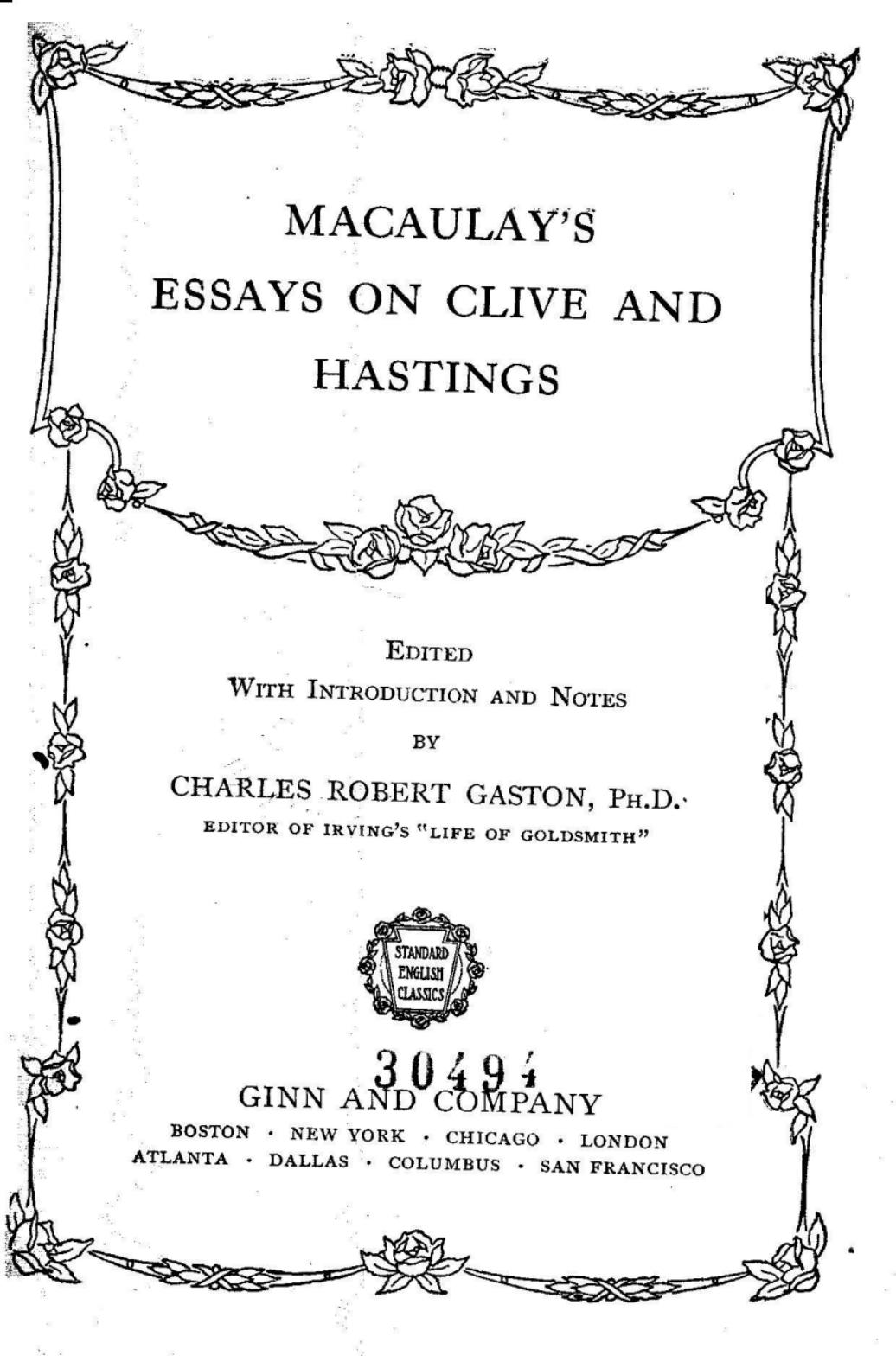




# ESSAYS ON CLIVE AND HASTINGS



MACAULAY



MACAULAY'S  
ESSAYS ON CLIVE AND  
HASTINGS

EDITED  
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES  
BY  
CHARLES ROBERT GASTON, PH.D.  
EDITOR OF IRVING'S "LIFE OF GOLDSMITH"



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TO  
JAMES MORGAN HART, J.U.D., L.H.D.  
PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF ENGLISH IN CORNELL UNIVERSITY  
IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF THE INTEREST  
THAT HE HAS ALWAYS SHOWN IN THE  
WORK OF HIS STUDENTS

## PREFATORY NOTE

In the editing of these essays for school use, there is a temptation to give merely encyclopedic information whenever Macaulay makes a historical or a literary allusion. In this edition an attempt is made to avoid this perfunctory method of annotation. The editor aims to present the necessary information, but to present it in such a way that it will in every case make clear the precise allusion that seems puzzling in the writing of the essayist. Throughout the Introduction and the Notes the purpose has been constantly to emphasize the literary reading of two notable essays dealing with epochs in India. It is hoped that no student will feel dismayed by the information contained in the essays and in the annotation, but that on the contrary all readers may relish as does the editor the vigor and brilliance of the distinguished essayist's style. The editor particularly wishes to thank the publishers for their painstaking coöperation in the production of the maps which have been inserted in this edition. Maps are an invaluable aid to any kind of reading of a historical narrative.

# INTRODUCTION

## LIFE OF MACAULAY (1800-1859)

Probably no writer in any language has given so much historical and literary information and misinformation in so entertaining a style to so many persons as Thomas Babington Macaulay. He had a positive passion for facts. Nevertheless, in his thirty-four years as a writer he exhibited such an interesting and brilliant antithetical style that he sometimes gave misinformation, unconsciously, in his desire to say something strongly and entertainingly. Very likely he gathered more information before he was twenty-five years old than he did in the last thirty-four years. At any rate, it proves convenient in studying the events of his busy, happy, and mostly prosperous life to consider them in two periods: the period of preparation, from 1800 to 1825; and the period of productiveness, from 1825 to 1859. During the second half of the second period he wrote his essays on Clive and Hastings — reviews of the lives of men prominent in Indian affairs.

Macaulay's youth was singularly fortunate. His father, Zachary Macaulay, was of good Scotch descent. He is buried in Westminster, along with several other noted English advocates of the abolition of slavery. Except for Macaulay there is scarcely an Englishman of fame buried in Westminster whose father is also buried there. The place of Thomas B. Macaulay's birth was Rothley Temple, Leicestershire, England. He was the eldest of eight children. In 1803 the family moved to Clapham, near London, where they continued to reside for eighteen years. Tom's mother thought that he was a wonderful

child, but, in spite of his superior powers of language, she would not permit people to tell him that he was unusually bright for one so young. When only three he enjoyed reading serious books or sitting by the fire conversing with his elders. When only four he had a copious vocabulary. A cup of coffee was spilled on him one day. Solicitously the hostess inquired whether it hurt. He replied, "Thank you, madam, the agony is abated." Tom would often listen, with the consent of his father, to the talk that went on in the Macaulay home when prominent members of Parliament and abolitionists met to discuss ways of advancing the cause of abolition of slavery in the West Indies. As a mere boy Tom wrote an article which he desired should be translated into an Indian dialect so as to persuade the people of Travancore to embrace the Christian religion. By the time he was twelve he had memorized a large part of Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel" and "Marmion," Milton's "Paradise Lost," and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," besides a good deal of the Bible, for he had a wonderful knack of taking in pages at a glance and remembering the contents and the very language for all time. A letter written by him at the age of thirteen shows better than anything else the kind of boy he was, and by implication the kind of parents he had:

Shelford, August 14, 1813

My dear Mamma:

I must confess that I have been a little disappointed at not receiving a letter from home to-day. I hope, however, for one to-morrow. My spirits are far more depressed by leaving home than they were last half year. Everything brings home to my recollection. Everything I read, or see, or hear brings it to my mind. You told me I should be happy when I once came here, but not an hour passes in which I do not shed tears at thinking of home. Every hope, however unlikely to be realized, affords me some small consolation. The morning on which I went you told me that possibly I might come home before the holidays. If you can confirm that hope, believe me when I assure you there is nothing which I would not

give for one instant's sight of home. Tell me in your next, expressly, if you can, whether or no there is any likelihood of my coming home before the holidays. If I could gain papa's leave, I should select my birthday, October 25, as the time which I should wish to spend at that home which absence renders still dearer to me. I think I see you sitting by papa just after his dinner, reading my letter, and turning to him with an inquisitive glance at the end of the paragraph. I think, too, that I see his expressive shake of the head at it. Oh may I be mistaken! You cannot conceive what an alteration a favorable answer would produce on me. If your approbation of my request depends upon my advancing in study, I will work like a cart horse. If you should refuse it, you will deprive me of the most pleasing illusion which I ever experienced in my life. Pray do not fail to write speedily.

Your dutiful and affectionate son,

T. B. Macaulay

After attendance at private school he entered Trinity College, Cambridge University, in 1818. Here he was a brilliant scholar and debater, averse only to the study of mathematics. He won prizes for Latin declamation and for two English poems, "Pompeii," 1819, and "Evening," 1821. The family moved to London in 1821. That year Macaulay won a scholarship at the university. In 1822 he received the bachelor's degree. In 1823 it became his good fortune to have to do something for his family; he took private pupils to make up as far as he could for his father's business reverses. He was made Fellow of Trinity in 1824. While he was at college he wrote "The Battle of Ivry" and other ballads for Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, which was circulated mostly at Cambridge and Eton. At the age of twenty-five he took the master's degree. Now, having been remarkably industrious during his youth, he had richer stores of information than most persons have at the end of their lives.

The years when Macaulay made for himself a career in literature and in politics were, in spite of one or two trying situations,

as prosperous and active as could well be imagined. No attempt, however, will be made to do more than relate, in strict chronological order, the principal definite events of his public literary and political career. It is strongly urged that the student find for himself more about these years in one of the most readable biographies ever written, "The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay," by his nephew, George Otto Trevelyan.

The same year in which Macaulay received the master's degree from Cambridge he wrote the famous essay on Milton, the second of a series of forty essays that he contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* in the years from January, 1825, to October, 1844. At the age of twenty-six he became a barrister in Lincoln's Inn, London. Caring more for politics and literature than for law, he spent more time listening to speeches in the House of Commons, making Whig speeches at political meetings, and writing for the magazines than he spent in the practice of the law. Through the aid of a political opponent, Lord Lyndhurst, he became Commissioner in Bankruptcy in 1828. Two years later, through the assistance of Lord Lansdowne, who had been greatly interested by the essay on Mill, Macaulay became a member of Parliament for Calne. His Reform Bill speeches, though uttered in a rapid, somewhat monotonous delivery, gained for him a reputation for eloquence, and when printed were found to be convincing in thought. The literary and political celebrities, whether belonging to his own party, the Whigs, or to the opposing party, praised the vigorous new member. Yet when his commissionership and his college fellowship both came to an end in 1832, he had to pawn his college gold medals, notwithstanding his very considerable and growing reputation; it is said that at this time he scarcely knew where to turn for a morsel of bread.

However, the financial trouble soon passed away, for he was made a commissioner of the Board of Control of Indian affairs, and a year later became secretary of the board. In Parliament

he was now representing the manufacturing city of Leeds. His speech in 1833 on the bill for the renewal of the charter of the East India Company was considered a remarkable effort. In February, 1834, he sailed for India at a salary of £10,000 a year for five years as law member of the Supreme Council of India. One reason why he consented to go to India was that, though he had no desire whatever for riches, he did wish a reasonable income for life, and the Indian position promised him such an income if he would be careful to save from his large salary. His greatest work for the distant empire was done as president of a commission for composing a criminal code for India. This code was published in 1837, but did not become law till 1860. Another Indian service of permanent value was his work as president of a committee which founded the educational system of India.

He returned to England in 1838. Soon after his return, he was on the point of fighting a duel with a man whose book he had mercilessly criticized in the *Edinburgh Review*, but the duel was averted by friends of the parties. In the autumn of 1838 he traveled in Italy.

In March, 1839, he began his "History of England," which is more fascinating than most novels (Macaulay read thousands of novels). He did not accomplish much at first on the History, because the people of Edinburgh invited him to stand for a seat in Parliament as their representative. He was elected in 1839 and continued to represent Edinburgh for eight years. Soon after his election he became Secretary of War, holding the position for two years. His essay on Clive appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in January, 1840, and his Hastings in October, 1841. In 1842 he was instrumental in the passage of a copyright law giving to authors sole ownership of their writings for forty-two years after publication. He published his "Lays of Ancient Rome" in 1842. The next year, since publishers were bringing out his essays without paying him

anything for them, he felt obliged to publish a complete copyrighted edition. He became paymaster-general in 1846. The following year, because of his active support of the toleration acts and his general air of independence, he lost his Edinburgh seat in the House and retired from political life to finish his "History of England."

Volumes I and II of the History appeared in 1848. Their author was installed Lord Rector of Glasgow University in 1849. He declined a Cambridge professorship of modern history and a cabinet position. In 1852, owing to the tremendous amount of work that he had done in so short a time, his health broke down; but he was that year urged to represent Edinburgh again in Parliament, and did so. His last speech in the House was made in July, 1853. He prepared civil-service rules and examinations for India in 1854. He published Volumes III and IV of his History in 1855, receiving in the next year £20,000 in royalties. For his articles on Goldsmith and Johnson, contributed in 1856 to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, he refused any payment, saying that these were labors of love and that he needed for his own wants, he having never married, no more money than he had. On account of ill health he gave up his seat in Parliament in 1856. Now, when he was nearing the end of his life, he took up his residence in Holly Lodge, near Kensington Palace, London. In 1857 he was made Baron Macaulay of Rothley, but rarely took his seat in the House of Lords. That year, too, he was made high steward of the borough of Cambridge. He kept working on his History till his death, December 28, 1859, at Holly Lodge. He was buried in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.

In looking back over this biography a reader cannot fail to be astonished at the immense amount of work that Macaulay was able to do. His literary activity, as the greatest essayist of his time in his particular field of biography, and as the most popular writer after Scott, would alone seem to be enough for

a busy life of an extraordinary man. His work in Parliament as a speaker of unquestioned oratorical power and keen intellectual grasp of great questions would alone make enough activity for all but the most exceptional members. His constructive, permanently effective work in advancing important reforms in India and in England would fill up more than three-score years of activity for most men. But Macaulay carried on all these lines of activity without seeming to be worried by any of them, and had time besides for a social life as a splendid talker in the homes of the wits of the age and as an affectionate uncle in his sister's home. There is no English writer who stands in the same class with Macaulay as the embodiment of energy; no writer compares with him in the practical accomplishment of the things that his keen, restless mind set before him to accomplish. The keynote of his life was hard work with a cheerful outlook. Only his History remains incomplete.

### QUESTIONS

1. What have you learned in this book or elsewhere regarding the domestic life of Macaulay?
2. What do you consider to be the use of knowing anything about the life of an author whose book you have read or are reading?
3. What did the world do for Macaulay?
4. What did he do for the world?
5. What kind of preparation did he have for his life work?
6. What official positions did he hold?
7. What kinds of writing did he do?
8. What writings of his have you read? Why have you read so many? Why have you not read more?
9. In exactly one hundred words write a biography of Macaulay. Imagine that you are spending a certain amount of money (words) and see how you can spend your money to get the best returns for it. If you look at such a task as this in the right light you will soon come to see the value of words and the necessity for proportion.
10. From Macaulay's schoolboy letter to his mother what can you infer concerning the temper and character of his parents?

## OBJECT OF THE READING

The essays on Clive and Hastings are to be read not as history but as literature. This makes a great deal of difference to the student approaching the reading of the two essays for the first time. Bewilderment will be the state of the ordinary reader who plunges into even the first paragraph of Clive with the idea of understanding offhand every obscure historical allusion. That cannot be hoped for from school readers of to-day. Not "every schoolboy" does know the things that Macaulay thinks the schoolboy knows. In the matter of the history presented in these two essays the best that the average reader can do is to get a fairly good grip on the essential facts in the career of Robert Clive which made him recognized by historians as the British empire builder in India, and of the essential facts in the career of Warren Hastings which made him the great administrator of Indian affairs. If, besides the obvious large facts in the lives of these two men, the reader can understand some of the picturesque details and something of the general historical events involved, he may consider that he has enough of the information in the case to go on with the main purpose of the reading, which is to secure a grip on the method of literary presentation of historical facts as illustrated by Macaulay. Macaulay does not aim so much to instruct as to interest and entertain. It is his way of writing with which the reader of the essays in a course in literature is most concerned.

The pupil, then, need not feel discouraged if parts of the essays make him sleepy. It might be a good idea first to hurry through the essays, skimming the cream of lively narrative, e.g. Clive's defense of Arcot and his contest for a seat in Parliament. It would be advisable, after such a hurried glance through the pages, to take a second look a little more carefully. The first view would show the most interesting narrative parts; the second would make the main divisions clear and would

take in as many details as it might seem advisable to try to absorb in the time at the disposal of the reader. A final general view would clinch the main facts in the careers of the two Englishmen most concerned in the evolution of English control in India, and would give a final impression of the author's characteristic manner of writing as illustrated in these essays.

## PLACE OF THE ESSAYS IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Clive and Hastings represent Macaulay's historical as opposed to his literary essays. By common consent Macaulay is recognized as having done better work in his historical than in his literary essays, for, though he had an eye for the picturesque and could tell graphically the outward events of a man's life or of a national epoch, he lacked the subtlety of understanding and fineness of feeling necessary to supreme success in discussing the essence of a spiritually minded man's writings or in penetrating to the core of a period of national literature. Yet because of this very limitation of his he was able better to please his contemporaries than any other nonimaginative writer of the time. His series of fascinating review articles made an era in the history of literature.

It was this series that alone was able to rival in popularity in the Victorian age the immense output of novels produced by Eliot, Dickens, and Thackeray, to mention only a few of the popular novelists of the time. Macaulay's essays, particularly his historical essays, put human interest consistently to the front. Macaulay and the contemporary writers of essays — Carlyle, for instance — thought that history should deal with "human beings of passions, caprices, moods, loves and hates, dwelling in a world of interesting costumes, arms, architecture, ideas and beliefs" (Lang). Consequently the historical writing of these men, whether in the form of long histories or shorter

essays, was as entertaining as instructive. It was literature because it was done with art and imbued with a powerful personality. The historical essays of Macaulay belong, then, in the front rank of the entertaining and instructive essays produced in the early Victorian age of English literature.

## SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF LORD CLIVE

Sir William Hunter in "A Brief History of Indian Peoples" strikingly characterizes the work of Lord Clive by saying that from Clive's victory at Plassey dates the English supremacy in India, and from his second administration as governor date the English efforts at good government in India. This authoritative view of the achievements of Clive corresponds well with the estimate in Macaulay's essay. In fact, the essay of Macaulay is to be trusted in the main as giving a fair and accurate account of the life of Clive. Yet, since Macaulay inserts few dates, a succinct narrative of the principal events of Lord Clive's life may assist the reader to follow the essay.

Robert Clive, born September 29, 1725, near Market-Drayton in Shropshire, England, was the eldest of the thirteen children of an impoverished country squire. In school he was constantly in trouble because of his high temper and mischievous spirit. In 1743 he was offered a clerkship in the East India service. The next year, after an unusually long voyage, during which he learned Portuguese, he reached Madras penniless. Having small pay and no friends, he soon tried to kill himself. In 1746 he was taken prisoner by Labourdonnais, but escaped to Fort St. David. Entering the military service as ensign, in 1747, he next year distinguished himself by his bravery at the unsuccessful siege of Pondicherry. He became lieutenant under Major Stringer Lawrence. Then he was promoted to be commissariat officer. He was twice in charge of reënforcements sent to Trichinopoly, and in 1750 became captain, in charge of several

hundred men. He captured Arcot, capital of the Carnatic, in 1751. Then with only eighty European soldiers and fewer than two hundred native soldiers he successfully defended Arcot while it was besieged by seven thousand troops from September 23 to November 14, 1751. Taking the offensive, he now defeated the French and natives in several engagements, and helped Major Lawrence capture Trichinopoly. He married, in 1752, Margaret Maskelyne. In poor health he returned to England, 1753. There he paid his father's debts, and was elected to Parliament but was not seated.

In 1755 he was again in Bombay, having now been appointed lieutenant colonel. He captured the pirate stronghold, Gheriah, in 1756. He took charge of Fort St. David just before the Calcutta Black Hole massacre, and set out at once to avenge the atrocity. He captured Calcutta in 1757, forcing the native ruler responsible for the massacre, Surajah Dowlah, Nabob of Bengal, to sue for peace. Next he captured Chandernagore. When he discovered treacherous intentions in the Nabob, he abetted a conspiracy by which the Nabob's general, Meer Jaffier, was to become Nabob. Omichund, a Hindoo go-between who threatened to betray the conspiracy, Clive tricked by means of two treaties, one genuine, the other false. Thus gaining time, he thoroughly defeated the Nabob at the battle of Plassey, June, 1757. After this he made Meer Jaffier Nabob, who soon permitted Surajah Dowlah to be put to death. From Meer Jaffier Clive accepted a large present and the quitrent of the Company's territory. As soon as the news of the victory of Plassey reached the directors, they made Clive Governor of Bengal, 1758. In 1759 he defeated a Dutch armament that had entered the Hoogley to found a rival colony. He returned to England in 1760. A rich man, he was promptly raised to the Irish peerage as Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey. In 1764 he was chosen Knight of the Bath. Great abuses having arisen in the Indian administration, Lord Clive was sent out to make reforms.

He reached Bengal as Governor for the second time, May, 1765. His reforms in both the civil and the military service were far-reaching and drastic. By pensioning the Nabob of Bengal he secured to the Company the supreme power in the province. Out of a legacy from Meer Jaffier he established a fund for invalid officers of the Company. With health gone, he returned to England in 1767. There was a parliamentary inquiry into his acts, 1772-1773, marked by much bitterness but ending only in a gentle censure. Though honored by being installed as Knight of the Bath and Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, Clive became sick and gloomy, a victim of opium. He committed suicide, November, 1774.

The best accounts of his life and services to England will be found in the following books, at least one of which may be accessible to the reader who desires more detailed information: Malcolm, "Life of Robert, Lord Clive" (3 vols., London, 1836), the book on which Macaulay based his review article; Malleson, "Founders of the Indian Empire: Lord Clive" (London, 1882); Mill, "History of British India," Vol. III; Orme, "History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan from the year 1745" (London, 1803).

## SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF WARREN HASTINGS

In Sichel's biography of Richard B. Sheridan, published in 1909, this summarizing sentence follows a long discussion of the speeches which Sheridan made against Hastings during the impeachment trial: "Warren Hastings was a pioneer of empire, a great, ruling Englishman, and he did his duty according to his lights." It is worth while to try to sift out the conflicting statements concerning the deeds of this great pioneer of empire and see in brief just what he did during his long life. Born in Oxfordshire, December 6, 1732, he lived as a child with his grandfather in the rectory of Daylesford House, near Adlestrop, a few miles