



Student Name:
Class Period:
Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Laura Vernon Hamner. Then, answer questions about it.

Laura Vernon Hamner 1871–1968

Known as “Miss Amarillo,” Laura V. Hamner devoted much of her life to recording and sharing the history of the Texas Panhandle.

Hamner was born in 1871. She served as postmistress in the Panhandle town of Claude and then, for more than a decade, as superintendent of the Potter County schools.

Hamner turned to writing in her late fifties. She became known for “prowling” the Panhandle, interviewing ranchers, cowboys, and pioneers—and once boldly facing gunfire to meet with a former outlaw. She was moved by the natural beauty of the region, where, as she often said, “the skies are always blue.”

Hamner wrote features for the *Amarillo Globe-News* for over thirty years, including a column for teenagers. She also had a weekly radio program on early Panhandle history.

Hamner’s books remain invaluable chronicles of Texas ranching history. Her biography of legendary rancher Charles Goodnight—told in the form of a novel titled *The No-Gun Man of Texas*—was corrected and approved by Goodnight himself.

Hamner encouraged other writers through the organization she co-founded in 1919, the Panhandle Pen Women. She often hosted writers and publishers at her residence in Amarillo’s Herring Hotel.

Hamner died in 1968. “I love and trust these Westerners with all my heart,” she once wrote. “The Panhandle is the grandest spot on earth.”

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Laura Vernon Hamner. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. What types of people did Laura V. Hamner interview for her writing projects?
2. In addition to writing books, how else did Hamner work to expand her influence and reach diverse audiences?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Making Inferences.** Hamner’s biography of Charles Goodnight was written as a novel rather than nonfiction. What do you think this suggests about the accuracy of the biography?