

**MONUMENT BLUFF
AT LA GRANGE**

**High Bluff On Colorado River,
Sacred With Dust of Texas
Heroes, One of Beauty
Spots of State**

(By Mrs. Geo. Willrich, in
Eagle Lake Headlight.)

The court and other records of Fayette county show evidence of efforts extending over a period of 80 years to properly care for the remains and commemorate the deeds of the men of Dawson's command slain at Salado, Texas, and the men of Mier who drew the black beans and were executed at Salado, Mexico, resting on Monument Bluff south of the town of La Grange in the original tomb in which they were placed in 1848.

Many of these efforts have to do with our State Legislature and some have borne fruit. There is a monument on the Fayette County Court House grounds erected in 1884 dedicated to the memory of those heroes. Each year on March 6th, Texas Heroes Day, for more than 25 years flags placed here, are reminders of the great privilege accorded Fayette county in having the dust of these heroes entombed in her soil.

The 27th Legislature appropriated \$1000.00 for the purpose of erecting a new vault over the bones of these heroes, but as the ground on which the vault stands was discovered to be private property, nothing could be done, and the money was never used.

The Dawson-Eastland Chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, organized in 1904, named for Nicholas M. Dawson and William M. Eastland, had for its special purpose the hallowing of the spot of ground.

Two bills were introduced into the 29th Legislature, one, House Bill No. 333, regarding the acquisition of this historic site for the State of Texas, and the other asking for an appropriation of funds for a monument. Under the former a commission was named by Governor Lanham for the purchase of purchasing the site, but in the case no agreement could be reached, condemnation proceedings were provided for. The latter became necessary and County Judge George Willrich appointed H. Amberg of Rutersville, J. H. Killough and Lad Vanek of La Grange, to secure the site and a roadway to same, as provided for by the Act. In this manner 36-100 of an acre of ground upon which the tomb was situated and a roadway was acquired for the State of Texas, and the Dawson-Eastland Chapter, D. R. T. placed the amount of \$351.17 in the hands of the county clerk of Fayette county for the purpose of reimbursing the owners of the property.

While these matters were pending Mrs. Mary E. Manton, now residing at Waco, Texas, then president of the local Chapter D. R. T. and widow of Edward Manton, who was captured at Salado, Texas, and other citizens of Fayette county, appeared before the committee on State affairs, 29th Legislature. The late Judge A. W. Terrell was present and spoke with eloquence and fervor regarding the bill under consideration, and stated that he would wish it amended so that the remains of Captain Ewen Cameron, executed on the

march to Mexico City, be brought to La Grange and placed along side those of his comrades in arms. Judge Terrell said that he heard the story from one who had it from the lips of Captain Cameron that he could easily have released himself by withdrawing his hands through the ropes with which he was bound, but as he said, it would only have served to increase the tortures inflicted upon his comrades. Judge Terrell substantiated the story by referring to the delicate build of the man, small hands and feet, and his Scotch determination.

November 29th, 1928, at Brownsville, Cameron county, Texas, a tablet was unveiled at the county court house, bearing the following inscription:

"Lest we forget, this tribute to Capt. Erwen Cameron is placed here. Born in Highlands of Scotland in 1811, he was killed in Mexico, April 25th, 1843. A soldier of the Republic of Texas. He died with his face to the foe."

Monument Bluff, long made sacred with the dust of heroes, is one of the beauty spots of Texas, one reason, no doubt, for its being selected for such a noble purpose. At any time of the day, under whatever weather conditions, no matter how often one has stood overlooking the valley of the Colorado spread out for miles around, the thought comes that it never looked so beautiful before. Dr. Stockton Axson of Rice Institute after a visit to this spot, remarked "that while most towns put up a bluff of some sort, the bluff at La Grange aroused his warmest enthusiasm."

The sculptor, Louis Amatels, who executed the Rosenberg memorial to Texas Heroes at Galveston, was carried away with the natural beauty of the scene and had visions of what could and should be done to enhance its historic significance.

Dr. Stark Young, prominent writer, upon viewing the old vault, shortly after a return from Greece, said: "It reminds me of a Grecian fame, nothing should be done to change the old tomb, but its simple impressiveness should be preserved."

Mrs. Francika Vogt of La Grange, at the age of 93 years, retained a vivid mental picture of the ceremonies attending the placing of the remains in the vault. For the two caskets, one for Dawson men and the other for the men who drew the black beans, Mrs. Julia Lee Sinks, mother of Judge Sinks, representative from Lee county, provided a suitable covering of black velvet with Texas flags.