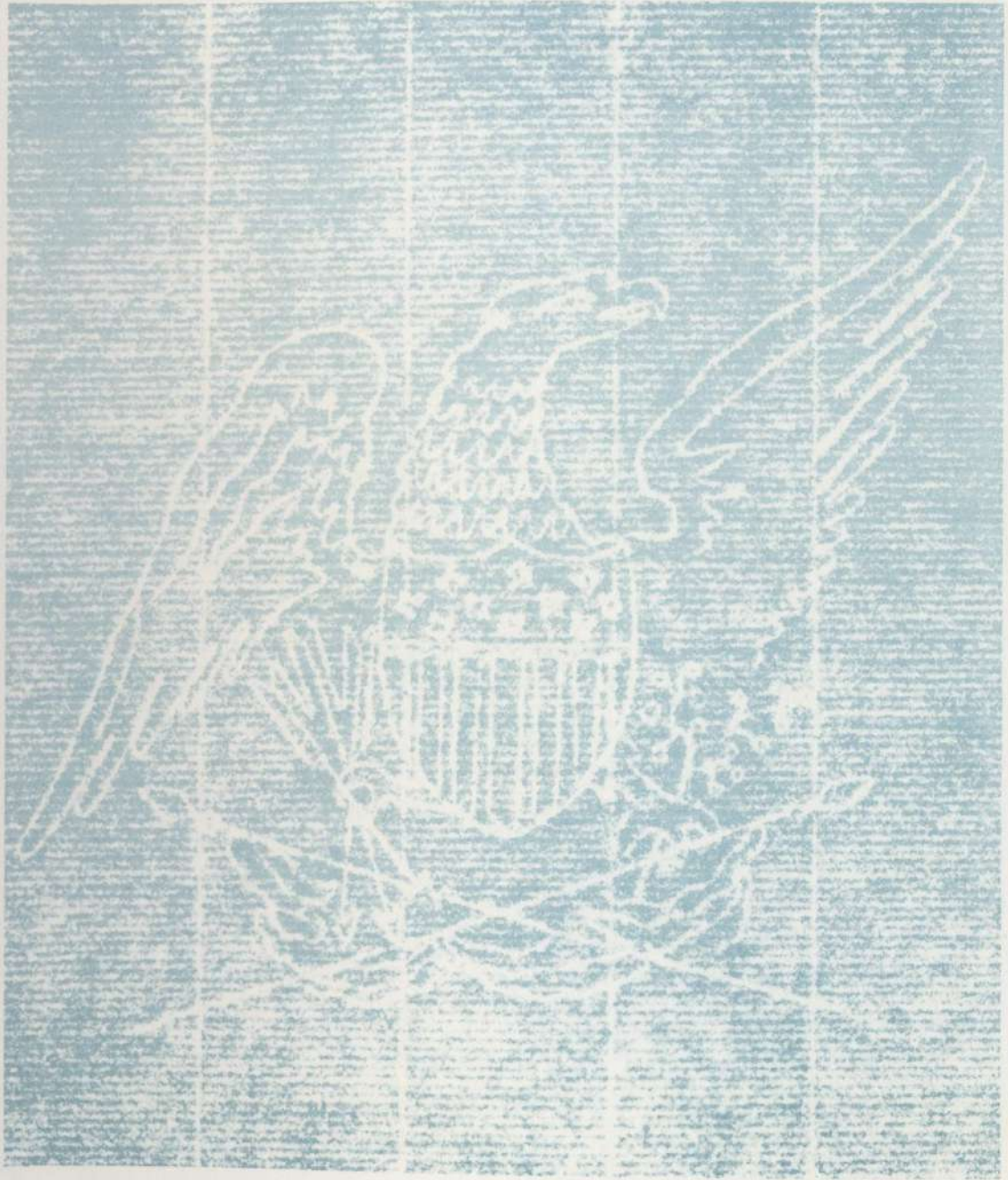


*a newsletter for bibliographers and textual critics*



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**THE DIRECTION LINE**

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Contributions to *The Direction Line* are always welcomed by the Editors, in particular notes of a bibliographical nature, announcements of research in progress, and queries. Correspondence from Europe and the Commonwealth should be sent to R.C. Alston, The British Library, Reference Division, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG. North American correspondence should be sent to Warner Barnes, Department of English, University of Texas, Austin, Texas 78712. Subscriptions (£1.50 or \$3) should be sent to the same addresses. *The Direction Line* will normally be published twice a year.

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books', *Library*, 203-213). His emphasis rests squarely on the primitive state of such studies, which is apparently deficient in all departments. "At the level of simple enumeration, we lack full and systematic guidance to the location of collections"; and there are too few displays of the "full panoply of textual criticism" in the field. As Alderson remarks this neglect seems hard to understand in the context of acknowledged growth and diversification of interest in children's books.

- 6 The papers referred to (*The Bibliothek*, 8(4-6), 101-176) are as follows:

The early history of Glasgow University Library: 1475-1710, by John Durkan.

Glasgow University Library's manuscripts: the non-Hunterian collections, by J. Baldwin.

The Stirling Maxwell Collection of emblem books in Glasgow University Library, by Hester M. Black.

The rediscovery of James Douglas, by C.H. Brock.

- 7 Department of Printed Books: Acquisitions 1965-1975. English books 1501-1640, by M.J. Jannetta (*BLJ*, 71-90, and 182-188).

Foreign bookbindings added to the Department of Printed Books from 1963 to 1974, by Howard M. Nixon (*BLJ*, 44-55).

The British bindings in the Henry Davis Gift, by Mirjam M. Foot, (*BLJ*, 114-128).

#### SWORDS AND SABRES; PAPERS AND PENS:

##### A NOTE ON WATERMARKS AS HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

On March 2, 1836, the Republic of Texas declared its independence from Mexico. Texas struggled to maintain its stability as an independent nation but the Republic was shortlived and in 1845 it became the twenty-eighth state in the Union. Throughout that ten years, Texas maintained a close association with the United States. It has been hinted that perhaps the relationship between the infant

republic and the rapidly expanding United States was more than that of friendly neighbors. A few historians theorize that the U.S. government covertly supported the Texas revolution in order to expand its own territory without embroiling themselves in direct confrontation with Mexico. Since most of the governmental papers of the Republic of Texas were destroyed in a fire in 1855, historians find it difficult to pursue this theory.

Recently, however, while examining the surviving papers of the Texas Army, the author accidentally discovered three interesting watermarks on original documents. These watermarks appear to offer some support to the above theory. The watermarks clearly indicate that the paper with which Texas carried on some of its official governmental business was the same paper used by the U.S. government. Although these watermarks offer no proof of a revolution supported by the U.S., they do raise some interesting speculation about the nature of the relationship.

Even prior to the revolution, Texas ties with the U.S. were already established. Separated only by the Sabine River, rapidly growing numbers of settlers found easy entrance into Texas from the U.S. In only fifteen years, these immigrants increased the population of the territory five-fold over what the Spanish and Mexicans had done in three hundred years of occupation. With so many of its citizens occupying Texas territory, the American government kept a close eye on Texas revolutionary efforts. At one point in the war between Mexico and Texas, U.S. troops crossed into Texas fortifying the frontier town of Nacogdoches. Incensed by this intervention into her internal affairs, Mexico broke off diplomatic relations with the U.S. After three bloody battles the Texas Republic was established and was recognized by the then major powers of the world. These included not only the United States, but England, Belgium, Holland and France, the only country to build a permanent legation in the infant republic.

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of its northern neighbor. Texas governmental monies were banked in the United States after efforts to establish a Texas Bank failed. The currency of exchange for the new nation was printed in New Orleans and Philadelphia. Even the economic health of the Republic of Texas was directly related to the economy of the United States to such an extent that one major cause of the Republic's financial collapse relates directly to the depression raging within the United States.

Besides attempting to establish a solid financial base, Texas faced a second problem of equal importance, the protection of its borders. From the south came continuous rumors of a Mexican invasion to retake the lost province. On its western borders, the Texans were threatened by the fierce Comanche and Kiowa Apaches of the Texas high plains. To counter these two militant forces the Republic once again turned to the U.S. as they established both a navy and a standing army. The Texas Navy was bought in the U.S. and the ships were restocked, refitted, and crews recruited in New Orleans. As for the army, it consisted of men recruited mainly in the U.S. and paid by Texas in land scrip.

Faced with the responsibility of providing equipment for the army units, the Republic placed an order for weapons with N.P. Ames of Springfield, Massachusetts. On January 22, 1840, William Smith, a United States Inspector of Arms, reviewed these weapons and filed this report:

I hereby certify that I have this day inspected and approved Two Hundred and Eighty Dragoon Sabres and Scabbards and Forty Artillery Swords and Scabbards manufactured by N.P. Ames of Springfield Massachusetts. And I do further certify that the said arms have been inspected in accordance with the regulations of the United States Ordnance Department, are equal in quality and workmanship and are of the same pattern of those made for the United States service with

the exception of the words "Texas Dragoons" on the blades of the Sabres and a five pointed star on the hilts of the swords. The letters W.S. are stamped on each sword and sabre as an inspection mark.<sup>1</sup>

Why was a United States ordnance inspector evaluating weapons for the then independent Republic of Texas? Smith might have been paid a retainer by the Republic for his services. On the other hand, inspecting the weapons in his official capacity would not have been unusual if the United States government was helping to underwrite the new country on their southwestern border.

When the sabers and swords arrived in Texas, they were distributed among the frontier troops. Among the few items of official correspondence that were not destroyed in the 1855 fire are the receipts written by the officers of the 1st Infantry and 1st Cavalry regiments of Texas for the weapons they drew from the ordnance department in Austin. All of the receipts have the same unusually detailed watermarks showing a cannon and camp tents behind an American flag.<sup>2</sup> Below this military scene are the onious watermarked words "U.S. Army." There can be no doubt that the paper, manufactured by the Hudson Company of the United States, was printed for the use of the American Army. One can only wonder how the Republic of Texas obtained this paper and why official military stationery of another country was used by the then independent Texas on such minor daily transactions as individual weapon receipts.

A second watermark discovered by the author offers further indication that the government of Texas was comfortable in using official governmental stationery of the United States. On January 31, 1840, Capt. J.C.T. Kennymore of the 1st Texas Infantry requested an issue of clothes for his unit. The watermark from this requisition shows the American Eagle holding arrows and an olive branch while sitting over the banner of the United States.<sup>3</sup> With a few minor changes, the emblem is exactly the same as that which appears on the

American dollar bill today. Once again, one must wonder why the Republic of Texas would be using stationery intended for the internal use of another country.

During the following month, 1st Lt. C.C. Hornsby, stationed at a frontier post on the San Gabriel River near Georgetown, Texas, requisitioned from the Quartermaster General of the Republic of Texas a list of clothing for his command. The watermark on this document again appears to bear the U.S. Eagle which is sitting on a rock over water. It is striking to note that the detail of the scene includes a ship on the horizon behind the eagle.<sup>4</sup> One must wonder how widespread the use of such paper was among the Texans since this requisition was written at a frontier post and not at the nation's capitol in Austin as had been all of the previous receipts and requisitions.

These documents show that the young Republic of Texas received from the United States not only friendship and support but tangible foreign aid in the form of office supplies for the government's daily business. Is it possible that the tangible foreign aid went far beyond gifts of paper? Is it possible that the U.S. also supplied Texas with gifts of military equipment, industrial supports, or other necessities of a struggling society just winning independence from an unhappy Mexico?

At this time, one can only speculate about the extent of the relationship between pre-Union Texas and the U.S. To prove that a clandestine connection actually existed between the two is beyond the scope of this article. Perhaps the most that can ever be said is that the Republic of Texas did use a variety of watermarked stationery intended for the use of the U.S. Government. Any definitive statement must be left to future researchers, but the discovery of these beautiful watermarks might be the key that will unlock the door of the relationship between the two nations.

Ken McElroy  
Bedford

Notes

- 1 Letter from the archives of the Adjutant General, The Republic of Texas. Permission to transcribe this letter and reproduce the watermarks discussed in this article courtesy of the Archives Division, Texas State Library.
- 2 See illustration facing page.
- 3 See illustration, front cover.
- 4 See illustration, back cover.

THE POTS OF NORMANDY IN ENGLISH PRINTED BOOKS

In his introduction to the Jubilee Edition of Briquet's *Les Filigranes* Allan Stevenson briefly discusses the importance of Norman paper as the stock commonly used in English books during most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He reports that watermarks of Norman Pots and Hands with Stars frequently occur together in English books, and that evidence of prices suggests that "the Pot was accounted the better paper."

By his choice, Briquet excluded holdings in English archives and libraries. Unintentionally, he also omitted the Bocage group of Norman mills, which Stevenson thinks may have been the largest group in France.<sup>1</sup> Stocks of Norman paper used in English books for two centuries, therefore, deserve and reward further study.

In the first English edition of *Aristotles Politiques, or Discourses of Government* (London: Adam Islip, 1598) I have noted nine lots of paper marked with Norman Pots and three leaves with Hand and Star or Cross. Seven of the Pots are unrecorded in Briquet or Heawood, one is Briquet 12693, another is a late state of Briquet 12874. The Hand with Cross is also unrecorded.

Using a Carbon 14 Beta-emitter of 40 mC and Kodak Medical No-Screen X-ray film in twelve-minute exposures, I have obtained the following results:

- 1 Pot with two handles. Similar to Heawood 3539. No similar mark



