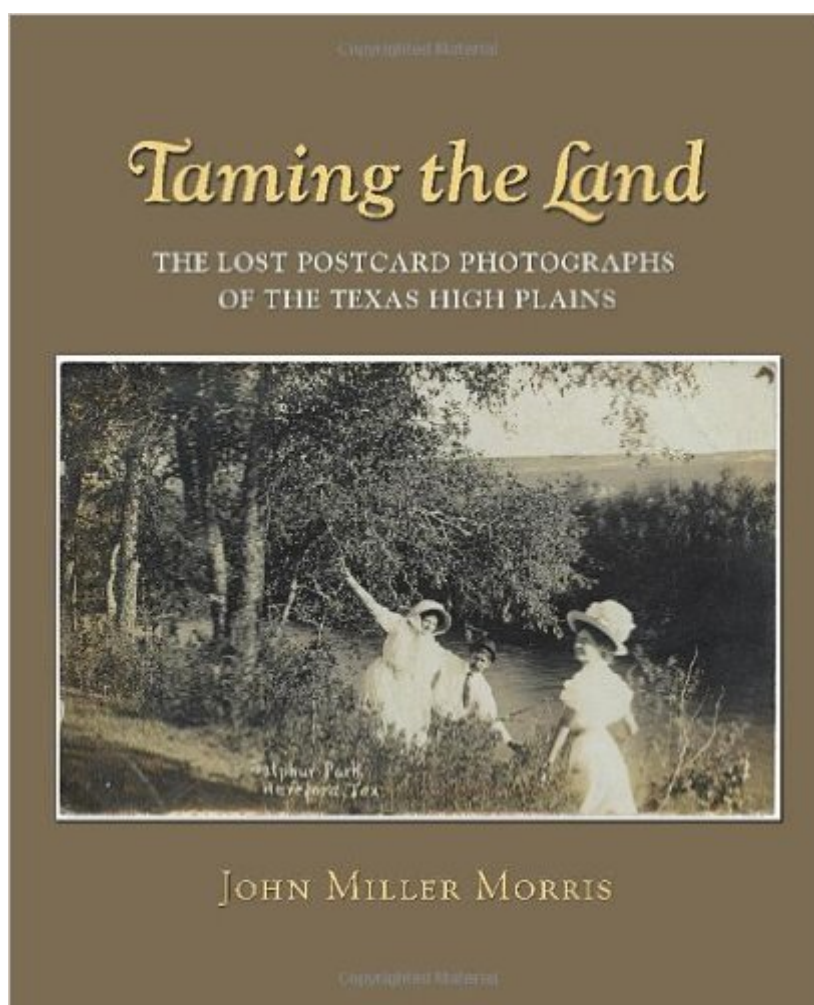


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# Taming The Land: The Lost Postcard Photographs Of The Texas High Plains (Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series)



## Synopsis

A postcard craze gripped the nation from 1905 to 1920, as the rise of outdoor photography coincided with a wave of settlement and prosperity in Texas. Hundreds of people took up cameras, and photographers of note chose some of their best work for duplication as photo postcards—sold for a nickel and mailed for a penny to distant friends and relatives. These postcards, which now enjoy another kind of craze in the collecting world, left what author John Miller Morris calls a "significant visual legacy" of the history and social geography of Texas. For more than a decade, Morris has been finding and studying the photographers and methodically gathering their postcards. In *Taming the Land*, he shares those finds with readers, introducing each photographer and providing interpretive descriptions of the places, people, or events depicted in the photographs. The stories the cards tell—in the images captured and the messages carried—add an exceptional dimension to our understanding of life in rural Texas a century ago. *Taming the Land* presents postcards from twenty-four counties in the booming Texas Panhandle. This is the first book in a set called *Plains of Light*, which will collect and document turn-of-the-twentieth-century photo postcards from all over West Texas.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"TAMING OF THE LAND" IS a unique offering of history, both of a neglected region, the upper panhandle of Texas, and a slice of entrepreneurial life of the early 20th Century photographers who

lived and plied their trade there during the short but dramatic craze for "real photo" postcards. This project would have been impossible before the advent of the internet and sites, primarily Ebay, which allowed people throughout the nation who discovered there was a keen interest in their old post cards, to find buyers such as Professor Morris. Simply amassing a collection from which the best have been culled for this book no doubt was an expensive and time-consuming task. But because Dr. Morris is a historian of note, with a special interest in the panhandle of Texas, his applied skills result in a most enjoyable combination both of a look back in time and an exposure of the individuals who captured these by-gone scenes for what, now, is the ages. In many cases, only by developing an eye for the tell-tale style of a photographer allows for the identification of otherwise unsigned photographs. The biographical research of each photographer required the investigatory skills of a private eye, since few of these early photographers were suspected of having achieved fame during their life times. Additionally, Dr. Morris provides enough detail of the pertinent local history to present each photo in, not just time and space, but social and material culture as well.

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