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Marilyn Mcadams Sibley
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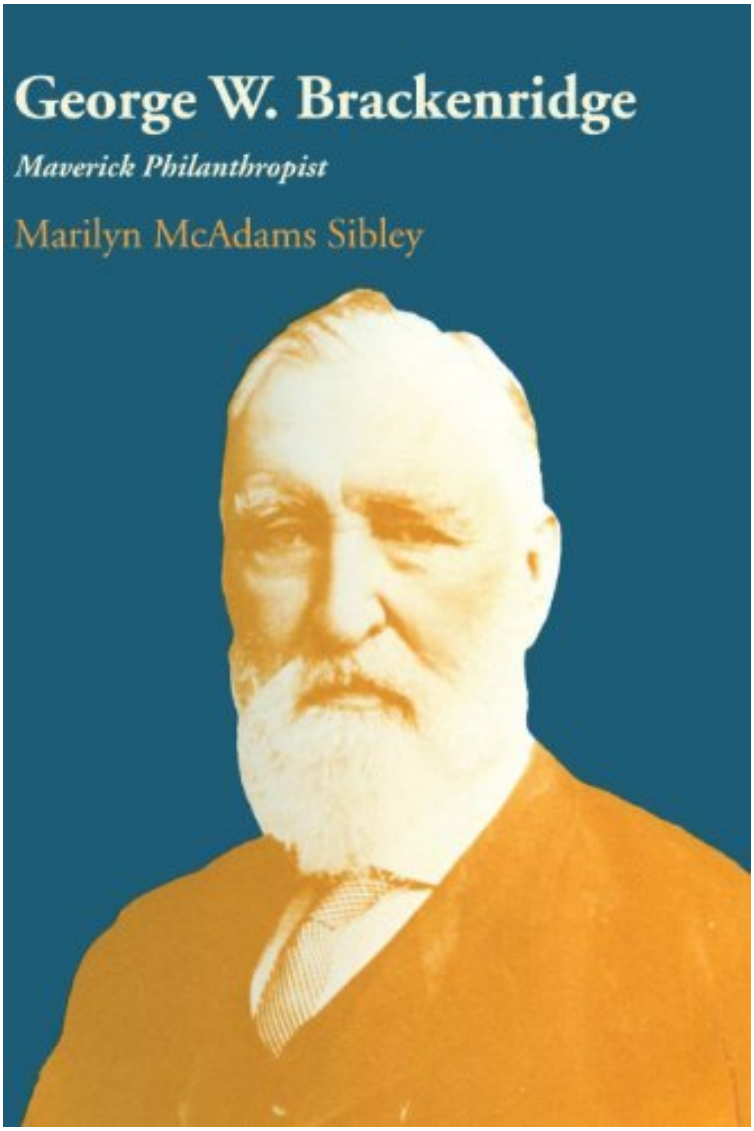

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Marilyn Mcadams Sibley : George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised George W. Brackenridge: Maverick Philanthropist:

George W. Brackenridge (1832ndash;1920) was a paradox to his fellow Texans. A Republican in a solidly Democratic state, a financier in a cattleman's country, a Prohibitionist in the goodtime town of San Antonio, he devoted his energies to making a fortune only to give it to philanthropic causes.Indiana born, Brackenridge came to Texas in 1853, but left the state during the Civil War to serve as U.S. Treasury agent and engage in the wartime cotton trade. Later he

settled in San Antonio, where he founded a bank and invested in railroads, utilities, and other enterprises.Some of Brackenridge's contemporaries never forgave him for his Civil War career, but others knew him as a public-spirited citizen, educator, and advocate of civil rights. He cared little for what others thought of him. Yet, he confided once in a rare interview that his fondest ambition was to leave the world a better place for his having lived in it. To this end, he gave generously of himself and his means.His best-known benefaction is Brackenridge Park, which he gave to the city of San Antonio, but most of his contributions were in the field of education. As regent of the University of Texas for more than twenty-five years, he gave the institution its first dormitory, a large tract of land in Austin, and innumerable smaller gifts. He also offered to underwrite the expenses of the University when Governor James E. Ferguson vetoed the appropriation bill for 1917ndash;1919.Other educational institutions to benefit from his largess were the public schools of San Antonio, a Negro college in Seguin, and the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. In addition, he assisted individual students, especially women, through scholarships and loans.Believing that the betterment of humanity lay in education, Brackenridge arranged for the continuation of his philanthropies. By his will he created the George W. Brackenridge Foundation, the first of its kind in Texas and one of the first in the United States.Marilyn McAdams Sibley's study of George W. Brackenridge is the first biography of an important and, for his time, unusual Texan. It presents new material concerning the Mexican cotton trade during the Civil War, on the beginnings of banking in Texas, and on higher education in Texas.

About the AuthorMarilyn McAdams Sibley (1921ndash;2006) was Professor of History at Houston Baptist University.