

HOGG BROTHERS

HOUSTON

December 29, 1927.

CITY AND COUNTY
TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL

Mrs. James L. Autry,
No. 5 Courtland Place,
Houston, Texas.

My dear Mrs. Autry:

Inasmuch as the newspapers have garbled or misquoted some of the statements of Mr. Spencer before the City Council yesterday, and inasmuch as Mr. Spencer himself has put an erroneous interpretation upon the attitude of some of us towards the present Tuberculosis Hospital site, I think best to send you this letter briefly to repeat the substance of my remarks to the Tuberculosis Hospital Board at the meeting in question just after lunch on November 25th:

(1) I explicitly and repeatedly assured the Board that, as far as I knew, all parties who were urging the abandonment of the present site and the removal to a larger and more restful site conditioned their entire proposal upon the flat assumption that the Autry Clinic should be duplicated in the new site and even made larger and better or there should be no removal.

(2) Therefore, any statement that "the proposed move is an uncharitable mockery on the philanthropy of our city" and that we were or are proposing to move it without considering the welfare and institutional value of the Autry Clinic as well as your own wishes, is a fair sample of plain and fancy lying.

(3) I particularly disclaimed any motivation or impulse arising out of my interest in River Oaks. I did say, however, among other incidental remarks, that by reason of the location of the present site at the junction of two fast growing thoroughfares, a great many people would be depressed by commiseration incidental to knowledge of the suffering of tuberculosis patients.

(4) The main purpose of my appearance before that Board was to urge them to go cautiously and defer the erection of additional permanent buildings on that property until they had canvassed the situation thoroughly in the best interest of the Tuberculosis Hospital itself, as well as the City at large. I believe I was correct in assuring them that the present movement, which was not instigated by me or my associates, would not

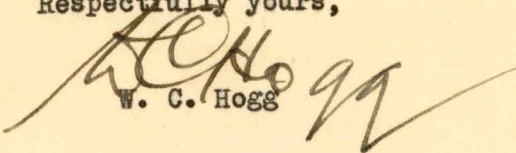
cease and that every recurrent appeal of the Anti-Tuberculosis Association for additional aid and additional structures for that site would meet with further and augmented opposition; that for one reason and another it seemed to me that expediency and caution would lead the Board to consider definitely the practicality of removal within a reasonable time.

(5) I did think and do think that it has outgrown its usefulness for that purpose; that the site could be sold advantageously by the City; that it could be developed for private uses and thereby contribute to the tax income of the City; that, as a matter of fact, the patients themselves would be better located in a quieter neighborhood; that it was inevitable that sooner or later Buffalo Bayou Drive, Dallas Avenue and Shepherd Drive would be permanently paved, and that the paving assessments alone against that property would be quite burdensome to the City, or would be so burdensome as to retard proper improvement in that neighborhood.

(6) I distinctly disclaimed any personal aversion to the location myself and said that I thought any student of city growth, regarding properly the useful future of the institution itself as well as the City, would urge its removal within a reasonable time, say, 3 or 4 years; and I felt sure that if all the practicable, sensible arguments in favor of its removal were presented to you and your advisors without passion or prejudice, they and you would recognize the farsightedness of the proposal.

(7) I am not sure, but I think the 30-acre site was bought for other purposes than the tuberculosis camp and I think the City proposes to use that site, if it is retained, for other purposes, perhaps the Jefferson Davis Hospital. As I review the past ten years' growth of Houston and as I see the inevitable growth during the next ten years, I think it would be a serious mistake for the hospital to continue in its present location and while I knew my motives would be misconstrued by some people, I felt so sure of the fairness of the proposal to abandon that site, that I had no hesitation in recommending it.

Respectfully yours,


W. C. Hogg

WC-hb

cc - Mayor Oscar F. Holcombe,
City Hall,
Houston, Texas.

cc - City Commissioners.

cc - Hospital Board.