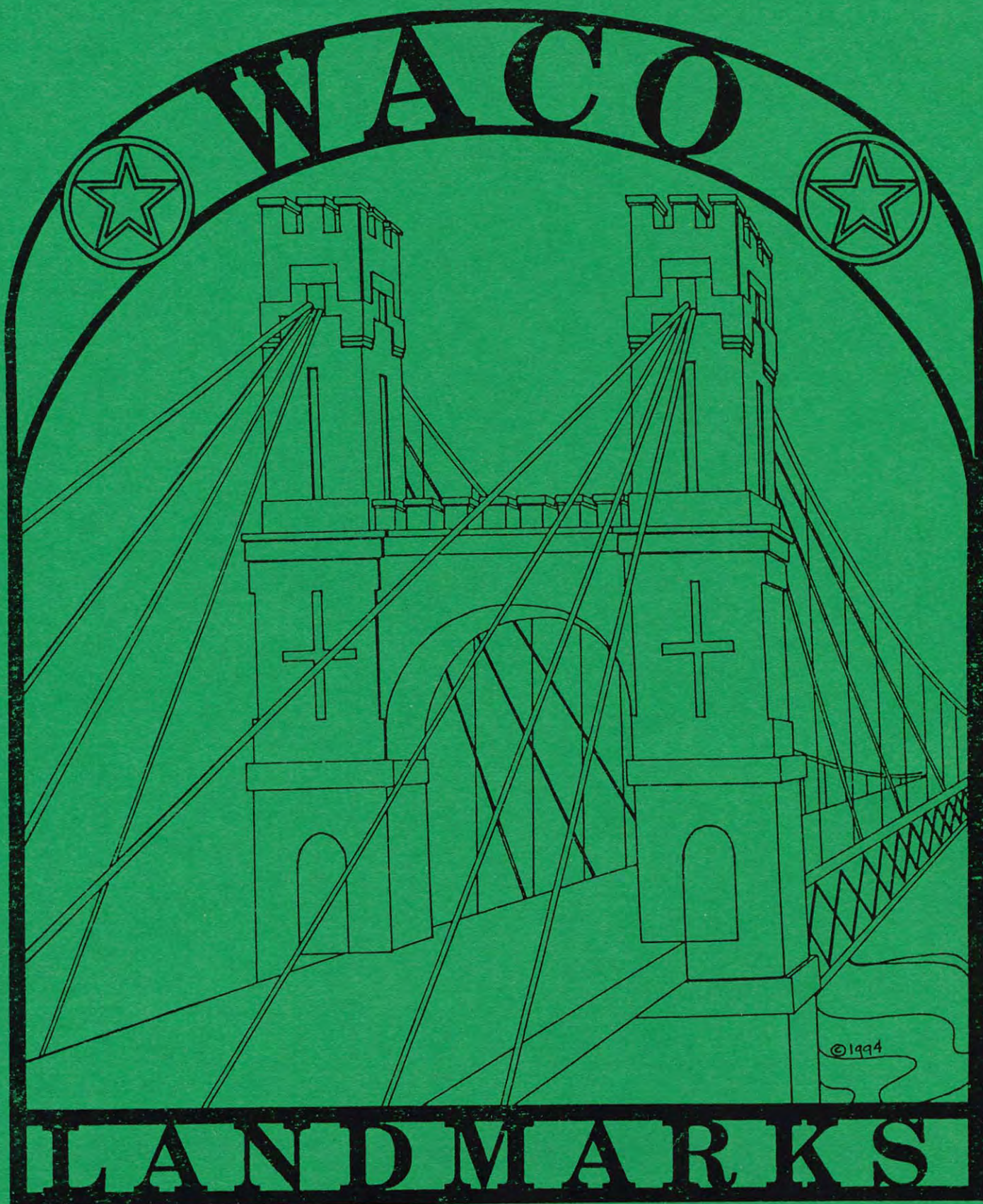


A Young Person's Guide To



Lynn Sloan Dean

HISTORY...

is the story of how we came to be where we are. It is an important part of where we are going. By tomorrow, today will be history. Think about it. How will the things you do today affect what happens tomorrow? You are making history, and you didn't even know it!

Most people don't mean to make history, but their choices and goals in life link yesterdays to tomorrows like a chain...a chain of events. Their lives tell interesting stories that can help us to learn how to set our own goals.

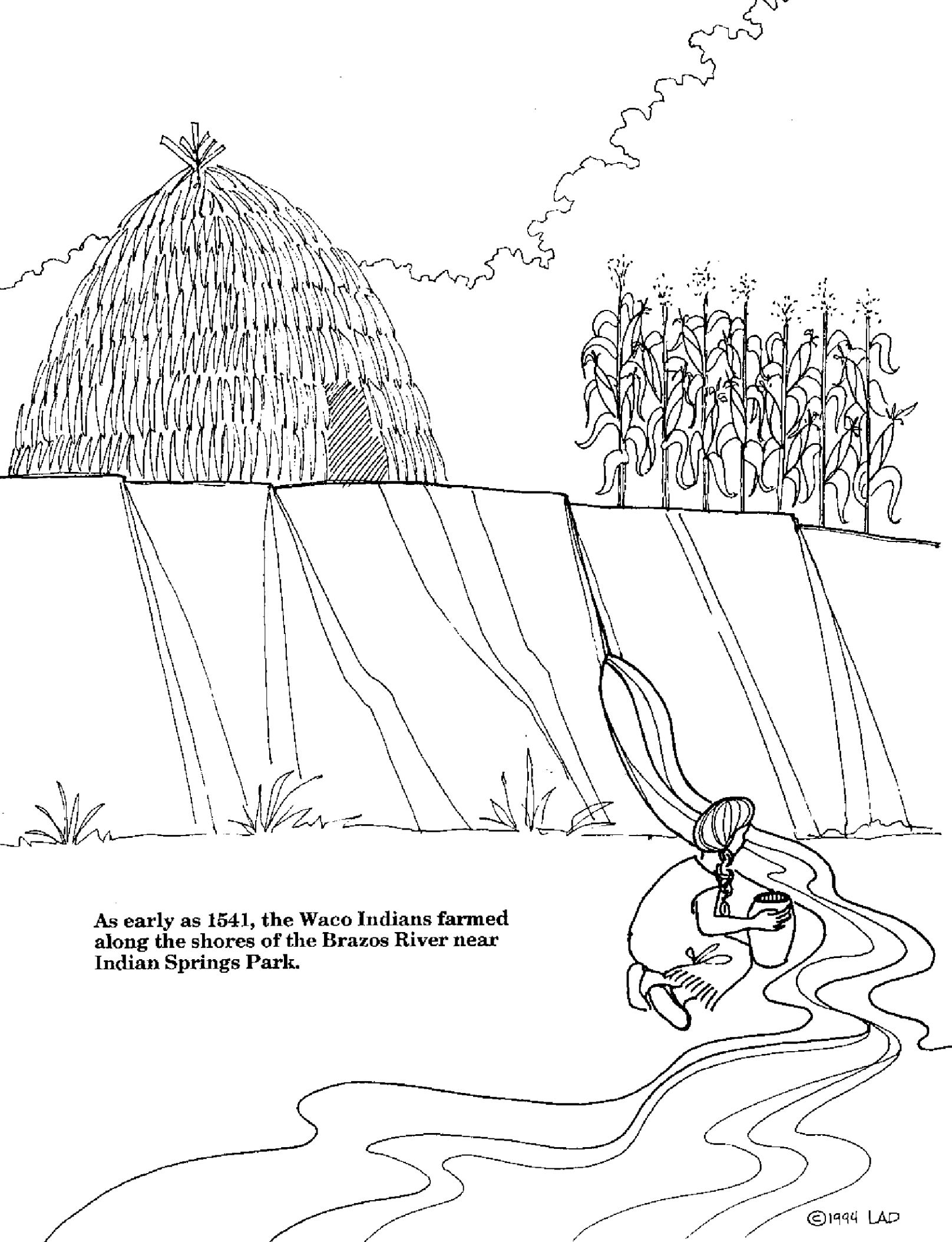
People long ago were very much like us. They worked and played. They told jokes and stories. They felt angry and fought and found ways to make peace. Sometimes they did the right thing. Sometimes they didn't. When they died, they left buildings, homes, and families that would touch the tomorrows they could not see.

The history of our town is a part of the history of our state and our country. It is history "close to home"—history you can see and be part of. You are a link in the chain to tomorrow.

A Note to Parents and Teachers

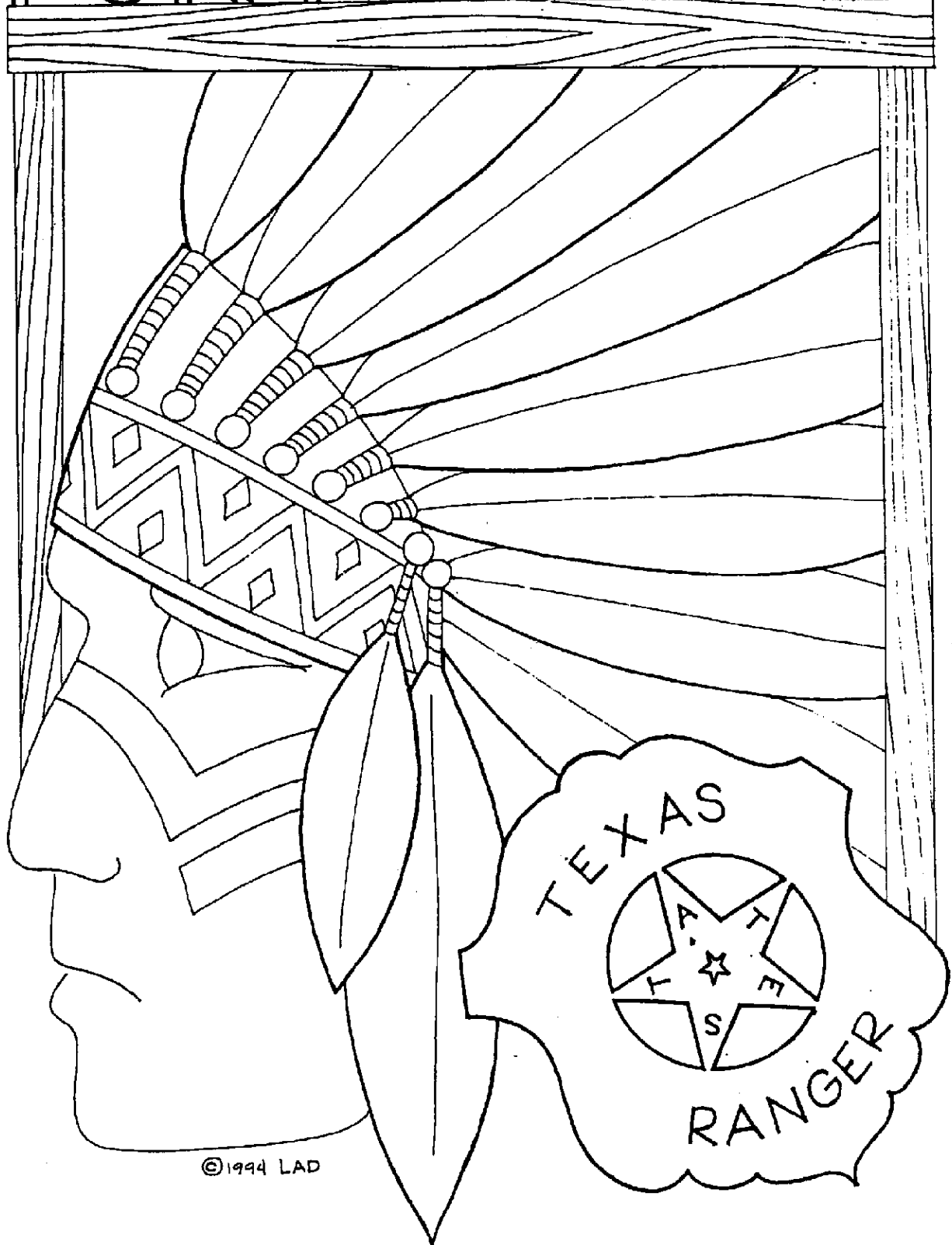
A study of local history can increase a child's self-concept and sense of civic cooperation. You may wish to use this book to provide a background for unit studies, individual or group research or field trips.

This supplement may be of special help in fulfilling Texas Essential Elements section 75.32 (Subchapter B) Part C—grade two 3(A), 5 (B), and 7 (B), and Part D—grade three 3(A), (B), (C); 6 (A), (B), (C); and 7 (A).



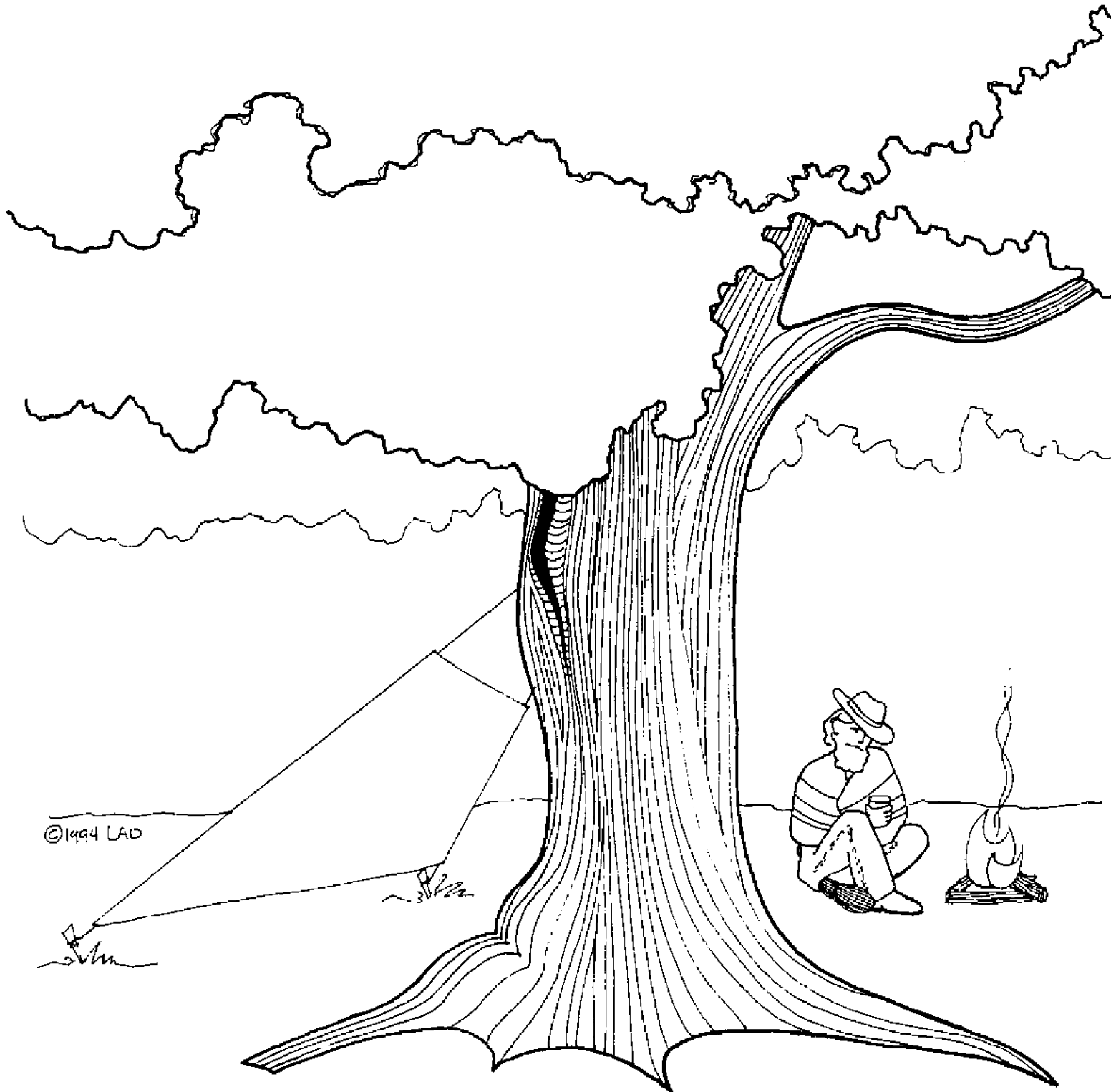
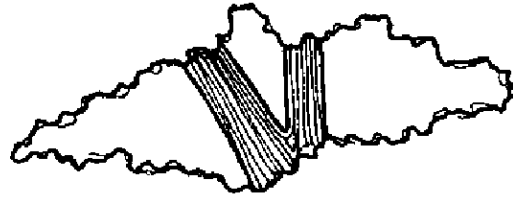
**As early as 1541, the Waco Indians farmed
along the shores of the Brazos River near
Indian Springs Park.**

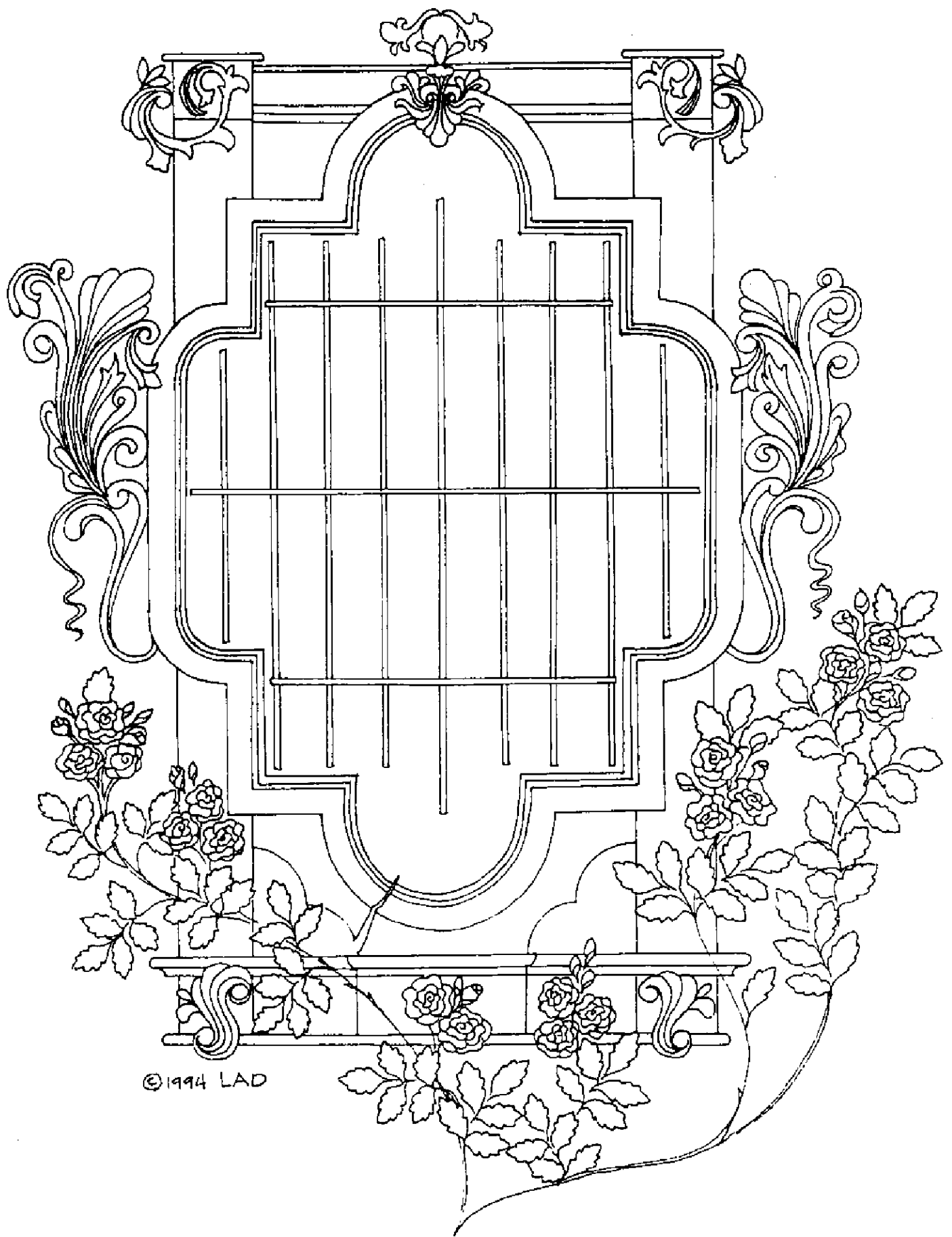
FORT FISHER



In 1837 Texas was a young, free country. There were many bloody wars with the Indians who also lived here. Texas' first president, Stephen F. Austin, sent rangers to guard the land near the Waco Indian village against Indian raids. They were called back a short time later, but many returned with their families to build homes.

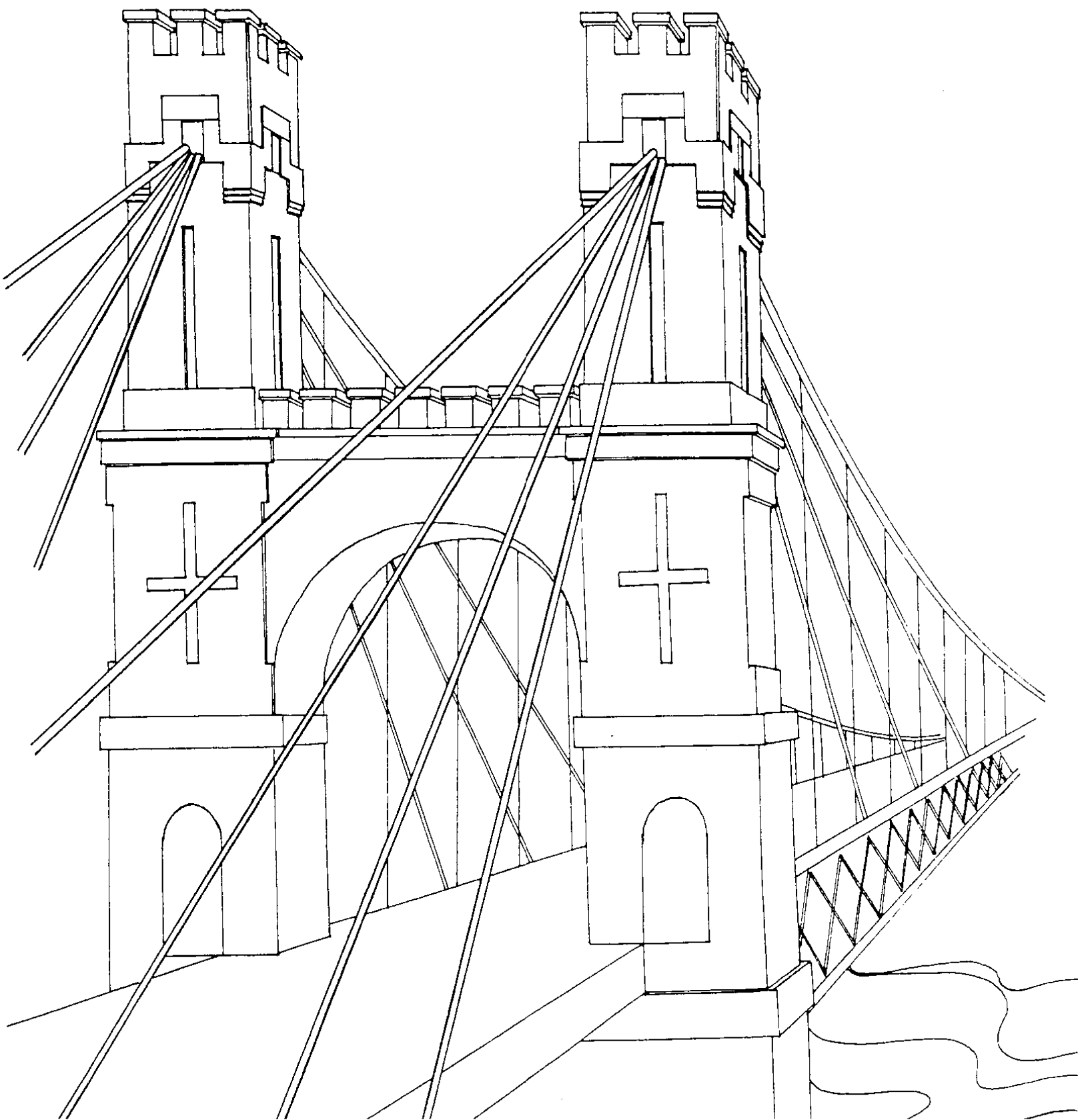
New owners bought the land. They hired one of the rangers, George Erath, to measure and mark it. They wanted to build a town. One of these men, Jacob DeCordova, asked his friend, Shapley P. Ross, to come and build a ferry service across the Brazos River. He promised to give him land for a farm. Captain Ross liked Waco. He once camped there under a huge tree --the Ross Oak.





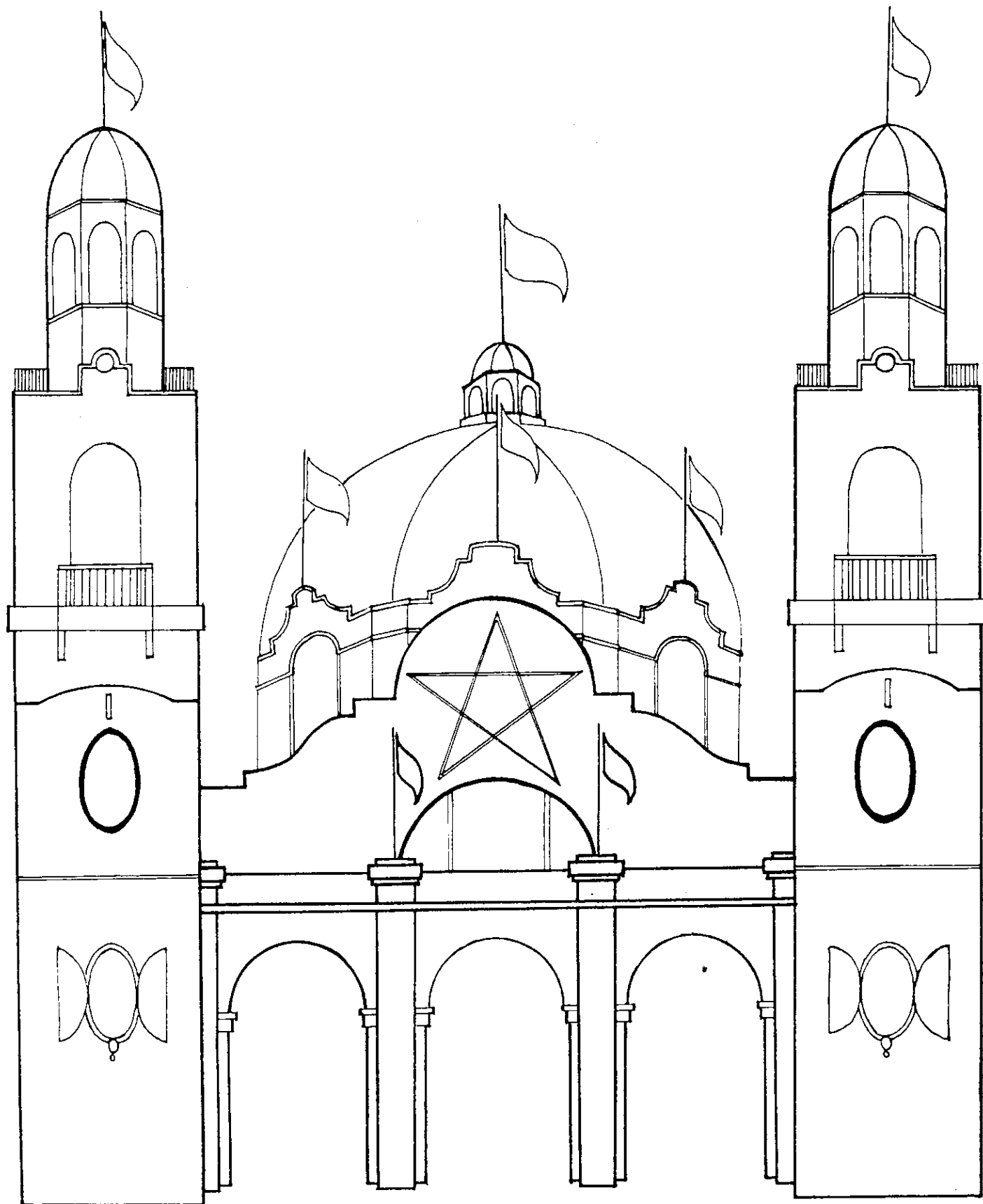
Some of the first public buildings were churches. Most of those buildings have been rebuilt. This window, carved in 1931 for the church of St. Francis on the Brazos, looks like the Rose Window at Mission San Jose, San Antonio.

The Suspension Bridge opened as a toll bridge in January, 1870. The idea of hanging a bridge from cables was very new, but it was the best way to span the sandy Brazos. Waco was the only fording place for miles. Settlers heading west and cattle drives going back east made Waco a busy place!



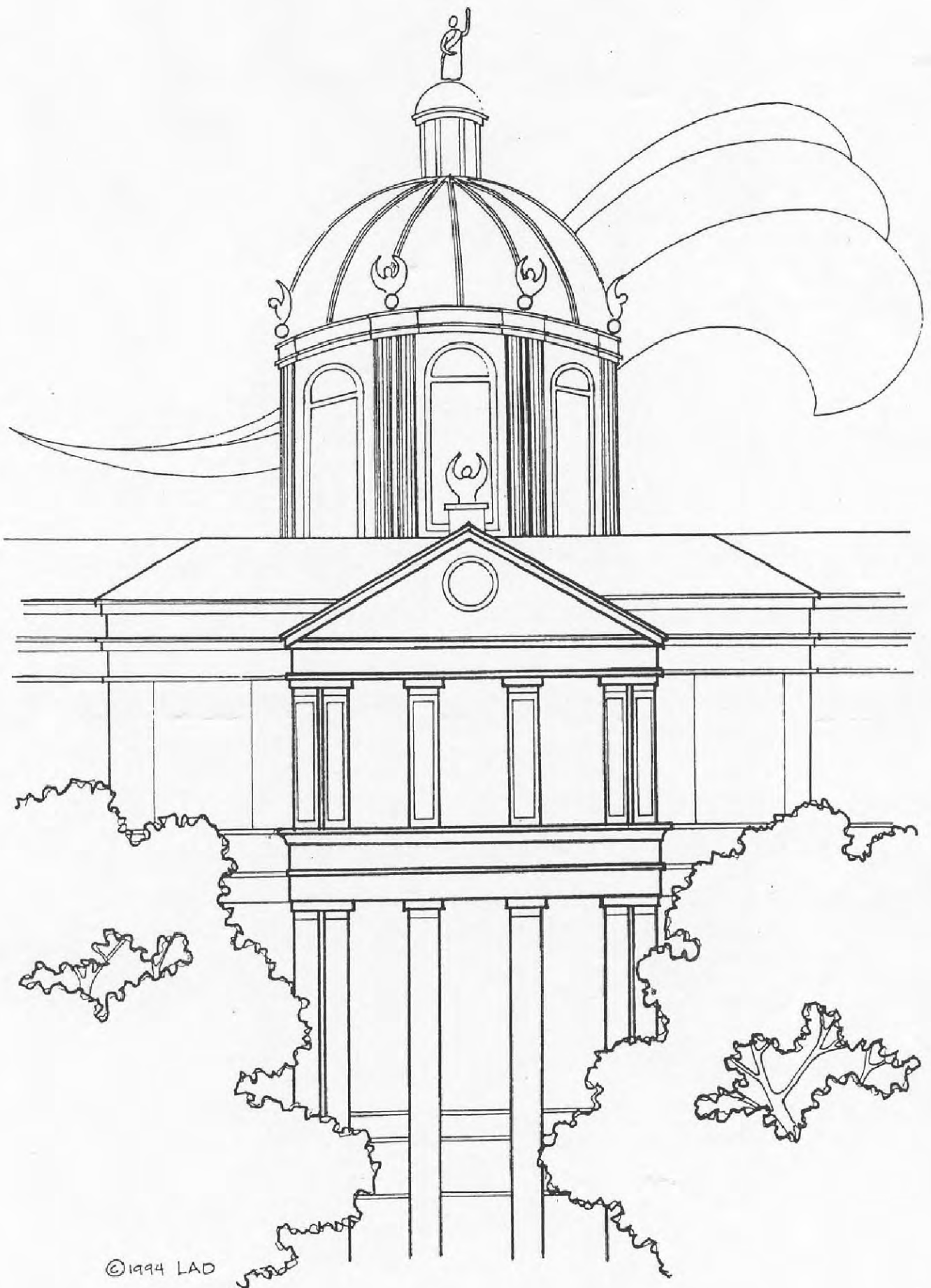


At least twelve colleges have been part of Waco's history, earning it the nickname of "The Athens of Texas." This tower is seen at Baylor University, which traces its roots to the Waco University begun in 1861. Paul Quinn College, established in 1881, was the first college in the south-west owned and operated by and for Americans with African heritage.

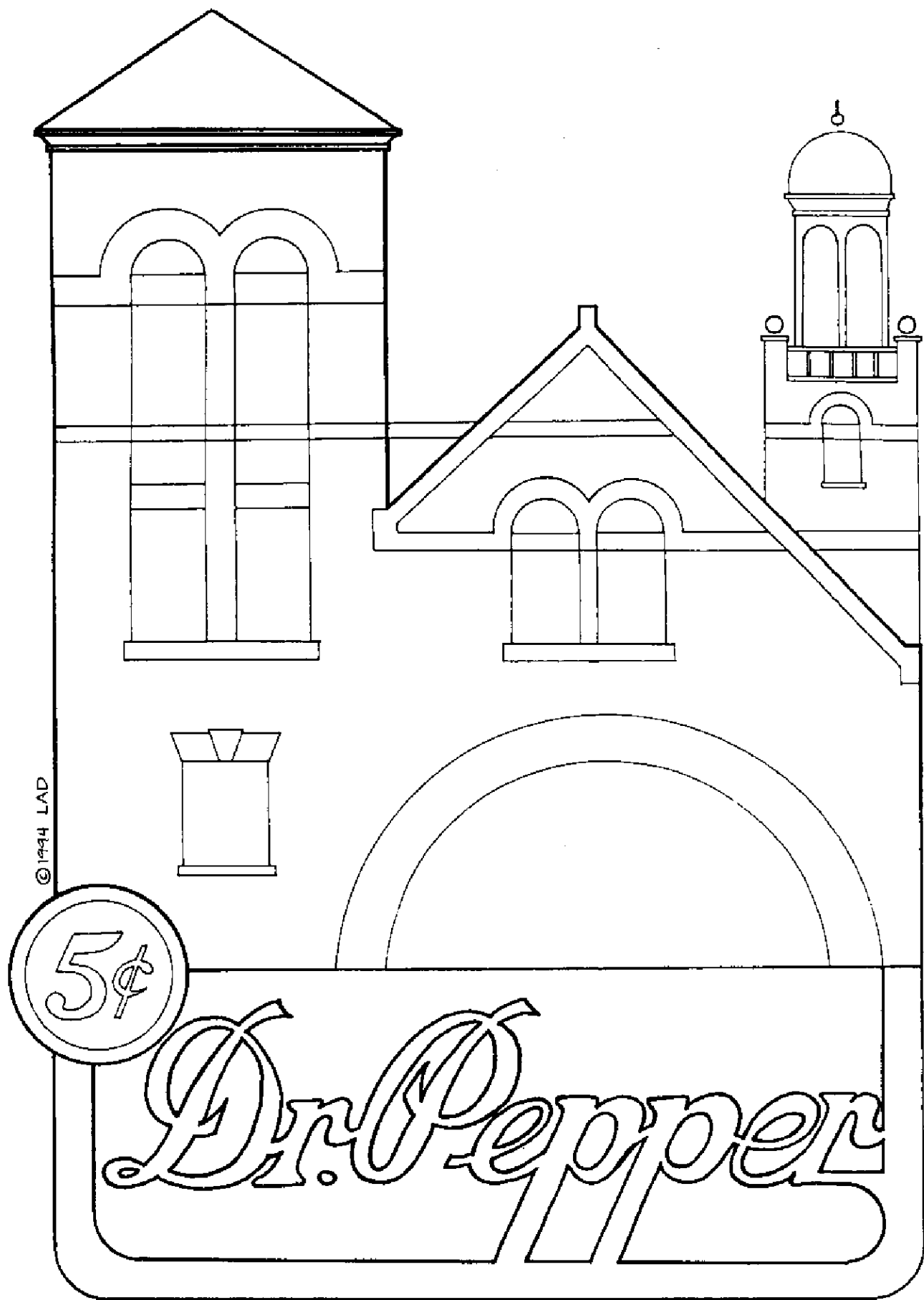


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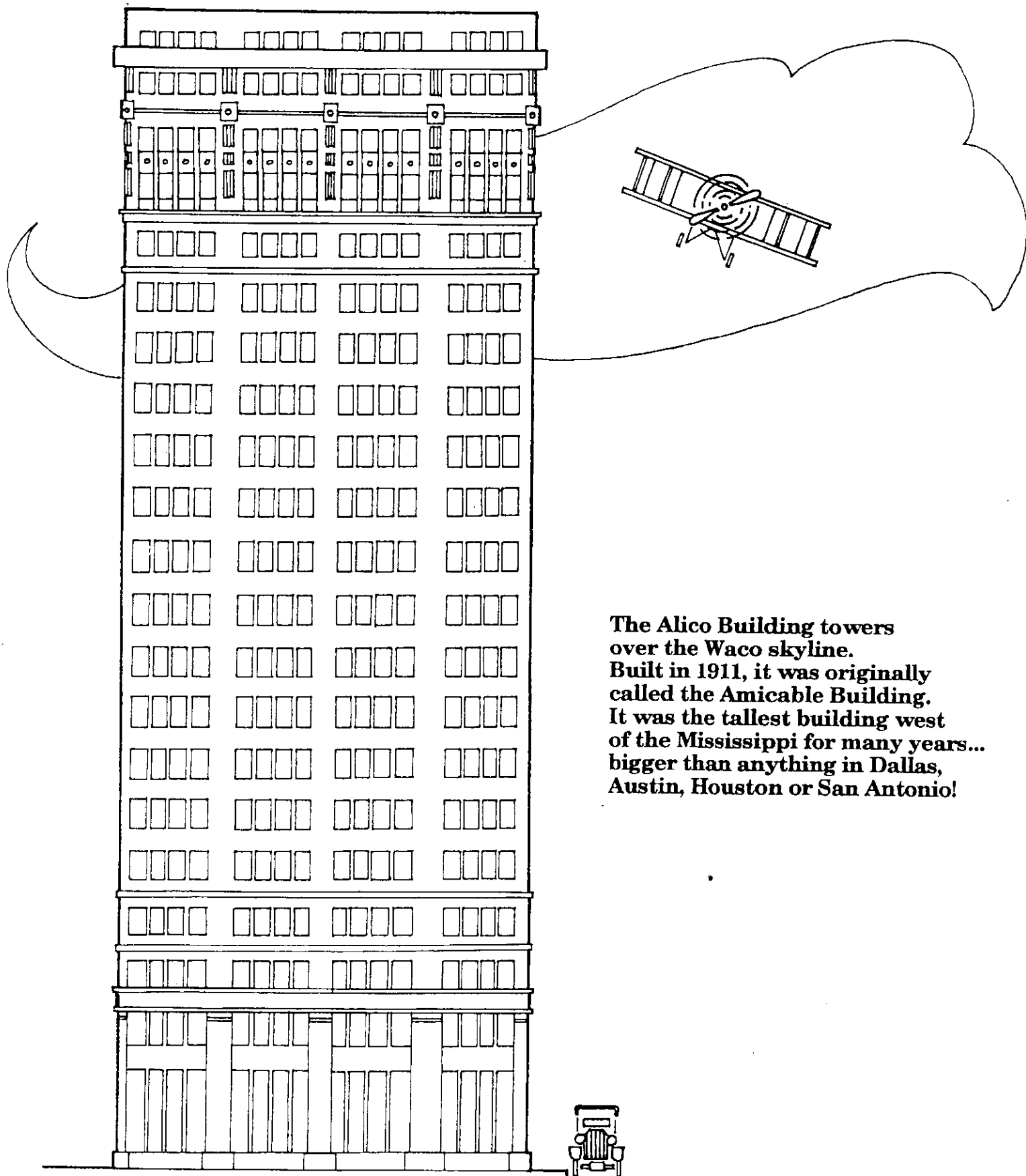
Most farmers around Waco grew cotton. They brought it to town to be ginned, weighed, and shipped. Waco grew even larger. They built the Cotton Palace and hosted a big fair to celebrate the good crops. This building burned, but you can still see the old fair park between 13th and 15th on Clay.



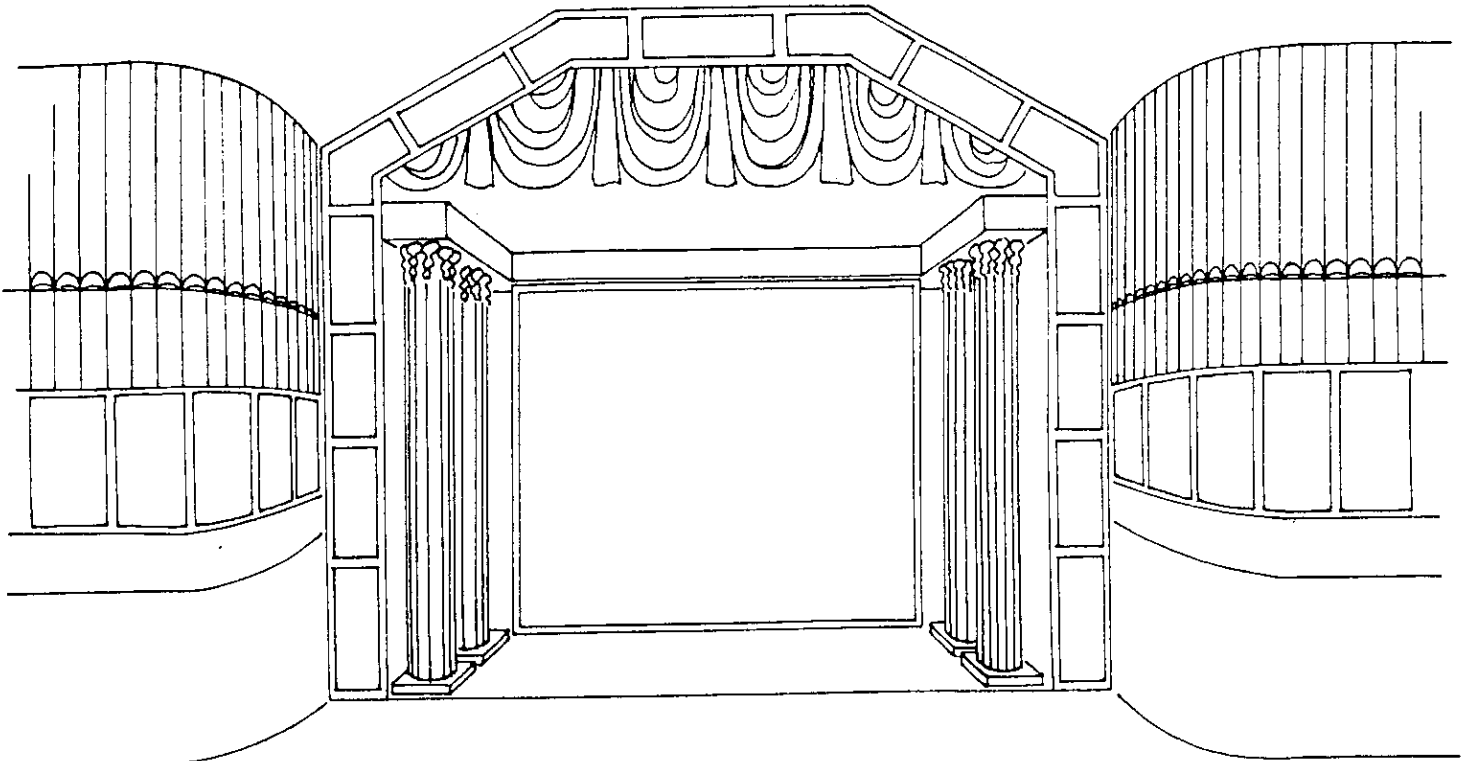
Waco is the county seat of McLennan County. The county was named for Neill McLennan, an early settler who built his home at Hog Creek on the South Bosque. The current courthouse was built in 1901.



A young Waco druggist invented Dr. Pepper in 1885 for customers at Morrison's Old Corner Drug. The drink became very popular. In 1906 the Dr. Pepper Bottling Co. opened at 5th and Mary. This building now holds an interesting museum.

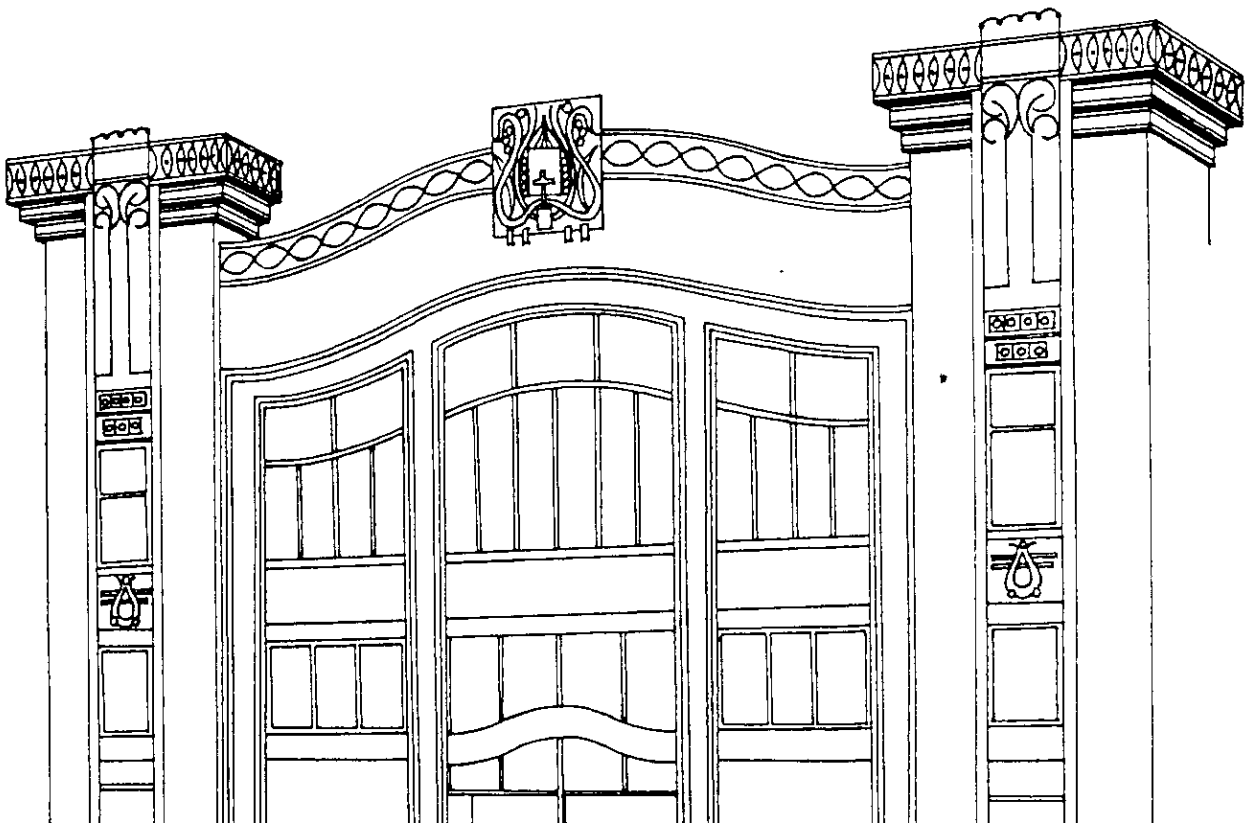


The Alico Building towers over the Waco skyline. Built in 1911, it was originally called the Amicable Building. It was the tallest building west of the Mississippi for many years... bigger than anything in Dallas, Austin, Houston or San Antonio!

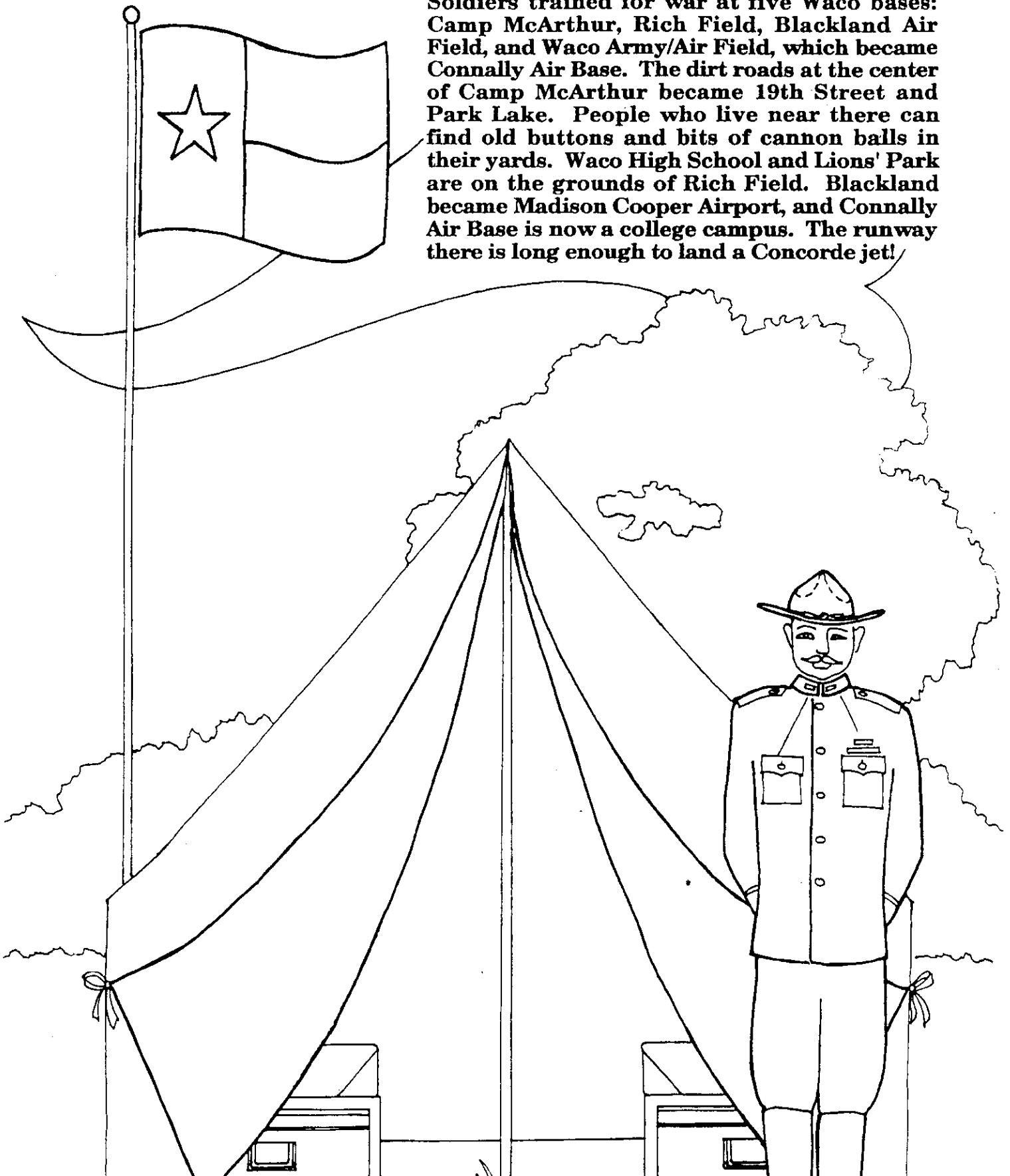


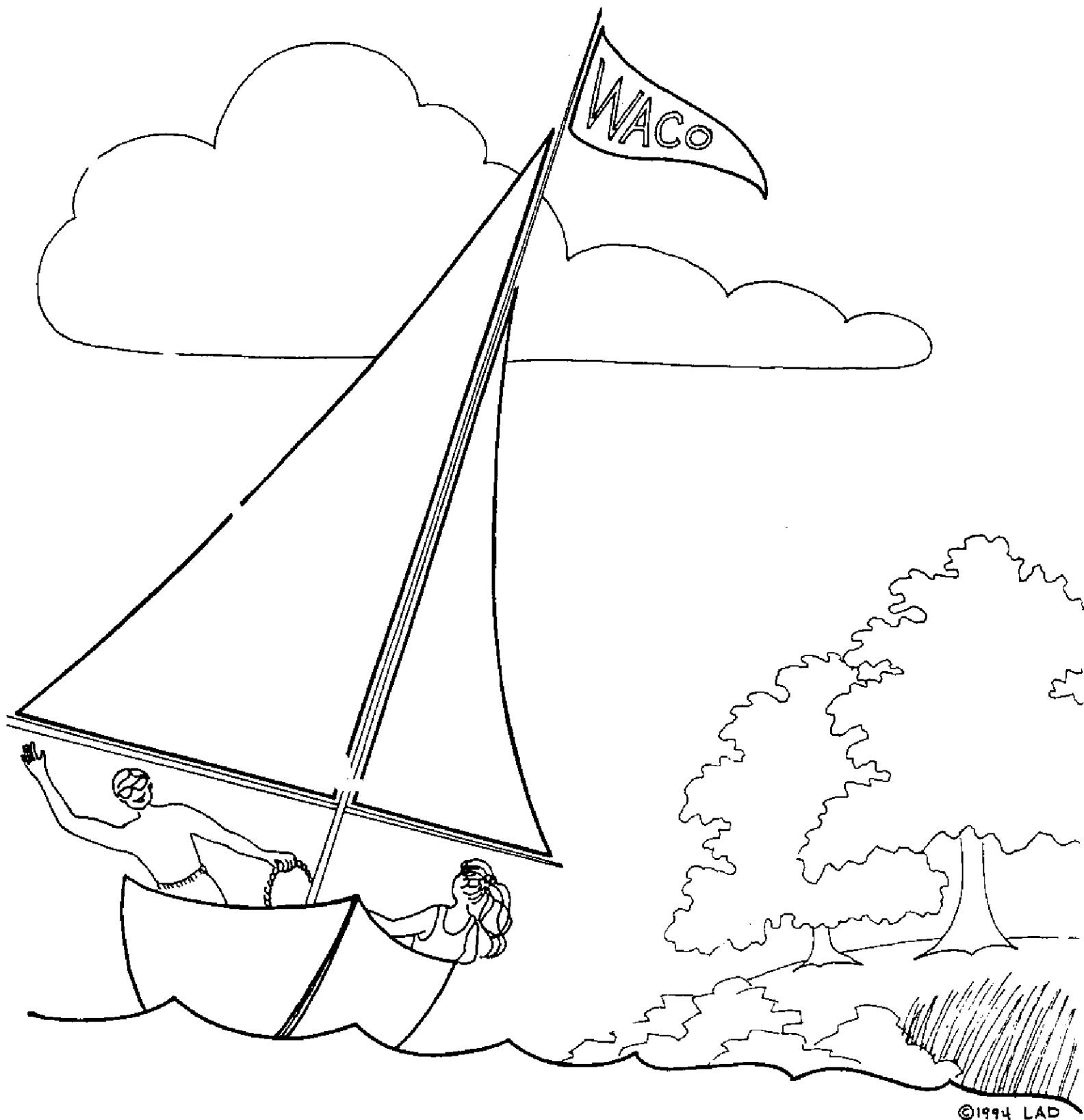
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The Hippodrome Theatre brought drama to Waco in 1913. Inside there are plush red seats and a gold dome above. Actors perform on the stage. On a screen at the back of the stage, moving picture shows once amazed early citizens. These first "movies" had no sound. Do you see the organ pipes? An organist played music to go with the scenes.

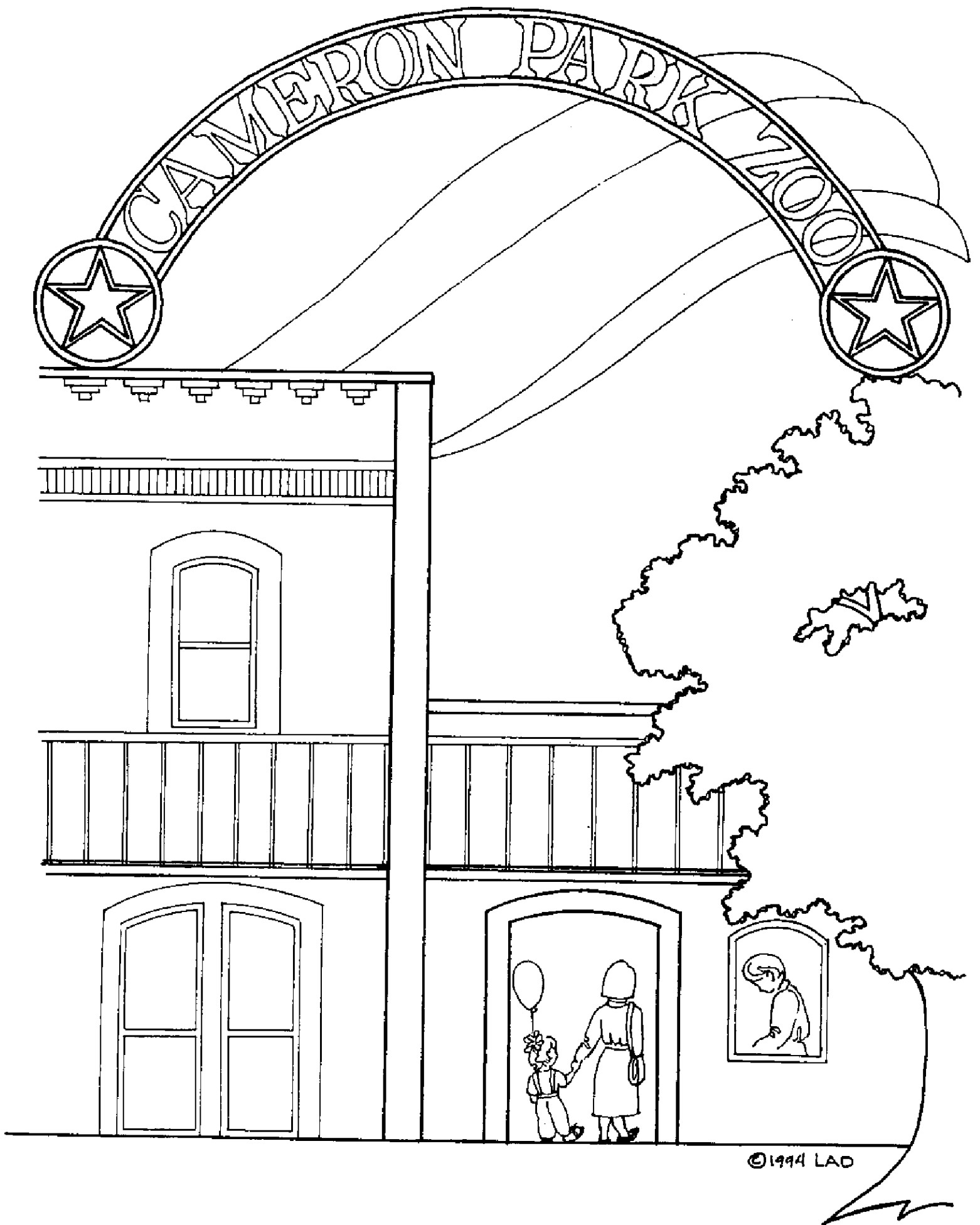


Soldiers trained for war at five Waco bases: Camp McArthur, Rich Field, Blackland Air Field, and Waco Army/Air Field, which became Connally Air Base. The dirt roads at the center of Camp McArthur became 19th Street and Park Lake. People who live near there can find old buttons and bits of cannon balls in their yards. Waco High School and Lions' Park are on the grounds of Rich Field. Blackland became Madison Cooper Airport, and Connally Air Base is now a college campus. The runway there is long enough to land a Concorde jet!

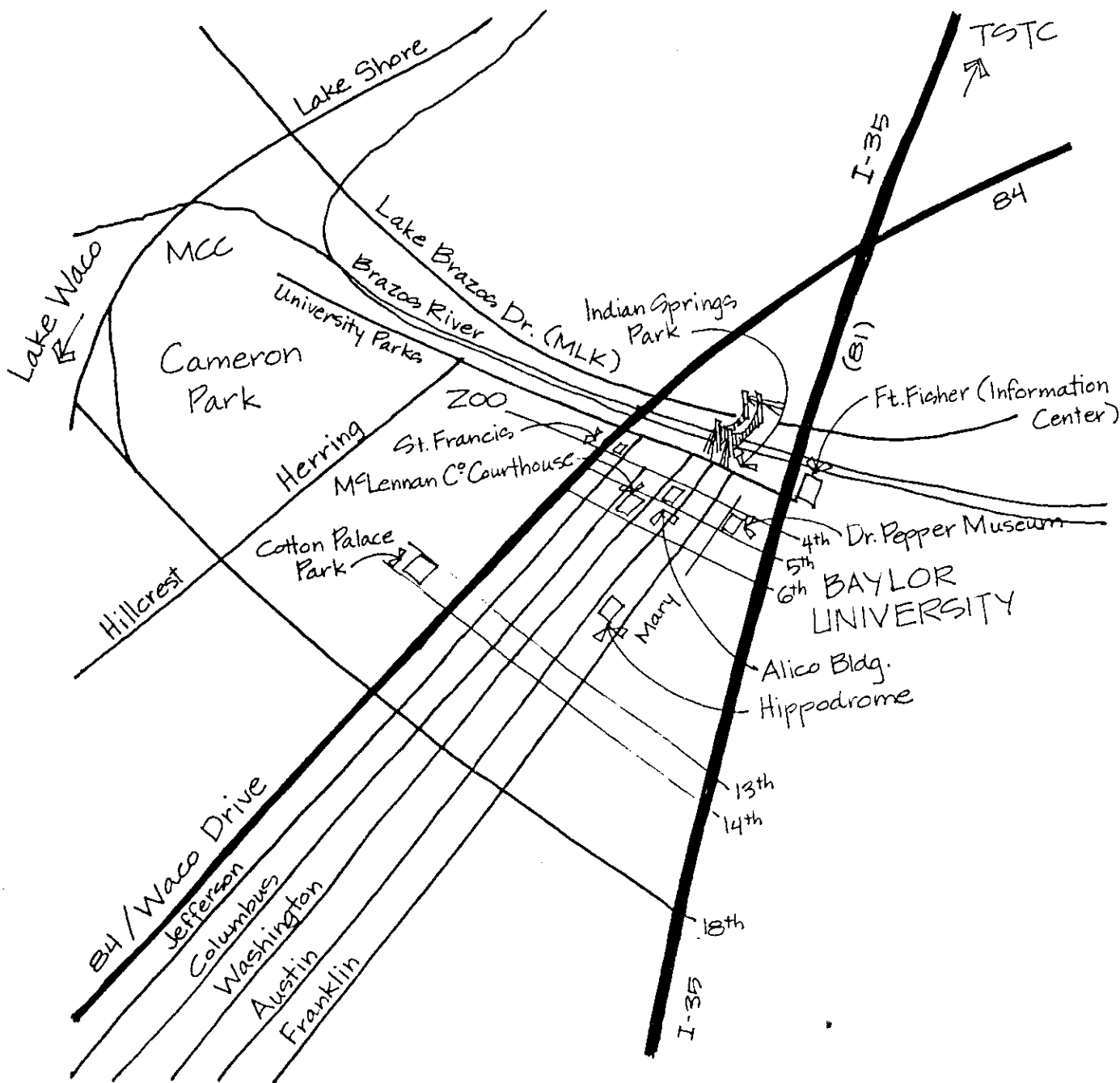




A dam across the Bosque River near the place where it joins the Brazos formed Lake Waco in 1930. The lake supplies the city's water. Many parks along its banks are lovely spots for picnics and water sports.



William Cameron built a very successful business in Waco. He gave the city a large piece of wooded land along the Brazos River as a nature park. A new zoo opened there in 1993.



Waco has many interesting museums and historical sites. Visit the Information Center at Fort Fisher for details!