



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE

Cmr. George P. Bush announces donation of exceptionally rare map to Texas GLO

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AUSTIN — AUSTIN - Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush is proud to announce an exceptionally rare Stephen F. Austin map of Texas has been donated to the Texas General Land Office by Thomas B. and Marsha Brown Taylor from Seabrook, Texas. The Taylors donated [*Genl. Austin's Map of Texas with Parts of Adjoining States Compiled by Stephen F. Austin, published by H.S. Tanner*](#), printed in 1848, in memory of Mrs. Taylor's parents, Harrison K. and Margaret C. Brown, who lived in Leon County.

No other copy of this map is known to exist, despite several scholarly articles being written on the subject, the most recent study coming from the Library of Congress in 2015 as part of the Philip Lee Phillips Map Society. Prior to this donation, Austin's map was believed to have last been printed in 1846. The discovery of this map changes what we know about the cartography of Stephen F. Austin.

"This rare map, donated in memory of Harrison and Margaret Brown, will be viewed by generations to come, thanks to the generosity of their loving family," said Commissioner Bush. "This map augments our collection of 45,000 maps and documents, and enhances the GLO Archives - one of the premier cartographic collections in Texas and the Southwest. The Taylors' generous donation is a great example of how Texans can help support our efforts to Save Texas History."

"The 1848 print is late in the evolution of the map, but it is quite rare in commerce and institutional holdings," said Dorothy Sloan, a rare books and Texana appraiser, and owner of Dorothy Sloan Rare Books.

Marsha Taylor describes her earliest memories of Austin's map: "I remember seeing the map for the first time when I was about eight years old. My father took it out of a small metal lock box he kept in the top of his closet. The pastel colors were bright and I was fascinated with the age of the document and the notations about wild horses, herds of buffalo, and Indian camps. My dad told me about the Native American burial grounds and the remains of an old fort just outside our little town and my imagination ran wild as I thought about our little piece of land in 1848. My father explained that our land was

part of a large grant from the Mexican government, long before Texas was a state. That day, Daddy gave me my first lesson in Texas history."

Later, she recalls inquiring about the map's future: "One day, I asked my father what he planned to do with the map and he replied that someday he hoped to find a museum in Texas that would want to have it and would keep it safe." After having the map framed in Taylor's home for over 26 years, it was decided to donate the map to the Texas General Land Office, where it will be held in perpetuity under archival conditions, and conserved for future generations, with access being granted to the public to see it.

When asked why she decided to donate the map to the GLO, Taylor said, "The only honest way to answer that question was to try to explain that I simply felt like it was the right thing to do. My dad had always wanted the map to go somewhere that it would be taken care of properly, appreciated and available for the people of Texas who were interested in the information it held. If I sold the map to a private collector or institution, it might not be available to others and I couldn't be certain how it would be stored, viewed, preserved (or not), or handled. At the General Land Office, the map was certain to be well cared for and very likely to be seen and studied again in the future."

"This map represents new scholarship in the cartographic history of Texas," said Commissioner Bush. "It is exciting to learn that this map is re-writing the history of Texas cartography, and it's happening here at the General Land Office. It goes to show that history is being updated every day, and in need of constant study. On behalf of our agency, and the people of Texas, we thank Mr. and Mrs. Taylor for this generous donation."

The Texas General Land Office is seeking to build the most comprehensive historic Texas map collection in the state, and provide high resolution digital access to every item online. The GLO encourages the public to get involved by donating historic maps and other archival documents, or making donations to the Save Texas History program in order to conserve the historic maps and documents housed at the GLO. Donations made to the GLO for public purposes are tax deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Code §170(c)(1).

About Marsha and Tom Taylor:

Marsha and Tom Taylor have been married 29 years. They are both Admirals in the Texas Navy and officers in the Sam Houston Squadron of the Texas Navy Association. Marsha is a member in the Daughters of the American Revolution and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. They have one son, Chris, and two rescued black kitties, Mr. Bob and Miss Lily.

This map was donated in memory of H. K. Brown and Margaret C. Brown (Keith & Margie), Marsha's parents. Both were born and raised in Leon County where the Brown family owned and operated the Leon County Abstract Company in Centerville for over 90 years, ending in 1981. Mr. Brown served in the US Navy in World War II in the Pacific.

About Save Texas History:

Save Texas History, a project of the Texas General Land Office, is dedicated to preserving and promoting the historic documents and maps of the General Land Office Archives, serving as a teaching resource for Texas history education, and serving as a resource for digitizing Texas history. No general revenue from the Legislature is appropriated for this purpose. The conservation and promotion of these Texas treasures depends solely on private donations, map purchases and corporate sponsorships. All donations made to the GLO, either financial contributions for conservation or donations of items such as archival maps, are tax deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Code §170(c)(1). The donated map can be viewed online, as well as the 45,000 other maps, sketches and drawings of the Texas General Land Office, at SaveTexasHistory.org.

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