

Lowwood (Lowood) Plantation

1. “The Lowwood plantation was also on Gulf Prairie, in what is known as the Bryan and Perry neighborhood. It was a sugar and cotton plantation well improved with brick buildings of all kinds. It belonged to and was developed by the brothers, Robert and David G. Mills. They were merchants, bankers and planters, and also owned the Bynum plantation on Bailey’s Prairie, and the Palo Alto, a cotton plantation on Oyster Creek within a few miles of Bolivar Landing, or sometimes known as Port Bolivar, the head of tide water on the Brazos. The Lowwood plantation is now a part of the Clements prison farm. The Palo Alto plantation is now a part of the Ramsey prison farm. These brothers were reputed at one time to be worth five millions of dollars, and made the currency for the Republic of Texas. They redeemed some of this currency as late as 1868, or just before their failure after the war between the States. They advanced the money to many of the planters to buy machinery and equip their plantations for sugar. And it is said that during their long business career that they never closed a man out for debt, and they had a long business career that they never closed a man out for debt, and they had a longer business career than any other firm in Texas. They had the plantation bells cast for the Wharton plantation, the Retrieve, Lake Jackson, Darrington, as well as their own three plantations, at a foundry in Philadelphia, Pa., and while there, dropped fifty Mexican silver dollars in each bell while being cast. You could hear these bells on a still morning for distance of five miles. I have heard them ring many times at morn, noon and night. The Bynum plantation was a well improved plantation – their improvements being of brick. There are none of this family in Brazoria County, and their property belongs to others. I believe there are descendants in Galveston. The two brothers were noted for their charity. They were noble men. I knew David G. Mills well. Their lives were a noble example of the business man and citizen. They had a large store in Brazoria, carried a large stock of goods – also bankers for the entire country. At that time the town of Brazoria had a trade with Mexico, a mayor and a marshal, with about five thousand population, and this trade continued until the Mexican caravans were murdered by renegade Americans enroute to and fro to do their trading. The two places, Lowwood and Palo Alto, are being worked by the Penitentiary system, and are partially kept up. The Bynum plantation has almost grown up, and with the exception of a few negro families working a few acres at random, the once well-developed plantation is now practically a wilderness.”

Strobel, Abner. *The Old Plantations and Their Owners of Brazoria County*. Houston, Texas: 1926.

2. “Emmett married his half-cousin, Hally Ballinger Bryan, who was Guy Bryan’s daughter. She attended Hollins College in Virginia, and was a founder of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, along with a cousin, Betty Ballinger. She and her husband inherited Lowood Plantation, which had previously belonged to Robert and D.G. Mills and was considered the richest sugar land in Brazoria

County. They sold the plantation, which eventually became the Clemens Unit of Texas Department of Corrections. This sale occurred about the time the jetties were being built and advertising was being distributed throughout the north, touting Brazoria County as a second Garden of Eden. Emmett went into the real estate business, operating successfully in both Velasco and Angleton. He also served for a time as State Representative for his district. ...”

Jones, Marie Beth. *Peach Point Plantation, The First 150 Years*. Waco, Texas: 1982.

3. <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/print/MM/fmi39.html>

Handbook of Texas. Robert Mills.

4. <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/print/MM/fmi64.html>

Handbook of Texas. David Graham Mills.