

THE BATTALION
by Jim Earle

CADET SLOUCH



"... Okay — what's your excuse for having to miss class on July 3rd?"

Old Book Discloses Texas As Hunter's Paradise

By The Associated Press
ROCKPORT, Tex.—A recently discovered book, published 113 years ago, disclosed that Texas was a hunter's paradise in the last century, even more so than today.

"Texas abounds in game animals beyond any country in the world," wrote Viktor Bracht, the first postmaster of this coast town just north of Corpus Christi.

Bracht, cautious to report only what he had seen, is an ancestor of the numerous Brachts who live

in Corpus Christi, Rockport, Poth and other places in South Texas. He first came to Texas in 1845, and revisited his native Germany in 1848. There he wrote his guide book, mainly for Germans who might migrate to the state.

"The most common game in Texas is the small American deer, which is present in all parts of the country," his book says: "In the West it is sometimes so numerous that 1,000 or 2,000 can be counted in a 20-mile ride.

It is said there are elk and mountain sheep in the northern parts of Texas. I have never seen any. On the other hand, there are flocks of antelope on the upper Cibola and Salado, and slopes of the Guadalupe Mountains.

Numerous herds of buffalo range the wide grassy plains of the northern mountain sections. Sometimes they stray to the coast, but their favorite range is the immense prairies.

Enormous herds of wild cattle competed with the buffalo on the Sabinas and upper Guadalupe, on the Rio Grande and on Beach Creek, as well as several other regions.

"There are three kinds of bears in Texas," Bracht wrote. "The dangerous grizzly is found in the

northern mountains; the black bear is found in the hilly sections and near the coast. There is still another kind along the Pedernales—taller and more slender than the black bear, and much fleet, wherefore it is called 'racer'."

Wild hogs, descended from domestic stock, ranged the river bottoms, and the hilly regions to the west were infested with Mexican hogs, called javelinas.

Jaguars were found in the western part of the state, between the Medina and the Rio Grande, and pumas were common. Moreover, Bracht said, one of the most common cats of all was the beautifully striped leopard cat (ocelot). These now rare, were more numerous than bobcats, which have become common.

Beavers were still living in the Hill Country when Bracht was here. Otter and mink were found along the Guadalupe.

"There are several kinds of foxes," he said, "including the beautiful silver ones in the western Hill Country. Armadillos were found close to Mexico, east of the Rio Grande, and every part of Texas has wolves. . .

"The coast are literally covered with waterfowl, and wild turkeys are more or less common everywhere in the interior."

He killed 65 ducks the first winter he was in Texas, and there were 30 different kinds in his bag. Besides this there were geese, swans, spoonbills, pelicans and sandierings along the coast.

Tyler Collector Has 62 Pounds Of Stamps

By The Associated Press
TYLER, Tex.—Howard Pollan of Tyler, Tex., is probably the most active philatelist in East Texas. At least he collects stamps by the bagful, boxful, barrelful.

The last time he put it on the scales, a barrel of stamps he keeps under his home weighed 62.5 pounds.

Pollan is an air traffic control specialist with the Federal Aviation Agency at Pounds Field in Tyler.

"Anything that's a stamp, I take it," Pollan said as he catalogued some new adhesives to add to his collection.

He also has an album devoted to plate blocks of United States issues. This country's stamps and those of the United Nations are his favorites.

"I have the United States solid, I guess you would say, from 1934 to the present," he said. "I also have all the first-day covers of the recent issues."

Metered mail tapes and precancels round out the collection.

And that's where the bags and boxes come in. Pollan keeps his precancels separated in paper bags and the metered adhesives in shoe boxes.

"I'm not in it for money because I just don't have that kind of collection," he said.

Pollan's most valuable stamp is one issued in 1868 for Prince Edward Island. This black stamp on yellowish paper cost him \$6 for his mint (unused) copy and catalogues for \$10. If he had a used of the stamp that features a profile of Queen Victoria, Pollan says it would be worth \$15.

"It's the ugliest looking thing you can ever hope to come across," he said about his choice adhesive.

He also has around 15 three-cent postcards issued by the United States that are going up in value. Pollan said they were issued in 1958 when postcard rates went up from two to three cents.

What makes them valuable (currently \$3.50 or \$4 catalogue value each) is that the "I" in "In God We Trust" either is just a dot on some of them or is completely missing on others.

"A friend of mine got them from an uncle of his," he said. "Originally, I had 17 of them, but now I just have the 15."

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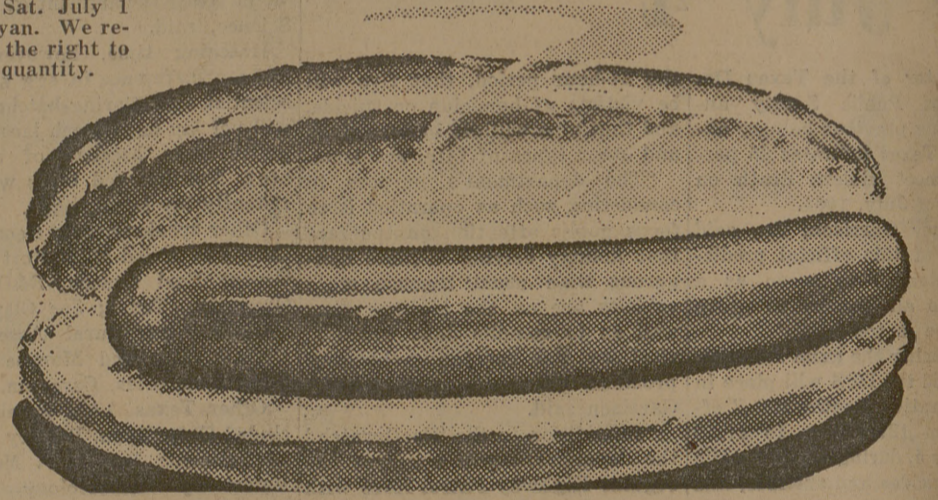


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