

R/F: Peters' Colony

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The axiom, "A dollar saved, is a dollar made," is significant that Texas wild lands indeed, worth being owned and tax paid, are worthy of some fostering care and attention; and that this impartial statement is worthy of a careful reading and consideration by

## OWNERS OF TEXAS "PETERS' COLONY LANDS."

To whom I respectfully announce, that without a change of views and regime of the larger ownership, each interest must practically continue of nominal value, an annoyance and burden. The hamper of the major interest has mainly conspired to prevent all chance to sell, of my own, and equally of others desirous and anxious to sell at fair prices to settlers, preclude settlement and success. Which, with cumulative hindrances to prevent early material enhancement, and indeed, calculated to continue their nominal value, even regardless of favorable influences of reasonably near railroad extensions, it will be undesirable, inexpedient, and, in a word, useless for me to longer *directly* employ my time as heretofore. I have *for them*, when obviously if forced to sacrifice my interest, the sooner the better, for if, indeed, a landed interest in Texas is to be desired, why, other as good, and (without change of policy) much more desirable, are to be had without limit, free from such prejudicial conditions, and be controlled with direct positive advantage and satisfaction.

**This presentation of facts, for your information and benefit**, with those heretofore made from time to time through circulars mailed to each of you, some of which, by the way, may have seemed too persuasive, and smacked of importunity, for which I may well be pardoned—condoned by the facts. That my presence and knowledge of the exigencies, and of things repressing to each and the whole interest—to sales and settlement, and short of proper remedy, for so peculiarly and unfortunately divided up and held, it was absurd to expect enhancement of value, and, indeed, absolutely impossible. So that the desire and anxiety of myself and of many others to sell to settlers, being prevented by the indifference and refusal of what constituted the larger interest, and the while from the establishment of my agency here for the sale of these lands; bestowing all my time, at continued heavy personal expense advertising them throughout the United States, parts of the Canadas and Europe, with that of employe surveyors to identify and show surveys, and that my interest, to an extent, was yours, and yours mine. All this exceptional to any and all other agents, who simply do nothing more than advertise their business cards. Yet the beneficiaries mainly of my labor and expense, all tended to induce and occasion it, and, without favorable change, culminate with this, the last I shall ever trouble you with.

**My agency here was opened for the sale of Peters' Colony lands to Settlers** for the reasons that, having sold and closed my mercantile business, I had the time, conceived that it would be promotive of better health, and at the same time could vitalize and appreciate my large interest in them—so intimately blended with and inseparable from yours, that yours would needs be evenly promoted by my endeavors—together with the wish of many, expressed to all concerned, by the action of their meeting, duly called by publication in newspapers, to be holden at and was, office Messrs. Hall & Long, Louisville, Ky., September 6th, 1876. Had all or the greater interest then heeded the advice given by said owners, by resolutions widely published through newspapers, favorable results would have been quick, satisfactory, and profitable to all concerned. For then the demand for lands was as great as since, with a most limited supply compared to now or the past three years. The only lands on market were of Bounty, Donation, Headright, Austin, Castro, these, and a few other Colony lands—the opportune time to have sold of, and settled your lands *readily* at prices greatly above what since they would average and would have saved subsequent taxes, interest, and trouble, avoided adhering prejudicial influences and impediments, which, for a long time, to an extent, will arbitrarily hold even under more favorable auspices of management, and by reason of such sales and settlement, the residue would now have greater value than will likely obtain for all for years to come.

**For the reasons following:** The State School, Asylum, and University lands embrace many millions of acres of the richest and most desirable in the State. A late Act of the legislature reduced their price from former minimum of \$1.50 an acre to \$1.00 an acre, on terms: ten annual payments, also, put on market additional millions of acres of State lands at fifty cents an acre, and other millions of acres of railroad and ditch lands of first quality at 25 cents and 50 cents an acre, are on market, the script having been sold by the Companies to whom issued by the State, at from 5 to 12 cents per acre. Withal, a late law practically abolished an old one, which allowed a person to buy and hold not more than 160 acres of State School lands, to, definitely now, three sections (1920 acres), and which, through transfers, can be made to cover aggregates almost without limit. Which, obviously, will tend to lower values and limit demand and sale of other lands, for years to come, a tendency especially with these under the ban of local prejudice, and conditions to countervail, needless to here repeat, for fully enumerated in my circular of date January 18th, 1879, mailed to each owner and representative of owner, and which might be referred to with advantage, and abuse, further abetted by short-sighted measures of State, alone quite sufficient to retard, if not suspend immigration, and which are caught up and used against it, with much distortion of facts and truth added, by the strong and growing stronger combinations of land owners, agents, and railroads of the Northwestern, and, indeed, all the old States, to disparage and traduce Texas, which, with the past pernicious policy of the larger interest continued, may become the worse. In that, during the past year, owners of parcels ranging from one to forty thousand acres, hopeless of deliverance from, causes mentioned preventing sales to settlers in which only is the profit, rather than hold for yet many years, sold their interests, and with difficulty too, at the *pitiful* sum of fifty cents an acre, and yet, price enough, without change and chance for the possibility of benefit, a policy fruitful of some success, for the new associates in interest are able, and when they realize the trouble, the old negative course, they will become indifferent too, and hold and hold to a longer, more *common and* infinite disgust of original owners.

**Then why not all recognize facts, take a common sensed view of the situation**, and, by common concert, move and act accordingly? That, unfortunately, these lands were so divided that scarcely any one owned an adjoining or near survey, except of "the Leckie 265 acre tracts," in the general way the roughest and least desirable of these lands. Many *flatly* refused to sell any; some at prices too high—beyond *reason*; others "will, when I see them," but never come to see; some reluctant and slow to answer; others create delay by the query, "can't you get offer of 25 cents or 50 cents an acre more?" another, "accept, if balance is paid in one year," instead as proposed, 10 per cent. lien notes at one, two, and three years,



interest payable annually, when, of course, I had *exhausted buyer's* willingness as to price, and his *ability* to live along and meet payments, and then *only sent application* on my impartial judgment that *price, etc., was* fair full market *value* for the tract, *and, if my own, would have sold it* at price and terms offered. Probably nineteen of twenty applications are made by those on the *move* with their families and their *all*, who wont and can't be expected to delay weeks, and at heavy expense the while, waiting to know if they can buy their choice, at price and terms they would be able and willing to meet, so pass on, and public sentiment has got to urge and insist their passing on. Keeping the Colony a *free pasturage* field has prevented sales and settlement of such of these lands as my own and of many others willing and anxious to sell at prices and terms often offered for their choice, that of others, but unable to do so except occasionally to those (a very few) thoughtless of the conditions to which the many are wide-awake to, *not to buy* where they must needs continue isolated, have no chance for neighbors, and the important desideratums of social, school, church, mill, mail, and other privileges and convenience. So you can plainly see that however willing others and myself have been to place settlers, the only way that profit and enhanced values mainly can obtain, under past and present regime it has been and will remain quite impracticable. So

**WHY PERPETUATE IT WHEN OBVIOUSLY A FOLLY?**

Are you afraid of fooling your lands away? Surely not worse than kept unsettled, and with much bother, fritted away by taxes and interest. Are you unwilling to risk proceeds of sales? Then move out and give them personal attention, failing, your heirs will be left with them, of nominal value, of now heavy and increasing taxes to pay, who will *have* to do what you refuse. Can't trust an agent in Texas? why, there are persons in your respective communities you trust, and as well worthy are to be found the world over—even in Texas.

To my old patrons, who, all along, have expressed appreciation of my endeavors for their (the common) interest in the Peters' Colony lands, and for your favor and trust, I tender my grateful thanks, and beg to inform you that I shall continue my agency for the sale of lands, and the service of my old Surveyors, whose knowledge of, and ability to identify Colony surveys, their labor of several years, unknown to, and impracticable to readily do by even County Surveyors, whose knowledge of them in the general way, is limited to those on the outside boundaries of the Colony work, which, with the fact that throughout the State and abroad my connexion with and agency of these lands is so notorious, that all general inquiry will come to me, so that I will be enabled to best promote and serve your interest.

Patronage is respectfully solicited from those who have withheld it, only and provided it is mutually agreeable. First. Be satisfied that, to whatever extent given, your *trust* would be *safe*. In assurance of which, to all who may require reference I shall be pleased to give names of well known patrons—large owners of this interest—also of banks and business firms of first class commercial standing, who have well known me during a long business career, and will attest my integrity, promptness, and responsibility. Second. I only ask of all what I know to be important, best, and necessary for your interest, a ready facility to contract and close sales, under written, explicit and full authority to sell tracts, or parts of such as admit of fair division or otherwise difference over value paid, at prices, in my judgment, marketably worth, quality, location, etc. considered, usual terms  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  or more cash, balance 10 per cent. lien notes at one, two, and three years, interest payable annually, or specific or approximate price for each, and parts of surveys, remembering that some are so poor, or rough and rocky, are of but little value, and that prices much above maximum market value would be a prohibition of sale and simply a farce, that these things are especially essential away out here in Texas, where buyers are choosers, and even in the older settled counties have yet an almost endless field to choose from, or, in short, *give discretion as to sales, price, and terms*, to be governed as if my own, your interest would be impartially served. No Deed would be sent for acknowledgment without the predicate of *Earnest Money* by applicant, which would assure close of contract or re-payment for trouble.

A proper protection of your interest can not be exercised without special written authority to eject squatters, prosecute for trespass and damage, which a good many have failed to give. If desired done, sign, detach, and send me the annexed form. Costs of suit and incidental expense only will attach. Necessary funds to be supplied me.

Respectfully,

Office: Graham, Young Co., Texas, Feb. 26th, 1880.

E. S. GRAHAM.

**TAX MATTERS.**—Messrs. Hilliard & Spiller, here, make tax matters a specialty in their business, attend to and pay my own (except in Young County,) and for all who desire me to have theirs attended to. Some counties have made excessive valuations of the Colony lands the past two years, Throckmorton County particularly so for 1879, of *twice* the value *rendered at*. I gave Messrs. Hilliard & Spiller notice to pay mine only at *rendition* value, and requested them to apprise other owners of my intention to resist the outrage, and hoped they would do likewise, for submitted to, will have to be repeatedly done. I shall enjoin sale of mine for taxes, and reach justice under equity guaranteed by Constitutional provision.

E. S. G.

No. . . . .

STATE OF . . . . .

COUNTY OF . . . . .

Know all men by these presents, That E. S. Graham, (office at Graham, Young County, Texas,) is hereby fully authorized and empowered to protect, prosecute for trespass and all damage, and eject squatters from any and all "Peters' Colony or Texan Emigration and Land Company lands, and other lands in the State of Texas, owned by me, or represented by me as trustee, executor, administrator, or guardian, and further: at his discretion of the expediency, to lease, for a short term, any tracts, or parts thereof, that may have improvements thereon, or held in adverse possession.

In Testimony Whereof, I hereto sign my name at . . . . . this . . . . . day  
of . . . . . 188 . . . . .