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Fayssoux Collection
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STORY OF FAYSSOUX TOLD AT TEXAS FAIR

Continued from Page Twelve

order, as to transform their whole nation from the "Republic of the South" to an American man-of-war as Walker's command in 1867, and returned to the United States, he never succeeded in subsequent efforts to go back to Nicaragua. Finally Walker considered him as a traitor and had him imprisoned in the United States. For two long years the two men in close correspondence over matters of a personal nature. After Walker finally had sailed, he had changed the plans for a Nicaraguan attack and instead landed in Honduras, and was waiting for reinforcements and supplies. Fayssoux was disappointed. He was not to be "the hero" of the work and wished a command which he was with Walker in the

Fayssoux believed that he was not what Walker wanted. Walker, who was a man of the United States government, friends heard with anxiety of Walker's desert upon the command. The commander asserted in such letters as he sent to Fayssoux that August 16, 1867, from Trujillo.

"I wrote you by Mr. Adrian a few days ago referring you to him for the details of the news in this quarter. Since then little of importance has transpired. There are daily rumors of an attack by the enemy, but in them I place small faith, and I will think we can remain here for some time with entire safety. The facility of communication between New Orleans and the island makes our movement from this point much more secure and certain than it could be from the San Juan river in the present state of Trujillo affairs.

Reports have reached me of a movement by Habana on the confines of San Salvador but in the present state of matters I do not deem it prudent to rely at all on such rumors.

"The health of the force is good. Our supplies of all sorts are abundant for our present numbers and we can remain here a month in spite of any possible force Central America can send against us.

It was not long after that the British warship, *Terra*, commanded by Norval Salmon, have into Trujillo.

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THE TIMES-PICAYUNE NEW ORLEANS, SUNDAY, JAN. 8, 1937

SECTION TWO

Relics and Papers Tell of Orleans Captain's Deeds

Filibusters of Fayssoux, Aid of Walker, Recounted in Display at Texas Fair

Tulane Department of Middle American Research Establishes Exhibit in Dallas

By W. M. Darling

The shadow of William Walker, who would have assumed the American frontier to Central America, has long obscured the career of a New Orleans lieutenant who has the right to a chapter of his own in the annals of filibustering.

The daughter, Mrs. Captain Calder, Irvine Fayssoux, of New Orleans, would have wished this to be so in the lifetime. Only finally, states that the spotlight "flashed out his tempestuous, crowded history."

In Dallas, Tex., this summer, at the "Greater Texas" Pan-American Exposition, which will open today, fragments of that history will be laid before the gaze of tens of thousands of visitors.

They constitute a small part of the Fayssoux papers and relics now in the possession of the library of the department of Middle American research, Tulane university. They include his commission as captain of the one-ship navy at the Republic of Nicaragua, signed by Walker himself as "president," a dagger presented him by a fellow officer, a drawing of the "Orcas" and *Graciosa*, which sailed valiantly to the aid of the lower Mississippi river forts when Fayssoux approached New Orleans, how the ship grounded and was burned to prevent her falling in the enemy's hands; how he "went down" on writing the last telegram before the forts fell; how, when citizens were given their choice of soldiers, he was chosen.

Mark H. Spivey, Texas

They were part of a long and eventful career, which began with the *Graciosa* and *Orcas*, which sailed valiantly to the aid of the lower Mississippi river forts when Fayssoux approached New Orleans, how the ship grounded and was burned to prevent her falling in the enemy's hands; how he "went down" on writing the last telegram before the forts fell; how, when citizens were given their choice of soldiers, he was chosen.

A permit issued by the governor of the state, which was as he noted, of being elected as a former filibuster. It recites in detail his service under Walker from 1867 to 1869, his rise in rank from a mere aid de camp in April, 1868, to general agent in New Orleans, for Walker's last and ill-fated expedition, his defiance of an English commander, Sir Robert McClure, who "threatened to hang me" and who later apologized to Walker, the various sailings he made on Nicaraguan expeditions which came to naught because of interference by the United States government, and which led him to assert that "voluntaries could be written on the blind frenzy of the United States government and the frontier ignorance of naval officers."

It contains the last letter he received from Walker, dated from Trujillo August 16, 1867, one of the last the commander ever penned, a month before his death, and it evokes that to Fayssoux's own judgment was left the question of whether Captain H. Maury should take 100 men from the United States and "avenge his death."

John H. H. H.

It shows how he volunteered his military experience to the Confederate cause, despite the debilitating effects of fever he had picked up in the earlier years. He commanded a crew of 100 men, which he took to the lower Mississippi river forts when Fayssoux approached New Orleans, how the ship grounded and was burned to prevent her falling in the enemy's hands; how he "went down" on writing the last telegram before the forts fell; how, when citizens were given their choice of soldiers, he was chosen.

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Fayssoux Collection Recalls Walker Filibuster Campaign



midshipman. "I cut him down," Fayssoux noted briefly, "but when he was in my power, I desired." He was tried and honorably acquitted over the encounter.

Serves as second

Still another of the "untouchables" acted as second for Midshipman Payton Middleton, who challenged Fayssoux for an alleged "offensive remark." The duel was fixed for November 21, 1867, "in Alajuela or elsewhere." Middleton shot, Fayssoux's bullet struck the other in the chest, and sent him to the hospital for six months.

In later years Fayssoux was second for William A. Tension in a duel on the beach at Galveston, Tex., with John F. Stephens in which neither was hurt; and in 1867 he fought with Colonel Stephen S. Tucker and Colonel Bruno von Natumer, two of Walker's officers, which would have resulted in a duel in New Orleans had not preparations then been in the making for a Nicaraguan expedition in which all played a part.

Moore's "sailing orders" took the Texas fleet, composed of the *Wharton* and the *Albatross*, off Galveston, where on April 30, 1868, it encountered a Mexican fleet of three steamships, a brig and three schooners. Outnumbered and outgunned, the Texas fleet off their opponents. Fayssoux received wounds in the side, arm, face and head.

An aftermath of this battle is given in a pencilled memorandum, dated in 1868, when the navy was disbanded. "By request of Commodore Moore I was present at a meeting between himself, Sam Houston, president of the Republic of Texas, and Commodore Stockton, United States navy."

"Moore denounced Houston in most bitter terms. He said, 'Stockton, do you realize you are walking with the scoundrel on the face of the earth.' The 'villain' (Houston) said to Moore, 'Take me arm,' and they walked off together. Houston turned and walked off alone. It was dropped by Houston."

Goes to sea

The cause was Houston had proclaimed Moore and his officers pirates and called on the civilized world to treat them as such when they were in the presence of, and fighting the Mexican navy, consisting of three steamers and four sailing vessels armed with long, heavy guns. Moore had one shot and the brig, small and short guns, but drove the Mexicans off.

After this the navy was demoralized for Fayssoux aboard various vessels at sea, but in New Orleans in 1867 there appeared on the scene Lieutenant Lewis, now Captain, of the steamship *Penny* Armstrong, recruiting men for General Nathan

that he joined the *Graciosa* in New Orleans, under Lewis' captaincy, and sailed with Lopez, a group of Mississippians and six other recruits on "the first expedition to Cuba."

Because of President Millard Fillmore's opposition, the group came to dub themselves the "Fillmore pirates" and Lewis styled himself "their chief." From Virgin Bay, San Juan, del Sur, Nicaragua, in 1861, Lewis sent a message to his boat aboard the steamer *Washington* in the Potomac river giving plans for another expedition and requesting Fayssoux, in several customs officers should board the vessel, to tell them a "concocted story" and that failing, to throw the "chest" and papers overboard."

Ship seized

The ship eventually was seized by the government, but in the third year Fayssoux boarded the *Pampero* at New Orleans with Lopez and 400 men for Bahia Honda, Cuba. This was Lopez' last expedition; he was executed and his surviving men were sent to Cuba, Africa, as prisoners.

"I was captured" for Fayssoux five years of sailing and engineering; in 1868 he sailed for the first time for Nicaragua, doubtless having been attracted by letters received in the previous year from an old friend, Julio de Brissot, who was serving under Walker as a senior captain of the navy and who offered Fayssoux \$500 per month, 1000 acres of land and a commission as second in command to join them. Fayssoux was made a first lieutenant on July 2, 1868, and put in command of the *Graciosa*, a former pilot boat, fitted from its Costa Rican owners.

"It was not long before his mettle was tested. The Costa Rican and other Central American governments were allied to drive Walker from Nicaragua. The *Orcas* de Abril was fitted out to destroy the *Graciosa*, but instead of seeking safety in San Juan del Sur, Fayssoux sailed boldly with his 24 men, two six-pound cannon and four civilian passengers against the 250-ton force with its 112 men and four long Paxton nine-pounders.

The *Orcas* de Abril opened fire at 400 yards and Fayssoux responded, backing back and forth in an effort to outmaneuver the Costa Rican. In two hours, however, only two shots had pierced the *Orcas* de Abril's hull, and injuries to the *Graciosa* were confined to its rigging. Finally what the Costa Ricans believed to be a "red hot" ball pierced the *Orcas* de Abril's magazine and set the vessel after a burst of raining his advantage, Fayssoux actually raised and gave the enemy a chance to reach the flames, but they were not far off. The *Orcas* de Abril was then approached by the *Orcas* de Abril, and a shot off some of the officers' arms, but about all of the *Orcas* after the *Orcas* de Abril was destroyed. He raised the *Graciosa* to the surface and returned to the United States.

THE MOSQUITO BITE THAT CHANGED HISTORY

By Melvin O. Frost

A NEW ORLEANS MOSQUITO is another trifle that changed history. That mosquito in 1849 bit a beautiful New Orleans girl who was in her 23rd year. Since the age of five she had been deaf and dumb from an attack of scarlet fever that nearly cost her life. She had conquered her handicap through the deaf-mute language of flying fingers. She had conquered New Orleans society with her beauty and charm. She had conquered the heart of a quiet, reserved young genius who had made New Orleans his home. He learned the deaf-mute finger language

to court and win her. They were betrothed.

On April 18, 1849, lovely Ellen Galt Martin died at her family home, 630 Julia street, then the "Gold Coast" residential district of rich Americans other than Creoles in New Orleans. Dr. W. E. Kennedy, New Orleans society physician, certified she died of "consumption." Dr. Rudolph Martin, world-famed New Orleans surgeon, says that diagnosis in 1849 meant "a congestive fever of malarial origin. They didn't know it then, but malaria is transmitted by the bite of the anopheles mosquito.

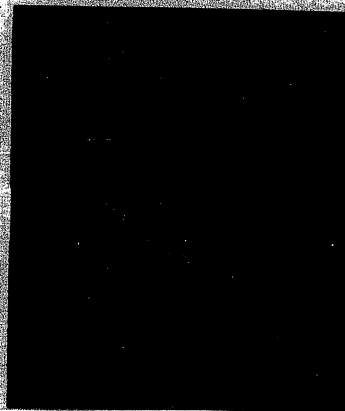
Thousands of men died in battle; history was changed, because that mosquito bite gave Ellen Galt Martin the malaria of which she died in her 23rd year. For the 23-year-old man she was to marry was William Walker. Born in Nashville, Tenn., a graduate of the University of Nashville at 14, he had won his M. D. at the University of Pennsylvania at 19, taken postgraduate studies at Paris and Heidelberg, and returned to be hailed by his contemporaries as "one of Nashville's most accomplished surgeons." Nobody ever wondered why he abandoned surgery to study law. But he read law in Nashville, came to New Orleans, mastered the Code Napoleon of Louisiana law, was admitted to the Louisiana bar, and

opened his law office on Canal street's uptown side between Magazine and Tchoupitoulas streets. With J. C. Larue and W. F. Wilson he founded the New Orleans Crescent and became editor of that newspaper. Then the girl he loved and was to marry died.

The New Orleans Crescent died with her. William Walker's law office was closed. The Forty-Niners were streaming westward to California's newly discovered gold fields. He joined them. He became an editorial writer on the San Francisco Daily Herald. But he could not forget the loss of the girl he loved. Restless devils drove him. He became one of the deadliest duelists in California's history. Then he became one of the world's most famous filibusters.

"Filibuster" comes from two Dutch words: "vrij" meaning "free" and "loot" meaning "booty" or "loot." a freebooter who gains wealth or power or both by taking part in armed revolt against a government not his own.

From California William Walker led a little band of desperate men who in-



Lovely Ellen Galt Martin, seen in a family portrait, was a deaf-mute. Walker wooed and won her by learning language of flying fingers.

vaded Mexico and set up the short-lived "Republic of Sonora." Defeated by overwhelming numbers, he marched back to California with 24 survivors. But he had discovered he could command men nobody else on earth could make take orders.

They called him "The Gray-Eyed Man of Destiny." His slight figure was just under five feet six inches tall. He weighed just over 100 pounds. His face was gaunt, "lean as an ascetic Scotch preacher's." His eyes were icy gray, the pupils so tiny they were almost invisible. His hands were "small

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Continued from Page 21

Family home, now 630 Julia street, where William Walker carried Elsin Gail Martin, was in fashionable section

as a woman's. His hair was straight and tow-colored. His voice was low, clear, distinct. He was refined in his feeling as a man, but he never drank alcohol or tobacco. His dignity was noble. His courage was absolute. He went into battle wearing a long-skirted black frock coat, livery-woolsey or cotton trousers, boots, and belted with two big mauls-loading, percussion cap .45 - caliber navy six-shooters.

Back in New Orleans and Mobile, and in California, he recruited 50 men who became "Walker's Immortals" and invaded Nicaragua. Defeated at first, he won bloody battles, destroyed historic cities, became president of Nicaragua, the only American in history to give up American citizenship to become ruler of another nation. He accused Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt of New York, founder of the Vanderbilt fortune, of defrauding the government of Nicaragua; confiscated Vanderbilt's property in Nicaragua as penalty. Vanderbilt poured money into Central America to foment war and rebellion so that he could overthrow the government of the United States among his belated followers overthrew him. He escaped back to New Orleans. He was tried in the old United States court at 124 Royal street, charged with violating the neutrality act of 1818; conducted his own defense. Ten jurors wanted to set him free; one to convict him. He was ordered to show cause why he should not be put under bond to keep the peace, "especially toward the states of Nicaragua and Costa Rica."

Mr. Walker's head organs led his last conclusion. He sailed from Mobile for the Bay Islands and Spanish Honduras. The gambling, gun-fighting, knife-fighting crew didn't even know the names of the ropes. Tradition with the weight of authority

has it that Walker fastened playing cards to the ship's rigging. Such orders rang out: "Haul on the ace of spades and 'Lower away' the king of hearts!"

"The king of hearts," Spanish Honduras. But Walker's luck had run out. Driven down to the mouth of the Rio Negro, he dug in, but surrendered to Captain Salmon of the British navy on Salmon's promise not to turn him over to the Honduras. Captain Salmon promptly sailed back to Trujillo and broke his promise, turned him over to Honduras. In the old fort at Trujillo, they gave him a drumhead court-martial, and led him out to face the firing squad that shot him September 12, 1860. A stubby cement shaft bearing his name and the date he was shot marks the spot. There he sleeps.

The girl he loved sleeps her eternal sleep in the almost forgotten Girod cemetery, New Orleans. Railroad tracks and freight warehouses surround it on South Liberty street between Cypress and Perillat streets, with Girod street running directly to its front gate. She was buried in the family vault with her mother and another. They were John Martin and Charida Glasgow Martin, his wife, both of distinguished ancestry from Charleston, S. C., whence John Martin came to become one of New Orleans' richest merchants. Her brothers and sisters share the same tomb.

Men who died in hand-to-hand fighting in jungles, on mountain trails, in Spanish-American city streets, in naval engagements on tropical seas, might well have lived out their natural lives had they not met a woman that lovely New Orleans had conquered scarlet fever and the handicaps of a deaf-mute. For grief at her loss drove William Walker out of New Orleans to change history and find death.

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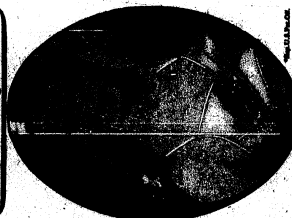
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