

Chapter VII

Prosperous Days Before the Civil War

The last letter that Horace wrote to Ellen was March 8, 1852. After that she did not hear from him again. He had found an interest that made him quite forget his sister in Charleston. For months he had been writing to her about his church, about the Sunday School and the choir and the church picnics. He had joined the Presbyterian Church in 1849, and was elected a trustee the following year.¹ From his letters it is obvious that he enjoyed his membership in the church immensely. Gradually he began to notice a pleasant girl with dark brown hair and eyes who had recently become a member of the church and was now singing with the choir. Her name was Emily Baker.

At first Horace merely enjoyed Emily's company as they sang together at choir rehearsals, but gradually he discovered that he was looking forward to seeing her at the church picnics and other social functions.

Emily Baker did not have the beauty or the personality of Caroleen Taylor. In fact she was rather plain with a quiet, shy manner. However Horace felt very self-confident and happy when he was with her, particularly one beautiful spring day when he and Emily were riding through the countryside. She had asked him to accompany her to try out a gentle mare her brother had just bought for her, and they were having a delightful time cantering through the wildflowers. Once when they startled an owl from a grove of trees, Horace was pleased to note that she was not afraid but watched the bird admiringly. He was discovering that Emily had an appreciation of nature similar to his own. Suddenly she pulled to a stop.

"Oh look, Horace," she cried. "Look at those huge blackberries. We can't pass those up."

He watched her as she gracefully dismounted, and laughing, he got down and followed her into the vines by the side of the path.

"I am sacrificing myself to red bugs, thorns and probably a snake or two," he teased, but he could not continue his pretense of objection very long. Blackberries were one of his favorite foods.

When they had picked all they could eat, he made a little basket out of his handkerchief so she could take some home. This was all accomplished

with much merriment, and more so when her skirts became entangled in the briars. With great gallantry he pulled away the thorns and lifted her back on her horse.

Soon Horace was courting Emily Baker steadily. In the late summer he asked her to marry him and heard to his great joy that her answer was "Yes."

Emily had been living in Houston less than two years. She had come from Baldwinsville, New York, to live with her brother, William R. Baker, a prominent man in Houston. Acquainted with the Allen brothers in New York, William Baker had arrived in Houston in 1837 and began his career as a bookkeeper for their Houston Town Company. Soon he was elected the County Clerk. Through dealings in real estate, Mr. Baker was by 1852 well on his way to becoming one of Houston's outstanding financiers. In the early days he had sent for Emily's older sister to come to Houston to keep house for him. Gradually all his sisters came. Marianna married Thomas M. Bagby, who was an elder in the Presbyterian Church. Emily's two younger sisters were Julia (later Mrs. William Clark) and Hattie (later Mrs. Alexander Szabo).

Horace and Emily were married December 1, 1852. Unlike Sister Ellen, whose engagement lasted over a year, they were engaged only a few months. The wedding took place in the Baker home with Marianna Baker as attendant and the Rev. A. Fairbairn conducting the ceremony. One of their wedding presents was a large family Bible sent to them by Sister Mary.

After the wedding they moved into their new house that Horace had recently purchased. It was the one where Edward and Caroleen had lived before moving to the Courthouse Square.² Horace had long admired the property, and he bought it shortly after he proposed to Emily. It was a large triangular piece of land of about three and a half wooded acres, bordered by the Bayou, Preston Avenue, and Smith Street, blocks 37 and 38. The house was surrounded by beautiful magnolia trees. "It had two well-built plastered rooms in front. As the years progressed and the family needed more space, other small houses were added onto the original. When it had ceased expanding, it had floors on six different levels. It looked as if about six houses had been moved up together and the roofs joined the best way possible without reference to the floors. There was a 'piazza' across the front and down the Smith Street side of the house."³

After some years the dwelling proper contained ten rooms and a pantry. In the rear was the kitchen and servant's room separated by a gallery open on both sides. This building was ten to fifteen feet from the main house and connected by a covered walk. Just north of the above

building was a small house about twelve by twelve feet that was used for a smokehouse. Fifty to sixty feet further north, and a little to the west, was the barn. It consisted of stalls for stock, a carriage room, and a feed and hay room. West of the barn was a cow or horse pen with a gate at the west end. North of the barn and stock pen was the vegetable garden, where corn, Irish potatoes, beans, etc. were planted. The whole place was enclosed, picket fences extending to the bayou on Preston St. and also to the bayou on Smith St. The bayou formed a barrier on the west and north. Two other fences were constructed so that the house and out-buildings were enclosed in a rectangular area. One began about ninety feet from the bayou on Preston St. and extended north. These fences met at a point at the N.W. corner of the vegetable garden. Within this space was an ample yard and many trees, including several large magnolias. Wild peach and china trees and juniper were planted along the fence, and later a fig orchard was added.⁴

Toward the bayou the property was covered with dense undergrowth and a great forest of trees, many of them quite immense. One of the dozen or so magnolia trees were nearly a hundred feet tall and could be seen far out on the Washington road by approaching travelers. Large sycamore, prickly-ash, and bois d'arc trees also grew there, along with sweet-gum, box-elder, holly and mustang grapes. Two or three horses and cows were allowed to pasture in this lower acreage, and many chickens could be seen roaming about freely. The bayou was very deep along the edge of the property, and the animals could not stray.⁵

Dr. S. O. Young said of the Taylor property, "Situated in the midst of a grove of magnificent magnolia trees, it was one of the most beautiful and attractive places in Houston."⁶ Dr. Young also mentions that the property was used as a trading post for Indians before being purchased by Mr. H. D. Taylor. However other authorities place the Indian trading post across Smith Street from the Taylors.⁷ This rough log cabin was one of the earliest structures in Houston and belonged to the Torrey brothers, who did a good business trading with the Indians in the area. On the Taylor acreage there may have been a small building used by Dr. Ashbel Smith as a hospital for military patients.⁸ Nevertheless, there was only a residential type house on the property in 1848 when the Taylors first saw it.

When Horace and Emily married, Horace had been in business for himself for over two years. He owned the cotton commission business which Edward had sold to him on going into partnership with William Marsh Rice and E. B. Nichols. Horace had written about this change in a letter of Sept. 12, 1850, and again on April 16, 1851, when Edward's

work began to take him frequently to Galveston. Edward was as usual doing very well. The R. G. Dun Company, forerunner of Dun and Bradstreet, reported on the merger favorably, saying that E. W. Taylor was an “active, industrious, capable businessman & stands high in this community . . . Since his adoption, the books have been better managed.”⁹

Horace was happy at the turn of events. He was glad to be working for himself for the first time in his life. Unlike Edward, he was not in a hurry to get rich. He supposed that if he continued steadily building up his business, he would eventually reach a measure of prosperity. In those days cotton buyers, or ‘factors,’ were also importers. The farmers brought in their products, of which cotton was dominant, and then they bargained for supplies to carry back to their farms. The cotton was bundled in sacks, old blankets or rags of any sort and often tied with rawhide. The planter would either sell his cotton immediately upon arrival, or he would place it in the hands of a factor to be sold when a better market price could be determined. Since there were no telegraphs, the dealings were often based upon Liverpool markets a month old.¹⁰

It was necessary for a cotton factor to have a place to store and weigh the cotton. One of the first business investments of H. D. Taylor, Commission Merchant, was the purchase of the property on the corner of Travis and Commerce Street, which up until this time he had been renting. (The buildings are described in his letter of Sept. 21, 1848.) The deed for the property shows that he paid \$300.00 to Mr. James House on January 8, 1853 and was given until September to pay another three hundred dollars. In the meantime the monthly rent was to be \$7.50.

Horace’s warehouse was on the bayou near the steamboat landing, and hence he met many newly arrived immigrants who were looking for a place to store their baggage and goods. Newcomers often had to travel long distances before finding a place to settle. They would then return to Houston by wagon, sometimes from hundreds of miles away, to claim their possessions. Horace made many new friends as he helped these settlers on their way inland, and he soon knew people all over the state.¹¹

In the summers when business was slack, he would ride out into the area around Independence and along the Brazos River to obtain promises of trade with the farmers. Attracting customers was an important part of the business.

Houston was an important trade center, and farmers came from as far away as Waco. They brought their cotton and other produce in wagon after wagon, each pulled by a team of up to a dozen oxen. The teams sometimes completely filled the streets so nothing could pass, and looked not like teams, but like one great herd of cattle. A large percentage of the

commerce from the country came across the Preston Street Bridge and along the street in front of Horace's home. Destroyed by a flood in 1853, the bridge was built back higher and longer and then was called the Long Bridge. Horace set aside the area on his property next to the bridge for a campground and allowed farmers to use it when they came into town. "No pressure was put on the campers to sell their cotton to Taylor or to buy from him, but of course the free camp ground did not create prejudice against him!"¹²

The first summer that Horace and Emily were married they both became ill with yellow fever. Fortunately their cases were light, but Horace was beside himself with concern for his new bride. She was expecting their first child, and he feared for the worst. However not long afterwards, on Sept. 27, 1853, a beautiful, healthy little girl was born to them. They named her Mary after Horace's sister.

A few weeks later some shocking news arrived from New York. Sister Mary had died on the same day that the baby was born. They couldn't help but ponder whether Mary's life would have had a different outcome if she had stayed in Texas and married the wealthy man who had proposed to her. Horace wished that she had not let her loyalty to the north and her hatred of slavery keep her from staying. However Horace understood her feelings about slavery, for he hated it too — so much so that he could never bring himself to buy a slave. When he needed servants to help with his growing family, he "rented" a Negro slave family from their owner. Thereafter "Aunt Betty" and her two sons worked for the Taylors and lived in quarters built for them in back of the house.

In 1854 Emily and Horace were blessed with another little girl, whom they named Ellen. In 1856 they had a baby boy. They named him George Baker after Emily's brother who had gone to the California gold rush and died of an illness he contracted there.

The H. D. Taylors were very content. Although they no longer sang in the church choir, their musical talent was not wasted. Horace, sitting on the porch in the evening, could hear his wife singing as she rocked the baby to sleep. "There's A Land That Is Fairer Than Day" and "Shall We Gather At The River" wafted through the night air. Often Horace's two little girls would crawl into his lap and he would teach them songs from his own childhood. He always ended the bedtime ritual with words his father had made up, "Shadrach, Meshach, and to bed we go." It was a play on the biblical words in Daniel 3:26.

Houstonians of that time had a very nice custom of making afternoon calls. The ladies had certain days when they were at home, and others knew that on those afternoons they would be welcome for tea. Emily later

told her sons that she had met more elegant people in the frontier town of Houston than she had ever known in New York. One afternoon Mrs. William Marsh Rice came to visit Emily. As they sat in the parlor, Emily was painfully aware that her furnishings were not nearly so fine as the ones Margaret Rice had in her handsome home on the Courthouse Square. However Emily's hospitality was warm, and she had a sweet way with both her children and her friends. One felt very much at home in this house with its many patched-on rooms. As Mrs. Rice was taking her leave that afternoon, she said with a little smile, "My dear Emily, I suspect that you are much happier than I."¹³

Horace traveled to the north in 1857. Alfred still lived and worked in New York City. He had bought a farm near Montclair, New Jersey, and now his two sisters were living there. Not only was Alfred supporting Martha but also Julia and her husband, Harvey Hyde, and their children. It is not known why the Rev. Mr. Hyde allowed himself and his family to be supported by his brother-in-law. Martha said in a letter to Horace later, that concerning Mr. Hyde, she "never saw a man so little fitted to make his way in the world." Alfred's wife, Sophy, had died in 1854, leaving no children. In his loneliness, Alfred doubtless enjoyed having his sisters nearby on his farm.

Horace had a fine time visiting them all. They even went again to Sunderland. Horace returned to Houston from the trip dressed in the latest New York style. He wore a stove pipe hat, and his beard was parted down the middle. Emily soon persuaded him to abandon the hat and to let his beard grow full again.¹⁴

The letters from Horace's sisters at this time are filled with religious fervor. Julia and Martha seemed to have been sick a great deal of the time and to have had little to look forward to except approaching eternity. Also they were frequently concerned about Edward's spiritual welfare. No doubt Edward had never had a genuine spiritual awakening such as the others had experienced, but since Edward was a pillar in the Episcopal Church, there could have been another reason which led them to think he was lacking in Christian faith.

At this time Edward was no longer with Rice-Nichols. He was now in partnership with a man named William A. Van Alstyne. Mr. Van Alstyne was another Houston financier from New York who had made a good bit of money trading cotton and other merchandise. He had made a name for himself by taking a leading part in the construction of Houston's first railroad and for building the first skyscraper in Houston, a three-story brick building on the corner of Main and Congress.¹⁵ Now Van Alstyne and Taylor were branching out in other directions. They began

buying and selling domestic slaves.

The importation of slaves from Africa had been illegal in the United States since 1807. After that it was legal to buy slaves only from slave dealers inside the country. However at various times during the first half of the century, smugglers were engaged in running Africans into the United States via Texas.¹⁶ Slaves were unloaded on a lonely beach at night and shipped overland to interior places. The lucrative trade continued, though greatly lessened, after 1836. The new Constitution of the Republic of Texas, seeking approval from Great Britain and the United States, forbade it.

During the 1850's the clandestine African slave trade to Texas was revived due to the urgent demand for labor in the ever increasing number of cotton fields in the state. The illegal trade was carried on chiefly by Northern citizens, who fitted out their ships in New York and Boston. It was enormously profitable. A prime slave could be sold for up to \$1500 in Texas, and slave dealers could "deliver African labor to the coast line of Texas for about one dollar a pound."¹⁷ There was very little effort made to curtail these shipments to the beaches south of the Brazos. It was commonly believed that the economy of the state depended on slavery, and the legal supply from the east was not meeting the demand. The number of slaves in Texas rose from five thousand in 1836 to 182,000 in 1860.¹⁸ There was much agitation for the government to again legalize the sale of African slaves. The newspapers openly advocated it.¹⁹

It is possible that Van Alstyne and Taylor never knowingly dealt in smuggled slaves. Still they were one of "two large domestic slave dealers in Houston" and had slave-trading agreements with other domestic dealers in Houston and Galveston who were involved with the illegal trade.²⁰ The whole operation was definitely unsavory to Horace, who could not comprehend his brother making a living in such a fashion.

Edward and Caroleen had become members of the Christ Episcopal Church when they moved to Houston. With his typical energy and enthusiasm, Edward was working on a committee of Christ Church by the fall of 1848, and was elected to the Vestry in 1851. Elected with him were Peter Gray, W. M. Rice, A. S. Ruthven, Cornelius Ennis, W. W. Stiles and J. Riley. In 1857 he was chairman of the building committee to build the new rectory.²¹

Edward provided a very good education for his two daughters. Rosalie and then Cora attended the Troy Female Seminary in Troy, New York. This school, begun in 1814 by Emma Willard, was the first school in the country dedicated to the higher education of women.²²

In June of 1857 Rosalie married Edwin Fairfax Gray. Fairfax, as he

was called, was the son of William Fairfax Gray, founder of Christ Church. He had graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis in civil engineering, and then served with Commodore Perry on the historic expedition which opened trade with Japan. He rose to the rank of lieutenant before retiring from the Navy and returning to Houston in 1857.²³ Rosalie and Fairfax were a very attractive couple and their large wedding in the Taylor's home was an important social event.²⁴

Edward's younger daughter, Cora, graduated from the Troy Seminary in 1858. On April 6, 1859 she also was married, and Caroleen and Edward had another wedding in their home. Cora's husband was Joseph Henry Evans (born in Bledsoe County Tennessee in 1835).²⁵

A pretty little bridesmaid in both these weddings was Elizabeth Taylor. She was Edward and Caroleen's youngest child and was about nine years old at the time.

In January of 1859 Horace formed a partnership with his good friend and brother-in-law, Thomas M. Bagby. They were both officers in the Presbyterian Church and had met when Horace first came to Houston. Mr. Bagby, a Virginian, had arrived in Houston in 1837 at the age of twenty-three and later married Marianna Baker. He had worked for various employers until he established his own cotton commission business. His partnership with H. D. Taylor lasted several years.²⁶

Horace along with the city of Houston in general, was experiencing a time of prosperity. Several railroad lines had been completed west and north of Houston. Cotton was pouring into the city. Rivalry with Galveston heated when that city built a bridge to the mainland and a railroad to Houston. In a special election the people of Houston voted to do away with wharfage fees, so it would still be more economical to ship down the bayou.²⁷

Horace became interested in the politics of the cotton business and was elected an alderman from the Fourth Ward. He had a reputation for being a good, honest citizen. "He was a man of strict integrity and high moral sense, and was always regarded as one of the solid, reliable men of the city."²⁸ A prominent physician of Houston said that "H. D. Taylor knew only two paths away from his home, one to his business, the other to church."²⁹ His family now consisted of three girls and a boy. The youngest child was Bessie, born in October of 1858.

In the early spring of 1859 his sister, Martha, came from the east to visit them. She brought news that their brother, Alfred was going to marry a lady named Jane Tucker. Martha and Horace talked about what the future held for them all. He tried to persuade her to remain in Texas with him, but she, like Mary before her, did not want to be a Southerner.

Martha was now thirty-one, and she was thinking about teaching school in Montclair, New Jersey. She had long felt grateful for Alfred's generosity and now wanted to do something on her own. She stayed with Horace and Emily about three months, returning home the last of May.

In the winter of 1859-60 Horace and Emily suffered a terrible tragedy. Their two youngest children became ill and died of the fevers, and then a month later, Horace and Emily watched helplessly as their little five-year-old Ellen slipped away from life with the same malady. On a cold January afternoon, with their one remaining child by their side, Horace and Emily led a grieving procession to their little cemetery beyond the garden fence.³⁰ A month before, they had chosen the site for the burial of their precious three-year-old George. As their little son was laid to rest underneath the branches of a giant magnolia, they felt as if their hearts would break. Horace remembered his own father's tears when his four-year-old brother was buried so many years before. Brother James later had showed him the letter their father wrote at the time, telling of the anguish he felt when "the chords of love" were suddenly broken. But their father never wavered in his faith toward "afflictive providence," and Horace was strengthened as he remembered.

When their infant daughter died two weeks later, Horace once again reached into his reserve of faith and found serenity in his loss and words to comfort Emily. But now going the third time to the cemetery was more than he could bear. Numbed by his pain, he held Emily's arm more for his own support than hers. He listened dully to the familiar words and stared unwillingly at the three tiny graves. He could only think of how much he had loved this little daughter of five years, so affectionate and sweet, so much like his sister for whom she was named. This time it was Caroleen who gave him strength to rekindle his faith. Her arm around his waist and her tear stained face reminded him that she too knew the pain of losing a child; her little son had died years ago on another cold January day. Her loving concern somehow reminded Horace that there was still a God who loved them all, who in some way was standing by sharing their sorrow.

Gradually through the months that followed Horace and Emily began to lose the ache that was deep within them. They had many other comforters who understood their grief. In those days living in cold, damp houses with the only heat coming from the fireplace, illness was very common. There was little known as to how the various diseases were caused, and medicine was very inadequate. Most families lost one or two of their little ones to childhood illness, not only in Texas, but in the States as well. James lost three infant boys, and his Mary died at fifteen. Alfred's first baby, born the following year, lived only a few weeks.

In the spring of 1860, the best thing that could have happened to Horace and Emily did. A healthy baby boy was born to them. They proudly named him Edward Wyllys Taylor. It was a grand old family name. Most of the Taylors who were descended from the venerable Puritan minister, Edward Taylor, and his wife, Ruth Wyllys, named one of their sons for them. That admirable pair had begun a long line of descendants who were “distinguished by their upright, straightforward course through life.”³¹

That fall Edward and Caroleen took their son Edward Ruthven, or Bud, as he was called, to New York to enroll him in school in East Hampton, on the far end of Long Island. While there with Bud, they visited Alfred and his sisters. Sister Julia was impressed by Caroleen. “How bright and fresh she is! I tho’t I must seem to be 60 beside her. Her perfect health is a blessing . . . I wonder if (she and Edward) are as happy as they seem. . .”³² Alfred and Edward also went up to Sunderland, where they climbed a neighboring mountain and planned a family reunion for the next summer. Alas, it was not to be. The Civil War was fast approaching, and brothers and sisters were to be separated by a great gulf, with no communication for many years.

In 1861 Emily’s vivacious younger sister, Hattie Baker, came home from a trip to New York on the last passenger ship to get through the hostilities to Galveston. The blockade had already begun, and Yankee gunboats were firing at ships entering the port. The danger of being hit by a Yankee bullet was apparent to all aboard, and Hattie Baker suddenly had an idea of how she could protect herself. When she was lowered from the ocean vessel to an awaiting smaller one, those waiting for her saw only a large bundle draped in an American flag.³³

known about Elizabeth, except that she died at the age of thirty-two in 1882.²⁵ Horace and Edward had long been aware that there were very few good schools in Houston, and through the years they had attended meetings connected with various educational endeavors. When the control of "free schools" in Texas was put into local hands, Edward, always the organizer, put his talents to work toward establishing a school system in Houston. It was not long before the first public school opened with thirteen teachers in the "white school" and twelve in the "colored school." The year was 1877, and this was the first system of graded schools in Texas. Grades 1-3 were Primary, 4-7 were Grammar. The following year a high school was added. The highest salary paid was \$50.00 a month. Edward was president of Houston's first school board, and he continued to work with the school system for the rest of his years.²⁶

Horace and Emily had the first wedding in their family when their daughter, Mary, was married December 16, 1878. The pretty bride was twenty-five. Her husband, Julian Robertson, a Virginian, had come to Texas with his older brother, who thought they could make a good living growing cotton. Knowing very little about farming, they soon discovered they would probably do better selling cotton as brokers. No doubt Julian met Mary through his connection with the cotton business. The two were married in Horace and Emily's parlor with the Rev. J. H. McNeely officiating. The young couple then lived for some years in Calvert, Texas, where four of their five children were born.²⁷

The Presbyterian church during the time of Dr. McNeely had its share of financial problems. The floor was rotting and the condition of the roof was doubtful, but there was no money to repair either. Up until this time the financial affairs of the church had been managed by the Trustees. Dr. McNeely suggested that Deacons be elected to handle the church finances and represent the congregation as recommended in the church constitution. This was done, and after three years discussion, the Deacons arranged for "hog chains as rods to hold the walls together," and a new asphalt roof. However the Deacons were not able to raise enough money to pay Dr. McNeely a decent salary, and thus he only stayed two years and eight months. Membership grew during his pastorate from 166 to 264.²⁸

The next minister was an older man, age fifty-one when he came in 1880. His name was Dr. E. D. Junkin, and he was called from a church in Virginia, where he had been the pastor for twenty years. He became greatly beloved in Houston, and stayed with the church until his death eleven years later. By that time the church had grown to 416 members. The financial situation eased a bit when the church borrowed money and

erected five one-story buildings on Main Street and rented them. Thus having gone into business, the Deacons had “the further responsibility of seeing that the renters did not transact business on the Lord’s Day.”²⁹

In 1886 Edward and Caroleen were looking forward to their golden wedding anniversary, although for several months Edward had not been well. It was very sad when he died on November 4, a few weeks before the anniversary. His funeral was held at Christ Episcopal Church, and he was buried with an elaborate Masonic ceremony. The *Houston Post*, after listing Edward’s many civic achievements, called him “one of the best citizens of the city, county and state . . . with high mental attainments and a brilliancy of intellect.”³⁰

Shortly after his brother’s death, Horace received a letter from Alfred, who mentioned that there were only four of the original Taylors now left, two brothers and two sisters. (Ellen Whilden had died in 1884.)

Sister Martha was now Mrs. Ira Campbell. She had married in 1874 when she was forty-five years old. Their other sister, Julia, had long been living in Virginia, her husband working with home missions there. Both of her sons put themselves through college, and they graduated from Cornell University.³¹

Alfred was separated from his wife and children. His second marriage had never been really happy. When his two sons went off to Harvard, he left his wife in New York and moved back to Charleston. There he lived out his days surrounded by loving nieces and nephews.³²

Horace’s children did not receive any higher education. There was no money for it, and in Houston after the war it probably did not seem terribly important to them. Young Ed was trained to be a cotton man, and he joined his father as a partner at age twenty-one.³³ He later served on the board of the Cotton Exchange and was president of that body in 1907. In 1885 he married Miss Garrietta Farrar of St. Louis, Missouri.³⁴ The same year he joined the Presbyterian church and, following in his father’s footsteps, was a very active member. He was Sunday School Superintendent for many years and was considered by all to have been a very saintly man. It was later written about him that “his life reflected his faith, and others seeing his good works, glorified his Father in Heaven.”³⁵

Horace, Jr., on the other hand, never joined the church, although he faithfully attended all his life. In his youth he was a member of the Houston Light Guard, the famous drill team of that time. He traveled with this group of men as far east as Philadelphia to compete with other Light Guard units. The Houston unit won so many trophies they finally had to drop out of the competition and give exhibitionary performances only. The whole city was proud of this team and enthusiastically supported them,

much as we do the football teams of today. Thousands of people turned out to see them march and cheer them on.

Young Horace (called "Holly") loved the outdoors. Like his father he suffered from respiratory ailments, but he discovered he could be cured by getting out into a dryer climate. Once he and Willie went to West Texas on horseback, purchased horses and drove them across country to buyers in Louisiana and Mississippi, crossing rivers and streams as they went. They were not hampered by fences as the prairies were completely open. The weeks they spent in this endeavor proved beneficial, and "Holly" came home in good health. One of his first jobs had been as a "runner" for the First National Bank, and later he became a teller. In his twenties Holly went to Dallas and worked for a bank there.³⁶

Willie (now "Will") became a clerk for W. J. Hancock. The name "H. D. Taylor and Son" remained only until 1888. Then Will was taken in, and the name was changed to "H. D. Taylor and Sons, Wholesale Grocers and Cotton Factors."³⁷ Will married Lizzie Brown in October of 1890. By this time Horace Taylor, Sr. began urging young Horace to come home and work with his brothers. Holly finally did come, working in the office for a time and then in the grocery department, which he liked better.³⁸

When Holly came back from Dallas, he brought "a new-fangled bicycle" which he had seen on exhibition at the State Fair and purchased. This "safety bicycle," as it was called, had two wheels of equal size. Unlike its predecessor which had one huge wheel followed by a tiny rear wheel, it was much safer, as the rider did not have so far to fall. It had small solid rubber tires. "Nearly all Houston crowded around Main and Congress to see it." As the fad of bicycles caught on, Holly joined the crowds of young Houstonians who made social events of nocturnal bicycle rides to Harrisburg and back. Tandem bicycles and "bloomer girls" became very much in style.³⁹

Horace D. Taylor, Sr. died November 9, 1890. He was sixty-nine. His funeral was held in his beloved First Presbyterian Church with the Rev. E. D. Junkin presiding. He was buried in Glenwood Cemetery. Pall bearers were B. A. Shepherd, A. J. Burke, F. A. Rice, G. W. Kidd, William Christian, A. P. Root, W. M. Stafford, E. W. Newall, E. P. Hill, W. D. Cleveland, and R. F. George. The flag of City Hall was lowered to half mast, and the City Council was adjourned to attend the funeral. The Cotton Exchange was also closed. Dr. Junkin described Horace Dickinson Taylor as a Christian and a gentleman of honor and integrity. The newspaper said of him, "he was respected and admired in all walks of life."⁴⁰

Epilogue

The Heirs of Horace D. Taylor

Shortly after their father died, the three sons of Horace D. Taylor decided that their mother and sister needed to move away from their old house on the bayou. Emmie was now twenty years old, and the neighborhood around the bayou was not a proper place in which to live anymore. The oldest brother, Ed, suggested buying the lot next to his house, which was in a new addition south of town. They all agreed, and the brothers built a fine new two-story house for their mother on the corner of Walker and Louisiana Streets. Then Will bought the property on the other side of her and built a house for himself and his wife, Lizzie. There was a large stable behind their houses which they all shared. Their houses were not far from the new First Presbyterian Church building being built on Main and McKinney. Down Smith Street from the Taylors was the Bagby home, where Emily's sister lived, now a widow. Later Mrs. Bagby gave her property, which was an entire block, to the city for the new Julia Ideson Library. The block where the Taylors lived is now occupied by #1 Shell Plaza.

In 1893 Holly married Maude Farrar, the sister of his brother Ed's wife. She was a pretty blond with large blue eyes and curly hair, and a lively personality. Originally from St. Louis, she had been in Houston for some time living with her sisters, Stella Langdon and Garrie Taylor, and going to Mrs. Kidd's school. Holly was twelve years older than Maude and had never paid much attention to her. When Holly came home from Dallas, she was away at boarding school in Weatherford, Texas. Then her sister, Stella, moved to Dallas, and Maude spent a good deal of time there. However when Maude finally returned to Houston to visit Ed and Garrie, Holly was smitten right away. Shortly before Maude's twentieth birthday, the two were married in Dallas in Stella's home. For their honeymoon they went to Chicago to the World's Fair.²

The new house on Walker and Louisiana had plenty of space, so Holly and Maude lived for awhile with his mother and sister. They stayed there until little Maude Farrar Taylor was born, April 28, 1894. After that Holly and Maude built their own house on the southeast corner of

Rosalie and Smith Streets. It was in the Fairgrounds Addition, where the old fairgrounds had been. Maude's mother, Sarah Rose Farrar came to live with them.³

The three Taylor brothers carried on the family business. In 1894 they bought the grocery business of Brown and Bollfrass at Milam and Preston Streets, paying about \$30,000 for it. Groceries were now added to the Taylor cotton brokerage, which grew into a strictly wholesale business, selling goods as far west as New Braunfels.⁴

Mary Taylor Robertson moved back to Houston, due to her husband's ill health. For a while Julian Robertson was the manager of the Taylor's cotton yard, which the Taylors established on the property their mother had vacated. Mary's fifth child, Emily, was born in 1893. In 1896 her oldest son, Norman, accompanied Holly and Maude and their little three year old daughter on a wagon trip to Del Rio. They spent three months camping on Devils River, a beautiful spot with good hunting and fishing. It was a great adventure that little Maude never forgot.⁵

Emmie Taylor was married in 1897 to Roy Montgomery Farrar. Her husband was Maude and Garrie's brother, and hence she was the third in her family to marry a Farrar. The Farrar children's family life in St. Louis had been unstable due to their father's illness, and all of them left home at an early age. Roy was fourteen when he went to Louisiana and got a job in a lumber mill. A few years later he came to Houston and entered the lumber business. He and Emmie built a house across the street from Holly and Maude and had one child, Ellen, but their happiness was not to last. Emmie contracted tuberculosis and died in 1902. Ellen lived with Maude and Holly for a few years until Roy married again, this time to Margaret Campbell of Coriscana. Roy Farrar later became president of the Union National Bank and was a very prominent Houstonian.⁶

Ed and Will Taylor had large families, and little Maude Taylor, loved to spend the day with her cousins who lived next to her grandmother. Those close to her age were Wyllys and Ruth Taylor (Ed's children) and Lucy and Emily Taylor (Will's daughters). Emily Robertson (Mary's youngest daughter), was often there too, visiting her grandmother, and sometimes Mitchell Langdon came from Dallas. The children were fast friends and had many years of good times together.⁷

In 1906 Emily Taylor, Sr., for whom so many Emilys were named, came to the close of her long life. She was buried beside her husband in Glenwood Cemetery.

That same year her oldest daughter, Mary Taylor Robertson, also died. Mary's son, Norman, who had just married, was offered a job in New York with the Continental Insurance Company by his cousin,

Henry Evans. Norman took his father and brothers and sisters with him and moved to Montclair, New Jersey. Near them was the home of E. W. Taylor Gray and his family. Norman continued to live there all his life and later became president of Continental Insurance.⁸

In 1907 the Taylor brothers in Houston sold their grocery business to the Schuhmacher Grocery Company and entered the lumber business under the name of H. D. Taylor Lumber Co. In 1912 they located their lumber company on the old family property at Smith and Preston, which they also used for many other commercial ventures. A large stable they built on the property was used by the Ineeda Laundry and later by the Model Laundry for their horses, wagons and later, autos. The Taylors built a long wooden building along Smith St. and a brick building on the corner, which they rented for stores. In 1912 they demolished the wooden building and built another brick one. Their lumber sheds were built in back of these buildings, extending almost to the Bayou.⁹

The Taylor Lumber Company stayed in this location until 1929, when a tremendous flood on the bayou influenced the Taylors to move their lumber company to Jensen Drive near Navigation Blvd. There they continued to sell building materials to the growing city of Houston for many years. After the death of the Taylor brothers, the company was carried on by the grandsons of its founder.¹⁰

In the 1930s the city bought some of the property on Smith and Preston in order to straighten the bayou at that point. This early effort at flood control left the Taylors with about a third or more of their property cut away. The remainder was used by the heirs of the Taylors as rental property until 1964 when the city again condemned this choice block of land. Although the Taylors protested, the city prevailed and took the property. Now it is next to the Wortham Theater, a triangle of pavement, with no hint of its history or its once beautiful magnolia trees.

As this book is being written, there are plans for beautification of the area around the Wortham Theater, and the Taylor property is designated to be part of the new Sesquicentennial Park. Perhaps this historic acreage will once more be called “one of the most beautiful and attractive places in Houston.”

**The Descendants of
Horace Dickinson Taylor (1821-1890)
and
*Emily Baker Taylor (1825-1906)**

1. Mary Taylor (1853-1906)
 - m. Dec. 16, 1878 Julian Roberston
 - a. Norman Taylor Robertson, Scarsdale, N.Y. (1882-1960)
 - b. Marion C. Robertson, Captain U.S. Navy (1884-1953)
 - c. Eleanor Robertson (1886-1977) m. Alfred K. Taylor
 - d. Alfred Robertson (1888-1963) m. Ora Dearlam
 - Alfred Taylor m. Geanell Lloyd
 - Norman Taylor m. Robert Linsey
 - e. Emily Robertson (1894-)m. Carl Spainhour (1890-1973)
 - Mary Spainhour m. Ambrose Gordon
2. Ellen Taylor (1854-1860)
3. George Taylor (1856-1859)
4. Elizabeth Taylor (1858-1859)
5. Edward Wyllys Taylor (1860-1919)
 - m. Dec. 31, 1885 Garrietta Farrar (1865-1916)
 - a. Farrar Taylor (1887-1961)
 - b. Horace D. Taylor II (1888-1948)
 - m. Blanche Phillips (1880-1960)
 - Blanche Taylor m. Herbert Pierce
 - Garietta Taylor m. Jack Hooks
 - m. William A. Beasley
 - c. Ruth Taylor (1884-1962)
 - d. Wyllys Taylor (1893-1965) m. Julia Pease (1894-1981)
 - Julia Taylor m. H. Clyde Dill
 - Evelyn Taylor m. William E. Sterling
 - d. LeRoy Taylor (1903-) m. Claire Bearden (1905-1984)

6. Horace D. Taylor Jr. (Holly) (1861-1949)
 - m. April 19, 1893 Maude Rose Farrar (1873-1949)
 - a. Maude Farrar Taylor (1894-1981)
 - m. Dr. E. Freeman Robbins (1888-1981)
 - Marion Robbins m. W. A. Parish (1918-1948)
 - m. Hugh G. Alexander (1910-1986)
 - Ellen Robbins m. David D. Red
 - Dr. Horace Taylor Robbins m. Nancy Welsh
7. William Baker Taylor (1863-1948)
 - m. 1890 Lizzie V. Brown (1865-1908)
 - m. 1910 Susan Dukes (1876-1973)
 - (no children)
 - a. Lucy Taylor (1894-1975)
 - m. Dr. Thos. W. Ray (1894-1958)
 - b. Emily Taylor (1896-1978)
 - m. Dr. Herman E. Dustin (1894-1980)
 - Dorothy Dustin m. Dr. Willard R. Karn
 - c. William B. Taylor, Jr. (1899-1941) m. Lottie Moss
Mary Frances Taylor
 - d. Edward Wyllys Taylor III, (1901-)
 - m. Marion Grosenbacher (1906-)
 - Roger Gilbert Taylor m. Ethelyn Schell
 - Donald Stuart Taylor (1934-1941)
 - e. Robert B. Taylor (1903-1977) m. Marie Houser
Raymond James Taylor m. Edna
Norman Taylor (1935-1942)
8. Emily Bagby Taylor (1870-1902)
 - m. Oct. 21, 1897 Roy Montgomery Farrar
(1870-1943)
 - a. Ellen Taylor Farrar (1899-1981)
 - m. Dallas Moore (1900-1967)
 - Margaret Moore m. Claude Nichols
 - Roy Farrar Moore (1927-1955) m. Diane Stansell

*EMILY BAKER TAYLOR was descended from Asa Baker and Hannah Robinson Baker of Baldwinsville, New York. Asa was a civil engineer. He died in 1851. Hannah Baker died in Houston, June 24, 1899, at the age of 95 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. T. M. Bagby. Hannah's father was William Robinson, merchant and importer, originally from England. Asa's father was Alden S. Baker of Cheshire County, New Hampshire, a Revolutionary soldier.

**The Descendants of
Horace D. Taylor, Jr. (1861-1949)
and
*Maude Farrar Taylor (1873-1949)**

Maude Farrar Taylor, b. Apr. 28, 1894 in Houston, Texas, d. Aug. 1, 1981, married May 29, 1918 to *Dr. E. Freeman Robbins, b. Aug. 21, 1888 in Oak Grove, Texas, d. May 4, 1981.

1. Maude Marion Robbins, b. Apr. 26, 1921 in Houston, Texas,
 - m. Oct. 23, 1942 to W. Alvis Parish,
 - b. Aug. 9, 1918, d. Oct. 1, 1948
 - m. Nov. 21, 1951 to Hugh G. Alexander,
 - b. May 16, 1918, d. Oct. 22, 1986
 - (his son, Hugh Alexander, Jr.)
 - (1). Marion Robbins Parish (Robbin), b. Feb. 2, 1944.
 - (2). Elizabeth Ellen Parish (Betsy), b. Mar. 20, 1946.
 - (3). John Stafford Alexander (Ford), b. June 30, 1956,
 - m. July 30, 1983 to Leslie Ann Grimes,
 - b. Sept. 8, 1956.
 - a. Louise Taylor Alexander, b. Aug. 11, 1986.
2. Ellen Ruth Robbins, b. June 24, 1925 in Houston, Texas,
 - m. July 7, 1948 to David Douglass Red,
 - b. Aug. 29, 1913.
 - (1). Martha Douglass Red, b. Feb. 16, 1954,
 - m. Aug. 19, 1978 Richard A. Henderson,
 - b. June 11, 1954.
 - a. Adam Taylor Henderson, b. Oct. 5, 1980.
 - b. David Vester Henderson, b. Aug. 12, 1984.
 - (2). Stuart Freeman Red, b. Aug. 22, 1956,
 - m. Apr. 26, 1980 to Lynn Schissler,
 - b. June 18, 1956.
 - a. Stuart Douglass Red, b. Apr. 22, 1985.

3. Dr. Horace Taylor Robbins, b. Oct. 4, 1926 in Houston, Texas,
 m. June 23, 1951 to Nancy Welsh,
 b. June 30, 1931.
 - (1). Hugh Taylor Robbins, b. Nov. 10, 1952,
 m. Apr. 16, 1983 to Melony Archgill,
 b. Apr. 24, 1962.
 - a. Kristin Taylor Robbins, b. June 5, 1986.
 - (2). Terry Robbins, b. Mar. 26, 1954.
 - (3). Nan Robbins, b. Apr. 30, 1957,
 m. July 28, 1979 to Robert R. Franklin,
 b. Nov. 18, 1954.
 - a. Nancy Louise Franklin, b. Oct. 21, 1983.
 - b. Peter Robert Franklin, b. Aug. 12, 1986.
 - (4). Stacy Cyril Robbins, b. Sept. 1, 1960.
 - (5). Maude Taylor Robbins, b. Feb. 13, 1962,
 m. June 10, 1983 to Bradley R. Dawson.
 - a. Matthew Ross Dawson, b. June 28, 1985.
 - b. Taylor Douglas Dawson, b. Nov. 7, 1986.

*MAUDE FARRAR TAYLOR was descended from John H. Farrar (1835-1839) and Sarah Rebecca Rose Farrar (1843-1911). John Farrar was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, March 22, 1835 and married Sarah Rose in Cincinnati, April 4, 1861. They moved to St. Louis, Missouri and had eight children. Four of them survived infancy, Stella, Garrietta, Roy and Maude. John and Sarah Taylor are buried in Glenwood Cemetery in Houston in the Farrar family plot. Their granddaughter, Maude Farrar Taylor, attended Sweet Briar College and then graduated from the San Antonio Female College, which later merged with Trinity University.

*DR. E. FREEMAN ROBBINS was descended from Elisha Freeman Robbins (1848-1913) and Seliah Katherine Holdridge (1860-1949). Elisha F. Robbins was born in Noxubee County, Mississippi. (His parents were from North Carolina.) He married Selia Holdridge of Jasper County, Mississippi on Jan. 16, 1878. They moved to Tarrant County, near Burleson, Texas in 1883, where they had thirteen children, six of whom lived to adulthood. These six all attended Baylor University, with the oldest son, E. Freeman, going on to the medical school in Dallas.