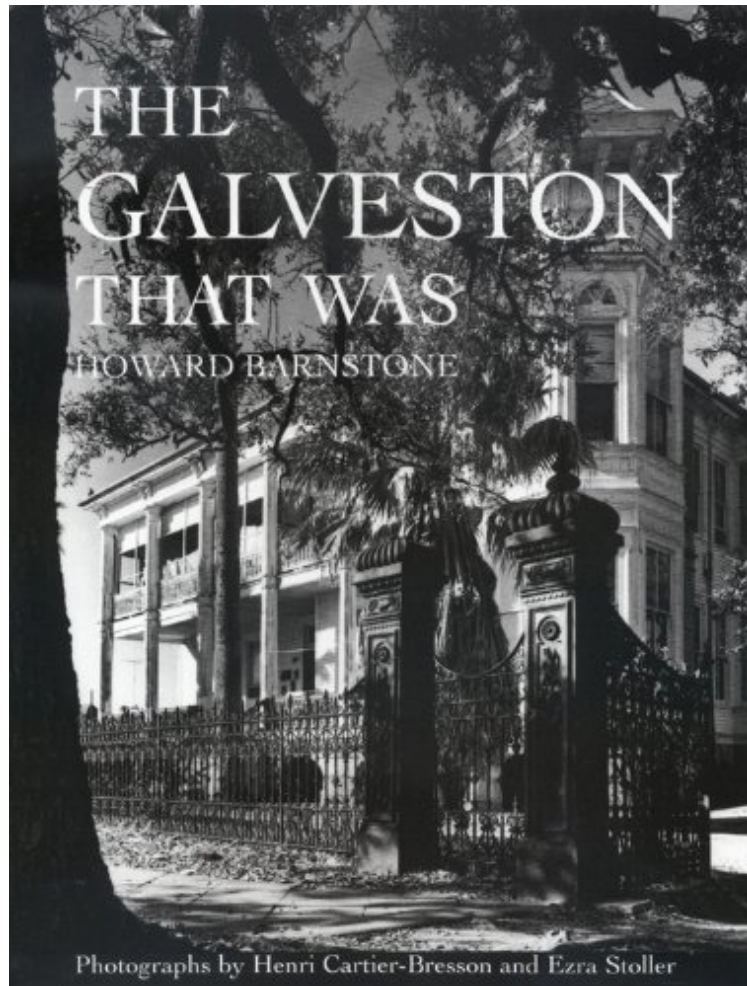


(Download free pdf) The Galveston That Was (Sara and John Lindsey Series in the Arts and Humanities)

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Howard Barnstone

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Galveston That Was (Sara and John Lindsey Series in the Arts and Humanities):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. "Ephemeral butterfly of the nineteenth century" and like unto "Miss Havisham" By CharA rich source of information about the history and architecture of some of the outstanding buildings of Galveston, a few of which no longer exist, this is also a source of fairly extensive information about the history of Galveston itself. It tells, for instance, why the city ceased to be a leading, great, wealthy seaport--and the answer was not because of the dredging of a ship channel to Houston. The book also includes descriptions of early citizens of Galveston, some drawn from old letters. Along with the photographs, original plans and drawings of

buildings and homes are reproduced here. While I agree to a certain extent with reviewers of the book who say they were disappointed in the photography and expected better things from such greats as Henri Cartier-Bresson and Ezra Stoller, I find memorable and enjoyable some of the photos which are evocative of that intriguingly decadent quality that used to be typical of the pre-restoration Galveston of the early 1960s. Cartier-Bresson seemingly loved and enjoyed Galveston but spent only a small amount of time--10 days--walking about the town and photographing it, and sometimes the sun was not right for pictures that he might have liked to take. Cartier-Bresson's work is supposed to be characterized by his studied attempts to capture "essences" in his photos, and I think he did sometimes capture the old city's essence, as of an exquisitely beautiful thing in a state of decay. He called Galveston a "strange and ephemeral butterfly of the 19th century." A quote from no lesser light than Edna Ferber serves as a literary "gateway" to the book. (Who would ever have thought that the great novelist knew anything about Galveston?): "Here in Galveston the humidity was like a clammy hand held over your face. Yet the city had a ghostly charm. The scent of the tangled gardens hung heavy on the muggy air. The houses, pockmarked by the salt mist and the sun and heat and mildew, seemed built of ashes. Here was a remnant of haunted beauty--gray, shrouded, crumbling. What did they resemble? Of what did this city remind me? Miss Havisham, of course. That was it. Miss Havisham the spectral bride in Great Expectations." ---From A Kind of Magic Everyone notices a certain similarity between Galveston and the Old Quarter of New Orleans. I think that both cities, especially when both were havens of decay that made for cheap rental quarters, partake of the atmosphere that one finds in some of Tennessee Williams' plays set in perhaps the 1940s and 1950s. Cartier-Bresson's photos of the old lady in the hallway of the Washington Hotel, pictures of the Vernacular Greek Houses on Avenue I, the Voelcker Residence, and the bordello on Post Office Street, all of these remind me of places that one might expect to find in a Williams' play. I like this book because I find the appearance of the old buildings of Galveston in decay to be somehow more interesting and affecting than the same buildings restored and nicely painted, a preference that I suppose could be labeled "romantic." The text informs us that: "In Galveston, as everywhere else, cast iron was, by 1856, an approved material for everything from steam engines to customhouses. Its predominance as a building material in the nineteenth century was founded on its fire-resistant qualities, comparative cheapness, simplicity of manufacture and tensile strength. It did not decline in use until the 1880s, when the steel frame was developed in Chicago." One can gaze upon some particularly beautiful exterior details of cast iron-work in this book. I especially love the pictures of the Block-Oppenheimer building, the Trueheart-Adriance building, the J. E. Wallis residence, and the Landes house. For me personally, some of these represent more beautiful examples of iron-work than one finds in New Orleans and there seems to be in Galveston a greater variety of iron-work creativity. Another great plus is that this book offers the opportunity to study photos of some of the work by the outstanding architect Nicholas J. Clayton. This is a high quality production of nearly 250 pages printed on glossy paper, footnoted and indexed. Despite some minimal disappointments, if you take time with it, the book proves to be exciting and excellent, a source of knowledge and beautiful things to study and enjoy. A book collector's treasure, I'd say. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting look at historic Galveston. By Sunshine As a former Galvestonian, I have found this book to be so interesting. I have learned more from it than I learned about these old fabulous houses when I lived there. All of the major buildings are discussed in detail. It has lots of great photographs and interesting histories. I think anyone who has visited or lived in Galveston would find it interesting. The hard but flexible cover is also an added bonus. I think it will stay in good condition for a long time. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting. Reminded me of times in my past ... By brazos bottom sonny Very interesting. Reminded me of times in my past. The book has been passed on to other family members.

In a 1963 novel, Edna Ferber compared the city of Galveston to Miss Havisham, the gray, mournful abandoned bride of Dickens Great Expectations. A thriving port city in the nineteenth century, Galveston suffered catastrophe in the twentieth as a deadly hurricane and shifting economics dropped a pall over its waterfront and Victorian mansions. Originally conceived as a requiem for the faded city, *The Galveston That Was* (developed by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and funded by Jean and Dominique de Menil) instead helped resurrect the city. Architect-author Howard Barnstone, renowned portrait photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson, and architect-photographer Ezra Stoller captured the soul of the city in *The Galveston That Was* and as a result, inspired a major and successful effort to restore Galveston's historic architectural treasures. Many of the buildings pictured in the book have since been restored, and the pace of demolition slowed dramatically after the book's initial publication. In 1994, Rice University Press, in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and George and Cynthia Mitchell, published an updated edition of the book. This new printing of the book, now under the Texas A&M University Press imprint, contains the text annotations and updates, plus Peter H. Brinks' afterword, that were added to the 1994 edition.

This coffee table sized book contains countless beautiful photos and the fascinating histories of the great buildings that made Galveston and Texas what they are today.--TopCountryMusic.com