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BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION PLANNED

The citizens of Borden County are planning a Bi-Centennial Celebration to be held in Gail on the 29th and 30th of May, A. D. 1976. The celebration is being planned with much enthusiasm and great expectations for a good time for all who attend.

There will be a parade and program on Saturday and Special Church Services and Recognition of Old-Timers on Sunday. Make your plans early and be with us in Gail, Borden County, Texas and help us have a big Bi-Centennial Celebration and pay honor to our forefathers and our Great Country. We will have more details in future issues of the BORDEN CITIZEN.

TEXAS CATTLE BRANDS

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BORDEN COUNTY BRANDS

Cattle brands have been called the Heraldry of the West, Coats of Arms on Rawhide. Certainly the heraldic banners of England have contributed no more to the colorful history of Britian than have cattle brands to American History. Longhorn cettle, their hides burned with Texas Brands, broke the trail of settlement, not only into West Texas but into all states North and West. Cattle from Texas had been driven into Louisiana and Missouri as early as 1842. In 1846, 1,000 head were driven to Ohio for fattening. In the 1850's there were drives to California and Chicago and after the Civil War the first herd was sent to Montana. The daring and enterprise of the men who drove these herds, facing unknown and untold dangers in a land of almost no trails and no inhabitants except hostile Indians and renegade white men, set the pattern for the type of men who braved the frontiers and pushed them Westward before the march of civilization.

For the next two decades, cattle wearing Texas Brands stocked the ranges, fed the Indians, miners and railroad builders and furnished the nucleus of the cattle industry in Western America. Many Texas cattle brands probably became more widely recognized than were ever the Heraldic bearings of European Nobility.

The history of branding livestock reaches back into antiquity. Branding scenes were pictured in Egyptian tombs almost 3,000 years before the birth of Christ, and the methods shown are almost identical to those still in use. Jacob, in Old Testament times, branded his livestock. Branding has been a means of identification and proof of ownership throughout history. Brands have been burned on slaves, on all types of livestock and poultry, and there is even a method for branding bees! Bales, boxes and casks of goods shipped by rail or boat are branded with the mark of the owner. Bags of wool are identified by the grower's brand.

And not even the ingenuity of modern science or the crocodile tears of d0-gooders, have been able to devise a more effective method of identifying cattle than a brand made with a seering hot iron. Brands have always been an essential part of the ranching

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industry. To the cowman, whether he brands a few head or many thousands, his brand is a proud symbol of ownership, exclusively his, and usually originated by him or his forefather. He displays it with pride on all of his possessions which are brandable. This is his trade mark, telling the world that these are his products and his possessions, backed by his reputation and self-esteem and THIEVES, BEWARE!

The history of the American West and of its industries is reflected in the history of its cattle brands, and much of the history of Borden County is recorded in the Brand Books at the County Courthouse. Since the County was not organized until 1891 and no brands were recorded in Borden County until then, we must go to other sources for the earliest brands worn by cattle that grazed in Borden County. Don Bigger, early day newspaperman and historian, quotes John Lovelady, who established a ranch "Just East of the Plains, and not far from the North line of what is now Borden County" in the summer of 1879, as listing only two ranchers in Borden County at that time. One was "Willis Holloway, located at the springs on Bull Creek", and the other was John Beal. The Beals brought a herd of cattle to Borden County and wintered them on Beal Hollow in the winter of 1879. The next year they established what Lovelady called the Buckle B Ranch. This was the Jumbo, which covered parts of five Counties. The Loving Brand Book, laboriously compiled to identify brands of cattle in the general roundups prior to 1884 lists:

Adams and Holloway, Borden County
Catlett and Malin, Head of Colorado River
Clay Mann, Kent and Borden Counties
C. C. Slaughter, Colorado River.

All these men, except Col. C. C. Slaughter, whose home was in Dallas, gave their address as Colorado City, the nearest Post Office.

Adams was a Colorado City merchant. Adams and Holloway are the first names in the Borden County Deed Records, a recording made in 1883. Willis Holloway lived for a time in Borden County and a canyon running down from the Caprock bears the Holloway name. John Holloway also lived here and his wife died in Borden County. The Holloway name is one that has been known and respected wherever cowmen have gathered since Texas statehood. The Holloways came to Texas in 1818 before Stephen F. Austin.

Catlett and Malin were very early Colorado City cowmen. They and Willis Holloway are included in a list of men having homes in Colorado City and "being worth or controlling cattle to the value of one hundred thousand dollars or more", in the years 1886-87. This list is a part of "A History of Colorado" by Judge R. H. Looney.

John Hendrix of Sweetwater, in his book, "If I Can Do It Horseback", says that Clay Mann, coming from Coleman County, brought the first cattle to the Mitchell County area before Colorado City was founded. As early as 1878, Mann Cattle with the "80" brand burned "from their back bone to their belly" were running near the Double Mountains in Kent and Garza Counties. Later "80" cattle were driven into many West Texas areas and into New Mexico. Mann also established a big ranch in Chihuahua, Mexico. He died in 1889. His descendants at Colorado City still bear the "Clay Mann" name and run the famous "80" brand.

Many of the early brands, in order to discourage rustlers, and for easy identification, were very large, usually spread all over a cow's side. Such was the *EH* on side, *P* on hip and *MOON* brands of Catlett and Malin. John Chisum of Jingle-Bob fame, branded a fence rail, extending from shoulder to tail. Each of the cowmen listed, recorded several brands, indicating that they had purchased cattle and brands from various sources. The brands for which they were best known may not be among the first recorded. Col. C. C. Slaughter's famous Long S, *S* was not registered in the Borden County Brand Book until 1915. Soash, a ghost town, just over the Howard County line, was given as the address. Too bad these men did not record the names of their brands, but, of course, they could not imagine anyone being so illiterate as to not be able to read them. Some of these cowmen could not read, but the language of brands held no mysteries for them. Reading brands is now fast becoming a lost art. Clay Mann listed one which resembles a house, *△* but is probably read Half Diamond Square or Block. Another he gave was *⊙* with the notation "These circle dot cattle are scattered from the head of San Saba River to the Powder River range in Wyoming.

Col. C. C. (Lum) Slaughter, who made his first dollars hauling hides and lumber, traded those dollars for cows instead of buying himself a saddle. He worked those cows "riding slick", and became one of the world's best known cowmen. His *S* range is said to have extended at one time over 14,000,000 acres. In 1905, after the country was fenced, probably 100,000 head of cattle running on 1,500,000 acres wore the *S* brand. For years he was the largest individual taxpayer in Texas and sold more cattle on the open market than any other man. Many West Texas Counties lay claim to Col. C. C. Slaughter and his Long S Ranch and rightfully so. His cattle ranged from North of Big Spring almost to Plainview. Perhaps few people know that this great cattle empire had its beginnings in Borden County. Most historians of the Western Range say that Col. Slaughter established his first headquarters at the mouth of Bull Creek on the Colorado River. "Headquarters" was a dugout covered with brush and dirt, a bull hide, swung by the tail served as the door, and a hole in the creek bank was the chimney for the dirt fire place. Later the "headquarters" was moved to German Springs, near Gunsite Mountain on



M K TRAIL HERD ON CIMMARON RIVER 1896

C the line of Borden and Howard Counties. Eugene H. Price in his book, "Open Range Ranching on the South Plains in the 1890's", says of the Slaughters Long S, "Their headquarters at the head of Tobacco Creek was said to have been the first major ranching venture upon the Plains in that part of the country after the Indians were removed." Jot Smythe, who was wagon boss on "the Colonel's" Rattlesnake range in Howard and Borden Counties, was told by Brooks Davis, cowboy, that he drove a herd of 500 cows and calves from Palo Pinto County to the head of Tobacco Creek and branded out the calves in a rock corral that was there at the head of the canyon. The chuck wagon on the drive was pulled by two yoke of oxen, and Indians stole their horses which were left behind before the men got back to Palo Pinto. The Long S is said to have had its beginnings in 1877 and this was supposed to have been the first herd driven West by Col. Slaughter.

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◇ David J. Murrah of Texas Tech University, says in an article in the West Texas Historical Association's Year Book entitled "C. C. Slaughter's Lazy S. Ranch" that in 1877 Colonel Slaughter bought 5,000 steers and heifers in South Texas, wintered them near the present site of San Angelo and then moved them to the head waters of the Colorado River North of Big Spring. This may have been the first big herd driven into Borden County. However, it is thought that Willis and John Holloway were living in Borden County and running cattle here at that time, although they are not listed among the three families and twelve "servant-herdsmen" enumerated in the 1880 Borden County Census.

ERB OS Colonel Slaughter may not have been the first to bring cattle to Borden County but he was a man of many firsts. He was the first child born of Anglo-Saxon parents in the Republic of Texas. His father, George Slaughter, came to Texas in 1830. The first cattle shipped from Abilene, Kansas, were trailed there by Lum Slaughter. He was the first native born "cattle king" and he was the first cowman to import superior blood lines to improve the Texas long horn cattle. As early as 1875, he was adding purebred stock to his herds and in 1884, he purchased ten carloads of Hereford Bulls for his range. In 1897 he owned 57 bulls which he believed to be the best in America, if not in the world. His purebred cattle won many prizes at stock shows. He was among the first to advocate advertising to further the consumption of beef, though he probably never heard the "Eat More Beef" slogan. According to Dr. W. C. Holder's book entitled, "Rollie Burns" he was the first cowman to furnish his "punchers" with canned goods to supplement their flour, coffee and beans. More than a million dollars given to charity in his lifetime is one of the Colonel's credits.

JD The head of Tobacco range still belongs to the Slaughter heirs and the Colonel's great grandson John Henry Dean III has his brand JD currently registered in the Borden County Brand Book.

MK -EH P MOON Other cowmen who were included in Judge Looney's list of "Cattle Barons" and who ran cattle in Borden County in the 1880's and 1890's were John T. Beal, Guff Beal, F. G. Oxsheer, W. V. Johnson, Winfield Scott, A. B. (Sug) Robertson, J. B. Slaughter and A. P. Bush. An article on the Jumbo Ranch, published The Borden Citizen, Vol. IV, No. 4, June, 1969, told the story of John T. and "Guff" Beal and F. G. Oxsheer in Borden County. Vol. VI, No. 4 of the Borden Citizen published June 1971 carried an article on Major Willa V. Johnson and the Magnolia Cattle and Land Company which he organized and managed. Major Johnson in 1883 fenced the first big pasture in West Texas, enclosing perhaps two thirds of Borden County. Willis Holloway traded his cattle to Johnson for stock in the M K Company and Catlett and Malin sold their cattle and range rights to the MK. The brands which they had used, -EH on side, P on hip, and MOON were registered by the Magnolia in 1892. Eugene Price says that the "Crooked Seven" people, Adams and Holloway, also ran cattle around Portales Spring, New Mexico.

MOON John B. Slaughter, a younger brother of C. C. Slaughter, did not come to Borden County as early as did "the Colonel". Beginning his trail driving career at the age of 17, driving cattle for his father, George Webb Slaughter, and brother, C. C. Slaughter, he acted out in real life many of the dramas of Western Fiction, including several Indian fights, in one of which he was wounded. Twice Indians stole their remuda of horses while they were on the trail, once leaving them in Indian Territory with 2,000 head of cattle and only one horse each. They continued on to Abilene, Kansas and arrived there driving the herd afoot.

In 1877, the year C. C. Slaughter came to Borden County, John and W. B. Slaughter,

another brother, became partners in trailing steers to market. By 1880, John had established a ranch in Blanco Canyon in Crosby County. In the next ten years, he ranched near Socorro, New Mexico, Salt Lake City, Utah, and back on the Texas-New Mexico line. In 1890 he established a 160 section ranch in Glasscock County and was made president of the Peoples' National Bank in Colorado City. Following the disastrous years of blizzards and droughts in the mid 1890's John Slaughter shipped most of his cattle to market. For the remnant he leased fresh grass in Borden and Garza Counties. In 1899 he purchased the Square and Compass ~~XX~~ ranch holdings, 150,000 acres and 5,000 head of cattle owned by Nave McCord Cattle Company and located along the Double Mountain Fork of the Brazos River on the line of Borden and Garza Counties. Abram Nave and James McCord were wholesale grocerymen from Saint Joseph, Missouri, who along with many Eastern capitalist and some foreign nobility invested in cattle during the booming 1880's. It is said that "when Mr. Nave and McCord were enroute to the Square and Compass they were accompanied by colored body servants to attend their wants enroute and at the ranch. They brought with them by express, a specially made hack and a spanking team of Missouri bays for personal use in traveling from Colorado City to their headquarters", which were near the present John Slaughter ranch headquarters. In their private room at the ranch, their carpeted floor, silken bedspreads and bath tub were the wonder of all the cowboys. Their Square and Compass brand is said to be the oldest brand in the South, a statement which is perhaps based on the fact that this is the Masonic Emblem and its history is traced to King Solomon and the building of the Temple. In 1900 John Slaughter branded 11,000 with the ~~XX~~. In 1902 he discontinued this brand and has since used his UC which he first registered in 1866, and registered in Borden County in 1896.

One of Mr. Slaughter's pet projects was his buffalo herd and his experiments in cross breeding cattle and buffalo. The last of his buffalo herd and cross breeds were sold to Clyde and Frank Miller who killed one of the buffalo bulls in attempting to "gather" him. John Slaughter's great grandson still lives at the headquarters near the Double Mountain River and his heirs own much of the old ~~XX~~ range.

Winfield Scott and A. B. (Sug) Robertson were men who started with little besides self reliance and determination and became "real cattle barons" in West Texas. Sug Robertson started "cow punching" when he was nine years old for \$10.00 a month. At the end of ten years he had taught himself to read and write, using his camp fire for a reading light and his boots for a slate. He had also acquired enough money and experience to go into partnership with his employer on 5,000 head of cattle. When he was 24 years old, he bought a ranch on the Pecos River near Horse Head Crossing which had been harassed by theives. He managed to make a success of it and sold it for \$50,000 profit. He then bought a ranch in Nolan County and when the Magnolia was being sold out, he bought what had been the ~~MK~~ horsepasture, which we now know as the Bert Dennis and Roland Key ranches, East of Gail. Robertson became president of a bank in Colorado City, where he made his home and in 1893 formed a partnership with Winfield Scott. They purchased the famous Hat ~~U~~ ranch, consisting of 1,000,000 acres, on the line of New Mexico and later established a ranch in Montana. In 1901 they sold the New Mexico ranch and purchased the St. Louis Ranch, 125,000 acres, in Crosby, Garza and Lubbock Counties. There Mr. Robertson founded and named the town of Southland.

When the buffalo and Indians were thinning out and herds of cattle began to fill the empty space, Winfield Scott drove 1,500 head to the Colorado City area. In the early 1880's Scott bought property and built business houses in the new town, among them one to house the bank he organized. As president of the bank, he lowered the prevailing interest rate from 18% per annum to 12%. He formed a corporation to build the St. James Hotel, a three story brick structure with indoor plumbing! There was held in 1885 the "Stockmen's Ball", a social event probably unsurpassed in West Texas history. A fifty piece orchestra from St. Louis played for dancing and a walk of red brussels carpet was laid from the hotel to the Opera House a block away to protect the silken gowns of the cowmen's wives and daughters. R. J. Kleberg of the King Ranch, Colonel Parramore, builder of Abilene, and Burk Burnett of the 6666, were typical of the men who traveled long distances to attend the Ball. Hiram Snyder said they all remembered when the ball started but there were a good many who could not recall when it was over. It was an event in cow country history second only to the organization of the Cattle Raisers Association in Graham in 1877.

Winfield Scott later moved to Fort Worth and constructed an entire block of business buildings there. In "Hot Irons", by Arnold and Hale, he is described as "a crude old-timer... who never saw a school..... but knew open range from Dallas to Montana... and controlled a string of banks as well as a string of ranches, all the way to Chicago." He could not write his name but he could go into a pen, buy a thousand steers and sign a check good for \$50,000 with the scrawled monogram ~~WFS~~, which he also used as his cattle brand and which was burned on the hides of many thousand cows. Once when he was persuaded to attend a Banker's Convention and coerced into making a speech, the Master of Ceremonies, a college professor, asked him his opinion of college bred men. The old cowman replied, "I'M all for 'em. They make the best servants I can hire."

The last of the Borden County ranch men on Judge Looney's list of "cattle barons" is A. P. Bush, Jr. of the Bush and Tillar Ranch in Eastern Borden and Scurry Counties. Bush was a man entirely different in character and background from Winfield Scott. He was raised on a Southern plantation with many slaves and was educated in the Universities

of Mississippi and Virginia, and had been in the wholesale grocery business in Mobile, New Orleans and St. Louis, before deciding that the cattle industry offered a good business investment. In 1883, with his father and brother, he organized the Alabama and Texas Cattle Company, which stocked the Bush and Tillar range with cattle which were shipped in from Alabama and were of every kind and color. These cattle are blamed with bringing the first screw worms into the area. Bush later bought an interest in the Pitchfork Ranch in Dickens County. He became a leader in the Cattle Raiser's Assn. of Texas and in 1888 was elected President of that organization, a position he held longer than any other man. Lewis Nordyke, in his "Great Roundup", a history of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raiser's Association, describes Bush as "a sort of maverick, a man of mystery". He was said to be quiet and unassuming and a man of great executive ability. He never married although he was considered to be one of the most handsome and eligible bachelors in Texas. When he built a large home on the Bush and Tillar, palatial for that time, the local gossips felt sure his bachelor days were over, but they were mistaken. In 1899 Bush sold his ranches, cattle and banking interests and disappeared from the Western scene. He spent his few remaining years on the Isle of Pines off Cuba. He dies and was buried there, far from the dust and smoke of the roundup and the branding pen, and from the rugged and individualistic cowmen who had been a part of his life in West Texas.

These men were builders of Empires. Not only their own personal empires, but the Empire of the great cattle country, an Empire of hides and horns, green grass and beloved cow ponies. They were made and broken by the whims of nature. But they have left us a legacy known to no other people. A legacy of romance and adventure, of reckless daring, of integrity and stick-to-it-iveness which developed in this country just as the long horns developed here on cattle to a length known nowhere else. These cattle barons are now part of the past but we need to remember what they contributed to the future - and to pass it on - for the things which made them what they were no longer exist to make more like them.

Since there were 1152 brands recorded in Borden County before 1943, this article has barely introduced you to Borden County Brands. We plan a series of articles to continue our story of these brands and our Borden County History.

MRS. FREDA CLAYTON, 63, wife of the late Joe Clayton, died July 17, 1975, in a Lamesa Hospital. She lived in Lamesa and on the Clayton Ranch in Borden County. Survivors include a son, Scott and a daughter, Nan. Burial was in Lamesa.

MURRAY GRAY, son of the late R. L. Gray of Borden County and Mrs. R. L. Gray, who now lives in Snyder, Texas, passed away August 22, 1975 in Amarillo, Texas. Survivors include his wife and two daughters; two brothers, Borden of Borden County and Bobby of Nairobi, Kenya; and a sister, Mrs. Margaret West of Snyder, Texas.

C. N. (CLEMENTS) von ROEDER, 86, who lived in Borden County in 1919, where he started The von Roeder Seed Farms, died August 19, 1975 in Snyder, Texas. He was married to Miss Ella Bodeman, August 1, 1909 in Lockhart, Texas. His wife, four daughters and a son, all of Snyder, survive; also two sisters, Frieda Murphy and Agnes Sorrells; and two brothers, Edgar of Snyder and Dr. H. S. von Roeder of Ira. A sister, Mrs. Ella Richter of Scurry County also survives.

SAM KROPP, a former Borden County resident, died in Midland, Texas, September 8, 1975. Survivors include his wife, two daughters, Sammie Lee and Gail, a son, Joe, and several step children.

MRS. IDA TURNER, 80, of Fluvanna died June 27, 1975. A resident of the Fluvanna Community for many years, her survivors include Paul and Guy Turner of Fluvanna and Ernest Turner of San Marcos.

DAVID FARMER, of Weatherford, grandson of Mrs. Fannie Farmer of O'Donnell and the nephew of Shorty Farmer was killed in an automobile accident August 1, 1975. His father was the late Toby Farmer.

J. M. CROSS, 80, died September 8, 1975 in Big Spring, Texas. He had lived in Howard County since 1915. Among his survivors is Mrs. Steve Stephens, his granddaughter, of Borden County.

WILL JOHNSON, former Borden County resident and son of the late Fred Johnson, died September 21, 1975 in New Mexico and burial was in Elida, New Mexico.

MEMORIALS TO MUSEUM

A generous donation has been received by the Museum in memory of Mozelle Johnson from Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hinshaw of 1800 Indian Road N. W., Valley Apts. 18, Albuquerque, N. Mex. 87104.

In memory of Mrs. Ruby Covey, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hinshaw of Albuquerque have sent a generous donation to the museum.

Bob, Janice, Deen and Gera Burrus of Miles, Texas have sent a generous donation to the museum in memory of Mrs. Freda Clayton.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Race and Bennie Humphries of the V H Ranch near Balmorhea, Texas celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 14, 1975, at the Community Building in Balmorhea. Hostesses were their two sons, Jack and Donnie and families. There were about 150 people in attendance at the bountiful dinner and for western music and dancing. The Vivian Clarks of Gail attended. The Humphries lived on the Munger Ranch in Borden County and worked for Arthur and Mardes Clayton in the mid 1930's. They moved to Balmorhea in July, 1939. Congratulations.

Virgil and Edith (Bennett) Clark of Big Spring, Texas, who were married September 9, 1925, at the home of Edith's parents, the H. E. Bennetts, on the Munger Ranch, were honored by their sons, Norman and Weldon and their families at the First Federal Savings and Loan Association Building in Big Spring, Texas, August 31, 1975, from 2 to 5 P. M. Included in the House Party were Edith's sisters, Blanche, Ruth and Pauline and Pauline Clark of Gail. After the reception a buffet dinner was served to the family and kin in the patio at the Clark home at 2800 Apache Drive. Virgil and Edith, we say congratulations.

Naymon and Moody Everett, O'Donnell, Texas celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, September 7, 1975, in the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church in that city. Naymon, son of J. Y. and Lucy Everett and Moody Burk, daughter of W. T. and Ida Burk (reared in and around Borden County) were married September 8, 1925 by the Reverend W. C. Hart, who lived and preached in Borden County and at Gail in the 1920's. The Everetts have a daughter Nancy Gayle, who is married to Wayne Mott, a granddaughter, Danna, and grandson, Dan, who also live in O'Donnell. Congratulations.

We of the Borden County Historical Survey Committee and Museum Association congratulate you and thank you for making Borden County a better place to live.

TWELFTH ANNUAL MEETING NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

The twelfth Annual Meeting of the Texas Historical Commission and Texas Historical Foundation will be held October 24 and 25, 1975 in Nacogdoches, Texas. The headquarters for the meeting will be in the Sheraton Inn, 200 N. Fredonia Street. Borden County hopes to have a representative of our Historical Survey Committee to attend this meeting.

BORDEN COUNTY MUSEUM

The Borden County Museum has been given The Blue Ribbon, that J. D. Hurley wore on his arm during the "Land Rushes" in Borden County in the early 1900's. This was sent to us by Mrs. L. E. Hurley of Wilson, Oklahoma. As the Bi-Centennial of the Nation and our country will be celebrated in 1976, let us review the Land Rushes.

On April 19, 1901, the Texas Land Law was amended to provide that School Land in twenty one West Texas Counties, including Borden County, should be opened for sale. Previous to this ruling, most of the land had been leased by large ranchers. Purchasers were limited to four sections. The person filing the first applications got the land. This resulted in what is now known as the "Land Rushes".

It is not known just how many rushes there were, but some old timers said there were six or eight. However, it seems there were only two or three big ones. The state put the land on the market at one dollar an acre, forty years to pay it out at 3% interest. When it was known that a piece of land was to be put on the market, people would begin gathering at the Court house, some coming from as far away as New Mexico, as they had to file at the Clerk's office.

The ranchers would send the cowboys to the Courthouse to file on the land. (Which I suppose they would then sell to the ranchers.) The settlers, known as "nesters" were farmers and small ranchers, who wanted to get some of the land for themselves. This resulted in a lot of scuffling, each side trying to drag the others out. The Ranchers wore Blue Ribbon Arm Bands and the Nesters Red Ribbon Arm Bands.

To prevent bloodshed, Sheriff W. K. Clark had each man deposit his gun in a barrel. It is thought the last Land Rush was on March 11, 1904. After the law was changed, instead of awarding the land at a fixed price, to the first man who deposited a bid for it, applicants were required to send in sealed bids with the highest bidder being accepted.

Mr. J. D. Hurley was a County Surveyor in Portales, New Mexico before moving to Borden County. We have some of his surveying equipment in the Borden County Museum.

The Borden County Committee congratulates the Committees in our surrounding area for the work that is being done. We hear reports of great achievements in O'Donnell and in Dawson, Scurry, Garza, and Howard Counties. Keep up the good work.

The Committee wishes to congratulate all of the families having reunions this summer. We hope you have been working on your family histories and will share them with us.

Granny Skinner

"One hundred years is a long time . . . time enough to do a lot of hard work."

The lady who spoke those words this week certainly has the right to make that statement. She is Mrs. L. E. "Granny" Skinner, who will be 100 years of age this Sunday, July 27. And her life has been one, for the most part, of hard work.

Granny was born Sarah Hester Red July 27th, 1869, near Meridian, Mississippi, daughter of Janie Willis and Alson Red.

Granny's mother was born in Belfast Ireland, and came to this country when she was 13 years old. They were six weeks and two days coming across the Atlantic. The family and others with them survived two bad storms. They landed in 1820 and located near Meridian, Miss.

Granny's parents helped organize a church there. There were so many from Ireland in that area that they named the church the Church of Ireland.

Granny's parents moved to Texas, near Ft. Worth when Granny was 13 years old.

Sarah Hester Red was married to Larkin Easton Skinner on the 4th day of December, 1887.

They moved to Borden County, Texas and homesteaded land. They both worked on the the L. T. Ranch. Mr. Skinner worked as a cowhand. She, (Granny) did the cooking and washing. Their combined salaries amounted to \$30 a month.

Borden County was organized in 1893. Granny's husband was the first tax assessor, a job he held for six years.

During the time the Skinner family lived in that area, their mail carrier was Tom Askew, father of Mrs. Willie Peacock, Fletcher's Postmaster.

Mr. Askew carried the mail from the county seat, Gail, to Colorado City, 45 miles away.

He stayed many times at the Skinner home while resting his team.

The county was composed of wild ranch land, with only a few nesters. There were no telephones or telegraphs. The fellow who got on his horse and got the doctor the quickest was the hero. They even carried their guns to church. A man could be sent to prison quicker or stealing a cow than he would for killing a man.

Granny's husband, being a tax assessor and a Baptist preacher, was away from home a great deal of the time. She had to work hard and learned how to be a crack shot. Granny tells of a time when she spotted a badger out the back door about 100 yards away. She got her rifle and hit on the little white spot, between the eyes. One of the hands skinned it for her, and she took it to town and sold the hide for 35 cents. She bought herself some red pepper with the money.

Granny also tells of the time when she had loaned her rifle to a neighbor. She later noticed a stranger coming up the road toward the house. She got her axe and chased him off. Turns out he was the Presbyterian minister coming to call.

The Skinner family moved to Oklahoma in September 1913 and settled in the Cedar Grove community east of Fletcher, where Mr. Skinner farmed.

He passed away March 26, 1940.

Granny continued to live in the home alone until about five years ago when her health became bad.

Mrs. Kate Cole was an old and good friend of Granny's. The two women spent many nights together. They were more like sisters than neighbors.

Six of Granny's nine children are still living. They are:

Francis Edward (Ed) Skinner of Fletcher; Alson Skinner of Midland Texas; Lillian Webber of Medford, Oregon; Kie Skinner, Eugene, Oregon; Larkin Skinner, Los Lunis, N. Mexico and Dee Skinner, Altus.

Walter, Pearl and Allie are deceased.

Granny has 15 grandchildren, 30 great grandchildren and 12 great, great grandchildren.

Granny stated the other day that her greatest possessions are her children, and how she loved them all.

She has been a resident of the Nursing Center since January of this year. She fell in March, breaking her left hip. It has begun to mend, but she must remain in her wheelchair for the time being.

Granny's mind is keen and alert. She loves company and likes to talk. Her eyes shine and she has an impish smile that can break out all over her face.

While visiting with her this week we asked her what advice she would give to a young couple getting married today.

Her eyes twinkled, that smile began, and with a wonderful sense of humor she replied:

"You mean there is still some one foolish enough to do that."

Happy Birthday, Granny.

The above article was printed in a Fletcher, Oklahoma newspaper when Mrs. L. E. Skinner celebrated her 100th birthday. Mr. Ed Skinner sent this article with a letter in which he says: "Mother lived to be almost 102. She lived about twenty four years alone after dad passed away. Our homestead was about a half mile from Durham where there was a blacksmith, hotel and school house. Miss Maty Patterson was my first teacher when I was five years old. Gail was the postoffice, store and doctor. Brother Petty was our preacher and Dr. Prince was our doctor. Mr. Tuner ran the hotel at Durham. Dad was the first Tax Assessor in Borden County. We did not have many neighbors but they were good ones."

Mr. Olin Ainsworth of Milnesand, New Mexico writes: "I would like to know when the next 'Old Settlers' Reunion will be". We are proud and happy to call your attention to the announcement on the first page of this newsletter. We will have an "Old Settlers" Reunion on the 29th and 30th of May, 1976 in connection with the Bi-Centennial Celebration in Borden County.

I am sending you \$10.00 as a small Memoriam for the Shaw family, all being deceased other than myself, I want to keep the name alive as long as possible. You girls are doing a wonderful job getting real pioneer information.. We do not have very many left who experienced the real hardships.

Adella Shaw Drew

LETTERS FROM THE PENS OF OUR READERS

We certainly enjoy the Borden Citizen. You do such a good job of issuing it. There is certainly a lot of work which goes into each issue.

GEORGE AND JUNE CLARK, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Pauline, we appreciate the paper and thank you so much for sending it to us. There is something in every paper about someone or something that we know about. We are sending a check to the Museum in memory of Mozelle and Mrs. Covey. We extend our sympathy to you in behalf of Mozelle. We won't ever forget, when we had Church in the top of the old Courthouse in 1936, that you, Vivian and Mozelle went home with us for lunch and what a lot of fun we had.

ERNEST & RUTH HINSHAW

I enjoy your paper very much. We lived in Gail in 1906 through 1910. JESS PATTON, Carlsbad, N.M.

Dear Edna and all the girls there who are working with the Historical Society. As most of you know, I was born in Gail, 79 years ago. I was a teenager when we moved away. I will always love the memory of Gail and the dear people there. I know so few who are still living. Give my love to Alma Taylor Cathey and others. My sister Grace is still living. We speak of the beautiful Gail Mountain so often. I see and talk with Bertha (Sister) Berry in Houston.

MADIE HOPKINS SABO, Dallas, Texas

I enjoy the Citizen so much. I went to school in Gail and remember so many old timers... I hope to write of my young days and happenings in Gail some time soon. My dad was Uncle Tom or T. C. Smith and he and my mother operated the hotel on the West side of the square during the Land Rush days.

EDDIE SMITH JENKINS, Athens, Texas

Please renew my subscription to the Borden Citizen. I enjoy it very much. I used to have many friends there, having come there in 1900. Miss Minnie was my first teacher.

MRS. ZETTIE RICHARDS, Portales, New Mexico

On December 8, 1974, I subscribed to The Borden Citizen and with great anticipation looked forward to my first copy. No copy! I finally wrote The Borden Citizen bewailing my loss and the fact that Faye (Mangum) Marshall put her sister's copy in Mr. Cosby's pickup to bring to me. Now I could get it! He let it blow out somewhere along the way. I lived through that, thinking SURELY the next issue I will receive a copy. NO COPY! Last week a lady we have known for twenty years called me to ask about Wayside Reveries my husband's latest book. She had just read her mother's copy of BORDEN CITIZEN and kindly offered to mail it to me. Ah! At long last! Mrs. Gunter's mother, Eula Hollar, and a brother, Clyde Hollar grew up in Borden County. That name, Hollar, is most unusual to me so I asked her if she ever heard of Ena Belle Hollar. "Yes, she married Clyde and is my Aunt. Where did you know her?" Then I explained that sixty years ago my family was moving to the Plains from a tiny settlement, Hylton, Nolan County, and the last night there, I spent with her aunt-to-be, Ena Belle Calcote - later Hollar. It's a small world, isn't it? Since discovering The Borden Citizen I have learned many interesting things about the people around me. I enjoyed the article about the von Roeder family, the first German settlers in Texas. How they survived is a miracle. Their trials reminded me of Carol Hoff's Johnny Texas, which my fifth graders have loved through the years.

MRS. C. N. COSBY, Canyon, Texas

The Committee apologizes to Mrs. Cosby for the delay in getting her Borden Citizen to her. Her name was in a card file but was not on the mailing list. If you know of anyone who is not getting their newsletter, please have them write us and give their correct address and we will check it out. Write Mrs. Pauline Clark, Gail, Texas 79738 or Mrs. Edna Miller, Star Route, Fluvanna, Tex. 79517. Send us your news, memories and history of Borden County.

Borden Citizen.

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