

# CROSS TIMBERS POST

Editor: Norman L. Newton



Cooke County Website: <http://txgenwebcounties.org/cooke/>

## December, 2019

CROSS TIMBERS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF COOKE COUNTY TEXAS  
PO Box 197  
Gainesville, TX 76241-0197

**Cross Timbers Genealogical Society** was organized in 1977 to provide a forum for those interested in genealogical research and preserving records for the future generations.

Funds raised by the CTGS are used to research, preserve and publish records relating to Cooke County family histories. As a service to other researchers, CTGS has published several books which are for sale.

For more or additional information, please contact any of the officers listed:

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The Cross Timbers Post is published four times a year: March, June September and December. Subscription is by membership in the Society. Annual membership dues are \$15.00 yearly per household. Memberships run from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup> the next year. All correspondence and material relative to the Cross Timbers Post should be directed to: The Editor, P.O. Box 197, Gainesville, Texas 76241-0197.

Note: The Editor of the Cross Timber Post will not be responsible for the accuracy of material printed herein since no proof is required.

**EDITORS' CORNER**

I included an article about a historical marker dedication for the Gainesville State School. Until the day of the ceremony I had not realized the long history of the school. Proud for the Gainesville State School.

Thanks to Ronnie Howser for providing the back trailing history. Additionally thanks to Cass Reasor for providing to me the Ozment query posted in this newsletter.

I hope you enjoy this December issue of the Cross Timbers Post.

Regards, Norman L. Newton, Editor

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## **Meeting Schedules**

Our 2020 meetings will meet in the Landmark Bank meeting room, Gainesville, Texas the first Monday each month at 6:00 pm., except for the months of January & July.

If history interests you please contact one of our officers and/or members who would love to speak to you.

Regards, Norman L. Newton

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## **Following the Ancestor Trail:**

This page covers research material and research locations in Cooke County.

**MUENSTER LIBRARY,**  
418 No. Elm, Muenster, TX

**COOKE COUNTY LIBRARY**  
200 South Weaver St., Gainesville, Texas  
Newspapers, family history, county history, various states, and counties

**COOKE COUNTY-COUNTY CLERK**  
100 South Dixon, Gainesville, Texas (courthouse)  
\*Death, Birth, Marriage records available.  
\*You can look up most records yourself. Copies are \$1.00 per page

**MORTON MUSEUM of COOKE COUNTY**  
210 South Dixon, Gainesville, Texas  
Historical people in Cooke County, various books

**LIBRARY—**1525 W. California St., Gainesville  
Various genealogy magazines, papers, family information, obits

## **Church's in Gainesville with libraries and Archives**

.....  
**First Christian Church**  
401 No. Dixon                      940-665-2053  
Started May 10, 1874      Open Daily

## **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**

415 E. California St. 940-665-4705  
Started August 6, 1885 Open 9 A.M. to 12 Noon Only Look-up's

.....  
**First United Methodist Church**

214 So. Dixon 940-665-3926  
Started 1852

.....  
**First Presbyterian Church**

401 So. Denton 940-665-5153  
Started 1878 Archives

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**

825 No. Weaver 940-665-5395  
Started 1879

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**BACK TRAILING - 95 Years Ago (January – March, 1925)** (Contributed by  
Ronnie Howser)

**Buildings Crowded at Valley View** Thurs. January 1, 1925

Valley View, Dec. 30 – Several business houses of this place have taken on the appearance of large department stores, allowing space to a number of the unfortunate establishments which were made homeless by the second fire at this place. One building is housing a drugstore, shine parlor, pressing parlor, bank, barber shop, and a doctor's office.

The Valley View Drug Co. and the Weiseman Cafe have opened up quarters in the brick building up the north side of the square. The First National Bank has quarters in the rear of the Kilgore Drugstore. Construction work on a number of buildings will commence as soon as the weather permits.

**Log Wagon Sold to Local Man** Tues. January 27, 1925

**J. W. Davis** of this city, who has a contract to haul material for three rigs to locations for oil test wells in Cooke county, has purchased through Schad & Pulte, local hardware and implement dealers, a special 8 wheel log wagon for use in hauling heavy drilling machinery. This wagon has a capacity of 40,000 pounds, and is the largest wagon of its kind to be found in Dallas.

Mr. Davis went to Dallas and obtained the wagon Monday, stopping off at Garza on the return trip to secure some of the material to be used in building a rig in the Callisburg oil field.

Mr. Davis is confident that Cooke county will soon be an oil center and has therefore equipped himself with machinery to various parts of the county where wells are to be drilled in the very near future.

**Clubs and Lodges: Violott Liberty Club Energetic Energetic Organization** Wed. January 28, 1925

The Violott Liberty Club will meet with Mrs. **Neva Winger** on Feb. 13 and will be given a demonstration on salads and cookery by Miss **Ownby**, county home demonstrator. This is one of the most energetic clubs of the county, up to the present time the members having put up nearly two thousand cans of fresh beef. Up to Jan. 10th the club has preserved 825 cans of beef. Since that time the following work has been accomplished by the members: Jan. 13th, 189 No. 8 cans for Mrs. **Mabel Kincy**; Jan. 14th, 111 No. 8 cans for Mrs. **Jewel Garner**; Jan 15th, 111 No. 3 cans for Mrs. **Grace Williams**; Jan 16th, 111 No. 3 cans for Mrs. **Lena Williams**; Jan 20th, 123 No. 3 cans for Mrs. **Fae Williams**; Jan. 21st, 85 No. 3 cans for Mrs. **Charmaine Odom**; Jan 21st, 84 No. 3 cans for Mrs. **Maude Ayres**; Jan. 22nd, 87 No. 3 cans for Mrs. **Bertha Henderson**. This makes a total for the winter, up to the present time of 1,726 cans.

**Son of Most Noted Volunteer Fire Chiefs of State Is a Resident Here** Thurs. January 29, 1926

**Oliver Deats**, store keeper at the Girls Training School of this city, is a son of one of Texas' most noted volunteer fire chiefs, **E. T. Deats**, deceased, in whose memory a magnificent monument was erected on the state capitol grounds in Austin a number of years ago. The elder Deats was chief of the Austin Volunteer Fire Department and lost his life while battling with fire that destroyed the State Blind Institute more than 40 years ago. At that time there were few if any paid firemen in Texas and to be chief of the voluntary department was an even greater honor than holding the office of mayor. Mr. Deats is declared to have been one of the most popular chiefs in the Lone Star State.

At the state convention of fireman held in Gainesville some time after his death, a movement to raise \$40,000 was started and the money was used to erect a monument in memory of Mr. Deats. The beautiful granite structure stands today in the capitol grounds in Austin.

**E. T. Deats Jr.**, also a volunteer fireman, attended a state convention of firemen in Gainesville a number of years since and perhaps will be remembered by some of the older members of the local department.

**Clubs and Lodges: Whaley Community Club Met Friday** Thurs. January 29, 1925

The Whaley Community Club met Friday at the home of Mrs. **M. W. Clayton**, three miles east of the city, with Mrs. **L. M. Almon**, the president presiding. Mrs. **Chester Robb** was elected secretary to succeed Mrs. **Oscar Sellars** who resigned.

Miss **Lela May Ownby**, county home demonstration agent, gave a report on the district agents convention held in Dallas. A report on homework done by the club since November showed 53 pounds of candy and 10 fruit cakes had been made, while canning consisted of 14 quarts of chili, 10 quarts of backbone, 113 quarts of sausage, 12 quarts of soup, 12 quarts of roast, 15 quarts of chow chow, 15 quarts of green tomato pickles, and 24 quarts of mince meat.

"Children's Clothing" was the subject of Miss Ownby's demonstration and suitable patterns, material, and trimmings were discussed. Four romper suits were made by Gainesville high school students and several garments made by club members were inspected.

The hostess, assisted by Miss **Mary Lou** and **Willie Clare Turner**, served pineapple salad, salted nuts, coffee, and whipped cream to fourteen members and four guests.

### **School District Wants Election** Wed. February 11, 1925

A petition signed by **B. F. Watson**, et al, of Fairview Common School District No. 12 in Cooke county, asking that an election to be ordered for the purpose of determining whether or not fifteen bonds of \$150 denomination be issued for school purposes in the district was presented to the commissioners court in session here Tuesday, and the election ordered held on Saturday March 21 with B. F. Watson as presiding officer.

### **Replacing First Deed Records of Cooke County Now** Fri. February 20, 1925

Yellow with age and badly worn through the seventy-five years of handling, Cooke county's first deed book has served its time. County Clerk **Guy Turner** has decided, and accordingly this week, he began the work of transcribing these ancient documents to a brand new book.

The first document in the initial book of the county was the bond of **Daniel Montague**, Cooke county's first surveyor, who surveyed the land and laid out the county. The bond amounted to \$10,000 and was signed by **Jame C. Dickson** and **William B. Carter**, being dated August 10, 1850.

A direct descendant of Daniel Montague is now a resident of Gainesville, **Alex M. Smith**, 107 South Grand Avenue, being a great-grandson, while Mrs. **Elizabeth C. Twitty**, now an inmate of the Confederate Home at Arlington, Texas, who is 89 years of age, a former citizen of Gainesville is a daughter of the pioneer settler of this section and grandmother of Mr. Smith.

### **St. Jo Merchant Who Was Buffalo Hunter in Early Days Recounts His Experiences on Visit to This City** Thurs. February 20, 1925

**J. L. Dowd**, a St. Jo, Texas merchant, was in Gainesville a short time last Sunday and while here a Register reporter had a short but very interesting interview with Mr. Dowd, who is one of the early pioneer settlers of this part of Texas.

Mr. Dowd has been a resident of St. Jo for forty-five years and several years previous to the time of taking up his abode in that now flourishing little village, he spent some years in Wichita county and adjacent west counties buffalo hunting, killing these animals for their hides most of which were later sold to Major **A. Wasson** of Sherman, who was a large dealer in pelt commodities, especially buffalo and cattle hides.

Major Wasson, mentioned above, later resided in Gainesville for a number of years until his death which occurred here several years ago. He was a well known and popular citizen of the community.

#### Wholesale Killing

Mr. Dowd and a brother of his were engaged together in that buffalo slaughter and hide traffic and they frequently killed as many as one hundred of those animals, skinned them, loaded the hides on big wagons drawn by oxen, and then left the carcasses on the wild prairie

where they had fallen and where they rotted or were eaten by vultures, wolves, coyotes and other wild carnivorous beasts. Mr. Dowd says they used high-powered rifles in shooting the buffalo and frequently would deliver a dead shot at a half mile distance. He states that when they would attack a big herd and commence shooting, those animals would just “mill” around and around and all the killer had to do was to stand in his tracks and fire on the moving objects until they killed all they needed on any occasion to secure enough hides to load their wagons which were then driven to Sherman where the pelts were purchased by dealers and shippers in that then frontier town.

Mr. Dowd states that frequently, when they had killed all the animals they wanted at the time, they would have to ride through the herd and scare the live animals away before the dead animals could be taken charge of before the skinning started.

Mr. Dowd said that he and his brother sold to Mr. Wasson alone more than \$25,000 worth of buffalo hides in less than two years.

That great slaughter all occurred not far from where Wichita Falls now stands, which at that time, Mr. Dowd says contained only a blacksmith shop.

Mr. Dowd says “at that time the buffalo was so plentiful, so multitudinous, that he never dreamed it would be possible to exterminate these vast herds, notwithstanding the wholesale slaughter being waged each day on these animals. Yet only after a few years from that time he was engaged, the buffalo was almost extinct and where thousands of the beasts had roamed only a few years before, not an animal of that species lived there to remind one of the innumerable multitudes of the American buffalo that once existed, multiplied, and propagated on the plains of West Texas.

This gigantic buffalo killing that Mr. Dowd recounts took place during the years of 1877 and 1878.

#### First Grist Mill West

Mr. Dowd hauled with ox-teams from Sherman nearly fifty years ago, grist mill machinery used in the first grist mill of the kind in Texas, west of Sherman. That mill was located in Henrietta and did custom work for the people in the surrounding country and for a score of miles distance, many coming to the mill with their corn and wheat grists to be ground for bread making purposes over a distance of 200 miles or more. This was a “roller” mill, the first mill of the kind to be operated in northwest Texas.

#### **Back on Lot** Sat. February 28, 1925

**Pawnee Bill** (Major **Gordon W. Lillie**), former partner of **Buffalo Bill**, who retired from show business in 1918, is organizing a wild west show at his Pawnee (Okla.) ranch which will go to London in May. Though 65, Pawnee Bill is actively directing his new show. King Edward will be the chief patron of the enterprise in England.

#### **Election to Be Ordered at Hood** Tues. March 17, 1925

An election was ordered for the purpose of deciding whether or not a \$17,000 bond issue shall be created by the Hood Independent School district as a result of the presentation of a petition seeking such a request.

**J. C. Bentley**, president of the board, and **G. M. Acker**, a member of the board, were in the city Tuesday morning, confirming with the county superintendent **John S. Hardy** in regard to

the model of the building to be desired. It is planned to have a structure boasting of five classrooms and a spacious auditorium equipped with modern school appliances.

**School Trustees Appointed** Mon. March 17, 1925

**J. W. Safle**, prominent farmer of the Rosston community, was appointed school trustee for the Rosston district No. 54 at a meeting of the county school board which met in the courthouse Monday afternoon with **Sam Briggs, F. H. Dayton, D. H. Spoon** and **E. G. Finnie**, members of the board, present.

The boundary dispute between Elliott and Whaley district was settled, and the dividing line permanently fixed. Three high school transfers were also entered.

**School Trustees Define Boundaries** Tues. March 24, 1925

The county board of school trustees met in the office of **John S. Hardy**, county superintendent of schools, Monday afternoon for the purpose of defining the boundary lines of the Fairview common school district which has been in dispute.

The object of setting the boundary is to complete plans for an election to be held for the purpose of determining whether or not bonds to the amount of \$3,000 be issued for the building of a new school in the district.

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**BACK TRAILING - 53 Years Ago, January – March, 1967** (Contributed by Ronnie Howser)

**Picked Up Passing By** by Jack Joyce Tues. January 17, 1967

**Bob Cooke**, who started a distinguished journalistic career with The Register back in the 1930's, has retired a farm editor of The Abilene Reporter News.

Bob, a native of Cooke County, has been honored many times by his profession. In 1956, the Headliner's Club at Austin presented him and The Reporter News the award for the state's top community service by a newspaper. The citation was in recognition of the Soil Day and Better Pond Use program supervised by Cooke.

Cooke was born on a cotton farm near Hood and he was reared in Haskell and Cooke Counties. After completing Decatur Baptist College, he taught for two years at the former Mt. Hope rural school in his home county. He then attended Baylor University and after receiving the degree he returned to Cooke County to teach at Marysville and Valley Creek. He later became a coach, principal, and finally superintendent at Saint Jo.

In 1929 Bob decided that he wanted to be a newspaper man, so he resigned at Saint Jo and entered the famed School of Journalism at the University of Missouri. It was during his tenure with The Register that he met his wife, the former **Dorothy Thomason** of Gainesville. Cooke worked for The Waco News/Tribune and the Sweetwater Reporter and the Nolan County News before going to the Abilene newspaper 19 years ago.

Mrs. Cooke is the sister of Mrs. **Royal Winters**, 1016 Fay St.

**Federal Funds Sought: Heritage Society Wins Campaign for Building** Wed. January 18,

1967

Persistence paid off for the Cooke County Heritage Society. The organization began a campaign last April to obtain the city's first city hall and fire station at Dixon and Pecan Sts. For a historical museum and today it has it.

The Society's board of directors and friends appeared at the City Council meeting Tuesday night, and after a lengthy discussion left with a five-year lease on the building.

The council voted to grant the lease at a fee of \$1 per year with renewal options to extend it for 25 years.

The Cooke County Heritage Society has two more hurdles to clear:

1. Obtain a \$97,000 federal grant to operate the proposed museum
- 2 . Raise \$32,000 by public subscription for repairing the structure.

The Society began its campaign last April when it successfully halted demolition of the building. The city had been using it for storage of equipment, but abandoned it due to its run-down condition.

The organization made appeals for the building at Council meetings last May 4 and 17. However, on the latter date, councilmen voted to put the lot up for sale, provided it could not be used for fire protection purposes. A study later determined that the lot would not be feasible for the Fire Department.

#### Plan Presented

During a meeting last Aug. 17, the Council agreed to give the Society until Jan. 1, 1967 to come up with a plan for the proposed museum. The organization presented its plan Tuesday night.

Miss **Mary McCain**, one of the original society members, presented a floor plan for the 30 X 90 foot building and introduced Miss **Margaret Parx Hays**, president.

Miss Hays disclosed that an application for a \$97,000 federal grant had been sent to Washington, D. C. She also reported that original estimates of \$10,000 to repair the building had been raised to \$32,000.

The Council was told the Society is working through Cooke County Superintendent **E. F. (Kit) Carson**'s office for the grant. The request was made under Title II of the Primary and Secondary Education Act of 1964, she said. "Actually, this is an application for federal funds to establish and operate a museum center to supplement the teaching of state and local history." Miss Hays added "We expect action on our request between April 14-17."

The grant is for one year's operation of the proposed museum. Additional grants will have to be requested each year for the next two years, with the program terminating in 1970.

Miss Hays said that 55 per cent of the grant will go for salaries, transportation, and consultation. Salaries would run 37 per cent, including \$12,000 per year for a museum director, \$8,000 for a chief of exhibits, \$6,000 for an accessions registrar, \$5,000 for a bookmobile driver, and \$4,000 for a secretary. About \$25,000 will be allocated for capital expenditures. These include photographic equipment, visual aids, a bookmobile, and other equipment.

#### Two Purposes

Miss Hays said that the museum would serve a six-county area – Cooke, Denton, Grayson, Montague, Wise, and Collin Counties. "The facility would serve two purposes, " she pointed out, "as an aid to schools in their teaching programs and as a tourist attraction."

Councilman **Vern Brewer** asked how the museum would be financed after federal grants were cut off. Miss Hays replied: "I don't think schools in the six counties would be able to do

without it and would support the museum.” She added that other groups and foundations would offer support, in addition to the museum selling artifacts and possibly charging fees for classroom teaching.

Carson told the Council that his office had made application for the grant with the Heritage Society to serve as the operating board. “The philosophy of our office is that we should take advantage of any educational opportunity for our children,” he said. “This grant is aimed directly at education and teaching programs.”

**Herman J. Naumer**, director of the Fort Worth Children's Museum, and **Sam Godfrey**, member of the Texas Tourist Development Agency in Austin, appeared on behalf of the Society. He stressed the educational value to children by utilizing a museum as a teaching aid and by showing children objects.

Godfrey pointed out the value of a museum in attracting tourists to a city. He said that 80,000 to 100,000 tourists could be drawn to a community each year by an up-to-date museum and companion developments. “This would amount to a \$1,000,000 industry,” he said.

#### Board Optimistic

Miss Hays and other board members were optimistic about federal approval of the grant. She said the Society hopes to have the proposed museum in operation by September and completed by December this year. A campaign to raise the \$32,000 will be launched immediately she reported.

#### **J. B. Cason Retires From Katy Railroad** Wed. February 1, 1967

**J. B. Cason**, section foreman for the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, has been retired after 39 years of service.

Cason, who was born Nov. 5, 1900 near Woodbine, saw his first railroad work with the Texas and Pacific at Collinsville. He joined that company on Dec. 12, 1920 and put in five years as a laborer.

Not satisfied with working conditions, Cason quit the T & P. Four days later he took a foreman examination on July 12, 1930 and has served as a foreman for 20 years.

Most of Cason's work with the Katy has been in and around Cooke County, but he has “bumped” fellow employees to stay on the job. “During the depression, I managed to stay on the job by moving around and bumping people with less seniority,” Cason said.

Cason and his crews were handling only five miles of line to a section when he first started working for the Katy. When he retired from the company on Dec. 31, there were 61 miles in a section.

Cason's first job as a section foreman was in Nocona, where he served as a relief man. From there he has been up and down the Katy tracks more times than he cares to mention.

The Gainesville man helped lay tracks into Denison and remembers one of the hardest jobs he had was to help replace a mile of railroad track which washed out west of Muenster.

A member of the Muenster Baptist Church, Cason has been Sunday School superintendent there for 15 years. He formerly resided there. He has held membership in the Masonic Lodge for 25 years, has held most of the offices in the Blue Lodge, and is past worshipful master of the Myra Lodge.

An avid raccoon hunter, Cason hopes to devote more time to the hobby, now that he is retired. He always keeps a few hounds for his coon hunting trips.

**1870 Statute: Horse Is Just a Horse** by Wayne King, Dallas Times Herald Writer for The Associated Press Thurs. February 9, 1967

Dallas (AP) An automobile may be a carriage and a truck may be a wagon but a horse is just a horse as far as the law is concerned at least.

This is the implication of an 1870 Texas statute that is still on the books. It deals with property that might be held exempt from forced sale for the payment of debts. The statute lists 24 items which cannot be taken from a family by creditors. A single person with no dependents though can keep only five items.

Among the 24 items are a carriage or buggy and two horses and a wagon. No mention is made of motor vehicles, perhaps because there wasn't any in 1870. There are millions of them in Texas now, however, and a footnote to the statute reads: "Courts have held trucks exempt as wagons and automobiles as carriages."

Courts nowadays have been forced to fall back on the intent of the legislation, which was to prevent a creditor from depriving a family of its livelihood or means of transportation. But the single man who goes bankrupt or is put under a civil judgment may have his car seized anyway, because the statute reserves to him only, "one horse, saddle, and bridle."

"Texas courts apparently have not held that a single person's car is equivalent to a horse. But a Dallas judge says he will so rule if the issue ever arises.

The statute harks back to a time when most Texans were farmers and ranchers. It exempts from seizures, for example, "all implements of husbandry, five milk cows and their calves, one gun, 20 head of sheep, and all provisions and forage on hand for home consumption."

Other family property that cannot be seized includes: the family homestead, all household and kitchen furniture, the family library, and all family portraits and pictures; two mules, 20 hogs; all saddles, bridles, and necessary harness for the use of the family; 20 goats, 50 chickens, 30 turkeys, 30 ducks, 20 geese, 30 guineas, and a dog.

But the single person, besides the horse, saddle, and bridle, can retain only the following, which is also exempt for families: all tools, apparatus and books belonging to any trade or profession; all wearing apparel, cemetery lots held for burial; and current wages for personal services.

The moral of all this may be if headed for bankruptcy, get married first.

**Arlington National: Pentagon Orders Stricter Regulations in Cemetery** Sat. February 11, 1967

Washington (AP) Arlington National Cemetery is temporarily running out of burial space, so the Pentagon is imposing stricter eligibility requirements. Only active and retired career servicemen, plus Medal of Honor winners, and high government officials can be buried at Arlington effective next week, an announcement Friday said. That means virtually all non-career veterans will be barred from the famed cemetery on the gently rolling Virginia hillsides across the Potomac River from Washington.

The cemetery includes the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the grave of President **John F. Kennedy**. It was the burial site early last week of Apollo Lt. Col. **Virgil I. Grissom** and Lt. Commander **Roger B. Chaffee**.

One Veteran group, the American Veterans of World War II (amvets) said it would ask the

President and Congress to reconsider the move by the Army which administers the cemetery.

The Pentagon said the policy change does not apply to the other 67 national cemeteries. It plans to add about 60,000 more grave sites adjacent to Arlington beginning in December 1969. But only 6, 137 sites remain now available, less than a year's requirements, at the current rate of more than 7,000 burials annually.

Non-career veterans and their dependents, who now will be barred, made up about half of last year's burials. The Pentagon said the Vietnam war accounted for 290 burials last year and "has not been a major factor" in the space shortage.

The Pentagon stated the new policy "does not affect previous commitments to eligible survivors" of persons already buried there. It also said the Golden Gate, Calif.; Camp Nelson, Ky; and Ft. Harrison, Va.. National Cemeteries are expected to become inactive this year because of lack of space.

Additional space is planned later for these places, and cemeteries at Beverly, Ind. and Ft. Rosencrans, Calif. The latter has used up their uncommitted spaces.

The Pentagon said there is no other plan to establish or expand the National Cemetery System. Thirty two of the existing national cemeteries have no grave sites available.

### **School Consolidation Election Set April 1** Fri. February 28, 1967

Elections on consolidation of the Myra Common and Muenster Independent School Districts will be held April 1.

Judge **William Carroll** set the elections Monday after **Earl Fisher** of Muenster presented the petitions Friday.

The Myra petition contains the signatures of 27 residents of the common district, which is now dormant. It requests that this district join the Muenster District.

The Muenster petition contains the names of 29 residents of this district and requests that the Myra District be accepted.

Muenster voters will ballot at the public school, with **Joe Luke**, presiding judge, and **Leo Henscheid**, assistant.

Students at the Myra School have been attending classes at Muenster, Lindsay, and Era since their facility became dormant almost two years ago.

The County Board of Trustees has the authority to divide pupils from a school among other districts after it has been dormant for two years. The two years on the Myra Common District will have expired this May.

A great amount of interest is predicted to arise from the proposed consolidation.

### **Coke Plant Boss: Wilson Honored Upon Retirement** Sat. March 4, 1967

"Things go better with Coke," the sign said. "Nobody knows better than Roland." And the sign was probably right. **Roland Wilson** has spent the past 34 years telling Gainesville area folks that things go better with Coke.

Wilson, 814 S. St., has been manager of Gainesville's Cocoa-Cola Bottling Co. for those 34 years. He retired Friday midst the praise and gifts of his fellow workers.

Wilson and his wife were the center of attention at a surprise party, held at the bottling plant. The sign mentioned earlier was only a part of the colorful decoration arranged for the event. All of the decorations were, of course, with a Coca-Cola flavor.

**Frankie Schmitz**, owner of the Coca-Cola Plant, acted as master of ceremonies for the program. He lauded Wilson for his faithful services, while employees of the plant applauded. "We have 209 years of service among our employees here," Schmitz beamed.

Schmitz revealed that Wilson's successor as manager of the plant is **T. J. Owens**, an employee of the Gainesville Coca-Cola Bottling Co. for 12 years. The 34 year old Owens and his family currently reside on the Callisburg Road.

Owens presented Wilson with a gift on behalf of the employees of the local firm.

**Dick Noggle**, a Coca-Cola Co. official from Dallas, was present for the party. He praised Wilson for his long service.

Wilson thanked the group for the party and then gave a history of the growth of the local business. He noted that the first bottling company here was a one-man operation that could be housed in one of the current storage rooms.

Cake and cold drinks – you guessed it, Coca-Cola – were served.

### **School Board Action: Booker T. Washington District Is Eliminated** Tues. March 7, 1967

Members of the Gainesville Independent School District board Monday night trimmed in two, half of it going to the Franklin District and the remaining half of the Lindsay Elementary School District. The new division will transfer 49 students to Franklin and 74 to Lindsay.

Superintendent **Wilbur Echols** told members of the board that the new division line between Franklin and Lindsay schools will be Cummings and Miller Sts., from the railroad tracks to Interstate 35. Students residing on the north side of these two streets will attend Franklin School, while students on the south side will attend Lindsay School.

Bus transportation will be provided if they are required to go outside their district and in special hardship cases.

Division of Booker T. District became necessary when board members voted to close the school last fall in compliance with total desegregation of Gainesville schools.

### **Now Proposed Site for Heritage Society Museum: Architect Saw First Gainesville Fire Station as 'Ornament to the City'** by Ralph Cole, Register Area Editor Thurs. March 23, 1967

Only the birds are chirping in the Cooke County Heritage Society's museum at the present time. And even they aren't too sure just how long their nesting grounds will remain intact.

Gainesville City Council recently granted the Heritage Society a five-year lease on the building, which is located at the intersection of Dixon and Pecan Sts. It is subject to renewal for a period of 25 years at \$1 per year rental. The lease came, however, after a crew of Gainesville fireman started razing the structure.

Constructed in 1884 at a cost of \$7,643.55, the building was one of the best in town at that time. It served the city as the first fire station, city hall, and jail.

Members of the Heritage Society estimate it will take \$32,000 to renovate the structure for use as a museum. A quick trip through the building will convince most people it will require at least that amount. A leaky water pipe greets visitors upon entry. An old stove pipe hangs from the ceiling, trash litters the floor, most of the windows are broken, and bricks are crumbling from the walls. A sign on the wall says "closed, stay out," It's been there for years and shows signs of age.

### 'Ornament to City'

"An ornament to the city" is the way **J. J. Kane**, architect, described the building at a city council meeting on Nov. 6, 1884. The building had been completed at that time with the exception of a few minor corrections by the contractor, **Edward Fleetford**.

A committee of three was named to secure a site for the new city hall on Nov. 6, 1883. They were **William Hudson**, **D. L. Painter**, and **R. L. Gribble**. The lot chosen cost the city \$1,000, payable over a period of three years at 10 per cent interest.

Fleetford was apparent low bidder on construction of the two-story building to be used as a city prison, fireman's hall, and for the office of mayor, **A. E. Dodson**, and other city officials. Bids were asked for on June 8, 1884 after city property valuations had reached \$1,971.34.

Dodson was authorized to advertise for bids "in all the local papers and the Fort Worth Gazette."

Dodson and other members of the council agreed to sell "coupon bonds" for \$10,000 to finance the construction. Twenty \$500 bonds were sold and carried an interest rate of eight per cent in semi-annual payments on the first day of February and August each year. The first bond was dated Aug. 1, 1884.

Local taxpayers felt the "bite" of the new building. Councilmen added seven and one half cents per \$100 of evaluation to the tax to pay for the structure.

At that time Gainesville was becoming increasingly more conscious of fire damage. **L. A. Cash** had been appointed acting fire chief of Gainesville Fire Dept. On March 5, 1883. The city's first fire warden, **W. D. Garvey**, was named on Aug. 5, 1884, after a split vote of the council. His nomination was approved on a four to three vote with the mayor breaking the tie.

Garvey's duties as the warden were to inspect all flues, stove pipes and other possible causes of fire in the city and to take charge of the city's fire-fighting apparatus. He was required to sleep in the new city hall-fire station at night and received a monthly salary of \$50.

Garvey was given the power of arrest at the time he was named fire warden.

On Aug. 5, 1884 the council awarded a contract for plumbing the new city hall to the Old Gainesville Water Co. on a bid of \$450. The water company later became mired down in financial troubles.

Dodson sold the city bonds on Aug. 4, 1884 through the bonding firm of Nelson and Noel of St. Louis, Mo. The company kept two and one half per cent of the total sale as a commission and the city actually received only \$9,750 of the \$10,000 in bonds.

Money received from the sale of bonds was deposited in Gainesville National Bank. Bonds for construction of the building were sold in turn to the National Park Bank of New York City.

#### Three Fire Companies

Three fire companies already were organized when construction of the new fire station started. They were the Red Jacket Hook and Ladder Co., Rescue Hose Company No. 1, and Alert Hose Company No. 2.

The Red Jacket company listed one hook and ladder truck, six ladders, nine rubber buckets, two axes, and two trumpets among its equipment at the time. Rescue Company owned one carriage, 900 feet of hose, six grapplers, 16 spanners, and a number of belts, badges, and rubber coats and suits, while the Alert Hose Co. had 950 feet of hose, six grapplers, 14 belt spanners, and two hydrant spanners.

Fleetford, the architect, reported to the council on Nov. 6, 1884 that the new building was completed except for minor corrections. He recommended the city withhold \$350 from the contract until the work was completed.

The buildings original contract price was \$7,424, but the addition of five windows, the hanging of a bell, a change in the "calaboose," and plastering of the lower story increased the price of \$7,643.55. The final \$350 payment was made to **J. G. Leeper**, agent for Ed Fleetford, on Dec. 8, 1884, and the building went into public use. Leeper was a partner in the bonding firm of Leeper and Frick.

Ladies of a Gainesville church used the building as a meeting place, prompting the council to pass a resolution stating that "After Jan. 1, 1885, the new city hall will be used for no purposes except which it was originally intended." The resolution was unanimously adopted.

#### Buy Two Horses

A motion at the same meeting was approved to purchase two horses for the fire department. The mayor was authorized to make temporary arrangements with a livery stableman for use of horses in case of fire.

The new city hall-fire station received lights in 1894 just 10 years before Gainesville residents voted a \$20,000 bond issue for erection of a new city hall. Then bonds were voted in 1904 and the building was erected and first occupied on Feb. 7, 1906.

As far as is known the Red Jacket Hook and Ladder Co. was the last fire fighting unit in the city. **G. M. Rousseau** was president of the company and other officers were **B. P. Garvey**, vice-president; **Charles Hunt**, foreman; **S. Murdock**, first assistant; **A. Newton**, second assistant; **Frank Carroll**, secretary; and **W. L. Bird**, treasurer.

A fourth ward fire company was created in 1885, a year after hose carts were ordered rebuilt to make them horse drawn.

Garvey's appointment as fire warden was made to replace a special fire committee named in 1873. **J. C. Latimer** and **W. W. Howeth**, city councilmen, along with a regular voter, **R. S. Rollins**, were members of the committee. Their primary job was to examine fire places, stoves, and buildings, and to make recommendations on eliminating fire hazards. There was no fire department in the city at that time, and three ladders were provided for each side of the courthouse square by the city council for use in case of fire.

Construction of the new city hall also opened a new era for law enforcement. Prior to construction of that building, the city and county had no effective method of holding prisoners.

The late **A. Morton Smith** in his book, The First 100 years of Cooke County said the sheriff arrested men and turned them over to a deputy to guard with a pistol. The prisoner very often had the pistol and was gone in a short time." Thus the new city hall-fire station also included a jail to detain criminals.

The old fire station remained in use until 1918, when the present Central Fire Station was constructed. **J. Z. Keel** was mayor at the time. L. R. Wright Construction Co. built the Central Fire Station and **E. O. Taylor** was the architect.

Since that time the original fire station-city hall has been used for storage. The second floor was torn away many years ago, and the bottom floor was to be razed last year until a group of interested citizens intervened.

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On October 1, 2019 a Historical Marker dedication was held at the Gainesville State School. The agenda included Mr. Bill Parks, Superintendent, Dr. Rachel Lively, Principal who read a history of the school. Also four Cooke County Historical Commission members were in attendance. The marker was unveiled by State Representative, Drew Springer. Others in

attendance were Cooke County Judge, Jason Brinkley, Commissioners Gary Hollowell and Jason Snuggs.



Cooke County Historical Commission members, L/R Ona B. Reed, Bill Cox, Norman Newton, Ron Melugin-Chairman

Marker reads;

**GAINESVILLE STATE SCHOOL**

*AUTHORIZED BY THE THIRTY-THIRD TEXAS LEGISLATURE IN 1913, THE TEXAS STATE TRAINING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS OPENED ON 160 ACRES EAST OF GAINESVILLE IN 1916. INITIALLY HEADED BY DR. CARRIE WEAVER SMITH, THE FACILITY OFFERED EDUCATION, AGRICULTURAL AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS TO GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN. AGNES STEPHENS WAS SUPERINTENDENT FROM 1925 TO 1941. CAMPUS FACILITIES WERE ADDED AND IMPROVED OVER THE YEARS. INCLUDING COTTAGES, AND ACADEMIC BUILDINGS, AND GYMNASIUM. IN 1966, THE SCHOOL WAS RACIALLY INTEGRATED, AND IN 1974, IT BECAME CO-EDUCATIONAL AND RENAMED GAINESVILLE STATE SCHOOL. IN 1988, THE SCHOOL BECAME AN ALL-MALE JUVENILE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY. AFTER MORE THAN A CENTURY IN OPERATION, THE SCHOOL CONTINUES TO CARE FOR YOUNG TEXANS IN NEED.*

(2018)

MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

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## Query – Andrew Ozment

Received from Cross Timbers Genealogical Society member, Caroline Miller. [millerivan@comcast.net](mailto:millerivan@comcast.net)

My 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandfather, Andrew Clinton Ozment, lived in Burns City. The story goes that he took some livestock to Gainesville, sold them, and was robbed and murdered on the way home, on 1 November 1883. The murder was never solved, as far as I know.

I have talked to several cousins about the murder, and their stories vary. My notes say:

“Selected U.S. Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880

Name: Andy Ozment

Location: Precinct 3, Cooke, Texas, USA

Enumeration Date: 12 Jun 1880

Schedule Type: Agriculture

OS Page: 21

Line Number: 08

... Andy Ozment rented on shares; he farmed 75 tilled acres, 1 acre of orchard, and 125 acres of woodland. The farm was worth \$1240, with another \$10 worth of implements, \$1000 of live stock. He spent \$15 in repairs in 1879, and \$45 for farm labor for 60(?) weeks of work. Estimated valued of production in 1879 was \$350. Andy had 1 horse, 0 mules, 18 milch cows, 100 others, and 8 calves dropped; he purchased 80 cattle and sold 16. He made 100 lbs. of butter in 1879. He had 10 swine; 17 poultry which laid 186 dozen eggs in 1879. He raised 25 acres of Indian Corn, which yielded 4000 bushels; 15 acres of cotton which yielded 4 bales. He cut 4 cords of wood worth \$8.

According to Loveta Ozment Ravize, in a telephone conversation on 28 Nov 1998, Andrew was murdered. Family stories say he was shot by "one of the Pierce boys", but no newspaper accounts or substantiating details have been found. Wanda Daggett remembers the grown-ups whispering about "Uncle Clint" when she was a child; later she found out that he ran a saloon in town, and was robbed and shot on the way home, and found dead alongside the road the next day. He was supposed to have a large amount of money on him, which was never found.

Winifred Ozment Johnson, in a phone conversation on 18 March 2000, said that Andrew was not associated with a saloon - - "that was 'Uncle Mack'", the Sheriff of Gainesville. Andrew took a herd of cattle to Gainesville on 1 November to sell them so he wouldn't have to feed them over the winter. On his way home, about dusk, he was shot in the head. His horse came home with no rider, alerting Robert Henry and his brothers, who went looking for Andrew. They found him by the side of the road, stripped of all valuables. He had a lot of money from the sale of the cattle, but it was never found. Rumor said that two young men from prominent families in the community were responsible, but they were never prosecuted and the murder was "hushed up". Winifred says it definitely wasn't the Pierce boys.

Willen Ozment Davis tells this story of Andy's murder: "A. Clinton (b) 1843 or 1844, was ambushed in the late days of October in 1884 by four men never known, died Nov 1 1884, 40 years old. This is my Grandfather who was returning from a cattle drive to Missouri with money from the sale in saddle bags on horse, he was trying to get to Dallas, Texas to bank it. He was not able to tell who ambushed him, but he knew who it was. I am told by some that the "A" stands for Arthur, but I am doubtful for I think it was Andrew. ... All of our people were Masons and my grandfather was a Grand Master in Cooke County for his head stone proves it as told. I have tried to find his record, but they say there isn't one ..."

*Clint Ozment, whom we published last week as being badly hurt by a stroke on the head, died a week ago last evening from the effects of the stroke, which is believed to have been a kick by the horse which he was riding at*

*the time. He was perhaps thrown from the horse. He was alone when hurt and never become able to tell how he got hurt! -Alvord Messenger, Nov. 9, 1883, p.3, c.3."*

Obviously, between the family accounts and the newspaper article, there are major discrepancies. The paper never mentioned the large amount of money missing. I thought you might have some insight or access to somebody else's research.

Andrew Clinton Ozment was born in Mississippi 11 October 1843 and died outside of Burns City on 1 November 1883. He is buried in the Ozment Cemetery in Burns City. His wife was Margaret Malinda Pierce; they married in January 1869 and had 7 children, the second of whom was my great-grandmother, Mary Elizabeth "Sweet" Ozment, who married Daniel Hinkle Tipton. There were Tiptons in Cooke County at least until 1961, when Dan Tipton died at age 91 in Gainesville.

Andy and Malinda were also the parents of Elnora Ozment, the mother of Gene Autry.

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