

John H. Robinson

A Pioneer Austin Family

1815 - 2010

Ann Johnston Dolce



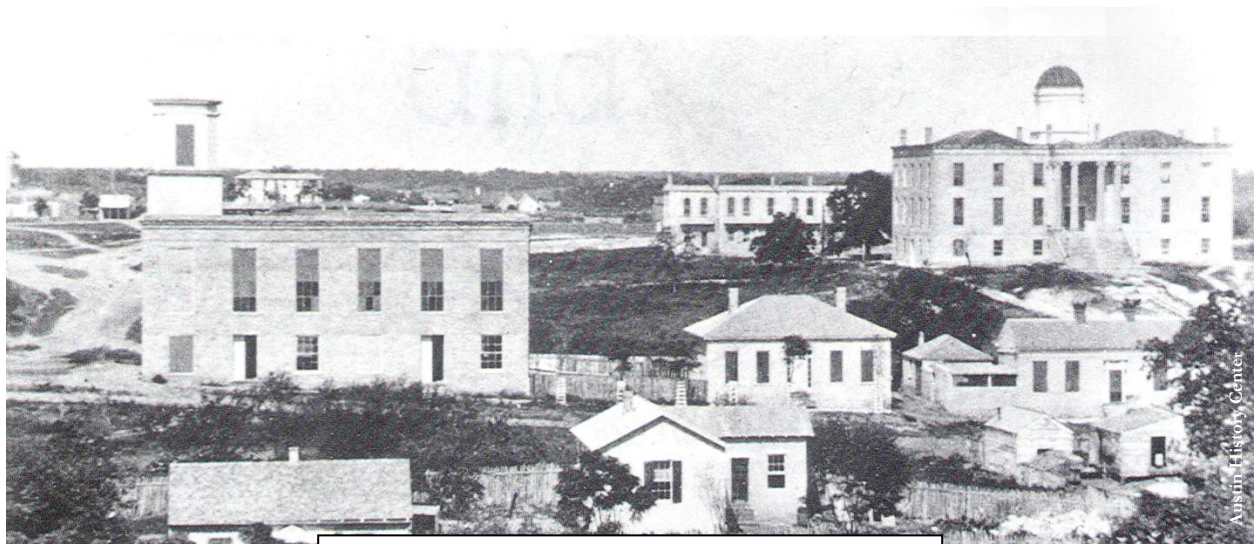
Robinson – Rosner Building
504 Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas

To Mary Jo Butler Cooper (1912-2010)
She taught generations to appreciate and preserve family
history and Austin buildings.



Robinson – Macken House
Home of John H. and Elizabeth Robinson
702 Rio Grande, Austin, Texas

Introduction



Austin, Texas 1856
A view of the city at the time of the arrival of J. H. Robinson
Note the capitol building in upper right corner.

Introduction

John Hermy Robinson Sr. was not a typical emigrant to the United States. He did not come fleeing religious persecution, famine, or war. He was not part of a land grant movement. He came because of business; he stayed because of love, a love he met in New Orleans, Louisiana. He moved his family from New Orleans to find financial success and safety, settling first in Little Rock, Arkansas and then in Austin, Texas. Both cities were state capitals situated in beautiful surroundings and experiencing periods of growth and vitality. Robinson's is a story of a merchant who became an integral part of a community, setting down deep roots and friendships that spanned generations.

This document represents the efforts of the descendants of John H. Robinson to gather and compile the history of the Robinson family in Austin, Texas. The text undoubtedly contains errors and incorrect information as well as missing information. In some cases when contradictory information has been obtained both sources of information are noted. The most recent generations of the Robinson family are presented with only basic historical facts. It is hoped that someday their grand accomplishments will be added to this record.

Significant contributions to the Robinson research were made by Carla Robinson Allen, Robert Grayum Baker Jr., Austin Swancoat Barber, Suzanne Robinson Bishop, Jama Overstreet Brown, J. Lawrence Buell IV, Sandy Smith Buell, Janne Anderson Burgio, Kelly Butler, Marguerite Walling Butler, Charlotte Carothers, Marsha Caven, Mary Jo Butler Cooper, Manning Robinson Day, Beth Peninger Beran Duke, George Anne Robinson Elmore, Sue Hartnett Gathman, Richard Gerhard, Martha Cooper Golden, Diana Butler Gribble, Peggy Peninger Hartnett, Kaki Peninger Hayden, Kathryn Hayden, Nobie Bremond Hendricks, Kay Butler Howell, Mark Hurd, Missy Miller Jackson, Carolyn Hartnett Jarchow, Virginia Schneider Johnston, Alan Jones, Lucinda Cruse Marinis, Madelaine Umstattd Morris, Ann Robinson Musgrave, McKay Brown Nutt, Carol Matz Owen, Paulette Plate Pearson, Alfred Robinson IV, Brad Robinson, Christopher Carr Robinson, George Robinson III, Laura Conner Robinson, Richard Coad Robinson, James H. Rogers, Becky Butler Scott, William Patrick Scott III, Scott Sibley, Eleanor Buell Stephenson, Susan Howell Templeton, Richard B. Turbiville, Tom Bloss Turbiville, Patricia Robinson Tyler, Alycia Smith Wootton, Ginger Umstattd, and Jeanne Smith Umstattd. Special thanks must be given to the staff of the Austin History Center for their expertise, patience, and amazing resources. Leonard Dolce provided support, sustenance and understanding. Beth Beran Duke was the ever faithful and encouraging editor without whom this "tome" would not have been finished.

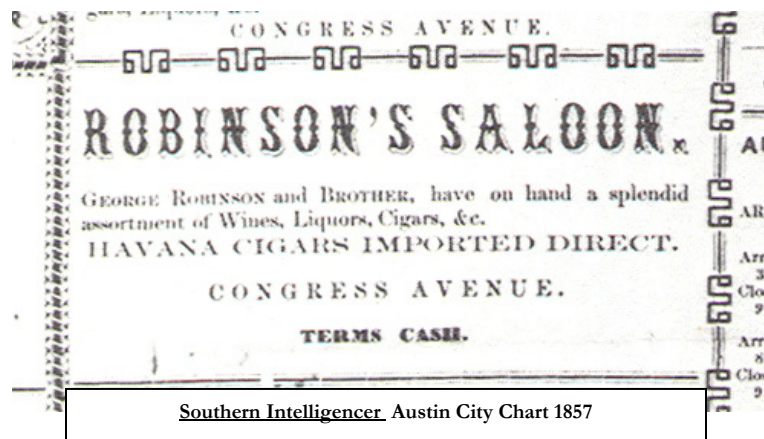
Two John H. Robinsons

In addition to John Hermy Robinson Sr., the patriarch of the family and focus of this history, there was another John H. Robinson who arrived in Austin at the same time but this second Robinson came from New York and was 10 years younger than John Hermy Robinson Sr. It is often difficult and puzzling to distinguish between the two men since they both referred to themselves as John H. Robinson, but a cash ledger and several letters that definitely belonged to John Hermy Robinson Sr. have provided clues to help solve the puzzle. Other clues were found in newspaper articles and records from Queensberry County and Washington County historians in the state of New York. Since the second John H. Robinson has been such a major part of the genealogical research, it is only proper that his story be told as well.

The un-related John H. Robinson was born in 1827 in Fort Edward, New York and died 19 Aug 1909 in Glen Falls, New York. His obituary states, "John H. Robinson of Austin, Texas died at 12:30 this morning at his Cleverdale Cottage, aged 82 years."¹ This John H. Robinson was the son of James H. Robinson (1792-1862) and Maria Linendoll (1800-1881). The couple had ten children: George E. (1814-1889), Caroline (1822-1824), John H. (1827-1909), Francis Jane (1829-1924), Mary Eveline (1832-1900), Ann M. (1833-), Albert J. (1833-1870), William D. (1837-1904), Emily W. (1840-), Catherine E. (1844-). George E. Robinson and his brother John H. Robinson left New York and moved to Texas in the 1850s. Deed records place George E. Robinson in Texas in 1854 when he purchased property in the name of the two brothers. The first record of a business transaction in Travis County, Texas is dated 15 Oct 1854 when George E. Robinson purchased property from William W. Schrier.² Only George's name was on this deed, but on 10 Feb 1855, George corrected the deed and stated that "now it be known that although said deed [of 15 Oct 1854] was made to me individually, yet the said deed is jointly owned by my Brother, J.H. Robinson, the same being the partnership property of the firm of G.E. & J.H. Robinson."³ This first recorded purchase in Travis County was for 320 acres near to and east of Pecan Bayou, part of the Upper Colorado River Basin near Jim Ned Creek close to Brownwood, Texas and the current-day Lake Brownwood.⁴ This area was part of Travis County in the 1850s.

G.E. and J.H. Robinson are listed together in the 1855 Tax Rolls of Travis County. The assessment shows them owning 1320 acres with a value of \$660; one horse valued at \$150; merchandise on hand of \$200; and 2 watches valued at \$200. They paid a poll tax of \$2, a state tax of \$2.52 and a county tax of \$1.61.⁵

The brothers purchased additional property and opened Robinson's Exchange or Robinson's Billiard Saloon on Congress Avenue. In Oct 1855 George sold his interest in the billiard saloon to John H. in exchange for money and a job at the saloon for the length of the lease on the building.⁶ George E. Robinson disappeared from the Austin scene and no mention of him has been found in Travis County following 1860.



In 1862, John H. joined the Confederate army as a captain in Company C of the 33rd Regiment of the Texas Cavalry, also known as Duff's Partisan Corps of Mounted Volunteers. He enrolled 15 Sep 1862 and was mustered into service 22 Nov 1862 in Austin, Texas. He held the rank of major when the war ended.⁷

John Hermy Robinson Family Tree Generations 1 - 3

