Historical Narrative for Texas Historical Subject Marker Application

Presented to
Bee County Historical Commission – Beeville, Texas
and
Texas Historical Commission – Austin, Texas
I. CONTEXT

In the quarter-century following World War II American society experienced profound social, economic, and political changes. America changed from a segregated and isolationist country to a more diverse and inclusive society, reflecting the shifting demographics in the workplace and beyond, while grappling with the emerging problems of the nuclear age. Nowhere did the winds of change blow more strongly than in Texas and the American South.

A humanitarian with progressive views, Benjamin Dudley Tarlton Dougherty was not content to remain silent after the war. As an active conservationist, rancher, oil producer, journalist, and author, he was an elected public servant whose experience as a decorated combat veteran and student of history led him to speak out boldly against complacency on the political and social issues of his era. Mr. Dougherty’s keen intellect, wide-ranging interests, and commitment to public service were hailed by many of his contemporaries, and later shown to be of enduring benefit to his state and country. He sponsored legislation which was profoundly forward-thinking and fostered groundbreaking discussions on the future of our foreign and domestic policy. His early involvement on conservation measures began during the epic seven year drought of the 1950’s in Texas\(^1\).

\(^1\) Handbook of Texas, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996; Droughts; [https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ybd01](https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ybd01)
II. OVERVIEW

Known as “Dudley,” Benjamin Dudley Tarlton Dougherty was a lifelong resident of Bee County. He was born in San Antonio on December 18, 1923 as the youngest of four children to James Robert Dougherty and Genevieve Tarlton Dougherty of Beeville.

A third generation Texan of Irish descent whose ancestors, Robert and Rachel Dougherty, founded St. Paul’s Academy at Round Lake, his grandparents lived and worked from the area now known as San Patricio de Hibernia, situated in the land grant of the McGloin Colony Empresarios. His father left San Patricio to settle and practice law in Beeville. Dudley was named for his maternal grandfather, Benjamin Dudley Tarlton, a noted jurist and law professor in Austin.

Dudley grew up in an environment rich in learning and life experience. His father, James Robert Dougherty, successfully argued cases before the United States Supreme Court and later in life became a rancher and oil producer in Bee County and greater South Texas.

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2 Handbook of Texas, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996; James Robert Dougherty; https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdo22
3 Handbook of Texas, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996; Robert and Racheal Dougherty entries for Robert Francis Dougherty (1827-1881) https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdo49
4 Handbook of Texas, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996; James McGloin; https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmc61
5 Handbook of Texas, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996; and Benjamin Dudley Tarlton (1849-1919) https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fta09%20
Mostly self-taught, Dougherty attended St. Joseph’s School in Beeville and Culver Military Academy. He was a gifted student who audited and attended classes at the University of Texas beginning at age 12 and following his return from military service in World War II.\footnote{Memorial Resolution, H. R. 22, Texas House of Representatives, 66\textsuperscript{th} Legislature, January 23, 1979}
At the age of nineteen, although plagued by bad eyesight, Dudley Dougherty memorized the eye exam and enlisted in the United States Army. He landed in Europe
shortly after the D-Day invasions and won four Bronze Stars in combat before receiving his honorable discharge on December 13, 1945\(^8\).

Dougherty returned to Beeville at age 21 after the war to fight for the peace and to manage his family’s oil and ranching interests\(^9\).

In his oral history, Dougherty described himself as a young man, who after the war “… followed County politics at an intensive level.” He was about to enter into state and national politics and it was then that he attended the 1948 Democratic National Convention where he witnessed the nomination of President Truman\(^10\).

In November 1950 Dudley Dougherty married Mary Patricia Calhoun of Goliad\(^11\). The Dougherty’s and their four children made their home at San Domingo Ranch, his 6,000 acre ranch in Bee County\(^12\). Dudley made it his home for the remainder of his life.

Next to politics, his second most important involvement, that with conservation began in earnest. The ranch was a meeting place for like-minded people whose politics and life stories interested Mr. Dougherty, and who often came and went to the surprise

\(^8\) Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979; Honorable Discharge Benjamin D. T. Dougherty, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, December 13, 1945, Dougherty Family Papers, San Domingo Ranch, Beeville, Texas.


\(^11\) “Miss Mary Patricia Calhoun and Dudley Dougherty Marry Saturday in Home of Bride,” Beeville Bee-Picayune (November 16, 1950), 7-8. Mary Patricia Calhoun Dougherty

\(^12\) The Doughertys had four children: James Robert Dougherty, III (1951-1992), Mary Patricia Dougherty (1953- ), Dudley Calhoun Dougherty (1955-1976), and Stephen Tarlton Dougherty (1958- ).
of his family and fellow co-workers. The Doughertys’ entertained frequently at San Domingo which became a meeting place and forum for a wide range of people of varying backgrounds and opinions. Their guests included Lyndon Johnson, Madame Nhu, *de facto* First Lady of the Republic of Vietnam, Audie Murphy\(^\text{13}\), and the Doughertys’ many friends in politics the arts, and friends from the Legislature years\(^\text{14}\). Many productive and memorable things came from those sojourns.

In 1952 Dougherty defeated a four-term incumbent to win election to the Texas House of Representatives from a district composed of Bee, Karnes, and Wilson counties\(^\text{15}\).


\(^{15}\) “Dudley Dougherty Announces Candidacy for Legislature; Is Life-Long Bee Countian.” *Beeville Bee-Picayune* (February 14, 1952), 1; “Dougherty Wins Representative Race By 604 Votes,” *Beeville Bee-Picayune* (July 31, 1952), 1.
Figure 2. Dudley T. Dougherty’s Senate Race Flyer, 1954
Figure 3. The Dougherty Family in Dudley T. Dougherty’s Senate Race Flyer, 1954
Mr. Dougherty was an ardent advocate for the protection of political refugees and prisoners of war\textsuperscript{16}. In 1953 he founded a national organization, the Committee for American Victory, which opposed the forced repatriation of North Korean prisoners of war to their former homeland\textsuperscript{17}. The following year, Dougherty organized a national effort to protect the rights of American servicemen who were threatened with prosecution by the U.S. Army while prisoners of war in Korea\textsuperscript{18}. His wartime experience produced a lifelong commitment to veterans’ groups which he supported both financially and through his active participation.

In 1953, during the period of racial segregation, Dudley T. Dougherty provided financial support and motivation to build the Charles Major Lytle American Legion Post 818 in Beeville, a post for African-American veterans. Mr. Dougherty’s support for Post 818 and his personal attendance at its meetings during the years of segregation reflected his commitment to a fair and equal place of honor for all veterans. In 2014 the Texas Historical Commission designated the Charles Major Lytle American Legion Post 818 with a historical marker\textsuperscript{19}.

\textsuperscript{16}“A Citizen Remembers,” Chicago Daily Tribune (August 10, 1953), II-5
\textsuperscript{17}“Texan Starts Own Crusade,” Omaha World-Herald (July 8, 1953), 8; “Texan Pushing Drive on Truce,” The Austin American (July 8, 1953), 3; “Solon Raps Truce with Ad,” San Antonio Light (July 11, 1953), 3.
\textsuperscript{19}Dougherty’s support is cited in the Texas Historical Commission’s Marker for the Charles Major Lytle American Legion Post 818 dedicated in Beeville in August 2014.
Figure 4. Post 818 American Legion Texas Historical Commission Marker, Beeville TX
Figure 5. Dudley T. Dougherty at his office
In 1954 Dudley Dougherty was the sole candidate to oppose the re-election of Lyndon B. Johnson to the United States Senate. Dougherty challenged the incumbent Senator to give voters a choice. He disagreed with Johnson for supporting the wartime agreements at Yalta and Potsdam and for failing to support the Bricker Amendment. This Amendment would have limited executive agreements and prohibited any treaty from abridging rights guaranteed to Americans by the Constitution.

The Dougherty-Johnson campaign attracted widespread attention beyond Texas and the interest of many national organizations. After the election, Lyndon Johnson persuaded Congress to adopt an amendment to the Internal Revenue Code prohibiting tax-exempt organizations from actively participating in election campaigns. Dudley Dougherty focused his attention as a rancher and state legislator on water conservation and environmental issues during the devastating seven-year drought which parched Texas in the 1950s.

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23 Dudley T. Dougherty, “A Workable Water Conservation Program on San Domingo Ranch,” San Antonio Light (February 8, 1957), 28A.
A WORKABLE WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM

ON DUDLEY T. DOUGHERTY'S SAN DOMINGO RANCH, BEEVILLE, TEXAS.

THE TEXAS WATER PROBLEM
A SOLUTION

BY DUDLEY TARLTON DOUGHERTY

Figure 6 San Antonio Light (February 8, 1957)
Dudley T. Dougherty became expert on water conservation and land management, pioneering cloud seeding and conservation experiments at San Domingo Ranch. Sponsored archeological digs for fossils took place at the ranch. In 1957 he wrote a well-received book, The Water Problem: A Solution.

When a Mastodon head was found during a well site excavation, it was subsequently donated to the University of Texas.

In the late 1950s Dougherty advised Congress in drafting a Great Plains Conservation Act, a comprehensive proposal for managing and conserving the resources and environment of the vast Great Plains region.

In 1959 Dudley Dougherty acquired La Prensa, a San Antonio newspaper published in English and Spanish, with the goal of uniting both communities and expanding commercial and cultural ties between South Texas and Latin America. His editorials sought to influence others for the common good, revealing information not

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26 Interview, Mary Patricia Dougherty, April 28, 2015

27 John A. Carroll Papers, University of Colorado at Boulder.
readily available elsewhere, while trying to seek workable solutions to complex problems of the day$^{28}$

Dudley Dougherty publicly opposed the use of military intervention in Indochina as early as his Senate campaign against Lyndon Johnson in 1954. In the 1960s Mr. Dougherty’s writings continued to show his commitment to building peace through a foreign policy based on human rights and international cooperation$^{29}$. His stance on military interventionism had not wavered, and he became an even more outspoken critic of war when America sent military advisors to Vietnam during the early Kennedy years$^{30}$.

In October 1961 President Kennedy honored Dougherty by inviting him to the White House for his advocacy of the President’s Alliance for Progress and as publisher of *La Prensa*.31

Figure 8. "A Washington Circus" Painted for Dudley T. Dougherty by artist Dong Moy Chu Kingman.
In 1962 the Chinese-American California watercolor artist, Dong Kingman visited San Domingo. There, Dougherty and he conceived his singular work, a political commentary called “A Washington Circus”, spanning the 1962-1964 years. The painting was done with Mr. Dougherty’s take on the political environment of the time. The inspiration for the title came from a phrase that described a philosophy known as Euergetism, a system of public beneficence practiced by Roman emperors that could be summed up in the phrase:

“..Give Them Bread and Circuses..”

In ancient times, euegetism was central to gaining popularity with the public. According to Pliny, when not used properly, euegetism was also a way to extricate the government from its own misdeeds.

The painting was an iconographic statement from Mr. Dougherty and Kingman on Washington Politics during that time of upheaval and change both immediately before and after the death of JFK\(^{32}\).

\(^{32}\) Interview, Mary Patricia Dougherty, April 28, 2015
casualties mount, war drags on to a stalemate, and South Vietnam is devastated and ruined and its young men exterminated, it will not encourage other small nations to become the battleground of Communism.

In case of such a tragic fiasco, at the one responsible, it might be your duty to resign but such action would not be in the interest of the nation as the Vice-President, who is a former active leader of the ADA has followed your footsteps faithfully in the war in Vietnam.

You should concentrate your efforts to safeguarding the United States from Communism within and from the cancer of Communism at our door steps in Cuba, which is spreading rapidly throughout Latin America, and above all to declare an armistice immediately in South Vietnam before war tensions increase throughout the world.

Despite extensive propaganda and brainwashing the American people are beginning to question this mad venture of Internationalism gone mad; of policing South East Asia alone with American lives and our taxpayers money.

The American people, up to now, have had no voice in this war. The purpose of this letter is to stop the fighting before it turns into a game of Russian Roulette that might involve us in greater or even nuclear wars.

Mr. President, you have the power to declare an armistice, to end the slaughter, and to stop war now, in accord with the admonition of Pope Paul VI in his world wide plea for Peace.

Wishing you every success,

DUDLEY TARLTON DOUGHERTY

A Constitutional, Jeffersonian Democrat.
A thoughtful man, despite his abilities and position, Dougherty approached life by the principle of "from those to whom much is given, much is expected". He was known as a brilliant and prescient individual who wanted to be an asset to others. His Congressional campaign in 1960 against incumbent Congressman John Young with the support of Labor, was his last foray into the field of political office.

After he retired from public office, despite political pressure, to remain silent, Mr. Dougherty lent his experience and financial resources to counsel and support other candidates such as his cousin, Frances Tarlton (Sissy) Farenthold and sponsored other innumerable causes and projects for the public benefit.

Throughout his life Dougherty was a devout member of the Roman Catholic Church. He was honored as a Knight of the Holy Sepulcher and a Knight of Malta, and attended both Papal coronations of Pope John XXIII in 1958 and Pope Paul VI in 1963 as a guest of Francis Cardinal Spellman.

As a rancher and oil producer, Dudley Dougherty played an important role in the economic life of Bee County and served on the Board of Directors of the First National

33 “Dudley Dougherty is Candidate for Congressional Post,” Beeville Bee-Picayune (March 10, 1960), 1.

34 Interview with Frances Tarlton Farenthold, September 14, 2013.

35 Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979
Bank and the Commercial National Bank in Beeville and on the Board of Directors of the Beeville Public Library.\textsuperscript{36}

Dougherty’s many philanthropies included gifts by his family’s foundation to local institutions, some of which include construction of the Recreation Center for St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Beeville, the Bee County Public Library, the Student Union and Dental Hygiene buildings at Bee County College, the Bee County Coliseum, and the Doctor’s Building in Beeville.\textsuperscript{37}

In June 1974 Dudley Dougherty received a Doctor of Humanities degree from Mary Hardin-Baylor College in recognition of his lasting and noteworthy contributions to humanity.\textsuperscript{38}

In 1975 the University of Texas named Dudley Dougherty as Patron of the Arts and Sciences for 1975-1976.\textsuperscript{39}

The Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation was established on February 21, 2000 in his honor and to fulfill his legacy by supporting many causes in his community and state.\textsuperscript{40}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{36} Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979; “Prominent Philanthropist Dies,” \textit{Beeville Bee-Picayune} (May 11, 1978), 1.
\textsuperscript{37} Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979; “Prominent Philanthropist Dies,” \textit{Beeville Bee-Picayune} (May 11, 1978), 1.
\textsuperscript{38} Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979.
\textsuperscript{39} Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979.
\textsuperscript{40} Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation, \url{www.dudleytdoughertyfoundation.org}
The Foundation actively pursues his legacy today. It recently established The Dudley T. Dougherty Natural Sounds Collection, which is located at San Domingo Ranch to catalogue and chronicle the unique birds and other wildlife of South Texas⁴¹.

Benjamin Dudley Tarlton Dougherty died on May 10, 1978 at the age of 54. He was buried in the family plot at St. Joseph’s Cemetery in Beeville beside his son Dudley Calhoun Dougherty (1955-1976), his parents, and a memorial to his older brother, James Robert Dougherty, Jr., who died in combat in World War II⁴².

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⁴² Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979; “Prominent Philanthropist Dies,” Beeville Bee-Picayune (May 11, 1978), 1.d
III. HISTORICAL/CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

As a business leader who was active in conservation and philanthropy, Dudley Dougherty made significant and tangible contributions to his community which are evident today in the educational, cultural, and medical institutions of Bee County and South Texas.

Mr. Dougherty was a fearless and outspoken reformer who risked his political future by courageously opposing Senator Lyndon B. Johnson’s re-election in 1954. He raised unpleasant questions about the incumbent’s disputed first election to the Senate, and won the votes of almost 355,000 Texans who would have had no voice had Johnson remained unopposed.

Dudley T. Dougherty’s experience as a decorated combat infantryman lent strength and credibility to his lifelong opposition to war and support for a foreign policy based on peace and international cooperation. Mr. Dougherty led a nation-wide campaign to protest the forced repatriation of prisoners of war to North Korea and founded a national organization to protect the rights of American servicemen who had been captured in Korea. In the 1960s he was a vocal critic of the Vietnam War.

Dougherty’s battles for open government, election reform, and strict accountability for public officials resonated with many of his fellow Texans and improved and strengthened the political culture of his state and nation. His major accomplishments during his lifetime illustrate Dudley T. Dougherty was a man of high intellect with wide-ranging interests with a lifelong dedication to making his community and country a better
place for all of its citizens and for future generations. His unselfish generosity to civic, educational, medical, and artistic causes was of distinct and lasting benefit to his community. His public service, including a willingness to speak candidly and to take unpopular stands, was widely recognized and commended in his community and state.
IV. DOCUMENTATION

1. Handbook of Texas, Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1996; Droughts; https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ybd01


6. 1996; Brown v. United states, 256 U.S. 326 (1921)


15. Interview with Mary Patricia Dougherty April 28, 2015, Beeville Texas, San Domingo Ranch.


19. Dougherty’s support is cited in the Texas Historical Commission’s Marker for the Charles Major Lytle American Legion Post 818 dedicated in Beeville in August 2014.


24. “Texan Proves Drought Can Be Licked; Proposes Direct Action,” *San Antonio Light* (February 8, 1957), 24A; “Dudley Dougherty Has Built Large Earthen Reservoir on 5,000 Acre Ranch Near City,” *Beeville Bee-Picayune* (April 12, 1956), 3

26. Interview, Mary Patricia Dougherty, April 28, 2015.

27. John A. Carroll Papers, University of Colorado at Boulder.


34. Interview with Frances Tarlton Farenthold, September 14, 2013.

35. Memorial Resolution, January 23, 1979


40. Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation, [www.dudleydoughertyfoundation.org](http://www.dudleydoughertyfoundation.org)


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