

THE FRANK AND MARY HAY LANGFORD HOME
407 FOURTEENTH STREET
BANDERA, TEXAS

They people in the history of the Frank and Mary Hay Langford Home (Fourteenth Street and Hackberry, Bandera, Texas) were all true pioneers who saw Bandera grow from a wilderness of beauty and danger to a community where they were proud to raise their children and grandchildren. They enjoyed the freedom of American enterprise and taught the love of God and Country in their home. The Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints, just across the street, reflects the impact of the early Mormon settlers in the region as well as the citizens' respect of freedom of religion. Frank and Mary Hay Langford's lives were closely interwoven with the members of Lyman Wight's Mormon Colony. Frank's mother had been born in the Colony. Mary's family was also a part of the Colony. This ordinary old house, has witnessed births, death, laughter and tears. It was a place where the community gathered and shared their lives.

Benjamin Franklin Langford, Jr. (1876-1950) and Mary Emma Hay Langford (1880-1971), or Frank and Aunt Mary, as they were affectionately known in the community, contributed moral and social stability to a rough hewn frontier region fraught with hardships. Both grew up in Bandera. Both had a strong sense of duty to family and community. They were always ready to help, be it friend or a complete stranger-never asking anything in return.

They were happily married on December 6, 1899, by Rev. M. K. Fred, the Methodist minister. Frank, was an honest and good person. He taught school in Honey Creek and was later associated with the W. J. Davenport & Co. Mercantile Store until he accepted the position of Office Deputy in the Office of Bandera County Sheriff. He was an active in the Methodist Church and the Masonic Lodge. He was a stern, but kind and caring parent. His world was Bandera and he was not comfortable away from there. Mary was someone to be consulted when there was an illness, a new baby to be cared for, or in times of family distress. She often went to the homes of new mothers helping to give a new baby its first bath and showing the mother how to care for the newborn. When necessary, she delivered babies. She was considered a woman with good sense about health matters. In addition she was also artistic. She had a good eye for aesthetics and in her youth painted some. She loved music and the classical music programs on the radio in the 1930's gave her a great deal of pleasure. She was a good cook with some imagination and a lighter touch than most of her neighbors. She was active in the Order of the Eastern Star and even represented her chapter in state meetings. Together Frank and Mary had eight children: Cohen Hay (1900-1977), Olin (1904-1904), Lora (1905-1967), Leotta (1908-1914), Othell (1911-2002) Eldon (1915-), Wirth (1918-1939) and Lera (1923-1923). In addition, they helped to raise many children other than their own.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had its beginning in Bandera County in 1854 when Elder Lyman Wight (1796-1858) arrived with his group of colonists.^{3,14} The Colony consisted of educated settlers who were doctors, teachers, millers, blacksmiths and skilled furniture craftsmen. Virgine Minear Hay (1844-1941), Mary's mother, was one of the children in the Colony and grew to womanhood to become the wife of George Hay (1836-1925), also a Colony member. She was a devout member of the faith of her predecessors, and in later years,

after she was widowed, she wanted to have a house of worship built for the faithful members in Bandera, Medina and Pipe Creek. In 1930, Grandma Hay, as she was affectionately known, her daughter, Mary Hay Langford and son-in-law, Frank Langford, donated the land and money to build the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints on the Southeast corner of Fourteenth and Hackberry Streets. The Church's Sunday School classes were held in Frank and Mary's parlor.

The Langford family has owned the home since the purchase by Frank and Mary Langford on May 8, 1894.