

J.M. DUNAWAY FARMSTEAD

.35 miles southeast of the intersection of
Boz and Barkers Branch Roads

Waxahachie Vicinity

Ellis County

Texas

HABS No. TX-3376

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Intermountain Regional Office

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

J. M. DUNAWAY FARMSTEAD

HABS NO. TX-3376

For more information about other structures at the J. M. Dunaway Farmstead, see,

HABS No. TX-3376-A	J. M. Dunaway Farmstead, Main House
HABS No. TX-3376-C	J. M. Dunaway Farmstead, Garage
HABS No. TX-3376-D	J. M. Dunaway Farmstead, Well House

Location: .35 mile southeast of the intersection of Boz and Barkers Branch Roads Waxahachie Vicinity, Ellis County, Texas

USGS Boz, Texas Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates
14.696300.3576920

Present Owner: Texas National Research Laboratory Commission
(TNRLC)
1801 N. Hampton Road, Suite 400
DeSoto, Texas 75115

Present Occupant: None

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The J.M. Dunaway Farmstead is one of the most significant architectural and historical landmarks in western Ellis County, Texas, and is associated with one of the most prominent pioneers in the region. The buildings are surviving components of a large farm that encompassed land in the J.J. Mays and adjoining surveys. The same family owned and operated this farm for over 120 years. The J.M. Dunaway House represents one of the best surviving examples of a mid nineteenth century farmhouse in western Ellis County. It also illustrates the success and prominence of one of the region's most influential families who contributed much to the agricultural development of the land. The house, with its triple gabled front, is an outstanding example of a double-pile Georgian plan residence, a somewhat rare nineteenth century vernacular house form of rural Ellis County. The house is among the oldest extant residences in the area.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Date of Erection: circa 1856
2. Architect: None
3. Original and Subsequent Owners:
 - J.M. Dunaway (1856-1903)
 - Jefferson R. Dunaway (1903-1943)
 - Joanna Forrester Dunaway (1943-1944)
 - Richard Waldo Dunaway (1944-1966)
 - Bessie Dunaway, Mary D. Crockett & Donald K. Crockett (1966-1991)
 - Texas National Research Laboratory Commission (1991-present)
4. Builders, Contractors and Suppliers: Unknown
5. Original Plans and Construction: No original architectural plans or drawings were located during research investigations. Such drawings probably never existed for the vernacular buildings on the property. An early photograph (ca. 1890) in A Memorial and Biographical History of Ellis County, Texas (p. 650) does document that the house had only one cross gable located at the front elevation and that the original columns were simple chamfered wood members capped by a molded wood cornice and sawn brackets.

B. Historical Context:

Jefferson Madison Dunaway established the farmstead about 1856. He was born in Warren County, Tennessee on February 14, 1825, and came to Texas in 1850 as part of a large migration of Upland Southerners who moved to Texas during the 1840s and 1850s. He initially settled in the Dallas area, where he worked as a tailor and later as a farm hand. After a year he acquired a small parcel of land in the Dallas area. On October 11, 1854, he married Sarah Ann Brack, who was the daughter of Ezekiel M. Brack, an early pioneer and extensive landowner in western Ellis County. Two years later, Dunaway traded his Dallas property for land that abutted his father-in-law's farm in Ellis County [1].

When he moved to Ellis County about 1856, the land was sparsely developed and populated. A contingent of Tennessee natives lived nearby, and they established a largely self-sufficient agrarian society. The vast majority of the populace was white, though a few settlers, such as Ezekiel Brack, held black slaves. By 1857 Brack owned seven slaves, and he hired J.M. Dunaway to supervise

their work [2]. Despite his owning of slaves, Brack did not grow cotton and instead may have used his slaves to raise livestock and produce wool. Ad valorem tax records and census data note that he owned about 900 acres as well as 375 cattle and 450 sheep [3]. The abundant grasslands of the Blackland Prairies that extended through Ellis County were ideal for ranching, and Brack apparently was among the first to raise livestock in the county.

By 1857, Dunaway had turned his attention to his own farm. He built a double-pile frame house with a central hall, now described as a Georgian plan. Although common in both the Upland and Lowland South, this vernacular plan type is somewhat rare in Ellis County. The I-house, which is only one room deep, is more typical of the pioneer era [4]. Dunaway also purchased additional properties in the area and quickly amassed a large amount of land in western Ellis County. The 1860 census lists him as a farmer with 45 acres of "improved" land, as well as 815 acres of "unimproved" land. Like Brack, he owned livestock (mostly cattle and sheep), but his totals were far less than those of his father-in-law. Dunaway harvested a variety of crops, including wheat, oats and rye, as did other area farmers. Dunaway did not grow any cotton at that time [5]. In fact, few Ellis County farmers planted cotton by 1860. The Agricultural Schedule for that year notes that the county produced only 359 bales of cotton, ranking 70th in the state [6].

Soon after the Civil War erupted, Dunaway enlisted in the Confederate Army and served until the war's conclusion [7]. He then returned to his home in western Ellis County and continued his farming activities. Like others in the area, he began to experiment with the cultivation of cotton. The Blackland Prairies had already proven to be fertile, but the soil seemed particularly favorable for cotton. Early results appeared promising, but large-scale cotton production remained largely beyond the grasp of area farmers during the late 1860s for a variety of reasons. The poor road network made it difficult to transport large quantities of cotton to major distribution points such as Galveston. Moreover, the harvesting of cotton was extremely labor intensive, and the small number of residents in Ellis County could not support or justify the planting of large cotton fields. Nonetheless, Ellis County farmers began to grow more cotton because of the potential profits it could yield. By 1870, when it was on the verge of a period of intense growth and prosperity, the county was the 45th largest cotton producer in the state [8].

The 1870s were pivotal years in Ellis County's history and development. The Houston and Texas Central Railroad reached the county and revolutionized the transportation network. Subsequent construction of other railroads through the county provided rail

access to even the most remote areas. The county's population doubled from a decade earlier, and most new citizens became farmers. Since much of the land was already owned by early pioneers, such as J.M. Dunaway, these new settlers often leased land in hopes that, if frugal and with some luck, they too could become landowners. Increased demands for cotton sent prices upward and area farmers, both landowners and tenants, began to grow more cotton.

Tenants usually provided one-quarter of their cotton crop to compensate the landlord for the use of the land [9]. Annual yields climbed dramatically, and by 1880 Ellis County was the 7th largest cotton producer in Texas. A decade later, the county led the entire state and it held that position for most of the subsequent 50 years [10].

The ensuing cotton boom brought unprecedented prosperity and growth to Ellis County and helped make it one of the wealthiest and most affluent counties in Texas. In the west-central region where J.M. Dunaway lived, cotton fields became the rule rather than the exception. The 1880 Products of Agriculture for Ellis County notes that most of Dunaway's neighbors, including Benjamin F. Forrester, Walter M. Turner, William Stiles and George H. Cunningham, devoted the largest percentage of their "tilled" lands to cotton and hired laborers for assistance. Dunaway deviated from the pattern; he continued to grow wheat and oats instead of cotton and had no hired labor [11].

Despite Dunaway's apparent reluctance to directly participate in the cotton trade, he supplemented his own income with revenues from farmers who leased his land. Ad valorem tax rolls track the steady rise of Dunaway's net worth, which would have been possible only if his tenant farmers joined in the lucrative cotton trade. In 1870 these records state that the combined value of his real estate and personal properties was \$3,946. A decade later the figure had climbed to \$15,992, and by 1895 it reached \$24,245 [12]. He ultimately abandoned farming altogether and relied solely on revenues generated from his tenant farms and other investments as sources of income [13].

As the cotton boom continued during the late nineteenth century, Dunaway diversified his financial interests. He invested in several industrial operations in Waxahachie, including a cotton seed oil plant that pressed cotton seeds for a use in a variety of consumer goods [14]. Dunaway also purchased stock in the Waxahachie Cotton Yards where densely compacted cotton was stored before its shipment by rail to ports in Galveston and Houston [15].

Besides his active role in the cotton trade of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Dunaway became a leader within Boz, a small rural settlement that developed near the Dunaway Farmstead. Boz centered around a cotton gin that began operations about 1880. By the early 1900s the community had three stores, two blacksmith shops, a post office and a school [16]. Dunaway was a leader and an early member of the Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which was founded in the 1850s. When a storm destroyed the original sanctuary in 1892, Dunaway joined a committee that oversaw the construction of a new church [17]. He and his wife Sarah had eight sons: William J. (born in 1856), Eugene (1858), John F. (1860) Jefferson R. (1862), Samuel M. (1866), James B. (1874) John E. (1878) and Ota B. (1881) [18]. Sarah Dunaway died in 1887, but J.M. Dunaway continued to live in the house with his sons.

The 1900 Census lists J.M. Dunaway as a widower who was head of a household that included his son Jefferson R. Dunaway and his wife Joanna, a daughter of Benjamin F. Forrester who lived nearby. Both J.M. and Jefferson R. Dunaway listed "landlord" as their occupation, an indication that they relied on tenant farmers as the source of their income [19]. In 1903 Dunaway began partitioning his properties among his surviving children. Jefferson R. Dunaway received the family homestead and surrounding lands and is presumed to have altered the house, but J.M. continued to live there as well [20].

J.M. Dunaway died on May 25, 1918 just as Ellis County's cotton boom reached its apex [21]. Productivity had increased to maximum levels and annual yields generally stabilized before declining in the late 1930s [22]. Jefferson R. Dunaway oversaw family-owned tenant farms where cotton continued to be the primary crop, and he and his wife and four children (Sara, Richard, Frances and Ruth) lived in the house at the Dunaway Farmstead [23].

Jefferson R. Dunaway remained owner of the property until his death in 1943 [24]. By that time the cotton boom had died, due to soil depletion, reduced cotton prices and other factors. Most farmers began growing grains and other crops besides cotton. Some even used their land to raise cattle [25]. Richard Waldo Dunaway, the only son of Jefferson R. and Joanna Dunaway, acquired the farmstead in 1943 and continued to oversee it and other family properties until his death in 1966. His heirs kept the land until 1991 when they sold it to the Texas National Research Laboratory Commission [26].

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: Located in the vicinity of Waxahachie, in the historic but no longer extant community of Boz, is one of the best examples of mid nineteenth century vernacular houses in the area. The one-and-a-half story house is a double-pile, Georgian plan type with Greek and Gothic Revival details. It features three dormers at the front elevation, a full-length front porch, a gable end chimney, a one-story ell and an enclosed porch addition. It survives with a garage, two wells and a well house.
2. Condition of the Fabric: The exterior plastered masonry chimney of the house is sound; the roof and walls are in good condition. Interiors are in good condition; however, a fireplace mantel (101) and other interior decorative elements have been removed. The carriage and well house are in poor condition.

B. Site:

1. General Setting: The site includes a house and outbuildings which face southeast and are located on a slight promontory, north of a bend in Bakers Branch Road. The house is approached from the road by a gravel drive which completely encircles it.
2. Outbuildings: Other buildings located on the site include a one-story, single-bay garage or carriage house with two shed additions, a well house and two cisterns.
3. Landscaping, Enclosures: The site is heavily landscaped with plant materials introduced during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as well as native varieties. The site exhibits strong evidence for an attempt at formal planting. Plants are equally-spaced, are located in rectangular patterns, and appear to almost have been planted on a grid. The owners utilized perennial and flowering shrubs, planted as ornamentals, and trees planted both as ornamental and as shade specimens, located about the house. An early photograph (ca. 1890) documents that the yard of this house was extremely well-maintained, and features pruned shrubs planted behind a painted wood picket fence.

Perennials such as Day Lilies, Lilacs, and Irises are used as borders along fencerows. Redbuds and Chanamoles Japonica are used as ornamental and would have been the first shrubs to blossom in spring.

Bois d'arc was the dominant species of choice for planting as a hedgerow specimen as well as an ornamental in the nineteenth century. Although the tree is found primarily in hedgerows throughout the project area, Bois D'arc is used specifically at this site as an ornamental.

Other trees which were intentionally planted, probably as shade specimens, although they are indigenous to the area are Vitex and Red Cedar. Salt Cedar, a specimen found at the site and introduced from the coastal plain was a popular tree during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although it was not a particularly good ornamental.

PART III: ENDNOTES

1. A Memorial and Biographical History of Ellis County, Texas (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1892) 393; reprint ed., Ellis County Historical Museum and Art Gallery, Inc., Fort Worth: Historical Publishers, 1972.
2. Texas, State Comptroller Office, Ad Valorem Tax Rolls for Ellis County.
3. U.S., Department of the Interior, Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Eighth Census, by Joseph C. Kennedy, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864).
4. Henry Glassie, Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968) 107-112; Daniel Hardy and David Moore "Historic Resources Survey of Ellis County, Texas: An Inventory for the U.S. Department of Energy," 1990.
5. U.S., Bureau of the Census, "Products of Agriculture," 1860.
6. U.S., Department of the Interior, Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Eighth Census, by Joseph C. Kennedy, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864).
7. A Memorial and Bibliographical History, 393.
8. U.S., Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census- Volume III: The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States, by Francis A. Walker, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872).
9. Almond and Moir, Historic Structures Management Plan.

10. U.S., Department of the Interior, Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883); U.S., Department of the Interior, Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895).
11. U.S., Bureau of the Census, "Products of Agriculture," 1880.
12. Texas, State Comptroller Office, Ad Valorem Tax Rolls for Ellis County.
13. U.S., Bureau of the Census, "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas," 1900.
14. A Memorial and Bibliographical History, 393.
15. Ibid, 393.
16. Edna Davis Hawkins et al., History of Ellis County Texas (Waco: Texian Press, 1972), 32.
17. Stanley Murdock and Yula Glenn Murdock, interview by Terri Myers, Written notes, Waxahachie, Texas 12 June 1992; Frances Dunaway McGregor, interview by Terri Myers, Written notes, Waxahachie, Texas, 20 May 1992 and 12 June 1992.
18. Ellis County Genealogical Society, Searchers and Researchers, Volume XV, (Waxahachie, Texas: Ellis County Genealogical Society, 1992), 22.
19. U.S., Bureau of the Census, "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas," 1900; Ellis County Genealogical Society, 22.
20. Ellis County, Texas, Deed Record 141:192; U.S., Bureau of the Census, "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas," 1910.
21. Ellis County Genealogical Society, 22.
22. Almond and Moir, Historic Structures Management Plan.
23. Frances Dunaway McGregor.
24. Ellis County Genealogical Society, 22.
25. Frances Dunaway McGregor.
26. Ellis County, Texas, Deed Record 362:471; Ibid, 852:876.

PART IV: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings: No original plans or drawings are known to exist.

B. Early Views: Photograph (ca. 1890) in collection of Frances Dunaway McGregor.

C. Interviews:

McGregor, Frances Dunaway. Interviews by Terri Myers. Written notes. Waxahachie, Texas. 20 May 1992 and 12 June 1992.

Murdock, Stanley and Yula Glenn Murdock. Interview by Terri Myers. Written notes. Waxahachie, Texas. 12 June 1992.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources

Ellis County, Texas. Office of the County Clerk. Deed Records.

Ellis County, Texas. Office of the County Tax Assessor/Collector. Tax Abstracts of Lands.

Texas. State Comptroller Office. Ad Valorem Tax Rolls for Ellis County. On file at the Genealogical Collection at the Texas State Library.

U.S. Department of the Interior. Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Eighth Census, by Joseph C. Kennedy. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864.

U.S. Department of the Interior. Report on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States at the Eleventh Census, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1895.

U.S. Department of the Interior. Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Ninth Census- Volume III: The Statistics of the Wealth and Industry of the United States, by Francis A. Walker. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas." 1860.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas." 1870.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas." 1880.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas." 1900.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Population Schedule: Ellis County, Texas." 1910.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Products of Agriculture." 1860.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Products of Agriculture." 1880.

2. Secondary and published sources

A Memorial and Biographical History of Ellis County, Texas. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1892; reprint ed., Ellis County Historical Museum and Art Gallery, Inc., Fort Worth: Historical Publishers, 1972.

Almond, Killis P., Jr., and Moir Randall W. "Historic Structures Management Plan, submitted to TNRLC on behalf of the U.S. Department of Energy in Support of the Superconducting Super Collider." 1992.

Ellis County Genealogical Society. Searchers and Researchers. Volume XV. Waxahachie, Texas: Ellis County Genealogical Society, 1992.

Ellis County Genealogical Society Record, Volume III. Waxahachie, Texas: Ellis County Genealogical Society.

Glassie, Henry. Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968.

Hardy, Daniel, and Moore, David. "Historic Resources Survey of Ellis County: An Inventory for the U.S. Department of Energy." 1990.

Hawkins, Edna Davis, Ruth Stone, Ida M. Brookshire
and Lillie Tolleson. History of Ellis County Texas.
Waco: Texian Press, 1972.

PART V. PROJECT INFORMATION

This Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) recording project was undertaken by the Texas National Research Laboratory Commission (TNRLC) in conjunction with the Superconducting Super Collider Project in Ellis County. The project was conducted in accordance with TNRLC's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Energy, The Texas Historical Commission and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The MOA stipulates that a record be created of buildings to be demolished in the project area. The field work and measured drawings were prepared by ArchiTexas of Dallas. The recording team consisted of Bruce Fowler, Gary Garmon, Gilbert Hickox, Larry Irsik, Craig King, Richard Martratt, Craig Melde, Jeanie O'Brien, Ernesto Robles, Edward Sergeant, Gary Skotnicki, Stan Solamillo, and Diane Van Buren. Historical Research was conducted under the supervision of David Moore of Hardy, Heck, Moore of Austin. Architectural analysis and descriptions were prepared by Stan Solamillo of Dallas. Archival photography was by Brendan Dunnigan and Doug Hankins of Arlington.