It is said that the Civil War is the most interpreted, most written about, and most read about time period of our nation’s history. There are over 60,000 books on the topic. But Yale University history professor and Pulitzer Prize Winner David Blight says it is the battle over Reconstruction and the narrative that emerged that is referred to as the Lost Cause, that is the most influential in how we are taught, how we interpret, and how we see the Civil War and its aftermath. Reconstruction was a battle over the vision of our country and the Lost Cause was a battle over our memory.

In his book, Race and Reunion, Blight says, “The Lost Cause became an integral part of national reconciliation by dint of sheer sentimentalism, by political argument, and by recurrent celebrations and rituals. For most white Southerners, the Lost Cause evolved into a language of vindication and renewal, as well as an array of practices and public monuments through which they could solidify both their Southern pride and their Americanness. In the 1890s, Confederate memories no longer dwelled as much on mourning or explaining defeat; they offered a set of conservative traditions by which the entire country could gird itself against racial, political, and industrial disorder. And by the sheer virtue of losing heroically the Confederate soldier provided a model of masculine devotion and courage in an age of gender anxieties and ruthless material striving.” (P266) He also noted that “Throughout the spread of the lost cause, at least three elements attained overriding significance: The movement’s effort to write and control the history of the war and its aftermath; Its use of white supremacy as both a means and an ends; And the place of women in its development.” (P259)

There are several organizations that worked to set this narrative after Reconstruction but the most notable are the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) and the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). There were local chapters that met regularly, held local annual reunions and participated in national reunions with other chapters. These organizations also funded scholarships, put out literature that supported their narrative, and erected statues that honored the confederacy but also that reinforced the racial caste system that was established after Reconstruction.

In North Texas, there are numerous monuments to the confederacy that were erected in the late 19th century and early 20th century. The most notable is probably the Confederate War Memorial in Dallas placed by the UDC in 1897. It has figures of Albert Johnston, Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Others monuments were placed in Sherman in 1897, Paris in 1903, Bonham in 1905, Gainesville in 1908, Corsicana in 1909, Kaufman in 1911, Palestine in 1911, Mount Pleasant in 1911, Waxahachie in 1912, Granbury in 1913, Weatherford in 1915, Farmersville in 1917, Cleburne in 1917, Texarkana in 1918, Denton in 1918, Greenville in 1926, and in Fort Worth in 1953. These monuments fit David Blight’s three elements of the lost cause narrative; the controlling of history, invoking white supremacy by placing many of these on courthouse lawns to symbolize and reinforce a racial caste system that restricted voting rights and other Jim Crow era forms of discrimination and oppression, and the role of women in their development as many were funded by the UDC and other women’s groups.

You may find a notable absence to this list, McKinney, the county seat of Collin County. There was a United Confederate Veterans group that met regularly in Collin County joined by a United Daughters of the Confederacy that provided meals and support. They held an annual
reunion in McKinney and had a day set aside as Confederate Day. A recap in the McKinney paper in 1906 mentioned that it was the 23rd anniversary of the reunion indicating that it dated back to 1884. The same recap mentions “Gen'l Cabell who commands the Western Department UCV soldiers of the ‘Lost Cause’ in which he claimed that ex-Confederate was a ‘misnomer,’ that he and the rest are still confederate without the Ex.” (McKinney Democrat Gazette, 8/30/06). So there is the presence of the controlling of history and the role of women, but no indication that they sought to erect a confederate monument like most of the surrounding counties.

However, they did work to erect a monument. The UCV established a monument committee in 1904 (MDG 10/6/04) and there were several updates throughout meetings up until the United Daughters of Confederacy affirmed their involvement separately on 1/20/10. The monument was placed on the courthouse lawn in 1911. It is not a generic confederate statue like the ones you find in many of the counties listed and it's not to a well known confederate figure like Lee, Jackson, or Davis. It was to their own confederate veteran and friend, James Throckmorton. A man they admired so much that a year after his death in 1894, the local UCV changed its name from Collin County Camp 109 UCV to JW Throckmorton Camp 109 UCV (McKinney Democrat, 8/1/95). A man that not only served as a soldier in the confederate army but also helped shape the racial caste system they sought to reinforce.

James Webb Throckmorton came to Collin County in 1842 when North Texas was still considered to be on the frontier of European settlement. He worked as a doctor, a lawyer, and was a veteran of the Mexican American War before beginning his political career as a state representative in 1851. As the Civil War loomed, he argued against Texas secession from the Union, largely because he wanted the development capabilities and economic stability provided by the Union on the frontier. His opposition to secession was not because he favored the abolition of slavery or the rights of African Americans, in fact, in the 1860 census, he was listed as the owner of a 23 year old enslaved man. After Texas seceded, Throckmorton joined the Confederate Army and served in different stints throughout the war. Although his role was largely to provide security in the Texas frontier and in Oklahoma, he did fight in the Battle of Pea Ridge in Arkansas and was stationed in Mississippi for a short period of time before returning to Texas.

The end of the Civil War marked the beginning of a period known as Reconstruction. There were several different visions of how the country would be reshaped following the rebellion of southern states, the emancipation of almost 4 million enslaved individuals, between 620,000 and 750,000 dead, and the need to remake an economy based on a different structure than slavery in the south. David Blight’s book, *Race and Reunion*, lays out a broad categorization of three visions for the country that played out in Reconstruction.

- There were the Emancipationists who were for the rights of freedmen and full participation in the new American society. This was largely the vision of the freedmen, Radical Republicans and President Ulysses S. Grant. It included actions like the passage of the Reconstruction Amendments that abolished slavery (13), provided citizenship and equal protection (14), and guaranteed the right to vote (15). It was the primary vision between 1867 and 1877.
There were the White Supremacist who wanted to maintain a social caste system based on race even if they were forced to abolish slavery. This meant restricting the rights of freedmen, especially in regards to voting rights. It was largely the vision of Andrew Johnson and the Democrat Party in the South. This group passed “black codes,” refused to ratify the Reconstruction Amendments, and ultimately ushered in what we know as the Jim Crow Era that would last until the 1960s.

And there were the Reconciliationist who were mournful about the division and the death in the country and wanted to find a way to heal and move forward. Reconstruction was how these groups maneuvered to set the vision for the country. Blight notes that it was ultimately the Reconciliationists who sided with the White Supremacists, and built that vision that included a racial caste system and a retelling of history that is referred to as the Lost Cause. The election of Rutherford B Hayes, in what is known as The Compromise of 1877, brought these two groups together and brought an end to Reconstruction.

Throckmorton played an active role in Reconstruction in Texas as he returned to politics following the Civil War. In early 1866, Throckmorton was sent as a representative to the Texas Constitutional Convention. At this convention, which Throckmorton presided over as President, the representatives decided against ratifying the 13th Amendment which abolished slavery but felt the oath they took to the US Constitution should be sufficient. Following the Convention, he was elected Governor of Texas. As his vision for Reconstruction largely aligned with Presidential Andrew Johnson, Texas largely defied the military rule remaining in the state after the end of the war. According to Dr. Kenneth Wayne Howell’s book, Texas Confederate, “The new legislators refused to ratify the Thirteenth and Fourteenth amendments to the US Constitution. If this were not enough, in November 1866, the legislators passed a series of laws known as Black Codes, which were designed to restrict the rights of the freedmen in areas such as interracial marriage, apprenticeships, and contract labor. The codes also called for segregation in public schools and on railroads. Furthermore, the legislature reinforced the idea that the homestead laws only applied to whites and passed laws that regulated vagrancy and convict leasing. Additionally, they denied freedmen the right to vote, to hold political office, to serve on juries, or to give testimony in court except in cases involving other blacks. The only civil rights afforded blacks were the rights to enter into binding contracts, to sue and be sued in the courts, to hold personal and real property, to make wills, and to have personal security.” (Dr. Howell’s Texas Confederate, Page 116)

Throckmorton had foreshadowed what policies he would seek in Reconstruction. In August of 1865, at the beginning of Presidential Reconstruction, Throckmorton wrote to a friend and declared that he would rather remain “under military rule always rather than yield anything but an acknowledgment that the negro has been freed by the act of the govern’t that we recognize it as an existing fact and that we have no disposition to quarrel any more about it.” He denied “any desire to reestablish slavery,” but he expressed optimism that “we will be enabled to adopt a coercive system of labor.” (Dr. Howell’s Texas Confederate, page 101). The coercive system of labor ultimately included convict leasing, a concept the state allowed until 1912 and Texas is still one of only 1 of 4 states that does not pay its inmates for labor. According to the Texas State Historical Association, “The prison population increased from 489 in 1870 to 1,738 by 1878. It reached 3,199 by 1890 and 4,109 by 1900. The number declined slightly during the
remaining years of the convict lease, reaching 3,471 at the end of 1912. During the years 1870–1912, 59 to 60 percent of Texas state prisoners were black, 30 to 40 percent were white, and 10 percent were Hispanic." Even his focus on economic issues for the area had a racial component. He wrote to his friend again, "Our political condition must be vastly mended before capital will venture here, and if the State should be turned over to the ignorance insolence of the negro race and radical hatred and vengeance it never will come." (Dr. Howell’s Texas Confederate, page 157).

As the national Reconstruction vision shifted from President Andrew Johnson to the Radical Republican majority in congress from 1866 into 1867, Throckmorton was not provided the leniency he got from Andrew Johnson. There were many disagreements over how the state was being governed. Throckmorton felt the US Army was not doing enough to protect the frontier. The US Army’s General for the area, Phillip Sheridan, expressed his feelings about Throckmorton’s failings when he wrote to General U. S. Grant on July 25 summarized by Dr. Howell again, “the crime rate in Texas was up and that Throckmorton was partly responsible for the atrocities committed against the freedmen and their white allies. Furthermore, the general stated that the governor had obstructed the ability of the military to maintain peace and had remained an obstacle to black suffrage. As a result, Sheridan stated that Throckmorton’s removal from office was absolutely necessary if the freedmen’s political rights were to be protected. Sheridan’s contention that the crime rate had risen in Texas was accurate. Between 1865 and 1867, the number of homicides had increased from 77 to 331. The highways were infested with bandits who were willing to kill for plunder. Many of these desperadoes were ex-Confederate officers and soldiers who were unwilling to accept Congressional Reconstruction policies. Thus, the primary targets of the outlaws tended to be freedpeople, white Unionists, and federal soldiers stationed in the state." (Howell’s Texas Confederate, Page 154). Ultimately Radical Republicans would provide the military the ability to remove civil government leaders in former Confederate states and Sheridan had Throckmorton removed on July 30th, 1867 because he was an “impediment to reconstruction." Although Johnson was still President, the Radical Republicans had begun to implement their vision for the country. This included granting voting rights to freedmen leading up to a new Texas Constitutional Convention in 1868, one that Throckmorton actively campaigned against this convention because it provided suffrage rights to freedmen and reduced his political power. In 1869, Texas passed the new Constitution and elected a largely Radical Republican civil leadership that led to the ratification of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments in 1870. On March 30, 1870, President Grant signed a bill readmitting Texas back into the Union.

The fight over vision was not over. In 1873, Texas elected Democrat Richard Coke as Governor and again shifted the vision back to one centered around a racial caste system. In 1876 the Texas government would draft another constitution that would provide for segregation, poll taxes, and other laws reflective of the Black Codes that would ultimately shape the Jim Crow Era. Nationally, Radical Republicans did not have the political ability to stop them and with the Compromise of 1877, Reconstruction ended and the vision for Jim Crow and a racial caste system was set. Throckmorton would serve in the US House of Representatives in two separate stints and would continue to advocate for the economic development of North Texas until he died in 1894.
Soon after Throckmorton’s death, many tried to honor him. As early as 1898, mentions of a Throckmorton Monument Association led by friend and colleague Russell DeArmond, appeared in the local paper. The granite pedestal with inscription that the statue sits on was actually completed in late 1899, but it would seem that fundraising was not sufficient to complete the monument at that time. Pleas are seen throughout the first decade of the 20th century to raise money to complete the project. As noted, the UCV renamed itself the Throckmorton Camp in 1895 and had their own monument committee as early as 1904 to complete the monument (MDG 10/6/04). Other groups would announce fundraisers throughout the decade included a push for nickels from school kids, fundraising concerts, and an effort by the Federated Women’s Clubs announced on 7/9/09. There are no McKinney papers digitized in the Texas newspaper archives for 1911, the year the statue was installed. The lack of an inscription from the addition of the figure in 1911 or the involvement of other groups does not take away from the meaning and intent the statue held for many. Federated Women’s Clubs in other communities helped raise money for confederate memorials including in Denton in 1918 (Denton Record Chronicle, 5/14/18) and the prior placement of the pedestal made additional inscription difficult and expensive. It still meets the three components that Blight lays out as how the lost cause operated. It controlled history by celebrating a confederate and politician who worked to establish a new racial caste system, it placed this person and their record in a position of honor and with intent to symbolize this racial caste system like the other courthouse monuments in the area, and it relied on women for its development. Throckmorton’s time as governor and as a politician, arguably did more to align with the objective of the UCV/UDC than his service in the confederate army. Presenting him in the position of honor on top of the pedestal achieved the same intent as a confederate statue would on the Collin County Courthouse Square, down the street from where Confederate Days was celebrated every year at the JW Throckmorton Camp 109 UCV Reunion.

1911 was also a notable year. A tracking of confederate monuments by the Southern Poverty Law Center lists that year as the year more confederate monuments were erected than any other year. It was also notable for Collin County because it is the only year of a documented lynching in the county. On August 14, 1911, a Bonham paper described it in this way (Traumatizing language warning). “‘Commodore’ Jones, a negro man, was hanged by the people at Farmersville yesterday afternoon after a conviction in the court of public opinion. His offence was the use of indecent language to a young land telephone operator, and the fact that it was a second time caused the infliction of the death penalty. About a year ago Jones, it was alleged, in using the telephone, used insulting language to the operator, and when the affair was reported to the officers he was reported and fined. There was considerable indignation at the time, but the law took its course and the affair was supposed to be closed. Thursday, while using the telephone he again insulted the same lady, and this time there were others who heard a part of the conversation. Jones was put in the calaboose that night, where he stayed until 6:30 yesterday afternoon when the people concluded that the statutes did not contain a provision severe enough to fit his case and they went to the calaboose, took the negro out, put a rope around his neck and hanged him to a telephone pole, where the body remained three quarters of an hour. It is said that Jones was made to climb part way up the pole and when the slack in the rope was taken up he turned loose and in effect hanged himself. Within an hour the town
was moving along the even tenor of its way, and a necessary lesson had been taught others who might have been emboldened by Jones’ action to do likewise or worse."

The Jim Crow Era and the racial terror and discrimination that marked the era, were the means and the ends of a racial caste system that was established through Reconstruction. Less than 45 days after Collin County erected a statue to the man who helped craft that system, that racial caste system had tragic consequences. Eighteen miles from the Collin County Courthouse, a black man was denied the justice a courthouse should ensure and was lynched by a white mob that moved on with its day within an hour. Six years later, the United Daughters of the Confederacy would assist with a confederate statue in Farmersville.

The statue of Throckmorton is a symbol of the racial caste system he helped create. A caste system that lives on today in McKinney. Mckinney was segregated by race and had a distinct and established racial caste system. ES Doty High School sat on Throckmorton Street until McKinney ISD was integrated in 1965. We still have disparate outcomes in metrics like income, wealth, home ownership, educational achievement, policing, criminal justice, employment and others. These outcomes were the means and the ends to a racial caste system that was established in the Reconstruction period after the Civil War and the Lost Cause narrative has worked to justify. Bryan Stevenson, author and criminal justice advocate, says that the greatest evil of slavery was not the enslavement of millions of African Americans but it was the narrative of difference that was used to justify that enslavement. In America, we’ve let that narrative of difference survive emancipation which allowed enslavement to evolve into Jim Crow. The narrative of difference survived the Civil Rights era and tries to make us believe that these disparate outcomes are the result of something other than this racial caste system that was implemented in Reconstruction. And it is the Lost Cause narrative that lies to us about why that caste system exists. It didn’t have to exist then and it doesn’t have to exist now.

In referring to this racial caste system in her book Caste, Isabel Wilkerson says “We are the heirs to whatever is right or wrong with it.” James Baldwin said something similar when he said “History is not the past, it is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history.” Addressing the statue is an easy first step to recognizing this history in our community. The statue was placed with intent and relocating it is the only way to remove that intent. Leaving the statue in place is not adhering to history, it is allowing history to be reflective of a vision that we should reject as a community.

As a city, we should work to tear down the vistages of the system that Throckmorton helped establish. In my opinion, the city should relocate the statue to Pecan Grove Cemetery where Throckmorton is buried. If the City spends money to relocate the statue, it should also spend money to improve Ross Cemetery, Potter’s Field at Pecan Grove also known as The Mexican Cemetery, and other cemeteries in the community that were segregated by this racial caste system. The City should rename Throckmorton Street that bisects a historic black neighborhood and passes in front of what remains of Doty High School, now Holy Family School. The city should establish a task force with an expanded scope, a more diverse representation of perspectives, and accountability to historically marginalized communities, that evaluates the racial division and inequities that have existed in this community since its founding, and make a commitment to addressing the findings.
Archbishop Desmond Tutu said “It is not enough to say let bygones be bygones. Indeed, just saying that ensures it will not be so. Reconciliation does not come easy. Believing it does will ensure that it will never be. We have to work and look the beast firmly in the eyes… Without memory, there is no healing. Without forgiveness, there is no future.” We can set a new vision for our community. We can find ways to heal divides that have existed for centuries. It will take work, it will take perseverance, and it will take a sincere approach to finding what is best for our community, for all of us.
Under Throckmorton’s rule, violence against Unionist and blacks increased. Former Confederates in remote areas such as the Forks waged a campaign of intimidation unchecked by “any fear of retribution.” The number of homicides in Texas more than doubled from 1866 to 1867; in Cooke County alone during the first two months of 1867 seventeen murders were committed. General Edgar M. Gregory in his final report as the commander of the Freedmen’s Bureau in Texas, submitted in June, 1866, stated that Unionists as well as freedmen were “trembling for their lives and preparing to leave the state,” and that their persecutors were almost always acquitted by the courts. His lament was sadly accurate; through 550 people were killed from June, 1865, through December 1867, only 249 suspects were indicted and only 5 were convicted. (170)

Throughout his life, four primary factors influenced Throckmorton’s political career: his experience of living within a frontier culture; his embrace of conservative Whig political ideology; his belief in white supremacy; and his desire to stimulate economic development in North Texas. (2)

This is not to say that Throckmorton did not believe in the legitimacy of the South’s “peculiar institution.” According to 1860 census records, he owned one slave. (4)

Collin County held a public meeting at McKinney to discuss Indian depredations on the northern frontier. With Throckmorton presiding over the meeting, those present expressed their determination to aid settlers living in frontier counties. They proclaimed that the citizens of Collin County would give settlers living on the western fringe of the Texas frontier “all the aid in our power towards removing the Indians North of the Red River.” Additionally, they vowed to assist the frontier settlers in “the protection of their homes, their firesides and their families, from depredations of the savages.” Finally, the leaders of Collin County called on the state government to remove the Indians living on reservations in western Texas, warning that if the officials failed to do so, Native Americans would force the settlers to abandon their homes. (55)

The enemy are routed horse, foot, and dragoons. The slave trade faction must go under.” The defeat of those politicians supporting the radical position of reopening the slave trade was
important to Throckmorton and his constituents. If the advocates of renewing the slave trade had been successful, Texas could have been inundated with new slaves. Thereby, the planter class could have solidified its control of the state, including the North Texas frontier. This was a proposition that non slave holding Texans could not accept. (56)

● While attempting to reorganize the Democratic Party, a series of unfortunate events occurring between October 1859 and the end of 1860 undermined the conservative Unionists’ political agenda. During this brief period two critical events occurred that fueled the flames of secession in Texas—John Brown’s raid at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, and an insurrection-arson panic that swept through East Texas. Both incidents caused fear in the hearts of Texas citizens and gave credibility to secessionist propaganda that claimed that abolitionists were making plans to kill white southerners and free the South’s slave population. (59)

● In their address to the people, the Unionists acknowledged that the North seemed hostile toward the South’s institution of slavery, especially considering that many northern states passed personal liberty laws to prevent the enforcement of the fugitive slave law. The Unionists also accepted the premise that Lincoln’s presidential victory made further provisions for the protection of slavery necessary. However, they were not willing to accept that secession was justified solely on the basis of the 1860 presidential election results. Clearly, Throckmorton and his fellow Unionists believed that there was still room for compromise between the northern and southern states and that prudent action on both sides could still save the Union. (65)

● Their plans for saving the Union came to an end when news reached Texas of the hostilities at Fort Sumter and President Lincoln’s proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand state militia volunteers to crush the southern rebellion. Many Unionists perceived Lincoln’s move as an act of coercion and as a result abandoned their efforts to preserve the Union. Following Lincoln’s proclamation, Throckmorton made the fateful decision to join the Confederacy. (72)

● Additionally, Throckmorton realized that the federal government would eventually attack the southern economy by waging a war against the institution of slavery, an action that would forever change southern society. Whites on the frontier feared that emancipated slaves would move to areas in the western regions of the Lone Star State where slavery had not been a significant part of the economy, effectively challenging white dominance in the region. In this regard, whites in North Texas were not much different than their northern counterparts who were concerned that emancipated slaves would migrate to northern states, thereby competing with northern laborers for jobs. Thus, Throckmorton and other like-minded individuals in North Texas concluded that the society Anglos created on the Texas frontier might potentially be threatened on two fronts if the Confederacy lost the war: Native Americans would try to push the frontier line eastward and reclaim the lands that they had lost to white settlers during the previous three decades, and former slaves would push into the frontier from eastern counties in Texas that had been the scene of their bondage. (76)

● This public pronouncement addressed the charges of his enemies, but Throckmorton also acknowledged for the first time in writing why he— and undoubtedly other North Texans—was fighting in the war. He stated that “the best and unscrupulous conduct of the Lincoln administration upon the slave question, its utter disregard of the Constitution, . . . too clearly show that this is a war, not only against our institutions and property but a war of entire and utter subjugation.” The former senator continued by stating that “it is the determination of the Federal Government to make slaves the equals of white men, to rob us of our property, and to make Southern freedmen hewers of wood and drawers of water, none can doubt.” In part, Throckmorton’s pronouncement clearly indicated that he entered the war to thwart federal coercion and to preserve white supremacy. (83)
Throckmorton was the friend of several of the Union men involved with the Loyal League, and he felt personally responsible for their plight. Many of the accused Unionists had supported him during the secession movement, and their loyalty to the Union was strengthened as a result of his influence. Throckmorton also agreed with the peace party’s position on the Confederate conscription law of 1862. In October 1862, he learned that local authorities had arrested several Unionists in the nearby town of Sherman and were preparing to lynch them. Fearing another incident like that which unfolded in Gainesville, Throckmorton traveled to Sherman with the state district judge Robert W. Waddell and defended the men’s right to be fairly represented in court. While their specific arguments were not recorded for posterity, the two men’s plea for due process of the law persuaded local authorities to send their prisoners to the Confederate district court at Tyler, where all were eventually released.

Despite giving aid to some of the accused Unionists, Throckmorton did justify the lynching of others in the Red River counties by stating that a “great good to society” had been accomplished because a group of dissenters had been eliminated. Apparently, he made these comments after learning that some of the dissenters hanged at Gainesville had murdered his former commander and friend Col. William C. Young. Furthermore, he believed that the accused individuals posed a threat to settlers on the frontier especially considering that they were found guilty of aiding a federal invasion of North Texas.

Thus, while he could appreciate their Unionist stance, Throckmorton could not accept the idea of destroying the community that he helped to create on the frontier, and as a result the former senator justified the executions of North Texans who did not wholeheartedly pledge to protect the interest of the people living on the frontier. (84)

In an effort to calm the crisis that was developing in the northern counties, Throckmorton published a letter to his constituents in local newspapers in October 1863. The newly elected senator reminded them that if the Confederacy failed to win the war, the white society they had forged out of the wilderness would be utterly destroyed:

If we fail in this struggle, we become the most degraded people on the face of earth. Our own slaves will be put on an equality with us by our masters. Nay, they will become our taskmasters. Our inheritance will be divided out with them. Our property will be confiscated and so burthened with taxes that the severest toll and most rigid economy cannot pay them. Our lands will be sold by the tax gatherer, and Yankee capital will become the purchaser; our whole country will be overrun with Northern adventurers. Your ancestral homes will be filled with new faces of Northern aspect; your sons and daughters will mingle their blood with that of the new-comers. You and your sons will become renters of your own soil, and Wanderers on the face of the earth; and in a few years the race of southern chivalry in this beautiful land of ours, will have [become] extinct and numbered among the things that were.

In part, Throckmorton wrote this letter to persuade the citizens of North Texas to renew their commitment to the Confederate cause and to convince deserters to return to their post, but the underlying meaning is clear: the senator wanted to remind people that white supremacy on the frontier was in danger. Apparently, Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation convinced Throckmorton that the federal government was now waging a war to free the slaves and give them an equal status with southern whites. (86)

Thus, the senator continued to give unwavering support to the Confederate military until it proved itself incapable of protecting white supremacy in Texas. (91)

He soberly observed that “we may have to give up slavery, but even that is not hopeless if properly managed; or at least the force of the shock to the great industrial interests of the Country may be greatly paralyzed and deadened.” This letter indicated Throckmorton’s loyalty...
to the white supremacy: the abolition of slavery did not necessarily mean the end of white dominance over blacks. Additionally, his willingness to secure a peaceful and quick reconstruction with the federal government reveals that he no longer believed that the Confederacy would win the war. (93)

- Throckmorton speculated that the governor “was an abolitionists glorified in it and I fear that he is for negro suffrage sitting on juries.” Throckmorton declared that he would rather remain “under military rule always rather than yield anything but an acknowledgment that the negro has been freed by the act of the govern’t that we recognize it as an existing fact and that we have no disposition to quarrel any more about it.” He denied “any desire to reestablish slavery,” but he expressed optimism that “we will be enabled to adopt a coercive system of labor.” Throckmorton adamantly added, “I take it that it is our policy to look out for ourselves. Certain it is I do not intend to be abolitionized nor to be the aiders or abetters in the further humiliation degradation of our people.” (101)

- The status of the freedmen was the most controversial of the issues before the convention. The members agreed that the Thirteenth Amendment freed the former slaves and that by taking the oath in support of the Constitution, they had indirectly accepted that slavery was abolished in the United States. However, the delegates were divided on the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment. Throckmorton was opposed to the forced ratification of the amendment, viewing it as an act of coercion by the federal government. Following his lead, the convention did not formally ratify the Thirteenth Amendment; rather, the delegates claimed that taking the constitutional oath was sufficient. However, the delegates did suggest that the next session of the legislature should take up the matter of ratification. (109-110)

- The state legislature took other actions that created distrust among northern Republicans and proved detrimental to Throckmorton’s administration. Believing that military defeat and universal emancipation of the slaves had already caused Texans enough humiliation, the legislators refused to ratify the Thirteenth and Fourteenth amendments to the US. Constitution. If this were not enough, in November 1866, the legislators passed a series of laws known as Black Codes, which were designed to restrict the rights of the freedmen in areas such as interracial marriage, apprenticeships, and contract labor. The codes also called for segregation in public schools and on railroads. Furthermore, the legislature reinforced the idea that the homestead laws only applied to whites and passed laws that regulated vagrancy and convict leasing. Additionally, they denied freedmen the right to vote, to hold political office, to serve on juries, or to give testimony in court except in cases involving other blacks. The only civil rights afforded blacks were the rights to enter into binding contracts, to sue and be sued in the courts, to hold personal and real property, to make wills, and to have personal security. In essence, the Black Codes reduced black Texans to a position of semislavery. 45 Throckmorton’s approval of the legislature’s actions placed him at odds both with radical members of the US. Congress and federal military authorities in charge of reconstructing the state. Two issues were especially problematic—the rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment and the passage of the Black Codes. While the Black Codes were consistent with the governor’s recommendation that the legislature pass “laws to secure the protection of [the freedmen’s] person and property,” he found it difficult to convince military authorities of the state’s good intentions toward black Texans, and therefore, Texas’ chief executive failed to achieve the removal of “all military forces and the Freedmen’s Bureau” from the “interior of the state.” General Sheridan rightly considered the Black Codes as “oppressive legislation” that developed a “policy of gross injustice toward the colored people on the part of the courts.” In regard to the rejection of the Fourteenth Amendment, the legislators simply followed the governor’s recommendation. On August 20, Throckmorton recommended the “rejection of the proposed fourteenth article of the United
States Constitution, that was passed by the late Radical Congress,” calling the amendment “impolitic, unwise and unjust.” This statement reinforced southerners’ commonly held idea that the freedmen were socially and politically inferior to whites. Under these circumstances, the military authorities felt that the State’s freedmen faced serious danger with Throckmorton in power. (116)

- Throckmorton’s governorship was characterized by three key issues: frontier defense, his belief that civil authority triumphed over military rule, and the governor’s removal from office. The North Texan’s attempt to preserve white supremacy was the basis for the position he took in each of these issues. Regarding the defense of the frontier, the governor wanted to remove the Indians from the state’s western lands, making that part of the state safe for Anglo settlements. Also, if whites effectively were going to keep blacks from enjoying full citizenship, it was clear that the civil government would have to be able to work independently of the military authorities who were charged with the duty of protecting the freedmen and their white allies. Thus, the governor sought to eliminate the necessity of military courts, particularly those of the Freedmen’s Bureau, and to induce military authorities to yield to the jurisdiction of state and local courts. Finally, Throckmorton was removed from the governor’s office because he refused to accept Congressional Reconstruction, which promised to give the former slaves an equal footing with white Texans. (119)

- Throckmorton saw some validity in Reagan and Johnson’s arguments. On October 31, he delivered an address to the state legislature in which he denied that ex-Confederates were preying on Unionists and freedmen and claimed that federal troops were no longer needed in the interior of the state. The governor suggested that the legislature pass a resolution pledging law and order without racial distinctions, and he urged the lawmakers to extend the witness provision to include blacks in all court cases. To strengthen his position, he submitted the letter that President Johnson sent to him the day before so that the legislators could read it for themselves. However, he stopped short of calling on the legislature to give suffrage rights to African Americans. As a result, they refused to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment and instead decided to pass the infamous Black Codes, which, as mentioned earlier, severely limited the civil rights of black Texans. (138)

- “I believe they will. For instance: Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware would, having nothing to lose except the principle, as there are not sufficient blacks in these States, for any risk to be run. The same may be said of Missouri and Tennessee, and I think Arkansas and North Carolina, would also adopt it.” Throckmorton concluded that “the other southern states would run too much risk in being onslaughted by negro voters, unless such qualifications should be adopted as would exclude them and at the same time exclude many white citizens.” Without knowing it, Throckmorton had visualized a plan of disfranchisement that would become all too common in the New South of the 1890s and early 1900s. Furthermore, he revealed his innermost fear that black suffrage might lead to his loss of political power. (140)

- On March 2, 1867, Congress claimed that President Johnson’s plan for the South was essentially a failure and therefore passed the first of a series of Reconstruction Acts over the president’s veto. This act declared that no legal government existed in the southern states; that Congress planned to divide the South into five military districts, with Texas and Louisiana comprising the Fifth Military District; and that President Johnson should appoint an army officer to command each district. The acts further stated that the southern states would have to hold another constitutional convention and to adopt a new state constitution that was in accordance with the U.S. Constitution. In addition, each state had to adopt the Fourteenth Amendment, requiring the states to ensure due process and equal protection under the law for African Americans. When
these requirements were met, the state could officially apply for readmission to the Union. General Sheridan, who commanded the Department of the Gulf, was appointed commander of the Fifth Military District, and General Griffin was made commander of the District of Texas. (145)

- The governor became engaged in more disagreements with the military authorities. Nowhere was this more evident than in the Huntsville prison controversy. In early 1867, Gen. William H. Sinclair visited the state prison and reported to General Griffin that nearly three-fourths of the black convicts were unjustly imprisoned. Sentence for the theft of a single dollar. In all, the general reported 209 such cases. General Griffin requested that Governor Throckmorton investigate the unjust imprisonment of African Americans, and when appropriate, issue pardons. The governor flatly refused. Although most of the prisoners in question eventually received pardons or at least reduced sentences, the prison controversy illustrated the conflict that existed between the military and civil authorities. The military clearly was attempting to enact equitable social reforms, which the civil government and the majority of white Texans were not willing to accept. (150-151)

- On July 25, Sheridan wrote to Grant again, stating that the crime rate in Texas was up and that Throckmorton was partly responsible for the atrocities committed against the freedmen and their white allies. Furthermore, the general stated that the governor had obstructed the ability of the military to maintain peace and had remained an obstacle to black suffrage. As a result, Sheridan stated that Throckmorton’s removal from office was absolutely necessary if the freedmen’s political rights were to be protected. Sheridan’s contention that the crime rate had risen in Texas was accurate. Between 1865 and 1867, the number of homicides had increased from 77 to 331. The highways were infested with bandits who were willing to kill for plunder. Many of these desperadoes were ex-Confederate officers and soldiers who were unwilling to accept Congressional Reconstruction policies. Thus, the primary targets of the outlaws tended to be freedpeople, white Unionists, and federal soldiers stationed in the state. Furthermore, Sheridan was correct that Throckmorton did little to bring the lawbreakers to justice. However, the governor did not have at his disposal an effective law enforcement agency: federal authorities had prevented the state from organizing a state militia or ranging companies. Even if Throckmorton would have had such an agency, he likely would have sent the state troopers to the frontier, leaving the freedpeople in the interior of the state to fend for themselves. (154)

- On July 19, a second supplementary reconstruction act became law. The new law gave military commanders of the military districts full power to remove uncooperative state and local officials. The way was now legally clear for the governor’s removal. On July 30, General Sheridan issued Special Order No. 105 ending Governor Throckmorton’s term as governor after less than a year in office. Sheridan sent the governor the following message:

  A careful consideration of the reports of Brevet Major General Charles Griffin, United States army, shows that J. W. Throckmorton, Governor of Texas, is an impediment to the reconstruction of that state under the law; he is thereby removed from that office. E. M. Pease is hereby appointed in place of J. W Throckmorton, removed. He will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

Thus, Throckmorton’s term as governor of the Lone Star State came to an abrupt end. The governor’s inability to accept the freedmen as the equal of white men and his repeated attempts to obstruct the military’s efforts to carry out the Reconstruction Acts led to his political downfall. His views toward Reconstruction policy had caused him to side against white Unionists who supported the Radical Republicans’ agenda of extending civil rights to African Americans. The North Texan could not bring himself to support even the moderate position of E. M. Pease, who called for limited suffrage rights for the freedmen. Throckmorton believed that the radical
Unionists’ position would eventually lead to equal rights for blacks and would provide them the necessary mobility to move en masse to North Texas. (154-155)

- During an interview, a reporter asked the president if he believed Throckmorton “had attempted to thwart the General in a proper execution of the law.” Johnson answered, “No sir, the records prove the reverse. The Governor of Texas also placed the whole machinery of his State at the disposal of the military power, and aided in every way possible, except in the manufacturing of a Radical majority of voters, and in securing negro supremacy.” If Johnson’s comments were not enough to please Throckmorton, it is certain the ex-governor took satisfaction that the president relieved General Sheridan as commander of the Fifth Military District in mid-August. While the president’s comments reveal more about his own bitterness toward the Radical Republicans in Congress than the realities of the deposed governor’s political actions in Texas, they do reveal an important aspect of the ex-governor’s removal from office. Like President Johnson, Throckmorton’s racial biases against the freedmen and his unwillingness to accept Congressional Reconstruction ultimately led to his removal from office. (155-156)

- In part, his motivation was fueled by racism. In a letter to Epperson concerning economic and railroad development in Texas, Throckmorton stated that “our political condition must be vastly mended before capital will venture here, and if the State should be turned over to the ignorance insolence of the negro race and radical hatred and vengeance it never will come.” The ex-governor’s hurt pride and his disdain for African Americans led him to oppose Radical Republicans in the state. (157)

- Because the Reconstruction Act of March 23 stipulated that individuals who had held executive or judicial offices in the state during the war were no longer qualified to vote, the North Texan claimed that many of the state’s most able politicians were unfairly barred from holding office or voting in elections. Throckmorton was also irritated because Radicals supported unrestricted suffrage rights for African Americans. Thus, the former governor believed that a constitutional convention would result in a state constitution that would elevate the freedmen to an equal status with white men. In addition, Throckmorton believed that disenfranchised ex-Confederates might never regain the right to vote or hold state office. As a result, he began a relentless assault against the Radicals’ efforts to call a constitutional convention. (158-159)

- Throckmorton seemingly condoned the crimes committed against the freedmen for two reasons: First, white oppression of blacks forced the freedmen to accept second-class citizenship, thereby allowing East Texas landowners to effectively force the freedmen to sign unfair labor contracts, which prevented them from escaping the cotton fields that they had worked as slaves. In effect this fulfilled Throckmorton’s plan to prevent blacks from migrating to other regions in the state, especially North Texas. Second, the violence eventually stifled the freedmen’s participation in the political process. Without the support of black voters, Republicans were weakened. When the federal government lifted its voting restrictions on the majority of ex-Confederates with the passage of the Amnesty Act in 1872, Radical Republicans lost their grip on the state, and Democratic redeemers regained political prominence once again. (182)
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Legend:
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Mark,

I've tried to put together all my sources for you and I finalized that narrative I had written and shared previously. I shared it on social media to try to provide a way to engage and I'll put the survey out there when that is published.

https://medium.com/@justinbeller_17036/contextualizing-throckmorton-ff157389e466

Most of these links to the sources I discussed last week are in the post but here they are succinctly for you. I'm not sure if you just wanted what I talked about last week or if there were more sources you were looking for. I'm obviously happy to provide whatever you need, just don't want to inundate you.

I referenced the 1906 Confederate day where Doggett, Brown, McKinney and Daffan all called for a Throckmorton monument. Here are the links for the articles. My guess is that the front page (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth291957/m1/1/) is the newspaper's recap of the day. It summarizes speeches and talks about the day as an event. The page 7 recap (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth291957/m1/7/) reads more like the announcement/recap the UCV would put out regarding their regular meetings. They both say the same thing but the front page from the newspaper is a lot more detailed.

As far as each of them as individuals, some of their background I found as I've been researching and noting but there are some quick sources for them.

McKinney - There isn't a whole lot about him because he wasn't a politician like the others. He was a Confederate veteran and was typically at UCV reunions, gave the invocation at the 1906 one. He had been in the area longer than most and had a tie to Collin McKinney.

Brown - There are several places for a general background of Brown, here is one (https://tarltonapps.law.utexas.edu/justices/profile/view/11). He was a Confederate veteran, law partner of Throckmorton, and served on the Texas Supreme Court for some time. In addition to the 1906 meeting, he popped up from time to time in the papers mentioning Throckmorton.

Doggett - Here is the article from the 1904 reunion which is the first I found on the monument committee and Doggett is on it (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth291858/m1/2/). And this (https://www.collincountyhistory.com/doggett.html) kind of talks about who he was. Confederate veteran, multiple term mayor, President of the UCV reunion, Active in the bar association and the Methodist Church.

Daffan - She was a big part of Texas UDC (https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/twu/00023/twu-00023.html). The UDC in Denton was named after her. One interesting thing in this link that I
didn't catch before is that she was the state secretary to the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1909, the same year the local Federation supported the Throckmorton monument. But that fits. From what I've seen in these articles and commentary from other communities, the UCV/UDC wasn't some offshoot of society that would pop up and build these monuments, they represented a majority of people. The concept that Blight talks about and I put in that post is that those that sought the social order or white supremacy were joined by those who sought societal reconciliation and that majority moved forward together after Reconstruction. So it's not surprising that the federation of women would have ties to the UDC, they probably shared membership. And someone like Doggett who was President of the UCV reunion and mayor of McKinney for multiple terms, would be the one accepting the monument. Those roles weren't conflicting.

Again, let me know if you were looking for something else and I'll be happy to provide what I have.