

INTRODUCTION.

Except for the years in which the United States has been actually at war, there is no decade of our history more abundantly filled with intense and instructive national experiences than that during which Texas was an independent republic. Then it was that the incompatible relations between slavery and nationality for the Union became clearly manifest; and then that sectionalizing tendencies began to weaken the impulse of expansion and develop that irreconcilable antagonism between North and South which culminated at length in civil strife. It is but natural that such a period should have become the subject of a large mass of partisan literature, and that it should have been greatly and persistently misunderstood and misrepresented. In dealing with it, therefore, the historian will place special emphasis on the sources and will welcome any really valuable addition to the available list. The editor hopes that such an addition will be found in this volume.

The efforts of Texas to establish diplomatic relations with the United States began with the appointment by the Consultation, on November 12, 1835, of three commissioners to that country. These were Stephen F. Austin, Branch T. Archer, and William H. Wharton, who received their instructions from Governor Henry Smith, in pursuance of a decree of the Council of the Provisional Government passed and approved on December 5. According to these instructions, which were dated December 8, the work of the commissioners on behalf of Texas in the United States was to include the stimulation of public sentiment and the procuring of such private aid for the revolutionists in supplies and money as they could. They were also to sound the Government as to its attitude toward Texas, its opinion of the proper course for the Texans, and the possibility of annexation or of recognition.

The commissioners entered upon their task at New Orleans early in the year 1836. Thence they proceeded by way of Nashville and Louisville to Washington, where they arrived before the end of March. For lack of proper credentials and official information from Texas they were unable to accomplish anything toward the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Government, and a few weeks later they were superseded.

Meanwhile the convention had met at Washington, on the Brazos, had declared Texas independent, had adopted a constitution with a provision for a government ad interim to last until the regular election, to be held in September, and had chosen David G. Burnet president.

The commissioners to the United States had appointed several agents, some local, and others with special functions of varying character. The Provisional Government sent out other special agents; and the Government ad interim, immediately after its organization, added still others. On March 19 President Burnet commissioned George C. Childress and Robert Hamilton to act in conjunction with the three commissioners already in the United States; and on April 1 he gave a similar commission to Samuel P. Carson, who had just been forced by ill health to retire from the secretaryship of state in Burnet's cabinet. The three new commissioners or agents went to the United States and remained there for a time in their official capacity; but on May 26, Burnet appointed James Collinworth and P. W. Grayson to supersede all the other commissioners, and on June 10 he issued a proclamation revoking the authority of all claiming to be agents of the yet unrecognized republic except the firm of Thomas Toby and Brother, of New Orleans.^a Collinworth and Grayson reached Washington on July 8. The former remained there till August 4, and the latter till October 11.

In September the elections were held in Texas and the Government regularly organized, with Sam Houston as president and Stephen F. Austin as secretary of state. William H. Wharton was appointed chargé to Washington. From the time of his arrival there in December, 1836, the Texan legation was maintained continuously until its existence was ended by annexation. Of course no commissioner nor chargé of Texas was formally received till recognition came in March, 1837; but meanwhile they were all allowed free informal communication with the United States authorities.

It is to be regretted that the presentation of the correspondence printed in this volume could not be made complete. The only materials that have been used therefor are those which could be found in the archives of Texas. They consist mainly of the despatches that passed between the Texan Government and its commissioners and chargés d'affaires at Washington and of the notes exchanged by that Government and the United States chargés in Texas. The more important notes belonging to the correspondence between the Texan chargés and the Department of State at Washington are also included, but the correspondence of the United States Government with its chargés in Texas of course is not. This can be had only

^a This proclamation of course did not affect the two recently appointed commissioners.

from the archives at Washington, which the editor has not yet been able to examine.

Most of the letters here published have been taken from a manuscript collection entitled "Diplomatic, Consular, and Domestic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas," in the State Library.^a A few were copied from the Austin Papers, belonging to the University of Texas, and some from the Records of the Department of State. The problem of selection has not been altogether easy. Besides the fact that the limit set on the amount of matter that could be published made it necessary to exclude some letters, it has been sometimes rather difficult to draw the line between the diplomatic correspondence and the domestic. This is especially true of the period from the first appointment of commissioners by the Texan Government up to the declaration of independence by the convention, March 2, 1836. During that time Texas had a government which was but imperfectly organized, and which had several agents in the United States with their powers and functions not clearly defined. From the strictly technical standpoint, perhaps the whole correspondence of that period might have been excluded; but some of it is of special historical value for the light it casts on the motives and purposes of the Texan revolutionists, and its omission would not have accorded with the *raison d'être* of this publication. Copies of private and unofficial letters that accompanied the official correspondence as inclosures have usually been printed; but in a few cases where such copies are filed separately with nothing to show how they came into the archives they have been omitted. Many published letters, however, of this type have been calendared. Of the voluminous correspondence between Commodore Moore, of the Texan navy, and the United States civil and naval authorities in New York, concerning his enlistment of men in that city in the winter of 1839-40, only enough has been given to illustrate the controversy. Matter relative to salaries, the expenses of the legation in Washington, and the like, letters of credence and recall, requests for interviews, and similar communications have in most cases been omitted. But to the last rule there is one exception: Because of the grave difficulties that resulted from the failure of the Texan Government properly to accredit its early agents and commissioners to the United States, such credentials as they had during the period previous to recognition have usually been given.

The diplomatic correspondence proper, as distinguished from the domestic and consular, is found in the Texan archives in two forms. The first of these is the file of originals received with their copied inclosures, and of copies of communications sent by the Government

^a All letters not credited to other collections may be assumed to belong to this.

to its chargés and others. It contains scarcely any copies of the inclosures that were sent with the letters from the Government. This file has lately been separated from the general mass of "Diplomatic, Consular, and Domestic Correspondence," etc. The other form in which the correspondence exists is that of a series of copies in the Records of the Department of State.^a The file is now incomplete, there being two great gaps in the series of despatches from Washington. The first includes Nos. 45-56, and the second Nos. 60-74. How the despatches bearing these numbers disappeared from their proper place can now only be conjectured. By the use, however, of the Records in the Department of State, it has been possible to fill the gaps, and to give the whole series except Nos. 12 and 13, which appear to have been lost in transmission and never to have been repeated.

The books of the legation at Washington seem to have been brought to Texas, but only one of them is now in the archives of the State. This contains copies of the correspondence of the legation from August 16, 1844, to November 8, 1845, and from it have been obtained one or two letters not to be found elsewhere. An inscription in the volume indicates that it was taken from the convicts in the state penitentiary at Huntsville in the year 1868 by one of the officials of that institution and was given by him in 1887 to the then existing "Texas Historical Society." He states that he found a box of books in possession of the convicts and that he rescued this one. The statement does not show what the other books were, nor what became of them; nor is there anything in it to assist an inference as to how the lot happened to be in Huntsville.

The arrangement adopted for the letters in printing is in order of dates without division into separate series; but copies inclosed or transcribed are printed along with the dispatches or notes with which they were transmitted. For the sake, however, of convenient reference, the title of each inclosure is given in its chronological place, with a note indicating where it is to be found.

My special acknowledgments are due to Mr. E. W. Winkler, state librarian of Texas, for generous and invaluable assistance in verifying the text of the letters and in preparing the calendar.

GEORGE P. GARRISON,
University of Texas.

^a Most of it is in Books 41-45.

1. SECRETARIES OF STATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS.

President.	Secretary.	Date of appointment.	Confirmed.	Remarks.
Burnet, D. G. (Mar. 16-Oct. 22, 1836.)	Carson, S. P.	Resigned May 26, 1836. Resigned Aug. 9, 1836. Died Dec. 27, 1836. Declined.
	Collinsworth, J. Jack, W. H. ....	..... May 26, 1836	..... .....
Houston, Sam. (First term Oct. 22, 1836-Dec. 10, 1838.)	Austin, S. F.	Oct. 28, 1836	Declined.
	Rusk, T. J. Henderson, J. P. Irion, R. A. ....	..... Dec. 31, 1836 .....	..... ..... Nov. 14, 1837
Lamar, M. B. (Dec. 10, 1838-Dec. 13, 1841.)	Bee, B. E.	Dec. 16, 1838	Resigned Jan. 22, 1841. To act till further orders. Served until Feb. 8, 1841. Declined. Served till May 25.
	Webb, James.	Feb. 6, 1839	.....
	Burnet, D. G. (acting) ..	May 30, 1839	.....
	Webb, James (acting) ..	June 28, 1839	.....
	Amory, N. (acting) ..	July 23, 1839	.....
	Burnet, D. G. (acting) ..	Aug. 5, 1839	.....
	Lipscomb, A. S.	Jan. 31, 1840	.....
	Waples, Jos. (acting) ..	May 25, 1840	.....
	.....do.....	Jan. 23, 1841	.....
	Terrell, Geo. W.	Jan. 30, 1841	.....
	Mayfield, Jas. S.	Feb. 8, 1841	.....
	Waples, Jos. (acting) ..	Apr. 30, 1841	.....
	Roberts, Saml. A. (acting).	May 25, 1841	.....
Houston, Sam. (Second term Dec. 13, 1841-Dec. 9, 1844.)	Roberts Saml. A.	Sept. 7, 1841	Filled Jones' place latter part 1842. For a time when Jones was ill in summer, 1842. Secretary <i>ad interim</i> .
	Jones, Anson.	Dec. 13, 1841	Dec. 21, 1841	
	Waples, Jos. (acting) ..	Feb. 5, 1842	.....
Jones, Anson. Dec. 9, 1844-Feb. 19, 1846.)	Terrell, Geo. W. (act- ing).	Aug. 20, 1842	Secretary <i>ad interim</i> .
	Allen, Ebenezer.	Dec. 9, 1844	.....
	Smith, Ashbel.	Feb. 5, 1845	.....
	Allen, Ebenezer (act- ing).	Mar. 31, 1845	.....
	Allen, Ebenezer. ....	.....	.....

2. MINISTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS TO THE UNITED STATES.

Minister.	Appointment.	Appointment confirmed.	Commiss- sioned.	Remarks.
Wharton, W. H. ....	.....	Nov. 16, 1836	Nov. 18, 1836 Dec. 31, 1836	Recalled Feb. 28, 1837.
Hunt, Memucan ^a .....	.....	.....	(minister extraordi- nary). May 12, 1837 (resident minister).	Resignation accepted June 12, 1838.
Catlett, Fairfax (act'g chargé ^b) ..	.....	.....	.....	Recalled Mar. 14, 1839. / Rejected by Congress Nov. 25, 1839. ^g
Mason, John T. ^c	June 22, 1837 (Aug. 13, 1837 ^d) (minister extraordi- nary).	.....	.....
Grayson, P. W. ....	.....	.....	.....	Recalled Aug. 1, 1842. Resignation accepted July 13, 1844. ^h
Jones, Anson. ....	.....	.....	.....	Recalled Jan. 24, 1845.
Dunlap, R. G.	Mar. 13, 1839	.....	Mar. 13, 1839	
Bee, B. E.	Feb. 1, 1840	Feb. 1, 1840	Feb. 1, 1840	Recalled Dec. 27, 1841. Recalled Aug. 1, 1842.
Relly, James.	Dec. 27, 1841	Dec. 27, 1841	Dec. 29, 1841	
Van Zandt, Isaac.	July 20, 1842	July 22, 1842	July 26, 1842	Resignation accepted July 13, 1844. ^h
Raymond, Chas. H. (acting chargé).	.....	.....	.....
Relly, James. ....	.....	.....	.....	Recalled Oct. 15, 1845.
Kaufman, David S. ^f .....	.....	.....	June 30, 1845	
Lee, William D. (act'g chargé ^g) ..	Aug. 2, 1845	.....	.....

^a Commissioned as minister extraordinary to act in conjunction with Wharton, and on February 28, 1837, he was instructed to remain at Washington as resident minister after the departure of Wharton.

^b From March 13 to June 26, 1837; also from April 20 to August 23, 1838, during absence of Hunt.

^c Authorized to act in conjunction with Hunt to procure annexation.

^d Authorized to confer with Hunt relative to annexation.

^e Appointed as resident minister, but did not enter on the duties of the office.

^f Left the legation May 15, 1839.

^g Recalled January 28, 1840. Remained at Washington as minister until April 20, 1840,

^h Remained in Washington as chargé till September 11, 1844.

ⁱ Served until May 17, 1845.

^j Left Washington November 3, 1845; he was not received by the U. S. Government.

^k Before arrival of Kaufman, and after his departure. Not received by the U. S. Government. ^l