



THE TEXIANS AND THE TEXANS

**THE
SYRIAN
AND
LEBANESE
TEXANS**

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THE TEXIANS AND TEXANS

A pamphlet series dealing with the many kinds of people who have contributed to the history and heritage of Texas. Now in print: The Indian Texans, The German Texans, The Norwegian Texans, The Mexican Texans (in English), Los Mexicano Texanos (in Spanish), The Spanish Texans, The Polish Texans, The Czech Texans, The French Texans, The Italian Texans, The Greek Texans, The Jewish Texans, The Syrian and Lebanese Texans, The Belgian Texans, the Afro-American Texans, The Anglo-American Texans, The Swiss Texans and The Chinese Texans.

*The Syrian and Lebanese Texans
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San Antonio Biblical Play. Courtesy of the Semaan Family*

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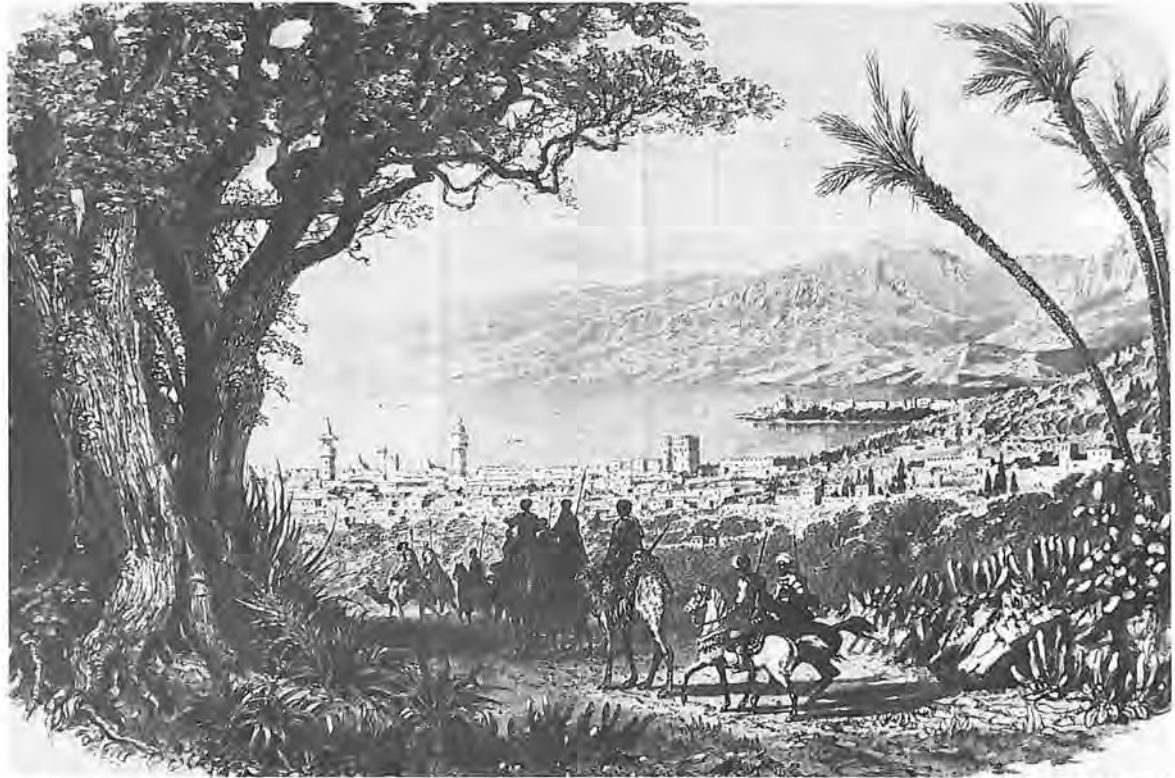
INTRODUCTION

Significant numbers of Arabic-speaking immigrants from Syria and Lebanon began arriving in Texas after 1880. The first were mainly Christians—Syrian Orthodox, Eastern Rite Catholics called Maronites, Greek Catholics called Melkites, and a few Protestants. Few Moslems immigrated prior to 1945, although hundreds came later as a result of conflict in the Middle East.

At the turn of the century, America had a magnetic appeal for the youth of Syria and Lebanon. Overpopulation, economic stagnation, and religious, political and social discrimination by the Ottomans caused hundreds, then thousands, to leave their homeland. Over nine thousand entered the United States in 1914, a peak year.

Called “Syrians” until the emergence of Lebanon as a separate nation in 1919, they came from the Ottoman Empire’s provinces of Greater Syria and Mount Lebanon. Descended from the ancient Phoenicians, these eastern Mediterranean people had been ruled and influenced by numerous conquerors in their long history. The modern Syrian and Lebanese immigrant felt pride in his ancient Christianity, maintained through centuries of alien rule and discrimination. Pride was also derived from his contributions to civilization—the Phoenician alphabet and the Arabic transmission of Roman and Greek philosophy and science through the Dark Ages.

Immigration from these two countries accelerated until the outbreak of World



VIEW OF BEIRUT

Le Tour de Mond

War I. The 1920 census revealed that there were approximately 3,400 persons of Syrian and Lebanese origins in Texas. Restrictive immigration quotas, especially after 1924, severely limited the influx. The development of Syrian and Lebanese communities in Texas thereafter relied on internal growth, immigration from other states, and a trickle who were admitted to the United States annually. Today, there are an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Syrian and Lebanese Texans.

After 1880 these people evolved from a few scattered itinerant peddlers of notions, laces, clothing, and religious items

from the Holy Land into a significant, successful, and integrated segment of Texan society. With his *keskey* (pack), the Syrian peddler travelled alone or in small groups to farms, lumber camps, and oil fields, beginning the journey from poverty to security. During this odyssey he braved bad weather, long distances, and occasional bandits. He also learned English, and received his naturalization papers along the way. New brides, or established families, were brought over as the dream of returning home after a few prosperous years in America vanished.

Characterized as clannish, patriotic, highly individualistic, and adaptable, the Syrians and Lebanese struggled to improve their economic situation. They turned to social and cultural organizations in the form of clubs, benevolent societies, and churches. Syrian neighborhoods settled by the immigrant generation soon faded as their children scattered to all sections of the cities. But through clubs and churches, they have successfully maintained family ties and ethnic heritage.

THE FORERUNNERS

1856

The first Arabic-speaking people appeared in Texas just before the Civil War, when the United States Army attempted to develop camel transportation between Camp Verde, Texas, and San Diego, California. The camel tenders were mostly Arabs, Greeks, and Turks, who amazed Texans with their unusual costumes and unpronounceable names. Perhaps the best remembered of these was Hadji Ali, a Syrian native called "Hi Jolly" by his contemporaries. Born about 1828 to an Orthodox family, he was raised as a Moslem. Hi Jolly landed at Indianola in 1856 with thirty-three camels. They went to California with a government caravan the following year. Hi Jolly lived "out west" until his death in 1902. One of his Syrian compatriots, Elias, eventually settled in Sonora, Mexico. Elias's son, Plutarco Elias Calles, became president of Mexico in 1928.

Other Arabs arrived at Houston in 1858



THE JOSEPH ARBEELY FAMILY

The Survey July, 1911

with a shipload of camels imported by an English lady, Mrs. Watson. For a year they periodically visited Houston from their nearby ranch. Little else is known about Arabic-speaking visitors to Texas before 1870. Texas's first Syrian family was that of Professor Joseph Arbeely from Damascus. The well-educated Dr. Arbeely had been the headmaster of several schools and had served as president of the

Patriarchal Syrian Orthodox College in Damascus. He had taught Arabic to American missionaries in Syria, and had assisted in translating the Arabic Bible. With his wife, his six sons, and a niece, he came to America in 1878. The family visited Texas. Two of the sons—Dr. Abraham J. A. Arbeely, a physician, and Khaleel, a pharmacist—remained in Austin until 1881.

THE JOSEPHS OF AUSTIN

1881

About 1881, Cater Joseph Cater, a teacher in the Presbyterian school at Roumie, Lebanon, began sending his children to America to escape Turkish rule. Eventually, eight sons and a daughter settled in Austin, where they changed the family name to Joseph, and produced a clan of capable businessmen and women.

The eldest son, Cater, came to Texas via New York at fourteen. His passage from New York to Galveston was financed by a New York newspaper publisher of Lebanese extraction, who gave the boy two hundred dollars in "silver" jewelry to peddle. The sea air discolored the jewelry, but the boy worked conscientiously to pay back the publisher. Eventually, he opened a confectionary on Austin's Congress Avenue, then returned to Lebanon to get married. He and his wife raised eight sons and two daughters.

His brothers Isaac and Joe came in 1891. They, too, survived as peddlers at first, carrying big black satchels to nearby farmhouses. Isaac, with an ear for languages, learned both English and German while talking with his customers. By the mid 'nineties he had saved enough to open a produce outlet on lower Congress Avenue. This store was later moved to East Sixth Street, where the business was continued in partnership with his brothers Cater, Shikery, and Nahoum. In 1901, Isaac brought his wife to Texas. This couple raised seven daughters and a son.



THE CATER JOSEPH FAMILY

Courtesy of Eddie Joseph

The other Joseph men—John, Alex, Fred, and William—all followed the same pattern of peddling, then establishing businesses in Austin. Fred, the last to arrive, opened a store at Manor in 1911, and remained there until 1930, when he, too, came to Austin. Succeeding generations also have made their mark on community life. Cater's son, Eddie, owned a chain of theaters, while Isaac's daughters—Hannah, Mary, and Margaret—were instrumental in founding the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs in 1931.

MONSOUR J. BASHARA 1889

In the prosperous years before the Great Depression, Monsour J. Bashara was known as the world's richest Lebanese. He had arrived in New York as a seventeen-year-old immigrant from Broumana in 1888. A year later, he was the first of his nationality to settle in Waco, Texas. He entered the dry goods business, and in 1900, married Olga Eunice, daughter of another Lebanese immigrant.

Bashara left Waco to open a store in the oil boomtown of Beaumont. For the next ten years, he moved his dry goods emporium from one location to another in southeast Texas and Louisiana. In time, he was joined by three nephews—sons of his brother Farris—to whom he taught the rudiments of merchandising and oil leasing. Eventually, two of them, Sam and Joe, became well-known Houston oilmen and realtors while a third, George,



MONSOUR J. BASHARA

Courtesy of George F. Bashara

established a highly successful contracting business at Waco.

M. J. Bashara moved to Wichita Falls before World War I and made a fortune buying land from drought-ruined farmers, then letting it out for oil lease. In 1918, he helped establish the American Refining Corporation, which soon had fifty wells in production and a refinery with a daily capacity of five thousand barrels. He was also half owner of the Bashara Building, which housed the American National Bank of Wichita Falls. The 1929 stock market crash brought an end to Bashara's fortune. He died in the mid-1930's a bright example of how opportunity could open to a man with perseverance.

HOUSTON'S UNITED JAMAIL CLUB 1890

Texas's largest Lebanese clan are the Jamails of Houston. Their club is the largest in the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs. According to tradition, five Jamail brothers and some cousins immigrated from a small village near Beirut in 1890. Some brought their wives and children, others did not. In Houston, they took advantage of their agricultural background by entering the produce business. In 1895, the brothers went back to Lebanon but the children settled in Texas. The descendants now constitute a clan of more than five hundred. Since the 1920's the United Jamail Club has held an annual reunion at Easter time.

Dahr Negem Jamail, one of the first-comers, left his wife in Lebanon and worked his way aboard ship to Texas. He returned to his native land in 1895, came again to Texas in the years 1898 to 1902, and later died in Lebanon. His son, N. D. "Jim" Jamail, is a well-known Houston grocer, who first arrived in 1904. He opened a stand in the old produce market, and in the 1920's and mid-thirties was supplying major restaurants and hotels. Today, the Jamail Brothers Food Market, established with his brothers Joseph and Assad Dahr, is still operated by the family.

Other members of this clan include Abe Jamail, Houston's most decorated World War II hero and one of thirty in his family to have served in that conflict;



THE JAMAIL PICNIC, 1933

Courtesy of Negem D. Jamail

Joe Jamail, Jr., one of the nation's leading attorneys specializing in personal injury suits; Mike Jamail, who led the first Armistice parade at Houston in 1918 and continued the tradition for many years; and John Jamail, one of Houston's biggest property owners.

ABRAHAM KAZEN, SR.
1890

One of the most distinguished Lebanese Texan families in legal, public service, and business fields is that founded by Abraham Kazen, Sr. of Laredo. Born at K'nat, Lebanon about 1868, the elder Kazen came to the United States in the late 1880's with his brothers, Anthony and Joe. These young men peddled dry goods in the countryside between San Antonio and Laredo. By 1890, they had established residence in the border city and were operating up and down the Rio Grande.

Soon after obtaining his American

citizenship, Abraham Kazen, returned to Lebanon, married Anne Reston in 1902, and brought her to his new homeland. They raised a family of four sons and a daughter. From 1912 to 1914, he operated a store in San Marcos, and then another in Benavides. Laredo, however, remained the center of the Kazen family activities. In addition to his merchandising, the elder Kazen supported his growing family through such odd jobs as special duty policeman and interpreter for the Immigration Service. He remained a staunch Democrat until his death at ninety-seven, and instilled a sense of public responsibility in each of his children. All his sons became lawyers.

The achievements of Abraham Kazen's descendants would distinguish them anywhere. Charles served as an army captain in World War II, and was appointed the first Allied judge in Naples after its capture. He was elected clerk of Webb County in 1946 and served until his appoint-

ment as customs collector by President Kennedy. He held this post until his retirement in 1970. Philip Kazen was district attorney at Laredo from 1938 to 1942, then served in various governmental capacities during World War II. He has been active in many programs for civic betterment and has been decorated by several foreign governments for his goodwill efforts.

E. James Kazen was appointed district attorney when his brother resigned the office in 1942. He served until becoming district judge in 1958. Judge Kazen's five children include three lawyers and two teachers. The youngest Kazen brother is Abraham, Jr., familiarly known as "Chick." After World War II service he returned to Laredo and was elected to the state legislature, where he remained in the House and the Senate until sent to Congress in 1967. He is the first Texan of Lebanese ancestry to reach this high office. Carmen Kazen Ferris, only daugh-



THE ABRAHAM KAZEN FAMILY

Courtesy of Carmen K. Ferris

ter of Abraham and Anne Kazen, was a home economics teacher in the public schools for nearly thirty years and then a Texas Education Agency official prior to her death in 1970.

THE SEMAAN FAMILY

1895

The Southwest's oldest store specializing in oriental rugs, linens, and art objects was established at San Antonio in 1895 by Ameen Semaan and his brother-in-law, Elias Farris. Semaan was born in 1876 in Syria and was educated at the American University at Beirut. He immigrated to America in 1893, and a half dozen years later, opened the store in partnership with Farris. The business prospered and branch outlets were acquired in Houston, Beaumont, and Mineral Wells, as well as in Arkansas, Missouri, Colorado, and Michigan. Within a few years Ameen brought his entire family—parents and six brothers and sisters—to San Antonio.

When Ameen Semaan died in 1920, his sister, Freda, and her husband, Elias Farris, assumed responsibility for the education of his children. Two of the boys became well-known San Antonio lawyers. Anees A. Semaan, born in 1907, received his bachelor's degree from The University of Texas at Austin in 1929. Returning to San Antonio, he entered the family business and became a widely consulted authority on oriental carpets. During World War II he was a captain in military intelligence and wrote a manual on the use of foreign maps. After the war he

changed careers. He enrolled in the law school at St. Mary's University, from which he received a degree in 1951.

For the next few years he practiced both civil and criminal law with his brother, Fred, one of San Antonio's most effective trial lawyers. Although handicapped by approaching blindness, A. A.'s thorough preparation gained him wide respect. In 1965-66, he was chairman of the State Bar of Texas Section on Criminal Law. In 1961, he was elected justice of the peace, a position he held until 1967, when Governor John Connally appointed him judge of the 175th District Court. It was his last public office; he died in 1970.

GEORGE NAMI

1897

George Nami established a pioneer South Texas mercantile enterprise and raised two sons who became prominent in American Legion affairs. Born at Bechmezine, Lebanon, in 1869, he was married to Sarah Mafrige in 1891. They had three children in Lebanon—Sam, Herman, and Adele—before Nami immigrated to America in 1896. Originally bound for Toledo, Ohio, he was persuaded enroute to come to Austin, Texas. There, he peddled dry goods afoot until he could afford to buy a hack and team.

In 1897, he moved to Cuero and opened the George Nami Dry Goods and Grocery, which he operated until his death in 1956. His wife and sons came from Lebanon in 1902, and his daughter followed six years later. Four more children were



THE NAMI STORE AT CUERO

Courtesy of Julia N. Sneed

born to the Namis in Texas. The household became a center of Lebanese culture in the area. The Orthodox priest visited annually to baptize, perform marriage ceremonies, and hold services in their living room.

George Nami's son, Herman, attended The University of Texas School of Law, graduating in 1917. He was then commissioned an officer in the United States Army and was shipped to France with the American Expeditionary Force. On his return from World War I he began practicing law at Cuero. In 1927, he transferred his practice to San Antonio. He served as fourth president of the

Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs from 1937 to 1939. Ten years later he was elected departmental commander of the American Legion in Texas. Herman Nami died at San Antonio in 1957.

A brother, Jimmie, was a San Antonio businessman who once served as a state vice president of the Southern Federation; and another brother, William, was departmental commander of the American Legion in 1967-68. William also served on the Cuero City Commission from 1956 to 1958, and was mayor from 1963 to 1967. Julia, their sister, was long a San Antonio school teacher.



THE AZAR-SOLOMON OFFICES AT SAN ANTONIO

Courtesy of Sophie Azar

THE AZARS OF EL PASO AND SAN ANTONIO 1900

For fifty-five years the Azar family of El Paso and San Antonio has been active in the Texas pecan shelling industry. Sometime before 1900 two brothers, Elias and Shibley Azar, came from Lebanon to visit a sister living in Canada. The brothers then ventured to El Paso, where they established a confectionary in the old Sheldon Hotel. By 1919, they were in the pecan shelling business in addition to candy making.

Other members of the family soon appeared: their brother and sister, George and Sophie, and an uncle, Richard Solomon. In 1926, Solomon and his niece,

Sophie Azar, opened their own company in El Paso. Four years later Elias moved to Los Angeles; and George, Sophie, and their Uncle Richard moved to San Antonio. Only Shibley remained in El Paso. With his three sons as partners, he built a multi-million dollar business with over two hundred employees. At his death in 1964, his sons continued the enterprise as the Azar Nut Company.

At San Antonio the Azar and Solomon Pecan Shelling Company began in small, rented quarters on West Commerce Street. At first, shelling by hand yielded only seven or eight pounds per worker per day, but George helped invent machinery that raised the daily output to at least 250 pounds. Today, theirs is one

of two remaining pecan shelling establishments in San Antonio. It is run by Sophie and her nephew, Richard Azar.

ELIAS J. ANTONE

1907

Elias Antone was an early-day Port Arthur businessman whose three sons have made their own estimable contribution to Lebanese Texan culture. Elias was a lumber importer in Tripoli, Lebanon, before coming to New York in 1892. There, he operated a wholesale house until 1907, when he moved to Columbus, Texas. His stay in Columbus was interrupted when he voted against a candidate for sheriff who then threatened to shoot him on sight. According to family tradition, he departed Columbus, took up residence at Jennings, Louisiana, and thereafter left the voting to others.

Meanwhile, Antone had married Jamilie Amuny, the daughter of a Port

ELIAS J. ANTONE

Courtesy of Jalal Antone



Arthur businessman. They had three sons—Kamal, Jalal, and Jamal—all named for Turkish generals sympathetic to the Christian minority in the old country. Only the intervention of the sons prevented their sister from likewise being named for a military figure. In 1913, Elias Antone moved his family back to Port Arthur, where he operated a dry goods store until his death in 1959. His son, Jamal, is still an active businessman in the coastal city.

Another son, Jalal, moved to Houston in 1935, and founded a well-known import food store specializing in Middle Eastern, Greek, and Asian foods. In one area of the building he operated a celebrated sandwich shop which was patronized at noon each day by busy Houston businessmen. A civic, charity, and cultural leader, Jalal Antone was a benefactor of St. George's Orthodox Church. He died in 1974.

The third son of Elias Antone is Kamal E. Antone, known far and wide as "Mr. Federation," a name he earned as a founder and longtime guiding spirit of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs. Born in Louisiana and raised in Port Arthur, he attended Lamar Tech in Beaumont while working in his father's store. He subsequently entered law school in Houston and received a degree, but never practiced. Instead, he became a successful realtor. He was president of the Houston Board of Realtors in 1959-60, and president of the Texas Association of Realtors in 1970.

But Kamal Antone is perhaps best

known for his work in the Southern Federation. After helping found the organization in 1931-32, he became a two-term president in 1948-49. For eleven years he was chairman of the board of directors. He is also editor of *The Official Bulletin*. Antone's stature among his compatriots may be judged by the fact that a Syrian lady applying for American citizenship once gave his name as the first president of the United States.

ESAU MALOOLY

1907

Among the first Lebanese immigrants to El Paso were members of the Malooly family from Rachaya, Lebanon. Esau Malooly was an educated man, fluent in five languages. As a twenty-two year old schoolteacher, he decided to immigrate to Brazil in 1907. Aboard ship, he was persuaded to join friends going to El Paso.

ESAU MALOOLY

Courtesy of Esau Malooly



Once in Texas, he peddled notions, then began repairing sewing machines for a living. Next he established an oriental rug and tapestry import business, which he operated until 1918. During World War I he utilized his language skills as a translator for Immigration Bureau officials at El Paso. When hostilities ended he visited Lebanon, returning shortly with a bride. He now established a note and mortgage company. When the Depression arrived, he found himself the owner of much real estate. He was able to assist his sons in starting furniture stores in El Paso. In 1946, he gave land for expansion of the College of Mines, which evolved into The University of Texas at El Paso. Esau Malooly died in 1969 at eighty-six after a long and successful career as realtor, investor, and civic leader.

SYRIAN ORTHODOXY IN TEXAS

1907

To the Syrian Orthodox immigrant, his religious affiliation has been more important than his former nationality in the Middle East. His Christian identity has been maintained since the seventh century A.D. despite Moslem rule and occasional persecutions. Those who worship in the Orthodox faith owe allegiance to the Patriarch of Antioch, who resides in Damascus. Missionary priests began arriving before the turn of the twentieth century. To the newly settled families, the church and its clubs offered a place not only for religious services, but for



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH AT BEAUMONT

Courtesy of Catherine Harris

social and community needs. Otherwise, the more isolated Orthodox families started attending Episcopal, Methodist, or other Protestant churches.

In Beaumont, El Paso, Austin, and Houston, Syrian Orthodox parishes were established after 1900, with priests from the old country, and familiar rites in their native Arabic. Then, the immigrants not only began to sink roots in Texas soil but to modify somewhat their ancestral religion into a more suitable

contemporary mold. To the casual observer entering an early Orthodox church, the spectacle was awesome. Icons of the saints, elaborate clerical robes of gold, richly gilded altar vessels, and the ancient liturgy made a vivid impression. For hours the voices of the priests, cantors, and laymen could be heard chanting the nasal Arabic rituals through the heavy smoke of incense. But by World War II, English was slowly replacing Arabic in the liturgy. Choirs, organs, pews, Sunday

schools, altar societies, and other American innovations had been introduced with the blessing of the clergy.

When Galveston's SS. Constantine and Helen Orthodox Church was built in 1895 by Serbian and Greek immigrants, a few Syrians were present. By 1898, a Syrian Orthodox society had been formed in Beaumont and nine years later St. Michael's Church, established in a simple frame building, became Texas's second Orthodox church and the first Syrian church. Rebuilt after the 1919 storm, and again after a disastrous fire in 1953, it continues the missionary tradition begun when its early pastors journeyed forth to keep alive the Orthodoxy of Texas's scattered Syrian pioneers.

By 1932, Austin's Orthodox immigrants had already spent a decade conducting periodic services in members' homes and in rented halls whenever a traveling priest arrived. In that year, St. Elias Orthodox Church was begun, utilizing conventional Middle Eastern architecture. Finished in 1934, it serves a wide Central Texas area. Its only full-time priest, the Rev. James Rottle from Tripoli, has served since 1943. For a generation, the parish has held a Lebanese Food Festival, much to the delight of Austinites.

Houston's Orthodox community had been visited for over a decade by priests from Beaumont before the first St. George's Church building was purchased in 1936 from a departing Methodist congregation. During the 1920's a Syrian Ladies Aid Society had started fund

raising by giving Arabic dinners, a tradition that continues in semi-annual food festivals. Located on Houston's near north side, the frame structure served the growing parish until a new brick church was completed in another part of the city in the 1960's. The present church is distinguished by its modern architecture, its onyx windows, and its magnificent icon-covered screen before the sanctuary.

El Paso's St. George Orthodox Church began with the arrival of large numbers of Lebanese settlers after World War I. Served only by visiting priests at first, a meeting house was bought in 1948 and a new church built in 1952. Father Nicholas Husson served the parish of El Paso

and Juarez, Mexico, from 1950 until his death in 1967. Today, the Orthodox heritage of the state's Lebanese and Syrian immigrants is firmly based in four Texas cities.

THE HADDAD BROTHERS 1908

Three Haddad brothers—William, Constantine, and Joseph—established Tyler's Mecca Cafe shortly after their arrival from Beirut, Lebanon in 1908. Together, they ran it for over thirty years. During the East Texas oil boom, the Mecca was a gathering place for hoards of speculators, geologists, and land men. The Haddads later acquired real estate and oil

interests and became civic leaders in their adopted hometown. They helped charter the local Cedars of Lebanon Club, one of the region's oldest and strongest Lebanese organizations. Their six sisters also settled in Texas.

Until his death in 1939, William "Bill" Haddad was widely known as a restaurateur and strong supporter of civic, church, and sports activities. As Tyler's "Mr. Baseball," he was an expert who attended all the local games. His brother, Joseph, became a prominent real estate broker and insurance man after 1940. He was also a bank director and board member of Tyler's Lone Star Steel Corporation.

Constantine Haddad, the last surviving brother, used resources acquired in commercial property and oil investments to benefit Tyler's Catholic schools and hospitals. Haddad Hall at the Mother Frances Hospital was named in his honor. The Haddad Hospital in Jall El Dib, Lebanon, founded by a relative, also benefitted from his philanthropy. When he died in 1961, part of his estate was left to the Catholic Diocese of Dallas, to be used for Tyler's parish needs.

LEON CURRY 1909

Born at Saghbine, Lebanon, in 1870, Leon Curry immigrated first to South America in 1890, and later to Mexico. He came to San Antonio in 1909, as a consequence of the Mexican Revolution, and opened a dry goods store. He raised a large family, wrote articles for New York's *El Hoda*,

CONSTANTINE HADDAD AND NEPHEWS

Courtesy of Edward W. Schaded





THE LEON CURRY FAMILY

Courtesy of Mrs. Ralph Karam

and acted as unofficial scribe for San Antonio's Lebanese colony. He died in 1941, survived by two sons who have led interesting and useful lives of their own.

Joseph Curry became an inventor and manufacturer of machinery used in processing Mexican food. Another son, Judge Peter Michael Curry, graduated from The University of Texas School of Law shortly before entering World War II service. He rose to the rank of major while stationed in the European and North African theaters. Back in San Antonio, he practiced both civil and criminal law until being appointed as 166th District Judge in 1963. He has been twice reelected to that position and became presiding judge of the Fourth Administrative Judicial District on the retirement of Judge Solomon Casseb, Jr. in 1968. Judge Curry became one of three Lebanese Texan judges serving in San Antonio during the later 1960s.

ZACHARY MAFRIGE

1911

Zachary Mafrige was one of nineteen youths who departed Lebanon aboard a Spanish ship bound for Havana in 1886. He was then twenty years old. Yellow fever broke out during the voyage and killed half the group; the survivors were left in Cuba to recuperate. Zachary then made his way to New York, and from there peddled jewelry to St. Louis, Fort Smith, and San Francisco. From 1886 until 1911, he stayed in Seattle, where he operated a dry goods business. The 1907 panic wiped him out, but he had re-



ZACHARY AND STEVENS MAFRIGE

Courtesy of Stevens Mafrige

covered to some extent by 1910, when he sent his wife and two children to Cuero, Texas, where his relatives, the Namis lived.

The following year he joined them, and briefly operated the Navidad Hotel. In 1912, he opened a small dry goods store, the Z. A. Mafrige General Store, and then a confectionary. In 1918 his son, Stevens, took over the dry goods business, and three years later, Mafrige opened a

wholesale dry goods establishment with government surplus material for starting stock. The family stayed in Cuero until 1927, when they moved to Houston, though they continued operating the Cuero store until 1931. Zachary died at Houston in 1946, but his son remained in the business until 1951, when he became a realtor.

Stevens Mafrige and his wife, Marie, became well known for their contribu-

tions, both in the St. George's Antiochian Orthodox Church and the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs. Their gifts to St. George's made possible the construction of the Mafrige Memorial Auditorium in memory of his parents and sister. The auditorium was completed in 1959, and served as the chapel for the congregation until the new sanctuary could be built. Stevens and Marie Mafrige had been supporters of the Southern Federation since its inception. In 1964, they established an annual scholarship fund for the organization. When Mrs. Mafrige died in 1970, the fund was named in her memory.

NAHIM ABRAHAM

1913

Nahim Abraham, merchant and civic leader of Canadian, Texas, was born at Kafracab, in 1885. At seventeen he began carrying a peddler's suitcase from the Rockies to the Texas Panhandle. In the next decade he made several trips back to Lebanon and, on one occasion, visited Sao Paulo, Brazil, with the intention of settling in South America. However, Texas attracted him more. On a last trip to his native Kafracab, Nahim married Alia Malouf, the daughter of a local doctor. Two sons were born before he returned to the United States in 1912. A year later, he established permanent roots in Canadian, where he was soon joined by his wife and two sons. Two other sons were born to the couple in Texas.

Nahim and Alia Abraham opened a department store which they called "The

Fair." They ran it until their retirement in 1949, when son Tom took over. Another son, Naceeb, owned an office supply firm in Amarillo. The Edward Abraham Memorial Home in Canadian honors the memory of a third son, who died in 1961. The youngest child is Malouf Abraham, nicknamed "Oofie" by his schoolmates. Graduated from high school at fourteen, he attended Texas Tech University, then

returned to Canadian, where he entered the real estate and oil and gas leasing business. From 1967 to 1971, he served as a Republican member of the Texas House of Representatives. "Oofie" Abraham has also been a director of the West Texas Chamber of Commerce and a member of numerous petroleum associations. One of his sons, Malouf, Jr., is presently a doctor in Canadian.

THE ABRAHAM STORE AT CANADIAN



Courtesy of Malouf Abraham

JOHN S. MALOUF 1913

When John S. Malouf and five members of his family arrived at Ellis Island, New York, in 1912, he could thank fate for intervening to save his life. His sister, Helen, had telephoned him in London, asking that he await her arrival there so she could join them on the trip to America. This caused the family to miss its scheduled voyage on the *Titanic*.

Malouf began his new life as a peddler on the streets of Salt Lake City. His wife and three children stayed in their native Kafracab, Lebanon, hoping to join him in a year or so. About 1913, Malouf drifted to the Texas Panhandle town of Canadian, where his relatives, the Abrahams, lived. With two or three suitcases in hand, he sold enough piece goods and trim to be able to send for his wife and children. However, the British blockade of the Lebanese coast prevented communication with his family until the end of World War I. Meanwhile, he and Joe Schaded ran a dry goods store at Dalhart. In 1920, Malouf went to Lebanon, was reunited with his family, and returned to Texas in 1922. He opened a dry goods store at Rotan. Retiring in 1944, he died three years later in Dallas.

John Malouf saw that his children had college educations. In 1941, three Malouf sons opened a ladies' dress shop in Dallas. Eventually, they began manufacturing dresses. Business prospered until the Malouf Company had six plants in Northeast Texas cities. Today, Eblen Malouf is chairman of the board, while



JOHN S. MALOUF

Courtesy of Mrs. John S. Malouf

his son, Ronnie, is charged with day-to-day operation.

The Maloufs of Dallas are part of the larger Malouf clan which includes the Salems of Sudan, the Abrahams of Canadian, the Schadedds of Tyler, and various Malouf families in Lubbock and Post.

FRED KADANE

1914

In his lifetime Fred Kadane entered several diverse businesses and made money in each one. He started as a peddler, later opened a dry goods store, then became a wholesaler of poultry and eggs, butter and cheese. Next he joined his brother, George, in oil exploration, and finally he became a manufacturer of men's trousers. His was a well-known and respected name at his death in 1962.

Kadane was born in the Lebanese mountain village of Baskinta in 1883, and came to America as a small boy with his mother and young brother, Charles. In New York City he obtained his first job in a shoelace factory, where he earned a dollar fifty per week. Soon he was peddling collar buttons and newspapers on lower Broadway to help his mother. In time they were joined by Kadane's older brother and sister. The family tried manufacturing novelties in their apartment; but in 1896, they came to Denison, Texas, then a raw railroad town.

For three years they peddled notions afoot and from a wagon. George eventually became an oilman and Fred opened a dry goods store in Denison. He also became a successful dealer in poultry and

eggs. In 1910, he moved to Dallas and expanded into the butter and cheese business. Later, he established the Texas Margarine Company and pioneered the manufacture of vegetable margarine and salad dressing.

As early as 1914, Fred Kadane became involved with his brother, George, in oil exploration and drilling in Oklahoma and Texas. Their Western Drilling Company sank thirteen wells in the Burkburnett oilfield. In 1937, there were further Kadane family discoveries in the KMA field near Wichita Falls. Between 1939 and 1943, Fred owned a factory that produced more than a million pairs of trousers for the United States government at the outset of World War II. After selling this enterprise in 1943, he founded the Southwest Margarine Company, which marketed the Admiration and Sun Valley brands. Fred Kadane died in 1962. A son, Sheffield, was recently a two-term member of the Dallas City Council.

CECIL LOTIEF

1919

Cecil Lotief was the first Texas legislator of Lebanese ancestry and a man much beloved for his work in the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs. Born at Jouret El Termos, Lebanon, in 1888, he immigrated to the United States at seventeen. Landing at Galveston in 1904, he settled in Tyler and began peddling merchandise to isolated homes and lumber camps in the Piney Woods. The following year, he opened a confectionary in Tyler, which he operated



CECIL LOTIEF

Courtesy of the Rev. Cecil Lotief, Jr.



MANSOUR FARAH

Antone, William Farah, Industrialist

until 1909, when he bought a store in Oklahoma.

Ten years later, Lotief was back in Texas, where for forty-two years he ran dry goods stores in Cisco, Cross Plains, Eastland, and Rotan. He was married to Margaret Joseph in Shreveport, Louisiana. His three children were born in Cross Plains, and most of his life was spent in small towns surrounding Abilene, Texas. In the 1920's he became active in Democratic politics. He served in the legislature from 1933 to 1937 as a representative from Callahan County, was a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1944, and was mayor of Rotan from 1954 to 1956. Lotief died in 1971.

MANSOUR FARAH 1920

In 1920, Mansour Farah of El Paso rented a 25' x 50' room and began producing work shirts and pants. Today, the Farah Manufacturing Company operates factories in El Paso, San Antonio, and Victoria.

Mansour Farah, born at Baskinta, Lebanon in 1885, came to Canada with his parents as a child. In 1905, young Farah and his brother, Andrew, established a dry goods and feed store at Las Cruces, New Mexico. There he married Hana Abihider and had two sons, James and Willie. In 1920, he visited New York City to study shirt design and production methods, then moved to El Paso to open

his own business. From a small rented room and a handful of employees, Mansour Farah slowly built the company.

During the 1930's it was moved to larger quarters and continued producing work shirts and denim pants. Farah himself served as designer, cutter, salesman, and janitor. Three years before his death in 1937, the company began manufacturing khaki shirts and trousers. James Farah took charge and obtained record production of military clothing during the war. James worked long hours to keep the aged machinery in repair, while his mother supervised the sewing rooms. Willie Farah became a combat pilot in the European theater.

Following the war, the company looked increasingly to national trends and markets. During the 1950's and 1960's, it expanded into the dress trousers field, increased production facilities in El Paso, and opened new plants elsewhere. When James Farah died in 1964, his brother assumed direction of the business. In 1967, the Farah Company became a public corporation. Both Mansour Farah's enterprise and his family have contributed generously to El Paso's civic and charitable drives, to hospital and nursing home construction, and to scholarships in science and engineering at The University of Texas at El Paso.

THE VERY REV. NICHOLAS NAHAS 1920

As a pioneer Syrian Orthodox missionary in Texas and the Southwest, Father



THE VERY REV. NICHOLAS NAHAS

Courtesy of Mrs. Nicholas A. Nahas

Nicholas Nahas came to Beaumont in 1920 to rebuild the storm-destroyed St. Michael's Church. For the next fifteen years he ministered to Texas's oldest Syrian Orthodox parish and to Orthodox people scattered from El Paso to Western Louisiana. Upon call, Father Nahas would pack his vestments and sacramental vessels into an old satchel and catch the next train from Beaumont. His aim was to keep alive the Orthodoxy of his fellow immigrants until they were able to organize and build churches for themselves.

Nicholas Nahas was born into a merchant family in the port city of Tripoli, Lebanon in 1888. His first trip to New York, in 1904, ended two years later when he returned to Tripoli to care for his aged parents. He became a school teacher and, in 1909, was married to Anna Suratie. In 1912, the young couple came to America with their son, Jack. While studying for the priesthood in New York, Nicholas also taught in the Arabic School and was assistant editor of *The Mirror of the West*, an Arabic newspaper. He was ordained in 1916.

As a priest of the Syrian Orthodox diocese in North America, Father Nahas served parishes in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York before accepting Texas's first parish at Beaumont. In Beaumont, he rebuilt the church, started an Arabic school, and began traveling throughout the state to minister to the faithful. In addition, he introduced English into the liturgy in an effort to attract American-born Lebanese who did not know Arabic.

In 1923, he compiled an early history of the Orthodox Church in America, and a year later he and his wife, Anna, translated the basic rituals into English. After 1935, Father Nahas served the Beaumont parish only occasionally. Until his death and burial at Beaumont in 1964, he was a missionary throughout the Midwest, Canada, Mexico, and Central America.

SOLOMON CASSEB, SR.

1923

Solomon Casseb, Sr. established San Antonio's first supermarket and became one of the city's leading realtors before his death in 1958. Married to the daughter of an Italian produce merchant, he also raised five sons and two daughters who continue a family tradition of public service.

Casseb was born at Beirut, Lebanon, in 1885. His father, a policeman, was killed in a mountain snowslide while on patrol, and young Solomon was raised by his widowed mother. At sixteen he went to live with his uncle, Elias Abdo, at Kenedy, Texas. After working a year, he arrived in San Antonio, where he attended night school and peddled fruit on the streets until he entered the produce business with Arredo Fahro. In time, he sent for his mother and brother, George. Later, he and his brother formed their own produce establishment, which they operated until George joined the army during World War I. They sold out in 1918, and Solomon became a real estate investor. In 1921, he bought property on Alamo Plaza, which he renovated two



ANNIE SWIA CASSEB AND SONS

Courtesy of Florence Casseb

years later into San Antonio's first super-market. In the 1930's he entered the real estate business exclusively.

Two of Solomon Casseb's sons, George and Joe, became bankers and two others, Paul and Solomon, Jr., established law practices. Solomon, Jr. graduated from The University of Texas School of Law and was admitted to the bar in 1938. On the eve of World War II he was elected vice president of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs. During the war, he served in the Army Air Corps in the South Pacific, attaining the rank of major. After the war he resumed his law practice until 1960, when he was appointed to fill an unexpired term as judge of the Fifty-Seventh District Court. Elected twice afterwards, he was named presiding judge of the Fourth Administrative Judicial District. He returned to private practice in 1969, and in 1971, became a Fellow of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers.

DR. SOLOMON DAVID 1923

For many years, Dr. Solomon David has been one of Texas's most respected orthopedic surgeons. Born at Rachaya, Lebanon, in 1888, he was educated at the Irish Presbyterian School in Damascus. He began teaching school, but his family's close ties with Protestant missionaries had both political and interdenominational repercussions. David decided, in 1908, to come to the New World.

In America, he sold linens for awhile, then went to St. Paul, Minnesota, to con-



DR. & MRS. SOLOMON DAVID

Courtesy of Dr. Solomon David

tinue his education. After a year of preparatory work, he entered Macalester College, from which he graduated in 1912. He enrolled in the University of Minnesota Medical College, finished his course work four years later, then joined the United States Army Medical Corps in 1917 as a first lieutenant. David was assigned as regimental surgeon of the Eighty-Second Field Artillery at Ft. Bliss, Texas, and participated in General Pershing's expedition against Pancho Villa in Mexico. Discharged as a captain in 1920, he went to Houston as an employee of the United States Public Health Service for two years. He spent another year in Boston, continuing his medical studies, then returned to Houston in 1923 to open his own orthopedic surgery clinic.

David became a leading specialist in bone and joint surgery and, for a time, was chief orthopedic surgeon at the Methodist Hospital. He has written articles on his specialty for leading medical journals and has served as president of the Texas Orthopedic Society. As a further contribution to the medical profession, he donated the David Orthopedic Library to the Fondren Orthopedic Center of the Methodist Hospital at Houston's famed Medical Center. The library, given in memory of his wife, Victoria, is supported by the David Foundation.

M. K. HAGE, SR. 1923

M. K. Hage, Sr. became a prominent Central Texas name because of the variety stores he operated in Austin, Taylor, and San Marcos. As a young man in Lebanon, his father had taught him the stonemason's trade. At twenty-three Hage took a mallet and chisel, selected a large stone near the village fountain at Roumie and thereon carved an inscription: "In April, 1912, M. K. Hage left his country." With money borrowed from his father, he began his journey to Wheeling, West Virginia, where a brother, John K., lived.

After long, hard hours working in the coal mines and steel mills around Wheeling to repay his father, M. K. moved on to Texas, where he became a peddler at Manor, a small cotton farming community fifteen miles east of Austin. German and Swedish families had already broken the rich, blackland soil, but there were few nearby stores where they could

get food and supplies. Another Hage brother, Assad, had capitalized on this situation by opening a store prior to M. K.'s arrival. After a decade of working for his brother, M. K. moved to Austin to enter business for himself.

Within a year, he had opened his first variety store; others followed. In the early 1930's he helped organize the St. Elias Orthodox Church. Near the end of his life he entered the building and construction business in Austin, and had achieved notable success before his death in 1966. His son, M. K. Hage, Jr., continued his father's enterprise after a sixteen-year teaching and school administration ca-

M. K. HAGE, SR. *Courtesy of M. K. Hage, Jr.*



reer. Elected to the board of the Austin Independent School District in 1964, he currently serves as chairman.

NEWMAN MCKOOL 1924

Newman and Lola McKool left three of their children in Lebanon when they came to America. About 1893, they and their six-year old son, Charles, immigrated to Waco, and began peddling household goods. "Buy, please" and "Thank you" were among the first English words they learned to speak as they sold socks, buttons, needles, and similar articles.

When Charles was eighteen, he returned to Lebanon and got married during a six-month stay. Back in America, he opened a grocery store in Shreveport, Louisiana; however, his travels were not over. The McKool family moved to New York state for six months and then, in 1917, to Mexico City, where Charles managed an uncle's shoe factory and dry goods store. The family stayed in Mexico for seven years before returning to the United States to settle at Dallas. There, Charles McKool was active in the restaurant business until his death in 1947.

One of his six children, Mike, became a successful attorney following graduation from Southern Methodist University Law School. In World War II, he was a tail gunner of a B-24 bomber. Shot down over Yugoslavia, he was later rescued by the Chetnik partisans. After the war he entered politics in Dallas County and served from 1969 to 1973 in the Texas



MR. & MRS. CHARLES MCKOOL
Courtesy of Patricia McKool

Senate, where he set a new filibuster record of forty-two hours, thirty-three minutes while trying to add more budget money for mental health and mental retardation programs in Texas.

ST. GEORGE MARONITE CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO 1925

The Maronites, an Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church, are found throughout Texas, but only in San Antonio's St. George Maronite parish has a church been built to perpetuate this ancient ritual. In other cities the Maronites have been assimilated into Roman Catholic



ST. GEORGE MARONITE CHURCH

ITC Collection

parishes. In San Antonio, Maronites, who comprise eighty percent of the Lebanese colony, formed their own parish in 1925. Today, it is part of the Maronite Exarchate of North America, ruled, since 1967, by a bishop representing the Patriarch of Antioch in Lebanon. The Maronite mass in Texas is conducted in Arabic with phrases in English and in Aramaic, the language of Christ. The liturgy is that of St. James the Apostle, and the music reflects the use of Arabic hymns and modes.

Lebanese Maronites began settling at San Antonio in the early 1880's, although the church was not established until 1925. A large initial contribution by Annie Casseb and assistance from others in the Lebanese community enabled the Maronites to acquire a small frame duplex on San Antonio's near west side, where most of the immigrants lived. The first priest, the Rev. George Aziz, lived upstairs and offered mass on the first floor. A new brick church was completed in 1932, during the pastorate of the Rev. Elias Najem. In 1952, the Mediterranean-style church was moved brick-by-brick to a new site because of freeway construction. By that time, the Lebanese neighborhood was disintegrating, as the second and third generations moved to newer areas of the city. St. George's continues, however, to be the center for San Antonio's Lebanese community. Its priests, usually from Lebanon, have provided religious rites not only for San Antonio's Maronites, but for those in other Texas cities.

Community spirit has always been



"MAGIC IS THE NIGHT"

Fred Damon Photographics

strong and, in 1964, led to a city-wide festival called "Magic is the Night." Preceded by the mayor's proclamation of Lebanese Colony Week, the festival annually entertains thousands of non-Lebanese with Arabic music, dancing, costumes, and food. An amateur dance troupe of parish youth offers its version of the Middle Eastern harem dance. Enthusiastic festival-goers also enjoy learning the *Dabke*, a traditional Lebanese village dance.

LOUIS HADDAD 1926

Farming attracted relatively few of Texas's Lebanese immigrants; however, Louis Haddad was an exception. He became a rice farmer on the Gulf Coast almost as soon as he reached Texas from his native Endara. Born in 1880 to a family of grain, vegetable, and silkworm growers, Haddad left his wife and infant son in 1912 to come to America. He intended to return to his native land in a few years, but

fourteen passed before he again saw his family.

In the meantime, he settled at Nederland, Texas and worked two years on a rice farm before beginning his own operation. He was located first at Spindletop, then Fannett, and finally at La Belle, near Beaumont. Mules were used for plowing and pulling the drill; steam-powered threshing machines were rented. Haddad bought his first tractor in 1925, the year before his wife and son, Daher, finally joined him in Texas. Since then, four generations of the family have become Gulf Coast rice farmers.

Louis Haddad retired in 1947 and turned the operation over to his son, Daher. The family is active in Syrian Lebanese club work in the Beaumont-Port Arthur area, and in Syrian Orthodox church affairs. Daher's wife, Esma, is a mainstay of the International Club at Lamar University, helping hundreds of foreign students to adjust to American life.

J. M. HAGGAR 1926

One of America's largest clothing manufacturers, one who has helped revolutionize the industry, is Lebanese-born J. M. Hagggar of Dallas, Texas. He visited Mexico as a teenager in 1909. After deciding to return home, he changed his mind during a stopover at New Orleans. He made his way to St. Louis by chopping cotton and driving wagons. There, he was employed in a dry goods store before moving to Bristow, Oklahoma, where he



J. M. HAGGAR

Haggar Company, Inc.

clerked in a grocery store, bought cotton, and sold oil leases. In 1915, he married Rose Wasoff, then became sales representative for a firm that manufactured pants and overalls. In 1920, he moved to Dallas and six years later invested his savings in his own company.

Haggar rented space in the old Santa Fe Building and started business with eighty used sewing machines and about one hundred employees. A hard trader with an uncanny ability to anticipate selling patterns, he quickly became a major force in the clothing industry. His

company was one of the first to advertise nationally. Today, Haggar slacks are produced in fifteen plants located in Texas and Oklahoma. He serves as chairman of the board, while his sons, J. M., Jr. and Ed, conduct the day-to-day affairs of the vast enterprise.

In 1972, the elder Haggar celebrated his eightieth birthday with a three million dollar donation to educational, medical, and civic charities through the foundation which bears his name. The Haggar Hall of Psychology at Notre Dame and the Haggar Student Center at

the University of Dallas both resulted from his generosity. He has also aided various denominational schools in the Dallas area and made possible an added wing at St. Jude's Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Haggar funds have been established for civic development in fourteen communities where his factories are located. The Boy Scouts and the Salvation Army have also benefitted from his patronage. These charitable efforts have earned J. M. Haggar several national awards for community service.

JOE T. SALEM

1931

Not all contributions of Lebanese Texans to the history and culture of the Lone Star State have occurred in the larger towns and cities. They have been welcomed and assimilated into countless rural communities where they have provided firmly established leadership for many years. Such an example is Joe T. Salem of Sudan, Texas, a small town fifty miles northwest of Lubbock. Here, Salem has had a highly regarded career as a dry goods merchant, farmer, and civic and religious leader.

Born in Kafracab, Lebanon in 1904, Salem was eight when he and his brothers joined their father who had previously settled at Provo, Utah. While his father and older brothers worked, young Joe acquired a sixth grade education. His mother and sisters came to America at the first opportunity, and when his father died in 1915, Joe accompanied one brother and the women of the family to Cana-

dian, where they had relatives, the Maloufs. Forced to quit school and earn a livelihood, he began as a peddler, then opened a dry goods store at Ranger in the waning days of the oil boom there.

In 1931, Salem moved his wife and son to Sudan, where he opened another dry goods establishment. The family lived in cramped quarters at the back of the building. During harvest seasons the tiny store was usually crowded until midnight on Saturdays. With proceeds of the day's sales in hand, he would reorder stock immediately to be ready for the following Saturday's rush. In time the business was expanded in a new location, but it continued as a family operation until 1954.

After struggling to make his store a success during the Depression, Salem gave both time and effort to civic endeavor. He was chamber of commerce president from 1933 to 1941, and a director of the regional West Texas chamber in 1936.

JOE T. SALEM

Courtesy of Joe T. Salem



SOUTHERN FEDERATION CONVENTION, 1932

Courtesy of Kamal Antone

THE SOUTHERN FEDERATION OF SYRIAN LEBANESE AMERICAN CLUBS 1931

The emblem of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs depicts a Phoenician galley departing the cedar-covered hills of Lebanon. The organization itself dates from 1931, when the idea was expressed during a July 4th convention sponsored by the Young Men's Amusement Club of Port Arthur. Two months later, the details of a federation were worked out at a Labor Day gathering initiated by a Syrian girls' club in Austin. During the following weeks,

clubs from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Alabama attended organizational meetings. The first convention was held at Beaumont in 1932. A constitution was adopted and officers elected; H. A. Amuny of Port Arthur became the first president. Within ten years the Federation had expanded to the East Coast. Conventions were suspended during World War II, but the Federation contributed to the war effort, principally by sponsoring War Bond drives.

The organization's bi-monthly newsletter began in 1933 as a column, "The Galley" in *The Syrian Voice*, a New York City newspaper. By 1936, *The Official Bulletin* had achieved its present format.

The current editor is Kamal Antone, himself an organizer of the Federation. The records on file at the Houston office are the best archive available on the Lebanese in Texas and the South.

With the establishment of Lebanese neighborhoods, clubs, and churches during the early 1900's, assistance often was forthcoming to the unfortunate, the unemployed, the sick, and the orphaned. With the creation of the Federation in 1931, aid on a much larger scale became feasible. Relief was now given to the refugees of Middle Eastern conflicts, and to natural disaster victims in Syria, Lebanon, and America itself.

Scholarships have also been a principal activity of the Southern Federation program. A student loan fund was initiated in the 1930's, and in 1948, a scholarship program was established which has handed out over \$100,000 from nine different funds. In addition, the Federation's Kahlil Gibran awards have honored America's most popular author from Lebanon. Since 1969, donations have been made to the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. In 1973, the Southern Federation Foundation, Inc. was formed as a Texas corporation to manage the scholarship and charitable programs.

Today, the Southern Federation is comprised of approximately seventy clubs in over fifty Southern cities, with a total membership exceeding 2,700. Texas, the pioneer state of the Federation, has twenty-five clubs in a dozen cities from Beaumont-Port Arthur to El Paso. It pro-

vides a forum in which Arabic-speaking people can foster their customs, music, food, language, folklore, hospitality, and devotion to heritage. Families and friends meet to exchange news and to introduce their children. A nonpolitical, nonsectarian policy is followed. At convention parties, dances, banquets, and official meetings, the traditions of old and new homelands are blended in a mixture of patriotism and pride.

ANTHONY R. FERRIS 1932

Anthony Ferris combined a full life in business, education, and service to his adopted country with a love of his native Arabic literature and music. As translator of the writings of Kahlil Gibran, the world-famous Lebanese mystic, philosopher, artist, and poet, Ferris made a lasting contribution to the literary arts.

Born in Roumie, Lebanon in 1907, Ferris received an excellent education at the British Missionary School in Broumana and at the American University of Beirut. After a brief teaching career, he came to visit an uncle, Saadi Ferris, in Texas during the early 1930's. He addressed the organizational meeting of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs at Austin in 1931 and is listed as one of its founders. After a visit to Cuba, Ferris was readmitted on the Lebanese immigration quota in 1932, and settled in Austin, where he worked with his brother, Elias, in a pharmacy.

In the years that followed he received undergraduate and graduate degrees



ANTHONY R. FERRIS

Courtesy of Anthony P. Ferris

from The University of Texas at Austin. During World War II he was an officer instructor at Lackland Air Force Base near San Antonio. Later, he became a teacher and eventually a lecturer at the university in Austin. From 1959 to 1962, he was a consultant on foreign languages for the Texas Education Agency. He was married to Carmen Kazen, daughter of the pioneer merchant, Abraham Kazen, of Laredo. Their son, Anthony, became a lawyer in the Kazen family tradition.

Ferris's renditions of Gibran have benefitted a wide public. Faithful to the idea and style, he painstakingly translated the difficult Arabic into English to supplement the existing versions available to the reading public. Before Ferris's death at Austin in 1962, he was responsible for no less than six volumes of Gibran's work in English.



MR. & MRS. BOBBY MANZIEL AND DAUGHTER ON RIGHT

Courtesy of Mrs. Bobby Manziel

BOBBY MANZIEL 1932

One of Texas's most successful wildcatters and independent oil operators, Bobby Manziel, acted as his own geologist and opened up nine fields during the great East Texas boom of the 1930's. Located in Wood, Smith, and Marion Counties, the fields were named for members of his family. One of his wells, drilled near Hawkins in 1940, resulted in the completion of 243 additional wells which produced 1.5 million barrels of crude within a year's time.

Manziel was born in Lebanon in 1905, and was brought by his parents to America when he was only a year old. The family settled in Arkansas. As a youngster, Manziel worked as a paper boy and sold peanuts at sporting events. Later, he became a boxing and wrestling promoter

in Arkansas, and a sportswriter for newspapers in Monroe, Louisiana, and Fort Smith, Arkansas. In 1932, he moved to Gladewater, Texas, where he operated a small hotel, until the opportunity arose to enter the oil business. On one occasion his friend, Jack Dempsey, loaned him four hundred dollars to complete a wildcat well. Dempsey said later that it was the best investment he ever made. Subsequently, the two became partners on many successful business ventures. In the early 1950's Manziel planned construction of a twenty-two-thousand-seat sports stadium near Tyler as a result of his lifetime interest in such activities.

His business empire grew to include banks, hotels, and newspapers, as well as oil production. He was proud of his ancestry, and was an organizer of Tyler's Cedars of Lebanon Club. He was also vice

president of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs. Two years before his death in 1956, he established the Bobby Manziel Scholarship Award. His widow, Dorothy, has continued the tradition of generous contributions to scholarships and Federation charities.

GEORGE E. KADANE 1935

The fabulous story of oilman George E. Kadane began in the mountain village of Baskinta, Lebanon, in 1880. At eleven his father died and his mother was faced with the task of supporting her children. She immigrated to America with her youngest sons, Fred and Charlie. George and a younger sister arrived later.

When the family reached Denison, Texas, in 1896, George had already tired of the peddler's life. Five years later he apprenticed an architect and builder and quickly learned his life's trade. One of Kadane's first projects was construction of the Catholic Church at Denison. He educated himself at night by reading an encyclopedia. He also learned drafting and became his own architect. Soon he had a thriving business in North Texas and Oklahoma.

The Kadane enterprises grew to include highway and railroad construction. By 1914, he was using his own drilling rig to explore for oil in Oklahoma. Four years later he returned to Texas, first to Dallas then, in 1918, to Wichita Falls, where he and his brother, Fred, formed the Western Drilling Company, which had its first

great success in the Burkburnett boom. He also drilled in fields at Breckenridge, Ranger, Desdemona, and Mexia. Returning to Oklahoma, he reentered the contracting business, and also operated movie houses in Frederick and Altus, Oklahoma. In 1935 he was back in Wichita Falls, drilling for oil in partnership with his sons and his brother, Fred. After eight dry holes, the Kadanés brought in their first sensational wildcat well in what became a sixty-thousand-acre field. Later, there were significant discoveries in Oklahoma and California.

George Kadane died in 1945, but his sons continued in the petroleum industry. Jack Kadane brought in twelve new fields in north and west Texas and pioneered development of the thermal process for the secondary recovery of oil and gas. Jack died in 1972. Today, only Eddie Kadane remains active in his father's profession.

GEORGE KADANE

Courtesy of Margaret Kadane Binger



NAJEEB E. HALABY

1944

One of the most celebrated names in the American aviation industry is that of Najeeb Halaby, Jr., a Dallas native of Syrian ancestry. In 1927, the twelve-year-old Halaby was in the throng that greeted Charles A. Lindbergh's triumphal visit to Dallas, following his historic solo flight across the Atlantic. Then and there, the youngster determined to become an aviator. By the time he entered college, he owned his own plane.

Halaby's Syrian father, born at Aleppo in 1880, came as an eight year old to New York with his parents. At fourteen he began learning the interior decorator's trade. Between 1891 and 1910, he moved to South America, back to New York, to New Orleans, and to Dallas, where he imported oriental rugs, was an interior decorator, and later ran an art shop in the Neiman-Marcus store.

His son, Najeeb, Jr., was born in 1915, educated in the Dallas public schools, graduated from Stanford University, and received a Yale law degree in 1940. During World War II he gained a reputation for courage and intelligence as a Navy test pilot. He manned the first cross country flight of a jet plane in 1944. From 1948 to 1954, he held important administrative positions in the Department of Defense. He then practiced corporate law until 1961, when President Kennedy appointed him director of the Federal Aviation Administration.

In 1965, America's top civilian aviator left government service, having helped



NAJEEB E. HALABY

Southern Federation Bulletin

frame new safety regulations that had reduced airline crash fatalities by two-thirds. He joined Pan American World Airways and rose to become president and chief executive officer. In 1974, he formed his own Halaby International Corporation, a venture capital company, and opened his own international law firm as well.

In addition to his aviation, financial, and legal careers, Najeeb Halaby, Jr. has devoted himself to teaching, serving in numerous corporate directorships, and participating in government study groups relating to defense and foreign affairs. He has also given time and effort to a wide range of civic, charitable, cultural, and educational programs in New York City and elsewhere. He is a trustee of Stanford University, the American University of Beirut, and of the Amon Carter Museum of Western Art at Fort Worth.

DR. MICHAEL DeBAKEY
1948

World-famed cardiovascular surgeon, Dr. Michael DeBakey, was born in 1908, the son of Lebanese immigrants. His father, Morris, came to the United States in 1900, and settled at Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he eventually acquired his own drugstore. Michael DeBakey attended Tulane University, receiving his medical degree in 1932. After his internship at New Orleans's Charity Hospital, and residencies at the Universities of Heidelberg and Strasbourg, Dr. DeBakey returned to Tulane, where he developed a roller pump that later became a vital part of heart-lung machines. During World War II he served in the Surgeon General's Office. In 1948, he came to Tex-

as as chairman of the Department of Surgery at Baylor University College of Medicine in Houston. He is now president of the Baylor College of Medicine and Director of Cardiovascular Research and Training Center at Methodist Hospital in Houston.

Dr. DeBakey, with wide renown for his surgical skill and research, has invented techniques, materials, and devices for heart and vascular surgery besides the roller pump. He pioneered the use of synthetics for grafts and leads efforts to perfect heart valves and artificial hearts. He has invented some fifty-five new surgical instruments and written over six hundred scientific articles. He performs over two thousand operations a year, in addition to his administrative duties, lec-

tures, and service on numerous boards. His honors and awards are international. In 1964, President Johnson appointed Dr. DeBakey head of the Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer, and Stroke. With his own funds the doctor has established the DeBakey Medical Foundation to make research grants and to foster the dissemination of medical knowledge throughout the world.

MICHEL T. HALBOUTY
1960

America's energy shortage and its repercussions were predicted as early as 1960 by Michel T. Halbouty, Houston independent producer, geologist, and petroleum engineer. He forecast that by 1975 the American consumer would blame the oil industry for lagging in exploration and production, thus precipitating a crisis. His prediction was based then upon thirty years of experience in the petroleum industry.

Halbouty was born in Beaumont, the son of Thomas and Sodia Halbouty. The couple had arrived from Beirut in 1902 during the Spindletop oil boom. The Halboutys encouraged the education of their children, who entered the fields of geology, petroleum engineering, teaching, insurance, and medicine. Michel T. graduated from Texas A & M in 1930, took his master's degree in 1931, and was the first to be awarded that university's professional geological engineering degree, in 1956. He was a geologist and petroleum engineer for the Yount-Lee Oil Company from 1931 to 1935, and for the Glenn H.

DR. MICHAEL DEBAKEY

Houston Chronicle





MICHEL T. HALBOUTY AT TEXAS A & M
Courtesy Dr. M. R. Halbouty

McCarthy interests from 1935 to 1937. He then opened his own consultant's office in Houston. By 1942, he had discovered eight oil and gas fields in Texas and Louisiana. During World War II he served in the planning division of the Army-Navy Petroleum Board. Later, he was responsible for discoveries and developments in eighteen Louisiana, thirty-six Texas, and one Alaskan field.

Active in professional circles, Halbouty has also served as a distinguished lecturer for national petroleum and geological societies, has published more than 190 scientific and technical papers, and has authored and co-authored books on the oil industry and its history. In 1965, he

received the Texas Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association's Distinguished Service Award, and in 1966-67, was president of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists. In 1968, Halbouty was named a distinguished alumnus of Texas A & M, where he has created scholarships for geology and petroleum engineering students.

D. D. HACHAR 1967

The D. D. Hachar Foundation for Education was established at Laredo in 1967 by an immigrant from Syria. The Hachar family originally fled Mount Lebanon in the 1860's to escape the infamous Druze massacres of the Maronites, and found refuge in Damascus. About 1920, Dimitri Hachar immigrated to Mexico, where he worked for two years in the oil boom town of Tampico. He then journeyed to Laredo, Texas, where an older brother, Nicholas, had preceded him five years earlier. Nicholas became a department store owner and well-known civic worker. Dimitri, meanwhile, opened a shoe store and soon acquired enough capital to initiate some shrewd real estate investments.

Kind, generous, and retiring, Dimitri Hachar has always been admired for his quietly effective charity work. In 1967, he established the D. D. Hachar Foundation for Education to benefit the people of both Laredo and Nuevo Laredo. Since that time, over one hundred thousand dollars has been given by the foundation to assist disadvantaged people in obtaining an education. Children and adults

have been aided at all levels from elementary to university, and in both vocational and professional fields. Baptist ministers and Catholic priests have been recipients of Hachar funds. In 1973, D. D. Hachar was honored in his own community when a new elementary school was named in his honor.

LEBANESE ATHLETES 1968

Athletic prowess among Lebanese Texans was not at first emphasized by the immigrants, whose overwhelming concern was finding economic security for their families. Boys and girls were expected to work in their parents' stores after school. However, by the 1920's the American-born generation was infected with baseball fever. As these youngsters grew up play-

CHRIS GILBERT *U.T. Austin Sports Information*



ing on neighborhood sandlots, there emerged baseball teams often composed of, and sponsored by, Syrian and Lebanese clubs. As early as 1923, Port Arthur's Young Men's Amusement Club had a team coached by Louis Abraham. By 1925, tournaments were being held with the Syrian clubs in Beaumont, Houston, San Antonio, and Port Arthur. Later, Austin, Victoria, Corpus Christi, and Waco organized teams. When the Southern Federation formed in 1931, part of the activities included a baseball tournament. Several young men, such as Waco's Louis Fadal and George George, went on to play semi-pro ball.

Football has attracted Lebanese fans since the 1920's, also. The diminutive Anees Semaan of San Antonio once tried out for the Texas Longhorn squad and ended up as head cheerleader. Others had better success in winning places on the squad. These have included Albert Nemir (Texas, 1929), Edward Ogdee (Texas A & M, 1942), Steve Jamail (T.C.U., 1965-67), Tommy Asaff (Texas, 1969), George Herro (Texas Tech, 1971-72), Doug Jamail (Nebraska, 1971-72), and Joe Aboussie (Texas, 1973).

The University of Texas All-American halfback, Chris Gilbert, who played from 1966 to 1968 set the greatest record for Lebanese Texan athletes. Half-Lebanese on his mother's side of the family, Houston-born Gilbert broke three school records as a sophomore and was the only player in N.C.A.A. history to gain over one thousand yards three successive years. Gilbert established a new Southwest Con-

ference record for his ninety-six-yard touchdown run in his junior year. He was All-Southwest Conference for three years, Most Valuable Longhorn for three years, and the winner of the first Annual Kern Tips Award. In 1968, Chris Gilbert became the first Lebanese Texan to be named All-American. Today, he is a Houston businessman.

JOE SALEM

1968

Joe Salem has represented Nueces County for three terms in the Texas House of Representatives, beginning in 1968. His father, Sam, was born in Tripoli in 1891, and came to the United States as a teenager. The elder Salem eventually opened a grocery store in Galveston. In 1918, he married Mary Moses, daughter of Lebanese immigrants in Morgan City, Louisiana. The Salems moved to Corpus Christi the following year and opened another store. They were joined by Mrs. Salem's parents, Michael and Rosa Moses, who opened their own grocery business. During the Depression, "Mother Moses" became a local legend as a friend of the down-and-out. She fed and helped them find jobs until her death in 1938.

Her grandson, Joe Salem, was educated in Corpus Christi and served as a pilot and instructor during World War II. After the war, he became a businessman, investor, and developer who took an active role in club work and youth activities. He was a member of President Johnson's National Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.



HELEN DONATH *Courtesy of Mrs. Helen Philpo*

HELEN DONATH

1972

When she made her Corpus Christi debut before a hometown audience in 1972, Helen Donath was already a star attraction of European operatic circles. Born in 1940, Miss Donath received her first musical instruction at the age of two from her Lebanese grandmother, Mrs. Alex Hamauei, who taught the child Arabic, Spanish, and English folksongs. As a teenager, she studied voice at Del Mar College, continued her training in New York City, and began her career in 1961 as a member of the Cologne Opera. Later, she toured Europe with the Hannover Opera and was a great success. In 1965, she married the Opera's principal conductor, Klaus Donath. She sang for four years at the Salzburg Festival and, in 1966, joined the Bavarian State Opera, with which she

has appeared in most of the European houses.

Although Miss Donath had been recording vocal parts since 1962, her American debut was not until 1970, when she first appeared with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, conducted by Sir Georg Solti. During the next two years, she became better known to North American audiences through appearances in New York, San Francisco, Ottawa, and elsewhere. As a lyric soprano, Miss Donath's voice has been praised for its tender lyricism, beauty in color, dramatic power, suppleness and flexibility. Although an unpretentious performer, her warm and responsive stage presence has delighted audiences in America and Europe.

LEBANESE TRADITIONS

The Arabic-speaking immigrants and their descendants still celebrate their ancient traditions in a variety of ways. Arabic language preservation—a nostalgic goal of the immigrant generation—suffered a decline after the second generation, but is experiencing a rebirth. Church-sponsored Arabic schools disappeared in the 1940's to be replaced by Arabic courses in several of Texas's universities. Arabic phrases and family-related words are taught the children in Lebanese Texan homes.

Syrian and Lebanese foods have retained their popularity. Prepared regularly for the family, the special recipes of the Middle East have reached a wider audience through Lebanese food festivals



DANCING THE DABKE

Fred Damon Photographics

held in such cities as Austin, San Antonio, Houston, Beaumont, El Paso and Waco. The role of the woman was nowhere more visible than in church-sponsored fund raising drives which were based on their culinary skills. Arabic bread, beans, salads, pastries, and *kibbe* (meatloaf) helped finance the first Orthodox churches in Texas.

Syrian and Lebanese Texans periodically relive their traditions at social gatherings called *sahrias*. These are festive evenings attended by Arabic Texans from far and near. These occasions are held by families, clubs, and churches to provide an ethnic experience for young and old. Food, drink, Arabic music, and the *dabke* are necessary for the *sahria*. The *dabke* is a traditional Lebanese circle dance. Music is provided by a small band of native instruments—the oud (lute),

the derbukki (hand drum), and the tambourine. The haunting, wailing, half-tone sounds add a new dimension to the musical scene.

CONCLUSION

I would define our Syrian-Lebanese heritage as that group of historic moral values, ancestral customs, racial characteristics and ethnic qualities and virtues acquired over the centuries by our forefathers of Lebanon and Syria; brought over to America by our parents and grandparents as they emigrated; and then bequeathed to us, their American descendants, to be used by us to attain a richer and more rewarding American way of life.

Judge A. A. Semaan

Judge Semaan's speech to the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Clubs at San Antonio in 1966 sums up the pride in ancestral heritage and American citizenship which has characterized one of the state's most colorful ethnic groups.

From those scattered first-comers to our present leaders in business, law, science, politics, and culture, the Syrian and Lebanese Texans have made steady advances. The hardships faced by turn-of-the-century immigrants were rewarded slowly by a better way of life, freedom of religion and politics, and with solid family and community ties. Their children obtained sound educations and contributed their knowledge and skill to every variety of occupation. Their culture has given Texas a welcome addition to its multi-ethnic society.



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