.<sup>4</sup>

#### Texas' Adoption Laws Compared with Adoption Laws of Other States

According to a study published in 1949, the laws of Texas and forty other states, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, provision is made for a social investigation and a report of the court after a petition for adoption is filed.<sup>5</sup> Twenty states, not including Texas, and the District of

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<sup>4</sup>Lundberg, op. cit., p. 360, citing The United States Children's Bureau, "Preliminary Draft of Essentials of Adoption Law and Procedure."

<sup>5</sup>American Association of Social Workers, 1949, op. cit., p. 23.

Colombia specify that the state department of public welfare is to make or arrange for the investigations; in Texas and fifteen other states and Puerto Rico the court is to make or arrange for the investigation; in five states and Hawaii an investigation is discretionary with the court.<sup>6</sup>

A period of residence is now required by the District of Columbia and thirty-eight states in addition to Texas, with six months as the most frequently required period. Only two states require less than six months.<sup>7</sup> In Texas and a number of other states, the residence period may be waived or reduced by the court for good cause.

A birth card showing only the name, date and place of birth, and some means of identifying the original certificate is now available in fifteen states and two territories.<sup>8</sup> Texas is not included in this group; however, the city of Houston has adopted this method. This protects the child against undesirable publicity.

Four states, including Texas, provided that adoption does not prevent a child from inheriting from its natural parents.<sup>9</sup> In about one third of the states records of adoption

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>9</sup>Mae Wadley Boyd, Some Factors in the Adoption of Children, p. 108.

proceedings are not open to the public; only persons having a direct interest in the proceedings are allowed to inspect them. In other jurisdictions, the final decree is a public record, but the evidence and other reports filed in the case are not open to inspection by the public.<sup>10</sup>

The State of Texas would profit by adopting a recent provision in the Wisconsin adoption law. The provision requires that consent to adoption by a parent must be signed before a judge after he is satisfied that consent is voluntary and is freely given.

An amendment passed in the State of Maryland in 1947, is also recommended for Texas. The amendment required anyone offering a home to an unrelated child, to register with the State Department of Public Welfare. This requirement checks direct placement as well as black market activities in adoption.

#### Specific Conclusions

The following conclusions are warranted by this study:

1. The actual adoption procedure in Tarrant County changed very little over the four-year period studied.
2. The method of preparing the court minutes, and other records open to public inspection, has been improved through the increasing use of a standard printed form.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

3. The increasing reliance on the Juvenile Department is desirable, because of the competence of that Department.

4. The statement of the illegitimacy of the adopted child, although included in a very small number of the court minutes, should be eliminated entirely from records open to public inspection.

5. Petitions should be approved or dismissed within a certain length of time after the filing in order that the number pending will not include cases filed several months, or even years previously.

6. Many of the reasons given in Tarrant County are insufficient, insofar as waiving the six-month probationary period. The reason for dispensing with the period should be stated in each case, rather than merely stating that good cause exists for such action.

7. Although adoption procedures in Tarrant County comply very adequately with the State adoption statutes, they could be greatly improved through improvement of their basis, the Texas statutes relating to adoption.

#### General Conclusions and Recommendations for Improvement of Adoption Laws and Procedures

Effective adoption procedures will reduce to a minimum the hazards which are now associated with adoption in many areas.

Because of the interaction of interests, proposed adoption acts often run great risks of being made ineffective by



individuals who believe that their personal rights are invaded, or through interference of agencies which feel that they have vested interests or prerogatives with which there can be no interference.

Although the agency worker may have a part in improving the adoption program, her contributions are based on the agency's policies and views. In addition to keeping its practices in conformity with the adoption statute, the agency should concern itself with the practical and emotional complications not written into the law. The agency should attempt to foster more public understanding of their work. The attitude of society toward the unmarried mother and the illegitimate child are greatly affected by the attitude and practices of agencies. The agency, by paying careful attention to complaints or views of the public as a whole, can do much to improve its own program and gain support of the community.

The following recommendations are offered:

1. Adoption of children should be limited to couples unable to have children as long as this group supplies a sufficient demand to place all adoptable children. An exception to this practice should be made in cases involving persons related to the child to be adopted.

2. Adoption should be limited to married couples only and should not be attempted by a single person, since it is

impossible for a single person to provide the natural family situation desired.

3. Because of the extreme importance and influence of the early part of a child's life on his personality, the child should be placed in the potential adopter's home as early as possible.

4. Although, the minimum period of residence should be maintained, the probationary period should vary with the child and the family. The probationary period should come after the temporary order of custody in order that it may be under court guardianship. Precautions should be taken to eliminate the waiving of the residence period when sufficient reason does not exist.

5. All homes or agencies placing children for adoption should have the same general requirements for adoptive parents.

6. It is suggested that a minimum and a maximum age be set for adoptive parents. The age limits should be in accordance with the age of the child to be adopted.

7. The State Welfare Department should be made responsible for the social investigation. This practice would eliminate inefficient investigators which may be appointed by the court. However, the Division should be allowed to designate qualified public and private agencies, as the Juvenile Department of Tarrant County, to continue to make investigations so that such valuable services now being

rendered will not be lost. It is further recommended that the thirty day limit for the investigation be increased to sixty days, due to the fact that the investigator must often travel to distant cities to secure the desired information.

8. Steps should be taken to prevent persons from adopting a specific child merely for financial gain, since adoptive parents may inherit from the adopted child.

9. The Texas adoption statutes state that upon adoption, the rights of the natural parents over the child are terminated. Therefore, the adopted child should be prohibited from inheriting from his natural parents.

10. For the protection of the child and of the adoptive parents, a provision should be included in the law permitting the court to annul an adoption within a limited period for restricted reasons.

11. Texas' adoption law closes the social records to everyone except the parties to the action. However, it would be advantageous for Texas to give access to the State Department of Public Welfare.

12. The granting of an adoption decree should be limited to the District Court having jurisdiction in the county in which the petitioners are bona fide inhabitants. Adoptions involving persons living a long distance away from the court in which they petition for the adoption is a serious handicap to the judge who must provide for a social investigation.

Adoptions of this type often result in hurried and undesirable adoptions. An example is a case in Tarrant County in which the residential period was waived due to the fact that the petitioners lived in Alaska.

13. In conclusion, it is suggested and recommended that the Texas adoption statute should be amended to assure maximum protection to the child, the natural parents, the adoptive parents, and the community. Other laws related to adoption should be amended to harmonize with the adoption statutes. Above all, the law should be strengthened to eliminate illegal adoption of children.

APPENDIX

EX PARTE:

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF  
TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS

\_\_\_\_\_ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioners

FINAL ADOPTION DECREE

ON THIS, the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A. D. 19\_\_\_\_, came on for hearing the verified petition of \_\_\_\_\_ and wife \_\_\_\_\_, for the adoption of a minor child, a \_\_\_\_\_, as mentioned in the petition on file in this cause, said child having been born on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_ County, Texas; and it appearing to the Court that a certified copy of the petition was mailed to the Executive Director of the State Department of Public Welfare, Austin, Texas, and that this cause has been set for hearing and the Investigator appointed, as required by law; and came the petitioners in person and by attorney, and it further appearing to the Court on being fully advised in the premises:

That the Court has jurisdiction in this cause; that said child has been in the care and custody of Petitioners for the length of time required by law, and for the length of time to have established that said child is a proper subject for adoption and suited to the home of Petitioners, and that the home of Petitioners is suitable for said child; that the Investigator who has been appointed by the Court has made the investigation required by law, which shows that said child is a proper subject for adoption, suited to the home of Petitioners, and that the home of Petitioners is suitable for said child; that the written consent of all parties required by law has been obtained; that all conditions precedent and legal prerequisites have been performed and complied with; and that said child is a citizen, by birth, of the United States of America.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED that the petition for adoption be and the same is hereby granted; that the written report of the Investigator be filed with the records of this proceeding; that the rights of all other persons, if any they have, to the care, control and custody of said child be and the same are hereby forever and finally terminated; that the said child shall henceforth be known as

\_\_\_\_\_ and is hereby declared adopted by said Petitioners in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas; that therefore, and henceforth, and for all intents and purposes whatsoever, the said child is and is hereby declared to be in the same relationship to the Petitioners as if born to them by natural birth, and remaining in such relationship as if the child were their own; and that said Petitioners are hereby charged with the duties and responsibilities for the care, support and maintenance of said child in the same manner, to the same extent and in the same relationship as if the child were their own by natural birth, all as provided for by and in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the State Registrar of the Bureau of Vital Statistics at Austin, Texas, issue a new birth certificate for the above named child as provided for by the laws of the State of Texas.

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Judge

TEXAS STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

<b>PART I</b> Items 1-7 must be completed. This information is necessary to locate the original birth certificate which will be removed from the volume and placed in a sealed file. Item 5 must show the actual place of birth of the child. Item 6 need not be completed if the natural mother was unmarried at the time of the birth.	
CHILD'S PERSONAL DATA	1. Name of child before adoption 2. Sex 3. Color or race
NATURAL PARENTS	4. Date of birth 5. Place of birth (city or town, county, and state) 6. Full name of father 7. Full name of mother
<b>PART II</b> The adopting parents must furnish the following information concerning themselves AS OF THE DATE SHOWN IN ITEM 4. This information is necessary to prepare and file a new birth certificate for this child.	
FOSTER FATHER	8. Full name of father 9. Color or race 10. Date of birth 11. Place of birth (state or foreign country) 12. Usual occupation 13. Kind of business or industry
FOSTER MOTHER	14. Full maiden name of mother 15. Color or race 16. Date of birth 17. Place of birth (state or foreign country) 18. Usual occupation 19. Kind of business or industry
20. Number of children born to FOSTER mother prior to date in Item 4. (Do NOT include this child) a. Other children now living _____ b. Other children born alive but now dead _____ c. Other children born dead _____ 21. Residence of FOSTER mother AT TIME OF THIS BIRTH (Include street address or rural route, city or town, and state)	
VERIFICATION OF PART II	22. Signature of parent verifying data in Part II 23. Present mailing address of foster parent(s)
ATTORNEY	24. Name of attorney 25. Mailing address of attorney
An X in this box will indicate that the adopting parents do NOT want a new birth certificate substituted for the record filed at the time the birth occurred. If this choice is made, the adopting parents must sign the statement appearing on the reverse side of this form.	
<b>PART III</b> The district clerk shall require that Parts I and II above be completed at the time the petition for adoption is filed.	
CERTIFICATION OF DISTRICT CLERK	26. I hereby certify that the child described above was adopted by the above named foster parent(s) on the _____ day of _____, 19____ and is now to bear the name of _____ as set forth in the decree of adoption made on that date in Cause No. _____ District Court of the State of Texas. 27. Signature and seal of district clerk _____ By _____ Date signed _____ District clerk in and for the county of _____ State of Texas Date report sent to state registrar _____

We, the foster parents of \_\_\_\_\_, a child for whom

a Decree of Adoption was entered by the \_\_\_\_\_ District Court of \_\_\_\_\_ County,

Texas, in Cause No. \_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_\_\_\_,

do hereby request the State Department of Health:

- To allow the original certificate of birth previously registered with the Department to stand as the official record of birth, or
- To prepare and file a new birth certificate to be attached as an amendment to the birth record previously registered with the Department.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ADOPTION INVESTIGATION

Now comes Lynn W. Ross, Chief Probation Officer of Tarrant County, Texas, who would show the Court on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_ that he was duly appointed by order of the Court as Investigator in the above styled and numbered cause:

## THE CHILD

1. Name
2. Date of birth
3. Place of birth
4. Certificate of birth (verified)
5. Attending physician
6. Hospital
7. Type of birth
8. Developmental history including physical and mental
  - a. diagnosis of present doctor
  - b. personality
  - c. school record
  - d. attitudes
9. Psychometric test if possible
10. Adjustment in the home
11. Physical Description

## PLACEMENT

1. By whom and from what place
2. Date of placement
3. How contact was made and cost
4. Do natural parents know where child is

## THE NATURAL PARENTS

- |  | <u>Mother</u> | <u>Father</u> |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Name in full (given and maiden name)  |               |               |
| 2. Place of birth  |               |               |
| 3. Date of birth   |               |               |
| 4. Marriages and divorces (verified)   |               |               |
| 5. Education   |               |               |
| 6. Physical and mental condition   |               |               |
| 7. Family and social history <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. police record</li> <li>b. agency and court records</li> <li>c. religious affiliation</li> <li>d. army record</li> </ol> |               |               |
| 8. Parents attitude <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. consent given</li> </ol>   |               |               |

THE NATURAL MATERNAL AND PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS  
AND OTHER RELATIVES

- |                            | <u>Maternal</u> | <u>Paternal</u> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Names                   |                 |                 |
| 2. Ages                    |                 |                 |
| 3. Health                  |                 |                 |
| a. physical                |                 |                 |
| b. mental                  |                 |                 |
| c. cause and date of death |                 |                 |

ADOPTING PARENTS

Mother:

1. Name in full (maiden name)
2. Birth date
3. Birth place
4. Present marriage
5. Previous marriages and divorces (verified)
  - a. other children
6. Education
7. Physical and mental health
8. Religion and nationality
9. Attitudes toward child and other family members
10. Occupation
11. Child eating practices

Father:

1. Name in full
2. Birth date
3. Birth place
4. Previous marriages and divorces (verified)
  - a. other children
5. Education
6. Physical and mental health
7. Religion and nationality
8. Attitude toward child and other family members
9. Occupation
10. Service record

THE FAMILY

1. Composition of family
2. Position of child in family
  - a. reason for adoption
3. Interest and hobbies of parents
4. Civic and social activities
5. Attitudes of immediate family members toward adopting child
  - a. attitude toward adoption
6. Relatives (immediate)

- a. any unusual developments regarding physical and mental health-deaths
- b. grandparents attitudes toward child
- c. financial situation of grandparents
- d. health-death and causes

#### THE HOME

- 1. Location
  - a. neighborhood
  - b. school and church
- 2. Description
  - a. type, size, and condition
  - b. own or rent (value)
  - c. condition of home
    - 1. furnishing
      - a. books, magazines, radio, television
    - 2. general appearance
    - 3. sleeping arrangements
    - 4. child's equipment and clothing
  - d. Condition of yard
- 3. Plans for the child
  - a. education
  - b. activity
  - c. will child be told of adoption

#### ECONOMIC STATUS

- 1. Employment (verified)
  - a. length, position
  - b. salary
  - c. occupational hazards
  - d. age in relation to job
  - e. seasonal, transitory
- 2. Insurance
  - a. father, mother, children, and property
- 3. Savings
- 4. Property owned and investments
- 5. Debts and obligations

#### REFERENCES

- 1. List references, at least three
  - a. relation to adopting parents

EVALUATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
INVESTIGATOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER

STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF TARRANT

Before me, the undersigned authority, on this \_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, appeared \_\_\_\_\_, and who  
after being duly sworn on his oath, states that the above  
and foregoing allegations are true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
IN AND FOR TARRANT COUNTY

NOTE TO WORKER:

Let them know that we do not charge for investigation

## REPORT OF MRS. JACQUE NICHOLSON, SOCIAL WORKER, EDNA

GLADNEY HOME, MARCH 18, 1950

The following statistics cover a nine-month period, from June 15, 1949, to March 15, 1950.

Traveled 10,685 miles and 110 home visits.

Made: 79 pre-placement studies  
55 supervisory home visits

Contacted: 7 hospitals  
14 doctors  
3 maternity homes  
8 families, re-admission

Attended: 3 Regional & State Welfare meetings  
5 Conferences with the State Welfare Representatives  
4 Conferences with the Mental Hygiene Clinic

Worked with: 79 mothers  
49 of them in the last half of 1949

Statistics on: 81 mothers in 1949 - Mother sheltered in West Texas Maternity Hospital  
78 babies placed for adoption  
2 placed with State Welfare Units  
1 mother kept baby

AGESMothers

Age	Number
14	1
15	3
16	2
17	7
18	6
19	11
20	8
21	9
22	6
23	6
24	2
25	8

Fathers

Age	Number
14	0
15	0
16	0
17	4
18	1
19	5
20	7
21	6
22	3
23	12
24	3
25	8

## Report - Mrs. Nicholson

Mothers

Age	Number
26	3
27	1
28	3
29	1
30	0
31	0
32	0
33	0
34	1
35	1
36	0
37	0
38	0
39	2
40	0
41	0
42	0
43	0

Average age of Mothers  
21½ Years

## Marital Status:

Mothers

Single - 54  
Widowed - 18  
Married - 2  
Married to father - 6  
Marrying father - 1

## Legal Residence:

Mothers

Texas	76
Alabama	1
Louisiana	1
New York	1
Oklahoma	1
Minnesota	1

Fathers

Age	Number
26	4
27	2
28	4
29	5
30	1
31	0
32	2
33	1
34	0
35	0
36	0
37	0
38	2
39	0
40	4
41	0
42	1
43	1
48	1

Average age of Fathers  
23½ Years

Fathers

Single - 47  
Widowed - 6  
Married - 19  
Married to mother - 6  
Marrying mother - 1  
Father unknown - 2

Fathers

Texas	58
Alabama	0
Louisiana	2
New York	1
Oklahoma	2
Minnesota	1

## Report - Mrs. Nicholson

Mothers

New Mexico	0
Nebraska	0
Massachusetts	0
Georgia	0
Washington	0
California	0
New Jersey	0
North Dakota	0
Mississippi	0
Missouri	0
South America	0
Unknown	0

Fathers

New Mexico	3
Nebraska	1
Massachusetts	1
Georgia	1
Washington	1
California	1
New Jersey	1
North Dakota	1
Mississippi	1
Missouri	1
South America	1
Unknown	5

## Birth Place:

MothersState

59	Texas
4	Oklahoma
3	Nebraska
3	Louisiana
2	Missouri
2	New Mexico
2	Arkansas
1	Alabama
1	Arizona
1	New York
1	Kansas
1	Pennsylvania
1	Germany
0	Kentucky
0	Georgia
0	Mississippi
0	Illinois
0	Massachusetts
0	Minnesota
0	Washington

FathersState

46	Texas
2	Oklahoma
1	Nebraska
2	Louisiana
2	Missouri
0	New Mexico
0	Arkansas
0	Alabama
0	Arizona
2	New York
2	Kansas
1	Pennsylvania
0	Germany
1	Kentucky
1	Georgia
1	Mississippi
1	Illinois
1	Massachusetts
2	Minnesota
2	Washington

## Church Affiliation:

Church

Baptist
Catholics
Methodist
Church of Christ

Mothers

36
10
8
5

Fathers

25
7
13
1

## Report - Mrs. Nicholson

<u>Church</u>	<u>Mothers</u>	<u>Fathers</u>
Lutheran	4	0
Presbyterian	4	2
Christian	3	0
Hebrew	2	1
Episcopalian	1	1
Congregational	1	0
Jehova Witness	1	0
Seven Day Adventist	1	1
Assembly of God	0	2
No Affiliation	2	0
Protestant	2	15
Unknown	0	13

## Education:

Less than / or some High School	20	12
High School Graduate	29	33
Business College	11	1
One year of College / or student	7	10
2 years College	5	6
3 years College	2	1
College Degree	3	12
Other Schooling	3	1
Unknown		5

## Occupations:

<u>Mothers</u>	<u>Fathers</u>
Office Workers & Secretaries & Stenographers	Farmer-Rancher
Waitresses	Armed Forces
Machine Operators	Oil Field Workers
Salesladies	Salesmen
Teletype & P.B.X. Operators & Telegraph Operators	Office Workers
Cashiers	Mechanics
Nurses Aide	Service Station Operator
Practical Nurse	Petroleum Engineers
Models	Machinist
Laundry Workers	Contractors
Medical Technician	Electrical Engineers
Cafe Owners	Advertising Managers
	Factory Worker
	Clothing Manufacturer



## Report - Mrs. Nicholson

Mothers

Elevator Operators	1
I.B.M. Operator	1
School Teacher	1
Librarian	1
Musician	1
Social Worker	1
None	13

Fathers

Engineers	1
Lineman	1
Produce Business	1
Airplane Mechanic	1
Railroad man	1
Store Manager	2
Mechanical Drawing	1
Odd Jobs	1
Owned Business	1
Lumberman	1
Artist-Writer	1
Shipping Clerk	1
Painter	1
Carpenter	1
Cattle Buyer	1
House Mover	1
Laborer	1
Grain Broker	1
Wholesale Business	1
Unknown	5
None	6

Average stay in hospital: 3 months

Teach: Cooking, washing, ironing, sewing and needlework

Have: Electric sewing machine - television set - piano - radio - record player - shut-in library service - furnish books requested, such as bookkeeping and information on Nurse's training.

2 - Mental Hygiene Aptitude testing

A number of job referrals to Texas State Employment Service

1 - given business course

Providing clothing and transportation to a number of girls. Always offer all kinds of rehabilitation service.

REPORT OF MRS. JACQUE NICHOLSON, SOCIAL WORKER, EDNA  
GLADNEY HOME, FOR PERIOD MARCH 16, 1950  
TO MARCH 15, 1951

Traveled 14,191 miles by plane or car, 142 home visits.

Made: 98 Supervisory visits  
37 Pre-placement studies in homes  
90 Pre-placement studies in office  
127

Have: 58 Pre-placement studies completed and awaiting place-  
ment (10 should be told we will be unable to use  
their homes)

Contacted: 7 other agencies and homes

Attended: 3 State Department meetings  
9 American Ass'n of Social Workers Evening Meetings  
3 Texas Social Welfare Evening Meetings  
1 Conference with Child Guidance Clinic  
7-days National Conference Social Workers,  
Atlantic City, April 21 to 4-28, 1950  
Several Child Welfare meetings, Council of  
Social Agencies

Statistics on: 112 mothers of babies handled by us during  
period:

109 mothers sheltered in W.T.M.H.

100 babies born in W.T.M.H.

9 " " All Saints Hospital

3 " " Elsewhere

112

105 babies placed in homes

1 baby declared ward of Juvenile Court

3 babies returned to mothers

3 babies died

112 mothers

112 placements - 105 babies in home

1 baby ward of Juvenile Court

5 older children in home

1 older child in Boys Ranch

112 placements

Referrals: From Ads in newspapers

- Doctors
- Hospitals
- Friends
- Adoptive Parents
- State Department
- Some who know type foster parents we have

AGES

<u>Mothers</u>		<u>Fathers</u>	
<u>Age</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Number</u>
15	1	15	0
16	6	15	0
17	7	17	3
18	15	18	3
19	14	19	11
20	19	20	4
21	3	21	15
22	10	22	7
23	5	23	5
24	8	24	10
25	2	25	7
26	3	26	2
27	0	27	8
28	3	28	2
29	4	29	2
30	1	30	6
31	0	31	2
32	0	32	4
33	1	33	1
34	2	34	0
35	2	35	4
36	1	36	2
37	1	37	1
38	1	38	4
39	0	39	1
40	3	40	1
		43	2
		45	1
		47	1
		48	2

Marital Status:

<u>Mothers</u>		<u>Fathers</u>	
Single	68	Single	55
Married	9	Married	25

## STATISTICS ON 112 MOTHERS

<u>Mothers</u>		<u>Fathers</u>
Married to Father	7	7
Widowed	16	15
Divorced	11	9
Separated	1	1

## Legal Residence:

<u>Mother</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Father</u>
Texas	98	79
Oklahoma	6	7
Iowa	2	2
California	1	6
Indiana	1	0
Nebraska	1	2
Kansas	1	0
Tennessee	1	0
Arkansas	1	0
Unknown	0	6
Missouri	0	2
New Mexico	0	1
Overseas	0	3
Georgia	0	1
Minnesota	0	1
Illinois	0	1
Louisiana	0	1

## Birth-place:

<u>Mother</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Father</u>
Texas	74	72
Oklahoma	15	6
Arkansas	3	4
Louisiana	3	1
California	2	3
Indiana	2	1
No. Carolina	2	0
So. Carolina	0	1
New York	1	1
Wyomin	1	0
Minnesota	1	1
No. Dakota	1	0
Nebraska	1	1
Pennsylvania	1	1
Kansas	1	1
Iowa	1	1

<u>Mother</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Father</u>
Kentucky	1	2
Arizona	1	0
Other Country	1	0
Florida	0	1
Georgia	0	1
Mississippi	0	1
Ohio	0	1
Illinois	0	3
Maine	0	1
Missouri	0	1
Michigan	0	3
Unknown	0	5

## Church:

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Number of Mothers</u>	<u>Number of Fathers</u>
Baptist	55	38
Methodist	21	15
Church of Christ	11	3
Catholic	6	6
Presbyterian	5	7
Christian	3	0
Lutheran	3	1
Episcopal	2	4
United Brethern	2	0
Assembly of God	1	0
Holiness	1	1
Nazarine	1	0
Friends	0	1
Unitarian	0	1
Protestant	0	25
None	1	3
Unknown	0	7

## Education:

Less than/ some high school	45	27
High school graduate	42	47
Business College	7	1
One year college/student	3	10
Two years college	5	14
Three years college	3	4
College degree	3	6
Other special training	4	1
Unknown	0	2

## OCCUPATION

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Mother</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Father</u>
Salesladies	21	Military Service	13
Waitress	17	Factory Workers	13
Office Workers	12	Truckers, bus, taxi d.	12
Students	12	Mechanics	10
Cashier	9	Salesman	10
Factory Worker	7	Students - odd jobs	8
Bookkeeper	6	Mining-oil field wkrs.	7
Beautitians	5	Farmers-Ranchers	6
Telephone Operators	5	Office Manager	4
Practical Nurse	4	Government workers	4
Stenographer-Sec'y	3	Business Owners	4
Laboratory Worker	2	Carpenter - Contr.	3
Dressmaker	1	Brick Mason	2
Hotel worker	1	Engineers	2
Artist	1	Entertainers	2
Florist	1	Filling Sta. Oper.	2
Model	1	Unknown	2
Registered Nurse	1	Electrical Engr.	1
School Teacher	1	Cotton Buyer	1
Photographer	1	Grave digger	1
Teletype operator	1	Hospital worker	1
		Shipping Clerk	1
		Physician	1

Average stay in hospital: 4 months

Teach: Cooking, washing, ironing, sewing, needlework.

Lessons: Piano, high school courses by correspondence, approval of home town principle and our school superintendent.

Have: Electric sewing machine; television set; piano; radio; record player; shut-in library service.

Resources: Child Guidance Clinic  
Texas State Employment Service  
Housing: Girls Service League  
Young Women's Christian Association

Provide: Rehabilitative training, such as beauty courses, business courses; clothing and transportation, where needed.

## Human Interest stories:

Couple in office

Girl-mother relationship

Not tell information about father

Girl returned for employment - Sister referred to State  
Department for preventive  
work

Girl brought fiance into meet us

Seven married after return home; 4 baby announcements;

Three married other than fathers before delivery

"My Hilda" best looking one in church - trousscau

Confessions and Mass for Catholic girls

Trips to picture show, etc.

Family visits-room provided

## WORKSHEET, EDNA GLADNEY HOME

Mother admitted to Maternity Home \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Born in \_\_\_\_\_

Hour of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Weight at birth \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. attending \_\_\_\_\_ Length of pregnancy \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery, natural or instrument \_\_\_\_\_ Labor \_\_\_\_\_

Ether? \_\_\_\_\_ Condition \_\_\_\_\_

How is birth registered? \_\_\_\_\_ Breast fed? \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER \_\_\_\_\_ Alias \_\_\_\_\_

Born in \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ht. \_\_\_\_\_

Wt. \_\_\_\_\_ Features \_\_\_\_\_ Hair \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes \_\_\_\_\_

Complexion \_\_\_\_\_ Skin Texture \_\_\_\_\_ Teeth \_\_\_\_\_

Disposition \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

Where? \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced? \_\_\_\_\_

(If divorced, state when and where filed)

Education \_\_\_\_\_

(If high school, state what school, graduated, activities, etc.)

College \_\_\_\_\_

(Names, years attended, graduation dates, activities)

Average grades \_\_\_\_\_ Ever employed \_\_\_\_\_

State capacity employed, names of employers, dates, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Diseases \_\_\_\_\_ Operations \_\_\_\_\_

Ever treated for V.D.? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Address Now \_\_\_\_\_



## WORKSHEET--Continued

Epilepsy, asthma or mental weakness in either family? \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S MOTHER: (Full maiden name) \_\_\_\_\_

Born in \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Ancestry \_\_\_\_\_

Ht. \_\_\_\_\_ Wt. \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Hair \_\_\_\_\_ Features \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Disposition \_\_\_\_\_ Diseases \_\_\_\_\_ Operations \_\_\_\_\_

Year Married \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Children \_\_\_\_\_

Boys \_\_\_\_\_ Girls \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_ Present address \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S FATHER: \_\_\_\_\_ Born in \_\_\_\_\_

Date or age \_\_\_\_\_ Ancestry \_\_\_\_\_ Disposition \_\_\_\_\_

Ht. \_\_\_\_\_ Wt. \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Hair \_\_\_\_\_ Features \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Training and employment \_\_\_\_\_

Name of employer must be given, if not  
self-employed

Diseases \_\_\_\_\_ Operations \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

Present address \_\_\_\_\_

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List names of sisters and brothers, their married names, ages, types, etc., number of children; employment addresses.

## THE EDNA GLADNEY HOME INFORMATION SHEET, 1951

Please read very carefully

The attached application should be filled out in full so as to give as much information as possible to aid the Home in making a proper investigation and giving it full consideration. Use an extra sheet of paper for additional information.

In answering the question - "What are your present circumstances and your probable ability to carry out your plans?", the name of the husband's employer should be given, together with his position and income. All property owned with values thereof should be listed, including home, business, automobiles, savings, etc., as well as amount of life insurance and companies in which carried. Total indebtedness should likewise be listed. If the husband has served in the Armed Forces, state the branch, time of service and serial number.

State to what grade in school husband and wife attained and names of colleges attended. If applicants parents are deceased, give names and addresses of nearest relatives. Show in what towns applicants have lived since their marriage, and the different occupations and employers husband has had since marriage.

Mention any serious illnesses, either husband or wife, has had within the past three years, and mention any physical defects, if any in either. Sometime after approval of application, a blood test and physical examination is necessary, but not until we advise you.

In giving references include the names of your doctor, your minister, your banker, and your attorney with those of other references.

Women over thirty-five years of age at the time of making application should not apply for infants, and preference is shown for older children to women under forty-five. However, the Home seldom has older children available for placements.

The Home prefers that applicants have been married to each other for at least three years, that they have an annual income of at least \$6000.00 and that they own their home, or have the equivalent in other assets.

Before a child is accepted by the Home to be placed for adoption, blood tests are made, a full history of the family is obtained, and if there is any infectious disease, insanity,

or epilepsy history, etc., the child is not accepted. The Home strives to give the foster parents a child that is mentally and physically well, a good foundation to begin with.

When a child is placed by the Home, there is a six months probationary period during which the child may be returned to the Home by the applicant for any or no reason at all. During this probational period the Home reserves the right to take the child back if it is considered by the Home best for the child's welfare, in which case the foster parents are due no reimbursement for expenditures toward caring for the child. This seldom happens, however, as the homes are thoroughly investigated beforehand, and the Home is satisfied at the time of placement. At the end of six months, the legal adoption of the child is required, except in exceptional cases where completion of the adoption is waived or postponed with approval of the Home.

Applicants are usually interested in knowing the approximate costs involved.

When a child is placed the foster parents are requested to reimburse the Society for the actual cost of nursing care and feeding of the child which has been determined by the Board to be \$10.00 per day for the number of days which the child is kept by the Society, usually not less than six nor more than twelve days.

The Board of Directors of the Society requests foster parents after receiving a child to inquire about and pay any portion of the mother's hospital bill and delivery fee remaining unpaid.

When the adoption is completed in Court, the applicants will, of course, pay the Court costs and attorney's fees. In Fort Worth, court costs are \$8.05, the Fort Worth Bar recommended fees on adoptions are \$100.00, and the new birth certificate costs 50¢.

This Society is a non-profit charitable corporation. No charge is made for its overhead, its administration, investigations, etc. nor for the multitude of other services rendered homeless children, adopted children and foster parents. These are all supported by private charitable donations. Funds are not solicited from applicants, nor does the staff personnel investigating applications have anything to do with solicitations.

After placing your application with the Society, if any changes of address or status occur, or if you receive a child elsewhere, please notify us.

## TEXAS CHILDREN'S HOME AND AID SOCIETY

Fort Worth, Texas

By filling out this blank the applicant is not bound to accept a child from this Society. The blank merely calls for the information necessary in considering your application. Please answer ALL questions clearly.

Husband's full name \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No. \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Color of hair \_\_\_\_\_ Color eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Where born? \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth? \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Date last physical examination and blood test? \_\_\_\_\_

Any former marriages? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, name of former wife or wives: \_\_\_\_\_

How many children and date of births by former marriages? \_\_\_\_\_

Dependents other than wife? If children, give names, ages and whether adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's full name, including maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security No. \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Color hair \_\_\_\_\_ Color eyes \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Where born? \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth? \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Any former marriages? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, name of former husband or husbands \_\_\_\_\_

How many children by former marriages and date of births?

\_\_\_\_\_

What persons live in your home (including hired help)? \_\_\_\_\_

Give full name and age and sex of each \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION OF YOUR HOME:

Which railroad from Fort Worth, Texas? \_\_\_\_\_

Which station? \_\_\_\_\_

How far is station from your house? \_\_\_\_\_

Give full directions for reaching your home by automobile

\_\_\_\_\_

How can you be reached by telephone? \_\_\_\_\_

What is wife's religious preference? \_\_\_\_\_

Husband's \_\_\_\_\_

What is wife's race? \_\_\_\_\_ Husband's \_\_\_\_\_

What is wife's nationality? \_\_\_\_\_ Husband's \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of pastor or pastors? \_\_\_\_\_

When and where were you married? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the state of health of the members of your household?

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of your physician? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to take a child? \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of a child would you consider taking? \_\_\_\_\_

Between what ages? \_\_\_\_\_ Boy or girl? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you take more than one? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you come for the child, when and if notified? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, will you pay the expenses of bringing the child to you? \_\_\_\_\_

What would be your plans for a child's future? (Position in the family, education, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

What are your present circumstances and your probable ability to carry out your plans? \_\_\_\_\_

Exact position of husband, if employed? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of employer? \_\_\_\_\_

If self employed, name of business or firm? \_\_\_\_\_

Annual income? \_\_\_\_\_

What property do you own? \_\_\_\_\_ Value? \_\_\_\_\_

Indebtedness \_\_\_\_\_

Bank where you do business? \_\_\_\_\_

Average balance in checking account? \_\_\_\_\_ Savings? \_\_\_\_\_

What facilities are there in your family and neighborhood for giving a child:

Schools? (Distance from house, kind of school, length of term) \_\_\_\_\_

Religious life? (Accessible churches, distance from house) \_\_\_\_\_

Companionship? \_\_\_\_\_

Recreation? (Including reading, music, play, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE GIVE AS REFERENCES:

Names of each of husband's parents. Addresses, if living? \_\_\_\_\_

If dead, name of nearest relative \_\_\_\_\_

Name of each of wife's parents. Addresses, if living? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
If dead, name of nearest relative \_\_\_\_\_

Name of a judge or lawyer of your acquaintance? \_\_\_\_\_

At least three other references (not all relatives) who are well acquainted with your family?

Name	Address	If Related, How?
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Signature of husband \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of wife \_\_\_\_\_

Post Office Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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