

On January 11, 1942, I was the second civilian interviewed by a Major Thomas in an office in the old First National Bank Building in Temple, Texas. The preceding August (1941) I had taken a civil service examination for stenographic position, passed, and my name was put on the eligible list.

Reporting for work on January 28th, I was soon assigned as secretary to the Secretary of the Tank Destroyer School (Maj. Eugene J. Howell), as substitute secretary to General Hugh T. Mayberry, Commandant of the TD School, and as chief of the stenographic pool. For weeks, the headquarters of the School was located over Marek's Cafe, just off Main Street on East Central Avenue, downtown Temple.

One day Major Howell called me into his office, swore me to secrecy (I had been cleared to handle classified documents earlier), told me to go over to the City Library and bring back some reference books. I was to find as much material as I could that pertained to heroes of the Civil War who had been stationed in Texas or were from Texas.

At the Library I selected as many books as I could carry at one time, placed them on the Librarian's desk to be checked out. She told me, rather emphatically, that reference books could not leave the Library under any circumstances. Relaying the message to Major Howell, I returned to the Library with pencil and notebook and copied in shorthand all the notes that pertained to the subject.

This took a bit of time, but the typed result was on Major Howell's desk the next day. It was then he told me about the project of selecting a name for the new Army Camp. If I remember correctly, General Mayberry, Commandant of the T.D. School, was Chairman of a committee to select a name which would be presented to General Bruce and the War Department for approval.

When Major Howell told me some time later that the name of John Bell Hood had been selected, I was not too surprised. There seemed to be much more information on Bell than any of the others considered.

I have often wondered if our City Librarian ever realized how she almost frustrated the effort to name Camp Hood!

Lucille Vann Cohen