

IN A FORWARD FASHION: THE MATERIAL LIFE
OF AUSTIN, TEXAS 1839-1846

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University-San Marcos
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of ARTS

by

Jennifer Allison Harris, B.F.A.

San Marcos, Texas
December 2011

IN A FORWARD FASHION: THE MATERIAL LIFE
OF AUSTIN, TEXAS 1839-1846

Committee Members Approved:

P. Lynn Denton, Chair

Angela F. Murphy

Peter Dedek

Approved:

J. Michael Willoughby
Dean of the Graduate College

COPYRIGHT

by

Jennifer Allison Harris

2011

FAIR USE AND AUTHOR'S PERMISSION STATEMENT

Fair Use

This work is protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States (Public Law 94-553, section 107). Consistent with fair use as defined in the Copyright Laws, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgment. Use of this material for financial gain without the author's express written permission is not allowed.

Duplication Permission

As the copyright holder of this work I, Jennifer Allison Harris, authorize duplication of this work, in whole or in part, for educational or scholarly purposes only.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis could not have been written without the patience and support of Nathan Lewis Freeze, who would rather imagine the future than think about the past. I am thankful for my thesis committee who have been inspirational during my academic career: Dr. Lynn Denton, Dr. Angela Murphy and Dr. Peter Dedek. Dr. Denton deserves particular recognition for her unparalleled diplomacy and graceful manner of giving advice.

I would like to thank those who have supported and influenced my research in Texas, including Dr. Suzanne Serriff, Cecile Marcato, Jamie Martin Alter and Jane Karotkin. I especially appreciated the assistance I received from Franke Smith, Stephanie Jarvis and Lise Ragbir at the French Legation Museum. Thank you for letting me frequently crawl under furniture and look under the house. I cannot thank Candace Volz enough for pointing me to the Republic of Texas Treasury records at the Texas State Library. I would also like to thank Lana Broussard at the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Museum, Laura H. Nightengale at the Texas Archaeology Lab, and the archivists at the Austin History Center.

My summer studies at the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts have been crucial to my studies of material culture. Robert Leath and Sally Gant provided me the opportunity to study at the Museum and have been a source of much encouragement and guidance. Daniel Ackermann has been a great sounding board for ideas and June Lucas

patiently fielded my questions about the Back Country and southern migration practices. Joanna Brown helped me to think about early Austin's temporary housing in a new light. Thank you to Gretchen Buggeln and Louis P. Nelson for wonderful career advice and Bernard Herman for telling me it was okay if I think more like a philosopher than a historian. I would like to thank Barbara Carson for informing my research and encouraging me to ask, "So what?" Travis MacDonald deserves warm thanks for sharing his enthusiasm for architectural history and his belief in my abilities. Thanks to Joseph Harold Larnerd for "good karma" and supplemental material culture readings; and to Suzanne MacDonald, Jane Harper Hicklin and Amanda Mushal for their friendship and support.

The Harris and Greene families have provided encouragement in my studies as well as sparked my initial interest in studying material culture. Thanks to the Bogner, Smith and Williamson families for being such gracious hosts while I traveled for research and study. Special thanks to Ellen Kirvin Donald for sharing her thoughts on Mobile, Alabama import records. Ongoing thanks goes to Miss Betsey Trotwood for supplying comic relief.

This Manuscript was submitted on November 4, 2011.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. COMMERCE AND SHIPPING IN THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS	11
III. GOODS AND SERVICES OF EARLY AUSTIN	25
IV. EARLY AUSTIN MATERIAL LIFE	49
V. CONCLUSION	85
BIBLIOGRAPHY	89

ABSTRACT

IN A FORWARD FASHION: THE MATERIAL LIFE
OF AUSTIN, TEXAS 1839-1846

by

Jennifer Allison Harris, B.F.A.

Texas State University-San Marcos

December 2011

SUPERVISING PROFESSOR: P. LYNN DENTON

Popular histories have portrayed the city of Austin, between 1839 and 1846, as a crude frontier town. Themes of sacrifice and material deprivation characterize such histories. The city's material culture from this period refutes characterizations of crudeness and austerity.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Popular histories situate Austin, one of the Texas Republic's capital cities, within a romantic wilderness where roughhewn pioneers thrived gloriously on the edge of civilization. These histories portray the Republic Era 1836-1846 with little historical factual detail. Stressing the most digestible and familiar aspects of Republic life, writers omit facets of early Austin's social history, such as slavery, that diverge from this narrative. The result is a pioneer pastiche reminiscent of the 1970s television program *Little House on the Prairie*. Nostalgia influences these interpretations, ignoring the illuminating documentation contained within early Austin's material culture. Careful examination of extant objects, architecture and primary source data suggest an alternate historical reading of early Austin's cultural identity.¹ Rather than portraying the city's early residents as rustic frontiersmen, the material culture reflects a wide variety of lifestyle choices, purchasing preferences and economic backgrounds. While popular histories of early Austin situate all businesses, government buildings and homes within log structures, documents relating to the early capital's building stock reveal the craftsmanship of skilled workers who constructed a variety of building types including sawn board frame houses. The frontier ideal isolates early Austinites from the influence

¹ Henry Glassie, "Studying Material Culture Today," In *Living in a Material World: Canadian and American Approaches to Material Culture*, Gerald Pocius ed. (St. John's, Nfld.: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University, 1991), 254.

of the refined, established world of “outside” commerce, but primary sources document the Republic’s trade relationships with the United States and other countries. These relationships influenced the material world of the early capital city. The material culture of Austin, Texas during the period of 1839 to 1846 thus indicates a variety of individual desires and expectations of Austin settlers, rather than a uniform narrative of personal sacrifice and material deprivation.²

The notion that outside sources of trade and commerce culturally impacted early Texas material life contradicts the popularized mythic identity of Texas exceptionalism. Furthermore, this contradiction undermines the authenticity of the Texan *nationality*, a notion that many modern academic Texas historians work to demythologize.³ In the introduction to their 1991 collection of essays, *Texas Through Time: Evolving Interpretations*, Walter L. Buenger and Robert A. Calvert write that the Texas myth simply echoes the romantic patriotism of the early Republic of the United States, wherein the veneration of the nation’s founders sanitizes and glorifies past events.⁴ Characterizations of Austin’s earliest history have also appropriated American frontier romance. The early city’s cultural identity portrays settlers who were able to sculpt a civilization from the wilderness, choosing to face and conquer challenges they would not

² In this thesis the term *immigrant* is used in the most literal sense, referring to people who moved to Texas from another country, which at the time included the United States. Although Texas was its own nation from 1835 to 1846, Austin was not established until 1839. Therefore, this research covers the years 1839-1846.

³ For histories exploring the origins and implications of the myth of Texas exceptionalism see Mark W. Nackman, *A Nation within a Nation: The Rise of Texas Nationalism* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1975); Robert F. O’Connor, ed., *Texas Myths* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1986). For modern revisions of Republic of Texas history, see Paul D. Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History 1835-1836* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992); William C. Davis, *Lone Star Rising: The Revolutionary Birth Place of the Texas Republic* (New York: Free Press, 2004).

⁴ Walter L. Buenger and Robert A. Calvert, eds. *Texas through Time: Evolving Interpretations* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), xi.

encounter in an established city. In this idealized story, Austin's settlers struggled to survive, but achieved glorious success, thus enlarging their mythic stature.

Folklorist Richard Flores finds fault with such nostalgia. Besides perpetuating bad information, Flores writes that extreme romanticism of past events "collapses the distinctions between" them, their "historical emplotment, the aura of the place, and one's memory of it."⁵ His work in reference to the Alamo shows that accretions of prescribed memory surrounding this site have resulted in sentimental reminiscence rather than complex or accurate historical interpretation. With this prescribed memory visitors allow ideas suggested by Hollywood to trump historical fact.⁶

Professional histories which include Republic Era Austin tend to focus on political characters and events while ignoring or romanticizing material culture, treating it almost as set decoration for the Republic political project.⁷ Popular histories by amateur historians such as Frank Brown and Mary Starr Barkley generalize the city's early history and its material world.⁸ In Barkley's book, *History of Travis County and Austin, 1839-*

⁵ Richard R. Flores, *Remembering the Alamo: Memory, Modernity, And The Master Symbol* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 18.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁷ See Stanley Siegel, *A Political History of the Texas Republic, 1836-1845* (publication place: University of Texas Press, 1956); Gambrell, Herbert. Anson Jones: The Last President of Texas. 2nd Edition ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964; Lewis W. Newton and Herbert P. Gambrell, *A Social And Political History Of Texas* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2009). The writing of Alexander W. Terrell apologizes for its focus on the architecture and cultural landscape of early Austin, indicating early nineteenth century Texas historians found the subject peripheral and irrelevant. "I am quite aware that much of the foregoing will be deemed unimportant, but sometimes the sidelights of history reveal conditions of a past era that serve to interest the antiquary, even when destitute of historic value." Alex W. Terrell, "The city of Austin from 1839 to 1865," *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 14:2 (1910): 128.

⁸ Frank Brown, *Annals of Travis County and of the city of Austin: From the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875*, Austin History Center, Chapter 3, 36; Mary Starr Barkley, Austin Files- Biography, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas. Frank Brown's *Annals* raises critical questions because Brown writes his history as a witness, although he was born in 1833 and did not live in Austin as a working citizen until 1856. His information concerning the Republic Era is largely compiled from newspaper advertisements and articles. Some of his stories are informed by recollections of the elderly population of Austin who had

1899, Republic era Austin's social history seems interchangeable with other regions of Texas at the time, no matter how ethnically, geographically or economically different. While Brown and Barkley compile factual data from newspapers, deed books and city records, they also preserve historical fantasy. Both historians are guilty of aggrandizing the lives of Austin's earliest citizens, converting them into martyrs stationed in the wilderness, purposefully sacrificing their own happiness for the benefit of future generations. Additionally, these histories rely upon the recollections of early Austin residents.⁹ Although personal recollections cannot be completely discounted, they must be understood as products of the era in which they were created. Histories written around 1876, the year of the United States Centennial celebration, are laden with nationalistic pride. Victorian writers populated their histories with Anglo males who conquered "savages" and triumphantly imposed the trappings of progress, a trajectory that serves the frontier myth.¹⁰

Austin's first residents were pioneers in the most literal sense; representatives of a distance culture who were the first to live in a particular area. However, the word pioneer has an almost inseparable popular image and culture found in literature, art, melodrama

stayed in the area. These early residents are lionized by Brown and made larger than life. Self-proclaimed "Housewife-historian," Mary Starr Barkley also liberally peppers her history of early Austin with hyperbolic imagery. Her work, informed by mid-century gender bias populates early Austin with brave husbands defending their families from "Indian attacks," supported by loyal wives.

⁹ See Jeffrey Kerr and Ray Spivey, *The Republic of Austin*, (Austin, TX: Waterloo Press, 2010); Mary Starr Barkley, *History of Travis County and Austin, 1839-1899* (Waco, Tex.: Texian Press, 1963); Alex W. Terrell, "The City of Austin from 1839 to 1865," *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 14:2 (1910).

¹⁰ Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 141.

and film that first appeared in the nineteenth-century.¹¹ Popular histories have made early Austin material life into a story of buckskins, bonnets, handmade moccasins and wagon trains.

Objects can disclose information concerning the employment, home life, social status and identity of their owners. As defined by Thomas Schlereth, material culture consists of all objects employed by humans in order to “cope with the physical world, to facilitate social intercourse, to delight our fancy, and to create symbols of meaning.” This thesis focuses on three distinct aspects of material life in the capital city of Austin, Texas between the years 1839 to 1846. The first chapter examines the trade relationships between Texas port cities and those of the Atlantic world. Commodities imported from ports as far away as Liverpool, England were shipped to Austin from the Texas coast. Conveyance businesses operating between cities such as Galveston and Austin permitted importation and commercial delivery of goods long before the appearance of the railroad. This evidence contradicts the frontier fiction that Austinites, deprived of necessary possessions, subsisted in a crude society in which they manufactured all of their own belongings.

The second chapter looks at the types of businesses present in early Austin. The sorts of services provided by skilled workers infer the types of tools they used, the goods they offered as well as the economic fluidity of the city’s residents. The wide variety of goods and services provided by businesses reveals economic diversity, reflecting a range of lifestyles from rural agrarianism to those of in-town dwellers. Early Austin’s dynamic

¹¹ See Jim Cullen, *Popular Culture in American History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2001).

commercial landscape provided opportunities to consume objects and participate in social rituals that mirrored those in long established cities.

The final chapter considers Austin's material life, the tangible belongings of the city's earliest residents. The exploration of early Texas material culture provides an opportunity to better understand lifestyle choices and living standards of early Austinites. Material goods including clothing, domestic items, vehicles and objects of personal discipline divulge efforts to appear socially polished and cultured. Furthermore such goods reveal a diverse array of social standards and cultural backgrounds, refuting a unified, clearly identifiable early Austin cultural identity. The personal preferences revealed by the city's early material culture highlight the differences not only between individuals, but between demonstrated preferences and those estimated, assumed or imagined.

The primary documents examined in this thesis include personal manuscript collections, Texian newspapers, official records of Travis County and extant object collections from the Republic of Texas Era.¹² Letters and journals, written mostly by political figures like the French chargé d'affaires Alphonse Dubois, verbalize disappointment with the level of comfort in Austin, but provide keen detailed criticism. Similarly, Sam Houston's letters create a shrewd commentary on Austin's material world. Journals kept by individuals such as artist William Bollaert, newspaper editor Francis S. Latham, and immigrant Mary Austin Holley document early Texas' social, architectural and commercial development. When mined for advertisements, Republic

¹² The term *Texian* identifies Anglo-or Euro American people, places, things, etc. associated with Texas during the Republic of Texas era 1835 to 1846. It was used during the Republic Era as a term to promote Texas nationalism. See Dorman H. Winfrey, "Mirabeau B. Lamar and Texas Nationalism," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 59 (October 1955): 188.

Era newspapers from cities including Austin, Houston and Matagorda reveal the offerings of merchants, skilled laborers, restaurants, hotels and forwarding services. These advertisements highlight the selection of goods and services available in the early capital of Austin, indicating commercial offerings competitive with established cities in the southern United States.

Travis County's early probate inventories reveal the complex and varied collections of domestic objects owned by Austin decedents. Only thirty-five inventories exist dating from the establishment of Travis County until annexation in 1846. Therefore, this analysis produces individual object ownership scenarios rather than compiling sweeping statistical data regarding consumption patterns. The county probate inventories name the decedent, the creator of the inventory and the date it was taken. They also list personal chattel property, including slaves and real estate owned by the estate. These inventories also enumerate monetary values items as well as the total estate value.

Republic Era Travis County estate values range from \$164.66 to \$5,042.00.¹³

Unfortunately, no inventories were taken for female decedents before annexation and inventories were never taken for enslaved individuals.¹⁴ Combinations of domestic goods

¹³ These values range from about \$3500 to \$109,000 in modern money. These amounts are very small when compared to 1840 estates in cities like Baltimore, Charleston or Boston. However, the purpose of this thesis is not to establish the wealth of early Austin residents, but the presence of refinement.

¹⁴ Gloria Main's article "Probate Records as a Source for Early American History," makes good points about the strengths and faults of probate records as primary documents. They are excellent records for ownership scenarios, estate worth, consumer preference, household habits and delineation of interior spaces. However, they usually demonstrate the household goods of older, wealthy, white men. In Republic Era Travis County, all of the decedents are male; however they are not all wealthy. The estate values differ greatly as do the goods listed on them. Clothing belonging to family members other than the decedent is always omitted, most notably those things belonging to the decedent's spouse. Other items that are generally omitted from inventories include portraits and miniatures of relatives, primitive handmade objects and items showing excessive wear. These articles were considered of no value to anyone other than the decedent and therefore unsalable and omitted from inventory. See Gloria L. Main, "Probate Records as a Source for Early American History," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 32:1 (January 1975): 89-99.

listed on Travis County probate inventories indicate household habits, purchasing preferences, regional origin and the economic viability of decedents. Furthermore, they reveal object collections that highlight the individuality of the decedents and fail to exhibit any predominant trend consistent with pioneer mythology in Austin households.

Collections of extant objects owned by Austin citizens during the Republic of Texas Era have been considered in complement to the county probate inventories. The furniture collection of the French Legation Museum reflects purchasing preferences of two very different households, those of French chargé d'affaires, Alphonse Dubois as well the family of Dr. Joseph W. Robertson. This furniture is compared to items found in Alabama, New Orleans and New York in order to trace provenance and therefore understand the trade route they followed to Austin. Along with probate inventories these objects help to broaden popular conceptions that deny the presence of refinement in early Austin.

The majority of published Texas material culture scholarship consists of medium driven monographs, focusing on individual object types. While studies have been conducted that examine crockery, German-Texas architecture, log cabins, handmade furniture, and some textiles, a comprehensive analysis of the state's material culture has yet be undertaken.¹⁵ The personal preferences revealed by extant antebellum Texas

¹⁵ Lonn Taylor notes that Austin's material culture has yet to be investigated thoroughly, "While virtually every settled county in Texas outside the valley area had at least one cabinetmaker there were six areas of the state that can be described as nineteenth-century cabinetmaking centers. Of these only two, the hill country region and the lower Brazos Colorado River valley region, are familiar to most furniture collectors and are well represented in Texas museums. The other four, Galveston, Austin the piney woods of east Texas are untouched fields for local studies and systematic collections of furniture." See *Lonn W. Taylor, Texas Furniture: The Cabinet Makers and Their Work* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), 14. See also Georgeanna H. Greer, *American Stonewares, the Art & Craft of Utilitarian Potters* (Exton: Shiffer Publishing Ltd., 1981); Terry G. Jordan, *Texas Log Buildings: A Folk Architecture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982); Paula Mitchell Marks, *Hands to the Spindle: Texas Women and Home Textile Production, 1822-1880* (College Station: TAMU Press, 1996).

architecture and records documenting historical ownership of objects present opportunity for analysis. By taking advantage of that opportunity, this thesis supplements existing Texas material culture scholarship, providing an in depth analysis related to a specific time and region.

The data in this thesis were gathered using a research framework employed in probate inventory studies conducted by material culture scholars Barbara Carson, Gloria Main, Kevin Sweeney and Lee W. Rahe.¹⁶ Barbara Carson's *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington* examines material culture of the early nineteenth-century relating particularly to the household and dining habits of the residents of Republic Era Washington D.C. Carson scoured two hundred and twenty-four probate inventories from the years 1818 to 1826, with special attention paid to dining and kitchen implements. She then analyzed the data for ownership trends, object organization and monetary values.¹⁷ From this she was able to create an understanding of the dining habits of District decedents, and gain insight into their social rituals.¹⁸ While the refinement present in 1840s Washington D.C. exceeds the

¹⁶ Barbara G. Carson and Kym S. Rice, *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington : August 7, 1990-October 30, 1990* (Washington, D.C: American Institute of Architects Press, 1990); Kevin Sweeney, "Furniture and the Domestic Environment in Wethersfield Connecticut, 1639-1800," in *Material life in America, 1600-1860*, Robert Blair St. George ed. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988), 261-290; Lee Wayne Rahe, "Residential Furnishings of Deceased Greene County, Alabama Slave Owners: 1845-60" (doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1992).

¹⁷ Carson, *Ambitious Appetites*, 174.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 175. Carson notes that the District's probate inventories include a remarkable amount of detail, a practice not employed by Austin estate administrators.

consumption capabilities of the majority of Austinites at the time, her approach and detailed findings strongly influence the investigation procedures of this thesis.¹⁹

This research is significant in amassing new information from historical documents. It establishes a base line understanding of Austin's earliest material life, and uncovers relationships between objects and owners. The current historical texts used to create interpretations of early Austin are few, confusing and narrowly focused. This work provides an alternative reading of early Austin's history, shifting emphasis from the city's rougher aspects to the many Austinites who cannot be characterized by popular ideas surrounding the frontier. By approaching the early capital city from the view point of its material life, a historical interpretation emerges bolstered by primary data. The detailed information found in customs inventories, newspaper advertisements, letters, journals and probate inventories, situates early Austin history within a material context. This context reflects a variety of purchasing preferences, informed by a spectrum of individual desires and expectations, rather than a uniform stereotype, thus expanding existing notions of early Austin's cultural identity.

¹⁹ For instance, early Washington, D.C. and early Austin were both national capitals of the early nineteenth-century. Boarding arrangements for transient government workers in both cities have many similarities. Both cities were characterized by transition, but attracted visitors with expectations of diplomatic gentility and refinement.

CHAPTER II

COMMERCE AND SHIPPING IN THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

Texas folklore credits a successful buffalo hunt near the “Colorado Mountains” in 1839 for inspiring the second president of the Republic of Texas, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, to move the capital from Houston to the settlement of Waterloo, now known as Austin, Texas.²⁰ By moving the capital city from Houston to Austin, then a five day journey by carriage, President Lamar shifted the capital’s context, geographically isolating the hub of government and those involved in its governance.²¹ Although the capital’s new location was situated on the banks of the Colorado River, William McKinstry’s 1840 survey found the river unnavigable by steam vessel without considerable alteration.²² The necessity of overland travel hindered commerce

²⁰ Katherine Hart, “Introduction,” in *Austin and Travis County: A Pictorial History, 1839-1939* (Austin: Encino Press, 1975), I. The settlement of Waterloo began on the north bank of the Colorado River near present day Congress Avenue. Coleman’s Fort was northeast of that point around Montopolis, and was used as a fortification against Native Americans during the Texas Revolution. Early settlers of the area commandeered the fort, resourcefully repurposing the building as living quarters. Waterloo was enveloped and incorporated into the city of Austin in 1839. See Thomas W. Cutrer, “FORT COLORADO,” Handbook of Texas Online, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/qcf01> (accessed September 02, 2011). Published by the Texas State Historical Association; Mary Starr Barkley, *History of Travis County and Austin, 1839-1899* (Waco, Tex.: Texian Press, 1963), 33.

²¹ Dubois to the Duke of Dalmatia, Houston, January 19, 1840, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 116.

²² See William C McKinstry, *The Colorado Navigator, Containing a Full Description of the Bed And Banks of the Colorado River, From the city of Austin To Its Mouth* (Matagorda, TX: Office of the Colorado Gazette, 1840), <http://www.scribd.com/doc/16612687/The-Colorado-Navigator-Containing-a-Full-Description-of-the-Bed-and-Banks-of-the-Colorado-River-from-the-City-of-Austin-to-its-Mouth> (accessed September 1, 2011).

complicating the arrival of visitors, mail, settlers and incoming freight. Hostility from displaced Native Americans, bad or non-existent roads, dangers of ocean and river transit further marginalized the possibility of safe delivery of travelers and cargo. Furthermore, influences that destabilized Republic transit also imparted a feeling of instability that shadowed the growing region.

Austin merchants helped to assuage the feelings of uneasiness by stocking familiar goods from American ports, adding to the potential for settlers' comfort in their new lives. Commercially produced goods associated with long-established communities and social traditions provided a feeling of permanence, familiarity and continuity.²³ Furthermore, these commodities established social identity, ritual and hierarchy in the Texian capital. The slow delivery of commodities made objects more costly, and in turn, seemingly more desirable. Although delivering goods to Austin proved complicated, these difficulties did not prevent delivery. The examination of shipping and transportation in the Republic provides insight into the realities of Texian commerce, illustrating an active trade network that supplied a wide range of industrially manufactured goods that influenced and fulfilled personal desires.²⁴

In 1839 only three years had passed since the Texian government declared independence from Mexico. The capitol of the Republic of Texas had been located in

²³ Individuals examined in this study were found to have come from to Austin from Switzerland, Germany and France, but the majority was born in the southern United States. Cumberland Presbyterian preacher, Amos Roark conducted an independent 1840 census of Travis County that reflects little information about the citizenry other than quantifying race, gender and profession. The documents closest resembling an official census are county tax records, but these list only the head of household, acreage owned and taxable chattel property. Tax records did not list place of origin. Therefore, no official record listed the homelands of Austin's earliest settlers.

²⁴ Cities located on the coast became established more quickly. Galveston and Houston for example, constantly received shipments from distant ports. Austin was able to participate in trade because of its designation as the capital city. If it had not been designated, it would not have developed economically at the time that it did.

seven different cities: San Felipe de Austin, Washington-on-the-Brazos, Harrisburg (near present day Houston), Galveston Island, Velasco, Columbia, and Houston, for a second time.²⁵ While none of these towns were established enough to provide a suitable setting for a national capital, President Lamar found Houston particularly inappropriate.²⁶ Accounts of Houston in 1839 detail the exploits of the largely unemployed population carousing and gambling. Few, primitive structures lined the muddy streets while yellow fever killed many Houstonians.²⁷ In an attempt to establish a more fitting seat of national government, President Mirabeau Lamar moved the capital once again.

President Lamar hired Virginian Edwin Waller, to plan the layout of the city of Austin. Waller's design aligned streets into grids, similar to plans found in prosperous cities in the United States.²⁸ This plan included public squares, a university, a courthouse and jail as well as a large Capitol Square. Rather than illustrating the actual condition of the city, the 1839 plan presented an idealized vision of the future. Waller had created propaganda for a city of standardized streets lined with admirable buildings; a civilization

²⁵ Washington-on-the-Brazos served as the capital from 1 to 2 March 1836, Harrisburg during April 1836, Velasco from April until October 1836, Columbia October to December 1836, and Houston December 1836 to 1837. See Lorena Drummond, "Five Texas Capitals," *Texas Monthly*, February 1930; Sara Clark, *The Capitols of Texas: A Visual History* (Austin: the Encino Press, 1975); John G. Johnson, "CAPITALS," Handbook of Texas Online, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mzc01> (accessed October 11, 2011).

²⁶ Lamar's disapproval could have related largely to the city's association with his political rival, Samuel Houston. For information about this rivalry, see Jack C. Ramsay Jr., *Thunder Beyond the Brazos*, (Waco:Eakin Press, 1985); James L. Haley, *Sam Houston*, (University of Oklahoma Press, 2002).

²⁷ Clark, *The Capitols of Texas*, 17.

²⁸ Edwin Waller to Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Austin, May 23, 1839, in *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Vol. 2*, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Charles Adams Gulick, Katherine Elliott, Winnie Allen, and Harriet Smither (Austin, Tex. : A.C. Baldwin & Sons, printers, 1921), 587-588.

that had not yet materialized.²⁹ Rather, Austin's building stock consisted of temporary buildings and pole and sail cloth shelters.³⁰

Relocating the capital provided a fresh start for the government and created business opportunities for speculators.³¹ Lamar dreamed of making Austin a central location of trade between Santa Fe and Texas Gulf cities.³² He also hoped the Colorado River could immediately provide easy transport to large centers of trade further downstream. William C. McKinstry, while mapping the Colorado from Austin to its mouth at Matagorda, discovered those living and working on the river felt that it would *never* be navigable for steamboats. In fact, they advised that McKinstry not "trouble the people with [his] 'visionary expedition,' as many were pleased to call it."³³ The first entry in the *Colorado Navigator* begins at the city of Austin. It states, "1st shoal abreast of the city, Island No. 1, channel on the *harboard* [starboard] side close in shore, gravel and rocky bottom, eighteen inches of water."³⁴ With frequent notation of water only twenty to twenty-four inches deep, there was little likelihood of anything but flat-bottom boats steered with a pole traversing the Colorado. Austin remained unreachable by boat, while port cities like Galveston and Houston thrived commercially.³⁵

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 587-588.

³⁰ Edwin Waller to Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Austin, June 3, 1839, in *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Vol. 3*, Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar, Charles Adams Gulick, Katherine Elliott, Winnie Allen, and Harriet Smither (Austin, Tex. : A.C. Baldwin & Sons, printers, 1921), 5.

³¹ Gambrell, *Anson Jones*, 77.

³² William Kennedy, *Texas: the Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas* (London: R. Hastings, 1841), 410, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/18919696.html> (accessed September 2, 2011).

³³ McKinstry, *The Colorado Navigator*, ii.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

The local Native American population posed another deterrent to the economic growth of the capital. Threats of ambushes intimidated travelers and slowed the import process. Alphonse Dubois, the French chargé d'affaires wrote to a superior in France, "It seems that the roads from here [Houston] to Austin are infested with Lipans and Tonkaways. Scattered through the country in small bands, they raid settlements and massacre the travellers."³⁶ According to Houston, Lamar had misjudged and placed his legislators in peril when he chose the new locale. During a stay in Austin he wrote to his wife, "If you are to serve the people for nothing, I think you ought at least to have the privilege of performing the labour in safety and in some civilized spot."³⁷

Though movement from Austin to other Texian cities proved difficult, goods arrived on ox-carts and wagons along with immigrants from the United States and Europe. Settlers like Mary Austin Holley doubted the availability of imported goods in the Republic of Texas. Her journal recorded her determination to be comfortable, "We can invent and give reins to the fancy in this country as well as anywhere else; and can supply our own luxuries in case we cannot get a regular supply of them from Paris, London, or New York." Luckily for Holley, she did not have to resort to manufacturing her own belongings. Ports of the Republic received regular shipments from United States cities like Baltimore, Philadelphia and Mobile, but also from as far away as Liverpool, England and Marseilles, France. When large shipments of goods arrived in port cities, advertisements appeared in Austin newspapers enticing Austinites to procure necessary

³⁶ Dubois to the Duke of Dalmatia, Houston, January 19, 1840, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 116.

³⁷ General Sam Houston to Margaret Houston, Houston, January 3, 1842, in *The Personal Correspondence of Sam Houston*, ed. Madge Thornall Roberts (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 1996), 158.

items in cities like Houston, Galveston and New Orleans.³⁸ With around fifty commission houses, the merchant port of Galveston was considered to be the “great commercial emporium of Texas.”³⁹ Such buying trips took time and effort from inland Austin. In order to buy goods in Galveston, one had to take a five day carriage ride to Houston, and then take an additional ten hour journey by steam packet to Galveston.⁴⁰ The trip to New Orleans required an additional two day’s journey on a steam boat or schooner from Galveston.⁴¹

The establishment of ports on the Gulf of Mexico and Texas rivers allowed the delivery of shipments from distant parts of the Northern Atlantic world. Alphonse Dubois recorded in his diary the arrival of the *Fils Unique* from Marseilles in 1840 at Galveston. This ship was sent by the House of Fitch, an export company in Marseilles, run by brothers Douglas and Asa Fitch Jr. from Connecticut.⁴² The British ship, the *Milton* after

³⁸ Amateur Austin historian, Frank Brown, wrote an extreme and misinformed account of coastal shipping during the Republic Era. Brown even ignores the existence of Galveston and its important as a trade center. “At rare intervals, small sailing vessels touched the coast with goods suited to the wants of the people. These vessels usually made port at . . . two small villages named, respectively, Quintana and Velasco . . . Only a few ports were visited by ocean craft in earlier times. There were no towns at that day on the gulf except those named and they were really not towns. . . as a rule people had not money to purchase supplies; they resorted to barter. The settlers managed to save bees wax from wild honey, pelts from wild animals, and the skins of beeves;” Frank Brown, *Annals of Travis County*, 3:35-36.

³⁹ John Calvin Smith, *The Illustrated Hand-Book, A New Guide for Travelers Through the United States of America: Containing a Description of the States, Cities, Towns, Villages, Watering Places, Colleges, Etc, Etc ; with the Railroad, Stage, and Steamboat Routes, the Distances from Place to Place, and the Fares on the Great Traveling Routes* (New York: Sherman & Smith, 1847), 164.

⁴⁰ An article in the *Morning Star*, January 31, 1840, announces the stage line services provided between Houston and Austin by business partners Stark and Burgess. The line crosses through Washington-on-the-Brazos but gives no details on stops between Houston and Washington. The coach stopped in the early Texan towns of Independence, Mt. Vernon, Shelby’s, Ruttersville, La Grange, Plum Grove, Mt. Pleasant, Bastrop, Webber’s Prairie and finally Austin. See Smith, *The Illustrated Hand-Book*, 182.

⁴¹ Dubois to the Duke of Dalmatia, Austin, January 30, 1840, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 117.

⁴² Dubois to the Duke of Dalmatia, Houston, March 10 1840, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971),

delivering its cargo took on three hundred and fifty-nine bales of Texas cotton and returned to Liverpool.⁴³ Although trade with European ports was steady, throughout the Republic of Texas Era, the United States provided the greatest volume of export goods to the Republic. New Orleans consistently exported the highest dollar amount of goods to the port of Galveston, with New York and Baltimore coming in as the second and third ranking exporters respectively. The Texian Congress assigned regional trade commissioners to specific districts to oversee all import and export business.⁴⁴ Texian shipping districts included the gulf ports of Galveston, Matagorda, Aransas, Copano, and Lavaca as well as districts like Sabine, Brazos, Jackson, and Maximilian that were situated near major rivers.

The Texas Treasury department collected tariffs imposed on bulk import shipments, but also on luxury items brought in any quantity into Texas ports. In 1840 \$101,745.55 worth of goods were imported into the Republic, with \$86,810.25 of that total dutiable.⁴⁵ The treasury's customs inventories and shipping manifests record the

129; The cargo imported by the Fitch brothers varied from soap to sauterne as demonstrated by this advertisement in the Houston Morning Star: "Just received, from Marseilles direct per French brig *Fils Unique* Brandy cognac, alcohol, brandy fruits, pickles, sardines, capers, olives, salad oil, wine, caret, burgundy sauterne, champagne, port, sherry, madeira, almonds, walnuts, marbled soap, salt, white beans, corks, single and double refined sugar, gentleman's fashionable hats, boots and shoes, ladies fashionable hats and shoes. A quantity of fruit trees, and every variety of grape vine cuttings, seeds. For sale low for cash and cotton by W. Douglass Lee, Galveston or Harris & Lee, Houston." Advertisement, *The Morning Star*, Houston, TX, July 8, 1840.

⁴³ *New Yorker*, March 13, 1841; the delivered cargo of the *Milton* is not mentioned in newspaper accounts of its departure. However, nineteenth-century northern England was known for its manufacture of textiles and trade porcelain. See James Burke's advertisement in *The Austin City Gazette*, September 23, 1840.

⁴⁴ These duties included cargo inspection, collecting tariffs, recording passenger arrivals and departures.

⁴⁵ The amount of shipments in 1840 alone total over \$2 billion modern currency. Robert Edward Lee Crane, "The History of the Revenue Service and the Commerce of the Republic of Texas," (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1950), 170.

material wealth imported into the Republic of Texas' ports, both by individuals and merchants. Patterns of trade between Texas and export cities emerge in the examination of these detailed records.

Shipping records of cargo imported from Louisiana indicate New Orleans as the main exporter of alcohol to the Republic of Texas. Liquor of all types, from boxes of cherry wine to pipes of gin came to the Texian coast from New Orleans. This port also supplied Texas merchants with large consignments of furniture. The cargo manifests of individuals shipping goods from New Orleans to Galveston, Velasco and Matagorda list fine furniture including multiple bedsteads, one with long carved posts, wooden blinds, casks of crockery, guitars, pianofortes, pier mirrors and framed painted portraits. Additionally, New Orleans produced steady deliveries of clothing including silk hats, cotton shirts and crates of boots, and shoes.⁴⁶

Exporters from Mobile, Alabama commonly distributed components for making distemper paint such as white lead and linseed oil, along with building materials such as bar lead and shingles.⁴⁷ Like New Orleans, the port of Mobile shipped individual's household goods to the Texian coast. For instance J.M. Smith, whose goods arrived on the *B. Joline* in 1841, brought nine bedsteads, a brass fireplace fender, a settee, a sofa and three tables. Also on board were Mrs. A. Tisdale's two bureaus, two mattresses, brass fireplace fender, sideboard, two sofas and three wash stands.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 1836-1845, Texas State Library and Archives, 4-26/21.

⁴⁷ Distemper is a simple waterproof paint made by suspending a pigment like white lead powder in carrier oil such as linseed oil. Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4/26-66.

⁴⁸ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4/26-21.

New York exporters supplied cargoes of textiles such as cotton sheeting, flannel and satinett.⁴⁹ New York was also the largest exporter of window glass, mirrors, household glass and crockery to Galveston.⁵⁰ Ward and Ingram, Matagorda general sales commissioners, imported panes of window glass from New York. They also shipped in iron in bars, kegs of nails, American and German steel and iron hooping. New York City exporter, Milton Bostwick, shipped a complete house frame from New York as well as fifty-two rolls of wallpaper that would be resold at the port of Matagorda.⁵¹

Philadelphia, like New Orleans, frequently exported liquor to Texian ports, but also medicines, which at the time were not so different from one another. Most significantly, Philadelphia exported finer building components to the Republic of Texas. Lumber came from Philadelphia as did kegs of nails, marble fireplace mantels, bricks, blind type slat doors, and door frames. Window frames, sashes, and shutters arrived in large numbers providing readymade architectural elements for the creation of houses with a finished appearance. Huge shipments of paint components and varnish were also sent from Philadelphia, as well as metal goods like steam boiler components, iron stoves, metal wash tubs and fire engines.⁵²

In order to deliver imported shipments from Texas port cities inland to Austin, the cargo was transferred among a variety of vehicles. First, goods were packed and stowed at the point of origin aboard a steamship and dispatched to the Texian coast. Upon

⁴⁹ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4-26/56.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4-26/16. Although a frame house seems like an odd “object” to ship, Bostwick also shipped small items highly desirable in the Republic as well. These include ten boxes of soap, gin, brandy and kegs of nails. Bostwick lived and worked in Brooklyn, New York until his death in 1842.

⁵² Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, oversize 28-1.

arrival, the steamship was met in the harbour by a lighter, which transferred the cargo from the larger vessel. This process allowed large steamships to enter shallow waters like Galveston Bay. Lighters transported the goods to the dock where draymen moved the cargo onto drays.⁵³ Drays could be sled-like with a simple platform set on runners or cart-like with two to four wheels. Pulled by draft animals, these drays then transported goods to warehouses or warerooms where they were stored until they were finally forwarded, usually via ox-cart. Wareroom owners stored merchandise for a fee and delivered imported goods on the date designated. Forwarders also wholesaled goods to inland merchants.⁵⁴ Merchants who combined storage, forwarding and wholesale services were known as general agency and commission merchants.

The use of a forwarding service was costly and indicated to neighbors the new householder's wealth. For instance, Lydia Evans who shipped five bedsteads, twenty-four chairs and five boxes of household furniture from New Orleans to Galveston on the *Schooner Tiger* in January of 1838 would have required multiple ox-carts to forward her things all the way to Fayette, Texas near La Grange.⁵⁵ The arrival of these items into town would have appeared as a parade of ox-carts, a procession of extravagance. Like modern moving companies, forwarders delivered, unloaded and installed furnishings. Commercial wagoners, such as Austin drayman James Latham, also had the opportunity

⁵³ Robert Edward Lee Crane, "The History of the Revenue Service and the Commerce of the Republic of Texas," (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1950), 103.

⁵⁴ John Purdy, *The Columbian Navigator: Containing in Part I: New Sailing Directions for the Coasts and Harbours of North-America; Commencing With Sable Island and Halifax in Nova Scotia; Thence, Including The Bay of Fundy to Cape Cod, With the Navigation of the United States* (London: [Printed for James Whittle and Richard Holmes Laurie], 1839), 180.

⁵⁵ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4/26-66.

to earn fortunes hauling goods.⁵⁶ Moving the Texas government from Houston to Austin required twenty-two ox-carts and cost the Republic \$21,223.41 to haul the government archives.⁵⁷

Settlers who traveled to the Republic overland left few records concerning what they brought with them. Woodward's *Guide to Texas Immigrants*, printed in 1835, proposed a pragmatic approach to composing the immigrant's moving inventory. The list included "sufficient bread stuffs and groceries to last them for six or seven months," medicines, farming equipment, seeds, cotton clothing, a rifle, and a "strong dog."⁵⁸ Although all of these items are useful, people also carried items of personal value, including luxuries. If one's wagon contained a small chest or trunk, smaller goods, like case clocks, glass and china, transported safely cushioned by clothing and bed linens.⁵⁹

Whether moving things by ship or wagon, objects had to be packed in a way which prevented them from being injured in transit. During wagon travel, this was a special feat considering the length of transit time and the absence of established, smooth roads. Travel by boat required cargo to be transferred between many vehicles and provided just as many opportunities for damage. Just as there is little evidence of what

⁵⁶ Kenneth Hafertepe, *A History of the French Legation in Texas: Alphonse Dubois de Saligny and His House* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1989), 5.

⁵⁷ Gambrell, *Anson Jones*, 79.

⁵⁸ In the preface to this book, written by Dorman H. Winfrey, the goals of the guide are explained: "To convince prospective settlers that Texas was the finest place in the world in which to live and make the trip to Texas seem like a summer vacation." The book was intended as an advertisement to those in the "Atlantic states" who were considering emigration. Although immigrants are recommended to bring a collection of items suitable for life on a farm, the book recommends Texas to mechanics and land speculators as well. See Dorman H. Winfrey, preface to *Guide to Texas Emigrants* by David Woodman, Jr. (1835; repr., Austin: Texian Press, 1974), 187, iii.

⁵⁹ June Lucas, interview by author, Winston-Salem, NC, March 3, 2011; Sinks, Julia Lee, *Early Days in Texas: From Articles Printed in the Dallas News and the Galveston News in February 1896*, Austin History Center, 22.

land travelers brought with them, there is little evidence of how they packed their things. Most surviving information, pertaining to crating and packing, refer to shipping by sea vessel. Excavations of sunken steamboats like the *Arabia* or the *Bertrand* lend clues to the processes of crating commercial goods for river voyages in the mid-nineteenth-century.⁶⁰

The nineteenth-century book *On the Stowage of Ships and Their Cargoes*, details standardized shipping and packing practices. The ship's hold had to be loaded wisely in order to stow the shipment without damage to the cargo or the ship, and to prevent overloading. Crates and barrels leaking liquids or aromas could damage adjacent goods like fabric and grain. However, when suitable pairings were found, one sort of cargo could be used as dunnage to protect another in the hull. For instance, hair mattresses and bales of cotton were used to pad and protect cargo, such as kegs of dishes, from the hull of the ship or rigid wooden crates.⁶¹

In describing ships' contents, some Texian customs inventories detail the packaging of the cargo, an often overlooked form of material culture. Alcohol was crated in several ways, sometimes designated by the type of alcohol. While most liquor was noted as arriving packed in casks, kegs and barrels, champagne is noted for arriving in baskets. Books were shipped from Britain in crates called deal cases that were made from

⁶⁰ See Ronald R. Switzer, *The Bertrand Bottles: Study of 19th-Century Glass and Ceramic Containers* (Washington: National Park Service, 1974); Jerome E. Petsche, *The Steamboat Bertrand: History, Excavation, and Architecture* (Washington: National Park Service, 1974); Annalies Corbin, *The Material Culture of Steamboat Passengers Archaeological Evidence from the Missouri River* (New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002); David Hawley, *The Treasures of the Steamboat Arabia* (Kansas City, MO: Arabia Steamboat Museum, 1995).

⁶¹ Robert White Stevens, *On the Stowage of Ships and Their Cargoes with Information Regarding Freights, Charter-Parties, &C., &C.* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, & Dyer, 1878), 51, <http://www.gale.com/ModernLaw/> (accessed September 1, 2011).

wood nine inches wide, three inches thick and six feet long.⁶² These long unwieldy boxes were reinforced with iron hooping and could be dismantled and the lumber could be used for building projects after shipping. Likewise, crates and barrels were repurposed as tables or used as trunks.

Textiles arrived packed in boxes, barrels and chests, but sometimes fabric was used as packing material wound around precious goods inside barrels. Some valued items arrived packed in excelsior and straw as well as old newspapers and broadsides. China arrived in boxes, tubs and casks. Some crockery came wrapped in domestic linens within crates, while rugs wrapped small furniture.⁶³ Windsor chairs arrived crated in boxes while other unspecified chairs arrived baled together.⁶⁴ Sofas and other upholstered or fragile furniture were sometimes shipped in skeleton boxes. These solid-bottomed wooden crates were built with rectangular armatures, instead of solid sides, to protect the contents. The armature added a protective cage, making these crates much lighter than solid crates.⁶⁵

No matter how carefully shippers packed and crated their goods, many items still arrived broken. When Sam Houston's wife Margaret had their household furnishings carted from Harrisburg to Galveston in 1841, she was disappointed when they arrived. "The furniture which I sent for arrived this morning. It was terribly abused."⁶⁶ Perhaps it was poorly packed, or simply mishandled by the draymen. Rough waters and natural

⁶² Ibid., 31.

⁶³ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4/26-66.

⁶⁴ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, Oversize 28-1.

⁶⁵ *The Western Boatman*, 12.

⁶⁶ Margaret Houston to General Sam Houston, Galveston, January 18, 1841, in *The Personal Correspondence of Sam Houston*, Madge Thornall Roberts, ed. (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 1996), 69.

disasters also threatened the safe arrival of ships and the cargo they held. Philadelphian Isaiah Bray drowned with his shipment while sailing from Linnville to Galveston on the *Schooner Caroline* after the steam packet's engine exploded.⁶⁷ Another vessel, the *Pilot Schooner Santa Ana* was struck by lightning while sailing from New Orleans to Galveston. Incredibly, this was the second instance in which the *Santa Ana* had been struck.⁶⁸

The economic fabric of early Austin extended the web of Texian coastal trade outward to encompass the distant location of the nation's capital, disproving assertions that the city's geographic isolation prevented the delivery of commodities. While the vast, hazardous landscape of Texas acted as a deterrent to easy importation and transport, the regulation and implementation of delivery services, combined with the efforts of determined merchants, helped to connect inland cities like Austin to Atlantic trade networks. Furthermore, this evidence refutes allegations that all early Austinites, lacking access to imported industrial items were forced to craft their own material possessions. The importation of information and material objects from distant ports enacted a dialogic relationship between foreign cities and Texian consumers, creating new lifestyles, personal preferences and expressions. The confirmation of Austin's participation in Texian trade, revises muddled assumptions concerning the availability of goods, their influence upon the lives of Austin citizens, and the possibility of fulfilling consumer desires through the provision of items of familiarity and comfort.

⁶⁷ *New Yorker*, March 13 1841.

⁶⁸ *New Yorker*, October 10 1840.

CHAPTER III

GOODS AND SERVICES OF EARLY AUSTIN

In November 1839 South Carolinian James Burke opened a reading room next to his house in Austin. The reading room burned down four days after opening, but this did not deter Burke. A few days later, when he publicized he would reopen business, he declared that the new establishment would be known as Phoenix Corner.⁶⁹ Burke naming the library in reference to the mythological phoenix rising from ash characterized the vicissitudes of the fortunes of early Austin business. When one enterprise folded, another appeared, resuscitating the economic lifecycle and sustaining the city's ability to function. While few businesses were successful enough to remain in operation from the city's establishment in 1839 to annexation in 1846, the overall presence of commerce in the city was continuous. This economic fluidity and the multitude of business offerings represents ongoing attempts to satisfy a variety of consumer desires. The wide variety of goods manufactured in Austin and shipped from Texian port cities, in concert with the services of skilled workers, demonstrates economic diversity and reflects a range of lifestyles from rural to urban. Early Austin's dynamic commercial landscape provided opportunities to purchase products and participate in social customs associated with the refinement offered in long established American cities.

⁶⁹ Kenneth Hafertepe, *Abner Cook: Master Builder on the Texas Frontier* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992), 29.

Records relating to Austin's commercial offerings inadvertently preserved information related to the material world of Austin's commercial sector. Early Austin newspaper advertisements specify the tools used by craftsmen, the services offered by businesses and items sold by merchants. The employment of Austin's enslaved population is primarily illustrated in accounts of encounters with Native Americans, archeological excavations and classified advertisements. The implements of agricultural work are listed in probate inventories. The analysis of these inventories reveals flexibility, versatility and resilience in early Austin's market offerings. In turn, these goods and services exhibit the variety of material lifestyles offered to residents of the Republic's capital.

A census taken in January 1840 by Cumberland Presbyterian minister Amos Roark details the human landscape of the fledgling city:

Seventy-five families, population eight hundred and fifty-six, of which seven hundred and eleven were whites and one hundred and forty-five blacks, five hundred and fifty grown men, sixty-one ladies, one hundred children, seventy-seven of which are large enough to go to school; seventy-three professors of religion, seventeen Methodists, twelve Presbyterians, five Cumberland Presbyterians, eleven Episcopalians, ten Baptists and ten Roman Catholics; two organized churches one Methodist and one Presbyterian; two Methodist preachers, one Cumberland Presbyterian and one Baptist preacher; one Sabbath school, one week day school, thirty-five mechanics, four lawyers, six doctors, six inns, nine stores, nine groceries, one billiard table, six faro banks, twenty gamblers, two silversmith shops, two printing offices and two tailor shops.⁷⁰

Roark conducted his query inside the city of Austin, rather than throughout Travis County where many farms were located. Therefore farmers outside the city limits are not

⁷⁰ *Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Austin, 1885 Commerce, Trade and Manufactures; Manufacturing Advantages, Business and Transportation Facilities: Together with Sketches of the Representative Business Houses and Manufacturing Establishments in the City* (Austin:1885), 13, <http://www.archive.org/details/historicaldescri00austri> (accessed September 13, 2011).

quantified in Roark's tally. A decade after Roark's census, when the 1850 United States census was conducted, the majority of Austin's male population was engaged in agricultural work. Thirty-seven percent of those employed in Travis County were farmers and twenty percent worked as farm labor. Republic era Travis County probate inventories reflect that both urban and rural decedents' owned farming implements, indicating that rural farmers were not the only ones growing their own food. Farming presented the opportunity to feed one's family and offered a valuable product for trade in the marketplace. Few Travis County probate inventories reflect a monetary value and collection of objects that would indicate the wealth of a large scale plantation.⁷¹ Although Travis County farmers owned enough acreage necessary for a large plantation enterprise, James Smith's probate inventory indicates he was the only decedent who owned a team of slave labor capable of running a large scale plantation. Furthermore, only Smith's farm reflects a production output competitive with southern United States plantations of that time, like those in Alabama's Black Belt region.⁷²

James Smith had a wagon and log chain that gave him the ability to clear his land of timber and haul the logs off for sale or milling. Chains and yokes that connected draft animals to ploughs are frequently listed on county probate inventories. Scythes, sneads, crop cut saws and grubbing hoes, hand tools used by slaves and laborers in the absence of

⁷¹ This is monetary value includes liquid assets, saleable chattel property and real estate.

⁷² Many other large scale plantation scaled operations were probably being farmed in Travis County, but no probate inventory other than Smith's reflects one of such a size. For detailed list of the sorts of goods associated with wealthy plantation houses, see Lee Wayne Rahe, "Residential Furnishings of Deceased Greene County, Alabama Slave Owners: 1845-60" (PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1992).

ploughs also appear repeatedly.⁷³ According to the inventory of merchant Conrad Drisinger's general goods store, Drisinger stocked wagon parts including hubs, tongues, timber and spokes.⁷⁴ Most Austin households used wagons for working and hauling, but a few owned carriages purely for the conveyance of people. Charles Mason, William Sweeney, James Smith, D.G. Burleson, and James Webb were noted for owning carriages, but only President Mirabeau Lamar's vehicle was indicated as a *pleasure* carriage. The inclusion of the word "pleasure" denotes this carriage was particularly special, for the conveyance of clean, well-dressed people rather than farm cargo.⁷⁵

Ulrich Wustrich's probate inventory lists a spoke shaver, but no wagon, implying that he repaired wagons for others.⁷⁶ Garden seeds appear on Gustavus A. Werlander's probate inventory stored in a wagon top. No wagon body appears on Werlander's inventory implying that he no longer owned the wagon the top once shaded. Thus, Werlander used the overturned top as a make-shift bin for storing seeds. While seeds for vegetables and cotton were sold by Austin merchants, James W. Smith's inventory contained a botanical specimen rare in Austin, Texas, a single South African clivia lily. Although widely available today, the appearance of a plant grown simply for its beauty,

⁷³ Gideon White, Probate Inventory, 1843, Probate Minutes Volume A, Travis County Probate Office, Austin, Texas (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin). All following probate inventories will be cited by name, year, film roll and location; William Bell, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Gustavus Adolphus Werlander, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

⁷⁴ Conrad Drisinger, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

⁷⁵ Gifford White, ed. *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin: Pemberton Press, 1966) 191-198.

⁷⁶ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

and discovered only twenty years before, indicates its purposeful cultivation and transportation to the early capital city.⁷⁷

Working animals, such as those that pulled ploughs and wagons were highly valued and often resold to settle estate debts. Immigrants to Austin brought and bred a variety of draft animals for work stock. Grazing livestock appears on inventories also listing acreage, whereas animals traditionally contained in pens such as hogs and chickens appear on both rural and Austin city lots. Some Austinites allowed their hogs to graze in the city and in turn, the hogs devoured rubbish in the streets. Such wandering pigs invaded downtown homes, devouring horse feed and almost any fibrous material they could find.⁷⁸ Jacob Burleson also allowed his hogs to roam unrestrained. At the time of his 1840 probate inventory he is noted as owning eleven “hogs in the woods.”⁷⁹ Commercial butchers slaughtered and dressed livestock including hogs and cattle.

⁷⁷ James Ridgeway, *The Botanical Register: Ornamental Flower Garden and Shrubbery Consisting of Coloured Figures of Plants and Shrubs Cultivated in British Gardens*, vol. 14 (London: J. Moyes, 1828), 1182, http://books.google.com/books?id=utsEAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA1120&dq=The+Botanical+Register+volume+14&hl=en&ei=BteITonnKfDLsQLO-_ShBQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CDIQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed September 19, 2011).

⁷⁸ In order to destroy free-roaming pigs that his employer considered an “infestation,” Alphonse Dubois’ servant Eugene Pluyette stabbed the pigs to death with a pitchfork in a highly contentious episode in 1841. Although the pitchfork proved effective in relieving the city of the menacing hogs, hatchets and axes, almost ubiquitous on inventories inside and outside the city confines, provided the most humane endings for hogs and chickens. Pluyette’s choice of weapon speaks to the lack of firearms in his master’s household as well as Pluyette’s resourcefulness. Furthermore, the fact that some pig farmers, in this case Richard Bullock, allowed their hogs to roam the streets exhibits the differences in people’s expectations. Bullock felt it was his right and obviously saw nothing wrong with the practice. Dubois’ telling of the event reveals his first Austin home had a stable for eight horses, a wooden fence held together with nails and a room dedicated as a bed room. Dubois’ expectations of the city had been rather high, leaving him referring frequently to this house as a “wretched log shanty.” The fact that he was able to have a room dedicated to sleep made his rented house more refined than those forced to do all activities in one room. For a complete account of this dispute in the words of Alphonse Dubois, see Dubois to the James S. Mayfield, Austin, March 21, 1841, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 228-230.

⁷⁹ Jacob Burleson, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

German immigrant Heinrich Felden evidently vended meat from a butcher's wagon. Felden's probate inventory lists the wagon along with thirty pounds of bacon. These items in addition to hoop and bar iron and wagon wheels, suggest that Felden may have earned money by vending meat in addition to wheelrighting and blacksmithing.⁸⁰

During the antebellum period, enslaved African Americans were considered chattel property. The Travis County tax records indicate the presence of two hundred and ten enslaved workers in Austin in 1840.⁸¹ Only four of thirty-five pre-annexation probate records list the ownership of slaves, but these slave owners averaged twelve slaves per household. Ownership of a large enslaved workforce allowed for the cultivation of a substantial farm. Farmers who owned many slaves and acres of land, but very little otherwise indicate reinvestment in the farming enterprise, rather than the purchase of fine things⁸²

Slaves were regularly imported from New Orleans into the Republic through the port of Galveston as demonstrated by this 1842 advertisement in *The Weekly Texian*: "The steam vessel *New York* which arrived at Galveston on the 27th brought over 175 passengers; 74 of which were Negroes."⁸³ Historic advertisements prove slaves could also be purchased at probate sales in Austin and other cities in Texas, "For sale to the highest bidder. . . at the courthouse in the Town of Franklin, a Negro man, likely and sound about

⁸⁰ Henry Felden, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

⁸¹ Gifford White, ed. *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin: Pemberton Press, 1966), 191-198. On his census, Roark lists only one hundred and forty-five.

⁸² June Lucas, interview by author, Winston-Salem, NC, March 3, 2011; Gideon White, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

⁸³ Advertisement, *The Weekly Texian*, January 12, 1842.

twenty-eight years old, belonging to the estate of James W. Hill, dec'd.”⁸⁴ Others inherited slaves or became slave owners after the transfer of property through marriage. This was the case with master builder Abner Cook, a North Carolinian who migrated to Austin, amassing a work force of ten slaves by 1850. Skilled slaves had a higher value, and master craftsmen purchasing slaves paid extra for those possessing talent in the master’s field of work. Cook employed his skilled workers at his brick making business and in the construction of the buildings he designed.⁸⁵

While Anglos in early Austin were encouraged to buy goods in the marketplace and dine in the city’s restaurants, the market visibility of the enslaved population was suppressed. In antebellum United States cities with large African American populations, such as Charleston, South Carolina, black culture was highly visible, interwoven into the city’s economic fabric.⁸⁶ Early Austin’s enslaved population represented a small percentage of the population and strict racial etiquette was enforced by society and law from its inception. City ordinances were instated in 1840 that attempted to reinforce racial etiquette by barring whites from befriending enslaved blacks. Further attempts included a ten o’clock curfew for slaves and the criminalization of selling alcohol to

⁸⁴ Advertisement, *Texas Democrat*, January 21, 1846.

⁸⁵ Hafertepe, *Abner Cook*, 35.

⁸⁶ This comparison is made based on the number of African Americans included on Amos Roark’s 1840 census, one hundred and forty-five to eight hundred fifty-six whites. The “census” created from the transcription of tax rolls of 1840 named householders, quantified their valuable property including time pieces, carriages, wagons, livestock and slaves. From this quantification, the African American population in Austin in 1840 was two hundred and ten. This tally includes no total number of white citizens. For reading on antebellum cities and the distinctive characters of those with large, influential black populations see Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority; Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 Through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: Knopf; [distributed by Random House], 1974); Maurie Dee McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Suzanne Lebeck, *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860* (New York: Norton, 1985); Peter H. Wood, “The Know Their Business Well,” in Dale Rosengarten, Theodore Rosengarten and Enid Schildkrout, *Grass Roots: African Origins of an American Art* (New York: Museum for African Art, 2008), 78-93.

blacks.⁸⁷ The enforcement of such laws confined social activities among slaves to private spaces and probably limited the goods they were able to obtain on their own.⁸⁸

The archeological record of the original kitchen at the French Legation uncovered artifacts which suggest the presence of enslaved bondsmen employed as domestic help. Alphonse Dubois, who commissioned the Legation to be built, hired white servants but also purchased three slaves in New Orleans and brought them to Austin.⁸⁹ The archeological evidence attributed to the slaves who worked at the Legation includes smoking pipes and clothing buttons. Multiple pipes were found near the hearth, most of them constructed from plain unglazed earth tone clay. One pipe bowl was modeled into a monkey's face and decorated with a high sheen green glaze. This discovery reveals the slaves' access to finer goods, whether by purchase or gift, as well as the availability of tobacco through trade or purchase. Many types of buttons were also uncovered in the Legation kitchen space.⁹⁰ Remains such as buttons and beads are commonly uncovered in spaces formerly occupied by the enslaved. Archeologist Patricia Samford associates the presence and arrangement of buttons and other small items found at Levi-Jordan Plantation outside of Houston with West African conjure. Probably the Legation's

⁸⁷ Paul D. Lack, "Slavery and Vigilantism in Austin, Texas, 1840-1860," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 85:1 (July 1981): 2.

⁸⁸ Probate inventories frequently list the presence of a single enslaved woman and her child. This indicates the division and estrangement of enslaved family units within early Austin slave ownership scenarios.

⁸⁹ Hafertepe, *A History of the French Legation in Texas*, 22. Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1820-1902, Microfilm publication M259, 93 rolls. Record Group 36. 1836. National Archives Administration, http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=7484&iid=LAM259_14-0498&fn=Jacob&ln=Matossi&st=r&ssrc=pt_t21925211_p1601237877_kpidz0q3d1601237877z0q26pgz0q3d32768z0q26pgPLz0q3dpid&pid=405453 (accessed September 1, 2011).

⁹⁰ Doris L. Olds, "The French Legation Museum Kitchen," Archeological Field Report, Prepared for Mr. and Mrs. John W. Beretta, March 1967, 14-15.

preponderance of buttons was due to the necessity of nighttime and winter fireside sewing rather than religious ritual.⁹¹

In Austin skilled slaves were desirable employees, and Austin newspapers regularly advertised requests to purchase these workers.⁹² Many of the advertisements explain how slaves would be employed, revealing some details concerning their work. The *Daily Bulletin* newspaper office advertised several times its desire to employ slaves who were hired out by their owners. “Wanted to hire, a Negro to serve as roller boy in this office. Good wages will be given for a length of time. A lad fifteen years of age, or therefore abouts will be most suitable.”⁹³ Another advertisement read, “Wanted, a young Negro to wait upon two gentlemen. Good wages will be given.” The good wages advertised would probably have been paid to the enslaved’s owner rather than the slave himself.⁹⁴ Slaves were commonly hired out by their masters throughout the southern United States and apparently this practice was also carried to the Texas Republic. While in Austin, Sam Houston wrote to his wife that he wished his brother-in-law Vernal, would give up any attempt at farming, but instead should move into town and hire out his slaves for profit. “I invoke him . . . not to settle his Negroes on a farm, but to settle in the village . . . live upon their hire, having one to wait upon him, and that he cou’d live like a

⁹¹ Patricia Samford, “The Archaeology of African-American Slavery and Material Culture,” *The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series*, 53:1 (January 1995): 111.

⁹² The Houston and Galveston newspapers published before annexation feature frequent advertisements for slave auctions, runaway slaves and slaves for sale.

⁹³ Advertisement, *Daily Bulletin*, January 3, 1842.

⁹⁴ In 1848, following annexation, the city created ordinances making it illegal for blacks to engage in what Paul D. Lack refers to “quasi free activities,” including allowing enslaved servants to out, collect their own wages and earn money they could spend as they wished. Furthermore, the time spent between the master’s house and the workplace presented opportunities for social interaction, which white people read as meetings for planning insurrections. See Lack, “Slavery and Vigilantism in Austin, Texas, 1840-1860,” 2.

gentleman.”⁹⁵ Following annexation hiring out slaves was criminalized in Austin, because white citizens feared that independently an employed slave would be empowered to "act or deal as a free person.”⁹⁶

Other enslaved individuals were employed to work in the countryside exposing them to the violent advances of Native Americans from tribes including the Lipan and Tonkaway.⁹⁷ If these slaves had not been killed by Natives, no record of their lives or work might exist today. Early Austin conveyance entrepreneur, Hamilton White, employed an enslaved drayman who transported lumber from the Bastrop pine forests to Austin. He trusted his twenty-year-old male slave to lead the ox-cart thirty-five miles and back on his own. On a return trip with a cart full of cut pine logs, the young man was abducted and killed by Native Americans.⁹⁸ Another enslaved young person met a similar fate while tending livestock. A young woman who worked on the Clopton farm near present day North Austin was scalped while guarding cattle. Her body was abandoned in a nearby well.⁹⁹

At the time of Amos Roark’s census nineteen percent of Austin’s population was black and only eight percent of the population was female. This left the majority of the

⁹⁵ General Sam Houston to Margaret Houston, Austin, January 21, 1842, in *The Personal Correspondance of Sam Houston*, Madge Thornall Roberts, ed. (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 1996), 187.

⁹⁶ Paul D. Lack, “Slavery and Vigilantism in Austin, Texas, 1840-1860,” 3.

⁹⁷ Dubois to the Duke of Dalmatia, Houston, January 19, 1840, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 116.

⁹⁸ Although this story is repeated by three sources, the name of the Native tribe is never given; See Barkley, *History of Travis County and Austin*, 35; Kenneth W. Porter, “Negroes and Indians on the Texas Frontier, 1831-1876,” *The Journal of Negro History* 41:3 (July 1956): 210; J.W. Wilbarger, *Indian Depredations in Texas Original Narratives of Texas History and Adventure* (Austin, Tex: Eakin Press, 1985): 266, <http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=27683>.

⁹⁹ J.W. Wilbarger, *Indian Depredations*, 269.

white male population to cook and clean for themselves or to seek sustenance elsewhere.¹⁰⁰ Transient government workers like legislators and lawyers were among those reliant upon inns and restaurants for their room and board. While legislators stayed in town only when congress was in session, lawyers constantly came to resolve disagreements regarding land ownership.¹⁰¹ Attorney N.S. Rector took advantage of the frequency of land disputes in the Republic. He advertised that he would “attend strictly to the obtaining of patents for lands from the General Land Office,” charging his patrons five dollars per patent for each league of land.¹⁰² While few bonds for orphans were submitted, and few wills filed, the Travis County court clerk filed volumes of petitions claiming land ownership. Likewise every newspaper published during the Republic Era contained multiple announcements proclaiming the loss of land certificates.¹⁰³

Attorneys were not the only visitors to Austin on business. Chargé d’affaires from France, England and the United States came to the Republic for government business. The Catholic Diocese in New Orleans sent Bishops to Austin in order to strengthen its relationship with the Republic government and Texan Anglo society.¹⁰⁴ The popularity of

¹⁰⁰ *Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Austin, 1885 Commerce, Trade and Manufactures; Manufacturing Advantages, Business and Transportation Facilities: Together with Sketches of the Representative Business Houses and Manufacturing Establishments in the City* (Austin: 1885): 13 <http://www.archive.org/details/historicaldescri00austri> (accessed September 6, 2011).

¹⁰¹ Ellen Garwood, “Early Texas Inns: A Study in Social Relationships,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 60:2 (October 1956): 236.

¹⁰² Advertisement, *Texas Democrat*, January 21, 1846.

¹⁰³ An example of such an advertisement was placed in the *Texas Sentinel* in June 1840: “LOST One Land Certificate calling 1280 acres, No. 2671, issued to Wm. E. Eastland assignee of Harbert Oatts, by Barnard E. Bee, Sec. of War, dated March 31st, 1838, which certificate was granted for services in the army of the Republic of Texas. At the end of three months, I shall apply at the War Department for a duplicate copy of said certificate. Wm. E. Eastland.” See Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel* June 13, 1840.

¹⁰⁴ Ralph Francis Bayard, *Lone-Star Vanguard: The Catholic Re-Occupation of Texas 1838-1848* (Saint Louis, Mo: The Vincentian Press, 1945), 157.

temporary housing encouraged socialization in common public spaces as many in Austin did not have had their own private parlors for entertaining.¹⁰⁵ The influx of lawyers and legislators with economic affluence stimulated Austin's economy and influenced the city's entertainment and dining offerings.

During the Republic Era, Austin's most historically significant and economically successful temporary lodging was Richard Bullock's Inn.¹⁰⁶ A stay at Bullock's in an upscale, private room cost two dollars a day, while boarding two white servants together in a smaller room cost one dollar a day. The charge for housing two slaves, fifty-cents a day, suggests that their housing was different and was considered insufficiently appointed for regular, white guests. Furthermore, boarding two slaves at Bullock's cost the same as stabling a horse.¹⁰⁷ Apparently Alphonse Dubois had many trunks when he first arrived in Austin. Bullock charged him the equivalent of one bedroom's rent just to store his luggage. For those who were more frugal, rooms could be shared with either strangers or friends. Sam Houston, while staying at Bullock's Inn frequently shared beds with fellow legislators and other politicians.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Hafertepe, *Abner Cook*, 14.

¹⁰⁶ Bullock moved to Texas in order to establish a large plantation with a team of enslaved workers, but was intimidated by the area's Native American population. Instead, Bullock built an inn at the center of the city. See Garwood, "Early Texas Inns: A Study in Social Relationships," 237.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Bullock to David G. Burnet, city of Austin, February 20, 1841, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 215.

¹⁰⁸ General Sam Houston to Margaret Houston, Houston, December 12, 1841, in *The Personal Correspondance of Sam Houston*, Madge Thornall Roberts, ed. (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 1996), 132. Bed sharing was a common practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. While traveling it was common to have to share a bed with a stranger or a friend at an inn. See John Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1990), 14-15.

Bullock's Inn was not only a primary temporary residence of Austinites, but also the source of their meals. The dining room or common space at Bullock's Inn must have been quite large, because the dinner table for a party held to fete President Lamar in 1840 was set for over two hundred guests. An article printed in the *Austin City Gazette*, details this dinner, listing the toasts given in honor of the Republic's President. It also mentions the food that was served, "The dinner provided under the immediate superintendence of Mrs. Bullock, reflected great credit on that lady's taste and superior judgment, displayed in the arrangement of the table, and in the delicacies which graced the festive board."¹⁰⁹

Early Austinites interested in foreign cuisine could choose from three French restaurants that opened in 1840. These included P. L. Duval's French restaurant, (formerly Mrs. Susan Tétard and P.L. Duval's French restaurant), Jacob Matossy's patisserie and Charles Baudin's confectionary.¹¹⁰ Matossy's restaurant and pastry shop was located within the walled yard of the capital building known as Lamar's Folly. Here he presented the public with pastry and fresh coffee made each morning. Matossy also offered to cook for parties and balls, as Austin's first professional caterer. Matossy further wholesaled his pastry to a local bar called Delorm's.¹¹¹ The passenger records listing Matossy's arrival in New Orleans in 1836 reveal that he came from Switzerland equipped to work as a confectioner. He arrived with six trunks of personal goods, three mattresses, a gun, and a writing desk but most importantly, one case of confectioner's

¹⁰⁹ Advertisement, *City Gazette*, October 30, 1839.

¹¹⁰ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Saturday, November 14, 1840.

¹¹¹ This small structure within the stockade served several purposes during the Republic Era. First occupied by business by J.W. Hahn and Company, who conducted an unknown type of business, then by painter and sign maker Louis F. Marguerat, who sold it to William Gibson in July 1840. Matossy could have leased the space from Gibson. See Deed of Sale from L.F. Margeurat to William Gibson, 10 July 1840, Travis County, Texas, Deed Book A page 77, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

utensils.¹¹² Another French cuisinier, Charles Baudin, also provided the extravagance of French confectionary to Austin. Baudin promised “a large assortment of cakes of the best quality, bonbons and every variety of candies.”¹¹³ Unlike Matossy, who only offered coffee in the morning, Baudin provided coffee throughout the day as well as “ginger beer and other items.”¹¹⁴

At any point between 1839 and 1841, Austin city newspapers advertisements prove the existence of at least one restaurant in addition to Bullock’s Inn. This means multiple restaurants were created for a population of under one thousand people. The presence of many restaurants provided marketplace choices and shows early Austinites had money to dine outside of the home. Furthermore, the fact that these restaurants offered sophisticated fare suggests the presence of cultured palates. In the nineteenth-century meals at such venues also required adherence to specific dining rules and behaviors. Patronizing such an establishment publicly exhibited one’s dining refinement and distinguished early Austin gourmands from gourmets.

Over the course of the Republic Era, ten doctors resided in Austin.¹¹⁵ While most of these physicians had gone to school to learn proper medical practices some such as,

¹¹² Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1820-1902, Microfilm publication M259, 93 rolls. Record Group 36. 1836. National Archives Administration, http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=7484&iid=LAM259_14-0498&fn=Jacob&ln=Matossi&st=r&ssrc=pt_t21925211_p1601237877_kpidz0q3d1601237877z0q26pgz0q3d32768z0q26pgLz0q3dpid&pid=405453 (accessed September 1, 2011).

¹¹³ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Saturday, November 14, 1840; Hafertepe, *A History of the French Legation in Texas*, 21. The connection between Dubois and Baudin was asserted by Kenneth Hafertepe in *The French Legation in Texas* although there no passenger lists bolster this assertion or prove they arrived together. Dubois’ travels are well documented into the ports of New York and New Orleans with his secretary and two servants Pluyette and Chabannes, but never Baudin.

¹¹⁴ Advertisement, *Austin City Gazette*, July 7, 1841.

¹¹⁵ Austinites could choose from Drs. Samuel G. Haynie, R.F. Brenham, J.E. Elgin, Joseph W. Robertson, Anson Jones, Richard Fox Brenham, Moses Johnson, William Louis, John Chalmers and Levi Bigelow. See James M. Coleman, *Aesculapius on the Colorado; The Story of Medical Practice in Travis*

Dr. Moses Johnson apparently had no training other than an apprenticeship in New York.¹¹⁶ Compared to modern standards, nineteenth-century medical practices were generally archaic. For instance, Dr. Joseph Robertson's medical dissertation covered the possible curative properties of mercury when used for treatment of various illnesses. He warned that if the patient's teeth become loose and his gums dark, treatment should be decreased or discontinued.¹¹⁷ Dr. Robertson's recommendations were not peculiar to his contemporaries as "quinine and mercury together with opium remained the backbone of therapy."¹¹⁸ Emigrants coming to Texas were urged in Woodman's *Guide to Texas Emigrants* to bring a small trunk of medicines including calcined magnesia and essence of peppermint for indigestion, laudanum, an alcohol based tincture of opium for pain relief; castor oil, a cure-all drug helping with symptoms from constipation to insomnia; hartshorn, otherwise known as smelling salts, and spirits of camphor for relief from nasal congestion and toothache.¹¹⁹ While bleeding was falling out of favor, Austin Alderman J.W. Garretty's probate inventory lists a thumb lancet. As an alternative to bleeding, cupping was still widely performed to relieve swelling, inflammation and supposedly blocked bile ducts.¹²⁰ Most Austin doctors did not keep offices, but visited their patients

County to 1899 (Austin: Published by the Encino Press for the Friends of the Austin Public Library, 1971), 15.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹¹⁷ Joseph W. Robertson, "An Inaugural Dissertation on Calomel," (PhD diss., University of Transylvania, 18__), 15.

¹¹⁸ Coleman, *Aesculapius on the Colorado*, 20.

¹¹⁹ Woodman, *Guide to Texas Emigrants*, 187.

¹²⁰ Thomas Andrew, *A Cyclopaedia Domestic Medicine and Surgery: Being an Alphabetical Account of the Various Diseases Incident to the Human Frame: With Directions for Their Treatment, and for Performing the More Simple Operations of Surgery* (Glasgow: Blackie and Son, 1842), 254.

in the home for a charge of around two dollars.¹²¹ B.F. Johnson and Samuel Haynie opened storefront pharmacies from which they dispensed medicines.¹²²

Tradesmen also ran businesses from storefronts on Congress Avenue. Skilled tradesmen were essential to developing Austin's architectural and household refinement. Many of these workers provided skills that were desirable but nonessential, providing goods that would add a bit of distinction to one's household. Others were fundamental to planning the city's layout and constructing its first buildings. Austin contained numerous master builders, draftsmen and contractors. Heinrich Mollhausen advertised himself as an "architect, civil engineer, draftsman, and contractor" and had an office downtown, offering "plans for buildings of every kind and description. . .with strict regard to solidity, comfort and beauty."¹²³ Mollhausen not only advertised his ability to create a functional blueprint, but the ability to imagine and design a home that would improve housing standards in Austin. Other draftsmen included L.J. Pilie and Charles Schoolfield who provided the city survey used for the initial auction of the city's lots.¹²⁴

Austin's work force also contained stonemasons, blacksmiths, plasterers and merchants all able to procure and construct the necessary components of finer houses. Contrary to the frontier mythology surrounding Austin's history, the city's building stock was comprised of *both* frame and log buildings. Rather than a uniform settlement of log buildings, Austin was varied in its architecture, demonstrating a variety of home values,

¹²¹ Coleman, *Aesculapius on the Colorado*, 20.

¹²² Advertisement, *Texas Democrat*, March 4, 1846.

¹²³ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Saturday, April 29, 1840.

¹²⁴ Schoolfield died in 1840, following his success surveying Austin and its surroundings with work partner L.J. Pilie. His estate had little worth, containing only "one rifle gun, a trunk and its contents." If his trunk contained surveying equipment, this information was omitted from his inventory; See Charles Schoolfield, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

builders' skills and consumer desires. Contracted to be constructed in 1839 by Alphonse Dubois, the French Legation building is the only extant structure in Austin from the Republic Era. Although the builder of the Legation is unknown, historian Kenneth Haefertepe believes Thomas William Ward probably created its design.¹²⁵ Disabled, due to his participation in a battle and a subsequent cannon accident, Ward was left with only one arm and one leg. Haefertepe believes that while Ward conceived the design for the Legation's French Louisiana colonial architecture, North Carolinian master builder Abner Cook led the construction work. The construction of the French Legation building required a team of workers including carpenters, masons and painters. Distemper paint, a simple oil based paint, was used to create a fresh weatherproof covering over the house's weatherboard. Republic customs inventories list painting supplies imported from Philadelphia to Galveston, which include distemper paint ingredients, white lead and linseed oil, paint brushes and "unspecified painting preparations."¹²⁶ The painted wood grain finish found on the Legation's stair case would have required advanced artistic skill.¹²⁷ Painters trained as studio artists frequently transferred this skill to the building arts or became professionally employed painting carriages, signs and houses. Early Austinite L.F. Marguerat, advertised in the newspaper that he was a "house, sign and ornamental painter on Congress above Pecan Street" and could have done the paint work at the Legation.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Haefertepe, *Abner Cook*, 40.

¹²⁶ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 1836-1845, Texas State Library and Archives, oversize 28:1.

¹²⁷ "The French Legation Main House Volume I.", Historic Structure Report, Volz and Associates Incorporated, October 20, 1997, French Legation Museum.

¹²⁸ Advertisement, *Austin Sentinel*, July 4, 1840.

Master builder Benjamin Nobles constructed both the president's residence and the capitol building in 1839. He was available for hire until his death the following year. His probate inventory lists a large quantity of lumber on his property.¹²⁹ Apparently, Nobles' building skills were insufficient to construct lasting structures. On a visit through Austin in 1842, just three years after the president's house was put up, traveling artist William Bollaert complained, "These buildings have been built of green wood and run up with great expedition the timbers have dried, and become loose, the plaster peeling off, and the Austin soft stone cracking."¹³⁰ President Lamar must have agreed that the house was poorly built, because one year after moving in Lamar hired John R. Slocomb, not Nobles, to build his post-presidential residence.¹³¹

The deed filed for the sale and construction of Lamar's house shows that Slocomb and his workforce were comfortable building frame houses and were able to create decorative architectural elements. Lamar's single-story eleven hundred square foot house was to be covered by a single gable roof constructed from cedar or pine shingles. The exterior of the house was to be covered in "planed and jointed weather boarding" indicating that rough boards, such as hand riven boards would not be acceptable. Furthermore, Slocomb indicates that these boards interlocked together to prevent the invasion of weather. The language used in Lamar's deed shows attention to detail concerning the house's aesthetics. The two front rooms, the public rooms of the house, contained large fireplaces, to be fitted with "neat mantel piece to be placed over each

¹²⁹ Benjamin D. Nobles, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹³⁰ William Bollaert, W. Eugene Hollon and Ruth Lapham Butler eds. *William Bollaert's Texas* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press), 198.

¹³¹ Deed of Sale from John R. Slocomb to Mirabeau B. Lamar, 21 May 1840, Travis County, Texas, Deed Book A page 47-50, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

fireplace,” perhaps a reference to the Georgia neat style. Mantle pieces were also available by import from Philadelphia to Galveston and could be shipped to Austin from the coast already built.¹³²

The entire house was to have plastered walls, and Lamar was unwilling to accept shoddy workmanship. His wording requires that the walls were “well lathed and plastered with a sufficient quantity of hair in the plaster, well mixed.” Poorly mixed plaster would cause air pockets in the plaster when dry, compromising the wall’s integrity. Early Austin decedent William Spencer’s probate inventory shows that he had the equipment necessary to perform a plaster job like this. His inventory lists both scaffolding plank and plastering tools.¹³³ The plaster walls were to be embellished with chair rails and floorboards, both of which would have required the use of decorative wood planes. William Bell’s probate inventory lists three smoothing planes, but Ulrich Wustrich’s complete set of planes and accompanying bench indicating that Wustrich would have been the best choice to create the decorative moldings.¹³⁴ Further woodworking expertise would have been necessary to create the eight-foot-wide folding doors Lamar requested to adjoin his two front rooms. The deed specifies that these doors were to be constructed from floating panels set into rails. This method allows the door components to expand and contract with the weather without warping, but would require great skill and precision to create.¹³⁵

¹³² Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4-26/21.

¹³³ William Spencer, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹³⁴ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Bell, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹³⁵ Deed of Sale from John R. Slocomb to Mirabeau B. Lamar, 21 May 1840, Travis County, Texas, Deed Book A page 47-50, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

The *Guide to Emigrants* suggests settlers bring a variety of wood working tools to the new Republic.¹³⁶ As demonstrated by the probate inventories, many Austinites had their own carpentry and cabinetmaking tools, including handsaws, squares, augers, different profiled planes, compress saws and carpentry benches.¹³⁷ The appearance of more specialized tools distinguishes those who were professional woodworkers from those who used them only for home improvement. Ulrich Wustrich's probate inventory lists many specialized tools, indicating that he was probably a professional cabinetmaker. Wustrich's tools included a tenant saw, used for making the hole that receives a mortise in a mortise and tenon joint. His kettle would have held hide glue to be heated and applied to such joints before they were permanently connected. Draw knives, like Wustrich's were used to smooth burs from wood, as a primitive sort of sand paper.¹³⁸ Primitive furniture made by joining, the method of attaching pieces of wood together simply with butt joints, required no more than a hammer and saw.¹³⁹ However, Austin wood workers owned tools that expressed their capability to create objects of sophisticated design. The forty-six different chisels owned by Wustrich indicate his ability to create decorative elements complimentary to the emerging Rococo revival style which often had heavily ornamented and intricate carvings.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ David Woodman, Jr., *Guide to Texas Emigrants* (1835; repr., Austin: Texian Press, 1974), 187.

¹³⁷ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

¹³⁸ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

¹³⁹ Edgar De Noailles Mayhew, *A Documentary History of American Interiors: From the Colonial Era to 1915* (New York: Scribner, 1980), 11.

¹⁴⁰ John Fleming and Hugh Honour, *Dictionary of the Decorative Arts* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 75; See also Marvin D. Schwartz, Edward J. Stanek and Douglas K. True, *The Furniture of John Henry Belter and the Rococo Revival: an Inquiry Into the Nineteenth-Century Furniture Design through a Study of the Gloria and Richard Manney Collection* (New York: Dutton Adult, 1981).

Heman Ward, originally a contract builder in New York, advertised that he would “constantly keep on hand at his yard in Austin a choice selection of seasoned lumber suitable for all kinds of work wanted in this market.”¹⁴¹ This sort of advertisement doesn’t designate the types of wood desired by furniture buyers, but buildings erected in Austin before 1860 were constructed of cypress, oak, pine and cedar.¹⁴² Woodworkers constructed and sold their wares in town, but imported hardware, lumber and materials in from other cities. Mahogany was available for import from the Caribbean, Charleston, New Orleans, or Mexico; however there is no proof Austin cabinetmakers worked with imported tropical hardwoods. Steam powered saw mills in Bastrop provided cart loads of loblolly pine boards and logs.¹⁴³ Apparently this business was so good that Bastrop levied a tax on milled lumber. L. C. Blake, tax collector in Bastrop posted the following warning in the Austin newspaper in 1840: “Notice- All persons transporting lumber from the corporation of the town of Bastrop are hereby notified that a tax is levied on the same; and none will be permitted to go from said corporation until the tax is paid.”¹⁴⁴

Ward’s advertisements promoted a variety of bespoke case pieces, including “desks, china presses, wardrobe, and book cases and drawers, milk and meat safes,

¹⁴¹ Advertisement, *Austin Sentinel*, November 14, 1840.

¹⁴² For a complete account of the lumber available in the Austin area in 1839, the “Speech of Mr. Jack” advertises the local tree stock. “On Onion Creek only seven or eight miles from the city, there is a sufficient quantity of cypress to supply the place with timber for many years . . . the supply of cypress and cedar is inexhaustible.” See Debate on the Bill for the Temporary Location of the Seat of Government, *Texas Sentinel*, July 18, 1840.

¹⁴³ The Bastrop sawmill was crucial to early Austin’s architectural development. The machinery of the Bastrop Steam Mill Company was imported from Mobile, Alabama to Matagorda on 18 October 1838. See Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4/26-66.

¹⁴⁴ Advertisement, *Daily Bulletin*, January 8, 1842.

cupboards and lockers.”¹⁴⁵ The expression of such pieces in pine relates to Southern American cabinetmaking traditions, especially in the back country region, those areas of the South located west of the fall line.¹⁴⁶ Considering the number of Austinites who had come from Tennessee and western and central North Carolina, pine furniture was probably familiar to many early Austinites. Furthermore, if desired, pine furniture could be painted to resemble finer hardwoods like mahogany.

Through Ward’s frequent advertisements in the *Austin Sentinel*, the cabinetmaker left clues about his success and talents as performed in Austin. The size of his shop supposedly allowed fifteen to twenty men to work at one time.¹⁴⁷ A shop this size was unheard except in the case of cabinetmaking “factories,” like that of Thomas Elfe, in the high demand furniture market of Charleston, South Carolina.¹⁴⁸ Ward’s business plan was ambitious with such a large shop, but he also attempted to offer a lumber yard. In advertising that “liberal advances will be made on lumber sent to him to sell on commission,” Ward seems to be trying to get the attention of those commissions agents and forwarders with the means to supply him with wood. This advertisement also

¹⁴⁵ Kenneth Hafertepe, *Abner Cook: Master Builder on the Texas Frontier* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992), 23; Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Saturday, June 13, 1840.

¹⁴⁶The fall line is a geographical boundary that marks the differences of the up country and the low country southern regions. These regions differ in their times and density of settlement, but in a historical sense they vary economically and culturally. See Frank L. Owsley, *Plain Folk of the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949); Sally W. Gant, “Southern Regional Furniture Features Demonstrated in the MESDA Collection,” Course Materials from House and Home in the Early Chesapeake (Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts: Winston-Salem, September 2009); Ronald L. Hurst and Jonathan Prown, *Southern Furniture, 1680-1830: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in association with Harry N. Abrams, 1997).

¹⁴⁷ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Wednesday, April 29, 1840.

¹⁴⁸ June Lucas, interview by author, Winston-Salem, NC, March 3, 2011; Emma Hart, *Building Charleston* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 150.

expresses a desire to create ties with economically stable Republic businessmen in order to steady his own business.

Resourcefulness characterized early Austin tradesmen. In an effort to encourage constant employment, some tradesmen diversified their offerings. Funerary services were offered by mechanics alike Heman Ward and Stonecutter Joseph Cox. In addition to cabinetmaking, Ward offered to act as sexton at funerals and provide burial for a fee.¹⁴⁹ Early Austin master builder, and former business partner of Ward, Abner Cook built coffins for Austin decedents.¹⁵⁰ Stonecutter Joseph Cox advertised his versatility stating he could carve any item requested be it “a window lintel or a tombstone.”¹⁵¹ Temporary structures like log cabins would not require permanent elements like stone window and door lintels. Cox’s work signals the movement from temporary structures to permanent ones.

Two primary records exhibit the presence of a blacksmith in early Austin. One is a real estate advertisement in the *Austin City Gazette*. Samuel Browning’s “home for rent” advertisement asks interested parties to see Mr. Dennis Walsh, the blacksmith on Brazos Street.¹⁵² The other record is a painting by William Sandusky in which Walsh’s whitewashed blacksmith shop prominently displays a sign stating his name and a decorative horseshoe.¹⁵³ Although there is no record in the newspaper or elsewhere, Amos Roark listed two silversmiths in Austin in 1840.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Saturday, November 14, 1840.

¹⁵⁰ James Smith, 1845 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

¹⁵¹ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Thursday, March 18, 1841.

¹⁵² Advertisement, *Austin City Gazette*, January 8, 1842.

¹⁵³ Draftsman William Sandusky is best known for his map of Austin created in 1839. His painting of Austin, created between 1839 and 1841 is in the collection of the Daughters of the Republic Library in

As Austin's population fluctuated, so did its business opportunities and available goods. The records left by businesses in the early city reveal a budding settlement not unlike modestly sized towns of the antebellum United States. Its white population dominated the market landscape, and its black population performed unpaid work in service of the white economy.

Surviving records relating to the employment of Austin citizens demonstrate the early city's diversity of lifestyles, work skills and consumer preferences. While life in Republic era Austin was constantly in flux, these businesses acted as a normalizing force, if not a stabilizing force upon daily life. The presence of multiple French restaurants, ornamented frame houses, trained cabinetmakers and two silversmiths illustrate that early Austin's commercial landscape provided broader offerings than those popularly correlated with a town situated on the frontier. This dynamic early Texas settlement adapted according to the desires of its paying public and Austin consumers supported businesses with sophisticated offerings.

San Antonio. A print of the image is contained in the Austin Historical Images file, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

¹⁵⁴ *Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Austin, 1885 Commerce, Trade and Manufactures ; Manufacturing Advantages, Business and Transportation Facilities: Together with Sketches of the Representative Business Houses and Manufacturing Establishments in the City* (Austin:1885), 13, <http://www.archive.org/details/historicaldescri00austrich> (accessed September 13, 2011).

CHAPTER IV

EARLY AUSTIN MATERIAL CULTURE

Every pioneer Texan was six feet, four inches if we are to believe all the tall tales.
—Herbert Gambrell, “Fashions of the Republic”

The diary of early Texan Daniel Hartzo, who settled near Jefferson, Texas in the 1830s, details his industrious habit of creating the tools and material goods he required from natural resources. He fashioned wagon wheels, grained deer skins, and made spinning reels, showing Hartzo did not have access to readymade things, and was thrifty, making, instead of purchasing, what he needed.¹⁵⁵ Hartzo’s ability to create for his family, any material good they needed supports “the macho myth of Anglo Texas.”¹⁵⁶ Amateur histories of Travis County and the city of Austin, including those by Frank Brown and Mary Starr Barkley equate the material lives of early Austinites to Texans, like Hartzo, located in totally different regions. In these histories, the popular pioneer stereotype is applied to all Texians, regardless of their financial standing,

¹⁵⁵ Joseph William Schmitz, *Thus They Lived* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1935), 36.

¹⁵⁶ Walter L. Buenger and Robert A. Calvert, eds. *Texas Through Time: Evolving Interpretations* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), xii.

location of their residence or even the time in which they lived.¹⁵⁷ This interpretation negates individuality and personal preference in favor of a generalization whereby all settlers were forced to forage for food and weave their own fabric. Primary documentation supports an alternate narrative for the early capital, portraying a small, growing city, populated by persons with varied economic capabilities and social backgrounds.

Early Austin created its own vernacular refinement; a local, colloquial set of rituals that echoed the social customs of culturally developed American cities. As Bertram Wyatt Brown writes, “The frontier, especially in the South, was the locale for recapitulating the social customs that settlers brought with them to the wilderness.”¹⁵⁸ Ownership scenarios derived from Travis County probate inventories from 1840 to 1846, support Austin decedents’ efforts to create cultural continuity in their new homes.¹⁵⁹ Settlers arrived in Austin with ingrained manners and habits, but also with their own personal inventories of comfort. These items included fine textiles, tea services, mattresses, personal libraries, dish and furniture sets; those things they thought would make them feel settled, familiar, at home. Some Travis County probate inventories point strictly to necessity, but most reveal a combination of items which indicate both luxury and practicality. Small components of their previous lives, like silver pieces and

¹⁵⁷ Frank Brown, *Annals of Travis County and of the City of Austin: From the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875*, Austin History Center, 3:36; Mary Starr Barkley, *Austin Files- Biography*, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

¹⁵⁸ Bertram Wyatt Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 33.

¹⁵⁹ The desire for continuity and familiarity certainly was not unique to those who immigrated to Austin. The difficulties all immigrants encounter when settling in a new place shift the emotional and psychological values of belongings. Intangible aspects of immigrant life, like waiting, desire and satiation are inextricably linked to such a transition. Throughout westward migration, immigrants frequently attempted to recreate or mirror previous home-life.

mahogany furniture sat beside handmade pine food safes, illustrating Austin's vernacular refinement and early material sensibility.

The production or procurement of shoes and clothing has been most widely distorted to support early Austin's popularized pioneer mythology. Through the lens of this distortion, each Austinite not only made their own clothing, but they wove the fabric the clothing was constructed from. Mary Reid, who collected costumes for exhibition at the Texas Centennial Exposition of 1936, writes "the most difficult things to locate were a buckskin suit and a homespun dress."¹⁶⁰ She first thought that the dearth of such items showed that these things had not survived because they were so well worn. However, she concluded that historical accounts of Texas clothing exaggerated the proliferation of such items.¹⁶¹

Amateur historian Frank Brown writes that homespun fabric was widely produced in early Austin and he details his conception of the entire process. "A small patch of cotton would be planted, sometimes enclosed with a brush fence and the product gathered at maturity. It was separated from the seed by hand, was carded by hand and spun on the wheel. The thread being prepared the cloth was woven on a primitive machine manufactured at home. This was a tedious process, but it was the best that could be done."¹⁶² Only two of the thirty-five decedents from Republic Era Travis County owned a loom or a spinning wheel, James Smith and Gideon White. Smith's and White's households may have been capable of producing their own fabric, but the value of these

¹⁶⁰ Mary Reid, "Fashions of the Republic," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 45:3 (Jan., 1942), 244.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 244.

¹⁶² Frank Brown, *Annals of Travis County and of the city of Austin: From the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875*, Austin History Center, 3:36.

decendent's estates show that they were financially capable of purchasing fabric in the Austin market if they desired.¹⁶³ Furthermore, Frank Brown's account attributes agriculture and manufacture work associated with home textile production to neither white nor black workers. In addition to his spinning wheel and loom, James Smith owned four female slaves. His wealth and enslaved workforce suggests the likelihood that Smith's female slaves were responsible for the production work.¹⁶⁴

Whether Austin residents were capable of producing fabric at home or not, Austin merchants consistently stocked clothing fabrics that made this process unnecessary. Following the departure of the Texas government from Austin, the importation of food and goods into the city slowed, but merchants still operated their stores. While this period resulted in a downturn in the local economy, Mary Starr Barkley concluded that during such lean times Austinites were forced to hand make everything they needed. Without referencing any primary historical data Barkley writes, "The people were really pioneers during these discouraging days, women worked at their looms, weaving, spinning and making cloths."¹⁶⁵ Even though the Austin economy was no longer being nourished by government money, the city was still tethered to a larger world of commerce. Merchant Conrad Drisinger continued to import fabrics and other goods from the coast. His 1843 probate inventory shows his store had a generous listing of fabrics and attire, the same year Starr Barkley claims the entire city dressed in hand-woven linsey. At the time of his

¹⁶³ James Smith, 1845 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Gideon white 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁶⁴ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 120-121.

¹⁶⁵ Mary Starr Barkley, *History of Travis County and Austin, 1839-1899* (Waco, Tex.: Texian Press, 1963), 257.

death, Drisinger's store offered ready to wear shoes, round coats, duck pants and suspenders, as well as multiple yardages of drilling and silk and cotton thread.¹⁶⁶

The probate inventory of early Austin decedent, thirty year old English immigrant William Mockford indicates that he professionally tailored men's clothes. His probate inventory lists a wide variety of fabrics and sewing items available for constructing men's clothing, rather than those used in creating women's attire. He stocked black cambric fabric, a light weight linen fabric similar to muslin, in large quantities. He also had twenty yards of seletia, lightweight cotton used for lining pockets and garments like vests and coats. Stocking such great yardages of seletia indicates Mockford's frequent use of the fabric. Finer men's clothing styles of the early 1840s were constructed so that they required linings to supply structure within the garment and to conceal the unfinished seams within. Mockford's large quantities of silk and satinett were employed to create fashionable items such as cravats, vests, coats, cloaks and frock coats.¹⁶⁷ An advertisement in the Austin newspaper, the *Texas Democrat* publicizes Mockford's fabric stock, consistent with those on his probate inventory. The advertisement also alerts potential customers that he was willing to accept payment competitive with tailors in Houston, but only for those customers paying in cash.¹⁶⁸

Men conducting government business in Austin during the Republic Era used clothing to assert their social superiority and manipulate their public image, displaying

¹⁶⁶ A round coat is a short jacket usually associated with military uniforms, and boys clothing from the nineteenth century. Drilling is coarsely woven cotton twill used in making clothes for warm weather like summer in 1843 Austin.

¹⁶⁷ For ownership scenarios for those men who wore such clothes see William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁶⁸ Advertisement, *The Texas Democrat*, January 21, 1846.

their refinement and sophistication. The editors of the *Texas Sentinel* took note inquiring in 1840, “Was there ever in a country as new and as young as this, so much attention paid to dress and equipage? To the punctilios of fashion and etiquette?”¹⁶⁹ William B. Melville died in Austin in 1841 with only the clothing and jewelry items in his room at Bullock’s inn. Melville felt a trip to Austin warranted checked pants, a figure coat with a satin vest, a collared shirt, white silk gloves and a cravat.¹⁷⁰ Melville rounded out his wardrobe with a silk umbrella and case, a gold ring, gold and lapis watch and a handkerchief.¹⁷¹

Houstonite B.H. Johnson died at the end of December of 1840, probably while visiting Austin for the holiday. His most valuable clothing item was a black velvet frock coat.¹⁷² None of these men were permanent residents of Austin, but the attention each of them paid to their attire illustrates the expectations for personal style and refinement in the early capital city.

Although Frank Brown’s history of Austin says, “Most of the time shoes were not worn by men or women,” Travis County probate inventories expose this assertion as another Victorian myth exaggerating the robustness of the city’s settlers.¹⁷³ Conrad Hentze, administrator of A. Werlander’s estate died not long after Werlander. Werlander’s clothes do not appear on his own inventory but on Hentze’s inventory listed oddly as, “pair of shoes . . . coats. . . valise with old clothes. . . trunk of old clothes . . . a pair

¹⁶⁹ Editorial, *Texas Sentinel*, 13 June 1840.

¹⁷⁰ A figure coat is generally long in length cut so that it accentuates the body form of the wearer, tailored to show the taper of the waist.

¹⁷¹ William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁷² B.H. Johnson, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁷³ Frank Brown, *Annals of Travis County and of the city of Austin: From the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875*, Austin History Center, 3:39.

of pantaloons [all] belonging to A. Werlander.”¹⁷⁴ William Kirshberg who died in November of 1841 is listed as having a pair of shoes belonging to A. Werlander. Apparently they were valued enough to be re-sold from Werlander’s estate to someone other than Hentze. Some Austin decedents owned expensive, ornamented shoes. Attorney, A. Adams Anderson’s wardrobe included a satin vest, a cloak, suspenders, a black handkerchief and prunella shoes.¹⁷⁵ Prunella shoes were particularly fine shoes with fabric uppers, usually constructed of silk or prunella fabric which was similar to moleskin. J.W. Garretty had a pair of boots to wear with his kersey pants, but his inventory neglects to give any other detail concerning his footwear.¹⁷⁶ Ulrich Wustrich displayed careful attention to his appearance, demonstrated by the shoe blackening that appeared on his probate inventory.¹⁷⁷ Burke and Company’s 1840 advertisement in the *Austin Gazette* announced “hats, boots, and shoes, ready-made clothing consisting of fine cloth dress coats and over coats, vests and pantaloons, shirts and shirt collars, besoms and stocks” were available for Austin’s men.¹⁷⁸ Cases of brogans, a common work type shoe were shipped in cases from Philadelphia to Galveston, available for wholesale to merchants in Austin.¹⁷⁹

In popular histories of early Travis County, buckskins also symbolize the power of early Texans to conquer the raw wilderness. The idealized proliferation of early Texan

¹⁷⁴ Conrad Hentze, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁷⁵ A. Adams Anderson, 1846 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁷⁶ J.W. Garretty, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁷⁷ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁷⁸ Advertisement, *Austin Gazette*, September 23, 1840.

¹⁷⁹ Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 4-26/66.

men in buckskins echoes the frontier romance of the self-sufficient, self-made man. However, if buckskins and fur caps were as widely enjoyed as portrayed by popular interpretations of early Texas history, this popularity is not reflected in early Austin's probate inventories. Buckskins were owned by only three Austin decedents of the Republic era.¹⁸⁰ Although Texas histories associate buckskins with protecting hunters and riders from brush, by the end of the eighteenth-century they were also considered mechanic's clothes.¹⁸¹ This assertion is supported by early Austin mechanic's Ulrich Wustrich's probate inventory which listed two sets of buckskins.¹⁸² Furthermore, William Kirshberg, an early Austin merchant, owned foxed pants, rather than buckskins, for comfort while riding.¹⁸³

Buckskins symbolize a connection to nature, and its conquest, but also the conquest of the indigenous peoples who Europeans perceived as inhabitants of the wilderness. When worn within the realms of polite society, buckskins also safely dramatized this narrative link between fear and danger and the exotic. The presence of Native Americans near the early capital city heightened this curiosity.¹⁸⁴ Sam Houston enjoyed adorning himself in a "savage" fashion. Alphonse Dubois carefully noted the "numerous gold, silver, and iron" ear and finger rings worn by Houston stating, "He acquired this bizarre taste in dress from the Indians with whom he lived for several

¹⁸⁰ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

¹⁸¹ Cathleen Staples, "Cloth and Clothing in the Atlantic Port City" Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Lecture, July 11, 2011.

¹⁸² Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁸³ William Kirshberg, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁸⁴ Maurie D. McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 14.

years.”¹⁸⁵ On one of the most important days of his political career, his presidential inauguration day, Houston wore a deerskin hunting shirt to the ceremony. Because of this choice, Sam Houston may have inadvertently begun the myth associating early Texan men with buckskin. His ensemble was considered outrageous. Other presidents elect chose to wear newly tailored suits of the latest fashion. Adolphus Sterne perceived Houston’s appearance as a spectacle, and commented in his journal that his dress was, “Too Indian that.”¹⁸⁶ Sam Houston used this apparel to distinguish himself from the other politicians in the city, equating himself with the fierce and resourceful indigenous people of Texas. His choice of attire demarcated a difference between Houston’s presidency and the last Republic president, Mirabeau Lamar. Lamar’s presidential term was characterized by excess and overspending.¹⁸⁷ Buckskins further made Houston appear both formidable (as a former Indian fighter and then resident among the Cherokee) and resourceful, one of the people.

Inclined toward exotic styles, Houston frequently even wore a red floor-length robe of Turkish silk while working in his Austin office.¹⁸⁸ He asked Alphonse Dubois to return from Paris with an outfit that was the equivalent of one worn by French royal

¹⁸⁵ Houston’s somewhat extravagant choice of wearing apparel was further recorded by French Chargé d’affaires in a letter, describing Houston’s style as “the strange attire in which he is always decked out.” See Dubois to Comte Molé, Houston, March 16, 1839, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 65.

¹⁸⁶ Adolphus Sterne, *Hurrah for Texas! The Diary of Adolphus Sterne 1838-1851*, ed. Archie P. McDonald (Waco, TX: Texian Press, 1969), 75.

¹⁸⁷ Edward W. Heusinger, “The Monetary History of the Republic of Texas” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* Vol. 57, No. 1 (Jul., 1953): 85.

¹⁸⁸ John Washington Lockhart, *Sixty Years On the Brazos: The Life and Letters of Dr. John Washington Lockhart, 1824-1900* (Austin: Texian Press, 1967), 120.

120. Mary Reid, “Fashions of the Republic,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 45:3 (Jan., 1942): 248.

courtiers. “The entire outfit is to be made of green velvet and embroidered in gold, worn under a short cloak in Spanish style, also in green velvet and lavishly embroidered, to be topped by a hat à la Henry IV sporting an immense three-colored plume.” Dubois goes on to say that Houston wished to wear this ensemble at his inauguration ceremony, but apparently he decided instead on buckskin.¹⁸⁹

The attire of Austin’s female population between 1840 and 1850 is undocumented. Amos Roark’s 1840 census lists sixty-one women, but by 1850 Austin contained 1035 women, about forty-four percent of its population.¹⁹⁰ No women’s attire appears on probate inventories prior to 1850 as all of the decedents are male. No merchants or tailors advertise the sale or professional construction of women’s clothing in Austin during the Republic period. Even as late as 1850, according to the United States census, the city had no dressmaker, mantua maker, haberdasher or any other professional producers or sources of women’s clothing. This may be for several reasons. First, because there were only sixty-one women in Austin in 1840, there was little economic incentive to focus on this clientele as a singular specialty. Second, Austin women might have sewn their own clothes. Burke and Company, in addition to ready-made men’s clothing carried a variety of fabrics specifically for the female market. In September of 1840, Burke stocked “calicoes, domestics, silks, muslins, ginghams, together with a large and general assortment of fancy articles suitable for the ladies.”¹⁹¹ Third, the women of Austin could

¹⁸⁹ Alphonse Dubois to Guizot, Mandeville, Louisiana, August 14, 1841, in *The French Legation in Texas*, Nancy Nichols Barker and Alphonse Dubois de Saligny (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971), 257. The hat Houston requested is now held in the collection of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum, but can be seen online at <http://digital.sfasu.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/SamHouston/id/531/rec/9> .

¹⁹⁰ *Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Austin*, 13.

¹⁹¹ Advertisement, *Austin City Gazette*, September 23, 1840.

have made trips to other cities like Houston, Galveston and New Orleans where they could fill out their wardrobes. Anson Jones' biography details the disappointment his wife Mary felt when trying for three years to assemble her trousseau. She was unable to find clothes in Austin she felt were suitable for her life as a new bride. In order to exhibit herself as a elegantly dressed young newlywed, Mary McCrory Jones went to Houston to acquire a new wardrobe.¹⁹² A.G. Compton's store on Main street in Houston offered "dancing pumps, ladies, misses and men's. . . walking shoes in black, white and colored kid," also "silk, cotton and woolen gloves, and stockings of all varieties."¹⁹³ The close proximity of Houston to the port of Galveston allowed Houston merchants to take advantage of shipments from France, such as the brig *Nomade*'s shipment of fine items including French perfume and "fancy dresses."¹⁹⁴ However they acquired their clothes or fabrics, primary accounts of early Austin women's apparel point to fashionable attire, rather than plain homespun dresses. During Francis S. Latham's 1842 visit to Austin, he attended a ball where he found the ladies who were present to be "elegant and accomplished – and who would grace the most beautiful and refined society."¹⁹⁵ Even as late as 1853 when Lucadia Pease moved to Austin, log cabins were still present in the city and posed a strong contrast to the refinement displayed by the dress of Austin females. Mrs. Pease wrote, "It strikes Northerners so oddly to see ladies issuing from log

¹⁹² Gambrell, *Anson Jones*, 194.

¹⁹³ Reid, "Fashions of the Republic," 244-245.

¹⁹⁴ Advertisement, *Telegraph and Texas Register*, May 11, 1842.

¹⁹⁵ Francis S. Latham and Gerald S. Pierce, *Travels in the Republic of Texas, 1842* (Austin: Encino Press, 1871), 25.

houses, arrayed in such an amount of fine and costly dress as is worn by them here,” proving the presence of finely adorned women in early Austin.¹⁹⁶

Clothes and smaller belongings were brought to Austin in a variety of luggage forms. Pocket books and valises held land grants, promissory notes and Republic currency.¹⁹⁷ Patent trunks, elegant trunks constructed of multiple layers of wood reinforced with metal bar on the edges, were larger and carried more items.¹⁹⁸ Decedent J.W. Garretty had a leather patent trunk, a regular patent trunk with leather sheathing the wood.¹⁹⁹ After the journey, such a trunk could sit handsomely in a settler’s new home serving as a table or a blanket chest.

Weapons were a practical necessity in early Austin. Travis County’s probate inventories record a distribution of pistols and rifles throughout the decedent’s estates. William B. Melville’s “fine pair of pistols” could actually have been a set of dueling pistols.²⁰⁰ Decedent J.W. Garretty had a pair of pistols and holsters so that he could wear his guns as a fashion accessory. Furthermore, Garretty owned a pocket pistol that could easily have been concealed within his dark green frock coat.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶ Article, *Austin American Statesman*, September 28, 1968.

¹⁹⁷ J.A. McCreary, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Bennett, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁹⁸ B.H. Johnson, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

¹⁹⁹ J.W. Garretty, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁰⁰ If these were dueling pistols, this suggests that Melville’s death could have been the result of a duel, although no primary record corroborates this narrative. Furthermore, no other record relating to William Melville could be found at all. See William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁰¹ William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); J.W. Garretty, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

Early Austin's newspapers reported frequent conflicts with the local Native American population. Many Austin decedents seemingly owned firearms to provide protection for themselves and their families. Upon moving to Austin, settlers could purchase guns in town from merchant William Kirshberg. His probate inventory indicates he was a merchant specializing in weaponry.²⁰² He offered practical weapons like muskets, shotguns and pistols as well as shooting accessories such as shot bags and shot.²⁰³ Most distinctively, he offered concealed and elegant weapons like the cane gun, designed to look like a walking stick. Disguised as a sophisticated accessory, a cane gun would be accepted at social occasions where a shot gun would not. Kirshberg also carried another now obsolete weapon, dirks, small daggers designed to be carried in the front of one's belt. Many double-bladed Bowie knives appear on the Austin inventories.²⁰⁴ Rifles, powder horns, double barrel pistols, even swords were used by Austinites for hunting, defense or as exhibition pieces.²⁰⁵

The charges associated with the burial of early Austinites appear on some of the probate documents, disclosing various burial practices in the Republic Era. Coffins were constructed, as mentioned previously, by local cabinetmakers like Abner Cook and Heman Ward. Some county probate records indicate how the dead were dressed when

²⁰² William Kirshberg, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

²⁰³ William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

²⁰⁴ Benjamin D. Nobles, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Kirshberg, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Henry Felden, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Rezin P. Bowie, brother of James Bowie, invented the Bowie knife in 1838. William R. Williamson, "BOWIE KNIFE," *Handbook of Texas Online* <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lnb01> (accessed April 01, 2011).

²⁰⁵ William Kirshberg, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin); J.W. Garretty, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Aust2n History Center, Austin); George Dolson, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

placed in their coffins. When William Melville was buried by grave digger Jonathan Hyde, his body was adorned most intricately. It was dressed in white linen underpants, linen pantaloons, white silk gloves, and a white collared shirt then it was wrapped in Irish linen and domestic cloth. He was either shaved or coiffed by a barber called Kirtland and had tooled funeral cards printed to announce his passing.²⁰⁶ After arriving in Galveston just four years before, Milton Bennett died in Austin in 1840. However, unlike Melville's elaborately composed burial ensemble, Bennett was buried simply in a shirt and sheet purchased specifically for the purpose.²⁰⁷

The provenance of furniture in early Texas has proved as confusing to historians as early Texas attire. Three predominant traditions have informed the confusion: 1) the idea that early Texans made all of their own things; 2) the understanding that "until the 1870s most Texans bought their household furniture from local cabinetmakers" and, 3) the assertion that all furniture in early central Texas was created by German cabinetmakers.²⁰⁸ Frank Brown's history of Austin illustrates the first tradition:

There were usually one or two plain bed steads- sometimes a sleeping place was prepared by sticks stuck in the wall with the other ends secured to an upright piece planted in the floor as support. There were a few split bottom or hide bottom chairs, two or three stools, a large puncheon, supported on four legs, used as occasion required for bench, table on water shelf, [sic.] with a bucket. A spinning wheel and a loom sometimes completed the catalogue. The . . . apparel of the inmates were hung around the walls on wooden pegs.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ William B. Melville, 1841(microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁰⁷ William Bennett, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁰⁸ Lon W. Taylor, *Texas Furniture: The Cabinet Makers and Their Work* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975); Lon W. Taylor, "FURNITURE," Handbook of Texas Online <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lpf01> (accessed September 03, 2011).

²⁰⁹ Frank Brown, *Annals of Travis County*, 3:40.

While each of these items, with the exception of the Georgia bed, appear on Travis County probate inventories alone or in combination, no single inventory creates a similar ownership scenario. The furniture items listed on the probate inventories demonstrate that houses were furnished as space may have allowed, but there is no overarching theme of deprivation or lack. Cabinetmakers were present in early Austin, but Travis County probate inventories in conjunction with customs inventories also indicate the high probability that furniture, brought from other cities, was sold in Austin.

Texas hide-bottom chairs are a ubiquitous furniture form, perpetuating the idea that so much Texas furniture was handmade. These chairs were easy to construct with a small number of tools and had a high survival rate, occupying exhibit space in museums across the state. Slat-back or ladder-back Texas chairs were commonly covered in stretched cow or deer hides, while the southeastern United States slat-back chairs usually have woven rush seats.²¹⁰ Hide-bottom chairs, now considered primitive, had a different meaning in early Austin society than their modern popularized associations. Modern descriptors of now antique hide-bottom chairs include the words “dirty,” “creaking,” and “decrepit.” However when first constructed, they would have been simple but elegant furniture forms. The freshly tanned seats would still be stretched taught but somewhat elastic, the soft hair providing a decorative element. The chairs’ slats and poles would be joined tightly and the wood surfaces finished to a smooth shine. George Dolson’s tavern was furnished with twenty-one such hide-bottom chairs paired with cherry wood

²¹⁰ Dale L. Couch, *Echoes from the Continent: Franco-Germanic Chairs in Georgia* (Madison, GA: The Madison-Morgan Cultural Center, 2010), 6.

tables.²¹¹ In his study of early Texas furniture, Lonn Taylor found the Texas governor's mansion to be furnished with at least fourteen hide-bottom chairs in 1861.²¹² In both cases, these chairs were made for seating during entertainments, evidencing the use of hide chairs the way folding chairs are used today.

The household furniture that belonged to the family of early Austinite Dr. Joseph W. Robertson is now housed in the French Legation Museum's collection. This furniture collection was purchased during the Republic Era and reflects an elegant and comfortable household. Dr. Robertson's wife, Lydia Lee Robertson came to Austin with her siblings from Hamilton, Ohio in 1839. The Robertsons were married in 1842. The following year, fellow Austinite, Thomas Marston died, and his belongings were sold at a probate sale. The Marstons moved from Deerfield, New Hampshire to Austin in the late 1830s bringing with them a large suite of fine mahogany and walnut furniture.²¹³

At Marston's probate sale Dr. Robertson bought a walnut sideboard, a "fine wardrobe," and a mahogany side table.²¹⁴ This side table may be the one that survives in the French Legation Museum collection. The object is identified as a worktable due its size, shape and the appearance of dividers within the top drawer. The worktable is a popular nineteenth-century furniture form appearing in parlors and drawing rooms for the storage of needlework and sewing projects. The brass keyhole escutcheon and locking

²¹¹ George M. Dolson, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²¹² Taylor, *Texas Furniture*, 156.

²¹³ David Humphrey, *Peg Leg: The Improbable Life of a Texas Hero, Thomas William Ward, 1807-1872* (Denton: Texas State Historical Association, 2009): 113; Thomas S. Marston, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center). The importation of large furniture came at a price. Texas levied tariffs as high as fifteen percent on many goods coming into its ports, especially those considered luxuries. A wealthy person, able to afford the shipping costs of a generous household inventory also had to afford the forwarding costs to transport the goods to their final destination.

²¹⁴ Thomas S. Marston, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

drawer denote the value of its contents. The table's legs are lathe turned with a ring motif appearing just below the table runners, a motif that appears frequently in furniture created in New Hampshire and Connecticut in the first half of the nineteenth-century.

The Robertson's large canopy bed at the French Legation is said to have been purchased and brought to Texas during the Republic of Texas Era. According to family stories, the bed was brought from Cincinnati, Ohio in 1840 by Dr. Robertson's wife prior to their meeting and subsequent marriage in 1842. Small factories in Cincinnati, Ohio like Mitchell and Rammelsberg produced furniture for the southern markets of New Orleans, Mobile and Galveston.²¹⁵ While the Robertson bed could have come from Ohio, the execution of its decorative elements shows a less sophisticated craftwork than the intricate carvings of Mitchell and Rammelsberg. Furniture factories in Ohio were automated, using steam power to execute the cutting and shaping of furniture components. The Robertson bed's design is very simple and could have been created without the use of steam tools. Furthermore, the Robertson bed more resembles the German Biedermeier style more than Empire or Rococo Revival styles indicating that rather than coming from Ohio, it may have been made by a German Texas cabinetmaker.²¹⁶ This large bed, almost eight feet in height, would have been delivered to the buyer in pieces rather than fully assembled. Marks on the inside of the beds rails

²¹⁵ Stephen G. Harrison, "Furniture Trade in New Orleans 1840-1880: The Largest Assortment Constantly on Hand" (master's thesis, University of Delaware, 2003), 39.

²¹⁶ Where Rococo Revival furniture scrolls and loops in three dimensions, Biedermeier furniture's curves are generally two dimensional, curving in all over form rather than in minute decoration. Most distinctively, the broken pediment on the canopy frame of the Robertson bed is not seen on beds produced in Ohio or New Orleans. Canopy beds sold by the New Orleans furniture shop of Prudent Mallard are either simple rectangles with planed moldings or ornate, heavily ornamented and carved. Stephen G. Harrison, "Furniture Trade in New Orleans 1840-1880: The Largest Assortment Constantly on Hand" (master's thesis, University of Delaware, 2003), 40.

guided the assembly process after delivery. Wherever it originated, the large scale of the bed and distinct ornamental features reflect elegance and comfort rather than utility.

Other furniture in the French Legation Museum collection includes objects purchased by Alphonse Dubois in 1841. Primary source documents record Dubois' efforts to furnish his home during frequent buying trips to Galveston and New Orleans. While Austin had a few merchants with modest supplies of various household objects, furniture warerooms in New Orleans stocked a huge variety of goods. Furniture scholar Stephen G. Harrison, in his study of New Orleans furniture production and trade, illustrates how shops like that of Henry Siebrecht sold, "wallpaper, drapery fabric, and upholstery material . . . along with an extensive selection of furniture . . . tableware, floor coverings, statuary, clocks and paintings."²¹⁷ Harrison asserts that such a shop was like an early department store, giving the consumer the opportunity to buy all they required in one place.²¹⁸ The Rococo Revival and late Empire styles are seen frequently in the furniture that was sold in New Orleans in the 1840s. With its busy scrolls and hand carved features, the Rococo Revival style gained popularity throughout the United States in the second half of the nineteenth-century.

The extant furniture purchased by Dubois includes a serpentine back sofa with enclosed arms, a matching balloon back chair with opened arms, a matching armless balloon back chair and at least three matching small slipper settees.²¹⁹ Discovering the

²¹⁷ Harrison, "Furniture Trade in New Orleans 1840-1880: The Largest Assortment Constantly on Hand," 73-74.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 73-74.

²¹⁹ Jean Houston Daniel, Price Daniel and Dorothy Blodgett, *The Texas Governor's Mansion: A History of the House and Its Occupants* (Austin: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, 1984), 270. The armless balloon back chair now resides in the Texas Governor's Mansion's collection as do two of the small settees. There was probably a fourth settee that is now missing.

provenance or maker of these furniture items is very difficult. They have each been reupholstered multiple times and any maker's tags or marks have long since been covered or disposed of. The sofa set exhibits visual elements of the Rococo Revival style, with finger molding on the arms and legs. This molding resembles an uncharacteristically simple design created by German furniture maker, John Henry Belter. Belter had a factory in New York City but shipped to southern ports like New Orleans. However Belter did not immigrate to the United States until 1844, so Dubois' furniture must be attributed to another furniture maker.²²⁰

Furniture manufactured by northeastern furniture factories in Philadelphia, Cincinnati and New York were popular with buyers in Mobile, Alabama and New Orleans alike.²²¹ Dubois' transitional style slipper settee is so similar to one from the original inventory of the Kirkwood Mansion in Eutaw, Alabama, that they could have been made in the same factory. It would be expected that Dubois would have better furniture for a variety of reasons, including his diplomatic standing and his pride in entertaining guests. However, Dubois's furniture does not represent the best specimens of furnishings being created at the time. Rather, they represent mid-grade factory produced furniture. Furthermore, this furniture would have been considered affordable to the middling level of the Austin population.

²²⁰ Sofa, "Personal Property Appraisal: The French Legation Museum and the Daughters of the Republic of Texas," French Legation Museum archives, 3. Although Belter's designs are frequently complicated and intricate, he did produce one line of molded rosewood ply furniture with simpler curves and finger molding. This style, however, is not characteristic of his work.

²²¹ Rahe, "Residential Furnishings of Deceased Greene County, Alabama Slave Owners: 1845-60," 130.

Late Victorian ideals and romantic interpretations of the early American Republic altered the meaning of women's production of textiles at home.²²² Ideas that the production of homespun "sustained the rugged virtues of hard work, neighborliness and unaffected piety . . . of industrious, self-sacrificing and patriotic women," have been employed by amateur historians to expunge Texas history of the social hegemonies experienced by early Texas women.²²³ Early Texas women in these histories worked busily at their looms, ignoring the social limitations imposed on their gender. Late Victorian writing about the Republic of Texas similarly used this interpretation to link the national narrative of "hard work" to Texas women while simultaneously attempting to articulate an exceptional Texas experience. While the New England homespun myth revolves around austerity and godliness, the Texian myth narrates sacrifice and resourcefulness.²²⁴

Household textiles appear on Republic Era Travis County probate inventories but there is no record of their creation, or meaning to the families who owned them. Quantities of these items vary from household to household but most contain at least one item, usually a sheet or a blanket. Others like the inventory of James Smith contain an array of valuable household textiles including pairs of coverlets, several bed quilts and two nondescript carpets. These handmade textiles serve as a lasting symbol of the family's wealth, social standing and style. Although attributed as belonging to James Smith in the probate inventories, the Smith textiles were most probably owned by his

²²² Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), 17.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 413.

²²⁴ For an example of this see, H. Bailey Carroll, "Texas Collection," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 55: 4 (Apr., 1952), 502.

wife Elizabeth, who moved to Austin with her husband from North Carolina. The Marston household contained two “Russian” carpets valued at \$95.00.²²⁵ The family also owned several nondescript bed quilts as well as Marseilles quilts, both of which were traditionally made by the women of the family. Marseilles quilts, coverlets and counterpanes all required many hours of dedicated hand sewing resulting in intricate designs created from tiny stitches. Textile scholar Laurel Ulrich asserts that such fine textiles would have been passed down the female family line as points of family pride, and as “emblems of gentility and the core of female inheritance.”²²⁶

Museum interpretations of early Texas homes like that at Barrington Living History Farm in Washington-on-the-Brazos exhibit fine bedsteads topped with mattresses filled with corn husks.²²⁷ Travis County probate inventories demonstrate that early Austinites slept on a variety of mattress types. Most members of James Smith’s family slept on walnut bedsteads, two of which were topped with corn shuck mattresses like those at Barrington Farm. However, four of the family members had the added comfort of feather beds. The least luxurious bed at the Smith home was a cot topped with a nondescript mattress. Like the Smiths, the Marston family had a regular nondescript mattress, but theirs was topped with two feather beds. Tavern owner George Dolson slept simply on a cot with a mattress but with two pillows beneath his head. In 1840 J. Ralston placed an advertisement in the *Texas Sentinel* announcing that his Austin mattress shop would be manufacturing “mattresses of various descriptions on short notice.” Ralston

²²⁵ To give perspective, Marston’s horse was valued at \$100 and so was the walnut bureau.

²²⁶ Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun*, 415.

²²⁷ Collection of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Barrington Living History Farm, Washington-on-the-Brazos, Texas.

also offered to repair and re-stuff mattresses that had lost their comfort or had become lumpy.²²⁸

In his study of early Annapolis, Maryland, Paul A. Shackel argues that as the middleclass emerged, accepted behavior became more recognized and standardized. Courtesy literature published proper etiquette guidelines, and gentility as John Kasson writes, became a “purchasable style and commodity.”²²⁹ Because of this civilizing process, segments of society began to use behavior and material goods in order to assert their position in the social hierarchy.²³⁰ Primary sources portray Austin as a democratic society with tight social networks formed through family relationships and deaths, business dealings and government and military service. Shackel’s theory, when applied to early Austin, shows that the ownership of status-bearing objects, like satinett frock coats and imported mahogany furniture, would have contributed to the process of creating social hierarchy, potentially straining or recasting important personal relationships. Intellectual and educational objects embodied the potential for social positioning as well as clothing or home furnishings. Items that displayed education asserted social superiority in a manner that contradicts the frontier standard, by highlighting intellectual rather than physical accomplishments. Likewise, the import and use of these items allowed those higher on the social scale to “differentiate themselves from other groups during a time of social instability,” such as the Republic of Texas Era.²³¹

²²⁸ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, July 4, 1840.

²²⁹ John F. Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1991), 43.

²³⁰ Paul A. Shackel, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture: An Archaeology of Annapolis, Maryland, 1695-1870* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), 5.

²³¹ Shackel, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture*, 85.

As the capitol of Texas, Austin attracted the presence of educated and elite workers involved in government and the law. Not only their manner of dress, as already discussed, but also their behavior and demeanor set them apart from laborers and farmers. Although the social landscape appears democratic through the retrospective lens of the frontier mythology, the delineation between social groups was an active and ongoing process. The gap in refinement levels among Austin's population prompted merchant James Morgan to write, "They are, apparently men of talents and have means . . . gentlemanly in their deportment and totally different from the class of loafers with which this country has been infested for the last few years."²³² The presence of men with the economical means to be called idle "loafers" indicates that at least a segment of early Austin's male population stood in stark contrast to the industriousness of the popularized male frontier ideal.

Education, worldliness and intellectual sophistication could be physically manifested through a personal library. The educational and intellectual pursuits expressed in the form of early Austin decedent's personal libraries are neither comprehensive nor extensive. They are small and in many cases the books pertain to the decedent's profession. Lacking a university or a public library, some Austinites created or brought with them personal libraries containing books that would inspire and entertain.

Personal book collections reflect the specialization of their owner's interests and careers. Of those listed in inventories, only law books, atlases, dictionaries and Bibles are

²³² James Morgan to Samuel Swartwout, Galveston, Texas, July 1840, in *Fragile Empires: The Texas Correspondence of Samuel Swartwout and James Morgan, 1836-1856* (Austin: Shoal Creek Publishers, 1978), 104.

listed by names, the rest are tallied as “lot of books” or a “pair of books.”²³³ Of the thirty-five decedents inventoried, there were eleven book owners averaging six books apiece.²³⁴

James Witherspoon Smith, Austin’s first judge amassed several law books in his inventory, along with a large atlas.²³⁵ Atlases and portfolios would be laid open for display to impress and entertain visiting guests, as much as for consultation and study.²³⁶ However, since James W. Smith lived in a double chambered log cabin full of furniture including a set of two tables and six chairs, it is possible he did not have the luxury of space for such a display. Alternately, he could have reserved one side of the cabin for business. His inventory does include a seal press, presumably for notarizing documents, and his law books.

Smith’s law books consist of three volumes of Joseph Chitty's *A Practical Treatise on Criminal Law* and four volumes of *Kent's Commentary on International Law*. Chitty was published in both English and American versions, suggesting new methods for obtaining witness statements and testimony in cases of legal remedy. In 1840 Chitty’s volumes were reviewed as an important contribution to law, rendering “all the old books of entries and precedents of little further use.”²³⁷ The presence of these books demonstrates up-to-date legal training and interpretation. However, without the court

²³³ James W. Smith, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Gideon White, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²³⁴ On probate inventories, books that are not listed with title are referred to as “a lot of books.” For the purpose of this research the quantity of seven equals a lot.

²³⁵ James W. Smith, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

²³⁶ Smith lived in a double pen log cabin that he filled with a set of two tables, six chairs, a desk, bedstead and cooking equipment. See James W. Smith, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

²³⁷ Ferdinand Andrews, *The North American Review*, Vol. L (Cambridge, MA: Folsom, Wells, and Thurston, 1840), 530.

records to demonstrate the implementation of these methods, there is no evidence for their impact in the practice of Austin Republic Era law.²³⁸

Smith's other volumes included *Kent's Commentary on International Law* written by former New York Supreme Court Justice and Columbia University law professor James Kent. This collection converted Kent's comprehensive law school lectures into a published three volume set. The volumes of *Kent's Commentary* were considered "the most influential American law books of the antebellum period." They included Kent's views on maritime law, real estate, business and personal partnerships, but also defined the authority of international, federal and state governments.²³⁹ The volumes further demonstrate Smith's knowledge of current philosophies of justice, and presumably dedication to widely accepted practice in the courts of major cities.

Austin lawyer, A. Adams Anderson, formerly of Carlisle, Pennsylvania owned a library that contained law books as well, as those written about economics and rhetoric.²⁴⁰ The loftiest of the books in Anderson's collection was *Virgil and Horace*, from the seventeenth-century series *The Delphin Classics*. However, this was the only volume from the series that Anderson owned. Reading classical Latin poetry without the luxury of a knowledgeable tutor required patience and intelligence to decipher.²⁴¹ The

²³⁸ Elizabeth Gaspar Brown, "Frontier Justice: Wayne County 1796-1836," *The American Journal of Legal History*, 16: 2 (Apr., 1972): 126-153.

²³⁹ John H. Langbein, "Chancellor Kent and the History of Legal Literature," *Columbia Law Review*, 93:3 (Apr., 1993): 548.

²⁴⁰ The same article in the *Daily Bulletin* that notes Anderson's background says because Anderson's death the law "profession has lost one of its brightest ornaments." Furthermore, "members of the bar and citizens, generally . . . requested to wear crape on the left arm for thirty days, in memory of the deceased." See Announcement, *Daily Bulletin*, 8 January 1842.

²⁴¹ Craig Kallendorf, Ward W. Briggs, Julia Haig Gaisser, and Charles Martindale, *A Companion to the Classical Tradition* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2007), 95.

ownership of these books implies either the ability to read esoteric Latin texts, or the desire to be able to do so. Both Anderson and Dr. Joseph Robertson owned a copy of *Robert Ainsworth's Dictionary, English and Latin: A New Edition, with Great Additions and Amendments*. This Latin dictionary would have assisted Anderson in his reading of *Virgil and Horace* and would have aided Dr. Robertson in reading medical texts.

Dr. Robertson's extant Republic Era book collection is quite varied when compared to those in Travis County probate inventories. Robertson's library includes both English and French dictionaries, Dr. John Eberle's *A Treatise on the Practice of Medicine*, the *Senate Journal of 1833* and a Henry Clay biography. Of Robertson's library, two titles provided an opportunity for armchair travel far away from the Texas frontier: Wilbur Fisk's *Travels in Europe and Narrative of the Residence of Fatalla Sayeghir*. American clergyman, Wilbur Fisk traveled Europe in 1839 describing his reactions in a manner that reads as a pious treatise on European behavior.²⁴² *Narrative of the Residence of Fatalla Sayeghir* also details the foreign and the exotic, however Fatalla Sayeghir's adventures take place in the Middle East. The book involves one of Napoleon's scouts, who was sent to explore the region to find water sources. Most fantastically, the scout was supposedly charged with uniting multiple Arab tribes under the rulership of a single chief.²⁴³ Both Fisk's travel journal and de Lamartine's *Narrative* contain black and white lithographs illustrating the scenes described inside. Possession of these books would display one's rounded education, interest in other cultures, as well the availability of leisure time.

²⁴² Wilbur Fisk, *Travels In Europe: In England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands*, fifth ed. (New York:Harper & Brothers, 1839), 90.

²⁴³ George M. Haddad, "Fathallah al-Sayegh and His Account of a Napoleonic Mission among the Arab Nomads: History or Fiction?" *Studia Islamica*, 24 (1966): 108-109.

Part of creating a new society is providing order and rationality. Thus surveying was a highly critical and valued skill in the Republic. Paul Shackel defines scientific instruments as those things that “facilitate the task of the division and measurement of land, time and environment.”²⁴⁴ Each of these items would have served to make the owner capable of doing his job with precision and accuracy. Master builder Benjamin Nobles owned a tapeline which would have been useful in his construction business. Likewise, A. Werlander’s carpenter’s square allowed him to create precisely squared corners on tables and shelves. The compass and surveyor’s compass appearing on Daniel K. Webb’s inventory allowed him to earn a livelihood from accurately plotting land. William Bell also owned a box of nondescript plotting instruments, and Heinrich Felden’s inventory lists nondescript mathematical instruments, presumably for use in his blacksmithing work.²⁴⁵

Although commonplace now, in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries, timepieces displayed individual participation in a distinct social system. In the eighteenth-century, the use of clocks became widespread and societies increasingly abandoned the sole use of church bells or the position of the sun in the sky to mark the time. Clocks are agents of discipline; they manage the public perception of time and structure the workday. Owning a timepiece showed that one could not only read a clock, but exhibited the owner’s commitment to conducting his life by its intervals. Of the probate inventories of Travis County during the Republic period, twenty-nine percent of decedents had household or personal timepieces. The 1840 Travis County tax records

²⁴⁴ Shackel, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture*, 8.

²⁴⁵ Daniel K. Webb, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Henry Felden, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Bell, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

also list householders who owned clocks. These timepieces were taxed according to their value. Values were determined by the material the clock was made from: wood, unspecified metal, brass, gold and silver. According to the tax list, only seventeen percent of Austin householders owned timepieces. Silver watches were the most popular; thirty-seven of four hundred and fifty-three households owned them, with only twenty-nine gold watch owners and thirteen households owning clocks that rested on tables or hung on a wall.²⁴⁶ The most detailed description of probate inventory timepieces include a gold lapis watch and chain owned by William Melville, valued at \$200.00, J.W. Garretty's gold lever watch valued at \$130.00, William Kirshberg's gold repeating watch, chain and key valued at \$45.00 and George Dolson's brass mantle clock worth only \$20.00.²⁴⁷ According to Republic Era Austin newspapers, Charles Sossaman was the only vendor and repair man of clocks and jewelry.²⁴⁸

In Amos Roark's 1840 census of Austin, he counted "one billiard table, six faro banks, twenty gamblers" in his numeration, although their gambling was not specified as professional or recreational.²⁴⁹ Decedent George Dolson, who kept taverns in both San Antonio and Austin, died in Austin in October 1842. His probate inventory shows that the

²⁴⁶ Gifford White, ed. *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas* (Austin: Pemberton Press, 1966), 191-198.

²⁴⁷ William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Kirshberg, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); J.W. Garretty, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); George M. Dolson, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center). The appraisal of Melville's watch would be equal to about \$4300.00 in modern United States currency, Garretty's watch would equal \$2800 and Kirshberg's watch, \$970.00.

²⁴⁸ Advertisement, *Austin City Gazette*, September 23, 1840.

²⁴⁹ *Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Austin, 1885 Commerce, Trade and Manufactures; Manufacturing Advantages, Business and Transportation Facilities: Together with Sketches of the Representative Business Houses and Manufacturing Establishments in the City* (Austin:1885) <<http://www.archive.org/details/historicaldescri00austri>>.

Austin tavern contained a roulette wheel and cloth.²⁵⁰ According to historian William Ransom Hogan, gambling was socially acceptable during the Republic Era. He writes “Any man could gamble at monte, faro, roulette, roly-poly, rouge et noir, or poker, or promote a lottery or place high wagers on a favored horse, without loss of community standing.”²⁵¹ Considering the number of men in Austin who had come from southern American states, gambling may have been, as Kenneth Greenberg writes, a “serious form of play” for formerly southern men of honor.²⁵²

Drinking was considered an amusement in early Austin, and probate inventories exhibit a widespread possession of beverage glasses, tumblers and liquor decanters denoting a care and attention paid to bar equipage.²⁵³ The probate sale of George M. Dolson’s estate offered twenty-nine barrels of malt whiskey and nineteen gallons of peach brandy, all purchased by Dr. Joseph W. Robertson. Although Dr. Robertson may have imbibed, by 1842 the use of anesthesia had not yet been established, and the whiskey may have been used as a pain killer during surgical procedures. Dolson’s inventory alone demonstrates the variety of alcohols available to Austinites: twenty-nine gallons of malt whiskey, thirty-one gallons of Ohio whiskey, nineteen gallons peach brandy, twenty gallons brandy, one hundred gallons of “best corn cog brandy,” eighteen gallons champagne, ten gallons brandied cherries, twenty-two bottles of fancy cordials, dozen common cordials, three dozen bottles of absinthe, two dozen bottles of claret wine,

²⁵⁰ George M. Dolson, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁵¹ William Ransom Hogan, “Amusements in the Republic of Texas,” *The Journal of Southern History*, 3:4 (November 1937): 414.

²⁵² Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Honor & Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 136.

²⁵³ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Saturday, November 14, 1840.

boxes of fruit, and four baskets of anisette.²⁵⁴ Virtually any alcoholic beverage could be had in Austin at taverns like Dolson's.²⁵⁵

As a public social space, Dolson used decorative items to make his tavern more aesthetically appealing. Liquors like brandy and whiskey that arrived in large barrels were decanted into the twenty-three bar decanters and four cut glass decanters lining the shelf of his bar. Nine French prints hung on the walls and his brass mantle clock chimed the hours. Wine glasses of claret were served on waiters to customers who sat in hide-bottom chairs that were placed around one pine and two cherry tables. Before exiting the bar, patrons could even check to insure a respectable appearance in Dolson's wall mirror.

The presence of early Austin's multiple restaurants reflect the early city's interest in cuisine, and the county's probate inventories provide proof that Austinites owned personal dining equipment. Because dining rituals had changed and elaborated in the eighteenth-century, the ownership of dining and cooking equipment reflects the knowledge and sophistication of the owner's dining practices. Material culture scholar Barbara Carson, in her analysis of District of Columbia material culture, established a variable hierarchy of dining refinement related to the possession of specific dining implements. She divided the utensils and dining equipage of early nineteenth-century diners into five distinct groups: "simple, old-fashioned, decent, aspiring and elite."²⁵⁶ This scale is helpful for the purposes of analyzing the Austin probate records. Carson's

²⁵⁴ George M. Dolson, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

²⁵⁵ Hafertepe, *Abner Cook*, 30. Taverns such as Dolson's were named 'groceries,' suggesting that the establishment also sold food. However, food items are not listed on Dolson's inventory. Furthermore, calling a tavern a 'grocery' alleviates the town from the presence of a "bar." A temperance society had been formed in the city during the summer of 1839, so there was reason to make the tavern less conspicuous.

²⁵⁶ Carson, *Ambitious Appetites*, 30.

analysis examined probate records executed only ten years before the Austin records in this study. According to Carson, the *simple* diners did not use personal utensils to eat at table, employing their fingers to deliver food to the mouth. *Old-fashioned* diners owned personal spoons, with *decent*, *aspiring* and *elite* diners owning spoons, knives and forks. The absence of dining implements could imply either a lack of such equipment, or that the diner's personal preferences did not require them.²⁵⁷ Dining with fingers could denote dining for sustenance rather than social performance, but it did not always indicate vulgarity. With multiple restaurants available in early Austin, it was possible to entirely avoid cooking at home, and therefore have no need to own personal utensils.

The inventory of Thomas Marston assembles by far the most refined display of sophisticated material comforts of all the probate records. His 1843 inventory includes five essentials of Barbara Carson's *elite* diners, including china place settings for eighteen, twenty-four place settings of knives and forks, a mahogany side table, two mahogany framed mirrors and six cane bottom chairs.²⁵⁸ According to Carson, even in a socially ambitious society like the District of Columbia, only "a few people at the top of Washington society owned enough equipment to lay an elegant, fashionable table for at least twenty guests."²⁵⁹ After dining at Alphonse Dubois' table, Congressional representative Isaac Van Zandt reported Dubois' capacity to entertain in an *elite* manner. He wrote, "It was the most brilliant affair I ever saw, the most massive plate of silver and gold, the finest glass, and everything exceeded anything I ever saw. We sat at the table for hours- I was wearied to death but had to stand it with the company. We had plates

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 33.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 45.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 45.

changed about fifteen times.”²⁶⁰ Archeological remains of Dubois’ stay at the Legation include fine glassware remnants, wine bottle stoppers and porcelain manufactured in Staffordshire, England.²⁶¹ The fine porcelain remains include blue transferware by J. Wedgwood and T.J. and J. Mayer.²⁶² William Bell’s inventory lists only two chairs, a stew kettle and skillet but an entire set of Delftware.²⁶³ Although this style of ceramics was named after the Dutch town, Delft, delftware was produced in both England and Holland.²⁶⁴ Despite Amos Roark’s census listing two Austin silversmiths in 1840, no other trace of these men has surfaced. Whether or not there actually were silversmiths providing Austin with sterling and plate, Austin merchants offered all sorts of dining equipment to the city’s consumers, including imported silver plate. Burke and Company advertised “a splendid assortment of fancy cutlery, hardware and plated ware imported directly from Liverpool to Texas.”²⁶⁵ Such objects of refined living as Staffordshireware and silver hollowware belie popularized ideas of early Austinites’ austere dining habits.

In Frank Brown’s 1875 history of the city he wrote, “Luxuries were unknown. Coffee and sugar were seldom seen at the table. . . The kitchen furniture, the cupboard and the table were scantily and simply supplied.”²⁶⁶ However, at the time of their deaths, William Kepler possessed twenty pounds of sugar and two coffee boilers, George Dolson

²⁶⁰ Isaac Van Zandt to Mrs. Isaac Van Zandt, December 6m 1840, quoted in Stanley Siegel, *A Political History of the Texas Republic, 1836-45* (Austin: 1956; New York: 1973), p 159.

²⁶¹ Olds, “The French Legation Museum Kitchen,” 16.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁶³ William Bell, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center, Austin).

²⁶⁴ Rosemary Troy Krill, and Pauline K. Eversmann, *Early American Decorative Arts, 1620-1860: A Handbook for Interpreters* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2001), 158.

²⁶⁵ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, Wednesday, September 23, 1840.

²⁶⁶ Brown, *Annals of Travis County*, 3:39.

had two glass sugar bowls and Benjamin Nobles and Conrad Drisinger each owned an entire tea service.²⁶⁷ The appearance of these items proves early Austinites were equipped to provide proper tea and coffee service. Furthermore, the presence of table and tea accessories disproves pioneer narratives that indicate the ownership of only practical dining implements.

While Susan Bean Marston may have been able to serve twenty diners with her china place settings, they would have had to take turns sitting in the six cane bottom chairs. This disparity might suggest that Marston's lodgings could not accommodate more than six chairs in addition to the many large case pieces such as the wardrobe, bureau, walnut sideboard and press.²⁶⁸ Substantial furniture forms like case pieces implied greater purchasing power. Furthermore, the presence of a press implied the ownership of smaller precious objects such as china, silver, fine glass and textiles that required secure protection. A sideboard provided storage for kitchen items but also provides additional surfaces for the service of dinner or tea. The long legs of James Smith's food safe would have lifted the mass of the cabinet off the ground keeping its contents away from animals and pests.²⁶⁹ Sometimes these legs would be set into pans of water or chemicals to discourage insect and spider invasion. Heinrich Felden owned a chest of drawers, listed amongst cooking items as well as farming and blacksmithing

²⁶⁷ George M. Dolson, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Benjamin D. Nobles, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Conrad Drisinger, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Kepler, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁶⁸ Thomas S. Marston, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁶⁹ Donald Linebaugh, "All the Annoyances and Inconveniences of the Country: Environmental Factors in the Development of Outbuildings in the Colonial Chesapeake," *Winterthur Portfolio* 29, no. 1 (1994): p. 1.

tools.²⁷⁰ The medicine chest in Gideon White's cooking area would not have appropriated as much space as Felden's chest of drawers, but its intricate design with multiple doors, drawers and compartments, made it six times more valuable than the Felden's chest.²⁷¹

Maintaining a respectable appearance could be accomplished by careful attention to personal hygiene. Goods appearing on Austin probate inventories relating to hygiene ritual would have emphasized social superiority while exhibiting self-respect and personal style.²⁷² Paul Shackel asserts that hygiene items not only denote wealth, but "create and reinforce the new behavior that aided the development of the individual" socially.²⁷³ Thanks to the growing popularity of courtesy literature, frequent bathing gained importance among polite society.²⁷⁴ Additionally, the fluctuations of male facial hair fashion during the Victorian Era encouraged the ownership of razors.²⁷⁵ The male population owned a variety of shaving equipment ranging from razors in cases, razor hones, strops and shaving boxes.²⁷⁶ If one did not have shaving equipment, Phillip Evans

²⁷⁰ Storing practical outdoor tools and cooking utensils together was a common practice in early Austin. Probate inventories indicate constellations of kitchen and farming tools intermingling near stoves and fireplaces.

²⁷¹ Felden's chest was valued at \$1.50 and White's medicine chest was valued at \$10.00.

²⁷² Shackel, *Personal Discipline and Material Culture*, 7.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 116.

²⁷⁴ For information on the development of bathing rituals in the United States, see Richard L. Bushman and Claudia L. Bushman, "The Early History of Cleanliness in America," *The Journal of American History*, 74: 4 (March 1988): 1213-1238.

²⁷⁵ John F. Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1991), 43.

²⁷⁶ William Spencer, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Bennett, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); A. Adams Anderson, 1846 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Conrad Hentze, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); A. Werlander, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Kirshberg, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

offered “fashionable barbering” from his Congress Avenue shop in 1841.²⁷⁷

Handkerchiefs owned by Austin decedents imply their desire to prevent the spread of illness and bodily fluids.²⁷⁸ Oddly, Wustrich and Werlander were the only two decedents who owned wash tubs or basins and only Benjamin Nobles owned soap.²⁷⁹

The primary records related to the material goods and social participation of early Austin residents indicate a narrative of individualism, within the bounds of accepted standards of long established cities. Embracing the consumption and display of material goods provided a basis for establishing a recognizable, standardized social structure within a new community. From this foundation, early Austinites compiled household goods related to social norms from their previous lives in their new community. Apparel choices in the early capital city indicate that Austinites valued the expression of personal taste, style and proper comportment. Spotty approximations of frontier living dress settlers in homemade simplicity, but early Austin provided the opportunity for stylish eccentricity. The variety of apparel choices in the Austin marketplace reveals that its male population recognized and appreciated fine clothing, taking care to dress themselves respectfully and stylishly. Early Travis County’s probate inventories highlight ownership scenarios with factual data supporting the assertion that early Austinites had the luxury of exercising individual consumer preference. The demonstration of self discipline through

²⁷⁷ Advertisement, *Texas Sentinel*, March 18, 1841.

²⁷⁸ J.W. Garretty, 1842 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William Bell, 1843 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); J.A. McCreary, 1840 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); William B. Melville, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center).

²⁷⁹ Ulrich Wustrich, 1844 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center); A. Werlander, 1841 (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16, Austin History Center). This could be due to their occupations. The use of hide glue could have necessitated the removal of the adhesive from hands after work.

the exhibition of education, hygiene and dressing habits further strengthened one's public image during the transience of the Republic Era.

While life in a newly settled society disoriented newcomers to the norms of social acceptability, familiar material remnants of previous life created social credibility and reinforced social hierarchy. Rather than having to manufacture all of the goods required for everyday life, Austinites purchased them from merchants and skilled workers, or brought them in from other cities. Primary documentation shows that rather than simply subsisting on the frontier, Austinites assembled collections of household and personal objects that provided comfort and allowed them to participate in the social rituals and entertainments, endeavoring to mirror the refinement of well-established early Victorian Era United States cities.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Ownership scenarios represented by Travis County probate records indicate the city's residents had a variety of goals and concerns for the future. While a portion of the community was concerned with accumulating vast acreage rather than material objects, others had inclinations toward tasteful in-town living with the benefit of simple luxury. Documents relating to the city's early material culture provide facts that expands or contradicts anachronistic estimations of pioneer living. From these facts, early households are released from the disguise of stereotypes, and the city's narrative expands to encompass individuality and personal preference. The complexity of the personal identities presented by the probate inventories prove that early Austinites cannot be easily labeled.

Popular histories equate life in the early capital city with a narrative of lack, deprivation and the necessity for constant resourcefulness. It is more likely however, that early Austin's narrative of lack relates to emotional response rather than material need. Moving to a new country placed distance between Austinites and their homelands. The material culture of the Republic of Texas Era acts as a stand in for the melancholy that distance may have created. Material comforts spanned the chasm between desire and fulfillment, expectation and reality, availability and want. Early Austin immigrants became a part of a growing society that struggled to construct a permanent and genteel

social atmosphere. Austinites used material goods to help stabilize their new lives, and to remind them that they could once again establish secure, familiar lifestyles in this new environment.

The early city's material culture reveals distinct individual preferences, the access to goods arriving from foreign ports, and the financial viability to purchase them. The choices of Austin's earliest citizens represent an array of regional and economic backgrounds. People came from all over, some came as slaves, some came with a great deal of money to invest, others hoped to make their fortune after they arrived. A householder's estate value correlated to their market status, and Austin's social hierarchy nurtured and governed the city's system of consumer preference and solvency. By engaging in a variety of occupations, whether by running a restaurant, farming land or building homes in the new city, early Austin citizens stimulated local economy creating goods and services suited to desires of a wide-ranging consumer population. The craftsmen of Austin were capable of creating finer objects and dwellings. The tools they owned reflected the aptitude for making sophisticated furniture and clothing for a demanding and discriminating market. The types of goods imported into the Republic of Texas both by businesses and individuals reflect an attempt to fill the wide ranging desires of the Texian market. Rather than reflecting standardized cargoes of agricultural gear, they reflect a variety of merchandise suitable to the buying preferences found in long established societies. The type and standard of these goods were the same as those being sent to cities like New Orleans, Mobile, Charleston and Wilmington, although Texas was last on the line of delivery.

The socially ambitious individuals who populated Austin created islands of vernacular refinement sometimes housed within primitive structures. These temporary houses belied the intricacies and complexities of social rituals such as tea service, balls and formal dinners. While Victorian recollections of early Austin suggest that many Austinites may have had dirt floors inside their log cabins, the probate inventories suggest that Austinites may have walked these floors in fine leather shoes. Although probate inventories list agrarian implements, these utilitarian articles appear alongside objects laden with the coding of social ritual and sophistication. The presence of French restaurants and the proliferation of diplomatic dinners and balls in Austin reveal the citizenry was knowledgeable of the etiquette and ritual demanded in these circumstances.

Extant material culture and documentary evidence are stand-ins for past experience. The scale and purpose of material goods holds information relating to bodily movement, the object's relationship to the world around it, as well as ideals concerning the civilization it is a part of. In the absence of the actual objects, documentary proof related to individuals' possessions reflect this experience, if more dimly. Early Austin's material culture conjures scenarios of well-dressed men sipping hot coffee from Staffordshireware, while peering out of window glass at carriages creaking and groaning over the earthen avenue. It attests to the chimes of the tavern clock signaling customers to leave the warmth of the cast iron stove and return home after an evening of imbibing absinthe. This documentation holds the place of the enslaved workers who manipulated hand tools to work the rocky soil of Travis County or were hired to run the city newspaper's printing press. Most significantly it acts as witness for the many humans, animated by emotional ups and downs, who dined, danced and slept together in the early

capital city. It acts as a record of the experience and capability of city builders, draftsmen and merchants and gives clues regarding the physical manifestations and symbols of racial and social hegemony within the early capital city.

For all of the rich information contained within the primary sources, gaps remain in the overall narrative of the early city of Austin. An overall building inventory needs to be undertaken in order to establish the reality of the early city's housing rather than simply typecasting the building stock as a "gathering of log cabins." Mapping of early residences, businesses and municipal buildings would provide greater understanding of the cultural landscape. Most significantly, the material world of the enslaved must be documented in depth. Early drawings of the capital city show rows of plain, small houses bearing a resemblance to slave housing in the southern United States. What did early Austin residents, both black and white, think of this similarity? If documentation relating to the housing of slaves could be found, the racial etiquette and relationships of the early city would be further illuminated.

Material culture presents the opportunity to use tangible, visible objects to tell the story of people who have long since passed. The documentary evidence, related to the material life of early Austin, gives an impression of individual personalities, personal histories and desires. The city's early individualism belies the simplified pioneer label. Simply stressing the primitive aspects of early Austin squelches opportunities for celebrating the complexity of its citizenry during the city's establishment. The material comforts desired, obtained and enjoyed by early Texans provide insight into early Austin life, insightfully broadening and complementing early Texas cultural identity rather than simply refuting previous interpretations of it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Manuscript and Archival Sources

Brown, Frank, *Annals of Travis County and of the city of Austin (From the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875)*. Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

Long, James, Letter to William Sandusky. William Sandusky Papers. Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library, San Antonio, Texas.

Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1820-1902, Microfilm publication M259, 93 rolls. Record Group 36. 1836. National Archives Administration,
http://search.ancestry.com/iexec?htx=View&r=an&dbid=7484&iid=LAM259_140498&fn=Jacob&ln=Matossi&st=r&ssrc=pt_t21925211_p1601237877_kpidz0q3d1601237877z0q26pgz0q3d32768z0q26pgPLz0q3dpid&pid=405453 (accessed September 1, 2011).

Probate Inventories, 1840-1852, Probate Minutes Volume A. (microfilm, Exp 61 Red 16) Austin History Center. Austin, Texas.

Republic of Texas Customs Inventories, 1836-1845, Texas State Library and Archives.

Robertson, Joseph W. "An Inaugural Dissertation on Calomel." PhD diss., University of Transylvania, 18__.

Sinks, Julia Lee. *Early days in Texas: from articles printed in the Dallas News and the Galveston News in February 1896*. Austin History Center. Austin, Texas.

Travis County Deed Records (microfilm).

Newspapers

Austin City Gazette

Daily Bulletin (Austin)

Daily Democratic Statesman (Ausin)
Daily Texian (Austin)
Democratic Statesman (Austin)
Morning Starr (Houston)
New Yorker
Texas Sentinel (Austin)
Telegraph and Texas Register (Houston)

Books

- Andrew, Thomas. *A Cyclopedia of Domestic Medicine And Surgery: Being an Alphabetical Account Of The Various Diseases Incident to the Human Frame: With Directions For Their Treatment, and for Performing the More Simple Operations of Sugery. Also, Instructions for Administering the Various Substances Used in Medicine; for the Regulation of Diet and Regimen; and the Management of the Diseases of Women and Children*. Glasgow: Blackie and Son, 1842. books.google.com/books?id=SG-AfOUde4AC&printsec=frontcover&dq=A+Cyclopedia+Of+Domestic+Medicine+And+Surgery&hl=en&ei=1U6fTsThMpL1sQKz kf32CQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CC4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false. (Accessed September 24, 2011).
- Barker, Nancy Nichols, ed. *The French Legation in Texas*. Vol. 1. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1971-1973.
- Bollaert, William. *William Bollaert's Texas*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1956.
- Embree, D. *The Western Boatman: Devoted to Navigation and a Registry of Pilots and Engineers*. St. Louis: Union Job Office, 1848.
- Fisk, Wilbur. *Travels in Europe, in England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands*. New York: Harper & Bros, 1839. <<http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/9192357.html>>.
- Holley, Mary Austin, and Mattie Alice (Austin) Hatcher. *Letters of an Early American Traveller, Mary Austin Holley; Her Life and Her Works, 1784-1846*. Dallas: Southwest Press, 1933.
- Houston, Sam, Amelia W. Williams, and Eugene C. Barker. *The Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863*. Austin, Tex: The University of Texas press, 1938.
- Houston, Sam, and Madge Thornall Roberts. *The Personal Correspondence of Sam Houston*. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 1999.
- Lamar, Mirabeau Buonaparte, and Philip Graham. *The Life and Poems of Mirabeau B. Lamar*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina press, 1938.

- Lamar, Mirabeau Buonaparte, Charles Adams Gulick, Katherine Elliott, Winnie Allen, and Harriet Smither. *The Papers of Mirabeau Buonaparte Lamar*. Austin, Tex: A.C. Baldwin, printers, 1921.
- Latham, Francis S. *Travels in the Republic of Texas*. Austin: Encino, 1971.
- Lockhart, John Washington. *Sixty Years on the Brazos: The Life and Letters of Dr. John Washington Lockhart, 1824-1900*. Austin: Texian Press, 1967.
- McKinstry, William C. *The Colorado Navigator, Containing a Full Description of the Bed and Banks of the Colorado River, from the city of Austin to its Mouth at Matagorda*. Austin: Office of the Colorado Gazette, 1840.
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/16612687/The-Colorado-Navigator-Containing-a-Full-Description-of-the-Bed-and-Banks-of-the-Colorado-River-from-the-City-of-Austin-to-its-Mouth> (accessed September 3, 2011).
- The North American Review*. Boston: O. Everett, 1821.
- Purdy, John. *The Columbian Navigator New Sailing Directions For the Coasts and Harbours of North-America; Commencing with Sable Island and Halifax in Nova Scotia; Thence, Including the Bay of Fundy to Cape Cod, with the Navigation of the United States: Containing in Part I*. London: Printed for James Whittle and Richard Holmes Laurie, 1839.
http://books.google.com/books?id=w8oBAAAAYAAJ&pg=PR39&dq=colorado+navigator&hl=en&ei=nNSeTu3aB8mosALVvZjVDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=7&ved=0CFIQ6AEwBg#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed September 1, 2011).
- Ridgeway, James. *The Botanical Register: Ornamental Flower Garden and Shrubbery Consisting of Coloured Figures of Plants and Shrubs Cultivated in British Gardens*. Vol. 14. London: J. Moyes, 1828.
http://books.google.com/books?id=aUU-AAAACAAJ&pg=PA1471&dq=The+Botanical+Register:+Ornamental+Flower+Garden+and+Shrubbery+Consisting+of+Coloured+Figures+of+Plants+and+Shrubs+Cultivated+in+British+Gardens&hl=en&ei=C0WfTo6RL8fosQKFoOXuCQ&sa=X&oi=book_result (accessed September 19, 2011).
- Smith, John Calvin. *The Illustrated Hand-Book a New Guide for Travelers Through the United States of America*. New York: Sherman & Smith, 1846.
<http://galenet.galegroup.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY103124206&srcthp=a&ste=14> (accessed September 19, 2011).
- Sterne, Adolphus, and Archie P. McDonald. *Hurrah for Texas!: The Diary of Adolphus Sterne, 1838-1851*. Waco, Tex: Texian Press, 1969.
- Stevens, Robert White. *On the Stowage of Ships and Their Cargoes*. Plymouth: Stevens, 1858. <http://www.gale.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/ModernLaw/> (accessed September 19, 2011).
- Swartwout, Samuel, James Morgan, Feris A. Bass, and B. R. Brunson. *Fragile Empires: The Texas Correspondence of Samuel Swartwout and James Morgan, 1836-1856*. Austin: Shoal Creek Publishers, 1978.

- The Western Boatman*. Cincinnati, OH: Pickering, 1848.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=h9j&jid=6JEL&site=ehost-live> (accessed September 19, 2011).
- White, Gifford E. *The 1840 Census of the Republic of Texas*. Austin, Tex: Pemberton Press, 1966.
- Woodman, Jr., David. *Guide to Texas Emigrants*. Waco: Texian Press, 1974. Print.

Secondary Sources

- Adams, Katherine J., and George B. Ward. "Images of the Past: Imprints from the Republic of Texas." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 1 (1986): 57-78.
- Barkley, Mary Starr. *History of Travis County and Austin, 1839-1899*. Waco, Tex.: Texian Press, 1963.
- Bayard, Ralph Francis. *Lone-Starr Vanguard: The Catholic Re-Occupation of Texas (1838-1848) with Four Illustrations and End-Paper Map*. Saint Louis, Mo: The Vincentian Press, 1945.
- Biographical Review. Containing Life Sketches of Leading Citizens of New London County, Connecticut*. Vol. 26. Boston: Biographical Review Pub. Co., 1898.
<http://persi.heritagequestonline.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/hqoweb/library/do/books/results/shortcitation?urn=urn:proquest:US;glhbooks;Genealogy-glh16511577;-1;-1;&letter=B> (accessed October 19, 2011).
- Brown, Elizabeth Gaspar. "Frontier Justice: Wayne County 1796-1836." *The American Journal of Legal History*, April 1972.
- Buenger, Walter L., and Robert A. Calvert. "Introduction: The Shelf Life of Truth in Texas." In *Texas Through Time: Evolving Interpretations*, ix-xxxv. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1991.
- Burkhart, J. A. "Texas, Texans, and Texanism." *The Antioch Review*, 9: 3 (Autumn, 1949) 316-331.
- Carroll, H. Bailey "Texas Collection." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. 55: 4 (Apr., 1952) 490-515.
- Carson, Barbara G., and Kym S. Rice. *Ambitious Appetites: Dining, Behavior, and Patterns of Consumption in Federal Washington*. Washington, D.C: American Institute of Architects Press, 1990.
- Clark, Sara. *The Capitols of Texas: A Visual History*. Austin: Encino Press, 1975.

- Coleman, James M. *Aesculapius on the Colorado; The Story of Medical Practice in Travis County to 1899*. Austin: Published by the Encino Press for the Friends of the Austin Public Library, 1971.
- Corbin, Annalies. *The Material Culture of Steamboat Passengers: Archaeological Evidence from the Missouri River*. New York: Springer, 2000.
- Couch, Dale L. *Echoes from the Continent: Franco-Germanic Chairs in Georgia*. Madison, GA: The Madison-Morgan Cultural Center, 2010.
- Crane, Robert Edward Lee. "The History of the Revenue Service and the Commerce of the Republic of Texas." PhD diss., University of Texas, 1950.
- Cullen, Jim. *Popular Culture in American History*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2001.
- Daniel, Jean Houston, Price Daniel, and Dorothy Blodgett. *The Texas Governor's Mansion: A History of the House and Its Occupants*. Austin: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, 1984.
- Fleming, John, and Hugh Honour. *Dictionary of the Decorative Arts*. New York: Harper & Row, 1977.
- Flores, Richard R. *Remembering the Alamo: Memory, Modernity, and the Master Symbol*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.
- Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- The French Legation Main House Volume I*. Historic Structure Report. Volz and Associates Incorporated. October 20, 1997. French Legation Museum Archive. Austin, Texas.
- Gambrell, Herbert Pickens. *Anson Jones: The Last President of Texas*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1948. <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/706922.html> (accessed September 1, 2011).
- Garwood, Ellen. "Early Texas Inns: A Study in Social Relationships." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (October 1956): 219-44.
- Glassie, Henry. "Studying Material Culture Today," in Gerald L. Pocius, ed., *Living in a Material World: Canadian and American Approaches to Material Culture*. Social and Economic Papers, 19. St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1991, pp. 253-266.
- Greenberg, Kenneth S. *Honor & Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Haddad, George M. "Fathallah al-Sayegh and His Account of a Napoleonic Mission among the Arab Nomads: History or Fiction?" *Studia Islamica*, 24 (1966): 107-123.
- Hafertepe, Kenneth. *A History of the French Legation in Texas: Alphonse Dubois de Saligny and His House*. Austin, TX: Texas State Historical Association, 1989.

- Hafertepe, Kenneth. *Abner Cook: Master Builder on the Texas Frontier*. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1992.
- Haley, James L. *Sam Houston*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002.
- “Handbook of Texas Online.” Texas State Historical Association.
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook> (accessed October 19, 2011).
- Harrison, Stephen G. “Furniture Trade in New Orleans 1840-1880: The Largest Assortment Constantly On Hand.” Master's thesis, University of Delaware, 2003.
- Hart, Katherine. *Austin and Travis County: A Pictorial History, 1839-1939*. Austin: Encino Press, 1975.
- Hawley, David. *The Treasures of the Steamboat Arabia*. Kansas City, Missouri: Arabia Steamboat Museum, 1995.
- Herman, Bernard L. “The Atlantic Port City” (lecture, Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, NC, July 8, 2011).
- Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of Austin, 1885 Commerce, Trade and Manufactures ; Manufacturing Advantages, Business and Transportation Facilities: Together with Sketches of the Representative Business Houses and Manufacturing Establishments in the City*. Austin: The authors, 1885.
 <<http://www.archive.org/details/historicaldescri00austrich>>.
- Hogan, William Ransom. “Amusements in the Republic of Texas.” *The Journal of Southern History*. 3:4 (Nov., 1937) 397-421.
- Horn, James P.P. “The Bare Necessities: Standards of Living in England and the Chesapeake, 1650-1700.” *Historical Archaeology* 22: 2 (1998): 74-91.
- Heusinger, Edward W. “The Monetary History of the Republic of Texas.” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 57:1 (Jul., 1953) 82-90.
- Humphrey, David C. *Peg Leg: The Improbable Life of a Texas Hero, Thomas William Ward, 1807-1872*. Denton: Texas State Historical Association, 2009.
- Hurst, Ronald L., and Jonathan Prown. *Southern Furniture, 1680-1830: the Colonial Williamsburg Collection*. Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1997.
- Jones, Joseph. *Life On Waller Creek: a Palaver About History as Pure and Applied Education*. Austin: AAR/Tantalus, 1982.
- Jordan-Bychkov, Terry G. *Texas Log Buildings, a Folk Architecture*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978.
- Kallendorf, Craig W., ed. *A Companion to the Classical Tradition (Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World)*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Kasson, John F. *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1991.
- Kaye, Myrna. *There's a Bed in the Piano: The Inside Story of the American Home*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1998.

- Kennedy, William. *Texas The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas*. London: R. Hastings, 1841.
<<http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY104481803&srchtp=a&ste=14>> (accessed September 1, 2011).
- Krill, Rosemary Troy, Pauline K. Eversmann, and Rosemary Troy Krill. *Early American Decorative Arts, 1620-1860: A Handbook for Interpreters*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2001.
- Lack, Paul D. "Slavery and Vigilantism in Austin, Texas, 1840-1860." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. 85:1 (July 1981): pp. 1-20.
- Langbein, John H. "Chancellor Kent and the History of Legal Literature." *Columbia Law Review*. 93:3 (Apr., 1993), 547-594.
- Lebsock, Suzanne. *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1985.
- Legation de France a La Republique de Texas Austin, Texas under the custody of the DRT*. Museums: French Legation. Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.
- Linebaugh, Donald. "All the Annoyances and Inconveniences of the Country: Environmental Factors in the Development of Outbuildings in the Colonial Chesapeake." *Winterthur Portfolio* 29:1, (1994): 1-18.
- Lockhart, John Washington. *Sixty Years On the Brazos;: The Life and Letters of Dr. John Washington Lockhart, 1824-1900*, Austin: Texian Press, 1967.
- Main, Gloria L. "Probate Records as a Source for Early American History." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (January 1975): 88-99.
- Marks, Paula Mitchell. *Hands to the Spindle Texas Women and Home Textile Production, 1822-1880*. College Station, Tex: Texas A & M University Press, 1996.
- McInnis, Maurie D. *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005.
- Myers, Edgar de N. Mayhew & Minor, and Jr. *A Documentary History of American Interiors: from the Colonial Era to 1915*. New York: Scribner, 1980.
- Newton, Lewis W., and Herbert P. Gambrell. *A Social and Political History of Texas*. Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2009.
- Olds, Doris L. "The French Legation Museum Kitchen." Archeological Field Report, Prepared for Mr. and Mrs. John W. Beretta. March 1967. Texas Archeological Research Laboratory. Austin, Texas.
- Owsley, Frank Lawrence. *Plain Folk of the Old South (Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History)*. Updated ed. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008.
- Petsche, Jerome E. *The Steamboat Bertrand: History, Excavation, and Architecture*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 1974.
- Porter, Kenneth W. "Negroes and Indians on the Texas Frontier, 1831-1876." *The Journal of Negro History* 41:3 (July 1956): 185-214.

- Rahe, Lee W. "Residential Furnishings of Deceased Greene County, Alabama Slave Owners: 1845-60." PhD diss., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1992.
- Ramsay, Jack C. Jr. *Thunder Beyond the Brazos*. Waco: Eakin Press, 1985.
- Ray, Worth S. *Austin Colony Pioneers: Including History of Bastrop, Fayette, Grimes, Montgomery, and Washington Counties, Texas*. Baltimore: Clearfield, 2009.
- Reid, Mary. "Fashions of the Republic." *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. 45:3 (Jan., 1942): 244-254.
- St. George, Robert Blair. *Material life in America, 1600-1860*, 261-290. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988.
- Samford, Patricia. "The Archaeology of African-American Slavery and Material Culture." *The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series*, 53:1 (January 1995): 87-114.
- Schlereth, Thomas J. *Material Culture Studies in America*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982.
- Shackel, Paul A. *Personal Discipline and Material Culture: An Archaeology of Annapolis, Maryland, 1695-1870*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993.
- Steinfeldt, Cecilia, and Donald Stover. *Early Texas Furniture and Decorative Arts*. San Antonio: Published for the San Antonio Museum Association by Trinity University Press, 1973.
- Schmitz, Joseph William. *Thus They Lived; Social Life in the Republic of Texas*. San Antonio, Tex: Naylor Co, 1935.
- Slyck, Abigail van. "The Lady and the Library Loafer: Gender and Public Space in Victorian America." *Winterthur Portfolio* 31:4 (Winter 1996): 221-242.
- Staples, Kathleen. "Cloth and Clothing in the Atlantic Port City" (lecture, Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, NC, July 11, 2011).
- Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.
- Switzer, Ronald R. *The Bertrand Bottles: A Study of 19th-Century Glass and Ceramic Containers, (Publications in Archeology)*. Washington: National Park Service, 1974.
- Taylor, Lonn, and David B. Warren. *Texas Furniture: The Cabinetmakers and Their Work, 1840-1880*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975.
- Terrell, Alex W. "The city of Austin from 1839 to 1865." *The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association* 14:2 (1910): 113-128.
- Ulrich, Laurel. *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*. New York: Knopf, 2001.

- Wilbarger, J. W. *Indian Depredations in Texas Original Narratives of Texas History and Adventure*. Austin, Tex: Eakin Press, 1985.
<<http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=27683>>
(accessed September 10, 2011).
- Winfrey, Dorman H. "Mirabeau B. Lamar and Texas Nationalism," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 59 (October 1955) 184-205.
- Wood, Peter H. *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion (Norton Library)*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996.
- Wood, Peter H. "The Know Their Business Well," in, *Grass Roots: African Origins of an American Art* by Dale Rosengarten, Theodore Rosengarten and Enid Schildkrout, (New York: Museum for African Art, 2008),78-93.
- Brown, Bertram. *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Zboray, Ronald J. "Reading Patterns in Antebellum America: Evidence in the Charge Records of the New York Society Library." *Libraries and Culture* 26, no. 2 (1991): 301-3.

VITA

Jennifer Harris was awarded a Bachelors of Fine Arts from Texas State University-San Marcos in 2007, following her study of studio art with a concentration in painting. In September 2009, her interest in architectural history, decorative arts and material culture led her to Texas State University-San Marcos where she enrolled in the Public History program. She has attended the Summer Institute at the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston-Salem, North Carolina twice, studying both the Chesapeake and the Low Country regions. She also attended the Architectural Restoration Field School at Thomas Jefferson' Poplar Forest near Lynchburg, Virginia. In 2010 she completed an internship with the Friends of the Texas Governor's mansion and is currently employed at the French Legation Museum.

Permanent Address: 4702 Philco Drive

Austin, Texas 78745

This thesis was typed by Jennifer Allison Harris.