

Jane [Fishback] Papers (addendum)

1/10/1892 Letter from Harry Fishback, Vernon, Texas, to his grandfather, presumably Robert F. Wood, Coral Hill, Barren County, Ky.

Harry reports that the farmers in Vernon, Texas, harvest 25-50 bushels of wheat per acre. The vicinity has lots of wild geese and ducks, and the barking prairie dogs are no bigger than half-grown cats. He has not seen a tree since coming to Texas, the ground is level, and he can't find a rock big enough to throw at a bird. Instead, a piece of coal or a stick is his only weapon.

[To appreciate Harry's concern about the local lay of the land and the paucity of rocks in Texas, the reader should know that Barren County, Ky., his former home, has a beautiful rolling landscape richly endowed with hardwood trees and such an abundance of troublesome field rocks that local farmers often say that when God finished creating the world He had far too many rocks leftover. Not knowing what to do with them, He just scattered them all on top the soil in Barren County.]

The letter is a good example of creative phonetic spelling, e.g., braking (breaking), soing (sowing), acer (acre), leval (level), pararie (prairie), wright (right), know (no), Ralf (Ralph), howday (chowdy).