

The Invincible



THE TEXAS NAVY

Part 1: The Critical Role of the Sea

Naval History Division
Navy Department
Washington, D.C. 1968

In the 1830's, events of fundamental importance to the United States began to take place in the vast, sparsely populated southwest area that in those years became an independent nation the Lone Star Republic. The United States, after purchasing the Louisiana Territory, grew steadily toward a true insularity, spreading from sea to sea.

Naval power had decided her destiny so far. Within generations, the fleets of the United States would decide that of the world. Texas was destined to play a large part in that drama, but first she would write her own stirring story—in which the sea was similarly decisive.

Small nations, as well as large, may find their existence dependent upon a clear understanding and timely application of seapower. The Republic of Texas owed its precarious life in the decade between

1835 and 1845 to a combination of its own temporary strength at sea and the fortunate action of larger naval powers.

The accompanying chart, part of which is based upon surveys made by the Texas Navy, illustrates the essentially maritime character of affairs both during and after the Texas revolt against Mexico in 1835. The Western Gulf of Mexico is shaped like a giant "C" with New Orleans at one end and the Yucatan Peninsula at the other. In between, from the Tropic of Cancer to the present site of Corpus Christi, sprawled a virtually impenetrable desert, relieved only along the coast by an occasional seaport, such as Matamoros at the mouth of the Rio Grande.

Men could march across the arid region, but neither Texas nor Mexico was ever able to solve the logistic problems inherent in such an operation. In the Mexican War, General Zachary Taylor would encounter the same difficulty of supplying his troops and he, too, would be unable to master these arid reaches. It proved impractical for either Texas or Mexico to sustain an assault on the other

Table of Contents

TNA Accomplishments & Updates
Nimitz Squadron Commissioning Ceremony at Liberty Rotary Club
Houston Squadron Meeting
Affiliated Squadrons
Update Your Address
Admiral Butler Honored
Texas Navy Artifacts Projects
New Ships Store Items
Quarterly General Open Meeting
FYI
The Forsaken Patriot
1950 Commission Certificate
In Memory Of



by land.

The Texans, who were concentrated in the area between the United States border and the Colorado River along the navigable streams fairly near the coast, turned naturally enough to the sea. New Orleans and Mobile, at the tip of the "C", represented a ready source of men, munitions, and money; and communications with these ports were almost exclusively carried on by sea.

In 1835 about 40 merchant ships, almost all flying the American flag (those

emigrating to Texas apparently still felt entitled to the United States citizenship they renounced when they went to the Mexican Territory), plied between Texas and U.S. ports. For the most part they were small vessels between 80 and 90 tons, but they held the only real hope for supply and reinforcement in the prolonged conflict with Mexico. The large steamship Columbia, for example, carried more than 700 volunteers into Texas on two voyages, a force more than three times the size of that lost at the Alamo and almost as large as the victorious Texas Army at the battle of San Jacinto.

Further south along the coastal "C" were the principal seaports for Mexico's populous highlands — Tampico, Tuxpan, and Vera Cruz, the gateway to Mexico City. The bottom of the "C" was a quagmire of swamps and marshes which prevented effective overland communications with the Province of Yucatan.

Yucatan was the New England of Mexico, the shipbuilding and sailor-producing section of the country. It was here that canoas, 50- to 60-ton vessels which formed the coastal trading and fishing fleet, were built, manned, and operated. The province was so isolated from the rest of the country that it was frequently neglected. Accordingly, it was often in or near a state of rebellion against the national government.

Inside the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula were the Alacranes and Areas Islands, and outside it the larger islands of Mujeres and Cozumel. All were utilized at some time by the Texas Navy for operations against Mexican vessels.

Once Texas proclaimed its independence, the strategies of the two adversaries at once became clear. Repeatedly, the Texans not only had to prevent a seaborne or sea-supported invasion from the south, but also had to protect their sealanes to New Orleans and Mobile in the east. In performing these twin tasks, they had to inflict unacceptable losses on

Mexico so that the latter would recognize her independence.

On the other hand, it was incumbent upon Mexico to project a sizable army into Texas and sustain it there, while at the same time she would have to prevent a mutual defense agreement between Texas and the turbulent, ever rebellious Yucatan. To achieve its aim, Mexico would have to control the sea.

Political and economic strife within Mexico greatly aided the Texas cause, for Mexico was still rent by the chaotic aftermath of its revolution against Spain a decade before. But it was the Mexicans' inability to comprehend and employ seapower that helped the Texans most. The new Republic's foe failed to blockade the Texas coast effectively. And Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna's great overland invasion was blunted and turned back because of inadequate logistic support which, in its own turn, was caused by the timely action of a few warships of the Texas Rangers. Mexico's lack of understanding and appreciation of the meaning and techniques of seapower gave the Texans advantages they sorely needed.

Although Great Britain, France, and at times Spain, all maintained naval forces in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, the only principal seapower in the area was the United States. The American Navy was small in comparison with the fleets

of the older nations and in proportion to its large merchant marine, but it did have cruising stations off Brazil, West Africa, in the East Indies, and in the Mediterranean. In addition, scattered units were employed in exploration, such as the Wilkes scientific expedition to the Pacific and Lynch's survey of the River Jordan and Dead Sea area.

The Home Squadron, located on the east coast, composed the main strength of the U.S. Navy, with a small flotilla kept in the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf Force based at Pensacola, consisted primarily of small ships suitable for operations in shallow waters. Many of them were veterans of the second Seminole War in Florida which was at last coming to an end as the Texas question increased in complexity and seriousness. The American people generally sympathized with their former countrymen in Texas, although there was sharp division over the question of admitting Texas into the Union. American merchants and vessels conducted a large and lucrative trade in the Gulf, and the bulk of material entering both Texas and Mexico came in these and British merchantmen. Therefore, the questions of contraband and blockade were not simply of academic interest to be discussed in foreign offices during the conflict; they were real and immediate problems involving large sums of money and vast quantities of material.

From the early days of the nation, and

particularly during the Napoleonic Wars, freedom of the seas had been an extremely sensitive point with Americans. The country's merchantmen demanded the freedom to sail without hindrance wherever they could load or discharge cargo. And they expected their Navy to protect them. Other countries had the same concern for their commerce, but none was more solicitous of its rights than the United States, and none could boast of such a spectacular rise in international trade. This zealous care for freedom on the high seas often brought friction — and sometimes crises — but it was an indispensable contributor to the greatness which the nation attained. The naval experiences of the Republic of Texas are a significant part of the transition of the United States from a new and somewhat backward country into a world power of the sea.

(Source: BG John C. L. Scribner; <http://www.texasmilitaryforcesmuseum.org/articles/texasnavy/texasnavy.htm>) To be continued in the next newsletter. Part 11: The Role of the Texas Navy, 1835-1838

Accomplishments & Updates by Admiral Dick Hatch, Director

For the past year and one half, the Texas Navy Association has successfully undertaken several projects in support of our mission statement. It is wonderful how much has been accomplished.

CAMP MABRY was the first museum project the TNA funded and opened. Located in the Texas Military Forces Museum depicting the gun deck of a Texas Navy ship of war, it clearly makes you feel a part of those days when ships were wood and men were steel. The cannon is ready to be loaded and fired. This exhibit is also equipped with a fully interactive touch screen display showing the significant events in our war for independence from Mexico. Everyone needs to see this professional depiction of The Texas Navy's role in our struggle for freedom.



TEXAS SEAPORT MUSEUM located in Galveston on the waterfront is the home of Texas' Tall Ship, Elissa. In partnership with the Galveston Historical Society, The Texas Navy Association funded the construction of a large display on the entire second floor of the museum. The centerpiece of the display is the Brutus Cannon. This is a large swivel cannon mounted on the centerline of the Texas Navy Ship, Brutus. Other artifacts present a colorful depiction of life at sea for the officers and men of The Texas Navy. Also on display is a replica period uniform. Thousands of visitors enjoy the museum every year and this display makes all aware of the importance of the actions of The Texas Navy. Items from the Texas Navy Ship's Store are available for purchase at both of the museums.



USS LEXINGTON CV16 Museum by the bay in Corpus Christi is our newest partner. Efforts are underway to establish a Texas Navy Exhibit aboard the Lex in the Forecastle area. This ship is one of the most visited museums in the State and is a perfect venue to tell the story of The Texas Navy.



THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE has set three goals for this year:



Committee Chair,
Adm Debbie Philips

1. Increase connections and communications with the Texas State Historical Association in an effort to increase awareness of the Texas Navy and our website.
2. Develop units of study and lesson plans that support teachers when teaching about the contributions of the Texas Navy.
3. Establish a Speakers' Bureau that can be accessed by 7th grade social studies teachers across the state.

In order to achieve our third goal, the Education Committee is seeking TNA members who are interested in sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm for the Texas Navy with 7th grade students and teachers. If you are interested and willing, please access this link and supply your contact information:

<http://goo.gl/forms/habczaF5Z5>

You can also call her at 832-656-3990 if you have any questions, or if you are interested in serving on the Education Committee. We are a very small group and would appreciate your support.

TEXAS NAVY COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE has just been formed. The mission of this active committee is to provide recognition to the grave sites of Texas Navy Veterans and mark locations significant to the history of The Texas Navy. Beautiful Medallions have been designed for this purpose and will be available for purchase at The Ship's Store.



These fabulous projects could only be made possible through the dedication, hard work and Love of The Texas Navy Association members. Many hundreds of hours of planning, managing and developing these projects and many thousands of dollars of Texas Navy Association funds made it possible to take these strides forward toward the fulfillment of our mission. This can only be continued with your help. If you are a member of The Texas Navy Association, Thank You. If you are not a member, please consider becoming a member and taking part in this endeavor to enlighten the public on the great accomplishments of The Texas Navy and preserve forever the proper place in history for the gallant officers and men who won and preserved our freedom.

"NOW HEAR THIS"

Coming this fall, The Texas Navy Association will conduct open elections to fill six positions on its Board Of Directors. These Board Members will be elected from a ballot of individuals that have decided to run for one of these seats. The requirements are simple. You must be a member in good standing with the TNA, be a commissioned Admiral in The Texas Navy and have a desire to serve this organization. It is enormously fulfilling to serve on the Board of Directors of the TNA and play a role in the development of this organization and help in the accomplishment of its mission. Anyone wishing to run for a seat on the Board will complete the following form declaring that you are a candidate for the Board of Directors. Submit the form as directed and your name will be added to the ballot of candidates. Those with the desire to make a difference in this organization and help it continue to grow and be a part of the leadership as we move ahead are encouraged to run. The skill set that made you a success will contribute to the success of The Texas Navy Association. Please thoughtfully consider this opportunity.

"That is All"

"



Texas Navy Association

Board of Director Candidate Declaration

#1. Personal Information		Photo
Full Name		
Preferred Name		
Spouse's Name		
Physical Home Address		
City, State and Zip Code		
Work Phone	Home Phone	
Cell Phone		Year Commissioned
Email Address		Year Joined TNA

#2. Please attach a CURRENT resume with your declaration.

#3: Give a brief summary of your vision for the Board of Directors and how you will carry out the TNA mission statement. You may attach an additional sheet of paper if you wish.

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#4. Please sign and date your declaration and send to the address below.

Candidate Signature

Date

Submit to: Texas Navy Association
4642 Waring
Houston, Texas 77027
Email to: admjfisher@texasnavy.com



(L) Admiral Carolyn Orlebeke presents certificate to newly commissioned Admiral Kay Allison Crews

Nimitz Squadron Commissions New Admiral

The commissioning of one of the newest admirals in the Nimitz Squadron taken at her commissioning on May 16, 2015. Her name is Miss Kay Allison Crews. Kay is the Immediate Past President of the Texas State Association of Parliamentarians, and she holds the honor of being named the 2011 Parliamentarian of the Year by the Texas State Association of Parliamentarians. Welcome aboard Admiral Crews!

Texas Navy Ceremony Held at Liberty Rotary Club

Liberty Rotary Club's Past President Admiral Jim Sterling, Texas Navy, gave a talk about the Texas Navy on Tuesday, 26 May. The scheduled speaker was unable to get to the meeting, due to the record flooding in the Houston area. During the meeting, Admiral Sterling Commissioned three new Admirals in the Texas Navy, shown left to right: County Judge Admiral Jay Knight, Jim's Wife, Admiral Sandra Sterling, and Petroleum Land Man Admiral Bruce Blake, with Admiral Sterling on the far right. Rotary Pianist Valencia Arceneaux played "Come to the Bower," the song which was played by General Sam Houston's Band as they attacked General Santa Anna at the Battle of San Jacinto. Welcome aboard Admirals!



Sam Houston Squadron Meeting



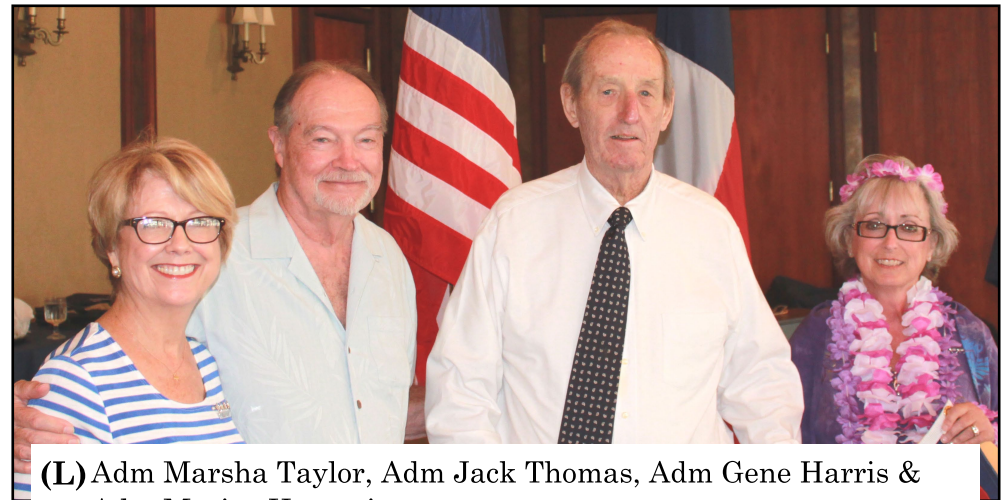
(L) SHS Commander, Adm Marsha Taylor, Guest speaker, Adm Will Fisher, Adm Judy Fisher and former SHS Commander Donnie Genitempo

On Saturday, June 13th, the Sam Houston Squadron (SHS) had a Luau Luncheon at Lakewood Yacht Club. Approximately 40 people dressed in their best tropical attire enjoyed a delicious Hawaiian lunch which included coconut shrimp, a tropical fruit salad with toasted coconut, rum infused pineapple upside down cake and more.

After lunch, participants enjoyed a presentation by Admiral Will Fisher. The title of Admiral Fisher's presentation was the "Republic of Texas Navy". Admiral Fisher also spoke briefly about the search for the Texas Navy ship Invincible that went down off the entrance to the Galveston harbor on 1837.



(L) Adm Marisa Hegyesi, Adm Marsha Taylor, Adm Larry Rogers, Adm Jack Thomas, Jimmy Rogers & Family



(L) Adm Marsha Taylor, Adm Jack Thomas, Adm Gene Harris & Adm Marisa Hegyesi

The SHS was proud to commission the following new Admirals - Gene Harris, Larry Rogers and Greg Binion. The Squadron also welcomed individuals already commissioned as new members to the SHS: Admirals Jean Rauckman Phillips, Evey Leavens, Harvey Denman, Chris Shaw and Paul Merryman. We are honored to have all eight of these individuals as members. Each of them have selflessly devoted time and energy for others, honoring and enhancing the great State of Texas.

Admiral Marisa Hegyesi, Deputy Commander
Sam Houston Squadron

TNA Affiliated Squadrons

Chester W. Nimitz Squadron

If you live in the Dallas area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Mike Lambert at mikelambert2@aol.com or 817.368.9076

Sam Houston Squadron

If you are a Texas Navy Admiral and a member of Lakewood Yacht Club or a reciprocal club to Lakewood Yacht Club and are interested in joining the Sam Houston Squadron, please contact the Sam Houston Squadron Commander, Admiral Marsha Taylor, at marshataylor1@icloud.com

Commodore Edwin Ward Moore Squadron

If you live in the Austin area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Larry Schroeder at lschroeder@grandecom.net

The Mirabeau B. Lamar Squadron

If you are a Texas Navy Admiral and a member of the Houston Yacht Club and are interested in joining the Mirabeau B. Lamar Squadron, please contact Squadron Commander Admiral Tom Deen at tdeen55@comcast.net

The Tom Toby Squadron

If you live in Houston area and are interested in joining a Squadron you may contact Squadron Commander Admiral Curtis Osborne at curtosborne@windstream.com (281.242.4972) or Admiral Ron Brown at 713 621-5660.

Squadrons Forming

A new Squadron is in the beginning stages of forming. If you live in **Corpus Christi** and have an interest in joining please contact Admiral Peter Davidson at peterd@cctexas.com

A new Squadron is in the beginning stages of forming in **Galveston**. If you live on Galveston Island or near by and have an interest in joining a Squadron please contact our Membership Chairman/Marketing Director Admiral Dick Hatch at richardbhatch@gmail.com

If you are in the **San Antonio** area and are interested in joining a Squadron; there is one forming. Please contact our Membership Chair/Marketing Director, Admiral Dick Hatch at richardbhatch@gmail.com

The next Moore Squadron meeting will be on 20 Sept, Sunday, 2pm, at the Texas Land & Cattle Company at IH-35 & 290.

By: Admiral Larry Schroeder, Commander

Update Your Address!

Have you moved your residence or about to change your email address? We need current contact information so we can keep you informed about announcements and upcoming events.

Send us your contact information by clicking [Here](#).

Texas Navy Association Admiral Honored by University of Texas

Adm Butler was very proud they mentioned he was also an Admiral in the Texas Navy!

2015 Hall of Honor Awardee for the University of Texas at Austin, College of Natural Sciences



John D. Butler, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired) is the Vice President, Naval Strategic Systems for Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company in Washington, DC. He joined Lockheed Martin in September 2005, after having completed a 31-year career as a Submariner and Engineering Duty Officer.

A native of Texas City, Texas, he received his BS in Chemistry from the University of Texas at Austin in 1974 and his MS in Engineering Acoustics from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1986. He is also a graduate of the Management Program for Executives at the Katz Graduate School of Business, University of Pittsburgh and the Professional Summer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Butler was commissioned in the Navy via the Nuclear Power Officer Candidate Program in 1974.

He received his CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2010. His military awards include the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit (3 awards), Meritorious Service Medal (3 awards), in addition to other service and unit awards.

John is the Lockheed Martin Focus School Corporate Executive for the University of Texas at Austin and serves as a member of the College of Natural Sciences Advisory Council, Chancellor's Council, Commission of 125, Littlefield Society and President's Associates at the University of Texas at Austin. He also serves as a member of: the Board of Directors for the U.S. Navy Memorial, the Board of Directors for the Navy Historical Foundation, the Advisory Board of the National Defence Industrial Association - Undersea Warfare Division, and as an Admiral in the Texas Navy. Butler is also a life member of the Texas Exes Ex-Students Association.

Texas Navy Artifacts Project

All members of the Texas Navy Association are encouraged to help locate Texas Navy related artifacts statewide. If you have or know of any documents/artifacts you would want us to know about, please click [HERE](#) and submit the information to us. Thank you for your participation with this project.



To visit the store
click on the logo

SHIP'S STORE

Our Ships Store is expanding rapidly! We now have satellite Stores in the Texas Seaport Museum and the Texas Military Forces Museum. Fun new items are planned to expand the inventory with more interesting and fun choices. Below are two new items that are on order and will be available for purchase soon!



Four Star Lapel Pin

*Background colors: Navy Blue, Royal Blue
black, or gold*



Stainless Steel Flask

Quarterly General Open Meeting

August 8th

at

Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry
2200 W. 35th Street, Austin, Texas

1:30 PM

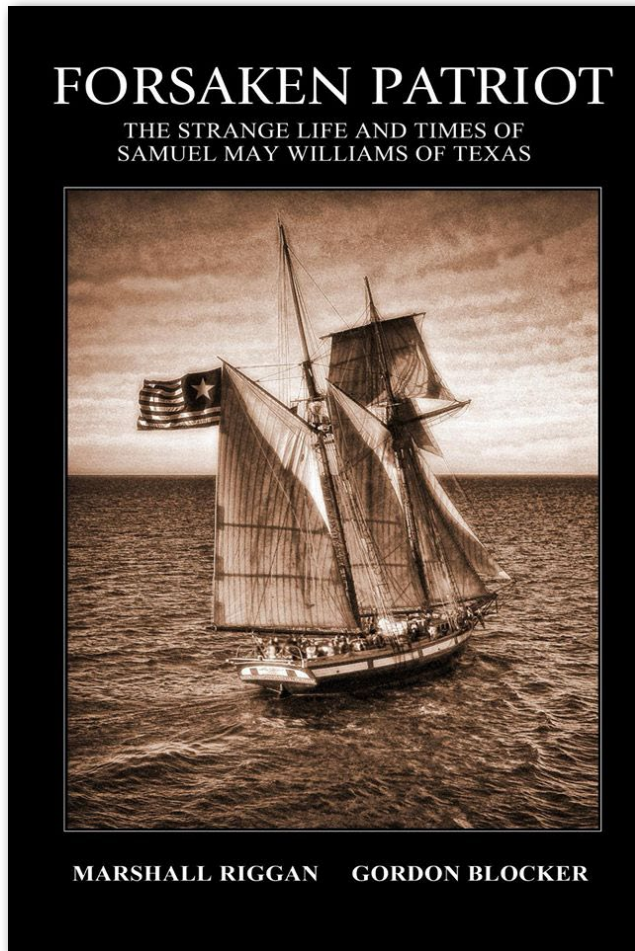
(Ask the Guard at the gate for directions if needed)

FYI

Submitted by: Admiral Chester Barnes

As a point of interest to members of the Texas Navy Association, a Colt Paterson revolver recently sold at auction for \$414,000. The revolver was used by the Texas Navy as the officer side arm. Also sold at auction were two Colts owned by Texas Ranger Jack Hayes for \$129,000. (<http://bulletin accurateshooter.com/2015/05/historic-colt-paterson-revolver-sells-for-414000/>)

Book Reads



Forsaken Patriot - Texas Navy Edition is the story of a remarkable life, a man who was viewed by many as a scoundrel and by others as a patriot. Father of the Texas Navy, he also built a mercantile empire, created the first bank in Texas, and spearheaded development of the port city of Galveston which, in his time, was the richest city per capita in the United States. Yet, while so many of his peers, like Sam Houston, Stephen Austin, even Jean Laffite, went on to be memorialized, Sam Williams went on to be forgotten. After all he accomplished for Texas, it is ironic that no street, school, park, county, building or monument in the city or in the state bears his name. Even the pirate Laffite has an elementary school, several streets and a city named after him. Unlike the other major players in Texas history, Sam Williams passed from our memory into the shadows from which he came.

Author: TNA Admiral Gordon Blocker's work with the Galveston Historical Foundation, creating a living museum in the Samuel May Williams Home in the 1980s, sparked his fascination with Williams, his life and his times. It was the beginning of a decades-long project of original research that became the heart of *Forsaken Patriot*.



Since Gordon began his career in 1970 at CBS (KHOU-TV) in Houston, he has combined his love of story-telling with a wide range of communication skills, including photography, editing, videography, and film-making. He is especially known for his cutting-edge techniques involving interactive high technology for Macromedia, American Airlines and Coca-Cola. Over the years, his films, interactive products and creative solutions have earned him recognition at numerous film festivals, both national and international.

Admiral Blocker has generously offered an opportunity to purchase the Texas Navy Edition of the *Forsaken Patriot* for a special discount when purchased from the TNA web site.

The discount code can be found by clicking on this link: [TNA Discount Code](#) When you check out it will be through a private site within amazon. Once your purchase is complete you will be able to return to the TNA Ships Store to continue shopping.

FORSAKEN PATRIOT

THE STRANGE LIFE AND TIMES OF
SAMUEL MAY WILLIAMS OF TEXAS



MARSHALL RIGGAN GORDON BLOCKER

ORDER BOOK BY MAIL

You are welcome to order copies of *Forsaken Patriot* by mail using either a personal check or a credit card. Checks should be made payable to Blocker Publishing.

Please provide the following details and mail this order form to **Blocker Publishing, 7434 Eccles Drive, Dallas, TX 75227.**

Books are \$24.50 + 3.95 shipping via UPS for **\$28.50** each. Member Discount is **only** available with online ordering.

PLEASE PRINT

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Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone contact _____

If using a credit card, please provide the following details:

Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover (circle)

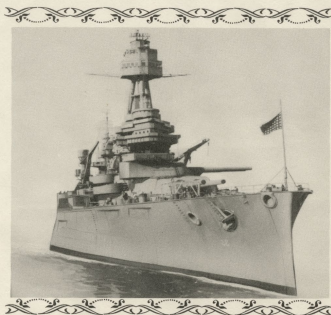
Credit Card Number _____

Card Expiration Date _____

Security Code (on the back of the card for all but AMEX) _____

Your order for the book(s) you purchase will be processed promptly and shipped by UPS to your address. Thank you for your interest in Samuel May Williams and we hope you enjoy reading *Forsaken Patriot*.

Blocker Publishing, 7434 Eccles Drive, Dallas, TX 75227



THE BATTLESHIP TEXAS
U. S. Navy, Retired
San Jacinto Battlegrounds



I, Allan Shivers
Governor, in the Name and by the Authority of
The State of Texas

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greetings

Know ye, That reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities; and in recognition of his signal contribution while serving as a commissioned officer in the Armed Forces of the United States, having graduated at the First Officer's Training Camp at Leon Springs, Texas, on August 15, 1917, I do hereby appoint

Ben M. Davis

Honorary Admiral

In the Navy of Texas

He is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duties of this high office by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging. And I do strictly charge and require all Officers, Seamen, and others under his command to be obedient to his orders as Honorary Admiral of the Navy of Texas.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name and caused the Seal of State to be affixed at the City of Austin, this the *9th* day of *September*, A. D., 1950

Allan Shivers
GOVERNOR OF TEXAS.

BY THE GOVERNOR:

John Ben Sheppard
SECRETARY OF STATE.

Many thanks to Mr. Ben Sheppard for sharing with our TNA Vice President- Adm Jerry Patterson, his Grandfather's 1950 Admiral in the Texas Navy certificate for our readers to view. This is to-date the oldest certificate known to the Texas Navy Association.

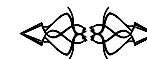


In Memory Of

Admiral Sir Bruce Marshall

Admiral George Aurich

Fair Winds and Following Seas



Many thanks to our Ships Store Sponsor



**Uncle Bob's
Storage**

If you would like to become a Ships Store Sponsor and have your Logo in the upcoming issues of the newsletter with a link to your website, please contact our Marketing Director, Admiral Richard "Dick" Hatch at richardbhatch@gmail.com

For More Information About The Texas Navy Association Visit Our [Website](http://www.texasnavy.org)