

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY BY H.E. SMITH**

### **Timid Sims**

“He’s got the sand, by\_\_\_,” said Alick Ware. Jim Freemantle walked hastily a little ahead of the rest.

“Look here, Sims,” said he, with a more kindly intonation in his voice than ever he had used in speaking to him before; “look here-come back, boy-if you go in, you’re only going to get drowned for a Chinaman-tisn’t worth it anyhow-and-and’ we’ve made a mistake, and you’re grit, that’s all. Here, take my hand.”

Sims took the proffered hand. It was but a moment. He did not allow the grasp to detain him. “It’s too late,” said he, “I don’t want your kind words now. I don’t need them. I stand above you all, and I’ve known it many a day. I’m going to prove to you that I don’t fear death. If I should turn back, you’d say in less than a week I’d been playing a game of bluff. I always knew I had grit enough in me. It wanted only your scorn and that poor creature’s extremity brings it out.”

He walked for a few yards further up the river bank made one end of the light line he carried fast to a stake, divested himself of his upper clothing, and holding the other end of the warp, plunged in. It was all over in a moment. Down with race-horse speed he was borne on the surging muddy billows toward the Black Rock: down he came, borne like a feather! With one arm uplifted, as he was shot past, he held out to the Chinaman the life-preserving line, which the poor creature eagerly grasped. But Sims could get no hold of the black and polished boulder. The fearful current, roaring and trembling, bore him into the mouth of the Big Canon; but no one on Texas Bar after that hour ever spoke of “Timid Sims.”

### **Judy Lambert Register of Deeds**