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## **Guide to the**

### **EDGAR BROWN ESTELLE COMMUNITY RESEARCH COLLECTION**

**1908-2007**

**(bulk 2002-2007)**

**3 inches**

**Accession Numbers: 0102-126; 0102-205; 0405-85; 0405-107; 0607-81; 0607-102;  
0809-12**

**Collection Number: 66**

**Prepared by Kevin Kendro**

**December 2009**

**CITATION: The Edgar Brown Estelle Community Research Collection, Collection 66,  
Box number, Folder number, Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.**

#### **Historical Sketch**

Estelle was a farm community that was located in what today is western Irving and part of the DFW Airport property. It evolved from scattered farms on Henry Burgoon's 1853 land grant. The community obtained a post office in 1881 to serve the area residents. The post office was named "Estell" after a Grapevine architect, but the post office officials in Washington, D. C., recorded the name as "Estelle."

By the late 1880s, Estelle was a shipping point for cotton, wheat, and corn on the stage route between Grapevine and Dallas. The community claimed a steam cotton gin, two churches, a blacksmith, two doctors, and a school.

The original school building, opened in 1884, was in a two-story frame Masonic Lodge. The first floor was used for the school, which served grades 1-11. The lodge met on the second floor. In 1916, the community constructed a two-story brick schoolhouse adjacent to the Masonic Lodge. During the 1920s, the school began offering only grades 1-7. High School students attended Irving High School.

In 1948, the Sowers Common School District took over the Estelle School, and in 1955 the Irving Independent School District annexed the Sowers Common School District. The city of Irving annexed the Estelle area in 1968.

#### **Biographical Sketch**

Edgar Brown was raised in the Estelle community and attended the Estelle School during the late 1920s and early 1930s. In 2002, he and a couple of schoolmates, Marion Altom and Morris Taylor, began exploring the old school grounds and decided to gather their recollections and other information on the school and community. This project led them to

the idea of a school reunion. The reunion was held on the school grounds in April, 2002.

### **Scope and Content**

The Edgar Brown Estelle School Research Collection is contained in one ½-size manuscript box and is arranged in two series.

The collection is a compilation of material put together by Edgar Brown during his research relating to the Estelle School and community. The final product of the research was a booklet inviting his Estelle classmates to a school reunion on the old school grounds; a brief history of the community and school; and a record of the reunion day.

Series I is made up of the raw research material gathered by the donor. Of particular interest is an original letter in which the Harrington brothers explain to a young Edgar Brown how the community got its name, 1931. The series also contains photocopies of Dallas County maps from several decades, and hand-drawn maps of the Estelle community and the Estelle School grounds.

Also included are hand-drawn sketches of all the buildings on the school grounds with notations describing the buildings' exteriors and interiors. These were done in hopes that the school grounds would be reconstructed and used someday as an historical education center.

Series II is made up of personal items relating to the Estelle School, including student valentines to a teacher, c. 1927, a spelling textbook, and a report card.

### **Provenance Statement**

The Edgar Brown Estelle School Research Collection was donated to the Irving Archives by Edgar Brown in several accessions over a number of years. Accession number 0102-126 was made on Feb. 20, 2002; accession number 0102-205 was made on May 28, 2002; accession number 0405-85 was made on July 24, 2003; accession number 0405-107 was made on Jan. 28, 2005; accession number 0607-81 was made on Mar. 14, 2007; accession number 0607-102 was made on Apr. 27, 2007; and accession number 0809-12 was made on Oct. 17, 2008.

### **Literary Rights Statement**

Permission to publish from the Edgar Brown Estelle School Research Collection must be obtained from the Irving Archives, Irving Public Library.

### **Note to Researcher**

The Irving Archives' Oral History Collection contains an interview with Edgar Brown and Marion Altom on tape #77 and transcribed. The interview was conducted on Feb. 14, 2002.

The Irving Archives' Oral History Collection contains an interview with Edgar Brown, Morris Taylor, and Bessie Powers Ramsey on tape #296 and transcribed. The interview was conducted on Feb. 16, 2007. The interviewees attended Estelle School and discuss the school grounds and buildings during the 1920s and early 1930s.

The Irving Archives' Oral History Collection contains an interview with Edgar Brown, Alvie

Barton, Joe Joffre, and Ruth Harkey on tape #78 and transcribed. The interview was conducted on Jan. 21,

## **Container List**

### **Series I. Research Material**

#### Box 1

#### Folder

##### 1 Maps, Deeds, Images

Contains a letter to Edgar Brown from the Harrington brothers explaining how the community of Estelle got its name, 1931; photocopies of deeds in which the Harringtons give land on which to build a school, 1883 and 1916; photocopies of Estelle School and community-related images; photocopies of Dallas County maps on which the donor has designated the Estelle community, 1846, 1886, 1900; and a hand-drawn map showing the location of homes, including the homeowners' names, in the community, c. 1930. Included are images of the Estelle store, the Masonic Lodge and school, the Bear Creek Baptist Church, and Edgar Brown and Marion Altom.

##### 2 School Grounds, 2005

Contains hand-drawn sketches and descriptions of the buildings that were on the school grounds.

##### 3 Correspondence, 2007

Letters from Pete Pannel concerning his description of the brick Estelle School building and people he remembers from Estelle. Also included are copies of photos that illustrate his description of the school building and photos of members of the Pannel family, 1920s-1930s.

##### 4 Reports, 2002

Contains reports on the Estelle School and community compiled from their research material by Edgar Brown, Marion Altom, and Morris Taylor: "A Brief View of the History of the Estelle Community;" "Estelle School and Community Reunion and History;" and a supplement to the reports containing corrections and additional information.

### **Series II. School Items**

##### 5 Report Card, 1928-29

Contains Edgar Brown's report card from the Estelle School.

##### 6 Textbook, 1908

Contains a textbook: The Elementary Spelling Book.

##### 7 Valentine Cards, c. 1927

Contains Valentine cards given by the students of the Estelle School to their teacher, Elizabeth Story.