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Eighter from Decatur: Growing Up in North Texas

Jim Tom Barton

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There was a time in North Texas when the “law” meant the sheriff rather than statutes or court decisions, and people were sometimes arrested for “looking suspicious.” Many country doctors had minimal education, but they were hardworking and dedicated. Home remedies, patent medicine, and placebos bought at medicine shows were commonplace. Emotional revival meetings in open tabernacles spiced hot summer nights.

A little boy could grow up secure there, full of mischief, enjoying whittling, family trips, and crawfishing. He could see the pioneer homes of his forebears and view the birth of more urban ways.

Jim Tom Barton’s *Eighter from Decatur* provides lively insights into the ways of a small North Texas county seat during the first decades of this century. Personal experiences, newspaper stories, historical information, yarns, and anecdotes—some humorous, some sad—are intertwined to give present-day readers a firsthand feel for the attitudes, customs, and conditions of an earlier time.

Texana lovers, social historians, and those with a small-town background will find this book an entertaining chapter in the exploration of the roots of Texas culture.

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