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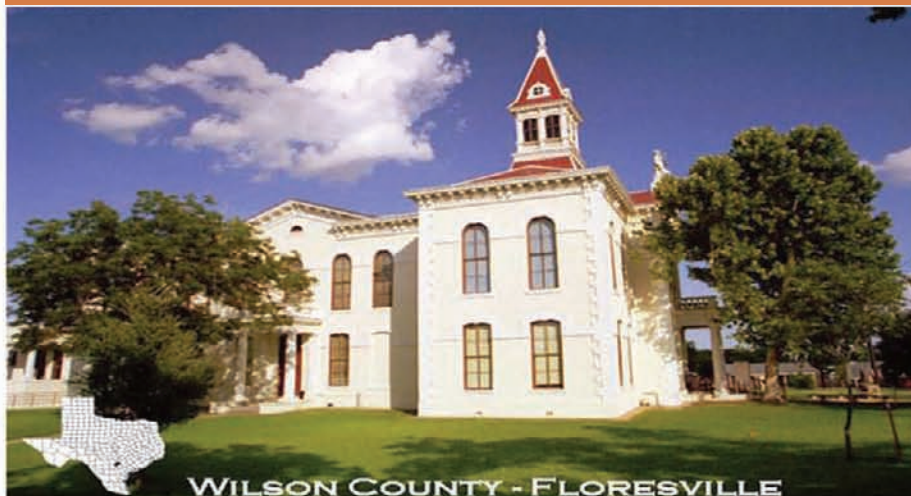
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Dewees

By Gene Maeckel

Dewees is a small farming community located in the southwestern area of Wilson County. It is centered around the ranch headquarters of the former J. E. Dewees Ranch.

J. E. Dewees was the first child of Thomas Dewees and was one of the partners of the Dewees Ranch. The original ranch encompassed approximately 100,000 acres and was well known during the longhorn trail driving days for the large number of cattle it trailed to the northern markets.

In the late 1800's as the railroads developed over Texas, and fencing closed the open range, and the price of longhorn beef diminished, ranching became unprofitable. To develop a source of income, the Dewees brothers started selling large tracts of the ranch to real estate investors. The developers then began to divide the property into farms and encouraged farmers from other regions of Texas to invest in these tracts as the cost per acre was much less than where they were living. The individuals who purchased these tracts of undeveloped land were mostly of German and Czech heritage. Not being encumbered by the old southern traditions of only planting cotton, they introduced the raising of grains, vegetables, fruit trees, poultry and livestock for meat production and dairy products. One of their early successful crops was onions which led to the more diversified farming approach Wilson County was wishing to develop at that time.

A post office was established in Dewees in 1906 with semi-weekly mail service between Dewees and Floresville. There was not a separate building for the post office but as was the practice at that time in small communities, the post office was located many times in the home of the postmaster. In

1911, postal service to Dewees was discontinued and the local region was served by the Floresville Post Office. During its period of operation, the Dewees Post Office had four different postmasters who served a population of approximately 400 people.

Central to the community was a rural general store. The store still exists today at its original site at the intersection of the Farm-to-Market Roads Nos. 541 and 1344. The enterprise replaced the

Dewees Ranch Commissary, which the Deweeses had provided for themselves, their ranch hands and families. The store was purchased in 1933 from a Mr. Ware by R. L. Eschenburg, Sr. and the Schneider brothers, Alfred and Eddie. These gentlemen also owned an adjacent cotton gin. The store and gin then was called Schneider's Store and Gin, a name which the store still retains today. The gin no longer

The community of Dewees is centered around the ranch headquarters of the former J. E. Dewees Ranch.



Ed Dewees House

central area has always been provided inside the store for people to sit and talk and if partners are available, to play cards or dominoes.

The cotton gin next to the store operated for a number of years until the 1950's, while cotton was providing a valuable cash crop for the area farmers. In later years it was dismantled and sold for salvage and scrap. During cotton ginning days the nearness of the adjacent store provided a convenient place for the folks waiting to have their cotton ginned to relax and talk with neighbors. The store management would bring the kids into the store for candy and ice cream. The children would also sit at the tables inside the store to color and draw pictures or rest. Meanwhile, their folks would wait outside in line with their wagons until their turn to move into the gin house to have their cotton processed.

At one time, across the road from the gin, there was an automotive repair business operated by a Mr. Pundt. He provided local repair service for cars and farm equipment during

the days of the Model T Fords. Cars were not unknown in the area as J. E. Dewees had the fourth car registered in Wilson County. General repair and maintenance for these earlier vehicles was a welcome service. In later years the business changed owners and became a welding repair facility.

A short distance from the store toward Poth is a cemetery providing burial sites for local families and residents. The cemetery is named Dewees because of its location on the original ranch site. It is not however, a Dewees family cemetery. During the earlier ranching days, the Dewees families resided in San Antonio and did not live on the ranch because of safety reasons and lack of conveniences.

On the northwest side of the intersection of FM Roads 541 and 1344 was the site of the Dewees School. The school only provided education for the elementary grades. For high school education, the students would usually attend school in Floresville. The original school was destroyed by fire and temporary quarters for classes were provided in the gin scale house, the store and local residences. Education of the children was always a very important necessity for the area families. The school was rebuilt and also provided a meeting place for local gatherings and church services.



Post Office - Dewees

exists except for the remains of the old cotton scales.

The store is a large one room structure offering general merchandise such as groceries, refreshments, ice cream, sandwiches, etc. In addition, it provides gas, oil and minor accessories for automobiles. Perhaps the most important contribution of the store to the community is that it served as a common point for neighbors, friends, and visitors to gather, meet, enjoy refreshments, discuss the local and national news and learn the latest area gossip. A

Dewees Ranch

By Steve Raabe

There were many big time cattlemen in the old trail driving days. Many of them, names like Goodnight, Loving, Slaughter and others, have had their story told. This is an attempt to tell the story of two men, John and Tom Dewees, who had a significant impact on the trail driving industry who, for reasons unknown, have not attracted the notoriety of others who played lesser roles.

The Men

John Oatman Dewees was born in Putman County, Indiana on December 30, 1828 and Tom Dewees was born in Dundee, Kane County, Illinois on June 2, 1843. Their parents were Thomas Dewees, Sr. and America Oatman Dewees.

In 1849, the family moved to Bastrop, Texas.

John O. and Tom Dewees both served in the Civil War, joining Company B, 32nd Texas Cavalry in 1862 and were discharged in 1865.

Tom Dewees moved to Oakville in Live Oak County after the Civil War and began buying land and cattle. In January 1868 he married Emily Katherine Tom. A son, John Edward (Ed), was born to them in December 1868. Emily Tom Dewees died shortly after giving birth to their second son, who also died shortly after being born, in April 1870. Tom Dewees married Kate Ham of Goliad County on October 15, 1872. They had seven children: Oscar Seth, Ola Elizabeth, Georgia Ira, Lilla, Charles Thomas, Claribel and Kate Graves. Tom Dewees died on June 12, 1905 and is buried in the Old Masonic Cemetery in San Antonio.

John O. Dewees moved to Atascosa County after the Civil War. On February 12, 1873 he married Anna Elizabeth Irvin of Guadalupe County. They had one daughter named Alice America Dewees. Alice married Hal Howard and had two sons. John Dewees died in 1896.

Throughout their ranching and trail driving careers, John O. and Tom Dewees maintained homes in San Antonio where they lived with their families. The ranch homes were used for periodic stays on the ranch and as headquarters for the ranch operations.

Tom Dewees lived on Presa Street just west of La Villita. Today the site of the house is a parking lot. Tom moved to a house on Augusta

Street in 1896 where he lived until he died. Today the site of this house is also a parking lot.

John O. Dewees lived on Goliad Street. Goliad Street was closed and included in the land where HemisFair was located. The location of the house was supposedly very near where the Tower of Americas stands today.

John and Tom Dewees, had a significant impact on the trail driving industry.

Around 1875, Tom Dewees built a south ranch house which was located near the San Antonio River near the present day community

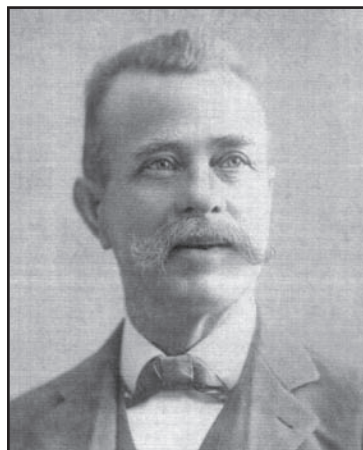
of Three Oaks. Tom Dewees built a north ranch house, located in the community of Dewees, around 1880 as a single story structure. Around 1909, J.E. (Ed) Dewees expanded the house and added the second floor.

John O. Dewees built his ranch house at the western edge of his ranch in Atascosa County. The house was located just north of FM 541.

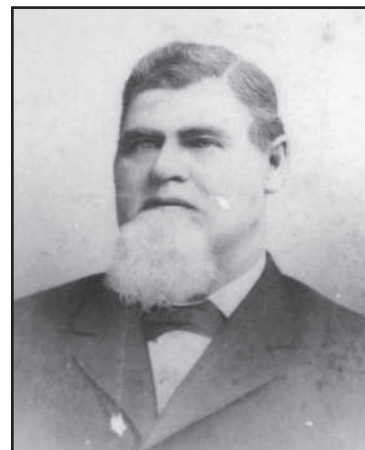
The Cattle

In 1869 Jim F. Ellison of Lockhart drove a herd of 750 cattle to Kansas and returned home with \$9,000. In 1870, John O. Dewees, who served in the confederate Army with Ellison, contacted Ellison and offered to sell him all the cattle he needed on credit with payment due when he delivered them to market. In 1871, John O. Dewees had two thousand cattle which he contracted to Ellison who located a buyer for them in Ellsworth, Kansas. The animals marketed at two and one-half cents per pound or some \$50,000 all told. Both Dewees and Ellison profited handsomely and decided to cement the relationship by forming a partnership, with Dewees supervising the procurement of the livestock and Ellison overseeing the actual transportation and sale of the animals. The exact nature of Tom Dewees' role in the partnership is not well defined. Many references only mention John O. Dewees as Ellison's partner while others include Tom Dewees.

John O. & Tom Dewees, in partnership with Jim F. Ellison, expanded their operation significantly. They averaged 20,000 to 40,000 head of cattle up the trail per year. In 1874 they drove 100,000 head of cattle up the trail. The company, between 1871 and 1882, drove no fewer than 400,000 head of livestock to northern railheads and ranges. The original partnership lasted until 1877 when other partners joined the



Thomas Dewees



John Dewees

firm and by 1879 it became one of the biggest partnerships up to that time.

In 1875, four transportation agents (Eugene B. Millet, Seth Mabry, John O. Dewees and James F. Ellison) owned or controlled an estimated two-thirds of the 150,000 cattle driven from Texas that year.

The company, with different partners at various times in its existence, was known throughout the range cattle kingdom simply as "Ellison and Dewees".

There is a model of a chuck wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen at the Trail Drivers Museum, which is located next to the Witte Museum in San Antonio. The oxen are branded on one side with Ab Blocker's brand and on the other side with Ellison and Dewees' road brand "Y".

Not very many stories about Ellison and Dewees are available. One story referenced in several books tells, in 1877, Ellison and Dewees had fifteen thousand cattle on the trail, in six herds scattered a few miles apart. Each herd had a boss, a wagon, two yokes of oxen and forty horses. One of the herds was bossed by Nat P. Ellison, Jim Ellison's brother. He had eight cowboys, a wrangler and a Negro cook. The herd of 2,600 cattle, thin after a dry, cold winter, left the pastures near Lockhart early in April. The cattle stampeded one night on Maze Prairie, near Onion Creek, but were recovered before long. They had to swim the Colorado River but came into fine grazing along the Trinity River near Fort Worth. The outfit found the Red River too swollen to cross and had to wait. When the herd was camped on Panther Creek near the Red River, some of the men spotted a fat yearling that was unbranded. They knocked it in the head, skinned it and took it to camp. The cook stretched a lariat from the bow of the chuck wagon to a tree

and hung the fresh beef. Coming to the wagon at midnight, the time when the bedded herd was restless, a cowboy saw a panther crouched on the wagon double tree looking up at the beef. He instinctively jerked out his .45 pistol and fired. The air-splitting roar of the gun boomed up and down the river and put the herd on the move. Several hundred of the cattle broke away and ran for five miles. This stampede excited all the herds for miles and the men in all the outfits were in the saddle the rest of the night.

The Western Trail also known as the Fort Griffin and Dodge City Trail was pioneered in 1876 by D. S. Combs with a herd belonging to Ellison and Dewees.

The Land

The Dewees brothers started investing their profits from their trail driving business in land.

John O. & Tom Dewees bought their first tract of land totaling 3840 acres in 1870 on the Borrego Creek in Atascosa and Wilson Counties.

In 1875 Tom Dewees bought the Gaspar Flores Survey from the heirs of William Mayes for \$20,593 or \$0.75 per acre. It was six leagues which is approximately 27,000 acres.

In 1879 the Tom Dewees built 211 miles of plank fence around a portion of the ranch. The fence has been reported to be made of either two planks or three planks. The lumber was hauled from Indianola.

By December 1881, John O. & Tom Dewees had accumulated 51,427 acres of land in Wilson, Karnes and Atascosa Counties. On Dec. 1, 1881, John O. & Tom Dewees granted an undivided 1/3 interest in their land to their banker James T. Thornton for \$29,805. After that transaction, the land holding operation was known as Dewees and Company.

The Company bought land until

July 19, 1884. The ranch contained 90,680 acres in Wilson, Karnes and Atascosa Counties. At that time the ranch was partitioned with Jim Thornton receiving 1/3 of the ranch (30,548 acres) and John O. & Tom Dewees receiving 2/3 of the ranch (60,132 acres). John O. & Tom Dewees immediately sold Jim Thornton another 10,000 acres for \$30,000. This left Jim Thornton with 40,548 acres and the Dewees brothers with 50,132 acres.

John O. & Tom Dewees leased Jim Thornton's ranch for one year. They also bought an additional 18,934 acres during 1884-1885.

On July 7, 1885, John O. & Tom Dewees divided their share of the ranch which had grown to 69,066 acres. Each brother received 34,533 acres in the partition. John O. and Tom Dewees sold and traded land between them leaving John O. Dewees with 24,152 acres and Tom Dewees with 45,192 acres.

In 1893 John O. Dewees sold several thousand acres of land in Tordia, Atascosa County to the Mitchell Brothers to start the breakup of the John O. Dewees Ranch. After John O. Dewees' death in 1896, the ranch was left to his wife, Annie Dewees,

and his only child, Alice Dewees Howard. All the land had left family ownership by 1920.

In 1900 Tom Dewees sold approximately 7,900 acres for \$4.50 per acre to Dilworth and Green from Gonzales County to start the breakup of the Tom Dewees Ranch. Dilworth and Green subdivided the land and sold it to German and Czech farmers from Lavaca and Comal counties for \$7.50 per acre. Soon thereafter, Dilworth, Green and other developers bought additional land to be subdivided. Upon the death of Tom Dewees on June 12, 1905, his heirs received the remainder of the ranch which still contained over 19,000 acres.

The farmers who purchased the land after the breakup of the Dewees Ranch developed several communities which were usually centered around a country school, store, cotton gin or shooting club. There were thirteen country schools, five cotton gins, four country stores, one church, one shooting club and two dance halls. Most of these businesses or activities remained active up to the 1950's, when the drought caused many people to move to town in order to make a living.



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*Congratulations to the Citizens of Wilson County
on 150 Years of Continuous Growth.*

Graytown

By Gene Maeckel

Graytown is one of the earliest settled areas in Wilson County. It is

located on the west side of the San Antonio River just downstream of the junction of the San Antonio River and the Medina River, very close to the Wilson-Bexar County boundary.

The residents living in this part of the San Antonio River valley were associated primarily with the ranching environment. These individuals were mostly vaqueros and ranch owners.

The town site is situated on a small rise on the western bank of the San Antonio River initially surrounded by massive live oaks and mesquite trees. The western side of the town was bounded by the Alamo-La Bahia Road. Just to the south of the town was the Maldonado River Crossing.

Fording the river at this site was convenient because there were gentle descents on both sides of the river. Also located in the area at a later time was a ferry operated by Mr. Seguin.

Graytown is sited in the Mariano Seguin land grant. Simona Fernandez Seguin inherited this property from her mother, Margarita Seguin. Simona Fernandez Seguin was married to James Gray, a Scottish immigrant. James Gray surveyed a portion of this grant to develop a town site which was originally called Santiago but changed later to Graytown to honor the developer's name.

A plaza was the centerpoint of the community. It bordered the Alamo-Bahia Road on the west and the Catholic church on the east. The other two sides of the plaza were sites for local businesses serving the area. Graytown became a flourishing community and a center of activity in the trade and social life of the surrounding ranches.

On the north and south sides of the plaza there were various stores, shops and saloons. Included was a school, a post office and offices for a judge and

a sheriff. Graytown, being located in the midst of thriving ranches, became a gathering place for the cowboys and ranchers who generally were descendants of

the first settlers of the Bexar area. Included in the local population were a number of individuals who were brought into the area at the request of James Gray

to help develop the town. These included workers and renters. As this became the centerpoint of the local ranches, it also became a gathering point for herds of longhorns to be driven up the trails to northern markets.

Graytown during its flourishing days was the religious, social and commercial center south of San Antonio. It was at the crossroads of travel routes from San Antonio to La Bahia (Goliad), San Patricio, Matamoras, Laredo, and other points south and west. Crossing the river at this point provided a choice of going to the Alamo Presidio on the east side of Bexar or the Villa de Bexar on the west. From areas as far away as thirty miles people would come to participate in the religious festivals and to receive the consolations of religion. This access by roads and trails to Graytown helped the Catholic church become the religious center of the area. It served people in Cañada Verde, Elmendorf, Lodi, Calaveras, Parita, Las Islitas, El Salado, Los Arroyos, Chupaderas, and Seguin.

By far the Catholic church became the outstanding factor in the growth and development of Graytown. Without it, it might never have become more than just an ambitious venture for James Gray. On April 1, 1854 the Right Rev. J.M. Odin, Vicar Apostolic of Galveston, established the church here as the parish church for the surrounding territory. The Rev. Casimiro Raymond, a Frenchman, was assigned as the parish priest to serve the hundreds of scattered Catholics living on the ranches and small communities in the vicinity. To establish the physical church,

James Gray Sr. and his wife provided property at the east end of the plaza for a church and a residence for the priest. The church was first named St. James after James Gray, the originator of the town and donor of the church property. In 1877 the church was renamed as the Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This occurred because the great number of Mexican Catholics in the parish had a great devotion to the national patroness of Mexico. They requested a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe be placed in the church. A temporary substitute priest who came from Mexico learned of the request and carried with him from Mexico such a picture and had it solemnly erected in the church by the Right Rev. Antony D. Pellicer, first Bishop of San Antonio. Slowly the official church title of St. James fell by the wayside and the church became known as Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe during its existence was blessed with one extraordinary French priest named Rev. Emilio Chapolard, who served here for 50 years. One of the first improvements he made to the church was the purchase of a bell. The bell was cast by the West Troy Bell Foundry and shipped by water to Port Lavaca, Texas. From there it was brought overland to Graytown by a mule-drawn wooden wagon. The priest later bought an organ for the church and erected the way of the cross. As a great lover of music, he established a choir in his church, plus choirs in the adjacent mission churches.

During prosperous times, the town had a post office, a school, and various stores and shops, plus a number of residences. One residence of note was the spacious homestead of James Gray located at the west end of the plaza. The town reached a peak population of 369 in 1900. In its time, it also had a sheriff and a judge, with James Gray Jr. holding these positions. He also served as the local postmaster. For many years, the post office was the central gathering place for the nearby ranchers and cowboys. A school opened in 1896 with an enrollment of sixty-four students.

After 1900, the community began to decline when many of its residents began to move to Elmendorf. Elmendorf was located nearby on the railroad connecting San Antonio to the Gulf Coast, and several industries had started operations there providing employment. The Catholic Church also relocated to Elmendorf depriving the Graytown community of its most important involvement with the nearby church missions. Gone was the uninterrupted offering of the Holy Mass, the awe-inspiring ceremonies of Holy Week, the feast to Our Lady of Guadalupe and the solemn procession in honor of St. Isidor, the patron saint of the farmers. The post office closed in 1912 and after the end of World War II, the school and the stores were closed.

Graytown exists today only as a location on the maps, as all the activities in the town have ended, leaving only the cemetery, a few ruins and memories.

Graytown during its flourishing days was the religious, social and commercial center south of San Antonio.

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Parish Church of the Territory

By Aurelia Flores Deuvall, Suzanne Deuvall, William R. (Bobby) Deuvall, Jr., and Peggy Ann Rodriguez

Out on the fertile ranches along the San Antonio River, in Northwestern Wilson County, just below the point where the Medina River joins the crystal waters of the San Antonio River, is situated the lonely and forsaken community called Graytown. High up on the southern bank of the river surrounded by massive oaks and cultivated mesquites extends a plaza divided on its southern side by the Old Corpus Christi Road, and on its northern side by the old church of Our Lady of Guadalupe. On the other two sides of the plaza are sites where prosperous community stores once did a thriving business. So wrote the Rev. John Kathrein, C.Ss.R. pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church on April 1, 1929.

One hundred and fifty two years ago the religious spirit of the people living in the San Antonio River valley was reawakened by the apostolic visit of the Right Rev. J.M. Odin, Vicar Apostolic of Galveston, Texas. Seeing hundreds and hundreds of scattered Catholics living on the ranches and in small communities without the consolation of religion, he promised to send a parish priest in answer to their petitions. Accordingly in 1854 the Rev. Emilio Chapolard was sent to the locality of Graytown and Las Islitas. Thus he established a church and dignified it by the title of parish church of the territory between the Medina and the Cibolo Rivers.

The most renowned pastor was Rev. Emilio Chapolard, a native of France. "Padre Emilio," as he was known, read his first Holy Mass in the Graytown Church on Easter Sunday in 1865. One of his first improvements was to purchase a suitable bell. The bell was cast by the West Troy Bell Foundry and shipped to Port Lavaca, Texas.

In 1977, a bolt of lightning struck the bell and the Graytown Church burned to the ground.

It was brought overland by Juan Manuel Rodriguez and Ignacio Sotelo by horse and wagon.

The exact date of the founding of the community cannot be determined but its importance dates from April 1, 1854. Testimony has been given by two brothers, Macario Tarin (Jr.) and his brother Juan S. Tarin, who at the time of the Diamond Jubilee were 78 and 63, respectively. They testified that the church was completed when Macario (Jr.) was three years old and that they had always worshiped there and were married in the church.

Families already living in the community were the Tarin, Rodriguez, Seguin, Flores, Casanova and Arocha families. Some were the descendants of the Canary Islanders who colonized San Antonio. Graytown also has ties to Erastus "Deaf" Smith, the famous Texas scout who fought in the battles of San Jacinto, Concepcion and the Storming at Bexar. He was also responsible for blowing up the Vincent's Bridge which delayed the Mexican Army from arriving at San Jacinto. Smith's daughter Gertrudes married Macario Tarin (Sr.). Seven generations later, their families still live on the same ranch in Graytown.

In 1921, the Redemptorists Fathers took over guardianship of the Graytown Church and also the other missions of Cañada Verde, Saspamco and Elmen-dorf. In 1962, the Augustinian Fathers from Spain took over these parishes.

The Graytown Church was abandoned by the Augustinian fathers on order from the Archbishop. It was in the process of being saved by a group of devout parishioners, current and former residents. Then as if by an act of God, one afternoon in the spring of 1977, a small cloud formed, the rains came, the sun was shining and a bolt of lightning struck the bell and the Graytown Church burned to the ground.



Graytown Cemetery



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James Gray

1815-1884

By Nora McMillan

James W. Gray, merchant and manufacturer of tin ware, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on November 9, 1815. As a result of his service in the battle of San Jacinto, he received 640 acres of land from the Republic of Texas. Gray applied for military pay for services rendered "against the hostile Indians" in 1840 and was listed as a captain, serving in the Bexar County, 30th Brigade, Frontier Regiment, Texas State Troops, in 1862-3.

Gray married Simona Seguin, the daughter of Ermeregildo Seguin, in San Fernando Church on June 16, 1841. Conversely, she is listed as Maria Simona Carlota Fernandez-Rodriguez in the Somos Primos website and her parents as Gervacio Fernandez and Maria de Jesus Rodriguez Herrera. Mariano Seguin was listed as her stepfather with possible adoption by Seguin.

Nonetheless, Simona Seguin inherited a portion of the original Mariano Seguin grant whereupon

her husband developed the town of Graytown in 1850. Located on the west side of the San Antonio River, it was situated in the midst of some prosperous ranches and adjacent to the older settlement of "Las Islitas," located at the confluence of the Medina and San Antonio rivers.

After an apostolic visit, the Right Reverend J. M. Odin, Vicar Apostolic of Galveston, promised to send a parish priest to the area. In 1854, the Rev. Casimiro Raymond, a Frenchman, was sent. The church and rectory, built "on the high west bank of the San Antonio River and fac[ing] the old Corpus Christi Road," was originally called St. James but by 1877 had been renamed Our Lady of Guadalupe. Graytown became "...the religious, social and commercial center south of San Antonio."

Vicente Carvajal's trail rides started at Graytown. Several saloons were recruiting sites for cowboys. A ferry became an important economic factor for the small town, although the earliest venture was attributed to a Mr.

Seguin.

In 1853, Gray petitioned for a license to operate a ferry at "Gray's Rancho" at the old "Maldonado crossing." The ferry was authorized in 1854 and a list of submitted tolls approved.

Several years later (1878) an application for a new road near Graytown, crossing the river about 500 yards below the ferry, was submitted to Commissioners Court. The road probably marked the demise of the ferry.

Interestingly, the same article revealed "...the sale by the Sheriff of the remnant of James Gray's stock of goods to satisfy a judgment in favor of the legendary madam, Mrs. [Fannie] Porter of San Antonio. The sale was lively, the articles bringing good prices, and was attended by no small amount of fun and amusement, caused by competition, curiosity, etc."

Surrounding the large square were the businesses of Messrs. Gillet, Menger, Pradel that stood side by side with the sheriff's office, the post office and the school. The Grays' homestead

was located on the west side of the square. James W. Gray "was the most prominent man of the growing village," serving as justice of the peace, sheriff and postmaster. Gray served as postmaster from 1861 to 1866, coinciding with Texas' secession from the Union.

A boundary change placed Graytown in Wilson County in 1869. Its population peaked in 1900 with 369 residents but many moved to nearby Elmendorf when the railroad bypassed Graytown. The post office closed in 1912, but the town still had a school, a store, and a church in the mid-1930s. The school and store closed after World War II and by the early 1990s Graytown's population was about 64. The population remained the same in the 2000 census.

In 1873, Gray and his family moved to Lodi where Gray established a blacksmith shop and a bar. He joined a community rich in diversity. James W. Gray died on September 12, 1884, and was buried in the Floresville City Cemetery.



RICHTER



Johann Richter and his family immigrated to Texas in 1855 from Prussia. This region is now in Poland, called Silesia. They settled in Yorktown after landing in Indianola. Johann lost his wife en route to America and three years later married for the second time and had a large family.

Sometime in the 1870s, the family moved to Wilson County and settled three miles west of Stockdale, where he purchased

large tracts of land on either side of the Cibolo Creek. The sons of Johann purchased more land in the area to the north. The family was heavily involved in agricultural pursuits.

After a storm destroyed the Catholic Church in Stockdale in 1886, Johann donated three acres of land for the second St. Mary's Church on his property. Vincent Richter donated one acre for the Richter Cemetery. The

church remained here until 1951 when it was moved to Stockdale. A community school was built across the railroad track from the school. This little area early on was known as Prairie Lea, but later changed to the Richter Community.

There are many descendants of Johann Richter living in Wilson County and in other parts of the United States in many varied professions.

Congratulations Wilson County on your Sesquicentennial!

The Richter Family in Wilson County

Calaveras

By Col. Jesse Perez

Calaveras thrived as a brick manufacturing community from 1887 through 1925. Up to about 1882 or 1885 depending on the source, the name of the community was changed from Wright to Calaveras. In the late 1880's, the brick of superior quality came from Calaveras County, California. N. Mackey, W.S. Dickey and others in the brick making business knew of the Calaveras County brick. A smart entrepreneur like Mr. Mackey would want his bricks to be known as Calaveras brick. The consensus of the group of current Calaveras residents that meet regularly at Albert Gamez's engine repair shop is that the origin of the name of the community is unknown. However, Jr. Beyer recalled the talk about three skeletons being uncovered in the early years of Calaveras. Then as now the collective wisdom was to leave well enough alone in reference to the skeletons. The belief of the group is that the skeletons had no bearing on the name of the community.

N. Mackey started buying land in and around Calaveras before the arrival of San Antonio Aransas Pass Railroad in 1886. Jose Cassiani sold land east of the San Antonio River to Mackey. The land in the area was full of clay deposits suitable for making bricks. In an ongoing

study of the area by local historians Allen and Regina Kosub, they state that Mackey recognized the value of the land with its clay deposits, sand, water, and plentiful wood for fuel. The

clay around Calaveras consisted of a third sand. This made the clay easier to press into bricks but limited the quality. The University of Texas published

a scientific bulletin in 1908 entitled The Clays of Texas by Professor Heinrich Ries. Dr. Ries did an extensive study of clay deposits throughout Texas. He said the following about Calaveras clay: "owing to its very sandy characteristics some difficulty has been experienced in getting enough pressure to make a solid brick. While the brick is adapted to the manufacture of common and pressed brick, it is doubtful it could be used for making any higher grade of ware." Nonetheless, the making of bricks was an economic boon for Calaveras. The Mackey Brick and Tile Company made millions of brick and operated until 1925. According to Allen Kosub much of the brick was used in the interior of buildings in San Antonio and shipped throughout the western part of the United States.

The brick factory brought more people and other businesses to the area. Mostly Mexican-Americans worked and lived in and around the factory. Calaveras, like Saspamco, was a

company town. The factory had a mercantile store and even issued its own coins redeemable in the store. Two other brick factories existed in the area but little is known about their owners. Other stores, a saloon and a school were built. The community had a post office, a railroad depot and even recorded a plat in the Wilson County Courthouse. In the mid 1900's, the county built a magnificent Warren polygonal bridge over the San Antonio River. The bridge still sits in its original location, a silent reminder of years past. One of the original store buildings also stands. This building was a store, a gas station, a bar owned by the Tackitt family and a restaurant. All of this activity supported the residents of Calaveras. After the closing of the Mackey factory in 1925, the business activity started declining. This included the closing of the depot and post office.

The community survived with many people staying on. Theo Johns bought the plant manag-

er's house in the early 1900's. The house has been in the Johns family ever since. Currently, Edwin and Rosie Johns live there. Lifelong resident Albert Gamez runs an engine repair shop attached to his house. His shop is a favorite gathering place for many Calaveras residents. The Floresville Independent School District is building a new elementary school at the corner of FM 775 and County Road 128. Andy McBride and partners are developing a subdivision known as Carrizo Ranch. Jamie Buchhorn has a pool cleaning business and accessory store. Footprints Day Care has just opened across from the new school. The Carvajal family has opened Aurelia's Mexican Café in the old Calaveras grocery store building. The San Antonio River Authority has purchased land on the east side of the river to build a public park. The ghosts of the old skeletons may be gone but the spirit of Calaveras lives on. The future is bright for the community.

In the late 1880's, the brick of superior quality came from Calaveras County, California, which brought about the naming of the town.



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Cañada Verde

By Monica K. Flores

"In the 1830's, Don (Spanish title of aristocracy) Francisco Flores De Abrego established a large hacienda about six miles from the present town of Floresville. Don Francisco's ancestors came from Asturias in Northern Spain during the early 1700's and settled in Saltillo, Mexico. ... Some family members later moved northward settling on both sides of the San Antonio River near ...Floresville, where they built homes close to each other for mutual protection from the Indians."

"The Yndo and Flores families of Floresville... (see abbreviated history of Flores De Abrego Family)... were closely related by marriage down through the generations since

first they came and established their homes, two in a chain of Habitores along the San Antonio River."

"Most of the land grants from Floresville to the San Antonio River, the life-giving source of water in the arid Texas climate, are still occupied by the descendants of the original grant holders. The road that connects the

land-grant ranches following the river's course was called EL CAMINO REAL, 'The Kings Highway,' although its condition in those early years hardly deserved such distinguished recognition. It was however, from its beginning the principal road which connected this area with the Gulf Coast and the port of Indianola."

"The Yndo Ranch was one of the land-grant establishments. Don Manuel de Yndo built his

first home near the river on the Calaveras Road. Later, in 1833, he established his ranch on the highest elevation after having been forced by a flood to move away from the river.

Through sales and donations of small parcels of his land to employees, Miquel Yndo, the only son of Manuel Yndo, who inherited the ranch in 1851, created the township of Cañada Verde by surrounding his home with a church, a schoolhouse, a country store and the houses and establishments of the families of his servants and workers. From the porch of this home, one can look down the foot of the hill, and see the beautiful Yndo Ranch Park with its majestic oaks. This parcel of land was inherited by Herminia (Minnie) Yndo (daughter of Manuel Leon Yndo), and wife of I. D. Flores Sr. (son of Antonio Serapio Flores married to Ursula Ximinez) in the 1930's."

"Yndo Ranch Park was a resting spot for the early pioneers in covered wagons traveling the historic trails. The mighty oaks, hanging moss, and natural springs flowing through the land offered much life and serenity to many. Pecan orchards and sugar cane were among common crops in this area.

Some of the biggest celebrations in the area were held at the Yndo Park Ranch. Ancestors of the Flores/Yndo Family, the late Mr. & Mrs. I. D. Flores Sr. (wife-Herminia Yndo), frequently held weekend dances built on the fertile ranch land, offering entertainment as well as employment for many around.

Besides social activity and employment, the Flores/Yndo

Family donated land for a one-room schoolhouse, church, and part of a community cemetery. The front steps to the schoolhouse can still be seen at the front entrance to the present-day Yndo Park Ranch." "Remembrances of Fausto Toscano and his wife Rose were teachers in this small one-room school which has been related to have been divided into Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades," along with the cemetery that is still in existence in Cañada Verde. "I. D. Flores, Sr. preceded his wife in death in 1961. Upon the death of Herminia Yndo Flores in 1984, Ignacio Deciderio (I.D.) and Mattye Sue Le Blanc Flores assumed their generational ownership of Yndo Park Ranch. I. D. Jr. continued the cattle operation and ranching while being sole proprietor of the I. D. Flores Rexall Drug Store in Floresville, Texas. Upon his death in 2008, Yndo Park Ranch was bequeathed to his children, Ignacio Deciderio (I.D.) Flores III, Carol Ann Flores, Susan Kay Flores Crissy and Monica Kay Flores."

Remnants of an old building in Cañada Verde can still be seen which at one time displayed a date of 1886 on the front of the building. One local resident remembers stories of it being a grocery store owned by a French family while close by was a meat market with a drive-through for wagons.

Other businesses included a small grocery store formerly owned by Calixtro Garcia and beverage locations. Still in existence today are several cemeteries, beverage businesses, and a fire station, along with many residences.

Most of the land grants from Floresville to the San Antonio River, are still occupied by the descendants of the original grant holders.

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Saspamco

By Col. Jesse Perez, Commissioner Albert Gamez Jr., and Raymond Gutierrez

The advent of the San Antonio Aransas Pass Railroad in the late 1880's in the northwest corner of Wilson County led to the creation of SASPAMCO. Longtime residents of the area Elisandro De Los Santos and Lorenzo Gonzales sold property to the SAAP Railroad. Looking at the contract, people say they sold the land for a few dollars. However, it has always been standard practice to list the sale price for a dollar or as much as ten dollars. In reality, the owners sold the land for a profit. Elisandro De Los Santos and Lorenzo Gonzales played a prominent role in the development of the community of SASPAMCO. The name of the town is all caps because it is really an acronym for the San Antonio Sewer Pipe and Manufacturing Company, thus SASPAMCO.

In 1894 (some say 1901, others 1903, and some of the oldtimers of SASPAMCO say as early as 1887), W.S. Dickey built the first sewer clay pipe plant in the area. The abundance of five types of clay, water and the new rail line made the building of the sewer clay pipe company possible. The plant originally was made of wood with the kilns lined up outside. This did not bode well for the company as the plant burned down twice in the early 1900's. The owners built the brick plant in 1907 and lasted until 1971 when the new plant was put into operation. You can still see the new and old plant from U.S. 181 as you enter Wilson County from San Antonio.

In its heyday, the plant produced over 12,000 pieces of pipe daily and employed over 350 employees. The finished pipe was transported all over the country and into Mexico. The employees came from all over the area. Most of the workers were Mexican-Americans from Wilson and southern Bexar counties. A bus from the plant came into Floresville in the '30s and '40s to pick up the workers. The work in the plant was hard, hot and physically demanding. The temperature hovered over 110 degrees in and around the ovens and

drying rooms. The environment in the plant resembled a steam bath. Pictures of the workers in the plant demonstrate a group of lean and sinewy men. Conditions in the plant made it difficult for women to be hired. Exception to this was

made during World War II when many of the men joined or were drafted into the military. The pay at the plant was not the best but for the time it was good and steady. Today

the plant is still operational but only has 5 part time workers and a limited production line.

SASPAMCO was a company town. The company built houses around the plant for the workers and charged rent according to size. A two-bedroom house cost \$2.50 a month rent and \$5.00 for a three-bedroom. The houses were made of wood and were of simple design and construction. The company provided water supplied from a water tank delivered by donkey-pulled wagons. Natural gas was also free. A mercantile company store supplied most of the dry goods and groceries to the workers that lived in SASPAMCO. The company issued coins redeemable in the store. The mercantile store closed its doors in the early 1970's. The company built a community hall for the workers. This was equipped with game tables, benches, a kitchen and in the late '40s, a television set for the residents. The company bought land from Elisandro De Los Santos to create a company cemetery. The cemetery could be used for the burial of the workers and their family members.

Apart from the company mercantile store, the town had two barber shops, a dairy, a cotton gin, three general stores that sold everything, two cantinas, a two-story hotel by the railroad depot and a Catholic church. A school dating back to the 1920's served the children from 1st through 12th grade. The school closed in the late 1960's. Lorenzo Gonzales owned one of the biggest grocery stores in the town and a dance hall. Today the memories of SASPAMCO, the town and plant lives on through its 440 residents, a proud, resilient and close-knit group of families.

SASPAMCO is an acronym for the San Antonio Sewer Pipe and Manufacturing Company.



Aerial view - Saspamco



Jan Hartl

County Treasurer

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MYERS FAMILY

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In May 1951, Joe and Helen Myers moved to Stockdale, Texas from Aransas Pass with their two young daughters. The family purchased the Salmon Funeral Home, which briefly was known as Salmon-Myers Funeral Home before finally becoming Myers Funeral Home. It was remodeled in 1961 and 1980. Among other businesses, the Myers also established Stockdale Memorials in 1964 — now known as Stockdale Monument Company.



The Myers were involved in the Stockdale Chamber of Commerce and the Stockdale Watermelon Jubilee for many years. Joe Myers was also appointed by Gov. John B. Connally to the State Board of Morticians in 1965. He was elected to serve as president of that board.



Joe & Helen's daughters, Janell & Susan, still call Stockdale home. Janell married John Lester Akin, whose family are long time residents of Wilson County. Susan married Michael Coon, who is a descendant of the McMains and Wright families, buried in the Fairview Cemetery in Wilson County.



After Michael's completion of service in the U.S. Air Force and graduation from mortuary college, he & Susan came back to serve in the family businesses. Michael worked alongside his father-in-law in the funeral home, ambulance service and monument company.

During the early 1970's, the Myers Funeral Home provided ambulance service to all of Wilson County. When the Stockdale Volunteer Ambulance Service was established in 1975, Joe and Mike were among the first class of Certified EMT's and served as volunteers for many years (Joe's other son-in-law, Johnny, was also a founding member of the volunteer ambulance service). Both Joe & Mike also served on the Stockdale ISD Board, each serving as President during their respective terms.

The Myers grandchildren, Scott & Stephanie Akin and Kristina & Kathryn Coon, learned much about the art of service to the community from Joe and Helen, as well as their parents.



After the death of Joe Myers in May 1999, Myers Funeral Home was sold to Troy and Janet Finch and became Finch Funeral Chapel.

Stockdale Monument Company — as it has been known since 1971 at its current location — is still owned and operated by the Myers Family. Michael & Susan Coon and Helen Myers, assisted by the Coon's daughters, Kristina Harrell and Kathryn McDaniel, have continued the legacy of quality, sensitive service to the people of Wilson County.



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12th Generation

Ignacio Deciderio Flores Jr. (I. D. Flores Jr.)
& Mattye Sue Le Blanc Flores

13th Generation

Ignacio Deciderio Flores III (I. D. Flores III)
& Marion Thomas Flores
Carol Ann Flores
Susan Kay Flores Crissy
Monica Kay Flores

14th Generation

Nicole Kay Crissy
Angela Grace Crissy
Whidden Lee Flores

Camp Ranch

By Viola Henke

This area located approximately three miles west of Floresville was one of the large ranches in Wilson County during the 1800's cattle trail-driving times. Ranching at that time dominated the Wilson County economy. In addition to cattle ranching in general, these ranches also served as a gathering point of small herds to create larger herds to trail up north.

In 1731, some of the meadow land along the San Antonio River was owned by Mission Espada. The ranch headquarters was the compound of Rancho de las Cabras. For the care of the souls of the herdsmen, a chapel was built at the compound. After secularization of the missions in 1794, some of the land here was owned by Ignacio Calvillo. His Rancho Paso de las Mujeres was inherited by Calvillo's flamboyant daughter, Dona Maria del Carmen.

John F. Camp started developing the prairie ranch land in 1874 when he purchased one league of land from Joseph Dwyer. Later in 1875, he purchased additional acres from Joseph Dwyer. By 1904, the Camp Ranch having increased in size was sold to land developers S.V. Houston, H.S. Tom and William Green. The new developers started dividing the ranch into smaller-acreage tracts. With the arrival of new landowners, mostly of German descent, the Striebacks, Zooks, Keys, Kleins, Stevensons, Alberts, Pundts, Boenings, Wenzels, Ziegler, Burketts, Griefs, Svobodas, Rehfelds, Coldewey's, Pfeils, Harrells and others, the community of Camp Ranch developed with then about 10,000 acres. The boundaries being on the east to the San Antonio River, west to Farm Road 2505, north to County Road 101, and south to County Road 134.

The new landowners were interested in the area because it was on high rolling hills which had fine views of the surrounding countryside. Also, the soil was mainly a rich mellow sandy loam varying in color from gray to reddish brown, good soil for their gardens and farm crops. On June 24, 1904, Gerhard and Johanna Boening with their children, Henry, Charley and Emma, purchased 300 acres of the ranch. Gerhard Boening was born

in Oldenburg, Germany. He came to Texas in 1872 and located in Lavaca County where he lived till 1904 when he moved to the Camp Ranch. Then by deed dated December 30, 1912, 150 acres of the Gerhard Boening property on County Road 132 was sold to his son, Charley Boening. Charley was united in marriage to Ella Pfeil on December 25, 1912. The young couple made their home on the newly purchased Camp Ranch property. Charley Boening operated a filling station, as well as a garage and general repair shop there for many years until his death in January 1949. He was a sub-agent for Ford vehicles, the owner of the first

Model T car in the community and a Gulf Oil Corporation distributor. Charley and Ella Boening's children, Lillie, Herbert and Edna, after getting married continued to

live on the property and had small businesses. After U.S. Highway 97 West was completed in the 1940s, land was purchased by Charley Boening from Robert N. Key to move the filling station, garage and grocery store (Camp Ranch Inn) near the new paved highway. Therefore, Charley's children also moved with their families to the new location. Today this property still belongs to his heirs, the Henkes, Orths, and Boenings.

For over 100 years the land Gerhard Boening purchased on County Road 132 in Camp Ranch is still in his family. A portion of this property is owned by his great-grandson, Howard Guenther and wife, Sally. Sally's great-grandfather, Augusta George, in 1886 was hired by John Camp of the Camp Ranch to be the ranch foreman. In 1894, Augusta George and family left the Camp Ranch and purchased land and moved east of Floresville.

Land developer William Green donated the land where the one-room schoolhouse was located on Farm Road 1344 west of Floresville in the Camp Ranch community. Then in 1929 a new two-room school was accomplished. Charles Apts was the contractor who, with the donated labor from the community, built the school. The pioneer spirit prevailed. Everyone lent a helping hand in the building of the new school. The school had been called the Green School, named after William Green, until the name was changed to



A float in Peanut Festival.

Camp Ranch School, named after John Camp. The story is that the schoolteacher at the time, Hattie Barnes, didn't like people telling others that she was just teaching a bunch of green kids. She was instrumental in getting the name changed. Now, in the present time, green is what it is all about. The school was for students through the eighth grade. Most of the students in the earlier years did not get a high school education. If students went to high school, they went to Floresville High School. Water for the school was provided by a rain-water cistern until dead snakes and birds were found in the cistern. Then for some time, students would go to a neighbor and carry back buckets of drinking water for the students and teachers. Emil Lohse, the school's trustee, saw to it that a shallow hand-dug well with a hand pump was provided to get good clean water for the school. Girls could not wear slacks to school, only dresses. The students and teachers walked or rode horses to school. Cora Lyons was the first teacher. Also some of the early-day teachers were three of Henry Albert's daughters, Evelyn Boening, Helen Fisbeck, and Alyce Maeckel, along with Martha Bartek, Laura Atkins, Agnes Steinberg, Hattie Fuller, Myrtle O'Neill, Robert Schlortt, Allen Herring, Elsie Morgenroth and Hattie Barnes. The Camp Ranch School was also the location of the Precinct Voting Box #25 with Charley Boening, Willie Rehfeld and Henry Albert as the election judges. Dances and different programs were held at the schoolhouse. There would be family get-togethers of Camp Ranch residents on the third Friday of each month at the school. The community beef club members met at the schoolhouse once a month to distribute the butchered calf meat

since there was no refrigeration. During and after World War II, the residents set up a schedule for two persons at a time to be at the school. They were spotters for suspicious planes flying by and to notify the civil defense. It appears the schoolhouse was the principal location for many different uses. In the late 1950s, the schoolhouse building was acquired and moved to Jourdanton's St. John's Lutheran Church.

There is a small cemetery called the Evergreen Cemetery near where the schoolhouse was located off Farm Road 1344. The 27 family lots bear familiar names such as Schulze, Thane, Pundt, Schroeder, Vernon, Brieger, Coldewey, Pfeil, Albert and Boening. Longtime resident Theo Boening, until his death, was always very interested in maintaining this cemetery.

Most residents in the community had a rifle, so the Evergreen Shooting Club was formed. The men loved target practice and the competition. Weddings, picnics, horseback riding, shooting and community dances were the primary sources of recreation. Couples often got married at their house. Prior to 1910, there was a Camp Ranch Platform for dances and festivals. On May 25, 1910, Adele Grief was crowned the Queen of the May Feast. A dance hall located off Farm Road 1344, now Pfeil property, was then built by local residents. It was finished on August 2, 1910, and a King Feast was held in the new hall with Fritz Pfeil being the King. Later in 1911, a hall stage was built. The dances at the hall discontinued after a young man was stabbed to death there. This ended all the dances at the Camp Ranch Dance Hall.

Today the primary business in the Camp Ranch area is Promised Land Creamery located on U. S. Highway 97 West of Floresville.

Pandora

By Patty Werley

I did not grow up in Wilson County, but I knew when we moved here in 1983 that it was going to be home. The countryside is really beautiful, with its rolling landscapes and huge oak trees. Yet it didn't take long before we learned to our surprise that Pandora was not always looked upon favorably within the county.

Pandora is located in eastern Wilson County, five miles west of Nixon and eight miles east of Stockdale. Highway 87 divides the town neatly in half, at least according to the original map drawn up in 1906. The only business is the local post office, which is open four hours a day, six days a week. But this small, sleepy town wasn't always this way.

Pandora was established in 1905 in the hopes that a town would prosper because the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway Company's main line ran right through it, from San Antonio to Port Lavaca. There was a post office, a bank, three general stores, a drug store, a pool hall, a gas station, two churches, and three school buildings. By 1915, the population had grown to 250. At its peak, the population was around 500.

I have heard several stories about how Pandora got its name. Some said it was named for the railroad commissioner's daughter in an attempt to win favor with him and keep the railroad running through town. Karon Mac Smith's re-

search on Pandora revealed that after it became obvious that two prominent families who owned land in the Jesse Mapping and M. Reinhart original surveys, which the line crossed, expected the new town to bear their name, a quick-witted railroad official said, "We've opened the box; we'll call it Pandora." Whatever the reason, the name stuck, though the

railroad did not, and when it left, the town went into a decline. The only landmark that remains, to my knowledge, is the "Bank of Pandora" blue-and-white tile floor of the foyer to the old post office.

Many of the original residents of Pandora were cotton growers. It was the main money crop of the area at that time. The boll weevil, combined with a drought, floods, and a bad economy, caused the farmers to diversify with other crops, such as watermelons and peanuts, by about 1918.

According to Gene Maeckel of the Wilson County Historical Society, in 1946, a project known as The Pandora Quail Management Project was begun. The aim of the project was to repopulate the quail in the Pandora and Union Valley area and provide an income stream to residents. This project included over 10,000 acres and 26 land owners and was highly successful.

Of course, there are still many fine families who have discovered this little gem tucked neatly into the corner of the county. The children of the current residents attend Stockdale School District,

A quick-witted railroad official said, "We've opened the box; we'll call it Pandora," and the name stuck.



Photo courtesy of Lauren Lankford

although the original residents attended Union Valley School. In the recent past, we have had some fine students come from Pandora. One student has worked for NASA, another for the governor of Texas, and still others are schoolteachers, nurses, writers, editors, ranchers, preachers, and entrepreneurs.

In 2000, the residents got together and began a beautification project that resulted in third place in a statewide competition. With

the help of the county commissioners of the day, the residents hauled away over twenty-five tons of garbage and several old mobile homes, and the roadsides were cleaned of litter and debris.

Sometimes you have to look a little harder to find the diamond in the rough. Maybe all the houses aren't so fancy in Pandora, but you won't find nicer people anywhere or prettier scenery if you like a country drive.

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Blessings to Wilson County's Multiple Generations

On March 13, 1877, William Sven Palm and wife Annie E. Batte Palm deeded ten (10) acres of land in Stockdale, Texas to the Roman Catholic church for the sum of one dollar. The present-day Quonset-style sanctuary, dedicated December 9, 1951, is the third house of worship constructed for local Catholic community and visitors. Probably in the not-too-distant future, the 242 registered families will break ground for the construction of a yet-larger sanctuary meeting current and future needs of the Catholic population around Stockdale, Texas. Of the rich diversity of cultures residing throughout the county, Polish and Hispanic families are predominantly listed in the sacramental records.

Under patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary — Mother of the Redeemer and the Redeemed — parishioners draw inspiration and solace to know, love, and serve God. St. Mary's doors are open daily from sunrise to sunset for people to come with adoration, thanksgiving, remorse, or requested favor before the Lord. Opportunities for faith formation are abundant and encouraged. With a faith that is conscious, living, and active, parishioners put devotion into action, identified with civic and educational leadership, the business community, and labor force. Parishioners and clergy are blessed to network with other denominations in Stockdale's Ministerial Alliance as well as the other four Catholic parishes in Wilson County. Ahead are years of being good neighbors with Stockdale's Industrial Park. St. Mary's recently constructed multi-purpose building stands as an asset to Wilson County; it is frequently available for private and not-for-profit functions. The banquet hall itself seats over 700 people in over 14,300 square feet; and this does not include a fully-equipped kitchen, concession stand, stage, conference rooms, and classrooms that can also be rented. May our time, talent, and treasure give glory to God as well as inspire our fellow citizens!

If you have never partaken of either our parish festival (1st Sunday each June) or our turkey dinner (last Sunday each September) then plan to do so soon; the food and fellowship are fantastic! Stockdale's Watermelon Jubilee (3rd weekend each June) is also exciting and enjoyable. Then again, would you expect anything less from the people of Wilson County?

St. Mary's Catholic Church
Stockdale • 830-996-3415

Marcelina

By Maurine Liles

Nestled among stately oak trees and in the springtime, surrounded by a blanket of wildflowers is a small white church, the Marcelina Baptist Church. Resting solemnly beside it is the Marcelina Cemetery. They stand as a bastion of the faith of our fathers and for some, the last resting place of the people who established the once prosperous community of Marcelina.

The rural community of Marcelina was named for nearby Marcelina Creek. The community was established about 5 and ½ miles north of Floresville on the Floresville and Stockdale Road. It was one-half way between the San Antonio River and Cibolo Creek, and is located near the Indianola-Floresville Road.

Wiley R. Franklin bought land in the area in 1873 and built a small horse-powered cotton gin which was located 1 and ½ miles south of where the stores and post

office were established. William Y. Elkins established a mercantile store in 1886, and he became the postmaster of Marcelina February 1, 1887. By the mid 1890's Marcelina had two stores, two cotton gins, a blacksmith and wheelwright shop, grist mill, a large school and a church. There were several homes in the community. Dr. Charles Watkins and Dr. Sims were in the Marcelina Community.

The grassy land was well watered by Marcelina Creek.

Some small lakes existed in the area in the 1870s. It was open country with little brush or mesquite

trees. Live oak, post oaks and hickory trees grew in the area and furnished logs for building houses and barns. The trees also served as a source of firewood for cooking and heating. The land was a dark loam and was easy to plow. Cotton was a cash crop and the fertile land of the area was planted in cotton.

Wildlife was in abundance and there was open range for cattle.

The people of the community had plenty of milk, butter, chickens and eggs. They ate fresh and cured hog meat and sometimes, fresh beef. Fruit and vegetables grew in home gardens. Corn was available in the spring and roasting ears were served at the table. Dried corn was ground into corn meal for bread. The corn also fed domestic horses and mules used to plow the fields. Needed staples such as salt, pepper, flour, coffee, tea, sugar, spice and sewing supplies were purchased in the stores.

A one-teacher school started in 1874. October 15, 1875 marked the formation of the Marcelina School District. The land for the school was a gift from Charles Harper. The school grew with time to a large school but ceased to exist at the end of the 1920 – 1921 school year. The children in the area attended Midway School starting in 1921.

The Marcelina Baptist Church Congregation was organized April of 1874 in Gabriel Moffett's home. Isaac Sims donated land for a church in 1883 and a regular house of worship was erected by church members and volunteers of the Marcelina Community in 1889.

William Theodore H. Callaway, an old-time cattle drive foreman, who made many trips up the Chisholm Trail, supervised the construction of the second church building in 1901. The present church sanctuary was built in 1935.

The Marcelina Cemetery was originally part of the farm of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Foster. This part of the Foster farm was a private burial plot for the Foster family. When Mr. Foster sold the farm, on which was the family burial plot, he retained one and one-half acres. On May 18, 1901, Isaac Sims, Sr. and his wife, Malinda, made it possible to have a larger cemetery lot as well as the land on which to construct a house of worship. Mr. and Mrs. Sims sold property to the Marcelina Baptist Church for use as a church yard and cemetery. Four acres was for church purposes and 2 & 1/6 acres was for a cemetery. The two cemeteries merged into one and the new cemetery was fenced in the next few years.

Marcelina did well until the boll weevils took a bite out of the cotton crops. Then the community began to decline. The post office had closed by 1906.

Marcelina Baptist Church stands as a bastion of the faith of our fathers.



The church was organized in 1874, and the present church building was established in 1935.

Marcelina Baptist Church

Marcelina Baptist Church is a rural church nestled among stately oak trees and wildflower blossoms. It is located in the old Marcelina Community, six miles north from Floresville on CR 404.

The Marcelina Baptist Church Congregation congratulates Wilson County on its sesquicentennial birthday.

Shiloh

By Maurine Liles, Shirley & John Grammer

Once upon a time, between the late 19th century and the early 20th century, a pioneer community called Shiloh existed in a beautiful pastoral setting upon a grassy hilltop fronting historic F.M. 539 in Wilson County. This historic road was also known as the Sutherland Springs - Lodi Road. In 1861, it was established to connect Sutherland Springs to the community of Lodi. Both communities were county seats at one time. Shiloh was located about midway between Floresville and Sutherland Springs.

Shiloh was a community comprised of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, the Shiloh Cemetery and the Shiloh School.

All cemeteries hold a wealth of history and Shiloh's remarkable history speaks out to tell us about the community and its inhabitants. The cemetery is situated on a par-

cel of land in Wilson County, Texas which was sold to J. P. Pritchett by J. H. James, et al on March 20, 1886. The land was a part of the original survey number 372 of the

John M. Allen survey. The land was described as lot number 13 of an 87 acre tract, and lot number 14 of an 87 ¾ acre tract. (2) The Shiloh Cemetery appears to be on

lot 13.

There are seventeen burial sites in the cemetery. The oldest apparent burial was that of Florence Price who died December 29, 1884. The last apparent burial is that of Thomas McDonald in 1939. The cemetery land was being used as a burial site before J. P. Pritchett purchased the land that included lots #13 and 14. There could have been earlier burials but there are no stones to indicate it.

The people buried in the Shiloh Cemetery were of pioneer farming stock, of Anglo-American descent and probably most attended the Methodist Episcopal Church

South. Many of the people in this community probably migrated from the southern states after the American Civil War. James Madison Smith, who was buried in the cemetery July 6, 1905, had this inscription on his grave stone: PVT. 2 FLA. CAV. C.S.A.

It appears that the cemetery was used before the Methodist Episcopal Church South or the Shiloh School was established. J. P. Pritchett conveyed or sold to the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church South of the West Texas Conference, four acres of that parcel of land #372 of the John M. Allen Survey for one dollar on December fifteen, 1887. It was specified that the land was to be used for the purpose of divine worship and for ministry and membership.

J. P. Pritchett conveyed to A. D. Evans, county judge of Wilson County, that certain parcel of land out of block 13 of the J. M. Allen Survey for one dollar on November 12, 1892. The land was to be used for the benefit of a public school in Wilson County, Texas.

These early pioneers of Shiloh lived their lives struggling to survive on land they had chosen for

themselves. They worked on farms near the church and school. They milked their cows, butchered their hogs, cured the meat, tended their chickens, weeded their vegetable gardens and washed with lye soap. They most likely grew cotton as a cash crop. They worshiped their God in the Methodist Episcopal Church South and their children attended the Shiloh School. When their time on earth was over, they were buried in the Shiloh Cemetery.

The Shiloh School and the Methodist Episcopal Church South appear to have existed well into the twentieth century. Today, the cemetery is on land belonging to the late Kenneth Brown. It is in a serene, tranquil location surrounded by cattle and horses. People were burying their loved ones in the Shiloh Cemetery over 100 years ago. Many of the descendants of these pioneer people live in Wilson County today. The Shiloh Cemetery has been designated as a Texas State Historic Cemetery. Today, only the Shiloh Cemetery remains to remind area residents that hardy pioneers once lived here and established a community.

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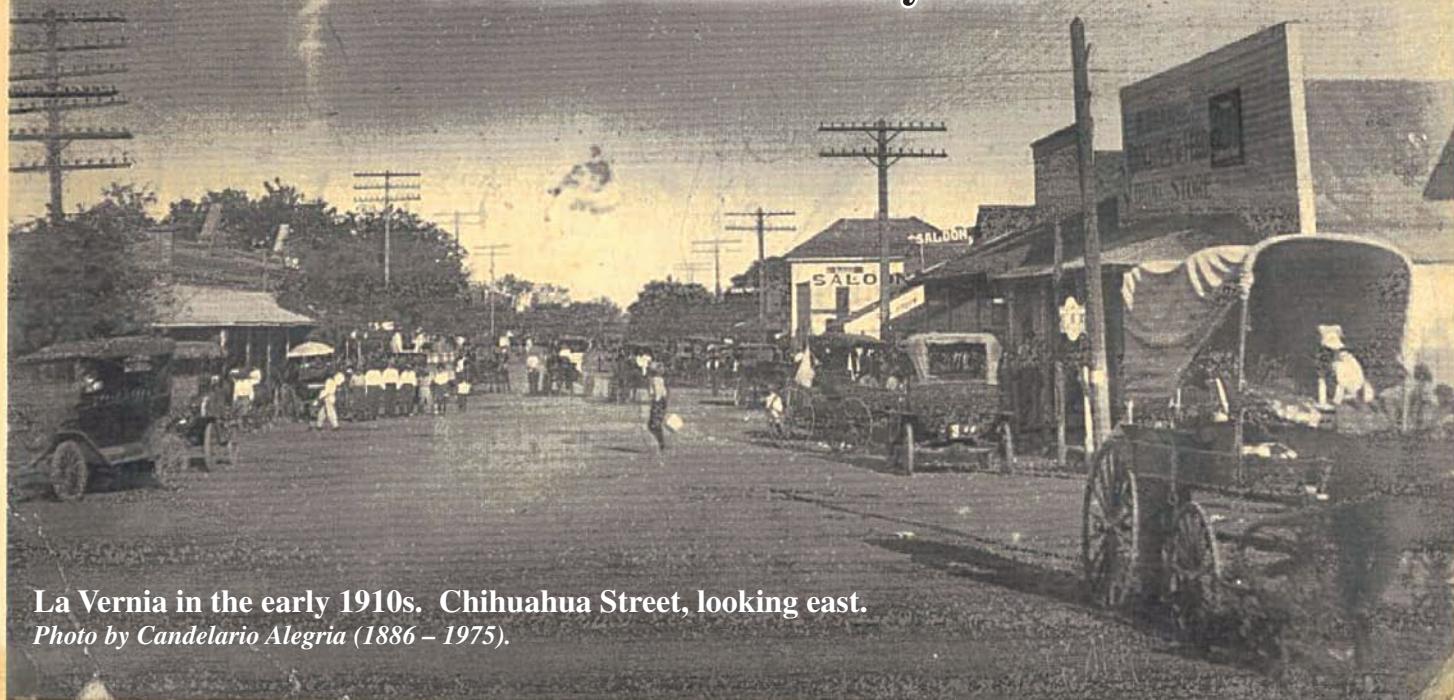
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La Vernia in the early 1910s. Chihuahua Street, looking east.
Photo by Candelario Alegria (1886 - 1975).

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Henry Castro and Julia Muniz were married on February 15, 1953.

Henry was a Catholic. Julia was a Methodist. Julia later converted to the Catholic faith. To this union were born ten children. They were brought up in the Catholic faith and all attended Sacred Heart School. Larry and Louie are now deceased. The couple are currently blessed with thirty-nine grandchildren, although they suffered the loss of one grandson. The family continues to increase with the addition of thirty-eight great-grandchildren but lost a baby boy soon after birth. Two more will be added soon. There are also several stepgrandchildren and step-great-grandchildren.



Henry and Julia's children and grandchildren, plus spouses, and great-grandchildren help them celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.



The Castro family pose for a family photo at Lia's wedding. Standing left to right are Diana Delmira (DeeDee) C. Flores, Leticia Ann (Letty) C. Martinez, Sara Elizabeth C. Garza, Lia C. Flores, Marshall Lee Castro, Lawrence Andrew (Larry) Castro, Henry Louis (Louie) Castro, and Frank Daniel Castro. Seated left to right are Loretta C. Rodriguez, Henry G. Castro, Julia M. Castro, and Joseph Leonard Castro.

Denhawken

By Ella May Calloway

The blackland area in eastern Wilson County, known in earlier days as the Dilworth Ranch, was eagerly being purchased by foreign immigrants at the turn of the 19th century. Although this land at the time was covered with natural forage of brush, cactus, and mesquite, settlers were sending letters back to their homelands telling of the beauty and promise of the land. Most of the new comers were from mid-European countries, many being of German descent.

The Denhawken Community received its' name from portions of sur names of three families who were among the first settlers of the area. Three letters from each of the names of Denmark (Den), Hawk (haw), and Steenken (ken) made up the name of the community that was formed in the early 1900's (mostly thought to be 1904).

The area inhabited by those who came for the purpose of farming and agricultural operations. It took knowledge and skills to farm this rich heavy dark soil. In those early years the community was heavily populated. The bustling new community had three stores, two gins, a blacksmith shop, a Lutheran church, a public school, and a beer joint. Among the names of owners of the general country store were Johnson, Bonner, and Hawk. The blacksmith shop was owned and operated by Bennie Linnstaeder. Eggermeyer, Bonner, Poth, and Roberson were names of owners of the gins.

Most of the Denhawken children worked in the fields at times and nearly all picked cotton. From reading articles of the past regarding cotton gins, it stated that at one time Denhawken was known for having more cotton ginned in the area than was being ginned in the entire state of Texas!

The school in Denhawken was built somewhere between 1900 and 1908. It was named Dilworth Ranch as the land was donated by a Mr. Dilworth from a portion of his ranch. The mascot for the

school was the "Dragon." Many speak of their schools as a one or two room school, but Dilworth Ranch had five large rooms in addition to a library and a study area, typing room, book room, Superintendent's office and a kitchen area. The first teacher was Lela Hawk Culpepper. In later years the school had many teachers, some who also served as coaches. The Dilworth Ranch Dragons were

known throughout the county for the High School girls volleyball teams, the boys baseball teams, and the great tennis players both in Jr. High and High School. The school had both sand and concrete tennis courts and it was rumored that first graders went to school with a dictionary in one hand and a tennis racket in the other.

The school building also served as the place for church worship services for many years. On January 1, 1908, the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church was formed with the pastor being Reverend Julius Schroeder. In the early years, all services were conducted in German, the native language of the members. After several years, both German and English services were held. A church building was erected by its' members in 1939 and has always had services every Sunday. Currently the church has approximately 120 members and is being served by Dr. Norman Beck, the Poelman professor of Theology at Texas Lutheran University.

The school building also served as the dance hall for the community. Dances were held at least once a month. Among the bands that provided the music were Adolph Hofner and the Texas playboys, The Texas Top Hands and local musicians such as the Weldon Freeman and family band and the Kosciusko Playboys. There were always large crowds and the families would bring their children and at break time the children were allowed to run and slide on the slick dance floors.

The beer joint was owned by Henry Peters and operated by King Jackson and Joe Hawk.



Denhawken School

It closed and ironically was moved away in 1948 - one day before Mr. Peters passed away. A portion of his farm was given by Wilhelm Peters for a cemetery. The Denhawken Cemetery was established around 1906/1907.

Denhawken was always a very friendly, close-knit community. Many 42 (dominoe) parties were held there, with all politicians

coming out when they were running for offices.

Original settlers who came to make their homes there were the Hawks, Steenkens, Stahls, Peters, Wehmeyers, Bohmans, Oltmanns, Lambecks, and Hassmanns. All of the above mentioned or their descendants still own properties in the community and are very proud to call Denhawken home.

ROEMER

Harry and Ida Pfeiffer Roemer settled at Jackson Gulch, about seven miles north of the present city of Floresville, in 1894.

Lizzie, Oscar, Alfred, Della and Arthur (Spitz) were their children. Milton, Clarence, Jeanette, Allen, Bennie, and Marvin were the next generation.

Most of their lives the family farmed and raised cattle in the area called Labatt.

The Roemers were one of the first families to produce "the new crop" - peanuts - for this area.

Marvin and wife Molly reside on the homeplace. Their children are Sarah and Christine.

Lily Grove

By Dottie Bowden

The community of Lily Grove is located east of Stockdale along FM 1347 and CR 538. It lies between the communities of Denhawken and Pandora in the vicinity of what was once known as Rancho Grande, a dairy complex owned and operated by Mr. Will Fordtran.

Rancho Grande was a newer version of the complex once known as the Big Ranch. The dairy was a thriving concern during the late 1940's where milking machines and state-of-the-art sanitation practices were observed. A small grocery store was operated on the premises. Like many other small agricultural operations, this one did not survive the move into the age of technology.

It lies between the communities of Denhawken and Pandora in the vicinity of what was once known as Rancho Grande.

In the state constitution drawn up in March of 1836, the Congress of the Republic of Texas passed a law setting up a system of free public schools, and in 1839

President Mirabeau B. Lamar gave three leagues of land for the purpose of setting up these schools. However, little progress was made until after Texas

became a state of the Union. The new state constitution, adopted in 1845, again provided that a system of free schools be set up, but it wasn't until 1854 that money was actually available so that schools could be built. And again, was put on hold because of the Civil War. It was 1875 before schooling was offered to many rural areas.

There was a school in this community prior to the school which was called Lily Grove.

This first school was located closer to the Ecletto Creek and was frequently flooded during heavy rains. For this reason, it was decided that the school should be re-located on higher ground. This decision was made by the families living in the community. Some of these families were Christi, Fridge, Ross, Dyal, Ware, Howell, Hemby, Russell, Patillo, Jackson, and Houston. Land for the new school was donated by John Houston, and the school was built by volunteer labor of the families of the community. Each day Sally Dyal would take food and water to the workers so she was given the honor of naming the new school. The school was completed in 1898, and she named it Lily Grove. The first teachers who came to teach at Lily Grove boarded with Sally and her husband, John Jasper Dyal. I don't have the names of these first teachers, but I do know that my great-aunt, Miss Mattie Jackson, taught there in 1926.

The community of Lily Grove never had a great deal going to mark its existence, but the community and the school made, for me, a childhood filled with precious memories, with the school assuming an importance far beyond what it actually commanded at the time. I first attended school at Lily Grove in 1936. At that time the building consisted of three rooms with a pot-bellied wood stove in the center of the room to furnish heat in the winter. The open windows were our only source of cooling in the warmer weather. We used outdoor toilets and all water was also outdoors. Playground equipment consisted of swings

and see-saws, and most of our games required little or no equipment, other than bats and balls and a can to kick!

I remember the school as being the social gathering place for the entire community; for homemade ice cream suppers, dances, and plays put on by the students. As I mentioned earlier, the school was probably never as important in real life as it looms in my memories, but where else could a child experience the excitement of Red Rover, Kick the Can and Piggy Wants a Signal; where else the fun of playing the part of a Christmas Angel baked in a pie and wearing a dress that my Mother made for me of white crepe paper trimmed in glittering tinsel. My Mother made all our costumes for the many stage plays, Halloween parties, and tacky parties over the years---no small task in itself, but a gargantuan undertaking when you realize that she also made most all the clothing worn by the six girls and two boys in my family.

Lily Grove School was closed in the early 1940's due to a lack of students. Schools were funded at that time based on ADA, average daily attendance, and when that attendance was too low, the funding just wasn't there. All students were bused into Stockdale to attend school there. The land was sold to Mr. Will Fordtran and is still owned by members of his family. The building was transported and rebuilt on the campus of Stockdale School---and all that remains to mark the location of the old school are the concrete steps where we used to play!!



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The mission of the Seventh-Day Adventists Church is to reach, minister, and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone in Wilson County.

Seventh-Day Adventists - Who are we?

1. As a Christian church, we are a faith-based movement community rooted in the beliefs described by the Holy Scriptures. We believe that salvation is a gift of God through faith in Jesus Christ who is our Saviour, Friend, Creator, Sustainer, God's Son, and God Himself!
2. We promote healthy living habits by offering health-food products, stop-smoking clinics, etc. The Church works to promote good health in the U.S. and around the world. We help undeveloped countries drill water wells, teach them how to plant and grow their own food. Currently we are helping them to build schools and churches.
3. The Church sponsors activities for people of all age groups. Youth activities designed to teach practical skills as well as spiritual guidance.
4. We are a Church that operates a worldwide educational system of more than 5,000 elementary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities to include Loma Linda Medical and Dental University in California, Andrews University in Michigan, and Southwestern Adventist University in Texas, just to name a few in the United States alone.
5. The "Voice of Prophecy" radio is broadcast worldwide in dozens of languages and the "Adventist World Radio" shortwave network broadcasts worldwide. Adventists TV Networks, such as 3ABN, LLBN, HOPE and SAFE TV, provide a variety of programs in many languages and our publishing houses, both at home and abroad, produce thousands of books, periodicals and journals every year.
6. Adventists have been going into countries that no other Church has ever been before. *"And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations; and then the end will come."* **Matthew 24:14.**
7. The Adventists follow the Ten Commandments as they were written by God; not as they were changed by man *"... and think to change times and laws ..."* **Daniel 7:25**
8. ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) is the Church organization that sponsors international development projects and coordinates the international shipment of emergency supplies.
9. We are located on the corner of Fourth and B Streets in Floresville, Texas in the United Methodist Church, and invite each and every one of you to come and visit.

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The Poth Family

The first Poths moved into the area served by the San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railroad that had a switch track called Marcelina Switch. The post office decided a town could not have two names in its name (Kennon City) so on August 26, 1901, a letter from Washington, D.C., was delivered to Arnold H. Poth announcing a post office would be established. The town site had been named "Poth, after the newcomer, Arnold Poth" appointing him the first postmaster. This day held a number of firsts for the town of Poth. The first baby, a boy named Jacob, was born to Arnold and Lena Poth. Poth also got its first telephone that same day. Arnold married Lena Mahler in 1899. They ventured to Poth by covered wagon with the promise of free land if he would build a gin. All that remained of the gin was a smokestack in the 1980's. Arnold and Lena had six children.

The family's journey began in 1848 when Richard Jacob Poth left Budenheim on the Rhine, Germany, for Texas. He was accompanied by his wife Anna Maria Braden (Wink) and three children. Arnold's father Jacob, Sr. was 5 at the time. The family moved several times, building cotton gins and grist mills and farming, before settling in Hochheim Prairie where they bought land and built a home.

Jacob Poth, Sr. and Anna Laake were Arnold's parents. They lived near Yoakum. Jacob served in the Confederate Army with Welhausen's Company of Artillery. They had fourteen children; thirteen lived to adulthood. Edmund Bernard was the fourth child of Jacob and Anna Poth.

Edmund Bernard ("E.B.") and Lillie Leissner were married in 1897 in DeWitt County. In 1914, E.B. left Elgin where he had founded Poth Dry Goods Co. (1897-1914) in partnership with his brother Charlie. E.B. joined his brother Arnold in Poth to work in a two-story general mercantile store located on the southwest corner of the plaza. Lillie and their six children joined him in Poth. In 1924, he decided to build his own two-story building on the north side of the plaza. This building housed a grocery and dry goods on the first floor with living quarters and storage areas on the second floor. Lillie died in 1948. The living quarters were moved to a new home built on 181 South in the early 1950's.

E.B. would sit by the front door of the store and give candy to children as they entered. His grandchildren were special; each got a "bag full". Lillie would sit by the door, greeting customers. "Papa" was very family-oriented. Every holiday was time for a family gathering. He loved to have his family around him and there were always special treats for the children.

E.B. owned a horse-drawn hearse with beautiful plumes and large viewing windows. What a wonderful place to play! It was many "different types of carriages" during our play. It is now on loan to the Transportation Museum in San Antonio.

"Miss Lillie B." took over the ownership of the store when E.B. died in 1962. She always knew the price of every item without "looking it up". Her brother Howard was there ready to help customers or tell a joke.

As children, if any items were needed for costumes, we knew where to go-Aunt "Little B". She was ready to search the store to help find whatever we needed, be it button-up shoes, hats, vest, etc. It was a treasure trove!

The store is now sold; it has moved to a different lifestyle. Papa's home is under new management. A cousin bought it and restored it with love. We still are able to gather there from time to time as we did years ago. Arnold's home is no more. Life changes, memories linger. The family continues with 19 grandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren, and 66 great-great-grandchildren; because of our past we hope to build a better future.

E.B.'s Children: Lillie B., Edmund Bernard Jr. (Katherine Florence/Emily Black), Leissner F. (Alfreda Carnes), Jay L. (Alice Flach/Hilda Elstner), Robert B. ("Bay" Demalin/Ruth Matejek), Howard A. (Fay Mansfield)

Picosa

By Julia Castro

Between Floresville and Fairview in Wilson County on the west side of the San Antonio River and near the Picosa Creek lies a community that is now called Picosa. There are no records to show how the community got its name. The Texas Handbook only lists a Picosa Creek. Most likely the name was derived from that. It was a rather large community of farmers and ranchers in the early 1900s.

A large number of families, mostly related to each other, organized a Christian community in 1908, and a church was built in 1909 in the area. The official seal of the church, copied from old church ledgers, reads Iglesia Evangelica Mexicana, Picosa, Wilson County, Texas.

Records of a school dating as early as 1909 lists the school as school district #25, Picosa. It is

believed that the school was moved at some point in time. Deed records show that Pedro Martinez and wife donated one acre of land for a school in 1919 by the side of the main road that runs through there (536). By the mid-1920s, or before, the spelling had changed from Picosa to Picoso.

The same Pedro Martinez donated land for a cemetery which was named after him. It has since been listed by historians as Picosa Cemetery #2 because another cemetery in the

area is listed as Picosa Cemetery #1. To the descendants of Pedro Martinez it remains the Martinez Cemetery.

School rosters list many families with Anglo surnames as well as Spanish surnames. In 1909, some of those surnames were Albert, Boening, Burkett, Cruz, Coldeway, Griego, Gonzales, Johnson, Leal, Martinez, Merecka, Orosco, Pacheco, Pundt, Sralla, Sanchez, Schulze, Teltschik, Talamantez and Toscano, just to

name a few.

A lifelong resident of that community, Juan Gauna, relates that his parents always referred to the area as Picosa and the creek as "El Arroyo de Picosa." One bridge that crossed it was known to the old-timers as "El Puente del Padre Mariano." Quite possibly it was named for a Spanish priest that came through the area or perhaps brought settlers. The name has since been changed to Mariana Creek. Mr. Gauna knows this from having worked with the Texas

Department of Transportation and helping put up the sign.

Mr. Gauna has also disclosed the general locations of where one cemetery used to be and another one that might still exist.

T. B. Coughran is credited with having established the Picosa Ranch, part of the Picosa Community, in the late 1800s. It was sold to the well-known Connally family in 1932. It has since changed owners again.

The community is sparsely populated now.

The area was known as Picoso and the creek for which it was named was called "El Arroyo de Picoso."



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- ★ Ox carts from your Lodi brought our families from the port of Indianola to central Texas.
- ★ Sam Maverick allowed his cattle to roam away from his ranch on your Marcelina adding "maverick" to the English language.
- ★ Dan Cotter brought the first watermelons to San Antonio from your Ecletto in 1849.
- ★ Historic buildings, all over Texas, are made of sand from your sand hills and the bricks from your clay.

Congratulations Wilson County on your historic past and promising future.

Regina & Allen Kosub
San Antonio, Texas

Three Oaks

By Steve Raabe

The community of Three Oaks in southwest Wilson County had its beginnings on September 15, 1900 when Tom Dewees sold 7,679 acres for \$4.50 per acre to R. S. Dilworth of Gonzales County and William Green of Lavaca County. Dilworth and Green subsequently subdivided that land and sold it to German and Czech farmers from Lavaca and Guadalupe Counties.

On May 3, 1901, William Koether purchased 450 acres from Dilworth and Green with the reservation of three and one-half acres in the northeast corner of his land for school and church purposes. A May 20, 1909 deed from William Koether to the Wilson County Judge deeded the northwest corner of the property for school and church purposes where the present community center is located.

The early settlers in Three Oaks initially traded in Falls City, which was the closest town, and they could cross the San Antonio River at Mayes Crossing. The residents of Three Oaks established several institutions and facilities in the community to serve their needs since they were more than eight miles away from the nearest town.

The earliest record available for a school in Three Oaks was a roster for 1908-09 for School District No. 1, Dewees, Texas, Lola E. Henderson, Teacher. Trustees of the school district were William Koether, G.F. Henson and A. W. Servoss. There were 43 students enrolled.

In 1916, a group of residents in the Three Oaks community petitioned the Wilson County Judge to form an independent school district. An election was held to elect the first Three Oaks School Board. School was still held in the old schoolhouse. In 1919, a two-room schoolhouse was built. There were three teachers employed at that time and the enrollment was 188 students.

Another new schoolhouse was built in 1926 and the first teacher in that building was Miss Bertha Tampke. The Three Oaks School Board voted to consolidate with the Poth Independent

School District on March 18, 1955.

The Three Oaks Shooting Club was organized in 1908 under a post oak tree in Mr. Fritz Hassmann's pasture. There were 23 charter members and membership was \$5.00. Frank Langhoff became a member by working free for one year at various jobs and by delivering water to the hall for feasts and dances during that year. The original hall was built on the Hassmann farm near the public road. In 1925 a new hall was built at the road intersection about one mile west of the old hall. The bar was moved into the hall in the early 1950's. The members who worked on that project were paid either five or ten cases of beer depending on how much they worked. On February 5, 1967, the membership voted to sell the hall and the 4.84 acres of land it occupied for \$1,500 and the organization then known as the Three Oaks Hall was disbanded.



Three Oaks - 1929

The Friedens Evangelical and Reformed congregation was founded in March 1908 by Rev. Carl Kniker and services were held in the Three Oaks schoolhouse until 1917 when the church was built. In October of 1920, a women's guild was organized. A new organ was bought in January 1921 and the cemetery behind the church was dedicated on August 27, 1924. In the beginning all services were held in the German language. The first English service was held in February 1928. In 1942 a hurricane blew the steeple from the church. A smaller steeple was rebuilt. The church was remodeled in 1945. The church was disbanded in 1970. The building was torn down and the altar, pulpit and pews were donated to a church in Corpus Christi that had been damaged by Hurricane Celia.

The Three Oaks Telephone Association was organized on September 16, 1911 with thirteen charter members. The association contracted with Eureka Telephone Company, which officed in Falls City, for materials to build the system and at a rate of \$6.00 per subscriber per year for service. A new telephone line was built to Poth in 1927. In 1929 there were eleven members. The last recorded meeting of the association was in January 1947 but the telephone system was in operation well into the 1950's when the current modern system was first installed.

A cotton gin was built on the southwest corner of the August Hosek place in 1906. It was owned by the Floresville Oil and Manufacturing Company, whose

president was W.O. Murray of Floresville. There was also a corn mill with a stone grindstone. The mill was located next to two large tanks built by the Dewees Ranch for stock watering. The gin was closed and the land sold back to August Hosek in 1917.

The first store in what was to become known as Three Oaks was located across the road from the Floresville Oil and Manufacturing Company cotton gin. The only story of how Three Oaks got its name is associated with this store. The story goes that a traveler came into the store and as he was resting, he asked what the name of this community was. Upon hearing that there was no name, he stated that it should be called Three Oaks for the three large oak trees that he could see from the store. Another story associated with the old store was when three men were gambling in the store, a deputy caught them and made them walk to Floresville to the jail.

The second Three Oaks store was located across the road from the second Three Oaks Hall. The store closed down in the mid-1960's.

Fifty-five citizens of Three Oaks formed the Three Oaks Anti-Prohibition Club around 1917-18. The first signature on the list is J.E. Dewees, who died in 1918. The members pledged "to use our votes and our influence, to the utmost of our ability, to promote the cause of Anti-Prohibition in our County, and to oppose and combat Prohibition in every manner, consistent with law, order and clear conscience."

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Nockenut

By Bobby and Jo Hastings

Nockenut is located on FM 1681, 3.2 miles from intersection of State Highway 123. Nockenut's main street would intersect the pavement at the edge of the post oak belt in the M.C. Wing survey where the road and Ecletto Creek part company. The community of Nockenut grew up around the Ecletto Creek, which was a spring-fed creek that ran year-round. A sawmill, gin and grist mill were built by Henry Solomon Hastings after he and his father, Green Hastings, purchased 1,280 acres from the heirs of M. C. Wing, one of the drawers of a black bean in Mexico as part of the Meir expedition. The community was named Nockenut by H. S. Hastings combining the names of two trees, the Hickory (hickernut)

The community was named by combining the names of two trees, the Hickory (hickernut) and the Anaqua (nockoway).

and Anaqua (nockoway), which abounded in the area. H. S. with his Mississippian and added Texas slang, called the community Nockernut, later Nockenut. A post office was established in 1858 with postmaster William Cockrum. H. S. served as postmaster after the Civil War and his daughter, Sallie, became postmistress in 1889. The town contained two stores, a saddle shop and blacksmith shop. At one end of the thoroughfare on the creek were the mill and gin, and the post office was at the other end. A two-story building was the site of the Masonic Lodge #362, with 10 charter members. The lodge served the community until 1873. A school named Cleto School as well as 2 churches, the Methodist and Bethel Baptist were here. The Rev. Preston Hobbs held the



Green Hastings home

Methodist services. He gave the land for the school and church. The Methodist building was moved from its original site to Pandora in 1909. The Bethel Baptist Church held services in a building north and east of the Leach Cemetery atop a hill that overlooks the area.

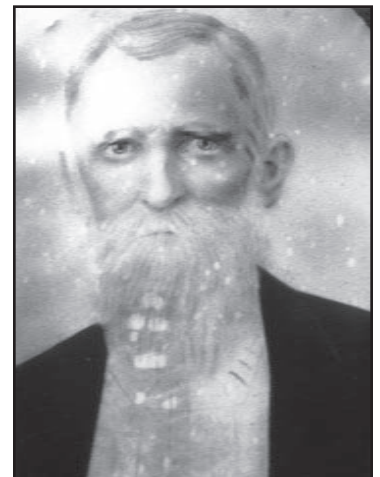
Numerous Hastings are buried in the cemetery including Green and Henry Solomon Hastings, the founders of Nockenut. The original homestead of Henry Solomon is approximately 1/4 mile north of what was Nockenut facing the Ecletto Creek.



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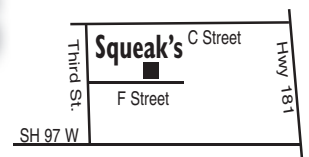
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Kosciusko

By Bertha Korzekwa & Evelyn Grimes

In October 1854, Polish immigration to America began. In search of freedom and a better way of life, the Silesian Poles sold all they had and set out on a journey to a new country. After traveling 9 weeks by sea and having endured unbearable suffering on an overcrowded ship, they arrived in Galveston, Texas. They continued their journey by land eventually arriving at their final destination, the junction of the San Antonio and Cibolo Rivers. They named their new home Panna Maria.

As families grew they continued to search for more land. In 1880, about 65 families headed north along the Cibolo River; they purchased and settled the land in an area called Little Egypt. Here they joined other families, and renamed the community Kosciusko. The town prospered and in 1892 a Polish Catholic school was built. The school was named St. Ann's. A few years later, to accommodate the growing number of children, another school was built.

The first general store was built in 1896, and a year later a meat market

was added on. Although the building has changed, the business is still in operation today. In the late 1890's a blacksmith shop and a garage were established, and the first water well was dug by hand. In 1896, Kosciusko opened its first U. S. post office, which was located in the general store. The post office remained open until 1920.

In 1898 St. Ann's Catholic Church was built. There were 65 families in the parish, and in 1934 there were 146 families. By that time electricity had been established in Kosciusko, and a new state highway, known as 123, was being built. Along this new highway a gas station and tavern were established. It later housed a small grocery store and barber shop, and remained open until 1972.

In 1935 a new church rectory and one-room school were built. In 1937 a new cotton gin became a big part of the community.

In 1937 the school added on a high school and auditorium. The old school gymnasium was converted to the Kosciusko Community Hall. During this time the Kosciusko Red Sox baseball team was organized.

Telephones were introduced to the area in the early 1900's and a

switchboard was operated by a local family until 1960.

In 1946 P & L Café was opened. This business changed in the early 1950's to a full-service gas station, and many years later became a seed and fertilizer business, which is still in operation today.

In March of 1951 the present church was constructed. The one-room school was moved and enlarged for a parish hall, and a larger school was built. By 1968 all high school students and the 7th and 8th graders were attending school in Poth; the following year, the Kosciusko school was closed.

In 1977 property for the new Kosciusko Red Sox Field, also considered the community park, was purchased.

In 1986 the present parish hall was built and is used for various community and parish activities. In 1995 the present church rectory was built.

St. Ann's Catholic Church celebrated its centennial in 1998. Many changes and events in the parish and community took place during this year, including the



Fritz Reininger - Kosciusko

renaming of the area's county roads in memory of three young men that lost their lives in World War II.

The community of Kosciusko continues to prosper, and celebrates their annual picnic on the first Sunday of August. The Kosciusko Community Hall has undergone many changes and is well-known for its large events, such as concerts and the annual barbeque cook-off. Kosciusko is still a strong and thriving community.

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Pulaski School

By Adrian Sekula

Pulaski School District #10, as it was known, was located on C.R. 230 between C.R. 229 and C.R. 228 in the southern part of Wilson County below Poth. The school district was formed by consolidating three smaller schools and relocating them to this location. These included Pulaski School, which had been on C.R. 228, Menchaca School, which had been at C.R. 231 and C.R. 262, and St. Peter's School, which had been a parochial school of the Cestohowa Catholic Church. With the consolidation of these three schools, the Felician Sisters of Cestohowa continued to teach in the Pulaski School District. At that time, the nuns did not drive, so they were taken to the school by different parents each day.

Named for the Polish soldier Kazimierz Pulaski, who once saved the life of George

Washington and became a general in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, Pulaski School District was formed in the early 1940's and continued to operate into the early 1960's when it was consolidated with Poth I.S.D. In the early years of operation, most of the students walked to school, or used any means of transportation available. In 1948, the school got a new school bus. Mr. Frank Smolka was the driver for the entire time of the school's existence. The school did not have indoor plumbing; restrooms were "outhouses." Drinking water came from two rainwater cisterns, and students were taught to conserve water.

The attendance at Pulaski

School varied with the seasons. For instance, in the spring, many of the children stayed home to help during cotton hoeing season or in the fall during corn harvest. Originally, the school had ten grades. This was

reduced to eight grades with the arrival of the new school bus that took the older students to Poth High School. Also, with the new bus,

the students could participate in activities with surrounding school districts, such as volleyball and softball games with the students at Stevens School and Kosciusko School. The bus also took the students on an annual outing to the stock show at the Freeman Coliseum in San Antonio.

In the late 1950's the school

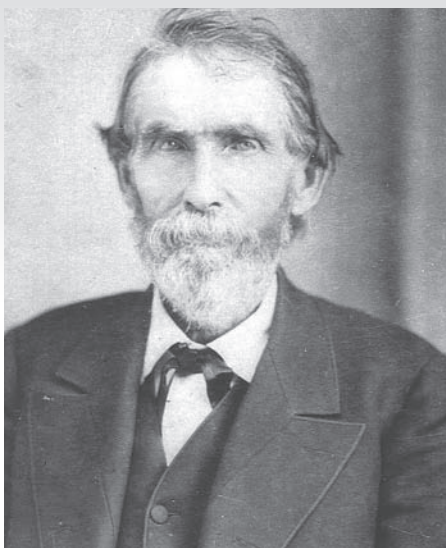
hired Mr. Walter Kowalik as the school's principal. He reported to a County School Superintendent, a Mr. Irvin. Everyone looked forward to the monthly visits by Mr. Irvin, who visited both classrooms. Also, the county bookmobile made a bi-weekly stop at the school; and the County Agent and the County Health Officer or nurse would work with the students on a monthly basis.

Originally the three school buildings served as four classrooms, a meeting room, and daytime quarters for the Felician Sisters. For being located in a remote area of the county, the school played an important part in the social life of the area. Besides the plays and other school activities, the school served as a center for fund-raisers such as the March of Dimes socials and other gatherings even after it was closed. Some of the original buildings still stand on private property.

Named for the Polish soldier Kazimierz Pulaski, who once saved the life of George Washington.

The Kings

John Rhodes King (1816-1898) arrived in Texas in 1837 from Tennessee, eventually helping to found Seguin, where he would later serve as the first mayor. King served in the Texas Rangers, being wounded by Indians in 1850, and in both the Mexican and Civil Wars. He served in the Texas Legislature for three terms - one term representing Guadalupe County and later two terms representing Wilson, Karnes, and Atascosa Counties. King and his family moved to Wilson County in the late 1850's. He helped with the creation of Wilson County, later serving on the commissioner's court.



Ruth Eliza Wheeler (1825-1910) married John R. King in 1851. She came to Texas in 1835 with her father and brothers and sisters, settling in Matagorda County. The family had moved to San Antonio by 1850. After her marriage, her brother and husband became co-owners of the Wheeler Mill on the Cibolo. She and her husband were the parents of three sons and three daughters. One son, William, organized the telephone company in Stockdale and served as a county commissioner. Another son, Jesse, was a Methodist minister.



Prairie Lea

and the Richter family of Wilson County

By Odell Richter Zarsky

The first mention of the Richter Family was in 1785. The country was called Prussia at this time. It is a country in Central Europe bordering on the Baltic Sea. The Richters came to Alt Karmunkau and settled there. No one knows exactly their country of origin, but research is being done to determine their early origins.

Prussia was centrally located in Europe between Germany and Russia. Its borders have changed many times over the centuries through conquests, usually by their neighbors. It is now a country named Poland. It has been a large country, a small country, and no country at all. The area in Poland the Richters immigrated from is called Silesia. It is an area of open plains and gently rolling hills and an agricultural region of farmers with a few livestock. This was how the Richters earned their livelihood – farming. Silesia had a very temperate climate. It had winter temperatures of about 30 degrees and summer temperatures of about 70 degrees.

It was quite an adjustment for the new “Texans,” especially during the summer months.

Exactly why the Richters left for America is not known. However, they received letters from an earlier settlement in Texas. They told them of their freedom to grow whatever crops they wanted, breed whatever animals they wanted, and worship in the religion of their choice.

Our ancestor is Johann Richter, who immigrated to the United States in June of 1855. Johann had married Barbara Anders and they had seven children in Poland, two of whom had died in Poland. They came via Hamburg via Liverpool aboard the Isaac Wright and landed in New York City. They sailed from New York City to Indianola in Texas. Johann arrived with four children, having lost his wife and one child en route from New York to Texas.

Johann and his four children made their way inland and settled in Yorktown, Texas, in 1855. He eventually remarried about three years later and had many more children. It is not known exactly when

his family moved to Wilson County, but there are cattle brands registered to him by 1875.

The Johann Richter family settled about 3 miles west of Stockdale on both sides of the Cibolo Creek with a purchase of 375 acres of farmland which had to be cleared for farming.

The Richters were Catholic, and when St. Mary’s Church was destroyed in a storm in Stockdale, it was never rebuilt. In 1891 fifteen families desiring a church began to build a Catholic church on land donated by Johann Richter. Subsequently, one acre of land was donated by Vincent Richter for a cemetery, which is still in use today. The church was built just north of the railroad track on the 3 acres donated by Johann. Later a country school was built south of the railroad for all the families in the neighborhood to attend. The church was to remain until 1951. The third



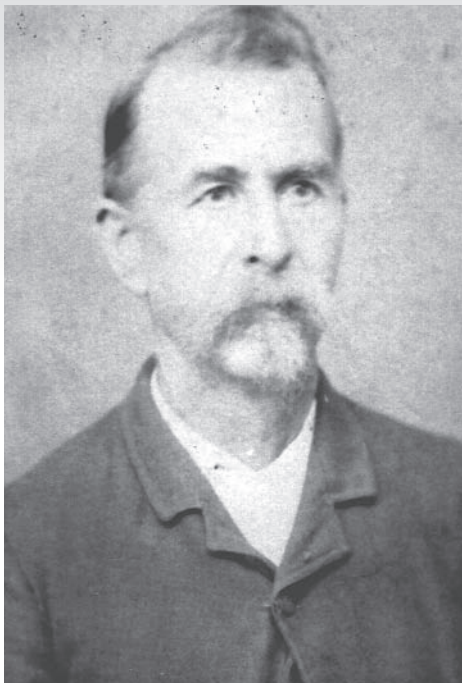
Victor Ramzinski's Home - built in early 1900s

St. Mary’s was dedicated in 1952 where it remains today. This area was known by another name before it became the Richter community. It is believed to have been called Prairie Lea, but this is without certainty.

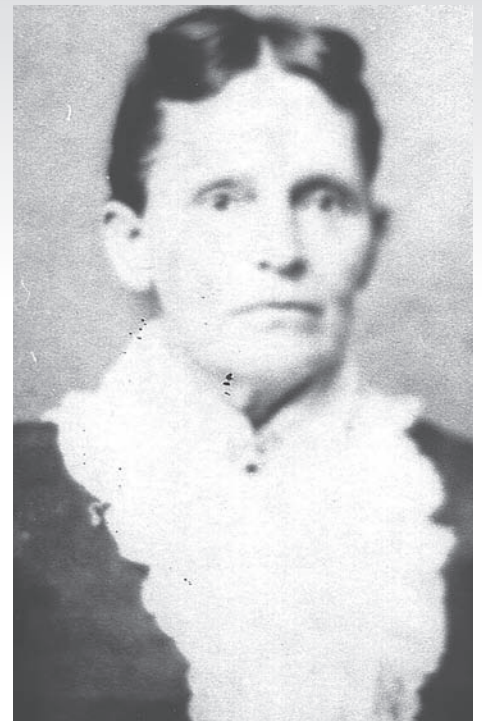
Today, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of Richter descendants scattered across the United States in many different professional fields – breaking away from their early agricultural roots.

The Hollands

Dr. James Bird Holland (1837-1911) was an early physician in Stockdale. He was born in Mississippi and graduated with a medical degree from the University of Nashville in 1860. Dr. Holland and his new wife first settled in Belmont, during which time he served in the Civil War. In the 1870s he and his wife settled in Stockdale, where he practiced. Many babies whom he delivered are registered at the Wilson County Courthouse.



Amelia Caton (1842-1926) came to Texas with her parents from Alabama in the 1840s and settled in Wharton. Both of her parents died before 1860, and she was reared by an uncle. She attended Matagorda Academy. Amelia married Dr. Holland in 1860. Six children were born of this union. One daughter, Onie, married William King and lived in Stockdale.



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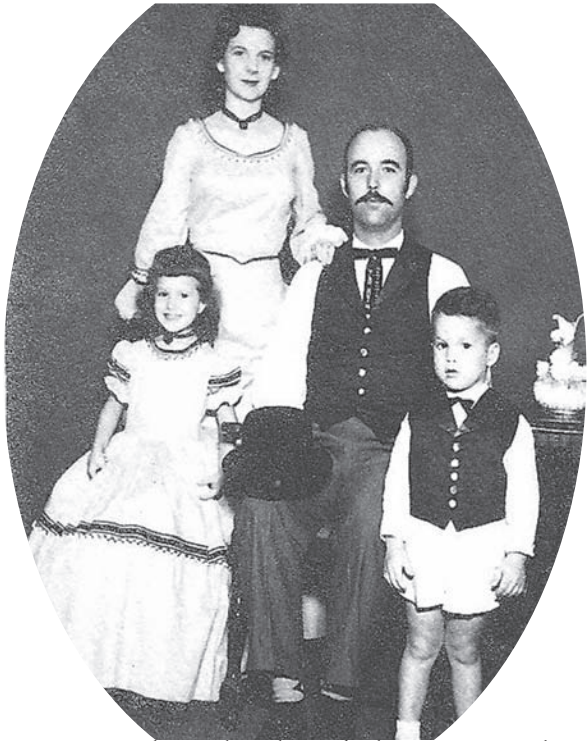
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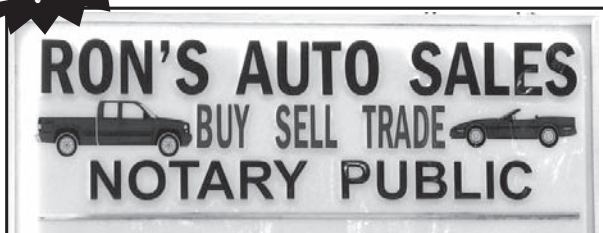


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Wilson County African Americans

By Jamie L. Walker Harris

African Americans have resided in Wilson County since the county was founded in 1860. However, a few of these slaves were here as early as 1845. By 1867, there were about 100 Negro freedmen 21 years old or older in Wilson County.

Most, if not all, were brought to this area from the Southern states by their slaveowners. Mississippi, Tennessee and South Carolina were the birthplaces of the majority.

By 1870, these freedmen lived in five colonies in Sutherland Springs, LaVernia, Lodi, and Nockanut. Most were farmers - the more prosperous families owned farms of 100 to 400 acres.

To worship and to educate their children, within 10 years, the freedmen built schools and churches in these five colonies. Some congregations of these early churches are still worshipping in their communities.

Eventually, when the county rural schools were consolidated, Dunbar School in Floresville became the institution educating African American children until the schools were integrated in the 1960's. These county schools have given the nation educators, ministers, religious leaders, funeral home directors, ranchers, and musicians, who are descendants of these African American families.

The African American



Dunbar School

population declined in Wilson County when many young people migrated to cities for economic and educational

opportunities. However, the elders remained until their deaths and lie in the many cemeteries across the county.

Bubba Walker & Ike Barnes

By Jamie L. Walker Harris

Wilson County lost one of its favorite cowboys in November 1974 when Richard "Bubba" Walker passed away and was laid to rest in Floresville's City Cemetery #2.

With his twinkling eyes and infectious laugh, Bubba was probably the last of his generation to work the area ranches. It is said that he followed in his father and grandfather's footsteps making him a third generation ranch hand.

While he pursued ranching in his spare time and on weekends, he worked more than 30 years at Kelly Field in San Antonio, where he commuted the 30 miles every day to provide for his family - Helen, his wife, and two sons, Richard Jr. and John Wilbert.

About 2 months before the disastrous 1900 hurricane struck Galveston, killing thousands, Richard Walker was born to Jim Walker and Eliza (Edwards) Walker in Wilson County. The youngest boy of 5 sons and 3 daughters, he was called "Bubba." The family lived in "The Colony" where most of the African American families congregated after the Civil War. This was in the vicinity of Sixth and Seventh Streets east of Standish; however, at that time the street names weren't known. Most of these families later moved away or out of Floresville.

Bubba and his brothers Walter, Obie, and Rosser "Buster" were lifelong Texas residents. His brother Alonzo, called "Lonnie" or "Tonker," lived in Chicago. His sister Johnetta, who seemed to take on the role of surrogate mother, was called "Johnnie" and lived in Karnes City. Mamye, the youngest girl who was called "Jim," was sent to college by her generous brother Bubba.

Some men become men by their actions. Quietly and secretly, Richard Walker

gave money to a local family when the husband became sick and unemployed... Richard Walker always transported the local school children to attend the county meets... Richard Walker moved a young family to a city where their children could continue their education... and according to whom you ask, there are hundreds of other examples of this caring person.

After leaving the old Walker home place where the HEB store is now located, Richard built a lovely home on Standish Street near the corner of 7th Street for his wife Helen and their sons. This home was the site of many happy events for family and friends.

Bubba worked on many of the area ranches including the 90,000-acre Dewees Ranch. His maternal grandparents, Andrew Edwards and Nancy McDaniel Edwards, worked and lived on the George A. Monkhouse Ranch. Records show that he and most of his brothers also worked for Monkhouse in later years. His son John reports working with his dad Bubba on the Frank Thompson Ranch in Charlotte. The Peeler Ranch in McMullen County also employed Bubba Walker. In fact, photographs of a staged roundup at the Peeler Ranch is in a collection at the University of Texas at Austin. This 1957 event shows Bubba and a number of other Wilson County African American "cowboys" on horseback with a Longhorn herd.

Sometime during the ranching years, Isaac "Ike" Barnes met Bubba Walker and they became lifelong buddies. This was a mutual admiration. At most family events, one would find Ike. Few, if any, knew much about Isaac Barnes' background. He was a big gentle quiet-spoken guy with a dark brown complexion. No record can be found that indicates he ever married. It seems cattle, horses and hard ranch work in south



Bubba Walker & Ike Barnes

Texas were his life.

Sometimes, a man receives accolades during his lifetime. Ike received recognition from South Texas ranchers by being given the Working Cowboy Award in 1979 at a festive annual rodeo event in Pleasanton. At that time, Ike was only the second African American to receive the award, which included a silver belt buckle and a vest. Ike Barnes died about 1989.

Although, the era of the great cattle drives had ended by the time these two men were born, the same skills were still needed on the ranches. Bubba and Ike learned over time to perfect their skills at branding and herding cattle, breaking horses, and other range duties.

Life continually presents characters in our lives that impact us in a special way, such as these two men. Their skills at ranching caused them to receive praises from their peers, tributes from publications, and admiration from many throughout Southwest Texas.

Troop 114, Boy Scouts of America

By Bob Wentz

In 1907, the Scouting movement was started by Lord Robert Baden-Powell, a decorated Brigadier in the British Army. He wanted a program of active, challenging outdoor activities for young men to be involved in. He wrote a handbook for Scouting. It attracted numerous young men.

William D. Boyce, an American businessman, lost his way on the foggy streets of London. A young boy asked if he could be of assistance. Upon hearing Mr. Boyce was lost, the boy personally guided him to his destination. When Mr. Boyce offered to pay him, the lad thanked him and informed him he was a Scout and could not take anything for helping. Impressed, Mr. Boyce contacted Lord Baden-Powell and was informed about his new Scouting program.

Upon returning to New York, William Boyce informed a group of educators, businessmen and politicians and on February 8, 1910 organized the Boy Scouts

of America.

That same year, W. H. Butler, the school principal in Floresville, found out about the program and chartered Boy Scout Troop 114, one of only two in Texas. It became very popular here also, and attracted young men from Floresville, Wilson County and as far away as San Antonio. A 1912 photo of the troop depicts a group of 29 uniformed Scouts with their Scoutmaster, W. H. Butler. That was a good-sized group for a small town, especially during that time frame. The records for the troop from 1910 to 1938 have not been found. Records of the troop, from founding of the Alamo Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, in 1912 and up until 1938, were destroyed in a fire in San Antonio. Records from 1938 to the present are available at Alamo Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, in San Antonio. We have been unable to determine how Mr. Butler found out about Scouting. It is believed the troop was chartered to the school, but we don't know for sure. When



1912 Boy Scout Troop

the county historical records are cataloged, a search will be made to see what is available on the history of the troop. Contact was made with the personnel from the Floresville Chronicle, before it went out of business, for information on the troop. They were only able to provide an article dated May 7, 1981 and an October 11, 1975 photo of

troop members taken at the Sam Fore Library in Floresville.

Troop 114 has been serving the young men of Floresville and Wilson County continuously since then, with few exceptions. It has had no breaks in serving the area for over 37 years. Other Scouting units have since started in LaVernia, Stockdale, Poth and Floresville to serve our youth.

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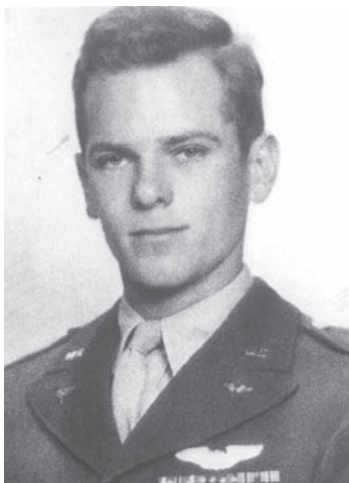
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Mary "Margie" Murray



John Murray



Scott Murray

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Judy and John Murray

Clark Murray and Sandy McDowell purchased 1427 Third Street in 1953 from Dr. Oxford for their law offices. A year later, McDowell sold his interest in the building to Murray, and Clark continued to practice law. In 1976 Clark and Mary Murray, along with their son, John, opened Murray Guaranty Title Company in the same building where it remains today. John later moved to Dallas to work in the real estate law department of Hexter-Fair Title of Dallas. Mary and son Scott operated Murray Title from 1979 until December 1993. Scott owned and operated the title company from 1994 until 2002. John moved back to Floresville in 1999 and Scott sold the Title Company back to him in 2002 and he continues to run the company with his wife, Judy, née Koenig, and children.

Dedicated in memory of:

*Clark & Mary Murray, Scott Murray, Betty Murray, and
Maxine & Ernst Koenig (Koenig Meat Market)*

ABSTRACT OF PEDIGREE

A straight line of generations for Floresville resident Otto L. Henke Jr.'s children: Kevin, Douglas, Clifton and grandchildren: Lauren, Sarah, Rachel, Emily, Brenna, Ryan & Brooke.

1. **Otto L. Henke, Jr.**, who is son of Born 04-19-1939
2. **Gussie Rose Hurt**, who was daughter of Born 12-30-1918 Died 08-30-1995
3. **Walter Tom Hurt**, who was son of Born 04-23-1885 Died 03-10-1959
4. **Lucy George Digges**, who was daughter of Born 06-19-1850 Died 01-1924
5. **David Dudley Michie Digges**, who was son of Died 1878
6. **Col. George Purdie Digges**, who was son of
7. **Major William Cole Digges**, who was son of Born 1754 Died 1817
8. **Col. William Digges**, who was son of Born 1734 Died 1785
9. **Hon. Cole Digges**, who was son of Born 1691 Died 1774
10. **Hon. Dudley Digges**, who was son of Born 1662 Died 01-27-1709
11. **God. Edward Digges**, who was son of Born 1621 Died 03-15-1675
12. **Sir Dudley Digges**, of Chilman Castle, Born 1583 Died 03-18-1639
Kent, England, who was son of
13. **Lady Anne St. Leger Digges**, who was daughter of
14. **Ursula de Neville**, who was daughter of
15. **George de Neville**, third Lord of Abergavenney, who was son of
16. **Sir George de Neville**, second Lord of Abergavenney, who was son of
17. **Edward de Neville**, first Lord of Abergavenney, who was son of Died 10-18-1476
18. **Joan**, who was daughter of
19. **John of Ghent**, Duke of Lancaster, who was fourth son of
20. **Edward III**, who was son of
21. **Edward II**, who was son of
22. **Edward I**, who was son of
23. **King Henry III**, of England, who was son of
24. **King John**, brother of Richard Coeur de Lion, who was son of
25. **King Henry II**, who was son of
26. **Queen Matilda**, widow of Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, who was daughter of
27. **Matilda**, of Scotland; b.1079; d.1 May 1118 ; m. 11 Nov.1100, Henry I (Beaucler, King of England)
who was the daughter of
28. **Margaret**, (St. Margaret of Scotland); b. 1045; d. 16 Nov. 1093, who was daughter of
29. **Edward**, the Atheling, called "the Exile," b. 1016; d. 1057; m. Agatha (of Hungary), who was son of
30. **Edmund**, Ironside, King of England, 1016; b. 989; d. 30 Nov. 1016, who was son of
31. **Aethelred II**, the Redeless, King of England, 979-1016; b. 968, who was son of
32. **Edgar**, the Peaceful, King of England, 959-975; b. 943; d. 975, who was son of
33. **Edmund**, the Magnificent, King of England, 940-946; b. 920; d. 946, who was son of
34. **Edward**, the Elder, King of England, 899-924; b. 875; d. 924, who was son of
35. **Alfred the Great**, King of England, 871-899, b. Wantage, Berkshire, 849; d. 26 Oct. 899, Alfred was
one of the greatest men in history. King at Winchester, 871; founded the British Navy, organized the militia,
compiled a code of laws, built schools and monasteries, and invited scholars to live at his court, who was son of
36. **Aethelwulf**, King of England, 839-858, d. 13 Jan. 858, who was son of
37. **Egbert**, b. 775; d. after 19 Nov. 838, King of Wessex, 802-827, and was the first king of all England,
827-836, who was son of
38. **Eahlmund**, King of Kent, who was son of
39. **Eafa**, did not rule, and who was son of
40. **Eoppa**, did not rule, and who was son of
41. **Ingild**, d. 718, did not rule, and who was son of
42. **Cenred**, did not rule, and who was son of
43. **Ceolwald**, did not rule, and who was son of
44. **Cutha**, of Cuthwulf, did not rule, and who was son of
45. **Cuthwine**, killed in battle 584, did not rule, and who was son of
46. **Ceawlin**, undertook the government of the West Saxons, 560, who was son of
47. **Cynric**, King of the West Saxons, 534-560, who was son of
48. **Cerdic**, King of the West Saxons, 519-534, who founded a settlement on the coast of Hampshire,
England, in 495, assumed the title of King of the West Saxons in 519, and became the ancestor of the English
royal line.

The Haydens *from St. Mary's County, Maryland* *to Wilson County, Texas*

Basil Hayden Sr., born Jan. 2, 1743 in St. Mary's County, Maryland, married Henrietta Cole. They lived in St. Mary's County, Maryland. He was a farmer. They moved to Washington County, Kentucky in 1790. Basil led his family and 25 other families to Kentucky and settled on Pottinger's Creek where he built a grist mill. He raised tobacco and corn. Basil also owned a distillery and made the best whiskey in Kentucky. After his death, his sons took over the whiskey business. The whiskey label was "Old Grandad" and a picture of Basil Hayden Sr. was on every bottle. His picture is on the bottles today. Basil Hayden Sr. had 15 children and one was Basil Hayden Jr.

Basil Hayden Jr. married Mary Rapier on July 9, 1795 in Washington County, Kentucky. They had 10 children. One was Joseph Thompson Hayden, born April 4, 1809 in Calvary, Nelson County, Kentucky.

Joseph T. Hayden married Nancy Williams on Jan. 1, 1830 in Pike County, Missouri. Joseph T. Hayden studied medicine and became a doctor. He lived in Missouri until about 1837. He brought his family to Arkansas. They lived in Clark and Jackson Counties. They had 11 children. Their firstborn was Leander Hayden, born Nov. 9, 1831 in Pike County, Missouri. Joseph T. was a State Representative for Hope County, Arkansas in the 1840s. He moved his family to Bee County, Texas. He was the first doctor to hang his shingle in Bee County, Texas. They then bought land in Wilson County, Texas and moved there in the 1850s. They built their home on the southwest side of Wilson County. Dr. Joseph T. Hayden passed away Jan. 19, 1869 in the township of Loire, Wilson County, Texas. Loire was named after a river in France. He donated land to the Catholic Church in Loire and also land for a cemetery. The church was named St. Luke.



*Leander and Artimesa Schultz
Hayden*

Leander married Artimesa Shultz on Sept. 17, 1857, in Wilson County, Texas. They lived in Loire all their lives. Ten children were born to this union. Leander fought for the Union in 1862-1864. Their firstborn was Joseph Leander Hayden, born Aug. 9, 1858, in Loire. He was a farmer as was his father.

Joseph L. married Emma Ruth Desha on Dec. 25, 1883, in Loire, Wilson County, Texas. They raised 11 children, all born in Loire. Their fourth child was Frank Hayden, born Dec. 9, 1890 in Loire. He married Helen Corrine Wilson Kirby on Sept. 4, 1926 in Dallas, Texas. They raised 3 children and two from Helen's previous marriage. Helen was born a Wilson and was adopted by Dr. Stella Kirby. I, Frank Kirby Hayden, am their only living child.



*Joseph Leander and Mary Ruth
"Emma" Hayden and their first
six children.*



*Frank Hayden
1919, WWI
son of Joseph Leander and
Mary Ruth "Emma" Hayden*



*Helen Corrine Wilson Kirby
(married Frank Hayden)*



*Frank K. Hayden, son of Frank and
Helen Corrine Wilson Kirby Hayden,
with wife Elsie E. Mitchum Hayden*

Kasper

By Lois Wauson

Kasper School opened in 1930, when Joseph Kasper gave a building on his farm for a school. It was located on the northwest corner of what are now FM 541 and FM 2505. Back then they were narrow dirt roads, muddy when it rained. One of the first teachers at the school was a Miss Brannen who boarded with the Stoeltje family. The school was in a building like a barn, near a creek.

Before 1930, any children who lived in that area of Wilson County went to school at Dewees, Borrego, Darilek or Three Oaks. Before that the children went to Green or Picoso Schools, the nearest schools in the southwest part of the county.

A couple of years later Mr. Kasper sold the farm to Mr.

Martin who didn't want the school on his property, so a new school was built about ¼ mile west on 541. It was a big L-shaped school with three rooms. Two of the larger rooms had a folding wall between which opened up to be made into one large room. This school became the "community center" and focal point of that southwest part of Wilson County for many years. It was the gathering place for meetings and social activities.

Election days were exciting times at Kasper School. Whether it was county, state or national elections, it was the time when all the men gathered at the school not only to vote, but later that night to socialize and wait to hear who won the races all over the county, state or nation. "Waiting for the returns to come in," is what everyone said.

Kasper School opened in 1930, when Joseph Kasper gave a building on his farm for a school.



Students in front of the Kasper School

At Christmastime Santa Claus came during the school program. He brought bags of candy, apples, and oranges. The schoolhouse was packed and was the social event of the Christmas season. During the Depression those bags were the only gifts some children received.

The social center of that community was the school. Dances were often held there. A small band played and the folding doors opened up into a big dance floor, and cornmeal scattered to make it easy to slide. The farmers and ranchers and their families came from all over the community to dance the night away. The kids played outside, and then later went to sleep on quilts under the benches along the sides of the room. There was no electricity until the REA came through in 1943 so lanterns were used for light.

The school had an underground cistern. During school, the children drew the water up in buckets and poured it into a big water cooler on the back porch, where the children had their tin cups hanging. The school had a baseball team with both boys and girls on it, and they played other schools in that part of the county.

There was a home built by the school for the principal or teacher.

For many years the school had one of the few telephones in the community. The teacher who lived next to the school would go all over the community to carry important messages.

During World War II Kasper School was the official site of the U.S. Army and Air Force Air Craft Warning Service. The community citizens volunteered to spot planes that might be flying in the area, then identify and report by telephone to Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio.

Leissner and Alfreda Poth taught at Kasper for many years through the '30's and early '40's and lived in the house by the school. Johnnie Carnes was also a teacher in the earlier years. Nellene and Laverne Jackson also taught in the early '40's.

Up until 1947, the school had 12 grades and three teachers. Then the school was consolidated with Poth High School and the grades 9-12 went by bus into Poth.

In 1947 Richard Wauson became the principal. He and Blondell Dunn taught at Kasper until the school closed in 1950. Then the students went to Dewees or Poth. The Kasper Community itself died out when Kasper School closed. There was no longer a focal point or place to draw them together.



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Kicaster

By Gene Maeckel

Kicaster in northeast Wilson County was a farm and ranch community which came into existence after the American Civil War. An influx of new settlers moved into the area at that time seeking a new life because of the low local land prices, low taxes, and favorable weather conditions. The open range land provided adequate grazing for cattle, horses and swine. The sandy soil was easily cultivated and the rainfall was sufficient for crops and stock tanks. The rainfall also provided a adequate domestic water for shallow water wells and water-gathering cisterns. Post oak, live oak and hickory trees were available for building shelters, corrals, and providing firewood.

The community got its name from the nearby Kicaster Creek, a small stream feeding into the San Antonio River. Initially, a post office was established here in August 1881, and the community was called Easterling, being named after an early area family. A year later the name was changed to Kicaster. The post office was discontinued in June 1901.

The primary roadway through the community was the New Sulphur Springs Road, a roadway just east of the older road to Sutherland Springs. This road, after passing through Sutherland Springs, continued on to Helena toward the Gulf Coast and Indianola. The town site was never platted nor recorded. However, in February 1872, John James a prominent landowner and surveyor in this portion of the county, donated a parcel of land 100 varas by 200 varas for the purpose of a school, and religious and moral meeting places.

In October 1887, another adjoining parcel of land 100 varas by 200 varas was obtained from A. C. and Mary P. Anderson which increased the site size to approximately five acres. This enlarged area provided adequate space for a school and church building and a cemetery. Across the Sulphur Springs Road from this site were the post office and a mercantile store.

The school was established in 1873 with one teacher. At about this same time, a Baptist Church began holding services here. In June 1874, the church adopted the name of Loma China Baptist Church. S o m e t i m e between 1882 and 1885, its name was changed to Sardis Baptist Church. In 1879, a second church was formed and named the Union Methodist Church.

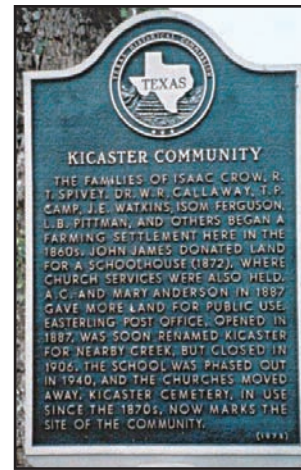
The mercantile store was opened in 1890 by James Aldridge. In 1904, the store was sold and operated by John Burns. In the 1880's a cotton gin was built and operated by W. T. Camp. The gin was not located in the community center but about four miles from Kicaster on the New Sutherland Springs Road toward San Antonio.

The first settler in this area was probably Isaac Crow. He bought land in this area in June 1856 in Survey No. 81 and later additional land in the William Goodwin grant. He farmed and raised cattle and was very active in the Baptist Church.

Another early settler was Gilbert Pettis. He purchased 400 acres out of Survey 124 in January 1868 and was one of the first school trustees. John E. Watkins bought land in the Y. P. Alsbury tract in October 1869. He was also one of the first school trustees. Thomas P. Camp was another of the first school trustees. He purchased land in the John Turner

tract. Isom Fergusonom also purchased part of the John Turner grant in August 1870 and served as another of the first school trustees. Mr. Ferguson died in 1874 and according to the cemetery markers is the first person to be buried in the Kicaster Cemetery. Other early settlers in the area were Dr. W. R. Callaway, Ira Anderson, R. B. Watkins, Robert T. Spivey, Lemon B. Pittman, Daniel B. Lay and J. J. Moore.

Agriculture was the economic base of the community. The first settlers raised crops, cattle, swine and fowl. These primarily served to provide for their immediate needs. In addition, corn, beans, potatoes and other vegetables were raised in gardens. These products plus dried beef, cured pork and wild game provided most of the needs for survival. Very few other items needed to be purchased. These lean rations served the settlers adequately until they were able to



clear the land and grow crops and raise domestic animals. The production in excess of their immediate needs permitted them to trade for other needs such as brood sows, chickens and calves. Some of the excess farm production was also sold for cash which permitted the purchase of clothing, salt, spices, coffee, etc.

Gradually as conditions improved, more cash crops were planted which included watermelons, cantaloupes, sweet potatoes and occasionally some peanuts. Land that had been under cultivation for an extended period declined in productivity. The arrival of the boll weevil also caused a reduction in farm income. This caused a decline in the viability of the community, resulting in the closing of the store and the relocation of the churches. The school remained open for a while longer but it too finally closed. The Kicaster Cemetery is all that remains today of this original community.



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