



Thursday, April 21st, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

**“Introducing the Rice Archaeology Learning Laboratory and student research on Texas history:
Showcasing the William McClure Faunal Collection Donated to Rice University by HAS”**

Dr. Mary Prendergast



The Thursday, April 21st meeting of the Houston Archeological Society will feature a presentation by Dr. Mary Prendergast, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Rice University. Dr. Prendergast will be broadcasting her meeting from the Rice Archaeology lab via Zoom to demonstrate her work. Due to technical concerns regarding feeding the Zoom audio into the auditorium, the meeting will be held virtually rather than in-person. Members will be able to log in to Zoom at 6:30 p.m. for the social time before the meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. Members will receive the link via email shortly before the meeting. The program only will also be presented via YouTube livestream starting at 7:15pm at this link <https://youtu.be/k9S-bHXRT3A>

In 2021, Rice University renovated its archaeology laboratory and expanded the possibilities for teaching and research with the generous donation by the Houston Archeological Society of the William McClure Faunal Collection. This talk will provide a virtual tour of the new laboratory, followed by a presentation of ongoing teaching and research projects, including student analyses of animal bone remains from Varner-Hogg Plantation, and a discussion of opportunities for future HAS collaborations with the Rice University team.

Mary Prendergast is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Rice University. She is an archaeologist focused on human-animal interactions and works primarily in eastern Africa. She co-leads excavations at a large ancient pastoralist site in Tanzania, in collaboration with the National Museum of Tanzania and University of Florida. She also conducts zooarchaeological analyses of sites along the eastern African coast and islands, and collaborates on studies of ancient proteins, lipids, DNA, and stable isotopes in order to better understand ancient African foodways. She co-directs a large interdisciplinary project on ancient African population histories, in collaboration with geneticists at Harvard University. At Rice, she is also mentoring students in Texas historical zooarchaeology research, including at Varner-Hogg Plantation .



Photo by Jeff Fitlow, Rice University

For more information on this meeting email president@txhas.org



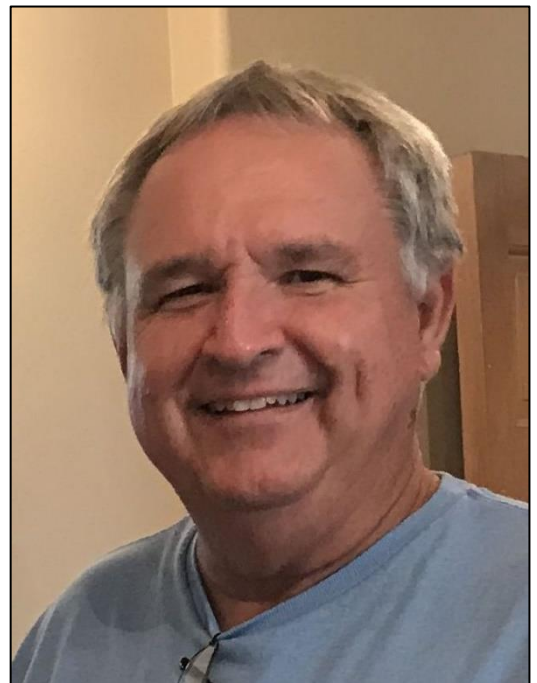
President's Message – Linda Gorski

Out with the Old, In with the New

By the time you read this President's message Rick and I will be on our way to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, to settle into our new home on the beach. However, I have left you in the best possible hands with a strong Board and a new leader!

HAS Vice President Larry Golden has agreed to step up to the plate and finish out my term as President. Many of you already know Larry as an important member of the HAS team and the current Vice President of the Society. What you might NOT know is that professional and avocational archeologists all over the State of Texas respect Larry for his remarkable knowledge of early Texas stoneware, pottery, ceramics, and glass and frequently call on him to identify artifacts as they come out of the ground.

Larry is a native Houstonian, born and bred in Pasadena, Texas. His father was a member of the Houston Archeological Society in the 1970s and worked alongside legends like Leland Patterson, Bill McClure and Sheldon Kindall. Larry followed his grandparents and his parents around Texas identifying Native American and early Texas history sites. He is especially knowledgeable about the area around the San Jacinto Battlefield and the San Jacinto Townsite and has presented several programs on that area to HAS and other groups.



I will continue working with Larry and the rest of the Board through to the annual Meeting in September as vice president, setting up our programs from afar and keeping in touch via Zoom meetings. I know you will give Larry and the rest of the Board - Bob, Diana, Frank, Leonie and Mike - as much support as you've given me in my role as president of HAS over the past ten years.

Finally, thanks again for all your wonderful support and friendship! Please keep Digging up Texas History – one trowel full at a time.

Linda

Houston Archeological Society

Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 24, 2022

Linda Gorski, HAS president, welcomed Members and Guests to our March meeting held at Trini Mendenhall Community Center and via Zoom and YouTube Livestream. Meeting began at 7 pm. In attendance was about 35 in person and 24 on Zoom. This meeting was held one week later than usual due to the speaker being ill.

Treasurer's Report (Bob Sewell):

Bob reported amounts in the HAS checking and savings accounts. If any member is interested in more information about HAS finances, please see Bob. From the amount Bob announced in HAS accounts, a check for \$15,000 has been paid to Chet Walker for Geophysical Survey at Arroyo Dulce.

- **Membership (Bob Sewell):** We have 142 members so far in 2022. Memberships not paid by the March deadline will cause your name to be removed from the membership list. If you joined in September or later this year, your membership will be good through 2022. If you are paying your membership renewal online, go straight to HAS membership page on our website. Credit card payment is the best.
- **Website (Bob Sewell):** If you experience a problem, please contact Bob. The website is currently not experiencing any problems.
- **Newsletter (Bob Sewell):** Thanks to everyone who has contributed an article to our newsletter. If you have a topic for an article dealing with Southeast Texas archeology, and need help with writing it, please contact Bob.
- **HAS Hats (Bob Sewell):** The hat order has arrived. Hats will be available for pick-up at activities and the cost is \$15.
- **Audit Committee:** The Audit Committee has reviewed the books and found everything in good order. The only item that was found was one check not placed in the expense file but the check was never deposited (Trini M. room deposit check). The committee members were Louis Aulbach, Geoff Mills and John Lumb.

New Business:

Proposed Amendments to the Constitution: With the recently pass amendment that allow meetings to be held virtually, then we received a request to have all voting virtual as well. The constitution committee members Louis Aulbach, Chairman, Bob Sewell, Diana Cooper and Linda Gorski. Several items were determined to be an improvement to HAS:

The current process of in-person show of hands does not accommodate those members who are unable to attend an in-person meeting for any of the following reasons:

- a) Illness or inability to travel
- b) Reside at a distance from the meeting location that makes it impractical to attend i.e., reside too far from Houston to be able to attend an in-person meeting, reside out of the state of Texas (either in another state or country)

Also, meetings are open to the public. A show of hands may include votes from people who are not actually HAS members. In order to address this issue would require additional administration, which may not be practical, during in-person meetings.

Benefits of email/postal voting

Inclusion: The proposed process will enable all members, regardless of their location to participate in the voting process.

Consistency: The voting process will be independent of whether the meetings are conducted in-person or virtually. The process will be the same regardless.

Security/Integrity: Emails/postal ballots will be sent to HAS members on record. Responses can be checked against the membership list. Therefore, only votes from registered HAS members will be counted.

The committee has developed a proposed changes to the constitution that will be sent to all members in the mail to review. The next time HAS meets in person, probably in April, we will take a vote. Any questions can be emailed to Louis Aulbach, constitution chairman, or Diana Cooper, Secretary.

Update on Lone Oak, Frelsburg, TX: The site is private property ownership that we have been working for 4 years now. A report has been written discussing the findings to date. There is a nearby property that is available to start as a new project. If the new project is started, then the work at Lone Oak will be placed on hold while working on the nearby property. Work will not be scheduled for every weekend due to cost of gas and other projects and labs.

Kirbee Kiln site Montgomery County (Bob Sewell): The event was a huge success due to the good turn-out of members. The conservatory was very complimentary of HAS. Many items were found such as a possible floor or wall of the domestic site of the people that lived and worked at the kiln. In the fall there may be more opportunity for HAS to assist. Once HAS is allowed to share the photos they will be placed in the newsletter.

Reports and Journals (Louis Aulbach): Our next journal, # 144, will be available in April. Currently there are 4 or 5 articles. The articles will focus on the San Felipe de Austin Dig by John Lohse, Horseshoes in Texas, a Thimble from the 18th or 19th century from France found in Frostdown, and another article about Camp Kirby in Dickenson, TX, a civil war camp by Charly Gordy, ceramics from Cottonfield by Tim Perttula, and information from Mike Woods about a Butted Knife Found in Comal County.

Next month program - April 21st: Linda Gorski reported that the April 21st monthly meeting will feature a program by Zooarcheologist Dr. Mary Prendergast. Dr. Prendergast is the associate professor of Anthropology Learning Laboratory and student research on Texas History at Rice University. She will give a program from the Rice lab named in honor of HAS member Bob McClure, who donated his zoological collection to Rice University.

New President: With deep sadness Linda formally announced her resignation as President. She will be moving to be closer to her children and to play more golf. Linda passed the gavel to Larry Golden who will move from Vice President to President to continue leading the HAS into the future. Bob Sewell presented Linda with a plaque for her service to HAS. He also presented her with a map of the San Jacinto site and an inset picture of Linda recovering a 17" bayonet at the San Jacinto site which was stated to be the best day of her life. Larry presented Linda with items she will need at her new beach front home – Sand shovel and pail, San Jacinto beach towels, golf towels and barnacle/shell home decorations. Frank presented a vase of flowers.

Tonight's Program: The speaker at the March 24th meeting was Chris Kneupper. He spoke in character on the History of the Forts Velasco at the Original Mouth of the Brazos River.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 p.m.

- Diana Cooper, Secretary

A TRIBUTE TO LINDA GORSKI

As many of you know our HAS President, Linda Gorski, is standing down from her post and moving to South Carolina to be closer to her daughter. She will, however, continue for a time as Vice-President to ensure continuity. She is a hard act to follow, but I am sure that Larry Golden will be a great President.

Anyway, at the March Monthly Meeting, we were not just going to let Linda walk away without saying something about her.



Linda has been a member of HAS for decades, and before that a founding member of the Fort Bend Archeological Society. Since September 2012 she has been the President of HAS. During that time, her leadership has kept HAS at the forefront of Texas Archeology. She has led the society from a low of 35 members to a record high last year of 255. Through her many contacts she has enabled us to participate in numerous projects, either on our own as HAS, or working with professional CRM companies.

However, it is her enthusiasm for archeology that we will remember, and miss the most, exemplified by her shrieks of joy when some interesting artifact has been found in the field. I am still partially deaf in one ear!

Of course, we will see her again, she remains an HAS Board member, is a HAS Lifetime member, and will attend our monthly meetings via ZOOM.

Before presenting Linda with several gifts, I asked Linda if she remembered what the most memorable day in her life was, excluding her wedding day or having her children. She did remember and said that it was the day that she recovered a 17" bayonet from San Jacinto. So, at the meeting we presented her with several gifts, including a map of the San Jacinto Battle Ground with an inset picture of Linda with the bayonet.

- Bob Sewell, Treasurer

HAS Memberships for 2022 Are Now Due

We hope you will renew your membership in the Houston Archeological Society and maybe even give a membership as a gift to someone you know will enjoy digging up Texas history with us – one trowel full at a time. You can either pay your dues online using a credit card at <http://www.txhas.org/membership.html> or download a hardcopy of the membership form from <http://www.txhas.org/PDF/HAS%20Membership%20Form.pdf> and mail it to us with your payment.

Our membership is the best deal in town:

\$25 Individual membership

\$30 Family Membership

\$35+ Contributing membership

\$15 Student membership

Remember that benefits of your membership include the unique opportunity to dig with us at archeological sites in the area, work with us at our labs where we process artifacts from those sites, and your FREE copies of our current academic publications including HAS Reports and Journals. Please join us!!!!

Notes on Munitions
Nose Cast Minié Balls
By Tom Nuckols.

Recommended reading: Notes on Munitions: The Minié Ball (Part 1) by Tom Nuckols. Houston Archaeological Society newsletter, The Profile, May 2020 @ <https://www.txhas.org/PDF/newsletters/2020/2020%20May%20Profile.pdf>.

Preface

Lead Minié balls (c. 1855-1865) were also referred to singularly as a ball, bullet or Minié bullet. In this article, I will use the term bullet¹.

In this article, the term “cavity” has three meanings:

1. The hollow space in a bullet mold block that is a negative impression of half of a bullet to be cast.
2. The single hollow space in the bullet mold blocks that is a negative impression of a bullet to be cast, created when both of the mold’s blocks are closed.
3. The hollow cone shaped space in the base of a bullet.

Introduction

In two of my previous newsletter articles, December, 2020 and March 2022, I have discussed .58 caliber lead bullets that were made in a nose cast bullet mold. This article will illustrate a nose cast bullet mold and explain how it works.

I will begin by giving you Nonte’s definition of a bullet mold, followed by Thomas’s explanation of how Civil War bullets were made. I was hesitant to include both quotes, as the information contained in both of them are somewhat redundant, however, they complement each other.

A bullet mold is a device for forming bullets for small-arms ammunition from molten lead. Generally, a bullet mold consists of two closely fitted blocks, into each of which has been formed half of the negative impression of the bullet desired. The blocks are then clamped together or held closed, and molten lead is poured in to fill the cavities. Separation of the blocks then allows the bullets to fall free.

Molds are generally fitted with pliers-type handles, for convenience in handling, closing, and opening the blocks, with alignment pins and lubrication points, and with a device known as a sprue cutter, which trims off excess lead before the blocks are opened to drop the completed bullet (1973: 44).

Civil War bullets were manufactured in several different ways. The most elementary of these was casting, i.e., pouring molten lead into a mold made of iron or brass. Molds contained one or more cavities and are categorized by the location from which the lead is poured into the cavity and forms the bullet, viz.: nose cast, side cast, lip cast, or base cast.

Casting was the least satisfactory method of forming a bullet. It required that the lead and mold both be extremely hot to prevent layering and air bubble entrapment which impaired the accurate flight of the bullet. After the ball was cast, the excess lead or sprue had to be removed. Often the sprue removal was done as an integral operation of the mold while the bullet was still in the cavity. If not, the bullet was taken from the mold and trimmed by separate means (Thomas 1993: 5).

¹ During the American Civil War, Fifth New Jersey Infantry soldier, Private Alfred Bellard, referred to Minié balls as “leaden pills” (Donald (ed.) 1975: 210).

A Nose Cast Bullet Mold

The top view of a nose cast, single cavity bullet mold in the open position is shown in Figure 1. This mold is capable of casting one, .58 caliber, three ring, lead bullet with a cone shaped base cavity.

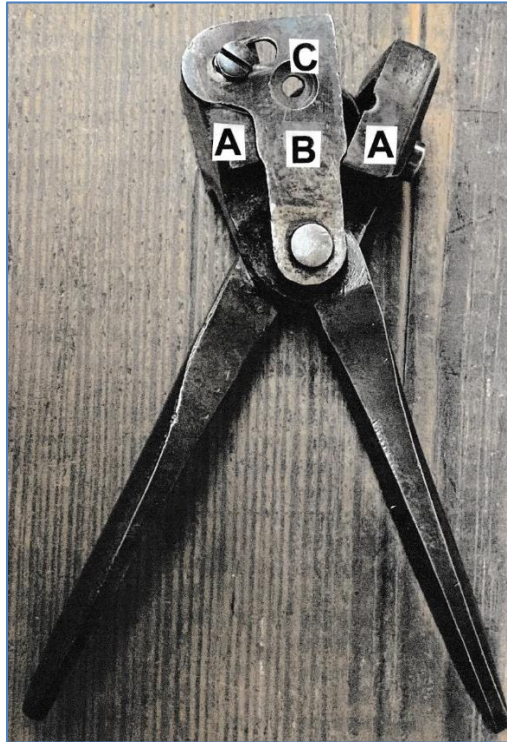


Figure 1. Top view of a nose cast bullet mold in the open position. A is one of the two blocks that contains half of the negative impression of the bullet to be cast. B is the sprue cutter that removes the excess lead, called the sprue, from the bullet after it is cast. C is the sprue hole where the molten lead is poured into the mold to cast a bullet.

The same mold in the upside down, open position, is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. The same mold as shown in Figure 1, in the upside down, open position. To the right is one of two blocks containing a cavity which is half of the negative impression of a bullet to be cast. Nesting in the top of the cavity is the plug. The plug creates the cavity in the base of a bullet. The plug is removable and held in place by a plug screw. Figures 1 & 2 from SHOOTERS FORUM @. <https://www.shootersforum.com/threads/how-can-i-figure-out-what-caliber-this-bullet-mold-is.240126/>.

How A Nose Cast Bullet Mold Works

Figure 3 is the view of the face of a bullet mold block containing a cross sectional view of a molded bullet. To make the bullet, molten lead is poured into the sprue hole at the top of the mold. After the bullet solidifies and cools, the sprue cutter is pivoted slightly to cut off the excess lead, called the sprue (figure 4). Once the sprue is cut off, the bullet can be removed from the mold by opening the blocks (since this author has never cast a bullet in a nose cast bullet mold, it is unknown if the plug has to be pulled out, prior to removing the bullet from the mold).

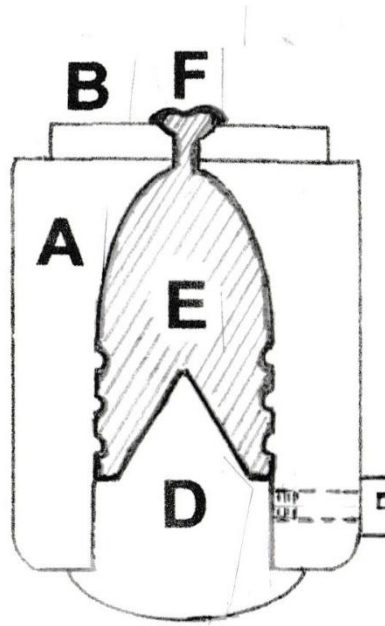


Figure 3. A is the face of one of the mold blocks. B is the sprue cutter. D is the plug. E is a cross-sectional view of a molded bullet sitting in the mold block. F is the bullets sprue. The plug screw is in the block at lower right. Illustration by Author.

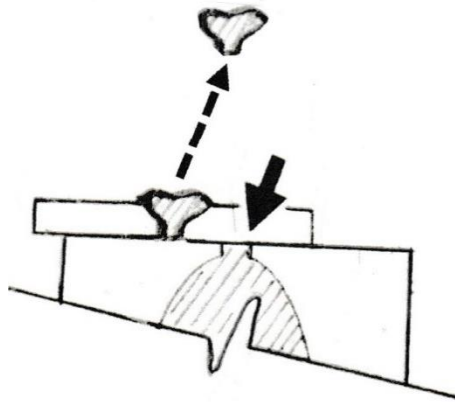


Figure 4. In this view, the sprue cutter has been pivoted slightly to cut off the sprue. A sprue was either discarded or saved to cast more bullets. The arrow to the right, points to the little bump of lead on the nose of the bullet called the sprue nib. Illustration by Author.

The Molded Bullet

After the bullet is removed from the mold, it has a sprue nib on its nose where the sprue was cut off, and two mold seams running down the length of the bullet at 180° apart. The mold seams are caused by molten lead filling up the tiny spaces where the two mold blocks join. A nose cast bullet is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. A .58 caliber, unfired, nose cast bullet. One of two mold seams is visible running down the length of the bullet in the middle. The sprue nib is the little gray spot on the nose of the bullet to the right of the seam. This bullet has a length of 1.02 inches, a mean diameter of 0.565 inches and a grain weight of 487.8. The cone depth is 0.335 inches. Author's collection

References

Donald, Herbert David, editor

1975 *GONE FOR A SOLDIER. THE CIVIL WAR MEMORIES OF Private Alfred Bellard*. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, MA.

Nonte, George C., Jr.

1973 *Firearms Encyclopedia*. Harper & Row, New York, NY.

Thomas, Dean S.

1993 *Ready...Aim...Fire! Small Arms Ammunition in the Battle of Gettysburg*. Thomas Publications, Gettysburg, PA.

The Lasting Legacy of Henke and Pillot

by Louis F. Aulbach and Linda C. Gorski

On the north bank of Buffalo Bayou, a short distance east of the Travis Street bridge, there is a white concrete foundation structure that extends across the upper levels of the bank. This feature is a remnant of the building that once was a large storage facility for the foremost grocery company in the Houston area, the Henke and Pillot Company (see Figure 1).



Figure 6: The white concrete foundation ruins in front of the UH-Downtown Academic Building are from the former Henke and Pillot warehouse on the site.

The story of the Henke and Pillot grocery business had its modest beginnings in the post-Civil War environment in Houston. Many prospective entrepreneurs saw the opportunities that were available in Texas, and in Houston in particular. One young man hoping to take advantage of those opportunities was 21-year-old Henry Henke. Henke was born in Westphalia, a region in Germany along the northern Rhine River, on March 17, 1851. He immigrated to New Orleans in 1866, at the age of fifteen, to join his older brother who owned a grocery store in the city. Henry worked for his brother for six years before deciding to seek his fortune in Texas, and in Houston in particular. With about a thousand dollars to his name, Henry Henke arrived in Houston in 1872, and shortly thereafter opened his own store on Congress Avenue opposite the Market House in Market Square. He advertised himself as a wholesale and retail dealer in groceries and liquors.¹

Business was good for Henke during his first decade in business. Although he sold wine and liquors, he realized that his best products were groceries, provisions, flour, butter, and cheese. In a marketing twist, Henke sold his groceries both as individual retail items and in wholesale quantities. In 1882, Henke opened a second store on Liberty Road in the Fifth Ward. Although his store had been a one-man operation for a decade, it was necessary to get assistance to manage the growing business. He hired a young man, Camille Gabriel Pillot, to be his bookkeeper.²

Camille G. Pillot was the son of Joseph Eugene Pillot who immigrated to the United States from France as a young boy with his father and mother Claude Nicolas and Jeannie (or Jane) Pillot. The Pillot family arrived in Texas in 1837 and settled in north Harris County in the Cypress Community near the modern town of Tomball. Joseph Eugene Pillot (who preferred his middle name) was a prominent real estate developer in Houston in the second half of the 19th century who is best known as the proprietor of the Eugene Pillot Opera House, a

fashionable entertainment venue in the city. By the age of eighteen, young Camille Pilot had learned the skills of business from his father, and he was working as a bookkeeper for the Robert Cotter and Company, one of Houston's first drug stores. In 1882, at age 21, Camille Pilot went to work for Henry Henke, and the association of these two men would endure for decades.³

Over the last two decades of the 19th century, the Henke and Company enterprises prospered. The wholesale and retail grocery businesses provided provisions for the local residents of Houston as well as the farmers and residents of the county who made the trip into the city to stock up on supplies. Henke expanded the services they offered with the establishment of the Houston Refrigerating Company (later known as Henke's Artesian Ice and Refrigerating Company) and the Texas Molasses Company. As Henke introduced new ways to satisfy the needs of his customers, Pilot managed the accounts. The relationship between the two men was so good that Henke made Pilot a partner in the business in 1884. As a further indication of the strength of their partnership, the company's name was changed to Henke and Pilot in 1889. Henke held the title of president of the company, and Pilot was the vice-president.⁴

To accommodate the storage and distribution of the provisions of the grocery operations, a warehouse was built on NSBB Block 6, a tract of land on the north bank of Buffalo Bayou in front of the modern Academic Building of the University of Houston -- Downtown. This three story, iron clad structure with a basement, identified as Henke's Ware House, can be seen on the 1896 Sanborn Map of Houston. Grocery staples and molasses were stored in the basement level of the warehouse. The mixing and storage of molasses took place on the first and second floors of the building, and cotton was also stored on those two floors. A railroad siding served the north side of the warehouse.⁵

By 1907, a new building, referred to as the Henke Grocery and Feed Warehouse, was constructed on the NSBB Block 6 site for the Henke and Pilot Company. The new warehouse was a corrugated iron clad structure consisting of two stories and a basement. The railroad siding served the thirty-foot front face of the north side of the warehouse, but access to the building from the north was also possible on a stone paved street (see Figure 2).⁶

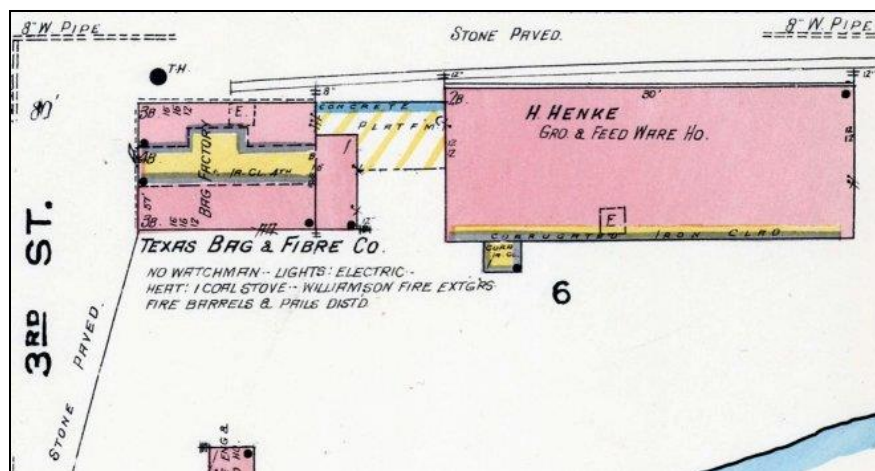


Figure 7: The Sanborn Map of 1907 shows the new Henke and Pilot warehouse on NSBB Block 6.

In the first decade of the new century, Henry Henke approached his thirtieth year in the grocery business. He had seen the company grow over the years. He had an outstanding business partner in Camille Pilot, and the management of the company's operations was in good hands. However, matters in his personal life required his close attention. Henke's oldest daughter Eleanor had married Dr. Readding Lloyd Williams, a physician who lived in Norfolk, Virginia in 1905. About two years later, in 1907, Eleanor was diagnosed with nephritis, a chronic inflammation of the tissues in the kidneys that may be caused by lupus.⁷ To care for their daughter, Henry and Catherine Henke moved to Norfolk. Although Henke, in his early fifties, continued to manage his business affairs

remotely from Virginia, he relied on Camille Pillot to develop a management team in Houston to keep the grocery enterprise successful.⁸

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, Henry Henke and Camille Pillot employed a number of loyal and dedicated managers who provided the talent and vision to successfully guide the grocery enterprise for the next four decades. Among these managers were Charles Henry Kuhlmann, John C. Benziger, and William D. Sutherland. The company took a critical step in the succession plan on July 29, 1924 when the Henke and Pillot grocery company was incorporated as a public company. Henry Henke, now in his early 70's, stepped aside as president of the company (although he retained a role as a vice-president), and Camille Pillot became the corporation's president. Charles H. Kuhlmann served as vice-president and general manager, and John C. Benziger, the company's buyer, also served as a vice-president. William D. Sutherland, who joined the company in 1912 as a bookkeeper, was the company's auditor at this time. He would rise into the executive ranks within the next decade.⁹

A significant management transition at Henke and Pillot, Incorporated took place in 1928 when Henry Henke passed away. Henry and his wife Catherine had moved from Norfolk, Virginia after their daughter Eleanor succumbed to her chronic illness on October 17, 1927. The Henke's took up residence with their other daughter Leona Katherine Bethea who lived in San Antonio, Texas. Henry Henke suffered a heart attack in December, 1927, and he died of complications from the illness on February 18, 1928. One of the founders of Houston's pioneering grocery business was gone.¹⁰

The Henke and Pillot Company Wholesale Grocery Warehouse on the banks of Buffalo Bayou gives evidence that the grocery business continued to grow during the 1920's. A large, single story shipping department was added along the south side of the warehouse of 1907 for the efficient distribution of merchandise. The receipt of goods and provisions into the warehouse was enhanced by the construction of a four-foot-wide platform on the northeast corner of the building to facilitate the delivery of goods from the railroad siding (see Figure 3). These warehouse improvements were needed since the grocery company had expanded to four stores in Houston during the decade of the 1920's.¹¹

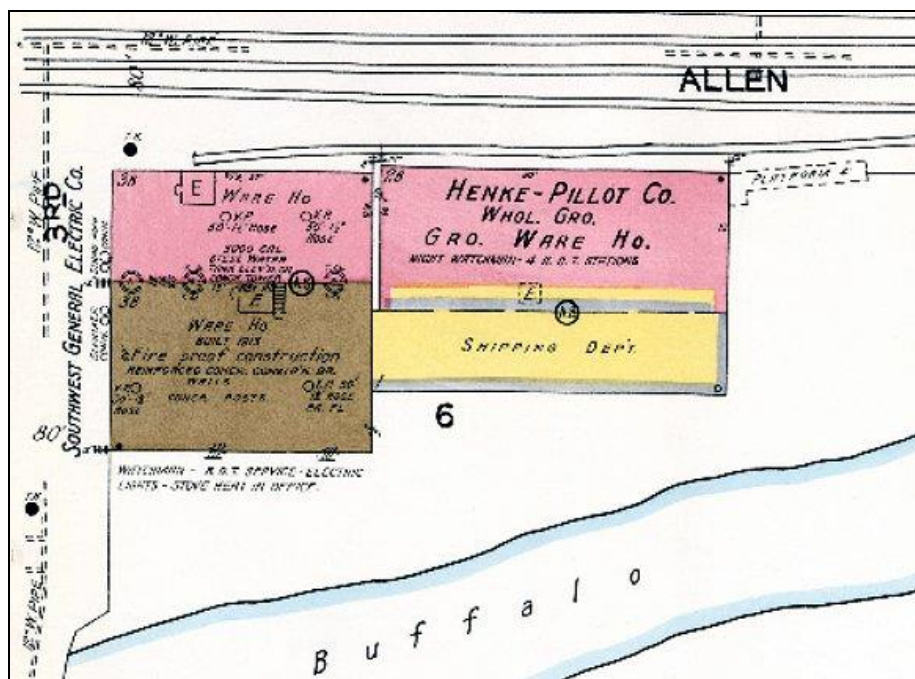


Figure 8: The Sanborn Map of 1924 shows the Henke and Pillot warehouse on NSBB Block 6 with the addition of the Shipping Department on the south side of the building and the loading platform on the northeast corner of the structure.

The year 1940 marked the end of an era for the Henke and Pillot Company as Camille G. Pillot, at age 79, decided to retire from the business. Pillot sold all of his interest in the grocery business, and the Henke and Pillot company was handed over to the managers who had worked with him for so many decades. A new corporate organization was created to address the evolving grocery business in Texas, and under the re-incorporation of Henke and Pillot, Incorporated on July 3, 1940, long time employee William D. Sutherland assumed the role of president and general manager.¹²

With almost thirty years of experience with the Henke and Pillot company, from his initial job in 1912 as a bookkeeper, Sutherland rose through a succession of executive positions including auditor, corporate secretary and treasurer, and general manager. He had witnessed the marketing programs that made the business successful, and he realized that having multiple stores located in the city's neighborhoods was an excellent strategy. In 1941, the opportunity for Henke and Pillot to expand that marketing plan came when Sutherland was able to acquire the ABC Food Markets of Houston. The ABC Food Markets was a Houston chain of groceries that operated fourteen stores, nine in Houston, three in Beaumont, and two in Galveston. Eight years later, in 1949, Henke and Pillot purchased the four Lone Star Super Stores located in Port Arthur and Orange, Texas. Within a decade, Henke and Pillot became a regional enterprise of supermarkets that took an enhanced grocery business to its customers in suburban neighborhoods.¹³

The effect of this expansion can be seen in the site on the banks of Buffalo Bayou. The 1951 Sanborn map of the location shows that the former Henke and Pillot warehouse was now occupied by the Black Brothers Furniture Company. The warehouse was no longer large enough to handle the volume of activity for the Henke and Pillot operations, and it was relocated.¹⁴

A milestone in the story of Henke and Pillot was crossed when founder Camille Gabriel Pillot passed away in Houston on October 1, 1953 at the age of 92. At the time of his death, Henke and Pillot operated twenty-nine stores in the Houston and Gulf Coast area.¹⁵

The success of the Henke and Pillot supermarket chain attracted the attention of the Kroger Corporation, a large grocery concern based in Cincinnati, Ohio. Kroger had no stores in Texas, and the company approached William D. Sutherland about a merger. Sutherland may have declined proposals in the past, but with all of the founders and former executives now gone, it seemed appropriate to pursue an agreement regarding the future of the company. On May 12, 1955, Sutherland, who controlled sixty to seventy percent of the voting stock of Henke and Pillot, negotiated a sale of the company to the Kroger Corporation in a cash transaction valued at between \$2.7 and \$3.24 million. At the time of the merger with Kroger, Henke and Pillot operated twenty-six supermarkets Houston, Beaumont, Galveston, Port Arthur, Pasadena, Orange, and Velasco.¹⁶

William Sutherland initially stayed on with Kroger after the merger, but in the 1960's, the Henke and Pillot stores were rebranded as Kroger stores. Sutherland retired and moved to Fredericksburg, Texas, and it was in that town that he passed away on December 5, 1972 at age 81. The legacy of Henke and Pillot did not completely pass away. Several of the Henke and Pillot stores continue to operate under the Kroger brand even in the twenty-first century. For example, the Kroger grocery on the southwest corner of North Shepherd Drive and 11th Street in the Heights neighborhood was once a popular Henke and Pillot store. But, the pioneering of supermarket merchandising with refrigeration, cold storage facilities, drugs, housewares, soda fountains, and major appliances is the lasting legacy of the two men who brought those concepts to Houston and America.¹⁷

Footnotes

1. "Henry Henke Dies at San Antonio Home of Daughter." *Houston Chronicle*, February 18, 1928, p1-2. "Henry Henke." *Mooney & Morrison's directory of the city of Houston for 1877-78* (Houston: Mooney & Morrison, 1877), 118.

2. "Henry Henke." *Morrison & Fourmy's general directory of the city of Houston for 1882-83* (Houston: Morrison & Fourmy, 1882), 169, 237.

3. "Pillot." Russell, Marie. *1850 Census Harris County, Texas* with added genealogical notes. Baytown: n.p., 1981.
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Houston Archeological Society

Monthly Meeting Programs for 2022

6:30pm Third Thursday of every month

May 19th – Dr. Jon C. Lohse, *The Calf Creek Horizon: A Mid-Holocene Hunter-Gatherer Adaptation in the Central and Southern Plains of North America*

June – TAS Field School – No program

July 21st – **Field School Attendees** - Report on 2022 Field School in Kerrville, Texas

All **Houston Archeological Society** meetings are normally free and open to the public. For more information about HAS then visit our website at www.txhas.org or email lindagorski@cs.com. You can also join our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/123659814324626/>

Please submit articles for publication to *The Profile* Editor Bob Sewell at newsletter@txhas.org. Please submit articles for the May 2022 issue no later than 25th April 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ARCHEOLOGY IN THIS AREA, CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:

HAS BOARD MEMBERS

Larry Golden, President, president@txhas.org
Linda Gorski, Vice President, lindagorski@cs.com
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Diana Cooper, Secretary, secretary@txhas.org

Mike Woods, Director-at-Large, mikeswoods@aol.com
Leonie Waithman, Director-at-Large, lwraithman@live.com
Frank Kozar, Director-at-Large, tupflash@aol.com

TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Sandra E. Rogers, Region V Director, sojourne47@gmail.com

AREA TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION ARCHEOLOGY STEWARDS

Elizabeth Aucoin, ekpj.aucoin@prodigy.net
Louis Aulbach, lfa1@att.net
Liz Coon-Nguyen, elizabeth.coonnguyenmd@gmail.com
Bob Crosser, 281-341-5251
Debbie Eller, debjajul@yahoo.com
Charlie Gordy, chagordy@yahoo.com
Linda Gorski, lindagorski@cs.com
Bruce Grethen, bruceg999@gmail.com
Sue Gross, suegbobs@comcast.net
Joe D. Hudgins, manso@jdhudgins.com
Kathleen Hughes, hughes.kathleen@yahoo.com
Brenda Jackson, brendajacks1@yahoo.com

Ron Jackson, ronj845@gmail.com
Beth Kennedy, bethiekennedy902@gmail.com
Don Keyes, keyes_don@hotmail.com
Sharon Menegaz, smenegaz@rcseagles.org
Clint Lacy, clacy13@comcast.net
Tom Nuckols, tnuckols58@att.net
Sandra & Johnny Pollan, pollanone@sbcglobal.net
Sandra E. Rogers (Sandy), sojourne47@gmail.com
Gary Ryman, gkryman@gmail.com
Steve Salyer, salyer4@hotmail.com
Bob Sewell, robert-sewell@att.net
Paul Spana, pcspana@comcast.net