



## DALLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

# THE DALLAS COUNTY CHRONICLE

### MORALITY, EDUCATION, AND FINANCES: MRS. JOSIE HALL'S GUIDE

By Priscilla Escobedo

*The Chronicle is pleased to re-print an article from The University of Texas at Arlington's 'The Compass Rose' blog, a publication to raise awareness of and to foster the use of Special Collections' resources.*

*Hall's Moral and Mental Capsule for the Economic and Domestic Life of the Negro as a Solution to the Race Problem* was written in 1905 by a Dallas teacher Josie B. Hall.

Hall was born on September 17, 1869, in Waxahachie, Texas, to Tennie and Henry Briggs. She was orphaned by the time she was eleven, and was raised by her sister. Her uncle and grandfather were the first Black Texans to purchase land in Waxahachie. She first began teaching at twelve years old when she served as a Sunday School teacher. In 1886, she became a Christian at Bishop College.



In 1888 she married Professor J. P. Hall, the son of Robin and Katie Hall. He was a graduate of Fisk University. In 1904, he was the Principal of the Mexia Colored High School. The couple had five children by 1905: Veralee Hall, thirteen; James L. Hall, ten; Theophilus Hall, eight; Thessie Arrilla Hall, five, and Arella Theresa Hall, one.

Hall directly wrote about the causes that led her to write this book. She believed that a solution to her community's oppression lay in providing a moral education regarding how to live daily, education, and economic advancement.

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### UPCOMING DCHC MEETINGS

Thursday, September 8, 2022  
 Thursday, October 13, 2022  
 Thursday, November 10, 2022  
 Thursday, December 8, 2022





## 2022 UNDERTOLD MARKER APPLICATIONS

✓ Applications will be available to download from the THC website September 1 and must be submitted by November 15 to [Markers@thc.texas.gov](mailto:Markers@thc.texas.gov).

✓ There is no application fee to apply for an Undertold Marker.

✓ To find out more about the Undertold Program [click here](#) or visit the THC website.

## ALL 2022 MARKERS APPROVED BY THE STATE

By Juanita Nañez

Once again, in 2022, the Dallas County Historical Commission marker committee held its record of having all marker applications that they reviewed and recommended, approved by the Texas Historical Commission. Kudos to the marker committee members: John Roppolo and Pat Hicks, Co-Chairs, Elizabeth DeLeon, and Jim Gaspard.

Each of these applications takes significant time to research and write. Enormous credit goes to the individuals who submitted applications in 2022. This year's approved markers recognize Manuel and Maria Valle Family, the Junior League of Dallas, Salem Institutional Baptist Church, Elm Thicket-Northpark Neighborhood, Fields Cemetery, and Henry Keller.

The Chronicle will highlight some of these markers in future articles.

## ANTIOCH LIFE PARK DEDICATION

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During the dedication ceremony, many of the guests spoke about the importance of preserving the Antioch Life Park Cemetery. Pastor Angela-Luckey Vaughn commended Thom Aldredge and his partners for their decision to preserve and restore the Antioch Cemetery, rather than develop the land. By doing this, all lives represented in this hallowed ground are honored and remembered.



*Community celebrants at the Antioch Life Park marker dedication.*

Mr. Aldredge said when they realized the importance of the cemetery's history, they were committed to preserving the legacy of Mose Jordan, Sr., his descendants and the enslaved buried nearby, as they honor all of the gravesites including the many U.S. Armed Forces veterans who are also buried there. The progress continues as more improvements are planned for this historic Dallas County cemetery.

## MRS. JOSIE HALL'S GUIDE

(continued from page 1)

Within this text are Hall's own commentaries on what she considers to be the moral and educational failings of her community and methods on how such issues can be addressed. Poetry, instructions, moral tales, reprinted works by Black writers, and photographs of prominent Black Dallasites make up the text of this book. These individuals served as inspiration to readers, and exemplified the importance of education, moral behavior, and sound business acumen.



As a teacher and mother, Hall gave particular attention to the creation and maintenance of the home as a means of fostering a healthy environment where families can grow. While she often lauds the importance of an education, this text was written to inspire readers to pursue education rather than provide educational support. Much of this work includes religious moral teachings and exhortations, making it clear that Hall saw faith as vital in becoming an accomplished person. One section of this text titled "The Pinnacle of Fame" is a moralistic fictional story of how a young woman grew into the pinnacle of womanhood by being morally upright, chaste, and cultured. Much of the poetry within this text are original works by Josie Hall, with each poem discussing an important trait or practice, or calling on the readers to take action to improve themselves morally.

Solutions as presented in this text reflect the ideas that were shaped and lauded by Booker T. Washington. Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech, delivered at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta on September 18, 1895, outlined the ideals that would guide his life's work. The turn of the last century was marked by massive legal and social undermining of Civil and Human Rights that had been granted to Black Americans during the Reconstruction Era. In response to the removal of rights and protections following the end of the Reconstruction Era in 1877, Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" called for an accommodationist philosophy where Black Americans would focus their energy on social, educational, and economic gains rather than direct confrontation of segregationist policies and Jim Crow laws and practices. While this ideology would later be criticized by prominent leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois, it was popularized by texts such as Josie Hall's book and served as the inspiration for Black academics and businesspeople. Josie Hall used her book to promote Washington's ideas to young Black women and families as a solution to the problems faced by the community due to systemic racism and oppression.

Contemporary discussions around equality and equity often fall somewhere between the ideas put forth by either DuBois or Washington. Historical works such as *Hall's Moral and Mental Capsule...* must be viewed with the understanding that the contemporary ideas within this text reflected the difficulties faced by Black Americans in the 1900's and attempts at finding solutions to their political and social oppression. As always, it is important to read books by multiple authors with different ideas in order to fully understand the experiences and ideas of people who lived over a hundred and ten years ago.