

## ELLIS SUGAR FARM TO BE SOLD

The application of the receiver to sell the Ellis sugar plantation will be passed upon by judge Camp in the 45th district court on April 18, and if favorable action is taken, June 4 will be fixed as the date of the sale of the plantation by auction to the highest bidder.

The receiver's estimate of the value of the estate is \$350,000. The sugar house on the farm alone cost \$200,000, and the plantation consists of 400 acres in cultivation, which now has upon it a fine crop of growing cane.

This is one of the finest plantations of its kind in the world, and there is expected to be a spirited lot of bidders if the sale should be ordered.

All first mortgage liens against the property, amounting to nearly \$150,000, have been secured by purchase by W. T. Eldridge of this city. On March 28 he took up first mortgage liens to the amount of \$124,000, held by Dr. Amos Graves, sr., and \$18,000 held by H. Mastersan. This gives Mr. Eldridge control of all secured claims against the estate. He will probably be one of the bidders for the estate when it is ordered sold.

There are outstanding claims which are unsecured to the amount of \$50,000. If the sale of the estate should bring more than the amount of the first mortgage liens, \$150,000, held by Mr. Eldridge, such surplus would be used to pay off the unsecured claims.

John C. Sullivan, who is the receiver appointed by the court, holds the property to be worth \$350,000. He places the valuation of the land at \$200,000 and the improvements at \$150,000.



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Thu, Jul 6, 2023

## STATE NEGOTIATING THE PURCHASE OF TWO SUGAR PLANTATIONS

If negotiations now pending are settled, the state preliminary board will buy the Ellis sugar plantation at Sugar Land, Fort Bend county, owned by a company of which W. C. Cunningham of San Antonio is at the head, and operate the plantation by contract lease. The Cunningham sugar plantation, the largest in the state, adjoining the Ellis plantation, is also to be purchased, being the state's largest sugar plantation. If the state, if purchased, they will give the state a wide average of which to give outside work for a large number of employees.

Judge W. H. Gill, chairman of the preliminary board, Captain Blanton and Colonel Hickey, members, and Capt. J. A. Herwig, superintendent of state plantations, spent Tuesday and Wednesday of this week improving the negotiations. The Cunningham Sugar Planting company is a corporation organized partly by the Lincoln Trust company of St. Louis and K. H. Cunningham of Sugarland, Tex. The Lincoln Trust company is the controlling power, the property being managed by Colonel Cunningham. It is proposed to sell the state 15,000 acres, 9000 of which are made cultivation, in case of the improvements thereof, including the irrigation system, for the sugar plant. It is understood that \$1,000,000 in cash figures will be the purchase price of the Cunningham property, if the state accepts the proposition.

The Ellis plantation is owned by a company headed by W. T. Dunlap of this city, and operated with him are Messrs. Halsey of Fort Bend county, the Kemper and others. This plantation consists of 3100 acres, 2000 of which are in sugar cane. This property is held in fee. It has on it a very fine irrigation ditch and a refinery, which has been in operation for four years. The mill is equipped to crush 1000 tons a day.

### Business Sugar Holdings.

If the state buys these two plantations, the purchase must be made now, as it is about time to get ready for another crop, and when the deal is closed now it will have to be deferred for a year, because it would be useless to make such a trade in the middle of the season—rather it could not be done.

By the purchase of these two plantations the state would increase its sugar acreage holdings now under the control of the preliminary board. The state owns already Harlan farm, where a great many cane cutters are worked, and if the Cunningham and Ellis plantations are purchased it would result in the withdrawal of a considerable number of cane cutters from contract labor to be put to work on these farms. The state is getting \$25 per head for outside cane cutters, and feels that it is better to have them on the state's own plantations.

There are now at work on the Cunningham plantation 250 contract men on the Ellis plantation about 100. There is a lot of free labor employed on work of these plantations. In the event of the purchase by the state there would be needed between 400 and 500 on the Cunningham farm and about 250 on the Ellis farm. It would result in a widening of the operation of the state in the manufacture of sugar, and would give an opportunity for the business to be handled better because it would operate so much wider field.

### No Profit Last Season.

On account of the drouth during the past season there has not been a great success in the sugar raising in this state. It has affected nearly all the farms, and while it has not resulted in great losses, there has not been a big profit made.

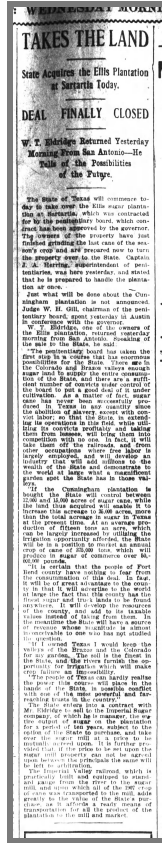
### History of the Plantations.

The establishment of the Cunningham and Ellis sugar plantations was organized with Col. L. A. Ellis, now deceased. Prior to 1883 Col. L. A. Ellis and Col. M. H. Cunningham had a lease on the land system of the state and managed it on the proprietary system. At the expiration of this lease Colonel Ellis bought from Messrs. Kemper, Sevier, Marshall and others those farms known as the Harlan, Halsey, Kemper, Sartorius or Ellis and most of Sugar land, or Cunningham, the transferred to Col. E. H. Cunningham, his former associate in the sugar raising, 2000 acres of what is now Sugarland. This property has been added to from time to time and has been very much improved. With it is a lot of private land. At the time this land was bought Colonel Ellis inaugurated the sugar business in Texas. It was then the open battle method that was followed. Colonel Ellis put up on his place the first vacuum plant that was erected in the state, and about the same time Colonel Cunningham built the old brick water mill that is on the Sugarland plantation today. The first white sugar made in the state was on the Ellis Sartorius plantation. After the sale of the Cunningham plantation, the purchase of the Sartorius made by Colonel Ellis was to C. W. Hilditch in 1890, and last a new house on the Hilditch plantation. The Dr. A. Turner 2000 acres was taken up between the Hilditch and what is now the Sartorius plantation. According to authorities the valuable part of all the sugar lands in this section is located on the Halsey, Christie and Harlan farms.

Such is the history of the big sugar plantations in the western of the state for which the state preliminary board is now negotiating. It is understood that within a short time there will be formal proposition from the Lincoln Trust company that will be made such share that it can be transferred.

# State negotiating the purchase of two sugar plantations January 1908





2/5/1908 State acquires Ellis Plantation at Sartartia



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Fri, Jun 18, 2021

## DEAL IS CLOSED FOR RIDDICK AND ELLIS PLANTATIONS

State Penitentiary Board Is Now  
Working Men There Planting  
Sugar Cane.

REPORT MADE BY  
THE SUPERINTENDENT

Daily Express Austin Bureau.

AUSTIN, Tex., Feb. 7.—The State Penitentiary board met in regular monthly session today and finally closed the deal for the Ellis and Riddick plantations, and are now working men thereon planting sugar cane. The State had 13 convicts leased to Ellis, and forty-nine on the Riddick place, which will be further augmented. There are now 24 convicts leased to Cunningham, whose 3,000-acre plantation will probably be taken over next year.

Financial Agent Wright states that 200 men and seventy-five teams are at work on the extension of the State Railroad from Rusk to Palestine, and that they are building a substantial standard gauge railroad, having just completed a bridge 150 feet long and averaging thirty feet high. Owing to the usual force available for the work and the recurring wet weather it is not expected to have the road completed and in operation into Palestine before next September.

Mr. Wright said that it is the intention to start up the iron industry at Rusk within the next few weeks and again turn out a hundred tons of pig steel, using coke for smelting. The pipe foundry has been going all the while. A large stock of pig has been on hand.

According to Representative Hervey's report there were 520 convicts on hand January 1, and during the month 20 were received, 1 resigned, 2 returned by Sheriff, 24 discharged, 2 sentenced, 13 escaped, 2 delivered by Sheriff, leaving 352 on hand February 1. They were located as follows: Central 300, 125; State 100, 25; national 100, 10; prison 100, 10; State 100, 10; Wayne 100, 10; Camp Wood, 10; Ransom 100, 10; Huntsville 100, 10; Rusk 100, 10.

INCLUDE THE TERRIBLE LAM



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